

MORE THAN ONE STORY: THE ANTHOLOGY

SELF CARE GUIDE FOR WRITERS

ABOUT MORE THAN ONE STORY: THE ANTHOLOGY

Following the success of our award-winning film series *More Than One Story*, which aimed to amplify the voices of those with lived experience, the next phase of the project is a ground-breaking collection of new writing, *More Than One Story: The Anthology*.

We're inviting writers with lived experience of homelessness or poverty to submit monologues for a new anthology, in association with Big Issue and published by Nick Hern Books.

This collection will spotlight the many realities of homelessness and poverty in the UK today – amplifying voices often overshadowed by the statistics.

This anthology will be more than a collection – it will be a living archive. A diary of our time.

WHAT IS THIS DOCUMENT

Writing a monologue about homelessness or poverty when you have your own lived experience of these issues may feel challenging at times.

This document contains information about ways to look after yourself before, whilst and after writing a monologue to be considered for *More Than One Story: The Anthology*.

This guide includes:

- An introduction to self-care
- Self-care suggestions
- Writer resources
- Helplines and support
- Further reading and self-care resources

WHAT IS SELF-CARE?

The concept of self-care comes from the Black feminist movement. Self-care is a choice to listen to our needs and look after ourselves, so we are able to keep going and live our best lives, despite the difficulties we experience in life and how they make us feel.

This guide takes inspiration from [20 Stories High](#) and [Clean Break](#).

SELF-CARE SUGGESTIONS

TALK TO SOMEONE

It may be a good idea to let a trusted person know that you're going to be writing, so that they can support you on that journey. Whether that's making sure you're not disturbed when you're writing or talking through your work with them.

If you start writing and then find it uncomfortable or difficult, try talking to someone you trust or try one of the organisations listed at the bottom of this document.

THINK ABOUT YOUR ENVIRONMENT

Find somewhere you feel comfortable to write, it might be a space where you are living, or a shared space like a café, or a library.

CHECK IN WITH YOURSELF

Before you start writing, maybe do a check-in to see how you are feeling, it may or may not be a good time to write emotionally.

Keep noticing what is going on for you. After expressing something on the page, or aloud, you can check in with yourself by using something a little abstract to gauge how you are feeling - for example, think about which emoji you feel like in this moment, take a pause and a breath.

BREATHE

Breathing is a great way to help you feel calm. Try breathing in for four seconds, holding your breath for seven seconds, breathing out for eight seconds. Repeat this for as long as you need. A guided breathwork video can be found here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kpSkoXRrZnE>

FIND SOME NATURE

Look out of the window or go for a walk if you can; experiencing nature can help us feel grounded.

TRY A GROUNDING EXERCISE

Grounding exercises are things you can do to bring yourself into contact with the present moment.

There are many ways you can do this. Here are some ideas:

1. Notice five things you can see, four things you can feel, three things you can hear, two things you can smell and one thing you can taste.
2. Sit with your feet on the floor and back against your chair and either gently tap each leg or cross your arms and tap your shoulders.
3. Wash your hands or drink some water.

KNOW IF YOU NEED TO STEP AWAY

There is nothing wrong with starting to write a monologue and then deciding that it's not for you or it's too much. If you feel like you want to write something but you're not ready to share it, write and don't submit. Writing can be a powerful form of self-expression and way to explore your creative voice.

WRITING RESOURCES

THE BRUNTWOOD PRIZE FOR PLAYWRITING

The Bruntwood Prize for Playwriting is the largest playwriting competition in Europe. They have a resources page on their website that shares provocations, tips, tutorials and advice all with the aim of helping you shape and develop your writing practice.

<https://www.writeaplay.co.uk/resources/>

THE ROYAL COURT

The Royal Court is a leading national and international force for championing, cultivating and supporting theatre writers. They have a resources page on their website that shares a playwright's podcast and writing exercises.

<https://royalcourttheatre.com/playwriting/writer-resources/>

HELPLINES AND SUPPORT

This section has organisations that can help you if you need to speak to someone about what you are experiencing or if you need advice.

SAMARITANS

Provides 24/7 emotional support to anyone in emotional distress, struggling to cope, or at risk of suicide.

[samaritans.org](https://www.samaritans.org) or **116 123**.

MIND

Provides advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem. [mind.org.uk](https://www.mind.org.uk) or **0300 123 3393**.

SHELTER

Provides advice, support and guidance with homelessness and housing.

[shelter.org.uk](https://www.shelter.org.uk) or **0808 800 4444**.

CRISIS

Advice and support for people experiencing homelessness. Crisis offers support to find housing, employment, develop new skills, and more.

[crisis.org.uk](https://www.crisis.org.uk).

REFUGE

Advice and support for women and children experiencing abuse.

[nationaldahelpline.org.uk](https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk) or **0808 2000 247**.

HELPLINES AND SUPPORT



SWITCHBOARD

Switchboard LGBT+ is a confidential UK helpline offering support and information to LGBTQIA+ individuals via phone, email, and webchat.

<https://switchboard.lgbt/> or **0800 0119 100**.

PAPYRUS

PAPYRUS Prevention of Young Suicide is a UK charity dedicated to the prevention of suicide and the promotion of positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in young people.

<https://www.papyrus-uk.org/> or **0800 068 41 41**.

THE MIX

The Mix is a UK charity offering free, confidential support to young people under 25 on issues like mental health, relationships, and housing.

www.themix.org.uk or call **0808 808 4994**.

If you are in immediate threat/danger from others or yourself, call the emergency services on 999.

FURTHER READING AND SELF-CARE RESOURCES

SURVIVORS TRUST - GUIDES TO HEALING

These resources have been collated for those that have experienced sexual abuse, but there are guides which anyone could find useful.

https://www.thesurvivorstrust.org/understanding-healing_

ANNA FREUD - SELF-CARE RESOURCES

These resources have been created for young people, but there are strategies and activities which anyone could find useful.

<https://www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind/self-care/>

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions or would like more information, don't hesitate to get in touch with the Cardboard Citizens team: Email:

anthology@cardboardcitizens.org.uk