

HEALING THE 4 PARTS OF THE BODY IMPACTED BY RACIAL TRAUMA

The Mental Body:

Easing Our Minds After a Racially Traumatic Incident

The mental body is where we house our thoughts, beliefs, opinions and our sense of value. After experiencing racial trauma, it is possible to be anxious, stressed, hypervigilant and frantic. To create space for healing in the mental body we can:



Unplug

Take some time away from traumatic or hate-filled viral videos and media. Indirect trauma can extend our experience and create even more anxiety and stress.



Pause

If you can, take time off from work or school. Even if just for an hour. This will help reduce the mental load you have to deal with during the day.



Talk

Release the thoughts in your mind to a trusted family member or friend. [Consider a licensed therapist or medical provider](#) who knows how to make space for your racial trauma. This practice can make a significant difference.

The Emotional Body:

Releasing Emotions After a Racially Traumatic Incident

The emotional body is where we hold our lived experiences and the feelings attached to them. After experiencing racial trauma, it is possible to feel sadness, anger, resentment, rage, rejection and depression. To create space for healing in the emotional body we can:



Feel

Allow yourself to express your feelings- sadness, anger, fear, etc.- in safe places and ways (without harming another being)-- so that the feelings do not remain trapped in your body. Trapped emotions can lead to bodily inflammation and illnesses.



Gather

Surround yourself with people who can empathize and give you a safe space to express your emotions. Your emotions deserve a soft landing place.



Create

Take the time to journal, draw, compose, paint, etc. about your experience and accept the emotions that emerge as you do so. You may feel a sense of relief.

The Physical Body:

Transforming Tension After a Racially Traumatic Incident

The physical body is the most noticeable part of our bodies where we see and feel the impact of trauma. Racial trauma (acute and ongoing) can lead to chronic fatigue, body inflammation and other physical ailments. To create space for healing in the physical body we can:



Rest

Take time to sleep and take naps. If you can't sleep, try sitting still and taking deep breaths near the water and/or with soothing music. Meditate. Rest is a reparational practice for our people whose bodies have been exploited.



Move

Walk, dance, stretch, run, bike, hike, yoga or shake your body. Allow your body to release the pent up energy within you. You may feel the pressure decrease.



Body Healing

Release tension stored in muscles and tissues through massage, acupuncture and other body releasing medicines. Don't be surprised if you get emotional during these healing practices. It is nothing to be ashamed of. It just means the energy is being released.



Food as Medicine

Healthy food and nutrition play an important role in improving and sustaining our wellness and health. If possible and affordable, eat leafy vegetables (high in antioxidants), fruits, nuts and seeds. Grill or bake fresh fatty fish (salmon, trout, tuna, sardines). Try seasoning foods with spices (turmeric, ginger, garlic, cinnamon, etc.), and herbs (parsley, oregano, sage, etc.) or drinking tea (green and other herbal teas).

The Spiritual Body:

Returning to Ourselves After a Racially Traumatic Incident

The spiritual body houses your essence. After experiencing racial trauma, it is common to feel hopeless, demoralized, rejected and low energy or vibrational. To create space for healing in the spiritual body we can:



Meditate/Pray

Take a moment for reflection, contemplation, [meditation](#), and/or prayer to remind you how divine you are. Recall the strengths of our ancestors. It is easy to forget how special you are (and we are as a people) when you experience racism.



Reclaim

Read, listen to, watch, or go to events that can help you feel uplifted and regain a sense of pride in your racial identity.



Reconnect

Engage with others you trust and support local anti-racist organizations, churches and groups that can help you feel connected, hopeful and empowered.