WEIRD-KID GUIDE
to
AVOIDING
Soothing
HEARTBREAK

by (name)
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This is a zine for those with hurting hearts. There are countless reasons for hearts to hurt, because hearts take a lot of wear. Loving is hard. Being alive is hard. This zine is not about romance, but if that's why you're here, you are welcome too. This zine is for weird kids with weird brains, and maybe hearts that feel too much. These are some (hopefully) helpful tips for the care and tending of your gentle heart. Keep fighting soden!

First things first:

Having [insert relevant brain/emotion situation] going on can make loving complicated. It does not make you unlovable. I love you, really and truly, and as a fellow creature stumbling through this world, I am so proud of you. You've made it this far! Woah. If you are here and need help, I am proud of you for finding it. Keep looking. Keep trying. You will only find more ways to care and be cared for.
So, depending who you are, what you like, and what's going on, self-care can really mean anything. If it makes you feel okay, and isn't hurting anyone or you then it's a good one!

Also, your needs may change from day to day, and that's perfectly okay.

Here are some things that help me to give you ideas:

- Surround yourself in blankets, snacks, other worlds.
- Let your body rest while you escape to other worlds.
- Walk until your brain falls into rhythm with your steps and speaks in poems.
- Get your body/brain enough to fall asleep at night.
- Make tea + warm it steep.
- Make the food your body craves or can tolerate gracefully (incl. some veggies!).
- Make observations to stay grounded.
- Leave the house.
- Get yourself away from places you associate negatively with your well-being.
- Organize things.
- Do small projects you can finish in 1-3 days.
- Sit in the sun.
- Journal or write letters about feelings.
- Listen to water.
Often, it's a good idea to have some armor.

(something you can do or wear that makes you feel strong/reminds you to be extra gentle with yourself throughout the day.)

- Bold lipstick or fancy eye make-up.
- Good bangles, or talismans from friends.
- Nail polish
- Underwear
- Something to hold/forget with
- A specific article of clothing
- Good, reassuring words:
  I Am Enough!

Wow, I'm anxious!
Please don't touch me.
'Too honest' patches

Sea Monster
Hey.

If your brain stuff has a tendency to make you nonverbal, or make communication hard, it’s a good idea to talk to 2+ friends you are around most often about how they can best reach you or help you.

Example: ASL for water

- Helpful sign language
- Physical cues to watch out for what they mean
- General steps to follow if you seem distressed.

Give and take care

When you’re feeling weird, it’s important to make sure you’re around people who understand and care about you and take care of themselves.

2 tips for helping friends in rough places: (i.e. how to care for yourself too.)

Ask for help. Show your friend that you need them too. Especially when you need help with something your friend is good at and/or enjoys.

Communicate needs. Let your friend know when you need rest or alone time. Everyone has needs, and meeting them keeps us healthy. Take care of yourself first. You can’t care for others if you’re worn out.

It is okay to need things + to take care of yourself.
I REMEMBER ONCE WE RAN AWAY, DUG A HOLE IN WHICH TO HIBERNATE. IN THE WARMTH OF THE ROOTS AND THE GROUND, WE THREW WHAT WE LOST, AND KNEW WHAT WE HAD FOUND. - NOELLE LONGHALL

SOMETIMES YOU JUST HAVE TO HUNKER DOWN AND GATHER ENERGY IN YOUR ROOTS. REST THAT'S OKAY. JUST REMEMBER

★ 1. Keep drinking lots of water! (Tea is good too.)
★ 2. Check in with yourself often. 
  - how do I feel? 
  - what do I need right now? 
  - how do I get that?
★ 3. Learn to ask people for specific, simple things that might help you. (e.g., nice notes, a homework buddy, a hug, not to mention around you)
★ 4. Try to get fresh air or see a growing thing daily if you can.
RESOURCES + HELP

* www.imalive.org
  [chat-based online crisis network/hotline]

* www.stayherewithus.tumblr.com
  [interactive safe-space]

* stayherewithme.com/resources-and-links/
  [mental health, gender, sexuality and self-love focused]

* www.thetrevorproject.org
  [support for LGBTQ+ youth ages 13-24]

* tumblr-search resources lists. (ex. mental health resources, anxiety resources, dissociation resources, etc. etc.)
  [There is so much out there.]

* calmingmanatee.com
  [silly encouragement]

So, that's all from me. I'll leave these here. Just in case. Remember, I love you!