



Your Voice Matters – A Safe Space to be Heard, Heal, and Grow



This blog is for all of us, no matter what you're struggling with and why, this is a safe place to share your experiences, your challenges, hopes and fears. Here, you can find support, realize that you are not alone and maybe you will find some self-help strategies that work for you!

Please be kind and respectful - everyone is welcome!



Hi, my name is Nina, nice to meet you 😊

I have recently created this blog to build a safe space where we can talk openly about mental health. No matter what you are dealing with, you are not alone! Write down your thoughts, worries, challenges, maybe someone reading your blog entry faces the same issues. Maybe you have some strategies that help you to cope with your problems, or you just want to talk about your struggles because you feel alone or not heard.

This community is here for you!



Nina, 16 y/o

So, I personally have struggled with loneliness for a long time. When my mum passed away last year, my dad and I moved to another city to gain distance from the old environment. It was a tough time, I was feeling depressed and it really wasn't easy at all. Everyone already had their friend groups at my new school. They were nice to me, but I knew in the back of my mind that this was only because they felt sorry for me. After school, I only stayed at home in my bed, I didn't want to go out anymore, do sports... This went on for a few months, until I realized that I really am struggling and need help. What really helped me was to talk to my dad. At first I thought I don't want to be a burden to him as he was struggling as well. But it was the best decision to talk to him, he was relieved that I opened up and we soon began searching for a psychotherapist. A few weeks later, I've already had my first appointment, I felt extremely nervous the weeks before, but I promise you, it is worth it! My psychotherapist really helped me to cope with my emotions, I am still healing, but it gets better! She encouraged me to join a swimming club, where I met a girl named Jessica, she is now my best friend. If you are in a similar situation to what I went through and don't want friendships that are based only on pity (hella annoying), here's a tip: don't share too much right away. Start by getting to know the people by normal conversations (hobbies, summer vacay...). Later, when the time feels right, you can open up. That's what I did, and Jessica was super understanding. It turned into such a great friendship, and now, I don't feel so lonely anymore! Also: doing sports helped me A LOT to feel better overall! Maybe my tips will help you in some way. I actually have so much more I could share, but I want to encourage you to write about your own worries first. It can be such a relief to get it off your chest, believe me!

No matter how big or small your problems are, you deserve to be heard!



Betty, 16 y/o

I Can Fix Him (No Really I Can't)

I can fix him. No, really, I can – at least that is what I had thought back in the beginning of my relationship. Maybe I was also led on by the so-popular “I can fix him” trope, where mass murderers are looked at with heart eyes. I admit to having been one of those thinking they could fix characters such as Draco Malfoy, Loki, and Kylo Ren. But now I am facing a reality that is slowly burning me out emotionally.

I have the feeling that his darkness is dimming my light more and more, and it is really my boyfriend dragging me down now instead of getting healed by me. And despite loving him more than anything in this world, I often am more of a personal unpaid therapist to him than his girlfriend, and this needs to stop. It seriously needs to stop. I now often do not even have the energy anymore to listen to his problems day after day – every single day – without a break. I could not keep trying to fix him even if I wanted to. Now, do not get me wrong; I still want him to get better; of course I do, but not like this. Things need to change, and I believe I have figured out some ways to help him while also significantly relieving my burden.

One option that I have been using for years now is a diary. In my diary, I can write and process my thoughts and feelings without anyone having to know about it. Writing and ranting about all my problems on those pages really helps me with getting over them more easily. It also is the perfect safe space for thoughts meant for no one but myself. Luckily, I do not have toxic parents who snoop around my room and disrespect my privacy by, for instance, reading my diary. And due to my diary being really helpful regarding my mental health, I have suggested buying one for my boyfriend.



Betty, 16 y/o

I Can Fix Him (No Really I Can't)

However, he is not familiar with the usage of a diary in order to cope with his problems, so I have created a group chat. In this group chat he can write down all his thoughts and problems any time he needs to without me getting any notifications about it since I keep it muted. This way, I can choose for myself when to read through it and only do so when I have the mental capacity for it. This really takes pressure off me, and I feel less drained. Also, he can simply get things off his chest while still being able to get my opinion and reassurance when needed. Notably, having a separate space for his traumas and problems, and them not being discussed in our private chat anymore, does lighten our communication over text immensely.

Thanks to social media and its algorithm, I also found some helpful self-help books that fit his case, and there are also quite a lot of creators out there that provide good information on mental health and how to cope with problems. After watching a few of those videos online, I realised that I really can't fix him, but that I at least can show him where to find actual help.



Sarah, 17 y/o

Hey, my name is Sarah and I have struggled with immense anxiety. It started during the pandemic, then came the war in Ukraine and it got worse through recent events like the election of Trump. I fell down a spiral of constantly checking the news and consuming bad headline after headline, which only fueled a sense of hopelessness in me. I want to share my struggle with doomscrolling because I think I am not alone with this. I also want to share the things that helped me to cope with the feeling of helplessness and had a good influence on my mental health.

The Doomscrolling had me in a tight grip. I always followed the news regularly and when these events happened, I felt obligated to check in daily. Through that I hoped to understand these events better and to gain some control in anxious times. The opposite was the case. It was a false sense of security and the reassurance I got from the news was short-lived when confronted with other bad headlines. Even though I still managed my schoolwork and met with my friends, it took a toll on my mental health. I often found myself spiraling late at night when I was alone worrying about the uncertainty and the constant confrontation with bad news resulted in me feeling overwhelmed daily. It was hard for me to distance myself from this because I could not imagine doing it without completely turning away from the news. Now a few weeks later I can say that it is possible to have a healthier relationship with the news.

The first step that helped me get out of this spiral was when I started to talk with my friends about the way the news made me feel. Many shared the feeling of helplessness and it showed me that I was not alone or overreacting. Others gave me a helpful shift in perspective that there are still good news under the wave of bad ones and reminded me, that even though I have no influence in these major events I can help in my community, directing my attention to things that are possible.



Sarah, 17 y/o

I also started to regulate my screen time. Like many of us I get my news from social media and I did not want to move away from this completely. Through the time regulation I could keep in touch with the news but in a fixed time slot and could guilt freely focus on other important things during the day. Another option that I got from a friend of mine is to watch news broadcasts like the Tagesschau. They present the news from the day in a more filtered way than social media.

But what helped me the most was establishing a routine at night to sleep better. I started to do Yoga exercises before going to bed as well as picking up hobbies to keep my mind busy when I felt anxious. I learned how to knit and read the books I always wanted to read but never had the time to. A routine helped me to feel less drained in the morning and I felt more well-balanced. I learned that my anxiety was heightened when I did not take good care of myself, like not sleeping regularly or forgetting to eat.

Don't get me wrong I still worry, but it no longer causes me crippling anxiety to the point that my life suffers under this. Bad things will always happen either in your personal life or in the world, but I learned it is immensely important how you deal with it. Just looking away is no long-term solution. I am just at the beginning of creating more resilience and hope to find others who are already on this path.



Lauren, 17 y/o

I miss my grandpa

Hi, my name is Lauren and I'm 17 years old. I'm in my last year of high school and really excited to start college. I just found this blog and decided to make a post because I feel like I have no one to talk to in my life. Don't get me wrong, my parents are super great but I'm not that close to my dad and wouldn't feel comfortable talking to him about this, because I don't think he'd understand me. And my mom would get it, but that's why I feel like I can't talk to her - she's struggling with her mental health herself.

OK, so this post is about my grandpa and what losing him did to me. When I was six years old, my grandpa passed away from a stroke and I was there with him, watching as he struggled to talk and looked weird. My mom came and picked me up just as the ambulance arrived. He died a few days later in the hospital but I wasn't allowed to visit him and so it always felt to me as if he had died that day in the living room with me. For months afterwards, I had so much trouble sleeping and could only fall asleep next to my mother. But if my mom fell asleep before me, I would be scared that she was having a stroke and so I would try to wake her again. I remember sometimes getting dizzy at bedtime, probably because I was so overtired and panicking and now, I'm actually kind of mad at my parents for not getting me help back then so I could work through that.

Eventually things got better but we never talked about my grandpa after that. I understand that it's hard for my mom because she lost her dad, but I really want to talk about him more and learn more about him. The only thing I remember of him is one memory of us playing in a sandbox. Other than that, I remember the day he died and that's about it. I also lost another family member when I was two and I don't remember them at all even though I know I spent a ton of time with them when I was a baby, and they really loved me. I just wish I could remember more.



Lauren, 17 y/o

I miss my grandpa

My actual problem is connected to these losses, I think: Last year in class, a girl fainted, and the teacher called an ambulance and when it arrived, I felt super bad. I started crying and felt really panicky and stuff. I also have this thing where I sometimes convince myself that I have some very dangerous disease or am going to die. Like I said, after my grandpa died, I was very afraid of my mom getting a stroke but recently I was trying to fall asleep at night and my leg was tingling a bit. I know it was because of the way I had been lying on it, but my head told me that it was a stroke. I started panicking and it took me ages to fall asleep afterwards. I've started to notice that this kind of thing is happening to me a lot more often now than when I was younger, and I don't know how to deal with it. Usually, it helps when I tell myself that it is obviously nothing, but I'm not really thinking rationally when I'm panicking so it's not super effective. I'd also go to my mom, but she has the same thing only it's worse for her and usually it the other way around, with her coming to me when she thinks she's having a heart attack or that a pimple on her back is skin cancer. She would try her best to calm me down, but it would also make her feel bad and anxious, so I feel bad afterwards when I do talk to her.

I'm probably going to ask my parents if I can talk to a therapist about this whole thing if it doesn't get better. My mom is also seeing a therapist about her anxiety, so I don't think they would react badly, but I'm bad at asking for things I want, and also at admitting weakness.

Thanks for letting me rant, it feels great to just get everything out that's on my mind without being judged for it. If you have any tips on how to deal with this kind of thing, feel free to leave a comment 😊



How to hand in your blog entry:

If you want to become part of this blog, you can reach out via email, join our Discord server, where we additionally support each other and regularly talk, and do not forget to follow on Instagram to make sure you are up to date about new blog entries.

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Credits

Lisa Brungs: Sarah's blog entry

Lauren's blog entry

Julia Nagel: text on pages "Home," "About Me," and Nina's blog entry

Elisa Leibold: Betty's blog entry, Contact page, and creating the slides in Canva