



DOMINION MOVEMENT

#WeWillRiseTogether

Your mental health is important

Bearing witness to the suffering of animals can be powerful yet painful.

Not only are we exposed to violence, but the empathy we feel for the victims can cause us to suffer vicariously.

You may notice feelings of anger, despair, grief, or hopelessness. You may struggle to forget the images you've seen, have negative thoughts about people and the world, or struggle to sleep and concentrate. Please note that these are normal emotions, and a valid response to experiencing something traumatic.

It is important at times like this that you look after yourself so that these psychological experiences do not cause you ongoing distress or significantly intrude on your day-to-day life.

Our willingness to acknowledge atrocity, rather than look away, can also be a catalyst that helps us to create important change. With adequate care, such an experience can be transformative.

What can I do to cope?

- **Attend to your body's needs:** Feeling distressed can be exhausting and deplete our energy. Assure you stay hydrated, well fed, and allow time for leisure. Physical exercise and adequate sleep also do wonders for our mental wellbeing.
- **Get connected:** It can feel isolating when you have learned about something that many do not know or understand. Reach out to someone you trust, join your local or online animal advocacy group, or dedicate time to social connection.
- **Make a difference:** If you are feeling confused or helpless about what to do, there are many ways you can help - whether it's donating, changing your eating habits, sharing what you've learned, or becoming a more dedicated advocate. As individuals, we have the power to make significant impact through our everyday choices. Choose your own goal in contributing to the cause, then put together an action plan on when you will do it, and the steps you will take to make it happen.
- **Remind yourself:** You may start to think negatively about people. Try to remind yourself that most people are not inherently cruel. Most people care about animals and are not aware of how systems and behaviours may impact them.
- **Remain hopeful:** While the suffering of animals may seem vast, global efforts to protect them are unremitting. The animal rights movement is one of the most rapidly and passionately growing of our time.

If you are feeling distressed and would like access to mental health support, contact your GP or local mental health practitioner.

For further support, contact Beyond Blue on 1300 22 4636, or LifeLine on 13 11 14 (24 hr phone services). In cases of emergency regarding your safety, contact 000.