

# ***OWNING OUR VOICE. RESISTING THE NOISE***

***Media engagement and digital wellbeing  
essentials for trans communities***

**tgeu.**

# Owning our voice. Resisting the noise: Media engagement and digital wellbeing essentials for trans communities

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wellbeing of trans people since 2005.*

*TGEU is an umbrella organisation that represents  
over 200 member organisations in more than  
50 countries in Europe and Central Asia.*

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Part 1. Owning our voice: Engaging with media</b>	<b>7</b>
Choosing our media battles	8
Decision making and addressing the request	9
Framing and preparing	10
During and after the interview	14
Continued media work	15
Managing expectations	19
DIY and collaborative media	19
Diving deeper	20
<b>Part 2. Resisting the noise:</b>	
<b>Media literacy and digital wellbeing</b>	<b>21</b>
Checking the bias	22
Challenging the algorithm	23
Staying connected with what's real	24
Mutual and self-care	25
<b>Endnotes</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>28</b>

# INTRODUCTION

This guide is a practical tool for trans activists and community representatives navigating today's complex media environment. It's not a deep dive into media or communications theory; instead, it offers grounded, real-world advice on how to safely and effectively show up in media spaces with clarity, confidence, and mutual support. This guide is for trans people and community organisers who may not see themselves as communications experts (and don't need to be). It's for those who speak up in local or international contexts, who may be approached by journalists, or who want to better understand how the media affects our movements.

While the guide is rooted in the experiences of trans people, much of its content is relevant for anyone engaging with media from the margins, particularly those working in feminist, anti-racist, migrant justice, or other movements. Whether you're actively giving interviews or simply consuming media, we all engage with information that shapes public opinion — and ultimately, affects our rights and dignity. In a world where visibility is both empowering and dangerous, media work becomes a form of strategy and resistance.

Despite the tectonic shifts in media — from biased algorithms to political polarisation — our voices matter. Traditional and digital media continue to influence how the public sees trans people. Many still don't know a trans person, making our lived realities vulnerable to manipulation and misconception. Trans visibility and awareness are increasing, but so are backlash and polarisation. Sensationalist and trauma-focused coverage often replaces the nuanced, people-first reporting we need. We may not control the media system, but we can learn how it works, show up with intention, and protect ourselves and each other.

None of the major media platforms are built for protecting our wellbeing, and often do not tell our stories well, with so much needed nuance and care. They are shaped by engagement economies that are driven by strong emotions and thrive on outrage. That's why this guide also looks at how we consume media. We offer tips for navigating toxic content, setting boundaries, and staying emotionally grounded in an overwhelming information landscape.

***This guide has two parts:***

***Part 1:*** *Owning our voice: How to engage with journalists, prepare for interviews, and pitch your story.*

***Part 2:*** *Resisting the noise: How to protect your mental health, understand media manipulation, and stay grounded amid the digital media storms.*

*We keep it real. You'll find practical lessons drawn from years of media work by the TGEU communications team, insights from our members, and the knowledge of partner and ally organisations.*

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# ***PART 1.***

## ***OWNING OUR VOICE: ENGAGING WITH MEDIA***



You have received a request from a journalist, editor, or content creator to comment for their article, newsletter, or even give an interview. First of all, congratulations - this request clearly marks a recognition of your work and your voice in the trans advocacy and media representation space. This is an honour, but also a responsibility to the broader community, and of course, a challenge to your personal time, energy, and wellbeing.

**Media opportunities are a rare chance to communicate a lot in a short space. That's why thoughtful strategy and preparation are key. Follow these tips step by step to maximise the impact of your media communications. The guidance works across all formats: newspaper interviews, newsletter comments, and digital video content.**

## Choosing our media battles

**Not every media request deserves your time or energy — you don't owe every outlet your time, intellectual, or emotional labour. Focus your energy where your voice will do the most good, not where it will be used against you.**

Before agreeing to an interview or contributing a quote, take a moment to research both the outlet and the journalist. What kinds of stories do they usually run? Are they known for informed, balanced, respectful coverage — or for clickbait, sensationalism, and controversy? A quick scan of their past reporting and social media profiles can tell you a lot about whether they're likely to amplify your message accurately or twist it for a hostile audience.

You can also check the current media landscape around the topic. For example, tools like Ground News let us see how stories are being covered across the political spectrum and identify common bias patterns of Western media. Are mostly right-wing outlets covering this issue? Has it become polarising? Are key facts missing from dominant narratives? Knowing this helps you prepare or decide to opt out. Your voice is powerful; use it where it has the most impact, not where it will be buried, distorted, or weaponised. It is fine to decline or pass on an opportunity.

### HELPFUL RESOURCES

- Check the outlet for political bias and credibility: [mediabiasfactcheck.com](https://mediabiasfactcheck.com)
- and [www.allsides.com/media-bias/ratings](https://www.allsides.com/media-bias/ratings)
- Newsbreaks and topics coverage across the political spectrum: [ground.news](https://ground.news)
- Each media website has a search function: try searching previous coverage of your topic or broader searches like 'trans' or 'transgender' and check out their tone and accuracy.



# Decision making and addressing the request

**Use these guiding questions when making a decision:**

- Does this media outlet reach the people I want to reach?
- Whose agenda is it serving?
- Why am I choosing to do this interview – is it because I want to or feel obliged to?
- Is there someone else who is better placed than I to do this?
- Do I have access to support before and after the interview?
- Will there be any ally voice if I don't do it?
- Who can I reach out to for advice, whether from an organisation or group?
- Do I have the time to prepare?
- Am I willing to give the mental and emotional time and space to this opportunity?
- Who can I turn to for support, especially if this comment or interview gains unexpected attention or backlash?

**Always take a moment to reflect or discuss this opportunity with a trusted peer. When replying (in case you decide to engage), remember that you are in control of your own time and voice, and never hesitate to ask:**

- What is the story they are working on? Who is the audience?
- What is the format? News, comment, analysis, etc.
- Who else are they talking with for this piece? What other voices will be included?
- What is the exact timeline? Be prepared to suggest your timeline, taking into account your daily routine and capacity.
- Do you feel comfortable and equipped to do this via a proposed technology, such as online video conference software or over the phone?
- Would it be more comfortable for you to provide the answers in written form? This will give you more control over the story and things you share.
- Request to share the list of specific questions in advance, and feel free to dismiss the ones that are not relevant or if there's another source you'd better recommend to a journalist.

- If you are not willing to speak on behalf of your name, inform them of this boundary and request to comment anonymously.
- If you think that one of your peers or another group might have better expertise on a particular topic or experience with this media format, check with them directly on their availability and readiness before connecting them to a journalist.

## Framing and preparing

**Do not react — respond. Stay calm and thoughtful instead of acting on impulse or emotion. Remember that communication is not just what we are saying, but also how it is perceived at the other end. These are the golden rules for any good communication.**

Once you've decided to take part in a media opportunity, give yourself time and space to reflect. What is the topic? What do you want to say and what words to use? Who is the audience on the other side of this article, newsletter, or video? Think about how your message might land with them. Taking time to prepare helps you speak and respond in an effective way. That's where the term 'framing' comes in.

Just like the frame around a picture, framing a topic means choosing what's in focus, what gets backgrounded, and what stays out of the frame entirely. It's a deliberate process and a powerful tool.

**Framing is how a story is told. Narrative is the bigger story being built.**

When trans people engage with media, we're not just sharing comments, stories, or data points. We are contributing to trans visibility. We're shaping how our lives and struggles are understood. Framing is about choices: which words are used, what's emphasised, what's left out. Narrative is what emerges when those choices repeat across stories, headlines, and platforms.

## QUICK NOTE ON TERMS:

**Audience:** *the people you're trying to reach.*

**Message:** *what you want them to understand, feel, or remember.*

**Story:** *how you bring that message to life, often through personal or relatable examples.*

**Framing:** *how you position your story so it lands in today's world.*

**Narrative:** *the larger story your message contributes to — the storyline that shapes public thinking over time.*

## How to frame effectively? Ask yourself (and your collaborators):

- What is the purpose of this communication? What do we want to change?
- Who is the audience, and what do they know and think about the topic? Be realistic about their knowledge and values — empathy is the key.
- Which main message do I want to highlight? Follow the rule: one communication = one key message. Do not overcrowd the communication: all the additional information should support and highlight it, not distract the audience from the main message.
- Is it accessible? Be realistic about the level of nuance accessible for the audience, and avoid too specific information, professional acronyms, etc (unless your defined audience is professionals).

**Call for collective support.** Before an interview, consider your peers and trusted allies, discuss the media opportunity with them, and ask for their advice. You might also want to organise a small group gathering or chat. This will not only enrich your perspective and answers but also support you emotionally and strengthen bonds within your community through mutual care.

**Research the context and audience.** Do a quick desk research on the same topic in the same outlet. Check out their social media and look at the profiles of people commenting on their content. Research and brainstorm alone or with a fellow activist.

**Sometimes we want to reach the movable middle — the people who aren't yet sure what to think, but who can be persuaded — instead of just talking to our allies, our opponents, or a vague 'general public'. These people might not have a clear opinion on the topic, but they're potentially open to perceiving and acknowledging 'good points' from others.**

**Centre shared rights and humanity.** Speak to the shared value and belief, apply to the vision of the future we all, as humans, want to see in the world. Appeal to common social, moral and language that would most likely meet people where they are. We all have fundamental human rights such as freedom of expression, movement, rights to education, health, and work, and we all need access to enjoy them.

**Have the data ready**, for example, explore the TGEU's [Trans Rights Index and Map](#) or dive into the [Fundamental Rights Agency's](#) latest reports. It will help you feel more confident and grounded in research. Mentioning a number or fact will also help you strengthen your story and effectively request a quote from a journalist for a fact check (don't use the word approval with journalists!).

**Don't rely on data alone.** Personal, real-life storytelling that embodies a shared value is often the most effective approach. Tell stories your audience can connect with and bring in a human element — whether it's your own experience, something from the community, or a broader social dynamic. No real-life story to share? Use a realistic scenario (like trying to get through airport passport control with documents that don't match your gender expression — a reality many trans people face). That said, don't feel pressured to share personal stories. Your expertise is valid on its own. You can also draw powerful stories from research, data, or patterns you've observed in your work.

**Be precise and use language that meets people where they are.** Avoid abstract, theoretical language. Yes, it often feels safer and 'more serious' to talk with a tone of voice of a professional spokesperson or politician, and for some audiences it is the only appropriate language. But this is media work, not advocacy in the legal spaces. The key messaging challenge is to strike a balance between precision, clarity, and simplicity. Consider how you and others speak in real life and adjust your language. Recognise and value that your experiences as a marginalised person give you unique and valid insight, but remember — this is a media intervention, not your one chance to articulate the most radical position possible.

**Be cautious with myth-busting.** Be equipped with knowledge and the best way to address the harmful myths about trans people<sup>2</sup>. But be aware that myth-busting itself is not the most efficient strategy, and addressing strong stereotypes can backfire. When we repeat claims we don't believe in or agree with, we risk strengthening these claims in our audience's mind, just as it is impossible to follow the command 'don't think of an elephant'<sup>3</sup>. Again, focus on related shared human values, vision of the future, and real-life storytelling.

**Think twice when sharing names.** It is strategically helpful to name the hostile actors and opponents as specifically as possible, but first, make sure to be mindful of your safety, especially when sharing your name openly, and have a safety plan at hand<sup>4</sup>. Never share names or contact details of your community members and allies before getting their consent.

**Give your notes another look and define three key points.** Focus on three things you want your audience to remember or understand. Prioritise short key messages to stay focused. These key points should be clear, concrete, and easy for you to repeat.

**Build up your confidence.** Give yourself time to rehearse the key points and possible answers in front of the mirror or a smartphone, a laptop camera or a voice recorder. This rehearsal will show you which sentences need to be simplified and what the tempo is for you to speak most comfortably. Learning the key points by heart will help you feel more grounded during the interview.

**Take good care of yourself!** Be mindful of your emotional state and capacities when accepting an interview invitation. Participating in interviews can be emotionally demanding and exhausting. Reminder: you can always suggest sharing written answers so you have more time to prepare and reflect on your answers. Even for the video interviews, pre-recording yourself at home and sharing the video, if needed, might be an option to discuss with a journalist.



*"Typically, I would also seek to have a chat upfront with the interviewer if that's possible; that helps me to feel more comfortable right from the beginning of the interview."*

**Sophie Rutard** (she/her), Germany  
Org manager, Speaker, TGEU member

**Create a safe setup.** If it's a video interview, choose a quiet spot where you feel secure. Turn off notifications, and use a neutral or blurred background to minimise distractions.

## During and after the interview

**Agree on terminology.** Make sure the words and definitions you use are clear, respectful, and consistent — especially when it comes to identities, legal terms, or medical language. You can refer to a glossary, such as the one in TGEU's [Trans Media Guide](#) or from the [Trans Journalists Association](#).

**Stay grounded.** Before and during the interview, check in with yourself. Notice where your body makes contact with the chair or ground. Breathe — slow, deep belly breaths. There's no rush. You can pause, recenter, and continue.



*"It's important to feel strong and confident during interviews and, therefore, keep my impostor syndrome under control. Otherwise, the journalist's questions can steer you in the wrong direction, and you may end up frustrated with how the final piece turns out."*

**Sophie Rutard** (she/her), Germany  
Org manager, Speaker, TGEU member

**Respect your own boundaries.** Say clearly if there's anything you don't want to talk about. You are not obliged to answer every question — especially if you're unsure, lack data, or simply don't want to. You can refer to open sources, suggest following up later, or dismiss the topic entirely. You're also allowed to stop talks in once you made your point, or even politely wrap up the whole interview if needed.

**Remember that you're in control.** This is your story and your expertise. Be clear if you are sharing something off the record. Ask if you can see the quotes they plan to use or the final text. While many outlets won't share full drafts due to editorial policy, it's always worth asking. Use data points — they provide you with additional opportunity to request your quote for fact-checking.



*"My worst experience was with a journalist fishing for trauma: 'I doubt anyone uses the correct pronoun, how does that feel?' or 'You look thin, do you have an eating disorder?' You don't have to engage with that — it's okay to walk away from the conversation."*

**Oliver Jähnke** (he/him), Sweden  
Trans activist, TGEU member

**Ask about next steps.** Planned timeline for publication, any editorial process, or a follow up from either side with further questions or fact-checks.

## SELF-CARE CHECKUP

- Why am I choosing to do this interview – is it because I want to or feel obliged to? Am I okay with this topic area?
- Is now a good time for me to be doing an interview? How do I feel right now?
- What nice thing will I do for myself immediately after the interview?
- What will happen if this interview goes viral and is shared across the internet?
- Who will I call for support if I need to at any point?
- Ask a friend to watch/listen to your interview and give you positive feedback.
- Get a friend to review the comments on an article or on social media. Avoid reading any negative ones.
- People getting in touch after an interview to share their story can be moving and overwhelming – consider skimming messages or not reading them. Have a ‘thank you’ message ready.
- Have offline conversations with loved ones.
- Eat enough food, drink plenty of water, breathe deeply. Dress comfortably.
- Give yourself a break from the topic and do something completely different.

## Continued media work

If your capacity allows, it's worth continuing your work with the media in a consistent and proactive way. The previous section already explored how to refine your message. This next step is about maintaining those efforts over time — refining your media relationships and finding new ways to amplify your advocacy work and stories of your community.

**Keep tracking media** mentions of your work using tools like Google News and Google Alerts. Search Reddit and utilise AI tools for media monitoring and trend analysis on social media (Perplexity, or even Grok if you need to scan the context on X).

**Build a basic journalist database** — even a simple spreadsheet with names, links, and notes about your interactions goes a long way. This will help you keep the knowledge in one place, follow up more easily, and prepare for future pitching. When you identify media allies (well-informed journalists or editors who “get” the topic), treat them as collaborators — share relevant updates, offer context and your perspective. Ask for their input so they feel valued and motivated to further support your work. Good media work is not just about getting coverage, but about building relationships rooted in mutual understanding and trust.



*“If a journalist is doing good work, let them know! Supporting or even creating awards for friendly professionals can boost their visibility — and show there’s something to gain from covering trans issues well.”*

**Miguel Vieito Villar** (he/him), Galizia (Spain)  
Practising lawyer, TGEU member

## Reaching out to the media

Maybe you’ve got a timely update, a new piece of research, or a lived experience, or a comment on a legislation change that needs to be heard, and you want to reach beyond your own or your group’s social media channels. This is where active pitching comes in. It’s more demanding, but worth trying to help you bring your voice into wider conversations. With time and practice, this will strengthen your advocacy and build a network of media professionals and allies.

As always, your story is the centre. Use your framing tools: what’s the message? Who is the audience? What are your three key points? Bring that clarity into the pitch from the start.



*“Doing any kind of public speaking — even on unrelated topics you care about — helps build your personal capacity to represent. That experience will strengthen your voice and presence in your activist work.”*

**Sophie Rutard** (she/her), Germany  
Org manager, Speaker, TGEU member



## Writing your pitch or press release

Once you're clear on your framing, message, and audience, it's time to put it into writing. Whether you're sending a short pitch email or a longer press release, your goal is to spark interest, offer clarity, and make it easy for a journalist to follow up and put your story into the immediate media context.

**Start with the pitch.** A short, direct message is often more effective than a long attachment.

**Subject line:** Make it timely and relevant — ideally with a hook ("New report on trans healthcare access in Germany" or "Queer organisers respond to hate crime spike").

**Opening line:** Say who you are and why you're reaching out — keep it simple and human.

**Why now? Briefly state the context:** a new law, breaking news, an upcoming event, or an anniversary.

**Your angle:** Outline your message or point of view in one or two sentences, or simply your three key talking points.

**Offer something specific, or even exclusive (they love it!):** a quote, access to a speaker, an interview, or an embargoed report.

**Close clearly:** Share your contact details, availability, and any relevant links or attachments.

Keep your pitch under 300 words if possible. Use bullet points if needed. You're not writing the whole article — you're inviting a journalist into the story.



*"Don't be afraid of making mistakes — working through them together helps us grow and get better at what we do."*

**Ali Malikov** (they/them), Azerbaijan  
Trans activist, TGEU member

**If a press release fits better**, especially for formal or organisational updates, here's a simple structure:

**Headline** – clear and newsy, no jargon or acronyms. Think like a journalist who want people to click on it.

**Date & location** – e.g. Berlin, 2 September 2025.

**Lead paragraph** – who, what, where, when, why. Get the essentials in early.

**Second paragraph** – provide key context. Refer back to your core message and audience framing.

**Quote** – include one or two from people directly involved (e.g. organiser, impacted person, expert). Keep them readable and impactful — not too long or generic. A quote in a press release is often a good slot to add more human touch or stronger language than the press release body. Feel free to draft the quote for your group's leader so they can simply refine and strengthen it.

**Background info** – add any relevant links, data, or past coverage.

**Contact details** – full name, role, phone/email, and social handles if relevant.

**Boilerplate** – a short 2–3 sentence description of your organisation or initiative at the very end.

Make it easy to use: Send the text in the body of the email, not just as an attachment. You can also paste it into a Google Doc and include the link in case they want to copy/paste.

Finally, follow up once if needed — a short, polite nudge after 1–2 days is totally fine.

## Managing expectations

There are a myriad of things we can't control in media work.

Be mindful of your own expectations. Editorial processes are often a black box even for those inside the media industry. Interviews can be cut down to a few seconds or a single quote. Entire pieces that took a lot of work may be postponed or dropped altogether due to breaking news, editorial agenda<sup>5</sup>, or a shift in priorities or the dynamic news context.



*"Don't be afraid to send your press releases or reports — even if you send 25, 30, or 35 without a single response, maybe the 26th, 31st, or 36th will do the job. The reasons behind a publication vary a lot; for example, if you send on the day of a big football game, even great news might not get published, but at quieter times, the media may be eager to publish almost anything, even if it's outside their usual focus."*

**Miguel Vieito Villar** (he/him), Galizia (Spain)  
Practising lawyer, TGEU member

This can feel disappointing, and that's valid. But even if a piece doesn't air or run, it's rarely wasted time. You've clarified your message, practised your framing, and built a connection. These efforts often pay off later, when the journalist reaches out again or when you're better prepared for the next opportunity.

Stay focused on what you can control: clarity, consistency, and care in how you show up.

## DIY and collaborative media

**Consider your social media channels as owned media and develop them as sources of trustworthy, community-backed information.** Build a content source that blends personal stories, political messaging, and relevant data. You won't compete with major media brands, and you don't need to: periodical posting can help establish your organisation's or personal voice, and amplify the voices of those you want to support.

**Collaborate on media projects.** Opportunities for co-creation — whether through joint statements, podcasts, zines, video projects, or simple collaborative

posts on social media with cross-tagging — broaden your reach, empower your community, and ultimately help counter dominant narratives. These collaborations can strengthen alliances and increase the reach of your message across multiple audiences.



*Today, what matters most is having a digital piece that can be easily shared on social media, not necessarily a traditional news report.*

**Miguel Vieito Villar** (he/him), Galizia (Spain)  
Practising lawyer, TGEU member

## Diving deeper

Explore these publications and search for additional guidelines and media training resources, particularly those designed explicitly for LGBT activists. Organisations like EDMO, ILGA-Europe, GLAAD, Trans Journalists Association, and All Out offer excellent training, guides and toolkits for engaging with media safely and effectively.

1. *Trans Media Guide: A community-informed, inclusive guide for journalists, editors & content creators*
2. *Messages that build support for transgender rights: A toolkit for effective communication strategies*
3. *Trans rights are human rights: dismantling misconceptions about gender, gender identity, and the human rights of trans people*
4. *Communications toolkit: Campaigning for trans rights*
5. *Supporting those who speak up for trans rights: safety and security toolkits*
6. *Framing Equality Toolkit*
7. *Trans justice: A messaging guide*
8. *Divide and rule: How the 'culture wars' are a reactionary backlash constructed to distract us, and how to respond*
9. *The Trans Journalists Association's stylebook and coverage guide*

# ***PART 2.***

## ***RESISTING THE NOISE: MEDIA LITERACY AND DIGITAL WELLBEING***



**Remember: most media in today's attention economy is designed to grab and hold our focus.**

Intense emotions, especially negative ones like fear, outrage, or despair, are the easiest way to do that. Algorithms reward engagement at any cost, it's the bread and butter of modern media. This creates an overwhelming, often harmful informational environment, especially for those of us who are already navigating additional marginalisations, grief, or burnout.

**Your lived experience gives you a sharp lens, very sensitive to how power operates. But that insight can also make you more vulnerable to being exposed to triggering or manipulative content. This section offers tips on how to build your own media hygiene and digital self-defence routines. Setting boundaries and recognising manipulation will help you protect your energy levels and stay grounded.**



*"Self-care is resistance: remember that rest is part of the work. Staying well is a powerful way to resist burnout."*

**Basira Paigham** (they/them), Afghanistan/Germany  
Advisor and Outreach Coordinator, Rainbow Afghanistan,  
TGEU member

## Checking the bias

Start by paying attention to the structures behind the message: Who created this? What are they trying to achieve, and for whom? Notice the techniques being used — the choice of words, the imagery, the tone — and how they make you feel. Ask yourself what's being left out: Which perspectives are missing? What's being taken for granted? Who is assumed to be the audience?

Often, what goes unsaid is just as revealing as what's made visible. Recognising these patterns helps resist manipulation, along with resources like [Media Bias/Fact Check](#) and [AllSides](#) that help identify political biases and the accuracy of specific outlets.



*"Even with lots of media experience, trans rights coverage can still feel emotionally challenging — but over time, getting used to working with media and reading it critically can help you handle it better."*

**Ali Malikov** (they/them), Azerbaijan  
Trans activist, TGEU member

## Challenging the algorithm

It's important to understand how algorithms (and the people who build them) shape our experience of the online world. Algorithms influence what content we see on websites and apps, including social media, news feeds, and search engines. Because most platforms make money from advertising, they're designed to keep our attention for as long as possible<sup>6</sup>. That means showing us content we're likely to click on, react to, or share — not necessarily what's accurate, diverse, or balanced.

Sometimes, this means prioritising posts from people or outlets you already follow. But algorithms can just as easily amplify misinformation (inaccurate content) or even disinformation: false content deliberately designed to manipulate or provoke. This kind of content often spreads quickly because it triggers strong emotions like outrage, fear, or shock. It's worth asking: who benefits from that?

What you see online isn't random, and it's not the same as what others see. From search results to video recommendations, algorithms tailor content to keep us engaged — but they can also trap us in an 'information bubble' or 'echo chamber', where we're exposed to the same perspectives repeatedly, while others are automatically filtered out.



*Follow media, groups, and individuals who provide balanced, constructive, and hopeful content alongside advocacy. Avoid sources that thrive on outrage or trauma.*

**Basira Paigham** (they/them), Afghanistan/Germany  
Advisor and Outreach Coordinator, Rainbow Afghanistan,  
TGEU member

### TIPS TO CHALLENGE THE ALGORITHM:

- *Don't trust something just because it's going viral. Read the full story, not just the headline.*
- *Remember: algorithms show you what you're likely to want, not what's true. Pause before sharing or engaging.*
- *Ask: What's missing here? Who benefits from this message?*
- *Seek out multiple, trusted sources, especially ones that challenge your usual views.*

- *Document and report discriminatory, harmful, or false content.*
- *Support and amplify authentic and nuanced content from within your community.*
- *Be mindful of your digital footprints. The more you tap, click, and share, the more the algorithm learns about your preferences — and reinforces them. Try consciously varying what you engage with to “teach” the algorithm that you want a broader range.*
- *Use privacy-focused browsers like Mozilla Firefox: These often track you less and personalise less aggressively, helping to break free from algorithmically filtered bubbles.*
- *Regularly clear your browsing history and cookies: This can help disrupt some forms of personalisation by resetting the profile an algorithm has built about you<sup>7</sup>.*

## Staying connected with what’s real

**Staying informed** doesn’t have to come at the cost of your wellbeing. A steady routine and mindful digital hygiene can make a real difference. This might mean avoiding feeds during the first two hours after waking, turning off notifications from social and news apps, or simply pausing to ask yourself why you’re choosing to engage with potentially triggering content at any given moment.

**Curating your feeds matters too.** Follow affirming, community-based accounts, and mute or block sources of hate or misinformation to make your media environment more manageable. You might also try switching to daily or weekly news digests instead of checking the news throughout the day — a dedicated timespace for news will help you stay grounded. Longer “media breaks” can also help, especially when paired with positive activities or time spent with others.



*“Fill your feed with positive news by following activists who focus on trans joy, and make space for your moments of joy, while also allowing yourself to feel grief and fear when they come.”*

**Oliver Jähnke** (he/him), Sweden  
Trans activist, TGEU member



## Mutual and self-care

When things feel heavy, seek out safe spaces to talk: no one has to process it all alone. Create a network of trustworthy friends who will listen to you and offer support when you're feeling down about the news. Stay connected offline and give yourself permission to disengage from the news — your energy matters. If you need to stay online, consider what brings you joy, such as exploring [r/TransPositive](#), a wholesome and uplifting Reddit space.

When anxiety takes over and your thoughts spin like a carousel, grounding yourself in your body can really help. Meditation and yin yoga are powerful tools—they slow your breath, calm your nervous system, and help you reconnect with the present moment. Even just 10 minutes can make a difference. Before and after engaging with news, take a moment to check in with how you feel. Journaling or even a short voice memo can help release the emotional weight.



*"When reading the news feels overwhelming, focus on actionable ways to fight back — such as donating or joining an advocacy group — but also set limits on how much you read and actively balance it with things that ground you, like love, friendship, or music."*

**Sophie Rutard** (she/her), Germany  
Org manager, Speaker, TGEU member

Movement is another great way to release stress. Whether it's going for a run, a swim, or a long walk in nature, being physically active can clear your head and ease tension. If you prefer privacy or don't like training with others, there are plenty of apps that guide you through workouts at home. Sometimes video games offer the escape and emotional reset you need. Whatever path you take, you deserve peace and pleasure. Try things out and find what works for you.

**Not every headline needs your attention. Protecting your mental health and nurturing your community connections are not just valid choices — they're essential. And when possible, share the good: stories of joy, care, and collective wins.**

## TGEU MEMBERS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME TO REACH OUT FOR SUPPORT

— whether you're responding to a press request, looking to amplify your voice or campaign in the media, or want to brainstorm strategy and framing. We're here for you: [comms@tgeu.org](mailto:comms@tgeu.org)



*Stay connected with fellow activists or support groups who understand the emotional toll of this work. Sometimes, just having someone to talk to who “gets it” can make a huge difference.*

**Basira Paigham** (they/them), Afghanistan/Germany  
Advisor and Outreach Coordinator, Rainbow Afghanistan,  
TGEU member

# ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> This section, as well as the Self-care checkup, is inspired and partially based on: On Road Media. Better Stories: How to support people with first-hand experience to do great media interviews, and NEON and Align. [\*Divide and rule: How the 'culture wars' are a reactionary backlash constructed to distract us, and how to respond.\*](#)

<sup>2</sup> Elena Blackmore and Bec Sanderson. [\*Framing Equality Toolkit by ILGA-Europe & PIRC.\*](#)

<sup>3</sup> Learn more: [\*GATE, ILGA-Europe, and TGEU. Trans Rights are Human Rights: Dismantling misconceptions about gender, gender identity, and the human rights of trans people.\*](#)

<sup>4</sup> NEON, All About Trans/On Road Media, and PIRC. [\*Trans justice: A messaging guide.\*](#)

<sup>5</sup> Learn more: TGEU. [\*Supporting those who speak up for trans rights: safety and security toolkits.\*](#)

<sup>6</sup> On Road Media. Better Stories: How to support people with first-hand experience to do great media interviews.

<sup>7</sup> This section is based on: EDMO and Desinfocheck. [\*Be online smart.\*](#)

<sup>8</sup> This section is based on materials from [\*Tactical Tech.\*](#)

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