



Emily Lavinia masterclass - follow-on activity

Thanks for joining me for my masterclass with Just Like Us.

Staying safe and feeling your most confident when online isn't always easy, but practicing **mindfulness** and **familiarising yourself with the Community Guidelines** of social media can help.

Below are some exercises and resources to help you **make the most** of your online presence, while **maintaining your mental wellbeing**.

Mindfulness Exercise #1

There are no wrong answers in this exercise, but it provides a good opportunity to think about where **your personal boundaries** lie and what you're comfortable sharing about yourself online.

Write down a list of your authentic qualities – the things you like about yourself, maybe things you dislike, things that make you feel vulnerable and things you're proud of. The true qualities that make you who you are. The real you.



Grab a pen and a piece of paper. You could use your phone for this if you'd rather keep your lists private. However, it's sometimes more effective to find a notebook and do this exercise physically on a regular basis. This way, you can track how your online persona and your confidence evolves.

Next, make two separate lists:

- **one list** of the **authentic qualities** you think **are ok to share** on social media.

- **one list** of the **authentic qualities** you think **are better to keep private**.

You can also **make a list of platforms** – TikTok, Tumblr, Instagram etc. – and **add a platform next to each authentic quality**. For example, I do share information about my personal experiences on Instagram but I wouldn't share this on Facebook, where my family and people I went to school with follow me. My platform for LGBT stories is on Instagram and that's where I feel safe.

Mindfulness Exercise #2

This exercise is useful if you've received negative comments or seen something that has made you feel anxious, upset or attacked. First, **delete the comment** so that it's out of sight. You can also **block the account** that posted the comment or content. This is an exercise in **self care**.



In my masterclass I talk about the 'de-platforming' debate – the idea that everyone deserves free speech but that some people use their platforms for inciting hate speech. Some believe these people should not be given a platform. **You are entitled to block, report and delete accounts like this to protect yourself and others**. It's important that you **do not engage** with these accounts.

Next, follow these steps:

- **Close your eyes** and **visualise** yourself inside a circle with you at the centre
- Breathe in and out calmly and imagine **the people closest to you**. The people you love, your supporters and your cheerleaders. Imagine these people standing around you, all holding hands, facing you.
- Behind these people, imagine your **other friends**. Perhaps **family members, mentors** or **teachers**. These people are holding hands and facing you also.
- Behind these people, is another circle of the many **people you know**. You might see them day to day, perhaps at school, perhaps elsewhere.
- Beyond this circle are your **heroes**. People you admire, **LGBT+ advocates, actors, singers, social media influencers, writers**. In a large ring, holding hands and facing you. **This is your network**.

Behind these people are the trolls, the haters, the people who use their platforms to be unkind. **Visualise the circles of your supporters blocking them out**. You can't see beyond the people who love you. You can barely hear anyone outside of the first two

circles as everyone raises you up with kind voices and encouraging words. **You're safe within your community.**

Take a few more deep breaths and **focus on this image in your mind.** Feel your power. **When you feel calm, open your eyes and carry on with your day.** Those negative messages can't reach you.

Resources and Instagram accounts to follow

- [@theangelinos](#) – my favourite LGBT+ content creators based in the USA
- [@whatwegandidnext](#) – a couple who create lifestyle content together
- [@jamie_windust](#) – non-binary activist and editor of [@fruitcakemagazine](#)
- [@ellessechar](#) – activist and editor of [@girlswillbeboys](#)
- [@livslittle](#) – writer and founder/CEO of [@galdemzine](#)
- [@lesbianrepresentation](#) – an inspiring lesbian visibility page
- [@outmagazine](#) – the IG page for [Out Magazine](#)
- [@theadvocatemag](#) – the IG page for [Advocate Magazine](#)
- [@divamagazine](#) – the IG page for [Diva Magazine](#)
- [@thefemalelead society](#) – a schools network for girls changing the world
- [@i_weigh](#) – inclusive community founded by Jameela Jamil
- [@aceandboogie](#) – my Instagram.