

How to help someone who self harms:

It can be scary if someone you know confides in you and tells you they are self-harming or wants to self-harm. It is ok to experience lots of different emotions.

Things to try and remember which might help:

*Try to listen to them without judgment don't minimize their feelings.

*Try to get them to seek help; GP, A&E, support groups, crisis centers' etc.

*Talk with them and finding out why they might be self harming (there are sometimes many reasons and this can be confusing for the person to try and pick one reason) you could try suggesting distraction/coping techniques but bare in mind this isn't going to be a magical instant solution.

*Validate and acknowledge their feelings

*Don't tell them to "just stop", if they could they would but its not that easy but there is help out there.

Seek support for yourself, you can't solve their problems but you can help them feel they are not alone. You also need to look after yourself as it can feel overwhelming, talking to someone you trust could help you and your friend/relative.

Useful Contacts

Samaritans (24/7): 116 123

SANeline (4.30pm – 10.30pm) :0300 304 7000.

CASS (Self injury helpline for Women):0808 800 8088 FREE Tuesday to Thursday evenings from 7-9.30pm

PorthEden Redruth (Crisis Café drop in sessions – Mon, Wed, Fri 6.30 – 10pm):
<https://portheden.org> - 07754 222488

Valued Lives Redruth (Out of hours Crisis support – Short notice appointments 7 days a week):
www.valuedlives.co.uk 01209 901438

Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM) 0800 58 58 58

Phone Apps/Websites



What's Up?



Calm Harm



Booster Buddy

Free, anonymous and confidential online text chat with trained listeners, online therapists & counsellors:
<https://www.7cups.com/>

Self harm

– a leaflet created through personal experience

What is Self-harm?

Self-harm is when you deliberately hurt yourself or inflict pain on yourself, the most known form is 'cutting' but there are many ways people self-harm.

Why someone may self-harm

To physically show what they are feeling inside but can't express

Biochemistry side- releases endorphins

To help deal with powerful negative emotions

To punish oneself

To try and gain control of oneself

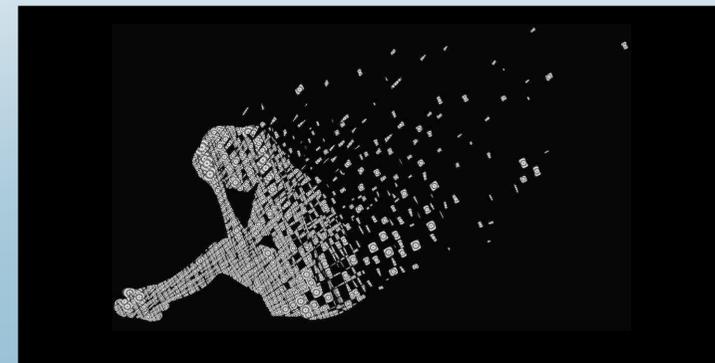
Addiction/habit

Wanting to cry but feeling emotionally numb and withdrawn - a way of letting it out

To try to block off emotions

To try and hide your pain from others

Unrealistic beliefs



Myth: People self-harm by cutting are trying to commit suicide

Fact: “for some, the physical pain of self-harm reassures them they are still alive- this might be because they are experiencing emotional numbness or feel disconnected from the world around them, of at the other end of the spectrum, feeling more connected and alone than they did previously.”
(selfharm.co.uk)

Myth: If the wounds aren't bad, it's not that serious.

Fact: The severity of a person's wounds has very little to do with how much he or she may be suffering. Don't assume that because the wounds or injuries are minor, there's nothing to worry about.
(www.helpguide.org)

Myth: People who cut and self-injure are trying to get attention.

Fact: The painful truth is that people who self-harm generally harm themselves in secret. They aren't trying to manipulate others or draw attention to themselves. In fact, shame and fear can make it very difficult to come forward and ask for help. (www.helpguide.org)

“Even if it were about attention, what is so awful for that person that hurting themselves has become the best way to be noticed? Perhaps we need to stop seeing ‘attention-seeking’ as being something negative, and actually accept that every one of us needs and enjoys attention of some kind or another at times. Attention is about connecting with others and feeling as though we matter – this isn't negative in itself.”
(selfharm.co.uk)

Coping Techniques and alternative ideas

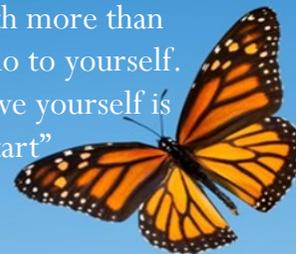
It is helpful to try and identify the reason/s as to why someone may want to self harm, by doing this it is then easier to try and find an alternative to match it.

For example, if the reason why someone wanted to self harm was because it was a way of expressing the pain on the inside that they felt they couldn't talk about then pinning a rubber band on their wrist may not be the most helpful coping technique for them at the time but suggestions like journaling, drawing, painting, collaging etc may help.

Here is a fantastic website which has a whole load of different alternatives to self harm depending on how you are feeling:

<http://becausewecandothis.together.tumblr.com/alternativesforselfharm>

“You are worth more than the harm you do to yourself. Learning to love yourself is the start”



Self soothe / Coping box

Self-harm urges can come like waves- out of nowhere they can appear or they can gradually build up. What is important is to TRY to remember that it will pass and if you can find something to do to distract yourself it can help delay this urge and it can help to reduce the risk and intensity of self-harm, maybe even enabling them to ride the wave and not self harm.

The idea of a sensory bag is to provide comfort and distraction, which could also help ease self-harm; urges, anxiety and can promote mindfulness

Here is a website that you can get more ideas from:

<https://myjourneywithdepression.wordpress.com/2014/02/02/how-to-create-a-self-harm-safety-box/>

