

What is Self-Harm?



**It can be upsetting and potentially triggering
to read information about how to self-harm.**

**If you are feeling vulnerable at the moment,
you should speak to someone at school, at
home or on www.kooth.com**



Self-harm is when you hurt yourself on purpose. You usually do it because something else feels wrong. It seems like the only way to let those feelings out. If you self-harm it is usually as a result of another problem. It can happen if you are feeling anxious, depressed, stressed or bullied and feel you don't have any other way of dealing with these issues.

Looking After Yourself

Sometimes it can feel like we don't have any control over what we think or how we feel. But by making simple changes to our lives, we can make a real difference to our mental health. Feeling good is worth investing in – and the best thing is that these simple tips won't cost you much time or money.

Asking for Help

We all need a bit of help sometimes. But it can be difficult to know how, or who to ask. Sometimes it feels like no-one understands why you self-harm, but lots more people today know about what the condition really means. **People who care about you will want to help you. You just have to ask.**

Who can you ask for help?

Decide who is the best person to talk to. Who would you feel most comfortable talking to? Many of us prefer talking to family or friends, but you may prefer to talk to a teacher or a helpline. You can ask for help from:

Your family – parents or carers, siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles or cousins

Your GP - Self-harm can be a sign of other disorders that you need help with such as depression or anxiety and they can refer you to the right people for treatment.

Your school - Speak to a member of staff who you get on best with or go to the Student Support Centre.

You can also receive on-line counselling by creating a user ID on www.kooth.com

There are also some useful websites which can help.

<https://www.childline.org.uk/toolbox/games/>

www.youngminds.org.uk for advice and information on all mental health/ emotional issues.

Samaritans – a 24-hour service offering confidential support to anyone who is in crisis. www.samaritans.org

Get Connected is a free confidential helpline for young people under 25 who need help and don't know where to turn. The service is available 365 days a year and young people can contact them by phone, web chat, email, text message or use the online directory, Web help 24/7 www.getconnected.org.uk

A Guide to Rough Times is a fantastic website. It covers just about everything that you could be worried about and points you in the right direction. www.cpfth.nhs.uk/GTTRT/A-guide-to-rough-times.htm

Try downloading these apps:

The free Get Connected app Headspace

Mindfulness techniques have benefits for mood, attention and general coping skills for the ups and downs of life. This simple app gives you ten short meditations, four brief videos explaining what meditation is and a series of facts and questions. Keep track of how many of the meditations you have listened to and try ten minutes a day for ten days. This website is good too – www.getsomeheadspace.com

MindShift

This is a good app if you are feeling anxious. It will explain what anxiety is and some helpful strategies to try and tackle your anxiety.

Calm

This is another free app which is based around meditation.

On-Line Clips

Young Minds

This clip is called "Positive Rush" and is about a girl called Sarah. Sarah started self-harming when her parents split up. After a successful therapy, she now gets positive kicks from dancing and volunteering for the youth charity. YoungMinds. www.youtube/watch?v=0IZVIOszOGU

Animated Minds

These are a series of short, animated documentaries which use real testimony from people who have experiences different forms of mental distress. www.animatedminds.com
Writer and illustrator Matthew Johnstone tells the story of overcoming the "Black dog of depression."
www.youtube.com/watch?v=XICrnilQGYc

When You Have Decided To Get Help:

Pick your time and place. Choose a good time and somewhere you feel comfortable, so you can talk uninterrupted in a relaxed environment.

What outcome do you want? *Do you simply want to be listened to? Would you like more practical or emotional support?* Be clear what you want to achieve.

Make notes. Write down the things you want to say so you remember to include them in your conversation.

Explain how you feel and what support you would like. The other person will then know how to help you.

It may be difficult to talk about your feelings. But “a problem shared is a problem halved” and you’ll probably feel better simply talking to someone. When you’re feeling down, it’s important that you are not struggling on your own. Just ask for some help

Why not try

Using a worry journal when you feel like self-harming. Do not go over and over worries in your head. Write them down, draw them and let it go. Discuss what you have written the next day with someone you find helpful to talk to. You should tell your worries to an adult at home or in school. They can help.

You could also use ice cubes or bite on a lemon. They give us that shock factor.

You could draw a butterfly where you’d normally hurt yourself. The aim is to keep the butterfly alive. If you self-harm, you ‘kill’ the butterfly. You can also let it fade over time so that the butterfly can fly away.

Try exercising. Burn off your frustrations.

List good things about yourself.

Why not try

Learning to value yourself and perceive yourself positively makes a big difference to your experience in life.

Practice speaking and thinking more kindly about yourself, in the same way as you would about a loved one.

Replace repetitive mental urges to hurt yourself with empowered thoughts – for example, ‘Even though I feel like cutting, I am going to find another way to express how upset I feel.’

Learn to be assertive by expressing boundaries of what does and doesn’t feel right for you in your life.

*“Today you are you. That is truer than true. There is no-one alive
who is youer than you.”*

Dr Seuss