

FEELING GUILTY OR LONELY ?

- Congratulate yourself on each minute you go without self harming
- Draw or paint
- Look at the sky, watch the cloud shapes
- Instead of punishing yourself by self harming, punish yourself by NOT self harming
- Call a friend and ask for company
- Give someone a hug with a smile
- Put a face mask on
- Watch a favourite TV show or movie
- Eat something ridiculously sweet
- Remember a happy moment and relive it for a while in your head
- Treat yourself to some chocolate
- Try to imagine the future and plan things you want to do
- Look at things that are special to you
- Compliment someone else
- Watch fish
- YouTube funny videos!
- Play with a pet
- Have or give a massage
- Light a candle and watch the flame (but please be careful)
- Allow yourself to cry; crying is a healthy release of emotion
- Accept a gift from a friend
- Carry tokens to remind you of peaceful comforting things/people
- Curl up under a blanket with hot cocoa and a good book
- Make affirmation tapes inside you that are good, kind, gentle
(Sometimes you can do this by writing down the negative thoughts and then physically re-writing them into positive messages)
- Make a tray of special treats and tuck yourself into bed with it
- Write words in the sane for them to be washed away.

JUST BIZARRE !

At the very least, they'll make you laugh!

- Crawl on all fours and bark like a dog or another animal
- Run around outside screaming
- Laugh for no reason whatsoever
- Fantasise winning a million pounds, and plan how you would spend it in just 100 days
- Make funny faces in a mirror
- Throw a temper-tantrum
- Without turning orange, self tan
- Put faces on apples, oranges, or other sorts of food
- Name all of the animals you would see in a zoo
- Blow soap bubbles
- Pull weeds in the garden
- Hug yourself

REMEMBER !

Stopping self-harming behavior isn't easy, it'll take time.
You will have setbacks—don't punish yourself.
You can reduce your self harm and it will get easier.
The key is to get help...
..from friends, family or professionals

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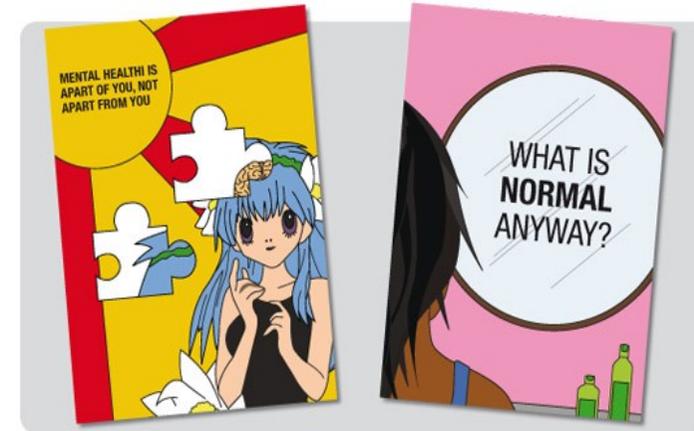
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Y P I M

YOUNG PEOPLE IN MIND

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



ALTERNATIVES TO SELF HARM

Self harm is a coping strategy for dealing with difficult thoughts or feelings.

There are many forms, and it can become addictive.

Stopping isn't easy...this leaflet gives some alternatives to try when you feel the urge to self harm.

ANGRY OR RESTLESS ?

- Scribble on photos of people in magazines
- Viciously stab an orange
- Throw an apple/pair of socks against the wall
- Have a pillow fight with the wall
- Scream very loudly
- Tear apart newspapers, photos, or magazines
- Go to the gym, dance, exercise
- Listen to music and sing along loudly
- Draw a picture of what is making you angry
- Beat up a stuffed bear
- Pop bubble wrap
- Splatter paint
- Scribble on a piece of paper until the whole page is black
- Filling a piece of paper with drawing cross hatches
- Throw darts at a dartboard
- Go for a run
- Write your feelings on paper then rip it up
- Build a fort of pillows and then destroy it
- Throw ice cubes at the bathtub wall, at a tree, etc
- Slash an empty plastic bottle/piece of heavy cardboard /old shirt
- Make a soft cloth doll to represent the things you are angry at; cut and tear it instead of yourself
- Flatten aluminium cans for recycling, seeing how fast you can go
- On a sketch or photo of yourself, mark in red ink what you want to do. Cut and tear the picture
- Break sticks
- Stomp around in heavy shoes
- Blow up balloons and pop them
- Yell at what you are breaking and tell it why you are angry
- The Calm Jar (Fill a jam jar or similar with coloured water and glitter. When feeling upset or angry you can shake it to disturb the glitter and focus on that until the glitter settles.)

NEED TO FEEL SOMETHING ?

- Hold ice in your hands, against your arm, or in your mouth
- Run your hands under freezing cold water
- Snap a rubber band or hair band against your wrist
- Clap your hands until it stings
- Wax your legs
- Drink freezing cold water
- Splash your face with cold water
- Put PVA glue on your hands then peel it off
- Massage where you want to hurt yourself
- Take a hot shower/bath
- Jump up and down to get some sensation in your feet
- Write or paint on yourself
- Arm wrestle with a member of your family
- Take a cold bath
- Bite into a hot pepper or chew a piece of ginger root
- Rub liniment under your nose
- Put tiger balm on the places you want to cut.
(Tiger balm is a muscle relaxant cream that induces a tingly sensation. You can find it in most health food stores)

NEED TO SEE A "WOUND" ?

- Draw on yourself with a red pen or body paint
- Cover yourself with plasters where you want to cut
- Give yourself a henna or fake tattoo
- Make "wounds " with makeup, like lipstick
- Take a small bottle of liquid red food colouring and warm it slightly by dropping it into a cup of hot water for a few minutes. Uncap the bottle and press its tip against the place you want to cut. Draw the bottle in a cutting motion while squeezing it slightly to let the food colour trickle out.
- Draw on the areas you want to cut using ice that you've made by dropping six or seven drops of red food colour into each of the ice -cube tray wells.
- 'Cut' your skin with nail polish (it feels cold, but it's hard to get off)
- Use red food colouring on your skin

NEED DISTRACTING?

- Count up to ten getting louder until you are screaming
- Count up to 500 or 1000
- Make as many words out of your full name as possible
- Count ceiling tiles or lights
- Colour coordinate your wardrobe
- Call a friend
- Alphabetize your CDs or books
- Make origami to occupy your hands
- Dress up or try on old clothes
- Write out lyrics to your favourite song
- Make a paper chain counting the minutes, hours or days you've been self harm free using coloured paper
- Memorize a poem with meaning
- Learn to swear in another language
- Look up words in a dictionary
- Go outside and watch the clouds roll by
- Make your own dance routine
- Trace your hand on a piece of paper; on your thumb, write something you like to look at; on your index finger, write something you like to touch; on your middle finger, write your favourite scent; on your ring finger, write something you like the taste of; on your pinkie finger, write something you like to listen to; on your palm, write something you like about you
- Get out on your own, get away from the stress
- Make a scrapbook
- Choose a random object, like a paper clip, and try to list 30 different uses for it
- Pick a subject and research it on the web - alternatively, pick something to research and then keep clicking on links, trying to get as far away from the original topic as you can.
- Re-organise your room
- Play the A-Z game (Pick a category ie. Animals, and think of an animal for every letter of the alphabet
- Have a lush warm bubble bath with candles!