

Do you feel like hurting yourself?

Self-harm is any act of self-poisoning or self-injury regardless of apparent motivation or level of suicidal intent.

Understanding self harm

Self harm can include things like cutting, burning, biting, poisoning, or hitting yourself. People of all ages and backgrounds might self-harm, and the reasons that they do this can be different for everyone. It could be because they feel overwhelmed by sadness, anger, or frustration, and they don't know how to express or deal with those feelings, or to feel in control when other parts of life feel out of control. Some people also see it as a way of punishing themselves for their feelings, or as a way of showing others how they feel when they aren't able to explain it, but it's important to remember that self-harm is not about attention seeking, it's a sign that you're struggling and need support.

While self-harm might seem like a way to feel better in the moment, it doesn't actually solve the problem and can leave you feeling worse over time, or even stuck in a cycle where self-harm is the only way of coping. If it feels impossible to stop right now, make sure that you are being as safe as possible, talk to someone about what is happening, and be patient with yourself. Start creating a safety plan that can help you identify triggers and find what works for you to reduce the urge.

Through practice and support, you can develop healthier ways to cope with difficult feelings and break the cycle. There are always people ready to support you, whether it's a friend, family member, or professional.

Helpful tools

Self-care - Self-harm often happens when emotions feel too much to handle, so it's important to take care of your overall wellbeing. Try to get enough sleep, eat well, and find activities that bring you comfort, even if it is small steps.

Get creative - Journaling, creating some art, making or listening to music, or even scribbling and doodling can all help act as an outlet for expression.

Practice mindfulness - Try grounding activities, controlled breathing or visualisation tools. Or stimulate your senses by holding an ice cube or cold stone.

Use alternatives - While it might feel difficult, there are other ways to express and manage your emotions without harming yourself. For example, try squeezing a stress ball, drawing on your skin with a red marker (without actually cutting), or snapping a rubber band on your wrist, tasting Tabasco sauce, lemon wedges, and intensely sour sweets, holding ice cubes or putting on headphones and listening to fast, upbeat music. These can help provide some relief without causing damage.

Talk to someone - Let someone you trust know what you're going through so they can help support you. Professional help, like therapy, can also guide you in managing the feelings that lead to self-harm and offer ways to work through it safely.

Other resources

- [Calm Harm App](#)
- [Mind - Information for 11-18 year olds on coping with self-harm](#)
- [Samaritans - Contact Us](#)
- [Kooth](#)
- [Talk/Isle Listen](#)
- Crisis support - If you or someone you know is in need of immediate support, DO NOT WAIT. Please contact Manx Care's 24-hour Crisis Team on 01624 642860 or the Emergency Services on 999.
- If you have safeguarding concerns regarding:
 - a Child, please contact 01624 686179 (office hours) or 01624 631212 (out of hours – Police Headquarters) and ask for the duty social worker.
 - an Adult, please contact 01624 685969 (office hours) or 01624 650000 (out of hours – Nobles Hospital Switchboard) and ask for the duty social worker.