

cutting and self-harm prevention

Cutting/self-harm can be a way some people try to cope with pain, upsetting problems, or strong emotions.

It can be a way to feel in control during a time they feel helpless.

It may be a way to express pain they have no word for.

It can be a way to feel something (even if it's pain) at a time when they're having trouble feeling anything at all.

The relief from self-harm does not last long. It can be followed quickly by feelings of shame or guilt. It can become addictive. It can be a source of serious injury.

Being able to specifically focus on other outlets, either physical or mental can help in times of stress. Below are some ideas to focus on instead of self-harming.

EXPRESSING PAIN/INTENSE EMOTIONS:

- Start a journal/blog/vlog
- Write a story or poetry
- Compose music
- Paint/draw/color
- Play a musical instrument
- Scribble on paper
- Create something in clay
- Sing
- Talk to yourself
- Build/craft something

RELEASING TENSION OR VENT ANGER:

- Exercise
- Punch a pillow
- Throw socks
- Use a stress ball
- Make noise/scream as loud as you can (in a safe or private space)
- Squeeze clay
- Stomp your boots
- Instead of cutting, cover yourself with band-aids
- Write the names of special people or thoughts on your arms
- Tear up an old newspaper
- Draw slash lines on paper

CALMING/SOOTHING YOURSELF:

- Take a warm shower or warm bath
- Pet or cuddle a pet
- Wrap yourself in a blanket
- Massage your neck, hands or feet
- Listen to calming music
- Hug a pillow or stuffed animal
- Paint your nails
- Watch a favorite movie
- Re-read a favorite book
- Go for a walk
- People watch
- Count ceiling tiles or lights
- Meditate

EXTERNAL IDEAS TO FOCUS ON THAT CAN INSPIRE YOU:

- Perform one act of kindness
- Volunteer somewhere
- Pay someone a compliment
- Pay it forward
- Read a new book

FEELINGS OF NUMBNESS OR DISCONNECTION:

- Talk to friend
- Take a COLD shower
- Hold ice in the crook of your leg or arm
- Chew on something strong like chili, lemon or peppermint
- Snap a rubber band on your wrist for short period of time
- Focus deeply on a piece of chocolate as you eat it
- Blow up a balloon and pop it
- Connect online with help forums
- Concentrate on things that have made you happy in the past

**LGBT National
Hotline:**

888-843-4564

Youth Talkline:

800-246-7743

Senior Hotline:

888-234-7243

**Coming Out Support
Hotline:**

888-688-5428



lgbt national help center

www.LGBThotline.org