

This is a personal pain that can help a caller cope when they are having thoughts of suicide or self-harm. We can walk through it with them, or it's available on our website at: [www: LGBThotline.org/self-harm-prevention](http://www:LGBThotline.org/self-harm-prevention), a caller can print it out, or make notes and place in a safe space.

This is a personal safety plan you can work on as a way to cope when you are having thoughts of suicide or self-harm. You can print it out, or write down your ideas on a piece of paper, then place it in a safe place you will remember. If you are beginning to feel you are having thoughts of self harming yourself or suicide you can read what you wrote now, and it may help in a time of need.

Step 1: What are some things that you can recognize in yourself which can remind you to use this safety plan?

For example, any thoughts, emotions, or behaviors that may be a warning that a crisis is developing?

Examples: Racing thoughts, feeling hopeless, sad, depressed, or thoughts of cutting, stressful events.

Step 2. What can you do to make sure that your environment is safe?

Examples: removing any weapons, pills or other objects which could pose a health or safety risk, holding a soft or harmless object to keep hands busy.

Step 3. What are some internal coping strategies that you can use?

Examples: meditate, exercise, listen to music, watch a movie/tv show/youtube, writing, etc.

Step 4. Who are some people or organizations you know that you can call to either talk with or to distract you?

Examples: The LGBT National Hotline, Suicide Prevention Lifeline, Emergency services, 988, therapist, school counselor, trusted friend or family member.

Suicide Hotline: 1-800-SUICIDE (800-784-2433) or 988		
LGBT National Hotline: 888-843-4564		
Trevor Project: 866-488-7386		

Step 5. What are some safe places that you can go get help or to distract you?

Examples: **Distracting safe place:** coffee shop, library, mall, taking a walk (in a safe place/time)

Places to get help: Local LGBTQ community center, support group, social group, etc.



Some people cut or self harm to try to cope with pain or strong emotions, intense pressure or upsetting problems. It may be a way for them to feel in control in a situation they feel helpless in. It can be a way to express pain that can't put into words. It can be a way to feel something (even if it's pain) at a time they are having trouble being able to feel anything at all.

The relief that comes from self-harm does not last long. It can quickly be followed by feelings like guilt or shame. It can become addictive.
It's possible to hurt yourself badly.

Finding coping techniques or finding outlets can help in times a person feels the need to cut. Below are ideas to focus on instead of self-harm.

To express 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

To releases 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 fin band aids
- Write the names of special people or thoughts on your arms
- Tear up an old newspaper

-Draw slash lines on paper

To calm or sooth 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 of 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
- Medicate

Because you feel disconnected/numb:

- 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
- (continued in next column)

- 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

Things that inspire you and to focus on instead of self-harm:

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

You know yourself best, take a moment to breathe & think about things that may have helped in the past to calm down. Write them down so you can remember them when you are feeling stressed.