

Here are some other sources of support:

Samaritans, tel: 08457 909090, website: www.samaritans.org

NHS Direct, tel: 0845 4647, website: www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

Childline, tel: 0800 1111, website: www.childline.org.uk

NSPCC, tel: 0808 800 5000, website: www.nspcc.org.uk

BEAT, tel: 0845 634 7650, website: www.b-eat.co.uk

Young Carers Net, website: www.youngcarers.net



Monster artworks by billiambabble

nshn

The National Self Harm Network



Advice for young people

Contact us at:

NSHN, Po Box 7264, Nottingham NG1 6WJ

Email: info@nshn.co.uk

Website & Support Forum: www.nshn.co.uk

A registered charity number: 1106336

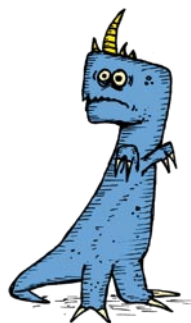
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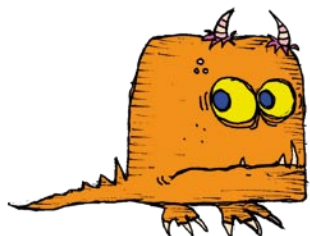


Everyday we encounter a number of thoughts, feelings and emotions. Sometimes there are situations in our lives that make these thoughts, feelings and emotions negative and at times distressing. These situations could be linked to difficulties in family life, upsetting relationships, troubled friendships, exam stress, and bullying behaviour, among others.



Being able to show how we feel, share our thoughts, express emotions and talk about things that are troubling us is not always easy. Holding in powerful thoughts, feelings and emotions such as guilt, anger, frustration, and self hate can be too much to bear. At times people may turn to themselves and their own bodies to express how they feel. This is usually called self harm which means anything we do to ourselves knowing it could cause damage and pain.

Self harm can become a way for people to cope with things that are happening and how those things make them feel. Once this is the case it can be hard to feel that anything other than self harm will help. But there are other ways to cope and other ways to express thoughts, feelings and emotions that are healthier and more effective.



Whilst the urges to self harm can be very strong distracting yourself from these thoughts can help to keep you occupied whilst the strong feelings pass. Here are a few ideas that might help: (For a full list see the NSHN distraction sheets. You can also download these at www.nshn.co.uk)

- Listen to music
- Painting, drawing, colouring
- Sport/Exercise (Football, running, walking, skipping)
- Telephone a friend or helpline
- Popping bubble wrap
- Draw on yourself with a non-permanent red marker pen.

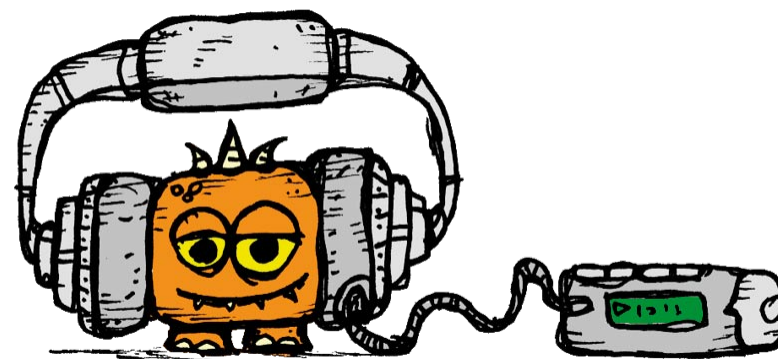


Talking to someone can really help but can be very hard to do. If the things we need to say are very personal or scary it can be difficult to find someone we trust. Friends can be good to talk to but at times it is easier to talk to someone who is less personally involved in your life. Teachers, G.P's and counsellors can be good sources of support. Talking isn't the only way to say what you want to say and you could consider writing things down.



However if you are under the age of sixteen these people may not be able to keep everything you tell them confidential. If they feel you are a danger to yourself or to others, they may have to share the information with others. Often the people they may also tell can really be of help to you. If you are worried about them telling others it's an idea to ask what they may do before you say anything. Try not to let this put you off approaching them though as sometimes just starting a little general conversation can make you more confident to say more or approach other people you trust.

If you don't feel ready to talk then there are other ways through which you could express how you feel such as writing a diary, creative writing, poetry or art. Music can be a very helpful way to show how you feel. You could write a song yourself or find some lyrics that seem to say what you can't. You could also write about how you feel in an online forum, such as www.nshn.co.uk/forum Here you can be anonymous and share exactly how you feel and what you are thinking in a safe environment with people who understand and that may be going through the same as you.





Distractions that can help...

DISPLACEMENT

1. Drawing on yourself in red marker
2. Snapping an elastic band on your wrist
3. Putting on fake or henna tattoos and then peeling them off
4. Putting plasters or bandages on where you want to self-harm
5. Mix warm water and food colouring and put it on your skin
6. Make ice cubes with added red food colouring and rub them on where you want to self-harm
7. Squeezing ice cubes
8. Chewing leather
9. Use stage makeup to create fake injuries
10. Use skin coloured plasticine, smear it on your skin, cut into the plasticine (carefully) pour fake blood or food colouring into the fake cut.
11. Draw yourself or around your arm on a piece of paper, draw the harm you are imagining then destroy the picture
12. Take a photo of yourself when you are feeling upset, write all over it how you are feeling then destroy the picture.
13. Take a hot shower and use a good exfoliating body wash and a sponge or glove and scrub!
14. Draw over all your old scars, which will provide a repetitive action and hopefully will relieve urges.
15. Bite into a chilli

REINFORCING

1. Thinking about not wanting scars in the summer
2. Thinking about not wanting to go into hospital
3. Set yourself a target e.g. 10 minutes and promise yourself not to harm in this time, once you get to the 10 minute point, set a new target of 15 minutes and continue
4. Use a glowstick, when you feel the urge to harm, snap the glowstick to start it glowing tell yourself that you can't harm until it stops glowing. The glow will last for a few hours by which time your urges will hopefully have passed

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Email: info@nshn.co.uk
Website: www.nshn.co.uk
Forum: <http://www.nshn.co.uk/forum/index.php>



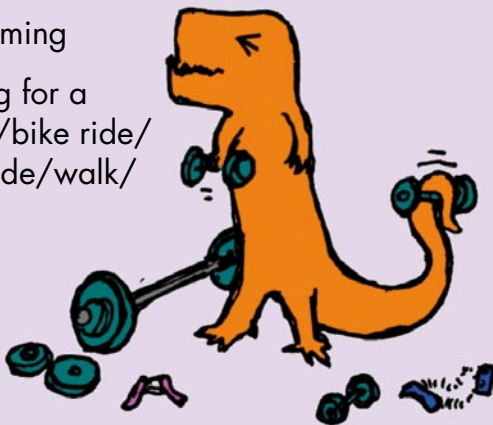
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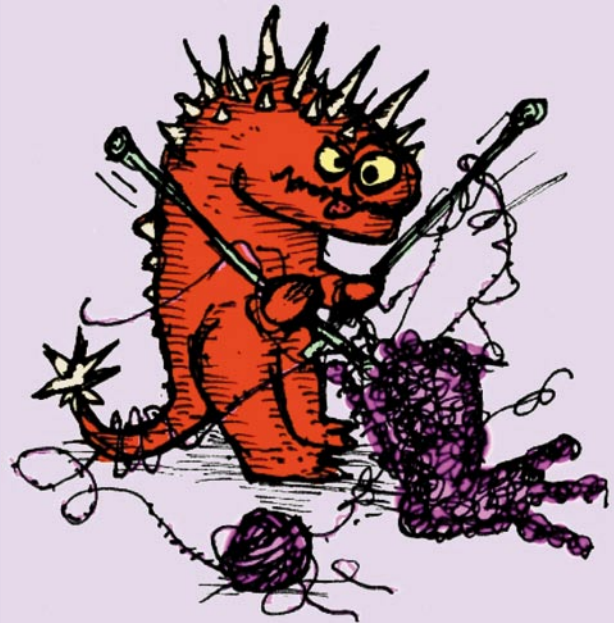
PHYSICAL

1. Exercise - Sit ups etc.
2. Going to the gym
3. Punching a punch bag
4. Having a pillow fight with the wall
5. Shouting and screaming
6. Ripping up paper into small pieces
7. Popping bubble wrap
8. Popping balloons
9. Playing with a stress ball
10. Plucking your eyebrows
11. Taking your anger out on a soft toy
12. Throwing socks against the wall
13. Dancing
14. Stamping your feet (with boots on)
15. Playing catch with a ball
16. Swimming
17. Going for a drive/bike ride/
bus ride/walk/
run



CREATIVE

1. Writing poetry, journals, letters, stories etc.
2. Doodling or scribbling on paper
3. Playing a musical instrument
4. Singing
5. Knitting
6. Sewing
7. Crocheting
8. Drawing or painting
9. Origami
10. Memorising poetry or song lyrics
11. Making a mix tape, compilation of your
favourite music



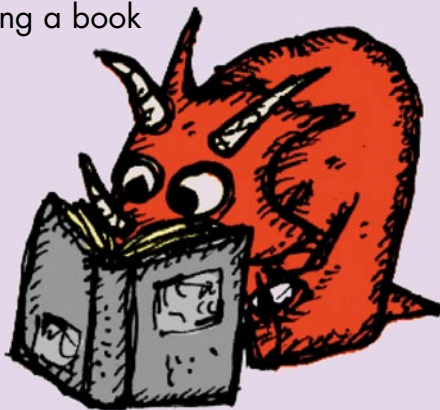
COMFORTING

1. Cuddling a soft toy/pillow
2. Allowing yourself to cry
3. Sleeping
4. Taking a shower or bath
5. Playing with a pet
6. Drinking hot chocolate
7. Wearing your pyjamas and watching daytime TV
8. Having a massage or massaging your own hands and feet



CONSTRUCTIVE

1. Doing school work, homework, paperwork
2. Writing a to do list
3. Untangling necklaces, string, wool
4. Organising your room, clothes photographs
5. Cleaning
6. Organising CD's, DVD's and books in genres, alphabetical and/or chronological order
7. Reading a book
8. Cooking, bake a cake or make cookies, meal
9. Calling a helpline, Samaritans, child line etc
10. Polishing furniture, jewellery
11. Posting on web forums/reply to posts
12. Writing a list of positive things in your life
13. Shredding
14. Dying hair
15. Painting your nails
16. Putting on false nails
17. Putting on fake tan
18. Stamping on cans for recycling (with sturdy shoes on)
19. Gardening



FUN

1. Watching your favourite TV show
2. Going to see a film, watching a DVD
3. Surf the internet
4. Listen to music, download new music
5. Dressing up, glamorous or silly
6. Using make up or face paints
7. Finger painting
8. Colouring in
9. Playing with play dough or modelling clay
10. Pop balloons
11. Jumping in puddles
12. Hunting for things on EBay
13. Planning an imaginary party
14. Looking for your perfect house in the paper
15. Write down your full name then make as many words out of it as possible
16. Counting anything, patterns on wallpaper, bricks on a wall, ceiling tiles
17. Playing computer games
18. Colouring or scribble over pretty women in magazines or cutting up magazines
19. Building things from Lego then destroy them and rebuild
20. Going to the zoo and renaming all the animals
21. Playing with a distraction toy such as a bedlam cube, geomag, or a tangle
22. Doing crosswords, word searches, suduko etc.
23. Naming all your soft toys
24. Play with a slinky
25. Going shopping to treat yourself



DISTRACTIONS WITH OTHERS

1. Generally being with other people
2. Phoning a friend
3. Helping someone else
4. Going to a public place
5. Visiting a friends
6. Hugs
7. Talking about your problems with someone close to you that knows what you are going through



INSPIRING

1. Looking up into the sky, cloud watching or star gazing
2. Watching a candle burning
3. Meditating
4. Picking an object a shell or rock for example and focusing on it very closely
5. Look at works of art
6. Watch fish, birds or butterflies
7. Yoga/Tai chi

