



Understanding Self-Harm

Information from the Intro to Understanding Self Harm 2 hour session

National Self-harm Registry for more information on statistics for suicide and self-harm visit: www.nsrif.ie

Resources from: www.healthpromotion.ie Available supports: www.yourmentalhealth.ie

G.P. – is the pathway to access more specialised services in mental health for adults and children Hospital Emergency Departments

Emergency Services – 999 or 112

Pieta Services – 24/7 FREEPHONE 1800 247 247 or text HELP to 51444

Samaritans – 24/7 FREEPHONE 116 123

Text Hello to 50808

YourMentalHealth – FREEPHONE Information Line – 1800 111 888

Alternatives to self-harm

- Mindful breathing
- Playing/Listening to music
- Physical exercise
- Talk with someone
- Cry it out
- Diary/Poetry/Draw/Paint
- Complimentary therapies
- 15 minute rule

Substitutes for self-harm

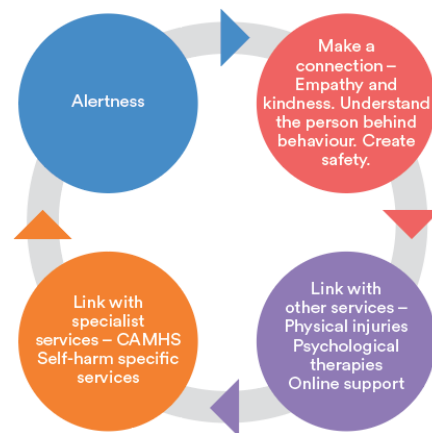
- Hold an ice cube, squeeze ice hard in your hand
- Have a cold shower
- Snap a rubber band on ones body

Source: (mental health foundation UK)

Functions of self-harm

Source Klonsky 2009, Franklin et al 2013, Voon et al 2014

- Relief of feelings: Expressing, externalising, distracting, numbing, calming
- Coping and crisis intervention
- Self-punishment: Atonement, washing/cutting out dirtiness or badness
- Control: Over own life/self, own anger, make unattractive to abuser
- Communication: To self or others, feelings or problems
- Comfort/Nurture: By self or others
- Confirmation of existence - feel real or alive
- Stop flashbacks
- Cleansing



1. Be Alert
2. Make a connection
3. Link with other Services G.P. etc
4. These will link with other specialist services i.e. MHS, CAMHS etc.

Helpful Responses

- Stay calm
- Listen & give time to the person
- Provide a safe environment
- Support decision-making
- Ensure good wound care in self-injury
- Respect cultural issues
- Offer Carer support
- Ensure Staff have knowledge of self-harm
- Nurture positive staff attitude

Adapted from the NICE Guidelines Service Users & Voluntary Groups

Other Resources: The Centre for Clinical Interventions Australia: <https://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/Resources/Looking-After-Yourself>

FREE LivingWorks START suicide alertness training for over 18's:

For additional information on the **90 minute free START suicide alertness session** contact:

The Local HSE Regional Resource Office for Suicide Prevention sp.enquiries@hse.ie