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# SELF-HARM

Practical Guidance

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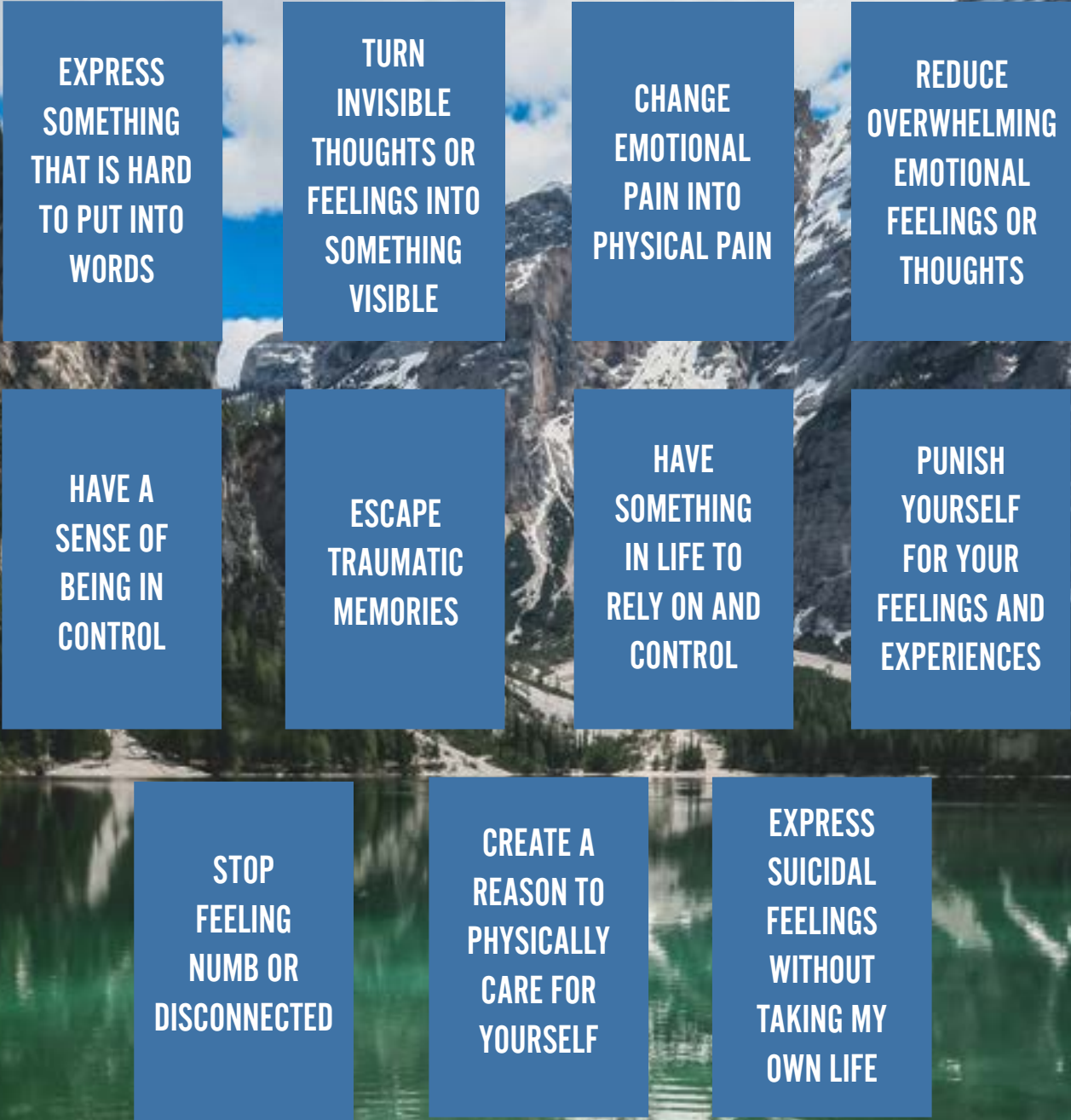
# WHAT IS SELF-HARM... AND WHY DO PEOPLE DO IT?

## WHAT IS SELF-HARM...

Self-harm is when somebody intentionally damages or injures their body. It's usually a way of coping with, or expressing difficult feelings or overwhelming emotional distress. It is more common than people might think. Although it is known that self-harm occurs more commonly in females, self-harm is experienced by both males and females. 10% of young people are reported to self-harm.

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/truth-about-self-harm>

## WHY DO PEOPLE SELF-HARM? People have explained self-harm as a way to...



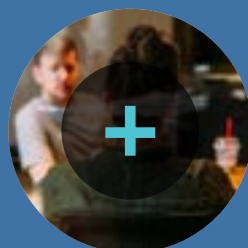
SELF-HARMING CAN RESULT IN A SHORT-TERM SENSE OF RELEASE, BUT THE CAUSE OF DISTRESS IS UNLIKELY TO GO AWAY. SELF-HARM CAN ALSO BRING UP VERY DIFFICULT EMOTIONS AND HAS THE POTENTIAL TO MAKE YOU FEEL WORSE.



## HOW CAN PEOPLE GET HELP FOR SELF-HARM?

SELF-HARM IS OFTEN AN INDICATION THAT A PERSON NEEDS HELP WHEN THEY DON'T KNOW WHERE ELSE TO TURN. IN SERIOUS AND UNTREATED CASES, SELF-HARM CAN ALSO INDICATE FEELINGS OF SUICIDE. THINGS THAT MIGHT HELP ARE:

### GETTING HELP



#### TALK

Look out for someone you can trust and talk to them. Share how you're feeling and explore other sources of support with them.



#### IT'S OK TO ASK

It's ok to seek help - self-harm is a lot more common than you might think and people are seeking help everyday.



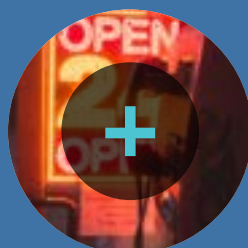
#### HEALTH WORKER

Understand that health workers are available to help. They see people who self-harm regularly and can help you develop a plan to manage your self-harm.



#### YOUR GP

Your GP is able to direct you to support close to home, if you feel able to speak to them.



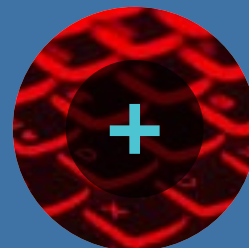
#### HELPLINES

Confidential helplines are available (see list at the end of this document). They can put you in touch with other people who have been in the same position.



#### WEB FORUMS

There are well managed self-harm forums offering support on the internet. Only use trusted sites (see the list at the end of this document).



#### WEB AWARE

Be aware that there is anonymous and often malicious content on the internet that plays on people's vulnerability and might actually encourage self-harm.



#### COPING

There are many different coping strategies to help with self-harm, and people out there to help you find the right one for you.



## WHAT PROFESSIONAL HELP IS AVAILABLE IF I WANT IT?

### WHAT COULD STOP YOU...

You might be scared of being seen as different from others.

Stigma is the single biggest barrier to seeking professional help.

Not feeling a sense of safety and trust when you are accessing support.

### REMEMBER...

...you are never alone.

Talk to a mate.

Ring a helpline.

Go online.

There are many organisations and resources that can help you professionally. These include:

**National Self-Harm Network** [www.nshn.co.uk](http://www.nshn.co.uk)

**Selfharm UK** [www.selfharm.co.uk](http://www.selfharm.co.uk)

**Mind** [www.mind.org.uk/information-support](http://www.mind.org.uk/information-support)

**NHS Self-Harm Support**  
[www.nhs.uk/conditions/self-harm/getting-help/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/self-harm/getting-help/)

**Papyrus Hopeline UK** 0800 068 41 41  
[www.papyrus-uk.org/self-injury-awareness-day/](http://www.papyrus-uk.org/self-injury-awareness-day/)

**The Truth About Self-Harm**

[www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/truth-about-self-harm](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/truth-about-self-harm)

**Samaritans** 116 123 (24 hours a day)

[www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/support-and-information/if-youre-having-difficult-time/if-you-want-self-harm/](http://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/support-and-information/if-youre-having-difficult-time/if-you-want-self-harm/)

**Young Minds Helpline** 0808 802 5544

Support for parents of young people who self-harm.

Young Minds parents' helpline (9.30am to 4pm on weekdays).