

Thank you very much  
for reading this



You will have your own emotions to deal with after you've read this. Give yourself time to process them.

If you wish to encourage more discussion with the person who gave you this leaflet try to remain calm, honest and supportive.

We are a U.K. based charity but all attempts are made to provide information that can be useful worldwide.

Our closed Facebook group is for anyone, anywhere who needs support.

If you need more information please visit our website

[www.battle-scars-self-harm.org.uk](http://www.battle-scars-self-harm.org.uk)

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I need to tell  
you...

[www.battle-scars-self-harm.org.uk](http://www.battle-scars-self-harm.org.uk)

[info@battle-scars-self-harm.org.uk](mailto:info@battle-scars-self-harm.org.uk)

# Please keep reading, this is important to me and I need you to understand

I need to tell you that I self-harm.

To the person handing this out: tick what applies to you:

- I self-harm to cope.
- I do not feel in control and that makes feel uncomfortable, trapped and frustrated.
- I do not self-harm to get attention.
- I do not self-harm to hurt or upset you.
- It helps me calm down. I use it to push my emotions aside when they're too hard to deal with.
- It doesn't mean I am suicidal.
- I do not know a better way to cope.
- I would rather not use it and I am trying to manage it.
- I don't use it all the time or as often as I want / need to. I do try to fight the urges but it can be extremely hard.

My other thoughts:

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*"I self harm to feel physical pain to stop the emotional pain"*

Facts about self-harm:

Many more people use this coping method than you might think. Self-harm does not discriminate, anybody can pick it up of any age, background, gender etc.

There are numerous methods of self-harm. It isn't only cutting. Overdosing, eating disorders and compulsive negative thinking are all self-harm.

Self-harm is addictive but unlike substance addiction its hold is almost completely psychological. It becomes a way of life and it's very hard to break this addiction because it requires major re-wiring of the brain.

People with Personality Disorders often self-harm. It's because they see the world as if through different colour tinted glasses and it's much scarier to them. They lack ways to deal with life and resort to self-harm to manage.

*"It relaxes me and chases away the voices"*

Some people hear voices when stressed which often tell them to hurt themselves. They cannot simply make these voices stop or easily ignore them.

People who do not self-harm will never be able to fully understand it and that is OK.

Dos and don'ts:

- It's OK to not know what to say, just listen.
- Accept the fact that I self-harm.
- Don't judge me, I feel bad enough already.
- Don't overreact. I need you to remain calm.

*"Self harm puts me back in control"*

- Possible indications that I'm experiencing self-harm urges: panic attack symptoms, difficulty paying attention, shaking, mood dropping, retreating inside, needing to be alone, manic behaviour, severe agitation, anger. Please talk to me - I may not be able to express myself - or stay with me even if I try to push you away. I will be scared.
- Don't make assumptions and jump to conclusions. Ask me direct questions and I'll do my best to give you direct answers.
- Don't ask, make me promise or threaten me to stop.
- Don't add more guilt, I already have enough.
- Help me distract myself. If distractions don't work and it's getting worse I may have to hurt myself. Let me do it while I still have some control over my actions.
- Be patient with me. It'll take time to be able to reach out and speak about this.
- Don't take my self-harm 'tools' away. In desperation I may use something that will cause me much more harm.
- Be there for me.