

What I'm trying to say really is don't stop trying, even if things are bad right now: please find someone who you trust and talk to them about it.

I used to wish that I didn't have my scars or mental health problems, but now I've learnt to live with them they are a part of me and make me who I am, I'm not ashamed of any of it.

Things will get better I promise and there are people there for you in the light and in the darkest of times, so talk to people and get help.

Useful contacts

SANE

Offer specialist emotional support and information to anyone affected by mental illness, including family, friends and carers.

Helpline: **0300 304 7000**
(Every day, 4.30pm-10.30pm)

Website: www.sane.org.uk

The Mix

Information and support for under 25s.

Helpline: **0808 808 4994**
(Every day, 11am-11pm)

Website: www.themix.org.uk

YoungMinds

Information for both parents and young people on child and adolescent mental health.

Parents' helpline: **0808 802 5544**
(Mon-Fri, 9.30am-4pm)

Website: www.youngminds.org.uk

stem4

The Old Town Hall
4 Queens Road
Wimbledon
London SW19 8YA

e: info@stem4.org.uk
stem4.org.uk

Registered Charity Number 1144506



Self-harm



stem4
stemming teenage mental illness
supporting teenage mental health

Self-harm

Key Facts:

Self-harm can:

- Be used to **communicate feelings** such as distress, confusion or anger
- Occur with a **mental illness** such as depression
- Become **habitual** in an unhealthy way

Why deal with self-harm?

Most people self-harm as a way of coping with problems, but this generally doesn't work because the solution is short-term and the problems don't go away. Self-harm as a behaviour also brings up difficult emotions such as feeling ashamed or different and this could make you feel worse.

It can become a habit that's hard to break; it carries risk of wound infection and can lead to permanent scars. It is very important to know how to look after your injuries and that you have access to first aid, including emergency contact numbers.



What can I try to do?

- Discuss your self-harm with a trusted adult or friend and set up a meeting with a professional who can help
- Visit your GP by phoning your local practice and booking an appointment (check if you can book it with their mental health lead). Go ready to discuss your concerns and the problems you are experiencing. Write things down if you think you will find it hard to speak. If you have a lot to discuss, book a double appointment
- Try and keep a diary of triggers to your self-harm and begin to understand the patterns
- Decide on an alternative way you could try and cope when faced with these triggers (for example, listen to a chosen playlist of music)
- Reduce easy access to what you use to self-harm
- Have the name of a 'go to' person in the first instance and also the names of a few people you could contact as a 'safety net'. Carry this list of contact numbers with you
- Keep cuts and wounds sterile. If in any doubt about safety, please tell someone, see your school nurse/first aider or your GP, or go to your nearest A&E department
- Shock can sometimes be experienced after self-harm. If your breathing is shallow, or faster, if you feel dizzy, weak or cold, ask someone to look after you

Calm Harm

- Try the **stem4 Calm Harm app**. This is not a substitute for treatment but it can help to break the pattern whilst you wait for treatment or alongside treatment
- Calm Harm is the first clinician-developed app to help manage self-harm
- Calm Harm follows the principles of Dialectic Behaviour Therapy (DBT)
- It is **FREE** to download from Apple Store and Google Play



bb It's great! I honestly didn't think this would work. But after trying it, my urge to self-harm started to decrease. And in all seriousness the app isn't the only thing that helped me. When I saw how many downloads there were on this app I immediately didn't feel as alone. This app has helped me so much and I'm glad I got it. **99**

