

You are in control, you make the choice

At the end of the 15 minutes check how you feel and make the choice about trying for another 15 minutes.

For the duration of this 15 minute period keep busy and try one of your distraction techniques.

15 minutes

"When the urge to self-harm comes upon you, check the time and tell yourself that you have felt the urge but you are going to choose to hold off of any self-harming behaviour for



Ride the wave with the 15 minute rule



For Safety Planning download the Calmharm App or scan the QR Code.

Safety Planning

Where to get help

Speak to
Someone

YOUNGmINDS

giveusashout.org

Text SHOUT to 85258 free, 24/7



breathingspace.scot

0800 83 85 87

SAMARITANS

samaritans.org

116 123



HEALTHIER MINDS Self-Harm Quick Reference Tool

Responding to Incidents of Self-Harm

Self-harm is **the act of deliberately hurting, injuring or poisoning oneself**. It can take a number of forms but all self-harm is a **sign of emotional distress**. Self-harm is predominantly accepted to be a **coping strategy for managing distressing or overwhelming thoughts, feelings and experiences**.

All self-harming behaviours or disclosures should be taken seriously and responded to sensitively and with care and compassion.

This tool is designed to be used by practitioners who have attended the Healthier Minds Self-Harm One Day Training Course.

Websites

Self-harm
Network
Scotland

[penumbra](https://penumbra.scot)

selfharmnetworkscotland.org.uk

HEADS ABOVE THE WAVES

hatw.co.uk

Apps



CALMHARM

Responding 1

1st Response

- Stop, breathe, stay calm and patient
- If harm has occurred – assess medical care need and provide First Aid as required
- Find somewhere quiet, calm & safe
- Clarify boundaries of confidentiality
- Focus on listening and be genuinely interested



What can help

- Responding sensitively and empathically
- Listening
- Considering that the self-harm is a coping mechanism to manage strong feelings
- Accepting the self-harm may continue for some time



What can hinder

- Telling them to stop
- Lecturing on the evils of self-harm
- Showing shock, panic or disgust
- Talking too much!
- Asking why?
- Asking them to consider the impact of their behaviour on others
- Attempting to fix the problem

Responding 2

Explore Benefits and Drawbacks

- acknowledge the thoughts and feelings
- repeat and reflect key thoughts and feelings
- use the same words as they do about the self-harming behaviours
- state that you understand why the person would self-harm – reflect back the triggers and consequence

“It sounds as if self-harming is helpful for you in some ways. Can you tell me how it feels afterwards for you?”

“It’s really understandable that you would try to cope in that way.”

“I wonder if there are any drawbacks to you cutting?”

“Are there times when you manage to cope without cutting?”

Cycle of self-harm

Trigger, situation or thought

Feelings of intense distress & emotional pain

Person self-harms

Temporary relief & calm returns

Feelings return feelings of guilt /anger situation remains unresolved

Harm Minimisation

- Respects that self-harm is a coping mechanism and that **just stopping is unrealistic**
- Creates the conditions for keeping the young person safe even while self-harming
- Requires shared understanding of how the self-harming behaviour helps them
- Promotes self-care and responsibility for wounds
- Advise regarding avoiding infection:
 - Using clean implements
 - Not using implements more than once
 - Not sharing implements
 - Maintaining a basic first aid kit
 - General hygiene
 - Dress wounds or seek medical help
- Consider rules such as
 - I won't cut until I have tried the 15 minute rule
 - I will read my safety plan when I feel the urge to cut

