CUTTING AND SELF HARM

Some people cut or self harm to try to cope with pain or strong emotions, intense pressure or upsetting problems. It may be a way for them to feel in control in a situation they feel helpless in. It can be a way to express pain that can’t put into words. It can be a way to feel something even if it’s pain at a time they are having trouble being able to feel anything at all.

The relief that comes from self harm does not last long. It can quickly be followed by feelings like guilt or shame. It can become addictive. It’s possible to hurt yourself badly.

Finding coping techniques or finding outlets can help in times a person

To express pain/intense emotions:
- Start a journal/blog/vlog
- Write a story or poetry
- Compose music
- Paint/draw/color
- Play a musical instrument
- Scribble on paper
- Create something in clay
- Sing
- Talk to yourself
- Build/craft something

To release tension or vent anger:
- Exercise
- Punch a pillow
- Throw socks
- Use a stress ball
- Make noise/scream as loud as you can (in a safe or private space)
- Squeeze clay
- Stomp your boots
- Instead of cutting, cover yourself in band aids
- Write the names of special people or thoughts on your arms
- Tear up an old newspaper
- Draw slash lines on paper

To calm or soothe yourself:
- Take a warm shower or warm bath
- Pet or cuddle a pet
- Wrap yourself in a blanket
- Massage your neck, hands or feet
- Listen to calming music
- Hug a pillow of stuffed animal
- Paint your nails
- Watch a favorite movie
- Re-read a favorite book
- Go for a walk
- People watch
- Count ceiling tiles or lights
- Medicate

Because you feel disconnected/numb:
- Talk to friend
- Take a COLD shower
- Hold ice in the crook of your leg or arm
- Chew on something strong like chili, lemon or peppermint
- Snap a rubber band on your wrist for short period of time
- Focus deeply on a piece of chocolate as you eat it
- Blow up a balloon and pop it
- Connect online with help forums
- Concentrate on things that have made you happy in the past

Things that inspire you and to focus on instead of self-harm:
- Perform one act of kindness
- Volunteer somewhere
- Pay someone a compliment
- Pay it forward
- Read a new book