

Self harm

Lighthouse aims to save lives and support those affected by suicide and self harm. We aim to:

- Offer support and advice to those bereaved through suicide.
- Increase the communities awareness around issues about suicide and self harm, with a view to reducing the stigma of suicide and encouraging people to seek help.
- Tell you about the places that offer help in your area. Provide information and advice.

What is Self-harm?

Regardless of age, sexuality, ethnicity or anything else it is important not to make assumptions about a person's reasons for self-harm. For each individual it will be a complex mix of factors, and the triggers may be different at different times. The most important thing is to start from what the person understands about their self-harm, be aware of potential factors and keep an open mind.

("Better services for people who self-harm"
Project 2006)

Reasons why People may Self-harm:

- Sexual Abuse
- Loneliness
- Low Self-worth
- Unable to talk to someone
- Gender Issues
- To avert suicide
- Drug misuse
- Survival Strategy
- Low Self-Esteem
- Death of a loved one
- Physical Abuse
- Alcohol Misuse
- Emotional Distress
- Anger
- Stress
- Weight Difficulties
- Memories
- Feeling Sad
- Emptiness
- Cultural factors
- Physical/psychological conditions

What to do if you are worried about someone...

Talk - use this opportunity to say you are here to listen calmly in order to connect to the person who is Self-Harming

Understand - it is important that your knowledge of Self-Harm is good as it makes talking much easier and you will be able to see different perspectives

Investigate - try and learn as much as you can about Self-Harm
Support - using your understanding, support the person caringly and safe guard yourself

Act normally - be yourself because people talk and express themselves more to the person they are talking to...so don't be too formal

Listen - Remember that the person you are talking to is divulging their personal thoughts, respect them for their honesty

Contact - make use of resources nearby
Encourage - try and establish if the person needs medical help, especially if you cannot provide it - GPs, community Groups or telephone help lines