

Alternatives to Self-harm - Distraction Techniques



EXPRESSING FEELINGS

- Scream as loud as you can
- HIT a cushion / punch bag /
- throw a cushion against a wall
- Smash a watermelon
- Kick a football against a wall
- Squeeze ice really hard
- Squeeze a stress ball
- Tear up a newspaper/phone directory
- Play loud music and dance energetically
- Draw on the place you want to cut with red marker pen, fake blood or watered down food colouring
- Spend some energy go for a walk, swim, go to the gym, ride a bike, or go running
- Write a list of your achievements
- Write a letter to yourself saying "I love myself because..."
- Make a list of things you are thankful for



CREATING A SAFE SPACE

Identify a safe place you can go to when you feel urges. This could be a corner of your room, a friend's house, etc.

Fill a box with items that comfort, distract, and soothe you. This might include:

Photos of loved ones

- Art supplies
- Puzzle books
- Fidget toys
- Soft blanket or socks
- Scented candle
- Comforting music playlist
- Notepad and pen



SOOTHING YOURSELF

- Have a warm bath or shower
- Use aromatherapy oils
- Eat a comforting snack
- Cuddle a teddy bear or pet
- Ask a friend for a hug
- Paint your nails or do your hair
- Have a cup of tea
- Rock or hug yourself
- Meditate or do yoga
- Listen to calming music



DISTRACTION

The 15 Minute Rule: When the urge arises, set a timer for 15 minutes and do something else. Often the urge will pass.

- Call a friend
- Watch a funny film
- Play a computer game
- Do a puzzle
- Read a book
- Take a bath or shower
- Listen to music
- Go for a walk
- Tidy your room
- Cook or bake something
- Play with a pet
- Mindfulness exercises (focus on your senses)



If you are using self-harm as a way to cope with your feelings, it's important that you talk to someone and seek help. Reach out and talk to a member of staff or an adult you trust.