



Alternatives that will give you a sensation (other than pain) without harming yourself:

- Hold ice in your hands, against your arm, or in your mouth
- Run your hands under freezing cold water
- Snap a rubber band or hair band against your wrist
- Clap your hands until it stings
- Wax your legs
- Drink freezing cold water
- Splash your face with cold water
- Put PVA/Elmer's glue on your hands then peel it off
- Massage where you want to hurt yourself
- Take a hot shower/bath
- Jump up and down to get some sensation in your feet
- Write or paint on yourself

Young People who self-harm also suggest the following alternative coping strategies for when they are feeling upset/distressed:

- Scribble on photos of people in magazines
- Viciously stab an orange
- Throw an apple/pair of socks against the wall
- Have a pillow fight with the wall
- Scream very loudly
- Tear apart newspapers, photos, or magazines
- Go to the gym, dance, exercise
- Listen to music and sing along loudly
- Draw a picture of what is making you angry
- Beat up a stuffed bear
- Pop bubble wrap
- Pop balloons
- Splatter paint
- Scribble on a piece of paper until the whole page is black
- Filling a piece of paper with drawing cross hatches
- Throw darts at a dartboard
- Go for a run
- Write your feelings on paper then rip it up
- Use stress relievers
- Build a fort of pillows and then destroy it
- Throw ice cubes at the bathtub wall, at a tree, etc
- Get out a fine tooth comb and vigorously brush the fur of a stuffed animal (but use gentle vigor)

- Slash an empty plastic soda bottle or a piece of heavy cardboard or an old shirt or sock
- Make a soft cloth doll to represent the things you are angry at; cut and tear it instead of yourself
- Flatten aluminium cans for recycling, seeing how fast you can go
- On a sketch or photo of yourself, mark in red ink what you want to do. Cut and tear the picture
- Break sticks
- Cut up fruits
- Make yourself as comfortable as possible
- Stomp around in heavy shoes
- Play handball or tennis
- Yell at what you are breaking and tell it why you are angry, hurt, upset, etc.
- Buy a cheap plate and decorate it with markers, stickers, cut outs from magazines, words, images, what ever that expresses your pain and sadness and when you're done, smash it. (Please be careful when doing this)
- The Calm Jar (Fill a mason jar or similar with coloured water and glitter. When feeling upset or angry you can shake it to disturb the glitter and focus on that until the glitter settles.)
- Blow up a balloon and pop it

Helplines:

- **The Samaritans** – Provide a 24-hour service offering confidential emotional support to anyone who is in crisis. <https://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan/>
- **Self Injury Support (Formally, Bristol Crisis Service for Women)**
www.selfinjurysupport.org.uk
- **Harmless** www.harmless.org.uk
- **Papyrus** www.papyrus-uk.org; Helpline: 0800 684141 Mon- Fri, 10am-5pm then 7pm-10pm; weekends 2-5pm. Resources and support for those dealing with suicide and emotional distress in teenagers and young adults
- **Childline** - Provides a free and confidential telephone service for children. Helpline: 0800 1111.
- **YoungMinds** - Provides information and advice on child mental health issue and a Parents' Helpline: 0800 802 5544
- **Firstsigns** - An online, user-lead voluntary organisation to raise awareness about self-injury and provide information and support to people of all ages affected by self-injury.
- **National Self-Harm Network** - UK charity offering support, advice and advocacy services to people affected by self harm directly or in a care role.
- **C.A.L.M. - Campaign Against Living Miserably** www.thecalmzone.net
Helpline: 0800 585858 5pm-midnight Tues to Saturday
Support and resources for young men experiencing depression and distress
- **Crossroads: caring for carers** www.crossroads.org.uk
Helpline: 0845 450 0350. Support, information and resources for informal carers