Help for Self-Harm. Figure out why you cut

Learn to manage overwhelming stress and emotions

Understanding why you cut or self-harm is a vital first step toward your recovery. If you can figure out what function your self-injury serves, you can learn other ways to get those needs met—which in turn can reduce your desire to hurt yourself.

Identify your self-harm triggers


Once you learn to recognize the feelings that trigger your need to self-injure, you can start developing healthier alternatives.

Get in touch with your feelings

If you’re having a hard time pinpointing the feelings that trigger your urge to cut, you may need to work on your emotional awareness. Emotional awareness means knowing what you are feeling and why. It’s the ability to identify and express what you are feeling from moment to moment and to understand the connection between your feelings and your actions.

The idea of paying attention to your feelings—rather than numbing them or releasing them through self-harm—may sound frightening to you. You may be afraid that you’ll get overwhelmed or be stuck with the pain. But the truth is that emotions quickly come and go if you let them. If you don’t try to fight, judge, or beat yourself up over the feeling, you’ll find that it soon fades, replaced by another emotion. It’s only when you obsess over the feeling that it persists.