



Why do I self-harm?



There are always reasons **why** people self-harm. These reasons vary from person to person and won't be the same for everyone.

Some people harm their own bodies because it makes emotional pain more bearable.

But others might self-harm because it allows them to express their feelings.

No one reason is more valid than any other. Everyone who self-harms is going through a struggle of their own.

Some people might self-harm because it makes them feel calm.

But others might do it because it makes them feel alive or excited.

When people start to try and understand why they self-harm they sometimes have to face lots of painful feelings and experiences - this can take time, and it's important to be **kind** to yourself when you are doing this.

Give yourself credit for having the **courage** to start thinking about this issue. Just by choosing to read this worksheet you've taken an important first step. Make sure you recognise this!



To start understanding **why** you self harm and **what** you get from doing it, you could try asking yourself some of the questions on the next page.



Understanding your self-harm.



Explore your [feelings](#), whatever they are, and don't worry too much about trying to find the "right" answer.

Start by thinking about just one question a week.

Take your time with this!

You might want to write your answers in your diary or [Rainbow Journal](#).

Make sure that you spend some time doing **relaxing** things that you enjoy as well!



How did self-harm help me to cope or survive in the past?



When did I first start harming myself? What was going on in my life at that time?



How does self-harm help me to cope or survive now?



How do I feel before I hurt myself?



What feelings might I be expressing or avoiding through self-harm?



How do I feel after I hurt myself?



What might I find difficult, frightening or overwhelming without self-harm?



What situations in my life can I list that make me want to self-harm?



What might I find easier without self-harm, and what would I feel happier about?



Give yourself some **appreciation** for having the courage to explore something that is possibly complex and painful.



If you ever want some **support** to help you go through this process then you can text or email TESS and let us know how you are getting on.



We are here to support you with how you are feeling and what you are understanding about yourself.