



Let's talk about self-harm

Jenny Groves – Founder & CEO

Long lived experience of self-harm

Experience as a parent of a child who self-harmed

Battle Scars is a Leeds-based charity in England & Wales (since 2018) and in Scotland (2023) made up of 5 trustees, 7 staff (3.5 FTE) and 62 volunteers.

Please take part and ask questions.

This is your opportunity to ask those awkward questions about self-harm.





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100% Survivor led & run

Our services:

- Virtual adult peer support groups - "standard", "Inbetweeners" & social (UK-wide)
- Face to face adult peer support groups (Leeds)
- Face to face 16-25's peer support group (Leeds)
- Online (Facebook) peer support group – all ages (worldwide)
- Virtual support groups for family & friends of people of any age who self-harm (UK-wide)
- Training for professionals about self-harm or eating disorders
- FRESH: phone service, requires self or professional referral (West Yorkshire)
- 12-step addiction programme & virtual support group (worldwide)
- Under 18's workshops (Leeds)
- School assemblies about self-harm or eating disorders (Leeds)
- Discovery Journal for 10-17 year-olds
- Awareness raising sessions (UK-wide)
- Online resources on our website
- Printed resources

Setting up the Onward Mental Health Hub in Leeds with more services available

Myths & realities

Please use the chat and put myth/m or reality/r or not sure/ns



TRIGGER WARNING

Some of the things we'll discuss may be triggering to some.
Please stay after the session if you need some support.

We are not recording this session to maintain a level of confidentiality

Self-harm means cutting

Myth?
Reality?
Not sure?



MYTH

Self-harm takes many forms:

- Scratching
 - Hitting
 - Burning
 - Overdosing
 - self-poisoning
 - Overexercising
 - Overworking
 - Disordered eating
 - Allowing oneself to become dehydrated
 - Excessively taking risks
 - Obsessive negative thinking
 - Self-neglect
 - Sabotaging opportunities
 - Sabotaging relationships
 - Forming similar damaging relationships
- Etc.

Only teenage girls
self-harm

Myth?
Reality?
Not sure?



MYTH

People of all ages and
genders self-harm

This myth stops adults and
anybody not identifying as
a girl reaching out for
support

Self-harm is an
attention-seeking
method

Myth?
Reality?
Not sure?



Let's talk about self-harm

MYTH

If someone is using
self-harm as a way to
get their needs met,
something is definitely
wrong!

Think "connection
seeking" instead

All self-harm is serious

Myth?
Reality?
Not sure?



REALITY

We must never gauge the level of distress by the self-harm method.
Never compare different people to each other.
Everybody is an individual.
Please make no assumptions

Self-harm is **COMPLEX**

Clever people don't
self-harm

Myth?
Reality?
Not sure?



MYTH

Self-harm is very
common amongst high
achievers who are
trying to maintain their
high standards.

Self-harm helps people
cope with difficult
emotions

Myth?
Reality?
Not sure?



Let's talk about self-harm

Partially a MYTH – not just
“difficult” emotions

Self-harm helps us cope with
extreme emotions.

Helps us manage life,
thoughts and emotions by
providing us with the control
we require.

Distractions are a replacement for self-harm

Myth?
Reality?
Not sure?



Let's talk about self-harm

MYTH

Distractions by themselves are not enough. They can be part of healthy coping strategies which are the true alternative to self-harm.

Each person needs to put their own strategies together and it's OK to think out of the box.

The self-harm may remain as a tool in their tool box but be used less and less.

People who self-harm are a
danger to others

Myth?
Reality?
Not sure?



MYTH

People who self-harm
often hurt themselves to
avoid hurting others.

Self-harm leads to suicide

Myth?
Reality?
Not sure?



Let's talk about self-harm

MYTH

We must split these two, they're very different!

Self-harm is not a risk factor for suicide (factor means something that contributes to a result). Self-harm is a risk INDICATOR

They are NOT linked to each other, they are both linked to the root, the problem they both stem from.

Every person who self-harms is trying to manage life, trying to LIVE. If they feel nothing helps, then they may consider suicide.

Talking about self-harm
encourages others to
take it on

Myth?
Reality?
Not sure?



MYTH

Let's normalise talking
about self-harm and
break down the stigma!

Q&A

Please put your Zoom hand up or use the chat

Please consider supporting us by becoming a member or by making a donation
(please see website for options)