

## Keeping a self harm diary

One way to help yourself understand more about your self-harming behaviour is to keep a diary or journal over a month or two of what happens before, during and after times when you self-harm. This may help you start to see patterns. We've given an example of how you might do this below.

**Writing a self-harm diary can be an upsetting thing to do, so be nice to yourself after each time you do an entry, or get some support from a trusted person to help you write and review it.**



### What was happening before you got the urge to self-harm? What were your triggers?

This could be about situations, people, anniversaries or particular thoughts or feelings.

**What urges did you experience?** For example, physical sensations like a racing heart or feeling of heaviness, strong emotions such as sadness or anger, feeling disconnected or numb, having repetitive thoughts about hurting yourself or the desire to take alcohol/drugs or work excessively.

How strong was the urge?  Low  Medium  High

### What distractions did you try?

How well did they work?  Not at all  Delayed me self-harming for a while  Worked well

### How did you harm yourself?

How severe was the harm?  Slightly  Moderate  Severe

### How did you feel afterwards?

## My hopes

What is it that keeps going and gives you hope, the people places and things you have to cherish or to look forward to.

## Remember: Be nice to yourself!

Many people stop hurting themselves when the time is right for them. Everyone is different so try not to feel guilty about it. It is a way of surviving right now, and does NOT mean that you will have to do it forever to cope.



## My supporters

Trusted people I can talk to or get help from when I'm having a tough time (including how to contact them).



- I can talk to them about my self-harming
- I can talk to them about my self-harming
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## Reaching out

### 24/7 Telephone/ Text Support

Young Minds Crisis  
Messenger: Text  
YM to 85258

Samaritans 116 123  
Childline 0800 1111  
The Mix 0808  
808 4994

### Online and Telephone Support

selfharm.co.uk  
selfinjurysupport.  
org.uk  
nshn.co.uk

### Local Support

safa-selfharm.com  
kooth.com

You can find out  
more about local  
and national advice,  
information and  
support available  
to you at **www.  
every-life-matters.  
org.uk/get-help**

**In an emergency  
call 999 or go  
straight to A&E.**



## My distractions

The urge to self-harm is strongest for up to 15 minutes. Begin to identify different ways you can distract yourself from the urge, or at least delay self-harming. Find what works best for you, and remember some work better than others at particular times.



- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

Four horizontal white bars for writing, each preceded by a large purple number (1, 2, 3, 4).

For Inspiration try the Calm Harm and DistrACT Apps

## Make a Distraction Box

Fill a box or bag with items that help you avoid the urge to self-harm. Things you can touch, smell, look at, cuddle, listen to or watch, fiddle with or break into pieces. Whatever works for you!



**Every life matters** ...

Suicide Safer Cumbria  
every-life-matters.org.uk  
Charity No.1180815

## My triggers

'Triggers' are what creates the urge to hurt yourself. They usually involve some form of strong emotions and can be situations, people, anniversaries or particular thoughts or feelings. If you don't know what these are right now that's OK, keeping a diary can help us figure out what they may be.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

Four horizontal white bars for writing, each preceded by a large blue number (1, 2, 3, 4).



## My urges

Recognising your urges, and being able to spot them more quickly each time they come, helps you take steps towards reducing or stopping self-harm.



- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

Four horizontal white bars for writing, each preceded by a large green number (1, 2, 3, 4).

## How I deal with stress

Stress is a big factor in people self-harming. When a lot of problems come together, it can often feel overwhelming so it's important to learn how to deal with it. Try writing down stress busting activity that you know works for you.

This might be talking to someone about your problems, meditation or mindfulness, exercise or your favourite sport, going for a walk, playing or listening to music - everyone can find something that works for them.



A large white rectangular area for writing, with a teal pencil icon at the top right and a teal dumbbell and a yellow palette icon at the bottom right.

**Self-harm**  
Safe plan