



finally, relief or temporary satisfaction. This cycle can become repetitive and difficult to break.

### **Signs and Symptoms of Self-harm addiction**

Self-harm may go unnoticed by others. Many people who self-harm do so in private and may not seek help. The “new” types of marks or self-harm tools may not be noticeable. Hence, we should pay attention to the following:

#### **Physical Signs**

- Wearing long-sleeved shirt and pants
- Having burns, scratches, bruises, cuts, or broken bones
- Excessive use of first-aid materials
- Presence of self-harm tools
- Changes in appetite or sleep patterns

#### **Behavioral Signs**

- Secrecy or isolation
- Withdrawing from friends, family, and social activities
- Participating in risky behavior
- Compulsive urges

#### **Emotional Signs**

- Experiencing sudden mood swings or mood changes
- Experiencing feelings of worthlessness and helplessness
- Increased anxiety or restlessness
- Shame or guilt
- Low self-esteem and negative self-talk

### **Why do people self-harm?**

The motivation to self-harm is not the same for everyone. It could have different ways for different reasons. Some of the most common reasons people self-harm are to:

- Difficulty managing emotion.
- Provide a sense of control when things feel out of control.
- Stop negative thoughts and feelings in their tracks.
- Allow emotional expression.
- Punish themselves.

As Monica Amorosi, a licensed mental health counselor from New York City noted ““For reasons that may be hard to understand, **self-harm is a regulating tool for some, a calming tool for some, and a punishing tool for others.**”

## At Risk People

While anyone can be affected by self-harm, certain groups are at higher risk. These include:

- Adolescents and young adults
- Individuals with mental health conditions
- Individuals with personality disorders

## Treatment and Recovery from Self-harm addiction

There are different approaches to treating self-harm. It may include:

- **Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT):** helps see the link between an individual thoughts, emotions, and behaviors.
- **Dialectical behavior therapy (DBT):** an effective self-harm addiction treatment that emphasizes practicing mindfulness, regulating emotions, and improving relationship with others. It addresses the source of the overwhelming stress that's driving self-injury.
- **Psychodynamic therapy:** explores the unconscious thoughts, past experiences, and emotional conflicts that contribute to self-harming behaviors.
- **Problem-solving therapy:** provides practical tools for managing immediate stressor, promoting healthier coping strategies.
- **Engaging in creative outlets**
- **Practicing relaxation techniques**
- **Seeking support from trusted friends and family**
- **Support groups and counseling**

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