

# SELF HARM

157,000 ages 10-24 are treated in the ER for self-inflicted injuries every year<sup>1</sup>. Those who self-harm range from 13-24%<sup>2</sup>. 90% begin during their teen or pre-adolescent years, 50% starting around age 14 and carry on into their 20's<sup>3</sup>. Types include cutting, banging, burning, piercing and more<sup>4,5</sup>. Causes come from overwhelming/numb emotion, stress, uncontrollable situations, etc.<sup>5</sup> Reasons include coping, punishment, having control, etc.<sup>5</sup> Symptoms include feeling helpless, hopeless, worthless and/or shameful, having relationship problems, emotional instability, etc.<sup>5</sup> The Bible has stories of people who cut themselves regarding false-god-worship (1 Kings 18:28), mourning for dead (Deut. 14:1) or demons (Mark 5:2-5), but God wants us to honor our body (1 Cor. 6:19-20) and offer it to Him (Rom. 12:1). We're specifically made (Ps. 139:11-16) in His image (Gen. 1:27) to follow the plan He made for us (Eph. 2:10). For those struggling, Jesus can relate to pain (Heb. 4:14-16), was physically harmed for the forgiveness of our sins (1 Pet. 2:24) and offers rest (Matt. 11:28-30) and strength (Phil. 4:13) to live in victory (1 Cor. 10:13) and a life of peace by the Spirit of God (Rom. 8:6).

## STATS & QUOTES TO CONSIDER

Approximately 157,000 youth ages 10-24 are treated for self-inflicted injuries in emergency rooms every year.

Studies of high school students indicated prevalence rates of self-harm in this population ranged from 13% to 24%.

90% of people who engage in self harm begin during their teen or pre-adolescent years"

About 50% of those who engage in self-mutilation begin around age 14 and carry on into their 20s.

Types of self-harm include but aren't limited to:

Skin cutting (70-90%)

Head banging or hitting (21%-44%)

Burning (15%-35%).

Also...

Scratching, carving words or symbols into the skin, Piercing the skin with sharp objects such as hair pins, pulling out hair, Picking at existing wounds and interfering with the healing process.

Reasons could be:

Coping with stressful feelings, finding distraction from overwhelming emotions, feeling something physical when emotionally numb, to feel a sense of control in their uncontrollable life, to punish themselves, to show their emotions instead of telling them, or to induce positive feeling state (the endorphin high from the injury).

Symptoms include:

Wearing long sleeves or long pants, even in hot weather, Difficulties with interpersonal relationships, Persistent questions about personal identity, Behavioral and emotional instability, impulsiveness, or unpredictability, saying that they feel helpless, hopeless, or worthless, Guilt or shame, avoiding people,

interpersonal difficulty from lying so much about their injuries.

\*Crisis hotline is 741741

## BIBLE VERSES TO CONSIDER

1 Kings 18:28 (Worshiping of false gods) "So they shouted louder and slashed themselves with swords and spears, as was their custom, until their blood flowed."

Deuteronomy 14:1 (Mourning for the dead) "You are the children of the Lord your God. Do not cut yourselves or shave the front of your heads for the dead." (Same in Leviticus 19:28)

Mark 5:2-5 (Related to demonic realm) "When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an impure spirit came from the tombs to meet him. This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain. For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs and in the hills, he would cry out and cut himself with stones."

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 "Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your bodies."

Romans 12:1 "I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God – this is your true and proper worship."

Psalms 139:11-16 "If I say, 'Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me', even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you. For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful; I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book, before one of them came to be."

Genesis 1:27 "So God created mankind in His own image, in the image of God He created them, male and female he created them."

Ephesians 2:10 "For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

Hebrews 4:14-16 "Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."

1 Peter 2:24 "He himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed."

Matthew 11:28-30 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Philippians 4:12-13 "I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength."

1 Corinthians 10:13 "No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it."

Romans 8:6 "The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace."



1 Corinthians 6:12 "I have the right to do anything," you say—but not everything is beneficial. "I have the right to do anything"—but I will not be mastered by anything.

James 5:16 "Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective."

2 Corinthians 4:16 "Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day."

Psalms 34:17 "The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears them; He delivers them from all their troubles."

1 Peter 5:7 "Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you."

2 Timothy 1:7 "For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline."

# RESOURCES

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2. The Refuge, "Self-Injury: Statistics, Causes, Signs, & Symptoms", 2019. <https://www.therefuge-ahealingplace.com/co-occurring/self-injury/effects-symptoms-signs/> (accessed March 2019).
3. Samantha Gluck, "Self Injury, Self Harm Statistics and Facts", *Healthy Place for Your Mental Health*, August 2016. <https://www.healthyplace.com/abuse/self-injury/self-injury-self-harm-statistics-and-facts> (accessed March 2019).
4. Mental Health America, "Self-Injury (Cutting, Self-Harm, or Self-Mutilation)", 2019. <http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/self-injury> (accessed March 2019).
5. Crisis Text Line, "Self-Harm and Self-Injury: Everything From Statistics to Alternatives to How to Help", August 2018. <https://www.crisistextline.org/fast-facts/self-harm> (accessed March 2019).