

## **Self – Mutilation and Self-Harm**

Self-mutilation is a way of victimizing yourself. It is usually direct, controlled, and repetitive. It is important to seek the help of a qualified mental health professional if you practice any form of self-mutilation.

### **You may practice self-mutilation as:**

- A way to manage painful emotions that you have no more appropriate way to express.
- A way to stop emotions and therefore control them.
- A way to feel alive.
- A way to react to trauma and/or abuse.
- An addiction than may become compulsive
- A way to punish yourself.
- An expression of self-blame or self-hatred.
- A way to get attention for your emotional pain.
- A way to communicate your pain.
- A way to self-soothe.
- A way to refuse to care for yourself, usually because you don't believe you deserve self-care.
- A way to escape pain.
- A way to distance yourself.
- A way to escape perceived rejection or any other pain.
- A way to prevent dissociation.
- A way to release endorphins so that you don't feel pain.
- A way to punish yourself.

### **Beliefs about self-mutilation**

- It doesn't hurt anyone.
- It's my body and I can do what I want.
- It shouldn't upset anyone.
- If I don't hurt myself, the pain will be worse.
- The scars will remind me of (needing to be punished, shame, what I did wrong, etc).
- No one knows.
- I need to be punished.
- It shows how bad I am.
- It keeps people away.