



SHIELD FOR SUCCESS

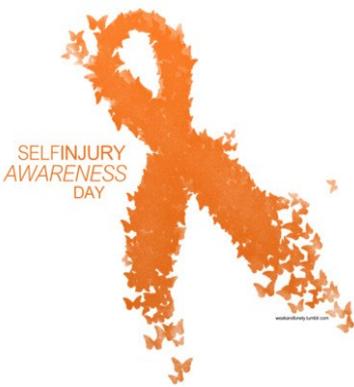
Monthly tips for success and promotion of overall well-being brought to you by **Valparaiso University's Counseling Services**

Self-Injury Awareness Month

Welcome to the March issue of the Shield for Success! This monthly newsletter is divided into two parts. The first section provides information and resources on a topic relevant to the current month. The second section offers helpful tips and exercises tailored to each month's topic. March is Self-injury Awareness Month. Self-injury or self-harm is a response to severe emotional distress. In some cases, the physical injury has a temporary calming effect, while in others a self-inflicted wound is a means of "feeling something" to combat emotional numbness. Among teenagers, an estimated 17 percent will experience some form of self-injury. The number drops to 5 percent among adults. When helping a person through the trauma of self-injury, listen and don't judge or act disgusted. Additionally, stay supportive and proactive, drive them to a counselor's appointment or visit them in treatment when appropriate. Take the opportunity to educate yourself about the condition and the underlying causes that often lead to it. Self-injury Awareness Month is a chance to set aside stigma, understand the problem and be open about mental health and recovery.

In this issue:

- Self-injury Awareness Month
- Links for Self-harm Statistics and Resources
- Crisis Resources
- Activities for Coping & Processing Emotions
- Instructions
- Mental Health Pain Scale



Links for Self-harm Statistics and Resources

- [Self-harm Statistics](#)
- [What is Self-harm?](#)
- [How to Help Someone Who Self-harms](#)
- [To Write Love on Her Arms—Self-injury Support Website](#)

If you are in an immediate crisis please call VUPD at 219-464-5430. Here are other crisis & campus resources available to you:

- Valparaiso University Counseling Center: 219-464-5002 (M-F; 8-12, 1-5)
- Campus Pastors – Chapel of the Resurrection: 219-464-5093; Rev. James Wetzstein & Pastor Kate Museum Dabay
- Residential Learning Coordinator's – Office of Residential Life: 219-464-5413
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255); suicidepreventionlifeline.org (24/7)
- Crisis Text Line: Text "TALK" to 741-741 (24/7)
- The Trevor Project: 1-866-488-7386 (crisis line dedicated to LGBTQIA+ people under 25)

Activities for Coping & Processing Emotions

- 1) Call or text a trusted loved one to process, or a crisis line if you feel you are at risk.
- 2) Work on something creative, whether it's drawing, painting, or coloring.
- 3) Listen to a guided meditation or some calming music.
- 4) Use your five senses to help ground you by identifying things you can see, touch, hear, smell, and taste.
- 5) Create a safety plan.
- 6) Find and make an appointment with a therapist for additional support.

Mental Health Pain Scale Instructions

Step 1: If you choose to participate, first rate your mood on a 1-10 scale, you can use the Mental Health Pain scale provided.

Step 2: Each day you will have the opportunity to complete a different exercise. On weekdays, Monday through Friday, pick one exercise from the list provided for you below. On weekends, Saturday & Sunday, choose one exercise that you felt improved your mood the most, these exercises do not have to be from the exercises provided.

Step 3: After implementing the exercise, rate your mood using the same scale as Step 1.

A Simple Mental Health Pain Scale

theGracefulPatient.wordpress.com

MILD		1 Everything is a-okay! There is absolutely nothing wrong. You're probably cuddling a fluffy kitten right now. Enjoy!
		2 You're a bit frustrated or disappointed, but you're easily distracted and cheered up with little effort.
		3 Things are bothering you, but you're coping. You might be overtired or hungry. The emotional equivalent of a headache.
MODERATE		4 Today is a bad day (or a few bad days). You still have the skills to get through it, but be gentle with yourself. Use self-care strategies.
		5 Your mental health is starting to impact on your everyday life. Easy things are becoming difficult. You should talk to your doctor.
		6 You can't do things the way you usually do them due to your mental health. Impulsive and compulsive thoughts may be hard to cope with.
SEVERE		7 You're avoiding things that make you more distressed, but that will make it worse. You should definitely seek help. This is serious.
		8 You can't hide your struggles anymore. You may have issues sleeping, eating, having fun, socialising, and work/study. Your mental health is affecting almost all parts of your life.
		9 You're at a critical point. You aren't functioning anymore. You need urgent help. You may be a risk to yourself or others if left untreated.
		10 The worst mental and emotional distress possible. You can no longer care for yourself. You can't imagine things getting any worse. Contact a crisis line immediately.

Created by Mike Moore, MA, LMHC, NCC

If there are any topics you are interested in seeing or learning more about please email counseling.center@valpo.edu, subject Shield for Success topic ideas.