

Self-Injury Awareness Month: Learn The Signs & How to Help

The purpose of Self Harm Awareness Day is to remove the stigma attached to self-injury. For anyone suffering it is important to speak with a counselor or a...

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What Is Self-Harm Awareness Month?



Self Harm Awareness Day on March 1st each year focuses on increasing education and support on a misunderstood problem.

Self Harm Awareness Day is a global event held annually on March 1. Its purpose is to remove the stigma attached to self-injury and to encourage parents, family members, educators, and healthcare professionals to recognize the signs of self-harm.

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Self-injury is, unfortunately, far too common. We have a real need and real people to help. That is why Self-Injury Awareness Month matters.”

Ryan Zofay, Founder of We Level Up

When Is Self-Harm Awareness Month?

March is recognized as the National Self Harm Awareness Month. A month dedicated to bringing awareness to something that happens across all genders, races, beliefs, and ages. One in five individuals will engage in self-injury in their lifetime, with the vast majority beginning during adolescence. [1]

"Self-injury is, unfortunately, far too common. We have a real need and real people to help. That is why Self-Injury Awareness Month matters. Won't you join us in raising awareness and lifting the stigma from this ailment." - Ryan Zofay, Founder of We Level Up

Self-harm, also known as self-mutilation, is an act of someone hurting themselves intentionally. If you are feeling intense emotional pain, have experienced trauma, or suffer from a mental

health condition, you are more likely to self-harm. And for some, it is a shout for help. Self-mutilating behavior is often mistakenly diagnosed as attempts of suicide, but most people who self-harm are not attempting suicide. However, self-harm can cause more damage to someone's health and safety, even causing accidental suicide.

What Causes Self-Harm?

There are different reasons why people harm themselves. Often, they have trouble coping and dealing with their feelings. [2] They harm themselves to try to:

Make themselves feel something, when they feel empty or numb inside

Block upsetting memories

Show that they need help

Release strong feelings that overwhelm them, such as anger, loneliness, or hopelessness

Punish themselves

Feel a sense of control

Top Warning Signs Of Self-Harm

On Self Harm Awareness Day, learn the top signs and symptoms of someone suffering from self-mutilating behavior. Someone may be self-harming to cope with upsetting feelings and thoughts. Someone may feel like self-harm relieves their feelings of guilt or shame. However, feeling relieved after self-harming is only short-term, and can result in a desire to self-harm again.

A person who experiences a mental health condition is at a higher risk of self-harm. Some cases



The orange ribbon of Self Harm Awareness Day



Self harm awareness day purpose is to remove the stigma attached to self-injury.

suggest depression can be a precursor to self-harm as well. People suffering from personality disorders may also be more likely to self-harm. In the same way, eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia increase the chances that someone will do self-harm.

Self-harm Behaviors and Signs

Cutting, burning, or hitting yourself

Drug addiction or alcoholism

Overdosing on prescription medications

Binge eating or starvation

Putting oneself in a risky situation

You may also self-harm because of the sudden death of a loved one, experience pain such as bullying, miscarriage, or any experience that brings you extreme sadness or anger.

Behavioral Signs:

Avoiding activities that expose the body

Interacting less or performing duties less well at home, school, or work

Having unexplained wounds or unlikely justifications for injuries

Hiding dangerous objects, like razor blades

Psychological Symptoms:

Expressing feelings of depression

Expressing feelings of anxiety

Changes In Behavior:

Lack of interest in hobbies that you once enjoyed

Disengaging from social interactions



Raising awareness about self-harm is incredibly important as it leads to community understanding and empathy, banishing stigma and judgment, and reducing the number of people who may suffer in silence.

Behavioral health treatment programs



Free 24-7 Hotline
(561) 678-0917
WeLevelUp.com

Behavioral health centers specialize in delivering state-of-the-art mental health treatment using science-based recovery programs. This is done by stabilizing the patient and continuing treatment of co-occurring mental health problems.

Having difficulties communicating with loved ones
Drastic mood swings

Physical Signs:

Overdosing on medicine and requiring medical attention
Physical signs of self-harm on the body like open wounds or cuts

Self Harm Awareness Month Events

March 1 of each year is Self Harm Awareness Day, which leads into Self-Injury Awareness Month. The day and month serve to draw attention to the struggles of those affected by this condition. Self Harm Awareness Day is a global awareness event celebrated on March 1. It draws attention to self-harm in the hope of helping people who practice it. Almost two million Americans engage in self-harm. About 17% of people will self-harm during their lifetime. People who self-harm say that it gives them a feeling of control and release from tension.

On Self Harm Awareness Day, people can share their self-harm stories, which can help them find a community of people who understand and can help them overcome it. Mental health organizations also make extra efforts to raise awareness about self-harm and self-injury, with some even offering free therapy sessions on the day. [3]

Self-injury Awareness Day (SIAD) (also known as Self Harm Awareness Day is a grassroots annual global awareness event/campaign on March 1, where on this day, and in the weeks leading up to it and after, some people choose to be more open about their own self-harm, and awareness organizations make special efforts to raise awareness about self-harm and self-injury.

Some people wear an orange awareness ribbon (self-harm awareness color), write "LOVE" on their arms, draw a butterfly on their wrists in awareness of "the Butterfly Project" wristband or beaded bracelet to encourage awareness of self-harm.

History Of Self Harm Awareness Day

The origin and history of Self Harm Awareness Day are unknown. People wear an orange ribbon, a butterfly on their wrists, or a beaded bracelet to encourage awareness of self-harm. The orange ribbon represents hope for a misread problem. The idea is to eradicate the common clichés surrounding self-harm and to educate medical professionals about it.

Self-harm begins with an express purpose to harm oneself. Self-injury includes skin carving, self-medicating, and abnormal scratching. Burning oneself, and punching or hitting walls to create pain are also methods. Other examples are drinking poisonous chemicals, radical skin picking, pulling hair, and purposely interfering with wound healing. Warning signs include isolation; avoiding social interactions, and baggy clothing to hide wounds. Further signs are finding sharp

instruments such as razors in strange places, constant excuses for cuts on arms, stomach, and legs, and locking themselves into the bathroom or bedroom for long periods of time.

Teens are by far the highest statistic for self-harm injury, as studies show that about 15% of teens and 17-35% of students have practiced self-harm. People who engage in self-harm activities often are three-and-a-half times more likely to try suicide. Depression and self-harm mostly go hand-in-hand. It must however be stated that there are many other reasons people self-harm. The vicious cycle recurs because, after the self-injurious act, the individual will be inclined to feel shame or guilt. This results in significant anguish, leading them to self-injure once again. It is a spiral of shame and guilt, followed by relief and emotional release. Self Harm Awareness Day aims to get rid of this guilt and break the cycle. [4]

Speak To A Professional

Diagnosis for self-harm is based on a physical and psychological evaluation. Someone may be referred to a mental health professional with practice in treating self-injury for evaluation. A mental health professional will also evaluate a client for other [mental health disorders](#) that may be linked to self-injury, such as depression or personality disorders.

There are different approaches to managing self-harm, similar to mental illness. They include the following:

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy — This is a type of 'talking therapy' and it usually involves efforts to change a patient's thinking patterns. CBT therapy may include learning to recognize one's distortions in thinking that are creating problems, and then reevaluating them considering reality.

Medication — In some cases, the effective treatment for an underlying condition that triggers self-harm is medicine, such as an antidepressant or anxiety medicine. A client's psychologist may recommend treatment, but only a doctor or a psychiatrist can prescribe medicines.

Psychotherapy — Counselling helps to stabilize feelings and thoughts by identifying the cause of the emotional stress and then it will teach skills to help address distress.

Anyone may need treatment from a doctor for serious physical injuries after a self-harm episode. In severe cases, a victim may be required to go to the emergency department.

Dual Diagnosis Treatment

If someone does self-harm often they can possibly become suicidal or feel confined to a cycle of hopelessness, as self-harm is not a helpful way to deal with distressing emotions. Other major complications of self-harm include long-term scarring, infection, brain injury as well as organ damage.

There are people of all ages who harm themselves, but it usually starts in the teen or early adult years. Self-harm is more common in people who:

Were abused or went through trauma as children

Have mental disorders, such as

Depression

Eating disorders

Post-traumatic stress disorder

Certain personality disorders

Misuse drugs or alcohol

Have friends who self-harm

Have low self-esteem

Self Harm And Addiction Issues

It is extremely important to speak with a counselor, psychiatrist, or doctor if someone does self-harm. These healthcare professionals can help someone in need find what is causing them to self-harm and work through their thoughts. Early intervention can also minimize damage caused by self-harm and decrease the risk of future episodes. Victims of self-harm may also find supportive people with who they feel comfortable, who they can talk to, and who will listen to them without judgment.

If you think someone you care for is engaging in self-harm, it is important that you offer them support. Encourage them to get professional help and continue checking in with them to see how they are going.

If you have struggled with self-harm or if you want to provide support to those who are struggling, bringing awareness to the issue is critical. Many times we don't even know that someone we care about is hurting emotionally and physically. They may hide their injuries with clothing and make-up or even isolate themselves.

Bringing awareness to the issue in a non-judgmental and supporting manner may create a platform for more people to open up about their experiences and inspire others to get help. The orange ribbon is a symbol of Self Harm Awareness Day. Pin an orange ribbon to your shirt or purse throughout March, and any day of the year to symbolize Self Harm Awareness. It may spark a conversation where the community can educate others on the subject or it can serve as a signal that the community can provide a safe space for individuals who do self-harm and need someone to talk to.

It is estimated that over 8% of people who follow through with self-harm also abuse drugs, but

some consider self-harm a form of addiction in itself. Similar to some forms of substance abuse, self-harm is often used as a response to feelings of sadness or depression. By causing an injury, a cut or burn could produce feelings of relief and even a rush of pain-relieving endorphins, however, this immediate relief will likely be followed by feelings of shame and guilt.

The highs and lows associated with self-harm lend themselves to a cycle of negative feelings, self-injury, relief, and more negative feelings. The obsession to cut or use other methods of self-harm is not much different than the use of drugs. On the flip side, the use of drugs or alcohol can be considered a form of self-harm too.

Bringing Awareness To Self Harm

Self-harm and substance abuse are often intertwined. Individuals that have had traumatic life events like abuse, neglect, and trauma pose a greater risk of self-harm along with substance abuse. Being influenced by substances often lead to self-injury as well.

Treatment can be much more complex when self-mutilating behavior is combined with addiction. Many who suffer from both behaviors need advanced care that simultaneously tackles both issues. Dual diagnosis treatment grasps the various constraints that lead individuals to self-harm, this will help them discover the problems and cope more healthily.

Individuals who physically self-harm and abuse drugs or alcohol may be given a dual mental health diagnosis. We Level Up [dual diagnosis program](#) is designed to assist those who struggle with a substance use disorder along with other mental health issues. We Level Up providers can work with clients to address underlying struggles and set clients on track for a healthier and happier future.

We Level Up trained experts strive to stay on top of the latest alternative treatments, and will give clients the proper help to resolve self-harming habits successfully. Self Harm Awareness Day is so important, but it's only one day. We Level Up supports the individuals they serve throughout the year and work to reduce the stigma associated with self-injury. Looking for Immediate Help? Speak with an Advisor by contacting the LevelUp [Deerfield Beach rehab center](#) admissions office.

About We Level Up Treatment Centers

WeLevelUp is a renowned treatment center that applies evidence-based treatment modalities along with holistic programs to improve client recovery outcomes. Combining traditional elements of SUD treatment, including supervised medical detox recovery coupled with intensive behavioral rehab. Offering cutting-edge advanced therapies, WeLevelUp is an accredited dual diagnosis drug and alcohol addiction and mental health care provider. Fully integrating co-occurring conditions into their programs, they provide a world-class comprehensive continuum of care through each stage of the treatment process. Their top-notch doctors, therapists, and

counselors leverage the power of science to help clients succeed in rehab recovery.

WeLevelUp provides best-in-class treatment in multiple locations, with amenities and activities designed to reinforce recovery success metrics. Each client receives lifetime alumni support post inpatient treatment along with family resources to help maintain recovery momentum, even once they depart their treatment facilities. Their teams of highly trained professionals are dedicated to each client's success.

WeLevelUp.com is A-rated by the BBB and is a confirmed and verified business.

About Ryan Zofay

Ryan Zofay is most passionate about sharing his practical lessons that change lives. As a successful entrepreneur and motivational speaker, he teaches development strategies that measurably improve performance, connection, and overall mindset.

Through Ryan's recovery success, he's learned how to be a licensed interventionist. He still finds time to give back and help inspire whenever there is a need for intervention.

Ryan Zofay is a successful entrepreneur and motivational speaker. He teaches personal development strategies that measurably improve performance, connection, and mindset. Using the teachings of his own successes and tribulations, Ryan has a unique ability to facilitate deep change for individuals and organizations.

Ryan's passion and enthusiasm readily spill over to his listeners. His own life accounts, amazing comeback journeys, along the wisdom he developed, help formulate instructions to clients on how to realize their goals. Visit the Ryan Zofay Events page to learn more.

Sources

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