

ALTERNATIVES TO SELF-INJURIOUS BEHAVIORS

1. Listen to music/relaxation tapes
2. Repetitive reality checking (It's January 8, 2005 and I'm going to be ok)
3. Negotiate with yourself
4. Get to know others
5. Recognize and acknowledge the choices you have NOW
6. Offer options
7. Create and use mental safe places (beach, cabin in the woods, peaceful mountain)
8. Get out on your own, get away from the stress
9. Help someone around you
10. Pay attention to the changes needed to make you feel safe
11. Count yourself down (10 ... 9 ... 8 ... 7...
12. Take a different perspective
13. "I'm aware" Repeat 5 things you see, smell, touch, taste in your present surroundings to help ground you in the present
14. Pay attention to your breathing (breath slowly, in through your nose and out through your mouth)
15. Pay attention to the rhythmic motions of your body (walking, stretching, etc.)
16. Move to music
17. ASK FOR HELP
18. Ask yourself inside, what YOU need
19. Make affirmation tapes inside you that are good, kind, gentle (Sometimes you can do this by writing down the negative thoughts and then physically re-writing them into positive messages)
20. Journal
21. Touch something familiar/safe
22. Draw
23. Put your feet firmly on the floor
24. Make something (craft, needlework, etc.)
25. Accept a gift from a friend
26. Meditate
27. Make a phone list of people you can call for support. Allow yourself to use it
28. Learn HALT signals (hungry, angry, lonely, tired)
29. Identify what is causing you pain (other than food)
30. Accept where you are in the process. Beating yourself up only makes it worse.
31. Do something FUN!!!
32. Take a break from mental processing
33. Take a shower or a bath
34. Honor your present anger
35. Give yourself permission to.... (Keep it safe)
36. Lose the "should-could-have to" words. Try... "What if"
37. Choose your way of thinking, try to resist following old thinking patterns
38. Put memories in air tight containers with air tight lids
39. Notice black and white thinking look for grey
40. Connect with others around you. Call a therapist or friend.
41. Notice "choices" versus "dilemmas"
42. Keep in touch with others who are fighting the same fight
43. Check in with yourself and others frequently (try not to isolate)
44. Make yourself as comfortable as possible (Without using food)
45. Color in coloring books
46. Hold a stuffed animal
47. Write a poem

48. Leave the room
49. Write a letter, NOT mailed, to the person or problem upsetting you. Dear Problem,
50. Play a musical instrument
51. Plan regular activities for your most difficult time of day
52. Call a hotline or support group
53. Listen to a comedy tape or video
54. Reality check old messages (Those you supply and those you hear others tell you).
55. Clean your room
56. Pull weeds in a garden
57. Plant flowers

When the urge to injure hits, we are often easily overwhelmed. This is not the best time to try and remember what your healthy alternatives are. If they are already written out and on hand, all you have to do is read down the list until you find something safe and helpful.