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An Explanation of Self Harm and Giving Help

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An Explanation of Self Harm

Self harm is caused by the inability to cope with overwhelming negative emotions.



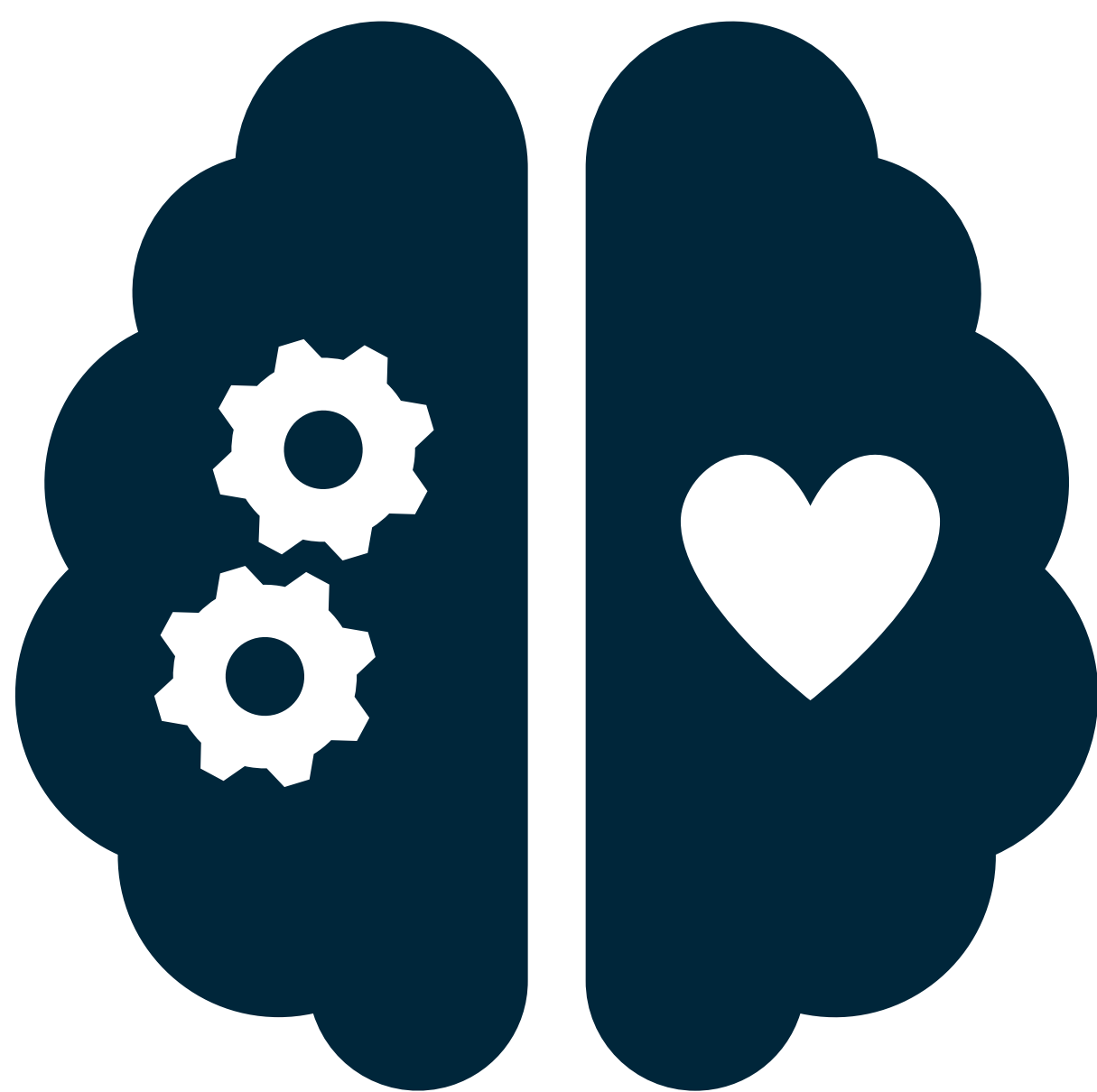
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Who is Most Likely to Self harm?

Most self harmers are teens (Cummings, Mattfeld, McMackin, 2021). More specifically teen girls. Since 2009 self harm has tripled. (Morgan, C., Webb, R. T. Carr, M. J et al., 2017) Members of the LGBTQ+ community have also been shown to have higher self harm rates. (O'Reilly, Pettersson, Donahue et al., 2020).



What is Self Harm?

The definition of non-suicidal self injury or NSSI is “the direct, deliberate destruction of one’s own body tissue in the absence of suicidal intent” (Nock & Favazza, 2009). Self harm comes in many forms including: scratching, hitting, pinching, burning, biting and cutting.



Why do People self harm?

Puberty is the start of social change and thus an overload of negative emotions. Different people self harm for different reasons ranging from a sense of control, a way to “get back” at themselves and an emotional release without crying (Moyer, 2018).

Neurological Reasoning

Teenagers physically can not manage their emotions. Their frontal lobe (the part of the brain that controls judgment and planning) is not developed enough to handle emotions effectively. (Cummings, Mattfeld, MacMakin, 2021) The action of self harm makes the emotional side of the brain “shut up” in a sense. (Apter, 2020)

What?

- Many methods
- Unique to each person

Who?

- Teenagers
- Teen girls
- LGBITQ+
- Face discrimination

Why?

- Cope
- Start of puberty
- Different to each person
- Cycle
 - negative thoughts, tension building, urge to act, action, relief guilt/shame, negative thoughts

Neurological Reasoning

- Imbalance between emotions and regulation
- Frontal lobe underdeveloped
- Sensitive to reward system
- “shut up” amygdala
- Lack of stress hormone cortisol

People who self harm should not have to face isolation and misunderstanding.

Sources

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