**Contacts for further support within the UK**

If you are currently under the care of a local mental health team you might find it helpful to contact your therapist/worker. Alternatively you may find it helpful to contact your GP if your distress is ongoing after participating in the study.

If you want feel you would like to speak to someone about the way you feel you can call the **Samaritans** on **08457 90 90 90** or visit their website at **http://www.samaritans.org**. They provide a confidential listening service.

There are also additional listening services available including:

**CALM (the Campaign Against Living Miserably)** who provide support via a helpline, webchat and website. You can call them on 0800 58 58 58 or visit their website at [www.thecalmzone.net](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.thecalmzone.net%2F&data=02%7C01%7C%7C43c87fbe39d94ee583ef08d7dfa63457%7C1faf88fea9984c5b93c9210a11d9a5c2%7C0%7C0%7C637223777267933716&sdata=b9T28qZxNPtA3aoTpp6GeDhuV8Vv%2FDjLI7h8oYXJ%2FqM%3D&reserved=0)

**HOPELineUK** who provide confidential support and advice service for anyone under the age of 35yrs having thoughts of suicide. Calls are free. Texts cost standard rates. They aim to reply to emails within 24 hours. You can call then on 0800 068 41 41; text on 07860039967 and visit their website at [https://papyrus-uk.org/hopelineuk/](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fpapyrus-uk.org%2Fhopelineuk%2F&data=02%7C01%7C%7C43c87fbe39d94ee583ef08d7dfa63457%7C1faf88fea9984c5b93c9210a11d9a5c2%7C0%7C0%7C637223777267933716&sdata=lzk45yFIlTQbiUaMyWARR7W0b6GgvjD%2BcfmPcmq6ZGo%3D&reserved=0)

**Support Line** who provide a confidential telephone helpline offering emotional
support to any individual on any issue. It's particularly aimed at people who are isolated, at risk, vulnerable and victims of any form of abuse. You can call them on 01708 765 200 or visit their website at [www.supportline.org.uk](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.supportline.org.uk%2F&data=02%7C01%7C%7C43c87fbe39d94ee583ef08d7dfa63457%7C1faf88fea9984c5b93c9210a11d9a5c2%7C0%7C0%7C637223777267953705&sdata=ZeI%2F4khVO%2FqqpgaxzZkTzls57VCGy6BhWsylof2emYA%3D&reserved=0)

**If you need help immediately and are in an emergency, you can call the emergency services on 999.**

**Contacts for further support outside of the UK**

**CheckPoint** is a charity that provides mental health resources for gamers and the gaming community. International mental health support services can be accessed on their website at <https://checkpointorg.com/global/>

**CALM (the Campaign Against Living Miserably)** who provide support via a helpline, webchat and website for people within the UK. However, their website also provides links to international services that offer similar support and these are broken down into different countries: <https://www.thecalmzone.net/2019/10/international-mental-health-charities/>

**Suicide Hotline** is a website where international suicide support and local emergency numbers across different countries can be found: <https://suicidehotline.org>

**Befrienders Worldwide** is a charity that has a global network of emotional support centres in 32 countries. The charity provides support via telephone helplines, SMS messaging, face-to-face and internet chat. Local helplines can also be accessed through their website: <https://www.befrienders.org>

**Crisis Text Line** is a free service for those in crisis and can be accessed by anyone in the US, Canada, UK or Ireland. Text ‘HOME’ to 741741 (US and Canada), 85258 (UK), 086 1800 280 (Ireland) to be connected with a Crisis Counselor. More information can be found here: <https://www.crisistextline.org/text-us/>

**Suggestions for how to manage your distress**

**Sometimes we can feel distressed and the following suggested strategies can help soothe us and reduce our distress. They are aimed at reducing some of the difficult feelings and thoughts that can arise when feeling upset. These thoughts can include thoughts of self-harm. The strategies can be helpful during times of distress but can also sometimes take a bit of practise to get the hang of using them.**

**Visualisation**

This is a quick way of getting away from a situation without physically leaving.

* Imagine yourself walking to a door.
* Open the door and walk down the 3 steps, taking a deep breath for each of the steps.
* You walk into an environment where you feel relaxed and calm. This could be a familiar place, a happy memory, or somewhere in your dream.
	+ - **What can you see?**
		- **What can you hear?**
		- **What can you smell?**
		- **What can you touch?**

Spend a few minutes in this place, enjoying the feeling of relaxation.

When you feel ready, start to make your way back up the three steps, take a breath for each of the three steps. Make your way back through the door and back into the present.

**Mindfulness -** “Leaves on a Stream” Exercise

(1) Sit in a comfortable position and either close your eyes or rest them gently on a fixed spot in the room.

(2) Visualize yourself sitting beside a gently flowing stream with leaves floating along the surface of the water. Pause 10 seconds.

(3) For the next few minutes, take each thought that enters your mind and place it on a leaf… let it float by. Do this with each thought – pleasurable, painful, or neutral. Even if you have joyous or enthusiastic thoughts, place them on a leaf and let them float by.

(4) If your thoughts momentarily stop, continue to watch the stream. Sooner or later, your thoughts will start up again. Pause 20 seconds.

(5) Allow the stream to flow at its own pace. Don’t try to speed it up and rush your thoughts along. You’re not trying to rush the leaves along or “get rid” of your thoughts. You are allowing them to come and go at their own pace.

(6) If your mind says “This is dumb,” “I’m bored,” or “I’m not doing this right” place those thoughts on leaves, too, and let them pass. Pause 20 seconds.

(7) If a leaf gets stuck, allow it to hang around until it’s ready to float by. If the thought comes up again, watch it float by another time. Pause 20 seconds.

(8) If a difficult or painful feeling arises, simply acknowledge it. Say to yourself, “I notice myself having a feeling of boredom/impatience/frustration.” Place those thoughts on leaves and allow them float along.

(9) From time to time, your thoughts may hook you and distract you from being fully present in this exercise. This is normal. As soon as you realize that you have become side-tracked, gently bring your attention back to the visualization exercise.

**Distraction Techniques**

These are some ideas for helping people delay or avoid self-harm that you might wish to consider- they’ve been suggested by people who self-harm. Some ideas might seem ridiculous, but others might work. Different people find that different things help, and it isn’t failure if you try something and it doesn’t help. You will be able to add things which you have discovered.

**Expressing Feelings**

**Letting it out PHYSICALLY**

* Scream as loud as you can
* Hit a cushion/punch bag/throw a cushion against a wall
* **Smash** a water melon
* Kick a football against a wall
* **Squeeze** a stress ball
* **Tear up** a newspaper/phone directory
* Play loud music and dance energetically- be as wild as you like
* Draw on the place you want to cut with red maker pen, fake blood or watered down food colouring
* *Write words* on yourself with red marker pen
* Spend some ***energy***- go for a walk/swim/go to gym/ride a bike/go running.



**Trying to work out how you are feeling….**

* Ask yourself ‘Do I feel ANGRY’? ‘Do I feel anxious’? ‘What about?’
* Ask yourself ‘What would the razor blade say if it could talk to me?’
* **Write a letter** to someone you’re angry with (hurt by etc.) saying how you feel

(NO need to send it).

* Write a list of your **achievements**
* Write a letter to yourself saying ‘I love you because……’
* **Make a list** of things you’re thankful for
* Make a wish list

**Talking about it…**

* Talk to a **friend**
* Call the Samaritans or other helpline (see below)
* Allow yourself to **cry** (if you can)

**Using your Creativity**

* Draw / paint / collage/ paper mache / finger paint / sculpt in clay- to express what you want to do or what you are feeling
* Write a poem / **story** / song / joke / autobiography / parody / musical
* Write a **DIARY** / journal / read old diaries (unless there might be triggers)
* Go to Facebook.com and write an online journal
* **Scribble** a word again and again to say how you’re feeling e.g. ‘lonely’, ‘angry’
* Deface a magazine (preferably your own)
* Paint with ***red paint*** using your fingers
* Draw yourself in MS office
* Write a message in a self-harm newsgroup on the internet
* *Take some photos*
* Play an **instrument** / Sing to music as LOUD as you can
* Put on music which *expresses* how you are feeling
* Write out the **soundtrack** to your life if it were a film
* Imagine a colour which expresses your feelings then change it in your mind to another colour
* Make a **memory box /** scrapbook
* Write an **alternative** ending to a story
* Watch a foreign language channel and make up your own interpretations
* **Create** your own cartoon characters / legends
* Create a SECRET CODE

## **Self-Soothe**

## **with the Five Senses**

**Things You See**

Make a part of your room look just the way you want it to. Look at nature around you. Watch stars, the moon, sunrise or sunset. Look at pictures or a poster that you like. Take a walk in a park or in your neighbourhood. Really look at and notice what is nice.

**What You Hear**

Listen to relaxing, soothing, or energetic music. Pay attention to the sounds of nature (waves, birds, rain, and leaves rustling). Sing your favourite songs. Hum a soothing tune. Learn to play an instrument. Call a friend. Listen to your cat purr.

**Odours You Smell**

Use your favourite aftershave, cologne, or perfume. Put potpourri in a bowl in your room. Boil cinnamon sticks. Bake cookies, cake or bread. Smell roses. Be mindful of the smells of nature; try smelling a pinecone.

**Foods You Taste**

Have a good meal. Have a favourite soothing drink such as herbal tea or hot chocolate. Treat yourself to dessert. Sample ice cream flavours. Chew your favourite gum or candy. Really taste the food you eat. Eat one thing mindfully.

**Things You Touch**

Pet your dog or cat. Take a bubble bath. Put clean sheets on the bed. Soak your feet. Put lotion on. Put a cold compress on your forehead. Sink into a really comfortable chair in your home. Brush your hair for a long time. Hug someone. Hold a pinecone. Hold a basketball, football, or baseball.