The skills list

– support for when life is hard

SHEDO

Skills to cope

- Focus on your breathing. Feel each breath, count them and vary the pace of your breathing
- Clench one part of your body at a time for 10 seconds, relax and then clench another body part (fist, face etc.)
- Pay attention to your senses, observe and describe one thing you experience via each sense (smell, hearing, etc.)
- Call a friend or a helpline
- Use the 10-minute rule; commit to not harming yourself for 10 minutes. When 10 minutes have passed, commit to another 10 minutes
- Pick an object and try to think of 30 ways to use it
- Pick an object and describe its qualities such as shape, weight and colour
- Come up with as many names as you can starting with the same letter
- Talk to yourself
- Say the alphabet backwards
- Listen to music that you like
- Play a game on your smartphone
- Think of an object or a person and search the internet for more information about it
- Watch a film or a TV series
- Sort things you have at home by size or colour
- Clean up
- Take a cold shower or wash your face with cold water
- Stand on something and try to keep your balance
- Buy beads and mix them in a big jar. Then sort them by colour
- Read a book, newspaper or comic
- Paint your nails, put on a facemask or take a bath
- Draw something in detail

Skills to express powerful emotions

- Write down your thoughts and feelings
- Write to someone who has upset you, even if you don't send it
- Put a plaster on a part of your body where you would otherwise have harmed yourself
- Paint your body
- Tear some paper into tiny pieces
- Scream into a pillow or punch it
- Dance to music
- Inflate balloons and burst them

Skills to cope with negative emotions

- Do the opposite. When you want to harm yourself, do something comforting or pleasant instead
- Look at yourself in the mirror and write a list about the body parts or qualities you like the most about yourself
- Play or cuddle with animals

If you have thoughts of hurting yourself, pause and ask yourself these questions:

- What am I feeling right now?
- Why am I feeling the way that I am?
- What is making me want to hurt myself right now?
- Have I been through this before? If so, what did I do to manage the situation? If I wasn't able to manage the situation, is there something I could do differently this time?
- If I harm myself now, how do I think I would feel afterwards?
- If I harm myself now, how do I think I would feel in an hour or tomorrow?
- Is there something else I could try right now instead of harming myself?
- What do I need to get through this moment?

Keep these questions easily accessible and pick five skills from the list above in advance to try before harming yourself next time.

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