

Crisis Hotline <http://www.crisistextline.org/>

TEXT "GO" to 741741

We get lots of emails, especially about our articles on cutting. Sometimes people tell us about the feelings and emotions that surround cutting. Others share their ideas on how they stopped. We decided to put some of these suggestions and comments on our site. Of course, the reasons why people cut are very different. So the comments below may help some people but not others.

When readers email us, it's through a secure system that doesn't record names or other personal information. That's why you don't see any personal details here — just experiences and a desire to help from the people who've been there.



"This stopped my cutting completely: When you want to cut, whether your wrist or thigh, stare at it intensely. Imagine it belongs to your best friend, girlfriend /boyfriend, brother, sister, father, mother, grandmother, or other meaningful person in your life. **Ask yourself, 'Would I cut him/her?'** You'll find yourself losing the urge to cut when you realize how fortunate you are to have this person who loves you. If possible, put away the knife or razor blade or whatever it is, and talk to the person. Thank them for loving you."



"I have found that **dropping red food color into a tall (clear) glass of water** can be a release (as long as the urge isn't too strong)."



"What really helped me quit was writing poetry. **When I wanted to cut, I would get out my notebook instead.** A lot of my friends used to cut (some still do), and write poems, so sharing with them helped a lot. I haven't cut since my 13th birthday, and I feel so much better. Sometimes I want to cut again, but my best friend does it really bad and I think how much I don't want her to."



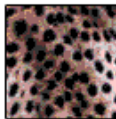
"I cut myself, and **I know how important it is with friends who stick with you.** When you're a cutter you are often feeling very down, or even depressed. And you have no power left to do things with your friends, sometimes it's hard to even call them, and as a friend you can get the idea that your 'cutter friend' doesn't like you anymore. But sometimes, they just need you even more. So please, everyone who knows someone who cuts themselves, call them, visit them at home, or just send a text message. It helps!!"



"I started because my boyfriend was cutting. He said it relieves your pain. But he didn't tell me that **after you relieve your pain for 5 minutes, you look down at your arm, and you feel so ashamed** When I first started, I thought, 'This is amazing, I feel so much better, but I won't do this ever again.' Then the next week, 'Well, one more time won't hurt.' I continued to tell myself, 'I can stop when I want,' so I continued to cut. I have been trying to stop for 8 months now. I would go 3 weeks and cut, I would go 1 month and 3 days and cut, I would go for 1 month and 28 days and cut. I haven't made it to 2 months yet, but I am trying so hard. **When I feel like I have to cut, I take a cold shower. Or I put ice on my arm.** You still get that numbing sensation. Good luck on stopping."



"I cut for about 2½ years, off and on. I eventually became addicted and couldn't stop. I have been seeing a counselor for around 2 years or more. I finally came to the point in my life, with my counselor's help and my best friends' support, where **I got tired of hurting myself** and I was seriously ready to stop cutting (for good, this time). I have now been cut-free for a few months. **I haven't had any more urges since I came to that conclusion.**"



"I tried the rubber band. Yeah, I did snap it too hard and ended up hurting myself. Now **I scrape scissors or anything sharp into a side of my desk.** I can dig as hard as I can without bleeding and scarring. I liked to count my cuts to think about how many times I got hurt. Now it's in the wood forever and it helps me a lot even though I don't wanna think about the bad times. My old diary was filled with sad stories and all about hating people. **I started a fresh diary and tried writing more positive things.** Every once in a while I write bad things and how I feel. That's my healthy way of expressing myself."



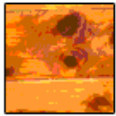
"I used to cut myself, and I realized that I did it because I felt bad for my friend, who cut herself, and **I really did it for curiosity. It didn't help me, it made more problems,** and I really hated myself. I told my mom and she said she had done it once, and it's not good. So stop. Your friends will always love you, like mine did, and my crush loves me more now, lol."



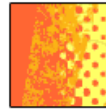
"I'm going to try and stop cutting myself because I know that it's not a good thing to do but it did relieve stress for a little bit. But the problems were still there and nothing can cover up the problems . . . **unless you talk about them, that's really the only way you can overcome the problems.**"



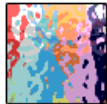
"I used to cut myself but my best friend helped me stop by love and **telling me over and over again that she doesn't want to hear that I went overboard one day** and am in the hospital. That's the main reason I stopped."



"I don't do it for attention, it's a habit when I get upset or stressed or scared or sad, mad, angry, anything. I wear coats all the time cuz my arm is all chopped up. I don't know what to do anymore. **I'm scared I'm gonna get out of control with my cutting and end up cutting really bad one day.**"



"I used to cut (not anymore) to relieve my pain. I mean, I would just be so upset when my brothers and mom fought, then I had friends fighting at school . . . it was a way for me to **temporarily escape from the life I was living, but in a way it almost made my problems worse** and made me more isolated. Anyway, I never knew how bad cutting was until after I stopped."



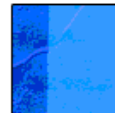
"I used to cut. It was my only way of getting away. It was the one pain I could control. But one time I did go too far. I cut too deep. When my mom found out, it was really bad. **When it got to the point to where I was lying all the time and hurting my friends, I knew I had to stop.** I now deal with my scars every day, and if I could go back in time, I would have never made them. I have people that care about me and it took me almost 2 years to figure that out. At this point I am cutting free. And I don't plan to start again."



"When you said that people try it from curiosity, well, that is true because I would have never even thought about it if my boyfriend hadn't tried it. **It's hard to deal with and usually people who don't know or understand tend to make it worse.**"



"I think cutting is an addiction. It's something you want to do over and over again. I know it's truly hard for me. Every time I do the dishes, every time I shave my legs, I get so tempted to cut! I'm just **glad I have friends to help me through it.** No matter how hard I try to push away from them, they don't take 'no' for an answer. It REALLY helps when people you care about and care about you are there for you in that low point in your life."



"I started cutting because **I couldn't handle the pressures at school.** Everyone expected me to get straight A's. **I only wish my parents could have been more understanding.** When I told them, they were shocked and disappointed, which made me feel worse. I'm just starting to go to counseling and I hope it helps."



"My friends just say stuff like if I keep doing it they won't be my friend, but that just makes me feel worse. **I wish my family and friends cared more, but I don't think they get it.**"



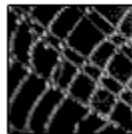
"I think that many of the techniques used helped, but not when it became a habit. Once it became habit, **the best thing and the hardest thing I did was to tell an adult.** It may seem impossible, but if they truly love you they will help you to stop. Congratulate yourself on every cut-free day. And on the days you do [cut], try to stop. It's hard but it will eventually work."



"I'm an ex-cutter, and **one thing that helped me stop was finding a way to distract myself.** The thing is, when cutting became a habit for me, I did it when I got bored, partially because I'd start thinking of the horrors of life, partially because there was nothing else to do. I suggest that, before one picks up a knife, blade, match, etc., to switch over to a book or game. Online, there are plenty of pointless yet addicting games that you can get lost in. Also, **I can distract myself with Sudoku, because it's a challenge that leaves no room for any other thought.** Those are just two things that helped me."



"I used to cut. It was a way to hide all the pain and pressure from being a teenager. One day in my 8th grade social studies class, my friend and I were passing a note [about cutting]. But the teacher grabbed the note. He read it to himself and looked at me. He said, 'Let's go down to the counselor's office.' We walked down there and I felt like I was walking the 'walk of shame.' **I talked to the counselor and she told me other ways to get rid of my anger and pain.** She also had to tell my parents I was cutting. I thought they would be angry at me, but parents are just trying to help. **So talk to your parents.** It may be scary at first but they have a lot to say and do to help you, and if you can't talk to them by yourself, have the school counselor help you find the words to say."



"I just started high school and I have a lot of self-confidence issues and as a result I started cutting. Being classed as the odd one out in my group, I grew more and more jealous. Now **my friends are helping me and are sending me to the school counselor, which is a good thing.**"



"I have been cutting for about 2 years and I'm not over it still, **but I found the more I can talk to friends the less I do it.**"



"It's extremely important to tell the friend you trust most. I did it and it worked. **After I was able to tell my group of friends finally, I stopped.**"



"I began cutting in 6th grade. During that time my single-father home was in complete and total ruins. **I was being physically and mentally abused and neglected.** The deep pain and agony led me to cutting, because I had no one to turn to. I really didn't have any friends trustworthy or mature enough to have any advice for me. So I drew myself inward. I cut for 3 years. Everyone in my family knew about me cutting but didn't know what to do. Eventually, a teacher caught me with a razor blade in school. **I am an honor-roll student with a flawless record, so everybody was shocked.** I found myself in a mental hospital for a 3-day stay. I felt so incredibly abandoned and lonely, and it seemed that nobody could understand me. Mostly because I wouldn't accept help. I lied to everybody involved. I couldn't get my father in trouble. So I was dismissed as an 'attention-cutter' and continued to cut for months. Finally, I overcame the struggle. My father is still dealing with his alcoholism, but I have only relapsed once, and luckily I pulled myself out of it. I just want to say to all the girls (and guys) that can relate to my story that **there is hope. There is ALWAYS an alternative. Take care of yourselves."**