

Online supplement for Lewis and Hasking, DOI: 10.1176/appi.ps.202000396

Strategies to draw on when using a person-centred approach when responding to and supporting someone who engages in self-injury

<u>STRATEGY</u>	<u>EXAMPLES</u>
Acknowledge self-injury is difficult to talk about	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I know self-injury can be hard to talk about for a lot of people. But I'd like to learn more about your experience. ● I recognise that this is hard to talk about. I appreciate you're willing to talk about your self-injury with me. ● I can see this is difficult for you to talk about but I'd like you to know that I'm here to listen when you are ready to talk about it.
Respectful Curiosity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sometimes when people have difficulty coping, they intentionally hurt themselves without wanting to die. Is this something you have done in the past? ● When people experience some of the difficulties you've mentioned they respond by self-injuring without wanting to die. I'm wondering if this has happened for you? ● Can you help me understand how self-injury works for you? ● Can you help me understand what makes it difficult for you to talk about self-injury? ● Can you describe what makes it hard for you when you have an urge to self-injure? ● I'd like to understand more about your experience. Could you tell me a bit about why you self-injure? ● Some people say they self-injure to cope when they feel really overwhelmed. I'm curious if this is the case for you? ● Have you ever had thoughts of ending your life when you self-injure? What about at other times?
Acknowledge self-injury serves a purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It sounds like self-injury helps you to feel a bit better when you're really distressed and overwhelmed. ● Given what you've shared, I can understand why you feel the need to self-injure when you're so upset. ● I can see that self-injury helps you to cope when things get really difficult.
Acknowledge that individuals may not be ready to stop self-injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● You said that self-injury helps you when you're really overwhelmed. Because of this, I can see why you may not be ready to stop. ● Given what you said about why you self-injure, I can see how it would be difficult to stop. ● I can understand you're not ready to stop self-injuring. It is not uncommon for people to go back and forth about whether they want to stop or not
Use a person's language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If the individual refers to "cutting" vs. self-injury: <i>Can you tell me more about your cutting?</i>

Avoid value-laden, labeling language	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Terms to avoid: maladaptive, unhealthy, or dysfunctional coping/behaviour; cutter, self-injurer, self-harmer
Focus on strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Highlight times when an urge was not acted on, especially if the individual does not acknowledge it or dismisses it• Highlight effort/courage when someone discloses difficult experiences• Highlight the effort needed to try different coping strategies
Draw on motivational interviewing approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are some of the advantages of continuing to self-injure?• What are some of the disadvantages?• If you woke up tomorrow morning and self-injury was no longer part of your life, how would you know? What would be different?• How much do you believe you can resist an urge to self-injure?