Self-Injury

Self-Injury IS:

😊 More common than people realise
😊 The only coping skill some people have when they feel emotionally overwhelmed
😊 Not intended to kill – it keeps people alive in the face of intolerable mental pain
😊 Frequently mistaken for a suicidal gesture or failed suicide attempt
😊 Time-out from stressful situations
😊 An emotional pain controller – serves as a method for converting emotional pain into physical pain that can be seen and managed
😊 A secretive and shameful activity for many people
😊 Often misdiagnosed and misunderstood
😊 Can affect people from all walks of life

Self-Injury IS NOT:

😊 A teenage fad
😊 An all female phenomenon
😊 Attention-seeking or manipulative behaviour
😊 Carried out with the purpose of hurting others
😊 Conclusively a sign of mental illness
😊 Easy to change
😊 Automatically an indicator of child abuse
😊 An act that people necessarily want to engage in - some people feel compelled to hurt themselves

Self-Injuries are RARELY:

😊 Freaks, weird, masochists
😊 A danger to other people
😊 Able to identify, communicate and/or release their emotions constructively
Responses They NEED:

😊 To find alternative coping methods of their own accord and at their own pace
😊 Love, support, understanding
😊 Help to find healthy alternative coping skills
😊 Gentle encouragement to recognise and put into words their emotions
😊 Time, space, good listening
😊 People they can trust
😊 Care, concern, compassion and respect

Responses They DON'T Need:

😊 Stereotyping, judgemental attitudes
😊 Assumptions about what their behaviour means
😊 Chastising their behaviour
😊 Reacting with anger, revulsion, condemnation
😊 Threatening and issuing ultimatums