

Appendix 3 – Distraction Techniques

Distraction techniques are a useful way for young people to distract themselves from urges to self-harm

Here are some suggestions for young people (Some have been taken from the calm-harm app)

With the young person identify a few they think could be helpful/ Encourage them to write them in their phone or give them to the young person on a piece of paper so they can access these distractions more easily when they are feeling the urge to self-harm

- Go for a walk or do some gentle exercise
- Whilst on a walk connect with nature, think about what you can see, hear and smell?
- Focus on your breathing
- Text a friend or give them a ring
- Play music and sing or dance along
- Write down your thoughts
- Hit a cushion or pillow
- Tear up a magazine or newspaper
- Use some hand cream, rub gently in to your hands
- Stroke a pet or something soft like a blanket
- Paint or draw your emotions
- Do breathing exercises such as the one below. – others can be found on calm-harm or youtube
- Write out what's bothering you on a piece of paper and tear it up
- Start a 'positive statements about me' diary
- Run on the spot as fast as you can, see how long you can do this for
- Have a bubble bath
- Tidy up your bedroom or organise something e.g. a shelf, some clothes