

# Understanding Self-Harm

What I'd like to grasp today:

## 1. Definition of self-harm:

*Self-harm is the act of deliberately causing oneself physical pain or injury in order to address some kind of emotional need (and bring relief) – usually in ways that are hidden, always in ways that impact spiritual health.*

- Punishment
- Cleansing
- Control
- Sensation

## 2. Self-harm not suicide

### **3. Route to self-harm**

- Pain
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- Wrong beliefs about God, self and the world
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- Contact with others who are struggling in this way

What worries you about supporting someone who self-harms?

### **4. Supporting those who hurt: Boundaries, Bibles and Hippos ...**

*The Love, Know, Speak, Do structure that follows is based on Paul Tripp's work in his book, Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands.*

Sam (male or female – your choice) is 19. Working in a shop 6 days a week, Sam has some financial independence but still lives at home with a father who has been verbally and sometimes physically abusive over the years. Sam is well-liked at work but doesn't handle difficult customers well. When complaints come, Sam retreats to the stock room and unleashes blow after blow onto his/her arm.

5. **Love**

- Loving God
- Loving Church
- Loving Counsellor
- Loving Co-operation

6. **Know**

- Knowing the pain
- Knowing the function
- Knowing the false beliefs
- Knowing the external influences

7. **Speak**

- Speaking words of prayer
- Speaking words of comfort
- Speaking words of gospel hope
- Speaking words of truth in love

8. **Do**

- Doing fight
- Doing flight
- Doing accountability
- Doing perseverance and praise

***Aim: that [they] may be presented perfect in Christ***