

**Don't treat me bad because of what I do. Don't treat me bad, I'm struggling as it is, don't treat me bad.**

**Punishment and control are two words that I would associate with what I was going through and what I did, and *ownership* as well I guess.**

**Believe what's going on for the person; don't label them in any way; really hear and listen.**

**It doesn't hurt forever, and you don't have to hurt yourself forever.**

**It gave me a great release, a *huge* release.**

**I *don't* believe its right to put people in psychiatric units because of self-harming. I think that actually does more damage than good. I need a counsellor *not* to be put into a psychiatric unit. Cos all that does is mess up people's lives and take away any reason they might have for *not* doing it: like *normality*; like their job; like relationships; friendships.**

Above are the voices of some of the participants of my research project  
"Flesh Wounds? New Ways of Understanding Self-Injury."

My research uses methodological and representational practices from the humanities and arts in order to develop a non-medical and understanding of self-injury. The aims of the project are: To use creative practices to promote an accessible, person-centred understanding of self-injury, from a holistic, harm-reduction, embodied perspective; To increase points of dialogue between *all* perspectives involved in and/or affected by self-injury; To illustrate both positive and negative responses to and interventions in self-injury and to highlight their impacts for the individual/s concerned.

The research will be written up as "ethnographic fictions", i.e. empirically-based short stories, which express key issues around self-injury. This format ensures accessibility for lay persons and professionals, interdisciplinary applications, and ensures confidentiality for participants. As a creative practice, this medium promotes empathy, connection, and a deeper understanding of the issues and individuals involved, than is possible within more traditional research or clinical accounts.

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