

Self Injury: Simple Answers to Complex Questions

Jason J Washburn



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This book provides comprehensive, authoritative, yet accessible information about nonsuicidal self-injury (referred to simply as "self-injury). Self-injury is a complicated and mystifying condition; purposefully causing pain in order to feel better is, by its very nature, a complex thing. This book helps to de-mystify this condition by providing answers to questions about self-injury that are informed both by the research and the rich clinical experience of the authors. Written by a team of clinical experts in the assessment and treatment of self-injury, this book is designed to be accessible to a wide audience, including the general public, healthcare providers, teachers and school administrators, people who suffer from self-injury, and family members of people who suffer from self-injury. Here are three reasons why this book is worth your time and energy: 1. Written by Experts. The authors are clinicians who work every day with children, adolescents, and adults who engage in self-injury. We are a multidisciplinary team of experts who specialize in self-injury, providing insights from clinical psychology, medicine, psychiatry, nursing, and counseling fields. Specifically, we are the medical directors, program directors and coordinators, clinicians, and researchers for one of the largest specialty services for self-injury, the Center for Self-Injury Recovery. The Center for Self-Injury Recovery is located within the 7th largest behavioral health provider in the United States, Alexian Brothers Behavioral Health Hospital. Since the service began in 2002, the Center for Self-Injury Recovery has treated over 2,500 individuals with self-injury. In the year before this book was published, we treated 608 children, adolescents, and adults suffering from self-injury. 2. Practical, informed answers. This is a practical book designed to provide answers to common questions about a complex and often confusing condition: self-injury. Our answers are based on information that is available in the research literature on self-injury and are enriched by our extensive clinical experience. We answer basic as well as complex questions about self-injury in a way that is accessible to someone with little knowledge about self-injury, but also informative to someone who has extensive experience with self-injury. 3. Multidisciplinary and comprehensive focus. The Center for Self-Injury Recovery at Alexian Brothers is multidisciplinary and cuts across all continuums of care, from traditional outpatient therapy to inpatient treatment. Our integrated care model includes counselors, therapists, case managers, expressive therapists, chaplains, nurses, clinical psychologists, and psychiatrists. The questions and answers in this book reflect the variety of clinical disciplines and levels of care that is provided at the Center for Self-Injury Recovery. This book is designed to provide answers to questions asked by people who self-injure and the people that care about them, including parents, spouses, siblings, and friends. It is also designed to answer questions that professionals may have, such as therapists, counselors, teachers, nurses, clinical psychologists, physicians, and psychiatrists. In conclusion, this book is our attempt to share with you the expertise, experience, and tools we have gathered and developed over the last decade treating people with self-injury in the Center for Self-Injury Recovery at Alexian Brothers. We believe that the practical, clinically-focused, and evidence-informed answers provided in this book will be a resource for all people interested in better understanding and addressing self-injury. Our goal for this book is that it is kept within close reach on your desk (or your e-reader!), that it develops furled pages, is bookmarked extensively, and has text highlighted and margins full of scribbles. Above all else, we hope that you find it useful in recovery from self-injury.

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