

Understanding Self Injury: Values, Empowerment and Relationships

This online course is for anyone who is interested in self-injury and self-harm. The course has been designed for people who self-injure, family/friends wanting to support people who self-injure and workers and services in the area of self-injury.

Although this course is about understanding self-injury, it is not so much about exploring self-injury, techniques and tools to support people who self-injure, but instead the course focus on explore self-injury at a deeper level, enabling the student to find ways to work with the person who self-injures or for people who self-injure to work with those trying to support them. Apart from at the start of the course, when students are invited to look at their views on self-injury, the remaining focus of the course is not on self-injury, instead about values, empowerment and relationships.

In this course, we want students to move away from the power around the behaviour of self-injury, and instead move towards the experience and essence behind the act. If you are wanting to support someone who self-injures, you need to ask yourself “are you ready to listen?”. If you are someone who self-injures, you need to ask yourself “are you ready to share your experiences and feelings with others?”.

Through an interactive learning environment, you will be able to learn from others taking the course. You will explore the challenges, frustrations and views of self-injury and challenge the barriers of keeping self-injury hidden/secret. Drawing on your own experiences you will explore what we mean by values look at your personal values and your values around self-injury, developing an understanding of why values are so important.

These areas will act as a foundation, as you examine in depth the importance of empowerment, you will learn about the three keys to empowerment and how to develop empowerment in relationships. This new understanding will enable you to explore the areas of risk and support in relation to self-injury.

Once grounded within this awareness, the course, allows you to look behind self-injury and ways to move forward towards recovery. The course ends with a lesson looking at how to take learning forward into life, by reflecting on your learning throughout the whole course and thinking about how you are going to take you learning forward into your life and practice.

The learning format/approach has been designed to meet all learning styles. Learning formats include: documents, PowerPoints, videos, exercises/activities, additional reading and learning from each other through forums.

This course is dedicated to Ian Murray, RMN. Ian was a caring, compassionate mental health nurse. He was ahead of his time and was known to challenge the poor practices in mental health care. About 20 years ago, he wrote a course on self-harm for Working to Recovery Ltd to deliver as a face-to-face instructor led course. The themes of his course have been used to write this online course on self-injury. You will see some of Ian’s writings used within this course.

Learning Outcomes:

- Consider what is meant by the term 'self-injury'.
- Explore the challenges, frustrations and good practices around self-injury.
- Confront the challenges and barriers of keeping self-injury hidden/secret
- Drawing on your own experiences, explore what is meant by values and look at your own personal values.
- Develop an understanding of why values are so important.
- Examine in depth the importance of empowerment, the three keys to empowerment and how to develop empowerment in relationships.
- Explore the areas of risk and support in relation to self-injury.
- Look behind self-injury and ways to move forward towards recovery.
- Reflect you learning through the whole course and think about how to take your learning forward into your life and practice.

Outline of the Course

Lesson 1 – Introductions to Self Injury

Lesson 2 – The Importance of Values

Lesson 3 – The Importance of Empowerment

Lesson 4 – Support / Risk

Lesson 5 – Moving Towards Recovery

Lesson 6 – Taking Learning forward into Life

The course will take students up to **21½ hours** to complete, please see below for breakdown of this time.

Course Description

Lesson	Description	Length
<u>Lesson 1</u> Introductions to Self Injury	To start the course, you will be thinking about what self-injury means to you, the challenges that are faced and how people can support those that self-injure. You will be personally thinking about your own experiences, reading a discussion paper and undertaking an exercise on how we can develop a supportive relationship, between the supporter and person who self-injure. This will act as a foundation, to build on, throughout the rest of the course. In this first lesson, there is quite a lot of sharing in two different forums. Not only is it important to share so that students can learn from each other, but maybe more importantly, it will begin the process of learning to share potential uncomfortable things with others, which will be looked at in more detail in Lesson 3. If you self-injure yourself, your sharing will also be really useful, for others to learn from the lived experience of people who self-injure.	3 ½ hours of learning time
<u>Lesson 2</u> The Importance of Values	In this Lesson, students will explore the idea of values and how this can help form effective and meaningful relationships between the supporter and person who self-injures. Students will look at their own personal values and be introduced to the idea and importance of values. The Lesson will then progress on taking this learning forward, to look at values around self-injury and how values are a key to developing effective and meaningful relationships. Students will undertake exercises, reading, watch a video and share in a forum.	3 hours of learning time

<p>Lesson 3</p> <p>The Importance of Empowerment</p>	<p>In this Lesson, students are introduced to the concept of empowerment and explore why it is important in the relationship of working with and support people who self-injure. This leads on to examine, in depth, the three key points of empowerment - 1) Sharing Information with Everyone; 2) Creating Autonomy through Boundaries; 3) Replace Hierarchy with Self-Directed Teams. The focus is not so much on self-injury, but more on gaining a deeper understanding and experience of forming empowerment. Each of the key points is introduced and students explore them in depth through reading, exercise and sharing in the forum.</p>	<p>5 hours of learning time</p>
<p>Lesson 4</p> <p>Support / Risk</p>	<p>In this Lesson, students are introduced to the concept of support and risk and examine these two areas in relation to self-injury. Students are invited to read presented papers and writings and to reflect on them, to enhance their learning. Sharing in a forum at the end is important to allow students to learn and interact with each other.</p>	<p>3 ½ hours of learning time</p>
<p>Lesson 5</p> <p>Moving towards Recovery</p>	<p>Apart from at the start of this course when the student looked at what self-injury meant to them, the focus of this course has not been on self-injury. This is because the issue is not to do with self-injury, instead, it is about values, empowerment and relationship. We want to move away from the power around the behaviour of self-injury, and instead, move towards experience, relationship and recovery. If you are wanting to support someone who self-injures, you need to ask yourself "are you ready to listen?". If you are someone who self-injures, you need to ask yourself "are you ready to share your experiences and feelings with others?". In this lesson, we continue to look behind the behaviour, enabling the student to gain the eureka moment of moving towards recovery.</p>	<p>4 hours of learning time</p>
<p>Lesson 6</p> <p>Taking your Learning Forward</p>	<p>In this final lesson, we want you to look back over the last 5 Lessons so that you can think about what you have learnt and how you are going to take the learning forward. There is a Worksheet for you to complete.</p>	<p>2½ hours of learning time</p>

Course Leaders

The course leaders are Jim Campbell and Karen Taylor, who have extensive experience in this area.

Jim Campbell is the Recovery College Manager within the Working to Recovery Online Open Recovery College. He has worked for the last twenty years in both healthcare and education. Jim's own journey of recovery has enabled him to specialise in this area. He has a long standing interest in developing alternative understandings, systems and tools for helping people who experience problems in life. Jim's own route to recovery and the challenges of working in healthcare as a mental health nurse, gives him a passion and enthusiasm in recovery, giving people hope that change can and will happen. Jim co-authored, with Ron Coleman, [Reclaiming our Lives: A workbook for males who have experienced sexual abuse](#).

Karen Taylor has a background as a Psychiatric Nurse Manager (RMN), Consultant and Trainer. She is an RMN with 16 years' experience in the NHS in England with both older people and adults of working age. After leaving the NHS, Karen managed the company 'Keepwell Ltd' for 2 years, where she ran a psychosis resolution service based on recovery and co-authored the workbook '*Working to Recovery*'. Karen has been involved in introducing recovery training in Australia, New Zealand, Palestine, Denmark and Italy, as well as throughout the United Kingdom. Based in Scotland, Karen is Director of *Working to Recovery Ltd.*, alongside with Ron Coleman. Karen and Ron are passionate that recovery is for all, including workers, and together they travel the world, telling their story of recovery and spreading a message based on hope, engaging with mental health services, carers and service users and challenging them to review their roles and embrace recovery for all.

This Course was written by Ian Murray and edited / adapted to an online course by Jim Campbell.

Sample of the Course Certificate

