

# UNDERSTANDING FEAR

AND WAYS OUT OF IT

ENGLISH



## **WELCOME!**

It's not easy to resume a normal life after difficult experiences such as violence at home or in foreign countries, war situations or becoming a refugee. Many things change and sometimes you may not be sure about yourself anymore.

## EMOTIONAL INJURIES – TRAUMA

We all know injuries of the body: bruises after being hit, burns when our skin has come into contact with something too hot, cuts when something sharp or spiky has touched our skin...

In the same way our body can suffer from injuries, also our soul can be injured. Injuries of the body are usually visible. Emotional injuries are invisible and therefore much harder to understand: for the injured person as well as others. This story is about such an emotional wound.

Are there things that frighten you because they remind you of difficult times? Is there something that makes you really sad and you don't

want to talk about it? Are there others who cannot understand why you don't feel like doing something you liked doing before? Do you just want to be left alone – or on the contrary – need someone close by? As you will see, other young people know what you are going through from own experience!

Anxiety helps us to keep safe in dangerous moments and helps us to protect ourselves. But in long-lasting situations of anxiety and if anxiety stays even after surviving extreme stress, we have to find ways out. In this story we tell about these forms of anxiety and show some ideas what can help to overcome these feelings.

### *GENERAL CONCEPT:*

In several stories we talk about problems after emotional injuries – about sleeplessness, anxiety, anger, feeling aggressive or sad, grief, difficulties remembering things and concentrating, distressing memories and other topics. We also offer suggestions about what could help.

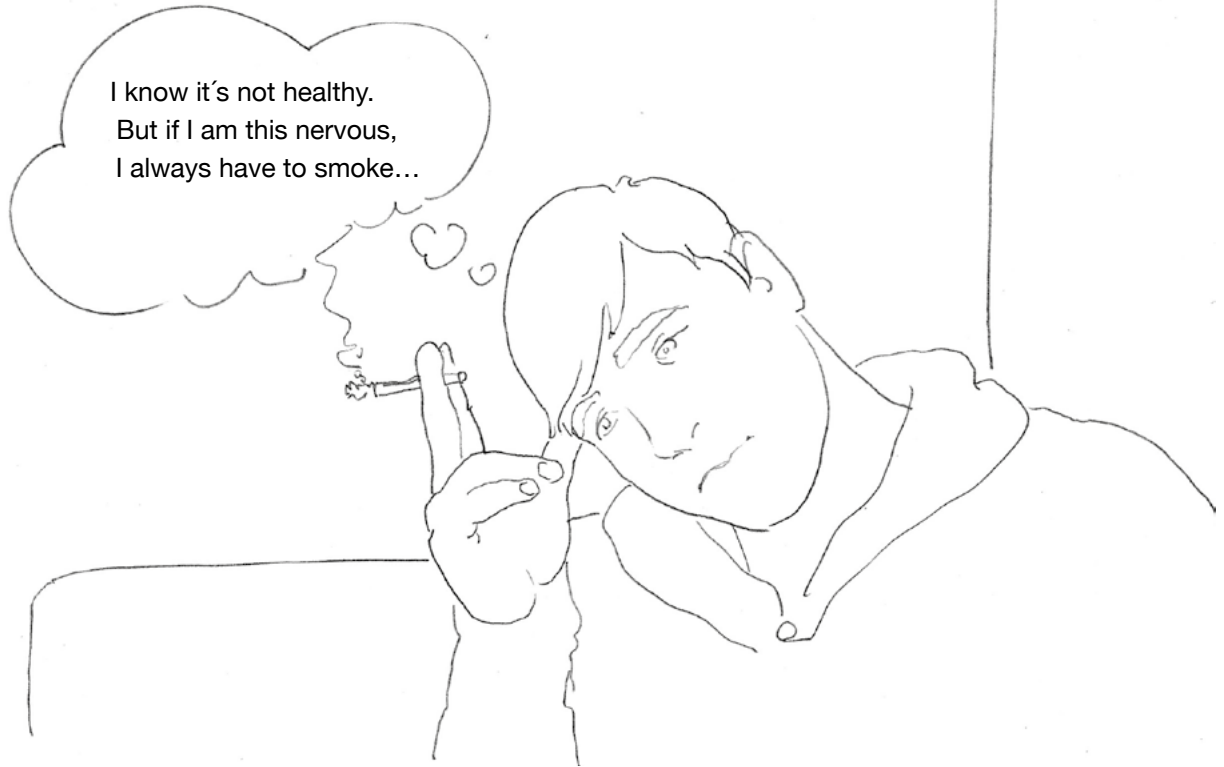
Jon is 16 years old. He has been afraid for a long time. He tries to be strong. But it gets worse and worse



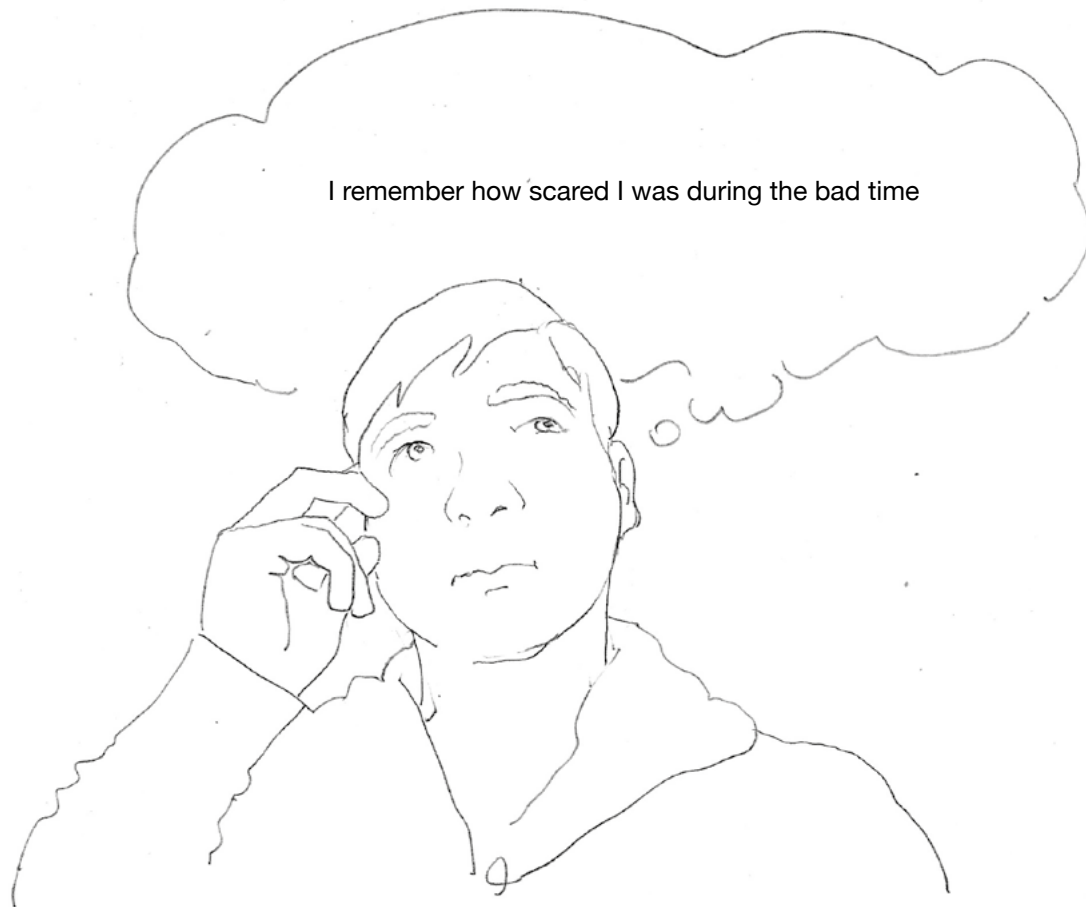




It's strange, I don't have to be afraid.








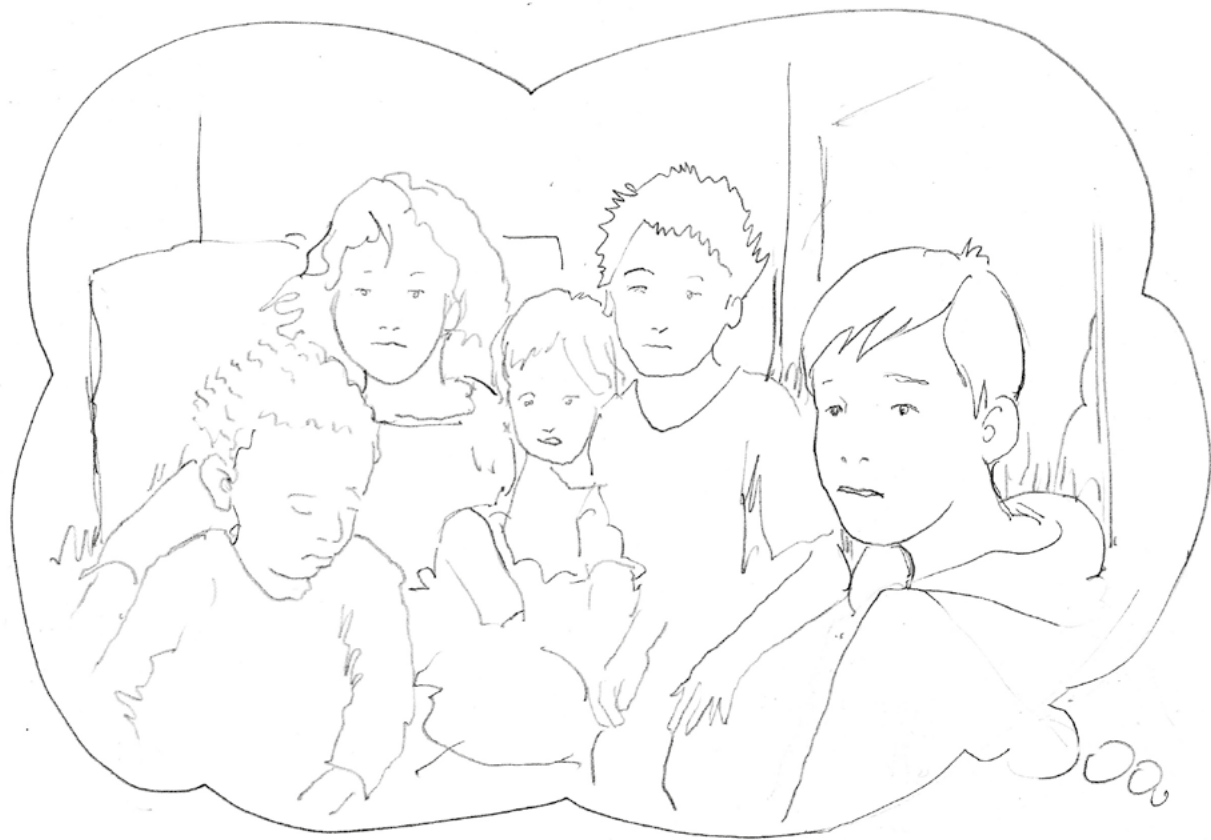








Fear helped me to do the right thing.



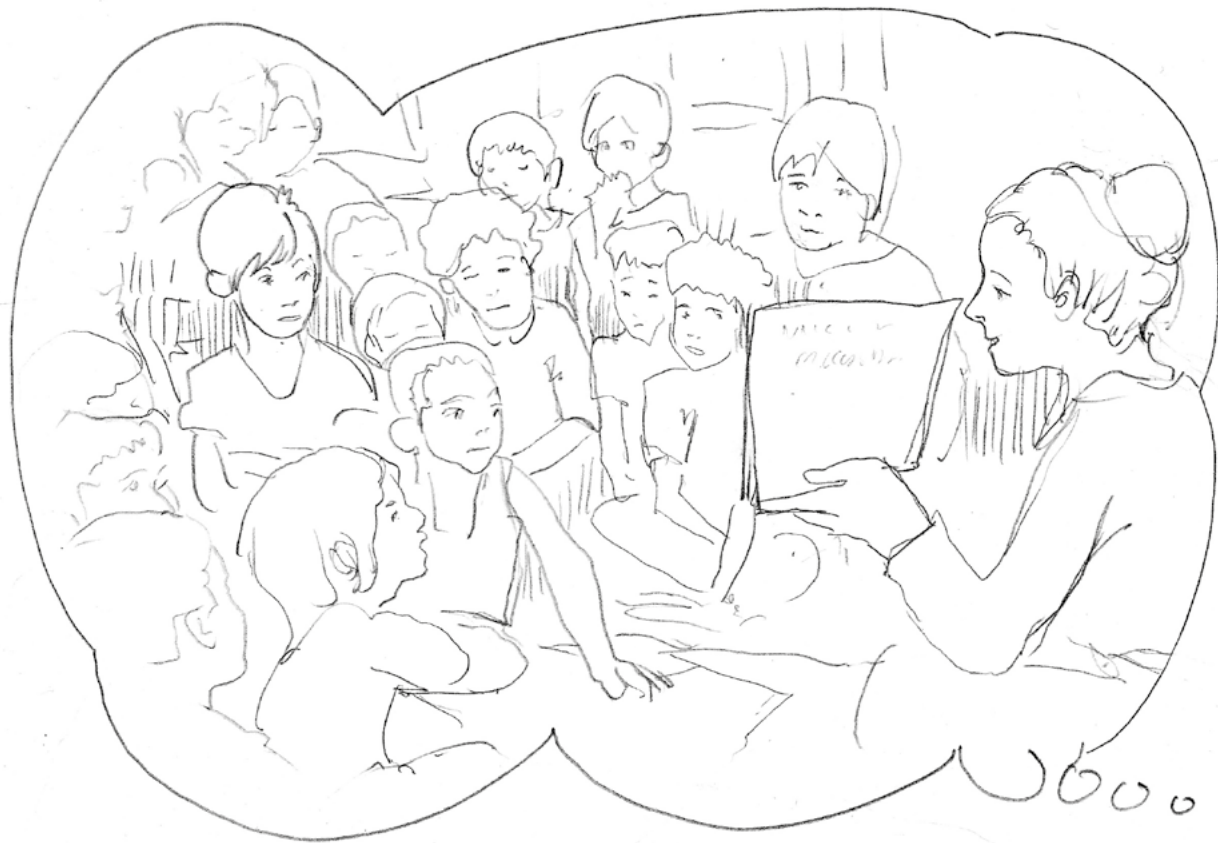
But when we just had to wait, fear was so horrible.  
We could do nothing.

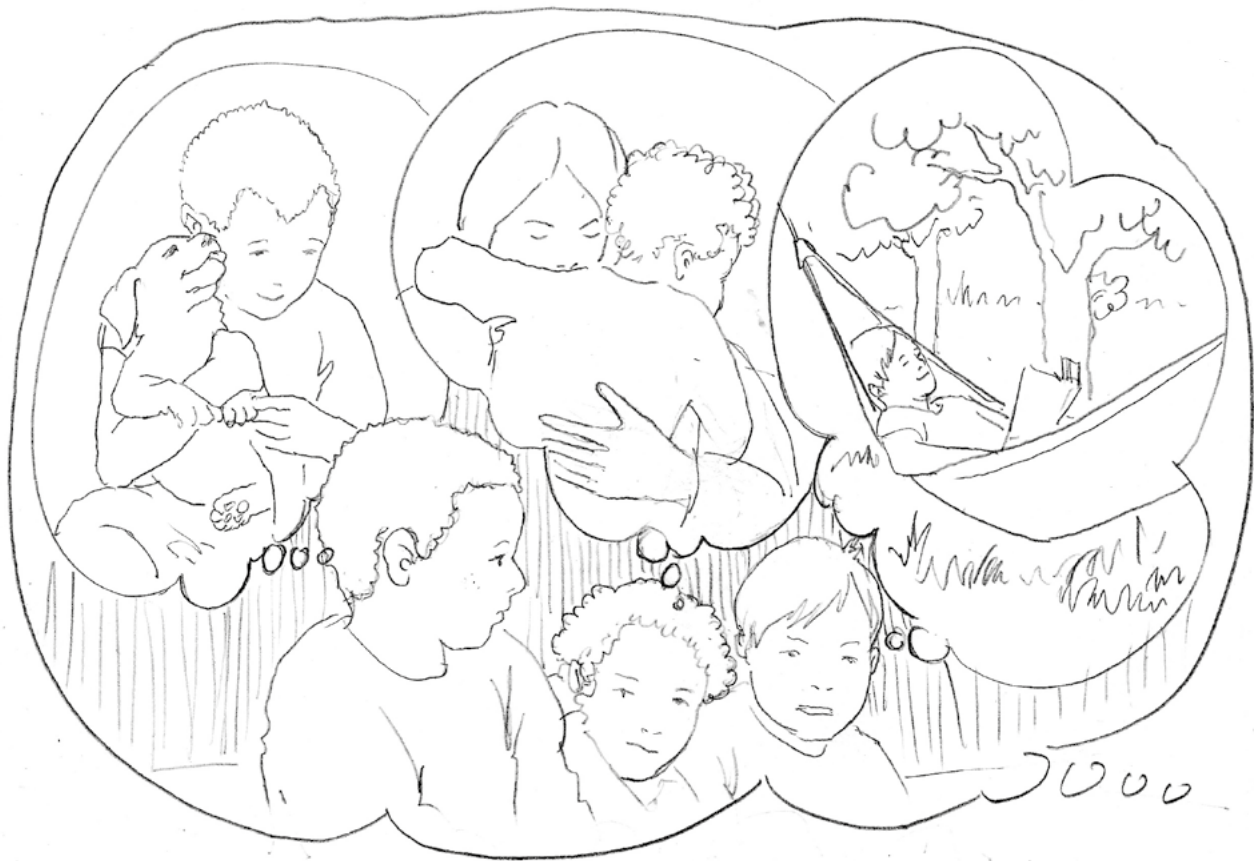


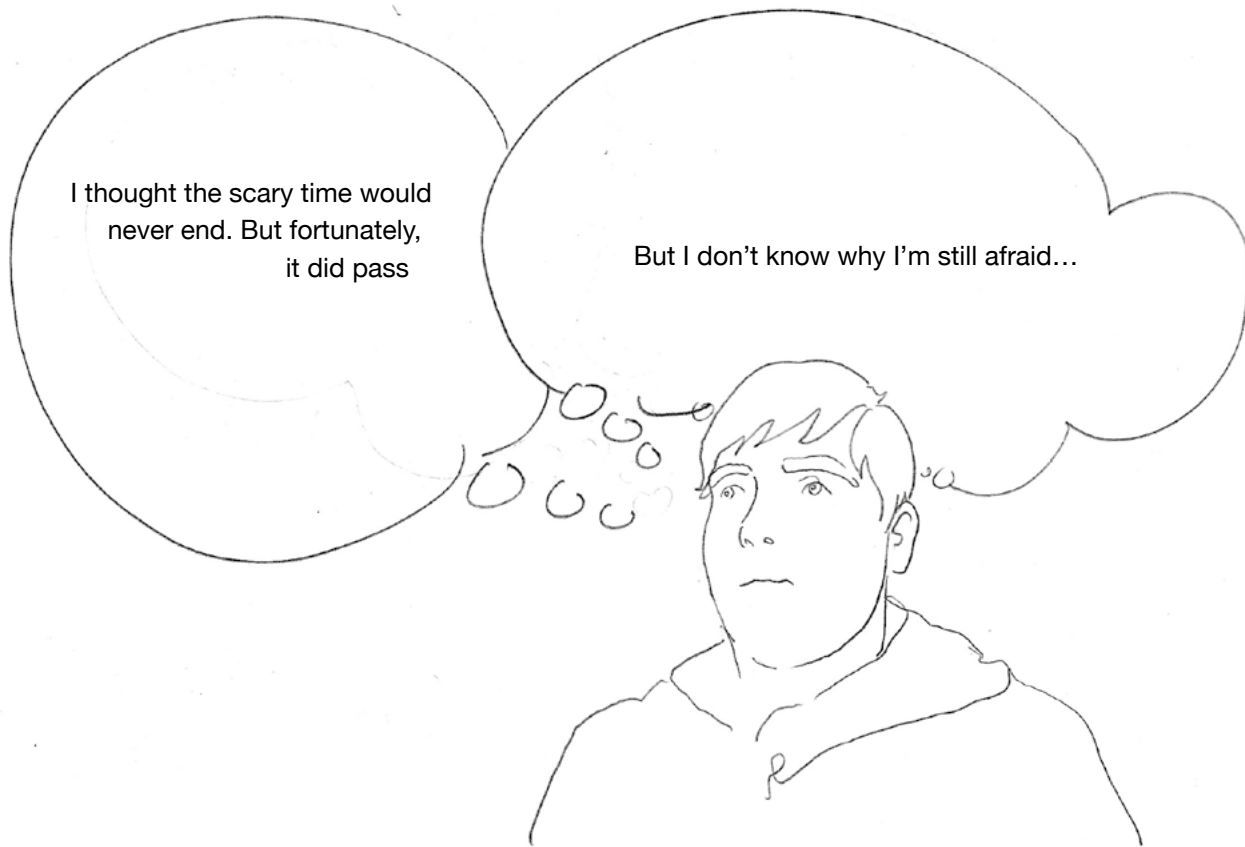
Fortunately, there was the woman who was telling us stories...  
Sometimes then I could forget the fear.  
And then we also came up with lots of stories.

















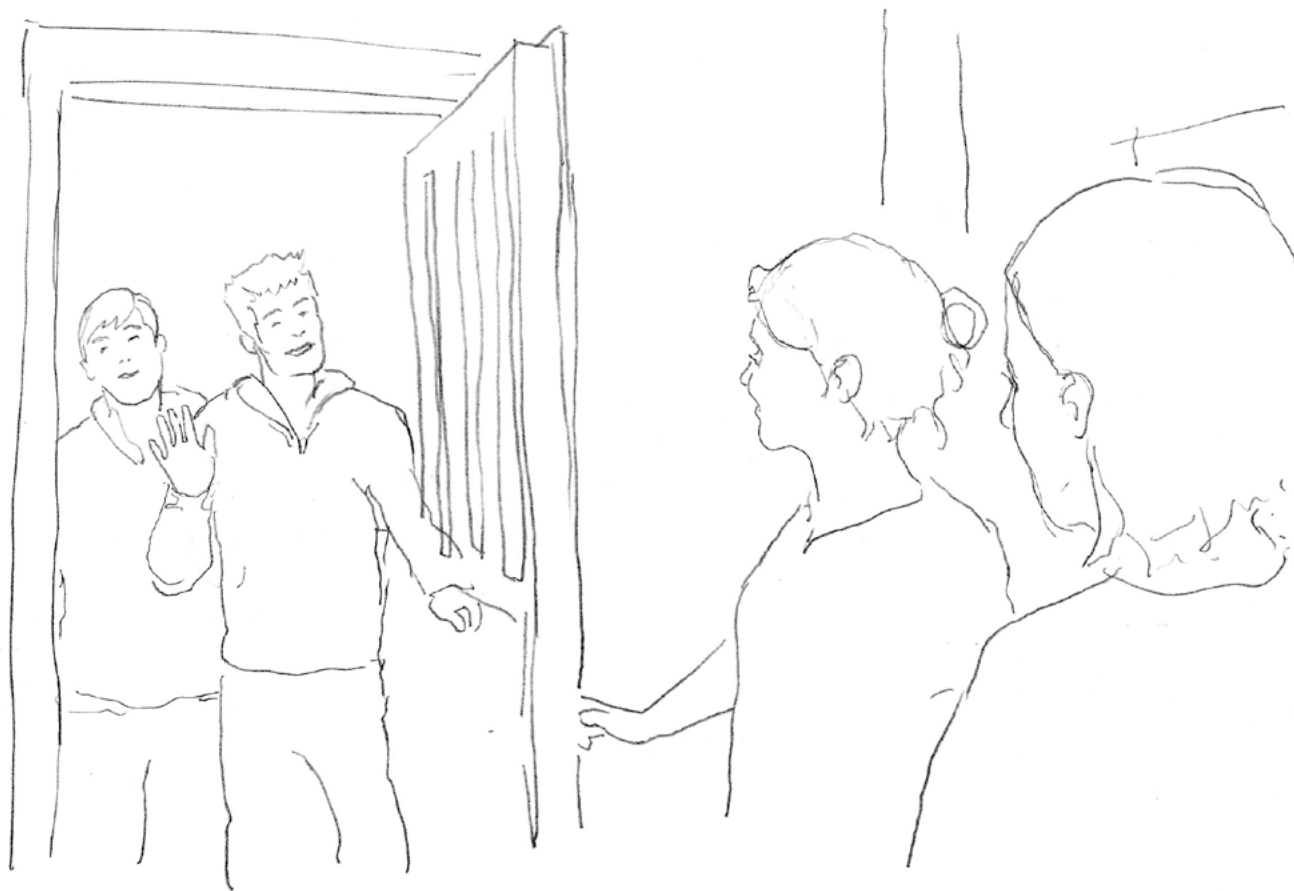


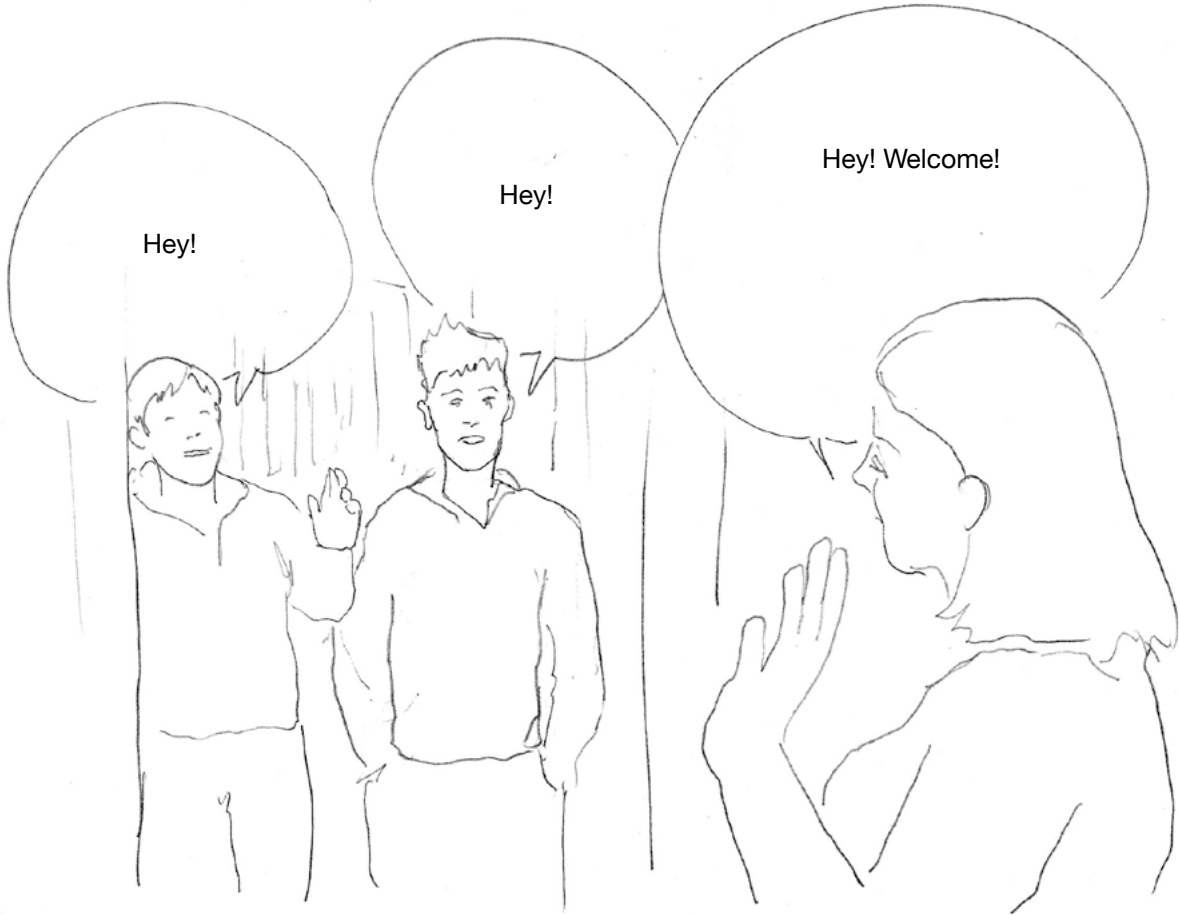






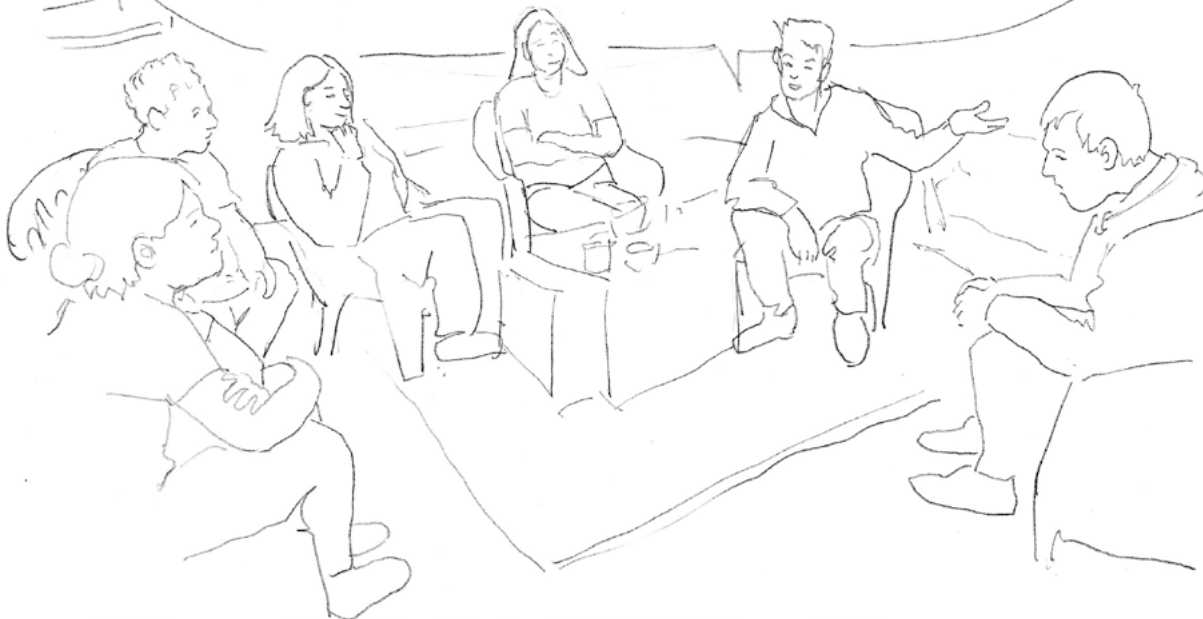
A few days later...







This is Jon. He has also experienced scary things. I really had to convince him to come with me today.











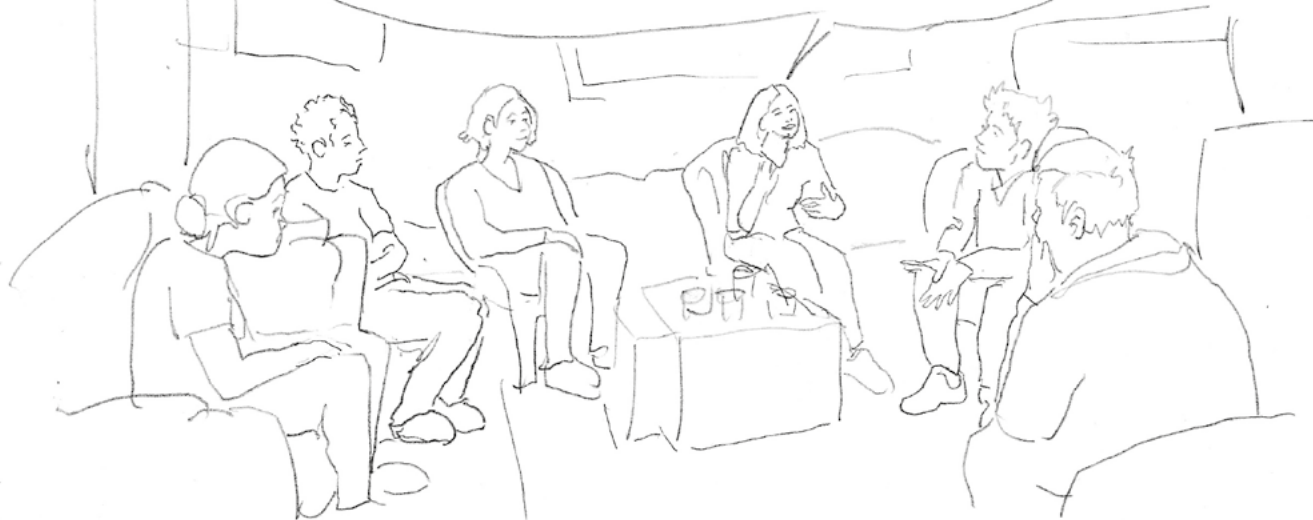


POLICE

I have learned that there are different times now.  
I can also say "NO" once I don't want something.  
Or I can ask for help.



Yes, I was also very scared.  
I did get so angry back then.







It was really hard. But I understood that my anger has to do with the past.  
The conversations with my caregiver were great.  
Now I can control my feelings better




It was different for me. My whole body  
used to hurt me so much.



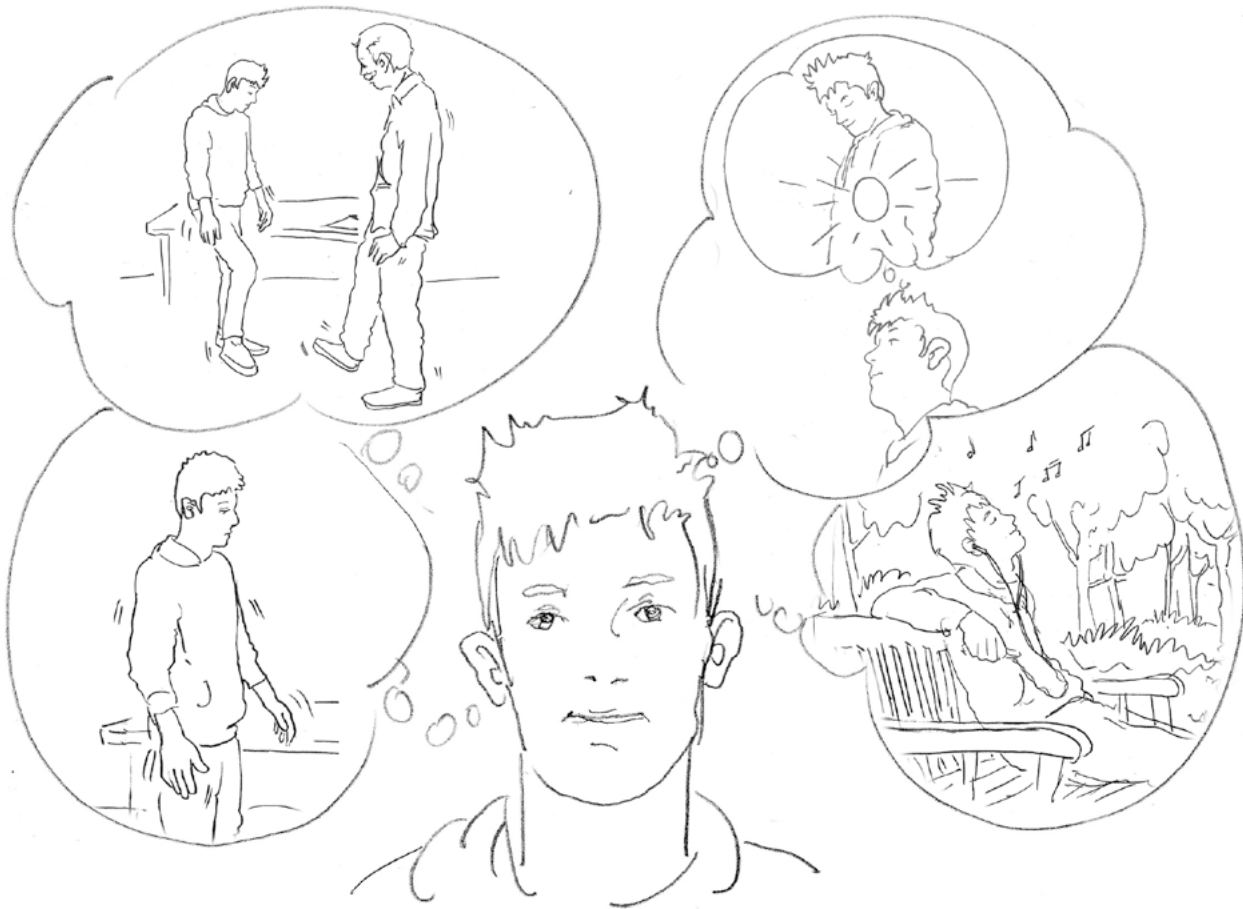








Fortunately, it's better already. When I have stress, something immediately hurts. But there are exercises that help me.







You chill while listening to music.  
I do it myself!



I think it's normal to be afraid after what I have experienced.

I thought it was just me...



It's really good that we're talking about it.  
With me it was a bit different. But I was also afraid.



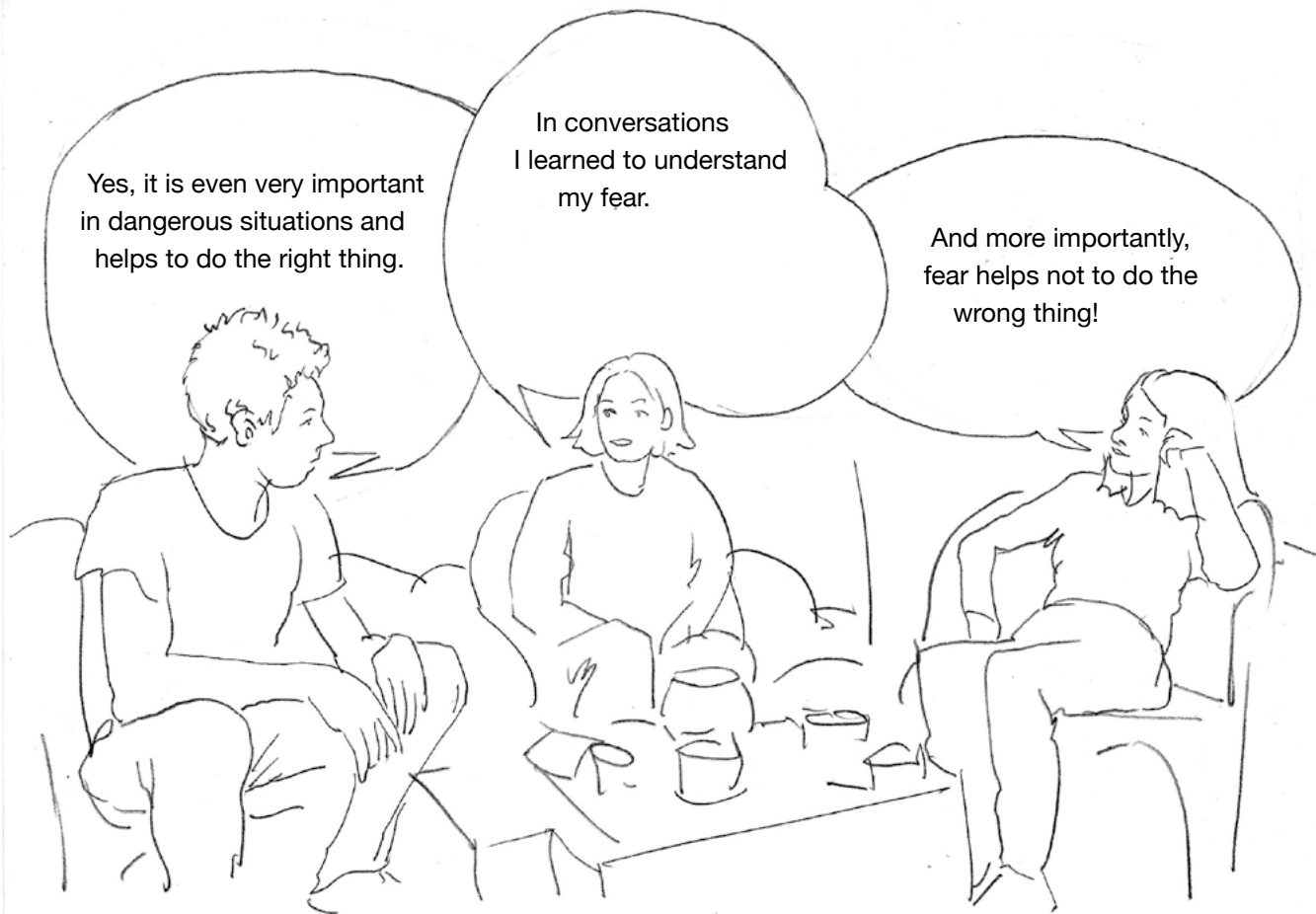







I was afraid every day that I would  
make mistakes again...





But when the world is safe again,  
we no longer need this great fear.  
But it is still there.





But we already know a lot of things that can help us.  
And we will also find something for Jon too...









And if you'd rather talk to someone who knows the ropes, we can help you find someone.









And sometimes it's just good to be able  
to laugh too....





## **HOW DO DOCTORS, THERAPISTS AND COUNSELLORS HELP?**

Sometimes, you are feeling unwell, without knowing exactly why. In such moments, it is good if someone is there to listen, understand and help. These can be family members and friends. When there are major problems, it is good to see doctors, healers, or so-called psychologists, psychotherapists or psychological counsellors.

Especially after very bad experiences, it can help to talk to therapists, psychologists or psychological counsellors to seek their support. Here, you can talk about things that preoccupy and worry you. But you do not have to if you do not want to, at the moment. Everything you talk about in the sessions will be kept confidential. You can rely on that. They will really listen to you and when you want to express something you do not find the right words for, there are other options, such as painting, playing games, etc. Usually, there are regular appointments for therapy or counselling. If there is not enough time, you can continue in the next session.

## **ABOUT THIS BOOKLET**

This booklet was conceived and realised by an interdisciplinary and international group of experts in the field of trauma survival:

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The purpose of this publication is to provide young people with an understanding of the impact of anxiety. In order to reach as many young people as possible, we are looking for partners interested in distributing this booklet, currently available in several languages:

German, English, Arabic, Dari-Farsi, Kurdisch Sorani and Kurdisch Kurmancî, Ukrainian and Romanian.

For further information please get in touch with [traumasurviving@gmail.com](mailto:traumasurviving@gmail.com)





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