

PTSD

EDUCATION WORKSHEETS
AND
COLORING PAGES

DRAWN BY CHRISTY BEL



IF YOU
CAN
FEEL
you can
heal.



CPTSD Damage

When you experience trauma (especially in your early years), it changes the literal structure and tuning of your brain and nervous system [health]. Your alarm system (the amygdala) becomes chronically hypersensitive, and the biological 'brake' no longer functions properly [health].

Here is why that happens, even if you want to process it very badly:

1. Neuroception: Your body scans outside of your awareness. The nervous system continuously scans the environment for danger through a process called neuroception. This happens completely outside of your thinking brain. You can decide with your adult mind (cognitively): "I am safe now and I want to process this," but your body picks up a tiny, unconscious trigger (a scent, a pitch of voice, a posture, or even an internal shift in your heart rate). Before your brain can think logically, your nervous system has already loudly sounded the alarm bells, and you shoot into Red or Blue.

**2. The body remembers what the mind has forgotten
(Implicit memory)**

Traumatic memories are often not stored as a logical story with a beginning and an end, but as loose fragments of physical sensations, scents, and emotions (implicit memory). You shoot into Red or Blue and you truly have no idea why, because there is no conscious thought or image attached to it. Your body simply relives the physiological panic of back then.

3. Wanting to process requires energy that is not there (yet)

Processing costs an enormous amount of energy from your nervous system. If your system is already chronically exhausted due to lasting damage or is constantly in survival mode, it simply lacks the physiological capacity to process that deep trauma energy. Every attempt at processing then feels like even more danger to the nervous system, causing it to immediately step on the emergency brake (Red or Blue) to protect you.



MINI EXERCISE – THE CHILD WITHIN YOU

THINK OF A DIFFICULT MOMENT WHEN YOU FELT SMALL, REJECTED, OR UNSEEN.

IMAGINE THE CHILD WITHIN YOU EXPERIENCING THAT MOMENT AGAIN, AND LOOK AT THAT CHILD WITH KINDNESS AND COMPASSION.

PLACE A HAND ON YOUR HEART AND SAY: "I SEE YOU. WHAT HAPPENED WAS NOT OKAY, AND YOU DON'T HAVE TO CARRY THIS ALONE." THEN SAY: "I'M HERE FOR YOU NOW. YOU ARE SAFE, YOU ARE VALUABLE, AND YOU ARE ALLOWED TO BE COMPLETELY YOURSELF." TAKE A SLOW BREATH IN AND OUT, AND FEEL THAT YOU CAN GIVE YOURSELF NOW WHAT YOU NEEDED BACK THEN.





Christy Bel



It is good to
clear your mind
and vent your
heart.



Christy Bel

Your tears are not a
sign of weakness.

THEY ARE YOUR BODY'S
WAY OF SAYING: LET ME
FEEL THIS FOR A MOMENT.



Fight & Flight

Active stress (Mobilization):
Adrenaline rises to survive.



Freeze , dissociate & Faint
Passive stress (Immobilization): Your system
shuts down to save energy.

**Survival is red and blue, green is where you
can recover and truly be yourself.**

**GREEN: Safety & Connection: You are
relaxed, social and in balance.**



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Green (Safety & Connection)

What do you feel in your body when you are in Green?
Which situations or triggers instantly put you into Green?
What do you do when your brain goes into Safety &
Connection mode?



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Active stress (Mobilization): Adrenaline rises to survive. Fight & Flight, adapt.

Fight: defense, taking control by dominating.

Flight: walking away, panic, being too busy.



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Red (Active stress / Mobilization)

What do you feel in your body when you shoot into 'Red'?

Which situations or triggers instantly put you into 'Red'?

What do you do when your brain goes into 'Fight or Flight' mode?



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What does 'Fight or Flight' look like for you?



"What does 'Freeze or Dissociate' look like for you?"

Red (Active stress / Mobilization)

What do you feel in your body when you shoot into 'Red'?

Which situations or triggers instantly put you into 'Red'?

What do you do when your brain goes into 'Fight or Flight' mode?





Blue ; Passive stress (Immobilization): Your system shuts down to save energy. Freeze & Faint, dissociate.

If fighting or fleeing (red) no longer helps and the stress becomes too overwhelming, your brain pulls the main switch, so to speak:

Mental checking out: You go 'out of your body'. The world feels unreal (derealization) or you feel disconnected from yourself (depersonalisation).

Biological numbness: Your nervous system dampens the emotional and physical pain. It is the ultimate emergency brake to survive when you have nowhere to go.



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Blue (Passive stress / Immobilization)

What do you feel in your body when you switch to Blue?

Which situations or triggers instantly put you into Blue?

What do you do when your brain goes into Freeze or Dissociate mode?



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Together
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CHRISTY BEL

Your world doesn't become
bigger by moving further
away from yourself,
BUT BY ALLOWING MORE
AND MORE OF YOURSELF
TO EXIST.

How do you create your own sunshine (happy chemicals) in your brain?
Your brain is the blue sky that can steer the storm!

Get moving:
go for a bike ride, run, or
dance.

Hug a person or a pet.
Think of something you
are grateful for.
Sing or listen to your
favorite music.
Do something creative.



Do you have to fight stress?

No, quite the opposite!

The stress hormone cortisol is simply trying to protect you. When you fight your stress or anxiety too hard, your brain can actually become more panicked and produce even more cortisol. So instead, allow the feeling to be there for a moment. By breathing calmly and doing an exercise, you signal to your brain that you are safe. The stress will then naturally start to fade away.



**It is good to clear
your mind and vent
your heart.**



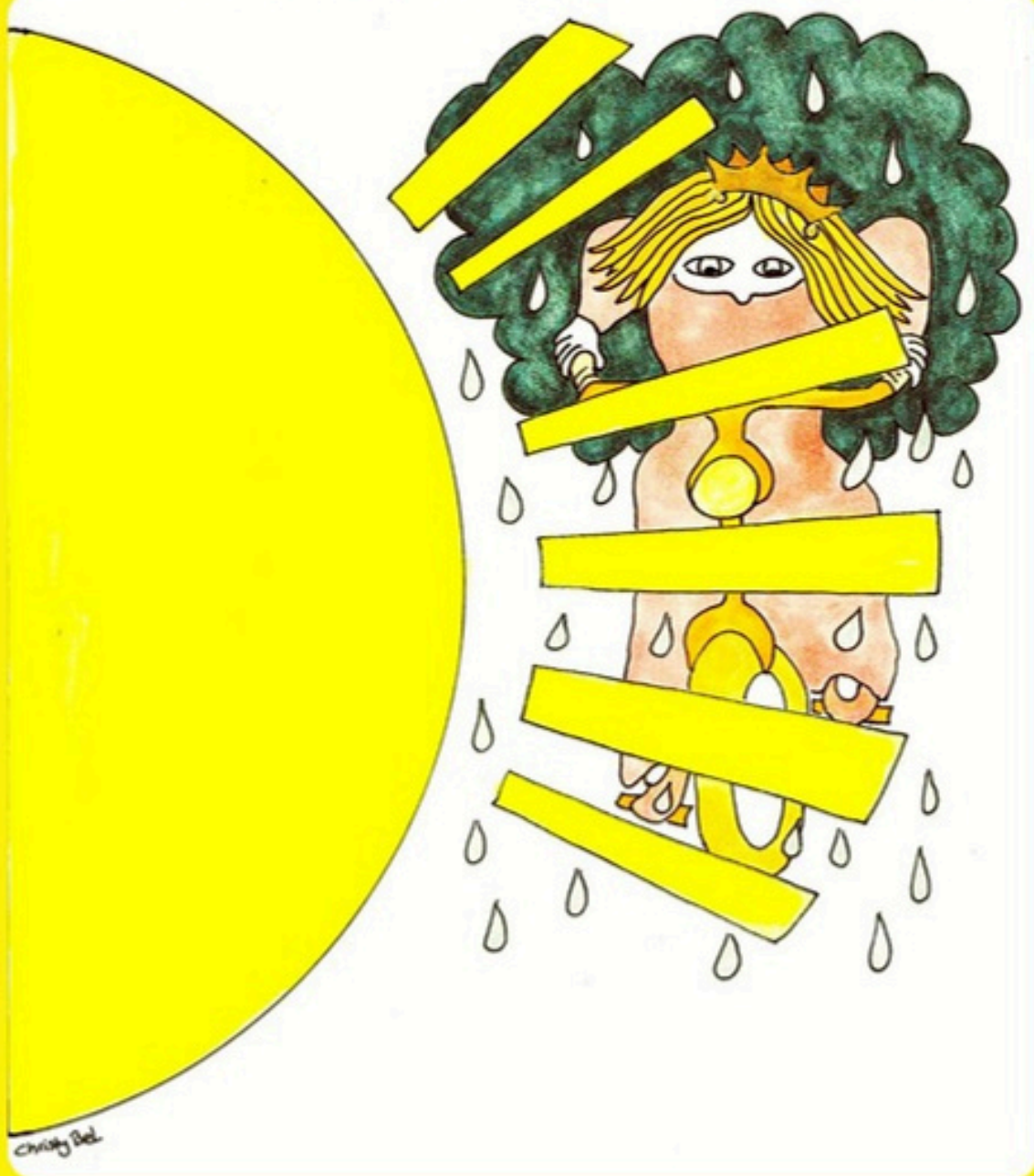
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The rain falls around me, but
God is riding with me.
I am safe and never alone.



Christy Bel

Your brain is just like the weather. A stormy feeling is caused by stress chemicals (like cortisol) in your brain. But your brain is also the blue sky that can steer the storm! Your brain creates happy chemicals (like dopamine and serotonin) that bring back the calm and the sunshine. Feelings come and go, but you steer the sky back to blue.



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It's Okay to Cry

Crying is a natural way for your body to release tension and emotions. When you hold on to sadness, stress, or fear, tension can continue to build. By allowing yourself to cry, you give yourself space to feel and allow your body to return to a calmer state.

You don't have to hold back your tears or always be strong.

Your tears are not a sign of weakness. They are your body's way of saying: let me feel this for a moment.

HEALING TAKES TIME,
GIVE YOURSELF THAT SPACE



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When stress, panic, or sadness pile up, your nervous system becomes overloaded. Sharing your story gives that pent-up tension a way out. Speaking is discharging. It instantly brings air back into your body and space into your head.



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**You grow throughout your whole life.
Your brain learns, changes, and keeps discovering
something new.**

The leaves:

**On each leaf, write a thought, a wish, or something new
you would like to learn.**

The fruits:

**What grows from your growth?
For example: helping, sharing, laughing, creating
something beautiful, or encouraging someone.**



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Imagine your hand is your brain:

Your wrist = the lower part of your brain. It controls things that happen automatically, such as breathing and making your heart beat.

Your thumb = the part of your brain that deals with emotions, such as feeling angry, scared, or sad.

Your fingers = the smart part of your brain. This is the part you use to think, plan, and make calm decisions.

Your thumb tucked under your fingers = you are calm and can think clearly.



Your fingers held up = you might be very angry or scared. Your “thinking brain” is not working as well for a moment.



In short: When you have very strong emotions, it can be harder to think calmly. First, calm down. Then you can think more clearly and look for a solution.

The Child Within You

Your world becomes bigger when you stop pushing away the child within you and start inviting them back in.

The child who was once curious, who dared to dream, asked questions, and looked at the world with wonder. The part of you that may have learned along the way to be careful, to adapt, or to hide certain feelings.

Integrating that child doesn't mean going back to who you once were. It means making space for everything you are: the adult with your wisdom, and the child with their playfulness, curiosity, and imagination.

Because when you learn to reconnect with the child within you, new possibilities begin to appear. You see differently. You feel more deeply. You dare more. And what once seemed small or far away suddenly has room to grow.

Your world doesn't become bigger by moving further away from yourself, but by allowing more and more of yourself to exist.



The setup of the exercise

During coloring, the therapist can talk about situations that bring the child into red or blue.

Or processing a moment in red or blue.

The child sits at the table and colors in a specific coloring page (for example with a figure or zones representing 'Red', 'Blue' or 'Green'). You sit next to them and optionally color along or watch. The coloring serves as a physiological anchor: the repetitive movement of coloring activates the parasympathetic nervous system and keeps the child connected to the here-and-now (safety). This provides the necessary distance to talk about the trauma-related stress without being immediately overwhelmed.

The course of the conversation

You ask the short questions in between, very casually, while the focus remains on the coloring page. This takes away the intense pressure of a direct eye-contact conversation.

Guarding safety (Window of Tolerance)

During the exposure you pay close attention to the non-verbal cues of the child:

Signs of flooding (Red): Faster breathing, pressing harder on the paper, abruptly stopping coloring.

Signs of dissociation (Blue): A glassy stare, coloring very slowly, no longer responding to your voice.



Trauma is not
what happens
to you.

Trauma is
what happens
inside you as
a result of
what happens
to you



"If the child within you is very scared right now, what does she need from you at this moment? A deep sigh, a warm blanket, or for you to place your hand on your belly for a moment?"



CHRISTY BEL

Your world doesn't become
bigger by moving further
away from yourself,
BUT BY ALLOWING MORE
AND MORE OF YOURSELF
TO EXIST.

Now
How old am I today?
Who is in the room /
around me now?
Where am I now and
what do I see around me?
What can I do now to
protect myself?



During a flashback or intense stress, your nervous system thinks that the danger of back then is happening again now [health]. Staying in the here-and-now means that you give your body active signals that time has changed. By consciously looking, hearing, and feeling where you are right now, you help your brain understand: the trauma is over, I am safe now [health].



Then
What happened?
How old was I during the
trauma?
Who was the threat there?
What did the environment
look like?
Which emergency brake did I
have to use then?

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Grounding exercises;

When you feel scared or stressed, you stop breathing properly. You easily lose touch with your body and get completely stuck in your worries.

This exercise helps you keep your feet firmly on the ground and stay in the here and now. It helps you shift your attention away from your thoughts and back to your body.

***Prayer** helps too. But trying to pray away your fear can sometimes make you feel like God isn't helping you if those feelings don't go away. This can actually make your anxiety feel even bigger.

God created our brain and our body.

Learning how to calm ourselves down is a beautiful skill He allows us to practice.

God is right there with you, even while you are doing this exercise.

Name **five** things you **see**,

four you **feel**.

three you **hear**.

two you **smell**.

and **one** you **taste**.

it also helps to make physical stimuli stronger than the stimuli in your head.

For example;

smelling a nice essential oil for a moment.

squeezing a (sensory) ball with your hand.

stomping your feet on the ground.

clapping your hands.

singing and humming.



Christy Bell

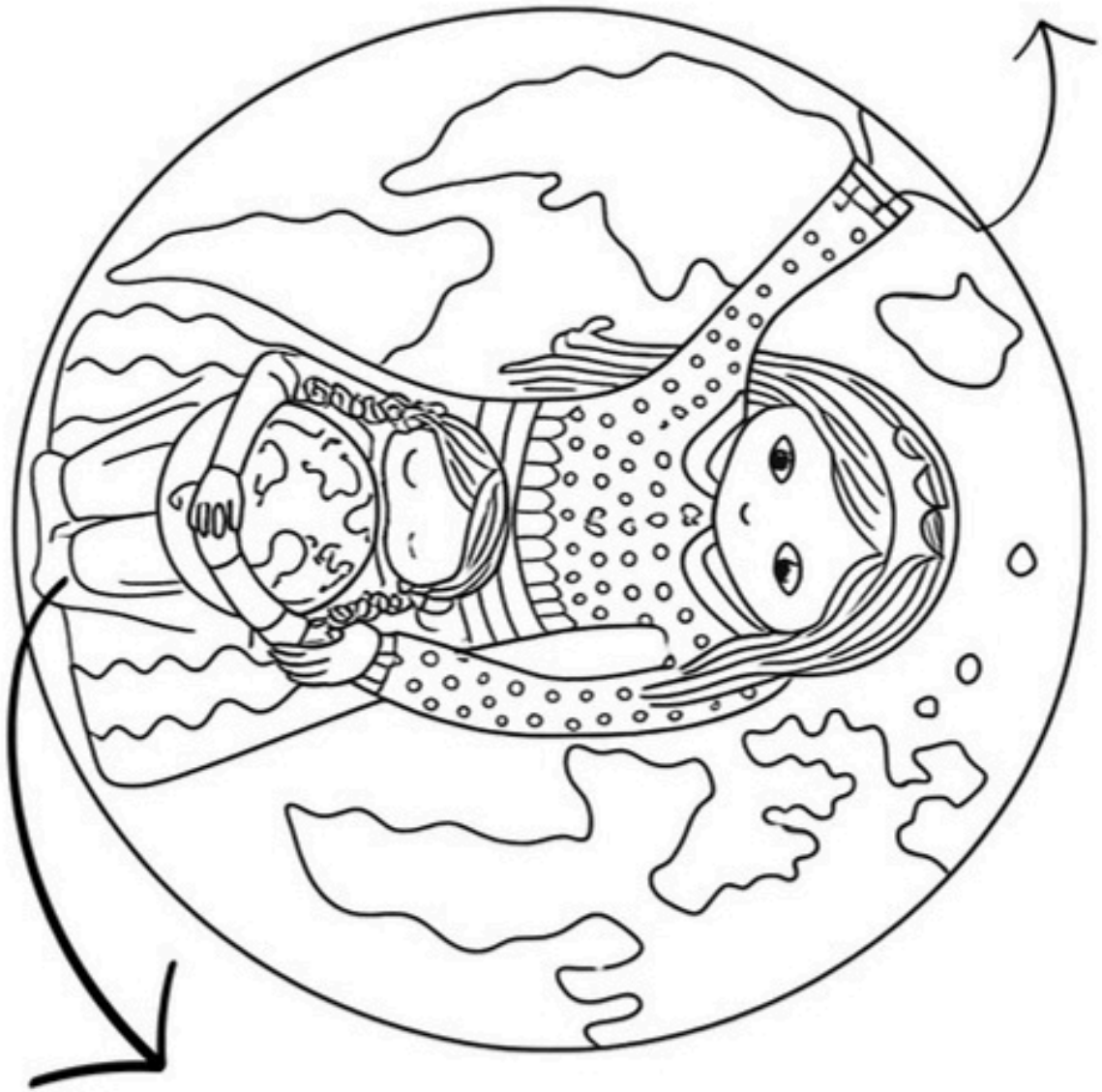
Do you have to fight stress?

No, quite the opposite! The stress hormone cortisol is simply trying to protect you. When you fight your stress or anxiety too hard, your brain can actually become more panicked and produce even more cortisol. .

**So instead,
allow the
feeling to be
there for a
moment.
By breathing
calmly and
doing an
exercise, you
signal to
your brain
that you are
safe. The
stress will
then
naturally
start to fade
away**



Christy Bel





Christy Bel





Care for each other.
By giving and sharing, we grow together.
Draw something you can give to someone else.



What does 'Fight or Flight' look like for you?

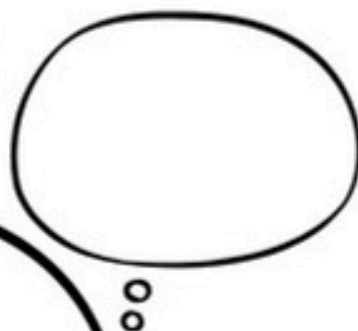
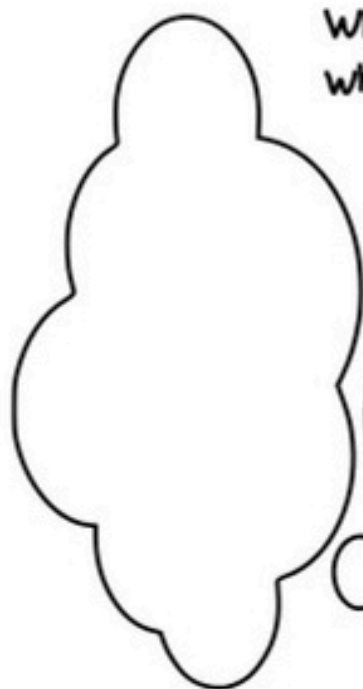


"What does 'Freeze or Dissociate' look like for you?"



you can heal.

Which thoughts help you
when there is a storm in
your head?



Just like the rain
difficult thoughts will pass by.
I breathe calmly in and out.

I am stronger
than the storm.
I keep riding calmly
and guide my own
thoughts.



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Red (Active stress / Mobilization)

What do you feel in your body when you shoot into 'Red'?

Which situations or triggers instantly put you into 'Red'?

What do you do when your brain goes into 'Fight or Flight' mode?



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YOU YOURSELF
ARE NOW THE
PROTECTIVE WALL
AROUND THE
CHILD. WHAT
BEHAVIOR DO YOU
SHOW TO SHIELD
HER PAIN, AND
HOW CAN YOU
MAKE THAT WALL
A LITTLE BIT
SOFTER TODAY?



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1 Can you look more mildly at your Red or Blue reactions if you know that it is an automatic alarm bell of your body, and not a conscious choice of yours?



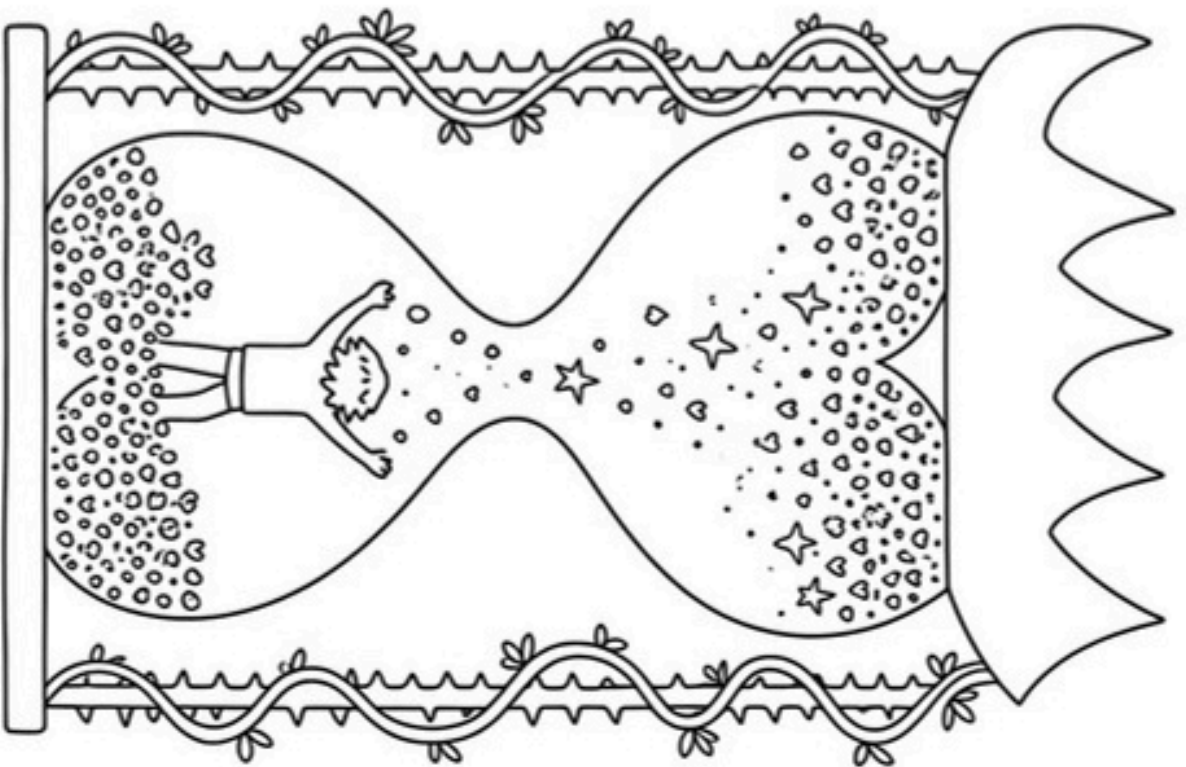
2 How can your adult self offer comfort or safety to the surviving part, after a flashback chased your nervous system into Red or Blue?"

Which thoughts help you
when there is a storm in your head?



**To become
whole, you
must take
the hand of
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Together
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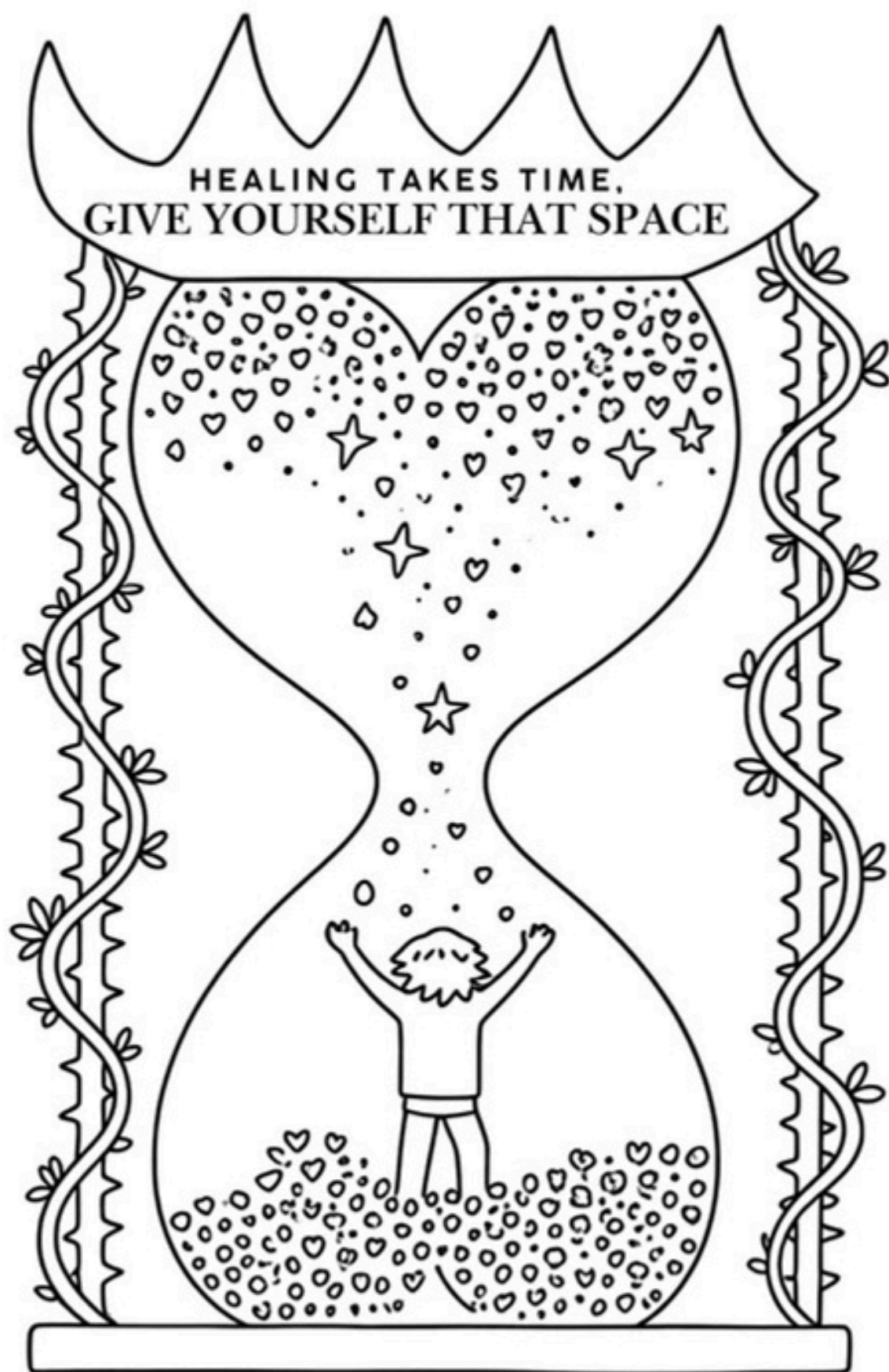


HEALING TAKES
TIME,
GIVE
YOURSELF
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**It is good to clear
your mind and
vent your heart.**



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Grounding exercises;

Name **five** things you **see**,
four things you **feel**,
three things you **hear**,
two things you **smell**,
and **one** thing you taste.

It also helps to make physical stimuli stronger
than the worries in your head. For example:

smelling a nice essential oil for a moment.
squeezing a sensory ball with your hand.
stomping your feet powerfully on the ground.
clapping your hands hard for a moment.
singing or humming softly.



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When your nervous system is overwhelmed
Look around you and name very
consciously:

5 things you can see.

4 things you can feel.

3 things you can hear.

2 things you can smell.

1 thing you can taste.

Green (Safety & Connection)

What do you feel in your body when you are in Green?
Which situations or triggers instantly put you into Green?
What do you do when your brain goes into Safety &
Connection mode?



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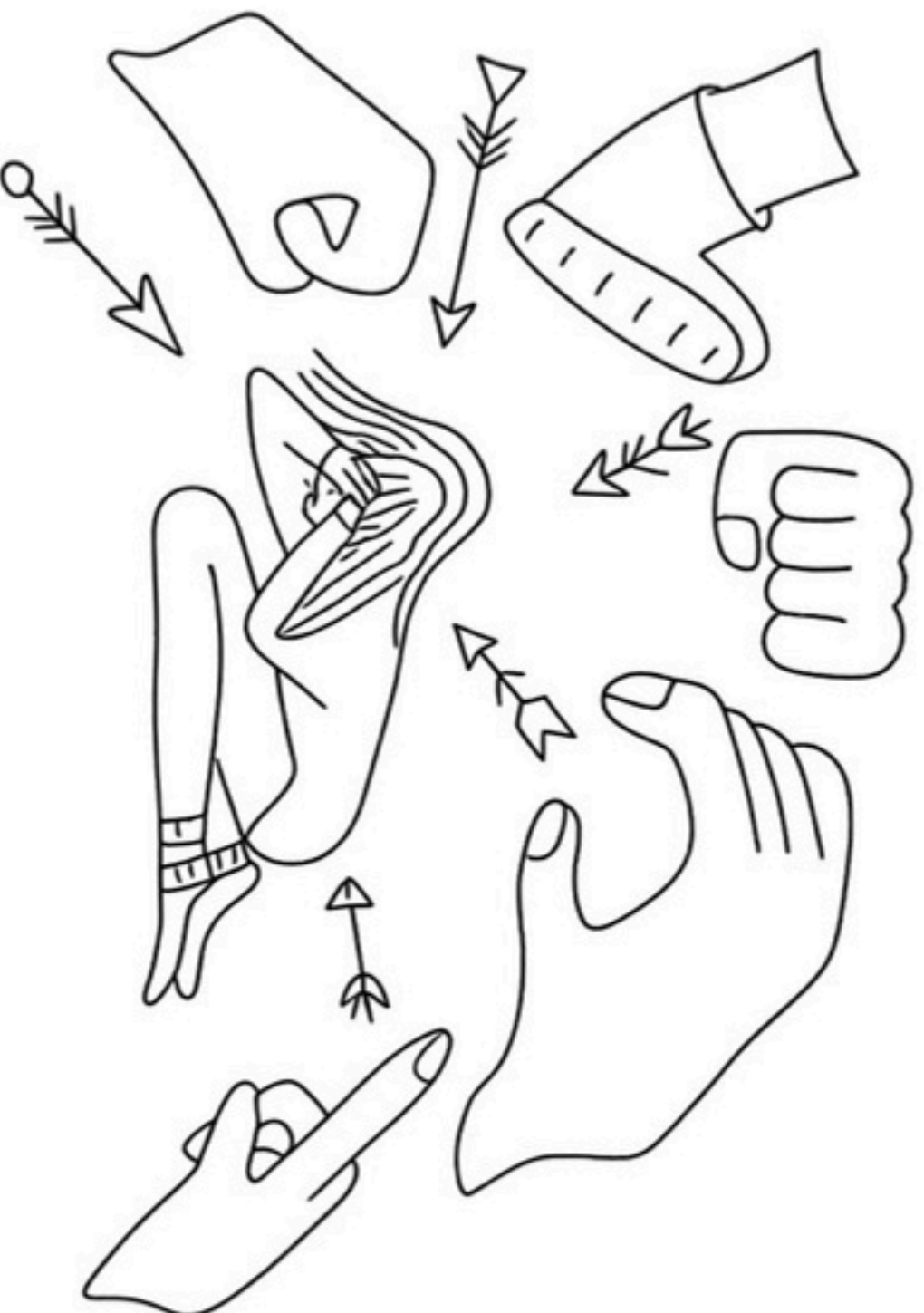
Did you know that God created your brain with the ability to change? In the Bible, God says in

**Romans 12:2:
Be transformed
by the renewing of your mind.**

You don't have to pray away anxiety and stress as if those feelings aren't allowed to be there. You get to train your brain! By choosing helpful thoughts and breathing calmly, you take charge of your brain. God helps you renew your thoughts step by step.



Trauma is
not what
happens to
you, it is
what
happens
inside you as
a result of
what
happens to
you."





IF YOU
CAN FEEL
you can heal.

How do you create your own sunshine (happy chemicals) in your brain?
Your brain is the blue sky that can steer the storm!

Get moving: go
for a bike ride,
run, or dance.
Hug a person or
a pet.
Think of
something you
are grateful for.
Sing or listen to
your favorite
music.
Do something
creative.

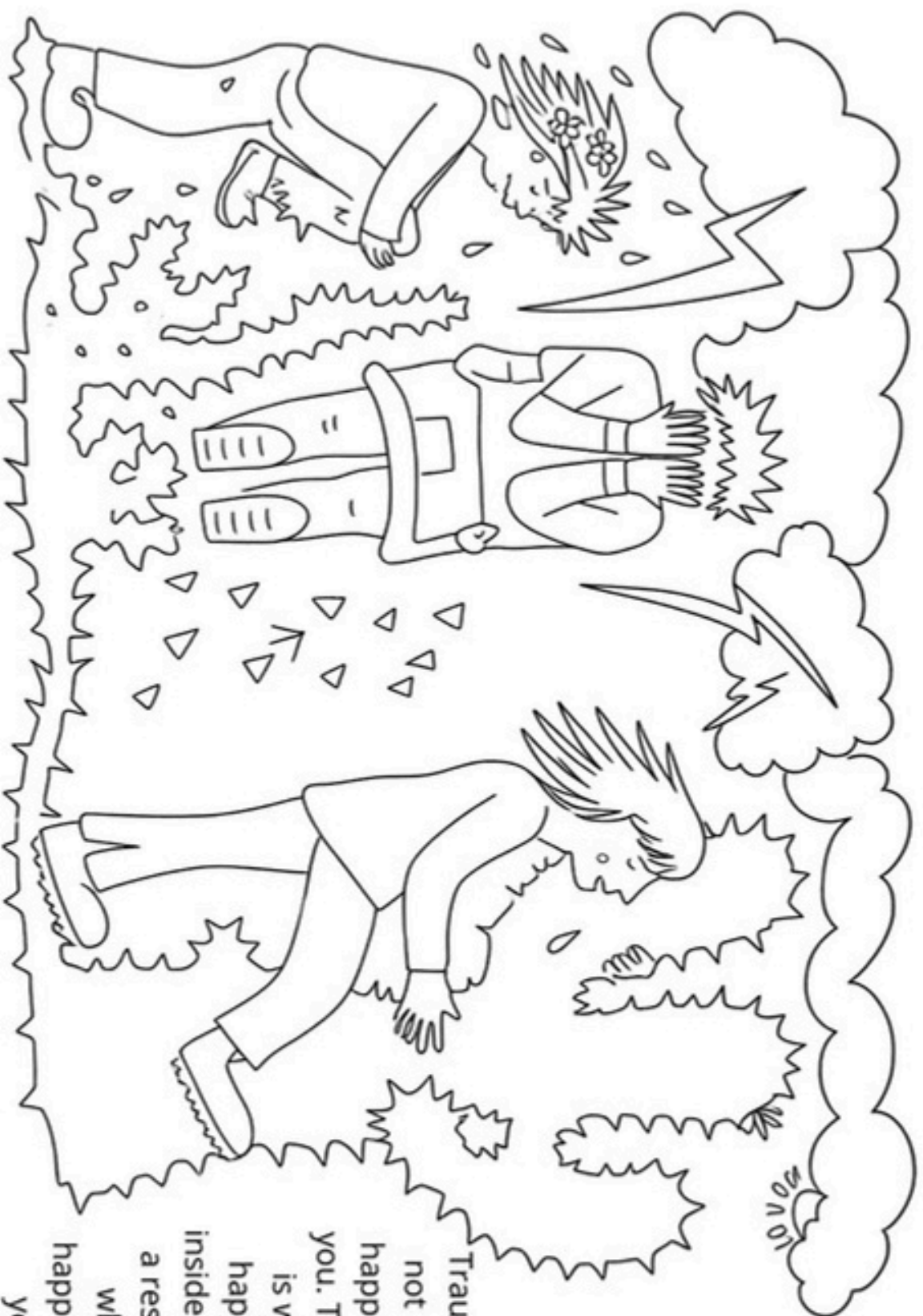


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Blue (Passive stress / Immobilization)

What do you feel in your body when you switch to Blue?

Which situations or triggers instantly put you into Blue?

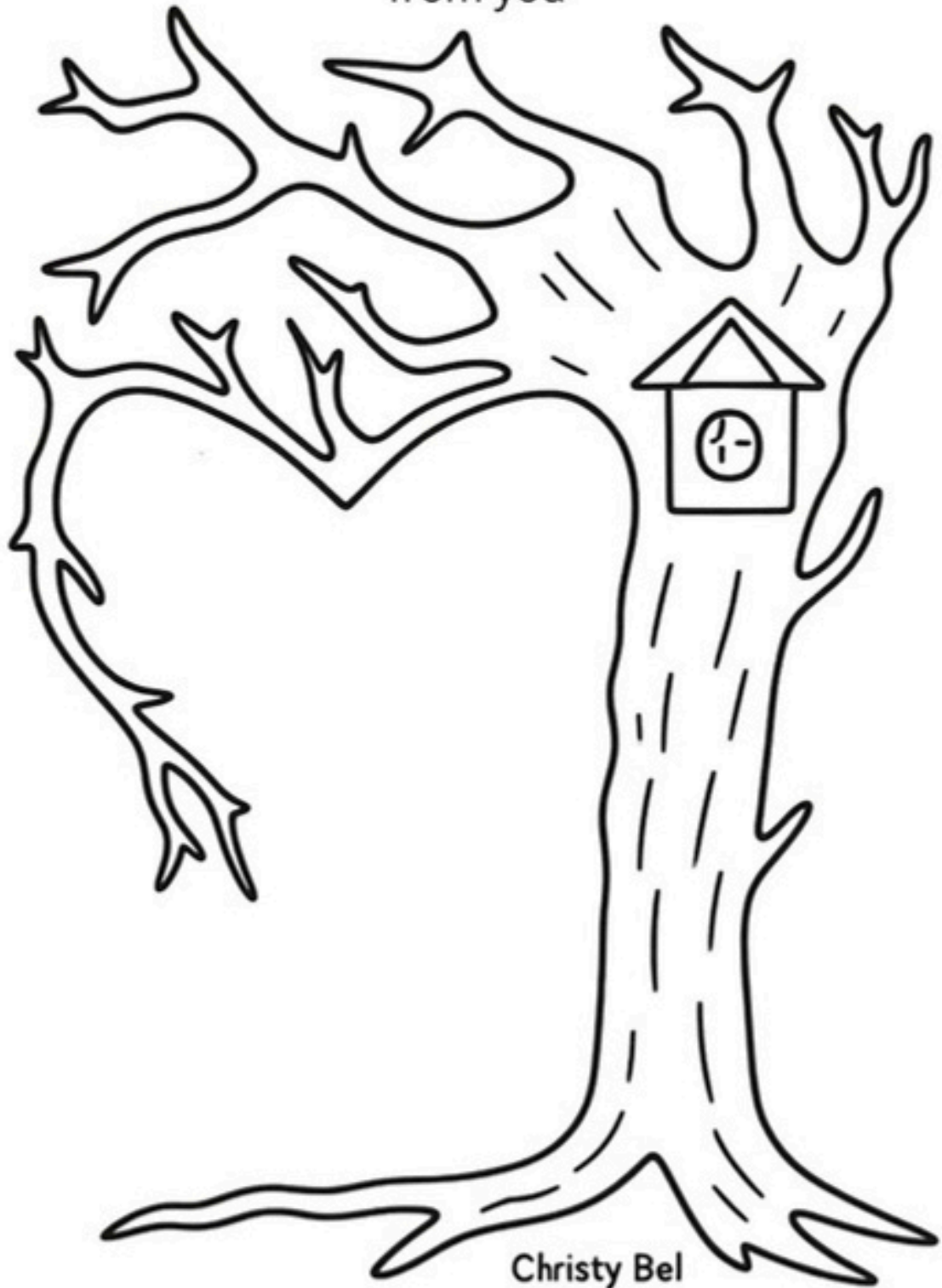
What do you do when your brain goes into Freeze or
Dissociate mode?



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Draw a leaf with a thought, wish, or something you
want to learn.

Draw a fruit showing something good that grows
from you



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Fight & Flight

Active stress (Mobilization):

Adrenaline rises to survive.



Freeze , dissociate & Faint

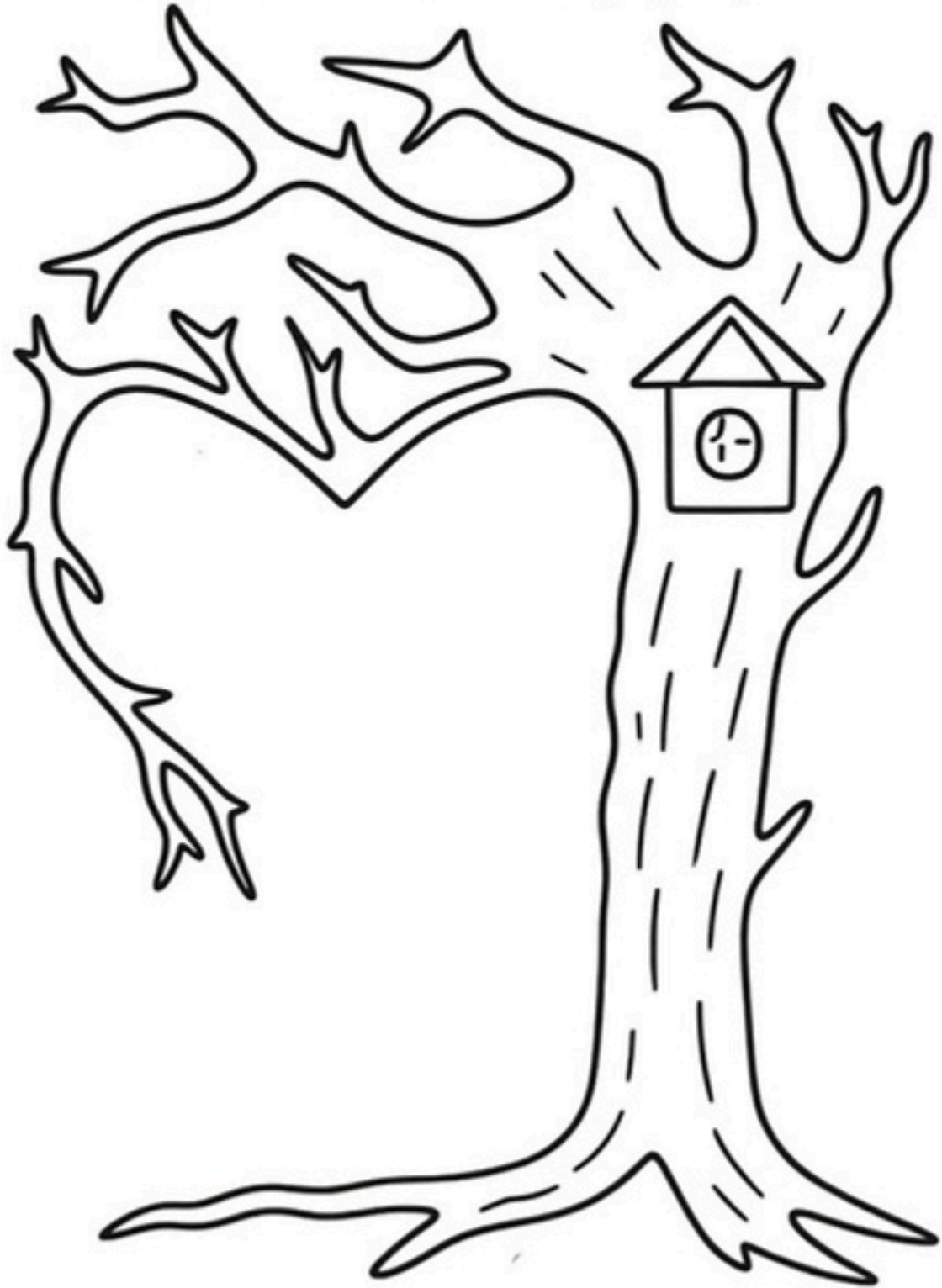
**Passive stress (Immobilization): Your system
shuts down to save energy.**

What is the weather like today in
the cloud above her head?



Christy Bel

God's creation brings peace.
Nature helps us to slow down and rest.
Draw the nature around the tree.
What in God's creation brings you peace?



The rain falls around me, but God is riding with me.
I am safe and never alone.



At what moments do you notice that your mind
knows you are safe,



but your body still chooses the emergency
brake (Red or Blue)?





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Red (Active stress / Mobilization)

What do you feel in your body when you shoot into 'Red'?

Which situations or triggers instantly put you into 'Red'?

What do you do when your brain goes into 'Fight or Flight' mode?



Your tears are not a
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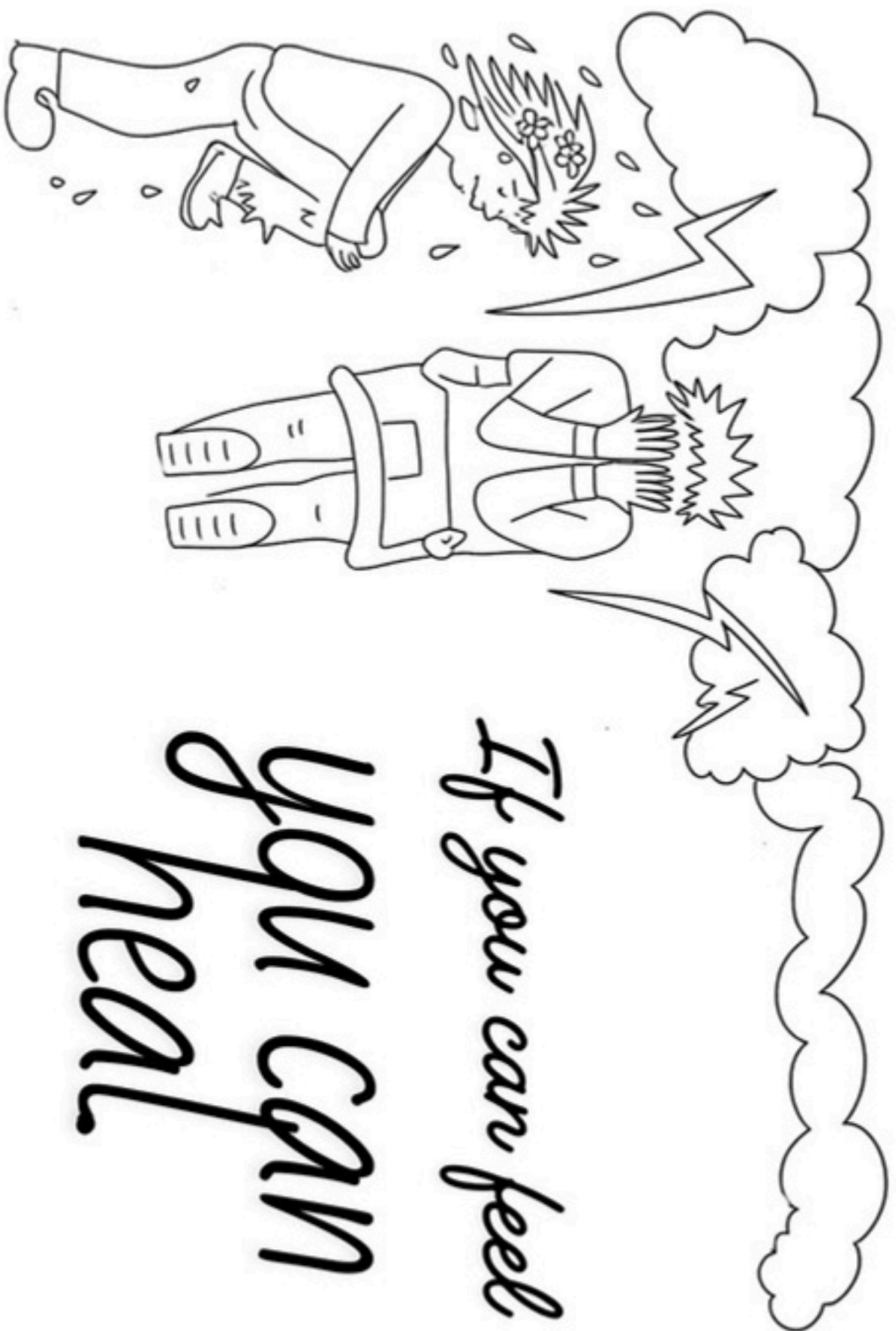
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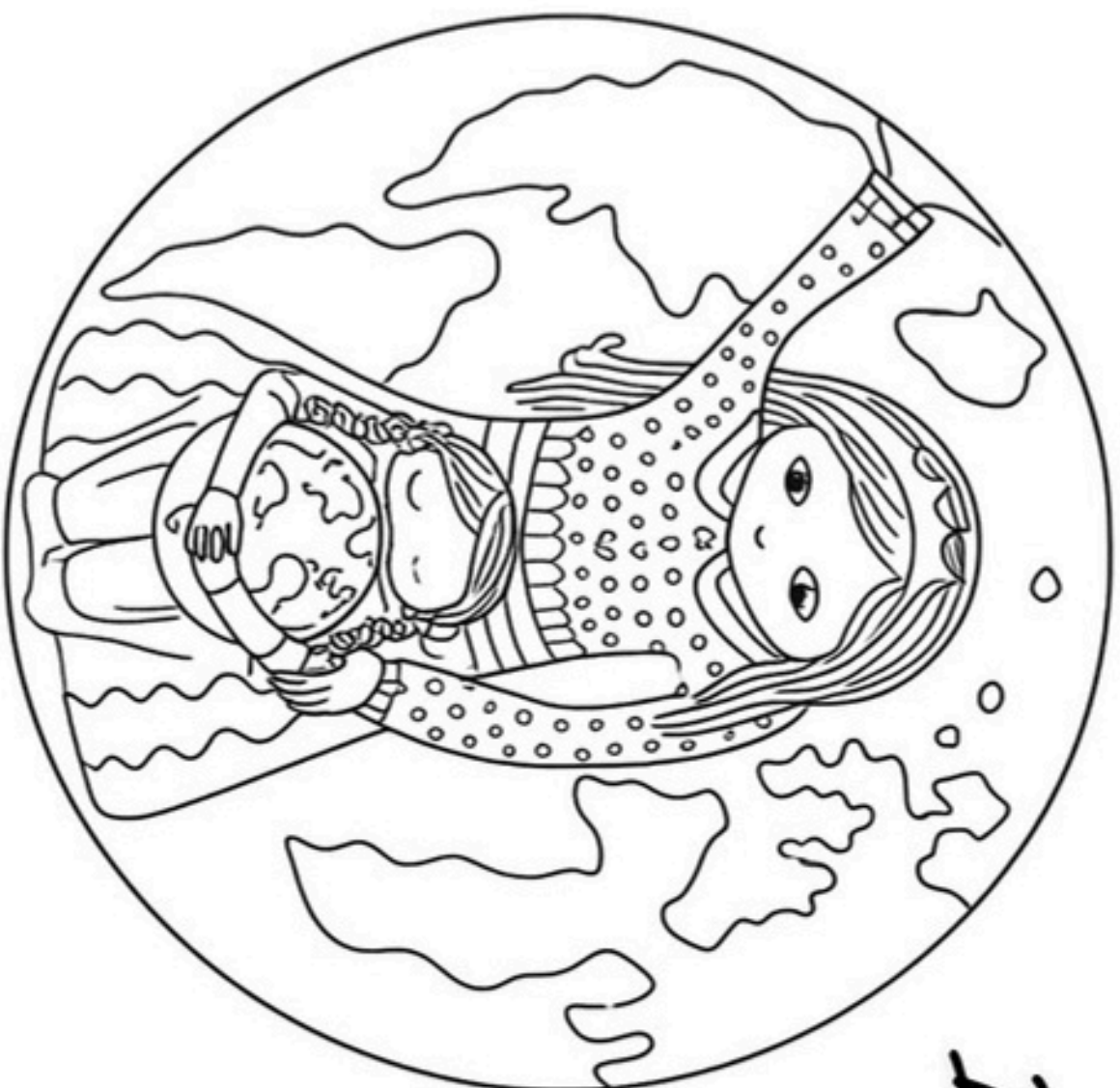
**Here
and
now**







IF YOU
CAN FEEL
you can heal.



*If you can
feel*

*you
can
heal*

**It is good to
clear your
mind and
vent your
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Trauma is not
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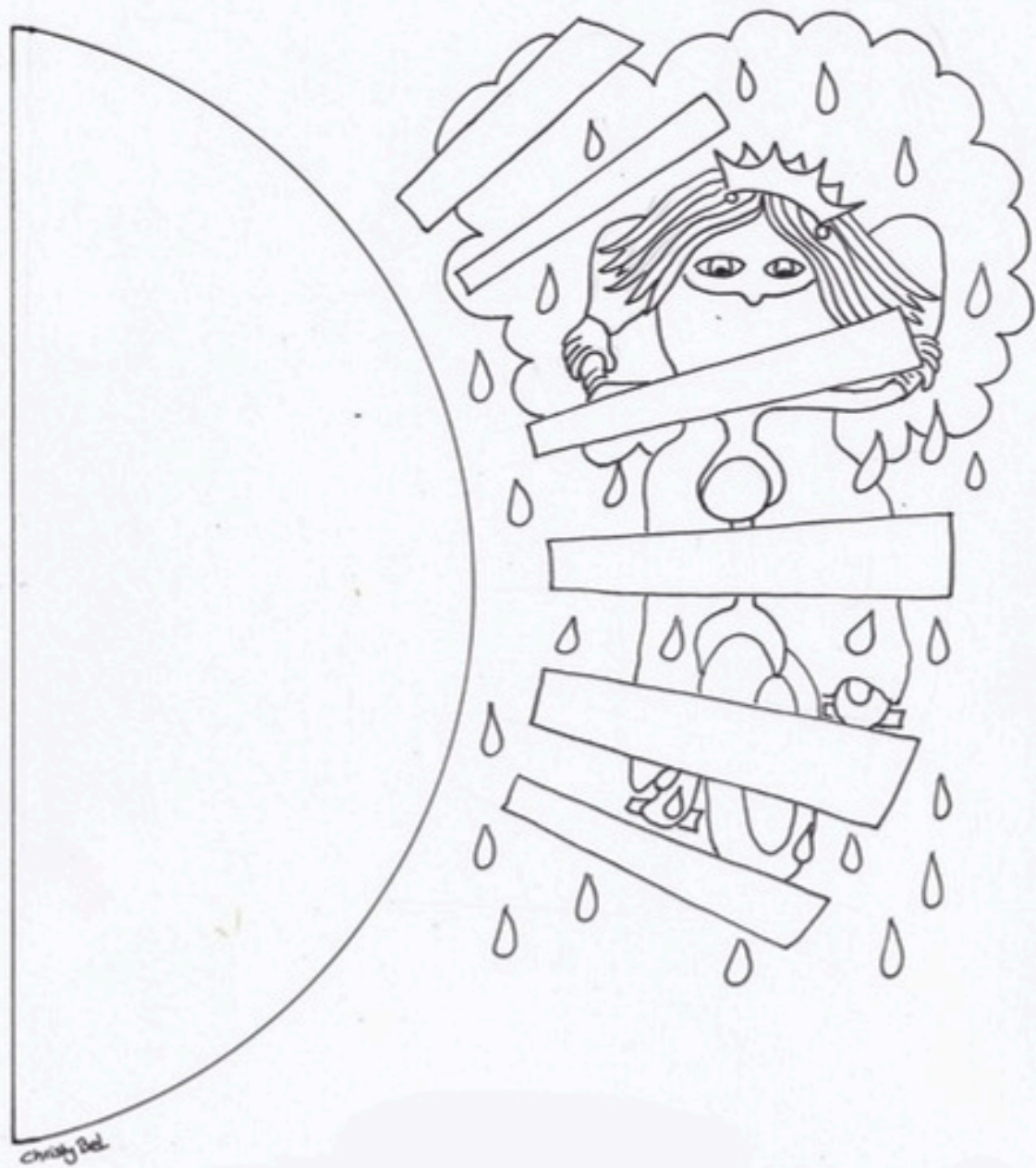
The rain can be cold, but what keeps you
warm inside?

Write or draw it inside the raindrops!



Christy Bel

Your brain is just like the weather. A stormy feeling is caused by stress chemicals (like cortisol) in your brain. But your brain is also the blue sky that can steer the storm! Your brain creates happy chemicals (like dopamine and serotonin) that bring back the calm and the sunshine. Feelings come and go, but you steer the sky back to blue.



**Are you afraid of something? God is your protector and
surrounds you like a safe shield.
Write your fears or worries inside the shield. Give them to God
in prayer and feel His peace**



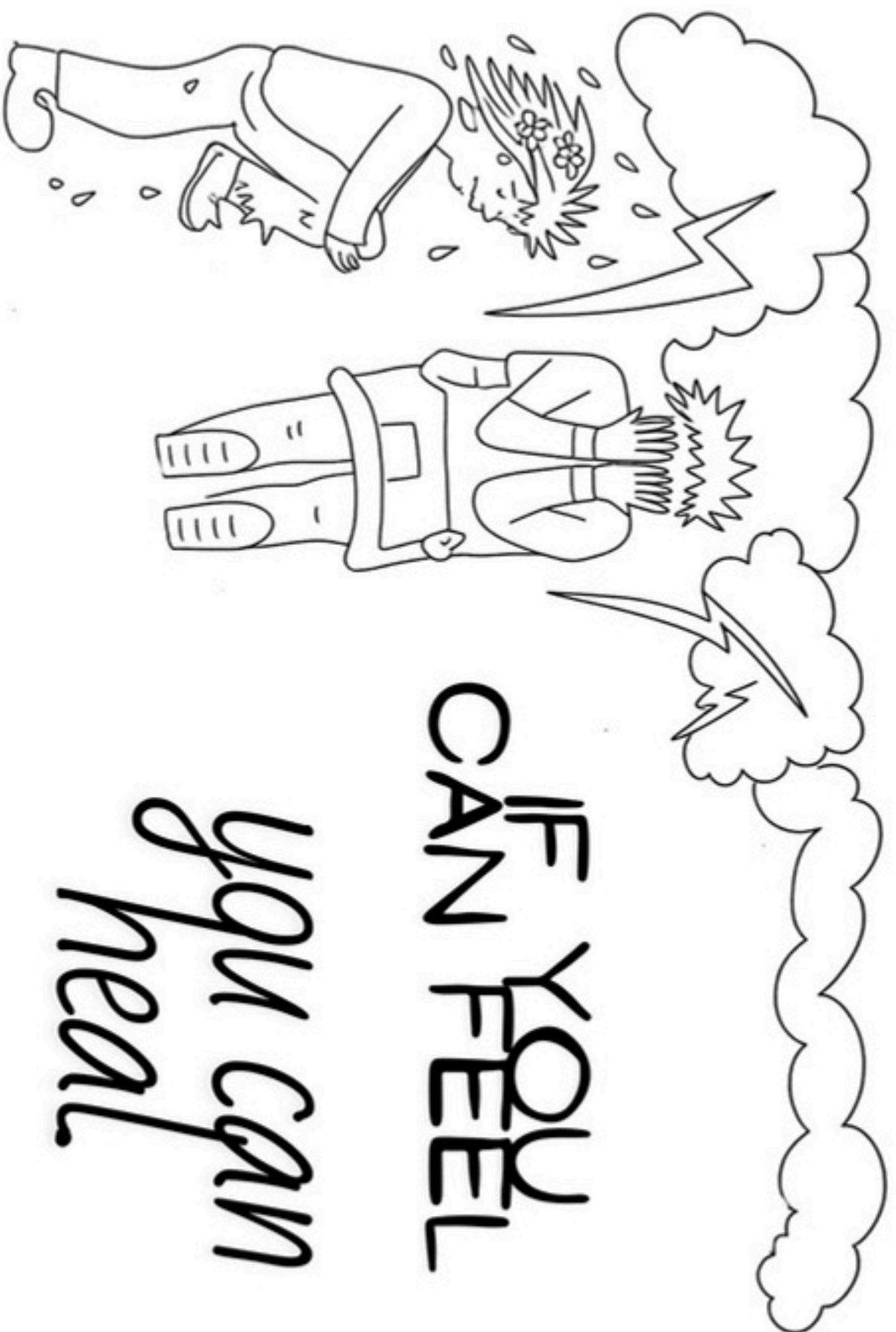
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