

The Child and the Liberation from the Shadow of the terrible big Fear

A Trauma-Picture-Book about Help
for Parents und their Children who fled from War and Home

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Trauma-Bilderbuch in Englisch



For my dear friends from Syria
and all families from war-wounded countries



Little Guide

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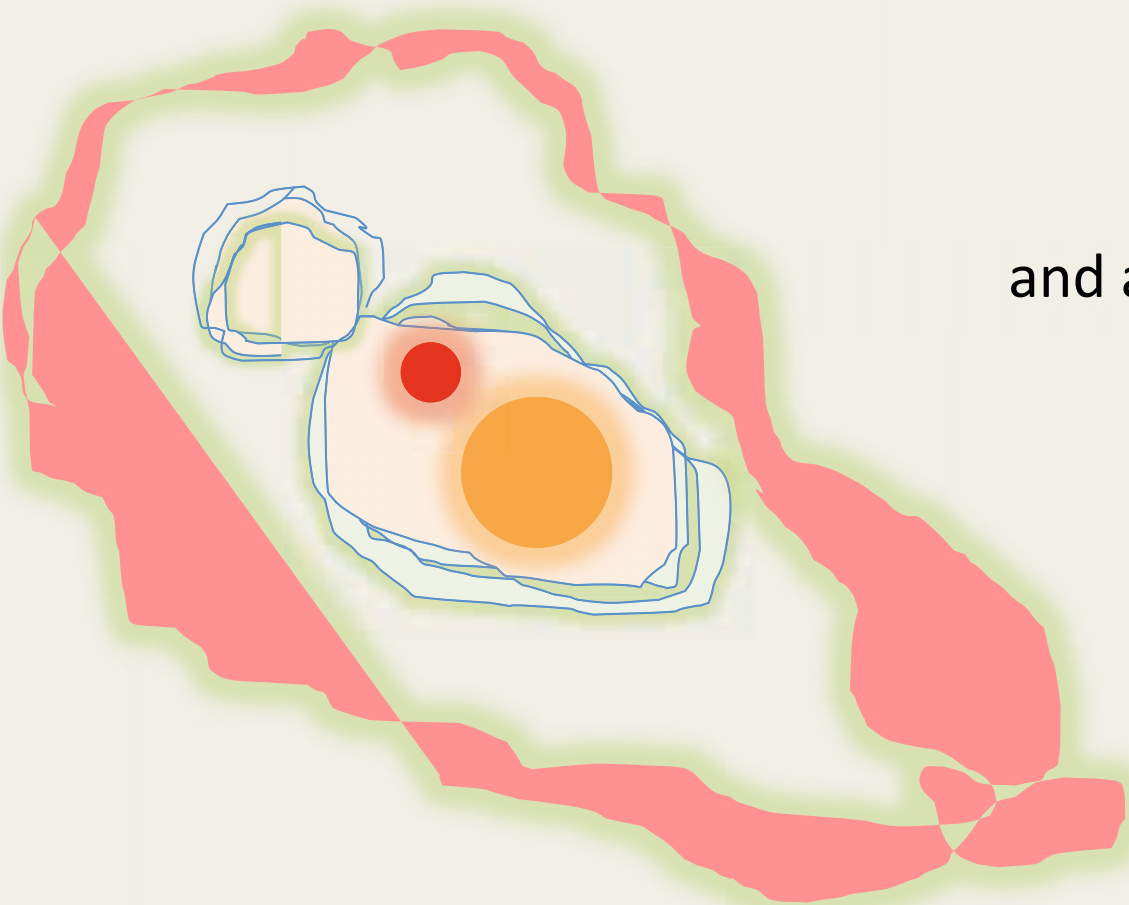
1

A Child is born

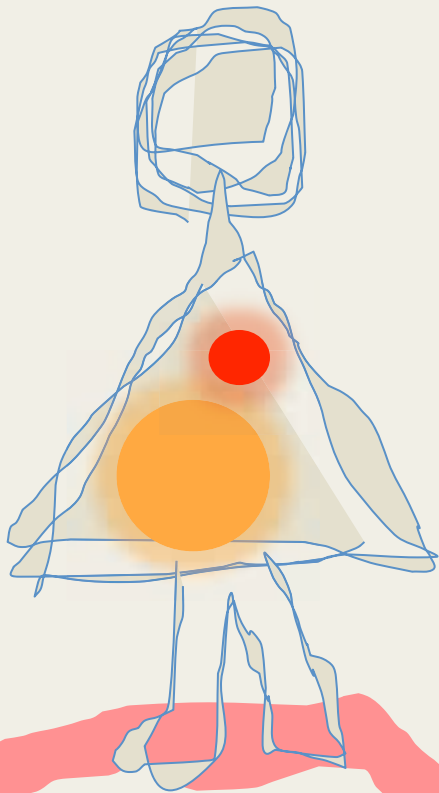


2

A Child is born
with a warm heart
and a bright light inside of it.

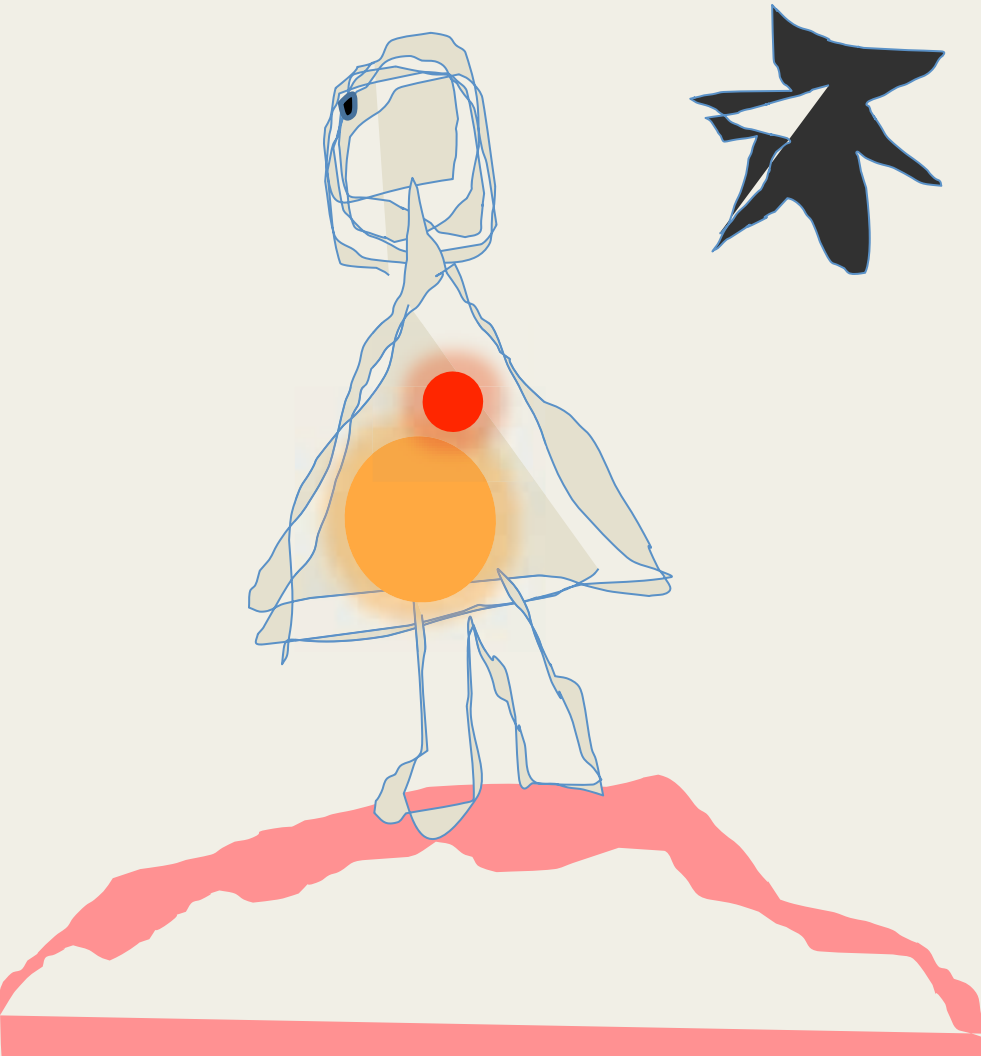


3



The Child grows up
with persons
who love the Child,
the way it really is.
That's happiness.

4

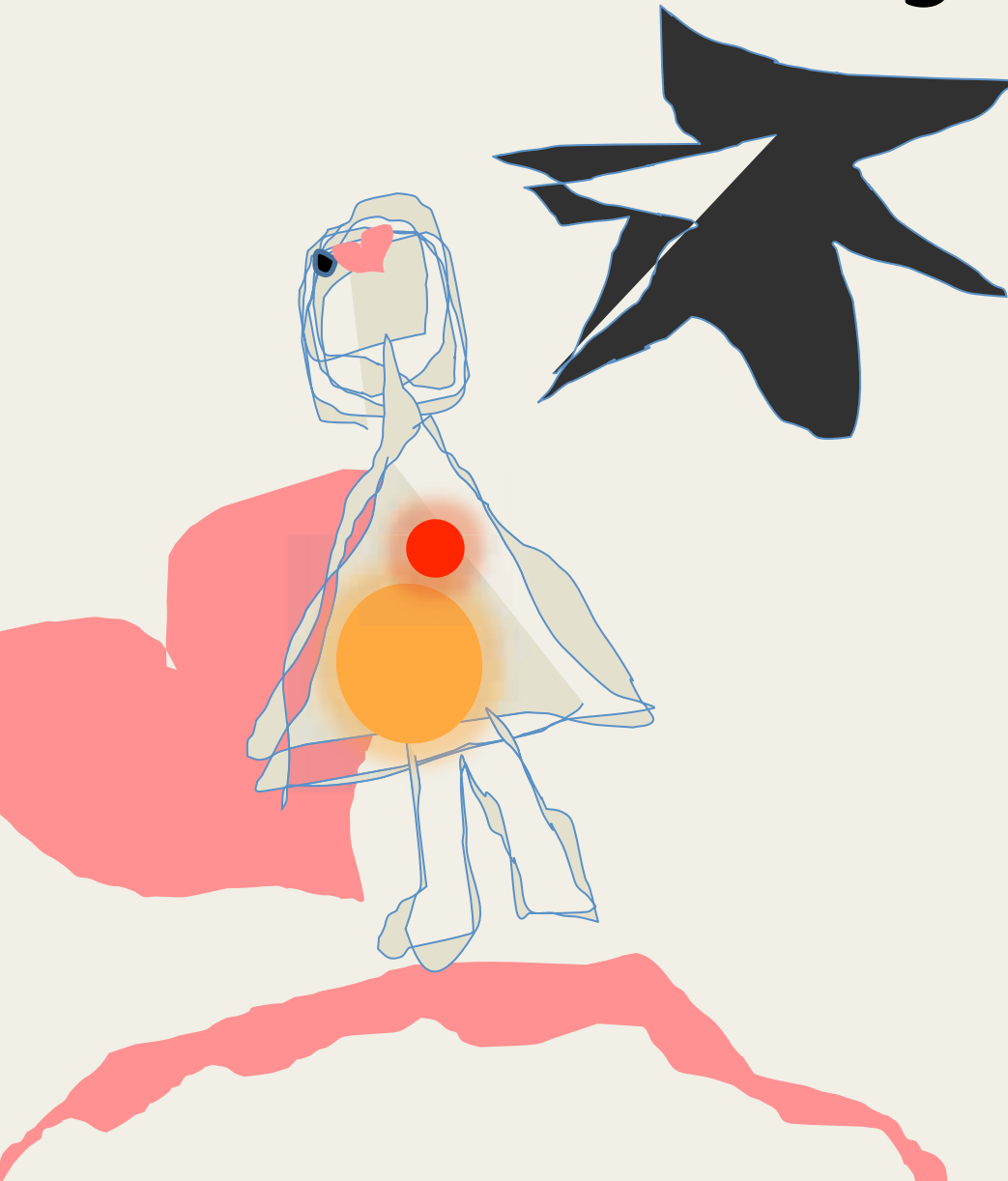


Something happens to the
Child.

It is frightened of someone,
of an animal,
of a new situation,
of the darkness at night
Or it can't find its mother
for a moment.

When this situation is over,
the Child is happy again.
That's a normal and important
experience for every Child.

5

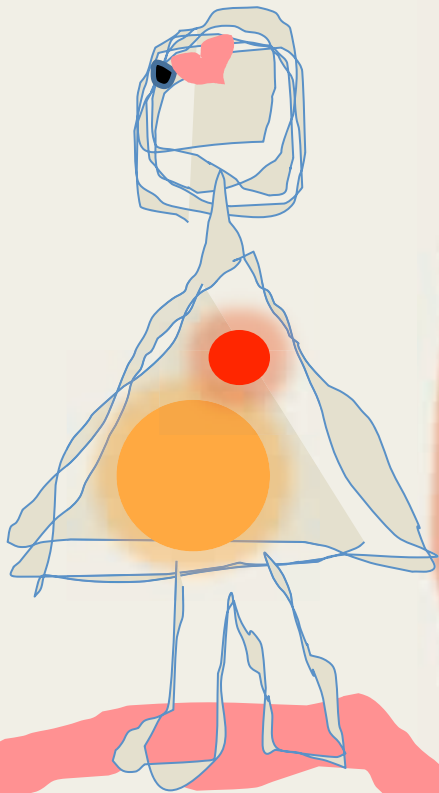


Another situation frightens
the Child.

Crying, screaming and despair
can be stopped by the comfort
of its parents or by
other beloved persons.

That's also a normal and
important experience for the
Child on its way to grow up.

6



So the Child grows up.
It learns how to eat,
how to walk,
how to speak

...

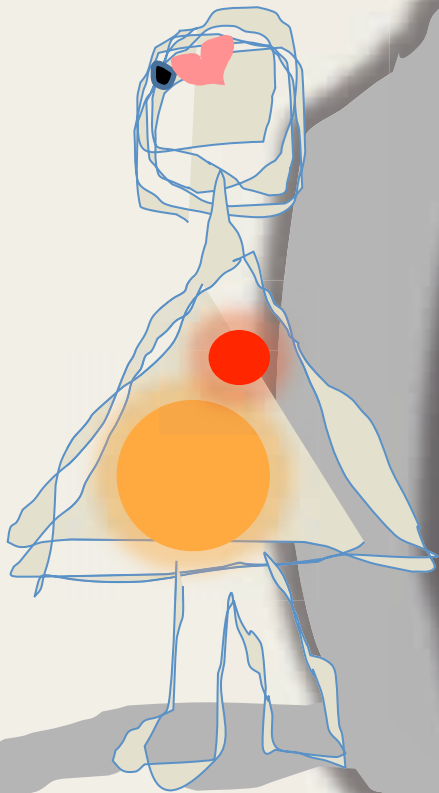
Always playing.
In love with its family.
Often happy, sometimes sad,
sometimes angry.
Always curious.
That's good life.



7

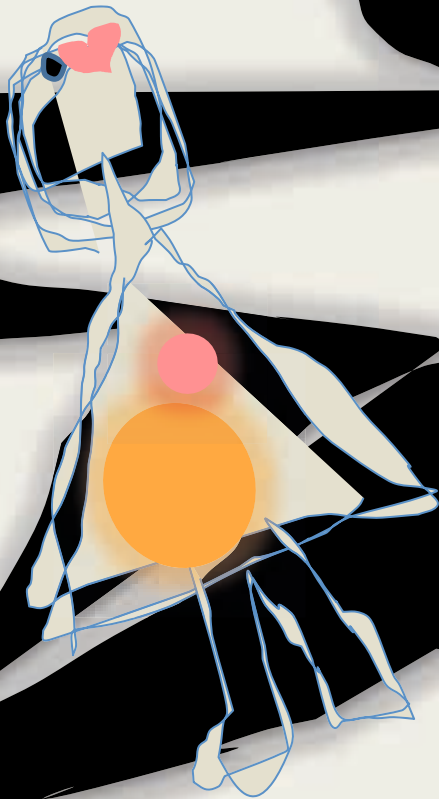
The War Comes

8



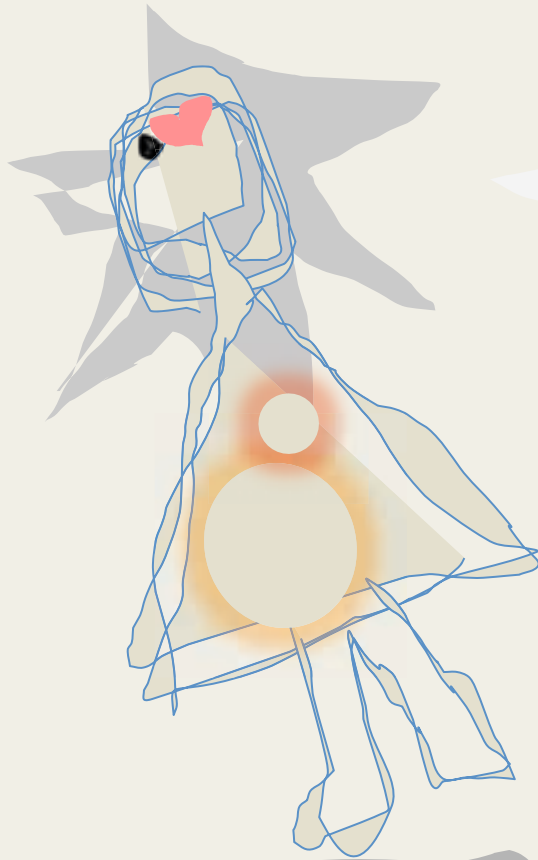
The life of the Child
and its family gets darker:
a lot of problems,
a lot of sorrows,
a lot of change.
Everybody is frightened.

9



And one day
the Child
experiences
a terrible and
dangerous situation.
Shock. Terrible big fear.
Crying, screaming, freezing.
Nothing and nobody
is able to help
in this moment.

10



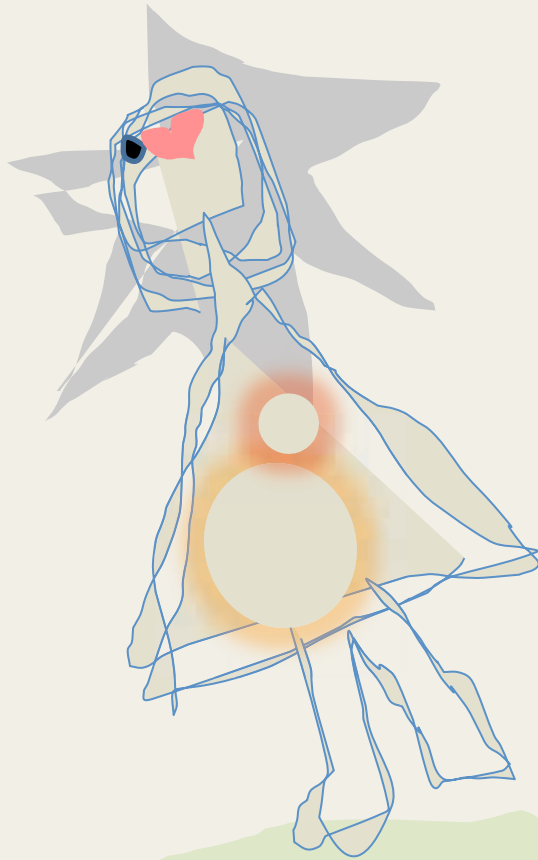
The dangerous situation is over
but:
A piece of the terrible big fear is still there.
Nobody can see it,
but the
shadow of the fear
is following the Child
wherever it goes.
For some time.

11

The Flight to a safe Country



12



The loving parents
– with fear and sorrow,
hope and courage
in their hearts –
decide to flee from the war,
to leave home,
to go to a foreign country.
They save the life of
the family.

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The Child and its family already reached
a safe situation, but:
The shadow of the terrible fear
is following it,
ready to frighten the Child.
Painful times.



The Child with the shadow of the fear
is waiting to feel better.
Waiting and hoping.
It tries not to feel it.
It is doing strange things sometimes.
It cannot stop doing it.

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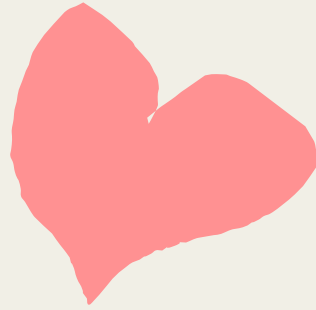
The Child doesn't understand
what the shadow of the fear is doing
to its soul and body.

It cries, it screams, it is ashamed.

No idea,
what to do to feel better.

15

Help for the Child to feel better



16

What can the parents do for their Child?



„We do love you as you are.
No problem can destroy our love.
Our love for you is forever.”

17



The parents give
safety to the soul of
the Child.

Love, comfort and
patience help the
Child to go on.

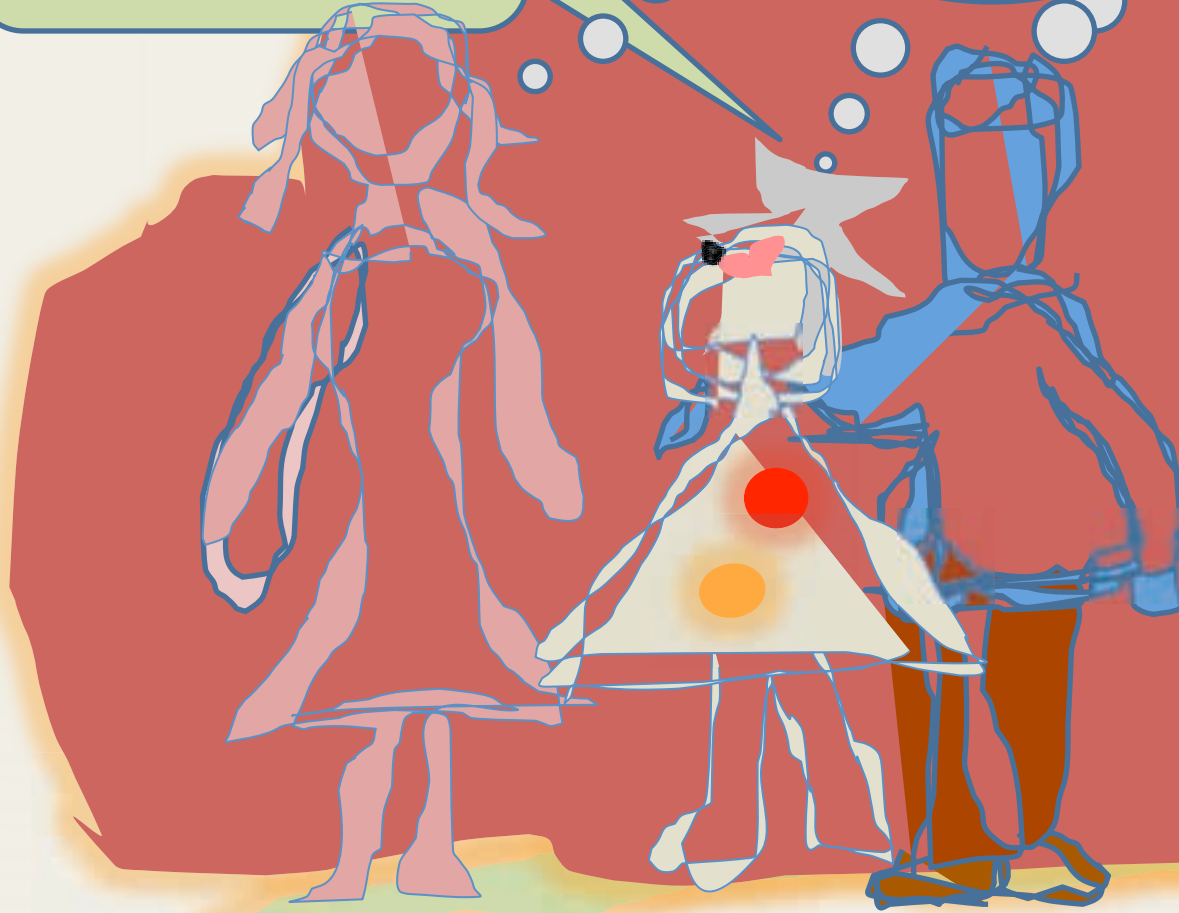
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„We are proud of you.
You are able to do so many things!“

The parents give
power to the soul
of the Child
by looking on its
strengths.



„Yes, there were terrible, bad situations in our past. Now we are safe.“



The parents talk now and then with the Child about its experiences, its fear and problems. They help the Child to feel the difference between the past and the presence.

„We help you.
We understand you.
We protect you.”

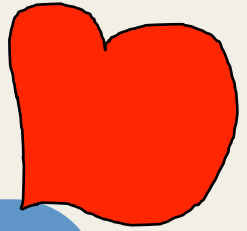
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The parents accept the special needs of the Child. They know, that the Child can not control its body sometimes. They try to protect it from new fears.

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You are the Child? You can also help yourself!
There are several possibilities to irritate the fear!



Do what you like to do!
Painting, playing, reading,
constructions, singing,
learning, being together
with other children,
dealing with technologies ...

Move your body!
Sports and fitness inside
and outside of the house
makes you stronger!

Ask for help
whenever
you need it!
You had a very hard,
terrible time and you
are a survivor!
It's okay, to feel the
fear. It's okay to get
comfort and help.



22



A safe home,
lots of love, comfort and patience,
doing sports, learning, laughing
and playing

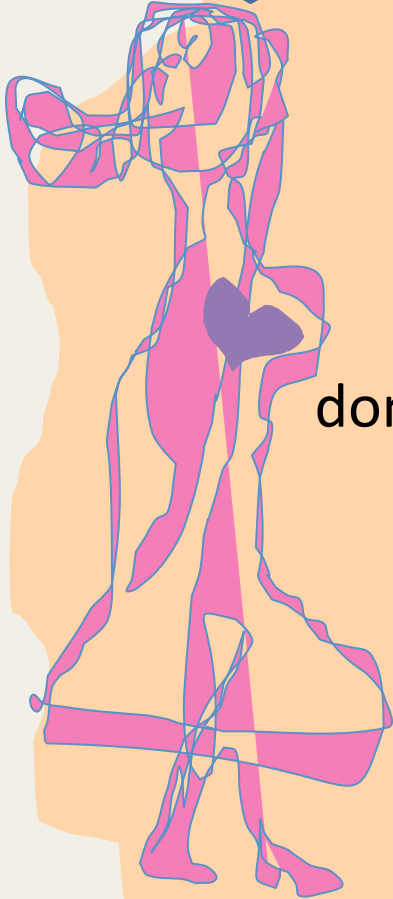
make the Child stronger!

And the shadow of
the terrible big fear
gets smaller and smaller

Very often it is just like this!

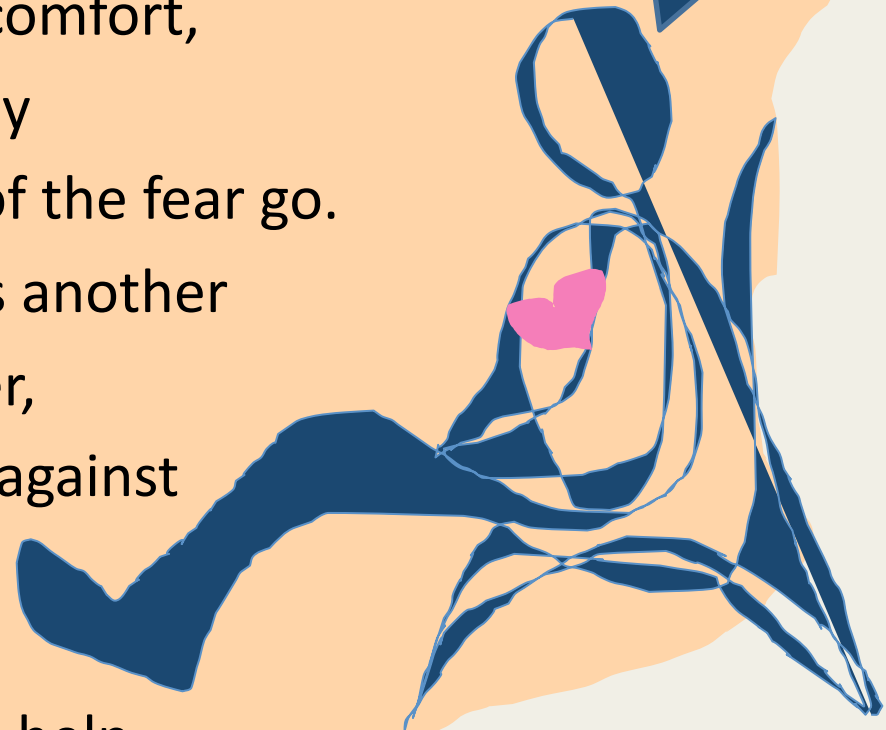
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Hallo, dear,
I'm Mrs. X.
Nice to meet
you!



Psychological doctors
for soul and body
Mrs. X and Mr. Y

Hallo, dear,
I'm Mr. Y.
You are welcome!

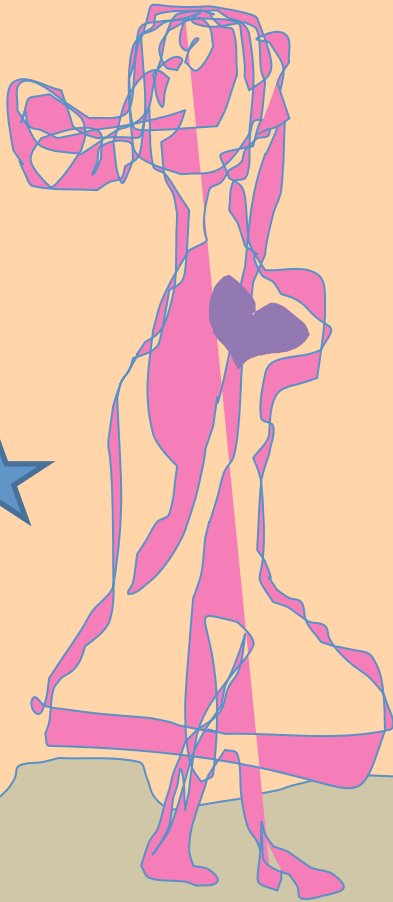


Sometimes,
love and patience, comfort,
safety and joy
don't make the shadow of the fear go.
Then the Child needs another
strong partner,
a specialist-fighter against
big and
terrible fear.
A therapist can help.

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With the help of the therapist, Mrs. X,
the Child gets
more and more
powerful.

Some day it is stronger than
the shadow of the fear.
One day the bad feelings
disappear.
The joy
returns.



25

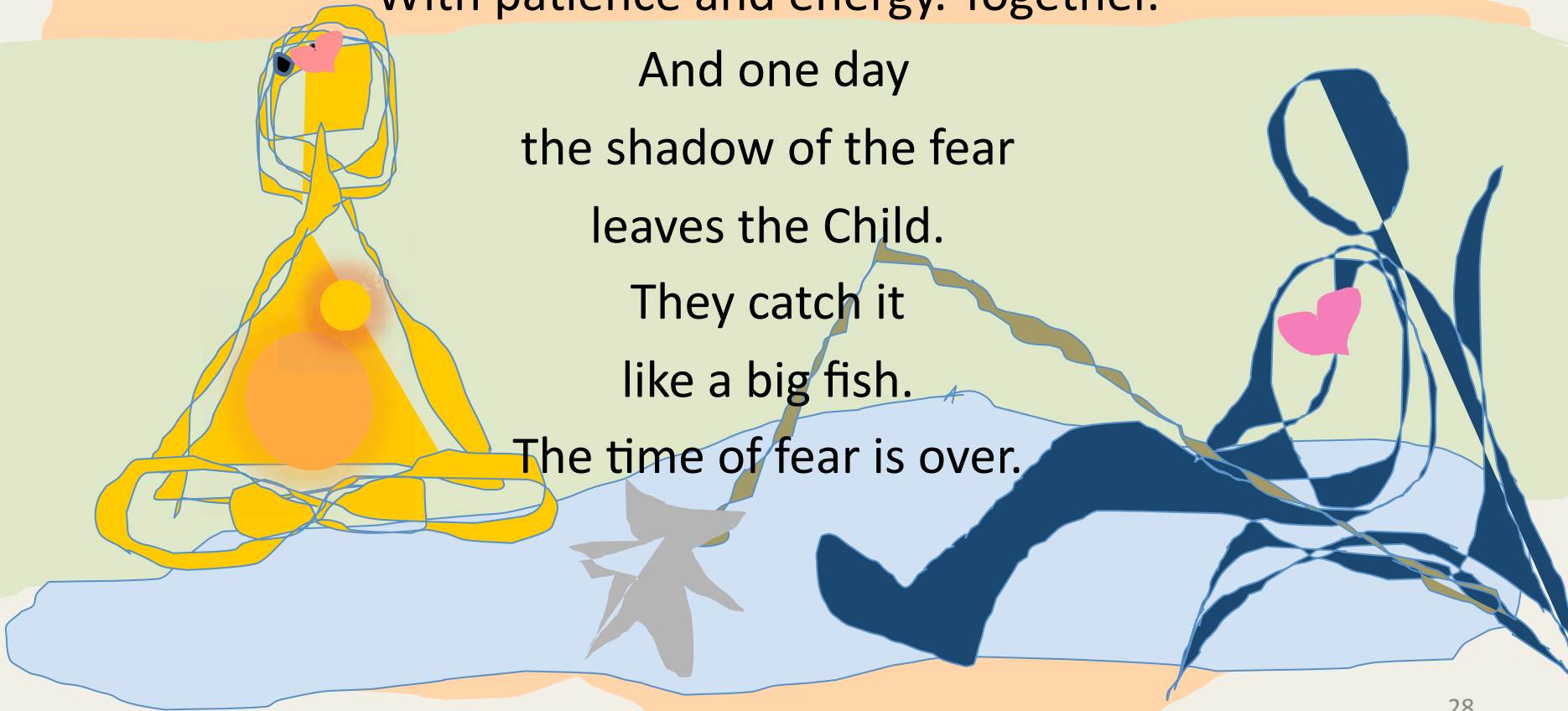
Or the therapist, Mr. Y, and the Child „go fishing“
to catch the fear.

With patience and energy. Together.

And one day
the shadow of the fear
leaves the Child.

They catch it
like a big fish.

The time of fear is over.



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When the shadow of the fear
is gone,
the Child is free.
Its light is strong again.
And the heart of the
Child is warm
and filled with
happiness.

Supplement 1

Information for parents

You want to help your child. On the next pages you will find some more information.

- About your situation
- About the situation of your child
- What can cause a big fear?
- What can this big fear do to your child?
- What can make the fear bigger?
- What can make the child stronger?
- How to use the picture book together with your child

About your situation

- You survived a war and a flight. You are strong persons!
- You found a way to save your life and the life of your child or children by leaving your country. You are very courageous!
- Now you reached a safe situation. That's very good!
- You are hoping and waiting for a normal life. Still you have to be strong. Life is not easy in this moment!
- You care about your children. You want to understand them. You are interested what is going on in their souls. You are loving parents and you do your very best!
- Ask for help, if you need it! Talk with your doctor about your sorrows and the problems of your child or children.

About the situation of your child

Your child survived a terrible time.

It experienced a great shock, a big fear, it was frightened to death.

Such a shock can cause a trauma. A trauma is a wound in the soul of a child (or an adult as well). After the experience of a trauma a shadow of the fear is following the person. The fear does not really end, when the terrible situation is over.

In this case you perhaps notice, that your child sometimes behaves in a strange way. It has got problems, that are not normal problems in its age.

It's important to know, that your child always wants to please you, that it wants to be nice and normal.

It's important to know, that your child can't control its body sometimes.

Your child is a survivor, but now it needs special help. Pressure and punishment would make everything worse.

This situation is not easy, nor for the child, nor for you.

What can cause a big fear (trauma)?

War or civil war, bomb attacks, shootings, flight/escape, all situations, in which the child experiences a terrible big fear of elimination:

- Violence against the child or against persons, the child knows or loves
- Loss of beloved persons
- Loss of home
- Strong pain
- Loss of security, uncertainty, hunger, freezing ...
- Getting lost, being left alone, not knowing how to get on
- Interpretation of situations, which makes the child feel ashamed or guilty

What this big fear can do to your child

All kinds of stress and fear reaction, sudden changes of the child's behavior (too less or too much activity, strange behavior), even days, weeks or months after the terrible, violent situation

- Crying, screaming, shivering, also without any actual reason
- Wetting the bed, teeth grinding, biting nails, twitching ...
- Aggression against other people
- Tiredness, inactivity, lack of interest, retreat, shyness, freezing
- Anxiousness, sleeplessness, lack of concentration,
- Repeating special movements without being able to stop it (like turning around, nervous beating with the feet or hands, washing and washing ...)
- Terrible phantasies or pictures or dreams
- More than a normal sensibility towards new situations or demands, towards noises and stress

If you notice such sort of reactions, please do also speak about it with a doctor and ask for help.

What can make the fear bigger?

- New dangerous situations
- Laughing or picking on the child because of its special behavior
- Parents, teachers or other persons put pressure on or give punishment to the child because of its strange behavior. The child can not control it's fear or stress reactions. Therefore it feels like a loser, if it is criticized or punished.
- Pushing back the child if it wants to speak about its memories and problems, if it needs comfort
- Speaking again and again about the child's problems (not sometimes with the child).
- The child is left alone or feels left alone. This can cause very strong and bad memories.
- Listening to the parents, when they speak again an again about their own fear and horrible memories. This leads to an atmosphere of panic.

What can make the child stronger?

1. Reliability/Trust

- Familiar or well known people
- Familiar or well known environments
- Familiar or well known routes
- Giving support to the Child, whenever it is frightened

2. Everything the Child loves to do

- All kinds of activity and sports
- Playing games
- Make or listen to music
- Laughing and being allowed to make noise
- Learning out of curiosity
- Reading
- Cuddling
- Being together with other children, animals and friendly people
- Doing handicraft work, painting, handling technical devices
- Make new experiences in a protected environment

3. Others

- All kind of success stories
- Memories: Having the permission to think about the terrible experiences and speaking about it. As well as crying, shivering and having attentive listeners who care. Being reminded that the terrible situation happened in the past not now.
- Have the permission to be angry without being a threat for other people.
- Experiencing parents who are happy about the strengths and the courage of their child or children.
- Experience parents who don't see themselves as a victim of terrible experiences only but mainly as a survivor.

How to use the picture book together with your child

The picture book on the pages 4 - 29

With children at the age of about ten years or more you can look at the pictures, read the text, explain, what is going on, speak about it. You know your child and you will certainly recognize whether the child is interested or not, whether it feels too much pain, and how long it likes to speak with you about this difficult subject

We think that children in any case need someone to speak about its thoughts and feelings, looking at the pictures. Perhaps it needs comfort and help.

It is possible that the child starts to remember terrible experiences or comes in contact with very hard feelings of pain and fear. It should not be alone then.

The ideas for painting of the child on the pages 38 - 43

Painting is often a good way for the child to express its thoughts and feelings. But its also a special way: Let the child decide, if it likes to paint. And don't leave the child alone while it is painting. It is possible, that the child comes in contact with very bad remembrance or strong feelings. Then it needs a well known person to speak to or to get comfort.

Please use the painting themes like they are situated in the book. In that way the difficult remembrances are included into themes, which make the child feel good. And last not least: Please accept every picture which your child paints – no matter if you like or understand it.

Ideas for Children

- You can paint, what you like to have or to do
- You can paint the persons you love
- What can you do really good?
- Which bad situations in your past do you remember?
- What do you wish for your future?

What do you like to have or to do?



Which people do you love?



What can you do really good?



Which bad situations in your past do
you remember?



What do you wish for your future?



Publishing information

Idea, text, pictures and coordination: Susanne Stein
Educationist, HR and organizational developer,
Teacher for Theme-centered Interaction TCI
here seen by a 5 year old girl from Syria



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- the center “Children for Tomorrow” for the big help - see page 45
- Mrs. Kholood Tayar translated this picture-book into the Arabic language.

If you have any comments please contact

Trauma.Bilderbuch@hamburg.de . Trauma.Bilderbuch is the German word for Trauma Picture-Book



„Children for tomorrow“ supported this book.

„Children for Tomorrow“ is a special part of the UKE, the University Hospital of Hamburg. This out-patient department offers counselling and therapies to children who fled from war or civil war. Two therapists of the therapy center, Sofie Silva Mella (Art therapist B.A.) and Dipl. Psych. Cornelia Reher (Leader of therapies) were proof-readers of the book. The Charity foundation „Children for Tomorrow“ is also the sponsor of the translation of this book into the Arabic language.

More about “Children for tomorrow”

Chances for a better future

Many children grow up in a daily life marked by violence; the images of war, abuse, persecution and loss of family are all too familiar. What are not seen are the psychological wounds and deep emotional scars that remain even after physical injuries have healed. Most of these traumatized children suffer depression, nightmares, loss of self-worth and often are the source of future aggression. Our Children for Tomorrow therapists and doctors are specialized in therapeutic treatments to heal these invisible wounds. Giving these children a chance for a better future is the mission of our foundation.

Stefanie Graf, Founder and Chairwoman Children for Tomorrow

www.children-for-tomorrow.de

www.uke.de

And your doctor is always a person you can ask for help for you and your children.



2015

We all wish you and your family the very best!