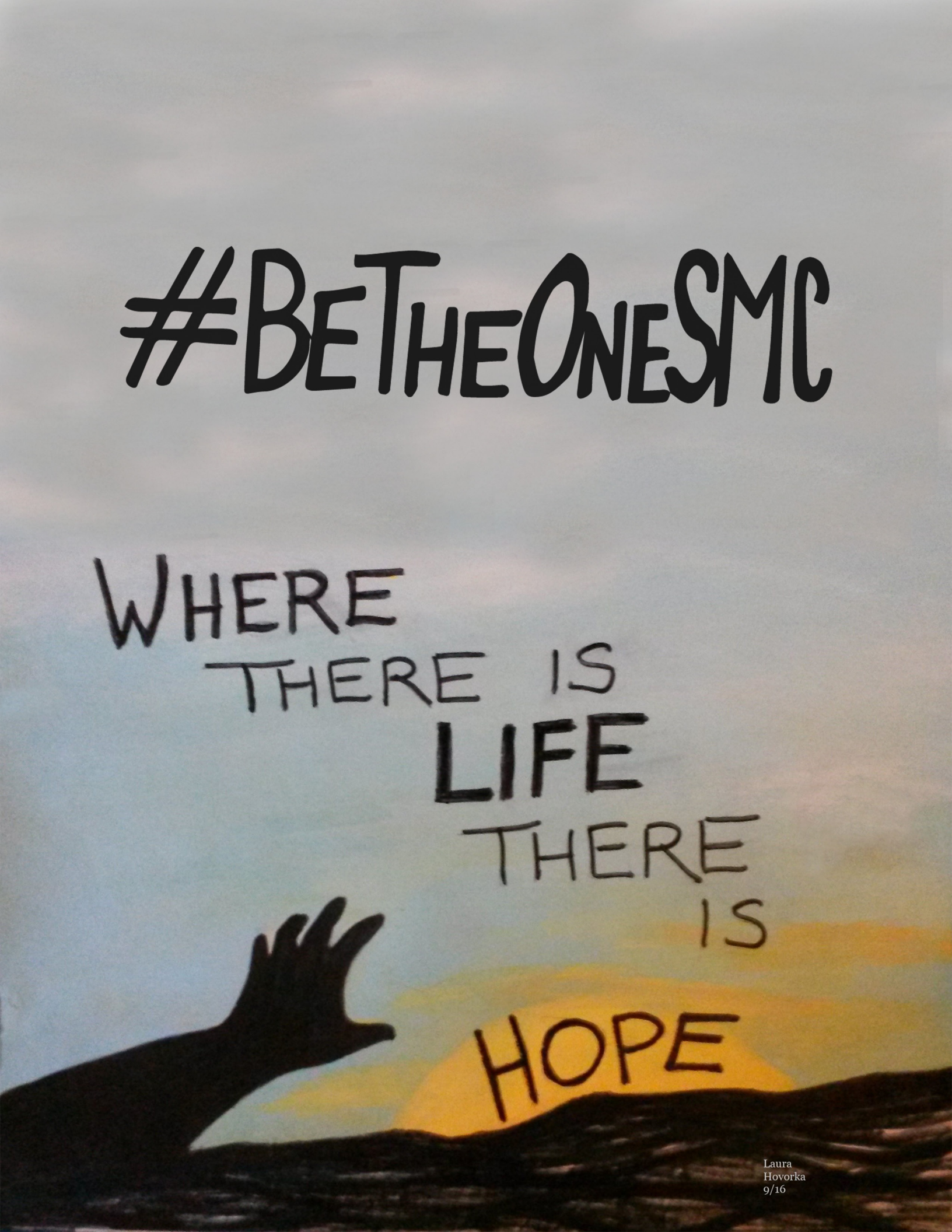
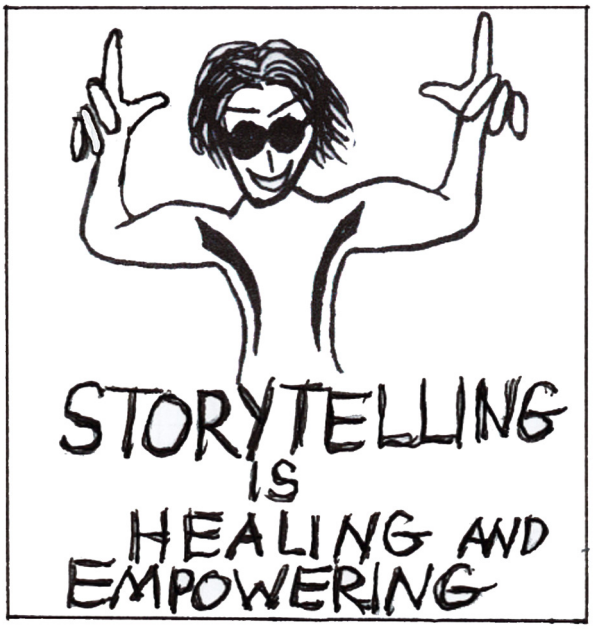

#BETHEONESMC
WHERE THERE IS LIFE THERE IS HOPE
Laura
Hovorka
9/16

Office of Diversity and Equity

The Office of Diversity and Equity (ODE) advances health equity in behavioral health outcomes of marginalized communities throughout San Mateo County. ODE's Storytelling Program empowers community members to heal and address issues within their communities. Participants engage in workshops that help them create and share their stories in different forms.

For access to the digital copy of this graphic novel as well as other stories, visit smchealth.org/comics. Contact ODE at ODE@smcgov.org for more information.



We All Need Help Sometimes.

For assistance in finding mental health and/or substance use services for someone who may be experiencing a mental illness and/or substance use condition, or for someone you are concerned about, call the Behavioral Health and Recovery Services ACCESS Call Center for information, an assessment, and a referral based on individual needs. You may contact the ACCESS Call Center at (800) 686-0101. The ACCESS Call Center is available 24/7 and language assistance is available.

For emergencies that need an immediate response, call or text 9-1-1 or go to your nearest emergency room.

In a crisis, you can also turn to the resources below.
24/7 Crisis Hotlines:
(650) 579-0350 – StarVista Crisis Hotline (San Mateo County)
1-800-273-TALK (8255) – National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
Text "BAY" to 741741 – National Crisis Textline

Psychiatric Emergency Services:
San Mateo Medical Ctr, 222 West 39th Ave, San Mateo, CA 94403 – (650) 573-2662
Mills-Peninsula Medical Ctr, 1501 Trousdale Dr, Burlingame, CA 94010 – (650) 696-5915

Table of Contents

These are the artists, authors, and consumers who have
shared their lived experiences of recovery within these pages.

1. John Butler — *Take A Look At Hope*

2. Cecilia Roberts — *Go to the Sun*

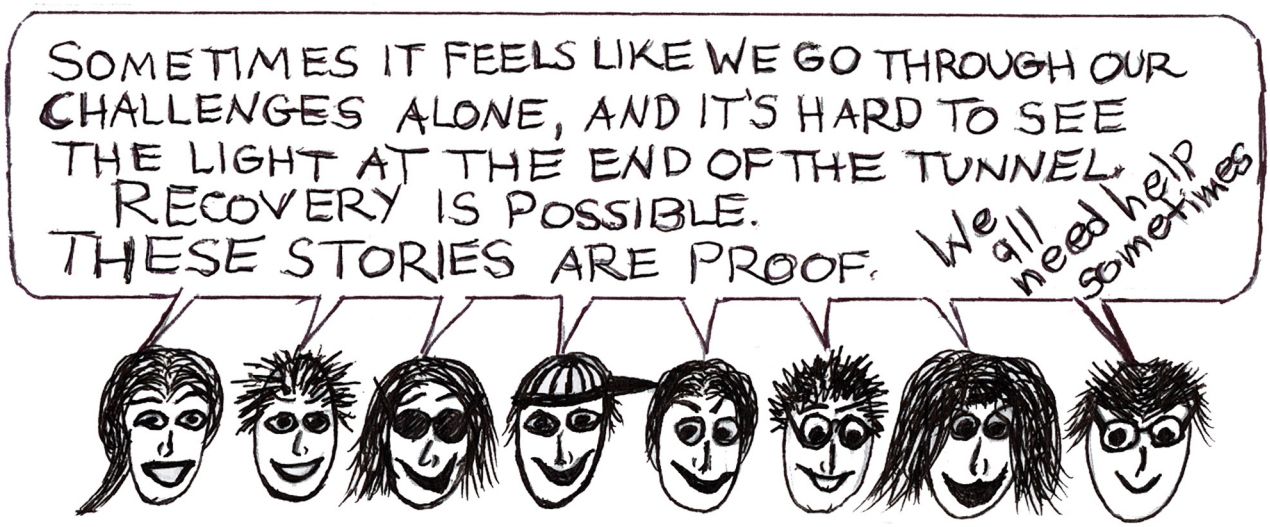
3. Carlos Rocha — *A Time For Change*

4. Tatiana Lyulkin — *Take Back the Night*

5. Laura Hovorka — *From There to Here... In the Blink of an Eye*

6. Laura Hovorka — *A Story of Hope*

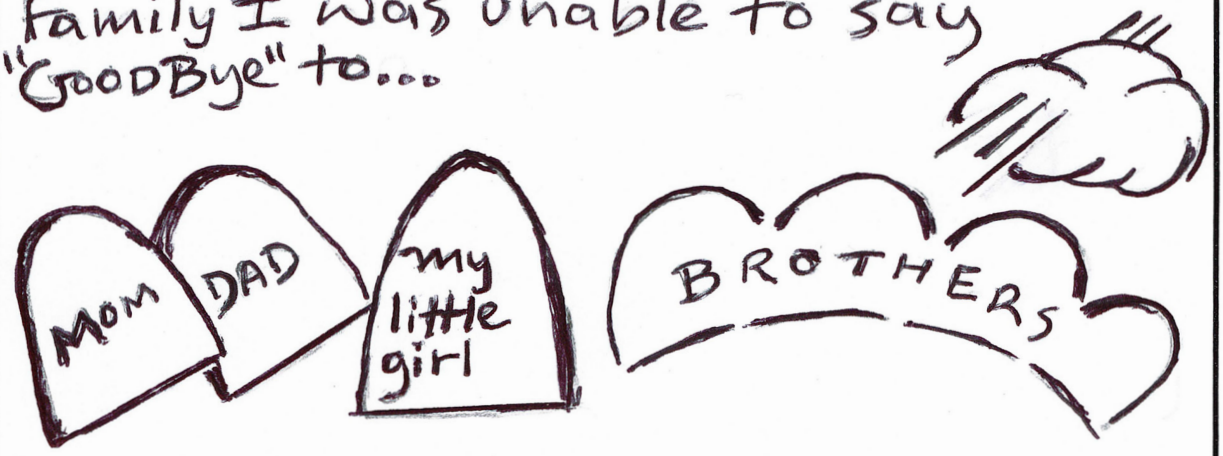
The stories in this graphic novel are dedicated to behavioral health consumers and their family members.



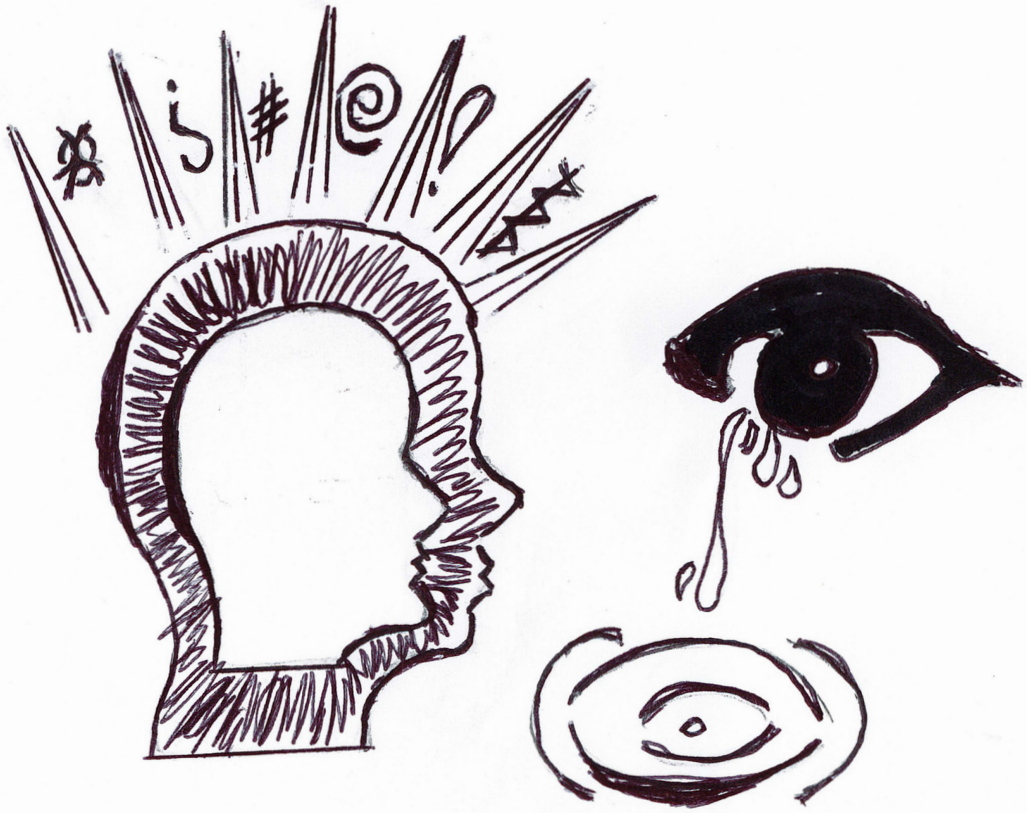
Special thanks to MayLynn Castañeto for your strength, you inspire us to reclaim our stories.

Stories are created by community members.
Views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of San Mateo County Health.

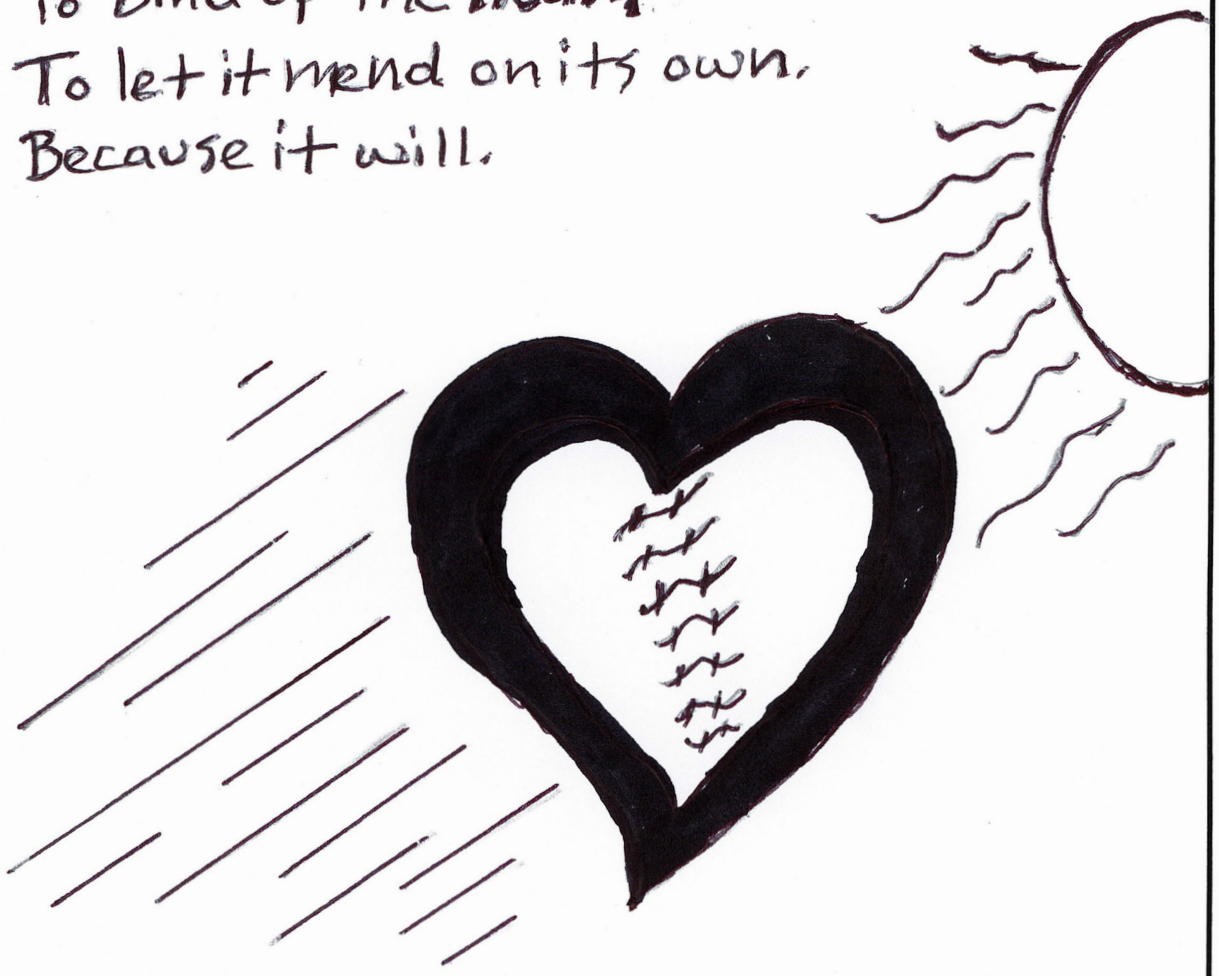
It was all those deaths. The family I was unable to say "GoodBye" to...



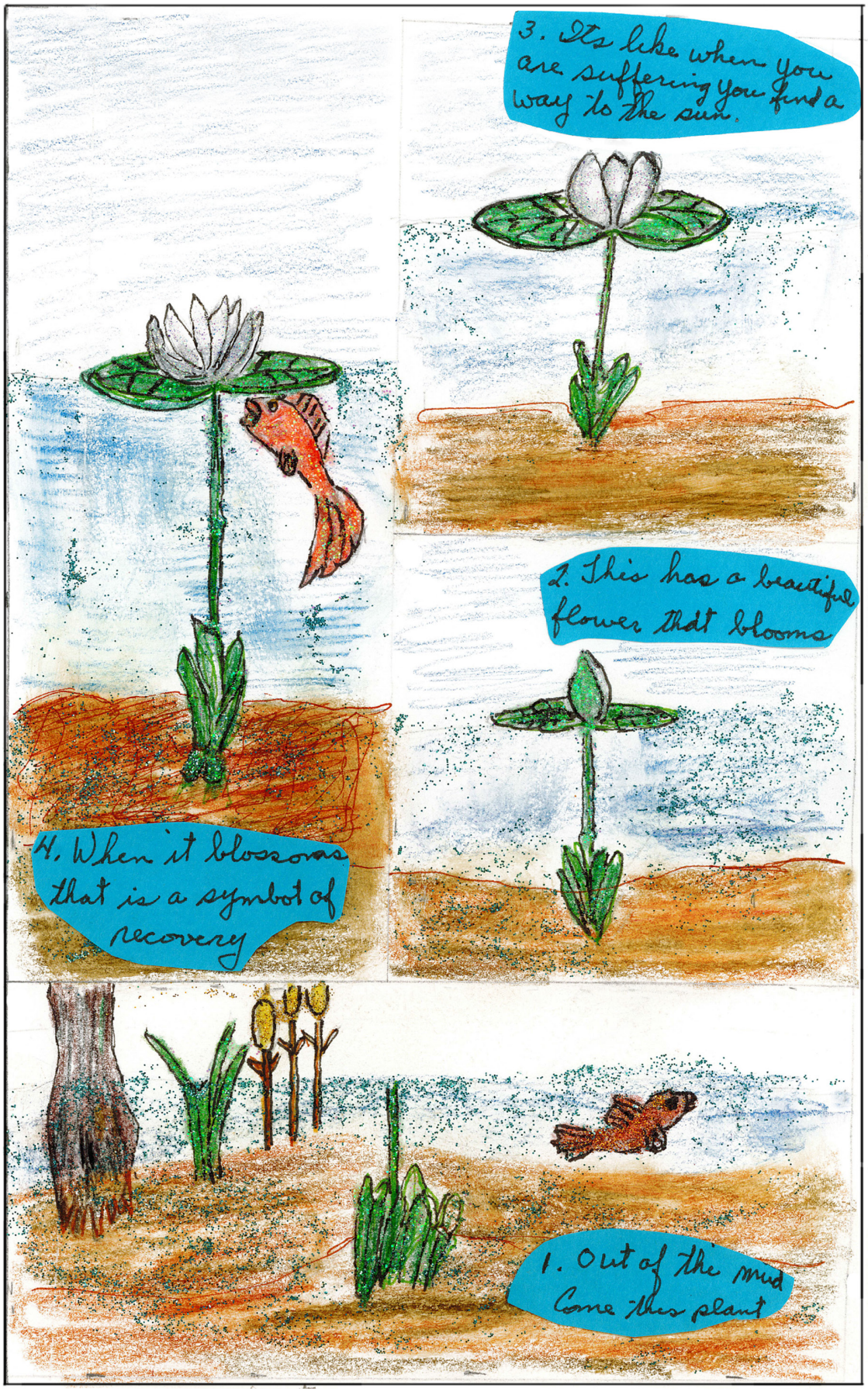
We're not supposed to call it insanity But how else do you capture the reality of excruciating mental anguish? It leaves you numb and empty.



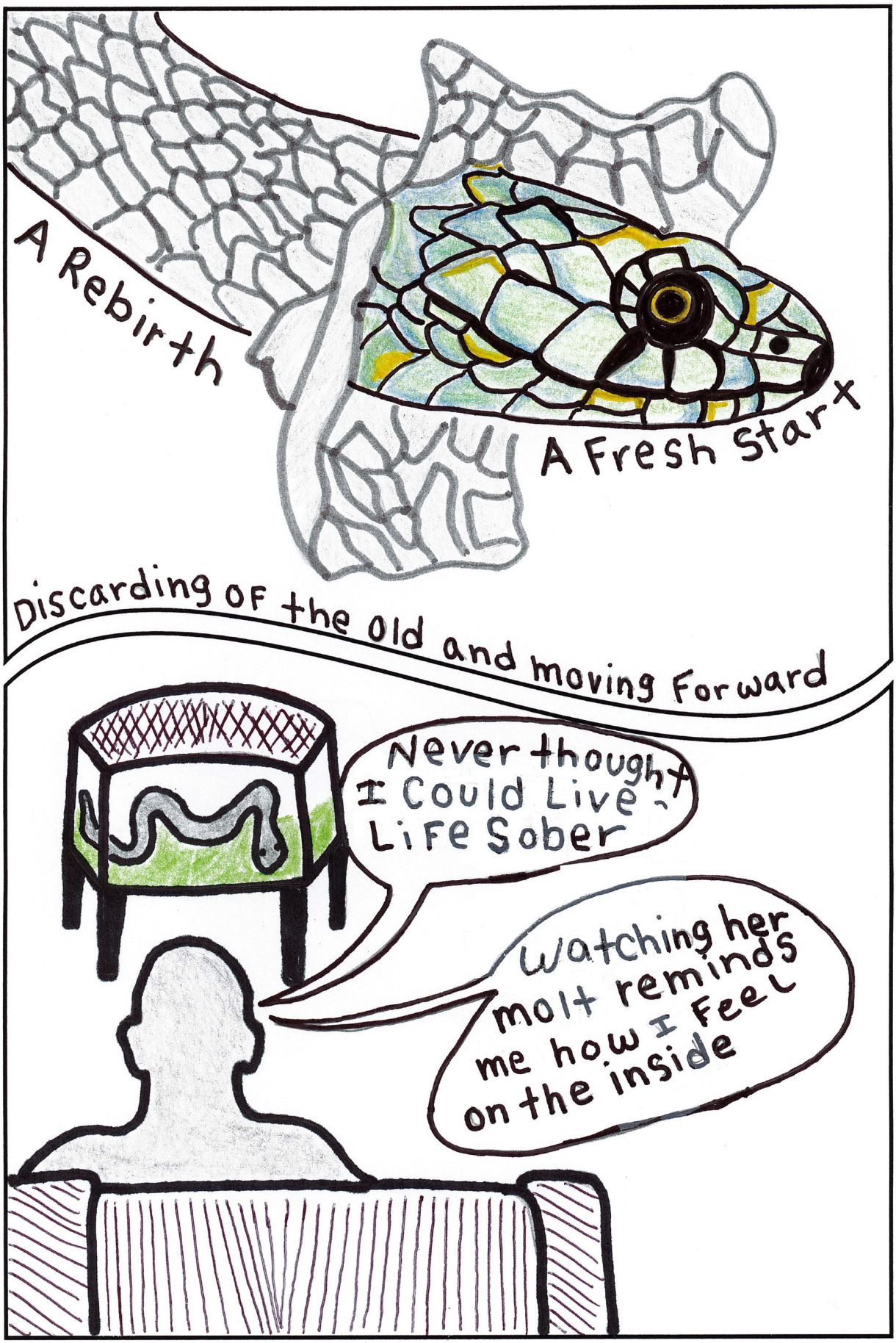
Time may not heal all wounds.
But it does give us time to **Breathe**.
To bind up the **Heart**
To let it mend on its own.
Because it will.

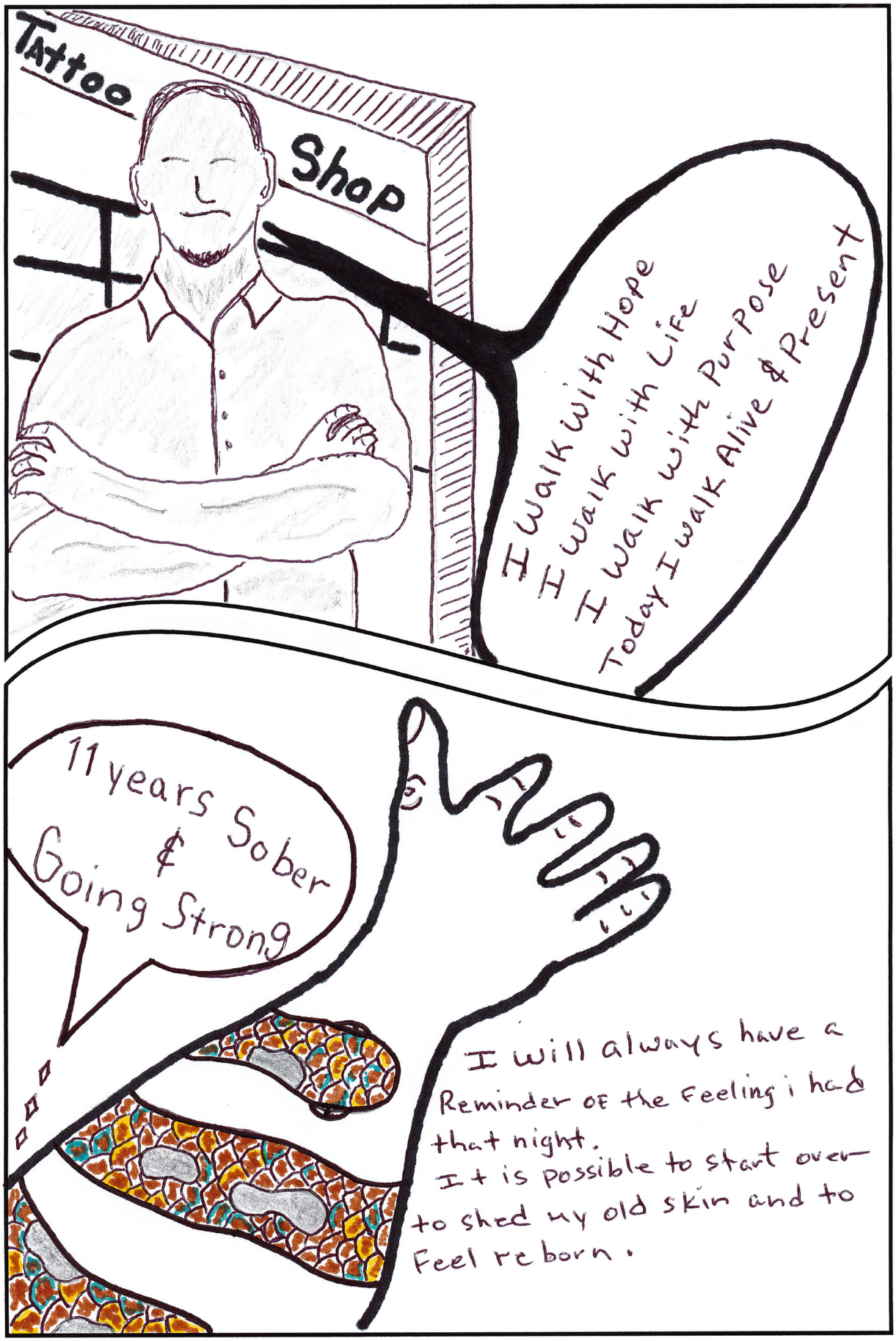


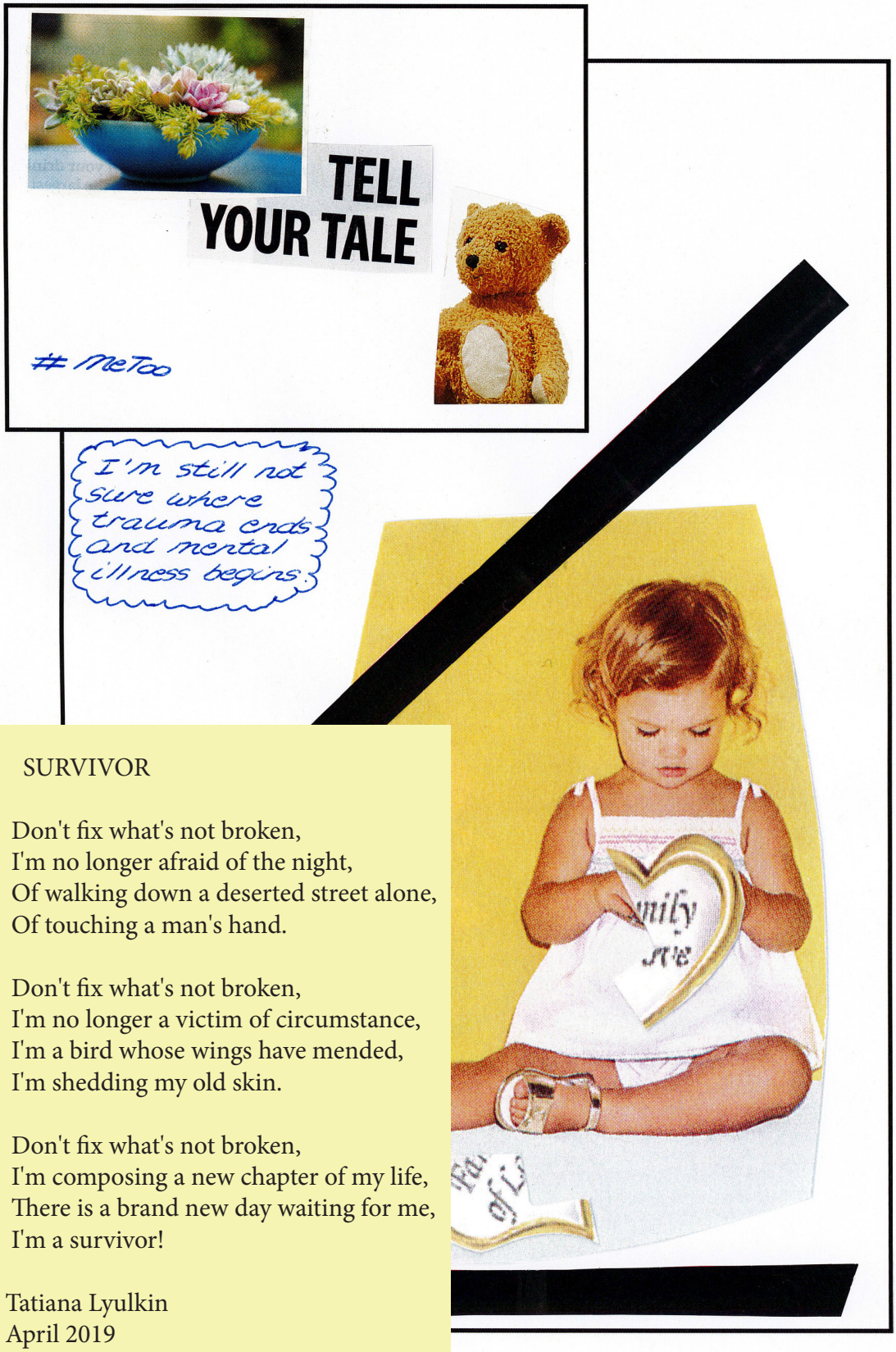
Give it time. Take a look at **Hope**.
Open your **Heart** now.
Take the hand of
the one who reaches to **Yours**


3. Its like when you are suffering you find a way to the sun.
2. This has a beautiful flower that blooms
4. When it blossoms that is a symbol of recovery
1. Out of the mud Come this plant

Cecilia Jane Robert


A Rebirth
A Fresh Start
Discarding of the old and moving Forward
Never thought I Could Live Life Sober
Watching her molt reminds me how I Feel on the inside


Tattoo Shop
I walk with Hope
I walk with Life
I walk with Purpose
Today I walk Alive & Present
11 years Sober & Going Strong
I will always have a Reminder of the Feeling i had that night.
It is possible to start over — to shed my old skin and to Feel reborn.



SURVIVOR

Don't fix what's not broken,
I'm no longer afraid of the night,
Of walking down a deserted street alone,
Of touching a man's hand.

Don't fix what's not broken,
I'm no longer a victim of circumstance,
I'm a bird whose wings have mended,
I'm shedding my old skin.

Don't fix what's not broken,
I'm composing a new chapter of my life,
There is a brand new day waiting for me,
I'm a survivor!

Tatiana Lyulkin
April 2019

The trauma you've
been through
is a part of you
but it doesn't
have to define you
or control you.

The future is waiting for you,
GO CLAIM IT!

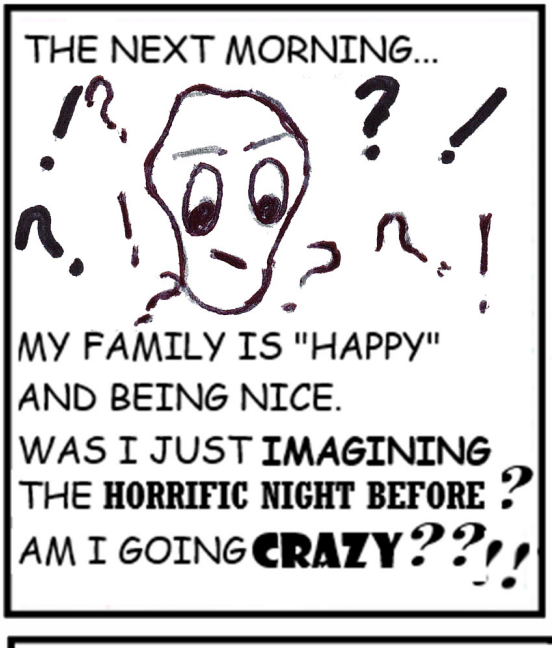
chef
designer
survivor
poet
aunt

This is
just the
beginning.

sister
citizen
scholar
godmother
photographer
child of God

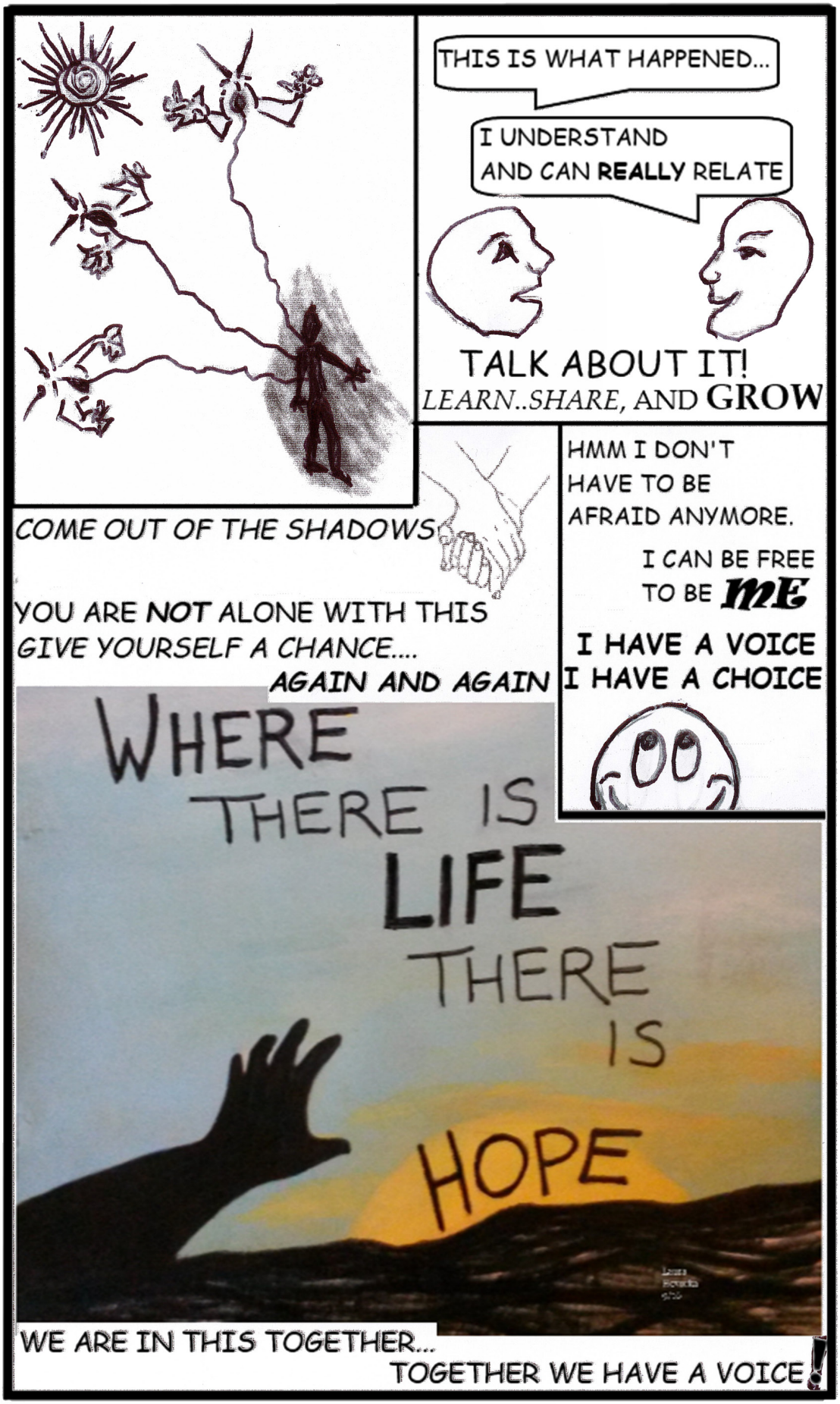
Don't be afraid
of the night -
it is there
to remind you
of how beautiful
the sunrise
can be.

Even if you
find yourself
walking
in total darkness,
hold on to the
tiniest glimmer
of hope
and
do all you can
to make it grow.

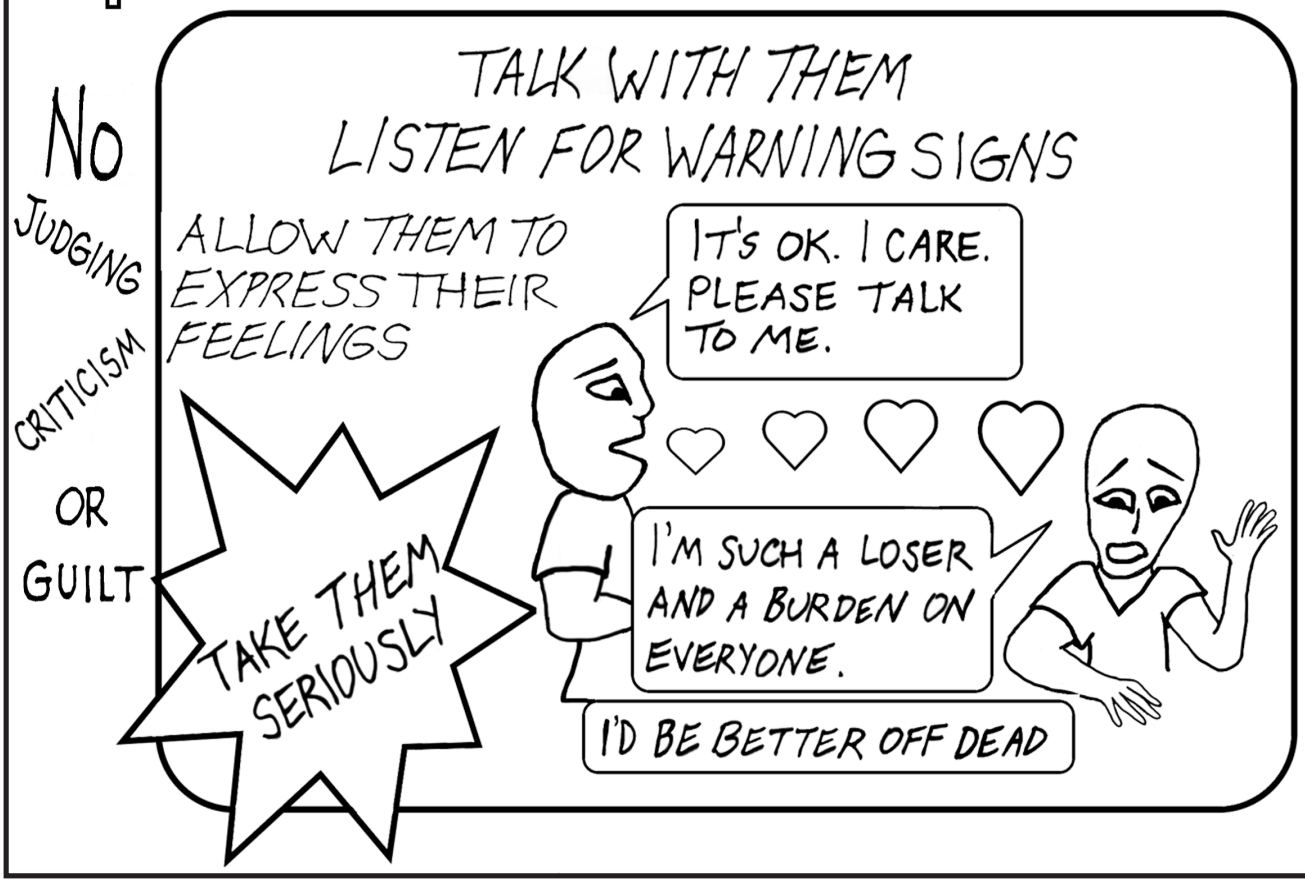


I LIVE HERE...

WHERE COLORS TURN TO SHADES OF GRAY
WHERE SOUNDS TURN TO MUFFLED SCREAMS
WHERE THE NIGHT TURNS TO JUST ANOTHER DAY
WHERE NIGHTMARES DESTROY ALL MY DREAMS.
WHERE MY BLOOD RUNS COLD
WHERE SUNSHINE BURNS WITH PAIN
WHERE I ALWAYS FEEL OLD
WHERE THE BRIGHTEST THOUGHT IS CLOUDED IN RAIN.
WHERE I EXIST IN DARK SOLITUDE
WHERE YOU ARE MILLIONS OF MILES AWAY
WHERE POLITE TALK TURNS BITTERLY CRUDE
AND WHERE REALLY THERE'S NOTHING MORE TO SAY.

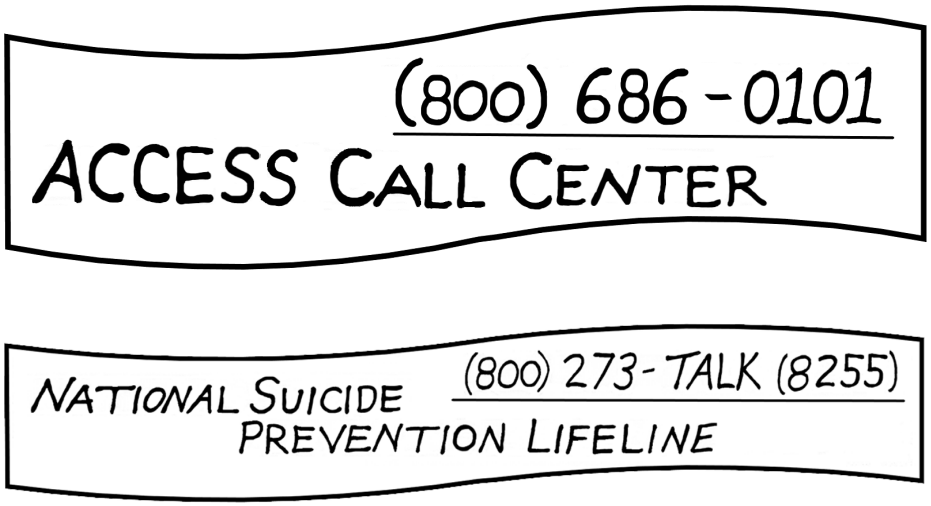

THIS IS WHAT HAPPENED...
I UNDERSTAND AND CAN **REALLY** RELATE
TALK ABOUT IT!
LEARN..SHARE, AND **GROW**
COME OUT OF THE SHADOWS
YOU ARE **NOT** ALONE WITH THIS
GIVE YOURSELF A CHANCE....
AGAIN AND AGAIN
HMM I DON'T HAVE TO BE AFRAID ANYMORE.
I CAN BE FREE TO BE **ME**
I HAVE A VOICE
I HAVE A CHOICE
WHERE THERE IS LIFE THERE IS HOPE
WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER...
TOGETHER WE HAVE A VOICE!

Lastly, A Story of Hope



ASK DIRECT QUESTIONS
SO ARE YOU PLANNING ON KILLING YOURSELF?
YES.
I DON'T KNOW. I JUST DON'T SEE ANY OTHER WAY OUT.
ASKING QUESTIONS OR TALKING ABOUT SUICIDE DOES NOT PUT THE IDEA IN THEIR HEAD

CONNECT THEM WITH RESOURCES AND PROFESSIONAL HELP
IT'LL BE OK. I'M GOING TO GET SOMEONE YOU CAN TALK WITH THAT CAN HELP YOU FIGURE THINGS OUT.
MAYBE THERE IS HOPE AFTERALL
CALL HELP
KEEP THEM SAFE
MEANWHILE, I'M GOING TO STAY WITH YOU.
I WANT YOU TO BE SAFE
NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE
(800) 273-TALK (8255)



Arranged by Siavash Zohoori, Office of Diversity and Equity

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smchealth.org/bhrsservices
Office of Diversity and Equity, 2019

SAN MATEO COUNTY HEALTH
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH & RECOVERY SERVICES

Behavioral Health & Recovery Services
SAN MATEO COUNTY
Office of Diversity and Equity

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