Nick’s diary
in quarantine

coloring book

Monica Torsellini

drawings by
Arianna Pensa

My most sincere thanks to Karen Hillman Fried and to all the VSOF staff

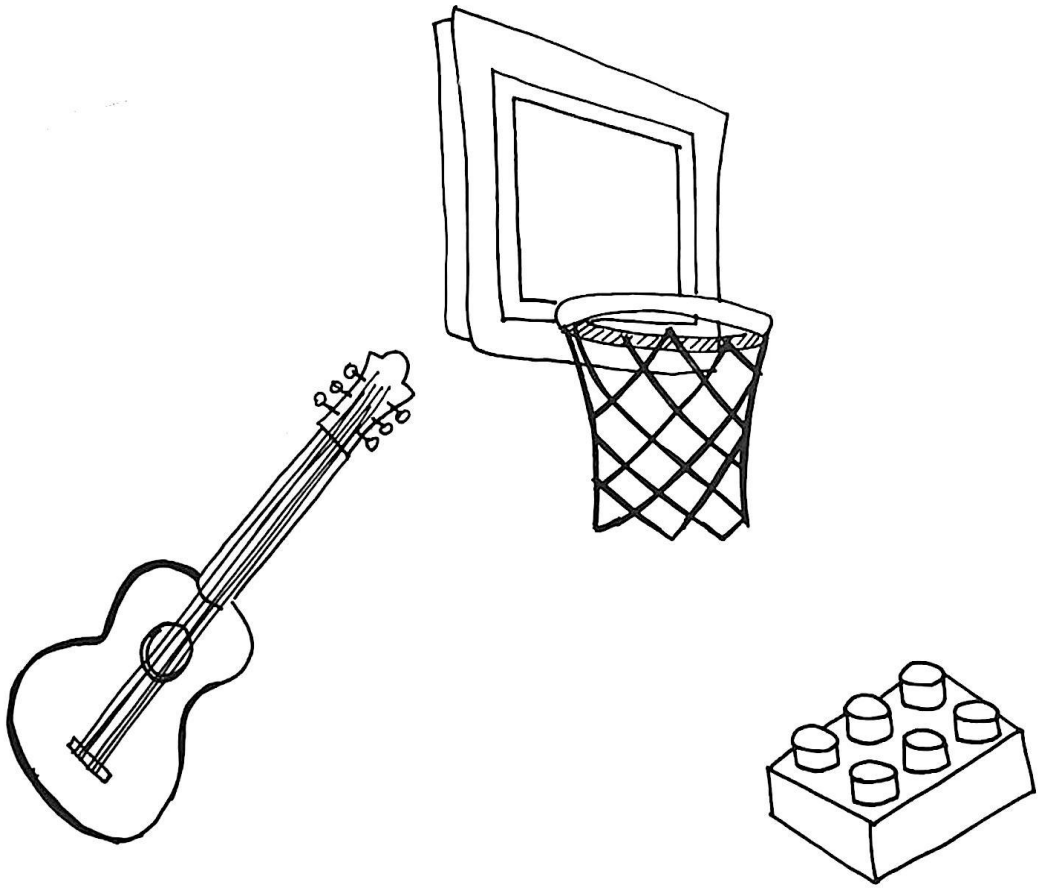
Coloring Nick's diary

Choose a color for each emotion:

- ◯ hope
- ◯ fear
- ◯ anger
- ◯ joy
- ◯ sadness
- ◯ shame
- ◯ surprise
- ◯ disappointment
- ◯ _____
- ◯ _____
- ◯ _____
- ◯ _____

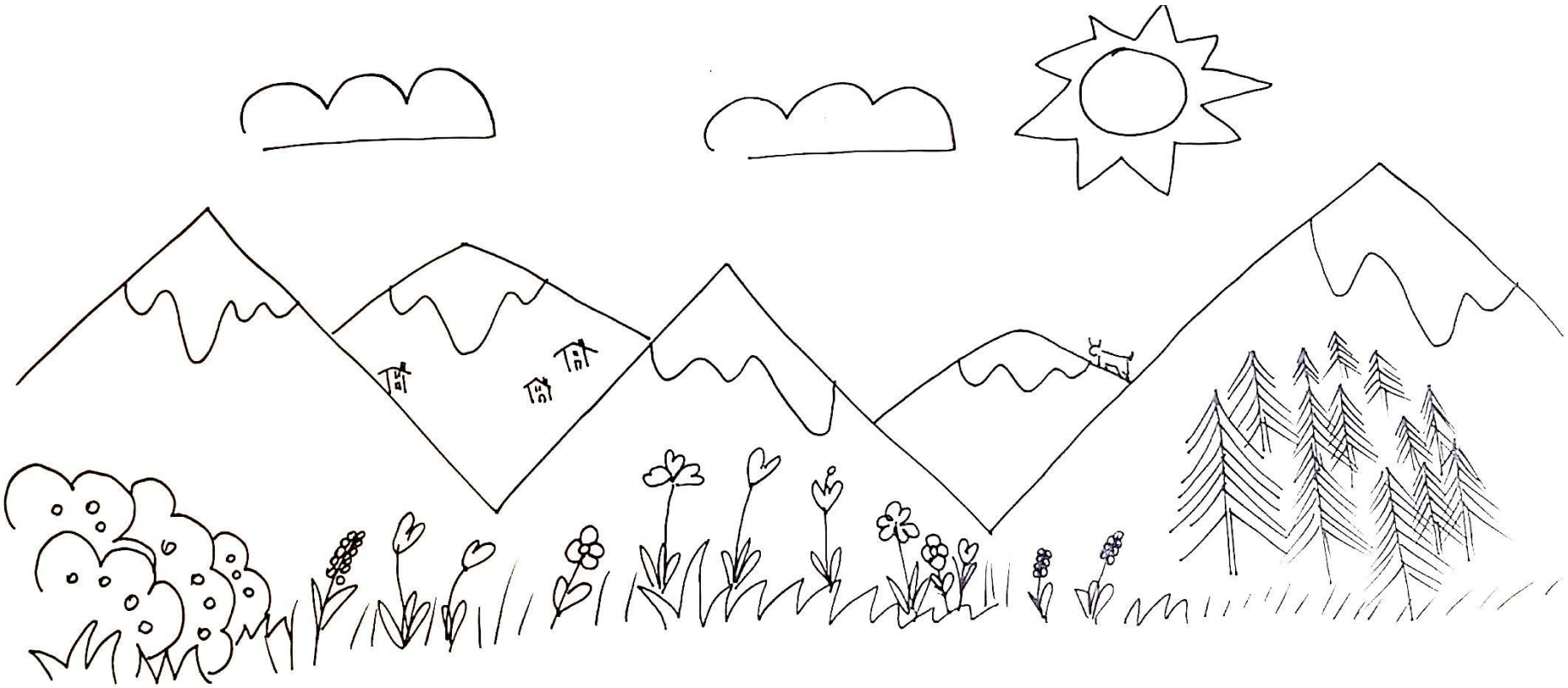
Color the drawings according to how you felt reading the text

Hello everyone. I am Carlo. Not so long ago I lived a good normal life. I went to school in the morning, sometimes I wanted to go, sometimes I just did not. In the end, however, I was happy to meet all my classmates, and my teachers as well. When, school was over my mom, or at times my grandpa would pick me up.



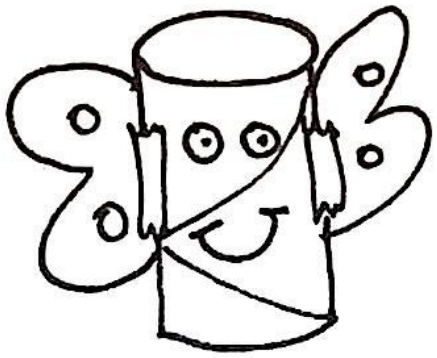
Mom or grandpa used to take me home for a snack, and then sometimes I'd go play basketball, other times I'd stay home and play, sometimes alone and sometimes with my sister Camilla. After school Camilla played volleyball with her friends or took guitar lessons. When she came home, we played with lego's together , or we argued and I usually was the one to cry. Then Camilla would get in trouble with my mother.

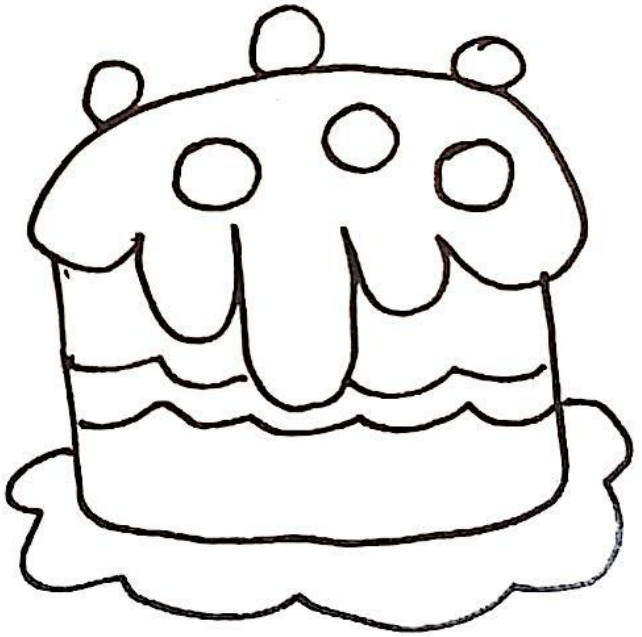
On Saturday's and Sunday's we always invited friends for lunch or dinner, or went biking or to a children's event. Unfortunately, I also had to do my homework on the weekends but one day was always dedicated doing something out of town. In the summer season we often went hiking in the mountains: I complained because I got tired, but I still had fun.



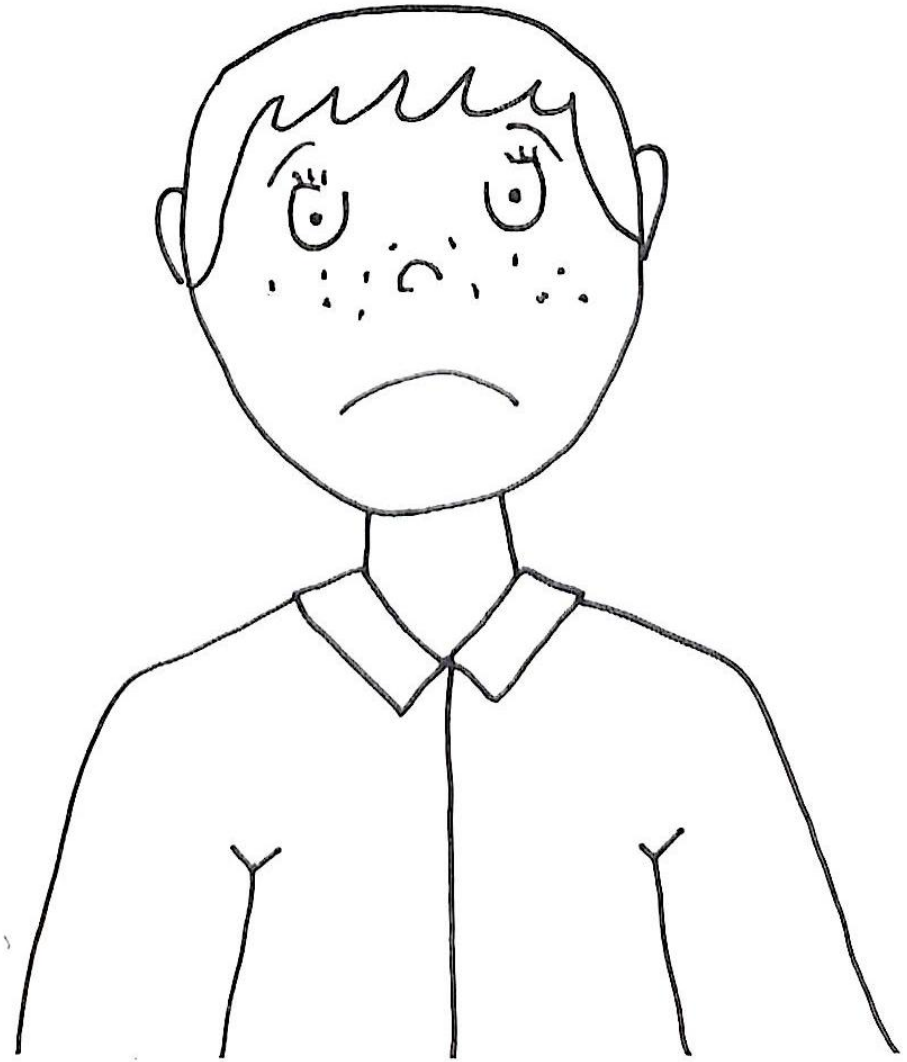
Now it’s spring and we were ready to start our walks and picnics around the woods. This year, however, we will not go walking around the woods. For a while now we have been locked in the house because a bad and very contagious disease has arrived, and a big mess is happening all over the world. Therefore, for our own and everyone's good, we must stay home.

At first when we did not have to go to school anymore, I was happy! At home we did some homework, but we also played a lot, we were making cakes and crafts with paper and clay dough. And then a lot of fun video calls to friends and grandparents, and class meetings on the computer. What's more, Mom was always at home and finally I could stay a little bit with her! Dad would come home from work at night, as usual, but he seemed to be a little worried!





As the days went by I understood, from the voice of the my mum and by my dad’s face, that this "vacation at home" was not exactly a reason to celebrate. They were worried, even if they didn't tell me.
And then I started to miss my classmates, teachers, our friends coming for dinner. But I mostly miss my grandparents, my aunt, my cousins.
Now I'm starting to not be so happy anymore.



I feel strange. I get bored sometimes. I miss those times in the school yard before going in chatting with my classmates. I miss the shiny wooden floor of the basketball court, where my friends and I had a lot of fun making long slides on our knees, and I really miss bread and chocolate for snacks when I'd go my grandparents'.

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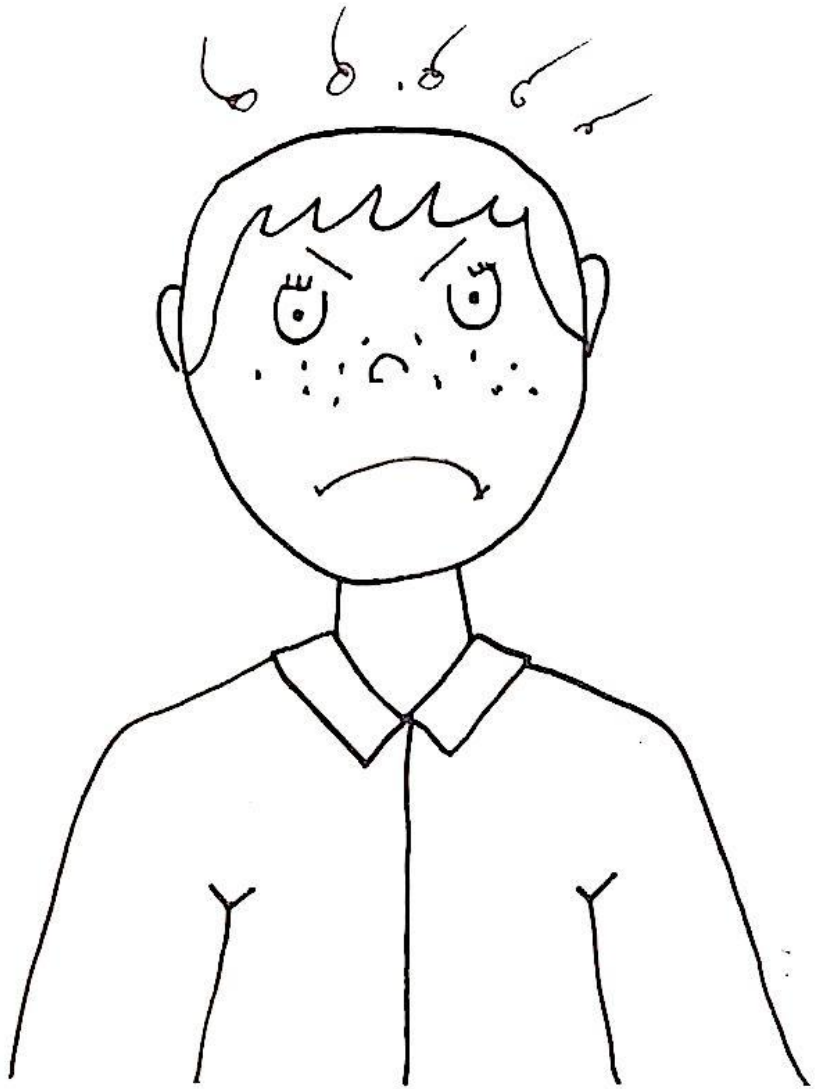


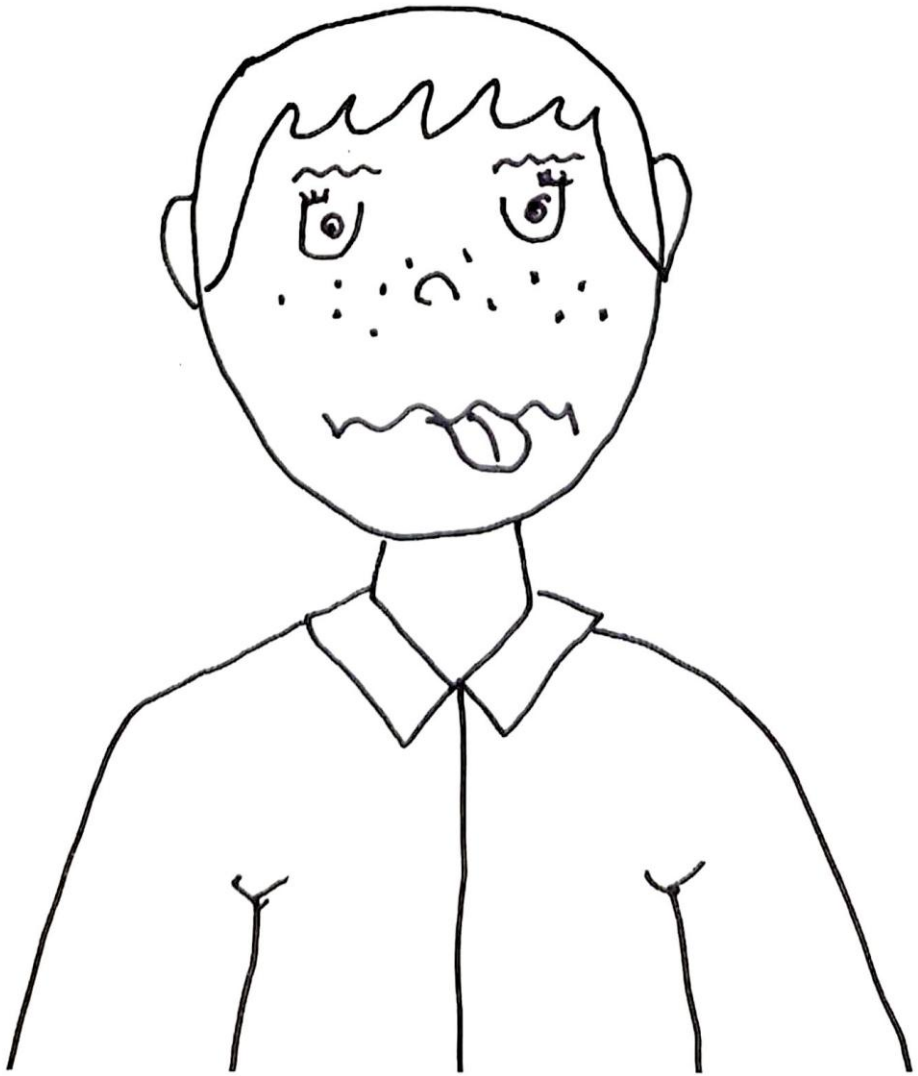
When I see my classmates on the PC they joke and laugh. And I feel something in my belly, my fists are clenched and I almost cry. And I don’t know why. I feel like I’m angry. I know I shouldn’t, but all of this just seems so unfair! Yeah, it’s not fair!

And while I think that it's not fair, I'm a little ashamed to be angry and I pretend nothing's wrong. Sometimes I feel like I'm in a bubble that bounces in the air and does not know where it goes and why, wandering confused and lost. I feel like a rock pressing on my chest. I feel lost. I do not understand!

Then I see my friends on the PC again, still laughing and I feel I’m not really normal! I would like to scream that maybe they do not understand, that we still have to stay stuck in our homes and that who knows what will happen, who knows when we will be able to go out again, who knows if we will be able to hug our grandparents again or will we have to stay far away longer. And this makes me feel like crying..

Sometimes I feel angry for no reason, I slam things on the ground, I scream and throw games and fight with Camilla over nothing. My mom gets very angry. I don't know why I do it, I feel like a tiger is eating my belly from inside with its sharp teeth.

And then often when I go to bed I toss and turn under the covers and I cannot sleep. In the middle of the night I wake up, looking for my stuffed animal to hug. I would like to call my mom and dad but I'm embarassed!

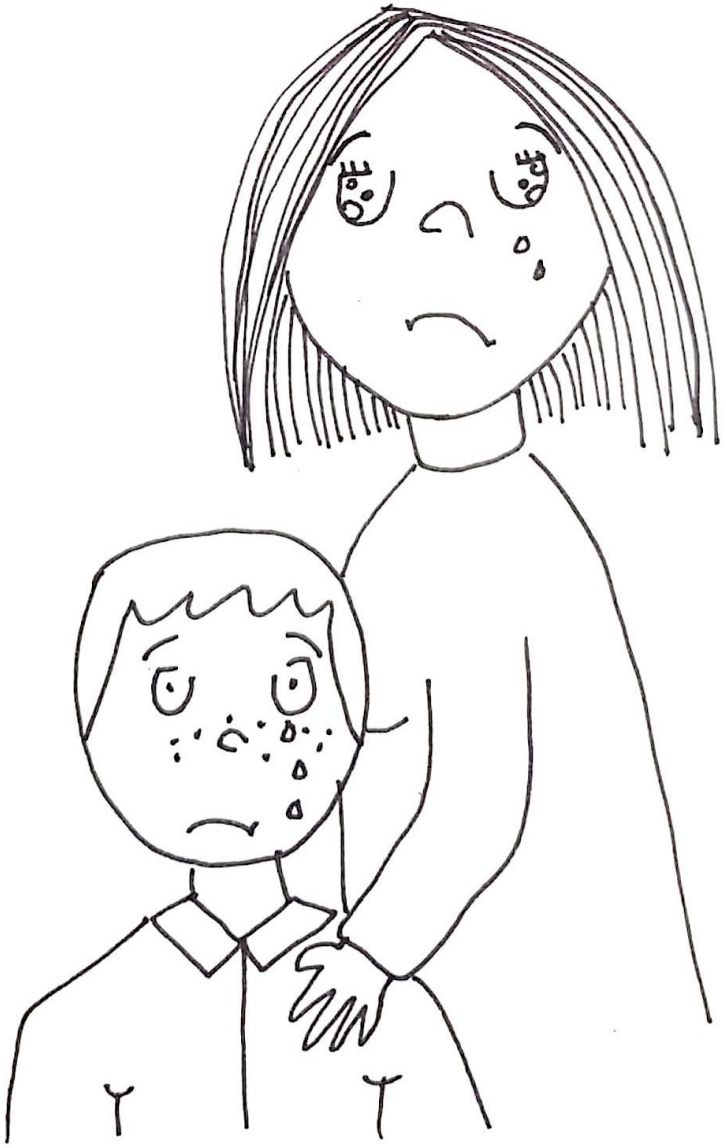


. Sometimes when I'm playing with my sister or watching a movie, I feel like I've lost everything, and I don't even know why. I lost my class, my friends and my teachers. I lost my basketball games and all my friends. I lost my grandparents, my aunt and cousins. I lost my bike rides. And who knows if I'll ever get them back.

And then I lost my mom and dad's laughs and their silly jokes. Even though they smile, they act weird, as if they are hiding something from me, and that's why I'm so sad and confused.

In the last few days I often felt like crying and I didn’t know why, and I was really beginning to worry that I was going out of control. What is happening to me? Besides being sad and nervous, I am now also crazy?

Yesterday I went to ask Mom for something and I saw she had been crying. I got scared but I didn’t say anything because I was embarassed. But she took me in her arms: You know, Nick, I’m so sad too. I miss grandpa and grandma, my friends, my job. And I’m also so worried about what’s gonna happen, I really don’t know what’s going to happen, Nick. And I feel so sorry for you and Camilla"



“Even I am so angry about this unfair thing that happened to us, and I feel like crying. But I also know that everything passes, and this too will pass.”. Mom hugged me hard, and I cried. “Let’s spend some time together every day for five minutes, maybe we cry a little, or we get a little angry, and we tell each other all the things that weigh on our hearts, and then we will have a silly laugh of ours!" she smiled.

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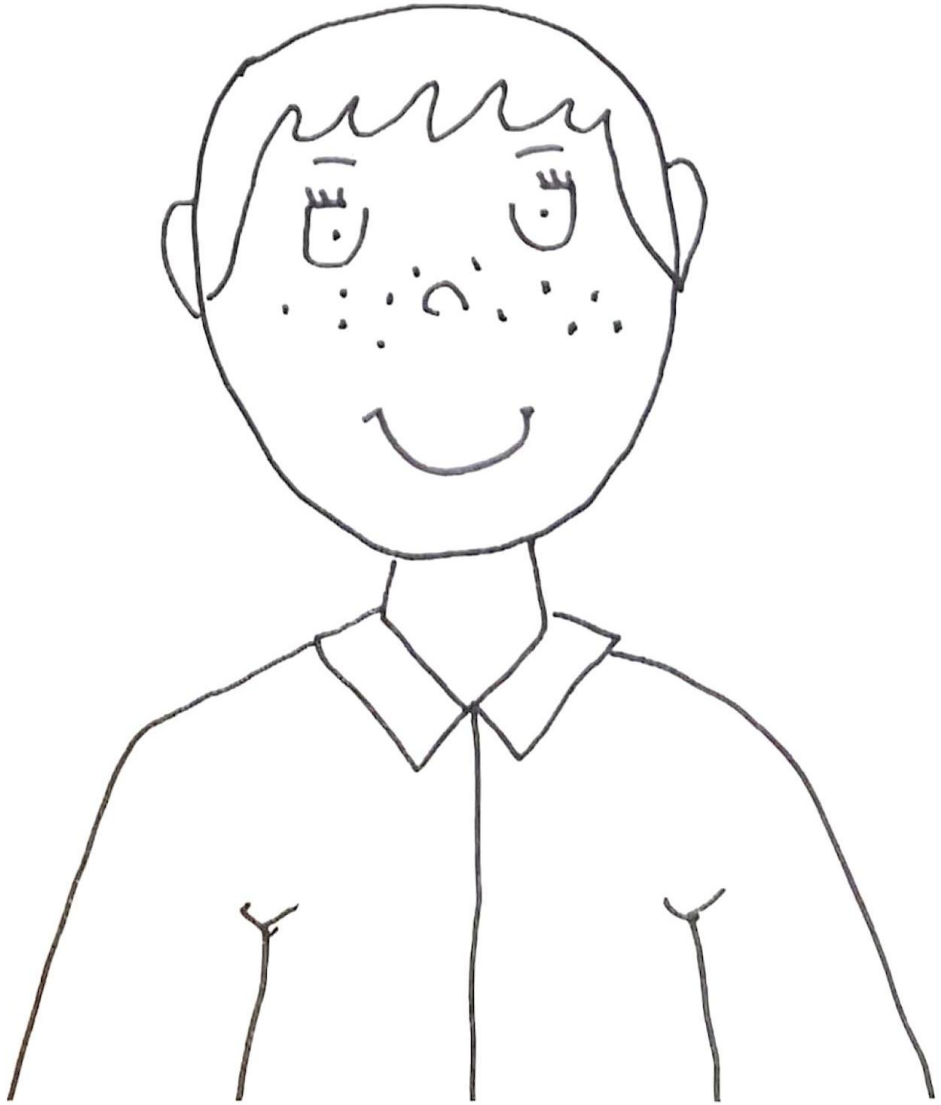

Now I’m in my room playing. I was sorry to see my mom crying. But I felt that a little bit of weight in my heart is gone, I feel a little warmer, a little softer. And now I know: I’m not crazy!

“Nick’s Diary” was realized from the author on principles of Oaklander model psychotherapy, and on a 20 years experience of educational work and then 7 years of therapeutic work with children and adolescents. It was edited by Karen Hillman Fried, Psy.D., M.F.T. is a licensed marriage and family therapist and an educational therapist in Santa Monica, California, and one of the founding members of the **Violet Oaklander Foundation**, a non-profit corporation created to further the work of Dr. Violet Oaklander, eminent child and adolescent psychotherapist, trainer, and author.

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