

The Sack



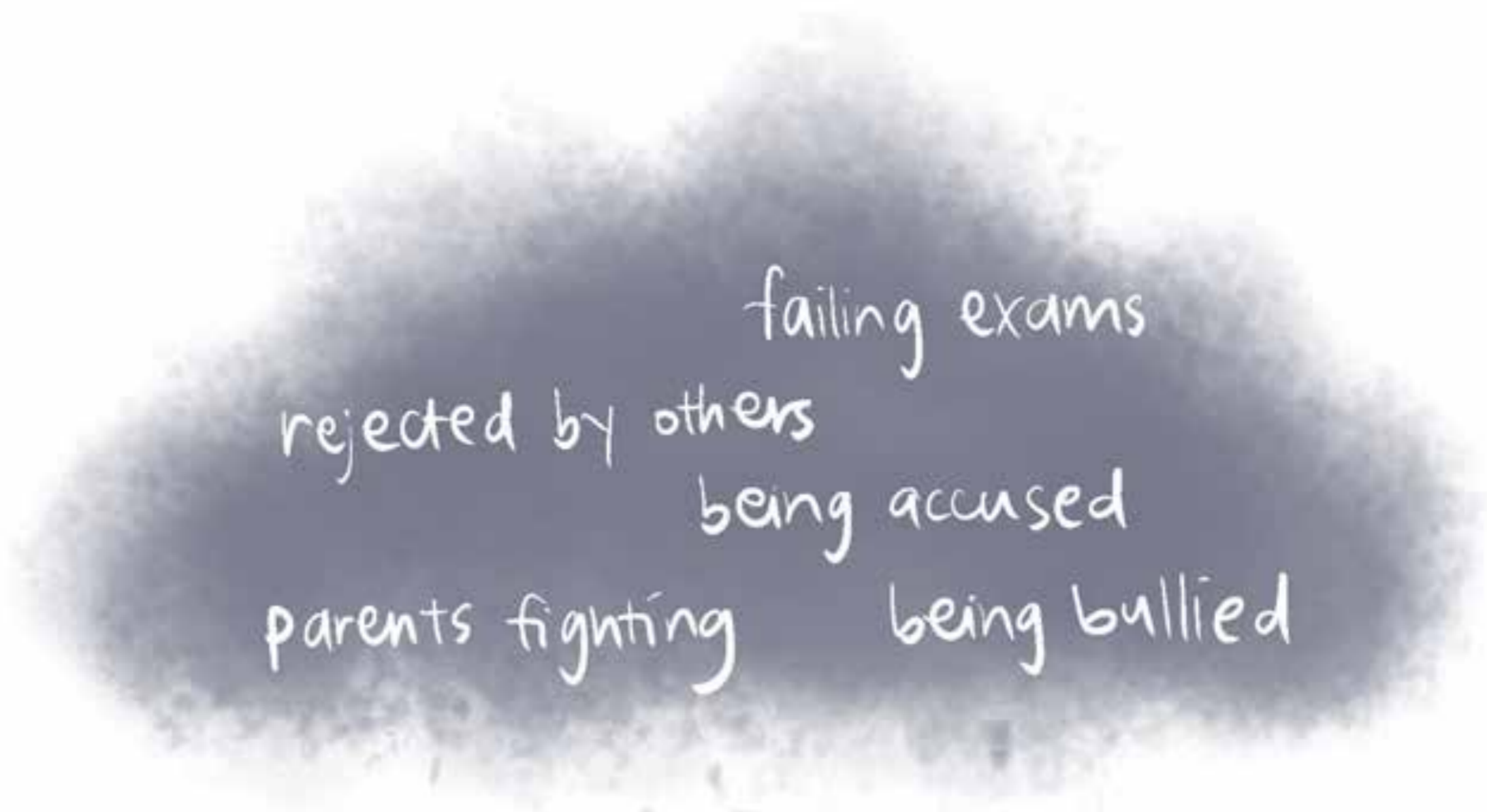
illustrated by Lee Jia Ai (IG: @soulfullydrawn)
created for Strengthening Families Programme@Family Service Centre
(MWS FAM@FSC)

failing exams
rejected by others
being accused
parents fighting
being bullied

Growing up, bad things may happen to us... some of which are beyond our control. Sometimes, these bad things last for a really long time...

Day by day, these things may form a dark raincloud over our lives.





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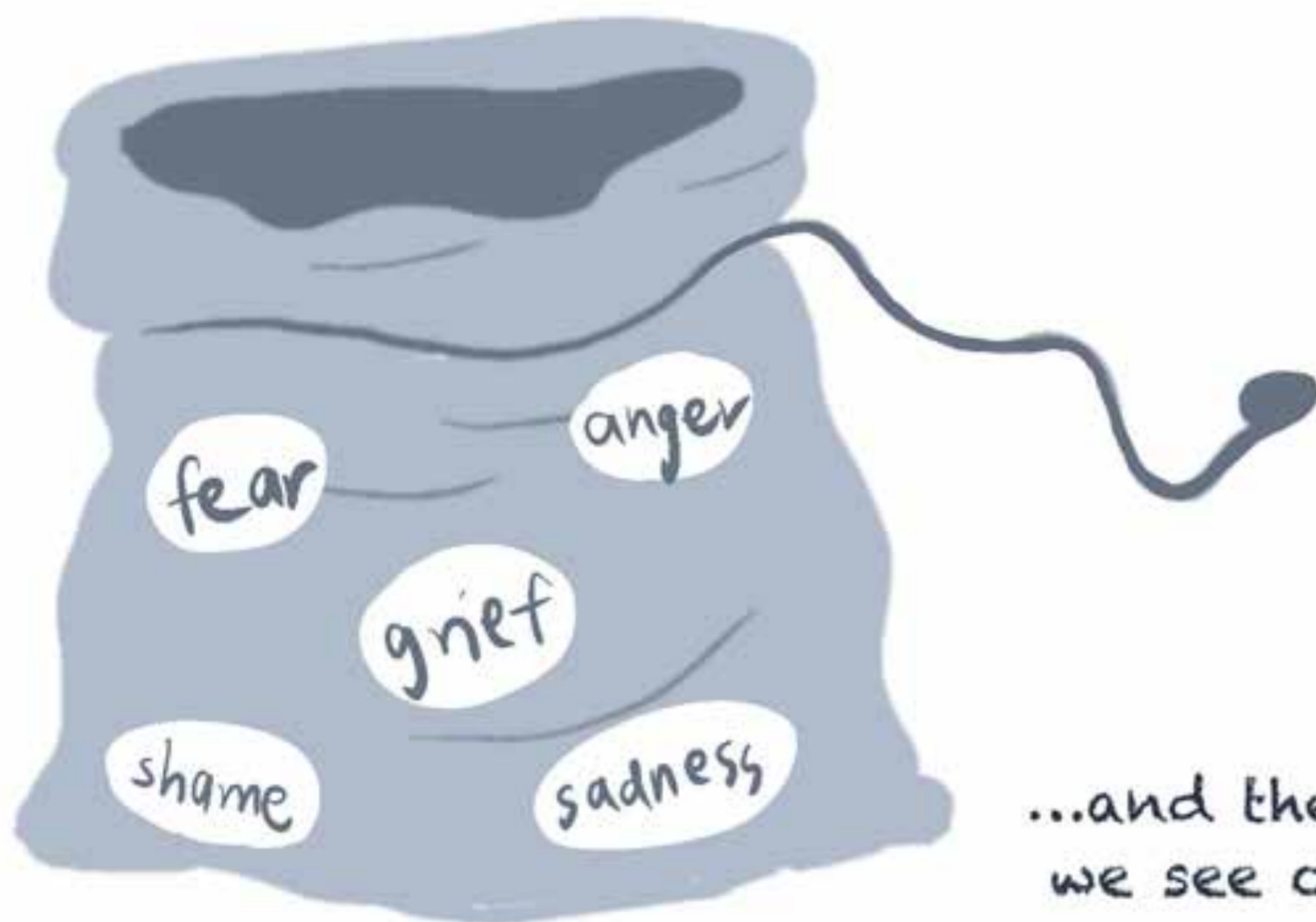
Until one day, the
raincloud starts to
pour.

Except that what falls
isn't raindrops but
something else...

And they fall into this
huge sack in our lives.



Upon a closer look, this sack may contain emotions like...



...and they slowly change the way we see ourselves and the world.

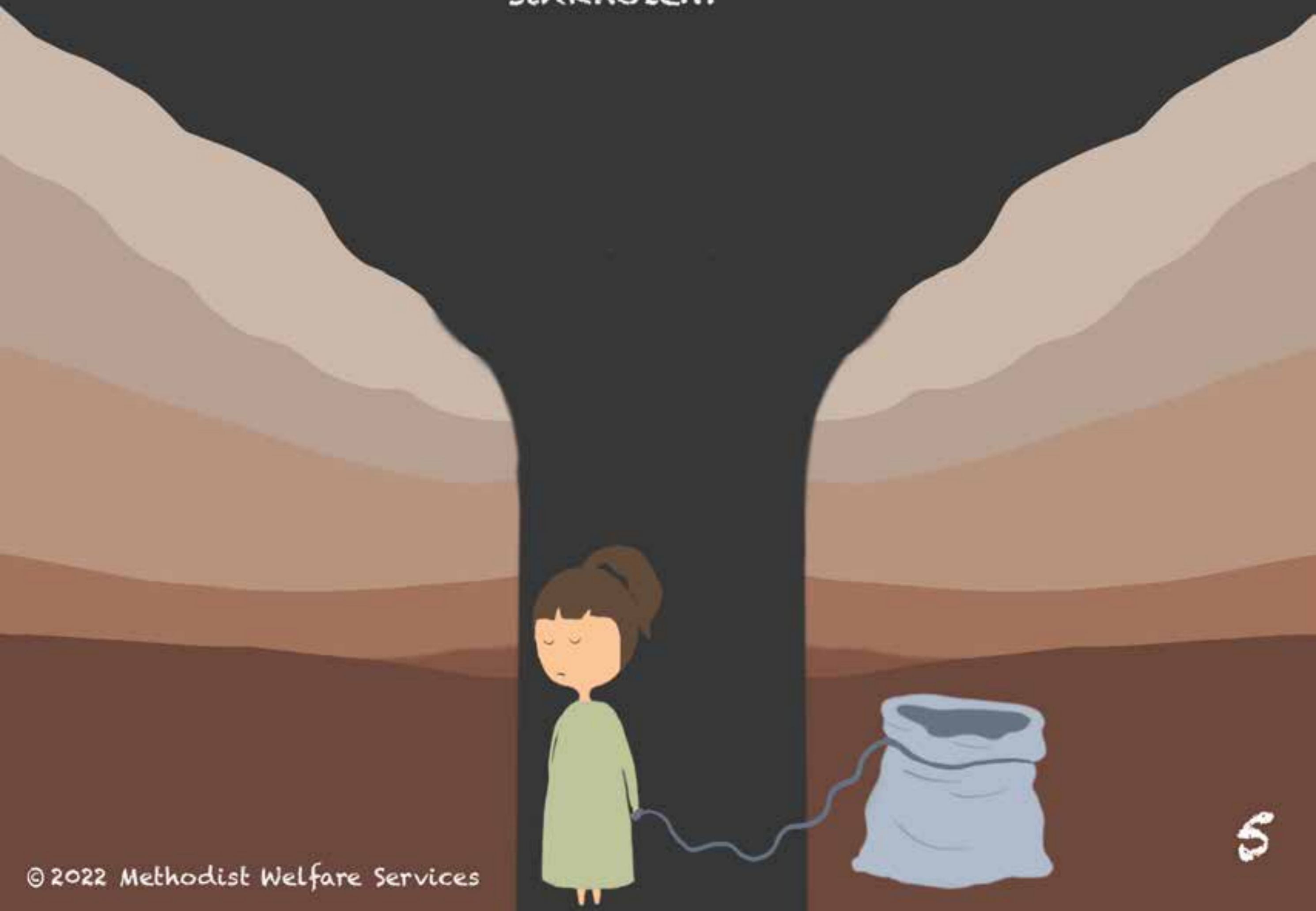


We carry this sack wherever we go...



... not because we want to,
but because it is just so difficult to let go...

And as time goes by... the sack gets heavier and harder to carry alone... It starts to feel like a sinkhole...



As the weight gets unbearable,
we may unknowingly build a wall to separate
ourselves from the sack...

... so as to block out those unwanted emotions.



Each brick in the wall represents an unhelpful strategy that we use to protect ourselves from pain and harm.

MISS PERFECT

"Everything must be within my control."

MR ACHIEVER

"I must get full marks, otherwise I'm not good enough."

MISS NICE

"It's okay even if people cross my boundaries. I don't want them to be upset."

MISS INDEPENDENT

"I don't have a best friend because I can never trust anyone."



"DO NOT ENTER MY BUBBLE!"

MR ANGRY

"It's all your FAULT!"

MR RIGHT

"I failed my exams because my teacher is bad"



"I just want to bury myself."

"GO AWAY!"



For a while, it may seem like things are getting better...

... but after some time, those survival strategies will eventually fail, as we get more and more tired, resentful and isolated, and lose important relationships in our lives...



... leaving us trapped in a web of pain and suffering.



Perhaps then, it might help to talk to someone about the sack...

"This sack is killing me. I don't know what to do anymore. Am I weird? Is it just me? Why is this happening to me?"

Everyone has his/her own sack, and it is absolutely normal to talk to a counsellor about it. This is a safe space for you to unload your sack ok... let's find out what's happening, and how we can make you feel better...



Sometimes, that process may offer us the safety and courage to gradually peep into that scary sack again and find out what's actually inside.



We may be surprised to find that there are good things in there too, which we had simply lost sight of because of all the bad things that had happened.



Over time, we may learn that it's not so much about keeping the sack out of our lives, but recognising that we are all survivors... that we are so much bigger than our circumstances, and we have the power to live with the sack without letting it rule our lives.

