

# Once I Was Very Very Scared

by Chandra Ghosh Ippen  
illustrations by Erich Ippen jr.



# Once I Was Very Very Scared

by Chandra Ghosh Ippen  
illustrations by Erich Ippen jr.



For grown-ups around the world who help  
children feel protected and cherished,  
for all the children they love,  
and for Raiden, our son, who is very very loved.







Copyright 2016 © Chandra Ghosh Ippen and Erich Ippen, Jr.

PDF Version of Once I was Very Very Scared All rights reserved.

The PDF may not be altered in any way. You may download and make a copy of this PDF for personal, noncommercial use and may make individual copies for families with whom you work provided that any copy is given free of charge. Links to the book from other web sites are permitted and encouraged.

You may use an electronic version for trainings and presentations, provided all participants are provided with a link to the story, the authorship is indicated, and the full story is not included in handouts, recorded, or posted to the web as part of that training.

No part of this book may be included in other materials including web or print. Exceptions include brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and articles. This PDF version may not be widely distributed without prior written permission from Chandra Ghosh Ippen. For inquiries about special use contact Piplo Productions (piplo@piploproductions.com).

The publisher, author, and illustrator take no responsibility for the use of these materials. Please review them and determine if they are appropriate for your specific needs. This book is not intended as a substitute for treatment from a mental health provider. The reader should consult with a mental health provider for any symptoms that may need diagnosis or professional attention.

Summary: Once I was very very scared, declared squirrel. The other animals chime in to share that they were also once scared. Through the story we learn what scared the little animals, ways they each respond when scared, and things that help them feel safe and calm. This book was designed to help young children who have experienced stressful or traumatic events.

The development of the story was funded in part by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), US Department of Health and Human Service (HHS). The views, policies, and opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of SAMHSA or HHS.

Special thanks to colleagues at the Child Trauma Research Program and the National Child Traumatic Stress Network who provided feedback and support.





Umm...





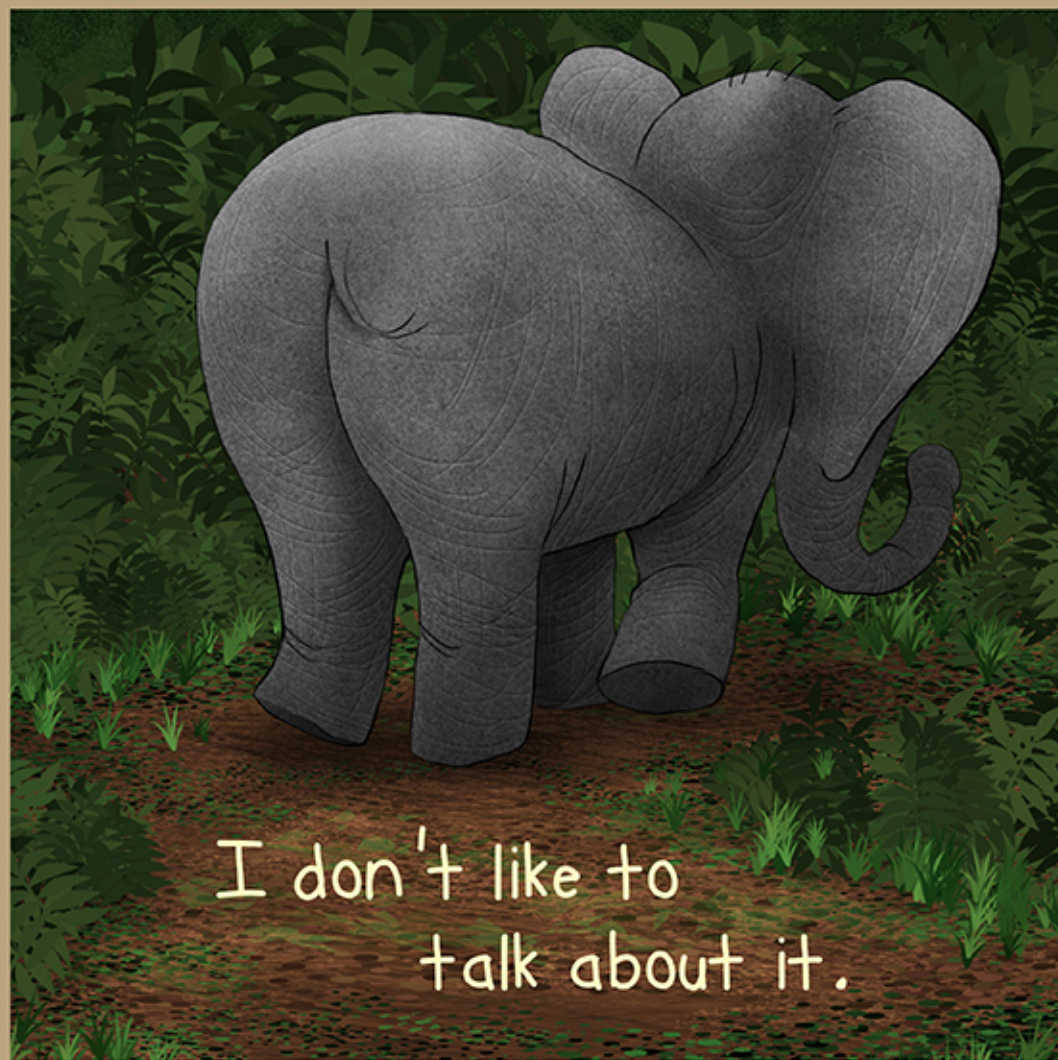














I wonder  
what scared you.







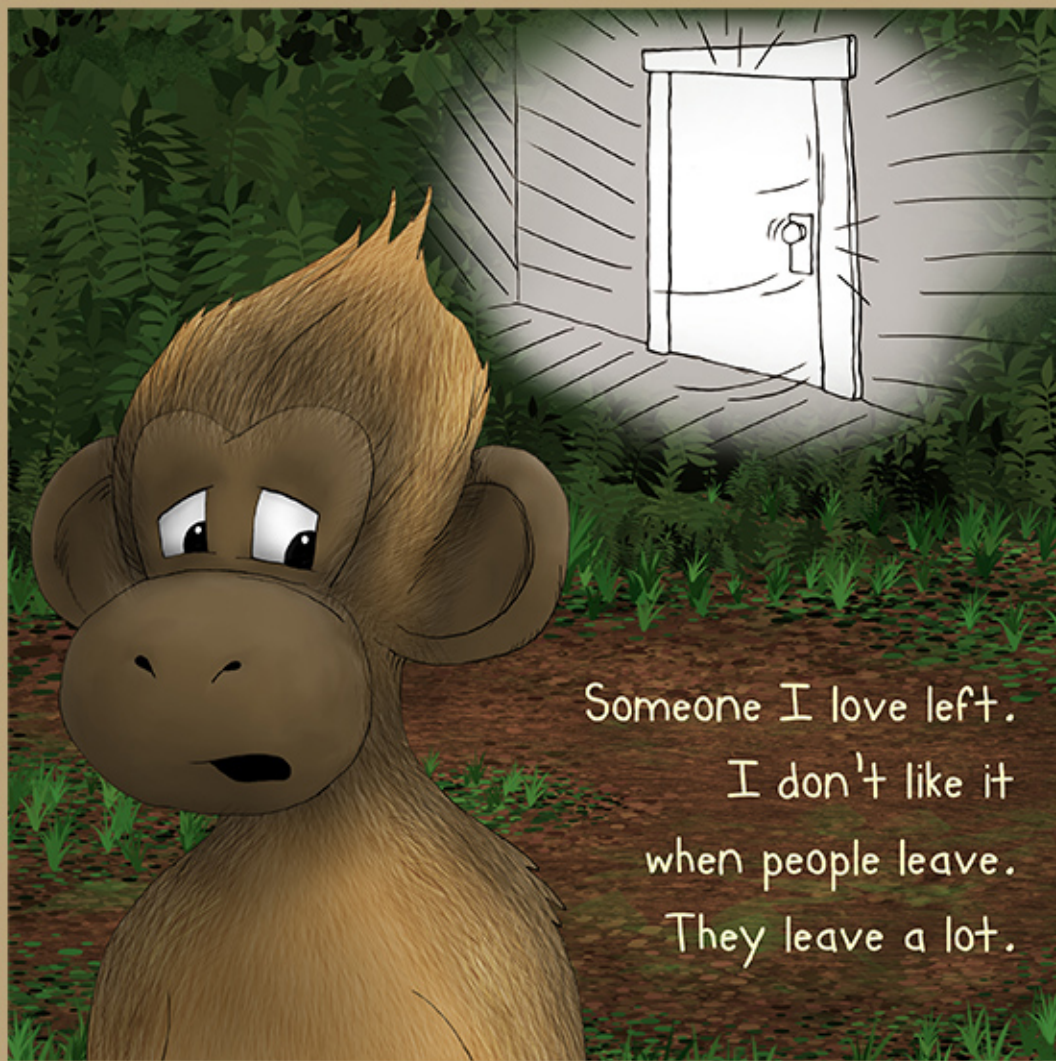
The wind.  
It was so loud.  
It hurt my house.  
My toys were broken.  
The nuts went everywhere.  
The whole place was shaking.



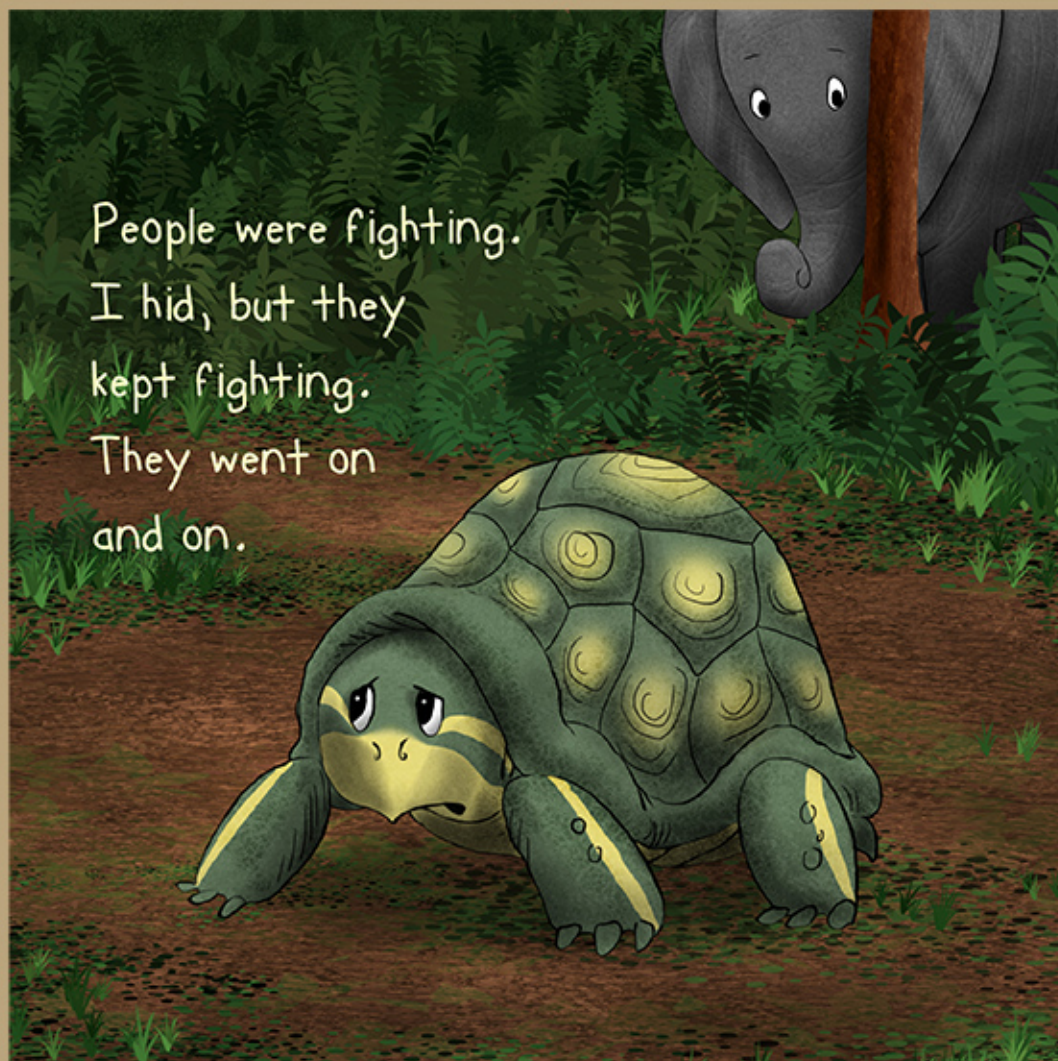
I saw someone  
get hurt.

...rb..bit...





Someone I love left.  
I don't like it  
when people leave.  
They leave a lot.



People were fighting.  
I hid, but they  
kept fighting.  
They went on  
and on.





People started yelling.  
No one wanted me around.  
I got scared, and I  
sprayed. They yelled more,  
and I sprayed more.



I don't remember  
what happened,  
but it was bad.  
I worry bad things  
might happen again.







Stop it. I don't like  
when you do that.

ARF!! ARF!!



ARF!!  
ARF!!

He's so loud.



ARF!! ARF!!  
ARF!!



You're  
scaring  
me.



rrr...rrr





Hey, why'd you  
do that?

Go away, or  
I'll do it  
again.



My heart is  
beating so  
fast I  
want  
to run.

Please  
don't go.











Turtle please  
don't go away.

Leave me alone.  
My tummy hurts.



I don't like what dog  
did with the barking  
and the growling and  
the running around  
and making noise!  
It's very scary, and  
I don't like it. I don't  
like when bad things  
happen. I don't  
like it at all!

rrr..rib...

I have to go  
to the bathroom.



Are you OK?

I don't like this.



grrr...rr?





Oh, it seems  
like you all got upset,  
but you show how you  
feel in different ways.

Let's think together  
about what might help.





I know I look prickly. People sometimes worry that I might poke them, but I won't. I might get frustrated or a little mad because it's hard when things get crazy, but I won't hurt you.

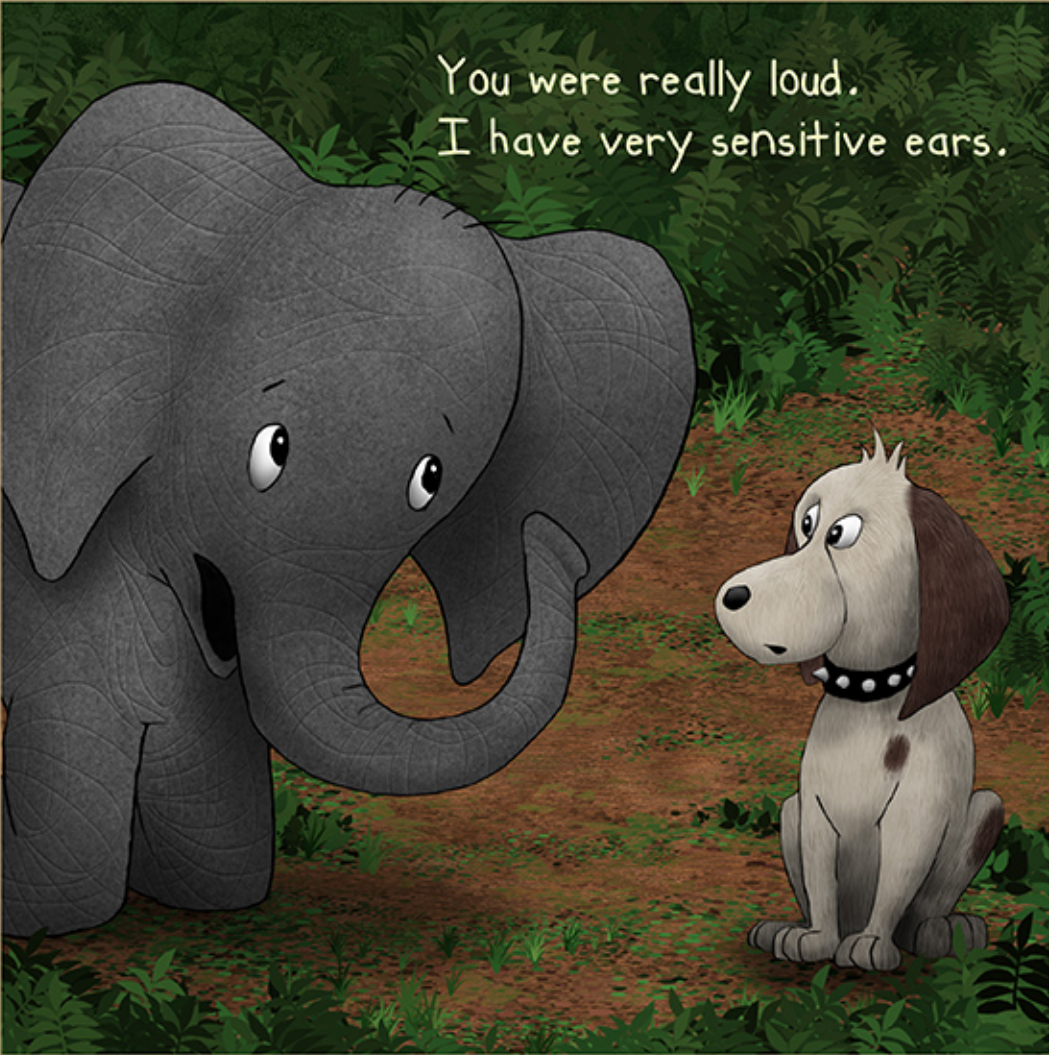


You smell OK.



Thank you. I'll try hard to earn your trust, but I know it might take time.



An illustration of a grey elephant with large ears and a trunk, looking towards a small white dog with brown spots and floppy ears. The dog is sitting on a dirt path in a lush green forest. The elephant's trunk is slightly curled.

You were really loud.  
I have very sensitive ears.

An illustration showing the same grey elephant and white dog from the first panel. The dog is now sitting on the ground, looking up at the elephant. To the right, a porcupine with dark brown quills and a grey face is looking towards the dog. In the background, a small white rabbit with long ears is running away from the group. The scene is set in a forest with green foliage and a dirt path.

Yes, that's true.  
You don't like it  
when things are loud.

When dog barked,  
I don't think he  
meant to scare you.  
He was just trying to  
show what he would do  
if anyone tried to  
bother him.



Well, here if anyone bothers you, it's my job to help them learn not to bother you. It's my job to keep you safe. Here you don't need to growl or bark. You can just tell me what's happening, and I will listen to you. Then we will decide what to do.



Can we try that?



Yes, but I might forget.



That's ok. You are learning, and we will help you learn. We want this to be a safe place where you don't need to bark or growl.

Or bite.



That's true. Biting is not safe. Sometimes it is hard for us to talk about what is going on inside us or figure out how we can calm down.



When you feel scared, or when you have other hard feelings like

sad, angry, frustrated, embarrassed, or ashamed, what do you do?



Scared



Sad



Angry



Frustrated



Embarrassed



Ashamed



I hide...

...and my tummy hurts.



I lose my voice, and all I can say is  
croak croak. I want to say more. I  
want to yell and say how scared I am,  
but all that comes out is croak.



I remember what my  
Mommy says. She says  
we should share our  
feelings and talk about  
what scares us.



Oh, and sometimes I  
eat. Nuts make me  
feel better...

Oh, and I don't  
sleep very well.

...and sometimes  
I talk too much.

I jump up and  
run fast...

...and sometimes  
I get hurt.







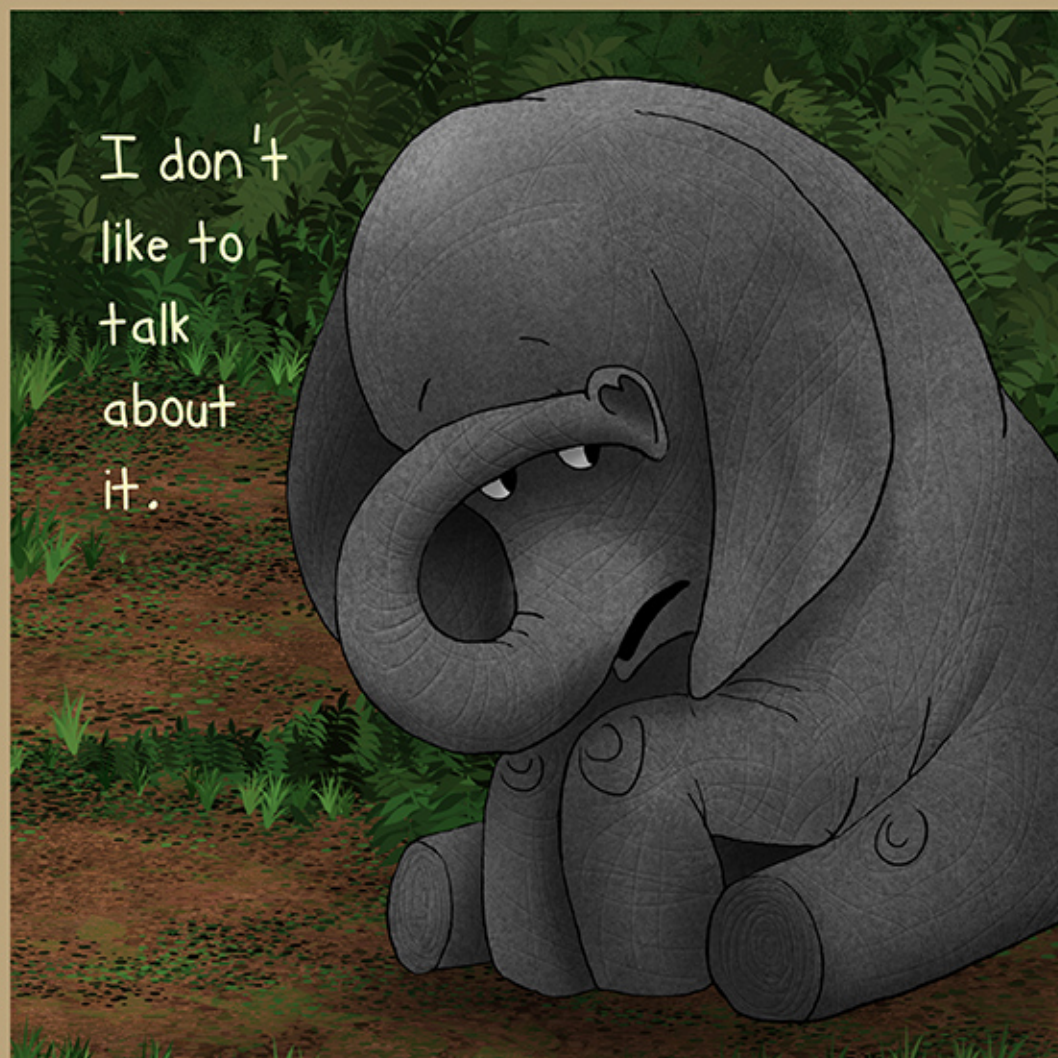
I become a  
real stinker.

I find someone to  
hold onto and hug.  
Some people don't  
like it when I  
do that.



I pretend I'm not here,  
but pretty soon I'm not  
pretending. I really feel  
like I'm not here, and  
I don't know where I am.









That's true. You don't like to talk about it. Maybe it's scary to talk about bad things that happened.

MmmHmm.

Even though you don't like to talk about it, I wonder if you think about it.



Often?

Almost all the time.



You have all been through a lot, and it makes sense that you feel this way, but it also seems like you need help, so you don't keep feeling this way.

Maybe we can learn new things to do that help us when we feel scared or mad or sad.







*That year, all the little animals learned lots of things. They learned how to write their names. They learned how to play fun games.*

*And very, very importantly, they learned what they could do when they were scared, angry, sad and feeling bad inside.*





Music helps me calm down.

I still like  
to run, but  
I also found a  
safe place where I  
can be calm and snuggle.



I talked to my mom,  
and she said she was  
very sorry that  
someone hurt me.

This makes me  
feel much  
better.

I will keep you safe  
and make sure no  
one ever hurts  
you again.





I play water ball with friends and that makes me feel so good.



My dad said that bad things don't usually happen and that makes me feel better.



ahhh...whhhh...

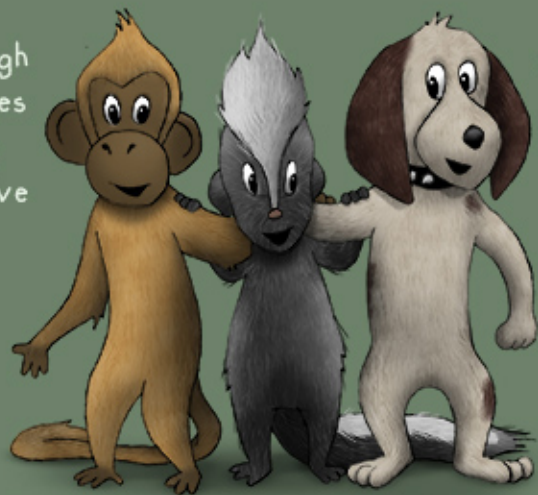
I learned to breathe. When I get scared, I pay attention to the air going in and out of my body and that helps me calm down.





I learned I'm really a cool skunk  
and not a little stinker, and  
I have friends who care  
about me and want  
me around.

I learned  
that even though  
people sometimes  
go away, there  
are people I love  
who always  
come back.



I learned I  
can trust  
some people.

I find that a cup of tea and a little support helps me.





And I learned that it's good to talk about things...

...sometimes.





*Thanks for watching!*

*for more information visit*



**Piplo**  
productions

*[www.piploproductions.com](http://www.piploproductions.com)*