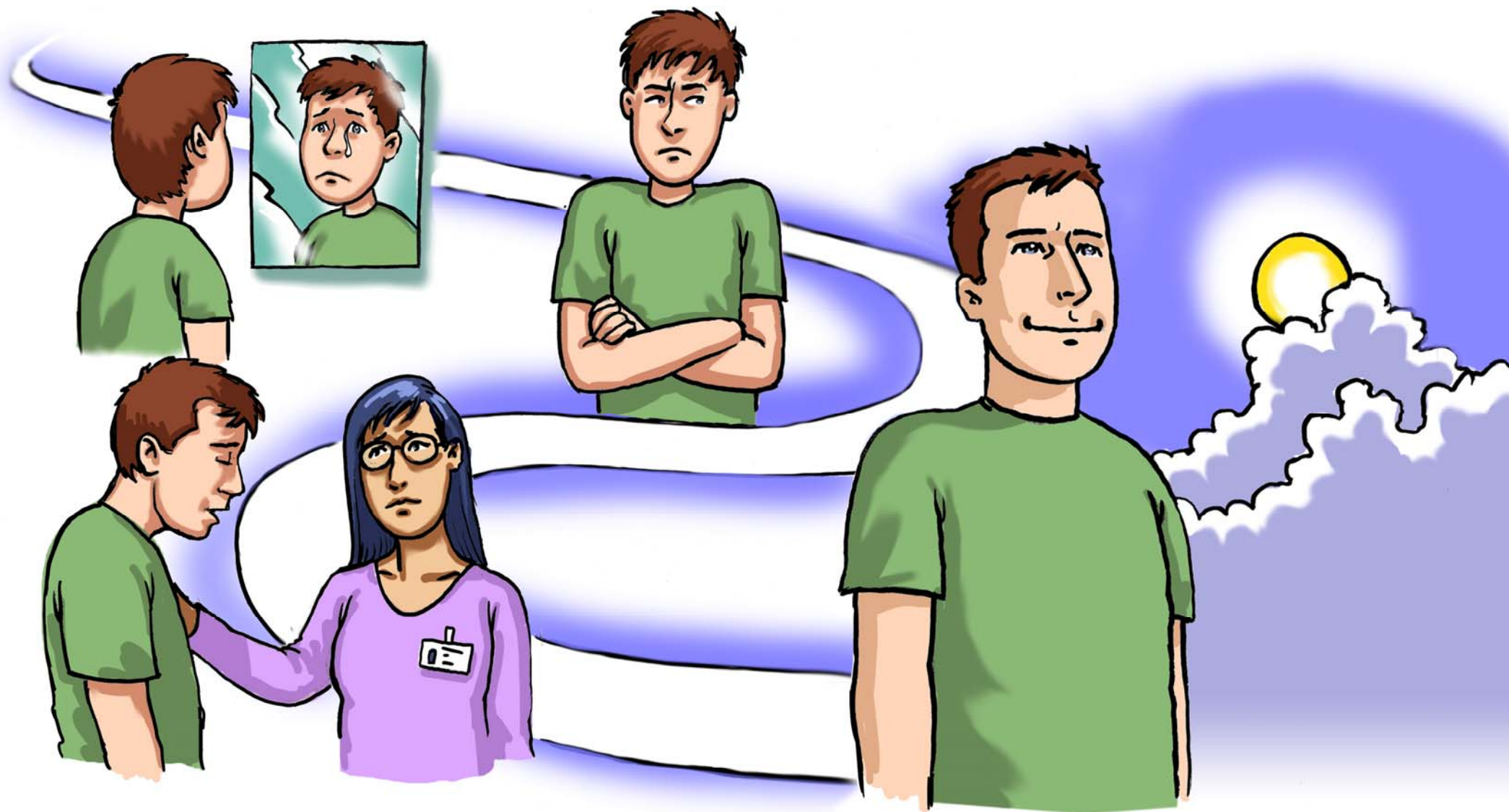


acts of RECOVERY

Moving on from childhood abuse



A leaflet for people who have experienced childhood sexual abuse

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Introduction

This book is about recovery from abuse. Abuse is when you are harmed by someone else. Recovery means getting better after you have been abused.

We hope this book will help people move on from the effects of abuse.

Reading about abuse can upset you. If you become upset you should speak to someone for help.

The words we use

We use the word survivor in this book. This means people that have been abused as a child.

How to use this book

This book is for both male and female survivors and people who support them.

We hope this can start to help people talk about recovery.

Chapter 1: Summary



Sexual abuse when you are a child can happen to anyone.



Talking about abuse and feelings of guilt and shame can help.



It's important to trust and like yourself.



Having friends and people you trust around you can help.



Learning about you and joining in activities you like helps recovery.

Chapter 2: Difficulties after abuse



John remembers being abused when he was a child.



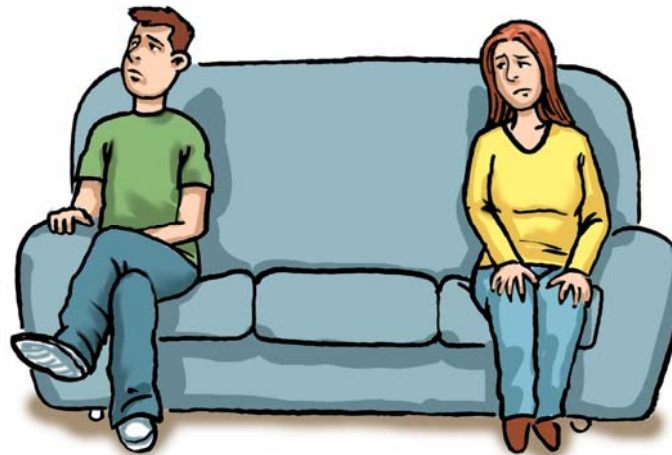
This memory makes him feel sad, and not able to trust people.



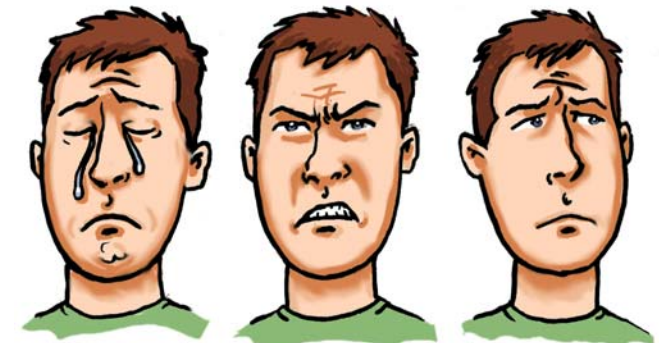
This memory makes him frightened to talk about the past.



John finds it hard to trust friends and have a social life.



John finds it hard to be in a close relationship.



John can feel sad, angry and worried when he thinks about the past.

Chapter 3: Talking about abuse



Mary said the longer she kept quiet about the abuse, the harder it was to talk about.



Mary said that talking about it made her cry and feel upset.



Mary wanted to talk about it, but John did not. Everyone is different.



Mary's family did not want to believe the abuse happened. It took them a long time to understand.



John's family helped him to talk, and speak to a therapist.



Mary and John both draw pictures about what happened when they were little, and how they feel now.

Chapter 4: Dealing with shame and guilt



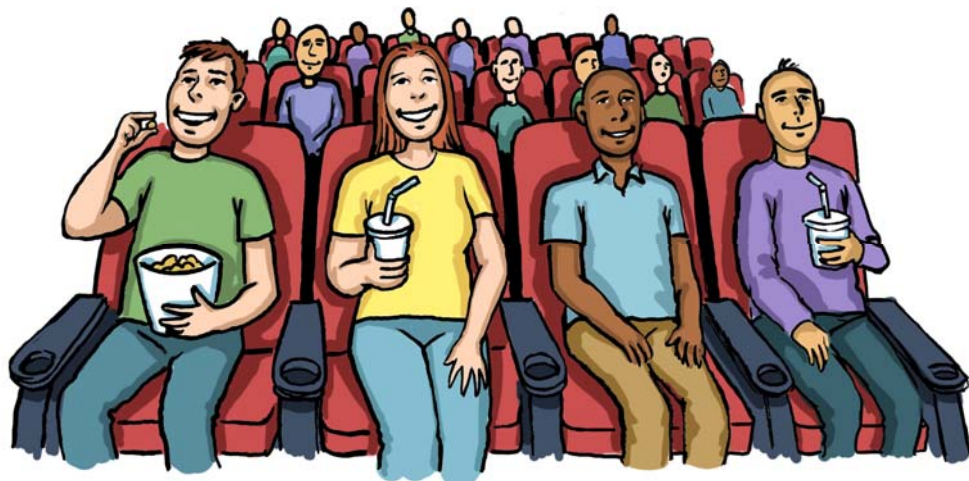
You could not stop the abuse from happening.

It was not your fault.



It is against the law.

Chapter 5: Moving on from the past



John does things he enjoys. He is making choices and taking control of his life.



John has learned to like himself.



John moved home so he doesn't live near his abuser any more. This made him feel safer. If you want to do this, you should talk to your carer, key-worker, etc.



Mary does things she likes – studying, travelling, making the most of her life.

Chapter 6: On-going difficulties



Survivors can find that changes in life are stressful – separation, divorce, losing a loved one, moving home, getting married, new job, having a baby.

Stress can make survivors feel hopeless again.



Worry and anxiety makes survivors feel they cannot cope.

Some survivors say it helps to talk with trusted friends.

If it gets to be too upsetting then get professional help from your doctor, nurse, or therapist.

Chapter 7: A hopeful future

People who were abused say you can recover and move on with your life.

Here are some key messages survivors of abuse want to share:

“It is never too late, and you are never too old or too broken to start moving on from abuse.”

“Find your inner strength and live a full life.”

“Be patient with yourself, you may need lots of time for healing, to speak about your abuse and work things out.”

“The abuse was not your fault.”

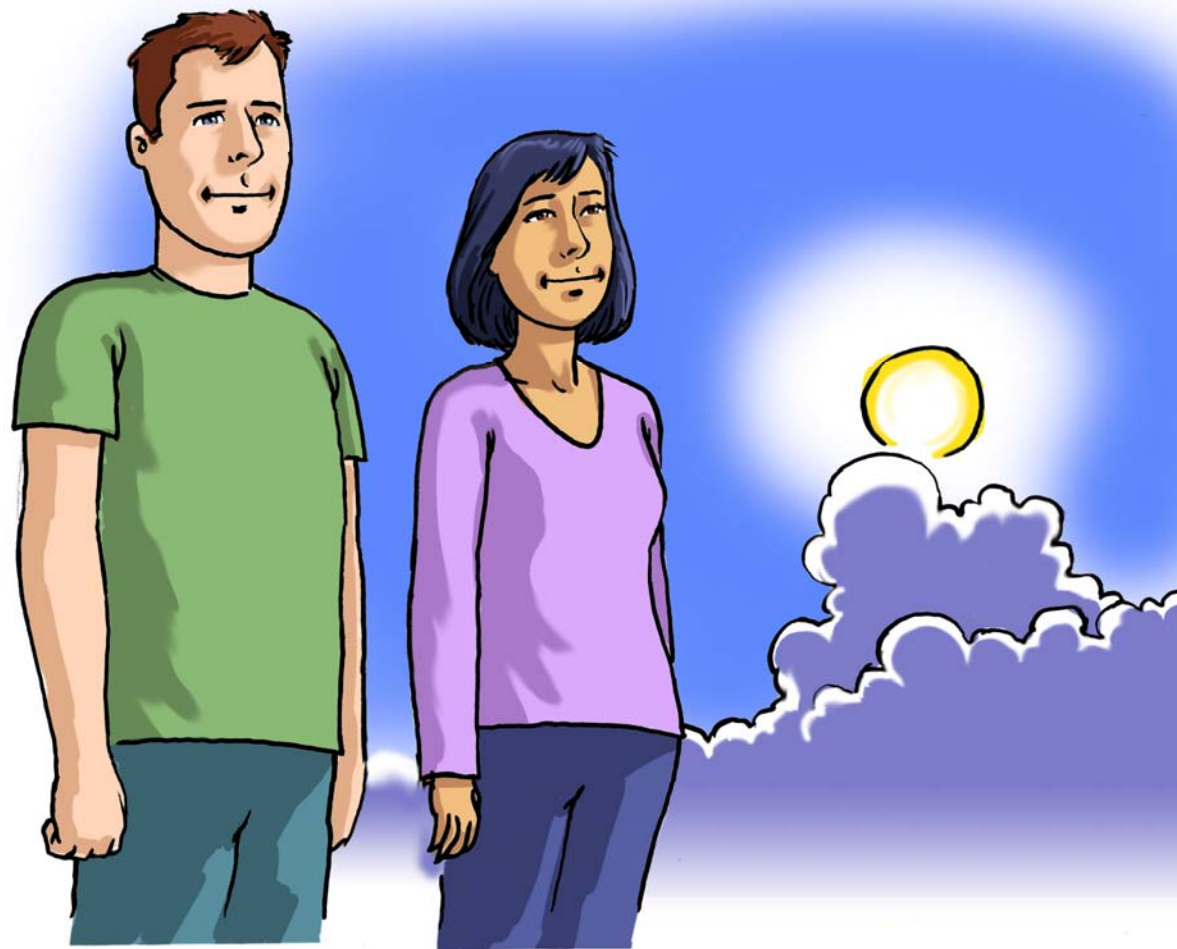
“Give the shame and guilt back to the abusers, where it belongs.”

“You are not alone.”

“Speak about what happened to someone you trust.”

“Take care of yourself and keep yourself safe.”

“Keep moving on with your life. You are entitled to live a happy and contented life.”



Acknowledgements and thanks

The original “Acts of Recovery” was funded by Survivor Scotland and developed and supported by many:

We wish to extend our thanks to all the survivors who shared their experience of recovery with us. Further, we thank all the professionals and support teams who have supported this aid. Particularly the teams at Break the Silence, Health in Mind, Moira Anderson Foundation, National Association for People Abused in Childhood, Orchard Centre, NHS Lothian, NHS Glasgow, NHS Aberdeen and NHS Highlands.

In consultation with Professor Thanos Karatzias, this Easy Read version was developed by Eileen Duncan NHS Lothian, Kimberley Swan & Paul Mudie FAIR, and funded by the Scottish Government.

Final Note

We are committed to reviewing the content of this aid and are keen to ensure that it continues to be relevant. We invite you to contact us with any suggestions which could enhance the use and significance of this aid.

Please email Prof. Karatzias with any suggestions: t.karatzias@napier.ac.uk

If you would like any further information about childhood abuse, please visit the Survivor Scotland website: <http://www.survivorscotland.org.uk>

Anyone needing further information about this easy read version, contact Eileen Duncan: Eileen.Duncan@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

The “6 Dimension Learning Disability Cards” funded and developed by the Scottish Government National Strategy for Survivors of Childhood Abuse, Survivor Scotland, NHS Fife and Talking Mats are an additional helpful resource. These cards support conversations about health, relationships and well being. For further information, please visit <http://www.talkingmats.com>

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Edition 1

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