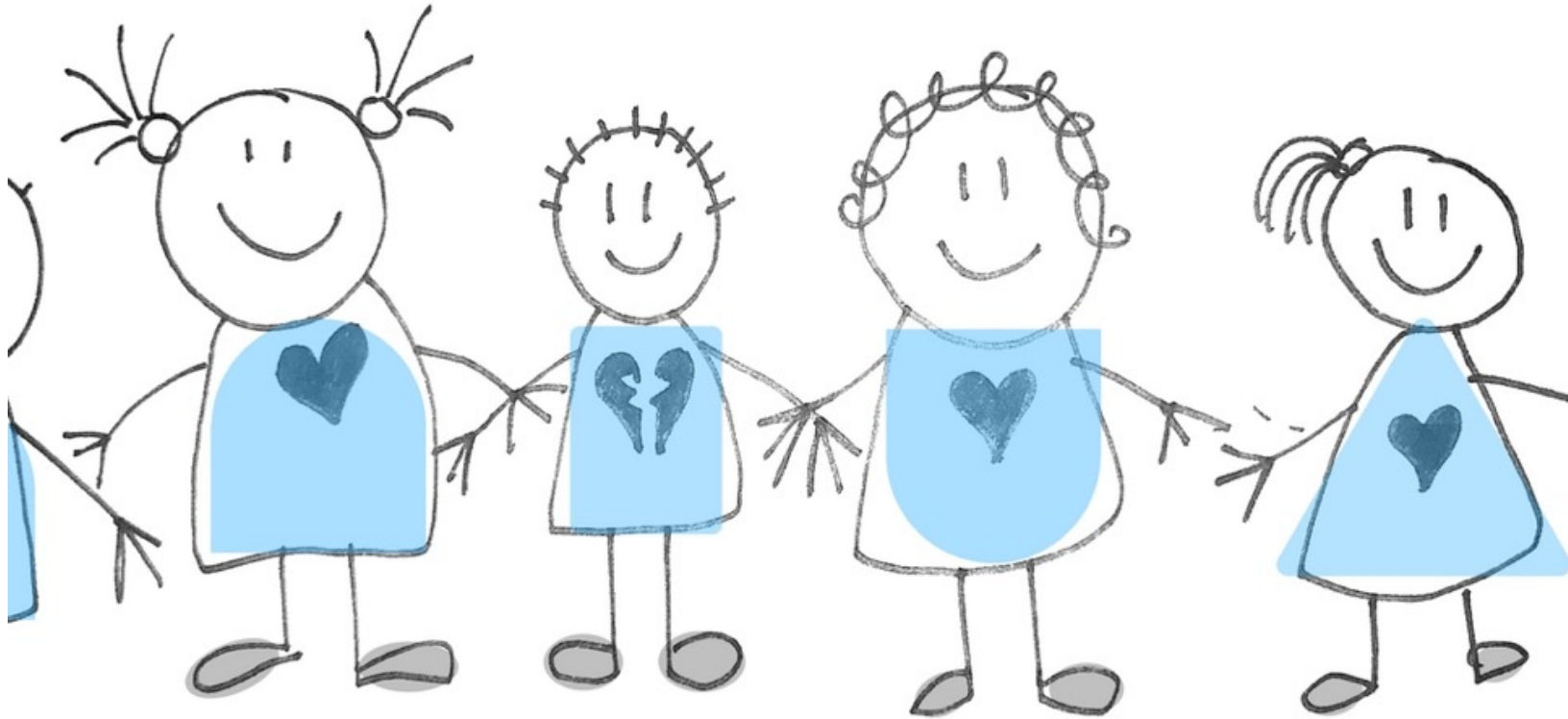


What survival looks like...

# IN SCHOOL



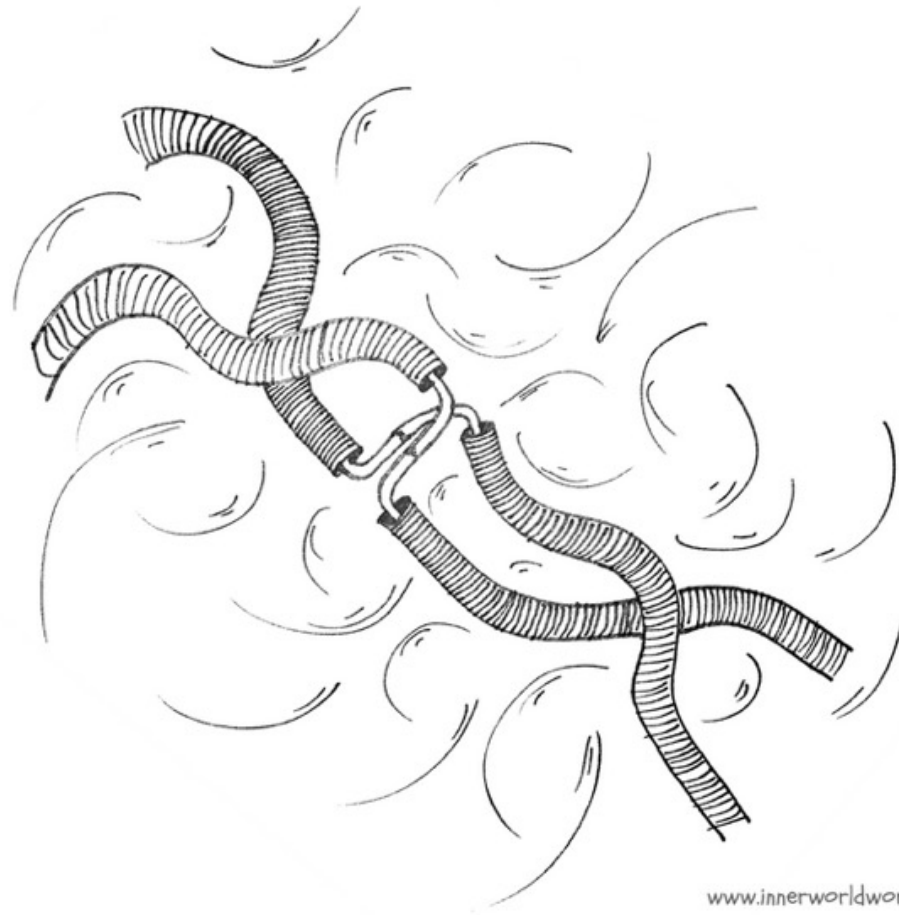
The fight-or-flight response (also called hyperarousal, or the acute stress response) is a physiological reaction that occurs in response to a perceived harmful event, attack, or threat to survival

Do you know  
where I learnt to  
be brave?  
In School, it's a  
really scary place



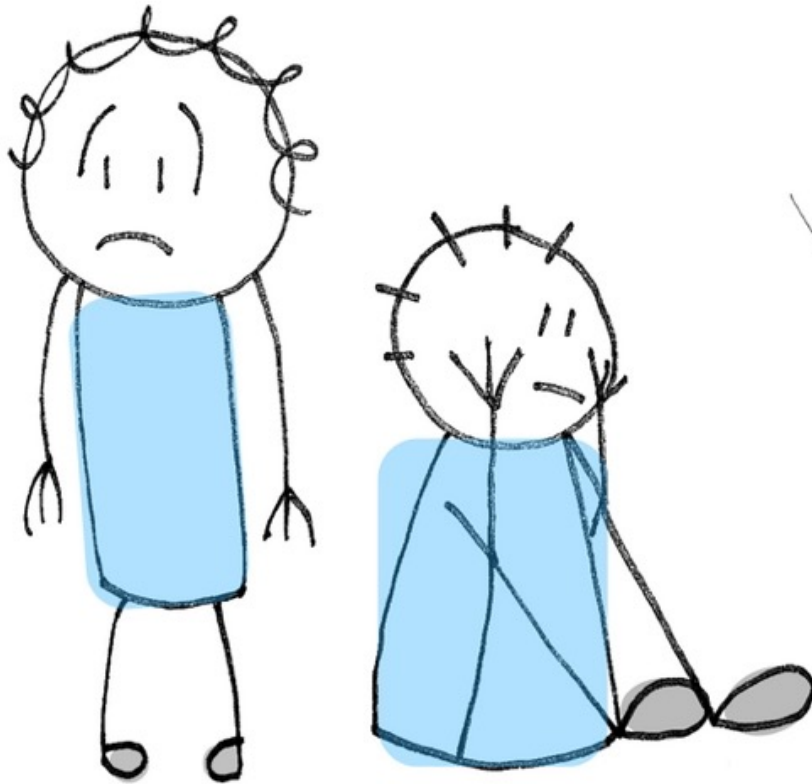
When I was little, some wires got connected to the wrong places in my brain. Often I think and feel like I'm under attack even when I'm actually very safe. My brain activates survival mode to protect me.

I don't even know that I have gone into survival mode, I can't even tell you what feels wrong. It happens so often that this part of my brain is really strong and rules over the calm part of my brain. I can't turn it off by myself.



Why is it so important that you know this?

The part of my brain activated to help me **survive**, is different from the part of my brain activated when I'm **calm**.



I can only learn properly when the calm part of my brain is activated. When I'm in a **survival** state it takes over from my **calm** brain and I struggle to learn. If I don't feel safe, you won't be able to teach me.

The problem is, it's really hard to see when I'm in survival mode.

I look very different to how I feel inside and often I can remain in survival mode for so long, that it seems like part of my personality.

I would love your help to feel safe so I can learn. For you to see that I am in a survival state and it's not a personality trait. I really want to learn, I really want to feel ok.



Freeze

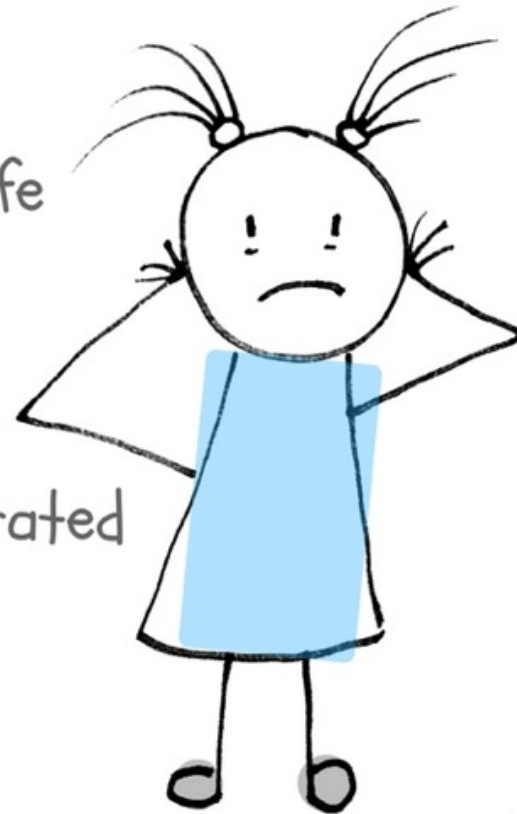
# What I look like in Freeze...

- × Not interested, bored
- × Confused, forgetful
- × Talking about something else
- × Hard to move through the task
- × Not listening
- × Staring into space, daydreaming
- × Clumsy



# What I am aware of...

- × My brain is slowing down
- × Trying to think of something safe
- × I can't do this
- × Feeling deeply anxious
- × I can hear you're getting frustrated
- × Starting to shut down
- × I feel under attack



# How my body feels ...

- × Frozen brain
- × If I don't move, you can't see me
- × Everything feels like a dream
- × Under attack
- × In a fog
- × Disconnected
- × Numb



# What's happening in my Inner World ...

- ✗ I can't bear your rejection
- ✗ I need to feel safe
- ✗ Shame, I hate myself
- ✗ I'm scared I don't know what's going to happen
- ✗ When I fail at this you'll send me away
- ✗ When you realise I can't do this, you won't want me in your class anymore



## You can help me feel safe with the following ...

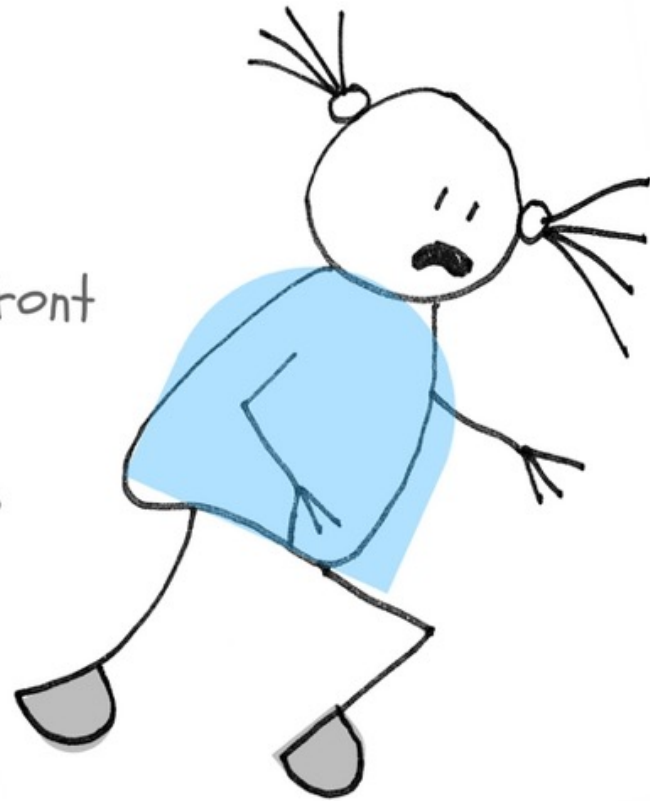
- ✓ Do the task with me
- ✓ Deep breathing
- ✓ Tell me I'm ok & that I'm safe
- ✓ Ask me to push my hands down under my seat & lift myself up off the chair
- ✓ Gently wonder where I've gone & welcome me back to the room
- ✓ Make the task smaller & more predictable
- ✓ Tell me kindly who I am & what I'm doing
- ✓ Tell me what you want me to do !:!  
without showing frustration



Flight

## What I look like in Flight ...

- ✗ Run away
- ✗ Keeping SUPER busy
- ✗ Not coping in free time
- ✗ Need to be first or at the front
- ✗ Bumping into people
- ✗ Avoiding tasks and activities
- ✗ Baby talk or silly voices
- ✗ Hyperactive, giddy & silly
- ✗ Hiding under tables



## What I am aware of ...

- ✗ Unable to focus
- ✗ Lonely
- ✗ Panic
- ✗ Feeling bad, movement is distracting
- ✗ Shame
- ✗ Overwhelmed
- ✗ Worried about what happening next
- ✗ Anxious, apprehensive



# How my body feels

- × Escape, run & hide
- × Painful joints
- × Numb
- × Vibrating
- × Ready for action
- × Jumpy & tense
- × Sick



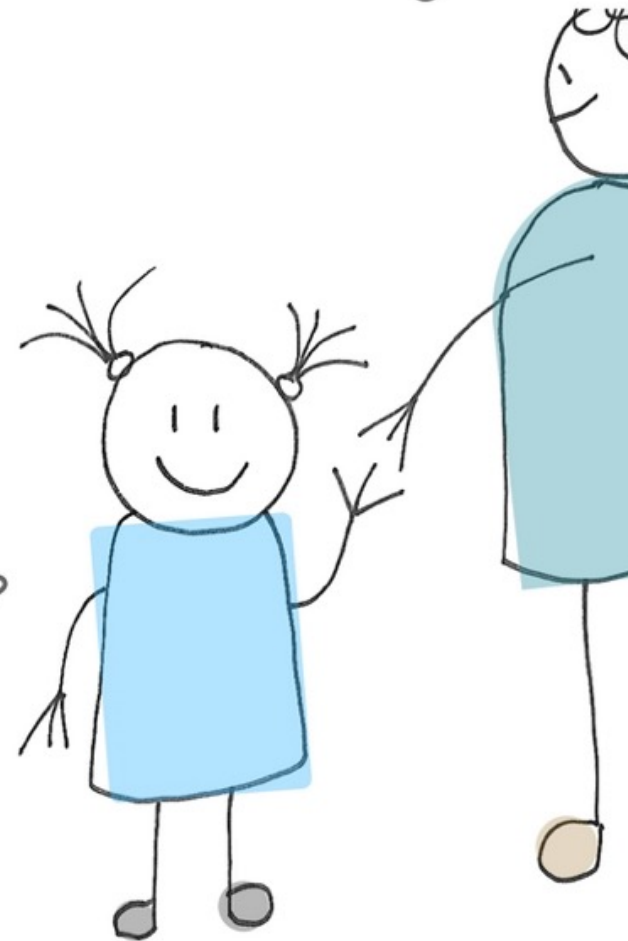
# Whats happening in my Inner World

- ✗ I want to escape from this scary moment but I can't
- ✗ I dont want you to see my real feelings, you can't handle them
- ✗ I am really worried I can't do whats going to happen next



You can help me feel safe with the following ...

- ✓ Keep me close by
- ✓ Deep breathing
- ✓ Give me a easy & familiar task
- ✓ Make things predictable
- ✓ Tell me I'm safe, show me a safe place or person I can go to
- ✓ Kindly talk though what might be tricky



Fight

# What I look like in Fight ...

- × Hot & bothered
- × Angry & aggressive
- × Controlling
- × Lie or blaming
- × Shouty & argumentative
- × Pushing away friends
- × Demanding
- × Inflexible



# What I am aware of ...

- × I'm in danger
- × Really scared
- × I am all alone
- × I feel bad
- × Frightened
- × Unimportant
- × Invisible



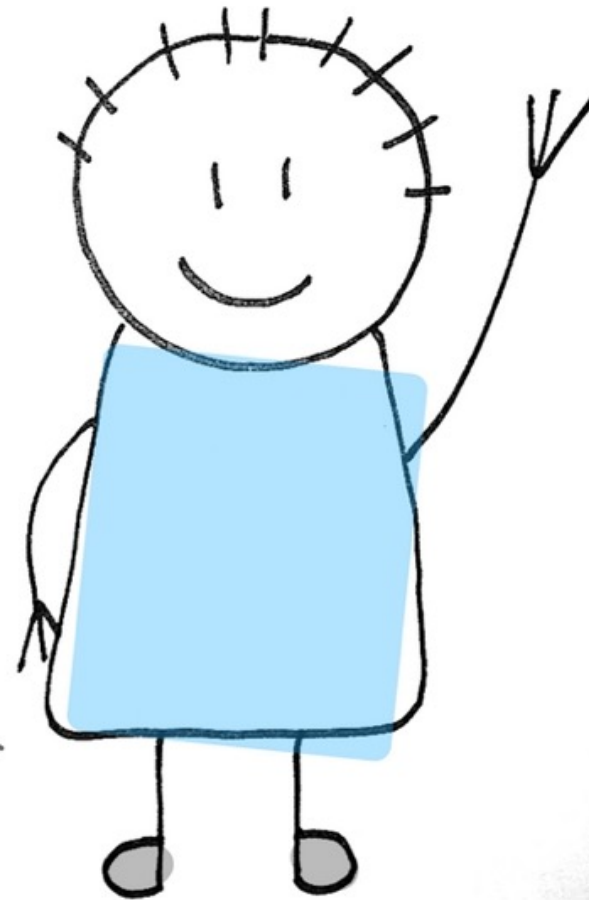
# Whats happening in my Inner World ...

- ✗ I can't be cross at the people  
I really want to be cross at
- ✗ I'm going to push you away  
before you get rid of me
- ✗ Unsafe
- ✗ I hate myself, I am  
unloveable, I want to die
- ✗ Why wasn't I good enough?
- ✗ I need to be in control &  
make things predictable



You can help me feel safe with the following ...

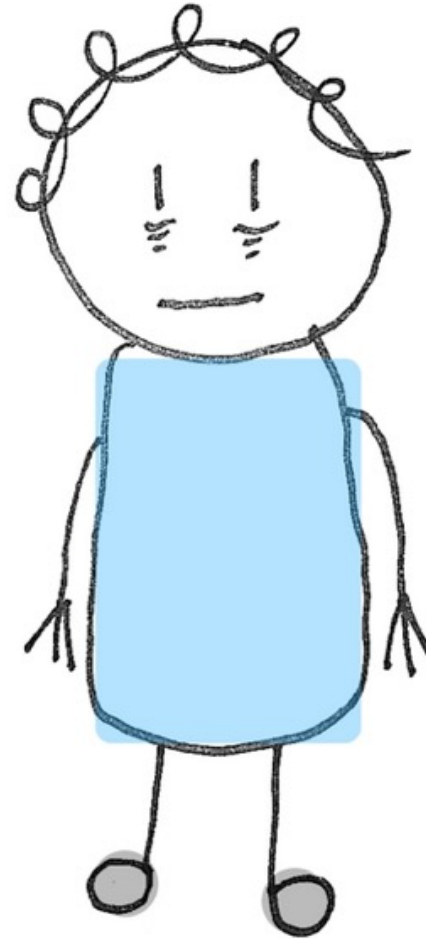
- ✓ Give me a role
- ✓ Support me socially
- ✓ Match my energy
- ✓ Make things predictable
- ✓ Deep breathing
- ✓ Connect & show empathy  
before exploring the  
consequences of my behaviour



Submit

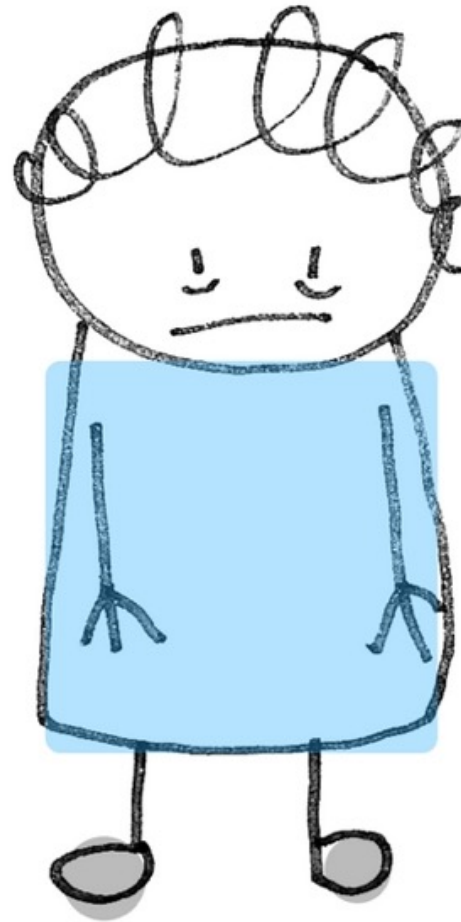
# What I look like in Submit ...

- × Socially withdrawn
- × Compliant
- × Quiet
- × Unable to think, just yes  
or no answers
- × Passive
- × Resigned
- × Neutral expression
- × Low mood



## What I am aware of ...

- × I can't think
- × Tummy aches
- × Tired
- × Sad
- × Lonely



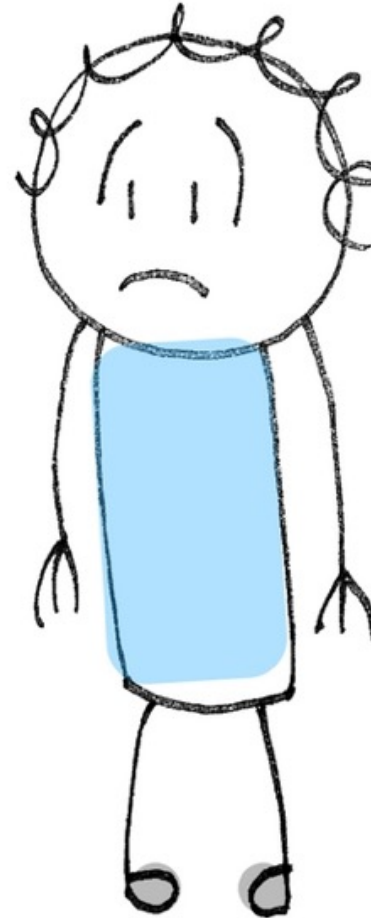
## How my body feels ...

- × Worn out, no energy
- × Guilty
- × It's given up
- × Slow
- × Tearful
- × Poorly



# Whats happening in my Inner World ...

- ✗ Why couldn't I be better, I'm completely useless
- ✗ I hate myself, I am unloveable
- ✗ It's all my fault
- ✗ Nothing will ever feel ok
- ✗ I can't keep myself safe
- ✗ I want to die



You can help me feel safe with the following ...

- ✓ Repetitive simple tasks
- ✓ Weighted blanket
- ✓ Building with lego or play-dough
- ✓ Tell me I'm safe
- ✓ Deep breathing
- ✓ Spending time with a trusted adult
- ✓ Do the task with me
- ✓ Tell me what to do without showing frustration



Spending just a small amount of time making me feel safe, activates the calm part of my brain and I am ready for you to teach me again.

I might need you to do this a few times throughout the task but the more my brain knows how to stay in the calm zone, the less likely I am to go into survival mode.

Thank you for helping me every day to make safe and life changing differences to my brain.

It's an amazing thing you're doing for me.