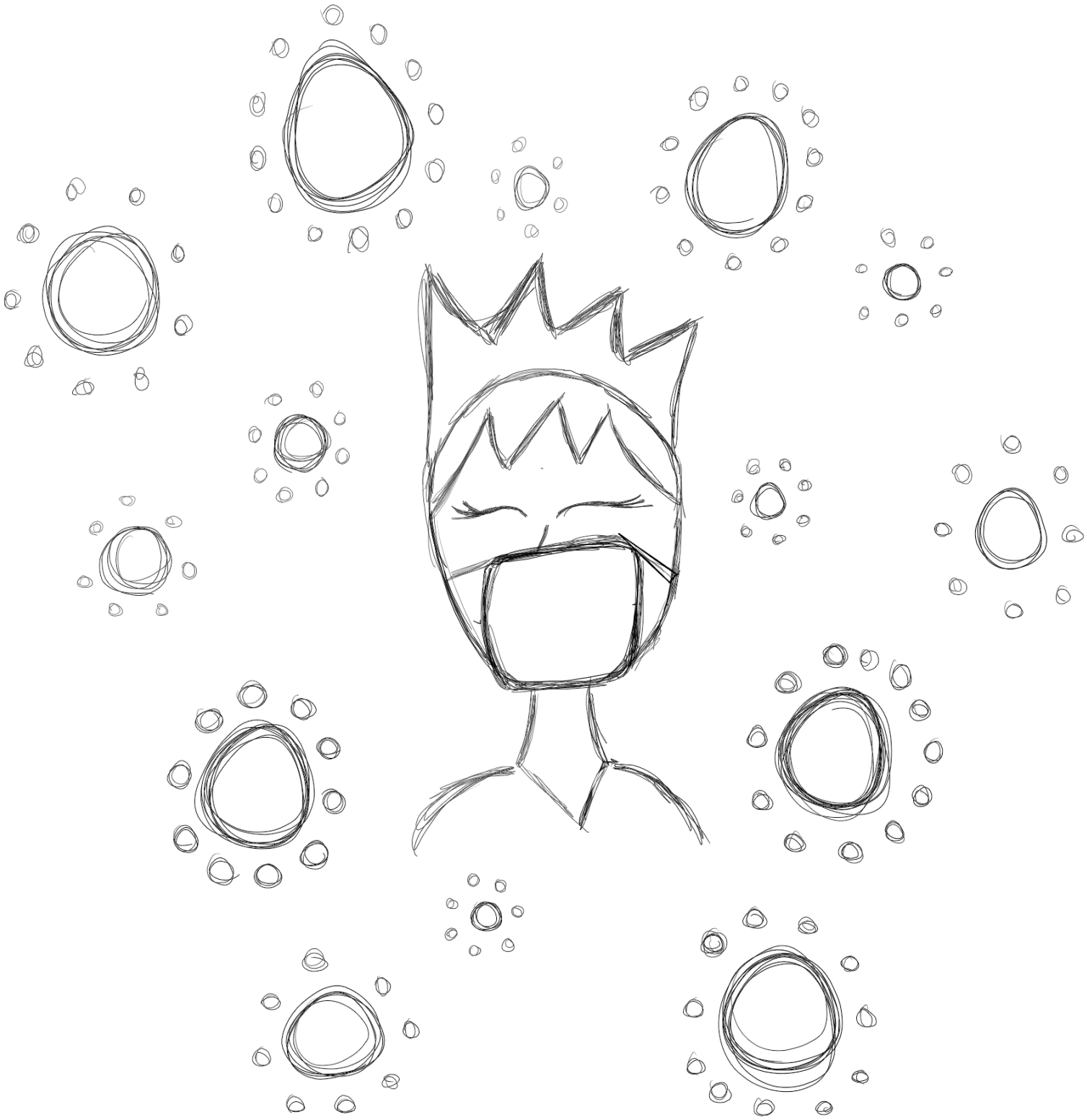


Caroline Continues to Conquer!

Kellie Camelford, Erin Dugan, & Krystal Vaughn

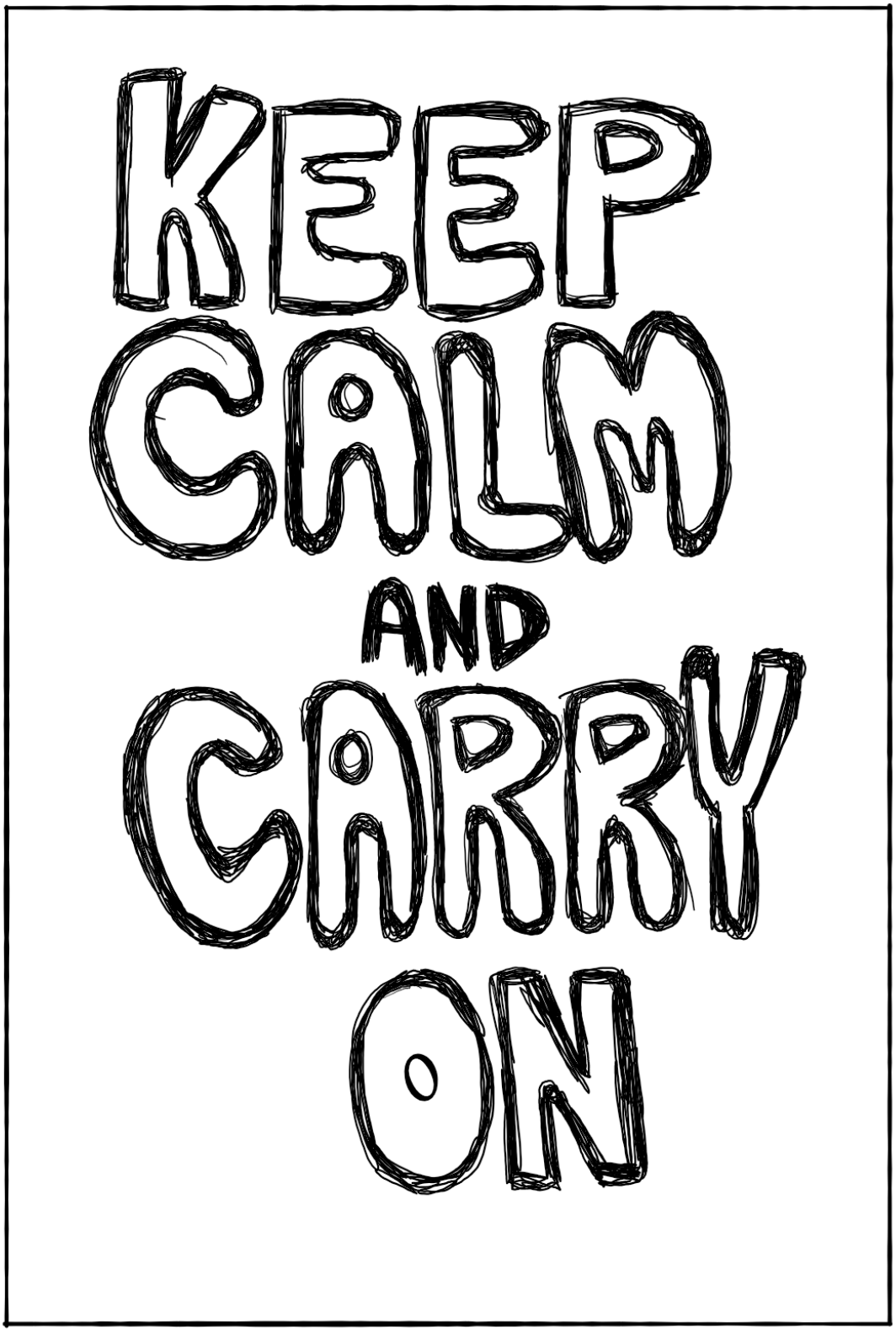
Well there, now you have it… The governor just declared we will be out for the rest of the school year! I can't believe I won't go back to school until August.



Even though I’m enjoying my family and Izzie, I still wish I could go back to school, which is something I never thought I’d say!



Since we're going to be home for longer, I'll need to come up with some more things to do to keep me calm and to avoid boredom.

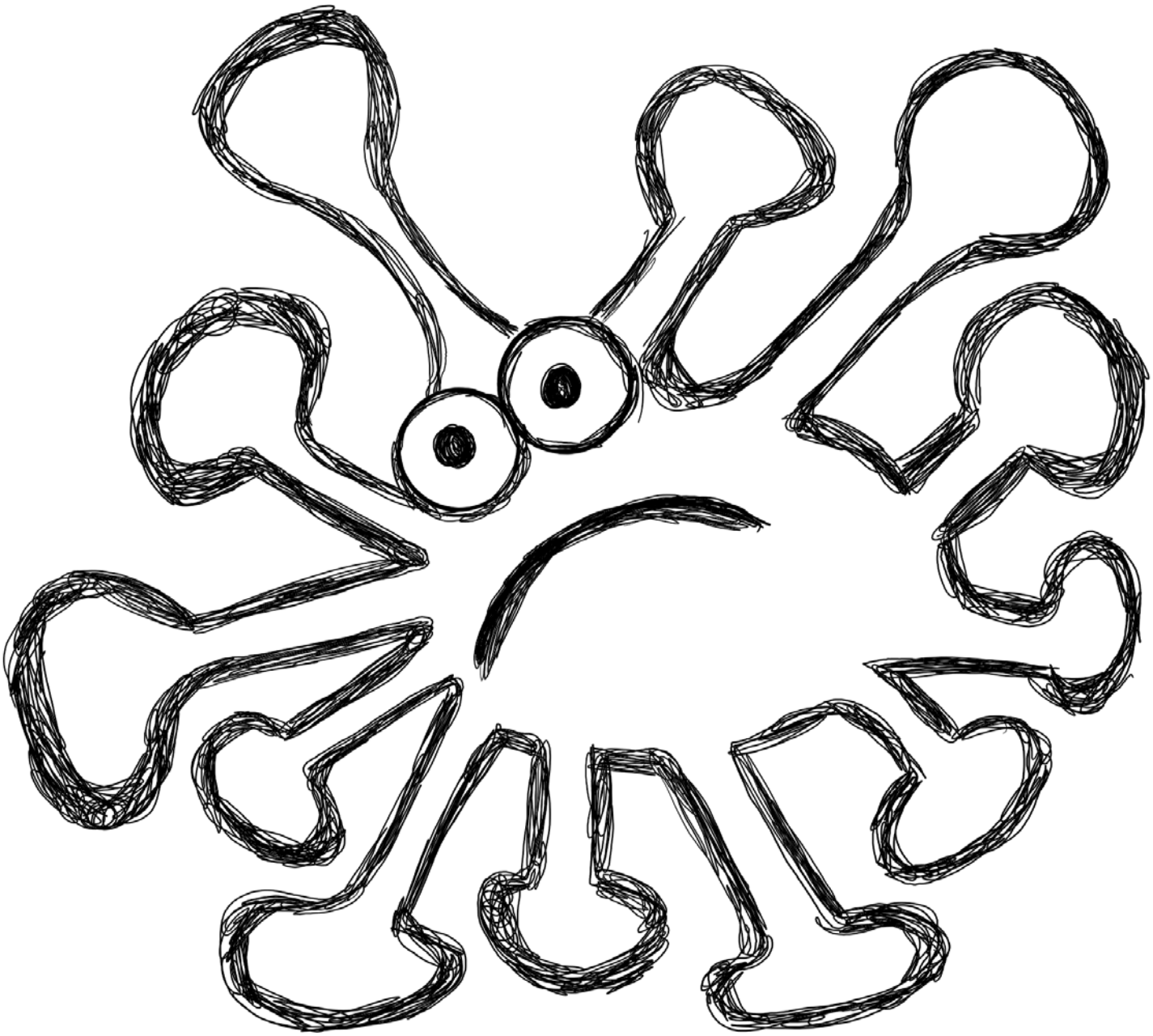


The CDC says we still need to continue to “flatten the curve”, and that the next couple of weeks are SUPER IMPORTANT. I made a paper chain countdown to get through April, although maybe it needs to be longer. Come on summer! We’re ready for you!

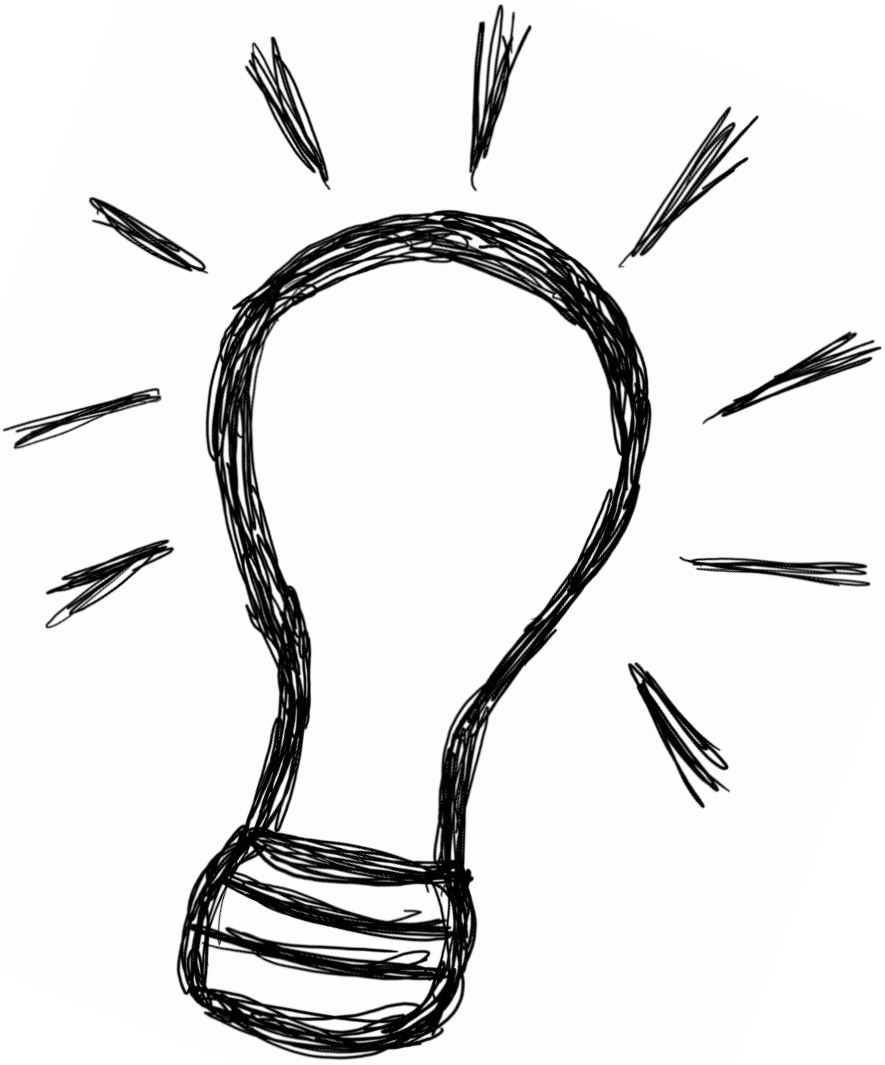




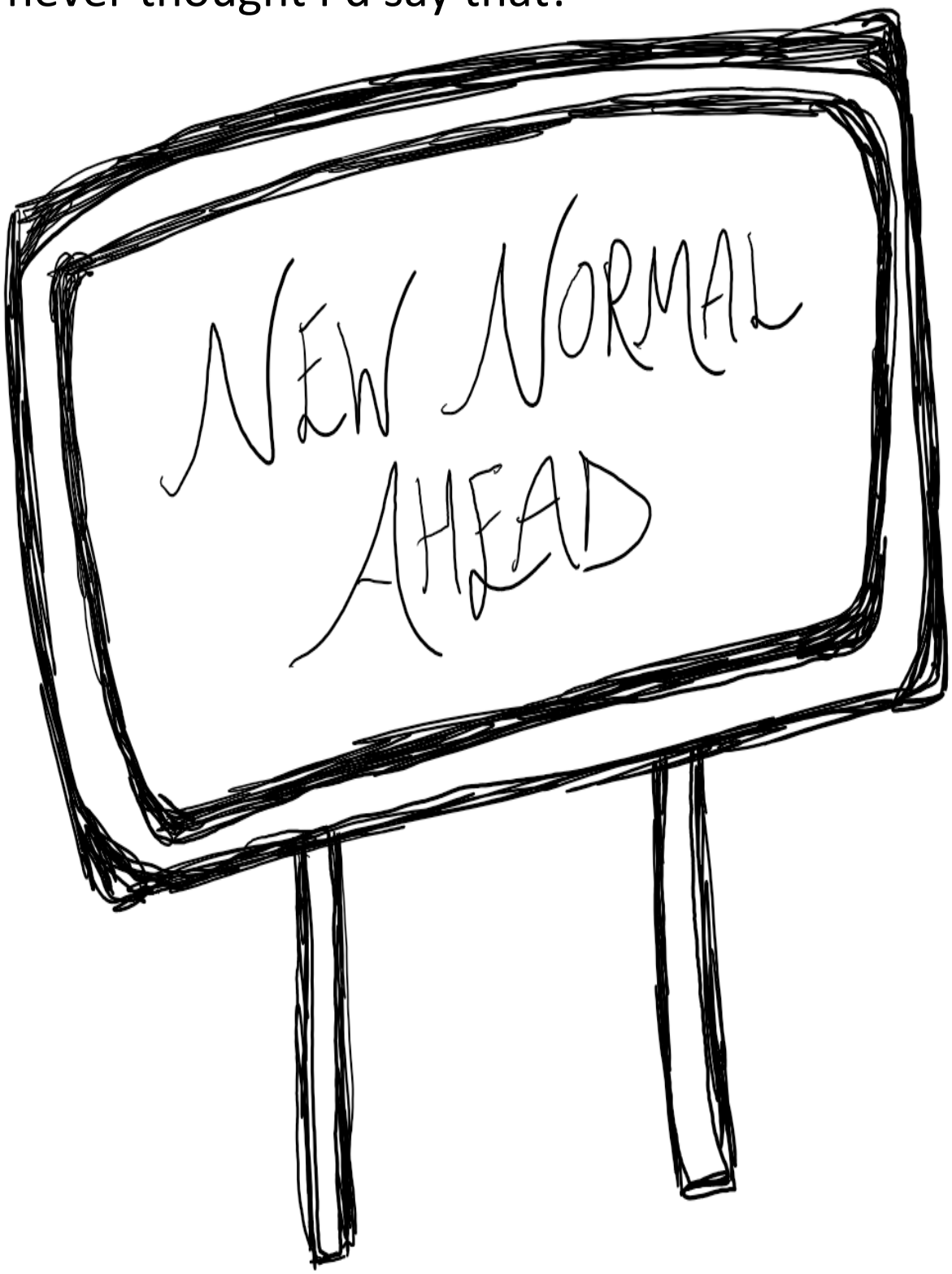
The news also says if we go out to stores for groceries, we should wear masks over our nose and mouth so that if we sneeze or cough our germs stay with us. We can share lots of things, but germs shouldn't be one of them!



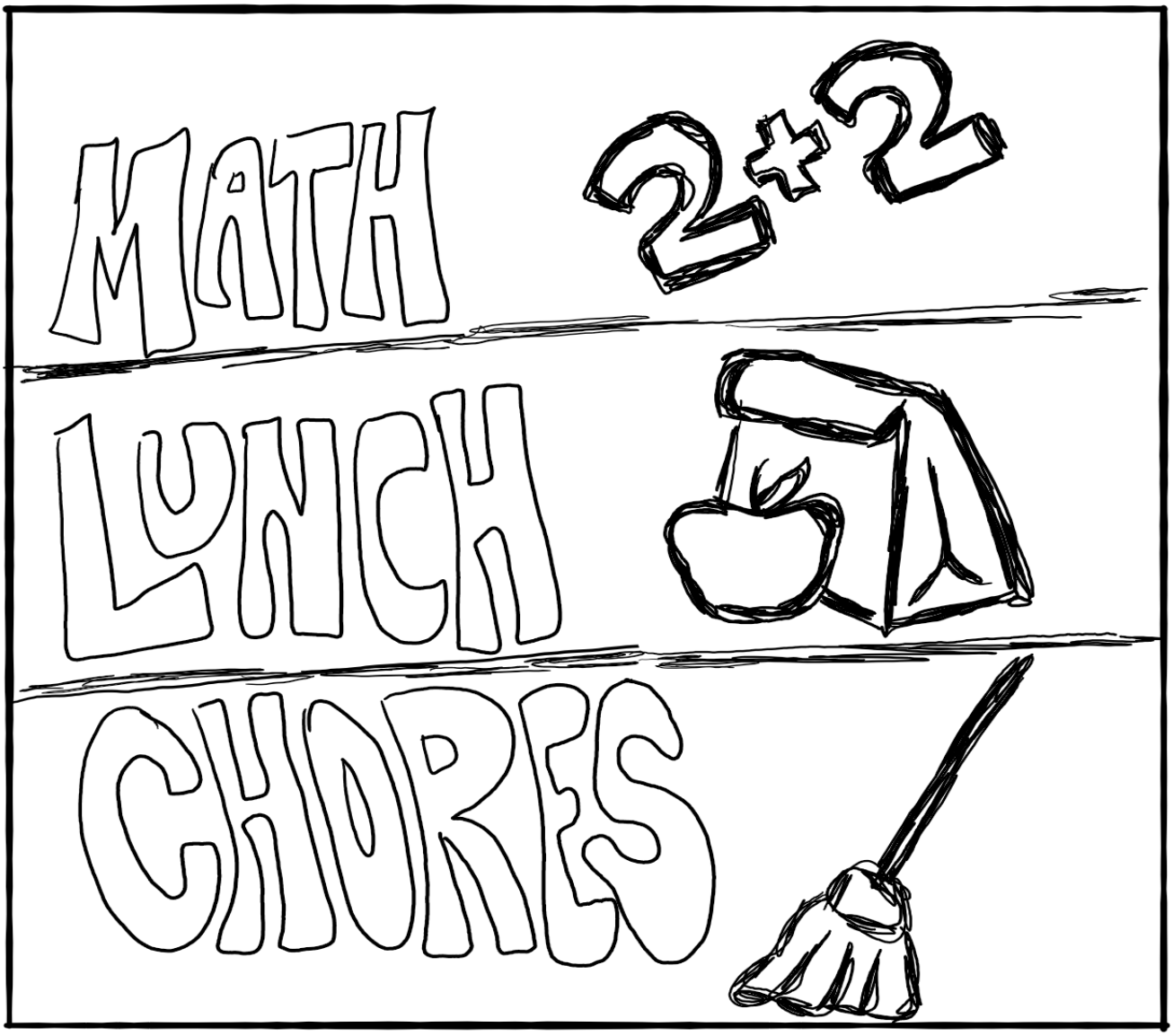
My family and I understand that it’s important to follow the rules and stay at home. In order for us to go back to “normal” we need to hear about less cases being reported.



We also may need to think about how normal may be different moving forward. I'm getting used to the "new normal"—which is weird and I never thought I'd say that!



Mom and dad are still working from home and Leo and I are still doing our school work. We are getting into a “new routine”. Mom and dad said, “You aren’t being home schooled. You are doing your school work at home.” That seemed to make more sense. At least my parents can still be mom and dad and not become my teachers!



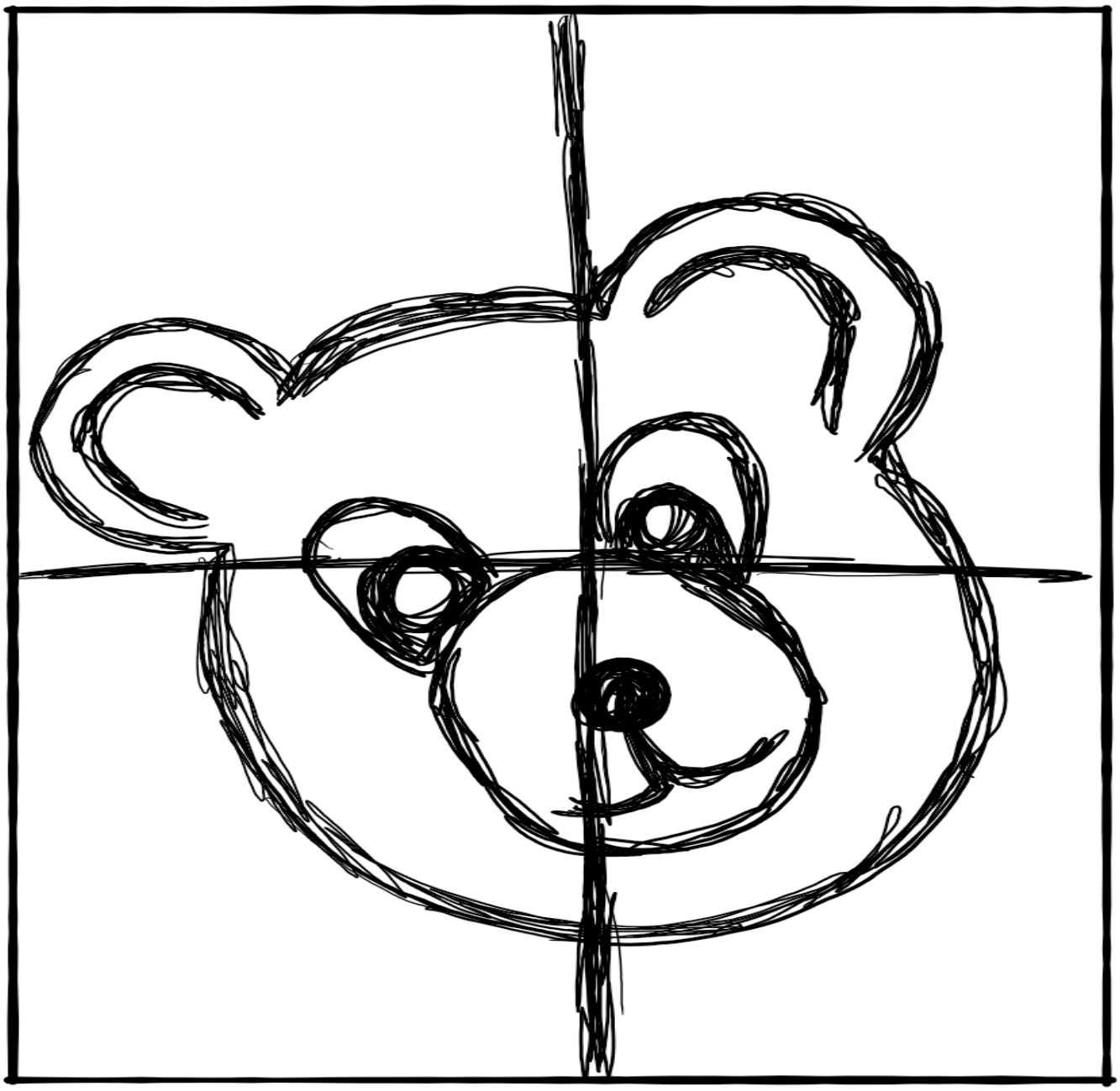
I love that I can hug my immediate family still, but I love even more that I get to snuggle with my puppy, Izzie, all day. She makes me feel safe and warm.



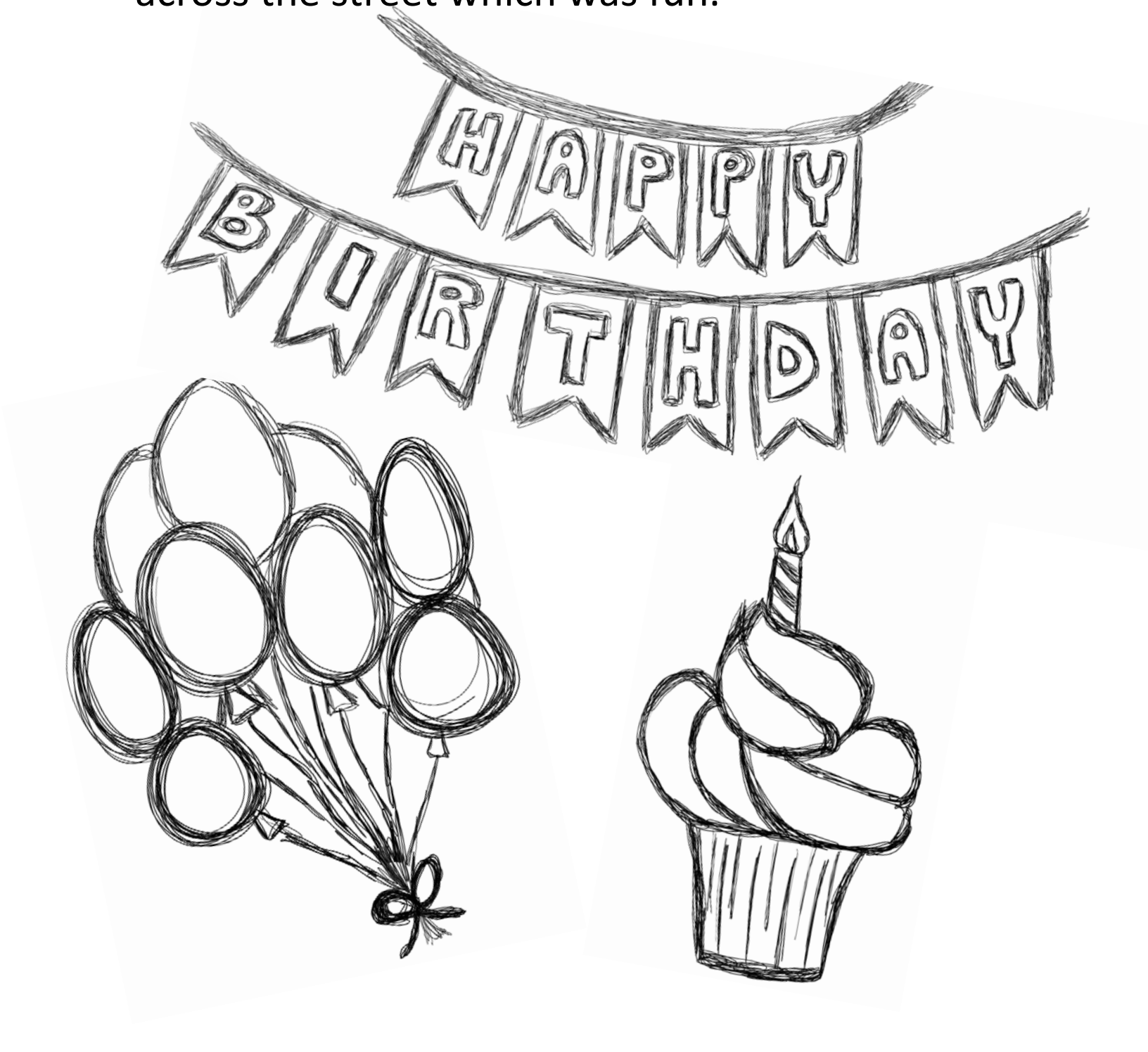
I like that I can visit with my family, friends, and teachers virtually through my tablet, however I still miss seeing them in person! Virtual hugs just aren't the same!



After our family's done their work for the day, we go on a "bear hunt" in our neighborhood. Yesterday we found 8 teddy bears in different neighbors' windows while we were walking to get our family exercise.



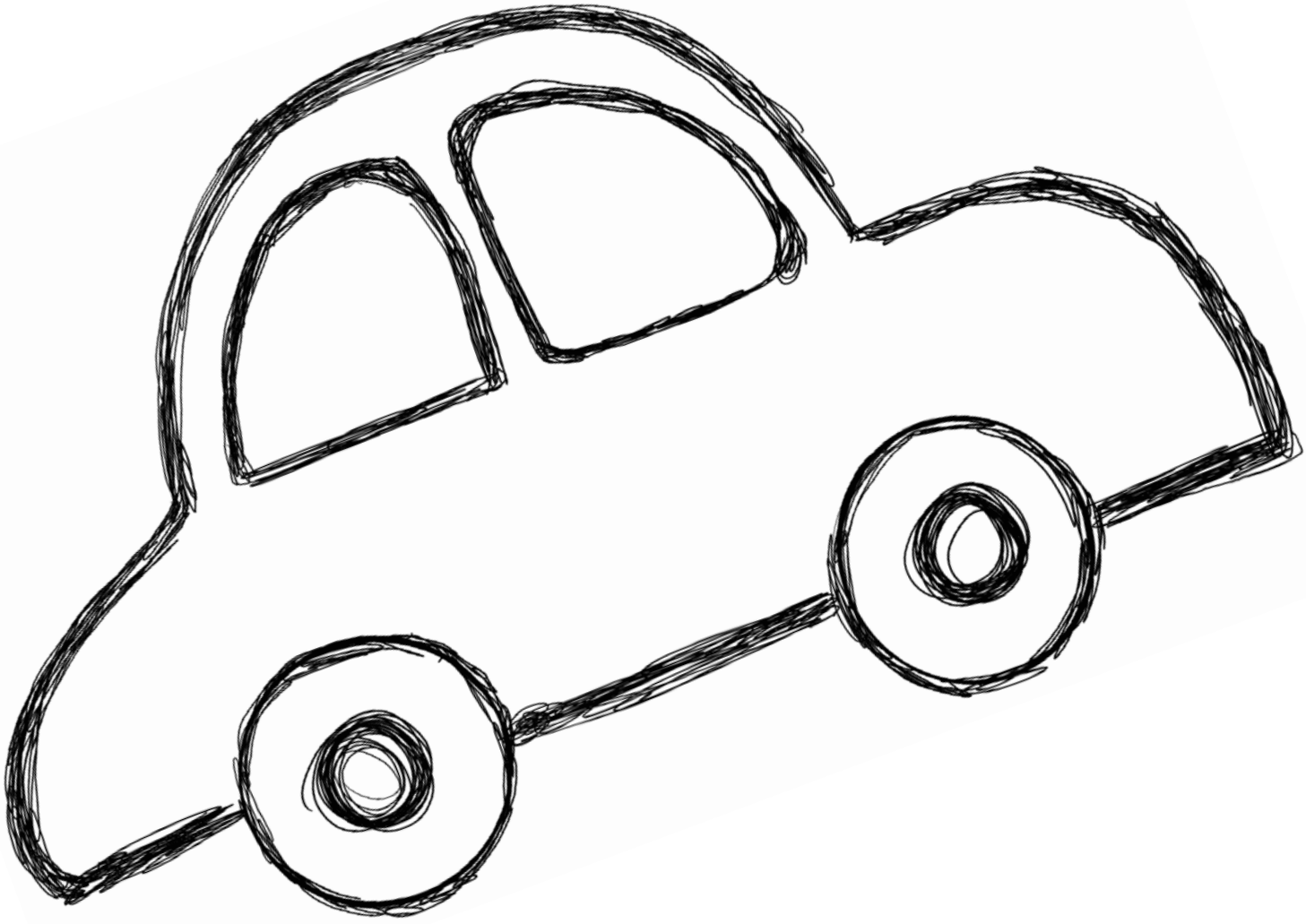
Today was Reece’s birthday, she’s my neighbor and friend. To celebrate we stood on our porch and shouted out a loud, fun version of Happy Birthday to her while she stood on her porch across the street which was fun.



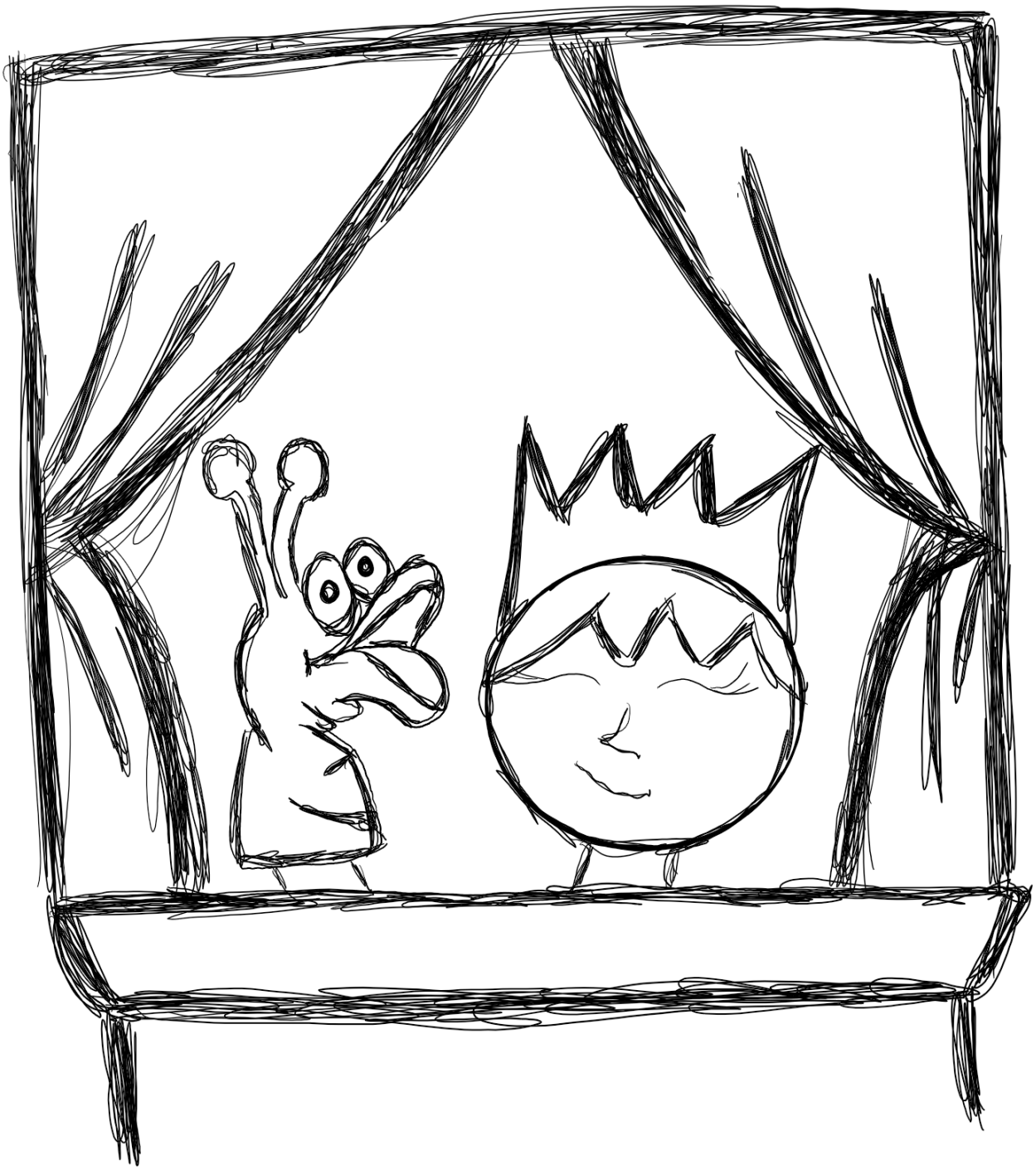
My mom is still into family pictures. Last week, a photographer came to take what's called a "Front Porch Picture." Mom made us get all dressed up even though we had no place to go! We all thought she was so silly!



Tomorrow dad says we'll take a car ride just to get out of the house. I guess I can't ask, "Are we there yet?" since we're not going anywhere! Maybe we can stop at my friend Charlie's house and wave to him outside the car window!



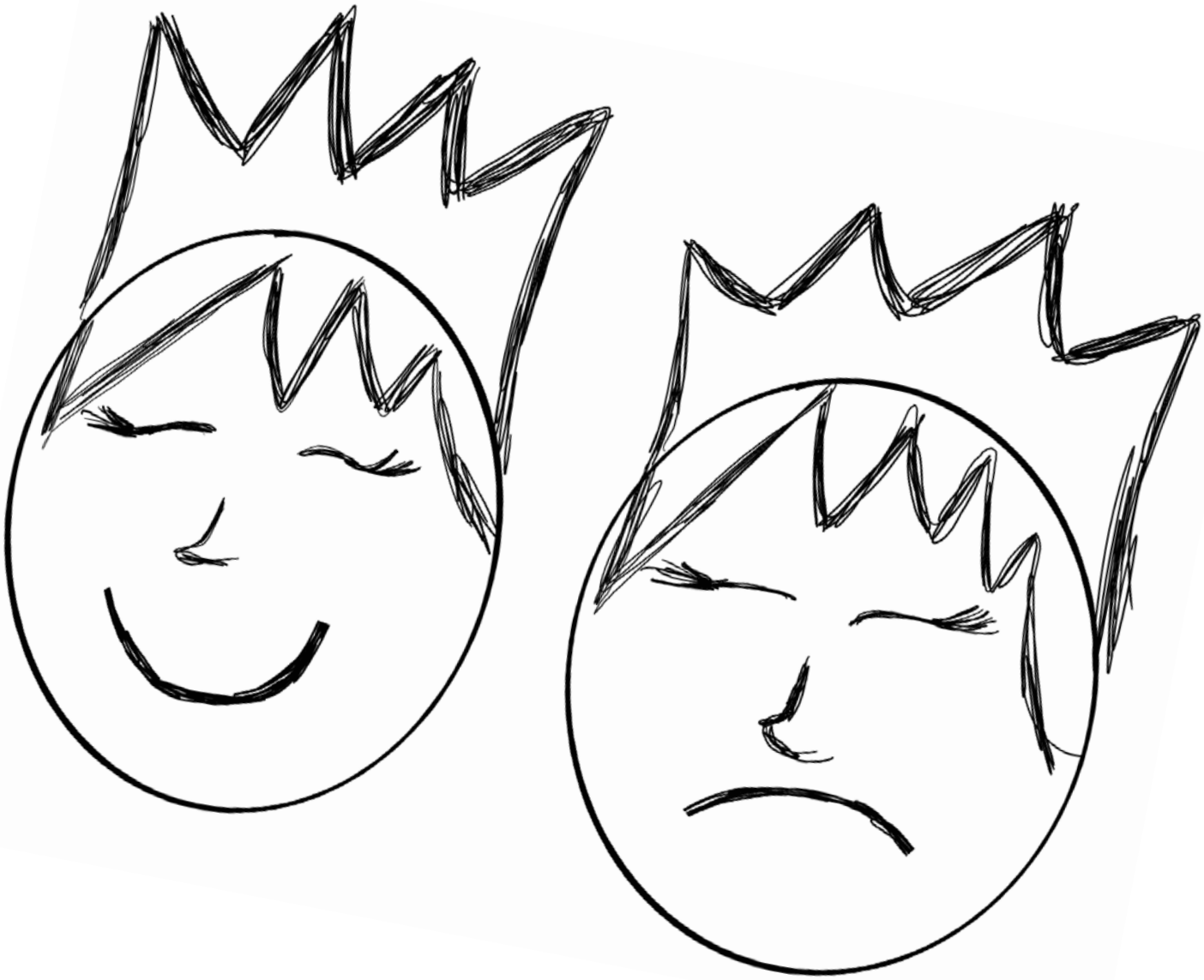
Besides school work, Leo and I have been working on a big puzzle in the living room, learning how to play chess, and having puppet shows. I’m glad I have a sibling, although he still annoys me at times!



My counselor called and it was fun to talk to her! I showed her some of my favorite things in my room and she helped me brainstorm on some ideas for how I can figure out how to deal with my worried thoughts and feelings of boredom. Together we came up with a few new ideas that I'll share with you at the end of my story.



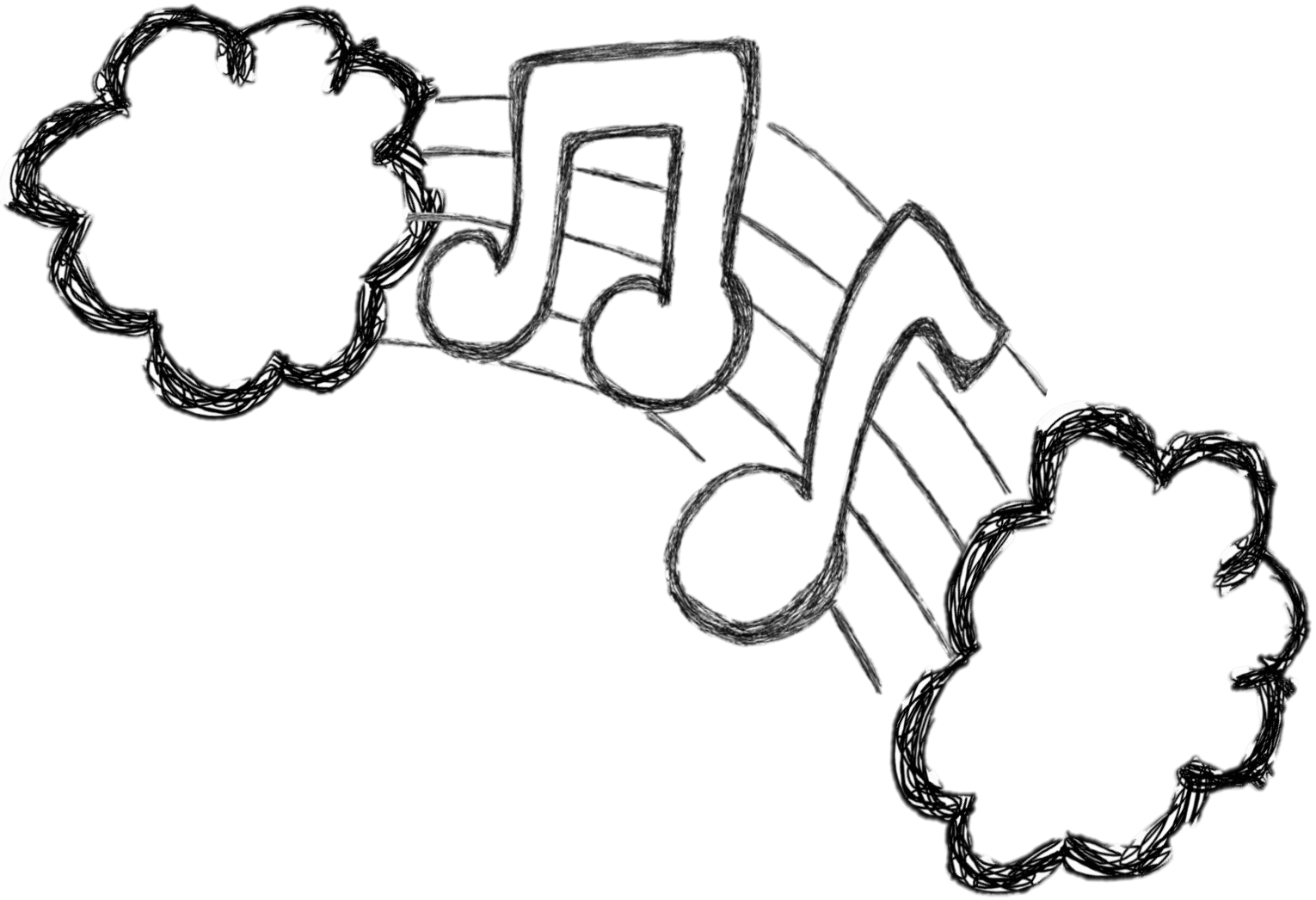
My counselor also told me it was ok if some days I feel happy because I'm home with my family, and if other days I'm sad or mad about everything that's going on. She said, "Feelings are okay to have!"



One thing that was bothering me is that recent holidays have been different. I'm glad we've still found ways to celebrate holidays with my family, but they're just not the same. I was excited to learn that the Easter Bunny was considered an essential worker and was on duty this year!



Other events like annual festivals and spring fairs are usually happening but have been “postponed” or “rescheduled” which makes me sad. Well, I guess I’ll have to plan my own mental Jazz Fest in my mind and put some music on in the backyard! Or, maybe I’ll take an imaginary beach vacation and pretend my feet are in the sand.



I know we're safe at home, but I'm still worried. This virus is scary because it's so new but I know there are plenty of doctors and scientists helping us to figure out how to get rid of it.



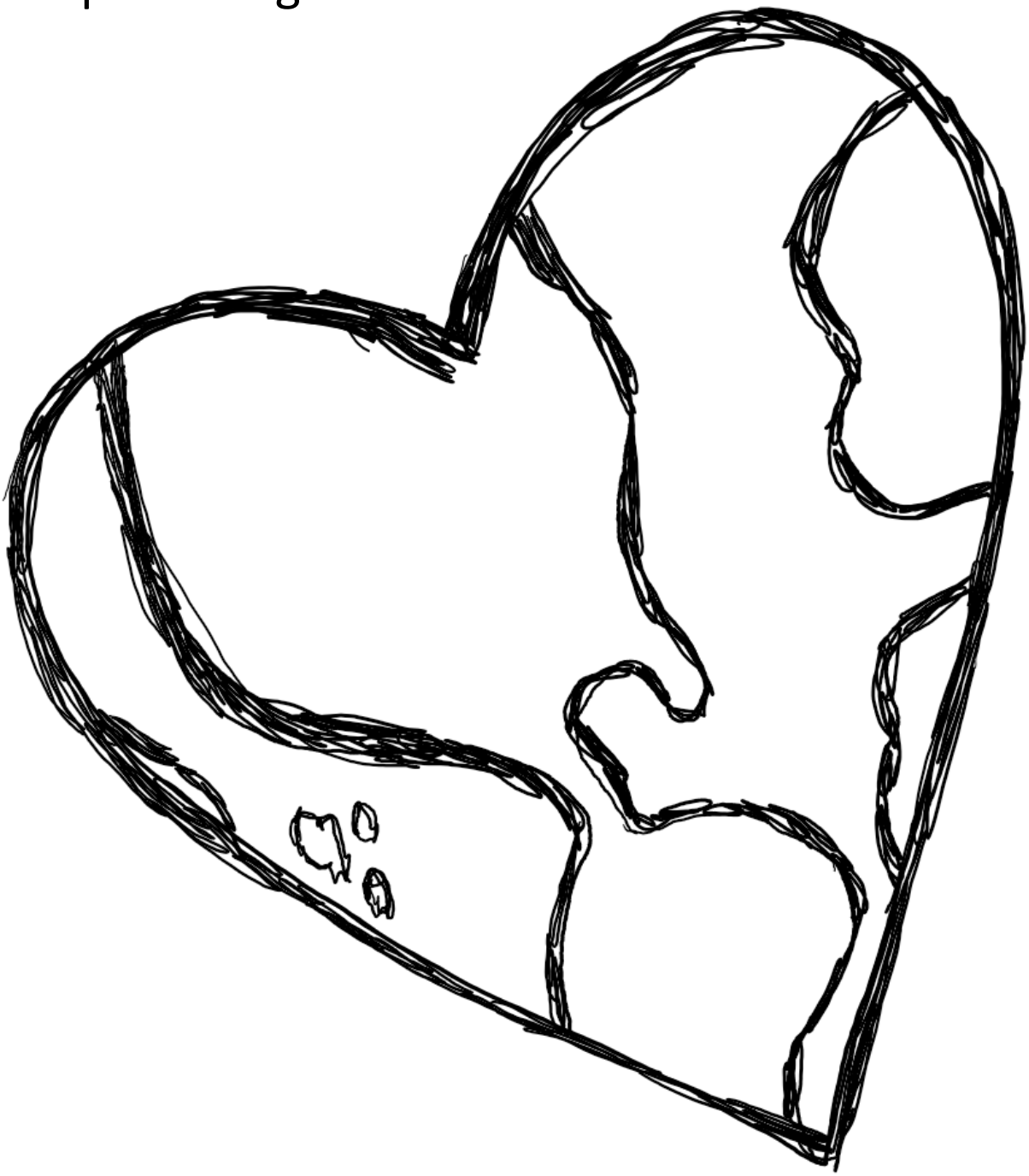
I’m super thankful to all the people working together to make the virus go away and thankful to all the people who are working together to help everyone out with our daily needs.

Thank you doctors, nurses, scientists, pharmacists, counselors, mailwomen, garbage men, grocery workers, essential workers, and so many more! We salute your bravery and courage!

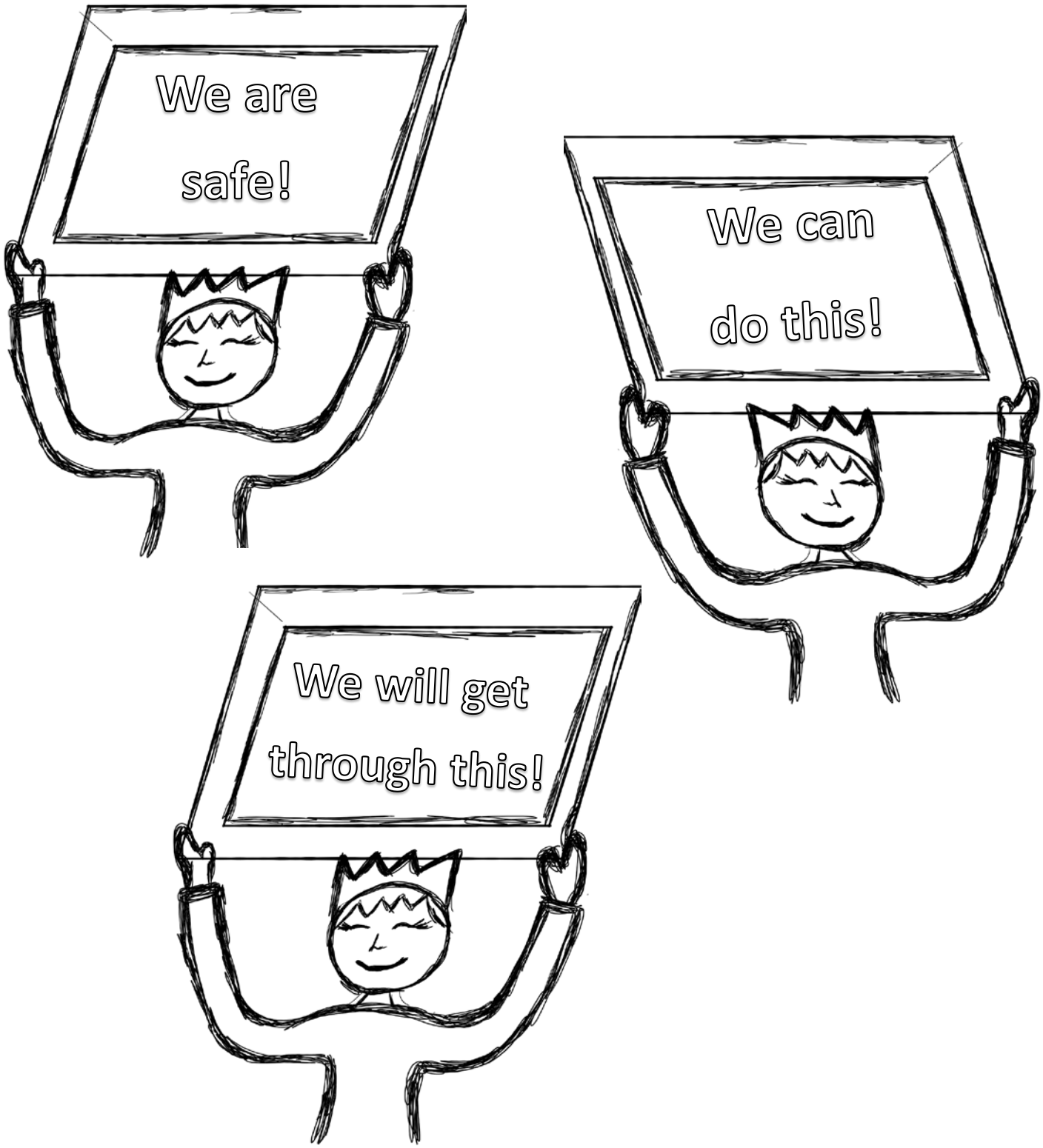
Thank

You!

The good news is that we are hearing reports that other people in other parts of the world are feeling better and getting back to normal which is promising for us!

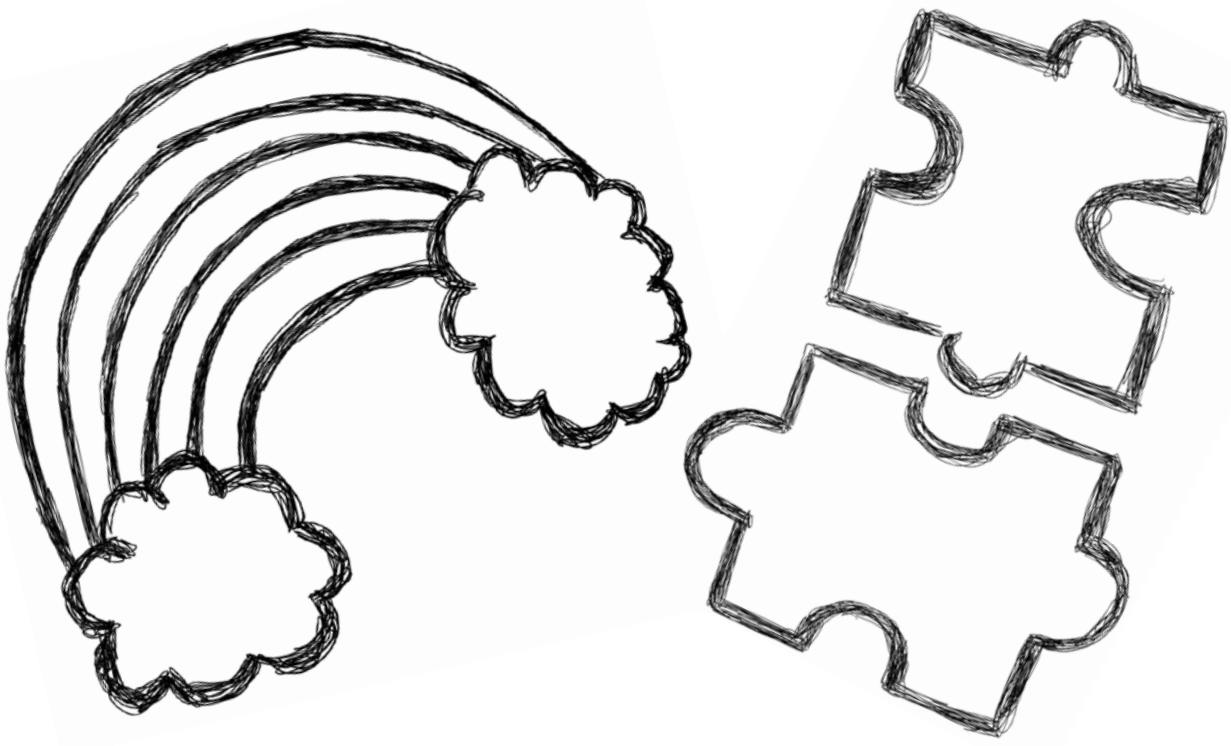


Even though this is tough, we have to remember that it's temporary! We can do this and we will get through this!



Caroline's New and Improved Playful Activities

1. Draw or color a rainbow to place in a window.
2. Learn a new game or activity.
3. Playing eye spy with a friend over video chat.
4. Helping in the garden to make things grow.
5. Draw or leave messages for your neighbors with sidewalk chalk.
6. Find an activity you like to play by yourself.
7. Draw all the things you want to do with your friends when you see them again.
8. Find a recipe to cook with mom or dad.
9. Go on a virtual tour to a zoo, aquarium or museum and share your favorite with your friends.
10. Design a life size board game based off your favorite game like Hasbro's Candyland or Chutes and Ladders.



Caroline's Glitter Bottle

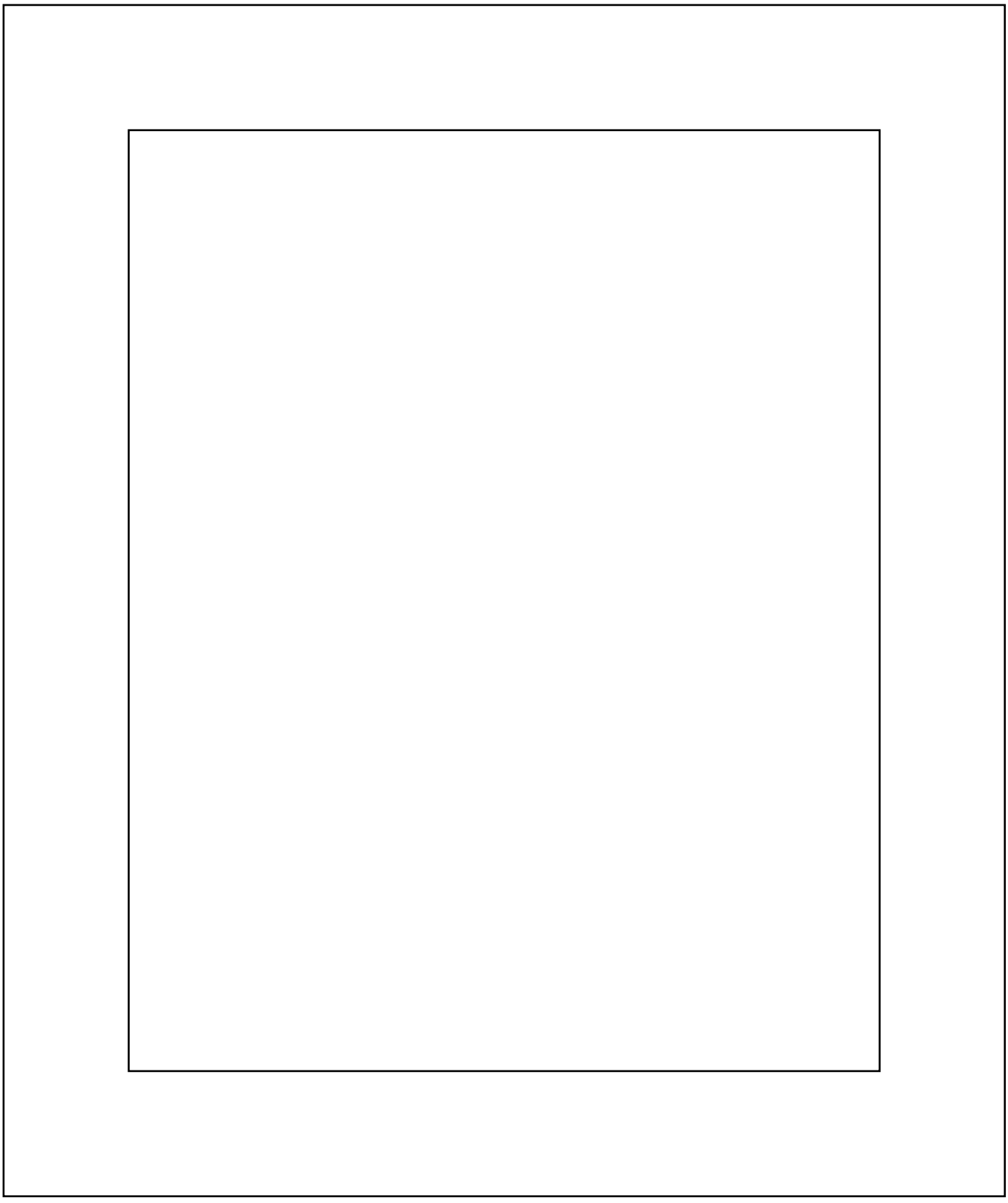
Do you have an empty water bottle? Do you want to design your very own calm down tool, then Caroline has an idea for you.

1. Empty and clean the bottle.
2. Remove the label.
3. Fill the bottle ¾ of the way with water.
4. Add glue.
5. Add glitter or other sparkles.
6. Add food coloring to make the water extra special.
7. Super glue the lid shut.

Caroline uses her day to imagine all the different types of sensory bottles she can design. She thought about adding feathers, sequins, blocks, pebbles, or Legos. I wonder what you can imagine for your own bottle?

**For use with older children or accompanied and supervised by an adult.*

Sensory Bottle Design Ideas



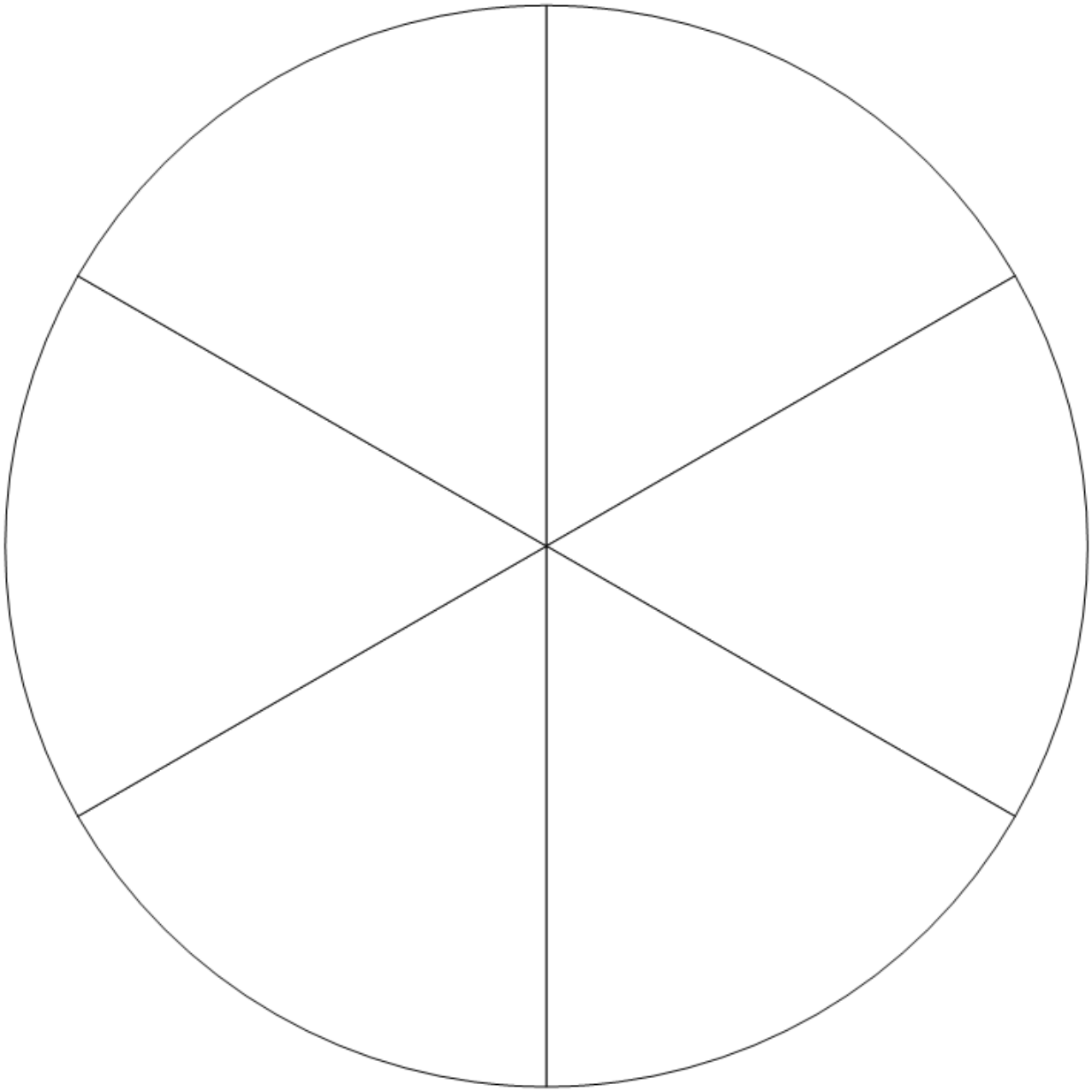
Caroline's Coping Wheel

Caroline realized that somedays she found things that made her feel better, but other days she could not remember what those things were. Her mom quickly decided they needed a place to capture all her great ideas. So they came up with a fun game.

Caroline's mom gave her a blank wheel that had many pieces of a pie for her to list her coping or fun activities in the slices. Caroline wrote down all of the things that made her feel great (blowing bubbles, dancing, listening to music, coloring, puzzles, painting, etc.) in each space. Mom gave Caroline the idea to leave a few blank slices of pie in case Caroline came up with new activities.

Now, when Caroline said "I'm bored", her mom would ask if she spun the "coping wheel". It became a great way to fill the day and now she has several coping wheels at her house. Some for daytime, some for afternoons, and some for evenings. After all, Caroline's mom said she could not ride her bike at night just because it felt good.

Your Coping Wheel



Caroline's Stuck vs. Flexible Thinking Strategies

Caroline was feeling "stuck" sometimes. Feeling "stuck" means saying the same thing over and over, having negative thoughts, or not having any new ideas. Caroline's counselor created a chart to help Caroline change her "stuck" thoughts to "flexible" thoughts. Feeling "flexible" means coming up with new ideas, having positive thoughts, or trying things in a different way.

Here's Caroline's Chart of Stuck versus Flexible Thoughts:

Stuck Thinking Thought	Flexible Thinking Thought
We are never going back to school!	We will go back to school once everyone feels better!
I'll never see my friends again!	I can ask my mom/dad to set up a FaceTime call with my friends for me!

Can you create your own chart?

Stuck Thinking Thought	Flexible Thinking Thought

Caroline Makes Choices

Another tip Caroline's counselor gave her was to think about the things that she could choose versus the things she could not choose. Focusing on the things she could choose gave her comfort.

Examples of choices Caroline can make include what type of juice she has with breakfast, what color she paints with, what songs she listens to, what puzzle she gets to complete first, and even what pajamas she gets to wear at night.

Things I Can Choose About My Day:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Things My Parents Choose About My Day:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Caroline’s Word Find

Caroline found some new activities online and discovered the fun of Word Find puzzles. She even found that she could play online with some of her favorite people, like her grandmother.

Here’s an example below for you to try on your own or with some help.

S F L I E T R W G K Q T X Y S
I O A I M X I M A G I N E J T
N Q U W I M A H T Q D C G B I
G N G X T J Z L D N O B I K E
T Y H B E O S X E U W J U A N
K Y I T C X D T N R W Q H X R
Y B Y U A S E T H H S A L P X
R L E Z F R M I U V A L L Y F
T S O Z P X K I Q Q V C N K J
V O Z K H J P H L S E M A G X
M F I M K Q G K X E R A O E T
H R L K D B D U O Q Y U A P M
T Z D A M U W W Q Q A S L Q R
P Z E Z C K P E V P L D H E O
M R U L R P K Y I I P M E K C

BIKE
COUNT
FACETIME
GAMES
IMAGINE
LAUGH
PLAY
PRETEND
READ
RELAX
SING
SMILE
WALK
ZOOM

About the Authors

*After the success of **Caroline Conquers her Corona Fears** and with the continued support of the Child and Family Counseling Clinic, the authors wanted to continue Caroline's story to help the children and families of COVID-19. If you missed Caroline's first adventure, you can find it here: https://alliedhealth.lsuhsc.edu/clinics/docs/CarolineConquersHerCoronaFears.pdf*

Drs. Camelford, Vaughn, & Dugan are all faculty and clinicians at the LSU Health Sciences Center in New Orleans, LA. They spend their days teaching master level students skills in counseling, training clinicians in the field of mental health, conducting research, and providing counseling services to individuals in the Greater New Orleans area. They are dedicated and committed to providing mental health services to the children and families in the Greater New Orleans area. It is our hope that each child has dedicated time in their day to play with toys and activities that allow them to visualize, fantasize, and create, embracing the powers of play.

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