

Introduction

Conflict Feelings has been developed to support children and young people, their families, and those working with them to explore their emotions and feelings around stories and images of violence and conflict in the world.

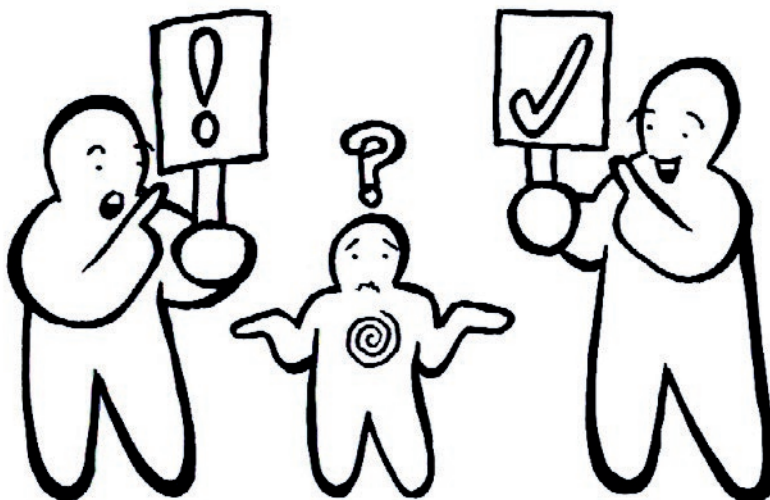
Children and young people will be seeing and engaging with stories of violence and conflict and may well be struggling to process their feelings in response to this. The stories may be more local and feel more personal, or they may feel further away. But one thing is for certain that some of these stories, images, and videos that children and young people are encountering will be causing distress.

Today's children and young people will likely be finding it harder to control what they are exposed to around violence and conflict. It used to be that, for the most part, if you chose not to watch the news on TV or read a newspaper, you wouldn't necessarily encounter distressing stories, images, or films. However, social media means that we all have less control over what we see online. This can be triggering and distressing for adults, and especially children and young people. Extremely distressing content can be shared on social media platforms that shows the first-hand impacts of violence and conflict.

Blob Tree Introduction

The Blob Tree is an international visual tool to help people of all ages to identify and share their feelings through conversation. In this document there are three Blob tools to help individuals relate their emotions about the issue of conflict and violence. When using the images, it is worth noting the following:

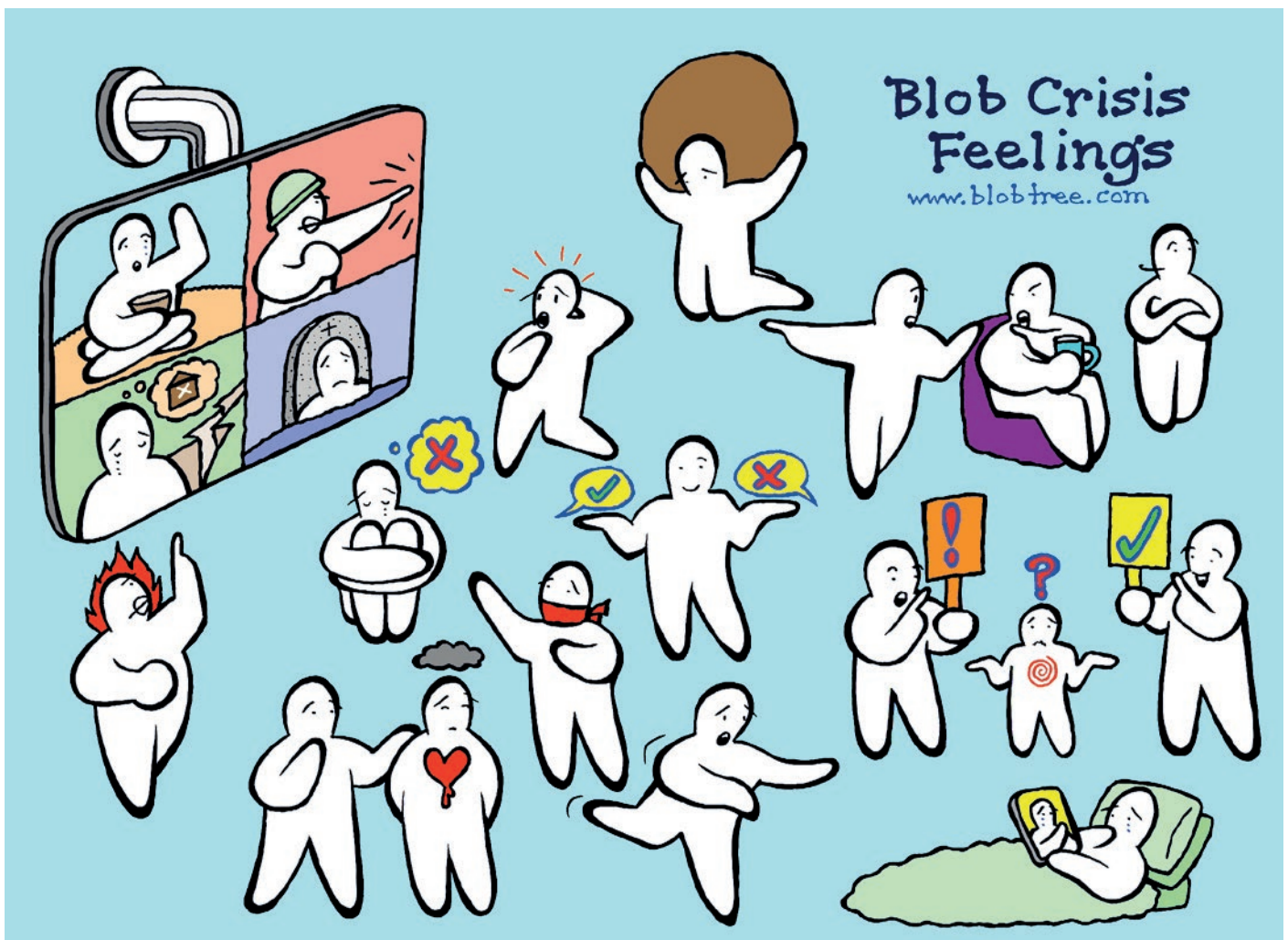
- There is no right or wrong answer with the Blobs. Even if you feel that someone is failing to interpret the Blobs correctly, allow them to share and thank them for doing so. Many people are shy, find groups difficult, and need lots of practice to build up their confidence.
- The Blobs are not male, female, adults or children – they are simply Blobs.
- Some people may be very confident to quickly jump through the different types of questions provided, whilst others may struggle to get beyond the first.
- Try to go at the pace of the individual or group that you are working with.
- The questions follow the same approach. First explore the visual tool. Ask a few simple questions. Then move to opinion based questions where there may be disagreement. When the individuals feel confident, ask them a few personal questions.
- Always model your answer for the personal question. Your vulnerability enables others to be open too.
- When there are two individuals looking at the visual tool, only provide one sheet for the discussion element of the process.
- Always practise these sheets with another person beforehand, so that you experience the process too.
- Each sheet takes about 15 minutes, unless extended by reflective writing. Use each one on a separate occasion, as a component of a lesson.



Blob Crisis Feelings

This image offers opportunities to talk about emotional responses to conflict and violence. The Blobs represent different emotional experiences and there is no 'right' answer to what they mean. They are designed to be flexible enough that people can see them meaning very different things. Remember to welcome whatever interpretation students put on them and remind students that they are welcome to understand them differently. For example one Blob might be seen as lonely by one person and safe and happy by someone else.

A full page version of this sheet can be found at the end of this pack. Invite participants to look at the sheet on their own and then with a talk partner.



Opening questions suggestions

What kinds of behaviour can you see the Blobs showing?

Which Blobs are on their own?

Which Blobs are interacting with other Blobs?

Opinion questions suggestions

Which Blobs look the most anxious, in your opinion?

Which Blobs need to be given immediate support, in your opinion?

Which Blobs seem to be ignoring the crisis, in your opinion?

Personal questions suggestions

Which Blobs have you felt like when people discuss conflict and violence?

Which Blobs have you felt like when people become upset about a crisis?

Which Blobs remind you of your friend's reactions to disasters?

Leader's notes: The subject of conflict and violence can cause many to switch off or get anxious, especially where this topic has left an individual struggling to know where they fit into the solution. Emphasise that this sheet is to help everyone to reflect upon their *feelings* about conflict and violence, not the issues of disasters; while the issues matter and are relevant to the subject, the goal of this resource is to enable children and young people to process their feelings. In a group situation, allow the pairs to discuss the questions together first, so that they build up their confidence before responding in a whole group situation.

You might like to ask each question and receive feedback before moving onto the next question. When individuals try to take it onto the issues, refer to the title of the sheet to draw them back to the task.

If someone makes an unusual choice in response to a question, ask, "How come?" or something similar as an invitation to explain more about their choice e.g. "You chose this Blob as the most anxious one. What was your reasoning?"

To extend the task, ask those doing it to annotate the Blobs by writing first about their own emotional responses, and then adding to that with the feelings that others have expressed.

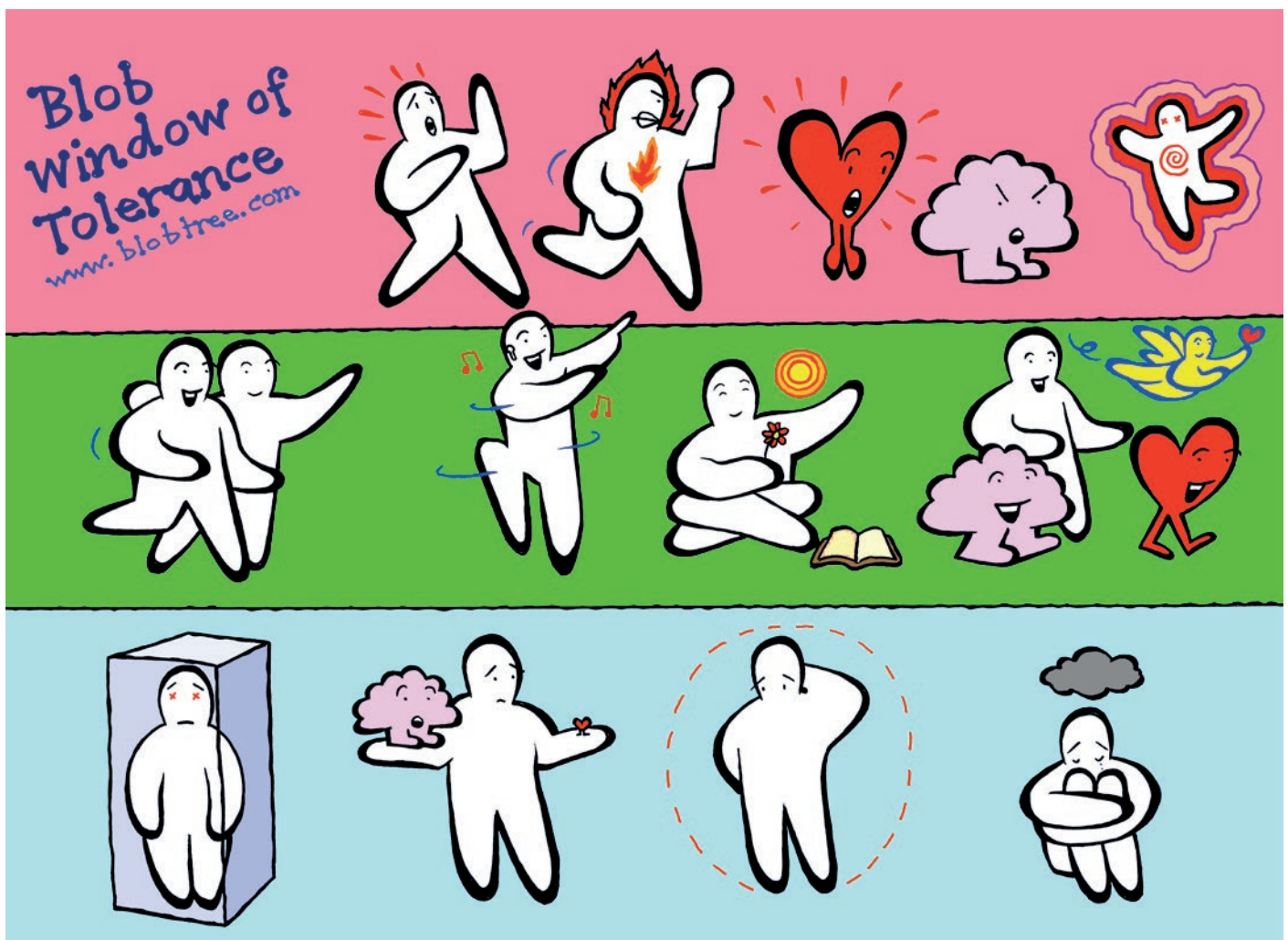
Blob Window of Tolerance

The Window of Tolerance is a model developed by Dr Dan Siegel to describe the way our emotional and nervous system works. There are many resources available to describe the model in more detail. Here is a video from the Augeo Foundation that gives an introduction to it:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=dtrGwXmjGM8

Use the Blob Window of Tolerance to explore how our emotions may affect our behaviour, and to begin to explore how distressing images, stories, and content may have an impact on our day to day lives.

A full page version of this sheet can be found at the end of this pack. Invite participants to look at the sheet on their own and then with a talk partner.



Leader notes for explaining the Blob Window of Tolerance:

The **central row** is where the Blobs feel comfortable with the level of stress that they are experiencing. Their feelings, thoughts, behaviour and beliefs are flowing smoothly.

The **top row** depicts when the Blob feels overwhelmed, causing their thoughts and feelings to become distressed.

The **bottom row** shows a Blob who has retreated from the stress and switched off emotionally.)

Opening questions suggestions

What can you see the Blobs doing on each level?

What feelings are the Blobs expressing on each level?

Opinion questions suggestions

Which Blobs could be thinking about conflicts and violence in your opinion?

Which Blobs could be avoiding thinking about conflicts and violence in your opinion?

Personal questions suggestions

Which Blobs have you felt like when discussing a conflicts and violence?

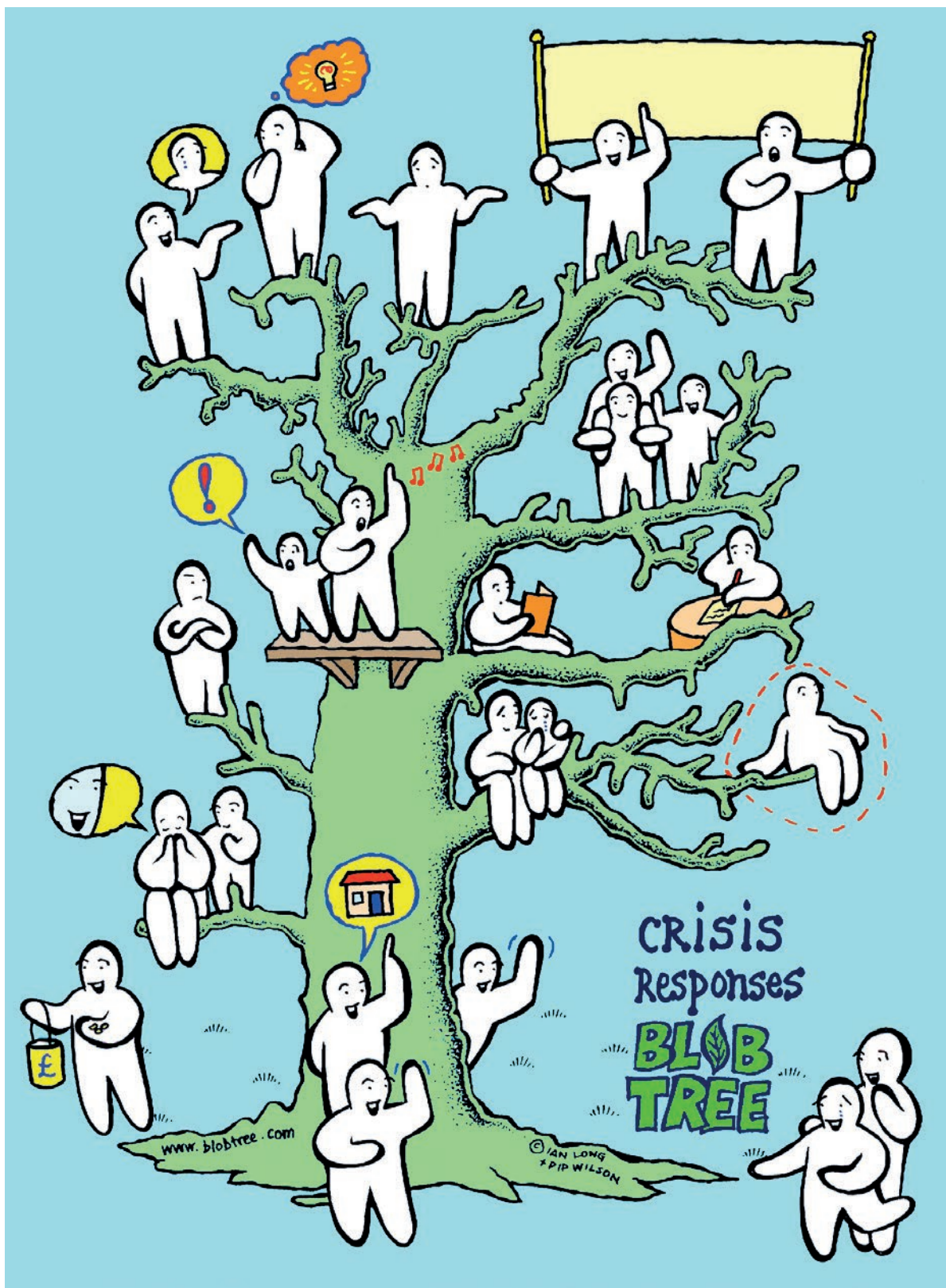
How have you managed to cope with the stress of a crisis?

Extending the use of this resource

When using this sheet, after the discussion and feedback, you could ask the individuals to annotate the Blobs with their explanations, describing not only what is happening, but how the Blobs could shift from the top and bottom levels back to the central row e.g. deep breathing, being quiet, being physical such as walking or running. In a group feedback session, strategies for restoring a state of calm could be shared.

Conflict Feelings Blob Tree

A full page version of this sheet can be found at the end of this pack. Invite participants to look at the sheet on their own and then with a talk partner.



This image enables conversations about active responses to conflict and violence. Again, there is no agenda about which is better or worse, just an invitation to explore and deepen the conversation. You can use questions to address local and global action as well as focus on different areas of concern such as refugees, destruction, emotional trauma, and supporting communities to rebuild in the aftermath of conflict.

Opening questions suggestions

What kinds of action are the Blobs taking?

Which Blobs are working individually?

Which activities are possible for children and/or young people to do?

Opinion questions suggestions

Which Blobs are being the most effective, in your opinion?

Which Blobs are helping others, in your opinion?

Which actions require an adult to be involved, in your opinion?

Personal questions suggestions

Which actions have you tried to do?

How did you feel about doing these activities?

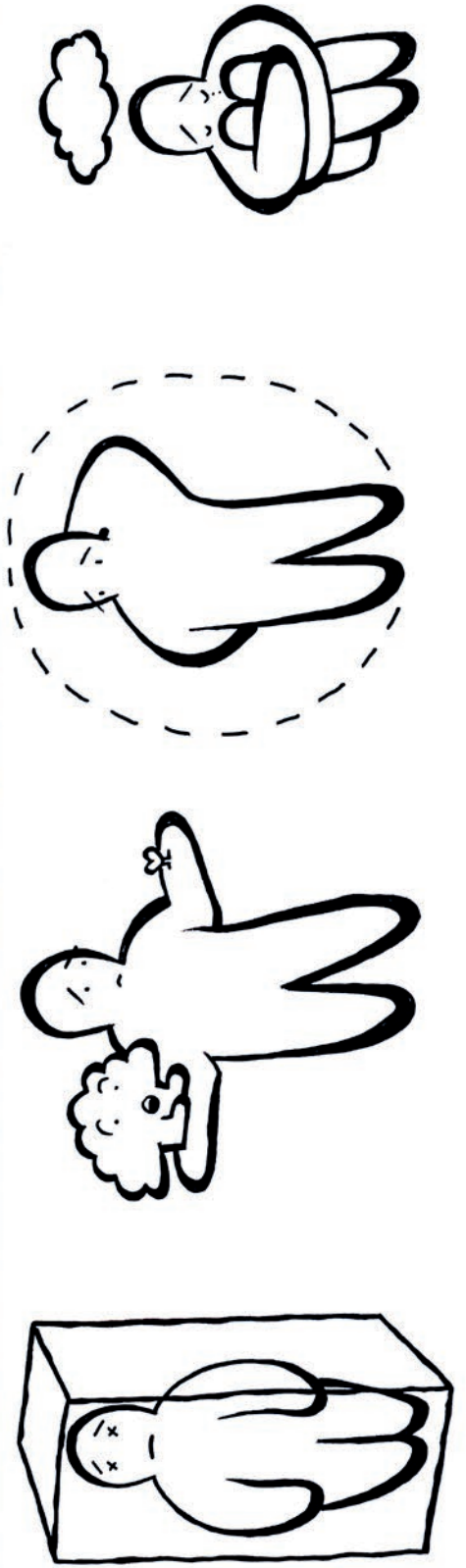
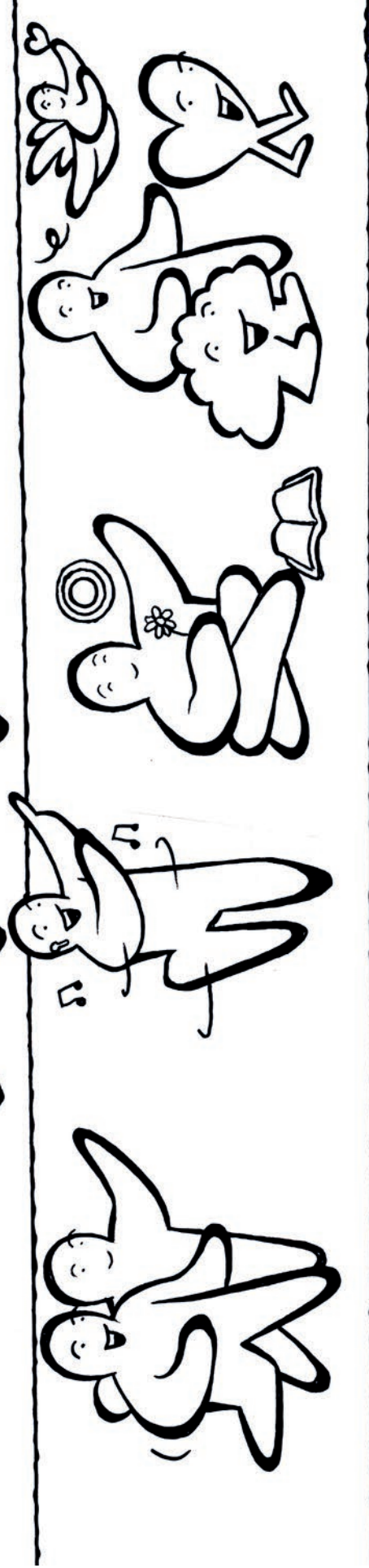
Which Blobs have you felt like?

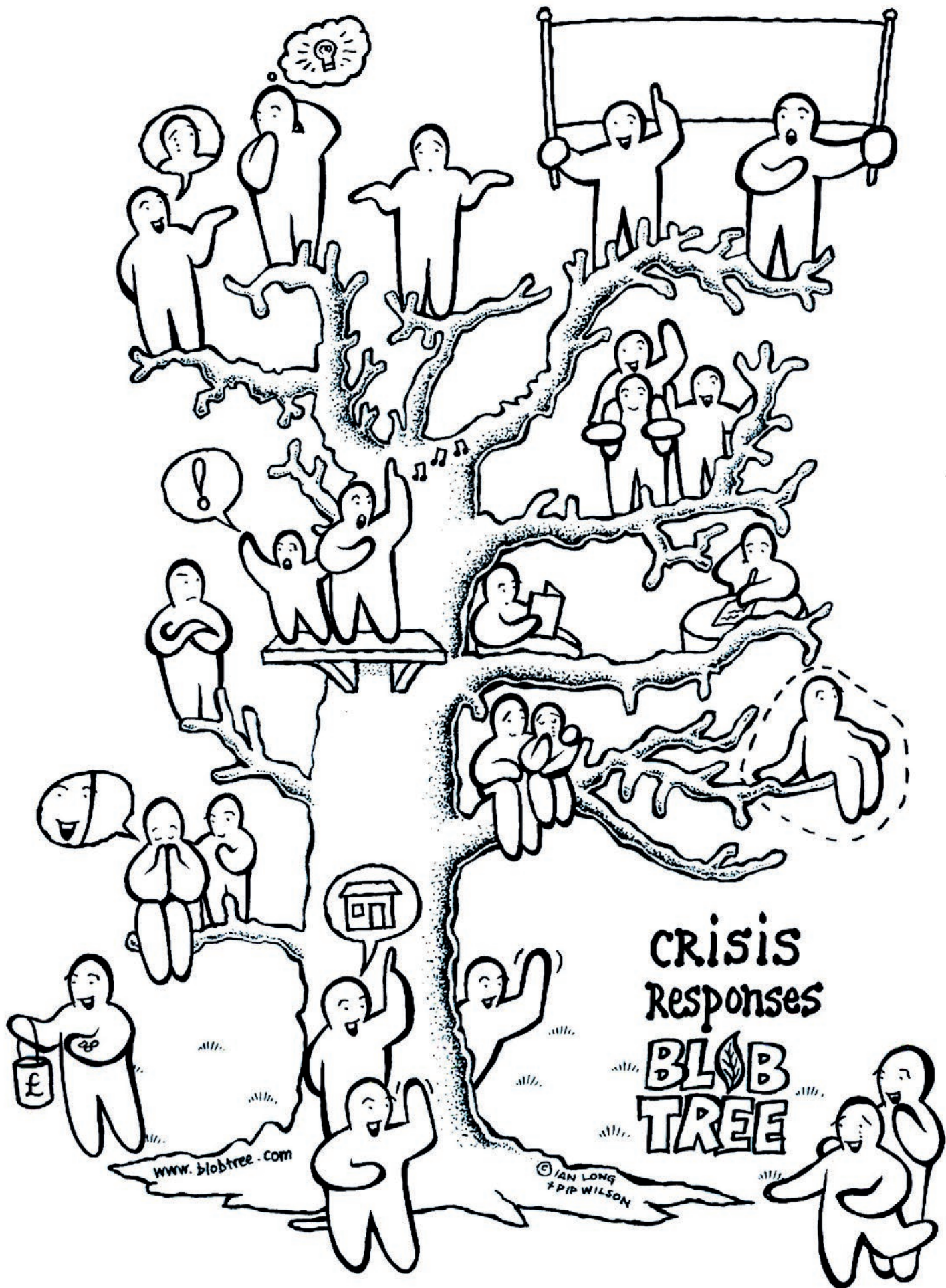
Facilitator Notes

Action to respond to a crisis can range from small choices, such as collecting money, to the large ones, such as helping refugees coming to the nation. There is no one remedy to effect change. The important aspect to emphasise is that by taking small or large steps, we are responding in a way we feel capable of.

As well as group reflections between each question, the sheet can be annotated with thoughts about which of these actions would be practical to pursue.

www.Blob4free.com
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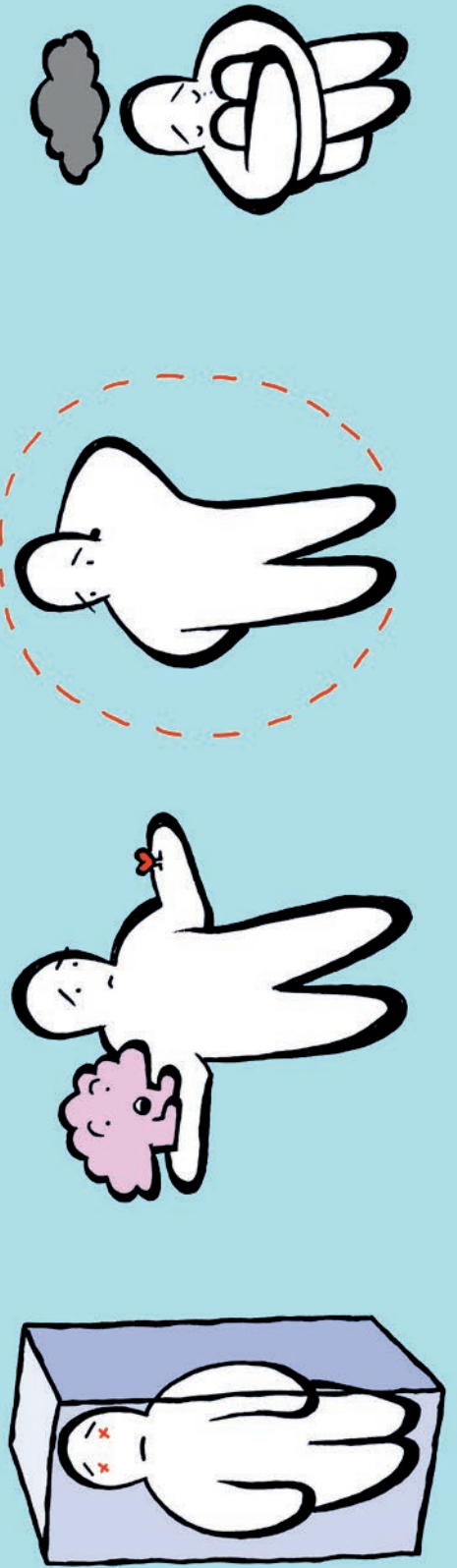
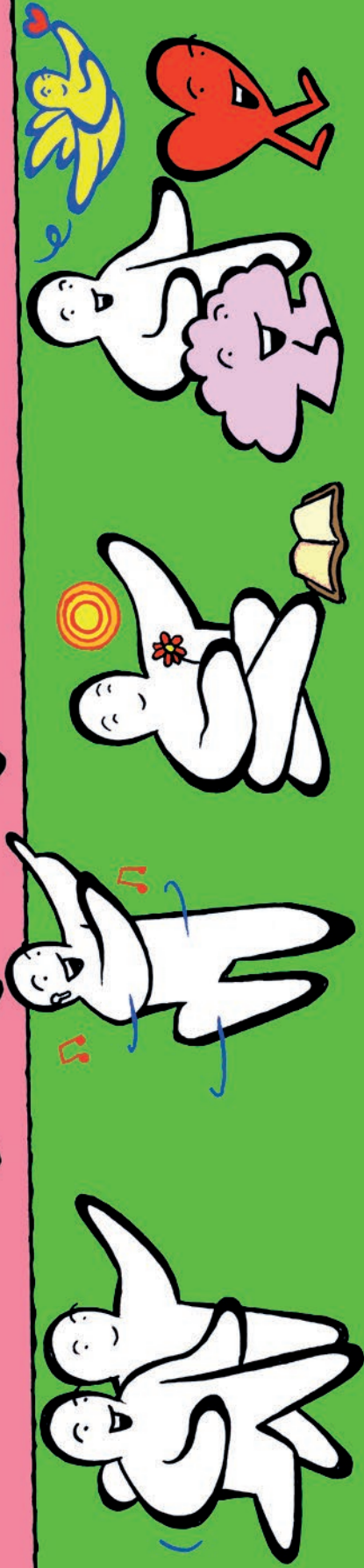
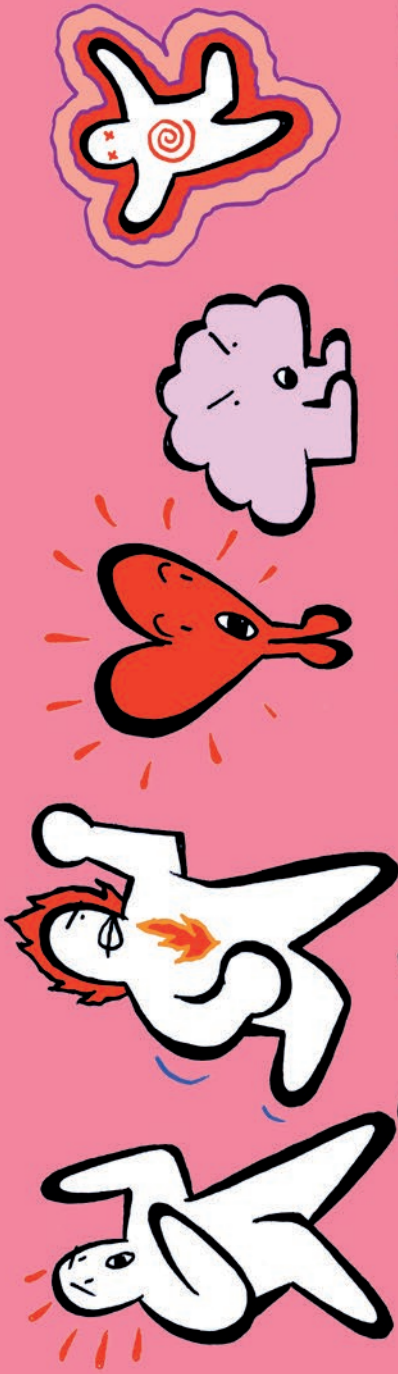


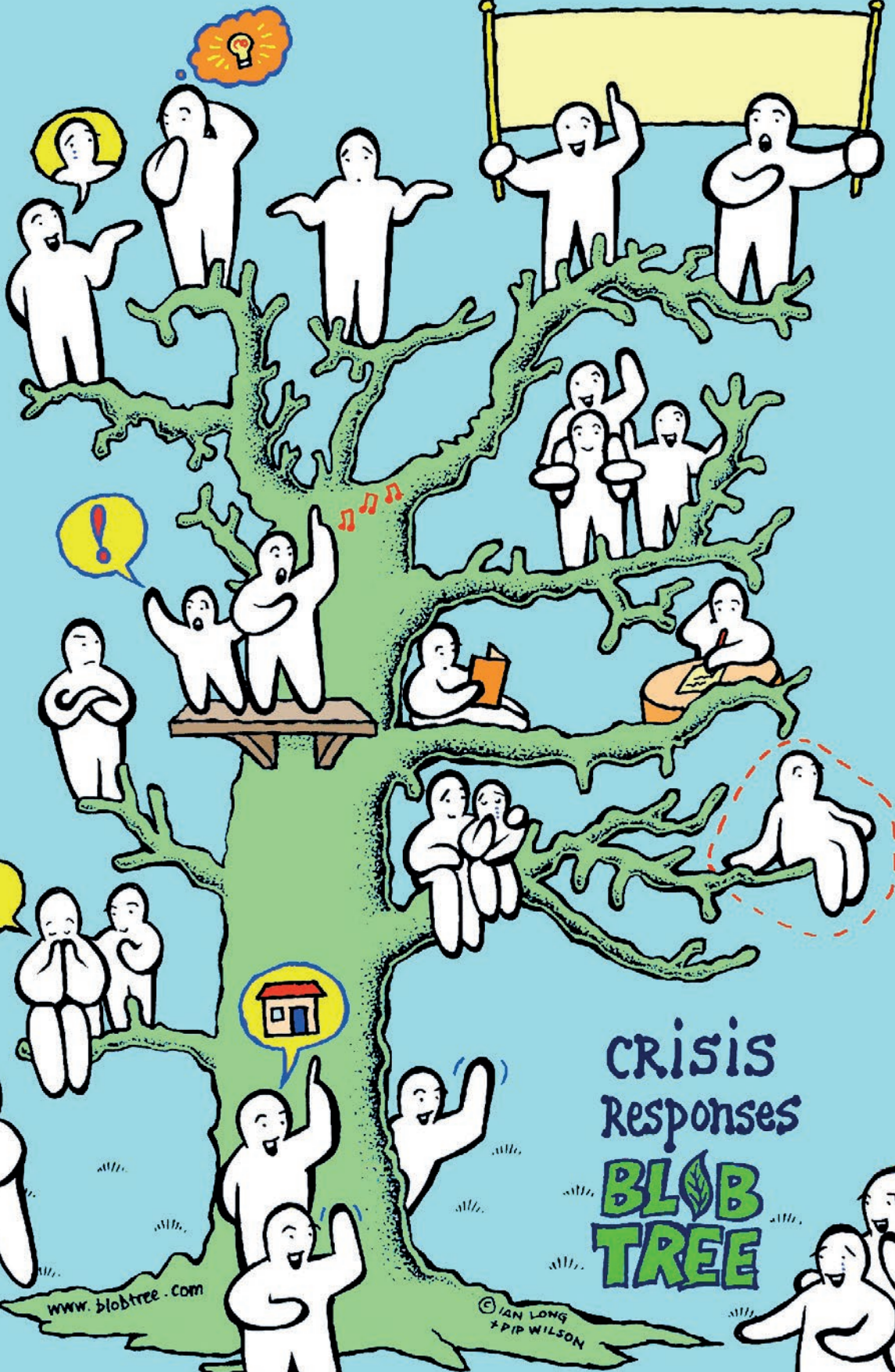
CRISIS
Responses
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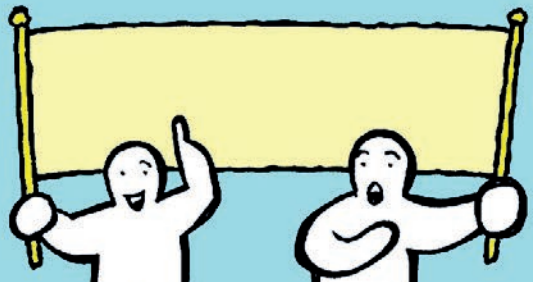




CRISIS
Responses
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Resources

Christian Aid Schools Website

caid.org.uk/schools

A wide range of learning materials, games, assemblies and projects focused on global citizenship learning, courageous advocacy and justice. All available free of charge.

Quaker Peace Education

www.quaker.org.uk/action/peace-education

Quakers work to promote peace education across Britain so that we can uproot violence and cultivate positive relationships at every level, from the personal to the global. The Quakers provide projects and educational resources to support pupils to learn about peace.

Pax Christi

www.paxchristi.org.uk

Their vision is of a world where people can live in peace, without fear of violence in any form. Pax Christi is rooted in Catholic Christianity but is open to all who share its values and work. Pax Christi provides educational resources and school speakers to support pupils learning about peace.

Peace Education Network

www.peace-education.org.uk

The Peace Education Network brings together people and organisations committed to building a culture of peace and nonviolence through lifelong learning. Educational resources on peace are available.

Blob Tree

www.blobtree.com

Books, downloads and resources to support emotional literacy.

Peace Schools

www.wcia.org.uk/global-learning/peace-schools-in-wales/

A scheme for schools in Wales focused on non-violent conflict resolution, developing critical thinking skills, and creative skills throughout the whole life of the school and curriculum.