

ALLIANCE FOR  
EQUALITY IN

THE SUICIDE  
EFFECT

Alliance for Equality and The Suicide Effect

A production of the George Wolf Youth Interns at Topeka Independent Living Resource Center:

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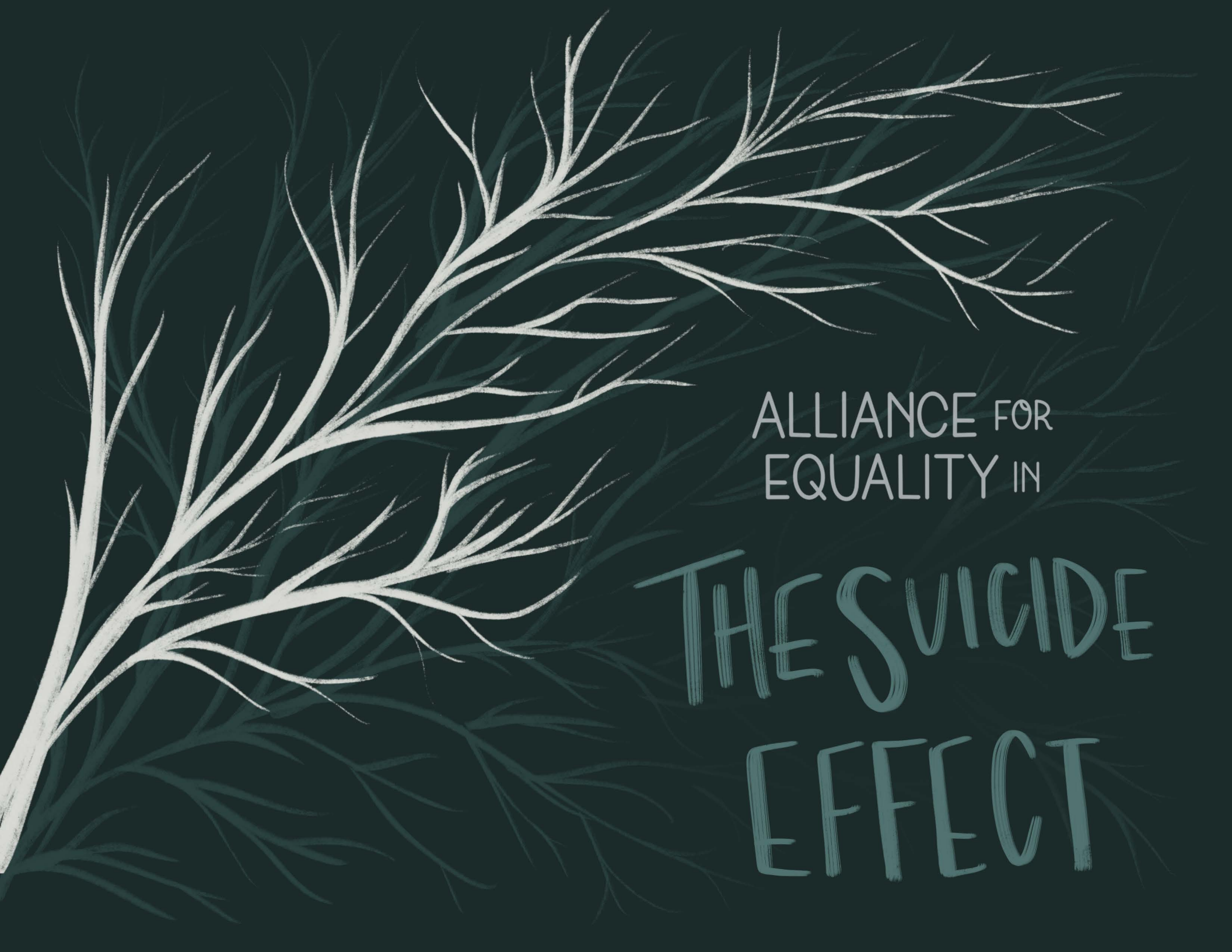
# TRIGGER WARNING!

This story has talk of suicide and shows some images that may be disturbing to some people.









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Late evening of the same day.




Hey Shelby I have some really difficult news to share. Carlos is in the hospital. He tried to take his life last night I am in contact with his parents and will share news as it comes available. Could you please reach out to the rest of the Crew?

Shelby is speechless for a couple of minutes before she assures Kinsey she will give everyone the news.







Hey guys I'm calling to tell you something and it's really hard to imagine. Carlos tried to commit suicide last night. He is going to pull through. We are going to get through this together.

I don't understand why he wouldn't let someone know? Any one of us would have helped him.

This makes me so sad. I want to help him feel better.



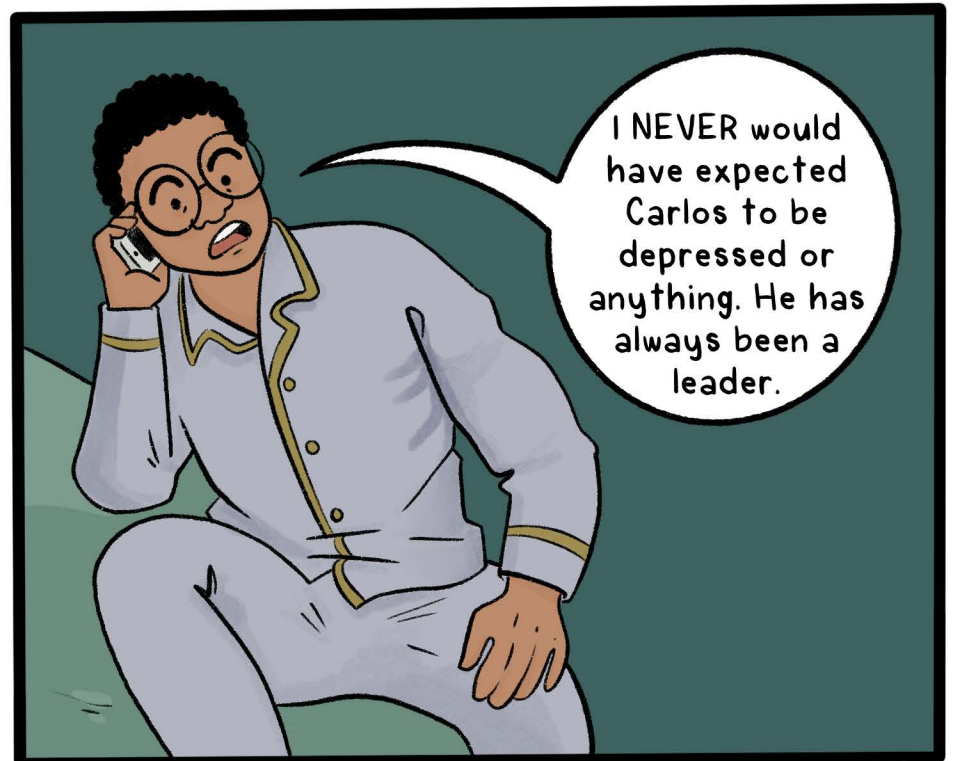
Hey did you hear about Carlos? He's in the hospital. He tried to commit suicide. He is going to be OK though.



What! What do you mean? Are you sure it is Carlos? We just was laughing and having fun on Zoom.



Can we see him? I really want to be there.



I NEVER would have expected Carlos to be depressed or anything. He has always been a leader.

## The next day

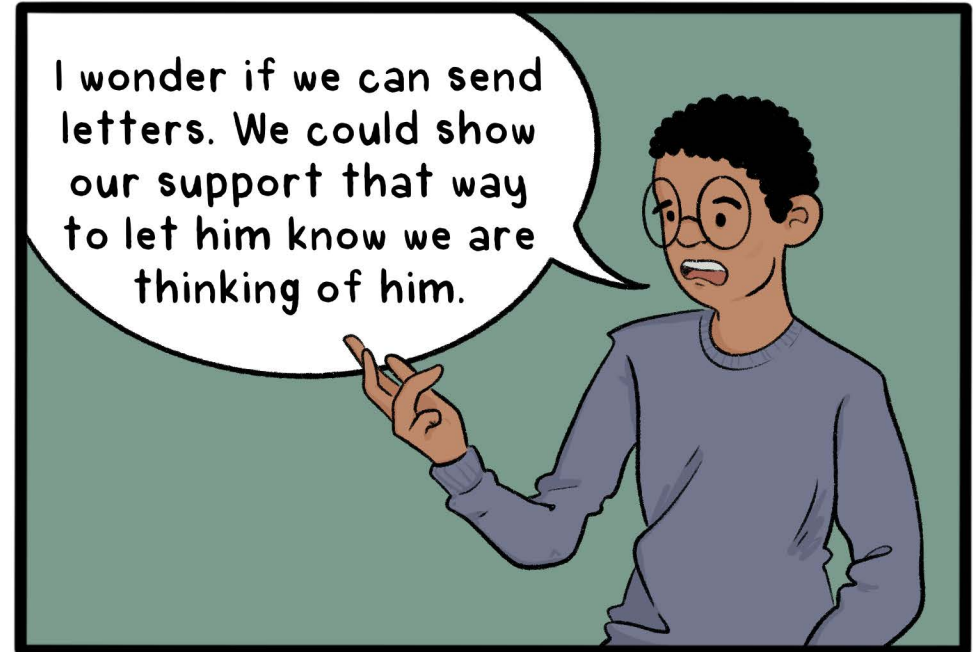
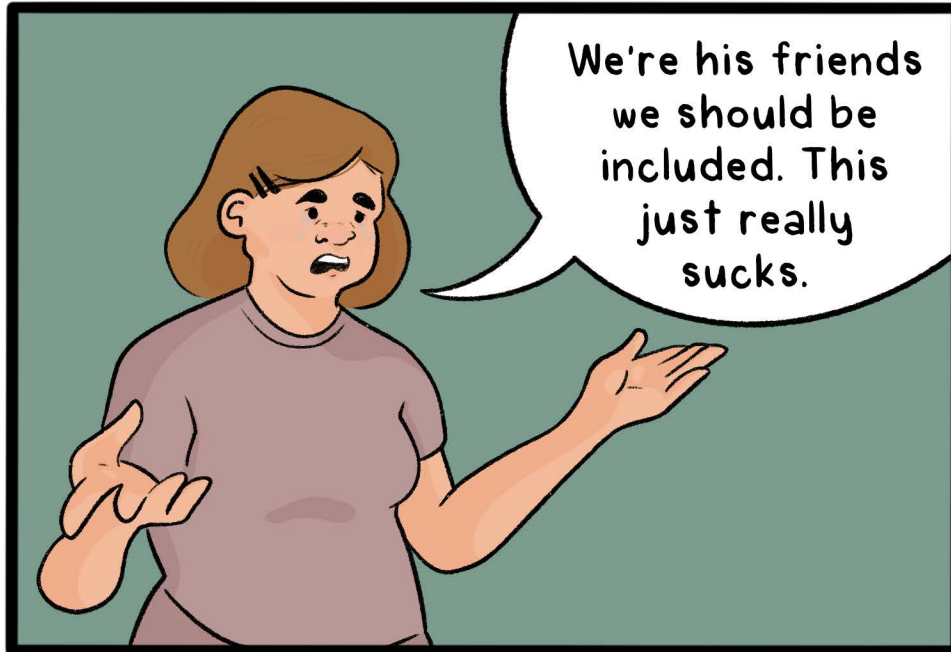
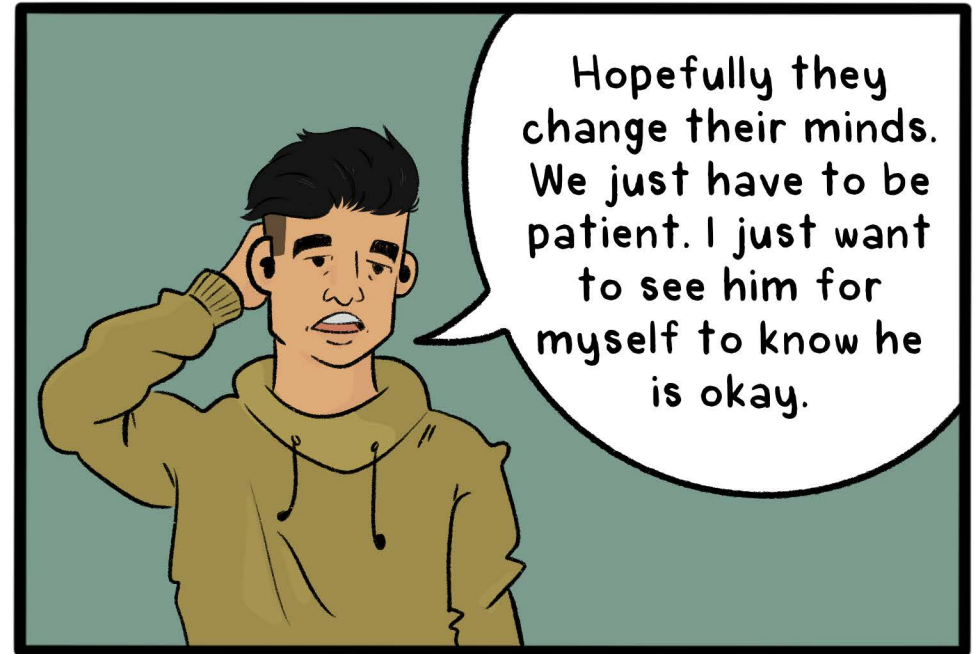
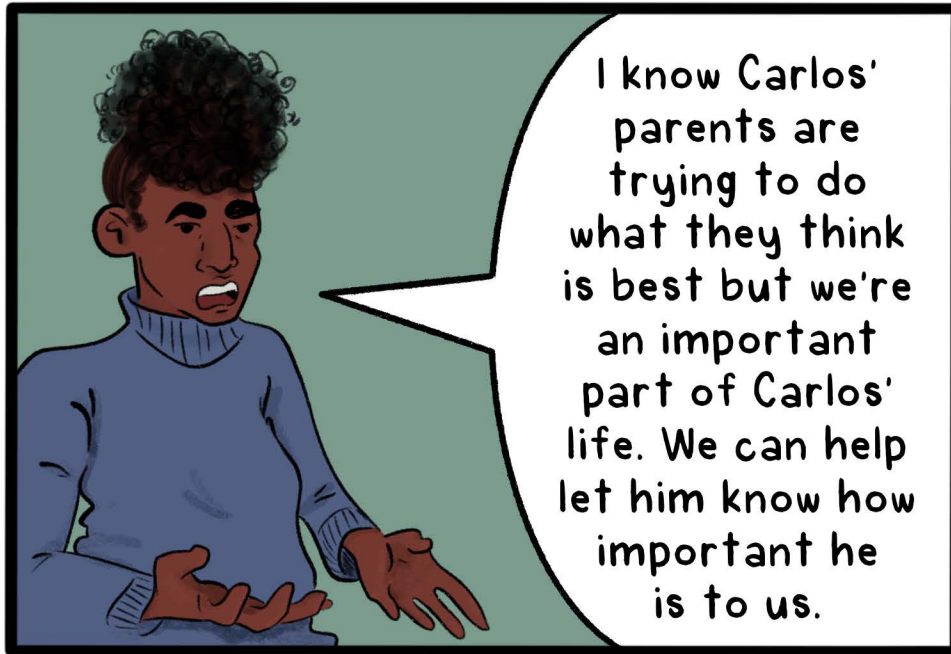


I'm just calling for an update. When can I visit? Can Carlos get calls?

We understand you and all the kids want to see or talk to Carlos. But at this time we feel that only immediate family would be best. We are not going to add anyone to the call list because we want Carlos to just focus on getting treatment. He is being discharged later today. He will be admitted to a treatment facility and will be staying there for two weeks before he comes home. We appreciate your concern and your friendship that you have with Carlos. We hope you understand. Carlos can have a couple of things during therapy if all the kids would like to get Carlos a stuffed animal to show support. We can give it to him when we visit.

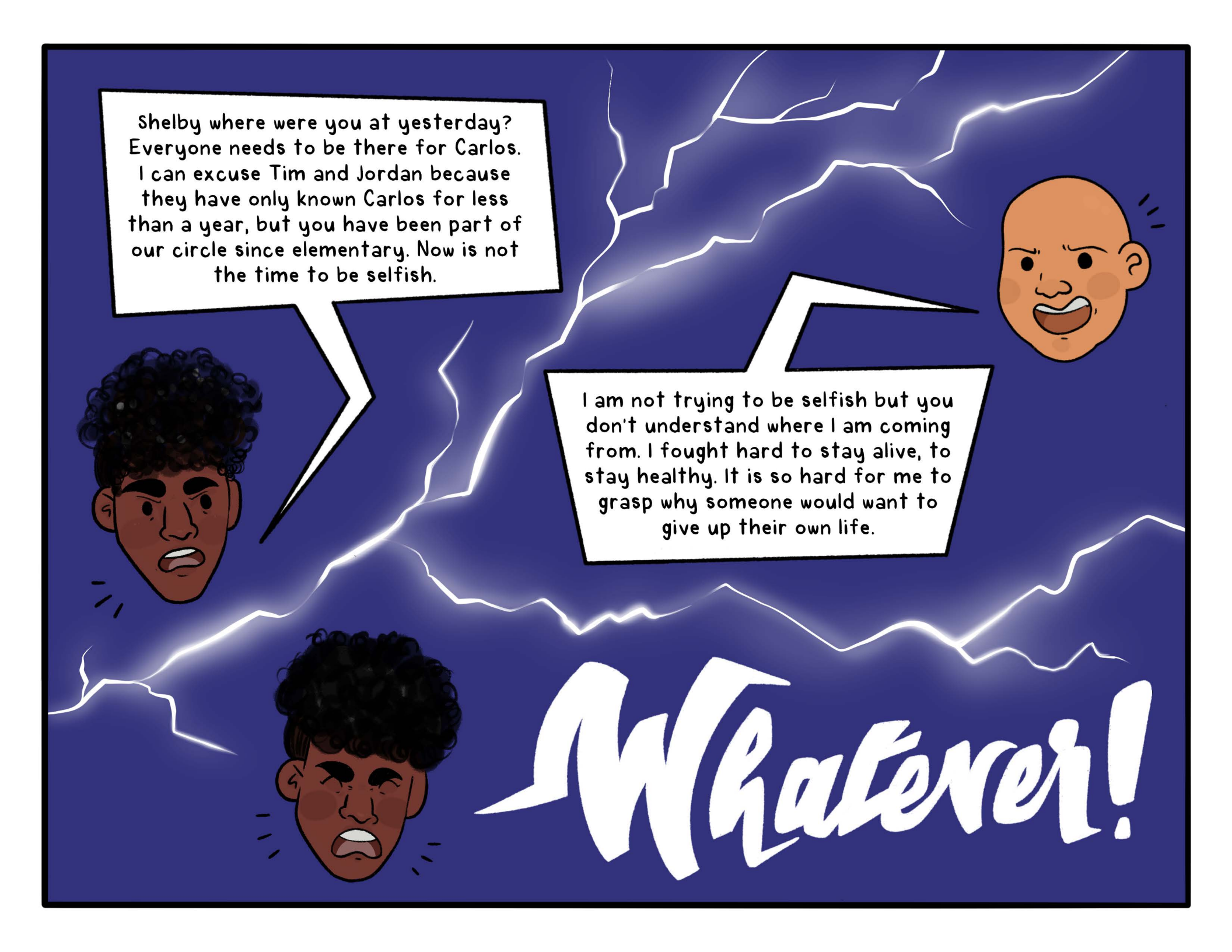


Kinsey calls for a group chat to share what she has found out.



Meanwhile Shelby, Tim, and Jordan, who are choosing not to join the others in the group chat, talk to each other.




A comic panel with a dark blue background featuring several white lightning bolts. In the top left, a speech bubble contains text. Below it is a character's face with dark skin and curly hair, looking angry. In the top right, another character's face with light skin and a bald head looks surprised. In the center, a speech bubble contains more text. Below it is another character's face with dark skin and curly hair, also looking angry. At the bottom right, the word 'Whatever!' is written in a large, white, stylized font.

Shelby where were you at yesterday?  
Everyone needs to be there for Carlos.  
I can excuse Tim and Jordan because  
they have only known Carlos for less  
than a year, but you have been part of  
our circle since elementary. Now is not  
the time to be selfish.

I am not trying to be selfish but you  
don't understand where I am coming  
from. I fought hard to stay alive, to  
stay healthy. It is so hard for me to  
grasp why someone would want to  
give up their own life.

**Whatever!**

Meanwhile Carlos and his parents are talking as he is getting ready to be transported to the treatment center.



I'm sorry I did this. I regret it. Please don't make me go to this facility. They won't even let you drive me there. You know it was an extreme circumstance. This lockdown could have just made me more depressed. You know I usually handle my depression better. Please!

It will be alright it is only two weeks. You will be back home before you know it.

Carlos it's out of our hands but we agree that you need treatment. It will help prevent this from happening again.

As Carlos spends his first night in treatment he reflects on events of the day. He remembers the embarrassment of the full body search the staff did. Having to wear the facility scrubs instead of his clothes. His room was sparse with heavy furniture and everything had rounded edges. There were no decorations or pictures. Screams and yelling could be heard outside his room.

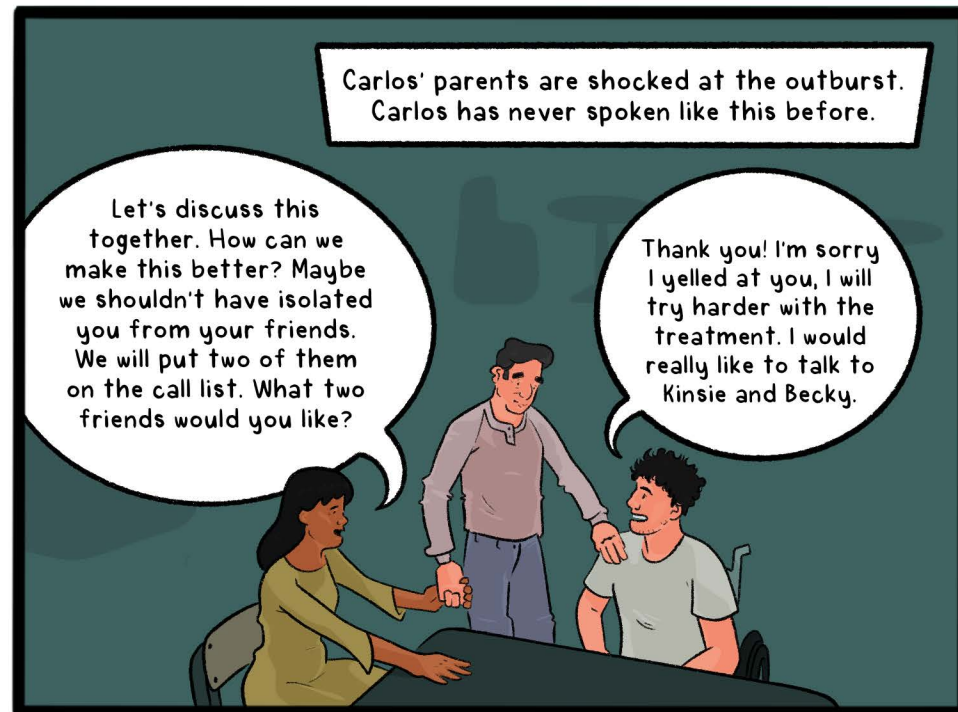




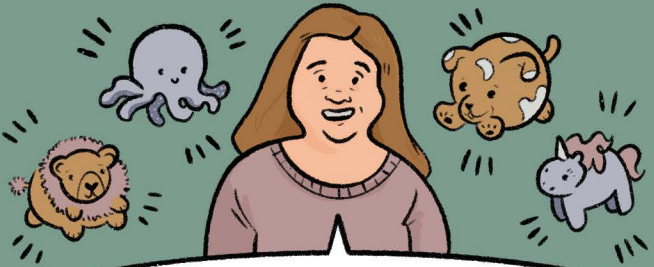
The next day Carlos is given a journal to help him sort through his feelings.

I don't know where to start really. I know I felt very alone. Being sheltered at home did make those feelings stronger and thoughts of covid did make my anxiety worse. But to be really honest with myself I began feeling more overwhelmed this whole year, being a senior, not knowing what the future held for me, if things I do really matter. I was very afraid of what the future held for me. Could I live up to all the expectations of everyone around me? The one thing I do know for certainty is that when I woke up in the hospital I was so glad I was still alive! I don't know why I feel so conflicted someti





The crew's emotions are running high. Becky calls the crew together in hopes they can decide on a stuffed animal to send Carlos.



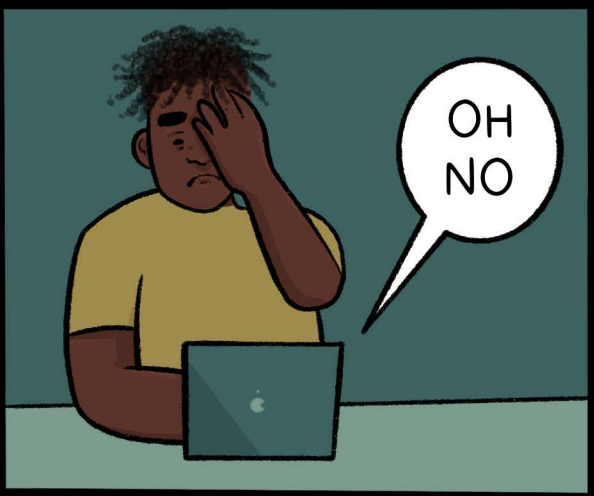
I just wanted to get together so we can decide on what stuffed animal to send to Carlos. We need to let him know we are thinking of him. His parents will deliver it to Carlos this week with a message we put together.



At least EVERYONE is here today, unlike a few days ago.



You need to chill Kinsey.



OH NO



Why should she chill? Everyone should be involved and doing their part.




Well if EVERYONE would accept people having different feelings and stop being so close minded.



She is right instead of bringing people down for the way they feel we should help each other with what we are feeling.

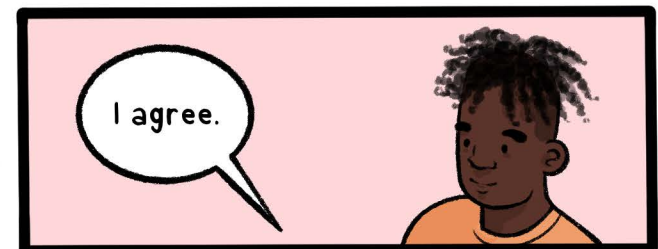
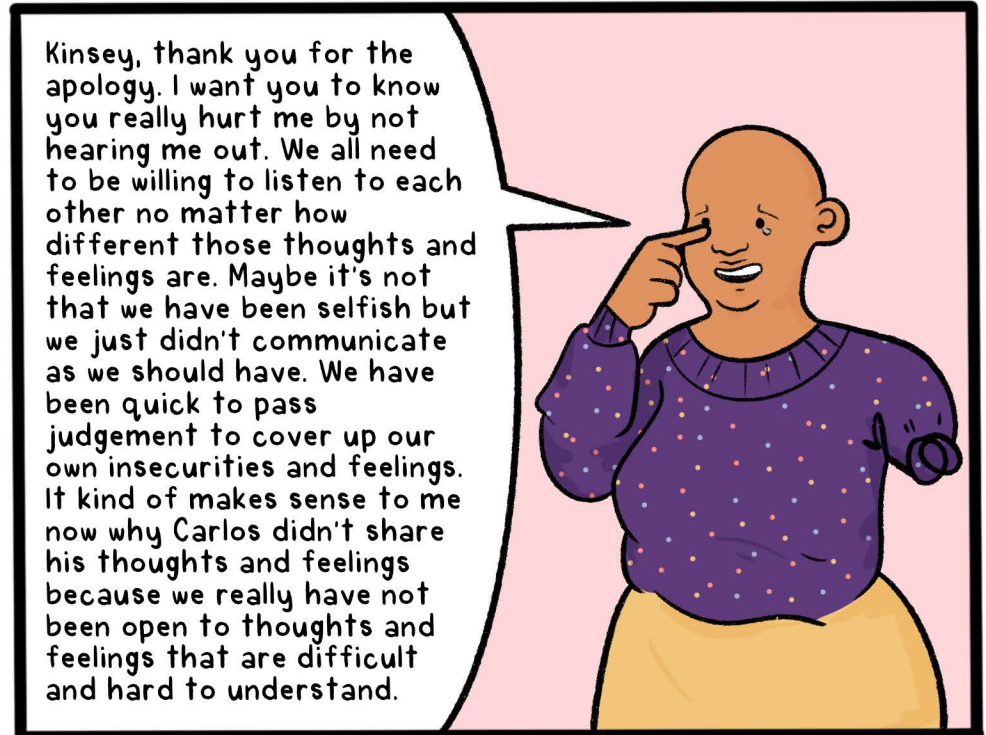
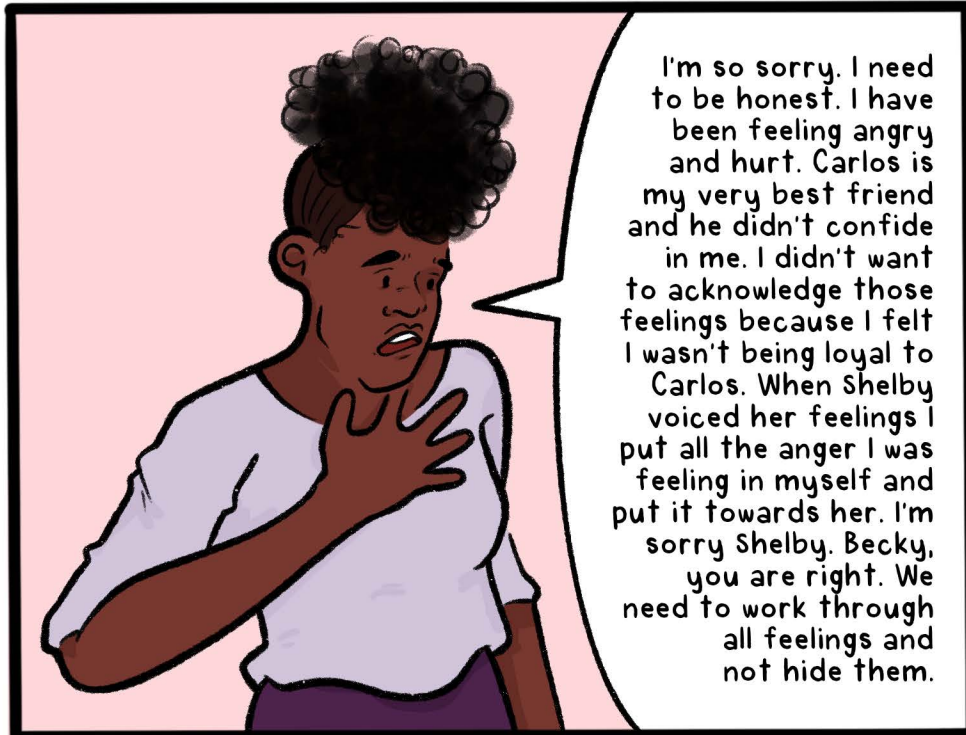
STOP!

# JUST STOP ALL OF YOU!

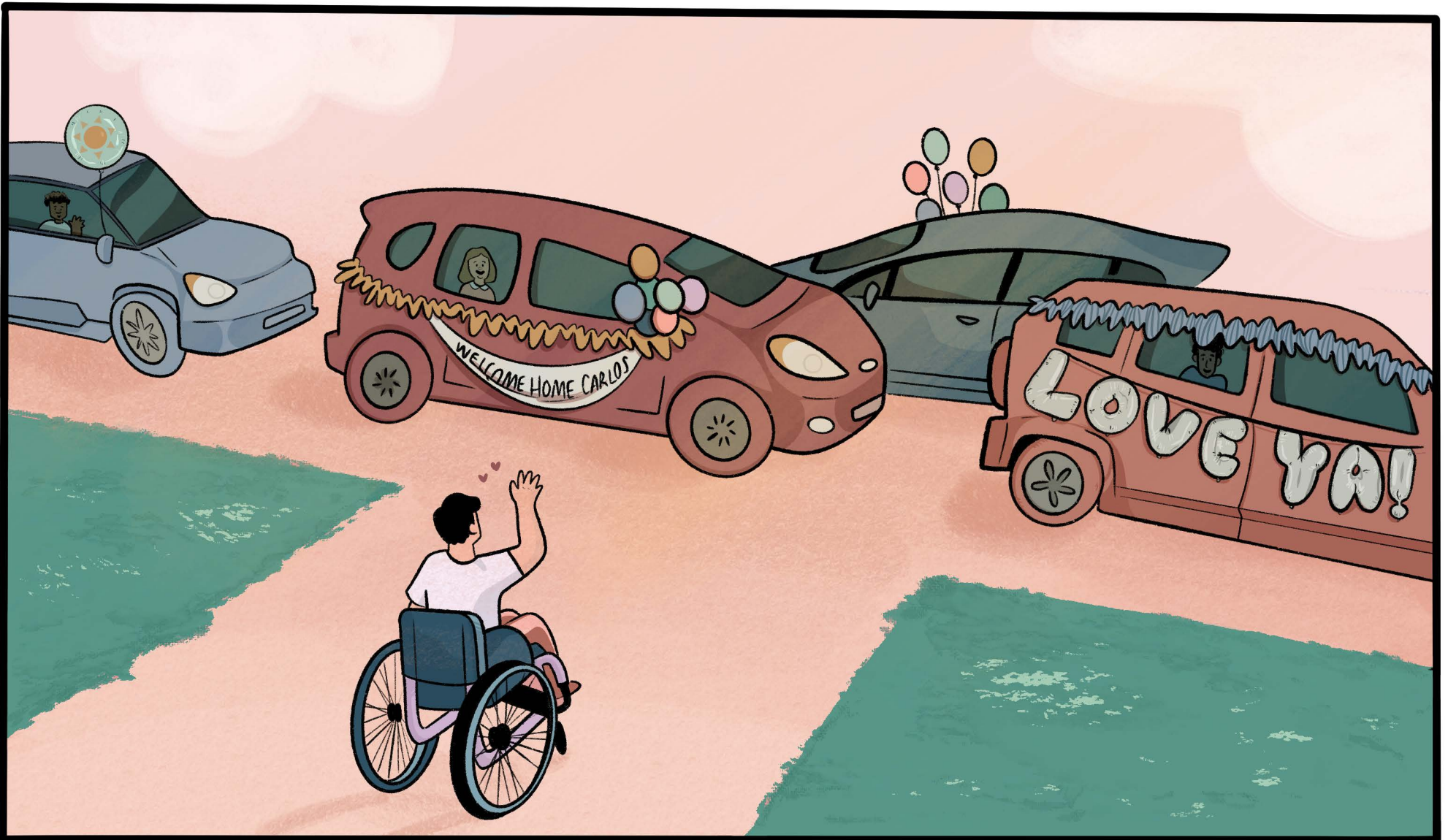


I have had it. Everyone is thinking of themselves and how they feel. We need to help each other through our feelings. ALL of them! If I'm honest I sometimes feel angry, sometimes sad, and a lot of times very confused about someone I'm very close to wanting to commit suicide. I love Carlos but I need to be able to talk about all of my feelings. It's the only way I'm going to get through this. We all need to do this for each other. We also need to look for ways to also help our friend Carlos because at the end of the day he is still our friend and our leader.

The Crew is silent for several minutes. Becky has never showed anger before which made what she said so impactful.



The Crew was able to move forward. They chose a stuffed lion to represent how they still see Carlos as being strong and their leader. After Carlos completed the two weeks of treatment he returned home to a drive through parade that the Crew put together.



"In a recent KFF poll (Kaiser Family Foundation) nearly half (45%) of adults in the United States reported that their mental health has been negatively impacted due to worry and stress over the virus."

"While suicide is the tenth leading cause of deaths overall in the U.S., it is the second leading cause of deaths among adolescents ages 12 to 17"

"A federal emergency hotline for people in emotional distress registered a more than 1,000 percent increase in April compared with the same time last year."

<https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-covid-19/issue-brief/the-implications-of-covid-19-for-mental-health-and-substance-use/>

**If you are having suicidal thoughts please reach out to a friend, family member, or school counselor. If you would like resources that allows for anonymity, here is some resources that are available.**

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline can be reached at **1-800-273-8255**, and in 2019, the use of **988** was approved.

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (ESP) can be reached at **1-888-628-9454**

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (Deaf & Hard of Hearing Options) can be reached at **1-800-799-4889**

The Veterans Crisis Line can be reached at **1-800-273-8255, followed by Pressing 1.**

The **Crisis Text Line** ([crisistextline.org](http://crisistextline.org)) is the only 24/7, nationwide crisis-intervention text-message hotline.

The Crisis Text Line can be reached by texting **HOME** to **741-741**.

**The Trevor Project** (<http://www.thetrevorproject.org/>) is a nationwide organization that provides a 24-hour phone hotline, as well as limited-hour webchat and text options, for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth.

The TrevorLifeline can be reached at **1-866-488-7386**.

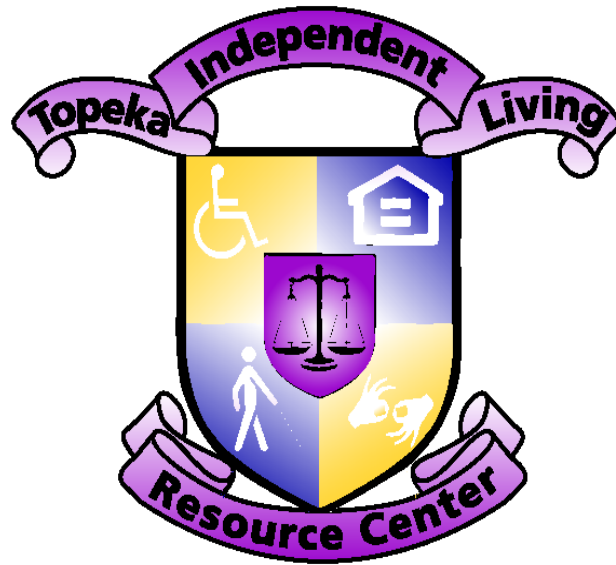
TrevorChat can be found at <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/get-help-now/> (available 7 days a week from 3PM to 10PM ET).

TrevorText can be reached by texting **TREVOR** to **1-202-304-1200** (available M-F from 3PM to 10PM ET).

The **Trans Lifeline** (<https://www.translifeline.org/>) is a nonprofit organization that is created by and for the transgender community, providing crisis intervention hotlines, staffed by transgender individuals, available in the United States and Canada.

The Trans Lifeline can be reached at **1-877-565-8860**.

This book is a project of the George Wolf Youth Program at



The book has been reviewed by

