

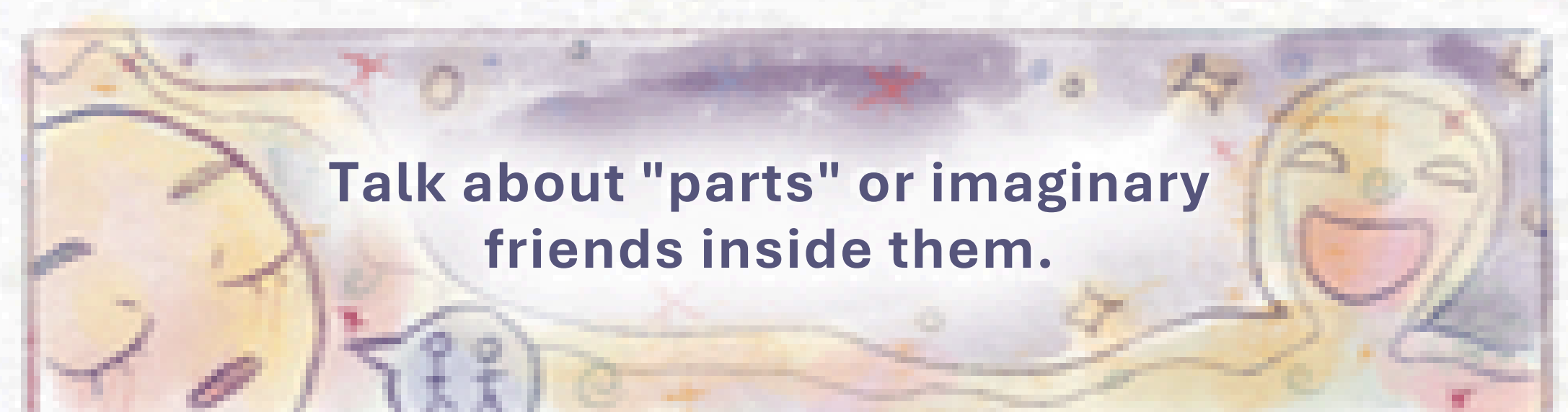
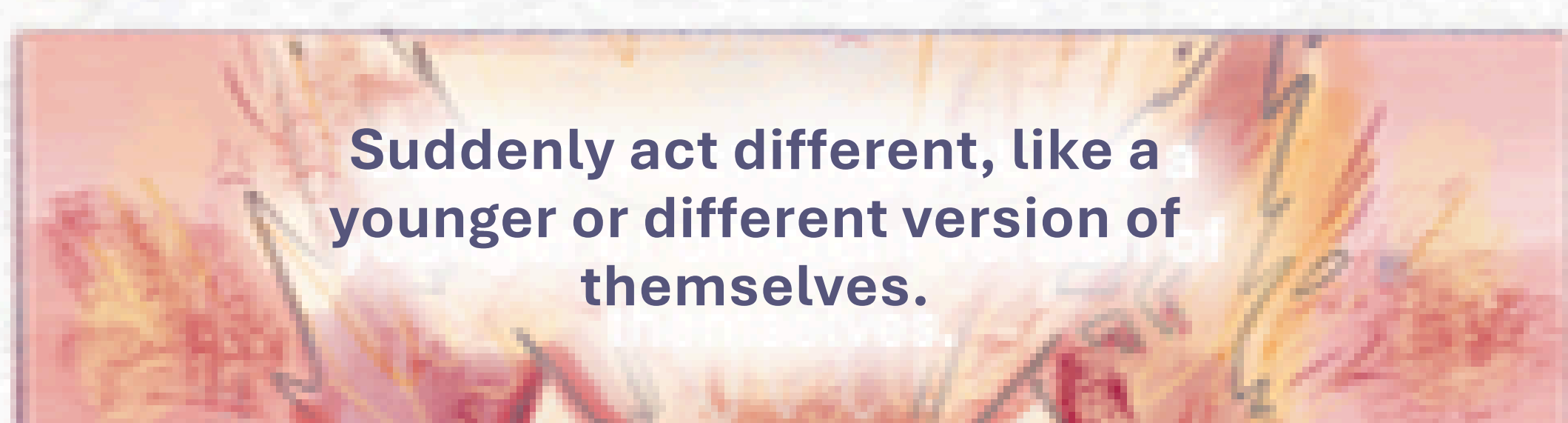
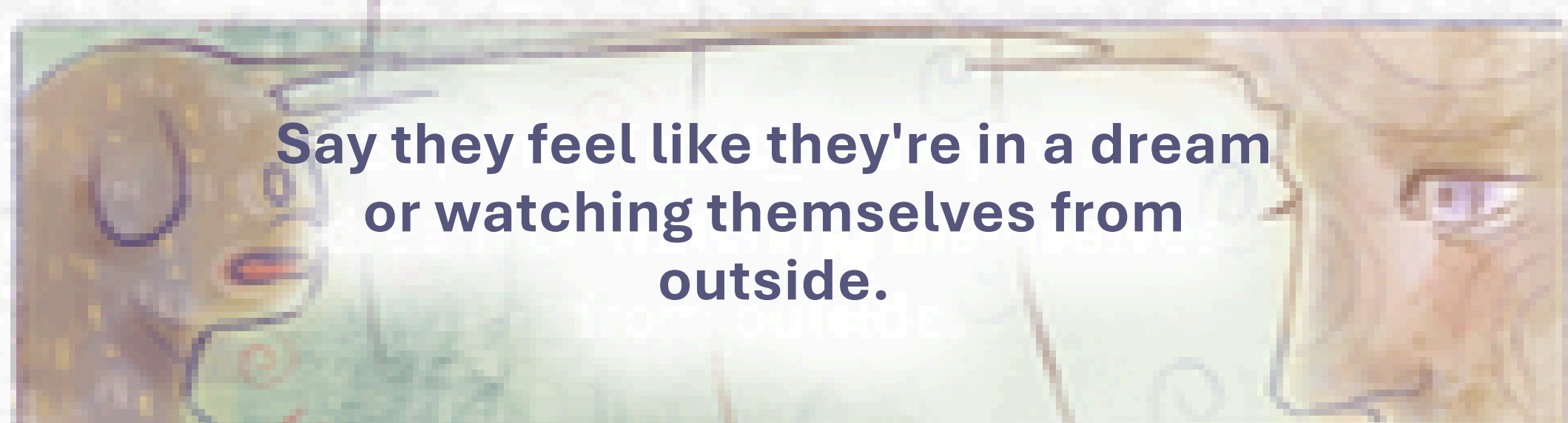
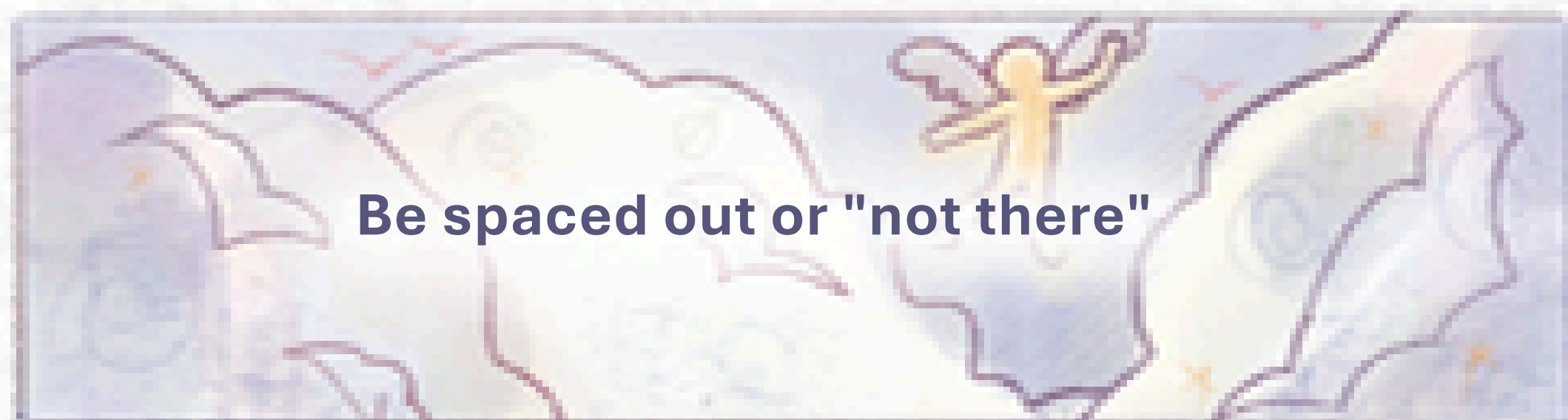
# HOW TO SUPPORT A FRIEND WHO DISSOCIATES

## WHAT IS DISSOCIATION?

Dissociation is when someone feels disconnected from their body, thoughts, feelings, or the world around them. It's like their brain "checks out" for a bit. This can happen when someone feels really overwhelmed, scared, or unsafe. It's something the brain does to protect them when things feel too much.



## WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE WHEN SOMEONE DISSOCIATES?



It can be confusing or even a bit scary to see, but they're not trying to be weird or rude, they're just trying to **feel safe**.

## HOW CAN I HELP MY FRIEND?

### Stay calm and kind:

Being a kind friend makes a big difference. Your friend might already feel embarrassed or scared. Let them know you're not judging them and that you care.

### Gently help them feel grounded:

You can help bring them back to the present moment. Try:

- Saying their name gently
- "Do you want to hold something or sit down with me?" Then suggest they touch something real like the floor or a chair.
- Asking them to name things they can see or hear around them.

### Ask for help from a safe adult:

If a safe adult is nearby, like a parent or a teacher, let them know what is happening and ask for their help.

### Stick with them:

You don't have to fix anything - just being there helps. Stay nearby and talk gently.

## WHEN TO GET HELP.

Let a trusted adult know if:

- Your friend talks about wanting to **hurt themselves**
- Their dissociation **happens a lot or gets worse**
- You feel **unsure or unsafe** helping them on your own

You're not dobbing, you're helping someone who needs more support.



## IF YOU EVER NEED HELP OR SOMEONE TO TALK TO.

- Kids Helpline - 1800 55 1800 (24/7) | [kidshelpline.com.au](http://kidshelpline.com.au)
- eheadspace - [www.eheadspace.org.au](http://www.eheadspace.org.au)

