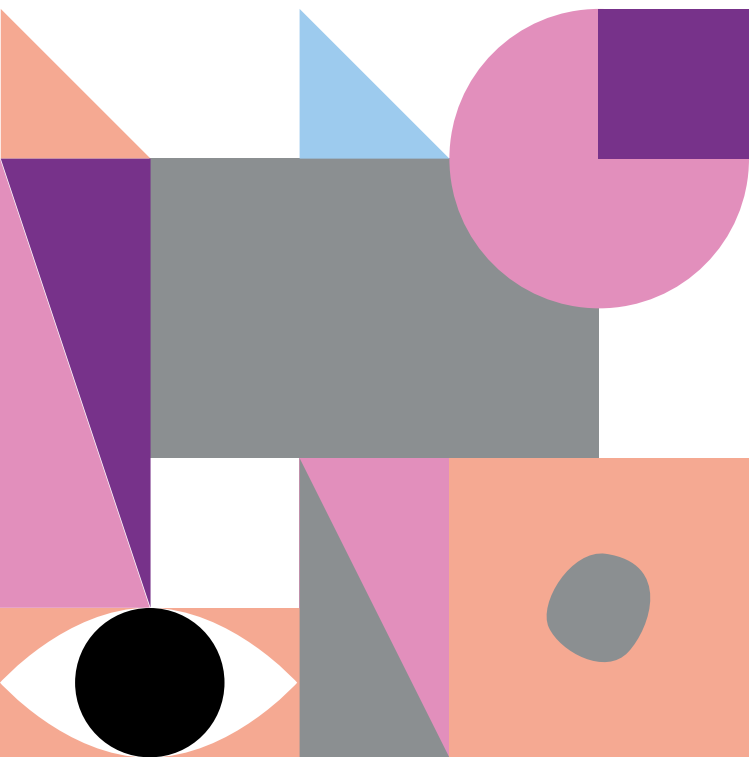




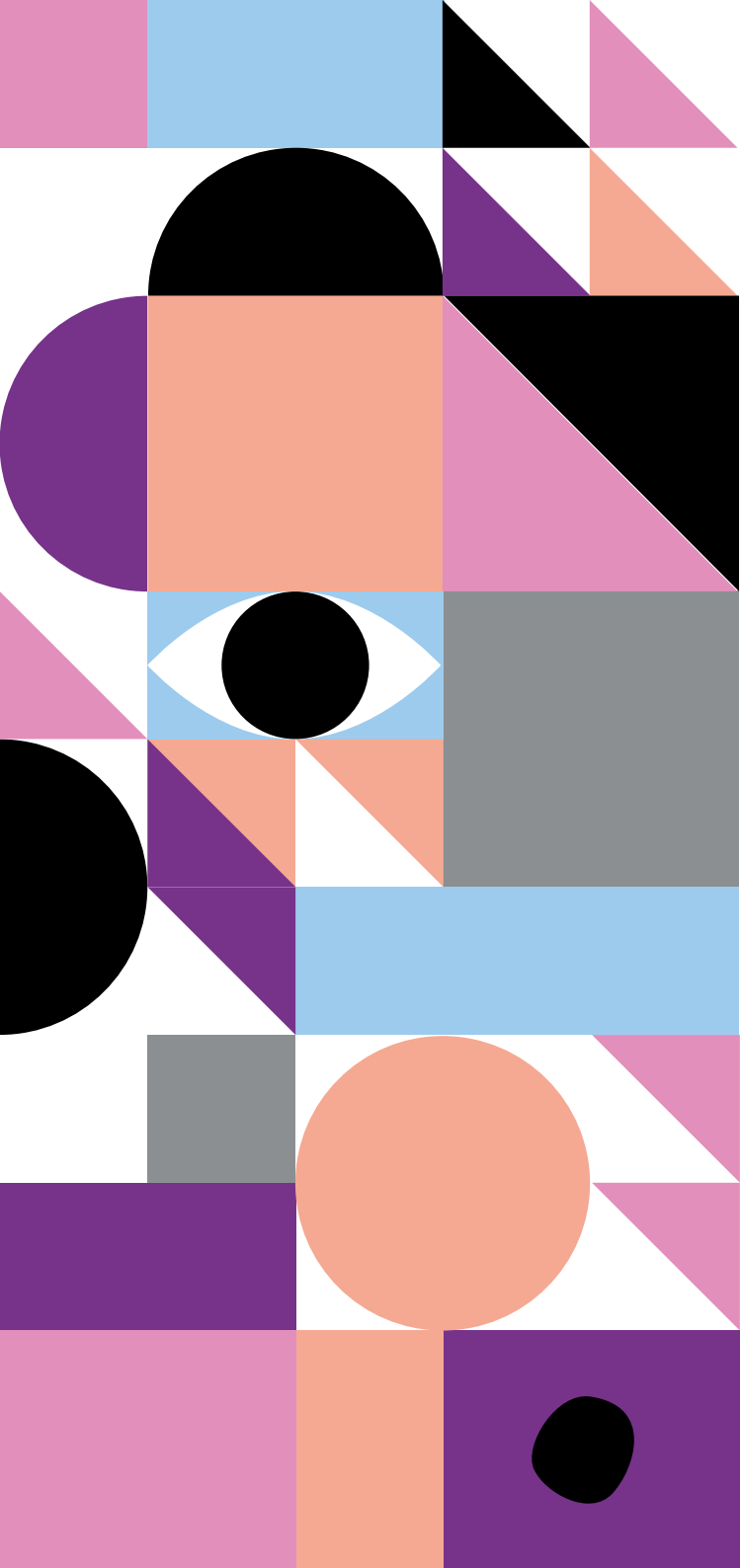
# Is there a way out?

Violence at school, at home.  
What can I do?



FUNDACJA

**Polskie  
Forum  
Migracyjne**



## What is this booklet about and how can it be useful to you?

What we have written here may come in handy for you when:

- you observe someone's behavior that is unpleasant to you,
- you wonder what is actually going on? (it is not always immediately clear what is violence, harm, and what is not),
- you don't know what you can and should do in such a situation – for yourself and others,
- you don't yet know how to find something that will convince you that standing up to violence is worth it, to be able to change a situation like this and seek help.

On each page we write about important issues:

- being different than others and being like others,
- sensitivity and empathy,
- figuring out difficult situations

# To be similar \_\_\_\_\_ or to be different?

## I am similar to others

What comes to mind when you hear it?

I like...

.....

I know how to...

.....

I am... (think of an adjective)

.....

## I differ from others

What comes to mind when you hear it?

I like...

.....

I know how to...

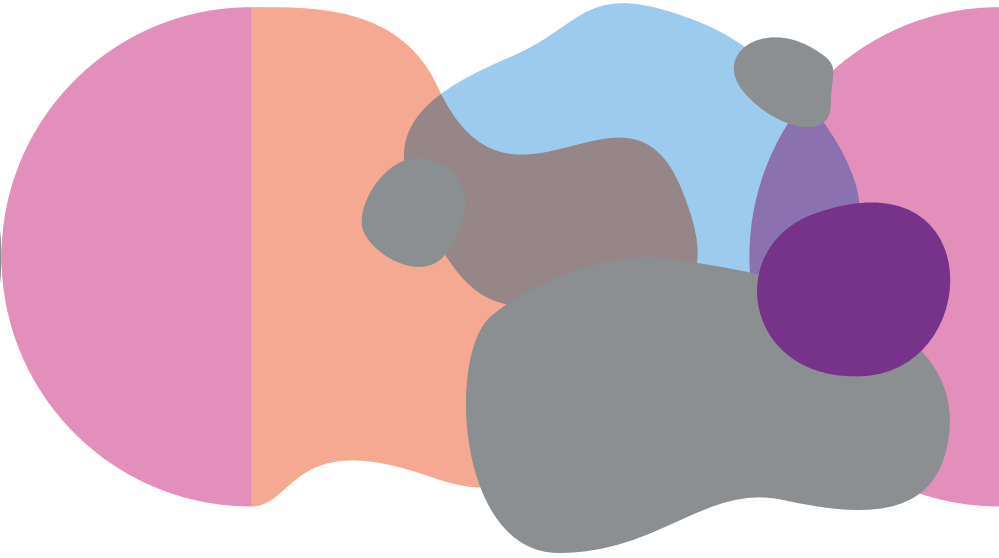
.....

I am... (think of an adjective)

.....

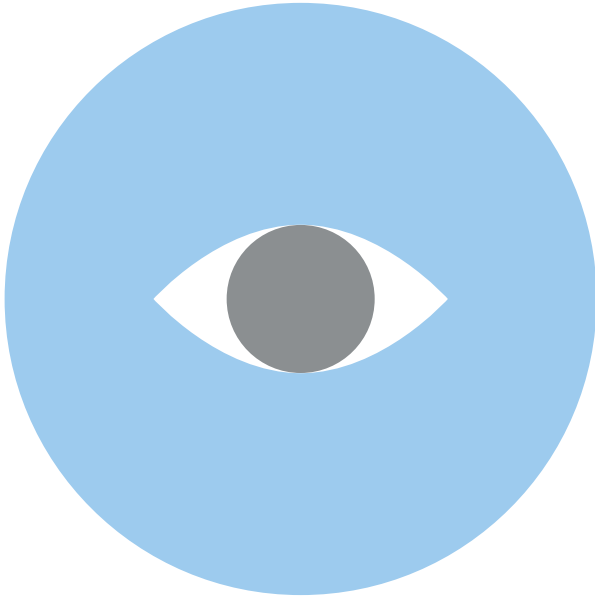


I am similar to others – I have a lot in common with others, I don't differ from others.  
Do you think similar people are more accepted?



I differ from others – I'm different from others, I am myself, I am similar in some things and different in others, sometimes others want to change me because of this.

# What do I want to be vs. what am I really like?



## **Sometimes you may not like something about yourself:**

- when others judge the way you are
- and you want to change something about yourself
- when you do something that doesn't align with your beliefs

**Change yourself**

*when YOU need those changes!*

**We may differ in our sensitivity.  
Is it a disadvantage or an  
advantage?**

- this means that we have to watch out for each other
- I need it for relationships with other people, including friendships
- thanks to it I can get to know and express myself

Here's what we say about sensitivity:

*you can't tell them anything!*

*they're overreacting*

*toughie*

*they're too sensitive*

*they can handle anything*

**Sensitivity is close to EMPATHY**

- Do we all have it?
- It's a look from another person's perspective
- I recognize and understand the emotions and decisions of another person
- I know how to show compassion
- I have friends
- It points to emotional intelligence
- Thanks to it I can cooperate with others

Do I know a person like this? Who are they?

*they know how to listen*

*they remember about my daily matters*

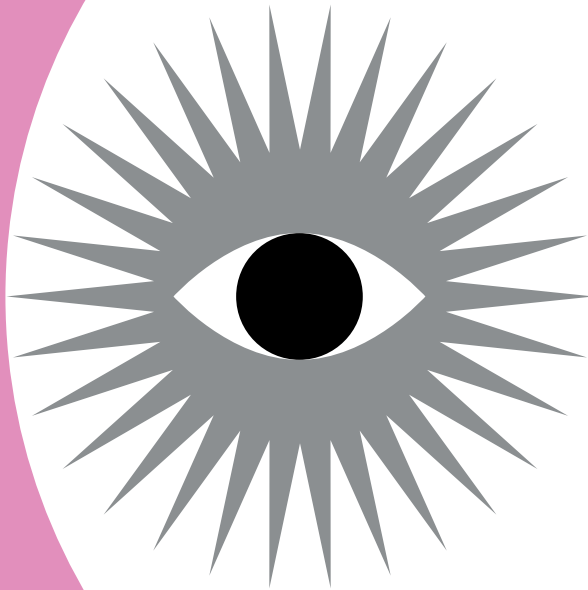
*they notice the little things*

*they understand me*

# What am I like?

What do you like?

What don't you like - other people's behavior? Situations? Places?



Each person has the right to:

- **their emotions** - I have the right to feel and express them
- **their decisions, choices** - I know what I like and what I don't like
- **deciding about their image** - I decide if, who and how shows me (me in a photo, drawing, movie, picture)
- **their body** - only I decide about my body

# YOU

are your interests, thoughts, needs, emotions, dreams, plans.

# When someone crosses my boundaries – violence, aggression.

When someone is aggressive towards me or uses violence, often the first signal that I don't like it is sent by my emotions. It's worth observing and naming them.

I feel **afraid** when someone...

I feel **angry** when someone...

I feel **sad** when someone...

I feel **ashamed** when someone...

I feel **helpless** when someone...

## Iza's story

Weronika said **in front of everyone**, that **every boy has a picture of me changing for gym class**. I pretended that I didn't believe it, that it was a joke, but I was **horrified**. Then Janek said: – that's not true, Veronica is scaring you! And I was so **relieved**. But Janek transferred to a sports school. Then it got worse, then stupid texts began from her close friends, then "who said that? There is no one here" – they **ghosted me, hid my phone** and other things. I wanted someone to finally **stop it** and say that it was all just jokes. But it continued. **I told my sister**, then she told my dad. What if I didn't speak up? I don't know what would have happened next ... **Dad spoke to the teacher**, there were classes with the **pedagogue** and it turned out that not everyone liked it.

The facts of this story can be found in this scheme:

someone's behavior towards me

my emotions

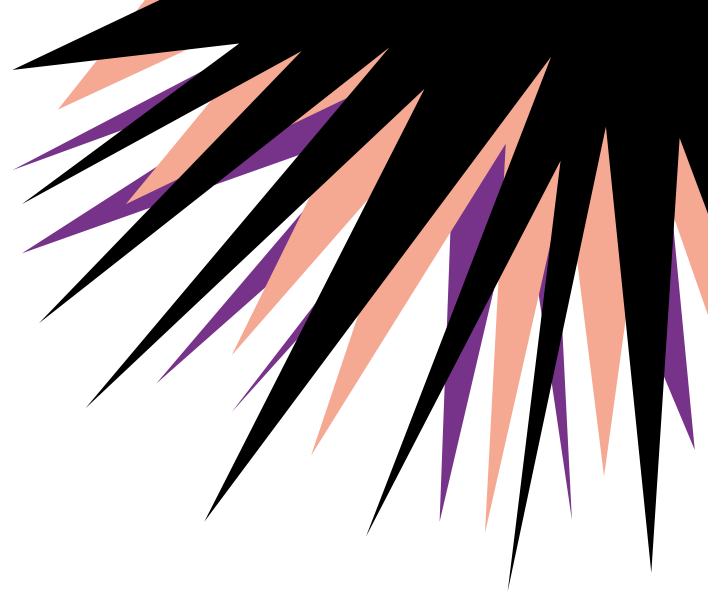
my thoughts

my behavior

what do I need?

who will I tell about this?

who will I ask for help?



# Who can help?

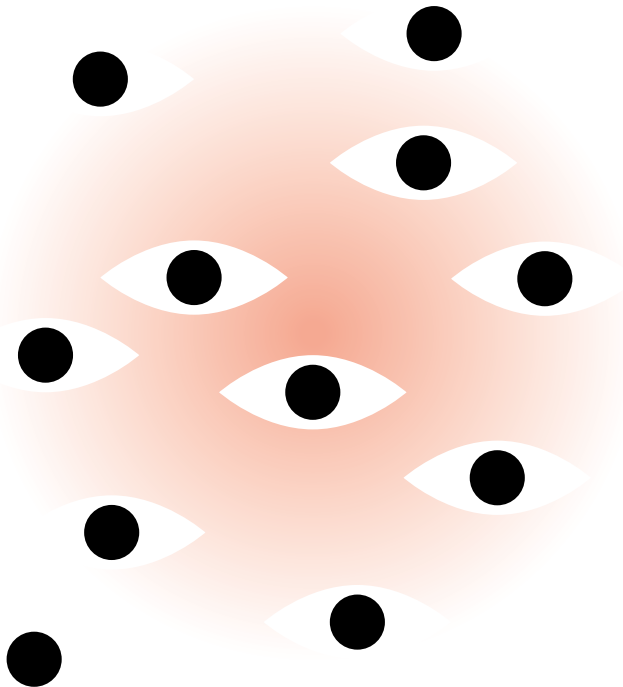
There are people in your school who help with situations like this – these are most often the pedagogue, school psychologist, your teacher, the principal.

**Do not remain alone with this situation! Never!**

**And if not at school? Look for someone, who will understand you, listen to your story and help you find the best solution!**

**It's your right – to seek help, protection. Any kind of aggression must be stopped – physical, psychological (including verbal), etc.!**

**It affects not only you, but also all those who are close** (they also participate in it).



**If a story like Iza's or similar has affected you – think through your own.**

Think about how it went or how it could run its course:

**How others behave towards me**

(but I do not like it, it makes me feel unpleasant things)?

.....

**What do I feel then?**

fear, shame, anger, sadness, helplessness, others – which ones?

.....

**What do I think about this?**

.....

**How will I behave?**

.....

**What do I need?**

.....

**Who will I tell about this?**

.....

**Who will I ask for help?**

.....



# When I see or know that someone is hurting others

This is an excerpt from a chat conversation with a person who helps children and young people in difficult situations. Read and answer the questions on the next page.

**Tymek:** For some time now, Janek has stopped talking to us at recess and often leaves school early. I don't know what's going on. I wrote to him, but I didn't hear from him. I didn't do anything to him, he was a good buddy.

**Consultant:** Do you have any idea what's going on? Something with his health? His family?

**Tymek:** I know that his parents are constantly arguing. I was at his place once and saw his father in action. I wouldn't want to have a parent like that. He got frustrated with any small thing and immediately yelled. Tymek quickly got me out of the house.

**Consultant:** When was that? Did you talk about it?

**Tymek:** Not long ago. We didn't talk. I mean... I told him not to worry, that you can't influence what kind of parents you have, there are so many cool things in the world. But all in all, since then he has distanced himself a bit – maybe I said something stupid.

**Consultant:** You're right – his father's behavior is not Janek's. He might have felt awkward, struggling, ashamed that you saw how his dad behaved. He certainly needs contact with you – because you are friends.

**Tymek:** Well, of course! I miss him too. Maybe I'll still try to write to him.

**Consultant:** Try it. See if he's okay. It's nice to hear that you care about him. Were you frightened by the situation at his home?

**Tymek:** all in all, yes, but I didn't have the courage to tell his father what I thought about it, after all, he's an adult and he's his parent – he has his rights.

**Consultant:** No one has the right to be aggressive. And Janek has the right to have a safe, good home. I understand that you were afraid to react. Did you tell any other adult about it?

**Tymek:** No, although... I was thinking whether to tell my mother – she would probably care and would definitely do something. She sided with me in my case and I don't know what would have happened if it wasn't for her. I didn't tell my mom because I don't know if it's ok for Janek – maybe things are better with him?

**Consultant:** Talk to your mother. It is important to check whether Janek is safe. It's easier for adults to help in such cases. And in your case, did they help?

**Tymek:** Yes. Although I was also afraid of the reaction and consequences and it took me a while to speak up. Okay... I guess I should talk to my mother.

**Consultant:** Mhm. Let's get in touch again. If that doesn't help – we'll come up with another solution.

**What do you think: what in this story could have indicated that Janek needed the help of a friend? Mark the answers that fit according to you.**

- a)** nothing – if he wanted his friend’s help he would have said so directly,
- b)** Janek avoided contact and that’s what worried Tymek – that he doesn’t know what’s going on with Janek,
- c)** Janek’s dad’s behavior, which Tymek witnessed. Who knows what else is going on in the boy’s house.

**Answers:**

**Answer a) not true!**

not always the person who needs help will say directly that they do.

**Answer b) true!**

when you know that someone may be in a difficult situation, observe them and make sure that they are okay. If they aren’t – talk to an adult close to you – at home, at school and ask them to take care of the matter. Keep in touch with your friend / buddy in this situation, they need you very much.

**Answer c) true!**

No one has the right to use violence against another person. Everyone has to react to such behavior. Sometimes you may be afraid to react, but it is always worth it.

Tymek talked at home about Janek’s situation. Together with his parents, they considered what are the pros and cons of helping in such a situation. Choose 2–3 answers that are most convincing to you to help the other.

He likes him, wants to help him and wants them to continue to be friends.

Anyone can find themselves in a situation where someone is aggressive towards them – Tymek too.

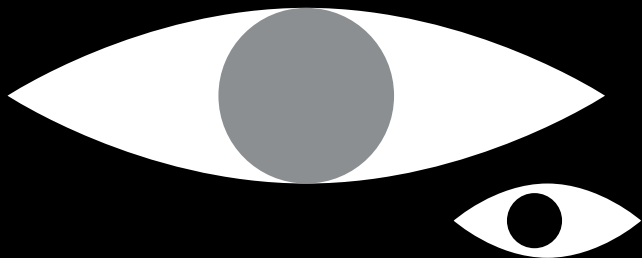
Pretending that nothing happened is selfish.

For Tymek, listening to aggressive comments towards Janek was also unpleasant – if you feel that something isn’t right, if you are worried whether someone is safe it is worth seeking help.

Janek should not be left alone with this – it’s not fair. Janek is not alone when Tymek helps him.

# What about when I'm the one seeing violence?

Pedagogue: *Weronika's situation affects all of us – each of the students who saw or knew what was going on in the class was involved. Therefore, everyone has some kind of opinion about it.*



Weronika: *Hi, I'm Weronika. You know me from Iza's story. I'm the one to blame for her wanting to change schools. She annoyed me by being so sensitive. She always stood up for others so much, she was so perfect, it was annoying. I guess I wanted to see how much she could handle. If I got a bad grade, I took it out on her. I wish I could turn back time, but I know it's impossible. The pedagogue asked me many times, my parents too – what took over me that I set the class against Izka, made up a nickname for her, gossiped. Maybe I wanted someone to tell me: stop!*

Karolina: *I didn't know what to do myself, we waited for someone to tell us what to do. It was bad watching Iza be attacked and I had no idea what to do.*



Piotrek: *my parents told me not to get involved in arguments that are not mine, so I pretended not to notice, but we all saw what was happening. Yesterday the pedagogue said something different. That you need to have courage and influence what the world and our group is like. I don't know myself anymore.*

Tymek: *maybe it's issues between the girls, maybe they fought over something? What do I think? It was silly. Weronika had a laugh about it, and the other one cried. How are you supposed to believe in friendship?! I, too, once changed schools because of such hate directed at me. No one helped me – my parents transferred me and I tried to forget. Ugh, never again.*



Janek: *I know that Iza felt bad alone, Werka's group was pitted against her. I was already leaving the class at the time so I wasn't afraid that Werka would get to me and take her revenge.*



# How to speak about violence?

When you see behavior that you think is inappropriate – always try to talk to someone about it, **say how you feel** about what you see, feel.

When someone uses violence against you, **speak up**, find someone you feel stronger with.

Always:

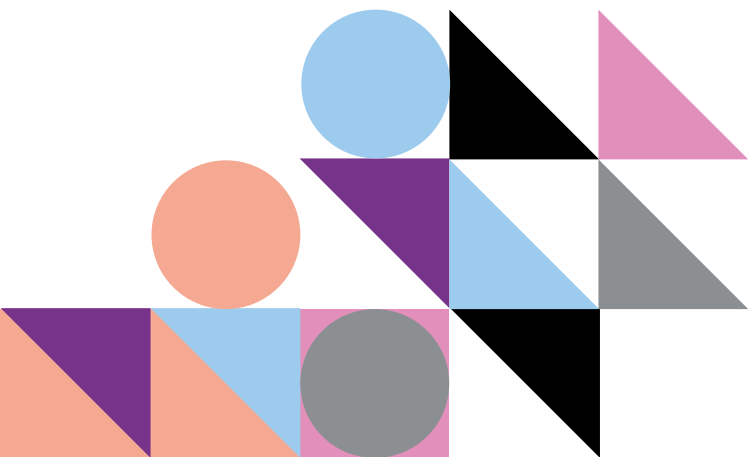
Stick to your opinion and your feelings. Just because someone says nothing happened – they can't know, because they are not you, everyone can feel differently.

When you feel bad about some behavior – someone else's or your own – **pause**, give yourself **time to think** – you always have time!



# Where to look for help:

- A close adult you trust.
- Pedagogue, school psychologist, teacher.
- Children's Ombudsman helpline 0800 121212/  
also in Ukrainian and Russian.
- Helpline for children and youth 116 111



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ISBN 978-83-969066-9-4



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