

Chapter 1

Sense of Self, Self-Esteem Building

Our conscious awareness lets us know that our inner world is made up of thoughts, feelings and reflections. A main part of this awareness is our ‘sense of self’, our unique identity in relation to the external world. As described by Richard Stevens:

In part, this is a process of ‘I’, arising from our sense of engagement and acting within and upon the world, and from our privileged access to the world of inner thoughts and feelings. In part, also, it derives from an awareness of ‘me’: an image of the kind of person I am. (1996, pp.19–20)

It is fundamental for our mental health and emotional wellbeing to know what we like, what makes us happy, how we feel excited or stimulated and what our fears are. Some worksheets in this chapter are designed to focus on increasing this awareness, bringing our core beliefs about ourselves to the forefront of our consciousness. This can help identify any aspects of our character we would like to develop or diminish.

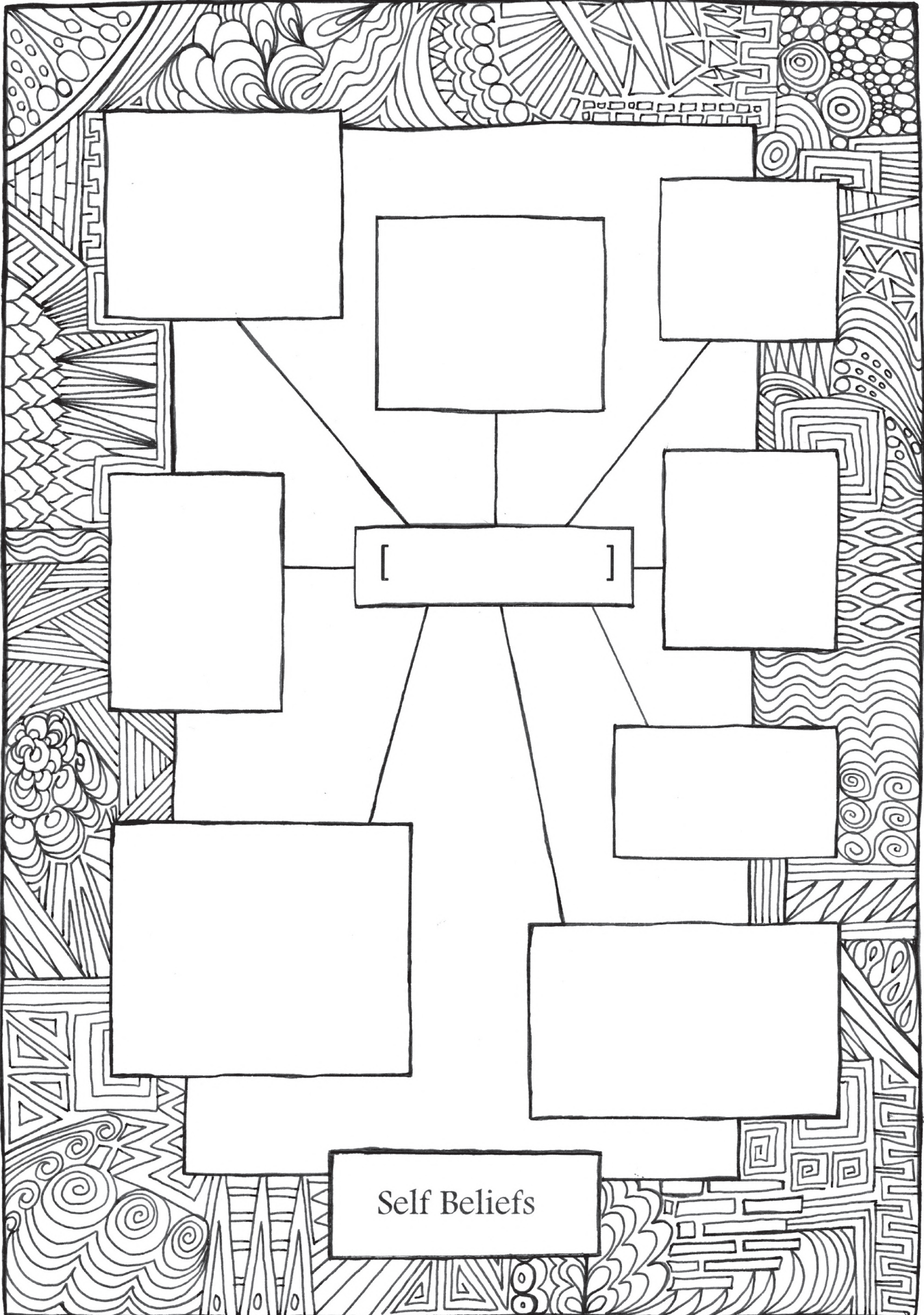
Self-esteem

Our levels of self-esteem indicate how much we like ourselves, or how high our self-worth is. Self-beliefs have a direct impact on self-esteem levels. It’s useful to explore and understand whether our self-beliefs lean towards the positive or negative, identifying the extent to which they help or hinder us in our journey towards emotional wellbeing. Someone with very low levels of self-esteem may struggle to find aspects of themselves that they like or are proud of.

Self-esteem can be raised and damaged by those around us, depending on whether these influences are critical or nourishing. Severe critical parenting, neglect of our childhood needs, a focus on mistakes or overly high expectations can induce low levels of self-esteem, as can major life changes during our adulthood. It is far easier to cope with adverse life events if our self-esteem is at a healthy level beforehand.

We can also feel a range of levels in relation to different areas of our lives. It's important to be aware of these aspects when working with clients, so that the therapy takes into account what feedback a person is receiving from the people in their lives, and how accurate and helpful the internalised information then becomes as a result. It's also important to consider which of these self-beliefs are specific to certain contexts.

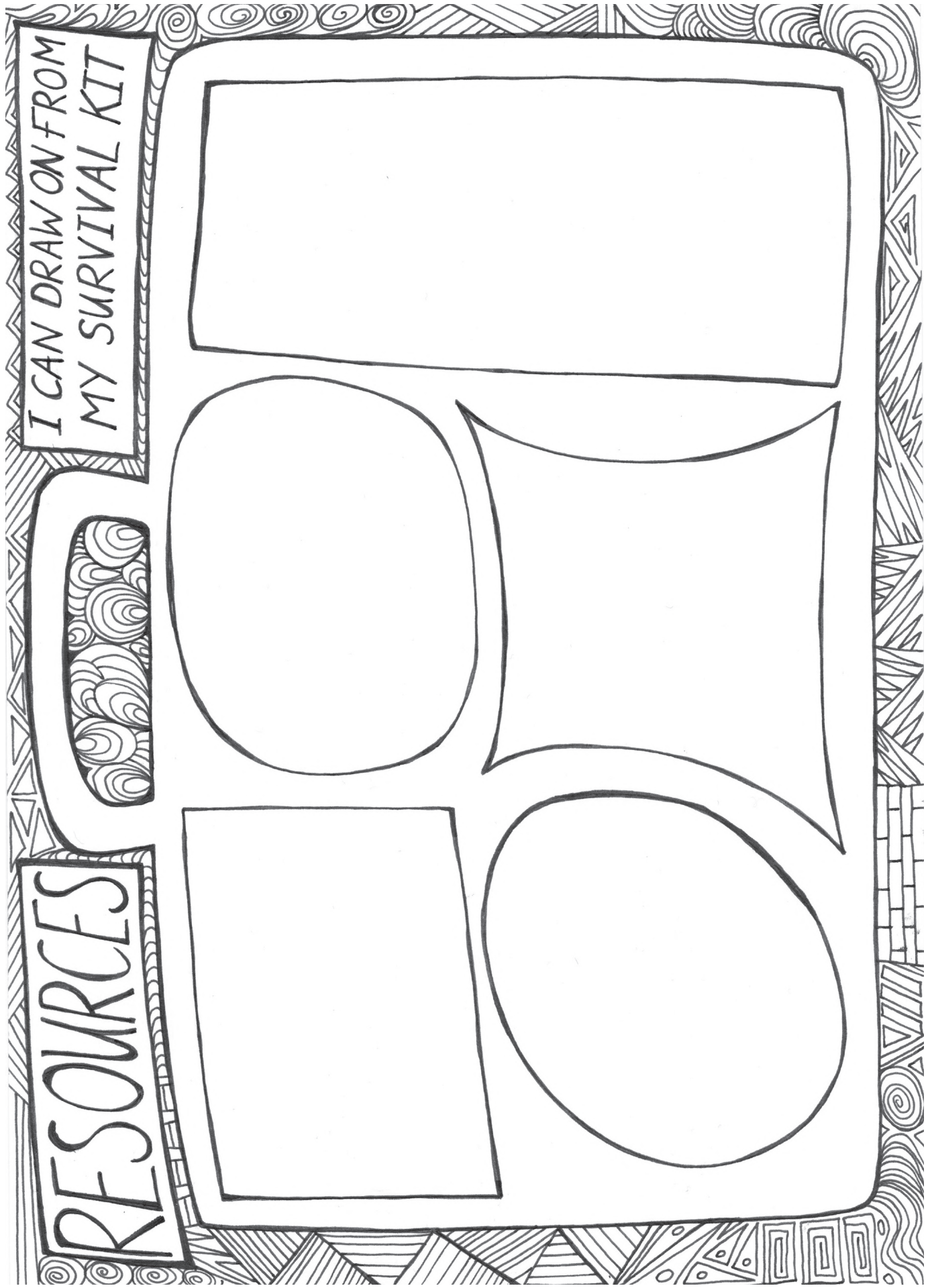
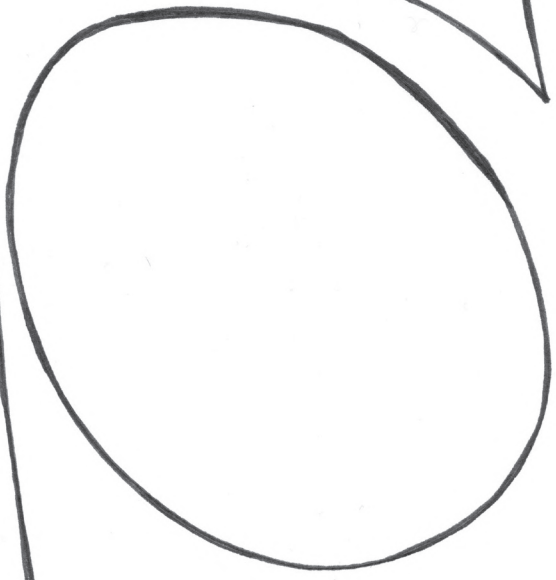
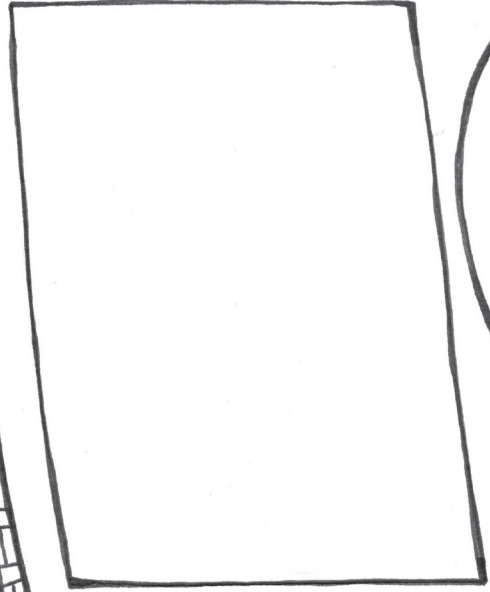
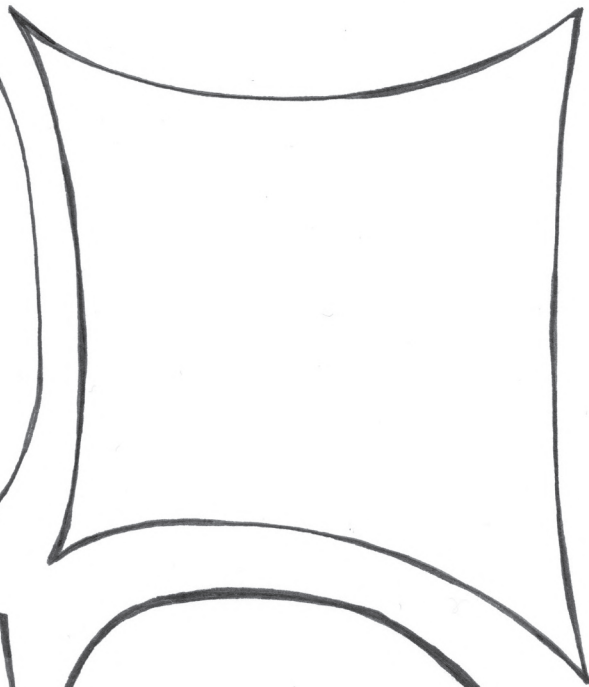
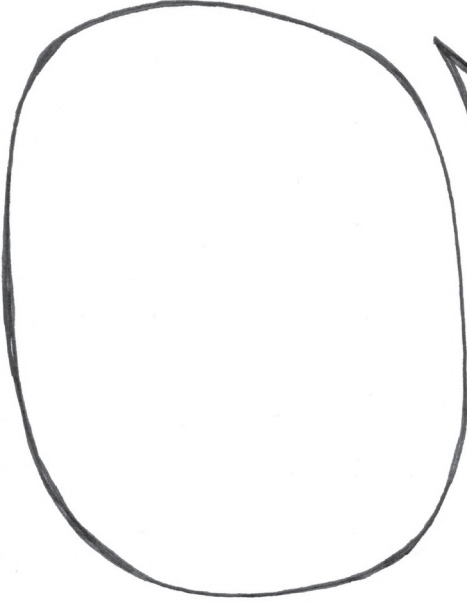
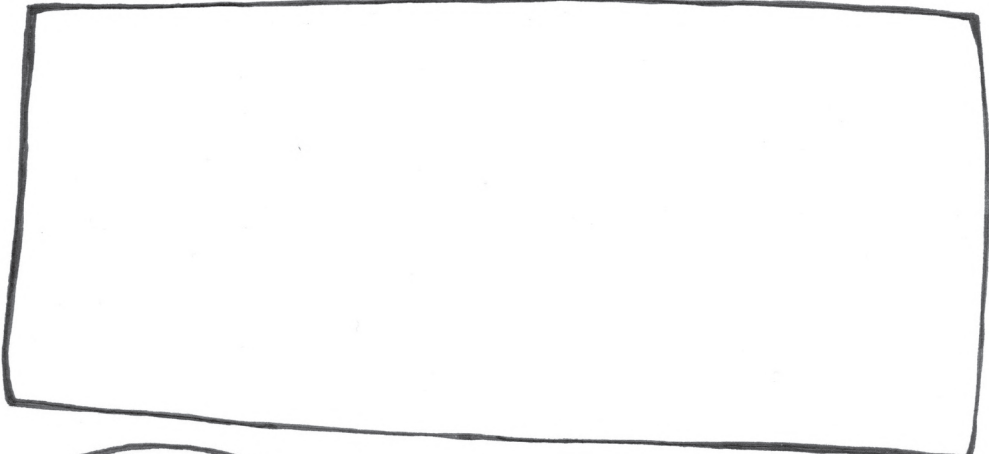
The worksheets in this first chapter aim to identify levels of self-esteem. They encourage clients to explore aspects of themselves, their characters and capabilities in a positive way, and to focus on their strengths and skills, so that they may come to celebrate who they are.

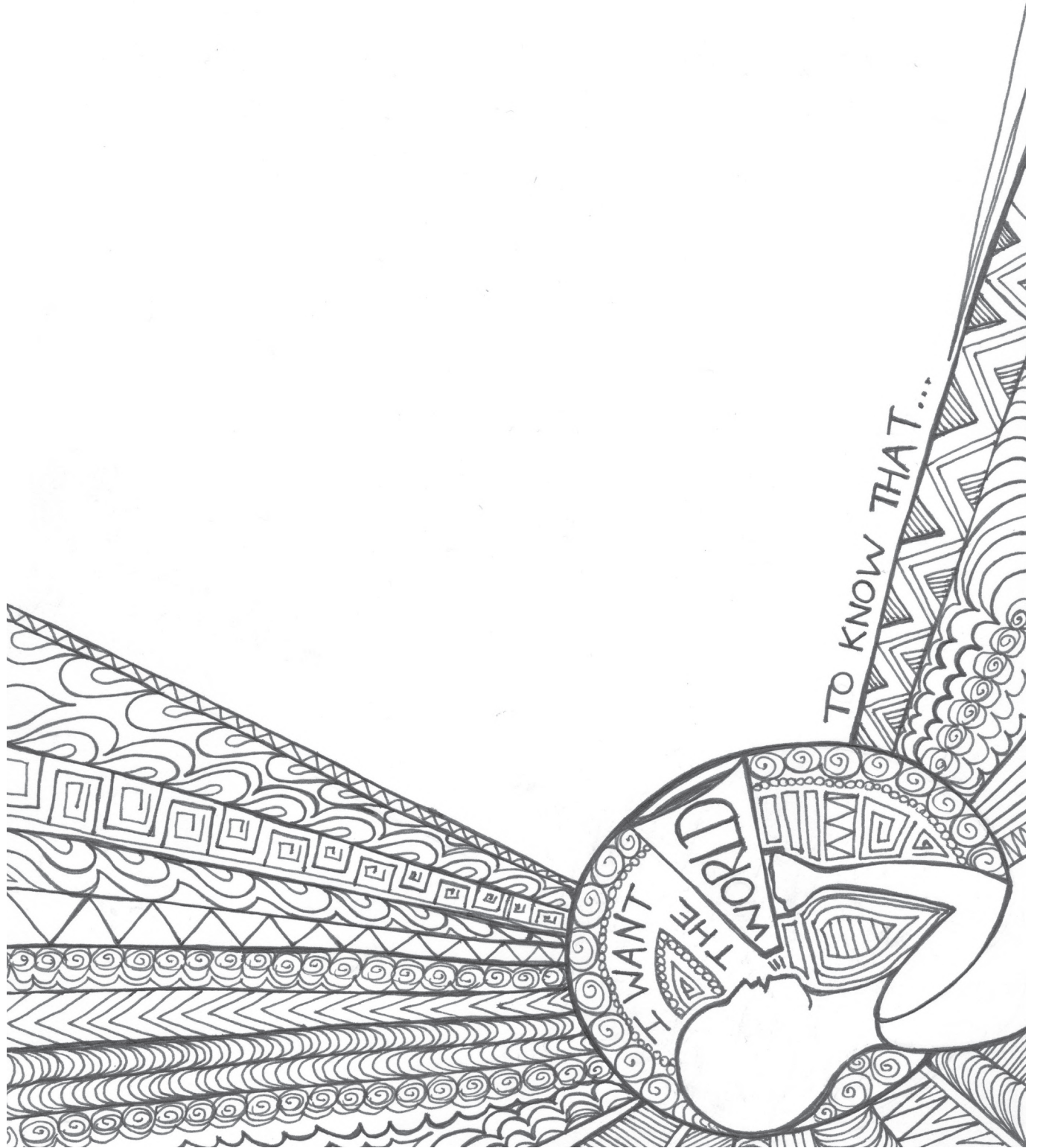


Self Beliefs

I CAN DRAW ON FROM
MY SURVIVAL KIT

RESOURCES



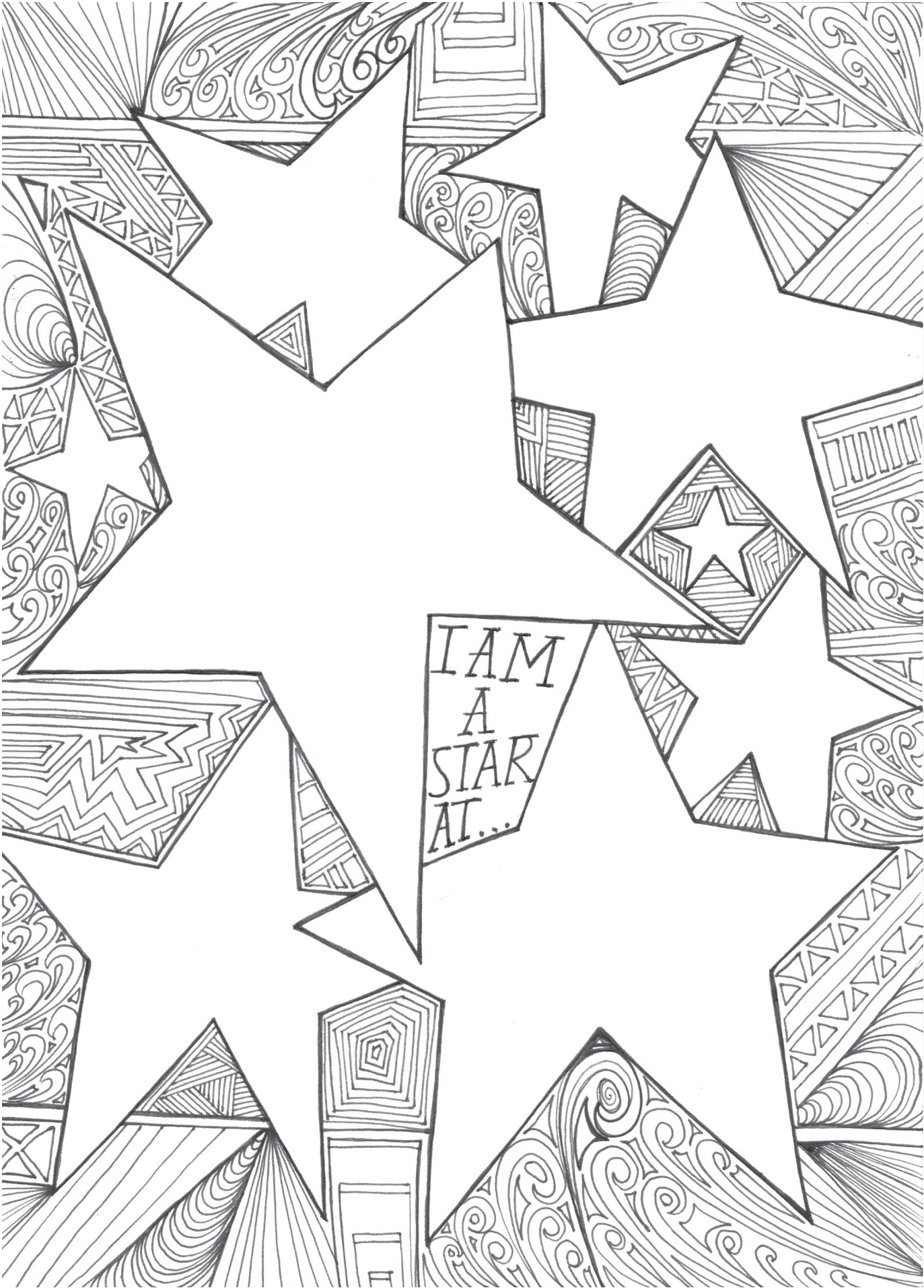


TOP SECRET





THE BEST VIEW





MY FAMILY COAT OF ARMS

