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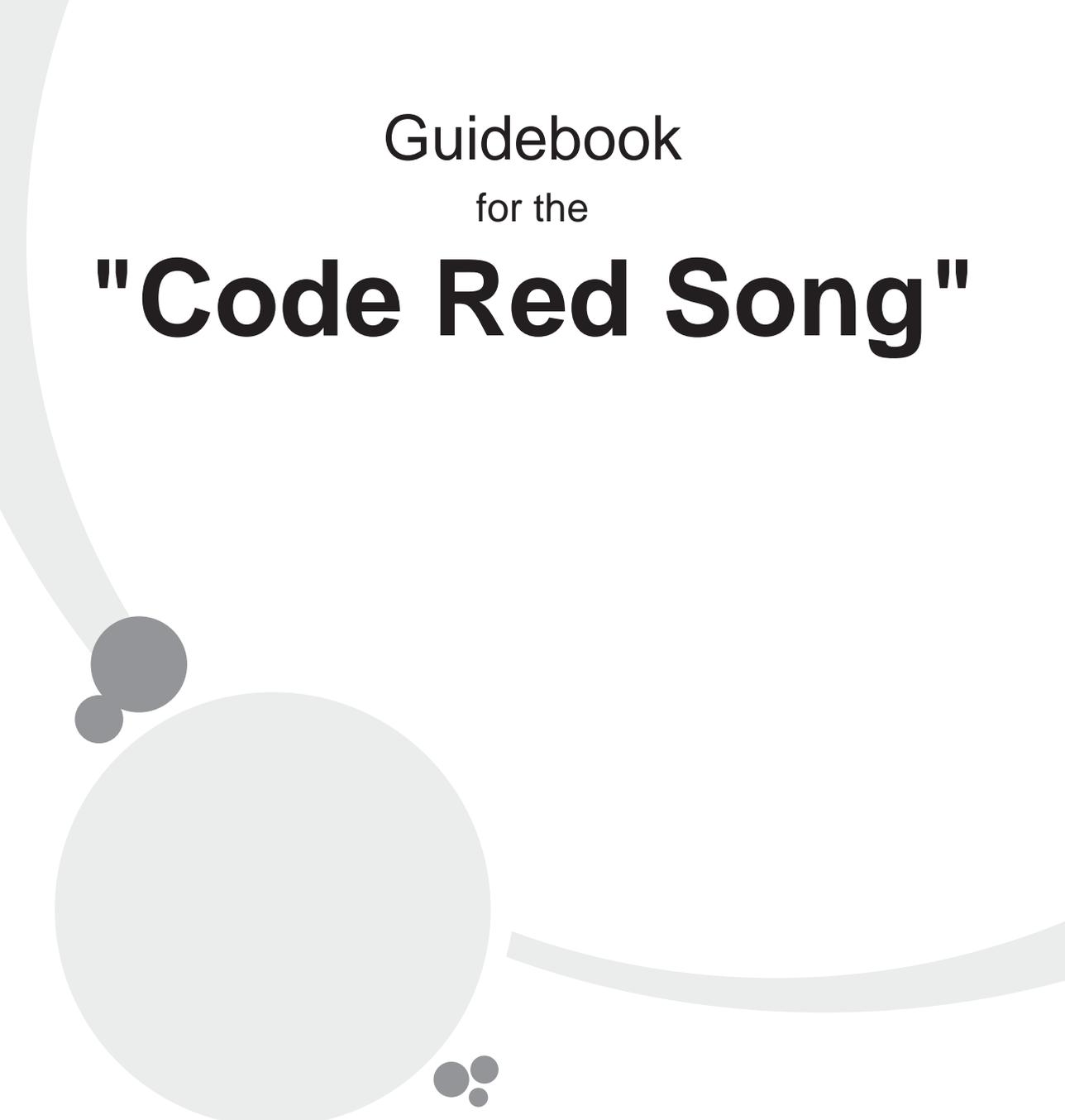
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ג'וינט ישראל אשלים  
יחד בעשייה חברתית למען ילדים, נוער וצעירים במצבי סיכון



Guidebook  
for the  
**"Code Red Song"**

2014 | Shahr Bar, Flora Mor  
Shai Hen-Gal, Yochi Siman-Tov



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2014

# Table of Contents:

A. Introduction .....	3
B. Theoretical Background: Emotional Endurance among Children and Youth in Conflict Areas.....	4
C. Therapeutic Aspects of the "Code Red Song".....	10
D. Practical Training for the "Code Red Song".....	18
E. Illustration of the Movements that Accompany the Song.....	22

## A. Introduction

### **Nursery Caretakers, Teachers and Parents!**

Due to the difficult security situation in Sderot and the Gaza Strip, the residents of the area are exposed to almost daily "Code Red" sirens and Qassam missiles. Many of these residents are therefore suffer from increased levels of fear and anxiety. In addition to the existing dangers that a Qassam missile might actually fall, the residents must live in a constant state of tension and fear of the dangerous conditions and threats of the area resurfacing through the particularly difficult moment of a missile attack.

By nature, during a "Code Red" siren, many children (like adults) become anxious and enter great emotional distress when the existing fear of a falling missile is joined with the paralyzing feelings of anger, frustration and helplessness. The ability to deal with these difficult emotions is associated with the degree to which a person is able to adopt a sense of control over the situation. When a sense of control of the reality of the situation is assumed, it is more manageable to control the internal emotional state and choose an alternative coping mechanism.

The "Code Red Song" is a proposed alternative coping mechanism for the emotional distress caused by the event of a Qassam missile attack for children and adults alike. By choosing to sing the song and perform the movements that come with it, the child or adult is choosing an alternative to emotional responses characteristic of the situation, such as helplessness and weakness. The active decision to sing the song and carry out the motions reflects the ability of the child or adult to internally handle the reality of the situation, and thus reduces the physical and emotional symptoms that arise during the sounding of the alarm siren.

This song suits any age, and can be applied anywhere at any time. The goal is that, in the event of a "Code Red" siren, children and adults will together sing the song and perform the accompanying movements. The lyrics of the songs paired with the movements give the children an empathetic directed framework which strengthens, releases tension, and relaxes.

The "Code Red Song" Project is produced as a part of the intervention to help the north and the periphery areas surrounding the Gaza Strip from Ashalim - Joint Israel and Psychological Counseling Service - Ministry of Education, with the assistance of the Jewish communities in America.

## B. Theoretical Background

### Emotional Endurance among Children and Youth in Conflict Areas

The security situation of the residents of Sderot and the Gaza Strip surrounding areas puts their lives and physical wellbeing at severe risk. For the past seven years, Qassam missiles have been fired at them almost relentlessly, with a count standing at approximately 14,000 according to the IDF. This situation leads to emotional disturbance, physical injury and high levels of anxiety among the resident population. Children living in this reality, witness to the constant media updates and exposed to the increased anxiety felt by the fearful adult populace, lead a life engulfed by the difficulty and disquiet of the situation.

In addition to the existential danger, the residents, especially the children and youth, are placed in a situation defined as "high-risk". In this context, the definition of "high-risk" relates to the level of likelihood that a threatening situation will have a significant developmental effect on the victim and their proper functioning skills. Many factors are considered risk factors that may impair normal development and cause emotional distress. At the same time, there are emotional protective measures that reduce the risk and threat of developmental harm. Cumulative exposure to the persistent state of distress and pressure is a factor endangering normal development in the long run.

The impact of the cumulative risk factors experienced and protective emotional measures taken are too complex to be treated in terms of cause and effect in evaluating the phenomena. In addition, the phenomenon is highly subjective in nature, as evident in the diverse reactions and coping mechanisms of the different peoples subject to the situational threats. Neither the personal characteristics nor the intensity of the event can allow for accurate prediction of the reaction that the children or youth will have to the threat and occurrence of danger. Still, there are ways in which to significantly reduce the level of emotional risk in children and youth, leading to the construction of resilience and endurance against stressful situations.<sup>1</sup>

It is possible to characterize situations that can create emotional trauma and thereby hinder proper development. A traumatic situation is defined as one which robs the victim of his or her sense of power and control. Situations involving deliberate harm are more damaging than those caused by accident or natural disaster, since they can invoke strong feelings of anger, disappointment, insecurity and distrust. The closer in proximity the child or youth is to the threatening situation, the more traumatic the event in terms of emotional damage to couple the existing physical threat. Traumatic response may also be caused by indirect exposure to the traumatic event through contact with family or friends affected by the situation or even media coverage of it. The traumatic responses and effects may also be minimal at time of exposure yet manifest themselves at another time without warning or control.

The book "This is No Place to be a Child: Growing up in a War Zone", was written about the coping of children living in conflict areas worldwide (Cambodia, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Chicago, and the Gaza Strip).<sup>2</sup> The authors interviewed children living in areas of conflict and war and examined how children coped with their lives of danger and ongoing stress. The authors found several factors that kept resurfacing as answers to the question, "How do children overcome stressful life circumstances?" These factors were found to develop resilience and endurance and lead to pro-social behavior and healthy adjustment of children living in conflict area.

**Active Coping with Tension** - Active coping with reality and positive relational development have positive effects on children growing up in war zone. Pro-active children who are able to orient themselves and solve social problems deal with the situation better than children who are more passive and tend to detach themselves socially. Even in war situations, things can be done. Those who give up tend to be more psychologically harmed; those who fight back, strive to find meaning in their world, and care for others tend to be more resilient. There are children who are more innately pro-active and extroverted than others. These differences in temperament are influential. Many studies have found that extroverted children who manage to survive in difficult situations had unique skills that enabled them to find the social and personal support they needed. Introverted children who do not innately possess such skills can learn to adopt these active coping mechanisms.

**Proper View of the Reality and the Ability to Cope and Solve Problems** - The ability to understand issues, read situations and people, and find alternative solutions helps children growing in war zones. For a child who lives in the war zone, every ounce of intelligence raises his chances of survival. His intelligence helps him protect himself from literal interpretation of reality, which can lead to self-destructive behaviors and social inadequacy in the long run. Self-efficacy and the resulting self-confidence create a positive self-image. Living in conflict zones creates a steady erosion of self-image. The child needs all resources available to him to strengthen his self-esteem. Building a positive sense of self in the child is an investment in resilience.

**Stable Relationships with a Parent or Other Adult** - Stable relationships with a parent or other adult are important resources with which children can cope with difficult circumstances. Children living in war zones who experience warm and positive relationships with their parents develop a sort of internal model of "what it means to be a good person" to rely on during difficult times. Understanding the backbones of these child-parent relationships is essential to understanding the psychological wellbeing of those living in conflict zones.

**Open Educational Climate and Support** - An open educational climate and feelings of support are especially meaningful when it comes to older children in pre-adolescence and adolescent years. A child growing under difficult circumstances needs assistance in processing the experiences undergone in a supporting social environment which encourages positive interpretation and understanding. Education which directs the child towards the path leading to high morals in which he can find himself can help children cope with difficult circumstances.

**Help and Social Support Outside of Family** - Children do not grow only within their family; they are also part of their community. The help and training offered by the community to children and their parents plays a crucial role in child development. The community also has a significant influence on the personal development factors of the child, such as intelligence or moral judgment.

## **Emotional Aspects of Traumatic Situations**

### **Trauma and Loneliness**

Loneliness is a commonality in aftereffects of trauma. Loneliness has several aspects, but in a situation where a whole population is in a continuous life-endangering situation, the feeling of loneliness is mainly tied to the child's belief that there is no one who can understand him or help him. This feeling ensues mainly because the adults refrain from discussing the worrisome situation and the way he is influenced by it with the child because they themselves don't want to think about it. They don't want to think about it, remember it, or raise the emotions experienced by it. The adults surrounding the child want to move on with their lives, fearing that speaking of the negative experiences without necessity will hinder the return to normalcy. They want to stay optimistic, not dwell on the situation, concentrate on the "glass half full" philosophy, and not feel sorry for themselves.

In other words, one can say that the experience of loneliness is connected to the fact that the adults surrounding the child refrain from connecting with the child on the level of pain and distress because they themselves are unable to deal with the feeling of fear, pain and helplessness that the distress raises within them. Connecting with the child forces the adults to connect with their own fears and sufferings. Many times, refraining from connecting with the child stems from a refusal to be with the child in such an intimate and vulnerable state in hope of on the one hand staying in the position of role model and on the other presenting clear boundaries between them and the child. A candid connection with the traumatic experience demands the adult to stop the natural flow of his life and focus on an issue that he would actually prefer to distance from and ignore.

### **The Influence of Adults on Child Experience of Traumatic Situations**

Tragically, the child experiencing the trauma contributes to the cycle of avoidance in that he himself protects himself by refraining from creating intimate connections with others. The child feels that touching the pain and distress weighs heavily on others, and in such cases the need to survive overcomes the need to deal with the issues. The child becomes suspicious, rigidly protects himself from others, and does not allow anyone to connect with him emotionally and assist him.

Most children who are overcoming traumatic experience and succeed in developing properly in the shadow of tragedy do so in view of an adult who is available to them on a daily basis; an adult who confirms, supports, and facilitates the daily coping. This presence creates in a long and slow process an internal change within the child dealing with the trauma. One can say that the nurturing presence of the adult allows the child to discover his own inner nurturing ability and enables him to nurture himself.

This thereby enables him to continue forth, nurture the development of his own self-esteem and deal with the demands of life. The continuous presence of the adult in the child's life has the ability to bring forth recovery. According to the Even-Shoshan dictionary, the word "presence" is defined as "being present in an event; someone who is in or takes part in an event." In this context, actual presence, here and now in real life situations, is a presence which has the ability to ease the distress of those who are traumatized.

### **The Impact of the Educational (Kindergarten and School) on the Level of Strength and Resilience of Children Growing in Conflict and War Zone Areas**

Researchers found that when educators treat their students with sensitivity and help them find solutions to their hardships, approximately 80% of the students behave adaptively and flexibly.<sup>3</sup> In every human system, a successful development depends on the quality of the relationship and opportunities of self-fulfillment within the participants.

Several consistent features were found in the educational systems which support growth and development, including:

**A. A caring relationship, loving support, and solid, persistent adult presence in the child or teens life.** The student benefits when their school supplies them with trust and unconditional care regardless of the child's behavioral patterns. These relationships stem from the ability of the adult to see through the child's external behavior; the adult recognizes the deep pain hidden within the child, which explains the behavior. The adult's authentic interest in the child is characterized by: personal acquaintance, active listening, and legitimizing the child's behavior and condition through joint discovery and recognition of his strength and abilities by rebuilding together the narrative of his life. In the words of the Israeli actress Tahel Ran (*Talking Pupils, 1998*): What saved her from a miserable life was the presence of an adult who was available to her during the most impossible moments in her life, a person who extended a hand when she was about to collapse.

**B. An adult who clarifies and recognizes the difficult experience of the child.** Alice Miller researched resilient children who experienced trauma and abuse, and demonstrated the healing power that the children who told their story to adult who listened to them experienced.<sup>4</sup> In each case of successful adaptation, there was a significant adult who helped that child to validate the way he understands reality and thus enable him to recognize that he was wronged.

**C. Expectations for achievement and optimal functioning while providing adequate support.** Expectations and demands for achievement, carried out within the process of rebuilding and preserving, and clear boundaries within the educational framework together create a sense of security and ability to predict. The same effect is achieved by customs and rituals which direct and structure the internal turmoil which is characteristic of children exposed to risk and emergency situations. The children have a need for a directing hand which defines and clarifies situations.

**D. Opportunity to actively participate.** The proper development of children and youth necessitates the providing of opportunity to be involved and take responsibilities. Every framework that supplies them with a real opportunity to leave their personal mark encourages and promotes growth and flourishing.

Even with the reality of ongoing stress and high risk, the school can act as a shielding force which calms and soothes the children. The adults who recruit for the children and for themselves and who try to find creative solutions have a significant impact of the ability of the children to deal successfully with the stressful situation and develop powers of overcoming and coping. An educational environment which acts as a safe space and support system to the individuals who need its support creates continuous caring attention to the visible and hidden needs of its students.

The "Code Red Song" may, despite its simplicity, or perhaps because of it, act as a protective tool which reduces the effect of the high risk experienced by children living in conflict zones.

### **Physical and Emotional Signs during Situations of Danger and Stress**

One of the most difficult situations for a person is a situation where he freezes helplessly in the face of a threatening reality of danger of death and loss. Passivity and a limited ability to save oneself and their dear ones of danger brings on feelings of frustration, fright, hopelessness and despair.

Herman describes the feelings of the person exposed to trauma as a tragedy of the helpless.<sup>5</sup> "At the moment of trauma, the victim stands helpless in the face of a force stronger than him & the traumatic events most often involve a threat on his life or physical wellbeing, or in personal confrontation with violence and death. These events confront the person with extreme situations of helplessness and horror, and awaken in him reactions of catastrophe." According to the Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry, the common denominator of psychological trauma is a feeling of "intense fear, helplessness, loss of control, and fear of extinction."

In time of danger, a complex and coordinated response occurs both physically and mentally. The sympathetic nervous system is awakened, causing the flow of adrenaline and a switch into vigilant mode. At the same time, extreme feelings of fear and anger emerge. This transition to a state of increased arousal and focused concentration in perception and feelings are normal responses - they are adaptations to life endangering situations. The role of physiological responses is to muster his strength to act in a manner of "fight or flight." This is a survival instinct resulting of threatening realities. Levin notes that "the symptoms of trauma are created in a spiral process that begins with primitive biological mechanisms (...) as a response to threat with fight or flight. When there is no room for the reaction of "fight or flight," the organism cringes instinctively and turns to an alternative reaction - the reaction of stagnation."<sup>6</sup> A situation where a person needs to stop and freeze in place in order to survive while the physiological reaction of his body are aimed towards vigorous physical activity ("fight or flight") is a damaging situation - especially when it comes to a process which continuously repeats itself over a long period of time.

Prevention of the traumatic reaction is possible when the person regains the sense of power and control. In order to strengthen the sense of empowerment and hope in difficult situations, the person must feel in control of himself and the events around him. He is required to take an active rather than passive stance. The ability to act effectively and lead brings back feelings of hope and creates resilience and a sense of competence.

Below are a number of dictionary definitions of terms:<sup>7</sup>

**Helplessness** - "Inability to act or do anything; physical weakness, impotence, and laxity."

**Control** - "(1) Oversight and influence over someone or something. (2) Ability to activate something or direct the activity. (3) Full knowledge; great expertise."

**In control** - "A situation in which a person has control over his emotions, behavior, etc. and acts rationally."

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<sup>1</sup> Yehuda, R. & McFarlane, A.C. (1995). Conflict between current knowledge about post traumatic stress disorder and its original conceptual basis. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 152(12), 1705-1713.

<sup>2</sup> Garbarino, J., Kostelny, K. & Dubrow N. (1991). *No Place to be a child, growing up in war zone*. Lexington Books, Toronto.

<sup>3</sup> Garbarino, J. & Kostelny, I. (1992). Child Maltreatment as a Community Problem. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 16, pp. 455-464. Benard, B. (1992). Peer programs: A Major Strategy for Fostering Resiliency in Kids. *The Peer Facilitator Quarterly*, 9(3).

<sup>4</sup> Miller, Alice (1990). *The Untouched Key: Tracing Childhood Trauma in Creativity and Destructiveness*. New York: Anchor/Doubleday.

<sup>5</sup> Herman G (2004) **Trauma and Healing**. Tel Aviv: Am Oved Publishing.

<sup>6</sup> Levin, P. (1999). **Awakening the Tiger - Healing the Trauma**. Hod Hasharon: Astrolog Publishing.

<sup>7</sup> Rav Milim, Complete Dictionary / Jacob Shoikeh.

## C. Therapeutic Aspects of the Code Red Song

The "Code Red Song" was created to help children when hearing the Code Red siren. The siren alerts people of an incoming Qassam missile attack and the need to immediately and quickly run (within 22 seconds) to a protective shelter. During the sirens, it is visible that children and youth are very scared, running aimlessly in search of the nearest protective shelter. Some scream frightfully, some cry, and ultimately the air fills with urgency and panic. During the siren, the children experience physical symptoms such as bodily shaking, weakness of the limbs, increased heart rate and perspiration. Some freeze in their place and are unable to move, and others remain in a state of anxiety even long after the scenario.

The state of continuous pressure weakens the children. Parents and children have reported regression. Some refrain from leaving their homes or protective shelters. Some parents report bedwetting, difficulty to fall asleep, fear of the dark, separation anxiety, fear of entering the toilet or shower without an escort, and a state of hyper-arousal and hyper-sensitivity to sound.

In order to help children deal with these situations and reduce the impact of their trauma, it became necessary to find a therapeutic tool that can help children deal with the fear and anxiety that may arise from the sounding of a Code Red siren.

The "Code Red Song" was constructed in a way that it should encompass several components which are relevant to children in stressful situations. This includes relaxation and movement, breathing exercises, yoga and laughter. The song also brings into play elements of different treatment methods, such as EMDR and auto-suggestion. These elements were chosen because they are known in the professional literature as very effective in helping to cope with adversity and stress in children.

The purpose of the song is to ensure that the children will reach the protective shelter in the fastest possible time, and supply them with the tools of recollection, self-help and empowerment. The words of the song and the accompanying movements were chosen so to bring the child into a state of active coping and provide him with a familiar ritual of taking action and harnessing the physical body into a purposeful activity which heals and calms the child. The song channels the child's inner strength to cope multi-dimensionally and thereby reinforces the resilience of the child in face of a threatening situation. The purpose of the song is at once therapeutic and preventative. The idea is to actively assist at the time of the Code Red siren and to prevent the distress of the situation from developing into a trauma.

The "Code Red Song" must be practiced within the educational system to a degree of familiarity during relaxation times and of course during the event of a real Code Red siren. The role of the teacher or educator is very significant in the process of learning and implementation. The teacher practices the song many times with the children, becoming a physical and behavioral role model for them. The practice strengthens and enhances her image in the eyes of the children. A teacher or educator who actively shares the

feeling of the children and is sensitive to the reactions that arise within and after the song can turn out to be a very significant figure for the children experiencing the stressful situation.

The song and the accompanying movements require the child to be active to move his body in a clear and structured way so as not to allow the body to reach a state of passivity or stagnation, and to act physically and emotionally at once. The child moves and sings the words to the song; he becomes physically active and his voice is heard. He frees himself from a state of passiveness to a state of active presence which is silent and does not accept submissively what is being done to him. Rather, he stands up, acts, and asserts himself.

## **Therapeutic Aspects of the Song**

The song includes a number of therapeutic aspects.

One of the ways to regain control is a full understanding of the situation. The song therefore begins with the transfer of information and clear data: it communicates what needs to be done and the reasons for those actions.

The first lines of the song read:

**Hurry hurry hurry to a safe place**

**Hurry hurry hurry because it s dangerous**

The song lyrics tell the children to guard themselves, and instruct them to perform the necessary actions required to survive: be pro-active, react appropriately, and hurry to a protective shelter. The transfer of information is clear - *Why do I need to hurry now? Because now it s a little bit dangerous. The solution for the danger in such a situation is to enter a safe place.* In these sentences a person regains the ability to recognize the event, understand it, and act accordingly. The result of this is control.

The following two lines of the song read:

**My heart is beating boom boom boom**

**My body is shaking doom doom doom**

There is immense value to both the words and the gestures.

The decision to act out the lyrics through the movements that accompany them from both sides of the body and diagonally across are taken from the EMDR method. This is a short treatment method that is focused on a variety of psychological problems that have been proven to be effective in treating different types of anxieties, fears and phobias, traumatic memories and experiences, stress reduction, and more. The method was developed in 1987 by American psychologist Dr. Francine Shapiro, who discovered by chance that quick movements of the eyes reduce the power of disturbing thoughts under certain conditions. Dr. Shapiro called the method EMDR, shorthand for Eye Movement Desensitization and Reassessment, or "reprocessing and systematic desensitization using eye movements. The treatment is performed so that the patient brings up a traumatic event, enters the experiences of the event, and retells it repeatedly. The therapist helps the treatment process through deliberate movements of the eyes of the patient or other bilateral stimulation of the brain, which increases the effectiveness of treatment.

EMDR apparently directly affects the way the brain functions. During the treatment, the normative procedure of processing information is resumed and as a result prevents a renewed invasion of disturbing stimulants when the event comes to mind. One can think of EMDR as a physiological-based therapy which helps a person process traumatic experiences in a new and less stressful way. The method has been researched and proven effective both in treatment of trauma and intense fears as well as other issues that impact the quality of life. In research published by Wilson, Becker and Tinker in the *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* (1995), the study of eight subjects with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder proved that the condition of the subjects was significantly improved for a long period of time following the EMDR treatments.

The alternating movements throughout the song are based on the assumption that when we use these motions, brain stimulation is created. The motion between the brain is what leads to immediate treatment of a person's trauma. The use of these motions is especially significant when stressed in order to reduce anxiety. They are also significant for reduction or prevention of long-term impacts of the trauma on the person's functional quality of life.

The use of the lyrics: **"My heart is beating; My body is shaking."**

These sentences bring to the surface part of the less-known reactions to anxiety.

Anxiety is composed of a physiological reaction and physiological behavior together. When a person enters a state of anxiety, their body reacts with a variety of symptoms, including: increased heart rate, tense muscles, dry mouth, sweating, uncontrollable shaking, and dizziness. On the psychological level, the anxiety may be expressed with symptoms such as paralysis, desensitization from the self, fear of death, or madness. States of anxiety are revealed in a variety of ways and intensities with a spectrum which shifts from condition of discomfort to extreme physical reactions. The treatment of a person suffering from anxiety includes treatment of the psychological as well as emotional side effects.

The lyrics of the song showcase the body's response to a person's mental wellbeing. They raise to the surface the condition and reflect feelings. This is part of an attitude which says that when we allow the body to feel the pain and legitimize the experience of the event, then begins the process of self-acceptance and healing.

Herman writes of this strength despite its harm on the other.<sup>1</sup> "The conflict between the will to deny horrible acts and the will to proclaim them aloud is the central dialectic of emotional trauma ... usual response to these atrocities is to remove them from consciousness. There are certain dissonances of the social order that are worse than voicing them. Yet atrocities refuse to be buried. Less than the desire to deny them, more powerful is the strong recognition that denial will not succeed. The remembering and the retelling of the horrifying event as it took place is part of the recondition, both to restoring social order and healing the casualty ... only when truth wins recognition, can victims ultimately begin the healing process." Therefore, these therapists must convey the true emotion as is and give it validation so that the healing process may begin.

We see this at play in the lyrics of the song.

### **But I am overvomig**

#### **Cause I am a little bit different**

In these lyrics, there is purpose, call to action, and the ability to overcome the feeling of fear and anxiety. The recitation of these lyrics inspires personal self-empowerment and auto-suggestion. Auto-suggestion (self-suggestion) is a psychological process in which people can change their opinions, attitudes, feelings and beliefs by conviction and impact the sub-conscious about these components. Autosuggestion is normally done in order to occupy the sub-conscious mind with positive thought so to change a particular behavior. One of the conventional ways of auto-suggestion is repetition of a positive sentence of some sort, subconsciously making the person believe the sentence to be true.

The word is derived from the English word Suggestion, meaning "proposal." It effectively serves as suggestion - it gives the person a certain way of action. The suggestion can be done in a verbal way, physical way, or through use of body language.

In the "Code Red Song", the lyrics as well as the accompanying movements are auto-suggestive. For the people that sing it, the intent is to sing with strength and increasing energy. *Despite it all, I overcome. I create within myself the change and center the physical and bodily powers to overcome.* The movement of the body in this sentence is clenching of the fists towards the body while raising the hands - again, a physical and emotional reaction of power and strength.

### **Falling down - BOOM**

#### **We may now stand up**

This line repeats the elements from the beginning of the song - a clear transfer of knowledge, and recognition of reality. We return to listen to sounds from the outside world, to being in touch with reality, and to understanding how to act in this situation. The words of the song tell us what is happening. *A Qassam missile has fallen, we heard the BOOM sound, we understand what happened, and now the main danger has passed. We can get up (from lying on the ground, under the table, etc).* Once again, there is the knowledge, understanding and recognition the expected action, and as a result a sense of control of the situation is created.

The following statements of the song is comprised of the release and breaking down of the physical and mental baggage; restoring the balance of the body and soul.

### **We shake our body - shake shake shake**

#### **We loosen our legs - loosen loosen loosen**

Shaking and releasing the entire body while emphasizing the movement of the legs is done in order to create a number of situations that "correct anxious reactions." We return sensation to the body which may have been lost or dulled during the state of anxiety. We release the energy that has been bottled up in the body and we "shake it" out of us. We return the blood flow, renew the rest of the vital motions, and create a therapeutic release that assists us in returning the body to some sort of balance and relaxation.

Levin clarifies that these "traumatic symptoms are not created by the 'awakening' event itself - the result is from the frozen sedimentary energy that has not been thawed and released.<sup>2</sup> This residue remains trapped in the nervous system where it can play havoc with our bodies and our

minds. When we cannot complete the entry process, staying and exiting a situation of stagnation or remain 'frozen' can develop long-term symptoms that awaken anxiety, are exhausting, and are often bizarre symptoms of PTSD. However, we can thaw them if we encourage if the innate ability we have to return to a sense of dynamic balance."

The physical activity has an additional effect which improves the mood and overall wellbeing of a person. Physical activity releases endorphins in the brain, which contribute to these feelings. The endorphins (in their full name, Endorphines and Endomorphines) are biomedical components which have a numbing effect and are found naturally in the brain and assist in the reduction of pain and improvement of one's mood. An additional effect of movement is the relaxation effect. The term "physical relaxation - muscular and movement" (Ayalon and Lahad, 1990), refers to one of three main relaxation methods, and is designed to help a person release stress through natural rhythmic motion that will give him a sense of calm. Jacobson (2001) found that people who are in a condition of emotional stress or over-excitement also experience muscular stress, meaning that emotional stress always accompanies muscular tension. If the muscles of the human body are released, a person is psychologically released. From here Jacobson reaches the conclusion that "it is possible to use muscular relaxation in a direct and gradually increasing way to reduce the impact of anxiety, worry, and negative emotions and to prevent certain situations of stress."

In the "Code Red Song," the phase where the body is shaking and the balance is restored to the body is designed to release the negative energy "frozen" and bottled up in the body during the time of stress. This is a necessary step to bringing a person to balance, relaxation and sedation. It operates on the emotional and physical aspects at once.

The following sentences are designed in order to put the body in an additional state of relaxation and sedation, to release, and to return the sense of happiness.

**We will breathe in deep**

**We will blow out as far as possible**

**We will breathe in deep**

There are a number of techniques for relaxation that help a person deal with the side effects of anxiety and stress as they occur which they are effective (in ongoing practice) in the development of future coping capabilities. They help create a sense of sturdiness. These techniques include regulating one's breathing, as Ayalon and Lahad (1990) state: "After the relaxation, physical and emotional powers are renewed. Relaxation is effective in reducing anxiety, calming irritation, refreshing the attention span, and increasing the ability of thinking and acting. During times of crisis, stress, and tension, short periods of relaxation are used as a kind of "time out" for collecting new coping energies... relaxation is a physiological action which works against the negative consequences of stress. Hence, the skill of the person obtaining the reaction of release will reduce somatic complaints, add to feelings of self-confidence and positive self-image, improve social integration and academic achievement, and encourage a sense of psychological and physical wellbeing. Therefore, one might assume that learning and training in one of the relaxation methods offers support and strength in case of an event which triggers stress."

The "Code Red Song" used movement as a relaxation method. At this point, we add the respiratory relaxation which focuses on respiratory rate and the amount of air inhaled into the lungs.

According to Ayalon and Lahad (1990) "The spontaneous and automatic reaction to stress awakens the physiological systems. These systems react instantly to stress and function accordingly. Most of these systems are related to the autonomic system, but the respiratory system is the only one using consciousness to control its rhythm. Controlling the pace of breathing (ie. breathlessly and speed of physical stress) through slow deep breaths transmits to the physical systems that it is possible to reduce the bodily stress and therefore reduces and weakens it. In doing so, this sends a message of calm to the body.

Working with deep and slow breaths is an age-old technique. It is used in techniques of relaxation and release - starting with therapeutic methods, through yoga practice, through Western doctrines, and as part of a variety of alternative medicines. The "Code Red Song" uses two major relaxation techniques: relaxation through movement and respiratory relaxation. Inhaling air through deep and far breaths is designed to emphasize the slow and continuous exhaling. We relax the stressful breathing we had during the time of stress and transmit a message of calmness throughout the bodily systems and as a result calm the inner self.

### **We can laugh**

After relaxing, it is possible to completely release oneself through a healthy burst of laughter.

Lahad and Ankor (1993) noted that "Laughter is good for health. Burst of laughter releases pent-up energy and eliminates muscle tension." Treatment through laughter has become profitable in recent years in Israel and abroad. In 1989 the Northwest Health Services Birmingham UK clinic for Stress Release was founded, and in 1991 Robert Holden founded the first health clinic as part of the National Health Service.

Laughter as medicine is not a new phenomenon. Researchers and anthropologists have found evidence of laughter as medicine in a lot of ancient civilizations. Philosopher Herbert Spencer, who lived in the nineteenth century, was a pioneer of science who took seriously the effects of laughter on health. He believed that the role of laughter is to serve as a safety valve to withstand flood of emotional forces and to release unwanted muscle movements. He believed that laughter is an essential mechanism for renewing the welfare of the body, and bringing it into a state of biological harmony and internal order.

In the distant past, laughter festivals used to take place in order to accelerate healing of patients from the community. Since we already know that stress, negative thoughts and grief can harm health, it is only logical that smiling, laughter, positive thoughts and happiness can heal. The energy of laughter releases and affects emotion, body, spirit and mind. Dr. William Fry has devoted thirty years of his life for the study of the healing potential that exists within humor, laughter and happiness. In an interview he gave (1991), he said "humor changes the person. The power of its influence does not end at the neck. It is accompanied by shocks of the body. It vibrates through us as though we are a huge

guitar. It is an experience of the whole body, in which the musculature, nerves, heart, brain, and digestive system participate. Laughter has two phases: a healthy stimulation and deep relaxation. "

In the "Code Red Song", the release of laughter effectively closes the healing process, soothes and relaxes the body, and enables the feelings of relief and joy both to the body and the spirit.

**It s all gone**  
**And I feel good it s over**  
**Yesssss!**

In these sentences, the accompanying hand motions are sliding one hand over the other, back and forth. The movement is like "washing your hands of this ordeal", cleaning the hands and eliminating the act. *We "cleanse ourselves entirely of the incident." We can leave it behind us. It is in the past and now we return to the here and now. We can speak openly about our feelings now that "It's all gone."* There is a feeling of relief and release that everything has passed, that we are whole and healthy, and that we have survived this test. We can perform important tasks of guarding ourselves, guarding our sanity, and our cool and perform the song in its entirety and enjoy the product - life that has returned to normative daily function

The victory cry and release of joy - "YES" - are accompanied with the movement of hands triumphantly raised above (as an athlete who has reached a high achievement) with a sense of achievement and recognition of it.

Indeed, every person that has experienced frequently over the years the terror of fear and the constant fear of survival is a person who manages to mobilize his emotional and physical resources over and over again in order to survive. Then comes the recognition of the achievement, encouraging pat on the back, feelings of joy, and feeling of triumph - "YES!"

Lahad (2006) discusses the process of development of a holistic concept which integrates body, mind and spirit into a whole. The basis of his work (Ayalon and Lahad, 1990) was the creation of a "multi-dimensional model of coping." He found that there are six phases of coping that are referred to as the "Basic Ph" coping model. It can be seen how the words to the "Code Red Song" refers to each of these coping methods. In this manner, there is empowerment of the capability of dealing with the reality of a Code Red situation in a variety of ways. The types of resources and the way they are reflected are expressed in the song:

**Belief (B)** - "Belief in God, a higher power; trust in another person; and trust in oneself." In the song, this resource appears predominantly through self-trust through the lyrics: "But I am overcoming; Cause I am a little bit different." This sentence allows for empowerment of self, gives strength in one s ability to withstand, and enhances one s internal strength and perception that they can overcome any difficulty.

**Affect (A)** - "Emotional coping style is associated with our ability to be aware of our feelings through emotional expression and nonverbal communication such as dance,

song, etc., and other emotional outlets." In the song, there exist certain nonverbal expressions for emotions through the songs movements: hammering the hand on the chest, heart pounding through singing the song and so on. Great emotional release throughout the entire song, begins with the stressful situation ("My heart is beating boom boom boom. My body is shaking - doom doom doom") to the release of laughter as an outlet for feelings of distress (We can laugh.) and again to the feelings of relief and burst of joy (And I feel good it's over; YES!).

**Social (S)** - "The social ties and social support; sharing family, filling the roles, and developing leadership." The entire song is performed in a group. It has therapeutic power in its unity - all the children of the school work together to sing and perform the movements. While relaying the song for children, it is advised to teach their relatives and even people outside of the classroom setting so that the children can be part of a group that operates with mutual benefit.

**Imagination (I)** - "The root of our creativity enables us to dream, to be intuitive, to change, to discovery new ways of coping, and to change unwanted circumstances in which we find ourselves." The entire song in fact changes the circumstances that are undesirable to circumstances with which we can cope with ease. The expression of the song is creative - singing, movement and keeping up with rhythm and pace. An additional element that is expressed in the song is the ability to change - in the sentence "But I am overcoming; Cause I am a little bit different," in order to create a change, one must imagine themselves in the future and therefore overcome.

**Cognitive (C)** - "The coping mechanism that depends on the ability to rationally think, learn new things, discovery new methods, analyze problems, and find solutions." In the song, there is a clear and knowledgeable transfer of knowledge that refers to the questions and answers: "Hurry to a safe place" - why? - "Because it is dangerous" These sentences do not leave the child wondering but rather explains to the child why he must act. The next thing is reflected in the sentence: "Falling down - boom; We may now stand up." Here, too, we explain the reality of the situation and the appropriate response to it. *There was a fall, the immediate threat is over, and therefore we can get out of our defensive position.*

**Physiological (Ph)** - "Coping through the senses, orientation in one's space, feelings of stress and internal tension, bodily motions, actions, and dealing with reality." The entire song is about physical activation through various movements. It brings one to spacial orientation: "Hurry hurry hurry to a safe place." There is a need to speed up the body, find shelter and run to it. In the song, there are two types of release: release through movement and release through breathing. Release through movement is seen in the lyrics: "We shake our body - shake shake shake; We loosen our legs - loosen loosen loosen." The respiratory release is seen in the lyrics: "We will breathe in deep; We will blow out as far as possible; We will breathe in deep; We can laugh." There is no doubt that the song enables active coping with reality.

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<sup>1</sup> Herman G (2004) **Trauma and Healing**. Tel Aviv: Amoved Publishing.

<sup>2</sup> Levin, P. (1999). **Awakening the Tiger - Healing the Trauma**. Hod Hasharon: Astrolog Publishing.

## D. Practical Training for the "Code Red Song"

Purposes of using the current guidebook:

1. Creating more overall control of the child on his actions, feelings, and ways of expressing themselves during a Code Red siren.
2. Diverting thoughts from the object of fear through supportive and constructive action.
3. Releasing stress and anxiety immediately through self-care.
4. Bringing relaxation and simultaneous bodily and emotional release.
5. Giving legitimacy to feelings of fear and the guidance to overcome them.
6. Raising feelings of inner strength and internal capability

### **Below are some points that describe the therapeutic components of the "Code Red Song":**

The song lyrics and movements have therapeutic value and it is therefore advisable to keep true to the guided performance implementation.

- Certain movements (particularly those that run diagonally and alternately on both sides of the body) taken from the method of treatment E.M.D.R. acts on the brain and is effective on coping with trauma, stress and anxiety.
- Body movements, physical release and the release of laughter releases brain chemicals called endorphins, which aid in reducing fear and raising positive mood and feelings.
- Deep and slow breathing aid in entering a state of calm
- Statements of empowerment in the lyrics ("...But I overcome ; raise hands in victory;"YES!") help to fortify the sense of inner strength and power
- The elements of the song which direct and define action, movement and activities contribute to increased self-control and divert the mind from the horror and helplessness to a reassuring anthem.
- The lyrics of the song call for the children to take action for maximum protection and understand the reason behind those action ("Hurry to a safe place, because it's dangerous"; as the lyrics act out: "Falling down - BOOM, We may now stand up") the children are asked to be attentive to what is happening outside and are guided as to what to do at any given time of the event, creating a sense of control over the event and personal action.
- The song gives legitimacy to the feelings of fear inside and bodily reactions to the situations of stress and anxiety. It is important in these cases to legitimize these feelings and anxieties. Mere confirmation of these feelings allow for proper and effective relief and coping ("My heart is beating" ; "My body is shaking"). While legitimizing the feelings of fear and anxiety, the song lyrics simultaneously offer guidance as to how to overcome them ("But I am overcoming").

## Practice for the "Code Red Song":

The Code Red Song is a tool for treatment and self-empowerment. In order to gain from it the full therapeutic benefits, it must be made known, recognizable, friendly and automatic to children. To do so, it is advised to pay attention to several points:

1. **Practice the song on a daily basis** as part of your daily routine (at least at first; after a while, you can reduce the frequency). Frequent practice better acquaints the children with the song and helps make it and its guidance familiar to the children.
2. **Practice the song with actual travel to a 'safe place'** as performed in real time occurrences. When a particular safe place - in our case, the shelter for rocket and Qassam missile attacks - is regularly accessed in times of distress and fear, there is an intrinsic tendency to want to stay away from it due to our mental association of that place with painful memories. Once involved into practice with the aid of the song in a fun and 'playful' way, the 'safe place' will no longer be as sinister. Also, the child will then know precisely where to run and what to do in the event of a real "Code Red" siren, thus giving the child better security and control over the situation.
3. **Practice the song at times of relaxation.** Relaxation time is a time where the class can gather and feel safe and at ease at their kindergarten and classroom. Find a fixed time on the agenda at which you can practice the "Code Red Song" with the children.
4. **Be active in the song when practicing with the children.** The role of teacher/educator is central to the "Code Red Song." The teacher is the most significant role model for a child. The teachers' response to the song therefore influences the children's reaction to it and establishes their attitudes towards it. The teacher's presence as someone who believes in and performs the song themselves sends the children an important message about the legitimacy and positive effects of the song. Teachers and educators who, during practice, perform the song with the children with an energy of happiness strengthen the coping skills of the children and the level of effectiveness of the song.
5. **Practice with enthusiasm** with deep recognition of the song's ability to help. The introductory chapters in this guidebook explain in depth the therapeutic implications of the song. Before it was introduced to the public, the song was practiced in three schools and one kindergarten in the areas surrounding the Gaza Strip. Since then, many testimonials from children, parents and teachers were received about the great benefits of the song. Believe and trust in the song's ability to benefit your students as well.
6. **Use the song at the time of a real Code Red siren in the same way that you use it during practice.** The song was intended to be performed in real time. As soon as the Code Red siren is sounded, start singing the "Code Red Song" while running to the protective shelter and perform the movements accompanying it. This is where its' power truly lies.
7. **Convey the message to the children to carry on and teach the song to their family, friends and others.** This practice is beneficial for several reasons. We can make this therapeutic tool benefit the Israeli populace. It will help the child perform the song and its movements even when he is not within the educational environment. There is a

lot of power in the fact that a responsibility is being given to the children and they are able to help their family rather than only be helped. This increases their sense of worth, their strength, and their ability to take charge and control of the situation.

8. **Encourage the children to use the song at any time wherever they may be a real Code Red siren.** Make it clear to the children that the song is appropriate for any age and can be sung at any time. It is not limited only to the classroom. It is applicable any place where they may be a possible siren, even if they sing it quietly to themselves. Making the movements will also help produce the desired effect.

The song opens with the Code Red alarm. This is an important therapeutic aspect in itself because, with that, we are touching the object of horror - the siren: that thing that so threatens us - through the pretend practice, when we are in a familiar location with a sympathetic adult and a supportive group near or with us.

Immediately after, we will sing the song and perform the accompanying movements.

### **Some Advice for Singing the Song During a Real-Time Code Red Siren:**

1. The first two verses of the song ("Hurry hurry") we sing while running to the protective shelter.
2. If during the real siren the child must turn a table into a safe space to protect himself, the child will continue to sing the song and perform the movements under the table until he reaches the line "We may now stand up." At this time, we get out from under the table, stand up, and continue the movements of physical release.

- If the children are outdoors during the time of the siren and the child must lie with his hands covering his head, the interchanging movements ("Boom boom boom" and "Doom doom doom") should be performed on the sides of his head. When we reach the sentence "We may now stand up" and it is actually safe to get up, the child should stand and continue the movements of the song where he is.
- 3.

- If the Qassam missile falls earlier in the song, continue to sing and do the movements
4. until the end of the song regardless.

- If there is another Code Red siren sounded immediately after the first alarm, sing
5. the song again until the end of the siren completely.

- It is important to sing the verse "But I am overcoming" with great emphasis and
6. intensity.

- It is important to sing the triumphant call "Yes!" with great energy in a happy and
7. exuberant manner.

## "Code Red Song "

PA: Code Red, Code Red

**Hurry hurry hurry to a safe place**

**Hurry hurry hurry because it's dangerous**

(running to a safe place)

**My heart is beating - boom boom boom**

(arms crossed - intermittently pounding on the chest as pronouncing the "boom" words)

**My body is shaking - doom doom doom**

(hands pounding intermittently on the legs as pronouncing the "doom" words)

**But I am overcoming**

(hands demonstrating strength - elbows bent and fists tight)

**Cause I am a little bit different**

**Falling down - boom**

(clapping hands as pronouncing the word "boom")

**We may now stand up**

**We shake our body - shake shake shake**

(shaking the body and the hands)

**We loosen our legs - loosen loosen loosen**

(throwing legs forward)

**We will breathe in deep**

(deep inhalation)

**We will blow out as far as possible**

(exhalation)

**We will breathe in deep**

(again deep inhalation)

**We can laugh**

(releasing out laughter)

**It's all gone**

(sliding palm to palm upwards and downwards as a clap)

**And I feel good it's over**

(likewise)

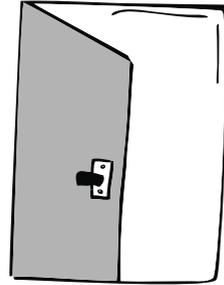
**Yesssss!**

## E. Illustration of the Movements that Accompany the Song:

Hurry hurry hurry to a safe place  
Hurry hurry hurry because it's dangerous



safe place



My heart is beating - boom boom boom



3  
boom



2  
boom



1  
boom

My body is shaking - doom doom doom



3  
doom



2  
doom



1  
doom

---

**But I am overcoming  
Cause I am a little bit different**



---

**Falling down - boom  
We may now stand up**



(boom)

---

**We shake our body - shake shake shake**



---

We loosen our legs - loosen loosen loosen



---

We will breathe in deep



---

We will blow out as far as possible



---

We will breathe in deep



---

We can laugh



---

It's all gone  
And I feel good it's over

X2



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**Yesssss!**



