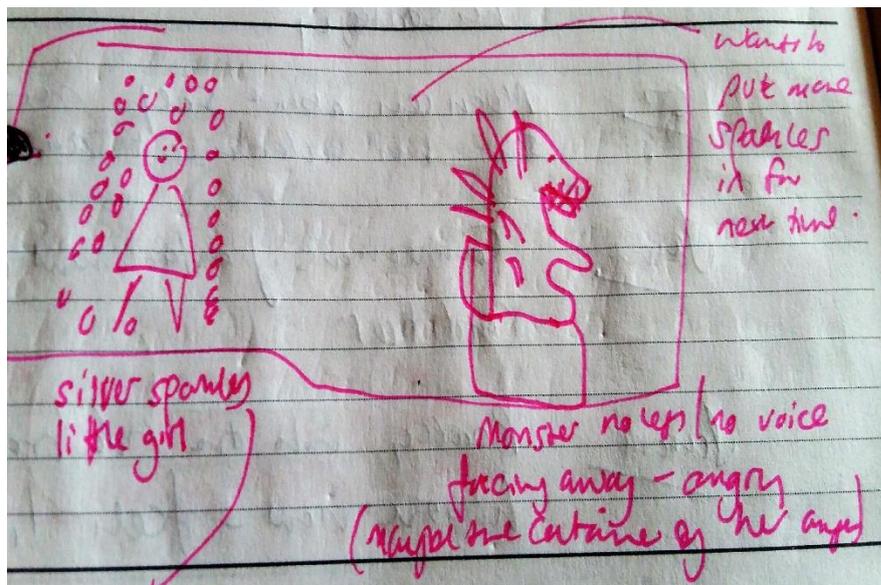


Metaphor Case study

Meredith entered the therapy room the light pouring through the blinded window. She had offered a number of metaphors in previous sessions in an effort to explain her life situation, metaphorical language appeared to feature strongly in her communication. For example, two weeks before she had said she felt stuck in grey metal and couldn't speak. She could only view some form of utopia across the river (it wasn't available to her). Through discussion with me she had developed the "grey" to a dance floor where she enjoyed to dance but still viewed freedom and beauty on the other side of the river. She could speak to a fish in the river (was this me I pondered?).

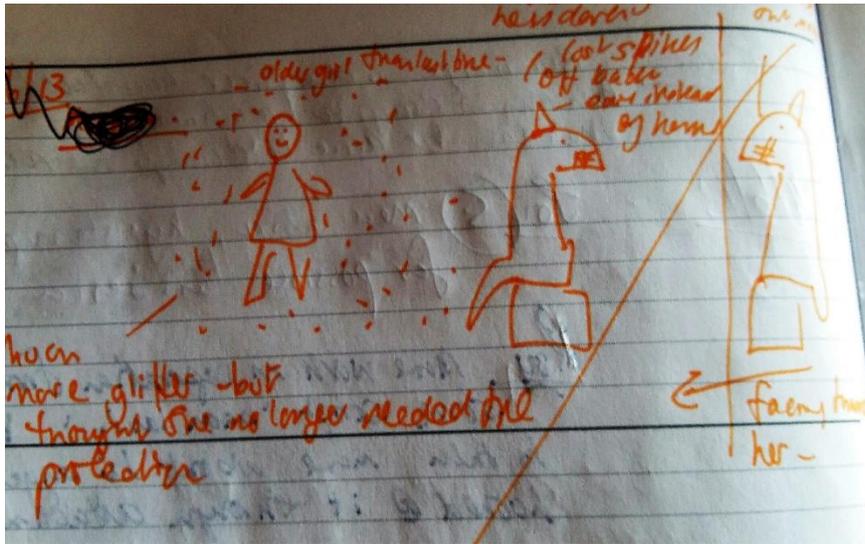
During the last session she had described a darkness inside her. When I gently explored what the darkness inside her was like, she described it being like a "dark monster" a monster lurking in a cave. She wondered if it was a message from Dad that bad things happen. She sensed that the monster did not want to come out, and she certainly wasn't going in this cave herself! Today she had a picture in her hands, it was the monster and also a young girl with silver sparkles around her. The monster was angry and faced away from the little girl and had no legs.



A representative illustration from my own notes

At this stage I could have asked her about her week, and was there anything which had encouraged the monster to exit the cave. I resisted this temptation as my intuition was to stick with the metaphor. I reflected on what I had noticed and asked her what needed to happen. She said that the little girl was scared and needed to be protected from the monster. She wanted to help it to be happy to throw it a ball. This led to a conversation how the little girl's role was to ensure that everyone is happy.

The following session she brought in a different picture. I noticed that the girl was older than last time and had more glitter around her. The monster had lost his spikes, was less dark and faced towards her. She said that he needed to find his voice. The stitches needed to be removed. I reached for an eraser on my desk and handed it to her. She immediately, but carefully, started to rub out the stitching. In this moment she reminded me that one of her childhood issues that she struggled to explore herself. She had no voice. Once the stitches had been removed she opened up about her relationship with her husband.



A representative illustration from my own notes.

What do you take from this case study?