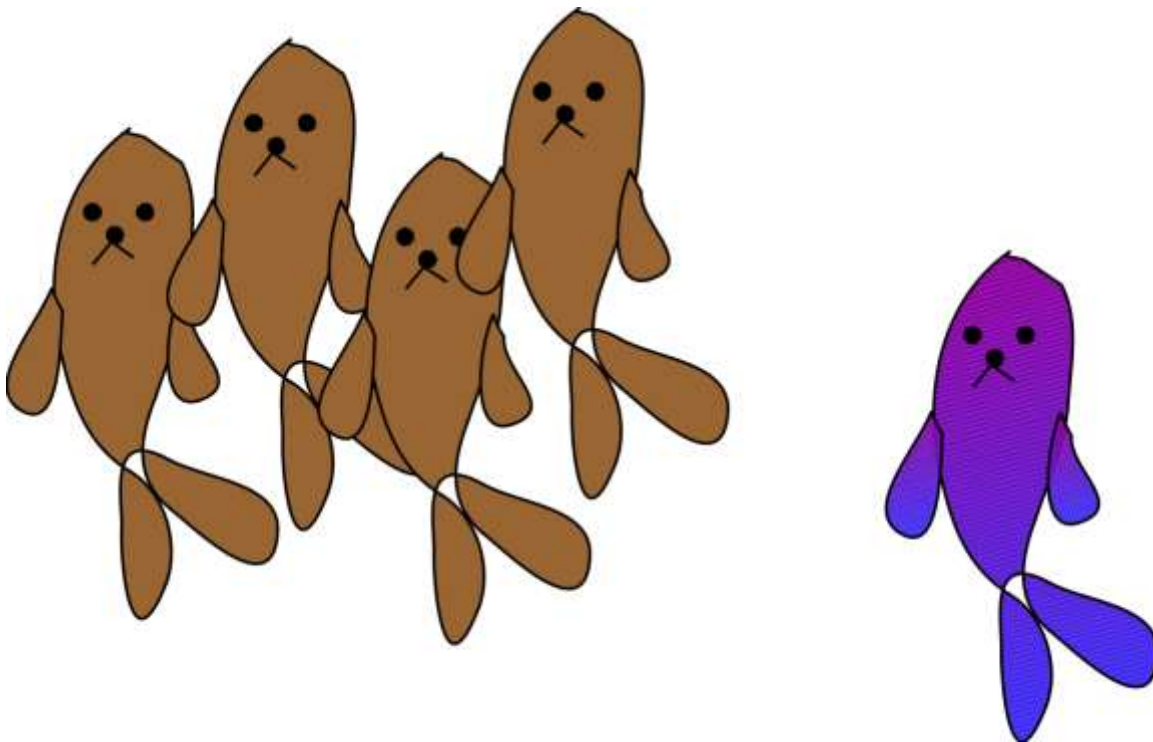


# Spotting the Odd One Out

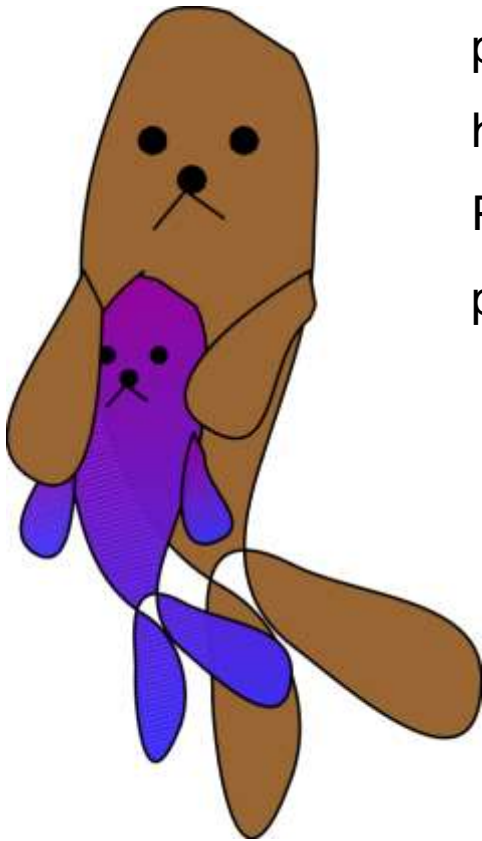


Psychedelic seal was different to all the other seals. The other seals were all brown. They blended in on the sandy shores and in the ocean.

Psychedelic seal didn't blend anywhere.

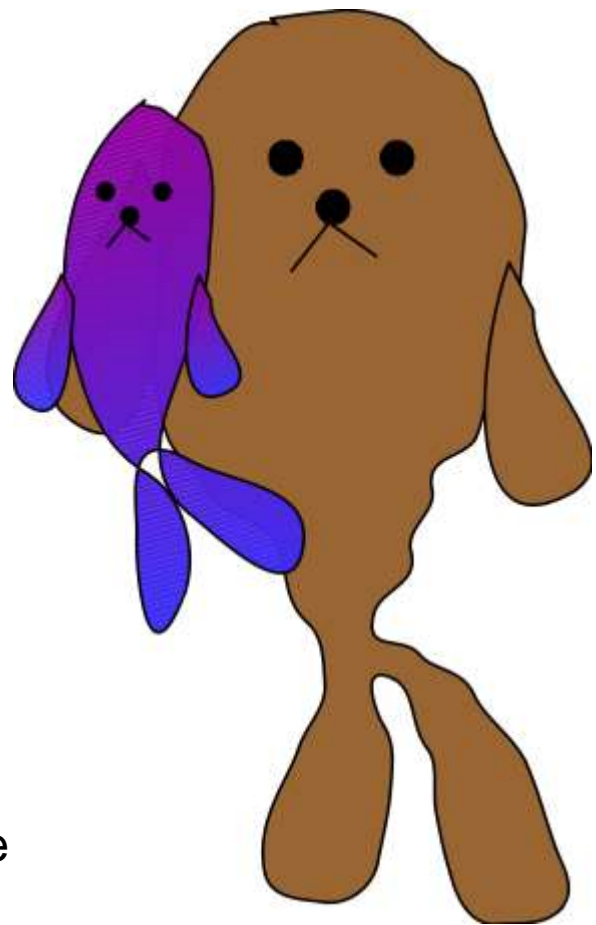


Psychedelic seal's mum tried to protect him from the big bad world out there – she worried about two problems, not only did the other seal pups tease and laugh at poor Psychedelic seal, but she worried that he was a big target for a predator.



But Psychedelic's father was more practical and told Mama seal – we have to make Psychedelic strong: Physically – so he can fight off predators, and emotionally so he can brush off the cruel taunts he might get from being different.

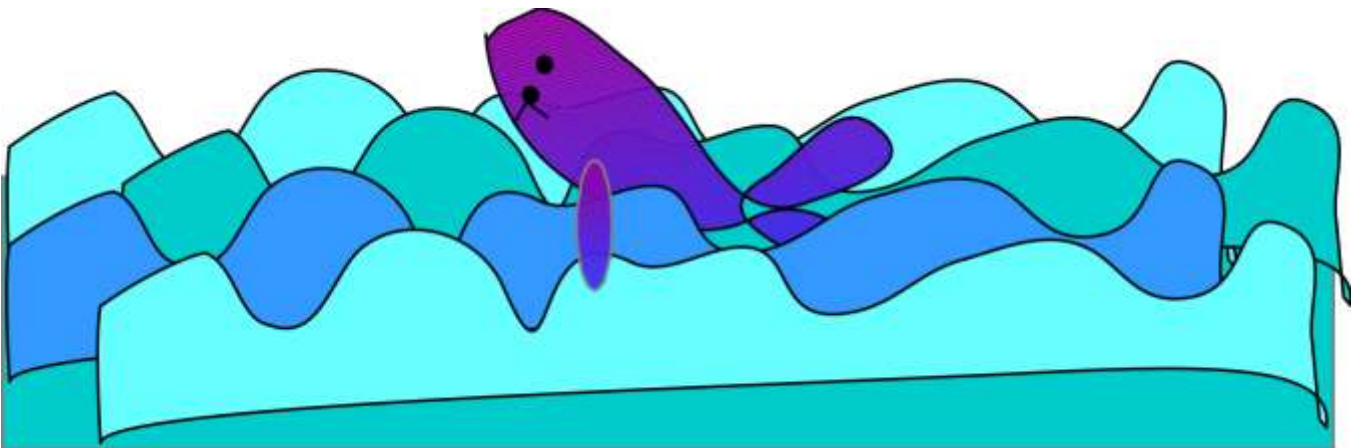
While kids can be cruel and Mama seal considered keeping Psychedelic in home school to protect him, Papa seal said – no. If we bring him up to be proud of his differences, and teach him to be physically and



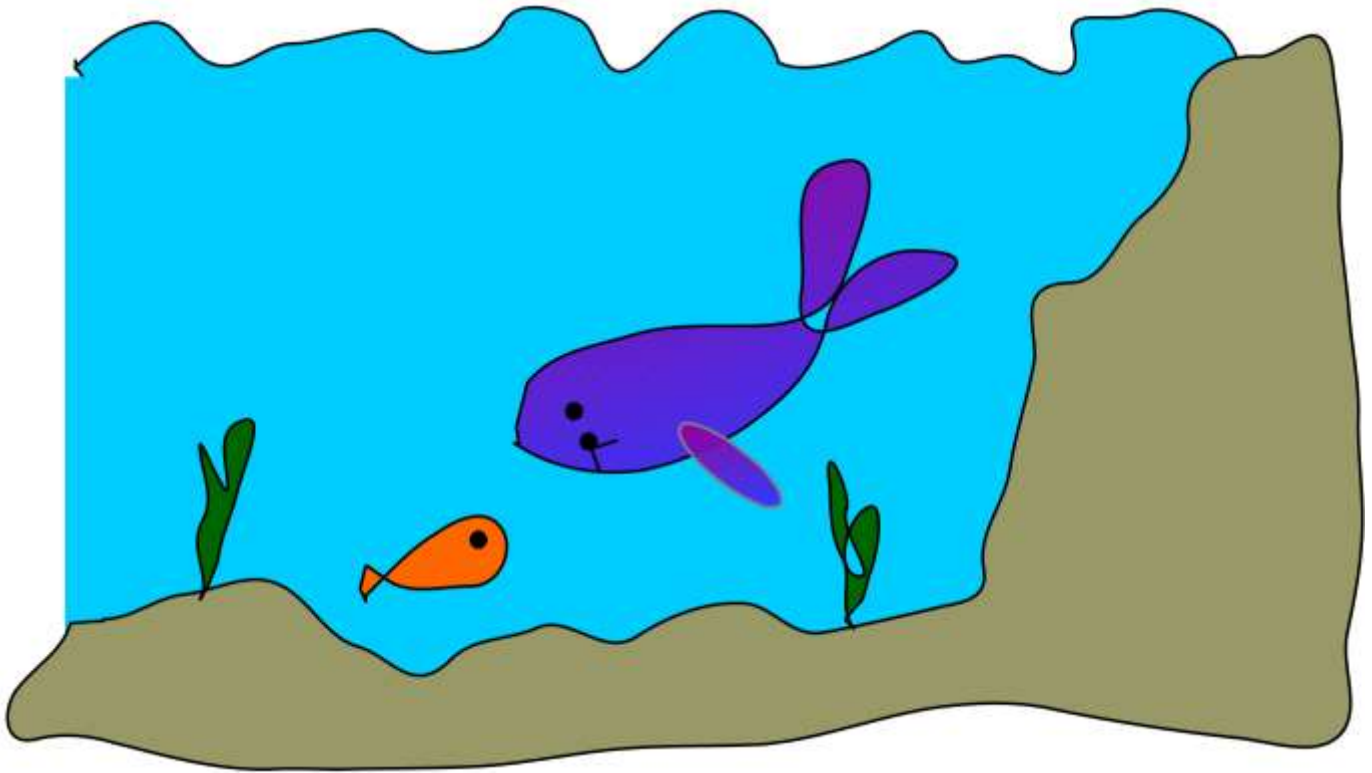
emotionally strong – one day it will pay off. Cruel taunts don't always stop when kids grow up, Papa seal reminded Mama seal.

Mama seal realized wrapping Psychedelic seal up in cotton wool wasn't good for anyone, so she agreed to Papa seal's plans.

The family went about a program of physical and emotional training that in fact helped them all become better seals.

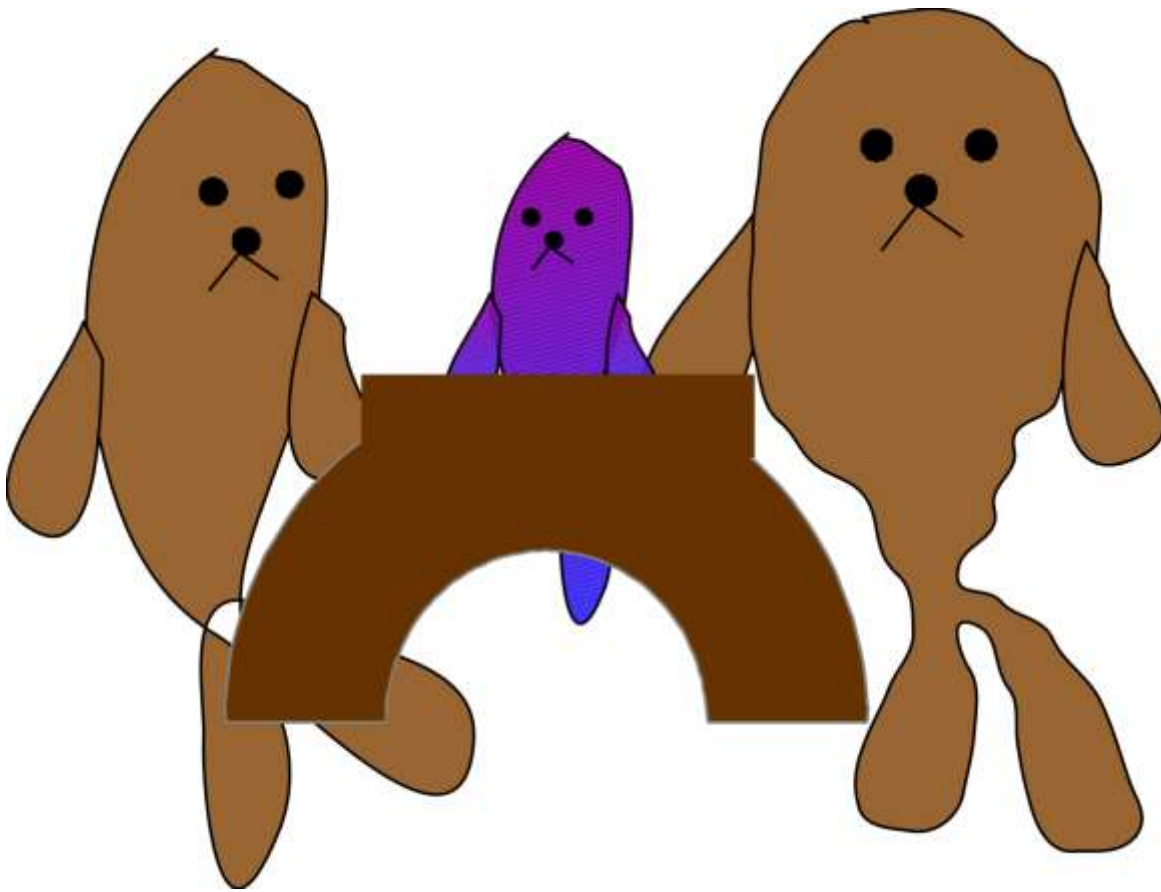


Physically they swam long distances, dove deep in the ocean regularly, and Papa and Psychedelic practiced sparring until he got very good.



Emotionally and cognitively, they practiced meditating, debating, and reading philosophy texts from the ancients.

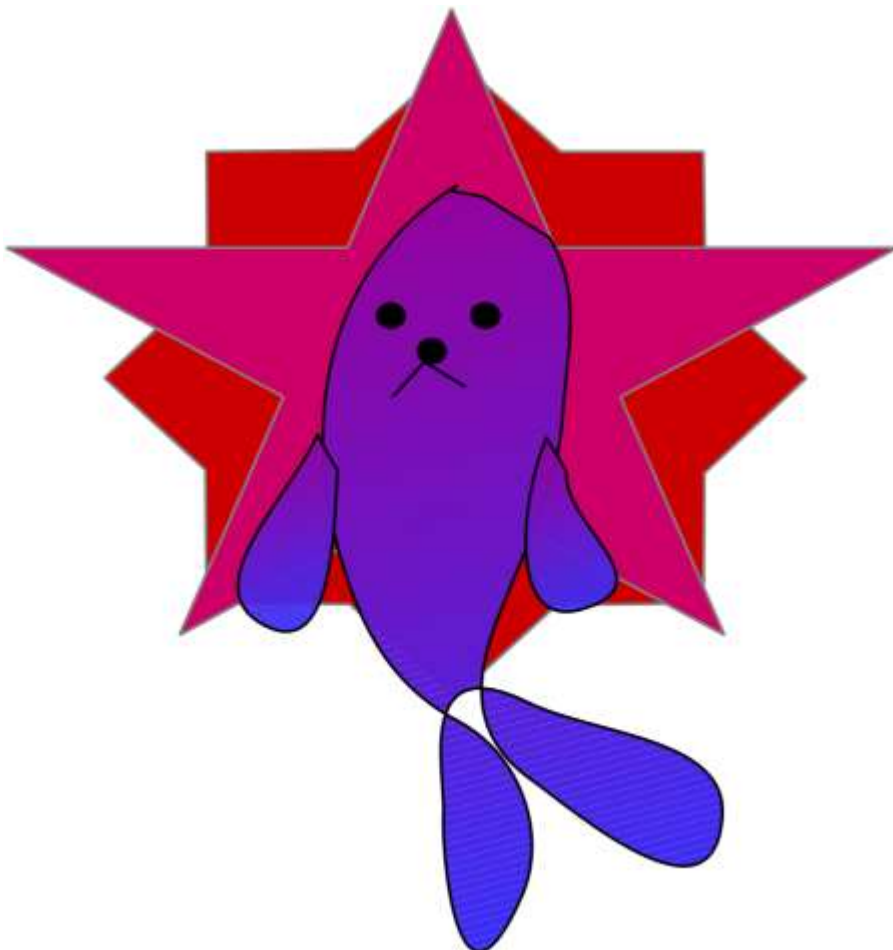
The family also engaged in long discussions around the dinner table about seal rights, environmental concerns, and dealing with discrimination among other important topics.



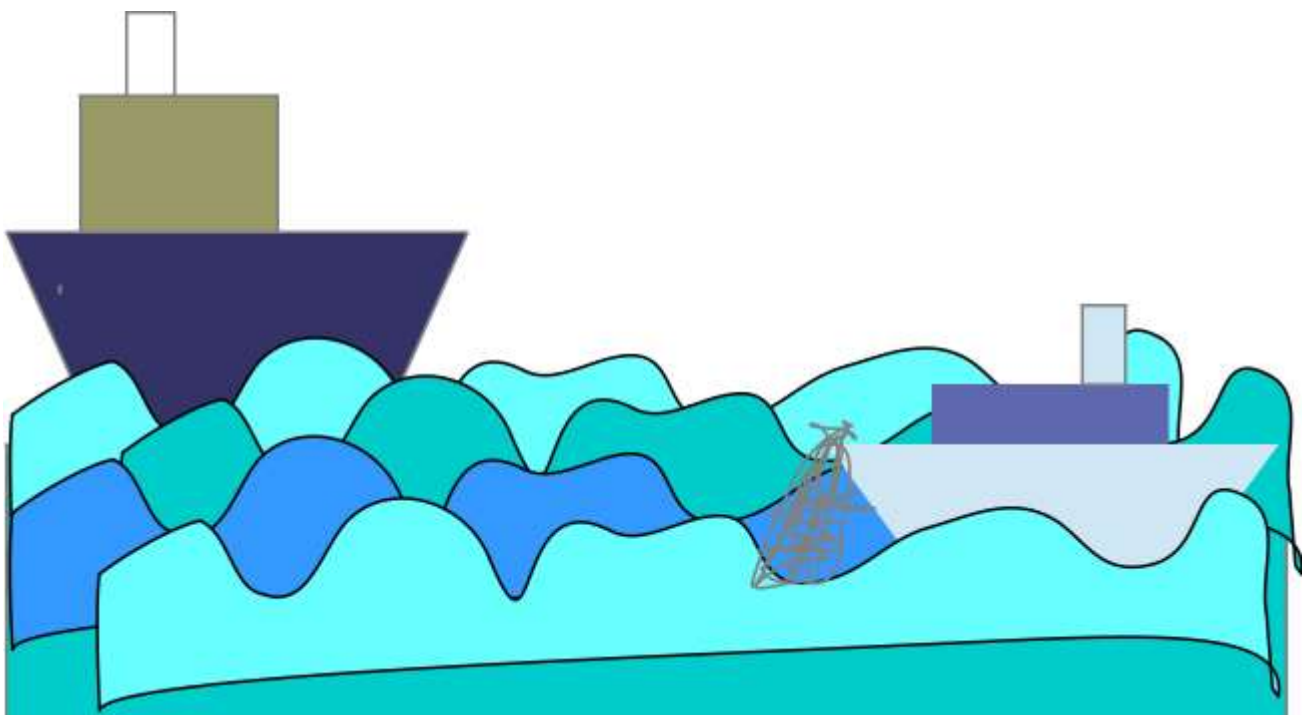
Besides continual physical and emotional strength, Mama seal and Papa seal made sure that Psychedelic knew that his differences made him special and that he shouldn't be afraid of them. If others couldn't see that, the problem was with them, not him. He should be happy in his own skin – psychedelic as it may be, and not worry about what others think or say. He always

remembered this.

As time went by Psychedelic grew into a dashing, competent young seal, and while he still stood out like a sore thumb, and he was still sometimes the butt of the jokes, his emotional and physical maturity allowed him to give back as good as he got. Psychedelic seal would always be different, but he had learned from his father and mother that differences are what make us special and he could in time be stronger for his differences.



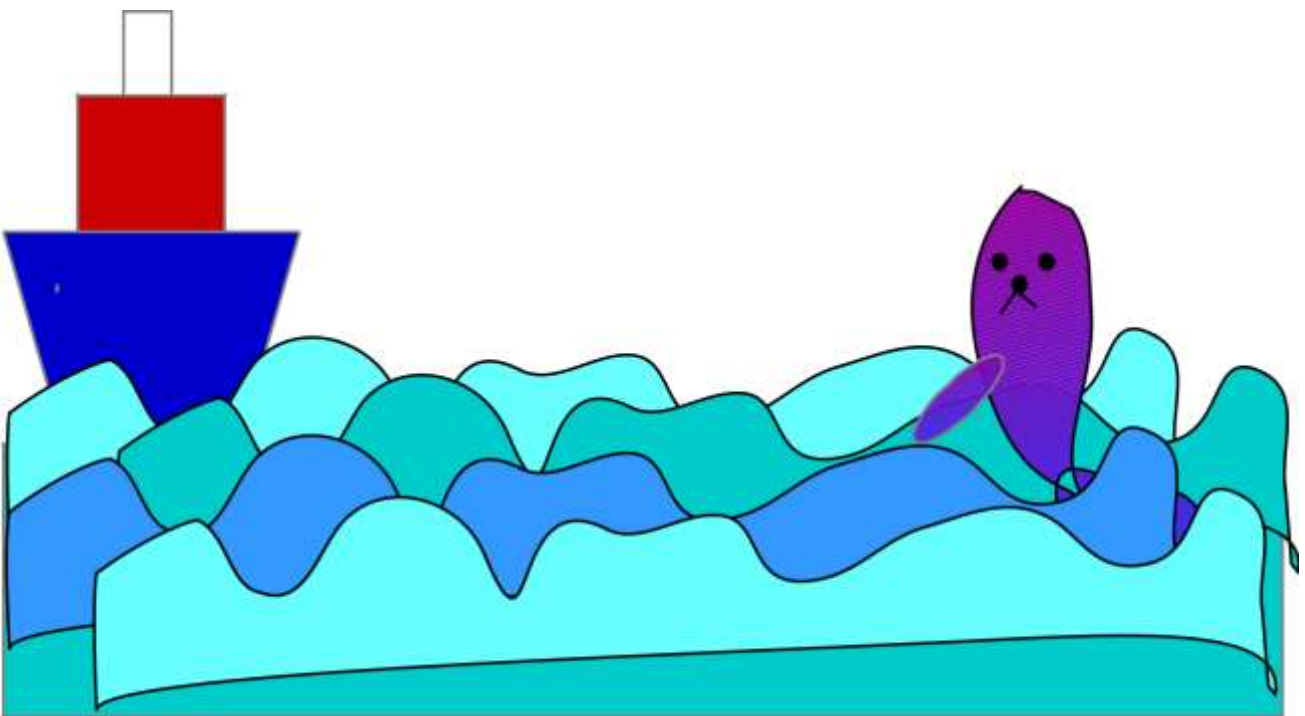
Over time the seals noticed that their resources were getting fewer and farther between. It was apparent that the sea vessels were overfishing the resources. There were research vessels also patrolling, but the seals didn't know how to reach them as they were very far out and it seemed they couldn't see the colony or what the fishing vessels were doing. Suddenly Psychedelic seal had an epiphany. This was HIS time to shine :-).



Digging deep down and sourcing everything he



had learned during his youth – improving his physical and emotional well-being, Psychedelic seal swam as far and as close as he could to the research vessels. When he got out to the vessels he sang out in his very best song. Because of his bright colors and sweet voice, the research vessels took notice immediately. They were intrigued color and clear song and wanted to study the colony because of this.



Psychedelic seal went back to the seal colony not knowing if what he did worked or not.

Low and behold, shortly after, smaller research vehicles started coming in closer to the coast – The researchers had seen Psychedelic seal and they sent smaller vehicles to investigate. Soon the researchers realized the troubles the seals were facing from the overfishing and they began campaigning to the authorities to limit the quotas for fishing in the area. The

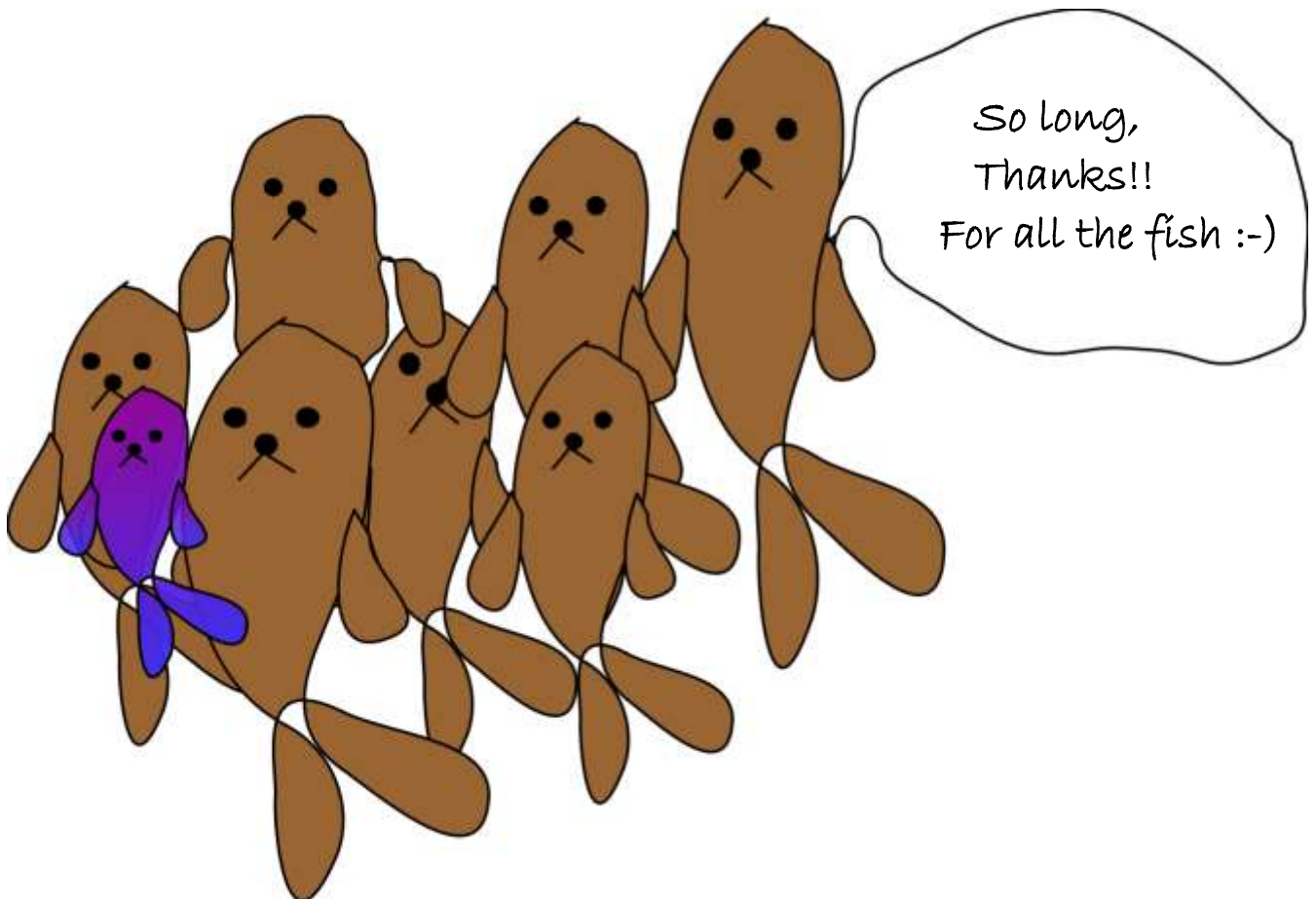
researchers, after more campaigning, established a special protected area around Psychedelic seal's colony and thereafter the colony was for ever



safe. The seals rejoiced and praised Psychedelic seal as a hero responsible for their means of continued survival.

After the colony was protected, Psychedelic seal began promoting anti-discrimination to schools and communities. The colony elders heard his

message and promised to develop programmers for schools to teach children to celebrate diversity and not to discriminate against those who might be different. Going forward as generations learned better behaviors, gradually the younger generation no longer felt the pain of being ostracized for being different.



- THE END -

