

A NUSSBAUM MIND STORYBOOK

Dovi and the Worry Bubbles

A story about checking your thoughts

Blue 1



For ages 3-6



This is Dovi. He is six years old. He can whistle through the gap in his front teeth, and he builds a mean couch-cushion fort. Today, Dovi was invited to his friend Yaakov's birthday party. Dovi is very excited. Mostly.



That night, when the house gets quiet, little bubbles start floating around Dovi's head. Worry-bubbles. "What if nobody plays with me?" whispers one. "What if I spill my juice and everyone laughs?" whispers another.



Dovi's tummy feels tight like a pretzel. He cannot sleep. So he pads down the hall to find Tatty.



Tatty listens to every single bubble. Then he says,
"Thoughts are like bubbles, Dovi. They float in, and
they feel very, very real. But a thought is not always a
fact. A worry-bubble might be wrong."



"How do you know if a bubble is wrong?" asks Dovi.
"You check it," says Tatty. "Ask three questions. Is it really true? What else could happen? And what would I tell a friend who had this bubble?"



Dovi checks his first bubble. "Will NOBODY play with me? Hmm. Wait. Yaakov invited me to his party. That is something a friend does." The worry-bubble floats a little farther away.



So Dovi trades his worry-bubbles for thinking-bubbles. "Nobody will play with me" becomes "I can say hi to one boy." "Everyone will laugh at me" becomes "If I spill, I can wipe it up." Dovi falls asleep with quiet, friendly bubbles.



At the party, the room is full of boys Dovi does not know. Uh oh. A worry-bubble floats right back. "They won't like you," it whispers. But Dovi catches it. Because now he knows exactly what a worry-bubble is.



"Is it really true?" Dovi asks himself. "What else could happen?" He takes a deep breath and says hi to one boy, a boy with freckles and a bright blue yarmulke. The boy grins. "Want to build the fort with me?" he says.



And yes. Dovi DOES spill a little juice. Drip, drip, right on the table. But nobody laughs. Yaakov just hands him a napkin. "The worry-bubble was wrong," thinks Dovi. "Worry-bubbles usually are."



On the walk home, Dovi's bubbles feel light as balloons. "I did it!" says one. "New things can be fun!" says another. And when a new worry-bubble floats by someday, because someday one will, Dovi will know just what to do.

Dovi's Bubble Check

Catch the worry-bubble.

- 1 Notice it. A thought can feel very, very real and still be wrong.

Check it.

- 2 Ask: Is it really true? What else could happen? What would I tell a friend who had this bubble?

Trade it for a thinking-bubble.

- 3 "Nobody will play with me" becomes "I can say hi to one boy." "I will spill" becomes "If I spill, I can wipe it up."

A thought is not always a fact. And a worry-bubble that comes back can always be checked again.