

A NUSSBAUM MIND STORYBOOK

Miri and the Very Big Feeling

A story about naming feelings and calming your body

Yellow 1



For ages 3-6



This is Miri. She is five years old. She loves crunchy pickles, purple crayons, and building towers taller than her baby brother. Today is Friday, and Bubby and Zeidy are coming for Shabbos tonight. Miri has a plan: the tallest tower EVER.



Up, up, up goes the tower. Red block, blue block,
yellow block. Miri stands on her tippy toes. One...
more... block...



CRASH! Down comes the tower. And up, up, UP comes a big, hot feeling. Miri's cheeks feel hot. Her hands squeeze into tight little fists. Inside her chest, something is blowing up like a balloon.



Mommy hears the crash and comes over. "Where do you feel it in your body?" she asks. "In my face," says Miri. "And in my hands." Mommy nods. "Every feeling has a name. When we name a feeling, our whole body knows what to do with it."



Miri thinks hard. "I'm FRUSTRATED!" she says. And something funny happens. Just saying it makes the balloon inside a little bit smaller.



"Now let's help your body calm down," says Mommy.
"Smell the flower..." Miri breathes in slowly, and her belly puffs out. "Now blow out the pretend candles..."
Miri breathes out slowly, and her belly comes softly back in. One, two, three times.



The big feeling does not vanish. But it shrinks small enough to fit in Miri's pocket. "Feelings come in waves," says Mommy. "They roll in, and they roll back out." Miri picks up one block. Then another.



That afternoon, baby Motty grabs Miri's purple crayon. Her FAVORITE purple crayon! Whoosh. The hot feeling comes rushing back. Because that is what feelings do.



But this time, Miri knows just what to do. She stops. She names it: "I am MAD." She smells the flower. She blows out the pretend candles. Then she uses her words: "Motty, that is my crayon. You may have the red one."



By candle-lighting time, the tower stands again by the window. A little crooked. Very wonderful. "That," says Bubby, "is the best tower I have ever seen."



That night Miri snuggles into bed. A big feeling visited her today. It might visit again tomorrow. And that is okay, because Miri knows exactly what to do.

Miri's Calm-Down Steps

Stop.

1

When a very big feeling comes, stop for a moment. Feelings come in waves. They roll in, and they roll back out.

Name the feeling.

2

Say it out loud: mad, sad, frustrated, worried. Naming a feeling helps your whole body know what to do.

Calm your body.

3

Smell the flower: breathe in slowly and let your belly puff out. Blow out the pretend candles: breathe out slowly, soft and long. Three times.

Use your words.

4

Say what you need, kindly. "That is mine. You may have the red one."

A big feeling might visit again tomorrow. That is okay. Miri knows exactly what to do, and now you do too.