

Eva Brlek & Julija Kukec

I'm worthy and I know I'm loved

Illustrations:
Ljiljana Kuruca

+
guidelines
for adults

evenio 
Prika gradiva za otroke

BUILDING RESILIENCE:

• developing positive self-image • self-esteem strategies

Mona spent the whole morning playing at her friend Tina's house. Mom came to pick her up after lunch thinking how Mona would be happy to see her.

When she saw her mom, Mona threw herself into her arms. Mom felt the warmth of that moment, but something caught her attention - Mona's eyes were full of tears.

- I'm happy to see you, Mona - Mom said gently, but she couldn't hide her concern. - I also see that something is bothering you. Shall we talk about it when we get home? I'd love to hear what happened.

Mona nodded and silently left Tina's house.

As they were walking home, Mom was thinking about how to approach the conversation with Mona. She wanted her daughter to feel safe and loved while sharing her worries. She was ready to listen and understand everything that was on the little one's heart.



When they came home, Mom called Mona: – Come, let's sit down and talk.

While slowly taking off her coat, Mona whispered through the tears: – Tina didn't invite me to play at her house again on Saturday. She invited everyone else, except me.

Mom took Mona's paws and said: – Oh, I'm so sorry that Tina didn't invite you and I understand that it made you sad.

– No one likes me, no one wants to hang out with me, I'm not a good friend... – Mona continued, and her mother could hear a little bit of anger in her voice.

– I see that you feel hurt and disappointed. And that's OK. I believe it's not pleasant when a friend doesn't invite you to a gathering that you really want to go to. – Mom hugged Mona and took her to the living room where they continued the conversation.





While they were talking, Mom listened carefully to Mona and didn't interrupt her. She gently encouraged her to tell her how she felt, showing her that she understood her.

Then she took an album with Mona's kindergarten photos from the shelf. Together they looked through the photos and stopped at one where all the children in the group were smiling in front of a large colorful poster.

Mona carefully looked at the faces of her friends, ran her paw over the photo, and said:

– She went to Tina's to play today, but he didn't... This one wasn't invited either.

Mom smiled and said gently: – We can't know why Tina invited some and not others. Maybe if she had invited all the children, there would simply have been too many. Think back to your birthday. You couldn't invite all your friends from kindergarten to the party either. There wasn't enough room for all of them. But that doesn't mean that the friends you didn't invite aren't worthy, good or fun.

Mona nodded in agreement, and her Mom added:

– Sometimes things we don't want and can't change will happen anyway. That is exactly what happened to you today with Tina, who didn't invite you to play at her house again. But that doesn't mean you are not loved, a good person, fun, and a dear friend.

After these encouraging words, Mona hugged her mother tighter, who smiled gently at her, letting her know that everything was okay.

– Let’s go for a walk. Maybe that will help you feel a little bit better – Mom suggested, and Mona quickly put her red coat back on.

They walked through the neighborhood and reached the park, where Mona’s friends from the street suddenly ran to hug her. Pierre jumped around her happily, and Luna joyfully hugged her. Mona’s face brightened.

When Luna let go of her and ran back to the swings with Pierre, her mother stroked Mona’s head and said: – You see, Mona, how happy your friends are to see you. You are a wonderful friend, and many children like to hang out with you. Remember, when you come to kindergarten or your sports group, all the kids are so happy to see you.

Mona smiled and added: - Yes, and my new friend Lara at grandmother’s in the country is also happy when I come there.

Mom nodded: – Most of these kids like you. But with some of them, you feel close, and with some not so much. Likewise, some children will accept you more, and some a little less. And that is perfectly fine. Even though you are not close with, or don’t hang out as much with some of your friends, that doesn’t mean they are not good or fun. That doesn’t mean you are not good and fun. Do you agree?

– Yeah... – Mona whispered softly, feeling much better.

