

Tatjana Gjurković & Tea Knežević

# The little tiger's big worry: I feel scared that I will fail

Illustrations:  
Jelena Brezovec



ANXIETY AND PANIC  
due to societal demands  
and fear of failure  
+  
tips for adults

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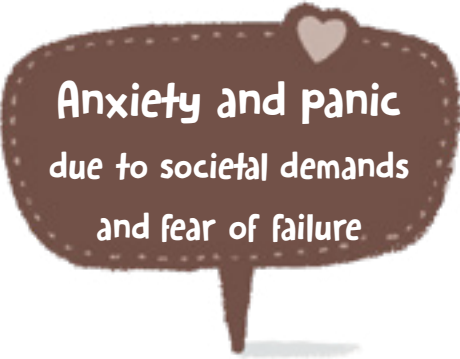
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**Anxiety and panic  
due to societal demands  
and fear of failure**

Until recently, anxiety was mostly mentioned in the context of difficulties in adults. However, experts who work with children have noticed a significant increase in anxiety symptoms among children. Children at younger and younger ages are increasingly troubled by the subjective feeling that something bad will happen in the future and that they will not be able to cope with that situation.

An anxious child is overwhelmed by feelings of deep worry, tension, restlessness, discomfort, confusion, and insecurity. They are hyper-focused on potential sources of threat and have an urge to avoid them, to do everything possible to protect themselves. Child has difficulties relaxing and playing, remembering and learning, falling asleep, wants to isolate, complains of stomach aches, headaches, and other psychosomatic symptoms, refuses activities and socializing that they previously enjoyed, develops phobias or panic attacks, and needs help of an adult to learn to cope with these unpleasant states.

Depending on the cause, we recognize several types of anxiety, and in this picture book we meet a little tiger who suffers from **anxiety due to the social expectations and fear of failure**.

In the story, we meet a little tiger whose father wanted to teach him a very important skill – to roar loudly and bravely. This skill would help him survive in the future, so it was very important to the father that his son learn it as soon as possible. But because tiger was still too young and tender, a quiet, squeaky voice came out of his throat. His father thought he wasn't trying hard enough, and he got very angry and was rude to his son. When it was time to practice roaring the next time, the little tiger experienced a panic attack because he was afraid that he would not be able to meet his parents' demands and expectations and that he would not be accepted for who he was.

As we will see in this story, in order to reduce a child's anxiety, it is necessary for parents to understand that there must be some cause for anxiety and panic reactions in their child and to **learn how to help the child regain the feeling that he is loved, enough, and accepted**. The advice for adults at the end of the picture book can help with this.

And don't forget, your soothing voice, attention, and the closeness you establish with the child you are reading to can greatly help reduce anxiety and restore a sense of security, time, and your little one's overall health.

Enjoy these moments together. ♥

”

I'm a tiger and I live with my mum and dad in the savannah. Something terrible happened to me recently. Dad was very angry and unhappy because he thought that I wasn't trying hard to complete a task, and I got so scared that I started shaking, sweating, my heart was pounding, and I had to run and hide.

I thought I wasn't good enough and would never be able to do what was asked of me.

Now get comfy and listen to my story...





In a large savannah, there lived a cheerful and playful tiger cub. He was curious and he loved to meet new friends. He often enjoyed watching elephants, antelopes, and monkeys passing by or rhinos, ducks, and swans bathing in the river.

Little tiger walked with his mom and dad through the savannah. Every day, they visited their secret spot at the edge of the savannah, where they hid their food. They covered it with leaves and branches to keep other animals from taking it and to make sure they wouldn't go hungry. If other animals got too close, a loud: – Rrrrrrooar! shook the savannah.

Tiger's dad scared them away with his powerful roar. It was so loud that sometimes the little tiger froze in fear.

– It's okay, son. We must defend what is ours. Other animals must learn that they are not allowed to come here – his father would soothe him.

Little tiger didn't mind other animals coming close. He would even play with them if his father didn't always scare them away.





One morning little tiger was heading to the river in search of new adventures, but his father stopped him and said:

– Today you'll come with me to learn how to roar. It's important for you to learn how to roar well so that one day you too can guard our secret place. You must look dangerous and strong. Other animals must be afraid of you so that you can scare them away from our food.

The tiger cub was a little surprised and confused, but he was also curious. Of course he wanted to be strong like his father, so he followed him.

When they reached their food hiding place, his father immediately gave instructions:

– The most important thing is to stand firmly in place and take a deep breath so you can roar like a real big tiger. Watch me.

Dad stood firmly on all fours, with a serious look straight forward, opened his strong big mouth, took a deep breath and roared loudly and long. That sound made the leaves shake, an antelope in the distance suddenly ran away in fear, and even the little tiger felt a tingling sensation in his body.

– Now it's your turn – said dad, and looked at his son.

Little tiger tried to stand just like his dad, he inhaled as much air as he could, raised his head, looked in front of him and... let out his voice as best and as loud as he could.





However, instead of a loud roar, only a squeaky and gentle voice came out. So gentle that the parrot on a nearby tree slowly opened its eyes and smiled softly at the tiger cub trying to roar.

But the father didn't smile. At first, he was surprised, and then he became very angry. He thought that the little one didn't try at all. He expected much more from his son. He wanted him to be strong, powerful, and impressive like him, to be recognized as the king of the savannah one day. He didn't like the squeaky voice he heard at all.

To teach him better, he roared:

– This is the first and the last time you roared like this! Powerful tigers, the biggest cats in the world, don't roar like that! Even the parrot wasn't afraid of you, and neither was this little ant. The savannah has never seen something like that!

When he heard dad's words and saw his big, strong body and his grim face, tiger became very sad and scared. It was hard for him because he disappointed his father. He wanted to be like him - big and strong, but he didn't know how. He tried, but he failed, and he didn't even like the idea of scaring other animals.

„How will I play with them if they're afraid of me?“, he asked himself with worry.

