

Tatjana Gjurković & Tea Knežević

# When angry, bunny hurts himself

Illustrations:  
Jelena Brezovec



Basic emotions:

**ANGER**

+

Advice for parents  
and caregivers

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Tatjana Gjurković i Tea Knežević, magistre psihologije

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## Anger and self-harm in children

If you took this picture book in your hands, you must have encountered the emotion of anger in your child or in a child you care for.

Anger belongs to so-called - basic emotions. Basic emotions appear in all cultures and can be seen in babies from birth. By the end of the 6th month of life, child expresses all four basic emotions (anger, fear, happiness and sadness).

Anger is an emotion extremely focused on others, it can be very strong and intense, and it seeks to be expressed "outwardly". It manifests itself through changes in the body which encourage tension and more impulsive behaviors. As it is much easier to notice a child's behavior than his emotions, adults are often not aware that behind unwanted behavior are a child's unfulfilled emotional needs.

Very often, children don't know how to recognize and process feelings of anger or frustration, which results in aggressive behaviour. Some children will turn the aggressive behavior towards themselves. They will intentionally injure themselves. For example, a child can hit his head with his hands, pull his hair, bite himself, hit his head on the floor or wall. In a milder form, auto aggression manifests itself as nail biting or pinching and scratching oneself.

In that situation, adults should send two important messages to the child: it is okay to feel angry, but it is not okay to behave aggressively towards yourself.

In this picture book you will find a therapeutic story about a bunny who was overwhelmed by anger, and he didn't know how to deal with, so he hurt himself. The story will help your child recognize the emotion of anger that he might feel inside, name it and get a practical example of how to work through the discomfort he feels in his body, but in a healthy way.

At the end of the book, you will find advice for parents and caretakers. Children who express aggressive behaviour are often said to be "naughty"; however, it is important to know that child's behaviour is based and rooted in unpleasant and intense emotions. Child has not yet learned to manage his behaviour under the influence of heavy emotions and needs help from adults to self-regulate.

Reading itself, your soothing voice, the attention and closeness you establish with the child you read to, is a big step on the way to healthy development of your little one.

Enjoy those moments together. ♥



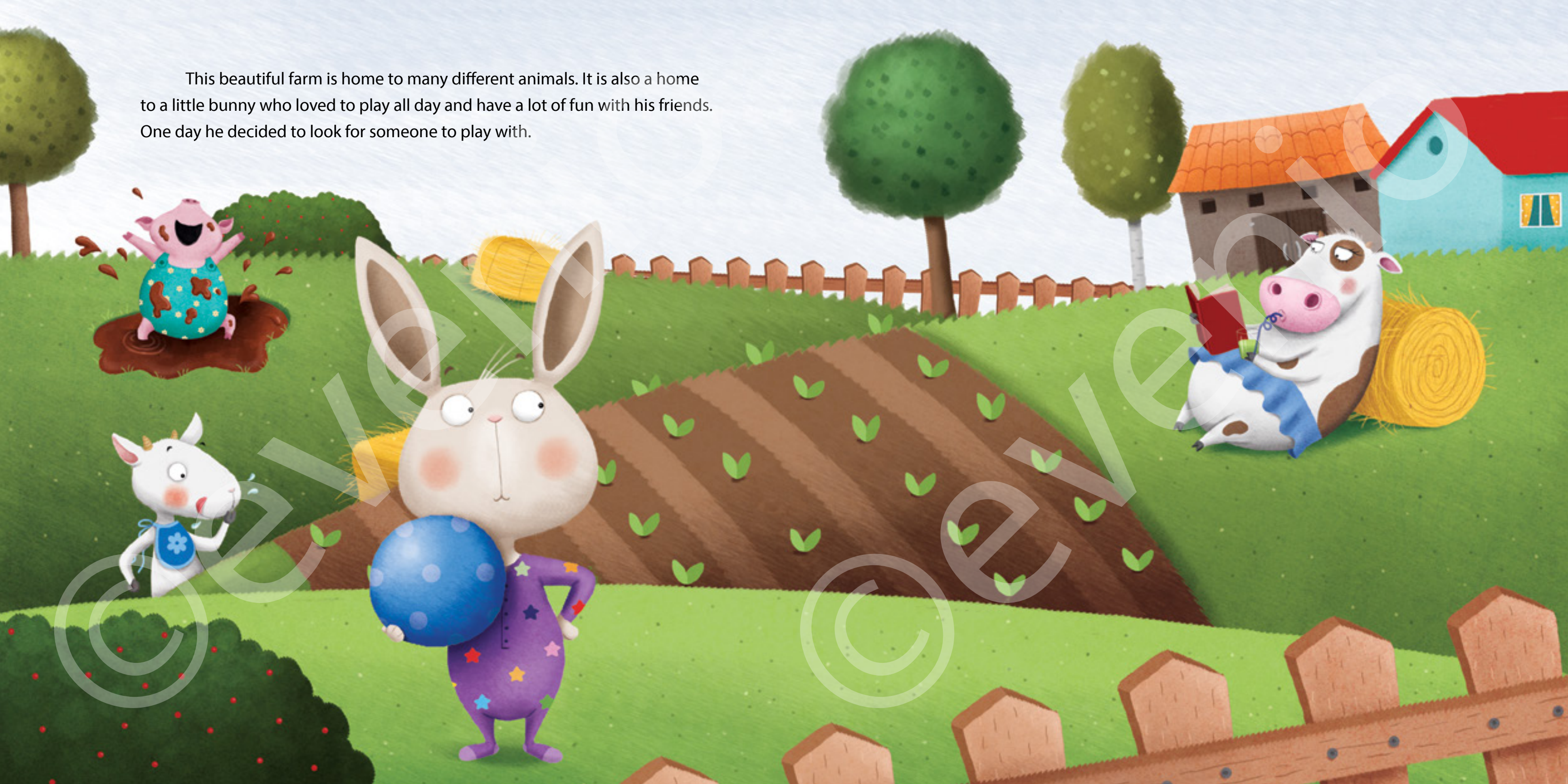
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Hi! I am bunny and I live on a big farm. I like it here because I can play outside all day long! Do you also like to play outside in the sun and fresh air?

I have a lot of friends, but once I got very, very angry with them. I was so angry that I hit a tree with my paw and hurt myself. Oh, that hurt so much!

Sit still, relax and listen to my story...

This beautiful farm is home to many different animals. It is also a home to a little bunny who loved to play all day and have a lot of fun with his friends. One day he decided to look for someone to play with.





– Well... because I like it! – piglet explained.

– Where did this puddle come from? Doesn't it bother you to get so dirty? Aren't you afraid you're going to slip and fall? Let me try! How do you do it? – bunny couldn't stop asking questions and piglet started to lose his patience. He was annoyed by all these questions.

– Bunny, you are so annoying!

I don't want to answer all these questions. Go and play somewhere else – piglet sent the little rabbit away.

Little rabbit was very disappointed. He felt rejected and didn't understand why piglet treated him this way.

He heard some noise behind the hay and rushed to see what is going on there. His friend piglet was jumping and playing in the mud.

– Hi piglet! What are you doing? – he asked.

– I'm jumping in the muddy puddle! – little pig said enthusiastically.

"How strange", bunny thought.

– But why are you jumping in the muddy puddle? – bunny was curious.

“Who am I going to play with?” bunny asked himself.

While he was thinking, suddenly he heard some loud noise that sounded like a song:

– Baaaah-baaaah! Kwee-kwee!

Little bunny decided to explore these strange sounds. Where are they coming from?

He went straight to the top of the hill. There was a little sheep playing with a little duck.

It seemed like they were having a lot of fun.

This game seemed very interesting. Again, the little bunny quickly asked a lot of questions to understand how the game is played, and then asked if he could play with the sheep instead of duck. Girls didn't like his proposal, they were not happy with being interrupted in the middle of their game, so they told the rabbit they will not play with him.

– Go somewhere else! The two of us want to play alone now.

– What are you two doing? –  
bunny asked them curiously.

– We are playing the mimic game.  
When duck sings something, I try to  
imitate her. And then she tries to imitate  
me – little sheep explained.

