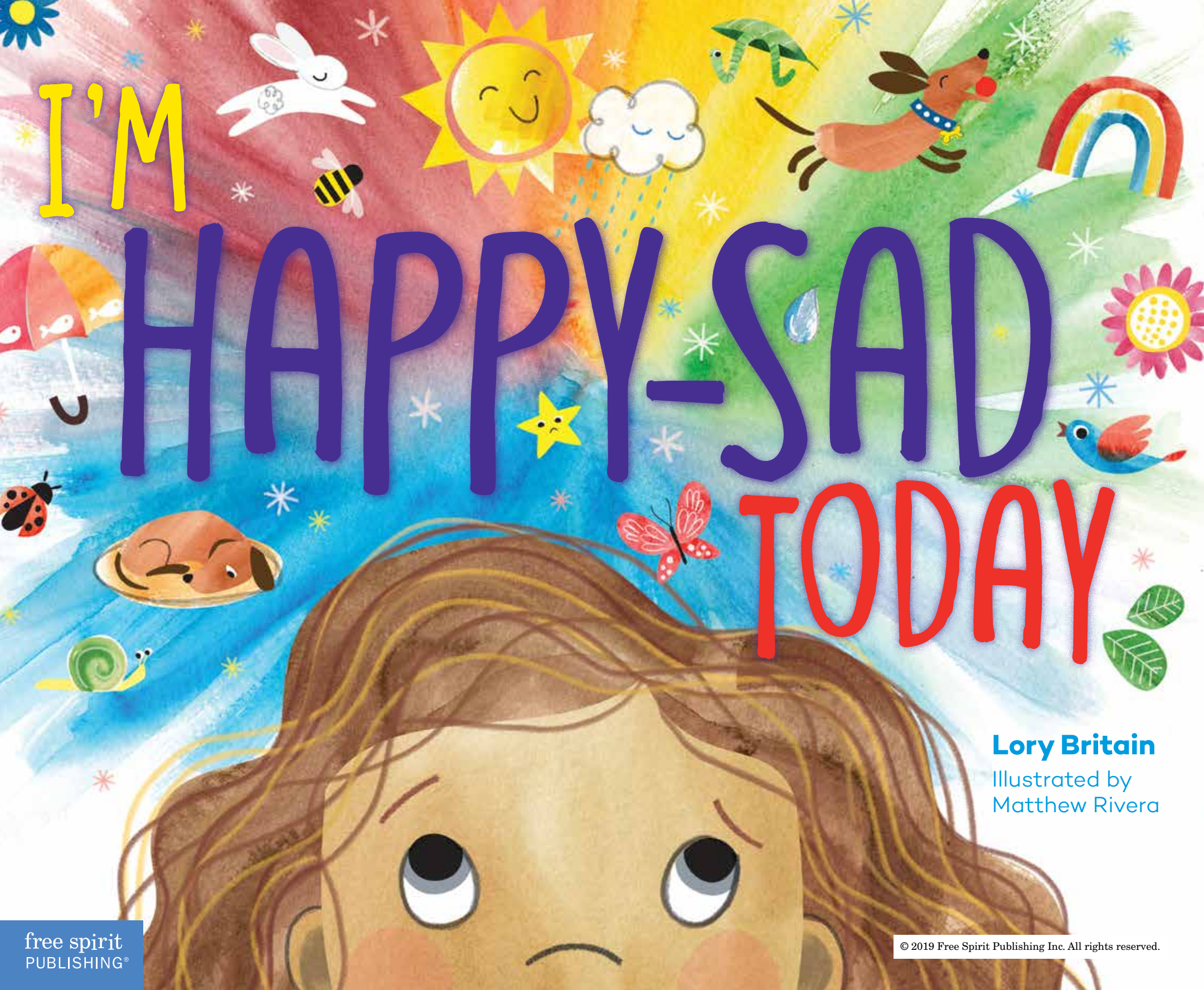
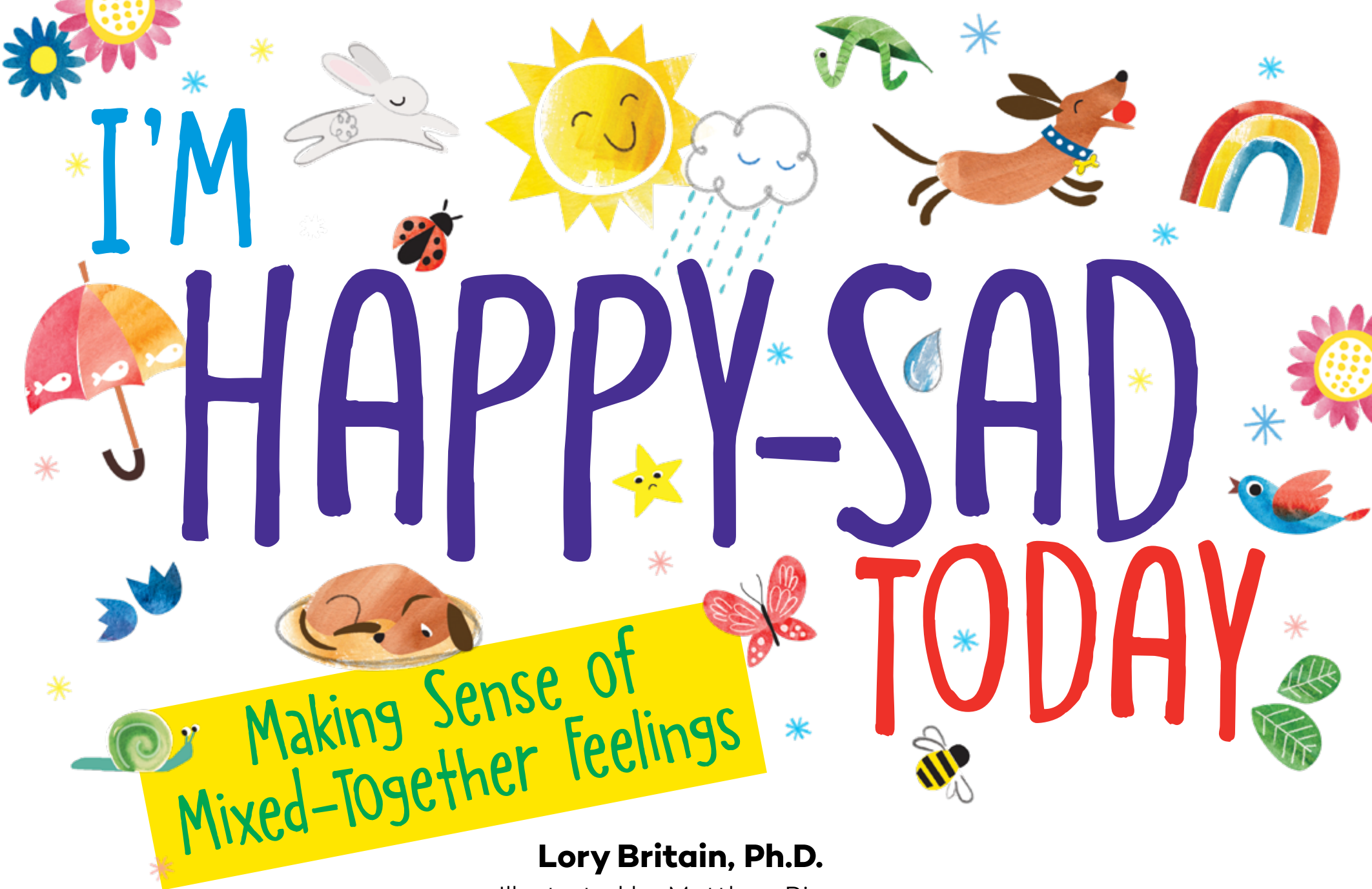


I'M

HAPPY-SAD TODAY

Lory Britain
Illustrated by
Matthew Rivera





Lory Britain, Ph.D.

Illustrated by Matthew Rivera

free spirit

PUBLISHING®



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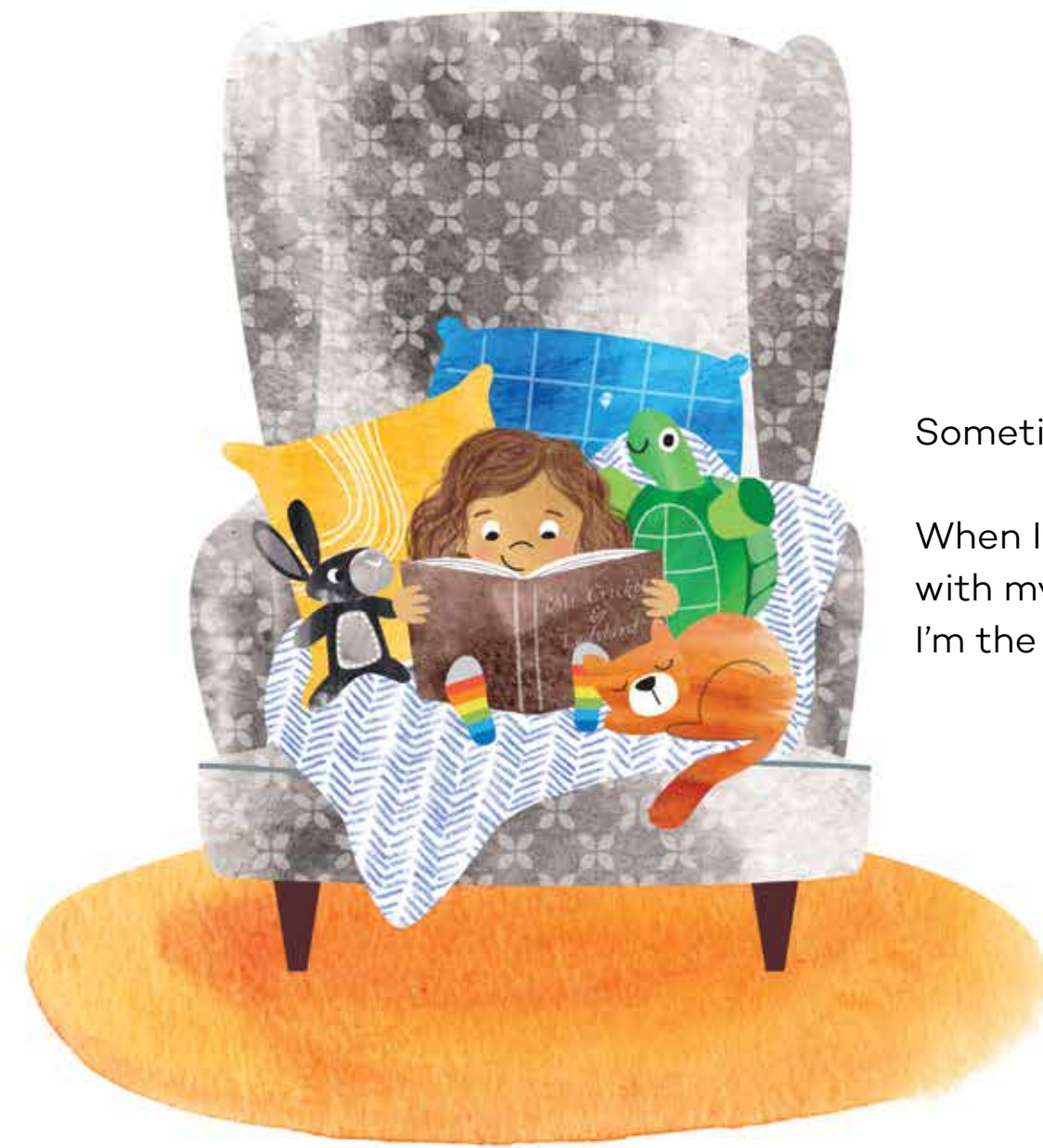
Contact edsales@freespirit.com for pricing information on multiple quantity purchases.

Thanks and gratitude to my wonderful, older granddaughter and editor, Momo, for telling me one afternoon that she was “SMAD” and inspiring me to write this book. And with much appreciation for my amazing younger granddaughter, Eliana, who shares her big ideas and big feelings with me.





Sometimes I just feel **happy** . . . that's all!
I feel the "noisy, giggly, jump and run" kind of happy.



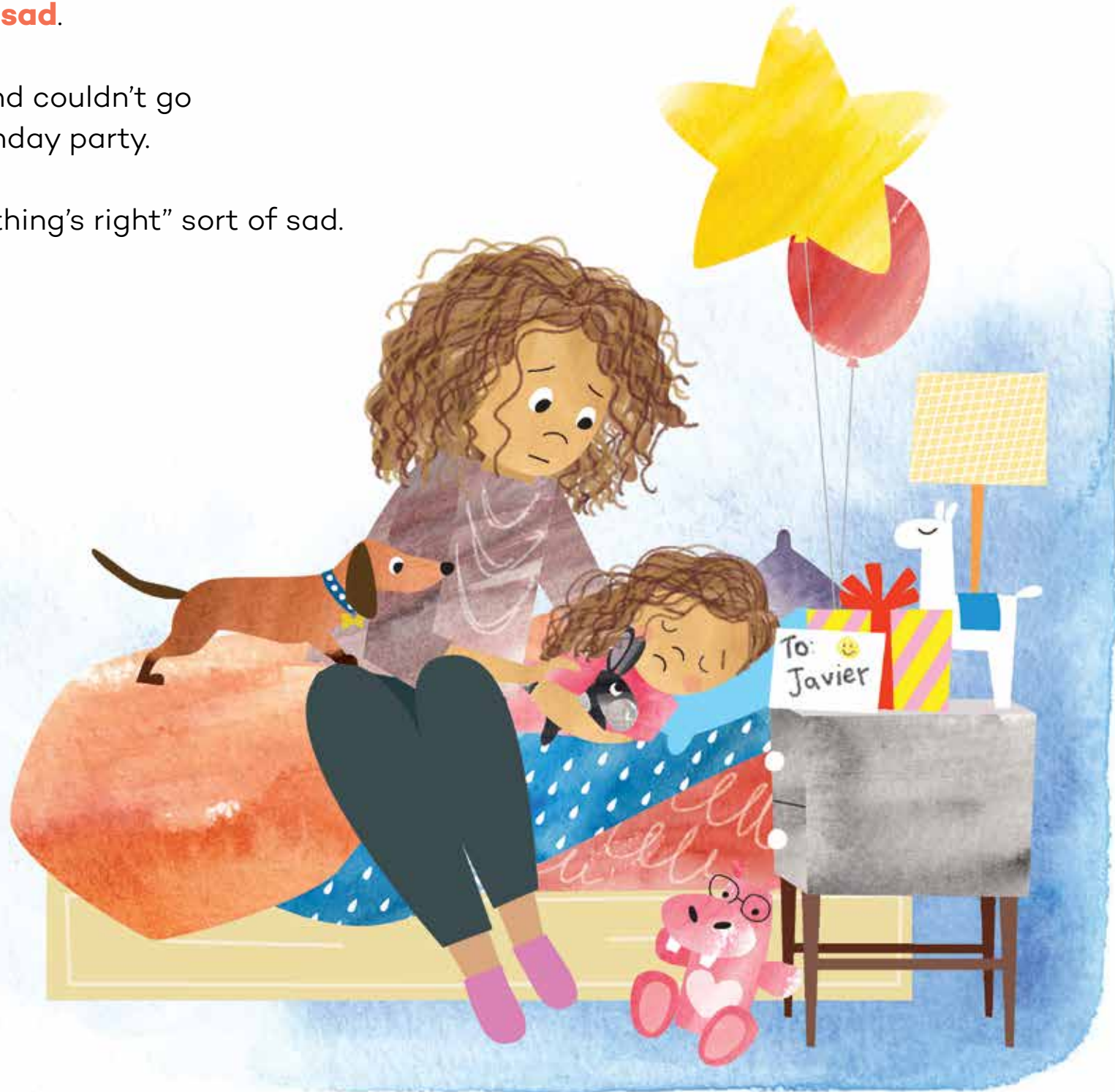
Sometimes, I feel a different kind of **happy**.

When I'm cozy in my favorite spot
with my favorite book,
I'm the quiet kind of happy.

Other times, I feel **sad**.

Once I was sick and couldn't go
to my friend's birthday party.

I had a "crying, nothing's right" sort of sad.



The day our neighbors moved away,
I was a different kind of **sad**.

I didn't smile for that whole day
or even part of the next day.

Talking and Learning About Feelings: A Guide for Caring Adults



Young children often face challenging and even conflicting feelings—just as adults do. And—just as they can be for adults—these feelings can be confusing and difficult to handle. For kids, these emotions might arise during common childhood situations such as a first-time sleepover or starting school, or during serious and difficult situations involving worry, trauma, or abuse. *I'm Happy-Sad Today* helps children begin to understand and express their complex, mixed-together feelings without having to choose one feeling over another. Whether you're a teacher, a parent, or other adult, you can use this book as a starting point to help children develop essential skills for expressing all their feelings today and in the future.

How to Read This Book with Children

As you read and discuss this book, be responsive to children by validating what they share and by matching your pace, remarks, and questions to their comments. Be attentive to their body language, pausing to give them opportunities to share their thoughts. Be sensitive to how and when children want to share about their feelings.

Sometimes children will want to listen to you read this book from beginning to end without interruption. Or children might be interested in hearing the book read from beginning to end, with frequent pauses for discussion. You might also choose to focus on only one or two pages at a time, allowing children to share similar feelings that are sparked by the pictures and words.

Whether you include discussion during the reading or at the end, ask open-ended questions and offer comments to encourage children to go deeper into their feelings and experiences, and to validate the importance of their feelings. Here are some examples.

- “That might be confusing sometimes. Thank you for sharing about all your feelings.”
- “How did you feel when you went to a new friend’s home for the first time?”

- “Tell me about a time you also felt nervous and excited at once.”
- “What feelings do you have when you try something new?”
- “Sometimes I also feel excited and then I feel shy when I _____.”
- “What feelings do you feel when you _____?”

Remember, open-ended questions and comments encourage children to go deeper to process and express their feelings and experiences. For example, consider the difference between asking a child, “Do you feel sad?” and saying, “I am interested in hearing about all the feelings you are having right now,” or “Tell me about how you are feeling now.” The first closed-ended question may only elicit a “yes” or “no” response, while the second approach is more likely to result in children sharing specific feelings and why they feel that way.

As you discuss feelings with children, keep in mind that while multiple emotions can sometimes occur at the same moment, there are other times when many different feelings might come in quick succession. Children, like adults, may be caught off guard by this cascade of feelings. And sometimes, one feeling can mask or hide another feeling. Also remember that children may not show their feelings through facial expressions, even when they are experiencing strong emotions.



Note: During a group reading, if a child divulges information about a serious issue such as violence or abuse, validate their feelings, thank them for sharing, and arrange to listen to the child later in an appropriate way and place. Also be sure that you are aware of policies in your program, school, or district about reporting this type of information.

Strategies for Supporting Children's Social-Emotional Development

Model Self-Expression

As adults, our words, actions, and body language are a powerful way of conveying to children values and ways of being in the world. When you are struggling to unlatch a cabinet, for example, you might say, “I feel frustrated that this is stuck, but I am determined to get it open.” You are giving children the implicit message that a person can have more than one feeling at once.

Encourage Children to Express Themselves with Words

Encourage children to share about all their feelings using their words. Help them learn and know accurate names for their feelings, and guide them to use these words even when their feelings are running high. Your body language, including being at the child’s level and eye contact, is also a form of encouragement. Allowing for unrushed, relaxed time together creates an environment conducive to talking and sharing.

Validate and Reinforce

Validate children’s words and actions by saying, “Thank you for sharing all your big [or deep] feelings with me.” This focus on multiple feelings sends the message that all feelings are okay, including when they happen at the same time. Remember to help children separate their feelings from their actions and understand that while all feelings are acceptable, all actions are not. One example might be to say, “All of your feelings are okay to have, but it is *not* okay to hit.”

Consider the Current Situation

If you feel a child needs particular support, evaluate the physical environment and what is happening in it. Are other children waiting at the door to go outside or trying to get their coats on? Is a baby crying and in need of timely care? Also consider the emotional receptiveness and physical status of the child who needs emotional support. Is the child tired or hungry? Perhaps the child wants comforting touches before even starting to talk about feelings. These considerations and more will guide you as you think about how to best support children in the

moment. Depending on the situation, you may want to offer a quick, friendly response and check in again with the child later, or you may take the time to offer more support right away.

Also remember to “seize the moment.” Be attentive to a child’s words and body language in a given moment and try to support that child’s immediate needs. For example, suppose a parent says to you, “Alicia’s favorite aunt will be picking her up from school today.” You sense from Alicia’s body language that she might be a bit anxious about this. After the parent leaves, consider Alicia’s immediate emotional receptiveness to discussion. If she is really upset, a hug or soft shoulder touch might be more appropriate than words. Or perhaps walking over to a classroom feeling chart or pulling out this book (or another book on feelings) would best support Alicia. Again, you will still need to consider the specifics of the moment. For example, if you have three children standing nearby who are waiting to wash finger paint off their hands, it may be most realistic to make a simple, supportive statement to Alicia and then follow up with her in a more substantial way later.

Encourage Kids to Think About How Others Feel

Becoming emotionally aware also means learning to understand the perspective of others and accept all the feelings other people may have. It means reflecting on how actions and circumstances affect others. During a challenging interaction between two children, consider using questions and comments to develop this awareness and understanding. For example, if one child excludes another, you might say, “I am wondering how José feels when you won’t play with him,” or “What feelings do you think Bai has right now?” or “Rosie, can you tell Ahmad how you are feeling right now?”

