

When Big Feelings Come

Here's how to gently bring the same words, prayers, and body practices covered in the **Collection Two** stories into the moments that count.

Martin the Rabbit

WORRY-THOUGHTS BEFORE SOMETHING HARD



When to use this: The night before a recital, test, or dentist appointment. Anytime the "what ifs" start spinning and your child can't settle.

What's happening with your kiddo: Their mind is making pictures of everything going wrong. The body responds as if the bad thing is already happening. They're caught in a loop their brain doesn't yet know how to step out of.

REINFORCE THE STORY SKILLS

- ♦ Worry-thoughts feel real, but most never come true.
- ♦ You can notice a worry-thought and let it float by.
- ♦ Pope John Paul II said it: Be not afraid. Jesus is with us.

TRY TOGETHER

CATCHPHRASES TO REPEAT: "That's a worry-thought. That hasn't happened yet." "Be not afraid."

BODY PRACTICE: Press feet into the ground → hand on chest, feel heartbeat → slow breath in and out

Crispin the Crow

PAUSING BEFORE CORRECTING FRIENDS



When to use this: Sibling play. Group settings. Playdates. Anytime you see your child about to "peck" i.e. blurt out a correction, snatch something away, or sharply tell a friend they're doing it wrong.

What's happening: They notice something they think is wrong, and the words come flying out before they can stop them. They're not trying to be mean: their body feels a tightness, an urgency, like the correction has to come out right now.

Underneath is often a child who values getting things right and hasn't yet learned that being right and being kind aren't always the same.

REINFORCE THE STORY SKILLS

- ♦ Love is kind (1 Corinthians 13)
- ♦ Before correcting, ask two questions: *Is it kind? Is it needed?*
- ♦ If the answer is no, you can let the little thing go

TRY TOGETHER

CATCHPHRASES TO REPEAT: "Pause before you peck." "Is it kind? Is it needed?" "Love is kind."

BODY PRACTICE: Notice the "ruffled feathers" feeling: tight shoulders, words wanting to fly out → slow breath → close your beak → soft body

The best time to teach a skill is **before** the meltdown. the best time to practice it is **during** one.

Brigid the Bumblebee



SETTLING A BUZZY BODY AFTER A BIG DAY

When to use this: Right after a high-stimulation outing: birthday party, a long playdate, a fun event. In the car ride home or after you get home. Anytime your child seems wound-up, snappy, or unable to settle even though the fun is over.

What's happening with your kiddo: Their body is still buzzing. The fun is done, but their nervous system hasn't caught up. They might feel "too big" inside — like they could burst. Snapping at a sibling or refusing to rest isn't disobedience; it's a body that doesn't yet know how to slow down.

REINFORCE THE STORY SKILLS

- ✦ Your body has to slow down little by little, not all at once
- ✦ It's okay to still feel buzzy after a big day
- ✦ Jesus is close, even when your body feels too loud to be still

TRY TOGETHER

CATCHPHRASES TO REPEAT: "Jesus, give me peace."

BODY PRACTICE: Buzz it out loud → softer → softer → quiet hum → slow breath in and out

Clare the Fawn



BIG FEELINGS WHEN SMALL THINGS DON'T GO THEIR WAY

When to use this: Mid-meltdown over a "small" thing: the wrong cup, the wrong shoes, the wrong seat. In the car when the day has stacked up. Anytime your tender-hearted child needs validation rather than minimization.

What's happening with your kiddo: Small disappointments are stacking. Each "no" that seems tiny to you is real to them, and the cumulative weight is what breaks the dam. By the time they're crying about the song getting switched off, they're not crying about the song. They're crying about all of it. Tender-hearted children feel disappointment deeply, and that's not something to "fix," it's something to honor.

REINFORCE THE STORY SKILLS

- ✦ Disappointment is a real feeling. It's not bad. It means you cared.
- ✦ It's okay to feel disappointed AND there are still good things waiting for you. Both can be true.
- ✦ Jesus sees every tear and stays with you

TRY TOGETHER

CATCHPHRASE TO REPEAT: "It's okay to feel disappointed."

BODY PRACTICE: Wrap your arms around yourself in a hug → slow breath → talk to Jesus in your heart

PARENT SCRIPT FROM THE STORY: "I see your tears. Jesus sees them too."
"You wanted [the cup / the seat / the song]. And you didn't get it. That is disappointing."