

BUZZY BEES IN MY BELLY

ABOUT:

Winston is unusual for a Scotty. Normally, they are aggressive, feisty, and energetic. While he is feisty and energetic in play, his personality is definitely chill, except when it comes to bath time groomer appointments, and vet visits. Thinking about his personality and his dislikes, I was inspired to write this story for children who sometimes feel anxious in hopes they will connect with Winston and follow his lead.

PURPOSE:

At one time or another, I've witnessed anxiety in all my fourteen grandchildren, I remember working through it with my five children, as well as memories of my being anxious as a child. Anxiety comes from many scenarios, changes in family relationships, moving to a new house in a different school district, friend problems, struggling in school, and feeling embarrassed in front of their peers (which was my problem.) Most of the time anxiety is manageable. Anxiety is something nature built inside of us to help us recognize and respond to threats of danger. However, when it comes from abuse or trauma manifesting physically as in a panic disorder, a school counselor needs to be involved.

SUGGESTIONS:

When anxiety strikes, our minds run to a dark place. To help bring reality back into focus encourage deep breathing. Suggest breathing in through the nose as if smelling a flower and blowing out through the mouth as if blowing bubbles. Helping a child to think about what they like, playing a game, and letting them run, bounce a ball, sing, or create also helps. What doesn't help is to minimize what they are feeling. In this story, Sugar validates Winston's worries about the vet. The anxiety children feel is very real to them. It is wise to validate and empathize with what they are feeling and then help them to navigate their anxiety.

IDEAS:

Learn about veterinarians. The different kinds, such as small animals, large animals, and exotic animals.

Read stories from James Herriot, the author of All Creatures Great and Small.

Ask a veterinarian to speak to your class.

Have a show and tell about pets.