

A book series for children  
How to understand your emotions: **SADNESS**

# No Hedgehog Without Prickles



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Story + exercises

**DKMS**   
POKONAJMY NOWOTWORY KRWI



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# No Hedgehog Without Prickles

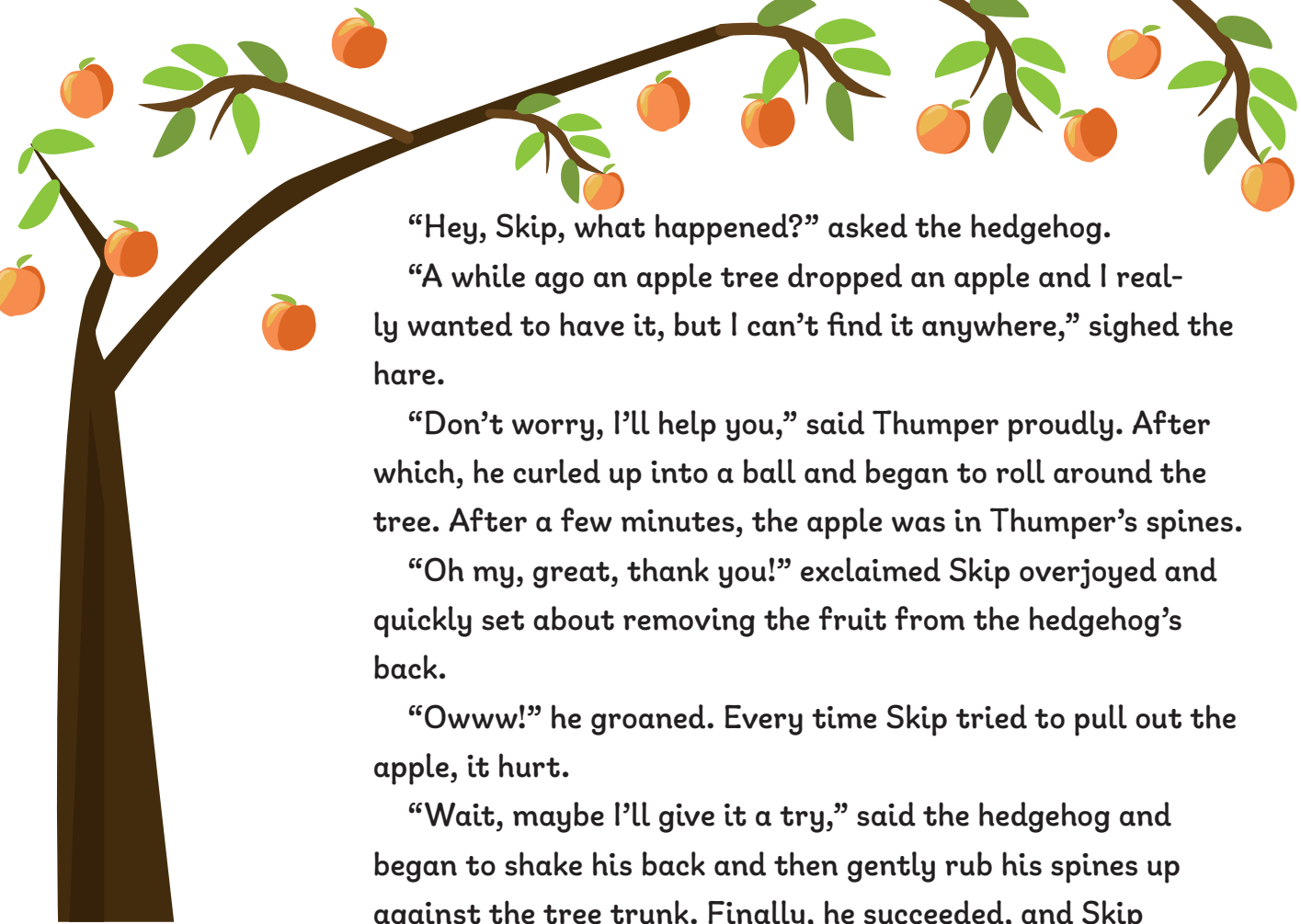
Morning came and the beautiful autumn sun peeked into the hedgehogs' nest. It tickled the noses of the hedgehog Mum, the hedgehog Dad and their son Thumper, who was the only one of the whole family already awake.

Suddenly, he heard someone's voice:

“Where did it go? Where are you?”

Thumper cautiously put his snout outside the burrow and after just a moment saw Skip the hare hopping back and forth in the tall grass. He looked very concerned, as if he had lost something important.





“Hey, Skip, what happened?” asked the hedgehog.

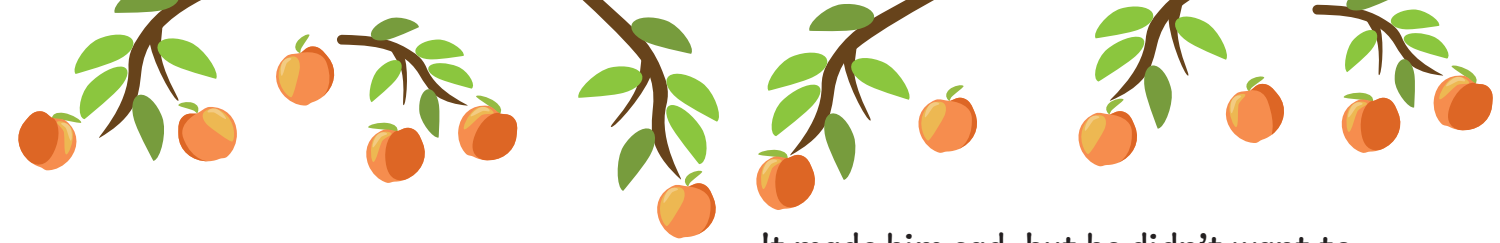
“A while ago an apple tree dropped an apple and I really wanted to have it, but I can’t find it anywhere,” sighed the hare.

“Don’t worry, I’ll help you,” said Thumper proudly. After which, he curled up into a ball and began to roll around the tree. After a few minutes, the apple was in Thumper’s spines.

“Oh my, great, thank you!” exclaimed Skip overjoyed and quickly set about removing the fruit from the hedgehog’s back.

“Owww!” he groaned. Every time Skip tried to pull out the apple, it hurt.

“Wait, maybe I’ll give it a try,” said the hedgehog and began to shake his back and then gently rub his spines up against the tree trunk. Finally, he succeeded, and Skip thanked him again and hopped away. But Thumper was upset. Looking at his hopping friend, he could see that Skip was looking at his pricked paw. And Thumper was almost certain that if it weren’t for his spines, Skip would have stayed with him longer, they may have even played together.



It made him sad, but he didn’t want to cry for anything in the world. After all, he was going home to a house where his Mum and Dad were still fast asleep, and if they woke up and saw that he had been crying, they would surely be worried.

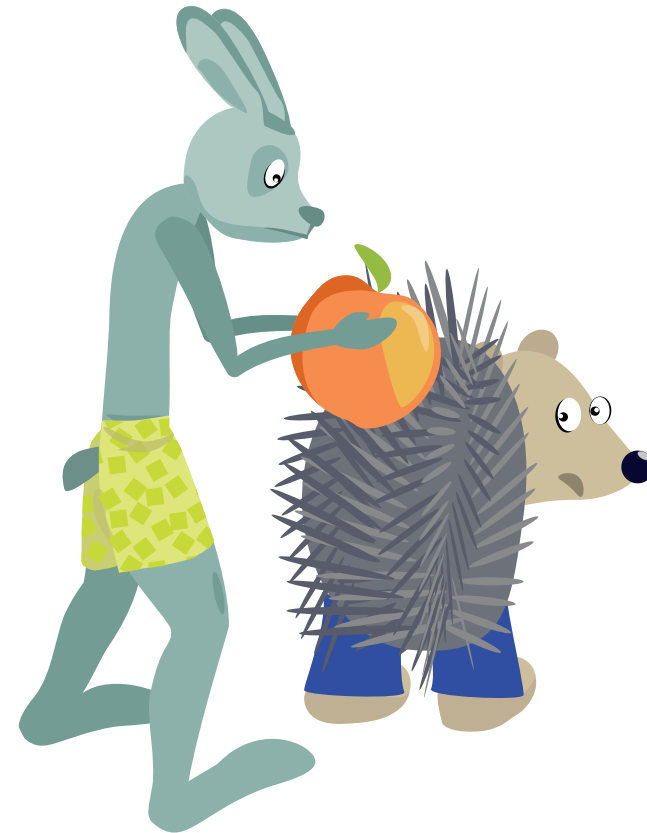
But, when he was just about to enter his burrow, he met the squirrel, Nimble.

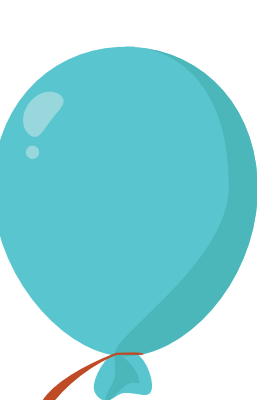
“Hey, Thumper, why are you so sad?” a familiar voice asked.

“Because, because...,” Thumper was about to confess the truth, but Nimble was ahead of him.

“I know, I know, you’re bored. But don’t worry, because I have a remedy for that.”

“A remedy?” the hedgehog almost jumped for joy. But after a while, he realized that this was a cure for boredom, not sadness.





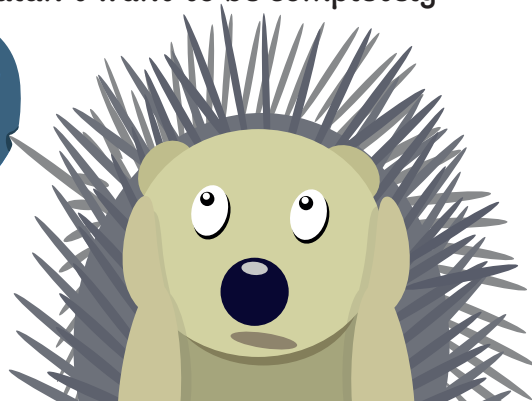
“The best!” yelled Nimble in excitement, leaping from branch to branch. “I’d like to invite you to my birthday party, today at noon. You’ll see, it will be great fun, there will be balloons, we will play ball and swim in the pool.”

“But I don’t swim very well,” groaned Thumper.

“Doesn’t matter, you don’t have to. Everyone will get an inflatable pool ring,” she added exultantly and disappeared into the bushes.

Thumper was happy at first, but after a moment he imagined Nimble’s birthday balloons pierced by his spines, then the ball, and then immediately afterwards his pool ring or, worse, someone else’s... To complicate matters even more, at the birthday party there would certainly be Skip with his pricked paw. Or maybe he wouldn’t even be there because his paw hurt too much...

Thumper felt more and more regret, he didn’t want to hurt his friends and spoil their fun, but he didn’t want to be completely alone either.



When he returned to the burrow, the feeling of sadness, grief and emptiness grew with each passing moment.

Hedgehog Mum and hedgehog Dad were still sleeping. Thumper quietly climbed into his bed, wrapped himself in a blanket and burst into tears. But he did it very quietly, after all, he did not want to wake his parents.





In his head, he was still searching for an answer as to what he should do. But the harder it became to find it, the sadder he became. Finally he thought it would be better not to go to Nimble's party. But making this decision did not make the sadness go away.

"Sniff, sniff," he sobbed wrapping himself up more and more in the blanket.

"What happened my dear," asked Dad, who was awakened by his son's sobbing.

"I...," Thumper started and burst into tears again.

"It's okay," Dad said tenderly. "Now close your eyes for a moment and take three deep breaths."

Thumper obediently closed his eyes and breathed with all his hedgehog strength.

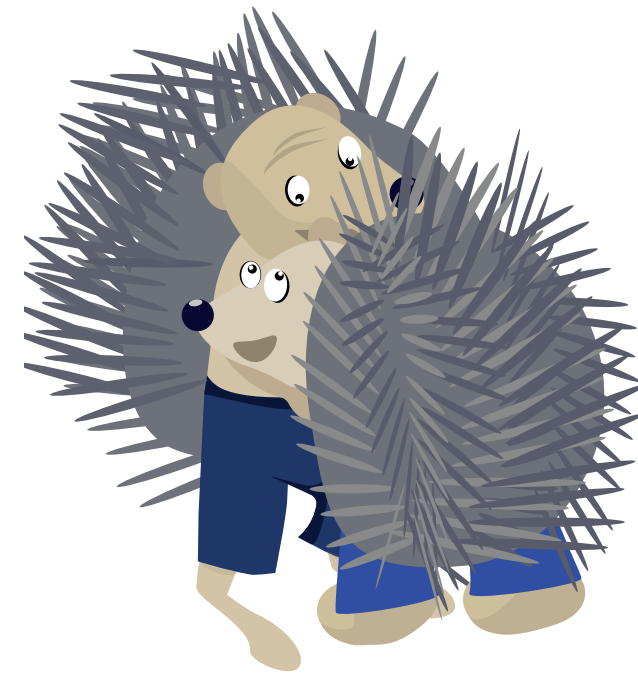
"It doesn't help," he groaned.

"Nothing, nothing at all?" asked Dad.

"Well, maybe a little," whispered Thumper, because just at that moment he felt a little lighter.

"Well, you see, and now come here to me," Daddy said calmly.

"I can't really," groaned Thumper, pointing with his paw to the blanket he was wrapped in.



"Oh dear, indeed!" smiled Dad. "It happens sometimes," he added, and walked over to his son to help him get out of the blanket Thumper had wrapped himself so tightly in that almost all his spines had pierced the material.

When they finally managed to free Thumper from the threads entangling him, the hedgehog burst into tears again.

Then Dad hugged him tightly, so tightly that their spines came into contact with each other and for a moment they looked like one big ball of needles.

This hug helped the hedgehog to calm down.

"You know Dad, it's all because of these prickles," he whispered. "They are so disturbing," he groaned and told his dad about everything.



“Why can’t I be like other animals that don’t have prickles?”

Dad smiled.

“Because you are special Thumper, your spines or prickles as you call them are part of you and they are what keep you safe. But remember, it’s not about shielding yourself from your friends; you can use your spines to protect them.”

“Really?” “But how?” asked Thumper hopefully.

Then Dad told him a story:

“When I was young, I also had friends and there were times when I accidentally pricked someone, and I was very sad about it.”

“Really?” “You were sad, too?”

“Yes, I was,” replied Dad. “But, once when we were playing around, a fox sneaked up on us. Then I curled up into a tight, spiky ball and started to hiss. My friends hid behind my back, and the fox got scared and left.”

“Oh, my,” enthused Thumper.

“And now we need to have a little training, I’ll teach you to control your spines,” Dad said.

For the next few hours, he explained to his son how to arrange the spines on his back. When to lay them down and when to ruffle them.

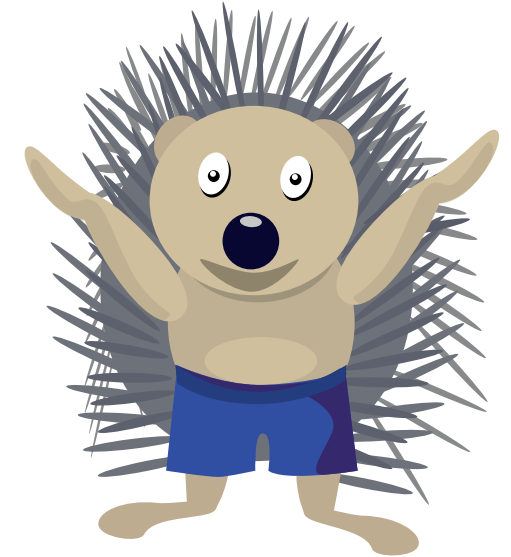
“When you want to play, you have to lay down your spines, so no one will accidentally get pricked. But, if you see danger approaching...”

“For example, a fox,” Thumper said. “That’s when I have to ruffle my spines.”

“That’s right,” smiled Dad. “By doing so, you will protect not only yourself, but also those who are with you.”

On that day, the hedgehog understood that he was not alone, as he had loving parents and friends. He learnt that sadness is a feeling that shouldn’t be hidden, it’s worth talking about, because even Dad had been sad once.

Now he just had to explain to his friends why he had those spines and that he was just learning how to use them, because being a hedgehog is a great responsibility.



## GAMES RELATED TO THE NO HEDGEHOG WITHOUT PRICKLES STORY

NAME OF EMOTION: **SADNESS/SORROW**

**1. “Hedgehog”** (to be done with another person or on your own after preparing materials)

**Goal:** identifying sadness

**Essential materials:**

- wooden sticks (e.g. from ice cream),
- plasticine, modelling clay etc.,
- a marker.

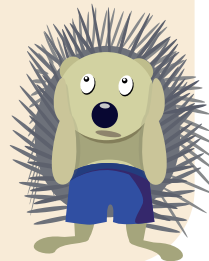
**Description of the game:** during the game, children make their own hedgehogs from the chosen material, such as plasticine. Hedgehog spines will be made from sticks with names of sorrows written on them by the children using markers. In addition, while creating hedgehog spines from individual sticks, the child can also talk about each sorrow.

**Instructions:** Today you will create your own hedgehog. You can make it look any way you want. It will be a special hedgehog, because each of its spines will represent one of your sorrows. We will write/draw your sorrows on the sticks.

**Tip:** the caregiver can also create their hedgehog.

**Possible modifications:**

- in order to make our game more interesting, while making a hedgehog we can use available art materials,
- if no materials are available, the hedgehog can be drawn on paper.

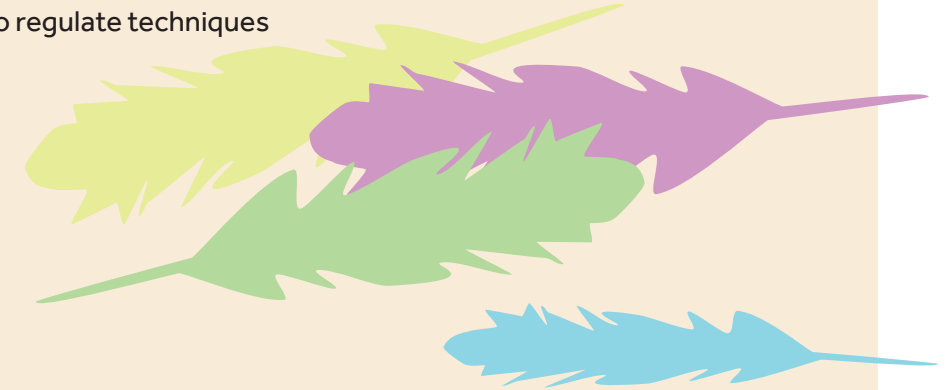


**2. “Ways to deal with sorrows”** – to be done with another person (once educated, it will be possible to do on your own)

**Goal:** to introduce how to regulate techniques

**Essential materials:**

- coloured feathers,
- a mascot.



**Description of the game:** we introduce suggestions for regulating intense sadness in the form of a game. One technique is based on breathing and mindfulness and the other on regulating oneself through contact – hugging (if the child is in isolation and contact with the caregiver is not possible, then a favourite mascot can help).

**Instructions:** Do you remember how Thumper felt?... Sometimes we are also sad, and it is difficult. Thumper’s dad showed him how he could cope. We will also learn this today. First, we will learn how we can breathe to feel better. Feathers will help us. Take one and place it on your hand. Now recall the last time you were sad and now try exhale all your sadness so that it blows the feather off your hand. Let it fly as far as possible.

When you feel sad, you can also hug me, if I (the caregiver) am not near, you could hug your favourite mascot.

**Tip:** when playing with breathing, you can also close your eyes and imagine sadness.

# 3.

**“Everyone’s a Thumper sometimes”** – creating a story (to be done with another person)

**Goal:** identifying sadness

**Essential materials:** in a modified version, we can use finger puppets.

**Description of the game:** we can tell each other when we felt like Thumper and what we did, what happened, and how we coped. We can also create stories, using finger puppets – tell their sad stories similar to Thumper’s situation.

**Instructions:** Do you know that sometimes everyone feels like Thumper? Have you ever felt that way too? Or maybe you are feeling like that right now? Tell me about a time when you felt like Thumper.

Here we have finger puppets and mascots, they also felt the way Thumper did. Do you know why? Let’s think, why they might have felt that way. What’s your idea? (Space for stories).





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