

A book series for teens

How to understand your emotions: **SADNESS**

The Accidental ROSE

Edyta Zarębska
Magdalena Pytel



Story + exercises

DKMS 
POKONAJMY NOWOTWORY KRWI



**DZIECIAKI
CHOJRAKI**

Author: Edyta Zarębska


The Accidental Rose

The rising sun was casting gentle rays on the white world, painting the sky in shades of pink and purple. Wherever it reached the ground, the snow glittered like thousands of diamonds shimmering like a calm sheet of water.

Every now and then, black dots would appear here and there. The number of dots was growing exponentially by the minute, as if they attracted one another. And before the sun appeared in all its glory, the whiteness of the fields and meadows looked like a black and white chessboard.


As you got closer, the black dots took shape, their feathers glistened in the morning light. Their heads equipped with massive grey beaks made them look majestic, creating a sense of distance and fear of a close encounter. However, one step forward, one movement that made the snow crust creak would make them all instantly float in the air like a black cloud. Screaming in outrage, they would obscure the sun and disappear behind the edge of the forest.





That was also the case now. A flock of hungry crows were scooping up scraps of food from under the snow when suddenly a sound, inaudible to the human ear, scared them off but this time not all of them took flight. One of the birds remained on the ground, too busy extracting a frozen delicacy, or perhaps too trusting due to his young age, or wanting at all costs to take with him what he had just found. However, the world decided to teach him that hunger is not the worst thing that could happen to him that morning.


In an instant the thing that he was so focused on was no longer important; he felt a tug on his tail, and when he turned, he saw a fox. He fluttered his wings with all his might, trying to defend himself. He struggled for a while and finally broke out of the grip and took flight. However, he didn't fly as intended, he couldn't control his tail, and instead of soaring to the highest branch, he slammed into thick thorny bushes.





He was in pain, and in an effort to get out of the prickly bushes, he flapped his wings mindlessly, losing the feathers that were so important to him. After numerous attempts he managed to break free, but this time too he did not soar high; the lack of several flight and tail feathers made him squat on one of the lower branches of the tree. Fortunately, the fox gave up, chased away by the other crows, who tried as hard as they could to discourage him from another attack.



2



That morning changed the young crow's life for a long time. He was unable to fly away with the others to a safe place. Despite his attempts, he had to stay. From then on, the other crows kept guard at his side, taking turns in threes, getting food for him and keeping him warm with their feathers.



Although the winter days were short, time dragged on for the young crow. He felt heartbreaking sadness and grief, as well as anger at himself, because not long ago he had thought something like this could never happen to him, that it happens to others. He did not want to eat the food brought by the crows, he missed flying and freedom too much. Suddenly the tree he chose to sit in, seemingly for a moment, became his cage.

As time passed, he began to experience sadness for yet another reason, he felt that because of him, the other crows doing guard duty were not free either.

Then came spring, followed by summer. Crows went on increasingly long flights, enjoying the benefits of the fields and meadows. They no longer had to keep him warm, only watch him at night, while during the day they kept an eye on him from afar.

3

The young crow no longer wanted to be a burden to others, he knew how absorbing these seasons of the year were and how much of a sacrifice it was for the guard crows to care for him.

Trying not to make any noise, he jumped over to a branch of another tree, then another, and another, and that's how he found himself deep in the forest. When he looked around, the meadow and crows were no longer in sight. He felt an unpleasant sting in his heart, and the sadness that had accompanied him for a long time was joined by uncertainty as to whether he had done the right thing.

Then in the midst of trees he noticed a rose bush, its branches full of flowers.

"Where did you come from?" he asked and, not expecting an answer, jumped down not far from the bush. The smell of rose blossoms was intoxicating, but the crow did not dare to get closer – seeing the thorns on the rose he remembered too well his escape into the thorny bushes.

"I'm here because of you," he heard a melodious voice. He looked around but saw no one.

"It is me, Rose. I am answering your question."

The crow took a few steps back and tried to turn back, flapping its wings clumsily.

"Don't be scared, don't go away," Rose said sadly. "I won't hurt you, my roots keep me in one place, so I won't move towards you, and I can't even



touch you. Stay at least for a while, it's been so long since I've seen a crow."

The crow calmed down a bit but was still unsure whether to trust her. The very fact that she was speaking to him made him feel insecure.

"What do you mean that you are here because of me?" he finally asked.

"One spring you brought the fruit of a wild rose here, cracked it, and then the seeds spilled out. You may have wanted to eat them, but something scared you off. And then... one of the seeds sprouted and here I am," said the rose.

"So, it's my fault," whispered the crow.

"Fault?" said rose in surprise. "Thanks to you, I have good soil, clean air and the wonderful company of plants and animals."

"But you are the only rose bush here," said the crow. "You certainly feel lonely and can't see the world."

"This is my world," she smiled. "Do not forget that I am a plant and my world, wherever I grow, is always limited.

And you, what are you doing here? Where is your flock? And what happened to your feathers?" she asked.



The crow lowered his head, he wasn't sure if he wanted to tell his story, after all, a rose is just a flower, so she certainly wouldn't understand him.

There was a long silence broken only by the sound of trees and branches.

Rose didn't push, didn't ask the same question a second time, she was just there, and it was most likely her presence and the calmness she exuded that made the crow feel safe.

He couldn't remember the last time he felt this way. Perhaps when he was still at full strength, close to the flock, or perhaps in the family nest? However, the feeling was so strong that he told Rose everything that had happened to him, without even knowing when.

"I understand your sadness," she said, "but the departure from friends, withdrawal and isolation make it worse."

"I told you why I left, I don't want to be a burden."

"This is how you perceive it," Rose sighed. "Do you feel better because you left?"

"No," the crow groaned. "I feel even worse."

"Sadness is an emotion that tells us what really matters to us," Rose said.

"What matters to you is the ability to fly, but also the closeness of other crows. By leaving, you expose yourself to even more sadness and loneliness.

And who knows, maybe they'll be sorry too when they don't find you in your usual place, and they'll start to worry," Rose said.

"It's very difficult when you don't know what's going on with someone you love."

"How do you know all this?" the crow asked.

"Sometimes I also feel sad," she replied.

"But you said you have everything you need," he said, surprised.

"That's what I said, but sometimes when the birds, butterflies and bees don't visit me for a long time, I start to miss them and then I feel depressed.

We all have the right to be sad and everyone feels it sometimes. You have your sorrow, and I have a different one, because what is important to us is different. But this feeling also has a good side – sadness can be creative."

"Creative?" the crow asked, puzzled.

"Yes, because it makes us think, encourages us to make a change in our lives so that we don't feel it so often."

"But what can you do to no longer feel sadness?" he asked, because he couldn't imagine what changes could be made by a rose attached by its roots to the ground and waiting for visitors.

"It seems like nothing, right?" she smiled. "And yet my sadness made me want to be happier, to admire birds and sunshine more often, to enjoy the flutter of butterfly wings more often."



“How do you want to accomplish this? You can’t force the sun, the butterflies or the birds to visit you more often,” said the crow.

“Of course not, because it is out of my control. All I can do is invite them with my scent.”

“But this still means waiting,” the crow sighed.

“But I can do something else,” Rose whispered. “I can start to climb. I can start hugging the tree and climbing upwards with all my strength, then I have a chance to be closer to what I want and what makes me happy.”

“I hadn’t thought of that,” admitted the crow. “And I... what should I do?” he asked.

“You have to think, I told you what I know, but it is you who has to make the choice.”

The crow got lost in thoughts and remained silent until sunset.

“I think I should go back to my tree, to my friends who care about me. I should not refuse food, and I should hope that the feathers will soon grow back,” he sighed. “I’m glad I could talk to you, and you know, it seems to me that in sorrow, apart from our own thoughts, it is equally important to meet someone who will listen to us,” said the crow.

Rose smiled.

“I’ll be visiting as often as possible!” he called out in farewell.

On his way back, he realized that his sadness also had creative power. It was the empathy that developed in him and made him leave the flock to give back freedom to other crows. But it was Rose that made him realize that he could use his empathy in a better way – by going back and doing his best to recover faster. This way he could show his friends his gratitude for their care and give them back their freedom without leaving them.

When he reached his tree, an unusual sight greeted him. Instead of the three crows usually sitting there, there was now a whole flock of them, occupying all the tree branches and calling him.

The crow smiled for the first time in a long time and thought that returning to his flock was the best decision he had made. But he didn’t forget about Rose, now he had extra motivation to take care of himself and get stronger faster so he could fly again, explore the world and tell Rose about its beauty.



1

GAMES RELATED TO THE ACCIDENTAL ROSE STORY

NAME OF EMOTION: **SADNESS/SORROW**



“Melting sorrows” (to be done with another person)

Goal: to educate about sadness/sorrow.

Essential materials:

- ice cubes,
- two cups,
- half a cup of warm water.

Description of the game: together with the child conduct an experiment. Put ice cubes into two cups – one is empty, and the other contains warm water. In which cup will the ice cubes dissolve faster? We use this experiment to explain the nature of sadness, which disappears faster when we can experience it with others, receive support from them (a symbol of warm water). When we isolate ourselves, it also passes, just like any emotion, but it takes longer.

Instructions: Today we will conduct an experiment together like real scientists. Remember in the story The Accidental Rose, the crows searched for food under the snow, and the treats were frozen. Ice is very hard, but it melts when exposed to heat – I have some cubes for you today, take a look. We’ll drop one cube into an empty cup, and the other into warm water. Which do you think will melt first? It’s the same with sadness – when we isolate ourselves and are alone with sadness, it lasts longer (melting cubes in an empty cup), and when we let others be close by (melting cubes in a cup of warm water) and support us, comfort us, we can feel better much faster. In addition, experiencing emotions together binds us and builds bonds.

Possible modifications: we can ask the child to name their sorrows – each sorrow will be symbolized by a separate ice cube. Then together we can drop them into the cup of warm water.

2

“Value cards” (to be done on your own)

Goal: to educate about emotions, identify sadness and related values.

Essential materials:

- art supplies,
- kartoniki lub prostokąty z papieru wielkości kart do gry.

Description of the game: the aim of the game is to create value cards on which the child places what is important to them, while observing and naming needs, the lack of which causes sadness.

Instructions: Remember when Rose said to Crow that sadness is an emotion that shows what matters to us, what is important. For the crow it was his ability to fly. What is important to you? Think about it... The absence of what makes you sad? We have some blank cards here – go ahead and create your value cards. You can write or draw what is important to you. When they’re ready, I’d love to hear about your values and sorrows.

3

“Petal or feather” – what’s the story (to be done with another person).

Goal: to educate on ways to support people who are feeling sad, to develop empathy; to express sadness.

Essential materials:

- a black feather,
- a rose petal.



Description of the game: an adult places a feather in one clenched fist and a rose petal in the other. The child picks one of them at random, pointing to the selected hand. Picking a feather means telling your own story about sadness, and picking a petal means recalling a story about supporting someone who is sad, what helps when we are sad? They can also be stories from books and movies or invented by the child.

Instructions: We will play a game of storytelling, but what the stories will be about will be decided by chance. Here I have a feather that symbolizes sorrows. When you draw it, your task will be to tell a sad story. You can talk about what makes you sad, or you can recall a character

from a book or movie. You can create your own story. When you draw a rose petal, then the story will be about supporting someone who was sad – it will be about helping others who are sad. These can be stories you remember, or you can create your own.

Tip: it's a good idea to take turns drawing lots to tell a story, once an adult and once a child – this will help build the atmosphere of fun.

TIPS ON HOW TO TALK TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT SADNESS:

EDUCATION

One of the most important facts about sadness, worth mentioning, is that each emotion is expressed in its own way, and in the case of sadness, it is through tears. It is worth teaching your child that there is nothing wrong with crying and it is necessary, cleansing and at the same time sends the message to others that we are sad and need support.



It is also worth taking a moment to talk about values. This can be done by referring to the content of the story: Remember how Rose spoke about how sadness tells us what is important to us. We can develop this issue by playing "my value cards," while sensitizing the child to search for their own values, "looking at themselves."

In educating about sadness, it is also worth touching on the topic of empathy, sensitivity to sadness and suffering of others.

WHAT CAN I DO?

We can talk to the child about their needs when they are sad. Does the child want a hug then, or do they want to be held by the hand? Does the child want to talk or just sit close by in silence? Let's remember that every child is different. This means that the needs will also be different and should be respected.

Sadness is an emotion that, unfortunately, is often suppressed in line with the message that "I must be brave or strong," and crying is a sign of weakness. It is worth building healthy beliefs that true courage is to share sadness, express it and cry.

Projekt został sfinansowany ze środków Dotacja Fundacji DKMS

Wydawca: Dzieciaki Chojraki
Stowarzyszenie Wspierania Transplantacji Szpiku i Onkologii Dziecięcej

Autorzy: Edyta Zarębska, Magdalena Pytel

Redaktor prowadzący: Katarzyna Grunt-Segień

Koordinator wydawniczy: Marlena Fiedorow

Korekta: Anna Kołodziejaska

Projekt graficzny, skład i łamanie: IlustraDorka D&D Domagała

Poznań 2023

Wydanie I

Druk: Drukarnia Akcygraf

