



Stillwater

Family Guides



Stillwater is beloved by children for its engaging storytelling, and by parents and caregivers for the thoughtful messages conveyed in the show. Each episode is designed to promote mindfulness and to model coping strategies for the ups and downs in any child's day. These guides provide discussion prompts, activities, and growth opportunities for you and your child to explore together while watching *Stillwater*. Here are some general tips for using these guides.

Episode Summary

Each episode of *Stillwater* has two parts, and each guide summarizes both so you can talk to your child even if you missed part of it. By talking about the show, you can help your child understand it better.

Talk to Your Child

- The questions are designed to help children reflect on the show and to draw connections to their own lives. Tailor these questions to your child's experiences with friendships and challenging emotions.
- Every segment of *Stillwater* contains a story within a story. *Stillwater* presents a tale that helps the other characters shift their perspective on their own situation. Help your child recognize the messages *Stillwater* is conveying and to see how stories are a powerful way to reframe your own circumstances.

Mindfulness Moments

Stillwater was created with the intention of helping children learn and practice basic mindfulness skills to help them throughout their lives. You will often notice *Stillwater* and the other characters engaging in activities such as the below:






- Take deep breaths.
- Pay attention to nature and your surroundings.
- Feel gratitude.
- Notice your senses.
- Count slowly.
- Notice and accept your feelings.

These guides help you spot mindfulness moments throughout the *Stillwater* episodes and practice them with your child. You can also use these activities throughout the day.



Resilience Builder

The Yale Child Study Center-Scholastic Collaborative for Child and Family Resilience has identified five basic pillars for helping children build their ability to cope with challenging situations. *Stillwater* reflects these same strategies. These guides identify the essential capacities (shown below) and provide suggestions for how to foster them with your child at home.

Developing Strong Relationships	Forming Self-Identities	Supporting Curiosity and Motivation	Engaging Flexible Thinking	Demonstrating Altruism
<p>Form strong connections to people who can support you.</p> 	<p>Have a strong sense of who you are and develop confidence.</p> 	<p>Be curious about the world around you and motivated to learn.</p> 	<p>Welcome new information and ideas and think creatively.</p> 	<p>Act for the benefit of your family, friends, and community.</p> 

Extend the Episode

Each guide includes a suggested activity that you can use to help reinforce the concepts explored in each episode. The time your child spends watching *Stillwater* is most meaningful when it sparks discussion, reflection, and activities throughout the day!

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Season 3, Episode 1: Waiting / Bake Sale



In the first segment, Karl is eagerly awaiting Stillwater's return. He's so excited that he finds it difficult to wait. Michael and Addy try to help him pass the time. But when Stillwater's train is delayed, Karl's impatience and frustration grow. Karl manages to pass the time with the help of Michael and Addy by using his imagination, telling stories, and being present in the moment. Stillwater finally arrives with a surprise for them: he's brought his niece Koo. Though the walk home seems far, time passes quickly as they play games and share stories along the way.



In the second segment, Addy offers to make cupcakes for a charity bake sale. One by one, friends ask her to take on additional baking projects. Eager to help, Addy agrees. But in trying to do too much for others, she becomes stressed out and her baking efforts suffer. While Addy is outside, Stillwater joins her and helps her realize that while it's important to be helpful, it's also important to recognize when to say "no." Once she tells her friends she won't be able to help, they all pitch in and have a great time making and selling their baked goods together.

Here are some conversation starters you can ask your child to help them make personal connections to the episode:

- Waiting can be so hard! What helped Karl while he was waiting for Stillwater? Tell me about a time when waiting was hard for you. What helps the most when you are trying to pass the time?
- Why do you think Addy said yes to all her friends who asked her to make extra treats for the bake sale? What could she have done differently?
- Sometimes it's hard to say no, especially when a friend or grown-up asks for help. How could Addy have said no with kindness?
- It feels good to help others, and it also can feel good to ask others to help you! Tell me about a time you've helped someone and a time you've asked for help.
- Stillwater tells a story about a traveler carrying additional packages. How does that story help Addy think about her situation?

Mindfulness Moment

Paying attention to details in nature is a wonderful way to experience mindfulness. On the walk home in segment one, the group stops along the wooded path to listen to the sounds and take in the sights of the forest.

Take a moment with your child to step outside together, be still, and notice your surroundings. Think about the smells, sounds, sights, and the way the breeze feels on your skin.



Resilience Builder

Giving and Receiving Help In the second segment, Addy gets joy out of baking for others. She wants to support the charity and help each of her friends with their projects. Having the desire to help others and being an active part of your community builds a child's inner strength and support network. Similarly, the ability to ask others for help and saying "no" when over-extended is a valuable skill. You can help your child practice giving and receiving help around your home and in your community.

Extend the Episode

Baking with Love Bake something together for a friend or family member. It could be a meal for someone who is having a hard time, cupcakes to surprise a neighbor, or banana bread for the school crossing guard. As you bake, talk about how great it will feel to give the food, and how pleased your recipients will be to know you thought about them!



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Season 3, Episode 2: Captain Koo / Digging Deeper



In the first segment, Karl and Koo are playing space explorers. Deep into their imaginary flight, two of Karl's friends show up. Karl is excited to incorporate them into their make-believe adventure, but Koo feels shy and runs off. When Karl and his friends try to find her, they find Stillwater instead and explain the situation. He encourages Karl to make introductions, and Koo joins them for one of Stillwater's stories. The tale of two dancing sisters helps Koo and Karl discuss her shyness. In the end, the kids and Koo all play spaceship together, with Stillwater lifting them into the air.



In the second segment, Addy and Maya are playing disc golf and celebrate their great shots with victory dances. They run into Tommy, who is usually a great player and enthusiast, but is now off his game and not very friendly. Addy is troubled by his uncharacteristic behavior. Stillwater shares a story of children who discover their teacher's mood is influenced by her personal life. They talk to Tommy and learn that his grandma recently died. Addy and Maya bring him a bouquet of daisies, his grandma's favorite flowers, and offer to play disc golf when he is ready.

Here are some conversation starters you can ask to help your child make personal connections to the episode:

- Are you shy when you meet someone else's friends or when new people join a playdate? What helps you feel more comfortable in that situation?
- When someone is acting grouchy, what might some reasons be? Are you ever grouchy doing one thing because something else is bothering you? Share a time when that has happened to you. (Share a time when you've been cranky with your child because something else was affecting your mood.)
- How does Stillwater's dancing sisters' story help Karl talk to Koo about her feelings?

Mindfulness Moment

Segment two features several acts of kindness. In Stillwater's story, the students bring their teacher flowers and adjust their behavior to make life a little easier for their teacher. Similarly, Addy and Maya bring Tommy flowers. They also show their friendship by listening and offering to play disc golf when Tommy is ready.

Thinking about others, striving to understand them, and offering small acts of kindness can help your child live mindfully. You can encourage these acts by modeling them in your own life and helping your child think about acts of kindness with friends and family.



Resilience Builder

Perspective Building Being able to see situations from other people's perspectives is a critical skill for building empathy and expands a child's capacity for resilience. In the episode, the children learn new perspectives; Karl recognizes that Koo's experience was different than his own, while Addy and Maya discover a new perspective on Tommy.

Encourage your child to imagine how other people are feeling and why they might exhibit a different point of view or behavior. When reading a story or watching a show, you can explore several characters' points of view to encourage perspective-building skills.

Extend the Episode

Practice Introductions Stillwater models making introductions for Karl and his friends. Practice introducing people around the dinner table and on playdates. Model this when you have someone over to your house or meet someone on the street. Showing your child how to facilitate other people's relationships and set people at ease is a teachable skill!



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Season 3, Episode 3: Tons of Fun / Apologies



In the first segment, Michael has planned a camp program for Karl and Koo. But all of his elaborate activities—from games to an obstacle course to story time—go awry when Karl and Koo create their own kind of fun, and end up not following Michael's planned activities. Michael gets frustrated and sends them inside for Addy's snacks. Meanwhile, Stillwater tells Michael a story about a student and a master teacher. The student needs to empty his teacup so there is room for the teacher to fill it up with knowledge. Michael realizes that maybe he needs to empty his cup to make room for the campers' ideas as well. When Karl and Koo come back Michael offers the chance for them to create and play their own games.



In the second segment, Karl and Koo decide to practice baseball using Michael's lucky baseball. Karl hits a home run, knocking the ball far away. Karl and Koo can't find it, and when Michael discovers what happened he gets upset. Karl and Koo apologize and explain they didn't mean to lose the ball, but Michael doesn't say that he forgives them. Later, Stillwater explains that apologies don't always make things right immediately. He tells a story about bears who eat the blueberries their grandma was counting on for a pie. Karl and Koo learn how to try and make things right from the story. They give a heartfelt apology and make another special ball for Michael.

Here are some conversation starters you can ask to help your child make personal connections to the episode:

- Why did Michael get upset when Karl and Koo didn't run the obstacle course or play hopscotch the right way? Have you ever planned something special but then your friends didn't play along the way you had hoped?
- Have you ever lost something or broken something that someone else cared about? How did you apologize? What helped the other person to feel better?
- How did Stillwater's story about the teacher and the empty tea cup help Michael with his camp problems?

Mindfulness Moment

Letting go of an expectation is hard for anyone, and can be especially difficult for young children. When Michael planned his camp, he got attached to the ideas he had in mind. Letting go of expectations and factoring in new details as a situation unfolds is a form of mindfulness. You can practice this when something doesn't go as planned and disappoints your child. For example, rain might cancel an outing, the ice cream shop might be out of your favorite flavor, or a friend might get sick. Practice letting go of the expectation and being open to other plans instead.



Resilience Builder

Flexible Thinking The ability to shift gears as a situation changes and not get too attached to one idea is called flexible thinking. This concept will help a child solve problems in school, at home, and in life. Michael has to think flexibly to adapt his camp to his campers' needs. Karl has to think flexibly to create a solution after losing Michael's lucky ball. You can encourage flexible thinking by saying, "How can we think about this differently?" and "What's another solution we can try?"

Extend the Episode

I'm Sorry! Karl and Koo try apologizing right away to Michael, but it doesn't do the trick. After Michael cools down, they try to apologize again. However, this time, they share what they did wrong and why it was wrong—taking responsibility and promising to make it up to him. In Karl and Koo's second attempt they realize apologies are more than just saying sorry. You and your child can practice apologies that go beyond saying sorry and try to make amends. As a parent, model forgiving yourself as well as others to show your child the power of forgiveness.



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Season 3, Episode 4: Sounds Like Poetry / Birdwatching



In the first segment, Addy prepares to read a poem she wrote for a cultural arts assembly. Karl, Koo, Michael, and Stillwater all gather to hear her practice. Everyone is enthusiastic except Michael, who reluctantly admits that the poem didn't move him. Addy is upset and not sure if she wants to continue with her plan to read in public. Stillwater shares a story about an art critic and three artists who realize that one opinion doesn't determine worth. Addy realizes the only critic she should think about is herself, and that she loves her poem. She goes on to read it at the assembly with pride.



In the second segment, everyone goes on a bird-watching trip. As an avid birdwatcher, Michael brings his birding book. He's so focused on checking off different birds that he neglects to look around him and consequently misses the bird sightings. Stillwater shares a story about a sidewalk layer who is so busy staring at his sidewalk day after day that he doesn't notice a city sprouting up around him. After Stillwater's story, Michael puts away his book and discovers the beautiful nature, including all the birds.

Here are some conversation starters you can ask your child to help them make personal connections to the episode:

- Have you ever had to read aloud or perform in front of a group? Were you nervous? What helped you to get up and do it anyway?
- Addy doesn't like Michael's feedback. Have you ever asked someone's opinion and received an answer you didn't like? How did you feel? What did you do?
- Michael's a big bird watcher but keeps missing the bird sightings. Why did that happen? What can help us make sure we see the cool things happening around us and not miss out?
- How does Stillwater's story about the sidewalk layer help Michael learn how to get more out of his bird-watching trip?

Mindfulness Moment

The first segment focuses on Addy's fears about her poem. Upon reflection, she was listening to other people's voices instead of her own. She thought that if Michael didn't like her poem, other people in the audience might not like it either. Help your child recognize the importance of listening to your own opinions as the ones that matter most, and having confidence in your own beliefs.



Resilience Builder

Self-identity In the first segment of this episode, Addy is worried how her poem will reflect on her. Helping your child develop a sense of identity is an important resilience skill. Addy's pride in her poetry is part of her sense of self. Ask your child what makes them special, and point out things that you notice throughout your daily lives together.

Extend the Episode

Nature Walk In the second segment, everyone goes on a bird-watching trip. Take a nature walk and give your child a list of sightings to check off, including leaves, bugs, birds, and other possibilities you might encounter along the way. Make sure all distractions (such as your phone) are put aside. Remain focused on the experience and interaction with nature together.



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Season 3, Episode 5: New Neighbors / Koo's Gift



In the first segment, Michael notices new neighbors are moving in across the street. He enlists Addy and Karl to watch the movers carefully to look for clues to see if there are any kids their age. They notice a basketball, a mountain bike, a piano, and other items that give Michael a sense of what the neighbors might be like. But Michael becomes worried that he won't live up to the neighbor's expectations. After a conversation with Stillwater, Michael realizes that he has made a lot of assumptions based on incomplete information! There's no way to get to know the neighbors except by meeting them in person. It turns out they are twins—and his age! It seems like they will all hit it off perfectly.



In the second segment, Koo attends a birthday party for Heather but begins to feel out of place when the games played are different from the ones she's used to back home. And when it's time to open presents, Koo becomes even more distressed. Her hand-made, carefully wrapped present is overlooked in favor of store-bought toys. Stillwater shares a story with Koo about a literal fish out of water who experiences similar cultural differences. Heather approaches Koo and Stillwater, warmly thanks Koo for the calligraphy gift and even wears the ribbon in her hair! Koo happily returns to the party knowing she is still welcome, and even teaches everyone a Chinese dragon game from her culture.

Here are some conversation starters you can ask your child to help them make personal connections to the episode:

- Suppose new neighbors are moving in across the street. What would you want to know about them? What would you want them to know about you?
- Why is Koo uncomfortable at Heather's birthday party? What helps her feel better by the end?
- Stillwater's stories seem to help the characters feel better. How will considering a new perspective be helpful when someone is feeling upset?

Mindfulness Moment

Everyone experiences uncomfortable feelings at times. One mindfulness strategy involves recognizing the emotion you are feeling without immediately trying to push it away. When Koo feels uncomfortable at the party, she steps aside and allows herself to feel that emotion, which is a good mindfulness strategy for coping. Help your child recognize and name uncomfortable feelings. Let them know that it's okay to be sad, nervous, or angry—and that understand those feelings are powerful life skills.



Resilience Builder

Appreciating Diverse Cultures Koo doesn't share the same cultural background as the children at the birthday party, leaving her to feel she doesn't fit in. When Koo introduces her own game to the party guests, they benefit from learning from a different culture. And Koo benefits by sharing her culture with others. Appreciating your own culture, while respecting other cultures, helps to build community resilience. Encourage your child to learn, experience, and appreciate the multiple cultures in your midst. Also, ensure your child has access to books featuring diverse characters and cultures, and where they can see themselves as part of the stories.

Extend the Episode

Paper Airplanes In the first segment, Michael, Addy, Karl, and Stillwater, along with the new neighbors, all go out to the yard to fly paper airplanes. Make a simple paper airplane with your child and try to fly it. Then experiment with other designs by folding the wings in different ways. Notice how each of the flights is affected.



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Season 3, Episode 6: Friendly Wishes / Growing Together



In the first segment, Michael, Karl, Stillwater, and Koo are getting ready to go to the beach, but Addy is sick. Michael is upset to leave Addy behind, but she convinces them they should not miss this long-planned outing. Reluctantly, they head to the beach. Even though they're building castles and playing in the waves, Michael can't help but miss Addy. Stillwater understands how Michael feels and shares a story about a builder who adds simple paintings to a family's new house. Even though the builder knows his artwork will be covered up, he continues to paint them as a way to offer friendly wishes. Stillwater then guides the group in a meditation exercise designed to help them visualize Addy. When they return home with sea glass, Addy is happy to know they were thinking of her and had fun at the beach.



In the second segment, Maya and Addy are delighted with their work in the garden but become dismayed when they realize a critter has eaten their crops. Maya and Addy try breathing techniques to calm down. However, after the crops are eaten a second time, they ask Stillwater for advice. Stillwater shares a story about a hawk and an owl who learn to coexist in a forest by taking night and day shifts and sharing resources. This story gives the girls the idea to create a separate garden to feed the critters—and to share their resources with other living creatures.

Here are some conversation starters you can ask your child to help them make personal connections to the episode:

- Have you ever missed a party or outing because you were sick? Who or what helped you feel better about the situation? Tell me about a time when a friend had to cancel a playdate. How did you feel?
- Can you think of a time you were out in nature and had to share the space with an animal? What was that like?
- How does Stillwater's story about the hawk and the owl help the girls find a solution to their garden problem?

Mindfulness Moment

In the first segment, Stillwater guides the children in an exercise to think about Addy by visualizing and considering her even though she's sick at home. If there is someone your child is missing, try using Stillwater's meditation exercise as a model. Have your child close their eyes, take slow deep breaths, and picture who they are missing.



Resilience Builder

Pride in Place Feeling connected to where you live is another cornerstone of resilience. Working in the garden, the children share Stillwater's garden resources. They weed and tend the garden, and also create a special garden for animals. Through these activities, they feel connected to the land, their home, neighborhood, and nature. Help your child plant a garden, do some weeding, or tend to nearby land as a way of feeling rooted in your location.

Extend the Episode

Water Painting In the first segment, the builder paints images that get covered over. Let your child paint with plain water on a stone or pavement. Watch the image appear and then gradually fade away. Even though the image isn't permanent, creating it is a form of expression.



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Season 3, Episode 7: The Catio / Campout



In the first segment, Michael, Molly, and Leo try to make a special home for the neighborhood cat, Jasper. They call their creation a “catio,” a patio for a cat. Jasper shows little interest in their increasingly elaborate structure. Stillwater recognizes their frustration and offers a story about an empress who makes an ornate perch for a bird who only wants to fly free. The three realize they weren’t thinking of what Jasper would really like. Instead, they repurpose their “catio” for chipmunks—because it’s what the chipmunks like (and need)—while Jasper stays cozy in his cardboard box.



In the second segment, Karl and Koo decide to go camping in the backyard; Stillwater joins them. At first, they have a great time, but as night falls they become slightly scared. To ease their fear, Stillwater shares a story about a boy, Cal, who climbs up to the high diving board at a pool but gets too scared to jump off. Cal learns that there is no shame in not being ready. In fact, recognizing that you aren’t ready for something scary can be an equally brave act. Karl and Koo decided to take their camping adventure inside for the night.

Here are some conversation starters you can ask your child to help them make personal connections to the episode:

- Have you ever tried to get an animal or a pet to do something you want? How did that work out? How can you best figure out what an animal wants to do?
- Share a time with your child when you were afraid and decided to change to a plan you were more comfortable with. Ask your child to share times when something scared them. How did they feel? What did they do?
- How does Stillwater's story about the empress and the bird help Molly, Michael, and Leo figure out what to do with their catio?

Mindfulness Moment

In the second segment, Karl and Koo recognize they feel scared. Instead of feeling bad, they learn from Stillwater that you can accept your feelings without judging yourself for it. Model to your child a time when you felt an uncomfortable emotion, such as fear, anger, or sadness. Share the importance of acknowledging the feeling and that you are okay with experiencing it.



Resilience Builder

Being Brave At the beginning of the second segment, Karl and Koo are focused on what they think it means to be being brave: doing something even though you feel afraid. In the end, though, bravery looked different than Karl and Koo expected. In Stillwater's story, being brave meant that Cal could climb down from the diving board. Offer praise when your child does something brave, tries something new, or persists when something is difficult.

Extend the Episode

Pitch a Tent You can go camping in your living room with some sofa cushions, chairs, and a sheet or a blanket over a table. Tell stories by an imaginary campfire—but nothing too scary!



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Season 3, Episode 8: Book Club / Treasure Hunt



In the first segment, Addy goes to a book club. Her friends' choices are weighty tomes that seem impressive but not the right topics or reading level for their group. Addy is insecure and feels the book she brought seems childish, so she keeps it tucked in her backpack. Feeling discouraged by her friends' choices and embarrassed about her own selection, Addy wanders off. Stillwater shares a story about a musician who agrees to perform classical but prefers his favorite folk music. When he follows his heart and plays folk, the crowd goes wild. Addy realizes that she should suggest the book that speaks to her heart. After courageously sharing her new book choice with her friends, they, too, change the books they want to share.



In the second segment, Karl digs for hidden treasure on the beach, based on a shipwreck story Michael shared. Karl is disappointed when he realizes that Michael's legend about pirate treasure wasn't real and won't ever be found. To help Karl, Stillwater tells a story about astronauts looking for a golden planet. Though they don't complete the mission, they return from space and are hailed for finding a lava planet and other discoveries. Karl realizes that he and his friends didn't find the treasure they were looking for, but they did find rare sea glass and other kinds of treasures.

Here are some conversation starters you can ask your child to help them make personal connections to the episode:

- How do you choose a book you want to read? What makes a book just right for you? And how would you choose a book to recommend to a friend?
- If we were at the beach, what treasures would you like to find? How would we look for those treasures?
- How does Stillwater's story about the astronauts looking for a golden planet help Karl with his search for buried treasure?

Mindfulness Moment

In the second segment, Stillwater points out that sometimes the best treasure is not always the one you were seeking, but the treasure you discover along the way. Help your child realize that if you are too focused on only one goal, you can miss discoveries and opportunities that appear during the process. Look for opportunities in your daily life when the process will be just as important as the outcome.



Resilience Builder

Building Confidence Addy was insecure about her book choice. When she found the confidence to present *Sunshine Dragons* to the group, everyone was supportive... and relieved! They were all just trying to impress each other rather than choosing books they wanted to read. Notice when your child chooses to present to others, such as picking something for show-and-tell, and help build self-confidence by supporting their ideas and choices.

Extend the Episode

Book Club Host a book club with your child and 2-3 friends. Let each child come prepared to show a book choice and talk about why they recommend it. Then read the book together or let them read it at home before your next meeting, depending on the children's ages. Encourage a group discussion of the book.



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Season 3, Episode 9: The Catch / Missing Out



In the first segment, Michael is playing baseball. As the team leader, he supports all of the players. But when he misses what would have been a game-winning catch, the other team scores and wins. Michael is despondent even though his teammates try to cheer him up. Frustrated, Michael throws his glove in the garbage, quitting baseball. Stillwater helps provide perspective through the story of a bandleader who plays a wrong note and decides to quit. Michael realizes that he wouldn't be mad if his friends dropped the ball, so why should he be mad at himself? He rejoins the team, and they continue to practice together.



In the second segment, Addy feels left out when she isn't invited to a birthday party for Sophia that Maya and Asha are attending. Even though she understands, she is still disappointed. Stillwater, Karl, and Koo are having a birthday party for their stuffed animals, Mumu and Pico. Though Addy tries to join in, she is preoccupied thinking about the party she is missing out on. Stillwater helps her see that if you focus on the present moment rather than what you are missing, new opportunities arise. Addy then embraces rejoining the stuffed animal party. Michael joins too, and announces a meteor shower happening later that evening. They were able to see the meteor shower together since Addy was home instead of being at Sophia's party.

Here are some conversation starters you can ask your child to help them make personal connections to the episode:

- Have you ever wanted to quit something because you thought you weren't good enough? Did you quit or stick with it? What would you like to do next time that happens?
- How did Addy feel about Sophia's birthday party? Can you understand why she felt that way? Have you ever felt left out? What helped you feel better?
- Stillwater mentions an old saying: "When one door closes, another one opens." What do you think he means by that?

Mindfulness Moment

The first segment emphasizes the idea that we all make mistakes. We should be as kind and forgiving of ourselves as we are to others. Instead of dwelling on the mistake, acknowledge it, let go of judgment, and commit to doing better. You can model this when a mistake arises. Work through the steps of accepting it and moving forward with your child.

The second segment helps us to understand that no one likes feeling left out and it's okay to feel upset, even while simultaneously being happy for your friends. You can also stay in the moment and be open to other possibilities.



Resilience Builder

Persistence The first segment offers the opportunity to focus on the importance of persistence in building resilience. Practicing when something isn't easy and not getting discouraged when you make a mistake are skills that will help your child now and throughout life. Affirm the process of trying and sticking with things as much (or more) as you celebrate your child's successes.

Extend the Episode

Stuffie Party Stillwater and friends are throwing a party for their stuffed animals. Help your child plan a party, too.

You can create decorations, plan a menu, set the table, and have a great time. This activity will also help your child see that it's always possible to create your own fun!



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Season 3, Episode 10: I'm Bored / Art Fair



In the first segment, Karl is bored. He tries to join in his friends' activities but nothing seems interesting enough. Stillwater tries to convince Karl that "sometimes doing nothing is just what we need." But Karl doesn't believe him. Stillwater offers a story about a manatee stuck in the muck. The water is so cloudy that the manatee can't see. By holding still, the water clears and the manatee gains a crystal-clear view. After the story, Karl practices stillness—doing nothing—with Stillwater. That allows him to realize he isn't bored after all and can use his imagination to run free and dream up ideas that inspire creative play at home.



In the second segment, Michael needs to create something for a school art fair. He's insecure about his artistic abilities and doesn't have any ideas. The project is due tomorrow, and nothing he tries is working out! Stillwater shares a story about a little seagull who is convinced he will never learn to fly. One day a storm comes, and they have to leave the nest. Instinct takes over, and the seagull discovers he can fly. Michael realizes that his negative mindset is blocking him and he needs to think about what comes naturally. He creates an expressive map showing who he is—with great success.

Here are some conversation starters you can ask your child to help them make personal connections to the episode:

- Do you ever feel bored, like you can't think of anything fun to do? That can be so frustrating. How can sitting still and doing nothing help you think of something creative to do?
- Michael thought he had no talent at art. How did that thought get in his way?
- How does Stillwater's story about the seagull help Michael with his art project?

Mindfulness Moment

In the first segment, Karl (and the manatee) focus on doing nothing. Try this activity with your child—practicing stillness, taking deep breaths, and noticing the sensations in your body and surroundings. Ask your child to reflect afterward on how doing nothing changes the way they feel and how it can lead to creative ideas, along with a renewed focus and energy.



Resilience Builder

Growth Mindset Often, our biggest obstacles are in our own minds. When we think we can't grow and change, we sometimes get stuck. Believing in our ability to improve is an important resilience skill. You can encourage a growth mindset by introducing the notion of “yet” as in, “I don't know how to ride a bicycle yet.” You can also break a goal down into small steps that your child can use on the path to success.

Extend the Episode

Art Project Michael creates a “Michael Map” for his art project with images, arrows, and boxes showing the key components of who he is. Make a map with your child that shows their interests, personality traits, and dreams. Take a photo of the art project and share it with a teacher or family member who might want to know your child better.



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