

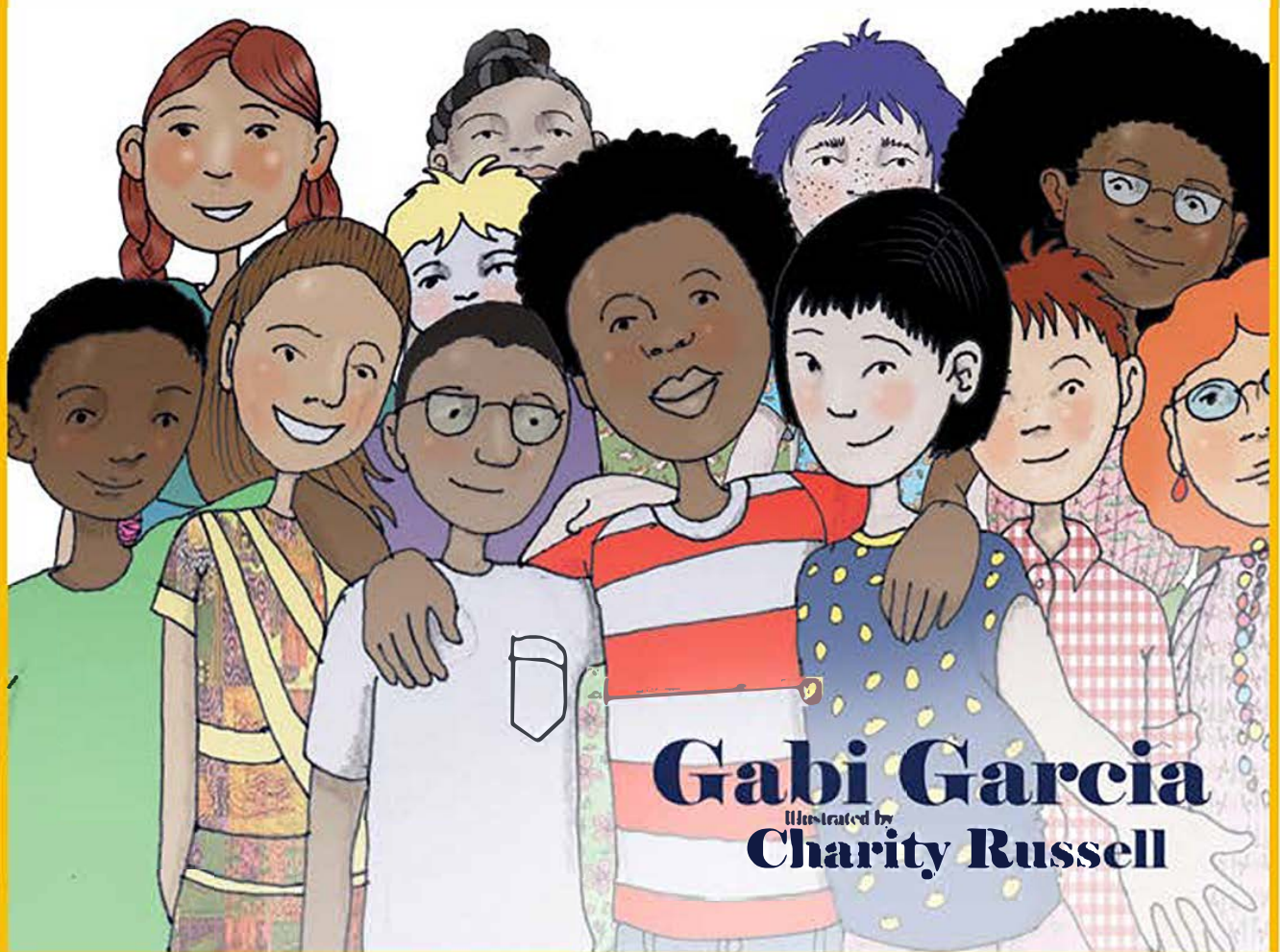
I CAN DO HARD THINGS

Mindful Affirmations for Kids

A DISCUSSION & ACTIVITY GUIDE

I CAN DO HARD THINGS

MINDFUL AFFIRMATIONS FOR KIDS



Gabi Garcia

Illustrated by

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A NOTE TO PARENTS AND EDUCATORS

As children navigate their daily environments they're expected to manage their feelings, peer pressures, social situations, etc., which can be hard. They need encouragement and opportunities to work through these challenges on their own.

I Can Do Hard Things: Mindful Affirmations for Kids introduces children to the practice of tuning into their quiet voice inside and using mindful affirmations to support them in navigating hard situations when they arise.

Support your child to work through their own hard things.

- **Validate and normalize what's hard for them** Listen and respond empathically when a child comes to you with a problem rather than dismissing something as "no big deal" or trying to solve their problem. Remember: "The way we talk to our children becomes their inner voice." – Peggy O'Mara
- **Help them become aware their feelings** Encourage and help them to name their feelings and to pay attention to the physical sensations that accompany their feelings. Let them know that whatever they are feeling is okay.
- **Be aware of the messages children get** Children get a constant stream of messages on T.V., social media, movies, peers, etc. and pick up on more than we think. Have honest conversations about what they're seeing and hearing.
- **Help them become aware of their inner voice/ self-talk** Critical self-talk can leave kids filled with shame, embarrassed or believing they're not good enough. If you notice this happening with your child, ask them to think about what they'd say to a friend having the same experience. You can also guide them in finding an affirmation they can connect to when something hard comes up.
- **Model resilience and self-compassion.** Talk about hard things you've navigated and mistakes you've made without judgment or criticism.

Pre-Reading Discussion Questions:

- The title of this book is *I Can Do Hard Things: Mindful Affirmations for Kids*, what do you think this book is going to be about?
- What do you think it means to do hard things?
- What can you tell from looking at the front and back cover?

Post-Reading Discussion Questions

- Where do kids get messages about how they should be, act or look like?
- What messages do kids get?
- How are the messages that kids get different depending on who you are or what you look like? (for example, how are the messages that girls get different than the ones boys get?)
- What do you think the author means when she writes, "I get so many messages about how I should be. Pulled in different directions, I feel wobbly?" Have you ever felt this way?
- What do you think the author means when she refers to "that quiet voice inside"?
- How do you think different kids may experience the world differently?
- Why do you think this story was told by multiple characters rather than just one?
- For each affirmation statement, you can ask questions such as: Why might this be hard for someone? Has this ever been hard for you? What do you think this statement means?
- Why do you think the author wrote this book? What message do you think she wants you to take away from reading this book?

YOUR QUIET VOICE INSIDE

That quiet voice inside refers to our self-talk—the things we say or think to ourselves about what’s happening around us. Your quiet voice inside can be like a coach or kind friend who offers support and reminds you what’s right and important to you. Read the poems and quote below to see different ways this voice is described.

Courage does not always roar.
Sometimes courage is that
quiet voice at the end of the
day that says: I will try again
tomorrow.

– Mary Anne Radmacher

The Voice

There is a voice inside of you
that whispers all day long,
'I feel that this is right for me,
I know that this is wrong.'

No teacher, preacher, parent, friend or
wise man can decide
what’s right for you - just listen to the
voice that speaks inside.

-Shel Silverstein

I don't always feel brave, confident or strong.
Sometimes it feels easier to follow others along
I get so many messages about how I should be.
Pulled in different directions. I feel wobbly!
When that happens, I listen for that quiet voice inside.
When I pay attention, that voice is my guide.
I connect with the love and strength it brings.
It helps me remember: I can do hard things.
-- Gabi Garcia

Think about a time when you paid attention to your quiet voice inside. What did it say or how did it make you feel? If you haven't paid attention, sit quietly and listen. What do you need to hear?

I CAN DO HARD THINGS

Draw or write about a something that's hard for you in the large box below. Choose an affirmation from the next page (or come up with your own) that would feel helpful to you and write it in the top box.

How does this affirmation makes you feel? _____

MINDFUL AFFIRMATIONS

I can do hard things.

I can be a friend to myself.

I can feel all my feelings.

I can ask for help.

I can try again rather than give up.

I can believe in myself.

I can speak up when it would be easier to stay quiet.

I can say no, even to my friends.

I can apologize.

I can forgive.

I can listen to understand different points of view.

I can care for my community.

I can choose kindness.

I can practice peace.

I can share my gifts with the world.

I can be myself.

I CAN DO HARD THINGS

I can be a friend to myself

I CAN FEEL ALL MY FEELINGS

I can ask for help

I can try again rather than give up

I can believe in myself

I can speak up when it would be easier to stay quiet

I can say no, even to my friends

I CAN APOLOGIZE

I CAN FORGIVE

I CAN LISTEN TO UNDERSTAND DIFFERENT POINTS OF VIEW

I can care for my community

I can choose kindness

I can practice peace

I can share my gifts with the world

I CAN BE MYSELF

MINDFUL AFFIRMATIONS

To be **mindful** is to be aware of what is happening right now. An **affirmation** is a short phrase or statement about yourself that is supportive, helpful or motivating to you in some way.

Mindful affirmations connect you with what you need to hear right now. Find one for yourself!

- Choose an affirmation found in this book that you connect with (or come up with your own).
- Take a few deep breaths and say it to yourself. Pay attention to any physical sensations (energized, strong, tingly, calm, relaxed, etc.). Notice how you feel (loving, brave, proud, curious, excited, peaceful, etc.).
- Think about how this affirmation is helpful or supportive to you. If it doesn't feel helpful or supportive, choose another one.
- Write your affirmation down. You can also use paints, markers, magazines, etc. to create art around your affirmation. Place it somewhere that you will see it and repeat it to yourself daily.

What you say to yourself matters! Mindful affirmations become your quiet voice inside, which supports you in doing hard things-- whatever that may be for you.

Hi!

I hope you've found these resources helpful in your home or classroom.

If you've read *I Can Do Hard Things* (or any of my books) and found it useful, I would sincerely appreciate a few minutes of your time so that you can leave an honest Amazon review.

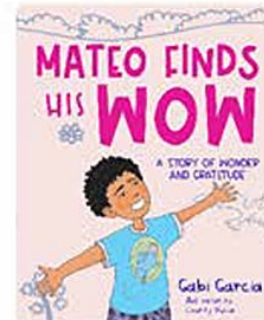
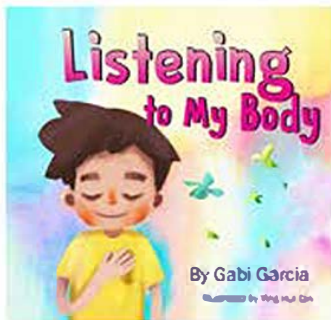
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With gratitude,

Gabi



OTHER BOOKS YOU MAY FIND USEFUL



All titles are available in Spanish

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