

I Like Being Me

Poems about kindness, friendship, and making good choices



free spirit
PUBLISHING®

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Judy Lalli

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Dedication



To Morris and Florence Goldsmith, my parents, who exposed me to the love of language and to the values expressed in these pages

To Diane O'Neill, who enthusiastically field-tested the poems with her students

To Doug Mason-Fry, whose creativity influenced me every step of the way

To Jim Botti, who encouraged me to persevere with the idea for this book

To Mary Martha Whitworth, who shared honest and caring feedback that enriched the project

And to Tony Lalli, who gave technical support to my writing and unconditional support to me





I Can Choose

I can choose
To win or lose.
I know it's up to me.

If I think that
I'm a winner,
That's what I will be!



I'm Waiting for a Rainbow.

I'm waiting for a rainbow,
I'm waiting for the sun.
I'm waiting for the rain to stop
So I can play and run.

I know I should be patient,
But waiting's such a pain.
I guess I'll have to pass the time
Appreciating rain.



Discussion Starters and Activities

A Guide for Teachers, Families, and Other Caring Adults

I Like Being Me is a book of poems for children and the adults who care about them. We all know the power of poetry. We remember rhymes and songs that we learned long ago. Whether the messages are simple or profound, they can stick in our heads for years. Teachers, counselors, and family members can use this book to foster a love of poetry and teach social skills along the way. Children can listen to the poems, read them, memorize them, and recite them. They can discuss the poems, act them out, illustrate them, write about them, and use them as motivation for writing their own poems.

The poems in this book encourage children to understand that they have the power to make good choices. They can choose to have a positive attitude; they can choose to learn from their mistakes; they can choose to care, share, and cooperate.

Each poem focuses on at least one important theme or social skill, listed in the following chart. The poems at the beginning of the book deal with the choices children make for themselves, while the later poems deal with how children choose to interact with others. You can read the poems in order, or you might want to choose a poem and its related social skill whenever an opportunity for discussion arises. When you introduce a poem, you may choose to tell children what its theme is or ask for their thoughts and discuss their ideas.

Poems	Related Social Skills
"I Can Choose"	Having a positive attitude
"I'm Waiting for a Rainbow"	Being patient
"I Hear the Music Playing"	Listening
"I Didn't Believe I Could Do It"	Believing in yourself
"Mistakes Can Be Good"	Learning from mistakes
"At Least I'm Getting Better"	Persevering
"Who Should I Be?"	Liking yourself
"Broken Wagon"	Solving problems
"If I Promise to Do It"	Being dependable
"Don't Say 'Crybaby!'"	Being kind

Poems	Related Social Skills
"When I'm Cranky"	Dealing with feelings
"I'm a Person, Too"	Speaking up for yourself
"Someone Else's Chair"	Understanding others
"I Don't Have the Time"	Helping others
"I Can't Move It"	Cooperating
"Hands"	Making choices
"Someone Who Knows How to Share"	Sharing
"I Hope You're As Lucky As I Am"	Being a friend
"Five Little People"	Getting along
"We're Telling the Teacher on You"	Working it out
"I Forgot to Say 'Please' and 'Thank You'"	Being polite
"There Are Only Two Kinds of 'I'm Sorry'"	Apologizing
"You Can Use It"	Caring about our planet
"We Give Thanks"	Showing appreciation
"Boring, Boring, Boring"	Celebrating differences

Getting Started

- After choosing a poem, read it aloud a few times. Show children the photograph.
- Invite children to recite the poem with you. Depending on the children's age and ability level, you might recite a few words or lines with them and gradually encourage them to recite the poem on their own.
- Discuss the ideas in the poem. Ask children questions such as,
 - » What choice did the person or people in this poem make? What might be some consequences of the choice? (If necessary, explain that consequences are results or effects that follow actions.) What other choices could the person or people have made?
 - » Look at the photograph that goes with this poem. What do you think is happening in the picture? What do you think the person or people in the picture might be feeling or thinking?
 - » When have you or people you know used the ideas or skills in this poem? (For example, think of times when someone learned from a mistake, had to be patient, or shared.) How did it feel to do this? Why can it sometimes be hard to make positive choices?