CJ STAR'S BIG FEELING

CJ Star woke up with a funny twist in his tummy. It wasn't his usual sparkle-and-shine morning.

He yawned and whispered, "Thank You, God, for today... even if I don't feel sparkly."



A few minutes later, Neeley Joy popped in. "Good morning, CJ! Are you ready to hike today?"

CJ tried to smile, but all he could muster was, "I don't think so."

Neeley's face softened. "Are you feeling something big today?"

CJ nodded. "I don't even know what it is. It just feels... hard."



Fendi Fox zipped in! "It's a great day to hike!" he called. "Who's ready?"

CJ frowned. "I'm thankful it's a great day, but I'm really sad today."

Fendi tilted his head. "That's OK, CJ. Feelings are a little like colors. I'm orange, black, and white. We're all more than one color (or one feeling at a time)."



Adia Aardvark joined and asked, "Can I ask you a brave question, CJ?"

"Sure," CJ answered.

"What do you need right now?" she asked.



CJ thought hard. "I think ... I just need someone to sit with me."

Calliope Cat padded over, soft and still. "I'll sit with you," she whispered. "I brought my favorite blanket."

CJ wrapped himself in the cozy warmth. "Thanks, Calliope."



Agape Ant carefully added, "Sometimes when I have a big feeling, I write a thank-you note to God."

"For the big feeling?" CJ asked.

"Yes," Agape answered. "Even when we're afraid or angry or sad, God is with us, and that's always something to be thankful for!" Agape handed CJ a paper star.

CJ took it and wrote, "Dear God, thank You for loving me, even when I feel messy inside."



Floria Flamingo twirled in. "When I'm sad, I like to dance it out! Want to try it, CJ?"

"OK, maybe just a quick spin," he said with a tiny smile.

The Sonshine Squad sat in a circle with CJ. After a while, he whispered, "I think my big feeling is a little smaller now."



Gilead Gecko joined the group, and handed CJ a little treasure box. "This is a Big Feelings Box," he said. "You can fill it with things that make you smile and remind you that you are never alone, including the prayer you just wrote on the paper star Agape Ant gave you."

CJ smiled for real now. "Thank you, Gilead!" He looked around the circle at his friends. "You know," he said, "big feelings don't feel so quite so big when they are shared with friends."



Liana Llama said, "Can I say a short prayer?" The Sonshine Squad nodded, and Liana prayed, "God, thank You for all feelings—big and small—and thank You for friends who listen, love us, and remind us that You are always near."

CJ started to shine. "You know," he said, "even on hard days, God's love shines brightly."

MAKE A BIG FEELINGS BOX

SUPPLIES:

- an empty box (a shoe box or small cardboard box)
- crayons, markers, or colored pencils
- glue stick or glitter glue
- stickers
- paper







INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Decorate your box with colors and shapes that make you feel calm and safe.
2. On the top, write: **GOD CARES ABOUT ALL MY FEELINGS.**
3. Cut out small paper stars, and write (or draw) prayers on them thanking God for all the things you love. Put them in the box.
4. Fill it with things that make you smile and remind you that you are loved.

PRAYER

Dear God, how amazing it is that I am *Your masterpiece!* (Ephesians 2:10 NLT) Sometimes, it doesn't feel like I'm a masterpiece, but You say I am, no matter how I feel. Thank You for all my feelings, and that I can tell You everything. Thank You for my family. Thank You for my friends. Thank You for always loving me. Amen.