



Mindy & Mind

The adventures of a girl and her brain.

Hi, I'm Mindy and
this is my friend...

We do everything together,
and she can be really helpful.



MIND helps me with math.



She helps me remember things.



She helps me make decisions.



She makes dreams for me.



And we get along...
most of the time.

But sometimes **MIND**
gets worked up about
things and it can
really mess us up!

We were ridding the bus
and **MIND** was grumpy ...



**THE
DRIVER
PLAYING
RADIO!
IS A
MEAN
MEAN
MEAN**

**BUS
ISN'T
THE
SHE
MEAN
MEAN
FACE!!!**





As we got off the bus, the bus driver said she, “was sorry she didn’t play the radio today it was broken.” **MIND** and I realized we were wrong.

Now **MIND** and I don’t decide that someone is bad or good just because of one thing they do.





One day at school, **MIND** said...

**WE SHOULD NOT
TRY OUT FOR THE
SCHOOL PLAY. I'M
SURE WE WON'T
GET PICKED!**



But... what if I WAS picked for the play? It would feel great! So I tried out. And guess what? I got picked and it was so much fun!



Mind and I try to spend less time thinking about what could go wrong, and more time thinking about what could go right!



One night **MIND** woke
me up whispering...

**HEY! THERE'S A
MONSTER!!!
IT WAS SCARY
ARMS THAT LOOK
LIKE BRANCHES!
IT'S AS BIG AS AN
OAK TREE!!!**





Hmm.. is that really a monster that looks like a tree? Or is it a tree that looks like a monster? I laughed and went right to sleep.

Just because **MIND** can imagine all sorts of big, scary things doesn't mean they are real.



One day on the playground **MIND** and I saw Victor.

EVERYONE MAKES
FUN OF VICTOR.
THEY SAY HIS
CLASSES ARE
WEIRD AND HE
LOOKS LIKE A BUN!



...ses... My grandma
wears glasses. I love
my grandma. She's not
afraid at all. So I
asked Victor if he
wanted to go on
see-saw with me.

A stylized illustration featuring a pink character with large, white-rimmed glasses and a grey, cloud-like headpiece. The character is sitting on a large, blue, dome-shaped object. A smaller pink character is peeking out from the bottom of the blue dome. The background is a warm, yellowish-orange gradient.

MIND and I
decided that just
because everyone
does something,
doesn't mean
it's right.

A whimsical illustration of two characters, MIND and I, holding a long pink ribbon that forms a path through a garden. MIND is a purple figure with glasses and a yellow grid shirt, while I is a green figure with a large blue leaf on their head. The garden is filled with various flowers like tulips and sunflowers, and several butterflies of different colors. A small orange tent is at the bottom.

I was at Farida's house for
lunch and **MIND** suddenly yelled,



NOW WE ARE
NOT
EATING THAT!
I GET IT
TASTES
LIKE FEET

A small illustration of a silver fork and knife with red handles, positioned vertically to the right of the text.



But I like the same toys
as Farida. I like the
same songs as Farida.
Maybe I'd like the same
food as Farida? So I
tried it and it was good!

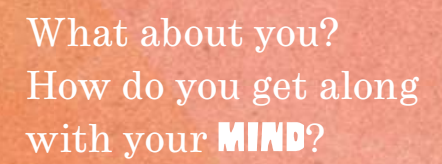
MIND and I now
know that just
because something
is new and different
doesn't mean it's bad.



MIND and I have
become good friends.
She is always trying to help.

But sometimes she gets carried
away and makes mistakes. When
that happens, I quiet **MIND** down
and I think for myself.





W E E N D

THE SCIENCE BEHIND THE STORY

Each of the mini-conflicts that Mindy and Mind had in this story was based on something called a “cognitive bias”. Cognitive biases are subconscious errors in thinking our brains make as they attempt to simplify and sort information. We all have them, and they can lead to poor decision making and unnecessary emotional stress.

The key to overcoming these biases is self-awareness. To be able to think about how you think is a crucial step in ensuring that you’re not at their mercy. Child psychologists believe children can start developing this kind of self-awareness as young as age five. So the goal of this book is to introduce young children to the empowering idea that their mind isn’t always right.

So each conflict Mindy finds herself in with Mind is based on a specific cognitive bias:

The School Play

Negativity Bias—This is our tendency to overweight the importance and effect of negative things. It’s why we remember criticism better than praise. It’s why we think about negative things more than positive things. And it’s why Mind was so focused on all the bad outcomes that could happen if they tried out for the play.

The School Bus

Fundamental Attribution Error—We very often leap to the conclusion that what someone does is who they are. We see someone do something we think is bad, and we assume they’re a bad person. That’s how Mind reacted to the bus driver not playing the radio that morning.

The Bedroom

Availability Bias—When evaluating a situation, often the conclusion that comes to us the fastest is one based on extreme or recent information. So when trying to determine what that scary “tree-like” thing was outside the window, Mind latched on to the outrageous, but unlikely, idea that it was a monster.

The Playground

Bandwagon Effect—As a belief or a behavior gains popularity, individuals often join in—not because of any coherent reason—but simply because others are doing it. It’s common among children who often don’t want to stand out from their peers. It was this force that Mindy was resisting when she didn’t want to make fun of Victor.

Farida’s House:

Mere Exposure Effect—We tend to prefer things and people we are familiar with while finding the unfamiliar less appealing. This is exactly what Mind and Mindy had to deal with when Farida’s mother put an unusual new food in front of them.

HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD COPE WITH THEIR COGNITIVE BIASES

The first step—and hopefully this book can help—is to inspire your child to think about how they think. That kind of self-awareness is essential to putting a healthy distance between ourselves and the anxieties and negative emotions that our biases can generate.

Here are some techniques psychologists recommend to help kids cope.

1. Think about your thoughts—Understanding that not all thoughts are created equal can be an important step toward a child being able to distinguish between what matters and what doesn't.
2. Breathing—Teaching a child to focus on their breathing and to try to take deep deep, slow breaths can help them calm down and relax.
3. Count to ten—The simple distraction can loosen the hold a thought or concern may have on a child's mind.
4. Go for a walk—Physical activity is a potent way for a child to “get out of their head”
5. Logic - Even young children can reason their way out of irrational thoughts and emotions.
6. Every kid is different so what works for one may not work for another. And of course, if your child is dealing with serious anxiety or mental health issues seek out a therapist or counselor.



A Nail Communications publication.