

A Note from the Author

Many stories in the world's long and recent history demonstrate the terrible impact of **bias**, bullying, and **discrimination**.

As an Organizational Psychologist, I focus on helping to create a place at work where people feel respected and safe and understand that they are valued. But, unfortunately, I see firsthand how discrimination plays out every day.

I know great work is already happening in **diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging**, and I wanted to help focus this work on children.

I remember a girl who felt different and had difficulty making friends in school. She watched as others played and laughed every day and felt she could not join them. Then one day during playtime, a boy came over and asked her to join his game. The girl was so happy and slowly started to not feel so sad and alone. Over time, she began asking other kids to join in during playtime because she wanted to help others, just like the boy who helped her.

I was that little girl who felt different, and this act of kindness by this boy changed my life. Because of this powerful memory, I asked myself, "What could I do to help empower children to accept and **respect** differences and do this better than adults do today?"

I wanted to create a story supporting the critical mindful discussion around **tolerance**, acceptance, inclusion, and belonging. I believe strongly that we have the power to change things for the better if we all work together.

Our differences make each of us **distinct** and unlike anybody else. People can't always see what makes us feel different, but we would all like our differences to be accepted and respected.

Sometimes what makes others different or unique can make us feel uncomfortable. But it is vital to still figure out ways to be kind and include everybody, especially those who are typically excluded from a game or



conversation. Then, we can all help someone else feel like a part of the group, welcomed and embraced as someone who truly belongs.

All acts of kindness are super powerful.

We are all part of this fantastic, ever-turning world. We all have the power to add value and make a real positive change.

So, here's the call to action! Here's where we can make a difference!

What can we do to help those around us feel accepted and included?

What can others do for you to help you feel accepted and included?

Now, imagine the amazing world we can create if all of us answer these questions loudly and proudly!

Imagine a world where it is normal to reach out and help someone feel like they belong!

I am excited and cannot wait to see what we can do together to help our world be the best it can be!

