

Clarion Review ★★★★★

PICTURE BOOKS

Self-Care with Ted and Friends

Najma Korrami**Maria Ballarin, Illustrator**

Mascot Kids!

(40pp)

978-1-64543-997-4

Self-Care with Ted and Friends is a picture book that ably introduces the self-care techniques of an endearing animal menagerie.

A bear shares how he takes care of his mind and body in Najma Korrami's picture book *Self-Care with Ted and Friends*.

Ted likes spending time with his friends outdoors, as well as laughing, learning, eating natural foods, and resting. In conversation with his friends, he shares why he loves to do each activity, and shows how his actions help him stay healthy and happy.

On each two-page spread, Ted and his friends—a squirrel, a caterpillar, a butterfly, and a bunny—participate in a single activity, from listening to each other's troubles while sitting on tree stumps, to catching and letting go of sparkling fireflies. The images complement the text well as it explains what the creatures are doing: "We are flying a kite" and "We are taking a nap" are among the pastimes.

The detailed illustrations make use of bright, autumnal hues and a strong portrayal of both the creatures' movement and their captivating environment. However, though Ted narrates, the text includes mentions of him that make it sound like he is speaking in the third person, impeding the book's cohesion. Uses of the friends' proper names before their official introductions also muddle the text.

The formulaic storytelling structure means that the book remains consistent throughout. Still, Ted and his friends' activities build in complexity as the text progresses. Sophisticated topics, as of "letting go," are also elucidated in accessible terms. An abrupt ending leaves these lessons feeling incomplete, though.

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AIMEE JODOIN (March 17, 2022)

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