

The Tug the Heart Picture Books: Featuring 4 Stories in 1

Jon Nappa

Thai Son, Illustrator

Nipi Books (Sep 14, 2025)

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Evoking positivity, The Tug the Heart Picture Books is a clear and focused children's collection that's designed to reinforce good values.

Jon Nappa's vibrant picture book collection *The Tug the Heart Picture Books* includes four stories with soothing advice that are reflective of positive values.

Each of the stories is emotive and has a clear focus. The first is about appreciation for one's caretakers and uses the trope of counting; the second is about cultivating resilience in loss. The third is about treating individuality as a gift, and the final story is a calming lullaby in which refrains and repetition invite peaceful sleep.

Evoking positivity, this is a clear and focused collection, though one whose meanings are often abstract and instructional rather than narrative. Its irregular rhymes strike a playful note, as in "You Are a Gift": "Because inside each of us / Is something all our own / That no one can ever take away / Not copy, mimic or clone." The pages alternate between full sentences and fragments, opting most often for a period at the end of the verse.

The bright illustrations, whose lines are suggestive of crayons or colored pencils, are realistic with imaginative flair. They make the referenced children's spaces more palpable, with details as of frogs holding flowers over themselves to protect them from the rain; elsewhere, a used paper airplane and musical instruments adorn an attic space, and a yellow canary alarm clock sits on a child's nightstand above an open book that depicts a reddish-brown cat. People of various backgrounds are also depicted.

The Tug the Heart Picture Books bring good intentions and delightful illustrations that aim to cultivate a child's healthy emotional grounding and growth.

MIKE GOOD (April 14, 2026)

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