

# Hidden Heart

**Themes include:** loss, sadness, feelings, friendship, acceptance, vulnerability, beauty, senses, playfulness, living in the moment

**Inspired by:** "The Heart and the Bottle" by Oliver Jeffers

## Opening Words

Are you ready for a story?

*From now on keep your eyes looking down.*

Let's turn this upside down.

Now we have time to breathe.

In a circle of trust we listen and explore feelings.

There's space to wonder and play, in love.

Your story, my story, our story. Let's be curious about this story.



| Words  | Actions (storyteller's perspective)   |
|--|---|
|  | <i>Lay out the stars and then the waves to cover 1/4 of the circle.<br/>Place down a disc with an animal on it, facing to the right. Make a path of discs alongside the water, then up to the animal. Place two discs in the water.</i>                 |
| Once there was a person  | <i>Move the person playfully from the right.</i>  |
| who loved playing in water,  | <i>Move the person playfully in and out of the water.</i>   |
| being with animals   | <i>Move the person to the animal and pause.</i>   |
| and staring up at the stars.   | <i>Look at the stars.</i>   |
| The person looked,<br>listened,<br>wondered,<br>imagined<br>and felt   | <i>Put down a felt piece each time you say a word.<br/>'looked' - yellow circle<br/>'listened' - orange semi circle<br/>'wondered' - blue wave (placed down like the string of a kite)<br/>'imagined' - purple triangle<br/>'and felt' - green leaf</i> |
| with all of their heart.   | <i>Hold the fleece heart in your palms like a gift and place it on top of the coloured felts.</i>   |
| One day something sad happened   | <i>Place the a grey blob above the coloured pieces.</i>   |
| and the person decided to hide their heart in a safe place.  | <i>Make a new path across to the left. Carefully hold the heart in the palm of your left hand and keep your left hand near to the person as you move them along to the left with your right hand. Place the heart carefully down near the edge.</i>     |
|  | <i>Slowly build a hiding place over the heart with bricks - two to make the sides, and with three as the lid.</i>   |
| Everything seemed fine at first.   | <i>Move the person back to be with the animal..</i>   |
| But things felt very different. They stopped looking up at the stars, being with the animals and playing in the water. | <i>Remove the green and purple when you say 'stars', then the blue and orange for the animals and finally the yellow for the water.</i>   |

| <b>Words</b>   | <b>Actions</b> (storyteller's perspective)   |
|--|--|
| Time passed and the person's heart was still hidden. | <i>Look at the box hiding the heart.</i>   |
| One day, a friend came to visit.                     | <i>Move the friend playfully from your right, along the beach to join the person. Pause.</i>                                       |
| As the two played together                           | <i>Move both people into the water, let them play and then leave them on the discs facing each other in the water.</i>             |
| they looked, listened, wondered, imagined and felt   | <i>With each word replace one piece of felt (in the same order as before) and remove one block.</i>                                |
| with all their heart.                                | <i>Hold the heart in your palms like a gift and place the heart back over the coloured felts. Leave the grey blob where it is.</i> |

*Please see our training resources or come on an OutoftheBox course to develop in the art of holding a safe and brave space for contemplation, reflection and dialogue.*

### **Wondering**

*You are now engaging with the group so look up, and say: Let's be curious about how we feel.*

I wonder what part of this story you like?

I wonder what part you don't like?

I wonder what the story reminds you of?

### **Community Play**

*Facilitate play with the materials to further explore feelings and to focus on an issue or idea, e.g.*

*How are you feeling? or What does your day look like? or What does your community look like?*

*What brings you joy?*

*When do you feel playful?*

*What helps you to play?*

*When are you living with all of your heart?*

*When do you need to hide your heart in a safe place?*

*How do you hide your heart?*

*You may invite people to place themselves in the picture using one of the wooden figures.*

### **Closing Words**

*Before the story is put away, ask: Is there anything else that needs to be said or done?*

*Hold out your hands as you say: For all that's been said and for all that's not been said - thank you.*

*Invite participants to remove the objects they put down, then put the other objects away in reverse order.*

### **Personal Response**

*Time to play and contemplate, e.g. in movement, art & craft, writing, playing with the story materials.*

### **Celebration**

*Share food and drink to allow people to connect socially and prepare to leave the session.*