



**Berry Beary Kind
— 12 Stories —**

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***In a very kind town called,
“Berry Beary Town”
Lived a very kind Bear called,
“Berry Beary Kind”***

***Imagine a place where fun things
happen every day;***

***Where everybody is happy and
helping each other;***

***A place that is safe, pleasant and
welcoming to all;***

***Where everyone is friendly and has
what they need;***

***A place where new and interesting
ideas and solutions can be tried.***

***...Perhaps, if we all do more than
imagine, this dream can become
a reality.***

Berry Beary Kind

— 12 Stories —

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The Story of Berry Beary Town



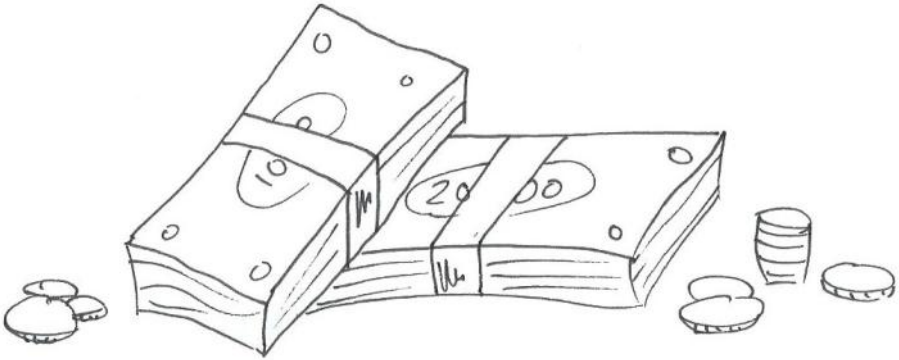
It was a cold and drizzly day in Berry Beary town—almost as grey and cold as Mr. Berry Beary Rich acted as he went about his day.

“Nothing fun ever happens here,” he’d often lament. His thoughts would occasionally take him back to when he was a child and fun things did happen, because, as his mother would say, “You have to bring fun to others first and then fun will come to you too.”



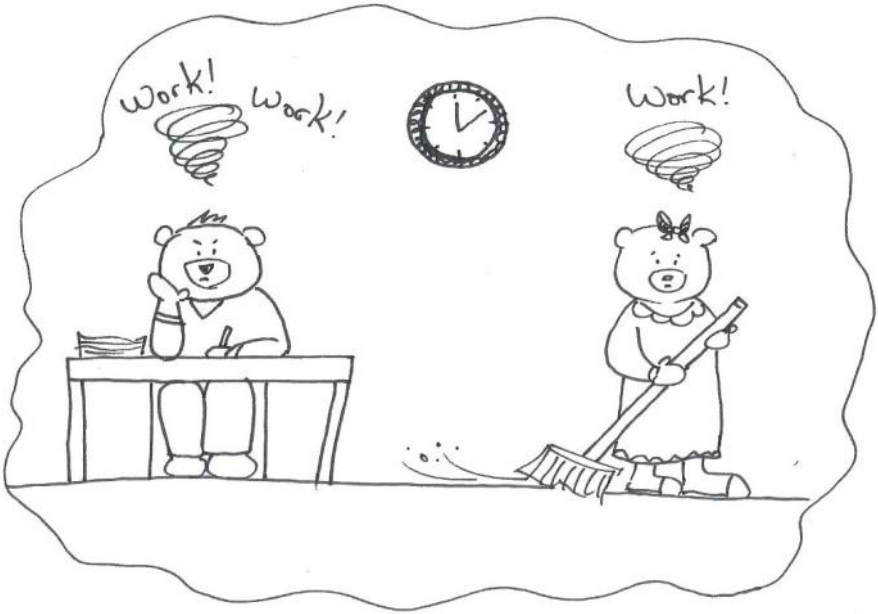
But he was much too busy nowadays. Ever since he became the mayor, there was just problem after problem to fix, in this now sad and cold-hearted town. The only solution, he thought, was to first of all make everything as comfortable as he could for himself.

“If I’m happy, then I can make this town what it should be,” he thought. But that just didn’t work, as the more he focused on getting things for himself, the more problems came into his life and to the town, which of course only made him sadder.



One afternoon he sat counting up the money he'd made that week by charging big fees to those who had disobeyed one of his very many rules, regulations and restrictions.

“Good, another 20,000. This should help me build that summer vacation house that I’ve always wanted. I just can’t enjoy being around town anymore; I need someplace to go and relax. Every time I look around—which I don’t have much time for anyway—it just brings me down. I’ve rarely ever seen a smile, or heard laughter. All people seem to have time for is work.



“Well, in order to keep up with the fees I charge, I guess they do have to work most of the day—and often on the weekends too. But maybe if they work hard, this will keep them from having time to cause trouble. Yet, it’s taken away nearly all joy. I think this summer vacation house I’m going to build will be just what I need. It will help me to get away from the sadness I feel here.”



Berry Beary Rich thought the way to be happy was to make himself happy first. But that wasn't working. He thought up plan after plan to cheer himself up. Building yet another house was his latest idea.

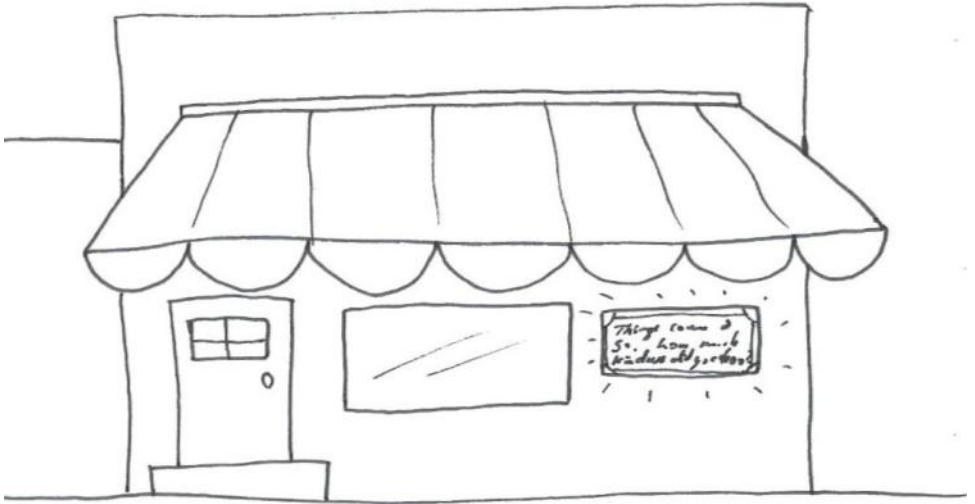


There was one family, however, who seemed to be nearly unaffected by the selfish mayor’s decisions, nor by the gloom that seemed to hang around the town like a big, invisible storm cloud: The Berry Beary family.

This family was descended from one of the founding families of Berry Beary Town. Many years before, this place had been discovered by the great and noble “Mr. and Mrs. Berry Beary”. They, together with their large family of 12 children, and a few other friends had built the very first houses and farms.

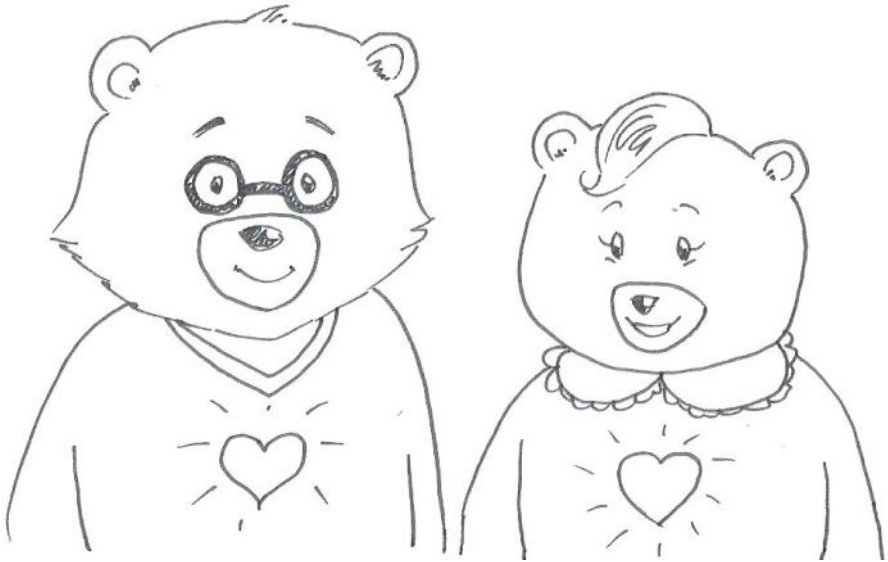


It was hard work for them, but in time it became a nice town that travelers were always glad to stop by and visit. There was so much to see and do; and most of all, the citizens of Berry Beary town were always friendly and generous.



Well, that was a long time ago. Things were different in this town now—much different. But for the Berry Beary family, things hadn't changed much.

“Things come and go. The important thing is: How much kindness did you show?” was their motto, which was written on a plaque on the wall of the corner store that they ran.



Berry Big Beary and Berry Beary Gentle were always kind hearted and friendly to those they met. Sometimes people came to their store, not because they actually needed something from the shop itself, but they needed a friendly word and a smile, and these were always found in there.



After several years, at last, this kind team had their own little cub. They were elated. “What shall we call him?” Berry Beary Gentle wondered.

“I think he should be called something that tells others the secret to having a happier and better town. Maybe one day he’ll even help to change things from the sad state it’s gotten into, and make this place a great place to be—like our founding ancestors tried to make it,” Berry Big Beary suggested.



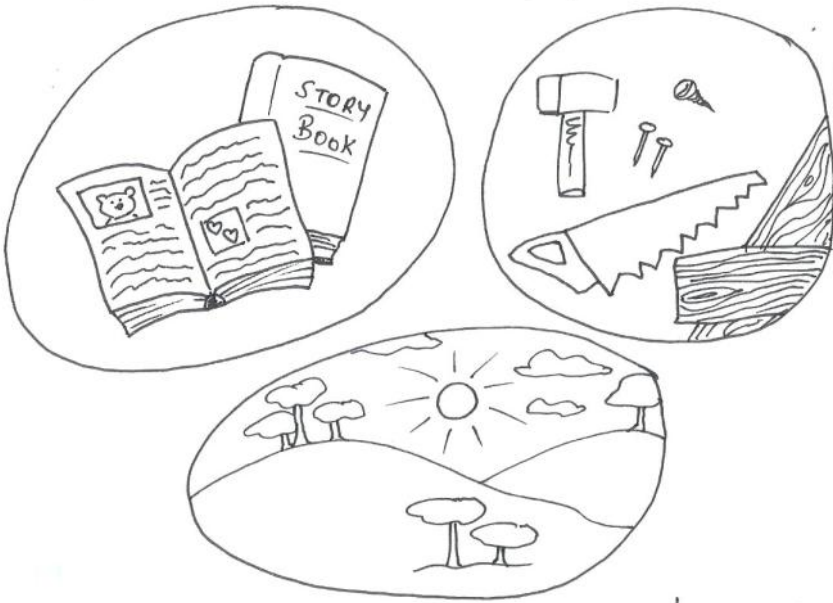
“How about calling him, ‘Berry Beary Kind?’”
Berry Beary Gentle offered.

“Yes. I like that. ‘Berry Beary Kind,’” Berry Big Beary said as he mused on the name, and then turned to look down on their cute and cozy cub who was snuggled up in his mother’s arms.



“Berry Beary Kind,” he whispered, looking at his cub. “I pray that God will help you to be just as we are naming you now. May you grow up to help many follow in the ways of kindness.”

Berry Beary Gentle and Beary Big Berry looked sober for a moment. They were both thinking of the same thing: Mr. Berry Beary Rich. “Well, dear, we can pray. One day I know things will change for the better if we do,” Beary Big Berry said.



As Berry Beary Kind grew up, his parents did their best to make his days filled with as much joy and fun and creativity as possible. They wanted to impart to him a happy life, and gave him opportunities to learn many helpful skills. His parents believed that one day he really could make a difference in the town.

They read him stories of the good that others did. They went on trips to the countryside together and learned all about plants and farming. Berry Beary Kind loved it out in nature most of all. His father helped to teach him carpentry skills too, and together they built a big strong tree house.



Berry Beary Kind would often have his friends over for back-yard parties where they'd play "Town" as they called it. They would pretend they were in charge of a town, and act out just what they wished their town was like.

In their make-believe town, there was no money or fees to pay; people were always kind and generous, and of course a whole lot of fun would be happening—because the people of the town chose to make it so, and their imaginary mayor inspired people to do the good that they thought of.

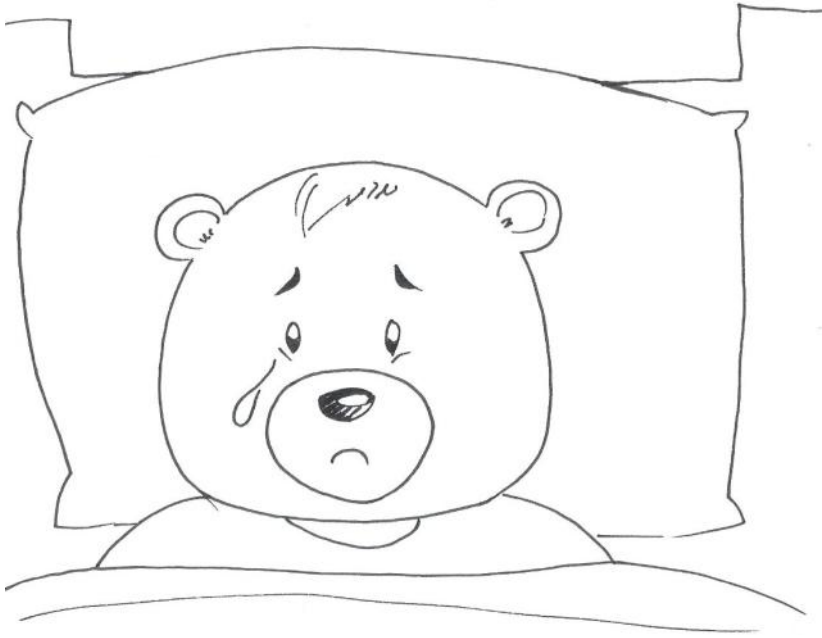


Sometimes Berry Beary Gentle and Berry Big Beary would sit on the back porch and watch their son play out in his games what he thought the town should be like. They'd smile. There was a ray of hope that it just might happen someday.



Then, one day news shocked the town as they heard the mayor of Berry Beary Town had become very ill. All his plans had come to a halt as he lay on his hospital bed.

He had expected that since he was, what he considered himself to be, the most important man of the town, that the nurses and doctors would be treating him with great respect and kindness. But that wasn't the case. These ones that were now having to care for him, in what could be his last days, never smiled and were rather cold-hearted and curt in their interactions.



Mr. Berry Beary Rich began to see some of the effects of his own lack of love and joy, and all the troubles he had caused to the town through his selfishness and money-taking focus. He wished he'd been kinder. He was now sadder than he'd ever been.

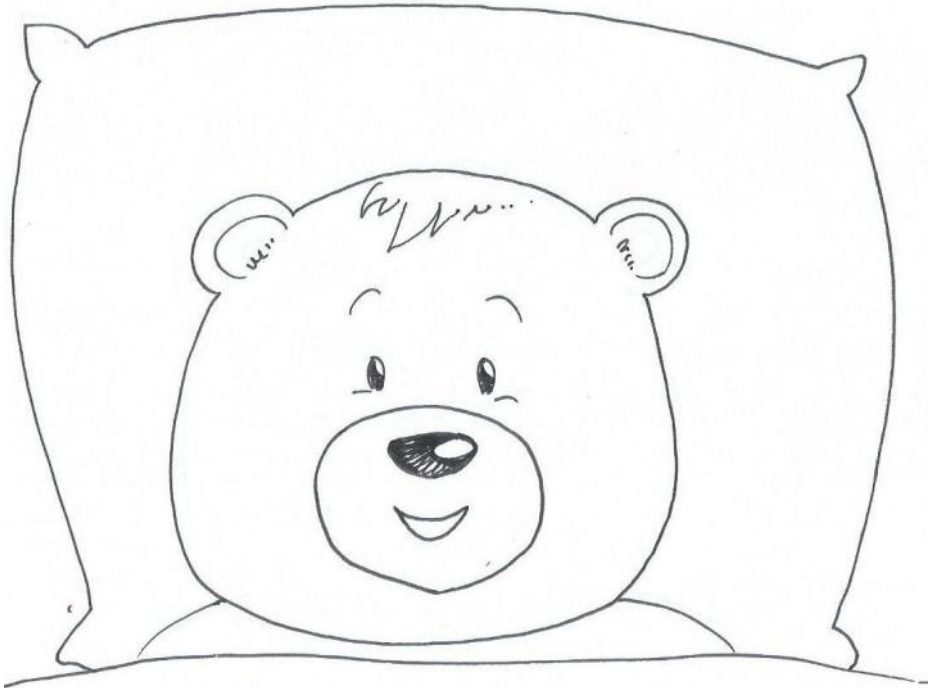
“Won’t even one person come to see me, to pay me a friendly visit?” A tear ran down his cheek. He tried to remember if he even had any friends. Most of the people he saw each day were those who he was trying to get things from, and trying to get to work harder in order that he might have what he wanted for himself.



But just as he was crying, there was a gentle knock on the door, and in walked a smiling family—a father and mother, their 18-year-old son, their daughter, and little boy.

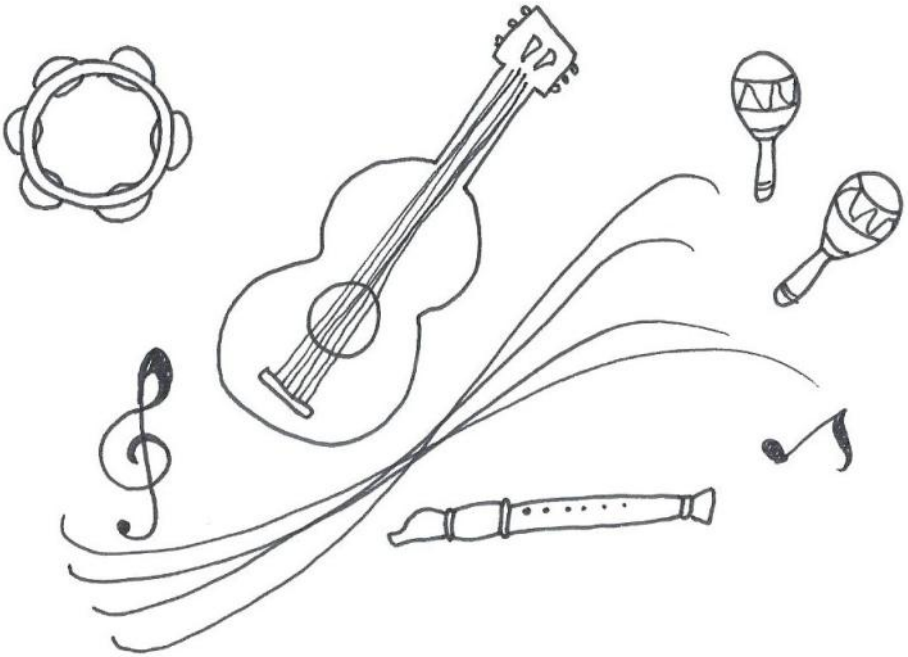
“We’ve brought you some flowers,” the mother said, and placed them on the table beside Mr. Berry Beary Rich.

“I... uh... why... Thank you...” Mr. Berry Beary Rich stammered in surprise. He’d almost forgotten how to say thank you. It’d been so long since a deed of kindness had been part of his life.



“Can we sing you a song?” Berry Big Beary said, and together the family sang and played on a few small musical instruments they’d brought along.

For the first time in a very long time, there was a small smile beginning to appear on the face of Mr. Berry Beary Rich.



“I’m so happy you all have come. I thought there was no one who cared. Please, come closer. I have something to say.”

They moved a few chairs near his bed and listened quietly as Mr. Berry Beary Rich struggled to speak. “I’ve been so wrong in the way I’ve run this town. It all started when I was your age... what is your name?” he asked and motioned toward Beary Berry Kind.

“Beary Berry Kind” was the response.

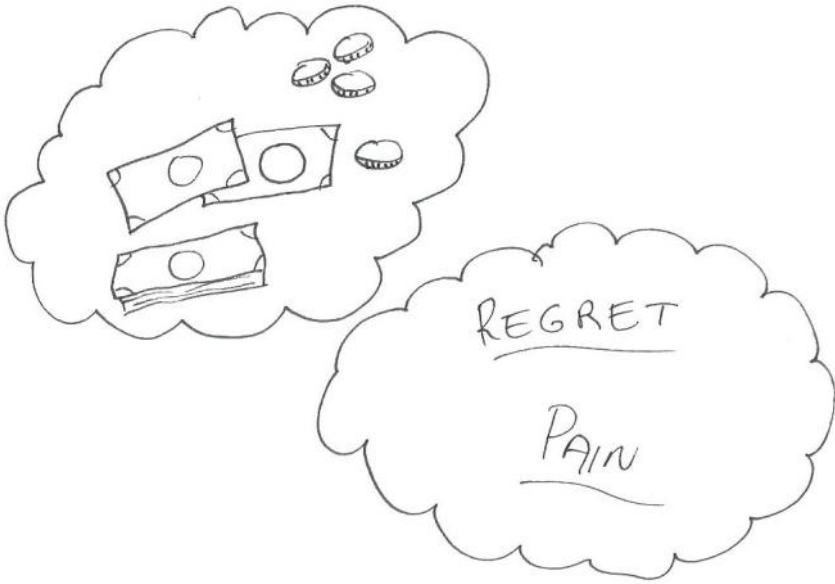


Mr. Berry Beary Rich continued,

“That is a wonderful name. I like that. Would you do me a favor?”

Beary Berry Kind nodded.

“I give you permission, that from now on, you can do as I should have done when I started out. I want you to be in charge of Berry Beary Town. I want you to teach them what your family has just taught me today—that showing kindness to others is more important than anything else on Earth. I’ve learned this the hard way.”



“I started out thinking that to be happy I’d need to be rich and important. But now, here I am. No money can heal me. And money can’t bring true friends to visit me. I’m worse off than a poor man. At least they might have a nice family to bring them joy, if they’d been kind and generous.

“I have nothing now but pain and sorrow and a whole heap of regret. I can’t buy back time or a chance to start again. So, since I can’t change what I did in the past, at least with the last part of my life, I can try to make amends in some small way.”



“Sonny,” he said, speaking to Berry Beary Kind, “I give you permission to do what you can for this town. I don’t mind if people forget about me now. They’ve thought about me and the misery I’ve caused through my own selfishness for too long. I want them to start smiling again, and I want you to find the secret to a truly happy and good town.”

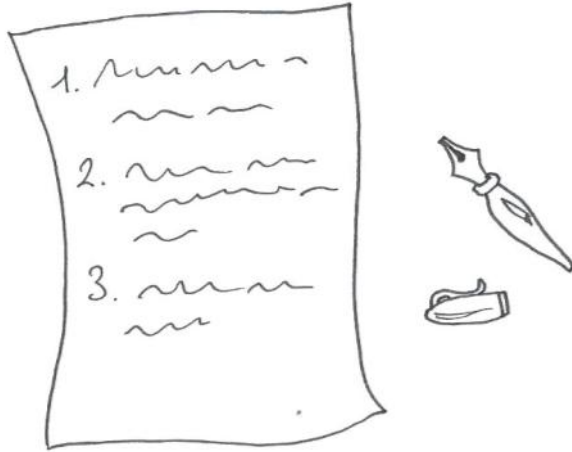
Beary Berry Kind looked over at his father. He was smiling and a tear of joy ran down his face. Berry Beary Gentle was bringing a glass of water and a cool cloth to Mr. Berry Berry Rich.



“We’d be happy to do all we can, in your stead, to make the town the friendliest and happiest one around,” Berry Beary Gentle said. “And our oldest son, Berry Beary Kind, will make a wonderful mayor, we know. Thank you. We are honored.”



“I’ll do my best, Sir,” Berry Beary Kind said, a bit overwhelmed with the sudden big responsibility. But he knew he didn’t need to do it alone. He had a great team of friends who had practiced “town” with him plenty. He was sure he could count on them to help turn things around for the better.

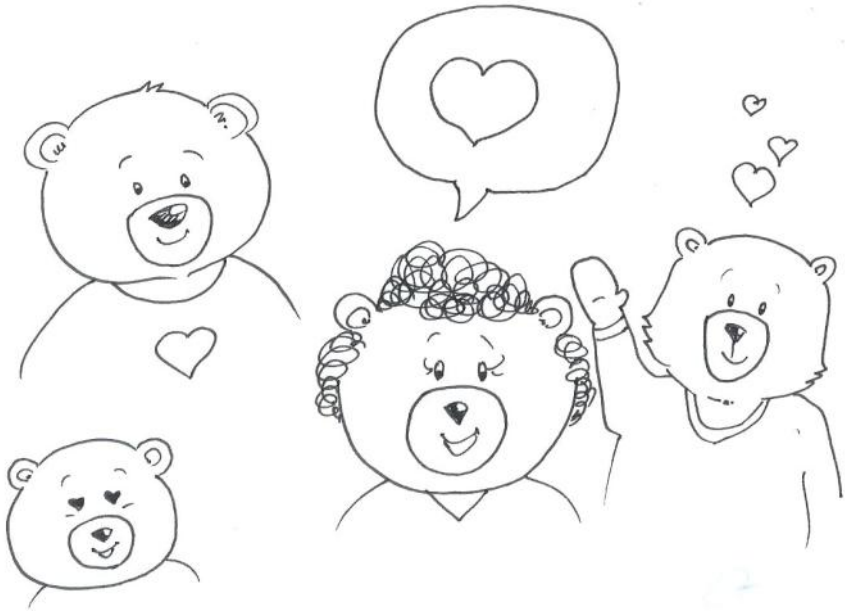


Berry Beary Kind took some time alone to pray, and to think about his new job, and wrote down the thoughts that came to him:

The first step to helping others smile, is to give away plenty of yours.

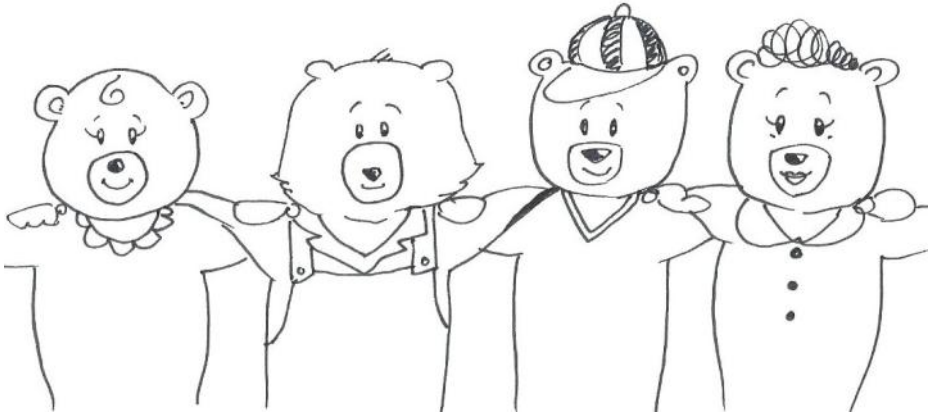
The first step to inspiring others to give and share, is to be very generous yourself.

The first step to get others to help out is to be willing to help whenever others have a need.



Indeed, there was a lot to be done, and it would take a long time until things were the way everyone would like them to be. But day by day, with one smile and deed of kindness at a time; with one new idea or initiative at a time, of something that would make things more pleasant; with one kind word at a time, things would change.

He had to choose to be what he wanted others to be. In time, it would catch on, and the love and friendliness would change things for the better.



Mr. Berry Berry Rich would give him enough money to get him started... until it was no longer needed. For when kindness and care are the priority of each one in the town, that is all that is needed to supply each one with what they'd need. Everyone caring for everyone else, means everyone has what they need. —Along with the willingness to work. Joy and fun would make even the work a pleasure.