

# Love Me For Me

## Discussion questions

The following questions are used for discussion

with the young people who have listened to the stories in this book. The goal is to get children talking and thinking through the means of the stories. The questions are not meant to be used to do therapy. Not all questions have to be used. Some questions are rather sensitive. If you are not sure you are equipped to follow up on a question, don't use that question. You are of course not limited or required to use these questions. These questions are merely suggestions to help a discussion

## Different like me

- Why do you think the boys were laughing at Matt? • What are some of the things you have learned are typical boy things or girl things?
- Have you ever experienced when you did something that wasn't specifically expected for your gender that people teased you or hurt your feelings?
  - \* What is it that you did?
  - \* How did they treat you?
  - \* How did you respond?
- Matt thought of Chris as his rescuer as a "knight in shining armor". What made what Chris did so special to Matt?
- Have you ever experienced that you had somebody who stood for you to protect you?
  - \* What was the situation and what did they do?
- Have you ever taken a stand and stood for somebody to protect or support them?
  - \* What was the situation and what did you do?
- Have you ever seen a situation where you wished people spoke up but they didn't, not even you?
  - \* What was the situation?
  - \* What stopped you from speaking up?
  - \* What would help people to speak up and support others in difficult situations do you think?
- The story says that Matt often felt lonely, but that day when Chris played with him was a good day. Have you ever felt lonely even when a lot of people were around?
  - \* What makes you feel lonely?
  - \* What could make you feel less lonely?

## Too cool for school

- Alex says that his parents taught him that “ just because somebody is different does not mean that they are bad people”, yet when people are different from the norm they are often treated as if they are bad. Have you ever seen when somebody was treated badly because they were different? What happened? And what was that like for you to witness that?
- Alex’s mom changed from being a woman into a man. Some people were very kind and some people were very mean when they went through that transition, even family members. Usually people become mean when they are scared or don’t understand something or disagree. What do you think could help people to not be so mean during such a period?
- Eli and his parents went into therapy to get help with his transition from a girl to a boy. What are some other things that families could use help with from a therapist?
- Alex shared that his uncle and grandmother were a great source of support for him when he could not talk to his parents. Who do you have in your family that you can talk to that listens and supports you?
- Who do you have in your life that might not be a family member but is a good listener and supports you?
- It helped Alex that his teacher supported his transition and respected him by using his preferred pronouns “he” and “him”. In what ways have teachers been helpful to making you feel like you belong? In what ways have teachers made you feel like you don’t belong?
- Eli talks about feeling good about being his “real self”. What is something about you that most people would be totally surprised about to find out about you. [be prepared to follow up appropriately]
- Alex and Eli became friends because of special circumstances, out of support, but then found out that they really liked each other. What does your ideal friendship look like?

## **Some dreams come true**

- David likes to daydream (and nightdream) about Homeria, a fantasy world where he is a queen. What do you like to daydream about?
- In his fantasy world he breaks a gender stereotype. Even though he does that in his fantasy his parents do not like that. Why would they be bothered by something he does in his fantasy world?
- David felt confused and hurt by what his parents said to him. Why do you think he felt that way?
- When David felt bad his brother made him feel better. How did his brother do that?
- Have you ever been in a position when somebody felt confused or hurt and you made them feel better?
- What was the situation and how did you do that?

## **What my mommy did for me**

- The little girl in the story has a mother who cares for her very much and shows it in her actions. Who do you have in your life that shows their love through their actions?
  - \* How do they show it?
  - \* How do you show it back?
- When the little girl's mom shared that she was going to transition from a woman to a man, her mother was a little bit scared to tell her. The little girl showed her mom kindness and support. Sometimes adults are surprised about what children can do. Can you describe a situation where you were supportive and kind for a person that was quite older than you?
- The little girl's mother noticed that something was bothering her and took her out for ice-cream and to have a chat. Her mother truly listened to her which allowed her to come to a solution.

- \* Can you think of a situation when somebody really listened to you and it led to some type of action to make things better?
  - \* What was that situation and who was the person that listened?
- Can you think of a situation when you wish somebody would listen to you, but nobody really did?
    - \* What was the situation?
    - \* If that situation was to happen again is there something you could do to make sure that you are heard? What would you do differently?
- The little girl's mom was very creative in her solution. Can you think of a situation when you (perhaps with help of others) were very creative in your solution to a problem?
    - \* What was the situation?
    - \* What was the creative solution?
    - \* Who helped you to bring your solution to a success?

## **Super-secret**

- The little boy in the story has a super-secret that he has only shared with his dog. Not even his best friend knows about it. Everybody deserves the right to some privacy, but keeping a big secret all to yourself can be dangerous. Why do you think it could be dangerous?
- The little boy did not obey his parents and got hurt. How did he disobey them and how did they respond when they found out?
- The little boy says that he has to keep a secret identity because people get weird about what they do not understand. He says he is different but not weird, but because everybody else is weird he has to keep his secret. Why does he say people are weird but he is not?
- The little boy liked that his superpowers were a lot like that of the Aztec deity Ometeotl or the Mayan deity Itzamna. In what way were his superpowers like them?

- In the end he shares that maybe it would be nice after all if he didn't have to keep his secret. He does not really want to keep his secret identity. Why do you think that after all the hiding he really does want people to know his secret?