Caitlin: Hey, we're Caitlin and Katie coming to you from our library living room. We are here not just as children's librarians, but as people who are parenting our own children.

Katie: Each month, we'll bring a new conversation about parenting with helpful resources from our library and beyond. This is "Your Family, Your Library," and we are your librarians.

Caitlin: Before we jump into this month's topic, we want to remind our listeners that though we're pretty good at finding resources and we have experiences parenting our own children, we are not child development experts. Our choices do not need to be your choices. There is no judgment here. We are all doing our best with the health and well-being of our families in mind.

Katie: And today we're talking about another light subject.

Caitlin: We like to keep it airy.

Katie: Breezy. About what we do when things are scary in the world, how we cope with that, and also how we help our children and our families cope with that.

Caitlin: Yeah, and I think we are part of that, right? I mean, I think we are part of the human population and when things are scary in the world, I think they're scary for us, too.

Katie: Mm hmm.

Caitlin: When we first were talking about this topic and we were writing, you know, like sort of our plot points into the outline, it says "scary things that our kids have said." And I think that the meaning behind that was, you know, when our kids come to us with things that trouble them. But the first thing that popped into my head was those listicles that were going around for a while that was like, you know, ten ways to know that your child is terrifying and it's like nothing but like a person is driving by a country road, you know, at 10 at night and the toddler sees a barn out the window and it's like "I used to live there." Like I got I went down a real rabbit hole about like, like haunted children. And I was thinking about this time that when Haven was a toddler and I was home with her and we were in the hallway, and I'm kind of given her like that gentle baby jostle, you know, like "it's time to sleep." And she all of a sudden puts her head right up and she says, "Ghost." And I was like, this is I'm telling you, this is like peak, terrifying, child listicle time for me. Like, I don't know why I got so into it, but I was like, "It's happening. It's happening to me now." I was like, "Ghost, you see a ghost?" I'm trying to play it cool, like, ha, ha. You know, I think your play, I'm playing along and she's like, "ghost there." And she points down the hallway and I'm like, "Oh, is it a nice ghost or not

nice ghost?" And she says, "Not nice ghost." And I am telling you
right now.

Katie: You're like holding Poltergeist.

Caitlin: Yeah, I was super scared. Turns out she was looking at my curtains and she saw an owl, like a picture of an owl on my curtains. And it was a whole like, I don't know if your kids got into Rescue Bots, but it was like a whole Rescue Bot subplot. But for a good minute and 30 seconds, I was scared to death and convinced my house was haunted.

Katie: Yeah.

Caitlin: By a not nice ghost. Nice ghost. That's one thing. Not nice ghost. Forget it. Nobody needs that time. Like, being a homeowner is terrifying enough. Like, I don't need to deal with any kind of haunting.

Katie: Yeah.

Caitlin: Anyway, what we actually meant was, how do we talk to our kids when things are scary in the world and they come to us with these problems? What's coming up for you?

Katie: I think for us, like for Edwin, I think he does understand now, like living and not living. But, you know, we just have like we talk about my mom a lot. And so he's been definitely more emotional about, like, what that means for someone to be here in spirit, but like, not actually being able to see them or meet them. So I think like every time, like he gets really emotional about it. And also I can tell he's trying to process like who this person is that he's never actually met or seen. You know what I mean?

Caitlin: That's just rough.

Katie: But I can see I'm figuring it out. And like, I mean, it's, it's definitely hard. It's easier for me to talk about than it was. But yeah, it's like I want to talk about it whenever he wants to talk about it, because I think the more we talk about it, that understanding, it develops and I'm hoping that it carries over and other difficult things to.

Caitlin: Sure. That's big. That's coming up at our house too. Haven is really thinking a lot about aging and death and Devin is turning 50 this year. So for some reason. Well, I mean, I think that is a big number and it's in her head a lot that he is turning 50. And then I have talked about stopping dyeing my hair. And she sort of drew a line in the sand there and she's like, "I don't want you to do that." I think she said, :I don't want you to look like a grandma." And it had

to do not so much with like me looking like a grandma, which I was kind of like, I mean, come on. But also, I think, like, she's aware that there's, like, a progression of, like, kid. Grown up. Parent, Grandparent. No longer with us.

Katie: But also, like, when she thinks about you, she sees a specific image and you think seen something different. That's jarring for some kids like that one's a lot.

Caitlin: My dad had this giant beard when I was a kid and he shaved it off and my sisters and I were like, we could not handle it. Yeah. So, yeah, I think you're right about that.

Katie: Yeah. Yeah. I mean, he doesn't do it much anymore, but when Edwin was smaller, Mike has to wear his glasses, like, all the time. But, like, you know, when he would get up in the morning and not have his glasses on, and Edwin was like, "You need to get your glasses right now." Like, kind of like because, like seeing him without them, I think for him is, seriously I know you're still you, but you don't look like you should look to me, you know, And I. Yeah, it's just interesting. So you. I mean, you all are moving soon, so, like, how is that?

Caitlin: It's not great for any of us. I sort of have my head down and just sort of like walking through, like, just sort of like, what are the steps that need to happen in order to, like, get us from where we are now to where we're going. And I'm not processing any of the feelings that I have. Like I'm putting on my own oxygen mask here and talking about this because like, I know that I have some really big feelings about this. This is this house that we're in now is the longest that I have ever lived anywhere in my whole life. And, you know, Haven wasn't born inside of my house, but she came home to this house. Desi was two when we moved here. I have some really big feelings that are fully unchecked right now. I am not dealing with them, and that's what I need to do in order to get it done. Haven is, she's feeling all of it. She is really sad and I think it has to do with change and impermanence and like, I don't know, it's really challenging. Just trying to like, remind her that it's not the walls of the house that matter. It's us, it's our family. And we're not changing. Just the location of where we're going to be is changing. And as I'm saying that to her, I'm saying it to myself, too. This is not my favorite moment in history. And I think Desi is trying to be very stalwart about everything. I think outwardly facing he's doing the same thing that I'm doing. But he let slip a couple of times like, "I'm not ready. I'm not ready to say goodbye." And it's big. Moving is one of those things for kids that and for grown-ups, I guess for everybody, unless it's like a really happy thing or if you're the kind of person that likes to move around a lot. Yeah, it's heavy.

Katie: Well, I mean, and it's like in your case, even when it's like a

wanted change and something that you like sought out to do, it doesn't make it any it doesn't make it easier.

Caitlin: No. And luckily there's a lot of resources in books that deal with this specific thing, this moving thing, and we're not even moving far. We're just moving, you know, up the block. So it's not, you know, we'll still be able to see our old house.

Katie: Yeah.

Caitlin: You know what's really sad? Somebody is going to mess with my flower gardens. I remember when we moved in, the person that we bought the house from had lived there for really, really, like, forever, for a super long time. And she was moving into an assisted living facility. So we never met her. But the neighbors all told us about her and how she would be like, her yard was meticulous and she would be out there, they said, with scissors, like trimming the grass in her yard. And that is not our aesthetic at all. Like, it's like we have toys and chalk and, you know, like weedy plants and stuff. And so, like, I remember I was sitting outside with Desi one day and we were blowing bubbles and like all kinds of detritus in the yard. And I saw this car drive by with an elderly person like, so slow, just like clocking us, staring at us. And I think it had to have been her or her or somebody in her family, but they did not have a nice expression on their face. Yeah, lots of good picture books for sort of reading about these feelings because honestly, like probably what Haven is doing is healthier than what Desi and I are doing.

Katie: Mm Yeah. One of my favorites is "In a Jar" by Deborah Marcero. It's so beautiful. It's just about two bunnies who are friends and they connect over collecting things. And when one of the friends moves away, that's kind of how they keep in touch by collecting things, but also like, ephemeral things. And I don't know, it's just so beautiful.

Caitlin: It is. The artwork in that book is it's like a visually stunning book, but also I think it gets it kind of what I've been trying to talk to Haven about like that. Your friendship is more than like a physical location. Your friendship is about the things that you share together and your common interests. And like the two of you, you know, or however many people are in your group. So it's, it's not a loss. It's just it's different. It's something different.

Katie: Yeah.

Caitlin: Whew, it's hard. Desi's more afraid of like, Haven's fears are more sort of they're harder to pinpoint a little bit. And Desi's are more concrete. He's always been scared of weather events like tornadoes. He went through this long phase where he was irrationally afraid of street sweepers. I would say from like 4 to 7 or 8. He was terrified of street sweepers. And to be totally honest, it's like you

go through all the things. For me, like I feel safer and better when I understand all of the facets of whatever the thing is that's freaking me out. So it's like, okay, here's how the street sweeper works. This is why it's doing the thing that it's doing. There's a person who is physically in the vehicle and they are propelling it forward and they are also watching. And you have to have a special kind of driver's license in order to, you know, manipulate this vehicle. And it didn't help. This is I'm not proud of this. But like, it, it troubles me that my very reasoned, rational way of solving this problem does not work for him. I don't appreciate that. I have done research into street sweepers.

Katie: It should work.

Caitlin: It should work. Yeah. I mean, it's the same with tornadoes. We've done a lot of talking about emergency preparedness and I feel like we have information and that gives us power. And that also is not enough. It's still, I don't know. Well, I think it is nice specifically about some of these big scary things for kids like, you know, dinosaurs, you know, which are like thrilling but also can be scary or like, you know, big weather events like tornado is you know, we have the "learning about them" books, which are you know, in our nonfiction section, we have like robust collections for all of these. And then also sort of the processing your scary feelings books in our carrying and emotion section of the picture books. I really appreciate that.

Katie: Yeah. But I think even though like the way that you are trying to explain to Desi of like why street sweepers are noble machines of the road and he like didn't really understand that. I think even just the, the act of actually talking about it and I think that's what's the important part is like I recognize that this makes you feel scared and I'm here. And I think just that recognition, you know, and not dismissing it.

Caitlin: I think patience is a big part of it, too. And that is not something that I always have a deep pocket for. Like, I think I will say that I did not always support him. I think in the best way when he was afraid of street sweepers, I thought it was performative for a while. You know, like the, the real peak time for this was, you know, when Haven was really, really little, you know, still a baby—baby. And I think we were dealing with some, you know, big brother getting used to like that. And I thought we were doing some, like transference. And I was like, after about the 50 billionth time of him, like throwing his hands up over his ears and, you know, getting very, very freaked out about this machine. I was like, "oh, my gosh. Like, get it together. Like, I cannot deal with this." And like, I, like sort of stormed over and, like, picked him up to put him in the car. And that's when I realized that he was shaking. And I was like, oh, yeah, oh, like bad me, bad, bad me and poor bud. And I think also hard to

like and we've talked about this before, but like totally separate your own brain from your kid's brain and remembering that they are a separate entity from you. So like what works for me is this like, rational, here's why there's zero possible ways that the street sweeper guy is going to run you over. And for him, it's like, Yeah, I hear what you're saying. And still [machine sound].

Katie: Yeah, yeah, yeah. So yeah, I mean something similar but different with Edwin again, is like he really needs to know like what is happening and when and like what the order is going to be. And even if it's like kind of the same thing each day, it's like a reminder of "Dad's going to take you to school. You know, Mom will pick you up." You know, it's just like knowing that specifics are really, really, really important to him. And at first it was kind of frustrating, I think, for both Mike and I, because it was like, "yes, that's what we're doing. We've already talked about this." But then it's just like, Oh, he really needs to be reassured that we're on the same page.

Caitlin: That makes sense. It's interesting that you say that because when I was looking through some of the resources, you know, like how to talk to your kids about things in the world that are scary or like what to do when a scary thing happens and kind of shakes your world. That routine maintenance is like at the top of the list.

Katie: Yeah.

Caitlin: Which I'm not a big routine person and I worry about it sometimes because I know it's important. But that wasn't like it definitely wasn't really a thing for my family when I was growing up. We didn't have like a solid routine in place, but I can see how it would make you feel a lot better. To know what's coming next? Are both your kids like that?

Katie: No, Orson not so much. It's interesting because I definitely I'm a routine person too, and I think I'm more so with when it comes to my kids, especially when they were little. They're three years apart. So when I was home with them, when they were little, like we definitely had a kind of a routine. So it's like they knew what to expect. And like, I think I gave that to them because that's also kind of what I like. I mean, I do like to know what to expect.

Caitlin: Yeah.

Katie: And I do get anxious, like, especially like leading up to a trip or something. Like I'm always the day before. I think my husband knows now, like, watch out. Like, you know, it's just I mean, I feel like I deal with it better, but yeah, it's like kind of that anxiety of "How's the drive going to go?" You know, I'm not a great flier, so, you know, all those things add up in like a hard.

Caitlin: I think that makes me feel better too. I think I like knowing what's going to happen. I guess what I meant more when I was thinking about routine is sort of like a repetition, and that's what I'm not good at. I think I always wanted to be the kind of parent and frankly, like I'd like to be the kind of adult who is good at making a list of what a day is going to look like or like what meals I'm going to have for the week, anything like that. And I just...

Katie: I can't.

Caitlin: I can't do it. I cannot get it together.

Katie: My brain doesn't work like that.

Caitlin: When we were locked down during COVID and talking about big, scary things like my body is still processing that. And I think I wanted some normalcy and some sort of escape from the constant like I was, I was so scared for the first six months. I was so scared anywhere outside of like my home bubble, you know? And it's funny, with some distance, I'd kind of forgotten what that fear felt like. But like lately I've been thinking about it more and it's been coming back in. But what I really wanted was like, my kids were doing the elearning, and Devin and I are trying to work from home and I wanted a plan. I wanted to be able to say, you know, from this time to this time we're going to do this. And you would think with all of us being home together and with all of that, like the wide swaths of time that we had, that we should have been able to get it together. And boy were we not.

Katie: But I think a lot of people felt the same way because, I mean, the uncertainty was like, palpable. I mean, yeah, like nobody knew what to understand about it. And it was like something that none of us in our generation at least had experienced before. And so there's like nothing you can equate it to.

Caitlin: Were you able to keep your kids from being very afraid of COVID stuff?

Katie: Yeah, I think so, because they were just really young. Like, I mean, they weren't I mean, Orson was in his last year of preschool when it started and then moved into kindergarten, and he was basically with the same group for the most part, same teacher. So a lot of that didn't change. I mean, obviously the way that things functioned within that space did change. And then, Edwin, I was like two, I mean, I'm sure because like I had definitely had a lot of feelings about it. I was having a hard time like processing it too. So I'm sure, like, they felt that, but like they were just still so young.

Caitlin: I think my kids were not super scared either. Like we kind of made we were kind of able to turn it into like, chores and like games,

you know, like, "here's how we're going to mask and here's what we're going to do. We're going to go in the woods and, you know, gonna make up stories where we walk." It was eating me on the inside, but I do feel like we did an okay job of keeping it from them. Along those same lines when, when there are big scary things that happen in the world. Do you talk to your kids? Do you approach your kids about those or do you let them come to you with stuff that's scary?

Katie: I think a little bit of both. When Orson was in kindergarten, he was like really interested in like kind of disaster events like the Titanic and Mount Vesuvius and Pompeii. And I don't know if that, because his teacher was actually like, you know, he's so interested. And I wonder if this is the way of him processing like the pandemic.

Caitlin: Oh, that's a great point.

Katie: So like, we would talk about that and like, read books together about like what happened and. And I think now, like, if we're listening to the radio or if I'm reading something on the news or something like that, like if Orson's there next to me, like sometimes like ask about something or what, you know, what that picture is like, Well, you know, I'll tell him. I don't really like the idea of keeping things from them because I think at any age there's an appropriate way of being honest and truthful. And I don't know, that was lacking for me a little bit when I was a child, and I'm not sure that it made me feel any better, not, not knowing things like I wish I would have been told. So now it's, it's a fine line.

Caitlin: It is a fine line. I sometimes struggle with, if this is a thing that is happening in the world, if this is a thing that kids are experiencing, you know what I'm thinking about? Like kids that are seeking asylum or kids that, you know, experience racism or, you know, poverty, or other things that just that hurt and are super sad. It doesn't feel terrific to me to pretend like that isn't a reality that kids their same age are experiencing. I don't think I actively like, "sit down kids and I tell you, I'm going to lay some truth on you." Like, I don't want to do that. But yeah, kind of the same with the radio. I have the radio on too often. We're not like TV news people, but we definitely consume radio news. And so if there is something big happening, we talk about it. Desi was, I think he was ten when the trials around Tamir Rice's murder happened. And so that was a really big conversation for us. And as always, I'm really grateful for the wealth of resources that we have at the library that help you navigate some of those big conversations and talk to kids in an open and honest way without being completely hopeless or helpless. Like, I really like finding books that are sort of empowering. And I think I think it comes back to like how I guess like again, that's me, like how I process my own fear, you know, it's like I need to have a concrete thing that I can do to make things better. So when we had our conversation about climate change, it's like, what makes me feel

better is knowing that there are tangible things that I can do that will help.

Katie: Yeah, yeah, I agree.

Caitlin: So we have a wealth of picture books and books in our parenting collection that help you find ways to have these conversations around big, difficult topics with your kids here in the library. And your librarians are excellent resources for helping you find them, but they're also sort of put into neighborhoods, like we have a parenting collection in the kids room that's easy access. And we have picture book neighborhoods like our caring and emotion picture books like Katie mentioned earlier, where you're talking about empathy or social justice or, you know, friendship. That's a big one. Yeah, bullying, all of these big topics.

Katie: Well, maybe we can talk more about these resources when we come back from our break.

Caitlin: I love it.

Katie: Want to catch a movie that's perfect for the whole family? check out our family movies and sensory—friendly movies at the library. Find these events in our show notes.

Caitlin: So we've talked about a lot of things that are scary and a lot of things that are hard. And we've touched a little bit on things, you know, ways that we can talk to kids and, and strategies to use. What else do we have?

Katie: I found some good resources through the Sesame Workshop and we can link to these in our show notes. One of them is kind of what we were just talking about is understanding and explaining change and that it's a part of life. And also that grief can be a part of change. You know, learning how to let go of things or whether you want to or not, let go of people. And that change can also help us grow. And that change might feel hard in the moment, but often you can find some beauty from the change that happens.

Caitlin: Yeah.

Katie: You know, may not happen right away, but.

Caitlin: It's in there.

Katie: It's in there.

Caitlin: I appreciate those resources like Sesame Workshop that sort of help tease out ways to proactively and productively cope.

Katie: They also have a like a table that you can do kind of like an activity that you can do with your child about what changes and what stays the same. If you're talking about kind of a big thing that's happening in your life. So on one side you can write what's going to change and on the other side you can write about what stays the same. So I think especially for kids that like concretely need to see how this change is going to affect them and what they can count on to like expect or that's going to remain the same. I think this is a really good way of going through that together.

Caitlin: You know, I think that's probably helpful for those kids that are bottlers, too.

Katie: Hmm.

Caitlin: Yeah, it's proactive. I like that a lot. You know what I thought was interesting was like looking through sort of this, I was looking at some different like mental health resources for, you know, how to how to talk to your kids. And this is probably a no brainer. But it didn't really occur to me until I was looking at it that the way that you talk to your kids is different depending on how old they are. I mean, I guess that's a big duh, but...

Katie: No.

Caitlin: I thought it was it was interesting because, like the one the first resource that I read talked about how when there is something globally scary happening, you know, whether it is like a climate change event or, you know, something weather related or something scary like that, if you have a very young kid, you should limit your media use. They don't need to be exposed to like sort of a constant barrage of, you know, whatever it is, that is scary. But if your kid is older and you don't have any kind of exposure to it, they know that's there. And it's more unsettling to not, you know, to pretend like it is not.

Katie: Yeah, well, cause I, I mean, I remember like, thinking back, being a child myself and, like, you know, there are questions that I had about things that I didn't always feel like I could ask. Like, maybe you think, like, if we don't talk about something, like, we're not, we shouldn't talk about something. And that's not how at least I want my kids to feel.

Caitlin: Yeah, same

Katie: Because I don't feel good.

Caitlin: No, my mom was pretty open, but I think we had to know how to ask for things. And I don't think I don't think kids always know how to ask. I mean, Desi's pretty direct, but the way that I figured out

Haven. It's, it's not it's not a perfect system. But I figured out if she kind of sidles. Like she'll kind of come up and be like, "this thing happened." And it's ,it's like overly casual, and that's like when I hear that, like, overly casual tone, I'm like, I better listen. It's like this "thing happened and then this thing happened," and I'm like, "Oh, say more about that thing." And sometimes that thing is nothing, but sometimes that thing is a thing. And she's like, I have an unsettling feeling about it, but I can't. I mean, this is me extrapolating, but like, I have an unsettling feeling about a chain of events that happened at school, but I can't quite put my finger on why it's uncomfortable. Yeah, like I can help you untangle that.

Katie: Yeah. I don't know if you heard this or not yet, but last week, when our colleague Lorrie was doing Lego Party, there was a mom with her two kids, and that week in school, their kids had learned about the assassination of Martin Luther King Junior, and they were kind of working together to build, I don't recall the exact details, but basically it was about to build something that could help people feel safe and be safe from things like that happening.

Caitlin: Oh, wow.

Katie: And, you know, it's like Lorrie, you could hear the mom talking about it with them. And I mean, she asked me, like, "do you think that that was okay? It's like, you know, it's not like they were building like weapons or something like that." And I told her, like, I think it's absolutely okay. Because I think play is one way that kids get out those big feelings or work through...

Caitlin: Oh, for sure.

Katie: Something that they're learning, especially something that's like just like so harrowing, like unbelievable and sad.

Caitlin: And hard to understand because objectively, like, you're looking at this person who's a really good person who was working to enact change. And why would somebody want to hurt them?

Katie: Yeah, Yeah. I mean, it's unfathomable, but I mean, it was actually like, I don't know, that was like one of the most beautiful things I heard last week because I was like,

Caitlin: That's great.

Katie: You know, it's sad that our kids have to think that way sometimes, but I think it's beautiful that those kids can feel comfortable enough to like, talk about it and to process it in such a constructive way.

Caitlin: Yeah.

Katie: I don't know. It was just it was just a great thing to hear.

Caitlin: Yeah, you're right. And play is a great resource.

Katie: When in doubt, get the Legos out.

Caitlin: Get the Legos out, you know? Good for everything.

Katie: Yeah.

Caitlin: Unless you have to clean them up or you're trying to pack for a move and then it's like they self multiply. How, we have so many Legos.

Katie: Yeah.

Caitlin: So many Legos.

Katie: We're getting to that point. Well, we took some of your Legos. So now we have even more Legos.

Caitlin: I don't know how to deal with it at all. It's just like nonstop, Lego explosion.

Katie: Yeah.

Caitlin: Some of the better books that I've read lately, I really, I they've mentioned the Caring and Emotion section of the picture books and I think it's because I know that you are also but like we're a big picture book emotion processors and one of the books that I found that I think helps exemplify the feeling of what happens when you bottle up all of your emotions. You know, we have a whole lot of books like this, but I really like "The Heart and the Bottle" by Oliver Jeffers, and it's just sort of a book about a little girl who has something really rough happen in her life and it's too much to feel. And so she takes her heart and she puts it into a bottle. And I won't give away the ending, but it's worth a read. But I think it's good for kids like Haven, who, you know, like you can explain over and over and over. like, hey, it's, it's not great to just hide from your big feelings. Like sometimes you have to experience that in order to move forward. I think it's nice to have something imprint that really helps. And when you're dealing with big, scary things like, you know, talking about the assassination of, of Dr. King or, you know, with Tamir Rice or any other big scary race events, we have those books here in the library and a couple of them that have been really, really helpful in our family were "That Flag," which just came out last year. It is just sort of this really rich, intensely, powerful breakdown of feelings around, specifically, it's talking about the Confederate flag in this book. And it,'s it's two friends who are sort of divided on this

issue. You know, the white girl, you know, her family flies the flag because they think it is, you know, Southern heritage. And it's a good feeling for her. And of course, it is not a good feeling for her best friend who is a black girl who obviously has like a whole lot of other experiences associated with that. And everything sort of comes to a head when they go to a Southern Heritage museum and they both see it. They both see the sort of horrific history around, you know, the symbol of this flag and cannot be friends anymore. And the white girl has to do some real intense introspection around her own family and their beliefs and harm. And her friend has to sort of examine, like even if somebody comes to terms and does some like soul searching and reckoning and makes changes, is there too much harm? Can we still be friends after this thing has happened? I like the whole book because I think it's really honest and really well portrayed. But I also love a book that includes resources and this one has a ton in the back. Like there's an author's note. There are further resources that you can use for when you're talking to your kids about stuff like this. It's a really good book. And another one that Haven and I went through and read together was "The Undefeated" by Kwame Alexander.

Katie: So good.

Caitlin: It's such a good book. The pictures, Kadir Nelson is a genius. And the pictures are Haven's an art kid and so she was immediately drawn to the pictures and the story that the images tell. I'm more of a word person and I just love the cadence of the book. And if you can find a recording of Kwame Alexander reading the original poem, it's worth a listen. But we have those books and more in our social justice section. Another one really useful, I think, especially for like it's not easy to read books about war, but our community has a number of people that are seeking asylum in the United States, and the kids have kids in their classrooms that come from places that are not hospitable right now and so it's really directly relevant. And this is sort of one of those times where I'm not trying to be scary and I'm not trying to make people feel, like my own kids feel bad or afraid. But also there are kids in their classroom that are dealing with the effects of the ravages of war. So books like "The Day the War Came," which is pretty intense, but it's real. I'm happy that we have these resources that help us have these conversations when they come up.

Katie: Yeah, me too. I have one that I wanted to talk about too. It's called "Why Am I Here" by Constance Ørbeck-Nilssen, and she's Norwegian. And basically it's just this child kind of wondering why was I born where I was? Why do I have this life that I have? And there are people across the world who are experiencing war, experiencing famine, you know, on a boat with a bunch of people trying to find somewhere new to live. I mean, it's very heavy, but it's just it's told in a really beautiful way. And it's one that my kids and I have enjoyed together and have had a lot of good conversation around. And I

think it's one of those books that help you understand what empathy is and like what that feels like. Because at least for me, when I experience the book, when I'm reading it, I honestly feel like each page and what each page symbolizes and it's heavy, but it's so easy to feel what the book is trying to say and experience it. On that note, I really wanted to read a couple of things from the Vietnamese monk Thích Nhất Hanh. I picked up a book called "Peace is This Moment: Mindful Reflections for Daily Practice." And there is just a few things that really spoke to me for our conversation today. The first is called "Being in Touch." "We have to be in touch with the present moment, the wonderful life that is present in us and around us. The birds sing, the wind sows and the leaves of the pine. If we're not in touch, our life is wasted. When we're in touch, we're nourished and we're transformed. Being in touch also means being in touch with the suffering in our own body and our own person, in our environment, in our family, and in our society. Getting in touch with suffering, we'll know what we need to do to transform it. On one hand, we need to be in touch with what is wonderful because that will nourish us. And on the other hand, we have to be in touch with our suffering so that we can understand love and transform."

Caitlin: That really sums it up. That's beautiful.

Katie: And I have just one more short one. It's called "Call Suffering by its True Name." "We recognize the suffering that exists inside of us and around us. Our practice isn't to get away from our real problems, difficulties and suffering. We recognize suffering as it is, call it by its true name and practice so that we can identify the deep causes of suffering. The division in families, the violence in schools and in society. All these things have to be confronted with our mindfulness. With mindfulness, we can look deeply into the nature of suffering and see how it has been made." And for me, that just goes back to we need to talk about things because they're happening. They're going to continue happening. And I feel like the more that we're able to be in touch with what's happening and our feelings around that and how we're all connected with what's happening, that we'll be able to better deal with what's coming in the future and also what's happening right in this moment.

Caitlin: If we can't feel it, if we push it down, if we put it in a bottle, then we don't experience it. We can't change it.

Katie: Right.

Caitlin: We can't make it better.

Caitlin: Kanopy Kids offers enriching, educational and entertaining films and TV series for children. These curated titles include language learning, videos on sciences and math, storybooks and more. Visit our show notes and get started today.

Caitlin: Katie, what kept you going this month?

Katie: I'm always like, I don't know.

Caitlin: I've been thinking about it for like two days.

Katie: I've been thinking about it too. And I'm like.

Caitlin: You know what? I'll tell you something that is keeping me

going, even though it's your turn.

Katie: What's that?

Caitlin: About a couple of episodes ago you mentioned pomegranates.

Katie: Yeah, I did.

Caitlin: Katie, I'm a convert.

Katie: I love it.

Caitlin: I, I think. Is it possible to eat too much pomegranate?

Katie: No. No, not at all.

Caitlin: It's a super food, so I feel like I'm.

Katie: It is.

Caitlin: I'm just making myself...

Katie: It'll give you wings.

Caitlin: I feel it hasn't happened yet, but I've eaten a lot of pomegranate. At Valley in Evanston, they're 99 cents. That's a pretty

good deal.

Katie: That's a really good deal.

Caitlin: I got a humongous pomegranate.

Katie: That's good to know.

Caitlin: And I'm the only one in the house that eats them. I made a huge mess. It looks like a pomegranate bloodbath, but it's worth it.

Katie: See me and my children love it, so we kind of like, "who's going to get to it first?" You know, and like, I'll come back to the fridge to get more pomegranate and it's like, gone. And I work so hard

because it's like it takes a little bit of work to deseed a pomegranate.

Caitlin: Well, you, you do it like I do it like I'm like a wild boar. Like I'm like standing over the sink. I like I don't even I don't want to, I don't want to mess around with getting my fingers all red. So I'm just, you know, in juice in my face.

Katie: I like to muddle it. What do you call it? Is it called a muddler?

Caitlin: Yes, you call them muddlers.

Katie: Yeah. I like. I muddle it with a muddler.

Caitlin: It's meddlesome.

Katie: And then put just plain seltzer.

Caitlin: That sounds really good.

Katie: And it's really, really good.

Caitlin: Yeah, that sounds good.

Katie: Yeah.

Caitlin: So you got anything?

Katie: So I think I'm going to say that I've been doing some reading for myself, and that always feels very luxurious. Because for me, that that really means I'm making time. I'm making time for it. I'm making time for myself. And I kind of love it. So.

Caitlin: Good job, Katie.

Katie: That's it for us this month. Remember to keep in touch with us. We'd love to hear from you. Email us at podcast at Skokie Library Info.

Caitlin: And don't forget, if you've enjoyed this episode or previous episodes rate and reviews on your favorite podcaster.

Katie: This has been Katie and Caitlin with "Your Family, Your Library." Produced by Amber Hayes and sound engineered by Paul Knutson.

Caitlin: Bye friends!

Katie: See ya!