

**Anxiety weighs down the heart,  
but a kind word cheers it up  
Proverbs 12:25 – A Proverbial Story  
By Ted Hildebrand and Chatgpt**

**The Kindness Stone**

In a cozy little village nestled between green hills and sparkling streams, lived a 10-year-old boy named Milo. Milo was known for two things: his bright red cap and the way he always seemed to worry.

Milo worried about everything—his schoolwork, thunderstorms, losing things, and even whether the ducks at the pond had enough breadcrumbs.

One summer morning, Milo sat on the porch, staring at a crumpled note in his hand. It was from his teacher: *“Remember to bring your science project tomorrow.”*

Milo groaned. “What if it’s not good enough? What if everyone laughs at me?”

His grandmother, Nana Lucy, came out with two cups of lemonade and sat beside him. “What’s the matter, Milo?” she asked gently.

He handed her the note. “I’m just... worried. What if I mess up?”

Nana Lucy looked at him kindly and reached into her apron pocket. She pulled out a smooth, shiny stone the size of a plum. It had a tiny heart carved into it.

“This,” she said, placing the stone in his hand, “is the Kindness Stone. It’s been in our family for generations. Whenever someone feels weighed down with worry, this stone helps.”

Milo looked at it curiously. “Does it have magic?”

“Not the kind you read in fairy tales,” she smiled. “But it reminds us of something important. There’s an old saying—*‘Anxiety weighs down the heart, but a kind word cheers it up.’*”

She put an arm around him. “So here’s your kind word: Milo, you’ve worked hard, and I believe in you.”

Milo’s heart felt a little lighter, like a balloon rising in the sky. He smiled and tucked the stone into his pocket.

The next day, Milo stood nervously in front of his class, his project—a cardboard volcano—wobbling on the desk.

Just as he was about to speak, his friend Lina whispered, “You got this, Milo!”

He took a deep breath, feeling the Kindness Stone in his pocket. He explained how his volcano worked, poured in the vinegar, and watched as foamy lava bubbled out. The class clapped, and his teacher beamed.

At recess, Milo found Sam sitting alone on the bench, looking down.

“What’s wrong?” Milo asked.

Sam shrugged. “I forgot my lunch. Again.”

Milo reached into his backpack and pulled out an extra sandwich. “I brought two today. Want one?”

Sam looked surprised. “Thanks, Milo.”

Milo smiled. “Just a kind word... and a sandwich.”

That night, as Milo placed the stone on his bedside table, he thought about the saying again: *“Anxiety weighs down the heart, but a kind word cheers it up.”* He understood it now, not just in his head, but in his heart.

And from that day on, Milo still worried sometimes—but he also became the boy known for one more thing: his bright red cap, his thoughtful heart, and the way he always had a kind word to share.

