

# THE BRIGHT SIDERS

*created by*  
**KARI GROFF, MD & KRISTIN ANDREASSEN**



A watercolor illustration of a young girl with curly hair, wearing an orange dress, running across a grassy hill. She is holding the strings of a large cluster of colorful balloons (purple, orange, yellow, green, blue, and red) that float in the sky. Each balloon has a simple face with eyes and a mouth. The background shows a blue sky with light clouds and green trees on the horizon.

**A MIND *of* YOUR OWN**



# 1. THE SONG ABOUT SONGS 3:30

K. Andreassen/Yellowcar Music, ASCAP – K. Groff/KGroffMD, ASCAP

# 2. IN THIS TOGETHER (SKIT) 0:41

K. Andreassen/Yellowcar Music, ASCAP – K. Groff/KGroffMD, ASCAP – C. Eldridge/Money Baby Music, ASCAP

# 3. THE MAD DAY 3:17

K. Andreassen/Yellowcar Music, ASCAP – K. Groff/KGroffMD, ASCAP

# 4. SAD IS NOT FOREVER 3:32

K. Andreassen/Yellowcar Music, ASCAP – K. Groff/KGroffMD, ASCAP – Larry Toto/SixEightSierra, ASCAP

# 5. THE NEW KID (SKIT) 0:43

K. Andreassen/Yellowcar Music, ASCAP – K. Groff/KGroffMD, ASCAP

# 6. FOREVER FRIENDS 3:09

K. Andreassen/Yellowcar Music, ASCAP – K. Groff/KGroffMD, ASCAP – C. Shaw/CharlieFromDurham Music, ASCAP

# 7. YOU DO YOU 3:05

K. Andreassen/Yellowcar Music, ASCAP – K. Groff/KGroffMD, ASCAP – O. Hally/Sony/ATV Music Publishing Australia Pty Ltd, APRA

# 8. A LOT IN COMMON (SKIT) 0:42

K. Andreassen/Yellowcar Music, ASCAP – K. Groff/KGroffMD, ASCAP – C. Eldridge/Money Baby Music, ASCAP

# 9. VAMOS A JUGAR, LET'S GO PLAY 2:26

K. Andreassen/Yellowcar Music, ASCAP – K. Groff/KGroffMD, ASCAP – C. Eldridge/Money Baby Music, ASCAP – G. Moreno/Lil Sparrow Music, SESAC – J. Ryan/Joey Ryan Music Publishing, ASCAP

# 10. SUPER BUSY KIDS (SKIT) 1:09

K. Andreassen/Yellowcar Music, ASCAP – K. Groff/KGroffMD, ASCAP

# 11. JUMPING THROUGH HOOPS 2:55

K. Andreassen/Yellowcar Music, ASCAP – K. Groff/KGroffMD, ASCAP

# 12. THE TALENT SHOW TRYOUTS (SKIT) 1:17

K. Andreassen/Yellowcar Music, ASCAP – K. Groff/KGroffMD, ASCAP

# 13. OOPS! I MADE A MISTAKE 2:36

K. Andreassen/Yellowcar Music, ASCAP – K. Groff/KGroffMD, ASCAP

# 14. WERE YOU EVER AFRAID OF THE DARK? (SKIT) 0:29

K. Andreassen/Yellowcar Music, ASCAP – K. Groff/KGroffMD, ASCAP

# 15. THE MOON & THE STARS & ME 3:18

K. Andreassen/Yellowcar Music, ASCAP – K. Groff/KGroffMD, ASCAP

# 16. JUST KEEP ON WALKING (SKIT) 1:01

K. Andreassen/Yellowcar Music, ASCAP – K. Groff/KGroffMD, ASCAP – N. Pikeln/Noam Tunes, BMI

# 17. BULLY THIS 2:29

K. Andreassen/Yellowcar Music, ASCAP – C. Eldridge/Money Baby Music, ASCAP – K. Groff/KGroffMD, ASCAP

# 18. A MIND OF YOUR OWN (SKIT) 0:48

K. Andreassen/Yellowcar Music, ASCAP – K. Groff/KGroffMD, ASCAP – C. Eldridge/Money Baby Music, ASCAP

# 19. THE SONG ABOUT SONGS (REPRISE) 1:08

K. Andreassen/Yellowcar Music, ASCAP – K. Groff/KGroffMD, ASCAP



# A TALE *of* TWO PASSIONS

KARI GROFF, MD

I was raised in a family of music teachers and musicians, my violin in hand from an early age. But in high school, it was medicine that grabbed my attention. I greatly admired the role of the physician healer and felt called to become one. I continued to follow both my passions; my violin was often tucked under the anatomy lab table, and my anatomy textbooks accompanied me to orchestra rehearsals.

When it came time to choose a specialty, I was drawn to psychiatry because it felt like the area of medicine that was most connected to the arts and philosophy. When training as a fledgling physician at the University of Pennsylvania, I became well versed in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Positive Psychology. My mentor, Dr. Anthony Rostain, believed that physicians should maintain interests outside of medicine, and I happily still play in a band with him called Pink Freud, comprised of some of the best psychiatrist musicians I know!

After graduating from the Penn residency program, I moved to New York City to pursue additional training at the NYU Child Study Center and Bellevue Hospital. While living in NYC, I quickly realized that I was surrounded by like-minded people such as psychologists

*Kari*  
Groff, MD



*Kristin*  
Andreassen



who also sang on Broadway, psychiatrists who were distinguished concert pianists, and neuroscientists playing bluegrass. It was amazing. For the first time in my life, it felt completely natural to juggle medicine with my passion for music. The city was also overflowing with talent from resident touring bands whose presence in the scene encouraged the professionals and amateurs around them to reach new heights of musicality. My days were spent seeing patients, and my evenings were filled with fiddle tunes—both onstage and in the pub and living room jams that underpin a thriving acoustic music community wherever it lives.

At NYU, I discovered the work of that institution's own celebrated professor, Dr. Oliver Sacks (1933–2015). Inspired by people like Dr. Sacks and the world-renowned Nordoff-Robbins Center for Music Therapy, I became interested in music therapy. In my own practice, I discovered that some of my most challenging patients, who might be completely resistant to the idea of talk therapy, will nevertheless respond to music therapy. It was almost as if once my patients found out that I was a musician (and not just a doctor), they were more at ease. Their faces would relax. I felt safer to them, more real or connected. Soon I began to write songs of my own with a social-emotional focus that I felt could be beneficial to my patients. And eventually, I started to think about creating an album that would finally combine my two passions in the same project.

## COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY, POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY, AND MUSIC

Both Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and Positive Psychology play a fundamental role in this undertaking (starting with our name, The Bright Siders!). Once Smithsonian Folkways decided that our music was the right fit for their label, I think we felt empowered to really lean into the academic and psychiatric roots of this album's concept.

At Penn, I was educated in the teachings of Dr. Aaron Beck. One of the most influential contemporary psychiatrists and creator of CBT, Dr. Beck developed new therapeutic techniques that greatly differed from traditional Freudian psychoanalysis. CBT is more of a directive, "problem-solving" approach and involves a more conversational style between patient and therapist.

CBT is all about helping people analyze their thought processes logically and systematically, using charts and logs, diagrams, and visuals to identify thoughts that could lead to undesired emotional states and maladaptive behaviors. CBT involves making a plan to think about how to change both behaviors and thoughts in ways that would be more beneficial to one's emotional well-being. If this sounds familiar, that's because it is! CBT ideas are pervasive in certain movements of self-help and empowerment.

At Penn, training physicians were also influenced by Professor Dr. Martin Seligman, who is regarded as the founder of the Positive Psychology movement. Positive Psychology has become widespread in its influence in self-help movements. Its aim is to focus on



developing authentic happiness, encouraging people to identify and nurture the positive and most meaningful aspects of life, even during difficult times.

These psychological approaches are both deeply validating of emotions and also provide a proactive, self-directed approach to managing challenging thoughts and replacing unwanted behaviors with healthy, more positive actions. Both are highly useful in helping children develop healthy emotional states and behavioral patterns. The Bright Siders strongly believe that a positive, flexible, and resilient mindset is critical to developing emotional well-being especially in the face of challenging times.



# A PHYSICIAN MEETS A SONGWRITER: THE BRIGHT SIDERS ARE BORN

KRISTIN ANDREASSEN & KARI GROFF, MD

It was a chance connection with songwriter Kristin Andreassen that really began to propel the recording project forward. Kari had been a longtime fan of Kristin's music, listening to her "all g'Earl" old-time string band, Uncle Earl. For Kari, the deeply personal and psychologically rich lyrics on Kristin's solo albums were good company on many occasions.

Kristin and Kari first met in person at Ashokan, an upstate New York fiddle & dance camp. Kari mentioned that she was a child psychiatrist with an idea for a children's album, and Kristin asked about her influences and inspiring music of her own childhood. We discovered that growing up, we both were captivated by the 1972 children's album *Free to Be...You and Me*. Created by author and actor Marlo Thomas and produced in collaboration with Carole Hart of *Sesame Street* and Letty Cottin Pogrebin of the newly created *Ms.* magazine, *Free to Be...* was a collection of songs and skits addressing gender issues and equality, performed by Thomas and a cast of the era's most prolific stars.

It was our mutual respect for Thomas' project that sparked the idea that we could be good collaborators in bringing Kari's idea to life. Kristin brought with her not only recording experience, but her own expertise in the realm of children's music both as a performer and songwriter. As a dancer, Kristin had toured for years with the Maryland-based Footworks Percussive Dance Ensemble, whose performances included childrens' workshops where American history and immigration were taught through traditional dance. As a musician, Kristin's song "Crayola Doesn't Make a Color for Your Eyes" had recently become a hit on children's radio (despite having been released on an album of music for adults!)

Kari asked Kristin to produce a handful of songs for the album, and we were amazed by the music that came out of those sessions, including early versions of "Oops! I Made a Mistake," "Sad Is Not Forever," "The Mad Day," and several hilariously improvised skits that gave us a pattern for a Bright Siders' approach to providing context and actionable suggestions to accompany our songs. In developing themes for the songs, we thought about the emotional path of our own childhoods and the topics Kari was frequently seeing in her work as a child psychiatrist. We knew we wanted to start by addressing feelings around change, anger, dealing with bullying and social exclusion, perfectionism, anxiety, and sadness. Along with Positive Psychology, many of the lyrics incorporate CBT techniques such as positive self talk, quieting the inner self-critic, avoiding catastrophic thinking, and suggesting behavioral changes to replace unhelpful or self-sabotaging behaviors. Above all, we wanted our music to have a lightness to it, and to convey joy and self-acceptance.

In addition to the other wonderful musicians Kari pulled into the project, Kristin brought along the talented Chris Eldridge and members of Punch Brothers, as well as several other internationally regarded musicians who would eventually participate in these recordings. Chris ended up contributing to this project so immeasurably—as a guitar player, singer, engineer and arranger, that they asked if he would consider a co-production credit on the album.

## THE GREAT PAUSE

Early in 2020, just as we were putting the final touches on the music and these liner notes, COVID-19 hit the world. With in-person psychiatry visits on hold, Kari put her energy into collecting personal protective equipment for Emergency Room colleagues and signed up for the NYC volunteer medical force. From grocery clerks to doctors and hospital staff, she was astounded and humbled by the bravery and courage of those who kept New York City going.

In Nashville, Kristin and our co-producer Chris Eldridge experienced the pandemic on the tailwind of a tornado that spared their own house while flattening those of neighbors and a vital commercial district mere blocks away. Within the month, virus-related cancellations cleared their busy calendars of teaching and touring dates, leaving them unemployed, save for online guitar lessons and Kristin's recently adopted "side hustle" in home renovations.

At the end of May, Americans took to the streets to protest police violence and to stand in solidarity with Black Lives Matter. A diverse crowd assembled, wearing masks and risking their own health in powerful, socially distanced marches that—at the time of writing—have had a remarkable impact in moving the discussion toward confronting our country’s history of racial injustice. As the mother of a biracial daughter, Kari was amazed to witness and be a part of this. Kristin, whose construction company prioritizes hiring immigrants and formerly incarcerated people, witnessed first-hand the race- and class-based inequities in how Americans experienced the storm, the pandemic, and the movement for racial justice that grew stronger in their wake.

We are now at a moment in history—prompted initially by COVID-19 and the widely experienced mental health challenges of quarantine life—that is making us re-examine the importance of emotional well-being. We were forced to take a great pause and examine what was before us. This year, the pandemic, issues of social justice, facing climate change, and other global reckonings, have created a feeling of global stress that as a psychiatrist, Kari had yet to witness. Collectively, these issues feel immense and overwhelming, especially to children. More than ever before, we will need to model resilience and determination for children. They will need our support as they contend with the consequences of the pandemic. We will do our children a valuable service by coming together and making social-emotional wellness a priority at home and in school

curriculums. This feels just as important—especially now—as basic academic skills for predicting future happiness and success. Every home situation is different, but we encourage you strongly to prioritize attending to your child’s and your own mental health as we come through this incredibly difficult period.

Even though COVID-19 has taken away so many of the things that we all love, including gathering and performing music together, it did not take away actual music! As artists, we moved online, streaming and connecting with people virtually. As activists and community builders, we did the same. Songs, stories, and projects have abounded during this difficult time as we have each been forced to look inward, reminding ourselves of our original passion for the work we make—musical and otherwise.

This album was a long time in the making. It originated from our shared desire to connect with children through music, and to spark meaningful conversations between adults and children about growing up and all the emotions that go with it. Our goal is to convey—through music and whatever medium is at hand—deep empathy and understanding (you are not alone!) while also providing problem-solving skills that can help children navigate common emotional experiences. We look forward to releasing it in a world where, now more than ever, it is important to take care of our mental health. It’s not just a kids’ issue. It is a universal issue for every human, regardless of age.



# TRACK NOTES

Track annotations by  
**Kari Groff, Kristin Andreassen  
& Chris Eldridge**

*The following notes will include some suggestions to facilitate discussion. For more problem-solving ideas, reading recommendations, and other resources—and for song lyrics—we invite you to seek out *The Bright Siders* online at [www.thebrightsiders.com](http://www.thebrightsiders.com).*

*Please remember that this material is not a substitute for professional help, and if you or your child are in need, please seek support and care.*

*To respect all genders, we will use the pronoun “they” in addition to he and she.*

## 1. THE SONG ABOUT SONGS

Michael Trotter, lead vocal; Tanya Trotter, lead vocal; Chris Eldridge, acoustic guitar; Jamie Dick, drums and percussion; Owen Biddle, bass; Tyler Chester, organ; Legend Trotter, Millie Sims, Sadie Sims, Kinston Smith, Tarin Bowles, Oliver Bowles, kids’ vocals

This song was written last with the intention of being heard first. It’s an invitation to join us in the circus tent of songs yet to come. But this performance from *The War & Treaty* is also a revelation, reminding us that regardless of what emotion we’re singing about, sometimes it’s the act of singing itself that brings the joy. Some of my most joyful memories in the making of this album were shared with the kids who sang background vocals on this one—including Michael and Tanya Trotter’s son Legend, who makes his studio recording debut with these undeniable “yeah yeahs.” He’s reinforced by a terrifyingly talented group of kids I met through the Nashville Theater Bug summer

program and who took turns recording solo riffs and chasing our dog Stan in the dappled sunlight of the backyard. — KA

### **Try this at home...**

There is a satisfaction that comes from simply putting words to music. Try setting a few lines of a favorite poem or your own words to a melody. Maybe it’s a melody you already know, or maybe it’s one that you create together. Start simple, and see where it takes you!





## *Skit* 2. IN THIS TOGETHER

Kari Groff, Adult voice;  
A Brooklyn Kid, kid vocal;  
Chris Eldridge, guitar

### 3. THE MAD DAY

Kristin Andreassen, lead vocal;  
Ed Helms, lead vocal;  
Jared Engel, bass; Dan Knobler,  
electric guitar, baritone guitar,  
acoustic guitar, high strung  
guitar, mellotron; David Moore,  
piano; Charlie Shaw, drums

Ed Helms is a dear friend through our shared love of bluegrass music. He's best known as an actor, of course, so we were truly honored to watch him bring this character to life. — KA & CE

"The Mad Day" was inspired by a young boy I met at Bellevue Hospital who had very difficult moments when his mother asked him to do something that he didn't want to do—especially if he was in the midst of a video game. Sound familiar? It's definitely a common parenting challenge. I wrote the chorus for this boy ("Take deep breaths and let them out slow"), to explain how to calm the mind and body through breathing to help slow down the anger reaction. As we sang together, he began to practice calming down. — KG

#### Try this at home...

Talk to your child about what happens when they feel frustrated, especially if your child is prone to getting very upset when limits are set around screen time, bedtime, homework, and chores—frequent sources of conflict. Have this conversation with your child when you both are feeling calm, and not right after or during a difficult moment. Try giving your child a few simple lines that they could use to communicate their frustration in a calmer and more effective way. Rehearsing or role-playing when things are calm is a useful way to have children practice these skills.



## 4. SAD IS NOT FOREVER

Kristin Andreassen, lead vocal;  
Chris Eldridge, lead vocal, guitar;  
Mike Barnett, fiddle; Paul Kowert,  
bass

We want children to remember that just because you feel sad does not mean you are a “sad person” or that your sadness is forever. As adults who have all coped with sadness in our lives, Kristin, Chris, and I wrote these lyrics to give hope to others and to remember to do something that you love and that brings you joy. For us, it is music and being together. Thank you, Larry Toto, for your beautiful melody. — KG

### Try this at home...

Talk to your child first about what makes them happy and what makes them sad. Validate and provide empathy for both experiences. *If you notice that your child's sadness is prolonged or you have concerns about it, don't hesitate to find support. Intervention can be life-saving.*



*Skit*

## 5. THE NEW KID

Adrian Currie, Dad's voice;  
Kaia Kater, Daughter's voice;  
Millie Sims, Kinston Smith, New  
Friends' voices; Chris Eldridge, guitar



## 6. FOREVER FRIENDS

Kaia Kater, lead vocal; Millie Sims,  
Kinston Smith, kids' vocals;  
Chris Eldridge, guitar; Paul Kowert,  
bass; Michael Riddleberger, drums;  
Joel Wennerstrom, banjo

In her psychiatry practice, Kari hears many stories of what it's like to move to New York City, sometimes from very distant places and very distant lands. She sees her young patients contend with homesickness while bravely adjusting to their new environments. "Forever Friends" honors the feeling of nostalgia as a natural human emotion that can coexist with learning to accept changes in one's life. We asked our friend Kaia Kater to sing this song partly because we felt she must understand what it's like to be "The New Kid." Kaia is a Grenadian Canadian who was studying Appalachian string band music in West Virginia when she and Kristin met. Now a touring "songsayer" based out of Brooklyn, Kaia's deep alto is somehow magically the most believably childlike vocal on this album. — KG & KA



Try this at home...

Moving or changing schools is a difficult thing for children and adults alike. Validating their emotions and teaching them to maintain a positive and flexible mindset will help immensely. Practice with your children by providing examples of helpful versus unhelpful mindsets, and providing affirmative feedback when they choose positive over negative approaches.

*Unhelpful mindset:* "I'll never make new friends."  
"I won't ever like this place."

*Helpful mindset:* "Making friends is challenging but hopefully with time, I'll meet nice people." "I might not like this place right now, but I will keep an open mind to it and try to focus on the good things."



## 7. YOU DO YOU

Olivia Hally, drums, percussion,  
guitar, lead vocal, backing vocal;  
Pepita Emmerichs, violin, mandolin;  
Isaac Barter, bass, kick drum

This song addresses social exclusion and was inspired by the countless children Kari has spoken to who have hurt feelings about feeling left out and not understanding why. Her message to the kids: “This is a common experience that happens when growing up, and when you are excluded, it feels confusing and hurtful. But it does not reflect who you are as a person! Maintain a mindset of being very kind to yourself, seeing yourself as the unique, the one and only person that you are, and realizing that ultimately what matters the most is what you think about yourself and feeling happy with your own actions and behaviors.” Liv Hally—of the Australian acoustic pop duo Oh Pep!—took this message right into her heart and came back with this utterly catchy song practically wrapped up in a bow for us. We love you both, Liv & Pepi. — KG & KA

### Try this at home...

Talk to your children about the concept of social exclusion and how it can be a common feeling to want to “fit in,” perhaps excluding others who don’t “fit in.” As parents, we can teach our children to be inclusive and sensitive to the feelings of others from an early age.

Ask your children about what happens at school or on the playground. Have they noticed someone who seems left out? Is there a way to start to include that child? If your child is the person who feels left out, validate how discouraging this can feel and help the adults involved do more to create an inclusive environment. Teach your child to celebrate their own uniqueness as well as appreciate the qualities of those around them.



*Skit*

## 8. A LOT IN COMMON

Gaby Moreno, voice; Chris Eldridge, guitar

## 9. VAMOS A JUGAR, LET'S GO PLAY

Gaby Moreno, lead vocal, guitar; Joey Ryan, lead vocal; Sebastian Aymanns, drums; Kimon Kirk, bass

Our nation's diversity is one of our greatest strengths. In my family, my Serbian husband is a soon-to-be American citizen, a longtime dream of his. My daughter is biracial with a Haitian American father, and myself, I am a white woman. Our extended family is a diverse group with roots in Europe, Mexico, Pakistan, Jamaica, India, and Korea. My daughter's family extends even further to Ivory Coast, Ghana, and China! It is an amazing gift to be a part of a multi-cultural family. Let's teach our children not just to be understanding and

appreciative of cultural *differences* but to find the *similarities* we share as humans inhabiting this earth together. This song celebrates that children love to play similar games all over the world—as Kristin and Gaby Moreno learned from each other when they chose a Los Angeles playground for the location of their first songwriting date! As they taught each other the names for the playground equipment they saw in front of them, they imagined a duet between Gaby and a curious, funny, English-speaking boy named Joey—because they were hoping their pal Joey Ryan (of the band The Milk Carton Kids) could be convinced to play the part. And it worked! — KG



### Try this at home...

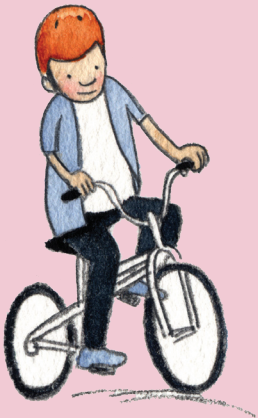
With your children, do some research together about the different types of games children play around the world. Can your children find similar games to those they play in their own school yard? Are there games that sound new and fun?



## Skit

### 10. SUPER BUSY KIDS

Chris Eldridge, guitar; Zara Bode, Coach Bernie voice;  
Gabe Witcher, Coach Buster voice; Charlotte Lang,  
Noah Rosenfeld, Busy Kids' voices



### 11. JUMPING THROUGH HOOPS

Gabe Witcher, lead vocal; Zara Bode, lead vocal;  
Chris Eldridge, guitar; Jared Engel, bass; Rob Hecht,  
fiddle; David Moore, piano; Charlie Shaw, drums;  
Ruby Lang, Charlotte Lang, kids' vocals

When I moved to NYC, I was amazed by the level of grit the kids here have! The stuff they deal with on a daily basis includes trekking on city buses to school, standing on hot subway platforms, patiently waiting in long lines, working in their parents' businesses, and generally being able to handle the intensity of the city with grace. This song is a tribute to those kids and is intended to inspire all children to have courage and perseverance, especially during tough times. Thank you to Gabe Witcher and Zara Bode for the great coaching. And thanks to real-life NYC kids Noah Rosenfeld, Charlotte Lang, and Ruby Lang, who have endured plenty of subways and long lines...and of course to all the children of NYC who bravely endured the early days of the pandemic! — KG

#### Try this at home...

As a child psychiatrist, I would state with conviction that one of the greatest gifts you can give a child is to tell them repeatedly that you believe in them and encourage them to believe in themselves. Have a discussion with your children about what it means to be resilient. Share with them times in your own life that required perseverance and resilience. Ask them for examples of times when they needed to use their resilience to get through a difficult moment. Open discussions like this one will foster much-needed emotional closeness between parents and their children.

## Skit

### 12. THE TALENT SHOW TRYOUTS

Aaron Jonah Lewis, vocal, piano; David Stone, Talent Show MC voice; Jim Groff, Teacher voice; Hilary Hawke, Encouraging voice

### 13. OOPS! I MADE A MISTAKE

Aaron Jonah Lewis, lead vocal, electric guitar; Zara Bode, backing vocal; Jared Engel, bass; Bobby Hawk, fiddle; David Moore, piano; Noam Pikelný, electric guitar solo; Charlie Shaw, drums

As a child, I learned to play violin through the Suzuki method. As in all Suzuki programs, we had yearly recitals in which the performance pieces had to be memorized. After drawing a blank onstage, I had to run to get my sheet music. Filled with shame, I returned to the stage, music in hand. Thus began many years of avoiding performing without sheet music in front of me! This was a problem that I did not overcome for many years. Now, when you see me onstage with The Bright Siders, you'll see me perform without music and playing from memory, but it took courage and practice to learn to let go of the fear of making mistakes. Aaron Jonah Lewis' ad lib "Talent Show Tryouts" skit makes us laugh every time we hear it, and he is, ironically, *perfect* at singing about mistakes. — KG

#### Try this at home...

The "Oops!" song actually draws on techniques from Cognitive Behavioral Therapy that address worries. Showing your child how to use positive thinking and rational replacement thoughts helps them develop healthy ways of thinking about problems and mistakes. It's good to get into the practice of reinforcing these behaviors with your children. Here's an example of Thought Replacement as you work to navigate it in your home:

*Negative thought:* I am going to mess this up so badly.

*Replacement thought:* Even if I mess up, I can move on and it's actually not a big deal. (Breathe, and repeat....!).

*Skit*

## 14. WERE YOU EVER AFRAID OF THE DARK?

Kristin Andreassen, Adult voice, tenor guitar; A Brooklyn Kid, kid vocal

## 15. THE MOON & THE STARS & ME

Kristin Andreassen, lead vocal, tenor guitar; Lauren Balthrop, backing vocal; Owen Biddle, bass; Tyler Chester, organ, piano; Jamie Dick, drums; Chris Eldridge, electric guitar, backing vocal; Zurielle Klaver Michaels, Oliver Klaver Michaels, Simon Owen, Penny Owen, kids' vocals

Kari and I asked her daughter why she thinks so many children are afraid of the dark. She explained that the shadows and the lack of light made things look different, sometimes a little scary, and triggered the imagination. Kari told us what she might say to a patient about this—to remember that nothing has changed, the room is the same and all the things you love are still there, even when you can't see them because the lights are off. I loved this image, and I wondered if I could write a song where the darkness protects all bright things and lets them sleep. And the dreaming child gets to be one of the shadows. — KA



## *Skit*

### 16. JUST KEEP ON WALKING

Chris Thile, Kid voice, electric guitar; Chris Eldridge, Supportive Friend voice; Paul Kowert, electric bass; Noam Pikelnny, Bully voice; Jordan Tice, Bully's Sidekick voice; Gabe Witcher, drums

#### Try this at home...

Do an experiment with light and shadows. (This is best done when you are not in the middle of a bedtime struggle!) With the lights on, have your child describe what they see in detail and really let them settle into feeling relaxed. Turn the lights off. Tell them that it will take a moment for their eyes to adjust, and then ask them what they see and feel, helping them to feel relaxed without the lights. Try to help them find the outlines of familiar forms and show them that it is just the change in light that is affecting their perception. Turn the lights on and off to show them that nothing has changed except their perception of color. Without any light, the surroundings look dark, but the same things are still there.

### 17. BULLY THIS

Chris Thile, lead vocal; Chris Eldridge, electric bass; Noam Pikelnny, electric guitar (2nd solo); Paul Kowert, electric guitar (1st solo); Gabe Witcher, drums

Bullying can be a devastating experience for children and adults alike. In my practice of child psychiatry, I encounter a lot of issues with bullying behavior and have had to understand the motivation behind those who taunt as well as the experience of those who are victims of bullying behaviors. The lyrics and music of this song are meant to empower children (and adults!) to feel stronger and more confident when faced with such situations. We deliberately chose to write powerful, loud music to inspire strength, but we want our listeners to know that there is nothing funny, confident, or cool about bullying behaviors. — KG

I play in an all-acoustic string band called Punch Brothers, whose instrumentation consists of banjo, mandolin, fiddle, acoustic guitar, and upright bass. For “Bully This,” I recruited my PB bandmates and, to suit the intensity of the song, we morphed





into a band featuring two electric guitars, electric bass, drums, with Chris Thile fulfilling his lifelong dream of singing like Julian Casablancas of The Strokes. Since none of us was playing the instrument we know best, we called ourselves The Hokes! Suffice it to say that this band sound is very far outside of our normal aesthetic. But everybody was game, we had a lot of fun, and the track turned out well. Who knew that Paul Kowert was such a righteous electric guitar player?! There is a lesson here: if you are open to the unknown and stepping into a vulnerable place—something that can demand real bravery—what comes of it might surprise and delight you. — CE

#### Try this at home...

Encourage your school to adopt an anti-bullying platform. Schools can do a lot in the way of prevention, especially when both parents and students take an active role in creating policies and educational programming around this issue. Recognize and acknowledge behaviors that feel like bullying. Ask your child about their experiences at school or online, and if you are concerned, speak openly to the school administration. Remember, bullying is as much online these days as it is in the school yard.

## Skit

### 18. A MIND OF YOUR OWN

Kari Groff, Adult voice; A Brooklyn Kid, kid vocal; Chris Eldridge, guitar

### 19. THE SONG ABOUT SONGS (REPRISE)

Michael Trotter, lead vocal; Tanya Trotter, lead vocal; Owen Biddle, bass; Tyler Chester, organ; Jamie Dick, drums & percussion; Chris Eldridge, acoustic guitar; Legend Trotter, Millie Sims, Sadie Sims, Kinston Smith, Tarin Bowles, Oliver Bowles, kids' vocals

As our friends Tanya and Michael so eloquently state in our farewell track, it has been a pleasure being with you on this musical journey. They say it so perfectly that there isn't much left to write here! Just remember, talk to your children about the power of mindset and positive thinking, and you will be surprised at the amazing changes that happen. This gift is simply one of the best things you can do for them and for this world. — KG, KA & CE

# CREDITS

**The Bright Siders help kids and families have meaningful conversations about emotions.**

Created and written by Kari Groff, MD & Kristin Andreassen

Music produced by Kristin Andreassen & Chris Eldridge

TRACKS 1, 2, 14, 15, 18 & 19: recorded at Blackbird Studios (Nashville, TN) by Gus Perkins with David Fitzgibbons and Brennan Pollack. Additional recording by Owen Biddle, Chris Eldridge, David Moore, and Rachael Moore.

TRACKS 3, 5, 8 & 16: recorded at Argosy Sound (Nashville, TN) by Chris Eldridge. Additional recording by Will Croxton, John Davis, Aaron Nevezie, Andrew Ryan, and Lawson White.

TRACKS 4, 6, 11, 12, 13 & 17: recorded at The Bunker (Brooklyn, NY) by John Davis and Aaron Nevezie. Additional recording by Will Croxton, Chris Eldridge, Scott Kettner, Dan Knobler, and Lawson White.

TRACK 7: recorded in Melbourne, Australia, by Isaac Barter

TRACK 9: recorded in Los Angeles, CA, by Sebastian Aymanns

TRACK 10: recorded at Soap Box Studio (Brooklyn, NY) by Scott Kettner. Additional recording by John Davis, Matthew Hall, and Aaron Nevezie.

Mixed by Juan-Pablo Berreondo at JPB Records (Los Angeles, CA)

Mastered by David Glasser at Airshow Mastering (Boulder, CO)

Track annotations by Kari Groff, Kristin Andreassen, and Chris Eldridge

Original illustrations by Danica Novgorodoff

Photo by Jefry Andres Wright

Smithsonian Folkways executive producers: John Smith and Huib Schippers

Production managers: Logan Clark and Mary Monseur

Editorial assistance by Carla Borden

Art direction, design, and layout by Caroline Gut

The Bright Siders are managed by Noelle Panepento, Noelle.panepento@gmail.com.

The War and Treaty appear courtesy of Rounder Records.

Oh Pep! appear courtesy of ATO Records.

Gaby Moreno appears courtesy of Metamorfosis Enterprises Inc.

Punch Brothers appear courtesy of Nonesuch Records.

**Smithsonian Folkways is:** Cecille Chen, director of business affairs and royalties; Logan Clark, executive assistant; Toby Dodds, director of web and IT; Beshou Gedamu, marketing specialist; Will Griffin, licensing manager; Kate Harrington, production assistant; Madison Hart, royalty assistant; Fred Knittel, marketing specialist; Seth Langer, licensing and marketing assistant; Helen Lindsay, customer service; Mary Monseur, production manager; Jeff Place,

curator and senior archivist; Sayem Sharif, director of financial operations; Ronnie Simpkins, audio specialist; John Smith, associate director; Jonathan Williger, marketing manager; Brian Zimmerman, sales representative and fulfillment.

**Smithsonian Folkways Recordings** is the nonprofit record label of the Smithsonian Institution, the national museum of the United States. Our mission is to document music, spoken word, instruction, and sounds from around the world. In this way, we continue the legacy of Moses Asch, who founded Folkways Records in 1948. The Smithsonian acquired Folkways from the Asch estate in 1987, and Smithsonian Folkways Recordings has continued the Folkways tradition by supporting the work of traditional artists and expressing a commitment to cultural diversity, education, and increased understanding among peoples through the production, documentation, preservation, and dissemination of sound.

Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, Folkways, Arhoolie, A.R.C.E., Blue Ridge Institute, Bobby Susser Songs for Children, Collector, Cook, Dyer-Bennet, Fast Folk, Folk-Legacy, Mickey Hart Collection, Monitor, M.O.R.E., Paredon, UNESCO, and Western Jubilee Recording Company recordings are all available through:

Smithsonian Folkways Recordings  
Mail Order  
Washington, DC 20560-0520  
PHONE: (800) 410-9815 or  
888-FOLKWAYS (orders only)  
FAX: (800) 853-9511 (orders only)

To purchase online, or for further information about Smithsonian Folkways Recordings go to: [folkways.si.edu](http://folkways.si.edu).

Please send comments and questions to [smithsonianfolkways@si.edu](mailto:smithsonianfolkways@si.edu).



## thank you

We want to express our mutual gratitude for each other, the artists who recorded with us, and our team—Chris Eldridge, Noelle Panepento, Mollie Farr, Danica Novgorodoff, Carissa Stolling, Paul Llewellyn, and John Smith and the Folkways family—for the friendship, inspiration, and trust that made it possible to create this music together.

**Kari** thanks: My family and friends, especially my parents who gave me the gift of music. To my father, Jim Groff, who patiently practiced with me and my mother, Barbara Groff, who inspired me to write songs. Thank you to Dr. Anthony Rostain, who allowed me to pursue my dream of playing dle in the midst of training at the University of Pennsylvania, and to Jess Shatkin, MD, at NYU, who initially supported and encouraged my idea to create this album. Thank you to my husband, Goran Veljic, for believing in me, and thank you to my daughter and her sisters for being my inspiration to write music.

**Kristin** thanks: The adults who raised me—especially Mom, Dad, Ron, Nenice, Donna, Dinda, Aunt Marcy, Granddad Linc, and the entire cast of *Free to Be...You and Me*. The kids I grew up with—especially my sisters Michelle and Kari, my neighbor Kim, and my cousins Meredith and Katie. The friends and colleagues who carried me when I needed them to—especially Lauren Balthrop, Joe Willey, the Sub Rosa Songwriting Collective, Laura Cortese and our precious Miles of Music Camp Community, and my sweetheart Chris Eldridge.

SMITHSONIAN  
**FOLK  
WAYS**  
RECORDINGS