Sometimes “I’m fine” hides
a whole lot of feelings.

Ginger discovers that honest words can be loving words—and that good friends respect each other’s belongings.

Inspired by Ephesians 4:15 and 4:26.

Ginger Joy and the “I’m Fine” Frosting



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A story of friendship and God’s love



Ginger Joy and the “I’m Fine” Frosting

A Ginger Joy story

Illustrations created with AI assistance.

Scripture connections are paraphrases.

Ephesians 4:15 and 4:26



The peppermint pom-poms were waiting on Ginger Joy's kitchen table when she came home.
Their red-and-white streamers curled over the edge of the box. Tiny silver ribbons caught the light.
Ginger lifted them carefully. "For me?"

Grandma Cinnamon nodded. "For your first Christmas cheer celebration."
Ginger gave them a shake.
Swish! Shimmer! Swish!
"They're perfect."
Grandma smiled. "I thought you might say that."



At practice the next afternoon, Ginger's best friend, Holly, spotted them immediately.
"Those are beautiful! Can I try?"
"Of course."
Holly tossed one into the air and caught it behind her back.
Ginger laughed. "Show me how!"

They practiced until both girls could almost do it.
Almost.
One pom-pom landed on Coach Merry's chair.
The other landed on Holly's head.
Sharing with Holly was fun.
At first.



The following day, Ginger reached into her cheer bag. Her pom-poms were gone.
She checked beneath her scarf. Under her water bottle. Inside the pocket where she kept extra hair ribbons.
Then she heard a familiar swish.
Holly was across the room, showing two teammates the toss.

Ginger hurried over.
“Oh, good,” she said. “You found them.”
“In your bag,” Holly answered. “I knew you wouldn’t mind.”
Ginger did mind. A little. She had wanted to practice her opening cheer. But Holly looked so pleased.
“It’s fine,” Ginger said.



The next week, Holly borrowed them again. This time, a silver ribbon came back tangled around a red streamer.
Ginger sat on the bench and worked it loose.
“Sorry,” Holly said. “They got caught on my bracelet.”
“It’s fine.”
The words came quickly now. Quicker than the truth.

When Ginger packed her bag for the next practice, she tucked the pom-poms beneath her sweatshirt. Then she felt silly.
Holly was her best friend. Friends shared.
Besides, Ginger was supposed to be kind. At church, she had learned to be generous and patient.
Surely a kind person wouldn’t make a fuss over pom-poms.



At practice, Holly reached into Ginger's bag.
Ginger watched. Her fingers tightened around her water bottle.
Please ask, she thought.
Holly pulled out the pom-poms.
Just ask me.
"Thanks, Ginger!"
Ginger looked away. "You're welcome."

That afternoon, Ginger missed two counts in their routine.
When Holly tried to help, Ginger said, "I know."
When Holly asked to sit beside her, Ginger put her bag on the bench.
And when Holly told a joke that usually made Ginger laugh, Ginger pretended she hadn't heard.



On the walk home, she thought about all the things she wished she had said.
They're special to me.
I was about to use them.
Please don't go through my bag.

But the next morning, when Holly waved, Ginger waved back.
And when Holly asked if she was all right, Ginger said—
"I'm fine."



The Christmas celebration arrived cold and bright.
Paper stars hung above the stage. Families filled the square. Somewhere nearby, warm cider smelled of cinnamon.
Ginger placed her pom-poms on the bench while she tied her shoe.

When she stood, they were gone.
Holly had them.
Again.
Something hot rushed up inside Ginger.



“Will you STOP taking my things?”
Holly froze. The girls beside her went quiet.
“You always do this!” Ginger cried. “You don’t care if you ruin them!”
Holly lowered the pom-poms.
“I was only moving them so nobody would sit on them.”

Ginger looked at the crowded bench. A little gingerbread boy had climbed onto the very spot where her pom-poms had been.
“Oh,” Ginger said.
Holly held them out. “You could’ve just told me you didn’t want me to use them.”
“I shouldn’t have to!”
The words came out sharp. Holly set the pom-poms down carefully. Then she walked away.



Ginger stood beside the bench, wishing she could pull every word back into her mouth.
Coach Merry found her behind the stage.
“Our group goes on in ten minutes,” she said. “But first, tell me what happened.”
Ginger stared at her shoes.
“I got angry.”
“I noticed.”
“Over pom-poms.” Ginger swallowed. “That sounds selfish.”

Coach Merry sat beside her. “Was it only about pom-poms?”
Ginger shook her head.
“She keeps taking them without asking. I let her try them once, and now she just helps herself.”
“What did you say when that bothered you?”
Ginger pressed her lips together. “Mostly… ‘It’s fine.’”
Coach Merry nodded slowly. “So Holly heard one thing while you were feeling another.”



“I thought I was being nice.”
“You were trying to avoid an uncomfortable conversation.”
Ginger picked at a loose thread on her skirt. That sounded more like it.
“Ephesians 4:15 tells us to speak the truth in love,” Coach Merry said. “Both parts matter. You can tell Holly the truth about your feelings and still treat her with love.”
“But I was angry.”
“Being angry doesn’t mean you have to shout. Ephesians 4:26 reminds us that we can feel anger and still choose what we do with it.”

Ginger listened to the music coming from the square.
“I think I’ve been angry for days.”
“What could you have said the first time?”
Ginger thought.
“Please ask before you take my pom-poms.”
Coach Merry waited.
“They’re special to me,” Ginger added. “And sometimes I want to use them myself.”
“That sounds clear.”



Ginger looked toward the stage.
“What if Holly gets upset?”
“She might. You can listen to her feelings, too.”
Ginger was quiet for a moment. Then she bowed her head.
“God, please help me be brave enough to tell the truth. And gentle enough to tell it kindly.”



She found Holly beside the costume table, straightening a row of bows that was already straight.
“Can we talk?” Ginger asked.
Holly nodded without looking up.
Ginger took a breath.
“I’m sorry I shouted at you. And I’m sorry I said you didn’t care. You were helping me just now.”
“I was.”
“I know.”
Holly put down a bow. “But I did borrow them before.”



Ginger nodded.
“I like sharing with you. I don’t like finding my things gone or seeing you go through my bag. Please ask first.”
“Why didn’t you tell me?”
“I thought you’d think I was selfish.”
Holly looked surprised. “I would’ve given them back.”
“I should have given you the chance,” Ginger said.

Holly rubbed one icing thumb over the other.
“I should have asked. You letting me use them once didn’t mean I could take them whenever I wanted.”
From the stage, Coach Merry called, “Two minutes, team!”
Holly glanced toward the sound. “Are we okay?”
Ginger considered the question. She still felt a little shaky. But she didn’t want to cover that up, either.
“I think we will be,” she said. “I’m glad we talked.”
“Me, too.”



They hurried to take their places.
When the music began, Ginger lifted her peppermint pom-poms. Beside her,
Holly lifted her green ones.
Their first jump landed together. So did the next.
At practice the following week, Holly stopped beside Ginger's bag.
"Can I use your peppermint pom-poms for the toss?"

Ginger was about to practice that toss herself.
For a moment, the old answer waited on her tongue.
Instead, she said, "When I'm finished. I need them for a few minutes first."
"Okay," Holly said. "Want me to count for you?"
Ginger smiled. "Yes, please."
Holly stepped back. "One, two, three—"
Ginger tossed. The pom-pom turned once in the air.
And this time, she caught it.

God’s Word for our friendships

Ephesians 4:15
Speak the truth in love.

Ephesians 4:26
When you feel angry, choose not to let anger lead you into sin.

Scripture connections, paraphrased.

Ginger could be generous and still ask Holly to respect her belongings. She also learned to speak about her feelings before they became hurtful words.

Let’s talk and pray

What was hiding behind Ginger’s “I’m fine”?

What did each friend need to apologize for?

How can you ask for something to change kindly?

What helps you choose loving words when you feel angry?

Dear God, help us speak honestly, listen carefully, and treat our friends with love. Amen.


The End