

= Bart 's Inner Child =

" Bart 's Inner Child " is the seventh episode of The Simpsons ' fifth season . It originally aired on the Fox network in the United States on November 11 , 1993 . In the episode , Marge finally realizes that she 's no fun due to her excessive nagging and seeks help from the self @-@ help guru , Brad Goodman , who uses Bart 's irreverent attitude as a new example of how people should behave . The entire town of Springfield begins to act like Bart , who at first enjoys things but begins to feel that his role as a troublemaker is usurped . During the inaugural " Do What You Feel " festival , several things go wrong and the town decides to stop acting like Bart.

The episode was written by George Meyer and was the first episode of the show to be directed by Bob Anderson . Actor Albert Brooks guest stars in the episode as Brad Goodman , a self @-@ help guru modelled after John Bradshaw . It was Brooks ' third of five appearances on the show . Singer James Brown guest stars as himself ; he sings his 1965 song " I Got You (I Feel Good) " . In 2006 , Brooks was named the best Simpsons guest star by IGN , while Brown 's appearance has been described as " hilariously over @-@ the @-@ top " .

The episode features cultural references to several films , television shows , and songs , including the 1939 film Gone with the Wind , Scott Joplin 's piano rag " The Entertainer " , and the Wile E. Coyote and Road Runner cartoons . In its original broadcast , " Bart 's Inner Child " finished 40th in the weekly ratings with a Nielsen rating of 11 @.@ 8 , and was viewed in 11 @.@ 12 million households .

= = Plot = =

Homer sees an advertisement in the newspaper for a free trampoline . He rushes to the address from the advertisement , where Krusty the Clown is giving it away , and brings it home . While Bart and Lisa are thrilled by it , Marge is concerned about the potential dangers . Homer brushes her worries aside ; he has plans of turning their backyard into a theme park , and decides to charge a fee to use the trampoline . Inevitably , however , people start getting hurt , and Homer finally takes Marge 's advice to get rid of the trampoline . After failing at his various attempts to do so , Bart steps in to help Homer . They chain the trampoline to a pole using a bike lock and wait for Snake Jailbird to steal it .

Homer and Marge argue later that night . Homer admits that while Marge was right that getting the trampoline was a mistake , he adds that he 's at least willing to go out and try new things while she 's bossy , boring and just nags all the time . Marge , of course , disagrees with this , but after asking Bart and Lisa what they think , she discovers that they agree with their father 's assessment about her . Marge becomes offended that people see her that way and goes to her sisters ' apartment . While at Patty and Selma 's apartment , the twins introduce her to an infomercial featuring self @-@ help guru , Brad Goodman , who can supposedly help people like Marge with their chronic nagging . After Marge encourages Homer to watch a Brad Goodman video with her , she becomes more tolerant and the two start getting along better . After seeing how out of control Bart is , the family goes to see Brad Goodman 's live lecture in the hopes that it will change him . Bart interrupts the lecture , but Brad Goodman encourages the town to follow Bart 's spontaneous attitude . Soon , the whole town starts acting like Bart , who at first enjoys things , but eventually becomes upset by it . Lisa explains that it 's because he 's lost his unique identity as a rebel with everyone else in town acting like him .

To celebrate their new @-@ found attitude , the town holds a " Do What You Feel " festival . However , the festival soon goes awry because those responsible for building the stages and maintaining the rides " didn 't feel like " doing a thorough job , resulting in a runaway Ferris wheel causing chaos . Arguments begin , as everybody has been encouraged to always say exactly what is on their mind , and a riot soon breaks out . Bart is quickly blamed for starting the whole " do as you feel " trend , even with Reverend Lovejoy pointing out that Brad Goodman was the one who encouraged them to act like Bart in the first place . The town chases after him , prompting Homer to save Bart by driving in a float . Despite the very slow speed of the float , the town gives up the chase

and goes to the old mill to get some cider . The Simpson family returns home , where they try to figure out what the lesson of the episode was . Homer claims that Bart should have been a better role model , but Marge comes to Bart 's defense by saying that self @-@ improvement is best left to people who live in big cities . But then Lisa says that self @-@ improvement can be accomplished , but through hard work and not a quick fix . Homer concludes that they 're all fine the way they are and the family starts to watch TV .

= = Production = =

" Bart 's Inner Child " was written by George Meyer and directed by Bob Anderson . It was Anderson 's directorial debut on The Simpsons . Meyer 's inspiration for the episode came from the fact that he was going through therapy at the time and he thought it would be a good idea " to send up these self @-@ help gurus " .

Actor Albert Brooks guest starred in the episode as Brad Goodman . It was Brooks ' third appearance on the show after playing Jacques in " Life on the Fast Lane " and Cowboy Bob in " The Call of the Simpsons " . He would later guest star as Hank Scorpio in " You Only Move Twice " , Tab Spangler in " The Heartbroke Kid " , and Russ Cargill in The Simpsons Movie . Executive producer David Mirkin describes Brooks as " really weird to direct " because " almost every one of his takes is flawless , but each one has different material . He makes up the stuff as he goes . " He uses a combination of the jokes in the script and his own material and because many of his takes are different , it is difficult for the producers to decide which lines to use . Goodman was based on the American self @-@ help author John Bradshaw , who popularized such psychological ideas as the " wounded inner child " and the dysfunctional family .

Singer James Brown guest stars as himself . Brown makes an appearance at the " Do What You Feel " festival , during which he sings his 1965 song " I Got You (I Feel Good) " . After a bandstand collapses , he proclaims " Hey , wait a minute , hold on here ! This bandstand wasn 't double @-@ bolted ! " He described the experience as " good , clean , and humorous . And we need more of that around . " According to Mirkin , the writers like to give guest stars awkward lines which then sound funny coming from them . They knew Brown would not be " the greatest actor in the world " but still " gave him these incredibly hilarious , stiff lines that killed . " Mirkin described Brown 's line as " horrible " but because of Brown 's reading , " you have something that just sounds perfectly wrong and it makes it funny . " In his book Planet Simpson , Chris Turner describes James Brown 's performance as " hilariously over @-@ the @-@ top " and uses it as an example of how the early seasons of the show would include celebrity cameos and not point out the " enormity of their fame " .

= = Cultural references = =

The episode features cultural references to several films , television shows , and songs . The scene with a field full of injured children from the trampoline is a reference to the field of injured soldiers shot in the film Gone with the Wind . There is a sequence of Homer trying to push the trampoline off of a cliff , but once he pushes it over the edge , it lands on a pillar of rock and bounces back up . This is a reference to the Chuck Jones @-@ directed Wile E. Coyote and Road Runner Looney Tunes cartoons . The background imitates the desert landscape from the cartoons . At church , Reverend Lovejoy plays the classic rag " The Entertainer " by Scott Joplin on the organ .

= = Reception = =

In its original broadcast , " Bart 's Inner Child " finished 40th in the weekly ratings during the week of November 8 ? 14 , 1993 with a Nielsen rating of 11 @. @ 8 , and was viewed in 11 @. @ 12 million households . It was the highest rated show on Fox that week .

In 2006 , Albert Brooks was named the best Simpsons guest star by IGN , who said he " captivate [s] the audience with his unique characters " . In Planet Simpson , Chris Turner also praised Brooks '

performance , writing that " Brooks went for a subtle , slow @-@ burn lampoon rather than broad caricature : his Goodman doesn 't ooze insincerity , he just lightly dribbles it . [...] Through a dozen little touches , Brooks created a timeless Simpsons character . "

MSNBC 's Patrick Enwright listed the episode as his ninth favorite in the show in 2007 , saying it " brilliantly skewers new @-@ agey self @-@ help gurus " and adding that " it 's also noteworthy for clever pop @-@ cultural references . " The authors of the book I Can 't Believe It 's a Bigger and Better Updated Unofficial Simpsons Guide , Warren Martyn and Adrian Wood , described it as " A very bizarre episode in which everyone just has a good time . " DVD Movie Guide 's Colin Jacobson wrote : " A certified classic , ' Child ' mocks the self @-@ help field and makes a good point along the way . Of course , it does all this with scads of clever moments and becomes a great show . As one who works in psychology , it 's hard to resist this program 's spoofery . " Patrick Bromley of DVD Verdict gave the episode a grade of B + and described Homer 's escapades with the trampoline as " the episode 's brightest spot . " Turner described the Wile E. Coyote and Road Runner homage as " one of the show 's most overt and inspired tributes to the Warner cartoons . " Bill Gibron of DVD Talk gave the episode a score of 4 @.@ 5 out of 5 .