

Video transcript

Virtual storytelling session | Out at Sea

2020

[17:00]

Anna Lehr:

Hello everyone and welcome! My name is Anna and today I want to tell you a story. Listening to stories is great – it is fun, you might learn something as well and, believe it or not, stories can also give you courage when sometimes you don't feel too good.

We all feel lost sometimes; overwhelmed and a bit 'out at sea'. It can be a scary time but there is always a light to help guide us back to safety. If you are scared, the most important thing always is to make sure you breathe properly; otherwise you will freak yourself out even more! So, before we start our story, let's practice some breathing, shall we?

Make sure you are nice and comfy. You can cuddle on to someone close to you or just sit on your favourite cushion or blanket.

Now, close your eyes and focus on your breathing. Big breath in through your nose – and out through your mouth. And again. In – and out. And in – and out. Aaaah...don't you feel already a bit calmer?

So I think now we are settled and breathing deeply we can begin our story.

Imagine it is a very lovely bright, sunny, early autumn day. You are fed up with sitting in the house and you decide to go on a trip. Outdoors, to enjoy the last sunshine before the long winter. You make for the seaside, which is not too far away, and you find your little boat tied up safely. It is a wonderful wee sail boat, sturdy and swift, and painted dark blue, like the sea itself. You can't wait to get into it; you unfasten it and hop in and set sail and off, off you go over the calm afternoon sea, a gentle breeze billowing your sail. It is almost as if the boat is sailing itself, once in a while you have to adjust where you are going but most of the time it literally is 'plain sailing'. You get so comfortable in the warm sunshine that you stretch out and lie back, the gentle lapping of the waves underneath you make you sleepy and before you know it, you are fast asleep.

But then, suddenly, you wake up, startled by a low rumbling sound – thunder! It is later in the day and the weather has taken a turn for the worse. The sky is turning black, the sea looks very dark and choppy. It is cold, and water is leaking into the boat. You have lost your way and aren't sure how to find your way back again. But, in the distance, you can see a light – it is a lighthouse showing you the way to safety. You try and steer your little boat sail towards the lighthouse but the storm is just too strong.

You can see an enormous wave rolling towards you and your first instinct is to struggle against it and force your boat away from it – but then you remember your breathing and the fact that all things will pass eventually.

So, you take a deep breath in through your nose – and out through your mouth. And again – in through your nose and out through your mouth. And you realise that you get calmer but your heart is still beating and you are scared, so you decide to add some movement to your breathing that will help calm you down.

You stand up in the wind and against the waves, strong and steady like a mountain. Back straight, shoulders back, legs strong, arms by your side and the palms facing the front. Nothing will be blowing over a mountain, not even this almighty wind! You instantly feel a bit calmer. Now you stand strong like a tree – you lift up one leg and place it on your other lower leg lower and place your arms over your head like branches. Nothing will be blowing over a strong tree, not even this almighty wind! You just start swaying gently from side to side and you feel so strong and calm that you can even change over your leg and stand just as strong. You feel as strong as a warrior and you turn to the side, one leg bent, the other one straight and your arms to the side.

You change over to the other side and feel invincible! You feel like a great warrior and though you are feeling calm and in control you also feel fierce and invincible and ready to take on the storm so you can open your mouth and give one almighty battle cry to let go of your fear and afterwards you feel so much better! You come back to your mountain pose and continue to breathe in a calm way. You close your eyes. And when you open them again...the storm has indeed passed! And you do realise that all things pass eventually and you will get always get through them; no matter how scary they are.

The water is still dark and menacing and the sky cloudy and towering but you take comfort in the fact that there is another ship close by – you are not totally on your own; you never are. You keep your eyes fixed on the shining beacon of the lighthouse to your right and you can also make out the moon peeking through the clouds, which is a calming site. The moon in the sky is always there, even if sometimes you cannot see it! Just as you are confident you will make it to the lighthouse soon, you see a ripple in the dark water next to you. Curious as you are, you check it out...you bend over the side of the boat and you realise the ripple is cause by an enormous, horrible, terrifying underwater creature, a monstrous kelpie, out to attack you!

He rears his ugly head, trying to get you, looking very, very angry. However, you don't scream, you don't shout, but you breathe calm; in and out, and in and out. You remember the calm moon above that is watching you and you also remember that nothing on earth, not even a horrid water kelpie, is ever as bad as it looks! In fact, the more you look at this ugly thing, the more you feel sorry for it – maybe he is so angry because he cannot sleep? So, to help him and yourself calm down, you start singing a little lullaby:

*La le lu – just the man in the moon listens to
all the little babies sleeping*

so you sleep too

La le lu – before your bed there is a little shoe

And it's just as tired tonight

So you sleep too.

And you sing the song straight away again as you can feel it working; not only do you feel a lot calmer but the sad ugly kelpie starts looking tired and not as mean anymore and eventually he starts sucking his thumb, appeased, and sinks sleepily under water again. See! Nothing is ever as scary as it looks at first. Our idea of how things or people are is often just in your heads; our minds like to think and come up with conclusions that are often very untrue.

You have now nearly reached the lighthouse there but it still seems quite a long way. You are exhausted! Not only have you braved an almighty storm and fought off a terrifying creature; you have also been out since late afternoon, all by yourself, and you are hungry and tired and you miss your loved ones! You will never make it to the light house and surely get lost at sea! You are quite close to tears but then you remember your breathing – in through your nose – and out through your mouth.

And you also remember that always thinking about the worst is not very helpful. So you start thinking about how you will actually be reaching the lighthouse and you are imagining that two lovely winged creatures, like angels, pick you up and out of your boat and carry you all the way to the lighthouse! You hold your hands like this and close your eyes which really helps to concentrate and you are imagining your journey with those two beautiful creatures so well that you can feel the wind on your face and hear the flapping of their wings. As you look down, you see a seal leading the way and as you look behind you, you can see seagulls accompanying you, cheering you on with their loud shrieks! You are being carried safely and you are trusting that you will land eventually; even if it will take a bit longer than expected.

And, as you open your eyes again, you can see the lighthouse right in front of you! You have made it; you have crossed the choppy, scary, dark sea and overcame all difficulties, just by trusting in yourself.

You spend the night in the cosy lighthouse; with a big steaming hot bowl of soup and a soft bed that the nice caretaker has prepared for you. You use their phone and tell your loved ones you are safe and the next morning, a bright, beautiful autumn morning, you make your way home, back across the sea, full of confidence.

But that's a story for another time. I hope you have enjoyed this story and don't forget to check out the website to have a closer look at some of the beautiful artwork and you can even visit again, just don't forget to book in advance.

Bye for now!