

WINSTON AND HIS WORRY WALRUS

A picture book about a young boy's journey to overcome his fears

with the help of his stuffed walrus

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There once was a boy named Winston who always had a lot of worries buzzing through his mind. Worries that he tried to leave far, far behind.

Sometimes his worries were small, like “Do I want a peanut butter & jelly or a turkey and cheese?” And other times, the worries were a *bit* bigger, like “How do I ride a bike without falling to my knees?”

But big or small, poor Winston was always worrying. And it made him very sad. His worries took away a lot of fun time, like playing soccer with his dad.

Until one magical morning, when Winston woke up to the biggest surprise. It was a stuffed walrus lying next to his bed with prickly whiskers, long white tusks and two big round eyes.

Wally the Worry Walrus apparently was his name. Winston thought, “What is this walrus? Some type of game?”

But when he grabbed Wally off the floor and away from the bed, a little piece of paper fell out of his pocket and it read:

Close your eyes

Count to three

Two deep breaths

One for you

One for me

Now turn up your head

And let out a sigh

That's the beautiful sound

Of me bringing your worries goodbye

Now give me a hug

A good squeeze will do

That's the feeling of strength

that I'm sending to you

Wherever you go

Just bring me

Tell me your worries

And I will set them free

And from that day on, under the moon and under the sun, Wally was always with Winston. A true friendship had just begun.

One day in class, when Winston was nervous about giving an important speech, he started to cry – but quickly stopped and smiled – remembering Wally was in close reach.

He closed his eyes, took some deep breaths and gave his walrus an embrace, And then carried on with the speech with perfect, perfect grace.

During the summer, when Winston's parents were going out of town, He was standing next to Grandpa waving goodbye as he started to have a breakdown.

There were so many things that Grandpa didn't know, such as what time to go to school or how to put on his favorite show. He missed his mom and he missed his dad. He just wanted to stop feeling so, so sad.

But once again, with Wally's love, Winston remembered that he was well taken care of.

Sometimes during bedtime, Winston would stay up for hours, Worrying about silly things like, "Do I like vegetables? Can I swim? Did I forget to take a shower?"

And soon enough, Wally would be cuddled up in his bed, soothing his worries and sending happy dreams to his head.

But everything changed one day when Winston came home from the playground, he took off his backpack, sat on the couch and realized Wally was nowhere to be found!

"Oh, Mama! Oh, Mama!" Winston cried. "Where did Wally go? Where would he hide?"

So Mama and Winston got to work, turning the house up and down, looking in every nook.

But days went by, and Wally never turned up. They had to stop searching. They gave up their luck.

Then the next day, while getting his teeth cleaned, Winston realized his typical worries were gone, gone for good it seemed.

Could it really be happening - that his worries went away? Without his little friend that had always kept them astray?

Winston then said, “Just maybe, *maybe* I have my own strength inside to solve any worry that goes through my mind.”

A few days passed, and Winston was on the beach, toes in the sand, eating a peach.

When a little girl - maybe half his size - was talking to herself during the sunrise.

She turned around, took two deep breaths, and let out a sigh, before giving her stuffed *walrus* a strong hug and a wink of an eye.

And at that moment, Winston knew that Wally had left him because he had other work to do.

Wally the Worry Walrus showed Winston all that he couldn't see, and it was time for him to go help another little boy or girl to show them all that *they could be*.