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Well, hi there kids. I've been waiting for you. Welcome back to Miss Robins place where "Different isn't bad" and kids can be themselves. This is a podcast just for you!

If you haven't met Stubby, the cat and all his friends go back and listen from the beginning. You'll find out just how much we love Stubby.

In today's original story, Stubby gets a funny feeling in his tummy and a lump in his throat when he tries to do too much! Mama reminds him he doesn't have to do everything, and Mrs. Smith teaches him more than just an English lesson.

Have you ever felt anxious?

Me too!

Sometimes I get overwhelmed, that's a big word that means I have strong emotions, when I do too many things all at once. I forget that sometimes all I need to do is take a deep breath, ask for help or take a nap.

So now let's listen as Stubby the cat overcomes his anxiety and learns some valuable lessons in the process.

Ready, Set, here we go!!

## Just Be You

By Robin Marie Johnson

“That’s good enough,” Mama repeated. “You don’t have to do everything Stubby.”

Propping his furring face onto his paws, Stubby thought about all he had done.

Starting school, making new friends, starting the Jester club and going to the cabin were just a few of them.

“Stubby,” Mama continued. “You are brave, kind and different, but sometimes you need to stop trying and just be you.”

Laying his head down on mama’s soft fur, Stubby closed his eyes. He knew things would be clearer in the morning.

The next day Stubby woke up with a funny feeling in his tummy and by the time he got to school it had made its way all the way up to his throat.

“Are you ok?” the lunch lady asked while lining the classes up for recess. “You don’t look good.”

Stubby lined up quickly. He didn’t want anyone to see the enormous lump growing on his throat.

Feeling dizzy, head pounding, he could hardly think. When was the last time this happened? That’s right, it was on the first day of school.

Stubby remembered the feeling. It felt like a big blanket covered his head and an elephant was sitting on his chest.

Mama called it ANXIETY! Whatever it was, Stubby didn’t like it!

“Will you play hide-in-seek with me?” Mia begged when she saw Stubby heading to the swing set.

“NO!” Stubby felt bad, but playing with his little cousin was the last thing he wanted to do.

“What are we doing at the Jester club tomorrow,?” Linda llama shouted as she swung from the monkey bars.

"I don't know." Stubby responded.

The classroom felt hot and sticky. Stubby was sweating. "What is wrong with me?"

Stubby tried to focus on all students as they filed in from recess.

"Someone needs to turn on the air" he thought to himself.

"Have you finished your writing, Stubby?" Mrs. Smith inquired.

"I can't do everything," Stubby cried.

Mrs. Smith looked at him with eyes that understood his feelings. Then she put a gentle paw on his little shoulder.

"Take two deep breaths. In through your nose and out through your mouth, Stubby, You'll feel better soon. I promise."

All the attention embarrassed Stubby, but he did what Mrs. Smith said, anyway.

"I think you need your own space." Mrs. Smith whispered. "Come with me."

Somehow Stubby knew he would feel better if he followed her directions.

Leaning on the wall in the dark, cool corner, Stubby felt the enormous lump in his throat go away.

He thought about the words mama had told him the night before.

"Stubby, Sometimes you need to stop doing and just be you."

Feeling a tap on his furry little head, Stubby looked up.

"You don't have to finish your writing today. You have extra time." Mrs. Smith's words were kind.

"Hey Stubby, why don't I lead the Jester club tomorrow, then you can take a break." Giggly Goat yelled from across the room as Stubby piled books into his backpack ready to head home.

"YES!" Stubby waved. "Thank you Giggly Goat, you're a good friend."

Finally home, Stubby sat down under the Big Oak tree. Stretching out on the cool winter lawn, Stubby let the gentle breeze blow across his face. He listened to the sweet chirping of his bird friends and rolled happily in the sweet smelling catnip.

“I don’t have to do everything,” Stubby sighed. “I can just be me.”

Then he closed his eyes and took an afternoon nap.

*So now it’s your turn, kids. Pause the podcast and discuss the questions with someone you love and trust.*

1. Why do you think Stubby felt sick to his stomach?
2. What were some of the things Stubby felt he needed to do?
3. Have you ever felt anxious?
4. What are some things you can do when you feel strong emotions?

Thank you for sharing your time with me. These short children’s stories feel a little like the old time “Sit around the Radio” broadcast. It’s a place my heart often yearns to return to. A place where families gathered together, listening to stories that made them laugh and cry.

If you enjoyed this episode and want to hear more about the adventures of Stubby the cat, have your adults subscribe to this podcast so you won’t miss any of them. Ask them to give Stubby a review too! I know he would do the happy dance!

Do you write stories? I’d love to hear them.

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Maybe you’ll hear your story read on this podcast.

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That’s all for now.

