

WRITING AGAIN AFTER LIFE UPHEAVAL

By
Karen Elizabeth Rigley

Storms of life can leave you battered and shipwrecked from your writing. Whatever the crisis, the resulting chaos can dam up your ability to create. It's difficult, sometimes nearly impossible, to be creative and inspired when you're in turmoil – emotionally or physically. You feel drained. As if the ability to write's been sucked out, leaving you empty. Words that once bubbled forth, vanish.

You may think you're empty, but you're not. Once a writer, always a writer. A writer's spirit flows with an undulating ocean of words and your ocean hasn't evaporated. The power of words; the passion to create, still lurk in hidden depths. So realize it's temporary when that blank screen and empty page haunt you.

Simple steps and a bit of patience will help reclaim your muse and get your creativity flowing once more. Wade into the shallows instead of trying to dive.

(1) *Look beyond the seawall.*

Revisit your last project. Read your last chapter, paragraph or sentence. Review your notes. Re-emerge yourself gradually into whatever you were writing. Don't expect to plunge in full force.

(2) *Collect seashells.*

Edit or critique someone else's manuscript. It's amazing how helping someone else with their work can help *you* swim back into your own writing.

(3) *Relax on the beach.*

Read. Every writer was a reader first. Wasn't reading what ignited your desire to write? Let the tide wash over you to soothe and renew your spirit.

(4) *Test the waters.*

Think of a new project or the way you want to end your current one. Play with an outline, a character sketch or a scene. Maybe do some research. Move through the warm shallows before diving into the cold sea.

Don't be so hard on yourself. Like the ebb and flow of ocean tides, rhythms vary. Everyone heals at their own rate. Soon your

writing will begin to flow and you'll find yourself afloat in an ocean of words.

LIMBO SAIL

I drift through the colorless ocean of writer's limbo,
aimlessly floating upon a sea of nothingness.
Has reality encroached too far
shipwrecking my creativity?
Has continuously pondering the fate of manuscripts
drowned my productivity?
Have the recent crisis and chaos of life
battered and marooned my muse?
Waves of limbo lure me away from my writing.
I unresistingly follow like a sailor searching the seas,
mesmerized by the siren call of mermaids.
I ignore cries of unfinished tales.
Ignore impatient ideas swimming through my mind.
Ignore imaginary voices floating upon the waves.
A flame flickers above the horizon,
igniting with the intensity of a lighthouse beacon,
beckoning me back to the harbor of my computer.

Karen Elizabeth Rigley

Author bio:

A multi-award winning author/poet/designer, Karen Elizabeth Rigley is recognized for her ability to touch readers with her myriad of stories, articles, scripts and poetry. She's a member of the International Women's Writing Guild and Science Fiction & Fantasy Writers of America, plus was former editor/director of Writers Rainbow. Her work's appeared in: *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Love Stories*, Underwired Magazine (Sept 08), Today's Woman, On the SingleSide, Magic, The Magic Within, Grit,, ComputerEdge, Andre Norton's TALES OF THE WITCHWORLD (Volume Two), CATFANTASTIC Edited by Andre Norton & Martin H. Greenberg, CATFANTASTIC II and CATFANTASTIC III, Romance Writers Report, RhymeTime, SouthWest Writers Workshop, Science Fiction & Fantasy Workshop, Inkling, Keystrokes, MysteryTime, Housewife Writers Forum, Strange Wonderland, Science Fiction Review, etc.

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