

Story Telling

Finding your story

Kinds of Personal Stories

There are all kinds of stories in our lives that we can develop into multimedia pieces. Here are a few sets of example questions for some of these stories. One of the hardest, but most important thing to do is get started. Because many of these stories ask us to reveal things about ourselves that make us feel vulnerable, putting together a story can be difficult. Just get up, start answering questions on your phone, write things down, gather up the photos, review your videos, and bounce your ideas off your friends and family.

Life is full of stories, but you may not have a lifetime to capture them, so, go for it!

The Story About Someone Important

Character Stories

How we love, are inspired by, want to recognize, and find meaning in our relationships are all aspects of our lives that are deeply important to us. Perhaps the majority of the stories created in our workshops are about a relationship, and in the best stories they tell us more about ourselves than the details of our own life story.

Memorial Stories

Honoring and remembering people who have passed is an essential part of the grieving process. These stories are often the most difficult and painful to produce, but the results can be the most powerful.

- What is, or had been, your relationship to this person?
- How would you describe this person (physical appearance, character, etc.)?
- Is there an event/incident that best captures their character?
- What about the person do/did you most enjoy?
- What about the person drives you crazy?
- What lesson did the person give to you that you feel is most important?
- If you had something to say to the person but they never had a chance to hear you say it, what would it be?

The Story About an Event in My Life

Adventure Stories

One of the reasons we travel is to break away from the normalcy of our lives and create new vivid memories. All of us who travel know that the experience is usually an invitation to challenge ourselves, to change our perspective about our lives, and to reassess meaning. We often return from these experiences with personal realizations, and the process of recounting our travel stories is as much about sharing those realizations as sharing the sense of beauty or interest in the place visited.

- How would you describe the place?
- With whom did you share this place?
- What general experiences do you relate to this place?
- Was there a defining experience at the place?
- What lessons about yourself do you draw from your relationship to this place?
- If you have returned to this place, how has it changed?

The Story About What I Do

For many people with professional careers, a life story is shaped by their job. Author and oral historian, Studs Terkel, collected a series of interviews in his book, *Working*, to demonstrate that we all have unique ways of perceiving and valuing what we do. And while jobs help to give some people a sense of identity, people also refer to their hobbies or social-commitments when thinking about who they are.

A good story often comes from looking at the familiar in a new way and with a new meaning. The details of the tasks, the culture of the characters that inhabit our workplace, or our spiritual or philosophical relationship to our work or avocation can lead us into many stories.

- What is your profession or ongoing interest?
- What experiences, interests, and/or knowledge in your previous life prepared you for this activity?
- Was there an initial event that most affected your decision to pursue this interest?
- Who influenced or assisted you in shaping your career, interest, or skill in this area?
- How has your profession or interest affected your life as a whole (family, friends, where you live)?
- What has been the highlight of your vocation?

Other Personal Stories

Recovery Stories

Sharing the experience of overcoming a great challenge in life is a fundamental archetype in human story making. If you can transmit the range of experience from descent, to crisis, to realization, then you can always move an audience.

Love Stories

Romance, partnership, familial or fraternal love all naturally lend themselves to the desire-struggle-realization formula. We all want to know how someone met their partner, what it was like when the baby was born, or what our relationship is with our siblings and parents. We constantly test other people's experiences in these fundamental relationships to affirm our own. These are also stories that tend to have plenty of existing documentation.

Discovery Stories

The process of learning is a rich field to mine for stories. The detective in us gets great pleasure in illustrating how we uncovered the facts to get at a truth, whether it is in fixing a broken bicycle or developing a new product.