

Tell your story...

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# Public Narrative

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## What is it?

A personal cohesive narrative that inspires and moves others toward change and action, consisting of:

- The Story of You
- The Story of Us
- The Story of Now

in order to:

- Communicate shared purpose, challenges, pressures, and values felt by a community
- And inspire action and movement toward change

# Why it matters?

- **Storytelling translates values into action-**  
it gives shape and clarity to values
- **Storytelling inspires movement, courage,  
and action by communicating from the  
personal and emotional.**

Emotion etymology:

*mid 16th century (denoting a public disturbance): from French émotion, from émouvoir 'excite', based on Latin emovere, from e- (variant of ex-) 'out' + movere 'move'. The current sense dates from the early 19th century.*

# The Story of You

- Connected to your why: Why you care about this?
- Always a human story under the layers of "why"
  - A specific example of what moved you into action? What brought the issue to your front door?
    - Personal experience
    - or the experience of someone you care about
- You can often find your story of "self" by looking for a moment of transformation/a moment where something shifted inside of you

# The Story of Us

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- Your "us"s may be defined as:
  - faith communities (like your CORE teams)
  - workplace (if you are organizing for better pay or safer conditions)
  - shared backgrounds or experiences or values
  - living in the same town/neighborhood/county
- The "US" is generally the collective community impacted by an issue or challenge (here is our collective story of this challenge)
  - sometimes you may have to do some work to convince someone that they are a part of the "us" (you may use public narrative to do that!)
- Communicates shared pressures and shared values and a shared future

# The Story of Now

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- Specific and urgent challenge you are called upon to face:
  - What is the issue that needs to be given priority over others?
  - Ex. from the Leaven Issue Cut- they had a specific challenge of helping a community member who was at risk of losing their housing
- Communicates a clear and specific ask (ex. the Leaven community asking for the pause on eviction from tiny homes)
- Rooted in the values that are expressed in your Story of Self and the Story of Us and points out the disconnect of the values and the reality- bridges the gap between the world as it *is* and how it *should* be (ex. The Leaven community pointing out how everyone ran on this issue of housing while actively kicking people out of tiny homes)

# Where would you use it?

You could find yourself using public narrative in several different contexts:

- To your congregation
- A synod assembly or conference gathering
- Fundraising (an event or with a possible donor)
- A Board of County Commissioners Meeting or City Council Meeting or a Townhall
- One-to-one with a new team member

# A few things to remember:

- Your public narrative is not necessarily linear:
    - You may start with a story of now, you may start with a story of you; often it will depend on the context of where you are giving your public narrative...
  - Like anything a public narrative takes practice! You will be able to hone and adapt it with ease the more you do it!
  - Remember that storytelling is not synonymous with 'speech-making.' It is the process of identifying and naming what is true about yourself and the world around you.
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# A Public Narrative In Action

In the following clip, you will see all of the different ingredients (the story of me, story of us, and the story of now) play out in a single public narrative. Watch carefully and see if you can identify them as they unfold in this familiar story:

