

# STORYTELLING STUDY COMPANION

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**for**

***The Astonishing Power of Storytelling:  
Leading, Teaching, and  
Transforming in a New Way***

**By Robert J. Garmston**

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### WELCOME!

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This Storytelling Study Companion offers a roadmap for a collective journey through *The Astonishing Power of Storytelling: Leading, Teaching, and Transforming in a New Way* by Robert J. Garmston.

While this Storytelling Study Companion is for pairs or small groups conversing either face-to-face or connected by phone or the Internet, anyone may be able to use it, even individuals or classes. The metacognitive prompts within the guide will support everyone wishing to learn more about storytelling or extend personal storytelling skills in whatever setting they engage. An additional outcome for some may be adding stories to your storytelling repertoire. The guide is organized so that users can pursue all these goals. There are many benefits from learning with others: exploring diverse perspectives, deepening collegial relationships, enjoying a sense of commitment to others that encourages personal preparation, acquiring new study and storytelling skills,

and providing periodic opportunities for rehearsal. Learners bring their own intentions and values to suggested experiences in this Storytelling Study Companion. Study formats and protocols for either pairs or small groups are provided. You will find icons that accompany suggested exercises. Exercises designed for pairs have . Activities intended for small groups of three or more persons are identified by . This icon  suggests individual action, and  indicates use of video. While some groups may be communicating by phone or the Internet, and others will be in the same room together, consider the icons as generally applicable to either setting.

## A THREE-PHASE LEARNING MODEL

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We offer ideas for an approach to study that comes from a widely accepted learning model developed by Laura Lipton and Bruce Wellman (2003) of MiraVia.com. In this model a facilitator, who also participates, guides the group through three stages of study in the Collaborative Learning Cycle. These stages also offer a reasonable structure for partners engaging in this collaborative book study. The three phases represent the essence of agreed on principles of many experts: first, activating and engaging what learners know about a topic; next, exploring and discovering new content; and third, organizing and integrating newly acquired learning. Each Storytelling Study Companion section refers to one chapter in the *Storytelling* book and is organized in these three collaborative learning phases.

*The Adaptive School: A Sourcebook for Developing Collaborative Groups* (Garmston & Wellman, 2017) is a helpful resource, and we recommend having at least one copy available

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for face-to-face meetings. We refer to it as *Sourcebook* and offer page references. As you work flexibly with this Storytelling Study Companion and the needs of participants, choose from the list of strategies in Appendix A of the *Sourcebook*, pp. 197–288. We find it useful for all those involved in the book study to be familiar with the processes listed below.

### Collaborative Learning Cycle

1. Activating and Engaging begins on *Sourcebook*, p. 215:  
Invite inclusion of participants and focus mental energy on the key topics in the chapter.
2. Exploring and Discovering begins on *Sourcebook*, p. 227:  
Collaboratively construct meaning and potential applications of the material in the chapter.
3. Organizing and Integrating begins on *Sourcebook*, p. 281:  
Collaboratively review and internalize the material in the chapter.

As facilitators respond to a group's unique needs, or study partners monitor their own needs in using this Storytelling Study Companion, you might consider the activities, questions, and prompts for each chapter as recommendations, modifying them as appropriate. While we have designed each session to last for approximately 60 minutes, you may wish to modify this to fit your time frame.

This Storytelling Study Companion is divided into sections aligned with the *Storytelling* book chapters. You may decide to use the chapter guides sequentially, beginning with Chapter 1 and

continuing throughout the book, or you may find certain chapters immediately compelling and want to go to those first. Should you choose the latter, be aware that the study suggestions for some chapters may refer you to earlier chapters. However you choose to use this Storytelling Study Companion, consider this your personal resource.



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## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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In addition to *The Adaptive School Sourcebook*, the descriptions of strategies can be found on the Thinking Collaborative website, [www.thinkingcollaborative.com](http://www.thinkingcollaborative.com). Readers may wish to further extend their presentation repertoire by examining *The Presenter's Fieldbook* (3rd ed.) by Robert Garmston (2018; see also Garmston & Wellman, 2017), available from Rowman & Littlefield (<https://rowman.com/RLPublishers>).

*I Don't Do That Anymore: A Memoir of Awakening and Resilience* by Robert Garmston (2011) demonstrates how a book may be “story driven,” structured around a series of stories. It is available via Amazon. A special resource is *My Voice Will Go With You: Teaching Tales of Milton Erickson*, edited with commentary

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by Sidney Rosen, MD. Erickson is considered the most influential hypnotherapist of his time. Part of his therapy was through teaching tales. Over one hundred stories, presented verbatim, are in this book. Available at W.W. Norton and Company.

Our thanks to Doreen Miori-Merola and Jane Ellison for their valuable feedback and Ochan Kasuma-Powell for field testing this study guide.

With our best wishes for your continued discoveries and learning success,

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## SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR YOUR STORYTELLING STUDY SESSIONS

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### Strategies

- You may wish to select just some of the suggested activities, depending on timing and group size, or employ others from the *Adaptive Schools Sourcebook* or elsewhere.
- It is recommended that each person develop a storytelling journal for use throughout the book study, as well as for future applications.
- It is a good idea to bring notes to sessions based on scanning what topics will be explored.
- When using these conferencing methods, establish norms of listening and sequential participation.

### Facilities

- Post a charted agenda for each face-to-face session (or share a written agenda for video or phone conversations).
- For face-to-face sessions, arrange the room for collaborative conversation (*Adaptive Schools Sourcebook*, pp. 74–78).
- For face-to-face sessions, participants familiar with the Seven Norms of Collaboration from Adaptive Schools and Cognitive Coaching may wish to post a chart of the Norms (or the “Adaptive Schools Banners,” available from [thinkingcollaborative.com/shop/page2/](http://thinkingcollaborative.com/shop/page2/)).
- **For video and phone sessions, prepare technology needs ahead of time.**

## Processes

- Each session is designed for an approximate 60-minute time frame.
- For group face-to-face sessions and video conversations, rotate facilitator and recorder roles for each session, and even within a session when appropriate.
- Begin with an “Inclusion Activity” to bring each participant’s voice into the conversation and be fully present (*Adaptive Schools Sourcebook*, p. 113, “Developing Inclusion,” and pp. 215–221 for strategy options).
- For group sessions, offer strategies using the *What, Why, How* format, offering the name and brief description of the strategy to be used, the reasons or purpose for using it, and the directions or steps for the strategy, visually available whenever possible.
- Use “Text as Expert,” referencing *The Astonishing Power of Storytelling* pages whenever appropriate.
- Ask for participants’ reflections on the session—what was useful about the session activities and what ideas for future improvements might study partners or group participants have?
- Agree on readings and set next agenda at the conclusion of each session.



# 1

## WHY TELL STORIES?

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### SETTING UP THE FIRST BOOK STUDY MEETING

- Review the “Some Suggestions for Your Storytelling Study Sessions,” pages 7–8 of this guide.
- For video and phone sessions, prepare technology.
- Collaboratively set (and in face-to-face meetings, chart) a clear purpose for the study session.
- Depending on the backgrounds of the participants (e.g., Adaptive Schools experience), reference the Seven Norms of Collaboration and establish possible Working Agreements (*Sourcebook*, p. 226, <https://tinyurl.com/y8nj4ph3>).

*(Continued)*

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- Conduct an Inclusion Strategy and vary these for each meeting. Check In, Grounding, and Analogy Prompts are useful early strategies (*Sourcebook*, p. 201) for this first session.

## ACTIVATING AND ENGAGING

- Grounding, or other Inclusion strategy (*Sourcebook*, p. 220, <https://tinyurl.com/yaf3ynql>), or
- Participants complete analogy: “Storytelling is to leadership as \_\_\_\_\_ is to \_\_\_\_\_.” (*Sourcebook*, p. 215, <https://tinyurl.com/y7uhajlr>)

## EXPLORING AND DISCOVERING

Depending on the number of participants and time available, consider using the Think-Pair-Share strategy (*Sourcebook*, p. 224) with one or more of these dialogue prompts:

1. **Preface** (*Storytelling*, pp. 9–17)
  - Consider the author’s assertion: “A leader’s job is to persuade, and stories persuade more effectively than reports, studies, statistics, or power point presentations” (p. 9).
    - How does this connect to your experiences?
  - The author shares some of his first experiences with storytelling through the lens of leadership (pp. 9–10).

- What are some of your first experiences with the power of storytelling in leadership?
  - The book organizes stories into four functions or purposes (p. 13).
    - What are some of the ways these categories might be relevant to your work as teachers, presenters, or in other leadership roles?
  - “The Book in Three Parts” (pp. 14–17)
    - Partners use “Say Something” strategy for each part (*Sourcebook*, p. 232, <https://tinyurl.com/ya3eqosq>), or
    -  Trios Modified Jigsaw (*Sourcebook*, pp. 230–231, <https://tinyurl.com/yamnhscj>).
2.  **Chapter 1** (*Storytelling*, p. 18)—Respond to the following prompts:
- *Let Me Tell You a Story*
    - “*Why are stories so influential?*”
  - *Communication Suffocation*
    - “*Much of what is transmitted we receive blurrily or at low volume because we are not interested.*”
  - *Leading Through Narrative*
    - What might be another example of a leadership story that “sells ideas”?
  - **Watch a Story Being Told**
    - Provide analysis of <https://tinyurl.com/y8sm2zvm>
      - ❖ What is it about this presentation that holds your attention?

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- ❖ What emotions are evoked in you?
- ❖ What stimulated the emotions?
- ❖ What are you taking away from this regarding stories you might tell?
-  *How Storytelling Began*
  - What does this statement mean to you: “*Stories have always existed because humans, unlike other life forms, need meaning.*”

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### ORGANIZING AND INTEGRATING

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- Explore ideas for formatting a personal storytelling journal to record ideas, insights, quotations, references, and reflections.
-  Jot personal notes about how you will structure your journal.
-  Record in your journal notes from today’s session the Most Important Points (*Sourcebook*, p. 283, <https://tinyurl.com/y7bcxza9>) about Chapter 1 (for groups, consider using Round Robin Sharing).

**Next Session:** Clarify assigned readings for next time. Bring journal notes to share.





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# THE NEUROSCIENCE OF NARRATIVE

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### SETTING UP THE MEETING

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- Review the “Some Suggestions for Your Storytelling Study Sessions,” pages 7–8 of this guide.
- Prepare the environment and review working agreements from earlier meetings.
- Conduct an Inclusion Strategy.

## ACTIVATING AND ENGAGING

- What experiences with stories or ideas about story have occurred to you since the last session? Compare ideas with others.
- Use the Stem Completion strategy (*Sourcebook*) to begin the session (<https://tinyurl.com/yatcuy5c>).

## EXPLORING AND DISCOVERING

Depending on the number of participants and time available, consider using the Think-Pair-Share strategy (*Sourcebook*, p. 224) with one or more of these dialogue prompts:

- **Provide analysis of <https://tinyurl.com/ycpnp824>**
  - What is it about this presentation that holds your attention?
  - What emotions are evoked in you?
  - What stimulated the emotions?
  - What are you taking away from this regarding how you might structure or deliver your stories?
- *Stories Arouse Cooperative Instincts*, pp. 29–31
  - With a reading partner or group, use the Key Concepts/Key Ideas strategy (*Sourcebook*, p. 230, <https://tinyurl.com/yb74fvuy>) to explore the production of neurochemicals in storytelling.
- *The Million Dollar Story*, pp. 31–33
  - How do stories mimic the way our brain works?
  - How do stories encourage the brain in the process of simulation?

- *Desired State Stories*, pp. 33–35
  - How might you explain the “transderivational search” that occurs in the dark, dense forest and the baby elephant stories?

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## ORGANIZING AND INTEGRATING

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-  Collaboratively craft a 1-minute story about “Storytelling and the Brain.”
-  Offer time for storytelling journal writing.

**Next Session:** Clarify assigned readings for next time. Bring journal notes to share.







# 3

## FINDING PERSONAL STORIES

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### SETTING UP THE MEETING

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- Review the “Some Suggestions for Your Storytelling Study Sessions,” pages 7–8 of this guide.
- Prepare the environment and review working agreements from earlier meetings.
- Conduct an Inclusion Strategy.

## ACTIVATING AND ENGAGING

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- What is a favorite personal story that you have used in the past to connect with an audience?
- The last session focused on how brains interact with stories. To bring the last chapter's information into this session, think of three stories from your personal or work life that, if told, might generate oxytocin (the empathy chemical) in your listener's brain.
  -  Write a word to stand for each of the three personal stories. Now, in round robin fashion, without commenting while one person is speaking, tell about the story most likely to cause empathy and why you think that might be so.
- Report an idea or two about story that you've thought of or noted in your storytelling journals.

## EXPLORING AND DISCOVERING

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Depending on the number of participants and time available, consider using the Think-Pair-Share strategy (*Sourcebook*, p. 224) with one or more of these dialogue prompts:

- *Story Categories*
  - What might be some stories about your organization that would be examples of any of the four story categories (Table 3.1)?

- *Locating Personal Story Material*
  - Share your understanding of a “signature story,” and explore what that story might be for you.
  - Work with a partner using Table 3.2 Examples of Personal Stories and Table 3.3 Categorizing Personal Experiences to identify personal stories in each category, noting them in your storytelling journal.
- *Stories About Your Organization*
  - Using the “*Is There Something I Can Do?*” story to give ideas, what might be a story about your team, school, or organization you could generate?

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## ORGANIZING AND INTEGRATING

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-  Record in your journal three ideas from this chapter you want to remember and one to share.
-  Share your insights round robin style.

**Next Session:** Clarify assigned readings for next time. Bring journal notes to share.







# 4

## OTHER STORY SOURCES

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### SETTING UP THE MEETING

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- Review the “Some Suggestions for Your Storytelling Study Sessions,” pages 7–8 of this guide.
- Prepare the environment and review working agreements from earlier meetings.
- Conduct an Inclusion Strategy.

**ACTIVATING AND ENGAGING**  

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- Name a high or low for this last week and how that might be developed into a story.
- In what ways might some of these story ideas benefit listeners?
- What have you recorded in your storytelling journal that you'd like to share?

**EXPLORING AND DISCOVERING**  

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Depending on the number of participants and time available, consider using the Think-Pair-Share strategy (*Sourcebook*, p. 224) with one or more of these dialogue prompts:

- For each of the *Six Story Sources*, what might be some additional examples to share? Add to your storytelling journal:
  - Biographies
    - ❖ *The Passage of Power*, Robert Caro
    - ❖ *Redefining Realness: My Path to Womanhood, Identity, Love & So Much More*, Janet Mock
    - ❖ *Persepolis*, Marjane Satrapi
    - ❖ \_\_\_\_\_
    - ❖ \_\_\_\_\_
  - Films
    - ❖ *Sully*
    - ❖ *Manchester by the Sea*
    - ❖ *Loving*
    - ❖ *Hidden Figures*

- ❖ \_\_\_\_\_
- ❖ \_\_\_\_\_

□ Histories

- ❖ *Team of Rivals*, Doris Kearns Goodwin
- ❖ *Danger Close*, Amber Smith
- ❖ *Genghis: Birth of an Empire*, Conn Iggulden
- ❖ \_\_\_\_\_
- ❖ \_\_\_\_\_

□ Literature

- ❖ \_\_\_\_\_
- ❖ \_\_\_\_\_

□ Stories Unique to a Particular Culture

- ❖ *Grimms' Fairy Tales*
- ❖ *Historical Atlas of World Mythology*, Joseph Campbell
- ❖ *Native Stories for White Minds: Daily Reflections*, Anne Wilson Schaef
- ❖ \_\_\_\_\_
- ❖ \_\_\_\_\_

□ Metaphor Stories

- ❖ \_\_\_\_\_

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**VIDEO WORTH WATCHING**

- A brief example of Native American storytelling can be found on YouTube. This is the tale of two wolves living inside us and the internal struggle humans encounter between good and bad. The Cherokee Legend of Good Versus Evil, <https://tinyurl.com/y8nmd4k9>

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- Follow up by watching “The Real Story of the Two Wolves” to witness the initial wisdom, lost in the popularized version of this tale. <https://tinyurl.com/y7l9cph8>
-  Wisdom was simplified and diluted in The Cherokee Legend of Good Versus Evil. What might be some other examples of truths, once profound, that have been made easier to communicate, but lost their potency?
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
- What might be some additional resources available on YouTube?

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### ORGANIZING AND INTEGRATING

- Brainstorm additional movies or books that might be used as sources for a story.
- Explain reasons for some of the choices.
- Select three to five story ideas from above and decide which of the four categories they might best fit.

**Next Session:** Clarify assigned readings for next time. Bring journal notes to share.





# 5

## WHY ARE METAPHORS IMPORTANT?

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### SETTING UP THE MEETING

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- Review the “Some Suggestions for Your Storytelling Study Sessions,” pages 7–8 of this guide.
- Prepare the environment and review working agreements from earlier meetings.
- Conduct an Inclusion Strategy.

## ACTIVATING AND ENGAGING

Depending on the number of participants and time available, consider using the Think-Pair-Share strategy (*Sourcebook*, p. 224) with one or more of these dialogue prompts:

- What do all these phrases have in common?
  - Rock the boat
  - Clean as a whistle
  - Stinks to high heaven
  - Slower than pond water
  - Like a gunshot in the night
  - Over the moon
  - Give it a rest
  - Smells rotten to me
- Now identify some categories from this list and group them accordingly. What comes to mind by doing this?
- Use the Synectics strategy (*Sourcebook*, p. 218, <https://tinyurl.com/yd8uvn4m>) to complete this prompt: “*Storytelling is like* (select an item found in nature) *because ...*” Generate as many examples as you can in 3 minutes.
- Describe the mental processes you used to come up with some of the examples in the Synectics exercise.

## EXPLORING AND DISCOVERING

- With a reading partner, use the Key Concepts/Key Ideas strategy (*Sourcebook*, p. 230, <https://tinyurl.com/yb74fvuy>) to explore the chapter introduction, including Mike Webb’s fishing story example.

- Consider using the A B Each Teach strategy (*Sourcebook*, p. 229, <https://tinyurl.com/ydhvg55c>) to divide, read, and teach *How Metaphors Are Processed* (pp. 59–60) and *Right Hemisphere Engagement* (pp. 60–61) to your partner.
- Alternative for *Right Hemisphere Engagement* (pp. 60–61): Consider using the “Say Something” strategy (*Sourcebook*, p. 232, <https://tinyurl.com/ya3eqosq>) to construct meaning of each paragraph in this section.
- *Four Uses of Metaphor*
  - Teach Concepts
    - ❖ Generate and share potential stories that might be used in this category.
  - Generate Ideas
    - ❖ Generate and share potential stories that might be used in this category.
  - Empower
    - ❖ Generate and share potential stories that might be used in this category.
  - Go Beyond Logic
    - ❖ Share reactions to Bob’s assertion: “To elevate metaphorical thought to a level that is equal with analytical thought brings heart to the work” (p. 64).
- *Using Metaphors in Presentations*
  -  With a partner, use Table 5.1 to choose some points in a presentation of yours for the use of metaphor.
- *Subtexts of Metaphor*
  - List some metaphors used with your team, department, and so on. What might be some Desired States, Values,

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Beliefs, and Presuppositions for each? What might be the significance of these choices?

- What other metaphors might be used on the same topics (See Appendix, Worksheet 1, pp. 175–176)?

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### ORGANIZING AND INTEGRATING

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- Develop an advertising slogan about metaphor.
- Regarding the author’s contention that metaphor is understood at the following three stages, talk together about what you believe this means. What might be examples of each?
  - The meaning of the story is literal.
  - The meaning of the story is associated with some generic or impersonal thoughts or data.
  - The meaning of the story is recovered from deep within the listener’s personal experience.

**Next Session:** Clarify assigned readings for next time. Bring journal notes to share.





# 6

## DESIRABLE STORY FEATURES

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### SETTING UP THE MEETING

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- Review the “Some Suggestions for Your Storytelling Study Sessions,” pages 7–8 of this guide.
- Prepare the environment and review working agreements from earlier meetings.
- Conduct an Inclusion Strategy.

## ACTIVATING AND ENGAGING

-  Briefly write your Hopes and Fears (*Sourcebook*, p. 221, <https://tinyurl.com/yc2lxhmp>) about telling stories to a group.
-  Report these to those with you, and identify common themes.

## EXPLORING AND DISCOVERING

Depending on the number of participants and time available, consider using the Think-Pair-Share strategy (*Sourcebook*, p. 224) with one or more of these dialogue prompts:

- Analyze two stories of your choice for Figure 6.1 Desirable Story Features.
- *Engaging Openings*
  - Start some sentences with the word “imagine.” Now, what synonyms could you use instead?
- *Tensions*
  - What are some reasons tension might be important in a story?
- *Create Voices*
  - What are some voices you’ve used in the past, perhaps to speak for a pet, or a person you’re telling a story about, or in inanimate object talking back to you?
- *Seven Steps to Preparing a New Story*
  - Prepare a story for the next session using *Seven Steps to Preparing a New Story*. Plan to present it during the next book study meeting.

## ORGANIZING AND INTEGRATING

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-  Offer time for storytelling journal writing.
-    Reflect on your journal writing and offer one insight to your partner or to the group.

**Next Session:** Clarify assigned readings for next time. Bring your story to share.







# 7

## DELIVERING YOUR STORY

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### SETTING UP THE MEETING

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- Review the “Some Suggestions for Your Storytelling Study Sessions,” pages 7–8 of this guide.
- Prepare the environment and review working agreements from earlier meetings.
- Conduct an Inclusion Strategy.

## ACTIVATING AND ENGAGING

- Paired Verbal Fluency topic: Everything you remember about Chapter 7 (*Sourcebook*, p. 225, <https://tinyurl.com/ycyte5jn>).
- Which ideas were most personally meaningful?

## EXPLORING AND DISCOVERING

Depending on the number of participants and time available, consider using the Think-Pair-Share strategy (*Sourcebook*, p. 224) with one or more of these dialogue prompts:

- Animation is important to storytelling. Each person animates in his or her own style. There is no right way. What is important for each of us, however, is to extend the range of actions you can make with your body, gestures, and face. Here are some exercises you might try:
  - Watch each of the first two segments, then perform the exercise that was described. Each segment takes only about 2 minutes to watch.
    - ❖ Segment 1: Improv Warm-Ups: Family Portrait. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U65SwDVB91U>
    - ❖ Segment 2: Improv Warm-Ups: Emotional Fruit Salad. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uidR9iq4RmE>
  - View the first 5 minutes of *Own Your Behaviors, Master Your Communication, Determine Your Success*, Louise Evans, TEDxGenova <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4BZuWrdC-9Q>.

- ❖ Each tells one story using five chairs or positions.
  - ❖ Observers report what they liked about the portrayals.
-  With a partner clarify these three exercises (breathe, center yourself, mental rehearsal) so that you might practice them here or at home. Selections are from *Lemons to Lemonade: Resolving Problems in Meetings, Workshops, and PLCs* (Garmston & Zimmerman, 2013):

□ **Breathe.**

The first principle of public performance is to monitor and adjust your oxygen levels. The 3 1/2-pound mass we call a brain consumes 30% of the body's oxygen. When you experience stress, your breathing becomes shallow and you hold your breath for brief periods of time. The neocortex in your brain, the site of language and reasoning, needs a full supply of oxygen to function. Stress shuttles precious oxygen to the limbic system to ready the body for survival, not thought.

The study of aikido and neurophysiology intersect at this point. The word *ki* in Japanese (*ch'i* in Chinese, *pneuma* in Greek, and *prana* in Sanskrit) comes from the notion of breath. Breath is considered the fundamental energy that connects all things and is the source of all creative action. The Eastern martial arts share this view. By controlling the flow of *ki*, the martial artist allegedly can achieve extraordinary powers.

□ **Center yourself physically.**

Review Figure 7.2 in *Storytelling*. It suggests that when you are centered you become more in touch with

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who you are and depend less on outside approval. The centered state is simple, natural, and powerful. Using Figure 7.2, with a partner, rehearse this way of standing:

- Person A centers himself or herself.
  - Person B reports presence and/or absence of factors described in the table.
  - Person A reports degrees of comfort and adjusts stance for alignment with the table and personal comfort.
  - REPEAT.
  -  **Mental Rehearsal.**
- Finally, each person tells the story he or she prepared as homework.



### MENTAL REHEARSAL



Athletes, performers, and research have documented the immediate effects of mental rehearsal. (See, for example, Emily Cook's Olympic Freestyle article and video on Mental Imagery, <https://tinyurl.com/ybvs5x2m>.)

Mental rehearsal is useful shortly before a performance. Many forms exist, and this is but one.

1. Find a time and place where you won't be interrupted.
2. Relax. Sit, recline, or even lie down. Close your eyes.
3. Take three deep breaths and exhale slowly. As you exhale, imagine that stress is leaving your body.

Start at your feet . . . feel all the stress leave your feet in each exhale . . . then your legs . . . then your chest . . . all the way to the top of your head . . . feel all the stress leave your body. Allow your mind to focus on the relaxation process. If other thoughts emerge, just let them float away.

4. Now, envision yourself at the start of your time with the group. Notice how you appear to them, what you are wearing, the approachable expression on your face, feelings in your body, and the sound of your voice, what you are saying. Feel being relaxed and confident. If anything seems not quite right, adjust it in your imagination.
5. You may wish to mentally rehearse this scene again, and again, if this helps in having you feel just right.
6. Finally, open your eyes and smile. You are prepared. Tell your story.

## ORGANIZING AND INTEGRATING

-  Offer time for storytelling journal writing.
-  Reflect on your journal writing and offer one insight to your partner or to the group.

**Next Session:** Clarify assigned readings for next time. Bring journal notes to share.







## 8

# PROMOTE CHANGE: STORY STRUCTURE AND EXAMPLES

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### SETTING UP THE MEETING

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- Review the “Some Suggestions for Your Storytelling Study Sessions,” pages 7–8 of this guide.

- Prepare the environment and review working agreements from earlier meetings.
- Conduct an Inclusion Strategy.

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## ACTIVATING AND ENGAGING

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- Since last session, what stories might you share?
- What ideas about story have you thought of or noted in your storytelling journals?

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## EXPLORING AND DISCOVERING

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Depending on the number of participants and time available, consider using the Think-Pair-Share strategy (*Sourcebook*, p. 224) with one or more of these dialogue prompts:

- *Resistance*
  - Explore the author's comments about resistance. What might be some examples or counter-examples? What might have been at play as reasons for the counter-examples?
- *Applying the Desired-State Map: Three Examples*
  - The story about Ross is an example of matching the other person's energy and, in this case, his or her voice and posture. What other examples come to mind?
  - At what points in the *Bear in the Cage* and *A Strong, Yet Delicate Rose* story did the speaker address the content of Table 8.1 Acknowledging Resistance?

- Identify a group or person known to you. Brainstorm what you believe might be the dominant factors in Table 8.1 for them.

## ORGANIZING AND INTEGRATING

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- Offer time for storytelling journal writing.
- Reflect on your journal writing and offer one insight to your partner or to the group.

**Next Session:** Clarify assigned readings for next time. Bring journal notes to share. Consider using the First Turn/Last Turn strategy (*Sourcebook*, p. 249, <https://tinyurl.com/yarutan2>) with Chapter 9. Bring highlighted items from the reading of the chapter to the next meeting.







# 9

## MEET GROUPS WHERE THEY ARE

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### SETTING UP THE MEETING

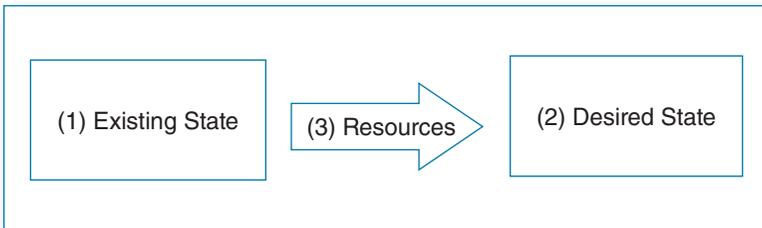
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- Review the “Some Suggestions for Your Storytelling Study Sessions ,” pages 7–8 of this guide.
- Prepare the environment and review working agreements from earlier meetings.
- Conduct an Inclusion Strategy.

## ACTIVATING AND ENGAGING

- Since last time, what stories might you share?
- What ideas about story have you thought of or noted in your storytelling journals?
- Select an issue and practice using the Existing State–Desired State Map (*Sourcebook*, p. 263, <http://tinyurl.com/y722gn5c>).

Desired-State Map



### (1) Existing State

Ineffective or nonproductive behavior in response to a situation

### (2) Desired State

Being in charge of own responses and choosing productive behaviors

### (3) Resources

Inner resolve, confidence, expanded perceptions

## EXPLORING AND DISCOVERING

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- Use the First Turn/Last Turn strategy (*Sourcebook*, p. 249, <https://tinyurl.com/yarutan2>) to dialogue about ideas in the chapter.
- In what ways might the author’s behavior with the hostile school staff be characterized as pacing?
- What did Principal Gonzales say that expressed “establishing rapport by acknowledging without judgment a group’s Existing State”? (Figure 9.1)

## ORGANIZING AND INTEGRATING

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- Use the 5-3-1 strategy to Organize and Integrate today’s learnings (*Sourcebook*, p. 229, <https://tinyurl.com/y894ln4u>).
- Offer time for storytelling journal writing.
- Reflect on your journal writing and offer one insight to your partner or to the group.

**Next Session:** Clarify assigned readings for next time. Bring journal notes to share.







# 10

## DESIGN FOR THE INTUITIVE MIND

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### SETTING UP THE MEETING

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- Review the “Some Suggestions for Your Storytelling Study Sessions,” pages 7–8 of this guide.
- Prepare the environment and review working agreements from earlier meetings.
- Conduct an Inclusion Strategy.

## ACTIVATING AND ENGAGING

- Since last time, what stories might you share?
- What ideas about story have you thought of or noted in your storytelling journals?

## EXPLORING AND DISCOVERING

Depending on the number of participants and time available, consider using the Think-Pair-Share strategy (*Sourcebook*, p. 224) with one or more of these dialogue prompts:

- Explore some alternative words or phrases that describe a “transderivational search.”
- Use the Say Something strategy (*Sourcebook*, p. 232, <https://tinyurl.com/ya3eqosq>) to construct meaning of each paragraph in *Invoking Receptivity*.
- With a partner, read the first paragraph under *Beyond Waking Awareness*. Based on this definition, describe some times when you were in a trance state.
- Use the Read and Example strategy (*Sourcebook*, p. 231, <https://tinyurl.com/yadsfg4d>) for each of the *Story Elements for the Intuitive Mind*.
-  For book study groups with four or more members, consider using the Modified Jigsaw strategy for these sections of text: *Conversational Openings*, *Presuppositions*, *Artfully Vague Language*, and *Nominalizations* (*Sourcebook*, p. 231, <https://tinyurl.com/yamnhscj>).

## ORGANIZING AND INTEGRATING

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- Use the Matchbook Summary strategy (*Sourcebook*, p. 282, <https://tinyurl.com/ybfjhspg>) with the terms “trance” and “transderivational search.”
- Offer time for storytelling journal writing.
- Reflect on your journal writing and offer one insight to your partner or to the group.

**Next Session:** Clarify assigned readings for next time. Bring journal notes to share.







# 11

## TWO STORIES THAT CHANGED BEHAVIORS

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### SETTING UP THE MEETING

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- Review the “Some Suggestions for Your Storytelling Study Sessions,” pages 7–8 of this guide.
- Prepare the environment and review working agreements from earlier meetings.
- Conduct an Inclusion Strategy.

## ACTIVATING AND ENGAGING

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- Since we last met, what stories might we share?
- What ideas about story have we thought of or noted in our storytelling journals?

## EXPLORING AND DISCOVERING

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- In the *Third Man Out* story, what are some examples of conversational openings, presuppositions, and tensions?
- As an analysis of the *Third Man Out* story, complete the template found in the Appendix, Worksheet 2c: Constructing Desired Story Elements, p. 183; and Worksheet 3: Constructing a Desired-State Story, p. 186.
- Construct meaning for the six *General Components of a Well-Formed Story* by using the Say Something strategy for each section (*Sourcebook*, p. 232, <https://tinyurl.com/ya3eqosq>).
- Distinguish between the two methods the author suggests for bypassing protective filters: anecdotally suggest a process for receiving discordant information, and parallel the dynamics in a problematic situation.

## ORGANIZING AND INTEGRATING

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- Develop a parallel story structure for the following situation. Use Worksheet 3: Constructing a Desired-State Story in the Appendix, p. 186.



## DECIDE ON DECISION MAKING

One of the three structures for successful meetings is to decide on decision making. When I first learned about this concept, I immediately remembered a situation I experienced years earlier when I thought there was clarity around the decision-making process and who was making the decision. I learned the hard way that there was not.

At the time, a colleague and I ran the teacher induction program for our school division, and one of our jobs was to hire coaches to work with our brand-new instructional employees. Our new teachers learned together in cohorts based on their grade level or subject area, and a fundamental commitment of our program was that the coaches who worked with them should have the same instructional background. Kindergarten teachers had a coach who taught kindergarten. High school science teachers had a coach who taught high school science. To that end, we interviewed many candidates, working to find the best coaching matches for each cohort.

In this particular situation, my colleague and I had invited specialists from the various content areas to sit on the coach interview panel to lend their instructional perspectives. While my colleagues and I had expertise around teacher induction and qualities to look for in an effective coach, we did not have expertise in every single content area. Bringing in a specialist would support us in determining the caliber of the candidate both in and out of the classroom.

Going into the interviews, I *thought* there was clarity around the decision-making process. My colleague and

*(Continued)*

(Continued)

I ran the program, and we would be doing the hiring. The specialists who sat in the interviews would provide their input after each round, and we would take that into consideration when making decisions. Ultimately, however, the decision was ours to make.

We shared that with the panelists. We used congruent language, always referring to ourselves as the decision makers, and never mentioning the panelists in any talk of next steps in the process. I thought we were all on the same page. I thought wrong.

About a week after the interviews, I ran into one of the specialists who had sat on the interview panel. She mentioned that she had seen one of the coach candidates earlier that day and that he was very excited to become a coach. I looked at her, confused, because we did not hire him as a coach. She proceeded to explain that she thought that because people on the panel thought he was a good candidate, she assumed that meant he was getting hired, so she told him he had the job. I explained to her that we received additional information about him from his principal, and while he had strong content knowledge, as had been pointed out by the panel, we had decided to go in a different direction.

-  Offer time for storytelling journal writing.
- Reflect on your journal writing and offer one insight to your partner or to the group.

**Next Session:** Clarify assigned readings for next time. Bring journal notes to share.





# 12

## IN CONCLUSION

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### SETTING UP THE MEETING

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- Review the “Some Suggestions for Your Storytelling Study Sessions,” pages 7–8 of this guide.
- Prepare the environment and review working agreements from earlier meetings.
- Conduct an Inclusion Strategy.

### ACTIVATING AND ENGAGING

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- Since we last met, what stories might we share?
- What ideas about story have we thought of or noted in our storytelling journals?

### EXPLORING AND DISCOVERING

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- Partners or teams collaboratively create a Story Map, a visual depiction of the summation of the book's ideas, which are contained in this chapter (<https://tinyurl.com/hkhzxrz>).
- Using your Map as a visual aide, tell the story of your collective journey through *The Astonishing Power of Storytelling: Leading, Teaching, and Transforming in a New Way*.
- Peruse the *Story Catalog* and share some of your favorites, envisioning a time when you might share them with particular audiences.

### ORGANIZING AND INTEGRATING

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- With a partner, compose the image and language you would put on a billboard telling others the value of this book. Share with whole group.
- Reflect on your journal writing and offer one insight to your partner or to the group.

## REFERENCES

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Bob is an award-winning author of books and articles, authoring over 100 publications on educational leadership, learning, coaching, and staff development. He was formerly a principal in Saudi Arabia, and a teacher, principal, acting superintendent, and curriculum director in the United States. His work has been translated into Arabic, Dutch, Hebrew, Italian, and Spanish. Bob lives in El Dorado Hills, California, near his five children and five (bright and cute) grandchildren. [fabobg@gmail.com](mailto:fabobg@gmail.com) [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert\\_Garmston](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Garmston)

**Michael Dolcemascolo** is the former executive co-director of Thinking Collaborative, the home of the Adaptive Schools Seminars and the Cognitive Coaching Seminars®. An independent consultant, Michael regularly presents workshops to educators on Cognitive Coaching<sup>SM</sup>, Adaptive Schools, as well as presentation and facilitation skills to national and international audiences.

Michael delightfully spends much of his energy mentoring coaches and facilitators who wish to become agency trainers for their systems and also regularly facilitates groups that are planning, problem-resolving, and engaging in change.

Michael is co-author with Robert J. Garmston of the *Study Group Facilitation Guide for The Presenter's Fieldbook* (2018), *The Focusing Four: A Consensus Seeking Activity DVD Viewers Guide*, and *Dialogue DVD Viewers Guide* (2009). With Carolyn McKanders, Michael has co-authored the *Developing Collaborative Groups Study Guide* and co-edited the *Adaptive Schools Foundation Seminar Learning Guide* (2017).

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