

The Seeing "I"

Empowerment through Interactive Storytelling

Vol7 No 4

December 2010

Look Around! As 2010 draws to a close, we look around at our expanding readership and supporters and are grateful for your being with us. May we all have a continuing productive relationship and mutually valuable bond! We will have more to share next year. Look Around!

A Special Meeting

What a great opportunity it was for StoriesWork to meet with one of the special interest groups (SIGS) of the Triangle Organizational Development Network, on Friday, September 24, 2010! Organized by Vickie Bevenour, SIG Chair, and hosted by Mary Charles Blakebrough, this meeting of trainers, coaches, and organizational development professionals warmly welcomed StoriesWork Executive Director Lenora Ucko and storyteller Margie Rose. Lenora and Margie demonstrated the StoriesWork interactive storytelling technique and led a spirited question and answer period exploring applications to the group's work and interests.



Mary Charles
Blakebrough

"Our members had very positive responses to the program," Mary Charles told us recently. Based on the animated discussion elicited by the stories, we would surely agree.

Mary Charles added, "The StoriesWork technique can be beneficial on both a personal and professional

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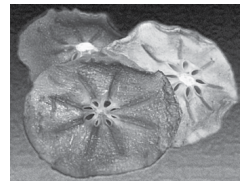
Getting What You Want

HOW MANY WAYS are there of achieving a goal? Are direct requests best? Is it better to manipulate and conceal one's aims? What else can you do?

Here is a story to think about.

The Poisonous Persimmon (Korean)

A Buddhist priest once kept a store of dried persimmons in a cupboard in his room. He planned to eat them all himself, and so he warned his young disciple, "These are deadly poison. If you eat even the smallest part of one you will die. See that you leave them alone."



But one day when the priest was out, the young disciple went and ate the persimmon. Then he found the priest's favorite inkstone holder and

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"Transitions"...from previous page

level. As our special interest group continues to consider the latest trends and practices in internal and external organizational development consulting, we look forward to future collaboration between StoriesWork and the wonderful change agents in our group."

Kudos to StoriesWork Board Chair, Peter Anlyan, who has once again extended the reach of StoriesWork by arranging our presentation at the TODN Change SIG. According to Peter, "This is an opportunity for the coaching/organizational development community to compare the StoriesWork methodologies to their own. What has always struck me is the purity with which StoriesWork storytellers ask questions in contrast to some coaching styles that tend more toward leading the client. The interactive storytelling technique is remarkably successful in relying on non-leading questions, an approach that can be tough for many coaches to use, but beneficial once they learn it."

And finally, a word from Vickie Bevenour before she left on her overseas trip. As the Change SIG meeting was coming to a close, Vickie made the following comment. "Tomorrow is my birthday," she said. "And I cannot think of a better birthday gift than having been at this StoriesWork session today!"

Thank you, Vickie. Thank you, Mary Charles. And our appreciation to Peter Anlyan and all the members of the Change SIG for a great meeting. We look forward to our working together again in the future.

A Note about Organizational Development

Many organizations today operate in a rapidly changing environment in which managing new and complex issues is increasingly critical for results. Drawing on a rich field of research, theory, and practice, organizational development consultants provide coaching, leadership development, conflict management, and process assessment to help organizations cope with management and leadership challenges.

"Food"...from previous page

broke it. As soon as he saw the priest returning, he quickly lay down on his bed and covered himself with blankets.

The priest was startled to see his disciple apparently suffering in bed. "Whatever is the matter with you?" the priest cried out.

His disciple answered, "Through my miserable clumsiness I dropped your favorite inkstone holder and broke it. I realized that was an unpardonable crime. The only thing left for me to do was to put an end to my life. Therefore I hurried to your cupboard and ate the poisoned persimmon. Now I lie here waiting to die."

The priest was amused by his disciple's ingenuity. He laughed and said no more about the matter.

This story reveals two characters who apparently knew each other very well. The priest knew his disciple would try to eat the dried persimmons. The disciple knew the priest would try to prevent him. Just who were they fooling with their trumped-up stories? At the end, they both recognized the "truth" of the situation and still were not able or willing to talk about it.

Think about answers to the following questions in reconsidering this story:

Who was successful? Who was not?

Why did they each feel they had to lie?

Would either party have been successful if he had told the truth?

Why didn't the priest and the disciple discuss the matter?

What would the priest's colleagues think of his behavior?

What would the disciple's colleagues think of his behavior?

Before we ask for your donation

LET US TELL YOU how your money brings hope, peace, enrichment and empowerment to some of the neediest in our community. Among our many Spring 2010 programs, two especially stand out

Latina Battered Women's Support Group: Six storytelling sessions

Combined group of adult ex-offenders and seniors: Five intergenerational storytelling sessions

Let us share with you comments participants made to complete this statement: After attending these storytelling sessions, I feel:

Very good about myself.

We are all equal.

(I feel) more relaxed. Stories are like my life.

We are not the only ones with these problems.

We have the freedom to say what we think.

Positive and at peace.

Like I gained wisdom from the maturer audience.

Contented for the moment . . . I have to leave home to find peace, and so in that way these stories relate to me.

These sessions are so good, I wish that I hadn't missed others.

About the future, participants said:

Sorry because there will be no more stories.

I definitely would love more sessions.

You should do this every week.

We need more stories, especially about pain, loss, stealing, overcoming.

I would suggest this for former and present youth who are gang affiliated.

Please help us continue these valued and valuable experiences.

Organizations are eager to have us return, but often lack the funds, despite the great need. We earnestly ask you to donate at this giving time of year, and if possible, increase your past contribution. We enclose a self-addressed envelope. Thanks for adding your own stamp.

All good wishes for a Happy Holiday Season and a Healthy and Peaceful New Year.

What Else We Did in 2010

Dinnertable Storytelling to promote healthy eating and to combat childhood obesity.

- Partnered with Weaver Street Market, we set up display tables at two outdoor summer events and held an evening storytelling session in September.
- Partnered with the "Spot the Block" campaign of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, we held two interactive storytelling sessions at the Durham Youth Life Foundation for teens and parents
- Distributed 2,000 Dinnertable Storytelling flyers to elementary school children and their parents

Transitions –Six storytelling sessions in and around Burlington, NC supported in part by the North Carolina Humanities Council.

Topics covered:

- Parenting the 21st Century Child
- Modern Courtship and Marriage
- Moving into the Later Years
- Immigration and Resettlement
- Home from the War
- New Health Habits for Old



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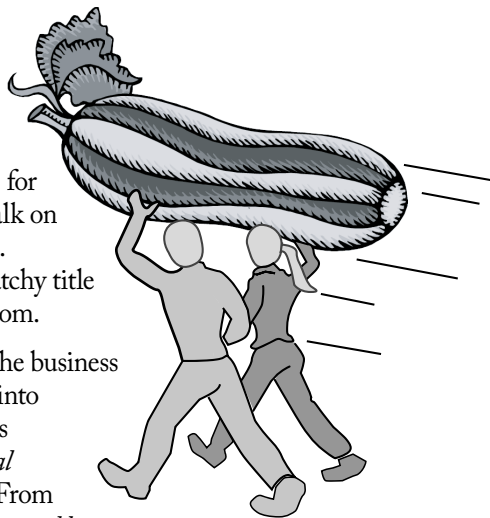
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A Look to the Future

AS 2011 APPROACHES, we wonder what new avenues will open for StoriesWork. Our successful "Move Your Zucchini!" Stories Walk on November 7 is an inspiration for more fruit and vegetable events. "Beckon the Banana"? "Shake Your Arugula"? Do you have a catchy title to suggest? Please send any and all ideas to storieswork@gmail.com.

Our October 23, 2010 Storytelling Workshop made a hit with the business coaches and consultants who attended and encourages us to tap into the business community. Comments from workshop participants include: From Carol Brainard: *I will employ (good, non-judgmental questions) in my work . . . (It) is an important skill in all situations.* From David Kirsh: *I'll be curious to see if there are stories I can use for target problems.* And from Carol Wise: *I will use these techniques in my work immediately!*



On to the New Year!!