

Story Sparking

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The first part of this document is a summary of 'How to Put a Story Together', the information that was presented in the [April 21 workshop](#).

The second part is a worksheet for developing your own story. You may use the exercises in the worksheet to help you figure out a good story to tell and how to structure it.

The third part of this document is instructions for submitting your story idea to the Presidential Precinct to be considered for a one-on-one coaching session with Ruth and to tell your story at the live **StoryShare: Spark!** Event on Zoom, Wednesday, May 26 with all Presidential Precinct Fellowship Alumni and a few Precinct friends invited to attend and cheer you on.

Remember: If you would like to submit your story idea for consideration, you must do so by the end of the day (Charlottesville time) on Wednesday, May 5.

Part 1: How to Put A Story Together Summary

What is an oral story?

A narration of a 'journey' designed to generate emotions in order to influence the listeners by orally describing mental pictures.

Why do we tell stories in the work setting? *Storytelling is a critical skill in today's workplace.*

An incomplete list:

- To introduce something/someone – authority, the mission, a process, explanation
- To create something – belonging, empathy, connection, trust, awareness
- To focus attention – a problem, a solution, an example, a change, advocacy
- To 'ignite' minds with ideas & attitudes – values, service, team spirit, inspiration
- To experience the unknown – options, challenges, foreign situations
- To communicate deep meaning – how something makes sense, why we do our work

What is good story structure?

Have a purpose for telling the story:

- What do you hope to achieve in telling this story?
- What might your listeners gain?
- What might you gain?

Consider the listeners:

- Stories are about connection, not about you. Focus on connection.
- Craft the story for the listeners' ears, brains, motives, needs, perspectives, etc.

Develop the building blocks:

- Old normal = people/characters + place + time
- Problem = a bend in the road, a challenge, a surprise
- Progress = something learned, help received, both
- New normal = changed people/characters or changed place

Part 2: Story-Development Worksheet

By being thoughtful and thorough as you complete this worksheet, you will be able to design a good story, for any reason or for the **StoryShare: Spark!** submission **(due on Wednesday, May 5 if you would like to be considered for coaching and presentation in the live event on Wednesday, May 26).**

All stories selected for the **StoryShare: Spark!** Event should have some connection to the theme of “Spark!”. A spark can be defined as a trace of a specified quality or intense feeling; a sense of liveliness and excitement; or even, in verb form, to provide the stimulus for. Your inspiration for your story could be a particular person who motivated you, an event that really kickstarted a personal conviction for you, an idea that captivated you, or an ongoing experience that continues to drive you. We are eager to see how our storytellers define the word and describe an example from their lives.

I want to tell a story about:

(Be VERY specific and focused. Try to write this answer in 1 sentence.)

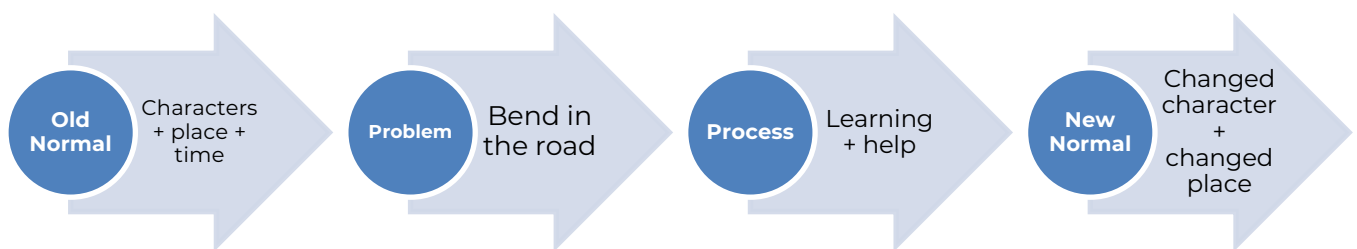
(For example, choose 1 person who motivated you, 1 event that kickstarted a personal conviction, 1 challenge you overcame, 1 idea or phrase that has shifted you, or an ongoing experience that continues to drive you. Do not ‘tell the story of your life’. Choose one ‘Spark!’)

I want my listeners to leave the story with:

This could be an emotion, an experience, a better understanding/awareness, action to take, etc.

4 Building Blocks of My Story:

Fill in as much information as you can for each of the building blocks.



- Be specific.
- Describe each component in as much detail as possible.
- You may not use all of these details in the actual story, but it is good to put them down as you develop your story.
- Draw actual pictures, if you feel it would help (it often does help!).

Part 3: How to Submit Your 1-Minute Story Idea

All Precinct Fellowship Alumni are invited to submit a Story Idea for the MWF **StoryShare: Spark!** live event, to be held on Wednesday, May 26. If your Story Idea is selected, you will receive:

- 30 minutes coaching on the development of your 5-8 minute story and on your delivery style with Dr. Ruth Walkup
- additional information on story development and story delivery
- guidance on how to deliver for an online audience
- an opportunity to tell your 5-8 minute story to a live, international Zoom audience
- a video recording of you telling your story for your own use and distribution

What is a Story Idea?

A Story Idea is a 1-minute overview of what your story will be about and why you want to tell that particular story.

The Story Idea is NOT a complete, finished product story. There is time and guidance to work on your actual story. The Story Idea is an 'elevator story' or a 'preview' of your longer story.

To submit your Story Idea:

- Work through the worksheet in Part 2. Be focused and specific about what 5-8 minute story you want to tell to the live audience.
- Practice so that your Story Idea is no more than 1 minute long.
- Record yourself (or have someone else record you) giving your 1-minute Story Idea.
- Watch your recording and make sure you like what you say and your delivery is clear and confident.
- Submit your 1-minute Story Idea video on WhatsApp: to Drew Precious, Director of Communications at the Presidential Precinct. **+1 (434) 841-6259**

If your Story Idea is selected:

If your Story Idea is selected for the **StoryShare: Spark!** show on **May 26**, you will be notified by **Friday, May 7**.

Work to further develop the building blocks and details of your story.

You will then be connected with Dr. Ruth Walkup for a coaching session to help you further develop your story. The more you have done by then, the more Dr. Walkup can help you refine your story and your delivery style. The coaching session will be at a mutually-convenient day and time.

You will receive a program for the **May 26 StoryShare: Spark!** even, including the presentation order of stories.

On **May 26**, you tell your story to a live, international audience through Zoom!

Afterwards, you will receive an edited video of you telling your story.

Good Luck!

If you have ANY questions, please email Hanna Strauss, Alumni Engagement Officer, at hstrauss@presidentialprecinct.org.