



Storytelling workshop

DRAFT PROGRAM

4 days

Training language: English

Introduction

Each community has its own traditions of storytelling – from elders sitting around the fire to the latest story hubs on social media. We hear stories every day, and we tell them every day: to friends, partners, children and grandchildren. Stories are everywhere. It's clear that they are used to make meaning and communicate with one another, but how do stories contribute to personal and political transformation, to democracy and social justice?

When people connect to political issues through personal stories, they see them in a different way. They don't just see democracy in the abstract, they see 'my democracy.' The transformative potential of storytelling is written into the fabric of our lives.

COVID 19 adjustments: In the eventuality of social distancing and/ or travel restrictions being enforced in the country/city where the training is to be held, participants will not be in the same physical room, though they will be in the same virtual space. Facilitators within the training will make necessary adjustments so as to ensure the successful creation of a safe space in which stories can be shared and vulnerability can be explored.

Meet the trainer

Galo de la Huerta is a writer, editor and storyteller. He studied Business and Marketing in Chile (2015), Storytelling in Cuba (2017), Storytelling Facilitation in Palestine (2018), and holds a dual Masters in Heritage and Memory from the University of Amsterdam (2019).

Galo's academic and work paths have been shaped by the intangibility of words, stories and how they affect reality. His interests are social narratives and belonging, identity and diversity, and the use of storytelling to infiltrate and influence mainstream narratives and collective identities.

Essentials: what we need for the storytelling workshop

1. Safe art space with a room to work that has desks and chairs for at least 8-12 participants.
2. WIFI (fast connection).
3. Screen / TV / projector with sound and a HDMI connection cable.
4. DVD player connected to the screen (a laptop with DVD player and connection to the screen also works).
5. Flip-over or whiteboard.
6. Stationary:
 - White paper
 - Pens & markers (3 colours)
 - Post-it notes (9 packages in 3 different colours)
7. Printer

Day 1

Soft skills to be addressed:

1. Trust building
2. Safe-space development
3. Creativity triggering exercises
4. The power of vulnerability

Theory to be addressed:

1. Introduction to storytelling I: parts of a story, the effect of stories at a chemical level (empathy and interest)

Method:

General meetings, individual exercises, peer-to-peer work, open class feedback.

Overall objectives:

1. Getting to know each other and building a safe sharing space through mutual trust and the power of vulnerability– between participants and facilitators as well as amongst the participants themselves.
2. Introduction to storytelling with emphasis on its role in humanity's ability to organise and communicate, thus establishing a link to democratic participation

Activities & Exercises

1. Check-in: arriving: settling in body and mind.
2. Ex. Familiarization: "THE NAME GAME"
 - About: The first person says their name and a favorite thing. The second person then says their name and a favorite thing, as well as the name and thing of the person before them. Each person after that adds the names and items of all of the people before.
 - Number of participants: 10-30
 - Duration: 15+ min
3. Ex. Building the Safe Space: "CODE OF CONDUCT"
 - About: A simple but meaningful activity that sets the tone for an event and builds consensus on shared values. Teams list what matters to them on a whiteboard.
 - Number of participants: 10-30
 - Duration: 30+ min

4. Ex. Triggering creativity: “COMPLETE THE DRAWING”
 - About: This is a great way to practice and trigger divergent thinkers: the ability to think out of the box and metacognition. The team is given a simple curved line, which they must use to complete as many concepts as possible (it can be a finger, a rollercoaster, an eyebrow, etc.) The exercise seeks to address creativity through (a) Fluency — This is to list out as many as ideas as possible, no matter how ridiculous they may be. The key here is to be explorative and open. Ideas can then be refined later. (b) Flexibility — This involves coming up with different ways to solve a problem you are addressing. (c) Originality — This is part of the divergent thinking process where you will have ideas that have more breadth and originality. A novice user will be able to offer unexpected responses and come up with breakthrough solutions. (d) Elaboration — This is the way you describe a certain idea. For example: “a pair of AirPods” as opposed to “a pair of wireless headphones that deliver an unparalleled sonic experience”.
5. Introduction to storytelling: parts of a story and the effect of stories at a chemical level (empathy, interest – oxytocin, endorphins)
6. Ex. Strategic storytelling: “PARTS OF THE STORY AND EFFECTS ON THE AUDIENCE”
 - About: Identifying the parts of a story and the effects on the audience: how storytellers articulate their verbal strategy.
 - Number of participants: 10-30
 - Duration: 30+ min
7. The power of vulnerability: Vulnerability is an ambiguous and dynamic concept. It stands for ‘strength’ as well as ‘weakness’ and is often associated with femininity and dependence, as well as weakness and victimisation. Vulnerability, however, is also one of the most fruitful attributes in terms of community building, self-discovery and leadership. It is key, therefore, to introduce participants to a differentiation between ontological vulnerability and contextual vulnerability.
8. Case study 1: “The danger of a single story.”
9. Case study discussion.
10. Check out: highs and lows of the day

Day 2

Soft skills to be addressed:

1. Trust building
2. Safe-space development
3. Creativity triggering exercises
4. Building a story

Theory to be addressed:

1. Introduction to storytelling II: intangible heritage and shared intersubjectivity; addressing concepts such as master narratives and sidelined stories. Link to democratic participation, minorities and human rights.
2. How stories weave narratives, and how the arts can infiltrate them. Case study: Netflix
3. Self, other, empathy and sympathy

Method: general meetings, individual exercises, case study material, peer-to-peer work.

Overall objectives: providing participants with a better understanding on how storytelling is a quintessential part of identity building and democracy.

Activities & Exercises

1. Ex. Stories vs narratives: "BRAIDING THE WOOL"
 - About: Each person of the group is given a long thread of wool. There are 5 colours. The mediator stands at the end of the room, and each participant gives him/her/them the end of their wool thread, holding on to the other. Once everyone has done this, all colours group together and braid their threads into one braid. The resulting braids are then braided into a larger braid and tied at both ends. The large braid represents the narrative. Its colour clearly shows what stories are dominant and what stories are sidelined.
 - Number of participants: 10-30
 - Duration: 30+ min
2. Discussion about the exercise: majorities, minorities, representativity and democracy.
3. Ex. Recognizing the elements that build identities: "TREE OF LIFE"
 - About: exercise based on the idea of using the tree as a metaphor to tell stories about one's life. Participants are invited to think of a tree, its roots, trunk, branches, leaves, etc, and imagine that each part of the Tree represents something about their life

- Number of participants: 10-30
- Duration: 20-40 min
- 4. Discussion about identities and the influence of how acceptance affects life; introduction to social and individual identity, and the multilayered identity-clash.
- 5. Case study 2: "Netflix, storytelling and a common European culture."
- 6. Case study discussion
- 7. Determining theme of participants' individual stories
- 8. Ex. Digital/live exercise to plant the seeds for a story: "SPEED DATE"
- About: Each participant within the group is paired with at least two other participants. They discuss their stories based on the guidelines provided by trainers/facilitators. Each participant gets 15 min to present their story, and 15 minutes for peer-comments.
- Number of participants: 10-30
- Duration: 40-60 min

Day 3

Soft skills to be addressed:

5. Trust building
6. Safe-space development
7. Creativity triggering exercises
8. Storytelling practice
9. Public speaking

Theory to be addressed:

4. Strategic Storytelling practice
5. Audience awareness

Method: general meetings, individual exercises, peer-to-peer work, open class feedback, individual coaching.

Overall objectives: From theory to practice, working on your own story: strategic storytelling in front of an audience (safe space).

Activities & Exercises

1. Ex. Outsider witness exercises: "THICKENING THE STORY"
 - About: Outsider witnesses respond to the stories by retelling them in terms of what they heard, emphasizing the positive impact on the listener and in this way, providing acknowledgement of the people at the center of the group, and a valuing of their selfhood. While in broader narrative therapy it can be carried out in different formats, for the purpose of this workshop it will be embedded within a broader community setting, in which more than one community member acts as outsider witness and responses are collective.
 - Number of participants: all
 - Duration: 30+ min (facilitators must have preemptively assessed the length of each participant's story and modified the program accordingly. All participants must have their chance to participate in this exercise).
2. Ex. Making a description of the start of the story: "SETTING THE SCENE"
 - About: Use of sensorial descriptors to set the scene as well as characterise the speaker in front of the audience. Link to strategic storytelling theory.
 - Number of participants: all
 - Duration: 30+ min (facilitators must have preemptively assessed the length of each

participant's story and modified the program accordingly. All participants must have their chance to participate in this exercise).

3. Ex. Describing the sequence of events, including the importance of mentors, adversaries and audience expectation. Participants get to experiment with time in their story: "SEQUENCE OF EVENTS"
 - About: Participants identify the pivotal events within their story. They draw the storyline incorporating a round-about system with alternative events in order to trigger creative thinking and practice strategic storytelling, while experimenting with alternative times for each part of their story.
 - Number of participants: all
 - Duration: 30+ min (facilitators must have preemptively assessed the length of each participant's story and modified the program accordingly. All participants must have their chance to participate in this exercise).

4. Ex. Finding an ending to the story: THE WRAP-UP
 - About: What is the best ending for your story, based on your objectives towards your audience? Participants experiment with endings that best suit their purpose.
 - Number of participants: all
 - Duration: 30+ min (facilitators must have preemptively assessed the length of each participant's story and modified the program accordingly. All participants must have their chance to participate in this exercise).

Day 4

Soft skills to be addressed:

1. Trust building
2. Safe-space development
3. Storytelling practice
4. Public speaking

Theory to be addressed:

1. Strategic Storytelling practice
2. Audience awareness

Method: general meetings, individual exercises, peer-to-peer work, open class feedback, individual coaching.

Overall objectives: Polishing, finalizing and practicing storytelling. Putting theory to practice.

Activities & Exercises

1. Ex. Sharing the stories: “PRACTICE AND EDIT”
 - About: In groups of 3, participants tell each other their stories, asking their peers to assess the parts of the story in which they feel weaker (in day 4 they will have received feedback from their trainer/facilitator). Facilitator is available for individual coaching and questions.
 - Number of participants: all
 - Duration: 30+ min (facilitators must have preemptively assessed the length of each participant’s story and modified the program accordingly. All participants must have their chance to participate in this exercise).
2. Short introduction to commenting: how to do it, when to do it and why to do it.
3. Ex. Sharing the stories: “AROUND THE FIREPLACE”
 - About: Participants share their stories with the whole group, one by one. The safe-space comes together in a welcoming environment, similar to ancient storytelling taking place around the fireplace. Upon completion, peers can reflect on the teller’s technique and story, all adhering to the code of conduct collectively assembled on day 1.
 - Number of participants: all
 - Duration: 30+ min (facilitators must have preemptively assessed the length of each participant’s story and modified the program accordingly. All participants must have their chance to participate in this exercise).