“We are our stories, we compress years of experience, thought and emotion into a few compact narratives that we convey to others and tell to ourselves”

Daniel Pink, *a Whole New Wind*
Effective story telling

- Introduction and overview
- Evidence based best and promising practice
- Potential uses
  - Tool Kit
  - Website
- Resources

“Degrees may be irrelevant but depending on the situation, hands-on experience can mean as much, if not more, than academic training; creative and quick insight can be more important than facts and figures. What is necessary is to intuit and communicate the human meaning of data.” Larry Wallach, *Media Advocacy and Public Health* 1993.
“...that which we call a rose, By any other name would smell as sweet.” (Romeo & Juliet, Shakespeare, 1600)
The word *storytelling* gets bandied an awful lot these days. It’s a term that has currency in industries and communities as diverse as activism, health care, advertising and art. It’s possible that the recent fascination with narrative comes out the immense possibilities that emerge out of digital technology—with each new web app, open-source community or forum, countless avenues for creativity and connection are opened up.

- **Storytelling:**
  The art and science of using individual experiences to generate collective education, relationships and engagement.

- **Stories:**
  Individuals recall and recount experiences with health care services with the purpose of building collective knowledge about organizational and systemic effectiveness.
Old as time

- Someone speaks
- Others listen
- Positive Living North Front Line Warriors: “It ends with me. I am your front line of defense.”
- Policy, Prevention and Promotion
Evidence base

- Simple and complex
  - Use with caution
- Applicable across multiple uses
  - Qualitative research, evaluation, organizational change, political persuasion, religious convictions, education, advertising, policy making, community engagement, case studies
- Individual, family and collective myths, legends and identities

BUT ONLY IF

Adopted with clarity, used with care, applied appropriately in context and supported with other sources.
Caveats

Direct experience/s

Past experiences

Mood (then & now)

Metaphors, social myths

Memories, Triggers, Associations

Values

The questions

Recall / recount

THE STORY

“We are not made up of Atoms, we are made up of stories.” — Muriel Rukeyser
Hands On

- Form a tryad
- Decide who will be Observer, who will be interviewee and who will be interviewer. You have three minutes conduct an interview
- Interviewer - The question to ask:
  - Tell me about a time in your life where you felt exceptionally healthy
  - Probes: what factors contributed to that experience
- Interviewee - Answer honestly and fully with an experience from your history
- Observer - Listen for elements that people identify as important in contributing to their sense of well being
- Facilitators at each site: collect 3 elements from your group for report back
Hands On - Report Back in Tryad and Plenary

Identify 2 elements in the story that would support good healthy and healthy choices

- What stood out for the interviewer about the experience of listening for health
- What stood out for the interviewee about the experience of recall and sharing (content if needed for context only)
- Observer reports out to plenary - 2 themes
Based on John McKnight, Asset Based Community Development

From story to policy

The question
The interviewer
The story teller
The story
The experience

Available for analysis
Illustration, etc.

Collected systematically
Captured accurately
Recorded transparently
Treated ethically

DATA
Research

COMMUNITY
IF KNOWLEDGE IS POWER WHY ISN’T HEALTH PROMOTION COMMUNICATION MORE EFFECTIVE?
The role of stories & storytellers in health communication.

**PAST**
Reflect / learn

**FUTURE**
Predict / Plan

Above the line: Health Care Services
Below the line: Individual and community space

The question

**KNOWLEDGE**

**IMPROVED HEALTH STATUS**

**Understanding**

**Peers & community**

**Relationships**

**Shared Actions**

**CHANGE**

Fire Carriers
A support to the work of health practitioners

Challenges and issues in community

Knowledge transfer

Multiple Outcomes
Theory & education
Knowledge translation
Story telling/narrative
Qualitative research

Practitioner

What’s practical?
What works?
What doesn’t?
What could be done differently?

Building shared knowledge base

EXCELLENT AND EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

Intervention:
Experience as narrative
The story

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Evidence Base

PURPOSE & USES

“I know only one thing about the technologies that awaits us in the future: We will find ways to tell stories with them.” Jason Ohlar

northern health
the northern way of caring
Evidence base - Potential purpose

- **Access**
  - Empowering those with no voice, low literacy, mistrust
  - Experiences across issues, class, race otherwise silent

- **Relationship / equity building**
  - Sharing knowledge, skills and experiences as cooperators in an endeavour

- **Policy & resource allocation**

- **Health promotion**
  - Information sharing with impact
  - Delicate or sensitive issues

In Sierra Leone, a fictitious “Auntie Sissy” enables children to discuss and develop answers to children’s sexual health questions. The children develop their answers into collectively created responses are a valuable and effective tool for educating their peers on sensitive but vital issues.
Evidence Base

TOOLS
Evidence base - trusted and tested tools

- Digital story telling
- Photovoice
- Most Significant Change
- Oral history interview
- Patient journeys

So, I went to see the social worker. They do that in prison, they want to make sure you are not thinking of killing yourself. Well, it gets you out of your cell, something to do. But then he [the counselor] said, “Tell me what happened to you?” All those years in and out of prison and I am in now for manslaughter. In all those years no-one had ever asked me that.”
Digital story telling supports health messaging

“a short, first person video narrative created by combining recorded voice, still and moving images and music or other sounds.”

- Creates a sandwich of voice, music and images
- 6 minutes max
- Advantages: low tech, low cost and easy to learn

“The first time the video was played, there wasn’t a dry eye in the house. Diverse audiences, people living with HIV, street nurses, health care professionals. Not one.” Participant debrief on digital story

“Front Line Warriors for evaluation.

“Public health has been among the first sectors in BC to explore the idea and practice of digital storytelling and practitioners see value in its use for the promotion and evaluation of a broad range of community-based activities.”

SPARC-BC, *Digital Story Telling in BC: An Inventory*, April 2010
Elementary schools have loads of playground equipment but there is nothing after you graduate from elementary school and go to high school. The summer between Grade 7 and Grade 8 is when you lose your childhood. Sara, Sept. 2009, University Student
“A supplementary evaluation tool developed by Davis (1996) to monitor and evaluate complex participatory rural development programs with diverse implementation and outcomes. The approach gathers stories about changes that participants experience during and as a result of a particular project or program, rather than pre-defined indicators...the meaning of stories of the most significant changes experienced by individuals and groups of learners are constructed and derived from their socio-cultural contexts...The benefits are therefore translated and constructed in socially meaningful outcomes.”
Conclusion

● Successful health communication
  - The issue is seen as important and a priority (*It may not be according to statistics*)
  - The informative material is presented accessible (*literacy and cultural norms*)
  - The material encourages “do-able choices and actions (*Recommendations that are not physically possible won’t work*)
  - Recipients can see themselves in the issue and content (insider investments in determining and describing the problems and the solutions will be highly effective and will garner support and investment from those closest to the issue

● Story telling is an effective intervention at each of these three choice points

“The science and art of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting health through the organized efforts and informed choices of society, organizations, public and private, communities and individuals.” C.E. Winslow
Resources - Articles

- S. Coy et al. Most significant change technique: a supplementary evaluation tool. found at: http://www.voced.edu.au/content/ngv46206
- P.A. Fraser, Digital storytelling in the arts health and seniors project; The independence, narratives and health in older adults, *Journal of Urban Health*
Resources - web sites

- Digital Storytelling: A Tutorial in 10 Easy Steps
  - [http://www.techsoup.org/learningcenter/training/archives/page10096.cfm](http://www.techsoup.org/learningcenter/training/archives/page10096.cfm)

- Welcome to Photovoice:

- Most Significant Change

- General: [http://www.kstoolkit.org/home](http://www.kstoolkit.org/home)
  - Join the CGIAR, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the KM4DEv Community, UNICEF and UNDP in creating and growing this resource of knowledge sharing tools and methods. While these are applicable in a wide range of contexts, we hope that together we can help frame them in the context of international development with a focus on agriculture, fisheries, food and nutrition, forestry and sustainable development.

Check out Vancouver Coastal’s Smart Fund story telling project at [http://ourstories.vch.ca/index.htm](http://ourstories.vch.ca/index.htm)
**Resources - web based tools**

- **DigitalFilms** is a website that lets you create your own film for free. You choose your background scene, characters, animated actions, dialogue, introduction and ending credits.
- **WebSlides** let you convert your feeds and bookmarks and present them as live web pages in an interactive slide show. It’s a great way to create and share unique presentations based on web content and user annotations.
- **Dipity** is an online timeline that you can add videos and pictures.
- **Doink** is a great way to create your own stories and share them with others. You can create your own story from scratch or you can use other animated stories to create yours.
- **Empressr** is a media presentation tool. You can add pictures, videos, audios, music and share it with the world.
- **Jaycut** lets you edit your movies online.
- **Mixbook** allows you to create your collaborative photo books and albums.
- **Fix8** allows you to customize your on-screen virtual appearance in real time using avatar technology. In short, it’s a web cam technology that lets you animate yourself.
- With **FuzzWich**, choose your settings, characters. If you like, you can even customize your character with your face. You drag the character and decide on its move and create your animated film. You can also have a look at **FuzzWichFridge** where you can play with magnetic words upon a fridge.
- **GoAnimate** is a site where you can create your own animations. You don’t need to have a drawing skill or know about Flash.
- With **LifeHabs**, you can create a sharable interactive timeline of the significant events in your life.

Thank you

QUESTIONS?

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