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# Travel Tales: the role of storytelling in abroad experience and healing

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Travel Tales: The role storytelling plays in post abroad experience healing 1

Travel Tales: The role of storytelling in post abroad experience and healing

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SIT PIM 73

Capstone Paper submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a  
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### Abstract

This capstone paper examines the perceived effectiveness of storytelling in the healing process. It aims to answer the question: What role does storytelling play in the healing of returning travelers? The study was conducted by analyzing forty digital videos, categorizing themes, and analyzing the themes in relation to themes found within several articles about the power and effects of storytelling. Five principal themes were used from the data collected. The themes were then used to gain a deeper understanding of how storytelling makes the storyteller feel and how storytelling can be used for healing. The author of this paper has also included a personal experience as a digital storyteller. Included is an analysis of the author's process and perceived emotions in relation to sharing a personal story with others and hearing it for herself. The data received revealed that people tell stories to share what events have shaped their identity, express appreciation, to gain understanding, to feel support or belonging, and to express change. The data is in support of the idea that storytelling may be an effective tool in aiding returning travelers in reintegration and healing after experienced abroad.

Keywords: Narrative therapy, storytelling, re-authoring, Alcoholics Anonymous, narrative, self, travel.

## INTRODUCTION

*“Storytelling is an art, a science, a way of life. To define storytelling or storyteller is to try to make concrete that which is abstract. Suffice it to say that storytelling is among the oldest forms of communication. It exists in every culture. Storytelling is the commonality of all human beings, in all places, in all times. It is used to educate, to inspire, to record historical events, to entertain, to transmit cultural mores.” (Collins and Cooper in Love et al).*

In September of 2014, I left the United States to embark on a journey that would become another great story to share in my lifetime. I traveled across the ocean to work in Karatu, Tanzania. Eileen Seissen, another fellow PIM from The School for International Training, and I were recruited by a local non-profit girl’s center as the Leadership and Life skills Trainers. When we arrived, we were surprised by a number of conditions. Aside from being immersed in a new country and culture, many of the circumstances at the center and with our supervisor were not how they were initially described to us. The next five months became a very different and challenging experience for me.

The organization, that we were told had been running successfully for three years, had fallen apart and was currently being run by one woman. The center had been closed for many months and was rapidly running out of funding. The woman running it, also our supervisor, was stressed with the burden of trying to re-start this organization from the bottom up and in a very short period of time. Eileen and I soon went from leadership and life skills trainers to student recruiters, English teachers, club programming managers, and on occasion, cooks. Despite being told differently, during this time we also needed to learn Swahili, as the girls did not speak

English. Eileen and I worked closely in a very short time frame to open in the center within a week of our arrival, asking many questions to our supervisor along the way.

After a short period of time, we saw very little improvement with the management of the center. Our supervisor spent much of her time away from the center taking care of other issues. It became a very stressful environment. Eileen and I found ourselves taking care of more than we knew what to do with. We struggled to connect with our supervisor, no matter how much we thought we were helping we felt as though we could not please her. Things at the center became more trying when a student fell ill and teachers began to leave in the middle of the semester. New teachers were hard to come by. Communication between teachers and the supervisor was limited and expectations were unclear. Things were not getting better. When it finally came close to the end of our five month stay, our relationship with our supervisor was very strained and we were tired and burnt out. While my experience with the students was invaluable and I had built strong relationships with the girls, I knew it was time to leave. While I was unsure of what going home would be like, I felt ready.

Once landing in the United States in March of 2015, I felt relief and the initial surge of excitement, however there was also an abundance of confusion. Life in the US felt very different from when I had left and it was extremely different from my life in Tanzania. I had different responsibilities and relationships to maintain. I was also struggling to process all that had happened in Tanzania. I was feeling like I had failed at what I had set out to do and I left with a strained relationship, something I am not used to. I was upset about leaving my positive relationship with the girls as well as the negative one with my supervisor. I was also not sure of how to live in a place like America after living so differently while I was away. There were so many changes and feelings I was experiencing and I found it difficult to explain to others who

had not been there. I can remember writing the word “overwhelmed” in my journal frequently as an emotion I continued to feel. I wrote on July 25, 2015, four months after returning to the US, “Now I’ve returned to a place where no one even looks up for one second to notice if I’m different or not. No one asks questions, has concerns, or expects anything.” This was in reference to how I felt after returning from Tanzania, where people always looked at me and asked me questions because I was so different from them. At this point of my return I was struggling to adjust to blending in again while still feeling very different internally.

I started seeing a therapist in June. She allowed me to tell my story in a way that helped me process my experience. I had time and space to reflect. As I told my story to her, I felt more confident telling it to others. I felt like I was beginning to understand what had happened in Tanzania and how I felt about it. My therapist began to suggest different books for me to read. In my reading I discovered a book about narrative therapy and realized my therapist had been using that technique on me. I became inspired by the idea of telling my story to anyone and even was asked to speak in a local school about my experience in Tanzania. I felt like I was finally beginning to process my experience. I began to read more about the power of storytelling and finally decided to do my own research to help other travelers struggling to connect and process after returning from experiences abroad.

After reading many articles and sharing my story I feel that storytelling has healing effects and may be a beneficial tool for travelers. I have read about how storytelling has aided addicts towards recovery and it has helped people heal from loss or trauma. After analyzing why people tell their stories I feel even more belief that travelers can use storytelling to help them understand their experiences and share their healing process with others. The problem I am considering is the difficulty of being a returning traveler and the lack care explored for returning



culture. Following my experiences and consideration of this problem I ask the research question: what roles does storytelling play in the healing of returning travelers. I answer this question through the lens of narrative therapy and present an analysis that is informed by the conceptual framework of storytelling and healing.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review will consider prior research on the effects of storytelling on the teller. I will explore how research conducted in several studies including Alcoholics Anonymous and other addiction groups. I will also consider the research that investigates how storytelling is successful in connecting people to self and others. I will examine this literature in an attempt to explore the research findings on why people tell stories, how storytelling can make the teller feel, and impact outcomes in the storytellers' lives. I will review the previous research to understand how research on storytelling can help travelers feel validated in their own experience as well as how different methods and findings may be helpful in my research for returning travelers.

The research and literature that is essential towards understanding my question is of that pertaining to the use and effectiveness of storytelling. This literature review seeks to answer the question "what effect does storytelling have on the storyteller?" in conjunction with the question "how might storytelling benefit returning travelers?" While my research does not focus solely on the concepts of storytelling and digital storytelling, as will be explained later in research design, it also explores a variety of storytelling techniques and their outcomes with different populations.

In my exploration and review of previous storytelling research five themes emerged: Identity, belonging/support, understanding, appreciation, and change. In the following paragraphs I will define the themes throughout the research and findings in the reviewed literature. Much of the reviewed literature overlaps reoccurring ideas thus confirming the previous five themes.

The first reoccurring idea I found was identity. Identity becomes a defining theme in storytelling whether the story creates identity, shares identity, or explores identity. McClean and Pasupathi conducted a 2011 study that explored the development of narrative identity in storytelling. The study centered on “connections of autobiographical experiences—primarily whether they contribute to stability (old) or change (new) in the self” (p. 136). The study listened to how people tell their story in the continuity of their lives and how their identity has either changed or remained over time. The stories told contributed to “identity development and well-being” (p. 138). McClean and Pasupathi also discovered that:

Over time, people report less negative emotion in the retelling than in the initial experience, whereas positive emotion remains unchanged over retelling experiences (Pasupathi, 2003). Thus, making positive connections about the self may serve to maintain or build well-being, and we suspected that disclosing stories that contain positively valenced self-event connections may contribute to identity through social bonding and the creation of shared positive affect” ( p. 138).

So, not only did the study show that storytelling, in this case was connected to change in emotion and identity but also the creation of bonding between the storyteller and listener. This study is important to understanding how storytelling impacts the teller and their identity as well as how their feelings change as a result of storytelling. People feel more positive when they are heard and have a better understanding of self when they share lived experiences. The study concluded that people tell stories related to their identity in order to make connections with others ( p. 160).

Similarly, within the theme of identity, research conducted by Elaine Nuske and Nerilee Hing (2013) looks at recovering problem gamblers and how storytelling has aided in recovery. The study recognizes gamblers who participated in narrative after feeling a “loss of self” due to their gambling experience (p. 48). Participants then reflected on their narrative experience, whether they shared their story with other gamblers or therapists. The participants found that narrative gave

them “insight” and understanding that helped them to deal with change and behavior (p. 50). Nuske and Hing state that “it is evident that in retelling and sharing their stories, the participants’ recovery is a journey that travels in relation to their reconstructed identity” (p.51). The effect that storytelling has on change may be very powerful to my research.

The second theme that became evident in the literature is the theme of belonging/support. Al Fuertes (2012) reflects on the person centered theory, stating that “human development is an ongoing process. Individuals belonging to a community change and adapt to meet the demands of their environment” (p. 337). He also expresses that people have the ability to heal and rebuild from their trauma. When trauma victims in the Philippines were asked why they told their trauma stories they mentioned a number of responses. Many answers were along the lines of wanting others to understand their experience, to release emotions, to share their identity with others, to feel validated, and common experience/connection (p. 343). Storytelling for these people took the trauma out of their stories and allowed them to triumph and feel strong enough to support other people telling their stories. It developed a sense of community and belonging. The storytelling workshop became “a form of intervention in that it played a crucial role in social healing and community building” (p. 346).

Sharon Hoffman (2010) also studies how storytelling is a catalyst for connection to others and culture. Hoffman asked the question, “What makes storytelling elicit compassionate connection?” (p. 380). She used media to give a woman with breast cancer and opportunity to tell her story in a gallery space. This way of “living stories” allows “authenticity and connection through collaboration” (p. 382). The “living story” process allowed for several meetings and storytelling groups before the gallery exhibition. Through this process both the storyteller and the audience felt connected through the words of the story as well as the visual elements included.

Hoffman states, “we are not merely making sense of our own lives through narrative interpretation but are also accessing and co-creating transpersonal phenomena and achieving transpersonal understanding or participatory knowing” (p. 396).

In 2010, Leah East et al also sought to find the connection between storytelling and belonging. They explained:

Healing after painful experiences can begin when our voices and stories are listened to and heard (Leseho and Block 2005). Frank (1995) asserted that personal stories have the ability to make sense of and increase understanding of personal experiences, while Murray (2003) found that new perspectives could be gained through the telling of personal stories to an interested researcher. Carlick and Biley’s (2004) review highlighted how sharing and listening to stories can promote awareness of and reflection on life circumstances, while Cowling (2005) recognised the reflection and the desire for positive change that accompanies storytelling and dialogue.” ( p. 20).

Their research also determined that reflection through storytelling was helpful in the storyteller’s coping as well as development of support groups and positive emotions. These support groups also made the storyteller feel “connectedness and belonging” (p. 21). They were also able to “make sense of their feelings....and grown and move on with their lives” ( p. 22). This also connects to the theme of understanding.

Thirdly, the theme of understanding began to resurface throughout much of the research in the field. Storytelling has been used as a tool for understanding and healing in a multitude of research studies. In relation to understanding for healing and change, is the study by Linda C. Lederman and Lisa M. Menegatos (2011). Shadowing early research conducted by Robinson in the United Kingdom in 1979, Lederman and Menegatos conduct a more recent study in the United States Alcoholics Anonymous program. This study focuses on storytelling in Alcoholics Anonymous, or more commonly known as AA, a program for alcoholics to tell their stories in attempt to maintain sobriety. The use of storytelling with AA members was found to be a form of “reflexive self-persuasion that facilitates sustained recovery, including the development of what

we conceptualize as the ‘aspirational self’” (Lederman and Menegatos, p. 207). Storytelling within the AA environment has become a way to receive social support and to make sense of experiences, thus helping members to reflect as well as move forward with self perception.

Rose and Granger (2011) also discuss storytelling and understanding in relation to identity in their study about storytelling and self. While they state that “While remembering, and narrating what we remember, can identify gaps in memory and even help begin to fill them, rendering narrative at times both ‘necessary and therapeutic’” (p.222), they also express some of the dangerous effects of storytelling. While most of the previous research has suggested that storytelling is helpful in developing and exploring one’s identity and understanding of past events, Rose and Granger also suggest that recalling the storyteller’s past can often bring about confusion about the actual events. They discuss how narration can depict what is remembered which can often leave out large piece of the actual story as it happened. However, their study also examined how hearing others stories can remind storytellers of unconscious past events, bringing understanding to suppressed experiences. Either way, storytelling has a way of allowing people to choose what they share and what they learn of experience from what they chose to share. Stories become personalized in new ways and allow the teller to maintain authentic and power over their words and experiences.

Storytelling is also used for understanding, both in the traditional and modern sense. Joyce Divinye (1995) refers to the oral tradition of storytelling as “the vehicle for self-understanding and healing” (p.27). Divinye uses a commonality to connect with clients in therapy. She chooses a common interest and uses it to inspire a conversation that triggers a story. That story acts a safe space where clients can refer back to in future sessions. She also suggests using commonly known stories or fables to bring about client’s personal stories. These stories help bring about a range of

“meaning and message” (p. 32). She discusses how using and sharing stories brings families closer with better understanding of each other. It also “has the power to heal” and “create new paradigms and discover new behaviors” (p. 37).

Another very important piece of literature I reviewed confirmed the themes of identity, support/belonging, and understanding in one study. Lynda Ashbourne and Mohammed Biobiad’s 2014 study focused on Canadian- Arabic immigrant families and the storytelling between parents and adolescents. Part of the study gave light to why people tell stories, expressing that the participants were seeking connection and comfort (p.10). They told stories of identity and advice while looking to “enhance understanding of each other” (p.10). One participant said that “it comforts me that someone else knows what I’ve been through” (p. 10). These realizations during storytelling are all feelings that promote healing and understanding of one’s experiences. This particular study also adds the element of travel as these are immigrant families often sharing stories of being immersed in a new place and feelings of discomfort and identity confusion.

The fourth theme is that of appreciation. Appreciation is interconnected in many previous studies. Quentin Hunt et al (2015) explore the theme most thoroughly. Hunt et al study the use of eulogies and birth announcements as ways to tell stories in the present. While used in therapy settings, Hunt et al. ask clients to commemorate positive experiences of their past and explore the things they enjoy about themselves (p. 38). Although it does not have to be in writing, it can be done through media, acting, etc, the eulogies honor past experiences in the teller’s life. This task asks the teller to not only reflect but also to reflect on the past with a positive perspective. This concept gives a different approach to what may be at present a negative look into one’s past. While this kind of storytelling is done to mourn and move on it also honors the lived experience and who the teller was at that time. This then allows the teller to find a positive way to also look at and create

a birth announcement that asks them to create a story for the present and the future (p. 39). This is a healing and transformational process (p.40).

Finally, the theme of change also began to emerge within my review of the literary research of storytelling. The work of Judy H. Mullet et al. (2013) explores adult learners using personal narrative writings to re-author their stories (p. 72). Re-authoring allows the teller of the story to practice multiple perspectives without changing the facts within their story. This gives the same facts different meaning. As Mullet et al. describes reauthoring, “a reauthored story provides a new, more encompassing framework that fosters trust, curiosity, and healthy relationships—sure signs of secure attachment and learning success” (p. 72). These reauthored stories allow the teller to project a more positive future rather than living in a hurtful past. When this story is shared, the feedback and questions received ask the teller to see new perspectives and revision their story with growth and guidance towards future events and stories to be told. As a result of reauthoring, many learners were able to “build [their] own capacity to adapt and grow” (p. 77). Restorying has also been credited to make the tellers “prospective clearer and more empowered” (Hunt et al., 2015, p. 40).

Further literature and research also focused on change and development. Annabelle Nelson et al, in 2008, looked at how storytelling impacted youth and their academic success. Youth aged boys were asked to write several stories about themselves and share amongst a group. The outcomes resulted in stories where the youth has learned something that provided them with a feeling or event that described success (p. 136). After writing these stories and sharing them, it was also found that these youth had developed stronger relationships with the peers and adults involved ultimately producing better behavior in the children (p. 136). These experiences

with storytelling brought about relationship building that developed in to positive change. Shared experiences take on powerful changes in different environments.

As evident through the above literature review, the themes of identity, belonging/support, understanding, and change are interconnected and reoccurring throughout storytelling research. Storytelling can help people define and redefine who they are through further understanding of their past, present and future. Storytelling also provides people with the environment and support they need to feel like they have a place where they fit in and are needed in the lives of others as well. It is also a place where they can pay homage to themselves as well as the important people in their lives who have had an effect on the change that these stories bring about in the tellers' lives. Storytelling has proven to be a powerful tool for many and given a voice to the stories that may have otherwise gone unheard. The research shows that stories can heal, bond, and enlighten as gateways to change in the lives of storytellers and listeners alike.

## RESEARCH DESIGN

I will introduce the theory of Narrative therapy which is the lens through which I have conducted my research. Narrative Therapy helps us to gain insight into how narrative affects the brain and healing as well as understanding of self. This research provides insight into how narrative therapy provides people with the means to honor their own lived experiences and explore self by telling their stories. I will use narrative therapy as the theory basis for my research. The first concept I began to investigate was narrative therapy. Narrative therapy is a theory based psychology model in which therapist honor the lived experiences of clients through narrative. As my main interest is storytelling it seemed appropriate to look at how storytelling is being used in



a variety of areas of health. Because I am looking at how storytelling can help people heal and feel more comfortable, therapeutic approaches to storytelling seemed right. Narrative therapists believe that asking specific questions will cause the client to reflect on personal experience and seek self analysis and validation. Questions are can be categorized (but are not limited to) into relative influence, future possibility, and experience of experience (Madigan, 2010, p. 160). Asking such questions and “externalizing conversation relocates the problems inside the relational and interactional context of culture and discourse and removes problems from the privacy of the decontextualized client body” (Madigan, 2010, p. 673). Allowing people to share their stories allows them to seek their own solutions as they bring light to their own problems.

In Stephen Madigan’s (2011) studies the origin of narrative therapy through the works of Michael White and David Epston. Madigan dissects the history, theory, and practice of narrative therapy. The purpose of narrative therapy was to give the storytelling rights back to the storyteller or the client rather than the therapist. Madigan states, that we as storytellers have the power to both “restrain and liberate our lives” (p. 943). Our own narrative has control and influence in how we move forward with life. Based on poststructural theoretical view, Madigan states that, “stories are shaped by the surrounding dominant cultural context; some stories emerge as the long-standing reputations we live through, and other (often more preferred) stories of who we are (and might possibly become) can sometimes be restrained and pushed back to the margins of our remembered experience” (p. 951). Narrative therapists believe that life is not fixed therefore stories are not fixed and neither are people and their personalities. People have flexibility in their own stories.

Narrative therapy is organized with the idea that “it is the stories people tell and hold about their lives that determine the meaning they give to their lives” (Madigan, 2010, p. 1008). If people can find meaning in their own stories, which are a telling of their life experiences, then they are

able to tell their stories as their selves and develop more authenticity. Madigan affirms this concept in “re-authoring” or retelling the story (p. 1022). With narrative therapy and questioning the client was able to “re-author” their story, and in their retelling they were able to retell themselves as they began to see themselves. For example if the client saw themselves as a loser as they begin to retell their story they include stories of life as a loyal friend and a talented writer. People begin to see themselves as more than they initially believed. As Madigan describes the process:

Re-authoring conversations acted to reinvigorate people’s efforts to understand (a) what it was that was happening in their lives, (b) what it was that had happened, (c) how it had happened, (d) what it all could possibly mean. In this way therapeutic conversations encouraged a dramatic reengagement with life and with history and provided options for people to more fully inhabit their lives and their relationships.” (2010, p1025).

As the storyteller shares their story they are often externalizing a problem or a time of their life that held deeper meaning for them. Narrative therapy provides clients with more understanding of their experience and “encourage[s] a dramatic reengagement with life and with history and provided options for people to more fully inhabit their lives and their relationships” (Madigan, 2010, p.1045). Through these stories it became more possible for people to develop a sense of identity and “(a) generate new proposals for action, (b) account for the circumstances likely to be favorable to these proposals for action, and (c) predict the outcome of the proposals” (p. 1061). People began to find ways to more forward from troubles in their lives and engage in positive living.

Madigan quotes Epston and White by stating, “A person’s story, the influences that shape this story, and the right to tell this story from multiple perspectives are at the center of narrative therapy” (2010, p. 661). Narrative therapy challenges the storytellers to explore different perspectives of self and allows change rather than a fixed self. Sharing stories, “demystifies problems” and allows further understanding of the issues at hand and further understanding of how

the storyteller views themselves in that problem (Madigan 2010, p. 714). Through this process, power is given to the storyteller and not the power-over relationship.

As presented by Lacy Ricks, "narrative therapy focuses on the ideology that problems in people's lives are derived from social, cultural, and political contexts (Payne, 2006). The origins from which stories manifest are the result of influences from a person's family of origin, peers, other interpersonal relationships, and sociocultural directives (Cobb & Negash, 2010)" (p.102). People's stories are often shaped by outside factors that impact one's identity. Madigan also goes on to explain:

Stories are shaped by the surrounding dominant cultural context; some stories emerge as the long-standing reputations we live through, and other (often more preferred) stories of who we are (and might possibly become) can sometimes be restrained and pushed back to the margins of our remembered experience. (Madigan 1992, 2008). But whatever the stories are that we tell (and don't tell), they are performed, live through us, and have abilities to both restrain and liberate our lives (p.1029).

Narrative therapy gives time and space to deconstruct the different context in which personal stories exist and give real meaning to lived experience through the power of the storyteller.

Lacey Ricks, Sarah Kitchen, Tonia Goodrich, and Elizabeth Hancock (2014) took narrative therapy to the next level by exploring its effects in a group setting. Their research explores how different forms of narrative as used in several other research studies are used for therapeutic purposes not only individually but in group settings. Storytelling, journaling, scripts, and memoirs have been used as positive forms of expression. Their research explores how empowering it can be for clients to share their story as they experienced it themselves and to gain new perspective through the feedback and support of sharing with others. The concept was based in the idea that listening to clients stories is more important than listening to symptoms or psychological information. They reflect on the success of Duba et al. study where woman in group therapy used

narrative therapy techniques to approach the issue of body image expectations. They also credit several other research projects that successfully use narrative therapy in group settings.

In looking at how Madigan and the researchers he follows as well as Ricks, Kitchen, Goodrich, and Hancock and their practice of narrative therapy I am given insight into how storytelling can fuel the teller's progress and livelihood. I believe that even outside of a therapy setting, storytelling can provide a multitude of benefits as it has proven in further research. Travelers are returning to a life that is different from how they left it as is their identity and perception of self. The use of narrative therapy offers much insight to recovery from a multitude of problems in one's life. As a traveler begins to readjust to life in new and extenuating circumstances narrative in a variety of uses may offer support and healing as well as a development of comfort with self and environment. While I do not believe that all travelers will need or desire to seek therapy or means as serious as such I do think that a space to share their stories may offer possible opportunity for expression and healing for those travelers who need it.

Narrative therapy brings light to many of the effects of storytelling and narrative. It explains how stories give meaning and allow for creation of change in reauthoring. Narrative therapy also shows ways in which people are able to transform through the telling of their own experiences. It helps the storyteller to find meaning and understanding in their lives and purpose to move in a new direction for the future while honoring their past as well as who they were and will be. It helps them to create change and see more positively. My knowledge of narrative therapy now makes me ask how this kind of narrative and storytelling can be used in different settings, especially those including travelers, to promote positive change and adjustment.

What is storytelling?

*“Storytelling is an art, a science, a way of life. To define storytelling or storyteller is to try to make concrete that which is abstract. Suffice it to say that storytelling is among the oldest forms of communication. It exists in every culture. Storytelling is the commonality of all human beings, in all places, in all times. It is used to educate, to inspire, to record historical events, to entertain, to transmit cultural mores.” (Collins and Cooper in Love et al).*

Storytelling has recently become a trendy tool in therapy, classrooms, and everyday life.

“To try to make concrete that which is abstract” is much like the task of the returned traveler.

Storytelling, often used interchangeably with narrative, is in the traditional sense the telling of past experiences in hopes of developing new meaning or understanding. Storytelling can be influenced by many factors including the storytellers’ experiences, environment, perspective, understanding of self, etc. Stories are shared and retold sometimes changing original form and developing deeper meaning. This study will use the words storytelling and narrative interchangeably as different literature uses different terminology often when referring to similar concepts.

Digital storytelling is not just telling one’s story using digital media but rather, in some circles, in it more of a process. From this approach, storytelling seeks to give people a voice through story using words, pictures, videos and multimedia approach in order to offer a holistic approach to healing through storytelling. According to *The Storytelling Cookbook* developed by Joe Lambert in 2010 for The Center for Digital Storytelling, digital storytelling happens in a seven step process including:

1. Owning your insights
2. Owning your emotions
3. Finding the moment
4. Seeing your story
5. Hearing your story
6. Assembling your story
7. Sharing your story

In Lambert's view:

The storytelling process is a journey. And in our workshops, we approach this journey as a facilitated group process. We believe that the connections made between people in the Story Circle help to focus and inspire each individual throughout the process. For many of the storytellers we help, the digital story they create in our workshops may be the only digital story they ever make, in part because overcoming the challenge of finding and clarifying the insights and emotions in their story is not easily done alone. Therefore, we recommend that digital storytellers connect with others to share ideas and work through these steps together.

In this study, I was interested in how storytelling makes people feel and how the stories they tell can help people heal from their past experiences. I understand that because of my own involvement in the healing process of storytelling and my personal feelings towards to topic that the research was developed with a certain level of subjectivity. In my best efforts put separate my subjectivity, I sought to understand the stories of many others. Through this process I was also concerned about the serious nature of the healing process. As to not harm anyone or put anyone at risk of mental harm or emotional danger I chose a population that could remain safe but could still contribute to the questions at large. Without putting participants at risk, I was able to develop themes and data that could contribute to the field of storytelling and healing.

In order to produce my data effectively, I used two methods of data collection; a textual analysis of a database of digital stories, secondly I became a participant observer in the creation of my own digital story. The literature review was an in-depth look at how narrative and storytelling work and the effects they have on the storyteller as well as the listeners. This enabled me to understand more clearly, the research that has been done in the areas of storytelling and the vast variety of ways it has been used to the benefit of storytellers. Each theme was found with the studies I had researched and was directly connected to why people tell stories and how it makes them feel. Discovering these themes gave me insight to the power of storytelling as well

as the articles gave me deep insight to the ways that storytelling is used in different settings and environments for different purposes and outcomes.

Secondly, I used the work of Story Center for further analysis of the effects of storytelling.

I watched forty published and public videos, drawing upon themes within those stories. Each video was chosen from the categories of healing, education, identity, family, relationships, community, place, and work on the Story Center webpage. I focused primarily on adults in various settings and of various ages. Due to the public yet, somewhat anonymous nature of the posted videos I was able to listen and view digital stories without the danger of contributing to any further emotional trauma for participants. Each video is about 2-5 minutes long and is a fully developed digital story as told by its author. While I viewed each story I kept a data chart, included in appendix II, where I recorded themes that were present. In order to confirm the themes, I recorded quotes, ideas, and images in the videos. I then grouped them according to patterns and repetitive subject matter. I originally recorded ten themes that all of which we closely related to those found in the literature review and were later condensed into five themes as they were similar in nature. As I watched the videos I recorded the theme I saw and heard. As they reoccurred in other videos I recorded the quotes or events that reiterated the themes. After I watched 40 videos I was left with ten recorded themes, to which I found five were the same themes as those found in the literature review. I then looked at the remaining five and found ways to connect them to the literature review themes. I did this by reviewing the quotes and findings that I recorded in the chart while watching the videos. I then found relationships between the remaining five themes and the themes that matched the literature review themes. It was relatively easy to connect the five. For example one of the remaining themes was “helping

others, which after reviewing many of the stories I found that it could easily be merged with the theme of “support and belonging.” The based on my findings while reviewing stories, the remaining theme of “pride” was easily condensed to join “identity” as well as “survival” and “overcoming fear” merging with “change.” It was not entirely surprising that the themes I found were the same ones found in the literature review: identity, belonging/support, understanding, appreciation, and change. It was also not difficult to align the themes and see how the similarities between the literature review and the videos made connections in storytelling.

I also understand that using the research and literature conducted in AA and gambling settings is limiting because the participants have more serious addictions whereas traveler’s are do not, however I also see a connection between people making transitions in life. I believe that although transition and recovery are different phases involving different circumstances and personalities the emotions can still be related and I will do my best research to do just that. While I will be using an unobtrusive method with a population that has made their stories public online, I believe the theme of storytelling and transition is prevalent and is being told through many public digital stories that I can relate to the literature on the effects of the stories being told.

As a participant observer, I explored the process of digital storytelling myself. As outlined in the Digital Storytelling Cookbook, I myself partook in a small digital storytelling workshop. I participated with two other people to develop my own script, participate in a story circle, receive and give feedback, and create my own digital story, as well as share the finished product. Through this process I was urged to reflect upon an important time in my life and share a meaningful story. I found the entire process to be very impactful. I have also included a link to my final digital story in Appendix I.



After analyzing the themes of both, the literature and the digital stories, as well as my own personal experience, I began to apply them to the existing literature and the questions at hand. I was able to explore how these themes apply to the healing nature of stories. I felt by this point I could understand the themes on a deeper level, especially in relation to theory. Then in looking at these themes I was able to reflect on how they could relate to a traveler's healing experience after returning from being abroad. I was able to connect each theme to a deeper understanding of the healing process and using storytelling as a tool for travelers.

I understand that my limitations for this research remain mostly in the population. As I did not conduct personal interviews for the sake of time and personal sensitivity of participants, I know that this research is based on a strong interpretivist approach. I have reviewed what has already been made public and used it to produce new information. In using people's public stories without access to the storyteller's thoughts I have analyzed to the best of my own ability. Although I used an unobtrusive method in order to avoid further trauma for storytellers, using public stories online has also limited the access I have to storyteller's feelings. However, in reviewing further literature on the topic I have gained insight to the data not made available in videos. This has also made my research more subjective than I had intended as I have also included my own personal experience and reflection as part of the data. My intention was to gain insight to the knowledge surrounding storytelling and healing and apply my findings to the modern day traveler as well as explore the process for myself.

Also in relation to limitations in my population, the stories used from Story Center maintain a certain level of anonymity in that I had little or no way of knowing the storytellers age, sex, race, occupation, origin, location, etc. In many ways this made the data collection limiting but it also made it less biased. While I could not use the background and personal information of the

storytellers I was still able to deeply listen to their stories without the distraction of bias and knowing. However, this did limit the research in such ways that I cannot compare the feelings or effects of storytelling between genders or based on location or background.

Finally, the nature of my population is also limiting in the fact that I was unable to determine if any of the storytellers were travelers, let alone travelers healing from their experience. In this limitation, I had to only interpret data and analyze information based on the stories told and the words presented to me through the published videos. I was unable to ask further questioning or clarify thoughts. My knowledge and data collection was based only on the public information and my interpretation of themes. I have been limited to only the views of the people who have shared their story and my own interpretation of the themes explored throughout these stories.

Once I had reviewed the literature and carefully recorded quotes, ideas, and sights from the videos on [www.storycenter.org](http://www.storycenter.org) I was able to organize the data into themes. During this process, I was able to identify five themes based on the reoccurring nature through resources. The themes relate to the nature of storytelling and why people tell their stories. Below are the five themes with an analysis of how they pertain to the healing process of storytelling as well as how they may impact returning travelers.

## PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

### **1. Identity**

A key theme in why people tell their stories is identity. A variety of the literature researched suggests that stories are the layers of self and by telling our stories we explore who we are (Rose and Granger 2013, p. 216). In the many videos I watched many stories were stories either confirming who someone was/how they identified themselves and also to share with others

who they were. They told stories of a defining moment that made them the person they were now. In a story titled “Lucinda” a woman speaks of owning a car that took her to so many places that she felt like “an old lady at twenty two”

([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B\\_4uugDuCg0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B_4uugDuCg0)). Many times the stories were tales of childhood or a time in the past that strongly impacted their current behaviors or identity. In a story called “My Home, 1980” a woman recalls how growing up in the city made her the strong and independent woman she is today.

In my personal reflection of the digital storytelling process, I spent a long time deciding what story to tell. I ended up choosing one that shared an experience in my life that developed who I am. In telling that story and through the process of digital storytelling, I feel even more in tune with my identity. I feel more aware of myself and was able to process that experience more fully in a way that added to how I identify. Like many people in the digital stories I watched and analyzed I feel like I was able to share a moment in time that “shaped my identity” while finding myself in the process.

The literature also suggests this theme repeatedly. A variety of studies suggested storytelling to develop a “conceptualized identity” (Rose and Granger, 2013, p. 221). Narrative therapy also confirms that re-authoring allows storytellers to recreate their perception of self while telling stories about their identity and providing new insight for themselves at later stages in recovery. Identity becomes a defining point of telling stories in that it is in fact what people almost always choose to discuss in their stories, themselves, whether in involvement with others or their journey of finding self through experience. Whether it is the story itself that reflects on the storyteller’s identity or the process of telling the story that helps the teller define their identity, identity becomes a large overlying theme of storytelling.

## **2. Belonging/Support**

In a digital story called “Sycamore” a woman recalls feeling right where she belongs in her grandparent’s home. Now an adult, she is reflecting on their home and her childhood there and how it has made her feel like she has a place in the world. In a more supporting manner the storyteller of “Love Child” discusses how she did not feel like she belonged as a black child growing up and how she is providing support for her now growing children. These stories express both a need more support and belonging as well as a desire to help others in their stories. As confirmed in the studies of Fuertes as well as Hoffman, and Ashbourne and Biobiad, storytelling is a means for connection and community. People feel validated by one another and feel belonging when they feel heard and supported.

In my personal experience, I found that one of the most rewarding aspects of sharing my digital story was the support I felt throughout the process and in conclusion to the process. Sharing my story made me feel comforted and made me want to share it with more people because I felt a sense of belonging. Much like the people in digital stories that I had watched, I felt like my story was a story of where I fit into the culture and space I was in and in sharing that story I felt more capable of adjusting to my current space because of the support I received.

These findings echo those of Lederman and Menegatos and Nuske and Hing. People use storytelling in search of belonging and support. The use of storytelling in both Alcoholics anonymous and recovering gamblers has uncovered the theme of belonging and support. In the research surrounding, storytelling used in such environments is successful because people feel supported and they find belonging. Nuske and Hing centered on the “shared narrative” and giving recovery gamblers an opportunity to talk about their struggle to stop their behavior (2013, p51).

People frequently shared their narrative as help seeking behavior in several studies, including that of recovery gamblers. In sharing their stories they were either seeking support to sharing stories of support in order to support others.

### **3. Appreciation**

Many stories that I watched throughout the course of my research were also stories of appreciation. Whether stories were honoring others or honoring the storyteller themselves the words paid homage to an experience. Like in the use of narrative therapy, the lived experience is honored and appreciated. Many stories told that honored a community or person that contributed to the teller's development or identity, like "Seeing Differently" honors the people and culture of Harlem. The story mentions the beauty of Harlem's families and brings clarity to stereotypes. There was also an abundance of appreciation of self and personal journeys. The story "12 inches" is about a man who loses his ability to walk and honors his own strength and determination. As Hunt et al explore with the use of eulogies, storytelling become as way of honoring pasts and who the teller was at a specific point in his or her life. Much like the use of narrative therapy and storytelling as a tool for healing, people tell stories because they have found an appreciation for a time in their life that they may only now be giving new meaning to. Especially with the use of re-authoring stories for healing, people are able to see themselves in a new way that allows them to appreciate the process and the purpose behind their story.

As I told my digital story, I too, was reflective on a time that now held new meaning. I felt more able to appreciate myself and express pride in my journey. I also told a story that honored an experience that impacted my feelings about so many things in my current life. I truly felt as though

I was honoring my lived experience and giving it a voice for others to hear, giving it what it deserved.

#### **4. Understanding**

Connected to most of the themes mentioned, is the theme of understanding. A large portion of the digital stories I watched brought up this theme, exemplifying how people want to understand their own stories but also want to be understood by their stories. This exploration is an understanding of self, culture, and belonging. It is also an understanding of their experiences both for the storyteller themselves as well as the listener. In a digital story called “Sankofa” a woman recalls her education as a black woman. She is now telling her story to educate others and bring understanding to other people and to be an advocate but she is also telling her story to help herself understand her journey toward becoming a social worker. Her story is also her processing her experience. Just as Rose and Granger discussed in their study, storytelling is both necessary and therapeutic in understanding one’s history.

When I returned home from my travels, understanding was my biggest concern. I could not understand many of the things that I had been through in my travels nor could I explain them well enough to help others understand my journey. I was also struggling to understand the life I was coming back to as a result of my lack of processing of events. In telling my story through this digital storytelling workshop I was able to process my story in a way I had not been exposed to previously. I was able to reflect upon my journey and being to understand why I felt the way I did and what I had actually experienced. I was also able to display my story in a way that helped those I shared with to understand where I was coming from and what my experience was like. The process of thinking about my script and how I wanted to share my story was something that called

on me to understand what I was telling first. It was humbling and informative as well as transformative.

Throughout the process of research this idea of understand reoccurred in so many ways. Traditionally stories have been told throughout history for understanding. Stories have been told to pass down understanding of past events. Storytelling is feeling heard, validated, and understood. This understanding gives so much meaning to the storyteller as understanding the processing of the events and the change that has occurred in the story and in the telling of the story.

## **5. Change**

Finally, the theme of change is one that reoccurred throughout nearly all of my research. People told stories of change and they change from telling their stories. The digital stories shared so many lessons of growth, becoming, and learning, all expressing moments of change or development. The digital stories shared so many lessons of growth, becoming, and learning, all expressing moments of change or development. As explained in the stories of addiction recovery as well as the digital storytelling process, people have a very transformative relationship with stories. The studies, such as those of Nuske and Hing and Nelson et al, expressed identity development and recovery, as well as a change in relationships and community. Storytellers address change because it is a part of their development and their journey. Their stories also reflect the influence of change or the outcome of change giving power to that time of their lives and giving their words transformative power by sharing this experience.

In a story called “Faces” a woman recalls being a child and wanting a “white face” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=El9b4SUsQNw>). Now, as an adult, she remembers wanting

to change, but also all of the moments in her life that changed the way she felt about herself and helped her to appreciate how own face. Another woman in “Distance” remembers feeling her shame change to pride after growing up in a mobile home and succeeding in college and her career.

My digital story reflected on a time of change as well as the process. I spoke of a time where I was going through many changes and how that change impacted who and where I am today. This story was important to me because of its current impact, however the change that also occurred in me through to process of telling the story was also very important to my research. I experienced a change in how I looked at my story and myself in that story. I saw my story differently that I had before telling it in the workshop. I also felt a change after sharing it. I had been very hesitant to share my story even with the two people in the workshop, but after sharing it and receiving feedback and support I felt differently. I was more confident with the way I presented myself. I had reauthored the story that existed in my head and while my story was still true I had a different perception of who I was in the story, making it a story I was more proud to share. The whole storytelling process was a process of change and a development of comfort and healing.

## DISCUSSION

This study, regarding storytelling and healing, sought to understand the effects of storytelling on the storyteller. The questions asked were: what role does storytelling play in the healing of the storyteller, and what role does storytelling play in the healing of returning travelers? The data collected from an in-depth literature review show that storytelling is an effective tool in aiding healing as well as the development of identity, belonging/support, appreciation, understanding and change. Storytellers often choose stories centered on these



themes while also learning lesson from them throughout the process of storytelling. Data also showed that storytelling can be effective in building relationships with self and others providing comfort to the storyteller and listener in some cases. The literature also supports the idea that change comes from the process of storytelling and most if not all of the researched case the change was positive. The therapeutic process of storytelling becomes very meaningful experience of healing for participants.

By looking at this research through a narrative therapy lens I was able to see how storytelling connects to healing. I feel that travelers may benefit from an approach much like that take in narrative therapy. If looked at through less of a medical approach and amore theory based and knowledgeable way, narrative therapy can be put to use in a communal and public space for storytellers to heal. If given the opportunity to reauthor their stories and a space to share them in, travelers have the potential to share their new identities and stories in an appreciative community where they feel like they belong as a means of processing and understanding their journey.

This study supports the need for storytelling in a variety of populations and environments. If used in a population of returning travelers it could provide the population with understanding and reintegration techniques as well as a community of understanding and support. This research could be used in further research to develop program for storytelling workshops in a reintegration settings were story circles are provided for returning travelers to share their experience. It could also be interesting research to see how those travelers' stories compare to the stories of non travelers and the rate of change or healing. This researches information could be useful to a variety of populations. It would be very interesting to see this study carried out by conducting further research that produced the results of the workshops with

travelers and developed conclusive data on the effectiveness of storytelling when used in regards to understand and coping with travel adventures.

Topics that emerged from this study may also have potential in other studies not so directly related. It would be interesting to see a study done in relation to immigration stories and storytelling in regardless to cultural appropriation and change in environment. Storytelling's relationship with change could be powerful in looking at workshops with a variety of different cultures and displacement circumstances as well. Storytelling has the power to reach so many populations and its potential for change could be beneficial in countless regions and areas of subject.

In an open ended conclusion I suggest that more care programs are in place for returning travelers and development of support is generated through a needs assessment of the specific population. Culture shock can be severe and often undetected by travelers and the people around them. By providing returning travelers with means by which to reintegrate they may be more likely to share their stories and their wanderlust, thus inspire more travel and insightful learning in the individuals who set out to explore themselves and the world.

APPENDIX I. Colleen McMurray's Digital Story

Link to my digital story:

<https://www.wevideo.com/hub/#media/ci/525402214>

## APPENDIX II : Digital Story Themes

	Story Title	Identity	Support/Belonging	Understanding	Finding the right path	Helping others	Honoring/Appreciation	Survival	Pride	Overcoming Fear	Change
1	"A step Forward	X Involved in illegal acts	X Finds mentor	X	X Goes to college	Tells other girls her story					
2	"see That Woman Over There"	Rape Victim				No woman should have to suffer from rape and abuse	Honors a deceased friend	X Lived to tell her story when others did not			
	"Storm Before the Calm" (Rape victim who gets pregnant)				X				X She stands up for herself		
4	"12 Inches" Man loses ability to walk	He is became after his accident	Finds people who care for him				Shares how he was appreciated and pays it forward			Pushes self to walk again	
5	"Footprints" Rape victim		Leadership team hugs her				Her footprints			Tells people	Becomes stronger

	Story Title	Identity	Support/Belonging	Understanding	Finding the right path	Helping others	Honoring/Appreciation	Survival	Pride	Overcoming Fear	Change
	gets pregnant”		and prays for her				help others			regardless of fear	
6	“January 1979” Pilot nearly kills people			Recalls what he did wrong		“Voice for the voiceless”			Lets go of pride		
7	“This is My Home” Building of Denver airport over reservation	Identifies as Native American. Does this for himself.	X This is his home	Wants people to understand history			Honors his heritage		Proud of who he is		
8	“Snapshots” woman paralyzed in ski accident	“where she came from”	She documents where she came from				Thank you mom				
9	“Lenka RIP” Spider in Czech	Recounts who she was abroad					Honors the spider and people who kept her company				

	Story Title	Identity	Support/Belonging	Understanding	Finding the right path	Helping others	Honoring/Appreciation	Survival	Pride	Overcoming Fear	Change
10	"Lucinda"	Feels like an old lady at 22. Her car gives her experiences.	Car gives her purpose				Honors her first car who took her places				She became someone else along the journey
11	"What are They Looking For" Man watches Wimbleton at Television shop		Enjoys people gathering together for the same reason				Appreciation for the unity				
12	"Pete's Grill" Man recalls a grill from childhood	Contributes to who he was in 6 <sup>th</sup> grade	Gives him a safe place for memories				Appreciates Pete's grill where he became who he is				Change over time from childhood and older
13	"Second Chance" Homeless Teenager searching for home	Looking for independence	Looking for belonging		Searching for something better		Learns to appreciate home and finds stories interesting		x		Grows up and learns from experience

	Story Title	Identity	Support/Belonging	Understanding	Finding the right path	Helping others	Honoring/Appreciation	Survival	Pride	Overcoming Fear	Change
14	"Sycamore"		Her roots at her grandparents' house				Honoring her childhood and grandparents				Growth
15	"My Home, 1980"	She is who she is because of where she grew up	Feels belonging here	Clarifying stereotypes			Honors where she grew up and the people in her life				
16	"Seeing Differently" Connecticut Girl Defends Harlem	Keep being someone who sees things differently		Bringing clarity to a stereotype			Honoring Harlem and its people	"That's survival" showing community making the most	Proud of how she sees things		Wants to change minds to see the good
17	"Resaved" Girl leaves home and learns to honor father	"Independent Arsty liberal daughter"	Parents suppose her even when she tries to be independent				Appreciation of her father's support and honoring his character				Learns about her independence
18	"Shift" Art school student	Despite disability she	She struggles to ask for				Honors her disability		Becomes proud of		Learns to appreciate self

	Story Title	Identity	Support/Belonging	Understanding	Finding the right path	Helping others	Honoring/Appreciation	Survival	Pride	Overcoming Fear	Change
		creates art	help but does/wants to be "normal"						her disability		
19	"Running to Ozone" Women talks about growing up near the mob	Justice for Italians		Not every Italian is in the mob "story in the fortunate pilgrim"			Honoring Ozone Park and Italians		Proud of Heritage		
20	"Do You Understand" Young man involved in a shooting	Defining and redefining self		Awareness that life is fleeting "every moment counts"							Learning a lesson
21	"Love Child" Mother recalls her black childhood	Racial identity/proving herself	Making her kids feel belonging			Give her children answers	Honoring her childhood		Racial pride		Wanting to be someone else
22	"Faces" A woman recalls wanting a	Racial identity	Where do I belong				Appreciating self/race				Wanting to be someone else



	Story Title	Identity	Support/Belonging	Understanding	Finding the right path	Helping others	Honoring/Appreciation	Survival	Pride	Overcoming Fear	Change
	white face										
23	"Distance" Woman recalls growing up in a mobile home	Kids with possibility					Appreciates the hard work of her parents		Shame changes to pride		Follows dreams to own a home
24	"Graphology" A woman discusses her name	Discovering herself through her name/signature		Researching her own history		Gives voices to the deceased	Honors people with "just one name"				
25	"The Lunger" A man remembers his grandfather catching a fish	"Will I inherit this/ What will I pass on to my children?"		Family history			Honors family				
26	"Alley Cat" Grandmother has Alzheimer's	Finding herself while her grandmother loses herself		Learning about her grandmother							People change/ her and her grandmother

	Story Title	Identity	Support/Belonging	Understanding	Finding the right path	Helping others	Honoring/Appreciation	Survival	Pride	Overcoming Fear	Change
27	"Prevail" Father of a suicidal son	"I am your father"		"You gotta do what you gotta do"		How to be there for those in need	Appreciation for parents	Surviving suicide with help from family			People learn from experiences
28	"The Ballad of Joe and Nina" Father recalls sons first love		The kids feel they need either	Trying to understand soul mates			Appreciation of friendship and dedication				Remembering what once was
29	"My Champion" Man recalls learning from grandfather	Who is became as a result of his grandfather					Honoring grandfather	Overcoming poor choices			Change in identity after death
30	"Finding" Drug addict become activist	Became who he longed to be	Found the sense of community he needed			Women who believe in him/helps people be heard		Drug overdose /recovery			From life not mattering to college
31	"Untitled" young girl dreams of		Supports her friends	Understanding women's roles in		Honoring women in her life					

	Story Title	Identity	Support/Belonging	Understanding	Finding the right path	Helping others	Honoring/Appreciation	Survival	Pride	Overcoming Fear	Change
	a community where women are safe			her society							
32	"Sankofa" Women discusses racial issues in education	People confused by her racial identity	Becomes an advocate	Understanding race and issues surrounding		"No one should have to live without dignity"					Influence change by becoming a social worker
33	"Wrecking Renewal" Country ruins homes for a garage	Discusses the people and places that made him who he is	How belonging changed after community changed/loss of community			Honors the community that once was					Change within a community and its people
34	"Cloaks of Protection" woman spreads prayer in travel	She grew into herself through symbolism in fabric	Cloak the earth in prayer shawls of suppose/protection			She connects with people through prayer	Appreciation of uniting different cultures				Bring hope to create change
35	"Becoming what I want to	Journey to become	Seeking people who			Helps community now	Appreciation of education				People transition from

	Story Title	Identity	Support/Belonging	Understanding	Finding the right path	Helping others	Honoring/Appreciation	Survival	Pride	Overcoming Fear	Change
	be” woman recalls religious childhood	who she wanted despite challenges/”religious girl”	inspired her				and religion				religious to not through experience
36	“The Girl Who Dreamed ” A girl is inspired to work for change	Becomes a strongest person	Found her place. dream because of support			Paying it forward	Honors the woman who inspired her				Changes herself to change the world
37	“Just Being There” Social worker talks about children	His work shaped who he is	“Sit and listen”			Works to help others	Honors the strength of children				Create positive change for children
38	“Angels of Anbar”	Who he is because of his time in the army	Working as a team through struggle			Helping each other despite belief in God	Honors the men lost in the army				How experienced changed him

	Story Title	Identity	Support/Belonging	Understanding	Finding the right path	Helping others	Honoring/Appreciation	Survival	Pride	Overcoming Fear	Change
39	"Knowing" Girl inspired by education seeks to help others	Became who she wanted from her experiences	Finding similar people inspired her			Helps the homeless as an activist	Honors the homeless				Change for the future
40	"My Right to Draw" Boy recalls his relationship with drawing	"Billy has become my identity" his drawing define him	He found belonging from making friend through his art			His art helps him connect to others					His skills help him grow

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