

STORY IS POWER



CENTER FOR
NARRATIVE
STUDIES

Written by: Evan Burton and Alli Cravener

“The stories are always bringing us together, keeping this whole together, keeping this family together, keeping this clan together. ‘Don’t go away don’t isolate yourself because we’ve all had these kinds of experiences.’ And so there is this constant pulling together to resist the tendency to run or hide or separate oneself during a traumatic emotional experience. This separation not only endangers the group but the individual as well-one does not recover by oneself.”

*Leslie Marmon Silko, Language and Literature from
a Pueblo Indian Perspective*



WHAT IS STORY IS POWER?

Stories are powerful acts that shape our lives. The past year has made clear to us just how important stories and the connections they forge really are. Story is Power is a collaborative experiment in sharing and receiving our collective stories. We'll keep a library of all the stories here, so you can take in a story as you leave your own. The goal is to inspire, and to help each of us feel re-connected.

There is power in the personal. We're looking forward to hearing your story. Please pick one question and share it with us.

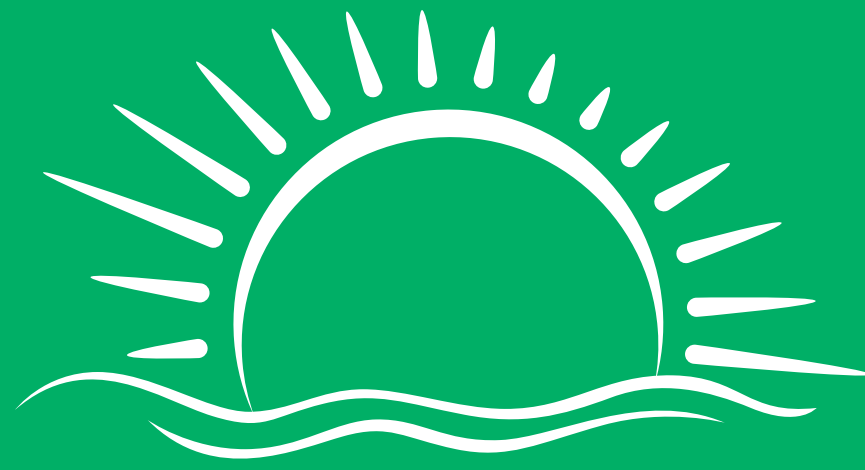
QUESTIONS

1. Tell us about something you're looking forward to.
2. Tell us about a time when you felt most alive.
3. When was the last time you forgave someone?
4. When was the last time you were forgiven?
5. How many different kinds of love have you known? Share a few examples.
6. What's the greatest gift you've been given in the past year?
7. What do you believe is the greatest gift you have to give?
8. What's something you let go of this past year?
9. Take this opportunity to tell someone you care about how much you love them and why.
10. If you could teach a younger version of yourself one lesson, what would it be?
11. Describe what it feels like to be indescribably happy.
12. What have you learned about love in the past year?
13. Who was your greatest teacher?
14. Thinking about this past year, what are two things you're most thankful for?
15. What is your greatest adventure?
16. Take this opportunity to leave your past-self a thank you note for a good decision you've made.
17. Take this opportunity to leave a thank you note for someone else.
18. What's your dream?
19. Who are you when you're at your best?
20. If you could give the same thing away every day, what would it be?

HOW IT WORKS

- 1. Identify a location to do your project: Where would you like to collect stories in your community, at a school, in a local park or library, at a senior center or in your own neighborhood.**
- 2. Print the poster and list of questions for participants to have time to ponder the questions**
- 3. Take your poster, list of questions, and index cards (5x8), some pens and coloring materials to the neighborhood you want to collect stories. Identify a popular public place, event, or organization where you can set up a station or table. Put up a sign to get people curious. Let people approach you as much as possible, but also feel free to ask passersby if they want to share a story. Don't be discouraged if people don't want to participate.**
- 4. Document and Share: Once you have index cards that have been filled out with stories, take a picture of them or scan them. Post them on Instagram with #storyispower and #centerfornarrativestudies. !**

OUR STORY



What happens when a psychotherapist and a writer meet by chance and strike up a conversation about Pablo Neruda's 'Book of Questions'? They discover a shared belief in the power the stories we tell ourselves and others have to change our lives. And what happens when they decide it isn't enough to just keep having a conversation about the power of story, but that they need to create one?

This project is all about finding out the answer to that question; we welcome you on the journey, and we hope you're in for a fun ride.

**Sincerely,
Evan & Mary**

ABOUT EVAN AND MARY

A poet and copywriter, Evan Burton believes that with the right motivation we can achieve anything. And he's amazed by the way stories can serve multiple functions at the same time: roadmap, solace, entertainment, inspiration and more. He hopes to help people use stories as a lens to discover inspiration and authentic power in themselves.

A licensed therapist, Mary Dove helps people address their feelings and thought patterns in a way that generates positive change. She feels the creativity that each person holds is one of their greatest treasures, and cultivating it is one of their greatest adventures.



*Photo credit: Galo
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