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Explore More

Take Control of Your Own Story

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Summary

Take Control of Your Own Story

Transcript:

Stories are amazing and absolutely fantastic. We just can't get enough of them. We love them so much.

We've been telling stories since the dawn of language. In fact, even older than that. Some of the earliest cave paintings are 40,000 years old, if not older. We've been telling stories since the dawn of man, but here's a really interesting thing. It's not like it's an old thing that we are, are, are enamored with stories. We love them today.

Stories at the box office, some of them gross \$1 billion in a given month. That is amazing. If you don't think that's amazing, frankly, I think it's fantastic how much we are so enamored with stories. You see there is a certain part of our brain called the Broca region. Broca. Did I say it right? Brooooccccaaaa. The broca region of our brain [is responsible for language processing]. See when we say very factual statements such as, "the lady sang a beautiful song" that's the region of the brain that lights up.

It's okay. It's a beautiful song. But it doesn't give us any intrigue. But if we were to say that same statement or the intention behind that statement in all of the benefits that a story gives us, our entire brain lights up.

So for instance, if we were to say, "The lady who sang in a velvety voice, sang like she had a choir of angels behind her." You see, that type of language as we depict it in a story lights up our entire brain and causes our visualization functions to kick in. It causes our imagination to functions, to kick in. Frankly, it

causes are sensory elements within our brains to kick in and we can literally see ourselves on a theater of our minds within that story. We can hear the lady, we can smell what's in the air, we can taste the meal that we just had before she began singing.

We can involve ourselves in the story and that is exactly why stories are so powerful. They move us. You see, stories give us the ability to really deliver emotion. Stories give us the ability to pass on ideas and connect with people far greater than factual statements. Stories allow for cultural identity and traditions to be passed on well beyond the persons who've created them.

The question is, "what stories are you telling yourself?"

We all walk around with a narrative. In fact, we walk with two narratives. We walk around with a major narrative and a minor narrative. See our major narrative - this is the one I like - the major narrative is the story that we tell about ourselves. It's who we are. It's the identity that we hold. It is a value system that we believe in. It is all of the hope and dreams that we have of our lives, our career, our family. This is our major narrative.

The minor narrative, on the other hand, it's a little bit more defeating. It's the one that speaks to the demoralizing statements that you had as a child. It's the one that says, "you will never become anything." It is the one that speaks to your fears and your doubts. This is the minor narrative, but the minor doesn't always stay the minor and the major doesn't always stay the major. They interchange. And when the minor narrative, the one that is demoralizing and defeating becomes a major, we have a serious problem.

Let's take this as an example. We have two people. They are presenting at a major conference. Let's say there are 500 people at this conference. The morning of this conference, they both wake up and their palms are sweaty, their heart is racing, they feel a little light-headed even. These are all signs of fear and anxiety. These are the physiological effects of fear and anxiety for so many people.

Jane is the first person that we're going to have in this conversation. And Jane, you see, she feels this and she wonders: "Am I ready for this presentation? Did I prepare enough? Oh, I should have prepared some more. What if I get up there and I forget everything that I was intended to say? What if they don't think that I know what I'm talking about? Maybe I should not go for this presentation? I should just call it quits." See Jane has allowed her minor narrative to overtake her major narrative.

Now Susan, on the other hand, has a different response. Susan's palms are sweaty, her heart is racing. She has a little bit of shortness of breath and she reminds herself that she's prepared for this. She understands that this physiological response is a response to fear and anxiety, so she reminds herself that she has prepared for this presentation. She reminds herself that she's the only one who can deliver this presentation and if she doesn't, there is no one else who can and these 500 people will be without the message that she has come to bring.

She slows her breaths. She focuses on her exhale. She uses a meditative technique like this to gain composure of herself and her mind. She recenters and realizes that what she was going through with simply the anxiety and the excitement of the presentation.

Who do you believe had a better presentation?

You see, we all have major and minor narratives and the way that we are able to put them in check is:

#1: Aligning Narrative:

We need to all have an aligning narrative that we can author. We are the author of our destiny and we need to get into the driver's seat and author our narrative. It doesn't have to be a bestseller at first, but we should have an understanding of what that narrative speaks to.

One of the best exercises I've seen in this case is to come from the standpoint of your obituary. What would it read like? I know this can be rather morbid...if you allow it to go there. What would your obituary read? How would the people in the room at your funeral respond? Will you have left a void? You see, from this standpoint, we can author the type of life that we would want to lead so that we knew exactly how it would be at the position of our death. We won't be there, but we could know exactly how that's gonna play out by leading a life aligned to our narrative.

#2 Recognizing The Opposition's Story:

Like I said in the beginning, stories are amazing and they will weave their way into our minds and into our hearts without us even realizing it. So the opposition narrative can easily come in as a major narrative without us recognizing it. We need to be able to have our aligning narrative as our anchor. We anchor down and we say, "This is the position that I am taking. This is the narrative for my life. This is the narrative that I have authored."

We have to be able to ask ourselves, whose story am I hearing or am I telling? Does it align with my narrative? Is this story defeating or is it purposeful?

When we're able to ask ourselves these questions, we can realign to our aligning narrative. But first, we have to have one in the first place. So number one, have an aligning narrative. Number two, understand oppositions a story so that we can align back to our narrative and stay grounded.

#3 Establish a Support System:

And number three, we must have a support system. We can't do this alone.

No matter how you construct your support system, if its friends and family, coaches and mentors; if it's youtube channels and magazines that empower you and make you feel good and grounded in your position. No matter how you construct your support system, it must do three things.

1. Obviously, it must be supportive.
2. it must be accountable.
3. it must be challenging. It must move you and challenge you forward.

You see, stories are amazing and we have the ability to write our own story. We have the ability to get into the driver's seat and drive and author a story that we can be proud of, author, a story that moves us and other people forward. So then we can accomplish the very goals that we have set out to be.

What's Next

Complete the section below. As you consider your response to the prompts below, there is no right or wrong answers. Responding honestly and expressively is essential to simulating more clarity and increasing your awareness to live a more authentic life.

- If someone was reading my life's story, I would want it to say:

- I will recognize the opposition's story by...

- My support system is made up of:
