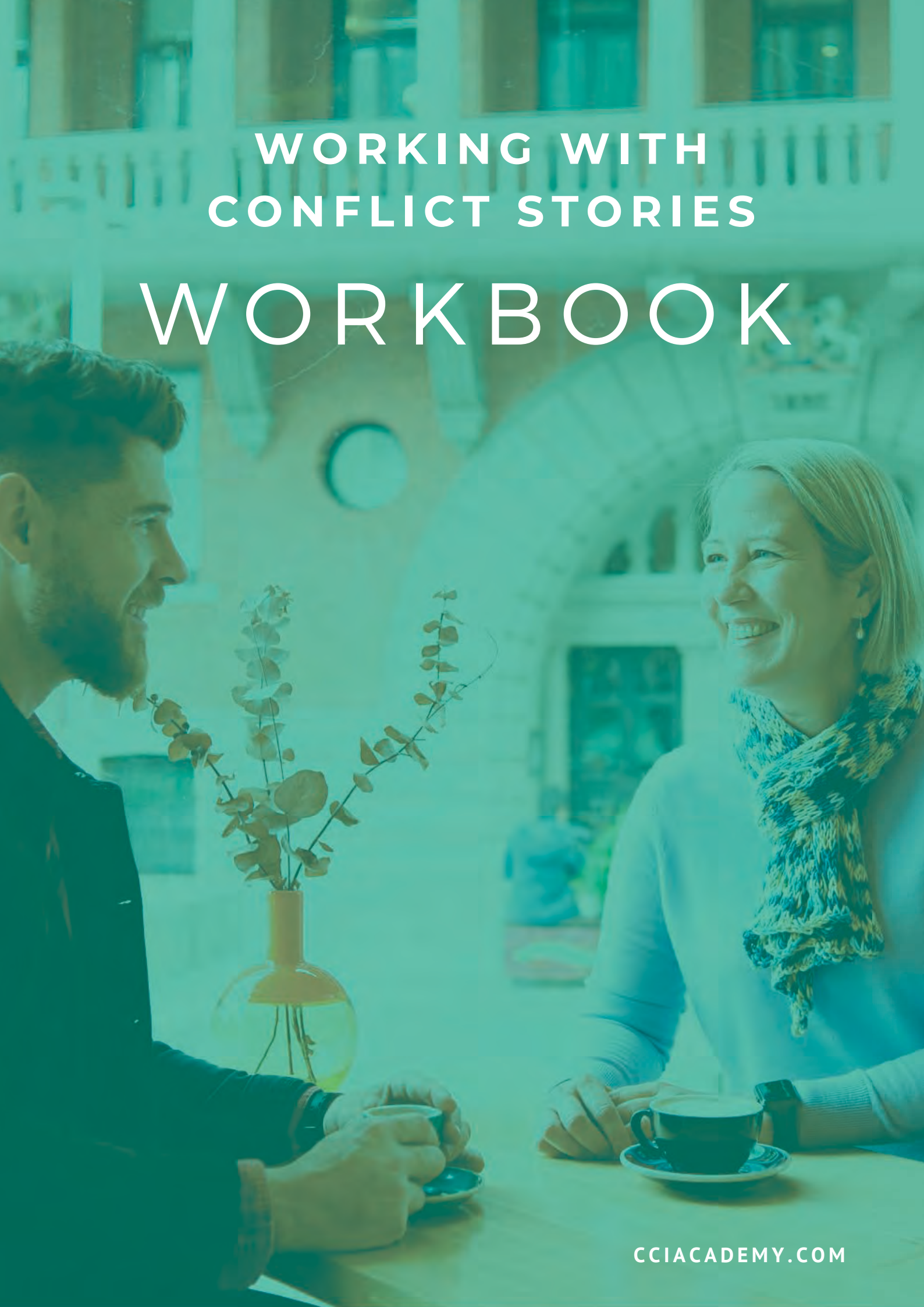
WORKING WITH CONFLICT STORIES

WORKBOOK



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A NOTE FROM YOUR TRAINER

WELCOME!

Conflict stories are my passion!

I have always been obsessed with stories, and am an avid reader of pretty much everything. I also come from a long family history of storytellers!

It wasn't until I started my PhD that I realised the strong connection between conflict and the stories we tell ourselves, and others, about it. Since then, I have listened to, recorded and collected hundreds of conflict stories. These stories are all different, but in some ways they are all the same.

There are two typical "types" or "genres" of conflict stories - one that is told by people who are not managing their conflict well; and another that is told by people who have learnt and grown through their conflict experiences.

In this course, you will discover the power of story in conflict. You will start to recognise patterns in the conflict stories of those around you, and you will probably even notice some in your own conflict stories!

The best thing about stories, is that we can edit them. We can turn those dysfunctional stories into constructive ones - and changing your story can change your life!

Let's get started and write some exciting new chapters together!

Sam

Dr Samantha Hardy
Lead Trainer, CCI Academy

COURSE OVERVIEW

- [ ] PROLOGUE
- [ ] MODULE 1 - HUMANS AND STORIES
- [ ] MODULE 2 - ANGELA'S CONFLICT STORY
- [ ] MODULE 3 - CONFLICT STORIES AND GENRE
- [ ] MODULE 4 - MELODRAMA
- [ ] MODULE 5 - MELODRAMATIC CONFLICT NARRATIVE
- [ ] MODULE 6 - TRAGEDY (WITH A TWIST!)
- [ ] MODULE 7 - RE-WRITING THE STORY
- [ ] MODULE 8 - REAL CONFLICT COACHING
- [ ] EPILOGUE

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YOUR CONFLICT STORY

Before we start the course, take some time to think about a conflict in your life - one that didn't get resolved satisfactorily. If you can't think of one of your own, think about a conflict story that someone has told you lately. Write down a summary of the conflict story below.

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MODULE 1

HUMANS AND STORIES

INTRODUCTION

Creating and telling stories is a natural part of being human.

Jonathan Gottshall, author of The Storytelling Animal: How stories make us human, suggests that our addiction to stories is the defining attribute that makes us successful as a species.

Sharing stories is a way for people to form community and cultural bonds.

Stories also provide a way for us to practice social skills and rehearse our responses to real life challenges.

However, our tendency to default to certain kinds of stories can also create problems, particularly in situations of conflict, as we will soon discover.

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WORKSHEET 1

YOUR STORIES

Question 1: What are some communities in your life in which you typical share stories?

Question 2: What are some of your well-told stories? (e.g. the time I got lost)

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WORKSHEET 1

YOUR STORIES

Question 3: What did you see when you watched the Heider Simmel clip?

Question 4: Can you think of an example of a personal 'conspiracy theory' story that you have told yourself in the past?

NOTES

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Extra Resources



THE STORYTELLING ANIMAL: HOW STORIES MAKE US HUMAN

By Jonathon Gottshall

http://jonathangottschall.com



THE STORYTELLING ANIMAL - TED TALK

By Jonathon Gottshall

https://youtu.be/Vhd0XdedLpY



LETTING STORIES BREATHE

By Arthur Frank

https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/L/bo9471242.html



MAKING STORIES: LAW, LITERATURE, LIFE

By Jerome Bruner

https://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=9780674010994



HOW CHANGING YOUR STORY CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE - TED TALK

By Lori Gottlieb

https://www.ted.com/talks/lori_gottlieb_how_changing_your_story_can_change_your_life

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MODULE 2

ANGELA'S CONFLICT STORY

INTRODUCTION

In this module, we will meet Angela.

Angela is a recent university graduate who ends up in conflict with a woman she works with.

We will hear Angela's story (directly from her!) and then we will examine it to see how the structure of her story may limit her understanding and choices in the situation.

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ANGELA'S STORY

I have a really bad conflict going on in my life at the moment and I don't know how to deal with it.

It's at my workplace. I have this colleague who has been in this job for twenty-five years, and she knows like in and out of the organization by her finger tips and she's really good at what she does and in other circumstances I would have got along with her perfectly well, but because I'm a newcomer in this role, I just have trouble dealing with her way of thinking.

She sees me as a threat, which is really discomforting because I don't want to be a threat to anyone, but she believes in experience and that's why she's been in this job for 25 years, and I am straight out of university, I've got two degrees in my hand, and she does not respect that at all because she thinks that experience weighs more than education.

And every day is a constant battle, because I have to prove to her that I'm good in what I'm doing and what I'm going to do, but it's never enough for her, and if I go to her for help, especially regarding my work, she just looks at me and she says, 'Don't they teach this at uni?' or, if I do something well, which I think is good, she just says, 'Oh, is this all they taught you at uni?'

And everything has the word "university" in it, or my degrees in it, and it clearly shows that she sees me as a threat and it clearly shows that she's threatened by what I have, but at the same time she's trying to make me feel inferior to her, and I don't know how to deal with it because I'm not here to please everyone, but at the same time I can't…

Waking up in the morning and going to work is a nightmare right now for me because I don't know how to deal with it.

continued…

ANGELA'S STORY (CONT.)

It's not a happy situation for me, and I think she's enjoying it, because every time she says these things to me she says it with a smirk.

She's the one who did my induction process and she had to show me to my desk where I'll be seated for the rest of the time period of my employment, and the first question she asked me was "is this fine for you or do you want my desk and chair instead? Do you want my office instead?"

And I just looked at her and... how do you react to something like that? You think about all these nice smart answers to give back but you don't because at that moment you're in a horrible situation with this person.

And I just stood there looking at her, tongue-tied, didn't know what to say, and I just told her "it's fine thank you". I mean I would have given it back to her but at that moment I was just tongue-tied.

So it's a nightmare, I just don't know what to do. I wish I can get a solution to this, because the only solution I can think of is quit the job, and don't do something which is not making you happy any more, but do I really have to quit this job for someone who is not worth my time?

Or, how do I go ahead with this, because there's absolutely no way I can talk to her about it because she's just going to be like, you know, she's going to ask me "what, didn't they teach you at uni how to deal with all these things?"

I don't know, I'm just helpless here.

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WORKSHEET2

ANGELA'S STORY

Question 1: Who are the characters in Angela's story and what does Angela say or imply about each of them?

Question 2: What are the main events in the story?

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WORKSHEET2

ANGELA'S STORY

Question 3: What does Angela think are the two most likely / possible endings to the story?

Question 4: Ideally, what does Angela most wish could happen to resolve the story?

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WORKSHEET2

ANGELA'S STORY

Question 5: What kinds of language does Angela use when telling the story? Are there certain kinds of words she uses more than once, or seems to emphasize in the telling of the story?

Other reflections on Angela's story...

NOTES

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MODULE 3

CONFLICT STORIES & GENRE

INTRODUCTION

All stories, whether told in person, in a book, on stage or on screen, usually fit a particular genre (or make a deliberate artistic statement by disobeying the rules of genre).

Genre does not just apply to stories told in the arts. Genres can also be found in everyday communications such as conversations, letters and online chats.

Genre is a useful tool to analyse a story - we can see whether a story fits an existing genre, or whether it, in effect, creates its own genre for others to copy in the future.

Once we identify an appropriate genre, we learn information that helps us understand why the story is constructed in this way, who the desired audience is, and why the story is being told.

In this module we will introduce the idea that there are two main genres of conflict stories - one in which the conflict is being managed well, and one in which the person telling the story is stuck and suffering. We will explore why people tend to tell their conflict stories in one of these genres, and the impact that has on their ability to take control of their own future.

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WORKSHEET3

STORY AND GENRE

Question 1: How many kinds of literary genres you can think of? What are their typical attributes?

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WORKSHEET 3

STORY AND GENRE

Question 2: Pick two typical story genres, and for each identify some of their attributes below:

GENRE 1:

CHARACTERS:

PLOT (INCLUDING MAIN EVENTS, TYPICAL ENDING, MORAL OF THE STORY):

TYPICAL AUDIENCE:

GENRE 2:

CHARACTERS:

PLOT (INCLUDING MAIN EVENTS, TYPICAL ENDING, MORAL OF THE STORY):

TYPICAL AUDIENCE:

WORKSHEET3

STORY AND GENRE

Question 3: What are some of the common kind of "everyday" communication genres that you can think of? What are some of the genre rules for each of them?

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EVERYDAY GENRES

John Smith B.Bus(Mkt)

johnsmith@internet.com
7 Holden Ln., Madison, NJ
+0312 0672 9090

February 28, 2019

Jennifer Dickson
Manager, Sales and Marketing
ACME Company

Dear Ms. Dickson,

I would like to apply for the position of senior manager of marketing at your company.

I have been following your company for some time and feel that we have mutually compatible values.

I have many years of experience in marketing and a passion for helping organisations connect with their stakeholders.

I have attached to this letter my curriculum vitae and the details of some referees who are happy to be contacted for further information.

I am available for interview at your convenience.

Yours faithfully,

John Smith
B.Bus (Mkt)



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WORKSHEET 3

STORY AND GENRE

Question 4: Look at the two different letters written by John Smith on the page above. Identify some of the genre rules for the two kinds of letters below:

GENRE 1: JOB APPLICATION

PEOPLE / AUDIENCE / RELATIONSHIP:

IN WHAT KINDS OF SITUATIONS IS THIS GENRE APPROPRIATE?

LANGUAGE / STYLE RULES:

GENRE 2: LOVE LETTER

PEOPLE / AUDIENCE / RELATIONSHIP:

IN WHAT KINDS OF SITUATIONS IS THIS GENRE APPROPRIATE?

LANGUAGE / STYLE RULES:

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NOTES

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Extra Resources



STORY: SUBSTANCE, STRUCTURE, STYLE AND THE PRINCIPLES OF SCREENWRITING

By Robert McKee

Chapter 4 - Structure and Genre

https://mckeestory.com



GENRE

By John Frow

https://www.sydney.edu.au/arts/about/our-people/academic-staff/john-frow.html

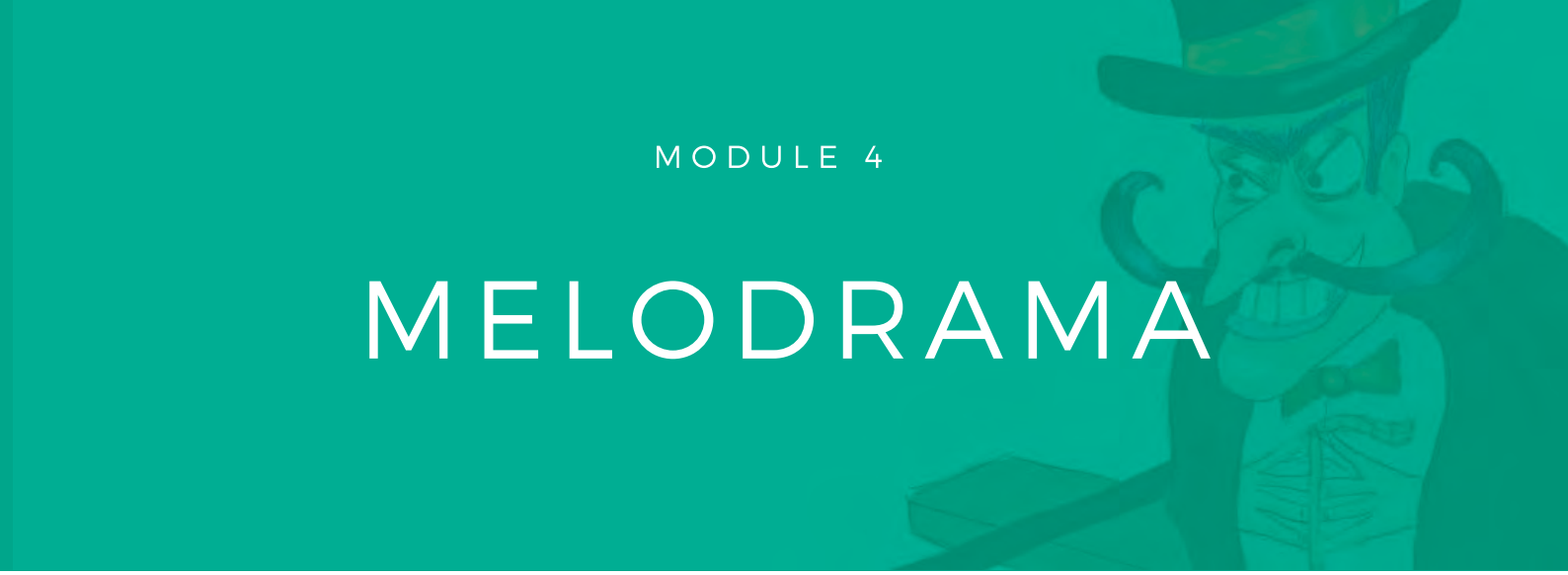


A NARRATIVE PERSPECTIVE ON MEDIATION: TOWARD THE MATERIALIZATION OF THE STORYTELLING METAPHOR

By Professor Sara Cobb

In New Directions in *Mediation: Communication Research and Perspectives*. Edited by Joseph P. Folger and Tricia S. Jones. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

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MODULE 4

MELODRAMA

INTRODUCTION

Definitions of melodrama differ. Some say that it is a theatrical production set to music (although music is not an essential component - the music is generally designed to highlight the emotional aspects of the performance). Others describe it as an overly dramatic story with stereotyped characters.

Like any genre, it has evolved and adapted with changing social conditions and audience tastes. However, most of us recognise melodrama when we see it!

In this module we will consider some of the typical components of a melodrama - the characters, the plot, the effect on the audience, and the purpose of melodramatic stories.

This will provide a foundation for us to map the genre onto conflict stories in the next module.

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COELINA, OR THE CHILD OF MYSTERY

BY RENÉ-CHARLES GUILBERT DE PIXÉRÉCOURT



Coelina, ou l'enfant du mystère
Melodrama, 3 acts.
Published 1803.
Produced Théâtre de l'Ambigu-Comique, Sept. 2, 1800

Coelina is the play most often associated with the birth of French melodrama and the melodramatic genre. Based on a popular novel by Ducray-Duminil, it is a story about an orphaned girl, Coelina, who is in the care of her ward, Dufour, the brother of Coelina's supposed father.

Coelina is in love with Dufour's son Stephany, and he loves her in return. In the opening scene they are planning their wedding.

However, Truguelin, the brother of Coelina's deceased mother, is a wicked man who plots to gain control of Coelina's inheritance by arranging a marriage between her and his son.

When Truguelin's plans are thwarted, he reveals that Dufour's brother was not, in fact, Coelina's father.

As it turns out, her real father is Francisque, an impoverished mute man who has been sheltering at Dufour's house.

At this news, Dufour declares Coelina a "child of adultery" and banishes her and Francisque from his home. The wedding between Coelina and his son is cancelled.

For the remainder of the play, there is an attempt to unravel the confusion about Coelina's parentage. Dufour initially believes Truguelin's story, but eventually investigates further. The only character who has all the necessary information to clear things up is Francisque, but he is mute and also has been banished.

In the end, Dufour finds out the truth, publicly recognises Coelina's virtue (it turns out her mother was in fact married to Francisque at the time she was born) and the marriage goes ahead and Coelina's inheritance is restored.

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WORKSHEET4

MELODRAMA

Question 1: Who are the main characters in melodrama, and what are their main attributes?

Question 2: What is the typical storyline in a melodrama?

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WORKSHEET4

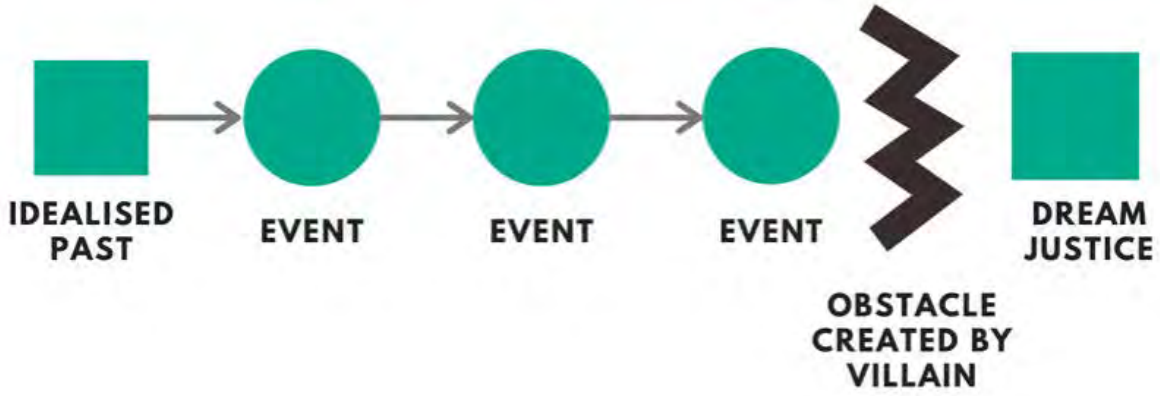
MELODRAMA

Question 3: What are some of the problems with melodramatic stories in real life? What does melodrama distract us from?

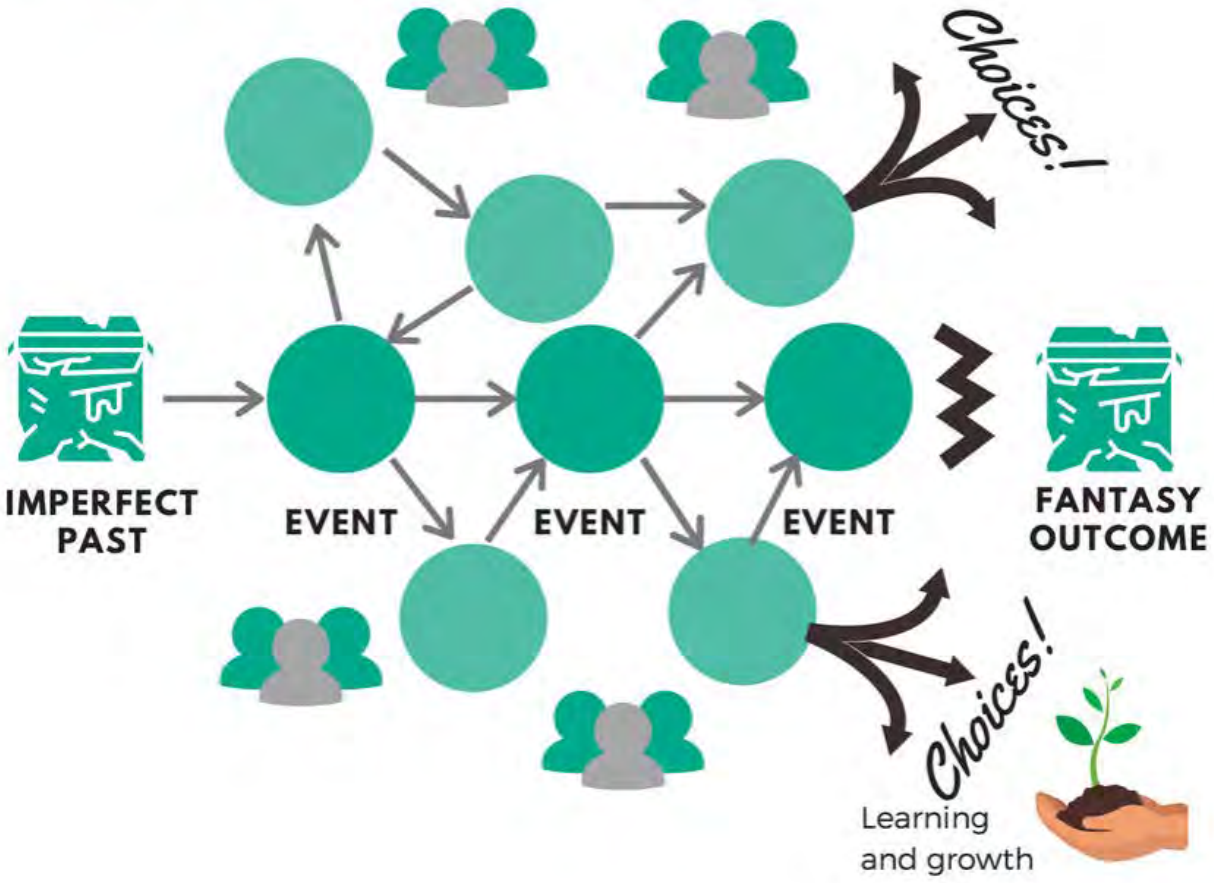
Question 4: Why are melodramatic stories so comforting?

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MELODRAMA



REALITY



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NOTES

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Extra Resources



FOR AN EXAMPLE OF A MODERN MELODRAMA:
SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE

A story about a fight to prove one's innocence.



FOR AN EXAMPLE OF A MELODRAMA THAT TURNS INTO A TRAGEDY:
GAME OF THRONES

A story about a good guys and bad guys and how the distinction can blur.

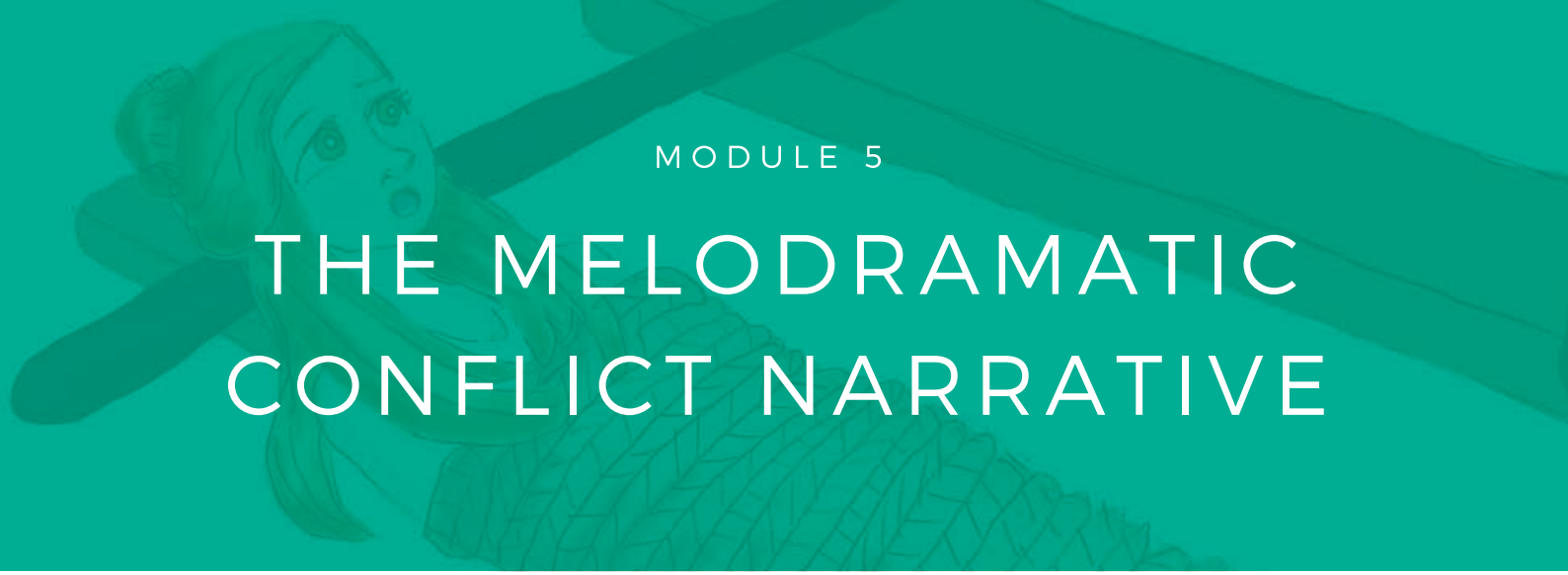


THE HERO WITH A THOUSAND FACES

By Joseph Campbell

https://www.newworldlibrary.com/Books/ProductDetails/tabid/64/SKU/15936/Default.aspx#.Xumtzy2r1UM

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MODULE 5

THE MELODRAMATIC CONFLICT NARRATIVE

INTRODUCTION

In this module we are going to see how conflict stories often fit the genre of melodrama.

We will examine how people typically characterise themselves and others, and how they explain their behaviour based on these characterisations.

We will also see how people tend to tell their conflict story according to a standard melodramatic plot, and consider some of the problems with this framing of the conflict.

This analysis helps us identify areas of the story that could be developed, to support the person to take more constructive steps to manage the situation.

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WORKSHEET 5

MELODRAMATIC CONFLICT NARRATIVE

Question 1: What aspects of Claire's conflict story seem to fit the genre of melodrama?

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WORKSHEET 5

MELODRAMATIC CONFLICT NARRATIVE

Question 2: How might Claire's response to her conflict situation be limited by thinking about it in this type of melodramatic way?

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WORKSHEET 5

MELODRAMATIC CONFLICT NARRATIVE

Question 3: What are the main ways in which a melodramatic conflict narrative can hinder a person from constructively managing their own conflict (now and in the future)?

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WORKSHEET 5

MELODRAMATIC CONFLICT NARRATIVE

Question 4: Think about the conflict stories you have heard recently (perhaps some you have been telling yourself, or those others have told you). Can you identify any of the typical melodrama features in those stories? What impact do you think that has had on how the people involved have reacted to the conflict?

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WORKSHEET 5

MELODRAMATIC CONFLICT NARRATIVE

Question 5: In classical melodrama, the heroine's virtue was based on (1) Legitimacy of birth and (2) Virginity. Obviously, in modern conflict stories, these are not the typical kinds of virtue that the storyteller needs to demonstrate to deserve help. In modern conflict melodramas, virtue is about what the person values in themselves in that context and the things that the villain is challenging about them. See if you can identify some modern kinds of "virtue" that a person may feel are being challenged in conflict.

For example, in a workplace conflict, the storyteller may see their virtue as being a hard worker who gets along with other people in the workplace.

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YOUR CONFLICT STORY

Review your conflict story again. Can you see any of the elements of melodrama in your version of the story? Check the characters, the plot, what choices seem available, etc. and make some notes below.

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NOTES

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Extra Resources



THE MELODRAMA OF CONFLICT

By Samantha Hardy

COMING OUT IN LATE 2020!



WHEN STORIES CLASH: ADDRESSING CONFLICT WITH NARRATIVE MEDIATION

By Gerald Monk and John Winslade

https://



PRACTICING NARRATIVE MEDIATION: LOOSENING THE GRIP OF CONFLICT

By John Winslade and Gerald Monk

https://



RISING STRONG

Especially Chapter 3: Owning our own stories

By Brene Brown



RESOLVIGN PERSONAL AND ORGANISATIONAL CONFLICT: STORIES OF TRANSFORMATION AND FORGIVENESS

By K Cloke and J Goldsmith



MODULE 6

TRAGEDY (WITH A TWIST!)

INTRODUCTION

We typically think of tragedy as a negative kind of story - a kind of "life sucks and then we die" version of events.

But there are some attributes of tragedy that make it a very helpful genre for helping people reflect on the conflict situation more effectively.

In this module we will explore the benefits of reviewing a conflict story through the genre of tragedy.

We will see that, if someone in conflict is supported to do this early enough in the story (ideally before anyone dies!), they may have the opportunity to start making better choices and "twist" the story's ending to a more positive one.

Sometimes, the story has progressed too far, and it is too late to change the trajectory of the story. In this case, we have tragedy without a twist. However, one of the benefits of the tragic genre is that in the face of great suffering, we learn and grow. We may be able to support someone to learn from a tragic experience, and to hopefully avoid similar tragic endings in the future.

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WORKSHEET 6

TRAGEDY

Question 1: What are the main elements of the tragic genre?

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WORKSHEET 6

TRAGEDY

Question 2: What are the benefits of thinking about conflict through the genre of tragedy?

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WORKSHEET 6

TRAGEDY

Question 3: Try re-writing Angela's story as a tragedy. You'll have to make up some content, but see if you can imagine it through that genre! What would be different?

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YOUR CONFLICT STORY

Review your conflict story again. Can you see any of the elements of tragedy in your conflict story? Are there parts of the story that might need to be re-worked to shift into a tragic sensibility? What would change in the characters, the plot, the possible choices, etc.?

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Extra Resources



THE MELODRAMA OF CONFLICT

By Samantha Hardy

COMING OUT IN LATE 2020!



KING LEAR, MACBETH, INDEFINITION, AND TRAGEDY,

By S Booth

1983, New Haven Publishing



PRINCIPLES OF TRAGEDY: A RATIONAL EXAMINATION OF THE TRAGIC CONCEPT IN LIFE AND LITERATURE.

By G Brereton

1968, Routledge



TRAGIC TIME IN DRAMA, FILM AND VIDEOGAMES: THE FUTURE IN THE INSTANT

By Rebecca Bushnell

2016,

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MODULE 7

RE-WRITING THE STORY

INTRODUCTION

One of the most valuable things we can do when supporting someone in conflict is to help them re-write their story, so that they can take control over the next chapter and become the hero of their own future!

As we have already seen, tragedy (counter-intuitively) is a more constructive genre for a conflict story, as it promotes action, learning, growth and resilience. However, you can't just ask someone in conflict to tell their story in a different genre!

In Module 8 (the bonus module on REAL Conflict Coaching) I will introduce an entire coaching system designed to support people to make these shifts. But you don't necessarily need to run an entire conflict coaching session to have a significant impact.

In this module, we will look at some of the main shifts in thinking (and storytelling) that a person needs to make to transition their story from melodrama to tragedy (hopefully early enough to twist the ending into something really positive).

And I'm going to share with you some of the main techniques that we use to support someone to do this.



WORKSHEET 7

RE-WRITING THE STORY

Question 1: What are the main differences between Melodrama and Tragedy?

MELODRAMA	TRAGEDY



WORKSHEET 7

RE-WRITING THE STORY

Question 2: What are some of the outcomes that might be possible when a person re-writes their conflict story from melodrama to tragedy?

WORKSHEET 7

RE-WRITING THE STORY

Question 3: What are the six main shifts we want the client to make, moving from melodrama to tragedy? And what are some of the questions we might ask to support those shifts?



ADRIAN'S CHOICES

Here are the choices Adrian came up with in his coaching session:

Deferring his PhD studies

Quitting his PhD

- Just dropping it altogether
- Trying to exit with a MPhil instead

Continuing with his PhD studies

At this university with this supervisor

- Without doing anything to resolve the problem
- Finding a co-supervisor to support him
- While seeking support from a coach or counselor to better manage the situation without confronting the supervisor
- Confronting his current supervisor with his concerns
- Making a formal complaint about his supervisor with the university

At this university with another supervisor

- With the same topic
- With another topic

At another university with another supervisor

- Continuing the same topic
- With another topic

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YOUR CONFLICT STORY

Review your conflict story again. What kinds of questions would be helpful in supporting you to develop a more tragic approach to reflecting on your experiences?

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Extra Resources



THE MELODRAMA OF CONFLICT

By Samantha Hardy

COMING OUT IN LATE 2020!



NARRATIVE COACHING: THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO BRINGING NEW STORIES TO LIFE

By David Drake

http://www.momentinstitute.org/cncpress



HUMBLE INQUIRY: THE GENTLE ART OF ASKING INSTEAD OF TELLING

By Edgar Schein

2013, Berrett-Koehler Publishers



MODULE 8

REAL CONFLICT COACHING

INTRODUCTION

In this bonus module I introduce the REAL Conflict Coaching System, which has been developed based on the principles of working with conflict stories that you have learnt about in this course!

The module covers the REAL Conflict Coaching principles and the stages of the system.

It's a brief introduction of a 40-hour plus long online program offered by CCI Academy.

At the end of the module there is a special offer for you to do the full program at a discounted price. You already have very strong foundations for becoming a REAL Conflict Coach after completing this Conflict Stories training, so I'd encourage you to take up this opportunity to put your learning into action!

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REAL
CONFLICT COACHING
SYSTEM

INTAKE

Goal setting	*Specific* *Measurable* *Attractive* *Relevant and realistic* *Time frame* *Yours*
What happened?	*Tell story* *Explore story* *Challenge story*
Why does it matter?	*Needs* *Identity* *Emotions* *Power*
Other perspectives	*Other party's* *Other peoples'* *Independent*
Preferred future	*Tell story* *Explore story* *Reality test*
Action steps	*Specific* *Ordered* *Reality tested* *Time frame* *Reviewable*
Reflection	*New learning* *Feedback*
Closure	*Summary* *What's next*

EXIT

NOTES

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‘WHETHER I SHALL TURN OUT TO BE THE HERO OF MY OWN LIFE, OR WHETHER THAT STATION WILL BE HELD BY ANYBODY ELSE, THESE PAGES MUST SHOW’.

(CHARLES DICKENS, DAVID COPPERFIELD)

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