

Flourishing Life Stories: Positive Psychology and Narrative Practices

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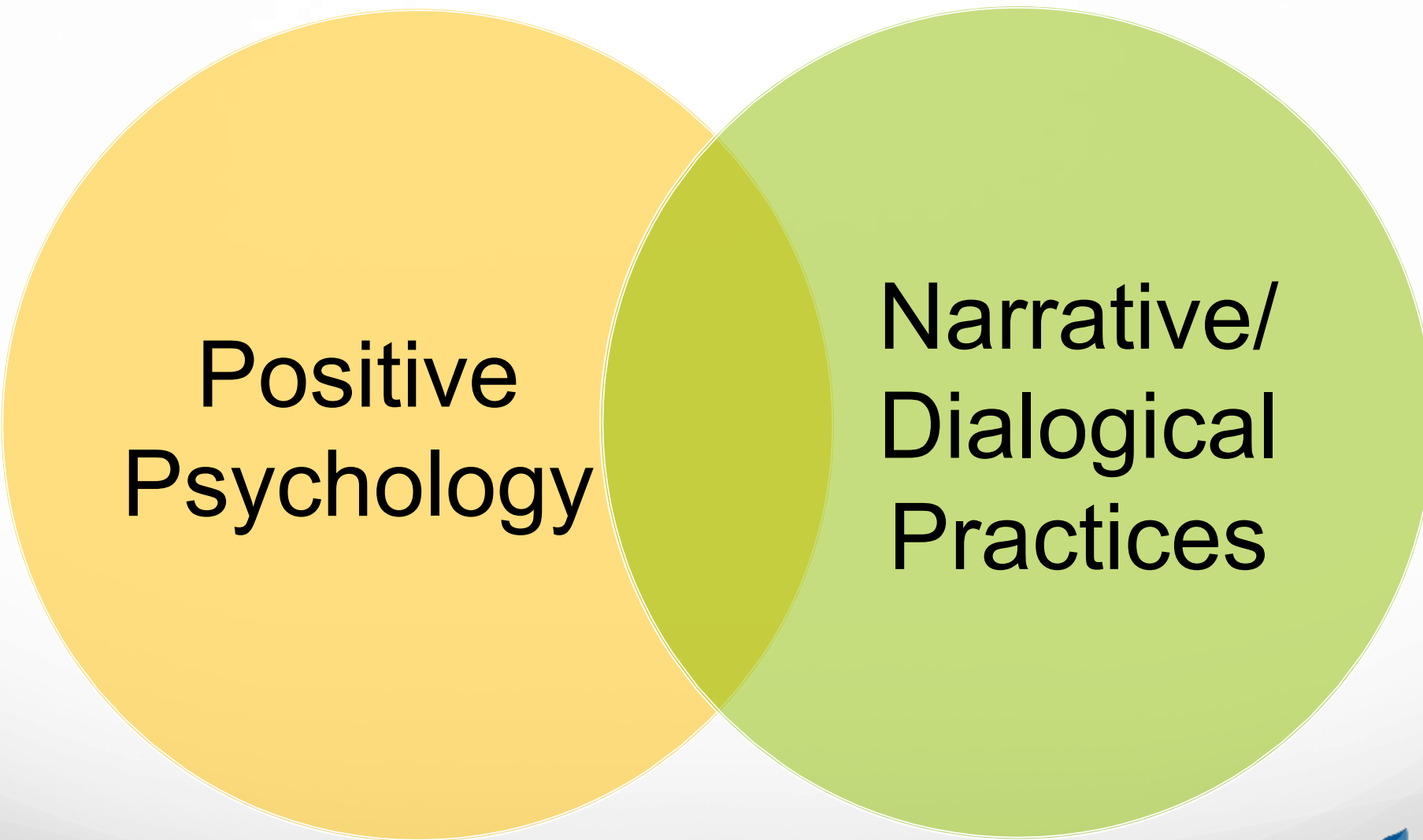




PositivaMente®

MARGARITA TARRAGONA





**Positive
Psychology**

**Narrative/
Dialogical
Practices**







Post-Structuralist

Discursive

Postmodern

Constructive

Narrative













- “Narrative Turn” in Social Sciences
- Text analogy
- A narrative view of identity
- Narrative Practices
- Storying our wellbeing experiences



Homo Sapiens



Homo Narrativus



Narrative Turn

- 1970's
- Social Sciences
- social interactions as “enacted narratives”
- actions guided by intentions
- accounted for and understood in specific contexts

- Czarniawska (2004)



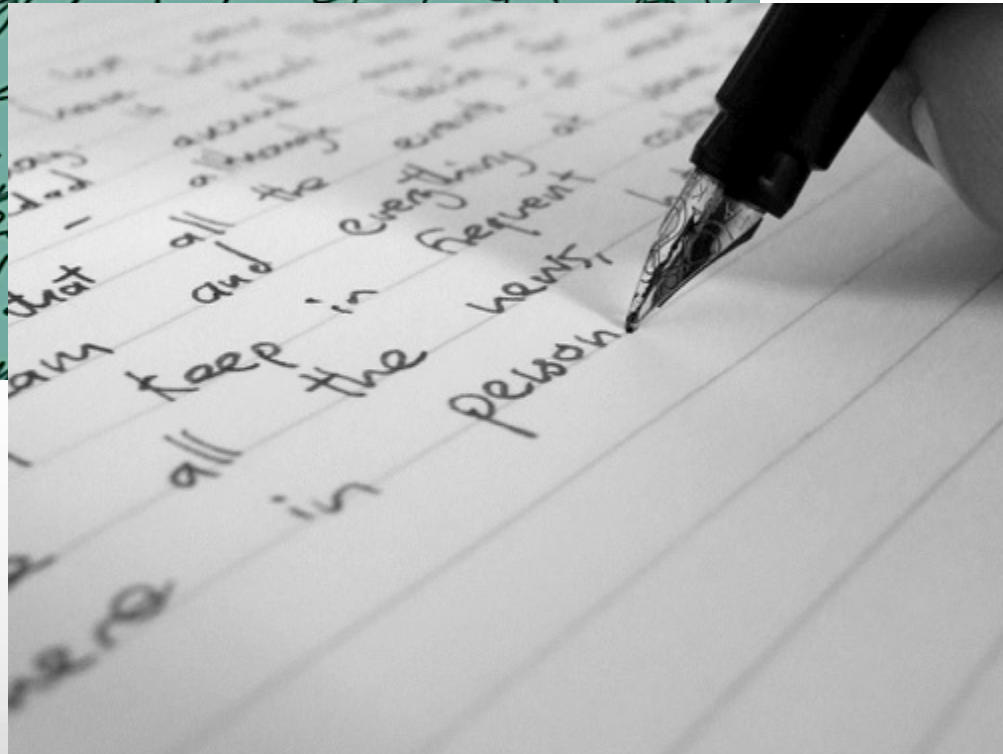








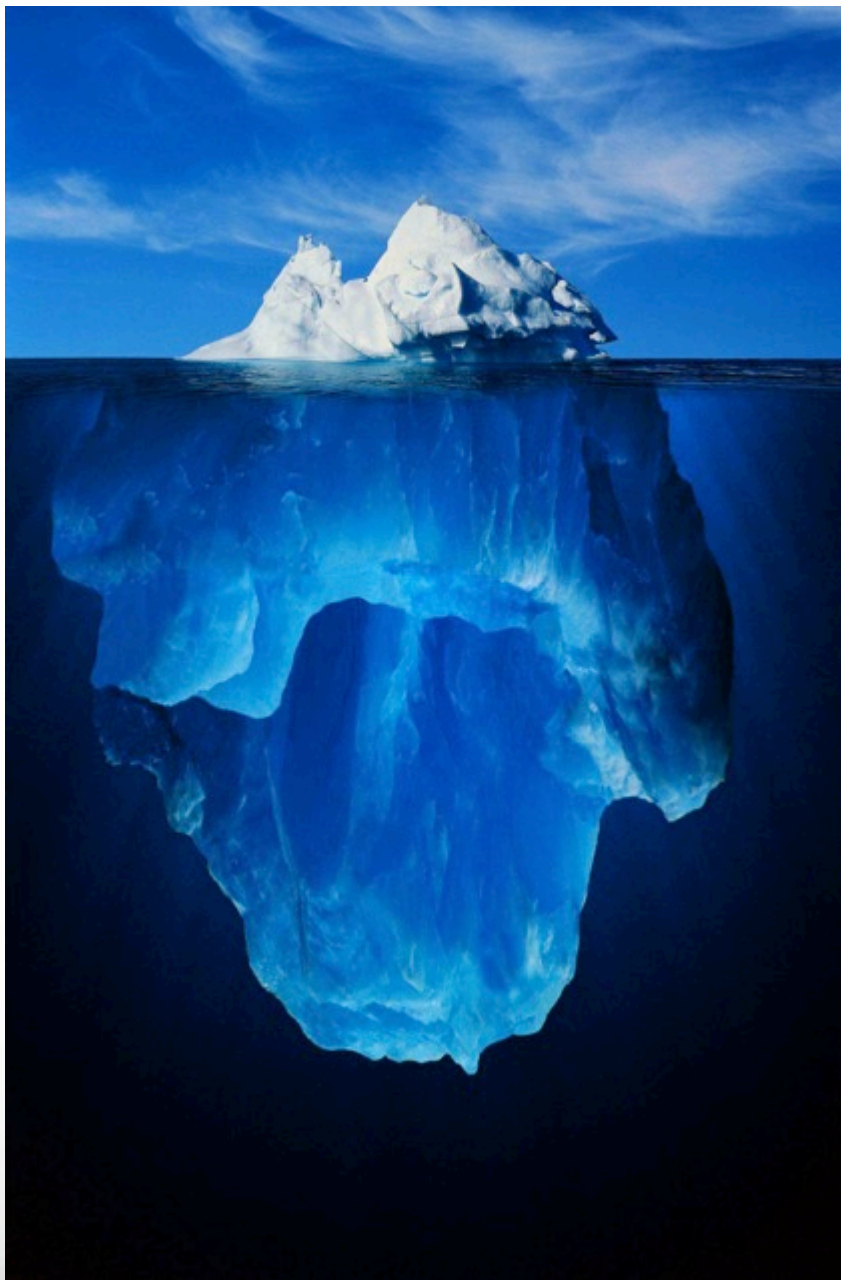
that madress has enrypted and your with soul def
our sadress is beyond the cast of being
you have sold your soul
ining all your shant
righted your prescriptive
you, hear my call
are perspective
it's scientific
light so based
spare hand



Text Analogy

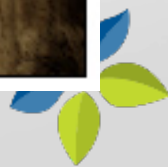
If difficulties are seen as certain kinds of stories, solutions can be found in the authoring of different, alternative stories.





Knowledge and Language







*Conversations
& Stories*

Relationships

Identities



Language

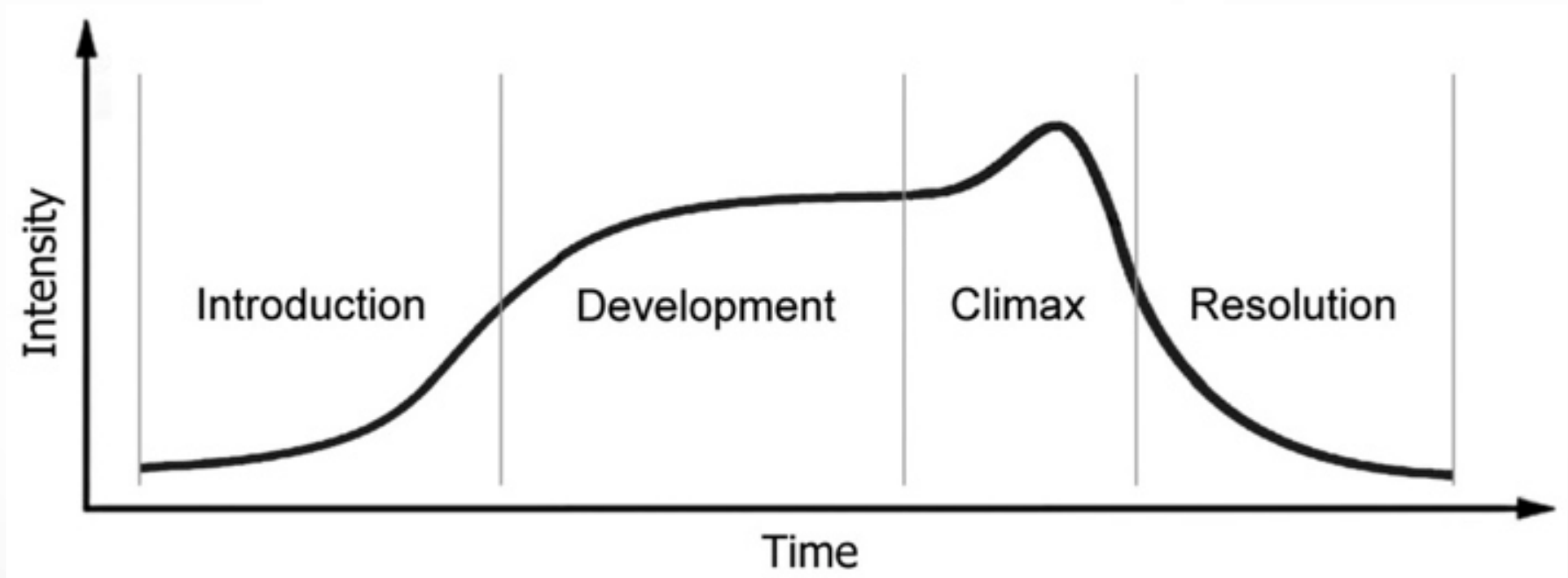
- Constitutive
- Generative
- Transformative



What is a story?







CH	TITLE	PLOT	PROPHCY / Hall of Prophecy	Chia/Gary	D.A.	OAP	Suspect / Victim / Other	Notes
06	Plots and Perseus	Hamilton & Korm go to Hesperides, attack bridge and Tarkin - could take Underworld (Hesperides) - pass over - story continuing but OAP P. Hesperides return - 2000	Hamilton & Korm go to Hesperides, attack bridge and Tarkin - could take Underworld (Hesperides) - pass over - story continuing but OAP P. Hesperides return - 2000	Chia in Hesperides - wants to join OAP	Tarkin & Tarkin	recruiting	Hamilton & Korm	Hamilton & Korm go to Hesperides, attack bridge and Tarkin - could take Underworld (Hesperides) - pass over - story continuing but OAP P. Hesperides return - 2000
07	The Order of the Phoenix	First meeting of the Order of the Phoenix	First meeting of the Order of the Phoenix	Chia & Gary both present	Underworld - some meeting - 2000	First meeting	Hamilton & Korm	Hamilton & Korm go to Hesperides, attack bridge and Tarkin - could take Underworld (Hesperides) - pass over - story continuing but OAP P. Hesperides return - 2000
08	The Distant Tackle	Quadrant version of the Order of the Phoenix - 2000	Quadrant version of the Order of the Phoenix - 2000	Chia & Gary both present	Underworld - some meeting - 2000	First meeting	Hamilton & Korm	Hamilton & Korm go to Hesperides, attack bridge and Tarkin - could take Underworld (Hesperides) - pass over - story continuing but OAP P. Hesperides return - 2000
09	Black Marks	Order of the Phoenix - 2000	Order of the Phoenix - 2000	Chia & Gary both present	Underworld - some meeting - 2000	First meeting	Hamilton & Korm	Hamilton & Korm go to Hesperides, attack bridge and Tarkin - could take Underworld (Hesperides) - pass over - story continuing but OAP P. Hesperides return - 2000
10	Rita Returns	Rita returns - 2000	Rita returns - 2000	Chia & Gary both present	Underworld - some meeting - 2000	First meeting	Hamilton & Korm	Hamilton & Korm go to Hesperides, attack bridge and Tarkin - could take Underworld (Hesperides) - pass over - story continuing but OAP P. Hesperides return - 2000
11	St. Mungo's Hospital for Magical Maladies and Injuries	St. Mungo's Hospital for Magical Maladies and Injuries - 2000	St. Mungo's Hospital for Magical Maladies and Injuries - 2000	Chia & Gary both present	Underworld - some meeting - 2000	First meeting	Hamilton & Korm	Hamilton & Korm go to Hesperides, attack bridge and Tarkin - could take Underworld (Hesperides) - pass over - story continuing but OAP P. Hesperides return - 2000
12	Extended Powers of Elvira Underbridge	Extended Powers of Elvira Underbridge - 2000	Extended Powers of Elvira Underbridge - 2000	Chia & Gary both present	Underworld - some meeting - 2000	First meeting	Hamilton & Korm	Hamilton & Korm go to Hesperides, attack bridge and Tarkin - could take Underworld (Hesperides) - pass over - story continuing but OAP P. Hesperides return - 2000
13	Valentines day	Valentines day - 2000	Valentines day - 2000	Chia & Gary both present	Underworld - some meeting - 2000	First meeting	Hamilton & Korm	Hamilton & Korm go to Hesperides, attack bridge and Tarkin - could take Underworld (Hesperides) - pass over - story continuing but OAP P. Hesperides return - 2000
14	Cornia Ground	Cornia Ground - 2000	Cornia Ground - 2000	Chia & Gary both present	Underworld - some meeting - 2000	First meeting	Hamilton & Korm	Hamilton & Korm go to Hesperides, attack bridge and Tarkin - could take Underworld (Hesperides) - pass over - story continuing but OAP P. Hesperides return - 2000



CREATE
MEANING

SP



“The self is an on-going autobiography; or, to be more exact, it is a self-other multifaceted biography that we constantly pen and edit”

- Harlene Anderson



Jerome Bruner

- Narrative Psychology
- Meaning making



Bruner

- Identity : “Trafficking” of our life stories and those of others



Bruner

- We **become** the narratives that we construct to tell our lives (1997)



Narrative

“ is a reflexive, two way discursive processes. It constructs our experiences and in turn it is used to understand our experiences”

(Anderson, 1997, p.213)



McAdams (2001)

- The narrative metaphor is useful because it can convey the coherence and meaning of lives.
- Identity : “internalized life story.



THIS IS
NOT SET
IN
STONE





Expressive Writing

- James Pennebaker
 - Writing about traumatic experiences
- Laura King
 - Best possible selves



“the beauty of narrative”

- Allows us to integrate all of the changes in our lives into a comprehensive story.
- We can include causes and consequences of events, plots and subplots and overarching themes.

-Smyth, J. M., Pennebaker, J. W., & Arigo (2012)



- Participants who had to bring high meaningfulness and integrative processing to their writing had the greatest increase in positive affect at the end of the study.

- Schutte, Searle, Meade, & Dark, (2012)



- Depressed women who wrote logo-autobiographies showed fewer depressive symptoms and higher levels of meaning in life than the depressed women in the control group.

- Cho, Bernstein, Roh, & Chen (2013)



- “A strong line of research shows that when narrators derive redemptive meanings from suffering and adversity in their lives, they tend to enjoy correspondingly higher levels of psychological well-being, generativity, and other indices of successful adaptation to life”

- McAdams & McLean's, 2013 p. 236



- “Findings suggest that the formation of a narrative is critical and is an indicator of good mental and physical health”.

- Pennebaker and Seagal (1999)



Positive Interventions

Tomasulo and Pawelski (2012)

- 3 of first 5 reported positive interventions involved autobiographical narratives
 - gratitude visit
 - you at your best,
 - 3 good things

(Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005).



Positive Interventions

Handbook of Positive Psychological Interventions (Parks and Schueller, 2014)

- 40 positive interventions that involve writing



Stories

- Events
- Linked over time
- Beginning
- Developments
- Outcomes
- Plots
- Meaning



How do we help people “write” different stories?



Approaches

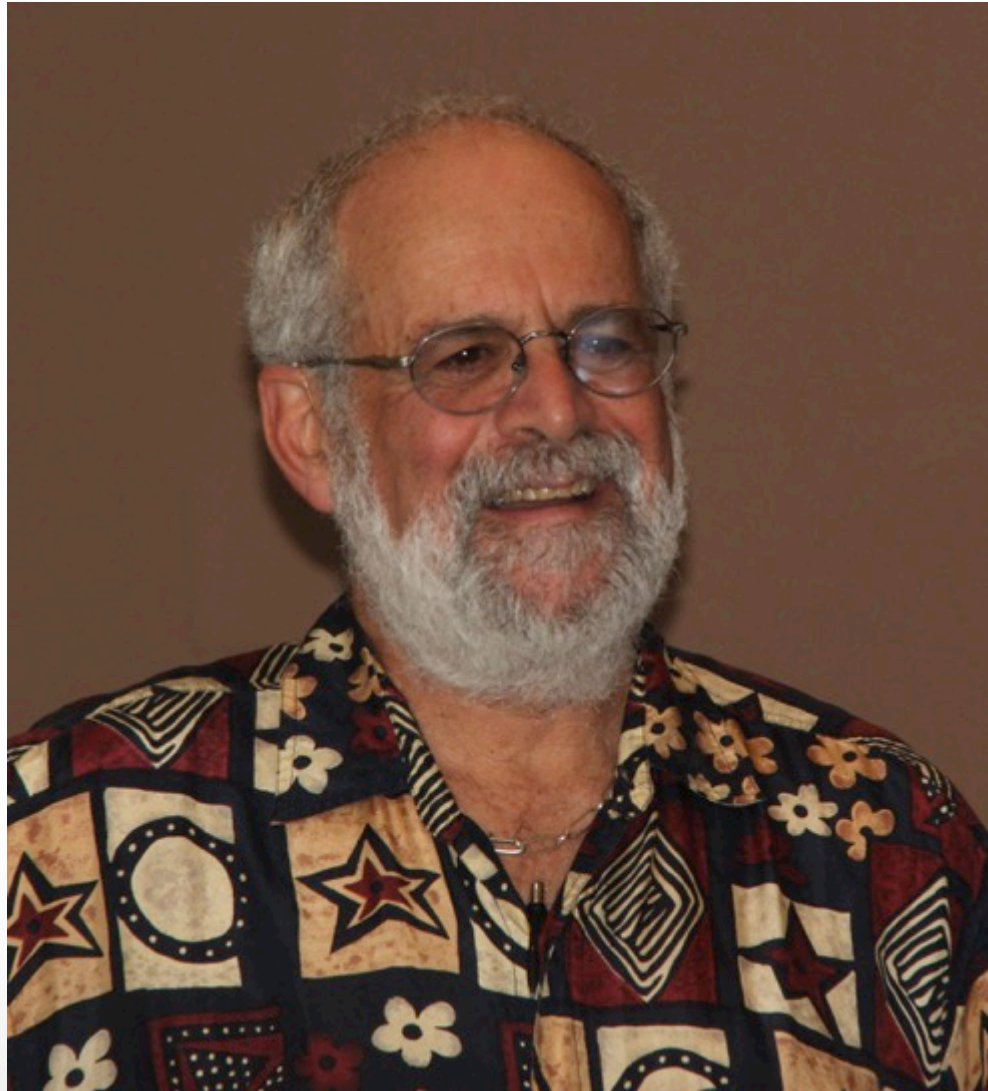
- Solution Focused Work
- Appreciative Inquiry
- Dialogic Collaborative Practices
- Open Dialogue
- Public Conversations
- Narrative Practices





Michael White





David Epston





Narrative Practices

- People as experts in their lives
- Stories about life and identity
- Problems are separate from persons
- Curiosity

(Adapted from de Morgan, A. (2000) [What is Narrative Therapy?](#) Adelaide, Dulwich Centre Publications.)



“The same events can be storied in a variety of ways and these different ways will make a difference in how life is experienced.”

- Jill Freedman and Gene Combs (2010)



M.White:

We can help people have a greater participation and a stronger voice in the authoring and construction of their life stories

“...involving people in the re-authoring of their struggles in life in ways that spark curiosity about human possibilities...”

Also: reauthor their triumphs and joys



*"Every time we ask a question, we're
generating a possible version of a life."*

- D. Epston



- Bruner:

“The gift of a great writer to a reader is to make him a better writer” (1986, p.5)



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What is narrative
therapy?



Collective projects
(including Tree of Life
and Team of Life)

What's happening




Featured video:



Social stuff: 

narrative approaches

Valuing our experiences, living our stories.

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welcome to

narrative

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approaches



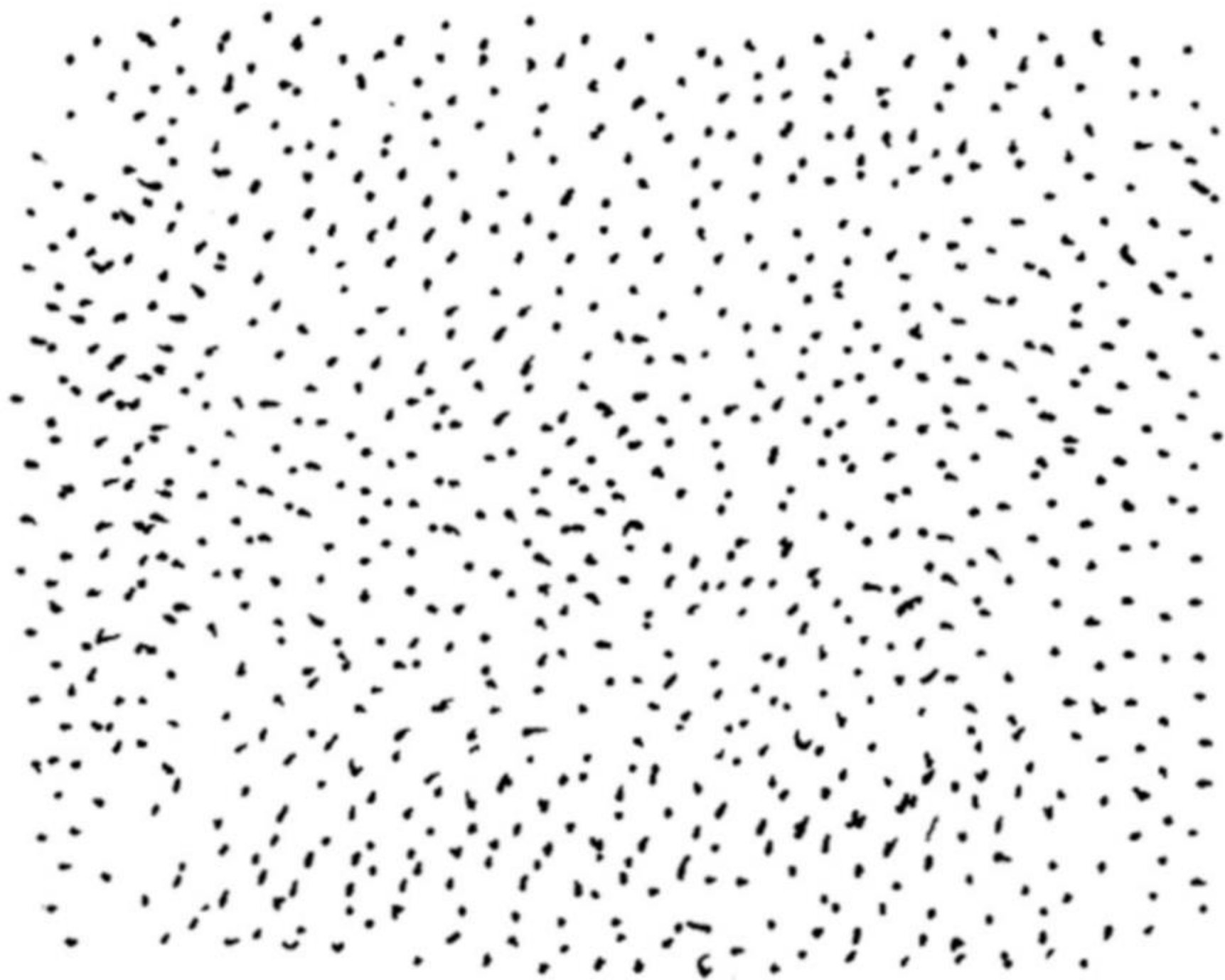
Landscape of Action

- Actions
- Behaviors
- Thoughts
- Plans
- Emotions

Landscape of Meaning

- What was important about this?
- What did it mean to you?
- What does it say about you?
- How does this fit with something you value?
- What implications does it have for the future?







X X X X X X X

X X X X X X X

X X X

X X X X X



Dominant Story

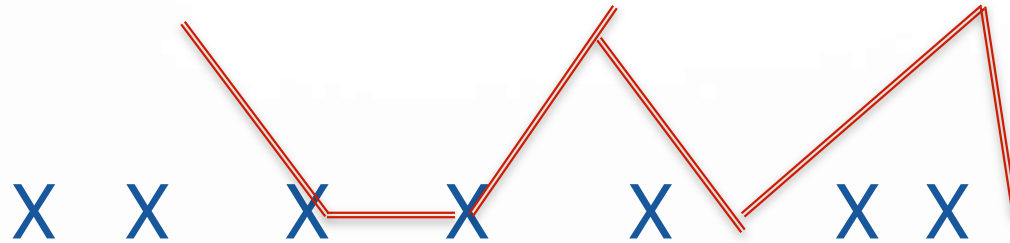
“I am mediocre”

- Not excited about a “great” job
- Studies but does not remember
- Hard to remember details of clients’ lives



Dominant Story

X X X X X X X



X X X
X X X X X



- Volunteers with community organization
- Leads “naturally”
- Created more efficient “production line”
- Wants to work in difficult situations



X X X X X X X

X X ~~X~~ X X ~~X~~ X X



X X X X X



AlternativeStory

“A passionate philanthropist”



Thin Descriptions /Thick Descriptions

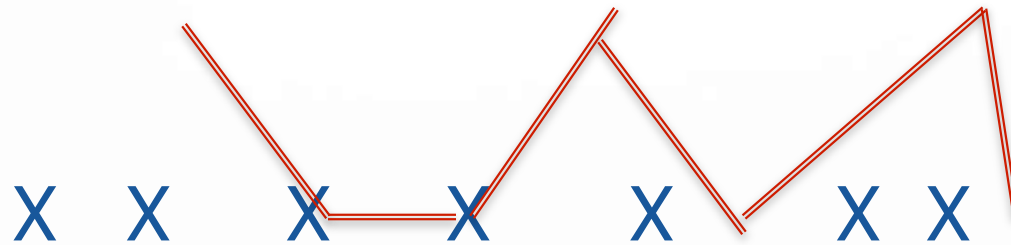






Negativity Biased Story

X X X X X X X

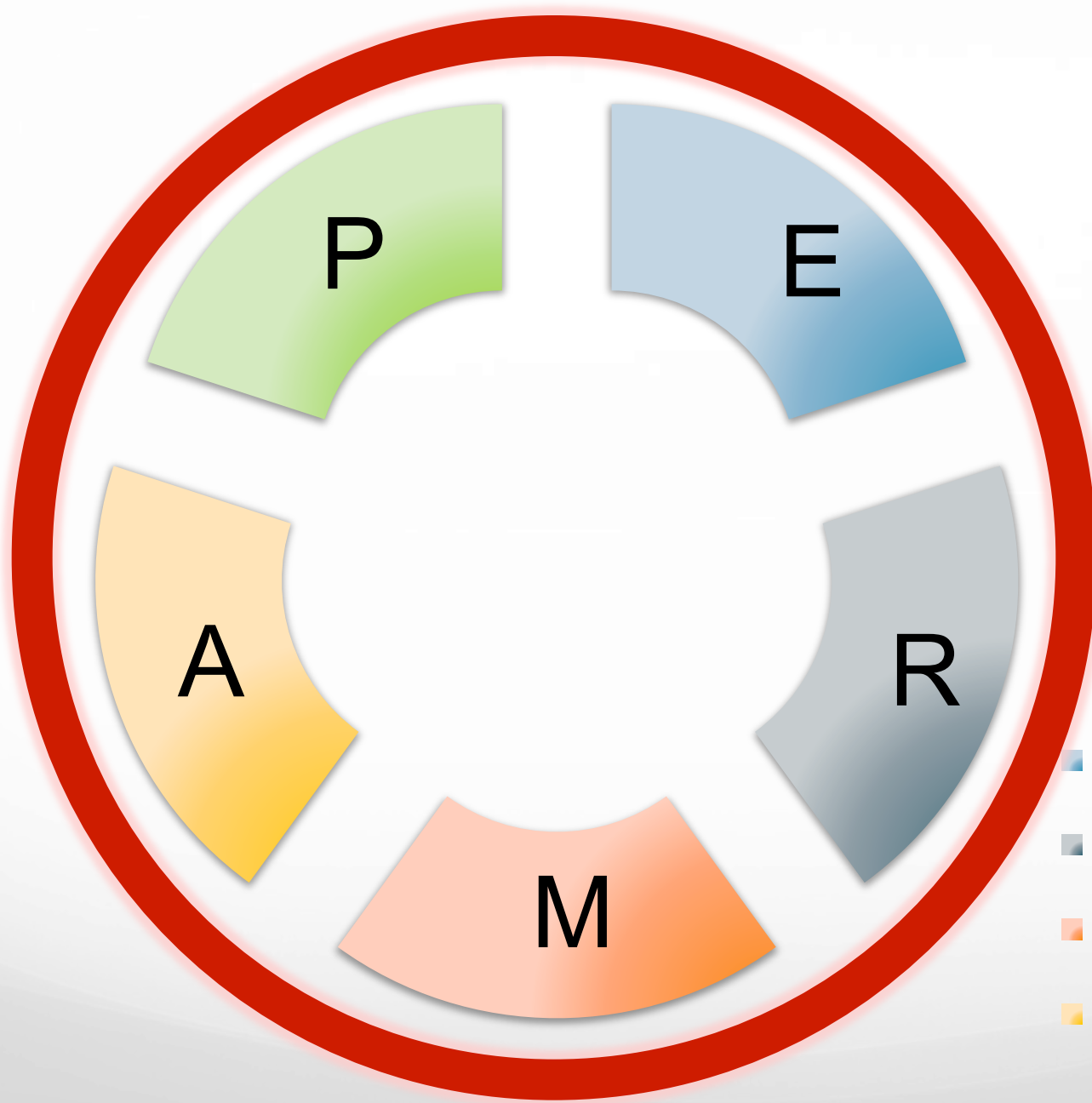


X X X
X X X X X



Positivity Inclusive Story





■ E = ENGAGEMENT

■ R=RELATIONSHIPS

■ M=MEANING

■ A=ACHIEVEMENT



S

SPIRITUAL

Leading a life of purpose and mindfully savoring the present.

P

PHYSICAL

Listening to and caring for the body.

I

INTELLECTUAL

Cultivating a life-long love of learning, wisdom, and art.

R

RELATIONAL

Contributing to and benefitting from community.

E

EMOTIONAL

Developing resilience and enjoying positive emotions.



Exercise 1

- A narrative interview about your strengths



ACTION

MEANING





- Who
- What
- Where
- When
- With whom



- What was important about this?
- What did it mean to you?
- What does it say about you?
- How does this fit with something you value?
- What implications does it have for the future?





Exercise 2

- An interview with a source of meaning



Emmons

Sources of Meaning in Life

- Work / Achievement
- Intimacy / Relationships
- Spirituality
- Transcendence/ Generativity



Exercise 3

- A narrative interview about your values and dreams



What if...





Lyubomirsky, Sousa, & Dickerhoof (2006)



- Denborough, D. (2014). *Retelling the stories of our lives: Everyday narrative therapy to draw inspiration and transform experience.*
- Freedman, Jill, and Gene Combs (1996). *Narrative Therapy: The Social Construction of Preferred Realities*
- Tarragona, M. (2012) *Positive Identities: Positive Psychology and Narrative Practices.*
- White, M. (2007). *Maps of narrative practice.*



Positive Identities:

Narrative Practices and
Positive Psychology

by Margarita Tarragona



- Denborough, D. (n.d.). *Retelling the stories of our lives: Everyday narrative therapy to draw inspiration and transform experience.*
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