



THE STORY MINDSET

PART 1 Special Report

The Story Mindset

UNLOCKING the Power of Story to Live the Life You Have Always Wanted, Take Your Business to the Next Level, And Have A Greater Impact In The Lives Of Those Around You!

Introduction

Everything you need to live the life you have always wanted is found inside of you. I don't mean that you are going to start pooping \$10,000 bank rolls, but your biggest block to success can be found by looking within. I have talked with highly successful entrepreneurs, moms, dads, grandparents, business professionals, military veterans, high performance coaches, athletes, blue-collar workers, and everyone in between and they all have something in common: A Story.

They also have something else in common – most of them, the hundreds of people that I have worked with over the years, in many different industries and walks of life, all over the world believe in some way shape or form that their story is not worth sharing. They believe that their story is not something other people want to hear, or they might even believe they have NO story at all. There are some who know they have a story to share, but they don't know the first thing about how to share it. Not in a way that will have the greatest impact on the greatest number of people and make a difference, not only in their life, but in the lives of everyone around them.

I get it. I struggled my entire life with sharing my story. Marred by my past of trauma and abuse, I believe that no one wanted to know my real story. No one wanted to know me. They would rather have the crazy, fun loving, positive thinking person I created. I made up a story that I liked and I could live with and one that I thought others would accept as well. The problem with that? It worked.

It worked all too well, until it didn't.

I got married in 2009 to my amazing wife, and by the grace of God, her strength, and my commitment to change, we are still married today. But the false narrative I had created, the story I crafted to make myself feel better about me, almost destroyed her, my marriage, and tore apart my family. Your situation may not be like mine. You might not have lived a life full of trauma or abuse. Your parents might have stayed together, or remained friends and raised you well, but that does not mean that you do not have a story.

The pages of this book are the result of a lifelong journey to knowing who I am in this world and learning how to show up in a way that has positive impact in the lives of those around me. The information contained in these pages has been won through lots of blood, sweat, and many, many tears that I wish were just my own.

I am writing this book because I have seen time and time again, where people are not embracing their story, and while they might not be living on the same extremes I found myself, the damage being done in their lives is just the same. Albeit mine was a giant ball of fire

threatening to burn my entire existence to the ground, the people I work with tend to have these slow burns that result in the loss of their marriages, dissatisfaction in their jobs, depression, anxiety, fear, worry, doubt, and so much more. But because of the slow burn of their confidence and life, they have a difficult time pinpointing what's causing it.

So, I am here to try and save you the same pain and heartache I have cause myself and so many others who have been in my life. I want you to see how a simple shift in your mindset will forever change the trajectory of your life. **Trust me it is simple. It's not easy, but it is simple.**

I hope this book changes your life. I hope that through the pain and struggle I have faced, you will find victory where I could not. You find yourself sooner than I did. I hope that you regain the confidence and clarity you need to live the life you have always wanted (which may not be what you think it is in this moment).

I can guarantee you that if you start the process of knowing and understanding your story, and how story is a part of all of us, you will see a shift in your energy and others will notice it too. It will seem like opportunity is attracted to you, not the other way around.

I am going to change your life. I know, that's a big claim, but I am confident that there is something within these pages that will inspire you to action and from that action will be the first step of many that will set you on a course of new and greater success.

Look, we all define success differently. For some it might be a better job, for others it is deep relationships, and for others it is a business that awards a certain lifestyle. However you define success, and wherever you are in your journey to success, I can assure you there is something you are missing that is keeping you from the next level. An even crazier claim is that this block has something to do with Story. Story is our superpower and we barely know how to use it.

What if I were to tell you that Story is the secret to your success, whether in life or in business, and has been hiding inside of you all this time? I am going to assume that you're smart enough to know that this doesn't mean that once you uncover this secret you will suddenly have the life of your dreams. Life is a journey we are all on together and, like everything else in our lives worth having, it will take time to develop this superpower, but the sooner you take that first step the sooner you will arrive to living the life you have always wanted.

See, the reverse is also true. When you do not know your story, when you avoid your story, or if you succumb to the negative stories we all tell ourselves, you not only block yourself to success, but you attract negativity, pain, and unnecessary suffering. Notice I said unnecessary suffering. Suffering is a part of life and leads to greater growth, but trying to avoid it will only lead you to more suffering – that's the unnecessary kind, the kind that comes when you are being avoidant.

I spent most of my life avoiding pain, lying, cheating, stealing, being addicted to all sorts of drugs, porn and sex. My whole life was all about following the path of least resistance and all I

found was more and more resistance. I thought the world was against me. I believed I was cursed or that somehow success was always going to be out of reach for me. I was the victim and the perpetrator at the same time.

What I didn't know then and I can see so clearly now, is that by avoiding suffering in my life, not knowing and taking ownership of my story, and not being my authentic self, I was attracting the very suffering I sought so desperately to avoid. It was a self-fulfilling prophesy of disaster and reactivity. I was in a constant state of survival mode and there wasn't anything that was going to break me out of it. Or so I thought.

The truth is that deep down I was tired of the life that I was living. I was exhausted emotionally, physically and spiritually. I was sick mentally and physically. I would go on drug and alcohol benders that were a futile attempt of escaping my own reality. Inevitably, I would come face-to-face with everything I was running from, and I wanted out. I just didn't know how to get it. It was the mafia of my mind. Once you are in, there is no getting out. You are gonna die like this. I contemplated suicide many times in my life. This brought me even more shame and continued me on the path of self-sabotage and self-destruction, but there was a catalyst moment in my life that started me on my decades long journey of coming out from by decades long journey into the abyss.

The Catalyst for Change

I was standing in line for the restroom at a club in Philadelphia. I had been to this club a few times before with my friends. It was a French Restaurant by day, but when night came around it was poppin'. I, literally, bumped into Donovan McNabb, who was at that time the quarterback for the Philadelphia Eagles, while walking out of there one night. But that's a story for a different day. This particular evening, I am in a line waiting create more room for some additional drinks and there was an intoxicated individual in front of me who was being a little belligerent.

The Jack and Coke in me was starting to get really annoyed at his bad attitude toward everyone, and at one point, I decided that it was up to me to ask this guy to stop being an asshole and just wait in line like everyone else. Well, he was not happy with me interrupting his power flexing and turned his focus on me. As you might expect, I puffed up too. I am sure in our inebriated minds we looked really tough. I know I felt tough. Thankfully, I have come a long way from this disconnected, reactive, immature version of myself, but in this moment, I was ready to throw down.

At this time in my life, I probably weighed 160lbs soaking wet, measured 5'9" tall. Suffice it to say, I am not a big guy by any stretch of the imagination. I actually have no recollection what this other individual looked like, but while we were feeling super tough with our alcohol infused muscles, I imagine, today, what that must have looked like to other people that evening. I am sure most people saw a couple of prairie dogs doing some kind of cobra dance.

While I am staring this guy down, ready to rain down fire and brimstone that I would conjure from the heavens above, out of nowhere, I feel this little hand grab my face. My cheeks were like a sandwich in this feminine but powerful grip, and my lips felt real fish-like. I knew some shit was about to happen, but it was not with the lucky guy in front me. She pulled my gaze away from his and made me look her in the eye while simultaneously pushing me back directly into a dining chair propped against the wall directly behind me.

I knew who it was right away – the girl I was dating, Alli. She was the best friend of one of my best-girlfriends from high school, Nienke. This club was her favorite place to go dancing and she was not having me ruin our night and any possibility of coming back by getting kicked out over a lame fight in line for a wee. I looked her dead in the eye, sitting in that chair, immediately sobered by the whole exchange, and I remember thinking, “I am going to marry this woman.” And I did. We got married a couple years later in 2009 before I was deployed to Iraq with the US Marine Corps and we have been married ever since. I wish I could say happily, but it has been nearly two decades of struggle.

There are many stories I could tell you that could have served as a catalyst in my life. One of those was joining the Marine Corps, but as I look back over my life it was in this moment, the moment I decided I was going to marry my wife, that I committed to dealing with my shit. And it is a journey that I have been on ever since and still have so much more to learn.

If it wasn't for the strength of this incredible and amazing woman, I know I would not be here today. And if it wasn't for her ability to see in me, to see through my pain, trauma and prairie dog toughness, and into the core of who I am and who I could be, I would not have dug into the depths of my story. I would have continued on my disconnected, reactive, path-of-least-resistance lifestyle and left a wake of damage and disaster behind me as I did.

This journey is one that I will be on forever, but my long and painful climb from the depths has lit a fire inside of me that cannot be quenched. My hope is that my journey and return to the pits of despair and destruction will somehow save others the same heartache I caused myself, but most importantly the pain and heartbreak I cause my wife and family.

I have spent the majority of my adult life running from my story, living a life of lies, shame, fear and guilt. Some of it was glaringly obvious, but most of it was buried deep within me. I have gone through years of therapy, personal development, coaching, and more, and still feel as if I am just scratching the surface of understanding the depth and breadth of the impact story has had in my own life. I would like to believe that I have gained some wisdom on my journey thus far, and it is this wisdom that I would like to impart to you.

So let me ask you this:

Are you ready to:

- Live your best life?

- Feel the power of true freedom?
- Achieve greater success in your business or career?
- Understand your why?
- Connect deeply with yourself and others?
- Become a magnet to success rather than destruction and sabotage?

Then I am here to tell you that it all begins and ends with Story.

That's right. That's it. That's the secret. Your Superpower is knowing, understanding, and using story in the right places at the right times for the greatest impact whether in life or in business.

In his book, *Green Lights*, Matthew McConaughey recalls a TV commercial he did for Lincoln cars in 2014. In the commercial he says, *"Sometimes you gotta go back to actually move forward. I don't mean going back to reminisce or chase ghosts...I mean going back to see where you came from; where you've been, how you got here—see where you're going. I know there are those who say you can't go back...but yes, you can. You just have to look in the right place."*

By one definition, story is an account of past events in someone's life or in the evolution of something. Story can really be many things, and serve many different purposes, but I assure you, by understanding story, your story, and the story of those around you, you will have what you need to effect change in every area of your life in one way or another.

In taking Matthew's advice, before we go forward we need to go back. In this case, we are going back tens of thousands of years. I hope you will join me on this journey to living your best life.

PART I: Story – A Human Condition

In order to understand why story has such an unrivaled impact on us, we need to see how story and storytelling developed over time. Starting with the cave drawings dating back to the Cro-Magnon and Neanderthal time periods, we see how storytelling, even in its more primal form, was fundamental in the development and survival of our species.

Today, storytelling has continued to evolve, but is still the most used form of communication around the world. Why is that? Is it because our brains have always been wired for story or because the early humans who survived the ice ages were the ones who were successful in using story to pass down important information to future generations and, now, all our brains share this foundational trait? I don't know the answer to the question, but science has shown that our brains react to story in a profound way. Literally changing our brains and controlling our moods.

Often, we think of stories as something external to us, but they are deeply internal as well. It's the stories we tell ourselves that have the greatest impact in shaping who we are, how we act, and is the lens through which we see the world and make sense out of the experiences we live through.

In this section of the book, I seek to set the foundation for why story is fundamental to living our best life and has been this way since the beginning of mankind. I am not presenting something new and revolutionary; I am calling you back to the fundamentals of who we are as humans.

I remember going to the playground when I was little with my neighbor and his mom. We went to sign up for football. We were young, so it was probably flag football. Once you signed up, they had a practice going. In the small dying industrial town of my youth in New Jersey, you played football or wrestled. So, the line was long. While we were waiting, my buddy, Kevin, and I, noticed the kids playing soccer looked like they were having more fun. The football practice looked like only a couple people were moving at a time, while everyone else watched and waited for their turn. The soccer players were all running around looking like they were having a blast. I wanna do that. He and I signed up for soccer that day and I played for the next 15 years.

In high school, we had a pretty competitive team, especially for a small private Christian school. I remember whenever we got into a slump our coach would ALWAYS bring us back to the fundamentals. To this day, I still use this tactic. Whenever I am in a slump, whether physical, emotional or spiritual, I will return to the "fundamentals" to get back on track again.

So, this section is calling you back to your fundamentals so you can build up from there and get back on track.

Chapter One: You Have A Story

Your answer to this one question could have the greatest impact on your life and your business.

In fact, the answer to this question is your key differentiating factor whether you are trying to land a job, grow your career, build and maintain relationships, or grow your business.

So, take a moment to think about the answer to this question, and then I want you to try and answer it in two minutes or less.

What is your story?

I don't mean just any story – I mean what is your story. Who are you, deep down on the inside? What is your CoreStory®, the overarching narrative of your life that has brought you to where you are and made who you are today? Others might call this your “Why,” but your CoreStory® is much deeper and broader than just your why. It's WHO you are, WHY you do what you do, WHAT you do to help people, and WHERE you are going next.

On the surface, this seems like a simple enough question to answer. However, once we try, we realize very quickly how complicated the answer to this question really becomes. Where do we start? What do we say? What don't we say? Do I offer the long version or the short version? How many details should I include? Surely when somebody asked me this question, they're not asking for my life story. Are they? Well, if they're not asking for my life story, what are they asking? Does it only relate to this situation, circumstances, or event? Are they asking me to summarize who I am in a few sentences? Do they even care?

Were you able to tell a power and impactful story of your life in just a couple minutes that would not only tell people who you are, but connect them to you and be inspired to take action? Chances are probably not. And you shouldn't be able to. We don't go around practicing telling our story. If you are like I was, we hold our story very close to the chest and don't share it with many people. MAYBE the people that are closest to us, but even then we might only share shallow versions of it.

If that's you, don't worry. You are not alone, and this book will help your turn your story into your secret weapon.

I spent a lot of time trying to answer this questions. I have worked with hundreds of people all over the world trying to answer this same question. The clients I am working with are typically business owners, entrepreneurs and professionals who are seeking to build a personal brand to help grow their business, but the fundamentals are the same for everyone. Knowing

your story, and what parts of your story to share is the key to making the greatest impact on your audience.

What If I Don't Have A Story

First, you do have a story. Not only do you have a story, but you have a story that you need to be sharing. Not just for your own benefit, but for the benefit that it brings to others. You will see in future chapters how sharing stories was the reason our species survived the ice ages, developed societies, and were able to go from surviving to thriving. The same is still true today, only we have gotten away from being curious, and from sharing stories in a way that helps future generations, even if that's just within the context of our own families.

I have told many, many people that they have a story and I typically get hit with a response similar to this one:

"I don't have a story that anyone wants to hear."

Well, yeah. If your expectation of a story is one that mimics a blockbuster movie, or should be similar to the experiences of the people and personalities we see on TV, it's easy to believe that we do not have a story that others want to hear.

It's easy to feel inferior when you spend your time comparing yourself to others. This is true in every area of your life. You know it to be true already in many areas of your life. You can compare the house you have, the car you drive, the person you date, the job you have, the success of your business. In reality, there will always be someone else who is better looking, more talented, more successful, has better relationships, etc. You need to stop telling yourself you don't matter solely on the basis of how you measure up to someone else. I will talk more about this in a later chapter on the stories we tell ourselves.

For others, you might feel like your story is too dark and sharing that part of your life would not be beneficial to people. People only want to hear success stories, the want to hear the wins, not the losses, is another story we tell ourselves that is not true. There are some people who want to float through life without ever facing suffering or hardship. I was one of those people. I am one of the most avoidant people at heart. I do whatever I can to relieve discomfort and not feel hurt or pain. A big part of my process was sitting in the painful parts of

my story and taking ownership of them. I still need to constantly be checking myself to make sure that I am not doing something because I am trying to avoid pain or conflict.

Look, I am not asking you to share anything that you have not yet processed and at least started healing. However, if there are parts of your story you are unwilling to share, I would bet my bottom dollar that it's those events which have had the greatest influence in shaping who you are today. It's those parts of your story that will connect deeply with others, give you freedom and help you understand the path that you are on, making your path to success all the more clear.

What's more, by not healing and sharing them with others, you are missing out on your deepest WHY and an opportunity to be vulnerable and truly authentic, and, most importantly, you might miss the opportunity to give someone else a lifeline, a feeling of hope, and could even save their life.

I get it, for many of us we pay very little attention to our own story. We are going through life doing our best and, because we have lived it, we easily take our own stories for granted. Whatever reason you have been telling yourself that you do not have a story

- I lived a boring life and my parents were amazing and loved me well
- I lived a terrible life and no one wants to hear that negativity
- My story is full of drama and is mine to bear, no one cares to hear it
- If I tell my story, then people will judge me and I will lose people I care about
- I have been living a lie, and coming clean now is too hard

I lived a life of lies. I had to come clean on so much and it was hard, but it was the most liberating thing I could have done. I will share more of this when I talk about my story, but for now, I want to assure you that your story is important, not just for your own personal growth and development, but you could have a deep impact on the life of someone else and set them on a better path to success as well.

What is the purpose of life if it is not to help those around us? If we can make a difference in the life of just one person, it's worth it. Born out of the necessity of survival, storytelling has been the primary source of communication to pass down information from one generation to the next and has been a part of our history since before the development of language.

Key Takeaways

The first step in this process is to believe that you have a story and that it's worth sharing. It also requires you to believe that there are people out there who want and who NEED to hear your story.

In order to take that first step, you need to be willing to go back and take a look at your life. In future chapter I will show you how to go back through your life and craft your story, but before the practical application, you need to first buy in to the importance of story. I hope the following pages will give you enough evidence to see that no matter how "boring" or "dramatic" your story might be, it's worth sharing.

I spent my whole life embarrassed and ashamed of my own story. So much so, I would tell stories about myself that I thought would make me more acceptable. I lied. I lied a lot. It was the only way I knew how to gain acceptance because I did not believe that my story was one that others would accept. Now, with social media taking over our lives, I am inundated with people who are telling false narratives because they believe that's what people want to see.

Not dealing with your story, and not understanding and sharing your true story is a recipe for disaster. I can tell you that firsthand, and when it goes too far it will lead to destruction not just of yourself but all those in your life too. Destruction of your businesses, friendships, marriages, and even your life. People trapped in their own stories often find the only release is by ending it all.

I have been there. I believed the internal story I was telling myself: that the only way to bring relief to myself and my family would be down the barrel of a gun or driving off the road. Thankfully, I never took it that far and was able to pull myself out of that false narrative and had the support of many people around me who loved me, but there are plenty of people who don't have that support. We lose 22 veterans a day to suicide. A DAY! I can guarantee you that's because they are stuck in the narratives playing out in their heads and they don't know there is a way out. If that's you, please know there is help out there, and you are not alone. You can email me directly: or call this number:

Whether you have tasted the pits of hell, or are just looking for a way to achieve the next level of success, knowing and owning your story is the path to the next level up. But why is story so powerful? How can it have such a profound impact on our psyche and contribute directly to our success or failure? Let's start with how it helped our forebearers succeed in surviving before spoken language and written word.

Chapter Two: Story in History

The art of storytelling has been around since the dawn of humanity. From ancient times to the present day, storytelling has been used to entertain, educate, and pass down knowledge from one generation to the next and has evolved and adapted over time to reflect the societies and cultures in which it exists.

The earliest stories were likely passed down orally, with each storyteller adding their own interpretation and embellishments to the same basic story. Research has shown the stories were being told in ancient cave paintings dating back tens of thousands of years before oral tradition had developed. While visual stories in cave drawings developed into the oral tradition of prehistoric times, the purpose has always been to pass down important cultural and historical information. Over time, becoming more religious in nature, the stories were used to explain natural phenomena and the origins of the world.

Cave Drawings: Visual StoryTelling

Cave paintings are the earliest representation of communication and storytelling that modern man has discovered to date. In 2018 researchers announced the discovery of the oldest known cave paintings in the caves of La Pasiega, Maltravieso, and Ardales of Spain. These paintings are attributed to Neanderthals living at least 64,000 years ago. While this primitive and abstract art is nothing in comparison to what we have today, the significance of these discoveries is the art is more than likely a result of early language development. Scientists and researchers are not clear on the purpose of these primitive paintings and hand stencils but speculate that it was meant to signify a special location or commemorate a special event that took place either there or nearby.

Over time, the art depicted in these cave drawings took on a form of their own. They began to feature animals and human figures. The first known hunting scene can be found on Indonesia's Sulawesi Island. We can wonder and speculate why the artist decided to paint this scene, but the fact that our painter created this masterpiece around 43,900 years ago is truly remarkable. While not a "story" in the sense we think of today, but the cave artists are using images intentionally to create a narrative, either for themselves or for others, or both.

In fact, Brian Fagan, an emeritus professor of anthropology at the University of California, Santa Barbara, talks about how the Cro Magnon, predecessors to *homo sapiens*, survived the last ice age over 20,000 years ago, in part, because "They had institutional memory through symbolic storytelling, which gave them a relationship with the forces of the environment, the supernatural forces which governed the world."

Our ancestors used art, among other means of storytelling, like dance and music, to collect and pass down vast and vital information that was key to their survival and the survival of our species. The cave paintings mentioned above and those from the famous sites in Lascaux in France depict their understanding of the natural world and the various animals they depended on for food and clothing and the related seasons that allowed for future generations to build on their knowledge and understanding.

Oral Tradition: Audible StoryTelling

In recent years, cave drawings have been linked to the early stages of linguistic behavior, but it is the oral tradition of our ancestors that contributed to our growth and social development as a species. In the history of humankind, written language is only a recent phenomenon, and oral tradition served as the sole means of communication available. To this day, oral tradition remains the most dominant mode of communication despite the development of written language and the ever-increasing rates of literacy around the world.

Oral storytelling was a way for ancient cultures to preserve their history and traditions, as well as to entertain and educate their community. Oral storytelling also served as a means of transmitting cultural values, religious beliefs, and social norms from one generation to the next. Some examples of what this looked like includes proverbs, riddles, tales, epics, rhymes, myths, legends, songs, poems, chants, charms, prayers, dramatic performances, and much more.

One of the earliest examples of written storytelling can be found in ancient Mesopotamia, where cuneiform script was used to record stories on clay tablets. These early written stories often dealt with the gods and goddesses of Mesopotamian mythology, as well as with historical events and everyday life. The Epic of Gilgamesh, one of the oldest known works of literature, is an example of an early written story from Mesopotamia.

Probably the most widely known ancient oral traditions are that of the Greeks. **Greek mythology is a collection of ancient stories and legends that were passed down orally for centuries before being written down in the form of epic poems and plays.** The origins of Greek mythology can be traced back to the Minoan civilization on the island of Crete, which flourished around 2000 BCE. The Minoans had a complex religious system that included gods, goddesses, and ritual practices, which likely influenced the development of Greek mythology as we know it today.

The earliest written records of Greek mythology date back to the 8th century BCE, when the epic poet Homer wrote the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey." These epic poems tell the stories of the Trojan War, the adventures of Odysseus, and the interactions between gods and mortals.

In the 7th and 6th centuries BCE, the Greek poet Hesiod wrote the "Theogony" and "Works and Days," which provided a genealogy of the gods and goddesses and explained the origins of the world. During the 5th century BCE, the plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides were written and performed at the Theater of Dionysus in Athens.

While the prolific works of ancient Greece and their oral traditions have greatly influenced western culture, literature, and art, the purpose remained the same as our prehistoric ancestors: to explain the metaphysical and natural experiences witnessed in our everyday lives as we interacted with each other and with the world around us. The gods and goddesses of Greek mythology were believed to have control over various aspects of life, such as love, war, and the weather, and were honored through rituals and sacrifices. Earthquakes were described as the result of Poseidon striking the ground with his trident when he (often) lost his temper. The seasons were explained through Persephone's abduction by Hades and subsequent return to her mother, Demeter, the goddess of harvest. So, the spring and summer seasons were a result of Demeter's celebration of Persephone's return, who caused the plants to flourish.

Modern Media: Digital StoryTelling

In the 20th century, with the advent of new technologies such as radio, television, and film storytelling took on an even more creative and engaging form and has turned the art of storytelling into a global phenomenon.

Today, storytelling has evolved and taken on new forms beyond traditional methods such as books, movies, and theater. With the advancements in technology and the internet, the ways in which we consume and create stories continues to change dramatically. Some modern forms of storytelling:

1. Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) - With the development of VR and AR technology, stories can now be experienced in a fully immersive and interactive way. VR allows users to fully immerse themselves in a virtual world while AR adds digital elements to the real world. This technology is used in gaming, education, and even in advertising.
2. Podcasts - Podcasts have become a popular form of storytelling in recent years. They can be listened to on the go and offer a wide variety of stories, from true crime to comedy. Podcasts are also a platform for independent creators to share their stories with a global audience.

3. Social Media - Social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok have become a new form of storytelling. People are now sharing their personal stories, experiences, and thoughts through videos, photos, and live streams. Social media influencers have also emerged as a new form of storytelling, using their platforms to share their lives, experiences and promote products or services.

The Future of StoryTelling

The future of storytelling relies on you. It relies on every one of us to uphold the ancient tradition of connecting and passing on information to others through our stories. The future of your business, whether you are B2B or B2C, relies on your ability to build and maintain relationships with your prospects and clients – and history has shown us this is done through stories.

If there is something we can all agree on, people do business with people they know, like, and trust. And by telling your story, but showing them you understand their story, and by having others share those stories, your business will see growth, advancement, and development. If history has shown us anything, it is that story is fundamental to our species and without it, your business will not thrive.

Think of it this way remains a huge part of our lives and its importance and relevance will continue to remain unchanged. Story is more than just the foundation for the survival and development of our species, it continues to be the bond that connects us all together. The core principles of Storytelling will continue to be a powerful tool for connecting people, preserving culture, and sharing experiences. In centuries to come, it is guaranteed to evolve and adapt to new technologies and mediums, but its importance and relevance will always remain unchanged.

It is why your story is so important. Not just for yourself. Not just for the benefit of your friends, family and for posterity's sake. It is important because it is the bond that holds us together, connects us as humans, and it foundational to our core existence. By sharing your story, and having a story that others share for you, we are continuing the art that has been a part of us for 70,000 years.

In fact, the influence storytelling has had on the development of our brains and our societies is being discovered by scientists around the world. Storytelling affects us chemically as well!

Key Takeaways

The Future of StoryTelling

The future of storytelling relies on you. It relies on every one of us to uphold the ancient tradition of connecting and passing on information to others through our stories. The future of your business, whether you are B2B or B2C, relies on your ability to build and maintain relationships with your prospects and clients – and history has shown us this is done through stories.

If there is something we can all agree on, people do business with people they know, like, and trust. And by telling your story, but showing them you understand their story, and by having others share those stories, your business will see growth, advancement, and development. If history has shown us anything, it is that story is fundamental to our species and without it, your business will not thrive.

Think of it this way remains a huge part of our lives and its importance and relevance will continue to remain unchanged. Story is more than just the foundation for the survival and development of our species, it continues to be the bond that connects us all together. The core principles of Storytelling will continue to be a powerful tool for connecting people, preserving culture, and sharing experiences. In centuries to come, it is guaranteed to evolve and adapt to new technologies and mediums, but its importance and relevance will always remain unchanged.

It is why your story is so important. Not just for yourself. Not just for the benefit of your friends, family and for posterity's sake. It is important because it is the bond that holds us together, connects us as humans, and it foundational to our core existence. By sharing your story, and having a story that others share for you, we are continuing the art that has been a part of us for 70,000 years.

In fact, the influence storytelling has had on the development of our brains and our societies is being discovered by scientists around the world. Storytelling affects us chemically as well!

Chapter Three: Story In Science

Being diagnosed with adult ADHD and PTS, I found it very difficult to trust my brain. My nervous system was out of whack, and I was living a life full of reactivity and anxiety. The brain has always been a fascinating topic to me because I desired to gain control over my life and I believed my brain was the ticket to do it – but it couldn't be trusted.

Over the years, and with the help of many people, especially my wife, Alli, I have been able to regulate my nervous system and create new neural pathways in my brain that have led me to a renewed sense of life and joy. Whether through EMDR, studying neuroplasticity, practicing mindfulness and meditation, or whatever modality exists for you at the time you are reading this, you will forever be at the mercy of your brain.

Our brains control everything, and this is why I felt it was necessary to include this chapter. Storytelling, as you have seen previously, has a looong history. But it is only recently, thanks to modern technology, that Scientists are seeing the effects that stories have on our brains.

Our Brains N'Sync

Before any of the following puns make you go, Bye, Bye, Bye let me tell you a little bit about brain waves.

Brain waves are simply oscillating electrical voltages that are being transmitted from our brains at different frequencies. You have probably heard of Alpha or Beta brain waves for when we are resting or alert and active, respectively. Studies have shown that our brain waves can actually change, and mirror those around us.

Uri Hasson, professor of neuroscience at Princeton University says that as you hear a story unfold, your brain waves start to synchronize with the brain waves of the person telling the story. In his research, he and his team discovered that the more an individual who is hearing the story can comprehend it, the more their brain wave patterns would mirror those of the storyteller.

When our brain waves are in sync with someone else's we can relate to each other more deeply. We begin to feel what they are feeling, sense what they are sensing, and you just "click."

What is it that makes it feel like you just click with some people and not with others? Well, research, like Hasson's, is showing that what we feel as "gut instinct" about someone or something is probably the synchronization of brain waves and energy, or the lack thereof.

And story is a powerful way for you to "click" with your audience. When you can tell your story well, or the story of a prospect or client, your audience will not only remember those stories but be inclined to share it with others, and instead of saying *Bye, Bye, Bye* they will be saying, *I Want You Back*. (Ok. I'm done).

Stories Are Easier To Remember

Throughout history, stories have been used to pass down important and even complex information. It is probably a chicken-or-the-egg question, but I will present it anyway: Are our brains wired to remember the details of a story better than rote facts because that is how early humans communicated or have our brains always been wired to remember stories which is why stories were the dominant source of communication?

Whichever answer it is, stories powerfully affect our brain's ability to process information. Listening to a story requires the brain to create a mental representation of the characters, settings, and events of the story, which requires the use of several cognitive processes such as attention, memory, and imagination. This helps to build our cognitive flexibility, which enables us to better understand and navigate complex problems. It also aids in our ability to recall the information more accurately and more readily.

Imagination

One of the main reasons stories help us remember details is that they engage our imagination. When we hear a story, we tend to visualize the characters and scenes in our minds. This creates a mental image that is much more vivid and memorable than simply reading or hearing a list of facts.

Mental imagery, also known as visualization or mental picturing, is a powerful tool for enhancing memory and recall. Research has shown that people who use mental imagery to encode new information are able to recall that information more easily and accurately.

When we are listening to a story, our minds will naturally imagine the scenes and details being described by the storyteller – even if we have never personally seen the place they are describing. This act of visualization makes the information easier to retrieve at a later time.

When my wife asks me to pick something up from the grocery store, without a list, I typically forget to get something. It drives her crazy, and rightfully so. In an effort to be more reliable about what I need to remember, even if I have a list, I will review that list and picture where each thing is located in the store, or what it looks like in its packaging. If I forget the list or misplace it – and before I ask her to send it to me – I try to recall what was written down. By visualizing what the item looks like or where it is located, I can remember a majority of the list, without having memorized it.

Perhaps, like me, you have heard your whole life how repetition is the most effective path to improving memory and recall. We have all heard the radio commercials that work off of this philosophy – I find them very annoying. And research has shown that repetition lacks the same level of meaning and connection to existing knowledge that is found through imagination and mental imagery. Mental imagery has the ability to connect new information to existing knowledge and, as a result, makes recall that much more effective.

Context

Another reason stories help us remember details is that they provide context. When we hear a story, we understand the characters, their motivations, and the events that led up to the story. This helps us make sense of the details and see how they fit into the bigger picture. Without context, details can seem random and unimportant, but when they are part of a story, they become more meaningful and memorable.

When we cannot or do not explain our WHY, we rob our audience of context. Why do you do what you do? It's one thing to tell your prospect, client, friend, family member, co-

worker, boss, etc. WHAT you do or what you have done, but it is something else entirely when you can provide them with context and the motivation behind WHY.

In later chapters I will show you how to craft your story, or any story for that matter, and give you a better sense of where and when to use them. We tend to offer too much context in situations and in other too little or none at all. It is important to know what context is relevant to your situation and what your audience needs to know for the story to have impact.

Relatable

Stories also help us remember details by making them more relatable. When we hear a story, we can relate to the characters and their experiences. This makes the details more meaningful and relevant to us, which makes them more likely to stick in our minds.

I remember having to read Don Quixote for school when I was younger. I don't remember very much from reading the book. I am questioning whether or not I actually read it. I was easily distracted, and I would often find myself reading the same paragraph 12 times and not remembering what I read. These days, I love Audible!

I do remember Wishbone. Wishbone was a show of a Jack Russel Terrier by the same name that went on all sorts of adventures. I loved that show, probably still do, just haven't watched it in a while. One of the episodes in season 1 was "The Impawssible Dream", the story of Don Quixote. I remember this adventure to this day. I remember much of the episode and the characters' faces, albeit a little foggy. To this day, Don Quixote is one of my most favorite stories.

Looking back, I imagine that it was the relatable nature of the show (geared towards kids) that stamped it into memory, but I also felt a relatable connection to Don Quixote. Perhaps in his insanity and desire to be free from the constraints of reality to live the life he could only imagine, but he was truly delusional. In many ways, my survival as a kid relied on my own

delusions, but as I grew older it was the wrestling of these dueling “realities” that I found my love for philosophy and knowledge.

I wear Picasso’s 1955 sketch of Don Quixote on my arm as a reminder that we can be fooled by our own delusions, but also that we should not let the nay-sayers of the world stop us from fulfilling our quest.

Emotional

The science of storytelling in the brain involves the activation of various neural networks and cognitive processes. The brain can process and understand stories by recognizing patterns, making connections, and simulating experiences. The areas of the brain associated with language, memory, and emotion are particularly active when we hear or read a story. For example, the Broca's and Wernicke's areas in the frontal lobe are responsible for language processing, the hippocampus and amygdala are involved in memory and emotional processing.

Additionally, the default mode network, a set of brain regions that are active when the mind is at rest and not focused on the outside world, plays a role in integrating information from different parts of the brain to create a cohesive narrative. Studies have shown that the brain responds to stories similarly as it does to real-life experiences, which can lead to increased empathy and understanding of others

Scientists have discovered that storytelling releases a neuropeptide in our brains called oxytocin. Commonly known as the "bonding hormone," oxytocin plays a crucial role in building and maintaining relationships by increasing feelings of trust, empathy, and connection between individuals.

When we hear a story, our brains release oxytocin, which creates a sense of connection with the person telling the story and the characters within it. This chemical reaction in our brains allows us to relate to the characters and understand their emotions, making the story feel more real and personal to us.

Oxytocin also plays a role in building trust and empathy. When we hear a story, we are able to understand and relate to the emotions of the characters, which can lead to increased trust and

understanding in our own relationships. Additionally, oxytocin can increase our ability to empathize with others, which helps us to connect with them on a deeper level.

Oxytocin isn't the only hormone produced; the act of storytelling also triggers the release of the chemical dopamine in our brains. Dopamine is responsible for feelings of pleasure and valuing and seeking rewards. Often associated with rewards such as food, sex, and drugs, dopamine is foundational to the It is also

Overall, science has found that storytelling plays a crucial role in building and maintaining relationships. The release of oxytocin and dopamine in our brains helps to create feelings of trust, empathy, and connection, which are essential for strong and healthy relationships. By understanding the science behind storytelling, we can appreciate the importance of story in life and in business.