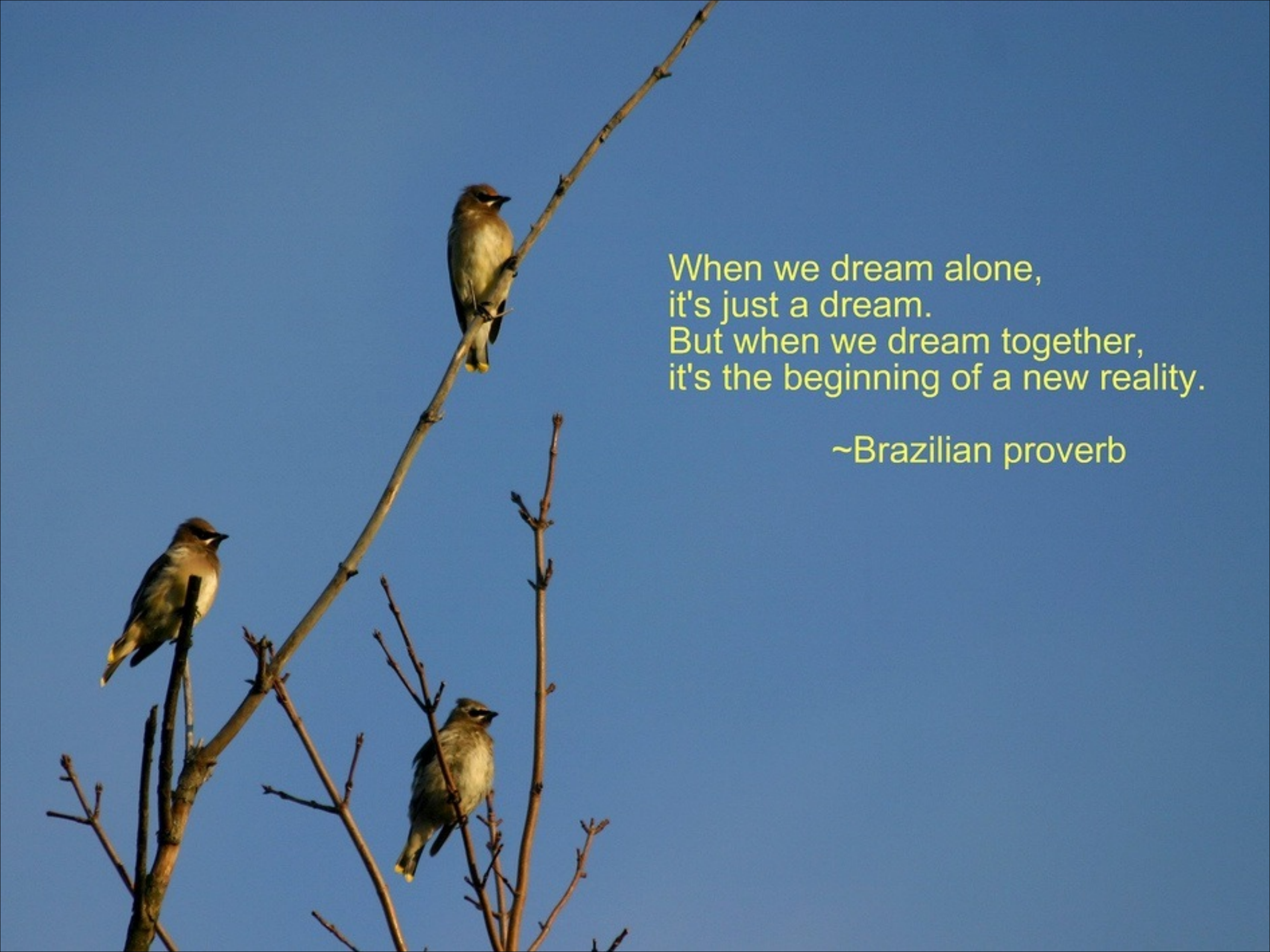




# Storytelling to Build Community

A Workshop for VCF & BJJ  
with  
Barbara Ganley



A photograph of three small birds perched on a bare, light-brown branch against a clear, bright blue sky. The birds are positioned at different heights along the branch, which runs diagonally from the bottom left towards the top right. The bird at the top is facing right, while the other two are facing left. The lighting suggests a sunny day, with soft shadows on the birds' feathers.

When we dream alone,  
it's just a dream.  
But when we dream together,  
it's the beginning of a new reality.

~Brazilian proverb





What do we mean by community?



# Membership





What makes us feel we belong?





Trust





A photograph showing several black birds, possibly Red-tailed Tropicbirds, in flight. They have black plumage and a distinctive bright red collar around the neck. The birds are captured in various stages of flight against a light-colored, textured wall. The ground in the foreground is covered in grey gravel. The word "Efficacy" is overlaid in the center of the image.

Efficacy



# Metaphor Exercise








What do stories  
have to do  
with community?



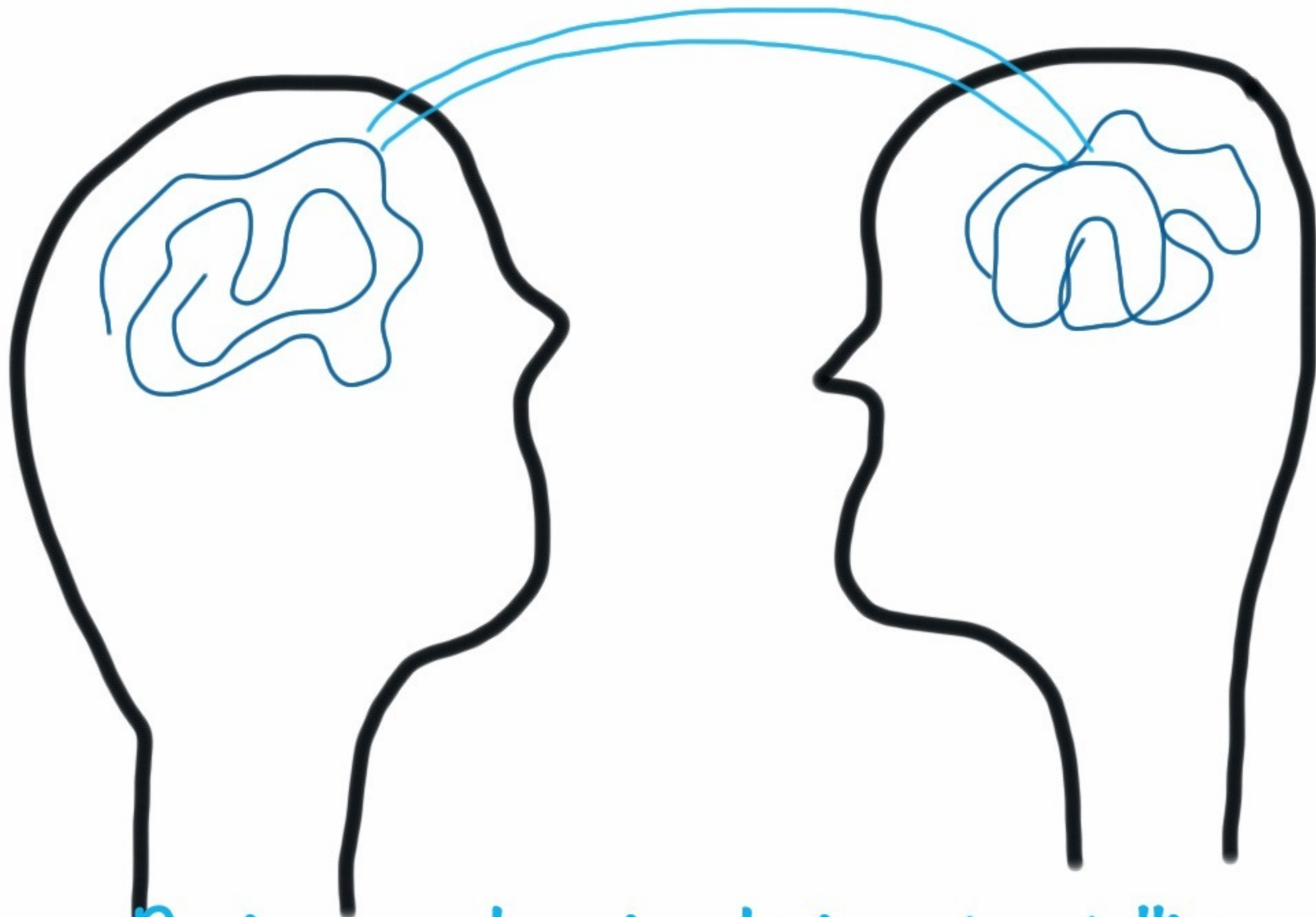
A photograph of two elderly women standing on a sidewalk in front of a red brick wall. The woman on the left is wearing a colorful patterned jacket, a dark headscarf, and dark trousers, and is carrying a brown shoulder bag. The woman on the right is wearing a light-colored coat, glasses, and brown shoes, and is holding a blue shopping bag with a house illustration. Two bicycles are parked against the wall behind them. A semi-transparent text box is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Evolutionary biologist Michael Gazzaniga on  
the brain hardwired to tell & listen to stories  
([http://bigthink.com/users/michaelgazzaniga#  
%21video\\_idea\\_id=41940](http://bigthink.com/users/michaelgazzaniga/%21video_idea_id=41940))

Psychologist Robin Dunbar on gossip as the  
glue to keep communities together.  
([http://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?  
isbn=9780674363366](http://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=9780674363366))

We are the storytelling species





Brains synchronize during storytelling

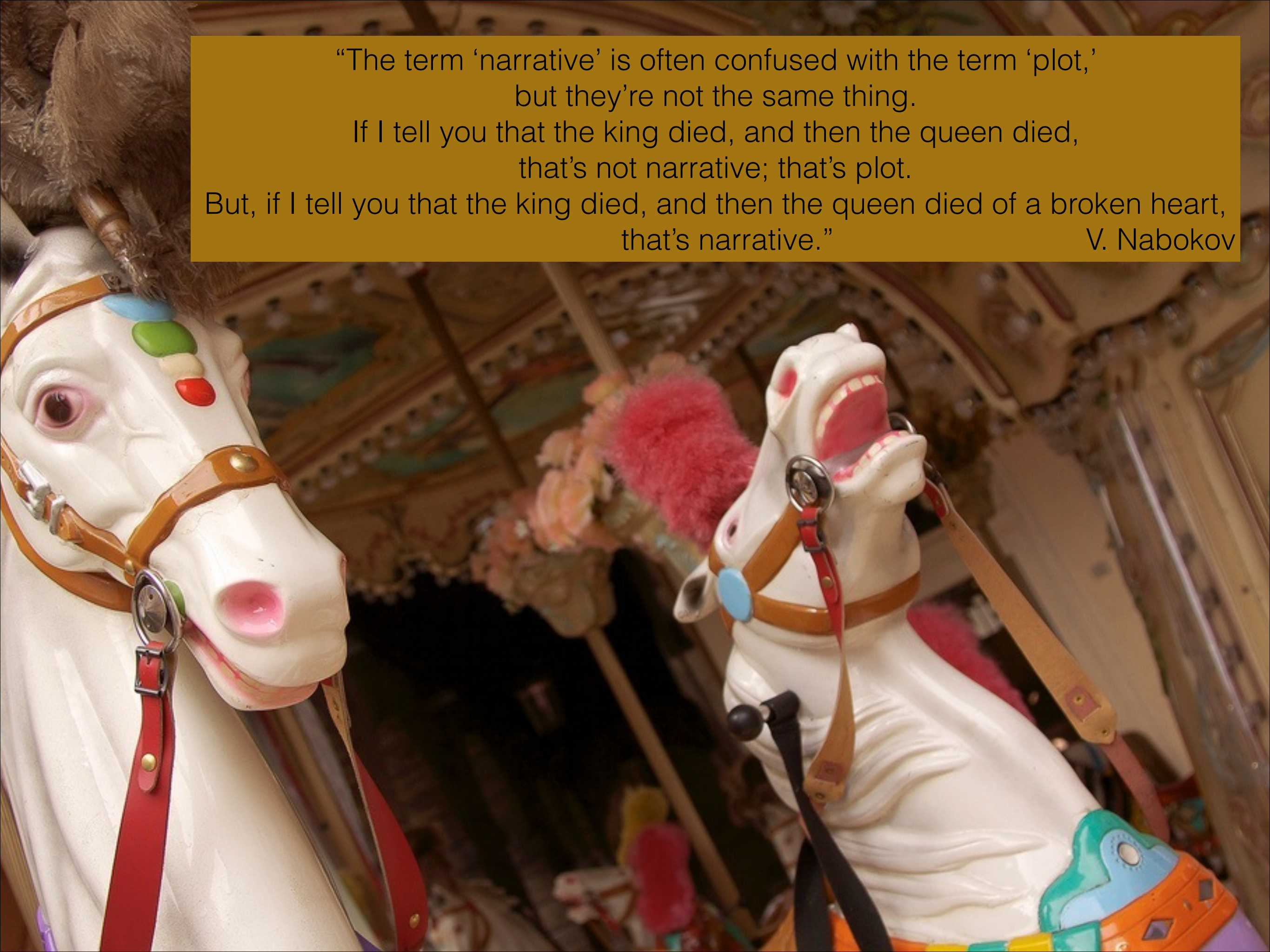


“The term ‘narrative’ is often confused with the term ‘plot,’  
but they’re not the same thing.

If I tell you that the king died, and then the queen died,  
that’s not narrative; that’s plot.

But, if I tell you that the king died, and then the queen died of a broken heart,  
that’s narrative.”

V. Nabokov





Turning Point



Resolution

Change!

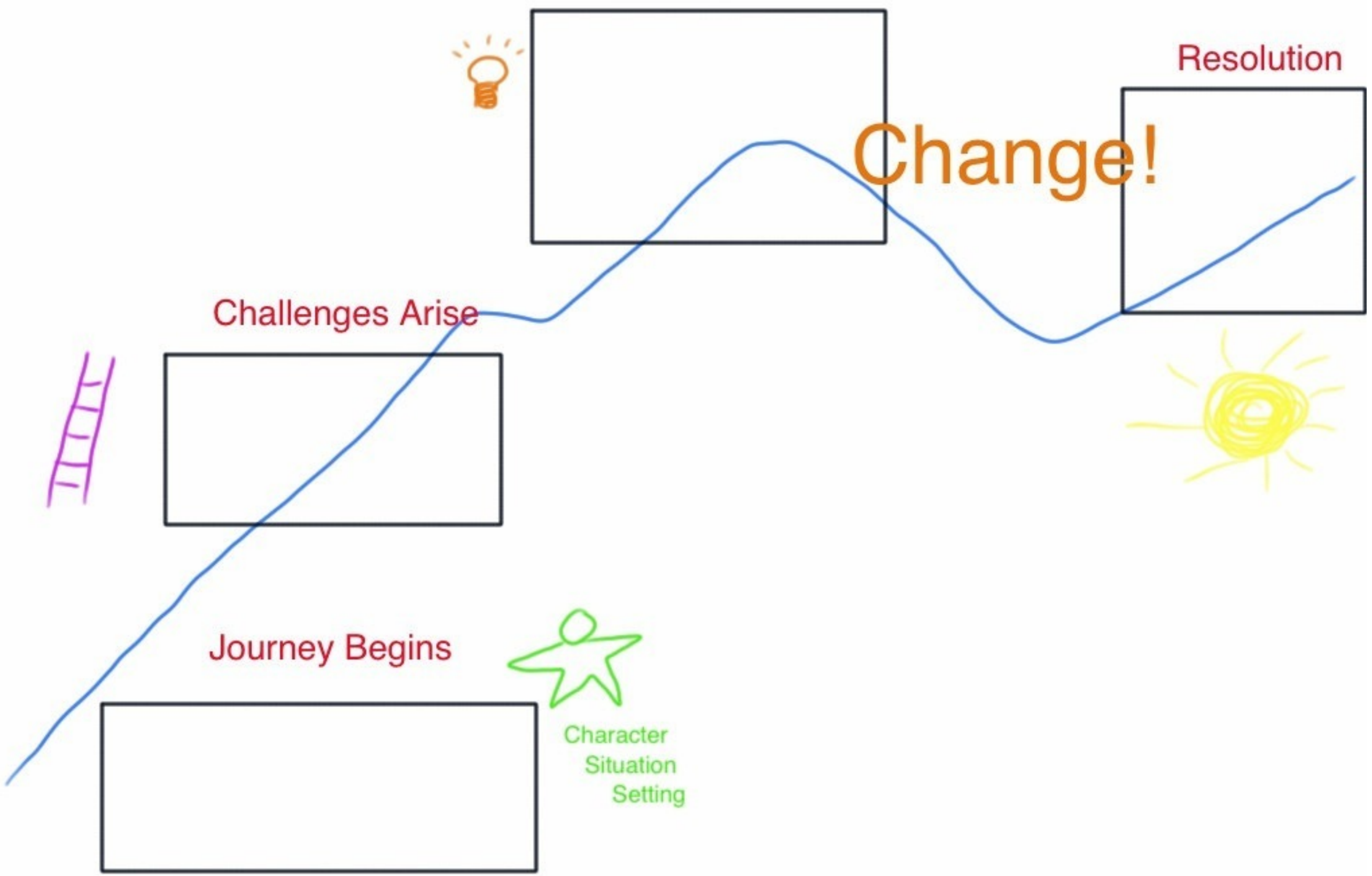
Challenges Arise



Journey Begins



Character  
Situation  
Setting





to inspire

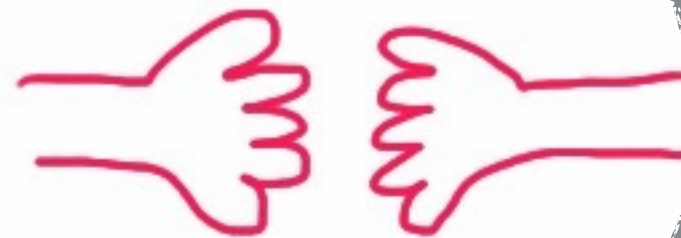
to learn

# Why we tell stories

to teach

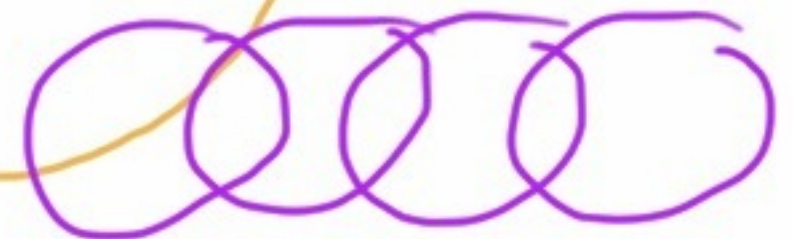


To share information



To connect

To make things stick





A wooden staircase with a handrail leads up a grassy hill. The sky is blue with white clouds. The text is overlaid on the image in three colored boxes: a blue box at the top, a green box on the left, and a yellow box on the right.

# How can story/telling help our communities?

## Transmission of Culture

Lessons of the Past  
Realities of the Present  
Plans for the Future

## Bonding & Bridging

Engaging the Full Community  
Inviting Reconciliation  
Fostering Empathy & Belonging



# The Story Spiral

L-I-S-T-E-N



C-E-L-E-B-R-A-T-E

S-H-A-R-E

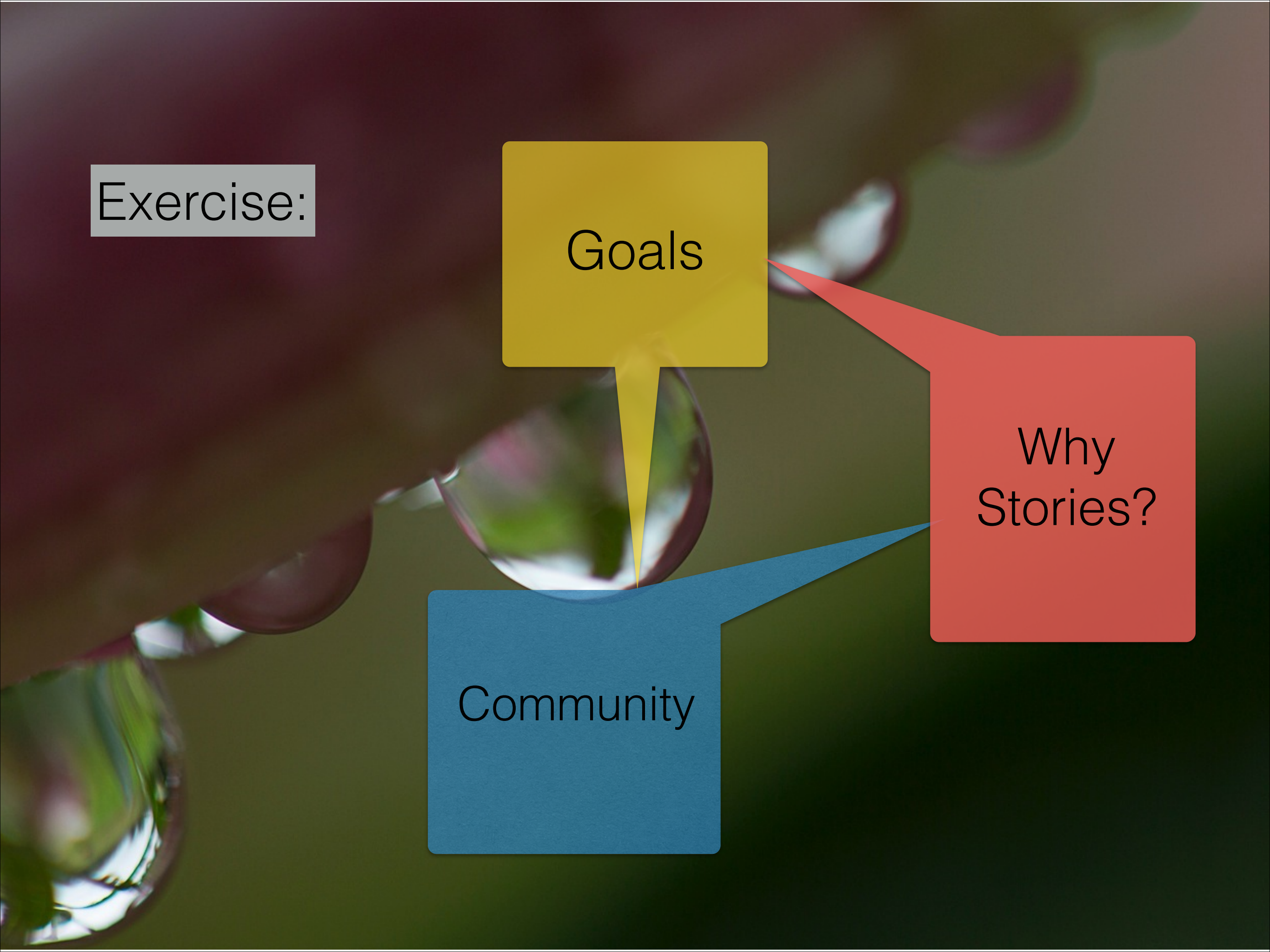


Exercise:

Goals

Why  
Stories?

Community





# Stories and Community: How







# Finding the right story

**Your purpose + your community + audience**



# Story Approaches & Outcomes

Circles



Interviews



Events

Collections



Relationships  
Trust

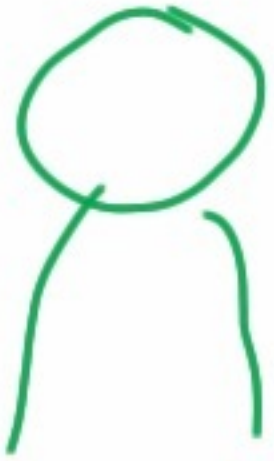
Knowledge  
Capacity

Vision

Action



# Your Audience, Your Story Holder Asks



**Why Me?**

**Why Now?**

**What Next?**





The background of the slide is a photograph of a body of water. In the upper left, a person is rowing a small, light-colored boat. In the lower right, the bow of another similar boat is visible, floating on the water. The water has a blueish tint and some ripples.

# Belfast Shared History Story Project

- Chinese-Irish, Polish Immigrants & Northern Irish
- Group Story Interviews—Past, Present & Future
- Photos
- Story Circles Between the Groups
- Touring Exhibition
- Theater: A Play from the Interviews





## **A community storytelling celebration**

in conjunction with the Art & Soul Civic Engagement Initiative

<http://www.slideshare.net/ortonfamilyfoundation/starksboro-stories-art-soul-civic-engagement>

Robinson Elementary School  
Starksboro, VT  
December 4, 2008



# Story Booths & One Question, Fifty People





# Murmur Project



<http://murmurtoronto.ca/>

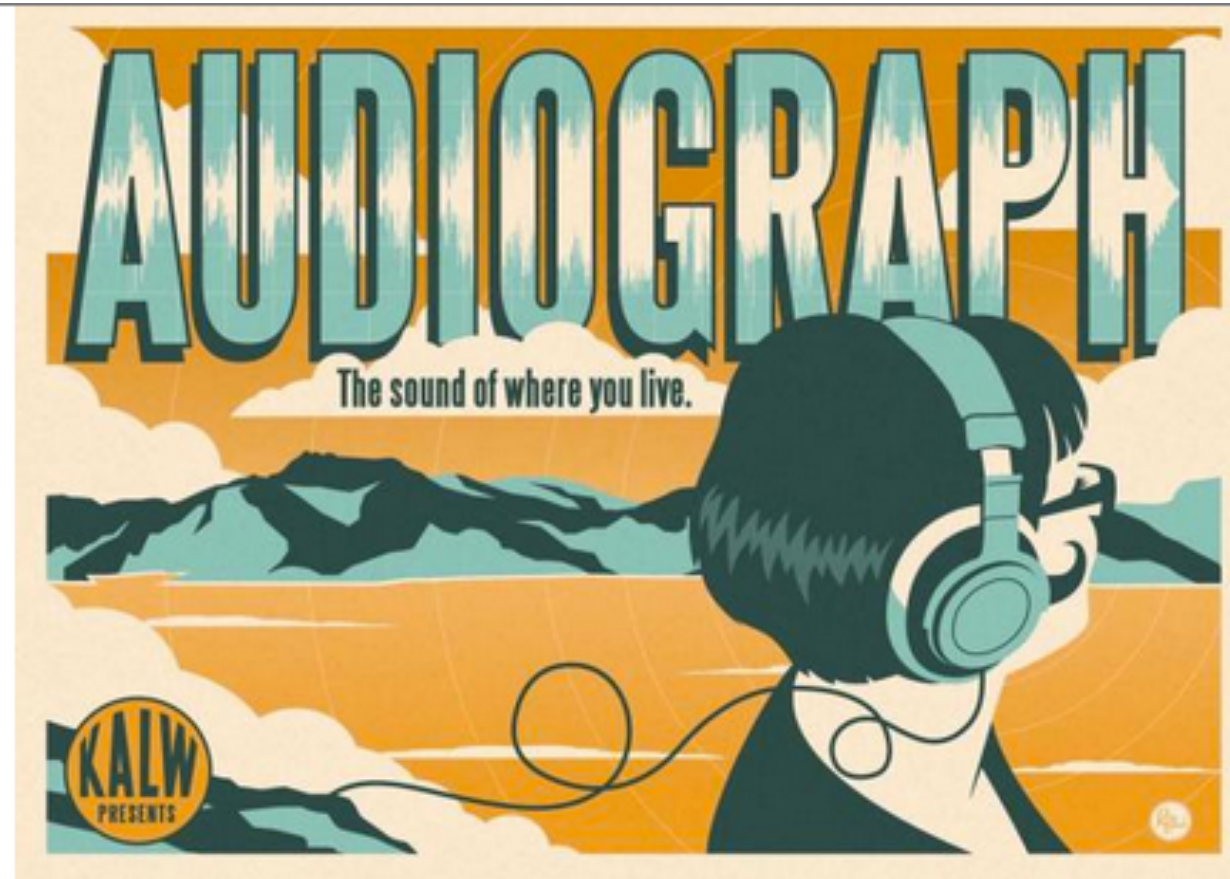




# Mural Stories



# Audio Storytelling



Credit Rich Black / <http://rblack.org/>

There are lots of tools you can use to experiment with audio storytelling – radio, digital, social, community engagement, quizzes. With [Audiograph](#), KALW found a way to combine all of that into one unique project.

Audiograph is a weekly feature at [KALW](#). It uses "the sounds of voices, nature, industry, and music to tell the story of" the Bay Area.

<http://audiograph.tumblr.com/>

Here's how it works:

Each week, KALW records a sound from somewhere in the Bay Area. The sound is broadcast on air and posted online on Monday. Like [this terrifying sound](#) from September:



Listeners have to guess the origin of the sound and can call in to submit their guesses. They're also encouraged to submit ideas for future Audiographs. The winner gets a t-



# Westminster Stories

Stories from a street in Providence, Rhode Island

[home](#) [the museum of westminster street](#) [about the project](#) [tell your story](#) [get updates](#) [further reading](#) [contact us](#)

"We have to be leaders."

Image-Text Stories Online

Lou has been working as a street cleaner on Westminster Street for about four years, pushing a distinctive yellow cart. "I do this in the mornings, and then at night I'm a drug and alcohol counsellor. I've been working there for about twenty years. It keeps me going."

[Click to read more](#)



HOME

ABOUT

METHODOLOGY

PARTICIPATE

SPONSOR

RESOURCES

COMMISSIONS

Prev

1

2

3

4

Next



## Suzanne

After growing up in Yellow Springs, Suzanne moved to the Bay area for 10 years. She returned to her childhood home to raise her own daughter with the help of her mother. While life is “easier” here, in ways that only a small, inter-generational community can be, Suzanne speaks about the danger of considering this place as being “so different” that we end up in a values and culture struggle, set-apart from the larger world.

[Continue Reading](#)

Four Interviews Together



Three Interviews Together: Can you catch the trick?



The First Two Interviews Together



# Video Story Interviews

The screenshot displays the 'invisiblePEOPLE' website. At the top left is the logo 'invisiblePEOPLE'. To the right is a navigation bar with links: HOME, ABOUT, BLOG, IN YOUR BACK YARD, MORE STORIES, and DONATE. Below the navigation bar is a horizontal row of four video interview portraits, each with a name label at the bottom: Rodger (an older man in a cap), Ron (a man in a beanie), Tammy (a woman), and David (an older man with a beard and hat). Below the portraits is a social media bar with icons for Subscribe, Facebook, Twitter, Google+, YouTube, Flickr, and Instagram. On the left side, there is a 'caution' box with the text: 'Some content may be offensive. Our hope is you'll get mad enough to do something.' At the bottom, a URL is displayed: <http://invisiblepeople.tv/blog/>.

invisiblePEOPLE

HOME ABOUT BLOG IN YOUR BACK YARD MORE STORIES DONATE

Rodger Ron Tammy David

caution  
Some content may be offensive. Our hope is you'll get mad enough to do something.

<http://invisiblepeople.tv/blog/>

Subscribe Facebook Twitter Google+ YouTube Flickr Instagram



14Free is a video project that features one meal program in each of Vermont's fourteen counties and brings you the real-life success stories that are ending hunger and malnutrition in Vermont. Hunger Free Vermont is the home base of support, education, and advocacy to help make these programs a reality.

14Free: 14 counties. 14 stories. 14 solutions.



<http://www.hungerfreevt.org/>





Find out more about Bristol's  
past and present through over  
200 digital stories from within  
the Bristol community. What  
lies at the heart of each story is  
the person's unique voice -  
telling us about the people,  
places and events that are  
important in their lives. [Read  
more](#)





## Not-So-Expected Stories

List stories

Sounds of Starksboro

Image-Only Stories

Poems, Maps

Collaborative Stories

Postcards, Story Mosaics/Quilts, Wishing Walls

Wish Book, Traveling storybook

A Day in the Life of Starksboro

Story Quests

Guerilla Storytelling (Performance)

## Stories in the Landscape

Kiosk

Bulletin Board

Murmur-type project

Tours

Story boxes, story benches



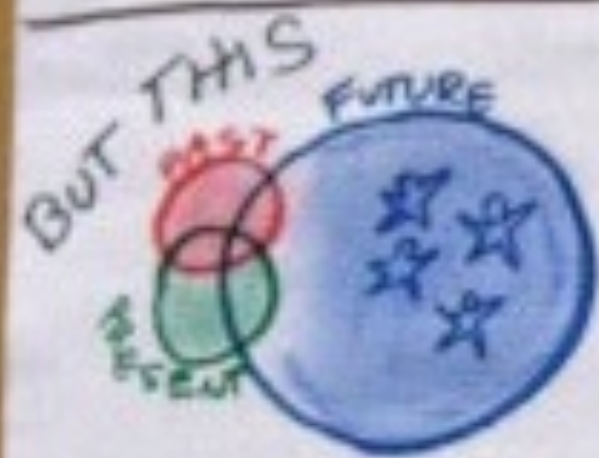
Original Photo by <http://www.flickr.com/photos/jessedraper>



# Challenges







HONORING & LEARNING  
FROM PAST & PRESENT  
WHILE LOOKING TO & CREATING  
FUTURE

## PAST STORY



WHY?  
UNDERSTANDING  
RECONCILIATION  
HOW THINGS CAME TO BE

## PRESENT STORY



RECOGNITION OF  
HOW THINGS ARE  
A COMPLEX REALITY

## FUTURE STORY

WHAT WE CREATE

SMALL CHANGES

SMALL CHANGES



CO-CREATION OF  
A REALISTIC,  
SUSTAINABLE  
FUTURE FOR  
OUR  
COMMUNITY

DISRUPTIVE ISSUES  
+ OBSTACLES

## HOW?

INTERVIEWS  
DIGITAL STORIES  
MEMORY MAPS  
EVENTS  
MURALS  
TOURS

STORY CIRCLES  
STORY QUILTS  
DIGITAL STORIES  
NEIGHBORHOOD &  
THEME-BASED  
STORY

WISH-DAY EVENT  
WISH BOOK  
PAST + PRESENT  
STORIES WOVEN  
INTO FACILITATED



How do we engage people?





Capacity





# Network Mapping





# Outreach: Engaging the Full Community



Locating &  
Engaging the  
Hubs


Matching story  
type  
& scenario  
to least likely  
participants



# Stocking a Story Bank







# Story Circles



# Neighborhood & City-wide Story Circles

Celebrations

Thematic  
Events



Please join us for a  
**Community Conversation**  
*"Special People, Special Places of Damariscotta"*



Pot Luck dinner and story-telling evening

Sponsored by

The Damariscotta Planning Advisory Committee (DPAC)

Thursday, January 29, 2009

5:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

At Mobius, 319 Main Street

(across from Yellowfront Grocery)

Please bring a dish to share and a story to tell about places or  
people that mean a lot to you in Damariscotta

RSVP

380-4802 or e-mail [DPAC@friendsmidcoast.org](mailto:DPAC@friendsmidcoast.org)

Sponsored by DPAC, a committee of the Town of Damariscotta, appointed by the Selectboard to lead a community driven visioning process to make the Damariscotta region a better place to live, work and play, do business and visit. Its work includes establishing and maintaining an on-going long range planning process and incorporating public dialogue in on-going planning efforts.

Site-Specific  
Events

Walking  
Story  
Circles





Connecting Our Stories





Clustering and Discussing Themes & Threads



A photograph of two elderly men sitting on a dark wooden bench against a light-colored stone wall. The man on the left, wearing a grey flat cap and a dark suit, is pointing his right index finger towards the man on the right. The man on the right, with white hair and wearing a dark sweater over a collared shirt and white trousers, is holding several magazines or newspapers in his lap. The scene is outdoors, and the lighting is soft, suggesting a calm, conversational moment.

Asking for Stories





# Ethical Story Gathering


What will we do with the stories?





What kind of listener am I?



A photograph of a paved road winding through a misty or foggy landscape. The road is dark and occupies the lower half of the frame. On either side of the road, there are tall, dark evergreen trees. The fog is thick, obscuring the background and creating a sense of depth and mystery. The sky is a pale, uniform color due to the fog.

# Asking Great Questions

finding & entering the space  
within the story





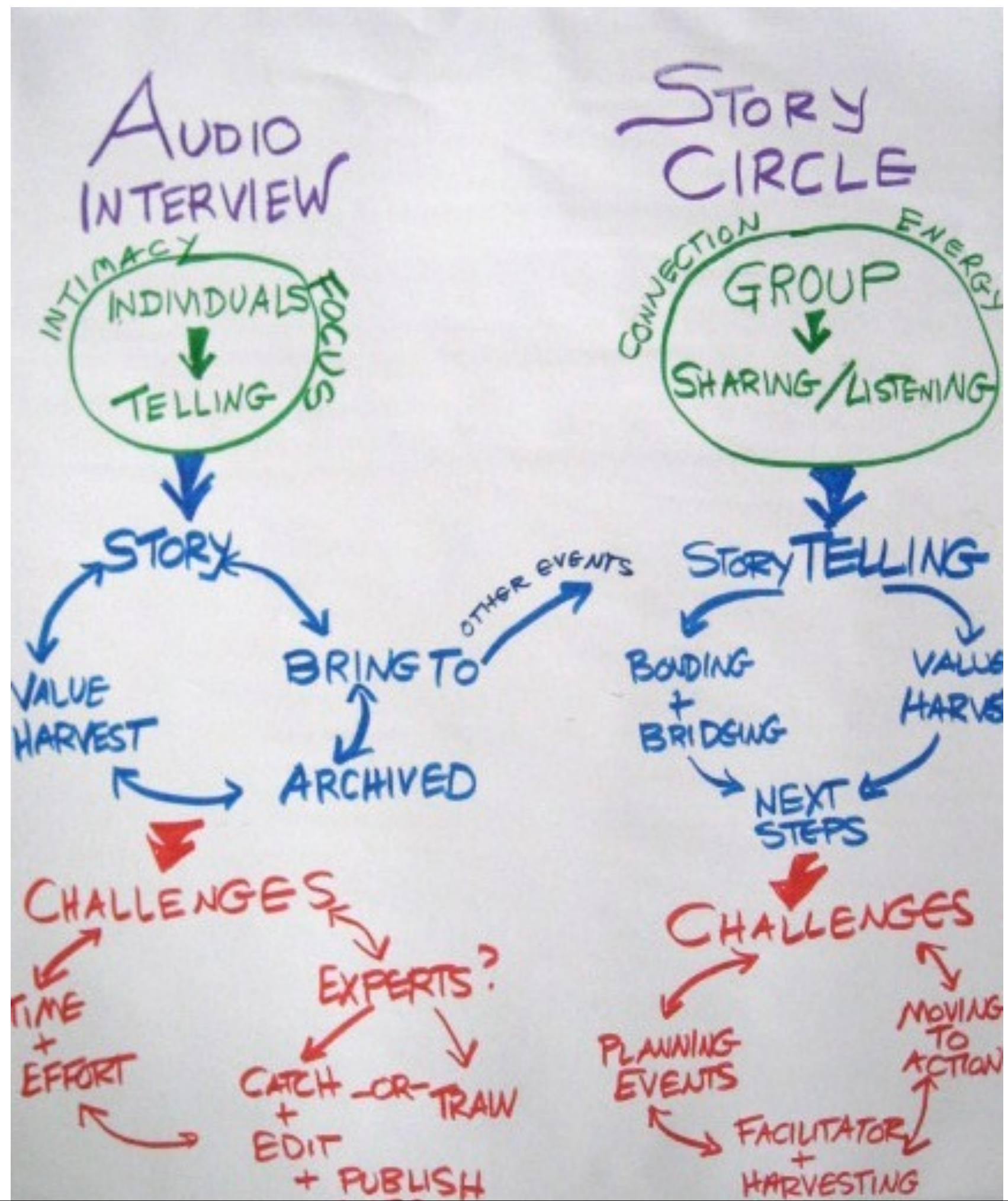
# Exercise: Story Interviews

1. Role Play: Asking for Map Stories
2. Triad Story Interviews: Asker, Teller, Observer



# Comparing Story Interviews to Story Circles

How do they match  
your goals  
& community?





# Weaving Storytelling Projects into Community





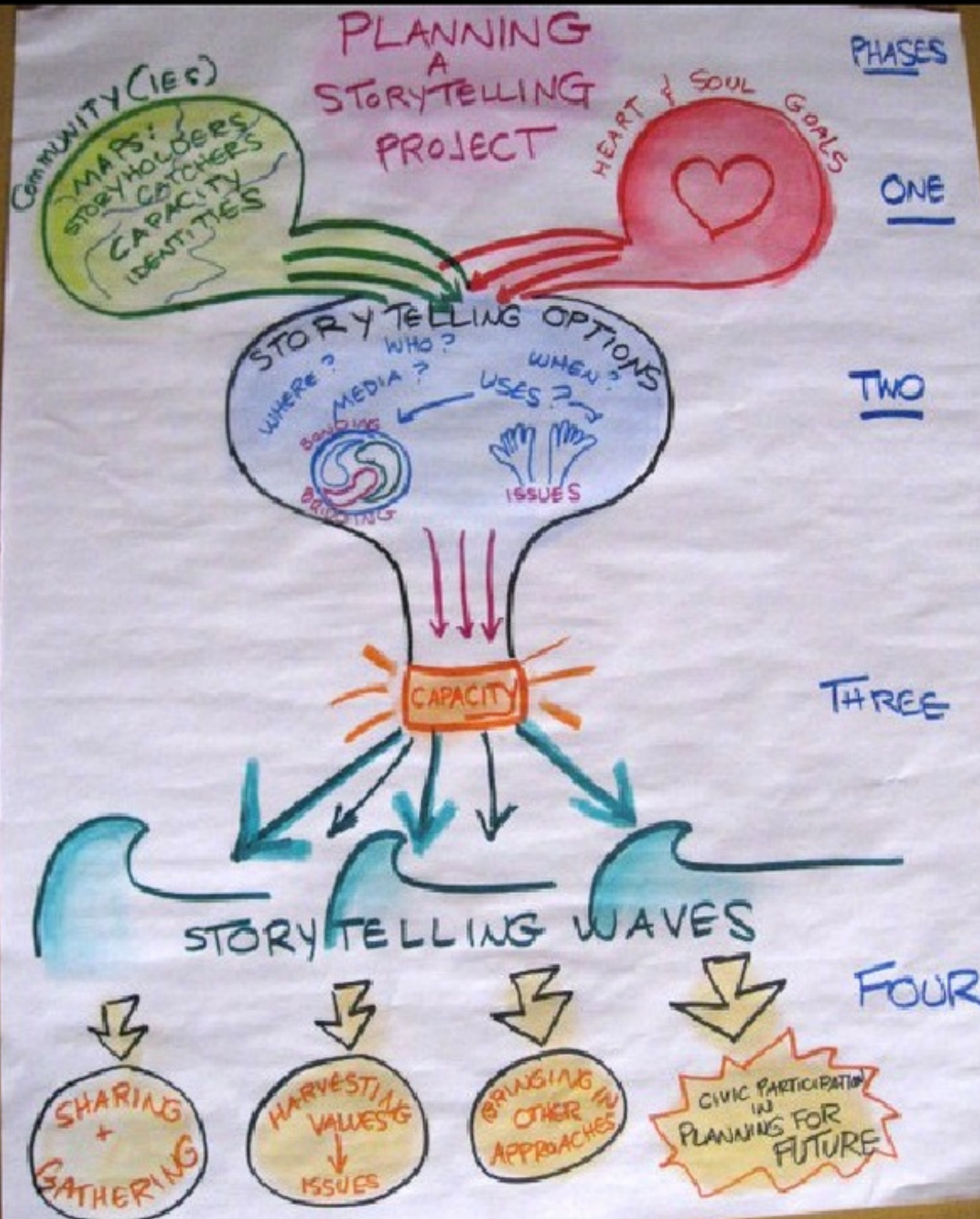


How do we connect?  
Where do we connect?

Ask & do a little research: <http://www.pewinternet.org/>



# The Four Phases



Map & Set Goals

Consider Story Options: how they match community & goals

Get Realistic about Resources & Capacity

Plan Waves:  
Moving from bonding to harvesting to dialogue to active civic participation while weaving in art projects



# IMPACT

# CHALLENGE

SOLO



EFFORTS

- ✓ PEOPLE W/NO TIME
- ✓ THOSE WHO LIKE TO MAKE THINGS ON THEIR OWN

- ★ Who moderates?
- ★ Publish where?
- ★ Who benefits?
- ↳ REACH?



INTERVIEWS

- ✓ PEOPLE UNLIKELY TO PARTICIPATE
- ✓ INTIMACY/BONDING
- ✓ VALUES HARVESTED BY SHARER
- ✓ MINI-DIALOGUES
- ✓ STORIES SAVED

- ★ Time Consuming!
- ★ Training - interviewing, recording, editing, harvesting
- ★ Keeping story ownership intact



STORY

CIRCLES

- ✓ People come TOGETHER
- ✓ BONDING/BRIDGING/TRUST
- ✓ MOVING TO DIALOGUE
- ✓ HARVESTING VALUES EASY
- ✓ MANY PEOPLE REACHED
- ✓ WEAVING IN OF OTHER APPROACHES

- ★ Some training-facilitating
- ★ Some planning effort
- ★ Stories can disappear
- ★ Disruptive issues can surface

CO-CREATION



EVENTS & PROJECTS

- ✓ FUN
- ✓ BONDING/BRIDGING/TRUST
- ✓ ART/INSTALLATIONS/TOURS/PUBLICATIONS → VARIETY!
- ✓ STORIES LIVE ON
- ✓ REACH → THROUGH COMMUNITY
- ✓ SENSE OF GETTING THINGS DONE
- ✓ WEAVING IN OF OTHER APPROACHES

- ★ often time-consuming
- ↳ over time
- ↳ training+planning
- ★ Group energy? (Burn-out)
- Commitment



# STORYTELLING WAVES

KICK-OFF EVENTS  
DRAWINGS + PILGR

TO DISCOVER & TO CELEBRATE

INTERVIEWS + STORYCIRCLES  
NEIGHBORHOODS + GROUPS

TO REACH OUT FURTHER  
TO GET SPECIFIC

CITY-WIDE EVENTS

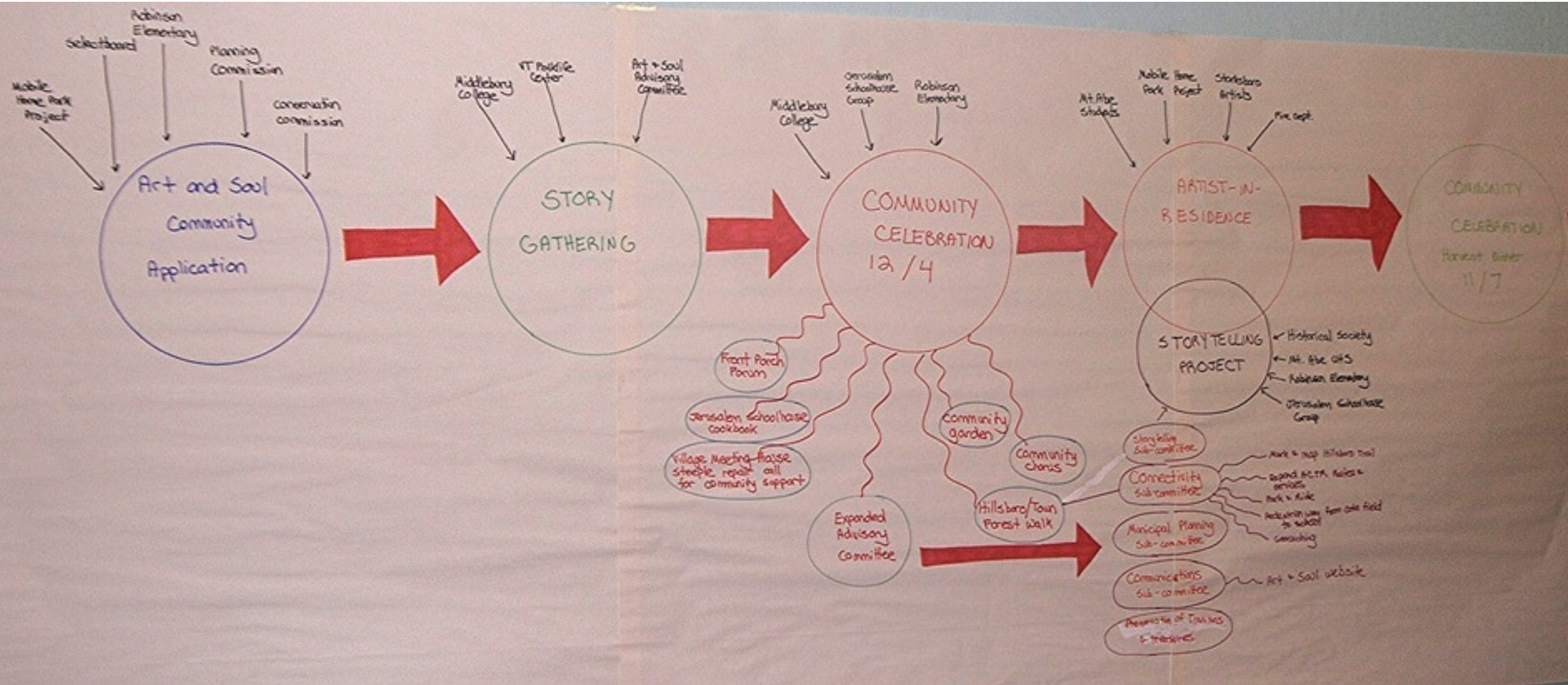
TO PRESENT & DISCUSS  
TO CELEBRATE

CITY-WIDE WORKING EVENTS


TO BUILD STORY MOSAIC  
TO CREATE THE FUTURE



# A Storytelling Timeline







Questions?  
Projects to share?

Contact Barbara  
at [community-expressions.com](http://community-expressions.com)  
[barbaraganley@gmail.com](mailto:barbaraganley@gmail.com)  
802-989-1885