

# How to Get Story Ideas

*“In West Africa, when a person in the village becomes sick, the healer will ask, when was the last time that you sang? When was the last time that you danced? When was the last time that you shared a story?” (Cox)*

## Types of Stories

### Character Stories

How we feel about another person, relative, or pet that is deeply important to us. Descriptions of love, how we were inspired by, how we want to recognize them, how we find meaning in our relationships to them.

### Memorial Stories

Honoring and remembering people who have passed is an essential part of the process of grieving. While these stories are often the most difficult and painful to produce, the results are the most powerful. What was the relationship, what event or incident captures their character, what lessons did they teach, what would you have said to them?

### Adventure Stories

Those who travel, or go on serious adventures, know that the experience is usually an invitation to challenge ourselves, to change perspective about our lives, to reassess. People tend to return from these experiences with personal realizations, and the process of recounting travel stories is as much about sharing as reliving those realizations.

### Accomplishment Stories

These stories describe achieving goals: graduating, landing a major contract, or overcoming an obstacle. These stories easily fit into the desire-struggle-realization structure of a classic story. Do not merely make it a documentary, describe your relationship to the event, your experience of it, the defining moment, and what you learned. How did it change your life.

### A Story about a Place in my Life

Our sense of place is the basis of many profound stories. The Wales stories are frequently about a sense of place. This sense leads us to identify the character of a place and potentially how human character evolved. They may be stories about one's home, an ancestral home, a town, a park, mountain, or forests. It might be a restaurant, store, or gathering place. Your insights into place give insight about a sense of values and connection to the community. How do you describe this place, did others share the same sense, descriptions of a defining experience, what lessons are learned from the concept of place.

### The Story About What I Do

Life stories for many people in professional careers is shaped by their job. For other people, the thing that they do that has value to them is their hobby or ongoing social commitments. The culture of the characters that inhabit the workplace, our spiritual or philosophical relationship to work or avocation lead to many stories.

### **Recovery Stories**

Sharing the experience of overcoming a great challenge in life, like a health crisis or a great personal obstacle, is the fundamental archetype in human story making. If you can transmit the range of experience from descent, to crisis, to realization, you can always move an audience.

### **Love Stories**

Romance and partnership, familial or fraternal love, naturally lend themselves to the desire-struggle-realization formula. We want to know how someone met their partner, what it was like when the baby was born, or what our relationship with our siblings and parents is. We constantly test other people's experiences in these fundamental relationships to affirm our own.

### **Discovery Stories**

The process of learning is a rich field to mine for stories. We love to illustrate how we uncovered the facts to get at the truth, whether it is fixing something, or developing a new product. Or discovering a new truth.

### **Targeted Storytelling for Research purposes**

As anthropologists, we may want targeted stories for research or for action projects.

- Ernie's Rivers –
- Snowbowl/Peaks Trail
- Land Use Issues
- Identity stories
- A sense of place