

Victim Story vs. Responsible Story

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(Revised: 28. July 2017 by Nicola Neumann-Mangoldt)

FORMAT:

Group process in ETB (2nd day in the evening).

Duration: approx. 2,5 hours

PURPOSE:

To learn that we create our box by choosing what meaning to give to our experiences. We are meaning makers. We are never victims. We create our experiences by choosing our interpretations.

INSTRUCTIONS/PROCEDURE:

1. Intro
2. Exercise „Victim story“
 - 2.1 Nacktschnecke tells a story – Tintenfisch holds space
 - 2.1.1 Nacktschnecke speaks – 1st round
 - 2.1.2 Nacktschnecke gets Feedback & Coaching - 1st round
 - 2.1.3 Nacktschnecke speaks – 2nd round
 - 2.1.4 Nacktschnecke gets Feedback & Coaching - 2nd round
 - 2.2 Tintenfisch tells a story – Nacktschnecke holds space
 - 2.2.1 Tintenfisch speaks – 1st round
 - 2.2.2 Tintenfisch gets Feedback & Coaching - 1st round
 - 2.2.3 Tintenfisch speaks – 2nd round
 - 2.2.4 Tintenfisch bekommt Feedback & Coaching - 2nd round
3. LANDING THE SHIFT OF MAPS (Map of Responsibility old/new)
4. Exercise „Responsible story“
 - 4.1 Nacktschnecke tells responsible story – Tintenfisch holds space
 - 4.1.1 Nacktschnecke speaks – 1st round
 - 4.1.2 Nacktschnecke gets Feedback & Coaching - 1st round
 - 4.1.3 Nacktschnecke speaks – 2nd round
 - 4.1.4 Nacktschnecke gets Feedback & Coaching - 2nd round
 - 4.2 Tintenfisch tells responsible story– Nacktschnecke holds space
 - 4.2.1 Tintenfisch speaks – 1st round
 - 4.2.2 Tintenfisch gets Feedback & Coaching - 1st round
 - 4.2.3 Tintenfisch speaks– 2nd round
 - 4.2.4 Tintenfisch gets Feedback & Coaching - 2nd round
5. Review of Exercise
6. Discussion „Map of stories“
 - 6.1 Which story gives you more power?
 - 6.1.1 Examples of critical questions/comments during the discussion
 - 6.2 Which story is true?
 - 6.3 How can a story be true?
7. Is-Glue and Is-Glue Dissolver
8. Closing
9. After the process

!!! Hints for the entire process!!!

- During this 2,5 hour process you speak very slow and in a very soft voice, especially during the exercise instructions. During the introduction you already build a very sensitive energetic space by the way you speak, which is essential for this process.
- Keep your integrity. Do not laugh or smile at all during this process. Especially not in the case when you lead the training together with one or several trainers and one of you whispers a joke into your ear while the participants are doing the story exercise. Keep your center and hold the space under any circumstances. For the participants this is a serious process.
- This process is on purpose extended in time so that ideally **ALL** participants **GET IT!**

Hint: Sometimes it might happen that one or two people don't get it. If it becomes obvious that somebody doesn't get one of the first two questions during the discussion while the rest of the group is already on board, invite them to stay with the group and with the discussion. They might get it at a later point or the next day.

- AND: concentrate on not mixing up the Tintenfische and Nacktschnecken during the many exercise rounds.

1. Intro

„We will now do a process. Please look around in the room and **choose a partner with whom you will go through some things**. Please spread in the room and sit facing each other.” => Through this announcement the appropriate dyads will find each other, because with this distinction you bring the depth of the exercise into the space.

2. Exercise „Victim story“

One person in each pair puts up your hand => you are the Nacktschnecken.
The other person puts up your hand => you are the Tintenfische.

2.1 Nacktschnecke tells story - Tintenfisch holds space

2.1.1 Nacktschnecke speaks – 1st round

- Instructions for the Tintenfische:
„Tintenfische, you have a special job. Please make a bubble around yourself and provide for the Nacktschnecke a totally safe space so that the Nacktschnecke can tell a story they might not have told anyone ever before. Please make this space safe and empty and keep it during the entire exercise.”
- Instructions for the Nacktschnecken:
„Nacktschnecken, please take a look at your life and at the things and situations in your life you have been affected by. Choose a situation, which you would say was bad in your life, probably even the worst thing that ever happened to you in

your life. Something where you lost your innocence or your heart was broken, where you rejected your vocation or built a wall around you. At some point in your life something happened which made you a victim and shattered your life. You choose the situation and the risk you would like to take. You have got 3 minutes to tell your story. Tell it so that it lands in all four bodies of the Tintenfisch. Please begin.”

- Nacktschnecken tell victim story: 3 Minutes

- Instructions for the group:

„Okay, please come to an end.“

“Please come to a complete end.”

=> Please remember to end the exercise with compassion, i. e. speak very soft and slow so that you don't disturb the sensitive space. Give people some more time to end.

„That was 3 minutes.“

Make another pause. The Nacktschnecken might be upset.

2.1.2 Nacktschnecke gets Feedback & Coaching - 1st round

- Instructions for the Tintenfische:

„Nacktschnecken, the Tintenfische were spaceholders for your message and heard what you said and probably felt. Now I would like to ask the Tintenfische to tell you how much they felt that this was the worst thing that ever happened to you. You tell the Nacktschnecke what worked and what didn't work. What touched you, what didn't? Did the story land in all 4 bodies? What could the Nacktschnecke change to increase the impact of their story so that it fully lands in your body and you experience it. Please begin.“

- Feedback & Coaching for the Nacktschnecken: 2-3 Minutes

- Instructions for the group:

„Okay, please come to a stop and thank the Tintenfische for their comments.“
(Try to avoid the word „feedback“ at this point in time)

2.1.3 Nacktschnecke tells story – 2nd round

- Instructions for the Nacktschnecken:

„To be able to tell an effective story or message is part of your competence. You just got hints from the Tintenfische about what is effective and what isn't. Please pick now one or several of the aspects of what you just heard. You have now again the possibility to tell the story in a way that the Tintenfisch really feels the impact it had on your life. Please tell the same story again, the same people, the same circumstances. Land the story again in all 4 bodies. Please begin!“

- Short instruction for the Tintenfische to again provide a safe space for the Nacktschnecke.

- Nacktschnecke tells victim story: 3 Minutes

- Instructions for the group:

„Okay, please come to a stop.“

“And come to a complete stop.”

2.1.4 Nacktschnecke gets Feedback & Coaching - 2nd round

- Instruction for the Tintenfische
„With the quality of your listening, please tell the Nacktschnecke again what you heard, what touched you, whether it landed in all 4 bodies and where the Nacktschnecke could even increase the impact.”
- Feedback & Coaching for the Nacktschnecke: **2-3 Minutes**
- Instruction for the group:
„Okay, please come to a stop and say thank you, because you are really doing great.” Then close the feedback round with compassion.

Let all participants take a deep breath.

2.2 Tintenfisch tells story – Nacktschnecke holds space

1.2.1 Tintenfisch tells victim story – 1st round

- Instructions for the group:
„We will now change roles. The Tintenfische will now tell a story and the Nacktschnecken make a safe space so that the Tintenfische can tell an honest story about something really bad or probably the worst thing that ever happened to you. A situation where they were betrayed or abused. There is so much abuse happening, sexual, physical, psychological or emotional abuse. Tintenfische, please tell now the story of your life, where you became a victim. Tell the story so that it lands in all 4 bodies of the Nacktschnecken. Please begin.“
- Tintenfische tell victim story: **3 Minutes**
- Instructions for the group:
„Okay, please come to a stop.
“And please come to a complete stop:”
(Remember to give the participants some time to come to an end).

2.2.2 Tintenfisch gets Feedback & Coaching - 1st round

- Instructions for the group:
„Nacktschnecken, you just listened and it touched you in all four bodies. Now let the Tintenfische know what it was like and also tell them what you probably missed. Tintenfische, you just listen. Please begin.“
- Feedback & Coaching for the Tintenfisch: **2-3 Minutes**
- Instructions for the group:
„Okay, please come to a stop and say thank you.“

2.2.3 Tintenfisch tells victim story – 2nd round

- Instructions for the Tintenfische:

„Tintenfische, you just got gold and clarity about how you can deliver your communication. Please choose one or several aspects now and use it consciously next time so that your story really lands. You tell again the same story about the worst thing that ever happened to you, where you were victim. Land it again in all 4 bodies. This is your victim story.

- Instructions for the Nacktschnecken:
„Nacktschnecken, please provide again a safe space for the Tintenfische. Please begin.“
- Tintenfische tell victim story: 3 Minutes
- Instructions for the group:
„Okay, please come to a stop.“
“And come to a complete stop.”

2.2.4 Tintenfisch gets Feedback & Coaching - 2nd round

- Instructions for the Nacktschnecken:
„Nacktschnecken, please tell the Tintenfische one more time how the story landed in you. What worked, what did you miss? What could the Tintenfisch do differently to land the story in all of your 4 bodies, if they had the chance to tell it again. Please begin.“
- Feedback & Coaching for the Tintenfische: 2-3 Minutes
- Instructions for the group:
„Okay, please come to a stop and say thank you for the feedback.“ – Give people some time to end.
„Keep sitting across from each other and turn around so that you can look up to the front here.“

3. LANDING SHIFT OF MAPS

Now hold a little speech about a shift that is as big as the shift from the flat world to the round world. You may want to put up the Map of Maps again on the flipchart and explain the shift.

„Since this is an *Expand The Box* training we invite you to do an experiment. It is an experiment in radical responsibility. It is a very big experiment which actually all great researchers do. In this experiment you take the territory that you have been familiar with your entire life and create a new map, just like we've created a new map for the world.“

=> Now show the map of responsibility (old/new)



„You now take the same event which practically undermined your entire life, the same actions, the same people. You take this territory and out of that create a new map.“

4. Exercise “Responsible story”

4.1 Nacktschnecke tells responsible story – Tintenfisch holds space

4.1.1 Nacktschnecke tells story – 1st round

- Instructions for the Nacktschnecken:
 „Nacktschnecken, you now tell the story in a way that you are 100% responsible for what happened to you. You explain how you arranged the circumstances to call forth this situation. How did you allow this to happen? How did you unconsciously arrange for this to happen? And the absolute radical responsibility lies in telling how this story served you your entire life. For example that you did not have to take over responsibility, that you got pity and attention, that you had an excuse to not live your vocation... Tell the radical responsible story.“

Example from Clinton:

„There once was a woman in the training, who struggled with taking responsibility for her father’s suicide when she was 9 years old. And then she found out with a question....<Who chose your parents?>“

- Instructions for the group:
 „Tintenfische, you provide again a safe space. Nacktschnecken, you tell the responsible story about how you arranged things so that this could happen to you. You have got 3 minutes. Please begin.“
- Nacktschnecke tells responsible story: 3 Minutes
- Instructions for the group:
 „Okay, please come to a stop.“ ... „Please come to a full stop.“

4.1.2 Nacktschnecke gets Feedback & Coaching - 1st round

- Instructions for the Tintenfische
„Tintenfische, you have a detector for authenticity and responsibility. You can detect whether something is really responsible or not. Please give the Nacktschnecken feedback, what worked and what didn't, how radically responsible their story actually was and where they could even take more responsibility.”
- Instructions for the Nacktschnecken
„Nacktschnecken, you just listen, no matter if you understand it or not.“
“Please begin.”
- Feedback & Coaching for the Nacktschnecke: **2-3 Minutes**
- Instructions for the group:
„Okay, please come to an end and say thank you for the feedback.“

4.1.3 Nacktschnecke tells responsible story – 2nd round

- Instructions for the Nacktschnecken:
„Nacktschnecken, please pick one specific aspect of the feedback you would like to implement now. Tell the responsible story once again. Explain how you are radically responsible for what happened to you. How you caused it to occur – without excuses. And especially tell what the benefit was to tell this victim story during your entire life. What was the advantage? Please begin.“
- Short instruction for the Tintenfische to provide again a safe space.
- Nacktschnecken tell the responsible story: 3 Minutes
- Instructions for the group:
„Okay, please come to a stop.“

4.1.4 Nacktschnecke gets Feedback & Coaching - 2nd round

- Instructions for the Tintenfische:
„Tintenfische, tell the Nacktschnecken what worked, how responsible the story was and what they could improve. GO!“
- Feedback & Coaching for the Nacktschnecke: **2-3 Minutes**
- Instructions for the group:
„Okay, please come to a stop and say thank you for the feedback.“

4.2 Tintenfisch tells responsible story – Nacktschnecke holds space

4.2.1 Tintenfisch tells story – 1st round

- Instructions for the Tintenfische:

„Tintenfische, now it is your turn to do the experiment in radical responsibility. Now you will create a map for your territory. It is absurd to do this. It even seems to be unfair. Radical responsibility doesn't allow any excuses, no back doors. Take the same story, the same people, the same actions so that the Nacktschnecke really understands that you are 100% responsible for causing this to occur, including the benefit you had. How did you play this out that you did not have to grow up, but instead could stay childish?“

- Instructions for the Nacktschnecken:
„Nacktschnecken, you just listen. GO!“
- Tintenfisch tells story: 3 Minutes
- Instructions for the group:
„Okay, please come to a stop.“

4.2.2 Tintenfisch gets Feedback & Coaching - 1st round

- Instructions for the Nacktschnecken:
„Nacktschnecken, please give them feedback & coaching about how radically responsible the story was. GO!“
- Feedback & Coaching for the Tintenfisch: 2-3 Minutes
- Instructions for the group:
„Okay, please come to a stop and say thank you for the feedback.“

4.2.3 Tintenfisch tells responsible story – 2nd round

- Instructions for the Tintenfische:
„Tintenfische, pick one element and use it in your final radical responsible story. GO!“
- Tintenfische tell story: 3 Minutes
- Instructions for the group:
„Okay, please come to a stop.“

4.2.4 Tintenfisch gets Feedback & Coaching - 2nd round

- Instructions for the group:
„And Feedback & Coaching. GO!“
- Feedback & Coaching for the Tintenfische: 2-3 Minutes

Now let 20 seconds of the feedback round pass by. Then draw the first part of the “Map of stories” while the feedback is still going on.



- Instructions for the group:
„Okay, please come to a stop. And then take your chairs and gather here up front, in front of the flipchart.”

Hint: those participants sitting in the last row might be those going into resistance during the discussion.

5. Review of the exercise

„I would like to review what we just did:

- I asked you to look back in your life and pick the worst situation that ever happened to you.
- You told the victim story.
- Then you got feedback and coaching.
- Then you told the victim story again using the feedback.
- And then you got again feedback and coaching.
- After that I gave you this wild experiment to take radical responsibility.
- You told the radical responsible story for 3 minutes.
- You got feedback and coaching.
- You used the feedback and told the story again.
- And then you got one more time feedback and coaching.

That's what we did.

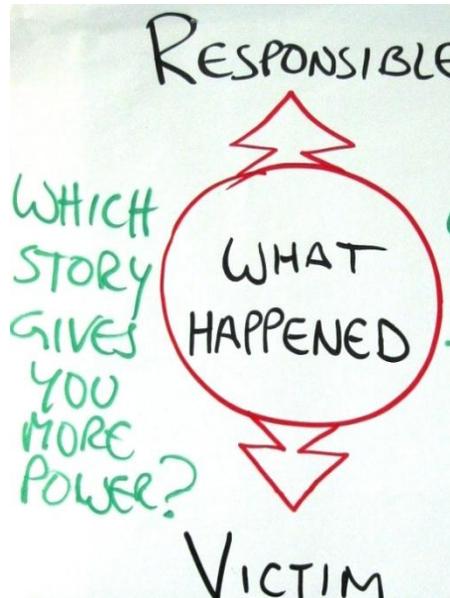
6. Discussion of the „Map of stories”

Hint: The entire discussion about the 2 questions “Which story gives you more power?” and “Which story is true?” should last about 30 to 45 minutes. **After 25 minutes (when discussing the 2nd question) bring in some humor so that the space does not explode because of too much tension and energy.**

6.1 Which story gives you more power?

„I would like to ask you some questions now.“

=> **NOW** write down the question „Which story gives you more power?“ on the left side of the flipchart.



- „Of these 2 stories – the victim story and the responsible story – which story gives you more power?“
- „Why?“
- Let the participants discuss until ALL agree that the responsible story gives them more power. **It is essential that everybody says that the responsible story gives them more power. In case someone doesn't say anything, address them directly** (they might say that they don't have an opinion. Then let them know that you don't play games and that you would like to know which story gives them more power). **ALL have to be on board before you go to the next question.**

6.1.1 Examples of critical questions/comments during the discussion

- „The victim story gives me more power.“ => One possibility could be to ask the person which „I“ is talking.
- „When I take radical responsibility then I become a persecutor. I don't want to be persecutor, although I don't want the victim story anymore.“
=> Point out that being responsible does not mean that they are a persecutor. Responsibility is High Drama. You can e. g. take again a look at the details of their story and thus make clear that there is no persecutor, but just responsibility and High Drama.

Pay attention to the examples you give. If you tell e.g. how you took responsibility

as 4-year-old for having hurt your sister to never allow intimacy again, you might catapult yourself into the next grudging comment:

- „How can a 4-year old, a baby decide something like that?“ => „This is exactly radical responsibility. A 4-year old has the power to do this. The experiment of creating a new map for the same territory is far outside of modern culture. Who are you then? Who do you become?“
- „Yes, but which story is true?“
=> This is a rare question, but can happen. Do not go there, at least not until everybody agrees that the responsible story gives them more power. You could for example answer, “We are not talking about that right now. We are discussing which story gives you more power.”

Trainer-Hint:

Sometimes people struggle how they should e.g. take responsibility for the suicide of a friend or for being beaten by their parents when they were 3 years old and could not defend themselves.

An interesting question is then “Who chose your friends, your parents, etc.?”

The responsible story is NOT about what somebody did. It is about whether somebody considers themselves as responsible or as victim.

It is not about taking on guilt. It is about the inner attitude, whether someone takes responsibility.

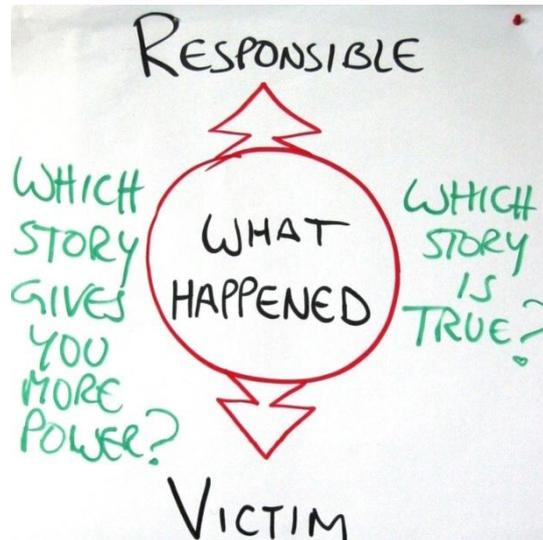
It is not about putting all the burden on their shoulders, but at the same time they don't complain when they don't take responsibility.

When I am responsible then I cannot be victim. This is a whole new game world.

6.2 Which story is true?

- Getting to the next question:
„We cannot change what happened. We can just tell stories NOW and change our relationship to the stories. The question is, which story you hold inside. We had a story about something. The thing we learn here is that we tell a story about something and then we tell another story about the same thing. We are the source. We create the world around it. And this brings me to another question...“

=> Write NOW the question „Which story is true“ on the right side of the flipchart.



- „Of these two stories, which one is true?“
- **Now bring in some HUMOR (with your voice, your facial expression, etc.)** („Hey, this is what happened. It is neutral. But we are really creative...“ Clinton told e. g. once the story in an ETB how he stuffed his little toy dog into a hole on the ground and forgot it there).
- Keep bringing the participants back to the question so that they don't start drifting off. “Yes, but which story is true?“
- At a certain point of the discussion someone in the group will say that none of the stories is true. Go there (unless it is right at the beginning. It is important that people struggle with this question to really get it). Then discuss this for a while and then go to the third question.

6.3 How can a story be true?

- Going to the next question:
„When you ask 5 people about a situation you would get 5 different stories. Stories are interpretations. How can a story be true?“

=> Now write down the question „How can a story be true?“ at the bottom of the flipchart.

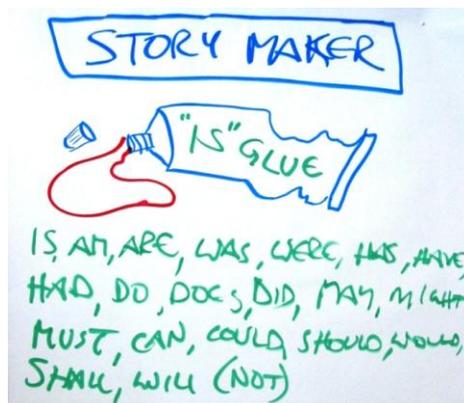


- Start the discussion on this question.
- „How would it be for you that a story is just a story? When there is a certain story about something then it is because someone invented it.“
- **Pay attention that everybody gets it.** When you have a big Gremlin in the group, who doesn't say anything and when you talk to him says that he is confused, you could e.g. say:

„Things happen in your life. We both have e.g. a conversation right now. You say you are confused. If you were responsible, you would raise your hand and say that you are confused. As a victim you would keep sitting here until we are finished, would go to bed and say <Pah! What a bullshit. I better forget this thing with the strange stories> If you took radical responsibility for being a story maker (a bullshit maker) you would realize that there are only two things in life: BULLSHIT and NOTHING. Werner Erhard already said this.“

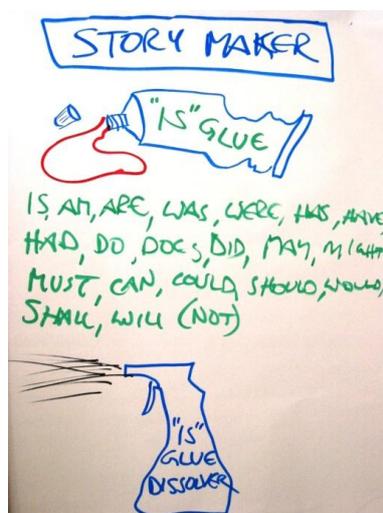
7. Is-Glue and Is-Glue Dissolver

=> Now draw the 1. part of *The Map of Making Stories*



- Explain the first part of the map and give examples.
 “If you want to invent a story then you take e.g. I ... **(fart-sounds) am tired.**
 Although you just made it up you step into this story and pretend as if it is true.
 John ... is an idiot.
 I ... can't do this!
 This ... is too much for me!“
 (further examples)
- Ask now a person to come up front by asking who wants to invent a new story about themselves.
- Ask the person when they are standing up front which story they would like to reinvent.
- Let them say the is-glué sentence.
- Explain now that is-glué doesn't exist in nature. “We build these is-gluéd realities, step into them, and think they are true. Fortunately there is another tool on your Possibility Manager tool belt, which is the is-glué dissolver.”

=> Now draw the 2. part of the *Map of Making Stories*



- Have the person take apart the sentence with the dissolver and say what they are holding in their left and in their right hand.
- Let them put the second part of the sentence on an imaginary shelf.
- Let them reach into their bag of things and take something out.
- Ask them whether they want to take it (if not, back on the shelf)
- Let them glue the new sentence together with a sound.
- Clarify once more that it is a story world and that they now can step into the new story.
- Ask them then to stand in front of another person and declare the new sentence (Hello xy, I am ... “).

8. Closing

“You are learning Possibility Management. Each profession has a price to pay, a sacrifice. What is the sacrifice the baker has to make? (He is sacrificing a good night sleep) What is the sacrifice a pilot pays? He doesn’t see the passengers, he doesn’t come out to them saying, “*Get out your technical manual and learn the frequency of the tower of 131.6 Megahertz by heart.*” He doesn’t say, “*Memorize the triple hydraulic back up system for the ailerons.*” He just says, “*Relax, lean back and enjoy the flight.*” The price he pays is that he knows about the Black Box. Do you know the Black Box? The price you pay as Possibility Managers is that you know about is-glue, and that you know that stories are just stories, and that you are responsible story makers while the others are still telling you their drama stories. This is like the pilot who knows about the Black Box. You now know about is-glue.

The Black Box records the last words that are spoken in the cockpit before the plane crashes. Do you know what the last words mostly are? (Oh Shit!) Yes, 75% of the last words are **Oh Shit!** Amazing, right? Especially if you come from a different culture where the religion says that you become what you last said before you died. Each time I now see a pile of dog shit on the street I look at it and say, “Relax, sit back and enjoy the flight!”

GOOD NIGHT!

9. After the Process

Stay sitting on your trainer seat and do NOTHING. After this big process some will still be confused and have questions, but only dare to ask when most people have left the room. Stay until the last person has left.