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Winter Newsletter 2001

Issue 6

Words on the Wing...

I am grateful. I am grateful for many things, but especially for this community of people who come together to offer stories of strength, passion, connection, caring, questions, challenges, delight, diversion, meaning and comfort to all who are hungry for them.

I know that many in our membership have reached out through story to people who are struggling, as we all are, to find or make meaning in the events and changes in the world. Now is also a time to be sure to care for ourselves as well as others, to tend to our own feelings and our needs for rest and support. We are more effective in giving to others when we give from fullness.

It is my hope that this newsletter will offer some of that support. Again we have "Notes from the Field," reports from our members about fine work that is being done. There are reports on meetings at the National Storytelling Festival in October, a review of a new book by Loren Niemi and Elizabeth Ellis, a fascinating article by Dr. Bill Noonan, who will be presenting our preconference workshop in Denver this July, and more.

Since our last newsletter, there have been changes in the board of HSA. Colin McNaughton, Cristy West and Diane Wyzga, having served our mission well, have each retired from the board. Colin has been our treasurer. Cristy has contributed mightily to almost every HSA project. Diane has been our secretary and the editor of the first 5 issues of this newsletter. We thank each of them for their generous contributions and wish them well in future endeavors. Laura Simms will be mov-

ing into the position of Board Consultant. She will be working on HSA projects as time allows and we are pleased to have her ear and advice on policy and new projects.

We now welcome four new HSA board members. You met Caren Neile in our last newsletter. She announced the formation of our Social Action Discussion Focus Group. Peggy Kenny, Meg Gilman and Fran Yardley will introduce themselves here. Already Peggy has jumped in and offered to edit this issue of the newsletter. Meg will be working on outreach. Fran will join us after January 1 and will be helping with the forum.

Regarding plans and changes in the future... We have been pleased to host the "Stories for Children in Crisis" page created by Laura Simms, that was posted within days of the September 11 events and will continue to be updated. More tales can be purchased as a published booklet from her web site: www.laurasimms.com. HSA will be posting stories and articles enlarging on this same theme on the page: "Resources for Challenging Times" that has evolved from the efforts of many storytellers. The plans for a web page "Treasure Chest of Stories" have shifted instead to indexing and adding to the "Forum" and developing the "Stories for Challenging Times" page. The new bylaws allowing a vote for board officers are still in process... these are busy days!

The board of HSA, along with our generous volunteers, continue to do our best to serve and support this community. We welcome your feedback, contributions and suggestions.

**Gail Rosen,
HSA Board Chair**



Grant Writer Wanted!

We are searching for an intrepid and generous soul to help us research and apply for grants. Please contact board members if interested.

**Renew Now and
Save \$ on Membership**

NSN renews all special interest groups on January 1. HSA membership dues will increase to \$25 per year on 1/01/02. If you renew before January, **you can renew at the old rate of only \$18.**

Either send a check to:

**National Storytelling Network/HSA,
101 Courthouse Square,
Jonesborough TN 37659**

Or call Amie at the NSN office toll free (800) 525-4514 and charge your dues by phone. Take advantage of the \$18 rate - give HSA membership as a holiday gift! By building our membership, we raise funds to offer even more to our members.

New Board Members!

Meg Gilman

With a background in visual arts, performing arts, writing and teaching, I was led to storytelling through workshops which addressed the use of storytelling in alcohol and drug addiction programs. I continued to explore storytelling in various workshop and retreat settings, and it was in a weeklong workshop with Elizabeth Ellis, where I had an opportunity to delve into personal story, that I became convinced of the healing power of story. I knew this was a path I needed to follow. I have most recently been using story with survivors of acquired brain injury, and introducing the viability, methods and techniques of storytelling to caregivers and professionals in the medical field. HSA has opened the door to a larger community, and since I am interested in expanding the recognition of storytelling into a broader base of healing practice and in connecting with others who are of like minds, it feels like a perfect place for me to be.

Peggy T. Kenny

For over 20 years I was a volunteer for the American Cancer Society. As part of those duties, I visited numerous breast cancer patients shortly after surgery to share useful information and personal story. As a counselor at a summer camp for children with cancer, I listened as the campers shared personal stories with each other. When asked to tell ghost stories one night during camp, my storytelling "career" was launched. I began reading and studying and received an MA in storytelling from

Board Members

Our titles are brief, but the commitment is deep. We all pitch in - a team effort.

**Allison Cox, Vice Chair
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**Diane Rooks,
Resource Coordinator
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**Gail Rosen,
Chairperson**

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**Laura Simms,
Consultant, Forum**

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Fran Yardley

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East Tennessee State University in 1997. When I heard about HAS working with developing skills for using story in healing contexts, it struck a chord. Surely with my background working as a lay person in a medical environment, and my interest and work in storytelling, there must be a fit somewhere! I am now searching for an opportunity to use these skills and make a meaningful contribution to my community. HSA should help me do it well.

Fran Yardley

Many years ago, I was a major support to my first husband during his 6-½ year struggle with cancer. During that time, I found myself gravitating towards stories although I had no conscious understanding of why that was. The stories I ended up telling led me to work with Hospice organizations in NY, MA and OH. I also began to work with the local prison population, getting them to tell their stories and going in each Christmas to regale a captive audience for a few hours. I began to develop workshops that dealt with loss and with finding independence. As participants begin to tell their stories, as they get a chance to truly be listened to, they begin to discover their own brilliance and power. My latest work has been to run an annual weekend for women with cancer and chronic illness in the heart of the Adirondack Mountains woods. With this work, I feel I am coming home; finding integration between the place I live and love so much and the work that really speaks to my heart. And now, to my great joy, the HSA has been created to explore and promote the use of storytelling in healing. I am honored and excited to be a member of the board and a part of this ongoing adventure. I look forward to working with all of you!

Update Membership Data Online

Update your e-mail, web site, phone #, address, and other info on our online form. Changes will be processed soon. This takes you directly to the form:

www.healingstory.org/join/memberForm.html
Fill out the form completely - if you skip a field, that field will be blank when your info is updated. Notify NSN of any changes in your address, phone #, e-mail, etc. since they maintain a separate database. Only current members of HSA are listed on the membership roster. If you do not have computer access and want your info listed on the web site, contact Gail Rosen and the form will be mailed to you.

Send Photos to HSA

HSA wants photos of members working in schools, hospitals, nursing homes, camps, etc, to include on our web site. Permission is needed from anyone identifiable in your photo.

Send photos electronically or hard copy to: M. Bassett, mark@dancingleaves.com Box 1731, Vashon, WA 98070

Meeting Reports From The National Storytelling Festival, 2001

Diane Rooks

HSA Meeting Oct. 5, 2001

Gail Rosen, chairperson, welcomed those attending and thanked everyone for coming. She talked briefly about the Healing with Stories program to be held October 6, 2001. Gail said that the last newsletter had been mailed around September 11, 2001, which slowed its delivery. Several members attending said they had received their copy in the mail in recent days. Gail announced that HSA was encouraging the formation of special focus groups within our membership so that members with similar interests could network. Caren Neile is the coordinator for the Social Action Committee and we hope to see other groups forming in the future. Everyone was invited to become a member of HSA and to hand out copies of the new HSA business card. Gail asked for participation and help with all of our projects and then turned the program over to board member, Andre Heuer. Andre encouraged people to use the healing story ListServe and then explained an exercise that he uses with groups. He asked those attending to get into circles of six people. Andre gave each group a ball of yarn and asked someone in each group to pick up the ball and toss it to another member of the group. The person catching the ball was asked to tell a brief story (2-3 minutes) or explain how he/she uses story in their work, then toss the ball to another group member. This process continued until each person had two turns and a yarn web was woven. Andre asked for someone to mention a theme that had occurred in any group. "Comforting others" was shouted from one group and Andre asked if any other group had a story with this theme. The first group tossed their ball to that group and another theme was called out. This continued until a larger web developed among all the groups. This exercise showed how our stories connect to others, both in our groups of friends and families and also to humanity. He then asked everyone to cut a piece of the

web to take as a reminder, and also to take the remaindered pieces to share with others. Andre encouraged everyone to use the exercise in different settings. The informal meeting came to a close, with the twenty attendees feeling closer together.

Healing with Stories: Exploring the Creative Applications of Storytelling in Health and Healing

The International Storytelling Center demonstrated their interest in using storytelling to create a more nurturing environment for health and healing by sponsoring this event held in a large tent adjacent to the center. HSA chairperson, Gail Rosen, the host and facilitator of the program, had asked for anyone interested in presenting to submit a proposal prior to the festival.

The six presenters told a brief story to a receptive audience and then explained how they used the story to encourage healing.

Olga Loya showed the importance of approaching life "one tick at a time" with her story, "Grandfather Clock." She described her work with teen mothers, helping them to work through their stories so they could share them with other high school girls.

Tina Alston demonstrated "storytimaging", the technique she developed and uses with many diverse groups, including Vietnam veterans. She asked the audience to project their own feelings onto the characters in her story of "The Mermaid Woman" and share those emotions with the group.

Rog Robbenolt told a capsule version of "Life Journey, Death Journey, Life Journey," explaining the Lakota view of death as just another stop in our journey. At the end of his story, Rog had all of us sing "Happy Journey to You" to the tune of "Happy Birthday to You" in memory of all those who had died.

Lorna Czarnota played her guitar and sang the thought-provoking song she wrote for a young woman who said to her, "Hey, storyteller, give me a story I can hold onto." Much of her work is with at-risk youth.

Dr. Andre Heuer shared "The Snake and the Holy Man" and described his use of story in dealing with issues of violence with those in corrections facilities. His closing line, "I didn't say you couldn't hiss" encourages "hissing" instead of violent actions.

Diane Rooks told a true story about Orville Kelly, a man who chose to celebrate his cancer and his life and started the national organization, "Make Today Count." Diane tells this story to groups dealing with transition and loss to illustrate that we get to choose how we live each day and what we become because of our experience.

In the time remaining, audience members added comments and asked the presenters specific questions about their use of storytelling in health and healing.

From the ListServe: Social Action Discussion *Caren Neile*

HSA's Social Action Committee was formally introduced to the HSA ListServe on Monday, October 8. Recent conversation related to this aspect of healing story has centered on the terrorist attacks and their aftermath. We have enjoyed compelling postings from 3 continents, but only a handful could be excerpted below.

Several of us discussed the way in which stories are not only what we tell eager audiences; they are also the lessons taught in our culture and by our governments, especially in time of war.

Carol Wright from Orcas Island, Washington, writes: "Stories are not confined to storytellers. If you choose to take some kind of stand on any issue in THIS "war," you are up against one of the smoothest "spin" machines in history. [Norman] Solomon's "media beat" column pertains to a certain PR firm...just a snippet:"

*At the Rendon Group, a public relations firm with offices in Boston and Washington, pleasant news arrived the other day with a \$397,000 contract to help the Pentagon look good while bomb
(Cont'd from pg. 3)*

ing Afghanistan. The four month deal includes an option to renew through most of 2002.

You all are storytellers of a different sort. With a bigger perspective. Perhaps you can see yourselves “at war” with these other stories. There was the briefest of news coverage of some woman college professor who was fired for teaching about the history of U.S. foreign policy to create dictatorships and support insurgent terrorists (sorry, freedom fighters). Did THAT story get squelched... or what? We live in interesting times; that’s for sure!

On the same subject, **Helen Sadler of Fort Myers** notes: “All great civilizations have their myths...and this situation we find ourselves in now will create its own myth. The stories we tell now and in the future about this time will be part of that myth. It is fascinating to see how this is weaving itself: good and evil, life and death, heroism and cowardice...it’s all here for us, every myth, archetype and symbol...even a generation being called to arms, being awakened from their complacency, finally understanding that some things are worth dying for. Yes, real people are involved, but this country definitely heeded the wake-up call (although I still wish none of it would have happened.)

Related to the idea of stories as culture was the theme of negative or harmful stories. **Mary Clark from Rochester, New York**, writes: “I rarely have heard a discussion among storytellers regarding stories used in harmful ways. Probably I just haven’t been in the right places. After the September 11 tragedy, I became interested in the terrorists’ stories and other stories I would normally not investigate.

I’m looking for greater understanding of the whole situation — our story, their story — the story(s). So I am interested in the stories terrorists tell, the stories behind the terrorist (cultural, personal, etc.).

If I know their stories — maybe I will understand them and better understand myself and others. After September 11, I found an increased need to

understand (try to anyway) the darker side of things — the shadow side of things whether they be related to terrorists or not. Is there such a thing as a harmful story?

Tim Sheppard of Bristol, England, discusses one form of harmful story, propaganda. “There’s an interesting chapter in Peg Neuhauser’s book, “Corporate Legends and Lore: The Power of Storytelling as a Management Tool”, called “Inspiring Stories or Corporate Propaganda?” She says

The first thing that is important to remember when considering the difference between an inspiring story and corporate propaganda is that we are examining ‘perceptions of the listeners,’ not the intentions of the teller. The teller of the story may have intended it to have a positive message, but the listeners did not hear it that way or did not ‘buy’ the message.

If you tell a story to illustrate facts, events, or ‘the way things are done around here,’ and the story does not match the listeners’ experience, the stories are likely to be rejected. Behavior must match the stories or there is no credibility.

The bottom line about the difference between inspiring storytelling and corporate propaganda may well have nothing to do with the storytelling itself. The most important element may be your capacity to listen. Listen... intensely, aggressively, and with an intent to respond and act on what you hear.”

What is the best way to counter negative stories and share and understand divergent stories? **Mike Seliger of Orangeburg, New York**, writes: “I believe we are all warriors. We are in a struggle for the hearts and minds of confused people who receive a barrage of messages that influence how they think and act. Those messages can be considered “harmful story,” delivered through mass media. Our weapons are our words and images, told and shared from the heart, usually not just a performance done to gain praise, approval or applause (or even money). We are low-tech, personal, and how we

say what we say has the potential to reach deeper than glossy digital controlled media, which certainly impacts far wider, but not deeper... And that makes us dangerous.

When we are ready to counter negative stories and propaganda through creative applications of storytelling for peace. **Limor Shiponi from Zichron-Yaakov, Israel**, sees strength in numbers: “Storytellers work alone most of the time. And there are so many people to help, so much healing to perform. We really do our best but much more could be done.

If social change is the desire, we cannot create the change as individuals. We must find ways to help each other and multiply our healing power. True solutions for such a heterogenic society like the society we live in have to be created in collaboration between fellow tellers and the different voices in the Israeli society.

We, storytellers, cannot give people in need money. We cannot build them houses or find jobs. We cannot cure cancer or AIDS or stop violence with our bodies. We can help people reflect on their lives in a positive way. We can help ease the silence of the wounded and the wounds of those who have chosen to be violent. We can help people to see their fellow man as a potential partner for creating change and making a difference.

Our tool-boxes are light but profound and we carry them in our heads. And showing us the way is a light shining powerfully from the stories of mankind.

And because story speaks more powerfully than anything else, we conclude with this moving tale posted by **Elisa Pearmain** and **Lorna Czarnota**:

A Native American grandfather was talking to his grandson about how he felt about a tragedy. He said, “I feel as if I have two wolves fighting in my heart. One wolf is the vengeful, angry, violent One. The other wolf is the loving, compassionate one.”

The grandson asked him, “Which wolf will win the fight in your heart?”

The grandfather answered, “The one I feed.”

Storytellers Responses to September 11

Outside My Window

Laura Simms

Early morning of September 11th before the planes hit the World Trade Center, I was awakened by a dream. I saw the door of my loft, which in reality is a dark blue painted metal Manhattan door, now turned into a window with frilly white curtains looking out onto a garden. Days of mail, as if I had been away for a long time, was pushed under the threshold and lay scattered on the floor. I heard a moan and pushed open the curtain to see my mother, now dead over twenty years, standing outside. She began to sob. I woke up unable to comprehend why she had come. The last time she had appeared outside my door in a dream was to inform me that my father was dying, which turned out to be true. Two hours later Joan Sutton called from California. She told me the World Trade Center had been hit by a plane. I went to my window to see the sky darkened with smoke. Then I turned on the television and didn't leave the television until later that afternoon when my nephew with a group of strangers, covered in dust, came to my house after walking uptown from a building beside the WTC. My mother had again warned me. This time of my greater family's death and of the end of my dreamlike sense of security, which was shattered, perhaps the most positive effect of the events.

In response, I began to list stories I might tell in this situation. I was stymied. I put out an alert to Storytell, the HSA list, and friends around the world. So many people responded kindly with marvelous tales. I began to sort through them all. What would I be able to tell? What did I feel was healing, not only in content but in the experience that someone would undergo through the reading or hearing of the tale. My actions were sudden, direct, confused, groundless, and grounded as I changed my mind every day trying to find the form, the means,

Returning Home

Lorne Browne

First the Canadian favorites - Bob Homme (the Friendly Giant) and then Ernie Coombs (Mr. Dressup) died. Then Fred Rogers retired from his Neighborhood. Three gentle television storytellers for children now gone, their places filled with frenetic, over-produced kids' shows. I found myself longing for the more innocent, gentler time of childhood and wondering if it were gone forever.

Then came September 11, 2001, and I innately felt that the world would never be the same again.

There are pundits now, proclaiming on everything, but I've grown old enough, and perhaps just a little wiser, to know better than to pontificate on things I know nothing about. Security experts offer their views; I sometimes forget to lock my door. Financial experts offer predictions for the marketplace; I'm happy if I can balance my bank account. Military experts state thus and thus; I sing "Last Night I had the Strangest Dream". Political experts offer advice to rulers; I'm not a political animal.

But I know a little bit about stories and songs, and I found myself turning to them to try to make sense of things.

I turned to the Bible, not out of any religious or spiritual beliefs, but because it is one of the oldest of books and seems to have set the pattern for literature down through the ages. I read again of the Garden of Eden, and the innocence of life therein. It was the childhood of the world, but its inhabitants had to flee it, never to return. The world became crueler for everyone. I thought of the Judeo-Christian tradition of longing to return to Paradise, the Classical tradition of longing for the Golden Age. Some say that this longing to return to the Garden of Eden has driven us ever since.

And I pondered yet again how the longing to return to the garden is still such a driving force. We see it in the gardening

War and Peace and Story

Caren S. Neile

I founded the Storytelling for Social Action Discussion Focus Group and agreed to serve on the HSA Board in order to promote awareness, conversation and action on the role of story in social issues concerning the public and the planet.

Seen in this light, the terrorist attacks and their aftermath could be the most important things to happen to storytelling since the talking stick, or at least since the first Jonesborough festival. No more can the public relegate story to the "children's table" of culture. If we do our jobs, people may soon begin to ask if there's a storyteller in the house almost as often as they call for a doctor.

As I write these words, six weeks have passed since the horrific attacks in New York and Washington, D.C., and about three since the U.S. unleashed its military forces upon Afghanistan. And here we find ourselves in the midst, fellow storytellers, of the quintessential war of stories.

I am sitting at my desk leafing through a picture book titled *The Blind Men and the Elephant*.* In this version of the well-known Indian legend, six blind men each understand a different aspect of the elephant to be the creature's essence.

It was six men of Indostan
To learning much inclined,
Who went to see the Elephant
(Though all of them were blind),
That each by observation
Might satisfy his mind.

The first man approaches the elephant's side and pronounces the animal "very like a wall." The next feels the tusk and determines the elephant to be "very like a spear." The third grabs hold of the tusk and says the creature is "very like a snake." And so on. The story ends:

And so these men of Indostan
Disputed loud and long,

(Simms cont'd) and the funds. I left a note for a foundation that had hired me on several occasions to tell stories. They loved the idea. They had just finished a booklet of tales told by teenagers about Holocaust survivors. Together they and I began to sort through the stories, many already generously posted on the HSA website. We created a booklet. They asked for more stories. It was focused on children of all ages whose parents or teachers could read the tales, giving voice to emotional and meaningful narratives. It was not direct therapy, nor was it a big resource packet. It was simply those tales I would tell. That was my offering most honestly.

We came up with 18 stories. The letter used to make the number 18 in Hebrew spell the word "chai" which means life. Also my mother's Hebrew name was Chaya (Clara), from the same root word. I began giving away the booklet. towntown offices asked for them and began to print them in the hundreds for their workers. The South Bronx Resource Center copied hundreds and gave them to families and workers in foster homes. Holland-Knight Charitable Foundation grew more and more involved in the project, dedicating the booklet to a lawyer that worked for them who was a part-time firefighter and was killed in the attack while saving lives. Val Sanford, the designer for Silverwave Records, offered to design the cover which was the only four-color page; and illustrator Tatiana Krizmanic from Croatia donated original art.

A vice president of a company downtown after reading the tales called me to his temporary office. A proposal was designed for me to raise funds to hire an assistant so we could create an office able to carry out the many dreams I had about storytelling in schools in the US, about work I wanted to do abroad, and the creation of a storytelling task force. We have worked seven to ten hours a day since. Much of the fundraising and project design is under a small nonprofit organization I formed in 1997 to raise funds for kids in crisis around the world called GAINDEH, which is a Mende

(Browne cont'd) craze of today, in walled gardens and in public gardens. We see it in literature, in some of the greatest and most influential of books, of stories. Robert Louis Stevenson called his book of poems for children "A Child's Garden of Verses".

The hero Theseus enters the Labyrinth constructed by Daedulus, searching for the dreaded Minotaur to whom the Athenians must pay a tribute of seven boys and seven girls every nine years. He is comforted and strengthened in his task by carrying a golden thread spun for him by the king's daughter Ariadne. After killing the fearsome beast, and thus liberating Athens, he returns to safety following the golden thread.

Homer's great work, "The Odyssey", is about another hero trying to get home, and the extraordinary adventures he has to undergo. The desire to return home drove Odysseus, and it drives us still. Virgil's "Aeneid" expands on this: the virtues of home and all that it implies can be carried to other places; we can go home again somewhere else.

After September 11, I wondered if I, or if the world, could ever go back to the childhood innocence of the Garden of Eden, of Mr. Dressup et al, indeed of anything pre-September 11. An ironically symbolic event that no one seems to have commented on is that the American President was about to talk with a class of school children in Florida when he was so rudely interrupted. It will be a long time, if ever, before he can go back to carry on his conversations with the children.

I read Shakespeare again, and his "Seven Ages of Man" speech in "As You Like It". You know the one, where man starts as a mewling and puking infant, then becomes the whining schoolboy, the sighing lover singing woeful ballads. I read with interest that he then becomes a soldier, jealous in honor and quick to quarrel. And then justice, full of wise saws. The sixth age is the lean and slipper'd pantaloon, leading to the final stage, second childishness.

As Ed McCurdy once said, there is a big difference between childlike and

(Neile cont'd)

Each in his own opinion
Exceeding stiff and strong,
Though each was partly in the right,
And all were in the wrong!

Since September 11, I have given a lot of thought to this simple tale of multiple perspectives. That's because directly following the attacks, President Bush stated that those who support America are "good," and that those who do not — those who perpetrated the crime and presumably those who support the perpetrators — are "evil."

In the Judaeo-Christian tradition, these black-and-white concepts of good and evil first appeared in the Old Testament. Despite the Enlightenment — the 18th-century ideological revolution that was the blueprint for our secularistic, scientific-minded Western society — we are still deeply shaped by our religious roots. They are the foundations of the stories that are the foundations of our understanding of the world.

The goal of the Enlightenment was universalism: the idea that eventually, all cultures would come to adopt the same values, that is, the same stories. But which stories? Those of the West, of course. To many people, that may sound perfectly reasonable. After all, we're on the side of freedom, humanism, knowledge, tolerance, progress and peace, aren't we? Yet the way I see it, like the story of the blind men and the elephant, ours is just one perspective. One set of stories.

Now it certainly helps to believe that only OUR stories are true if we are supporting an army. Even an ideological army. This is the spirit with which Western missionaries set off to convert the African "barbarians." Most of us would likely say extremism of any kind is wrong. Yet we too may be practicing a form of extremism if we refuse to acknowledge stories that conflict with our own.

I want to be very clear here, because I recently made a similar point at a public forum and was attacked for it in the press. Let's return to the story of the elephant. Saxe notes that each blind man "was partly in the right." We have every right to believe in our stories; that's what

(Simms cont'd) word from West Africa meaning “the first rays of sun in the morning.” The mission of Gaindeh is that all human beings have inherent goodness and regardless of circumstance that goodness is not extinguished, and that storytelling uncovers and nurtures that inner goodness and activates it.

Some parts of the booklet are on the HSA website. The HSA Board made a decision, not necessarily in keeping with the guidelines but in keeping with the urgency of the times, to have an individual’s page on a membership organization’s website. I am really happy that it happened like that since so many new people were drawn to see our website and activities as a result. Now, with the booklet almost published and about to be distributed and used in schools around the country, the website is changing. It will once again become an HSA site to be designed and expanded. It will still maintain some of the *Nourishing the Heart Stories*, particularly those sent by authors other than myself. The new introduction and related essays, and other stories will be placed on my web site, www.laurasimms.com.

As for the booklet, it is about to be birthed and will have a long life of its own in the world thanks to innumerable people whose support in so many ways made it a possibility. When I think about the aspiration and the process I realize that it in itself was a healing process. I had no idea of what would result. I just began—and did one thing after another—listened, made choices, made mistakes and auspicious decisions, never quite knowing what would arise, but knowing in my heart that this was to be done and was important and useful. I want to once again thank the HSA board and particularly Mark Bassett, who designs and maintains the HSA website. Mark spent a lot of time putting it together and reworking it as the process unfolded. My invisible inner dedication is to my mother—to her memory, and her presence, even now. It gives me another kind of faith and acceptance of the reality of impermanence as something normal and inspiring. ✨

(Browne cont'd) childish, and Shakespeare is very negative about the last stage, the stage of oblivion, sans teeth, eyes, taste, everything.

In the immediate aftermath of September 11, it seemed as if Shakespeare were right. As if Thomas Wolfe were right when he said, “You can’t go home again.” I know that I was not alone in thinking this; everyone seemed to agree that the world was changed in some profound way and that we can never go back to the way it was. It left me deeply shaken, questioning the value of everything.

At the moment of my deepest despair, these old tales reminded me that history and literature are on our side. We can go home again, even if only in our stories and songs. We must go home again.

Home will, of course, be changed, and changed in ways that no one can fully understand. But I think that there is the distinct possibility that some of these changes will be beneficial. Sad though it is that it takes crises such as a Walkerton or a World Trade Center to drive the point home, I think that the recognition that a strong government is fundamental in a civilized society might finally take the wind out of those neo-cons who keep bleating about smaller government and who worship big business. I think that we have now seen real heroes, the firefighters, police, and emergency crews, in action; we have seen real strength and love and heroism in so many final cell phone calls to loved ones. Such real heroism, such real strength might finally put to rest the bizarre cult of the personality that has bedevilled us all. Our preoccupation with the banal and the trivial now seems absurd.

So I found myself singing Erev shel shoshanim, a beautiful Hebrew song that is all about gardens and roses and love. I found myself singing the song about the woman mystic with the man’s name, Julian, who lived in the time of Chaucer. The Bells of Norwich has this wonderful chorus:

(Neile cont'd) makes them our stories. I am in no way justifying the attacks. I strongly condemn Osama Bin Laden and believe that he and his co-conspirators should be punished for their criminal acts. What’s more, I do not believe that all Muslims support Bin Laden and despise America, although apparently many thousands do. And I do not equate everyone who despises America and supports Bin Laden with the criminals who perpetrated the attacks.

I merely suggest that unlike the blind men, we are capable of holding in our heads two contradictory ideas — or stories — at the same time. We would do well to bear in mind the following: In his speech to the nation following the attacks, President Bush’s story was that Al Qaeda’s goal is “remaking the world and imposing its radical beliefs on people everywhere.” Not so coincidentally, this is exactly their story about us.

If we understand this conflict as a matter of conflicting stories, we do not condone terrorism. We do not imply that we do not love our country. But we may be able to question and debate, as human beings, the causes of the attacks, and the thoughts and feelings of the human beings who perpetrated and defend them.

To promote war, we must keep in mind the image of what our enemies did to us. To promote peace, perhaps we must keep in our hearts the image of how they perceive us.

There is a bright side to all of this, which is the basis for the creative application of storytelling for peace-building. The cultural schema, the bits and pieces of knowledge and attitude embedded in story, are partly innate, but they also partly learned. This means that they can be changed.

I am not advocating a propaganda war to replace a military conflict. At their best, stories raise questions rather than provide answers. Instead, I suggest that we share, question, and when appropriate reconsider our own stories and

(Browne cont'd)

*All shall be well, I'm telling you,
let the winter come and go,
All shall be well again, I know.*

And I read again E. B. White's wonderful poem, and found myself singing it to Pete Seeger's tune:

*The spider, dropping down from twig,
Unfolds a plan of her devising,
A thin premeditated rig
To use in rising.*

*And all that journey down through space,
In cool descent and loyal hearted,
She spins a ladder to the place
From where she started.*

*Thus I, gone forth as spiders do,
In spider's web a truth discerning,
Attach one silken thread to you
For my returning.*

Yes, dear reader, you and I, we need Theseus' golden thread now, more than ever. Stories and songs help. ✨

Lorne Brown, editor of Appleseed Quarterly, 44 Wentworth Ave. Toronto, ON, Canada, M2N 1T7

(Neile cont'd) encourage those with whom we disagree to do the same. Yes, this is difficult when dealing with fundamentalists. But if we do not try, we are as fundamentalistic as they.

Those who engage in storytelling with the intent of community- and peace-building encourage all parties to bring their stories to the table. The goal is not to convince anyone of the truth of one's own story. It is, rather, to exchange competing stories, find common threads, begin to understand and examine the differences, and together weave a new, shared story — which may evolve again as further information and insights develop.

To understand the true meaning of tolerance, we must acknowledge that while all humans reach for stories, the stories we reach for cannot, and should not, be the same. There is no single truth. Which also applies, by the way, to what I'm telling you now. Because, of course, all six blind men were also in the wrong. ✨

*Saxe, John Godfrey. *The Blind Men and the Elephant*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963.

Notes from the Field

HSA invites members to tell us how you are using storytelling in the field of healing.

Using Story with ABI

Meg Gilman

I develop storytelling programs for people with ABI (acquired brain injury) and for clinicians who work in that field. While there are common problems and struggles for people with ABI, the unique nature of the brain and its response to trauma begs that anyone telling stories to survivors, for any purpose, be aware of a multitude of possible needs and responses. Stories need to be adjusted and adapted to allow for inclusion, regardless of physical, mental or emotional ability. Attention span, focus, memory, emotional control and behavioral problems, mobility and/or ability to speak (among other challenges) may be issues, and trust is always an issue.

These two stories are used primarily as introductions to a longer program; they are 'icebreakers' of a sort. I've found that brief, humorous stories provide an opening, a space for people to breathe and relax into a process with which they may be unfamiliar and about which they may have some anxiety concerning their abilities to participate. Though simple, these stories stimulate discussion and sharing because of the survivors' identification with the content. Initially most responses will be of the head-nodding in agreement, the "I've done that" comment.

The first story, "The Memory Clinic" is in the form of a joke. It puts people immediately at ease; everyone recognizes the tone of a joke, and yet this particular joke addresses through humor the problems and strategies that people with ABI confront on a daily basis. People laugh, then there's the "me too" response, and then the sense of ease which follows on the heels of recognition.

The second story "Tyndal and the Priest" is a short folktale (paraphrased here), and there is always a sense of pride when the listener 'gets it'. Confusion and difficulty with generalizing strategies are common problems among survivors of ABI.

These stories trigger memories, increase self-awareness and self-acceptance, decrease the sense of isolation and prompt the sharing of personal stories about challenges in ABI recovery. Participants are encouraged to share their responses and their stories, no matter how brief.

Once participants have settled into their comfort zone, other usually longer stories can be told, both listening stories and audience participation

stories. I find that stories which offer hope through the naming and acceptance of loss to be very effective. These stories can provide the listener with a heartfelt moment of connection with their own process and their own story.

The Memory Clinic

Two elderly men were sitting in the living room having a conversation when one of the men asked the other, "Fred, how was the memory clinic you went to last month?"

"Great," Fred replied. "They taught us all the latest psychological techniques like visualization, association and repetition. It was worth it."

"Well, I'm thinking about going. What was the name of the clinic?"

Fred's mind went blank. He thought and thought, but couldn't remember. Then a smile broke across his face and he asked, "What do you call that flower with the long stem and thorns?"

"You mean a rose?"

"Yes, that's it!"

He called to his wife in the kitchen, "Hey, Rose, what was the name of that memory clinic?"

(Use of association ... rose with Rose to remember wife's name, but obviously the clinic had limited benefit!)

Tyndal and the Priest

This is a Moldavian tale about a man named Tyndal who goes on a journey. When he spends the night at an inn, he shares his room with a priest who does not want to be awakened as early as Tyndal. So Tyndal dresses in the early morning dark and mistakenly dresses in the priest's robes instead of his own clothing.

As he goes on his way, the sun comes up, and he notices the priest's robe instead of his own coat. "Now I'll have to go all the way back," he cries. "The innkeeper woke the priest instead of me."

(Confusion, inability to identify real problem)

These are short, funny stories which allow the opportunity for identification with a problem and for discovering humor in solving it or living with it. These stories serve well as an intro to a longer program by 'breaking the ice' and creating a safe judgment-free space, a space where those present can feel a sense of community which welcomes sharing in the healing process. ✨

See page 2 for more information about our new board member, Meg Gilman



Giant Pain

Allison Cox

Each month I tell stories to the teens in the Remann Hall Juvenile Detention Center as part of my health education work for the local Health Department where I am employed. Our goal is to prevent violence and substance abuse. We have found that stories offer these youth a safe venue for listening to these various issues without feeling they are being lectured. We give them various ways to respond to the stories and share their thoughts – so many of them are desperate to have someone listen to them and they are hungry for stories. Last month, I told each class an adapted version of a literary tale drawn from folklore – “**The Heartless Giant**” from *The Storyteller* by Anthony Minghella, Knopf, NY, 1997. The quotes are from my adapted telling. This story is 30 minutes long but most of the class stayed engaged throughout the story.

Story synopsis: The king’s youngest son, Leo, discovered that there is a giant in the dungeon below the castle. In the past, this giant removed his heart (too much pain in such a big heart), replaced it with a wasp nest, and then ravaged the countryside until the King caught and imprisoned him. The prince befriended the giant and told him all his secrets. Leo decided to free the giant, but once the giant was loosed - he immediately began to maim, kill, and ravage again. Leo blamed himself - while saying nothing. The young prince tried to stop both his brothers from going after the giant, but they insisted that it was their duty - neither brother returned. Finally, Leo leaves to search for

the giant, his only weapon - a toy drum.. After 3 years, he finds the giant’s trail and befriends 3 animals that he saves from death. These animals point the way and/or carry him to the giant’s lair. Outside the giant’s house were hundreds of life-like statues that Leo discovered were really people turned to stone by the giant – including his two brothers. Leo tells the giant that he was banished and the giant takes Leo on as his servant as long as there are “No tricks, no traps!” Leo cleans, cooks, waits, watches, and one day asks the giant “What ever happened to your heart?” The giant lies to Leo twice as to where his heart was hidden, until finally he admits that his heart lies hidden in an egg, in a duck, in a well, in a church, on an island, in a lake, in a mountain “that is so far away that you can not even imagine it.” Leo takes on this impossible task and with the aid of his three animal friends, returns to the giant’s house with the egg containing the heart. “You once broke my heart and now I will break yours” Leo tells him. The giant begs for mercy and Leo tells him to turn the statues back into people, make amends for all the wrongs, and finally – “put your heart back – for with your heart in place you would never act as you do.” The giant agrees. Leo’s brothers rush to hug their savior. The giant returns to receive his heart, but as Leo lifted the egg up to the giant, his brothers seized the egg, and all the statues-turned-back-into-people scream for revenge. The giant whispers to Leo, “You promised...”, as the eldest brother crushes the egg and the giant dies. Leo is chosen as the next king because of both his courage - and kindness. He lives to an old age, has 42 grandchildren and tells them all this story... only in Leo’s version, the giant gets his heart back in the end, makes amends, serves the kingdom... Because, after all that happened, in the end there is this: once there was a boy who met a giant... and they became friends.

The morning girls’ group was invited to think about scenes and images from the story that stood out for them. Then they named the various characters/objects/images from the story that came to

mind. The girls offered these responses quickly and easily. Here are some of them:

Giant	Leo	Mother
Horse	Bird	well
wolf	fish	egg
brothers	keys	church
dungeon	candle	wasps
giant’s house	pigs	lake
heart	paint	bones
mountain	stream	bed
drawbridge	moss	tears
bells	footprints	guards
beating drum	friendship	castle
eyes	chains	statues
saddle bag	windows	king

Since this group has the longest class period (2 hours), I then asked the teens to pick a character/object/image from this list and to observe what came to mind as I made the following suggestions for exploring these aspects of the story. I learned this exercise from NLP studies and from Melonie Ray of Vancouver, British Columbia as a method to develop characters in stories. Some of the questions are the same ones that Melonie had used.

Imagine you are that character, thing, animal, place... “Step into” what you chose and notice – how do you move? How does the world look from your eyes/from this place? Is your skin/ exterior rough or smooth? What are the sounds around you? Notice the tastes and smells. How old are you? What are your powers? What are your limitations? How do you feel about the other characters in the tale?

When the group reconvened, I asked them if they had a new understanding of the story now - several said yes and most wanted to share their experience.

Giant (chosen by 3): My eyes have darkness in them and the world at my feet looks small. I look and feel rough and the sounds around me are harsh echoes of the constant thoughts in my head. I am 13, 17, or a million years old. My power is my strength - controlling others, turning them to stone. I can be stopped by the crushing of my heart, also my relief would stop me. I am just using Leo to get my way, but I want to do right for Leo and I want to solve this “wanting”

feeling. I feel alone and scared because there is no one there for me and I am below in this cell. I am hurting everyone that I love and all I need is a friend.

Queen Mother: I am 75 years old. The world is light and fuzzy. My skin is rough and I am surrounded by lonely sounds and the world stinks. I am an all-powerful queen but I am stopped by my own family. I feel I am losing...

Moss: It is dark here. I am sad and covered with a fuzzy like feeling. The sounds were loud until the giant's voice faded to a whisper. The smell of giant surrounds me, with the taste of dirt. I am 3, 4 or maybe 5 years old. I have no powers... I have no feelings.

Church: The world is light, great and wonderful. My surface is smooth and I am very kind. I am 12 years old or even as old as 28. I am so strong that no one can stop me. I feel great about some things and some things I will punish...

Castle: It is gray and there is fog everywhere with just a hint of light hiding behind the clouds, shining down upon the yellowish grass. It smells wet. I am 10 to 17 years old. There are cobwebs and the castle is very run down. I have a wishing tower and only falling stars can stop me.

Heart: It is dark and I feel love. I am smooth, and the sounds are in harmony, heavenly. Life tastes sweet. I am 17 years old. My power is to make good and be loved by all – hate and fear can destroy me. I love them all.

I found it interesting that many of the girls picked ages close to theirs for the characters illustrating their identification with the story. Otherwise they picked the other extreme – the Queen mother was 75, the Giant was a million years old – unfathomable ages to them. Even the girl who said that the Church could be as old as 28 – seemed to think that this was extremely old.

The afternoon girls' group (1 hour) were each asked to come up with one word that for them described what the story was all about (this was after discussing the story together regarding the parts of the story that had made an impression). Here is the list they gave me: Respect (Leo), Faith (Leo), Responsibil-

ity (king, Leo, brothers, animals...), Loyalty (animals), Helping (Leo, animals), Courage, Forgiveness, Caring, Amends (Leo, Giant), Determination (2 chose this – Leo, wolf, horse, Giant), Friendship

The boys' afternoon group (1 hour) discussed the story regarding those aspects of the tale that had made an impression. Immediately the point that the giant had removed his heart came up – “All that pain in that giant heart.”

I asked them “*Why did he take out his heart?*” They told me:

His wife left him. He lost a friend.
He was an outcast. He was lonely.
He suffered from a mismatched love.

I talked with them about the changes that Leo went through in the story – “*What caused these changes, this loss of innocence?*” They responded:

- He lost his brothers.
- He was betrayed by the Giant.
- He had to steal from his father.
- The Giant took Leo's dignity away.

And also they said:

- Leo went after the giant because he wanted his brothers back.
- He had to prove himself to his brothers and the king.
- This is a story about patience.

“*Can you imagine being locked in a dungeon with your arms and legs chained to the wall for years – unable to stretch out your legs?*” I asked.

“*I'd die*” one boy said.

At the same time – two boys began to talk, expressing similar thoughts ...

•“*I am like that giant. I took out my heart. I stopped feeling. Now, I don't care about anyone else but me. There is no one else I can count on.*”

•The other added - “*I try to be good but it doesn't get me anywhere – just more pain. At least when I do bad I get something – some money or things that I want. But when I do good, I just get nowhere.*”

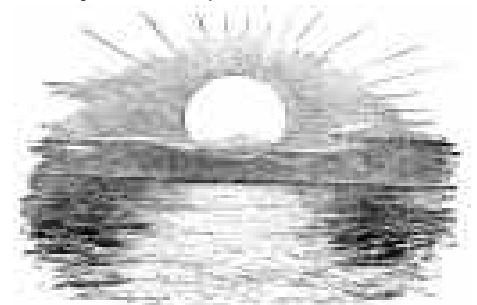
During storytelling sessions, these teens have a rare opportunity to talk about their feelings in meeting the challenges of their lives. Our health department staff will be available throughout the week to talk with these teens and assist with health care.

We offered some follow-up ideas for

the teacher and the class. I pointed out that in spite of all that happened, Leo still believed in the good in some things - (he helped the animals – he wanted to give the Giant his heart back.). I told them “*You can write tomorrow about what are those things that you do believe in – in spite of everything that has happened.*” My co-worker added that just as there were helper animals in the story, he believes that there are helpers placed in each person's life. “*Think of who those helpers are in your life – and write about how it is that they help you.*” At this point – we were out of time. It was clear that the boys group had wanted more time to talk...

After each of these sessions, several students waited to shake my hand or thank me and they commented about how much they liked the story. I had chosen this story because it reflected previous discussions with the teens regarding emotional pain, violence, imprisonment, loss of innocence, justice and confused loyalties. As usual, the youth showed me so much more that the story held for them and always they ask – “*When are you coming back?*” ✨

Allison Cox is a board member of HSA, (see pg. 2), and works for the Tacoma Pierce County Health Department in Tacoma, WA.



Opening Up To Story

Deborah Freedman

Images are powerful medicine. There are internal images that develop out of thought, experience and imagination, and grow into stories of information, narrative and fairytale, touching the mind, the heart and the soul. There are two words that seem appropriate to our awakening as listeners - integration and transformation. The format I propose is to integrate our stories, informative, narrative

Once Upon a Time

William Noonan, Ph.D.

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Health Communication Research Institute

*Dr. Noonan will be offering the Healing Story Alliance **pre-conference workshop** in July 2002, at the National Storytelling Conference in Denver. The workshop is titled "Emissaries of the Imagination." Participants will be guided through a process of creating original fairy tales, which metaphorically describe a disruptive experience or life altering event.*

Once upon a time, an evil sorcerer stole a magic crystal orb, a troll-like imp turned himself into a poisonous fruit tree, and a giant abducted a princess and hid her in his Castle of No Return. These are images from folk tales that you would expect to find in Grimm's Fairy Tales, but they are not. They are metaphors used by people who have undergone heart, liver and kidney transplants, to describe their experiences of illness, the miracle of transplantation and the journey to healing.

Recently, I was sponsored by Good Life Resources (a patient-centered pharmaceutical company designed to ease the financial and paper burden for people who require constant medication) to conduct a workshop at the Transplant Recipient International Organization Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada. The workshop was for people who wished to create folk tales that metaphorically captured their experience of transplantation. The workshop was not intended to create literary works of art, but was an opportunity to discover meaning through the use of imagination and fantasy. Transplantation is a modern medical procedure that has offered new hope for thousands of people. Tissue matching, drugs and surgical skills have made transplantation a viable choice for treatment rather than an experimental venture. Yet, with the exception of live kidney donors, the patient and transplant professionals depend on the gift of an

organ from a person who has died.

The knowledge and skill of transplant technology has advanced dramatically since the first kidney transplant in 1959. It has outpaced our ability to comprehend that in spite of death, a deceased person's organ can live on in the body of another. We can understand a martyr who willingly lies down his or her life for another, but in the case of transplantation, it is a freak, unexpected accident that unleashes the possibility for a new life.

A woman hears a heart beat within her chest which hours earlier beat inside the body of a stranger. A slight distention under a man's left rib cage is a conscious reminder that his insides have been rearranged by someone else's kidney. The donor's organ enters the diseased body of a living other and heals the infirmity.

Transplantation has ushered into the human realm of experience an event that confounds rational explanation. The metaphorical language of folk tales offers an alternate way to make meaning out of disruptive experiences.

As participants in the workshop in Las Vegas shared their memories, their transplant experiences were carefully crafted into the metaphorical language of folktales. The plot lines of their personal tales were based on traditional folk tales, yet the contents of the stories were the creation of their imaginations.

Many folk tales begin with a misfortune, an insufficiency, or the loss of a valued object. The problem invites a journey towards a resolution. For all the members of the workshop, the failure of a vital organ set them on a unique journey. Participants shared with each other what had been taken away from them by illness. Then, they imaged their personal loss as a stolen valued object.

For example, one woman who had received a kidney transplant felt deprived

of time and freedom. Her story began with a town whose life centered around a golden clock with numbers made of jewels.

All the townsfolk arranged their activities to the time of the clock. This special clock ran on a soft, gentle wind that always blew through the town. One day, a gray fog descended on the town. When it moved on, the townspeople discovered the clock had stopped. There was no wind. The wind had been stolen. Her story went on to describe the journey of the clock keeper's search for the wind.

Another man, who had encephalopathy, a disease that made him appear drunk and confused, imaged the loss of his decision-making ability as a crystal orb that George, the mayor, used to wisely govern the affairs of the town Fa-La-La. In the misty mountains lived an evil sorcerer named Sir Rosis and his evil pets, Encephalopathy, Creatnine, and the ugly brothers, T. Bilirubin and D. Bilirubin.

The evil sorcerer looked down from the misty mountains and was jealous of the good things in Fa-La-La. He was determined that he would get the Orb and things would be good in his kingdom. One night Sir Rosis sneaked down from the mountains and stole the Orb. But the Orb wouldn't answer the sorcerer's questions and in a fit of rage the sorcerer hurled the crystal Orb from the mountains into the Valley of the Gray Fogs, where it lodged in the Tree of Life.



Well, things became bad in Fa-La-La. The crops failed because the farmers didn't know when to plant or harvest. The fish didn't bite and the hunters came back with no game. The people quarreled and were unhappy. When they would ask George a question he wouldn't know the answer. George would go to lunch, and get lost. Someone would have to find him and all the people in the land said "Poor old George, he's lost it." This man's story continued along the plot line of a classical folk tale. After the villain has stolen the valuable object, a call for help is made. A hero/heroine appears (in this case, George the mayor, as the victimized hero) and sets out to find the stolen object. On the way, the hero/heroine meets a provider, a helper who has the magical means to recover the stolen object, but the hero/heroine must first pass a test.

Upon passing the test, the hero/heroine receives the magical means and is transported to the place where the valued object is hidden. Each sequence of action represents an aspect of the transplant experience. Due to limitations of space, the entire tale cannot be presented. But a fascinating part of the process occurred when several participants became "stuck" trying to create a metaphor for the experience of waiting for and eventually receiving the donor organ. In each instance, the resistance revealed unresolved feelings around the necessity of a person dying in order for them to live and around their complete dependency on external circumstances.

The man's story was progressing nicely until he came to the part where George, the mayor of Fa-La-La, arrived at the Tree of Life with the crystal Orb lodged in its trunk. During the session, the man was able to express his frustration at not knowing what to do next. He couldn't have the character, George, chop down the tree or harm it in any way. That would represent his taking an active role in bringing about his donor's death. I suggested that he relax and trust what he saw in his imagination. After five minutes he interrupted the group discussion, shouting, "I've got it!" This is what he saw.

After waiting many days at the foot of

the Tree of Life, George finally heard a great noise approaching through the forest. It was a horrible crashing and thrashing noise. George jumped to his feet and climbed a nearby tree. Across the forest, he could see a blind woodcutter dressed all in black coming toward him swinging a black axe. As the axe touched a tree it would fall to the ground. George watched in horror as the woodcutter approached his tree swinging his black axe in front of him. When the axe touched the Tree of Life it exploded in a great flash of light and George was thrown onto his back and the crystal Orb landed in his lap.



Through the construction of this story, the man made sense of his experience by metaphorically representing Death as the blind woodcutter. Death showed no discrimination. Death cut down one tree (Life) after another. The man just happened to be in the right place at the right time, when Death struck a stranger down with the right organ tissue match.

The man's difficulty with assuming a passive role in waiting for the death of another human being was resolved by his acceptance of the randomness of life events and the recognition of death as the Great Equalizer.

The man came to this understanding through the creation of his personal folk tale. The process of creating a story engages the right side of the brain. According to neurological research, the right side of the brain is active in processing metaphorical types of communication and mediating emotional processes. Image making stimulates unconscious associa-

tions and begins to shift patterns of meaning which forge a new reference of understanding in the conscious mind.

The shift in understanding not only prompts new insights, but creates a sense of unity. In a letter following the workshop, the man wrote that the story making process "helped me to bring the transplant experience together and view it as a continuous whole. Always before I had looked at it as a fragmented experience, sort of a series of unrelated events." Narrative form was used as a pattern for unifying the events in his life into unfolding themes, appropriate resolutions and meaningful significance.

Transplant recipients have stories to tell. Their stories are amazing journeys out of illness to new life. They have approached the boundary lines of life and death. At those outer regions of human experience, the language of metaphor retrieves the power of the event and the depth of emotions. The creation of a narrative bestows meaning on life.

Editor's Note:

Bill Noonan teaches at Marylhurst University in the Business Department, the Art Therapy Department and the Religious Studies Department. He also teaches the philosophy series of courses at Columbia Gorge Community College and is the chaplain for the Hospice of the Gorge where he comforts the dying and counsels the bereaved.

The Healing Story Alliance wants your input!

Please send us articles and stories for our newsletter, journal and the Forum page on our web site.

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Healing Story Alliance Goals

- To Explore and promote the use of storytelling as a healing art
- To encourage the discussion and exchange of ideas about story and healing
- To create an ongoing network of support for those involved in storytelling as a healing art
- To organize opportunities for members to develop their skills in the use of storytelling to inform, inspire, nurture and heal.

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Healing Story

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Three issues a year

Diving in the Moon:

Honoring Story Facilitating Healing
Annual Journal of the
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- July NSN Conference
- October at the Storytelling Festival in Jonesborough, TN

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HSA members across the nation connecting with each other and tellers of like minds in their communities.

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National Storytelling Network

101 Courthouse Square

Jonesborough, Tennessee 37659

Fax: 423-753-9331

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Healing Story Alliance
National Storytelling Network
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