

# DOES YOUR STORY RUN YOUR LIFE?

By Sandy Brewer, PhD

It resonates like an old gospel spiritual: You got a story, I got a story. All God's children got a story.

The intensity of our stories varies as does the degree of the resulting chaos. Some of us had it really rough, as did I. Yet others have had harsher lives. And for some of us, not so much. High-end or low-end trauma, it matters not. All of it can make for a great story about how and why we have the right to be victims of our own reality. Because reality is not carved in stone. It is based on a point of view. Namely, ours.

Like Shakespeare's "To be or not to be," it's a choice. To be – to empower ourselves; not to be – to debilitate and hobble ourselves. Neither choice makes us right or wrong, but one will definitely make us happier. Which candle will we light today?

It's easy to let stories – old ways of seeing ourselves, our histories and agendas – take center stage in our lives and be the focus of our existence. It's easy to consciously or unconsciously be a victim. What if we all looked at the experiences in our lives, especially the tougher ones, as simply passages? Places through which we have traveled. Whatever the journey has been, it pales in comparison to the core of who we are today. We're all at the head of our own line. No circumstance, no individual, event, or history gets to state who we are. We do.

Who and how do you want to be today? You get to choose. Really, you do.

Begin by releasing resistance. If things are or were tough allow for those facts. Don't debate them, but do redefine them. Our experiences, however difficult they may have been are only places through which we have traveled. They do not define us unless we say they do. So, here's the caveat for creating a pathway to healing: no story. If you want to choose triumph – if you want to choose you – you can't put a story around why you feel so miserable. You won't create change and learn how to empower yourself by saying, "The clerk in the grocery store forgot to put the milk in the bag and now I have to go back and nobody does it right and nobody ever takes care of me and this always happens to me..." By the time you're done letting your run on sentences – your victimization story – vomit all over you, everybody around you is ready to throw up, too.

If you want to work with the law of non-resistance which *always* precedes the law of attraction, you could say. "Ugh, the milk's not here. How irritating. But, wait. Maybe there's something for me in the drive back to the store. Maybe it will give me the time I have been needing to take a breath. Maybe it will teach me that I can create fifteen minutes in my day just for me. Next time, I'll see if I can do it without the double milk run..."

Even if your story is based on something of much greater substance than the milk metaphor, it's all the same principle. Someone may have truly "done you wrong." You may have genuinely been hurt and it was perhaps outrageously unfair. I'm not asking you to agree with what happened or to pretend it wasn't hard. I'm not suggesting for one moment that you avoid processing and releasing those deeply embedded, difficult emotions. I'm asking you to understand that those emotions do not define you and do not have to limit you. Hold yourself in a higher light and be determined to stop attaching

your identity to what has happened to you.

Change your mind about yourself and you will change your reality. It takes a lot of practice to break away from old identities and yesterday's attachments. It takes courage to stay focused on the recognition that there is a Source inside of you greater than any circumstance or doubt. It's not a straight line. You'll have to be willing to fall down and then get up. Maybe you'll have to tumble down into doubt and confusion 100 times today; tomorrow maybe it'll be 105 times. But soon it will become automatic – this reaching for a choice about yourself that is greater than the illusion that something bigger than you is blocking your way. That “something bigger” is your doubt and fear, your attachment to an old story of pain and suffering, self-judgment and inadequacy.

If you're feeling stuck, step off the hamster wheel of obsessively replaying your right and wrong, good guys/bad guys scenarios. Instead, make your new prayer, your new mantra: “Show me a greater point of view – a point of view stronger than my doubt, greater than my anger, fairer than my self-judgment. I am not that which has happened to me. Show me the point of view of Love and how I can recognize and be healed by it in the midst of my chaos.”

There have been times in my life when I have clung to this prayer for weeks, and on occasion, months. But there has never been a time when, as long as I held to my intention of self-growth, that the clouds didn't ultimately part and the healing presence of wisdom come cascading through.

“All God's children got a story...” It's part of our nature. What will your story be today? The light of all that you truly are and the potentials that await you? Or will it be the shadow of doubt? Shadows are within the light, not outside of it. And shadows have no true power over you, for at your core you are so much greater than the illusion of separation.

Today make the promise of you be an empowering choice, not an interminable process. We're all in this dance of life together. Know that in the midst of all our self-perceived flaws, is the stunning light of all that we can be. Let it shine.

Now that's a story worth living in!

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