



TRAUMA-INFORMED ADVOCACY SERIES

Storytelling for Advocacy



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WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT IN THIS MODULE

the significance
of storytelling



how stories
spur change



framing your story for
a particular audience



what makes
stories effective

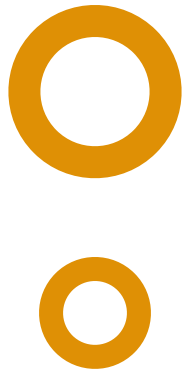


telling your story
of self, us, and now





STORIES AND STORYTELLING: FIRST THOUGHTS



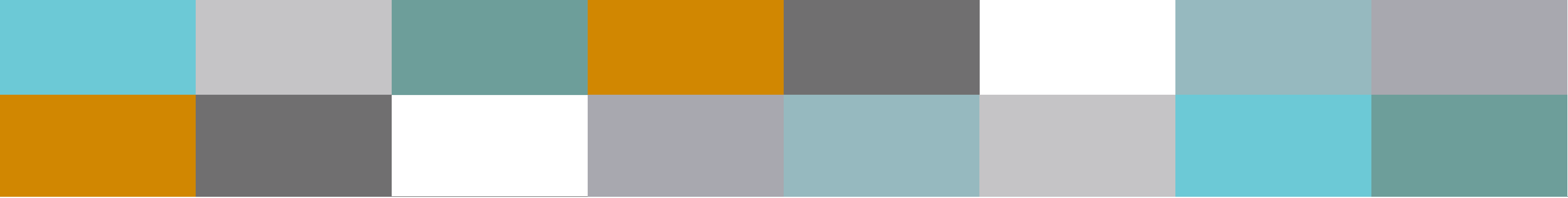
“The world is shaped by two things:
stories told and the memories they leave behind.”

-Vera Nazarian





THE ART OF STORYTELLING



WHY STORIES ARE EFFECTIVE

- Stories are already how we “do” learning
- Stories make the “why” clearer
- Stories articulate our shared values
- Stories cut through competing demands
- Stories help engage both the head and the heart

HOW STORIES SPUR CHANGE

ACTION MOTIVATORS

urgency

anger

hope

solidarity

Y.C.M.A.D.

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ACTION INHIBITORS

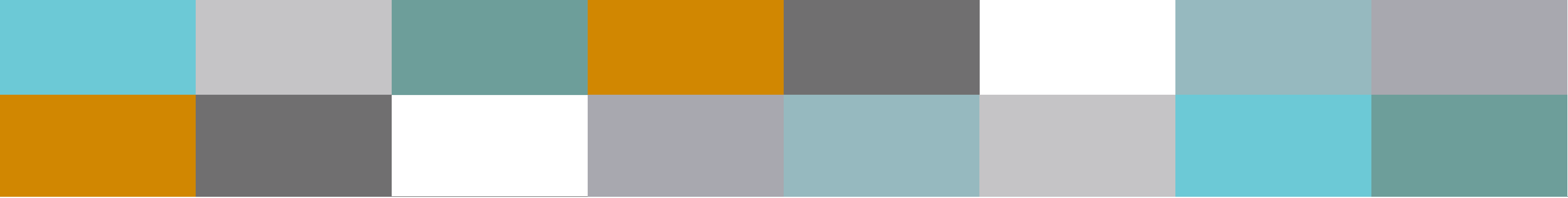
inertia

apathy

fear

isolation

self-doubt



WHAT MAKES STORIES MOST IMPACTFUL

- Engaging and connective
- Factual/honest
- Professional ≠ academic
- Distilled to main points/succinct
- Relevant to and focused on policy
- Focus on heroes rather than villains
- Include a clear “ask”/call to action

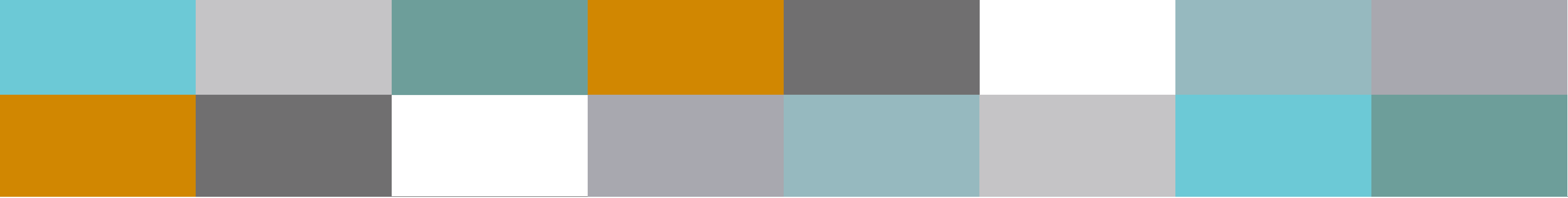
CONSIDERATIONS TO INFORM STORYTELLING:

TARGET AUDIENCE SELECTION

Notice what is already happening to help define your advocacy target(s).

- What have other advocates/stakeholders/policymakers attempted?
 - * Successes - how did they happen?
 - * Shortfalls - what contributed?
 - ◆ What has changed that may make you more likely to succeed?
- Who are your active and passive allies?
 - * Where are opportunities to collaborate/coordinate efforts?
- Who are your passive and active opposition?
- Who is neutral/uncommitted? What might they need to hear to be swayed?
- What is the dominant discourse/public understanding?
- What barriers could prevent your proposed solution from being developed, drafted, supported, or implemented? How can these be overcome?
- What are groups most impacted by the issue asking for?


What do you hope to accomplish with each target?



CONSIDERATIONS TO INFORM STORYTELLING:

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

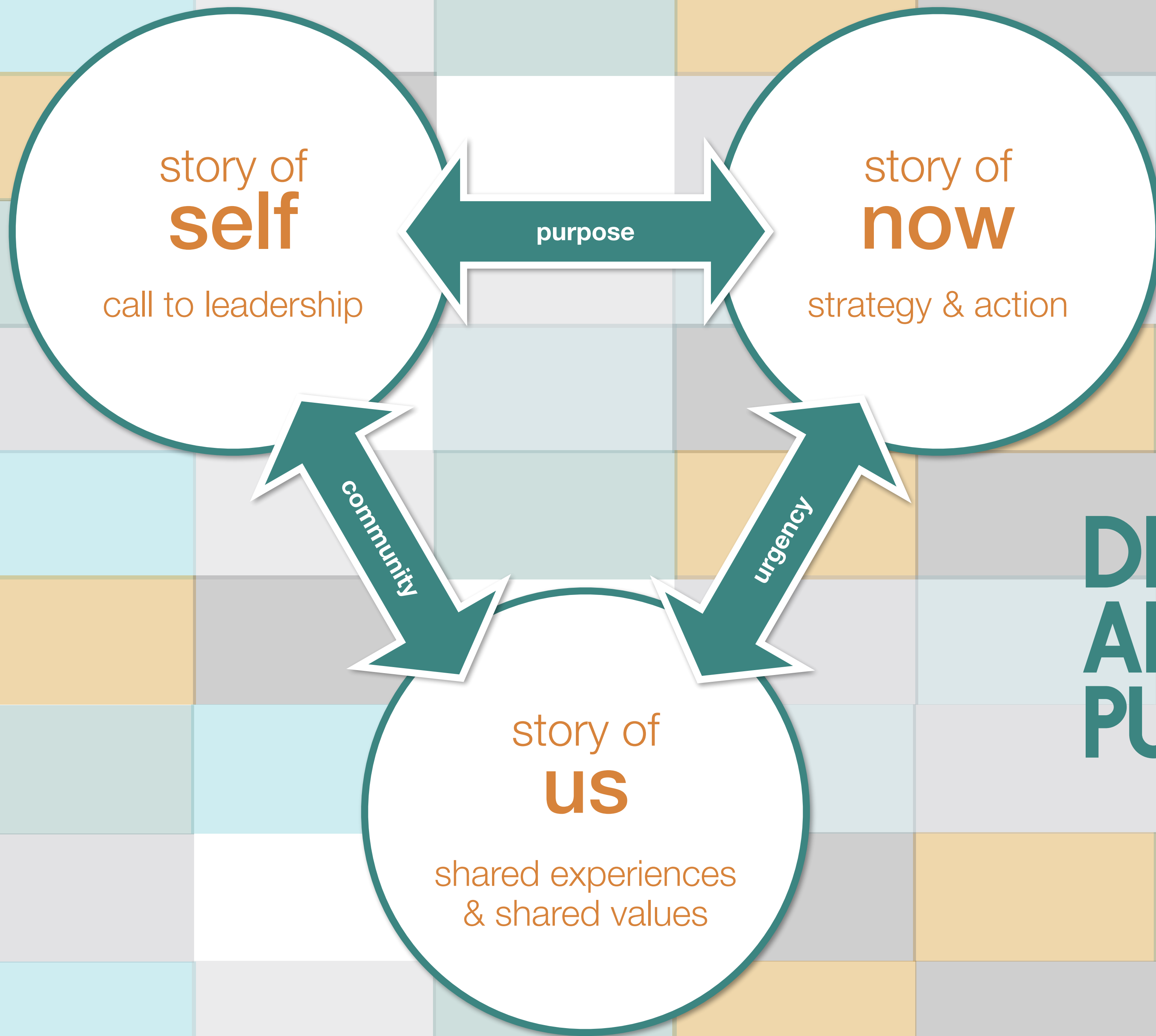
- Where do they stand on your issue (or similar issues)?
- What is their professional history?
- What is their (known/public) personal/volunteer history?
- What do you know about their motivations/values?
 - * Think beyond money, power, and votes!
- What do they need to hear to be swayed/encouraged to act?
 - * Who will be the most effective/appropriate messenger?



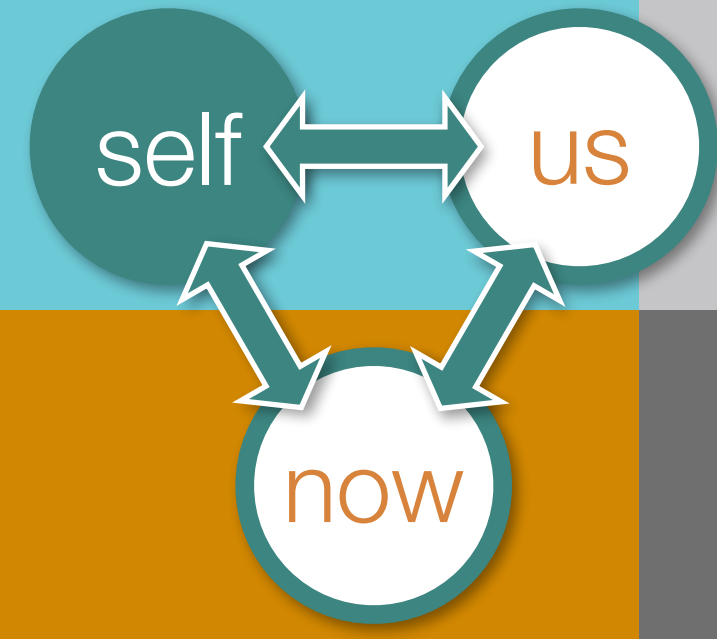
**STORIES MOVE THE NEEDLE
OF PUBLIC OPINION AND
INSPIRE OTHERS TO ACT.**

THE STRUCTURE OF A STORY





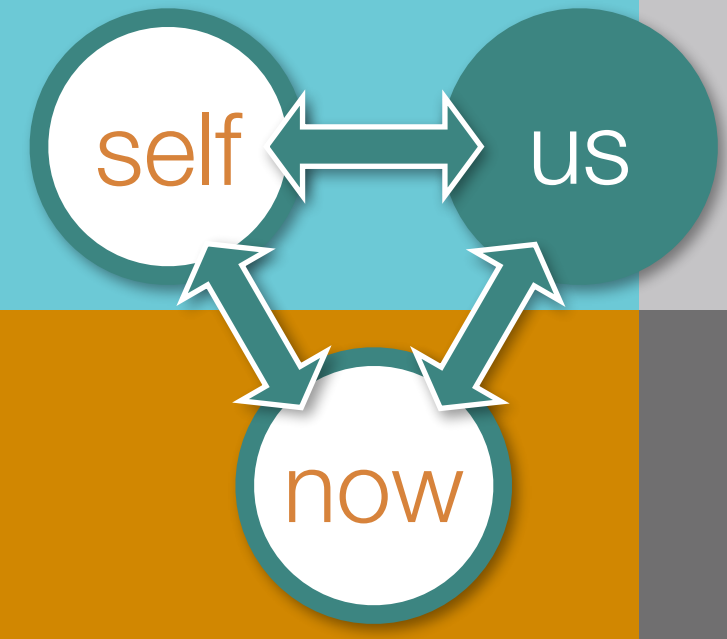
DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE PUBLIC NARRATIVE



A STORY OF SELF

- What has called you to join in this action? What has driven you to want to create change?
- What called you to motivate others to join you in action?
- How did you get the courage/hope to act?
- What values move you to act? When did these become important to you? How might these values inspire others to act similarly?
- What did the outcome of your own actions teach you?

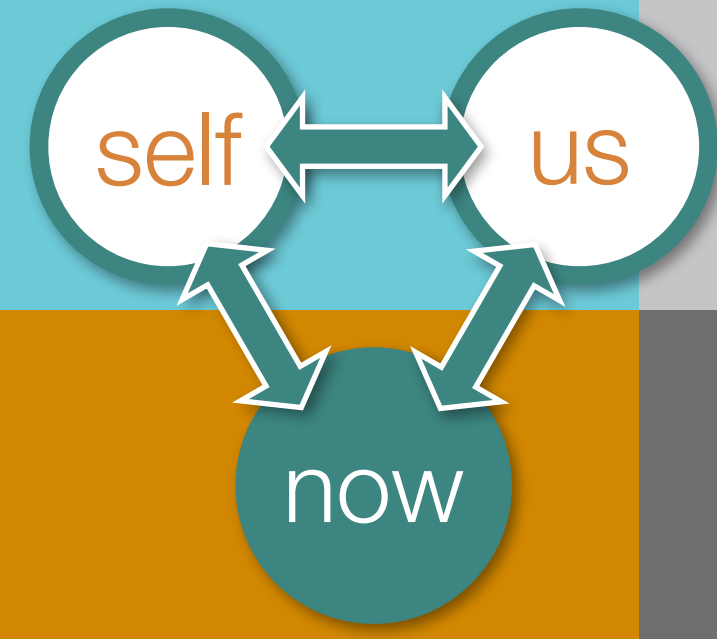
“ We all have stories of pain, or we wouldn't think the world needs changing.
We all have stories of hope, or we wouldn't think we could change it.
-Marshall Ganz ”



A STORY OF US

- What values do you share with your target audience? What can you share that captures this?
- What challenges have impacted this audience? How have these been addressed?
- What change does the audience hope for? Why?
- What choice points exist for us to act together to make change in alignment with our shared values in response to collective challenges we face?
- To what values, experiences, and/or aspirations of your audience will you appeal when you call on them to join you in action?

answers the question:
WHY IS MY CAUSE YOUR CAUSE, TOO?



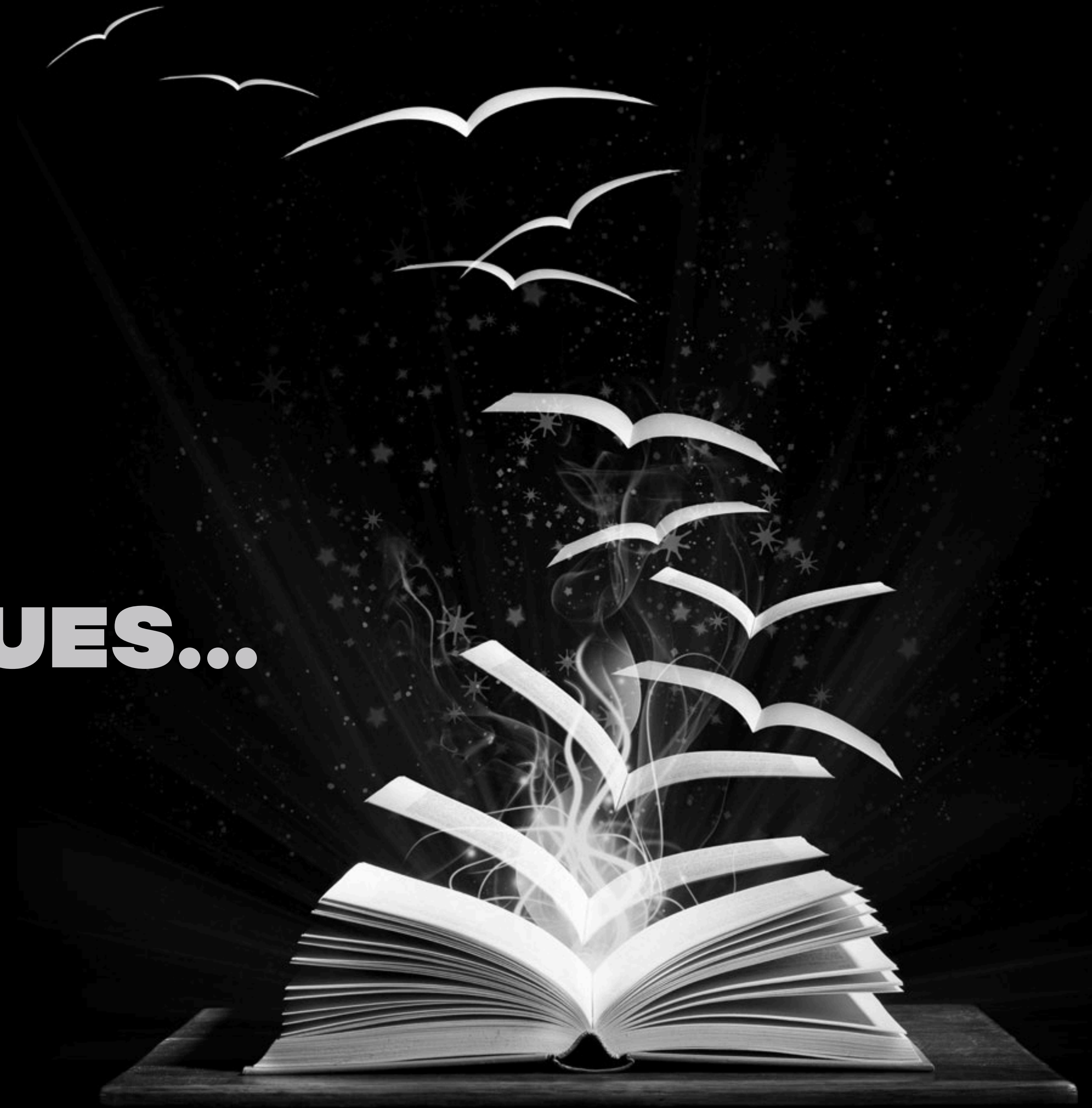
A STORY OF NOW

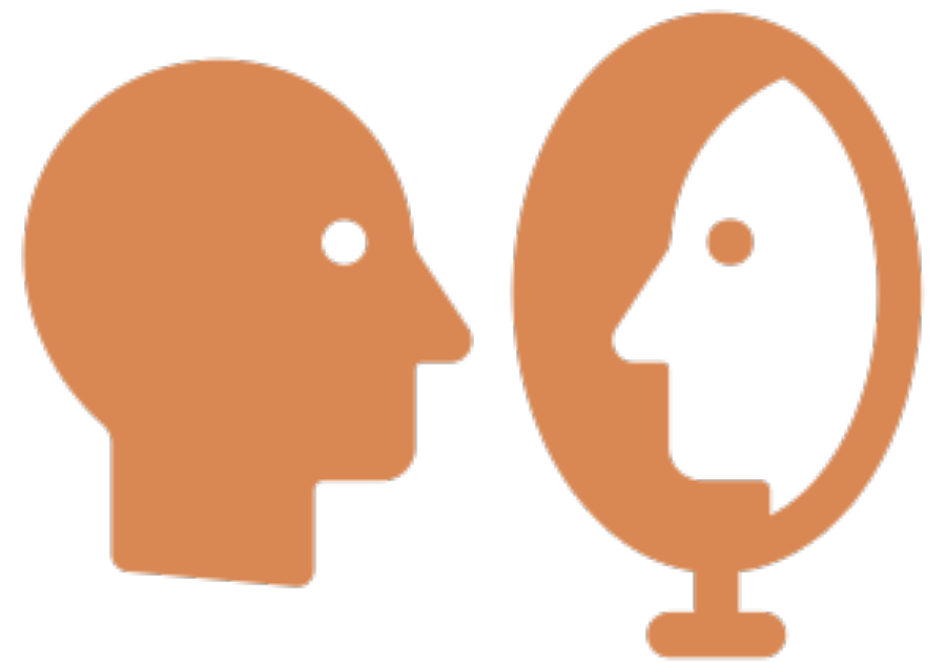
- What urgent challenge do you hope to inspire others to take action on?
- What choice will you call on your audience to make to successfully meet the challenge?
- Why is now the time to organize to make this change?
- What is the risk, or what would the future look like if the change isn't made?
- What will the future look like when the change is made? What is the “big picture” impact?
- How can they begin now, at this moment?

“Our goal is to meet this challenge, seize this hope, & turn it into **concrete action.**”

-Marshall Ganz

THE STORY **CONTINUES...**





REFLECTION POINT:

What might you do differently when telling your story next time?

What parts of your storytelling will stay the same regardless of your target audience?
Which details will you “customize” depending on your target audience?