LIVES INTO STORY

Nicola Grove
Robin Meader
Open storytellers
About Robin

• I am one of the first members of Openstorytellers -since 2004

• I work telling stories, drawing pictures to support people, and with Somerset Advocacy

• I am an artist illustrator with my own business- graphic facilitation at conferences and courses

• I use my life story to teach staff in social services
About Nicola

• I was a teacher and then a speech therapist

• I set up Openstorytellers

• Now I do research, training and storytelling
Openstorytellers

• A charity based in Frome, Somerset
• Enriching lives through the sharing of stories
• Projects in schools and community
• Day services and training
• Founded in 2004
• charity 2009

www.openstorytellers.org.uk

www.drnicolagrove.com
All kinds of stories…from all over the world
Where do stories come from?
Handed down from the sky - as an ancient story tells us

or

Arising out of the way friends and family share experiences
What stories do for us

- Friends
- Memories
- Making sense
- Possibilities
- Who we are

www.drnicolagrove.com
Shared experiences
Identity - the hats we wear

My cowboy hat
I feel adventurous and creative

My Xmas hat
I feel generous and giving

My Army hat
This represents freedom and finding

My American Maritime hat
I feel relaxed and independent by these

every hat tells a specific story from Robin’s life...
Grove, N, (2007) Exploring the absence of high points in story reminiscence with carers of people with profound disabilities

Journal of Policy and Practice in Intellectual Disabilities, 4, 252-259
Nazreen’s Life Story book

- Where I used to live: 54%
- Holidays: 20%
- Education: 15%
- My early life: 12%
- Likes & dislikes: 7%
- People I live with: 13%

28 artefacts, mostly cards
Study of communication acts in a day centre

- 15 care staff with 5 verbal, 5 nonverbal people
- Structured and Unstructured sessions
- 70% + interactions in structured sessions, more than 2/3 to verbal people
- *Directives & Information transfer* predominate
- More *directives* and *social closeness (phatics)* with nonverbal people
- No stories with either group  
  *(McHutchison, 2006)*
A handbook of personal storytelling for those who live and work with children and young people who have severe communication difficulties

Nicola Grove
STORYSHARING®

- A framework for finding and sharing personal experience narratives with friends, family, staff and paid workers
- Using a social, collaborative model
- Focus on identity, friendship, active participation and listening
- +++Communication, Confidence, +++Staff skills in supporting real conversation

15 years of research: project 2015 -2018 capacity building and accredited training
A small story becomes part of the big Life Story with a mythic flavour!
Once upon a time, there was a boy called ....Jack
And they lived happily every after….

A hero with ASD?

and a girl who is Deaf and dumb
People with Down syndrome have always been with us... and often been valued for themselves.
Sometimes people had a good story and something got in their way, like bullying, politics, anti-social behaviour or unhappy relationships.

We sort out problems in stories and this can help us.

I think that everyone in the world has the need to have a story, or we would be under a dark cloud.
I was like Aladdin he always had to do a lot of washing, but one day he discovered he wanted to go somewhere he could find a magic lamp, and it's like me, feel like I really want to go out to a place to visit like a castle or a cave or something

...and as he rubs the lamp a genie comes out with the three wishes, it reminds me of wanting to get a job and make a lot of money....And then he falls in love with this girl and becomes rich, and to me it makes me feel like I want to go out in the world and talk to people.
Do come to our workshop...

Thank you for listening