Digital storytelling in healthcare: the essential experience

Chronic disease: prevention and management
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Why tell stories?

‘We tell stories to entertain and to teach.’

Pascal
SUCCESS

Messages that stick are:

Simple,
Unexpected,
Concrete,
Credible,
Emotional
Stories


Digital stories: definitions

Digital stories are short videos consisting of still images, music, voice-over (usually) and video (sometimes); the stories are told by real people about real experiences.

Digital stories are a distillation – they move us from the narrative to the essential story.
Digital storytelling: essential characteristics

Digital stories are:

- brief: a good digital story is a short digital story
- simple: low-technology using a few carefully chosen images, voice-over and/or music and simple titling
- personal: revealing something important about the storyteller
- about the story: a way of developing associated skills
- respectful of others’ feelings and experiences
- created in a spirit of collaboration and partnership.

Stories that move

‘The foundation of a story is an emotional foundation.’

Yann Martel
Telling the right stories

‘How can I help people if I don’t know the right stories to tell them?’

Jack Cash
Heavy Lifting

Doreen's story

All the King's Horses
Doreen Merritt's Story
‘One of the essential qualities of the clinician is interest in humanity, for the secret of the care of the patient is in caring for the patient.’

Francis Peabody (1927) The care of the patient

How to get the patient’s story
Lies, damn lies and . . .

'As always in history, statistics give little insight into individual experience. That can only be gained by listening to stories.'

Laurence Rees's
History of Auschwitz

Becoming (a) patient

'To the typical physician, my illness is a routine incident in his rounds, while for me it’s the crisis of my life.

I would feel better if I had a doctor who at least perceived this incongruity… I just wish he would… give me his whole mind just once, be bonded with me for a brief space, survey my soul as well as my flesh, to get at my illness, for each man is ill in his own way.'

Anatole Broyard (1992) Intoxicated by my illness
Jean’s story

Digital storytelling: ‘Powerpoint for the soul’

‘Behaviour change happens in highly successful situations mostly by speaking to people’s feelings.’

Kotter and Cohen (2002)

‘Culture of the mind must be subservient to the heart.’

Mahatma Gandhi
What makes a good story?

Effective stories:
- have a purpose
- are descriptive
- are interesting, captivating, and something the listener can relate to
- are coherent
- make a point
- inspire listeners to think and to take action or change behaviour.

Two-minute story

‘If we communicate for two minutes only, it will be a start.’

Paul Weller
The two-minute story

- Take a few moments to think of a story. Make a few notes if you wish.
- Now tell your story to your partner in two minutes.
- Stop! Listeners, what did you notice?
- Now use the storyboard template to plan your story.
- Tell your story again.
- What were the differences between the two stories?

Digital storytelling: stories move in circles

‘Each affects the other and the other affects the next, and the world is full of stories, and the stories are all one.’

Mitch Albom (2005)
Digital storytelling: a chance to reflect

‘Reflection is as natural – and as necessary – as breathing … or telling stories.’

Joe Lambert, Centre for Digital Storytelling

Digital stories: how they can be used

To increase understanding between teams
Inter-professional education
Continuing Professional Development
Sharing good news and good practice
Reminder of patients’ existence/raison d’etre of NHS
Mental health
Sharing experiential learning
Reflective practice

Process mapping
Building social capital
Project feedback
Reminiscences
elearning
Digital executive summary
Commissioning
Frontline teams
Organisational development
Team building
Patient education
The power of stories

‘Every light was a story and the flashes themselves were the stories going out over the waves, as markers and guides, comfort and warning.’

Jeanette Winterson, 2005

From stories to transformation

Markers

Guides

Comfort

Warning

Interprofessional education
Rizia’s story

Keepers of the stories

Which stories do you need to keep?
Why do you need to keep them?
How would you preserve them?
What would you do with them?
Thank you.

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