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What's in your story?

By Jim Rives

December 1, 2009

Shakespeare's words, "all the world's a stage," were merely observing that each of us is an actor within our own story.

Time may have come and gone, but this truth was never truer than it is in our world today. The interesting aspect of this is that most of us do not see ourselves as walking about our daily lives inside a story. The way we take on our story shapes how others see us – and how they interact with us. It allows us to be noticed, or unnoticed, validated within our perceptions of reality and thus reinforces how we see and experience the world.

College professors see themselves in a unique manner and shape their bodies so as to show up in a certain manner – whether it is dressed a certain way (or not), smoking a pipe, wearing a funny hat, etc. They are merely acting out their role so that they can maximize how others see them – and how others respond to them.

What difference does this make?

The place I see this showing up in the lives of most individuals is in how they see themselves as a winner or a martyr. They are overcomers or victims of life.

Which are you?

There is an easy way for YOU to discern what story you are playing out in your life. Is your conversation heavily involved in talking about how others are responsible for your misfortunes? Do you feel like that you could succeed if only someone else was not holding the keys to your success? If your language and thoughts are consumed in what is wrong with others, you are living in a story that is toxic for you. The language of complaint does little if anything to change the world. It only imprisons you for a longer term of bitterness and depression.



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Once you become aware of how toxic this is for your mental and financial health, you have the choice to change. No one else holds the keys to your success – unless you hand those keys to them. Recently I was informed that more fortunes have been made in bad economic times than during the good ones. Hmmm...what could that mean for you?

Doing things the same way (including how you talk) will only generate the same results. If you REALLY want to change, get out of the story you are in and create a new one. Wow! Do you realize that you have the option to create a new story? It likely will include finding a mentor or coach to guide you in surfacing old habits and language that needs to change. It takes more than doing something differently once. In fact, scientists have discovered that it takes 3,000 repetitions. However, it will

never change unless you move into new practices.

What's in your story? Do not like where you are or what is happening? I hand you a pen and invite you to write a new story....

Jim Rives is an executive coach to small businesses and Fortune 500 companies as the CEO of Executive Leadership Institute LLC, which offers the Maricopa Entrepreneur Training Program for the city of Maricopa. He can be reached at 520-568-6442 or jim@executiveleadershipinstitute.com.

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