



The Power of Storytelling for Mental Wellness

What Makes Us Vulnerable Makes Us Human.

Sipping my dark roasted coffee, listening to my client's engaging conversation, a series of questions run through my head:

**How can I
make our message
impactful?**

How can I connect with
people on a *heartfelt* level,
not just a business and
intellectual level?

**How do I tell their story
when people are drowning in
a sea of marketing messages
coming at us from every
direction?**

How do I communicate
and attract the right people
for all the right reasons?

**How do I tell their story when people are
drowning in a sea of marketing messages
coming at us from every direction?**

*As Brene Brown says, vulnerability
is the thing we first want to see in
others, but the last thing we want
others to see in ourselves.*

And yet, only when we allow ourselves to be authentic and imperfect, we can impact others with our stories in an honest, real, and meaningful way.

As human beings, we struggle to share who we really are, how we're really feeling and what we really believe in. We grow up in a world learning what we should and should not show to others. We fail to realize that what makes us vulnerable, makes us human.



What Makes A Good Story?

A fine line between brevity and creativity

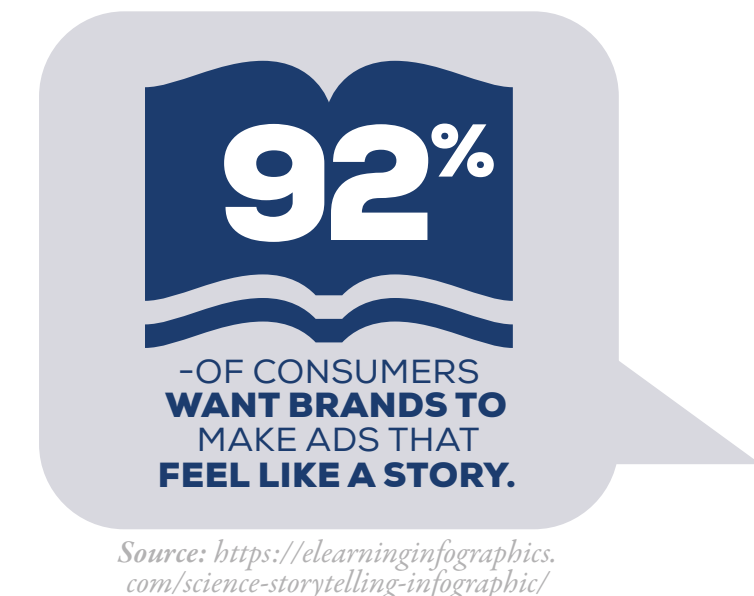
- ✓ **Relatability and relevance:** Your audience needs to identify with your story.
- ✓ **Immersive experience:** Your story should be about people, their dreams and desires but also problems and challenges.
- ✓ **Dramatic development:** It starts with a hook, and ends with a resolution – a good story needs tension and release.
- ✓ **Simplicity:** Keep it short and simple and avoid confusion and overload to keep your audience invested in the story.
- ✓ **Trust in the teller:** Keep it authentic, and real. Vulnerability is relatable.
- ✓ **Show, don't tell:** Engage your audience and leave them hungry for more. Let them connect the dots.

Stories Let Us Share Information In A Way That Creates An Emotional Connection.



Stories help us understand information and each other, it makes the information memorable, but it also can shape, strengthen, and challenge our opinions and values. With every story, we create a greater emotional connection, and we gain a deeper understanding of other people's experiences, needs and concerns to better reach out and connect to them.

When a story catches our attention and engages us, we are more likely to absorb the message and meaning within it than if the same message was presented simply in facts and figures.



Scientifically a well told story can engage many more areas in the brain than when the brain is just processing facts. A story activates parts in the brain that allows our listener or reader to turn the story in to their own ideas and experience, thanks to a process called "neural coupling".

(<https://elearninginfographics.com/science-storytelling-infographic/>)

Stories are more than just 'engaging content' – fundamentally, stories shape and define our communication strategies.



Storytelling Can Be A Force For Nurturing Mental Well-Being.

Storytelling is the vivid description of ideas, beliefs, personal experiences, and life-lessons through stories or narratives that evoke powerful emotions and insights.

Recently, a coalition of leaders, experts and entertainment giants have come together to form the Mental Health Storytelling Coalition to raise mental-health awareness and show the role storytelling can play in addressing our nation's mental-health crisis.

Stories about mental health challenges can help people living with mental health conditions know that they are not alone. It can also help in their own recovery, while offering encouragement and support to others with similar experiences.

“

Media has enormous influence over how we collectively perceive and understand the most difficult issues in our society,” said ViacomCBS president-CEO Bob Bakish. “The mental health crisis impacts people of all demographics and geographies, and as content creators, it’s our responsibility to use our assets – through our stories, platforms and reach – to take action. Our ability to come together as an industry to meaningfully shift the narrative around mental health can transform the lives of people everywhere.

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Storytelling is a fundamental human experience that helps generate closeness and empathy and unites people. Well-told stories enable us, as healthcare leaders, communication experts and content creators, to drive a deeper and stronger connection with our audience.

The concept of storytelling in healthcare dates back to William Carlos Williams, a physician-writer with a propensity to capture the diversity of the human illness experience through poetry and prose. Harnessing the power of a narrative changes the way we care for those in need.

That is why at Idea Hall, we strongly believe that telling stories that truly resonate with our audience and elicit an emotional response will cut through the noise, inspire, lead, and shape a healthier world.



Let's Shift the Narrative...

Think of the story's angle with your audience in mind.

Who is going to receive the story?

What moves them?

What are their needs, concerns, dreams?

What do they wish/need to know?



Determine what the story is responding to.

What is the story's resolution?

What offering can your audience benefit from and value?

What's your core message?



Establish the voice and tone of your story.

Whose voice needs to be heard?

What tone will keep your audience engaged?



