

Exercise 2.2

Drawing out the core story



Foundation

Yes

Medium

2.2.1

In story-based research, core stories are sometimes used as a way of distilling the core content of a story to help focus on the central aspects being communicated. However, the aim is not to lose the overall message by reducing the story to un-related elements, so the key aspects chosen should themselves tell a story, in order to remain faithful to the overall idea in the story.

Forced into the Emergency Room

They thought my leg was in a very bad shape, so the doctor told me: "Marian, you must go to the ER" I say: No! Not to the ER!" And she told me: "You must go". Moreover, I must go there alone. So she told me: "I'll call one for you" And I told her: "I can't even go by taxi alone, I need company." "Then I'll call you an ambulance, round trip". But she thought they would keep me there. Because she saw my leg in a bad shape.

The automatic systems (queueing and being called) as well as the protocols (using the walker) are not adapted to people like her and make her feel deprived and disempowered:

So, I tell him: "It's just that I barely can see, I've lost my sight and out of this eye I can barely see" and you know now everywhere they have these... those... screens like televisions, where the numbers appear, and I can't read it. So, he told me: "No, do not worry, I've already told him your problem and they'll come for you". And well, there I was in a corridor, waiting. Well, after a long time, a really long time, I saw something lightning up... just me, all alone, no one else was there, I was that TV turning on... I thought: "Maybe they're calling you", but I can't read and there was no one to ask to.

- Read the story below told by Mariann (around 650 words) and re-write it in a core story of around 100 words, to capture what you consider to be the key elements, in a storied form.

- Work in pairs - each partner should read and justify their own shorter core story.

But they sat me on a wheelchair. And I was with my own walker, not this one here, but one which is smaller and I use it to move around, they took it from me immediately after getting to the "Sagrat Cor" and I said: "Don't take it away from me cos you make it impossible for me to walk. With it I still can manage..." And they told me: "No you won't be needing it anymore because they will take you everywhere". And I told the young man: "It's just that I can't..." "Don't worry I will... I will bring you in".

She meets a "friendly doctor", suddenly dismissed by the person in charge:

He brings me in with a... with the wheelchair and the doctor sees us and he tells the young lad: You, what are you doing here! What are you doing here! And he says: "Oh it's just that this woman was waiting to come in but she can't on her own so I'm helping her". And he goes: "But that's not for you to do it!" And he answers: "I don't care, now she's here" he says, "Now you're here, madame, have a nice day, goodbye".

The doctor blames her for her problem and circumstances:

And the doctor tells me: "What's up with you? I say "Look, I've got my file...

look, this leg" And he tells me... he takes a look at the leg, stares at me and says: "Listen to me" he says, "Did you come alone?" I say "yes, yes sir, I came alone." He says "I must tell you something" he says "Don't you know you can't come alone to the ER? And I say: "Yes sir, you're right, because when we come here we don't know what we might find." I say, "but I had no option but to come alone" he says "Well, it's really wrong!" I say, "I guess so, but I also must tell you something, Doctor, when the family doctor, and here you are my file, sends me in an ambulance", I say "I think this may not be the first time you're in this kind of situation". He didn't answer. He didn't answer. He unwrapped the leg's bandage, but roughly".

They treat her like an object, with no explanation given:

That he didn't even let me in his cabinet to tell me about... what his opinion was, give me an explanation. He didn't give me one. He... he was already carrying the papers and he told me... he said: "Well", he says "here you are the papers...", I say, "Doctor", I say, "is it bad? Am I in a bad condition?" And he says "Ah! Here, I wrote everything down on this report, your doctor will explain it to you".

2.2.2

Now discuss this story in your pairs or small groups.

How did Marian react to her experiences?

What do you feel about the professionals she encountered?

2.2.3

Replace the patient in the narrative with yourself and change the other characters to suit.

What parts of the narrative remain relevant to you?

What parts of the narrative would be different?

What is it about your situation that means that, in the same circumstances, your narrative would be different?