

# UNDERSTANDING STORY

## I. Introduction

*"For fear of sounding Freudian or hoping not to give the counselee the idea that the past is determinative, many Christian counselors give little credence to the counselee's childhood, family dynamics or long-term history. We have found that by listening carefully to their history and probing with heart exposing questions we are able to get valuable heart shaping information. By reflecting on the shaping influences of the past and reframing the language of the counselee we can speak the truth in love much more clearly and sensitively into their life and soul. Looking at the past is useful and important not because we are looking for blame or excuse but to hear heart themes as they emerge through multiple stories. They now sense we know them better, care more empathetically and we have the distinct advantage of planting a pivot foot into their worldview all the while keeping our other foot planted in a solid biblical worldview" (Garrett Higbee).*

<http://www.biblicalcounselingcoalition.org/2014/02/21/top-10-counseling-mistakes/>

## II. Preparing Yourself

A. \_\_\_\_\_ yourself.

B. \_\_\_\_\_ yourself.

C. \_\_\_\_\_ yourself.

### III. Why is Story so Important?

A. It is \_\_\_\_\_ (Proverbs 18:13).

*"Good counsel understands then explains people's experiences in ways that ring true to them yet also casts a new light of understanding in accordance with the Bible. A wise counselor will not give one-dimensional instruction, but three dimensional insight" (Jeremy Pierre, The Dynamic Heart in Daily Life pg. 25-26).*

B. It is \_\_\_\_\_ (Proverbs 22:6; 29:15).

*"As people grow in self-awareness, they begin to understand how their beliefs, desires, and commitments result in their knee-jerk responses to life" (Jeremy Pierre, The Dynamic Heart in Daily Life pg. 30).*

C. It communicates \_\_\_\_\_ (Proverbs 27:23)

D. It reveals \_\_\_\_\_ (Luke 6:45).

## IV. How We View Story

Story Centric	Problem Centric
What were the _____?	What is the _____?
What are the _____?	What is the _____?
What values have _____?	The Bible says . . .
What is their _____?	_____
What is their _____?	Struggle = _____
_____ for the struggle	Failure = _____

*"In counseling and in other forms of personal ministry, the trajectory of care must delve into the dynamic heart instead of skim along the surface of the presenting issue" (Jeremy Pierre, The Dynamic Heart in Daily Life pg. 27).*

*"A troubled person is a person to love, not a problem to fix. And people often change slowly and struggle deeply" (David Powlison).*

*"Counseling should be directed to the breath of the heart's functions – thinking, feeling, choosing. Emphasizing one aspect without due attention to the others will lead to a lopsided view of people and a lopsided methodology in handling them" (Jeremy Pierre, The Dynamic Heart in Daily Life pg. 27).*

V. How do you gather a story?

A. Build \_\_\_\_\_ to get information.

B. \_\_\_\_\_ the room .

C. Be a \_\_\_\_\_.

D. Ask open ended \_\_\_\_\_.

E. Think: \_\_\_\_\_.

F. Get it on paper (we use [www.novamind.com](http://www.novamind.com)).

1. Early life questions – types of questions

- a. How would your teachers, peers, and parents; how would they have described you?
- b. Describe your parents (key values and how it manifested); relationship with your parents. Were they expressive with words, what was the culture? How did they respond to misbehavior?
- c. School life – academics, teachers, peers.
- d. Why are these questions important?
- e. What was their religious foundation – church life; view of God; parental interactions around God.

2. Teen years

- a. What relationships noticeably changed and why?
- b. Follow up with how those answers impacted or affected them.
- c. Describe any romantic relationships, how did you engage with those relationships or lack thereof?
- d. Relationship with God.
- e. Peer pressure

3. College and young adulthood (18-25) Ask about:

- a. Ambitions and why
- b. Work
- c. Self-reflection
- d. Relationships
- e. Activities and Recreation (what are they enjoying most)

4. Adulthood

- a. Major life events
- b. Major life changes (relationally or career)
- c. Relationship with God evolve or erode, what contributed to the growth or erosion of the relationship with God

