

Intentional Living: Start Sharing Your Story to Encourage Others

“The stories we tell the best are the ones we have lived.”

– John C. Maxwell

What action step did you commit to last week? What were the results?

INSIGHT

Directions: Take turns reading the paragraphs below. As you read, underline the ideas that capture your attention. Click [here](#) to watch the video for this lesson.

We are nearing the end of our time together. Our journey began with discussions about life-changing keys to success and opportunities to apply those principles to our lives. As you went through those six roundtables, did you begin to see positive changes in your life? Did others see changes in you too? We hope so.

This next phase of your journey has focused on intentional living. By now, we hope you have embraced the idea of making your life a great story by valuing people and adding value to them every day, so that you can experience significance. If you do that, you can begin to see the positive changes within you spread to others. And that’s how you can change your world.

John C. Maxwell says, “Mass movements don’t begin with the masses.” Instead, change begins with one person. Hopefully that change has begun in you. If that is true, you have an opportunity to help others make positive changes in their lives.

In last week’s lesson, you learned John’s five essentials of success. The last one was to encourage others to add value to people every day. Today’s session focuses on how you can do that.

In the early 1960s, when John was a teenager, United States president John F. Kennedy made a great impression on him. In particular, John was captivated by Kennedy’s announcement of the founding of the Peace Corps, an organization created to add value to people outside of the United States. Kennedy said, “Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country.”

It’s been said that everyone has a “change the world” speech inside of him. John C. Maxwell believes you have one in you, too. You don’t have to become a famous politician or communicator to make a difference. All you have to do is start telling others your story.

John says, "Everyone loves a good story. Stories tell us who we are. They inspire us, connect with us, fire our emotions, paint pictures of who we aspire to be, and give us permission to act." By telling your story, you can inspire someone else to live a new story too.

Today's session is going to be different from the other roundtables. You're going to share your story by answering several questions and talking about them to your fellow roundtable participants. You won't be expected to tell a polished story. This is just your starting point.

Facilitator: Stop taking turns reading. Instead, each person is to answer all six questions before the next person's turn. Each person's answers will become the starting point for his or her story. Facilitator, please go first.

- 1. Reality:** What was I like before participating in these roundtables?
- 2. Discovery:** What did I learn about myself by doing the roundtables?
- 3. Change:** What is the most important change I made because of the roundtables?
- 4. Results:** How has that change helped me?
- 5. Sharing:** What lesson would I like others to know from my experience?
- 6. Significance:** How will I intentionally help others make change in their lives?

Facilitator: Ask someone in the group to read this final paragraph.

Philosopher and author Parker Palmer said, "Our real freedom comes from being aware that we do not have to save the world, we must merely make a difference in the place where we live." Telling your story can do more to make a difference than you might imagine. As Charles Swindoll said, "Stories transport us into another world. They hold our attention. They become remarkable vehicles for the communication of truth and meaningful lessons that cannot be easily forgotten. If a picture is better than a thousand words, a story is better than a million!"

REFLECT AND RESPOND

Choose something you underlined that is important to you. Take one minute to tell everyone what you chose and why it is important to you.

ANSWER THIS QUESTION

Take one or two minutes to share your response to this question:

What do you expect to be the most challenging or difficult part of telling your story to others?

INTENTIONAL ACTION STEP

Your task this week is to tell at least one person your story. You discovered many of its components when you answered today's questions. Use that information, plus anything else that you think would help you tell a good story.