

Telling Your Story:

Communicating Throughout Your Journey

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Sarah Moore, *Communications and Marketing Manager*

Joanne Lee, *Collaborative Learning Director*

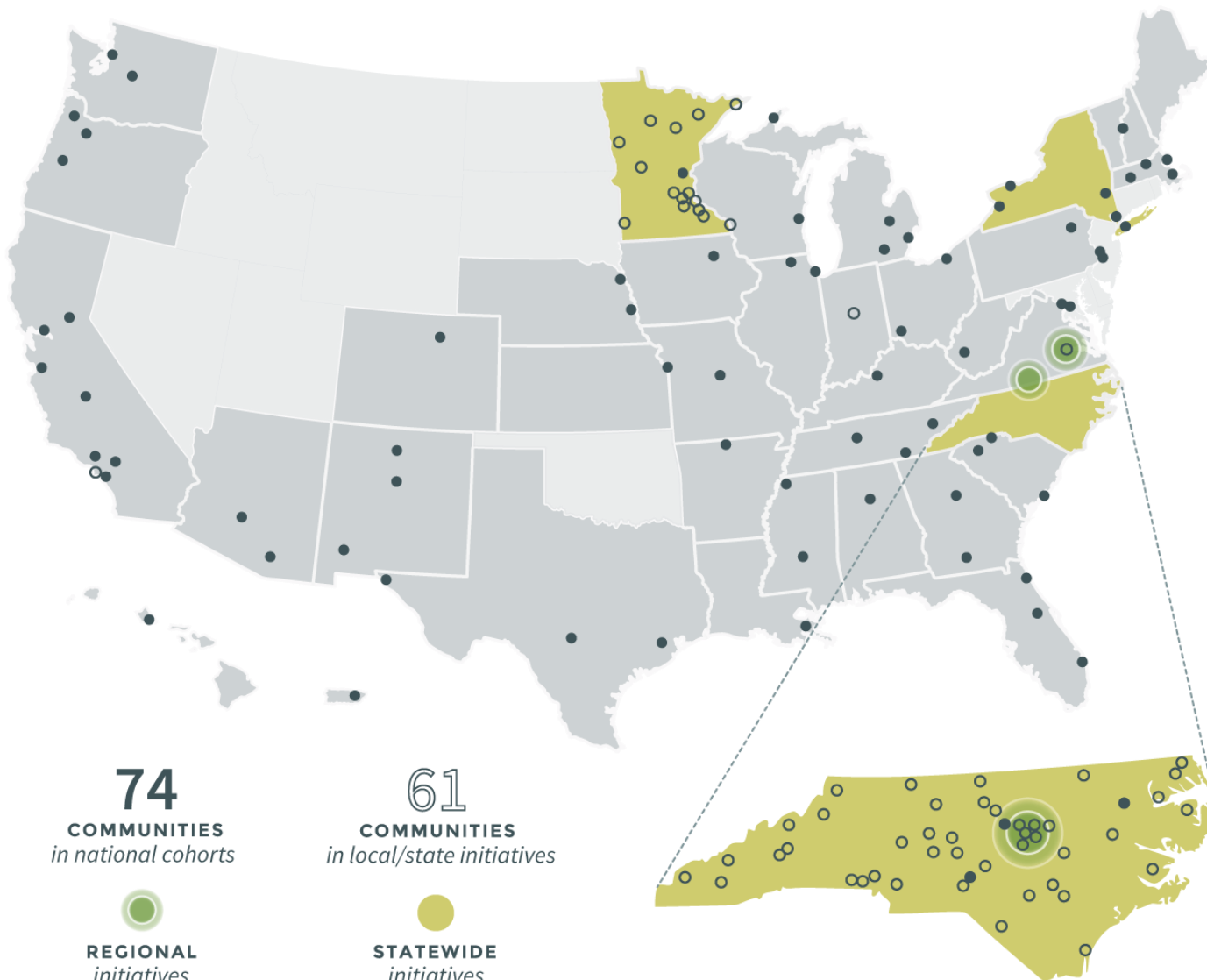
Active Living By Design

The background of the slide is a blurred photograph. On the left, a person wearing a dark hijab and a necklace with large, light-colored circular pendants is visible from the back. To the right, another person is partially visible, holding a white object, possibly a book or a folder. The overall scene appears to be an indoor setting, perhaps a meeting or a classroom, with soft, natural light.

Agenda

- Storytelling Overview
- Telling *Your* Story:
Communicating Throughout
Your Journey
- Sharing Your Story
- Activity

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Storytelling Overview

Why Do We Tell Stories?

- Motivate people to action through emotions like:
 - *Joy*
 - *Anger*
 - *Sadness*
- Explain facts, successes and failures
- Persuade people by bringing life to your message
- Generate a sense of connection

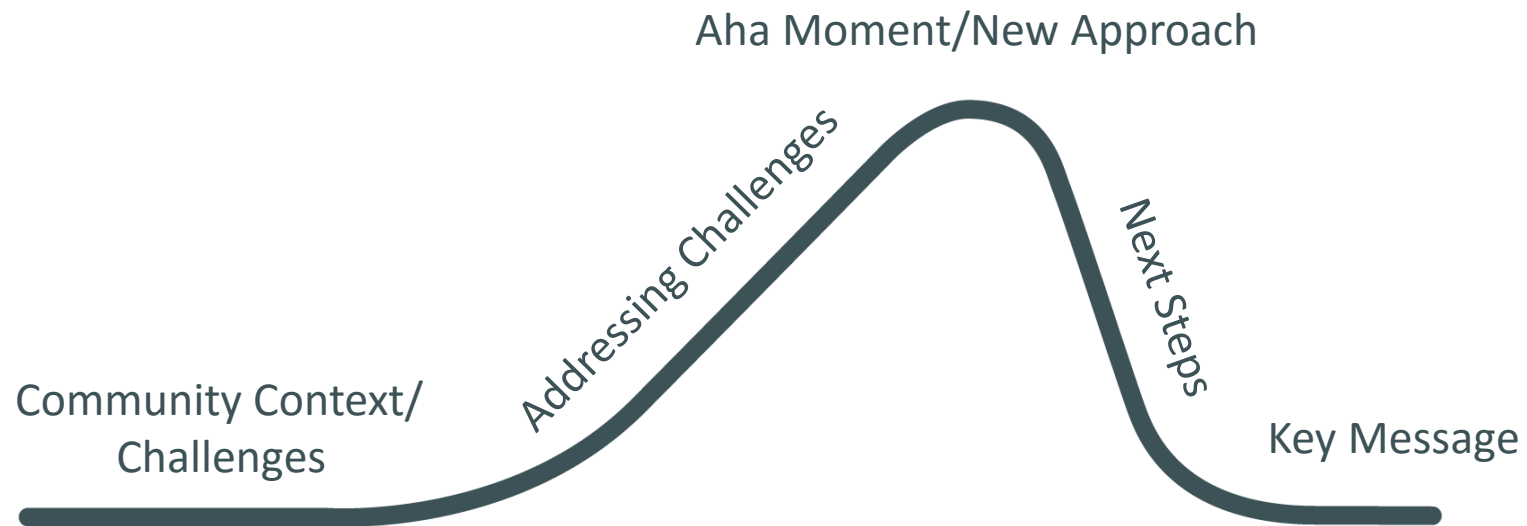
Story Types

- Anecdotes
- Examples
- Hypotheticals
- Analogies
- Visual language
- Narratives

Structure of a Narrative



Structure of Your Narrative



Narrative Example

Community Context/Challenges:

Maria Garcia walked her kids to and from school each day in Rancho Cucamonga, CA. There were no sidewalks in their neighborhood, and in one part of their path, a large barrier forced them to step out into heavy traffic.

Addressing Challenges:

Maria took a few pictures of this barrier, but she wasn't sure how to raise the issue with the city, especially since English wasn't her first language. With the support of the city's Community Champions program, she worked with other residents to create a photovoice.

Aha/Transformational moment:

While attending a community cooking class where the mayor and city council were present, Maria presented her photovoice and shared images of her daily challenges. She and the Community Champions then asked, "What can we do to help solve this problem?"

Next Steps:

The Community Champions began working with city staff to collect data and put together an application for a grant to build sidewalks. Those sidewalks were completed last year, and now Maria and her kids have safe places to walk.

Key Message:

The Community Champions program empowered Maria and others to voice their concerns and have a say in how problems were solved.

Elements of an Effective Story

- Serves your goals
- Resonates widely
- Shifts, reframes or broadens thinking
- Strong protagonist: the “main character(s)”
- Emotionally compelling
- Clear and concise

A photograph of a diverse group of people sitting at a table in a meeting or workshop. In the foreground, a woman with dark hair and glasses is smiling. Next to her, a woman with brown hair is also smiling. In the background, other participants are visible, some looking towards the camera and others looking away. The atmosphere appears positive and collaborative.

Telling *Your* Story

Throughout Your Journey

- **Early:** “How can I tell a story that doesn’t have an ending yet?”
 - *Our “the end” is actually our key message*
 - *Focus on process and actions*
- **Intermediate:**
 - *Integrate any data you do have, but continue to focus on the work*
- **Long-term:**
 - *May be more appropriate to craft “before/after” stories when there are years of work to draw on*
- Tips in this presentation are relevant for all these stages in the process

Know Your Audience

- “Resonates Widely” is relative depending on your audience
- Define who your audience is, then learn about them
- Remember: you cannot tell stories “for everyone” or “the general public”

Develop Your Key Message

- End of the story
- Shifts, reframes or broadens thinking
- Learn what the current thinking is: your message exists in that context
- Lesson learned, plea for action, or new frame around an issue

Find Your Protagonist

- Strong protagonist: the “main character(s)”
- Person or group addressing the challenges
- Depends on your goal, audience and message.

Build Your Plot

- Make an outline!
 - I. *Community context/challenges*
 - II. *Addressing challenges*
 - III. *Aha moment/new approach*
 - IV. *Next steps*
 - V. *Key Message*
- Decide on your plot before you start the story
- *Then* fill in the details

Tips for Plot-Building

- Keep the plot vivid and simple
- Build suspense
- “Show,” don’t “tell”
- Connect clearly to your message
- If relevant, “Cast” your audience
- Finally...Be yourself! Be authentic and share your optimism and hope



Sharing Your Story

Sharing Your Story

- Create an adaptable structure that can be repurposed
- Create a strong headline and opening “hook” summary sentence
 - *Draws readers in*
 - *Can work double-duty as social media content*
- Have a game plan



Sharing Mediums

- Blogs/Op Eds
- Press releases/news articles
- Links on social media
- Infographics
- Video interviews
- Animated graphics
- Printed mail/fliers



Example of Repurposed Story

Socioeconomic differences and health disparities bisect Rancho Cucamonga, CA, into two communities with distinct needs. Healthy RC, a city-community partnership, is working to bridge that divide through authentic community engagement.

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COMMUNITY CONTEXT

In Rancho Cucamonga, people of color represent a significant proportion of the residents, with Latinos comprising more than one-third. Socioeconomic differences and health disparities also bisect the city into northern and southern sections, with the south facing significant barriers to accessing opportunities for healthy eating and active living.

To address health disparities like these, Rancho Cucamonga formed a partnership called Healthy RC in 2008 to create "healthy minds, healthy bodies and a clean, sustainable earth." Over the years, the Healthy RC model has sustained its involvement in the community through a comprehensive approach that builds community capacity and leadership to engage with multiple sectors, including city staff, elected officials and professional and partner organizations.

Healthy RC has not only created strong, supportive relationships where the government serves residents, but where residents are also influencing decision-making from the grassroots up. When Rancho Cucamonga received the *Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities* (HKHC) funding, the partnership was able to inject health into city processes, elevating the level of collaboration both internally and within the community. A small team, the Healthy RC "core team," comprised representatives from every department and division of the city and allowed them to get together to talk about how health was impacting their work.

"One of the things that allowed us to be successful was that our team was strategic. We wanted to make sure that we understood what health and wellness meant to us, and we made sure that we had a vision for that internally, and got all of the departments on board. And even down to where we housed it—how we decided not to politicize it, not tie it to any one elected official—has had a huge impact on the success of this initiative." —Michael Ball, former Project Director for Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities

ACTION STEP: PREPARE

The success of this city-community partnership began by first including residents in early assessment and data collection processes. Rancho Cucamonga's HKHC partnership team had discovered that farmers' markets were not zoned in the southwest area of Cucamonga—the area with the least access to healthy eating and active living opportunities. The team reached out to the community to address this disparity.

Healthy RC staff developed a farmers' market subcommittee made up of community residents and city leaders. The committee interviewed market managers, conducted site visits at markets in nearby cities and connected over the phone with other HKHC sites which were also working with farmers' markets. To ensure that future farmers' market sites accurately reflected the community's desires and needs, the partnership also conducted focus groups with residents. These primarily Spanish speaking residents shared that the two main barriers to their buying healthy food were access and cost.

Meanwhile, the city's GIS department launched a mobile app that, in addition to providing general City information, allowed residents to take pictures of infrastructure needs and submit those directly to the city's response services. Youth and local residents even provided feedback on how best to tailor some of the application's features. Rancho Cucamonga also uses GIS as a tool to prioritize resources and redesign communities. For example, Healthy RC used GIS to locate neighborhoods that had limited access to grocery stores or lacked green spaces and infrastructure that would have enabled residents to walk and bike safely. After identifying community needs, the City held forums that allowed residents to map out amenities and challenges and then develop strategies to improve their neighborhoods.

"[Residents] were involved in a lot of data collection, really trying to get the Southwest Cucamonga voice out. And I think that's where you see the benefit of authentic community engagement, because ... having that voice means we're able to look at this with a completely different lens and really have a 'Health in All Policies' approach." —Michael Ball

ACTION STEP: PARTNER

Healthy RC worked to build trust and capacity in resident leaders, viewing them as vital partners in the work. The *Campeones para la Comunidad* (Community Champions) and the Healthy RC Youth Leaders programs provide opportunities for local residents to gain skills and capacity for meaningful engagement through public speaking, public policy, leadership development and team building. Providing this training to adult and youth residents has built sustainable community capacity for policy and environmental changes. It has also generated a deeper level of ownership and sustainability around the Healthy RC community change goals.

With this approach, city officials and leaders view themselves as conveners and stewards, and citizens view themselves as partners and change agents. Community

members identify important issues and determine how to address them, and the city responds with resources and support. This type of authentic partnership is achieved by intentionally developing relationships, offering capacity building training and resources for adults and youth, and ongoing engagement through council workshops and neighborhood meetings.

"Really think about how you're engaging residents. It needs to be authentic, it needs to be meaningful, and you need to commit to that. Sometimes that's a scary thing, because stuff bubbles up that you might not be prepared to deal with. But you need to. And I think once you relinquish some of that control and transfer some of that power to the residents, they are the ones who will hold you accountable, and they are the ones who will ensure the success of the program. It starts with building trust within the community." —Michael Ball

To help sustain the momentum that Healthy RC was developing in the community, the City Manager created three staff positions in his office with HKHC support. These staff members served as key facilitators among community members, city staff and elected officials, and they built trust within all parties. They sought opportunities for those leaders to connect to local, regional and national networks to share their stories of healthy community change and learn from others in the movement.

On the ground, Healthy RC also continued to integrate community members, especially residents from southwest Rancho Cucamonga, into the community change process with visits to city hall. Through these visits, Community Champions could meet the mayor, visit each of the department offices and learn how those departments work together, all in an informal setting. Those trips made the process of political advocacy less daunting and communicated to residents that the city's government was their government.

Although HKHC ended in 2014, those trips to City Hall still continue. As new community leaders join the healthy change movement, the periodic visits allow the network of empowered residents to grow and build on successes from years past. Michael Ball explained, "One of the other things we've done is to leave our titles at the door. When we meet with the community, it's not 'city staff' talking to residents.' It's a much more equitable exchange, and real conversation happens."

"We all have a perspective and we all have responsibilities, and that's what we talk about more than titles and balance of power." —Michael Ball

ACTION STEP: PROGRESS

The information gathered during community-led research laid the groundwork for a development code amendment that required approval from City Council. This amendment set out to increase areas of the city zoned for farmers' markets (including

Example of Repurposed Story

Blog

APR
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Community-Owned Government: A Lost Ideal or Achievable Goal?

By Joanne Lee on April 21, 2014



ActiveLivingByDesign @ALBDorg · 13 Feb 2014

Read how @CityOfRC has "implemented key strategies to address and improve healthy food access" on the @letsmove blog: 1.usa.gov/1gvOXGB



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"...government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth." – Abraham Lincoln

I've often reflected on the ideals in this famous quote by Abraham Lincoln and pondered on its relevance



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organizations, city

used advocacy strategies, such as community assessments and focus groups in Spanish, that resulted in a successful \$797,000 Safe Routes to School grant award and the adoption of the city's farmers' markets and community garden ordinances. The Healthy RC Youth Leaders conducted a park assessment project utilizing Photovoice and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) skills and technology, and assessments to monitor compliance with a healthy vending policy.

ed three staff facilitators among s, and they have to share current althy community opportunities for anal networks ye and learn se efforts is the ambition for the

This multi-level engagement and partnership continued during the development of *The Road Map for a Healthy Future in Rancho Cucamonga*. Hundreds of community members dedicated thousands of hours to establish the priorities and strategic directions to inform this document. Adopted by a unanimous vote of the city council in March 2014, it will serve as Healthy RC's strategic plan with specific roles for city and community members to fill through the implementation and sustainability of the plan.

Example of Repurposed Story

**County Health
Rankings & Roadmaps**
Building a Culture of Health, County by County

HEALTH RANKINGS ▾ ROADMAPS TO HEALTH ▾ RWJF CULTURE OF HEALTH PRIZE ▾ MORE ▾

COMMUNITY IN ACTION

Examples of programs

**Active Living By Design**
Published by Sarah Moore [?] · 2 hrs ·

To increase physical activity in a rural region with high rates of unemployment and poverty, and lots of snow, Michigan's Western Upper Peninsula Health Department created the Copper County Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities partnership. This partnership increased opportunities for active transportation through a Complete Streets policy, Safe Routes to School, and improved bicycle and walking trails throughout the region.

Houghton MI implements Complete Streets



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**ActiveLivingByDesign** @ALBDorg · 3h

Houghton MI implements Complete Streets:
countyhealthrankings.org/community-in-a
... via @CHRankings



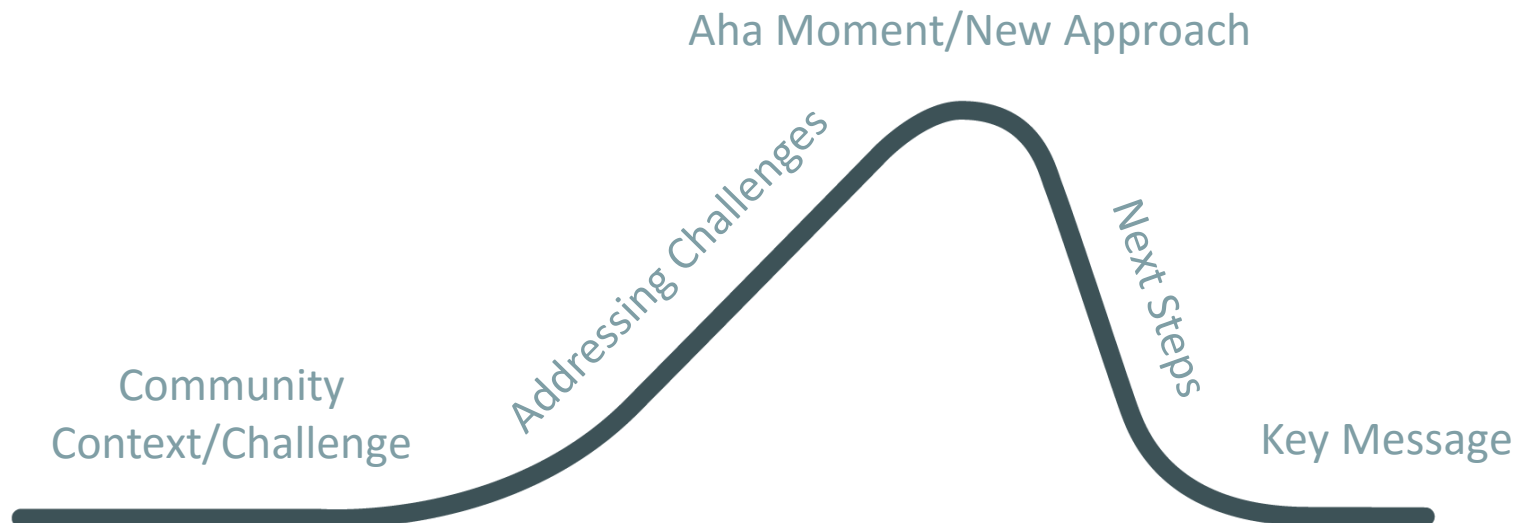
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Activity

Activity: What's Your Story?

- Organize into 6 groups (5-7 people per group)
- You have 30 minutes to develop a story in short form
- Be sure to have a compelling headline or hook!
- Decide what medium to use deliver your story (newspaper or print piece, television or video format, or via a social media platform)



Elements of an Effective Story

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- Emotionally compelling
- Clear and concise



Resources:

Hatch for Good

<https://www.hatchforgood.org/>

Spitfire Smart Chart

<http://smartchart.org/>

Stories Worth Telling

<http://csic.georgetown.edu/research/storytelling>

Thank You!

For more information, contact:

Sarah Moore: sarah_moore@activelivingbydesign.org

Joanne Lee: joanne_lee@activelivingbydesign.org

Active Living By Design: activelivingbydesign.org

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