

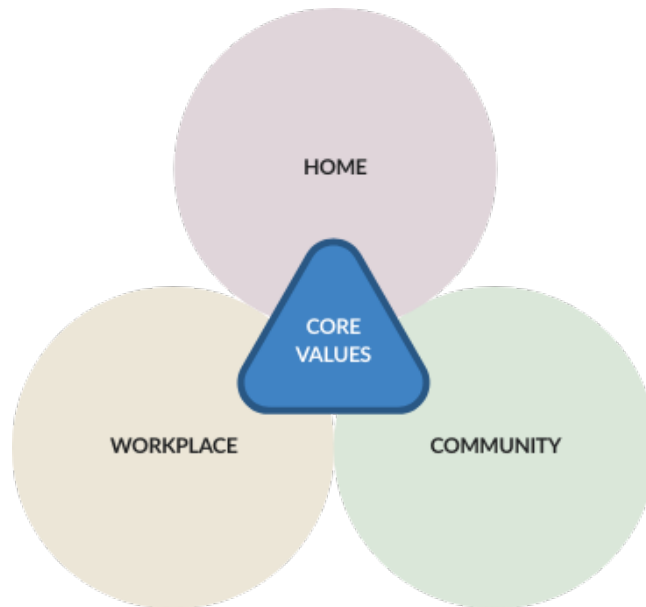
Preparing to Share Your Personal Narrative

A framework to prepare to
share your story



RESTORED LEADER

The relationship model



Core Values:

Undeniable truths that help you make sense of self and the world.

Home:

These relationships are those you consider “family”.

Community:

They are your friends, neighbors and places of worship.

Workplace:

These relationships are with your professional colleagues and customers you serve.

A framework for sharing your story

Our stories are always evolving. As we practice sharing our stories with others, we constantly refine them. While narratives are about past events, we share them in the context of the present. This context forms the way we approach and share our stories, pushing us to be selective about what and when we share. Your decision about the way you share is influenced by who you're speaking with and your relationship with them.

A personal narrative doesn't need to include every detail – it's meant to communicate something in particular. Take a moment to consider: what specifically do you want to share about your story?

There are a number of things to consider:

Your Audience

Preparing your narrative to share with another will help you become aware of two dynamics:

1. First, your story is for and about you. As you share your story with another person, you reveal the nuances of your life and become more accepting of yourself and your desires.

2. Second, your story is for the benefit of others. When someone receives your story, they're learning from you and expanding their own understanding of the world around them.

Sharing your story means that your audience will place themselves somewhere along a spectrum of relating to you within the context of your story and their other experiences with you.

Be intentional about this as you prepare your narrative to share with your friend, spouse, coach or mentor. What do you want this person to know?

Framing Your Narrative

There are a variety of ways to share your personal narrative. The method outlined below will help you incorporate the elements of time, place, roles and relationships into your story.

Remember that the narrative you're sharing isn't your entire life story, but rather a snapshot that will explain an important element of who you are.

Step 1: Pick 3-5 past significant experiences. Determine how to share these experiences in a concise way, and identify what is particularly important about these experiences.

Step 2: Identify and provide brief context about major transitions that these experiences stemmed from or created. What's important to know about these significant changes?

Step 3: Describe how you are showing up today in light of these experiences, including the hopes and dreams you now carry.

Complete this narrative framework and then consider any gaps or questions that still exist within the story. Expand or remove details as needed. You now have a draft of your own personal narrative.

Narrative Secret Sauce: Increase your Vulnerability

It's important to connect with your audience by discerning how to shed light on elements of yourself that need to be known. A narrative with vulnerability will invite others in and create connection. A narrative without vulnerability may be true, but will not help your audience connect with you more deeply. For example, your job history as it reads on LinkedIn is not (and shouldn't be!) a narrative with vulnerability.

When you vulnerably share parts of your story, your audience will know who you are and help you know who you want to become.

None of us have arrived at a perfect story. There's freedom to share honestly with one another in light of that.

Summary

Remember as you work through this personal and vulnerable exercise that the narratives you share are entirely in your control. You get to choose how and how much you share. There is great opportunity to share with others in a way that is best for both you and them.

Take a moment to reflect on the experience of crafting your narrative and remember that as the author, you have the authority to share. Do so with great joy.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Darren Ho empowers leaders to live without compromise by redeeming their Core Values.

He knows that all leaders face daily pressures from the world; leaving them feeling exhausted, frustrated, hesitant, and often like they're chasing after the wind. Darren founded The Restored Leader – a leadership coaching firm – in 2017 to help clients redeem, protect and live their Core Values. As a result, leaders create authentic narratives, giving them confidence and joy in their leadership formation.

Originally from the Los Angeles area, Darren is a first generation American citizen. He and his wife and three children currently reside in Indianapolis, Indiana. Before that, the Ho family lived in Asia and Europe for 11 years and as a result, are passionate global citizens.

Darren earned his Bachelor of Science in Business from the University of Southern California. He received his Executive and Organisational Coach education from the International Executive Coaching and Leadership and is a Professional Certified Coach (PCC) of the International Coach Federation. He is also currently pursuing a Master of Arts in Theology at Fuller Theological Seminary.