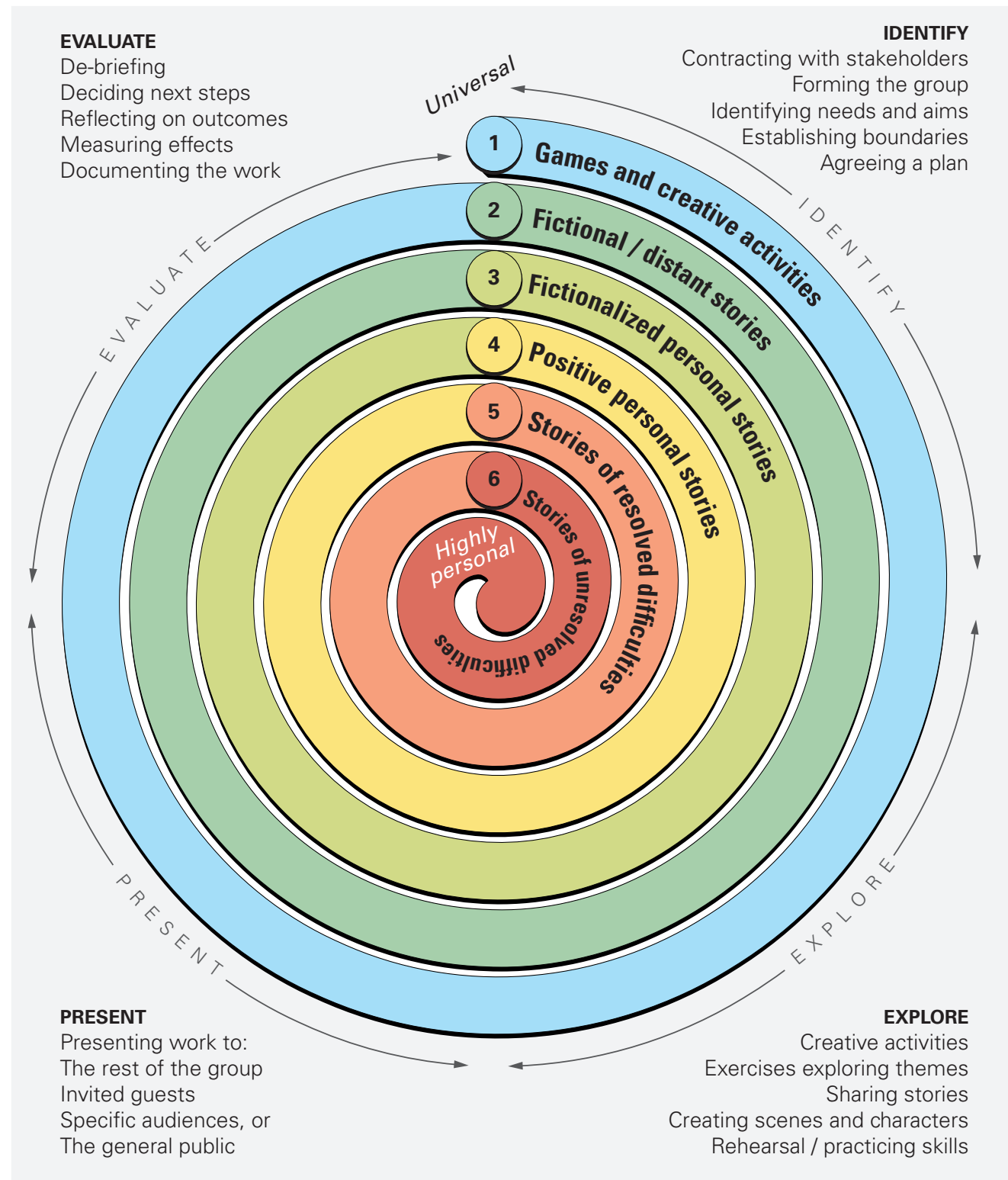
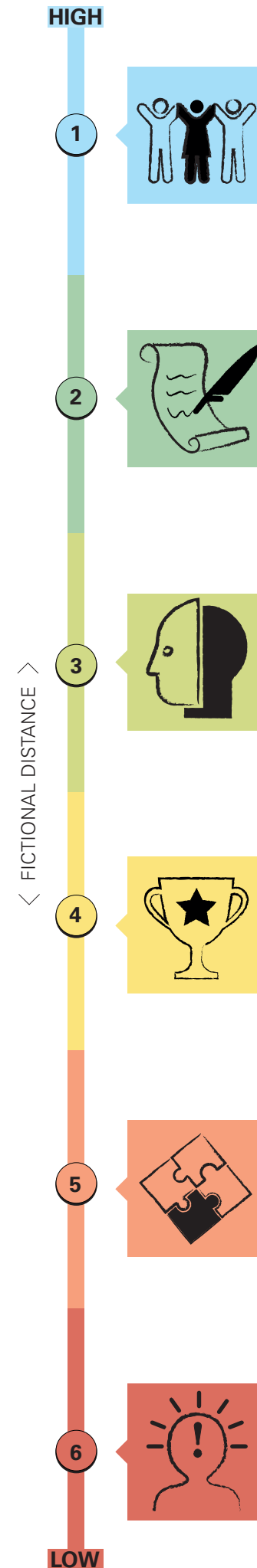


The Drama Spiral

Clark Baim 2015



The Drama Spiral is a decision-making tool intended to help theatre and arts practitioners to work safely and ethically along the continuum from the fictional to the highly personal. In the outer rings, participants are involved in creative activities and work at the metaphorical and fictional level. As one 'spirals in' towards the centre, the rings represent stories that are increasingly personal and sensitive for the participants. Each ring of the Spiral includes four important processes: *Identify*, *Explore*, *Present* and *Evaluate*.



Games and creative activities

- Group-building; warm-ups; theatre games; communication and performance skills.
- Creative activities including dance, music, song, art, writing, rhythmic movement and percussion, social and communal customs and pastimes where everyone participates.

Fictional / distant stories

- Enacting stories and plays that are already written. Can include myths, fables, fairy tales and other well-known stories. Can also include watching a play / interacting with characters.
- Ensemble-created plays or improvised dramas that are wholly fictional or based on historical / news events.

Fictionalized personal stories

- Ensemble-created drama with fictionalized scenes and characters; can include stories and themes that have arisen from more personal work.
- Metaphor is frequently used to create distance from personal stories and to contain powerful themes.

Positive personal stories

- Participants enact directly personal stories focusing on neutral, positive, safe or non-troubling topics.
- Participants may also enact situations they desire or may face in the future, i.e. 'rehearsals for life.'

Stories of resolved difficulties

- Participants enact directly personal stories about troubling issues that are resolved – for example, stories of healing, growth, or triumph over adversity. The rehearsal process itself may be a part of the healing and growth.
- Important processes include informed consent, group support, sharing experiences, validation and witnessing.

Stories of unresolved difficulties

- Participants enact directly personal, unresolved stories for the purpose of therapy or growth. Important processes include informed consent, confidentiality, witnessing, group sharing and follow-up support.
- The focus on unresolved personal stories can make participants highly vulnerable and requires experienced facilitators and the guidance or supervision of a qualified therapist with relevant training, e.g. psychodrama, drama therapy.