

Stories

From the time when people were trying to pass the time , and share Moments around a fire, people have always told stories. Whether through fairy tales, moral fables, folk tales, and ghost stories, people have always needed to draw/excite interest and appreciation.

In many ways, stories, whether it be tales or myths is a way of making sense of the world. Stories are handed down from generation to generation, bearing witness to how people lived, survived. It was and it a way of distilling wisdom of each age for those to come. Stories are meant to instruct, heal, entertain and mystify. Experiences through stories, and I'm thinking of family stories here are told in order to connect with what's gone before. Tribe and nation, past and present. And future. Stories has as much to do with the future as of the past and present. Because Stories never end. They are left and people receiving them very often are left in mid-air , still thinking or trying to find gravity.

Although people in many parts of the world still tell stories, there are some cultures where storytelling is more urgent/significant than in other cultures. We in the western world have, in many ways, abandoned the stories of long ago- although some poetsand writers still seek through new writing to carry the shadows of the past. I'm thinking of Seamus Heaney with *Beowulf* or Philip Pullman – *Dark Materials*. Both books indeed, have taken over from the oral art of telling a story, though we still tell tales – and stories- pubs are full of people gathering telling one another new stories.

But sometimes, in hearing stories, we don't ask questions. We are receivers , rather than investigators. This is where I think a child's imagination is sharper in many ways than an adult. It is exercised more and more – as they try to make sense of the world. An adult, will whether she likes it or not, accept the world for what it is- but a child will ask 'why'? Why did someone seek revenge?

And it's the imagination that connects and expresses fantasy and reality. Whenever we listen to a story we go on a journey and make up the terrain around us. And it should have personal meanings for us. If we were to listen to Hansel and Gretel we might remember a time when we got lost – when the woods were dark and so forth. Because traditional tales express essential human experience. And we become witnesses to what 's going on in the story.

Stories speak through images. And in this media world children will automatically almost animate their characters. And it will be in full colour. It is no wonder either that stories are used as therapeutic practices. One can use storytelling, myths or fables to hide other beings.

We'll start with the Tao Story and see what it means.

PLEASE TELL ME A STORY.

It's no surprise to me that stories are told before children go to sleep because stories are told in transition from waking up and going to sleep. It could also be at the beginning or end of day, a school day, or during times of travel. These are times of lightness and darkness, of togetherness and aloneness. It also means allowing the mind to go, to wander, to explore the realms of impossibility or possibility. Because we can create an inner world – spinning threads of human experience and Dreams. Telling stories or writing stories is about being allowed to dream.

The Bushmen of Kalahari desert say that without a story of one's own, one hasn't got a life of one's own. People need to find and express their story. – so it's not just about using language but a process by which we give form to our experience of life and affirm our individuality. Stories and owning stories is about that – affirming/memory/ a life before us.

Once upon a time

Haf hirfelyn tesog

Hark, hark ye people. Listen to these tidings. (Icelandic Edda)

They arrest attention – invoke a sense of apprehension. There needs to be listeners.

It's a stain on silence as Beckett said.

It is also about memory and memory according to James Joyce was me – me and more more me.