

UPGRADING YOUR STORY AND FINDING YOUR VOICE IN RECOVERY

“Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?” – Mary Oliver.

- **Finding your voice in recovery** means finding your most authentic, powerful, and connected self (whatever that means to you.)
- Finding your voice means dropping the shame of your past and embracing your **sober-self** confidently, as you move into your present and future.
- Finding your voice means shifting your life from being controlled by addiction (and feeling like a victim) to becoming the author of your own story – taking “ownership of the pen.”
- Finding your voice means taking responsibility of your healing – and doing the work necessary to unveil a YOU that you can trust and love.

What else does it mean to you?

The best way to find our voice in recovery is to let go of old stories and write new ones.

Old Stories:

- Familiar narratives based on lack, trauma, and victimhood (resentments, pain)
- Keep us in survival mode, recycling the same experiences.
- Make us feel powerless, living reactively.
- Even if we are sober, old stories can keep us stuck and in pain.
- **Old stories = <X> is happening TO ME.**

Note on trauma / victimhood – Trauma is not your fault. Get curious, though: Can you find freedom from the constant burden of it? What can you do to heal, and set yourself free?

New Stories:

- Created by breaking reactive cycles and writing new ways of showing up to our life.
- Based on abundance, love, gratitude, and trust.
- Help us evolve, living from a vision of our future (not our past)
- New stories feel empowering. We take responsibility of our life when we create them.
- **New stories = <X> is happening FOR ME.**

HOW DO WE SHIFT FROM OLD STORIES TO NEW?

FIVE STEP FRAMEWORK:

1. RADICAL HONESTY = AWARENESS

In this step, we examine our beliefs, life, environment, and reality with curiosity. Investigate our thoughts, patterns, and behaviors to understand how we've gone unconscious and handed over our power to create our own lives.

We start here: ASLEEP. UNCONSCIOUS. UNAWARE. (*this is SURVIVAL MODE*)

- You are unaware of the old stories that are running your life.
- You don't know what you don't know.
- You're unconscious of the problem.
- You are incapable of doing anything about it

When we are UNAWARE (or "asleep") we live in the past, clinging to old stories and re-living old feelings repeatedly (resentments).

When we can't break old stories, we keep having the SAME thoughts, the SAME emotions, and the SAME behaviors. In this state, we are NOT CREATING. WE are just REACTING.

For those of us who struggle with ADDICTION OR CODEPENDENCY – this is where we end up drinking or obsessing. We feel so powerless and full of victimhood, that we give ourselves permission to "act out." **Old stories keep us trapped.**

In this step, we invite contemplation and RADICAL HONESTY. We need to become AWARE and AWAKE to the fact that we've been living through old stories – old thoughts, feelings, and actions.

Being radically honest is not easy – but it's a non-negotiable if we want to find our deepest freedom. *We must become bigger than our environment and circumstances by working on our inner selves*, and it begins with getting honest about ourselves.

JOURNALING PROMPTS TO CONSIDER

1. What are the 3-5 old stories you tell yourself every day?
2. What feelings come with these stories (your common feelings)?
3. Would you feel better if these feelings were not in your life?
4. Why?

2. YOUR “DEEP YES”

This term refers to a decision made at a profound level of our soul, driven by our deepest desire to heal - not external pressure to do so.

I will say this again: We must become bigger than our environment and circumstances by working on our inner selves. This requires a ROAR from your heart saying, “I no longer want to be in pain. I will do anything in my power to heal my life.”

The DEEP YES is a very personal decision, **and it will mean different things to different people.**

For some, it may mean to get sober. To others, to work a recovery program in a deeper way. To deal with codependency and toxic relationships. To heal the trauma or pain from the past.

The DEEP YES is about SAYING YES TO YOU.

It's about taking ownership of YOUR LIFE in a new way, as it shifts you from ***fighting against your addiction*** (and characters in your life story) to ***fighting for your transformation*** (where you write your life story).

3. DROP THE OLD STORIES.

To drop the old stories, we need to be willing to drop *our victimhood and lack of responsibility (our part)*. That is, the places where we have handed over our power, and stayed in the role of victim.

*Note: For many of us, dropping our victimhood means confronting our TRAUMA. This is where it gets delicate because we are, in fact, victims of circumstances. But with love and compassion, we **make a decision** to heal the trauma and stop living through the pain.*

Dropping our old stories needs to be done zero self-judgment or shame. We are not here to add more pain to our hearts, but to TENDERLY take ownership of the pen that writes our life. This is why it's important to lead this step with self-compassion, not self-judgment.

In this step we take back the “pens” we’ve handed to others, so that they can stop writing our life, and we can start being the author if it.

JOURNALING PROMPTS TO CONSIDER

1. Are you ready to let go of old stories and victimhood?
2. What does this mean?
3. Can you see how your victimhood has kept you stuck?
4. Can you be compassionate about this process?

4. PLAN OF ACTION:

A path of action leads you to create new stories and be the designer and creator of your life.

In this step, I ask you to commit to a daily path of action. Information and inspiration are not enough. Radical change requires consistent, daily effort, even if it's through small steps. *Information, motivation will only get you so far. Now, we need ACTION.*

Being aware is passive. Being awake requires becoming ACTIVE.

Path of action = The intentional creation of new thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.

This may mean different things for different people, but here is the one that worked for me:

In my personal PATH OF ACTION, I committed to doing one thing for each of the following areas, daily:

- **My RECOVERY** (meeting, chat with coach, sponsor, community, step-work, etc.)
- **My BODY** (movement, nourishment, sleep, intentional focus on being connected to my human body and healing it)
- **My MIND** (what content am I bringing in, and what content am I limiting?)
- **My SPIRIT** (prayer, meditation, journaling, pausing, yoga, etc.)

Once you set a path of action and start following it...

- You allow yourself to take ownership of your script (your life, your healing)
- You regain trust in yourself.
- You shift into a place of ownership of your life / healing.

This is where you flip the script. Instead of being a human stuck in the same thoughts, feelings, and behaviors – in reactivity to the world -- you become a CREATOR.

JOURNALING PROMPTS TO CONSIDER

1. What will be your path of action?
2. What “new agreements” or new stories do you want to write for yourself?
3. Are you willing to commit to a 90-day journey of action?
4. How will you stay accountable to this?

5. STAY IN THE AUTHOR’S CHAIR, ALWAYS.

The only permission you need to keep upgrading your story is your own. You GET to write and re-write your life as many times as you want. Today’s iteration of you is different than tomorrow’s. Get loving and expansive with yourself as you take ownership of the author’s chair for good and all.

This is where you keep showing up, no matter how many times you fall. You keep showing up to your life “claiming back the pen” all the times needed.

Finding your voice also means connecting with others and sharing your journey. This not only helps you heal but also inspires others to do the same. Finding your voice in sobriety challenges the stigma around addiction and allows you to develop a powerful version of yourself as a sober human who can live proudly and share their strength, hope and joy with others.

It's been an honor to share these insights with you.

Questions? Connect with me pamela@mybadassrecovery.com

Grateful - and proud of you already.

X,

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