What's Your Story?
Workshop Participant Guide

Henry Ford is quoted as saying, "Whether you think you can, or you think you can't –you're right."   The goal of this workshop is to help you focus on those stories that will help you believe that you *can*!

Story Cubes Activity:

Explore stories we tell ourselves while working together in a small group. You and your group will use a random collection of images to create two stories.

First story begins: *You won't believe the day I just had. This always happens to me – everything I touched turned into a problem!*

Reflections on your group discussion following the story:

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Second story begins: *I've just had the most amazing experience. I am on top of the world!*

Reflections on your group discussion following the story:

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Self-talk:

What is it? How do you use it?
Make a list of 5-7 words, ideas, or examples related to the term "self-talk."

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Think about a time that your self-talk influenced your actions or decisions. What was the situation? What was the impact of your self-talk? Why did your self-talk have the effect that it did? Take a few moments to write down your thoughts:

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Self-talk scenario #1:

Self-talk scenario
1.mp3

Bill is just about to start his first supervisory job, where he will have a staff of eight entry-level employees. Bill has recently returned from a supervisory training program and has been asked to give a presentation to current supervisory staff on the time management skills that were taught in the program. Listen in on Bill's internal dialogue as he prepares for his presentation:

I'm nervous about this! When was the last time I spoke in front of a group of people? It's been awhile... high school? Those aren't good memories...

What if I'm standing up there and forget what I was going to say? I can just picture it – my neck and face are going to turn beet red. Then I'll probably just say, "Um..." over and over while I scramble for my notes, fumbling through them to find my place. Painful. Will they laugh at me or just feel sorry for me?

So, I'm thinking I should start with a joke. Put everyone at ease, including me. That seems to be standard practice, too. But what if they don't laugh – then what? Sometimes people make a joke about how no one laughed at their joke... If I do that it will probably sound lame. Like I'm trying to be a real comedian or something.

What if someone asks me a question and I have no idea how to answer? I'm supposed to be the expert now, right? After all, I just went to this training. They're going to think it was a waste of time and money and that I didn't learn anything... There are a few things I'm not sure about – I should have asked more questions while I was there!

I never know what to wear for this sort of thing. Too formal, and they'll think I'm arrogant. Too casual, and they'll think I'm not taking it seriously. I'm sure I'll get it wrong, one way or the other.

<u>Self-talk scenario #2:</u>

Self-talk scenario
2.mp3

Debra is a front-line supervisor for a staff of six. She's been doing this job for about a year now and has been very successful in leading her team in achieving goals in productivity, quality, and customer service. Her company is putting together a cross-functional project team to develop a change management plan for a new software system they will be adopting. Debra has passed the first round of screening and is now preparing for a panel interview, the final step in the project team selection process. Listen in on Debra's internal dialogue leading up to the interview:

What if they ask me a question that I don't have an answer for? Well, I have always been able to come up with <u>something</u> in the past. There really aren't any single "right" answers, are there? But what if my answers aren't what they're expecting? ... That could be refreshing, right?

It's so much easier to be on the other side of the table – <u>asking</u> the questions. What if they think I don't belong there? I'm not even sure I think I belong there... But do I really even care what they think? They are the decision-makers, so it does matter. Usually people are interested in what I have to say. I'm often asked for my opinion or for feedback.

What if I'm just not cut out for this project? Will I be able to add any value? I know I'm going to learn from the experience, no matter what. What happens if I fail at it? Go back and try again? I might look foolish. Ha – remember that time that I tripped going into a customer's house and nearly broke my arm? That turned out to be one of the best customer interactions I've had... We did both get a good laugh out of it. I guess it made me more human.

I'm good at working with others on projects. I usually have a lot of ideas that we can use or build on. I think I have to trust that I can do this in other situations, too...

Reflections on your own experience with self-talk and how it has influenced your confidence:

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Self-efficacy:

What is it? How does it apply to you?
Make a list of 5-7 words, ideas, or examples related to the term "self-efficacy."

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Self-efficacy scenario:

Self-efficacy
scenario.mp3

Joe has been asked by his manager to facilitate a brainstorming meeting for about 20 staff managers. This will be a high-profile breakout session during the company's annual strategic planning conference. The goal of the brainstorming session is to generate innovations and solutions that will be incorporated into the company's short and long-term strategy for continuous growth and improvement.

Joe is both excited and nervous. He's had some experience with brainstorming – he has read several books and put the techniques into practice by leading small-group brainstorming activities multiple times. Each time he has led this type of activity he's gotten positive feedback from participants and the groups have always generated useful ideas. Quite a few of these ideas have already been implemented at his company.

This situation is different from any of the other brainstorming activities Joe's been involved in before, though. In the past, it's always been a much more informal setting, usually with peers or his team of direct reports. It's really important to Joe that he make a good impression on these staff managers. He knows they'll be judging him and his abilities and any of them could be in a position to make decisions about him that could influence his career in the future. Even more importantly, the work they will be doing can potentially have a significant impact on the company's future.

When Joe's manager first talked to him about this, she did make it clear that she selected him specifically because of the valuable outcomes from similar activities that he's been involved in before. He's worried, though, that no one will have any good ideas, although he's never seen that happen. Somehow people always seem to have unique and interesting ideas when he uses his various ideation techniques with them. And while that used to surprise him, he realizes that it doesn't anymore. Now he typically goes into a brainstorming activity with the expectation that people will come up with great ideas. So why should this be any different?

Reflections on how Joe's prior personal successes influenced his belief in his ability to achieve his goals:

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Think about an experience where you were successful at something in the past. Write down at least two personal characteristics that you exhibited in that situation, which would help you have similar success in the future. Why do those characteristics support your belief in your ability to succeed in the future?

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Affirmative story for your future:

Envision your ideal future state, at least five years in the future. Write down and prioritize at least five conditions that would be met in your ideal future state.

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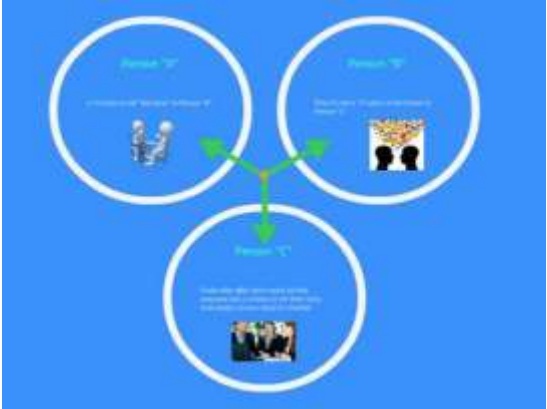
Create a Future Activity:

Did you have any insights? What were the most amazing things that you heard about yourself? Reflections on the activity:

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Affirmative story:

Write an affirmative story about your ideal future, incorporating at least three of your top three success conditions. Write your story in the present tense, as if it were already happening. Include detailed descriptions of what you will be doing and what your life will be like.

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Brainstorming:

What are your take-aways from your triad discussion about how to incorporate your affirmative story daily?

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Planning for an upcoming event:

Select an upcoming event that involves new or unfamiliar elements. How might you use your affirmative story to prepare for the event?

Reflect on your ideas and discussion with your triad:

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Follow-up call scheduled with triad:

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<u>Final reflections:</u>

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Resources:

http://www.goodreads.com/quotes/978-whether-you-think-you-can-or-you-think-you-can-t--you-re-right

http://education-portal.com/academy/lesson/self-talk-in-psychology-examples-definition-quiz.html#lesson

http://www.education.com/reference/article/self-efficacy-theory/

Images:

http://files.strategicleader.webnode.com/200000164-4777c4871a/Presentations%20-3%20c.jpg

http://www.gmtfutures.com/wp-content/uploads//Fotolia_24003147_Subscription_XXL.gif

https://www.pehub.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/anxious-businessman_shutterstock_86293354-300x200.jpg

http://www.frci.org.uk/services-view/interview-services/

http://sfatulparintilor.ro/familie-parinti/pentru-tati/15-sfaturi-ca-sa-fii-un-barbat-de-succes/

http://www.masterfulfacilitation.com/subpage/products/join-newsletter

http://money.usnews.com/money/careers/slideshows/what-will-the-job-market-look-like-in-2020

http://momentslater.blogspot.com/2011/01/letter-to-my-future-self.html

http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/memories-of-tomorrow/