



# INTEGRATE TO LIVE

Restore Resilience. Cultivate Community. Impact your World

## Week 8 Transcript: Narrative

---

Today, we focus on the Narrative portion of practicing pause in the Pause & Pivot method, and take a more expanded look at how the meanings we attach to our experiences shape the story that we live.

Whether or not we are aware of it, our lives are lived through the medium of story. There is a narrative that defines the experience of our perceived reality.

Our minds are always processing, labeling and organizing the many emotions, sensations, behaviors, thoughts and images we experience, and drawing conclusions about what it all means. This is always happening, often outside our awareness.

Making meaning of what's happening is part of our survival system. Our brains receive a hit of dopamine as a reward for connecting the dots. That's the sensation we feel when we have a dawning realization or put 2 and 2 together. We feel safer if we can anticipate the future.

But, here's the kicker. The brain doesn't necessarily fact check the meaning that it's making. We feel better coming to a conclusion, even if we're wrong about the story we're making up.

In addition to working to keep us safe in this world, our meaning making and narrative crafting is part of how we determine our identity - it's how we make sense of who we are. We create beliefs about life, and about ourselves, from the conclusions we draw from the events, or lack of events, in our lives.

If, for instance, we craft the narrative that "I'm not enough" the survival system stays on high alert in situations that may call our enoughness into question to keep us out of harms way.

We unconsciously create ways of behaving to help regulate uncomfortable feelings that correlate with these stories. If I believe "I'm not enough" then I may shrink back from risky opportunities that could lead to painful loss or disappointing failure.



# INTEGRATE TO LIVE

Restore Resilience. Cultivate Community. Impact your World

## Week 8 Transcript: Narrative

---

This is the push/pull that many of us are stuck in. We want to move toward connection and risk, but something keeps holding us back.

What's bizarre is my brain feels safer if I have a repeat experience as opposed to facing the unknown of having a new and different experience. So, we'll often unconsciously self-sabotage by re-living the story of our lives over and over again.

It's not what we want, and brings us pain and disappointment, but our survival system would rather feel ready to defend itself than vulnerable to uncertainty.

The reason we take a holistic approach to re-writing our narrative is that new research shows that the power of positive thinking isn't enough to cultivate resiliency. If you force a thought that you don't actually believe, it drives the negative core belief even deeper.

What is more powerful than positive thinking is developing a grounded hope. And, I believe this hope is born out of an integrated narrative - owning all of the parts of our story and choosing to live courageously as a result. The sense of worthiness and belonging that we seek lives inside our stories.

The Pause & Pivot approach allows for exploration of new thoughts, meanings and stories that emerge through embodied self-awareness: from the body through the emotional engine of the brain and up to our conscious processing.

This way, I organically have a new thought, and create new meanings and interpretations, as opposed to trying to enforce a new thought into my experience.

Restoring resilience involves re-writing these narratives you make up about yourself that are holding you back from full living. It's also about having the tools, and the in-the-moment awareness, to fact check the stories you're making up about someone else, and your relational dynamic with them, and draw new conclusions.



# INTEGRATE TO LIVE

Restore Resilience. Cultivate Community. Impact your World

## Week 8 Transcript: Narrative

---

For years, I've been blessed with both colleagues and friends who practice this with one another, albeit imperfectly. But, if we step away from an interaction with each other that feels off-putting or wonky in some way, and we recognize we're making up a story about it, we attempt to circle back and fact check our story.

We'll say, "Here's the story I'm making up. When you did that, I felt like this and thought you must be thinking this about me. What was going on for you in that interaction?"

This gives them the opportunity to give you more information. And, when we lead with "here's the story I'm making up..." from a place of curiosity, it creates a non-threatening, non-accusatory way of sharing with someone their unintended impact. It also allows for humility to recognize we could be wrong about our interpretations of it.

Fact checking and making sense of our stories in new and different ways is what we will be practicing in the weeks to come. Stay connected as we all put these new concepts into practice and download the action guide to support your process this week.