

# How to Uncover & Own Your Authentic Story

(and how it impacts your success)



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# Introduction

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Self-affirmation is the practice of clarifying your story to yourself.

—Amy Cuddy

Have you noticed that the most interesting, authentic people have a strong sense of self?

They know who they are. They've made sense of their lives. When they share their insights, we lean in.

This self-directed course is a place to clarify your story and take control of how you tell it--to yourself and others. At its conclusion, you will have a library of key story elements you can use to create refreshing and memorable moments in your communication. Story is a language we use when we chat over coffee, brainstorm, commiserate and celebrate.

If you are an entrepreneur, professional, student, teacher, artist or leader looking to harness Your Authentic Story, this course is for you.

Let's get started.



## Module 1: Your Backstory

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I have always loved watching the Kennedy Center Honors, which is held each December to celebrate extraordinary people who have left their mark on American Culture—from rock and roll icons and world class composers to former presidents.

For each honoree, artists are selected to perform some of their most well-known works. But before those performances, a close friend narrates their backstory over images from their life. We learn about their family and the early experiences that shaped them before they were famous. We gain a deeper appreciation for who they are.

There is a backstory to who you are, too. And just like the stories told at the Kennedy Center, it isn't about running down the dates on the timeline of your life. Your story rests on your influences and the source of your inspiration.

### **Go Back**

“Sankofa” (SAN-KO-FA), is a West African word meaning “Go back and fetch it.” It describes the process of going back to collect the wisdom of your early influences, in order to build for the future.



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Here are four areas to explore. This is not a formal writing assignment, or a psychological profile. We are simply identifying your influences.

1 Where were you raised? Describe traits, geography or history of your hometown. Little town, big city, beautiful country? How did it influence you?

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2 What were the talents or career choices of your parents? What did you learn from them? What parts of them do you see in yourself? What was important in your home? Being smart, winning, working hard—or the opposites?

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3 How many siblings do you have and where do you fall in the birth order?  
Did you have to be responsible as the oldest? What did you learn?

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4 Name a tough obstacle you had to overcome and the wisdom you (vs. your) carried forward. Do not tell yourself you haven't had to overcome anything. All of us have experienced change, disappointment, stress and loss.

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This is about internal sense-making. Once you understand your backstory, you will be more natural in your interactions with others—the way you listen and the way you relate your life's experience to theirs. You will show up with more presence, owning your story and knowing who you are.

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Next up, download

## **Module 2: Defining Moments and Turning Points**

**Learn to tell your story as your best, authentic self.  
Reach out today. We would love to hear from you.**