



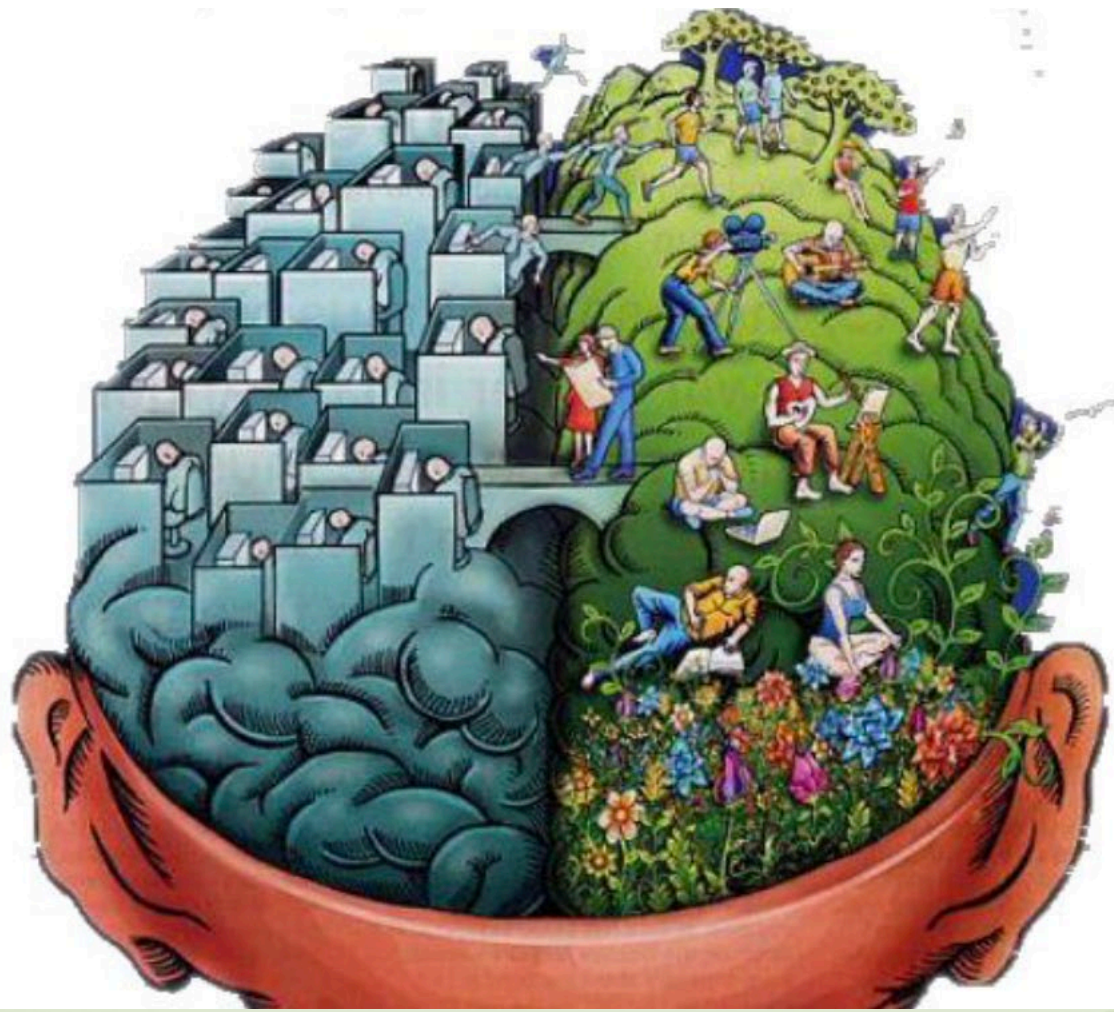
Storytelling and Advocacy: Telling our Rural Stories

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Goals and objectives:

- To review the nature of story and how it relates to our neurobiology.
- To tell a rural Story of SELF.
- To explore how story inspires a pathway to creative advocacy
- To examine a framework of relational leadership – Story of NOW

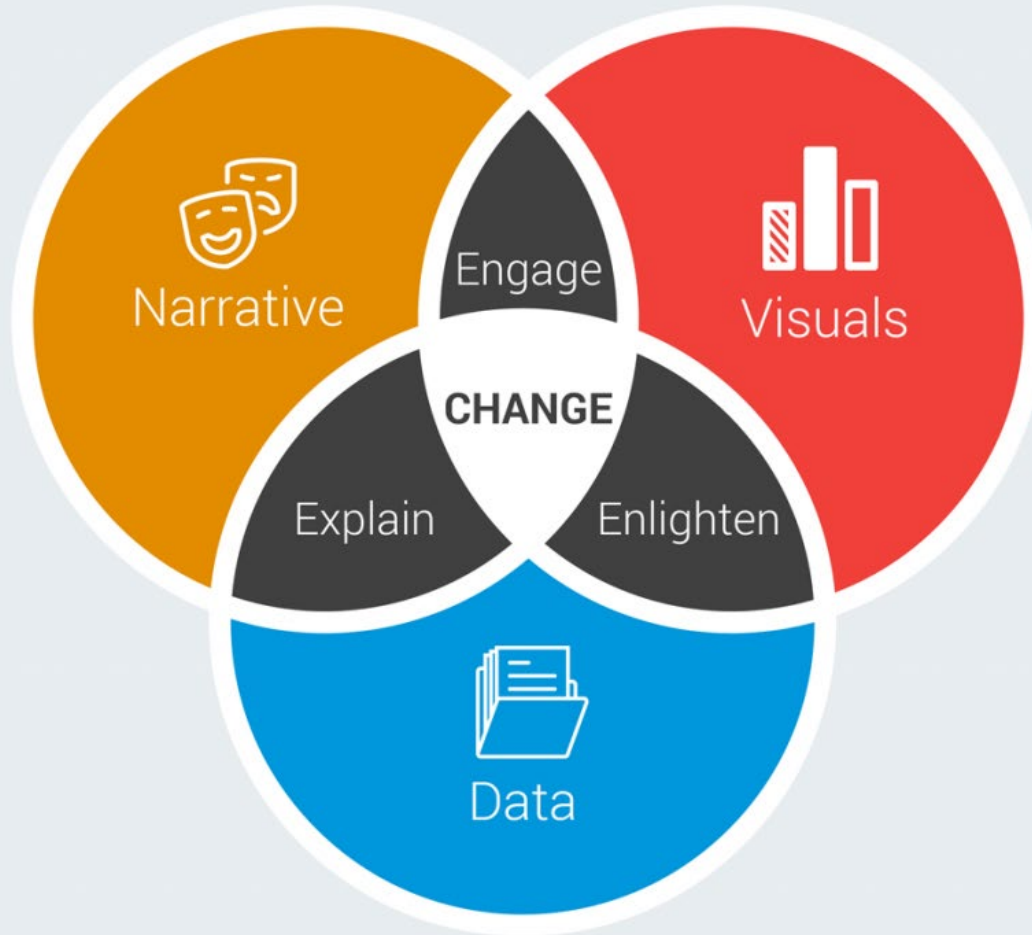


To Whom do we tell stories?

Narrative Interactions:

- Patients
- Professional peers
- Our society at large
- Our reflective selves
- Our adversaries

How do you tell stories?



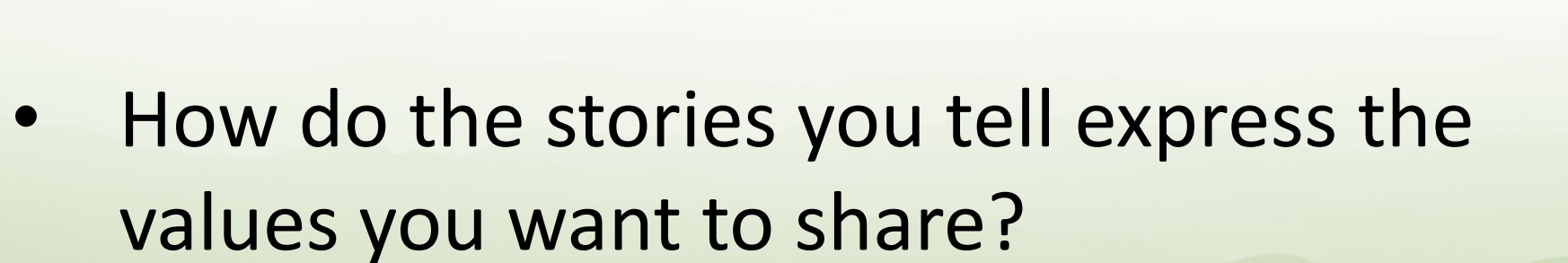
Why WE are good story tellers?

- Curious, attentive observers
- Committed to our rural story
- Skilled communicators
- Out-of-the box thinkers
- Life-long learners – cognitively adaptable
- Solution oriented
- Authentic and vulnerable

Benefits of rural stories?

- Enhances CURIOSITY
- Inspires the SHARING of ideas
- Engenders COMMUNITY
- It is a THERAPEUTIC medium of communication
- Inspires CREATIVITY and LISTENING
- Bridges DIFFERENCES of opinion
- Helps us to transmit VALUES

Story of SELF – A call to Leadership

- Why were you called to motivate others?
 - What stories can you share that will enable others to understand and be inspired by your mission?
 - How do the stories you tell express the values you want to share?
- 

A Story of Self



Summer 2001 - VG and his wife move to NC to start their rural life together



July 10th - 2003



July 2003 Broughton (51-52)



June 28th – 2004

Donald Gilmer goes missing



STATE HOSPITAL — MORGANTON.

June 28th, 2004



Good Hope Road (7)



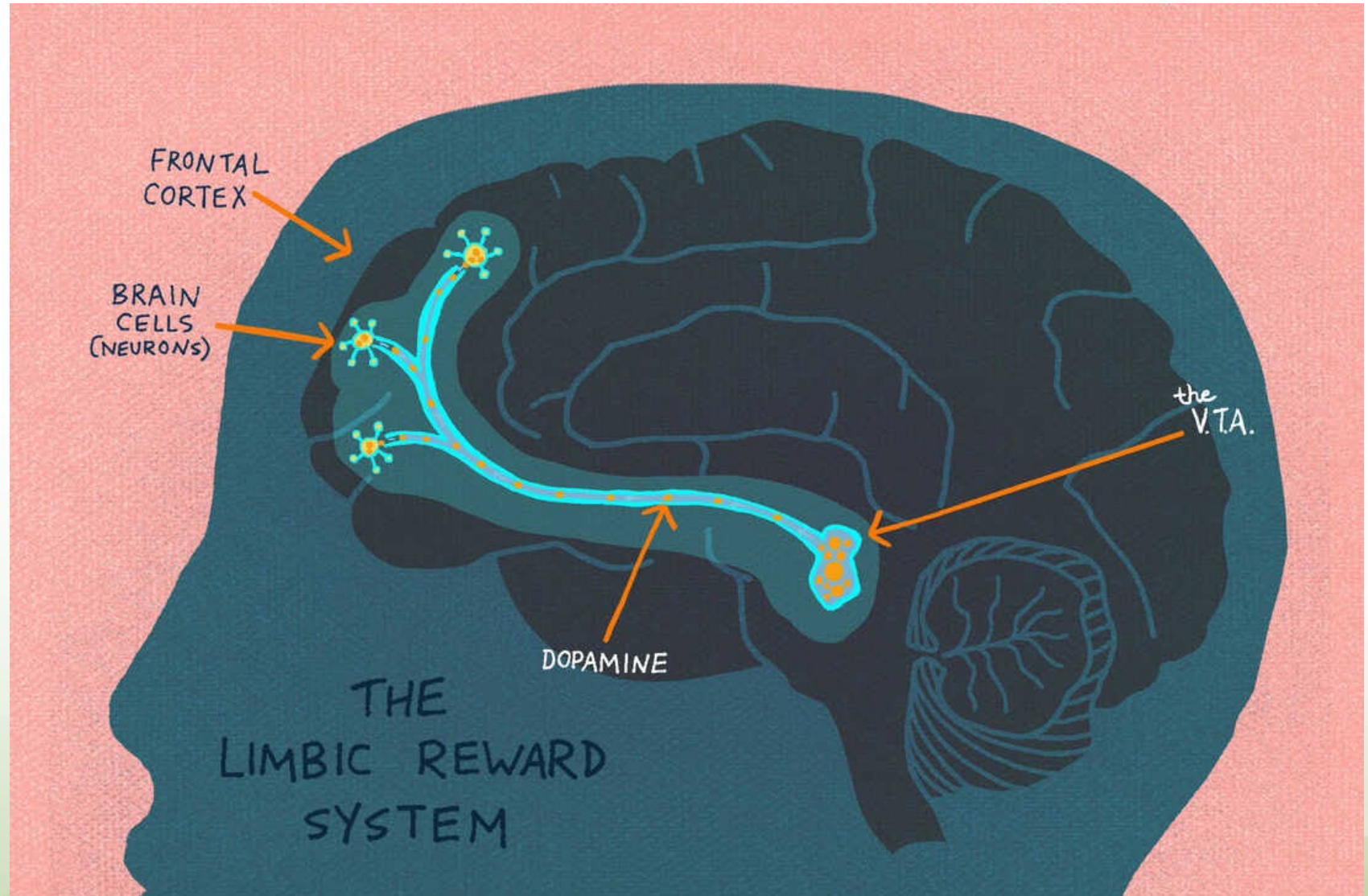
July 2009 (19)



The Pathway to Creative Advocacy

- **Curiosity**
- Inquiry
- Transformation
- Vision
- Advocacy

CURIOSITY: Why is it so critical?



CURIOSITY

Just thought he was going through a mid-life crisis.

Such a good guy!

I presumed it was a mercy killing.

Dr. Gilmer was the kindest doctor I have ever known.

Never even had a traffic violation before this!

He was a victim of abuse, I'd a killed the bastard, too.

He would even take the spiders and mice out to the field; would never kill them.

He gave me a buy at every visit.

He was completely normal the week before the murder.

He did act different that winter. Did seem more impulsive.

You know that you would be the one he would come after next.

The most compassionate physician I have ever known.

The Pathway to Creative Advocacy

- Curiosity
- **Inquiry**
- Transformation
- Visioning
- Advocacy

INQUIRY

Explore

Wonder

REFLECT

QUESTION

INTERPRET

Collaborate

Document

Investigate


OBSERVE

Create

Synthesize

INQUIRY - The Trial (111)



A blue brain scan image, likely an MRI or CT scan, showing a cross-section of the brain. The image is centered on a light brown, textured background. The text is overlaid on the brain scan in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The text reads: "DON'T BELIEVE EVERYTHING YOU THINK".

**DON'T
BELIEVE
EVERYTHING
YOU
THINK**

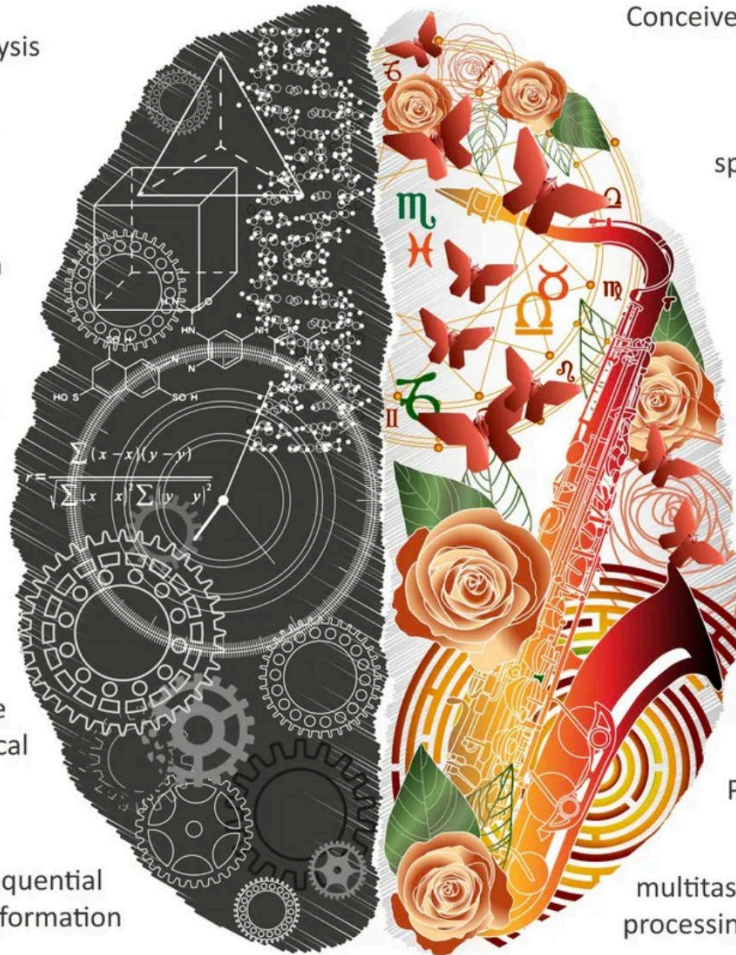
A Divided Brain

LEFT HEMISPHERE

- Responsible for logical thinking
- Focused in analysis
- Responsible for language skills
- Controls speech
- Responsible for memorizing facts and names
- Controls reading and writing abilities
- Controls science and mathematical capabilities
- Specializes in sequential processing of information
- Controls right part of the body

RIGHT HEMISPHERE

- Focused in intuition
- Conceives the non-verbal information
- Responsible for spatial orientation
- Focused in synthesis
- Responsible for ability to draw pictures
- Responsible for imagination
- Responsible for musicality
- Creates emotions
- Produces dreams
- Specializes in multitasking and parallel processing of information
- Controls left part of the body



The process of INQUIRY turns (166)

- Judgement into CURIOSITY
- Disagreement into SHARED EXPLORATION
- Defensiveness into SELF-REFLECTION
- Assumptions into QUESTIONS
- Talking into LISTENING

Story of US – Shared values

- To what values, experiences or aspirations will you appeal to when you call on others to join you?
- What stories can you share to express these values?



Feb 2013 - Wallen's Ridge (87)



First Impressions

- “Wow, are these sx are for real?”
- Shuffling gait?
- Amnesia?
- Fidgety
- Sensorium intact, + insight
- Facial dyskinesia
- Physical age >> actual
- Profound anxiety,
- Ravenous appetite
- Kind, gentle, warm and gracious.

The Pathway to Creative Advocacy

- Curiosity
- Inquiry
- **Transformation**
- Visioning
- Advocacy

TRANSFORMATION - March 28, 2013



TRANSFORMATION

Mental Illness and Incarceration

- **40% of incarcerated people** have some form of mental illness
- **Ten times** more mentally ill are being punished in prisons, rather than treated in mental hospitals.
- **25% of the world's incarcerated humans** are in the USA
- **Paucity of access** to primary care.

Advocacy - Media

**THIS
AMER
ICAN
LIFE
FROM WBEZ**

January - 2018

Governor Terri McAuliffe denies our clemency petition on his last day in office. No feedback is given to us.



The Pathway to Creative Advocacy

- Curiosity
- Inquiry
- Transformation
- **Visioning**
- Advocacy

VISIONING



Relational Leadership

Relational Leadership is a framework that can be used to influence change at different levels. It can change how we understand ourselves and interact with others in our own immediate spheres of influence, our institutions, and even bring change to large-scale systemic problems.



Individual

Am I personally living these values and practices?

Team

Can I foster these values and practices within my team or institution?

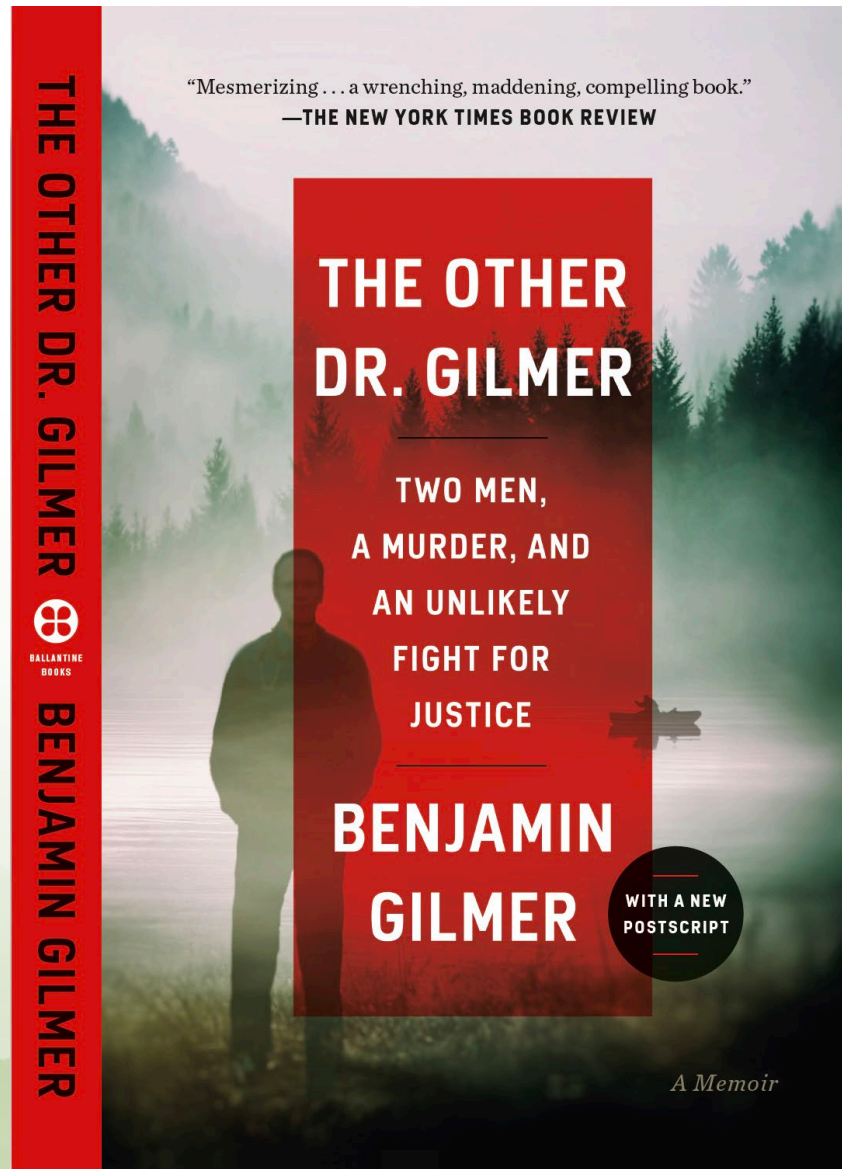
System

Can I use these values and practices to impact the healthcare system?

The Pathway of Creative Advocacy

- Curiosity
- Inquiry
- Transformation
- Vision
- **Advocacy**

Story of NOW – Healing Crime (255, 257-259)



Telling Uncomfortable Stories

People

NEWS

ENTERTAINMENT

ROYALS

LIFESTYLE

STYLEWATCH

SHOPPING



After a Beloved Small-Town Doctor Murdered His Own Father, the Clinic's New Doc Solved the Mystery of Why

What began as an odd coincidence — the two doctors share the same surname but aren't related — turned into an unlikely friendship and a fight to free a killer from prison


By **Eileen Finan** | Published on March 3, 2022 10:00 AM



Advertisement



Story of NOW – Strategy and Action

- What **URGENT CHALLENGE** do you hope to inspire others to pursue?
 - What is your vision of **SUCCESSFUL ACTION**?
 - How can you engage **PARTNERS** to act together?
 - What will it take to **ACT** now.
- 

ADVOCACY

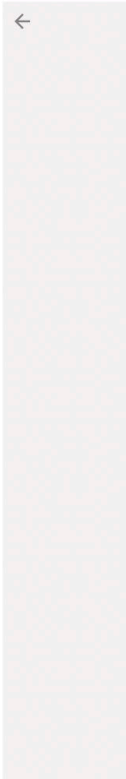
The Washington Post
Democracy Dies in Darkness

Pardoned but still in prison: Advocates work to free man caught in system



By [Gregory S. Schneider](#)

August 6, 2022 at 8:00 a.m. EDT



ADVOCACY - Writing

BOOKS JULY 25, 2022 ISSUE

WHY STORYTELLING IS PART OF BEING A GOOD DOCTOR

Physicians' education puts science front and center, but narrative can be a surprisingly powerful medicine.

By Jerome Groopman




July 18, 2022

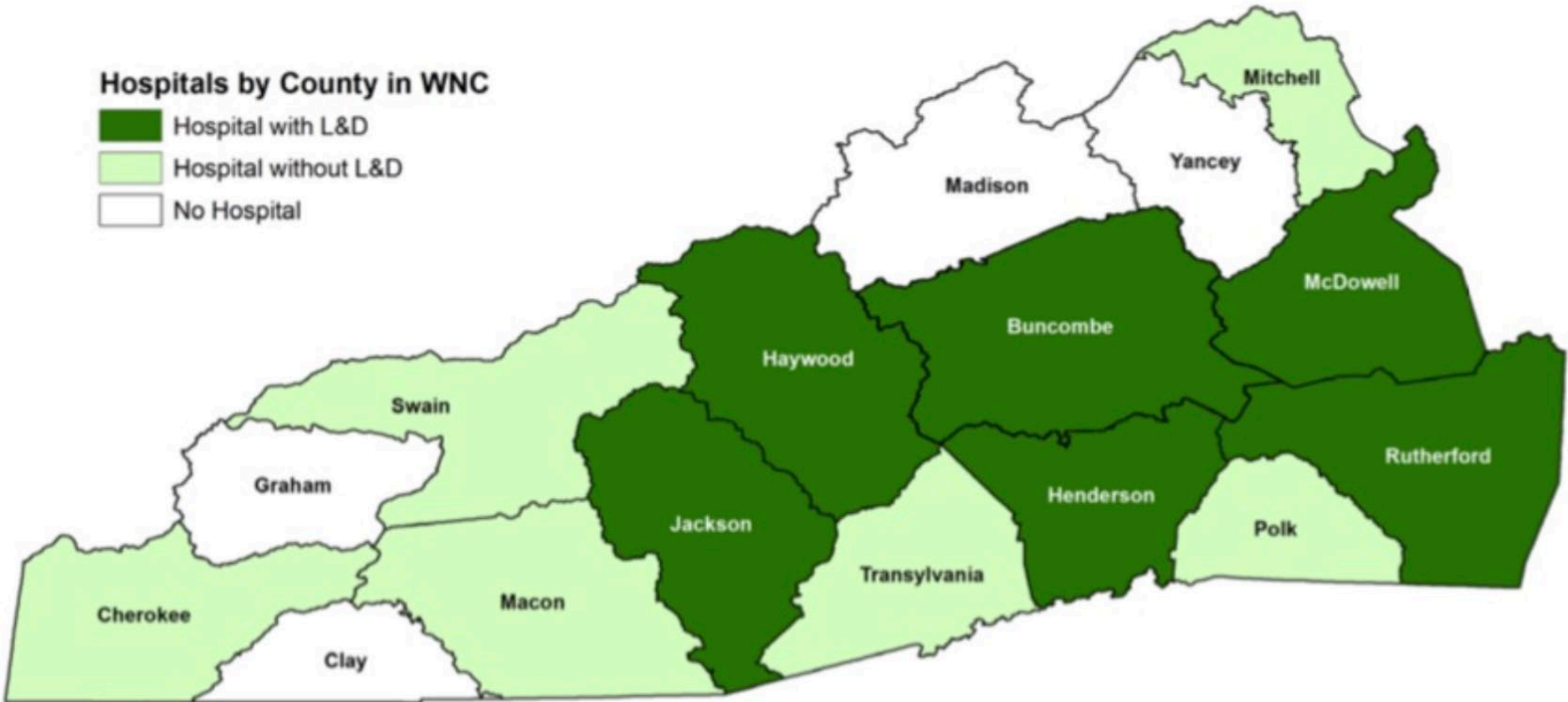
What are the stories we must tell?

Availability of Hospital Labor and Delivery in Western North Carolina

11/15/2017

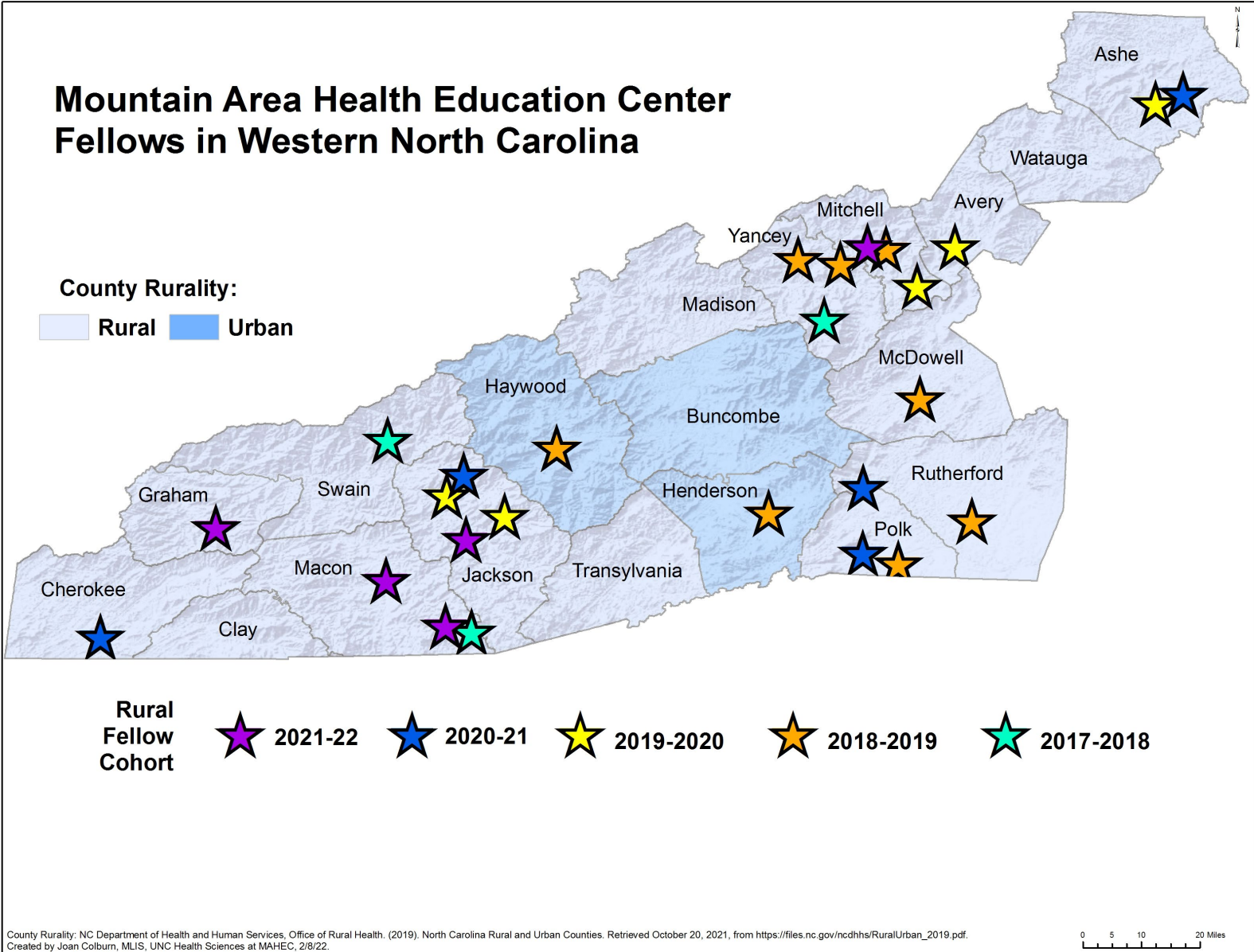
Hospitals by County in WNC

-  Hospital with L&D
-  Hospital without L&D
-  No Hospital



Story of Now – Rural Fellowship

Mountain Area Health Education Center Fellows in Western North Carolina



VISIONING – A Rural Fellowship



A story of Now – Rural abundance!



Thank you!

Please share your ideas and reach out:

<https://benjamingilmer.com>

Instagram:

