

Fall 2023: “Story-Telling: Re-Connecting with the Heart-Mind”

Class sessions: 75 minutes

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People, young and old, in all walks of life and stages of social development are *now challenged by stories*; in the forms of information, tools, and techniques offered and compelled by social media, zero-sum political polarization, and marketing polyps of huge corporations, utilizing manipulative techniques that many times are designed to be below the level of conscious awareness. These challenges are eroding the human-to-human social communication, to socially hypnotize recipients into giving their power away, in the promise of imagined security and constructed memories of “the good times.” This is the ongoing onslaught of attempts to capture the attention and emotionally manipulate each of us for profit and power of the manipulators. These experiences are showing up as a crisis of poor mental health, of isolation, anxiety, and depression, sometimes tragically leading to suicide that seem to permeate the social fabric at present. This course offers students a way out of challenging cultural, social, and personal stories that utilize of ignorance, dis-information, and manipulation, **through the practice of heart-to-heart connection.**

1. Week 1: Introduction & Ice-Breaker
 - a. The Way Out: (Heart-Mind vs Cold-Brain)
 - b. Making Space that Connects: small groups
 - c. Meet and stories of other class members: building trust
2. Week 2: Critical Thinking Refresher:
 - a. What is Critical Thinking:
 - i. Argument: basic construction and analysis
 - ii. Rhetorical Devices: Fallacies:
 - b. Brain Hemisphericity
 - i. Iain McGilchrist
 - ii. Jill Bolte-Taylor
3. Week 3: Spotting Manipulative Techniques in Argument & Media
 - a. Ethics (George Lakoff)
 - b. Good & Bad Faith (Mediation)
 - c. Specific Manipulative Techniques
 - d. Social Morals: Jonathan Haidt
 - e. Structure of the self: Bateson’s logical levels, Diltz, & Wilbur
 - i. Amnesias and arbitrary assignments of meaning
4. Week 4: Application and Practice of States:
 - a. Improv, Releasing Shame, Flow
5. Week 5: Application and Practice of States:
 - a. Dealing with Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity (VUCA)
 - b. Tranquility or Peace of Mind
6. Week 6: Support of Self, Relationship, Family, Community
 - a. Connecting with and re-choosing
 - i. Self
 - ii. Relationship
 - iii. Family
 - iv. Community
 - b. Vagal Tone Modeling
 - c. Re-Socialization
 - i. Making time
 - ii. Fractal Time
 - iii.