

## Getting Ready to Tell

### The Goals for a Performance

Choose a performance that you will be doing—or, if you prefer, that you have already done. A “performance” can be any telling in which you care about the results: a paid performance, an impromptu telling for friends, etc.

To a partner (or, if you prefer, talk into a recorder or write), describe:

- A. The goals of the organizer (if there is one) as you understand them.
- B. The goals of the listener(s), as much as you know them.
- C. Your own goals in this situation.
- D. The overlap between A., B., and C. You may have to be creative to find an overlap! But, if you manage to find one, it will become your personal goal for the event. If you achieve it, all the parties, including you, will be satisfied.

### The Moment of Triumph

Choose a story you already know. Ask yourself, “What is the moment of triumph in this story?” Or, if you prefer, “What is the moment of transformation?”

By “moment of triumph,” I mean the climax of the story: the moment when something sought has been found or achieved. “Moment of transformation” might fit some stories better: when the key change finally happens in a story.

Of course, these questions presuppose that there will be a change or climax in a story. In certain cultures, contexts, and genres of story, there will not be any change or climax. In such a case, ask yourself, “What is the key moment or image that my listeners need to be able to imagine, in order to respond to the story as I wish?”

Once you have identified a moment of triumph, try imagining it fully. Imagine it physically and emotionally. Imagine it in every sensory mode: sight, sound, muscles and gut. Now try telling the story. Notice how the moment you chose feels as you tell. Based on the result, how would you prepare the next time? What aspects of your preparation for this time would you keep or change?

### How Do YOU Want to Review Stories?

For each of these possible review methods, write (or speak aloud to a partner) its possible uses for you. Indicate whether it’s a method you use already. Then indicate if you want to use it more. Do you want to use it less? If you need some form of help with this method, write that in the final column. (e.g., You might need more helpers to listen to stories. Or you might need a recorder for listening to yourself.)

<b>Method</b>	<b>I use this method</b>	<b>I want to use it more</b>	<b>I want to use it less</b>	<b>I need ____ to help with using this method</b>
Read you <b>outline</b>				
Listen to a <b>recording</b> of yourself telling it				
Read a written <b>script</b> or <b>transcription</b>				
Tell <b>about</b> it to a partner				
<b>Tell</b> it ...				
...to a <b>partner</b>				
...to a practice <b>audience</b>				
...into a <b>recorder</b>				
<b>Other</b> ways you can review a story				

## **Your Warm-Ups**

Think about how you might best warm yourself up before each performance. To me, warming up means preparing myself physically and emotionally, and establishing my openness and connection to the audience. Try warming up in different ways. Notice the results.

## **Your Body**

Physical warm-ups have three parts for me:

1. Relaxation
2. Gathering energy
3. Preparing the voice

For me, “gathering energy” is often part of my other physical and emotional warm-ups. My vocal and emotional warm-ups usually stimulate me to a higher degree of alertness and readiness. But activities like Chi Gung, dancing, and even calisthenics may help you gather energy directly. What works for you?