

## PILLARS OF GOOD STORYTELLING

**3 P's** = PEOPLE, PLACE, PROBLEM  
**3 C's** = CHARACTER, CONFLICT, CHANGE

Strong Hook (grab attention)  
Stakes (what matters?) good place for a bit of backstory  
Beats = 2 to 3 mini scenes that build tension  
Crisis/Conflict (something's got to happen)  
Change = living in the new normal  
Ending (surprise, humor, heart, call back)

## INGREDIENTS

**Compact core idea.** Discard details that don't advance the action. Metaphors, short lists convey info quickly, often with humor. Make every word count / matter to the story's whole ("economy of words")

**Opening hook.** Use a stunning declarative statement or phrase that captures a unique perspective or paints a visceral picture. Or, create a knowledge gap by posing a question only answered at the end. Opening must grab the audience emotionally, make them thirsty to know more. Then you paint the scene, lay out the dilemma, plant subtle seeds ("call backs," foreshadowing what comes later).

**Surprise.** Break a pattern. Start in the middle of the action, then flashback. Go against the expected. Create a knowledge gap / cliff hanger. Pose a question you only answer at the story's end.

**Show, don't tell. Use tactile words.** You control the "mind's eye" of the audience so make them hear, see, smell, touch, feel what you experienced.

**Dialog conversations.** Instead of back and forth "I said... then she said... so I said."

**Humor.** All stories go down better with a dash of comedy. Laugh at your mistakes and the audience will laugh with you.

**Emotion & relationships. YOU** are the protagonist navigating events as they unfold. Story can't be all thoughts/feelings in your head/heart. It's you interacting with the world, SHOWING (not telling) how you changed it or it changed you. Show your vulnerability. Make listeners care so they're in your corner and want to hear how it ends.

**Ending.** Use combo of heart (vulnerability), humor, a surprise twist or "call back" to something you subtly planted earlier in story that now makes sense, gives that satisfying "full circle" feeling / mic drop moment.

*Note: Stories work best when told from the perspective of a scar, not an open wound; that's where wisdom grows. Difficult to craft and tell when still hurting, still learning.*