

The Possibility Path for Parents

A Life Coaching Program based on
Book One: A Field of Possibilities through Jeannine Proulx

“Bringing Possibilities to Reality”

SECTION ONE

FOUNDATION

1. What Makes You You
Identity and self formation.

2. Personality
The opinionated I the Observer and our view of life.

3. Story
The stories we tell ourselves, our family, the world,
and the stories they give us.

4.. Stranger in Small Town.
The possibility of people.

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Step Three

Read:
STORY

Short Cut Topic on Parent, Child, and Family:
Movie

*For the Short Cuts, find a quiet space and listen to each.
Have a pen and paper or discussion questions handy to write down your insights as they are
fresh in your mind. You may receive more insights as your mind continues to process the
information, so keep an eye on your dreams, the changes in your life, and how you are feeling.*

** Do them in a row or on separate days or times.*

*The first Short Cut focuses on you, the parent. The second and third are for YOU to do
to get insight into your children and your family as a whole.*

Family Fun Project or Experience:
Storybook

This Possibility Step discusses perspective. The way we see the world defines our reality. Life is full of ups and downs, tragedies and consequences, births and deaths. Thinking of life as a story helps us to understand ourselves and the world around us better. Changing perspective can change how you define yourself, your children, your family, and the world. Kids see the world through story. Learning how to master the art of storytelling and offering perspective change possibilities for your children and yourself can create an empowerment dynamic that offers solutions to life's difficulties. For changing your story changes reality!

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Step 3

STORY

Each step has discussion questions for you to do alone while reading the section and then additional insight opportunity with the Short Cut for you to do on your role as Parent, insight about your Children, and thoughts on your Family.

Let the thoughts that come to you, come to you.

This Possibility Step and these topics are about planting the seed of thought to help bring awareness. This is the starting foundation of who we are in the world! Let what is important for now come and let the rest go. The insights and ideas will flow naturally as you go about your life, grow, and change as an individual, as a parent, and as a family!

When stripped bare, reality just is. What Makes You You: the traits of you, the world you were born into, the family that surrounded you, and the events that happened in your life, are your blueprint for experiencing reality. The way we interpret the world around us is story.

We make up our stories. We decide how to interpret, act upon, and share the events and experiences of life. We choose. We may not even know that we are choosing. We may be so attached to our story we think it is who we are. It is not who we are. It is simply story.

THE TREE IN THE GARDEN

There is a Zen story about the tree in the garden. It is just a tree, in the garden. Everything we say about that tree, color, size, memories of it, pretty, ugly, maple, oak, is story. The tree just is. It is bark. It is leaves. It is oxygen. It is mass. It is cells. It just is. It is not even a tree until we call it a tree. It is we who give it labels and descriptions.

It is the same with everything and everyone in life. They just are. This world we live in just is.

At birth an infant does not even see clear colors or shapes! The eyes must adjust to the world around them to form the connections that create sight. The same with language, touch, taste, and sound! It is all being formed right there before our eyes! This process of learning to experience the world continues throughout childhood.

The rapid growth of childhood allows for many stories to be added on top of these sensory input experiences.

It is added by parents, family, society, religion, peers, media, strangers on a train, and more. They all give us stories about gender, age, birth, death, nature, science, food, housing, money, body, image, and attitude; all the things that make up life.

We are given stories to explain the things we see, taste, touch, feel, and know. But we make up our stories. And you can choose your story!

Often we choose our stories based on what works to get us what we need at each moment in life. It is easy to see this in children. They form their story through the process of BERRPS.

BERRPS

At first they are. They are the tree, just being. Then something happens: an event. They need something. They are hungry. Someone takes their toy. They want something. Then they test out a story: a reaction. They cry. They scream. They walk away. They smile. Then they watch for your reaction. From there? They process and form a story.

It has been said children as young as five weeks learn that when I cry a parent comes and feeds me. They have learned that the reaction of crying from being hungry = an adult feeds me.

This trial and error testing gets more and more sophisticated as the child grows and its needs (and our expectations) get more and more sophisticated.

Lu was three years old when she learned that crying would not get her what she wanted. Her parents, instead of giving her a cookie, would look at her disapprovingly and say “Use your words.” Crying no longer worked like it did when she was a baby. So she tried a few different tactics. One elicited a confusing response, but worked nonetheless.

Grandpa was babysitting one day. It was a hot day and Lu wanted ice cream in the worst way. She slyly crept up to Grandpa. (She had learned by now that being quiet and shy-like got her more of what she wanted than being loud and screaming.) She knew she was not supposed to have ice cream today as she already had a treat. She knew her parents would disapprove. So she tested a new way of getting what she wanted: giving others what they wanted and sharing in the spoils!

“Grandpa, would you like some ice cream?” she said sweetly.

“Why, yes, I would!” exclaimed Grandpa, surprised at how thoughtful his three year old granddaughter was acting.

“Great! Can you get me some too?!” Lu said with a great big smile hoping it would work.

Grandpa laughed at this small child's sudden ability to manipulate to get her needs met. He got them both some ice cream.

As we grow and change we learn other ways than just crying to get what we want. We learn to cajole. We learn to tease. We learn to give others what they want. We learn to compliment for it, smile for it, work for it, barter for it, beg, trade, and steal for it. We learn a thousand different ways to get our needs met over many, many years.

By the time we are adults our methods are so engrained in our daily interactions with the world and ourselves, we barely notice we are doing them at all. We have created our story through trial and error, testing it out throughout childhood until it becomes us. It is a part of who we are. It is how we see the world, how we process experience, and how we get our needs met so that we can survive.

It is rough to change our story. It has become so much a part of who we are, to change sometimes means literally changing everything in our life. We are met with resistance when we change our story.

People around us used to our BERRPS cycle may not like the change in our words or actions. People who are used to getting their needs met from us and our story may do everything they can to stop us from growing and changing.

If we were always the caretaker and decided to be the master and no longer care take, those who had been used to getting their needs met from our caretaking will cry and scream in resistance. (Metaphorically and literally cry and scream! ;)

If our story was to be the bully, those who liked us being the "bad one" so their story could be that they were the "good one" in contrast will revolt. If we were always the victim and we stop using the victim story, those who were our rescuers and used that as their story will resist as well.

We use story to get what we need. We are all a part of each other's stories. We all are a part of helping others get their needs met as others are a part of us getting our needs met. When we change, others are forced to change, and most people do not like to change, so they will resist.

To re-work or re-wire the methods that we have so carefully crafted over the course of a lifetime takes time, energy, honesty, self-awareness, and work! Most people resist all of this.

But, the easiest and quickest way to change reality is to simply change the story!

As a parent you can help facilitate awareness within your children on the idea of story that will allow them to be consciously aware of the stories they tell about themselves, their lives, their families, friends, and even the world!

To do that you must become aware of what stories you are telling and give language to them.

THE SUPER POWER MAGIC WAND

Story is like a Super Power Magic Wand. We can use it to change perspective on reality at any time. Some call this manipulation. It is! We are doing it all day everyday in a million different ways, conscious or not. We all use story technique to explain the world around us and get what we want. Manipulation has been given a bad rap by those who to use it for what we would consider ill will. But it is simply a way to use story, words, and techniques to get our needs met.

NEWWW

One way to change our story is to use a system to identify and explain and help create a new one. NEWWW can help identify, redirect, and change the story to benefit your children, yourself, your family, and the world!

Use the NEWWW steps to check in with your children and change their story and empower them to find new paths to possibilities themselves!

1. First identify what is the Need. (Not the Want, but the NEED.)

Stop to check and see if the basic body survival needs are being met. Have they been fed, clothed warm (or cool) enough? Is their tummy okay? Outdoor time or sunshine? How about sleep? Sometimes the reaction or whining storyline about what they are wanting is just because they can't express or know what it is they need. Do a body check. If they are old enough they can do it themselves. Are all those needs met? Then move on to the emotional needs.

* As they say with marriage arguments, it is rarely about the toilet paper roll! There are deeper issues. With younger children these deeper issues are usually physical needs they aren't aware of or can't express.

2. Identify EMOTION behind the need.

What is the feeling behind the need? Is it sadness? Did the child just lose a friend, a toy, or a dream? Allowing grief in all its forms including anger, sadness, bargaining, and denial even when it's just a toy that is lost is healthy mentoring for your child. Saying what emotions you see out loud can help give the words to the child to identify their own emotions, as well as giving you something to do instead of fixing or stopping the child from feeling.

"I see your bottom lip is quivering and tears are coming out of your eyes. That looks like sadness to me. I hear you say you lost your favorite toy. It's okay to be sad. That's a part of grieving."

Often times because children's emotions are so intense and it is extremely painful to watch our children in pain, we want to stop the emotion. Simply labeling the emotions and the events you

see happening gives you a way express your sympathy and compassion while allowing them to feel their feelings! (Which is the only way to work through them to move on after all.)

3. Notice the WORDS being used.

Notice what words are being used by your child. Are they begging? Are they blaming? Are they shaming? (Themselves or others?) What about using drama words like “Always and Never?” Do they say self-pity things like “I am always the one last.” or “I never get to do anything.”

Just notice the words being used. What words do you use often? Paying attention during daily activities when you are not in crisis or in the middle of a meltdown can help become aware of the stories everyone is telling!

* Write down the words you hear on a board or notebook. Discuss later with kids what they think those words mean and what story they are telling.

4. STORY telling and WHY.

Mirror to your child. Simply state the words they are using and what storyline you think it might be.

Always and never are dramatic victim words. “If I can’t have it, no one will.” is a bully line. Comparison words like prettier, smarter, better, are perfectionist story lines.

Keep it simple, clear and plain. Say it without judgment.

“I hear you saying “Always and Never.” Those are self-pity words. Do you feel sorry for yourself right now? Why?”

Once again, simply mirroring back the words you hear being used helps to bring awareness to the storyline the child is using.

* When you watch movies with your child begin to become aware of the storylines: dramatic, comedic, victim, rescuer. What words and attitudes do they use to get what they need? What colors and music did the movie creators use to create a mood. Why? Have the conversation during fun times to educate and start the discussion on story and how it affects our lives.

5. Create a WIN-WIN solution by redirecting behavior to healthier behavior where both parties needs get met.

Ask them to use their Super Power Magic Story Wand and change the words they are using to fit a new storyline.

What would it look like for all parties involved to get their needs met and they were happy? What if the event that happened was for the best? What words would that story be? What if crying and grieving were okay? What would that story be?

* What would it look like if you were happy and then told the story like a victim or a bully? Doing it from a happy story place can help show how story and the words we use work too!

Using the NEWWW steps and the Super Power Magic Story Wand with your children can help them to be aware of story and how it affects others and themselves in their lives - and give them the freedom to change at will their story at any time to help feel better, meet goals, solve difficulties, and heal relationships now and in the future.

Using the NEWWW steps with yourself to monitor your own internal dialogue can open you up to a world of possibility and the freedom to be more of who you truly are, and less of the stories others have put upon you!

WE ALL USE STORY to identify, interpret, and share our experiences. Becoming aware equals conscious living and empowers us all to change our reality at anytime by changing our stories!

What does story mean to you? How do you feel this could help you as a parent?

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SHORT CUT: MOVIE

A Short Cut is a Guided Visual Exercise that helps allow access to our own inner wisdom, our unconscious information Possibility Doorway, and our own inner intuition.

Listen to each Short Cut and then process your insights.

*** The short cuts are for you to listen to and get insight into your perspective on your self, your children, and your family as a whole. You can, if you wish, use these concepts and the questions below with your children or your family after you do them yourself to get your family's insight - if your children are at the age they could understand and relate to the Possibility Step topic.

These questions might help.

Group Discussion or Personal Journaling Questions:

Questions are just suggestions to get the ball rolling. You might get new insights you never thought of that have nothing to do with the topic at hand or realize things that are not in the questions. Allow. It is your time. It is your program. It is your inner wise self. Go where the journey takes you!

FOR PARENTS

Does it ever feel like you are living in a movie?

What movie are you living RIGHT NOW?

What is your story right now? What words do you use to describe your life, your story?

What role are you playing in your movie right now?

What are some things you could do for yourself to change something in your movie?

ABOUT CHILDREN - FOCUS ON EACH CHILD SEPARATELY

1st CHILD'S NAME: _____

What type of movie comes to mind with the personality of this child?

What role do they take? Leader? Rescuer? Rescuer? What role do they feel they have in their lives? In the world? In your family?

IF you feel that there is something not well with their viewpoint/story - what is best for THEM from THEIR viewpoint in this moment? What can you do as a parent to mentor?

2nd CHILD'S NAME: _____

What type of movie comes to mind with the personality of this child?

What role do they take? Leader? Rescuer? Rescued? What role do they feel they have in their lives? In the world? In your family?

IF you feel that there is something not well with their viewpoint/story - what is best for THEM from THEIR viewpoint in this moment? What can you do as a parent to mentor?

3rd CHILD'S NAME: _____

What type of movie comes to mind with the personality of this child?

What role do they take? Leader? Rescuer? Rescued? What role do they feel they have in their lives? In the world? In your family?

IF you feel that there is something not well with their viewpoint/story - what is best for THEM from THEIR viewpoint in this moment? What can you do as a parent to mentor?

4th or more CHILD'S NAME: _____

Insights:

ON FAMILY

What movie shows up to describe your family life right now? (No judgment! Just take note)

What ROLES do each member of your family play?

Lead(s):

Cs-star:

Supporting Cast:

Comedy relief:

More?

What story, what movie genre, would you really want for your family life to be?

What ONE thing could you do or just be to change your family story?

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Family Fun Project:

A FAMILY STORY BOOK

1. Make a WORD list.

- Start by asking kids, spouse, grandparents, even friends to name some words that describe you as a family. What are traits that are distinct to your family? What unites you? - What areas of interest or hobbies do you share?
 - What are your values? What are your loves?
 - What makes you individuals? What makes you the same?

2. Write the STORY of your family.

- Start “Once Upon a Time.”
- How did you and spouse meet?
- What was the weather the day each child was born? The year? Give a few details. (Age appropriate on story.)
 - Who was there when they were born? Family? Friends?
- Any fun things or big life changes in the years following? (Pick a few.)
 - What happened? How did you as a family overcome?
 - Describe positive words for each kid and each parent.
 - END with “We are a Family who.....”
 - and “No matter what . We will always be a family.”

3, Create your BOOK

- Buy a blank book - fold 8 1/2 x 11 paper -or do online a photo book
- Have kids draw pics of themselves, your house, what they think of with your family.
 - If kids young, do prints of hands or feet!
 - Make it your own !

4. Make a new one every so often to Connect, Regroup, and Refocus the family!

Second Art Project!

- Create a Super Power Magic Story Wand out of sticks, ribbons, and more!
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Because this is a personal development program, please understand the importance of keeping this material private within the group or your coaching time with Jeannine.

*Feel free to share the insights, ideas, and growth you have experienced with people you trust and who care about you, including family, friends, coworkers, therapists, doctors, etc. and of course the group that you are working with on the **Possibility Path**.*

Please direct any professional questions to Jeannine at jeannine_proulx@yahoo.com

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