

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

Sermon Based Curriculum

HEARTLINES Series

7th – 28th September 2025

Co-ordinated by Pastor Angela Wessels

Introducing The Series

(based on material from Heartlines, the Centre for Values Promotion)

Challenges we face:

- We live in a technologically-driven world where many more people are feeling disconnected, isolated, lonely, unseen and unheard.
- We live in a world where division, fear and prejudice plague us daily. The predominant sentiment seems to be **anti**-everyone who is not like us. These divisions undermine social and economic development, divide communities and families, and often lead to tensions and violence.
- In South Africa, we have a trust deficit that can affect the quality of our relationships with others and hinders us from getting to know each other better. This deficit is fuelled by divisions based on class, race, ethnicity, and socio-economic levels amongst others.

Heartlines is a South African-based NGO that aims to be part of addressing some of the issues facing society by helping move people from just having positive values to living out their positive values. Their **vision** is to see a more equitable, caring, cohesive, healthy and just society. Their **mission** is to help people live their better selves for the common good.

(<https://www.heartlines.org.za/>)

Heartlines believe in the power of personal storytelling as a means to create better understanding and trust amongst people.

Why story?

- Stories are what move us, challenge us, anger us, make us feel alive and inspire us.
- We use stories to make sense of life and the world in which we live. We can all relate to stories because each of our lives is a story.
- Stories give us a way to reach out to people and connect emotionally.
- Hearing someone's story helps us understand who they are and where they come from. We discover more about the events and people that shaped their lives, and we learn about their hopes and dreams for the future. We find out who they are at a deeper level, and our view of other people and the world we share expands.

Why us?

- As Christians, we have a unique opportunity to be the type of friends and communities the world is longing for. In Mark 12:30-31, Jesus encourages us: "And you must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength. The second is equally important: Love your neighbour as yourself. No other commandment is greater than these."
- As Christ followers we have a God-given mandate for reconciliation. We need to understand better the people we interact with daily. Understanding builds trust.
- Jesus was the greatest storyteller of all time, and we believe that sharing in one another's stories is the best starting point for loving our neighbours as Christ loved us.

But even more so ... This initiative aligns closely with our 2025 theme, 'One Heart, Many Voices' — moving us from simply stating the theme to living and demonstrating it in tangible ways. The series will create space for our congregation to share their personal faith journeys, connect across differences, and celebrate the common thread that unites us: our shared identity as children of God and members of the Trinity community.

What's Your Story? *is a tool that can help us build understanding, empathy and a stronger sense of community, through sharing in each other's stories. It's a tool that can be used to strengthen our relationships and create a culture of understanding in our small groups, church and beyond.* The journey we will embark on is taken from a combination of two resources from Heartlines.

What will this journey invite you to do?

- Reflect more deeply on your own story.
- Learn to use the values and practices of story-sharing as a first step to loving your neighbours and inviting others in, especially those considered 'different'.

By asking, listening and telling our stories, we can embark on a process of deepening our relationships. When our relationships display understanding, acceptance, empathy, respect and love, they become a powerful treasure, for us and our wider communities.

Will you join the story-telling revolution?

How to journey through this guide:

- In your home group, follow the notes relating to the previous Sunday sermon.
- Give lots of time to the group sharing – that is the essence of what we want to encourage.
- Journey further on your own in the week with the solo reflection questions.
- Together as a home group, decide if you'd like to allocate a further week to the deeper sharing of your stories. Tools for this at the end of this booklet.
- For a solo journey, work through the material and find someone who you can share with along the way.
- If you are not in a small group, consider joining us on Wednesday 17th September and 1st October, 6pm to 8pm at the church as we journey through the material together.

The power of story.

Word *Matthew 13:34; Hebrews 10:24-25;*

Group opening activity: What's your favourite story – book, film or biblical? And why or what does it say about you? **OR**
What's your full name? Is there a story behind your name? What does your name mean to you?

Notes

- 1. The power of story - When we understand one another, we can help one another heal.**

Key scripture “Jesus always used stories and illustrations like these when speaking to the crowds. In fact, he never spoke to them without using such parables.” — Matthew 13:34

Stories are all around us - As Jesus knew, everyone relates to stories. They are our way of making sense of life and the world around us. Jesus is the greatest storyteller of all time! As Matthew says, Jesus hardly ever spoke without using a parable to illustrate his point because he knew that by listening, and relating, to stories we develop deeper understanding. Story is the way he chose to reach out to us and connect with us. It is God's way of revealing who he is and his desire for us to live in relationship with him.

Stories help us to connect – My story is always connected to a bigger story and we need to see ourselves, and others, as part of God's cosmic love story. By exploring our own stories, we find out: who we are and where we come from; the people and events that have shaped our lives, and our hopes and dreams for the future. By listening to others' stories, and sharing our own, we can come to understand each other more fully. Each person's story makes our spiritual family's collective story richer, stronger and more inclusive.

Stories have power to heal - Promoting better understanding is one of the most important reasons for sharing stories. It helps to increase trust and break down prejudice in all its forms. We start seeing the reasons behind the things that divide us and discover new things to unite us. God is intimately involved with each of our stories – he has been since the beginning, and he continues to be. As we become more acquainted with our own stories, they shed light on our way ahead. As we share our stories, growth and change happens within ourselves and our relationships with others. *“An enemy is one whose story we have not heard.” – Gene Knudsen Hoffman*

FOR DISCUSSION / REFLECTION

(either in the large group or break into 2's or 3's to share)

- Where were you born and share a good memory from your childhood.
- Who had an important impact on your life growing up?
- Share a key defining moment of your life.
- Share a difficulty you have faced.

2. Storytelling can be a powerful way to express love for your neighbour and to bring them to Christ.

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” — Hebrews 10:24-25 (NIV)

Every story matters – When it comes to connecting with people, stories can be a key way to reach out. Especially when we love someone or want to help them come into a personal relationship with God. We often neglect seeing the value in our own stories and discount the potential that exists for our lives and experiences to impact others. We may think - “Why me? Why my story? I have nothing significant to say.” But a better question might be, “How can my story be used to love someone or bring them to Christ?”

Our lives show and tell - Pictures paint a thousand words. Jesus could simply have told us what to do but, to ensure we understood and could relate, he painted pictures with his words to open our imaginations (and hearts) and make it easier for us to put ourselves in other people's shoes.

Our story is a testimony - Giving testimony by explaining our personal salvation experience is a powerful way to share the gospel with others because it provides an example of how God changes lives.

FOR DISCUSSION / REFLECTION

- When and how did you first come to faith?
- Share something about why your faith is important to you.
- What are you still hoping for in your relationship with God?

3. How do we do this? Three practical steps to hearing and telling our stories

Sharing our story with others is not always easy. In fact, getting to grips with our own story can be a challenging and uncomfortable process. Getting to know someone's story can feel intimidating and awkward – where do we start, what do we ask? We believe that there's a simple way to help us share in each other's stories. It's a framework called Ask. Listen. Tell.

Ask

Asking someone to tell you some of their story. It can be anything from a simple question like "What is the origin of your name?" to putting aside time to hear their life story. Doing this sends the message that you "see" them as a fellow human being and that they are worthy of respect.

Listen

Truly listening to someone's story extends the message of respect. In listening to another's story we see the human being behind the "other" and are often surprised by how much we have in common. This can help break down stereotypes and suspicions and open up a path for understanding and reconciliation.

Tell

Being prepared to tell some of your story, when asked, can be a gift to others and yourself. To tell our stories, we need to take time to reflect on our own journeys. This can be a really positive experience as we might see how hard times have shaped us and led us to forgive ourselves and others.

FOR DISCUSSION / REFLECTION:

- Which of the three steps above is easier for you? and which would you like to grow in?

PRAY for God’s guidance and leading in:

- understanding your own story
- being able to use parts of your story for sharing His love with others
- knowing whose story he would like you to understand better and how you may go about this
- the journey you are on

At Home Reflection

- See the storytelling tools and ideas at the end of this booklet and choose one to do.
- Who would you like to share some of your story with?
- Whose story would you like to get to know more of?

Sunday 14th September

Let's Build a Bridge – Building Relational Bridges

Word John 4:1-26 – Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well.

Group opening activity: “If you had to swap lives for a week with someone from a completely different walk of life, who would you choose and why?”

Notes

To successfully love God, love people and love our nation, we need to follow our biblical mandate of reconciling people to God and to each other. This calls for us to become bridge builders who are able to create spaces for people to talk about difficult issues around differences, social privilege and oppression, and formulate practical, biblical responses to these fault lines.

Jesus is our bridge builder. Jesus shows us through his life, how and why we should be bridge builders.

The backstory – These verses tell the story of Jesus and his disciples as they were en route from Judea to Galilee by way of Samaria. (Something many Jews would refuse to do because it meant coming into contact with Samaritans.) In fact, their desire to avoid contact with Samaritans was so great that they were prepared to travel twice the distance, crossing the Jordan somewhere in Judea, then travelling up the eastern side of the river before crossing again into Galilee! The hostility between them dated back to the time when the Assyrians had settled non-Jews in the area and inter-marriage with local Israelites contributed to the Jews' view that the Samaritans were second-class people who should be avoided for moral reasons. The conversation between Jesus and the woman took place at about noon, just outside the Samaritan town of Sychar, on some land that Jacob had bought and given to his son Joseph. A tired Jesus was resting at the well while his disciples went to buy food, when the Samaritan woman came to draw water. Despite the cultural divide

that would have stopped most Jews engaging with her, he reached out and took a real interest in her life and her pain (in other words, in her story).

Bridge building has four phases:

1. Clearing away the obstacles:

The dividing lines between Jesus and the Samaritan woman were stark, and these obstacles were cleared away by Jesus.

Ethnicity Profound racial and cultural tensions existed between the Jews and the Samaritans. According to law at that time, there was a clear dividing line between them that Jewish rabbis were not to cross (John 4:9).

Gender Back in biblical times, women were held in very low esteem, and the Samaritan woman would not expect to be greeted by Jesus, nor for him to want to converse with her (John 4:7-9).

Lifestyle The woman carried the stigma of having been married five times and living with a man to whom she was not married (John 4:16-18).

Worship Their religious differences mean they worshipped in different ways: “Our ancestors worshipped on this mountain but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem” (John 4:20).

2. Building the Bridge

Jesus models for us how to build bridges:

Proximity - As Jesus teaches us by his decision to come to earth and live among us and by going to the well (where people gathered to draw water), reaching out means meeting people where they are (both physically and emotionally).

Presence - The Bible says: “Go into all the world and preach the gospel.” In today’s world, perhaps reaching out is more about showing care and compassion and, when people open up, really listening to what they have to say. It’s about being **PRESENT**.

Powerlessness - In John 4:7, although Jesus had something important to share with the Samaritan woman, he approached her with humility

and first asked for a drink of water. Jesus, who is God and all powerful, left his power behind in order to reach her effectively on her level.

Proclamation - In our efforts to represent God, we can so easily do the opposite! In the words of Karl Bath, “When we speak of our virtues, we are competitors. When we confess our sins to each other we become brothers.” Just as Jesus reached out and listened to the Samaritan woman before revealing himself as the Son of God, we need to spend time understanding the stories of the people we connect with. As the relationships develop, the time will come for us to tell our stories – with their joy and pain – and to share God’s story of his love and commitment to us.

3. **Anchoring the keystone** – the stability of our bridge needs to come from a deep and meaningful walk with God.
4. **Maintaining the structure** – it’s not enough to build the bridge – we need to use it by walking across it from both sides.

FOR DISCUSSION / REFLECTION:

- Which obstacles / dividing lines do you find easier to ‘clear’ and which do you find more challenging to ‘clear’?
- In bridge-building, which of the 4 P’s do you find easier to do? Which would you like to grow in?
- Where / with whom are you feeling called to build a bridge? How are you going to do this? How are you going to cross that bridge once it has been built?

Creating Safe Spaces for meaningful dialogue

Creating a safe space is not simply about creating an environment that makes it “safe” or “easier” for a particular group of people to engage. It is about creating safe spaces for meaningful dialogue around complex, uncomfortable and deeply pressing issues. Safe spaces help us find new ways to talk, think, and act together – making it possible to talk across our differences and invent a new direction for our

future. 'I always was prepared to talk. It never occurred to me to be as well prepared to listen'.

To create a safe space for people to think and talk together effectively (both further afield and closer to home), we need to:

- **Listen** — Still the noise inside ourselves.
- **Respect** — Recognise that everyone has something to teach us.
- **Suspend** — Let go of our need to be right, engage with curiosity and be willing to be influenced.
- **Voice** — speak authentically, with integrity; finding our own authority without needing to dominate.

FOR DISCUSSION / REFLECTION:

- Which of the four steps above (listen, respect, suspend, voice) comes easier for you?
- Which of them would you like to grow in?
- Where are you feeling called to create safe spaces or deepen the safety of existing space?
- How are you going to do that?

Pray

- For the building of bridges amongst your small group and larger church community.
- Specifically for each member's personal growth in areas of bridge-building.

For Further Reflection

Use these or other questions to chat to two people about their lives – first can be someone you do already know (but would like to hear more) and the second is someone you want to know better – preferably someone who is different from you in some way.

Some conversation openers

I would love to get to know you better.

Where were you born and raised?

Tell me about your family/parents?

What does your name mean to you? Do you know why you were given it? Is there a story behind it?

Going a little deeper

Tell me more about your childhood/upbringing?

How would you describe your family when you were growing up?

Which were your most important relationships growing up?

What are some of the turning points in your life that have helped define who you are?

What are your future hopes and dreams?

What makes you feel positive about living in South Africa today?

Review: (for yourself)

How easy or difficult was it to ask these questions?

Did this story sharing change the way you saw this person in any way?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Who are We? Identity, Privilege and Reflexivity:

Group opening activity: Share 3 identity 'lables' for yourself: one word to describe yourself based on what a stranger can see from the outside; one word to describe yourself based on who someone close knows you to be; one word that you would use to describe something about your identity.

Word Romans 3:23-24; James 2:1-4; Matthew 7:1-2

Notes

For us to become successful bridge builders we need to do the brave work of unpacking how we identify ourselves and others; we must face our privilege, assumptions, judgments and implicit biases; and we must speak the truth about any discomfoting revelations we may have about ourselves, so that real change can happen.

1. Identity:

Think about how we identify ourselves. Do we say: 'I'm Zulu' (which is to say I am not Xhosa, or any other ethnic grouping)? 'I'm an A-type personality' (which is to say I'm not a hippie B-type)? 'I'm an extrovert' (which is to say I'm not a shy, wallflower introvert)?

The secular concept of identity: Cultural studies theorists describe the concept of identity as "we are this because we are not the other" which implies that identity is based on difference and that exclusion is at its centre. In other words, "I am what I am because I am not the other" or "white is only white because it is not black" and vice versa.

The biblical concept of identity: In Romans 3:23, the Bible says "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" which infers that, after the fall of humanity, all humankind was excluded from identifying with God and seems to support the secular idea that we were born into exclusion. But, thank God for his grace, for the very next verse says: "*And all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus*" Romans 3:24.

Having an identity in Christ means we are included into the family of God, not excluded. In contrast to the secular concept of “I am what I am because I am not the other,” the Christ-centred concept of identity is “I am what I am because I belong to Jesus Christ.”

To clarify what we mean when we refer to ‘exclusion’ and ‘inclusion’: **Inclusion** is the act (intentional or unintentional) of creating environments in which any individual, or group, is welcome, respected, supported and valued and feels fully able to participate. An inclusive environment is one in which differences are embraced and each are equally respected, in words and actions.

Exclusion, on the other hand, is the act (intentional or unintentional) of creating environments in which people do not feel welcomed, respected, supported, valued or able to fully participate.

FOR DISCUSSION / REFLECTION:

- Discuss the statement – In contrast to the secular concept of “I am what I am *because I am not the other*,” the Christ-centred concept of identity is “I am what I am *because I belong to Jesus Christ*.”
- Who do I exclude from sitting at ‘my table’ based on my own identity or on their identity?
- Who am I in Christ?

2. Unpacking privilege

The Cambridge Dictionary defines privilege as:

1. A special advantage or authority possessed by a particular person or group.
2. The special right that some people in authority have that allows them to do or say things that other people are not allowed to.

While the powerless and marginalised have no difficulty in recognising these definitions, it is often the case that those who are advantaged, or have authority, are unable to see the benefits that accrue from their place of privilege.

Some examples of privilege you may, or may not, identify with

- The people you see on TV, and in movies, mostly look like you.
- Most reading material you are exposed to (for work, study or pleasure) is written by members of your race or class.
- The school you went to offered numerous sporting activities and excursions.
- When you behave badly the behaviour is attributed to you, as an individual, and not to your race, class, gender, age or sexuality.
- You have visited a doctor for a routine 'check-up' (rather than to receive specific treatment).
- You have been on holiday with your family.
- No-one has ever been surprised at your intelligence, your honesty or ability to speak well.
- Going to university is a reasonable expectation and not a far-off dream, and many more ...

The Bible has a few things to say about privilege: *"My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favouritism. Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in. If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, 'Here's a good seat for you,' but say to the poor man, 'You stand there' or 'Sit on the floor by my feet,' have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?"*

— James 2:1-4

FOR DISCUSSION / REFLECTION:

- What's one way your life has been made easier because of something about your identity? (*Example: language fluency, passport, skin colour, gender, education access*)
- What's one way your life has been made harder because of something about your identity?

3. Practising reflexivity:

When we critique the ways in which we identify ourselves and others, and when we review our own privilege, or lack of privilege, we begin

to debunk the foggy lenses (assumptions, stereotypes, biases) through which we have viewed the world.

The Bible gives us some great direction: *“Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce, you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you.”*

— Matthew 7:1-2

“Reflexivity” is a social science term used to describe the process of critical self-observation. For our purposes, it simply means reflecting on our own assumptions and preconceptions as we engage with the world.

It’s a great relationship tool, directing us to ask ourselves questions like: How is my presence affecting this encounter? What does the way people look or speak have to do with the way I engage with them? How does my tone of voice affect the way people respond to me?

It’s also a great way to check our known beliefs against our implicit biases (which are the things we believe without having ever examined why we believe them). The more we practise reflexivity, the more we become aware of our implicit biases and the more we understand about them, the easier it is for us to work on correcting them!

Reflexivity is like a muscle – the more you work it the bigger and stronger it gets! If we flex from an inclusion-centred view of who we are in Christ, then we will create an atmosphere of openness, cheerfulness, and brave vulnerability for those around us. That sounds so enticing and will undoubtedly help to break down walls of exclusion.

FOR DISCUSSION / REFLECTION

- Think of a time you realised your view of a situation was shaped by your own background. What was the moment, and what shifted for you?
- What’s one question you wish people would ask more often about identity and privilege?

Pray

- Ask every member to share a prayer need that has come up related to the session and pray for one another as a group.

Further reflection. The Harvard Implicit Bias test is geared towards showing us our hidden beliefs about the world and what it reveals can often be surprising. Be brave! Take the test (<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>) and, once you've reflected on the results, talk to a friend and pray about ways to overcome any biases that may be affecting the way you relate to others.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on the right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

Our Story – Celebrating our One Heart and Many Voices

Word *“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”*

— Galatians 3:28 (ESV)

God loves diversity. It is part of his nature. And he wants us to embrace diversity in the way we live our lives. God’s love for diversity is reflected in nature and reflected in how we are called to live on earth.

Use your group time to share answers to the questions below – encourage everyone to answer with a single word or sentence so that you can get through the questions for everyone.

Celebrating our many voices:

- Something I’d like to celebrate about myself ...
- Something I’d like to celebrate about my heritage ...
- Something I’d like to celebrate about my neighbour ...
- A dream I have for myself ...
- A dream I have for South Africa ...

Celebrating our Trinity story:

- Something I’d like to celebrate about this church community ...
- Something I’d like to celebrate about this group ...
- What is God’s dream for Trinity?
- What practical things could we do to live more relationally and communally, in this small group and as a church?

Celebrating God’s story:

- Something I’d like to celebrate about my faith journey ...
- Whose story in the bible most inspires me?
- Is there a biblical story that echoes my story?
- Where do I locate myself within God’s story?
- In which parts of my story can I clearly see how God was with me?

- Which parts would I like to invite him into to heal, redeem or celebrate with me?

Celebrating this journey:

- What new thing did I learn about myself?
- What new thing did I learn about others?
- What new thing did I learn about God?
- What's one commitment I'd like to make in my own life when it comes to story-sharing?
- In what practical ways can we create a culture of community through story-sharing in our families, small group, and broader congregation?

In God's Kingdom, His desire is for every nation, tribe, people and tongue to be doing life together. As Christians we have an opportunity to make sure people in our church – and those beyond our church – feel invited to be part of a loving community, regardless of their age, language or background.

We've accepted the challenge to build the kind of church and small groups that make people feel welcomed, accepted, heard and connected. It's really not that hard or complicated – it starts with one simple question: "What's your story?"

Pray

- About any next steps for yourself and the group.

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

Methods of Recording / Sharing your Story

A: My Blessed History / My Spiritual History

I have engraved you on the palms of my hands. (Isaiah 49:16)

Surely the Lord is in this place and I was not aware of it.
(Genesis 28:16)

Using the framework below consider how God was with you during your childhood and teens; as an adult – work, marriage, family, community, church; retirement and later adult years.

1. Getting ready

Sit comfortably and naturally.

Let yourself be present and at ease.

Feel the natural rhythm of your breathing.

Open yourself to the prayerful space around you and within you.

Take time to sink into the NOW, the mystery of your being.

Then begin to reflect on your life.

Rest in the presence of the God who has lovingly held you from the day of your birth until now.

2. Then let the Spirit of God draw you to significant experiences and events in your life so that you might gain understanding.

Simply allow memories - as they come.

Let one memory recall another by association, which may not be logical nor chronological.

These might include:

- memories of persons, events or experiences, which have shaped or influenced you,
- memories of special places, of significant moments, or of an intense atmosphere,
- memories of times in ministry, of endings and beginnings, or of decisions you have made.

3. Name each experience. Express it in a few words or in a symbol. (Feel free to draw or paint.) Stay long enough with each.

Allow yourself to be aware of the mood, the feelings, which accompany each memory, i.e.

- joy, gratitude,
- fear, sadness, anger, pain,
- desire, hope, intimacy,
- loneliness, safety.

4. Then try to order the experiences which have come alive for you in whichever way is best.

- Do you recognise any patterns, any recurring movements?
- Is there a common thread running through them all?
- How has God been in your story?
- Which faces of God do you recognise?
- Has the face of your God been loving or stern?
- Perhaps there were times when God 'had no face'.
- Where and how has God been leading you?
- Is there a hope in you that God longs for fullness of life for you?

5. Find one or two Biblical stories, or images, or metaphors that symbolise for you how God encounters you and how you usually respond to God.

B: The River of Life:

1. Imagine your life as a river which roughly corresponds to the chronological order of events in your real life. For example, the river can be calm and straight, perhaps bubbling, during the good/happy times. The river might then wind itself around large, imposing rocks that could represent obstacles you've faced. Think of relationships or key moments with your family and friends or encounters with people who are different to you. A major bend in the river could represent a big life change, such as moving away from home. A waterfall could represent those times when you feel like you lost control and were caught in a downward spiral.
2. Think also of your river in terms of some key moments in South Africa's history, and in terms of significant personal encounters.
3. Spend some time drawing your river.
4. Once you've done this, choose four key moments – good and bad – that have shaped who you are today.

C: Tree of Life (Roots & Fruits)

1. Think of your life as a tree, with roots:
Roots of my life • Who are the people that played the biggest role in my life while I was growing up? • What are the moments, events

or memories that I believe have shaped who I am today? • What are the key moments or memories I have from my upbringing when it comes to relating to others?

Fruits of my life • What are the key moments, victories or accomplishments I hold dearest in my life right now or from the past few years? • What are some good fruits or personal victories when it comes to my relating to others?

2. Spend some time drawing your tree.

D: Photographs and objects

Required materials – a photograph for each decade of your life. Alternatively, you can bring in a few objects (between 4-6) that have special meaning to you. They could be an item of clothing that holds sentimental value, a book or DVD, a certificate, a tool or gadget, etc.

1. The person tells the story of the day the photograph was taken and what was happening when it was taken. Listeners are encouraged to ask questions about the story and the photographs.
2. If using objects, explain what story each item tells about a specific part of your life, or how it has been instrumental in defining who you are

E: Fork in the Road

Choose a big moment in your life and imagine it as a fork in the road. Use this as the centre for your story. Some helpful questions to build your story could be:

- What was a fork in the road in your life? What was a key defining moment or a turning point issue or decision you were facing?
- What series of events were happening before this fork in the road, that may have led up to this point?
- What else was happening in your life at the time you needed to make that decision?
- What were some of the factors that influenced your decision: personal beliefs, advice from others, books you read, etc?
- How did that fork in the road story shape who you are today?

