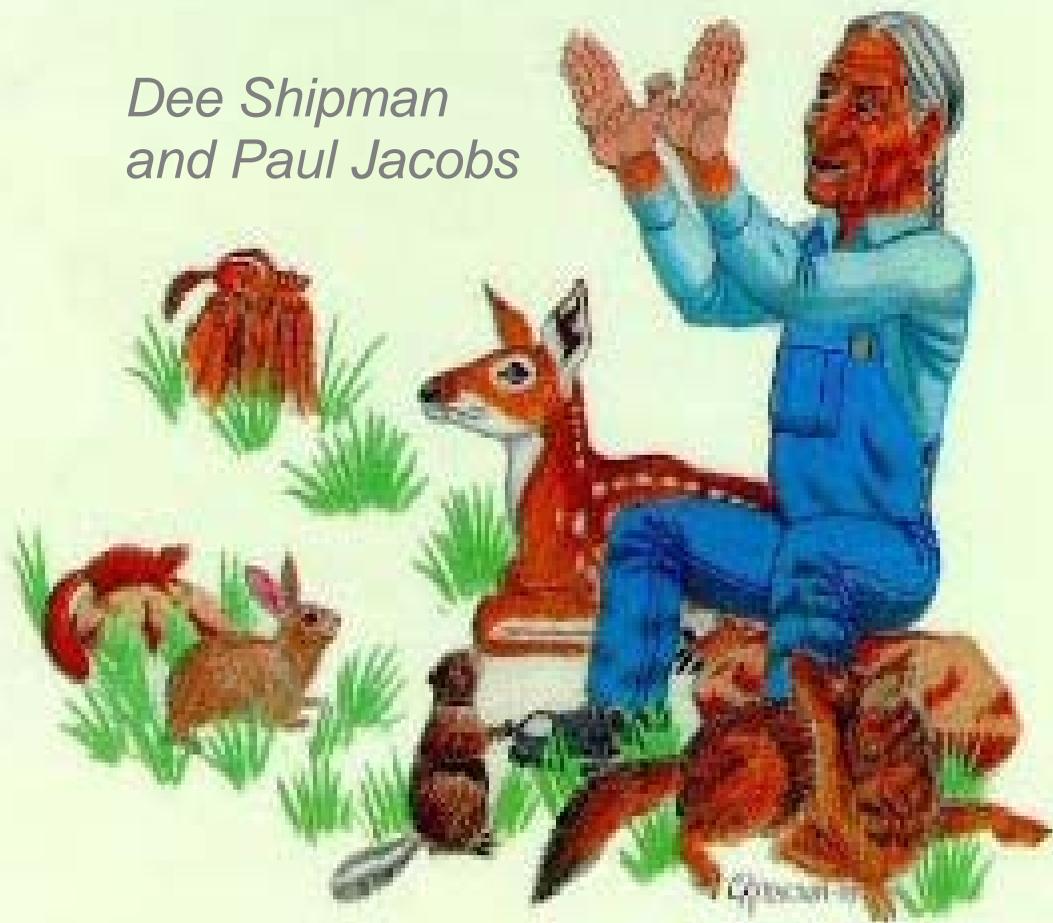


All We Are Is Our Stories

*Dee Shipman
and Paul Jacobs*



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First published in UK 2006 by:

NEW OCEANS

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St Albans, Herts, AL1 4NX, UK

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First Edition – June 2006

NO 003/A1

Printed and bound in the UK by
NEW OCEANS PUBLISHING

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FOREWORD

All we are is our stories. Our words are how we express them, how we tell our lives:- to be connected, to stop ourselves being alone, being islands.

Our words are streams in which we pour out our stories to become the oceans that touch other islands.

Paul and I believe in constantly expanding our horizons, exploring new oceans, which is what life is surely all about; and we recognise that even as we move forward, our history always comes with us. Every significant experience becomes a resource, a new pearl of wisdom on our individual 'necklace', a jewel which truly becomes us....!

For we ARE our experiences, which we have filtered through our senses, beliefs, and values, and stored as memories.....and so our memories are the stories of our lives.

All the people – all the stories – we have met through our trainings, workshops, coachings, made us realise that had to be what this new book is about.....

INTRODUCTION

Our stories are our experiences: but our words are not..... they are just signposts, indicators, pointers, codes, anchors, to help us express who we are, what we have been and done and hope to be and do; to share our lives.

My life is true for me; but 'true', for me, is not necessarily the same as 'true' for someone else. So what is 'true' but a drop in the stream?

Only when the different drops become the stream, become the ocean... in other words (!)only when we share the experience, can we share the meaning.

And what is 'experience'? To some it is the going through, the being part of, a particular time or event or process. To others it is the wisdom or joy or pain or learning gained from those.

So what are words?... representations of our lives, drops in the streams.... streams of consciousness, of unconsciousness, of time and sentience and spirit, which flow together to become new oceans of meaning and being.....our stories...us.

THE STORIES



We want to take you
Where the five winds of our senses
Are forever blowing bubbles
Pretty bubbles in the area of
"Once upon a times"

The times and places
Where imagination was raised
Remembering the world
Of yesterday

Where everything we were
Became everything we are
Became all our future memories
Waiting

To be born
Waiting
To be written
Waiting
To be told and heard
Waiting
To be read.....



GREAT OAKS AND LITTLE ACORNS

Patterns....& whose they are!



She felt as though she was not only rooted to where she stood, but that the weight of her expectancy was pushing her even further down, deeper into her primeval heritage. She wondered remotely, dissociatedly, what it must be like to have only one baby at a time.....when she dropped this lot she would be able to wave her arms, dance for joy!

But she accepted that she was what she was – and that this is how it always was... The wind was getting up now:- for all her heaviness she could feel a movement growing in her, a change, and then the rain started.....and as the waters broke, her fruits were torn free from the safety of her body.....

... Now the sun was warm: and on the forest floor they were aware of the unseen protection of their mother's green dress billowing above them.

It was funny how comforting it was to know that all that was required of them now was to BE, not to DO – because the patterns had been set for them, and they could only be what their parents, what all the members of their family tree, had been, and were.

All they had to do was to find a safe crack in the earth, and wait to become the same.

So each little acorn rolled in the sun-kissed and now gentle breeze, to hide; patiently resigned to be as they were designed, to become, like their mother, an oak tree.....rolling away from the light, towards the safe dark earth; preparing to be the same, and in the same place, as all the other oaks in the forest.

Except for one acorn....."I will NOT be yet another oak tree!" he declared. "Nor be in the same place. I'm different.....I want to travel, see more of the world, really understand others from the inside".

"You're an acorn....you have to be like us" said the other acorns woodenly. But he just knew that wasn't for him. No accident of birth was going to decide his life. "I will not GROW in this forest.....so I WILL not grow in this forest!" he vowed.

And he was right...

There was a rustle in the undergrowth, and suddenly a squirrel pounced on the mismatching acorn, smashed it open – and ate it!

Be very careful what you wish for...!

Unless of course you are an NLP nut! In that case you would future pace, and go some months ahead, to when the acorn had been carried inside the squirrel and eventually dropped in a totally new place.

It hadn't been able to control what the territory had thrown at it, but it HAD been able to choose how it mapped it, by using circumstances, and reframing the raindrop of being eaten, into the sunbeam of having achieved its outcome.....to not be yet another oak tree in the same old place, to see what life was like inside someone else!

And of course, it WAS different, for no matter how many oak trees there are, each one is totally unique.

What is more, our dreams are unique to our maps, and shape who we are; our dreams are our stories..... and we ARE our stories.

LACE

Maybe we don't realise just how much our VAK preferences pervade everything we say, feel, write. I had been sitting on the balcony at home intending to write a piece about the modalities – the senses through which we filter all input - for the next Diploma training. As I sat with pen and A4 pad at the ready, I was aware of all the territory around me, of everything I was hearing and seeing and feeling.....and this is what emerged.....

I love the lace
The new green white
Of May
That grows discreetly
Covering the windows
Us looking out
And no-one seeing in.
I love the fabric of it, hanging
New against the blue
Waving tiny hands from every branch
The laughter of its light voice
Touching and murmuring the breeze of early Summer
Making promises;
And I believe them every year -
Because lace doesn't lie!



LOVE DOESN'T MAKE US MAD



This is about one of those everyday stories – love! – as an example of the logical level of Values, Beliefs, & Metaprograms. It's also, of course, about reframing, looking at something in a completely new way to open up the landscape of our maps.

Love doesn't make us mad

It keeps us sane

It's living without love that's crazy

Love makes us get our priorities right

In love it's far more rational to count the raindrops

Falling on your face

Than to buy an umbrella

And much more important to keep his voice in your head
Than talk to friends on the phone
To stroke the imprint of his body on the bed
Than to straighten the pillows
Or change the sheets

Love makes it logical to kiss the phone
After you've whispered "Goodnight"
And makes it make more sense
To keep the smell of him on your breasts
Instead of Ralph Lauren's 'Safari'
Love doesn't make you lose your reason.....
It's the only reason there is.

