



Narrative techniques and self-storytelling are powerful tools in coaching LGBTQ+ individuals. They allow for an in-depth exploration of personal history, make sense of lived experiences, and strengthen the sense of identity. In telling their story, the individual being coached can better understand their journey, identify their resources and imagine new possibilities for their future.

Narrative techniques lean on the transformative power of stories. They consider that we give meaning to our life and our identity through the narratives we construct. These narratives are not fixed: they evolve according to our experiences, our interactions and the meanings we attribute to them. By becoming aware of these narrative processes, we can choose to alter our perspective on the past and write new scenarios for the future.

In the coaching of LGBTQ+ individuals, narrative techniques invite them to explore the dominant stories that have shaped their relationship with themselves and others. These might, for example, be internalized narratives about shame, inadequacy or the impossibility of fully living one's identity. The coach helps deconstruct these limiting narratives and develop alternative, more nourishing ones, focused on the person's strengths, skills and aspirations.

Self-storytelling is a particular form of narration, centered on the unique history of the individual. It involves not only retracing the significant events, but also exploring the emotions, beliefs and meanings associated with them. By telling their story, the person puts into words their intimate experiences, clarifies what genuinely matters to them and reinforces their sense of identity coherence.

For LGBTQ+ individuals, self-storytelling has particular importance. It allows them to revisit

key stages of identity construction, such as the discovery of their sexual orientation or gender identity, first emotional and sexual relationships, coming out to family and friends, etc. By making sense of these pivotal moments, the person can better integrate their LGBTQ+ identity into a holistic and positive view of themselves.

The coach supports this narrative work with listening, respect and compassion. They help the person explore the different facets of their history, without judgment and at their own pace. Open-ended questions can guide the reflection: "How would you tell your journey to someone who doesn't know you?", "What are the moments in your life that you are most proud of?", "Are there chapters of your story that you would like to rewrite?", etc. The goal is to foster a positive reappropriation of their experiences, highlighting the resources utilized and the learning achieved.

Various aids can be proposed to facilitate self-storytelling, such as writing a personal journal, creating a commented photo album or even creating a symbolic life tree. The coach may also use metaphors and stories to help the person shape their history. The main point is to foster a meaningful and personal narration, full of meaning and hope.

Take the example of Karim, a 35-year-old cisgender gay man, who is exploring his life story with his coach. By telling his story, he gains awareness of the impact his family's rejection of his homosexuality had, leading him to leave his home country to freely live his identity. He also realizes that his migratory journey enabled him to develop valuable skills, like adaptability and resilience. Armed with these insights, he decides to write a new chapter of his story, centered around his associative commitment to LGBTQ+ asylum seekers. By helping others rebuild themselves, he gives new meaning to his own wounds.

The narrative techniques and self-storytelling provide a privileged space to reappropriate one's history and strengthen one's identity. They transform painful experiences into resources, create coherence in the person's journey and project them towards a more fulfilling future. For LGBTQ+ individuals, often marked by specific challenges and normative demands, this work is of particular importance. It supports the construction of robust self-esteem and a sense of inner unity, fully integrating one's sexual orientation and gender identity.

The coach ensures this narrative exploration is carried out in a secure and supportive environment, respecting everyone's defenses and limits. They encourage a kind and nuanced narration, embracing the complexity of one's journey. Through the sessions, they help the person exercise their authorship power, choosing the words and images that give meaning to their story. Because beyond the hurts and obstacles, every LGBTQ+ life carries singular riches, resilience strength and inspiring creativity. In telling their stories, it's this unique beauty that each can recognize and celebrate.

Key points to remember:

- Narrative techniques and self-storytelling are potent tools in coaching LGBTQ+ individuals to explore personal history, make sense of experiences, and reinforce identity.
- Narrative techniques lean on the transformative power of stories and assist in deconstructing limiting narratives to develop more nourishing ones.
- Self-storytelling enables exploring the emotions, beliefs and meanings associated with significant events, clarifying what truly matters to the individual.
- For LGBTQ+ individuals, self-storytelling assists in revisiting key stages of identity construction and better integrating their identity into a positive self-view.
- The coach supports this narrative work with listening and compassion, using open-ended questions and various aids to facilitate a meaningful and personal narration.
- Narrative techniques allow transforming painful experiences into resources, lending coherence to the journey and projecting toward a more fulfilling future.
- This work supports building robust self-esteem and a sense of inner unity for LGBTQ+ individuals, by fully integrating their sexual orientation and gender identity.
- The coach ensures that the narrative exploration takes place in a secure and supportive environment, promoting a compassionate narration that embraces the complexity of each person's journey.