



Speaking Truth to Power Tool

Reflecting on the Storytelling Process

Purpose of this tool

This tool contains reflective questions for individuals involved in a process that may consciously and unconsciously involve power dynamics and speaking truth to power. Speaking truth to power is the ability to be transparent and open, without fear of consequences, about the impact that those who are holding the power in a situation are causing, particularly when that impact is not beneficial.

This tool was developed by Social Action Inquiry Scotland during the storytelling process after noticing that some storytellers and communities consciously or unconsciously did not highlight within the storytelling output any aspects that were hindering their social action that involved power holders or connections close to them, fearing it affect, for example, their financial income, or connections with those in power. In essence, it held them back from speaking truth to power.

“The second thing is very important for me, and it has been important for the Inquiry, is to embed reflection in the process of storytelling. And I think that is very important and we have tried to do it in our own smaller groups but also invited storytellers to do that, invited the communities to that in some ways or the other because it helps you to reflect on your own positionality. It helps you reflect on your own privileges, your own helps and hinders, your own struggles, your own vulnerabilities. But more than ever it helps you also to tell truth to power.”

Deborah Menezes, Storytelling episode of the Wavicle podcast.

Why use this tool?

Engage with this tool if you are seeking:

- to use reflective questions to begin discussions about speaking honestly and clearly about power. Reflections on the questions within this tool are intended to prompt further thoughts and may lead to topics of conversation with everyone involved in the storytelling work.
- to support individuals and communities to include stories about power in relation to what helps and hinders them.
- to reflect, acknowledge and act on whether your contribution (especially when in powerful positions, or positions of entitlement and privilege) within social action has been of benefit. Bearing in mind that positive emotions and sentiment tend to flow up to power holders.

How to use this tool?

The invitation is to use the reflective questions within this tool (on page 4) to begin discussions about speaking honestly and clearly about power. Following on from using this tool reflections on the questions are intended to prompt further thoughts and may lead to topics of conversation with everyone involved in the storytelling work.

If it is helpful, adapt the this tool align with the work you do with others who may view you as a position of power, entitlement or privilege. Listen and hear the responses before working together on how to move forward.

Those reflecting on the questions will need:

- Paper, pen or something suitable to take notes of reflections.
- A space they feel comfortable reflecting in.
- The reflective questions as part of this tool on page 4.
- A total of 30 mins - 1 hour (suggested).

Those prompting the conversation will need:

- Paper, pen or something suitable to take notes of reflections.
- A space to gather together to listen and hear. Suggested: A facilitator to aid the group to work together in a relational manner on how to move forward.
- A total of 2 hours to half a day (suggested).

Reflective Questions

These reflective questions were created for storytellers and communities involved in storytelling to begin discussions about speaking honestly and clearly about power. Reflections on the questions within this tool are intended to prompt further thoughts and may lead to topics of conversation with everyone involved in the storytelling work.

1. What have you been struck by as the story has been emerging?
2. What has worried you?
3. How have you felt when experiencing or observing power dynamics play out?
4. How do you deal with power dynamics or sensitive issues in the storytelling?
5. When have you experienced a sense of joy when involved in the work?

This tool was created by [Social Action Inquiry Scotland](#)



**Social Action
Inquiry Scotland**