

From Learning to Sharing



Story is a narrative, which is either true or fiction, in prose or verse, it is designed to reach the audience with their interest, amusing to the hearer or reader. Story telling is an art which involves primarily using words and actions (secondarily properties and other required things) connecting with the listeners and taking them on a virtual journey and sharing the information. It can be the strongest tool as it spreads awareness and touches the critically important issues/aspects. Over the years stories have been passed from generations to generations as knowledge. Without living in that moment, we know about the history such as Ramayana and Mahabharata. Through these stories cultural heritage has been preserved for future generations. Giving a strong message, understanding or learning/ lessons.

I attended the 'Art for conservation' (A4C) workshop conducted by the team at Zoo Outreach Organisation, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. Peter Viegas, Chetan Shetty, Sunita Shetty, and Audry Viegas made best use of three days teaching us the story telling and its background which all the participants thoroughly enjoyed and were grateful. After coming home, I started working on it, reaching not only 25 people but as many as I could, conducting small sessions of storytelling. Representing stories and what I learned from the workshop, in my vicinity of friends, family, neighbors and their known people. I told them a story which Peter told us in the workshop, "The Mountain That Loved a Bird", by Alice McLerran. Initially I fumbled, even broke the original story and made a few minor changes which I learned from the workshop.

Also, I shared my own story of "The Ocean Ecosystems" by putting all the scientific information about marine biology that I know, taking them on an underwater journey from coastal area of shores to deep sea. And telling them about various marine species and their survival strategies adaptations such as bioluminescence used in hunting by angler fishes, from giant whales to tiniest planktons etc. As we connected through the medium of art, my participants understood the following things from "The Mountain That Loved a Bird" – the network of nature and how presence of one organism affects another. From "The Ocean Ecosystems" they understood the dynamic of the ocean and different layers with respect to the depth, in simple words, the environment beneath the waves.

We discussed more about life forms and their survival and how we humans affect it. And why they need conservation. And how we can contribute to it, such as avoiding single use plastics and minimizing its usage as plastic is a major problem in the food chain. By sharing this information and talking to them, I felt this awareness is needed as there are people who care about nature and conservation but either they don't have the knowledge or don't know what to do, hence reaching out to people and making a small impact and telling them to spread the awareness can actually bring a wave from small ripples. Hence, I believe these kinds of workshops are essential.

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