

Narratives and Storytelling in Qualitative Research

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Narrative inquiry is a valuable investigative technique in qualitative research. Narrative inquiry and storytelling offer us a different way of knowing, of investigating the lived experiences of individuals, and of exploring subjectivity. Narrative knowledge is created and constructed through the stories of lived experience and sense-making, the meanings people afford to them, and therefore offers valuable insight into the complexity of human lives, cultures, and behaviours.

It allows us to capture the rich data within stories, including for example shedding insight into feelings, beliefs, images and time. It also takes account of the relationship between individual experience and the wider social and cultural contexts. Crucially, it also involves collaborative inquiry and co-construction of meaning between participants and the researcher. Examples of narrative inquiry in qualitative research include for instance: stories, interviews, life histories, journals, photographs and other artefacts.

This course will benefit participants who wish to advance their knowledge of qualitative research methods by exploring at a foundational level the benefits that narratives and stories offer as a method of inquiry in a range of applied and policy settings and contexts. This one-day course is designed to help participants become aware of narratives and storytelling in qualitative research, and to practice some of the techniques involved. As well as providing a grounding in the principles and theories, participants will gain hands-on experience of using various techniques of narrative inquiry. Some prior knowledge of qualitative research methods is advisable.

Programme

DAY 1	
10.00 – 10.15	Welcome, introductions and housekeeping
10.15 – 11.00	What is narrative inquiry? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The principles of narrative inquiry ➤ Why use stories in research? ➤ Narrative thinking and reflective thought
11.00 – 11.30	<i>Workshop 1: Discuss how and why you might use narratives in your research</i>
11.30 – 12.00	Break
12.00 – 12.30	Theories of narrative inquiry
12.30 – 13.00	Forms of narrative: interviews, life histories, journals, (auto)biography, autoethnography, photos, artefacts, social media, blogs.
13.00 – 13.30	<i>Workshop 2: Part I - write your own story</i>
13.30	Close of day 1

DAY 2	
10.00 – 10.30	<i>Workshop 2: Part II - sharing our stories and reflections on day 1</i>
10.30 – 11.00	Narrative interviewing
11.00 – 11.45	<i>Workshop 3: Part I – narrative interviewing</i>
11.45 – 12.15	Break
12.15 – 12.45	<i>Workshop 3: Part II – how did your narrative interviews go?</i>
12.45 – 13.00	Innovations: a ‘small stories’ approach to narratives
13.00 – 13.15	<i>Workshop 4: discussion of how you might use ‘small stories’</i>
13.15 – 13.30	Reflections on day 2 and final questions
13.30	Close of day 2