

# **Les Brown's 7 Principles of Powerful Storytelling**

*How people live their lives is a result of the  
stories that they believe about themselves.*

*Les Brown*

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## **Introduction**

**You have a story to tell; it's time you share it  
with the world!**

Hello, this is Les Brown. One of my greatest joys in life is speaking; can you identify with that?

If you love to speak or even if you don't love to speak and are petrified of speaking, you're gonna get something of value out of this book. I'm going to share with you some methods and techniques on how you can begin to improve your speaking skills substantially.

And you might consider using your speaking skills to create another career for yourself. It's a multi-billion dollar business; that's a great possibility. And I'll share with you methods and techniques on how you can begin to do that and as quiet as it's kept.

You don't have to have a Ph.D. or be a rocket scientist in order to do that.

If you're interested in working on yourself and being involved in ongoing learning, and working to master the art of public speaking, the possibilities are unlimited.

Don't take my word for it; prove it for yourself. I've been doing this now for several years... over 50, to be more exact.

And it has just been unbelievable the experience that I've had.

I'm going to share with you and make available to you information that I've shared in seminars that I've done all across the world called Speaking for a Living.

This seminar was created for the most high-level audiences you can imagine.

And the contents and strategies that we talked about were in-depth and complex.

We talked through every little secret you could imagine to be a successful speaker.

In this book, I'm going to share with you the 7 principles you need to know to be a powerful storyteller. But remember... being a good storyteller is just the beginning of a speaking career.

So I encourage you to get started with this book and learn the basics. And when you're ready to pursue a career in Public Speaking... I have something for you.

My team and I have made available to you an online program with the original tapes from the seminars of "Speaking for a Living."

In the first tape, you will learn about the three R's of repetition, review, and reinforcement. In the tapes that follow, I will be giving you some in-depth point-

by-point systems which I have developed for delivering dynamic, unforgettable presentations.

And by speaking, by practicing, by studying this art, I believe you can change millions of lives and find something that will give your life a sense of purpose, meaning, and value that will boggle your imagination.

Join me on this adventure.

People need to hear what you have to say. So leap out there and make it happen.

There are some people that I'm going to reach, and nobody else will reach, and there are some people that you're going to reach, and nobody else will reach them.

And they are waiting for you.

They are waiting to hear from you.

So start working to develop your craft.

Welcome on this journey to discovering the greatness that you have within you as a speaker and, most importantly... you want to be the message that you bring; you need to live your message, not just speak it.

So if you'd like to join me on this journey after you finish reading this book... then go to my website

[lesbrown.com/speakforaliving](http://lesbrown.com/speakforaliving) and submit your application.

I only let 21 people a month join this masterclass as we don't just teach you about public speaking; we TURN YOU into a public speaker!

This program is a three-phase program.

Phase 1 - Self Study: you will go through my Speak for a Living course.

Phase 2 - Group Coaching: you will be trained by one of my hand-selected corporate trainers for 90 days straight. So we can work out details that self-study don't address.

Phase 3 - Marketing Services: my marketing team will give you a \$4,000 credit to use on services such as social media marketing, advertising, graphic design, etc... You will have TANGIBLE deliverables that will help your speaking career move to success!

We will also teach you where to find speaking engagements and help you get booked as a speaker. And lastly, we will help you launch your own products like books, podcasts, courses, and communities so that you can monetize your message just like I have for the past 50 years.

This training program was valued at more than \$15,000. Out-performing and crushing our

competition... but even though it's valued at \$15,000, what makes it even more shocking is that we sell it for just \$2,000 and have financing options available through our private network of lenders.

Now, only 21 people get accepted every month.

The people I'm looking for are the few that are hungry. The few that would love to be just like me.

We get over 100 applications to join the program every month... so if you're interested in being a world-class public speaker and want to Speak For A Living, then go to the link above and submit the form. One of our agents will get back to you as soon as possible to interview you and see if you're a good fit for this training program.

Remember, you have something special. You have GREATNESS within you.

That's my story, and I'm sticking to it!

Bye for now...

# **Principle #1 –**

## **Distract, Dispute, and Inspire**

**The purpose of stories is to distract, dispute and inspire.**

We all have stories... think about it.

You have lived a life full of experiences and situations, and you have stories about yourself and about others.

At the same time, everybody around you has their own story with the experiences and situations they have lived through.

So the question I want you to ask yourself is: why should your audience care about your story when they have stories of themselves?

Now, don't get defensive. Because I'm not saying your story isn't good or powerful.

I need you to think in the mind of your audience.

"Why should I listen to {{INSERT YOUR NAME}}?"

And if you don't have a solid and immediate answer to that question... keep reading because that's what I'm here for. ————



The purpose of stories is to distract, dispute, and inspire.

Let me break that down for you.

Distract - people need to be distracted from their personal stories in order for them to listen to yours.

Dispute - once you have distracted your audience from their troubles and problems, this is where you can dispute whatever belief system you are trying to dismantle.

Inspire - after you dispute your point, you need to inspire your audience to ignite their spirit, giving them the courage to act. — — —

Now, let's break this down even further.

I'm sure you've seen my famous "Georgia Dome Speech" also known as the "You've Got To Be Hungry" speech.

While I was speaking that day in front of 80,000 people, my goal was one thing and one thing only... to distract, dispute and inspire every single one of the people in that arena.

You see, we all have problems and situations going on in life.

As a speaker, you will be paid to SOLVE that problem and situation. For example, if you are a motivational

speaker, then your job is to motivate a specific demographic to do something.

If you are a corporate speaker, your job may be to teach something valuable to high-level executives.

In whatever case you may be in, a public speaker has a job. And it's to solve whatever problem your audience may have.

Now, your audience may or may not know they have said problem.

And when you take a step back and think about that, you may say, "Well, hold on, Les, then how am I supposed to speak to them?"

And that's why understanding the principles I'm about to share with you will be a game-changer because these things apply no matter what circumstance or audience you find yourself in.

Let's put this "Distract, Dispute, and Inspire" into simple terms.

Through our speech we will...

... distract people from their current story.

... dismantle their current belief system.

... inspire them to create a new chapter in their lives.

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So what's the secret to being a good storyteller?

Always remember that our story has to do these three things "Distract, Dispute, and Inspire."

If your story does not distract them from their current situation, then they will not be receptive to your message.

When I was giving the Georgia Dome Speech, through my tone of voice and my personal story that captivated the audience... I was also to distract them from their current situation. I got the audience engaged in my story.

After I got their full attention, I started, through my story, showing them how my limiting beliefs had held me back until somebody told me a life-changing quote "Someone's opinion of you does not have to become your reality."

From that moment on, the audience was following my journey through "disputing" the limiting belief we all carry inside of us.

And lastly, the ending to my speech is a direct message to the audience. I end up using words directed at my audience, such as:

"You've got to be HUNGRY!" "You have greatness within you!" "Never stop running towards your dreams!" etc...

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Now do you more clearly see the “Distract, Dispute, and Inspire” principle applied to my most famous speech?

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The thing about this principle is that your story may need to be tweaked and worked so that what you say touches each of these points... and that's the hard part to do on your own.

That's why the three R's of repetition, review, and reinforcement is the first thing I train my speakers on.

Because it's only after repetition, review, and reinforcement that you will be able to accurately tweak your speech to be within the principle of “Distract, Dispute, and Inspire.”

In these lines, break down your story into three parts “Distract,” “Dispute,” and “Inspire,” and try to think about what parts of your story will make the most impact on your audience.

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## **Principle #2 –**

### **The Listener's Journey**

**Stories can be used to take a person on a journey within themselves to places they would never go by themselves.**

Stories have the unique ability to transport us to places that our feet may never tread. They take us on an internal journey, exploring the deepest corners of our thoughts, emotions, and dreams.

We're not just passive spectators in this journey, but active participants discovering new facets of ourselves.

Our minds are wired to resonate with stories; it's how we've communicated, learned, and grown since the beginning of time.

Stories grab our attention, evoke our emotions, and stimulate our imaginations. They ignite our curiosity and inspire us to dream bigger, to reach for what may initially seem unreachable.

As we delve into the realms of stories, we become the heroes of our own narratives. We face our fears, traverse the hardships, and emerge victorious, stronger, and more confident. We discover our values, our passions, our potential, and our resilience.

The most compelling stories are those that resonate with us on a personal level. They mirror our experiences, our triumphs, and our struggles.

In my story, I take people through my biggest struggles. Through my experience I allow them to join me in my biggest triumph of becoming one of the biggest motivational speakers of all time.

My audience always joins me on this journey: from the struggle to the triumph.

That's the journey you need to follow with your audience.

Notice how nobody will take an interest in your story if the first thing they hear is how good your life is right now.

Because most people DON'T have a good life, and they won't resonate with you as a person.

They want to hear about your success, last.. after they've seen all you had to overcome to get there.

Now, your story may not necessarily be exactly like mine.

And the fact of the matter is IT DOESN'T MATTER if your struggles or my struggles are the same.

What matters is that your struggles resonate with the audience you are trying to impact because if they don't... your speech isn't going to be understood.

Remind yourself as you craft your speech that you need to lead your audience on a journey of self-discovery through their darkest secrets and traumas.

They won't go there alone. You are their guide.

You will lead them through it.

But for them to follow you, you'll need to "prove" to them who you are.

That's how you win their trust, and that's how you get them to follow you on this journey.

In this section, write down "WHERE" you would like to take those you inspire with your journey. Always make sure to have a good ending to your journey. What will they get out of it?

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## **Principle #3 – Out Of This World Experience**

**A master storyteller creates strategic experiential communication that gives people a vision of themselves beyond their mental conditioning and their present circumstances.**

Becoming a master storyteller is not easy. Do you know why? Because it will involve taking people through an experience that will test their minds to the highest degree.

You see, to break bad habits, and solve problems, most of the time, people need to let go of certain things either mentally or physically.

And a lot of times, our audience may not follow our journey to let those things go.

So let me explain what it really means to be a master storyteller.

I've witnessed the power of strategic and experiential storytelling on many occasions. I've seen how it can unlock the latent potential within individuals, providing them with a vision of themselves beyond their mental conditioning and current circumstances.

The art of experiential storytelling involves not just telling a story, but allowing people to live it, feel it, and see themselves in it. It is a form of communication that allows people to see beyond their current reality and visualize a different future.

I remember once, when I was giving a motivational talk to young adults, I looked at the crowd and saw faces filled with doubt, fear, and uncertainty. So I began to tell them a story about a man who once stood in their place, a man who overcame countless challenges and adversities to achieve incredible things.

As I told the story, I could see how their facial expressions started to change.

Doubt was replaced with curiosity.

Fear with hope.

Uncertainty with determination.

By the end of the story, I had created a vision of what they could become, a vision that went beyond their mental conditioning and current circumstances.

That is the power of strategic and experiential storytelling. It allows people to see beyond their limitations, believe in their potential, and take steps to make that vision a reality. As a master storyteller, my aim is to help people see this vision of

themselves and, in the process, unleash the power and potential they carry within.

Remember, no matter what their current circumstances are; your audience has the ability to change them. They have the ability to rewrite their story. Through strategic and experiential storytelling, you can create a vision of them that goes beyond their mental conditioning and opens the door to a future of unlimited possibilities.

## **Principle #4 – Your Energy Will Make or Break**

**Your speech, the power of a story, is fueled by the energy behind the words that you speak. This energy creates life-changing moments for the listeners.**

I don't know if you've noticed, but I control my voice a lot when I speak. I've mastered the art of laughing on stage, crying on stage, and raising my voice on stage.

You wanna know how I do it? How I get so much "energy" into my speeches?

It's actually quite simple...

I live what I preach.

The number one thing to be able to control your energy is to know what you're speaking about and live it.

People see through fake voice changes and exaggerated gestures.

It's not enough just to KNOW your speech; you have to LIVE your speech.

Living means laughing, crying, and having different tones of voice in different sections.

If your entire speech doesn't have any sections where the tone changes... change your speech.

Rewrite it.

You need to include changes, or your audience will fall asleep.

So if you wanna be a good storyteller... LIVE your speech.

## **Principle #5 – How to Choose Your Stories**

**The real power of stories lies in their ability to expand the mind, unlock the heart and ignite the spirit.**

The key here is crafting your message with stories that check off the boxes of providing thought-expanding information to the mind, entering the heart by tapping the emotional aspect of your story, and fortifying their spirit with possibility and the desire to take action.

Ask yourself these questions to help you choose your stories:

1. Does this story align with the overall theme and objectives of my speech?
2. Is this story relevant and relatable to my audience?
3. Does this story evoke emotion? Will it engage my audience?
4. Does the story have a clear message or lesson that contributes to my overall points?

5. How does this story reflect or enhance my credibility as a speaker?
6. Is this story concise enough to maintain audience interest and not divert from the main topic?
7. Does this story provide a unique perspective or fresh insight into the topic of my speech?

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## **Principle #6 –**

### **Go To The Future, Not The Past or Present**

**The best stories allow listeners to develop optimism and hope to live out of their imagination instead of locking them in the past with their failures or their present fears.**

At times we all unconsciously get stuck in life. And that's normal... because we cannot see the picture when we are in the frame.

Our job as storytellers is to help people see their situation from an outside perspective.

This principle is all about providing that hope factor... the bigger and better picture for tomorrow being more prominent in their thinking than their past or current challenge. To do so, you must create a safe space in your message and provide feedback respectfully.

Is the “hope factor” there, and did I position it to be the more dominant thought going forward?

## **Principle #7 – Feedback & Corrections**

**The key to becoming a powerful storyteller is to train with an accomplished coach who has expertise in extracting stories, facilitating transformative shifts, and creating a thirst for a new life while providing value to an audience.**

The best of the best in any field have coaches... those who can indeed see what they cannot see... those who will push you beyond what you would likely push yourself... a cheerleader, and one who provides caring but truthful feedback.

A coach is one who can leverage their own experience, insight, and passion and has expertise at pulling the best out of you.

They also provide one of the most powerful components of optimal success, accountability.

Listen to me... after 50 years of being a speaker, I can teach you a thing or two.

The first thing I'll tell you is... It isn't easy.

One of the best things I've done in my career is surround myself with Only Quality People that became my coaches and mentors.

So go out there and find someone.

## Conclusion

**Do you want to know what's the biggest excuse I hear from aspiring speakers regarding the topic of storytelling?**

t every event I've done about public speaking, I always get somebody that comes up to me and tells me...

"But Les, I don't have a story like yours to tell. My life wasn't rough. I wasn't left abandoned in a building, or was labeled educable mentally retarded (EMR)..."

This type of excuse is SO COMMON that I've heard it at least a couple of dozen times a year, even online through messages.

And you know what I told the last person that asked me the same question?

"Let me answer your question with a question... in your opinion, do you know of a pastor that's a good storyteller?"

"Yes," he answered.

"Ok. Now, when that pastor preaches, is he always preaching about himself, or is he preaching about the Bible?"

I could instantly notice his eyes open up with the revelation. You see. You don't need to have a story like mine to be a good storyteller. Good storytelling is a craft that applies whether you're the subject of the story or not.

Let me give you another example that I've used before...

Marianne Williamson

Marianne's first book, *A Return to Love*, was published in 1992 and became an instant best-seller that has since then sold over 1 million copies around the world.

Do you know what's unique about her story?

That her book, was a book, about a book.

Let me say that again. She wrote a book, ABOUT ANOTHER BOOK.

The cover of "*A Return to Love*" has the subtitle "Reflection of the Principles of A COURSE IN MIRACLES."

Now, let me give you some history. *A Course In Miracles* was originally published in 1976 by Helen Schucman.

The book has over 1,300 pages! And by the time Marianne had the idea of writing *A Return to Love*, a

lot of people had already seen the book A Course in Miracles... but many still had not.

Now, how many people do you personally know who would read a 1,300-page book?

Not too many, am I right?

I hope you see what I'm seeing, up in here!

Marianne decided to write a book, about a book.

She wrote a 300-page book, about a 1,300-page book.

What am I trying to tell you?

That your success can be telling other people's stories.

You can use someone else's story.

You can use someone else's book.

As long as you have a unique take on it, HAVE AT IT!

You don't need to have a story like mine to make a good book or a good speech.

Being a good public speaker will come down to who YOU want to be and how well you want to hone your craft.

You know, we live in the era of the three C's — accelerated change, overwhelming complexity, and extreme competition.

Therefore, being average as a speaker will not be enough.

If you DON'T want to be an average speaker, and you would like to be the next best public speaker like me... then submit your application to join my Speak For a Living Program.

Hundreds will apply, and only 21 will be selected every month.

<https://lesbrown.com/speakforaliving>

Apply today.