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A JOURNEY OF REFLECTION: NAVIGATING QUALITATIVE
RESEARCH AND SELF-DISCOVERY

(Re-storying [Metaphors Clients Use to Describe their Experiences in BMGIM](#))

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SCENE 1: INTERIOR CLASSROOM

A typical university classroom with rows of chairs and desks. The atmosphere is filled with intellectual curiosity and anticipation. A young PhD student, with a look of wonder on their face, sits among their peers, captivated by the professor's lecture on qualitative research methodologies.

As the professor delves into the intricacies of qualitative research, the student's eyes widen with inspiration. They reflect on their previous knowledge and contemplate the challenges of undertaking a qualitative research study. The classroom buzzes with the energy of intellectual exploration.

CROSSFADE TO:

SCENE 2: INTERIOR CLASSROOM – CONTINUOUS

The same classroom setting. The student sits at their desk, diligently taking notes in a worn-out notebook. A hint of self-doubt lingers in their mind as they engage in an inner dialogue, questioning their abilities and understanding of qualitative research.

STUDENT (inner dialogue)

“Can I really embark on a qualitative study?
Am I capable enough to navigate the complexities of research?
Is publishing the goal, or should the focus be on learning
and experiencing the qualitative research process?”

CROSSFADE TO:

SCENE 3: INTERIOR THERAPIST'S ROOM

The student, now in the role of a client, sits across from a Bonny Method trained GIM Therapist. The room exudes warmth and tranquility. The client expresses their frustrations, seeking understanding and guidance.

CLIENT (exasperated)

“I find myself uniquely experiencing each phase of the session.
I struggle with initial conversations, and relaxation is a challenge
during the induction. However, I feel a deep connection and meaning
when I imagine to the music. Yet, when it comes to describing and
evaluating my experiences, I struggle to find the right words and
connect my inner world with language.”

CROSSFADE TO:

SCENE 4: INTERIOR THERAPIST'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The familiar chorus of "Truckin'" by the Grateful Dead (1970, track 10) fills the room, creating a reflective ambiance. The lyrics resonate with the student's journey and the twists and turns they have encountered along the way.

The student sits in contemplation, the music serving as a backdrop to their realization of the long and unconventional path they have traversed.

Cue the chorus of the song:

CHORUS (by the Grateful Dead)

“Sometimes the light's all shinin' on me

Other times, I can barely see

Lately, it occurs to me

What a long, strange trip it's been.”

SCENE 5:

The scene is set in a quiet office with a single spotlight focused on the protagonist (me), who stands at the center of the stage. The protagonist begins their monologue, addressing the audience directly.

PROTAGONIST: *Note: When performing this monologue, the actor should infuse their delivery with personal reflection, passion, and a sense of retrospection. The pauses and variations in tone can be used to convey the protagonist's introspective moments and the conviction behind their words.*

“It's been over a decade since I ventured into the world of qualitative research in music therapy through Qualitative Inquiries in Music Therapy (QIMT). Back then, I had a basic understanding of qualitative research, but it was in a class dedicated solely to this topic that I truly delved into its intricacies. This class was a gateway to undertaking a qualitative research study and little did I know how profoundly it would shape my journey.”

“I still vividly recall the time when qualitative research in music therapy was evolving, gaining recognition, and being increasingly valued within our discipline. It felt like an exciting era, filled with possibilities and the promise of a deeper understanding of the therapeutic power of music.”

“In the spirit of creativity, I present to you now a retrospective re-storying, weaving together the structural elements of a story. Allow me to take you on this introspective journey, guided by the setting, characters, plot, theme, and conflict that have shaped my research path.”

[The protagonist pauses, reflecting on the significance of their retrospective approach.]

“Looking back, it strikes me how the protagonist and antagonist roles have intertwined within me throughout this process. As both a participant in my own study and the researcher, I've battled with conflicting thoughts and emotions. The protagonist in me yearned to find meaning and understanding in my experiences with BMGIM. Meanwhile, the antagonist whispered doubts, questioning the importance and value of a study that simply sought to explore and comprehend my own journey.”

“But here's the truth—I find immense value and purpose in this

pursuit, even if it may not be deemed exceptional or profound by some. The power of personal narratives, the metaphors that resonate deep within, and the fascination I've experienced through the stories shared by others—these elements have propelled me forward. They continue to inspire me to this day, not only in unraveling the workings of BMGIM but also in unraveling the profound nature of therapy itself.”

[The protagonist's voice grows passionate, embodying their dedication to the subject.]

“I return to this study time and again, its echoes reverberating in my thoughts. It serves as a reminder of the significance of subjective experiences, the transformative potential of narratives, and the boundless growth that comes from qualitative research. Through the prism of my own journey, I strive to convey these insights to my students, illustrating how BMGIM works, and shedding light on the intricate workings of therapy itself.”

[The spotlight dims gradually as the protagonist concludes their monologue.]

“And so, in this monologue, I invite you to join me on this retrospective exploration—a journey that began over a decade ago, where qualitative research in music therapy bloomed, and where I discovered the profound and ever evolving connection between personal stories, qualitative inquiry, and the transformative power of music.”

[The stage goes dark, leaving a sense of contemplation in the air.]

CROSSFADE TO: SCENE 6:

The scene is set in a cozy, book-lined study, bathed in warm, soft lighting. The room exudes an air of intellectual curiosity and introspection. A large desk sits at the center, cluttered with papers, notebooks, and a laptop. On the walls, framed photographs and inspiring quotes hint at the protagonist’s passion for research and exploration. The sound of soft instrumental music fills the air, creating a tranquil ambiance.

Books of various sizes and colors line the shelves, showcasing a wide array of academic disciplines and research methodologies. Post-it notes peek out from between the pages, serving as reminders and markers of important passages. A comfortable armchair, worn but well-loved, beckons invitingly in the corner of the room.

At the desk, there are scattered pens, highlighters, and a cup of steaming coffee. A laptop screen displays a research article, indicating the protagonist’s engagement with scholarly discourse. The protagonist, dressed in casual yet professional attire, sits at the desk, engrossed in deep thought, occasionally scribbling notes on a yellow legal pad.

Soft sunlight filters through the partially drawn curtains, casting gentle rays onto the protagonist’s face, highlighting their furrowed brow and the expression of contemplation. The room exudes a sense of tranquility, providing the perfect atmosphere for deep introspection and intellectual exploration.

As the scene unfolds, the protagonist engages in a silent dialogue with their thoughts, reflecting on their research journey, and contemplating the next steps in their qualitative inquiry. The study becomes a sanctuary for the protagonist's intellectual pursuits, a space where ideas are nurtured, and insights take shape.

The scene captures the essence of the protagonist's commitment to research, evoking a sense of curiosity, passion, and dedication. It serves as a visual representation of the protagonist's ongoing quest for knowledge and understanding, offering a glimpse into their inner world of academic exploration.

[Note: The scene description can be adapted and expanded based on specific details and visual elements relevant to the setting and the protagonist's character.]

PROTAGONIST: *[The protagonist, facing the audience. Their tone is introspective, reflecting on their internal struggle.]*

“In the realm of storytelling, protagonists and antagonists play vital roles. The protagonist propels the narrative forward, their actions driving the story's purpose and focus. On the other hand, the antagonist seeks to disrupt, creating conflict and tension. But in this re-storying, I found myself inhabiting both roles simultaneously—an intricate duality that shaped my journey.”

“Within the context of my study, I found myself as both the participant and the researcher, intertwined in a dance of conflicting desires. The protagonist within me yearned to uncover meaning in my own experiences with BMGIM. I sought to delve deep, to understand the nuances and intricacies of this therapeutic approach. Yet, there was also an antagonist lurking within, whispering doubts and suggesting the pursuit of a more exceptional, grandiose, or profound study.”

“The idea of simply asking clients in BMGIM to share their experiences, as a means for me to comprehend my own, initially felt insignificant and lacking in value. The antagonist questioned its importance, doubting whether this path would truly lead to meaningful discoveries. But, amidst this internal conflict, I found solace in the realization that significance is subjective. What may be perceived as ordinary or trivial by some could hold profound meaning to others.”

“As I embarked on my research journey, inviting other “characters” to share their stories of BMGIM, the significance and purpose of my study grew clearer. I discovered that by delving into the narratives, metaphors, and stories shared by participants, I was granted a glimpse into a world of fascination and wonder. The depth and richness of their descriptions ignited a fire within me, resonating deeply with my own experiences.”

“Among the many narratives I encountered, there was one that

remained etched in my memory. A participant shared the story of an entire BMGIM session—a tale of arrival on a broken bicycle, bearing a burden, and the transformative process that unfolded. It was through stories like these that I discovered the power of metaphor, the intricate interplay between music and personal experiences.”

“And so, I find myself returning to this study time and time again. The metaphors, stories, and the fascination I encountered while hearing about participants’ descriptions of BMGIM continue to captivate my thoughts. These recurring reflections serve as a reminder of the profound connection between narrative, metaphor, and the therapeutic journey. They reinforce the significance I find in my own research, in inviting others to share their stories and unravel the mysteries of BMGIM alongside me.”

[The protagonist takes a deep breath, conveying a sense of resolution.]

“In this re-storying, I embrace the complexity within me—the simultaneous presence of both protagonist and antagonist. And through this reflection, I acknowledge the meaningful purpose that lies in understanding the experiences of others while unearthing my own truth.”

[The stage gradually fades into darkness, leaving a sense of contemplation in the air.]

[Note: During the performance of this monologue, the actor should convey the introspective nature of the protagonist’s thoughts and the emotional conflict they experience. The delivery should reflect the protagonist’s journey of self-discovery, with moments of doubt and clarity. The pauses and variations in tone should emphasize the internal struggle and the eventual acceptance of their dual roles.]

CROSSFADE TO: SCENE 7:

The scene opens in a serene and contemplative space—a researcher’s study. Soft, diffused sunlight filters through sheer curtains, casting a gentle glow over the room. Shelves adorned with well-worn books line the walls, signifying a rich intellectual journey. The desk, cluttered with papers, pens, and a laptop, serves as the central focal point. A cozy armchair sits nearby, inviting introspection and reflection.

The protagonist, a researcher with a discerning gaze, sits at the desk, surrounded by a sea of open books and scattered notes. With furrowed brows and a focused expression, they engage in an internal dialogue about the nature of conflict in storytelling. The room is filled with a quiet tension, as if the very air awaits a revelation.

In the midst of their ruminations, the protagonist’s gaze shifts to a bookshelf. Books labeled "Seven Main Conflicts" by Scribendi and "Four Main Conflicts" by Lefkowitz catch their attention, symbolizing the divergent perspectives on conflict in narratives. Pensive, they reach for one of the books, flipping through its pages, seeking insight.

As the protagonist ponders, the scene transitions to an ethereal visualization. Shadows dance across the walls, projecting images of human interactions, internal struggles, battles with nature, and encounters with the divine. These images represent the four main conflicts commonly found in stories—person vs. person, person vs. self, person vs. nature, and person vs. God(s)/supernatural.

Returning to the present, the protagonist's focus intensifies. They grasp a pen and a fresh sheet of paper, eager to articulate their thoughts. In a voiceover, their words echo through the room, expressing their revelation.

PROTAGONIST (voiceover)

“In this re-storying, I find myself embodying both protagonist and antagonist. As a participant in the study and the researcher, I am torn between two perspectives. The protagonist within me seeks meaning in my BMGIM experiences, while the antagonist urges me to undertake a more exceptional and profound study.”

As the words fade, the protagonist's gaze settles on a framed photograph. It triggers a flood of memories and emotions.

The scene transitions to a vivid flashback, transporting the protagonist to a therapy session. They witness the client's narrative unfold—an evocative description of an entire BMGIM experience. The emotions of awe, fascination, and deep connection reverberate within the protagonist's being.

Returning to the study, the protagonist's eyes shimmer with newfound clarity. They acknowledge a unique conflict—one not often found in stories: person vs. research methodology. The protagonist reflects on their journey of methodological evolution, their initial focus on discourse analysis giving way to a deeper exploration of the clients' experiences—an inspiration drawn from phenomenology.

With conviction, the protagonist resumes their voiceover.

PROTAGONIST (voiceover)

"It was within the method section that I truly grasped the essence of qualitative research. My method evolved, as would it in any future study. Over time, my understanding of qualitative epistemology has expanded. I have come to realize that the research process thrives on understanding and supporting one's chosen method."

The scene concludes with the protagonist's gaze lingering on the bookshelf, symbolic of the diverse qualitative "designs" they have encountered on their research journey. They embrace the inherent diversity, acknowledging the uniqueness of each researcher's approach.

As the room basks in quiet contemplation, the scene fades, leaving a palpable sense of anticipation—a reminder that the conflict between the researcher's immersion in the study and their wrestling with research methodology lies at the heart of every qualitative article. It is a conflict that propels them forward on an ever-unfolding path.

CROSSFADE TO:

SCENE 8:

The scene opens in a cozy study, bathed in warm, muted lighting. The walls are adorned with shelves, filled to the brim with books, academic journals, and research papers. A worn-out armchair sits in one corner, its cushions inviting comfort and contemplation. The desk, cluttered with papers and a laptop, takes center stage, symbolizing the protagonist's journey in the publishing world of academia.

The protagonist, a reflective academic, is seated at the desk, surrounded by stacks of old articles and notebooks filled with handwritten notes. Their expression is one of introspection, as they embark on a journey of self-discovery and evaluation. The room is filled with a mixture of nostalgia and curiosity, as if the air holds the secrets of their past struggles.

Lost in thought, the protagonist's gaze wanders to the bookshelf. Titles that once symbolized rebellion and creativity catch their eye, triggering a surge of introspection. With a hint of skepticism, they reach for a book, flipping through its pages, searching for answers.

As they delve deeper into their contemplation, the scene transitions to a sequence of flashbacks. Fragmented memories unfold, revealing moments of frustration, ambition, and a longing for creative expression in their research articles. The scenes depict the protagonist's relentless pursuit of breaking free from the constraints of academic writing.

Returning to the present, the protagonist's expression shifts to one of realization. Their voice, filled with a mix of vulnerability and self-reflection, resonates through the room.

PROTAGONIST (voiceover)

"Looking back, I realize that my struggle wasn't with academia and publishing, but with my own writing. I rebelled against what I perceived as a lack of creativity, but now I question the notion of eloquence and articulation as the only forms of creativity. It's not self-deprecation, but an honest recognition of my own growth and understanding."

The scene transitions to a contemplative montage. The protagonist is seen poring over their past writings, reading sentences, and paragraphs that once held pride and ambition. A trace of wistfulness flickers in their eyes, acknowledging the journey that has brought them to this moment.

With renewed clarity, the protagonist continues their self-reflection, their voice resonating with introspection and wisdom.

PROTAGONIST (voiceover)

"Revisiting my experiences in writing research articles has allowed me to reflect and honor my younger self. I recognize now that my rush to achieve and meet academic expectations often blinded me to the essence of my journey. Amid the demands of promotion and tenure, I failed to 'smell the roses' and embrace the present."

The protagonist's gaze fixates on an old photograph, capturing a younger version of themselves—a reminder of who they once were and the threads that still weave through their present identity.

The scene shifts to a tranquil moment of self-realization. The protagonist's voice, tinged with a hint of irony, echoes through the room.

PROTAGONIST (voiceover)

"The irony of self-discovery is that I knew who I was all along, but I resisted acknowledging it. My understanding of myself has come through lived experiences rather than objective means. My ontological perspective has always centered on my relationship with others and my thirst for knowledge."

As the words fade, the protagonist's gaze returns to the bookshelf. They reach for another book, this time with a sense of reverence, embracing the knowledge and wisdom it holds.

PROTAGONIST (voiceover)

"This study was the foundation for my research stance, shaping my conceptualization of self and the world. Ontology becomes a perspective, intertwined with my being, while epistemology fuels my quest for knowledge and expands my perspective. Revisiting this moment in time humbles me, revealing who I am, and the potential for who I am becoming."

CLOSING SCENE:

The scene shifts to a serene park, bathed in golden sunlight. The protagonist sits on a park bench, surrounded by blooming flowers and the gentle rustle of leaves. They hold a weathered notebook in their hands, filled with scribbles and reflections.

As the protagonist gazes into the distance, a sense of tranquility and contentment washes over them. The weight of past struggles and self-discovery has lifted, leaving a profound sense of acceptance.

The scene transitions to a montage of moments—a montage that encapsulates the protagonist's journey of growth and self-realization. They are seen engaging in deep conversations with colleagues, delving into new research topics, and embracing the beauty of the present moment.

As the montage concludes, the protagonist closes the notebook, a smile playing on their lips. Their voice, filled with newfound clarity and peace, resonates through the air.

PROTAGONIST (voiceover)

"In re-storying my path, I have found solace and wisdom. I have learned to appreciate the lessons of my struggles and the evolution of my writing. The rebellion against perceived constraints were merely a stepping stone towards self-awareness and creative authenticity."

The camera zooms out, capturing the protagonist in the park, surrounded by the beauty of nature. The final shot lingers on their face—a face filled with a deep sense of fulfillment and self-acceptance.

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