

WHY WORKING WITH STORIES IS IMPORTANT

WEAVING WITH GOLD

When people tell about holiday experiences to a careful listener, they have a chance to integrate their hopes, experiences and discoveries into their personal and family life line. This is what Dan Benn, of the University of Surrey told us recently. A similar idea came out of a conversation with Chené Swart, a South African narrative consultant.

Our very ordinary lives...

People compare their lives to the stories the media feed them. Compared to the light of goodness of Mother Teresa or Nelson Mandela, the glamour of celebrities or the performance of top athletes, our lives seem very mundane. "Oh, well, it is what it is", we say with a shrug, "just be normal, that's enough."

We say exactly the same when it comes to our holidays. We had a good time, but, well, life quickly falls back into the familiar rhythm. We barely look back. Chené Swart: "And that is a pity, because through these memories, sharing and reflection, we give our experiences a valuable place in our life story".



Weaving threads into the tapestry of our lives

Dan Benn concluded in his research: "In-depth conversations before and after the holiday open up the space to reflect on events, relationships and emotions. The holiday then moves 'into' people's life line which is so much more than a brief escape from life's day-to-day hardships". Social workers and tour guides/holiday enablers can open up this meaningful process by asking good questions and listening attentively. That is meaningful, because when someone listens, asks and wants to understand, human beings feel they are being seen as a person with dignity, with fascinating experiences. And then, everything becomes a little different.

More:

connectyourstory.org/stories/weaving-holiday-stories-golden-threads-our-lives



'FIRST, THE HOLIDAY IS SOMETHING TO LOOK FORWARD TO. A LINE IN THE SAND, A WELCOME BREAK. IN LATER CONVERSATIONS, YOU START SEEING THE CHANGES, THE SEEDS OF WHICH WERE SOWN DURING THE HOLIDAYS.'

DAN BENN, UK



'PEOPLE ARE STORY-MAKERS. WHEN WE INVITE EACH OTHER TO TELL OUR STORIES, WE MAKE OUR LIVES EXTRAORDINARY AGAIN.'

CHENÉ SWART, SOUTH-AFRIKA



CONNECT YOUR STORY

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JOIN THE STORY WEAVING MOVEMENT

CONNECTING STORIES

When professionals and policy makers talk about 'tourism', we often hear facts, figures, economic terms and returns. Isn't that strange, knowing that tourism is all about the joy of travelling and hosting, meeting people you didn't know before, being amazed of the beauty of our world?

Tourism fosters connections between people, creates tolerance, respect for culture, arts en differences. Travellers and hosts become responsible stewards for humanity and earth. That is what tourism really is about. Connect Your Story contributes to this awareness.

Weaving experiences into stories

The Connect Your Story team invites, asks, listens and writes. We weave real life experiences in a meaningful pattern for you to discover. With this growing

collection of stories, we want to serve the sector with stories about the importance and benefits of travelling and hosting. We want to encourage you to help creating experiences for people with less access to the benefits of a holiday.

Wanna Join?

This ISTO World Congress 2018 is a great moment to explore the work of Connect Your Story. We'll listen to your experiences and hopes with wide open ears and curiosity. We are ready to be surprised. We'll write your story and bring it online and in this congress newspaper. If you become intrigued about the story work we do, then join our workshop on October 18, 17h at this congress. There, you'll discover how you can become part of this careful story weaving journey.

'TOURISM IS A WAY OF OPENING UP YOUR MIND TO THINGS THAT ARE DIFFERENT'

LUC GOBIN

WWW.CONNECTYOURSTORY.ORG/STORIES/TRAVELLING-EXERCISES-YOUR-TOLERANCE-MUSCLES

COLOPHON

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WHAT A MAGICAL WORD...

HOSPITALITY

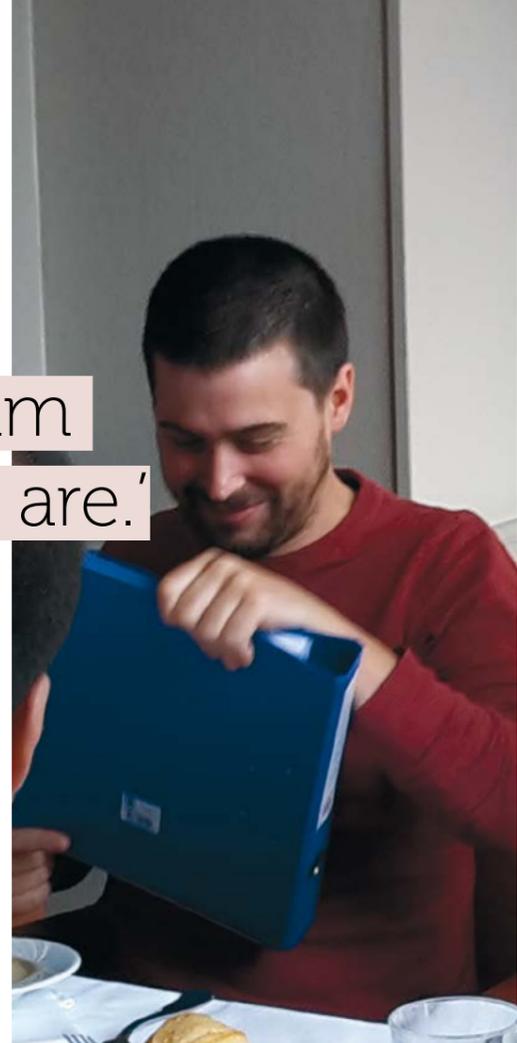
Try this: is there in your mother tongue a word for 'hospitality'? How does this word, in your language and culture sound like? Now, how would you describe the meaning of this word to someone who does not speak your language?

What comes out of this little thought experiment can be magical, so we discovered in a conversation with Belgian Philosopher Marc Colpaert a short while ago. Every culture and language has a particular word or phrase that reveals a broad diversity of meaning and stories. In Farsi, hospitality sounds like *Mehman Nawazi*, and written as *مهمان نوازی*, says Walli Sediqi, a colleague at Tourism Flanders. The word refers to being in harmony with your guest en to enjoy each others company. In IsiXhosa (South Africa), hospitality is 'ububele', however

the word is incomplete on its own, says Lungi Molamu. When said as 'Ububele obunobuntu' – hospitality with ubun-

'I see you, I am because you are.'

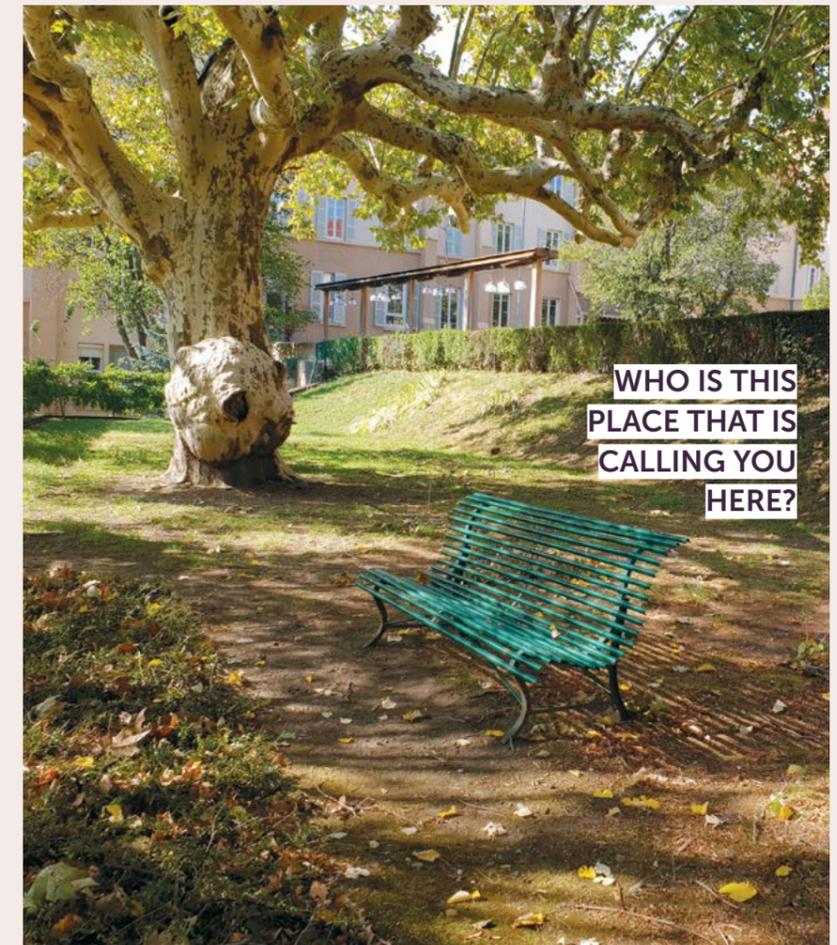
tu – it means: 'I see you, I am because you are, we have a spiritual connection.' In Dutch, the word is 'gastvrijheid', and emphasizes on the experience of freedom for our guest. This freedom can even be a two way experience. The stranger you encounter with your hospitality, makes you free also, because he brings the gift of difference and therefore a chance to see yourself anew. What is the word for 'hospitality' in your culture? *Come to our story counter and share your thoughts.*



'AVOIR DES CONVERSATIONS SUR SES VOYAGES, AIDE À ÊTRE PLUS VRAI AVEC SOI-MÊME ET AVEC LES AUTRES.'



**JEAN-MARC MIGNON,
PRÉSIDENT DE L'OITS**



WHO IS THIS PLACE THAT IS CALLING YOU HERE?



'ONE DAY, WE'LL LOOK BACK TO THIS INTERNATIONAL ISTO BACKPACKER PROJECT EN SAY: BACK THEN, WE WERE PIONEERS FOR WORLD PEACE.'

**JUDIT BORBELY (FRANCE) &
ANNELEEN ADRIAENSSENS (BELGIUM)**

'HOSPITALITY ORIGINATES IN THE MOMENT YOU RESPECT THAT YOUR GUEST IS DIFFERENT THAN YOU ARE. THEREFORE, HOSPITALITY IS A STEP TOWARDS PEACE.'

ALEXANDER SIMOEN, ISTO



'I AM HOPING THAT CONNECT YOUR STORY WOULD OPEN PEOPLE'S EYES TO THE VALUE OF TRAVELLING AND TOURISM AND HOW IT CAN TRANSFORM YOUR MINDSET TO MAKE THIS WORLD A BETTER PLACE.'

**TALEB RIFAI
FORMER SG UNWTO**

WHY TOURISM FLANDERS AND ISTO JOIN FORCES TO CONNECT

HOLIDAY STORIES

Marianne Schapmans, director of the Holiday Participation Centre of Tourism Flanders, tells us why they strongly believe & invest in Connect Your Story & the Storyweaversnetwork

"It's an important tool in connecting, supporting and communicating in our network. A continuous stream of stories keeps drawing attention to initiatives, evolutions and people with passion who help to promote the right to a holiday.

stories are not an end product, but rather an infectious spark that creates new possibilities for the narrator, the network and the wider reading audience.

Stories bring about energy and connection. The stories of vacationers and the integrated experiences of partners give concrete handles in discussions with policy makers. Authentic stories have special power. They confirm the right of human experiences to exist.

'The immeasurable is made visible.'

Connect Your Story wants to honour this. Through collecting and sharing stories, the immeasurable is made visible. These

They connect, clarify, enthuse and bring things into motion. They give complex themes a face

and make them comprehensible, human and real. Without the small stories there would be no bigger story."