

Syllabus - Self-Paced

Your Story Matters

Details

Instructors: Ann Maree Goudzwaard and Melissa Affolter
Contact: learning@helpher.help

Course Purpose & Learning Aims

This course is designed to foster thoughtful and careful engagement with the role of story, memory, and meaning within the Christian life and in the care of others.

Through engagement with the course material, learners will:

- a. Become familiar with key terminology and concepts related to story work
- b. Explore a biblical framework for one-another care, particularly with women in crisis within the church
- c. Consider theological and practical approaches to stewarding stories with wisdom and restraint
- d. Reflect on how stories are held, remembered, and shared for the benefit of others
- e. Think creatively and critically about integrating trauma-aware practices within biblical care

Course Structure

The course is organized around four primary movements:

- a. Introduction
- b. Remember
- c. Story
- d. Application

Each section includes teaching videos, guided readings, and reflection prompts. Content is organized by week for ease of navigation, though you are not required to follow a fixed schedule.

How This Course Is Designed to Be Used

This course is offered as a self-paced learning environment. You are encouraged to move through the material in a way that is attentive to your own capacity, responsibilities, and season.

Some learners move steadily through the course, while others pause, return to earlier material, or engage selectively with certain sections. There is no expectation of live participation, public sharing, or interaction with other learners.

The course prioritizes discernment over speed and care over performance.

Readings Assignments

The following texts form the primary reading foundation for the course:

- Jim Wilder & Michel Hendricks, *The Other Half of Church* (Moody Publishers, 2020)
(Required reading + required reading journal assignment)
- Diane Langberg, *Suffering and the Heart of God* (New Growth Press, 2015)
(Required reading + required reading journal assignment)
- Leslie Leyland Fields, *Your Story Matters* (NavPress, 2020)
(Required reading)

Reflective & Writing Practices

Required reading journals accompany selected course texts and are completed within the course platform as part of the certification requirements.

Throughout the course, learners engage in reflective and writing practices that are integral to course completion, including:

- a. Required reading journal assignments connected to assigned texts
- b. Guided reflection and writing prompts related to teaching content
- c. Additional reflective exercises that support integration of course themes

Some reflective activities include optional creative formats, such as timeline or vignette work, for learners who find visual or narrative processing helpful.

These practices are intended to support thoughtful engagement and integration. Learners are not required to share personal material with instructors or other participants beyond what is outlined in the course requirements.

Care, Discernment, & Content Notes

Some course themes address suffering, trauma, and difficult relational experiences. You are encouraged to engage with this material thoughtfully and to take breaks as needed.

An optional observation assignment involving a film series is included as a learning tool. Engagement with this material is not required and may be filtered or omitted entirely based on personal discernment. Detailed content notes are provided for those who choose to participate.

If at any point the material feels overwhelming, you are encouraged to pause and seek appropriate support outside the course environment.

Communication & Support

For questions related to course access, materials, or logistics, please contact: learning@helpher.help

Course Evaluation

A brief course evaluation is required at the conclusion of the course and is completed digitally within the course platform. Completion of the evaluation is part of the requirements for receiving a Certificate of Completion. Your thoughts matter.