inamber



A GUIDE TO STORYTELLING

Tell the stories that matter most

and we'll teach you how.

A short course, 25 story sparks and a first story you can finish tonight. Free from inAmber.



A LETTER TO YOU

Dear friend,

If you're holding this, there's probably someone on your mind. A child, a grandchild, a parent, someone far away. I know that feeling well.

A few years back my wife and I moved our family from South Africa to the UK. You rebuild everything when you move that far. The hardest part is the distance. My kids grew up with their grandparents on a phone screen.

My uncle Yanna used to send me voice notes. Silly ones, proud ones, ones that were just him saying hello. When they stopped, the silence was deafening. I'd have given anything for one more story from him, with his laugh somewhere in the middle of it. So I locked myself away for eight months and built inAmber.

A while back I did a programme called Leadership Through Storytelling, and one thing stayed with me: people forget the facts we give them, but they remember our stories. A story is how a feeling travels from one person to another, and it keeps travelling long after we've told it.

> *People forget the facts we give them. They remember our stories.*

You have stories like that. I promise you do. The ones you think are too ordinary are often the ones your family will treasure most.

This little guide is how I'd sit down and teach a friend to tell them. Read it once, try one story tonight, and keep it close for the next.

We're on a mission to capture one million stories for the people we care about. Yours could be the next one.

Your stories matter. So do you.

Always, Hope, Forever,

Ravs

Ravi Naicker, founder of inAmber



PART ONE

Why your stories matter

Think of a story someone in your family used to tell. The one your grandad told every Christmas. How your parents met. The day your mum got lost in a city she'd never seen.

You probably can't repeat a single piece of advice from that same person, word for word. But you remember the story. You can still see it. Advice tells people what to think. A story lets them feel it for themselves, and what we feel, we keep.

Your stories hold what no photo album can: what the kitchen sounded like on a Sunday, what scared you at nineteen, the moment you knew. If you don't tell them, nobody else can.



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PART TWO: A SHORT COURSE

Six lessons in telling a story

01 Start with the person, not the story

Before you write a word, picture who will receive it. How old will they be when it arrives? What might be happening in their life? Then ask yourself one question: how do I want them to feel when they finish? Proud. Less alone. Like laughing. Let that answer choose the story for you.

TRY THIS

Write their name at the top of the page. Underneath, finish this sentence: "When you read this, I hope you feel..."

02 Find one moment

Don't try to tell a whole life at once. Pick one moment: an afternoon, a phone call, a meal, a long drive. "The summer I worked at the bakery" is a story. "My twenties" is not. A simple test: can you say where you were standing? Then you've found it.

TRY THIS

Finish the sentence "There was this one time when..."

03 Take them there

Help them see it. Give them a few real details, the kind only you would know. The colour of the front door. The song on the radio. What your father always said when he came in from work. Smell and sound are especially powerful: "Every Sunday the whole house smelled of my mother's curry" puts someone in the room faster than any clever word.

TRY THIS

Close your eyes for ten seconds and stand in that moment. Write down the first three things you notice.

04 Say how it felt

This is the part most people skip, and it matters most. Tell them how you felt, honestly. Nervous, excited, embarrassed, overjoyed. "My hands were shaking" says more than "I was very nervous." It's fine if you look a bit silly. That's often what they'll love most, because it shows them the real you.

TRY THIS

Write one sentence that starts "I remember feeling..."

05 Tell them what it taught you

Inside most good stories is a small discovery: something you understood afterwards that you didn't before. Say it plainly, in a line or two, and then stop. The story has already done the work.

TRY THIS

Finish the sentence "Looking back, I realise..."

06 Hand it to them

End by turning to the person you're talking to. Why are you telling them this, and why now? "So when you're standing outside your first job interview, think of your grandad shaking outside that bakery, and walking in anyway." That last line is the one they'll carry. Make it about them.

TRY THIS

Finish the sentence "So when you..., I hope you..."

> *That last line is the one they'll carry with them.*

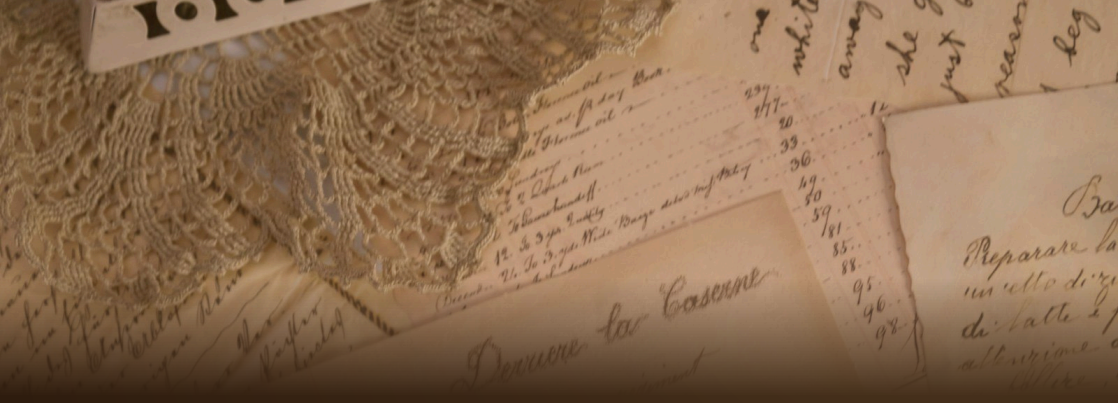
KEEP THIS PAGE

The shape of a story

Six steps. Follow them in order and your story will land.

1. **Who**
   Who is this for, and how do I want them to feel?
2. **When**
   One moment. One time, one place. Where was I standing?
3. **What**
   Two or three real details: what I saw, heard or smelled.
4. **Feeling**
   How it felt, honestly, then.
5. **Meaning**
   What it taught me, in a line or two.
6. **Them**
   Why I'm telling them, and what I hope it gives them.

If a story ever feels flat, come back here and look for the step you missed. It's usually the feeling.



Before and after

BEFORE

~~Dear Amara, always work hard and never give up. Love, Grandad.~~

AFTER

Dear Amara,

When I was sixteen I got my first job at a bakery on Grey Street. On the first morning I stood outside in the dark for ten minutes, too scared to knock. I could smell the bread through the door.

The baker, Mr Pillay, opened it and said, "You're late. Come in, there's work to do." I wanted the ground to swallow me. By the end of that week I could knead dough faster than anyone in the shop.

Looking back, being brave doesn't mean you're not scared. It means you knock anyway. So on your first day, if you find yourself outside the door, think of me on Grey Street. Then knock.

All my love, Grandad

TWO MORE, TO SHOW YOU HOW

Stories that land

A MUM, FOR HER DAUGHTER'S 18TH

Dear Zara,

The night you were born, the power went out across half of Leicester. The nurses delivered you by torchlight, and the first thing I ever saw of you was your tiny fist, lit up like a little lantern.

I was terrified and happier than I'd ever been, all at once. Your dad cried so much the midwife handed him a tea towel.

Looking back, I think you've been bringing light into dark rooms ever since. So on the days you can't see the way, remember you were born glowing. Happy 18th, my girl. Mum

A GRANDMOTHER, FOR DIWALI

My darling Arjun, when I was seven my own grandmother let me light the first diya. My hands shook so much I burnt my thumb, and she laughed and kissed it better. Every Diwali since, I think of her laugh. This year, light the first one for me. Love always, Ammamma.

Saying it out loud

Your voice carries things writing can't: your accent, your laugh, the way you say their name. If writing isn't your thing, tell it out loud.

1. Jot down the moment and your last line. Don't write a script.
2. Find a quiet room and hold the phone close, as if they're beside you.
3. Start with their name. Then tell it the way you would over a cup of tea.
4. Stumbles and pauses are fine. They sound like you.
5. Two or three minutes is plenty.

A few gentle reminders

Wishes, not instructions

"I hope you find work you love" lands better than "Become a doctor."

Keep it warm

If a story has a hard part, tell them how you came through it.

Write how you speak

Your own phrases, even the ones your kids tease you about.

One at a time

You can always tell another story tomorrow.



PART THREE

25 story sparks

Each one is a door into a memory. Pick the one that makes you smile first.

The days we celebrate

Christmas, Diwali, Eid, or whatever your family gathers for.

1. The celebration I remember most from when I was your age.
2. What our house smelled like on that morning.
3. The present I never forgot, and who gave it to me.
4. A family tradition, and how it started.
5. What I hope you're doing this Christmas morning.

Birthdays

6 What you were like at this age, as I remember it.

7 What I was doing when I was your age.

8 The thing I love most about you right now.

9 Something I was afraid of at your age, and how it turned out.

10 One wish for you this year. A wish, not advice.

Big firsts

For an 18th, a first job, a driving test, a new home, a wedding morning.

11 My own first day at work, and what I wish someone had told me.

12 The first time I left home.

13 The day you were born, from where I was standing.

14 The one rule I'd keep, and the ones you can break.

15 How proud I am of you, in plain words.

Open when

For the days they need you close: exams, heartbreak, a tough week.

16 Open when you feel you're not enough: the time I felt that way too.

17 Open when you miss home.

18 Open when your heart's been broken.

19 Open when you need to hear my voice.

20 Open when everything went wrong today.

Your life story

The ones nobody else can tell.

21 The house I grew up in, and what made it home.

22 How I met your mum, or your grandad. The real version.

23 A family story nobody else will tell you.

24 The best advice I ever got, and who gave it to me.

25 What life has taught me that I want you to keep.

PART FOUR

Your first story, tonight

Fill in the gaps. Read it out loud once, and change anything that doesn't sound like you. A small tip: if a spark feels too big, shrink it. Not "my childhood", but "the afternoon I fell out of the mango tree".

Dear _____,

1. Who is it for?

There was this one time when _____

2. One moment, one place.

I remember _____

3. Something you saw, heard or smelled.

I remember feeling _____

4. Be honest. Funny is fine.

Looking back, I realise _____

5. What it taught you.

So when you _____, I hope you _____

6. Hand it to them.

With all my love, _____

PART FIVE

Keep it for the day it matters

Once you've told your story, give it a home. With inAmber you write it, record it in your own voice or film it, choose the day it reaches them, and seal it. It arrives on that day, even years from now.

> *Once it's sealed, it's delivered. Even if you stop your plan.*

Only the people you choose receive it. Nobody at inAmber reads your words. At least 10% of every purchase goes into a fund to keep messages safe for decades.

One story

Write, record or film one, and seal it for the day it matters.

The Year Ahead

Twelve stories, one a month, the first on Christmas morning.

Prices in your own currency are at foreverinamber.com.

Scan to give The Year Ahead,
or visit **foreverinamber.com**

STAY IN TOUCH

We'd love to hear your stories

Questions, ideas, or a story you'd like to share with us? Get in touch. A real person reads every message.

WEBSITE	foreverinamber.com
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THE SMALL PRINT

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Example stories

The example stories in this guide are made up to show how a story can be told. The people and places in them are illustrative, and any resemblance to real people is a coincidence.

Images

Photographs from Unsplash, used under the Unsplash licence. They show models, not inAmber customers.

Guidance only

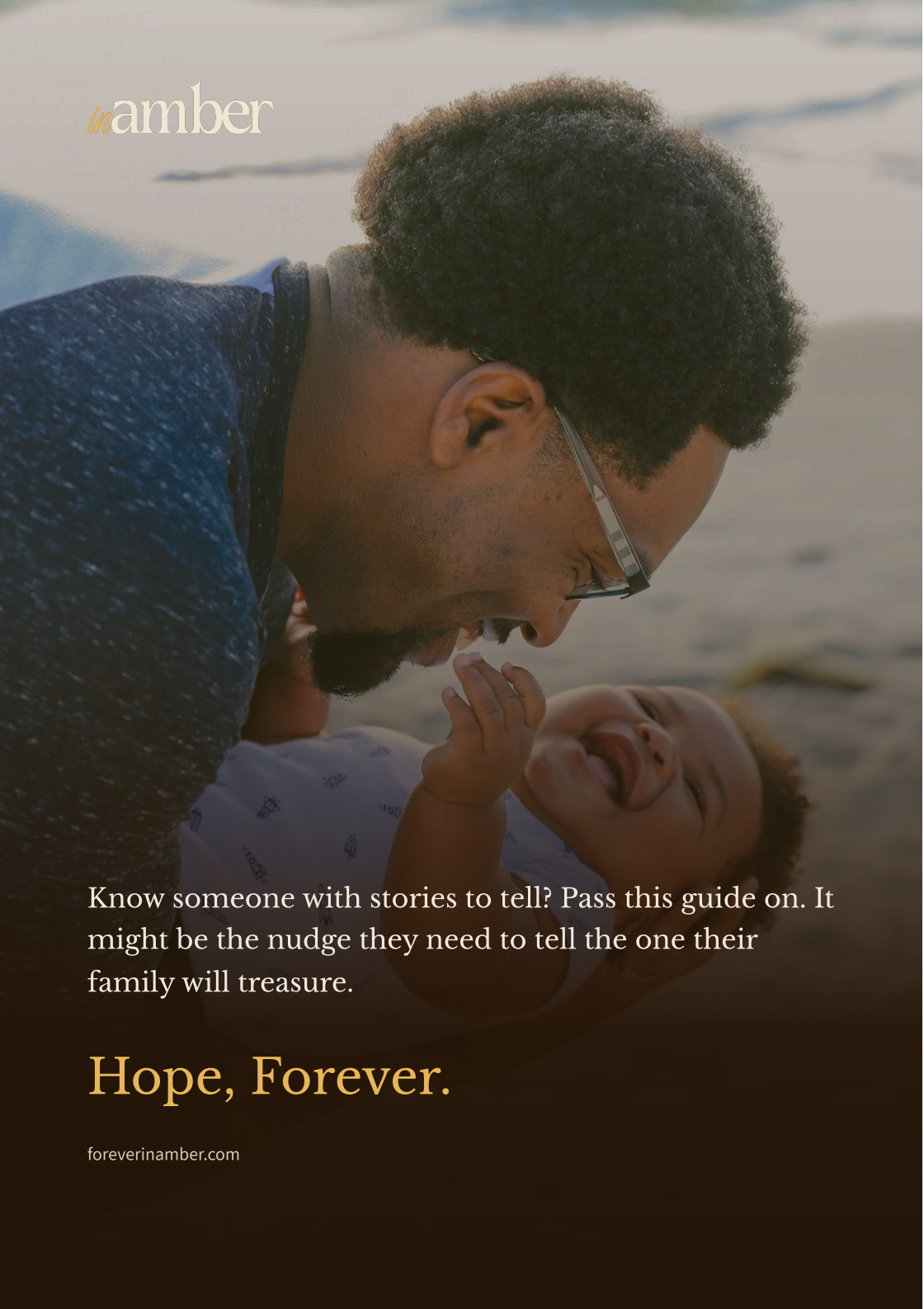
This guide offers general creative guidance on telling stories. It is not professional, legal, financial, medical or psychological advice. If you are going through a difficult time, please talk to someone you trust or a qualified professional.

Prices and terms

Current prices, terms and our privacy notice are always at foreverinamber.com. Messages sealed with inAmber are encrypted, and nobody at inAmber reads your words.

Who we are

inAmber is a trading name of Capitalizt Ltd, a company registered in England and Wales. Contact: hello@foreverinamber.com.



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Know someone with stories to tell? Pass this guide on. It might be the nudge they need to tell the one their family will treasure.

Hope, Forever.

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