

Shared by **Tom Asacker: author, innovator, change agent, provocateur**

Our stories steer our lives.

I recently read a fascinating study where researchers gave participants the ability to fly using virtual reality.

Some were passengers in a helicopter.

Others flew under their own power with arms extended.

The people who flew like “Superman” were later more likely to provide help to others in the real world.

The theory is that their inner experiences inspired them to embody the role of superhero.

Without them having the slightest clue.

It sounds crazy, but I believe it.

I know, first hand, the power of stories.

I wrote my first book more than a decade ago.

I got the idea while sitting unemployed and downhearted at my breakfast table.

As I stared blankly into my coffee cup, I caught a glimpse of my youngest daughter playing with her spoon.

She was gazing into it with a puzzled look on her face.

Then she flipped it around and raised her eyebrows.

“Honey, what are you doing?” I asked.

“Daddy? How come this way, I’m upside down? But when I turn it around, I’m right side up?!”

She waited anxiously for a response.

I sat speechless.

I knew the words “convex” and “concave,” but I had no idea why her spoon reflection was flipping (I still don’t).

However, that simple question set my mind in motion.

I imagined a story about business.

About how people knew a lot of fancy concepts, but not much about the real lives of the people they serve.

Then I conjured up another story, with me as the protagonist who exposes the Emperor’s nakedness.

And then another, with me writing a book and standing on stage speaking to large groups of people.

My self-deceptive mind was on one heck of a roll.

And, thankfully, it’s been rolling along ever since.

But most of us forget.

There was a time when our minds were always on a roll.

We used boxes and sticks to become astronauts and artists.

We created fantasy characters and outrageous worlds.

We drew whimsical pictures and cooked up wild ideas.

We were complete originals.

And some of us, the ones with the most vivid stories, became today’s inventors, poets, actors, and musicians.

Stories are powerful.

Because we all become the stories we tell ourselves.

Catalyst for change, Tom Asacker has written several books including *The Business of Belief* and *Opportunity Screams*. He views today’s world of complexity and change as a large-scale manifestation of many emergent events and behaviors that require a new, coherent viewpoint to guide one’s actions.