

**PART II**  
**Performance Scripts**



## **Building resilience Stories: Actual vs ideal scenes**

**Jimmie Gilmer**

### **Part I: A bad example**

Narrator: Jimmie was dyslexic when he was younger, but they didn't call it that then. In general, one was labeled either slow or retarded. Imagine how these one-dimensional labels made the subject feel? Jimmie's father, Frank didn't help by scolding him for his not-so-perfect efforts to read.

[Jimmie and Frank, Jimmie's father, riding down the street in the car]

FRANK: Son, what's that sign coming up say?

JIMMIE: Sttt...sssis...stttt...

FRANK: Say it, boy! What the heck's wrong with you?

[At that point, Jimmie stopped talking to his father for three years. Jimmie had begun to internalize his feelings, seeking avoidance as a coping mechanism.]

Narrator: Jimmie's father did much more harm than good by chiding and shaming Jimmie. When we make others feel stupid, or otherwise inadequate, they often take on those roles, believing the lie. This type of treatment often leads to life-long self-esteem issues that plague them for life. They can become "people pleasers," who make poor decisions to make others happy, rather than thinking for themselves. As a result, they are often cheated from reaching their fullest potential, and then everyone loses.

### **Part II: A Good Example**

Narrator: It should be remembered that it is encouragement and support that motivates people, not shaming and scolding. Everyone is different; and we all learn differently, at a different pace, and through different mediums. We must teach with compassion, allowing the individual to be themselves, and learn in a way that is

most conducive to their long-term health. Some people are slower than the "normal" milestones of others, but are still exceptional in their own unique ways. Jimmie is now a thriving Cal State LA student.

[Jimmie and Frank ride down the street in the car.]

FRANK: Son, what's that sign coming up say?

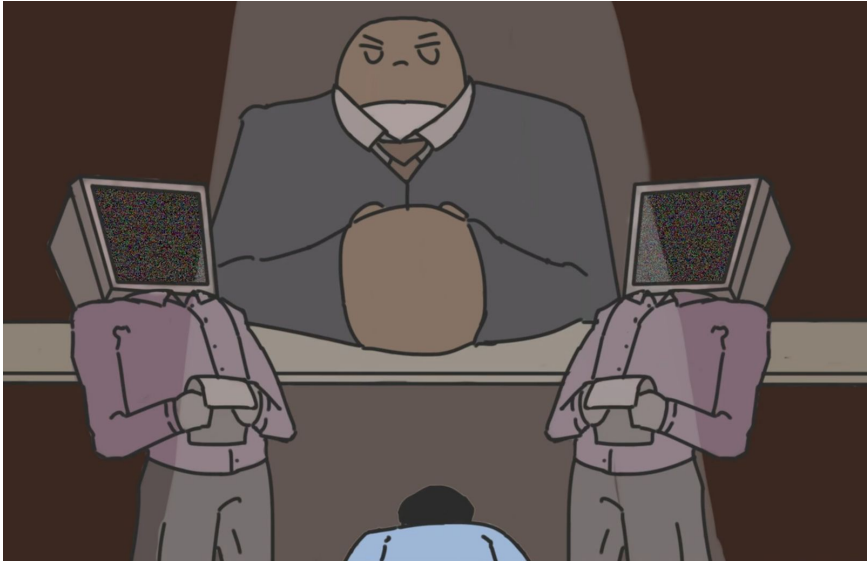
JIMMIE: Stttt...sssis...stttt...

FRANK: Take your time, Jimmie. I got you. Take your time, I believe in you, son.

[At that point, Jimmie stops and concentrates. He is encouraged by his father's support and wants to show his father that he can do it.]

JIMMIE: It says "stop"! "Stop"!

Narrator: Frank's support motivated Jimmie to push through until he got it, and indeed, Jimmie got it.



## **Rising on affirmations**

**James Heard, Duncan Martinez, Dortell Williams,**

Narrator: This script is designed to demonstrate the power of positive affirmations in our lives and how they can be used as a source of resiliency when negative assertions are made against us, or when we tend to be our own worst critic.

[Fourteen-year-old Eric Sandoval is standing in the hallway of his high school when he sees his soccer coach, Mr. Alfred Malveney, walking swiftly toward him. Malveney has a reputation of being mean, aggressive and abusive. Eric feels his body tense up as he notes Malveney approaching.]

MALVENEY: You stupid punk, why didn't you cover your man? You cost us the game!

[Eric mentally shrinks to the floor as Malveney yells and points at him. Malveney storms off. Actor should shrivel down slowly to the floor.]

Narrator: Tracey MacKhintosh, Eric's English teacher, walks by Eric in the shadow of Mr. Malveney. She is oblivious to the abuse Eric has just suffered.

MacKhintosh: Hi, Eric! You did great on your test. Your superb writing ability is going to take you to wonderful places in the world.

[Eric ponders in his head for a moment. He considers the positive affirmations he has heard from others in the recent past. Actor should voice the following:]

ERIC'S MOM: You're such a good little man, Eric; so talented. I appreciate your art, your respect for others and your generosity. The world needs more people like you, son!

ERIC'S BROTHER, TOM: Bro, when you were playing soccer yesterday, I was cheering for you and three girls came up to me and asked me for your hook up. They think you're hot. Obviously, you got swag, bro!

ERIC'S FRIEND, JACK: I appreciate your help with my homework, Eric. You're really smart.

Narrator: As the words of those close to Eric resonate, he finds strength in their comments.

[Eric slowly rises as Mr. Malveney's words melt off of him.]

ERIC: Forget Mr. Malveney. Yeah, we lost that game, but what about my last three winning games? I'm not stupid. I am a good person, and I am a smart person.

Narrator: Eric was able to quickly bounce back from the helpless feelings he experienced as Mr. Malveney tried to tear him down. This is called resiliency.



## ***Reality Check***

***Tin Nguyen***

**Narrator:** Two fifteen-year-olds ventured into a café where known gang members hang out. They sat at a table, ordered some drinks and food. They then began to boast that they were no longer boys but men, and had a reality check, a taste of the real world.

(Tin and Can excitedly talk and take all their surroundings in—music, crowd, and women.)

**Waitress comes to the table and places two glasses of milk:**

“You boys enjoy the milk.”

(Tin and Can are offended.)

**Can (mean mugging):** “What the F! Take this s\*\*t out of here!”

**Tin (also mean mugging the Waitress added):** “B\*\*ch!”

(The Waitress rolls her eyes and takes the milk back to the kitchen. While Can and Tin mean mug everyone who laughs. The boyfriend approaches, and both Can and Tin jump up. The boyfriend pulls out a gun and shoots twice. One at Can’s heart, and the other toward Tin, he then runs off. Can and Tin fall to the ground. There is silence as Tin checks himself and goes to Can, lying there, dying. Tin holds Can in his arms.)

(Tin recites the poem.)

On the ground in bloody shirt,  
Watching my best friend die without a good-bye.  
Listening to his dying breath,  
Forever echoing in my heart, it’ll be kept.  
As his young face turned blue,

I prayed that this nightmare was not true.

*(Tin raps.)*

O' Fools keep on Slipping, Slipping, Slipping.

Never again, 'cause fool I'm not,

Mess with me, you're going to get got.

I joined a gang, and started to bang,

Got a gat and some prison tats.

Earned my bones, while my heart turned to stone.

Loved by few, hated by most,

But respected by all.

A monster you call me, so a monster I shall be.

Rage! Rage! Rage!

*(As Tin ends, he slowly turns to face the wall, and places a "Smile Now" mask on, breathing heavily. Another actor, playing an older version of Tin, approaches Young Tin.)*

**Older Tin:** Tin, turn around.

**Young Tin:** I don't go by Tin. I go by P24706.

**Older Tin:** Please, turn around.

*(Young Tin finally does and is surprised.)*

**Young Tin:** Dad?

**Older Tin (smile):** No, I'm you—at 46. Please, sit. *(They do)* Tell me, why are you so angry?

**Young Tin:** Where do you want me to begin? At 8? 15? 17? Etc.?

**Older Tin:** Let's start at 15.

**Young Tin:** Man, it's bulls\*\*t. We were kids, just kids wanting to be men. We didn't even have our driver's license yet, and they shot at us. They killed him; they killed Can; **I killed Can!**

**Older Tin:** Why did you say, you killed Can?

(Behind the mask Young Tin sniffles.)

**Young Tin (a long pause):** If I didn't call the waitress a b\*\*ch, her boyfriend wouldn't have shot at us.

**Older Tin:** Tin, look at me, and please take off your mask.

(Young Tin sniffles and turns his face away.)

**Young Tin:** I don't want you to see me cry.

(Slowly, older Tin turns young Tin's face back, and delicately removes the "Smile Now" mask.)

**Older Tin:** Reality check, it's not your fault, and boys do cry.

Notes: I dealt with a significant trauma that had a violent ripple effect by writing a creative nonfiction. I was able to realize that it was not my fault for the shooter's action, and it is okay to grieve for my best friend.



## **Teacup: Rituals of Grief**

Adapted from “Let Me Down Easy” by Anna Deavere Smith

*“For Us The Living:*

*Some Traditional Practices to Soothe the Minds of the Living.”*



### **Terry Don Evans**

Almost every culture on this planet has a tradition in which they acknowledge members of their culture that have ‘given up the ghost’. The Ghost being the force (spiritual energy) within living things that infuses and animates the physical body to constitute the actualization of living entities.

### **Jarold A. Walton:**

Certain tribes in Africa have a practice of visiting the graves of their ancestors and pouring ‘spirits’ out on the graves to honor their ancestors. This practice morphs, in America and other parts of the urban Western world, to ‘pouring out a portion of

liquid libations on the ground “in memory of those (close associates) who cannot be here (because they are dead) ‘R.I.P.’”

### **Jesse Crespin:**

There is also “El Dia de los Muertos” (The Day of the Dead), a practice that honors those who have passed away. This Day of the Dead is a Mexican and South American cultural practice that mirrors “Halloween” in America.

### **Robert Mosley:**

Three of the Qur'anic admonitions used to soothe the human mind (of the believers) are:

“And never think of those who have been killed in the cause of **THE GOD** (Allah - God Almighty) as dead. Rather, they are alive with their Lord, receiving provision.

“And say not of those who are slain in the way of **THE GOD** (Allah - God Almighty) that ‘They are dead’. Nay, they are living, though you perceive (it) not.

“There will be circulated among them a cup from a flowing spring.”

### **Optional reading (actor 4):**

Arabic Phonetic rendition

*Wa Laa Tahsabenna Al la beena quteluuu fee sabeel Allah,  
am waataa baa bal ah yaa-u-endaah Rabbehem yurzaquun.*

*Wa Laa ta quluu lemanee yuqtalu fee sabeel lahee, am waa  
tub al ah yaa-u wa laaken la ta sha-u-ruun.*

*Yutaafu Alay hem Bekaasem mem-ma-een.*

## **Terry Don Evans**

The Buddhists of Tibet are taught to prepare for death during every moment of life. They think of death, though not in a morbid way, all the time. This in turn gives greater richness to every moment of life.

## **Jarold A. Walton:**

Before a Buddhist practitioner goes to sleep, they turn their teacup upside-down next to their sleeping location. Upon awakening, the cup is turned right-side-up to receive the blessings of the day. The tea ceremony is one of the traditional ceremonies of blessings in the Buddhist traditions.

## **Robert Mosley:**

In the evening, when someone has died in Tibet, as the tradition of the tea ceremony takes place, you put their teacup upside down, never to set that person's cup right side up again. If there was any tea in the cup, it is poured into the palm of the hand that turns the cup, signifying the fleeting fluidity of life in this world.

## **Jesse Crespin (actor 3 leads, others join in):**

*(While sitting around a table with five place settings – representing the Tea Ceremony. Actor 34 pours out each cup of Tea. Then he takes the cup to the empty seat (the one that cannot be there) and pours out the contents through his palm and fingers.*

*After reflecting a moment, Actor 3 places the cup down on the table up-side-down. Then all four of the other people present raise their cups and drink the contents.)*

End

## **References**

Harrington, N.G. (2015). *Health Communications: Theory, Method, Application*. Routledge.

Holy Qu'ran. 3:169-170; 2:154; 37:45. (Phonic Rendition)

Smith, A. D. (2016). *Let Me Down Easy*. Dramatists Play Service.