

## **(Un)Believable**

This exercise is designed to help you and your students think about false narratives and the impact they have on us and others.

1.) Think of a time when you either:

a.) believed something that was not true

Or

b.) witnessed an untrue narrative being believed by others

2.) Reflect on why this belief took hold. What happened before you or others heard this story? In what ways did you or others receive this false information? What outside forces or influences were at play? What did you or others hope to gain, or what did you or others fear losing in relationship to this belief?

3.) Now, take some notes on what impact – both short and long-term – engaging with this false belief had on you and/or others.

4.) Soon, we are going to write a monologue – A first person narrative that might be spoken to another person. First, we must get to know the figure.

- a.) Who is the speaker? Yourself, or another person who believed a false narrative?
- b.) Identify some basic biographical information: age, occupation, relationship status, gender identification, etc... (This might be an invention if you are imagining a person whom you do not know.)
- c.) Explore other, less tangible, elements. For example:
  - What are the person's pet peeves?
  - What did they long for most?
  - Of what are they most afraid?

5.) Identify to whom the person is speaking and what they want from the listener. Some examples:

- a.) to their best friend and they want that friend to agree with them
- b.) to their colleague and they want to be seen as knowledgeable

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6.) Write the monologue in which this person talks about their false belief, trying to explain why it's true or why they believed it. Keep in mind all that we have identified above to inform your writing.

7.) Read it over and reflect on what it revealed to you about how and why false narratives might take hold.