

# Story vs Fact Transcript

Hi there!

This is Ellen Yale, Master certified life coach and founder of “The Nest”, the online program to help you thrive in college.

In today’s video I’m going to talk about how to ease your top worries about college... With a tool called Story vs. Fact.

People think that their emotional stress comes from their circumstances... from things going on around them in their life.

From having too much to do.

People who are jerks.

Moving away from home.

Not having enough money...

From something outside of themselves.

But that’s not true.

Your circumstances can’t cause you emotional pain.

It’s your story about those circumstances that cause you pain.

Here’s an example:

Let’s say you don’t get into the college that is your top choice.

You **think** that not getting into that college is causing you pain.

But it’s not.

It’s your thoughts about not getting in that are causing your pain.

You weren’t feeling badly the day before you got the rejection letter. You didn’t feel gut punched until you opened up the letter and read it and thought, “It’s terrible I didn’t get in” that you felt the pain.

The bad feelings are caused by thoughts you create inside your head.

Not from the circumstances.

Someone else might be happy they didn’t get in that very same school, because it meant that they could take that gap year they really wanted.

So the **fact** was you didn’t get in.

The **story you made up** was that it was bad you didn’t get in.

Here’s another example.

It’s your first weekend at college; you don’t want to do whatever activity the college has planned for you, and you are sitting alone.

On your bed.

By yourself.

You feel sad.

It sure seems like the situation you are in... being at college... is the problem.

So, ask yourself:

What are the facts vs. what's the story?

The only things that are facts are that you are  
at college,  
sitting on your bed  
and no one else is in the room.

Everything else is your story you have spun about the circumstances.

The facts... being alone in your dorm room on your bed, aren't bad.

... those same set of circumstances are ideal for reading a good book. Or meditating. You could be delighted you get some alone time so you can study, or write or listen to music.

Facts are neutral.

But the story you choose to think is that you have no friends.

I'm not suggesting that you should pretend you are happy when you're sad.

But I AM saying that it is not your circumstances that make you feel bad.

Nothing external is causing your sadness.

Just realizing that it's your thoughts that cause your heartache, not your circumstance is fabulous news!!!

**Because a lot of the time, you can't change your circumstances, but you CAN change your thoughts.**

I have a whole technique to successfully change your thoughts...

But just this first step.... being aware that it's your thoughts not your circumstances that cause you pain... that alone can give you a lot of relief.

I know it really **seems** like what happens TO you makes you feel a certain way, but it's not. It can be a trigger, but you are always in control of how you think about a situation.

People will tell me, But Ellen, it **really was** not getting into college that made me feel terrible.

But it's important to know that that you have control of how you feel all the time. Even in your case.

You can give me ANY example, and it will always be true... the things happening to you are never the cause of the pain.

It's ALWAYS your thinking.

So it's important to know the difference between a thought and a circumstance because we are going to build on this in future lessons, and it's one of the fundamentals of being able to change how you feel.

How about college debt?

Debt is just a bunch of numbers on a spreadsheet.  
They can't hurt you.

You can think, "Oh no! If I don't get a high paying job right out of college, I'll have to live with my parents until I'm 40!"  
Or you can choose to think, "That debt is an incredible investment I am making in myself."  
It's your choice.

Here's a simple way to figure it out which are the facts and which are the stories...  
First, facts can be proven in a court of law.  
And facts are the same no matter who you ask.  
Everything else is a thought. Everything else is your story **about** the facts.

Here's a quiz;  
If I said, "I took out a big loan"  
Fact or Story?  
It might seem like fact, but that's a thought, because I used the word big.

\$10,000 may be a big loan to one person, but it might be a small loan to someone else.  
That it's big is not a fact. That it's big can't be proven in a court of law.

So, the only FACT is, "I took out a loan."  
Or even, "I took out a \$10,000 loan."

Now, I'm not placing judgment on whether college debt is good or bad. Or if you should take out a loan.  
We're just looking at why it might cause you pain.

Any decision is always clearer without the pain involved.

All stress is story driven.

Once you start paying attention it's amazing how much of what you think and say is a story you thought up.

That's it for this video.

Start separating your story from your facts. It is a big step towards your emotional freedom.

