



Joel ben Izzy Bio

Storyteller Joel ben Izzy has spent nearly four decades traveling the world, gathering and telling stories. His career began back in 1983 when he graduated from Stanford with a self-designed degree in English, Creative Writing and Storytelling. Since then his storytelling performances and workshops have led him to over thirty-six countries throughout Europe, North and South America, Asia, the Middle East and, in recent years, Rwanda and Ireland. Since the pandemic his travels have been on Zoom – this past January to Shanghai, China.

Over the years, Joel has also recorded and produced six recordings of his stories, all of which have received awards from organizations such as the American Library Association, Parents' Choice Foundation and Booklist Magazine. The year 2003 marked the publication of his first book, *The Beggar King and The Secret of Happiness* (Algonquin). A memoir with stories he's collected from around the world, it recounts recounting the strange but true tale that began when, after fifteen years of traveling and telling stories, Joel awoke from a surgical procedure to discover he could no longer speak. At first doctors thought the loss was temporary, but later decided it was permanent, and so it was Joel fell into a story as strange as any he had ever told. Rather than read about it, you can hear [Joel tell a little about it here](#).

The eventual surprise return of Joel's voice has left him passionate about helping others to find and tell their stories, often hidden, sometimes forgotten – tales that need to be told. This has led to travels far beyond Joel's geographic travels – to philanthropic foundations and board rooms, biotech labs and hospitals. Over the years Joel has become one a highly sought-after story consultants, with clients including The Federal Reserve Bank, Stanford University, Genentech, and Pixar Animation.

He also teaches storytelling skills to elders and others around the world, helping them find and tell the stories that connect them to one another, healing tales that help them build bridges of understanding to others as they make meaning from a lifetime of experiences. Joel lives with his wife in Berkeley, California. You can learn more about his work as a storyteller, author, and coach, as well as sign up for his mailing list, at his website www.storypage.com.