Agency
Narratives high in agency are fundamentally concerned with the autonomy of the protagonist. Highly agentic narratives describe protagonists who can affect their own lives (Lysaker), initiate changes on their own (Adler, Skalina, & McAdams), and who achieve some degree of control over the course of their experiences (McAdams’ status/victory). This theme is related to the degree to which people internalize their actions and engage in them with a full sense of choice (Deci & Ryan’s Self-Determination Theory). This achievement may come through self-insight, gaining a sense of control, or a feeling of increased power (McAdams’ self-mastery). The theme of agency bears some relationship to internal locus of control (Rotter), but it is not identical; for example, if someone feels that they are responsible for everything in their life, but they are failing at all of them, they might be rated as high in internal locus of control, but low in agency.

This theme should be coded only as it pertains to the protagonist of the narrative, not other characters.

- Code 0-4, where 4 = highest agency
  - 0 Protagonist is completely powerless, at mercy of circumstances; all action is motivated by external powers; or narrative is not written in first person (rare).
  - 1 Protagonist is somewhat at the mercy of circumstances, with primary control of the plot at the hands of external powers.
  - 2 Recorded where there is no code-able language pertaining to the theme of agency (quite rare), or when narrative displays equal amounts of both agentic and non-agentic elements.
  - 3 Protagonist is minimally at the mercy of circumstances, with the majority of the control of the plot in the hands of the protagonist.
  - 4 Protagonist is agentic, able to affect their own life, initiate changes on their own, and achieves some degree of control over the course of their experiences; may or may not include description of some struggle to achieve agentic status.
Communion
Narratives that are high in communion are fundamentally concerned with the connection, intimacy, love, belonging, union, friendship, and caring of the protagonist. Highly communal narratives describe protagonists who experience satisfying romantic and friendship relationships, involve nurture and caretaking, and are rich with themes of unity and togetherness (McAdams). Social connections may be to individuals, groups, or to society (although connections to specific individuals are weighed heaviest towards high communion scores and isolation from society writ large are weighted highest in low communion scores). Communion may be revealed in the explicit language participants use to describe their relational lives, or evidenced in their pronoun use (i.e. “we is more communal than “I”; likewise, “me” versus “them” is less communal than “me” versus “him/her,” but these are fairly low-level ways in which communion is instantiated in narratives). Participants may discuss their lack of connection to others, which is to be scored as low in communion.

- Code 0-4, where 4 = highest communion
  0 Protagonist is completely disconnected, isolated, or rejected and strong disconnection language is predominant.
  1 Protagonist is mostly disconnected from others, and disconnection language is predominant, though some connection language is present; or only mildly negative connection language is used.
  2 Recorded where there is no code-able language pertaining to the theme of communion (quite rare), or when narrative displays both communal and non-communal elements.
  3 Protagonist is mostly connected to others and rich connection language is predominant, although some disconnection language is present; or only mildly positive connection language is used.
  4 Protagonist is highly connected to others and rich connection language is predominant.