

Getting under our skin

by [Carol Howard Merritt](#)

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I paced back and forth in a frenetic circle at the foot of my bed. Holding my cell, I concentrated on each syllable coming from the headphones. I was interviewing my mom for a book, when I realized the pent-up energy in my dizzying march. I wondered why my interrogations had such urgency, as I longed to fill in the holes in my incomplete memories, as I yearned to make the fuzzy edges of my recollections sharp.

I glanced at my paper, pen, and computer, abandoned on the bed. Unlike most of my interviews, I wasn't tapping a keyboard as I peppered my mom with questions. I wasn't exactly trying to get to the facts. I didn't care as much about the *hows*. I wanted something more than that. I wanted the *whys*. I wasn't worried that I'd forget her answers, because the stories she told were a part of me. *The stories were me.*

Because what are we, if we are not our stories?

[Read the rest at Patheos](#), as I join a [panel of very impressive people](#), like Barbara Brown Taylor, Marcus Borg, and Brian McLaren, talking about Religious Trends.