

Sharing Our Stories

Thank you for your interest to share stories from the Office of Diversity and Equity's (ODE) Storytelling Program. Sharing these stories with respect, care, and intention is very important to us and our storytellers. We'd like to share some of our tips and tricks for sharing stories and we ask that you follow this guide to effectively share these stories with your group.

There are a so many reasons to share and listen to stories. Some reasons include:

- Reduce stigma
- Cope with trauma
- Celebrate lived experience
- Broaden the definition of wellness and recovery
- Provide insight to policy makers and providers
- Support the empowerment of marginalized communities

Please, first, be mindful of the desired outcome of sharing stories, so that you can curate the stories that best align with your intentions. If you'd like any support, get in touch with our Storytelling program and we will be glad to assist you in sharing our stories. Alternatively here are some things to consider before curating a set of stories to share:

- What are your goals and desired outcomes of sharing the stories?
- Who is your audience? Do they want to hear stories of hope or challenges?
- What themes of stories would fit well?

Script

When introducing the stories to your group, recite the script below how you see fit.

“The Office of Diversity and Equity (ODE) storytelling program empowers community members to share their stories of recovery and wellness to heal and to address issues within their communities. Participants engage in workshops that help them create and share their stories in different forms. Beginning with a framing question, facilitators support participants to share their stories as Photovoices or Digital Stories.”

Depending if you are showing Digital Stories and/or Photovoices, read the appropriate scripts below:

“**Digital Stories** are 3-minute videos that include a recorded narrative. Participants create their stories using photography, videography, and audio to describe their lived experience. All stories are written, produced and edited by the storytellers.”

“**Photovoices** are single-paged layouts of a photo and short written piece. Participants create their stories using photography and written narrative. All images are captured by and all scripts are written by the storytellers.”

Showing

After you have introduced the stories with the above script, or your own rendition of the script, present the stories.

Photovoice

There are two ways to present Photovoice:

1. Display the stories on a large screen. If possible, invite the storyteller to read their story to the group. Otherwise, read each story to the group, pausing between stories to give the audience time to process.
2. Post the stories around a room and invite the audience to walk around and engage with the stories. Encourage them to navigate the room in silence, so that each story can receive the attention and respect it deserves. **To request printed stories, contact the Storytelling program.**

When the group is finished viewing the stories they may return to their seats. As the presenter, facilitate a conversation about the audiences' reactions to the stories.

Digital Storytelling

Play the stories on a large screen. If possible, invite the storyteller(s) to introduce their story to the group (including their creation process, intentions, and hopes). Otherwise, play each story in succession, pausing for a few seconds between stories to give the audience enough time to process.

When the group is finished viewing the stories, they may reflect to themselves for a moment. As the presenter, **facilitate a conversation** about the audiences reactions to the stories.

Facilitate a conversation

It is important for each story to be acknowledged and for audience members to have the opportunity to share their reactions to the stories shared. Here are some instructions about facilitating a conversation about stories shared.

1. Once you have shared all of the stories, open the first story and ask your audience about their reaction to the story: "What came up for you in response to this story?"
 - There are no wrong answers: support everyone in the audience by understanding that they are sharing their truths.
 - Be comfortable with silence: count to 10 (to yourself) before you move to the next story so that your audience has ample time to speak up and share.
2. Go to the next story and repeat step 1.
 - Encourage people who have not spoken up to share their thoughts.
3. Once all stories have been reviewed and audience members have had an opportunity to respond, reflect the responses of the audience members and thank them for engaging with the stories.

Evaluation

Once the showing is completed and the participants are finished reflecting on the stories as a group, pass out ODE Storytelling viewer evaluation forms. Depending on the types of stories you will be sharing, pass out the Digital Storytelling Viewer Evaluation and/or the Photovoice Viewer Evaluation.

Download evaluations at SMChealth.org/StorytellingFacilitators