

TELLING YOUR STORY IN SIXTY TO NINETY SECONDS

To tell your story in sixty to ninety seconds, to make a point with a purpose, use one or two sentences utilizing each of the following outline points.

- State the lowest point in your addiction history, either as an individual or as family members.
- State what support opened the doors and paved the way for your recovery
- State what you are going to do to “give back” to society out of gratitude for your recovery.

SHARING YOUR STORY - A Little MOAR Manual

Remember using your recovery story as an educational outreach opportunity is very different than telling your story at a 12-Step Meeting. You need not tell the specific details of your drug use or the very personal places that your addiction brought you. Whether speaking or writing your story for presentation, only do what you feel comfortable doing. You, as a person in recovery, are most important and valued, above all else.

Some suggestions when preparing to share your story

- 1.) When preparing your story, know these facts:
 - Who you will be talking to (Type, gender, and age of group)
 - Why have they invited you to tell your story (What is the purpose for your being there)
 - Are there going to be other speakers
 - What is the length of time you will be speaking
- 2.) Using a 12-Step format may be helpful in writing and telling your story:
 - *Experience*: Give a brief synopsis of what your life was like before your active addiction and what addiction did to you.
 - *Strength*: Share the strengths that you developed while in treatment, the support system that help get you through each day, and the benefits you receive from not drinking or drugging for one day.
 - *Hope*: Share what you hope continues within your life in recovery, and what you hope the results will be of you telling your story.
- 3.) Remember that for every story there is a beginning, middle, and end.

- 4.) Always be honest. Never embellish or exaggerate your story and never tell a lie.
- 5.) Never “put down” or say any thing negative about a specific person, religious group, political party, institution, organization, or agency. Doing could cause problems or offend someone.
- 6.) Remember that you are telling “your story”, not that of a spouse, family member, or friend. They may be part of the story, but don’t make it their story.
- 7.) Don’t get too personal. The audience or reader does not need to know specifics. Be careful not to say anything that you might regret saying or that can be used against you later.
- 8.) Never swear or use off-color or foul language.
- 9.) Be careful not to use recovery “catch phrases” or 12-Step language that the reader or audience might not understand.
- 10.) If you are hand writing your story, make sure that it is legible. Always proof read to correct any mistakes you may have made.
- 11.) If you are including your children in your story, it might be useful to include a picture of the family together. Be sure you are comfortable doing this and are not endangering your children or placing them in a detrimental position.
- 12.) If you plan to read your story to an audience, read it aloud to a friend first. This is a good way to be sure that it has the planned effect when read aloud. You also might want to time how long you take so that you are sure you speak for time you intend.
- 13.) However you present your story, be honest, to the point, and be yourself. Don’t use phrases that you are not accustomed to or that are difficult for you to say.
- 14.) If you are speaking to an audience, try video or audio-taping a “milk run” so that you can see how you look and sound. Do this until you feel comfortable with your presentation.

Suggested steps when presenting your story to a group:

- 1.) Before speaking, remember the who, what, when, where, how, and why of telling story
 - *Who* will your audience be -- (gender, age, size of audience)
 - *What* is the purpose of talking to them -- (What type of group is it; legislators, service providers, students, etc.)

- *When* are you scheduled to speak
 - *Where* are you going to be speaking -- (auditorium, office, restaurant, from a podium, on panel, from the audience, etc.)
 - *How* is the speaking format set up – (Is there more than one speaker, how are you being introduced)
 - *Why* are you there and what do you expect to accomplish
- 2.) Have your story prepared in written form. Bring the written copy with you. Index cards that outline your story can be helpful in guiding you.
 - 3.) Leave for your destination early allowing time for traffic or unexpected circumstance.
 - 4.) Dress appropriately. You are representing MOAR and the Recovery Community
 - 5.) Arrive early so you can familiarize yourself with the surroundings.
Review your notes and papers.
 - 6.) When you arrive, introduce yourself to the events sponsor or other person in charge.
 - 7.) Realize that there may be media and photographers present.
 - 8.) Realize that people you know may be there.
 - 9.) Remember to stick to your speech format. Don't be afraid to use your notes. Many good speakers refer to notes.
 - 10.) Remember to speak clearly, slowly, and loudly. Speak directly into the microphone and adjust the mike if you need to.
 - 11.) It is good to make eye contact with people. Find a friendly face or someone you know.
 - 12.) If you run out of things to say, stop speaking, say thank you, and sit down.
 - 13.) Don't leave the room immediately when you finish speaking. Be polite and listen to what others have to say.
 - 14.) When the meeting is over, thank those who invited you and make yourself available to answer any questions people may have.
 - 15.) Remember that you are representing MOAR.

BE HAPPY AND KNOW THAT YOU MADE A DIFFERENCE