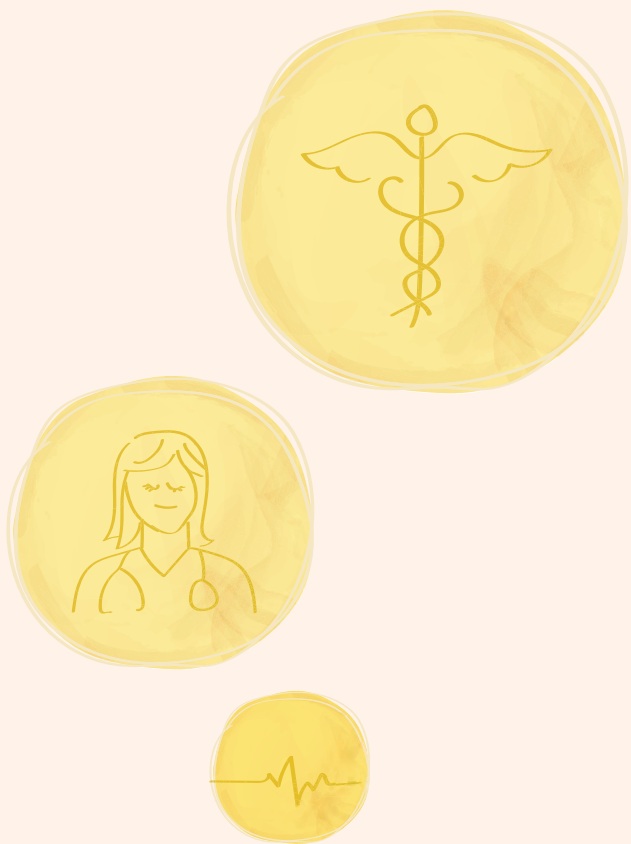


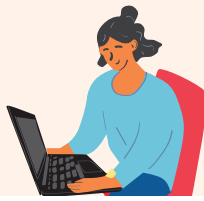
More About Us

Participant Recording Packet*

(*All materials adapted from the *All Our Voices* Participant Recording Packet by StoryCorps Inc., 2021)

- P 2 Welcome!
- P 5 Join the *More About Us* Disability Visibility Recording Campaign
- P 9 Conversation Tips & Considerations for Recording Disability-Related Stories
- P 11 Custom Questions for the Project
- P 14 Planning for Your Conversation
- P 16 Next Steps: Reflections and Questions After the Conversation





ABOUT STORYCORPS & THE INTERVIEW MODEL

A StoryCorps interview is an opportunity to record an uninterrupted, intentional conversation with someone you know about anything you'd like, from favorite memories to important life questions. It's also a way to connect with family and friends in a time when visiting in person is extremely limited.

Recording using StoryCorps' digital tools is an opportunity to have conversations and preserve them for generations to come. Each conversation is up to 40 minutes of uninterrupted time with a loved one.

Conversations are about stories, not just facts. There's no right or wrong way to conduct a StoryCorps interview. We invite you to share stories and experiences that are meaningful to you, and ask questions that you've always been curious to ask. Feel free to use the [list of suggested questions](#) at the end of this guide for inspiration.

“Life would be different if I hadn't shared my story. I got it all out and now am able to share it with others.”

StoryCorps Participant





Why Share Stories Related to Disability?

StoryCorps interviews are designed to give participants an opportunity to build connection and understanding, usually with a family member, friend, or other loved one. Our model focuses on the individual and creates a “no wrong answer” environment, fostering communication between the storyteller and the people they know and love. The interviews are intended to help participants feel that they themselves, and their own stories, have a value.

StoryCorps interviews have repeatedly demonstrated the value of these personal conversations to participants, their families, and the organizations that serve them. By affirming the value of the individual through attentive conversation, StoryCorps interviews can directly combat the feelings of isolation, low self-esteem, and anxiety that may arise through experience of disability.

“It is impossible to be involved in a StoryCorps interview and not be changed in some way.”

StoryCorps Participant

StoryCorps interviews have shown:

- ▶ **Reflecting on one’s personal narrative is part of the healing process.** For people experiencing challenging circumstances, it can be especially important to develop control over their story and comfort in sharing that story with others.
- ▶ **Storytelling allows us to weave together new stories about ourselves.** Each conversation can provide space for people to articulate how their experience of disability relates to the larger narrative of who they are.
- ▶ **Storytelling connects us to those who have had similar experiences,** fostering community and a sense of support. People learn new ways to cope with experiences of disenfranchisement, build connections, and feel less alone in their experiences.
- ▶ **Listening to other people’s experiences can also positively affect the listener,** boosting empathy, creating connection, and inspiring them to have more conversations with loved ones.

How to Participate



1 Create a free account and join the *More About Us* Community in the StoryCorps Archive

Your free account at archive.storycorps.org will be used to prepare, record, save, and share your interviews. You can also use it to browse our collection and listen to stories that others have shared.

To create an account and join the *More About Us* Community page follow this link: <https://archive.storycorps.org/communities/more-about-us/register/>

If you already have an account, visit archive.storycorps.org/communities/more-about-us/ and click “Join.”

TECH TIPS

If you are using the app, only the person logged in on their smartphone needs to have an account.

If you are using Connect, both people will need to log into their StoryCorps accounts.

2 If recording on your own, choose an interview partner to determine your technology (App or Connect)

Consider who you would like to record with and why. Here are some helpful questions to consider:

- ▶ Who in your life might find this type of recording meaningful, and what might you wish to share with that person? Consider reaching out to family members, healthcare providers, caregivers, or friends.
- ▶ Who is someone from your community that you want to connect with on a meaningful level?
- ▶ What disability-related stories or memories are important for you to preserve at this time?

For Self-Recording:

Are you and your interview partner in the same location?

YES Record using StoryCorps App

How-To Video: [Use the StoryCorps App to record in person](#)

Get Started: [Record Your Story Using the StoryCorps App](#)

Are you and your interview partner in different locations?

YES Record using StoryCorps Connect.

How-To Video: [Use StoryCorps Connect to record virtually](#)

Get Started: [Record Your Story Using StoryCorps Connect](#)

TECH TIPS

If recording in person with the StoryCorps App, download the free StoryCorps App to a smartphone (iPhone or Android) or Kindle tablet.

If recording remotely, you and your partner will both need access to a computer or tablet with the latest device software, an internet connection, and a microphone and webcam.

For Recording at the Technology Learning Center at

Boatwright: sign up for a recording slot on the *More About Us* WordPress page: <https://blog.richmond.edu/moreaboutus/>



3 Make a plan and prepare

- ▶ **SET A TIME:** Reach out to your recording partner and arrange a time when both you and your partner will be relaxed. Choose a quiet, comfortable place where you won't be interrupted. Remember that you will need to have access to Wi-Fi to record your conversation.
- ▶ **PREPARE YOUR QUESTIONS:** Take time to talk with your interview partner about what you'd each like to share during the recording. Use the [Suggested Questions list](#) and [Planning Worksheet](#) included in this packet to prepare together.
- ▶ **PRACTICE:** Whether you are using StoryCorps Connect or the app, we recommend that you record a practice interview to familiarize yourself with the technology.



TECH TIPS FOR RECORDING

You may not be able to choose where you record your conversation, and if so, that's fine. If you do have more than one room to choose from, we recommend that you:

- **USE smaller rooms that have:** carpeted floors, drop ceilings, closed windows and heavy drapes, irregular shapes, full bookcases, hanging clothes
- **AVOID using a room that is large and has:** uncovered or tiled floors, high ceilings, square shapes, bare walls, big windows without curtains, noisy appliances such as refrigerators and air conditioners

- ▶ We recommend sitting in a comfortable chair that locks in a fixed position.
- ▶ Consider using headphones or earbuds that have a microphone built in: this will help prevent "echoes" in the recording.
- ▶ If you are recording from a laptop, position yourself as close to the laptop as is comfortable for you.
- ▶ If you are recording with a phone or a tablet, you may wish to prop up the device on a table so that you don't have to adjust it during your conversation.
- ▶ If you prop up your device on a table, we recommend placing it horizontally so as not to cover the device's microphone.
- ▶ When recording with phones and tablets, please turn on Airplane Mode, and then turn on Wi-Fi.
- ▶ Make sure that your conversation partner can hear you before hitting "Record."
- ▶ If you hear disruptive noises such as a microphone rubbing on your partner's shirt, pause the conversation and resolve the issue.

Participant Recording Packet



► **DISCUSS SHARING & PRIVACY SETTINGS:** After recording, you will be prompted to publish your interview to the StoryCorps Archive, making the recording publicly available online at archive.storycorps.org and sharing it with the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress. Then you will have the option of choosing among three privacy settings that control how accessible the recording is in the StoryCorps Online Archive:

- **Everyone:** Your interview and related information are available to anyone on the internet.
- **StoryCorps Community:** Your interview and related information are available to anyone with an account on the StoryCorps Archive.
- **Private:** Your interview and related information are private.

Remember that your conversation may touch on sensitive health information. If there are any details or parts of your story that you do not wish to share, review with your partner ahead of time.

Please note that you may change your privacy settings at any time. But in order to access your recording later on, you must publish and share your interview with the StoryCorps Archive. You can learn more about privacy settings [here](#).

- **If you are recording with the app**, you have an additional option to save your recording to your device without publishing it to the StoryCorps Archive. If you would like to record but not share your conversation, you should use the app.
- **If using StoryCorps Connect**, there is no way to save it to your local device.

Regardless of what you select as your privacy setting, please be aware that StoryCorps may use your interview and other materials in the following ways, including but not limited to: broadcasts on public radio, animated and other audiovisual content, educational use, and any other StoryCorps programs. StoryCorps can also share your interviews with community and media organizations for use on their platforms and sites.

PARENTAL OR GUARDIAN CONSENT

Under StoryCorps Connect's terms of use: Children under the age of 13 may not participate in a StoryCorps Connect or app recording, and parental or guardian consent is required for people under the age of 18 to register for a StoryCorps Archive account. You can review StoryCorps' full terms of use at archive.storycorps.org/terms-of-use.

USER-GENERATED CONTENT

The [StoryCorps Archive](https://archive.storycorps.org) contains user-generated content that is not reviewed before it is posted online. While we adhere to a strict set of Community Guidelines and work to maintain a culture of tolerance and acceptance, not all published content will be appropriate for all individuals. We also have a flagging mechanism in place to help further identify content that violates our Community Guidelines.



4 Record your conversation

Follow the prompts in either the app or Connect to begin recording, and let the conversation flow! Listen closely, and let your chosen questions guide the discussion, not control it. Make sure you ask follow-up questions. You never know what unexpected and wonderful new things you will learn about a person—no matter how well you think you know them.

Both StoryCorps Connect and the app prompt users in English; however, you may record in any language.

5 Preserve your story in the archive

When you're done, click "Stop Recording," and then "Save Interview." You'll then be prompted to select your [privacy settings](#). In order to allow future generations to find, listen to, and learn from the stories you and your partner just shared, you will have the option to share your recording on the StoryCorps website and have it preserved and archived at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress.

Participant photos are an important part of the StoryCorps Archive and are included with the interview when it is published to archive.storycorps.org. After your interview, you will be prompted to take a selfie with your partner if using the app. When using StoryCorps Connect, screenshots are taken of participants sporadically over the course of the interview.

After recording, tag your story with any relevant keywords. Keywords are like hashtags, making it easier for you and others to find your interview in our collection. You can also add a title and description to help you keep track of your conversations.

To add your story to the *More About Us* Community Page choose "Add to Community" and add the special keyword: #MoreAboutUs

6 Share your interview

Share your interview with the world, or save it for friends and family. Explore the StoryCorps Archive and [More About Us Community Page](#) for more disability-related stories, and watch the collection grow!

7 Repeat!

Consider inviting another friend or family member to record.





Conversations Tips & Considerations for Recording Disability-Related Conversations

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Take some time to check in with your conversation partner. It can be helpful to develop a list of questions you each might want to ask during the recording. Typically, 6–8 questions is a good place to start for a 40-minute conversation. We've provided some suggestions in our [Suggested Questions](#) list. As always, the best questions are the ones you've always wanted to ask, so feel free to add a few of your own.

INTRODUCTIONS

Begin by both introducing yourselves. Share your name, age, today's date, where you are recording, and your relationship to your conversation partner. For example:

My name is (name). I am (age) years old. Today is (date), and I'm speaking with (partner's name), who is my (relationship). I am recording this interview in (place, city, state; e.g., "my home in Nome, Alaska").

“I'm hoping that the section of the interview talking about the illness might touch others with the same illness. It's very difficult to connect with other people facing this condition.”

StoryCorps Participant

CONSIDERATIONS FOR RECORDING Disability-Related STORIES

Recording is an opportunity for you to share your story, in your own words, and listen to your partner tell their story. Conversations about disability-related experiences can be joyful, healing, illuminating, and sometimes hard. Speaking about a disability can be a struggle for some people. Remember that there is no right or wrong way to have this conversation. All feelings are welcome, like happiness, humor, sadness, anger, or guilt.

We recommend checking in with your partner before, during, and after the conversation to review any personal or sensitive information that may come up during your interview. Are there any details you do not want to include in your recording? Does your partner want to avoid discussing certain information? Only share information about your own disability that you are comfortable with, and be mindful not to reveal identifying information about others, especially if you're mentioning disabilities they may not want shared publicly. You can also talk with your interview partner about whether you would both like to share your conversation in the StoryCorps Archive.



INTERVIEW TIPS FOR GREAT CONVERSATIONS

Forty minutes can seem like a long time, but the recording session may go faster than you think. Here are some tips and considerations for recording a conversation with someone about their personal health journey, or sharing a story of your own.

Think about what you want to talk about during your interview before the recording session. Reflect on some of the major people, places, and events of your health story. Consider some of the questions that might come up during conversation or that your interview partner might ask.

Ask warm-up questions. Press the record button and follow the prompts to introduce yourself and your partner. Then ask a few warm-up questions, like “Where were you born?” or “Can you describe the first time we met?”

Ask open-ended questions and follow-up questions that elicit great details. “What” and “where” questions are good places to start. Then move on to bigger-picture “why” and “how” questions. Ask open-ended questions that don’t assume answers. When you get a good response to a question, consider saying, “Tell me more.” Doing so can provoke longer, richer stories.

Think of it as a conversation. You and your partner should feel free to ask one another questions throughout the interview—there is no right or wrong way to do an interview. Try to relax and share what feels natural. It’s okay to take breaks, move on from certain questions, and/or have moments of silence throughout your conversation.

Listen closely. Repeating back what your partner says can be affirming for them and helpful in forming your next question. Allow your partner to talk about their experiences in their own words.

Be prepared to rephrase. If at first your partner does not seem comfortable answering a question, consider rephrasing it, offering more context, or asking something different.

Be prepared for an emotional experience. The interview can bring up feelings for you and your partner.

Plan some reflective questions. Keep an eye on the timer so that you know when there are 10 and 5 minutes left. End your interview with reflective questions, such as “What legacy would you like to leave?”

Express gratitude. Take a few minutes at the end of your conversation to tell your partner how much you care about them, and thank the person for the conversation you just had.

Continue the conversation after the recording stops. Take the opportunity to follow up on the things you discussed and to continue reminiscing.

Be yourself. Be curious. Keep an open heart.



MORE ABOUT US:

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS

- Basic Introduction: (a) Your name (part or full) or the name you would like to use in the interview*; (b) With whom are you recording?; (b) where and when?; (c) Your preferred pronouns. (*You do not need to use your full name, nor a real name.)
- Basic Introduction continued: (d) Do you have a preference for person-first language (i.e., person with a disability, person with autism) vs. identity-first language (i.e., Disabled person, Autistic person)?
- Further Introduction: Tell us a little bit about yourselves... (as much or little as you choose to disclose).
- Possible further introduction questions for students: (a) Your major (if you have one) and career plans/dreams; (b) Was this always your career plan/dream? If not, what did you want to be growing up?
- Possible further introduction questions for faculty, staff, and administration: (a) What is your position and how did you there?; (b) Was this always your career plan? If not, what did you want to be growing up?; (c) Where did you go to school? Did you need accommodations?
- Why did you want to participate in the project?
- How, if at all, does your/your loved one's disability impact daily life?
 - Are there particular activities it prohibits/makes more difficult?
 - Are there things it makes easier?
 - How much time, money, and effort does it take to manage your/their disability?

- When did you first recognize that you/your loved was different? Or, if you/they were not born with the disability in question, when was its onset? How did it make you feel?
- If you, how does your family handle your disability? Are they supportive?
- If you, how do your friends and peer handle your disability? Are they supportive? Do you feel included?
- If you, how do you survive on campus as a person with a disability or Disabled person? Are there changes to the physical or social environment or to our practices, or assistive aids or services, that would make your disability less disabling or not disabling at all?
- If you, and your disability is invisible, do you disclose it? In what circumstances do you feel comfortable disclosing? In what circumstances, do you not feel comfortable? What would it take to make you comfortable?
- Do you think of yourself/your loved one as disabled or having a disability?
- If you, what does it mean to you to be disabled or to have a disability? Is it part of your identity? Something in which you take pride?
- What is the most valuable lesson your experience with disability has taught you?
- What, if anything, do you wish more people understood about your/your loved one's disability? Are there specific things you wished your/their friends or family or peers or strangers understood better?
- What, if anything, do you wish more people understood about disability in general?

- If you could change one or more things about the university or the world to make it more equitable or accessible to people with disabilities in general or with your or your loved one's disability in particular, what would you change?



PLANNING FOR YOUR CONVERSATION

Below are some specific questions to consider and discuss with your interview partner before you hit record.

Meaningful stories often focus on challenge, choice, and outcome. Reflect on what moments in your life presented you with a challenge. Why did you feel this was a challenge? Why did you make the choice you did? How did the outcome feel? What did you learn?

“Because it is recorded, it lifts up the importance of the conversation. And, the questions were so great and in-depth—I would never have thought to ask them on my own.”

StoryCorps Participant

What are 3–5 main topics that you would like to touch upon in your conversation?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Are there any topics you do not want to discuss?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____



What are five questions you would like to ask your interview partner?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Forty minutes may sound like a lot of time, but a thoughtful question can open up an entire thread of conversation. Feel free to develop your own questions, or use the [Suggested Questions](#) list for inspiration. It can be helpful to start with some general questions before asking about more complex subjects.

Great Follow-Up Questions

- *How did that make you feel?*
- *Can you paint a picture in words?*
- *What happened next?*
- *What were you thinking when that happened?*
- *Can you remember a specific time...?*
- *Is there anything else you'd like to say to me?*
- *Can you give me an example?*





NEXT STEPS

Reflections and Questions after the Conversation

Whether you record using the StoryCorps App or Connect, listen to stories in the archive, or start a discussion with family or friends, we encourage you to take some time to reflect on the importance of health and wellness conversations.

- ▶ Why is it important to share stories about disability?
- ▶ What did you learn from having a disability-related conversation? What surprised you?

“The good thing about telling my story was that it showed that I am not just a kid with a disease. I have friends and ambitions. The story got to be about me as a person and human being.”

StoryCorps Participant

Here are a few ways to continue the conversation:

- ▶ Search for stories in the [StoryCorps Archive](#) and at [storycorps.org](#).
- ▶ Ask your library staff for more health and wellness resources at your library.
- ▶ Connect with others through the [More About Us Community Page](#).
- ▶ Explore the community pages for Alice Wong's original [Disability Visibility Project](#) and the [Grosse Pointe Library Disability Visibility Project](#) it inspired.
- ▶ Record more disability related conversations with other friends, family, or community members.

