

SPARK CHANGE.

HANDOUT FOR NFP STORYTELLERS: Prompts for Finding and Sharing Your Story

Use these prompts to help organize your experiences into a powerful story using ULUstory's 5-Step Storytelling Model. This model helps you easily create the tremendously important "dramatic arc" which fosters empathy, trust and connection.

1. Who I Was at the Beginning (Stasis)
2. The Spark Event
3. The Choice or Dilemma I Faced
4. The Consequences of My Choice
5. Who I Am Now (Reflection and Meaning)

When answering these prompts, focus on specific moments that feel vivid, emotional, or meaningful to you. Don't worry if your answers feel rough at first—every story starts with discovering the key moments that matter most.

1. Who I Was at the Beginning (Stasis)

These questions help you reflect on what life looked like for you before the event or challenge.

- What was your everyday life like before things changed?
- Who or what helped you feel stable, safe, or supported at that time?
- What made you feel hopeful or excited for the future?
- How did [the program/service/resource] play a role in your life?
- What did you value most about your community, family, or surroundings at this point?

2. The Triggering Event

The trigger is the event beyond your control that disrupted your life or stability. These questions will help you uncover the moment that set your story in motion.

- What specific event or change disrupted your world?
- How did you find out about what had happened? (For example, through an email, news, or personal experience.)
- How did you feel in the moment when you realized your life or situation was changing?
- Who was there with you, and how did they react?

- What was the first thing you did or thought when this event occurred?
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3. The Choice or Dilemma I Faced

At the heart of every story is a moment of decision. What did you have to choose, and how did you make that choice?

- What difficult choice or decision did this event force you to make?
 - Did you have an instinctive reaction or hesitation? What was it, and why?
 - What values, beliefs, or priorities guided your decision-making?
 - Were there any doubts, conflicts, or pressures you faced while deciding?
 - Was the choice you made clear and obvious, or did you struggle to find the right path?
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4. The Consequences of My Choice

This part of the story explores the impact of your decision on yourself and others.

- What happened as a result of your choice?
 - Did things take an unexpected turn—either good or bad? How did that feel?
 - How did your choice impact other people, such as your family, community, or colleagues?
 - Did you face obstacles, challenges, or surprises afterward?
 - Looking back now, would you say your actions created positive change (big or small)?
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5. Who I Am Now (Reflection and Meaning)

Your story ends with growth or insight. These questions help you reflect on what the experience taught you or how it changed you.

- Looking back, how has this experience shaped who you are today?
- Give a very specific example of a recent action you took, or a thought you had, which was informed by the choice you faced.
- What have you learned about yourself, your values, or your ability to navigate challenges?
- What do you see differently now that you didn't before this experience?
- What would you like someone who hears your story to take away from it?

- If you could deliver one message or piece of advice to someone else facing a similar experience, what would it be?

Optional Prompts for Building Empathy with Your Audience

Your story has the power to create shared understanding and inspire action. These prompts help make your experience relatable to others.

- What's one specific, small moment from your story that truly shows the bigger impact of what happened?
- How would you describe your experience to someone who has never gone through anything like it?
- If you could help someone step into your shoes for a single day, what would you show them? Use precise, evocative language.
- What helped you feel seen or supported during this time? How can others help people like you?
- Why do you think sharing your story could help others understand a bigger issue?

Optional Prompts for Activating Change

If your story is aimed at creating a call to action, use these prompts to inspire others to take the next step.

- If you could send one message to policymakers, donors, or decision-makers, what would you tell them?
- What's something you wish people outside your community understood about what you've been through?
- What do you want your audience to do after hearing your story? How can their actions make a difference?
- What would it mean to you—and others—if change actually happened?
- How would supporting people like you create long-term benefits for society?

Tips for Developing Your Story

As you develop your responses into a full story, remember these tips:

- Be specific: Focus on vivid moments instead of general statements. For example, describe a single day, conversation, or realization.
- Use metaphors, analogies, visual descriptions to create pictures in your listeners' minds. These make your stories more memorable, and also help cross cultural or emotional barriers.

- Be vulnerable: Don't just explain what happened—share how you felt. Authentic emotions build trust and empathy.
 - Be relatable: Highlight universal themes like family, resilience, or hope to help others connect with your story, even if they haven't experienced the same challenges.
 - End with impact: Reflect on what the experience taught you, and consider how your story can inspire others.
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How to Use This Handout

If you need help writing or shaping your story:

- Focus on *one question* from each section to get started.
- Use your responses as building blocks to draft your story.
- Practice sharing your story with a friend, family member, or team member for feedback.

Remember, your story matters. It has the power to inspire, connect, and spark change.

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