

Join us. Be the living proof that recovery saves lives.

How to use *The Power of Our Stories*. Organize a training event to watch the video and practice story telling.

You can use the video to demonstrate how people are using their stories to speak out. Then create a supportive environment where people can use the Training Video



Worksheet to practice telling their stories and speaking out. If you are working on a particular issue campaign, you can tailor the worksheet materials to fit that particular campaign.

- Decide on when the event will be, who will host it, and who you would like to come.
- Identify a training facilitator. This person should keep the event on schedule and organize the post-viewing discussion and group exercises.
- Publicize your event. Email friends and coworkers, advertise in your local paper, and create fliers to post.
- Make sure there is a sign-in table and ask a friend to staff it. Have name tags, copies of hand-outs, and light refreshments. Set up the room so everybody can watch the video.
- Make copies of this brochure and the Training Video Worksheet.

FORUMS FOR TELLING YOUR STORY

Start by talking with one other person or a small group. As you become more comfortable and have more practice, expand your audience. Here are some examples of people to speak to and places to speak at:

- ◆ Neighbors
- ◆ Friends
- ◆ Civic organization meetings
- ◆ Media
- ◆ Faith-based meetings
- ◆ Your city council
- ◆ Your state legislators
- ◆ Addiction treatment providers

Recovery community organizations research issues, strategize about what to ask, and mobilize recovery advocates. To find a recovery community organization near you, go to our website at:

www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org

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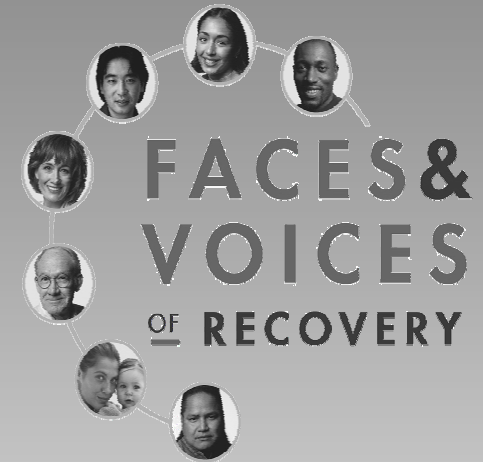
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The Power of Our Stories:

Speaking out for Addiction Recovery



All across our country, people are organizing and mobilizing to let others know about addiction recovery.

They are moms and dads, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, and friends of people who have regained their health and lives through freedom from addiction.

They are using their stories to come forward, speak out and stand up for their rights.

www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org

Stories teach and inspire, and empower us to make a better world.

FACES & VOICES OF RECOVERY

The Power of Our Stories video is one part of our national campaign to broaden understanding and increase support for people in or seeking recovery from addiction to alcohol or other drugs.



In 2004 Faces & Voices held trainings on the power of story and organizing in the recovery community, based on the Recovery Association Project (www.rap-nw.org) in Portland, Oregon's model. This video shows one piece of that training – practicing telling your story.

Our stories help break down the myths and stereotypes that keep people from getting the help they need. Our stories have the power to change public attitudes and policies. Telling your story effectively takes practice. Groups of people or individuals can use the video to hone their storytelling skills.

Your story can be far more engaging than even a famous expert because you are the expert.

When it comes to addiction recovery and the barriers that people face who are seeking recovery, you, as a person in recovery or family member, have lived it.



Through storytelling, we learn to respect others' points of view and gain empathy for each other. Our combined stories can teach, inspire, and make a difference.

Preparing to Tell your Story. Here are four techniques to use as you prepare to tell your story. Before you tell your story, here are a few things to think about:

- 1) *Tailor your story to your audience*
 - Be flexible: Make the story interesting to the specific audience you are speaking to.
 - Be engaging: What's in your story that grabs people's attention?
 - Be credible: Make sure that your story has characters and situations that people can relate to.
- 2) *Make sure you "hit your mark"*
 - Be concise and relevant: Get rid of extraneous details.
 - Be explicit and to the point: Restate your point a few times.
 - Use research and information: Give specific facts and provide examples to get your message across.
- 3) *Include the "ask" of what you want them to do and let them know what's in it for them*
 - Be specific: Make sure the person understands what you want them to do.
 - Explain "What's in it for me:" Let the person know what they are going to get by doing what you are asking.
- 4) *Make the connection*
 - Build a relationship: Use your research to make a personal connection with the person you are speaking to.
 - Describe the "big picture:" Explain why you are a recovery advocate; share your vision of a recovered community.
 - Explain the consequences: Make a connection between what you are asking for and how it will affect that individual.

Stories are effective when they are told in a way that says something about a broader set of issues.



STORYTELLING TIPS

- ◆ Maintain eye contact.
- ◆ Think about how you are sitting or standing and ask yourself what your body language is communicating.
- ◆ Think about how you are dressed and how you look.
- ◆ Speak conversationally.
- ◆ Paint a picture with words.
- ◆ Use terms and language that everybody would be familiar with. Avoid jargon and acronyms.
- ◆ Use note cards to jot down some talking points and to help be sure you've covered everything.

My vision is that everyone everywhere has access to vast and varied recovery support services; that no one feels the ongoing desolation of this disease; that those who have suffered no longer live behind a veil of stigma, but rather they feel society's admiration and appreciation for the struggle and courage it takes for them to live a life reclaimed from darkness.

—Mark Helijas