

Additional Resources

Power of Personal Narratives

Things to Remember When Sharing

Stories should be shared at an **individual pace** with very gentle encouragement, no one should feel forced or rushed to share.



Practice **self-care**—Hearing others' stories can be emotional and taxing. Find your own support system to avoid burnout.



Learning Circles should promote **storytelling** by encouraging respect, accountability, inclusive, not over-sharing and focus on topic



Sharing Your Personal Narrative

Instead of This		Try This	
X	Winging it...	✓	Practicing your story
X	Sharing more than you are comfortable with	✓	Thinking about why you are sharing
X	Overwhelming the audience	✓	Sharing enough details to make the story make sense without oversharing
X	Sharing every detail of your life	✓	Staying within time guidelines
X	Sharing more than is necessary	✓	Thinking about story elements and highlights

Responding to a Story

Instead of This	Try This
✗ Say too much	✓ Matching your response to the level of story that is shared
✗ Offering trite answers	✓ Giving a response that is genuine and real
✗ Giving advice	✓ Speaking from your heart
✗ Saying nothing or staying silent	✓ Giving responses that make it safe for the person to tell more of their story
✗ Telling the person how they should or should not feel	✓ Keeping responses without judgement
✗ Telling someone to stop crying	✓ Connecting responses to feeling words
✗ Asking for more details	

Personal Narrative vs Self-Disclosure

Self-Disclosure

- Disclosing your personal information to someone who is receiving services
- May include sharing an array of personal information such as about family, personal experiences with mental health or personal belief systems and values
- Risks pulling the focus away from the person being served
- Unless properly trained, it is generally a safe practice to avoid self-disclosure to the extent possible with those receiving services

Personal Narrative

- Sharing one's individual story in a business/work environment to help foster deeper relationships
- Represents the individual's journey and what shaped who they are
- May include values, customs, culturally important elements or other information that reflect the whole person
- A personal narrative is not therapy and one must be mindful to not share information that is emotionally raw or trauma and resist "over sharing"