

# A Storytelling Guide & Resource List

EVERYONE  
HAS A STORY

# Welcome!

The purpose of this guide is to take you through the process of storytelling through a checklist for each step and connect you with relevant resources and organizations. Storytelling in this guide is defined as “true and personal narratives shared from a first-person perspective and highlights lived experiences”. A story can be about a moment, a phase, a conversation, a relationship, or even multiple moments in one’s life.

There is no one correct way of describing the storytelling process so this guide is not an exhaustive list and some elements may not be applicable to your needs. Feel free to adapt, modify, and be inspired by these resources to create your own storytelling process. The aim of storytelling practice is not to foster a culture of trauma or to compete with one another about who has experienced the worst oppression. In fact, storytelling can help to find one’s voice, reaffirm values, increase empathy, bring communities together, and process healing. It is not to be substituted in lieu of therapy or counseling (StoryCenter). This guide should not be used as a facilitators guide or train the trainer manual. Holding and facilitating story circles and storytelling workshops may require additional training and learning.

**Please remember that EVERY STORY MATTERS. EVERY VOICE MATTERS.**

# This guide includes:

- What's my story?
- Mapping the Process of Storytelling
- Process of Storytelling
- Resources and Organizations

## WHAT'S MY STORY? Self- Reflection Activity:

What are a few true personal stories you may have heard or read or watched that made an impression?

Think about that time when someone's story helped you or made you think further?

How did it help?

What made the story useful?

Which parts of the story made it memorable?



# What's your story?

Check out this short video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h9nBW5JpLnY>



# What kinds of stories can I share?

What are a few true personal stories you may have heard or read or watched that made an impression?

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# Mapping the Process of STORYTELLING

## SEVEN STEPS OF DIGITAL STORYTELLING

- **Preparation Steps:** identifying and screening storytellers; developing story prompts
- **Finding Your Story:** view examples; Story Circle
- **Hearing Your Story:** scripting and recording
- **Seeing Your Story:** image collection and production
- **Bringing it Together:** video editing; story screening; identifying next steps.

**Resource:** [Digital Storytelling Cookbook](#) (StoryCenter), pp.5-14



# Checklist:

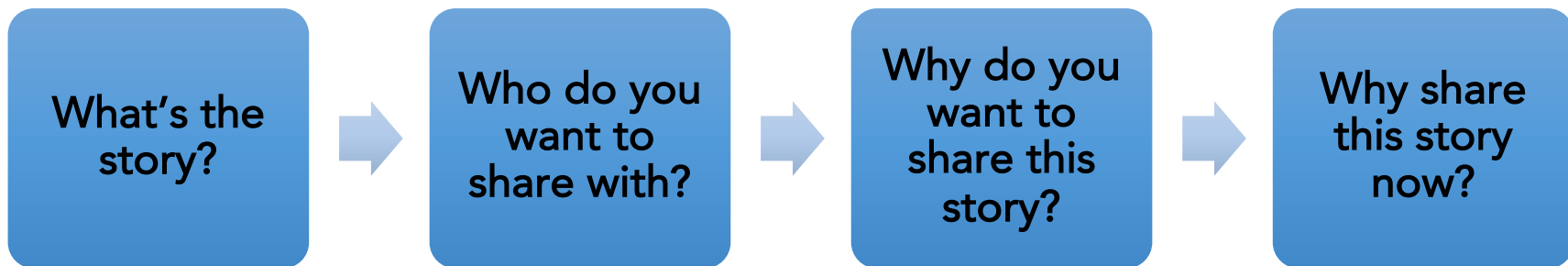
- Prepare and Find your Story
- Write a Story
- Finalize and Record your Script
- Identify Materials or Platform
- Create a Storyboard [if digital]
- Edit and Finalize Video [if digital]
- Send to trusted folks for review [optional]
- Decide if and how you wish to share [optional]

# 1. Prepare and Find your Story

What are the stories coming up in your mind?

- ❑ Kinds of true personal stories can vary
- ❑ “What’s the story you want to tell?” (StoryCenter)
- ❑ Write in first-person voice
- ❑ What were the sights, sounds, weather, season etc?

# Digital Storytelling Process



If you plan to create a digital story, you can register for a [free webinar offered by StoryCenter](#):

## 2. Write your story



### Own your story! Own your experience!

- ❑ Free writing: Write a page of that story without filtering or worrying about grammar etc.
- ❑ Write in a language you feel most comfortable with
- ❑ Write a story with a letter to yourself or someone else
- ❑ The script can be a poem or include dialogues
- ❑ The story could also be a personal narrative

*For example*, for written storytelling, check out the stories of street harassment shared on [Stop Street Harassment](#)

# 3. Finalize and Record your Script

- ❑ Create a highly focused script (approx 300-500 words)
- ❑ Examine script for any unnecessary repetitions & typos
- ❑ Read it aloud a couple of times like you are narrating with natural pauses
- ❑ Don't trivialize your voice and story
- ❑ Check if your script focuses on "that moment" or "message" you wish to convey.
- ❑ Read your script a few times aloud before recording.
- ❑ To record your script, use your cell phone, or [Quicktime Player](#) or through [Audacity](#) free version.
- ❑ Use Audacity or iMovie or Quicktime Player itself to edit any audio issues or breathing or long pauses (if applicable)

# 4. Identify Materials/Platform:

- ❑ **Decide what platform you wish to use:** [iMovie](#) app is available on Apple iPads & Mac laptops. A free version and paid accounts of [WeVideo](#) is available via the browser [other platforms may also be available]
- ❑ Identify a few digital or print photos (approx 10-12) either from your personal album or online.
- ❑ Find online stock-free images here: [Unsplash](#), [Gender Photos Vice](#), or [The Noun Project](#) or [Adobe](#)
- ❑ You can also create art or draw or paint or illustrate/ animate your story or video shoot your painting process
- ❑ You can also take photos of artifacts, collectibles, or take homemade photos of nature, etc
- ❑ Obtain consent from people before using their images or blur them
- ❑ Upload materials online on [iMovie](#) or [WeVideo](#) platform

# 5. Create a storyboard

## Arrange your materials on your digital storyboard

- What's your story? Listen to your voiceover
- Select most relevant images or videos or other materials
- Remember: LESS is MORE to make sure your story is heard
- Upload your edited audio mp3 voiceover to your platform
- How do you see these materials playing your story?
- Avoid very obvious cliched photos (like sunset etc.) unless uniquely significant to your story
- Do you imagine background music or just your voice over?
- Orchestrate your digital story by [creating a storyboard on WeVideo](#)

# 6. Edit and Finalize Video [it digital]

## A. Editing Video includes:

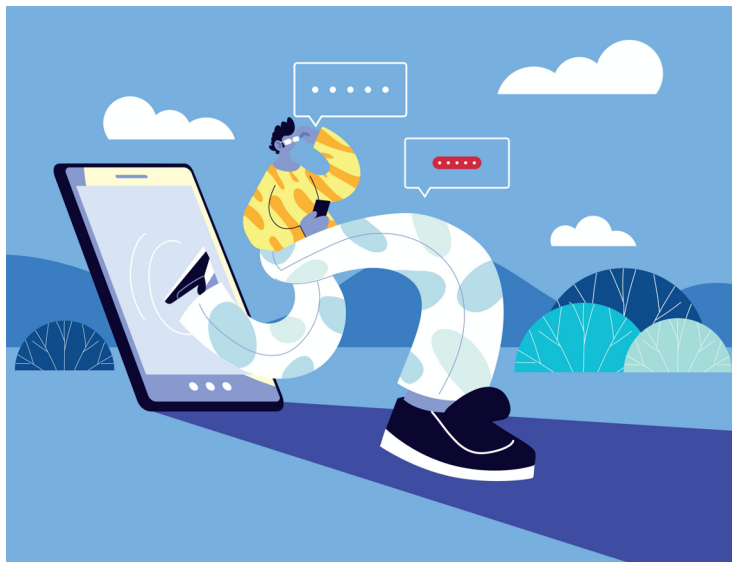
- Add transition effects to your digital film on [WeVideo](#) or [iMovie](#)
- Add copyright free background music (optional)
- Edit audio voiceover volume and transition (if needed)
- Play the rough draft of the video a few times to see how it looks
- Share with trusted folks if you want for their review

## B. Finalizing Video includes:

- Download/ export the video
- Do you wish to share your story? If no or not now, that's great!
- If YES, with whom? When? How?
  - If you feel ready to publicly share outside your trusted circle, then remember the impact of digital footprints and power of your story



## Decide IF, when, and how you wish to share your digital story/film



## Examples of Digital Films:

- ❑ I Am With You (Chanel Miller)
- ❑ Dear Aayee... (Meghna/ Maureen, StoryCenter)
- ❑ Distance (Marianna Corona, StoryCenter)
- ❑ I Guess I Don't Hate Blueberries (J. Forrest, StoryCenter)
- ❑ Asian Women's Shelter Case Studies (StoryCenter)
- ❑ Stories of Home Video Playlist (StoryCenter)
- ❑ Embers (Anonymous, StoryCenter)
- ❑ Untitled (Kim Thuy Seelinger, StoryCenter)
- ❑ Don't feed the animals (Chagan/ Eunice, StoryCenter)
- ❑ Digital Narratives: Youth Stories of Connection and Joy (Vermont Network)

# RESOURCES:

- Register for a free webinar offered by StoryCenter on digital storytelling
- StoryCenter: [www.storycenter.org](http://www.storycenter.org)
- A How-to Guide for Digital Storytelling (SAMHSA)
- Storytelling Basics for Community Building (CALCASA/ The Partnership)
- Creating Stories for Gender Justice... (PreventConnect/ CALCASA)
- Our Collective Future Story Circle Guide (IDVSA)
- Story At Scale: <https://www.storyatscale.org/>
- Art + Storytelling (Resonance Network)
- Write It Out: Using Words and Art to Strengthen and Heal Family Bonds  
[Vermont Network]
- Storytelling Webinar Series [NSVRC/ StoryCenter]
- Capital Storytelling: Oral Storytelling workshops
- StoryCorps

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