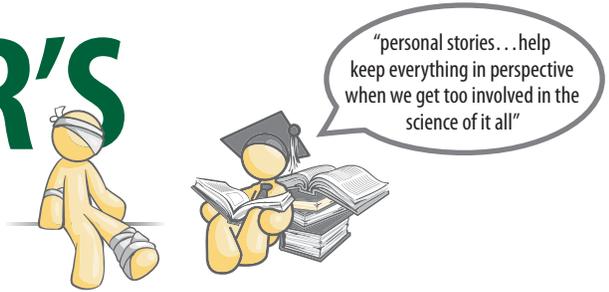




PATIENT MENTOR'S Guide to storytelling



WHY When you share your story, health science students will grow in understanding and empathy. Mentors value this chance to inform and inspire future practitioners.

WHAT You are the expert of your own story: there is no right or wrong way to share it. Both positive and negative health care experiences can help to provide a balanced perspective. Remember to link any negative experiences with suggestions for how it could have been made better for you. Students engage further when it is clear how their profession can support you.

10 questions for fine tuning your story:

1. What is it like to live with your health condition?
2. How does it impact your physical function and other aspects of your life?
3. What was your reaction when you first acquired this condition, how do you feel now?
4. What is your experience coordinating your care and navigating the system?
5. What barriers have you encountered to accessing treatment?
6. What information was helpful, missing or not helpful?
7. How has the choice of language used by practitioners been helpful (or not)?
8. Which professions have you worked with?
9. How have you interacted with these practitioners?
10. How have you been involved in the decision making related to your health?

SAMPLE APPROACHES:

Visual representations

- Every parking chit from the months following diagnosis through treatment to current day
- All your pill bottles
- All the patient information handouts received
- A Day/Month in the Life: Your calendar can highlight complexity through number of appointments & practitioners involved

One person: Two perspectives

How Practitioners See Me	How I See Me
Stroke	Accountant
Wheelchair	Father
Speech impairment	Chess player

HOW The interview should be a two-way interaction in which students share in establishing a dynamic interaction. Encourage roundtable introductions, if students forget. Ask a student to track time. Silence can be a tool, though a quiet group may need encouragement. Dialogue can be encouraged by asking students what they are afraid to ask.



A NOTE ABOUT PRIVACY

If your story includes other family members, get their permission and engage them in how to share their part of your story.

Disclose only what you are comfortable sharing. Decide what questions might be too personal for you to answer so you are

not caught off guard. Possible response: "Sorry, that is not something I can/will/am able to speak about".

Telling your story may stir past emotions. Showing emotions during your session is okay. Rehearsing ahead of time can help. If you become upset, stop. Do not force yourself to continue until **and** unless you feel you can.