



UU Voices for Healthcare Study Action Series UU Legislative Ministry, CA

Facilitator Outline for Story Catching Campaign

Materials needed:

- Hymnals
- Piano or guitar (optional)
- Copies of Order of Service (to be distributed before you begin), Interview Questions, Story Form, and Telling Your Story handout.

Singing:

Gather the Spirit
#347, Singing the Living Tradition

Opening / Chalice Lighting:

By Chris Cavanaugh

Storytellers, by the very act of telling, communicate a radical learning that changes lives and the world. Telling stories is a universally accessible means through which people make meaning.

Greeting One Another

Find someone you don't know very well and re/introduce yourself. Share a few words about what brought you here today.

Unison Reading

Facilitator's note: Divide group in half; one group reads italicized phrases.

In the words of Helen Keller: 'Until the great mass of the people shall be filled with the sense of responsibility for each other's welfare, **social justice** can never be attained.'

In the words of Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.: 'Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.'

In the words of our religious movement: 'We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.'

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Introducing Story Sharing

Facilitator's note: Read the following text, or invite another volunteer to do so.

For years, healthcare advocates have collected stories from people of all walks of life who have had trouble getting the health care they needed, when they needed it, at a price they could afford. These stories have helped coalitions advocate for high quality, affordable, health care for all. Your story can help educate policy makers and reporters, by making them aware of the struggles ordinary Californians face in accessing health care.

Stories also play a vital role in communities of faith, fostering solidarity and connection among its members and in the wider world. Your story can help Unitarian Universalists everywhere build community, share their own healthcare stories, and organize their congregations for just healthcare reform.

Sharing your story in this safe and sacred space is a faithful way we can be present with each other, mindful that we are all connected.

Story Sharing (45 min)

Facilitator's Note: Distribute the "Interview Questions" and "Story Form" handout.

Participants pair up with the person whom they greeted earlier, and spend fifteen minutes per person interviewing each other. Take a five minute break after each interview to write the response to the last question in the Story Form, and fill out the other information (type of insurance, contact info, etc.)

Debrief by asking what the experience was like for the story teller, and the interviewer – take two or three responses. Remind participants that UULM will only use their first name, and congregation or city, to identify me them if their story is shared with others, and that they will be contacted if more information is needed.

Singing:

Spirit of Life
#123, Singing the Living Tradition

Telling Our Story to Others (10 min)

Facilitator's Note: Distribute the "Telling Your Personal Story" handout.

Review handout (ask a few participants to each read a paragraph). Take two minutes to think about your story, then take two minutes each to tell your brief story as if you were sharing it with a legislator or reporter.

Facilitator's Note: Remind participants that healthcare stories can also be shared via UULM's website, www.uulmca.org. Be sure to sign up for the UULM email list so that we can let you know about legislative updates, ways to take action, and stories from other Unitarian Universalists across California.

Singing

Facilitator's Note: To learn the tune or download a free file of the song, visit mcneilmusic.com/wrkunion.html, where you can download a clip of the song. Sing it loudly (clapping is welcome!) with a hopeful, lively tone.

Facilitator's Note: Introduce the song as a song with a long history in the United States. Based off the gospel hymn "I Shall Not be Moved", this song became an anthem for the trade union movement, the civil rights movement and beyond, building solidarity and spirit among those working for justice.

We Shall Not Be Moved

We shall not, we shall not be moved
We shall not, we shall not be moved
Just like a tree that's planted in the water
We shall not be moved!

Working for justice, we shall not be moved
Working for justice, we shall not be moved
Just like a tree that's planted in the water
We shall not be moved!

Fighting for healthcare, we shall not be moved
Fighting for healthcare, we shall not be moved
Just like a tree that's planted in the water
We shall not be moved!

Extinguishing the Chalice

#698, Singing the Living Tradition

By Wayne Arnason

Take courage, friends.
For though the road is often long,

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The path is often unclear,
And the stakes are very high,
There is another truth:
You are not alone.

Interview Questions

For In-Person Healthcare Story Gathering

Describe for me (or draw) an overview of your health insurance history. How would you describe your overall sense of health and wholeness at different points?

How have you provided healthcare for yourself and your family? How has that changed over time?

Have you ever been in the hospital? What was that experience like?

Tell me about a time when you felt anxious, fearful, or stressed about healthcare.

Access, or lack of access, to quality affordable health care touches us all: patients, providers and employers alike. Was there a time when you, or someone close to you, was uninsured, had inadequate insurance, or made a major decision based on the need to get or keep insurance? How did this affect you, your family, your business, or your congregation? *Write the response to this question on the Story Form.*

Telling Your Personal Story

Your role as an advocate is to *motivate others to act*. Telling your personal story is a powerful tool for connecting with others based on shared values. It can be successfully used to motivate a legislator to support your cause or to motivate others to join you.

Using Your Personal Story for Legislative Advocacy

Legislators want to hear from **YOU**, their constituents! They want to make laws that will make a difference in the lives of their constituents. Personal stories can move representatives to look harder at an issue and help them understand the need to act.

Telling an Effective Story

Keep your purpose in mind when telling your story. Telling your story is not venting and it is not therapy; provide details to make the story tangible, but stay focused.

- The 3 key elements to a complete story are:
 - Challenge** – describe the situation/problem you faced
 - Choice** – describe what action you took or didn't take
 - Outcome** – describe what happened as a result of your action or inactionUse these 3 elements to lead your audience to the action or response you are seeking.
- KEEP IT SHORT!
Legislative testimony almost always has time limits, make sure you get it all out in time. You want to get to the point or compel attention as quickly as possible. It's always better to leave them wanting more than to leave them wanting to tune you out.
- Additional Dimensions
 - Story of Self** - the *personal* in Personal Story is key – YOU make the issue real to your audience
 - Story of Us** – personal experiences are often shared experiences or highlight shared challenges
 - Story of Now** – describing personal challenges invoke emotions and inspire action

Making an Ask

You should avoid asking for things while telling your story. Your story should speak for itself and clearly identify the need for action on the part of the listener. Save your “ask” for the end.

- Ask for action. “Thank you for listening” or “This needs your attention” are not going to get you what you want. “Vote against a spending cap” is better.
- Be as specific as possible and relate back to your personal story as appropriate. “Stop the budget cuts” is not as effective as “Please do not make cuts to children's health, my grandson Bobby desperately needs these services”.
- Do your homework and make sure your “ask” is within your target's purview. Don't ask your mayor to enact federal legislation.

Make your voice be heard!

“Nothing can stand in the way of millions of voices calling for change!” – President Barack Obama