



Listening Lab

Pocket Guide for Facilitating Discussion

The stories featured in the Listening Lab are catalysts for mindful listening and conversation with your patients, colleagues, teams, and family. They are frequently integrated into medical, nursing, staff education, new employee orientation, and meetings. We offer the following suggestions for hosting or facilitating conversation:

1. Begin your session by creating a safe space for listening and sharing. Establish ground rules. Skilled facilitators are available should you need support. Let everyone know that participation is voluntary and participants are welcome to leave the room at any time.
2. The stories featured in the Listening Lab aspire to uplift and empower. They also describe experiences of trauma and suffering that may cause discomfort or vulnerability. Be mindful and share resources on our website with those needing support.
3. The stories are intimate and powerful, and can be transformative for those who hear them. After playing the story, allow for silence. This enables individuals time to reflect, make connections to their own lives, and emotionally prepare to share.
4. Provide participants with space to respond by asking open-ended questions, such as the following: “Can you share your reflections about the story you recently heard and how it made you feel?” “How does listening to this story help you reflect on your relationships, and how you communicate with others?” Perspectives may form by listening to the responses of others.
5. Share why you selected this story and what resonated. Be thoughtful and restrained in sharing your perspectives, so as not to overdetermine the conversation.
6. In closing, acknowledge the impact of the story. Express gratitude for those who have shared, and the healing that may have occurred.

