



“Surviving Your Story” Handout

A resource for trauma survivors thinking of telling their story publicly

Intro:

If you are listening to this resource then you are considering talking publicly about your story of abuse and that is no small thing. In fact it is everything and will be to many people just like you, trying to find their courage too. BUT it is also no small thing for you personally to revisit this story and this is why we have recorded this resource to help guide and protect you through this process.

That protection of your heart and soul, as you show even more courage by exposing your truth to help others, is vitally important. This guide is here to help you understand and prepare for the process of telling and releasing your story publicly before, during and after it has been recorded. The things you might want to consider, the boundaries you may need to set, the elements that could be too painful for you and how to protect, nurture and support yourself throughout it all, especially when it goes out into the world. The last thing anyone wants is for you to be retraumatized and it is important that you know you come first and your emotional wellbeing matters most.

I hope you find this guide helpful and it gives you the confidence to know that you will be cared for and looked after as you tell your story.

Lets get into it...

BEFORE THE RECORD....

Podcasting is an amazing storytelling medium. It is my preferred medium because it is so intimate and free of restrictions and that intimacy means you are accessing the deepest level of people's minds and hearts when they hear your words direct to their ears. This can be exciting and exhilarating and when you record a podcast, it can also feel like you are speaking into a vacuum. That no one is really there. Which can provide a false sense of security. People will be there at some point and that is important to remember when revealing yourself.

Questions you may want to ask yourself before you record are:

- 1) Why do you want to tell your story? and Are you ready to tell your story?
- 2) Will telling your story help yourself and others or will it cause further pain?
- 3) Are there any parts of your story that you are not comfortable with the whole world hearing (because the whole world will eventually be able to access it)?
- 4) Are there parts of your story that you would be concerned for certain people in your life to hear?
- 5) Are there legal considerations to telling your story?
- 6) Do you have a support system in place to help guide you through as you tell your story and when it is released?
- 7) Do you have a Counsellor?
- 8) Are there kids involved?
- 9) Do you have particular trauma triggers that the podcast producers should know about?
- 10) Are there things that you do that calm you and bring you peace in times of stress?

RECORDING.

If after answering all of those questions, you STILL want to tell your story via podcast then you are ready. You are emotionally ready to go down this path and Bravo to you one more time.

Now it is time to record your podcast. What does that even mean?

On the surface it doesn't seem like much but sitting in a quiet room with someone, telling your story and answering questions as they record it all. No big deal right? And for some it is no big deal but for others it is the biggest deal of their life and often they won't know it until they are knee deep in the middle of it and that's what we want to prepare you for. The moment's you may not expect because emotions can be unpredictable.

ALWAYS REMEMBER -

- *The producers are your friends.*
- *You can stop and pause at any time.*
- *You can decide to not talk about any part of your story at any time.*
- *You can use whatever legal methods you need to get through.*
- *Make sure you have tissues and don't wear make up on the day you record*
- *Have a glass of water within reach*

Some tips for navigating through the actual telling of your story:

- 1) ***Have someone you trust with you if possible.*** If you can't have someone with you or don't want someone with you then consider having someone lined up on the phone ready to support you, who knows what you are dealing with.
- 2) ***Arrange to have your counsellor ready to take calls*** from your throughout the day and provide support.
- 3) ***Work out the parts of your story that might trigger an emotional response or be hard for you to get through.*** List them down, give a copy to the producer / interviewer.

- 4) ***Have someone pick you up or meet you later*** for a bit of TLC and support.
- 5) ***It is a great idea to do something special for yourself*** after a day of digging deep like this will be.
- 6) ***Take a day or 2 off around the recording date to give yourself a break.***
Get a relative or friend to handle the kids and allow you some time to decompress. This is something that some people will need and others won't. Be kind to yourself. Be proud of yourself. You just did something heroic. Sit with that as much as anything else.

RELEASE DAY.

You have done the work, you have recorded the story and now the day has come for it to be released into the world. Woot Woot! Yay!

BUT as much as this can be an exhilarating and exciting moment for some it can be kind of scary and that is a perfectly natural reaction. It is one thing to tell a story to an individual in a one on one situation, it is an entirely different thing to have that story released into the world for all to hear and for people to be able to have an opinion on it.

It can be an incredibly overwhelming and confronting period the release period and we want to prepare you for that and give you some tips on how to get through it.

Making the release of your story a positive experience for you and your loved ones:

- 1) ***On the day of release and even the week following avoid looking at the comments and social media*** around the release of your podcast episode.
- 2) ***It is just as important to celebrate the release of your episode in some way.*** Whatever you do on that day take a moment somewhere to recognise that something huge is happening and congratulate yourself for the achievement and the courage it has taken.
- 3) ***Get someone you trust to check the emails and comments that come through on social media, filter through the positive ones*** for you and get rid of the negative ones that you don't need to see.
- 4) ***If you get any kind of threatening communications*** screen shot them, print them and file them AND contact the police if necessary. Definitely make sure the Producers know and have copies of everything too.
- 5) ***Remember that the Producers are there for you the whole way***
- 6) ***On the day of release and the days surrounding it pull in your support systems and people*** and keep yourself immersed in activities and people that bring you great joy.
- 7) ***See your Counsellor and talk it out*** whenever the overwhelm starts to hit or the world becomes scary.
- 8) ***If it is at all possible get away*** around the time of the release.

That is everything you may want to think about, ask yourself, research and do in preparation for telling your story. I hope this resource helps and gives you a sense of security about the process you are about to undertake. It is an incredibly bold path and you are so brave for walking it. I salute you. I really do. And you should salute you too.

**Good Luck and Just Be You!
You are more than enough.**

This audio resource was produced, written and narrated by Kel Butler from Listen Up Podcasting.

**IF THIS RESOURCE HAS TRIGGERED ANYTHING FOR YOU
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