



SHARING YOUR STORY

DISCOVERING DISCLOSURE, OPENNESS AND VULNERABILITY

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GUIDELINES

Use this as a guide for two or more people to share life stories together. Through sharing at a deeper level, we open our hearts to each other. It's at the heart level that we develop genuine care and trust. Practice with friends, family and work associates. Advance to people you don't know well, but with whom you feel reasonably safe. Then try it with those you feel are so different that it's hard to imagine having anything in common with them. Focus on each other's life stories and NOT the differences in values, beliefs, lifestyles or identities.

Have the conversation in a private place, free from noise, interruptions and distractions. Turn off mobile devices. Allow 60-90 minutes. Begin by taking 10 minutes in silence to consider how you will answer.

START WITH A COMMITMENT TO CONFIDENTIALITY

Share your answers to the questions and stretch 15% into your discomfort with disclosure and vulnerability.

- Describe your family life growing up.
 - Where were you born?
 - What was your household like?
 - Talk about parents, birth order, culture, socioeconomics and environment.
- What stands out from memory?
 - Share one of your happiest memories or times from childhood.
 - Share one of your greatest challenges or times from childhood.
- Describe your family/personal life situation today.
 - Key relationships – Kids – Ages – Pets – Hobbies.
 - What makes you happiest?
- Share something about a life challenge you are facing, now or from the last few years.
 - How are you feeling about it?
- Tell each other something intimate about yourselves that would help you connect at the heart level.
 - Stretch yourself into discomfort with self-disclosure and openness. Be vulnerable. Take a risk.

TO CONCLUDE

Have a discussion that flows naturally. Be curious about your own reactions to the discussion; especially your emotions. Conclude by sharing how you feel about each other now. What has changed? Finally, end by recommitting to each other that the conversation is to remain confidential.