

# Telling Your CARE Story

As an advocate of CARE Action, you are part of something bigger than yourself and are connected to people across the globe who seek a world where poverty has been overcome and all people live in dignity and security. You are part of a community of people who make a difference. Advocacy with CARE affirms your commitment to standing with individuals and communities across the globe. Together, we are a movement that gives hope to the thousands of women and girls that inspire our work, and we change the world.

Each of us joined CARE for a reason, and **these stories matter**. Our stories help us find commonality across experience, geography, background and motivations, and weave a web of relationships that makes CARE Action powerful. Your story can help build the movement! **By telling the story of why you joined CARE and why you lead in your community, you can motivate others to act.** Whether it's encouraging someone through signing a petition, joining a group, taking on a new leadership role, or even convincing your Member of Congress to sponsor legislation on Capitol Hill, it is through shared action that we are most influential. Your story can build connections, inspire people to make a difference, move people to action and change the world. **This toolkit, paired with our virtual and in-person storytelling workshops, will provide a guide for you to craft a compelling story about why and how you are fighting for a better future alongside CARE.**



**“I realized advocacy is just talking about what you’re passionate about. It becomes easy and natural quickly.”**

— Dan Berger, CARE advocate, Pennsylvania

## Two Ways to Share Your Story

### 1. Recruiting in your community

Stories are key in building your base within your community, district or state. You can employ your story both online and in-person to bring new members or reengage members in CARE’s advocacy.

*Here are some examples:*

- Tell your story as you open events, panels, or meet-ups to make sure everyone in the room is grounded in who you are and who CARE is



- Share your story on social media to help inspire others
- Use the elements of storytelling to bring urgency into your newsletters and emails

### 2. Meeting with Members of Congress

This can be the most impactful way to use your story as you speak to those in power. At CARE, we will equip you with all the information, data, and numbers for your meeting, but **we know people remember stories more than isolated data points**. Learn more about [how to hold meetings with your Member of Congress here](#), and consider these two quick ways to bring your story into the meeting:



- **First**, have a quick 60- 90 second story ready to go at the beginning of a meeting when the traditional introduction round happens. Show how you're connected to the issues personally as a constituent in their district/state.
- **Second**, if you are in a one-on-one meeting with a staffer of a Member of Congress, you'll have more freedom to weave your story throughout the meeting.

## Creating Your Advocacy Story

**Every story has a plot.** A plot begins with a **challenge** that confronts a character with an urgent need to pay attention or to make a choice. The **choice** yields an **outcome**, and the outcome teaches a **moral**. A good story allows the listener to empathetically identify with the character and “feel” the moral. We hear about someone’s courage, and we are inspired by it.

### Structure and Elements



**1. The Hook:** Set the scene. Introduce the main character, the setting, and the situation. Gives context and helps people feel connected. Who is this about and why should we care?



**2. Challenge or Problem:** Where the tension builds, draws people in emotionally, and creates empathy.



**3. Outcome:** When the story moves towards a resolution and the challenge is addressed. May not always be perfect or a “happy ending” but shows growth, change, or insight.



**4. Turning Point:** Most intense moment of the story. Something shifts. Might be a breakthrough, decision, or key event that changed the direction of the character's journey.



**5. Meaning:** This is where you end with reflection. Why the experience matters and what we can learn from it.

### 3 Tips for Telling Your CARE Story



**Write it down:** Storytelling is challenging. Write your story down in a way that will keep you on track. Either quick bullet points or a full draft, do whatever is helpful for you.



**Keep it short:** Remember, you will usually only have under 3 minutes to tell your story. When you first craft your story, it will probably seem really long. Go through and edit several times. Then time yourself saying it out loud at a conversational pace.



**Practice, practice, practice:** It can be uncomfortable to talk about yourself or share some parts of your life with others. The more you do it, the more comfortable you'll feel. Practice with your Advocacy Manager, friends, family or even in the mirror.

*Use the worksheet on the following page to practice your storytelling!*

## Worksheet: Developing Your Story

Now that you know the structure and elements of a persuasive story, it's your turn to try! We suggest you choose a specific situation that you will be using your story for — recruiting in your community, meeting with Members of Congress, or Letters to the Editor — so you know your timing and issue focus.

**When you tell your CARE story, here are some questions to keep in mind:**

- **When** did you decide to be an advocate with CARE? Where were you? What happened? Who were you with?
- **Why** did you become advocate for CARE's issues?
- **Where** do your values come from? What challenges have you faced, and what choices have you made that illustrate your values and passions?
- **What** will you be calling on others to do? How will the world be different if more people take action?



Who is at the heart of this story?	What's the problem? What challenge or injustice are they facing?	What changed? What shifted the situation or perspective?	What happened? What was the result of impact?	Why does it matter? What should the audience do or take away? What is the call to action?