



ONE SMALL STEP: DIY (DO IT YOURSELF)

A guide to recording a courageous conversation inspired by politics and who we are, using StoryCorps Connect.

*Story
Corps*[®]

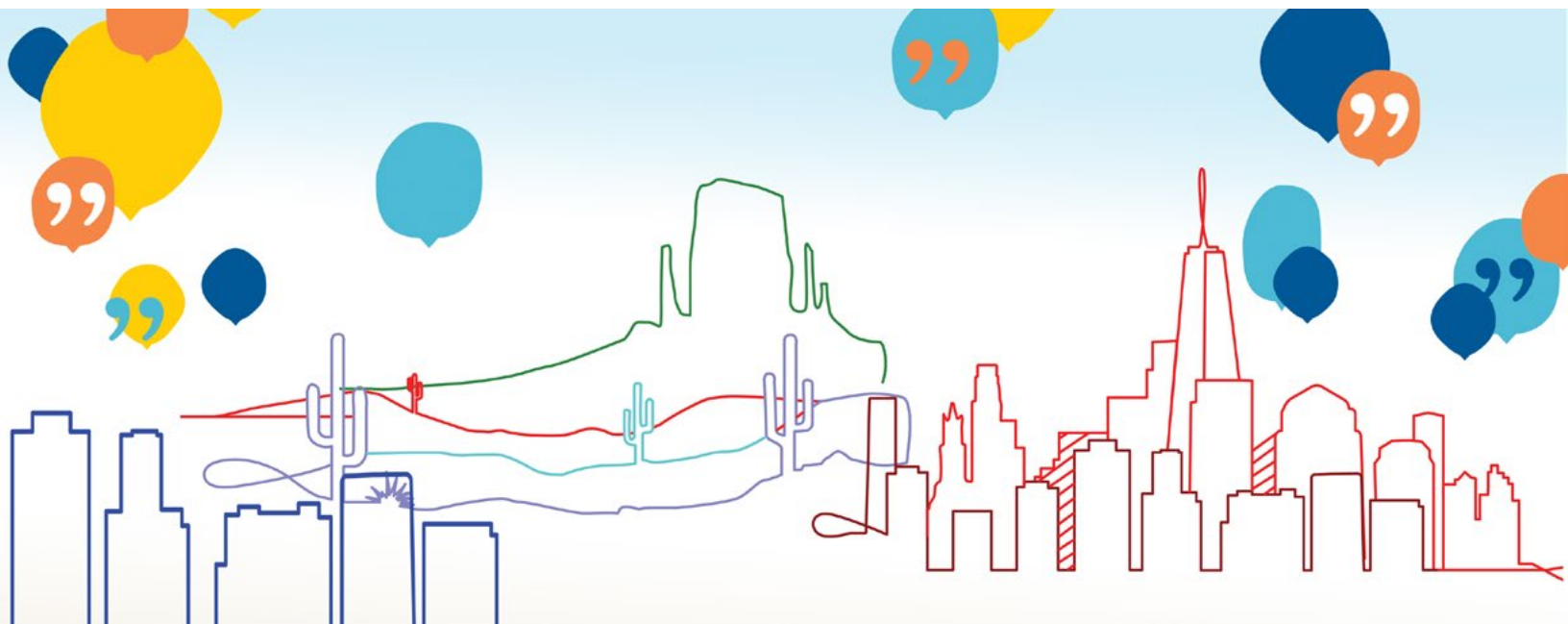
WHAT IS ONE SMALL STEP?

Created by StoryCorps, **One Small Step (OSS)** is an effort to bring together people with different political views to engage in respectful, personal, and meaningful conversation. **These conversations are not meant to be debates over politics, beliefs, or personal choices. Instead, they're a chance to share the stories and experiences that helped shape who you are.** In this space of sharing and listening, we find an opportunity to remind ourselves of the humanity present in each of us—including those with whom we disagree.

Your willingness to personally engage with someone different from you represents one small act of dismantling the political divide that many compatriots feel today.

The conversation will be entirely self-guided by you and your conversation partner, and takes place in a virtual video chat-room.

Thank you for your willingness to take this step with us. This guide will walk you and your partner through the entire process. Both participants should hold a copy of the document; OSS works best when both partners engage in a conscientious, collaborative conversation.



YOUR ONE SMALL STEP CONVERSATION IN THREE EASY STEPS

1. **PREPARE** (one week before your conversation)

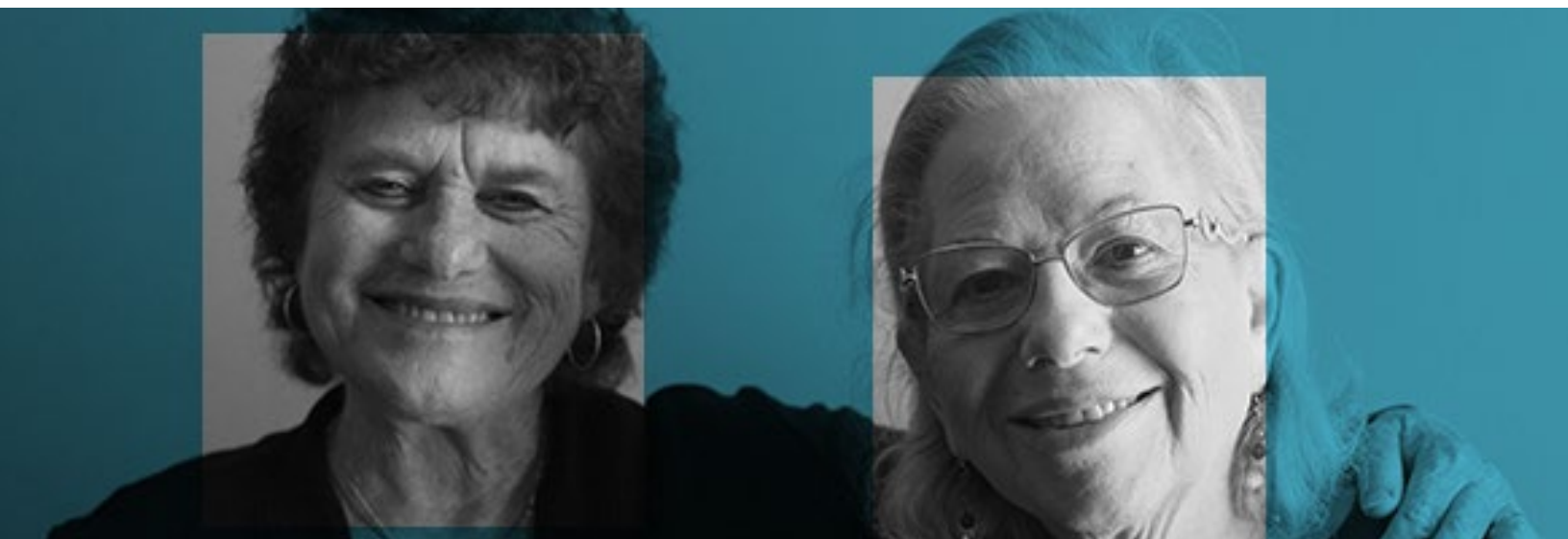
- Read through this conversation guide to familiarize yourself with the activity.
- Select your conversation partner and schedule a date and time for your conversation.
 - The conversation should last 40 minutes, but set aside one hour to complete the activity.
- Decide who will be the lead participant.

2. **HOLD THE CONVERSATION**

- Using this packet as your guide, launch into your conversation.

3. **DATABASE & ARCHIVE YOUR CONVERSATION**

- Together, decide on a privacy setting that reflects your wishes.
 - The Public setting will allow you to share your conversation far and wide.
- Together, compose an interview description and choose five keywords.
- The lead participant enters this data into the interview info form, then saves to the archive.
- Both partners should share their conversation on social media, and consider participating again.



BEFORE THE INTERVIEW: GETTING STARTED

With your partner, schedule a time and date for your conversation.

- The conversation should last 40 minutes, but set aside one hour to complete the activity.

Watch our 1-minute animation, [How To Use StoryCorps Connect](#)

Five minutes before your start time, navigate to archive.storycorps.org.

- Create an account or log in.
- You must be logged in to join the chat room.

One of you will be the lead participant. This participant will open the chat room, start and stop the recording, then fill out the interview information form after the conversation concludes. Afterwards, the interview will live in the lead participant's account.

- One partner can volunteer to be the lead, or you can choose the person whose name is closest to A in the alphabet.
- The lead must be chosen prior to the interview's start.

Lead participant:

- Login at archive.storycorps.org.
- Click your avatar (upper right-hand corner).
- In the dropdown box, select "Record with StoryCorps Connect."
- On the next page, press "Record with StoryCorps Connect".
- Allow Connect to access your camera and microphone.
- Add your partner's email address to the invite field, then press "Invite via Email."
- Wait for your partner to arrive in the chat room.
- Once your partner arrives, move to "Step One" of this conversation guide.

Non-Lead participant:

- Login at archive.storycorps.org.
- Three minutes prior to the scheduled start of your interview, check your email for an invite email from StoryCorps.
- Click on the link to join the chat room.
- Once you're both in the chat room, move to "Step One" of this conversation guide.

ENJOY YOUR DISCUSSION!

TECHNICAL ISSUES?

View instructions and a video in StoryCorps' [Connect Help Center](#).

Most issues are solved by granting Connect access to your camera and microphone.

STEP ONE: LEVEL SET

Take turns reading aloud through “The Successful One Small Step Conversation” and our ground rules.

THE SUCCESSFUL ONE SMALL STEP CONVERSATION

OSS conversations create a space to discover your partner’s values, life experiences, and motivations on a deeper level—and to simply connect. Both partners should leave with the sense that they’ve been heard, acknowledged, and treated with respect. Most importantly, each should walk away feeling that their partner is a human being who deserves to be regarded with dignity.

Steps to Creating a Successful One Small Step Conversation:

1. **Listen actively.** Be genuinely curious about how your conversation partner’s life experiences—and your own—have shaped your world views.

During the conversation, follow your curiosity and what intrigues you. Feel free to ask, “Can you tell me more?” Your partner may respond, or may say, “I’ll pass on that one.”

The best conversations feature active listening. It’s often helpful to wait an extra moment before asking your next question. This allows you to adequately digest what is being said, and to respond thoughtfully.

2. A respectful, personal conversation can **plant the seed for a valuable** new relationship—one perhaps outside your usual circles, allowing you to **seek a different perspective**.
3. **It’s okay to disagree.** The important part is understanding and acknowledging the validity of your conversation partner’s point of view.
4. **Don’t go in aiming to duke out politics.** Sincere connections happen by exploring who you are, what you care about, and your dreams for the future.
5. **Telling personal stories** can help you to anchor in a place of respect for your shared humanity.
6. **Cultivate regard for your differences.** Don’t try to persuade one another.
7. These conversations are just one small step, but they’re crucial in cultivating unity despite differences. **Make a plan for what your next step will be.**

GROUND RULES

1. Refrain from using any harmful or derogatory language.
2. Share the time equally.
3. Don’t interrupt each other.
4. Don’t make assumptions about your conversation partner or their beliefs.
5. Speak for yourself and about your own experiences: do not try to represent an entire party or belief system.
6. Respect each other’s differences. Do not try to persuade each other.

Okay, do we both agree to these ground rules? Great, let’s get started.

STEP TWO: BEGIN RECORDING

Lead participant: Press “Start Recording Audio.”

- Note that you cannot pause a Connect interview.
- The timer alerts you to remaining time (per a 40-min. interview), but will not cut you off. Your interview can last as long as you’d like.

STEP THREE: INTRODUCE YOURSELF TO YOUR PARTNER (10 minutes)

1. Together, take a few minutes to **talk about why you agreed to participate in One Small Step, and what you hope to get out of it.**
2. Now, take three to five minutes each to **tell a bit of your “life story.”** You don’t need to describe your entire life here, but share a few details that give a sense of who you are—for example:
 - **where you’re from**
 - **big life events that shaped you**
 - **any issues that have directly affected your life**

If your partner says anything that surprises or interests you, feel free to ask additional questions.

STEP FOUR: GET THE CONVERSATION ROLLING (15 minutes)

The following questions aim to help you understand where your partner comes from.

Spend about two or three minutes per partner, per question. Remember not to interrupt your partner, but feel free to ask follow-up questions when they’re finished.

1. Who has been the most influential person in your life? What did they teach you?
2. Can you recall your earliest memory of politics?
3. Could you briefly describe, in your own words, your personal political beliefs?
4. Was there a moment or experience in your life that helped shape your beliefs?





STEP FIVE: GOING DEEPER (15 minutes)

Take this opportunity to go deeper by asking your partner more questions about what they have shared, or by choosing from the suggested questions below.

1. Is there something about my beliefs that you don't agree with but still respect?
2. Do you ever feel misunderstood by people with different beliefs than you? How so?
3. Do you ever feel troubled by people with the same beliefs as you and how they communicate those beliefs to others?
4. When thinking about the future of the country, what are your fears or concerns?
5. Have you ever experienced doubt in your political beliefs?
6. Have your political leanings affected your relationships with friends or family?

STEP SIX: CLOSING (10 minutes or any remaining time)

This is the time to reflect on your experience. Ask each other one or both of the following:

1. Is there anything you learned about me today that surprised you?
2. Was this experience what you thought it would be?

Note: If you wish to exchange contact information, wait to do so after the lead participant presses "stop recording."

STEP SEVEN: STORECORDING & WRAP-UP

Talk about whether you'd like to archive your conversation.

Lead participant:

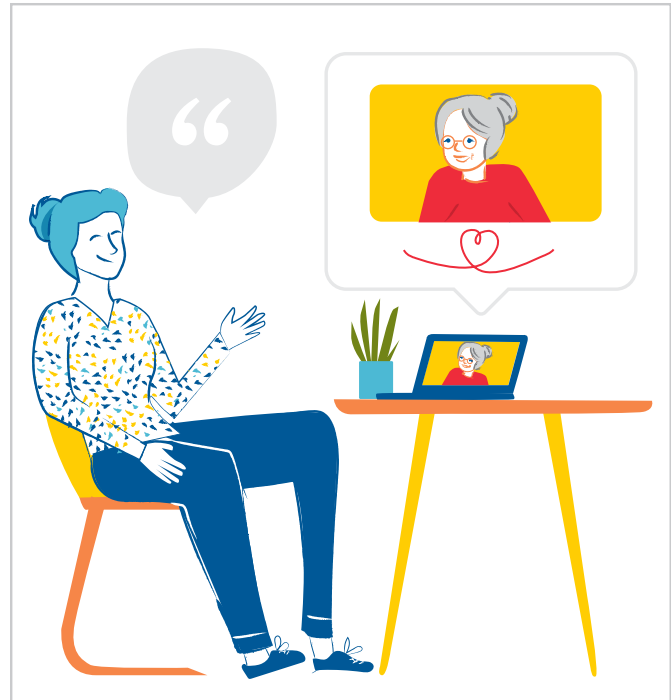
- Press "Stop Recording."
- *Both participants should remain in the chat room even after recording has stopped!*

Both participants:

- Discuss privacy settings:
 - **Public:** Your interview and related information are available to anyone on the web.
 - **StoryCorps Community:** Your interview and related information are available to anyone with an account on the StoryCorps Archive.
 - **Private:** Your interview and related information are private. Private interviews cannot be added to public communities. If your interview is currently part of a public community, selecting this option will prevent people in that community from viewing this interview.
- **Choose** the privacy setting that aligns with your comfort level. (Lead participant, note this election so that you can database it later.)
 - When participants disagree, choose the more conservative setting.
 - All published recordings will be preserved at the Library of Congress whether they're publicly available on the Online Archive platform or not.
- Don't want to publish?
 - That's fine! If you choose not to publish, do not press "Save Interview to Archive."
 - The interview draft will appear in the lead participant's account. To delete it, follow these [instructions](#), found in our [Help Center](#).
 - If you choose to delete, your interview will not be accessible at StoryCorps or at the American Folklife Center of the Library of Congress.



- Next, write your interview information (lead participant should jot this information down on paper). Both participants:
- Together, compose a short interview description.
 - Example: Angie and Frederica discuss their political differences, shared values, and the major life events that informed these beliefs.
- Choose five keywords.
 - Example: Democrats, Republicans, 2020 Presidential Election, Political divide, Democracy, [Your organization name, if relevant].
 - Please also input keyword One Small Step (OSS).
- Non-lead participant exits the chat room.



- Lead participant presses “Save Interview to Archive”
- Lead participant fills out the interview information form. This includes the interview description, keywords, privacy setting selection, plus additional information.
- Press “Save to Archive.”
- In approximately one hour, the interview will publish to the chosen privacy setting. Both participants will receive email notification that it’s ready. Click the link to find your interview in StoryCorps’ Online Archive.
- Use the Share button to share the interview with your interview partner, friends, and family!

THANK YOU!

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