



**ASAM ADDICTION MEDICINE**  
**ACTION NETWORK**

Connecting Your Story to  
ASAM Policy Priorities

May 21, 2021

# Welcome!

## *Housekeeping Items*

- Today's training will be recorded.
- Today's recording and slides will be available in ASAM's e-Learning Center.
- Attendees will be automatically muted but are able to unmute themselves.



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**ASAM** American Society of  
Addiction Medicine

# Goals for Today's Call

- Understand role of personal stories in advocacy
- Learn tips & best practices for sharing your story
- Identify (practice) your stories – walk away with idea of what and how you might share



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# Call Agenda

- Why Storytelling For Advocacy?
- Review of 2021 Policy Priorities
- Tips for Sharing **Your** Stories
- ASAM Examples: Connecting Stories with Policy
- Practice + Questions



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# What is Storytelling?

Storytelling is a practice of leadership that draws on personal experiences and encourages listeners to feel an emotional response that moves people to take action.



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# Why Storytelling for Advocacy?

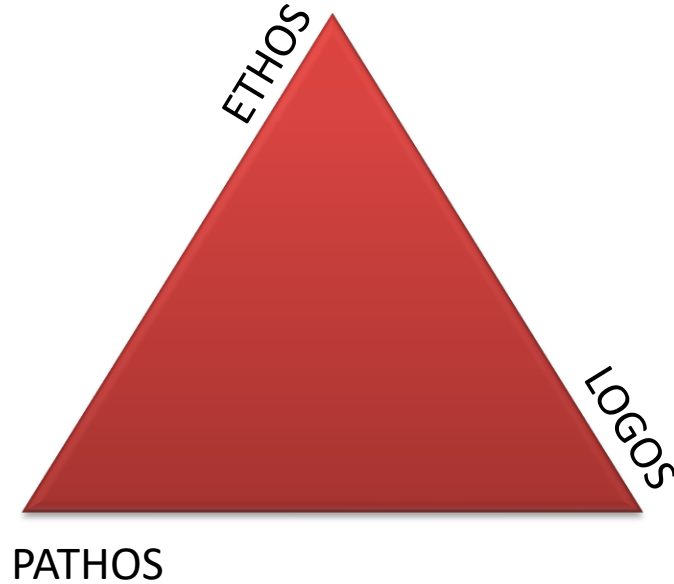
- As physicians who treat addiction, you have unique and important personal experiences to share.
- Storytelling can be an effective tool to confront stigma, improve understanding & increase empathy.
- A powerful story can motivate and encourage action.



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# Elements of Persuasion

**ETHOS:** Greek for “ethics,” refers to **credibility** of the spokesperson. Established through various factors (status, awareness, professionalism, celebrity endorsement, etc.)



**LOGOS:** Greek for “**logic**,” refers to the facts, research, and other message elements that provide proof or evidence for a claim.

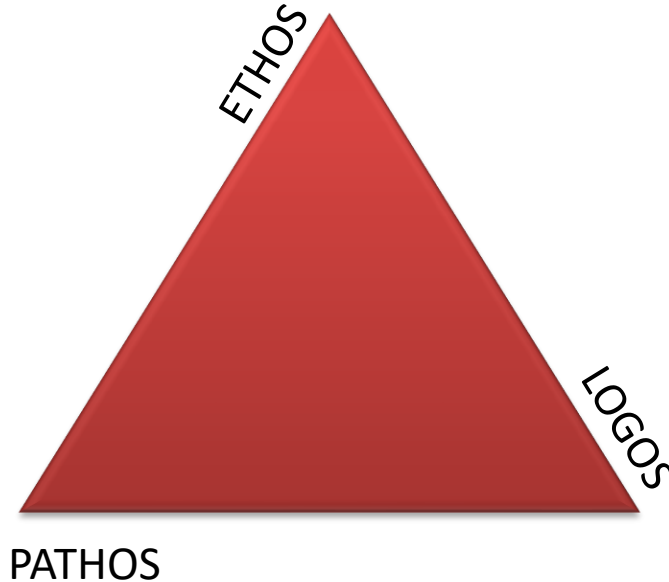
**PATHOS:** Greek for “**emotion**,” refers to how an audience feels or experiences a message. The appeal of pathos makes a person feel excited, sad, angry, motivated, jealous, or any other number of emotions that may persuade them to act based on what you say.



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Storytelling!



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# Opportunities to Share Your Story

## Audiences

- Elected officials
- Professional colleagues
- Students and trainees
- Patients
- Community organizations
- Media audiences

## Venues

- Meetings & hearings
- Speeches & presentations
- Interviews
- Written communications (emails, op-eds, letters)
- Social media- Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, etc.



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# ASAM 2021 Policy Priorities

- **Teach It**

- At least \$25 million in FY 2022 for HRSA's SUD Treatment Workforce Loan Repayment Program.
- At least \$30 million in FY 2022 for HRSA's Mental and Substance Use Disorders Workforce Training Demonstration Program (home of AMF Program)
- At least \$10 million in FY 2022 for SAMHSA's Practitioner Education Grant Program
- Opioid Workforce Act

- **Standardize It**

- Medication Access and Training Expansion (MATE) Act of 2021 (H.R. 2067)

- **Cover It**

- Medicaid Reentry Act (H.R. 955/S.285)



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# Connecting Stories to Policy: Questions to Think About

- **Teach It**

- How does the shortage of addiction medicine professionals affect your practice?
- Did you take out loans to cover your education? What about colleagues? Have you met young people interested in addiction medicine but intimidated by the cost?

- **Standardize It**

- Have you run into addiction medicine stigma? Do you think requiring education in treating and managing patients with SUD would help?

- **Cover It**

- What role do behavioral, social, and psychological services play in SUD treatment? Are there unique needs for individuals who are incarcerated?



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# Know Your Ask

- Know your ask - why are you here and what do you want the takeaway for your audience to be?
  - Support a policy
  - Better understand an issue
  - Advocate on your behalf



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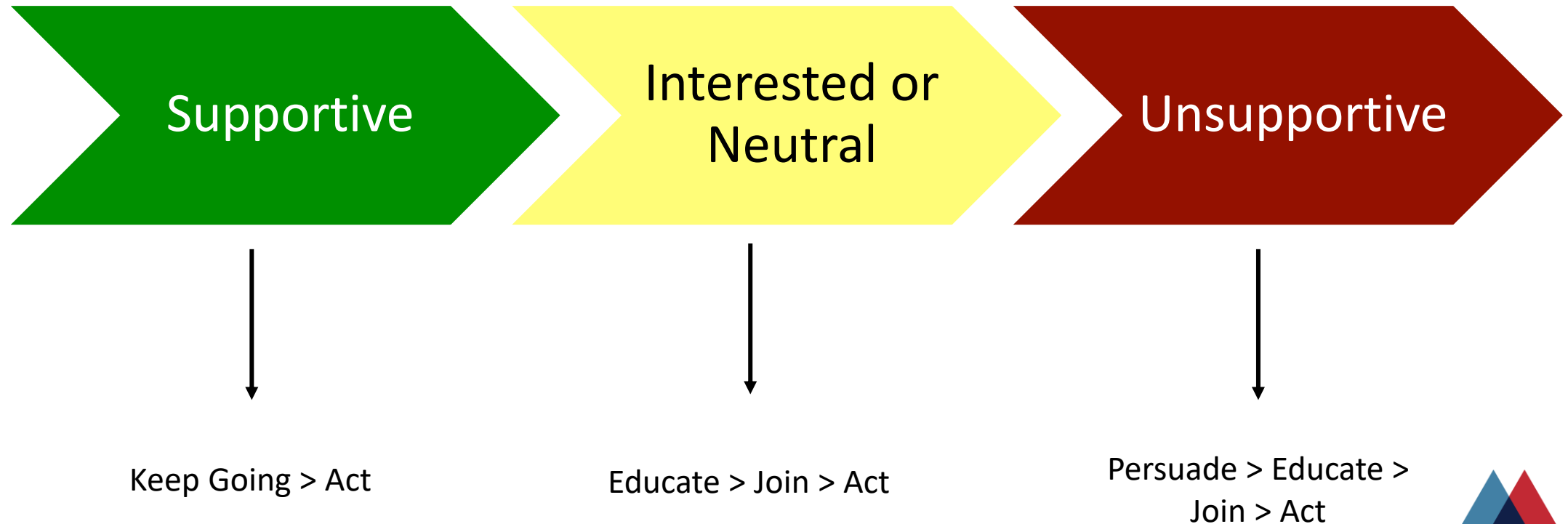
# Know Your Audience

- Know your audience, do your homework and review your advocacy plan:
  - Does your audience have experience with addiction, addiction medicine or a basic understanding of who ASAM is?
  - When meeting with a representative or their staff- have they sponsored this legislation before? What about other ASAM policies?
  - What is the experience with addiction and addiction medicine? Ask!



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# Know Your Audience



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# Telling Your Story: Connecting Experience With Policy

- Think of your meeting as an opportunity to connect policy with real-world impact and make clear why policymakers should care.
- You know your story best, but other patient or colleague stories can be compelling too.
- Keep it short and simple - be prepared to “close” if you run short on time.



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# Examples of Effective Story Telling

## Dr. Jim Baker

### Community Outreach: *The Maxwell F. Baker Foundation*



"I don't present as an expert in addiction treatment, or anything more than a physician epidemiologist and **father who wants to share what I have learned** along the way."



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# Examples of Effective Story Telling

## Dr. Shawn Ryan

**Op-ed:** *“Economic Recovery From Pandemic Requires Investment in Recovery of a Different Kind”*



“The addiction treatment centers where I serve as chief medical officer are already seeing signs that our country’s long-standing mental health and addiction crisis is starting to spiral further out of control. **My colleagues and I have fielded hundreds of calls from patients with addiction who are wondering how — or even if — they will still be able to access treatment for their disease...** However, we need policymakers and insurers to act now...insurers — including state Medicaid programs — need to reimburse clinicians for telehealth and telephonic services the same way they would if those patients were physically in the exam rooms. “



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# Examples of Effective Story Telling

## Dr. Yngvild Olsen

### **Congressional Testimony:** *US House Committee on Oversight and Reform*

**“I’d like to start with a story of one of my patients whom I will call Andy.** In 2011, Andy walked into my office and told me he was addicted to heroin. His life was in shambles, and his mother and ex-wife were unwilling to let him see his two children. Andy began taking methadone and receiving counseling in our clinic. Slowly, he began to escape heroin’s grip. Previously, he had struggled for years to maintain a job while suffering with addiction. Since starting treatment, he has stopped problematic substance use for long periods of time; has been able to work; has been able to pay child support; and has been able to support himself and his new wife. He is an involved father in the life of his children.

However, out of his eleven close high school friends, Andy is the only survivor. The others have all died of drug overdose. **I think of Andy and his high school friends every time I see the statistic in the 2016 Surgeon General’s Report that only about 1 in 10 people with addiction receive specialty treatment.”**



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# Examples of Effective Story Telling

## Dr. Paul Earley

**Op-ed:** *“Here's How to Fight Addiction. Trust Me, I'm in Recovery”*

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“Regardless of race, income, gender, or profession, addiction is a complex medical disease that can affect anyone.

Take, for example, a young doctor I watched fall into its clutches... his accelerating substance use disorder caused him to lose himself, his job, and eventually his freedom. He would have lost his medical license, too, if he had not received a sustained tapering course of addiction care and ongoing support by family, friends, and others on the same journey of recovery... **but I didn't see that man in my office. I saw him in the mirror. My story underscores the fact that recovery is possible -- if the right treatment and support is provided at the right times.”**



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Questions?  
Volunteers to share their story?



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