**Humanities Project for 1ST Year DPT Students**

**Assignment Summary:** Students areasked to choose an older family member to interview for The Great Thanksgiving Listen (TGTL): this an annual educational project started by StoryCorps, Inc., a story sharing and archival organization founded by Dave Isay in 2003. While the project specifically targets high school students, the concept is equally valuable and meaningful across ages.

Students are encouraged to download TGTL StoryCorps app and use that platform; however, they decide whether or not to publish their recording to the StoryCorps archives and Library of Congress or simply save the recording on their own device for personal access. Some additional parameters are included to address specific class objectives and needs. Following the holiday break, part of a class session is devoted to a guided group discussion addressing the assignment objectives, particularly how the exercise may inform and impact future patient/client/family therapeutic interactions such as an assessment/evaluation and establishing a plan of care.

Alternatives for those who do not go home for the Thanksgiving break or have a family member they can/wish to interview: 1) choose anyone you would like to interview, preferably someone at least a generation above 2) interview by phone 3) submit a paper summarizing the experience and provide the questions and responses (primarily for those who have technical difficulties).

The website (<https://storycorps.me/about/the-great-thanksgiving-listen/>) offers a toolkit that includes an introduction to teachers, technical guidelines, suggested interview questions for students to use, etc.

**Sourced from the StoryCorps website** (<https://storycorps.org/about/)>:

*StoryCorps’ mission is to preserve and share humanity’s stories in order to build connections between people and create a more just and compassionate world.*

*We do this to remind one another of our shared humanity, to strengthen and build the connections between people, to teach the value of listening, and to weave into the fabric of our culture the understanding that everyone’s story matters. At the same time, we are creating an invaluable archive for future generations.*

**Sourced from The Great Thanksgiving Listen StoryCorps website** (<https://storycorps.me/about/the-great-thanksgiving-listen/>):

*The Great Thanksgiving Listen is a national education project that empowers high school students to create an oral history of the contemporary United States by recording an**interview with an elder over Thanksgiving weekend using the StoryCorps App.*

*Interviews are entered into the StoryCorps archive at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress and on StoryCorps.me where they become an invaluable resource for future historians and provide families with a priceless piece of personal history.*

*In its pilot year of 2015, thousands of high schools from all 50 states participated and preserved over 50,500 individual recordings at the Library of Congress. In 2016, StoryCorps will continue to work with educators around the country to preserve the voices and stories of an entire generation of Americans over a single holiday weekend.*

**General goals of the class assignment: (Geriatrics course)**

* Foster effective and respectful listening skills
* Evoke a sense of partnership in the therapeutic relationship
* Create opportunities for reflection
* Develop awareness regarding the risk of making assumptions (e.g. about people's behaviors)
* Build emotional intelligence and competence for sensitive conversations
* Enhance comfort with intimate and vulnerable situations in the healthcare environment
* "See" the humanity of older individuals and be willing to connect authentically
* Value and learn from perspectives born of a different generation and cultural experience
* Explore the power of a shared story and experience in the healing process
* Learn to be flexible in an interview process; being willing to leave your “script” where needed/appropriate
* Explore the unique benefits and value of intergenerational friendships

**Examples of assignment objectives:**

Through the assigned StoryCorps interview project, students will be able to:

* Describe the value of skillful listening during an interview.
  + What is the goal of listening?
  + What does skillful listening accomplish?
  + How is it demonstrated?
  + How do you know if you’re doing it?
* Describe at least one new insight about your interviewee that you discovered as a result of the interview.
  + Did the surprise provoke other questions from you?
  + Did it alter the direction of your conversation?
* Discuss how this exercise may apply when soliciting important, sensitive information from patients.
  + How do you create a safe/comfortable space for your patient to share?
  + How do you establish trust?
* Discuss how the use of specific questions and skillful listening during a PT evaluation may impact the plan of care.
  + For example,
    - Have you had any falls?
    - Do you have problems with your balance?
    - Do you feel unsteady when you walk?

**Submitted on February 14, 2017 by:**

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