



Outline for Talking to Those Around You about Organ, Eye and Tissue Donation

When you speak to a family member, coworker, friend, or neighbor you may want to include:

- ✓ Your personal story (see tips below)
- ✓ The need for donors (refer to “The Numbers”)
- ✓ The benefits of donation and transplantation (think back to your story)
- ✓ Organs and tissue that can be donated (refer to “The Numbers”)
- ✓ Who can be a donor (refer to “The Numbers”)
- ✓ Some common misconceptions (see “The Facts”)
- ✓ **CALL TO ACTION:** Register to be a donor and pass the opportunity along to other friends and family members. Know your state donor registry web address or send people to *donatelifenet*
- ✓ **Answer Questions** – Answers to the most common questions are included in your kit. If you do not know the answer to someone’s question, say so, but tell them you will find out. Contact your local donation and transplant professional or the national office. Go to *donatelifenet* for a listing of local contacts by state.

Tips for Telling Your Story

Whether you are sending an email, presenting to your church group, or having a conversation with someone in line at the grocery store, your personal experience can be the most significant influence in someone’s decision to become a registered donor. Below are tips to remember when adding your Voice to the need for organ, eye and tissue donors and inspiring your family, friends, coworkers or neighbors to register.

The Basics:

- Keep it simple
 - For those who live through it, donation and transplantation, because of its many procedures and medical terms, is complex. Though sharing every

detail may feel natural, it can be overwhelming to others and they may miss the important message you are trying to get across.

- Less is more
 - Specific dates are not necessary. You will never forget them, but for your listener, including all of them does not add to the power of your story. Say things like: “Several months later” instead of “Then on June 24, 2008.”
 - Mention the number of medicines you are taking and their overall effect on you, instead of the name of each medicine and its individual side effects.
- Stress the positives!
 - Donation and transplantation can be bumpy roads. Be honest, yet appropriate. “Tell, don’t dwell!”
 - Our goal is to educate and motivate. Make it a priority to make your audience comfortable and keep their attention.
 - Whether you are a grateful recipient, hopeful candidate or family member, focus on the positive feelings you and your loved ones have experienced to inspire others to register as donors.
- Remember the purpose
 - Who can’t remember at least a dozen songs from classic Disney movies? Disney once said he’d never include a song that didn’t advance the plot. Remember that any detail you share is with the hope that someone will decide to register as an organ, eye and tissue donor and save lives.
 - The goal is to *educate* and *motivate* those around you to register as donors. Never attempt to pressure or “guilt” someone into registering.
- Use the correct terms
 - Misusing them can turn someone off or raise questions.
 - Use **recover**, **recovery** or **donation surgery** instead of *harvest*.
 - Use **deceased donor** instead of *cadaver donor*.
 - Use **artificial support** or **mechanical support** instead of *life-support*.
- Be yourself
 - Use your natural approach in telling your story. Whether you insert humor, use an analogy or shed tears, your listeners know you, so go with what feels right.

Ideas Based on Your Situation

Patient Waiting Story

Tell about life for you and your family before you became ill:

- What things did you enjoy doing that are now difficult to do?
- What changes has this made in your:
 - Family
 - Work
 - School/Studies

Tell about receiving the diagnosis from the doctor:

- How did you react?
- How did your family react?

Tell about life on the transplant waiting list:

- How long have you waited?
- What does it feel like to have to wait to be healthy?
- What is your prognosis without a transplant?

Recipient Story

Tell about life before transplantation for you and your family:

- What could you do and not do?
- How long did you wait?
- What was the waiting like?
- What was your medical prognosis without transplantation?

Tell about receiving the message from the transplant center:

- Where were you?
- How did you react?
- How did your family react?

Tell about life after transplantation:

- What do you do now that you couldn't do before?
- How do you feel about life now?
- What changes has this made in your:
 - Family
 - Work
 - School/Studies

Recipient Family Member/Friend Story for Presentation

Tell about life before transplantation for you and the recipient:

- What could the recipient do and not do?
- How long did the recipient wait?
- What was the waiting like for your family or friend?
- What was the recipient's medical prognosis without a transplant?

Tell about receiving the message from the transplant center:

- Where were you?
- How did the recipient react?
- How did you react?

Tell about life after transplantation:

- What can the recipient do now that they couldn't do before?
- How do you feel about life now?
- What changes has transplantation made in your family/friendship?