



MAGID: TELLING YOUR OWN STORY

Passover Reminds Us of the Power of Storytelling

Storytelling is one of the hallmarks of the Jewish tradition. We see it as we read the same Torah portions year after year and as we celebrate holidays by diving into the same stories and texts. Most notably, the core of Passover, the Seder, is the retelling of the Jewish people's journey from slavery to freedom. Every spring, we regale the moments of struggle, joy, awe and unexpected twists and turns in our story of freedom — and we learn something new each year.



And you shall explain to your child on that day,
'It is because of what God did for me when I
went free from Egypt.' (Exodus 13:8)

Why is there such a strong focus on storytelling in Judaism?

Judaism is an oral tradition as well as a written one. We pass messages and stories down in a way that evokes our emotions and helps us retain both our history and our identity as a people. This process of retention connects us with our ancestors and helps us carry their memories and lessons with us as we move forward.

What is the power of telling our own stories?

Telling our own stories gives us power over our own narratives and helps us develop deeper relationships with the people we share them with. When we share our stories with others, we give them a chance to understand us more deeply. It also allows people with similar stories to feel connected in a more meaningful way, decreasing isolation by emphasizing shared experiences.



But perhaps even more important, storytelling allows us to cultivate a deeper connection with ourselves as a means of mental wellness. It lets us take ownership of our own stories, allowing us to tell them how we want them to be told. Storytelling grounds us in our past and allows us to determine how we carry our stories, letting us sit in our vulnerability while simultaneously giving us power.



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Story-Telling Checklist


Depending on the story or the space we're in, sharing it might come naturally — or it may take more preparation before we are ready to share it with others. Nevertheless, some stories must be shared, so we need to learn how to [take ownership of our own stories and share them with others](#). Using the questions below, think through how you would like to share your story.



What story do you want to share?

Where are you sharing this story?

- Who is your audience? Is it a more intimate or public setting?
- What adjustments might you need to make based on the setting you are sharing it in?



How can you use this to ground yourself regardless of the reactions people have to your story?



What is the arc or flow of your story?

- What key points will help get your story across?
- How are you introducing the story?
- What are the closing or take-home points to end your story?



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