



# DCSS Guidelines for Tellers

## **1. True Story**

Names can be changed, but the story you tell needs to have actually happened.

## **2. Your Story**

Not only did it happen, it happened to YOU! If your friend has a great story, it's not yours to tell. You can encourage them to tell it, though, and what better way than to tell your story first!

## **3. No notes, props, or music**

Stories are told, not read! So, no notes. And stories should speak for themselves without props or music - if there's a song that's an important part of the story, sing/hum a bit of it or tell us the name if we'd recognize it, but don't bust out your phone and put the actual song on.

## **4. No -isms will be tolerated**

Duke City Story Slam strives to create a safe, inclusive and affirming community space to share our life experiences with one another. If a storyteller expresses oppressive views or derogatory language (racist, sexist, cissexist, heterosexist, classist, ableist, etc.) on the DCSS mic, they will be cut off mid-story and not permitted to tell again in the future. Story is one of the most powerful tools available for building empathy and understanding across difference, so we hope that DCSS is able to do just that.

## **5. Storytelling, not stand-up**

"It's funny because it's true" - true stories can, and often are, funny! But don't force the laughs using setups and punchlines - just tell your story and the laughs will come organically.

## **6. Storytelling, not therapy**

Telling a story can definitely be therapeutic, but the DCSS audience is not your therapist. A story has an arc (beginning, middle, and end) and is not a rambling list of experiences. Also, Tellers should check in with themselves about whether they have enough distance from what happened to be able to tell the story without being triggered or breaking down.

## **7. Stay within the time limit**

Featured Tellers have 10 minutes and Open Mic Tellers have 5 minutes to tell their story. Our Time Keeper will periodically let Tellers know how much time they have left. We want to be sure we get to hear from all of our Tellers, so please be respectful of the time limit.