# Session 47: Your Story in a Helping Role: Testimony With Guardrails

**Phase 5 — Giving Back: Service, Leadership & Purpose · Block 2 — Mentoring & Leadership**

**Date: _____ My craving today (0–10): _____ One word for my week: _____**

## What we're learning

Session 33 taught telling your story safely in public settings. A helping conversation is a different stage: one listener, usually in pain, whose need sets the length and the content. The guardrails tighten: two minutes, one chapter, chosen for them — the part of your story that stands closest to where they are standing — and then the floor returns to them with a question.

- Serve the listener's chapter They are grieving a custody loss; the chapter of your story that matters is the season you parented from a distance, not your arrest record. Relevance is the discipline.
- Two minutes, then the floor Set the length before you start: 'Can I tell you the two minutes of my story that sound like tonight?' Their nod is consent; the clock is respect.
- Some nights, holster it Fresh crisis, raw trauma, or a person who needs information and a warm handoff — your story waits. A peer who can withhold the story can be trusted with it.

## Goals for this session

☐ I can tell a two-minute version of my story shaped for a peer's need, not my own

☐ I can apply Session 33's safety rules inside a helping conversation: no graphic detail, no war stories, no advice disguised as testimony

☐ I can decide when not to tell my story at all

## Check-in

*What is the one sentence of your story that seems to land hardest on newer people? Say just the sentence.*

## Discussion — write your answers

*Write what you would say out loud — and more, if it comes. There is no right-length answer; there is only an honest one.*

**1. Which chapter of your story is most often useful to newcomers here — and which chapter do you tell mainly because you like telling it?**

**2. What detail do you always leave out now that you used to include? What taught you?**

**3. How can you tell, mid-conversation, that your story has stopped helping? Name the signs.**

**4. What is the question you end your two-minute version with, handing the floor back?**

## Session 47 — Skill Practice

Two-minute drill (in pairs, timed): each person tells the two-minute version aimed at a scenario the partner names — a newcomer afraid of their first night; a peer ashamed after a slip (Session 30's rules apply); a participant furious at a house decision. Partner feedback: what landed, what ran long, and where the floor came back. Switch.

**My two-minute version — the chapter, the turning point, what helped:**

**The question I end with, handing the floor back:**

## My takeaway

*The one thing from this session I most need to remember — in my own words:*

## Homework — this week's application

☐ Write your two-minute version in your workbook: the chapter, the turning point, what helped, and the question you end with. Keep it under half a page; if it does not fit, it is not the two-minute version.

**Space to do the homework and note how it went:**

*An optional Scripture handout for this session is available from your facilitator on request.*