

## Questions and Concerns

### **Common questions and concerns for survivors of violence considering public speaking.**

#### ***“I want to speak but I’m not sure I’m ready.”***

There are a variety of ways that you can determine your readiness. Talk to your friends and family as well as Turning Point staff about your interest in joining the Survivor Speaker’s Bureau. Also consider how much time has elapsed since your last incidence of violence. A minimum of one year is necessary (and often times much longer) before considering public speaking. Allow yourself plenty of time to heal before putting yourself in front of an audience.

#### ***“I would speak but my offender is out of jail and I am afraid. Should I speak or not?”***

Always err on the side of caution. If you think speaking publicly could jeopardize your safety or the safety of your friends or family – don’t do it. There are many ways to be an activist that don’t include putting your story out to the public. Contact our volunteer/intern specialist at 586-463-4430 to hear about other volunteer opportunities.

#### ***“I need to speak because I want everyone to know what my offender did to me and my family.”***

This is not an appropriate reason to speak. In order to be truly effective your main goal must be to educate others. If you go into public speaking to seek revenge or retribution or because you have a lot of anger to work out, your audience will have a hard time connecting with you and the issues you want to address.

#### ***“I think speaking would help me heal.”***

As a speaker, you need to be at a place of healing *prior* to speaking publicly. There are healing aspects to speaking, but there can be painful parts as well, particularly if you are not fully prepared.

#### ***“I want to speak but there are parts of my story that I don’t want to share.”***

You have control over what you say during a speaking engagement. You can simply leave out parts of your story (there is no way you could tell your entire story anyway). If you are asked a question you don’t want to answer, simply say that you would prefer not to talk about that piece of your story. There is also information that is not appropriate to share in a speaking engagement. Training and practice will help you make these decisions.