

Petersburg Listening Project

The Petersburg Listening Project is a production of the Petersburg Public Library and KFSK Public Radio, it is supported by the Alaska Community Foundation.

What to Expect

The interview is 40-60 minutes of uninterrupted time for meaningful conversation with a friend or loved one. What are the questions you want to ask and the memories you want to preserve?

When you arrive at your session with a friend or loved one, a trained facilitator will meet you to explain the process, make you feel comfortable in our recording space, and sit with you during the interview session.

There are 6 basic steps:

1. Welcome: The Facilitator will provide some background information about the Petersburg Listening Project, explain his or her role in the interview process, and answer any questions you might have

2. Prep: The Facilitator will walk you through the paperwork, which asks for basic personal information such as name, address, and ethnic background

3. Sound check: Once you and your interview partner are ready to proceed, the Facilitator will make sure you are positioned well for recording and check the audio levels

4. Interview (40-60 minutes): Use your question list, but remember they are just suggestions to get you started. Trust your instincts. When you hear something that moves you, ask more questions. Sometimes your storyteller will need "permission" to explore a certain topic; you can simply say "Tell me more". Feel free to ask questions in whatever order feels right, and don't let them constrain the conversation. Real moments are the best moments. Some tips for helping the conversation flow:

- Look at your storytellers eyes, not the microphone. Stay interested and engaged
- Be yourself; you can laugh or even cry with your storyteller.
- Emotional questions like "how does this make you feel?" often elicit thoughtful responses. Don't be afraid to ask.
- Be curious and honest and keep an open heart. Great things will happen.

While you and your partner are talking, the Facilitator will take notes, keep time, and monitor audio. Facilitators are not interviewers, though they may ask a question during the recording.

5. CD: After the interview, the Facilitator will give both participants a copy of the interview on CD. He or she will also explain the release form, which allows Petersburg Listening Project to archive a copy of the interview. Interviews may be posted on the library's website, made available for checkout at the library, or edited for radio broadcast.

6. Photos: Finally, the Facilitator will take photos of you and your interview partner, both together and separately. These photos will be included in the archive at the Petersburg Public Library and may be used for displays or publicity.