**Share Your Story Worksheet**

Adapted from **15 STEPS** TO CREATE EFFECTIVE CLIMATE COMMUNICATIONS; EcoAmerica

These are steps to help guide you toward crafting your own personal story on why you care about climate change. The first four steps can be used to effectively communicate to others why it matters to you. The remainder of the steps are included at the end to help you to continue the conversation at another time.

**Step 1: Start with People, Stay with People**If you want your audience to care about climate change, then care about them. Start from their perspective, not yours. Infuse your entire communication with tangible, relevant concerns. Move from people to climate, not the other way around, and keep going back to people.

**For example:** As some of you know, my husband and I own XYZ Restaurant on Route 1A. A few of you are regulars, we love seeing your faces around our tables.

**Step 2: Connect on common values**If you really understand your audience’s priorities, concerns, and values, you can open their hearts and minds by talking about those values and showing you share and honor them. Common values, such as family, community, choice/freedom, health, and fairness, are powerful motivators and connectors. Affiliation or “tribal” connectors such as being fellow congregants, business leaders, organization members, or professionals are also helpful.

**For example**: Whether you have been here for generations, or are here to start a new one, we can all agree the seacoast region is a special place to call home.

**Step 3: Acknowledge ambivalence**People approach climate from different perspectives and have different levels of concern. And we all have other priorities. Don’t be self-righteous. Respect their perspectives and allow them their own space. A simple line like “Some of us are more worried about climate change than others” allows people to be comfortable and listen with an open mind.

**For example**: Not everyone here agrees on whether or how much climate change is to blame (for the ice storms, extreme rain storms, flooding, etc).

**Step 4: Make it real**Many Americans are latently concerned about climate change. We need to move them from concern to action. By focusing on local realities they can see with their own eyes—simple, irrefutable facts about changing seasons, local fauna, or record weather—you can make climate change relevant for them. Assume the realities, don’t argue the science. And share how it impacts you or why you care!

**For example**: However, things are changing here in Portsmouth, and we need to pause and take notice. We have had extreme flooding, ice storms, (add in). Our business was closed for days during the last storm. Even if we wanted to be open, no one could get to us. I care about this issue because I want to continue to have a vibrant, strong, local community that our kids can grow up healthy in. I am worried about the changes we have seen and what to do something about it.