

# VOICES OF HOPE

## INTERVIEW TIPS

- 1. Plan out your questions in advance:** Before you conduct your interview, pick three to five of your favorite questions from our Teen and Survivor question guide. Send the questions to the person you are interviewing ahead of time, so they have time to consider their answers before they meet with you.
- 2. Check your audio:** Make sure the audio feature on your phone is working properly. Test it out when you ask a few warm-up questions (see next tip), and then pause to make sure the sound is good before you start the actual interview.
- 3. Ask warm-up questions:** Ask your interviewee questions that get you into the flow of a natural conversation. Try simple questions such as, “Where were you born?” or “Why did you want to participate in this interview?”
- 4. Ask open-ended questions:** Be sure to lead with questions that require more than a “yes” or “no” answer. Use questions that begin with “why” and “how” as well as language like, “Tell me about...” or “What was it like when...”
- 5. Ask follow-up questions:** Feel free to ask follow-up questions if an interviewee’s response sparks your interest. You might divert a bit from your predetermined questions, but that’s OK. Don’t ignore little aspects of an answer that pique your curiosity because it connects you with the person. More than likely, other people who listen to your interview will want to know more too!
- 6. Approach the interview as though it’s a conversation:** Speak normally as if you were speaking with a friend (but remain respectful).
- 7. It’s all about the details:** Details are what make a story special. Asking questions that appeal to the senses is a great way to get a vivid account of a memory. For example: “What images stand out when you think of your grandmother?”
- 8. Set up context:** Listeners may not know or be familiar with specific people in the person’s life that they talk about. Make sure to ask questions that give the listener some context such as, “Who was your uncle Brian?”
- 9. Relax and have fun:** This is the most important tip of all. Approach the interview with an open mind and use it as an opportunity to get to know this survivor or fellow volunteer. Although the interview may get emotional at times, remember to relax and just let the conversation flow. You’re giving a great gift to each other and the pancreatic cancer community by sharing your stories!