

Building Bridges Word by Word

Call for Stories

Building Bridges Word by Word provides a safe space where we can share our stories, discover what we have in common, and, with that understanding, begin to build bridges across our divides. We invite you to be part of this bridge building effort by writing a short reflection on a favorite saying, quote, song, or poem that is meaningful to you. By posting your stories on [Building Bridges Word by Word](https://buildingbridgeswbw.com)¹ and sharing them on [Substack](https://mscribnerbuildingbridges.substack.com),² the project reflects the rich diversity of our country and our common humanity.

Wondering what you might write about? Think about a line or two that speaks to who you are or what you believe. It could be a saying that seems particularly relevant these days or a quote that you've taped to your refrigerator or tacked on to your emails because it captures how you feel about the world. Or it could be a song that gives you comfort or joy or a poem that challenges you to think or act differently.

To get started, visit [Building Bridges Word by Word](https://buildingbridgeswbw.com), read the [stories](#) and meet the people who wrote them. You may find that their story is an inspiration for your own or that *their* song is also *your* song. That's okay. There's no limit to the number of stories that can be written about the same text. Then, review the guidelines and fill out the [form](#) to submit your story. You can also email your story to buildingbridgeswbw@gmail.com or mail it to Building Bridges Word by Word, Box #162, 7304 Carroll Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912. Be sure to include your answers to #1-7 below in your email or letter.

We look forward to working with you on your story, lightly editing it as needed, with your approval before posting. To ensure that this is a safe space, please refrain from commentaries on others. We will not accept malicious content, hostile language, or anonymous reflections.

Guidelines for your submission:

1. **Select a saying, quote, song, or poem that is meaningful to you.** If you choose to write about a song or poem, please identify a few lines that are the most meaningful to you and your reflection. (For copyright reasons, we cannot post an entire song or poem on our website.) We will include those lines and a link to the song or poem with your story. We appreciate that you may have written quotes, songs, or poems, but this project focuses on those written by others that are meaningful to you.
2. **Write a short reflection** (up to 250 words) that describes your connection to the text. You may find it helpful to consider one or more of the following prompts.
 - Building bridges can be hard, even scary. There's a lot of misunderstanding in the world. If you knew people would listen with an open mind, what would you want to tell them about you, your life experience, and your beliefs in reference to this text?
 - Many have lost something over the past few years. It may be a job, a loved one, a relationship, a way of seeing our country, or a sense of what the future holds. What text gives voice to that loss?
 - How does the text help you celebrate special moments or honor people who are important to you? How does the text reveal something about them or yourself?
 - How have these words helped you see things in a different way? How have they helped you to

¹ <https://buildingbridgeswbw.com>

² <https://mscribnerbuildingbridges.substack.com>

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better understand someone and their situation or reach out across the divides?

Please also include the following:

3. **The source of the text**, such as the author of the text and the name of the book, song, poem, or website where you found the text. If you don't know the source, just write N/A.
4. **Your name and a brief bio** (up to 75 words) to accompany your story and introduce yourself. Here is an example: "I retired in 2001, after teaching thirty-four years of high school English. I've written many books for young adults and others who are not so young, including [*Brooklyn Diner and Other Places*](#). I could not have been a writer if I were not a teacher. When not writing, I am obsessed with "Jeopardy" and am the biggest Mets fan in Brooklyn!"
5. **Your photo**: Upload your profile photo or a photo to represent your story. If you like, you may supply two pictures, one to accompany the story and your picture for your bio. Please make sure to only upload photos that you have the right to use and share the source of the photo. High-res photos work the best. A cell phone picture saved as "actual size" will work. If no photo is uploaded, we will select a photo on your behalf and share it with you before posting.
6. **Your contact information**, including your email, address, and phone number, so that we can verify your identity. Your contact information will be kept confidential. We will only post your name, bio, and photo with your story.
7. **Links to your social media**. We will share stories posted on our website through social media. Please let us know if we have your permission to share your picture, story, and bio. And, if so, please include your social media account names for Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram so we can tag you in our posting. Please separate each account with a comma.

Consider the following:

8. **Comments**: We'd appreciate hearing how you heard about the project, what it was like to write your reflection, and/or suggestions of other people, organizations, or networks to contact to share the project more broadly. Please include your comments through the submission form or in your email or letter. We will not share these comments publicly unless you give us permission to do so.
9. **Resources**: For our Dive Deeper section, please use this [form](#) to share related readings (blogs, articles, etc.) or information about individuals or organizations who are engaged in building bridges.
10. **Please help us expand our outreach** by sharing [Building Bridges Word by Word](#) and this [Call for Stories](#) with your family, friends, colleagues, communities, and networks.
11. **Please follow, like and share** the Building Bridges Word by Word's [Substack](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#) pages. If you have other ideas for getting out the word about Building Bridges Word by Word, please let us know.

If you have questions about the process or the project, contact us at buildingbridgeswbw@gmail.com.

Thank you for joining us in building bridges word by word!