



## **A Conversation about Podcasting**

AMWA Session facilitated by Helen Osborne, M.Ed., OTR/L, Producer and Host of Health Literacy Out Loud Podcasts, [www.healthliteracyoutloud.com](http://www.healthliteracyoutloud.com)

**Podcasts** are like radio shows in that they have informational or entertaining audio content. But unlike radio, podcast listeners can choose when, where, and how to hear these shows.

Familiarity with, and interest in, podcasting continues to grow. Here are some findings from *The Podcast Consumer 2017* report from Edison Research:

- Listeners are of all ages and come from a wide range of educational and income levels. But they do skew toward higher income and more educated.
- Increasingly, people listen to podcasts on smart phones, tablets, or other portable devices rather than on computers.
- People listen at convenient times and places. This includes at home, in a vehicle, while walking (like me), at work, in a gym, or on public transportation.

### **Tips for Getting Started with Podcasting**

#### **Choose your format:**

- Lecture. This is just one person talking. But many people find this format hard to listen to unless the speaker is amazing and has an incredible story to tell. An example is *From Our Own Correspondent* (BBC), at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/fromourown correspondent/>
- Radio show. These often have several stories or segments within one show. While wonderful to listen to, they can be time-consuming and expensive to produce. My favorites include *This American Life* with Ira Glass <http://www.thisamericanlife.org/> and *Radiolab* with Jad Abumrad and Robert Krulwich at <http://www.radiolab.org>
- Interview. To me, this format is interesting to listen to and can be produced at a reasonable cost. Examples include *Fresh Air* with Terry Gross at <http://www.npr.org/freshair>. And of course, *Health Literacy Out Loud* with Helen Osborne at [www.healthliteracyoutloud.org](http://www.healthliteracyoutloud.org).

**Decide about frequency and timing:**

- Frequency. Generally, this should be no less than once a month (to build a loyal audience) and no more than once every week or two (so as to not tire yourself out).
- Timing. 20 minutes is a good upper limit as this usually fits within a person’s commute, walk, or workout. 5 minutes is usually the lower limit for podcasts. If podcasts are too short, listeners need to repeatedly access new episodes.

**Gather needed tools, equipment, and technology.** Some of these recommendations are from my long-time podcast editor, Adam Weiss

**For recording in the office:**

- Computer (I prefer a Mac)
- Skype (I use Skype to call guests as this kicks-in my recording software)
- Recording software: *Call Burner* for PC, *Call Recorder* for the Mac.
- Microphone to record over the phone. *Snowball* mic is now about \$50
- Pillow. Footstool. Headset, or earbuds.

**For recording on-the road:**

- Recorder to take on the road. Adam’s recommend options include *Zoom H1 Handy Recorder*, or *Tascam DR-05* (each about \$100).
- Microphone to plug into the recorder. Adam recommends *AudioTechnica AT8010*, about \$150.
- Headset or earbuds.

**For editing and posting:**

- *DropBox* (I pay for extra capacity)
- Editing software: *Garage Band* (Mac). *Audacity* (Windows or Mac), *Adobe Audition*
- Square logo to represent your podcast. Logo cannot be of an iPod.
- Music. Either royalty free, or pay a fee to license use of music.

**Notes:**

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## Learn More about Podcasting & Interviewing

- Abel J, Glass I. *Radio: An Illustrated Guide*. Public Radio International: Chicago, IL. 1999.
- Adam Weiss: *Podcast Consultant*, "Interview Basics," <http://www.podcastconsultant.net/2007/03/14/interview-basics>
- Allison J, *This I Believe II: More Personal Philosophies of Remarkable Men and Women*. Henry Holt and Co.: New York, NY, 2008.
- Gross T, *All I Did Was Ask: Conversations with Writers, Actors, Musicians, and Artists*. Hyperion: New York, NY. 2004.
- *Health Literacy Out Loud*, [www.healthliteracyoutloud.com](http://www.healthliteracyoutloud.com)
- Osborne H, Weiss A. *Podcasting Guide: A Little About Technology, A Lot About Getting Started with Audio Interviews*. 2009. Available at <http://healthliteracy.com/2015/04/22/podcasting-guide-a-little-about-technology-a-lot-about-getting-started-with-audio-interviews/>
- *The Podcast Consumer 2017* report from Edison Research. <http://www.edisonresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Podcast-Consumer-2017.pdf>.

## Learn More about Helen Osborne & Health Literacy Out Loud

Since September 2008, Helen Osborne has produced and hosted her own podcast interview series, *Health Literacy Out Loud*. You can learn, listen, read transcripts, and subscribe for free by going to [www.healthliteracyoutloud.org](http://www.healthliteracyoutloud.org)

Just for fun, watch Helen talk about her podcast journey at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y0vqbQEI-rQ>

To learn more about Helen's background and work in health literacy, go to [www.healthliteracy.com](http://www.healthliteracy.com)