



**Magdalene Institutions:
Recording an Archival and Oral History
A project funded by the**



Topic Guide for Relatives

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Please give your name

Consent to participate: Before starting the interview, I would like to ask you to confirm that you agree to participate in this interview voluntarily and freely. I would also like to ask you that you are familiar with the information and consent forms that I previously provided to you.

Background

1. Can you tell me something about yourself?
2. Did you hear about Magdalene Institutions when you were young? What did you hear?
3. Can you tell me how the person who was in a Magdalene Institution is related to you?
4. Can you tell me about your family life?
5. Growing up, were you aware that your relative was in a Magdalene Laundry? If not, how and when did you hear about it?
6. What impact did this have on your early life?
7. Can you tell me about the level of silence surrounding your relative's time in the Magdalene Laundry?

Was your family silent?

Was it difficult to find out information?

Entry into the laundry

1. Do you know what laundry your relative was in and between which dates?
2. Do you know the circumstances of how she came to be there?
3. Did she move from one institution to another?
4. Did you have any other relatives in institutions, (such as Industrial, Reformatory Schools, mother and baby homes and psychiatric hospitals) at the same time?

The laundry Regime

1. Do you know anything about the living and working conditions in the Magdalene Laundry? If so, can you tell me as much as you know?
2. Did your relative ever tell you of any accidents she or others experienced in the laundry? If so can you tell me about it?
3. Can you tell me how the women who worked in the laundry were disciplined and punished?
4. Was your relative beaten or abused during their time in the laundry? If so can you give any details?
5. Did your relative speak of anything positive in relation to their time in the institution?
6. How about anything negative?

7. Is there anything else you would like to add?

Interacting with Others

1. Do you know if your relative had friends in the laundry?
2. Do you know if your relative was allowed to leave?
3. Were people allowed to visit?
4. Did you ever visit the laundry? If so can you tell me about it?
5. Can you tell me about your relative's interaction with the outside world?
6. Can you tell me what you know about the nuns at the laundry?

Leaving

1. Can you tell me anything about your relative's leaving experience?
2. Did they manage to leave and if so how did they manage to leave the laundry?
If she didn't manage to leave and is still alive, is she still in the charge of the nuns in an institutionalised setting? Do you see her? What is her life like?
If she died in the institution where is she buried?
3. Can you tell me what happened when she left?
4. Do you know what it was like adapting to the outside world for her?

The Impact

1. Can you tell me the impact of her institutionalisation on you and your family?
2. Is it something you talk about freely to others?
3. Can you tell me the impact her institutionalisation had on your relative psychologically?
4. And what about the impact it had on her health?
5. And what about the impact it had on your relative in the long term?
6. What about the impact of this on her relationship with you?
7. And what about her views of Irish society more generally?
8. How does she feel about her time there?
9. How do you feel about her time there?
10. Can you tell me of any differences between the way she was before entering the institution and the way she is now?
11. What is your impression of these institutions?
12. What was your impression of these institutions before you knew you had someone you knew institutionalised in one?

Redress and Attitudes

1. Has your relative been given a chance to speak the truth of what happened to her?
2. How open is she about her time in a Magdalene Laundry?
3. Did your relative speak about the Magdalene Institutions after she left? Who did she speak with? What did she say?
4. How open are you about talking about it?
5. Did she or you ever complain about her treatment there to anyone?
6. Is she or you in touch with any of the other women institutionalised at the same time?
7. Do you think the State has dealt with the issue of the Magdalene Institutions sufficiently?
8. As a relative of someone who was in the Magdalene Laundries, what do you want? What would you like the state to do?
9. What is it that you would have liked the state to do differently, e.g. to facilitate information?
10. Who do you think is responsible for your relative's institutionalisation? Why?
11. What is your attitude towards the Church, the State and Irish society in general during the time that these Magdalene Laundries existed?
12. Do you think attitudes have changed since these Laundries were in existence?
13. What impact has this had on your life, and your sense of your own identity?
14. Is there anything else you would like to add?