

Justice for Magdalenes

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Questionnaire for Testimony from Adopted People

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Introduction

1. Please give your full name.
2. 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 that you are familiar with the consent forms that I previously provided to you.

Adoption Experience

3. When and where were you born?
4. Did you hear about Magdalene Institutions when you were young? – What did you hear?
5. Who raised you?
6. Before adoption, were you in a mother and baby home or elsewhere (e.g. Temple Hill or St. Clare's in Stamullen)
7. At what age did you go to your adoptive parents?
8. Do you know if your natural mother gave informed consent for your adoption?
9. Did you have any brothers or sisters and if so, were they adopted too?
10. Growing up, when you thought about your natural mother, did you know or suspect that she was in a Magdalene Laundry?
11. If not, what did you think became of her?
12. What agency handled your adoption?
13. Did you reunite with your natural mother? If so, when?
14. Did you search yourself or did you go through the agency?
15. What was your searching experience like, was the agency/HSE cooperative?
16. If reunited, what was your reunion like?
17. Do you know anything about your natural father? Have you reunited with him?

Entry into the laundry

18. Do you know what laundry your natural mother was in?
19. Between which dates?

20. Do you know the circumstances of how she came to be there?
21. Did she move from one institution to another? (Please provide dates for each if known.)

Living Conditions in the laundry

22. Did your natural mother have a “house name” or number at the Magdalene Laundry?
23. Do you know anything about the living conditions?

Relationships

24. Do you know if your natural mother had friends in the laundry?
25. Were friends or members of your family able to visit?

Working Conditions in the laundry

26. Did your natural mother tell you what work she did?
27. Did your natural mother tell you if she was paid?
28. Did your natural mother tell you if she was given pocket money?
29. Did your natural mother tell you how many days per week she worked?
30. Did your natural mother tell you what hours she worked?
31. Did your natural mother tell you what working conditions in the laundry were like?
32. Did your natural mother tell you whether any government officials or employees ever visited the laundry – factory inspectors, Gardaí, doctors? If so, what parts of the laundry did they visit? Did they talk to anyone?
33. [If your natural mother entered the laundry, from the Industrial School system or on remand/probation/being given a suspended sentence from the Courts or by being referred by the Gardaí/welfare officers/social workers]

Did anyone from the relevant Government department/agency visit your natural mother in the laundry to check how she was? If so, how often? And what did she say to them?

The type of work in the Laundry

34. Did your natural mother tell you if it was possible to tell where the items of clothing which were being laundered or repaired came from?

35. Did your natural mother tell you if any of the items were recognisable as uniforms or work clothes? If so, does she remember which organisations they came from?
36. Did your natural mother tell you if she ever had any contact with or talk to the people delivering the clothes to the laundry? If so, what did she say to them?
37. Was she aware of regular contracts – did the laundry regularly come from particular clients?

Possibility of Escape

38. Did your natural mother tell you if she was allowed to leave?
39. Did she try to leave or escape?
40. If so, what happened to her? Did someone bring her back? If so, who?
41. Did your natural mother tell you if anyone else at the laundry tried to escape whilst she was there? If so, what did the nuns/auxiliaries do when they discovered this? What happened to the person who escaped? Did they return to the laundry? Who brought them back?
42. Did your natural mother tell you how people left the Magdalene?
43. Did your natural mother ever ask the nuns when she would be able to leave the laundry? What was the reply?
44. Did your natural mother tell you if the doors to the laundry were locked?
45. From the inside or the outside?
46. Did your natural mother tell you what the windows were like? Were they locked? Could they be reached? Could she see outside?

Leaving the Laundry

47. Did your natural mother manage to leave the laundry?
48. If so, why did she leave?
49. How did she leave? Where did she go?
50. Was she released to a position of employment? Was it a religious run institution?

If natural mother did not manage to leave the Magdalene

51. Is she still alive?

52. If she is deceased, where is she buried? In an individual/family plot or in a mass Magdalene grave?
53. Is her name on the grave? If yes, is it her real name or her "house" name?
54. Is her death registered?
55. If deceased, were you informed of her death? Were you allowed to attend the funeral? Was there a funeral?
56. If your natural mother is still alive, is she in the charge of the nuns? If so, where?
57. Is she still working? If yes, does she get paid? What hours does she work?
58. Is she institutionalised? If yes, what, to your knowledge, was her mental state before entering the laundry?
59. What is the impact of her institutionalisation on you and your family?

Complaints

60. Did your natural mother tell you if there was a process to make a formal complaint?
61. Did she complain to anyone while she was in the laundry?
62. Have she ever made a complaint to the nuns about her treatment?
63. Have you ever made a complaint to the nuns about her treatment?
64. Have you or your natural mother complained to anyone else (Ministers, IHRC, Gardaí)?

Records

65. Did you or your natural mother apply to the nuns for records?
66. How were you treated?
67. Did you get the records immediately? What was the process?
68. Did the nuns deny that your natural mother was in the laundry?
69. Did you or your natural mother apply for any state records? If so to what department? Were you successful?

Redress Board

70. Did your natural mother make an application to the Redress Board?
71. What happened? Was she successful?
72. Was she allowed to speak about the Magdalene Laundries?
73. If she received a payment, does she feel her time in the laundry had been acknowledged?

Post-Magdalene Institution Experiences

74. Did your natural mother speak about the Magdalene Institutions after she left? Who did she speak with? What did she say?
75. How does she now feel about her time in the Magdalene?
76. Has her time in the laundry affected her since she left? If so, please give details?
77. Has her time in the laundry affected your family?
78. Do you or your natural mother ever visit any of the women who are still institutionalised?

Personal impact

79. As a relative of someone who was in the Magdalene Laundries, what do you want? What would you like the state to do?
80. What impact has this had on your life, and your sense of your own identity?
81. What is it that you would have liked the state to do differently, e.g. to facilitate information?
82. What would an apology mean to you?