Interview Guide- Human Rights Activists

➤ Before the camera is rolling
- Do you have any questions for us?
- Chat!

➤ The Beginning – the Life Story
- Can you introduce yourself?¹
  - What is your name?
  - What organization are you involved with?
  - Where are you from?
  - (What do you see as being ‘your cause’?)
- Can you tell us about your childhood?²
- What was your family like?
- What was your neighbourhood like?
- Why did you come to Canada?
- When did you first decide to come to Canada?
- How long have you been in Canada for?
- What is your current immigration status?
- How did you come to be in Canada? (Tailor follow-up to their particular experience)
- What was your immigration experience like?
- What, to you, does it mean to be Canadian?
- Tell us about your life here in Montreal
- Where is your family now? What is your family life like now?
- What communities do you identify as being a part of?
- What’s your favourite sport?

➤ The Middle – Life in Activism (re-examining the Life Story)
- What is activism?
- What are human rights?
- Do you consider yourself a human rights activist?
- What do you do as an activist?
- Why are you an activist?
- How did you get involved with your cause?
- What was your first political experience?
- What was your first experience as an activist?
- How did you get involved with your organization?
- How are you sharing, or do you share, your life story with your children? Your family?
- More generally, how do you teach people about human rights? Your cause?
- Have any events or people influenced you, either positively or negatively?
- Are you an “activist” on a volunteer basis? Or are you paid?
- How do you balance your life and profession/volunteer?
- How do you remain connected to your community or to the cause you represent?

¹ Allow interviewee to self-identify
² Life towards activism OR life with activism as a part of it?
The End? – General Reflections/Dreams for the Future
- What did you want to be when you were young?
- Do you drink coffee? What’s your favourite coffee shop?
- If you could, would you return home?
- What’s important in your life today?

**general life story -> questions about activism -> looking back in more detail -> where they want to be** this will allow the interviewee to re-examine their life as an activist, their conceptions of activism and human rights, and their ‘formative’ experiences. They may choose to trace a trajectory from their past experiences to their present conception as a human rights activist, to their dreams of what their life will become – or maybe they won’t.

- Questions for Steve
  - How do you negotiate between having structure and leading the interview?
  - Comments? Suggestions?

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3 Views interviewee as a whole being – not essentializing them as ‘activists’