

## Human Book Interview Guide: Human Library Project

Organized by Thomas Memorial Library & the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee

Thomas Memorial Library

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### SCREENING PARAMETERS [GOOGLE FORM LINKED FROM TML WEBSITE + RECRUITING EMAIL]

#### Part I: Book Title/Topic Relevance

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The objective of this portion of the interview is to determine whether the individual has the relevant experience for becoming a Book in the Human Library.

1. Have you had experience of prejudice and/or discrimination, directly or indirectly? How would you describe your experience?
2. With what negatively marginalized group, group vulnerable to prejudice, of minority group do you identify? *[This will help the librarians ensure diversity across the human books.]*
3. What topic would you address that is typically tough to discuss or surrounded by taboo? *[This will help guide selection of a book title.]*

#### Part II: Motivation to Become a Book

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4. What is your motivation to be published in the Human Library? [Should be based on a desire to be part of the Human Library's mission to challenge prejudice.]

#### Items to confirm with the human book candidate:

- Are you aware the Human Library is not a means to mission your set of beliefs, lifestyle, ideology, or religion? Yes/No
- Do you understand you may not promote or collect any financial compensation for being a Human Book? Yes/No
- Do you understand you may not self-promote being a Human Book to promote your business, art, or products. Yes/No

#### Part III: Conversational Abilities *(for interviewer to answer based on interview)*

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The Candidate:	Yes	Maybe/ Sometimes	No
Practices active listening and is open to unjudging the reader			
Able to draw boundaries and address gracefully and respectfully any questions/aspects of their Topic they are not ready to talk about			
Brings their experience to life in an engaging and relevant way			
Can maintain focus while letting the reader guide the conversation			
Is open to having conversations with different kinds of people and can adapt to the readers' level of familiarity with the topic			

## THE INTERVIEW

### Part I: Introduction to the Human Library (explain, clear up misconceptions, and manage expectations about what it means to be a Book)

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1. How did you learn about the Human Library and how much do you know about it?

Confirm:

- The purpose of the event is to create a safe space for dialogue where challenging and taboo subjects can be discussed in the open without being condemned.
- Each Human Book is an expert in their own lived experience of the Topic.
- The Human Library is NOT a platform for self-promotion.
- There is NO place for hate speech or promoting prejudice of other groups.
- The Human Library is a neutral space to explore diversity. There are no pre-determined outcomes or takeaways. Readers may not leave with any belief or changed perspective.

### Part II: Content and Conversation (focus on potential Book's personal lived experience with their topic; explain the Human Library works with Book Titles and delivers Book Training)

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2. Can you give examples of how [POTENTIAL BOOK TITLE] affects you and your life experience?
3. Which prejudices have you met in connection to/based on [POTENTIAL BOOK TITLE]?
4. Are there any aspects OF [POTENTIAL BOOK TITLE] you do not wish to talk about or that could cause you discomfort?
5. Are there questions that make you frustrated or angry? *[Evaluate whether the individual is ready for open and honest dialogue about their experience? Are there triggers that should be prefaced at the beginning of the reading?]*
6. What is your motivation for becoming an open Book?
7. How do you feel about being asked personal questions and not being in control of the direction of the conversation? *[Emphasize this is not a storytelling exercise; Books are meant to respond to questions from the Readers.]*
8. Is there anything about the concept of the Human Library you are unsure about?
9. What do you expect to gain from being an open Book?
10. How do you feel about talking with various types of people in different contexts? *[Will the Book be able to adjust to different age groups, types of readers, and questions? Can they maintain healthy boundaries?]*
11. Do you feel you have processed the incidents you have experienced? *[Could there be any psychological factors? Emphasize this is not intended as therapy, even though it may be therapeutic.]*

### Part III: Practicalities

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- Explain the event and that Books will also have the opportunity to be published by the Human Library at international and online events. Review expectations for the event (time commitment, arrival time, breaks, support of librarians).
- Share the **“Rules of Behavior & Code of Ethics.”**
- The next step is a Book Training Session. You will receive offers to sign up once you have signed the non-disclosure agreement.
- THANK YOU!