

EXERCISE:

# ***Talking About our Passion: Why I Became an Activist***

FORMAT:

GROUP  
EXERCISE

TIME: 60 MIN

REQUIRED MATERIALS: NONE

SUMMARY:

*This exercise is used to introduce participants to each other on a deeper level. It is useful for establishing group connections and commonalities, and to begin to explore issues of motivation, passion and the personal history behind the public work.*

KEY EXPLANATION POINTS:

- Ask participants to take a few minutes to think about why they became an activist.
- Once they are ready, and have that story in their mind, tell them to forget it – that is not the one you want them to talk about.
- Ask them to tell the real reason they became an activist... the story underneath.

FACILITATION NOTES:

Explain that everyone has their ‘first’ story – the one we hold on the surface, the one that we are comfortable with. This is the intimate story we share on occasion, the one that becomes our history. But it is the other stories we want to unearth, the ones that reveal the deeper, truer reasons behind our activism – that help us to reconnect to ourselves, to the passion and those beginnings.

And when these deeper truths are shared in this space, we connect to each other on another level. We see that we have a lot more in common than we ever expected.

In addition, this helps us to form connections before ideological differences regarding our organisational or theoretical frameworks emerge – first we see each other as coming from similar places.

This exercise can then flow naturally into discussions about our identities: who we are as activists and what connects us.

*Alternative Option:*

This exercise can be used any time you want to encourage participants to leave their comfort zone and get to a deeper truth. You could, for example, ask for an example of a situation in which they were hurt or betrayed by another activist – then ask for a different story, in which they were the one to hurt or betray someone.