



# REENTRY OWNERSHIP MANUAL

National Web-based Reentry Resource Center

**[www.fairshake.net](http://www.fairshake.net)**

PO Box 63, Westby, WI 54667

## **Fair shake. Just chance.**

### **An equitable opportunity or treatment.**

The term 'a fair shake' is an Americanism which has been in use since the early nineteenth century, but around the globe, and throughout the human lifespan (including toddlers!), we all care about what is 'fair'.

Let's talk about this!

*Doesn't everyone deserve a fair shake at life?*

"No matter what, you give everybody a fair shake, and when somebody needs a hand, you offer yours." - Michelle Obama

"I'm into people, especially kids, and making sure they have a fair shake, and making sure they reach their potential." - Jamal Crawford

"All workers want is a fair shake." - James P. Hoffa

"Dale Jr. has never gotten a fair shake from the start because, guess what? He's not his father." - Kevin Harvick

Please feel free to consider this book as a slow conversation. I'm sharing my perspective here, and I hope you will reflect on the ideas that appeal to you and, if you're moved to do so, share your thoughts with me! Please let me know what topics you think should be included on the website, in the software, and in this Ownership Manual. Don't be shy! If you disagree with my perspective, I'd still like to hear your thoughts! We are building the future together. Let's start with a conversation about what's important and what is possible.

## **THANK YOU!**

Fair Shake is grateful for the donations of expertise, time and financial support in the creation of this publication. Several notable professionals have donated materials to share freely with the incarcerated, the formerly incarcerated, and the stakeholders who support reentry success. Many eyes have read the content and shared their critiques and suggestions. I hope you will feel comfortable sharing yours! Deep gratitude goes out to the donors (many of whom are incarcerated!) who believe in what we are building together.

The Fair Shake Ownership Manual is available for free to print or download from [fairshake.net](http://fairshake.net).

Fair Shake PO Box 63 Westby, WI 54667

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# Fair Shake Ownership Manual



Note: Resources evolve constantly. For this reason, the Ownership Manual contains very few resources. In a few months, the ones in this publication may change names, merge with larger organizations or disappear. If you are unable to connect with any of them, I hope you will write to us and let us know, and we'll update the information for everyone's benefit and, hopefully, find an organization that fits what you were looking for.



## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book is a primer to thinking about things that increase the ownership of our lives. For you to get the most benefit from it, please remember a few things while reading through the pages:

- Like everything that is alive, this book – and every aspect of Fair Shake – is constantly changing. What you are seeing here is the current phase of a 'work in progress'.
- It is 100% based on the perspective of Sue Kastensen, founder and director of Fair Shake. I share what I believe is important. It is my hope that this booklet will pique your curiosity so that you will look into some of the ideas I explore. Read, discuss, listen to talk shows and watch programs to build your knowledge. And be sure to question each and every source of information...including this book!
- Know that every subject found in this book is merely a representative of a much larger body of work on each topic - whether it is about identity, or human needs or even Swellness - a word I made up - there is a great deal of information (and misinformation and disinformation) to consider! As you make your way through the murk of 'information glut' you will improve your critical thinking filter so weeding out incomplete, false and purposefully misleading information will become easier over time. Investigate the topics using your unique way of interpreting information so that you can apply it to your life, if it has meaning to you. Or, if it is not valuable, you can use the information to improve your argument against it! Regardless of how you use it, my aim is only to provide an opportunity for reflection, thinking and discussion.
- Contribute! We're building this world together. We can build it more beautifully by making sure there is a place for everyone and that each of us is valued. I value your thoughts, reflections and perspective! I have just two eyes to use to see the world; if you share how you see the world with me, my view will be that much more complete.

Throughout your life, proceed with caution.

*Remember: We see things as WE are, not as they are.*



# NOTES AND QUOTES

Throughout the book you'll find 'rest areas' with quotes and / or a little room for notes.

*"None but ourselves can free our minds."*  
- Marcus Garvey

*"What we see depends mainly on what we look for."*  
- John Lubbock

*"The first revolution is when you change your mind."*  
- Gil Scott Heron

*"Nothing is more desirable than to be released from an affliction, but nothing is more frightening than to be divested of a crutch."*  
- James Baldwin

*"Consciously making choices and accepting the responsibility for the results of those choices equals power."*  
- Denise Ryan

*"Do not wait, the time will never be just right. Start where you stand, and work with whatever tools you may have at your command. Better tools will be found as you go a long."*  
- Napoleon Hill

*"The most potent weapon of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed."*  
- Steven Biko

*"Difficulty is what wakes up the genius."*  
- Nassim Taleb

*"Vision is not enough; it must be combined with venture. It is not enough to stare up the steps, we must step up the stairs."*  
- Václav Havel

*"There is always light - if we are brave enough to see it; if we are brave enough to be it."*  
- Amanda Gorman

*"The real voyage of discovery consists, not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes."*  
- Marcel Proust

*"We must act as if our institutions are ours to create, our learning is ours to define, the leadership we seek is ours to become."*  
- Peter Block

*"The man who views the world at 50 the same as he did at 20 has wasted 30 years of his life."*  
- Muhammad Ali

*"The ultimate, hidden truth of the world is that it is something that we make...and could just as easily make differently."*  
- David Graeber

*"All we have to do to create the future is to change the nature of our conversations, to go from blame to ownership, and from bargaining to commitment, and from problem solving to possibility."*  
- Peter Block

*"Attention is a limited resource, so pay attention to where you pay attention."* Howard Rheingold

*"No problem can be solved from the same consciousness that created it."*  
- Albert Einstein

*"You never change things by fighting against the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the old model obsolete."*  
- Richard Buckminster Fuller

*"...your job is to figure out what your gifts are to best serve yourself, your people and your world. What do you love doing so much that you would still do it if you didn't get paid? Find what you love and work on it. Whatever it is that you love, it's under attack. Which of the most pressing problems can you help to solve using the gifts that are unique to you in all the universe?"*  
- Derrick Jensen

*"Growth is a 2-step process:  
1: Overcoming naivety - learning what it means to live your best life  
Key skills: humility, self-reflection, openness to negative feedback  
2: Overcoming bad habits - actually living that best life  
Key skills: inner strength, undying determination"*  
- Tim Urban

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## THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FAIR SHAKE AND A PROGRAM

Fair Shake; the Un-Program		Most Programs
Build community	When I receive questions from individuals, I turn to the 4000+ incarcerated newsletter readers to share their suggestions, reflections, ideas, and experiences. Each of us holds a wealth of information! We can look to each other for solutions, critical questions and support.	Programs address one 'need'. They rarely support people outside of that one area and almost never build community between areas and among the incarcerated or formerly incarcerated.
Encourage feelings of agency and self-determination	Fair Shake provides opportunities for people to pursue their own goals. We offer support to everyone to meet their universal human needs, including the need to understand themselves as a person-in-society vs. a person alone.	Many programs are created to address 'criminogenic needs'. Many participants 'go through the motions' to get the certificate or check the box.
Build knowledge base with incarcerated and non-incarcerated alike	I ask incarcerated people what they need to properly reintegrate into society. I share their ideas with all readers...for example, we built our free books, higher education and pen-pal lists through newsletter contributions!	Programs tell people what they need and must do. They then provide ways to see if the participants are doing it. That's how they determine if the program 'works'.
Understanding and addressing complexity	Fair Shake offers a unique blend of interdisciplinary education opportunities Including: building capabilities, helping others, understanding ourselves, ways to collaborate, and leveraging community knowledge to address today's challenges.	Programs mainly focus on fixing or addressing deficits. They target single aspects of a person, not the whole, messy, integrated, unique person-within-community.
Multi-Stakeholder Approach	Fair Shake is the only organization that offers free information for many stakeholder groups; providing a platform for us to all work together to build mutually-beneficial success.	Programs are encouraged to work collaboratively but very few do so without funding that will support it.
Educate and Leverage staff	I share 'best practices' among the state and federal institutions, who have no opportunities to learn from each other. I strongly encourage prison staff to provide tools that returning citizens need for reentry success.	Many programs rely on staff. They rarely, if ever, focus on problem-solving with other state's prisons to improve outcomes or usefulness.
FREE benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free of cost to anyone.</li> <li>• Free software for prisons and jails</li> <li>• DIY: no need for staff or supervision</li> <li>• Free to use and explore as you like!</li> <li>• Free National Resource Directory</li> <li>• Free from data collection and algorithms</li> </ul>	"Free" of financial costs for "Clients", but often paid for by the government to address 'needs'. Many resources are offered on 'referral' basis only.

# The Fair Shake Ownership Manual

*Fair Shake is the 'unprogram'.*

*We will never tell you what you need or what you should do.*

Every person is different, so Fair Shake offers a lot of information for you to peruse and choose!

Getting a fair shake is difficult. We must advocate for ourselves despite the fact that we have not had a proper education to understand ourselves...much less to own our future. But everyone deserves a fair shake at life, so we must learn how to get it. Have you thought about what you might need to get a fair shake? I think about this a lot, and I'd like to explore this idea with you!

First, we can ask ourselves to define the term. What does it mean to get a fair shake? In this publication we consider beliefs, values, feelings, relationships, boundaries, intention, persuasion, agency, and freedom, for starters. We can think about forces (expectations, status quo, legal and social) that direct us, support us and limit us, we can think about how we are educated, roles we play, parenting, money management, time management, and employment options. What else should we consider?

At Fair Shake, we believe that when you own yourself, you own your future. There is no "program" for you to build your best life! Your strengths, your skills, your knowledge, gifts, characteristics and capabilities can develop and expand along with your intentions, beliefs and commitments. Instead of telling you what to think, how to behave, or what you 'should' do, Fair Shake offers ideas to ponder, questions to consider, and ways to understand your thinking and your feelings to build your mental, emotional, physical, relational and community strength. You are the captain of your ship!

There is no specific order to this book or to the Fair Shake software / website. Feel free to pick an intriguing idea to consider. Read, reflect, question, critique, compare this information with other texts, discuss the ideas with others, and then explore some more! Your unique interests will guide you. Like any good Do-It-Yourself center, hardware store or library, we just want to "help you help yourself".

Everything at this do-it-yourself center is FREE. We want to be clear that this means it's free for you to utilize and free for you to share; please let your outside supporters know that it's free for them to use as well! The software is free for prisons and jails to provide resources and development support to you. Please feel free to share this information with the library, education department or reentry center.

Fair Shake is also committed to your freedom; for instance, the freedom to search through our information without being tracked, nudged, directed or counted, freedom from us mining your preferences or sharing your information. Search freely and anonymously with just your curiosity, interests, and self-determination to guide you.

We can't tell you "What works". No one can. If they try to tell you, they are lying. There is no 'magic pill' that works for everyone. In fact, we've been chasing the elusive key to what works for 50 years and, despite the billions invested 'evidence-based' claims, the recidivism rate has only increased. The most recent report from the Bureau of Justice Statistics showed it at a whopping 83%\*! "Evidence" rhetoric is a 'red herring' (intentionally misleading) because the 'evidence' which is 'observed' is not you!

Only you know what works for you; it's your unique blend, comprised of belief in yourself, your opportunities, your commitments, your capabilities, your problem-solving skills, your intentions and your determination. The secret to what works is inside each of us. It IS us. It includes feeling respected and understanding our value. It is having the autonomy to make - and act upon - our choices. We can build ourselves, we can build our communities, and we can build a powerful, safe and engaging future. The future we all deserve. A fair shake for all.

Get lost in discovery and open doors to new possibilities!

## *So how do we prepare for the future? What skills will be important for success?*

While it is valuable to prepare for the future through skills building and education, it is equally, if not more, important to prepare for an unpredictable future. If we prepare for change, we can reduce the mental, physical and emotional strain that comes with it. When we don't know what to expect, or what is coming next, there are skills that can help us to be better learners, to be flexible, and to collaborate, so we can be ready for opportunities, challenges, and even disappointments. Here are a few ideas for skills we might want to possess in an unpredictable future:

Agency	Creativity	Humility	Resilience
Boundaries	Critical Thinking	Humor	Patience
Care	Curiosity	Listening Skills	Self-worth
Commitment	Determination	Noticing Skills	Questioning Skills
Confidence	Flexibility	Ownership	Tenacity
Courage	Heath (Swellness)	Relationship Skills	Willingness to Learn

None of these qualities are taught in school, yet they are crucial concepts for success and satisfaction. They are needed at work, at home, when using technology and apps, and for building safety and joy in our communities. They will help us make sense of the world, they will help us to trust our capabilities and courage, and they will help us read situations and make good decisions.

*"The only constant is change."* - Heraclitus (approx. 500 BC)

The world will continue to change. That does not mean that we must change in the way that it's changing; only that we must accept the change, and determine how we wish to respond to it.

Our projections and our assumptions often get in the way of our ability to see clearly: to listen, to learn and expand our perspective...which then expands our opportunities. Now is a great time to reflect on biases, projections, assumptions, and our vulnerability to BS and persuasion. We can build our 'reflective muscle' to prepare for change, and to defend ourselves against the barrage of fake news, the deep challenges of emotional appeals, and to navigate the psychological games found in all forms of media (social and otherwise), several professions and even in relationships.

We always have a choice. We can either keep doing what we're doing, or we can do something else.

*"Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom."* - Viktor Frankl

*You might be asking yourself "Who is she to say anything about reentry or life after institutionalization?"*

A valid and important question! To be frank, I'm "an older white lady from flyover country" and to be clear, I am also a person who spent her first night in a jail cell at age 14...and several years in foster homes, group homes, and a reform school far from home. In fact, I have 6 years' experience 'in the system'. I know how it feels to be hundreds of miles away from everyone and everything I knew; to lose friends, lose trust and to not have the care or love of family. I know what it's like to feel controlled, undervalued, and unable to grow into my authentic self. I know what it's like to long for a fair shake at life.

Getting a fair shake is complex! But we are capable, and we can handle this. We can own our values and our decisions, and build a life that reflects our intentions.

I hope you will let me know what you think of this book. It will grow and improve with YOUR input. Yes, it's true; I listen! We never stop learning, and I'm eager to learn from and with you.

To our successful transitions!

Sue Kastensen



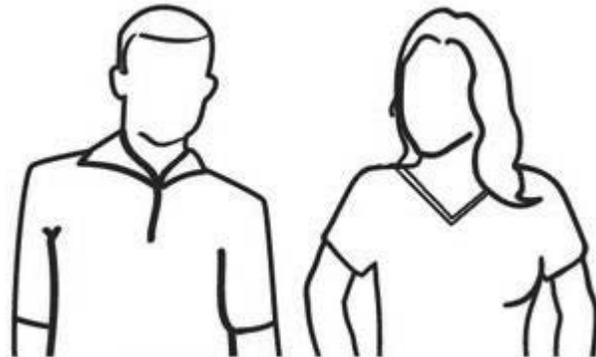
Fair Shake Founder and Director

*\* 2018 Recidivism Update, 9 years after release: 83% Recidivism = 17% Reentry Success.*

# Fair Shake Basics:

- OR -

*How does the  
website and  
software work?*



## Fair Shake offers the following FREE Benefits



**Transition Considerations**

**Reentry Resources**

**Information Center**

**Member Menu**

**About Fair Shake**

**Sign up for our E-news**

**Reentry Checklists**

**Ownership Manual**

**Resume**

**Certificate**

**Document and Photo Storage**

**Public Profile**

**Personal Web Page**

**Member Card**

**Personal Web Page**

**Member Card**

**Building Computer Skills**

**Welcome to Computer, Basics**

**KEYS TO SUCCESS!**

**Educate Yourself**

**Employment Support**

**Power of the Personal Web Page**

**Resource Directory**

**Free Fair Shake Member Tools**

### Transition Considerations

- ▶ Preparing for Release Checklists
- ▶ Ownership Manual
- ▶ Culture Shock!
- ▶ Developing Relationships
- ▶ Resisting Influence by Dr. Philip Zimbardo
- ▶ Tips for dealing with:
  - Transition
  - Motivation
  - Frustration
  - Depression
  - Rejection
  - Anger

### Free Fair Shake Member Tools

- ▶ **Resource Directory**  
Employment links, job training programs, housing assistance, family services, health care, food assistance, voting rights, volunteer opportunities and more.
- ▶ **Office in the Clouds:**
  - Personal Web Page
  - Document and Photo Storage
- ▶ **Tutorials for Our Tools**
  - Resource Directory
  - Documents and Photos
  - Personal Web Page
  - Website Quick Start Guide

### Employment and Education Support

- ▶ **Employment Support**  
Including resume writing, sample interview questions, interview questions for you to ask, accomplishment and skills worksheet, and other employment tips.
- ▶ **Educate Yourself**
  - Education Basics
  - Higher Education
  - Life Skills
  - Employment Skills
- ▶ **Build Computer Skills**
- ▶ **Information for Employers - Help Them Hire You!**
  - Links to Bonding and Tax Credit Information
  - Value of the Personal Web Page
- ▶ **Employment and Training Resources**

# Fair Shake Website and Software Home Page

Fair Shake is not like any other reentry organization:  
 The website is free for anyone to use.  
 The software is free for prisons and jails.

Fair Shake does not track, nudge, mine or sell your information. We do not tell you what you need to do as you explore the website or software. What you want and need will change over time! And Fair Shake will change over time, too, as we continue to add more information.



*Be kind; everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle.*

- John Watson



Sign In | Member Menu ▾

search our site...

Reentry Resources

Information Center

Member Menu

About Fair Shake

Sign up for our E-news!

Support Us

**Donate!**

We are a 501(c)(3) charity and all donations are tax deductible. Thanks Supporters!

Photo by David Y. Lee for The Fortune Society

Are you ready to get a Fair Shake?

## START HERE!

→

Please print our Quick Start Guide to help you find everything we offer

**WELCOME TO FAIR SHAKE!**

Three important facts for you to remember:

1. Fair Shake is a free website and software.
2. Fair Shake is a non-profit organization.
3. Fair Shake is a 501(c)(3) charity.

Now, what are you looking for?

**REENTRY RESOURCES:**

1. Resource Directory
2. Ownership Manual
3. Building Computer Skills
4. Find a Job
5. Become a Member!
6. Educate Yourself
7. Fair Shake Newsletter

**Fair Shake Reentry Tool Kit**

- Resource Directory
- Ownership Manual
- Building Computer Skills
- Find a Job
- Become a Member!
- Educate Yourself
- Fair Shake Newsletter

**For Formerly and Currently Incarcerated People**

You have big hurdles. We have powerful tools to help you get beyond them!

**For Family and Friends**

Special support for special relationships

**For Property Managers**

Successful reentry is not possible without a place to live.

**For Employers**

We have tools to support you in making informed, careful hiring decisions.

**For Corrections / Reentry Professionals**

We have a number of tools for you to help incarcerated people prepare to return to the community.

**For Community**

Neighbors, Students, Advocates. We all play an important role in reentry.

**Reentry News**

- Bureau of Prisons Commits to Prison Reform  
Click on the link to find a summary of the most significant reforms at the BOP, starting from arrival and continuing until the return home. And call this toll-free reentry hotline for resources and support! 877-895-9196
- The Baltimore Sun: Port Covington should commit to hiring ex-offenders  
What can be done to keep people from cycling back into the system? Let's start with jobs. Sustainable employment may be our single best opportunity to significantly reduce recidivism.
- CA Voters Choice: End Death Penalty, or Speed It Up  
Voters will decide between Prop 67 which would end the

More news in our archives

**Videos**

Damon Horowitz teaches philosophy through the Prison University Project.

3:51

Fair Shake has created several FREE tools exclusively for those coming home.

3:41

Victor Frankl, author of Man's Search for Meaning shares his perspective on having faith in humanity.

**WELCOME TO FAIR SHAKE! → [www.fairshake.net](http://www.fairshake.net)**

PRINT THIS PAGE to guide you as you explore the Fair Shake Do-It-Yourself Reentry Resource Center. There is a lot of information on the website! This guide will help you get find your way around.

**3 important items for you to remember:**

1. If you ever get lost on the website (or any website), click on the logo to return to the home page. → 
2. Words in blue are links to pages on our website, other websites or documents that you can also print. → [> Resource Directory](#)  
[> Resource Directory](#)
3. Icons you will see:
  -  Available off-line and on-line
  -  Available on-line only
  -  Documents available off-line and on-line

**Fair Shake Website Home Page: → [www.fairshake.net](http://www.fairshake.net)**



**Do It Yourself!**

- You are unique! No one knows what you need better than you do
- Explore new opportunities!
- No tracking, nudging, or monitoring



**Fair Shake Reentry Tool Kit**

- > Resource Directory
- > Ownership Manual
- > Building Computer Skills
- > Find a Job
- > Become a Member!
- > Educate Yourself!
- > Fair Shake Newsletter

**Find RESOURCES:**

- Resource Directory – search our huge data base!
- Resource Guides – local, regional, and national brochures, books, and interactive websites

**Find EMPLOYMENT**

- Prepare For Work
- Find A Job (also includes Start Your Own Business)
- Help an Employer Hire You!

**Explore LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES**

- Formal, Informal, Non-formal
- Higher Ed, Life Skills, Lifelong Learning

**And Improve COMPUTER SKILLS!**

- Step-by-Step Tutorials and Internet Safety Tips

# SEARCH the entire Fair Shake WEBSITE

It is like a REENTRY, DEVELOPMENT and COMMUNITY-BUILDING LIBRARY!

You can find all the pages on our website from almost any location on our website! By hovering over the four menu tabs on the left side of our home page, you will activate the menu bar to reveal links to pages organized under headings.

## STEP BY STEP:

Look to the left side of any page and you will see a dark purple column. Do you see the words: Reentry Resources, Information Center, Member Menu and About Fair Shake? Hover your cursor (don't click) over the words Reentry Resources at the top of the column. To 'hover', move the cursor – which usually looks like an arrow – over a tab. You will see the cursor switch to the image of a hand. The Menu Title will then change to light-purple and the Menu will appear to the right. Next, you can move your cursor over the words in the menu. Hover over any of the titles and the color will change to orange and a line will be added underneath. Click on the title that interests you, and you will go to that page on the website.

The screenshot shows the Fair Shake website interface. On the left is a vertical navigation menu with four tabs: "Reentry Resources", "Information Center", "Member Menu", and "About Fair Shake". The "Reentry Resources" tab is active, showing a list of links under various headings: "FS RESOURCE DIRECTORY", "OWNERSHIP MANUAL", "BECOME A MEMBER", "FAIR SHAKE TUTORIALS", "BUILDING COMPUTER SKILLS", "FREE SCHOOL", "EMPLOYMENT", "GET INVOLVED", and "STAKEHOLDERS". The main content area on the right displays the "BECOME A MEMBER" section, listing various resources like "Computer Basics Tutorial", "Email", "Browsing", "Software", "Storage", "Be Careful", "FREE SCHOOL", "Beliefs", "Boundaries", "BS Detecting", "Cognitive Biases", "Culture Shock!", "Dealing with Rejection", "Educate Yourself", "Gratitude", "Handling Frustration", "How To Watch TV", "Managing Anger", "Motivation Tips", "Resisting Influence", "Swiftness", "Transition Tips", "Working Through Depression", and "Ubuntu: Building Social Fabric".

This screenshot shows the Fair Shake website with the "Information Center" tab selected in the navigation menu. The "Information Center" menu is expanded, showing a list of links under various headings: "GENERAL INFORMATION", "MEDIA CENTER", "GET INVOLVED", "EDUCATE YOURSELF!", "BUILDING COMPUTER SKILLS", "CHOOSE YOUR PERSPECTIVE", "LEARN MORE", "PHYSICAL HEALTH", and "MENTAL HEALTH". The main content area on the right displays the "Are you ready to get a Fair Shake?" section, which includes a list of links under various headings: "GENERAL INFORMATION", "MEDIA CENTER", "GET INVOLVED", "EDUCATE YOURSELF!", "BUILDING COMPUTER SKILLS", "CHOOSE YOUR PERSPECTIVE", "LEARN MORE", "PHYSICAL HEALTH", and "MENTAL HEALTH".

Most websites work like Fair Shake:

- Click on the logo to return to the home page
- Find the sitemap at the bottom of almost every page
- Words that change color are often links
- Learn about an organization's Mission and Vision by visiting the "About Us" page.

Found at the bottom of each webpage, the Sitemap also shows all of the pages on the website:

Home / Sitemap / Privacy Policy / Help / Contact Us / Back to Top

## The Fair Shake Resource Directory

***The directory is a dynamic, expanding Do-It-Yourself resource-finding tool that is only available online or in the free Fair Shake software app.***

It is FREE! It's EASY!

And it's like a phone book, where **YOU decide what's right for YOU.**

Everyone is welcome to search freely through more than 15,000 resources, located in all states. Just enter your state, city and/or zip code, and the search tool will find local, state and national resources. Select the ones that are right for you! The results go into a .pdf to print or save.

If you are in an institution that does not utilize the free Fair Shake software, please ask a friend, family member, case manager, housing unit support staff, reentry coordinator, church support group, activist, advocate, or mentor to use our FREE DIRECTORY to locate your resources! Be sure to also let them know there are Reentry Guides below the form, too!

**Search**

State:

City or Zip Code:

Within: 5 Miles

**Guide to our Resource Directory:**

[Click here to see the list of categories.](#)

[Click here to find out where resources can be found. \(Under the local, state or national heading\)](#)

[Resource Directory Tutorial](#)

[Click to see State and Local Reentry Guides](#)

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**National, State and Local Reentry Guides** Choose Your State ▶

Florida ▼

**Florida**

South Florida Reentry Guide

 File: south\_florida\_reentry\_guide\_2011.pdf

Veterans Reentry for Florida and Southern Georgia

### Categories and Sub-Categories found in the Resource Directory

#### **Citizenship**

Birth Certificate  
 Community Development  
 Expungement  
 Legal Assistance  
 Social Security Card  
 Voting Rights

#### **Clothing**

Free Clothing  
 Interview and Career Clothing

#### **Education**

Continuing Education  
 Employment Education  
 Free Education  
 GED programs  
 Life Skills

#### **Employment**

Employment Programs  
 Employment Services  
 Job Training  
 Staffing Agency  
 Workforce Development

#### **Family**

Child Care  
 Family Counseling  
 Parenting

#### **Food**

Food Pantry  
 Free Meals

#### **Free Stuff**

#### **Health**

Counseling Services  
 Free / Sliding Scale Clinic  
 Free / Sliding Clinic w/ Dental  
 Free / Sliding Dental Clinic  
 Reduced Cost Medication

#### **Money**

Free Credit Report  
 Financial Literacy

#### **Reentry Resources**

Multiple Resources Available  
 Programs  
 Rights and Roadblocks

#### **Shelter**

Energy Assistance  
 Homeless Shelter  
 Low-Income Housing  
 Transitional Housing.

#### **Special Considerations**

Disability Support  
 Elders  
 Registrants  
 Veteran Support

#### **Support Groups**

Support Circles

#### **Volunteer**

Volunteer Opportunities

#### **Your Leisure Time**

Leisure Activities

# FAIR SHAKE RESOURCE DIRECTORY

<https://www.fairshake.net/reentry-resources/search-for-a-resource/>

This is how it works:

## Search for a Resource

Please note: Services and organizations listed in our directory may change at any time.

Resource Directory | Print Saved Resources | Recent Searches | Submit a Resource

**Search for Resources**  Print Saved Resources

state:   
City or Zip Code:   
Within:

How to use our Resource Directory 

What can be found in the RD 

US and State Reentry Guides 

Help us build this powerful resource tool! Please share your resources with us to reach people outside and inside prison.

## Results

### Fort Worth (76198) 0 Miles

- Citizenship
- Clothing
  - Employment Services
  - Free Clothes
  - Salvation Army
  - Thrift Store
- Education
  - Continuing Education
- Employment
  - Employment Services
  - Job Training
- Food
  - Soup Kitchens
- Free
- Health
- Reentry Resource
  - Multiple Resources Available
  - Reentry Coalition
  - Religious
- Shelter
  - Homeless Shelter
  - Low Income Housing
  - Salvation Army
  - Transitional Housing
- Special Considerations
- Volunteer
- Your Leisure Time

### Texas Programs

- 
- Citizenship
  - Employment
    - Licensing Information
  - Family
  - Food
    - Donate Food
    - Food Pantry
    - Free Meals
  - Money
    - Finances/Budgeting
  - Reentry Resource
    - Rights and Roadblocks
  - Shelter
    - Energy Assistance
    - Low Income Housing
  - Special Considerations
    - Elders
  - Volunteer
    - Community Development
    - Habitat For Humanity

### National Programs

- Citizenship
- Education
- Employment

# National, State and Local Reentry Guides and Other Useful Information

## Search for Resources

State:   
 City or Zip Code:   
 Within: 5 Miles

Just below the Search Box on the Resource Directory page you'll see that Fair Shake has discovered more than 400 local, regional, state and national reentry guides that offer even more resource information! Many cities, counties and states have created reentry publications, and may resources are available for the entire country, as well.

## National, State and Local Reentry Guides

Choose Your State   
National

### National

Veteran's Reentry Guides by State (VA's most recent update: 2009)  
 All of the Reentry Guides were found on this page in 2010: <https://www.va.gov/homeless/veterans-affairs>  
 Veteran's Affairs website. The Guides have not been updated, however, and in 2016 they were all of the pdf icons have no link; they are 'empty'. Why didn't they delete this page? Why has the home from US prisons? This is the VA text from the page: Incarcerated Veterans Re-entry Guide: how to plan a successful reentry. Please select a state to view local re-entry resources for Inc. pdf icon you see: Page Not Found

[Web: https://www.fairshake.net/veterans-page/](https://www.fairshake.net/veterans-page/)

Prisoner Reentry Resources: U.S. Dept. of Labor  
 Federal Funding for Crime Prevention and Improved Reentry

[Web: https://reentry.ojp.gov/funding/labor](https://reentry.ojp.gov/funding/labor)

New England Guide to Resources 2012

Resources in New England; some may no longer be available. No update was found.

[File: new\\_england\\_reentry\\_guide-1.pdf](#)

SSI: What Prisoners Need to Know

Benefits after incarceration: What You Need to Know. An Individual released from incarceration, retirement, survivors, or disability benefits Call to see if you qualify 1-800-772-1213

[Web: https://www.ssa.gov/reentry/benefits.htm](https://www.ssa.gov/reentry/benefits.htm)

[File: what-prisoners-need-to-know.pdf](#)

SSI: Entering the Community After Incarceration - How We Can

Benefits after incarceration: What You Need to Know. An Individual released from incarceration, retirement, survivors, or disability benefits Call to see if you qualify 1-800-772-1213.

[Web: https://www.ssa.gov/reentry/benefits.htm](https://www.ssa.gov/reentry/benefits.htm)

[File: entering-the-community-after-incarceration.pdf](#)

Prisoner Activist Resource Center (PARC) Directory 2019

PO Box 70447 Oakland, CA 94612. PARC is a prison abolitionist group committed to ending mass incarceration specifically within the Prison Industrial Complex (PIC). PARC believes in building communities without reliance on the police or the PIC. We produce a directory that is free

[Web: https://www.prisonactivist.org/](https://www.prisonactivist.org/)

[File: 2019-parc-directory.pdf](#)

Transitional Housing.org

Transitional-Housing.org is for those who are in need of locating transitional housing and group housing.

[Web: https://www.transitionalhousing.org/](https://www.transitionalhousing.org/)

Money Smart for Adults

14 Money Smart for Adults Training Modules

[Web: https://www.ftic.gov/consumers/consumer/moneysmart/adult.html](https://www.ftic.gov/consumers/consumer/moneysmart/adult.html)

The Quixote Center

The Quixote Center is a multi-issue, grassroots organization founded in the Catholic Church. You can find information about reentry programs available in each state. Quixote Center 20740, Ph: 301-699-0042

[Web: https://www.quixote.org/category/criminal-justice/](https://www.quixote.org/category/criminal-justice/)

[File: quixote-prisoner-resource-guide.pdf](#)

Homeless Shelters and Service Organizations.

National list of homeless shelters and other services.

[Web: http://www.homelessshelterdirectory.org/](http://www.homelessshelterdirectory.org/)

Food Pantries, Food Banks and Soup Kitchens

Find emergency food resources nearest to you.

[Web: http://www.homelessshelterdirectory.org/foodbanks/index.html](http://www.homelessshelterdirectory.org/foodbanks/index.html)

Career Gear

Career Gear is focused on helping empower men of all ages, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds regardless of the obstacles that have held them back in their past. 212-577-6190

[Web: https://www.careergear.org/](https://www.careergear.org/)

Social Security Card - Getting Your Number

A Social Security number is important because you need it to get a job, collect Social Security services. You should keep your Social Security card in a safe place. In many cases, simply knowing your Social Security number may be enough.

[Web: https://www.ssa.gov/ssnnumber/](https://www.ssa.gov/ssnnumber/)

[File: social-security-card-application.pdf](#)

## National, State and Local Reentry Guides

Choose Your State   
Texas

### Texas

Inside Books Project

Sends free reading material to inmates in Texas. One request every three months. Inside Books Project also publishes a handy Resource Guide. Inside Books Project works to promote reading, literacy, and education among incarcerated individuals and to educate the general public on issues of incarceration. Inside Books Project c/o 12th Street Books 827 W. 12th St Austin, TX 78701

[Web: http://insidebooksproject.org/](http://insidebooksproject.org/)

[File: inside-books-project-resource-guide-2015.pdf](#)

A New Start - Reentry Guide for Texas

A 216 page reentry guide for the entire state! Housing, Health, Employment and much more!

[Web: https://www.tdcj.texas.gov/documents/riid/RIID\\_Article\\_A\\_New\\_Start.pdf](https://www.tdcj.texas.gov/documents/riid/RIID_Article_A_New_Start.pdf)

[File: a-new-start-reentry-guide-for-texas-2010.pdf](#)

Locked Out

A Texas legal guide to reentry.

[Web: http://www.texasojc.org/sites/default/files/uploads/TRLA\\_REENTRY\\_GUIDE\\_2012.pdf](http://www.texasojc.org/sites/default/files/uploads/TRLA_REENTRY_GUIDE_2012.pdf)

[File: trla-reentry-guide-2012.pdf](#)

Veterans Reentry Guide

Incarcerated Veterans Re-entry Guides contain information on resources and how to plan a successful reentry.

[Web: http://www.va.gov/homeless/reentry\\_guides.asp](http://www.va.gov/homeless/reentry_guides.asp)

[File: 09\\_tx.pdf](#)

Texas CareerOneStop Centers

Locations all around the state!

[File: tx.pdf](#)

Texas: Reentry Resources by County - Interactive Map

To find local reentry and justice resources for adults within your county, simply click on your county on the Texas map.

[Web: http://county/resources.texasojc.org/](http://county/resources.texasojc.org/)

Travis County Reentry Success Guide - 2014

The Guide was created for the benefit of those in need of information regarding resources that may be available to former offenders and their families during the reentry process after incarceration. Not all local services are listed in the guide. Providers of basic needs services may have significant waiting periods for services or they may have closed. Please be aware that there are costs associated with some resources listed in this guide. Travis County Justice and Public Safety Division: Criminal Justice Planning Department P.O. Box 1748 Austin, Texas 78767

[Web: http://county/resources.texasojc.org/sites/default/files/Travis County Reentry Success Guide July 2014.pdf](http://county/resources.texasojc.org/sites/default/files/Travis%20County%20Reentry%20Success%20Guide%20July%202014.pdf)

[File: travis-county-reentry-success-guide-july-2014.pdf](#)

2-1-1 Texas or 877-541-7905

No matter where you live in Texas, you can dial 2-1-1, or (877) 541-7905, and find information about resources in your local community. Whether you need help finding food or housing, child care, crisis counseling or substance abuse treatment, one number is all you need to know.

[Web: http://www.211texas.org/](http://www.211texas.org/)

County-by-County Reentry Guide! 2020

Create by and for the TDCJ. Resources for every county in the state.

[Web: http://tdcj.state.tx.us/documents/riid/RIID\\_Reentry\\_Resource\\_Guide.pdf](http://tdcj.state.tx.us/documents/riid/RIID_Reentry_Resource_Guide.pdf)

[File: tdcj-reentry\\_resource\\_guide-2020.pdf](#)

Fort Worth

Tarrant County Reentry Coalition Resource Directory

Comprehensive list of a multitude of resources among a wide variety of categories for services and resources throughout the county.

[Web: http://tarrant.tx.networkofcare.org/pr/services/index.aspx](http://tarrant.tx.networkofcare.org/pr/services/index.aspx)

[File: tarrant-county-resource-guide.pdf](#)

Fort Worth

Tarrant County Reentry Coalition

Since 2013, the Tarrant County Reentry Coalition has been bringing together stakeholders and citizens to address the challenges of prisoner reentry. Our community-wide collaboration includes over 35 organizations and agencies, partnering for a long-range strategy aimed at breaking the devastating cycle of criminal recidivism in tangible ways. We meet the third Friday of each month, from 9:30 to 11:00 AM. TX WALK-IN HOURS (no appointment needed!) Monday through Thursday - 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

[Web: http://www.tcreentry.org/](http://www.tcreentry.org/)

[File: purposeful-neighborhood-book-2013-rev01.pdf](#)

# Fair Shake's (large and growing!) webpage for you: (Please help me build it! :)

## Formerly and Currently Incarcerated People



Photo by David Y. Lee for The Fortune Society

Are you ready to get a fair shake? We exist to support your successful transition! Fair Shake is like a reentry hardware store: we have tools, resources and information to support you as you build your new life, including bridges of trust with your family, employers, property managers and the community.

Remember, many of America's most highly treasured stories are those involving redemption and pulling ourselves out of tough situations to create meaningful and fulfilling lives. This can be your story!

For those of you who are currently incarcerated and are able to email us, you can sign up for our Corlinks newsletter: [outreach@fairshake.net](mailto:outreach@fairshake.net).

### Employment



Looking for information to help you find a job? Check out our Find A Job page! If you're getting ready to apply or interview, check out our Prepare For Work page!

### New to Computers?

Need help with your computer skills? Learn more about using your computer on our Building Computer Skills page! Keep your documents safe(ish) in the cloud!  Google online storage



### Educate Yourself!



Need more math skills? Concerned about your grammar? Looking to pick up more knowledge or skills? Visit our Educate Yourself page.

List of correspondence schools that offer paper-based formats:

 Correspondence Schools

### Financial Aid

Federal Student Aid Information Center  
P.O. Box 54  
Washington, D.C. 20044  
1-800-433-3243  
<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/>

### Education not found in school!

**THE SCHOOL OF LIFE**  
The School of Life explores unconventional education to assist people in the quest for a more fulfilled life.

Watch the introduction video here ->  
Here are some topics we thought might interest you:

-  Self: [https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLwXNmB28mpokOVZZ\\_AzD7WM2p9-5NBv](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLwXNmB28mpokOVZZ_AzD7WM2p9-5NBv)
  -  Relationships: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLwXNmB28mpoEwOdydf2jSazQF8t81E>
  -  Work + Capitalism: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLwXNmB28mpoEwOdydf2jSazQF8t81E>
- You can find more on the School of Life on the Educate Yourself page!

### Fair Shake Reentry Packet



Our Reentry Packet is loaded with reentry information including tools and materials for building bridges of transformation and trust.

 Fair Shake Reentry Packet

### Choose Your Perspective

You have the right to Choose Your Perspective regardless of what you may encounter in life. For further insight and documents by other authors, view our Choose Your Perspective page at: <https://www.fairshake.net/reentry-resources/choose-your-perspective/>

-  Swellness
-  Handling Frustration
-  Working Through Depression
-  Motivation Tips
-  Culture Shock!
-  How To Watch TV
-  Ubuntu: Building Social Fabric
-  Managing Anger
-  Dealing with Rejection
-  Resisting Influence
-  Transition Tips
-  Educate Yourself
-  Gratitude

### Fair Shake Peer Learning / Self Study Guides

A Self-Study/Workshop Guide for groups and individuals and we would like your input in order to create the most effective material.

 Peer Learning / Self Study Guides

### Fair Shake Inside News

Read the newsletters here  
Sign up at [outreach@fairshake.net](mailto:outreach@fairshake.net)

### Looking for Books?

 Check out our Free Books Programs page!

### Fair Shake Resource Directory

Find food, employment training, free stuff, housing, health care, family support, and nearly 15,000 resources and 400 reentry publications and links in our FREE Resource Directory!

### 2-1-1

A FREE national resource service available by phone or internet to help folks in need find resources they seek 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They list resources for food, shelter, employment, education, housing, mental and physical health, specific services for veterans, special needs and reentry, a safe path out of physical and/or emotional abuse. A service of United Way. [www.211.org](http://www.211.org)



**CALL 2-1-1**  
<https://company.auntbertha.com/>

Search for free or reduced cost services like medical care, food, job training, and more. Too many Americans are suffering, and they don't need to. We created a social care network that connects people and programs - making it easy for people to find social services in their communities, for nonprofits to coordinate their efforts, and for customers to integrate social care into their work.



### Vital Documents

 Social Security  
 Supplemental Security Income  
 What Prisoners Need To Know  
 More Publications  
 Social Security Card  
 social-security-card-info.pdf  
 This is the ss-5 form.  
 <https://www.ssa.gov/forms/ss-5.pdf>  
 [social-security-card-form-ss-5.pdf](https://www.ssa.gov/forms/ss-5.pdf)

Write For Vital Records - All States  
Certificates of Birth, Death, Marriage, Divorce  
 <http://www.odc.gov/vitals/w2w.htm>  
 [vital-records.pdf](http://www.odc.gov/vitals/w2w.htm)

### DMV Request Outline:

There are many reasons you may wish to write to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to request relief. Perhaps you have very old parking tickets, or your license was suspended, et al. You may find some leniency from the DMV to help you drive again, especially to get to work. This form has been created by folks in the FCI Sandstone Career Resource Center and is meant to be used as a template or outline for you to use to create your own.

 DMV Change Request Outline

 Tax FAQ's from the IRS  
 Get Right With Your Taxes

### For Parents

It's important to stay connected!  
 Children of Incarcerated Parents - Bill of Rights  
 Children of Incarcerated Parents' Library  
 Biblioteca sobre niños de presos  
 Prison Parenting Programs - May 2016  
 Sesame Street: On Incarceration  
 Tips for Incarcerated Parents  
 Little Children, Big Challenges  
 Tips for Caregivers

Can you change your child support order?  
 State by State Guide  Changing a Child Support Order

### Improve Your Financial Outlook!

Check out the Money Management page!  
 Improve your Credit Score  
 Build a Budget Worksheet

### For Veterans

<https://www.fairshake.net/veterans-page/>  
**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE!**



The veterans' page was created to assist veterans who have been incarcerated as well as their families. The programs and resources on this page can help reduce the pressures associated with reentry. Our hope is that you will find these resources helpful in providing relief as you face the challenges of finding and supporting an effective way of life after incarceration. Thank you for your service to our country.

The Transition Assistance Program (TAP) was established to meet the needs of veterans during their period of transition into civilian life by offering job-search assistance and related services. The guide books below were created specifically to support you by applying considerations from your service life to your job seeking. Check in with your local TAP program to find out about jobs that are available near you. To locate your local support office, click on this link: <http://www.benefits.va.gov/vow/tap.asp>

-  Personal Appraisal & Career Exploration
-  Job Search Strategies & Interviews
-  Reviewing Job Offers & Support and Assistance

### Become a Fair Shake Member!

-  Personal Web Page
-  Data Storage
-  Save your Resources
-  Tutorials

Become a Member, It's FREE!

### Looking to get an Interstate Compact? Interstate Commission for Adult Offender Supervision (ICAOS)

 According to the ICAOS website: "The Interstate Commission for Adult Offender Supervision will guide the transfer of returning citizens in a manner that promotes effective supervision strategies consistent with public safety, accountability, and victims' rights."

Here are two documents that can help you get started:

-  Interstate Compact Overview
-  Interstate Compact Directory

### Voting Rights

 Voting rights vary from state to state. In two states, Maine and Vermont, incarcerated people can vote in prison. In all other states people in prison lose their voting rights all together. Voting rights are automatically reinstated at various times throughout the completion of the sentence. There are no longer any states with a lifetime voting ban!

According to The Sentencing Project: Felony disenfranchisement (the loss of voting and other civil rights) is an obstacle to participation in democratic life which is exacerbated by racial disparities in the criminal justice system (and creates) a disproportionate impact on communities of color.

To find out more, please visit The Sentencing Project: <https://www.sentencingproject.org/issues/felony-disenfranchisement/>

### NATIONAL INVENTORY OF THE COLLATERAL CONSEQUENCES OF CONVICTION

 Collateral Consequences of a Criminal Conviction  
Collateral consequences are legal and regulatory sanctions and restrictions that limit or prohibit people with criminal records from accessing employment, occupational licensing, housing, voting, education, and other opportunities of a criminal conviction... This state / national resource is now a project of the Council of State Governments.  
 Website: <https://mcoo.org/justicecenter.org/>

### Currently and Formerly Incarcerated Authors Page

 We've created this page to showcase literary accomplishments of the incarcerated and formerly incarcerated authors. In support of these individuals and all successful transitions, we have vetted and recommended the books on our Currently and Formerly Incarcerated Authors page at: <https://www.fairshake.net/incarcerated-and-formerly-incarcerated-authors-page/>

### Annual Credit Report.com

[www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com)  
Get a free copy of your credit report every 12 months from each credit reporting company. Ensure that the information on all of your credit reports is correct and up to date!

Wherever you are on your financial journey, you can prepare yourself to make informed financial decisions with these resources.  
 Consumer Financial Protection Bureau  
[www.consumerfinance.gov/consumer-tools/](http://www.consumerfinance.gov/consumer-tools/)  
Ver página en español

### INCHARGE

InCharge offers a free credit counseling service that provides help with budgeting, solutions for becoming debt free and tips to successfully manage your money. The goal of credit counseling is to provide a solution that helps you achieve debt relief and get on a financially healthy path. The service can be done over the phone or online.  
You may be able to:  
• Lower your interest rates  
• Reduce monthly payments  
• Credit scores are not a factor  
• Eliminate fees and over-limit charges  
• Stop harassing calls from debt collectors  
• Consolidate credit bills into one monthly payment  
• Build a realistic budget and financial plan you can follow  
InCharge Debt Solutions  
5750 Major Blvd, Suite 300  
Orlando, FL 32819 <https://www.incharge.org/>

### Mental and Physical Health

 Visit the Swellness Page!  
<https://www.fairshake.net/swellness/>  
Physical Health Page (just getting started!)  
 Self-Therapy.com  
HelpYourselfTherapy.com is a website that offers free, confidential, practical advice from a therapist. The Self-Therapy model is easy to understand and self-disclosure is never needed. Everything is completely confidential. Click on the link below to view the list of topics from the website.  
<http://helveyourselftherapy.com/tooics/index.html>

### Housing

 We receive very little housing information, especially on a national scale. Recently, however, the two-part document came to us from a HUD representative. So began my attempt to connect you to HUD.  
 HUD regional locations  
 Two Part Reentry HUD Housing Request  
Since HUD does not offer any documents (that I could find) of their locations (the book does not even offer office locations, only links and email addresses) please ask your people outside to investigate further.  
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development  
451 7th Street S.W.,  
Washington, DC 20410  
Telephone: (202) 708-1112  
<https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD>

### HUD Programs

-  Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) Program
-  HOME Investment Partnership (HOME) Program
-  Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8) at HUD
-  Benefits.gov
-  Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP)
-  Public Housing Programs
-  Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly Program
-  Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities

### PREPARING FOR PAROLE?

You might want to consider the info in these Parole Board Handbooks  
 Ohio Parole Board Handbook 2017  
 New Parole Board member (State, Federal, and Military) handbook

### Free Member Benefits!

 Full access available online only.

## Quotes Out of Context:

### *Identity and Agency*

When we don't know anything about how or why, or in what context a quote was shared, to a large extent, we decide what it means. Pick one and ponder. Or explore and discuss with others!

In our daily lives, we can become comfortable assuming that our belief about the world is 'how things really are'. Most people believe their views, even though no two people have the same understanding or perception of the world. Each person holds only their own unique perspective of "what is".

Listening carefully to others can enhance our perspective, motivate us, and increase our awareness... which can then increase our opportunities! Hearing the words of others can help us feel less alone; especially when we need to be courageous. They can help us persevere. Ubuntu!

*"You're not what you think you are; but what you think, you are!"* - William James

*"You can't use up creativity. The more you use, the more you have."* - Maya Angelou

*"If you think you can or think you can't, you're right."* - Henry Ford

*"We cannot think of being acceptable to others until we have first proven acceptable to ourselves."* - Malcolm X

*"No one can make you feel inferior without your consent."* - Eleanor Roosevelt

*"The tighter you cling to your current identity, the harder it becomes to grow beyond it."* - James Clear

*"The greatest thing in the world is to know how to belong to oneself."* - Michel de Montaigne

*"Don't let someone dim your light simply because it's shining in their eyes."* - Jessica Ainscough

*"The most important things cannot be seen."* - Fred Rogers

*"The easiest thing to be in the world is you. The most difficult thing to be is what other people want you to be. Don't let them put you in that position."* - Leo Buscaglia

NOTES:

*"There is no I without We."* - Roche Mamabolo

*"The hardest battle you're ever going to fight is the battle to be just you."* - Leo Buscaglia

*"Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms - to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way."* - Viktor Frankl

*"The easiest thing to do is to deceive oneself; for we believe whatever we want to believe."* - Demosthenes

*"Belief is a personal construct, an emotionally-colored fusion of imperfect mental processes like perception and memory."* - Tom Asacker

*"Do you want to know the man against whom you have most reason to guard yourself? Your looking-glass will give you a very fair likeness of his face."* - Richard Whately

*"It takes courage to grow up and become who you really are."* - e e cummings

*"You can't build a reputation on what you are going to do."* - Henry Ford

*"We become the stories we tell ourselves."* - Tom Asacker

*"The most effective way to do it is to do it."* - Amelia Earhart

Support for  
folks with

# DIFFERENT ABILITIES / DIS-ABILITIES

More information can be found at [fairshake.net/different-abilities](http://fairshake.net/different-abilities)



**National Federation of the Blind** [nfb.org](http://nfb.org)  
200 East Wells Street at Jernigan Place  
Baltimore, MD 21230 410-659-9314

NATIONAL  
**DISABILITY RIGHTS**



**National Disability Rights Network** [ndrn.org](http://ndrn.org)  
820 First St. NE, Suite 740 TDD/TTY: 202-408-9521  
Washington, DC 20002 Phone: 202-408-9514  
Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities



**Int'l Center for Disability Resources on the Internet** [icdri.org/legal/CAP.htm](http://icdri.org/legal/CAP.htm)  
The Client Assistance Program (CAP) is funded by taxpayers. It provides assistance, information and advocacy to people with disabilities who are getting or applying for services under the Rehabilitation Act. Programs include: Vocational Rehabilitation, Independent Living Services and more. Each State has its own programs.

**Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI & SSI)** [ssa.gov/benefits/disability](http://ssa.gov/benefits/disability)  
Social Security Administration Office of Public Inquiries and Communications Support  
1100 West High Rise  
6401 Security Blvd. TTY 800-325-0778  
Baltimore, MD 21235 800-772-1213



Write for information to start your application before release! It's included in the Fair Shake software: [fairshake.net/fici](http://fairshake.net/fici). Your supporters can find information at this link, too: [ssa.gov/reentry/benefits.htm](http://ssa.gov/reentry/benefits.htm).



**Social Security Disability Resource Center** [www.ssdrcc.com](http://www.ssdrcc.com)  
Private website created to "provide information about how Social Security Disability and SSI work" Nationally, and in NC specifically. Online only.



**Vision Aware** [visionaware.org](http://visionaware.org)

An amazing website, loaded with information, webinars, support groups including special support for elders, veterans, children and much more. "VisionAware is a free, easy-to-use informational service for adults with vision loss, their families, caregivers, healthcare providers, and social service professionals."

**Expanding Employment Possibilities for People with Vision Loss!** [aphcareerconnect.org](http://aphcareerconnect.org)

**The Arc** [thearc.org](http://thearc.org)

The Arc of the United States 202-534-3700  
1825 K Street NW, Suite 1200 800-433-5255  
Washington DC 20006



The Arc serves as a bridge between the criminal justice and disability communities. We promote and protect the human rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and actively support their full inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetime.



**Olmstead Rights** [olmsteadrights.org](http://olmsteadrights.org)

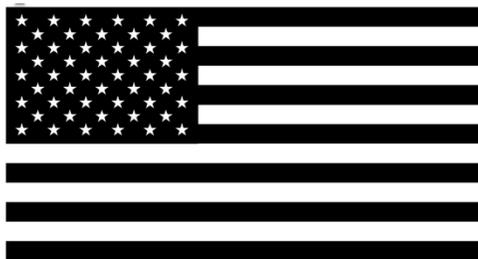
Our mission is to help low-income people navigate complexities by providing information and resources for self-advocates, family and friends of people with disabilities, and legal advocates alike. Self-help Tools! Legal Advocacy Tools! Links to resources in every state! (web-based only)

Just a few resources from our

# Veteran's Page

*Thank you for your service!*

[fairshake.net/veterans](http://fairshake.net/veterans)



This page was created to assist veterans who are, or have been, incarcerated. There are several resources on this page that may help reduce the pressures associated with reentry. Sadly, very few organizations provide mailing addresses any more. Fair Shake's Veteran's page is actually pretty large, but it has very few mailing addresses. Fair Shake continues to hold the Resource Guides that were available from 2012 -2016. Many of the organizations are still in operation so it's worth it to check them out. Resource guides like that are just not available anymore. (They are in the software application, too, which is FREE to all prisons and jails.)

**VA | Vets.gov**

Get the VA benefits you've earned

[www.vets.gov](http://www.vets.gov)

*All resources available online only.*

Disability Benefits, Health Care Benefits, Education Benefits, Housing Assistance, Careers and Employment, Life Insurance, Pension Benefits, Burials and Memorials, Family and Caregiver Benefits (Links to the forms are available on the Fair Shake website.)

## Wounded Warrior Project

The WWP mission is to honor and empower Wounded Warriors who incurred a physical or mental injury, illnesses, or wound, co-incident to your military service on or after September 11, 2001.

Wounded Warrior Project  
4899 Belfort Road, Suite 300  
Jacksonville, FL 32256

ph: 877-832-6997

[www.woundedwarriorproject.org](http://www.woundedwarriorproject.org)



## Other resources found on the Veteran's Page:

Veteran Justice Outreach (VJO) Initiative [www.va.gov/homeless/vjo.asp](http://www.va.gov/homeless/vjo.asp)

The Transition Assistance Program (TAP) [www.benefits.va.gov/vow/tap.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/vow/tap.asp)

How Incarceration Affects Eligibility for VA Benefits  
[www.benefits.va.gov/PERSONA/veteran-incarcerated.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/PERSONA/veteran-incarcerated.asp)

VA Benefits for Homeless Veterans  
[www.benefits.va.gov/PERSONA/veteran-homeless.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/PERSONA/veteran-homeless.asp)

VETNET: A Career Service for Those Who've Served [www.vetnethq.com](http://www.vetnethq.com)

Helmets to Hardhats: [helmetstohardhats.org](http://helmetstohardhats.org)

Note: very few organizations offer mailing addresses any more. Much more information, including brochures and forms, can be found on the Fair Shake website and in the FREE software. (It's free for all prisons and jails to load onto any computer and share with you.)

Fair Shake is an OPEN resource. It is FREE for everyone to use!

# ELDER SUPPORT

This page is just a sample of resources on our constantly updated webpage: [www.fairshake.com/elders](http://www.fairshake.com/elders)

Elders (65 years old and older) make up the fastest growing age segment of the US population. This population will be targeted for support programs, transportation, activities and various types of living accommodations, and they will all change and expand along with the elders. And just like Fair Shake's web-page for Elder Support. We hope you will help us learn about other free resources. We can add them to our webpage so that everyone can benefit from them!

But before we list resources, here are some benefits of a 'gift exchange' with the elders in your life:

Gifts that elders can give to us: SLOWING DOWN. LIVE IN THE NOW. LISTENING SKILLS. HEALTH BENEFITS! REFLECTION SKILLS (How will we want to be treated when we need help?)

Gifts that we can give to elders: CARE. ATTENTION. NOTICING. LISTENING. DEFENDING THEIR DIGNITY, SELF-HOOD & AGENCY

Senior Employment These are federal programs; states have elder employment programs, too.



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR**

## **Senior Community Service Employment Program**

Provides training for low-income, unemployed seniors.  
<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/seniors>



**careeronestop**  
your source for career exploration

## **Older Worker Program Finder**

Find employment services for low-income, unemployed seniors.  
<https://www.careeronestop.org/LocalHelp/EmploymentAndTraining/find-older-worker-programs.aspx>

## Senior Volunteer Opportunities

Millions of elders (65 and older) volunteer every year.



**AmeriCorps**

## **AmeriCorps Seniors**

[americorps.gov/serve/ameriCorps-seniors](http://americorps.gov/serve/ameriCorps-seniors)  
They offer many ways you can help others.  
Discover the program that's right for you!

## **Social Security Administration**

[ssa.gov](http://ssa.gov)

Office of Public Inquiries and Communications Support  
1100 West High Rise  
6401 Security Blvd.  
Baltimore, MD 21235



## **Eldercare Locator**

[eldercare.acl.gov](http://eldercare.acl.gov) 1-800-677-1116

The U.S. Administration on Aging connects you to services for older adults and their families.

## **Family Caregiver Alliance**

[caregiver.org](http://caregiver.org) 800.445.8106

We're here to help you. All resources are free, and assistance through CareNav is free, secure, and private.



**Family Caregiver Alliance®**

# CARING FOR ELDERS WHO NEED EXTRA CARE

Elders are a crucial segment of our community. They have much to teach us and many gifts to share. The elders of today were our caregivers when we were not able to take care of ourselves. They did not charge us for their efforts, and asked for nothing. Wouldn't it be nice to return the favor?

I realize this is not possible in many scenarios. I lived through one myself. But I know that with creativity and willingness, opportunities sometimes arise and we can simply share time with the elders in our life, even when they are getting support in a facility. Care-givers in facilities can do a lot, but they are often quite busy, and cannot slow down to share time to through a magazine, or sing, or go for a stroll.

According to the National Institute on Aging, 1/3 of all adults age 85 and older may have some form of dementia. There are several forms of dementia; Alzheimer's is just one type. Dementia is diagnosed when we reach a specific point in the forgetfulness spectrum. As of this writing, I'm 58 years old. I forget things all the time...like why I walked into a room, or what day it is, and many simple regularly-used words. We ALL, on occasion, forget, get confused, and even need help knowing what day it is. What we want, when we forget, is generosity and kindness from those around us. People with a dementia diagnosis want the same thing. Some nice gifts that we can offer them include:

**ACCEPTANCE \* AGENCY \* IDENTITY \* LISTENING \* NOTICING \* EYE CONTACT \* MUSIC  
CARE \* CHOICE between two things \* OUTDOORS \* NICELY SCENTED SOAP \* SOFT TOWELS**

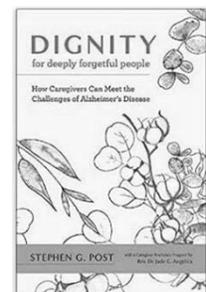


**Validation Training Institute, Inc.** <https://vfvalidation.org/>  
P.O. Box 871 Pleasant Hill, OR 97455

Validation can help you improve and integrate new communication skills, gain competence and confidence in dealing with difficult situations. You will have less stress and frustration, and more joy.

## ***Fair Shake Book Recommendation:***

***Dignity for Deeply Forgetful People*** by Stephen G. Post  
***How Caregivers Can Meet the Challenges of Alzheimer's Disease***



Learn to notice and appreciate expressions of continuing self-identity and include deeply forgetful people in your vision of a shared humanity! Drawing from years of experience, author Stephen Post challenges us to set aside 'hypercognitive biases' to learn from 'differently abled' people. He inspires us to deliberate about inalienable dignity, autonomy, identity, worth and authenticity. Post stresses the continuity of selfhood in persons (not patients, not victims, not disposable objects) experiencing the increasing challenges of cognitive decline. He argues for a deeper dignity grounded in consciousness, emotional presence, creativity, interdependence, music, and a self that is not "gone" but "differently abled."

## ***Music can support mind and heart:***

Music is deeply rooted in conscious and unconscious areas of our brain. Music can awaken the rich trove of memories that are associated with familiar songs or beloved pieces. Help the elders in your life connect to joy through music! You can sing, play favorite songs, play the soundtrack to musicals, leave the classical or jazz music station on all day.

## **Other ways to engage:**

Art, Crafts, Gardening, Cooking / Eating, Looking Through Picture Books. These are all great activities for living in the present moment, and also for triggering good memories.

## Resources on Fair Shake's LGBTQ+ page



### Black & Pink

Black & Pink is an open family of LGBTQ+ prisoners and “free world” allies who support each other. We are outraged by the specific violence of the prison industrial complex against LGBTQ people, and respond through advocacy, education, direct service, and organizing.

Black and Pink  
6223 Maple St # 4428  
Omaha, NE 68104 531-466-3346



Black & Pink has chapters in many cities including:  
Boise, Buffalo, Chicago, Denver, New Orleans, New York City. San Diego  
and San Francisco: Flying Over Walls

### LGBT Books to Prisoners

Volunteer-run organization that sends books and other educational materials, free of charge, to LGBT-identified people in prison across the US (except those in TX). Will send books in Spanish (enviar libros en Español). **Serves all states except Texas.**

LGBT Books to Prisoners  
c/o Social Justice Center Incubator  
1202 Williamson St #1  
Madison, WI 53703 [lgbtbookstoprisoners.org](http://lgbtbookstoprisoners.org)

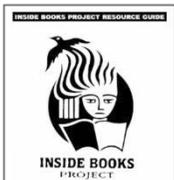


### Prison Activist Resource Center

LGBTQ+ Resources:

[www.prisonactivist.org/resources/lgbtqi-focused-organizations-and-resources](http://www.prisonactivist.org/resources/lgbtqi-focused-organizations-and-resources)

Contact PARC  
PO Box 70447  
Oakland CA 94612



### Inside Books Project

Inside Books Project is an Austin-based community service volunteer organization that sends free books and educational materials to prisoners in Texas. Inside Books is the only books-to-prisoners program in Texas, where over 140,000 people are incarcerated. Inside Books Project works to promote reading, literacy, and education among incarcerated individuals and to educate the general public on issues of incarceration. Write to them to find out about their Resource Guide.

Inside Books Project  
3106 E. 14 1/2 Street  
Austin, Texas 78702 [insidebooksproject.org](http://insidebooksproject.org)

# RESOURCES for REGISTRANTS

<https://www.fairshake.net/registrants/>

## ONCE FALLEN



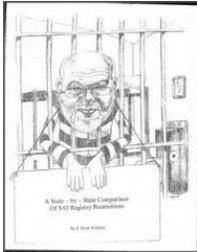
Reference and Resource for Registered Citizens

[oncefallen.com](http://oncefallen.com)

Since 2007, Once Fallen has been the leading reference & resource site for Registered Citizens and provides useful information to those seeking to reform or abolish sex offender laws. Write to the address for inquiries.

DEREK LOGUE  
2211 County Road 400  
Tobias, NE 68453

## State-By-State Comparison of Registry Restrictions



Written and generously shared by J. Scott Nichols  
PDF format...print one state or the whole book!

© 2019 118 pages

Also listed: **The Council of State Government's  
Residency Restriction Zones**



## UNITED SOS

[unitedsos.net](http://unitedsos.net)

1601 Dove Street, Suite 115  
Newport Beach, CA 92660  
888-900-1978



*United Sex Offense Solutions is self-service company  
dedicated to addressing the many issues unique to those  
who are accused, affected by or convicted of sex offenses.*



**Sex Offender Solutions  
and Education Network**  
2211 C. R. 400  
Tobias, NE 68453  
[sosen.org](http://sosen.org)

SOSEN's mission is to  
educate the public, the  
media, law enforcement  
and legislators.

**CURE: SORT**  
**Sex Offenders Restored  
Through Treatment**  
P.O. Box 1022  
Norman, OK 73070

[cure-sort.org](http://cure-sort.org)



**National Association  
for Rational Sex Offense  
Laws**  
PO Box 36123  
Albuquerque, NM 87176  
[narsol.org](http://narsol.org)

BOP Corrlinks:  
[newsletter1940-  
digest@yahoo.com](mailto:newsletter1940-digest@yahoo.com)

### State by State List of Resources:

Almost all individual resources listed on the Fair Shake website were found on the ONCE FALLEN website. Thank you, Derek, for freely sharing your hard work!!!

## Fair Shake Technology Tools

Do you need to learn to use a computer? How to navigate websites? Or just brush up on your skills?

### Check out our Computer Basics tutorial!

We cover these topics:

- ☞ Mouse
- ☞ Keyboard
- ☞ Hardware
- ☞ Computers and Your Health
- ☞ Desktop Environment

And you will learn these skills:

- ☞ Mouse Articulation
- ☞ Keyboard Hand Placement
- ☞ Creating Files and Folders
- ☞ Storing Data
- ☞ Healthy Computer Use



### Ready to expand on the basics? We offer more information in these areas:

**Using computers:** Desktop, Program Menus, Recycle/Trash, Keyboard Short Cuts and Printer information.

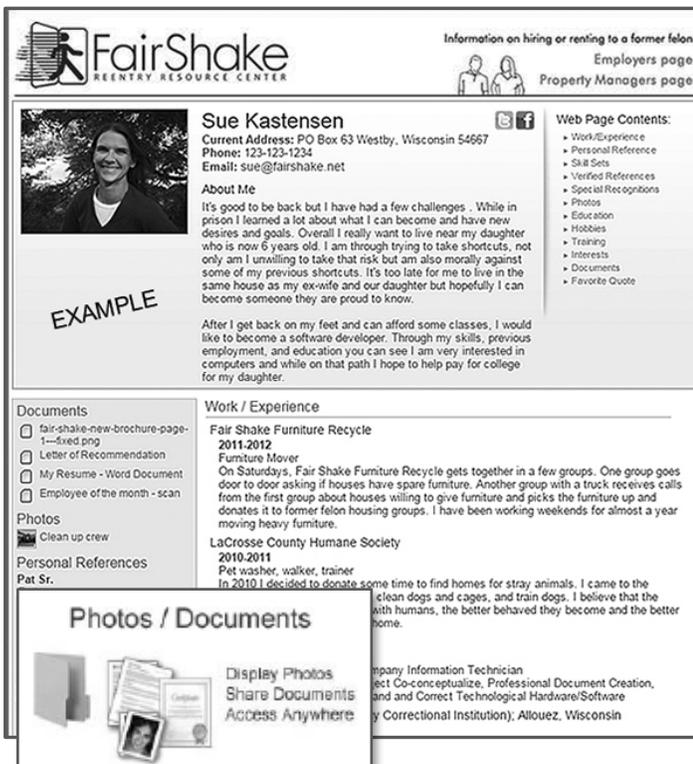
**Internet / Storage:**

Internet: Web Browsers, Internet Connection, Fair Shake Technical Tools

Storage: Hard Drive, Internet Storage, Flash Drive

**Software:** Software, Word Processor Programs (to write documents), Spreadsheet Editors (for making a calendar, schedule, budget), In The Cloud Programs, Email Software (including our Shake web mail)

**Be Careful:** Save Your Work, Internet, Downloading, Updating and Uploading



## FREE Personal Web Page!

**Personal Web Page:** Your Personal Web Page is a comfortable environment to disclose the information you would like to share with people you permit to visit. Here you can introduce yourself, list your skills, your education and work history, show your photograph, link to your documents and provide relevant and important information not requested in many job applications.

- ✓ Members differentiate themselves from other applicants!
- ✓ Members share information easily. No need to carry documents; they can be located, downloaded and/or printed from the page.
- ✓ Shows dedication to reentry success and provides a place to demonstrate interest in taking a proactive approach by sharing skills, character traits, and intentions.

# WHERE CAN WE LEARN HOW TO DRIVE A CELL PHONE?!

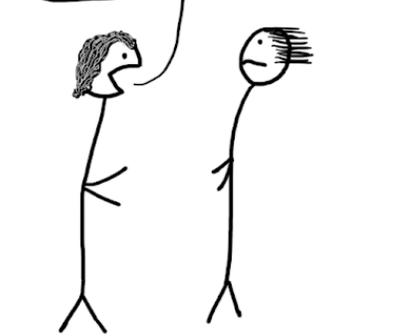
wikiHow

 Search: How to Use a Cell Phone

Don't fall in the "Rabbit Hole". Use the search bar!

Search this site 

I ENJOYED THAT ARTICLE THANKS FOR SENDING



waitbutwhy.com

(When we write in ALL CAPS)

Looking for Guidance? How-To videos? You might want to check out

## **SUPREME GURU TECH**

[www.youtube.com/c/SupremeGuru/videos](http://www.youtube.com/c/SupremeGuru/videos)

How-To Mania! She'll help you add apps of all kinds! Delete apps of all kinds! iPhone and Android! Plus how to email, change font size, find music, tips and tricks & lots more.

# **FAIR SHAKE ON YOUR PHONE**

It's an application, but it's not an APP (That's right...you get info while we don't take your info! ~ : )

Search for Fair Shake

[www.fairshake.net](http://www.fairshake.net)



1 Discover Resources & Information!

2 Zoom In

3 Search Through Fair Shake

4 Discover Resources & Information!

# GIZMOS AND HUMANS

We humans are fickle. We are consistently over-confident about what we are capable of doing, except, of course, when we are justifying our deflection of ownership or initiative. We blame outside circumstances when we fail, and claim prowess and skill when we succeed. We LOVE to think that, where media is concerned, we are strong and we can “take it or leave it alone.”

With the enormous and rapid rise in emotional, physical and existential suffering caused by anxiety fear, depression and loss of meaning and care, however, many of us turn to social media for distraction, diversion, old friends (hoping they were “good” friends), new friends, games (healthy and not) potential partners, events, and ways we can feel like we belong. What few of us realize, is the apps often contribute to our suffering.

Today, our phones are tiny computers; complete with tracking devices and communication options.

## **EVERYTIME YOU ‘GET AN APP’, YOU SHARE A GREAT DEAL OF INFORMATION THAT YOU’VE STORED IN YOUR GIZMO, SUCH AS:**

**YOUR CONTACTS** (and all the info you have - not just their names)

**YOUR PHOTOS** (think “training facial recognition AI”)

**YOUR PREFERENCES** for every app you use and visit; including things you clicked on when you were trying to get them off your screen. Yup, they are now considered your ‘preference’)

**AND MUCH MORE. REMEMBER: your phone knows where you are at all times.**

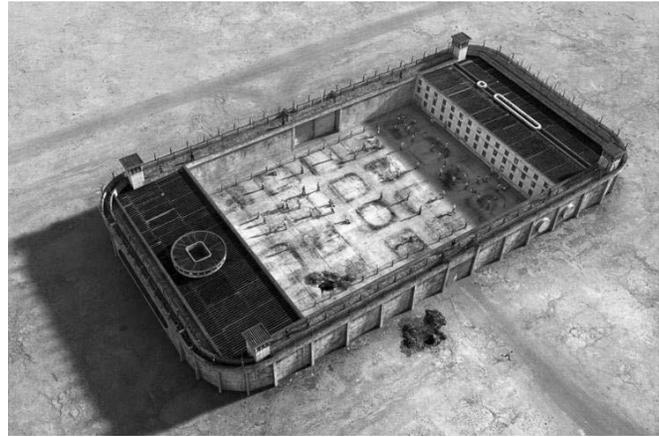
## A LITTLE FOOD FOR THOUGHT ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION

<https://www.addictioncenter.com/drugs/social-media-addiction/>

Social media addiction is a behavioral addiction that is characterized as being overly concerned about social media, driven by an uncontrollable urge to log on to or use social media, and devoting so much time and effort to social media that it impairs other important life areas.

Due to the effect that it has on the brain, social media is addictive both physically and psychologically. According to a new study by Harvard University, self-disclosure on social networking sites lights up the same part of the brain that also ignites when taking an addictive substance. The brain receives a “reward” and associates the activity with positive reinforcement.

The phenomena of social media addiction can largely be contributed to the dopamine-inducing social environments. Social networking sites have been developed to produce the same neural circuitry found in gambling and recreational drugs. Studies have shown



*Modern Day Prison by Banksy*

that the constant stream of retweets, likes, and shares from these sites have affected the brain’s reward area to trigger the same kind of chemical reaction as drugs.

Addictive social media use will look much like that of any other substance use disorder, including mood modification (i.e., engagement in social media leads to a favorable change in emotional states), salience (i.e., behavioral, cognitive, and emotional preoccupation with social media), tolerance (i.e., ever increasing use of social media over time), withdrawal symptoms (i.e., experiencing unpleasant physical and emotional symptoms when social media use is restricted or stopped), conflict (i.e., interpersonal problems ensue because of social media usage), and relapse (i.e., addicted individuals quickly revert back to their excessive social media usage after an abstinence period).

*“I used to think communication was the key until I realized comprehension is.”*

- Banksy

Here are a few organizations that want to help you use social media in a healthy way!

Center for  
Humane  
Technology

## The Center for Humane Technology

<https://www.humanetech.com/>

***As long as social media companies profit from addiction, depression, and division, our society will continue to be at risk***

Ledger of Harms that tech companies have no desire to address: (edited by sk)

- Misinformation, conspiracy theories, and fake news make it difficult to make sense of the world.
- Loss of crucial abilities including memory and focus making it harder to think and to pay attention.
- Stress, loneliness, feelings of addiction can lead to physical and mental health problems.
- Less empathy, more confusion and misinterpretation puts a strain on relationships.
- Propaganda, distorted dialogue & a disrupted democratic process impacts elections.
- Broadcast amplification of -isms reinforces an appeal to authority for regulation.
- Children face physical, mental and social challenges from developmental delays to suicide.
- Tech limitations can be difficult to adopt; gizmo 'house rules' are critical

**THEIR PODCAST:** Your Undivided Attention - <https://www.humanetech.com/podcast>

**TAKE CONTROL!** Got in too deep? Here are important steps to increase well-being and regain control.

<https://www.humanetech.com/take-control>

**Look Up** <https://lookup.live/>

*Helping young people thrive in the digital world.*

The logo for LOOKUP, with 'LOOK' in a bold, dark font and 'UP' in a lighter, outlined font.

Youth leaders taking action to challenge the digital ecosystem and our unrealistic social norms so we can level the playing field and improve the mental health and well-being of young people.

They also offer a Community Hub: a platform where youth can collaborate with others around the world. (Adults can learn a lot from the youth who have lived their entire lives in the digital world!)

## Addiction Center

<https://www.addictioncenter.com/drugs/social-media-addiction/>

Research has shown that there is an undeniable link between social media use, negative mental health, and low self-esteem.

The logo for Addiction Center, featuring a stylized cross icon and the text 'Addiction Center'.

## Some apps that help us think better:

**Pocket Biases** <https://pocket-biases.glideapp.io/> It will help you recognize the excuse biases to strengthen your HONEST BIAS. The app. lists a different bias each day...and you can search through biases. **“A bias a day keeps our hubris away.”** - Buster Benson, app creator and author of the *Cognitive Biases Cheat Sheet* (featured in this packet) and the book *Why Are We Yelling?*

**Mind Games:** [www.mindgames.com](http://www.mindgames.com) Full of tests to help improve mental agility, no matter how old the user is, including critical thinking skills.. Most games can be completed in less that 5 min.; just enough time for a brain workout. The app is free, or \$5 for the ad-free version.

**READING RECOMMENDATION:** *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism: The Fight for a Human Future at the New Frontier of Power* BY Shoshana Zuboff 2019 Public Affairs.

## Mini Computer Guide

**Keyboard Shortcuts** - Usually the same on all computers... Macs have slight differences

Windows	Mac OS	Linux	Action
Ctrl + A	⌘ + A	Ctrl + A	Select all content
Ctrl + B	⌘ + B	Ctrl + B	Bold selected text
Ctrl + C	⌘ + C	Ctrl + C	Copy file or selected content
Ctrl + I	⌘ + I	Ctrl + I	Italicize selected text
Ctrl + P	⌘ + P	Ctrl + P	Print document
Ctrl + S	⌘ + S	Ctrl + S	Save current page or work
Ctrl + U	⌘ + I	Ctrl + U	Underline
Ctrl + V	⌘ + V	Ctrl + V	Paste file or content
Ctrl + X	⌘ + X	Ctrl + X	Cut file or content
Ctrl + Y	Shift + ⌘ + Y	Ctrl + Y	Redo, If you did an undo
Ctrl + Z	⌘ + Z	Ctrl + Z	Undo last action, can be done many times
Alt + Tab	⌘ + Tab	Alt + Tab	Shuffle through open programs
Tab	Tab	Tab	Use Tab as a quick way to move around forms
Shift + F3	⇧ + ⌘ + C	Shift + F3	Change selected text to all capital letters, first letter capital or all lowercase.

### Email Warnings

1. Beware of SCAMS. Advice on Scams: Scambusters <http://www.scambusters.com/> gives information about how to avoid becoming a victim of identity theft, or of frauds such as pyramid selling, or money laundering scams. The Office of Fair Trading describes SCAMS as:

**Scheming Crafty Aggressive Malicious**

Their advice is that "If it looks too good to be true it probably is!"

1. Nigerian "419" email fraud: These are emails from Africa offering to share huge sums of money with you if you let them use your bank to help them get their money out of the country. They ask for your bank account details and an administration fee. But it's a scam. If you comply and pay a small administration fee, then there'll be some complication and more money will be requested - again and again. The big money for you will never materialize. At worst you might get an invite to Africa where being held for ransom is a further threat.
2. Lotteries and Prize Draws: You may get emails saying you are a winner in an overseas lottery or prize draw and asking for your bank account details so that the cash can be transferred. You may also be asked to send money in order to claim your prize. These are scams.
3. Phishing: Many Internet fraudsters use a technique called "phishing" - sending out hoax emails, which look like they have come from your Bank or other online account such as Ebay Paypal. These often say that there has been a problem with unauthorized access to your account, or that you need to reconfirm your details for security reasons. Links in the email would take you to a page that could look like it belongs to your bank, where you will be asked to enter your passwords and personal information. If you followed these instructions and entered your details you would be enabling the fraudsters to access your accounts. It might be safer to use a search engine to find the web site of your bank than a link in an unverifiable email.

For more Fair Shake computer guides, tutorials and short-cuts visit our New To Computers page at:

[www.fairshake.net/new-to-computers](http://www.fairshake.net/new-to-computers)

	<b>New</b> – Create a new document like a blank sheet of paper.
	<b>Open</b> – Open a saved project - something you already worked on.
	<b>Save</b> – Save your progress on this project. We recommend you often save.
 <b>New</b>  <b>Write</b>	<b>New / Write</b> – This is the button you use to start a new message. When you arrive in your email you are in the reading portion, use this button if you would like to create a new email.
	<b>Print</b> – Start printing your document on the default printer.
	<b>Print Preview</b> – View what your document will look like on paper and also view more printing options.
	<b>Cut</b> – Remove selected object or text from the document and keep it ready to paste somewhere.
	<b>Copy</b> – Copy selected object or text and keep it ready to paste somewhere.
	<b>Paste</b> – Paste the most recent cut or copied object/text.
	<b>Copy Formatting</b> – Highlight object or text with a desired format and click this button, then highlight some other object or text you want the format copied to.
	<b>Undo</b> – Undo the previous action. This can usually be done a few times.
	<b>Redo</b> – Redo action previously undone. This can be done as many times as you used the Undo feature.
  	<b>Insert Hyperlink</b> – Add a link to your document that will open in an internet browser. Be ready with the address ( <a href="http://www.address.com">http://www.address.com</a> ), highlight what you want to link and press the button. Insert the link and click <i>ok</i> or <i>apply</i> .
	<b>First Line Indent</b> – Location to indent the first line within a paragraph.
	<b>Hanging Indent</b> – Location to indent all lines within a paragraph after the first line while leaving the first line unaffected.
	<b>Spell Check</b> – Check the document for spelling errors. If there is more than one button then you can use the second one to turn on / off the red line under misspelled words.
 	<b>Attach Files</b> - Sometimes you want to send another document or photo along with your message. Do this by clicking the attachment button and finding the file/image.
	<b>Line Spacing</b> – Increase or decrease the amount of space between lines.

	<b>Common style type</b> – You can set common style types that you like and then add them to any selected text by choosing them from the drop down menu. Default/Normal would be common paragraph formatting while Heading1 or Heading2 might introduce sections or important paragraphs as their titles.
	<b>Font</b> – Fonts change the way your letters look. There are hundreds of fonts, most people choose from one of the fonts displayed in these icons because they are professional and are easy to read.
	<b>Text Size</b> – By selecting text and choosing a number within this list you can make your text larger or smaller.
	<b>Left Alignment</b> – Pushes all your lines of text as left as they will go.
	<b>Center Alignment</b> – Puts the text within a line in the absolute middle.
	<b>Right Alignment</b> – Pushes all your lines of text as right as they will go.
	<b>Justified Alignment</b> – Spaces all the words within a line to fill the whole line.
	<b>Numbered List</b> – Start a list or turn selected text into a list. When you press the enter / return key a number will appear in front of the next list item.
	<b>Bulleted List</b> – Start a list or turn selected text into a list. When you press the enter/return key a number will appear in front of the next list item.
  	<b>Bold</b> – Use the style <b>Bold</b> <b>Italics</b> – Use the style <i>Italics</i> <b>Underline</b> – Use the style <u>Underline</u> You can combine any or all of these styles.
	<b>Decrease Indent</b> – Pull selected paragraph to the left.
	<b>Increase Indent</b> – Push selected paragraph to the right.
 <small>(in color)</small>	<b>Text Color</b> – Change the color of selected text or text you are about to type.
 <small>(in color)</small>	<b>Highlight Color</b> – Change the color behind the selected text or text you are about to type.
  	<b>Find / Search</b> - Use key words from within the subject or body of an email to find emails within your folders quickly. When you search you will get a list of emails that all contain the word(s) you entered.
	<b>Add Photo / Image</b> - Add an image to your message. Click the button and then locate your image.

## National Reentry Resources (besides Fair Shake)

**2-1-1 or [www.211.org](http://www.211.org)** Dial 211 or visit the website!  
211 is a vital service that connects millions of people to help every year. Simply call 211 or search for 211 online. Program of United Way.



Services include:

Supplemental food	Health care
Shelter, housing, utilities	Rehab and addiction services
Emergency / disaster relief	Reentry Resources
Employment opportunities	Support groups
Education opportunities	Safe path away from abuse
Veterans services	



**Aunt Bertha:** <https://www.auntbertha.com/>

Search for free or reduced cost services like medical care, food, job training, etc. People can create profiles, connect with resources, and save searches...or search anonymously anytime.

**Positive Transitioning:** 614-573-0464 or 844-392-9695

CALL FOR RESOURCES: Employment, Housing, Education, and Legal Assistance. - 24/7 Resources and Listening Line Are you looking for resources? Give us a call! Also sign up for coaching, enroll in classes and connect to a mentor or become a mentor. [www.positivetransitioning.org](http://www.positivetransitioning.org)

**Help Yourself Therapy:**

[www.helpyourselftherapy.com/](http://www.helpyourselftherapy.com/)

SELF-Therapy For People Who ENJOY Learning About Themselves. Free, confidential, practical advice from a therapist. Everything is easy to understand and to use. Self-disclosure is never needed. Completely confidential.



**Help Yourself Therapy**

**Homeless Accommodation Directory:** [www.homelessshelterdirectory.org/](http://www.homelessshelterdirectory.org/)

**Transitional Housing** [www.transitionalhousing.org](http://www.transitionalhousing.org)

**Food Pantries and Soup Kitchens:** [www.homelessshelterdirectory.org/foodbanks/](http://www.homelessshelterdirectory.org/foodbanks/)

**Employment Related:**

Clothes For Women: **Dress For Success** <https://dressforsuccess.org/>

Clothes For Men: **Career Gear** <https://www.careergear.org/>



**careeronestop**

U.S. Department of Labor

**Career One Stop** [www.careeronestop.org](http://www.careeronestop.org)  
Your source for career exploration, training & jobs.

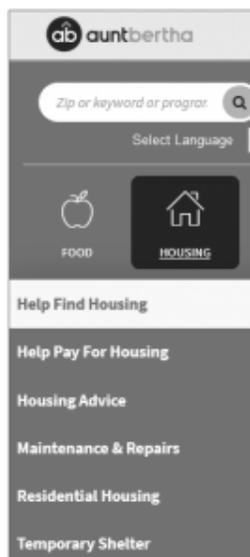
**Vital Records** [www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w/](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w/)

Where to write, or where to go, to obtain birth, death, marriage and divorce certificates.

**Social Security** new or replacement card: <https://www.ssa.gov/ssnumber/>

# HOUSING

Like the Fair Shake [Find A Job](#) page, the Housing Search page lists search engines to find housing near you. In addition to the websites listed below, there is a lot more information in the [Resource Directory](#) and in Reentry Guides section below the Search Box.



## Aunt Bertha

Aunt Bertha is a social care network that connects people and programs — making it easy for people to find social services in their communities. To do this, we’ve verified and added hundreds of thousands of programs covering every county in the US.



## 2-1-1

A phone number and a website! Not sure where to turn? We are here for you. **211 receives more requests for help with finding housing or shelter or paying utilities bills (over 4.4 million each year) than for any other issue.**

## Homeless Shelters and Service Organizations:

National list of homeless shelters and other services [homelessshelterdirectory.org/](http://homelessshelterdirectory.org/)

## Find the Housing Authority Near You!

A nearly-complete list. Some others are located on the Fair Shake website under State and Local Reentry Guides.

[https://www.hud.gov/program\\_offices/public\\_indian\\_housing/pha/contacts](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/pha/contacts)



## Section 8: Frequently Asked Questions

### *What is Section 8 Housing?*

The actual name of the program commonly known as “Section 8” is the Housing Choice Voucher Program, a federally funded program that subsidizes rent for eligible participants. It is designed to assist very low-income families or individuals. A housing subsidy is paid directly to the landlord on behalf of a participating family/individual.



How do I apply for Section 8 housing?

Contact your local [Public Housing Authority](#).

For further assistance, contact the Housing and Urban Development office nearest you.

### Does my criminal record ban me from public housing?

There are only 2 convictions for which a PHA must prohibit admission:

- If any member of the household is subject to a lifetime registration requirement under a sex offense registration program; and,
- If any household member has ever been convicted of drug-related criminal activity for manufacturing or production of methamphetamine on the premises of federally assisted housing.



# EDUCATE YOURSELF!

*Once you have learned to ask questions - relevant and appropriate and substantial questions – you have learned how to learn and no one can keep you from learning whatever you want or need to know.*

- Neil Postman

*You either learn your way towards writing your own script in life, or you unwittingly become an actor in someone else's script.*

- John Taylor Gatto

College Correspondence Courses: *Be sure to ask about the Pell Grant!*

## Adams State University

Correspondence Education Program  
208 Edgemont Blvd., Suite 3000  
Alamosa, CO 81101  
719-587-7671  
<https://www.adams.edu/academics/print-based/prison-college-program/>

Free non-credit courses!

### College Guild

P.O. Box 696  
Brunswick, ME 04011

## Colorado State University-Pueblo

**Division of Extended Studies**  
2200 Bonforte Blvd  
Pueblo, CO 81001-4901  
719.549.2100  
[csupueblo.edu/extended-studies](http://csupueblo.edu/extended-studies)

## Ohio University Correctional Education

Haning Hall 102  
1 Ohio University Dr.  
Athens, OH 45701  
800.444.2420  
[ohio.edu/online/programs/print/correctional](http://ohio.edu/online/programs/print/correctional)

## Freshman Year For Free!

[www.modernstates.org](http://www.modernstates.org)

MODERN STATES

MODERN STATES and the CLEP exam - Modern States' program: Freshman Year For Free, is intended to let students earn up to one year of college credit without tuition or textbook expense. They provide recorded courses, and the cost of testing, using CLEP exams (see below). Free to all who qualify! You can start studying for the courses below now!



**Get college credit with what you already know!**

CLEP offers 33 exams in five subject areas at over 1,800 college test centers, covering material generally taught in the first two years of college. By passing a CLEP exam, you can earn 3 to 12 college credits. Exams cost \$80. There are text exams for you to use to prepare.

### College-Level Examination Program (CLEP)

P.O. Box 6600  
Princeton, NJ 08541-6600  
Phone: 800-257-9558 or 212-237-1331

[clep.collegeboard.org](http://clep.collegeboard.org)

### List of CLEP Exams: Match with OpenCourseWare Classes!

American Literature	Western Civilization I: Ancient Near East to 1648
Analyzing and Interpreting Literature	Western Civilization II: 1648 to the Present
College Composition and Modular English Literature	Science and Mathematics
Humanities Foreign Languages	Biology
French Language (Levels 1 and 2)	Calculus
German Language (Levels 1 and 2)	Chemistry
Spanish Language (Levels 1 and 2)	College Algebra
History and Social Sciences	College Mathematics
American Government	Natural Sciences
Human Growth and Development	Pre-calculus
Intro to Educational Psychology	Business
Introduction to Psychology	Financial Accounting
Introduction to Sociology	Introductory Business Law
Principles of Macroeconomics	Information Systems and Computer Applications
Principles of Microeconomics	Principles of Management
Social Sciences and History	Principles of Marketing
History of the United States I: Early Colonization to 1877	
History of the United States II: 1885 to the Present	

THE FAIR SHAKE WEBSITE ALSO LISTS MANY FREE ONLINE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES!



# MODERN STATES Freshman Year Free™!!!

## MODERN STATES + CLEP exam

Modern States Education Alliance is a non-profit dedicated to making a high-quality college education free of cost and accessible to any person who seeks one. Its founding principle is that access to affordable education is fundamental to any philosophy that respects all individuals, and fundamental to the American dream.

Modern States' program, *Freshman Year for Free*™, is intended to let students earn up to one year of college credit without tuition or textbook expense.

Modern States is partnering with edX, the leading online learning platform founded by Harvard and MIT. Modern States has given edX the money to complete the development of more than 30 high quality freshman college courses, taught by some of the world's leading universities and professors. Each course includes online lectures, quizzes, tests, and other features. Textbooks and materials will also be provided online, free of charge.

The courses are designed to prepare students for the major "Advanced Placement" (AP)\* or "College Level Examination Program" (CLEP)\* tests offered by the College Board, including subjects such as History, Computer Science, Math, English and Economics.

According to the College Board, more than 2,000 traditional colleges and universities already offer credit to students who pass AP and CLEP tests. Students can take one course or many courses from Modern States, and then – by passing the AP or CLEP exams – can begin with up to a full year's worth of credit after they enroll in traditional college, making Modern States an "on-ramp" to college. Modern States hopes to provide links for students to tutoring, mentoring and college advising groups as well.

## Modern States

787 Seventh Avenue 49th Floor  
New York, New York 10019

### Open to Everyone

In short, Modern States works like a global digital public library of great college courses. Enrollment in Modern States courses will be "massively open" to all people without regard to age, location, family income, nationality, prior credits or other factors. The courses may also provide a critical "road back" for students who have left the traditional US college system. Modern States is not in opposition to any traditional college and recognizes that a four-year residential experience at an established university is the preferred alternative. However, such an opportunity is out of reach for many people, given the high cost of tuition and other factors.

Modern States was initially conceived and funded by businessman and philanthropist Steve Klinsky (the CEO of Modern States), but has grown as an alliance with the guidance and support of other education and foundation leaders. College systems with over two million students have affiliated with Modern States Education Alliance, including systems in New York, Texas, Ohio, Indiana and Tennessee.

Working closely with Klinsky is Pulitzer Prize winner David Vise, Executive Director of Modern States. The author of four books, Vise was a reporter at The Washington Post for more than 20 years before joining the investment firm New Mountain Capital as a Senior Advisor.

Modern States is a philanthropy intended to increase global access to high quality education and seeks to partner with others who share its goals.

[www.modernstates.org](http://www.modernstates.org)



As of this writing, CLEP tests are not offered in prisons.

***Let's change this!***

# Welcome to the Wonderful World of Mathematics!

By Jason O'Malley <https://bridgегap.biz/>

Buckle up...because on this journey you will experience thrilling feats of mental acrobatics; you will endeavor to go to places no human has ever gone before; and you will discover a world that you create!

While we know that the language of math includes relationships in nature through science and income through business ventures, did you know that mathematics, and specifically algebra, will help you reason your way through life? Yes, mathematics is a lens through which you can view the world.

**Count** on math to help you identify when an argument is on the right

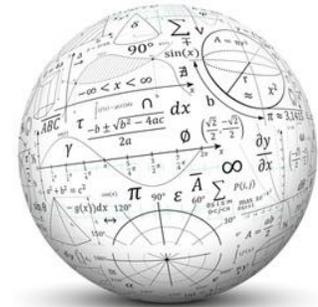
A few examples of math for **everyday living**:

- Budgeting
- Manage and grow savings
- Manage credit
- Carpentry and hobby projects
- Vehicle modification

path, or when you need to call bull\$#!t when it doesn't **add up!**

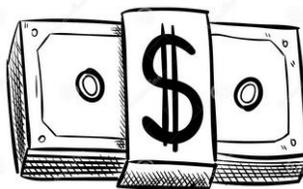
You can pursue a math-based career in a **Science, Technology, Engineering, or Mathematics (S.T.E.M.)** field.

With your mathematics and life experiences, you can hone your intuition to investigate and develop the world around you. If you can imagine it, you can use your math tools to create the infrastructure for the new tomorrow. Envision yourself being the next human being to see the world differently than anyone before you! Through programming, you can literally create the cyber



world, while a strong math base will also help you to develop the mindset needed to examine complex social issues through economics, psychology, and other social sciences.

And with the power of mathematics at your disposal, you may be the one to invent the next society-changing technology or design a architectural feat of engineering!



- Sales tax at the store
- Investing
- Start a business
- 3-Dimensional art
- Tipping

Many of us know someone who is very good at staying ahead of bills, with extra money to spend. What we might not have realized is that underlying their uncanny ability to seem "rich", their mathematical thinking helped them navigate through budgeting and saving. They continuously add to, and subtract from, a running total that they hold in their mind - or in a ledger. Every financial decision they make has this total in mind.

If your goal is to learn math well enough to make great decisions

about money, then go get it: first, the math training; then, the \$\$\$! Ok, **entrepreneurs**, I know y'all are definitely thinking about them numbers! It is literally your **business** to think mathematically. Everything from your start-up costs, to your break-even point, to your profit and loss, has you thinking in terms of math. Mathematics will help you make decisions to be more effective and efficient in your organization. Your strength in mathematics will help you to create your marketing budget and increase your profits. It will help you determine how many employees you should hire and how

much you should invest in equipment to help your business flourish! These examples only scratch the surface of the numerous ways in which this powerful tool can be utilized. If you want to delve deeper into the power of math, try to find instructors proficient in the "coach approach" – or learning through questioning to draw forth deep level epiphanies - to help you become fluent in thinking and speaking mathematics. You will never regret knowing something as essential to the economy that we operate in. In fact, you will thrive in navigating the great maze of today's world!

## About the Author - Jason O'Malley:

With over 20 years of experience teaching mathematics – many within a prison setting - Jason has honed his craft using the "coach approach". His experience started at the age of 15, when he helped his mother get her G.E.D. He has experience with university-level mathematics, also: college algebra, calculus, and statistics.

Jason holds a number of certifications: As a Life Coach through the Institute for Life Coach Training; as a teacher's aide through the US Department of Labor; as a facilitator through the Facilitator Awareness and Competency Training System, Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) and Offender Workforce Development Specialist (OWDS).

Finally, Jason believes that by embodying optimism and hope, he can help others see that circumstances do not have to define who we are: "We define who we are by the choices we make. So, be intentional and choose well."



## Improve Your Credit Score!

It's amazing how many things today rely on our credit scores. We expect a bank to be interested in our credit when we are looking to borrow money, or credit card companies when we are looking for credit, but did you know all of these organizations can look at your credit information?

- Lenders
- Insurance companies
- Landlords
- Credit card companies
- Employers (only with your written consent)
- Organizations considering your application for a government license or benefit
- State or local child support enforcement agencies
- Government agencies
- Other organizations you've initiated business with

If your credit score is not where you would like it to be, here is one way to build credit:

### **Secured Credit Cards**

Secured Credit Cards can help you build credit by helping you learn to feel comfortable using a credit card while you carefully manage your spending. They require a cash deposit which becomes the credit line for your account. You will probably need at least \$200 to open a secure credit card account.

By making your payments on time, and meeting the minimum payment requirements, you begin to build credit history. Your monthly statements are then reported to consumer credit reporting agencies and in this way you begin to shape your credit profile.

It may take a while to build your credit back to a place where you can borrow money, but with patience, dedication and perseverance, it is possible!



## FREE BOOKS PROGRAMS!

This list was created on 9/23/21. If you find that some of the programs are no longer available, would you please let me know? Thanks! ~ sue Fair Shake, PO Box 63, Westby, WI 54667  
(Fair Shake's 'suggested reading' list can be found at the end of the Ownership Manual.)

### California

Pages and Time  
PO Box #66583  
Los Angeles, CA 90066  
Serves: Libraries at  
Wasco/Delano State Prisons  
and Chino Women's Prison

Prison Library Project  
586 West First Street  
Claremont, CA 91711  
Serves: All US states  
Except: MA

### Connecticut

Connecticut Prison Book  
Connection  
P.O. Box 946  
Rocky Hill, CT 06067-0946  
Serves all states

### District of Columbia

DC Books to Prisons Project  
PO Box 34190  
Washington, DC 20043  
Serves: state and federal  
prisoners in 34 states, and  
federal prisoners in Arizona.  
With the exception of DC  
residents in federal prisons,  
Except: CT, FL, IL, MA, ME,  
MI, NH, NJ, NY, OR, PA, RI,  
VT, WA, or WI.

### Florida

Open Books Prison Book  
Project  
1040 N. Guillemard St.  
Pensacola, FL 32501  
Serves: FL only

### Illinois

Chicago Books to Women in  
Prison c/o RFUMC  
4511 N. Hermitage Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60640

Serves: women and trans  
people in the BOP and in  
these state prisons in AZ, CA,  
FL, IL, IN, KY, MS, OH

Haymarket Books  
P.O. Box 180165  
Chicago, IL 60618  
Serves: entire US. The only  
info they need is your full  
mailing address and a sense  
of what kind of books they are  
interested in reading.

Liberation Library  
@ In These Times  
2040 N Milwaukee Ave  
Chicago, IL 60647  
Serves youth Illinois youth  
prisons and select jails

Urbana-Champaign Books to  
Prisoners Project  
UC Books to Prisoners  
Box 515 Urbana IL 61803  
Serves: Illinois

### Indiana

Midwest Pages to Prisoners  
Project  
PO Box 1324  
Bloomington, IN 47402  
Serves: AR, IA, IN, KS, MN,  
MO, ND, NE, OK, and SD

### Kentucky

Louisville Books to Prisoners  
McQuixote Books & Coffee  
Attn: Louisville Books to  
Prisoners  
1512 Portland Ave #1  
Louisville, KY 40203  
Serves: KY and VA

### Louisiana

Louisiana Books 2 Prisoners  
3157 Gentilly Blvd. #141 New  
Orleans, LA 70122  
Serves: AL, AR, LA.

### Massachusetts

Great Falls Books Through  
Bars  
PO Box 391  
Greenfield, MA 01302  
Services US, except MA

Prison Book Program  
c/o Lucy Parsons Bookstore  
1306 Hancock St, Suite 100  
Quincy, MA 02169  
Serves: All US states Except  
CA, IL, MI, MD, NV, and TX

### Minnesota

Women's Prison Book Project  
3751 17th Ave S Minneapolis,  
MN 55407 Serves: All US  
states  
Except: CT, FL, IL, IN, MA, MI,  
MS, OH, OR, and PA

### Mississippi

Big House Books  
PO Box 55586  
Jackson, MS 39296  
Serves: Mississippi only

### Missouri

Missouri Prison Books  
Program  
438 N. Skinker Blvd  
St. Louis, MO 63130  
Serves: MO

### New Jersey

Books Behind Bars  
PO BOX 2611  
Wildwood, New Jersey 08260  
Serves: NJ only

**New York**

NYC Books Through Bars  
 c/o Bluestockings Bookstore  
 116 Suffolk Street  
 New York, NY 10002  
 Serves: All US states  
 Except: AL, FL, LA, MA, MI,  
 MS, NC, OH, and PA, NY.

**North Carolina**

Asheville Prison Books  
 Program  
 67 N. Lexington  
 Asheville, NC 28801  
 Serves: NC, SC

Prison Books Collective  
 PO Box 625  
 Carrboro, NC 27510  
 Serves: men in NC

Saxapahaw Prison Books  
 347 S Main St  
 Burlington, NC 27215  
 Serves: GA and NC

Tranzmission Prison Project  
 PO Box 1874  
 Asheville, NC 28802  
 Serves: LGBTQ nationwide

**Ohio**

Athens Books to Prisoners  
 30 1st Street  
 Athens, OH 45701  
 Serves OH

**Oregon**

Rogue Liberation Library  
 PO Box 524  
 Ashland, OR 97520  
 Serves: AZ, CA, CO, ID, MT,  
 NV, NM, OK, OR, TX, UT,  
 WA, WY and the BOP  
 nationwide.

**Pennsylvania**

Book 'Em  
 PO BOX 71357  
 Pittsburgh PA 15213 Serves:  
 PA only

**Books Through Bars**

4722 Baltimore Ave  
 Philadelphia, PA 19143  
 Serves: PA, NJ, NY, DE, MD,  
 VA, and WV

**Rhode Island**

Providence Books Through  
 Bars  
 42 Lenox Ave  
 Providence, RI 02907  
 Serves: All US states  
 Except: AL, AR, FL, IL, KY, LA,  
 MA, ME, MS, NY, NC, OH, PA,  
 SC, WA, WI

**Tennessee**

Tennessee Prison Books  
 Project  
 P.O. Box 22846  
 901 Broadway  
 Nashville, TN 80202  
 Serves: TN only

**Texas**

Inside Books  
 3106 E. 14 1/2 Street  
 Austin, Texas 78702  
 Serves: TX only

**Vermont**

Vermont Books to Prisoners  
 PO Box 234  
 Plainfield, VT 05667  
 Serves: New England states

**Virginia**

Books Behind Bars  
 Friends of the Jefferson-  
 Madison Library  
 attn: Books Behind Bars  
 1500 Gordon Ave.  
 Charlottesville, VA 22903  
 Serves: VA only

**Washington**

Books to Prisoners  
 92 Pike St. Box A  
 Seattle, WA, 98101  
 Serves: All US states  
 Except: CA and MA

**West Virginia**

Appalachian Prison Book  
 Project  
 PO Box 601  
 Morgantown, WV 26507  
 Serves: KY, MD, OH, TN, VA,  
 WV

**Wisconsin**

LGBT Books to Prisoners  
 1202 Williamson St.  
 Madison, WI, WI 53703  
 Serves: LGBTQ prisoners in all  
 states Except TX

Wisconsin Books to Prisoners  
 c/o Social Justice Center  
 Incubator  
 1202 Williamson St #1  
 Madison, WI 53703  
 Serves: WI only

**Free Magazine Subscriptions**

The Sun Magazine  
 an award-winning, ad-free  
 magazine of interviews,  
 essays, fiction, poetry, and  
 photography. They offer free  
 subscriptions to incarcerated  
 individuals. To request a free  
 subscription, write to:

The Sun Customer Service  
 P.O. Box 323  
 Congers, NY 10920

The Militant  
 is a socialist newsweekly.  
 Subscriptions for prisoners are:  
 \$6 for six months or \$12 for a  
 year. Prisoners without funds  
 can get a free six-month  
 subscription upon request. To  
 get a subscription write to:

The Militant  
 306 W. 37th St. 13th Floor  
 New York, NY 10018

**ATTENTION CURRENTLY AND FORMERLY INCARCERATED WRITERS!**

Fair Shake Authors page: This page has been created to showcase literary accomplishments, and to share opportunities with new and aspiring writers! If you are an incarcerated or formerly incarcerated writer with a book that can be purchased somewhere on the internet (I need to be able to post a link), please send your name, book title and where the book can be found and I'll post it on the page.

**Writing Outlets:**

**5 a YfjWUb'Dfjgcb'K f]hjb[ '5 fW jj Y'**  
c/o Hamilton College  
198 College Hill Road  
Clinton, NY 13323-1218

"The mission of the APWA is to replace speculation on and misrepresentation of prisons, imprisoned people, and prison workers with first-person witness by those who live and work on the receiving end of American criminal justice." As of 2.18.20 they have 2323 titles in English and 17 titles in Spanish. <https://apw.dhinitiative.org/>

**Dfjgcbg': ci bXUjcb'**  
2512 Virginia Ave. NW, #58043  
Washington, DC 20037

If you are an incarcerated person who has written a book, or would like to write a book, we want to publish it. All books on any subject are welcome. There is no charge to you to publish your book and no charge to anyone who wishes to read it. You retain full rights to your book if you later wish to place it with a literary agent or commercial publisher. It will be protected under common copyright law. When we receive your book, it will be scanned in its entirety, just as you submitted it to us, even if it's hand written. <http://prisonsfoundation.org/>

**K F H B; 'H D G** by Neil Postman

**Gfjj Yz f'h fYY'h ]b[ g.'**

1. Clarity
2. Engagement
3. There is no third thing

Thinking Clearly: make an outline. if you think you can skip this step, you aren't thinking clearly.

Writing Clearly: Eschew baroque vernacular

Whenever possible do your level best to avoid at all costs the unnecessary words you should be avoiding but aren't.

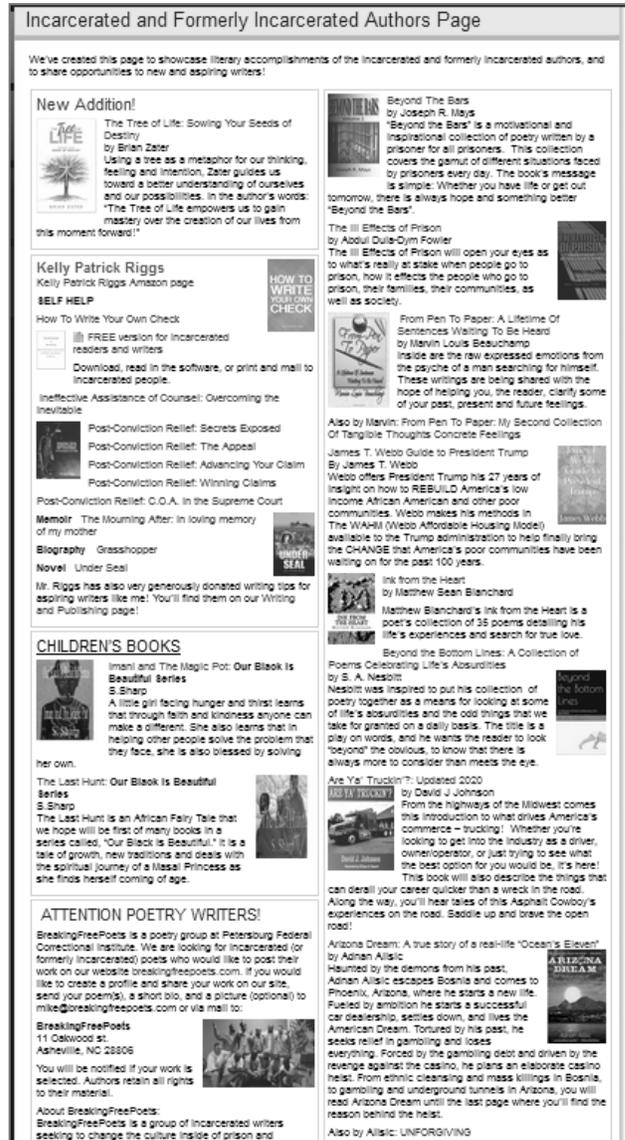
Slash and burn. Repeat. First drafts are always twice as long as they should be.

Say one thing big. If you have two big things to say, control yourself.

Use metaphors and examples. Provide maps and sign posts on the narrative journey (previews, pointers, summaries, and redundancies)

Accept Criticism: When readers tell you that you're writing is unclear or uninteresting, they are by definition correct

Writing Stylishly: don't try. The only style worth having is your natural speaking voice.



**Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Authors Page**

We've created this page to showcase literary accomplishments of the incarcerated and formerly incarcerated authors, and to share opportunities to new and aspiring writers!

**New Addition!**  
The Tree of Life: Sowing Your Seeds of Destiny  
by Brian Zater  
Using a tree as a metaphor for our thinking, feeling and intention, Zater guides us toward a better understanding of ourselves and our possibilities. In the author's words: "The Tree of Life empowers us to gain mastery over the creation of our lives from this moment forward!"

**Kelly Patrick Riggs**  
Kelly Patrick Riggs Amazon page  
**SELF HELP**  
How To Write Your Own Check  
FREE version for incarcerated readers and writers  
Download, read in the software, or print and mail to incarcerated people.  
Ineffective Assistance of Counsel: Overcoming the Inevitable  
Post-Conviction Relief: Secrets Exposed  
Post-Conviction Relief: The Appeal  
Post-Conviction Relief: Advancing Your Claim  
Post-Conviction Relief: Winning Claims  
Post-Conviction Relief: C.O.A. in the Supreme Court  
Memoir: The Mourning After: In loving memory of my mother  
Biography: Grasshopper  
Novel: Under Seal  
Mr. Riggs has also very generously donated writing tips for aspiring writers like me! You'll find them on our Writing and Publishing page!

**CHILDREN'S BOOKS**  
Imani and The Magic Pot: Our Black Is Beautiful Series  
S. Sharp  
A little girl facing hunger and thirst learns that through faith and kindness anyone can make a difference. She also learns that in helping other people solve the problem that they face, she is also blessed by solving her own.  
The Last Hunt: Our Black Is Beautiful Series  
S. Sharp  
The Last Hunt is an African Fairy Tale that we hope will be first of many books in a series called, "Our Black Is Beautiful." It is a tale of growth, new traditions and deals with the spiritual journey of a *Masai Princess* as she finds herself coming of age.

**ATTENTION POETRY WRITERS!**  
BreakingFreePoets is a poetry group at Petersburg Federal Correctional Institute. We are looking for incarcerated (or formerly incarcerated) poets who would like to post their work on our website [breakingfreepoets.com](http://breakingfreepoets.com). If you would like to create a profile and share your work on our site, send your poem(s), a short bio, and a picture (optional) to [mike@breakingfreepoets.com](mailto:mike@breakingfreepoets.com) or via mail to:  
BreakingFreePoets  
11 Oakwood St.  
Ashville, NC 28806  
You will be notified if your work is selected. Authors retain all rights to their material.  
About BreakingFreePoets:  
BreakingFreePoets is a group of incarcerated writers seeking to change the culture inside of prison and

Beyond the Bars  
by Joseph R. Myers  
"Beyond the Bars" is a motivational and inspirational collection of poetry written by a prisoner for all prisoners. This collection covers the gamut of different situations faced by prisoners every day. The book's message is simple: Whether you have life or get out tomorrow, there is always hope and something better "Beyond the Bars".  
The Ill Effects of Prison  
by About Duke-Dym Fowler  
The Ill Effects of Prison will open your eyes as to what's really at stake when people go to prison, how it affects the people who go to prison, their families, their communities, as well as society.  
From Pen To Paper: A Lifetime Of Sentences Waiting To Be Heard  
by Marvin Louis Beauchamp  
Inside are the raw expressed emotions from the psyche of a man searching for himself. These writings are being shared with the hope of helping you, the reader, clarify some of your past, present and future feelings.  
Also by Marvin: From Pen To Paper: My Second Collection Of Tangible Thoughts Concrete Feelings  
James T. Webb Guide to President Trump  
By James T. Webb  
Webb offers President Trump his 27 years of insight on how to REBUILD America's low income African American and other poor communities. Webb makes his methods in The WAHII (Webb Affordable Housing Model) available to the Trump administration to help finally bring the CHANGE that America's poor communities have been waiting on for the past 100 years.  
Ink from the Heart  
by Matthew Sean Blanchard  
Matthew Blanchard's Ink from the Heart is a poet's collection of 55 poems detailing his life's experiences and search for true love.  
Beyond the Bottom Lines: A Collection of Poems Celebrating Life's Absurdities  
by S. A. Nesbitt  
Nesbitt was inspired to put his collection of poetry together as a means for looking at some of life's absurdities and the odd things that we take for granted on a daily basis. The title is a play on words, and he wants the reader to look "beyond" the obvious, to know that there is always more to consider than meets the eye.  
Are You Truckin'?: Updated 2020  
by David J. Johnson  
From the highways of the Midwest comes this introduction to what drives America's commerce - trucking! Whether you're looking to get into the industry as a driver, owner/operator, or just trying to see what the best option for you would be, it's here!  
This book will also describe the things that can detail your career quicker than a wreck in the road. Along the way, you'll hear tales of this Asphalt Cowboy's experiences on the road. Saddle up and brave the open road!  
Arizona Dream: A true story of a real-life "Ocean's Eleven" by Adnan Alisic  
Haunted by the demons from his past, Adnan Alisic escapes Bosnia and comes to Phoenix, Arizona, where he starts a new life. Fueled by ambition he starts a successful car dealership, settles down, and lives the American Dream. Tortured by his past, he seeks relief in gambling and loses everything. Forced by the gambling debt and driven by the revenge against the casino, he plans an elaborate casino heist. From ethnic cleansing and mass killings in Bosnia, to gambling and underground tunnels in Arizona, you will read Arizona Dream until the last page where you'll find the reason behind the heist.  
Also by Alisic: UNFORGIVING



Prison Journalism Project (PJP) is a digital magazine for incarcerated writers and others to take the power of journalism into their own hands, to learn the craft of journalistic storytelling and to share their stories about life behind bars. We believe that the deep reforms that are necessary to fix the U.S. criminal justice system can only happen by shifting the narrative. Intentional, responsible and well-crafted journalism from within the incarcerated community can break stereotypes, bring more transparency and drive change. We aim to develop the first national network of prison correspondents and help shape freedom of the press behind walls; our ultimate goal is to create a national network of prison correspondents.

We see an opportunity to address the critical and urgent need for accurate information by connecting the dots between prisons across the country, bringing transparency to an opaque industry, and asserting the rights of prison journalists.

PJP is an all-volunteer organization currently housed at Penn State University. Our co-founders, Yukari Kane and Shaheen Pasha, are veteran journalists with 20 years' experience each at newsrooms including The Wall Street Journal, Reuters, CNN and Dow Jones; Kane and Pasha are also journalism educators at Northwestern University and Penn State University, respectively, with vast experience teaching inside prisons.

### **WRITE FOR PRISON JOURNALISM PROJECT!**

#### **SUBMISSION GUIDELINES**

**WHO:** Writers and artists who are incarcerated, formerly incarcerated, family members, corrections officers, prison educators and others involved in the criminal justice system or affected by the experience of prison or jail. We welcome submissions by first-time writers.

**WHAT:** Articles, essays, poems, art and cartoons that incorporate firsthand observations and/or experiences. Our word count is 500 - 1,200 words (ideally 1,000 words or less). No more than **ONE STORY** or **THREE POEMS** per submission. We cannot publish work that we cannot understand. We do not publish stories that re-litigate individual cases. Submission categories include:

For more information, write to:  
Prison Journalism Project  
2093 Philadelphia Pike #1054  
Claymont, DE 19703

<https://prisonjournalismproject.org/>

### **PJP SPECIAL PROJECT: WHAT IS IT LIKE TO BE YOU?**

One of our goals is to de-stigmatize the incarceration experience by introducing readers who are untouched by incarceration to perspectives and stories from behind walls. We want everyone to see you and connect with you as fellow humans.

However, we also know that it's difficult to be open about your past, present and future if you have to put your name on it.

In this project, we invite you to take a piece of blank paper and anonymously answer the question - **WHAT IS IT LIKE TO BE YOU?** You can answer the question however you want as long as it's true. It can be a journal entry, letter, poem, song, art - however you express yourself. Put your state location at the bottom, and your name at the back. We hope you'll also invite others around you to submit something. This only works if we get a lot of submissions. If you can collect a few and send them to us on their behalf, it would be great. We are treating this project as art - please send it to

PJP Special Projects  
3501 Southport Ave., #204  
Chicago, IL 60657



# Free School

AN EXPLORATION

*Expand  
Possibility!*

## Quotes Out of Context: *Education*

*"You either learn your way towards writing your own script in life, or you unwittingly become an actor in someone else's script."* - John T. Gatto

*"The most potent weapon of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed."* - Steven Biko

*"Children learn more from what you are than what you teach."* - W.E.B. Du Bois

*"Intelligence is the ability to adapt to change."* - Steven Hawking

*"Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today."* - Malcolm X

*"Books can let you chew on an idea without social risk."* - James Clear

*"...the cliché 'learning how to think, not what to think'...is actually shorthand for a much deeper, more serious idea: Learning how to think really means learning how to exercise some control over how and what you think. It means being conscious and aware enough to choose what you pay attention to and to choose how you construct meaning from experience. Because if you cannot exercise this kind of choice in adult life, you will be totally hosed."* - David Foster Wallace

*"Education doesn't need to be reformed – it needs to be transformed."* - Sir Ken Robinson

*"It takes considerable knowledge just to realize the extent of your own ignorance."* - Thomas Sowell

*"It doesn't matter how smart you are, unless you stop and think."* - Thomas Sowell

*"Grading has three predictable effects - less interest in learning, a preference for easier tasks, and shallower thinking."* - Alfie Kohn

*"A primary object should be the education of our youth in the science of government. In a republic, what species of knowledge can be equally important? And what duty more pressing than communicating it to those who are to be the future guardians of the liberties of the country?"* - George Washington

*"The mind, once stretched by a new idea, never returns to its original dimensions."* - Ralph Waldo Emerson

*"You ain't gonna learn what you don't wanna know."* - John Perry Barlow

*"The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go."* - Dr. Seuss

*"It is hard to learn when we think we know."* - Peter Block

*"There is absolutely no inevitability as long as there is a willingness to contemplate what is happening."* - Marshall McLuhan

*"A good teacher does not teach facts, he or she teaches enthusiasm, open-mindedness and values."* - Gian-Carlo Rota

NOTES:



## LEARNING WHAT WE WANT TO LEARN!

When we were young, we were educated as if we were an 'empty vessel', now we can learn as persons-in-the-world!

### **UNLEARN:**

Much of what we've learned, we received without scrutiny or a filter. We simply accepted information given to us, norms expected of us, and beliefs to orient us. This was enormously helpful in our early years! Without occasional reflection and re-evaluation, however, the information, that may no longer be true, can become 'calcified' or stuck, and we may even defend it by saying 'that's how it is', or that's the way we've always done it. With intention and effort, we can remove mental 'plaque' and open our minds to new and improved information!

### **HEUTAGOGY:**

Since we learn all the time, why not direct our learning to increase our opportunities, possibilities and success? We can seek information in a library, in books, through conversation, and on the internet. (Be very discerning when looking for information on the internet!! "Information" is just 'stuff' and does NOT include truth; that is for you to figure out.) Self-determined learning can include critically reflecting on our early learning and discovering deeper meanings now.

*"It's hard to learn when we think we know something."*  
– Peter Block.

### **UBUNTUGOGY:**

What we never learn in school in the U.S. is that we are constantly in relationship with everyone and everything around us. We are trained to see ourselves as 'individuals' who have to figure things out for ourselves. We are also taught that we are 'rational actors' and we behave in our own 'self-interest'. This is the story that continues to divide us. We can choose to let it go for the misleading falsehood that it is, and discover that our true nature is the balance between autonomy (agents in control of our destiny), and belonging (connected to others and the world around us). Creating a world that is fair and just for all IS in our self-interest! We will be secure and free, also!

### **EMBODIED COGNITION**

Our brains evolved with our body and our bodies evolved with the world around us. We experience life, and make decisions, based on feelings...so it's high time we recognize how we extend our cognition (thinking ability) to understand ourselves, others, and the world better! According to Erik Shonstrom,

*"Embodied Cognition research supports the idea that feelings and emotions are not obstacles to the process of rational thought, but part of it, inextricably intertwined. All decisions are "gut" decisions – they are formed, informed and carried out by the body and the mind in tandem."*

### **TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING THEORY (TLT)**

(Please find this information on the next page.)

## Styles of Learning

*Use one, some, or all!*

### **UNLEARN**

Letting go of the behaviors and mindsets that keep us stuck so we can transform the past, improve today, and prepare for the future.

### **HEUTAGOGY**

aka: Self-Determined Learning  
Learners decide what is important and act. They build knowledge on alone and with others. They learn the value of information. They listen, they ask questions to clarify and build empathy, they reflect, they consider others in their process. They also construct knowledge with them.

### **UBUNTUGOGY**

Learning through a lens of interdependence, knowing that everything is connected and that all learning must recognize, include and honor others now, in the past, and in the future. Ubuntu-gogy can be applied when we learn alone and when we learn with others.

### **EMBODIED COGNITION**

Learn how to "trust our gut."  
Developing an understanding of how we are informed by our body and our brain - together - when we 'think', including when we learn, pay attention, construct knowledge and meaning, and make decisions.

### **TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING THEORY**

The transformative learning theory (TLT) lens will equip learners with ways to foster critical self-reflection, challenge social norms, engage in dialog with greater confidence, and consider other perspectives, including changing their own.  
TLT supports capacity building, a deeper sense of compassion, and a healthy curiosity, to use as power-tools in a world of constant change, 'nudges' and emerging truth.

# TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING THEORY

created by Jack Mezirow

Throughout our lives, and for a wide variety of reasons, we may want to - or need to - change our perspective. Transformative Learning Theory (TLT) will help with this process.

*"When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves."*

- Victor Frankl

Transformative learning is perspective transformation, or gaining a different point of view. During the transformative learning process, we critically reflect on our prior interpretations and assumptions to form new meaning. Critical reflection is when we analyze past events by considering what worked, what didn't work, and why. Perspective transformation is achieved through disorienting dilemmas that lead to critical reflection, then discussed in rational dialogue and, finally, taking action.

Jack Mezirow argued that transformations often follow some variation of the following phases (while not all are required):

- A disorienting dilemma - something happens that was unexpected.
- A self-examination of feelings of guilt or shame.
- A critical assessment of assumptions in our thoughts, beliefs, or cultural norms.
- Recognition that our feelings are shared, and that others have also changed their perspective.
- Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions.
- Planning a course of action.
- Acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing a plan.
- Trying new roles, new ways of seeing, and being in, the world.
- Building competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships.
- A reintegration into one's life using the new perspective in all areas.

## Why am I such a huge fan of Transformative Learning?

When I was in my early teens, I physically rebelled against authority by skipping school and running away from home. At that time in my life, I felt like all forms of authority wanted to 'mold' me; that they would never let me become myself. After 5 years of constant conflict, I said I wanted to become an emancipated adult. The answer was 'no'. Then I made a deal: I would calm down and go to school if I could live in a foster home and attend an 'alternative high school' called Walden III (it still exists today!). This was approved. When I got to Walden III, I quickly learned that I did not hate school, or 'authority'; what I hated was being disrespected. When I was able to learn in a respectful setting, and through a self-determined process, I flourished. I actually loved school!

### **WHAT ARE YOU CURIOUS ABOUT? WHAT ARE YOU CONCERNED ABOUT?**

These questions can not only guide you on a self-directed learning journey, but may provide a gentle introduction to changing your perspective. When we dig into any topic, and search for the many different points of view (we are almost always presented with only two - with us or against us – but there are always more than two!) we can – without the guilt or shame, learn to understand other perspectives. For instance, we could be curious about the internal combustion engine, but when we dig into the history and consider the future, we could learn about electric motors...and try on that perspective, and then learn about the impact of lithium battery production, and come full circle to believe that all we really need to do is to drive less. This is a super-simplified version, but it provides three strong perspectives that may provide a window into a person's world view.

*Changing your stance on a long-held belief will not be simple, but it might change your life completely!*

Please check out the Transformative Learning Process diagram on the next page.

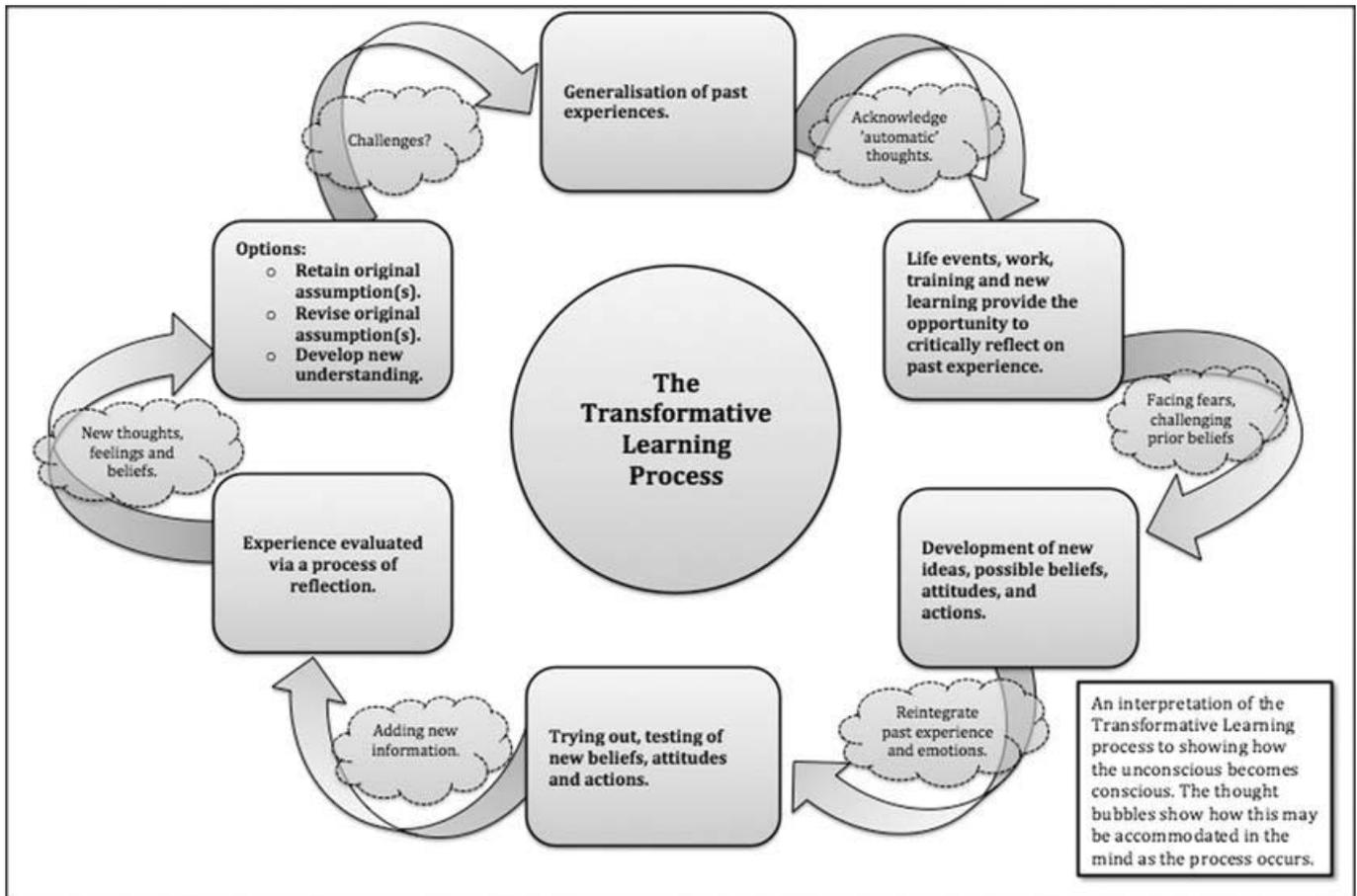


Diagram by Justin Sharp.

**To investigate this topic further, book recommendations can be found at the end of the Free School section, and at the end of the Ownership Manual. Look for titles by Jack Mezirow.**

Free and very inexpensive learning opportunities abound...on the internet, in our libraries and by talking with people willing to share their knowledge! We can purchase new or used books to share, we can study alone or in groups, and we can even get college credit for some of our learning through the CLEP exam ([www.clep.collegeboard.org](http://www.clep.collegeboard.org)) for \$95 per course! We can teach - and explore learning - with our children and our youth for free...and we can help them get the information that the schools do not provide. All ages can learn better together!

### EDUCATION FOR FREEDOM!

*We have a right to learn; "to create our own history".*

- Paul Bélanger, UNESCO

*How can anyone read history and still trust politicians?*

- Thomas Sowell

*The mind, once stretched by a new idea, never returns to its original dimensions.*

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

*Education doesn't need to be reformed – it needs to be transformed.*

- Ken Robinson

*The most potent weapon of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed.*

- Steve Biko

*We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.*

- Albert Einstein.

*...the whole of life is learning therefore education can have no ending.*

- Eduard Lindeman

*At its best, schooling can be about how to make a life, which is quite different from how to make a living.*

- Neil Postman



# PHILOSOPHY: our Human Operating System

"It's not fair!" "Good job." "Why can't I do that?" "You should eat more vegetables."

These statements, which seem to have nothing in common, are all based on beliefs, values, and judgement. These statements are all philosophical expressions.

According to the City University of New York's website, "philosophy is a combination of two Greek words, *philein sophia*, meaning lover of wisdom". Philosophy celebrates all kinds of thinking and provides a 'wholeness' about knowledge, recognizing that our beliefs about things are connected, and form the foundation of our *epistemology* or 'how we know what we know'.

Discussions about philosophy are often considered 'academic' or pointless, and are generally avoided yet, as demonstrated above, philosophy forms the foundation of the way we view the world and act in it. It also forms the foundation of how we believe people-in-society ought to act.

Philosophy covers: morals and ethics (which we all have, whether we articulate them or not). It also covers beliefs, values, and reasoning or *logic*; and the questioning of our assumptions about all of them - known as critical thinking.

Philosophy guides all learning, including what we determine is important to learn or whether we want to learn at all. Sadly, we are systematically denied a pursuit of the 'love of wisdom' in our basic mandatory school years. Rather than teaching us *how* to learn, or simply to *love* to learn, we are instead trained to accumulate and memorize facts, followed by dehumanizing testing to demonstrate retention. But memorizing is not understanding. It does not help us become caring or creative problem solvers. It does not help us listen or value each other's contributions to a collective community project. Aren't these skills at least as important as remembering specific historical dates (which we can look up on our phones)? Testing kills our creativity..but it's never too late to revive it! We are never too old to learn, nor to learn to love wisdom.

Socrates was a philosopher who loved to ask questions and to encourage others to ask questions. Socrates was not necessarily looking for answers. Instead, he often asked questions just to understand how people think. Socratic questions, like the ones below, help us to understand each other:

- Why do you think that?
- What do you mean by that?
- Why is this question important?
- Could you put that another way?
- What do you think is the main issue here?
- Could you expand upon that point further?
- Why would someone make this assumption?
- Could you give me an example of what you mean?
- What assumptions can we make based on this question?
- Does this question lead to other important issues and questions?

As we will explore in the Moral Courage document, sometimes simply asking questions requires a great deal of courage. Although there is such a glut of information that it's difficult to make sense of it all, a lot of people are threatened when we ask questions...about the information, about beliefs or values and even about accepted norms, commonly called 'the status quo'.

But how can we learn if we don't ask questions? How can we grow if we don't question our own beliefs? How can we build a satisfying life if we don't determine what is valuable to us?

*"The man who views the world at 50 the same as he did at 20 has wasted 30 years of his life."*

- Muhammad Ali

## WHAT IS PHILOSOPHY GOOD FOR?

Philosophy helps us:

- create meaning. Meaning guides our values, and values guide our lives.
- bolster our courage. People of all ages, all around the world, have endured and survived extremely difficult situations because of their beliefs.
- trust ourselves – our knowledge, our reasoning, and our beliefs! – and also to trust others, even when their beliefs are different from ours.
- understand identity: personal, group, national, global!
- recognize and address our desire to feel we have control over our lives, and help us grapple with our constant dual needs for autonomy and belonging
- interpret the world through different perspectives. We don't have to believe the perspectives, but understanding them can help us listen, understand, and 'walk a mile' in someone else's shoes

## Moral Foundations Theory (MFT) [www.moralfoundations.org](http://www.moralfoundations.org)

MFT was created by a group of social and cultural psychologists, including Jonathan Haidt, to understand why morality varies, yet shows many similarities and recurrent themes. In brief, the theory proposes the concept of “intuitive ethics” used to construct cultural virtues, narratives, and institutions around the world. They consider these as universal moral foundations:

### **1) Care / harm:**

This foundation is related to our long evolution as mammals with attachment systems and an ability to feel (and dislike) the pain of others. It underlies virtues of kindness, gentleness, and nurturance.

### **2) Fairness / cheating:**

This foundation is related to the evolutionary process of reciprocal altruism. It generates ideas of justice, rights, and autonomy. [Note: In our original conception, Fairness included concerns about equality, which are more strongly endorsed by political liberals. However, as we reformulated the theory in 2011 based on new data, we emphasize proportionality, which is endorsed by everyone, but is more strongly endorsed by conservatives]

### **3) Loyalty / betrayal:**

This foundation is related to our long history as tribal creatures able to form shifting coalitions. It underlies virtues of patriotism and self-sacrifice for the group. It is active anytime people feel that it's “one for all, and all for one.”

### **3) Authority / subversion:**

This foundation was shaped by our long primate history of hierarchical social interactions. It underlies virtues of leadership and followership, including deference to legitimate authority and respect for traditions.

### **4) Sanctity / degradation:**

This foundation was shaped by the psychology of disgust and contamination. It underlies religious notions of striving to live in an

elevated, less carnal, more noble way. It underlies the widespread idea that the body is a temple which can be desecrated by immoral activities and contaminants (an idea not unique to religious traditions).

### **5) Liberty / oppression:**

This foundation is about the feelings of reactance and resentment people feel toward those who dominate them and restrict their liberty. Its intuitions are often in tension with those of the authority foundation. The hatred of bullies and dominators motivates people to come together, in solidarity, to oppose or take down the oppressor. We report some preliminary work on this potential foundation in this paper, on the psychology of libertarianism and liberty.

To explore more ideas in philosophy, check out the **Morals in Brief**, **JUDGE**, **VALUE**, and **BOUNDARIES** documents; or the reading list at the back of this book!

## PHILOSOPHY:

*Let's explore*

# BELIEF



Belief is at the foundation of our thinking, our feeling, and every aspect of our daily existence. This document will not directly address religion, but much of the content applies to religious beliefs as well. We all believe!

### **BELIEF is how we steer our ship:**

- It influences what we acknowledge, perceive, hear, pay attention to, discover, attribute.
- It guides our values: how we invest in ourselves, how we value and treat others, how we see the value of things (money, cars, etc.), of information (education, news sources).
- It guides our emotions, which guide our thinking and our behaviors. For example: if we are afraid of dogs, we might shake and sweat, and even run away from a sleepy dog.
- It guides our feelings of self-worth, efficacy, and what we are capable of - all of which affect how we see our options, opportunities and potential.
- It can give us strength or make us weak. Belief has brought believers through amazing hardships!
- Belief guides our ability to trust; trust that we can do things, that we are important contributors to civilization, etc., and also how we trust others, and how we can grow our trust in relationships.
- Belief also guides how we make sense of things; our justifications and our logic.
- We tend to believe that others see the world the way we see the world, which is one of the reasons we can't believe that they have different solutions to problems.

***"Whether you think you can, or you think you can't - you're right."***

- Henry Ford



**LENSES TO SEE THE WORLD:** Our beliefs 'tint' the lenses we've created to see the world...and to see ourselves. Each of us has a variety of lenses to use, depending on our feelings and the situation. Each of us can decide which lens to use in any situation, but most of the time we simply react, using whatever lens is triggered by our subconscious. We believe our assumptions, and even assume that others see the same things that we see. This is why it is vitally important to ask others how they see a situation! We hope that others will be generous when they view us. Perhaps we could also use our curious, or our 'rose-colored', lenses with them as well.

### **Tom Asacker, author of *Your Brain on Story*, describes how our beliefs are formed:**

*"Everyone has been conditioned to think in certain, scripted ways. What you see today as 'you', wasn't consciously crafted by you. It's a product of unquestioned learning and unconscious assimilation - including limiting beliefs which were woven into you by others, especially by people you trusted. Those 'knots of beliefs' are everywhere and most of the time you fail to notice how they affect your emotions and your decisions, and how important they are to maintaining your story. Like our favorite sweaters, our identities are very precious to us."*

But we can outgrow beliefs that were given to us. When we reflect on how we became who we are today, we might find beliefs that are inconsistent with who we have become. We can let these beliefs go, and we can adopt new ones. Tom Asacker recommends: *"If you want to change your perspective, change your behavior - and your behavior will change your mind."*

See it to believe it? Not so fast! Here are some common, age-old phrases to ponder:

*We see things as we are, not as they are.*

*Don't believe everything you see.*

*The absence of evidence is not evidence of absence.*

*Don't believe everything you think.*

**BELIEF IN YOURSELF:** also known as Confidence or Self-Efficacy *Affirmation:* "I can do this!"  
Your "Agency" is your sense of power to determine - and to drive your life toward - your destiny.

### Signs of Self-Determination, Self-Efficacy and Agency:

- You feel like you can handle problems if you are willing to work hard
- You feel confident that you can achieve your goals.
- You feel like you can manage unexpected events when they arise.
- You are able to bounce back fairly quickly after stressful events.
- You feel like you can come up with options when you are facing a problem.
- You keep trying even when things seem difficult.
- You stay calm even in the face of chaos.
- You perform well, even under pressure.
- You can focus on your progress, chipping away, rather than getting overwhelmed by all you still have to do.

**Do you need to build your feelings of Self-Efficacy?** Here are some things to try:

- + Celebrate your achievements! Reflect on the hurdles you surmounted and how much more you know.
- + Observe others. See how they progress and then see if you can do the same, or in your own style.
- + Have positive affirmations ready when you start something new. Develop a 'positivity bias'.
- + Pay attention to your thoughts, your emotions, and your cues from your body.

***"Our belief in our ability to succeed plays a role in how we think, how we act, and how we feel about our place in the world."*** - Albert Bandura



### Bridging Our Beliefs

Have you ever talked with someone who believes things that don't make sense to you? Our mind creates stories to make sense of what we know when new information comes in. It also creates shortcuts to connect information, save energy and reduce confusion. The mind will create bridges between beliefs that might not clearly connect. Some of these bridges are helpful, some are not good for us or for others. Some of these bridges are called 'magical thinking'. We make 'sense', or meaning, based on our beliefs and the way we connect them.

We also believe in others. We trust them to guide our sensemaking abilities. The level of trust we give them will contribute to the arch of assumptions that connects our beliefs. For instance, if we believe in one type of news source over another, the news source that we trust becomes part of the foundation of our assumptions; the things we believe to be true.

Questioning claims, statements, experts and evidence is not an attack. It is healthy. Questions support critical thinking, wisdom, reflection, dialog and discovery toward the truth.

**Obedience is not belief.**

**Skepticism: Curiosity or questioning of beliefs.** It is very important for us to consider building a healthy level of skepticism since our information channels are being flooded with 'fake', and misleading information.

We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them. - Albert Einstein

*The difficulty lies not so much in developing new ideas as in escaping from old ones.* - John Maynard Keynes

*She believed in nothing. Only her skepticism kept her from being an atheist.* - Jean-Paul Sartre

*The repetition of affirmations leads to belief. Once that belief becomes a deep conviction, things begin to happen.* - Muhammad Ali

**POSSIBILITARIAN BELIEFS:** important to build the future

Self-Determination + Self-Efficacy + Self-Reflection + Intention + Opportunity + Agency + Respect

Questions are crucial! Everyone is valuable and important! Yes, We Can! Where there's a will, there's a way.

**No super-hero is coming to save us. Together, we can be the superhero we have been hoping for!**

## PHILOSOPHY:



# (to) JUDGE v.

OED: To form an opinion or conclusion



FairShake  
REENTRY RESOURCE CENTER

"Nice job!"

"That's a great haircut."

"You're amazing!"

We love to hear comments like this, and all of these statements are judgments.

One of the funny things about the word 'judge' is that it is almost always judged unfairly. One look through internet search pages – using a wide variety of search words – provided fewer than 5% of the results to the word 'judge' in a positive light (and then only when I used 'good' in the search; most of *those* results were from law firms and business websites!).

Judging well, so that we make good decisions, is one of the most valuable and important functions our brains can perform. But where can we learn to discern?

When we judge, we designate value. We determine if a thing is 'good' or 'bad', 'heavy' or 'light', 'beautiful' or 'ugly', etc. Judgements are relative to a belief system. To improve our ability to judge, we must expand our experience, and also our knowledge of ourselves and humanity.

We must judge when food is too hot to give to a child. We must judge if we have enough fuel to reach our destination. We judge our culpability in an unfortunate event. (Often generously. Flip this page to find out about the *Fundamental Attribution Error*)

Like many popular words and phrases, the word 'judge' is often referred to negatively, and is based on a fear or a projection of our own beliefs.

By reflecting on the word, we can open our minds and hearts to it's full potential, confront and de-escalate uncomfortable situations, and enlarge our feelings of humanity. We can understand that values, and the judgements that are made because of them, are personal; and that the judgments of others are no threat to our own.

Through understanding, we can own our judgments, and offer generosity when we hope that others, too, will judge us kindly.

Job interviews are all about judgments; an applicant must gather enough information to determine if the job that is available is one that will be satisfying, while the employer must also judge if the applicant will be a good match for the job and the team.

We must judge for safety. We must judge for nutrition content, carcinogenic (cancer-causing) content, and alcohol content. We must learn to say 'no'...which is a judgment about our limitations. We can be understanding and forgiving, which may be what we will want from others, too.

We can decide how we wish to judge, and see an opportunity to educate others when we know we are being judged. We have a lot of power!

Things we judge: FAIR \* GOOD \* BEST \* SAFE \* ENOUGH \* IMPORTANT \* VALUE \* RIGHT

## BELIEFS, MORALITY, VALUES AND JUDGMENT

They determine our choices and, hence, our possibilities!

*"Judge so that you can make the best decisions for yourself; some choices are better than others."*

- Sheila Baranoski

*"Good judgment comes from experience, and experience comes from bad judgment."* - Anonymous

Examples of judging in action:

**Decide:** Should I articulate my boundary about this? If so, should I be gentle, forceful, or generous?

**Discern:** Is this partial story really just fake news? Does red dye #40 make me hyperactive?

**Determine:** Do I have enough time? Do I have enough energy / fuel to go the distance?

**Reflect...and double-check:**

When I think someone is judging me negatively, I can I stop to ask myself:

Is it ME who is judging THEM? Am I projecting my fears? Am I reading too much into the situation?

What behavior do they demonstrate that causes me to believe they are judging me negatively?

Could it be that I'm just hungry, hot (or cold), anxious about something else, or in a bad mood?

Is this just the **Fundamental Attribution Error** rearing its ugly head again?

**FUNDAMENTAL ATTRIBUTION ERROR:** (a common bias!)

When we judge others differently than we judge ourselves.

- When 'good' things happen to us, we tend to believe we earned them or deserve them. When good things happen to others, we tend to believe they were lucky.

- When unfortunate things happen to us, we tend to blame others for our misfortune, or believe we had bad luck. But when bad things happen to others, we often attribute their difficulties to their character, as if they are careless or foolish.

		Who did it?	
		myself	someone else
Outcome	positive	personality	circumstances
	negative	circumstances	personality

**BIASES ARE SNAP-JUDGMENTS BASED ON OUR HISTORY.**

We can decide HOW to judge. We can be generous in spirit to others, as we often are for ourselves. Through our actions, we help the people that we love make better judgments.

Considerations to improve your judgment:

- Be aware of your biases and filters. Listen carefully and question assumptions, including yours.
- Question the quality of the information you receive. Consider topics through a variety of sources for a more complete picture. Get out of the 'confirmation bias' echo chamber.
- Reflect on your history with the topic: what you've learned through your life, and who the sources were that informed you. Were they biased? Is it time to let go of the filter of false beliefs? Look for ways to expand your experience!
- Consider what you feel and what you believe. Reflect on your values; your values drive decisions! Seek the input of a third party when you can.
- Can you see more options; esp. options that may not be offered?
- Can you consider others in a generous light: as people who are striving, and who are mostly good?
- Can you see how your behavior or comments could be misunderstood?
- Can you be flexible enough to change your perspective?

**"Replace judgment with curiosity."**

- Lynn Nottage

Finally, here are a few helpful questions to ask before making an important judgement:

1. Do I tend to act on impulse and later regret it? If so, how can I slow down and weigh my options?
2. Is this unlike anything I've seen before? If so, what should I do to learn more before I decide?
3. Are the stakes high? If so, should I do more research and gather more perspectives from others?

**When we improve our judging abilities, we can help others improve theirs, too!**

*All Fair Shake documents are written solely as 'primers' or jump-off points to stir curiosity and desire for further investigation.*

# Spot the Bias:

## *Fundamental Attribution Error*

One of the most common biases!

The fundamental attribution error (FAE) is a cognitive bias which frames positive outcomes and negative outcomes differently, depending on the actor.

It refers to our tendency to attribute our success to our character and ability, and our failures to fate, other people, technical problems - in other words, to blame something or someone else. Not only is this not true, but on the other side of the error, we perceive the problems that others face as flaws in their character, and their success as luck.

For example, if I cut someone off in traffic, it's because I was in a rush or I happened not to see the other driver. But if *someone else* cuts me off in traffic, it's because they're a bad or selfish driver.

The same goes for positives: if I do well on an exam, it's because I studied hard and earned it. But if someone else does well, maybe the exam was too easy or they happened to guess well.

Of course, as the name implies, this is an *error*, so it's something we have to be aware of in order to fix it. Since the natural tendency is to be biased, it might be best to lean in the opposite direction. If someone else does something good, we can consider that it's more likely that it is the result of their choices. And if they do something bad, we can keep in mind that it's more likely to be due to circumstances.

Similarly, if you do something well, remember how much good fortune is involved; and if you do something bad or poorly, it may be a signal to look inward, to be more conscientious or careful next time.

The FAE is a foundational bias for many Americans through the lens of *meritocracy* or the belief that "we can make it if we try" or, in other words, we will "get what we deserve". The thinking error is so common, that it is "at the root of any misunderstanding in which human motivations have the potential to be misinterpreted", according to Patrick Healy.

The fundamental attribution error, like confirmation bias and overconfidence, affects every day behavior.

Cognitive biases shape how an individual interacts with the world around them. Understanding these biases and becoming aware of the ways that they influence your behavior – as well as the thinking and behavior of others - is vital to your self-efficacy and to creating success. It is equally important understand biases to work with others!

Can you see this bias in yourself? In others? On TV, in newspapers (esp. by political parties) or in books?

BIASES and ASSUMPTIONS: our lazy brain relies on assumptions and limited information to make judgments.

We will never overcome our biases or our faulty logic, but if we pay attention to them, we will get much better at seeing them and stopping them....and creating better situations and opportunities by using our wisdom!

## SO WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?

We can build an HONEST BIAS, where we check, repeatedly, to check our assumptions. We can also ask for feedback from people we can trust to help us see ourselves better than we could alone.



The table (below) and much of the writing is by alex petralia

Who did it?

		myself	someone else
Outcome	positive	personality	circumstances
	negative	circumstances	personality

## The 3 Conundrums & 13 Strategies That Generate Biases

No matter what we do, we can't escape these conundrums, but 13 strategies help us think within their constraints.

### 3 CONUNDRUMS

1. There's too much information (so we must filter it).
2. There's not enough meaning (so we use stories to make sense).
3. There's not enough time (so we motivate towards action).

Each of the following strategies helps us compensate for one of the 3 conundrums by overvaluing a certain kind of possibility and undervaluing everything else. Each strategy is a collection of cognitive biases, mental shortcuts, and energy savers that help us filter information, make sense of things and get stuff done.

### 13 STRATEGIES

#### 1-5 HELP US FILTER INFORMATION

1. We depend on the context to figure out what to notice and remember.
2. We accept what comes to mind, and don't worry much about what doesn't come to mind.
3. We amplify bizarre things.
4. We notice novelty.
5. We seek takeaways to remember and toss the rest.

#### 6-10 HELP US MAKE SENSE OF THINGS

6. We fill in the gaps with stereotypes and generalities.
7. We favor familiar things over the non-familiar.
8. We treat experience as reality.
9. We simplify mental math.
10. We are overconfident in everything we do.

#### 11-13 HELP US GET THINGS DONE

11. We stick with things we've started.
12. We protect existing beliefs.
13. We will opt to do the safe things, all other things being equal.

#### 13 BLIND SPOTS TO QUESTION:

1. Out of context: What have I missed because options were hidden from my particular circumstances and context in the moment?

2. Out of mind: What have I not considered because they just didn't come to mind at the time?

3. Lackluster: What have I missed because something else immediately grabs my attention when I think about this?

4. Expired: What options have I neglected because they didn't present themselves as shiny and new?

5. Irrelevant: What have I undervalued because it didn't fit my expectations as a proper take-away?

6. Untypical: What options have I not seen in their true light because I projected stereotypes and generalities onto them?

7. Unfamiliar: What have I passed over simply because it didn't feel familiar to me?

8. Unrelatable: What options have fallen to the wayside because they didn't match my own personal experiences?

9. Ambiguous: What options have I dismissed because they felt less certain or more risky in the moment?

10. Underestimated: What have I ignored or neglected because I overestimated my ability to control certain situations?

11. Costly: What options have I dismissed because they would require changing course from previous decisions?

12. Threatening: What have I dismissed because I wasn't ready to accept that I might be wrong?

13. Unpopular: What options have been pushed aside because I felt gathering consensus would put me at risk in some way?

For a lot more insight, check out Buster's book *Why Are We Yelling?*

# MORAL GUIDES



Although, one of our most fundamental values is freedom, it is a moral that we never discuss. Instead of discussions, arguments or debates, nations, cultures, religions, families, individuals and even the media, turn to stories to pass on moral "guides". We have the "E Pluribus Unum" story, the "rugged individual" story, the "good neighbor" story, the "melting pot" story, and many more.

Our lack of moral courage is affecting us greatly, which I address on another page, so I'm excited to explore morals – an important part of philosophy, both culturally and individually - here in the Fair Shake Free School.

Let's begin our study with those who were here before everyone else: the native peoples. Miigwetch (thank you) for sharing this timeless wisdom!

A GIFT FROM THE ANISHINAABEG

## Seven Grandfathers (and Seven Rascals) Principles for Living Well

Many people native to the Great Lakes region understand this teaching as what is needed for a community to survive. According to the authors at the Ojibwe.net website "Each Grandfather Teaching is a gift the Anishinaabeg carry, a potential tool for living a good life. Our understanding is that as we use these gifts our experience of living improves. Using these gifts in our lives is an ongoing challenge for each of us, requiring attention, discipline and perseverance."

The 7 Grandfathers are Wisdom, Love, Respect, Bravery, Truth, Humility, Generosity  
The 7 Rascals are Greed, Revenge, Inferiority, Negative Attitude, Fear, Jealously, Resentment

**Nibwaakawin** - Wisdom. Sound judgment, ability to teach others what you have learned or experienced. Use good sense and form a good attitude and course of action.

**Zaagidiwin** - Love. Strong affection for another forming out of kinship or personal ties; attachments based on devotion, admiration, tenderness, unselfish loyalty, concern. Feel and give absolute kindness for all things around you.

**Minwaadendamowin** - Respect. Showing regards for the value of persons or things through courteous consideration and appreciation, to be upright with a good giving heart. Don't hurt anything or anyone on the outside or the inside.

**Aakodewewin** - Bravery. The personal inner strength to face difficulties, obstacles and challenges. Have courage and a strong heart to make positive choices.

**Debwewin** - Truth. Sincerity in action, character, and utterance. Learn truth, honor truth, no truth, see truth.

**Dibaadendiziwin** - Humility. A measurement or reflection of your own self-worth. To be humble, to be human.

**Miigwe'aadiziwin** - Generosity. Sharing your ability, time, and extra or non-necessary things. Standing together / Responding to needs

## THE STORY OF THE TWO WOLVES

A young girl told her grandmother that she was having a hard time. She said, "*I can feel a fight going on inside me, Grandmother. It is a terrible fight and it is between two wolves. One is evil – she is anger, envy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego.*"

Her grandmother listened, and nodded gently.

*"The other wolf is good", the young girl continued. "She is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion, and faith."*

Her grandmother looked deeply into her eyes and said, "*I know it's hard, granddaughter. The same fight is going on inside me....and in every other person, too.*"

*The young girl reflected on what her grandmother said. Then she looked up and asked, "Grandmother, which wolf will win?"*

Her grandmother replied softly, "*The one you feed.*"

# Fair Shake is DIY: Build Your Own Operating Principles

Operating principles, which are based on our values, articulate our personal philosophy and help us maintain the clear boundaries necessary to own our life and, hence, own our future. They change over time, developing as we develop. You are under no obligation to accept operating principles 'should-ed' on you by others ("You should try to fit in!", "You should get married.", etc.) . Sue's current Operating Principles are listed below to provide an example. You already have operating principles! To reflect on them, and further develop your list, write down hundreds of ideas, then group similar ideas together. Pare those down to a list that you can remember and commit to.

1. I value living an integrated life. UBUNTU! I am because we are.
2. I strive to develop meaningful relationships.
3. I foster personal growth.
4. I move intentionally and carefully toward my desired outcomes.
5. I listen actively and empathetically when others talk.
6. I own my actions, reactions, responses, decisions, opinions and attitudes.
7. I take a long-term perspective and consider future impact when making decisions.
8. I move away from my comfort zone into growth opportunities. I increase my capacity.
9. I reflect critically and generously; I remember my past as I accept my 'now' and create my future.
10. I do not 'should' on people; I offer options and stay available for questions or support.
11. I respect others' time and opinions.
12. I value honesty. I am courageous and invite others to be courageous, too.
13. I do not avoid confrontation; I say what needs to be said with care and respect.
14. I take care of the body and the mind that take care of me.
15. Words are possibilities, actions are commitments.
16. I strive to be authentic and to support other's authenticity. We all have unique contributions.
17. Learning is available everywhere and all of the time. Wisdom is not found in books; it is built through relationships, conversations, reflections and experiences.
18. Every one and every thing has value, even when I don't understand what it is.
19. Emotional, relational, time and other types of wealth are considered when I determine value.
20. I become stronger from adversity. I utilize my challenges to build inner strength which I can apply to my determination, to humanity, and to the future.

Operating Principles are like affirmations; we will not execute our lives perfectly, but we can create our unique aspirations and limitations. Your principles may change as you change.



# MORAL COURAGE

## What is the definition of *['i:æ]*?

**['i:æ]** Adj: 1.a.) Of or relating to human character or behavior considered as good or bad; of or relating to the distinction between right and wrong, in relation to the actions, desires, or character of responsible human beings; ethical.

**['i:æ]** A code of conduct. Morality and religion are not the same thing, morality is only a guide to conduct.

## What is *['i:æ]*?

According to Rushworth Kidder, "Moral courage is the bridge between talking ethics and doing ethics." He goes on to say it is "a readiness to endure danger for the sake of principle, he explains that the courage to act is found at the intersection of three elements: action based on core values, awareness of the risks, and a willingness to endure necessary perceived hardship."

According to Irshad Manji: "Moral courage equips you to do the right thing in the face of your fear." She also says "Most people who show moral courage do so because the intimate voice of individual conscience drowns out the groupthink that produces passivity."

~~~~~ **["i:æ]** - Anonymous

ALL AROUND US, we see increasing polarization, fakeness, gaming, and desire for control. It's happening in groups, political parties, schools (including higher education), the medical industry, prisons, and work places. Rather than increasing listening skills, understanding, care or knowledge, we have been willing to accept more laws, rules, restrictions and authoritarian measures, hoping to shape and manage behavior.

MORAL COURAGE offers a different approach to increasing safety, cooperation and social engagement. Moral courage offers us the opportunity to demonstrate our most deeply held values: equality, freedom, authenticity, autonomy, democracy, ownership and more...as we willingly offer them; each of us in our unique ways. Moral courage offers us the chance to offer understanding, rather than demand acquiescence; to listen and care, rather than enforce conformity. It provides us the opportunity to be ourselves, and also to be citizens-of-the-world.

But, as the quotes above show us, moral courage is not easy, especially since we have not been encouraged to be courageous or moral. Courage requires risk, and we are powerfully discouraged from taking any risks. Morality requires thinking about right and wrong, and we are strongly encouraged to just 'follow rules' and not worry about moral issues. We have to be morally courageous simply to talk about morality! Yet we all have our own perspectives of the thick complexity surrounding 'right and wrong' and 'good and bad'. As with many cases of the Fundamental Attribution Error (please look for the page dedicated to this topic), however, the 'good and bad' is easily defined regarding others, and only gets complex when we need to apply them to ourselves.

Moral Courage is the willingness to give to others these things that we all want ourselves:  
**["i:æ]**



# BASIC HUMAN NEEDS



*It is clear that all humans have basic needs. What is not clear is exactly what they are.*

We can agree, for instance, that our physiological needs of water, food, air, and a reasonably comfortable environment are crucial to our survival. There is also broad agreement for the idea that humans have psychological needs for autonomy (to feel we have authority of ourselves) and belonging (to feel we are a part of a group) along with a need for physical and psychological safety. Beyond this, there are many different perspectives about what we need.

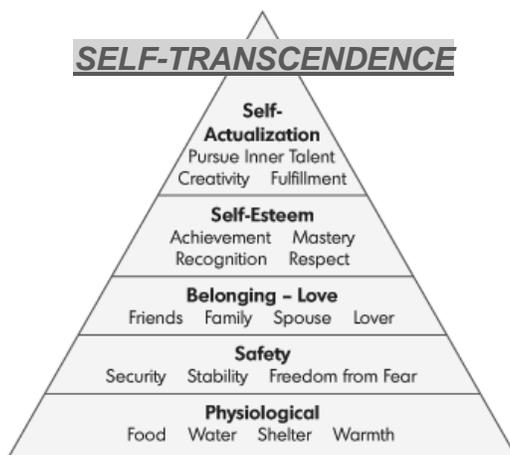
## Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Most of us recognize this triangle. Abraham Maslow has been attributed with this triangle because his "Hierarchy of Basic Needs" is contained within it...as if the needs were stages of development where we reach a higher level after completing the one below it. This 'managerial approach' was not created by Maslow, however! It was created by business management writers in the late 50's specifically to look like a mountain that we must climb.

The idea for the triangle came from his 1943 paper "A Theory of Human Motivation" where he described our psychological and sociological needs in addition to physical needs as a "Hierarchy of Needs".



In his paper, however, Maslow clarifies that one need not be met before addressing others. He states: "There are some people in whom, for instance, self-esteem seems to be more important than love." He later adds "In actual fact, most members of our society who are normal, are partially satisfied in all their basic needs and partially unsatisfied in all their basic needs at the same time." He continues: "For instance, if I may assign arbitrary figures for the sake of illustration, it is as if the average citizen is satisfied perhaps 85 per cent in his physiological needs, 70 per cent in his safety needs, 50 per cent in his love needs, 40 per cent in his self-esteem needs, and 10 per cent in his self-actualization needs."



Why did we not learn this when we learned about the pyramid he never made?? This is a prime example of why school today is not providing the education we so badly need. Thankfully there is a great deal of information in books and on the internet so that we can dig for the real story.

## Kaufman Rocks the Boat!

Scott Barry Kaufman has studied Maslow intensely and discovered that later in life Maslow realized that we also have a deep need for transcendence.

He shares insights like "Maslow defines self-actualization as becoming everything that you're capable of becoming and that you're most uniquely capable of becoming" and "We feel much more fulfilled when we actualize our potentialities, our deepest

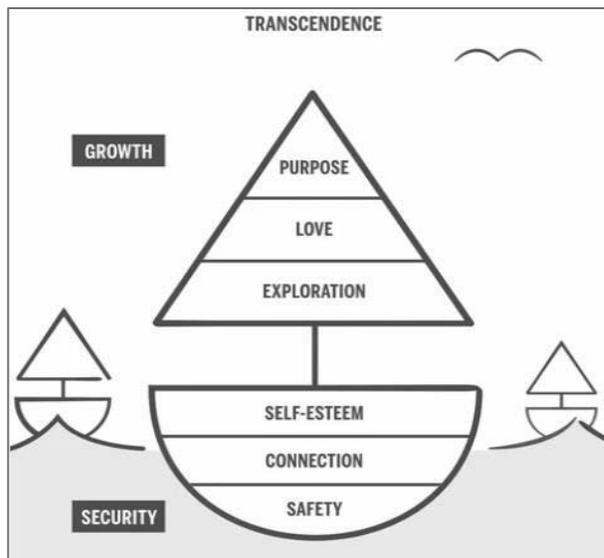
potentials, the things that make us unique, the things that we can uniquely contribute to the world in ways that have a positive impact on the world." He believes that self-actualization, to Maslow, asked the question "What do you most uniquely have to contribute to this world?"

Kaufman also tells us that in "the latter years of Abraham Maslow's life, he was working on a theory of transcendence, arguing that our highest motivation in life wasn't self-actualization but it was actually transcendence. What is good at the highest level of human development, the highest level of human motivation transcendence? What is good for oneself is automatically good for others."

Kaufman revised Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs" and traded the pyramid for boat. He tells us:

*"I argue that a better metaphor than a static pyramid is a sailboat. With a sailboat we absolutely need to have a boat that is safe and secure or else we don't go anywhere. If you have a huge leak in your boat you're not going very far in life or in the ocean. But being safe and secure and having a secure boat is not enough or else we won't go anywhere. What we need to do is we need to open up our sail, as well. And when we feel very comfortable and safe enough to open up our sail, we can really move through the ocean in the direction that we want, usually it's in a purposeful direction. We have some sort of meaning or purpose in life.*

*But as we're moving, we're still moving in the vast unknown of the sea and the truth is we're all in this together. We're all in our own boats going in our own direction but we're all in the vast and unknown sea. Especially in this time that we're living in right now. We all see quite clearly how choppy these waters are. But it's important that we recognize that while safety is important in these unknown times, we must not neglect our higher possibilities in life. They're just as important."*



I appreciate Kaufman's boat and sea metaphor and his expanded perspective of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. You can find out much more about his insights in his book called *TRANSCEND: The New Science of Self-Actualization*.

Metaphors are great for giving ourselves our mental models, or frames of thinking, so we can more easily access them since there is so much information constantly swirling around us, vying for our attention. Kaufman's idea that the combination of the boat, and the water and even the air suggests that we affect one another. This is critical for development as individuals, keeping in mind that we develop together, since we constantly impact one another.

### Adding Ubuntu to Our Basic Needs

UBUNTU means: I am who I am because of who we all are. (for more about ubuntu, see page 120)

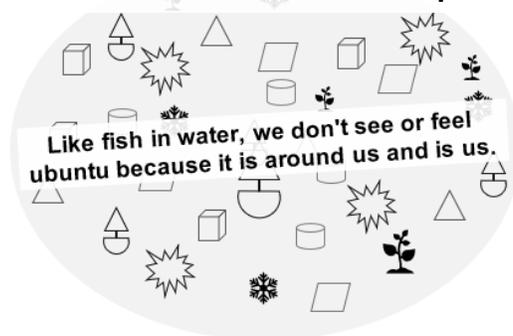
According to the philosophy of ubuntu, we are not fully human while we are thinking of ourselves as solitary individuals. We are, in fact, 'persons-through-other-persons'. The models above describe a solitary individual on their own unique journey. "Ubuntu" reminds us that we are always connected, always impacting one another, always on one shared journey together. Transcendence is important to understand that to improve my life I must do what I can to improve the lives of others, and ubuntu clarifies that the idea of 'others' is an illusion – an incomplete mental model. We are not only interdependent here and now, but that we continue to carry information and behaviors - and much more - from those who have gone before us and passed on their ideas of humanity and wisdom. To me, the ubuntu need differs from the need for belonging because in "belonging" we recognize ourselves as separate from others while the ubuntu recognizes that we are an inseparable part of others.

We constantly struggle with our needs. Our need for belonging and our need for autonomy and agency are often at odds, pulling us in different directions. Sometimes the most important thing for us to do is to reflect and weigh which one will be the better route: Should we take our own path and think and act for ourselves? Or suppress our desire to do something different this time and, instead, to go with the group? The answer is: 'it depends!' We decide, we act, we deal with the consequences, we reflect, we learn and we grow.

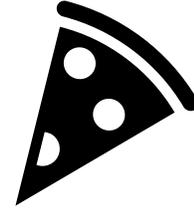
The question we must ask ourselves each day is:

## HOW AM I ADDRESSING MY BASIC NEEDS?

### Our need for UBUNTU envelopes us.



# INFLUENCE



Mmmmm...I can almost taste the steamy, hot pizza slice on the television screen. I know that what I see is just an image, but my mouth still waters. My mind and body have been influenced by advertising which, hopefully, will be short-lived.

Throughout our lives, and often unconsciously, we are influenced. Events, experiences and ideas can change our life without our permission (especially throughout our early years!). As we get older, we start to learn that we have some power to decide how things influence us. We still mostly react to what comes at us from friends, family, co-workers, other people in the world, movies, advertising, television, social media, weather, animals, history, our projections (including fear, expectations and overconfidence) and much, much more...but by our teens we learn that we can call BS on something we don't think is right.

We influence others, too, of course: we smile, we say a kind word or a cruel word, we try to convince others to see our point of view.

Popular culture encourages us to believe we are easily influenced. We are pummeled with TV advertisements telling us to 'ask our doctor' to give us drugs...but then the newscasters tell us that the Sackler family is responsible for our addiction. What no one says is that we can say 'no' to the whole game. You won't see an ad or a news story telling you that you don't need to buy one product or service to share your unique and awesome power and gifts with the world!

We are persuadable, certainly, but we can push back on at least some of what we don't like. We can be stubborn and immovable when we feel it's important. We can learn to include our intentions in our response, reducing the likelihood that these powerful attempts to influence us will distract us from our goals.

In our early years we were not able to choose the impact of the influencers. We were shaped by them. In our early teens, we were told that our choices were limited and we should just comply with the status quo: to believe authorities and experts know what's best.

But we're fickle. We may hear, we may comply, and play the part, but many of us today find ways to be our authentic selves. Sometimes we are accepted for being different, but often we are encouraged to fit into a group. Our boundaries are useful here; we can be open to ideas – even when they are delivered by a powerful persuader, but then we can stop...and think! We can 'hear them' and then – if we wish – we can defend our perspective, our ideas, our choices.

Influencers only have the power that we give them.

*"Between stimulus and response there is a space.*

*In that space is our power to choose our response.*

*In our response lies our growth and our freedom."*

- Viktor Frankl

*"No one can make you feel inferior without your consent."*

- Eleanor Roosevelt

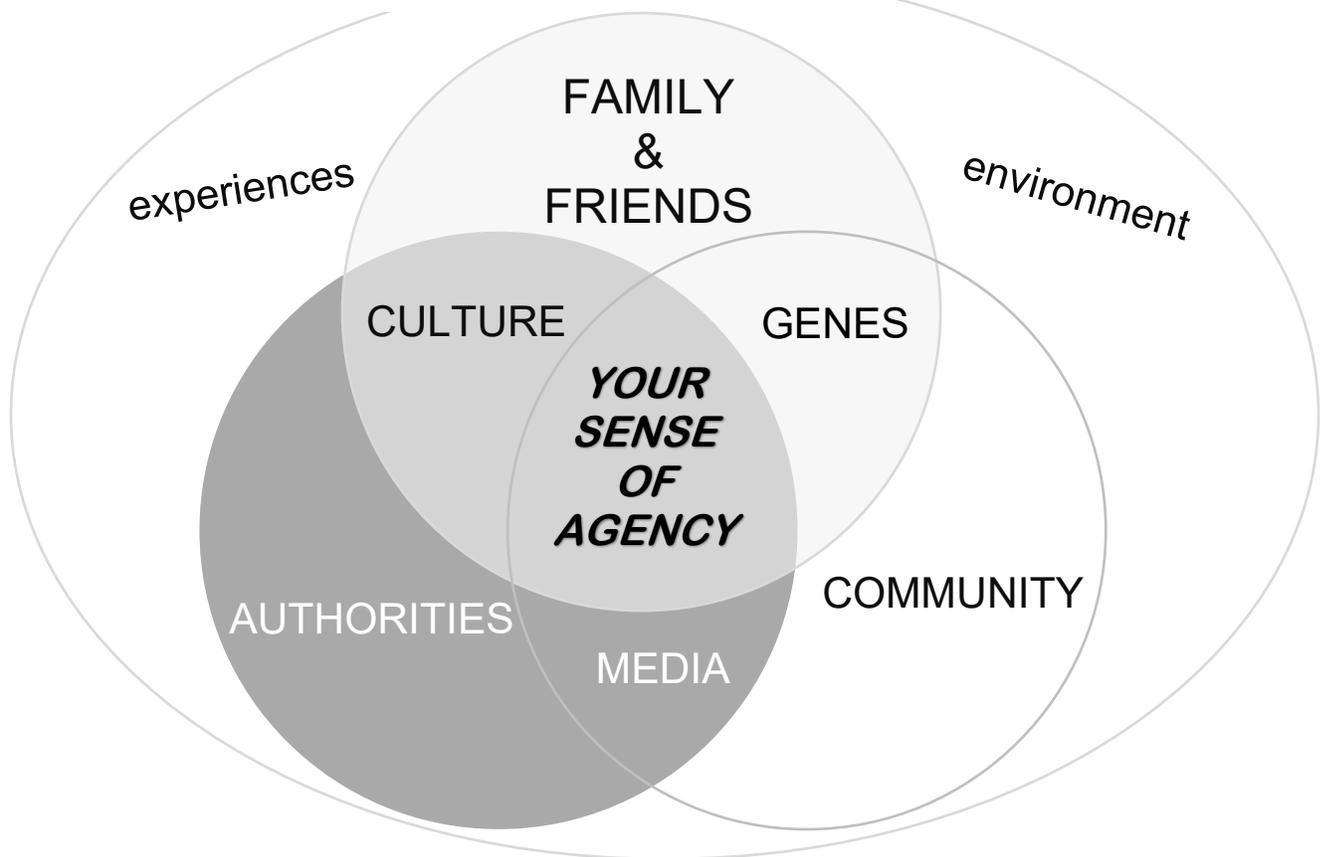
## Shortcuts to Remember Cialdini's Principles of Influence (formerly 6, now 7!)

1. **Reciprocity:** We feel obligated to return favors. For instance, if a sales person gives us something, we are more likely to say 'yes' to them.
2. **Scarcity:** We value things more if they seem scarce: this includes objects, information, food and opportunities.
3. **Authority:** We believe what experts say (the experts that we believe are 'trustworthy and credible').
4. **Commitment & Consistency:** People want to be consistent with what we've said or done in public.  
We are most likely to do what is consistent with what we've done in the past.
5. **Social Proof:** We trust the power of the crowd and like to be associated with popular things.
6. **Likability:** We like those who are like us. We say yes to people that we like by how they act or how they look.  
We are also more likely to say yes to people when we have things in common with them, receive complements from them, or share a cooperative endeavor with them.
7. **Unity:** What people have in common. "Inclusion fitness." Increased oneness and shared aspects of identity which reduces 'otherness' (Sue: one way to interpret our ubuntu nature ~ : )

Based on Robert Cialdini's *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion - New and Expanded* (2021)

(For more information on this topic, see *Resisting Influence* on page 103.)

# HOW ARE WE INFLUENCED?



## YOUR SENSE OF AGENCY and FEELINGS OF SELF-EFFICACY

Your belief in your ability to control your destiny. This includes creating and maintaining clear boundaries.

**FAMILY & FRIENDS:** Love and acceptance are influential. Alongside these important feelings, we may also feel a great deal of pressure to conform to the group, including traditions.

**CULTURE:** What society accepts as 'normal', status, roles: examples can include parenthood, age, physical abilities, gender, race, religion, character, employment, etc., and stuff: money, bling, cars, clothes, et al.

**GENES:** Clearly they influence us, but how much? And can we still write a new script for ourselves?

**AUTHORITIES:** Can include family and friends, teachers/classroom settings, employers, legal agents (lawyers, police, judges, elected and appointed politicians), and – recently – entertainers can fall into this category!

**MEDIA:** All forms of video: movies, news, commercials, games, All forms of audio: music, podcasts, advertising, talk radio, All forms of print: newspapers, magazines, books, ads and All social media.

**COMMUNITY:** Norms, language, 'word of mouth' information sharing, power of the group.

## Dr. Zimbardo's Hints About Resisting Unwanted Influences On You

1. Let go of illusions of 'personal invulnerability'.
2. Engage in life *and* think critically!
3. Be aware of Cialdini's principles. Look for attempts to persuade you.
4. Be okay with saying: 'I was wrong' and 'I've changed my mind.'

5. Separate your ego from your actions; laugh at yourself each day.
6. Be aware of wanting simple answers or short cuts!
7. Develop and learn to understand the vague feelings called intuition.
8. Play devil's advocate!

9. Think hard.
10. Reflect on when, where and why we have rules.
11. Insist on a second opinion
12. Consider possible situational forces before judging behavior as 'character'.

# Exploring *IDENTITY*

## What Makes You YOU?

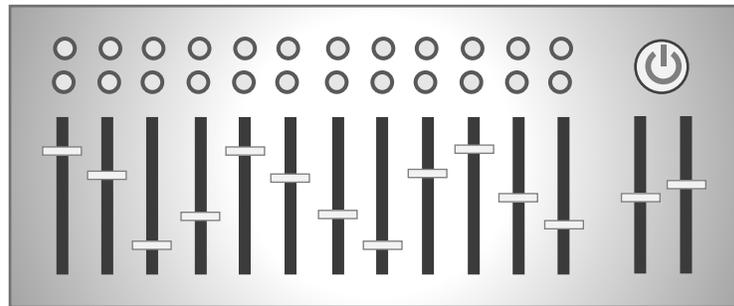
Who we are - at any given time - is a compilation of our experiences, our interests and intentions, our environment, our body, our mind (whatever that is) and our spirit (whatever that is). Mind and spirit are very important to us. They are at the foundation of our values and beliefs, and drive our desires, fears, goals and relationships, yet they cannot be located or clearly defined. That is a good thing. They defy empirical observation and they can't be quantified. This is our 'special sauce' of unlimited potential!

***"I am what time, circumstance, history, have made of me, certainly, but I am, also, much more than that. So are we all." - James Baldwin***

In a very real way, we became who we are today because of our relationships. Civilization is made up of people...including those who have been here and left their mark, and those with whom we currently share this planet. Other people have guided our lives and our development since we were born and other people continue to shape us today. We learned how to be a person from other people. We are who we are today because of who we all are (people in our family, our community, our region, our nation and our world). This is the foundation of the philosophy of UBUNTU. (We explore this philosophy more deeply in this booklet, but for now let's just explore YOU.)

I created a MIXING BOARD METAPHOR for this exploration so we can see the 'hard-wired' aspects of ourselves that are so frequently cited (and feel inauthentically limiting) and the 'plastic' aspects... which are the areas where we are always changing.

Mixing  
Your  
Unique  
Identity!

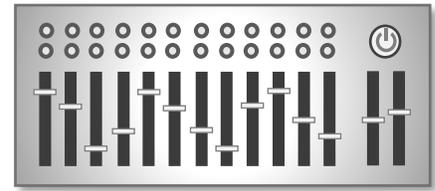


Although it may sometimes feel like other people are shaping us, we are at the wheel. Our bodies may be directed, controlled, or limited in one way or another, but our minds are free to choose how we will respond. We can surmount limitations by gently questioning some of the beliefs that were given to us when we were too young to question them. We can learn, and develop new skills, and do things that our family, friends, culture or the status quo may not do. The status quo wants us to fit into roles. But times are changing; the roles may no longer apply.

***"Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom."***  
- Victor Frankl

## WHAT ARE WE MIXING?

We are all unique, yet we share basic human needs (the 'hardwiring' we hear so much about). For instance, we all need to feel that we can do things by ourselves (Autonomy), but how we address that need is different for each of us. Look at the list of needs and wants below as if they are the sliders on a mixing board. You may be in one position today, and another in a year. We are changing all the time, and even in different contexts (at home, work, hockey practice, and when we take a personality test). Like sound through a mixing board, our needs and wants are steady, but where we open the gates or constrict the flow, the flow will change as we change. The sliders below are set to me, Sue Kastensen, on 7.21.21. Where will you move them to reflect who you are today?

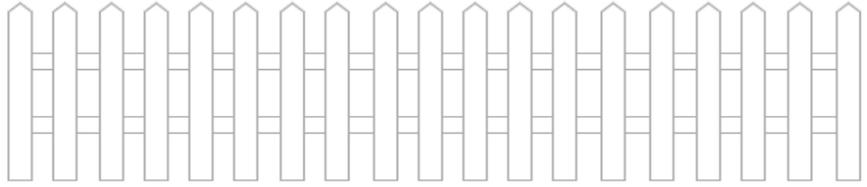


1. I prefer to be alone. I prefer to be with people.
2. I keep things close to take care of them. I share almost everything.
3. I'm on time, and often early. I'm not strict about schedules.
4. I prefer questions. I prefer answers.
5. I explore other cultures and values. I prefer traditional customs and values.
6. I like to plan for the future. I like to think about the past.
7. I prefer to let others make decisions. I like to make decisions.
8. I enjoy sharing my stories and perspective. I enjoy listening to stories and perspectives.
9. I am very trusting. I am very skeptical.
10. I like to think about stuff. I like to do stuff.
11. I am very curious. Almost nosy. I learn what I need to learn.
12. I learn through stories and experience. I learn through research and facts.

Go ahead, put pencil marks on this chart today, in 6 months, and in 6 years, and see how you change. And add 1000 more sliders! Or as many as you think it takes to consider what makes you you. Add or subtract dimensions of your unique style: your character, personality, choices, beliefs and more.

Remember: we are all always changing – we never stop. We are in charge of our change.

# Boundaries



*I didn't set this boundary to offend you or to please you.*

*I set boundaries to manage the priorities and goals that I have set for my life. - Unknown*

*If I can't say "no", then my "yes" has no meaning. – Peter Block*

*Boundaries define us. They define what is me and what is not me. – Dr. Henry Cloud*

Good boundaries protect you; they protect and preserve your goals, your time, your health and your identity.

I explore this crucial topic here with the help of several guides, including The School of Life, Mark Manson and Dr. Henry Cloud, who have written careful and thoughtful articles that illuminate tricky aspects of boundary setting.

From The School of Life: *because most of us have not been educated in this byway of emotional maturity, (our) boundaries are either non-existent or else get thrown up in a jerky and destructive manner. It takes a little self-confidence and courage to be able to notice just how bad we may be at the art of boundary-laying. We may have spent a large chunk of our lives already in an essentially passive relationship to everyday infringements by people close to us. But we aren't a piece of helpless flotsam on the river of others' wishes; we have agency, direction and – as it were – a rudder. The price to pay for affection isn't compliance. We can prove loveable and worthy of respect and at the same time, utter a warm-sounding and definitive 'no'.*

Mark Manson reminds us: *taking responsibility for your own actions and not blaming others are two of the pillars in Nathaniel Branden's Six Pillars of Self Esteem. People with high self-esteem have strong personal boundaries. And practicing strong personal boundaries is one way to build self-esteem.*

Boundaries protect and preserve our time for thinking (or not thinking) and doing for ourselves. Time that we need to work toward our own unique goals, including meeting with new people, outside our usual circles!

We also need to create healthy boundaries around our learning, our growth and our change. Once we start to make changes in our lives, we will find that some people do not support our growth and will try to convince us to stop, or to once again do what we used to do when we did not have the knowledge we have now. They are afraid of change, but we can't let their fears hold us back. We can politely let them know we respect and understand them, but we are on our own path, and we hope they can respect and understand us, too.

Boundaries liberate you to continue to become your unique, authentic self! (We are always becoming...)

Let's clarify a few words and concepts before we continue:

**Autonomy** - Humans have a deep need for autonomy. From the Stanford Philosophy website, the definition of autonomy is: *to govern oneself, to be directed by considerations, desires, conditions, and characteristics that are not simply imposed externally upon one, but are part of what can somehow be considered one's authentic self.* (plato.stanford.edu) Our AGENCY is our ability to ACT on our decisions.

**Belonging** - Humans have deep need for belonging, too. To be a part of a group, a family, to feel we contribute; in other words: *the feeling of being accepted and approved of by a group or by society as a whole*, according to the American Psychological Association.

**Boundaries** - Our boundaries are shaped in the balance between our need for autonomy and our need for belonging. It is up to each one of us to determine where to draw our lines. We move the line as we learn new things, reflect on our values, make decisions and create goals. Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Thompson share this description: *Boundaries define us. They define what is me and what is not me. A boundary shows me where I end and someone else begins, leading me to a sense of ownership. Knowing what I am to own and take responsibility for gives me freedom.*

*Healthy personal boundaries (includes) taking responsibility for your own actions and emotions, while NOT taking responsibility for the actions or emotions of others.* - Mark Manson

*Laying down a boundary involves informing those around us – colleagues, parents, children, lovers – of a set of reasonable things that we require to feel respected and happy.* - The School of Life

*Your personal boundaries protect the inner core of your identity and your right to your choices.*  
- Gerard Manley Hopkins

## Boundaries and Our Health



Healthy boundaries increase our mental and physical health! Boundaries are determined by our core values. If you have not taken inventory of your values lately, there's no better time than now. It's good to check in on your values now and then because we're always changing, always becoming. As we change, our perspective changes and our values change. Reflecting on our changes, and then checking on our boundaries, helps us stay clear and consistent, even during our changes.

The Health Affiliates of Maine share this on their website: *Being consistent with implementing external and internal boundaries will increase your self-esteem, conserve emotional energy, and create more independence in your life. Once you've made your boundaries known in your life, it's natural for people to test them. We all have different values and boundaries and we all deserve to have them respected. What matters most to you? What are you unwilling to compromise on? Use meditation, prayer, journaling or time outside to allow for a space of self-awareness. These realizations may not all come immediately. That's okay—have patience and continue showing up for yourself.* (www.healthaffiliatesmaine.com)

- + Look to your core values
- + Follow your instincts
- + Be assertive and consistent
- + Learn to say “no”
- + Communicate clearly

*"No" is a complete sentence.*  
- Annie Lamott

Build your 'courage' muscle. Brush up on the "delicate art of graceful objection"!

### *Unhealthy Boundaries*

“When we have unhealthy boundaries, we end up feeling like we have to hold everyone else’s feelings but our own, and that leads to resentment, anger, anxiety, depression, and stress,” says Babita Spinelli. People find it empowering to make decisions for themselves and experience their feelings rather than being told how they should feel. (www.thehealthy.com)

*Boundary Maintenance:* Based on your core values, reassess your boundaries as you learn new things. Pay attention to your feelings and needs so you know when to protect and when to expand. How can we support others to explore their boundaries while maintaining our own?

From MindBodyGreen: "Boundaries are about honoring *your* needs, not about judging other people's wants. For example: I set boundaries around phone time because I get overstimulated by tech. This boundary is to decrease my stress level and not about avoiding others' phone calls."

Clearly communicate your boundaries! Unclear proclamations will ensure greater difficulty later on.

## Our Boundaries and Others



From Mark Manson: *A person with strong boundaries is not afraid of a temper tantrum, an argument or getting hurt. A person with weak boundaries is terrified of it. A person with strong boundaries understands that a healthy relationship is not controlling one another's emotions, but rather each partner supporting each other in their growth and path to self-actualization.*

Sometimes you have to make sacrifices for the people you love. If you make a sacrifice for someone you care about, it needs to be because you want to, not because you feel obligated or because you fear the consequences of not doing it. Acts of affection are only valid if they're performed without expectations. It can be difficult for people to recognize whether they're doing something out of perceived obligation or out of voluntary sacrifice. Here's the litmus test: ask yourself, "If I stopped doing this, how would the relationship change?"

People will tell you that they applaud your boundaries while they privately, or perhaps not-so-privately, hope that you will bend your boundaries in their favor. A little extra pressure, another chance to prove your devotion to them. But everyone is important. And it is important that you are able to recharge your own battery, so you can have good energy to share in the future, in an even more supportive way.

According to the School of Life: *three powerful anxieties bedevil the boundary-less person:*

- *If I speak up, they will hate me.*
- *If I speak up, I will become a target for retribution.*
- *If I speak up, I will feel like a horrible person.*

## A Note on Co-Dependency

Mark Manson writes: *In codependent relationships "victims" and "savers" both get kind of an emotional high off one another. The victim creates problems not because there are real problems, but because they believe it will cause them to feel loved. The saver doesn't save the victim because they actually care about the problem, but because they believe if they fix the problem, they will feel loved. In both cases, the intentions are self-sabotaging.*

*If the saver really wanted to save the victim, the saver would say, "Look, you're blaming others for your own problems. Deal with them yourself."*

*The victim, if they really loved the saver, would say, "Look, this is my problem. Don't fix it for me."*

*For the victim, the hardest thing to do is to hold themselves accountable for their feelings and their life. They've spent their whole existence believing they must blame others in order to feel any intimacy or love; letting that go is terrifying.*

*For the saver, the hardest thing to do is to stop fixing other people's problems and trying to force them to be happy and satisfied. They've spent their whole lives only feeling valued and loved when they were fixing a problem or providing a use to someone; letting go of this need is terrifying to them as well.*

*People who blame others for their own emotions and actions do so because they believe that if they put the responsibility on those around them, they'll receive the love they've always wanted and needed. If they constantly paint themselves as a victim, eventually someone will come save them.*

*People who take the blame for other people's emotions and actions are always looking to save someone. They believe that if they can "fix" their partner, then they will receive the love and appreciation they've always wanted.*

Co-dependency can take other forms as well:

We find it in the relationships where each party holds something the other wants, and they use it for manipulation: sex, money, children, access, etc.

And we also find it in relationships where one person is the authority (the parent, the controller), and the other is subservient, or the follower. We see this not only in personal relationships, but also in cultures.

Erich Fromm describes this in *Escape From Freedom: Is there not also, perhaps, besides an innate desire for freedom, an instinctive wish for submission? If there is not, how can we account for the attraction which submission to a leader has for so many today? Is submission always to an overt authority, or is there also submission to internalized...anonymous authorities like public opinion?*

## Prepare for Challenges



Not everyone will appreciate your boundaries. Some will even insist that they get to plow right inside your boundaries to 'should' on you. I've seen it all aspects of my life: casual, personal and business. I tend to believe people 'should' on women more than men, but that's just my perspective...because I'm a woman! After figuring out my own unique approach to life and work, I find it very hard to not to be offended when other people want to tell me how to live according to their world view. (I share an example of this in "Sue's Anger Story" within the Managing Anger document found in this publication): Anger may be evoked as a response to a perceived provocation when

one's personal boundaries are violated; and anger may be utilized effectively by setting firm boundaries and avoiding unhealthy situations in the future. Power dynamics often add a complex level of difficulty to the situation.

**Problem:** When you show you are strong, capable, and operating with intent, people will want you to do even more for them, claiming they do not possess your abilities.

I know that my commitment to my boundaries demonstrates my dependability, tenacity and care so I get asked to manage things, run things, or follow up on things all the time. I'm grateful that others trust me. I get to help them build their own skills in those areas by politely saying 'no'. In asking me to do something, they say they cannot do that thing, so they want me to do it. I tell them "I had to learn to do it, too!" I am, first and foremost, an "Agent of Agency", so I must give them (back) the power they had hoped to give to me.

If you are thinking of starting your own business, clear, well-maintained boundaries is a must!

## *We Are All Teachers*



Teach others about healthy boundaries by enforcing yours. – Bryant McGill

We teach each other many things simply by doing them. We can teach our family and friends about boundaries. We can help them fortify their boundaries by demonstrating courage and strength as we define ours.

Wouldn't it be helpful today if we would have studied how our minds work when we were younger? Thankfully, it is never too late to reach out to the young people coming behind us. We can make sure they are not denied the education we all deserve: primarily the education about ourselves as individuals and as community members.

Do you want to help our youth make better decisions? There is no better way to teach than by showing: model boundary setting with courage and compassion. Where do we learn to build and maintain boundaries? Where do we learn to assess our values and build courage? School, television, and most adults will not model boundaries. We are encouraged to be acquiescent to authorities, professionals and experts.

"Very few of us were modeled the delicate art of "graceful objection" - School of Life

Children today deserve to learn how to protect themselves from predators of all kinds, including marketers. They need to learn how to say 'no', and how to recognize and avoid unhealthy situations and relationships. We can, and we must, show them how. Not by telling, but by doing.

Model courage! Model strength! And model the "graceful art" of saying "no".

Can you find one person, or a small group, to discuss the many challenges that arise from declaring and maintaining boundaries? Perhaps each person can research the topic, and then share what you find? Constructive learning increases our access to knowledge and widens our perspective, to ponder other viewpoints!

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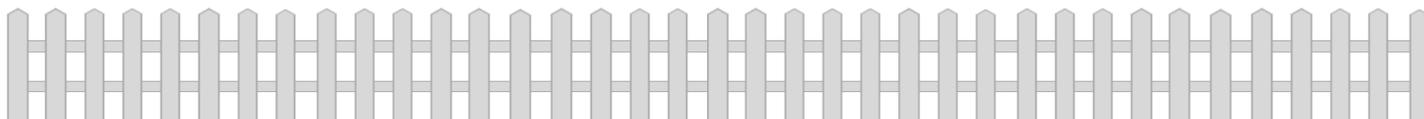
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# Desmond Tutu: On Why We Forgive

By letting go of past hurts, we can heal not only ourselves, but our families, our communities, and our world.  
Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Mpho Tutu A mash-up from spiritualityhealth.com and theguardian.com 2014

There were so many nights when I, as a young boy, had to watch helplessly as my father verbally and physically abused my mother. I can still recall the smell of alcohol, see the fear in my mother's eyes, and feel the hopeless despair that comes when we see people we love hurting each other in incomprehensible ways. If I dwell in those memories, I can feel myself wanting to hurt my father back, in the same ways he hurt my mother, and in ways of which I was incapable as a small boy. I see my mother's face and I see this gentle human being whom I loved so very much and who did nothing to deserve the pain inflicted upon her.

When I recall this story, I realize how difficult the process of forgiving truly is. Intellectually, I know my father caused pain because he was in pain. Spiritually, I know my faith tells me my father deserves to be forgiven as God forgives us all. But it is still difficult. The traumas we have witnessed or experienced live on in our memories. Even years later they can cause us fresh pain each time we recall them.

Are you hurt and suffering? Is the injury new, or is it an old unhealed wound? Know that what was done to you was wrong, unfair, and undeserved. You are right to be outraged. And it is perfectly normal to want to hurt back when you have been hurt. But hurting back rarely satisfies. We think it will, but it doesn't. If I slap you after you slap me, it does not lessen the sting I feel on my own face, nor does it diminish my sadness as to the fact you have struck me. Retaliation gives, at best, only momentary respite from our pain. The only way to experience healing and peace is to forgive. Until we can forgive, we remain locked in our pain and locked out of the possibility of experiencing healing and freedom, locked out of the possibility of being at peace.

Without forgiveness, we remain tethered to the person who harmed us. We are bound with chains of

bitterness, tied together, trapped. Until we can forgive the person who harmed us, that person will hold the keys to our happiness; that person will be our jailor. When we forgive, we take back control of our own fate and our feelings. We become our own liberators. We don't forgive to help the other person. We don't forgive for others. We forgive for ourselves.

## The Science of Forgiveness

The discussion of forgiveness was once left to the religious. It is now studied by philosophers, psychologists and physicians. The findings show that forgiving transforms people mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and physically. Psychologist Fred Luskin writes, "In careful scientific studies, forgiveness training has been shown to reduce depression, increase hopefulness, decrease anger, improve spiritual connection, [and] increase emotional self confidence."

As more and more scientists document the healing power of forgiveness, they also look at the mentally and physically corrosive effects of not forgiving. Hanging on to anger and resentment, living in a constant state of stress, can damage the heart as well as the soul. In fact, research has shown that failure to forgive may be a risk factor for heart disease, high blood pressure, and chronic stress-related illnesses. Medical and psychological studies have shown that a person holding on to anger and resentment is at an increased risk for anxiety, depression, and insomnia, and is more likely to suffer from high blood pressure, ulcers, migraines, backaches, heart attack, and even cancer.

In the end, science will prove what people have known for millennia: forgiving is good for you. Health benefits are only the beginning. To forgive is also to release yourself from whatever trauma and hardship you have experienced and reclaim your life as your own.

## Healing the Whole

When we are uncaring, when we lack compassion, when we are unforgiving, we will always pay the price for it. It is not, however, we alone who suffer. Our whole community suffers, and ultimately our whole world suffers. We are made to exist in a delicate network of interdependence. We are sisters and brothers, whether we like it or not. To treat anyone as if they were less than human, less than a brother or a sister, no matter what they have done, is to contravene the very laws of our humanity.

In my own family, sibling squabbles have spilled into intergenerational alienations. When adult siblings refuse to speak to each other because of some offense, recent or long past, their children and grandchildren can lose out on the joy of strong family relationships. The children and grandchildren may never know what occasioned the freeze. They know only that "We don't visit this aunt" or "We don't know those cousins." Forgiveness among the members of older generations could open the door to healthy and supportive relationships among younger generations.

## Freeing Ourselves

Unconditional forgiveness is a grace; a free gift freely given. In this model, forgiveness frees the person who inflicted the harm and it also frees the one who forgives. The one who offers forgiveness as a grace is immediately untethered from the yoke that bound him or her to the person who caused the harm. When you forgive, you are free to move on in life, to grow, to no longer be a victim. When you forgive, you slip the yoke, and your future is unshackled from your past.

## Our Shared Humanity

Forgiveness is a choice we make, and the ability to forgive others comes from the recognition that we are all flawed and all human. We all have made mistakes and harmed others. We will again. We find it easier to

practice forgiveness when we can recognize that the roles could have been reversed. Each of us could have been the perpetrator or the victim.

In some situations, we have been harmed, and in others we have harmed. And sometimes we straddle both camps, as when we trade hurts with our partners. Not all harms are equivalent, but this is really not the issue. Those who wish to compare how much they have wronged to how much they have been wronged will find themselves drowning in a whirlpool of victimization and denial.

People are not born hating each other and wishing to cause harm. It is a learned condition. I do not say this because I am a saint. I say this because I have sat with condemned men on death row, I have spoken with former police officers who have inflicted torture, I have visited child soldiers who have committed acts of nauseating depravity, and I have recognized in each of them a depth of humanity that was a mirror of my own.

#### **The Invitation to Forgive**

The invitation to forgive is not an invitation to forget. Nor is it an invitation to claim that an injury is less

hurtful than it is. It's not okay to be injured. It's not okay to be abused. It's not okay to be violated. It's not okay to be betrayed.

The invitation to forgive is an invitation to find healing and peace. In my native language, Xhosa, one asks forgiveness by saying, Ndicel' uxolo—"I ask for peace." Forgiveness opens the door to peace between people and opens the space for peace within each person.

If I traded lives with my father, if I had experienced the stresses my father faced, if I had to bear the burdens he bore, would I have behaved as he did? I do not know.

My father has long since died, but if I could speak to him today, I would want to tell him that I had forgiven him. What would I say to him? I would begin by thanking him for all the wonderful things he did for me as my father, but then I would tell him that there was this one thing that hurt me very much. I would tell him how what he did to my mother affected me.

Since I cannot speak to him, I have had to forgive him in my heart. If my father were here today, whether he

asked for forgiveness or not, and even if he refused to admit that what he had done was wrong or could not explain why he had done what he did, I would still forgive him. Why? Because I know it is the only way to heal the pain in my boyhood heart.

Forgiving my father frees me. When I no longer hold his offenses against him, my memory of him no longer exerts any control over my moods or my disposition. His violence and my inability to protect my mother no longer define me. I am not the small boy cowering in fear of his drunken rage. I have a new and different story. Forgiveness has liberated both of us. We are free.

A human life is a great mixture of goodness, beauty, heartbreak, love, cruelty, indifference and so much more. The simple truth is, we all make mistakes, and we all need forgiveness. There are times when all of us have been thoughtless, selfish or cruel. No act is unforgivable; no person is beyond redemption. Yet, it is not easy to admit one's wrongdoing and ask for forgiveness. "I am sorry" are perhaps the three hardest words to say.

## Meditation: Opening to the Light

1. Close your eyes and follow your breath.
2. When you feel centered, imagine yourself in a safe place.
3. In the center of your safe space is a box with many drawers.
4. The drawers are labeled. The inscriptions show hurts you have yet to forgive.
5. Choose a drawer and open it. Rolled or folded or crumpled up inside it are all the thoughts and feelings the incident evokes.
6. You can choose to empty out this drawer.
7. Bring your hurt into the light and examine it.
8. Unfold the resentment you have felt and set it aside.
9. Smooth out the ache and let it drift up into the sunlight and disappear.
10. If any feeling seems too big or too unbearable, set it aside to look at later.
11. When the drawer is empty, sit for a moment with it on your lap.
12. Then remove the label from this drawer.
13. As the label comes off, you will see the drawer turn to sand. The wind will sweep it away. You don't need it anymore.
14. There will be no space left for that hurt in the box. That space is not needed anymore.
15. If there are more drawers still to be emptied, you can repeat this meditation now or later.

# EMOTIONS: THE BASICS

By: Tony Schirtzinger - [www.helpyourselftherapy.com](http://www.helpyourselftherapy.com)

What every eight-year-old should know, and most adults have never been taught, about the emotions that run our lives.

## Basics #1

### YOUR NEEDS AND WANTS

This topic explains what your feelings are, how to use them to help yourself, and how to overcome the ones that get in your way.

This information applies to every second of your life and every decision you will ever make.

Learning to apply the concepts in these few short pages can go a long way toward improving your life!

Keep these pages close at hand and use them regularly.

### YOUR ENERGY AND YOUR FEELINGS

We get our physical energy from taking care of our bodies well – not perfectly, and not obsessively. We only need to eat, sleep, and exercise well enough in order for our feelings to give us all of the information we require about our needs and wants, and all the energy we'll need to address them.

Feelings are actually energy surges which tell us, very specifically, what we want or need.

When our feelings are strong enough to grab our attention, we can be certain that we'll have sufficient energy to handle things.

### YOUR NEEDS

Needs are about survival. We would die if we didn't get what we need.

An adult needs the same things an infant needs. We need: food, air, space, exercise, temperature control (avoiding being too hot or too cold), and to eliminate waste efficiently.

We also need attention or "strokes" from each other. We don't need anything else!

### YOUR NEED FOR ATTENTION OR "STROKES"

A "stroke" is a unit of recognition. When we receive a stroke, we are being noticed by someone.

Infants need strokes to survive. Adults want strokes so much that getting attention (just being recognized) is the strongest want we will ever experience in our lives.

## FOUR KINDS OF STROKES

| TYPE OF STROKES               | THE ATTENTION COMES FROM:                 | EXAMPLE:                       |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>Conditional Positive</i>   | People who like something you did.        | "I like how you did that."     |
| <i>Conditional Negative</i>   | People who do not like something you did. | "I don't like that about you." |
| <i>Unconditional Positive</i> | People who like the whole you.            | "I love you!"                  |
| <i>Unconditional Negative</i> | People who do not like the whole you.     | "You are worthless!"           |

Get good at understanding... and deeply absorbing... the first three.

And be sure to powerfully turn down and throw away all the "Unconditional Negative Strokes" you ever receive!

### THE FIRST SIGN OF DISCOMFORT

Some people ignore their needs. They live in pain and may die from it. Most of us don't ignore our needs. We notice our need but then

we wait while the discomfort turns to pain.

Don't wait!

Get good at noticing the very first feeling of discomfort! Avoid emotional problems by taking care of your physical needs at the first sign of discomfort!

**TRIGGERS FOR FEELINGS**  
Feelings are triggered by reality or fantasy. (It's always one or the other, never both.) **REALITY**

comes to us through our senses. If we can see it, hear it, taste it, smell it, or feel it on our skin, then it is real.

**FANTASY** is all mental activity – including thoughts, memories, dreams, ideas, etc. Fantasy doesn't come TO us, it comes FROM us – from our own brains.

If we only think it, it might be true or it might be false – but it is not real!

**FEELINGS WE CREATE**  
 Feelings that start in our brains rather than in our senses are unnecessary and optional, because they are not real. If we create painful feelings, we will need

to change how we think in order to feel better. If we create pleasurable feelings, that's great – as long as we remember we are only imagining.

Sometimes we create feelings which are so strong that they hide our real feelings from our senses. When we do this, we are out of touch with reality, and in real danger of making serious mistakes.

**Basics #2:**  
**YOUR NATURAL FEELINGS**

**THE NATURAL, REAL FEELINGS**  
 Feelings that start in our senses are natural responses to the real world.

When we notice real anger, or sadness, or scare, we notice that something is wrong in our lives.

When we notice real joy or excitement, we notice that something is right in our lives. Natural feelings are always trustable. Learn what they are saying to you. Use them well.

**TYPES OF FEELINGS**

There are 5 natural and necessary feelings: EXCITED, SAD, MAD, GLAD, SCARED.

There are many other unnatural and unnecessary feelings – and all of them cause problems. Guilt, shame, and imagined fear are by far the most common and troublesome of these. (“The Basics #3” is about these.)

**THREE HUGE QUESTIONS THAT AFFECT OUR FEELINGS**

When any feeling starts, we are immediately faced with three huge questions, and we tend to automatically answer them in less than a second:

1) Will you admit to yourself what you are feeling? If you don't, you'll feel “out of touch” or “crazy” or uncentered.

2) Will you express the feeling either alone or with someone else? If you don't, you are giving up the chance for relief.

3) Will you take action to improve things? If you don't, you are giving up the chance to improve your future.

When we are having problems, we need to slow down this automatic process so that it takes longer than a second or two. This will allow us to think through each step instead of relying on old habits.

| <b>THE FIVE NATURAL FEELINGS</b>                                     |                                                                                    |                                                                                                            |                                                                                        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Use this information so you will always know what you want and feel. |                                                                                    |                                                                                                            |                                                                                        |
| <i>THE FEELING:</i>                                                  | <i>WHEN YOU FEEL IT:</i>                                                           | <i>WHAT TO DO FIRST:</i>                                                                                   | <i>WHAT TO DO NEXT:</i>                                                                |
| <b>SADNESS</b>                                                       | When you've LOST something, or when something important is MISSING from your life. | Feel it through thoroughly, to notice how important the loss was.                                          | Work to replace what you've lost or what is missing.                                   |
| <b>ANGER / MAD</b>                                                   | When there is a BLOCK between you and what you want.                               | Feel it through thoroughly, to notice how powerful you are.                                                | Work toward getting past the block powerfully, wisely, and safely.                     |
| <b>FEAR / SCARED</b>                                                 | When your EXISTENCE is threatened.                                                 | Feel it immediately – in a second or less – and notice the danger.                                         | Tune into your senses (what you see, hear, smell, taste or feel) and protect yourself! |
| <b>EXCITEMENT</b>                                                    | When you are ON YOUR WAY to something you want.                                    | Feel it through thoroughly, to notice how good you feel about what's coming.                               | Enjoy it for the fun of it!                                                            |
| <b>JOY</b>                                                           | When You've GOT What You Want.                                                     | Feel it through thoroughly, so you notice how happy you are and how good you are at getting what you want. | Enjoy it for the fun of it!                                                            |

| HOW TO FIND EACH FEELING IN YOUR BODY |                                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1st                                   | Remember a time when you felt each feeling very strongly.                                                                                          |
| 2nd                                   | Recall what was going on when you felt the feeling so strongly. Remember it in enough detail so that you actually start to feel the feeling again. |
| 3rd                                   | Notice where, in your body, you feel each emotion. (Find your "sad spot," your "angry spot," etc.)                                                 |
| 4th                                   | Describe what you feel in your body. Use adjectives like tight, weak, empty, heavy, light, etc.                                                    |
| 5th                                   | REMEMBER what you learn by doing this. Do this exercise over a few times if needed.                                                                |

You will need this information to know who you are and what you want and to make every decision you will ever make.

**Basics #3:  
UNNATURAL FEELINGS**

ABOUT GUILT

Since guilt is not a natural, necessary emotion, it blocks and wastes our energy.

***Guilt is a cover-up for anger, which leaves us feeling sad.***

We wonder: "Why am I so sluggish and irritable?"

On the surface we feel:  
SAD or DEPRESSED

We've been telling ourselves things like:

"I shouldn't be angry. I should be understanding."

"That person didn't mean to hurt me."

"I'm too sensitive."

"I should just take the mistreatment."

"I don't deserve better."

Down deep we feel: ANGRY

Make A Conscious Choice:  
Will I admit to myself that I'm angry or will I keep feeling guilty and be depressed?

BE PROUD OF YOUR ANGER!

It's there to protect you. Let it do its job!

ABOUT SHAME

Since shame is not a natural, necessary emotion, it blocks and wastes our energy.

***Shame is a deep belief in our own worthlessness. It comes directly from being shamed as a child.***

We wonder: "Why don't I seem to care what happens to me like other people do?"

On the surface we feel: VERY SAD and "HOPELESS."

We've been telling ourselves things like:

"I'm no good. I just don't feel worthwhile."

"I wonder what's wrong with me, but most of the time I just don't care."

"I might as well have a drink (or a drug, or take a big risk)."

Down deep we feel:  
MOSTLY SAD, BUT  
FEARFUL & ANGRY TOO.

Make A Conscious Choice:  
Will I keep believing those people who shamed me or will I treat myself well and be happier?

***Know that anyone who shamed you was wrong!***

ABOUT IMAGINED FEAR

Since imagined fear is not a natural, necessary emotion, it blocks and wastes our energy.

***Imagined fear is a feeling we create to cover deeper feeling which bother us more.***

We wonder: Why am I afraid?  
Why do I always ask: What if?  
Why don't I stop scaring myself?

On the surface we feel: FEAR

We've been telling ourselves:  
I hate being afraid.  
I wish I could do what other people do, and not be afraid.  
I wish I'd stop thinking about every single bad thing that could happen.

Down deep we feel:  
USUALLY SAD.  
SOMETIMES SHAME

Make A Conscious Choice:  
Will I always feel scared or will I face and overcome my deeper bad feelings?

**Face what you feel that bothers you more!**

You will get past the deeper feelings. But creating fear can last forever!

**All other created feelings that feel bad.**

It is possible to create any feeling – and any created feeling that feels bad will block and waste our energy.

All imagined feelings are habitual feelings we create to cover deeper, real feelings that bother us more.

We wonder:  
Why do I keep feeling this same feeling all the time, even when I know it's not necessary?

On the surface we feel:  
THE CREATED FEELING.

We've been telling ourselves:  
I hate feeling this all the time.  
I wish I'd feel and do a wider range of things like other people do.  
Why can't I stop making myself feel this way?

Down deep we feel:  
**Real feelings that seem too much to handle.**

Make A Conscious Choice:  
Will I keep feeling this way or will I face and overcome the deeper bad feelings?

**You can overcome the deeper feelings alone or with help, but the habitual feeling you are creating could go on forever.**

Face the feelings that bother you more!

Stop covering them with your "favorite" bad feeling!

These three topics contain the most important information I have for you.

I originally wrote "The Basics" around 1985. I refer to these concepts many times every day in my work with others and in dealing with my own dilemmas.

I sincerely hope you will keep this information readily available and use it frequently.

Use it whenever you feel stuck in bad feelings, when you want to feel more joy and excitement, and when you feel the healthy urge to look inward.

**I WISH YOU THE RICHEST, HEALTHIEST, HAPPIEST LIFE YOU CAN ARRANGE!**

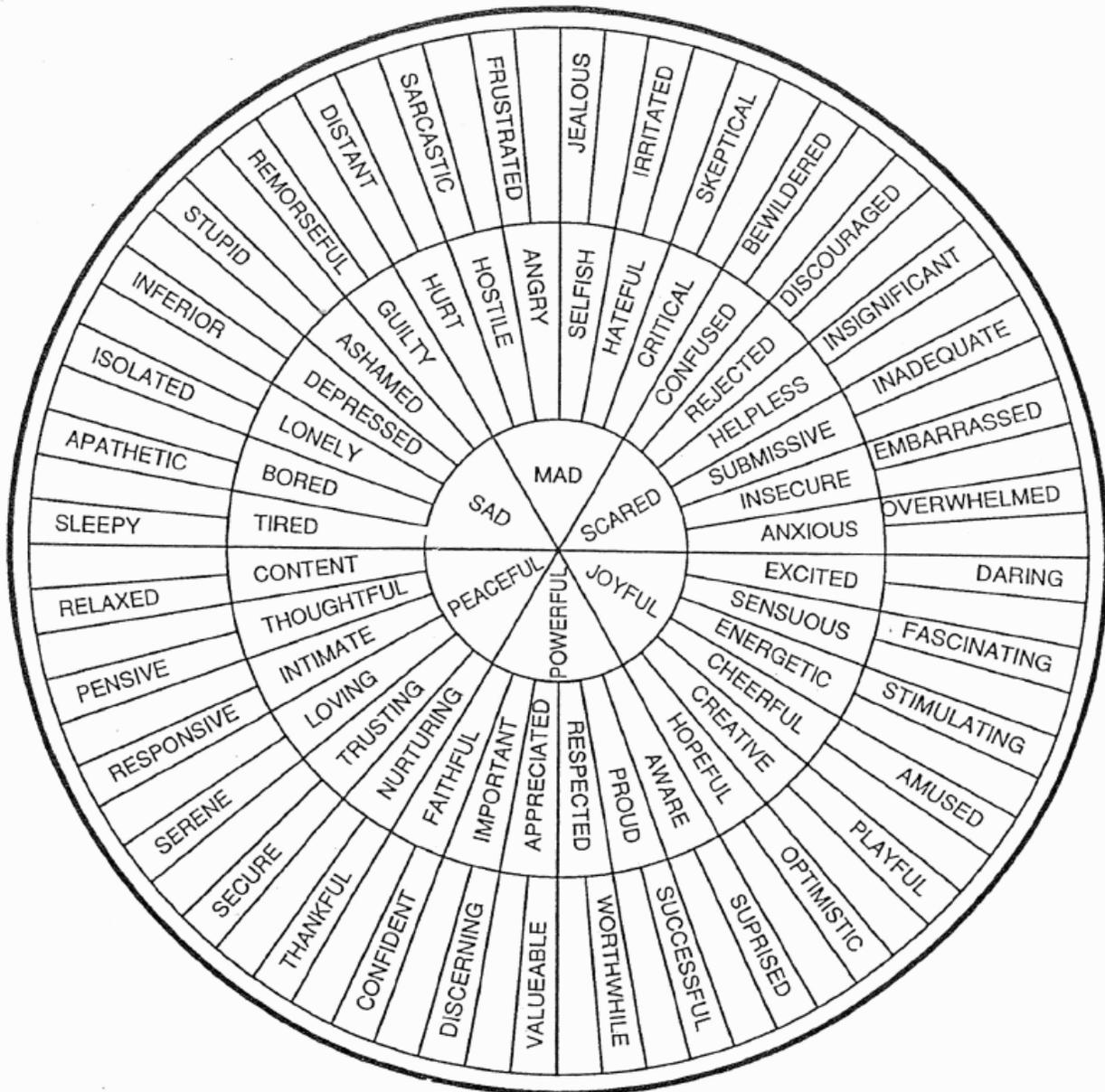
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Tony would like very much to hear your thoughts and experiences as you apply the information provided here. Please send your comments to Fair Shake, and I'll pass them on to Tony! I will then send his responses back to you, if you would like to hear what he thinks.

Fair Shake PO Box 63 Westby, WI 54667

Tony shares more great insights at [www.HelpYourselfTherapy.com](http://www.HelpYourselfTherapy.com)

# FEELINGS WHEEL



Developed by Dr. Gloria Willcox  
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# Mental Health Recovery

Created by the:  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
(The text has been revised for greater self-determination.)

*Mental health recovery is a journey of healing and transformation as we strive toward our full potential.*

## The 10 Fundamental Components of Recovery



**Self-Direction:** Lead, control and exercise your power of choice. Discover your path of recovery through autonomy and agency, and determine the resources that will support you to achieve a self-determined life. Define your life goals and design your unique path toward them!

**Individualized and Person-Centered:** There are multiple pathways to recovery based on your strengths and resiliencies; as well as your needs, preferences, experiences (including past trauma), and background.

**Empowerment:** Choose from a range of options. Discuss your needs, wants, desires, and aspirations! Gain control of your identity, destiny and influences and build your life.

**Holistic:** Recovery encompasses mind, body, spirit, and community. Recovery embraces all aspects of life, including housing, employment, and education. It also impacts spirituality, creativity, community participation, friendships and family relations.

**Non-Linear:** Recovery is not a step-by-step process. Instead, it is based on continual growth, occasional setbacks, and learning from experience. Recovery begins with awareness that positive change is possible and we learn even when we make mistakes. (Or *especially* when we make mistakes!)

**Strengths-Based:** Recovery “tools” include your resilience, talents, coping abilities, capacity and your inherent worth. YOU are important and valuable! By building on your strengths, you can engage in new roles, opportunities and trust-based relationships.

**Peer Support:** Sharing experiential knowledge, skills and social learning plays an invaluable role in recovery. People encourage each other and can feel a sense of belonging, support, value, and community.

**Respect:** Acceptance and appreciation are crucial to reinforce recovery. Self-acceptance, agency, and regaining belief in expanding your capacity and capabilities is particularly vital.

**Responsibility:** You know what works for you! Taking responsibility for your self-care strengthens your determination and agency. Progressing toward your goals may require great courage. Strive to understand and give meaning to your experiences as you identify coping strategies and healing processes. One day at a time, one moment at a time. Inch by inch. You can do it. (And *only you* can do it.)

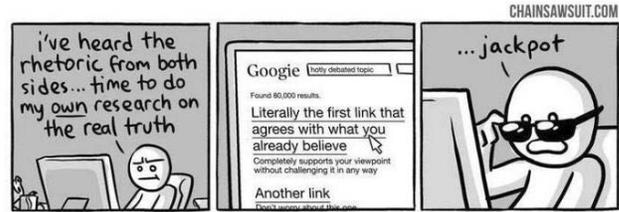
**Hope:** Include essential and motivating messages of a better future in your day. Other people have been, and many are now, in the middle of difficult time. Hope can be fostered by friends, families, colleagues and even quotes from people who are no longer with us. Hope provides motivation to persevere!

# COGNITIVE BIAS CHEAT SHEET

Because thinking is hard.

<https://medium.com/better-humans/cognitive-bias-cheat-sheet-55a472476b18>

By Buster Benson 2016 (edited by sk 2021)



<http://chainsawsuit.com/comic/2014/09/16/on-research/>

I've spent many years referencing Wikipedia's list of cognitive biases whenever I have a hunch that a certain type of thinking is an official bias but I can't recall the name or details. It's been an invaluable reference for helping me identify the hidden flaws in my own thinking. Nothing else I've come across seems to be both as comprehensive and as succinct.

However, honestly, the Wikipedia page is a bit of a tangled mess. Despite trying to absorb the information of this page many times over the years, very little of it seems to stick. I often scan it and feel like I'm not able to find the bias I'm looking for, and then quickly forget what I've learned. I think this has to do with how the page has organically evolved over the years. Today, it groups 175 biases into vague categories (decision-making biases, social biases, memory errors, etc) that don't really feel mutually exclusive to me, and then lists them alphabetically within categories. There are duplicates a-plenty, and many similar biases with different names, scattered willy-nilly.

I've taken some time to try to more deeply absorb and understand this list, and to try to come up with a simpler, clearer organizing structure to hang these biases off of.

## PROBLEM 1: TOO MUCH INFORMATION

There is just too much information in the world, we have no choice but to filter almost all of it out. Our brain uses a few simple tricks to pick out the bits of information that are most likely going to be useful in some way.

- We notice things that are already primed in memory or repeated often. Our brains are more likely to notice things that are related to stuff that's recently been loaded in memory. Look up: Availability heuristic, Attentional bias, Illusory truth effect, Mere exposure effect, Context effect, Cue-dependent forgetting, Mood-congruent memory bias, Frequency illusion, Baader-Meinhof Phenomenon, Empathy gap
- Bizarre, funny, visually-striking anthropomorphic things stick out more than non-bizarre, unfunny things. Our brains tend to boost the importance of things that are unusual or surprising. Alternatively, we tend to skip over information that

we think is ordinary or expected. Look up: Bizarreness effect, Humor effect, Von Restorff effect, Negativity bias, Publication bias, Omission bias

- We notice when something has changed and we'll tend to weigh the significance of the new value relative to the positive or negative direction of the change rather than re-evaluating the new value as if it had been presented alone. Also applies to when we compare two similar things. Look up: Anchoring, Contrast effect, Focusing effect, Framing effect, Weber-Fechner law, Distinction bias
- We are drawn to details that confirm our own existing beliefs.

This is a big one. We also tend to ignore details that contradict our own beliefs. Look up: Confirmation bias, Congruence bias, Post-purchase rationalization, Choice-supportive bias, Selective perception, Observer-expectancy effect, Experimenter's bias, Observer effect, Expectation bias, Ostrich effect, Subjective validation, Continued influence effect, Semmelweis reflex, Bucket error, Law of narrative gravity

- We notice flaws in others more easily than flaws in ourselves. Yes, this list is not just how other people think; you are also subject to these biases. See: Bias blind spot, Naïve cynicism, Naïve realism

I started with the raw list of the 175 biases and added them all to a spreadsheet, then took another pass removing duplicates, and grouping similar biases (like bizarreness effect and humor effect) or complementary biases (like optimism bias and pessimism bias). The list came down to about 20 unique biased mental strategies that we use for very specific reasons.

I made several different attempts to try to group these 20 or so at a higher level, and eventually landed on grouping them by the general mental problem that they were attempting to address.

Every cognitive bias is there for a reason — primarily to save our brains time or energy. If you look at them by the problem they're trying to solve, it becomes a lot easier to understand why they exist, how they're useful, and the trade-offs (and resulting mental errors) that they introduce.

Four problems that biases help us address:

- Information overload
- Lack of meaning
- The need to act fast
- What needs to be remembered for later

## PROBLEM 2: NOT ENOUGH MEANING

The world is very confusing, and we end up only seeing a tiny sliver of it, but we need to make some sense of it in order to survive. Once the reduced stream of information comes in, we connect the dots, fill in the gaps with stuff we already think we know, and update our mental models of the world.

- We find stories and patterns even in sparse data. Since we only get a tiny sliver of information, and we filter out information sources, we never have the full story. Our brain reconstructs the world inside our heads. Look up: Confabulation, Clustering illusion, Insensitivity to sample size, Neglect of probability, Anecdotal fallacy, Illusion of validity, Masked man fallacy, Recency illusion, Gambler's fallacy, Hot-hand fallacy, Illusory correlation, Pareidolia, Anthropomorphism
- We fill in characteristics from our past, stereotypes, and generalities when there are gaps in information. When we have partial information about a specific thing that belongs to a group of things we are familiar with, our brain has no problem filling in the gaps with guesses or what trusted sources provide. We then forget which parts were real and which were filled in. Look up: Group attribution error, Ultimate attribution error, Stereotyping, Essentialism, Functional fixedness, Moral credential effect, Just-world

hypothesis, Argument from fallacy, Authority bias, Automation bias, Bandwagon effect, Placebo effect

- We imagine things and people we're familiar with or fond of as better than things and people we aren't familiar with or fond of and make assumptions about the quality and value of the thing we're looking at. Look up: Halo effect, In-group bias, Out-group homogeneity bias, Cross-race effect, Cheerleader effect, Well-traveled road effect, Not invented here, Reactive devaluation, Positivity effect
- We simplify probabilities and numbers to make them easier to think about. Our subconscious mind is terrible at math and generally gets all kinds of things wrong about the likelihood of something happening if any data is missing. Look up: Mental accounting, Normalcy bias, Appeal to probability fallacy, Base rate fallacy, Murphy's law, Hofstadter's law, Subadditivity effect, Survivorship bias, Zero sum bias, Denomination effect, Magic

number 7+-2, Swimmer's body illusion, Money illusion, Conservatism

- We think we know what others are thinking and often assume that they know what we know. We may also assume they're thinking about us as much as we are thinking about ourselves. Look up: Curse of knowledge, Illusion of transparency, Spotlight effect, Streetlight effect, Illusion of external agency, Illusion of asymmetric insight, Extrinsic incentive error
- We project our current mindset and assumptions onto the past and future. Magnified also by the fact that we're not very good at imagining how quickly or slowly things will happen or change over time. Look up: Hindsight bias, Outcome bias, Moral luck, Declinism, Telescoping effect, Rosy retrospection, Impact bias, Pessimism bias, Planning fallacy, Time-saving bias, Pro-innovation bias, Projection bias, Restraint bias, Self-consistency bias

## PROBLEM 3: NEED TO ACT FAST

We're constrained by time and information, but we won't let that paralyze us. Without the ability to act fast in the face of uncertainty, we would have perished as a species long ago. With every piece of new information, we need to do our best to assess our ability to affect a situation, apply it to decisions, predict what might happen next, and act on our new insight.

- In order to act, we need to be confident in our ability to make an impact and to feel like what we do is important. Most confidence is overconfidence, but without it we might not act at all. Look up: Overconfidence effect, Egocentric bias, Optimism bias, Social desirability bias, Third-person effect, Forer effect, Barnum effect, Illusion of control, False consensus effect, Dunning-Kruger effect, Hard-easy effect, Illusory superiority, Lake Wobegon effect, Self-serving bias, Actor-observer bias, Fundamental attribution error, Defensive attribution hypothesis, Trait

ascription bias, Effort justification, Risk compensation, Peltzman effect, Armchair fallacy

- To stay focused, we favor the immediate, relatable thing in front of us over the delayed or distant. We value stuff more in the present than in the future, and relate more to stories of specific individuals than anonymous individuals or groups. I'm surprised there aren't more biases found under this one, considering how much it impacts how we think about the world. Look up: Hyperbolic discounting, Appeal to novelty, Identifiable victim effect

- (Sue adds here Hasty Generalization, Jumping to Conclusions or "The Danger of a Single Story" as described by Adichie Chimamanda: "The single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story.")
- In order to get anything done, we're motivated to complete things that we've already invested time and energy in (even if they are

unhealthy, not working or ineffective). Look up: Sunk cost fallacy, Irrational escalation, Escalation of commitment, Loss aversion, IKEA effect, Processing difficulty effect, Generation effect, Zero-risk bias, Disposition effect, Unit bias, Pseudocertainty effect, Endowment effect, Backfire effect

- In order to avoid mistakes, we're motivated to preserve our autonomy and status in a group, and to avoid irreversible decisions. If we must

choose, we tend to choose the option that is perceived as the least risky or that preserves the status quo. Better the devil you know than the devil you do not. Look up: System justification, Reactance, Reverse psychology, Decoy effect, Social comparison bias, Status quo bias, Abilene paradox, Law of the instrument, Law of the hammer, Maslow's hammer, Golden hammer, Chesterton's fence, Hippo problem

- We favor options that appear simple or that have complete information. We'd rather do the quick, simple thing than the important complicated thing, even if the important complicated thing is a better use of time and energy. Look up: Ambiguity bias, Information bias, Belief bias, Rhyme as reason effect, Bike-shedding effect, Law of Triviality, Delmore effect, Conjunction fallacy, Occam's razor, Less-is-better effect, Sapir-Whorf-Korzybski hypothesis

#### **PROBLEM 4: WHAT SHOULD WE REMEMBER?**

There's too much information in the universe. We can only afford to keep around the bits that are most likely to prove useful in the future. We need to make constant bets and trade-offs around what we try to remember and what we forget. For example, we prefer generalizations over specifics because they take up less space. When there are lots of irreducible details, we pick out a few standout items to save and discard the rest. What we save here is what is most likely to inform our filters related to problem 1's information overload, as well as inform what comes to mind during the processes mentioned in problem 2 around filling in incomplete information. It's all self-reinforcing.

- We edit and reinforce some memories after the fact. During that process, memories can become stronger, however various details can also get accidentally swapped. We sometimes accidentally inject a detail into the memory that wasn't there before. Look up: Misattribution of memory, Source confusion, Cryptomnesia, False memory, Suggestibility, Spacing effect

- We discard specifics to form generalities. We do this out of necessity, but the impact of implicit associations, stereotypes, and prejudice results in some of the most glaringly bad consequences from our full set of cognitive biases.

Look up: Implicit associations, Implicit stereotypes, Stereotypical bias, Prejudice, Fading affect bias

- We reduce events and lists to their key elements. It's difficult to reduce events and lists to generalities, so instead we pick out a few items to represent the whole. Look up: Peak-end rule, Leveling and sharpening, Misinformation effect, Duration neglect, Serial recall effect, List-length effect, Modality effect, Memory inhibition, Part-list cueing effect, Primacy effect, Recency effect, Serial position effect, Suffix effect

- We store memories differently based on how they were experienced. Our brains will only encode information that it deems important at the time, but this decision can be affected by other circumstances (what else is happening, how is the information presenting itself, can we easily find the information again if we need to, etc) that have little to do with the information's value. Look up: Picture superiority effect, Levels of processing effect, Testing effect, Absent-mindedness, Next-in-line effect, Tip of the tongue phenomenon, Google effect, Self-relevance effect

#### ***Great, how am I supposed to remember all of this?***

You can start by remembering these four giant problems our brains have evolved to deal with over the last few million years:

1. Information overload sucks, so we aggressively filter. Noise becomes signal.
2. Lack of meaning is confusing, so we fill in the gaps. Signal becomes a story.
3. Need to act fast lest we lose our chance, so we jump to conclusions. Stories become decisions.
4. This isn't getting easier, so we try to remember the important bits. Decisions inform our mental models of the world.

In order to avoid drowning in information overload, our brains skim and filter insane amounts of information and quickly, almost effortlessly, decide which few things are actually important and pull those out.

In order to construct meaning out of the bits and pieces of information that come to our attention, we fill in the gaps, and attach it to our existing mental models. We need to make sure it's relatively stable and as accurate as possible.

In order to act fast, our brains make split-second decisions that could impact our chances for survival, security, or success, and feel confident that we can make things happen.

And to try to be efficient, our brains remember the most important and useful bits of new information and inform the other systems so they can adapt and improve over time, but no more than that.

### ***Sounds pretty useful! So what's the downside?***

Well, the solutions to the four problems have problems of their own. Try to remember these four truths:

1. We don't see everything. Plus some of the information we filter out is useful and important.
2. Our search for meaning can create illusions. We can imagine details that were filled in by our assumptions, and then construct meaning and stories that aren't real.
3. Quick decisions can be seriously flawed and can be unfair, self-serving, and counter-productive.
4. Our memory reinforces errors. Some of the stuff we believe we remember makes all of the above systems more biased, and more damaging to our thought processes.

Nothing we do can make the biases or the 4 problems go away, but if we accept that there's room for improvement, we can continuously improve our thinking abilities and our understanding ourselves.

Cognitive biases are tools: useful in the right contexts, harmful in others. We might as well get familiar with them and appreciate that we have some ability to process the universe with our mysterious brains.

*"Since learning about confirmation bias, I keep seeing it everywhere!"*

### **Four Steps to Developing Honest Bias - Switching from "Fix" to "Maintenance"**

Step 1: OPT IN. Developing honest bias requires us to wake up to our own blindness; to stop pretending it doesn't exist. This means letting go of the false belief of permanent fixes and being open to answers that are complex. Only you can decide if you're up for the challenge!!

Step 2: OBSERVE (Beginner level). Take steps to reduce the amount of time and energy you spend trying to hide or ignore your biases and blind spots. For example: read articles like this to get familiar with the variety of biases. Notice when your defenses are triggered and check whether A) you're really in existential danger right now, or B) if there's an opportunity to learn from a new perspective (even in a small way).

We often have blind spots to things that: we don't identify with, aren't being talked about, don't come to mind, blend in, have been around for a while, don't feel immediately relevant, don't match our perceived stereotypes, don't match our personal experience, aren't certain, are outside of our control, require challenging our friends, family or general consensus, or those that challenge our existing beliefs.

Step 3: REPAIR (Intermediate level). Take steps to reduce the time and energy it takes for you to identify and begin to repair inadvertent damage caused by your biases and blind spots. For example: when you notice a blind spot, look into it and identify people and ideas that may have been undervalued or harmed by you and others. Look for ways to reverse that trend and repair damage.

Step 4: NORMALIZE (Advanced level). Take steps to reduce the time and energy others have to spend challenging your blind spots and recruiting you to address the damage that you've contributed to. For example: actively seek out information and perspectives that challenge your own. Invite the best representatives of positions you don't agree with to productive disagreements. Actively attempt to falsify your own beliefs.

## Ownership Tiny-Manual



**Locus of Control** - Do you see that you create your life or do you feel that fate is in control? If you want to be the master of your experiences and success, you will not be able to play the role of victim. Create your luck and design your success; you (and only you) can do it!  
 "The only way to predict the future is to have power to shape the future." – Eric Hoffer

**Self Motivation** - While managers continue to try to find ways to motivate people from the outside, the best way to get things done is simply by wanting to do them! The more we align ourselves with our goals, the more easily we can find the necessary motivation to carry out our tasks.  
 "Whether you think you can or whether you think you can't, you're right." – Henry Ford  
 "He is able who thinks he is able." – The Buddha



**Change** - We cannot change change; we must change with change. Change we invite is exciting and change we have pressed upon us is challenging. We are always changing, whether we initiate the change or fight against it. Even when we cannot change a situation, we can still change the way we look at it.  
 "The only constant is change." - Heraclites

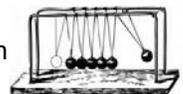
"Life is change. Growth is optional. Choose wisely." - Karen Kaiser Clark  
 "When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are forced to change ourselves" - Viktor Frankl

**Satisfaction** - Reduce stress and physical illness by achieving satisfaction in your life! When you take responsibility for your own satisfaction at home and on the job, you will be able to create the life you desire. With all relationships, be yourself and state your boundaries. Remember when it's time to interview! By interviewing your interviewer you ensure your own satisfaction at work.  
 "One day your life will flash before your eyes. Make sure its worth watching." – Soren Kierkegaard



**Fear** - Fear is a healthy emotion for threatening situations. We also use fear to hide behind when we are challenged, which keeps us from learning, growing and trying new things. Fear can be physically and emotionally paralyzing. To break the chains that keep you from realizing your dreams, you must confront your fears. You will learn and grow, which cannot happen without taking action.  
 "Courage is resistance to fear, mastery of fear - not absence of fear." -Mark Twain

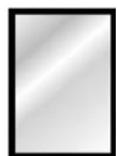
**Cause and Effect** - Every action and intention has an effect – on ourselves as well as others. Through negative feelings we radiate negativity, and in this way the negative energy grows. When we choose to feel great, we radiate love and positivity. When we offer encouraging vibes we receive them...and the positive energy grows! Smile!  
 "Everything you are against weakens you. Everything you are for empowers you." – Dr. Wayne Dyer



**Freedom** - What is your definition of freedom? At Fair Shake, we define freedom by exercising the rights and responsibilities of being a world citizen. You are free to make decisions that influence your relationship to all beings. You are free to make decisions that make your life miserable and you are free to make decisions that make your life wonderful and successful. We are free to be human and make mistakes; and we are also free to forgive others, and to ask for forgiveness.

"While we are free to choose our actions, we are not free to choose the consequences of our actions."  
 - Stephen Covey

**Accept Yourself** - First you must see yourself for who you really are. Only then you can accept yourself with all your virtues and your weaknesses and see yourself as worthy of success, a good life, and quality relationships. When you acknowledge and accept yourself, you are free to make the necessary changes in your life that will get you on the path to your dreams.  
 "Growth begins when we start to accept our own weakness." - Jean Vanier  
 "Only when we accept ourselves can we change." - Fred Rogers





**Work** - Evaluate your skills, assess the careers that are best suited to your talents, critique your communication style and then set a course to create the work life you desire! Career development is in your hands. Often we must do work we do not favor as we gain the experience we need to find or create the career we want. Sometimes we find that it is not a particular job we are after but an environment we want to work in, tasks we like to do or experiences we want to gain. "Find something you love to do and you'll never have to work a day in your life." – Harvey MacKay

**Boundaries** - Do you say "yes" when you want to say "no"? Do you refuse to take "no" for an answer? To reduce stress, burnout and conflict, we need to establish boundaries in any relationship. When you speak from clear boundaries you simply state "what is". Setting healthy boundaries gives you a sense of control and power in your life, which means you know yourself and the things that are good or bad for you. "Those who stand for nothing fall for anything." - Alexander Hamilton.



**Degree of Agreeability** - Do you find you get along with people in social situations (family, friends, work, sports) or do you feel you are often "at odds" or not quite fitting in? You have the power to make relationships wonderful, exciting and fun! Take a minute to consider: do you try to really listen and understand others? What do you contribute to make situations enjoyable? Do you make it easy for others to work with or communicate with you? "Those people who are uncomfortable in themselves are disagreeable to others." – William Hazlitt

**Equality** - As Americans, we agree that all people are equal. Still, we find we sometimes feel less valuable than others, confusing superiority with authority. This can happen with professionals such as professors, lawyers or doctors; and sometimes we even feel like we are worth less than people with great material wealth. We need to remember that, while some folks can have authority in an area where they have great knowledge or expertise, they are still equals with similar goals, desires and struggles. "No one can make you feel inferior without your consent." – Eleanor Roosevelt



**Communication** - Using accurate terminology and body language to illustrate our ideas is only half of the communication equation. We must also interpret words and body language of others as they are offered to us. We must try to resist letting our own personal history decipher their meaning so we can truly listen.

"Listening to both sides of a story will convince you that there is more to a story than both sides." – Frank Tyger

**O.A.R.S.** - Careful communication is critical in situations of conflict or opposing points of view. Remember these tools to find ways to work through problems: ask Open-ended questions, offer Affirmations, participate in Reflective listening and provide Support. This can be difficult in tense situations, but will reap priceless benefits.



"When you find yourself in deep water, use your OARS." – Ron Schafer

*Open-ended questions:* What do you think? *Affirmations:* I understand what you are saying.

*Reflective listening:* What I hear you say is.... *Support:* It is important to me that we sort this out.



**Value** - Value and worth are relative to the degree of importance something has in our life. Our perception of value affects our desires, our morals, and our possessions. How do you value things? Based on money? Based on importance or sentiment? How about people? Do you share things with others, preferring to strengthen relationships; or do you keep things to yourself to keep them close and in good shape? We protect that which we value, and we must understand and honor that each of us values objects, people, commitments, and life in general differently.

"Every man stamps his value on himself... man is made great or small by his own will." – J.C.F. von Schiller

**Relationships** - We often think of family or romantic involvement when we discuss relationships, but we are actually relating whenever we interact with others. From the neighbor that bangs on the wall when we play the music too loud, to the unhoused person that we offer a meal to, we share space and affect one another. Long-lasting relationships are the most valuable to us because in them we learn a great deal about ourselves and others. A commitment to long-term relationships demonstrates our character, integrity, tenacity and worth.



"The value of a relationship is in direct proportion to the time that you invest in the relationship." – Brian Track



**Dependency** - Unhealthy dependencies come in many forms; the most obvious is substance abuse. Other, more subtle dependencies include: people, gambling, cigarettes, treatment, television and video games. If you hide behind any dependency you will not be able to realize freedom. When you can see that you encourage a dependency, you have the power to master it.

"There is no dependence that can be sure but a dependence upon one's self." – John Gay

**Tenacity** - Stick to it!! Hard work pays off. Learning this discipline is challenging, but will be a valuable attribute all of your life. Tenacity is one of the essential ingredients to success.

"Let me tell you the secret that has led me to my goal: my strength lies solely in my tenacity."

– Louis Pasteur



**Denial** - Denial is an unconscious defense mechanism characterized by refusal to acknowledge painful realities, thoughts, or feelings. It is hard to recognize when we are in denial. If we listen to others when they tell us we are daydreaming, or when they say we should look at some aspect of ourselves they see as inconsistent with who we say we are, sometimes we can see that we have been covering up a challenge or justifying our behavior to suit our wishes.

"More people would learn from their mistakes if they weren't so busy denying them." – Harold J. Smith

**Commitment** - We are often afraid of committing, yet we appreciate a commitment from others. Commitment does not have to be frightening! Start by making a pledge that you will take care of yourself as well as you possibly can. Once you are comfortable with this, commit to small things and then grow into larger and longer- term commitments, very much like trust.

"Unless commitment is made, there are only promises and hopes; but no plans." – Peter F. Drucker



**Time Control** - Can you set a schedule and stick to it? We can get a lot of things done in a day if we make time to do them all. If we don't make time, the clock ticks while we watch TV, mope, look for excuses for why we can't or don't act. While it is hard to initiate the motions, once you are up and running, it's hard to stop! Remember: we need to make time to relax, too!!

"Lost time is never found again." "You may delay, but time will not." – Benjamin Franklin

**Reality check** - How do you know you are being realistic? Do you have anyone to check in with? When making decisions, consider these three ideas: 1. Check in with a friend or family member 2. Can you see each step of the process from start to finish? 3. Is this goal / desire in line with your long-range goals and personal philosophy?

"How many legs does a dog have if you call the tail a leg? Four. Calling a tail a leg doesn't make it a leg" – Abraham Lincoln

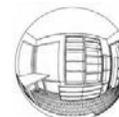


**Education** - What do you consider knowledge and how do you know what you know? What about when others know something that is different from what you know? If we remember that what we know is only true for us, it becomes easier to see how people have many different perspectives on any given subject. Through conversation we can learn to see things a new way and reinforce or increasingly appreciate our own beliefs.

"Education is what remains after one has forgotten everything one learned in school." – Albert Einstein

**Point of View** - Every situation can be viewed from several perspectives. Folks who want to see problems will certainly find and create them. Folks who want to feel good most of the time will create and be drawn to positive work and making positive situations.

"In the middle of every difficulty lies opportunity." – Albert Einstein



**Understanding** - When we understand that other people seek to satisfy the same needs as we do, we can see that often we have more in common with each other than differences. This is an important consideration whether we are in a managerial or a subordinate position.

"When you judge another, you do not define them, you define yourself." – Wayne Dyer

**Permission** - Sometimes we need permission to proceed, but many times we look for permission just to validate our wishes (like advice) or get out of an uncomfortable position. When permission is not required, why wait? Dare to Think for Yourself! Do you actually need permission, or are you really looking for approval?



“Care about people’s approval and you will be their prisoner.” – Tao Te Ching



**Success** - What is your definition of success? Happiness? Being a good parent? Financial gain? Possessions? Staying out of prison for 3 years? You must define this for yourself, and create your goals accordingly.

“No one can cheat you out of ultimate success but yourself.” – Ralph Waldo Emerson

**sWellness** - Good physical and mental health are necessary for success. It is easier and less expensive to maintain good health than to treat disease. When we are in good health we think clearly and reduce our risk of disease. Eat well, exercise, get enough sleep, and keep negative stress to a minimum.



“You can set yourself up to be sick, or you can choose to stay well.” – Wayne Dyer



**Stress** - Not all stress is bad! There is good stress (excited for the future) and bad stress (worry). We all handle good and bad stress differently. Some people embrace change, problems and conflict and some prefer to keep life safe, predictable and amiable. Regardless of our choice, however, we will all experience stress, and the bad side of stress can manifest itself in physically damaging

ways. When we identify our stress causers and learn about our stress tolerance, we can become more comfortable in a variety of situations and reduce, eliminate or accept reasonable levels of stress in our lives.

“You don’t get ulcers from what you eat. You get them from what’s eating you.” –Vicki Baum

**Anger** - Conflict is neither good nor bad. Like stress, it can be useful if engaged in appropriately, and it can damage us if handled poorly. One out of control outburst can cost you your job. When you feel anger building, remember to take a breath, own your feelings and remember to identify your Trigger (what upset you?) your Feeling (how does that make you feel?) and Reason (what is the best way to resolve this?)



“Flying off the handle sometimes causes hammers and humans to lose their heads, as well as their effectiveness.” – William Arthur Ward



**Diet** - Although you may be on a constricted diet due to limited funds, fresh foods such as fruit and vegetables are relatively inexpensive and are the best source of nutrition for your money. While they may appear cheap on the shelf, foods with extensive processing, that are full of sugars (including corn syrup) and preservatives, can do more harm than good in the long run and cost you a great deal more later – in medical expenses. Our bodies are between 55% and 75% water, so be sure to drink between ½ and 1 gallon of water every day!

“Did you ever stop to taste a carrot? Not just eat it, but taste it? You can’t taste the beauty and energy of the earth in a Twinkie.” – Astrid Alauda

**Exercise** - As important as food, exercise keeps vital nutrients circulating to the places that need them most. Exercise is also important for mental clarity, keeping our vital organs in good working order and helping to reduce blood pressure. Physical activity can improve flexibility, build muscular strength and increase endurance.



“Movement is a medicine for creating change in a person’s physical, emotional, and mental states.”

– Carol Welch



**Flexibility** - Often it takes great flexibility to keep our desires and commitments under control. Sometimes the burden is too heavy and we have to put some of it down. Sometimes we have to expand our capabilities temporarily, which is when we find out we can handle more than we ever thought possible. Life is unpredictable and we have to be ready for everything!

“If one does not wish bonds broken, one should make them elastic and thereby strengthen them.”

– Ardant du Picq

Most of the information Fair Shake shares is for everyone to read, because everyone plays an important role in creating opportunities for success after incarceration. This document has been created to increase generosity and understanding between the people who are coming home from prison and the people who have not experienced prison. Whether family, co-workers, neighbors, or friends, it's important to try to think about how hard it must be to 'hit the ground running' after living in such a stark and controlled environment, while gadgets, lingo, and trends are mutating quickly and constantly.

*In many aspects, life in prison functions in opposite ways to life outside of prison.*

Although we cannot grasp what prison culture is like, if we can imagine living for several years on a confined piece of land surrounded by fences while living, working and eating in cement buildings, we begin to scratch the surface of a very different daily life. Inside prisons (and outside of administrator's offices) we find few, if any, potted plants, curtains, pictures on the walls, or carpets on the floors to provide a little comfort and absorb sound. Sleeping quarters are often very small, sometimes made smaller by the addition of a toilet, a sink and possibly another person. Other sleeping spaces can include large dormitories filled with dozens of bunk

beds and little or no privacy or quiet. People in prison do things in large groups frequently, like dining and going to work, while everyone in prison is living within their own unique story, too, which may include difficult news from the doctor, a lawyer, or family and friends, at any time. Oftentimes people must bear their hard news alone.

Prisons have unique cultures, which can vary a great deal: over the years, within one institution, between institutions, and amidst the types of institutions (federal / state; or security levels). Not only do the people change, but also the philosophy and directive of "corrections".

We all become acculturated or "institutionalized" to places where we spend a lot of time: where we work, go to school, our neighborhood, etc. When we return home after spending time in another culture, our own customs can feel a little strange. We can adjust to a wide variety of conditions over time and even assume new cultural norms without consciously deciding to do so. Just as we need time to adjust to a new neighborhood or job, people coming home need time, generosity and understanding to adjust, too.

We have power! We can build relationships, trust and understanding by reducing expectations and projections; and by increasing listening and care.

## Consider just a small sample of cultural and lifestyle differences:

### Persona

**IN PRISON:** Survival in some prisons may require a tough appearance. Gentleness and kindness may be perceived to be weak, leading to a person being taken advantage of mentally, physically, or both. Maintaining a stoic exterior, keeping thoughts to one's self can be useful in prison.

**OUT OF PRISON:** Friendliness, smiles, and engaging conversations can show others we are open to interaction. These sociable attributes are critical for success many jobs.

### Trust

**IN PRISON:** Trust is hard to give and hard to gain. Concealment of emotions is important in many circumstances but it can make trust more difficult to attain.

**OUT OF PRISON:** One of our most treasured character traits is honesty. Trust is an important element in any relationship; whether with family, friends, or work-related. We work hard to build long- lasting relationships. It is within these deeper relationships that we can learn more about ourselves.

### Choices

**IN PRISON:** In addition to having an established schedule in prison, incarcerated people have few choices about where to go, what to wear, what colors they would like to see on the walls, or what they would like to eat for breakfast.

**OUT OF PRISON:** We constantly make decisions. Life moves at a brisk pace with frequent changes. We're constantly adjusting our plans, and re-prioritizing our goals to accommodate others and still keep time for ourselves. Lots of choice!

## **Gizmos**

**IN PRISON:** There are few gizmos. One gizmo is the music player. For twice the cost that unincarcerated people pay for a single song, an incarcerated person – who often earns about 1/100th of what they would earn outside of prison – can add a song to their MP3 player. Another gizmo is the 'public computer', which offers email and news within the institution. The most advanced gizmos are the tablets, which may or may not be free to the user. They offer email, music and movie services that generally come with a cost, and may include free services, too, such as books from Project Gutenberg, prison and education programming, or even Fair Shake's free software.

**OUT OF PRISON:** Gizmos, such as phones, tablets and laptops are ubiquitous. The devices demand attention which many of us eagerly provide. They offer non-stop distractions from 'real life' in the form of videos (many of which people make and post themselves), TV, social media, email, music and radio. Gizmos are also able to offer two-way communication through text, voice or video options.

## **Social Media**

**IN PRISON:** People watching TV together, people reading the same article and then talking about it, and even teleconferencing visits with family or friends are pretty much the extent of social media.

**OUT OF PRISON:** Social media is on almost every gizmo, and the pressure to join facebook, twitter, instagram and linkedin is great.

Many of us claim social media is 'pro-social' and boosts our awareness of current events and their meaning, but it has been tied to anxiety, depression and suicide.

## **Quiet Time**

**IN PRISON:** Prisons are noisy places. They offer few quiet places or opportunities for time alone. The buildings are made of concrete and offer few furnishings to reduce noise. When people get upset, they may become loud. Many incarcerated people keep earplugs with them at all times.

**OUT OF PRISON:** Life is very busy and we are constantly interacting; the gizmos make sure of that. We have to be strong and determined to carve out time to be alone...to reflect on our day, our perspective, and life, or to sit quietly and listen. Quiet time can be rejuvenating and reaffirming.

## **Care-giving**

**IN PRISON:** Incarcerated people are not able to provide daily, in-person physical or emotional care for children, partners, parents, or pets.

**OUT OF PRISON:** Caring for others is constantly affirming, taxing, challenging, and invigorating! We need to be needed, and we feel good supporting those we care about. Caring for others enhances our health!

## **Humanness**

**IN PRISON:** Incarcerated people may be referred to as "offender", inmate, or by their last name or ID number.

**OUT OF PRISON:** We can insist upon being treated with respect.

## **Physical Contact**

**IN PRISON:** Affectionate touch is brief and has been limited to family and close friends when they visit. Since COVID began, many visits have been replaced with teleconferencing.

**OUT OF PRISON:** Handshakes, hugs, back-patting, and other signs of affection are welcome and encouraged among relatives, friends, teammates and colleagues.

## **Information**

**IN PRISON:** Incarcerated people can access a limited amount of information through magazines, newspapers, television, radio, and letters. But a person can think, weigh options, and philosophize with others, and without a gizmo buzzing at them constantly.

**OUT OF PRISON:** We are overloaded with information, misinformation and disinformation, with very few tools to differentiate one from another and very little desire to hear things from outside of our bubble. Online, we have limitless reinforcements for our beliefs.

## **Patience**

**IN PRISON:** Incarcerated people must ask for - and wait for - assistance, services, and professional help including doctor visits, rides to see specialists, meetings with administrators, phone calls, and daily meals.

**OUT OF PRISON:** We are impatient. We want 'urgent care' and we can get medical help immediately, if necessary. We arrange meetings according to our schedule and we can spontaneously do things.

## **Consider these similarities, too!**

- In prison, people continue to love children, partners, parents, grandparents, sisters, brothers, other relatives, friends, colleagues, clergy, advocates, etc.
- We all appreciate humor and many of us support our favorite sports people / teams
- We all feel sad, scared, excited, angry, caring, anxious, blue and vulnerable at times.
- We are all concerned about safety, security, and the future.
- We all need - and deserve - feelings of self-worth, agency, dignity and belonging.

## Transition Tips

Reentry can be both exciting and frustrating! Popular attitude toward release from prison is that it should be a simple matter of getting resettled, resuming routines, and reestablishing your relationships; but, of course, there is much more to it than that. Here is a list of tips to consider that might be helpful for any transition process:

1. **Mentally prepare for the adjustment process.** Be prepared for anything... especially the most challenging things like rejection, depression, anger and disappointment. Also, be prepared for things to be NOT as you expect them to be.
2. **Give yourself permission to ease into the transition.** Allow yourself the space and time to acclimate to your new environment. Don't worry if it takes you a little while to get used to things again. You'll need time to reflect upon what is going on around you.
3. **Understand that the familiar will seem different.** You have changed, and everyone and everything has changed. You will view familiar people, places, and behaviors through a new perspective.
4. **Expect to do some 'cultural catching up'.** Clothes, trends, phones and language have changed!
5. **Reserve judgments.** Reserve all judgments of others, but especially negative judgments; just as you would like to have others reserve judgments of you. Try to resist the impulse to make snap decisions.
6. **Expect mood swings.** It is entirely possible for you to feel ecstatic one moment and completely deflated a short time later. It's okay; it is a part of the process.
7. **Allow sufficient time for reflection and self-analysis.** Your most valid and valuable analysis of an event is likely to take place after allowing time for reflection. Consider your core values and determine how you can live within them.
8. **Respond to inquiries thoughtfully and carefully.** Prepare to greet surprise questions with a calm, thoughtful approach. If you find yourself being overly defensive or aggressive, take a deep breath and relax.
9. **Seek support networks.** Don't isolate yourself! There are people who want to help you through your transition. You will find them if you look.
10. **Volunteer.** It's a great way to ground yourself, to connect to community, to build references, reduce depression and anxiety, and network with people and possibilities!

To prepare yourself for upcoming challenges, it is safe to expect the following:

- You will have to prove yourself (over and over and over).
- People will make many assumptions about who you are now.
- You will be different than when you left; your family and friends will be different, too!
- People will expect a lot from you.
- The way you'd hoped things would be will be different from the way they are.
- You will feel down or depressed after the initial return 'honeymoon' period. Please share and discuss our Culture Shock! page with folks around you for further transition considerations. Feel free to contact me to share your thoughts: [sue@fairshake.net](mailto:sue@fairshake.net)

## Quotes Out of Context:

### Shifting Gears

*"Our greatest glory is not in never failing, but in rising every time we fall."* - Confucius

*"The curious paradox is that when I accept myself just as I am, then I can change."* - Carl Rogers

*"Too much challenge makes life hard, but so does too little."* - James Clear

*"When I am locked into my personality, which is a result of my conditioning, it's like I'm looking at the world through a lot of filters."* - Rafia Morgan

*"The most precious gift we can offer anyone is our attention."* - Thich Nhat Hanh

*"The things you take pride in are the same things you are likely to be biased about."* - James Clear

*"Motivation is what gets you started. Commitment is what keeps you going."* - Jim Rohn

*"Let me fall if I must fall. The one I will become will catch me."* - Baal Shem Tov

*"Showing up every day and having integrity about the way you live your life: that's really the magic."* - Min Jin Lee

*"When you're the boss of the ideas in your head, you're always willing to revise them. When there is no amount of evidence that will change your mind about something, it means that idea is your boss. Humility is the awareness that no idea is worthy of being your boss."* - Tim Urban

*"Never expect to fail, but always plan for it."* - James Clear

*"It is often an assumption that because we are sitting in the same room, we are sitting in the same reality."* - Orland Bishop

#### LETTUCE PARABLE

*"When you plant lettuce, if it does not grow well, you don't blame the lettuce. You look for reasons it is not doing well. It may need nutrients, or more water, or less sun. You never blame the lettuce.*

*Yet, if we have problems with our friends or family, we blame the other person. But if we know how to take care of them, they will grow well, like the lettuce.*

*Blaming has no positive effect at all, nor does trying to persuade using reason and argument. That is my experience. No blame, no reasoning, no argument, just understanding."*

- Thich Nhat Hanh

#### NOTES

## Relationships – Proceed With Caution

The Mental Health Foundation defines relationships as ‘the way in which two or more people are connected, or the state of being connected’. Relationships include the intimate relationships we have with our partners, ties that we form with our parents, siblings and grandparents; and the bonds that we form socially with our friends, work colleagues, teachers, healthcare professionals and community.

*If you don't trust people, people will not trust you.* – Lao Tzu

*You don't see things as they are. You see them as you are.* – Talmud

*More from the Mental Health Foundation:*

Relationships are one of the most important aspects of our lives, yet we can often forget just how crucial our connections with other people are for our physical and mental health and wellbeing. People who are more socially connected to family, friends, or their community are happier, physically healthier and live longer, with fewer mental health problems, than people who are less well connected.

It's not the number of friends you have, and it's not whether or not you're in a committed relationship; it's the quality of your close relationships that matters. Living in conflict or within a toxic relationship is more damaging than being alone. As a society and as individuals, we must invest in building and maintaining good relationships and tackling the barriers to forming them.

Having close, positive relationships can give us a purpose and sense of belonging. Loneliness and isolation remain the key predictors for poor psychological and physical health. Having a lack of good relationships, and long-term feelings of loneliness, have been shown by a range of studies to be associated with higher rates of mortality, poor physical health outcomes and lower life satisfaction. In seeking to combat loneliness and isolation, however, we need to be aware that poor-quality relationships can be toxic and worse for our mental health than being alone. Research shows that people in unhappy or negative relationships have significantly worse outcomes than those who are isolated or have no relationships.

Longer working hours, money problems and less time to spend with family have been reported as some of the most important stress factors for relationships. Having few close relationships has been linked to higher rates of depression and stress in older adults.

Engaging in community helps us feel connected and supported, and it gives us a sense of meaning and belonging. Involvement in local activities, such as volunteering or playing sports as part of a team, has been shown to improve mental health and wellbeing.

When it comes to keeping physically well, we recognize that exercise and eating well require commitment and dedication. We need to adopt a similar approach to building and maintaining good relationships! For many of us, our approach to building and maintaining relationships is passive – it is something we do subconsciously and without deliberate effort. We often overlook that it requires an investment of time to maintain good relationships.

Five things we can do to build our feelings of connection:

1. Put more time aside to connect with friends and family.
2. Try to be present in the moment and be there for your loved ones. Slow down, notice things.
3. Actively listen to what others are saying and concentrate on their needs in that moment.
4. Share how you are feeling, honestly, and allow yourself to be listened to and supported.
5. Foster healthy relationships: being around positive people can increase our mental and our physical health!

### Tips for building relationships and learning to trust:

- Be honest with yourself. If you are honest with yourself, you can be honest with other people
- Express your concerns
- Go slowly! Do not idealize the situation; consider the relationship clearly and thoughtfully
- Build trust step by step. Start trusting each other in small matters
- Trust is a perception of honesty; competence and value similarly are essential
- We creatively build our reality through social interaction using social structure as our guiding behavior
- Remember: The judgments we make about others depend not only on their behavior but on our interpretation of the social situation

### Love and Relationships

Regardless of how old we are, if we can think, we have thought about love. We know the definition is very broad, but we often allow ourselves to be duped into thinking "love" means "romantic relationship". Love certainly includes romantic relationships, but it is really so much more.

#### **Almost everyone wants:**

- To feel valued / valuable.
- To love and feel loved.
- To feel safe.
- To make sense of our life.
- To share joys and sorrows with close friends or family.

### Why do we lie?

- To look good. We choose to present an image of ourselves as attractive and desirable. We are afraid to share information that may make us look bad.
- To avoid unpleasantness. We conceal information that we believe may cause conflict. We go to great lengths to create false, superficial harmony. We get to know ourselves and each other better as we reveal and negotiate our differences.
- To avoid hurting feelings. We don't want to upset people by saying something that might hurt or make them angry.

Detecting lies can be difficult. Scrutinize three elements: voice, body language, and facial expression. Other possible signs of loss of trust: withholding information, mixed messages, refusing to negotiate.

## Basic Sociological and Relationship Concepts

### Uncertainty Reduction Theory:

Uncertainty is unpleasant and therefore motivational; people communicate to reduce it.

Strangers, upon meeting, go through certain steps and checkpoints in order to reduce uncertainty about each other and form an idea of whether one likes or dislikes the other. The contents of the exchanges are often demographic and transactional. What do you do? Do you have any pets? Demographic information can relate to gender, age, hobbies, interests, etc.

When the new acquaintances are ready to get to know each other better, they begin to explore the attitudes and beliefs of the other by asking questions about values, morals, and personal issues. They feel less constrained by rules and norms and tend to communicate more freely with each other. One factor which reduces uncertainty between communicators is the degree of similarity individuals perceive in each other (in background, attitudes, and appearance).

### Three basic ways people seek information about another person:

- Passive – observation only, no contact
- Active – ask others about the person in question
- Interactive – communicate directly with the person

The primary determinant of individual behavior is the social situation in which that behavior occurs. Social roles, competition, or the mere presence of others can profoundly influence how we behave. We usually adapt our behavior to the demands of the social situation, and in ambiguous situations we take our cues from the behavior of others.

## Terms

**Social Construction of Reality:** Refers to the process by which individuals build reality through social interaction. While statuses and roles structure our lives, we shape our patterns of interaction with others. People build reality from the surrounding culture. Therefore, perceptions of reality vary both within a single society and among societies the world over.

**Social Norms:** “Unwritten rules.” Adjustment to a group typically involves discovering its social norms., usually in one of two ways: noticing uniformities and observing negative consequences.

**Social Reality:** Subjective interpretations of other people and of our relationships. Social Reality determines whom we find attractive, whom we find threatening, whom we seek out and whom we avoid. The judgments we make about others depend not only on their behavior but on our interpretations of the social situation.

**Principle of Proximity:** Frequent contact best predicts our closest relationships.

**Self-Disclosure:** Sends signals of trust. “Here is a piece of information that I want you to know about me, and I trust you not to hurt me with it.”

**Nonverbal Communication:** This concept refers to communication using, not speech, but body movements, gestures, and facial expressions. Types of body language – smiles, eye contact, and hand movements. Most nonverbal communication is culture-specific. Three ways in which emotional life differs cross-culturally include: (1) what triggers an emotion, (2) how people display emotions according to the norms of culture, and (3) how people cope with emotions.

**Similarity:** People usually find it more rewarding to strike up a friendship with someone who shares their attitudes, interests, values, and experiences. If we have just discovered that we share tastes in music, politics, and attitudes toward education, we will probably hit it off because we have, in effect, exchanged compliments that reward each other for our tastes and attitudes. Most people find marriage partners of the same age, attitudes, and values.

## Terms Continued...

**Expectancy-Value Theory:** People usually decide whether to pursue a relationship by weighing the value they see in another person against their expectation of success in the relationship. People with low opinions of themselves tend to establish relationships with people who share their views, that is, with people who devalue them. On the other hand, individuals who appear to be extremely competent can be intimidating; we fear they will reject our approaches. When highly competent individuals commit minor blunders, however, we like them better.

**Cognitive Dissonance:** The term is used to describe the mental discomfort that results from holding conflicting beliefs, values, or attitudes...which causes feelings of unease or discomfort. This inconsistency motivates people to minimize their feelings of discomfort in different ways, such as by rejecting, denying, explaining away, blocking or avoiding new information. This explains how smokers rationalize their habit.

**Becoming an Ex:** This experience is common to most people in modern society. Unlike individuals in earlier cultures who usually spent their entire lives in one career, one marriage, one religion, or one geographic locality; people living in today's world tend to move in and out of many roles in the course of a lifetime. It's hard to shake former roles, however, so the 'ex' must repeatedly demonstrate the behaviors of the new roles they are in.

**Cooperation can change people:** Working with diverse people we learn all people are just people, not objects to be hated and/or loved for their perceived and distant media or culture-derived social value. We share a small country and a small planet! We are mutually interdependent. Whether we recognize this or not, we have a working relationship based on shared goals, such as breathing, eating, striving and belonging.

**Power of the Situation:** A basic premise of social psychology that assumes people's thoughts, actions, and emotions are influenced substantially by the social setting. Philip Zimbardo - creator of the Stanford Prison Experiment - said that it's not "a few bad apples", our our problem is with bad barrels. The barrel corrupts.

**Discrimination:** A negative behavior, an action taken against an individual as a result of her or his group membership.

The source of discrimination and prejudice that is perhaps the most pervasive is an unthinking tendency to maintain conditions the way they are:

- Even when those conditions involve unfair assumptions prejudices and customs. If similarity breeds liking, then dissimilarity can breed disdain.
- Find commonalities! Diversify the groups you belong in, expand your associations, visit new places, try different cuisines!

**Fundamental Attribution Error:** We tend to attribute other peoples actions and misfortunes to their personal traits rather than to situational forces. This helps explain why we often hear attribution of laziness or low intelligence to people who aren't wildly financially successful.

For ourselves, however, we attribute our success to internal factors, such as motivation, talent or skill. We attribute our failures to external factors beyond our control, called a self-serving bias; probably rooted in the need for self-esteem due to social pressures to excel.

**Ubuntu:** A person is only a person-among-persons. Or, as the late Rev. Desmond Tutu said "the 'solitary individual' is a contradiction in terms". Or, as the author Wei Wu Wei phrased it: "Why are you unhappy? Because 99% of every thing you say, and everything you do, is for yourself...and there isn't one." We have a deep need to be unique, authentic and self-directed, and we can do this best while we are within a group of others who are also self-directed. We can reduce feelings of depression by volunteering, for instance.

## Dealing With Rejection

When we put ourselves in a position to be vulnerable to another person's opinion, we risk rejection.

Sometimes the risk is very small. Example: I tell a joke but my audience doesn't laugh. They look at me like I am speaking a language they don't understand. What does this mean? Do they reject my joke? Do they reject me? Maybe they don't share my sense of humor. Maybe they don't understand the joke. Maybe it's just not a good joke or maybe I need to learn how to deliver jokes. There are so many variables!

When I'm standing there in the silence, however, I find it hard to think of anything but "I'm not funny." or "I failed." I may even internalize these words and start to feel pretty rotten, as if I am incapable or unappealing. I told the joke to have fun and win approval; instead I feel deflated and rejected.

When I take a much larger risk, such as applying for a job, an apartment or a loan - where I've invested so much more of myself (time, information, hope, dedication) – the stakes are much higher. I may become discouraged when I hear 'we've chosen another applicant', 'we've rented the apartment to another person', or just plain 'no'. Again, it's hard for me to not internalize it. But just as in the case of the joke, there may be many variables that I am not considering. At this crucial time, I must remember to believe in myself and continue to pursue my goal.

It is hard to stay positive when we internalize rejection, and yet that is exactly what we need to do to persevere toward what we want. When we feel defeated, we would be wise to remember that we have taken many risks in the past and we have been successful. We must risk failure and rejection to feel the power of success. It is both scary and exhilarating!

Consider using these tools to keep your perspective as favorable as possible:

- First, remember you are important! Do not let rejection from any person or group lead you to believe you are not important, valuable, creative and necessary to the well-being of everyone.
- Be open to the possibility of rejection or criticism as the push you need to improve your approach, consider making other changes. Find ways to be positive. Positivity is magnetic!
- Consider the source. If you are doing what you believe is the right and best thing for you, keep doing it. It's okay to be rejected by people or groups that we do not wish to be a part of. Perhaps it's not a good fit and our view is clouded by a fog of unrealistic hopefulness. Try to remember to not take feedback or rejection personally.
- Keep focused on the big picture! Don't let minor set backs keep you from achieving your goals.
- Persevere! Keep doing what you are doing. Remember that you are the pilot of your goal, challenge, or position and you will not let rejection hold you back.
- Believe in yourself! If you don't believe in yourself, how can you expect others to believe in you? There are so many things that are special and incredible about you; don't forget what they are!
- This is an opportunity to build resilience. Getting through difficult challenges makes you stronger and more capable for your next challenges. Summon your fighting spirit that says "I will not quit"!
- Find your gratitude. Be grateful for the opportunity. Be grateful for allowing yourself to FEEL. Be grateful for the freedom to create your life, even though it may be very challenging. Be grateful for your critics. If it wasn't for them, we would not learn about ourselves.

## Handling Frustration

Life is full of frustrations. From the minor irritations of forgetting where you put your car keys, to the major anxieties of continued failure towards a goal, frustration is not a pleasant emotion in any magnitude. Because of the unpleasantness of this emotion, people will often avoid anything that might lead to it. Unfortunately, many of the things we truly want to experience such as triumph, joy, victory and purpose require a great deal of frustration. Being able to manage frustration allows us to remain happy and positive even in trying circumstances.

In order to successfully manage frustration, you need to first understand what causes it. Frustration is simply caused whenever the results you are experiencing do not seem to fit the effort and action you are applying. Usually frustration is caused by a narrow focus on a problem that isn't resolving itself as you had hoped. This is a very simple concept, but it is an important step to solving frustrating problems.

### Frustration is Energy Consuming

Our energy as human beings is our primary currency we use to do anything. Physical, mental, emotional and spiritual energies all fuel discipline, creativity, courage and motivation. Anthony Robbins includes energy as the first key to success in any area of life. Stress in excessive doses is a negative emotional state that weakens the immune system and raises blood pressure as the direct result from a lack of energy. When we run out of energy we become useless.

Frustrating problems are incredibly energy consuming. Because these problems consume our energy in such great quantities, we need to be extremely careful that we don't try to keep running with an empty energy reserve. When this happens we burnout and require a long time to recover. The initial reaction of most people is to work harder when they encounter frustration. Although the intention to work harder makes sense, it often results in trying to spend more energy than we have available.

Why are frustrating problems more energy consuming than normal tasks? The answer to this is relatively simple. Because your action is not producing the results you expect, your brain naturally goes into full gear, rapidly consuming mental energy to solve the problem at hand. In this time it is very easy to run out of energy. When your energy stores are depleted this is when you become irritable, tired, stressed and sometimes even angry.

To get a little perspective on your issue, try broadening your focus from your current problem outwards. Try thinking about how the problem looks when you view it from a few weeks, a year, or ten years from now or compared to your lifetime?

Go outside and look up at the sky. Viewing the incredible expanse of space and time will ultimately make your problems look very small indeed.

Getting perspective when you are frustrated isn't a particularly difficult practice; the difficulty is in remembering to do it. It will be difficult to do this at first, but after diligent practice it will become a habit and happen automatically.

Nobody likes to feel frustrated. Unfortunately, frustrations are part of life. Learn to manage your frustrations so they don't leave you stressed, burned-out or depressed. Take breaks from your frustrations to recover your mental and creative energies. Reward your actions, not just your results and remember to gain a little perspective when you begin to feel overwhelmed. Don't let your frustrations prevent you from setting goals and living your life to the maximum.

Thank you Scott Young! Find more about this information here:  
<http://www.scotthyoung.com/blog/2006/06/10/dealing-with-frustration/>

## Motivation Tips

From the Fair Shake Ownership Manual:

**Self Motivation** - While managers often try to find ways to motivate people from the outside, the best way to get things done is simply by wanting to do them. The more we align ourselves with our goals, values and interests, the more easily we can find the necessary motivation to carry out our tasks. Sometimes we have to keep our 'eyes on the prize' and work through things we really don't like – and sometimes we have to wait patiently - to get to the ultimate goal that we value the most.

“Whether you think you can or whether you think you can't, you're right.” - Henry Ford

“He is able who thinks he is able.” – The Buddha

Often people use - and many people want - **EXTRINSIC MOTIVATORS** (outside forces) to get us to do things we don't desire to do. Do we want to be lured by a Carrot? Do we prefer to be scared by a Stick? Bribe... or... Threat? Lured to buy a gizmo with a coupon or Afraid you will feel inadequate if you don't have the gizmo? Do you recognize these *extrinsic motivators*? You will find more examples of extrinsic motivators all around you once you start to take notice. Alas, extrinsic motivators whether fear or bribes - work well to get us to do some things, but not everything.

We cannot always be pulled or pushed. Sometimes we just want to be interested in what we're doing!

The forces that can energize us through our most challenging and creative tasks are often our **INTRINSIC MOTIVATORS** (inside forces) that bring satisfaction when we do tasks we don't care for but can find meaning in. For example, hanging laundry may be your least favorite thing to do, but you need clean clothes. This mundane task can transform to something beautiful when it happens on a warm, sunny day in the early spring. Just knowing that a beautiful day of hanging laundry is possible makes it easier to hang laundry on less desirable days. Intrinsic motivators make the tough stuff tolerable and can even connect us to the rest of the people on the planet who are going through tough stuff. And also to the people who are enjoying the spring sun while hanging out their laundry.

When we have an inner goal, a desire to solve a puzzle, the wish to work out something by ourselves, we are often motivated with speed, stamina, determination and creativity! Often our values and beliefs provide the fuel for our intrinsic motivation motors.

### Motivation Tips:

1. **Systematically and deliberately create success.** Decide what you want to do and what you will do when you get there. Now explore the steps you need to take to get you to where you want to be. Remember to anticipate the hurdles!
2. **Don't let your excuses get in the way.** Your tricky brain will come up with every excuse in the book to not move forward. You will even believe many of your excuses are legitimate. When you believe your excuses you can become stuck. Can you listen to your fears, and then remind yourself that you are strong enough and capable enough to take this on, and then just go and do it?
3. **Imagine Yourself Afterward:** Can you see yourself *after* you've reached your goal?

3. **Change habits and behaviors that lead you to procrastinate.** Are you doing things that are holding you back? Schedule time to do nothing and other than that time, stay on track with your goals.
4. **Several small jobs done over short periods of time are more manageable than one large task.** Instead of focusing on the difficulty of the large task, break it into smaller jobs and create a timeline for finishing them.
5. **Try tackling the more undesirable tasks early** so that you can pursue more pleasant activities later in the day.
6. **Exercise self-discipline.** Say 'no' when you need to...to yourself and to others. Keep your "eyes on the prize!"
7. **Overcome procrastination and block out human and media obstacles.** Sometimes we have to just get started, even when we don't feel like we're ready, or even up for, the task. Often just the ACT of getting started is enough to get engaged and encouraged. Refuse to let others divert you from your path! Procrastination is a self-defeating behavior that develops - in part - due to the fear of failure and paradoxically, the fear of success!
8. **Reward yourself.** Your self-motivation will increase enormously if you give yourself a pat on the back for a job well done. It feels great to accomplish tasks!
9. **Have fun!** Learning to enjoy yourself keeps you enthusiastic and motivated and helps you keep stress to a minimum. After all, good vibes create more good vibes!
10. **Imagine what the rewards will be when you finally reach your destination and keep that thought foremost in your mind.** You can also imagine the bad consequences (pain, frustration, the feeling of defeat) that may occur if you don't, if you prefer to look at it that way. Carrot or stick?
11. **Tell someone about your goals.** Show them or mark stages on a calendar to emphasize and visualize your goal. Check in with them periodically to tell them of your progress.
12. **Review your habits:** do you see yourself accomplishing your goals? You must change the habits that lead you to procrastinate in the first place. Lose, shorten or refuse to participate in demotivating habits during inappropriate times of the day (watching TV, disengaging from your goals) and replace them with habits that lead to engaging in and control of your life.
13. **Find your true interest.** If you dislike certain tasks, just look at them in the big picture...they are character building steps on the path of getting you to your greater goal.
14. **Make lists of the smaller jobs then tick off the work that you have completed.** Prepare a list of the things you have to do. Prioritize the list and then start ticking off tasks as they are completed. If you do this right, you may become motivated to complete them all!

## Managing Anger

*Flying off the handle sometimes causes hammers and humans to lose their heads...as well as their effectiveness.* ~ William Arthur Ward



Everyone gets angry.

We are all familiar with anger; we see it demonstrated frequently. We see angry people in TV shows and movies; we hear angry politicians and radio hosts. Sometimes we experience anger with others around us, and we also experience anger in ourselves.

People sometimes try to use anger to solve problems or to relieve stress...but that often creates more problems, more stress and even more anger.

We can't eliminate anger, but we can manage it. We can make it a useful tool instead of one that demolishes relationships and other things.

Anger is often glorified as a key to unlock hidden strength and passion. Anger *feels* powerful.

Power alone is not good or bad. We need to feel powerful to feel capable. Feeling powerful is an important element of our American cultural self-image. But power alone...without caring emotions such as reflection, kindness, and humility...can cloud our perception of situations, others, and ourselves.

When we feel painful emotions such as sorrow, or hurt, because we've been rejected, disrespected, offended, forgotten, etc., we can find ourselves feeling like we have a loss of power. To try to reduce our discomfort, sometimes we respond with a powerful emotion like anger.

It's hard for us to feel pain! We are 'wired' to go toward pleasure and away from pain. Anger feels like it stops pain - at least momentarily.

The process of dealing with painful emotions is very hard and requires a great deal of strength and self-control. We become more powerful, capable and intuitive as we develop deeper problem-solving skills and tools for life's constantly challenging situations. Used positively, anger can help us realize deeper feelings about things so we can construct ways to avoid anger in the future.

Processing anger-energy through 'venting' (to ourselves; not others!) can be beneficial for focusing on and clarifying a problem. If we can be critical and clear about what is going wrong, we can then drive ourselves to go deeper to get the picture of what it would look like to go 'right', and then we can make changes to turn the situation around. Once we deeply reflect on the situation, other people's points of view (if applicable), and our deeper feelings, then we can see what we can do to make things better. We can then show others how we'd like to be treated!

Many of us experience a great deal of discomfort when we disagree with others. Many of us were not taught the value of listening or engaging in friendly arguments or debates. We say we believe that another person's opinion can be as valid and 'right' as our own, but do we mean it? For *every* person? Believe it or not, it's possible for people with opposing view points to work together to create the best possible solutions!

Anger needs to be expressed, yet aggressive displays of anger can result in violent eruptions that further hurt us socially, mentally, and physically. We need to find ways to process our emotions effectively. An out-of-control outburst could cost us a job. Or worse.

A hammer is a great symbol for anger because hammers can demolish....and they can build!

When we feel our anger building we need to stop and recognize triggers that can seize control of our power.

**When you feel anger building, try to remember to:**

- Take a breath (or many!)
- Identify
  - o your TRIGGER (what upset you? And then look again...was it something deeper?)
  - o your FEELING (how do you feel about what is upsetting you?)
  - o your REASON (why does it bother you and what is the best way to resolve this?)

Then ask yourself some questions about how and when you get angry. Questions like:

- Do I always get angry about this issue?
- Could I have seen this coming?
- Could I have avoided feeling angry by taking a different approach to this situation?
- What is my goal here? What do I hope to achieve?

Blaming others for our anger or frustration seems like an easy way to solve our problem: we want to say that someone or something "did this to me". But blaming leaves us powerless and ineffective! How can we expect a situation to improve - in the way we would like to see it improve - if we put the task on someone else?

Did you know that no one else can *make* us feel angry? We choose to respond with blame and/or anger...and we can choose a different response. We are FREE to improve our relationships and live without rage when we decide to deal with our feelings in effective and purposeful ways.

**Consider deeply what makes you angry and why. DIG for the answer that will transform anger!** Here are a few examples from my (Sue) usual challenges:

Why do I feel angry when others try to tell me what to do?

- Do I feel disrespected? As if they think I haven't thought about something carefully?

Why do I feel angry when it feels like others don't listen to or acknowledge me?

- Do I believe they think that my opinion is not valid or important?

Why do I feel angry when others are not respectful of an agreement we made?

- Do I feel like they think I am less important than they are?

Why do I feel angry when I stub my toe?

- Am I embarrassed because I missed something right in front of me?

Why do I feel angry when other drivers make travel difficult?

- Do I feel they are selfish, dangerous, disrespectful, and not paying attention?

Can you find the solutions you are looking for in your answers?

**Be aware of your temper: your 'anger energy'.**

Here are some ideas to help you keep your temper under control:

- **Try the Thermometer Technique** - Imagine your temper is red mercury in a large thermometer. When you're HOT, don't react! Wait until you are 'cool' to respond.
- **Count to 10, or 100!** – Count...and think of a time when you were calm and relaxed...to take your mind out of the immediate situation. Counting is an anger management tip that has worked for centuries! The Roman poet Horace (65 - 8 BCE) said, "When angry, count ten before you speak; if very angry, one hundred."
- **Inhale deeply** - Can you breathe so deeply that you get clean air deep down into your belly? Walk outdoors if possible! Your brain and your body work better with fresh air and plenty of water. Be sure to communicate with anyone you might be in a confrontation with that you are not leaving the problem; you're just clearing your head.
- **Exercise!** - Daily exercise allows you to work out stress. When you have less stress, you will feel angry less often. Regular exercise, including yoga and meditation, help you stay centered and keep things in perspective.
- **Vent** - Finding a safe spot to articulate your feelings...and maybe even yell (I find this particularly effective when I hammer my finger) can relieve enough stress to see the problem - and the solution -more clearly. Do not 'blow off steam' when anyone is nearby. Instead, try to find a place where you can be alone, or run and talk to the wind, or maybe stomp on aluminum cans to relieve frustration.
- **Ask Questions:** What will anger do? What can I do that would be more effective? I wonder if other people have experienced this before? What would a problem-solving hero do right now?

Our best way of dealing with anger is to find ways to make it useful. A powerful example is when someone uses the energy from anger to find the courage they need to protect someone who needs an ally.

**Be Careful - When anger turns into poison:** Sometimes we think that being angry and bitter all the time means we are smart, savvy and aware of the ways in which people and the media want to persuade us; as if it shows we are 'on to them'. Soon we are cynical, crabby people and, although people may think we are smart, they may also think we are just 'haters' and and they might not want to hang out with us. It's hard to have fun with angry people.

**Sue's Anger Story**

I live in a small town. We see our neighbors out and about and everyone knows I frequently ride my bike on the nearby bike trail. My dentist has an office just across the street from our bike trail and sees me on it all the time. He also likes to exercise outdoors; he runs.

One day I went to see my dentist for a routine check up. I enjoy talking with everyone when I'm there. When he checks my teeth we often 'catch up' for a minute, too.

After one of these friendly little chats, my dentist stood up and told me that his white coat identifies him as a health authority and added: "in the interest of health I have to tell you that I think you should wear a helmet".

I told him that I consider wearing a helmet sometimes, but most of the time I am comfortable - and prefer riding – without one.

I wish our discussion would have stopped right there.

Instead, he continued by saying "It's not like you're going to find a date out there." *WHAT?* Because helmets are ugly? I sat there, stunned, and thought: *Did you just say that? Is that sexist, or just stupid?*

Apparently he did not think that was enough reasons because he went on to say: "My wife just broke her pelvis riding her bike. Of course, the helmet did not protect her, but if she would have hit her head it would have." Oh, *REALLY???* Well, now I was outraged!!! I yelled at him in my mind: *Your wife's injury has NOTHING to do with wearing a helmet! You don't even know what kind of a rider I am! You don't know that I have fallen a lot and I know HOW to fall!*

Out loud I said "I know that you think you are showing me that you care...but I like riding without a helmet." In my mind I added "*and I will never sacrifice my joy, ability, confidence or strength to pander to your controlling and unjustified fears.*"

Even though I was piping mad, I held my tongue and went out for a bike ride. I talked sternly to myself - out loud - in to the wind. I may have cussed. I talked and talked ...to him...to me...to really work through my frustrations to understand WHY I was so angry and upset.

It all came flooding in: I felt disrespected! I felt like I was treated like I was stupid! Like somehow being a dentist makes him a 'health authority' over me? Like I've never considered wearing a helmet before? Looking for a date? Really? He did not ask what I thought, he just told what he thought and expected me to comply.

So...what did I do? Well, it took me until my next appointment to decide.

I considered going in and talking with him. I also considered sending a letter stating that I was so offended that I will no longer be a patient. I considered making a point to have a talk with him the next time I go in for a check up. And then I considered saying nothing and just letting it go.

But wait! That answer was clearly *not* an option. I realized I needed to tell him that I want to be respected.

I mean, if I really want to resolve my anger - to eliminate this frustration of disrespect - well, then I must talk with him; to help him realize how to understand that 'caring' can feel an awful lot like 'controlling'. How could he know if he didn't hear my point of view? I realized he needed to hear how thin and lame his arguments were so he could see things differently, *and* respect that I am also a health authority...of me! I have been healthy for nearly all of my 58 years. So I resolved to discuss this with him during my next appointment.

I wonder if my dentist would have told me I needed a helmet if I rode to his office on a Harley.

I've been working on using my "angry energy" appropriately for most of my life. Every year my new year's goals are 'be kinder and more patient'. I will not need another resolution; I still have a long way to go. This is big, tough, complicated work!

For me, the first step to managing my anger is to decide that anger will no longer be used for demolition; that my feelings of anger will be used to construct new, better alternatives to challenges.

## Resisting Influence

*This is a shortened version of the original which was prepared by Dr. Philip Zimbardo and Cindy X. Wang*  
*You can view the full Resisting Influence Guide here: <http://www.lucifereffect.com/guide.htm>*

Our daily lives are wrought with compelling social tensions. Many of us hope that we are immune to compliance tactics, have the courage to resist unjust authority, and would never abandon our core beliefs and principles in the face of social pressures.

This document was created for learning how unwanted and unjust influence can impact your daily life and to better equip you to resist these forces. By understanding the contexts of influence and social compliance, we hope you will be able to identify the principles and strategies that professional agents of influence may use to gain your compliance.

We will look at frameworks to understand social influence and identify how you can apply these ideas to your own life, we will discuss ways to utilize your new understanding of the principles of social influence for positive social change, and finally we provide hints from Dr. Z on how to resist unwanted influences.

### Varieties of Influence

We listen to a debate with each side presenting seemingly compelling reasons to endorse one or another point of view. We get messages from advertisers, from the government, from assorted authorities to take particular actions, like buy a product, vote for a candidate, give blood, avoid impending disasters, and more. Such attempts to influence our attitudes, values or actions are considered forms of persuasive communication. "**Do as I say,**" is the persuasive motto.

Other times the influence comes not dressed up in words in persuasive messages or visually appealing ads, but simply when the members of a group you are in, or want to belong to, act in a particular way. They don't have to tell you what to do; they simply exhibit the behavior or the style of action that is expected of "good team members." That form of social influence is known as conformity. "**Do as we do,**" is the conformity motto.

Go along with the majority and be accepted. Refuse to dress as they do, talk like they do, value what they value, or act in ways that are the accepted social norm for this group, and you are rejected, isolated, expelled, ridiculed. The power of groups in our lives to influence our thoughts and actions can be enormous, especially when we desperately want to be accepted by the group. But you don't need a group to put pressure on you to act as they expect you to do; in fact, much social influence comes from a singular source - another person.

Compliance is a form of influence in which direct pressure is put on individuals to take some specific action, such as doing a favor or buying a product. The influence agent doesn't want to change your mind, only to get you to act on his or her request. Sometimes the request is pro-social, like donating blood, but more often than not, the request is to get people to purchase products that they might not need or even want initially.

All of these sources of social influence are external; they are imposed from the outside of you through influence agents (people who work hard to convince you to think a certain way).

One of the most powerful forms of influence is self-persuasion, which encourages individuals to engage in personal thought and decision processes. One tactic for inducing self-persuasion comes from role-playing positions that are contrary to one's beliefs and values. When we engage in public behavior that does not follow from our personal beliefs, cognitive dissonance is created. To the extent that we come to believe we made that commitment freely, without (awareness of) external situational pressures, we rationalize it and convince ourselves that it was the right action and the right position to hold.

What can you do to weaken or counter each of these varieties of social influence? Knowledge of how these influence settings work and what you can do to resist them is the first step in becoming a wiser consumer of social influence. You have to be continually vigilant and continually put into operation these resistance tactics for you to inoculate yourself against their insidious power.

### How We Are Persuaded

Communicators are most effective if they are perceived as Credible, meaning they have both expertise relevant to their message and are trustworthy - honest, and unbiased.

Communications come in many forms: some rational, some hit at our emotions, some inform us of the action we should take, and others leave the action hidden. Some messages are simple, others complicated, some lead with the request, others build up to it. Ideally, we need to process communications systematically, that means taking the time to figure out what is being requested, what evidence is being presented, and how contrary views are dealt with. Too often, we take short cuts and process the information only peripherally: too focused on the packaging and not the product. We may give excessive value to the speaker's tone of voice, or his or her good looks; and too little to what they are actually hawking. Always try to figure out who the message is intended for and what action are they requesting.

### Why We Conform: The Power of Groups

Whenever we change our behavior, views, and attitudes in response to the real or imagined presence of others, we are experiencing conformity. Two main types of conformity have been studied: *informational* and *normative*. **Informative conformity** often occurs in unfamiliar situations when we are likely to shape our behavior to match that of others. The actions of others inform us of the customs and accepted practices in a situation: what is right to do, how to behave.

**Normative conformity** occurs when we want to be liked or approved of by the group. This is the dominant form of social conformity. Though we may disagree secretly with the group opinion, we may verbally adopt the group stance so that we seem like a team player rather than a deviant.

Both of these pressures impact us everyday. A staple of a functioning society is that people follow social norms such as obeying traffic laws, respecting others' property, and diffusing aggression in non-violent ways. However, conformity can have deleterious effects if one conforms automatically without questioning of the validity of social norms. In Nazi Germany, many ordinary people did not dissent to the ongoing atrocities because few other people resisted.

In our daily decisions, we should also examine whether our reasons justify our actions. In an unfamiliar situation, first ask yourself whether the actions you observe others performing are rational, warranted, and consistent with your own principles before thoughtlessly and automatically adopting them.

Similarly, in a situation in which you want to impress and be accepted by others, ask yourself whether the action conflicts with your moral code, and consider whether you would be willing to compromise your own opinion of yourself just so others would have a higher one of you. Ultimately, you are the only one who has to live with your actions. Be sure to take a time out to find out the correct information.

### Cialdini's Principles of Social Influence

Having begun to understand the strength of social influence, we now move on to the principles of influence studied by social psychologist Robert Cialdini; a renowned social psychologist that has done extensive research on the domains in which social influence is most powerful. The following principles play on fundamental human instincts and can be exploited both intentionally and unintentionally.

Many of these may seem like obvious tactics that advertisers and influence agents will utilize to sway our opinion. However, when we are not prepared to scrutinize and resist them, these principles will often work subliminally and quite powerfully. An important part of resisting these influence tactics is awareness of their operating principles, contexts in which they are provoked, and methods to avoid falling prey to them.

We hope that by learning about these principles of persuasion, you will be better able to recognize the situations you are in that may lead to act against your will and then to have the tools to resist unwanted social influence. There are six basic principles, and each one is set in a specific Context. When you are aware of the Context, or the behavioral Setting, you will better recognize the principal at work, when you see the principal operating, you will understand the Context in which it is embedded

### **Reciprocity [Context: Obligation]**

The rule of reciprocity requires that one person try to repay, in kind, what another person has provided. Supports the giving of favors since repayment is expected from the recipient

#### *The Basics*

- Sense of future obligation makes it possible to develop continuing relationships and exchanges
- We are trained from childhood to abide by the reciprocity rule or suffer social disapproval

#### *How It's Exploited*

- Rule can spur unequal exchanges
- "Door-in-the-face" – relies on persuader making an outrageous, extreme request first, then conceding to a comparatively small request (one desired all along) that will likely be accepted because it appears to make a concession

#### *Best Defense*

Reject initial offers, favors, concessions; redefine them as tricks and refuse to feel obligated to respond reciprocally

### **Consistency [Context: Commitments]**

#### *The Basics*

- People desire to look consistent within their words, beliefs, attitudes, and deeds
- Consistent conduct provides a beneficial approach to daily life and is highly valued by society
- Shortcut through complex decision-making reduces processing time in future decisions

#### *How It's Exploited*

- Profiteers exploit the principle by inducing people to make an initial commitment, take a stand or position that is consistent with requests that they will later ask of them
- Commitments are most effective when they are active, public, effortful, and internally motivated.
- If they are successful, abiding by this rule may lead to actions contrary to one's best interests

#### *Best Defense*

- Do not be pressured into accepting requests that you do not want to perform.
- Be sensitive to situational variables operating on your decision

### **Social Proof [Context: Consensus]**

#### *The Basics*

- A means to determine what is correct by finding out what other people think is correct
- Principle can be used to stimulate a person's compliance by informing the individual that many other individuals have been complying (compliance by famous or authoritative people is very effective)
- A shortcut for determining how to behave – while making us vulnerable to persuasion experts
- Most influential under two conditions:
  - Uncertainty – situation is ambiguous; more likely to accept the actions of others as correct
  - Similarity – people are inclined to follow the lead of similar others

#### *How It's Exploited*

- The Bandwagon effect – everyone who is anyone is doing it, why not YOU?
- The "In Crowd" has it right, do you want them to accept you or not? So act like them

#### *Best Defense*

- Develop counterarguments for what people are doing; their actions should not form yours
- Be aware that the others may have a biased reason for the action they are advocating
- Be aware that the others may be misinformed
- Remember the entire group might be wrong-headed because the leader has biased their opinions

## Liking [Context: Friendship]

### *The Basics*

- People prefer to say “yes” to individuals they know and like
- We want people to like us and we like those who show that they like us

### *How It's Exploited*

- Persuasion experts manipulate factors that influence their likeability.
- Features that influence liking:
  - Physical attractiveness – attractive people are more successful in getting requests granted
  - Similarity – we like people who are like us; we more willing to say “yes” without thinking
  - Praise – compliments generally enhance liking and compliance
  - Familiarity – repeated contact with a person or thing normally facilitates liking
  - Association – making connections to positive things
  - Shadowing - persuader exhibits behaviors that match those of the target individual

### *Best Defense*

- Developing a special sensitivity to suspicious and undue liking from the requester
- Separate the requester from the request, and make decisions based solely on the merits of the offer – not your feelings about the requester.

## Scarcity [Context: Competition]

### *The Basics*

- People assign more value to opportunities when they are less available—if there are fewer resources and less time to get them, we want them more
- Principle holds true for two reasons:
  - Things that are difficult to attain are typically more valuable
  - As things become less accessible, we lose freedoms and want them more than before
- Optimizing conditions for scarcity principle:
  - Value newly scarce items more than items that have been restricted all along
  - Most attracted to scarce resources when we must compete with others for them

### *How It's Exploited*

- Use of this principle can be seen in compliance techniques as ‘limited number’ and ‘deadline’ tactics

### *Best Defense*

- Step back and assess the merits of the opportunity, the value of the item, and why/if we want it
- Give an objective evaluation of its personal value; not overvalue it because it appears to be scarce

## The Science of Social Influence – Anthony Pratkanis

Anthony Pratkanis has meticulously studied social influence tactics and classified numerous methods that humans utilize to manipulate and change the attitudes and beliefs of others.

### **Landscaping (Pre-persuasion tactics)**

The following methods are some of the ways influence agents can have contexts working for them even before you know you're being influenced.

1. Define and label issue in a favorable manner
2. Association
3. Set expectations
4. Agenda setting
5. Establish a favorable comparison point or set
6. Control the flow of information
7. Limit and control the number of choices and options

### **Tactics that rely on social relationship (Social credibility and social rules)**

One of the most important elements of convincing arguments is a reputable source. We are constantly bombarded by commercials that report experts such as dentists support a brand of toothpaste or professional athletes eat certain breakfast cereals. These tactics are surprisingly effective! By utilizing the following traits and characteristics, people can play on social relationships in order to persuade.

### Tactics that rely on social relationship (continued)

1. Authority
2. Attractiveness
3. High Status
4. Similarity – “just plain folks like you”
5. Role-play
6. Social modeling
7. Social reinforcement
8. Multiple sources
9. Arguing against one’s own self-interest
10. Draw on well-being of friends and family

### Effective message tactics

Effective communication depends on the strength and logic of the message. Here, we cite a few examples of how messages can induce the target to generate reasons for adopting recommended action:

1. Self-generated persuasion – give the target a chance to persuade themselves
2. Vivid appeals – emotionally interesting or compelling
3. Let the message recipient draw his or her conclusion
4. Rhetorical questions
5. Pique interest in message
6. Message fit with pre-existing beliefs, experiences, knowledge
7. Placebic reasons – arguments that appear to make sense but actually lack information
8. Defusing objections – acknowledging objections and refuting them before a target can raise them
9. Asking for small contributions initially
10. Message length = message strength
11. Repetition of message
12. Primacy effect – order of presentation

### Emotional tactics

Emotions are often thought to infringe on our rationality and better judgment. Pratkanis presents this set of emotional tactics that take advantage of our subjective feelings, arousal, and tensions as the basis for securing influence.

1. Fear
2. Guilt
3. Embarrassment
4. Threat of insult
5. Flattery
6. Empathy
7. Reciprocity
8. That’s not all – sweetening the deal
9. Commitment trap
10. Low-balling
11. Bait-and-switch
12. Scarcity
13. Anticipatory regret
14. Door-in-face – ask for a large favor, retreat and ask for a much smaller favor
15. Foot-in-the-door – ask a small request than ask for a larger request

## Defensive and Offensive Tactics for Resisting Influence

Defensive – learn how to detect propaganda

1. Play devil’s advocate
2. Generate questions to ask

Offensive – steps that will identify common propaganda forms and stop them at their source

1. Know the ways of persuasion and know that you personally may be the victim of propaganda
  - o Distinguish source credibility
  - o Realize your level of personal vulnerability
2. Monitor your emotions
  - o If you’re having an emotional response to a communication, ask yourself why
  - o Look for things that induce false emotions of fear, guilt, reciprocity
3. Explore the motivation and credibility of the source: what does the source have to gain and is it an overly manufactured image?
4. Think rationally about any proposal or issue: What is the issue? Arguments for and against?

### Defensive and Offensive Tactics for Resisting Influence (continued)

5. Attempt to understand the full range of options before making a decision; relate to your values.
6. If you hear something repeatedly, ask why it is being repeated.
7. If the deal looks too good to be true, it probably is such as free gifts and time-sensitive offers.
8. Develop counterarguments to propaganda and compare performance with advertising.
9. Support efforts to prevent vulnerable groups against exploitative persuasion.
10. Avoid being dependent on a single source of information.
11. Separate news from entertainment (FS note: The 'news' often consists of entertainment 'news'.)
12. Use 'communication style' as one criteria in making decisions and judgments.
13. Increase your personal involvement, knowledge, and awareness in important issues; take some time to find out more on your own.

### Positive Social Influence and Civic Virtue

While most psychological research is focused on the negative aspects of social influence, principles of social influence can be used for good, to enhance basic social and political values. Making sensible adjustments and achievable objectives can help us reach goals that improve on our lives and those near us. Moral behavior can be cultivated by rewarding positive behavior. Government, education, and social institutions can be re-designed to facilitate critical thinking and responsible conduct. The following highlights some ideas that we can bring into our own lives and those of our children.

1. Supporting critical thinking abilities. Asking Why? How does this relate to my values? Resist living on mindless "auto-pilot" and instead reflect on details of the immediate situation; think before acting!
2. Rewarding moral behavior: Social recognition for good deeds; acknowledge bravery.
3. Encouraging respect and appreciation for diversity and human variability reduces biases and discrimination.
4. Not allowing stereotyping and dehumanization of other people.
5. Changing social conditions that make people feel anonymous; support conditions that encourage people to feel valuable, special and worthy.
6. Encouraging admission of mistakes, accepting error in judgments – to reduce justification for continuing wrong, immoral behavior and motivation to minimize dissonance.
7. Promoting personal responsibility and accountability of one's actions. Blaming others is a disguise for one's own role in the consequences of actions.
8. Supporting independence over group conformity; recognize when conformity to the group norm is counter-productive and when independence should take precedence despite possible rejection.
9. Reducing poverty, inequities, and entitlements of the privileged.
10. Never sacrificing freedom for promised security.
11. Discouraging even small transgressions: cheating, gossiping, lying, teasing, bullying.

### Dr. Z's Hints About Resisting Unwanted Influences On You

1. Let go of illusions of "personal invulnerability". If it can happen to them, it can happen to you.
2. Be modest in self-estimates – it's better to perceive yourself as vulnerable and take precautions.
3. Engage in life as fully as possible, yet be prepared to disengage and think critically when necessary.
4. Be aware of Cialdini's contexts and principles of compliance; look to the relevant context being manipulated on you and pull back.
5. Be ready to say the three most difficult phrases in the world: "*I was wrong*", "*I made a mistake*", and "*I've changed my mind.*" Dissonance and consistency go limp in the face of self-honesty.
6. Separate your ego from your actions; maintain a sense of positive self-esteem, that is independent from the occasional failure and your stupid actions at times (Laugh at yourself once a day.)
7. Separate the messenger from message in your mind, be aware of mental fatigue, wanting simple answers or short cuts, and giving in to non-verbal tricks. There are no free lunches and no quick paths to anything worthwhile – sloth and greed breed gullibility.
8. Insist on a second opinion; think about opportunities, contracts, proposals and requests for commitments away from the situation; never immediately sign on the dotted line.

9. Develop mental and intuition systems that acknowledge your vague feelings of something wrong.
10. Try playing devil's advocate; be the deviant in a positive way! Assess the reactions against you when the influence agent says he/she is only doing this for your good.
11. In all authority confrontations: be polite, individuate yourself, describe the problem objectively, do not get emotional, state clearly the remedy sought, and the positive consequences expected.
12. Never allow yourself to be cut off emotionally from your familiar and trusted reference groups of family, friends, neighbors, co-workers – do not accept putdowns against them.
13. Remember all ideologies are abstractions used for particular political, religious, social, economic purposes – always relate these to your values and question if the means justify the ends.
14. Think hard before putting abstract principles before real people in following others' advice to act in specific ways.
15. Trust your intuition and gut feelings. When you sense you are becoming a target of influence, put up your counter-arguing mentality and dig down for sources of resistance.
16. Rules are abstractions for controlling behavior and eliciting compliance and conformity - consider when, where and why we have rules. Ask: who made the rule? What purpose does it serve? Who maintains it? Does it make sense in this specific situation? What happens if it is violated?
17. When trying to figure out reasons for unusual behavior - yours or others - start by considering possible situational forces and variables vs. judging the behavior as "character".
18. Imagine Dr. Z as your conscience, your personal Jiminy Cricket (from Pinocchio) sitting on your shoulder and saying be cool, be confident, be collected - to avoid becoming a Jack Ass.

## A Ten-Step Program to Build Resistance and Resilience

Here is my 10-step program toward resisting the impact of undesirable social influences, and at the same time promoting personal resilience and civic virtue. It uses ideas that cut across various influence strategies and provides simple, effective modes of dealing with them. The key to resistance lies in development of the three S's-- **Self-Awareness, Situational Sensitivity, and Street Smarts**. You will see how they are central to many of these general strategies of resistance.

### **"I made a mistake!"**

Let's start out by encouraging admission of our mistakes, first to ourselves then to others. Accept the dictum that to err is human. You have made an error in judgment; your decision was wrong. You had every reason to believe it was right when you made it, but now you know you were wrong. Say the six Magic words: "I'm sorry"; "I apologize"; "Forgive me." Say to yourself that you will learn from your mistakes; grow better from them. Don't continue to put your money, time, and resources into bad investments. Move on. Doing so openly reduces the need to justify or rationalize our mistakes, and thereby to continue to give support to bad or immoral actions.

Consider how many years the Vietnam War continued long after officials knew that the war could not be won. How many thousands of lives were lost, when acknowledging failure and error could have saved them? It is more than a political decision to 'save face' - it is a moral imperative to do the right thing.

### **"I am mindful."**

In many settings smart people do dumb things because they fail to attend to key features in the words or actions of influence agents and fail to notice obvious situational clues. Too often we function on automatic pilot, using outworn scripts that have worked for us in the past, never stopping to evaluate whether they are appropriate in the here and now. We need to be reminded not to live our

lives on automatic pilot, but always to take a Zen moment to reflect on the meaning of the immediate situation, to think before acting. For the best result add "critical thinking" to mindfulness in your resistance. Ask for evidence to support assertions; demand that ideologies be sufficiently elaborated to allow you to separate rhetoric from substance. Imagine scenarios of future consequences of current practices. Reject simple solutions as quick fixes for complex personal or social problems. Support critical thinking and become vigilant about deceptive ads, biased claims, and distorted perspectives. Become wiser and warier knowledge consumers.

### **"I am responsible."**

Taking responsibility for one's decisions and actions puts the actor in the driver's seat, for better or for worse. Allowing others to determine our actions or opinions makes them powerful back-seat drivers, and makes the car move recklessly ahead without a responsible driver. We become more resistant to undesirable social influence by always maintaining a sense of personal responsibility and by being willing to be held accountable for our actions. Always imagine a future time when today's deed will be on trial and the judge and jury will not accept your pleas of 'only following orders', or 'everyone else was doing it'.

**“I am Me, the best I can be.”**

Do not allow others to deindividuate you, to put you into a category, in a box, a slot, to turn you into an object. Assert your individuality; politely state your name and your credentials, loud and clear. Insist on the same behavior in others. Make eye contact (remove all eye-concealing sun glasses), and offer information about yourself that reinforces your unique identity. Find common ground with dominant others and use it to enhance similarities. Anonymity and secrecy conceals wrongdoing and undermines the human connection. It can become the breeding ground that generates dehumanization. Go a step beyond self-individuation. Work to change whatever social conditions make people feel anonymous. Instead, support practices that make others feel special, so that they too have a sense of personal value and self worth. Never allow or practice negative stereotyping—words and labels can be destructive.

**“I respect just authority; I question unjust authority.”**

In every situation, work to distinguish between those in authority who, because of their expertise, wisdom, seniority, or special status, deserve respect, and those unjust authority figures who demand our obedience without having any substance. Many who assume the mantle of authority are pseudo-leaders, false prophets, confidence men and women, self-promoters, who should not be respected, but rather openly exposed to critical evaluation. We must play more active roles in critical differentiation. We should be polite and courteous when such a stance is justified, yet be wise by resisting those authorities that do not deserve respect. Doing so, will reduce mindless obedience to self-proclaimed authorities whose priorities are not in our best interests.

**“I will balance my Time Perspective.”**

We can be led to do things that are not within our values when we allow ourselves to become trapped in an expanded present moment. By developing a balanced time perspective in which past, present and future can be called into action depending on the situation and task at hand, you are in a better position to act responsibly and wisely. Situational power is weakened when past and future combine to contain the excesses of the present.

**“I can oppose unjust Systems.”**

Individuals falter in the face of the intensity of some systems and resistance may involve physically removing one's self from a situation in which all information and reward/ punishments are controlled. It may involve challenging the “groupthink” mentality, and being able to document all allegations of wrongdoing. Systems have enormous power to resist change and withstand even righteous assault. Here is one place where individual acts of heroism to challenge unjust systems, and their bad barrel makers, are best taken by soliciting others to join one's cause.

**“I will not sacrifice personal or civic freedoms for the illusion of security.”**

The need for security is a powerful determinant of human behavior. We can be manipulated into engaging in actions that are alien to us when faced with alleged threats to our security or the promise of security from danger. More often than not, influence peddlers gain power over us by offering the Faustian contract: You will be safe from harm if you will just surrender some of your freedom, either personal or civic, to that authority. Reject that deal. Never sacrifice basic personal freedoms for the promise of security because the sacrifices are real and immediate and the security is a distant illusion.

**“I want group acceptance, but value independence.”**

The power of the desire for acceptance will make some people do almost anything to be accepted, and go to even further extremes to avoid rejection by The Group. We are indeed social animals, and usually our social connections benefit us and help us to achieve important goals that we could not achieve alone. However, there are times when conformity to a group norm is counter-productive to the social good. It is imperative to determine when to follow the norm and when to reject it. Ultimately, we live within our own minds, in solitary splendor, and therefore we must be willing and ready to declare our independence regardless of the social rejection it may elicit. Pressure to be a “team player,” to sacrifice personal morality for the good of the team, are nearly irresistible. We must step back, get outside opinions, and find new groups that will support our independence and promote our values. There will always be another, different, better group for us.

**“I will be more Frame Vigilant.”**

The way issues are framed influence us without our being conscious of them, and they shape our orientation toward the ideas or issues they promote. We desire things that are framed as being “scarce,” even when they are plentiful. We are averse to things that are framed as potential losses, and prefer what is presented to us as a gain, even when the ratio of positive to negative prognoses is the same. We don't want a 40% chance of losing X over Y, but do want the 60% chance of gaining Y over X. Linguist George Lakoff clearly shows in his writings that it is crucial to be aware of frame power and to be vigilant to offset its insidious influence on our emotions, thoughts, and votes.

This 10-step program is really only a starter kit toward building resistance and resilience against undesirable influences and illegitimate attempts at persuasion. It takes your awareness and sensitivity to such influence settings, and a willingness to think for yourself, as you practice being independent and as autonomous as is possible.

## Working Through Depression

**Depression** *noun* Severe, typically prolonged, feelings of despondency and dejection, typically felt over a period of time and accompanied by feelings of hopelessness and inadequacy. (source: *the Oxford (online) Dictionary*)

As Americans, it is common to feel like we are supposed to be happy. TIME magazine\* recently announced “Americans are wired to be happy”, and reminded us that we made the pursuit of happiness “a central mandate of the national character” when we declared it a basic human right.

With so much emphasis placed on feeling good, it should come as no surprise that when we don't feel happy, we may feel like something is wrong.

In fact, when we feel lonely, inadequate or disheartened as we search for meaning in our lives, our friends and family and even professionals often encourage us to strive to feel good again as soon as possible; whether through distractions (shopping, media and other activities) or pain relievers (drugs, alcohol, food). It is rare to receive sympathy and support to simply *feel* our discomfort as we reflect, contemplate, ask questions, grow, and become stronger and more capable through a natural and important process.

When we experience painful emotions we often feel alone. Sometimes we think we are the only person who feels this sad, hurt, alone or lost. However, people all over the world experience these difficult feelings.

Painful emotions are not bad; they are actually powerful guides to self-fulfillment.

- They help us clarify our values.
- They help us find meaning in our lives and see our unique perspective and qualities.
- They allow us to stop moving forward for a moment so we can reflect and think critically.
- They can motivate us through tough spots to more deliberately plot out our life course.
- They help us understand the suffering of others; and realize that we are not alone when we suffer.

All of our emotions - the pleasant ones *and* the difficult ones - are vital for our well-being!

We will most likely feel grief, loss, powerlessness, disrespected, compromised, inauthentic, abandoned, anxious, overwhelmed, unworthy, melancholy, or even a sense of hopelessness at some point in our lives, yet none of us will experience depression in the same way as anyone else. The good news is: we can work through most forms of depression without drugs. Everything we need is either already in our possession or can be found in the natural world around us.

There are many books, classes, groups, articles, and television shows on depression. The content of this brief document does not support or refute any existing information. Our sole intention here is to reinforce a positive and enabling perspective about growing through tough emotions rather than denying them through distractions or pain relievers. We grow in important ways through our human challenges.

Depression is related to our thinking; our perception of our memories, our fears, our failures, our hopes. It's mostly a modern illness and has been growing consistently since the industrial age which, paradoxically, is celebrated for making our lives easier. According to Dr. Stephen Ilardi, author of *The Depression Cure*, many cultures where people are dedicated to living in connection to their environment and to each other, do not experience depression.

When we feel sad, hopeless or depressed, we often feel like we don't have a choice in how we experience these feelings....but we almost always do. We can't eliminate depression by pretending we can 'let it go' without effort. We begin to rise out of it by looking at our situation through a different perspective. We can see different perspectives by considering philosophical, psychological and sociological concepts. This sounds rather 'academic', but we've been using techniques identified in these fields of study everyday since we were very young.

\* TIME magazine: July 8, 2013

Below are just a few of these perspectives that we use everyday:

**Pessimism vs Optimism:** (inspired by Dr. Martin Seligman)

**Optimism** *noun* Hopefulness and confidence about the future or the successful outcome of something. *(source: the Oxford (online) Dictionary)*

**Pessimism** *noun* A tendency to see the worst aspect of things or believe that the worst will happen; a lack of hope or confidence in the future. *(source: the Oxford (online) Dictionary)*

**Optimists** believe that tough times are temporary, that hurdles build character and that most problems are surmountable. An optimistic perspective uses a Specific, External and Temporary lens (see below). We are optimists when we can see solutions, and also when we realize situations will change and beneficial opportunities will again present themselves.

*Optimism is a tool with a certain clear set of benefits: it fights depression, it promotes achievement and produces better health.* ~ Dr. Martin Seligman

**Pessimists** focus on what's wrong and what's difficult; they believe they are victims. They blame others for their situation. They believe that they are inadequate to fend off tough times, which are constantly threatening. A pessimistic perspective looks through a Permanent, Personal, and Pervasive (PPP) lens. We are pessimists when we believe we are incapable of doing whatever it is we need / want to do, when we blame outside forces for our situation or experience, when we want to give up, and when we believe we cannot create the life we want.

The difference between Optimistic (SET) vs. Pessimistic (PPP) perspectives:

**Pervasiveness:** Specific (*I'm great at fixing bikes.*) vs. Universal (*I can fix things.*)

**Personal:** External (*I have no luck.*) vs. Internal (*I have no talent.*)

**Permanence:** Temporary (*I am not good at this right now.*) vs. Permanent (*I am bad at this.*)

**Hope:** Hopeful (*I'll be able to fix this.*) vs. Hopeless (*It can't be fixed, I have to buy a new one.*)

Each perspective can be interpreted as a personal belief system, a self-fulfilling prophesy. Most of us are both pessimists *and* optimists, depending on the situation and our perception of our capabilities. Just as we can pick up good habits and let go of bad habits, so, too, can we learn to be optimistic and to drop pessimism.

And as with any habit, we can improve our ability and change our perspective over time by staying focused on meaning, values, and the long-term results.

To lift ourselves out of depression, and switch from a pessimistic to an optimistic perspective, we need to have faith.

**Filters of Faith:**

**Faith** *noun* Complete trust or confidence in someone or something *(source: the Oxford (online) Dictionary)*

We have faith when we believe in something even when we don't have proof.

Example: I have faith that I will get to the grocery store without getting into an accident.

*Faith* itself does not require belief in a particular religion; but belief in any religion requires *faith!*

To switch from a pessimistic perspective to an optimistic one, we need to have faith that optimism will help us reach our goal; and that pessimism is not how things really are. Remember *The Little Engine That Could?* "I think I can, I think I can." We are capable of doing very difficult things!

### Can you **believe**

- that you have inherent worth, and that you are as important and valuable as everyone else?
- that your situation, problem or feeling is temporary?
- that a series of complex circumstances is what brought you to this point; not who you are?
- that all things change?...and that your situation is temporary and you will be able to get through it?
- that you have the power to change your attitude, your perception and your opportunities?

**Dr. Stephen Ilardi**, author of *The Depression Cure*, has been inspired by studying the resilience found in aboriginal groups who rarely suffer from depression. He suggests we integrate the following six elements into our lifestyle. Try the item that feels the most comfortable for you...and after a while add another. After a week or so, reflect on how you feel. Then add a 3<sup>rd</sup> and reflect on that experience, etc.

- 1. The Omega-3-Rich Diet:** Sources of omega-3 essential fatty acids include fish, kidney and pinto beans, soybeans, canola and flaxseed oils, walnuts and vegetables such as broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, kale, spinach, and salad greens.
- 2. Exercise:** Dr. Stephen Ilardi says: *Even moderate physical activity - brisk walking three times a week - has been shown in two landmark studies to fight depression as effectively as Zoloft. Simply put: exercise changes the brain.* You can start with small increments of time. Make exercise one of your healthy habits!
- 3. Plenty of natural sunlight:** Get outside, even when it's cloudy. Sunlight supports the creation of vitamin D, a necessary nutrient for mental health and strong bones.
- 4. Quality Sleep:** Sun, fresh air, exercise, and fully engaging in life will help you get a good night's sleep.
- 5. Social Connections:** One of our most basic human needs is belonging. Calls and letters with family and friends, participating in team sports and/or book clubs, volunteering and helping others all contribute to the feeling we belong and are cared about. Another basic need is independence. Remember to take thoughtful and creative time just for you, then you can share your thoughtful and creative self with others!
- 6. Participation in Meaningful Tasks:** This leave little time for negative thoughts. Consider concepts in philosophy. Another basic human need is having a sense of purpose, self-worth, and meaning. We determine these by our thoughts; we demonstrate them through our actions. Volunteer! Help someone else.

### Inspiration from great thinkers:

"Participating in meaningful tasks" has been a central theme to many philosophers, psychotherapists and other great thinkers, and has played an important role in of the process of reducing or transforming suffering for thousands of years.

**Buddhism**, a 2500 year old philosophy practiced like a religion, focuses on creating a meaningful life to alleviate suffering. By studying Buddhist ideas, we can learn to understand why we suffer. People can participate in any religion and still benefit from The Four Noble Truths:

First Noble Truth: To live is to experience physical and psychological suffering. We have to endure physical suffering like sickness, injury, tiredness, old age and eventually death; we have to endure psychological suffering like loneliness, frustration, fear, embarrassment, disappointment, anger, etc.

Second Noble Truth: All suffering is caused by craving. (Getting what you want does not guarantee happiness / satisfaction). Rather than constantly struggling to get what you want, try to modify your wanting. Wanting deprives us of contentment and happiness.

The Third Noble Truth: Suffering can be overcome and happiness attained.

The Fourth Noble Truth: This is the path leading to the overcoming of suffering. This path is called the Noble Eightfold Path and consists of Perfect Understanding, Perfect Thought, Perfect Speech, Perfect Action, Perfect Livelihood, Perfect Effort, Perfect Mindfulness, and Perfect Concentration.

**It's easy to find out more about Buddhism.** Hundreds of books are available.

Some Buddhist authors include: Thích Nhất Hạnh, Pema Chodron, the 14th Dalai Lama and Alan Watts

**Friedrich Nietzsche**, the late 19<sup>th</sup> century German Philosopher offers some bolstering quotes:

- *To live is to suffer; to survive is to find some meaning in the suffering.*
- *He who has a why to live can bear almost any how.*
- *That which does not kill us makes us stronger.*

**Victor Frankl** – Psychiatrist, neurologist, Holocaust survivor and author of *Man's Search for Meaning* has many empowering thoughts on this topic. Frankl observed that depression is a person's 'warning light' that something is wrong and needs to be worked through. He believed that each of us needs to identify a purpose in life to feel positively about (meaning), and then immersively imagine that outcome. According to Frankl, the way a prisoner imagined the future affected his longevity.

*The one thing you can't take away from me is the way I choose to respond to what you do to me.  
The last of one's freedoms is to choose one's attitude in any given circumstance.*

He believed that meaning can be found through:

- Creativity and self-expression
- Interacting authentically with others and with our environment
- Changing our attitude when we are faced with a situation or circumstance we cannot change

More recently, **Dr. Martin Seligman**, considered the father of the Positive Psychology movement, professor emeritus at Pennsylvania State University, and author of many books on improving one's quality of life, believes that meaning and character play an important role in creating a satisfying life. Seligman articulated an account of the good life, which consists of five elements called the PERMA model:

### **P: Positive Emotion**

For us to experience well-being, we need positive emotion in our lives. Any positive emotion like peace, gratitude, satisfaction, pleasure, inspiration, hope, curiosity, or love falls into this category – and the message is that it's really important to enjoy yourself in the here and now, just as long as the other elements of PERMA are in place.

### **E: Engagement**

When we're truly engaged in a situation, task, or project, we experience a state of flow: time seems to stop, we lose our sense of self, and we concentrate intensely on the present. This feels really good! The more we experience this type of engagement, the more likely we are to experience well-being.

### **R: Positive Relationships**

As humans, we are "social beings," and good relationships are core to our well-being. Time and again, we see that people who have meaningful, positive relationships with others are happier than those who do not. Relationships really do matter!

**M: Meaning**

Meaning comes from serving a cause bigger than ourselves. Whether this is a specific deity or religion, or a cause that helps humanity in some way, we all need meaning in our lives to have a sense of well-being.

**A: Accomplishment/Achievement**

Many of us strive to better ourselves in some way, whether we're seeking to master a skill, achieve a valuable goal, or win in some competitive event. As such, accomplishment is another important thing that contributes to our ability to flourish.

Quotes by Dr. Seligman:

- *We're not prisoners of the past.*
- *Just as the good life is something beyond the pleasant life, the meaningful life is beyond the good life.*
- *We deprive our children, our charges, of persistence. What I am trying to say is that we need to fail, children need to fail, we need to feel sad, anxious and anguished. If we impulsively protect ourselves and our children, as the feel-good movement suggests, we deprive them of learning-persistence skills*
- *Self-esteem cannot be directly injected. It needs to result from doing well, from being warranted.*
- *Habits of thinking need not be forever. One of the most significant findings in psychology in the last twenty years is that individuals can choose the way they think.*

**Positive self-talk you can try on to see if it fits:** *Life is meaningful and engaging and human, even when it's hard. I will get through this, just like I've been able to get through so many other difficult things.*

**We need:** Food, air, water. These components will help to keep our bodies running, but our mind is a necessary part of our bodies and our mind is programmed with needs of its own.

**We also need:** To feel we are valuable. We need to be around others and to feel like we belong. At the same time, we need our independence! Being on our own helps us feel strong, capable, creative and unique. We must try to keep a good balance between our need for autonomy and for belonging!

**Depression can happen when we don't believe we can change the course of our lives.**

It can also happen when we feel we are incapable of doing things for ourselves.

Sometimes the source of suffering can come from our relationships to others. We may feel we don't fit in, or we are being used, or we feel like we are not valuable to others.

Sometimes we feel like all we need is a partner/lover/other intimate relationship to feel better about ourselves, but others cannot fill our inner void. Relationships can be supportive and beneficial; and they can also deplete our power and resources and challenge our self-worth. We must consider: *what must I give* and *what do I gain* by maintaining this relationship? Is it worth the cost? Am I valued, honored and respected? Can I offer the same? Remember:

- All relationships involve choices, compromises, and commitments (investments).
- We must weigh the degree to which we are willing to give up our authenticity and individuality to belong to a group or commit to an intimate relationship:
  - Do we raise the bar so high that no one is 'good enough' to be around us?
  - Do we drop the bar so low that we find we are involved with people who don't share our values, don't value us, or even abuse us or take us for granted?

### **Manufactured Desires**

An especially tricky part to all of this is recognizing when marketers, TV personalities and even close family and friends try to influence our values, needs and desires to fit their motives or goals.

If we look deeper into our suffering we can find that some of the things we suffer from do not originate from our values, our needs or our desires, but are manufactured 'needs' as a result of the media's attempt to homogenize our fears and desires through news, TV shows, slick advertising and emotionally appealing marketing.

We are told we are inadequate, unsafe, unhealthy, and unattractive unless we purchase certain products, desire to look and think a certain way, or buy into fear. TV 'experts' are often just sales people wearing lab coats.

We take command of our lives when we raise our awareness and think critically about their intent. Do they really know what's best for us? When we know our core values, we can refer to them and hold them up to their attempts to influence our decisions. When we maintain control of our lives we feel strong, and when we feel strong, it is much harder to feel depressed and powerless. We are too busy driving our ship!

**When we examine our core values, we realize that we know what's best for us.** Our core values are necessary for healthy living; they help us make good decisions, gain confidence and fully engage our abilities.

Getting through...moment by moment...can be the hardest part. But we can do it!

### **Tips to encourage you during depression:**

- Try to remember that how you are feeling is temporary and just your momentary perception, like a cloudy day seems to have no sun. The sun is there; we can have faith it will again brighten our day.
- Read uplifting and motivating books, articles, and Daily Motivators ([www.greatday.com](http://www.greatday.com))
- Drink lots of water
- Start with small achievable goals and stay focused
- Talk with someone about your experience. Remember: you are not alone.
- Eat fruit, vegetables, and drink more water ~
- Exercise outdoors! Get fresh air, sunlight and breathe deeply!
- Get involved in a meaningful, social activity such as volunteering to support your community.
- Have FAITH in yourself! You can conquer your depression and engage in life in a positive way!

### **Recommended reading:**

Man's Search for Meaning.....Viktor Frankl  
"Learned Optimism" and "Flourish".....Martin Seligman  
The Depression Cure.....Stephen Ilardi  
Plato, not Prozac!.....Lou Marinoff  
Books on Buddhism.....Thích Nhất Hạnh, Pema Chodron,  
Alan Watts and many more

# Swellness

(Yes, it is spelled correctly)

**Health. Strength. Tenacity. Flexibility. Durability. Resilience. Power. Discipline. Vigor.**

These words can be used to describe both mental and physical characteristics. Swellness is the idea that our physical and mental well-being cannot be separated; they are dependent upon each other. It is the belief that we must take care of our mind to take care of our body, and we need to take care of our body to take care of our mind; that health is psychosomatic / somapsychotic and that those words can be applied to wellness as well as to illness. Swellness exists in those who have overcome illnesses and physical setbacks with powerful positive beliefs about their ability to survive and thrive. Swellness is not a goal, it is a continuous process.

## From the dictionary:

**Swell** – noun: a full shape or form   adverb: excellently; very well

**Swellness** - is a state of excellently full form.



## A few considerations for healthy minds and healthy bodies:

- When our minds are in turmoil, often our guts and/or our muscles are, too.
- When our neck and shoulders ache from stress, we may struggle to feel happy or optimistic.

**We need:** Strength in our heart, character, muscles, mind

Fresh: air; water, foods, ideas

Connections to others, to nature, to our authentic selves

## Important Considerations for PHYSICAL HEALTH

**Air. Water. Food. Movement. Attitude.**

**Air:** Oxygen allows our cells to produce energy from the food we eat. It is needed to keep cells alive. Being able to move and think require oxygen. And breathing deeply is a great stress reliever by decreasing heart rate, blood pressure and muscle tension.

**Water:** About 60% of the human body is water! According to the US Geological Survey, water serves a number of functions including:

- Water is a vital nutrient to the life of every cell.
- The carbohydrates and proteins that our bodies use as food are metabolized and transported by water in the bloodstream.
- Water assists in flushing waste and toxins, mainly through urination.
- Water acts as a shock absorber for the brain and spinal cord.
- Water forms saliva, keeps our eyes moist and lubricates our joints
- Water regulates our internal body temperature by sweating and respiration.

**Food:** Growing food is not easy. When we harvest our lettuce, rhubarb, pears, etc., we find it not only provides nourishment, but also connects us in gratitude to the farmers and farm-workers who keep us alive. Eating healthy food makes us more productive, reduces stress, boosts happiness, controls weight gain, saves money (including medical expenses), helps to prevent disease, and increases energy. Cooking meals from scratch increases our connection to the earth, to the people who grow our food, and to each other...all important psychological aspects for belonging. Food for thought!

**Movement:** Our body is built to move: our muscles, our lungs, our organs (including our brain!), our heart, our bones and more conspire to provide the air, water and nutrients to keep our complex system working. Movement supports increased strength, better sleep, and improved mental and physical health.

**Attitude:** Add a healthy attitude to good nutrition and you have a recipe for better health and a longer life.

A University of Illinois (UI) study found that "anxiety, depression, a lack of enjoyment of daily activities and pessimism all are associated with higher rates of disease and a shorter lifespan." UI professor emeritus of psychology Ed Diener added, "Current health recommendations focus on four things: avoid obesity, eat right, exercise and don't smoke, but it may be time to add 'be happy and avoid chronic anger and depression' to the list."

# Important Considerations for MENTAL HEALTH

## Security. Belonging. Autonomy. Purpose. Meaning.

**Security:** safety / having our needs met / enough money / warm and out of the elements. We are barraged with stories of terrible and depressing events in the news. When we have the choice to seek out information, we still choose to focus on bad, scary and negative stories. We worry about the security of our job, our health, our home, our children, our plans for the future. Security issues may also include staying in an unhealthy relationship/situation because it is known and 'normal', even though it may be disrespectful and painful. The unknown may be scarier. Fear of failing and rejection can be paralyzing. The physical and mental stress from elevated levels of fear and worry can cause us to feel weak, sick, overwhelmed, untrusting, depressed, disconnected. We may seek medication to reduce worry and anxiety (which may then cause us to feel more vulnerable and dependent).

**Belonging:** acceptance / relationships / respect / understanding. A basic human need is to belong to a group, a family, a community. We have a deep desire to feel we are valuable to society and can be acknowledged and accepted for who we are. We can 'charge our batteries' when we engaging with others by playing a game, volunteering, talking, preparing a meal, working on a project or simply sharing time together. In person. (The internet creates and maintains connections, but they cannot replace live interaction.) Healthy relationships require respect: so give it and get it. Or go.

**Autonomy:** agency / power / freedom. It is important to feel we are in control of our destiny and capable to do things for ourselves. (We are generally far more capable than we tend to believe we are.) We need to feel we are valuable and offer something unique. A belief in agency or self-efficacy plays a crucial role in physical health and well-being. We have the power to say 'no' and create clear boundaries. We have the power to say 'yes' and make lasting commitments. We can learn new things. We can get physically invigorated by exercising our power. Acknowledging and exercising our power enhances healing and supports physical and mental health.

**Purpose:** The 'meaning of life', the 'reason for living', one's 'driving force'. What you set out to accomplish or attain. Determined intention. Aim. What do you enjoy the most about being alive? Feeling alive (often not consciously...simply 'in the flow'), and spending time making the most of our short life, is important to our health!

**Meaning:** sense of purpose / hope / belief / spirituality / morality. Regardless of how we were raised, we each possess a truth that is unique to us. We have our own set of beliefs, our own way of making sense of the world, and an individualized system for how to respond to challenges. We feel hope if we wish to and can plan for a future that we believe we can create. We are the captains of our ships and we decide where we are going and why. Meaning is how we make sense of our existence, which contributes to our health and well-being. To live without meaning incites suffering. Viktor Frankl believed that a firm sense of meaning is essential for optimal human development.

## Some ways we can become weak or ill:

Consider things that deplete your mental and physical strength.

Eating unhealthy food / unhealthy amounts of food  
Not drinking enough water  
Giving up, despair, feeling defeated  
Mental and physical exhaustion  
Saying 'yes' when we want to say 'no'  
Blaming

Letting negativity dominate our thoughts  
Cheating, lying, trying to manipulate others  
Lack of exercise and fresh air  
Addictions: drugs, alcohol, gambling, food,  
unhealthy relationships, TV/internet  
Feeling disconnected from nature and the world

## Personal Litmus Test:

When you feel pressed to make a decision, consider asking yourself:

- Does this strengthen me? Or is it a counterfeit to strength?
- Is it aligned with my goals? My values? My well-being?
- Does this strengthen my community as a whole or just a faction / fraction?
- Does this respect all things? And elements shared by all things (such as water, earth, air)?
- Does this impede anyone's travel on their own path to self-actualization or well-being?
- Then second-guess yourself and play 'Devil's Advocate'!

**Very small note on *Embodied Cognition*:** It is the theory that many features of cognition, whether human or otherwise, are shaped by aspects of the entire body of the organism; the body informs the brain!

## Some Things That Help Us Feel Strong:

Increase our awareness of, and our dedication to, satisfying our needs...which are the same needs that every person has:

- o **Acknowledgement:** for our unique experiences, ideas and perspective in the world
- o **Agency:** feeling like you are in charge of your life and that you make decisions about your life.
- o **Autonomy:** the ability to decide for yourself, to do things on your own
- o **Belonging:** acceptance, in a group or relationship (all kinds), engagement with others
- o **Character:** your unique qualities, idiosyncrasies, values, strengths and ways of seeing the world
- o **Communicating:** sharing your thoughts; listening - with care - to others
- o **Compassion:** care, understanding, patience – for others and for ourselves
- o **Confidence:** believing you are capable and you can commit.
- o **Cooking** your meals from scratch; with others if you can
- o **Cooperation:** working with others on a shared project. "Many hands make light work."
- o **Drinking** plenty of water!
- o **Eating** healthy, fresh and home-cooked food including plenty of fruits and vegetables
- o **Elevate your heart-rate:** by walking, running, riding, rowing, etc. for at least 30 minutes every day
- o **Exercise and fresh air:** are both great for physical and mental health
- o **Faith:** in your abilities, that you are valuable, that things can get better, spiritual faith
- o **Gratitude:** for what we have, for what others do, for a new day to start fresh
- o **Goals:** setting and reaching achievable goals
- o **Flexibility:** be ready to flow with change...bend, don't break! ...for mental and physical health
- o **Healthy mental engagement:** conversations, problem solving, imagining possibilities, listening
- o **Healthy physical engagement:** caring for plants, walking a dog, mowing our neighbor's lawn
- o **Humanness:** listening, empathizing, caring, feeling excitement and encouragement
- o **Humor:** helpful to lighten our burden for a minute; add a new perspective
- o **Identity:** understanding and accepting our unique skills, values, attributes, character traits, and relationships with others. Our identity changes as we change; it is fluid.
- o **Meaning:** why we do what we do, purpose, value, beliefs, big picture, self-transcendence
- o **Music:** is evocative. It can be cathartic, mood-changing, reflective, powerful and much more.
- o **Opportunity:** finding and/or creating possibilities; feeling like we're not stuck
- o **Outdoors:** taking walks in the sun, stargazing at night, planting a garden, connecting with nature
- o **Reading + Learning:** theories, stories, newspapers; discovering many types of diversity and creativity
- o **Power:** self-efficacy and capability: to maintain our health, our success, our relationships
- o **Reducing** processed sugars, saturated fats, habits we don't like, self-defeating thinking
- o **Reflecting** on your values, your path, your reasons to be grateful, your vision for yourself, your next moves; long-term goals, people in your life, what you can offer the next generation
- o **Resilience:** our ability to adapt to stress and adversity, and even grow stronger because of it!
- o **Respect:** giving it, expecting it, receiving it, helping others understand it and offer it.
- o **Satisfaction:** setting achievable goals and reaching them, being grateful for what we have
- o **Success:** measured by relationships and reaching goals; not by an accumulation of money or stuff
- o **Trust:** believing in yourself and developing trust with others; crucial for good health
- o **Ubuntu:** realizing everything is connected; you support others and others support you
- o **Value:** what is important? what unique gifts do we bring? how do we 'add value'?
- o **Volunteering:** offering our gifts to others, receiving gifts in return!
- o **Yoga / meditation / stretching / rest:** Taking mental and physical time out of our fast-paced world.

## Some Things That Help our Neighborhoods Feel Strong:

- o **Capabilities:** our abilities grow with knowledge and confidence; this happens alone and in groups!
- o **Care:** about our health and our contributions; also, about the concerns and perspectives of others, care about our air, water, soil and living things that give us life, and care about the future
- o **Constructive Learning:** we can learn, and we can learn to solve problems, together!
- o **Imagination:** we'll have to be creative to envision and create a satisfying future together.
- o **Listening:** everyone is important! We need to be heard, yes; and we also need to listen carefully.

# UBUNTU: Swellness for Humanity

Ubuntu is a sub-Saharan African philosophy that recognizes the interdependence of life. It means:

*I am who I am because of who we all are.*

*"The 'solitary individual' is a contradiction in terms. A person is a person through other persons."*

- Archbishop Desmond Tutu

I am a person among and within other persons. I learned how to be a person through my relationships. We are born in relationship and we exist in relationship. My destiny is inexorably bound to yours. Any concept of separation is an illusion. I cannot hurt you without hurting myself, and the only way I can become the best version of me is by supporting you to become the best version of yourself.

The term is often used to describe human relationships, and it can be expanded to include our relationship to all living things as well as our planet, which keeps us alive. Ubuntu begs us to take greater ownership our swellness, as well as the swellness of everything around us...because our safety, our security, our success and our needs depend on the swellness of others and the world around us.

## UBUNTU: Building Social Fabric

When I present Fair Shake in prisons, sometimes people ask me if I can connect them to mentors that can bolster their reentry success. They also ask about opportunities to give back to their community or to support the youth.

These desires reflect our need for belonging, and the philosophy of UBUNTU. When these deep feelings are engaged, they strengthen our social fabric.

But this ideal is difficult to achieve. Today we are discouraged from solving problems together, or trusting one another. We are expected to ask the 'experts' and 'professionals'. We are told to purchase products and services, but we are not educated to understand how to build stronger relationships - even though healthy, caring relationships are vital for building a

safe and satisfying future.

Since this understanding is rarely taught, we need to study, to listen, to be curious, to be open, to reflect, to share our perspective, to care...and then to collaborate with others to conjure and create trust, cooperation, and possibility.

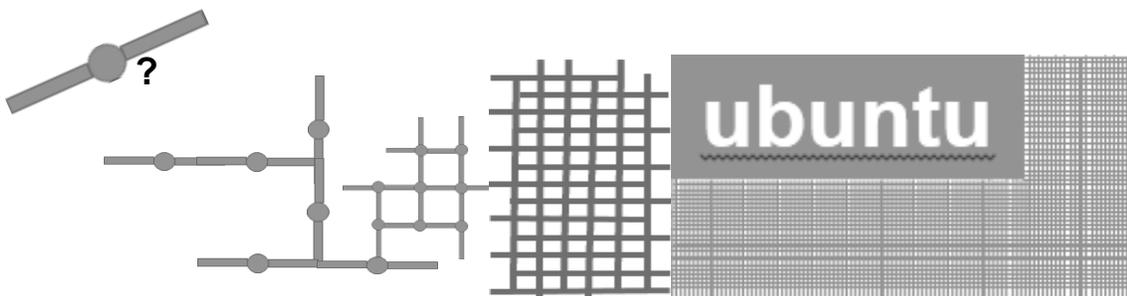
Despite what pundits and politicians promise, no one can "fix" our challenges without our participation.

Once we understand that developing ourselves is vital to developing healthy communities, jobs and relationships, it will be much easier to build a successful democracy that can pay attention to civic life. When we work together to solve problems, we begin to create more of what we want, which has the potential to improve everyone's quality of life.

To encourage people to see a hopeful and convincing picture, I consulted with the author of *The Business of Belief*, Tom Asacker. He reminded me that we are not motivated by logic; we are driven by our beliefs -based on our feelings and experiences. He also told me that we need a clear picture of where we can go, in order to move ourselves toward a goal. When we change our belief of what is possible, we can change our attitude, and when we change our attitude, we change our approach and our ability to solve problems.

When we realize that we must do this together, we realize that no one understands the situation like we do, we realize "we are the ones we've been waiting for." I'm looking forward to building the future with you. Ubuntu!

**What can one person do? They can join others to build our SOCIAL SAFETY NET!**



*"I want you to be all that you can be, so that I can be all that I can be!"* - Rev. Desmond Tutu

Want to be mentally and physically healthy?

# VOLUNTEER

for just 2 hours each week!



No matter what research, anecdotes, survey or data are most important to you, they all demonstrate that people who volunteer enjoy increased physical and mental health, a deeper sense of meaning, and a decrease in depression and/or anxiety levels. All of this is true regardless of the physical or mental state of the volunteer before they start volunteering.

**It's FREE! YOU reap many health benefits!**  
***It builds MEANING, CONNECTION, and VALUE!***

I sometimes hear from people who 'want to tell their story to the youth to keep them from going to prison'. It's an interesting idea, but just 'telling' probably won't work. The youth today - just like when you were a youth - won't learn from old people's stories. But if an old person will listen to them? That might make a big difference, and once you build trust, you may be able to share your story after all. When you listen, you can gain trust, and then help them build the future. Listening helps people feel valued, which can increase their feelings of agency and power over their lives.

There are many ways, formally and informally, that you can commit to supporting others:

- Wherever you go, there are people who need attention; who need to be heard and honored.
- There are people who need to eat, need help shopping and help taking care of their home.
- There are people who need support, need to learn how to ask good questions, need to find their voice, need to learn to establish good boundaries, need to learn *how* to learn, and also to re-learn how to express themselves through art, movement, music, and imagination!

In a 2009 survey\* of 4582 people, at an average of 2 hrs/wk., people said this about volunteering:

96%: feel happier (A way to relieve our suffering from unhappiness and depression!)

92%: enriches my sense of purpose in life

89%: improved my sense of well-being

78%: helps with recovery from loss and disappointment

77%: improves emotional health

73%: lowers my stress levels

68%: made me feel physically healthier

*\*[http://cdn.volunteermatch.org/www/about/UnitedHealthcare\\_VolunteerMatch\\_Do\\_Good\\_Live\\_Well\\_Study.pdf](http://cdn.volunteermatch.org/www/about/UnitedHealthcare_VolunteerMatch_Do_Good_Live_Well_Study.pdf)*

According to Stephen G. Post, volunteers have less trouble sleeping, less anxiety, less helplessness and hopelessness, better friendships and social networks and a sense of control over chronic conditions.

You may want to starting your volunteerism with an established organization. Or you may wish to start your own thing...that's how Fair Shake got started!

Volunteering is a great way to meet people, to immerse yourself in diverse groups, to network in new circles, to demonstrate character and commitment, and to build faith in humanity!

**NO DRUGS! NO SIDE EFFECTS! ALL NATURAL! NO OFFICE VISIT! NO DOCTORS!**

## EVERYONE VOLUNTEERS. YOU NEVER KNOW WHO YOU WILL MEET THERE!

You may find your next employer, property manager, babysitter, ride-share person or friend!

Ways to Volunteer: (this is just the beginning of a list for which there is no end...)

|             |                   |                     |
|-------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Food Pantry | Clean Up Trash    | Arts and Crafts     |
| Free Meals  | Driving / Rides   | Animal Rescue       |
| Yard Work   | Help with Taxes   | Handy-person Repair |
| Reading     | Simply Spend Time | Snow Shoveling      |
| Shopping    | Hobbies           | Help with Moving    |

## Community Volunteer Opportunities

\* \* 2 hrs/week delivers health benefits to you. Any amount of time delivers benefits to others. \* \*

Food Pantry \* Habitat For Humanity \* Lawn Mowing \* Church or Community Groups  
Direct Support \* Child Care \* Elder Support \* Home/Yard Help \* Shopping \* Outdoor Activities

## Web-based Connections to Volunteering



VolunteerMatch

**Volunteer Match** [volunteermatch.org](http://volunteermatch.org) (non-profit)  
people, animals, environment

Volunteer Match is the largest network in the nonprofit world, with the most volunteers, nonprofits and opportunities to make a difference.

## Buy Nothing Project

**Buy Nothing Project** [buynothingproject.org](http://buynothingproject.org) (global network)  
Help another person give and receive, share, lend, and express gratitude using technology through a worldwide gift economy network in which the true wealth is the web of connections formed between people!



FairShake  
REENTRY RESOURCE CENTER

**Fair Shake** [fairshake.net](http://fairshake.net) (community-powered non-profit)

- \* Fair Shake is web/software based. We welcome tech volunteers!
- \* Help others find resources and information in our huge library!
- \* Help us build the FS resource directory by letting us know about resources that you recommend from your area! Mail information to Fair Shake PO Box 63, Westby, WI 54667 or email: [sue@fairshake.net](mailto:sue@fairshake.net)



Volunteer.gov

**Volunteer.gov** (federal program)

America's Natural and Cultural Resources Volunteer Portal built and maintained by the Federal Interagency Team on Volunteerism (FITV)



POINTS  
OF LIGHT  
ENGAGE

**Engage** [engage.pointsoflight.org](http://engage.pointsoflight.org) (project of Pres. George H.W. Bush)  
Search our database for volunteer opportunities inside and outside of the home that meet critical needs. The world is waiting for you to shine your light.



JUST SERVE

**Just Serve** [justserve.org/projects](http://justserve.org/projects) (provided by Mormons)

A website where the volunteer needs of organizations may be posted and volunteers may search for places to serve in the community.



## CONSTRUCTING ACTIVE

# CITIZENSHIP



**This is OUR democracy. Every person is important.  
We need your input and engagement to build our future together.**

It's clear that the two main political parties in the U.S. – who, by the way, allow for no other parties to participate in a meaningful way – are not at all interested in increasing citizen participation in our democratic process. As we have seen throughout this century and the final quarter of the last, politicians want to tell us what our choices are, rather than hearing from us what it is that we want. It's easy to see the result of his approach: decreased interest in the political process, decreased activity in community-building, greater demand and dependence on government programs, often outsourced to private – even 'non-profit' - contractors, school systems arranged to program robots rather than nourish our precious, developing children, and a war on information, integrity, critical thinking and values through all forms of media.

Who will protect us? We may find one or two politicians who support community, humanity, and 'E Pluribus Unum' but most, even with good intentions, work on 'party-line' projects without thinking or caring about the whole; about all citizens building our communities together.

***Citizens do not live in political parties; we live in families, neighborhoods and communities.***

Politicians want us to hand over our power to them. They want us to believe the solutions to our problems can only be resolved with money or control. They want us to believe we lack the knowledge, the experience and the capacity to oversee or contribute to the remedies. We are undereducated for this moment in time and struggling to figure out who we can trust; who we can follow to a safe place where we can heal and grow. We turn to groups, to ideologies, to politicians and parties to find a safe group.

The two-party system is pitting us against each other and is at the very root of why we are no longer willing or able to work on building our commons together. Are we going to let these two parties hold us back from living a better life? We are smart! We are capable! We care! So why are we becoming less civilized? Isn't this what education is for? We can defend our right to live in a better society. We can solve our problems.

***We have everything we need. We are the "Savers" that we have been waiting for.***

Just imagine how politics could change when we tell the politicians what we want.

## TOOLKIT FOR COMMUNITY-BUILDING

ATTENTION  
BIG PICTURE  
CARE  
COMMITMENT  
CREATIVITY  
CURIOSITY  
INTENTION  
LISTENING  
SHOWING UP  
VOLUNTEER

### Conversations and Questions

- + What do we want?
- + What commitment can you make?
- + Physical + Emotional First Aid Kit
- + Books, webinars, advisors, training



These are just a couple of 'seed' suggestions to start your basic community-building tool kit. The tools, questions, resources, concerns, gifts, wants and needs will change for each community setting. Heck, you can create a reentry organization, if that's what society needs! ~ ; )

## COMMUNITY BUILDING ASSUMPTIONS

- Everyone has an important gift (or more than one!) to share.
- Everyone has a unique perspective to consider.
- Build relationships to build community. Building relationships builds trust.
- Community members have a lot of power...especially together!
- Community leaders will listen to and contribute to community concerns.
- Asking questions is more effective than giving answers.
- People are better than programs! We can make institutions work for us.

## COMMUNITY-BUILDING AND CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT RESOURCES



Abundant Community <https://www.abundantcommunity.com/>  
Every neighborhood has all the gifts required to raise our children, be safe, carve out a living, be healthy, care for the vulnerable and end the isolation of all, especially the elderly.

Check out Peter Block's book *Community: The Structure of Belonging* (2018) Berrett-Koehler Publishers

**“Transformation occurs through choice, not mandate.” - Peter Block**



**Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) Institute**

ABCD: local people working together for the well-being of their home place.

Community Building Tool Kit: [www.tinyurl.com/446pj9va](http://www.tinyurl.com/446pj9va)

Videos and Podcasts: <https://tinyurl.com/syue92s>

Online Community Engagement: <https://tinyurl.com/363zvyc8>

Offers resources for these main focus areas: Community Organizing, Disability Justice, Homelessness, Identity, Immigration Rights, Mental Health, Police Accountability, Restoration Practice, Youth Advocacy, Gentrification, Animal Welfare



MRSC: The Municipal Research and Services Center (MRSC) is a nonprofit organization which exists to serve Washington residents by providing legal and policy guidance on any topic. The org is by and for Washingtonians, but there is a lot of information that can benefit citizens all around the country. They “believe the most effective government is a well-informed local government.”

Community Engagement Resources: [www.tinyurl.com/4vmy6r25](http://www.tinyurl.com/4vmy6r25)

### **ACTIVATE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT BY VOLUNTEERING!**

*"The essential challenge is to transform the isolation and self-interest within our communities into connectedness and caring for the whole.*

- Peter Block

*"Which of the most pressing problems can you help to solve using the gifts that are unique to you in all the universe?"*

- Derrick Jensen

*"You'll never ever be able to convince a person thru logical argument or even brilliant rhetoric that a free and just society is possible. You can show them. You can start doing it."*

- David Graeber

*"Active citizenship is our only hope for getting a fair shake at life."*

- Sue Kastensen

***We must act as if our institutions are ours to create, our learning is ours to define, and the leadership we seek is ours to become.” - Peter Block***



*The media is the most powerful entity on earth.*

*Because they control the minds of the masses.* ~ Malcolm X

Americans watch a lot of TV. Even though we are also obsessed with our phones (texts, tweets, Facebook, email and much more), the average American still finds time to watch more than 5 hours of TV per day. Only a very tiny fraction of us watch 0 hours of TV each day. I am one of those people. "No TV" includes no cable, no 'smart' TV, no Netflix or other movies (except when I'm on my bicycle wind trainer in the basement during inclement weather) and no flat-screen-monitor hanging on the wall in the living room. Or the kitchen. Or the bathroom, bedroom, office, car, etc.

I have gone as far as to get a device that turns TVs off. When I feel attacked or trapped by loud, offensive commercials, news stories or shows being broadcast in public places, I just turn them off. Most people don't notice. Those that do usually just shrug their shoulders and do something else.

I have lived without TV for over 25 years (about half of my life). Most people are appalled when I say I don't have TV. They often ask "If you don't watch TV, how do you know what's going on?" (Answer: I read local, state and national newspapers.)

So who am I to talk about how to watch television?

I am a concerned citizen, worried about the effect's television has on society. I'm worried not about what people are watching, but how they receive it (unquestioningly, passively) and believe it. I see Americans getting weaker physically and mentally (more diabetes, social anxiety, obesity and depression) and I am aware that our schools do not prepare us to defend ourselves against crafty ads, emotionally-charged news stories, and shallow role models. I believe we want to be smarter and healthier.

Research conducted in 2013 by Thinkbox, a commercial television marketing association, discovered there are six main reasons that people watch television: "to unwind, for comfort, to connect, for an experience, to escape, or to indulge". Many of us believe that TV is neutral, that it simply informs us and entertains us.

However, most of us don't watch one show then turn off the TV to make some homemade cards, change the oil in the car, or contemplate if we are successfully meeting our needs for both belonging and autonomy. Most of us turn on the TV and don't turn it off until we go to bed. Some of us even keep the TV on when we sleep or when we are alone, as if we are somehow safe or connected.

TV is a thief. It's not the TV's fault - we willingly surrender our power - but it robs us of our time. It robs us of opportunities for reflection, creativity, critical thinking, interesting conversations and paying attention to other important things in our lives. It homogenizes our desires, fears, identity and what we believe we know with those of other viewers. We allow TV to make us weak.

While we are passive and non-critical, advertisers and producers are hard at work, trying to persuade us through video and audio impressions that evoke deep feelings that we are lacking in many ways; but that our needs, fears and desires can be fulfilled by buying products, services or ideologies.

There is good news: it is possible to stay smart and strong and still watch TV!

We can watch TV with others and converse about shows. We can plan our viewing and discipline ourselves to watch only 1 hour or 2 hours per day. We can ask questions. We can free ourselves from 'programming'!

## Neil Postman and Steve Powers encourage us to consider these principles when watching TV news:

### 1. Whatever someone says something is, it isn't.

What this means is the brief description used to describe an event does not fully describe the event. Try this with two other people: choose an event you experienced together. Have each person describe the event in two paragraphs. Compare your descriptions. Now consider how that relates to what you 'learn' on the news.

**Lesson:** Viewers should know that with all news, they learn just a fraction of any story.

### 2. Language operates at various levels of abstraction.

Some language describes an event: In Westby, 6% more votes were cast today than during the previous election. Some language evaluates an event: A record number of voters flooded the polls today. Some language infers an event: Voters showed up in droves today, demanding to be counted.

**Lesson:** Be careful and critical watching the news to hear how the stories are told and punctuated.

### 3. Almost all words have connotative meanings.

(Connotation: an idea or feeling that a word invokes in addition to its literal or primary meaning.) Example: when we use the word 'judge' we often imply that a person has formed a negative conclusion about something since we rarely use it to describe positive attributes or activities. Ex: "Don't judge me." But when we say "He's really nice", we are still judging him. Lesson: Critique the words the anchors and actors use, especially words like important,

love, reality, judge, relationship, faith, manly/womanly, motherly/fatherly and many others. (Start a list!) Consider if the word is used to evoke a particular feeling, and also if the word has further implications about roles and social expectations.

Fragmented pictures and accompanying music and sound effects: are used grip your attention and evoke feelings. Pay attention to the music and sounds which provide added tension (like it does in movies).

We want to believe that the news is a public service; provided to keep us informed, intelligent and abreast of the events that we need to know about to live in society together. (Aw, wouldn't that be peachy?) But the 'news' is not that at all. The news offers a controlled view of the world; in addition to telling us about events, it entertains us, incites fear, generates money, and is filtered by political perspectives and advertisers.

**According to Postman and Powers: "The "news" is only a commodity, which is used to gather an audience that will be sold to advertisers."**

**Activity:** Consider where the money (or other influence) is coming from to produce the news, to entertain you, to inform you about history or science or health. (Interesting note: the words inform and information are not related in any way to truth or validation) Are they produced by companies with specific messages, ethics or goals? Are they supported exclusively by commercials?

## Postman and Powers say there are two dimensions of commercials: money and social values:

**Money:** Advertisers pay for your attention. The shows with the most viewers are news shows.

The average American watches over 39,000 commercials in a year.

**Social Values:** Advertisers want to sell us stuff (or services or ideologies), but to motivate us to buy stuff we don't need, they must make us feel things about ourselves. (If they used logic, we would not be duped in to feeling inadequate, we could see that we could share stuff, and that we could live with less stuff.)

Commercials are "all about serious money", and they "are also about the serious manipulation of our social and psychic lives" say Postman and Powers. Most commercials have this basic premise: "whatever problem you face (lack of self-esteem, lack of attractiveness, lack of social acceptance) it can be solved, solved fast, and solve through a drug, a detergent, a machine or a saleable technique. One of the reasons commercials are so effective", they add, is that "people do not usually analyze them." Life's problems, including moral dilemmas, "are to be solved through chemistry and technology."

From

### **How to Watch TV News:**

*"For a market economy to work, the population must be made to believe that it is need of continuous improvement. If you are quite satisfied with your teeth, your hair, and your 2003 Honda, you will not be an avid consumer. The thematic thrust of advertising is to get you to think about your inadequate self and how you can get better."*

**Activity:** Write down the commercials that go along with shows for at least 48 hours. Note the time, the show being watched and the commercials that are either just before, during or immediately after the show. When you're done, see if you can find a pattern of the types of commercials with the types of shows. What does that tell you about who they think is watching and what they believe they can convince the viewer to purchase or do?

While we sit passively, the marketers, politicians and media organizations plot to persuade us. They hook us through our emotions while trying to convince us we are smart, rational thinkers. (Check out Dr. Zimbardo's Resisting Influence piece in this packet) We believe we have a great deal of choice; that we can't be that easily controlled; after all there are hundreds of channels! But according to Corporate Research Project, just "five major corporations are the gatekeepers and decision makers for the programming choices of the vast majority of the American people".

Consider the authenticity of 'reality' prison shows. People tell me they gain a greater understanding of prison life by watching these shows. What do you think? Is prison life as they portray it on TV? Does everyone have quick, smart and witty remarks? Do the people where you are - including you - look like the people in the shows? Your answers to these questions are the same answers that apply to all shows: dramas, comedies, reality shows and yes, even the history channel are not like real life.

### **Some Postman / Powers' recommendations for what to do when watching TV:**

1. When encountering a news show, you must come with a firm idea of what is important.
2. In preparing to watch a TV news show, keep in mind that it is a 'show'.
3. Never underestimate the power of commercials.
4. Pay special attention to the language of newscasts.
5. Reduce by at least one-third the amount of TV news you watch. (Read the news, too!)
6. Reduce by one third the number of opinions you feel obligated to have.

***How To Watch TV News*** by Neil Postman and Steve Powers 2008. Penguin Books

### **Five things we need to know about technological change** by Neil Postman (1998)

**#1.** All technological change is a trade-off. This means for every advantage a new technology offers, there is always a corresponding disadvantage. We always pay a price for technology; the greater the technology the greater the price.

Examples: think of the automobile, which for all its obvious advantages, has poisoned our air, choked our cities, and degraded the beauty of our natural landscape. Or you might reflect on the paradox of medical technology which brings wondrous cures but is, at the same time, a demonstrable cause of certain diseases and disabilities, and has played a significant role in reducing the diagnostic skills of physicians. Culture always pays a price for technology.

**#2.** The advantages and disadvantages of new technologies are never distributed evenly among the population. This means that every new technology benefits some

and harms others. Who specifically benefits from the development of a new technology? Which groups, what type of person, what kind of industry will be favored? And, of course, which groups of people will thereby be harmed?

Technology favors some people and harms others; these are questions that must always be asked. There are always winners and losers in technological change and the winners always try to persuade the losers that they are really winners.

**#3.** Embedded in every technology is a powerful idea, an epistemological, political or social prejudice with practical consequences.

Every technology has a philosophy which is given expression in how the technology makes people use their minds, and what it makes us do with our bodies, and how it codifies the world, in which of our senses it amplifies, in which of our emotional

and intellectual tendencies it disregards. The sum and substance of what Marshall McLuhan meant when he coined the famous sentence, "The medium is the message."

**#4.** Technological change is not additive; it is ecological, which means, it changes everything and is, therefore, too important to be left entirely in the hands of Bill Gates.

Example: what happens if we place a drop of red dye into a beaker of clear water? Do we have clear water plus a spot of red dye? Obviously not we have a new coloration to every molecule of water. That is what I mean by ecological change. A new medium does not change something; it changes everything.

**#5.** Technology tends to become mythic; that is, perceived as part of the natural order of things, and therefore tends to control more of our lives than is good for us

## Quotes Out of Context:

### Question and Reflection

*"You'll never ever be able to convince a person thru logical argument or even brilliant rhetoric that a free and just society is possible. You can show them. You can start doing it." - David Graeber*

*"There comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find out why they're falling in."  
- Archbishop Desmond Tutu*

*"Every city has thousands of institutions, programs, and agencies all committed to serving the public good. Why have we seen too little fundamental change?" - Peter Block*

*We need diverse cultural representation... "so that we begin to become the society which we're capable of becoming; of which we aspire to; so that everyone participates in the making of culture in America, so that you will have something that you can call an American culture."  
- August Wilson*

*"Think occasionally of the suffering of which you spare yourself the sight." - Albert Schweitzer*

*"We must believe in free will, we have no choice."  
- Isaac Bashevis Singer*

*"We currently have all the capacity, expertise, programs, leaders, regulations, and wealth required to end unnecessary suffering and create an alternative future. We are a community of possibilities, not a community of problems."  
- Peter Block*

*"How can anyone read history and still trust politicians?" - Thomas Sowell*

*"... ask questions with a measure of skepticism."  
- Neil Postman*

*"The essential challenge is to transform the isolation and self-interest within our communities into connectedness and caring for the whole."  
- Peter Block*

*"The greater danger for most of us lies not in setting our aim too high and falling short; but in setting our aim too low, and achieving our mark."  
- Michelangelo*

*Blaming has no positive effect at all, nor does trying to persuade using reason and argument. That is my experience. No blame, no reasoning, no argument, just understanding."  
- Thich Nhat Hanh*

## NOTES

# Learn to Discern



## B.S.-DETECTION TIPS!

from Neil Postman and Carl Sagan

Quotes from  
**Bullshit and the Art of Crap-Detection**  
by Neil Postman 1969 *(sk comments in italics)*

*How can you defend yourself from media, bias, persuasion and manipulation?*

"As I see it, the best things schools can do for kids is to help them learn how to distinguish useful talk from bullshit. Every day in almost every way people are exposed to more bullshit than it is healthy for them to endure; helping kids to activate their crap-detectors should take precedence over any other legitimate educational aim."

"Varieties of bullshit with transcendent significance: (this is a perfectly good example of bullshit, since I have no idea what the words "transcendent significance" might mean and neither do you.) Thus, we have our first variety of bullshit: pomposity or style over substance. People are daily victimized by pomposity in that they may feel less worthy by people who use fancy words to hide their own insufficiencies. Education has made respectable this form of bullshit."

"When I hear such talk my own crap-detector achieves unparalleled spasms of activity."

"Superstition is ignorance presented in the cloak of authority. A superstition is a belief, usually expressed in authoritative terms for which there is no factual or scientific basis. Among the more intriguing of these are the beliefs that people learn more efficiently when they are taught in an orderly, sequential and systematic manner; that one's knowledge of anything can be "objectively" measured; and even that the act of "teaching" facilitates what is known as "learning."

*We learn because we want to, and we learn what we want to learn. Adults learn best when can relate new information to their lives, and to their existing knowledge.*

"The most amusing of all our superstitions is the belief that education will result in one's becoming a more decent, liberal, tolerant, and civilized human being. I have not noticed that teachers are any more humane than mechanics or certified public accountants."

"There are dozens of other forms of bullshit, including earthiness, which is based on the assumption that if one uses direct, off-color, four letter words like crap and shit, one somehow is making more sense than people engaged in pomposity."

"What can be done? We will not find 'answers' in schools. As Carl Rogers has said, teaching is an overrated activity; and any impression to the contrary is, in my opinion, mostly superstition."

*Unfortunately, teachers today may lose their zeal because of the endless testing and the disrespectful working conditions including low wages, lack of supplies, little freedom, and large class sizes. We can support them by creating learning opportunities - for all ages - wherever we can find them!*

"Crap-detecting is an art. Each person's crap-detector is embedded in their value system; if you want to teach the art of crap-detecting, you must help students become aware of their values. This is precisely why you will not find it in school."

"Postman's 3<sup>rd</sup> Law: At any given time, the chief source of bullshit with which you have to contend is yourself."

"Postman's 4<sup>th</sup> Law: Almost nothing is about what you think it is about. All human communications have deeply imbedded and profound hidden agendas. Most of the conversation can be assumed to be bullshit of one variety or another."

"Postman's 5<sup>th</sup> and final law: There is no more precious environment than our language environment."

"An idealist usually cannot acknowledge his own bullshit, because it is in the nature of his "ism" that he must pretend it does not exist. In fact, I should say that anyone who is devoted to an "ism" - Fascism, Communism, Capitalism - probably has a seriously defective crap-detector."

***"Just as societal norms are created through language and action, they can be dismantled through language and action." - Brett Lunceford***

## Carl Sagan's Baloney Detection Kit from *The Demon-Haunted World* (1995) (edited by sk)

Sagan proposes a rigorous but comprehensible "baloney detection kit" to separate sense from nonsense. Intellectual tools that can help us separate wishful thinking from genuine probability and to recognize a fallacious or fraudulent argument.

- Wherever possible there must be independent confirmation of the "facts."
- Encourage debate on the evidence exploring of all points of view. (*How many different points can you find?*)
- Arguments from authority carry little weight - "authorities" have made mistakes in the past. They will do so again in the future. In science there are no authorities; at most, there are experts.
- Consider more than one hypothesis. If there's something to be explained, think of all the different ways in which it could be explained. Then think of tests by which you might systematically disprove each of the considerations.
- Try not to get overly attached to a hypothesis just because it's yours. It's only a way-station in the pursuit of knowledge. Ask yourself why you like the idea. Compare it fairly with the alternatives. See if you can find reasons for rejecting it. If you don't, others will.
- Can you count or measure your point? What is vague and qualitative is open to many explanations. (*Complex, qualitative assessments are crucial to humanness, however.*)
- If there's a chain of argument, every link in the chain must work (including the premise) - not just most of them. (author's emphasis)
- Occam's Razor. This convenient rule-of-thumb urges us, when faced with two hypotheses that explain the data *equally well*, to choose the simpler. Always ask whether the hypothesis can be, at least in principle, falsified.... You must be able to check assertions out. Skeptics must be given the chance to follow your reasoning, to duplicate your experiments and see if they get the same result.

Elsewhere in *The Demon-Haunted World*, Sagan states that the loss of control over media and education has rendered people "unable to distinguish between what feels good and what's true." He goes on to say that well-supported scientific theories carry the same weight - or less - than explanations made up on the spot by authorities. He is afraid that people have lost the ability to "knowledgeably question." With a little effort at the start - that will quickly become habit - we can learn to discern, ask powerful questions, and improve our media environments!

**Calling Bullshit:** Here's a quandary: how are we going to help people get unstuck by recognizing and addressing all the bullshit in the world?

### HELPFUL WEBSITES:

**CALLING BULLSHIT FREE COURSE!!** "Bullshit is everywhere, and we've had enough. We want to teach people to detect and defuse bullshit where ever it may arise." [www.callingbullshit.org/videos](http://www.callingbullshit.org/videos)

**WHICH FACE IS REAL?** Can you tell which image is a real person and which one was made by a computer? Learn to defend yourself against 'deep fake'! [www.whichfaceisreal.com](http://www.whichfaceisreal.com)

**DEBUNKING HANDBOOK** – Free to download and print! (Available in 12 languages!)  
<https://www.climatechangecommunication.org/debunking-handbook-2020/>

**TRUTH-O-METER** [www.politifact.com](http://www.politifact.com)

"A fact-checking website that rates the accuracy of claims by elected officials and others who speak up in American politics". They do this to "to give citizens the information they need to govern themselves in a democracy."



## Fair Shake's

# MYTH-BUSTERS



**Myth: FALSE DICHOTOMIES** – The idea that you must choose between two options: Yes or No. Good or Bad. Right or Wrong. Candidate A or B. Rise or Fall. With Us or Against Us. Science vs Religion. Rational vs. Emotional. Individual vs. Group. and one that I've heard a lot in my life: "That's a man's (sport, job, perspective); it's not for women". (a form of yes or no) Whenever you need to make a choice, see if you can find 4, 5, or even 10 options!



**Myth: WE STOP LEARNING** – If I had never touched a flame before I turned 58 years old, I would learn to never touch one in the future if I touched one today. We acquire information constantly and we organize it into meaning. We may even care enough to find out how what we learned relates to what we already know and believe. One thing school failed to teach us is how to learn, and how to discern what we learn. The 'information sources' today are louder, strangely influential, and grossly incomplete. To get the full picture, we have to dig for information and ask good questions, while also trying to avoid getting overwhelmed or trapped. We must keep learning, and as we learn, we can learn to live together better! We do not have to accept limitations or acceptable levels of suffering. We are NOT STUCK. We can learn...and then change...whatever we want. "There is no inevitability as long as there is a willingness to contemplate what is happening." - Marshall McLuhan (author of *The Medium is the Message*)



**Myth: MERITOCRACY** - The more you learn the more you earn', 'you can make it if you try', 'pull yourself up', etc. Many ways to reinforce the idea that the people who have the money and the stuff are successful because they earned what they have, they got all their money through hard work and a shrewd (including a 100% respectful, environmentally-sound and firearms-free!) investment strategy. If only. Investing is almost never in line with our humanity values...yet it is always in our best interest to invest in humanity. Meritocracy is justified stratification; people above others for their achievements. Michael Sandel said: "We've slid into the assumption that the money people make is the measure of their contribution to the common good." I wonder how the merit idea would work if we increase accolades and 'status' based on care about others?



**Myth: INCARCERATION PAYS A 'DEBT TO SOCIETY'** - Why do we keep repeating this? Members of society believe that incarceration and the judicial system costs them money; they do not feel that they have been paid in any way. How could they? The only debt that has been paid is the one requested and required by a heartless and hungry punitive system. Society has little faith that 'the system' is providing the information necessary to reengage successfully. Together, we can change this. The 'justice system' is the only group getting paid.



**Myth: WE ARE FRAGILE** - The "Helping" Industry relies on us being weak. ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) scores may describe some aspects of people, but they in no way represent who we are. Many of us with high ACE scores have also become even more than resilient, we are now anti-fragile because of our challenges. This means that the adverse conditions made us stronger than we would have been without them.



**Myth: TV NEWS INFORMS YOU OF WHAT IS GOING ON** All you get from any single news source is what they want you to see and believe. What they show us is what their sponsors want them to show us. Sponsors demand support, so the advertisements determine the 'news' you'll see on TV. Social Media cannot be counted on to inform us of anything but an opinion. To get more pieces of the whole story, we must consider information offered by many news sources.



**Myth: WE NEED AUTHORITY AND MONEY TO 'FIX' OUR CHALLENGES** - Why would we ask the institutions, and the people who are complicit in maintaining them, to fix the problems they created? Winona LaDuke says: "You shouldn't let your dealer tell you what you need." Are we frustrated enough yet to work on the solutions together? We've been trained to believe these myths:

- Experts and 'science' have the solutions to our challenges; they will provide the relief for our suffering. Q: *What if they are the cause of our suffering?*
- Money will fix our problems. *Does money build trust, cooperation and feelings of confidence? We have gifts to share with each other. Our focus on money continues to take away our power. Money does not give us power. Feelings of agency, support and capability give us power!*



**Myth: INDIVIDUALISM** – Individualism is said to be a “fundamental American principle” so is authoritarianism, lying, stealing, false superiority and also the myth of the 'self-made' person and "united we stand".

INTERDEPENDENCE, on the other hand, is a fundamental planetary principle. We can easily see our impact on the environment and on each other because of our insatiable pursuit of more stuff; a belief created to fill the hole created by 'individualism'. The Rev. Desmond Tutu reminded us that "the solitary individual" is a contradiction in terms.



**Myth: "FREE-MARKET CAPITALISM"** - You'll find that file between Easter Bunny and Santa Clause. The game is rigged. Capitalism offers some opportunity, but 'the market' does not **respond to our needs**. Instead, it manufactures our desires and externalizes unhealthy costs.



**Myth: NOTHING WORKS:** Roger Martinson wrote, "the represent array of correctional treatments has no appreciable effect - positive or negative - on rates of recidivism of convicted offenders." In the magazine *Public Interest* (1974), he stated, "rehabilitative efforts that have been reported so far have no appreciable effect on recidivism." The way that I read this is: the ineffective 'programs' supplied by the prisons (or whomever else) did not impact the already low (compared to today) recidivism rate. He said that no single *thing* works because we are unique. We are not robots. One thing that always works is 100% pro-social: it's us working together!



**EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION REDUCE RECIDIVISM** Only YOU "reduce recidivism". You and nothing else. It is up to you to utilize education or employment opportunities to support your reentry success; YOU get full credit for how you apply your gifts. After all, employment and higher education did not keep Jeff Skilling, Bernie Madoff, Martha Stewart, Bill Cosby, Charles Kushner, or several elected representatives, out of prison.



**CRIMINOGENIC NEEDS** Incarcerated people have basic human needs; the same needs we all have. You are not different. This is yet another attempt to scientize othering.



**Myth: EXPERTS KNOW WHAT'S BEST**

Experts have agendas. Always consider who is paying the 'expert'. Non-profit status does not automatically indicate integrity. Professional 'fixers' are often poor listeners. Prisons, schools and hospitals tell us what we need, they rarely ask what we think or feel. How can they 'help' if they don't hear? We can learn to listen to ourselves and each other by asking questions. We can work, care, and grow together to build our capacity for complexity, cooperation, constructive learning, critical thinking, and agency! We are the 'experts' we've been waiting for.

# Attention Budget Worksheet

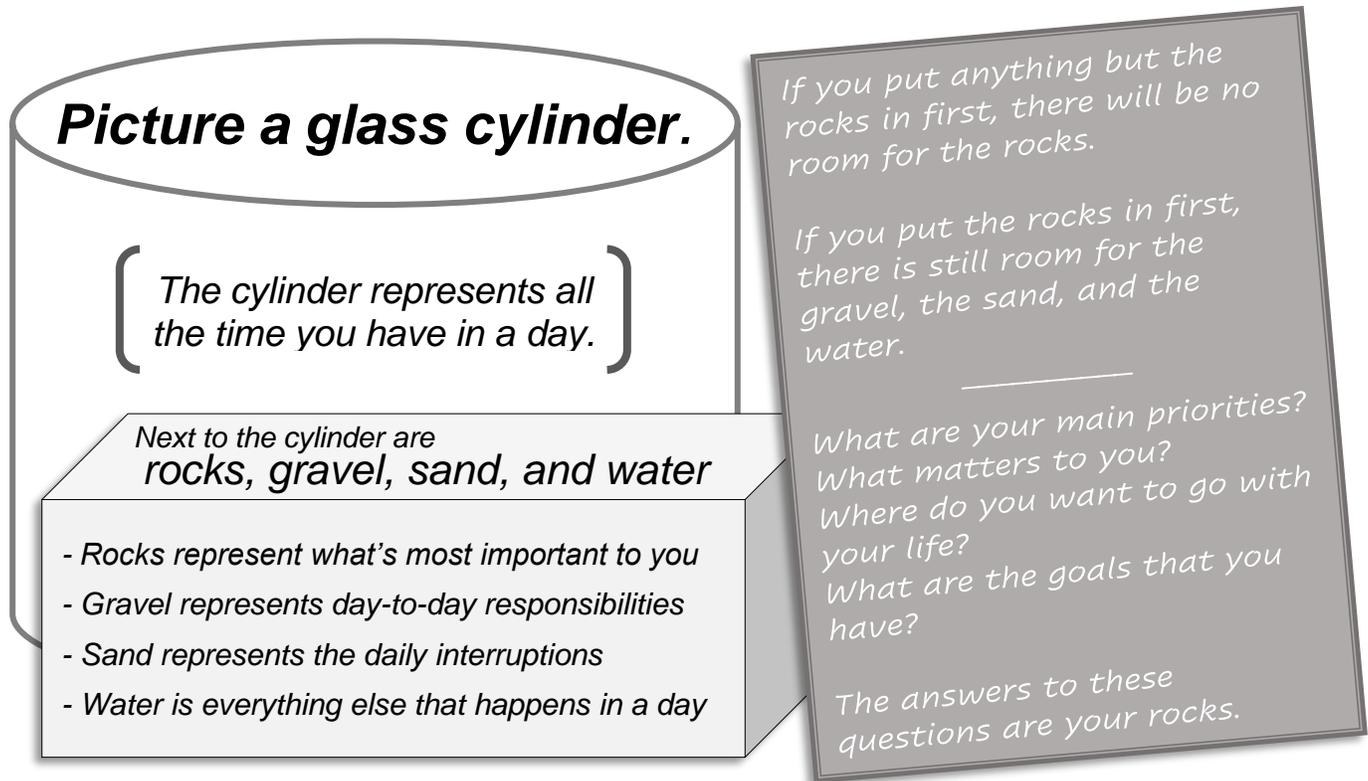
|                                             |                                                          | <i>Time Invested in</i> | Planned | Actual Time Spent |
|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------|-------------------|
| <b>Daily</b><br><i>Work</i>                 | Work                                                     |                         |         |                   |
|                                             | Travel time to and from everything                       |                         |         |                   |
|                                             | Other Travel...for errands, etc                          |                         |         |                   |
| <i>Food</i>                                 | Shopping (perhaps certain days per week?)                |                         |         |                   |
|                                             | Meals – cooking                                          |                         |         |                   |
|                                             | Meals – cleaning up                                      |                         |         |                   |
|                                             | Meals – away from home                                   |                         |         |                   |
| <i>Exercise</i>                             | Walk, stretch                                            |                         |         |                   |
|                                             | Aerobic – elevate your heartbeat!                        |                         |         |                   |
|                                             | Meditation / Yoga                                        |                         |         |                   |
| <i>Thinking</i>                             | Planning and Prioritizing                                |                         |         |                   |
|                                             | Evaluating (how effective was your plan?)                |                         |         |                   |
|                                             | Reflecting                                               |                         |         |                   |
|                                             | Meditation / Mindfulness                                 |                         |         |                   |
|                                             | Reading                                                  |                         |         |                   |
| <i>Frequent<br/>Other<br/>Possibilities</i> | Family (at home / visiting)                              |                         |         |                   |
|                                             | Friends                                                  |                         |         |                   |
|                                             | Hobbies                                                  |                         |         |                   |
|                                             | Classes and Homework (if in school)                      |                         |         |                   |
|                                             | Personal care: bathing, dressing, hair, teeth, etc.      |                         |         |                   |
| <i>Media</i>                                | Television, movies, YouTube®, electronic games           |                         |         |                   |
|                                             | Social Media, Text                                       |                         |         |                   |
|                                             |                                                          |                         |         |                   |
| <b>Weekly</b>                               | Weekly cleaning                                          |                         |         |                   |
|                                             | Events with Family and Friends                           |                         |         |                   |
|                                             | Intentionally building your gift, yourself, your world   |                         |         |                   |
|                                             | Travel time                                              |                         |         |                   |
|                                             | Paying bills, balancing money                            |                         |         |                   |
|                                             | Services                                                 |                         |         |                   |
| <b>Monthly</b>                              | Auto care                                                |                         |         |                   |
|                                             | Volunteering                                             |                         |         |                   |
| <b>Surprise<br/>Events</b>                  |                                                          |                         |         |                   |
|                                             |                                                          |                         |         |                   |
|                                             | <b>Totals:</b>                                           |                         | Planned | Actual Time Spent |
|                                             | Time alone: doing stuff                                  |                         |         |                   |
|                                             | Time alone: thinking, reflecting, reading (books)        |                         |         |                   |
|                                             | Quiet time with others                                   |                         |         |                   |
|                                             | Active time with others                                  |                         |         |                   |
|                                             | Time with Gizmos, Electronics and Screens                |                         |         |                   |
|                                             | Time dedicated to living your life in the fullest sense. |                         |         |                   |
|                                             | Time connecting to your own life and all life.           |                         |         |                   |

# MANAGE YOUR PRECIOUS TIME!

ATTENTION BUDGET Deeply connected to your financial budget!

THIS IS THE FIRST DRAFT! I've included what this one mind of mine could think of; I'd love to hear from you to provide a more accurate range of options!

Steven Covey's great metaphor for managing our time; from his book *First Things First*:



The world demands your attention! Everyone tries constantly to get your attention. Set boundaries! Make your goals your priority! Slight changes to your path are like a compound-interest investment in your life!

Commit to goals as if they are appointments with your future self. YOU are important. Your goals are important. Goals are proactive, not reactive. Goals help us determine our "no" and our "yes" for investing our time.

All security experts agree: Trust no-one.

- Stay skeptical.
- Turn off cookies.
- Limit tracking as much as possible.
- Don't say anything stupid; don't use hate speech
- Thou shalt not overshare, or share data about friends.
- If the product is free, it means that you are the product.
- Limit your time on each platform (fb, twitter, instagram, et al.)
- Privacy is a myth. Assume if it's on the phone it'll be published.
- Don't live your life online. Take a walk, play a musical instrument, build furniture, live in the real world.

*You have to decide what your highest priorities are and have the courage – pleasantly, smilingly, non-apologetically – to say 'no' to other things. And the way to do that is by having a bigger 'yes' burning inside.*

*- Steven Covey*

"Trying to be "safe" while using a "smart" phone is like trying to keep water out of a submarine with a screen door."

"If you join Facebook, you relinquish your privacy."

"When you receive an email from someone that wants to share their fortune with you, do not reply or click on the links!"

You can turn off media, social media, phone, text: YOU set the boundaries. No communication after 8 pm? Sundays? You choose your limit. With your time managed, you can invest time online...time digging for information, learning new things, listening to guided meditations, music and pontificators.

**: ]bUbWU'6 i X[ YhK cf\_gl YYh**

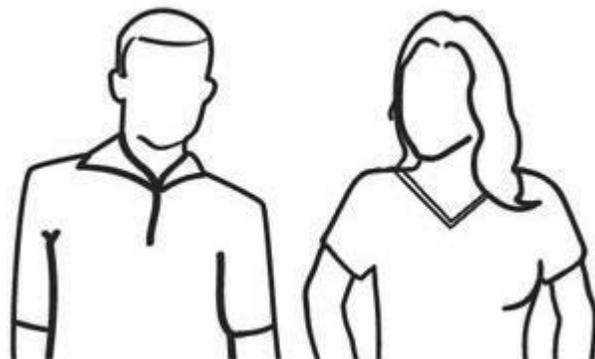
| Category                                 | Item                                      | Amount | Due Date |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|--------|----------|
| <ca Y'                                   | Rent or House Payments                    | "      | "        |
|                                          | Property Tax                              | "      | "        |
|                                          | Insurance                                 | "      | "        |
| CH Yf'<ca Y9I dYbgYg'                    | Electric                                  | "      | "        |
|                                          | Gas or Oil                                | "      | "        |
|                                          | Water and Sewer                           | "      | "        |
|                                          | Repairs                                   | "      | "        |
|                                          | Maintenance and Fees                      | "      | "        |
| HYW bc'c[ m                              | Land-Line                                 | "      | "        |
|                                          | Cellular                                  | "      | "        |
|                                          | Cable / Satellite / Internet              | "      | "        |
| HfUbgdcfHUjcb'                           | Car Payment                               | "      | "        |
|                                          | Gas                                       | "      | "        |
|                                          | Auto Insurance                            | "      | "        |
|                                          | Repairs / Maintenance                     | "      | "        |
|                                          | Other Transportation                      | "      | "        |
| <YUH `bgi fUbW'                          | Insurance                                 | "      | "        |
|                                          | Monthly Medical Expenses                  | "      | "        |
| 8 YVhDUma Ybfg.'@Ubgz<br>7 fYXjh7 UfXgz' |                                           | "      | "        |
|                                          |                                           | "      | "        |
|                                          |                                           | "      | "        |
| : ccX'                                   | Groceries                                 | "      | "        |
|                                          | Dining Out                                | "      | "        |
| : Ua ]mi9I dYbgYg'                       |                                           | "      | "        |
|                                          |                                           | "      | "        |
|                                          |                                           | "      | "        |
| CH Yf'9I dYbgYg'                         | 2 <sup>nd</sup> car, loan or credit card? | "      | "        |
| Gi fdf]gY'9I dYbgYg'                     | "                                         | "      | "        |
|                                          | "                                         | "      | "        |
| <b>ACBH&lt;@MG5J-B; G.'</b>              | <b>HcIU'</b>                              | "      | "        |
|                                          | <b>5 j YfU] Y'A cbh `mi9I dYbgY'</b>      | "      | "        |
|                                          | <b>; fUbX'HcIU'</b>                       | "      | "        |

|                           |                                               |   |   |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|---|---|
| <b>5 bbi U'9I dYbgYg'</b> | Subscriptions and Memberships                 | " | " |
|                           | Vehicle Registration                          | " | " |
|                           | Dental or Other Medical                       | " | " |
|                           | Donations                                     | " | " |
| "                         | <b>HcIU'5 bbi U'9I dYbgYg'</b>                | " | " |
|                           | <b>8 jj ]XY'hcIU'Vm%&amp;</b>                 | " | " |
|                           | <b>F Ygi `h'5 j YfU] Y'A cbh `mi9I dYbgY'</b> | " | " |





# Employment and Entrepreneurship



## Quotes Out of Context:

### Employment + Vocation

*"When choosing a new job, it is crucial to ask ourselves, "What can I stick to even on my worst days?"*  
- James Clear

*"It is difficult to get a man to understand something when his salary depends on his not understanding it."*  
- Upton Sinclair

*"What you do makes a difference; you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make."*  
- Jane Goodall

*"Choose a job you love and you'll never have to work a day in your life".*  
- Unknown

*"We have become a civilization based on work - not even "productive work" but work as an end and meaning in itself."*  
- David Graeber

*"You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step."*  
- Martin Luther King, Jr.

*Nothing will work unless you do.* - Maya Angelou

*"Things may come to those who wait, but only the things left by those who hustle."*  
- Abraham Lincoln

*"Most people's sense of dignity and self-worth is caught up in working for a living. Most people hate their jobs. We might refer to this as "the paradox of modern work."*  
- David Graeber

*"The beginning is the most important part of the work."*  
- Plato

*"If I'm not constantly being met by challenges that I am overcoming, how do I know that I'm capable?"*  
- David Graeber

*"The more I want to get something done, the less I call it work."*  
- Richard Bach

*"Hope is not a feeling of certainty that everything ends well. Hope is just a feeling that life and work have a meaning."*  
- Václav Havel

*"The only place success comes before work is in the dictionary."*  
- Vince Lombardi

NOTES

## Find A Job

Finding employment is one of the top priorities of most people in society. Finding employment after incarceration is not only pivotal for reentry success, it can also be a requirement for parole or a halfway house.

It is important to find satisfaction in our jobs, but sometimes we must temper our wishes with our needs.

When we have to take a job that we are not excited about now, we can leverage the feelings of dissatisfaction to push us toward whatever it is that we need to do to find satisfaction. These things may include: submitting applications for jobs that we really want but may not be available now, or trying to work in an organization that has a similar philosophy to our own so we can move within the organization to a job that is more fulfilling, or perhaps we need to get the education required for certain positions, or maybe what we really want is to start our own business but need to work a 'day job' until our idea provides enough income for us to thrive.

Knowing there are many avenues to employment, Fair Shake offers several ways for you to engage within our website.

**Remember: most jobs get filled without ever being listed on a website!**

When searching for employment, remember to consider what it is you want to do. What type of business would you like to work in, and in which positions do you think you would do well? What kind of jobs might you enjoy doing? Keep your eyes on the prize! Even if you must work in a job you don't care for now, remember that you are building character, patience, tolerance and REFERENCES. The image to the right is what our "Get A Job" page looks like today. This page, like all pages on the Fair Shake website, is constantly evolving. Please let us know what you think!

# Fair Shake Employment Pages

Find a Job

### Find a Job (or Start Your Own Business)

#### Job Search Engines

All search engines available online only

**job-applications.com** Job Applications  
#1 Independent Online Job Application Website We offer links to online application pages and printable job application forms from our comprehensive database. We feature information on 1,500 popular companies in major industries such as fast food, retail, grocery stores, hotels and restaurants. Each company listed has a page which includes company history, service offered and common job opportunities. <https://www.job-applications.com/>

**Way Up**  
https://www.wayup.com/  
 We feel strongly that opportunity belongs to all, and that an individual should never be limited by their economic status, race, sexual orientation, gender, who you know, where you went to school, or where you're from. 

**glassdoor** Glassdoor  
https://www.glassdoor.com/  
 Glassdoor is one of the fastest growing jobs and recruiting sites. It holds a growing database of millions of company reviews, CEO approval ratings, salary reports, interview reviews and questions, benefits reviews, office photos and more. No other site allows you to see which employers are hiring, what it's really like to work or interview there according to employees, and how much you could earn.

**JobsFor FelonsHub** Jobs for Felons Hub  
http://jobsforfelonshub.com/  
 A resource website created by a few folks who have personally watched their loved ones struggle to get a job due to having a felony. They share their free reentry employment guide here. Check out their website or their Facebook page for more information: <http://jobsforfelonshub.com/start-here/> or Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/jobsforfelonshub> 

**Successful Release**   
 We have personally contacted each company for information regarding jobs for felons. <https://successfulrelease.com/jobs-for-felons/>  
 Guide to Finding a Job Through Networking <https://successfulrelease.com/who-hires-felons-where-to-network-to-find-jobs-for-felons/>

**Formerly Incarcerated College Graduate Network**  
https://www.ficgn.org/job-leads Discover career-related jobs that welcome formerly incarcerated applicants and see the value in your lived experience.

**Jobline**  
 Toll-Free Number: 1-800-414-5748 If you are looking for employment, Jobline is a free public service available on the telephone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. New jobs are listed on the system each day, and jobs that are filled are removed. All that is required is a touch-tone telephone to establish your personalized job-search profile. The system is designed for you to use each day during your job search.

**USA Jobs**  
 An official website of the United States government <https://www.usajobs.gov/>

**O\*Net**  
 Occupation Search! <https://www.onetonline.org>

All of these websites have thousands of jobs available at different employability levels:

Indeed.com      Simplyhired.com      Monster.com      Linkedup.com

**Non-profit Job Search Engines:**

**Idealist**  
www.idealist.org Jobs, Internships and Volunteer Opportunities (that can sometimes turn in to jobs...)  


**Jobs That Help**  
https://www.jobsthathelp.com/  
 WISCONSIN JOB SEEKERS! Looking for a meaningful career that makes a positive difference in your community? Whether you are an experienced professional or an enthusiastic newcomer, you have come to the right place!

**Encore**   
www.encore.org  
 Jobs for people 50+ yrs of age

**Philanthropy News Digest**  
  
 Philanthropy News Digest: all levels of non-profit jobs.  
<http://philanthropynewsdigest.org/jobs>

**GIGS: Single or multiple day opportunities**  
 For an interesting temp option, you can check out the Craigslist in your area under 'Gigs'. You'll find opportunities that include moving furniture, doing yard work for a few hours, car dismantling, CDL temporary jobs, staff for weekend events, handyman, cleaning, carpentry, welding, electrical, plumbing, painting, brand ambassadors (reps) and much more. Many of these gigs have opportunities that can turn into jobs.  
Keep the author's intent in mind when searching on Craig's list. Beware that some listings are quite sketchy...  
https://newyork.craigslist.org/

**Start Your Own Business**  
 It's not easy, but for the creative, courageous and tenacious, it's often the right thing to do. Here are a few documents to help you get started.  


**Gary's Job Board: Truck Drivers wanted!**  
  
 Gary can find you a better truck driving job, with or without a CDL.  
 Website: <http://www.garysjobboard.com/>  
 More information about trucking / driving jobs:  
<https://www.fairshake.net/employment-trucking-driving-jobs/>

**Prepare For Work!**  
  
[www.fairshake.net/prepare-for-work/](http://www.fairshake.net/prepare-for-work/)  
 -- Resume Writing Ideas  
 -- Letter of Explanation  
 -- Prepare For Your Interview  
 ... and much more!

**Employer Support**  
 Give employers tools and information to help them hire you.  
  
 Share this document with your potential employers to help them hire you.

**Bonding, WOTC, and EEOC filers**  
  
 You are bondable     Federal Bonding Filer  
 Work Opportunity Tax Credit Filer  
 Equal Employment Opportunity Commission: Background Checks  
 More on Background Checks: What Applicants Need to Know  
 Formerly Incarcerated Individuals' Job Restrictions (US and Wisconsin) Created by the WI-DDC

**US Department of Labor CareerOneStop**  
 Formerly Incarcerated Reemployment  
  
<http://www.careeronestop.org/ExOffender/index.aspx>  
 Watch The Video!   
 1-877-348-0502    TTY: 1-877-348-0501  
 Career OneStop Locations:  
 Alabama     Louisiana     Ohio

## Prepare For Work

There are many ways to approach employment. Some people 'know somebody', sometimes we get lucky and meet our new boss or coworkers where we volunteer or through a recreational activity...but most of us will write resumes, find available jobs online or through an employment agency, fill out applications and then endure one or many job interviews.

Thanks to the generosity of several resume' writing professionals and job readiness coaches, we've assembled what we've found to support you as you build your resume', your interview skills, and your confidence!

While the information here addresses several of the concerns of job seekers, we want to encourage you to also consider topics from the "Free School" section of this book, the website or the software, to support you through the inevitable challenges that will occur as you create desirable outcomes.

Please remember: many employers want to hear more about how you built yourself up while you were incarcerated than they do about your past. Keep the conversation positive!

They want to know that you care. That you will be a good listener and team member, if you can embrace the company culture, learn, follow through and get things done. They want to know that you are interested and motivated.

### Prepare for Work

Everyone prepares for work in a different way. Fair Shake offers many tools for you to use in the way that you choose to prepare for temporary jobs or long-term careers.



O\*Net  
Occupation Search! <https://www.onetonline.org>

#### The Resume Writing Academy

[www.resumewritingacademy.com](http://www.resumewritingacademy.com)

**Resume Writing** This document generously shared with Fair Shake by The Resume Writing Academy thanks to: Wendy Enelow, MRW, CCM, CPRW, JCTC and Louise Kursmark, MRW, CCM, CPRW, JCTC

Resume Examples

Top Tips & Techniques for Writing Best-in-Class Resumes  
Free 78-minute resume writing audio webcast with printable handouts.

Best Resumes and Letters for Ex-Offenders  
A resume guide that addresses special employment issues facing ex-offenders.



#### Raw Resume

<http://www.rawresume.com/write-resume-definitive-guide>

**How to Write a Great Resume: The Definitive Guide**  
This guide will take you from start to finish through all the aspects of a great resume and help you transform your current one into an interview-winning resume. Written for beginner and intermediate job searchers. Print or read The Complete Guide to A Winning Resume - Cheat Sheet to get started.

Here I am - Resume Writing That Gets Noticed  
The Complete Guide to a Winning Resume Cheat-Sheet

Discussing Your History in the Interview  
Discussing Criminal History in the Interview

#### Other Employment Support

Jails to Jobs

[http://www.jailstojobs.org/html/help\\_with\\_new\\_entry.html](http://www.jailstojobs.org/html/help_with_new_entry.html)



Jails to Jobs is an organization that gives ex-offenders the tools they need to find employment. On this website you'll find a step-by-step plan to follow as you carry out your job search.

#### Livecareer.com

Livecareer.com offers great tools and resources for exploring careers, whether you're searching for a new job or considering a career change - See more at:

<https://www.livecareer.com/quintessential/career-exploration>

#### how2become.com

How2become.com offers a resource guide that provides detailed insight into how to answer certain questions, body language and more.

<https://www.how2become.com/resources/interview-skills/>

#### Fair Shake Employment Documents

Available Offline and Online

- Employment Tips
- Resume Guide
- Interview Tips
- Interview Questions for You to Ask
- Sample Interview Questions
- Computer and Internet Tips
- Letter of Explanation
- Functional Resume Example
- Accomplishments and Skills Worksheet
- Employer Support
- Resume Examples
- Favorite Verbs for Your Resume
- Sample Employment Application
- Cover Letter | Thank You Letter
- Self Employment



#### Employer Support!

Share this document with your potential employers to help them hire you.

#### Bonding, WOTC, and EEOC fliers

- You are bondable | Federal Bonding Flier
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit Flier
- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission: Background Checks
- More on Background Checks: What Applicants Need to Know
- Formerly Incarcerated Individuals' Job Restrictions (US and Wisconsin) Created by the WI-DOJ

#### Start Your Own Business

It's not easy, but for the creative, courageous and tenacious, it's often the right thing to do. Here are a few documents to help you get started.

- From the Small Business Administration:
  - Small Business Administration: Start A Business!
- From the Consumer Information Center:
  - Planning and Goal Setting for A Small Business
  - Minding Your Own Business
  - How to Write a Business Plan
- From the Fair Shake Reentry Packet
  - Self Employment

#### US Department of Labor Career Onestop

Formerly Incarcerated Reemployment

<http://www.careeronestop.org/ExOffender/index.aspx>



1-877-348-0502 TTY: 1-877-348-0501

#### Career Onestop - Locations:

- |             |                |                |
|-------------|----------------|----------------|
| Alabama     | Louisiana      | Ohio           |
| Alaska      | Maine          | Oklahoma       |
| Arizona     | Maryland       | Oregon         |
| Arkansas    | Massachusetts  | Pennsylvania   |
| California  | Michigan       | Rhode Island   |
| Colorado    | Minnesota      | South Carolina |
| Connecticut | Mississippi    | South Dakota   |
| Delaware    | Missouri       | Tennessee      |
| Florida     | Montana        | Texas          |
| Georgia     | Nevada         | Texas          |
| Hawaii      | Nevada         | Vermont        |
| Idaho       | New Hampshire  | Virginia       |
| Illinois    | New Jersey     | Washington     |
| Indiana     | New Mexico     | West Virginia  |
| Iowa        | New York       | Wisconsin      |
| Kansas      | North Carolina | Wyoming        |
| Kentucky    | North Dakota   |                |

#### Career Onestop

Put together a successful job search with resources on resumes, interviewing, networking and finding job openings.

<https://www.careeronestop.org/JobSearch/job-search.aspx>

Everything in this section available Online Only

- America's Service Locator connects individuals to employment and training opportunities available at local American Job Centers. [www.ServiceLocator.org](http://www.ServiceLocator.org)
- America's Career InfoNet occupation and industry information, salary data and career exploration assistance. [www.CareerInfoNet.org](http://www.CareerInfoNet.org)
- mySkills myFuture helps career changers find new occupations to explore. [www.mySkillsmyFuture.org](http://www.mySkillsmyFuture.org)
- Veterans ReEmployment is a one-stop website for employment, training, and financial help after military service. [www.CareerOneStop.org/ReEmployment/Veterans](http://www.CareerOneStop.org/ReEmployment/Veterans)

#### About the Fair Shake Personal Web Page

- Members differentiate themselves from other applicants!
- Members share information easily. No need to carry documents; they are stored in their account.
- Shows dedication to reentry success and provides a place to demonstrate interest in taking a proactive approach by sharing skills, character traits, and intentions.
- Employers and property managers can get to know members comfortably, reducing likelihood of auto-dismissal based on felony history.
- Fair Shake Member Card provides member information, url and password to the member's page.
- Member Web Page password is changeable! Access only given to current password holders.
- Fair Shake can verify references, even for volunteer work. Check out our example Personal Web Page | Personal Web Page Flyer | Fair Shake Brochure

Also available to Fair Shake members is a free email account, data storage and tutorials to learn to use electronic tools.

#### National Resources and Information

Advice from a Senior U.S. Probation Officer Workforce Development Coordinator

<http://community.ncdo.gov/forums/pi/46711/85165>

- Federal Bureau of Prisons Employment Information Handbook
- Background Checks - EEOC

**Veterans Employment Assistance: The Transition Assistance Program (TAP)** was established to meet the needs of veterans during their period of transition into civilian life by offering job-search assistance and related services. The guide books below were created specifically to support you by applying

## Self-Employment

CAUTION: Entrepreneurship is NOT for the weak!

The idea of owning a business is attractive to many types of people. Some are drawn to 'be their own boss', to work closer to where they live, or to provide a product or service to an area where it is needed. Some people feel they can take more pride in their work and also be recognized for their efforts, still others feel they can have greater job security and may even be able to sell their business or pass it on to their children. Our shared *American Dream* features a 'rags to riches' story that includes a plucky protagonist that pulls her- or himself up with their bootstraps to achieve financial and social success.

One of our basic human needs is to feel we have the power to determine our destiny. Owning your own business is certainly one way to take control. Unless the start-up is handled cautiously, intelligently and with a long-term commitment, however, a person can drive their dream right into the ground.

This brief document will only cover the very basics (mostly using bullet points!) of things to consider in starting a business. It is merely a check list to assess if this is the right path for you, and also to consider some of the many things you'll need to address to get started...and then to keep it running.

### **Let's begin with some simple questions to ask yourself:**

- What kind of business do I want to start? Will I provide a product or a service?
- Where will my business be located? What type of community supports my business? (examples: neighborhood, city, state, internet)
- Who are my customers? What makes them different from other consumers?
- How must I organize my company: What regulations must I follow? Does this business require special licensing or permits? How should I incorporate? (examples: LLC, S Corp, B Corp, non-profit)
- Where and how will I advertise or otherwise communicate to my customers?
- Does my business benefit all of the members of the community in which it is located?
- What is the name of my business and what is my 'tag line' or 'elevator speech' to describe it?
- How will I explain my business to my grandmother? (good practice; even if she is no longer with us)
- Can I tolerate book-keeping or am I able to pay someone who can?

### **Are you willing and able to:**

- Start organized and stay organized?
- Follow legal procedures (including lots of paperwork!)?
- Ask for help?
- Pay taxes willingly?
- Be flexible, creative and responsive when things don't go as planned?

**Now let's look at some difficult things to consider in starting a business:**

- Can I handle a lot of rejection and nay-sayers?
- Will I feel jilted or jaded when my friends are not willing to be my customers or backers?
- Can I live with little to no income for at least 1 year and up to 3 years?
- Am I willing to sacrifice much of my leisure time or social life for up to 3 years as well?
- Do I have a super-strong moral base? (The temptation to cheat can be powerful for many.)
- Can I provide clear proof I will be able to succeed - and that I am a worthwhile risk - to small business loan officers?
- Do I have solid back-up plan for repayment?
- Am I comfortable with risk or will I worry?
- Am I physically strong enough to endure hard work, stress and exhaustion?
- What aspects about running a business matter most to me?
- Am I a 'people person' and if not, can I hire this person, or how will I communicate with customers?
- What are my 'competitors' doing? What do I do similarly or differently to what they are doing?
- How long will it take to start my business before any money begins to come in? Can I start it while I work at another job?
- Am I willing and able to trademark, copyright or patent my name, logo, written or recorded material or invention?

**Some possible snags or ways to fail at starting a business:**

- Need others to do work or research for you to get started.
- Blame others or 'the system' when things get difficult
- Require more resources from outside investors than you are willing to contribute yourself.

**A couple of resources for entrepreneurial hopefuls:**

**SCORE:** <https://www.score.org/>

**Small Business Administration:** <https://www.sba.gov/>

**US Patent and Trademark Office:** <http://www.uspto.gov/>

**How to Write a Business Plan:** <http://articles.bplans.com/how-to-write-a-business-plan/>

**Free Government Publications:** The Consumer Information Catalog lists approximately 200 free and low-cost publications available to you from various federal agencies. The publications cover topics such as money, health, employment, housing, federal programs, travel, small business, and education.

To write for your free catalog, send your request and address to: **Federal Citizen Information Center**

**Also ask for "How to Write a Business Plan Pub #173**

Attn: Catalog  
Pueblo, CO 81009

Please share your thoughts, ideas, questions and concerns. Your questions, suggestions and ideas will help me improve this page to better serve our future business owners!

# Write Your Business Plan!

*This text is from the Small Business Administration website:*

<https://www.sba.gov/business-guide/plan-your-business/write-your-business-plan>

**Traditional business plan format:** When you write your business plan, you don't have to stick to the exact business plan outline, but it would be wise to use the sections that make the most sense for your business and your needs. Traditional business plans use some combination of these nine sections.

**Executive summary:** Briefly tell the reader what your company does and why it will be successful. Include your mission statement, your product or service, and basic information about your leadership team, employees, market and location. Include a brief financial summary and plans for growth, especially if you plan to ask for financing.

**Company description:** This is where you will share detailed information about your company. Be specific. Describe the problems your business solves. Describe the consumers, organizations, and businesses your company plans to serve. Explain your competitive advantages. Are there experts on your team? Have you found the perfect location for your store? Why are you so passionate about the product or service to see the project through to become a solvent business? This is the place to extol your strengths.

**Market analysis** You'll need a good understanding of your industry, what is in store for the future, and your target market. Competitive research will show you what other businesses are doing and what their strengths are. In your market research, look for trends and themes. What do your competitors do? Why does, or doesn't it work? Can you do it better?

**Organization and management:** Describe how your company will be structured, who will run it and how it will be managed. What is the legal structure of your business? A C corporation, S corporation, B corporation, a non-profit corporation? Will you have a partnership? If not, will you simply be a sole proprietor or possibly a limited liability company (LLC)? Consider all options before you file with the IRS or state regulators.

Use an organizational chart to lay out who's in charge of what. Describe the qualities each team member will bring to contribute to the success of your venture. Consider including resumes of key team members.

**Service or product line:** Describe what you sell or what service you offer. Explain how the product or

service benefits your customers and what the product lifecycle looks like. Share your plans for owning your intellectual property, like trademark, copyright or patent filings. If you're doing research and development for your service or product, explain it in detail.

**Marketing and sales:** There's no single way to approach a marketing strategy. Your strategy should include the reception for your audience and your advertising outlets. It should also include flexibility should your product, service or messaging need to change slightly. How will you attract and retain customers? Where and how will you sell your products or services? Be clear! You'll need to refer to this section later when you share your financial projections.

You'll refer to this section later when you make financial projections, so make sure to thoroughly describe your complete marketing and sales strategies.

**Funding request:** Your goal here is to clearly explain your funding needs for the next 5 years. How much will you need? What will you use it for? Demonstrate how your profits will keep your business fluid while you're able to pay off a loan. Or would you prefer to take on investors? Give a detailed description of how you'll use your funds. Specify if you need funds to buy equipment, materials, cover payroll or other specific bills. Include your strategy for paying off debt or selling the business.

**Financial projections:** Here you want to convince the reader that your business plan is stable, will remain solvent and will be a financial success. List the collateral you will put up against a loan. Provide a prospective financial outlook for the next five years. Include forecasted income statements, balance sheets, cash flow statements, and capital expenditure budgets. For the first year, be very specific. Use monthly projections if possible. Make sure to clearly explain your projections, and match them to your funding requests. This is a great place to use graphs and charts to tell the financial story of your business.

**Appendix:** Use your appendix to provide supporting documents or other materials were specially requested. Common items to include are credit histories, resumes, product pictures, letters of reference, licenses, permits, patents, legal documents, advertisements from competitors, trade news about your product, materials, or services, any contracts you may have now or which are on the table.

# Tips for Writing a Business Plan



## What is a business plan and why do I need one?

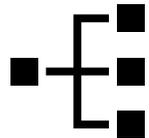
A business plan describes the strategy that the creators of an organization plan to follow as they build a new business...for instance, what steps will you take to start the business, and then what steps will you take to grow the business? The plan includes a description of the products or services that will be offered by the business, the customers, location, competitors, anticipated expenses, profit margin, plan to bring in employees, licensing or other special requirements and details specific to each industry, such as product shelf life and or cost of training staff. It should be written as a 3-to-5-year plan that includes short term and long-term goals. A business plan includes the mission statement and the vision for the organization. Use them to guide your structure and strategy. Business owners who need funding from another source to start the business – whether loans, grants or investors – will need a business plan to convince the grantors, lenders or investors that the business is a good investment.

## A BUSINESS PLAN IS USUALLY REQUIRED TO OBTAIN FUNDING OR ATTRACT BUSINESS PARTNERS.

## Is a business plan good for anything besides applying for funding?

Certainly. A business plan will guide you through the beginnings of your business. It will serve as a guide to get started, a measuring tool to keep you on track and a tool box notice problems and address them when they arise.

A business plan helps you monitor your cash flow, time and production rate to help you capture all of the aspect of creating your goods or services. It can be helpful in securing employees so you can attract a team that clearly sees and embraces your vision. It also provides a vision for potential partners or complementary business relationships, which can grow your business, or improve the environment for your business category.



If you can, incorporate graphs, charts, and visual displays of research, statistics and projections. They help readers stay engaged and visual descriptions appeal to different learning styles. They can also provide quick references.

Be prepared to make changes as the business develops!

### Business Plan Basics:

1. Executive summary
2. Company description
3. Market analysis
4. Organization and management
5. Describe your services or products
6. Marketing and sales goals
7. Request funding
8. Financial projections
9. Appendix





# Fair Shake's Guide to TRUCKING OPPORTUNITIES!

## ATA



ATA Headquarters  
950 North Glebe Road, Suite 210  
Arlington, VA 22203-4181

<https://www.trucking.org/>

From their website: American Trucking Associations is the largest and most comprehensive national trade association for the trucking industry. ATA is an 86-year old federation with state trucking association affiliates in all 50 states. We represent every sector of the industry, from LTL to truckload, agriculture and livestock to auto haulers, and from large motor carriers to small mom-and-pop operations.



## OOIDA

OOIDA HEADQUARTERS  
1 NW OOIDA Dr.  
Grain Valley, MO 64029  
816-229-5791 800-444-5791

<https://www.ooida.com/>



The mission of the Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association, Inc. is to serve owner-operators, small fleets and professional truckers; to work for a business climate where truckers are treated equally and fairly; to promote highway safety and responsibility among all highway users; and to promote a better business climate and efficiency for all truck operators. More than 150,000 members of OOIDA are men and women in all 50 states and Canada who collectively own and/or operate more than 240,000 individual heavy-duty trucks and small truck fleets. All OOIDA officers and directors are now, or have been, professional truckers, and are elected from the membership, by the membership. The 22-member board helps define OOIDA's position on all major trucking issues. They offer information and education in all areas of independent truck ownership and responsibility.



**Truck Drivers wanted! Since 2004.** [www.garysjobboard.com](http://www.garysjobboard.com)

Gary can find you a better truck driving job, with or without a CDL.

Gary's Job Board was created to help Truck Drivers find Driving Jobs, and to help Dispatchers find Drivers. Gary's Job Board is 100% unaffiliated. We DO NOT recruit for any carriers. Our service will always be FREE to drivers because drivers' rock. Here's how garysjobboard.com works: (this is NOT a run-of-the-mill trucker job board. No one will call you, you have all the power).

- € Complete your Driver Profile, it takes 2 minutes.
- € Companies will see your first name, type of CDL, and experience level.
- € They will not see your email address.
- € You will receive a company invite by email and the email will come from our system.
- € Check out what they are offering. Answer the email or not. You'll receive another invite down the road.



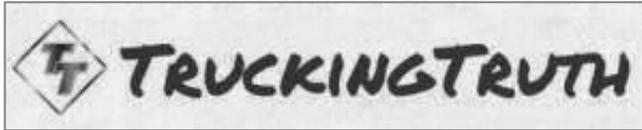
**5`Hfi W]b[ 'Wta** [www.alltrucking.com](http://www.alltrucking.com)  
 PO Box 26330,  
 Overland Park, KS, 66213

"Welcome to AllTrucking.com, your source for finding information to become a truck driver and find a trucking career. Whether you are looking for your next truck driving job or want to learn how to earn your CDL, we have guides for you. We have even organized some of the more common questions that might be found on a CDL exam, and put them into a simple practice test! "



They have a library of guidebooks - from career support and paying for school to helping veterans – "we've got a resource to help anybody." Here are a few of our most frequently requested pages:

- € How to Pay for Truck Driving School
- € Truck Driving Jobs: Careers in Commercial Truck Driving
- € Company-Paid CDL Training Programs: A Comprehensive Guide



**Hfi W]b[ 'Hfi H '**  
[www.truckingtruth.com](http://www.truckingtruth.com)

Trucking Truth (TT) was created in 2007 to give new drivers a true picture of what a career as a truck driver is all about and a straightforward strategy for surviving that first year of their career. I wanted people to know that trucking can be an awesome career for the right person and it's totally doable if you work hard, keep a great attitude, and have a solid strategy in place.

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A huge informational website that includes:

- € Trucker's Forum
- € Truck Driver's Career Guide
- € Free CDL Practice test
- € A list of companies that hire people with a criminal history.
- € "The Road Home" podcast
- € All things CDL
- € Trucking Company Reviews
- € Trucking Wiki...where you can find out FAQ's, physical health tests and issues, limitations and opportunities for drivers with a criminal history, driving with pets and much more.



**On Completion of Paid CDL Training**

Upon completion of your paid CDL training, you will sign an agreement to work for the company for a specified amount of time. This is how they recoup the time and money they've invested in your CDL training, which is a very fair deal for both sides.

If you quit working for the company before your obligation is complete, you will owe the company a prorated amount of money for the schooling. At some companies, your training will be free once your obligation is complete. Others may require you to make payments from your paycheck to cover the tuition for the schooling.

TT offers a review of the companies that offer paid CDL training.

## **Employment Tips**

We often have to work our way up to the job we want; either because it is not available when we go to find it or we need more experience, education, preparation or time to get ready. Although we will spend time working at jobs that are not our preference, we can enjoy the interim more when we stay focused on our goals.

### **Start by asking yourself:**

- What kind of job or career do I want?
- What am I willing to do, learn or sacrifice to get that job or career?

Before venturing out into the world of work you will have to obtain necessary documents.

The most frequently requested documents are:

- Birth Certificate
- Driver's License or Basic Identification
- Social Security Card

You can find links to the applications that you need in our Resource Directory!

### **Next, ask yourself the following questions**

- What occupations or industries in my area are in need of employees?
- What are my employment limitations due to my conviction (if any)?
- What do I need to earn each month to afford housing, food, energy, phone, child support, loans fines, transportation, etc? (check out our Build a Budget Worksheet)
- Which strategies will be most effective for finding the job that is right for me?

### **To prepare to apply for a job you may want to create the following worksheets:**

- Inventory your work history in and out of prison
- List your training, skills, limitations, and health considerations
- Gather all the information you will need to fill out employment applications. Are you ready to fill them out online? (Several companies only accept online applications.)

### **Considerations and Preparation**

What are your job-finding resources?

- Classified ads (mainly on-line) and signs in windows!
- Applying for jobs with companies you want to work for
- Job Assistance and Job Training centers
- Job search websites

### **Skills Assessment and Personal Strengths Evaluation**

Consider taking a free online self-assessment test to see what types of work you'll be best suited for.

### **Do you need clothes for your interview or new job?**

Check out Dress for Success or Career Gear, programs that may have a location near you! (dressforsuccess.org and careergear.org)

### Resume' and Interview tips:

Two good places where you get the chance to show a company why they cannot afford NOT to hire you. Keep these tips in mind as you write your application or resume', and prepare for job interviews:

- Be cheerful in your in-person or telephone job interviews.
- Talk about the benefits of your experience and the relevant expertise you offer.
- Speak about the value you would bring to the company.
- Share stories in the job interview about success in prior assignments.
- Talk about your ability to work with a diverse group of people.

### Typical Barriers to Employment:

- Lack of updated resume
- Appropriate clothing for job search
- Transportation
- Stable housing
- Substance abuse
- Poor interview skills
- Poor job search skills
- No diploma or GED
- Lack of documentation (ID, etc.)

### SMART: What is your strategy for overcoming barriers and creating success?

You can create a clear strategy by following SMART guidelines:

*Specific Measurable Attainable Realistic Timely (or Tangible)*

**Specific** – what is the specific goal you wish to achieve?

Can you answer these questions?

- Who do you need to be involved?
- What do you really want to accomplish?
- When do you want to accomplish it?
- Where do you need to be to accomplish it?
- Why do you want to achieve this goal?
- Which things do you need to get in order and which are the constraints to achieving your goal?

**Measurable** – How will you know when you've achieved your goal? What criteria have you set up to measure your progress and reach your target dates?

**Attainable** – Can you see yourself achieving this goal? Can you see the path to get there and then see yourself in that place of having reached the goal?

**Realistic** – Are you willing and able to achieve the goal?

**Timely** – How long do you need to achieve your goal? Work out your goal date and then the smaller goals that must be met to meet that goal date?

**Tangible** – Imagine: can you taste, touch, smell, see or hear the results of achieving your goal?

## Interview Tips

Before you head to your interview, ask yourself these questions:

- Do you really want this job?
- Are you qualified for the job?
- Do you believe you can get the job?
- What attitude and information must you deliver to the employer to get the job?
- Are you ready for your interview?

If you decide you really want to get this job, consider these tips:

1. Keep your answers short, yet full of information, unless you are asked to clarify. Try to put yourself in the interviewer's shoes; asking the same questions of many applicants! Fine tune your answers to the Sample Interview Questions and bring your authenticity and vitality to the interview.
2. Determine what your key strengths, gifts, talents and assets are. Be sure to state them confidently throughout the interview.
3. Prepare for a variety of interview questions. Consider the challenges you have overcome, the difficult interpersonal situations that you resolved with others, and several success stories.
4. Describe specific situations and accomplishments. Generalities fail to show the interviewer your strengths and assets and how they can benefit the company and the position that is available.
5. Describe yourself on their team. Show the interviewer how you fit in the existing work environment and company culture. During the interview, align your language with the language of the team.
6. Observe your non-verbal communication. Are you saying what you mean to say? Practice answering some of the Sample Interview Questions in front of a mirror to see if your eyes and your gestures agree with your words.
7. Ask questions to make sure this where you want to work! Find out what you need to know to accept the job. The interviewer will understand that you want to make sure you're a good fit, too. This is an important quality in a team player.
8. Be sure to talk WITH the interviewer and not AT the interviewer. Interviews are stressful enough for both parties. Keep it human.
9. Research the company. Is it a good fit for you? Can you get behind the mission of the company? How much can you know about the work and the work environment before the interview?
10. Apply for jobs that you are skilled for and that you can appreciate...even if only as a stepping stone to your next job. If you truly want the job, you must be able to qualify for the position. Authenticity shines through your words and your non-verbal communication.

# Job Application Example

**Personal Information**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |        |                                                                                                                          |                      |                |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Last                                                                                                                                                                                                                | First  | MI                                                                                                                       | SSN#                 | Email          |
| Street Address                                                                                                                                                                                                      | City   | State                                                                                                                    | Zip                  | Home Phone     |
| Are you authorized to work in the United States?                                                                                                                                                                    |        |                                                                                                                          | Are you 18 or older? |                |
| Have you been convicted of a felony or been incarcerated in connection with a felony in the past seven years?<br><br><b><i>THIS QUESTION IS SLOWLY BEING REMOVED FROM MANY JOB APPLICATIONS. (but not all!)</i></b> |        | If yes, please explain:<br><br><b><i>BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS ANYTHING AN EMPLOYER MAY FIND IN A BACKGROUND CHECK.</i></b> |                      |                |
| Military Service?                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Branch | Are you a veteran?                                                                                                       | War                  |                |
| What position are you applying for?                                                                                                                                                                                 |        | How did you hear about this position?                                                                                    |                      |                |
| Expected Hourly Rate                                                                                                                                                                                                |        | Expected Weekly Earnings                                                                                                 |                      | Date Available |

**Previous Employment**

|          |                    |               |
|----------|--------------------|---------------|
| Company  | Phone              | Ending Salary |
| Address  | Supervisor         |               |
| Position | Reason for leaving |               |
| Company  | Phone              | Ending Salary |
| Address  | Supervisor         |               |
| Position | Reason for leaving |               |
| Company  | Phone              | Ending Salary |
| Address  | Supervisor         |               |
| Position | Reason for leaving |               |

**Education**

|                                        | Name/Location | Last Year Completed | Degree |
|----------------------------------------|---------------|---------------------|--------|
| High School                            |               |                     |        |
| College / University                   |               |                     |        |
| Trade School                           |               |                     |        |
| Other                                  |               |                     |        |
| Any other Special Skills or Training . |               |                     |        |

Signature:

Date:

## **Sample Interview Questions**

The interview is your chance to show an employer your unique qualities and it is also the time you can ask more about the employer, the company culture and the job you are applying for. Before you interview be sure to find out all you can about the company so you understand who they are, and also so the interviewer knows you care.

Interviews can be stressful; the best way to manage that stress is to be prepared. If you are ready to answer the questions below you will be prepared for most of the questions that might come up.

There are many variables that make finding a job even more complicated if you have a criminal record. How much should you disclose and when should you disclose it? How do you explain your criminal record and still land a job? How do you address it during an interview? We explore these questions and more at the end of this document.

### **Possible Interview Questions: About the Job and the Company**

- Why did you apply for this job?
- What experience, skills and characteristics do you possess to do the job?
- Why do you think you are the best person for this job?
- Why should we hire you?
- What have you learned about our company?
- How do you see your role in joining this or any company?
- Describe good customer service.
- Describe handling a challenge with a co-worker.
- Are you willing to travel?
- Do you have any limitations that would inhibit you from doing this job?
- How long do you think you would like to be employed by this company?

### **Possible Interview Questions: About You**

- Tell me about yourself.
- What are you passionate about?
- What is your greatest strength? What is your greatest weakness?
- What do you do when you're angry?
- If you know your supervisor is wrong about something, how would you handle it?
- Describe a difficult work situation and how you dealt with it.
- Describe your work style.
- How would you describe the pace at which you work?
- How do you handle stress and pressure?
- Tell me about how you worked effectively under pressure.
- What motivates you? Are you self-motivated?
- What are your salary expectations? (if it is not listed with the job posting)
- What types of decisions are difficult for you? What types are easy?
- If you could relive the last 10 years of your life, what would you do differently?
- If the people who know you were asked why you should be hired, what would they say?
- Do you prefer to work independently or with others?
- Tell me about your ideal work environment.
- How do you evaluate success?
- What are your career goals? How do you plan to achieve these goals?
- Give an example of a goal you reached and tell me how you achieved it.
- Give an example of a goal you didn't meet and how you handled it.
- Give an example of how you set goals and achieve them.
- How do you handle a challenge?

**Possible Interview Questions: Your Work History**

- Tell me about \_\_\_ company listed on your resume.
- What were your duties, responsibilities, expectations...for the position and as an employee?
- What challenges did you face? How did you handle them?
- What did you like about this job? Were there things you didn't like about this job?
- What was your biggest accomplishment at this job? At any job?
- What were your favorite and least favorite aspects about the people you worked with, including supervisors?
- What attributes to you like to see in a supervisor?
- What do you expect from a supervisor?
- Tell me a little about your favorite and least favorite supervisor.
- Why did you leave this job? (Why did you quit or why were you fired?)
- Have you been in a position when you did not have enough work to do? What did you do with your time?
- Have you made a mistake? How did you handle it?
- Have you ever dealt with company policy you weren't in agreement with? How?
- Have you gone above and beyond the call of duty? If so, how?
- When you worked on multiple projects how did you prioritize?
- How did you handle meeting a tight deadline?
- What do you do when your schedule is interrupted? Give an example of how you handle it.
- Tell me about a difficult situation with a co-worker? How did you handle it?
- Tell me about your experience working with a team.
- Have you motivated employees or co-workers? Tell me about it.
- Give me an example of when you did and when you didn't listen.
- Have you handled a difficult situation with a co-worker? How?
- Have you handled a difficult situation with a supervisor? How?
- Have you handled a difficult situation with another department? How?
- Have you handled a difficult situation with a client or vendor? How?

**Possible Interview Questions: Incarceration**

- What did you learn from jobs you've held while you were incarcerated?
- Do you have challenges or limitations, such as appointments, that could affect your work schedule?
- Have you been able to prepare to use computers at work?
- Were you employed or in school when you were incarcerated? If so, tell me about your work and / or your education.

**Questions They CANNOT ask (and which you can refuse to answer):**

- What is your age?
- How many children do you have? Are you pregnant?
- How much do you weigh? How tall are you?
- Do you live with anyone? Who?
- Are you married or in a relationship?

**Legal alternatives that they can ask:**

- Are you over 18 years old?
- Can you lift 60 pounds?
- Is there anything that might interfere with your work schedule?

### Related to Your Criminal Record

An employer may not ask questions about a previous arrest or conviction. They may ask if you have been convicted of specific crimes if they are relevant to the position being applied for. An employer may not refuse employment to someone just because they have a criminal record.

Lisa Pollan, site coordinator at LIFT-DC, says they encourage formerly incarcerated clients to collect "evidence of rehabilitation." This evidence should prove to employers that the client has changed since their conviction. Evidence of rehabilitation can include:

- Letters of recommendation from employers or advocates
- Proof of training program completion/certificates (including during incarceration)
- Participation in a mentoring or support group

For Job Applications, LIFT-DC counsels clients to do the following:

- **Only answer what is asked:** If a question asks if you have been convicted of a felony, you can say no if you only have misdemeanors. If you are asked if you have been convicted of a felony in the last seven years, and you were convicted 10 years ago, answer no.
- **Answer truthfully:** A company may hire people with a record, but have a policy of terminating anyone who lies on an application.
- **Demonstrate change:** If you answer a question about your record by writing, "Yes, and I got my GED while I was incarcerated," you show that you are educated, focused and want to make positive changes in your life. You can also attach a written explanation of your situation or your shift in perspective.

Check out LIFT-DC for more tips on interviewing! <http://www.liftcommunities.org/>

### From the National Reentry Resource Center:

<http://www.nationalreentryresourcecenter.org/faqs/employment-and-education#Q8>

### How should job-seekers respond to questions regarding past convictions?

- Acknowledge the previous mistakes in a concise and businesslike way
- Mention any relevant skills or interests developed while in prison or prior to entering prison
- Reinforce a commitment and an interest in the new job, by stating, for example, "I'm more mature now and my top priority is to work at [company] to use my abilities, focus on the work, and make a fresh start."

Applicants should be familiar with their criminal history to answer accurately specific questions on job applications and in interviews.

### Religion

An employer may not ask you about your religion but it may come up if they ask you what days/times you are available. An employer may not judge you for your religion but may decide not to hire you if you are unavailable for any crucial time for the position you are applying.

## Interview Questions for You to Ask

In an interview both you and the employer are finding out about each other. Asking these questions will show general interest in the business, and the team you are applying to work with. These questions show you care about the position and how you might fit. Asking questions will also help you understand if you think the environment is suitable for you.

Please tell me important information I should consider about working with this company:

- On average, how long do people keep the position for which I am applying?
- What strengths and skills do you think I should have to best fill this position?
- What employee qualities are encouraged here?
- Is this a friendly or casual environment or is it fairly strict?
- Would you tell me about the challenges I might find working here?
- Which companies, products or services are our competitors?
- Is there an opportunity for promotion from this position?
- How often will I be evaluated?
- What are the company's strengths?
- What will be expected of me in the first 3 months? 6 months? Year?
- Do employees participate in events outside of work like sports or volunteering?
- In what ways does the company recognize and honor workers?
- Will I have an employment agreement?
- Will I work alone or with a group?
- Who will I report to? What kind of person are they?
- Are you anticipating any major changes in the workplace?
- How many applicants do you have for this position?
- What training do you provide?
- Does the company provide or support higher education or advanced training for employees?
- Is there anything else I can provide you to help you make a decision?
- How soon can I expect to hear from you?

Not all of these questions would apply to any one position. These questions are just examples to either pick from or open your mind to asking questions that will help you make sure the job is acceptable for you!



www.fairshake.net

PO Box 63 Westby, WI 54667 608-634-6363

# Fair Shake Employer Support

All of this information and much more can be found at <https://www.fairshake.net/employers>

Although tremendous responsibility is on the shoulders of those transitioning from prison to society, success is made possible only when the entire community is involved. Returning citizens need employment, a place to live and a community that is willing to give them a second chance. To create the opportunity for reentry success, we must offer returning citizens the chance to rejoin society fully.

Employers have the opportunity to help create one of the first and most stable bridges to reentry success. Fair Shake supports an employer's desire to understand formerly incarcerated applicants by offering tools and information to help you make informed, careful hiring decisions.

Fair Shake has also created tools for our members to more fully demonstrate their character than may be available on a standard job application through our free "office in the clouds", which includes a Personal Web Page.

## **The FAIR SHAKE PERSONAL WEB PAGE (PWP): What you learn about these applicants**

Building a Fair Shake personal web page is not an easy feat! Members who create this page demonstrate many things to you:

- **HONESTY:** They are letting you know they have been incarcerated. This takes a great deal of courage. We know that honesty and courage are imperative to building trust. Is honesty something you are looking for in your employees?
- **SELF-MOTIVATION:** Creating this page demonstrates the applicant's perseverance tenacity, and desire to succeed. They had no coercion in building this page; there was no class for it, nor did anyone recommend they do this. They built the page of their own volition.
- **TECH-SKILLS:** A variety of computer skills were required to create the Personal Web Page including: scanning, storage, typing, and understanding 'cloud' technology; to name a few.
- **HUMANNESS:** In addition to the above, the applicant offers information here that describes more than skills and experiences; you learn who they are and what they bring to your organization. This information is very important in building company culture, but is not requested on standard job applications.

## **Why hire a formerly incarcerated person?**

- To find the best possible candidate!
- Many applicants have received extensive training
- Often these applicants are highly motivated to work
- Many have a job coach or advisor
- Support is available for training and reducing risk

**Fidelity Bonding Program**

The **Fidelity Bonding Program** offers six months of free bonding support to businesses across the country to lower their risk when hiring applicants who have been incarcerated.

Federal Fidelity Bonding Program: <http://bonds4jobs.com>

Bonding can:

- Provide six months of FREE insurance against employee theft
- Be obtained quickly and easily by just a phone call to confirm your hire

To bond a formerly incarcerated new hire today **call toll-free: 877-US2-JOBS (877-872-5627)**

**Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)**

The WOTC is a special tax credit available for hiring returning citizens (and others) and must occur within one year of their release date. The WOTC is available to any size business from small organizations to national corporations. The credit is also available for any type of job. The work can be full-time, part-time, temporary, or seasonal.

Facts about the WOTC tax credit:

- Employers can save as much as \$2,400 in taxes
- Applies to the first year of employment
- The new employee must work 120 hours for the employer to begin to receive credit

Exceptions:

- Not available for independent contractor work
- Not available for a business owned by a close relative

To find out more: <http://www.doleta.gov/business/incentives/opptax/wotcEmployers.cfm>

Or call: 1-800-829-4933

**Employee Training Support**

Your business may be eligible for a state or federal training grant (or other funding). To find out what you may qualify for, check with your Workforce Investment Board, Small Business Development Center, or economic development agency.

- Workforce Investment Board: [servicelocator.org/contactspartners.asp](http://servicelocator.org/contactspartners.asp)
- Small Business Development Center: [sba.gov/tools/local-assistance](http://sba.gov/tools/local-assistance)
- Economic Development Administration: [eda.gov/](http://eda.gov/)

**Ban the Box:**

Are you ready to remove the box that says 'Have you ever been convicted of a felony?' from your job application forms? If so, we can help! <https://www.fairshake.net/ban-the-box/>

On our page you will find:

- Best Practices and Model Policies
- Fair Chance Fact Sheet
- Community Hiring Model
- Which states, cities and counties *Ban the Box*
- Learn from dedicated states like Minnesota who have Banned the Box for both public- and private-sector jobs. They freely share information for you to do this, too.

## Resume Guide

A good resume will open the door for an interview. But do you need a resume? Some employers prefer a resume and others require an application form. That depends on the kind of job you're applying for.

### RESUME REQUIRED

- Professional, technical, administrative and managerial jobs.
- Sales positions.
- Secretarial, clerical, and other office jobs.

### RESUME SOMETIMES REQUIRED

Professional positions: Baker, Hotel Clerk, Electrician, Drafter, Welder

### RESUME NOT REQUIRED

Unskilled, quick turnover jobs: Fast Food Server, Laborers, Machine Loader, Cannery Worker

**The Rockport Institute** has generously donated the resume guide below. It is a shortened version of their full resume guide, *How to Write a Masterpiece of a Resume*, which can be found here: [www.rockportinstitute.com/resumes](http://www.rockportinstitute.com/resumes)

## WRITE A RESUME THAT GENERATES RESULTS

Before you begin, ask yourself: Why do you have a resume in the first place? What is it supposed to do for you? How can you differentiate yourself from hundreds of other applicants with qualified resumes? The prospective employer has the overwhelming task of looking over many resumes to find the special person that is right for the position and a great fit for the culture of the company. You are facing a great deal of competition.

The resume is a tool with one specific purpose: to win an interview. If it doesn't, it isn't an effective resume. A resume is an advertisement; nothing more, nothing less. A great resume doesn't just tell them what you have done but makes the same assertion that all good ads do: If you buy this product, you will get these specific, direct benefits. It presents you in the best light. It convinces the employer that you have what it takes to be successful in this new position or career.

Other reasons to have a resume:

- To pass the employer's screening process (requisite educational level, number years' experience, etc.), to give basic facts which might favorably influence the employer
- To establish yourself as a professional person with high standards and excellent writing skills, based on the fact that your resume is so well done (clear, well-organized, well-written, well-designed, of the highest professional grades of printing and paper).
- To use as a covering piece or addendum to another form of job application
- To put in an employer's personnel files. (which they may check out later for other openings)
- To help you clarify your direction, qualifications, and strengths, boost your confidence, or to start the process of committing to a job or career change.

It is a mistake to think of your resume as your work history, a personal statement or some sort of self expression. Sure, most of the content of any resume is focused on your job history. But write from the intention to create interest, to persuade the employer to call you. If you write with that goal, your final product will be very different than if you write it just to catalog your job history.

Most resumes are quickly scanned, rather than read. Ten to twenty seconds is all the time you have to persuade a prospective employer to read further and the decision to interview a candidate is usually based on an overall first impression of the resume, a quick screening that so impresses the reader and convinces them of the candidate's qualifications that an interview results. The top half of the first page of your resume will either make you or break you. You hope it will have the same result as a well-written ad: to get the reader to respond. You are selling a product in which you have a large personal investment: you.

The person who is doing the hiring often cares deeply how well the job will be done. You need to write your resume to appeal directly to them. Ask yourself: What does the employer really want? What special abilities would this person have? What would set a truly exceptional candidate apart from a merely good one? How can I demonstrate that I am the perfect candidate? Put yourself in their shoes.

Loosen up your thinking enough so that you will be able to see some new connections between what you have done and what the employer is looking for. You need not confine yourself to work-related accomplishments! Use your entire life as evidence of your character, skills and talents. If Sunday school or your former gang are the only places you have had a chance to demonstrate your special gifts for leadership, fine. What are the talents you have to offer the prospective employer? A great resume has two sections. In the first, you make assertions about your abilities, qualities and achievements. You write powerful, but honest, advertising copy that makes the reader immediately perk up and realize that you are someone special.

The second section, the evidence section, is where you back up your assertions with evidence that you actually did what you said you did. This is where you list and describe the jobs you have held, your education, etc. This is all the stuff you are obliged to include.

Most resumes are just the evidence section, with no assertions. The 'juice' is in the assertions section. **When a prospective employer finishes reading your resume, you want them to reach for the phone to invite you in to interview.** The resumes you have written in the past have probably been a gallant effort to inform the reader. You don't want them informed. You want them interested and excited.

## THE OBJECTIVE SECTION

Ideally, your resume should be pointed toward conveying why you are the perfect candidate for one specific job or job title. Good advertising is directed toward a very specific target audience.

Targeting your resume requires that you be absolutely clear about your career direction—or at least that you appear to be clear. You would be wise to use this time of change to design your future career so you have a clear target that will meet your goals and be personally fulfilling. With a nonexistent, vague or overly broad objective, the first statement you make to a prospective employer says you are not sure this is the job for you.

Imagine the position of a software manufacturer looking at a sea of resumes. They all look so much alike until they come across a resume in the pile that starts with the following: "OBJECTIVE - a software sales position in an organization seeking an extraordinary record of generating new accounts, exceeding sales targets and enthusiastic customer relations". They are immediately interested! This first sentence conveys some very important and powerful messages: "I want exactly the job you are offering. I am a superior candidate because I recognize the qualities that are most important to you, and I have them. I want to make a contribution to your company." This works well because the employer is smart enough to know that

someone who wants to do exactly what they are offering will be much more likely to succeed than someone who doesn't. And that person will probably be a lot more pleasant to work with as well.

Secondly, this candidate has done a good job of establishing why they are the perfect candidate in their first sentence. They have thought about what qualities would make a candidate stand out. They have started communicating that they are that person immediately. What's more, they are communicating from the point of view of making a contribution to the employer.

Here's how to write your objective. First of all, decide on a specific job title for your objective. Go back to your list of answers to the question "How can I demonstrate that I am the perfect candidate?" What are the two or three qualities, abilities or achievements that would make a candidate stand out as truly exceptional for that specific job? Having an objective statement that really sizzles is highly effective. And it's simple to do. One format is:

**OBJECTIVE:** An xxx position in an organization where yyy and zzz would be needed (or, in an organization seeking yyy and zzz).

Xxx is the name of the position you are applying for. Yyy and zzz are the most compelling qualities, abilities or achievements that will really make you stand out above the crowd of applicants.

If you are applying for several different positions, you should adapt your resume to each one. Have an objective that is perfectly matched with the job you are applying for. Remember, you are writing advertising copy, not your life story.

If you have a limited work history, you want the employer to immediately focus on where you are going, rather than where you have been.

### **Examples of an Objective section:**

**OBJECTIVE:** An entry-level position in the hospitality industry where a background in advertising and public relations would be needed.

**OBJECTIVE:** A position teaching English as a second language where a special ability to motivate and communicate effectively with students would be needed.

## **THE SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS**

The "Summary of Qualifications" consists of several concise statements that focus the reader's attention on the most important qualities, achievements and abilities you have to offer. Those qualities should be the most compelling demonstrations of why they should hire you instead of the other candidates.

This may be the only section fully read by the employer, so it should be very strong and convincing. Include professional characteristics (extremely energetic, a gift for solving complex problems in a fast-paced environment, exceptional interpersonal skills, committed to excellence, etc.) helpful in winning the interview.

How should you write a Summary of Qualifications? Look for the qualities the employer will care about most. Then look at what you wrote about why you are the perfect person to fill their need. Pick your qualities that best demonstrate why they should hire you. Assemble it into your Summary section.

The most common ingredients of a well-written Summary are as follows. Do not use all these ingredients in one Summary - use the ones that highlight you best.

- A short phrase describing your profession
- Followed by a statement of broad or specialized expertise
- Followed by two or three additional statements related to any of the following:
  - o breadth or depth of skills
  - o unique mix of skills
  - o range of environments in which you have experience
  - o a special or well-documented accomplishment
  - o a history of awards, promotions, or superior performance commendations
- One or more professional or appropriate personal characteristics
- A sentence describing professional objective or interest.

Notice that the examples below show how to include your objective in the Summary section. If you are making a career change, your Summary section should show how what you have done in the past prepares you to do what you seek to do in the future.

#### **A few examples of Summary sections:**

- Highly motivated, creative and versatile real estate executive with seven years of experience in development and construction. Especially skilled at building effective, productive working relationships with clients and staff. Excellent management, negotiation and public relations skills. Seeking a challenging management position in the real estate field that offers extensive contact with the public.
- Health Care Professional experienced in management, program development and policy making in the United States as well as in several developing countries. A talent for analyzing problems, developing and simplifying procedures, and finding innovative solutions. Proven ability to motivate and work effectively with persons from other cultures and all walks of life. Skilled in working within a foreign environment with limited resources.
- Performing artist with a rich baritone voice and unusual range, specializing in classical, spiritual, gospel and rap music. Featured soloist for two nationally televised events. Accomplished pianist. Extensive performance experience includes television, concert tours and club acts. Available for commercial recording and live performances.

## **SKILLS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

In this final part of the assertions section of your resume, you do exactly what you did in the previous section, except that you go into more detail.

In the summary, you focused on your most special highlights. Now you tell the rest of the best of your story. Let them know what results you produced, what happened as a result of your efforts, what you are especially gifted or experienced at doing. Flesh out the most important highlights in your summary.

#### **Here are a few ways you could structure your “Skills and Accomplishments” section:**

##### **SELECTED SKILLS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- Raised \$1900 in 21 days in canvassing and advocacy on environmental, health and consumer issues.
- Conducted legal research for four Assistant U.S. Attorneys, for the U.S. Attorney’s office
- Coordinated Board of Directors and Community Advisory Board of community mental health center. Later commended as “the best thing that ever happened to that job.”

## FUNCTIONAL RESUME FORMAT

The functional resume highlights your major skills and accomplishments. It helps the reader see clearly what you can do for them. It helps target the resume into a new direction by lifting up from all past jobs the key skills and qualifications to help prove you will be successful. The functional resume is a must for career changers and for those returning to the job market.

## THE EVIDENCE SECTION - YOUR WORK HISTORY, EDUCATION, ETC.

Most resumes are not much more than a collection of "evidence," various facts about your past. By evidence, we mean all the mandatory information you must include on your resume: work history with descriptions, dates, education, affiliations, list of software mastered, etc. If you put this toward the top of your resume, anyone reading it will feel like they are reading an income tax form.

### EXPERIENCE

List jobs in reverse chronological order. Don't go into detail on the jobs early in your career; focus on the most recent and/or relevant jobs. (Summarize a number of the earliest jobs in one line or very short paragraph, Put dates in italics at the end of the job; don't include months, unless the job was held less than a year. Include military service, internships, and major volunteer roles if desired! Because the section is labeled "Experience." it does not need to mean that you were paid.

### EDUCATION

List education in reverse chronological order, degrees or licenses first, followed by certificates and advanced training. Set degrees apart so they are easily seen. Put in boldface whatever will be most impressive. Don't include any details about college except your major and distinctions or awards you have won.

- Do include advanced training, but be selective with the information.
- If you are working on an uncompleted degree, include the degree and afterwards, in parentheses, the expected date of completion.
- If you didn't finish college, start with a phrase describing the field studied, then the school, then the dates (the fact that there was no degree may be missed).

Other headings might be "Education and Training" or "Education and Licenses".

And then add your Awards, Civic and Community Recognition and Comments from Supervisors.

### PERSONAL INTERESTS

Only list these if your personal interests indicate a skill or knowledge that is related to the goal, such as photography for someone in public relations, or carpentry and wood-working for someone in construction management. This section can create common ground in an interview.

### REFERENCES

You may put "References available upon request" at the end of your resume, if you wish. This is a standard close (centered at bottom in italics), but is not necessary. You can bring a separate sheet of references to the interview, to be given to the employer upon request.

## A FEW GUIDELINES FOR A BETTER PRESENTATION

**The resume is visually enticing, a work of art.** Simple clean structure. Very easy to read. Symmetrical. Balanced. Uncrowded. As much white space between sections of writing as possible; sections of writing that are no longer than six lines, and shorter if possible.

**There are absolutely no errors.** No typographical errors. No spelling errors. No grammar, syntax, or punctuation errors. No errors of fact.

**All the basic, expected information is included.** A resume must have the following key information: your name, address, phone number, and your email address at the top of the first page, a listing of jobs held, in reverse chronological order, educational degrees, in reverse chronological order.

**Jobs listed include a title, the name of the firm, the city and state of the firm, and the years employed.** Jobs earlier in a career can be summarized and extra part-time jobs can be omitted. If no educational degrees have been completed, it is still expected to include some mention of education (professional study or training, partial study toward a degree, etc.) acquired after high school.

**It is targeted.** First you should get clear what your job goal is, what the ideal position would be. Then you should figure out what key skills, areas of expertise or body of experience the employer will be looking for in the candidate. Gear the resume structure and content around this target, proving these key qualifications.

**Strengths are highlighted / weaknesses de-emphasized.** Focus on whatever is strongest and most impressive. Make careful and strategic choices as to how to organize, order, and convey your skills and background.

**Use power words.** For every skill, accomplishment, or job described, use the most active impressive verb you can think of (which is also accurate). Begin the sentence with this verb, except when you must vary the sentence structure to avoid repetitious writing.

**Show you are results-oriented.** Wherever possible, prove that you have the desired qualifications through clear strong statement of accomplishments

**Writing is concise and to the point.** Keep sentences as short and direct as possible.

**Make it look great.** Use a laser printer or an ink jet printer that produces high-quality results. A laser is best because the ink won't run if it gets wet. It should look typeset. Use a standard conservative typeface (font) in 11 or 12 point. Use off-white, ivory or bright white 8 1/2 x 11-inch paper, in the highest quality affordable. Use absolutely clean paper without smudges, without staples and with a generous border.

**Shorter is usually better.** Your resume should be just long enough to keep the reader's interest, and create psychological excitement that leads prospective employers to pick up the phone and call you.

**Telephone number that will be answered.** Be sure the phone number on the resume will, without exception, be answered by a person or an answering machine Monday through Friday 8-5pm.

## WHAT NOT TO PUT ON A RESUME

- The word "Resume" at the top of the resume
- Fluffy rambling "objective" statements
- Salary information
- Full addresses of former employers or names of supervisors
- Reasons for leaving jobs
- References

These verbs have been generously provided by Wendy Enelow and Louise Kursmark  
 Founders of The Resume Writing Academy [www.resumewritingacademy.com](http://www.resumewritingacademy.com)

## **Favorite Verbs for Your Resume**

Originally "Our Favorite Resume Verbs" by Wendy Enelow

|             |               |               |             |
|-------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| Accelerate  | Collaborate   | Differentiate | Expand      |
| Accentuate  | Collect       | Diminish      | Expedite    |
| Accomplish  | Command       | Direct        | Experiment  |
| Accommodate | Commercialize | Discern       | Explode     |
| Achieve     | Communicate   | Discover      | Explore     |
| Acquire     | Compare       | Dispense      | Export      |
| Adapt       | Compel        | Display       | Facilitate  |
| Address     | Compile       | Distinguish   | Finalize    |
| Advance     | Complete      | Distribute    | Finance     |
| Advise      | Compute       | Diversify     | Forge       |
| Advocate    | Conceive      | Divert        | Form        |
| Align       | Conceptualize | Document      | Formalize   |
| Alter       | Conclude      | Dominate      | Formulate   |
| Analyze     | Conduct       | Double        | Foster      |
| Anchor      | Conserve      | Draft         | Found       |
| Apply       | Consolidate   | Drive         | Gain        |
| Appoint     | Construct     | Earn          | Generate    |
| Appreciate  | Consult       | Edit          | Govern      |
| Architect   | Continue      | Educate       | Graduate    |
| Arrange     | Contract      | Effect        | Guide       |
| Articulate  | Control       | Elect         | Halt        |
| Ascertain   | Convert       | Elevate       | Handle      |
| Assemble    | Convey        | Eliminate     | Head        |
| Assess      | Coordinate    | Emphasize     | Hire        |
| Assist      | Correct       | Empower       | Honor       |
| Augment     | Counsel       | Enact         | Hypothesize |
| Author      | Craft         | Encourage     | Identify    |
| Authorize   | Create        | Endeavor      | Illustrate  |
| Balance     | Critique      | Endorse       | Imagine     |
| Believe     | Crystallize   | Endure        | Implement   |
| Brainstorm  | Curtail       | Energize      | Import      |
| Brief       | Cut           | Enforce       | Improve     |
| Budget      | Decipher      | Engineer      | Improvise   |
| Build       | Decrease      | Enhance       | Increase    |
| Calculate   | Define        | Enlist        | Influence   |
| Capitalize  | Delegate      | Enliven       | Inform      |
| Capture     | Deliver       | Ensure        | Initiate    |
| Catalog     | Demonstrate   | Equalize      | Innovate    |
| Centralize  | Deploy        | Eradicate     | Inspect     |
| Champion    | Derive        | Establish     | Inspire     |
| Change      | Design        | Estimate      | Install     |
| Chart       | Detail        | Evaluate      | Instruct    |
| Clarify     | Detect        | Examine       | Integrate   |
| Classify    | Determine     | Exceed        | Intensify   |
| Close       | Develop       | Execute       | Interpret   |
| Coach       | Devise        | Exhibit       | Interview   |

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## **Favorite Verbs for Your Resume**

Originally "Our Favorite Resume Verbs" by Wendy Enelow

|             |             |              |              |
|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| Introduce   | Organize    | Recapture    | Solve        |
| Invent      | Orient      | Receive      | Spark        |
| Inventory   | Originate   | Recognize    | Speak        |
| Investigate | Outsource   | Recommend    | Spearhead    |
| Judge       | Overcome    | Reconcile    | Specify      |
| Justify     | Overhaul    | Record       | Standardize  |
| Launch      | Oversee     | Recruit      | Steer        |
| Lead        | Participate | Recycle      | Stimulate    |
| Lecture     | Partner     | Redesign     | Strategize   |
| Leverage    | Perceive    | Reduce       | Streamline   |
| License     | Perfect     | Regain       | Strengthen   |
| Listen      | Perform     | Regulate     | Structure    |
| Locate      | Persuade    | Rehabilitate | Study        |
| Lower       | Pilot       | Reinforce    | Substantiate |
| Maintain    | Pinpoint    | Rejuvenate   | Succeed      |
| Manage      | Pioneer     | Remedy       | Suggest      |
| Manipulate  | Plan        | Render       | Summarize    |
| Manufacture | Position    | Renegotiate  | Supervise    |
| Map         | Predict     | Renew        | Supplement   |
| Market      | Prepare     | Renovate     | Supply       |
| Master      | Prescribe   | Reorganize   | Support      |
| Mastermind  | Present     | Report       | Surpass      |
| Maximize    | Preside     | Represent    | Synthesize   |
| Measure     | Process     | Research     | Target       |
| Mediate     | Procure     | Resolve      | Teach        |
| Mentor      | Produce     | Respond      | Terminate    |
| Merge       | Program     | Restore      | Test         |
| Minimize    | Progress    | Restructure  | Thwart       |
| Model       | Project     | Retain       | Train        |
| Moderate    | Promote     | Retrieve     | Transcribe   |
| Modify      | Propel      | Reuse        | Transfer     |
| Monitor     | Propose     | Review       | Transform    |
| Motivate    | Prospect    | Revise       | Transition   |
| Navigate    | Prove       | Revitalize   | Translate    |
| Negotiate   | Provide     | Satisfy      | Trim         |
| Network     | Publicize   | Schedule     | Troubleshoot |
| Nominate    | Purchase    | Secure       | Unify        |
| Normalize   | Purify      | Select       | Unite        |
| Obfuscate   | Qualify     | Separate     | Update       |
| Obliterate  | Quantify    | Serve        | Upgrade      |
| Observe     | Question    | Service      | Utilize      |
| Obtain      | Raise       | Shepherd     | Verbalize    |
| Offer       | Rate        | Simplify     | Verify       |
| Operate     | Ratify      | Slash        | Win          |
| Optimize    | Realign     | Sold         | Work         |
| Orchestrate | Rebuild     | Solidify     | Write        |

## Accomplishments and Skills Worksheet

Use this worksheet as a spring board to organize your work history and personal interests for your resume. Include all successes in your life! You have valuable talent, skills and traits to share. Remember: there are no wrong answers.

### Examples

- Shipped an average of 40 packages per day for 4 years with fewer than 3% damage in shipping.
- Volunteered at the Humane Society every Tuesday evening for 2.5 years. Walked, bathed and groomed dogs.
- Organized a fund-raising event for Fair Shake, generating over \$8300. Organized silent auction donations, secured entertainment and food and assembled volunteers.
- Managed a household of four on \$2000 per month.
- Restored a 1961 Volkswagen Beetle to original condition.
- Successfully planted, nurtured and harvested an annual garden (8 years running!) and canned, froze or dried the harvest to provide year-round food for my family.

### Occupational Titles

Job titles to start your brainstorming when considering job goals.

|             |                   |                    |
|-------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Accountant  | Graphic Designer  | Manufacturer       |
| Assembler   | Grounds Keeper    | Operations Manager |
| Carpenter   | Inspector         | Painter            |
| Cashier     | Lab Technician    | Programmer         |
| Chef / Cook | Librarian         | Salesperson        |
| Clerk       | Machine Operator  | Secretary          |
| Data Entry  | Mail Carrier      | Snow-maker         |
| Director    | Maintenance       | Teacher            |
| Editor      | Massage Therapist | Tree Trimmer       |
| Engineer    | Manager           | Veterinarian       |
| Firefighter | Mason             | Welder             |

### Job Skills

The following is a short list of job skills. (There are literally thousands of job-specific skills.) You will have to research the job skills specific to your occupation

|                      |                       |                      |
|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Accounting           | Drill Press Operation | Payroll / Accounting |
| Advertising          | Driving               | Planning             |
| Auditing             | Editing               | Public Speaking      |
| Brake Alignments     | Electronic Repair     | Researching          |
| Building Maintenance | Filing                | Sign Language        |
| Carpet Laying        | Hammering             | Scheduling           |
| Cleaning             | Interviewing          | Soldering            |
| Cooking              | Keyboarding           | Technical Writing    |
| Correspondence       | Management            | Telemarketing        |
| Counseling           | Marketing             | Typing               |
| Customer Service     | Mechanical Drafting   | Welding              |
| Detailing            | Metal Fabrication     | Writing              |

**Self-Management Skills**

Follow instructions  
Get along well

Get things done  
Honest

Punctual  
Responsible

**Personality traits**

Articulate  
Assertive  
Assume responsibility  
Communicative  
Competitive  
Creative  
Decisive  
Dependable  
Detail-oriented  
Diplomatic

Enthusiastic  
Emotionally strong  
Flexible  
Friendly  
Highly-motivated  
Integrity  
Quick-thinker  
Self-motivated  
Sense of direction  
Sense of humor

Sensitive  
Sincere  
Sociable  
Tactful  
Tolerant  
Tough  
Trusting  
Understanding  
Willing to learn

**Physical skills**

Agile  
Assembling  
Balancing, Juggling  
Crafts  
Counting  
Drawing, painting  
Driving (CDL?)  
Endurance  
Finishing, refinishing

Flexible  
Grinding  
Hammering  
Keyboarding, Typing  
Manual dexterity  
Mechanical  
Modeling, remodeling  
Observing, inspecting  
Operating machines

Precise  
Set standards  
Strong  
Thorough  
Restoring  
Sandblasting  
Sewing  
Sorting  
Weaving

**People Skills**

Caring  
Comforting  
Communicating  
Conflict management  
Conflict resolution  
Counseling  
Consulting  
Developing rapport  
Diplomacy  
Diversity

Empathy  
Encouraging  
Group facilitating  
Helping others  
Inspiring trust  
Inquiry  
Instructing  
Interviewing  
Listening  
Mediating

Mentoring  
Motivating  
Negotiating  
Outgoing  
Problem-solving  
Respect  
Responsive  
Sensitive  
Sympathy  
Tolerance

**Data Sorting Skills**

Analyzing  
Auditing  
Averaging  
Budgeting  
Calculating, Computing  
Checking for accuracy  
Classifying  
Comparing  
Compiling

Cost analysis  
Counting  
Detail-oriented  
Evaluating  
Examining  
Financial or fiscal  
Analysis  
Financial management  
Financial records

Following instructions  
Investigating  
Inventory  
Interrelate  
Logical  
Organizing  
Recording facts  
Research  
Surveying

### Leadership Skills

Brainstorm  
Competitive  
Coordinating  
Decisive  
Delegate  
Direct others  
Evaluate  
Goal setter  
Influential  
Initiate new tasks

Integrity  
Judgment  
Manage, Direct others  
Mediate problems  
Motivate people  
Multitasking Negotiate  
agreements  
Organization  
Planning  
Results-oriented

Risk taker  
Run meetings  
Self-confident  
Self-directed  
Self-motivated  
Sets an example  
Solve problems  
Strategic planning  
Supervision  
Work schedules

### Artistic Skills

Artistic ideas  
Dance, Aerobic  
Designing  
Drawing, Painting  
Handicrafts  
Illustrating, Sketching

Imaginative  
Inventive  
Mechanical drawing  
Model-making  
Perform  
Photography

Play an instrument  
Rendering  
Singing  
Visualize shapes  
Visualizing  
Writer / Editor

### Descriptive Words to Use in Your Resume

Able  
Accurate  
Active  
Adaptable  
Adept  
Administrative  
Advantageous  
Aggressive  
Alert  
Ambitious  
Analytical  
Articulate  
Assertive  
Astute  
Attentive  
Authoritative  
Bilingual  
Broad-minded  
Calm  
Candid  
Capable  
Cheerful  
Committed  
Competent  
Comprehensive  
Confident  
Conscientious

Considerate  
Consistent  
Constructive  
Continuous  
Contributions  
Cooperative  
Creative  
Curious  
Decisive  
Dedicated  
Deliberate  
Dependable  
Detailed  
Detail-oriented  
Determined  
Diligent  
Diplomatic  
Disciplined  
Discreet  
Diversified  
Driven  
Dynamic  
Eager  
Easily  
Easygoing  
Economical  
Effective

Efficient  
Effortlessly  
Empathetic  
Energetic  
Enterprising  
Enthusiastic  
Excellent  
Exceptional  
Experienced  
Expert  
Expertly  
Extensive  
Fair  
Farsighted  
Fast-learner  
Flexible  
Forceful  
Friendly  
Generalist  
Hard-working  
Honest  
Imaginative  
Increasingly  
Independent  
In-depth  
Initiative  
Innovative

### Descriptive Words (Continued)

|               |                           |               |
|---------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| Insightful    | Precise                   | Significantly |
| Instrumental  | Problem-solver            | Sincere       |
| Inventive     | Productive                | Skilled       |
| Knowledgeable | Professional              | Skillful      |
| Leadership    | Proficient                | Solid         |
| Logical       | Profitable                | Sound         |
| Loyal         | Progressive               | Specialized   |
| Major         | Proven                    | Specialist    |
| Mature        | Punctual                  | Stable        |
| Meaningful    | Qualified                 | Strategically |
| Methodical    | Quality-conscious         | Strong        |
| Meticulous    | Quick-learner             | Substantial   |
| Motivated     | Realistic Recent          | Successful    |
| Multilingual  | Reliable                  | Superior      |
| Objective     | Repeatedly                | Systematic    |
| Open-minded   | Resilient                 | Tactful       |
| Optimistic    | Resourceful               | Talented      |
| Orderly       | Respectful                | Team player   |
| Organized     | Responsible               | Technical     |
| Outstanding   | Responsive Risk-taker     | Thorough      |
| Patient       | Routinely                 | Timely        |
| Perceptive    | Satisfactorily            | Uniform       |
| Persistent    | Scope                     | Universal     |
| Personable    | Self-confident            | Up-to-date    |
| Personally    | Self-controlled           | Valuable      |
| Persuasive    | Self-reliant Self-starter | Varied        |
| Pertinent     | Sharp                     | Versatile     |
| Pleasant      |                           | Vigorous      |
| Positive      |                           | Well-educated |
| Practical     |                           | Well-rounded  |

## Cover Letter

Many employers today want to read a letter of introduction, or cover letter, when they review a resume. A cover letter should tell the employer which position you are interested in, why you think you are qualified for the position. Some information in your cover letter may also be on your resume; overlapping information emphasizes skills and characteristics. Read your cover letter carefully, check for spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors, then have another person proofread it one more time before you print it or press 'send'.

January 5, 2021

Alex Wikstrom  
Sun Dog Manufacturing  
123 Swiggum St.  
Westby, WI 54667

Dear Mr. Wikstrom:

I am interested in the Shipping Manager position advertised on your website this week. I believe I would be a great fit for this position and welcome the opportunity to talk with you to find out more about the job and your company.

Your Requirements:

- Computer literate, able to learn software programs
- Compare multiple shipping criteria
- Self-motivated
- Friendly, work well with others

My Qualifications:

- I am experienced in shipping with USPS, Fed Ex and UPS and their software programs.
- I understand that each shipper offers different services. I can learn what I need to know for the safe delivery of products to the customer and the most cost-efficient route for the company.
- I enjoy my work and take pride in a job well done. I find this very motivating.
- I encourage you to follow up on my references as I am sure you will see that I am a 'team player' and understand how to recognize company culture and enhance the work environment.

I enjoy playing an important role in enhancing customers' experiences. I also enjoy balancing the technical skills, physical skills and social skills that are required to do a great job in this position. I take pride and ownership in my work and consider the perspective of the customer when packing an order.

My resume is attached for your review. I'm interested in talking with you and learning more about the position and Sun Dog. I read the mission statement and feel I really can get behind it.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I'm looking forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

**Signature Here**

Sue Kastensen

For more examples, check out Best Resume's & Letters for Ex-Offenders by Wendy Enelow and Ronald Krannich, or simply search for 'cover letter examples' in your favorite search engine.

# Maurice Sprewer

414.874.1657 (list the BEST contact number you have)

[Maurice.sprewer@dwd.wisconsin.gov](mailto:Maurice.sprewer@dwd.wisconsin.gov)

*(be sure that your email address is professional)*

## EXAMPLE of a FUNCTIONAL Resume'

### Production Worker and General Laborer Committed to Safety and Quality

*(personal branding statement - describes position and a quality that makes you great at it)*

#### Summary of Skills: *(make sure the skills are relevant to the job you are applying for - usually found in the job description)*

- Sorting, grading, weighing, and inspecting products, verifying and adjusting product weight or measurement to meet specifications.
- Observing machine operations to ensure quality and conformity of filled or packaged products to standards.
- Monitoring the production line, watching for problems such as pile-ups, jams, or glue that isn't sticking properly.
- Attaching identification labels to finished packaged items, or cut stencils and stencil information on containers, such as lot numbers or shipping destinations.
- Stocking and sorting product for packaging or filling machine operation, and replenishing packaging supplies, such as wrapping paper, plastic sheet, boxes, cartons, glue, ink, or labels.
- Packaging the product in the form in which it will be sent out, for example, filling bags with flour from a chute or spout.
- Inspecting and removing defective products and packaging material.
- Starting machine by engaging controls.
- Removing finished packaged items from machine and separate rejected items.
- Counting and recording finished and rejected packaged items.
- Stopping or resetting machines when malfunctions occur, clearing machine jams, and reporting malfunctions to a supervisor.
- Removing products, machine attachments, or waste material from machines.
- Transferring finished products, raw materials, tools, or equipment between storage and work areas of plants and warehouses, by hand or using hand trucks.
- Packing and storing materials and products.
- Helping production workers by performing duties of lesser skill, such as supplying or holding materials or tools, or cleaning work areas and equipment.
- Counting finished products to determine if product orders are complete.
- Measuring amounts of products, lengths of extruded articles, or weights of filled containers to ensure conformance to specifications.
- Following procedures for the use of chemical cleaners and power equipment to prevent damage to floors and fixtures.
- Mixing water and detergents or acids in containers to prepare cleaning solutions, according to specifications.
- Loading and unloading items from machines, conveyors, and conveyances.
- Operate machinery used in the production process, or assist machine operators.
- Placing products in equipment or on work surfaces for further processing, inspecting, or wrapping.

#### Relevant Production and General Labor Experience

##### General Laborer (Position while incarcerated)

State of Wisconsin / Badger State Industries / FBOP *(whichever applies)*

**year - year**

City, State

##### Previous Relevant Employment

Previous Employer

**year - year**

City, State

##### Other Experience

##### Previous Relevant Employment

Previous Employer

**year - year**

City, State

##### Education

Relevant Education

*(Relevant Degree / Diploma)*

*Created by Maurice Sprewer Employment & Training Specialist / Reentry Coordinator  
DWD / Job Service 4201 N. 27<sup>th</sup> Street Suite 602 Milwaukee, WI 53216*

Your Name  
Milwaukee, WI  
Your email  
111-222-3333

**EXAMPLE of a  
Letter of Explanation**

Re: Letter of Explanation

Insert Date Here.

Dear Sir or Madam,

The things I value most are honesty, integrity and directness. Therefore, in anticipation of the criminal background check, you will find that in October of 2006 I was convicted of the offense of Armed Robbery - Use of Force. I served 24 months in prison for my crime. Upon release in 2008, I unfortunately, returned to the same negative influences and the same circle of negative associations and as a result, I re-offended in 2009. The charge was again, Armed Robbery this time as a Party to a Crime. I know that what I did was wrong. It was a result of poor decision making on my part and it hurt a lot of people. I've learned a great lesson and won't repeat those past mistakes.

While incarcerated, I completed my HSED through the Warren Young School. In addition, after a period of careful self-examination, I began working on ME. I successfully completed coursework in **Walking the Line - the Vow to Succeed Program, Cognitive Intervention Phases I and II, and Re-Entry bridge to Success programs**. I then continued my education, gaining **certifications in Telecommunications Technologies as a Network Cabling Specialist in Copper Based Systems**. Since my release I have done some full time work as laborer in a tannery and volunteered my time at my 11 year old son's school. However, I am looking forward to getting back to work full-time in the field of Telecommunications as an installer so I may further demonstrate the changes in my life and be a responsible member of society.

I can understand why you may be hesitant to hire someone with my background. However, I am eligible for **The Fidelity Bonding Program which can insure you for up to \$25,000** against any act of dishonesty on my part. Additionally, when you hire me, you will be eligible for **Work Opportunity Tax Credits to save you up to \$9,000 this year**. I will be happy to provide you more information about those programs during our interview. Lastly, I recently successfully completed the **Pipeline to Employment Training Program for Former Offenders** sponsored by the **State of Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development** and I can provide a letter of recommendation from them at your request.

I am eager to pursue this or other opportunities with your company because I am confident my skills and experiences will dovetail with the needs of your business.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Your name here

*Created by Maurice Sprewer Employment & Training Specialist / Reentry Coordinator  
DWD / Job Service 4201 N. 27<sup>th</sup> Street Suite 602 Milwaukee, WI 53216*

## Thank You Letter

Writing a thank you letter allows you the opportunity to share your reflections from the interview, including topics that were discussed and your decision to accept the job if it is offered to you. If you do not want the job you can write a short thank you letter stating that you wish to withdraw your application. If you do want the job, restate the qualifications and social skills you possess related to the requirements of the position and culture of the company. Be sure to send your thank you letter within a day of your interview.

Sue Kastensen  
PO Box 63  
Westby, WI 54667  
608-634-6363  
sue@gmail.com

January 20, 2021

Alex Wikstrom  
Sun Dog Manufacturing  
123 Swiggum St.  
Westby, WI 54667

Dear Mr. Wikstrom:

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me yesterday about the Shipping Manager job opening. I appreciate the opportunity to interview for this position.

Upon reflection, I believe I am a good fit for the Shipping Manager position and also for the company. I bring four years experience in shipping and receiving and I am familiar with nearly all of the tools you showed me. I learn quickly and will be able to master each of the computer shipping programs easily. My personality is well-suited to accommodate the variety of employees who will bring items to be shipped, and also the freight handlers that I will interface with.

Thank you for listening to me describe my past and what I have learned from my incarceration. Be assured that I have reflected upon, learned from, and moved beyond all types of criminal behavior. I am ready and willing to be a reliable benefit to Sun Dog Manufacturing.

I'm very interested in working with you and your team. I am a dedicated worker and can commit to supporting Sun Dog Manufacturing well into the future. Please feel free to contact me if you would like further information. My cell phone number is 608-634-6363

Thank you again for your time and consideration.

I'm looking forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

**Signature Here**

Sue Kastensen

\*\*\* For many more examples, Search the Internet for *Thank You Letter Examples* \*\*\*

# PRE-RELEASE INVENTORY

Additional items to add to your list!

## 1. List the gifts that you bring with you!

- Include your courage, determination and authenticity.
- Your ability to listen well and offer the greatest gift a person can give: your attention.
- The special tools and skills you've developed to share with employers, coworkers, customers and clients.
- Expanded knowledge, compassion and commitment to those who are close to you.
- The unique perspective, and pro-social community-building skills that you have to construct the future with others!



2. Prepare for tough times. Write down book titles, articles, names of friends and family, and community resources you can turn to when things are tough; or when you feel down or vulnerable. When it's difficult to reach out to people; books may be a good place to start.

3. Check for "Over-Confidence". It's crucial to be confident...but foolish to be over-confident! Here are a couple of ideas to locate and address possible points of overconfidence:

- + Play "Devil's Advocate". Be critical and pessimistic. If possible, solicit the help of a friend or a young person. (In general, the young are better at this than adults.)
- + Resist comparing yourself to others. Everyone does things differently!
- + Listen to, and address, concerns or criticisms from others. This doesn't mean you need to argue with them or change course. Just check to see if you are fully considering their perspective.
- + Mix modesty and humility with enthusiasm.

4. Remember: you've got a lot of choices ahead! There's always more than one option, and almost always more than two. Try to find at least 4 options from which you can build or blend options to create your best opportunities!

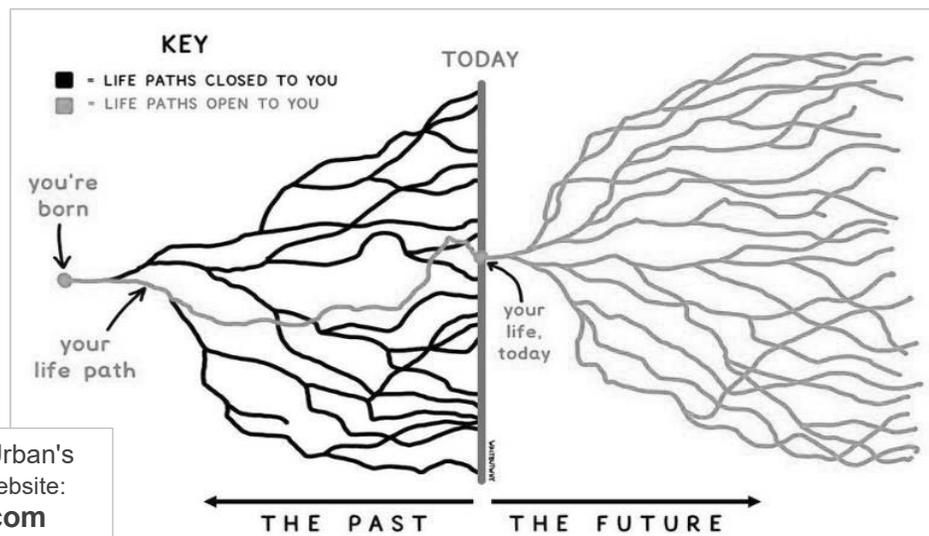


Image from Tim Urban's **Wait But Why** website:  
[waitbutwhy.com](http://waitbutwhy.com)

# AGENCY and ACTION

What can we do,  
with what we have,  
where we are,  
right now ?

\*\*\* We can get ready for change; ready to build what comes next; ready for the unknown! We can read, write, plan, draw, and think – as a strategic problem solver *and* community building collaborator.

\*\*\* We can stay flexible...mentally and physically...so that whatever comes, we will be ready and able to adjust and contribute.

\*\*\* We can reflect, and deepen our understanding and compassion.

\*\*\* We can consider the things that we would most love to give our deep attention to and consider how our unique gifts could bring strength to the areas we are most passionate about.

\*\*\* We can gather tools and build skills that we will need such as attending to issues with anxiety, depression, loneliness, self-doubt; or deepening skills we already have and which are so hard to find such as listening and caring.

\*\*\* We could learn something important for community building, so we can share it with any community we join.

\*\*\* Feel free to reach out to Fair Shake to see if we can connect you with a group of people who are working in the area where you would like to invest your efforts: [outreach@fairshake.net](mailto:outreach@fairshake.net).

Wishing you all the best through your transitions to come! Your success is important to me...and to our future together. **Ubuntu!**

# How Do You Solve a Problem Like Reentry?

Sue Kastensen, Founder and Director, Fair Shake

Imagine, if you can, being snugly stuck in a building with 1,600 other people, all of whom share your physical gender; never leaving, eating in the cafeteria that offers no choices, and sleeping in a room that is the size of your current bathroom, which, by the way, you share with one or two “roommates” not of your choosing. Imagine, also, that you have no internet access, no cell phone, and no computer. Your phone calls, on an old-school pay phone, will be conducted in a large room filled with boisterous people. You are restricted to one 15-minute call after which you must wait one hour before you are permitted to make another. Finally, you are only offered short intervals of time in the exercise room and library, and you receive few, if any, very short visits from family or friends. Oh, and you’ll share the bathroom with 50 people.

Can you imagine this for even one full day? How about one week? A month? A year? People in U.S. prisons are serving sentences that exceed 1 year ... so let’s imagine five, 10, 20 or even 30 years.

The crowded picture in your head, however, doesn’t come close to the reality of life in prison. I have omitted the suffering, the sadness, and the loss of loved ones; the manipulations, the disrespect, and lack of trust; the fear, the censorship, and the razor-wire fence. And the heavy gates with electronic locks.

Today there is an added threat of a potentially deadly virus running wild within the building. The virus, by the way, can only enter the building with the people who come and go for work, but who do not live there.

Finally, I want you to imagine how anyone who does not have personal experience in this process could possibly

guide people to build successful lives in a busy world once the exit door is opened to them. Where does one start to offer information about an ever-changing society when it is difficult to keep up, even for those who are fully engaged?

At least one building, full of the people in the thought exercise, opens its doors to release the inhabitants each day; 7 days per week (Carson, 2020). There are approximately 1.4 million prisoners currently serving time in state and federal prisons (Carson, 2020), and 95% of them will be returning to society (Hughes & Wilson, 2020). They are all excited to experience freedom again, but many are also extremely fearful of failure.

Very few prisons offer resources, support, or information to the incarcerated that will help them make vital connections for housing, medical support, or clothing prior to release. No prisons allow those who have recently come home to share their experience with those who are preparing for the transition.

Incarcerated people, when they can work, make less than 30 cents per hour, on average (Sawyer, 2017). It’s nearly impossible to save up for today’s cost of living on that wage, and the difficulty is exacerbated when landlords or employers refuse to consider leasing to or hiring formerly incarcerated applicants after running a background check.

With such a steep hill to climb, it should come as no surprise that less than 10 years after release from prison, 83% of those who have been released will find themselves back in prison (Alper, Durose, & Markman, 2018).



Photo credit: Federal Bureau of Prisons

*Sue Kastensen presenting Fair Shake in a federal prison.*

But it is a surprise. It’s shocking. A 17% success rate for an organization of any kind is ridiculous! How is this even possible? It’s embarrassing, unacceptable, maddening, and, for me, motivating.

## Minding My Own Business

Prior to 1999, I — like most of my fellow Americans — was not aware of the formidable and terrifying gauntlet of challenges waiting for those who are returning to society from prison.

I was also not aware of the extremely long sentences and collateral consequences imposed by our war on drugs, or that people convicted of committing burglary were much more likely to commit another crime than people convicted of committing murder, or that many people convicted of sex offenses would be listed on a national registry for the rest of their lives.

I had never thought about the psychological hurdles to reengagement: building the courage and confidence to apply for a job, the frustrations of learning to use technology, needing strong boundaries to resist the

lure of using shortcuts to acquire money, finding and building healthy relationships (including reconnecting with children, parents and partners); or the intense tenacity and dedication to stay committed to goals made while incarcerated.

I never thought about any of that because in 1999, I — like most Americans — was focused on myself and my future. I was an enthusiastic 36-year-old business owner, manufacturing products that were in high demand in a rapidly growing market. I needed machines, and the employees to build and run them. Amid the growth and excitement, an employee took me aside one day and quietly asked if I might consider hiring her friend who would be coming home from prison soon.

Entrepreneurs are often courageous to try new and different things, but this question put me in a difficult position. I wanted to protect the loyal team that was cranking out our products every day, and I also wanted to give this person a “second chance.” Besides, if I did not say I’d consider this question in my small community of 2,000 people, who do I think should?

I said “yes.”

I learned a lot about reentry challenges from Rick, the applicant who became our new employee. He and I continued our conversation while I brainstormed on building a tool that could help people find needed resources. I knew that, at the very least, I could contribute an online reentry resource library! I called it “Fair Shake.”

Wanting to connect with professionals who help prisoners prepare for release, in 2002 I joined the Correctional Education Association and started searching for a mentor. I found one, and by 2005, I had sold my business, eager to create a nonprofit that would help people transition from prison to life after prison.

### Unique Qualifications

Since before I can remember, I have been a risk-tolerant, extremely curious, self-determined, anti-fragile, and somewhat courageous individual. My approach to life did not bode well with authorities and by 8th grade, I felt I was being developmentally stunted at home and in school. In order to survive my teens, I had to find my own path.

After getting kicked out of my parents’ home at 13 — and after five high schools, four foster homes, several stays in group homes, a couple of jail visits and a few years in a Catholic reform school — in 1979, when I was 16 years old, I wanted to drop out of school and become an emancipated adult. I felt I was serving a sentence that had no end and no purpose. Authorities wanted me to stay in school, so I said I would continue with high school if I could attend Walden III, an alternative high school (which still exists today).<sup>1</sup> This was my last opportunity for a formal education and, thankfully, I flourished.

The school engaged in very little top-down pedagogy and primarily worked from a framework of student-centered, constructive, and problem-solving perspectives. Even the students were teaching classes! Some of my most cherished and important lessons were not taught in the classrooms; they were felt within the care of the community, for which I had yearned for so many years. The comradery, respect, interactions, support, and cooperative learning — unheard of in public or private schools in 1979 — gave me a deep understanding of authenticity, freedom, ownership, agency, interdependence, and even the importance of history.

At the start of my junior year, I detested school but at the end of the year, I found myself deeply in love with learning. I know now that we can find this love no matter where, or when, we find ourselves.

### Lifewide Learning

Between selling my business and organizing a nonprofit, I worked in fair trade for a few years. During that time, I learned about stakeholders in the food chain: the farmworkers, farmers, processors, distributors, retailers, and consumers (we did not include the waste process at that time). My mind opened; I realized that the onus for reentry success did not solely fall on the person coming home from prison — that person also needed to be accepted for employment, housing, higher education, in places of worship, and more. In short, their success depended on all of us! I realized that I had to offer support to other stakeholders, too. I started thinking about ways to support and encourage family and friends, employers, landlords, corrections, and citizens to participate in this common goal for reintegration.

By creating, and listening, and creating some more, amazing things started to happen.

In 2014, I received a call from a reentry affairs coordinator in a federal prison in Colorado. She contacted me because the resource-selection tool on the Fair Shake website<sup>2</sup> was not working properly. After we talked for some time, she invited me to present Fair Shake at the prison complex. She said I would speak with hundreds of men in institutions that covered three levels of security. This would be my first opportunity to present Fair Shake to the incarcerated!

After I nervously introduced myself and provided an overview of Fair Shake, I asked the group if they would tell me what information and resources they were looking for that would help them find success after release. Once we started talking, I relaxed and they, too, became increasingly comfortable with our conversation. By the end of the presentation, I felt like we had an energizing reentry brainstorming session!

In addition to gaining insight from the responses to my question, I also discovered that most of the people in that room were corresponding with family and friends through a secure email server called CorrLinks and that I could continue to communicate with them through that service by creating a newsletter and sharing best practices.

I also learned an even more important lesson: A lot of incarcerated people go to great lengths to help one another.

In early 2016, I started writing a monthly newsletter and by the end of the year, 250 readers had signed on. (Today there are more than 4,000 subscribers.) It is not a broadcast newsletter, either. It is a place to share and build ideas. The readers know more than I do, so we advise and inform one another.

Once that door was opened, I committed myself to spend as much time as I could to engage in in-person conversations with incarcerated people. For the next three years, I traveled all around the country: north to south and coast to coast, presenting Fair Shake in many types of prisons and all levels of security.

For each trip, I created a route that put me on the road for up to one month. I had to drive to the institutions because it made no sense to fly. Prisons are mostly located far away from airports and amenities and can get locked down without notice. I learned to be very flexible!

When I would arrive at an institution where the myriad of presentation participants — incarcerated people, prison staff, and public servant visitors — had seen the Fair Shake Reentry Packet<sup>3</sup> or the free Fair Shake software application or even the website (in a staff office; prisoners do not have access to the internet), someone would inevitably ask me how my bubble truck<sup>4</sup> was running and if I had new stories from meeting people along the way (I always did).



Sue Kastensen with her bubble truck.

My truck, with a camper on the back, made my travels possible. It was vital to have my kitchen, office, and bedroom with me at all times.

My travels are on hold for now, but prison reentry and education staff around the country have been staying in touch. Some check-in to make sure I will still be coming to their institutions when they open their doors again to volunteers, and others contact me to ask when the new software will be released. Robert Cialdini's (1984) "Scarcity Principle" is working in my favor, and suddenly Fair Shake is in high demand!

So, who comes to the presentations, and who signs up for the newsletters?

One can make almost no assumptions at all about who is in prison. As you have likely seen in the news, lawyers, CEOs, entertainers, and elected officials can be found in prisons; along with mothers, fathers, young people, and elders — many of whom have been in prison most of their lives and may have entered prison before they turned 18. The people serving time inside prison are as diverse as the people outside of prison, and many who have been convicted of committing crimes have also been victims themselves.

Criminologists, correctional administrators, elected officials, many academics, and, of course, the media, attempt to impress upon us that there is a specific type of person who commits a crime. They want us to believe that this "type" has "needs" that are unlike our usual human needs and they call them "criminogenic needs." They believe that these needs are like an addiction

and that most people who commit a crime must vigilantly "desist" from crime for many years, and possibly the rest of their lives because the needs are so strong. These people are put into groups according to their "risk of recidivism," their propensity to commit a new crime and return to prison.

To ensure that most prisoners from powerful and influential backgrounds will not be included in medium- or high-risk groups, the criminologists have devised a way for the majority of white-collar criminals to be excluded from having these "needs" (e.g., Jeffrey Epstein, Martha Stewart). The high-profile prisoners can often skip the dehumanizing, behaviorism-based programming and lengthy stretches of time in higher security prisons, where "assigning low-risk offenders to intensive programs designed for high-risk offenders" ... "can make things worse," according to the National Institute of Justice (2012, p. 109).

Considering the amount of time, effort, money, and research invested, I find it very disappointing that the criminologists have not created instruments that allow them to observe how people change. Many people grow, learn, feel deep remorse, and develop a world view that will lead to a law-abiding life, even without programming.

It is no wonder people are mystified about corrections, reentry, and how they can get involved to improve the corrections system or support the lives of those who have been released. National corrections associations, academics and elected representatives — the self-proclaimed "experts" — discourage others from getting involved in attending to the "broken system," as President Obama referred to it. They want us to trust them and leave the "reform" to them. After all, they will assert, they are informed by "evidence."<sup>5</sup>

These experts have been asking the question "What works?" to reduce recidivism for 50 years. In 1974, Robert Martinson answered their question.

Photo provided by the author.

After visiting many prisons and looking at the programming available in each one, he concluded that not one program worked for everyone. He found that some people benefited from one type, and others benefited from another, but no perfect program that applies to all had been created; there was no silver bullet. His findings liberated corrections from their duty of rehabilitation, creating a gap for the criminologists, with their medical model of interventions, dosages, and programming, to step in.

After more than 20 years of their studies, “evidence” and best practices, the criminogenic approach has only increased recidivism and failed to address the issues that it accuses the incarcerated population of engaging in in the first place: anti-social thinking and behavior. (See the Criminogenic Need Factors chart [National Parole Resource Center, 2014].)

have the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge of, and commitment to, them! In fact, many of our incarcerated have become far more prosocial than the people who determine them to be a high-risk for recidivism.

**What You Focus on Grows**

Since I have been presenting in several institutions annually, the prisons that have reentry councils, or think tanks, or other groups dedicated to problem-solving, often invite me to join their groups for an hour or two of conversation after my presentation. Over the course of a few meetings, we gain a deeper understanding of the unique qualities that each of us brings separately — and together — to the solution of the reentry problem.

It was through one of these opportunities that I was able to create a workshop for a National Conference on

It was a crazy idea that was fairly difficult to execute but we pulled it off. We were even able to include recorded presentations by Mike, the incarcerated member, and also the voices of the Fair Shake newsletter subscribers who shared their thoughts in writing.

The conference organizers greatly underestimated the interest in this topic: they gave us a small room for our presentation that we filled to more than 250% of capacity, while we had to watch many interested attendees walk away. Unfortunately, like so many things, the conference has been canceled this year, so we will not be able to rekindle and continue the conversation in person. The idea, however, will persist.

**The Fair Shake Operating System**

Creating a web and technology-based prisoner-reentry nonprofit organization that serves millions of people, on-demand, is a huge undertaking.

Many of my toughest lessons were learned simply by deciding to take this on! I had to learn to manage the daily website development by myself, to communicate with several stakeholders using a variety of tools, and to grasp several software tricks and tools involving Office, Adobe and Windows OS. And I have to keep on learning those tricks and tools, too, because software makers often change them when they update.

It was during one of these updates that I became very frustrated. I felt that no matter how hard I tried to keep up, Microsoft et al., were not interested in having me get my work done, they were mainly interested in making me learn things that served their interests. I felt like I was working for them!

My son calmly offered me an alternative to the commercial “matrix.” He asked me to consider learning to use an operating system called Ubuntu, which was constantly and seamlessly updated and improved by developers who ask for input from the users. He said it

Image credit: National Parole Research Center

|                                                        |                                                                                                                                     |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Antisocial attitudes, beliefs and values               | Attitudes, values, beliefs, and rationalizations supportive of crime; cognitive emotional states of anger, resentment, and defiance |
| Antisocial behavior patterns                           | Early and continuing involvement in a number and variety of antisocial acts and a variety of settings                               |
| Antisocial peers and associates                        | Close association with criminal others and relative isolation from anticriminal others; immediate social support for crime          |
| Antisocial personality and temperamental factors       | Adventurous, pleasure seeking, weak self-control, restlessly aggressive                                                             |
| Family/marital stressors                               | Two key elements are 1) nurturance and/or caring, and 2) monitoring and/or supervision                                              |
| Substance abuse                                        | Abuse of alcohol and/or other drugs                                                                                                 |
| Lack of education, employment stability or achievement | Low levels of performance and satisfaction in school and/or work                                                                    |
| Lack of pro-social activities in leisure time          | Low levels of involvement and satisfaction in anticriminal leisure pursuits                                                         |

*Criminogenic Need Factors*

Fancy (and expensive!) assessments, algorithms, and programming have been built to disregard the attributes, characteristics, and qualities they say criminals lack, which include building capabilities, perspective change, prosocial studies, engagements (such as mentoring), ownership, self-determination, critical thinking, and commitment to community. We want our nation’s citizens — as parents, employees, friends, and community members — to embrace these empowering and liberating qualities; and incarcerated people would like to

Higher Education in Prison with three men; two of whom I had met several times in the same prison and had been released; and one I met in a different prison and was still incarcerated. We wanted to find out if the academic attendees would help us think about how we could switch the reentry goal from being a negative one (reducing recidivism) to a positive one (building a satisfying and successful life) since it is far easier (and much more sensible!) to pursue a positive goal.

was a little harder to get started, but he assured me that once I got the hang of it — like driving with a manual transmission — it would become easy.

I wasn't ready for it when he offered, but I very much liked the idea of the operating system and how it was created. It reminded me of what I was doing with Fair Shake. Fair Shake, too, was a little harder, and people had to "do it themselves," but in the end they would be more informed, and Fair Shake would continue to become more relevant and supportive. I promised to look it up later.

Later came hard. It was when I was being forced to abandon Windows XP, which I loved so much, that I decided I'd had enough; it was time to try Ubuntu. I searched online to download it and the search results provided not only the computer operating system, but more importantly, they provided a link to a vital philosophy for our human operating system!

I was like a kid in a candy store as I explored the information online about Ubuntu! I was so excited to read and hear and learn about this traditional, sub-Saharan African philosophy, founded on the idea of interdependence. Ubuntu can be understood through the Zulu maxim, "umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu," or "a person is a person through other persons." It means, according to Desmond Tutu (2015), that it is the very essence of being human that we belong in a bundle of life, and that the solitary individual is a contradiction in terms.

I couldn't believe my eyes. I recognized this as Fair Shake's operating system and since then I have been weaving the philosophy into all of the information I share. I also close the newsletter with "Ubuntu" to remind the subscribers that we are in this together.

### Education for Democracy

Understanding and effectively running a large democracy is an enormous undertaking and proper preparation should begin at an early age. We must nurture care in our youth and demonstrate ways they can think about themselves as individuals-within-community. Their education must include how to express — and listen to — a wide variety of perspectives in problem-solving debates about how to achieve social goals. It will take all of the formative years of schooling to develop these crucial and necessary thinking, reflection, communication, and feeling skills.

Rather than provide powerful tools for ownership, engagement, and intellectual expansion in a vibrant democracy, however, today's foundational pedagogy, with its attendant testing and comparisons, conditions our children to passively receive and believe information. The unspoken argument (unless you ask, like I always have) is that if we just rely on experts, follow the rules, and pursue employment, we will create the means to achieve happiness, security, and satisfaction in our lives.

We need not look further than the front page of the newspaper on any given day to see the devastating suffering and failure of this approach: increased polarization and authoritarianism across civil society, increased mental illness, suicide, anxiety, depression, addiction and opiate use in individuals; and the enormous loss of meaning and control in our lives.

Our citizens are waiting for a courageous and benevolent leader to do the heavy lifting of leading civil society. We want to believe that reform is happening and that infusing money into bad systems is making them better. We are waiting for the white knight to come and save us, but we can't yet see her on the horizon. The education system we count on to properly prepare our youth to recognize and solve social, regional, and global problems is failing our

future leaders by withholding the very tools they must use to develop their capabilities, at our nation's collective peril.

In 2007, just one month after receiving my bachelor's degree (at 44 years of age), I read an article in the *Journal of Correctional Education* that offered a new lens for me to use as I think about "correctional education." In it the author, Cormac Behan (2007), argued: "[T]he current penal orthodoxy must be challenged and alternative discourses explored within and without of correctional settings" (p. 158). I agreed! I read on, and found myself weaving these considerations into my perspective:

Educators need to create an alternative discourse about how we define our progress. It could shift the focus of the argument from a defensive position to a positive one. This might be achieved by arguing for a different approach to education than what the prison authorities or politicians may want. Mezirow's theory of Transformative Learning has a lot to offer prison educators. It encourages individuals to challenge the way they make meaning in the world. This requires transforming frames of reference which begins with critical reflection, i.e., assessing one's assumptions and presuppositions. It begins with encouraging students to engage in critical thinking which, according to Stephen Brookfield, is what one should strive for in an adult education process. ...This is the beginning of liberating learning. (Behan, 2007, p. 160)

I had just finished school, but I wanted to head straight back to the library to find out more about transformative learning theory! After all, wouldn't we all benefit from taking the time to think critically, reflect, question our assumptions, biases and beliefs, and discuss our thoughts with others?

After 10 years of self-study, I gathered all my savings and returned to school to pursue a master's degree in education. I needed to learn about education theory, curriculum-building and evaluation, so I could build a place where all people — regardless of their educational attainment or relationship — could freely learn how to learn. We have the right, as citizens and humans, to know how to think deeply, how to find information that is not offered through the “news,” to consider other perspectives, build agency, and expand our capacity for complexity, caring, and knowledge. We deserve to have a place to break free from the limitations of other people's educational norms, goals and expectations, and think outside of the social or tribal bubble. A place where learners of any age and any educational attainment level could continue freely on their personal path of acquiring wisdom.

Where I once thought a certificate was the answer, I grew to understand that employers et al. were understandably cynical about the value of certificates that cannot show commitment, moral fortitude, team building or critical thinking. They want to judge the person for themselves, which makes sense. After all, a driver's license does not verify a willingness to use turn signals, only that the driver knows how to use them.

It takes courage to face an employer in an interview following many years of incarceration. It also takes courage to say “no” to a powerfully persuasive family member or close friend. It takes great bravery to do the right thing when our group is doing the wrong thing. We can muster the strength that we need to create good boundaries, expand our capabilities, and reduce our suffering. From there, we can feel strong enough to reach out to help others .... and discover that helping them helps us even more. No certificate shows this level of growth, determination, or commitment.

I was extremely fortunate to have been diverted from dropping out of school to finding a reason to love learning. In the halls of Walden III, at the age of 16, I was able to experience the process and value of transformative learning. I am deeply grateful and, like many believers, I feel a responsibility to offer this opportunity to others.

### **The Fair Shake Free School**

So now, while I am not able to get into the prisons to talk with people face-to-face, but while the interest rises in newsletter subscriptions, creating think tanks, exploring biases, and more, I am pushing the creative side of my mind to its limits (which will, thankfully, expand even more) to figure out how one person can maintain and even build a lifelong learning “community center” that not only offers information, but asks visitors to contribute.

The Fair Shake Free School will more deeply investigate these areas:

- Philosophy — to explore epistemology, purpose, morality, care for humanity, values, etc.
- Psychology — to explore the feeling/thinking problem, our needs and wants, uniqueness, dropping unwanted baggage, motivation, etc.
- Sociology — to explore TV and media and it's impacts, how authority impacts groups, how being in groups impacts individuals, etc.
- Citizenship — building community and capabilities together, education, democracy, global village, etc.
- “Swellness” — where our physical health meets our mental health.

We now live in a world of constant change; where lifelong learning is no longer just a good idea, it is vital for security, satisfaction, meaning-making, and building trust.

Fair Shake will not engage in top-down pedagogy but will, instead, rely on a learning foundation based in

heutagogy (self-determined learning), ubuntu (teaching and learning undergirded by humanity toward others), and transformative learning theory (critical reflection and potential for perspective change).

Looking through the heutagogical lens (Glassner & Back, 2020), learners will understand that they are the captains of their learning adventure and they will “make the road by walking” (Machado, 1912). They will learn how they can discern the value of the information they entertain, ask relevant questions for proper reflection, and construct knowledge to build their life to its fullest.

By applying the lens of ubuntu (Bangura, 2005), learners will be able to think deeply about what is at the core of being a human: relationship! They will be able to remember that we learned how to be human from other humans, and that we can build information in a way that honors, accepts, and encourages others. Ubuntu is such an important philosophy for democracy that, in 1997, the South African Department of Welfare stated that Ubuntu “acknowledges both the rights and the responsibilities of every citizen in promoting individual and societal well-being” (p. 12).

Finally, the transformative learning lens (Mezirow, 1990) will equip learners with ways to foster critical self-reflection, challenge social norms, engage in dialog with greater confidence, and consider other perspectives, including changing our own. These tools will support compassion as well as capacity-building in a world of constant change and emerging truth.

### **Our Opportunity**

Let us think again about those who are stuck in the building:

The monolith of correctional bureaucracy and its supporters — the current managers of the building — have no incentive or desire to improve their performance. In accordance with

our current contract, they can keep us out, but they cannot stop us from reaching in to connect, to listen, and to share time, learning opportunities, and humanity. They can also not stop us from changing our contract with them in the future.

We can change the building; for instance, we can create a campus with choices. We can continue to include limitations and restrictions, while we also include decency, respect, and opportunities. We can remind those inside that we know they are bringing unique and important contributions to our communities.

The management of the building, and the welfare of those being held within it, is OUR business; we have a right and a duty to build possibilities with our fellow citizens. As we now properly recognize ourselves as the owners, and see our neighbors inside as co-creators, we can experiment with new ways of thinking about how to help them prepare to leave the building and find success in our dynamic, technology-based world.

Remember, more than 1,600 of our fellow citizens will walk out of those doors full of hope and determination each day. With our eyes and hearts open, I am certain that we can switch the 83% failure rate to an 83% success rate.

What works to improve reentry success? We do. Together.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Walden III, Racine, Wisconsin: <https://www.rusd.org/district/walden-iii-middle-high-school>
- <sup>2</sup> Fair Shake website: <https://www.fairshake.net/>.
- <sup>3</sup> Fair Shake Reentry Packet: <https://www.fairshake.net/reentry-resources/ReentryPacket/>.
- <sup>4</sup> If you'd like to learn about the philosophy behind the bubbles, please check out the "On Sue's

Desk" page of the website and scroll down until you see Bubble Truck Philosophy (<https://www.fairshake.net/suesdesk/>).

- <sup>5</sup> To see the survey that the Federal Bureau of Prisons use to assess the "risk of recidivism," please find the Measures of Criminal Attitudes and Associates (MCAA) survey on the Fair Shake website: (<https://www.fairshake.net/risk-assessments/>), or on the Research and Practice in Corrections Lab website: [https://sites.google.com/a/siu.edu/corrections-and-research\\_lab/Downloads](https://sites.google.com/a/siu.edu/corrections-and-research_lab/Downloads). See the "Measures of Criminal Attitudes and Associates (MCAA)" questionnaire (please scroll down to find it) and the "Measures of Criminal and Antisocial Desistance (MCAD)" survey — worth a moment while you're there!

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# “Champion of Change” Sue Kastensen is On a Mission to Help People Succeed After Release

by [JD MacBean](#) | May 2, 2021 | [Life After Prison](#)

<https://lvinthedreamblog.org/2021/05/02/champion-of-change-sue-kastensen-is-on-a-mission-to-help-offenders-succeed-after-release/>



**LtD: Sue, first thank-you for taking the time to speak to us at the *Living the Dream Prison Blog* and thank-you for *Fair Shake*. I want to start by asking you to explain your personal journey and what you learned from it?**

At 57, my personal journey is long, and I am mid-stream in my learning! A few characteristics stand out, however, and also a few events:

- I never stopped asking why...or why not
- I have never allowed myself to be limited by what someone else said.
- Thanks to Billie Jean King, I knew I could be whatever I wanted to be.

A few major events:

\* I was kicked out of my parent's home at age 12. For the next 5 years I was deemed an 'uncontrollable child' and sent to group homes, foster homes, jails, and a reform school 200 miles from home. Ran away a lot. On Christmas eve, 1979 (age 16), I hitchhiked to a hospital in GA, bent over in pain, to get appendix removed.

\* In my small WI town of 2000, I built a popular, national hemp-based personal care company in 1993. In 1999, an employee asked if I'd hire her friend who was coming back from prison soon. I did...and the seed was planted for Fair Shake.

\* In 2005, I sold that business, received my bachelor's degree (age 42) in 2007, and started Fair Shake in 2009. In 2016, I was recognized by the Obama White House as a Champion of Change and in 2019 I received a Master's in Education. Next, I plan to add a Free School to Fair Shake.

**LtD: Where did the idea for Fair Shake come from and what were**

**your first steps to creating Fair Shake?**

I decided on that name because I kept hearing that all people wanted was a fair shake. As a kid who had spent several formative years 'in the system', I knew what that meant and how that felt. That was all I wanted, too.

I also knew that to get a fair shake people would need a way to differentiate themselves from the media portrayal of a person who has committed a crime. The only way to do that is to demonstrate volition, skills, intention, commitment and one's unique characteristics. But first, people had to find the things they need to exist! So, first I created a huge national [Resource Directory](#), next I built the stakeholder pages, and the last, but not least-important, came the page that holds the [Choose Your Perspective](#) documents.

**LtD: What are the features of the Fair Shake website and software? How does each help the Returning Citizen?**

Fair Shake is like a huge reentry Do-It-Yourself building center. I've pulled together resources, information, tutorials and lots of links to offer to people to use in the way that makes sense to them. Everyone's successful reentry project is different, so – like a hardware store – there is a lot of diverse information!

The website and software are identical, except – of course – that the software is offline, meaning it functions without the internet. There are several benefits to using the software prior to release:

\* The individual can learn to find things in the website. Fair Shake is huge! They can explore the 'website' on their own time and in their own way. Then,

when the person gains access to the internet, they will know where to go to click on links to the resources and information that is most relevant to them.

\* Some people have never used a computer or the internet, or maybe they have just been away from them for a long time. Learning how to navigate the website through our simulation will be beneficial to navigating all websites...without pop-ups, advertisements or other 'shiny' distractions. Also, we created a tutorial for learners to gain computer and internet knowledge regardless of their previous experience; one which does not require them to start at the beginning unless they want to. We offer email tutorials, as well.

\* Progressive institutions can send people home with their digital property! Documents, spreadsheets and images can be uploaded into a personal account which can then be accessed online after release. Resume's, reflections and other writings can then be accessed from any computer!

**LtD: Fair Shake must be a ton of work. How do you keep it going, and more importantly, how do you fund it?**

It is a ton of work. I don't understand why large organizations with many staff members don't accomplish more, when I am doing all this by myself. But then again, I don't waste time at the water cooler, or arguing with people about the best way to do things...

Fair Shake is 100% community supported, funded only by donors who believe that what I've pulled together, to freely share, has value. Most of Fair

Shake's donors are incarcerated, where they earn around 13 cents per hour. Since the donations have yet to start really rolling in, Fair Shake's HQ is in my home.

**LtD: Lets discuss re-entry more broadly. You've called mass incarceration a "Wicked Problem", a term coined by Horst Rittel. First, tell our readers what a "Wicked Problem" is and then please explain why re-entry is a wicked problem.**

The way I used the term, it means that a problem has many dimensions, it is complex to solve, it contains many moving parts, and relies on a large number of stakeholders who do not work in concert.

A proper response to this question would require a book-length examination, but I will offer a few examples of the dimensions of the problem:

Television pretends to inform us but it mostly just numbs us, conditions us, and leaves us feeling overwhelmed and unable to think deeply about crime, justice, or the power and responsibility of citizens in a democracy.

Schools crush our full humanity (which includes others; not just ourselves). It conditions us to only care about ourselves and our individual goals; it also embeds the idea that we must see others as competitors for jobs, and that jobs provide the key to a life worth living. I believe this is at the root of our crisis of care today.

The 'justice system' is focused on 'othering' people based on the idea that the incarcerated possess "criminogenic needs", which are different from the deep human needs we all share. They 'manage' people through behaviorism instead of personal development. By failing to offer people resources and personal development information before release (job training is grossly insufficient for human development), they guarantee that many people will come back. We can see ample evidence for their "evidence-based" approach in the 83% recidivism rate\*.

We've been lulled into thinking that government grants and philanthropy

have 'got this' so we don't need to think or take action. But we've been hearing that same story for so very many years...

This is just the tip of what I see of the "wicked problem" iceberg. There are many more dimensions to explore.

**LtD: In your experience, what is the biggest hurdle men and women face as they leave prison? Are their unique challenges for each gender? How does Fair Shake help?**

The biggest problem that I see is that prisons do not offer the incarcerated the skills that we all need to face the world each day: confidence about the gifts that we have to offer to our communities and to employers, critical thinking and problem-solving skills, the ability to use a computer efficiently and wisely to find information without getting pulled into the vortex of distraction, and a deep understanding of our needs - and the way we satisfy them - to foster both autonomy and interdependence.

Limiting stories create a huge hurdle. We know that stories can bolster us and help us feel confident, but they can also be used to justify fear, self-doubt and inaction. For example, even though I constantly share stories about employment opportunities all around the country, and employers who are looking toward prisons to find their future employees, I must constantly address the old claims that employers won't hire people who have been released from prison.

I believe there are far fewer employers in that category today. Employers want references, however, so a person may have to work in a setting that is not their ideal position until they can demonstrate that they are tenacious, convivial, caring and dependable. People can move to a more desirable position once they have a reference for 6 – 12 months of work.

Since I'm a kid from the system, and a female and a mother, I can see that women have an extra-tough hurdle to surmount to fully engage their powerful self-determination. I'm shocked and saddened that we have slid back from the liberation that was growing from the 60's to the early 80's. Media in every form wants to convince us that

we must focus first on how attractive we are; and second, our duty to others (children, men, elders). Very rarely are we provided with images or support for being agents of our destiny and success. In prison, for instance, we are mainly offered employment training opportunities for the occupations that women have traditionally held for the past 100 years, rather than giving us the opportunity to earn much higher wages in occupations such as construction, welding, or coding.

**LtD: Many of the resources provided by Fair Shake appear to address Re-entry as a process. For example, you recommend re-reading the Working Through Depression information a few weeks after release and the Educate Yourself! resources six-months later. Is re-entry a process? Does thinking of it this way help Returning Citizens succeed?**

I've been fortunate to stay in touch with quite a few people after release. Most, if not all, have said that it was much different than they expected, and that they were over-confident (a bias that afflicts most of us!) about their ability to address gnawing issues. Even after a year or two of relative freedom, they were still learning about themselves and their true needs and goals.

This is true for all of us. When we move to a different state or city, we are often unable to anticipate the psychological and emotional challenges that will face as we settle in to the new environment. The challenges are exponentially exacerbated for the person coming from an environment of such complete deprivation to one with an overload of information, misinformation, fake information...and overwhelming possibility.

One of my new friends, who was released from prison just over 2 years ago, shared his "process" in the most recent edition of the Fair Shake [newsletter](#) (sent to 3500+ incarcerated subscribers each month). He felt it was important to reach back and remind the readers to take care of themselves, or they would be faced with challenges they have not prepared for.

**LtD: The information you provide in the Fair Shake Ownership Manual is very comprehensive and extensive in many different categories - including tips on watching TV, for example! Why are these topics so important for Returning Citizens to understand?**

Where can we learn to watch TV defensively? It has such a huge influence on society, yet we are most often passive recipients of its pervasive and controlling messaging. Anxiety and depression are increasing! We can refuse to see ourselves as inadequate. We can question the media with its constant promotion of drugs, fear mongering and consumerism.

Besides critically thinking about the impact television has on us, what school teaches about all of the other influences that have shaped us - and the status quo? Where do we turn to foster self-determination in ourselves and our youth? Why are we taught to turn to authority for answers, rather than how construct knowledge with others? Who helps us to bravely set boundaries, or consider the biases that play havoc with our thinking?

I feel it is my duty to not only offer physical resources but also emotional and psychological resources! We have a right to ask questions, to reflect, and to think for ourselves. These documents form the foundation of the Free School I'm building: a free and open study center where people can explore the education that we were denied in our formative years.

**LtD: Proponents of the term "Prison Industrial Complex" see the system as one that intentionally sets Returning Citizens up to fail in order to maintain a revolving door of imprisonment. What is your opinion on this? Are felons set-up to fail? Why or why not?**

We are all set up to fail each other, starting with public school. Since we are starved of the opportunity to learn about ourselves as persons in the world, we are stripped of fundamental inclinations toward care, creativity, cooperation and critical thinking. The result is that we fail to care about one another - which is against our nature.

Many of my other responses provide examples of how prisons fail to prepare people for release.

I want to remind readers here to keep their scope very wide: the prison industrial complex does not stand alone. It is as pernicious and pervasive - and deeply connected to - the medical industrial complex, the education industrial complex, the military industrial complex (Eisenhower coined this term in 1961) and even the charitable industrial complex, which has been created to give us the illusion that society's shortcomings are being tended to by caring souls; rather than "foundations" and grants that may be bent on making sure things stay the same.

These writings will help you see the controlling power behind philanthropic funding and government grants: [The Revolution Will Not Be Funded](#) written by INCITE!, [Winners Take All](#) by Anand Giridharadas, and Peter Buffet's article [The Charitable Industrial Complex](#). Philanthropists, and the science that supports their perspective, circumnavigate democracy, create a comforting illusion, and continue to generate "solutions" that perpetually fail to solve problems.

I don't want to disparage non-profits! Many, like Fair Shake, are committed to a mission to reduce suffering and improve lives.

The industrial complexes, however, are about control: control of the people, control of the economy, and control of the future.

**LtD: What industries or companies seem more open or willing to hire felons in your observation?**

I believe the field of employment is wide open. Many of the newsletter readers are interested in trucking, entrepreneurship and building maintenance. I learned that more than a few thought they would like to share their gifts in the non-profit sector. I think this is a great idea, so I added a non-profit employment search engine link to the Fair Shake [Find A Job](#) page.

One of the most interesting aspects of Fair Shake is that it can be responsive to the interests of those who are preparing for release and those who

have made the transition. Real-time data!

**LtD: What should current prisoners do, right now, to prepare for release and success upon re-entry?**

Learn to recognize the conditioning that we've all been subjected to throughout our lives and decide, with intention, which beliefs are still serving you, and which ones you can let go.

In addition to your regular studies and job training and preparation, consider perusing user-friendly books on functional philosophy, psychology, sociology, citizenship and physical and mental wellness.

If you are interested in higher education, start your studies now! You can test out of many courses for just \$90 by utilizing the [CLEP](#) test, and you will likely even qualify to get your [Freshman Year Free](#).

Finally, read while you can, because taking the time to read a book will become very difficult once you get busy ~

**LtD: Do prisons provide appropriate rehabilitative programs and/or job skill training for inmates?**

It is impossible to answer a question about "appropriate rehabilitative programs" with a yes or no response since we have nearly 2000 prisons in the US and they function like independent communities.

I believe all institutions offer some sort of job skill training that can be considered appropriate, but I would doubt they are universally adequate.

**LtD: What could prisons do better? Or, put differently, how should prisons help prepare inmates for our current economy?**

I hope you don't mind if I skip this question. I've written, and scratched and rewritten responses and I have so many problems with 'the current economy', which I believe is in the process of pivoting anyway, that I don't think I could provide a response that is anything but confusing. (side note: I was deeply involved in Fair Trade for a decade, so my view of 'the economy' includes high regard for the workers

and deep thinking about extraction and externalizing costs...including pollution, toxins, etc.)

**LtD: Has COVID affected the employment opportunities for Returning Citizens over the last 14-months?**

Yes. It has been more difficult to get documents, in-person training and hands-on support, but - from what I've heard - jobs have been relatively easy to obtain.

**LtD: You believe in, and promote, the concept of Ubuntu. Please define that concept for us and explain how and why you've adopted it in your life.**

Desmond Tutu sums it up so well when he says "the solitary individual is a contradiction in terms".

Ubuntu, roughly translated, means: I am who I am because of who we all are. We learned how to be a person through other persons, and the culture and the environment in which we have lived. We are interdependent, and authenticity is of paramount importance because, as Desmond Tutu also says "I need you to be all that you can be, so that I can be all that I can be."

One of our deep human needs is belonging. We have a powerful, innate desire to give to our community, and we have many gifts to give! But we are taught to focus on our needs, and to address our problems as individuals, rather than within a community.

I learned about Ubuntu because I was frustrated (and still am!) by how we are controlled by Microsoft, et al. My son told me to try the Ubuntu operating system (which I now use), but when I

searched the term, I found the philosophy instead. I felt like I struck gold! I realized it is how I see the world, and how Fair Shake was created and continues to develop.

**LtD: What about Fair Shake makes you the most proud? What are you still working to improve? Most proud: (I live in the midwest; this is very difficult to say out loud)**

That my efforts are recognized and valued by the stakeholder groups I have tried to reach out to. Below please find a powerful, unsolicited 'performance review'; one I take very seriously. I see the acknowledgement and accolade not only as a compliment, but also as a fortunate responsibility.

I received this unsolicited comment just last week: Please know how much I remain grateful for all that you do. Despite the recent cold blast, I am given tremendous warmth from the hope and passion you exhibit. During moments of adversity, I will reread your newsletters and your encouraging words.

Working to improve: I'm always working my listening skills, widening my scope, my metaphors, and my understanding. The website and software are constantly being improved upon, and I'm writing new personal development documents in the hopes to improve the new Reentry Ownership Manual, as well!

**LtD: What is the best advice you can offer a soon-to-be-released person?** Hold on to your values, and try to not worry too much about unsettled feelings; they will settle in time. Breathe. Take an inventory of your gifts, your skills, your unique qualities. Think of ways you will share them with

those around you. Feel your confidence, and try to remember that feeling when you need to tap into it. Believe in yourself. Remember that Fair Shake is here, and I am here. Feel free to reach out if and when you need support. Congratulate yourself for getting through what could be the most difficult time in your life!

**LtD: If Fair Shake is not available in an inmate's specific prison, how can they bring the software or information into the prison?**

They may find an interested person in education, reentry and even in the library. Case managers have brought Fair Shake in, too! Let them know I will be happy to send a copy of the Reentry Ownership Manual and a DVD. The best way to reach me is sue@fairshake.net.

Other options are in development, too. We're creating a 'secure' website, that acts like the software but is accessed through the chrome books now in circulation. We're also working with a tablet supplier. Fair Shake will remain free through all access points.

**LtD: I always end these interviews by giving our guest an opportunity to address any area I may have missed or share information or ideas important to you. What would you like to leave our audience with today?**

We've allowed our imaginations to be limited by external influences. We do not need models to build a powerful and satisfying future; we need gumption, determination and curiosity! We need to learn to listen, and we need to support one another. We must shatter the old models that no longer work. We have to make it up as we go; and to do this we will need to learn to trust ourselves and one another.

Rosie The Riveter said "We Can Do It!"

Candidate Barack Obama said "Yes We Can."

Sue Kastensen says "What Are We Waiting For? Let's Go!"

\* Alper, M., Durose, M. R., & Markman, J. (2018, May 23). 2018 update on prisoner recidivism: A 9-Year follow-up period (2005–2014). Retrieved from <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/18upr9yfup0514.pdf>

## Quotes Out of Context:

### *Vision and Oomph!*

*"Our chief want is someone who will inspire us to be what we know we could be."*

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

*"Transformation comes more from pursuing profound questions than seeking practical answers."*

- Peter Block

*"I must create a system (for myself) or be enslaved by another man's."*

- William Blake

*"We are all connected; To each other, biologically. To the earth, chemically. To the rest of the universe atomically."*

- Neil deGrasse Tyson

*"Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together. All things connect."*

- Chief Seattle

*"Not only do self-love and love of others go hand in hand but ultimately they are indistinguishable."*

- M. Scott Peck

*"Questions draw us together. Answers push us apart."*

- Peter Block

*"Loved people love people. Love someone so they can love someone."*

- Marvin Beauchamp

*"I imagine one of the reasons people cling to their hates so stubbornly is because they sense, once hate is gone, they will be forced to deal with pain."*

- James Baldwin

*"When people talk, listen completely. Most people never listen."*

- Ernest Hemingway

*"If you really want the last word in an argument, try saying 'you're right'."*

- Unknown

*"The best way to have good ideas is to have lots of ideas...and then throw away the bad ones."*

- Linus Pauling

*"If we believe something does not exist unless we measure it, then we put aside: love, feeling, intuition, art and philosophy."*

- Peter Block

*(...and potential and possibility!*

- sue k)

*"...the ultimate, hidden truth of the world is that it is something that we make, and could just as easily make differently."*

- David Graeber

## NOTES

**HOT AND SPICY ROLL**

## Ingredients

1 bag of white rice  
 1 sausage log  
 jalapeño slices  
 ½ cup of shredded hot pepper cheese  
 tortillas

**Instructions**

1. Cut up sausage roll in small pieces
2. Put rice, sausage and enough water to cook the rice. Boil for 20 minutes.
3. Warm tortillas in the microwave or pan.
4. Put some cheese and jalapeño slices onto the warm tortillas, add the rice and sausage combination, and roll up.

**SESAME NOODLES**

1 pkg ramen noodles (hot & spicy flavor only)  
 2 dollops of peanut butter (or any nut butter)  
 1 tbsp garlic powder  
 1 tbsp soy sauce  
 1 tbsp of hot sauce  
 black pepper (to taste)

**Instructions**

1. Boil water, in microwave, until it's a rolling boil. Put noodle block in there as is. It will separate into strands over the course of 3 minutes.
2. Drain noodles, put aside.
3. Plop noodles in bowl, add at least 2 dollops of peanut butter and mix well.
4. Add the garlic powder & soy sauce (to taste)
5. Season with hot sauce & pepper to taste.

**CHICKEN JALAPEÑO RANCH BURRITOS**

1 (18oz) bag of rice,  
 1 Chile lime ramen soup,  
 1 (4.5oz) chicken breast,  
 1 container of jalapeño cream cheese (could use cheese cup),  
 1 pack of shells,  
 2 (1.5oz) packs of ranch dressing,  
 1 teaspoon garlic powder.  
 Optional: Hot sauce.  
 Peanut butter lid to measure out food.

In microwave-safe bowl, place 1 lid full of rice and 1.5 lid fulls of hot water, cook until fully cooked. Then cook half of the noodle w/out seasoning. After cooked drain excess water and let rice and

noodle to cool. Place rice, noodle, cream cheese, ranch dressing, garlic, and half chili lime seasoning packet and mix. As you mix add chicken. When done mixing put mixture on shells, should make 4 burritos.

**CHICKEN & BEAN DIP**

1 pkg of chicken ramen  
 ½ cup of shredded chicken  
 1 chopped jalapeño  
 1 cup of boiling water  
 2 cans/16 oz of refried beans  
 Tortilla chips

1. Crush the ramen in the wrapper and empty into a large bowl. Set aside the seasoning package (for a different recipe).
2. Add the water, cover, and let sit for 8 minutes. Then, drain off the excess water.
3. Mix the chicken, refried beans and chopped jalapeño into bowl.
4. Cover and microwave for about 5 minutes until hot.
5. Add the ramen and mix well.
6. Dip tortilla chips into the dish and eat!

**SWEET & SOUR PORK**

4 pkgs ramen noodles  
 1 sausage log  
 2 pkgs of pork rinds  
 2 tbsp of hot sauce  
 6 tbsp cherry Kool-Aid  
 chopped jalapeños (to taste)

Boil enough water to cover the blocks of ramen, let sit for 8 minutes. Then, drain of the excess water. In another bowl, chop the sausage log into small pieces, add the pork rinds and chopped jalapeno (to taste) into bowl. Then, cover and nuke it until hot. Add the ramen, hot sauce and cherry Kool-Aid to the hot bowl and mix well!

**FRUITY TEA**

1 tea bag A few pieces of orange peel  
 5 cherry cough drops 1 tsp of honey  
 1½ cups of boiling water

Put the tea bag, orange peel and cough-drops in a big mug. Pour over water, add the honey, and stir. Let steep for 4 min, remove the tea bag. Drink while hot or enjoy cold.

## **SUGAR RUSH DELIGHT**

Ingredients:

2 honey buns,  
peanut butter,  
2 candy bars of your choice, and  
1 pack of M&Ms.

STEP 1: flatten Honey buns with your hands while still in the wrapper.

STEP 2: warm up the desired amount of peanut butter and pour desired amount over the honey buns.

STEP 3: crush candy bars of your choice while still in the wrapper by hitting it on the ground then sprinkle 1 crushed candy bar on each honey bun.

STEP 4: crush M&Ms and sprinkle on honey buns.

STEP 5: fold each honey bun in half like a taco.

STEP 6: enjoy!!!

## **THE REAL HOT SHOT!!! (MAKES 16oz)**

Ingredients:

2 spoons of hot cocoa,  
1 big spoonful of coffee,  
1 candy bar of your choice (or 2)  
2 spoonful's of cappuccino mix (optional).

STEP 1: heat up 16 oz worth of hot water.

STEP 2: add cocoa, coffee, cappuccino into cup.

STEP 3: smash candy bar on the ground, open it up, and pour into your cup.

STEP 4: add the hot water to your cup.

STEP 5: stir mixture thoroughly until chocolate, coffee, and cappuccino mix is dissolved.

STEP 6: enjoy!!!

## **STRAWBERRY PARFAITS (4 servings)**

- 4 cups of vanilla pudding
- ½ bag of tropical mix
- 2 packets of regular oatmeal
- ½ bottle of strawberry jelly
- a cup of creamer

1) In a separate bowl, stir together the jelly, creamer, and pudding cups.

2) in a cup, put 2 banana chips on the bottom.

3) put a scoop or two of strawberry mix over chips.

4) pour a layer of oatmeal on the mix. Smoothen.

5) add more strawberry mix on that until there is ½ inch left on cup. Put raisins or some fried fruit and sprinkle some more oatmeal. 6) repeat for next cups. \*Optional: put strawberry mix on ice for 30 min before separating in cups.

## **APPLE PIE**

3-4 apples for a medium size pie. 5-6 for large. Cut apples into thin slices, you can keep the peel on if you like but when it cooks it won't get soft. Put all apple slices in a bag with 10-12 butters. Next take 3-6 packs of cinnamon roll oatmeal's and put over bowl with paper on top. Take paper and punch holes in it so when you pour the packet out the oatmeal won't get through. You just want the cinnamon. Add all the cinnamon to the bag and add a generous amount of sugar to the mix. A splash of water too. Put in hot pot and let cook for 2-3 hours. It may take longer, it just depends on how thin you slice the apples next, take a bag of nilla wafers and crush them finely. Add to this the same amount of butters and sugar and a splash of water. Pat it down into a nice smooth crust and put it on ice. Once the pie filling is hot and soft pour it on top of crust and spread it evenly. Let sit for an half hour to an hour. If you got it eat it ala mode!!!! Put more packets of cinnamon in the mix if you really want that flavor to pop!! Enjoy!!

## **CHOCOLATE PEANUT BUTTER BROWNIES**

Ingredients:

1 (16oz) bag of Vanilla wafers,  
1 (10oz) packet of cocoa,  
2 (14.4oz) boxes of Graham crackers,  
1 (18oz) jar of Peanut butter,  
1 large glass of tap water.  
Optional: mixed nuts, trail mix, or M&M's

Break one sleeve of Graham crackers into dime size pieces, and set aside. Place remaining sleeves of Graham crackers and wafers into a bag and crush into dust. Mix in cocoa, peanut butter, and slowly add water and mix until gooey. \*May not need all water. Can mix while in bag or a bowl. Add dime size chunks and any optional items, be careful not to over mix at this point. On plastic surface, roll out mixture until 1/2 or 3/4 inch thick. Let rest to set. Cut into 2" squares.

## **PEANUT BRITTLE**

Two bags of butterscotch buttons and half jar of peanut butter

Melt buttons with peanut butter until smooth

Add 1 bag peanuts.

Spread on a surface to cool.

Words and ideas to expand possibilities and bust through limiting beliefs!

**AGENCY** Capacity to act, to exert power. oed  
Capacity to decide; to act on your choices. smk

**ANDRAGOGY** - The method and practice of teaching adult learners. oed    Adult learning. smk

**AUTONOMY** - The capacity of reason for moral self-determination. Liberty to follow one's will; control over one's own affairs; freedom from external influence, personal independence. oed

**CITIZEN** - Inhabitant of a nation, possessing civic rights and responsibilities. oed

**CULTURE** - The distinctive ideas, customs, social behavior, products, or way of life of a particular nation, society, people, or period. Hence: a society or group characterized by such customs oed

**CUSTOM** - A mode of behavior which is widely practiced and accepted in a particular society, community, etc.; a convention; a tradition oed

**DISPARITY** - The quality or state of being of unequal rank, condition, circumstances. oed

**ETHICS** – The guidelines, rules, agreements and group approaches to morality. smk

**EPISTEMOLOGY** – How do you know what you know? smk

**HARAMBEE** – Pulling together. oed It means "All Pull Together" in Swahili and is the national motto of Kenya.

**HEUTAGOGY** - Self-Directed Learning

**MEANING** (in our life): gives purpose, fulfilling smk

**MORAL** - Of or relating to human character or behavior considered as good or bad; of or relating to the distinction between right and wrong, or good and evil, in relation to the actions, desires, or character of responsible human beings. oed

**KEY:** OED = Oxford English Dictionary  
smk = Sue's perspective

**MORALITY** - knowledge concerned with right and wrong conduct, duty, responsibility, etc. oed

**OWNERSHIP** - The fact or state of being an owner; proprietorship, dominion; legal right of possession or solving a problem. oed

**PHILOSOPHY** - The love, study, or pursuit of wisdom, truth, or knowledge. oed  
Once a foundation of learning, now rarely studied, yet critically needed. smk

**SELF-AWARENESS** - Conscious knowledge of one's own character, thoughts, emotions; awareness of the fact of one's own existence. oed

**SELF-CONTROL** - The ability to control one's emotions, desires, and reactions, esp. in difficult situations oed

**SELF-DETERMINATION** - The power or freedom to direct oneself or act independently; the capacity for free will; the process of, or capacity for, determining one's own course of life. oed

**SELF-GOVERNANCE** - The ability to govern or control oneself or one's emotions, desires, etc.; the fact of governing oneself in this way; self-control, self-discipline. oed

**SELF-REALIZATION** - Realization of one's true nature or ideal self; fulfilment of one's potential by one's own efforts. oed

**UBUNTU:** I am who I am because of who we all are. (aphorism)

oed: embodying the various values and virtues of essential humanity  
Desmond Tutu: the sense that my humanity is bound up in your humanity

**UBUNTUGOGY** – Framing our learning within the belief that everything is connected so all learning must include and address connections and interdependence. smk

## WHY AM I SO OBSESSED WITH LIBERATION & FREEDOM?

### WHY QUESTION BELIEFS THAT WERE GIVEN TO US?

### WHY DO I WORRY ABOUT LIBERATION FROM LIMITING THOUGHTS?

I want you to be able to find what you need to build a satisfying life. I believe a lot of the things that we really need to do that are not taught to us in school. It is my hope that by building this Manual, and by sharing ideas with its readers - that we will continue to build the book and the website together. Together, we can offer even more tools and information, including tools to build trust and community. The most important thing we need is deep, not fleeting, desire. If that flame is burning, we can learn to locate and reinforce everything else.

I believe:

If we want to build the life a life filled with meaning and connection -

If we want to be successful -

If we want to navigate the world safely -

If we want to learn, to develop, to build the future with intention -

If we want to support families, friends and communities -

*THEN*, it might be beneficial to:

Think about how we think. (cognition)

Think about how we know what we know. (belief / epistemology)

Think about how we feel. (some of what we believe is based on feelings that go way back...)

Think about how we sense. (we learn through our body and our surroundings, too)

Think about what we project on to what we think we know. (we assume our beliefs are true)

and Think about how we are 'persons-in-the-world', not 'solitary individuals'.

When we sharpen our skills and our care, we'll build our vehicle to a better future.

**We can't always calculate and strive, however....**

**...we need to rest and reflect, too.**

A couple of ways you can relax and reinvigorate your mind:

|                    |                       |                           |
|--------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Reflect            | Yoga / Meditate       | Listen to an elder        |
| Write in a journal | Mow / Shovel / Dishes | Listen to music w/o words |
| Walk / Run / Swim  | Read with a child     | Read by yourself          |
| Laugh              | Day dream             | Paint, draw, dance, etc   |

## Sue's Suggested Reading List



These books and authors have powerfully influenced my perspective for many years. Many videos of the authors lecturing, or in interviews, are available on the internet for you to hear from them directly as well.

### **The Abundant Community:**

Awaking the Power of Families and Neighborhoods  
John McKnight, Peter Block 2010 Berrett-Koehler

### **The Age of Surveillance Capitalism:**

The Fight for a Human Future at the New Frontier of Power  
Shoshanna Zuboff 2019 PublicAffairs

### **Amusing Ourselves to Death**

Neil Postman 1985 Penguin Books

### **Anti-Fragile: Things That Gain from Disorder**

Nassim Taleb 2014 Random House

### **Asking the Right Questions:**

A Guide to Critical Thinking  
M. Neil Browne & Stuart M. Keeley 2014 Pearson

### **Atomic Habits: Build Good Habits & Break Bad Ones**

James Clear 2018 Avery

### **Better Together: Restoring the American Community**

Robert Putnam & Lewis M. Feldstein 2004  
Simon & Schuster

### **Black Prophetic Fire**

Cornel West, Christa Buschendorf 2015 Beacon

### **Business of Belief**

Tom Asacker 2013 CreateSpace

### **The Book of Forgiving**

The Fourfold Path for Healing Ourselves and Our World  
Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Mpho Tutu 2015  
HarperOne

### **Calling Bullshit:**

The Art of Skepticism in a Data-Driven World  
Carl Bergstrom and Jevin West 2021 Random House

### **The Careless Society: Community and Its Counterfeits**

John McKnight 1996 Basic Books

### **Community: The Structure of Belonging**

Peter Block 2018 Berrett-Koehler

### **Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers**

Kwame Appiah 2007 W. W. Norton and Co.

### **Creating Capabilities:**

The Human Development Approach  
Martha Nussbaum 2013 Belknap Press

### **The Dawn of Everything: A New History of Humanity**

David Graeber and David Wengrow 2021  
Farrar, Straus and Giroux

### **Debt: The first 5000 years**

David Graeber 2014 Melville House

### **Democracy and Education:**

An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education  
John Dewey 1916 The Free Press

### **Democracy Matters:**

Winning the Fight Against Imperialism  
Cornel West 2005 Penguin

### **The Depression Cure:**

The 6-Step Program to Beat Depression Without Drugs  
Stephen S. Ilardi 2010 Da Capo Press

### **Developing Critical Thinkers:**

Challenging Adults to Explore Alternative Ways of Thinking and Acting  
Stephen D. Brookfield 1991 Jossey-Bass

### **Dignity for Deeply Forgetful People:**

How Caregivers Can Meet the Challenges of Alzheimer's Disease  
Stephen Post 2022 Johns Hopkins University

### **Don't Label Me**

Irshad Manji 2020 St. Martins Griffin

### **The Doors of Perception**

Aldous Huxley 1954 Harper Perennial

### **Dr. Seuss and Philosophy:**

Oh, The Thinks You Can Think!  
Edited by Jacob Held 2011 Rowman and Littlefield

### **Dumbing Us Down: 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition**

The Hidden Curriculum of Compulsory Schooling  
John Taylor Gatto 2017 New Society

### **Empowering Public Wisdom:**

A Practical Vision of Citizen-Led Politics  
Tom Atlee 2012 Evolver

The **End of Education:** Redefining the Value of School  
Neil Postman 1996 Vintage  
**Escape From Freedom**  
Erich Fromm 1941 Henry Holt and Company

**The Ethics of Identity**  
Kwame Anthony Appiah 2007 Princeton University

The **Extended Mind:** The Power of Thinking Outside  
the Brain  
Annie Murphy Paul 2021 Mariner

**Everyday Ubuntu:**  
Living Better Together, the African Way  
Mungi Ngomane 2020 Harper

**The Evolving Self:**  
A Psychology for the Third Millennium  
Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi 1994 Harper Perennial

**Fostering Critical Reflection in Adulthood**  
Jack Mezirow 1990 Jossey-Bass

**Freedom and Accountability at Work:**  
Applying Philosophic Insight to the Real World  
Peter Block and Peter Koestenbaum 2001 Pfeiffer

The **Globalization of Addiction:**  
A Study in Poverty of the Spirit  
Bruce K. Alexander 2010 Oxford University Press

**Happiness Hypothesis:**  
Finding Modern Truth in Ancient Wisdom  
Jonathan Haidt 2005 Basic Books

**Hearing the Other Side:**  
Deliberative Versus Participatory Democracy  
Diana C. Mutz 2002 Cambridge U. Press

**Humankind:** A Hopeful History  
Rutger Bregman 2021 Little, Brown & Co.

**Hypercapitalism:**  
The Modern Economy, Its Values, and How to Change  
Them  
Larry Gonick 2018 New Press (cartoon history)

**In My Father's House:**  
Africa in the Philosophy of Culture  
Kwame Anthony Appiah 1993 Oxford Univ. Press

**Influence, New and Expanded:** The Psychology of  
Persuasion  
With Unity, the newest principle for this edition  
Robert Cialdini 2021 Harper Business

**Learned Helplessness:**  
A Theory for the Age of Personal Control  
Peterson, Maier and Seligman 1993 Oxford

**Learning as Transformation:**  
Critical Perspectives on a Theory in Progress  
Jack Mezirow 2000 Jossey-Bass

**Learning for a Complex World**  
A Lifewide Concept of Learning, Education and  
Personal Development  
Norman Jackson 2011 AuthorHouse

**Learning to Be a Person in Society**  
Peter Jarvis 2009 Routledge

The **Lies That Bind:** Rethinking Identity  
Kwame Appiah 2019 Liveright Publishing

The **Lucifer Effect:**  
Understanding How Good People Turn Evil  
Philip Zimbardo 2007 Random House

**Man for Himself:**  
An Inquiry Into the Psychology of Ethics  
Erich Fromm 1947 Henry Holt and Company

**Man's Search For Meaning**  
Victor Frankl 1946 Beacon Press

**Moral Courage**  
Rushworth M. Kidder 2006 Wm. Morrow

**No Contest:** The Case Against Competition  
Alfie Kohn 1986 Houghton Mifflin

**No Mud, No Lotus:** The Art of Transforming Suffering  
Thich Nhat Hanh 2014 Parallax

**On Personal Power:**  
Inner Strength and It's Revolutionary Impact  
Carl Rogers 1977 Delta Books

**Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis**  
Robert Putnam 2016 Simon & Schuster

Out of Our Minds: Learning to be Creative  
Ken Robinson 2001 Capstone Publishing

**The Paradox of Choice: Why More Is Less**  
Barry Schwartz 2004 Ecco

The **Phantom Tollbooth**  
Norman Juster & Jules Feiffer 1964 Bullseye Books

**Plato, Not Prozac!:**  
Applying Eternal Wisdom to Everyday Problems  
Lou Marionoff 1999 HarperCollins

**Practical Wisdom:**  
The Right Way to Do the Right Thing  
Barry Schwartz, Kenneth Sharpe 2010 Penguin

**The Psychology of Attitude Change and Social Influence**

Philip Zimbardo and Michael R. Leippe 1991  
McGraw-Hill

**Punished by Rewards:** 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
The Trouble with Gold Stars, Incentive Plans, A's,  
Praise, and Other Bribes  
Alfie Kohn 2018 HarperOne

**Race Matters:** 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
Cornel West 2017 Beacon

**The Revolution Will Not Be Funded:**  
Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex  
INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence  
2017 Duke University Press

**The Righteous Mind:**  
Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion  
Jonathan Haidt 2012 Pantheon Books

**The School of Life:** An Emotional Education  
Alain de Botton & Colleagues 2020 The School of Life

**Self-Efficacy in Changing Societies**  
Ed. Albert Bandura 1995 Cambridge Univ. Press

**Set Boundaries, Find Peace:**  
A Guide to Reclaiming Yourself  
Nedra Glover Tawwab 2021 TarcherPerigee

**The Subtle Art of Not Giving a F\*ck:**  
A Counterintuitive Approach to Living a Good Life  
Mark Manson 2016 Harper

**A Theory of Justice**  
John Rawls 1999 Belknap Press

**Thinking Fast and Slow**  
Daniel Kahneman 2011 Farrar, Straus and Giroux

**Transcend:** The New Science of Self-Actualization  
Scott Barry Kaufman 2021 TarcherPerigee

**Tyranny of Merit:**  
What's Become of the Common Good?  
Michael Sandel 2020 Farrar, Straus and Giroux

**Ubuntu and Personhood**  
Ed. James Ogude 2018 Africa World Press

**Ubuntu and the Reconstitution of Community**  
James Ogude 2019 Indiana University Press

**The Upswing:**  
How America Came Together a Century Ago and How  
We Can Do It Again  
Robert Putnam 2020 Simon and Schuster

**Utopia of Rules:**  
On Technology, Stupidity, and the Secret Joys of  
Bureaucracy  
David Graeber 2016 Melville House

**Weapons of Math Destruction:**  
How Big Data Increases Inequality and Threatens  
Democracy  
Cathy O'Neil 2017 Crown

**What About Me?**  
The Struggle for Identity in a Market-Based Society  
Paul Verhaeghe 2012 Scribe Publications

**What Does It Mean To Be Well- Educated?**  
Essays on Standards, Grading & Other Follies  
Alfie Kohn 2004 Beacon Press

**What Doesn't Kill Us:**  
The New Psychology of Posttraumatic Growth  
Stephen Joseph Ph.D. 2013 Basic Books

**Why Are We Yelling?**  
The Art of Productive Disagreement  
Buster Benson 2019 Portfolio

**Why Good Things Happen to Good People:**  
How to Live a Longer, Healthier, Happier Life by the  
Simple Act of Giving  
Stephen G. Post 2008 Broadway Books

**Winners Take All:**  
The Elite Charade of Changing the World  
Anand Giridharadas 2019 Vintage Books

**The Wisdom of Insecurity:**  
A Message for an Age of Anxiety  
Alan Watts 1951 Vintage Books

**You Call This A Democracy?**  
Who Benefits, Who Pays And Who Really Decides?  
Paul Kivel 2004 Rowman and Littlefield

**Your Brain on Story:**  
The Destructive Seduction of the Hero's Journey  
Tom Asacker 2020 Independently Published

**You're Not Listening:**  
What You're Missing and Why It Matters  
Kate Murphy 2020 Celadon Books

# WHAT BOOKS DO YOU RECOMMEND?

(I hope you will share your recommendations with me!)

Neil Postman on the difference between  
1984 (George Orwell) and *Brave New World* (Aldous Huxley)

*What Orwell feared were those who would ban books.*

*What Huxley feared was that there would be no reason to ban a book, for there would be no one who wanted to read one.*

*Orwell feared those who would deprive us of information.*

*Huxley feared those who would give us so much that we would be reduced to passivity and egoism.*

*Orwell feared that the truth would be concealed from us.*

*Huxley feared the truth would be drowned in a sea of irrelevance.*

