

The INSIDE REPORT

APRIL 2020

Breaking News From Behind the Walls

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 1

Healing Through VOD

BY DOUGLAS L. BAKER / FCF



RF2 Box 999 event participants / FCF

Close your eyes and begin to visualize someone hurting you. Imagine losing the innocence that life once offered you. Imagine the loss of property, safety, or even the life of a loved one. Immerse yourself in the emotional, physical, financial, and spiritual pain brought about by someone else's misdeeds. Now, ask yourself, "What would healing look like, sound like, feel like? Could I ever truly start to heal?"

In 1970, a juvenile probation officer thought so. He had a magnificent idea about how healing can begin. How something so simple, yet commonly discounted by many, can affect both those who have been hurt, and those who have hurt people. Healing can begin with the most natural and simplest of human endowments - words. The Victim Offender Dialogue (VOD), or as it was called in its initial inception Victim Offender Mediation, began as an experiment in Kitchener, Ontario (Canada). A probation officer convinced a judge that two adolescents convicted of vandalism should meet the victims of their crimes. After the meetings, the judge ordered the two juveniles to pay restitution as a condition of probation. Thus, the VOD had its origins as a probation-based, post-conviction, sentencing alternative inspired by a probation officer's belief that victim-offender meetings could be helpful to both parties. The first United States program was launched in Elkhart, Indiana in 1978. From

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Fit For Release

BY MICHAEL J. MCCARTHY / SCF

Imagine if the majority of prisoners morphed into successful members of society prior to their release. A new pilot program introduced in the Colorado Department of Corrections (CDC) may soon make this a reality.

Three prisoners from Limon Correctional Facility are paving the way for thousands of incarcerated men and women to take a second look at what it means to be human.

Erik Jensen, Brandin Kreuzer, and Jonathan Willis are improving prisoners' mental, physical, and spiritual well-being. In unprecedented fashion, they visited Sterling Correctional Facility (SCF) for five days to introduce a program that prepares long-term offenders to be "proven leaders" and upstanding citizens.

For decades, prison administrators have known that long-term offenders (those serving 10-plus years) have the lowest rate of recidivism once released. The statistics are telling, while 57 percent of Colorado-released prisoners are rearrested within three years, less than 20 percent of parolees serving 10 or more years reoffend.

Presently, the CDC's annual budget is nearly \$1 billion. It costs approximately \$40,000 a year to house a single Colorado state prisoner. That figure is derived by taking the CDC budget and dividing it by the number of inmates in general population (including

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Redemption Through the Wire

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY ERIC DAVIS / FMCC

To say that the day's Redemption Road Fitness Foundation competition was unprecedented would be only a slight overstatement. It was a new event for Fremont Correctional Facility, but simply an extension of the burgeoning collaboration between CrossFit communities beyond the perimeter fences, and those in numerous Colorado Department of Corrections facilities.

At 3:50 p.m. on a sunny October afternoon, 60 residents of Fremont—all members of RF2—began pouring from the gym into Fremont's upper yard. Awaiting them by the newly-mounted Rogue Infinity Rig were 15 men and women volunteers from various Front-Range CrossFit gyms. There wasn't a moment of hesitation as these groups began sharing their enthusiasm for CrossFit. This mass of people was no longer a bunch of prisoners and a group of volunteers from outside these walls. Instead,

they morphed into a new type of CrossFit community, many of which are springing to life in prisons around the state. Instant bonds were formed as a large group hit the Infinity Rig together, comparing pull-up techniques; while another group attacked the jump-boxes; and still others glared menacingly at the bumper-plates and bars that were set up on the tennis and shuffleboard courts.

After five to eight minutes of meet and greet, Trevor Jones—original RF2 member—gathered everyone around to outline the day's schedule. Trevor is also on The Inside Report editorial team. He transferred to Fremont to participate in the Juveniles Convicted as Adults Program. His enthusiasm for RF2 is evident immediately. He possesses an ability to grab everyone's attention while offering a motivating vibe that washed over the group as he spoke. This is one of his many qualities that were instrumental in bringing RF2 to life at Fremont. It was as if everyone could feel his deeply-held

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FEATURED ARTIST

Jerry Martinez

A long-time Resident & JCAP Participant



One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest

BY ANONYMOUS VOLUNTEER

In the DWCF gym on September 12th, a doctor in a white coat holds a clipboard, and a man in scrubs greets us. Behind them is a screen. Is this medical team trying to reassure us volunteers, as well as prison staff, before we walk around the screen to see a radical performance? After all, "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" portrays a topsy-turvy madhouse where the inmates show more common sense and compassion than the crazy staff does.

Soon, I'm chatting with a man in scrubs who tells me he comes from Sterling, and he is Cheswick—or

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Masks

BY MAX THOMAS / FCF

Letting go of the masks we wear can be exceptionally hard to do. Many of us chose these personas as sixth graders and we've been locked into them ever since. We've hurt people, wrecked our families, poisoned our communities, blown up our own lives. All to uphold identities we hoped would protect us from a cruel world. But we were only making it crueler.

Now that we're stuck here, the predatory prison environment seems like the last place we could ever open up, be vulnerable and try to make a change. So we cling even tighter to the exact masks that got us here. The

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A Lost Connection

BY JOHN RED CLOUD / CC

I have often reflected on my upbringing on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. Consciously, I was aware I belonged to something greater than myself. Subconsciously, I was unaware that each step I took, my ancestors were counting on me to keep writing our story. As humans, we have that unique ability to reason, or so we think we are the only ones. There is no possible way the earth was created for buffalo, or magpies, or impala. It was created for the almighty Man. We have to be the reason. I want to feel like I am chiefly responsible for what Tunkasila has allowed me to experience on this earth, whether that be alone with my thoughts, or sharing a common experience with others.

We still have a lot to offer each other in the way of developing our consciousness. The problem is, too many of us do not see the value in devoting time and effort to this very important aspect of our lives. At this point in my life, I would like to think I still have more tomorrows than yesterdays. How much of the time that I have had have I spent consciously trying to connect with my inner self? Not enough. Much can be said for being in the moment. When I talk to people, I try and listen to what they are saying, instead of simply waiting for them to stop talking so I can say what I

have to say.

One of the beautiful things about being human is our many imperfections, and the ways we have either embraced them to better ourselves as a whole, or succumbed to them, yet still were able to find success in a failure. That is what has inspired, and continues to inspire some of the most innovative minds and advances our species has ever known. I have not lost faith in the human experience because I can't accurately quantify what our potential is as a species. I only know that I want it to be a better place for my children, and their children's children. Now I ask myself if I am doing enough to affect change, no matter how slight.

I lie awake some nights feeling the weight of my ancestors as seen through the future footsteps of my descendants. How much responsibility can I realistically be expected to take credit for, if this my generation's time? Time for what? What can I do to consciously make a difference without actively trying to effect meaningful change? How am I supposed to know when I have achieved any measurable success? Perhaps the answers will reveal themselves to me upon intentional introspection. There are answers. They have always been there. The problem is that maybe I (or we as a species) am not ready for the answers.

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Impeachment Why Does It Matter to Me

BY SHAWN MCCLUNE / FORMER RESIDENT

In past histories of governments, the way in which leaders were often removed was by a treasonous act or civil war. Prior to 1776, our forefathers were subject to a tyrannical form of government that robbed them of a voice or any form of self-governance. In 1776, the founding fathers of the United States of America created a Constitution that gave the people of this great nation the power and a voice, which is greater than the sword, to ensure that we don't fall prey to a tyrannical system. They created a system of checks and balances to protect us from ourselves by implementing the three branches of government Executive, Legislative, and Judicial. One of the powers is the power of impeachment by the Houses of Congress that falls under the Legislative branch to remove publicly elected officials that commit treason, bribery, and high crimes or misdemeanors that threaten our form of government. For the past 243 years, we the people have expressed our will and exercised our collective power ensuring that our great nation stays true and honest; it takes the people, including you, to help keep those who represent us representing us.

So what exactly is an impeachment and what does that mean? Impeachment comes from British constitutional history. The process evolved from the 14th century as a way for Parliament to hold the king's ministers accountable for their public actions. Our founding fathers, fearing the potential for abuse of executive power, considered impeachment so important that they made it part of the Constitution even before they

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An Interview with Dr. Ashley Hamilton

BY ERIC DAVIS / FMCC

Could you explain how you developed the mindset that led to the establishment of DU PAI?

I have been working in arts and education in prison for almost a decade now. I started my work inside prisons in New York City when I was quite young. I had moved to New York to be an actress and was restless, and serendipitously found my way to working inside. At first I had little sense of what I was doing — But, I knew immediately that I loved it. In the very first prison class I ever taught one of the students said of the theatre workshop “this is the only place where I forget where I am” — and I was so curious about that, I decided to go back to school so I could create theatre and art inside to the best of my ability. I went to graduate school at New York University and got my Masters and PhD — where I focused on prison education and the arts. During my graduate work, I started teaching and creating art inside as well as teaching for four different prison education programs — teaching college courses inside in facilities of all kinds — across the state of New York. I trained under one of the longest standing prison arts programs in the country — Rehabilitation through the Arts, under whom I wrote my dissertation. By the time I finished my PhD I was going into prison four to five days a week for various jobs and projects and I knew I had found my calling. I wanted to be inside as much as possible. When I finished my PhD I was offered my job at the University of Denver (I am on the faculty there), and I told them I wanted to accept but I had to start my own prison arts program — they were thrilled. Thank goodness!

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CDOC Approved Mentor Program

Administrative Regulations 900-02

BY RICHARD JOHNSON / FCF

If you are in the Department of Corrections, or if a loved one of yours is, then you should check out AR 900-02. The new AR went into effect September 1, 2019, and it has a goal of promoting reintegration into the community, with the help of a mentor-mentee relationship. According to AR 900-02, “It is the policy of the Department of Corrections to provide a mentoring program for offenders releasing from DOC... by providing a continuum of care and programs to incarcerated offenders in preparation for re-entry into the community.”

There are guidelines and criteria that must be met. And for the entire list, go to your library and read the AR yourself. A few of them are:

The mentor will be the same gender as the mentee.

Relatives of current DOC offenders may be accepted based on potential positive influence.

Former and ex-offenders are eligible to be mentors to those still incarcerated.

Approved mentors will be added to the visiting list of the mentee.

The administration at each facility will have final approval of the mentor(s).

An offender wishing to get a mentor must be within 180 days of a release to community or parole.

As stated before, if this sounds like a program that you or someone you know could benefit from, please apply. You could read the entire AR in your library or request an application from your case manager or the program coordinator. For those of you in the community that wish to support an offender and be a mentor, reach out to the program coordinator, or the administration of any DOC facility or at headquarters. The application process is not much, but the difference it will make will be great.

The Yard No Place for Drama

BY TAYLOR DOUCET / SCF

Limon Correctional Facility is in the midst of some monumental changes that I'm proud to say I'm part of. If you are someone who wants to be a part of positive change, then look no further. The first program I want to highlight is Redemption Road. It is a life changing program that has had a huge ripple effect on DOC.

The new Executive Director of prisons has made it clear that this program is working wonders in people's lives. As Limon's affiliate continues to grow, Fremont has just launched their own affiliate this year, which is running extremely smooth for it being so new. Major props to the CFL-1's and CFL-2's that are making this possible. Sterling and Arkansas Valley are not far behind on getting their programs off the ground with a little help from Limon's trainers. It's amazing what can happen when men who have the calling to be world changing leaders stop at nothing to make

sure progression is being made no matter the environment. They're starting a trend that seems to be spreading fast. Here at Limon, a new Powerlifting class that continues to thrive today at Fremont. It not only helps students with learning safety and technique to unleash their full potential, but also a healthy lifestyle that takes place outside of the weight pile. At the end of the six-month class we will have an



Taylor Doucet / SCF

open weight meet for the whole facility and then start a new six-month class shortly afterwards to get ready for the next meet. Prison yards are no longer a place for drama and problems with the help of men who are desperate for a change. Now they will continue to grow into a place of progression, not stagnation. If you want the same thing that you have received your whole life, continue to act exactly as you have. If you want to be part of something bigger than yourself, the time is now to act on it.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Since the writing of this article Mr. Doucet has relocated to SCF to participate in GO-MAP.



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Our mission is to provide an intellectually challenging forum for information, entertainment and inspiration, written by and for the people who live and work within the Colorado Department of Corrections. We strive to be good stewards of the truth, while recording history and news that affects us all.

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TO OUR READERSHIP AND FUTURE CONTRIBUTORS

Welcome to *The Inside Report*, the editorial team hopes you enjoyed reading the paper as much as we enjoy producing it. Each month we will strive to bring you news, entertainment and valuable information. As you make your way through our pages, you may notice a high number of pieces were authored by residence of Fremont. It is important to convey that *The Inside Report* is a statewide paper meant to represent the whole of CDOC and beyond. One significant challenge would be to draw contributions from all Colorado's prisons. We recognize that Fremont's residents comprise a mere 10% of CDOC's population. That means we must look to acquire and publish content each month from the other 90% as we are can. This will help to ensure that we better reflect the voices of CDOC residents and staff. We encourage everyone to write, to draw, and to contribute every month. We look forward to hearing from you. Thank you for your support and enjoy!

The Paper & The Possibility

BY JULIE RADA / DU PAI

One of my favorite things to do is sit with a cup of coffee and pore over the Sunday New York Times. It is a simple and singular pleasure. I don't always agree with what I read or the values expressed in the paper, but I nonetheless revel in the challenge to my preconceived ideas, the knowledge I gain, and the connection to the world I glean from simple text on a page. I possess insatiable curiosity and a good newspaper feeds my appetite to learn. Spending my days working in prisons, I am struck by a paradox. People in prison, to some degree, are just like people on the streets. I have encountered people in prisons that reminded me in their appearance or mannerisms of friends, coworkers, or loved ones. People in prison have hobbies, jobs, friendships, daily rituals, faith practices, and all the things that make life full and dimensional on the outside. On the other hand, people in prison are different than free people. As an outsider, I come and go as I wish, make my own schedule, adjust my creature comforts to allow for the best quality of life and a host of other material and psychological differences I experience that I know that people who are incarcerated do not experience or experience differently. Prison has its own culture as well, in terms of how groups form and relate to one another. This means that working inside prisons is a kind of cross-cultural practice. The work we do at University of Denver Prison Arts Initiative (DU PAI) lives at the intersection of inside and outside worlds. We engage in this cross-cultural practice. It has been such a joy to work for the past several months with the newspaper team at Fremont Correctional Facility and with my DU PAI colleagues, Ashley Hamilton and Karen Levi-Lausa, as we have created a newspaper office, complete with buckets of coffee and stacks of paper. CDOC's support and the staff at Fremont have been instrumental in building up the infrastructure to make it all possible. Imagine the early days of *The Washington Post* or *The Wall Street Journal*, as a small group of journalists and editors hashed out the details of masthead design, submission requirements, layout, paper quality, and any number of ethical and practical decisions made at the onset of any business or media organization. We have been doing that at Fremont. We have mimicked the practices of the outside world as much as possible, in spite of the constraints of the prison environment. In all work, we hope to build sustainable communities. In the case of *The Inside Report*, we hope to also build a business and a sustainable organization.

While at times a barrier, the specificity of the prison context has also fed our work. Prison journalism is not new and folks inside have plenty to say. We have looked to the *San Quentin News*, a paper with a storied history of over four decades and a worldwide readership as our beacon. The *Angolite* out of Angola Prison in Louisiana, Iowa's *Presidio*, Charisse Shumate's *The Fire Inside* from the California Coalition for Women Prisons (CCWP), and most recently, The Marshall Project's *News Inside* have also led the way. Here in Colorado, I've heard that Colorado Territorial Correctional Facility had a thriving facility newspaper for some time and *Pens and Paradigms* at Fremont, stewarded by Captain Quattlebaum, certainly helped lay the foundation for *The Inside Report*. Publications such as Philadelphia's *Prison Health News* and

Black & Pink for LGBTQIA prisoners have been creating forums on the outside for writers and readers inside for many years.

Prison journalists have been submitting stories to papers on the outside since print journalism in the United States became the primary way folks got their news. An iconic example of how folks behind bars used print journalism to make their voices heard is Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Letter from Birmingham Jail" which was written in his momentary incarceration in Alabama and published in *The Atlantic* magazine in 1963 and a number of newspapers across the country and represented a shift in the public's sympathy for the Civil Rights Movement. Indisputably, print journalism is and has been a powerful vehicle for anyone with something to say to make their voice known and all it requires is pen, paper, thoughtfulness, and gumption.

I was asked by the team of *The Inside Report* to write an editorial for the first issue describing why newspapers by and for incarcerated writers and readers is important. To me, with my love of reading and learning, the significance of such an endeavor is self-evident. Distilled to its essence, a newspaper is a commons of ideas - a site of communication. A newspaper can take faraway worlds and bring them into focus, unlocking understanding and empathy for those different from us. A newspaper can reflect the world around us - our daily lives - giving us a sense of community and belonging, helping us to see ourselves anew and to recognize that others share in our experience. What could be more necessary in a prison? Out on the streets, folks representing a range of political perspectives and lived experiences complain of an increasingly polarized world. No doubt, the public conversation has become increasingly vitriolic. With more than seven years of experience working alongside incarcerated artists in prisons in three states with a range of populations, I know that polarization inside is nothing new. Unfortunately, prison is mired in binary thinking, a politics of "us and them." Now is a special time for the Colorado Department of Corrections, however. Visionaries incarcerated inside Colorado's prisons, staff working at all levels of CDOC - uniformed officers to executive-level - and initiatives like DU PAI and others from the streets are forging alliances to dream up a better approach to incarceration. This approach is based on normalization, compassion, and working across divides to build something that provides material benefit to all. *The Inside Report* is a standard bearer for this new way of thinking; it represents the coming together, with good intent, of varying stakeholders at all levels of investment in the CDOC with the hope that it offers a glimpse into what, I believe, we all want: the possibility of better ways of being together as human beings. Perhaps the newspaper crew at Fremont Correctional Facility and the contributors and readers of *The Inside Report* can teach the rest of us in the free world a little something about discourse, where ideas can be fostered and challenged with respect and intelligence.

The act of reading a newspaper is a quiet act, an act of the everyday, an act of normalcy. Poring over the paper or scanning the headlines is a habit of the curious and intellectual, a morning ritual shared by many. We hope to invite you into our community of readers and contributors and that you'll make *The Inside Report* part of your daily life.



FCF Editorial Team with Executive Editors / FCF

Masks

From page 1

tough guy, the gang guy, the dope fiend “don’t give a damn about living or dying” guy. Deep inside we know these façades are crippling us. But a lot of us have convinced ourselves it’s too late to change now. It’s never too late.

I’m gay. So simple to say these days. But for most of my 49 years alive, I would’ve rather died than speak those words. I couldn’t even think them. Growing up in Texas, I was in total denial. Of course, the truth would cave in on me at times. But I’d push it away and seal it off as quickly as I could. With booze. With dope. With fighting and raging against everyone in my path.

As a kid, I was always prone to anxiety and depression. And just like my sexuality, these were emotions I found deeply unacceptable. So I buried them away and told myself they didn’t even exist.

Looking back, I see I was trapped in a state of perpetual panic. Always racing to stay one step ahead of myself. Hooked on anger as the only antidote. At least anger blocked out my panic for a little while. At least it cut through the confusion. At least it hid how I really felt.

So I raged. And I ran. At 13, I ran away from home. I lived on the street, slept in abandoned buildings. I stole to eat. I huffed paint. I drank Thunderbird—just like the rest of the winos. I pinballed from city to city. Dallas, Austin, Houston. Flailing for any identity to clutch onto.

At 14, I became a skinhead. Like a lot of us, I was easy pickins for older gang members. A confused kid who’d do anything to prove I was worthy. In my desperate mind, living this ridiculous lie made perfect sense. Skinheads hated “fags”. And so did I. I hated myself.

The spiral continued. More booze. More dope. More running off every cliff I came across. I stumbled through Denver a

few times. At 16, I stabbed a guy in a big house party fight. I was sent to Lookout Mountain, a Colorado juvenile joint. A wild place. Everything predicated on gangs and violence. Any sign of weakness was viciously attacked. And, of course, being gay would’ve been deemed the weakest sign of all.

After a year in Lookout, I was released. I had totally bought into juvie prison’s warped value system. It had only reinforced everything I already thought I knew. I had to be anybody but myself to survive. I had to stay engulfed in anger, ready to explode into violence. I had to barricade myself even deeper behind the mask.

I had a girlfriend who’d stuck with me through all kinds of hell. But after only a few months back on the street, I finally drove her away with my ever expanding rage. Without her anchoring influence, I quickly spun out of control. I drank all day, every day. I shot meth. I carried a gun wherever I went. I set the stage for tragedy.

In March of 1989, I spontaneously robbed a man behind a bar. It spiraled into a kidnapping. Ultimately, I shot him to death and burned his body in his car to destroy evidence. He was 32 years old. He would have had a long life ahead of him. But I had stolen it. He was white. It wasn’t a hate crime, but it might as well have been. It was just as senseless.

I can’t claim to know much about him. But I know he had a mother, a brother, and a girlfriend. People who loved him. People who needed him. I knew I had caused a massive amount of pain. I knew I had done something despicable. The shame was overwhelming. But I wasn’t done running. Not even close.

Like every other unwanted emotion, I was unwilling to deal with the guilt from what I had done. I had always used any excuse to hide. And prison provided me with the best excuse I could’ve ever asked for.

Nowadays, the joint is still a rough place to be. But thirty years ago, it was like getting dropped into a war. It was Lookout times ten thousand. I was this bone skinny,

18-year-old, closeted gay kid. I had doomed myself to life in prison. I know I deserved it. But I didn’t know how I could possibly live it.

Except, I did know. I doubled down on the same façade that brought me here. The crazy kid who’d explode over any provocation. I fought with sticks and knives. I attacked any perceived threat. I dove headlong into the penitentiary race gang culture. I relentlessly chased the dope sack. I abused medication every single day. I drank hooch every chance I got. Anything to muffle the pain. I was utterly hopeless. My first 15 years were one long fall.

But, as I got a little older, I began to grow tired of the box I’d locked myself into as a 13-year-old. Tired of always choosing weakness over strength. I was drawn to Buddhism. And through that practice, I learned to stop running. To sit still and face all the feelings I could never stand to have. Little by little, I learned to open my heart and let the mask fade.

In 2004, I finally came out as gay and stepped entirely away from the gang life and all the prison politics. Progress. But the real work was just getting started. Turns out, a lifetime of drug and alcohol abuse was a lot harder to shake than the closet. Turns out, facing the waves of anxiety and depression, with no haze to hide in, was an even rougher ride than I had imagined. Turns out, facing pain without anger as a safety net left me with no net at all.

And then there’s my crime. No matter how much damage I try to repair, I know I can never undo what I did that night. Facing that stark reality stone sober is an everyday grind. Thoughts of my crime can sneak up and steal the air out of even the lightest of moments. They can make me feel worthless all over again. Like it’s too late to change. Like it’s pointless to even try. Like I should dive back into hiding. Dope and fatalistic thinking always being the easiest mask to slip back into.

But I’m done running. It took a while, but eventually I was able to stay sober.

Every day I meditate on the suffering I

caused. I’ve learned trying to push him out of my head only sends me spinning back into the same old trap. It’s just running. So I strive to keep him right in front of my mind. I stay with these, and all the other feelings I’d rather not feel.

Buddhism has taught me we were made for facing things. It may feel easier to hide behind our masks. From reality. From our past. From our present. From the things about ourselves we wish weren’t true. But evasion never works. Whatever we run from only grows stronger, while we sink weaker. It’s a hard, but simple truth. We have to be real to heal. It’s the only way to change.

I wish I could say it gets easier. But it doesn’t. That’s growing up though. Doing what needs to be done. Especially when it’s not easy. And hard as it is, there’s a lot of solace in finally growing up some.

There’s also solace in service. In being there for others as they work their own way back towards hope.

The Colorado system is currently undergoing a tremendous wave of change. It’s clear Governor Polis and Director Williams are genuinely determined to transform this system into an environment that promotes growth and positive change.

There’s an excitement in the air. New programs are popping up all over the state, offering more and more paths to being part of something bigger than ourselves. New opportunities to help heal the world around us—our prison communities, and by extension, the free-world communities that most of us will eventually return to. New ways of working together to create a place for change.

A safer, saner, kinder place, where people won’t feel so compelled to cling to gangs and hardened personas. A place to focus on education and recovery. A place where we give and get the support we need to face into our issues, take responsibility for our choices and to begin making amends. A place to open our hearts. And finally let go of the masks.

My SOTMP Experience

Closing The Door On Selfishness By Opening The Door On Honesty

BY RICHARD JOHNSON / FCF

Allow me to begin by saying that there is no easy way to say this...I am in prison because of the poor choices that I made in my life. I strived to be the best teacher, the best coach, the best friend and the best son I could be. But I failed miserably in many areas of my life, and one of them was being a husband. I chose to put my ego, my needs and my embarrassment in front of my relationship. I chose to not communicate with my wife, I chose to not speak to my parents, ultimately I chose to not speak to myself openly and honestly. I have made a goal of never again lying to myself when it comes to what it is that I want, and who it is that I want it from. I am a man that is worthy of good things, and I am a man that chooses what labels I choose to accept. My identity is not dictated by what people think of me, not by who likes me, and not even by what career I choose. I choose my identity, and for that reason I am going to put aside my fear of rejection and choose to speak honestly about my thoughts and my passions. I look now to the future and the man that I am - and who I can be to make positive change for those around me. I may never get another shot at being a great teacher or coach, and if I do it will look completely different than it did before, and I am excited about that. Regardless of that point I get a second shot at being a

great son, a great friend, a great member of society, and maybe just maybe a great husband again. It is with the confidence of my faith and the hard work that I have done in treatment that I am able to put these words on paper. I am thankful for the challenges and the change that I went through to get to this point. For that reason, I am supremely thankful for Sex Offender Therapeutic Management Program and the therapists that did not push me from behind to get to this point, but rather they walked beside me - with me, to get me to this point. Thanks!

Introduction

This is the first opportunity that we truly have to take responsibility for our past and to no longer make excuses or minimize what it is that we did. It is essential that we take ownership of all the actions and behaviors that we were involved in. It is at this point where we are then able to begin see the impact that we have had on the victim(s), by seeing how we go to the point of creating a victim in the first place.

Offense Cycle

This is single handedly the most important project to be completed. Here we get to see what we were like in all four phases of our past that led to committing

our crimes. Everyone has a Pretend Normal, the portrayal of what we want people to see and think about us, but it is dangerous if we live in the phase and we never address the reasons that we don’t want others to see our true selves. We then get triggered into our Build Up, where we now play out scenarios in our heads and give our assaultive thoughts life. It is this cycle that shows us these phases and allows us to stop them before they start and exit the cycle safely without creating any victims. If we don’t we, move into the Acting Out phase, where people are getting hurt and victimized. And after this phase, most of us choose to Justify our actions and move back into Pretend Normal. Being able to stop this cycle is key - but is not possible if we are not honest with ourselves.

Sex History

Here we dig into our past and disclose the actions that led up to our present day. Where many could feel this is intrusive and not necessary, it gives us a chance to once again truly explore what our interests are and be open about what led to our assaultive behaviors. It is essential in growth.

RMP

This is the final paper, which shows the ultimate growth in what our high risk behaviors are and what life looked like in the past in dealing with them, and how we can now live life in the future in a healthy manner dealing with them. This only works if we trust the process and are open.

WAYS I HAVE GROWN

I recognize the distorted core beliefs that led to my poor choices.

I know I am not the most important person in the world, BUT my opinions, feelings and wants do matter.

I found out that it was not until I was able to recognize my faults, that I became able to begin building my strengths in a healthy manner.

I am now able to TRUST others and see there are lots of ways to get help, but the choice to do so is mine.

Impeachment

From page 2

defined the contours of the presidency. Massachusetts' Elbridge Gerry said impeachment was a way to keep the executive in check: "A good magistrate will not fear (impeachment). A bad one ought to be kept in fear of them." The crimes, according to our founding fathers, were obviously treason and bribery but didn't include a large number of punishable offenses against the state, so Mason (1725-1792, American statesman and revolutionary) added high crimes and misdemeanors, which was a technical term that denoted crimes by public officials against the government. Impeachment is the formal way in which all civil officers up to, and including, the President can be removed from office before their term is over in a peaceful manner as provided in the Constitution under article one. The impeachment process is designed to protect the people and its government from those who would abuse the power given to them by the people who voted them into office.

How does it work? All impeachments begin in the House of Representatives; they act as the prosecutor in this case. They will present all evidence that is derived through investigations and witness testimonials to the committees within the House of Representatives. Then the House of Representatives will present the charges which are then turned into articles to be presented to the floor of the House of Representatives, and at this point the full House must vote. In the House of Representatives, a simple majority is all that is needed to impeach and move forward the articles to the Senate for trial. Under Article 1, Section 2, Clause 5, the House of Representatives has the sole authority to impeach.

Now that the House of Representatives have voted to move the impeachment forward, it will be presented to the

Senate, by managers, who in this case will represent the articles of impeachment sent to the Senate by the House of Representatives. Under Article 1, Section 3, Clause 6, the Senate has the sole power to try and judge all impeachments. The Senate may acquit or with a two-thirds majority vote can convict. If the Senate acquits, they will then finish their term; if found guilty they will be removed from office and also be disqualified from holding future office. Fines and potential jail time for crimes committed while in office are left to civil courts.

As of 2019, the House of Representatives has initiated the impeachment of 64 elected officials, and the House of Representatives has only impeached three presidents, with one president "at the time of this writing" in the Senate; Donald J. Trump. One president resigned before the House of Representatives could vote on the impeachment, Richard Nixon. As of today, no president has been removed from office due to being impeached. The Senate has held formal impeachment hearings for 19 officials, of which eight were convicted and removed from office. All eight were Federal judges.

The first president that we impeached was Andrew Johnson, the 17th President. On February 24th, 1868, the House of Representatives voted 126 to 47 to impeach on 11 articles. Three of them were the corrupt use of the veto power and interference of elections (violation of the Tenure of Office Act). History tells us that in the backdrop of the times there was a bitter difference of opinion about the proper treatment of the South after the Civil War. Johnson favored a milder policy than the one proposed by a strong group in the House of Representatives. The Senate acquitted him later that same year.

The second one was President Bill Clinton, the 42nd President. In 1998, he was impeached for a variety of things. The two major accusations were perjury and obstruction of justice; the House of Representatives voted 228 to 206 to impeach on perjury, and 221 to

212 to impeach on the obstruction of justice. The Senate acquitted him in 1999. History tells us that this was more politically motivated as there were no actual articles of impeachment based off of corrupt policies. President Nixon resigned on August 9th, 1974 due to the Watergate scandal before the House of Representatives were able to vote on articles of impeachment, the then Vice President, Gerald Ford, was sworn in as President where he then gave Richard Nixon a full pardon of all Federal crimes committed in office.

As this article was being written, we have the third President who is currently going through the impeachment process. On December 18, 2019 the House of Representatives passed two Articles by voting 230 to 197 to impeach on Abuse of Power and 229 to 198 to impeach on Obstruction of Congress. Both articles were passed primarily along party lines and President Trump became the third President to be impeached.

Now to be truly objective in this we must also be aware that this impeachment is ongoing and currently there are two trains of thought. The first thought is the Constitution gives the House of Representative the power to impeach and they did so by passing the resolution of impeachment to the Senate. The Constitution separates the impeachment process so that it takes both houses of Congress to remove someone from office. The founding fathers did this so that one political party may not impeach or remove any official due to partisan disagreement. Since the impeachment process has yet to be completed, there is no legal precedent to fall on. The House of Representatives has never impeached someone and held the resolution of impeachment from the Senate. In other words, it's like a prosecutor charging someone with a crime and wanting to put them in jail, and not giving them their due process, day in court, to defend themselves.

Our leaders are elected, not born into office. We the people give our government its power and authority. It's important to

know just how and why our founding fathers put the impeachment process into our Constitution. Through impeachment, our founding fathers designed a government that protects itself from itself while giving the citizens a voice that's more powerful than the sword. Our government protects its citizens from their own government because it is of the people, by the people, and for the people.

I feel that it matters because, left unchecked, the government can become corrupted and then abuse the power and authority given to it by the people. We are a country that is self-governed, a government that is of the people, by the people, and for the people. To form that more perfect union that our founding fathers stated, we as a people, a nation, and as individuals must stand for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

It matters because we have not only the right, but a duty to protect ourselves and those for whom we love from tyranny that would be imposed upon us, both foreign and domestic. As a nation we are a beacon to the world, where it's citizens are not beholden to its government, but its government is beholden to its citizens, the very citizens from which has sworn an oath to protect and defend the Constitution.

Tell Us About the Educational & Vocational Programming at Your Facility

The Inside Report wants to hear from you about... Any new, exciting or ongoing opportunities in educational programming where you reside. We want to highlight successful completions, valued teachers, excelling students, and state of the art programs that represent the shifting attitude toward moving forward in life.



A Lost Connection

From page 2

The time and place for continued evolution of our consciousness is now. Each day as I make my way to work, I notice the rush we are all in to get somewhere. No matter the destination, we all feel like the place we are going is more important than the next person's. It is hard to think about what our responsibility is supposed to be for the next generation. Our inadvertent, collective disregard for our responsibility of earth is not entirely our fault. Look at the way society places so many demands on our time. Does it make us feel that we are important when we see a pop-up ad that is supposedly tailored to our needs or our buying patterns? Blindly accepting terms of use and cookies ensures the all-powerful Google remains incredibly intuitive. Maybe its intuitiveness is a little on the spooky side. Thanks auto-fill!

I would like to believe there is a redeeming quality we all have as humans. All of us are capable of such goodness, yet we never reach our full potential. Why is that? Are we counting on the person next to us to make the move first? Maybe it's

uncomfortable to be the first one to do the right thing. Remember those dances in middle school? Change is sometimes uncomfortable, and may even come along with some growing pains. What it is about getting in touch with our inner self that we find so uncomfortable? We hardly ever make purposeful efforts to really delve into our subconscious. I guess we do not have enough time. Of all existing resources, time is arguably the most precious of them all, because no matter what we do we can never get time back. All we are left with is a collection of memories that continue to erode over the years.

Our senses as a human being paint a picture for our memory bank to store for future retrieval. I still remember participating in a retreat in college. One of our group activities was to do a sunrise hike to the peak of a mountain. Why do I still remember that event so vividly? I remember it because it was one of the few times in life where I was completely, and intentionally unplugged from the hustle and bustle of life. No cell phone. No tablet. No technology whatsoever. Just me and the winds. I was nothing more than a wind block on top of that mountain. It didn't matter what was in my inbox, or what my calendar looked like for those precious few moments.

I cleared my mind as much as I could,

and tried to figure out if I knew what my purpose is on this planet. What am I meant to do as a human? Am I doing it? Even if I were doing it, would I know that I was doing it? If I am not fulfilling my role, what is keeping me from realizing that? What sort of deficiency is keeping me from reaching the conclusion that I have not reached where I am supposed to be? It reminds me of Lewis Carroll's classic, *Alice in Wonderland*. Alice first meets the Cheshire Cat at a fork in the road. She is lost, and asks him which way she is supposed to go. He asks her where she is trying to go. She responds that she doesn't know. He then proceeds to tell her that it doesn't matter which way she goes if she doesn't know where she is going.

Here we are in our warped wonderland. Do we know which way we go? There may be some unrealized benefit from aimless wandering. Sometimes it's necessary to go through a struggle in order to come to certain conclusions. Is that what a midlife crisis is? This could be the point of where our struggle is as a species. Honestly, I am a little concerned about the direction we are hurtling towards. Case in point: the federal government pays some farmers to not plant crops so prices can be artificially high. Or, better yet, some plants are genetically engineered to be the botanical reproduction equivalent of a mule. The

motivation is profit, or greed actually. Messing with the perfection of nature so a person can't produce. "Take that Johnny Appleseed!"

As a history scholar, I constantly look towards achievements; as well as failures, to see what we have learned as a people. What ideas or concepts are continually being reinforced? It seems like as long as we feel like we are masters of the universe, then we have carte blanche to "innovate" in the name of humanity. We are capable of such good, yet we mar those achievements by destruction and chaos. What are the most memorable events in our history? Think history textbooks. How many chapters are devoted to wars, conflicts, death, dying, despots, etc.? Peace time is boring. What can be learned from tranquility? My take on consciousness will continue to evolve. I would like help in understanding it. There are not enough opportunities devoted to consciousness or contact. Take the opportunities that do arise and really dedicate yourself to them. It is said that wisdom is where you find it. That means wisdom is everywhere. Our connection to our past is our decoder to the future. Our spirits need nourishment. Luckily those precious spiritual seeds of growth haven't been genetically modified for sterility... not yet anyway. Find your connection, even if it means disconnecting.

Shifting the World

BY ERIC DAVIS / FMCC

The University of Denver Prison Arts Initiative has sprung to life inside the Colorado Department of Corrections. As DU PAI grows, it has awoken the spirits of hundreds—if not thousands—of the men and women residing in CDOC. This program is at the forefront of an innovative approach reaching out to even the hardest of those residents, encouraging them to shift their own thoughts and attitudes toward a value-based, sincerely rehabilitative mindset.

DUPAI's Founder and Director, Dr. Ashley Hamilton has a deeply-held belief that exposing prisoners to the arts provides an opening for positive inspiration in their lives. She is committed to offering some of society's most desperate and overlooked people the opportunity to immerse our minds in a wide variety of artistic endeavors, which may ultimately provide a foothold, allowing us to begin the long climb out of the holes we have dug for ourselves. Dr. Hamilton is convinced that rehabilitation through art can happen when it encompasses experiences that undo the traumatic and negative impacts of day to day life in prison, and allows for opportunities of personal transformation.

While pursuing her Doctorate

in Philosophy at The Steinhart School of Culture, Education and Human Development at New York University, Dr. Hamilton submitted her dissertation in August 2017. It was titled: *Devised Theatre as Liminal Transformer in a Women's Maximum Security Prison*. There she said that, "No matter the specific curriculum I was asked to follow, or created as the lead facilitator, I began to notice, through my observation and through the participant's self-reporting, that something transformative was able to happen when artistic and expressive opportunities were brought into these prison spaces."

In 2017, Dr. Hamilton persuaded CDOC to take a chance on a program that was unfamiliar to Colorado's prison system. As I spoke with her about this initial foray into CDOC, she revealed how difficult it really was. Creating a prison art initiative inside of a system that had little appetite for "outsiders" wasn't always easy. That era of thinking has passed. The University recently signed a historic contract with CDOC to bring their arts curriculum into every one of the State's prisons over the next three years.

As DU PAI expanded, an assortment of opportunities appeared in unexpected ways. On

I think that at the foundation of it all, I believe that the arts are one of the best vehicles we have to create spaces for transformation — in and outside of prison. What better tool do we have to understand prison and to shift it? —Dr. Ashley Hamilton

Tuesday July 9, 2019, two CDOC residents—Andrew Draper and Denise Presson—along with Dr. Hamilton, hosted a podcast inside "The Vault" at the Denver Complex Correctional Facility. In the inaugural *With(in)* episode, they spoke with CDOC Executive Director Dean Williams. During that discussion they spent significant time exploring Director Williams' vision of a "shift" in the Colorado prison system.

An example of this shift reveals itself upon closer examination of the *With(in)* crew. Male residents housed in the Sterling Correctional Facility are transported to the Denver Complex to work side by side with their female counterparts who are housed at the Denver Womens Correctional Facility. This team functions as one to achieve the goal of producing the podcast series. CDOC is airing all of the *With(in)* episodes on every state prison's internal broadcast system. The episodes are also available to the public online at [ThisisWith\(in\).com](http://ThisisWith(in).com). Director Williams believes it is crucial for CDOC residents to maintain a connection with the community beyond prison walls. Having the ability to use storytelling, via the podcast, assists in the nurturing of these connections. There definitely is a

shift in the air.

Another improbable example of DU PAI walking through prison walls, was the theatrical production of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. A cast and crew comprised of Sterling Correctional Facility residents became the first prison play in the United States to go on tour. Yes, they went on tour. The entire production travelled to both the Limon and Denver Womens Facilities to perform for those residents. Some notable attendees included members of Colorado Governor Polis' cabinet, and his executive staff. Although, for many of the actors and crew, the performance for family and friends was the most meaningful of all. Shifts happen in stages.

Mere days before Christmas of 2019, one of the most astonishing undertakings I've witnessed in my 33 years of incarceration went off without a hitch. A cast and crew comprised of residents housed in the Denver Womens Facility were transported to The University of Denver—to perform for the public—their production of *A Christmas Carol*. Over a span of two days, there were three performances at the Newman Center for the Performing Arts. The play was directed by Dr. Clare Hammor & Jamie Law of DU

PAI. When asked to recall his most memorable moment from the production, Dr. Hammor relayed a story about the woman who played the part of Jacob Marley. He explained that she met her grandfather for the first time at the Sterling Correctional Facility performance. The event also gained national attention, with Dr. Hamilton appearing as a guest on Fox News Channel's *The Daily Briefing*. Host Dana Perino seemed genuinely interested to hear about the positive effects the arts are having in CDOC residents' lives. Ms. Perino conveyed that her mother had attended one of the performances and was equally impressed by the women's presentation of a classic. Fox News Channel doing an optimistic piece on convicted felons transforming their lives through arts. A shift in views.

On Saturday January 11, 2020, open auditions were held at the Fremont Correctional Facility for an upcoming production of *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Approximately 30 people auditioned for the chance to show off their acting chops. We will follow their progress. The script has shifted.

DU PAI is coming to your prison, if it isn't already there. Take advantage of this opening and step into a space beyond the one you've been in. The world is shifting.

Interview

From page 2

Could you elaborate on why you believe exposure to the arts is so important to people confined in prison?

This is a really hard question for me to answer briefly.

I think that at the foundation of it all, I believe that the arts are one of the best vehicles we have to create spaces for transformation — in and outside of prison. For anyone who has ever been involved in the arts (inside or not) you know how powerful it can be to be involved with a community that is creating and sharing stories of meaning. The arts, since the beginning of time, have been one of the main ways we attempt to understand what it means to be human. What better tool do we have to understand prison and to shift it? I am very interested in beautiful, complex art being created inside but I am actually more interested in the ways that the arts can create a culture shift in prison — for incarcerated people, their loved ones, staff and the public. The arts in many ways, are "palatable," they aren't hard for people to experience (most of the time) so they can act as this space for really incredible growth, connection... and change to happen. I could keep going...

In what year, and in what facility was the first DU PAI program?

I launched DU PAI (before we had that name) in late 2017 at DRDC with a class of six men and I taught the class ON THE UNIT. You can imagine how well that went...

How many facilities is DU PAI presently in?

We are currently in 10 prisons in the state

and growing — this Fall we will be in 12! But, over the next three years we will be in every facility in the state in some capacity. Pretty incredible...

What has been the biggest obstacle you've encountered in relation to DU PAI? And what has helped you to overcome those obstacles?

The start of DU PAI was incredibly rocky. I — and my team — have overcome so many obstacles. Of course there are people who don't think that the arts (or other programs) have a place in prison — and I can understand that perspective. However, I think when most people see what we do — and how we do it — they don't feel that way anymore. So, when I hear that opinion I ask to talk about it and I invite those people to come closer. I invite them into the community too. But, honestly, I think the largest obstacle we face is just the incredible need. It feels endless at times. There is so much work to be done — and I often want to be everywhere at once and do as much as humanly possible. So, that can feel daunting at times. Also, the travel. The reality is that prisons are generally far away — I drive on average thousand miles a week and am in prison 6-7 days a week in all kinds of weather. And, I wish I could do even more. But, luckily I have an amazing team who run the program with me so we can do as much as possible.

What do you feel has been your greatest achievement with DU PAI?

That is a really hard question for me to answer. I am so incredibly proud of the program and our students. We have achieved more than I could have dreamed of. I am so proud that we brought *A Christmas Carol* (with 30 of our incarcerated cast and crew from DWCF) to the University of Denver to perform for thousand people and it not only

went well — it went perfectly. I am so proud of bringing *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* from Sterling, on tour to other facilities. I am so proud of our podcast *With(in)* that we create across facilities, and the very important conversations we have on it. I am so proud of this newspaper — I am so proud of our workshops. But, I think the greatest achievement has been the getting to be a part of the large level culture shift that I see happening in CDOC. I'd never claim that is because DU PAI — I think it is because of thousands of people and dozens of programs, but I think we might be helping to support it — and I am most proud of that. I am proud to be part of the shift. And, I am proud of watching my students choose compassion, hard work and community — which is creating the shift.

What is your grand vision of DU PAI?

My grand vision is that everyone is prison in Colorado (and the country, let's be honest) has access to the arts, as a tool for personal and community growth, if they want it. My vision is that DU PAI helps to create a major and lasting shift in the culture of prison and also the way people see prison and who is in the system. My grand vision is that DU PAI helps to change the way we think about prison.

How has the recent "shift" that CDOC Executive Director Dean Williams has implemented affected DU PAI?

DU PAI is what it is because of Director Williams and his team. He has allowed us to grow into what we are growing into, and not only just allowed it but deeply supported us. Our visions are very much parallel and not only that — Mr. Williams is an artist himself, so he understands the power of what we are doing. None of this would be happening without him and his executive team — in

particular, I have to thank Director Hansen who has supported DU PAI and advocated for us since day one.

Of course *The Inside Report* is also a part of DU PAI's collaboration with CDOC. How important do you believe speaking the truth, through the newspaper, is in prison?

I think it's incredibly important, but also incredibly complicated. We are so proud of *The Inside Report* and even more proud of our team of students that are bring it to life. I think that "the shift" that we keep referencing relies on truth. It relies on us telling the truth to ourselves and to each other. And, it relies on storytelling and community building — all of which are deeply ingrained in this newspaper. This is one more tool we have to shift culture and understanding of prison and who is in prison (incarcerated people and staff).

Has anything really surprised you since you began DU PAI?

I have said several times over the past year, "I didn't dream THIS big." And, I was dreaming big — trust me. The reality is — when the right moment opens up in time and space, and you have a calling, and you listen to it — anything can be possible. And, I am surprised by how hard people can work when they deeply care about something — I often work 12-14 hours a day but because I know I was born to do this. I am in the world to be doing this work. And, I know so many others who feel the same way. There are so many people working to shift the system. But, more than surprised, I am just deeply grateful to be in this position. I am so lucky.

Is there anything else you'd like to speak on before we close?

I am so grateful you've given me the space to share, thank you!



Malala Yousafzai; Pakistani activist for women's education, Nobel Prize Laureate, painted by Roohallah Mobarez / Former Resident

Like A Girl

BY EVAN LAWLOR / FCF

I think it's safe to say that a majority of us have heard the phrase, "You [fill in the blank] like a girl!" Some of us may have even been on the receiving end of that comment. Now, I can see how maybe fifty or more years ago, that could've been hurtful; and it's probably still used as an insult today. But how much of an insult is it, really? Let's try it.

"You throw like a girl!"

Like Mo'ne Davis, the groundbreaking pitcher, who led her team to the Little League World Series? Okay.

"You run like a girl!"

Like Florence Griffith-Joyner, who ran her way to 3 gold, and 2 silver medals during her Olympic career? Or, like Hillary Clinton, who ran for President of the United States of America?

"You act like a girl!"

Like, literally? Like Julia Roberts, or Meryl Streep, who are both Academy Award winning actresses? Or, figuratively? Like the countless women who've struggled, fought, and grinded to make their status, and the status of others, as women, a symbol of power and strength?

When you look at it from that perspective, they're not really insults, are they? Unh-unh. Instead, they're a

...similar dialogue, has been very commonplace throughout history due to the belief that women were inferior to men.

testament to how far women have come on their path to gain empowerment, respect, and equality. And, although there's still a long way to go, the strides made to this point are very encouraging.

Un-Happy Homemaker

Wife: "Honey, I'm thinking about getting a job."

Husband: "A *job*? What are you talking about? Your job's here at home, cooking, cleaning, and raising the babies. Now, stop being silly and go make me a sandwich."

This, and similar dialogue, has been very commonplace throughout history due to the belief that women were inferior to men. As warped as it was, this way of thinking was generally based on the natural differences between the sexes: Only women give birth and nurse, so they should be responsible for raising children; and women, on average, are smaller and not as physically strong as men, so the harder, more difficult jobs should be left to their male counterparts. And, while the development of birth control and machinery should've countered those notions, it was still difficult to shake the idea that women were weaker than, and dependent on, men.

Moving Mountains

The fight for equality, and women's

rights, started to take shape in the 1800s with the first of four major movements. This first movement focused on breaking down barriers that pertained to the education, property rights, and voting rights for women. While progress was made for education and property rights, it wasn't until 1920, with the passing of the 19th Amendment, that American women were granted the right to vote.

The second of these movements – and by far the most productive – came about in the 1960's when women began to really examine their lives and their status in society. With this came the discovery of workplace discrimination, i.e. lower wages and fewer promotions. Difficulties for women trying to attain political office, along with higher academic achievement for female students, were also realized. This led to the forming of many women's rights groups, including the National Organization for Women NOW, which was headed by feminist leader, Betty Friedan. It was groups like NOW that fought against sexual discrimination and paved the way for the passing of several laws, between the 1960s and 1970s, that were aimed at providing equal rights for women.

The third wave of women's movements came in the 1990s and showed a significant increase in male involvement. A majority of the groups involved continued to work for the securing of equal rights, but other goals, such as nonviolence and

community empowerment, also came into focus.

The last, and latest, of the four major movements, is the #METOO movement, which focuses solely on the sexual mistreatment of women and men, alike. Though dredging up painful, and sometimes traumatic, memories, this movement also exemplified the courage and strength it took for people to come forward and take a stand against such abuse.

Light on the Horizon

Regardless of a particular group's agenda or motivation, women's movements have inspired cultural changes and created an overall new perspective on the roles of women and men. There's a growing, and notable, equality between the sexes. We have more women in positions of power than ever before. Women can voice their ideas and opinions without them automatically being dismissed as 'silly talk'. The ceiling for women and girls, to achieve their goals and dreams, has never been higher; and it's only possible because of the brave women (and some men) who blazed that path for them. Now, while the journey is far from over, March—as National Women's History Month—gave us the chance to celebrate women – past, present, and future. And you can say what you will, but if I [fill in the blank] like any of these girls, I'm cool with that.



JOURNALISTIC WRITERS NEEDED

submit your stories to the bureau chief in your facility

*Daydreamer no dreaming
daydreams have no meaning.*

*My thoughts are all random
but incredibly pleasant.*

*Day dreaming
with reason,
for reasons,
but really no reason,*

*Of lunch breaks ,mochas,
good books and sofas.*

*Tea parties with daughters
cold pizzas ,leftovers.*

*Day dreaming no dreaming
daydreams have no meaning.*

-Sure Whatever Dude-

*Ballroom dancing,
Piano classes,
Archery classes,
Violin classes,*

*Ducati bikes,
And messenger bikes,
And coffee shop bikes.*

And cold winter nights.



*Bowties with scarfs
square-tips with yarn
to crochet more scarfs
Western art ,
Antiques,
Boutiques,
Critiques.*

*Day dreamer no dreaming
day dreams have no meaning.*

*But if it were so
then how could i go to Dubai?*

*Paint pictures of buildings with
pictures-*

*Take pictures in Paris of people
Ferris wheels?*

*Penguin and parrots that preach
is hilarious!*

*A thought you can stare at
to clean up the mess
in my subconsciousness*

*More or less,
No Stress,
No regrets,*

Daydreaming helps.

Do You Know Me

BY MONSÉL DUNGEN / BVCF

You cannot Love Me if you do not know me.

If you do not know why my hands are calloused and my feet are bruised and I smell of terror, and not of an oil bath. If you do not know why my head is bald, and my eyes are a natural brownish black, instead of hazel.

No, you cannot Love Me. You see, no matter how much I tan, I still remain a golden brown, and I have no need to enhance my looks. Besides that, I take no pleasure in sticking my pinkie out while drinking tea, and if you cannot understand that, then you cannot Love Me...

I try to deal with certain customs so as not to seem strange, but I really do prefer a woman over girls. I'm not multi-colored and I'd rather leave the small gaps between my teeth unchanged...

It is utterly important that you know these things before you dive off into some fantasy of what I might be – only to be shocked at what I am. I must tell you that I have dug ditches, chopped wood, shoveled snow, I have busted suds,

and had to wash my own clothes in buckets. And I have obeyed capo I didn't want to obey. There are scars upon my mind and bruises on my soul. Mostly I try to forget, but when I remember I am often violent when called upon...

If you think you want to Love Me, you must know what turns me on. Why I cook for myself, live by myself, and look to myself for strength. Why I need to see you smile, and why sometimes I do not need to see you at all. You must understand that this outer image is but a proper disguise while I preserve and conserve the real me inside. I am a Man, and in the privacy of the private chambers of my mind, in the intimacy of the intimate corridors of my soul, when the doors to western civilization are shut – I open the doors to myself...

My name is Monsél Lameson "Zales" Dungen. You cannot Love Me if you do not know me, "Do you know Me?"



The Forced Poem

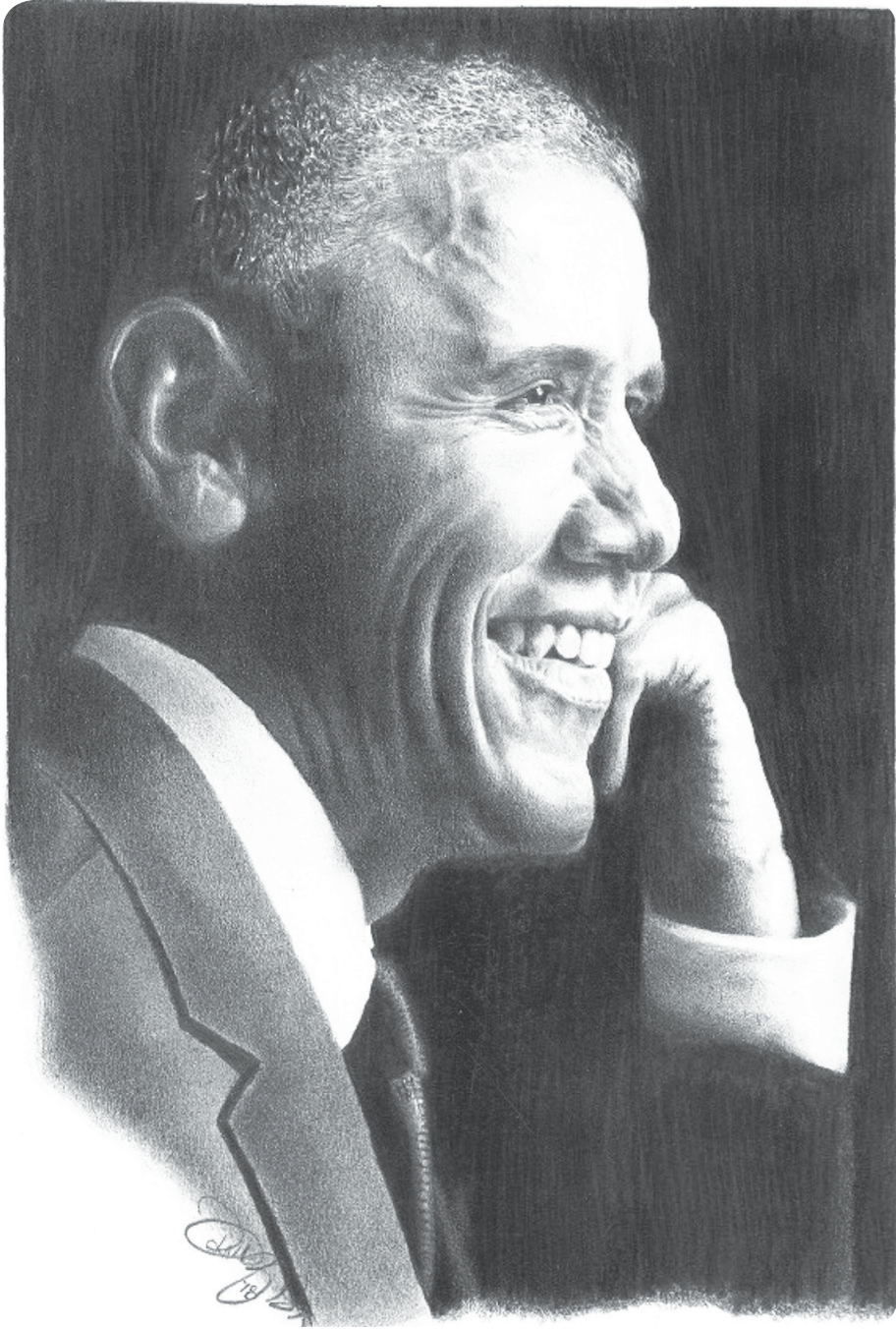
BY ANTHONY LUCERO / FCF

**This forced poem cuts deeper
Than razor-wire – Bleeding
words pregnant with sound.**

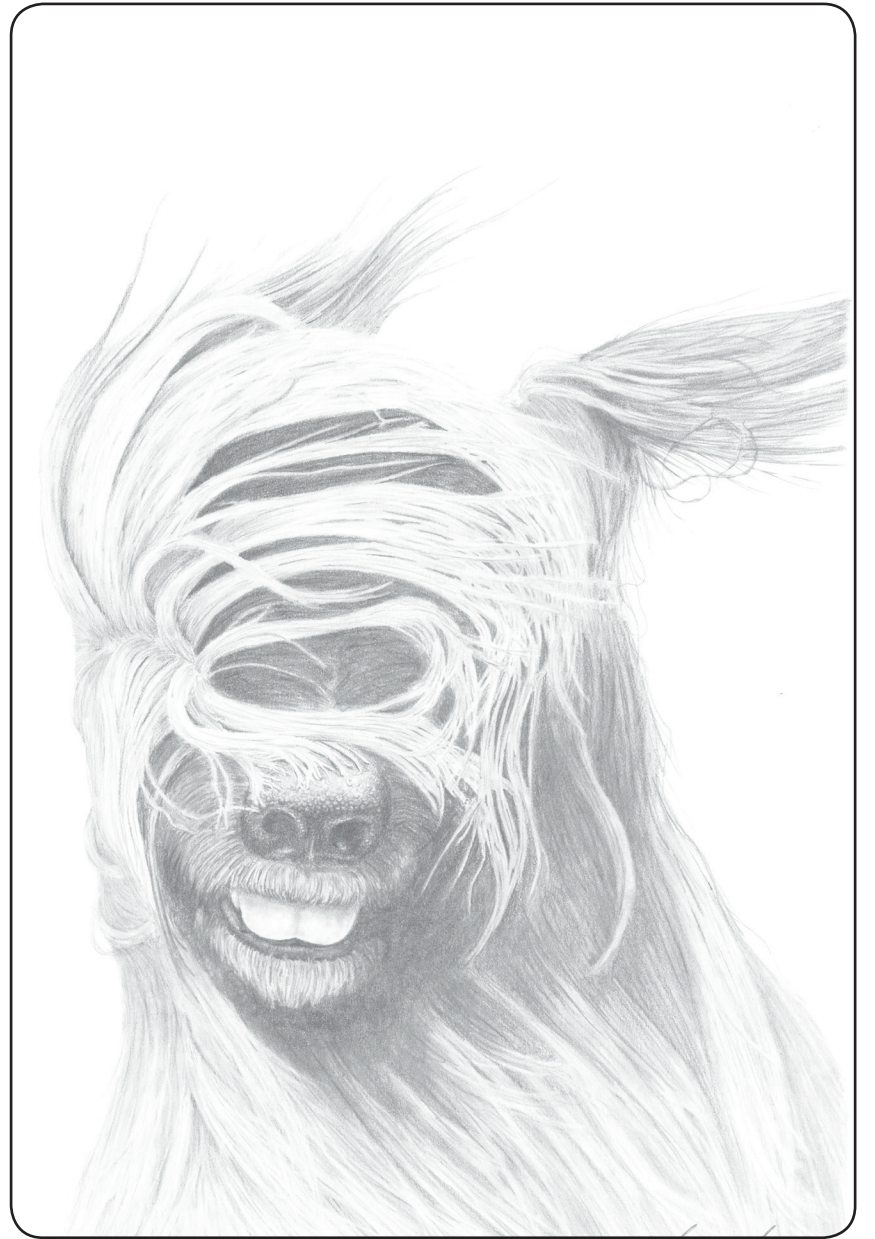
**Slinging, flinging ink
At 1600 Pennsylvania
into images of
skinheads at a mosh-pit
stomping, stomping
stomping black words
into white sheets.**

**Well-heeled folks
yell in agreement to
the smug man with the
DILLIGAF grin.
Migrating families yanked apart.
A child cries, "Quiero a mi mama!"
"Quiero a mi papa!"
"I want my momma!"
"I want my papa!"
That's what the truth sounds like.**

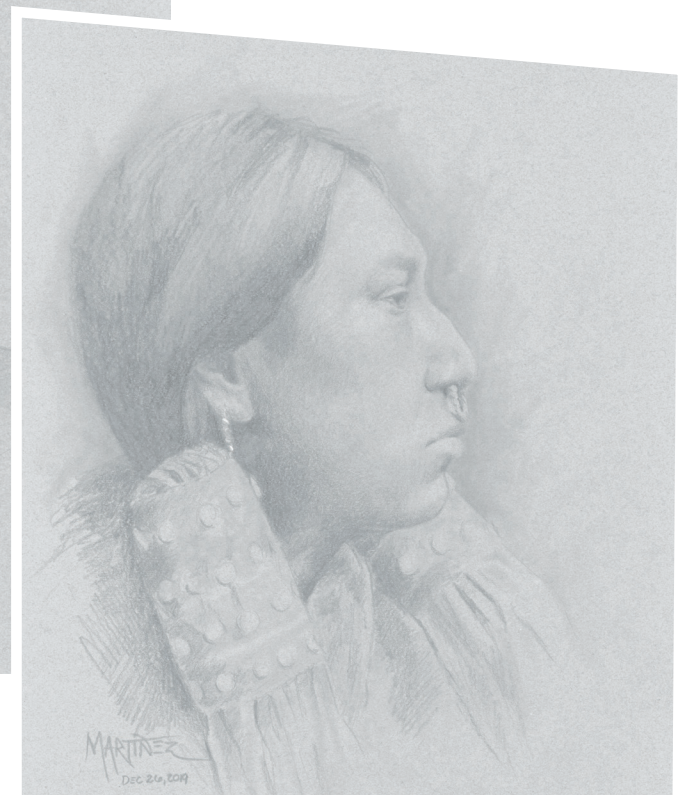
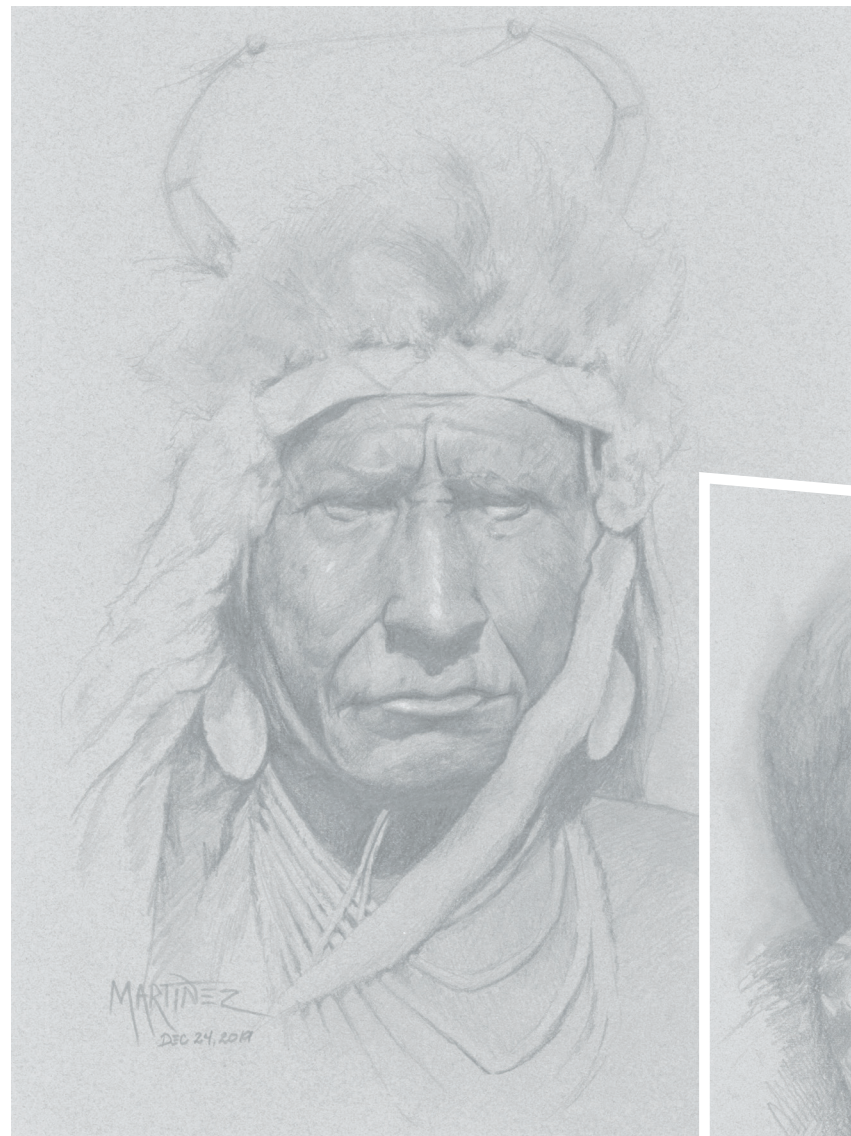
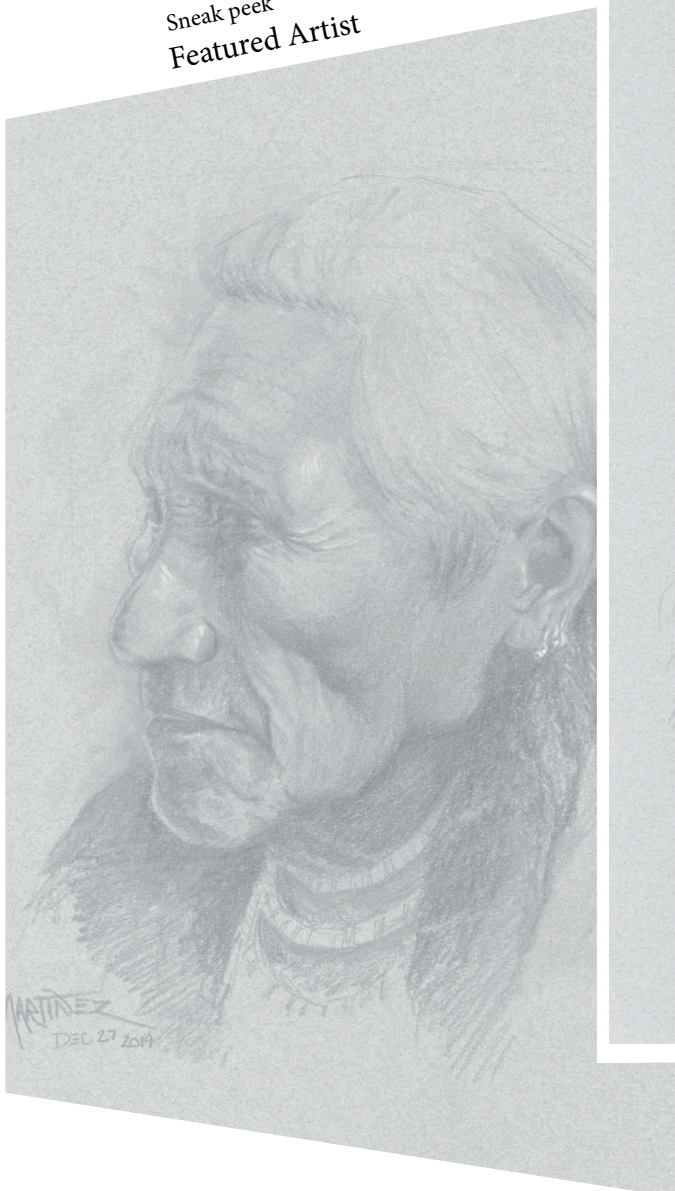
BY ROBERT ZEIGLER / FCF



BY JOSEPH TAYLOR MCGILL / FCF



Sneak peek
Featured Artist



Featured artist continued on page 20

Through the Wire



RF2 / Box999 volunteer team in front of FCF

From page 1

belief of a road to redemption available through participation in CrossFit. I would be remiss if I did not mention the rousing ovation that erupted as he finished speaking.

The Redemption Road Fitness Foundation inception saga is destined for legendary status in both the CrossFit community and CDOC lore. It just makes no sense that a group of guys housed in the Limon Correctional Facility, and a Sergeant with the Denver Police Department, came together on the common ground that is CrossFit. Any of us who've spent time confined in this system know the usual response to outlandish proposals by inmates often lands somewhere between "no chance" and "you've got to be dreamin' son". One of these answers was right on the money. Brandin Kreuzer was in fact dreaming, and he was dreaming big.

In 2017, Kreuzer and Damian Arguello—residents at Limon—created a proposal requesting that the Limon recreation department host an open, moderately-informal event, using various Workouts Of the Day that guys had received from the streets. There was a group of guys who

had followed these CrossFit-style routines since 2016. Not only did the event take place, it was extremely well-received by the 40+ participants. This success inspired Kreuzer to pitch his big dream—a CrossFit-style class—to the Limon Management Team via Programs Major Jeff Long (now currently Warden at SCF) and Captain Pleiman. Kreuzer had been speaking with a friend of his dad who owned a CrossFit box in Denver. This friend—Sgt. Aaron Brill—is a member of the Denver Police Department. With the enthusiastic support of Sgt. Brill, the Limon Management Team granted the request—allowing 30 participants, an hour-and-a-half class, three days a week.

As Sgt. Brill recalled during the RF2 event at Fremont, "I had a concern, as a police officer, were these guys wanting to be bigger, stronger, faster criminals? I could see right off the bat, good-hearted guys. They wanted the community. They wanted the accountability. They wanted the rehabilitation aspect that this can provide. That was all there right from the go."

Kreuzer selected five men to help with the organization, teaching and leadership of the class. He chose men of integrity,

who would not only teach the correct techniques, but were a daily representation of positive living at Limon. The character and virtue of these men were crucial. As we all know, convicts are fantastic at ruining opportunities for ourselves. Kreuzer had long believed that people in a community can positively affect each other, as well as the world, if that community's foundation is established in the right mindset. He had just the men in mind to take up this task—Arguello, Trevor, Juan Velasquez, and Jon Willis. Unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances, Velasquez had to step aside. In his place came Chris Harris.

CrossFit encourages a profound spirit of community. This concept is historically absent in prison. Upon entering prison, we don't trust anyone, nor have we earned any trust with the other residents or staff. There are so many obstacles, barriers and excuses for why we don't engage in here. We create myriad of reasons to become walled-off from each other—whether it's politics of gang affiliation; types of criminal cases; religion; race; or any number of other divides we arbitrarily place between us to justify the separation. CrossFit on the other

hand, opens doors and creates the sense of community the moment you step in. This sense of community instantly draws you in, encouraging you help the next person to succeed. That type of thinking is not commonplace in the joint. Experiencing the way this approach affects people calls to mind a quote from CrossFit's Founder, Greg Glassman, "The magic is in the community." It rarely feels like something magical is happening inside the cage. This day it did.

In late October 2017, Sgt. Brill contacted CrossFit's Training Department. He wanted to set up a CrossFit Level 1 Certification seminar for the guys at Limon. Eventually his email reached Dave Castro, retired Navy SEAL and Co-Director of Training for CrossFit. His reply to Sgt. Brill's request was simple, "We can do it." (Building Community Behind Bars by Andréa Maria Cecil, originally published 2018 in The CrossFit Journal)

The commitment required to achieve CF-L1 cannot be exaggerated. Once the guys at Limon realized they had this opportunity, they encountered another obstacle... the cost. Eight of the men each raised the \$1,000 required, while two were granted

scholarships by CrossFit. The seminar was scheduled for April 17-18, 2018.

Two longtime members of CrossFit's company, Eric O'Connor and Jason McDonald, led the seminar. McDonald found it challenging to find the right mindset. He was a retired UFC fighter, and had been an employee of Canadian Federal Corrections for 11 years. For five of those years he was a leader of the Emergency Response Team. His concerns were soon replaced with how impressed he was by the Limon guys' dedication and preparation. "The prisoners' familiarity with the Level 1 Training Guide was unparalleled. They knew the manual inside out better than any seminar and any participants I've ever taught. From an instructor standpoint, there couldn't be anything better than having your students well prepared and super invested in what you were teaching them." (Building Community Behind Bars by Andréa Maria Cecil, originally published 2018 in The CrossFit Journal)

Once the men at Limon passed their CF-L1, CDOC began to view the program in a different light. They recognized that it was quickly becoming a positive, forward-thinking program bringing people together who hadn't normally "hung out". Trevor relayed his thoughts about how this has affected him, expressing how the experience has been an emotionally rewarding time in his life, and an enormous step forward in CDOC. "I am still dumbfounded and humbled about these things" he said.

This spirit was unmistakable as Nick—another event volunteer—reflected on the day's event. "It's a community...we're cheering each other on. Because it's universal, right?" he said

This sense of community radiated throughout the day. Earlier, Chris Dong—the lead volunteer of the RF2 group at Fremont—revealed a moment that likely resonates with all of us, "When I came in here... I didn't know how this was gonna go. But when I stepped in I felt immediately welcomed." It's doubtful that many felt immediately welcomed on that first prison yard they stepped into. Chris then said something profound, "I'd say that when I left the first time, I just felt a great feeling of hope. Which is kinda weird I would say—coming out of prison." Chris, who is a Captain in The United States Air Force, has certainly accomplished much in life. Yet, the sense of community in CrossFit is so strong, that he regularly makes the trip from Colorado Springs to Fremont to workout with the RF2 guys. In addition, he coordinates the growing number of volunteers making regular trips to the newest fully-recognized CrossFit affiliate, Redemption Road CrossFit 999. This is the second CrossFit box in CDOC. RF2 at Limon being the first. A CrossFit box, in "The Box", encouraging



Michael Beebe RF2 / Box999 CF-L1 Certified Trainer detailing the day's event

guys to step outside of the boxes they keep themselves in.

Fremont resident Michael Beebe gathered the entire group into a large circle encompassing both tennis courts. There, he began the official stretch and warm-up for all 75 participants. After a few minutes he brought them into a much tighter group to apprise everyone about the different stations, in addition to the day's scoring system. The RF2 members were divided into 10 teams. The volunteers were encouraged to "shop around" to find the team they felt most comfortable with. Once again, there was no hesitation. They immediately began chopping it up with the RF2 guys. This was well-thought-out strategy. It encouraged the volunteers to find the RF2 guys they felt most at ease with. By not directing them to one team or the other—the earlier-developed connections, and how life just works things out—was allowed to flourish. Once everyone had their teams set, a healthy competitiveness began to take hold of the crowd. It was clear everyone was ready to 3...2...1...GO!

The strength of RF2's community arose again. The organization of those who developed the event was obvious. Every step was well-planned and easy to follow. More importantly, the RF2 guys were highlighting the best approaches to tackling some of Fremont unique obstacles like "The Hill". The teams all

as they attempted to become certified CrossFit Level 1 trainers. Not only did they transport them once, they brought them back to Fremont that night, returning them to Limon the following day to complete the seminar. This is another example of the shift happening in CDOC. Unheard of programs and events such as podcasts, traveling plays, The University of Denver Prison Arts Initiative, and this newspaper—are cropping up from one end of Colorado's prison system to the other.

Everyone at the event was thrilled to discover that these men, (Beebe, Michael Clark, Evan Lawlor, Leroy Gatrell, and Glen Worley) had taken this giant

There are so many obstacles, barriers and excuses for why we do not engage in here.

step. Everyone later learned they all had passed! It also seemed to motivate everyone to "get after" their own workout just that bit more. When this accomplishment was mentioned to Liz, another of the volunteers—who happens to be a doctor—she beamed with pride for these guys. "I'm so impressed they've done that." She relayed that Chris Dong had posted online to see if anybody in



Chris Dong RF2 / Box999 affiliate lead

proceeded to their first stations. There were total of five stations scattered around the yard. Since there were 10 teams, this meant that two teams would simultaneously compete at each station—dead-lifts on the handball courts; medicine ball-throw at the west end of the soccer field; weighted box step-over on the basketball court; pull-ups on the Rogue Infinity Rig; and clean & jerk on the tennis courts. It was apparent to everyone that there was some running between stations. More work, more dedication, more sweat... CrossFit!

Earlier in the week, five residents traveled from the confines of Fremont to Limon for a CF-L1 seminar. Yes, you read that correctly. CDOC transported these men to another facility simply to participate in a seminar,

the CrossFit community wanted to come and participate. She further expressed her enthusiasm about making the trip, "because CrossFit is all about community. And what better way than to bring community to everyone? That's what CrossFit is all about, people and community and I love it." she said. At the end of the day she recounted what a great workout she had. All the RF2 guys at the event were equally impressed by Liz, who would be taking her MDCF-L1 test that following weekend. She passed, of course!

As the Fremont event continued, two groups made their way to the handball courts. Many residents scattered across the CDOC archipelago and readers of this piece, can attest to the fact that I "ran" various handball courts—in numerous facilities—

in the last three decades. But that's another story for another day. This story showcases the instant camaraderie developing between groups who were gearing up to compete against one another. As they approached the courts, the RF2 guys continued to explain the planners' visions for this station.

A bullhorn from lower on the yard barked a countdown 3...2...1...GO! Instantly the groups gathered at the handball courts began sprinting to the west end of the soccer field. Simultaneously, two more groups came bounding across the softball outfield and up The Hill from their previous station at the tennis courts. At that moment 10 groups were running from one station to the next.

Watching the groups arrive from the tennis courts, it was clear they were winded, but ready. As if mirroring the previous groups, the RF2 guys offered their insights regarding the task ahead. Witnessing the collaboration and mix of strategies come together was inspiring. Another bullhorn call sounded and the weights rose from the deck. Teams of people who had only met 30 minutes earlier instantly became one, striving to achieve the best number possible. The thrill of competition was afoot. Once again, the sense of community within CrossFit was shining through. Another bullhorn countdown echoed across the yard, and all 10 groups were off again from one station to next.

In the ensuing 35-40 minutes, people reached deep into themselves to find another level, determined to propel their team further up the standings. Hearing team members from such varied walks of life—as they elevated, cheered and urged each other to

succeed—was simply remarkable. Throughout the day's competition, participants from both sides of the fence voiced their appreciation for this opportunity. It was evident how thankful everyone was, as they experienced life in this newly discovered way.

Following the completion of the Fremont event, everyone gathered to congratulate each other on the day's successes. Wherever you looked, people were grouped together recounting moments of triumph from the day.

Mike, who owns a CrossFit box in Centennial, revealed that it was his first time in prison. He conveyed his thoughts on what CrossFit can do for guys in prison? "I think movement cures a lot of things for a lot of people... not just physically, but mentally more than anything" he said. In addition, he offered his view on guys coming out of prison and reaching out to him at his box. He was one hundred percent in favor of guys coming to his box to work out, and they could even apply for a job as a trainer if they have the proper certifications.

Audrey—another first-time volunteer—conveyed her thoughts on the event, "It was so welcoming, and it was just a good strong community—it was really nice to be here."

Late in the afternoon, Sgt. Brill encapsulated the day as well as anyone "Like I said, I am humbled to be a part of all this. To see these guys doing what they're doing with the barriers in place, but working to make themselves better—it makes me want to be a better person. Everybody comes up and thanks me for this—and I'm repaid a hundred-fold."

There are numerous Fremont staff that were indispensable in the creation and nurturing of

RF2. Beginning with the first discussion, Major Caleb Moore—Head of the Fremont Furniture Shop—contributed countless hours strategizing to bring RF2 to Fremont. His open-minded approach to the concept was refreshing. Major Stephanie Sandoval may have been the most instrumental individual when it came to the ultimate approval of RF2 at Fremont. As the Security Major, she had the power to veto the program's implementation at every turn. She did not veto it. Instead, she actively engaged with troubleshooting the security concerns certain to arise as the program came to fruition. In addition, Captain Quattlebaum played an enormous role throughout the establishment of RF2 at Fremont. Her enthusiasm and dedication has been crucial to RF2's success. It can be said with certainty that without her guidance, this event may not have taken place. Officer Campbell and Officer Lessar were also there that day, and have significantly supported RF2 from its inception. All of Fremont's Recreation and Programs personnel—with a special shout out to Sergeants Simpson and Taylor—have contributed time, positive suggestions, and uplifting attitudes as RF2 has grown.

Following the event at Fremont, while speaking with Trevor about the future of RF2 in CDOC, he explained that there are three new affiliates of RF2 in the works at the Arkansas Valley, Denver Women's, and Sterling facilities. There has undeniably been a "shift" within CDOC. RF2 is at the leading-edge of this shift, quickly becoming one of the most participated-in programs inside Colorado's prison system. One that's leading the way to a better path in life.



Aaron Brill RF2 Executive Board Member



Liz RF2 / Box999 affiliate volunteer with FCF residents



LOOKING FOR SPORTS WRITERS

submit your articles to the bureau chief in your facility

Restorative Justice From the Inside

BY ALAN YERKEY/ FCF

Over the past year, there has been an increasing amount of talk surrounding the issues of restorative justice and the normalization process. Many do not see these as separate topics however, but rather view them as a symbolic whole where one cannot exist in true effectiveness without the other.

What is restorative justice? Restorative justice is a framework of principles and values which one lives by and encourages within others in order to not simply build community, but to do so even from the darkest wounds suffered by it. It is as personal as it is often as inclusive of the environment in which it is found as it seeks to create a safer, healthier community for all. It is not a one cure solution, but an ever evolving resource that acts as a guide in not simply finding what works best in a given situation, but which leaves room for criticism and change for what doesn't.

In my own experience, restorative justice is

upholding a strictly punitive attitude towards crime. This does not excuse nor minimize the harms perpetrated, but recognizes and respects the needs of all the parties involved.

On our part, there is a responsibility we hold to our victims, to ourselves, and to society, which is key in creating both a community and peace that is beneficial to all. The first step is in our acting with integrity in accepting responsibility to take upon ourselves whatever is necessary to help those we have harmed. Here, we are no longer simply an offender guilty of a crime, but one part the responsible party to help bring in a form of resolve. For some, this is harder than others, especially in cases of extreme violence or murder. However, the principles and the purpose sought after, under the auspice of restorative justice, and the tools learned and applied in seeking to rehabilitate and integrate ourselves back into society, are a necessary step in finding both meaning and purpose.

These help to mend the wounds we are

Workout of the Month

BY BRANDON MOSS / FCF

This column will be a monthly workout routine that can be posted or "Challenged" by a member of our IR community (staff or resident). Each workout will have the ability to gather times and scores so that we can feature top contenders around the CDOC community in upcoming issues. This is your "Workout of the Month."

Look for the WOM emoji "Swolie," and feel free to give responses, feedback, and opinions. Most important of all submit your "challenges" on workouts and nutrition.



Here's the first challenge...Good Luck! no wait-no weight

BY RICHARD JOHNSON

- † 5 ROUNDS FOR TIME
 - † 25 MINUTE TIME LIMIT
 - † TOTAL NUMBER OF REPS COMPLETED IF NOT FINISHED WITHIN TIME LIMIT
 - † REQUIRED EQUIPMENT (PLYO-BOX, PULL UP BAR, AB-MAT)
 - † IF NO PLYO-BOX AVAILABLE - REPLACE WITH BURPEES
 - † IF NO AB-MAT - REPLACE WITH NORMAL SITUPS/CRUNCHES
 - † 5 - PULL-UPS
 - † 10 - BOX JUMPS (OR BURPEES)
 - † 15 - HAND RELEASE PUSH-UPS
 - † 20 - LUNGES
 - † 25 - BODY SQUATS
 - † 30 - AB-MAT SITUPS (OR SITUPS/CRUNCHES)
- A COMPLETED ROUND = 105 TOTAL REPS!

It is when they feel safe and are encouraged by being treated with compassion and recognized as a human, in spite of their failings, that allows them to better work towards success in the change necessary.

the cornerstone of what is meant as a responsible party to take accountability for my actions, as much that it is possible that I may do so. It is seeking for my victims the justice that I would seek for myself. This is not in speaking of either vengeance or revenge; but that which is practical and achievable; in being of benefit for the good and welfare of the soul. It is meant as justice which leads to resolution and healing, helping to enable some form of peace to be had for all.

In principle, restorative justice is empathy, compassion, humility, understanding, support and love towards the hurt and suffering party; it is a hand of action in helping to heal the harms caused as defined by the suffering party themselves. This begins with four basic questions: Who was hurt? What happened? What do they need? And, who is responsible to meet this need? In this way, restorative justice is a victim-driven approach at justice; yet it neither ignores the needs of the offender (responsible party) nor that of the community at large. It focuses upon seeking the healing of the harms to all, rather than simply

responsible for creating. How this unites with the principles of normalization is in recognizing that accountability, or the willingness one has to account for a wrong, best occurs when people live in a supportive and normative environment. It is not when one is demoralized or demeaned, being treated as anything less than human, that a person guilty of a crime or is that of an addict, is able to better themselves and take responsibility for their actions. It is when they feel safe and are encouraged by being treated with compassion and recognized as a human, in spite of their failings, that allows them to better work towards success in the change necessary.

My hope in this and the articles to follow is to provide more than a technical viewpoint. It is to give one that is more personal and impactful. My intent is to equally speak to the concerns of the masses and to spur us all into action in an open dialogue of finding a healthier and more beneficial way in meeting the needs of crime victims and in rehabilitating the responsible party.

Who is going to be this year's softball champion on your yard?
Who are your best handball players?
Who is lifting the most weight?
Who is the Pinochle champion?
The Inside Report wants to know who holds the bragging rights at your facility. We want every yard to rep their elite. Contact your Bureau Chief or facility Liaison to send us your stats... names of champions, etc. Unless you ain't proud of that title, can't climb the leader's board, or you're old like Eric Davis... a.k.a. Mr. 50 & Over.



Each month, the champs will be posted!

3050 LIFE BY ANONYMOUS



First published in FCF's Pens and Paradigms newsletter

Nothing is as Fast as *The Speed of Trust* by Stephen M.R. Covey

Trust is like the air we breathe. When it's present, no one notices it. When it's absent, everyone notices. —Warren Buffett

BY JOSEPH TAYLOR MCGILL / FCF

How incredible is it to feel trusted by someone that you look up to, or by a family member after a painful event that destroyed the relationship? What about the feeling of trust being developed between you and someone that you just met? Or even the feeling of being able to trust someone else? The sad part is that many of us are so scared of trust that when the opportunity to be trusted presents itself, we ruin it; or when we have the opportunity to give trust to someone else, we hold it back in fear of being let down or hurt. In *"The Speed of Trust,"* Stephen M.R. Covey shares easily relatable life experiences to show that we, as ordinary people, who make mistakes daily, can restore, develop, and extend trust with those around us through The Five Waves of Trust, starting from the inside and working out, and that it can be done faster than you think.

In the first wave, Self Trust, we see how our four cores, integrity (Are you congruent?), intent (What is your agenda?), capabilities (Are you relevant?), and results (What is your track record?) lead to credibility, or how much we trust ourselves and inspire trust in others. The second wave, Relationship Trust, is about how to establish and increase

the trust that we have with others, with the key of being consistent in our behaviors. The behaviors that Covey chose — talk straight, demonstrate respect, right wrongs, and listen first, to list a few — are all ones that we can change. Behaviors that, when changed or grown upon, can produce an astonishing result in all of our relationships. Even in those that have been damaged "beyond" repair.

The last three waves, Organizational Trust, Market Trust, and Societal Trust, are about our alignment, reputation, and contribution. These three are built off of the first two by using the tools that are given to maximize influence. Showing that who you are and what you do will greatly influence the community that you live in.

This book is a mandatory read for anybody that wants to develop, or needs to repair, a relationship, which means everybody. And while it may take longer to restore trust in a broken relationship, nothing moves as fast as the speed of trust. In the end, just remember that, "You can't talk yourself out of a problem you've behaved yourself into." ~Stephen R. Covey (author of *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*)

The Inside Report encourages residents, custody staff, volunteers and others outside the institution to submit articles.

Submissions will become property of *The Inside Report*.

Please use the following criteria when submitting:

Limit your articles to 300 to 1500 words. Featured Artist's bio's keep word count 100 to 150 words.

Articles will be edited for content and length.

The Inside Report will not be used as a medium to file grievances.

We encourage submitting articles that are newsworthy and encompass issues that will have an impact on the prison populace.

Poems and artwork (cartoons and drawings) are welcomed.

The Inside Report does not return original works, please contact your facility Liaison on the procedure to submit copies of original works.



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COLLEGE OF ARTS, HUMANITIES
& SOCIAL SCIENCES
Prison Arts Initiative

A Blue/Green Book Review

Connecting Across the Spectrum of Humanity Through Books

BY MARK HORTON / FCF

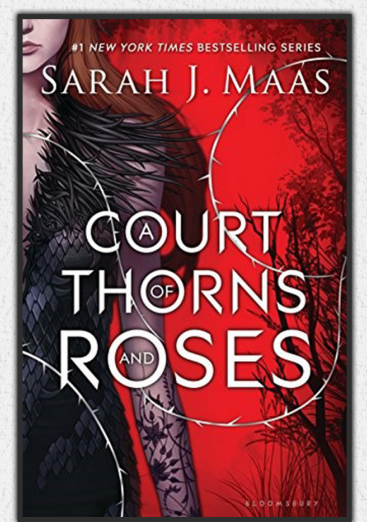
I believe the connection that forms between two people over a book is stronger than the divisions between them. I envision this column, A Blue/Green Book Review, to showcase the connection that forms when two people share an affinity for the same book. This was inspired when Correctional Officer L. Lightfoot

recommended a book for me to read and the rapport developed between us (a DOC resident and a DOC employee) over the love of reading. Have you established a connection with someone who isn't in your circle over a book? We want to hear from the both of you. Mark Horton, FCF, Assistant Managing Editor

A Court of Thorns and Roses Book 1 of 4 By Sarah J. Maas

"There are no faster or firmer friendships than those formed between people who love the same books." ~ Irving Stone

"No two people read the same book." ~ Edmund Wilson



Reviewed by Mark Horton, FCF

One day, a few months back after a shakedown, CO Lightfoot commented on a David Baldacci book that I had in my cell. "Do you like Baldacci?", he asked? "I actually haven't read him before, a friend recommended him." "Well if you like that one, check out his Will Robbie series. It starts with *The Innocent*. It is a really great series!" So I did, and once I started the series I couldn't stop! Some time passed and then one night Mr. Lightfoot said, "If you liked that series, check out *A Court of Thorns and Roses* by Sarah J. Maas." So the next time I was at the library I looked it up. A story about magic, fairies, and magical lands? I was skeptical; I wasn't a "fantasy" guy. I love Harry Potter, but that was as I was willing to sojourn in the world of wizards, warlocks, and such. But Lightfoot's first recommendation was golden so I gave it a shot...

WOW! What a great series! Maas creates a fantastic (pun intended) world between humans and fairies (she spells it differently). The main character leaves the human realm and journeys into the enemy territory of the fairy world to protect her family. Once in their world of magic and wonder, her strength of character transforms her.

Transformed, she becomes a badass of epic proportions and the books portray her journey from a nobody to a somebody. There's love and hate, marriage and war, good becomes bad and bad becomes good. The twists and turns of the journey kept me reading, wanting to turn each page to find out what happens next but hating that with each page turned, I was getting nearer to the end. This series opened up an entire new genre to me. If you are a fantasy fan, you'll love it. If you were like me, a fantasy skeptic, try it out, you might just discover a whole new world.

Reviewed by Correctional Officer L. Lightfoot, FCF

Sarah takes you into a world of magic, mystery, love, and war. The story surrounds a young, human female by the name of Feyre [pronounced like fire], who is not well-educated but is versed in hunting and survival skills. She will also do anything for her family. Feyre lives a lonely life as the sole provider for her family; this comes after their misfortune in which they went from a lavish lifestyle to barely getting by.

In the beginning, we find her hunting in the woods, in the dead of winter to ensure her family's survival. After killing a wolf, and in a twist of fate, Feyre is taken from her home and tossed into a world we all wish existed but never dreamt that we would visit. But, after all, isn't that one of the reasons why we read books? The story continues with Feyre trying and failing to accept her position in this magical world. There are a lot of colorful and scary characters. Feyre later discovers the secrets her companions and friends have been living with for so many years, and she may be the only one who can save them.

She later puts her life on the line to save those she loves and cares about. This book grabs a hold of you and won't let go, and you find yourself wanting more and more, and guess what? You get it. And yeah! There is also some romance.

And if you thought *A Court of Thorns and Roses* was good, wait until you get your hands on the second book in the series, *A Court of Mist and Fury*. Feyre's story continues in the most unpredictable way, prying into her fears, relationships, and battles, even all-out war. This is a book that I would definitely read a second time.

A 12th Chance

Inspirational testimonies about the hard, beautiful, and emotional experiences trying to rebuild a marriage, and parent from within.

BY DOUGLAS L. BAKER / FCF

Do you ever wish that when you got to Denver prison complex the officers would've provided you with a book titled, *"The Dummies Guide to How to Sustain Your Marriage and be a Father to Your Children While in Prison?"*

Inside would be chapters outlining, in detail, how to survive life's wonderfully, amazing, and pleasant experiences in prison. Chapters like: "How to work through the financial difficulties when there is not enough money for the bills, and it's all your fault because you're in prison"; or "Separation in your marriage, you're not at home, in prison for many years, and she still has a life to live"; maybe one about "How to regain your children's trust, and what to do when you go from Dad, to your first name"; and finally "How to improve yourself, rebuild those family relationships, and then prove to your wife and kids that you really have changed for the twelfth time."

Unfortunately, they don't do that, hence the reason I've created this monthly marriage and parenting advice column to help those in prison learn from my successes, and most importantly, my classic failures.

I've been in prison for almost nine years and I can finally see the light at the end of the tunnel, which is going home to my family a changed man. I have an amazingly beautiful wife of 19 years, who has been beyond understanding and patient. She has blessed both of us with six wonderful and unique, children together. We are the Hispanic-American version of the Brady Bunch. (If the Brady Bunch was ghetto, poor, Puerto Rican-American with attitudes, lived in Florida, and are mildly difficult at times, to say the least.)

Now if I left you at that, on the surface, life for the most part would look like a blessing. Normal, spicy, and pleasantly entertaining. I'm not saying it's not, but my family and our life, is unique in and of itself. My wife has advanced stage multiple sclerosis. I want to do one of the most difficult things in the world and become a neurologist. Our children are a mix of boys and girls ranging from ages eight to eighteen, each with their own unique personality. They all live 1,800-plus miles away. Oh, and before I forget, yes their father, me, is still in prison.

Our lives still go on, and I want to be in theirs as much as I can. I want to be involved in all the amazing situations, and

events, both good and bad, that transpire. I want to be an active husband and father albeit from prison.

In the spirit of wishing there was a book for dummies when I came to prison, this column will feature my family and I in our most recent endeavors. I will captivate you with some of the history behind the situations that I write about. I will divulge how I helped in those situations, and sometimes made them worse. The events will be real and my reactions, parenting and marriage skills, and the outcomes will be put out there whether they worked or not. In the end, I believe we want the same thing — to be better husbands, wives, mothers, and fathers. In my mind there is no better way, to grow as one person than to take someone who has a really amazing and unique situation and learn from their rights and wrongs, ups and downs, and talk about it. Events and situations like the time I was told that my oldest son wants to become a rapper. How I had to look inside myself, go to therapy, and realize that this is his dream. I want to truly support his choices and not immediately judge him. Today I immerse myself the best I can in his dream.

Then there's the time my teenage daughter, with the help of the internet, tried to meet up with boys, and the conversation I had with her trying to parent from prison; my middle boy's trouble in school, getting kicked out, not wanting to talk about it, and how I'm still wishing one day he will open up to me; reigniting the flame with my wife, rebuilding our relationship, and asking her to tear down the walls that she created, asking her for another chance, and also asking her for the most precious thing she has to offer, her love and trust.

Life is not easy, and anyone who says it is should be evaluated for potential neurological damage to their prefrontal lobe, the part of the brain that deals with mature rational decision making. Marriage, parenting, children, finances, trust, communication, love, intimacy, heartache, disappointments, disagreements, and those hard to forget, horribly unfortunate situations are all components of life and just have to be dealt with. I don't believe now, if life were easy, I would cherish it as much as I do. I want life. I want my life, and I want a twelfth chance. Come join me, and together we will see how it goes.

Getting Started

BY CAMERON LUNDSTROM / FORMER RESIDENT

It was a bright morning as I stepped into the light. Outside the fence without shackles for the first time in many years, I was both excited and nervous. The drive through the canyon was glorious, the company magnificent. I truly felt like a new man ready to engage life. I think my parole officer felt the optimism and our first meeting went well. I got all dialed in on my ISP, and what was to be expected of me while on it. I was also glad to learn there was a weekly orientation available for the reintegration programs now being offered.

By then it was late afternoon in the Denver metro area and I was beginning to be overwhelmed easily. You know how when you give too many commands to a computer and it runs real slow and herky-jerky? That's how I felt. Even simple tasks became great adventures as I tried to coordinate all the extra stimuli. Trying to recall old substance abuse habits at the TASC office was like wading through molasses. I spent much of the rest of the day in the same mode but enjoyed every minute of it. I was home again after all these years and it was a full but comfortable house. It was the simple things I found most pleasant, having family around me, good food, and a soft bed.

It turned out to just be a warm-up for what lay ahead on day two. Having been given a direct order to report to Geo Inc. monitoring services in downtown Denver, and with my brother at work, it was up to me to brave the wonders of the Metro mass transit system alone. Within only a few minutes, I felt like I was exploring the far reaches of another continent. Luckily, I met many fellow travelers and after I explained my situation they were helpful and polite, often turning into tour guides for all the new sights and sounds downtown. Everything went off without a hitch and I am now the proud owner of a global positioning system, currently attached to my ankle.

Choose Normal

BY BRADLEY ERICKSON / CTCF

For those of us that were around in the 80s, most of us can remember President Reagan's famous phrase, telling Mikhail Gorbachev to "Tear down this wall." That wall, at the time, imprisoned eastern Germans from the west.

If you think about it, we are living in the midst of a political movement here in CDOC. It's safe to say that, with the change in the political climate, prison reform is finally here. Coming along with our new Executive Director, Dean Williams, are his great ideas and normalization concepts. We should also give some credit and consideration to a couple of programs that are a part of this movement.

Restorative Justice is a community-based program which, with hard work, has unimaginable gifts of insight to offer. There are many different facets of Restorative Justice. Considering that "hurt people, hurt people," every facet focuses on healing victims. By design, these circles of healing are formed and created to give us a safe place to relive trauma from our past. This process allows us to better empathize and gain compassion for those we have harmed. Through gaining these life-changing insights, it is the goal of the worldwide Restorative Justice community that you choose to not create any more victims, therefore making the world a better place for us all.

The University of Denver Prison Arts Initiative is also a community-based program. It has values that parallel Restorative Justice. I believe that taking part in DU PAI would be a great way to prepare yourself for the intense, hard work of Restorative Justice. Most of us can agree that prison in itself is a traumatic experience. As a means to survival, humans unknowingly build walls around our hearts. We do this as a natural defense mechanism,

My next challenge: securing communications. Everything in this modern world revolves around the cell phone, so I called upon our old friend Peter Kim. Even though he was busy at work in a conference meeting, he found the time for me. He got me set up with a free smartphone and on a pre-pay plan with two months already paid. He also got me dialed in with a bus pass and connected to the 72-hour fund from Doing His Time, where I obtained work boots and clothes. Peter also put me in contact with Scott Gutches who now works at Mile High Workshop where those who face employment difficulties (like ex-cons) can get training and part-time employment while doing it. Blessings surround us friends, just stay open and honest and good things will follow.

I spent Friday setting up my EBT (food stamps) and Medicaid accounts. Both applications had been submitted before I left the back gate. As some of you know, I still have a battery of medical appointments and tests to do, but today I am cancer-free and I am confident that I won't be left hanging now that I'm a free man. I still have the same doctor at Rocky Mountain Cancer Center and my healthcare has not skipped a beat, everyone involved is behind us. At every appointment I went to I was greeted with welcome home and smiles.

Brothers, the truth is that I've been in and out of prison four times in 25 years and it has never been like this before. Things are changing in every way. All around me, in my relationships, in my professional and social interactions. The difference really is me, I changed and when that happened not only did my view of everyone else change but their view of me as well. Even people I had never met before. It sounds so simple but we know it is not easy. But I promise you it is worth it. I committed early on this time and it has made all the difference. The time to start is now, not when you are walking out the back gate.

generally done subconsciously. DU PAI has created another safe place to explore what we hide from behind those walls: our vulnerability. DU PAI reconnects us with areas of the brain that have atrophied and gone numb by using the therapeutic qualities of art.

Normalization, what a refreshing concept. I've personally been involved in many talks about what normalization means. It differs dramatically, depending on who you talk to. I've heard ideas as simple as owning a plant, wearing jeans, and being able to go to the chow hall in sweats all the way to some as ambitious as having a job on the streets and returning to prison at night. We all have our own perspective on the meaning of normal.

As for myself, if I were to ask for something from DOC, it would be ways to normalize my family dynamic. However, after immersing myself in Restorative Justice and DU PAI, normalization has an even deeper meaning. I've come to believe that a greater part of it is actually up to the individual and not DOC. Don't get me wrong, wearing some jeans can go a long way. It's a step toward normal, especially if that's what normalization means to you. I'm just asking that you search even deeper.

As President Reagan asked Gorbachev to "Tear down this wall," I'm asking you to tear down all the walls you've built around your heart. Choose to restore yourself to dignity by allowing yourself to feel. Allow yourself pain. Allow yourself love. Allow yourself happiness and sadness. Allow yourself to remember both the good and the bad. Most importantly, allow yourself forgiveness. I ask you all to make the choice to take back your birthright as a human being and restore your humanity. Let that be the thread that ties us all together. Together, we can form the foundation for normalization with one common ingredient: our humanity.

Roller Coaster

Looking at this like it's a game is a set up for stress.

Mindful Practice portion of AVCF's Health and Wellness Program.

Imagine you're visiting an amusement park with a large roller coaster. There are three ways you can experience the ride:

Staying on the ground, off to the side watching others ride it.

Getting on the ride and paying attention to how it affects others and you.

Getting on the ride and only paying attention to how it affects you.

These are examples of three different perspectives on immediate experience.

Observer (just watching).

Observer-participant (watching and riding).

Participant (just riding).

No one perspective is superior to the others and most people switch from one perspective to another throughout the day. One of the points of mindfulness is to learn to intentionally shift between perspectives so that you can use one that will work best for you in any given situation.

For example, if your goal is to figure out how the roller coaster's platform and rails are constructed, it would be best to take the observer perspective. If you were asked to identify which turn is most likely to make you scream along with everyone else, the observer-participant would be required. If you were asked to determine how many

consecutive rides would be needed to make the ride less exciting for you, the participant perspective would be your best choice.

The roller coaster metaphor can be very helpful in managing day-to-day stress simply because of how it frames your thinking. For instance, when it comes to dealing with a difficult person, rather than thinking of it as a game that you will win or lose, thinking of it as a roller coaster allows you to ask yourself, "Do I really want to take this ride?" Taking on a purely observer's perspective, as the difficult person continues being difficult, allows you to ask, "How does this ride work?" and, "Is this ride safe?"

Say there is some cop who talks crazy to people in green, cussing and invading their space as he sends clear "I'm going to beat your ass" messages. But every time someone cusses back he writes them up for verbal abuse and every time someone responds to this tough guy act saying, "Take off your badge," he calls first responders.

Looking at this like it's a game is a set up for stress. Why? Because you are automatically taking on the participant's perspective and from this you will instantly think in terms of winning and losing. You'll start strategizing how to proceed. You'll keep pushing to win.

On the other hand, if you view it as a roller coaster, you can stand back, watch, and get an idea of how it operates.

Would it be fun to get into a cussing competition with a cop where you say something so crazy about his mom that it leaves him speechless and makes him decide to never talk to you again? Sure. Is it natural to respond to tough guy talk by entertaining ideas of calling the person

out? Of course. But in this case, that's like getting on a roller coaster thinking about how great it would be to go through the triple corkscrew loop but never getting to it because you're thrown out on the first turn due to lack of a proper safety harness. A cussing "tough guy" cop who writes reports and calls first responders when convicts react in-kind is like a roller coaster that sends people flying off it into a concrete wall before they get to the fun part.

From an observer's point of view, you'll probably realize that's not a ride you want to take, not because you're soft, or weak, or scared, but because it's a crap ride that doesn't deliver what it promises.

The roller coaster observer's perspective not only allows you to tell yourself, "I'm not taking this ride," it enables you to tell anyone trying to cable you into going off, "I'm not taking that ride with you and I really ain't taking it for you." Learning to intentionally shift to the observer's perspective will help you learn to set boundaries with others as well as in your own mind, boundaries that will help you prevent yourself from becoming an observer-participant or participant in experiences that can have a negative impact on you. Similarly, learning to intentionally shift perspectives will allow you to fully enjoy moments you want to share with others from the observer-participant perspective and those you want to experience yourself from the participant perspective.

For more on the observer's perspective, exercises, and other mindful practices check out "In This Moment" by Kirk D. Strosahl and Patricia J. Robinson or write AVCF. Programs Major Stangier and request a copy of the Health and Wellness Program workbook.

BURN-NOTICE

BY BRANDON MOSS / FCF

Burn Notice focuses on engaging conversations. Ask us questions regarding burning topics and have those questions answered with blazing truth by the editorial team and its affiliates. This platform is made for your voice to be heard in debate, feedback, and statement form on topics in and outside of the Department of Corrections. Vent, speak, and follow the movement. This is your Burn Notice.

We would like to hear your opinion on the following topics: **The Mask, My SOTMP Experience, Impeachment.** Feedback and opinions may be published in an upcoming issue.

Here's the burn conversation starter for Issue 1:

A staff member wonders why a resident has a tablet, video games, ice cream, and cable TV. "You guys live better than I do and you don't even have to work for it."

Any takers?

We anxiously await your voice on this topic. Please refer to "Volume 1 Issue 1 - Burn Notice Reply" as the title of your response to Brandon Moss 167442 at FCF.

Not hot enough? Bring it—we want to know what's lightin' the fire on your yard.

Cuckoo's Nest

From page 1

does he say Martini or Scanlon? He looks me in the eye, welcomes me, and seems eager for me to see the play. It dawns on me that he's not a medical person. Rather, he's incarcerated at Sterling, as are the other white-coated greeters. They are giving us a whiff of the roles they will soon perform.

Next, I'm seated across from incarcerated women. The audience quiets, and we all watch a statuesque man. He proclaims his Native American heritage and speaks in a voice drenched in sad truths. Suddenly the action switches to the mundane, and the Native American is sweeping the floor as orderlies mock him as "Chief Broom." A new man saunters into the ward. He commands the room-- grinning, gambling McMurphy! Extending a hand to each man in the ward, he keeps grinning when one of the inmates blurts out the F-word, and another stands motionless, his arms splayed as if nailed to a cross.

DWCF women seated across from me seem to blend onto the stage which is a few feet from their chairs. Among the women sits the DWCF warden, and he grins as McMurphy announces that he's gonna be the "bull-goose looney" in the ward. The women in the audience laugh at the slapstick humor of the madmen and orderlies; at one point they sympathize with the stutterer Billy as he stalks



Sterling residents performing at the Denver Women's Correctional Facility. Courtesy of Stephanie Daniel / KUNC

off—"Awwwww," they murmur.

The year is 1959, and the "Sterling Ward" is a state-run mental institution. As Nurse Ratchet enunciates every vowel of the rules, it's clear that she holds the keys to freedom—or to electroshock treatment or lobotomies. She brands McMurphy a manipulator even as she terrifies Billy by threatening to tell "everything" to his mother if Billy doesn't do what she wants him to do.

The play is mesmerizing, like an exhilarating breeze. But not everyone in the audience is captivated. Some frown or look away, a few whisper critiques and jeer. Suddenly, tragedy and travesty stalk onstage and bring relentless horror. The

audience is silent. Can freedom beckon any one of the men who experience the horror in their ward? Chief Bromden? As if hearing the felled McMurphy, he describes him as BIG like his Papa, now the Chief feels his own "bigness," and strides toward it.

After the production, during a Q&A, a DWCF woman asks the cast for suggestions for an upcoming production of "A Christmas Carol." Actor-to-actor, advice is offered: "Become your character; open your heart; listen—really listen—to your fellow players."

Now we all must return to "real life." Those in prison stay in prison. Volunteers, DOC staff, and other visitors cluster at

various checkpoints before electronic gates leading to the lobby. Praise for the performance sounds like a melancholic echo of something real.

The audience files out, some to their cells, some to the parking lot to drive home. In the moonlit darkness of the parking lot, I looked back at the glistening barbed wire atop the fences. A rabbit darted among the shadows in the grass. So... "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest." What now?

Prison still imprisons. Yet, for a few hours, performers and audience members felt a refreshing, bracing breeze. Even now, do we not breathe the same air? Inside and out? What's that sound? Everybody look what's goin' round! Can it be ... freedom?

VOD

From page 1

there it has spread throughout the U.S. with an estimated 400 VOD programs in existence today, and has flourished in Europe with similar numbers.†

The VOD was created and established to help those who have been impacted by violent crime, both physically and mentally, advance the process of healing. For those who have harmed and stripped the life of innocence from humanity, it's a chance to evolve, edify, and become accountable for their actions.

This was the grand vision for a future program in the State of Colorado, put into action by the late Executive Director of Corrections, Mr. Tom Clements, then State House of Representatives Pete Lee and his wife Lynn, and victim/survivor Ms. Sharletta Evans. In the search for the right person to govern such a notable program, none were more qualified than Ms. Monica Chambers, Coordinator for the CDOC. Victim Services Unit, VOD Program, and D.O.C. Representative for the State Restorative Justice Coordinating Council. In the coming months, Ms. Chambers will be transitioning into a new position as the Restorative Justice Coordinator for D.O.C. In July of 2019, I sat down with Ms. Chambers, Raymond Johnson, the very first VOD offender participant, and Alfred Montano, a recent VOD offender participant.

Ms. Chambers' background spans 22 plus years in CDOC, from that of a Corrections Officer, to Executive Offices Administrator, to her newly appointed departmental position. She was the chairperson of a national organization that consisted of individuals who have been dialoguing since the 1990s. There, she developed a deeper resolve and understanding of

what worked in those dialogues, as well as what did not. Her work with that organization was instrumental in establishing the fundamental values of Colorado's VOD program, maintaining integrity, and creating a safe space for the dialogue process. "Our main intent is to help the victim/survivor(s) become the best version of themselves; to assist them in moving forward and help them in their healing journey," stated Ms. Chambers.

The VOD program is beautiful and simplistic in concept. It focuses on the human aspect, not the law that was broken. It provides the opportunity for the victim/survivor of the crime to be face-to-face with the perpetrator of the crime, allow them to talk with one another, and support the opportunity for healing to begin. Initiated in 2011, the VOD had its first dialogue on May 23, 2012 between Ms. Sharletta Evans and Raymond Johnson. Raymond was convicted of murdering Ms. Evans' son in 1995. Nineteen dialogues have been successfully completed since then. In February 2019, Alfred Montano participated in a VOD process with a victim/survivor. Alfred held, at gun point, a retail store clerk while robbing money from the register. Since 2012, there have been 18 VOD's, with crimes ranging from murder to violent robberies. Most recently, a dialogue was conducted at the La Vista Women's Facility in July of this year.

The VOD is a one-time experience that comprises numerous variables and months of preparation. There is no financial burden to the victim/survivor. Financials are secured through Ms. Chambers' position as the coordinator for the program. Funding is arranged by Senator Pete Lee and many others that occupied seats in the State Government at that time. It is obtained from the Restorative Justice Fund, which in turn is funded by the



Alfred Montano / FCF Resident during interview with Monica Chambers

“To the offenders, you need to be open, honest, and accountable for what you’ve done...”

‘Long Bill’ that provides for the payment of expenses of the executive, legislative, and judicial departments of the State of Colorado, and of its agencies and institutions. Offenders are not able to initiate the dialogue. The dialogue must be initiated by the victim/survivor, whether they are the person harmed directly, or a secondary victim such as a family member.

Once a request has been made, the process begins by evaluating what the victim/survivor hopes to gain from this experience. Ms. Chambers stated, “Working with the victim/survivor and understanding their needs, meeting them where they are, understanding what they need from this program and what their intentions are, is instrumental to having a successful dialogue.” She then continued by stating, “I also conduct research on the offender, finding out everything possible I can to help me effectively orchestrate the dialogue, using a variety of tools: Pre-Sentence Investigation Reports (PSI), Institutional Behavioral Reports (Write-Ups), and Offender Chronology (Chrons).” From

there, Ms. Chambers contacts the warden of the facility where the offender is housed. “I only let the warden know I’m coming, and why. This is so I can see if the offender is genuine, remorseful for their actions, and if they are amenable to the program.” Ms. Chambers explains the intricacies involved and the experiences the program has to offer, the fact that it is voluntary, and the intentions of the victim/survivor. At that point, trained facilitators assist her, the victim/survivor, and the offender through the process of preparing for the dialogue. They are also present during the dialogue, and conduct post-dialogue follow-ups.

The offender and the victim/survivor are paired with one or more facilitators, beginning a journey of analyzing the layers of emotions that will come up in the dialogue. They learn to navigate through those emotions in a healthy way, helping both parties communicate in an effective manner. “It taught me how to be empathic to individuals; how to be sensitive to not just their feelings but my feelings. You have to take full responsibility for your actions, and it helped me find the reasons for my actions. It assisted me in correcting that behavior. It helped me convey to the survivors what happened, and why. Nobody wants to admit they are an abuser, but once you take on that role and go in to that mindset, you’re able to see it and explain it to them,” stated Raymond, when asked about the preparation sessions and homework assignments that are provided. Raymond Johnson and Alfred Montano both acknowledged that the facilitators and the homework helped them with the process of analyzing and understanding their criminal behavior and the suppression of their emotions. By engaging in activities like writing an apology letter and role playing, both individuals were

able to truly see how they have impacted their victim/survivor. The role playing that takes place is where the offender takes on the position of the victim/survivor. The offender then works through different aspects of the impact and ripple effect of violent crime in an attempt to gain a more meaningful understanding of what it is like to be hurt, and start to heal.

The dialogue does not end after the initial meeting. Post-dialogue follow-up sessions are available to both parties, should they choose to engage in them. “Part of our intent as facilitators is to make sure everyone has a support network throughout the entire process,” stated Ms. Chambers. I ventured out to ask Alfredo Montano what advice he would offer to future dialogue participants. These are his words: “To the offenders, you need to be open, honest, and accountable for what you’ve done. I went into the dialogue thinking I was not going to cry, and I’m going to be tough. I was wrong. To the victim/survivor, you should know that there is no question that is off limits to any of us when it comes to the VOD program.”

The program, unfortunately, is not readily available to all offenders. Currently, only violent crime offenders are permitted to dialogue. Sexual assault and domestic violence cases are not being considered at this time, based on resources. Other states have dialogues with these types of offenses, and this is an avenue that CDOC is evaluating and possibly implementing in the future. For those offenders who are not able to participate in the VOD program and want to be a part of an amazing experience, there are currently events and programs available to the population, under the umbrella of Restorative Justice. This includes a 12-week Restorative Justice Education group program and an apology/accountability letter bank. Restorative Justice workshops will be developed and conducted after Ms. Chambers transitions into her new role. For more information, or to submit a proposal for your idea on how to help offenders become more involved in the Restorative Justice programs, contact Ms. Chambers at CDOC. Headquarters in Colorado Springs. No postage is necessary. You can also have your case manager forward your correspondence to Ms. Chambers.

Finally, I ended my visit with Monica Chambers asking her why she cares and invests so much of herself into the concept of Restorative Justice. Ms. Chambers gave these lasting words of encouragement to end with: “I think what I see in the philosophy of Restorative Justice is that it’s about the people and the humanity. That’s what it’s really about. If people become better individuals and I can witness that, help that, and give someone healing from either direction... I want to do that, and I think that has been a piece of the criminal justice system that has been lacking for a long time.”

Editor’s Note: Restorative Justice is the concept which encompasses multiple programs designed to aid in the healing process for the victim / survivor; while drawing focus of the impact of the crime to the offender. VOD is but one of those programs.



Raymond Johnson / JCAP participant during interview with Monica Chambers



Pioneering leaders of the newly implemented GO-MAP Brandin Kreuzer, Erik Jensen, and Jon Willis / SCF

Fit for Release

From page 1

private facilities). To actually recognize savings, the system not only needs to reduce the prison population, it must close prisons. Moreover, ending Colorado's reliance on private prison contracts should be its focus. It is an insanely wasteful expenditure. Funds spent over-incarcerating long-term offenders could be utilized in more vital areas of government, such as: K-12 education, road repair, and healthcare.

Why aren't we paroling institutionally-compliant, long-term offenders at first opportunity?

The answer to that question is complicated. Most of these offenders had serious offenses, many of them violent, some of them heinous. Hence, their long sentences to begin with. Fear, warranted or not, plays into the decision making process. Parole board members' personal whims, and victims' unforgiving recommendations often offset otherwise unblemished prison records and set back prisoners to serve more time. It defies logic given the low-rate of recidivism and the costs of incarceration.

Prison advocacy groups would argue that holding back deserving prisoners from parole is the point where justice served becomes an injustice. But what if there was a way to quantify that prisoners will prosper and flourish upon release? This is where these traveling prisoners enter the story.

CDOC Director Dean Williams, Assistant Director Matthew Hansen, and Pendulum Foundation Founder Curt Jensen, whose son, Erik Jensen, is a lifer at Limon Correctional Facility, devised a pilot program of measurable accountability and active progress that generates seasoned leaders and productive members of society. The idea is to take the guess work

out of who will be a success upon release. Participants will accrue documented track records as proven leaders capable of handling the rigors of the free world.

Erik Jensen, an articulate, intelligent, and well-spoken man entered the CDOC at age 17, a juvenile tried as an adult and given life without parole for complicity to murder in Douglas County in 1998. In recent years, changes in juvenile sentencing laws provides Jensen the opportunity to parole.

For the public this is good news: prisoners already with a statistical low-rate of recidivism will enter back into society with a guarantee of sorts – a proven track record of achievement.

Today, Jensen would easily blend into any company's boardroom, or could be a motivational speaker for a product or service – essentially what he does.

Jensen said, "When designing this program, Director Dean Williams, and Assistant Director Matthew Hansen wanted to ensure public safety and accountability, above all else. And we've done just that. Individual freedoms are extended only after documented track records worthy of such privilege are achieved. The program Graduate-Oriented Mentor Accountability Program (GO-MAP). GO-MAP is a mentor-led program for long-term offenders. Its mission statement asserts: GO-MAP is designed to make world-changing leaders who make world-changing leaders.

GO-MAP induces safer prisons and communities, improves correctional staff/inmate relations, reduces recidivism, and drives down prison costs. One of the strong points of GO-MAP is how the program integrates prisoners with the community they will be paroling to prior to their release. Ideally, long-term offenders would have huge savings, a job, and a place to live when they parole.

GO-MAP is a voluntary program with a hefty commitment. Participants must choose self-improvement, healthy-living, and education over gangs, drugs, violence

or other destructive lifestyles. The "carrot at the end of the stick" is freedom and learning and skill sets to be happy, productive members of society.

GO-MAP is still in the development stage. One of the things being worked out is how to get prisoners on board. The hook may be CrossFit.

Erik Jensen, Brandin Kreuzer, and Jonathan Willis are all CrossFit Level 2 trainers. Brandin Kreuzer is the president, and Founder, of Redemption Road CrossFit at Limon Correctional Facility. They have over 100 members which includes prisoners, correctional staff, and community volunteers. Redemption Road CrossFit is focused around CrossFit training, membership, shared suffering, and teamwork.

At Redemption Road Fitness, its members use CrossFit to promote a healthy environment that helps hold each other accountable and carry over to all aspects of their lives.

Kreuzer penned in the Redemption Road Fitness vision and mission statement, "We believe that healthy habits promote a healthy life, and prison is an opportunity for people who made significant mistakes to reform those bad habits."

Brandin Kreuzer has served 11 years of a 50-year sentence for robbery and second-degree assault. He is currently 30-years-old. Brandin is not only fit, he is an excellent writer, leader, organizer, and a bit of a philosopher.

Jonathan Willis, Brandin's fellow CrossFit Level 2 training partner, commented, "Brandin is our proposal writer extraordinaire. If something we propose gets shot-down, Brandin adjusts the proposal until everyone is satisfied. He is very tenacious."

Jonathan Willis is the soul of this trio on a mission. Willis has served 14 years of a life sentence for murder. He is devoted to a Christian lifestyle and helping other prisoners. He is able to talk to hardened men and offer them a viable alternative.

Quick to offer sound advice, Willis demonstrated a proper full-seated squat and the importance of CrossFit trainers getting the little things right. Willis can walk comfortably into a room that would make the average man quickly look for an exit. However, in a prison environment, Willis's bravado plays an integral role in their recruiting objectives.

Willis remarks on CrossFit's website: "The ultimate purpose of CrossFit is to instill value to other human beings... when someone instills value in themselves... you're part of the solution rather than the problem."

Brandin Kreuzer said, "Those ridiculous shows on television about prison are not the whole story. What folks don't see are the amazing transformations taking place. Spending time around men in our program absolutely changed my life. They mentored me. They are some of the kindest, most honorable, and humble men to know. That's why the mentorship part of CrossFit and GO-MAP go hand-in-hand."

Willis, Jensen, and Kreuzer laid out under the stars in the garden of the U.S. Military Veteran's Unit at Sterling Correctional Facility. This is something they haven't done in over a decade. Kreuzer noted a meteor-shower; Jensen nibbled on some squash; Willis hashed over the day's events. All three were savoring the moment at 10:30 pm, long past lock down at Limon.

Kreuzer writes on CrossFit's website: "Human beings are created to be together, and the heart is not meant to be alone... Sometimes people believe that, as inmates, we should sit in a corner, stare at a wall, and have no liberties whatsoever..."

But that evening, these fallen men were chasing stars and dreams. (Since this article was written Erik Jensen has been awarded clemency, and has left prison. Jonathan Willis and Brandin Kreuzer have joined GO-MAP at SCF and have left LCF.)

The Comfort Zone

BY BRANDON MOSS / FCF

Prison can be looked at in many different ways, through a lot of different lens. Some people may have the “lock them up and throw away the key” opinion, where we as convicted felons, should rot away from the rest of society. Others may have a skewed idea of prison which is neither negative or positive, it’s just simply ignorant to the realities of how we as inmates actually live. Whether as a result of TV or internet, family ties to prisons, or no idea what to expect, there are a number of individuals who seem to have figured that rehabilitation is the true path to restoration for us convicts. This is why the CDOC is implementing programs that allow residents of the state prison system to be reintegrated into society with a second chance at living a normal life in the free world. Growing up, I was never taught the basics of adulthood. I was left alone for days at home with my younger siblings with little food, local channels and an imagination of what life was like outside my resident solitude. Several people in positions of authority can attest to the fact that they know someone or either themselves, have been a part of a situation where they too could have ended up in prison. A 20-year-old, on a path to destruction, surrounded by men who also grew up inside these walls. But what way did I grow up? Personally, I have a high school diploma, a job in CCI which has taught me various skills, and a background in the army before my sentence. All of these things, along with the maturity I have experienced in here, have equipped me to better my chance for success upon release; or so I thought. The program that I was able to be a part of for a day quickly showed me that I may not be as ready as I once believed I was.

An interesting development in the CDOC has surfaced recently. Many who comes into prison may not be ready to leave, even though their sentence says they are. Drug and alcohol, TC, 7 Habits, and anger management helps us deal with the crimes we committed, and even helps us figure out things about ourselves that we didn’t know, but what



JCAP participants and instructors on meal day

about adulthood? Are we truly ready for that? The Juveniles Convicted as Adults Program was designed to help address that question. Juvenile residents, some sentenced to life without parole, have been given the opportunity to become citizens once again, and contribute to society as adults. From the foundation stage in 2017, five male, and two female inmates were originally selected to start the program. After three years, this first group will be placed in front of the parole board with tools necessary to reenter into the community after 20-plus years in prison. In a joint effort to stabilize the program with Ms. Brubaker, JCAP Administrator, Ms. Jenkins, JCAP Educator, and Mr. Seifkert, JCAP Social Worker, this curriculum is set to be a success. Immersed into the scene of what I thought was the most important and awe-inspiring classroom setting, I sat and watched as the students filed into their respective areas and prepared for a day like no other in prison. You would have thought the governor himself was going to sit in on this day, and even though I was there as a rep for the newspaper, it was as unscripted as an episode of “*Who’s Line Is It Anyway?*”

Allow me to paint a picture: imagine your favorite school scene from an 80s movie and splash every wall with an inspirational quote. The room is filled with tables and chairs pointing to the front of the room, where one of the three staff stand in front of a white board filled with to-do’s and scheduling for

the coming weeks. Now take that same 80s movie school scene, and integrate the technology of today. There is an office extension where the two Samsung Galaxy S6 phones are stored, and music is played on surround sound speakers for all to enjoy. Opposite the office, is a wall lined with driving simulators that allow you to practice driving, (or wrecking if you’re me). In the back of the room sit computers and an opening to the kitchen, equipped with a full range stove/oven combo, a double-decker sink, fully stocked pantry, and a refrigerator full of food aimed to please. You see, Fridays are important in the JCAP community. On these un-recognized holidays, meals are prepared by the inmates and served in a makeshift restaurant setting. The tables and chairs are shifted and place-mats are set. Along with silverware, glasses, plates and bowls are simulated with their plastic counterparts and the aroma of the day’s menu item fills the entire education building.

As I took my seat and watched from the back of the classroom, I noticed an immediate open and honest style of communication between the teachers and students. The topic of conversation was evidence-based practices, and it was a bit intriguing because it showed how selfless and giving everybody was. The root of evidence-based practices is a simple conversation. One that allows feedback from the students for teachers to better understand the programs effects.

The reason I felt that this was so interesting was because this type of communication style allows for future curriculum to be implemented effectively. In layman’s terms, use what works and take everything else to the lab to dissect and improve it. If it continues to fail, abort. So unselfish of this group of men and women to set aside what they want as the “first” group of participants and instead prepare for the next group’s success. All the while, I felt a moment of déjà vu come upon me as I noticed a group of inmates cooking and speaking on the conversation at hand. “Where have I seen this before?” I asked myself. When it hit me, the symmetry was simple: a family at home after a long day, some watching TV, some cooking dinner, conversing on many topics. Whether you grew up that way or watched it on TV and movies, life has a way of coming full circle, and at that moment I saw a family, one that genuinely cared about each other and that could be mirrored on the outside. I immediately felt hope for every man and woman coming through the JCAP program, and with that, a feeling of love for the teachers who cared enough to do what they do.

I had many opportunities to talk with a few people about their relationships with the staff and about how I processed what I saw, and I was pleased to know that I was not alone in my thinking. Here’s my thing: you come into prison as a young man or woman, but in reality you are still a child in so many ways. A couple of people

come into your life after many calendars and spend a few more teaching you things like time and money management, dating and cooking skills. (See JCAP Timeline for a more in depth breakdown of what is taught and learned) and all of a sudden they are gone. Now what?

These teachers re-enact what all of us were supposed to or did learn from a parent! So I pose the questions: How can I allow an individual to take on this role while still being in an inmate/staff relationship? How can I hide human nature? How can we just kick each other out of our lives and not feel some way about it? Easy. Because it is what it is, right?

Meet Eric Davis, a 33-year-old inmate, not by age but by length of stay, and a JCAP participant who also happens to be a fellow journalist for The Inside Report. He was happy to lead the way in helping make this day a reality for me and also made me feel very comfortable during my venture. We talked about his journey in doing time and the people he has met, and I asked him about his thoughts on Ms. Brubaker and the separation that was about to take place between them after so many years. He simply said “Well honestly, I haven’t thought about it much, but I am sure I will feel an emptiness when she is out of my life.” Adam Drake is a quiet, secluded young man, and JCAP participant who praises Mr. Seifkert’s approach on mental health. “He’s a therapist... we know that, so we try and analyze him and help him to

FCF Vocational AutoCAD

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CAD 101 CAD Drafting I

Use the AutoCAD interface and a keyboard, cursor pointing device, and graphics monitor to put drawing information into a computer. Describe and use the basic terms, concepts, and techniques of computer-aided drafting. Set up drawings, use drawing aids, save drawings, and get help when needed. Draw lines, basic shapes and geometric constructions, edit drawings. And Much More.

CAD 100 Print Reading for CAD

Identify basic drafting equipment. Use drafting equipment in a safe and efficient manner. Describe the tools used by CAD drafters. Principles of drafting are common to both traditional drafting and CAD. Bisect a line, arc, and angle. Transfer an angle. Basic Geometric Construction. And Much More.

CAD 102 CAD Drafting II

Dimension drawings and use dimension styles properly. Insert and edit tables. Draw section views and graphic designs using AutoCAD’s hatch patterns. Construct blocks with attributes and use them in a drawing. Use external references. Create, modify, and archive sheet sets. Make Multi-view layouts and plot or print drawings.

CAD 115 Introduction to SketchUP

Demonstrate the ability to use and navigate the Sketch Up Interface. Create and edit accurate shape, volumes, and forms using dimensional input and inference. Organize geometry in 3D model using groups and components. Manipulate and organize groups and components using layers and outliner. Create 3D models using components. Explore and develop approaches to the generation of common volumetric constructions. And Much More.

better understand us, while we better understand him...he's like that uncle everyone has." His thoughts on Mr. Seifkert were as close as you were going to get to the truth on a man who let very little interaction become personal at first, but with time, many people in the program agreed that he was "warming up" to them. Naturally, I assume. Davis and Drake have showed a compassion and a thankfulness for what these people have done and because they are human, can't just throw them away and out of their lives as they move forward in the program. So what is next? Eventually, nine of them who are in a deeper phase will

"I feel like this program should be offered to every single person in prison, we cover everything about becoming a man ..."

leave to Four Mile and then to CMRC to see parole, but without these very important "parental figures" or their official titles, DOC-employed teachers.

Leroy Gardenhire, who was recently sighted wearing virtual reality goggles after 28 years in prison, said a lot about success. He highlighted the elements of the curriculum and how it already has made him feel more comfortable with going out into the world and becoming a functional member of society. "I feel like this program should be offered to every single person in prison, we cover everything about becoming a man who can provide for himself and his family, while maintaining a job and still having good, legal fun." I thought the legal part was funny because most of us never

really had real "legal" fun out there before we came to prison. How about travel, mountain climbing, or amusement parks? Things like that are what Leroy looks forward to once he can get his feet wet and establish himself comfortably. Robby Valanzuela, also a JCAP member, had an interesting take on comfort as well. "The thing I like most is how open and easy it is to converse with the opposite sex. Decades pass by and you expect me to get out and act normal around people, not be creepy around a woman after being around nothing but men for 30 years, these teachers help us with that. How many of you feel that? The realness of that statement is proven in the curriculum, showing that relationships and marriage are a part of everyday life, and for some of us, dating and sex will prove to be challenging because we have been "out of the game" for so long. Good thing the class teaches it. Gardenhire and Valanzuela speak volumes on comfort and how much easier it will be because of these three teachers.

Ms. Jenkins, the JCAP educator, has a bubbly, joyful personality mixed with a genuine love for her job and, in my opinion, a love for her students. We talked awhile about her short CDOC background that includes only the year she has been with JCAP, and the few comments she made were enough for me to understand the stance she takes on life, forgiveness, and success. One of the questions I asked was in relation to my curiosity on the separation of CDOC employees and the "parent figure" they seem to resemble. She had this to say, "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." The statement was so powerful because it was the truth. Why would I listen to someone who doesn't care? I wouldn't. With that, she followed it with a confident and matter of fact, "I have belief, hope in these guys." I then asked her to elaborate more on how that separates her roles and she responded, "Let me make this clear for the record, in this order, I want them to be

safe, responsible and happy." "Education is what is most important to me and I want that for them."

At that very moment, Ms. Brubaker and Mr. Seifkert walked over and you could see the resignation on their faces as they agreed with Ms. Jenkins' statements. "The fact of the matter is, this is our job, and we are ok knowing that they will have all of the tools for success." "We are looking for ways that we can check up on them in the future." Ms. Brubaker had that to say when asked about how she felt about being separated from her students. As you can tell, there is a human aspect to their relationships with respect to their jobs. Truth is, whether you leave here or not, there is an impression left with every relationship, including the ones with staff.

As the interviews were sporadically coming together, I enjoyed a few selfies, some driving lessons and a few educational courses on a Chromebook with "Mr. CrossFit," Trevor Jones. Before I knew it, the food was ready, and I helped set the tables with placemats and chairs for a big

meal. Ok, so I just want to say, Andrew Salas, Nathan Lucero, and Robby Valanzuela are amazing cooks. On the menu was cream of mushroom soup, grilled cheese and jalapeno sandwiches, and a side of corn on the cob. They did such an amazing job and three bowls of soup later, I was a very happy man. Thanks again!

While eating, I was re-taught basic manners like keeping my elbows off of the table and not speaking with my mouth full. It was a humbling experience to say the least. Without this class, those who are not provided the opportunity to take this class will surely be behind in some areas of life. All three teachers agree that this class should be offered to the masses and I encourage CDOC to read this with intent to look into a class on "living life." The evidence will be in the success of the first JCAP participants and the belief and tools instilled in them by their three amazing teachers who I know root for them and us inmates as a whole.

At the end of the day, I was left with a few thoughts on normalization and the push to live easier as a prison community, while always preparing to reenter

the world outside of these walls. Whether you are an inmate, staff member, volunteer, supporter, family member, parolee or even a politician, you are a part of the CDOC web. In some way we are connected, whether you like it or not. In order to make this easier on everyone involved, on behalf of all residents, we are not just a number or a job. In the same breath, I would like to challenge my fellow inmates to respect that mother, father, sister, brother, son, or daughter who is a part of the web, but not as an inmate. We can co-exist, walking that line together. Evidence-based practice is clear cut and it works. Let's follow the lead of the JCAP community. I want to thank Ms. Brubaker, Ms. Jenkins and Mr. Seifkert for allowing me, on behalf of The Inside Report, to step into their bubble. Thank you and good luck to all of the JCAP participants now and future. Shout out to the CDOC for giving these guys a chance and inspiring all of us to do be a better version of ourselves with each passing day. With that, I want to leave every reader with this quote from Michael John Bobak; "All progress takes place outside the comfort zone."



Brandon Moss enjoying grilled cheese and cream of mushroom soup made by JCAP participants



PHASE I JCAP TIMELINE	
Money, Taxes and Credit	3-6 Weeks
Diet, Factors in Food Choices, Consumer Decision Making	4-8 Weeks
Conflict Management, Professional Communication, Positive Relationships	4-8 Weeks
Keyboarding, Virtual Reality, Driving Simulator, Chrome Books, Computer Software	4 Weeks
Kitchen Skills, Foodborne Illness, Nutrition Labeling, Groceries 101	4 Weeks

PHASE II JCAP TIMELINE	
Business Ethics, Employee Benefits, Financial Literacy	3-6 Weeks
Family Life Cycle, Health, Beauty of Marriage and Dating, Relationship Management	4-8 Weeks
Technology In Depth, Microsoft Office, Presentation Strategies	4-8 Weeks

Artist Bio:

How old are you?
Age: 40

Where did you grow up?
I was born and raised in Denver, Colorado.

How long have you been creating art?
From the time I was old enough to hold a pencil in my hand, I was scribbling on paper. I would go around my house and draw everything I saw. Then I discovered comic books and that changed my outlook on art. It opened a different world for me. One where the impossible was possible. From those early days I was being creative; was it truly art? That is up for speculation. By the time I was 19–20 years old, I was creating what most people would consider art. But for me it was just an evolution into a different medium, oil painting. I have worked in many mediums, but oils remain my number one love of the art world.

Artist Statement:

What inspired these pieces?
For me, it is like the air we breathe. I can't live without it, but it will go on long after I am gone. Art is creation. I have given life to these paintings and drawings with the hope that when released into the wild, someone will find them and see something in them and love them as much as I do.

What techniques did you use?
I am a self-taught artist. But I tend to work in a slight impressionistic style. I want to give a dream-like quality. I remember when I was younger, I always wanted to draw and paint photo realistic. But over the years I learned that a painting needs to flow, from tight to loose. For me, this gives the art life.

Any tips you'd like to share with our readers?
The first is, never a day without a line. Draw daily, even if it's only a line. The second is, work on the foundation of art. If you get the foundation down, you can build a masterpiece.

In what ways, if any, is creating art soothing for you?
The creation of art is life.



FEATURED ARTIST SUBMISSION

ARTIST BIO:
AGE? WHERE WERE YOU BORN?
WHERE DID YOU GROW UP?
HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN CREATING ART?

ARTIST STATEMENT:
WHAT INSPIRED THIS PIECE?
WHAT TECHNIQUES DID YOU USE?
ANY TIPS YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE WITH OUR READERS?

PROFILE QUESTIONS:
IN WHAT WAYS IS CREATING ART SOOTHING FOR YOU?
IN WHAT AREAS WOULD YOU LIKE TO IMPROVE AS AN INDIVIDUAL ARTIST?

ATTENTION: Communicate with your Facility liaison in order to get your artwork scanned