

November 26, 2018

Hey there Club supporters!

Our October was incredible, we had some great presentations, Ms. Barb Carter and Chuck Stepping headed our first group meeting with the men who desired to work through our batterer's prevention workbook from MRT, this is a big first step in finally getting some much needed domestic violence programming, we plan on expanding this program over 2019! Many men are asking for this type of programming and we are planning on meeting the need as much as possible, thank you Chuck and Barb!

This time of year we are reminded of the choices we have made and the consequences that have rippled through our communities, families, and fellow Oregonians. We were privileged to have Sue McNelly speak. She is a crime survivor and more than that spoke about how she took action and became involved in facilitated dialogue and worked on the behalf of other crime survivors! She is a champion and hero and we were both humbled and inspired. Rarely do we as criminals here how the people we have harmed continue to live. Sue is incredible and although she was a little overwhelmed by our group size (about 150) she handled it very well. Thank you Sue!

As some of you know we have been working to create a virtual classroom, yes, the challenge presented is to take these tired, cold cells and turn them into classrooms!, How? I'm glad you asked. One of the greatest obstacles to any programming is class size, most classes offered by both DOC and clubs only have about 20-30 max participants, and those participants can't have work conflicts and must be NCI level 2 or 3, meaning they have not been in trouble in at least 6 months. Mmm... got me thinking, that why can't we, as a club, provide manuals, broadcast DVD materials through the institution channels, and host a conference once or twice a year? This would open up participation to all NCI levels, special housing, mental health, there would be no work conflicts, and no class size restrictions! Could you imagine what the conversation in the dining hall would be like if 300-400 men were going through a fathering manual? I'll share that they are not speaking about that now. What if men were meeting on the yard to talk about the cycle of violence? Could you imagine that? It gets me excited!

With the changing political climate and attitude towards sentencing reform there is a strong possibility that change is on the horizon, because I truly believe this I have a responsibility to provide this information to these men. Transitioning back into our communities begins the day we walk into to this prison waiting till the day we leave this prison is a set-up for failure. To this end I am working on getting some grant money approved so that materials can be purchased. By mid-2019 we should be rolling out some plans, I want to turn our small groups that are just starting into steering committees, they can work on the virtual classroom content and DVD info.

I like to keep things interesting and tackle a challenge now and then. I'm pleased that we have this platform and that men can actually do the work, there is a need and a desire so we need to meet these guys where they are at and make them good neighbors for today and for the day they leave this place. Thank you for your support, we actually couldn't do this without you.

If you have any questions about our events or dates don't hesitate to contact us and we'll figure something out.

All my best,

Kyle