

OREGON CURE

Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants

A Newsletter for Incarcerated People and their Families and Friends

P.O. Box 80193 – Portland, OR 97280 (503) 977-9979



Winter 2021, Volume 63

IT'S A NEW YEAR AND HERE AT CURE WE ARE FILLED WITH HOPE THAT IT WILL BE A GREAT YEAR FOR EACH OF YOU AND YOURS.

Hope is an interesting word. It is a word that brings about a lot of feelings for many of us. It brings about a feeling of confident expectation and desire for a certain thing to happen. It is commonly used to mean a wish; its' strength is the strength of the person's desire. Hope is associated with many positive outcomes, including greater happiness, better achievement and the likelihood of thriving. It's a necessary ingredient for getting through tough times (and who of us reading this cannot relate to that?!) and also for meeting our goals.

Hope is a sustainable power which makes use of our plans, optimism and prospects.

So how do you nurture more hope in your life?

- Make the Most of Self-Reflection
- List Your Successes, Strengths and Resources
- Make a Positive Contribution
- Develop Your Coping Skills
- Proactively Seek Out Hope
- Have Trust in Yourself
- Surround Yourself with Positive People
- Focus on Things That Will Empower You

Having a positive expectation of a future outcome and having hope transcend every aspect of your life creates a lifestyle that is reflected in everything you do and in everything you are. In other words, it is a way of living your life that seeps into every part of your being.

You can use hope as a platform to help improve your situation and by doing so you will find that nurturing hope will help you alleviate self-doubt, anxiety, fear and even stress. Hope will instill in you a higher level of self-confidence and self-belief that things will work out in your favor. Hope can bring you a level of comfort and a sense of contentment, happiness and control despite the adversity and turmoil you face. This naturally causes you to think in a more positive way, which of course will generally lead to proactive action that will help you work through your problems more effectively.

When you use hope as a platform to help motivate you to take positive and proactive action, it becomes a fuel that helps you make the most of the situation you find yourself in. It is not what happens to you, but rather how you interpret what happens and then what you do about it that makes all the difference in the world.

In order to experience hope in this way, you must trust in yourself that you can get through any challenge that life throws your way.

You can accept that life brings no guarantees no matter how hopeful you are and yet you can do your very best to make the most of every situation by keeping a strong sense of hope alive within you at all times. **KC**

Robert Brault once said *If you knew that hope and despair were paths to the same destination, which would you choose*

Marshall Project Newsletter: Subscribe to the free “News Inside” newsletter published by The Marshall Project specifically for incarcerated individuals. Please contact “News Inside” for your printed copy at: 156 W. 56th, Suite 701, New York City, NY 10019. For any questions you may call: 212-803-5200.

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE BY

contacting your legislators about issues that are important to you.

Find your legislators at www.oregonlegislature.gov/FindYourLegislator/

It's never too late or early, your legislators will be back in session again before you know it.

HELP SUPPORT OREGON CURE WHEN YOU SHOP

Amazon: Help us earn .05% for all of your Amazon purchases by selecting Oregon CURE on Amazon Smile. Visit smile.amazon.com and search for Oregon CURE. Select Oregon CURE and start shopping using the smile.amazon.com URL every time!

Fred Meyer: Link your Fred Meyer rewards card with Oregon CURE and Fred Meyer's will send us a quarterly donation. It's easy! Visit FredMeyer.com/community-rewards then Link Your Rewards Card Now. Login to your account or sign up and then search for Oregon CURE (Org # BN477).

SOME RECOMMENDED READING FOR THESE WINTER MONTHS

WISDOM WITHIN THE PEN

The writing in Wisdom Within The Pen encompasses poetry, short story, and other forms of creative expression that are often autobiographical in nature. There are also many interesting, historical facts relating to the Oregon State Penitentiary and the inner workings of life behind bars. \$8.50 on Lulu here:

<https://bit.ly/2WU0sBB>

A GRIP OF TIME: WHEN PRISON IS YOUR LIFE This book opens a door into the lives of several men serving life sentences inside a maximum-security prison. The book is an anthology of their stories and perspectives compiled over three years from their writing group. \$25.00 here: <https://bit.ly/2y1jL77>

MEN STILL IN EXILE An anthology of poetry and prose by members of the Oregon State Penitentiary writing group, Penned Thoughts. Edited by Michele Dishong-McCormack, group facilitator. The collection explores themes of gratitude and faith, hopes and dreams, life, love, family, and regret. \$18.00 on Amazon here: <https://amzn.to/2TYUoGo>

CRIME AND THE PUNISHED The chapters are organized into three main sections: “Core Contributions” exemplifies how sociologists and other social scientists think about otherwise familiar phenomena like crime, incarceration, and suicide. Chapters in the “Cultural Contexts” section engage crime in cultural realms—from politics to families to international crime and justice—that are often ignored or taken for granted. Finally, the “Critical Takes” chapters provide sociological commentary, perspective, and reflections on crime and its control. \$15.50 on Amazon here: <https://amzn.to/2UC4j8Z>

DID YOU KNOW THAT CURE IS AN ALL-VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION?

OUR MISSION:

The mission of Oregon CURE is to reduce crime by advocating for effective criminal justice policies, procedures, and programs.

Some of the ways we do this are:

- We meet with the Director of ODOC twice yearly to advocate for those who are incarcerated.
- We send out a newsletter every quarter to those who sign up for it.
- We send Christmas cards to the prisoners on our newsletter mailing list every Christmas.
- We keep a 1-800 phone number and a PO Box so that those who need to can contact us.
- We assist with donations to prisoners.
- We reply to prisoner mail inquiries and send helpful information, as we are able to.
- We have support groups for those who have a loved one incarcerated in Oregon.
- We provide a postcard to all newly incarcerated individuals with an offer of support.
- We participate in Intake Orientations throughout the year for those new to Oregon DOC.
- We participate in Release Orientations throughout the year for those releasing from DOC.

Your membership donations pay for the printing and mailing of our newsletter, our correspondence postage, our website fees, our phone line fees and our post office box fees. Your funds go directly to pursue our mission, we do not have any paid employees, we are strictly a 501(c) 3 organization.

**Would you like to see something added to our newsletter? Just let us know!
WE LOVE FEEDBACK and we are always open to suggestions.
Please send us your suggestions via email to oregoncure@gmail.com or
write to us: Oregon CURE P.O. Box 80193, Portland OR 97280**

OREGON CURE President and Vice-President met virtually in August with Director Peters to address some of Oregon CURE's key concerns. In our Fall newsletter, we reported on two of the questions we asked and the answers we were given. Here are the remaining questions & answers from that discussion.

CURRENT PRACTICE OF CHARGING PRISONERS FOR MEDICAL CARE INCLUDES:

- a. An AIC can have a tooth pulled for free or will be charged to fix it if it needs repair.
- b. An AIC is charged \$45 for an eye exam (my son in freedom with no insurance coverage just paid \$85 for an eye exam. A person making \$20/hr. being charged \$85 and a person making less than \$1/hr. being charged \$45...quite a disparity there).
- c. AIC are charged for frames and lenses on top of the exam fee.
- d. What is done for those needing continuous Glucose Monitors for diabetics?

Because of the aging prison population, and the trend of many incarcerated individuals coming to prison with a complete dearth of any medical care pre-prison, the costs of dealing with this are enormous.

- *How is this budgeted now? Who would be a good person to get an overview of Correctional Health Services? What would you like to see done to address this? How can we help?*
- *How could a program be devised to assist people with these payments? Some are perfectly able to pay the costs for these services. The majority are not. What kind of program, that might mimic how things work on the outside (i.e. 'normalization') would be able to fund this for people?*
- *Might it be possible to get funding from Kaiser Permanente or some other medical group to help with costs to the AIC?*
- *Could this be tied to an incentive program? For AIC doing well, DOC will help them to cover these expenses, yet if the AIC cause problems then DOC won't help with these expenses.*

DOC's Response: The Oregon Department of Corrections (ODOC) uses a co-pay system for specific healthcare services. This method increases patient responsibility and decreases non-essential visits without limiting access to healthcare. ODOC requires adults in custody (AIC) to financially participate in the following: eye exams beyond the eye exam provided every two years (co-pay), AICs pay in full for elective procedures, items that will become the AICs property (e.g. eye glasses, dentures, prosthetics), and non-essential self-care items (e.g. fiber supplements, vitamins, minerals, medicated shampoos). AICs may be approved to incur debt for some items based upon the Therapeutic Level of Care Committee (TLC) review and approval. For example, AICs are required to pay for refractory eye exams after utilizing their eye exams provided by ODOC every two years. If approved by TLC an AIC can incur debt for the cost of the co-pay.

AICs pay their co-pays through CD-28 or are indebted if approved by TLC. The remaining healthcare is paid from the General Fund. ODOC is budgeted to cover medically necessary care for AICs. For ODOC to cover care and items other than what is currently deemed medically necessary, the agency budget would need to be increased. It is possible for outside organizations to donate – this requires coordination between ODOC and the outside entity.

COVID-19 CONCERNS

- a. Staff are bringing it in, they are not consistently wearing masks.
- b. The ONLY way COVID is getting in is through staff, since volunteers and visitors are not being allowed into the prisons at this time.
 - *Why is mask wearing not being enforced?*

DOC's Response: At every opportunity we are reminding our employees of the mandate to wear a mask if six feet cannot be maintained and correcting them to the degree appropriate. We follow our established process of progressive discipline in order to give our employees an opportunity to change behavior. Several messages have been sent out DOC-wide with guidelines and expectations around face coverings.

- *Could your auditor monitor the cameras to see who is and is not wearing their masks and then enforce accordingly?*

DOC's Response: No. Cameras in our prisons are not for surveilling staff but for having video evidence of events if it is necessary.

- *Another real concern is that AIC may not report themselves sick since it might mean they lose their home. When they do report feeling sick, they are doing a service for everyone. They should be rewarded for doing so, not punished with loss of housing, etc.*
- *What can be done to address this? How can we help?*

DOC's Response: Encourage adults in custody who are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 to reach out to Health Services. This is important to do to keep the virus from spreading to others. After a full assessment by Health Services, the AIC may be tested for COVID-19 (depending on the results of the assessment, their symptoms, and other factors). If an AIC tests positive for COVID-19, the patient will be placed in medical isolation and could be transferred to an institution with 24/7 medical care. Most of these medical isolation areas are on a general population housing unit that has been converted to be used for COVID-19 patients. Patients who are too sick to remain within the institution will be sent to local hospitals for further evaluation and treatment. After the patient is recovered, they are transferred back to their original institution.

VOLUNTEER ISSUES

- *Has the issue been worked out regarding not giving a regular volunteer card to those who've been through the whole process due to a felony charge?*

DOC's Response: At the end of July, the Oregon Department of Corrections began rolling out the first tier of a new volunteer process that not only streamlines the process statewide, but also shortens the timeframe to become an active volunteer. This tiered approach allows DOC to slowly introduce the new process to the institutions and gives both our employees and the public time to adapt. Tier 1, the current stage, includes working with the institutions on all outstanding applications. Volunteer Services will be reviewing the status on a regular basis and will decide when to move to the next implementation tier based on this review. Updates will be shared on DOC's website.

Tier 1 introduces a new application form. All individuals looking to volunteer will now be required to complete an application as their first step in the process. This will remove the possibility of individuals completing various steps of the process only to be disqualified once their LEADS is completed. Volunteers and prospective volunteers must meet a variety of criteria, including:

- No outstanding warrants or pending criminal charges
- No misdemeanor convictions in the past two years. No felony convictions or incarcerations in the past five years. The functional unit manager may, on a case-by-case basis, approve an individual with no felony conviction or incarceration in the past three years.
- No escape from a correctional facility. In the case of someone who walked away from a work crew, the functional unit manager may approve them to volunteer providing they were otherwise qualified under this policy.
- A prospective volunteer with a prior criminal conviction who performs services inside a correctional facility must have the approval of the facility functional unit manager at each facility where the service will be provided. The approval must be noted on the Volunteer Program LEADS information form.

In short, this new process will remove any concern of applicants going through the majority of the process, only to find out they may not qualify due to a criminal background.

Readers--Do you have topics you would like for the board of directors of Oregon CURE to discuss with ODOC Director Peters? If so, let us know, we are scheduled to meet again in late February 2021.

LOTS OF PROBLEMS WITH NEW PHONE SYSTEM.

- *Extremely difficult for persons not tech savvy*

DOC's Response: DOC added a section to our website to help people, who are not tech savvy, assistance with signing up and validating their information. This includes a clear [link](#) to the new communications provider [CenturyLink's website](#), where a [step-by-step](#) instruction guide begins. We designed a timeline of events which includes the announcement of the change of the correctional communications system to the new vendor. Information regarding the expanded preregistration and how to call unregistered numbers, a free 60-second call the first time a call was attempted, a planned schedule of when the changeover occurred at each of our 14 institutions, and what a friend or family member needs to know and how to take action. We also have a direct link to CenturyLink's question and answer page, along with phone numbers and an email to contact if issues arise.

- *Out of country cannot access calls*

DOC's Response: Setting up a prepaid account with an international number must be done manually (via email or mail). This can be done by the friend or family members emailing a copy of their phone bill with their address and a copy of their driver's license or passport to customer@icsolutions.com.

CenturyLink can only accept payments from international individuals if they have a US-based credit card with a US-based billing address. CenturyLink can accept money orders and cashier's checks in US currency as well. International friends and family are able to receive calls from AICs once they've worked with ICSolutions customer service to complete their phone number validation. At this time, they are unable to fund a prepaid account to pay for calls or video visits, but the vendor is working to find a solution to this issue.

- *Apple products cannot access calls*

DOC's Response: Apple products have always been able to receive phone calls from AICs. Initially, Apple IOS was not available for video calls. These services have been available on Apple products since the beginning of July. The new Apple iOS app was released in the app store last month to allow video calls. This issue has been addressed and fixed.

- *AICs are being charged for emails.*

DOC's Response: AICs have always been charged for electronic messages. The prior contract charged AICs per minute while they read or wrote an electronic message. The new contract only charges for actually sending a message.

- *There are limits on amounts that can be put on an account at one time-- so fees mount up.*

DOC's Response: The vendors have chosen to set maximum deposit limits per transaction as a business decision to prevent losses (credit card fraud). This is not a DOC policy. ICSolutions does not charge to deposit funds onto a friend or family prepaid calling account which can be used for calls to the friend or family's number and for funding video calls. Access Corrections offers a free deposit service to the AIC communication account by sending a check to their lockbox.

Access Corrections also offers deposit services for the AIC Trust account. These fees are listed on the website <https://centurylinkcorrections.com/facilities/odoc.html> and vary depending on the amount deposited and the method of deposit.

- *What are the DOC's plans for addressing these problems?*

DOC's Response: DOC is continuing to work with the vendor on issues as they arise. DOC has put together a team, including DOC and vendor representatives, to track down issues and resolve them. We have staff trained and available at each institution to assist AICs that experience issues. The "outside" team helps assist the public should they have difficulties or questions about the new system.

- *Who, at the DOC is responsible that people can reach out to? A name and a means to contact.*

DOC's Response: Issues related to account creation and account management should go through the vendor by calling 888-506-8407. The Correctional Communication System Program Management Office has been established to oversee the communication system contract. They can be reached by email at DOC.ICSPMO@doc.state.or.us. In addition, the Office of Communications set up an email account to assist the public with questions and concerns around the new communications system.

DOCCenturyLinkHelp@doc.state.or.us

Due to COVID-19, meetings may be cancelled. Please call before attending.

RELEASE ORIENTATIONS

Release Orientations are co-facilitated by Community Corrections and Oregon CURE. Find out how you can help your recently or soon to be released loved one successfully re-enter our communities. Before attending, please phone one of the county coordinators / department listed below to confirm the date, time and location.

Washington County Dates

Contact: Marcus Ford (503) 846-3494

Held Quarterly: 1st Wednesday of February, May, August, November

Time: 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm

Location: Call to Confirm (503) 977-9979 or email oregoncure@gmail.com

Multnomah County Dates

Contact: (503) 988-3081 press “0” for TSU

This orientation is for family and friends of prisoners who will be released within 6 months to Multnomah County.

Time: 3rd Thursdays, 3:30 – 5:00PM

Location: Mead Building

First Floor Conference Room

421 SW 5th Avenue, Portland

Marion County Dates

Contact: Kayla Thompson

(503) 540-8017 (call to confirm)

Meetings are held each January, April, July and October from 6:30-8:30 PM.

Marion County Probation and Parole

Location: Marion County Transition Center

3950 Aumsville Hwy SE, Salem, OR 97317

INTAKE ORIENTATIONS

Intake Orientations are co-facilitated by Oregon Department of Corrections and Oregon CURE. Find out about Oregon’s prison system, the intake process, phones, mail, and visiting requirements. You will receive a packet of informational brochures. There will be opportunities to ask questions and learn how you can get through your loved one’s incarceration. Maintaining family contact is vital to your loved one’s time in prison and upon release.

Portland Metro Dates

Held Quarterly: 1st Wednesdays of March, June, September, and December

Time: 5:30pm to 7:00pm

Location: Varies, please call Oregon CURE to confirm: (503) 977-9979 or email oregoncure@gmail.com

Salem Dates

Held Quarterly: 3rd Thursdays of February, May, August, and November

Time: 6:30pm to 8:30pm

Location:

First Christian Church

685 Marion Street NE

Salem, OR 97301

Parlor Room

(503) 378-0050 (call to confirm)

Corner of Marion and Church streets, on the north side of downtown. There is parking on the street or in the Dept. of Energy parking lot next door. The entrance is on the west side of the building, in the parking lot.

Support Groups

Oregon CURE support groups are intended for adult family members and friends only. Some topics of discussion may not be suitable for small children or pre-teens. Attend a support group and network with family members who have “been there”.

Beaverton Support Group

1st Wednesdays: 7:00-8:30pm

Please call to confirm the location.

(503)977-9979

or email oregoncure@gmail.com

Salem Support Group

1st Saturdays: 9:30-11:30am

The Keizer Senior Center

930 Plymouth Drive NE

Keizer, OR 97303

(503)409-3329 (Wayne)

Portland East Side Support Group

Our New Leader for this Support Group is

Ray Fox. Please email him for details at

RayAllenFox@gmail.com

Eugene Support Groups

1st Thursdays and 3rd Tuesdays: 7:00-9:00pm

Please call to confirm location.

(541)344-7612 Dave (541)342-6817 (Don)

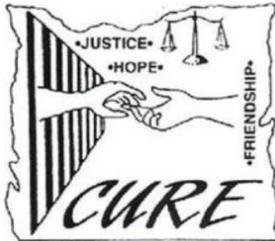
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**Renew today to
Remain informed!**



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The opinion and statements contained in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of Oregon CURE.

Contributions of articles, letters to the editor, notices, etc. are welcome, but may be edited or rejected for space.

Articles may be copied in their entirety with credit to the author or to the publication.

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Your membership renewal date is on the address label of this newsletter. If your renewal date is expired, we ask that you please renew today to continue to receive this newsletter and to continue to support our organization.

You can also make a donation for someone you know to become a member.

Your support is important to our mission and your donation is tax deductible.

Send your membership tax-deductible donation to: Oregon CURE, PO Box 80193, Portland, OR 97280

Please fill out the member donation form below to receive our newsletter.

Adult in custody subscription donation: \$3 Individual Non-Incarcerated subscription donation: \$15

All Tax-Deductible Donations are greatly appreciated and can be made in any amount.

Name: _____ Address: _____

Email: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

(Optional):

Name of incarcerated loved one/ SID & facility: _____

Visit our website at: www.oregoncure.org