



THE UNCLASSIFIED

SEPTEMBER 2023

INTAKE MANAGER: MICHELLE AXTELL

WELCOME TO CCIC.

For first timers, please know that we are working hard at making your stay with us as short and safe as possible. There are 10 counselors to help you. There are many moving parts to your intake process, and it might take a while to get if fully done but we want to make sure to get a clear picture of who you are and what your needs are to start you on the right path, thank you for your patience!

For the others, you know the process and we encourage you to be positive role models to the newbies in your community!

If you are still at CCIC 10 days after meeting with your intake counselor, please kyte C.Andretti to make sure your transport request was entered. Thanks!

Thank you!

Newsletter content:

- What in the PRAS?
- September facts
- Chaplain's corner
- Lane co-Sponsors spotlight
- Bunk maintenance
- GOGI program
- Self-help corner: dealing with substance misuse issues while incarcerated

if you need **brain teasers** during your stay please:

Kyte Ms. April if you are housed in A & B Units and Ms. Wheeler if you are in O & Q Units.

You can also submit your own poems, short essays, or drawings to be included in our next newsletter, we welcome your submissions and suggestions!

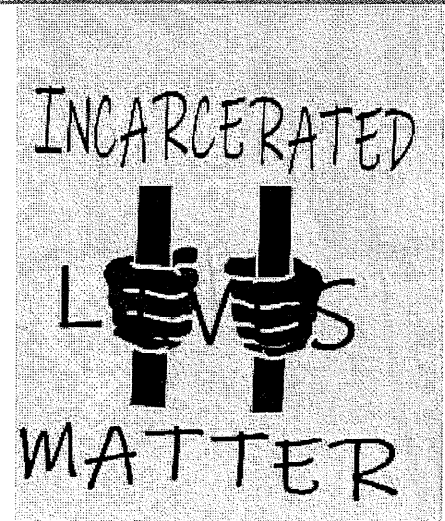
THANKS 😊



All of you matter to the intake team and we are eager to meet with you and listen to your wants, needs and goals. We might not always give you the answers you want to hear however you will be treated with respect and dignity and we thank you for your patience!

Until we meet enjoy this reading material and start thinking about what purpose you would like this time in custody to serve in your lifeline. We wish you the best.

YOUR INTAKE TEAM



Number of Points Earned	Monetary Award	Total After 5% Reduction
16 thru 45	\$12.50	\$11.88
46 thru 65	\$22.50	\$21.38
66 thru 85	\$32.50	\$30.88
86 thru 106	\$37.50	\$35.63
107 thru 127	\$42.50	\$40.38
128 thru 148	\$47.50	\$45.13
149 thru 169	\$52.50	\$49.88
170 thru 190	\$57.50	\$54.63
191 thru 211	\$62.50	\$59.38
212 thru 232	\$67.50	\$64.13
233 thru 253	\$72.50	\$68.88
254 thru 274	\$77.50	\$73.63
275 thru 295	\$82.50	\$78.38
296 thru 316	\$87.50	\$83.13
317 thru 337	\$92.50	\$87.88
338 thru 358	\$97.50	\$92.63
359 thru 379	\$102.50	\$97.38
380 thru 400	\$107.50	\$102.13
401 thru 999	\$112.50	\$106.88

NEWS IN BRIEF

PRAS Awards

PRAS Increases - Started in January for the February Award

Status of PRAS revisions: In 2014, the Department of Corrections (DOC) received a petition from an AIC to amend the PRAS Rule (OAR 291-077) so monetary awards align with costs of living. While the petition was denied as it was too complex, DOC formed a PRAS Audit Workgroup to address the petition and other concerns. These included points assigned for work and programming, and improving the work and training history letter AICs receive at release.

The good news: The DOC Executive Team approved Workgroup recommendations to satisfy the petition as well as eliminate several discrepancies in the PRAS rule. These changes create PRAS consistency throughout the department.

The bad news: Change takes time. Making the improvements required new PRAS system technologies, databases, and tracking systems to replace outdated originals. Due to several high-priority challenges (COVID-19, staffing issues, etc.), the necessary changes were nearly impossible. In addition, the consumer price index (CPI) caught up with the routine increases of average PRAS points, and canteen prices increased due to supply chain issues.

The best news: The Workgroup has been steadily making progress. In 2019, DOC eliminated the 120-day wait period to earn PRAS. The Workgroup is now ready to implement more changes.

What does this mean to you? Over the next few months, you will see the following changes:

The PRAS matrix will be adjusted to create a more even point spread in the first three levels. Also, two more levels will be added to reduce the chance of “maxing out.” In addition, there will be an overall 25% increase in the dollar value of each level of the PRAS matrix to counteract the effects of the CPI and canteen increases. This will be accomplished through temporary rule adoption, effective 01/01/2023.

The number of PRAS points awarded per position will be consistent at all DOC institutions. AICs will earn the same number of PRAS points for the same work, regardless of location. This will not happen all at once, as there are over 15,000 assignment possibilities.

Start date: 12/01/2022. Estimated completion date: 06/30/2023.

Improvements to the Work and Training History document you receive upon release will be implemented when the position realignment is completed.

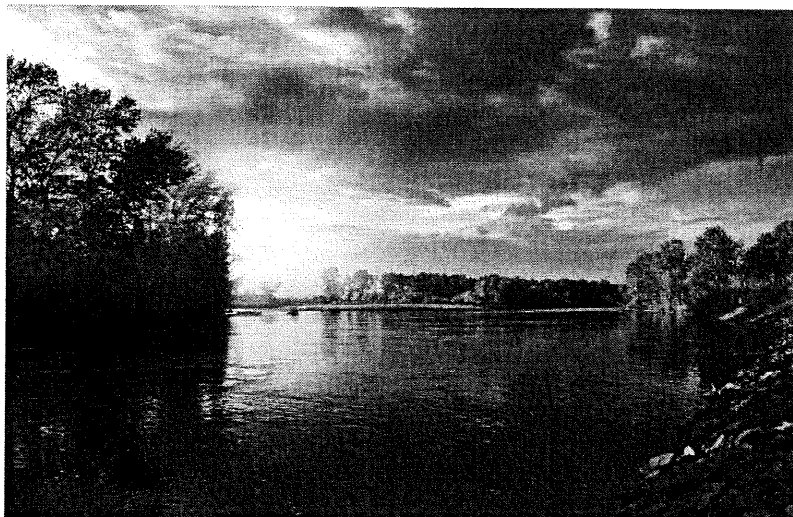
Estimated start date: 06/30/2023. Estimated completion date: 07/31/2023.

The Month of September

September's name comes from the Latin word *septem*, meaning "seven." This month had originally been the seventh month of the early Roman calendar.

September Calendar

- **September 4**—the first Monday of the month—is **Labor Day**. Canadians also observe Labor Day.
- **September 11** is **Patriot Day**, held in honor and remembrance of those who died in the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.
- **September 11** is also **Grandparents Day** this year. Honor your grandparents today—and every day!
- **September 15** starts **Rosh Hashanah**, a Jewish holiday that marks the beginning of the new year.
- **September 17** is **Constitution Day**. This day celebrates the adoption of the U.S. Constitution, which occurred on September 17, 1787 (just five years before the founding of *The Old Farmer's Almanac*, believe it or not!).
- **September 21** is recognized as the annual **International Day of Peace**. Observances range from a moment of silence at noon to events such as peace walks, concerts, and volunteering in the community.
- **September 23** marks the start of fall! This year's **Autumnal Equinox** occurs at 2:50 A.M. EDT on Saturday, September 23. On this date, there are approximately equal hours of daylight and darkness.
- **September 24** marks the start of **Yom Kippur**, at sundown.
- **September 26** is Johnny Appleseed Day, celebrating John Chapman and everything apple!
- **September 29** is **Michaelmas**. Michaelmas is an ancient Celtic "Quarter Day" which marked the end of the harvesting season and was steeped in folklore.



“Just for Fun” Days

Have fun with these strange celebrations this month!

- September is National Happy Cat Month
- **September 11:** National Hug Your Hound Day
- **September 13:** Kids Take Over the Kitchen Day
- **September 19:** International Talk Like a Pirate Day
- **September 24:** National Punctuation Day

September Zodiac

September's zodiac signs are **Virgo (Aug. 23–Sept. 22)** and **Libra (Sept. 23–Oct. 22)**.

Virgos are confident, independent, ambitious, and hardworking.

Their personality traits mean that they are driven to be successful in whatever they are passionate about, and they generally make it there.

While they might make it look easy from the outside, their success is not without struggle.

They are characteristically perfectionists and self-critical.

This drives them forward to work harder, but can also result in a bit of inner turmoil. Not that anyone would ever know.

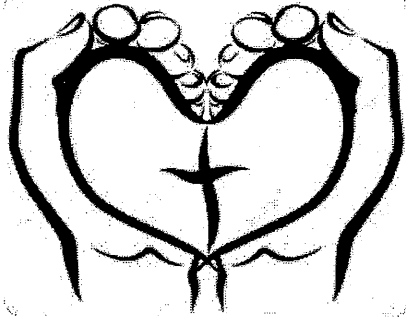
Virgos are consummate actors and only show people what they want them to see, they keep everything else locked up behind closed doors.

LIBRA PERSONALITY TRAITS

The mind of Librans is just like the sensitive scales swinging between the right and the wrong, the left and the right; they often think the matter repeatedly.

One of the positive traits of Librans is that they are sensitive and often care about others' feelings but they may hurt themselves if they care about others too much. Having no knowledge about refusing others makes the Librans suffer losses. The Librans can't display their talents in troubles and they will become timid, coward and escape from reality as time passes.

The most awesome trait of the Librans is that they request justice for everything and strongly oppose the unfair things.



Greetings from Religious Services! Happy September! As you may know, there are no services or volunteer visits provided for, or religious property available, during your brief stay here at Coffee Creek. These opportunities are available when you arrive at your next institution. However, if you would like to speak to the Chaplain or need a religious resource of some kind, please send Chaplain Melendez a Kyte. Many blessings to you as you grown on your spiritual journey.

Faith-Based Services and Support

The Oregon Department of Corrections (DOC) provides AICs the opportunity to explore and practice their faith or spirituality, either individually or in a group setting. The department's Religious Services unit actively strives to present itself as open and welcoming to community faith-based groups, to establish a streamlined and consistent system, and to provide AICs with many accessible programs both inside and outside of prison.

GENERAL INFORMATION

WEDDING RINGS: Wedding bands are authorized through a facility's chaplain office. The ring should be mailed directly to the chaplain along with a copy of the marriage certificate or domestic partnership paperwork. Please be sure to include the name and SID of the AIC inside the package. Rings must be plain (no stones, special cuts or engravings). If the ring meets department standards, the chaplain will authorize the ring to the AIC. A record of receipt will be forwarded to the AIC's property list

WEDDINGS: The Oregon Department of Corrections permits individuals to be married or have a domestic partnership ceremony within its correctional facilities, and AICs may request information about the ceremony from the chaplain at their facility. Officiators and witnesses cannot be Oregon Department of Corrections' chaplains or staff. All guests must be approved for privileged visiting. No food, cameras or special clothing may be brought into the facility for the ceremony.

Book Requests at CCIC

Holy scriptures and other spiritual books are available by request. Once you get to your next institution, you can ask the chaplains there to authorize holy scriptures and/or other religious books for your personal property. If you need something other than books or have general questions about Religious Services in the ODOC while you are here, you can send a kyte to **CCIC Chaplain Melendez**.

Chapel Services

Depending on which institution you transfer to, there may or may not be religious services and activities happening based on current COVID restrictions. If you are interested in attending services, please send a kyte to the chaplains once you arrive and ask what is currently available. No services are held at Intake.



Sponsors Transformation Happens Here

Summer 2023 | Newsletter

Growing Up Inside

After spending 25 years in prison, Aaron takes a moment to reflect on how good he felt during his first trip to the lake since his release! He exclaims, "We've been given another chance to live and enjoy life, let's act upon it with intention!"

Aaron went to prison at the age of 18 and had to learn how to grow up behind bars. He admits that, at first, he was not a model prisoner. "I got in a lot of fights and was sent to the hole often. I was angry."

I have no adult experience on the outside. Technology and cell phones have changed so much. During my first month out, I worried I would get lost. I was afraid to take the bus, and my anxiety was bad."

But during Aaron's 8th year in prison, something shifted. He explains, "While in solitary something just clicked and I started thinking, 'I want to get out of here someday and when I do, what kind of person do I want to be?' At that moment, in my mind, I began consciously building my life after release..."

Aaron is finding support here at

Sponsors. He shares, "My case manager and therapist are here for me, and Mentorship has helped me get out and get comfortable meeting new friends. It's weird making friends as an adult. I am able to go into a store now without feeling afraid." Even though Aaron still has hurdles to overcome, he is committed!

Aaron started getting involved with programs and groups inside the prison. While he lived out the many remaining years of his sentence, he underwent a total transformation.

Aaron matured from a troubled teen into a kind, thoughtful, and motivated man. He even had the chance to mentor at-risk youth from inside prison.

He felt ready when he was finally released, but Aaron's transition has been hard. He explains, "The first month and a half out, I cried every day because I was just so scared of everything I had to do. I was 18 years old when I went to prison. I'll be 44 next month.

Today, Aaron has two jobs that keep him busy. He is saving money while he lives in Sponsors Honors Housing and searches for a permanent home. He dreams of one day owning his own upholstery business, where he hopes to help others by hiring individuals recently released from prison. He works hard, but he also makes sure to enjoy his freedom. Just as he did on the warm spring day when he swam and canoed in Fern Ridge Reservoir for the first time in 25 years.

Second chances like Aaron's are made possible because of your generous partnership.

"I'm finally starting to feel a little more comfortable out in the world." -Aaron

Property Storage

In the Cell

A statewide initiative has been delivered to all DOC facilities for addressing AIC property in accordance with the State Fire Marshall's direction. This initiative states that excessive property must be removed by 7/1/22.

Steps to Take:

- Review the housing unit guidelines, specifically those related to property storage.
- Make sure your cell meets all the guidelines.
- Mail out any excess property before July 1st, 2022.
 - For most items, pre-paid envelopes and box tickets are available through canteen.
 - Items such as keyboard or guitars can be mailed out using a CD-28 to pay for the shipping cost.
 - A scale is available in the property area to weigh items.
 - Each unit will be scheduled for mail out as time permits. It is not necessary to send a kyte.
- Use the locked shredding bins for confidential document destruction. These will be available on the housing units.

After July 1st, any excess property will be confiscated and held for 45 days. The confiscated property must be mailed out. After 45 days, all confiscated property will be destroyed.

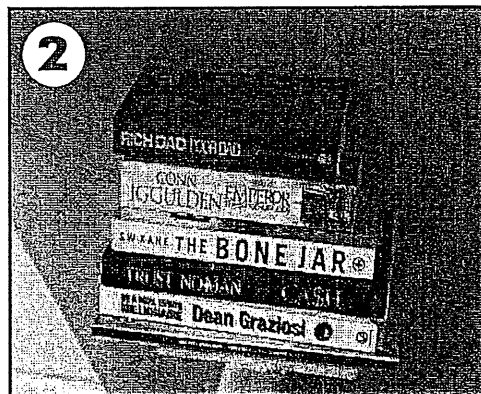
Following is an example of how a cell should look when leaving your area. Please keep in mind, these are guidelines. Speak to your Unit Officer if you have questions or concerns.



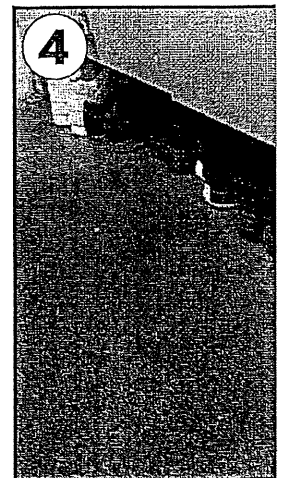
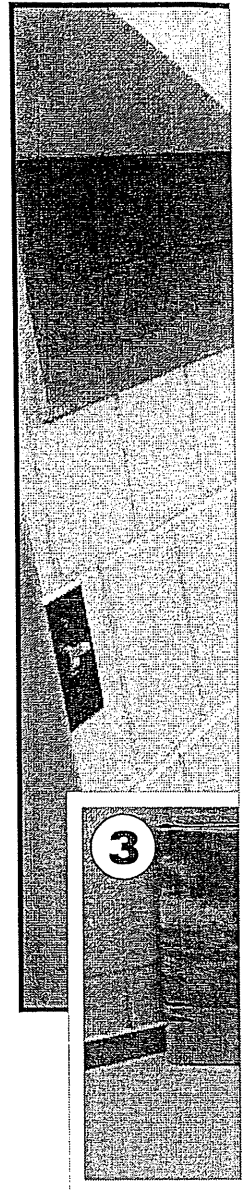
Shelves may be used to store:

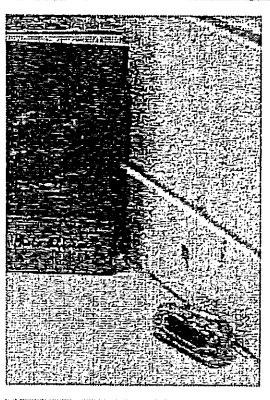
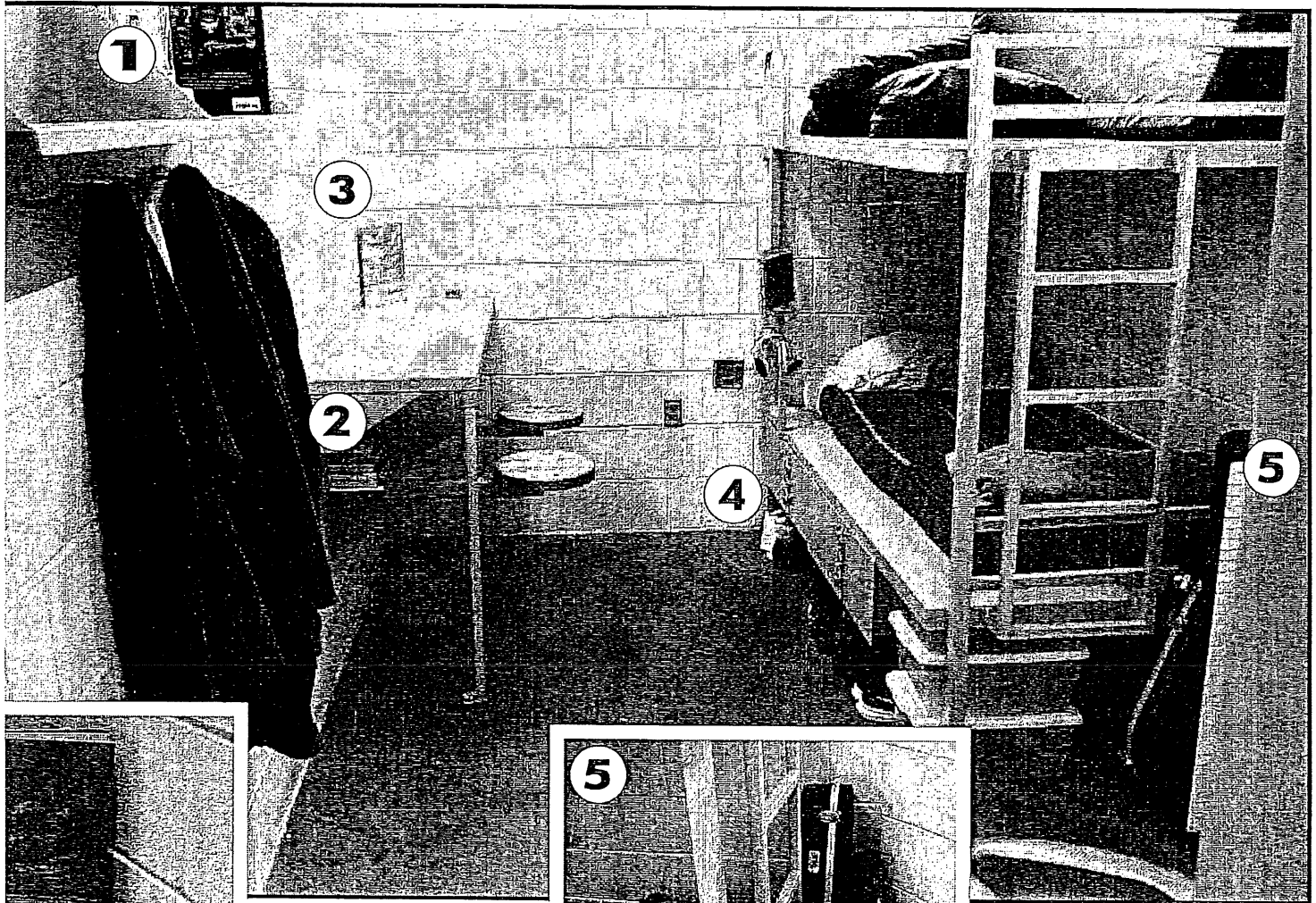
Text books, 1 religious book, 1 dictionary, 3 library books, 1 of each personal hygiene, 1 tumbler, 1 coffee mug, and 1 pitcher.

All clothing will be hung under the shelves or in your drawer. Towels, coats, and laundry bags will be hung up.

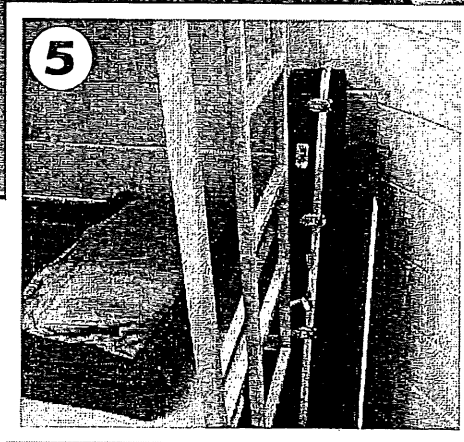


Books can be stored on the leg of the seat, below the desk.

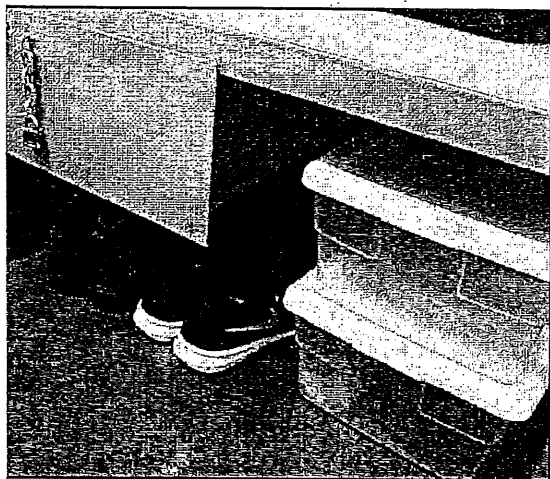




Tables may have a photo album, photo folder, and an alarm clock.



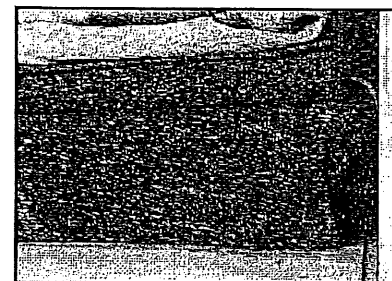
Musical instruments should be stored neatly in the cell and are not required to be placed under the bunk.



Legal totes are stored under the bunk and must contain only legal property and paperwork.

Shoes should be stored under the bunk, with the heels facing outward. This includes shower shoes and sandals.

AICs are allowed two legal totes per person.



The end of the blanket is folded under and the sides of the blankets are over the top of the tuck.

Property Storage

On the Dorm

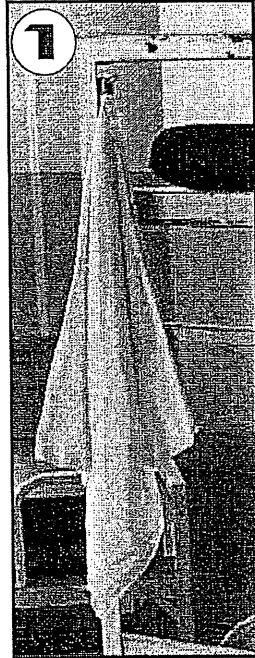
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 - Items such as keyboard or guitars can be mailed out using a CD-28 to pay for the shipping cost.
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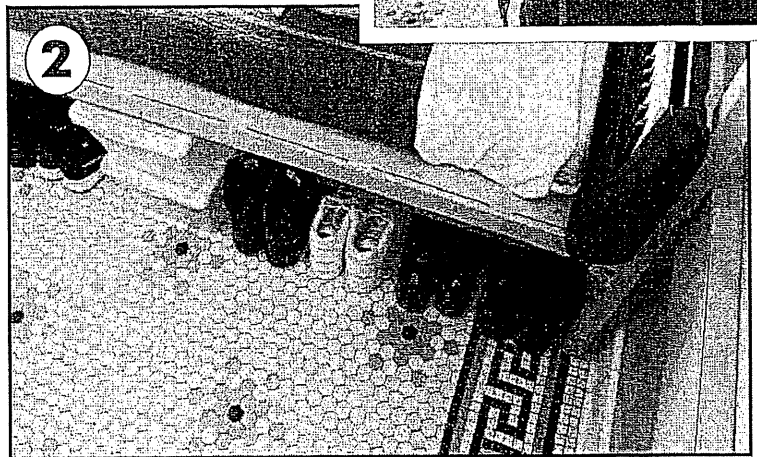
After July 1st, any excess property will be confiscated and held for 45 days. The confiscated property must be mailed out. After 45 days, all confiscated property will be destroyed.

Following is an example of how a bunk should look when leaving your area. Please keep in mind, these are guidelines. Speak to your Unit Officer if you have questions or concerns.



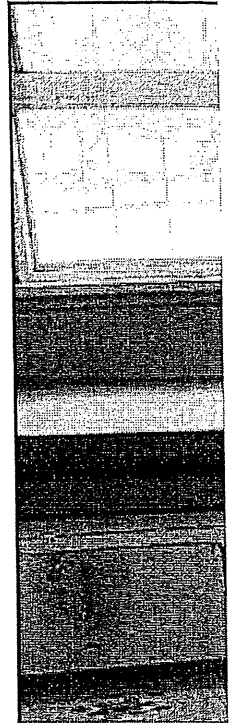
Towels are hung on a hook at the end of the bunk.

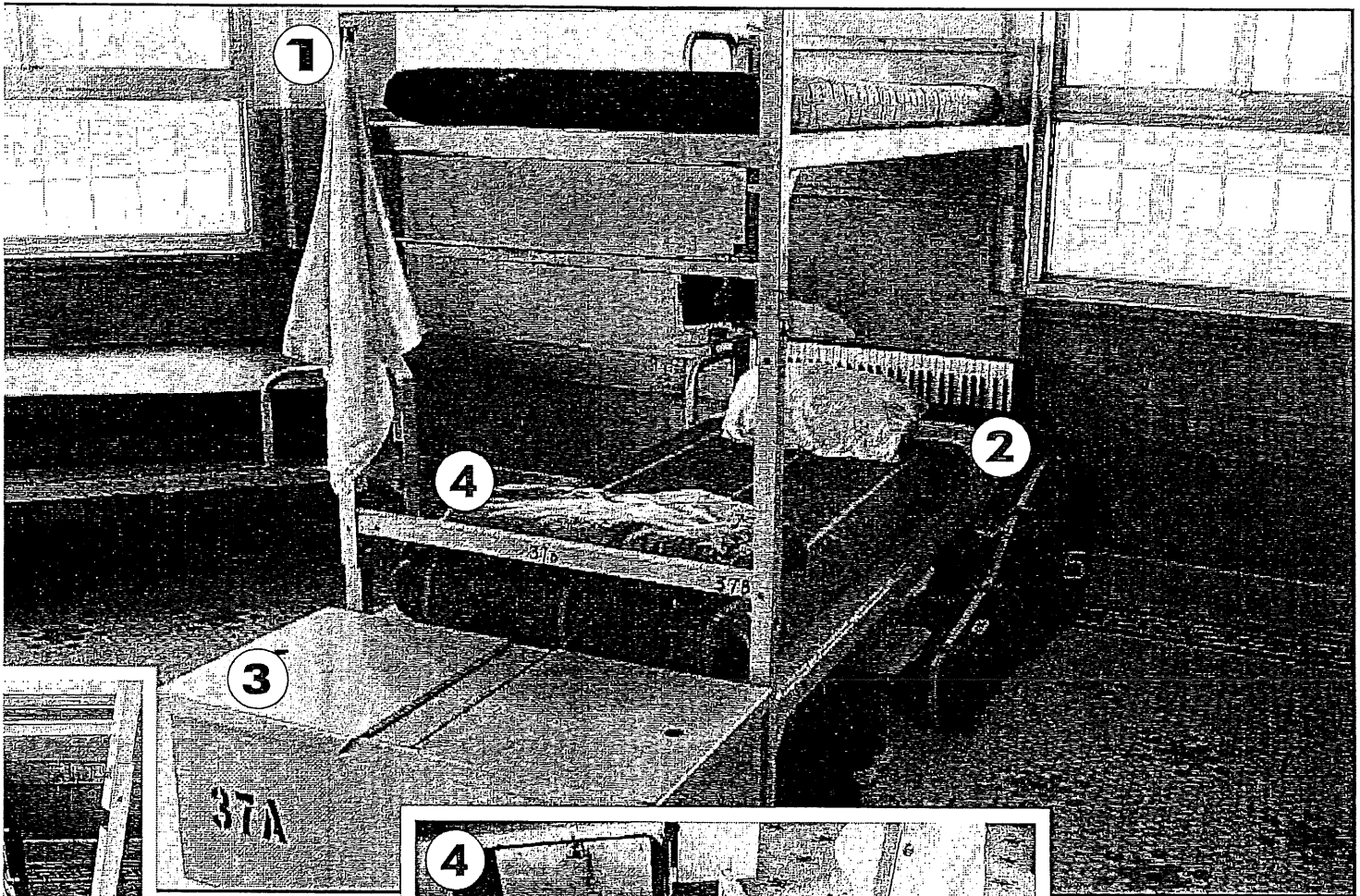
Other items (socks, coats, shorts, for example) can be hung to dry between the hours of 4:30 pm and 7:00 am.



Legal totes are stored under the bunk and must contain only legal property and paperwork. AICs are allowed two legal totes per person.

Shoes should be stored under the bunk, with the heels facing outward. This includes shower shoes and sandals.





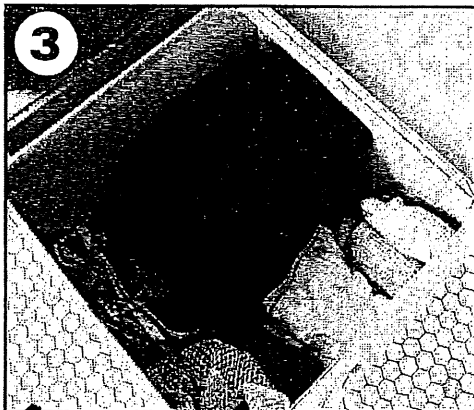
Instruments can be stored behind the bunk or neatly in the bunk area.

Feet should be facing the tier when sleeping.



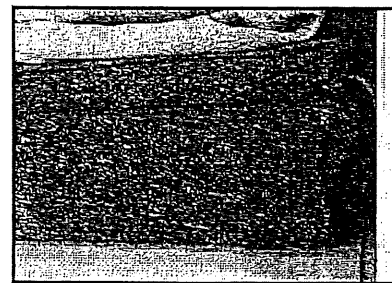
Coats can be folded and placed at the head or foot of the bunk.

Bunks should be made military-style with hospital corners.



Clothing, books, and other items are stored in the box at the end of the bunk.

Food items, hygiene, mail, magazines, letters, or other personal items should be stored in the drawer.



The end of the blanket is folded under and the sides of the blankets are over the top of the tuck.



TALK OF THE TOWN

A GOGI Ceremony

Three AICs Obtain Coach Status; EOCI Boasts Highest Completion Rate in the State

Written by Phillip Luna

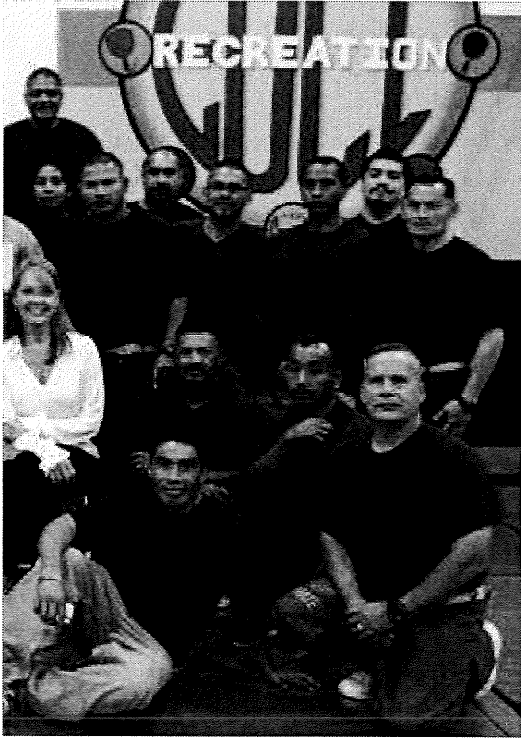
GOGI is an avenue for change; meaningful, impactful, and resilient,” stated Superintendent Dave Pedro in his introduction speech for the GOGI event on July 19, 2023. More than 100 students were in attendance for the occasion, as well as the GOGI leadership, facilitators, and supporting administrative staff. This event marked the second time GOGI’s founder, Coach Taylor, has visited the institution since the program began in 2018. A momentous occasion, as the ceremonies included several speeches and the acknowledgment of three AICs who received Coach level certification – a rare occurrence in the program.

But first, what is GOGI?

GOGI, which stands for Getting Out by Going In, is a non-profit organization focused on empowering individuals with simple decision making tools to help them make lasting change. GOGI’s simple life tools are the foundation of its course studies - con-

cepts taught by AICs for AICs. Since its start GOGI has graduated 1161 students at EOCI, according to Correctional Rehabilitation Manager Bryan Clark. EOCI leads all institutions across Oregon, with the Snake River Correctional Facility boasting a close second at 1076. Year-to-date, EOCI has graduated 121 while the closest rival is the Oregon State Penitentiary at 112. While the numbers are impressive, Mr. Clark emphasizes, “It’s about quality not just quantity, I like what we are doing here. I like this culture. GOGI is a huge part of change for yourself.”

There are three ways to GOGI: organizational GOGI which includes student courses and working in groups; independent GOGI for individuals who wish to complete solo study; and free GOGI for a beginner which offers a community meeting manual, facilitator support, and My Life Story Course. Students who complete the GOGI course receive an official GOGI certificate and can request a transcript documenting course completions, or a letter of support for court or hearing purposes.



For many in attendance during the event, the occasion marks the beginning of their GOGI journey. Paul Ropp, the newly appointed Secretary for the program, spoke at the podium thanking the numerous staff and justice-involved individuals for their support. *“Despite obstacles, affiliations, or your past, you have dared to achieve,”* stated Ropp in reference to the students and facilitators. *“To you most of all I’d like to say thank you.”*

But while the journey begins for some, a few others have obtained the pinnacle of accomplishment in the GOGI program. James Hedges, Gonzalo Barbosa, and Nicholas Vega each achieved Coach status. Coach status requires GOGI facilitators to complete 11 units of the program (similar to college level classes) in no less than 15 weeks, which promotes them to Advocates. Advocates are required to complete 11 more elective courses to obtain GOGI Representative status. From there, 11 more units are required to become a Community GOGI Coach. Becoming a GOGI Coach is a process that takes years.

“It’s been a pretty long journey, took me about 5 years to get it [Coach status]. Anybody that has known me for a long time knows I’ve got a little history,” stated Barbosa, *“nobody is perfect around here. We all make bad choices. We can always fix them and make positive choices.”*

“
***Despite obstacles,
affiliations, your
past, you have dared
to achieve. To you
most of all I’d like to
say thank you.***

- Paul Ropp

Also acknowledged during the ceremony were the GOGI facilitators: Christopher Bickford; Richard Step; Horacio Orozco; Juan Chavez; Brooklyn Sasso; David Derrick; James Hedges; Christopher Gonzalez; Shawn Crabtree; Nicholas Lunetta; Joseph Calvo; and Oscar Cass.

There were several speakers during the event, but most notable was program founder Coach Taylor. Taylor spoke at length about the twenty years she has spent pursuing this dream. *“It’s so wonderful to get to this point, where I have been going in and out of prisons since 2002 and after twenty years how my vision has become our collective vision,”* she stated. She further recounted her experience as a Psychology student at the 108th Street School in Compton, California.

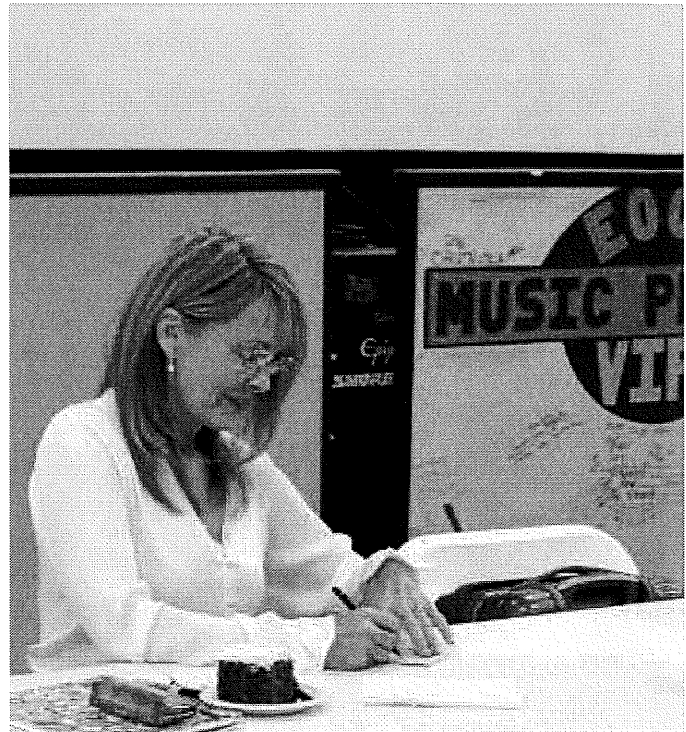
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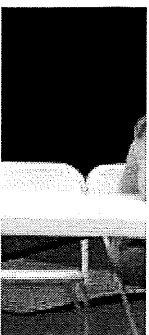
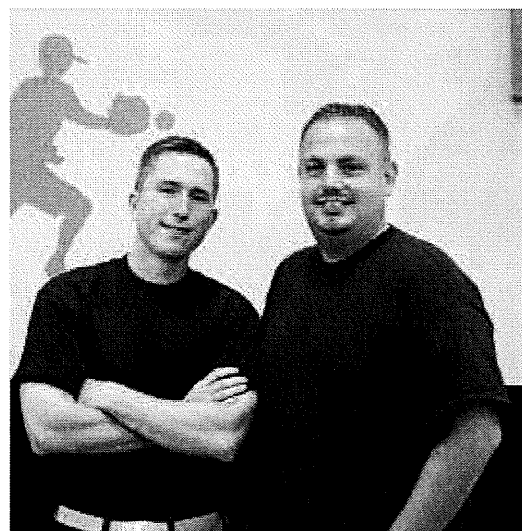
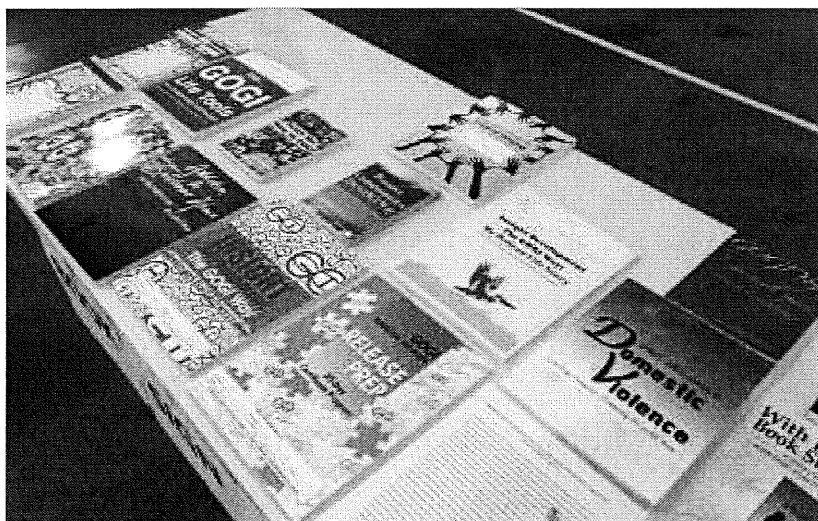
Taylor shared a story that at first appears quite simple but concludes with an emphasis on disenfranchised youths and a generation failed by the education system and communities. "I volunteered to test out these weird concepts when I was a Psychology student. We went into a school... we ended up getting the worst behaved kids," stated Taylor. She further shared testing out concepts such as *Belly Breathing* on the children. "The kids loved what are now the GOGI tools," said Taylor. While the tools held promise of being effective short-term, there was no lasting impact and would not serve to reduce the incarceration rate, which Taylor said is 98% among black men in Compton. She explained the purpose of this story to the audience:

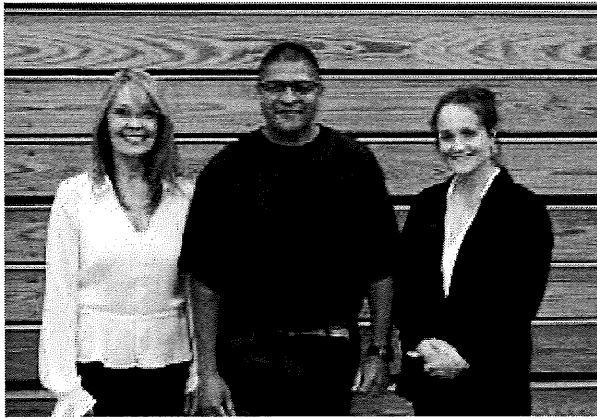
"Our experiment was successful but it didn't last, we weren't boots on the ground. We didn't come back next week. It didn't last because nobody returned. Why do I tell you this? Because that is your job. That is your job. Your job is to get out [of prison] and volunteer with the children. Tell them about Belly Breathing, 5 Second Light Switch, Boss of My Brain and don't use them as an experiment to prove anything. Show back up the next week... GOGI is nothing if it is just an experiment for a psychologist like me. We know it works. It's up to you men to reenter your communities as volunteers and leaders. That's your job. It was the generation before that failed you by not being there to teach you these things. Your counselors can't do it. Your churches can't do it. Your parents can't do it. Nobody can do it but men like you who have that experience... you are solutions in your communities even if you don't know it yet.

Those interested in becoming a solution in their community can sign up for GOGI by sending a communication form to GOGI: Correctional Rehabilitation.



“
You are the solutions in your communities, even if you don't know it yet.
”





“ Nobody is perfect... we all make bad choices. We can always fix them and make positive choices. ”



My Way

By Christopher Ainsworth

I start each day with a positive thought
Trying to implement each *GOGI* tool I've been taught
Like what if I choose positivity over giving into pain
I could claim responsibility becoming the *boss of my own brain*
I can *flip the switch* to get myself back on track
The tools of choice are my *GOGI* life hack
Breathing with my belly induces a calm state of mind
I'm still eight steps ahead even if I can let go in time
In order for me to give I must get away
so I can be ultimately free at the end of each day
My gift of *GOGI* I wanted to share
Living the *GOGI* way allows my life scales to tear

Chapter 8

BATTLING SUBSTANCE ABUSE

For Individuals Overcoming Addiction

Becoming incarcerated with a substance abuse problem or developing one during incarceration can make an already difficult situation far worse. Entering into a program available at your institution that helps combat substance abuse is essential and should be sought immediately.

It is imperative to seek professional help in fighting addiction. Before stopping or cutting down suddenly on drinking or using drugs, seek the advice of an appropriate professional. It can be potentially dangerous, even life-threatening, to suddenly stop taking something your body is used to getting. You may need a prescription that serves as a substitute for the addictive substance or to reduce your drinking or drug use gradually rather than trying to stop “cold turkey.” A professional will know the best way to help you 1) stop using; 2) stay drug-free; and 3) become and remain productive in the context of family, work, and society.

According to a 2012 study by the Partnership at Drugfree.org and the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services, more than 23 million Americans have overcome addiction.

Source: <http://luxury.rehabs.com/drug-addiction/recovery-statistics/>

Addiction

*Trapped in a repetitive cycle of wants and needs
Slowly unraveling inside of me.
There are many things,
An entrapment of feelings.
Letting go does not seem to be an option.
Therefore, I sit painfully
Letting it all consume me.
All of this negative energy
Swirling around and around
Inside then out.
Self-sabotage I commit without a doubt.
The strength is overwhelming,
Devastatingly daunting.
I feel I can no longer resist,
Resist the temptation, resist the urge.
Self-preservation does not seem to be a concern
My brilliance, my beauty, and heart
Are left behind
In the beginning,
At the start.
What is left is nothing,
An empty vessel that once used to be.
Termination turned to temptation
Lost in illusion,
In disarray.
Scattered thoughts become astray.
Numbness from head to toe.
A blank slate,
A black hole,
Till the next day.
Addiction,
Repeat.*

Anonymous

In addition to entering a program and seeking professional help, there are other steps you can take now to help regain control over your illness and life.

Take a True Inventory of Your Life and Addiction

STEP 1: Make a list of all the pros and cons associated with addiction. This is an important step because it will help you realize the pro list is non-existent, but the con list goes on and on. Give this the attention it deserves - the attention you deserve.

STEP 2: Discuss your addiction with someone you trust who is not an addict. Be honest, don't get mad or defensive, and listen to what they say. Whether it's a pen-pal, a counselor, or a friend on the inside, talk it out. No one who cares about you wants to see you continue on this path. Sometimes having an honest conversation with someone we trust can help both parties recognize the need for change and lead to the next step.

STEP 3: Ask yourself this question: What is stopping me from quitting?

STEP 4: Keep track of your substance abuse, including how often and how much you use. This gives you a better picture of the role addiction is playing in your life. Many people have fought addiction by maintaining an addiction diary. Be honest with yourself if you do this. An example of how to maintain an addiction diary is included on the following page.



Personal Cravings Journal

Circumstances	Intensity	Emotions & Physical Response	Initial Response	Better Response
Who were you with? What happened? When did it happen? Where were you?	Rate the intensity of the craving 1-10.	What was I feeling during the craving? What did I feel physically and where in my body?	What thoughts went through my head just before the craving?	Is there another way to view the situation? What advice would I give to a friend in this situation? What would help in the future?
Example: I was with my co-worker at dinner after work on Tuesday. She asked if I'd cover her shifts the following week.	Example: 4	Example: Overwhelmed, frustrated, angry. Physically I felt it in my back and stomach.	Example: I can't handle the added workload. She expects too much of me. I just covered for her; she takes advantage of my kindness. I feel weak and need a drink.	Example: I overreacted to the situation. I meditated when I got home, and the craving went away.

What's Next?

STEP 1: If you are still reading at this point, you have likely answered this last question – nothing. The very first thing to do at this point is research what resources are available at your own institution. Is there a program for substance abuse? If not, is there a group formed by

other inmates battling addiction? Put your feelers out and see. Having people to talk to who are also fighting addiction can be a big help. Seek out a program, but know that you can still do this if you do not have one available to you. If you are fortunate enough to have access to a program or a group, do not miss meetings. Go sick, go tired, go late - just go! Meetings must be a priority. Treat them like a job.

STEP 2: Consider problem associations and distance yourself from those groups. People abusing and/or selling need to fall from your friend list immediately. If you have a friend fighting addiction, battling the problem together can certainly be a help. However, if the friend is using and not fighting, you should sever your ties with the person. Surrounding yourself with people interested in improving their lives is the best approach. Build a sober network you can look up to and grow with. Avoid problem areas in your institution as best you can.

STEP 3: Consider asking for a transfer if you are currently incarcerated in a cell or pod with abusers or sellers. Prison politics can be a difficult issue to navigate; however, you must do your best to get away from problem people. If you are housed with them, finding alternative cellmates is the only realistic option.

STEP 4: Addiction often stems from a way of dealing with stress. Understand that stress does not go away. You must come up with new methods to manage your stress. Exercise is a fantastic way to combat stress. Exercise helps us release endorphins, lower blood pressure, and sleep better. It is a no-brainer that exercise is right for all of us.

STEP 5: Be honest with prison staff! Being incarcerated does not make us exempt from dental or medical problems. If you are having a dental or medical procedure done, let your dentist or doctor know about your previous substance abuse. While it is possible they will already have this information about you, they may prescribe less addictive medications if they know. Make sure they know. Being open and honest with medical professionals both in and, hopefully, out of prison one day is important.

STEP 6: Set and reach goals – not just around addiction, but around your entire life. Goals should be simple and attainable, but actual goals that mean something: read a book, don't miss a meeting for a month, and reconnect with estranged family or friends (as long as they are law-abiding and addiction-free) are examples of simple, worthy goals that you can attain. Grow as a person, and your world will grow along with you.

“All the suffering, stress, and addiction come from not realizing you already are what you are looking for.”

- Jon Kabat-Zinn

STEP 7: Relapse can and does happen. Fight relapsing with every fiber of your being, but know that life does not (usually) end with a relapse. Learn from it. What caused it? Were you stressed? Were you feeling good and wanted to feel ever better? Were you in physical or emotional pain? Did it happen when you were hanging out with certain people? Was it a place? Learn what triggered your relapse. The next time you are experiencing the same thing, talk to someone before using. And if you do find yourself relapsing, getting clean as soon as possible is imperative to getting back on track. Do not let a single bad decision lead to an entirely ruined life. Catch yourself and start over immediately.

Tips & Points

- Make and carry a list of all the reasons you want to stay clean. Read it in difficult times before using.
- Understand and never forget that addiction is a disease. Once you have it, it is always there. Remember that many people with all sorts of diseases, even addiction, live long, productive, and happy lives. You can, too.

- Remind yourself that cravings do not last forever. Be strong and survive the craving. It will pass.
- Try hobby after hobby until you find one you like. You will! Hobbies are great ways to occupy our minds and pass time.
- Do not dwell on setbacks or situations that cause you stress. Focus on the good in you and in your life.
- Congratulate yourself each day you make it through without using. It is a huge victory!
- Help others. Prison is filled with people needing that help. Sometimes helping someone with their problem helps us keep our mind off our own problems. Some inmates chose to prey on new inmates. Try to befriend and help one. We all need someone to look out for us from time to time.

There isn't a perfect science to treating addiction. It is a trial and error situation. What works best for one person does not work the same for the next person. You must find what works best for you. Just remember, you are worthy of a life free of addiction. When you are clean, the good only gets better. We hope you rise up and take this opportunity to improve your life. When you do that, you not only improve your life, you improve the lives of the people who love you. We hope you get clean. If you already are clean, please stay that way. We wish you all the love and luck in the world!

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Tips for Avoiding Relapse

The most important moment before relapse isn't the final decision to use a drug. It's when you decide to expose yourself to triggers. For example, a trigger could be going to a party or walking through the liquor section at the store. Before encountering your triggers, *you* still have most of the control. Not your craving.

If you're feeling the urge to use, try to wait it out. If you distract yourself for even 30 minutes, it's likely your craving will lessen in intensity. It might not totally disappear, but it will become easier to resist.

Focus on replacing your past drug use with new positive activities. If you used to go home after work and drink, you'll need to make a new plan to occupy yourself. Going home and staring at a wall will eventually lead to staring at a wall with a drink in your hand.

Don't try to do this alone. Sharing your goals for sobriety with a friend makes all the difference. They can hold you accountable when you're making questionable decisions ("I'm just going to the bar to hang out, I won't drink!") and they can offer a kind ear when you're struggling.

Remind yourself that cravings will pass. Have you ever had that experience when you're sick where you can't remember what it feels like to *not* be sick? The same thing happens with cravings. Give it time, and believe it or not, the feeling will go away.

You'll have to make sacrifices beyond giving up the drug. If you previously used during specific activities (for example: watching a game on TV, going to concerts, or spending time with friends), you may need to make changes. This might mean *not* watching the game, or making new friends who are sober. This can be really hard, but that's what makes it a sacrifice.

Have a plan for when things get bad, because at some point, they will. People get fired, hearts get broken, and sometimes people leave us forever. Develop a plan to get through these major life challenges--without the use of drugs--before they happen.

Don't become complacent with your sobriety. If you someday consider having "just a glass of wine with dinner", don't make the decision lightly. If you've struggled with addiction in the past, you are much more likely to develop an addiction again.

If you do relapse, don't give up. A lot of people find it helpful to keep track of how long they've been sober, but don't confuse this count with the true goal of leading a good life. If you're at day 100 of sobriety, that's great. However, if you make a mistake and end up back at day 0, know that you are not starting over (you gained knowledge, experience, and confidence). In other words: Slipping up is not a license to go on a binge.

Come up with new rituals. How do you celebrate holidays, promotions, or any other happy occasion? If your answer includes any sort of drug, you'll want to get creative and figure out something new. Go wild with a hobby for the day, treat yourself to a nice dinner, or take a weekend trip. Make sure it's something you can get excited about.