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# **THE RE-ENTRY PROCESS**

## **UNDERSTANDING WHY OFFENDERS RELAPSE**

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# DESCRIPTION OF PRESENTATION

Relapse and recidivism begin long before substance abusers are discharged from a treatment program or offenders are released from prison. There is a need to begin focusing on the behavioral similarities of addiction, relapse and recidivism. Having a basic knowledge of how the addictive mind works is a starting point towards understanding recovery and reentry.

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## BY THE END OF THE SESSION, PARTICIPANTS WILL BE ABLE TO:

- Identify the Reentry Problems of a felon with a *3 strike Life Sentence*
- Identify the behavioral similarities of *Addiction, Relapse, and Recidivism*
- Recognize the correlation between *Adverse Childhood Experience* (ACE) and Co-Occurring Disorders
- Recognize how an offender's *Maladaptive Behavior* contribute to relapse and recidivism
- Identify how *Ban the Box and Fair Chance* addresses employment and housing

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

## RE-ENTRY TRENDS IN THE UNITED STATES

- Reentry programs are designed to assist incarcerated individuals with a successful transition to their community after they are released.
- By the end of 2016 over 1.5 million individuals were under the jurisdiction of state or federal prisons or in county jails.
- According to the National Institute of Justice there are an additional 4.6 million individuals under criminal supervision in the community.
- Every year, nearly 700,000 offenders are released from state and federal prisons, and an estimated 9 million are released from jail.
- In 2000, among state parole discharges, 41% of offenders successfully completed their term of supervision; relatively unchanged since 1990.
- 30% of released offenders were rearrested within six months of their release according to the Bureau of Justice and Statistics and
- 68% were rearrested at least once within three years for a new offense

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# **RE-ENTRY PROBLEMS**

Once released from jail or prison, offenders are faced with a myriad of barriers to successfully re-enter society.



## 3 STRIKES

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### Strike 1

- Criminal offenders have limited job offers, even for low level jobs

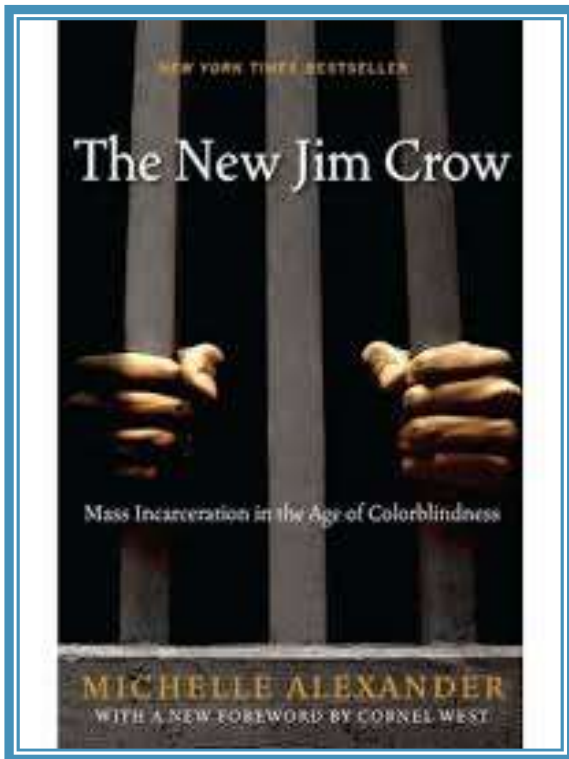
### Strike 2

- Many have limited education (NO High School Diploma / GED) or low literacy level

### Strike 3

- Many offenders lack essential life coping skills coupled with co-occurring disorders, mental health issues, alcohol, amphetamine or opioid abuse.

**THE TITLE FELON IS A LIFE SENTENCE**



Alexander states in her book, our prison population leaped from 350,000 to 2.3 million due to changes in laws and policies, not changes in crime rates

As of 2008, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics Report there were 5.1 million people under community correctional supervision (Probation or Parole)

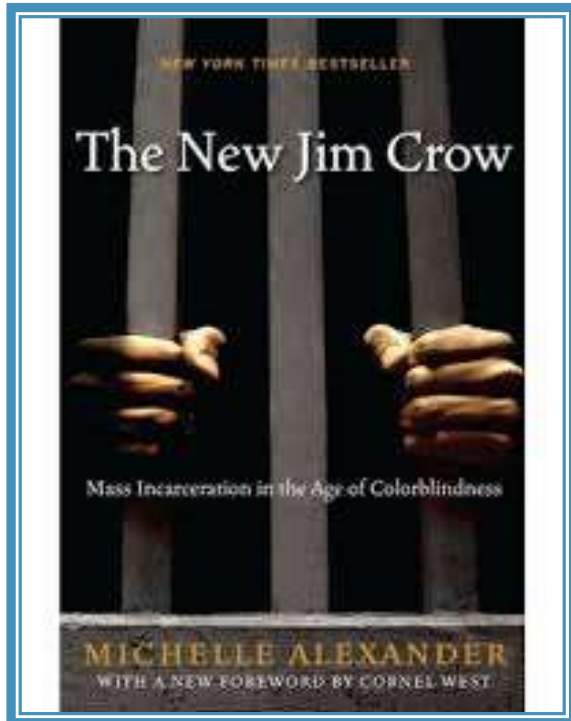
A person's second-class citizenship begins the moment they are  
Branded a Felon



**THE NEW JIM CROW**

by Michelle Alexander

## Once labeled a Felon:



- Discrimination
- Stigma and Exclusion become perfectly legal
- Privileges of citizenship
  - Voting and
  - Jury service are off limits
- Barred from public housing by law
- Discriminated against by landlords
- Ineligible for food stamps
- Forced to check the **“Ban the Box”**
- Denied licenses for a wide range of positions due to:
- Drug addiction or possession
- Most people branded Felons are not sentenced to prison

**THE NEW JIM CROW**

By: Michelle Alexander



# Addiction

Is derived from a Latin term for “enslaved by” or “bound to”. According to ASAM (American Society of Addiction Medicine) Addiction is a treatable, chronic medical disease involving complex interactions among brain circuits, genetics, the environment, and an individual’s life experiences. People with addiction use substances or engage in behaviors that become compulsive and often continue despite harmful consequences.

(Adopted by the ASAM Board of Directors September 15,2019).

**Relapse**

**Recidivism**

**Tolerance**

- ✓ Is the return of a disease or behavior after partial recovery.
- ✓ It means to fall back into a former state of an
- ✓ abusive practice - using illegal drugs
- ✓ destructive behavior - criminal life style
- ✓ About 40% to 60% of people with a drug addiction or criminal behavior experience at least one relapse after an initial recovery

## Relapse

### **Primary triggers for relapsing are re-exposure to:**

- **Environment** - dysfunctional and toxic gatherings,
- **People** - familiar seducing peer group - gang members or drug dealers
- **Places** - previous corner hangout, frequent dives, drug houses
- **Things** - use and abuse of illegal drugs and weapons

## Recidivism

Is usually preceded by a relapse and is measured by criminal acts that resulted in their

### REARRESTS

- Probation or Parole violation

### RECONVICTION

- New sentence

## Tolerance

Is stimulated by a part of our pleasure and reward system in the brain, known as the nucleus accumbens. It delivers high levels of dopamine to this area, which allows a person's diminished response to a drug or behavior and their ability to endure unusually large doses of a poison or toxin.

Illegal drugs - Criminal life style (offender's poison or toxin)

### FRONTAL LOBE

damage here can cause increased irritability, which may include a change in mood and an inability to regulate:

- behavior
- interpreting and processing sensory information
- decision-making and problem-solving capabilities

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# MENTAL DISORDERS

DIANE SMALL JORDAN STATES IN DECODED SCIENCE

SINCE THE 1970'S

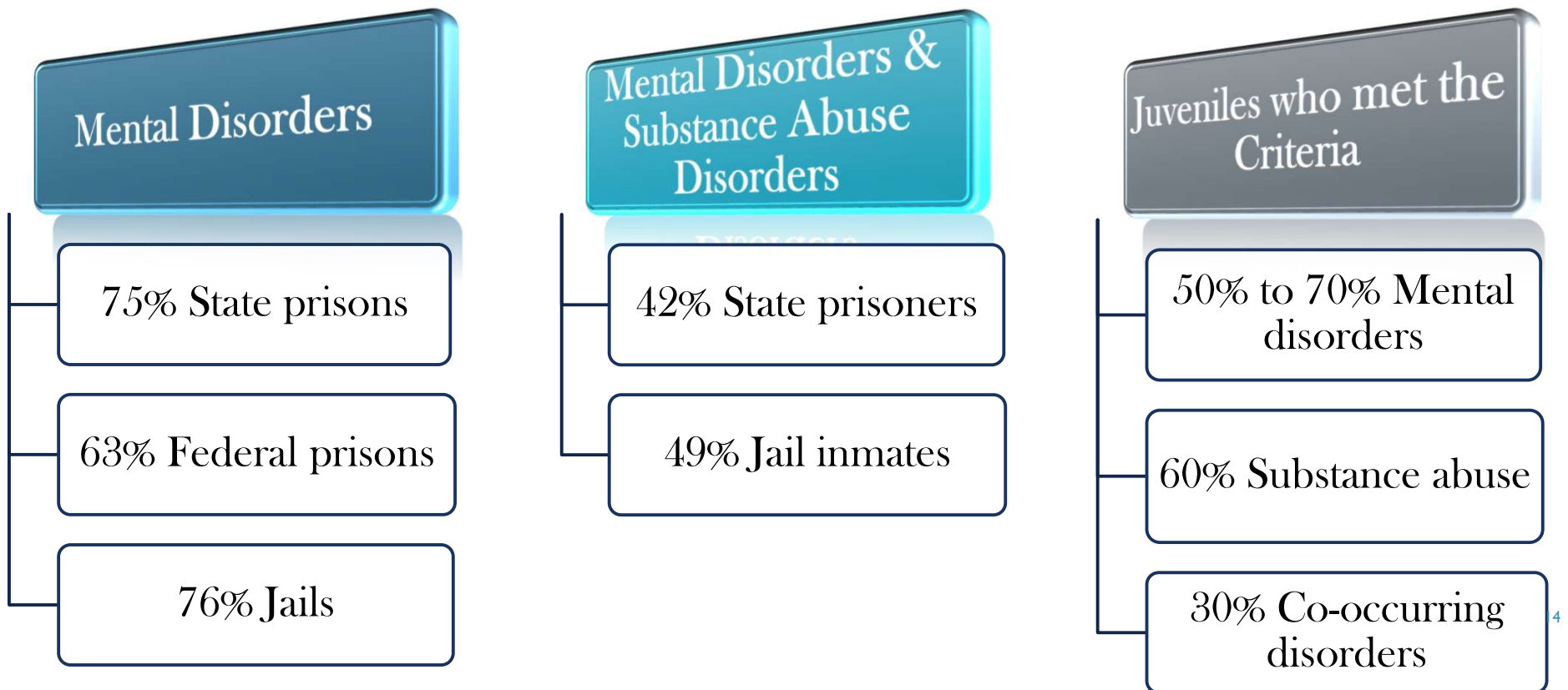
The incarceration rate has significantly increased while the rate of mental hospital occupancy has decreased

Resulting in a surge of imprisoned mentally ill persons and African-Americans making up the majority of those going without treatment

African-Americans are less likely than Non-African Americans to report receiving treatment

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## The Bureau of Justice Statistics Report Shows:



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## MELISSA THOMPSON

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY AT PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY

argued in her book:

- Gender and race is a determinant as to whether or not a person gets a mental health label
- African- Americans were stereotyped and labeled with having criminal genic behavior vs mental illness

**GENDER, RACE AND MENTAL ILLNESS IN THE  
CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM**



Many offenders Reentering society had encountered Psychological or Emotional induced Traumatic Lifestyles or un-diagnosed Behavioral disorders prior to incarceration.

Between 1995 & 1997 a study known as Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) was conducted by the Kaiser Permanente and Center for Disease and Prevention, an American health maintenance organization. The study describes a traumatic Experience in a person's life occurring before the age of 18 is remembered as an adult and the experiences have a tremendous impact on probable future violence and victimization.

## **ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCE/CO- OCCURRING DISORDERS**



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# CO-OCCURRING DISORDER

Is defined by the DSM (Diagnostic Statistical Manual) as an individual experiencing 2 or more disorders relating to the use of alcohol and other drugs of abuse as well as mental health issues and or behavioral disorders.

## ACE and Co-occurring Experiences

- Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD)
- Neurobehavioral Disorder Associated with Prenatal Alcohol Exposure (ND-PAE)
- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
- Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD)
- Conduct Disorder (CD)
- Drug Addiction (abuse of):
  - Alcohol
  - Prescription medication (legal or illegal)
  - Amphetamine
  - Opioids



## ACE and Co-occurring Experiences

- Possible child abuse
  - Molestation
  - Rape or Incest
  - Prostitution
  - Human Trafficking
- Living homeless
- Forced gang affiliation
- Domestic violence
- Verbal and Physically abusive family
- Stealing or selling drugs prior to puberty
- Having anxiety or depression (social, emotional or both)



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**FRUSTRATION**

**STRESS**

**PSYCHOLOGICAL**

**&**

**EMOTIONAL  
DISTRESS**

**GUILT**

**SHAME**

**ANGER**



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In the mid-1950's clinical psychologist Dr. Albert Ellis introduced Rational Emotive Therapy (REBT); and, in the 1960's psychiatrist Aaron Beck introduced Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT).



These two concepts formed the basis that:

Thoughts control feelings; Feelings **DO NOT** control thoughts and Human Emotions or Behaviors Are the results of what people think

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# BEHAVIORAL THERAPY

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Behavioral therapy is an umbrella term for types of therapy that treat mental health or behavioral disorders.

This form of therapy seeks to identify and help change potential self-destructive or unhealthy behaviors.

It functions on the idea that all behaviors are learned and that unhealthy behaviors can be changed

**BEHAVIORAL THERAPY SHOULD BE A FUNDAMENTAL PART OF ALL  
CORRECTIONAL AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROGRAMS**

## A Change in Thinking can Change a Behavior

A Lasting Change in an Offender's Addictive Behavior and Criminal Life Style is to Change the way they Think

- Addictive behavior and Criminal thinking can become a permanent fixture of the drug abuser or the offender's criminal life style
- Offenders holding on to their addictive or criminal life style is insane and self-destructive
- Relapse for substance abusers and criminal offenders usually begins before they are discharged from a treatment program or released from prison.
- They also anticipate high-risk situations prior to being discharged or released

Major Reasons Why Offenders Find  
Their Way Back Into The Criminal Justice System

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# MALADAPTIVE & ADDICTIVE BEHAVIORS

Becomes a belief system of actions or tendencies that don't allow an individual to adjust well to certain situations. The problem arises when these behaviors end up being harmful to an individual with a drug addiction or an offender's well-being. The following behaviors are typically unrelenting, compulsive and unproductive for many offenders reentering society:



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- Petulance
  - Narcissistic
  - Rude
  - Disrespectful
  - Impatient
  - Impulsive
  - Inconsiderate
  - Make excuses rather than take responsibility
  - Exhibit a temper and express anger
  - Exhibit negative attitudes and character
  - Express intolerance of others
  - Lack dependability and trustworthiness
  - Lack clear focus
  - Lack clear goals or sense of purpose
  - Lack flexibility
  - Unwilling to listen, learn or change behavior
  - Lack initiative and self-motivation (low self-esteem)
  - Lack reasonable interpersonal communication skills

## MALADAPTIVE & ADDICTIVE BEHAVIORS

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## **SUPPORT SYSTEM FAMILY & FRIENDS**

Some offenders will come home to family members and friends embracing their return  
Some offenders left family members and friends who celebrated their leaving and regret their return

## EDUCATION

- Access to higher education for formerly incarcerated individuals has been severely curtailed. In 1994, the Omnibus Crime Bill included a provision that blocked Pell Grants for criminal offenders. The next year, the number of offenders able to access higher education fell by 44 percent.
- Nearly 40 percent of incarcerated individuals over 18 years old have not graduated from high school.
- Numerous studies conducted over several decades have shown that the more education a criminal offender receives, the less likely he or she is to return to prison.
- However, in 2005, the Bureau of Justice Statistics reported that only 35 percent of prisons were providing some sort of access of higher education.

# Employment

## CAREER PATHWAYS AND UNEXPLOITED OPPORTUNITIES FOR FELONS

- Is a workforce development strategy used in the United States to support workers' transitions from
  - Education into and through the workforce
  - Short term goals transitioning into long term goals
- It was adopted at the federal, state and local levels to increase
  - Education
  - Training and
  - Learning opportunities for America's current and emerging workforce
    - ✓ Start in a low-level job and
    - ✓ Move up within that pathway
- The pathway for a Felon is like traveling through a maze of uncertainty with limited opportunities

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- **Ban the Box** laws are also called “**Fair Chance**” or “**Fair Opportunity**” laws.
  - **Ban the Box** and **Fair Chance** are often used interchangeably but reference different aspects of the hiring process.
  - **Ban the Box** was a campaign initiated to eliminate the check box employment applications that asks candidates whether they have any prior convictions.
  - **Fair Chance** policies do more than **Ban the Box**; many chance laws incorporate best practices outlined in the 2012 U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) guidance plan, including:
    - ❖ Delaying background checks and records-related inquiries until after making a conditional offer
    - ❖ Banning employment ads that say “background check required”
    - ❖ Eliminating questions regarding criminal history during job interviews

## **BAN THE BOX & FAIR CHANCE**

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- More than 90 percent of companies use background checks in their hiring decisions, putting jobs further out of reach for the one in three adults who are living with a criminal record.
  - Between 2002 and 2006, 50 percent of the 262,000 criminal offenders that were released from federal prison who could not secure employment during the time of their supervised release
    - ✓ committed a new crime or
    - ✓ violated the terms of their release and
    - ✓ were sent back to prison.

**BAN THE BOX & FAIR CHANCE** CONT'D

- ❑ Ninety-three (93) percent of those who were able to secure employment during entirety of their supervised release were able to successfully reintegrate back into their communities and not return to prison.
- ❑ Eighteen (18) states and more than 150 cities and countries have embraced **ban the box** and other fair-chance policies.
- ❑ Major corporations have chosen to **Ban the Box** like:
  - Target
  - Bed Bath & Beyond
  - Walmart
  - Home Depot and
  - Starbucks
- ❑ Imposing restrictions on an employer's consideration and use of criminal and convictions

**BAN THE BOX & FAIR CHANCE** CONT'D

# HOUSING

- ❑ Since 1975, federal regulations have instructed public housing authorities to consider the criminal history of applicants for public housing as it relates to criminal acts that could affect the welfare of the other tenants.
- ❑ Federal law mandates a public housing ban for offenders with certain types of specific convictions – such as methamphetamine production.
- ❑ Most public housing authorities have adopted blanket screening policies that reject applicants with criminal backgrounds.
- ❑ An estimated four out of five landlords employ background checks to screen out prospective tenants with criminal records.



# HOUSING

- ❑ For the vast majority of crimes, federal statute gives public housing agencies broad discretion to deny or evict anyone with a history of criminal activity.
- ❑ Under U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's 1996 One Strike policy
- ❑ public housing agencies have the authority to evict or deny an entire household
- ❑ if the agency has reasonably determined that any member or guest of the household is engaging in illegal drug or other criminal activities.
- ❑ Due to the limited work histories and low incomes, most offenders released from prison cannot afford to buy or rent housing in the private market.

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Due to such housing barriers,  
one in five offenders who leave  
prison will become  
**HOMELESS.**

# VOTING RIGHTS

- ❑ 6.1 million Americans are prohibited from voting due to laws that disenfranchise citizens convicted of felony offenses.
- ❑ Each state has its own laws regarding the deprivation of the right to vote after a criminal conviction, resulting in a confusing patchwork of laws across the country.
  - Thirty-four (34) states prohibit voting by people who are either in prison, on parole or probation, and post-sentence.
  - Twelve (12) states permanently disenfranchise offenders who have completed their sentences in their entirety.
  - Individuals in those states make up 50 % of entire disenfranchised population.

## VOTING RIGHTS

- 77 % of the disenfranchised voters live in their communities, either under probation, parole supervision or having completed their sentence.
- Disenfranchisement laws have a disproportionate impact on African Americans.
  - Nationally, one out of every 13 African-American are disenfranchised, a rate more than four times greater than for non-African-American men.
  - In some states in the Deep South, about one quarter of African-American men can't vote. In total 2.2 million black citizens are banned from voting.
- Research suggests that formerly incarcerated individuals who vote are less likely to be rearrested.

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## **The Whore or the Prostitute: A Choice to Change**

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This Analogy can help gauge the possible success or failure of an offender prior to their reentry into society.

### **Whore**

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- A person who is unscrupulous, especially one who compromises their principles for gain.
- A person who will violate behavioral standards to achieve something desired.

### **Prostitute**

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A person who does, or offers to do, an activity for a reward, despite personal dislike or dishonor.

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# The Prison Whore

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WASTE 2 or more YEARS

## Doing Time

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- In gym or yard
    - Lifting weights
    - Playing ball
  - Playing cards
  - Playing dominoes
  - Watching television and
  - Reflecting on maladaptive behavior
    - Drugs
    - Criminal life style
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# The Prison Prostitute

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## USING TIME CONSTRUCTIVELY

### **Develop Life Coping Skills**

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- Seeking positive and constructive feedback from educators, counselors and mental health professionals to avoid a relapse and
  - Enrolling in recovery and self-help programs to help guide and manage the Psychological and Emotional distress they will encounter upon their release
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# The Prison Prostitute

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USES TIME CONSTRUCTIVELY

## Recovery and Self-Help Programs

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Adult Basic Education (ABE)

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

General Education Development (GED)

Vocational

College

Life Skills

12 Steps

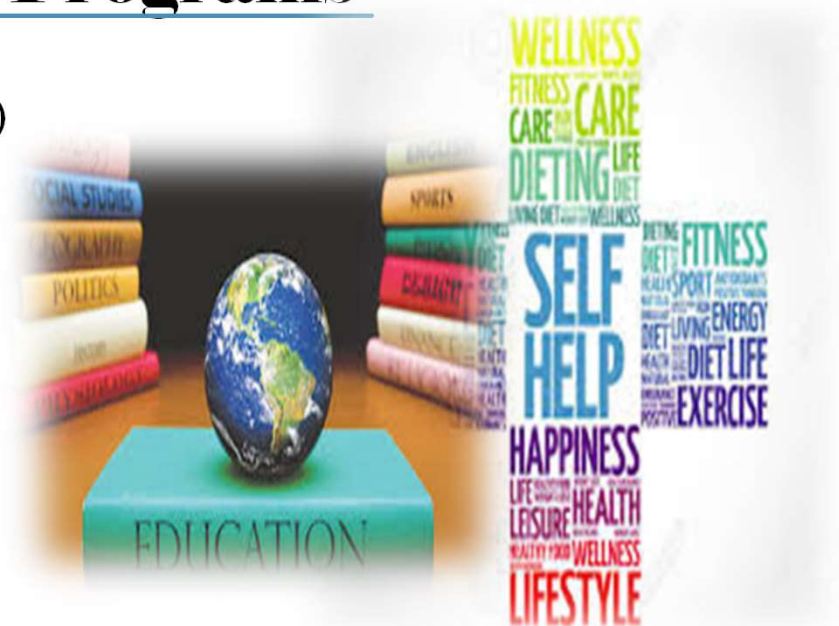
A.A. (Alcoholics Anonymous)

N.A. (Narcotics Anonymous)

Anger Management

CBT (Cognitive Behavior Treatment)

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**BECOMES AN INVESTMENT TOWARD THEIR FUTURE**

**FOR A SUCCESSFUL  
RECOVERY  
&  
RE-ENTRY**

## Biographical H.T. Lee, Sr.

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Mr. Lee was a Correctional Andragogist (adult educator) with over 4.5 decades of experience within the Illinois Department of Corrections School where he has taught ABE, ESOL, GED and Life Skills (Substance Abuse and Reentry) classes. In 1982 he authored a 148-page manuscript titled, A Handbook for Teaching Adult Basic Education in the Department of Corrections. This process manual became correctional school district 428's Adult Basic Education Language Arts Curriculum. Mr. Lee has also had the opportunity to teach at community colleges and the university level. Mr. Lee has been presenting papers at regional, national, and international educational conferences for more than 3 decades. In 1983 he was recognized as the Illinois Region III Correctional Education Association Teacher of the Year. As an Addiction Counselor, Mr. Lee provided individual, and group, therapy at a Comprehensive Mental Health Center. He is an appointed member of the Illinois Advisory Council on Alcoholism and Other Drug Dependency. Mr. Lee is a Licensed Professional Educator with a B.S. Ed. (K-12), and an M.S.Ed. (Educational Administration). Mr. Lee is a Certified Alcohol and Other Drugs of Abuse Counselor, Certified Criminal Justice Professional, and Certified Co-Occurring Substance Use and Mental Health Disorder Professional I.

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