

OREGON CURE

Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants

The mission of Oregon CURE is to support the incarcerated and their families and friends by advocating for effective criminal justice policies and procedures.

Winter 2024, Volume 75

A Newsletter for Incarcerated People and their Families and Friends
P.O. Box 80193, Portland, OR 97280 | (503) 844-9145

CHANGE IS INEVITABLE

Life is full of change. We just changed our calendar year from 2023 to 2024. We have changed our newsletters from 8 pages 4 times per year, to 12 pages 3 times per year, starting with this one here, our 75th volume. ODOC just changed Directors from Heidi Steward to Mike Reese. Some of the prisons have recently changed Superintendents and other staff. Some of the residents have left, others have moved in.

If you are incarcerated, or have a family member or friend who is, you really have no control over many of the changes you must deal with. But you do have control over how you respond to the changes that you face. Change gives us some things we want and some things we do not. Some changes we can control and some we cannot. We CAN control how we react to change, how we move forward, how we respond, and that is wherein lay our control to change. We have the powerful ability to choose our perspective. So, while we cannot change the past, we have the power to create, to some degree, our present and our future. Let's all choose wisely and do our best.

Yes, change is an inevitable part of life. It can be difficult to deal with, but it is necessary for growth and progress. Change requires adjustments, which can be small or significant. Even good changes can be stress-inducing, as they disrupt our routines and push us out of our comfort zones. However, having strategies to cope with change can help us become more resilient to stress and make it easier to adapt to the transitions in our lives.

If you are struggling to cope with a change in your life, you might be left with feelings of negativity, bitterness, or regret about the outcome. If you tend to be resilient in the face of life's challenges, you might bounce back and adapt with relative ease. But if you tend to struggle more with transitions, you might need a little extra help to get back on track. Fortunately, there are steps you can take when dealing with change to help make those adjustments easier.

Here are some strategies that can help you cope with change:

1. Visualize how the change might affect your life: This can help you prepare for the change and anticipate any challenges that may arise.
2. List your priorities: Make a list of what is most important to you and focus on those things.
3. Practice self-care: Take care of yourself by getting enough sleep, eating well, and exercising regularly.
4. Celebrate moments of progress: Recognize and celebrate small successes along the way.
5. Lean into social support: Reach out to friends, family, or other connections for support.

Remember, change can be difficult, but it is an inevitable part of life. Having strategies to cope with change can help you become more resilient to stress and make it easier to adapt to the transitions in your life.

The way you think about change plays a major role in determining how well you deal with it. Negative thinking patterns can undermine your ability to focus on the positive. When negative thoughts bog you down, it is more challenging to have faith in your coping abilities.

Cognitive reframing is a technique that can help people change these negative thoughts. It's a strategy you can utilize in your day-to-day life to help look at situations with a more realistic, hopeful attitude.

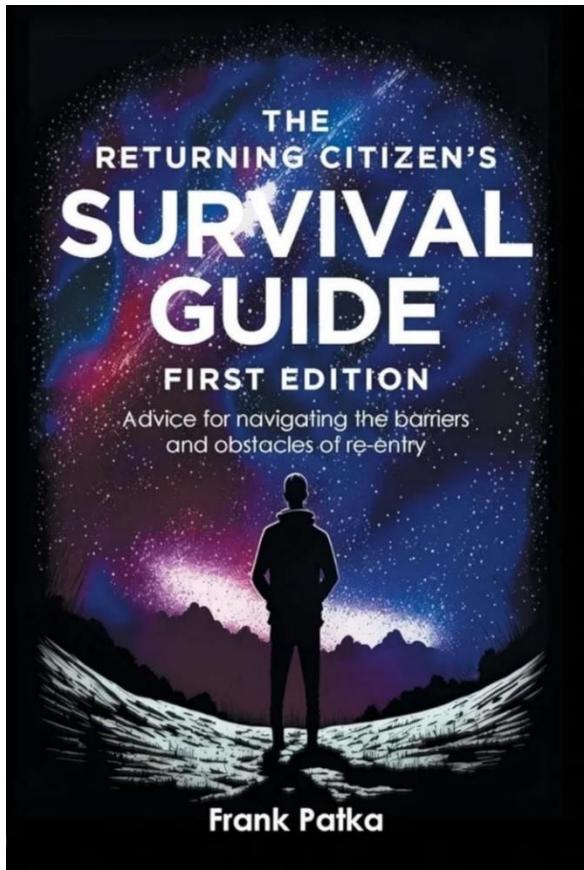
Cognitive reframing is all about shifting the perspective from which you view a situation. For example, if you see a change as something that is upsetting the balance of your life, chances are that you're going to find it much more challenging to handle that change effectively.

It's more empowering to shift that perspective to focus more on your strengths and abilities to adapt. This way, you might see the positives that come out of the situation or believe in your ability to survive and thrive through change.

While cognitive reframing is something you can work on with the help of a therapist, it is also something that you do anytime you notice yourself caught in a pattern of negative thinking.

If you want to shift into a more positive mindset about a change in your life:

- Notice cognitive distortions: Are you engaging in patterns like catastrophic or all-or-nothing thinking that worsen your thoughts?
- Consider the evidence: How realistic are your thoughts? What evidence is there to dispute your negative thinking?
- Be kind to yourself: Is your self-talk kind and compassionate? How can you show yourself kindness in this situation?



THE RETURNING CITIZEN'S SURVIVAL GUIDE by Frank Patka

My name is Frank Patka, formerly incarcerated returned citizen of ODOC and author of The Returning Citizen's Survival Guide, written to help inmates prepare for re-entry. Changing Patterns, Inc has a fund to send this book to prisoners who are preparing for release. If you know anyone who could use this resource, please email frank@changingpatternsinc.org with their name and SID# and we will send a book at no charge to anyone.

This book is available at Barnes & Noble here:

<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/the-returning-citizens-survival-guide-first-edition-frank-patka/1144101481?ean=979888510896>:

“Moving is considered one of the most stressful times in a person's life. Moving from prison back to life as a citizen adds a unique spin to the stress one experiences. Individuals exiting the correctional system are inconsistently prepared for re-entry. Many are disconnected from the reality of how to live and lack knowledge of what resources are available. A life of freedom is an achievement worth living for and requires a strong foundation to be built on. There are eight fundamental needs in order to survive life and have a shot at creating a life of freedom.”

WHAT AND WHY TOASTMASTERS?

by Deb Clough

Toastmasters International is a nonprofit educational organization that helps members build confidence by teaching public speaking and leadership skills through a worldwide network of clubs. Members prepare and deliver speeches, fulfill club roles, provide supportive peer evaluations, serve as mentors to each other, and assume leadership roles as board members for their club.

It is not instructor-led, empowering members to develop and achieve personal and professional communication goals at their own pace. Pathways, the education program used in Toastmasters, is a multi-language curriculum that includes projects such as interview preparation, meeting facilitation, leadership development, project management, conflict resolution, and more.

Previously incarcerated members have said their participation in Toastmasters helped them learn to interview for jobs and housing, articulate their thoughts and feelings at parole board hearings, and manage difficult situations with co-workers. Incarcerated members have described how good it made them feel to receive a certificate for completing a speech project or winning a ribbon for best speaker or evaluator. For many, this was the first time they had ever been publicly rewarded for their efforts.

In 2016 The Oregonian wrote about Rose City Toasters and the positive impact it has on the lives of its members! https://www.oregonlive.com/washingtoncounty/2016/03/inmates_learn_the_art_of_publi.html.

Oregon currently has four Toastmasters clubs in Oregon prisons:

- Audacious Orators at Coffee Creek Correctional Facility - meets the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 6:30pm
- Rose City Toasters at Columbia River Correctional Institution - meets every Tuesday at 6:00pm and every Sunday at 1pm
- Capital Toastmasters at Oregon State Penitentiary - meets the 2nd Wednesday at 5:30pm
- Spirit Trackers at Deer Ridge Correctional Institution - meets every Sunday at 3pm

AICs that are interested should be able to find out who leads the club at their facility for more info. It also would be amazing if an AIC was interested in establishing a new club at any facility that does not have Toastmasters yet. The mailing address for Jim Robison if interested in more information is Jim Robison, 33909 NW Pekin Ferry Road, Ridgefield, WA 98642

Several Rose City Toasters members recently released were so inspired by their experience that they are chartering a new club especially for adults previously incarcerated. This new club, Beyond the Walls, was supposed to hold its first meeting on January 20, 2024 at 9am, but due to a power outage, and given current weather conditions, the meeting of Beyond the Wall Toastmasters that was planned for January 20 is postponed to January 27. Same time, same place, one week later. They will meet in person at 7901 NE Glisan St, Portland and online. Use this link to join online: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82454965241?pwd=T2ZhbkFPaVNmSU9iL0djaGgrTUJuZz09>

You are encouraged to attend and help support this new club!

Membership in Toastmasters is \$10 per month. Prison club members often do not have funds to pay for membership. Some clubs conduct fundraisers or otherwise accept contributions to help sponsor scholarships for members' dues. Rose City Toasters has a GoFundMe account to help support their club.

<https://gofund.me/32f7e12d>. Once a member has paid their dues their membership goes with them when they transfer to another club.

We encourage folks to consider joining or otherwise supporting Toastmasters for our currently or previously incarcerated friends and family!

BELIEVE IN YOURSELF FOR 2024

by Scott Spencer-Wolff

In corners of the mind,
Belief crouches, silent. Undefined.
It whispers beyond language,
In echoes of intuition, pieced
Together from stories told by its
Unreliable sister,
Memory.

Knowing without seeing,
Understanding without being,
Certainty unfounded by empirical proof,
A leap beyond an observable proof.

In a garden of thoughts and feelings,
Where the present
Soft as a fountain, unpredictable as
The golden carp in a koi pond darts
In the sun-dappled pool of
Our history and perceptions of
What was
While Belief, like a buddha,
Silently watches.

This compass for our soul,
This witness to the marriage of
doubt and certainty
Defines us more
Then the real
Which we often do not
Care to know.

Better to live in our bubble
Of certainty - of the familiar
Even if it isn't serving us
In any useful way.
Belief, a non-experiential way
Of knowing grows like wild ivy in
spaces where logic is not fed.
Belief sets our limits in untold ways
From bits and pieces
Fragmented on the floor of ourselves,
Like a broken teacup.

Move beyond belief
This coming year. Chant
"I Can" until you can.
Do what you want.
Have what you want.
Be what you want.
Love who you want.

Belief sets limits
But you don't have to
Accept those limits
As yours. Even
If you believe that
Is your history.
It is not your
Destiny – unless
You believe
It is.

OREGON FEARLESS

Fearless is a safe online space for people who are currently, or have been, on the sex offender registry and their allies. The Oregon group was started in March, 2022 by a prior registrant who was inspired by similar groups in other states. The group meets for 90 minutes on the last Tuesday of each month on Zoom and is open to anyone over 18 years old. One member facilitates the meeting and maintains a safe and respectful environment. Everyone is encouraged to participate at the level that makes them comfortable, including just listening. We have members from other states. Some participants are from state prisons and some are from the federal system.

It is not a place for legal, mental health, or personal advice although sharing of resources is encouraged. Fearless meetings may include people on the sex offender registry, on post-prison supervision, spouses, adult family members, friends, co-workers and supportive community members. Lawyers, politicians, mental health professionals, medical professionals, business people, educators, and other leaders are welcomed but not in a professional capacity. We are here to support each other and to offer advice.

Oregon Fearless does not engage in lobbying although we recognize that direct political action is necessary to further our goals. Hence, we support organizations that do lobbying and several of our members are politically active. They can help you with political connections. We do not have the capacity to support people who are currently incarcerated. Letter writing, video visits and in-person visits are vital and we support individuals and organizations that provide those services. We maintain a strong connection with other organizations that share our goals. Oregon Voices, oregonvoices.org, Washington Voices, wavoices.org, and Oregon CURE, oregoncure.org, members often attend our meetings. Fearless is always looking to expand connections to other like-minded organizations.

If you can help us expand our reach, we would love to meet you. If you, or someone you know, is interested in Oregon Fearless please send an email to Scott at s63881768@gmail.com. Let us know your name (first names or aliases are just fine) and preferred pronouns. Please briefly outline the reason for your interest and how you would like to be contacted. Messages are confidential and will be deleted after we have contacted you.

HOW TO WRITE FOR THE MARSHALL PROJECT'S LIFE INSIDE

Life Inside is a weekly series of first-person essays from people who live or work in the criminal justice system. Here are answers to the questions people ask us most.

What makes a Life Inside essay? Life Inside essays are 1,000- to 1,400- word nonfiction pieces about personal experiences you've had with the criminal justice system. We want slices of life rather than full autobiographies. Focus on telling a good story — one that is vivid, surprising, instructive or interesting to a reader who may not share your frame of reference. Our contributors include people who are currently or formerly incarcerated, people on parole or probation, lawyers, teachers, medical staff, people with loved ones in the system, corrections officers, police, social workers, judges, people who are victims of crime and advocates.

What don't you publish in Life Inside? We don't publish poetry, fiction, letters to the editor, commentaries, pieces under pseudonyms, or visual art without an accompanying essay. In addition, we don't publish claims of innocence, provide legal help or publicize advocacy campaigns.

How do I send you a Life Inside essay? Before we tell you where to send your work, we want to let you know this: We try our best to respond to all mail, but we can't write everyone back. Follow these guidelines:

- The best way to submit work to us is to send a quick introductory note and a draft of the essay you want us to publish. We don't need extras like photo collages, drawings or poetry. Please save your time and stamps.
- Sometimes people ask us for feedback on their ideas, but we need to evaluate your writing style. The best indicator of your writing style is a draft of the essay you want us to publish.
- We understand that most incarcerated people don't have access to email. But if you have it, please use it. Your message can come directly from you or from someone you trust. Our email address is lifeinside@themarshallproject.org
- If you can type your essay, please do. That will make it much quicker and easier to scan your work into our content management systems. Where and when are Life Inside essays published? Life Inside pieces appear on www.themarshallproject.org. We usually post them on the website on Fridays at 6 a.m. EST. We also email them to newsletter subscribers on Friday afternoons. If we partner with another media outlet, your piece will also appear on their website and/or on their pages. We may also re-publish your piece at a later date. Our mailing address is: The Marshall Project C/O Studio CitySpire, Attention: Life Inside, 156 W 56th St. 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10019

Do you pay writers? In most cases, we offer a small honorarium of \$200 for essays people write.

What does the editing process look like? If we accept your piece, we make edits to ensure that the writing is engaging and clear. An editor will communicate directly with you or through someone you trust like a relative, friend, teacher or volunteer. We use prison messaging services, email, pre-arranged phone calls and letters.

Do you fact-check the essays? Yes. A fact-checker may reach out to you for clarification and/or use court records, reliable media reports and input from corrections officials who deal with the news media. Do I have to use my name? Yes. We do not publish anonymous essays or fake names.

How do you create the bios at the end of each piece? We ask our writers to send us two to three lines that describe who they are and what they've accomplished. We also ask that they include why they are currently incarcerated if that information is not in the piece.

Why do you publish the reason why people are currently serving time? We publish the reason why someone is currently incarcerated because, as journalists, we need to be transparent with our readers. We are aware of the criticism of this practice — that it reduces writers to their criminal convictions. But readers can easily obtain this information on corrections websites and news articles anyway. Those sources don't offer the context that an essay provides.

What if I don't hear back from you? We try our best to respond to every submission, but due to the high volume of mail we receive, we can't guarantee it.

PRISON TRANSPARENCY, THE OMBUDSMAN & EQUAL FOOTING

by Scott Spencer-Wolff, Ph.D.

PART II CONTINUED, "Power corrupts' absolute power corrupts avsolutey" (First coined by Lord Atton, in 1857)

Legal rights are both the basis and the result of citizenship. The inability of prisoners in most places to vote, even post-prison in numerous areas, attests to an antiquated idea that a criminal conviction somehow cuts one off from the benefits of citizenship.

Our social life demands the sacrifice of unlimited freedom for the individual and the specification of standards for which freedoms will be sacrificed and which will be retained. None of this really takes much account of the incarcerated. However, 95% of all incarcerated people will be released back to the community, and as former ODOC director Collette Peterson used to say, "will be your neighbor." Are we preparing folks for that release and the social responsibilities and privileges of citizenship? I don't think any reasonably honest corrections professional would say we are.

The legal rights won by prison inmates in recent years are not unrestricted, gratuitous freedoms but rather specific, fixed relationships between the inmates and the total institution called prison. The litigation process begins when a dispute arises in the area of legality. The issue is decided according to whether the individual right of the inmate as a citizen overrides the institution's self-described need (or responsibility) to maintain the rules and practices that the prison administration determines are essential for institutional order, security, and habilitation or rehabilitation of the inmate population.

Institutional order has always been the bottom-line argument against prisoners' legal rights from the beginning of the prisoner litigation phenomenon, and it remains a valid reason for restricting individual rights—when demonstrated to the satisfaction of the court to be necessary." However, in recent years the rationale offered by prison administrations for restricting inmate rights around many things has come under scrutiny as possibly not as genuine as it ought to be.

The prison is still more accountable to the courts than to the inmates and, because of the nature of the law, is required to meet minimal legal standards of operation and policy, which might happen if the prison system were actually transparent.

Every facet of the criminal justice system needs to be more accountable—particularly walled or fenced institutions that do not have the high visibility of the police or the courts. Internal incidents that have the effect of extending sentences are rarely reported in the news. Legalism and other procedural changes have given inmate populations a weapon to defend themselves against some (although not all) capricious behavior but have not given inmates the power to control any significant part of their destinies. The legal processes available are poorly suited for the subtle, sensitive aspects of human interaction determining the institutional quality of life.

Historically, the institutional tendency to disregard the individual is based on the formal legal relationship between prison and inmate previously mentioned. In the past, each side cooperated with the other based on tacit agreements of mutual self-interest, which, it was understood, would be invalid in crises. No legal rights have established inmates as people who must be considered in policymaking. Legal procedures must now be followed, especially in moments of crisis.

This new relationship has to exist before any "humanizing" programs can even be considered. Many good ideas in corrections have failed for a lack of solid support—by the lack of a crisis plan. History, while seldom acknowledging a reasonable interest of inmates in the process and outcome of prison governance, does provide many examples of attempts to create an interest.

PART III – “THE BALANCING POWER OF THE OMBUDSMAN”

If you’re an avid reader of penological history, there have been some brilliant and inspired wardens. In 1888, Warden Hiram Hatch created an inmate organization called the Mutual Aid League at the Michigan State Penitentiary. Thomas Mott Osborne advanced the concept by establishing an inmate council at Auburn Penitentiary in New York in 1913. While these experiments, with many variations, have been made in prisons throughout the United States since 1930 and advertised and promoted as the key to a humane and rehabilitative prison experience, such a council has never been based on a legal or even a negotiated, position of a right to be involved in institutional governance. This practice has subsequently been manipulated and circumvented by both administration and inmates in situations of stress and tension until its credibility is lost and the experiment fails.

Perhaps you have never heard of Katherine Lawes. Katherine was the wife of Lewis Lawes, warden at Sing Sing Prison from 1920-1941 (in Ossining, NY – right “up the river” from New York City, and from where we get the term, ‘Sent Up the River’.)

Katherine took seriously the idea that prisoners are human beings worthy of attention and respect. She regularly visited inside the walls, encouraged the prisoners, and spent time listening to them. Most importantly, she cared about them. And as a result, they cared deeply about her. One night in October of 1937, the news was “telegraphed” between the prison cells that Katherine was killed in an accident. The prisoners petitioned the warden to allow them to attend her funeral. He granted their strange request, and a few days later the south gate of Sing Sing swung slowly open. Hundreds of men – felons, lifers, murderers, thieves – men convicted of almost every crime conceivable marched slowly from the prison gate to the warden’s house to file past the bier of Mrs. Lawes and then returned to their cells. There were so many that they proceeded unguarded. Not one tried to escape. If he had, the others may have killed him on the spot, so devoted were they to Katherine Lawes, the woman who daily walked around the prison tiers to show the men they mattered.

Could this happen today? Unlikely – we have too many mentally ill folks, but this was a testimony of what was possible.

Inmate involvement in administrative decision-making, rather than in the traditional advisory council, has been markedly successful when the input scope has been strictly limited and tied to some programmatic or structural elements of the prison system.

Another vital element in successful inmate involvement is the involvement of civilians (volunteers) in the program. The prototype of such a successful program is the Ward Grievance Procedure of the California Youth Authority.

By building the procedure into the institutions' treatment modality and using civilians as judges and evaluators, the program has become a standard in much of the California system and now become embedded in the institutional structure of the agency. Other partial involvements have included inmate membership on the committee, which reviews correctional grant requests in the Wisconsin Council on Criminal Justice, housing unit boards and inmate self-help groups (prison orientation and parole planning) in Pennsylvania, and various uses of inmate organizations around budget and program proposals. Programs such as these are important indicators of the potential for improving the quality of life in prisons. They are not, however, broadly or solidly enough based to achieve maximal inmate participation in governance effectively. The key to their success has been their limited scope.

Most frequently used as adjuncts to existing programs of discipline, work, and treatment, inmate councils have traditionally had lofty aims and little support from line staff, who often feel this progress to be challenging to their unfettered authority. The values of reason, cooperation, and learning to honor differences become easy to discard. The staff also lose out on a chance to become actual catalysts for change in the lives of those they supervise and reap the benefits of the self-esteem and self-worth that would come from being a change agent in someone’s life. Frequently defined in negative terms—what one does not have to do—human rights also do not carry with them a process by which they can be temporarily suspended in crisis and restored when normalcy returns. When rights are suspended, they tend to be lost.

Prison administrators demand flexibility in crises, and bureaucracies have always had trouble giving and enforcing negative instructions or orders. Democratization has not successfully enhanced the welfare of the incarcerated. The prison system cannot be expected to grant and maintain human rights by policy. Some solidly based, structural component of the system must be created that will have "...as its basic purpose the protection of the human rights of the citizen to complaints against the [prison] government." [Bernard Frank, *The Ombudsman and Human Rights, Revisited*, 1976]. This is the definition of an Ombudsman.

An effective balance between those in custody and the institution or system in which they are incarcerated is the objective of any effort to advance the human rights of prisoners. Both the incarcerated and their respective institutions are legitimate stakeholders. If the rights and concerns of both are recognized and honored, the result will be a more stable, civilized, and less debilitating prison system. Additionally, in preparation for release, the incarcerated will be in a healthier position to assume personal autonomy and begin to recognize their responsibility for taking care of themselves. This results from creating and recognizing a healthier tension (or balance) between the integrity and value of the individual and the institution. The key to this balance is a firm foundation for the Ombudsman, who acts as a balancing agent. Since the office was created in Sweden in 1809 - the word means explicitly an office created by Constitution or statute, responsible to the legislature, whose function is to receive complaints from citizens about governmental actions or inactions. The office, even according to the Oregon Statutes creating it, can act on its initiative or based on a complaint; it has the power to investigate, recommend, and make public reports.

The Ombudsman's office must remain close enough to the subject organization to be effective but not so close as to be under the influence of the system it should be balancing. The philosophy for an ombudsman is that of a fail-safe, last-resort mechanism to achieve what the justice system deems as all-important - justice. Or, an a priori kind of "good." The Ombudsman must see that the individual stands as an equal against the State in the dispute over the issue at hand. The Ombudsman's purpose is not winning. If winning individual complaints begins to be the goal, the ultimate purpose is jeopardized. The Ombudsman is not an advocate, outside of advocating for equity and balance. The Ombudsman is a balancer. "The Ombudsman cannot be bound to the philosophy of combat inherent in the advocacy role." [Richard Fulmer]

Achieving transparency within the walls and fences of prison means that all actions are policy- driven, not personality driven - and that everyone and all stakeholders understand and play by the common playbook. This can be achieved without a major and cataclysmic culture change in prison staff. Ideally, the ideas and outline of such a change must start at the bottom and work its way up the chain of command. Not the other way around. Already there are too many communications that come down from "on high" and are immediately discounted and ignored by line staff. California brings in volunteers to staff and adjudicate disciplinary hearings as a start towards some degree of parity. Who can imagine going to court when the arresting officer(s) are best friends or are in a romantic relationship with the judge and jury?

The Ombudsman cannot be effective without a climate of concern and a desire to do what is right, not just expedient or ego-reinforcing for the staff. Programs like legal services, inmate organizations, volunteer groups, and others that are part of the prison eco system cannot deal with the deepest, most significant, and most natural problems of the prison without the assistance of the Ombudsman position being active and operational.

There is much to suggest, based on prisons already using the idea, that an ombudsman benefits the prison administration as much as if not more than, the inmates. Walter Lippmann has said: "... Unless there is a method, be it through elections or otherwise, by which the governed can make their views effective in some proportion to their weight, the nation is at the mercy of violence in the form of terrorism, assassination, conspiracy, mass compulsion and civil war."

Nothing would be lost from this quotation if "prison" were substituted for "nation." The statement concerns the ultimate relationship between governance and the governed, whether about nations or prisons. An effective correctional ombudsman allows the inmates to make their views known regardless of the system's imbalance.

In the prisons of Oregon, like elsewhere, the idea of rights seems unrealistic, naive, and preposterous as an operating principle of both security and treatment. There is no way for the outside world to compete with the prison's self-stated need for the institutions' ill-defined and too often used "safety and security" of the institutions. This has become a catch-all phrase which translates, to "we don't want to do this..." However, when that is used as a catch-all too often, it wears thin and begs to be backed up by any actual data, not just "Well, if we do this, or allow this...such and such might happen."

Because we can no longer ignore the necessity of assuring human decency to all human beings, we must take the concept of treating the incarcerated as someone who will make a neighbor at some point. Taking seriously the idea of actual transparency in the prison system and fully funding and supporting the balancing efforts of our Ombudsman are logical, reasonable first steps.

WELCOME Deborah Clough, OUR NEWEST BOARD MEMBER

In our last newsletter, we asked for volunteer board members and Deborah stepped right up and attended our December board meeting to see exactly what we do.

She then came back to our January board meeting, and we voted her in. Deborah is still getting familiar with all that there is to do as a board member, and deciding exactly what it is she would like to do, yet in the meantime, has already provided us with valuable input as well as the submission in this newsletter regarding Toastmasters. Thank you and welcome Deborah!

Here is Deborah's bio:

Originally from Northern California I moved to Portland in 2000 for work and to be closer to friends and family. I have come to treasure the beauty and variety of the environment and people of the Northwest.

I am a grateful employee of the American Red Cross for the past 25 years. During those years I have had opportunities for in-depth learning in business management, leadership, finances, employee engagement, problem solving and root cause analysis.

I graduated from the University of Wisconsin at Madison with a baccalaureate degree in English Language, Linguistics, Literature and have a soft spot for communication: books, podcasts, public speaking, etc.

I have been involved with Toastmasters International, an organization that teaches communication and leadership skills, since 2014 and have supported the Rose City Toasters club at Columbia River Correctional Institution since 2017. To say I was inspired by my involvement with Rose City Toasters would be a massive understatement. The experience opened my eyes to the tremendous need for programs in our prisons and how appreciative the men were for the support and encouragement of the program.

I am somewhat 'new' to what goes on in our justice system, and what I see concerns me deeply. I have dear friends both in the system and released from its hold and I see the ways it fails not just them but those around them.

My goal with Oregon CURE is to learn and understand how I can use my skills and heartfelt beliefs about our broken system to bring about positive change.

Outside of work, I am a peer wellness mentor with The Insight Alliance and a regular volunteer with Blanchet House in Portland. I have a niece and nephew that I adore, and a cat named Milo that is somewhat maladjusted, and I cannot guarantee that he won't attempt to shred your face if you try to touch him. Yet I adore him as well.

OMBUDS CORNER

Oregon OMBUDS Office... The Oregon OMBUDS, Adrian Wulff, is up and running, although start-up has been a little slow. Oregon has not had an OMBUDS position for many years, and only recently has the legislature decided to fund the position, operating out of the Governor's Office and with broad statutory authority for investigations, oversight, and making recommendations to the Oregon Department of Corrections. The process of gearing up such an endeavor, especially with the wide-ranging list of TORT claims against the DOC, ranging from retaliation to medical issues, to problems with Adult in Custody phone contact, has resulted in the start-up time being challenging and less than enthusiastically welcomed by some. That said, progress is being made, and significant steps forward will be achieved in the next six months.

The contact information is here if you have an issue or concern that you believe the OMBUDS office needs to be aware of.

HOTLINE: 888-685-6842

EMAIL: DOC.OMBUDS@oregon.gov

Attn: Oregon Corrections OMBUDS

900 Court Street, NE Suite 254

Salem OR 97301-4047

The system is being set up so all inquiries, reports, suggestions, etc., will be responded to more promptly. Remember that for Adults in Custody, the internal GRIEVANCE process MUST be followed before the OMBUDS office can get involved. However, to keep tabs on issues, any information you have regarding problems, challenges, or situations is beneficial to know about.

SHOP & SUPPORT OREGON CURE

You can benefit Oregon CURE when you shop at any Kroger/Fred Meyer Store. Simply sign up at Kroger.com. link your shopper's card if you already have one or sign up for one and choose Oregon CURE as the organization you wish to benefit from your shopping with each transaction.

Once you sign up, any transaction you make moving

forward using your membership Shoppers Card number will benefit Oregon CURE at no expense to you.

Kroger will donate a percentage of what you spend with them to Oregon CURE. What a great way to benefit our non-profit.

SUPPORT US IN OTHER WAYS

Oregon Cure appreciates your donations and support. Click to see the full QR code and scan to go directly to our PayPal link.



HOW DOES YOUR DONATION HELP?

It pays for our phone service, post office box, and postage to correspond with those who write to us, both in the free world and the incarcerated, it pays to print and mail our newsletters, and it pays for our non-profit status.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

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 is \$3 and Individual Non-Incarcerated subscription donation is \$15. **All tax-deductible donations are greatly appreciated and can be made in any amount. Visit our website at oregoncure.com.**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____
(optional)

City/State/Zip: _____

Name of incarcerated loved one / SID & facility: _____

PUBLICATION NOTICE

This newsletter is a publication of Oregon CURE. Oregon CURE is a 501 (c)(3) organization whose goal is to reduce crime through criminal justice reform. 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. Oregon CURE is an all-volunteer organization that is not a service organization. Do not send us any legal documents, we are not a legal service. We are not qualified to assist you with legal matters.

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' departments listed below to confirm the date, time, and location.

Washington County

Contact: Michelle Scholl (503) 846-3455

Marion County

Contact: Austin Herman (503) 540-8043

INTAKE ORIENTATIONS

Intake Orientations are co-facilitated by the Oregon Department of Corrections and Oregon CURE. Find out about Oregon's prison system, the intake process, phones, mail, and visiting requirements. There will be opportunities to ask questions and learn how you can get through your loved one's incarceration. Please email for Zoom link prior to meeting:
oregoncure@gmail.com or admin@oregoncure.com

7PM-7:30PM First Wednesdays via Zoom

Portland Metro

Location: Varies - please call Oregon CURE to confirm: (503) 844-9145 or email oregoncure@gmail.com

Oregon CURE
7805 SW 40th Ave.
PO Box 80193
Portland, OR 97280

ATTENTION:

Your address label has printed your renewal-date, below your name. This will be your last newsletter if your renewal date has passed. [Renew today to remain informed!](#)



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”.

Some of these support groups meet via zoom and some meet in person. Please reach out with the contact information given below as you are planning to attend, or if you have any questions. There is no limit to which of or how often you attend a support group, nor is there a location requirement, if you are interested in attending a support group, we welcome you to do so.

Each meeting offers different insights and valuable information, and you are not required to share anything it all, if you do not wish to, simply listen and learn from other attendees.

Portland East Side Support Group

Varies & flexible – please call if interested.
Please call Ray at (503) 421-0269.
RayAllenFox@gmail.com

Eugene Support Groups

1st Thursdays: 6:30-8:30pm
Please call to confirm location.
Dave (541) 344-7612 or Don (541) 521-2231

Zoom Support Group

1st Wednesdays: 7:00-8:30pm
Please email for Zoom link prior to meeting.
oregoncure@gmail.com or admin@oregoncure.com

Salem Support Group

1st Saturdays: 9:30-11:30am
The Keizer Senior Center
930 Plymouth Drive NE, Keizer, OR 97303
Wayne (971) 432-0148