



VALUES-BASED WELLNESS PLAN FOR CORRECTIONS
HUMANIZATION & WELLNESS

IIII FOURTH PURPOSE FOUNDATION

MAKING PRISON A PLACE OF TRANSFORMATION

INTRODUCTION



- While the pervasive “hardness” in corrections has been normalized as the product of working with the offender population, the depth of physical, mental, and emotional damage to the staff was unrealized.
- The implementation of global best practices, particularly a values-based model of humanization, are needed to achieve better staff and offender outcomes.

COURSE OBJECTIVES



At the end of this course, the participant will be able to:

- Understand the subconscious tendency toward a punitive orientation: negative bias, depersonalization, and inappropriate use of power often seen in the corrections setting.
- Articulate the framework of the humanization/rehabilitation model, and why it leads to better resilience to burnout and better mental/emotional/spiritual health.

CORRECTIONS DESIGN



- The typical “design” of corrections tends toward hardness. We’ve normalized it, not realizing the depth of physical, mental, and emotional damage to our staff.
 - **39%** more likely to commit suicide (than general population)
 - High rates of depression, anxiety, PTSD
 - **20%** more likely to divorce
 - Negative workplace culture
 - More than half say the job has negatively impacted their family and social life
 - Decreased life expectancy by an average of **16** years

THE “DARK SIDE” OF CORRECTIONS



- 200 years of U.S. penal system
 - Punitive orientation of staff well documented
- Last decade of research findings
 - Poor physical, mental, and emotional outcomes
- The field of neuroscience points to potential causes
- Are we attracting a particular “type”, or are we producing a particular “type”?

CORRECTIONAL FATIGUE



- Term coined by Dr. Caterina Spinaris of Desert Waters
- *“Consequences or manifestations of Corrections Fatigue include negative personality changes, socially dysfunctional thinking/ideology, and forms of declined health and functioning.”*
- *“... involves the gradual wear-and-tear of the spirit, soul, and body of correctional staff as they adapt to the demands of their workplace and career.”*

PSYCHOLOGICAL RESPONSES



- Over time, the natural, adaptive, physiological response to the typical correctional setting will push a staff member to:
 1. More likely see the offender as an adversary (a threat)
 2. More likely be apathetic or resistant to the offender's rehabilitation and well-being
 3. More likely to see the world through a negative lens, with little empathy and decreased ability to have meaningful connections
- This natural tendency can be overridden only when the executive functioning of the brain draws from a reservoir of values and beliefs, which formulates better possible outcomes

SAFETY FIRST



- Keep staff safe; maintain all the tools and training to prioritize safety
- Firm, fair, and consistent
- Strong and sure in your space
- Professional, not personal; training to prevent being compromised
- Build on that bedrock how to “think” better so that your heart and mind stay healthy and fully engaged in humanity

VALUES-BASED WELLNESS INTERVENTIONS



- There are various wellness interventions in place now; a values-based approach is needed to work through the dissonance of corrections, prevent moral injury, and equip a soul to withstand the demands of working in a corrections environment.
- Global best practices demonstrate correctional cultures shaped by values, beliefs, and norms that promote human dignity and rehabilitation yield improved staff well-being, retention, and job satisfaction. Improved offender outcomes have resulted as well.

DISSONANCE OF CORRECTIONS



- A human dignity and rehabilitation focus creates a sense of dissonance in the mind of the typical corrections narrative.
- A human dignity and rehabilitation focus of corrections will require staff to “exercise” certain values/beliefs muscles.
- When the solid ground is established under the everyday staff/offender interactions, standing firm on determined values and beliefs, the staff member is more likely to have higher resistance to job stress, better mental and physical well-being, and increased job satisfaction.

MINDSET CONTINUUM



PUNITIVE

PUNISHMENT FOCUS

“BAD GUYS DOING TIME”

NEGATIVE IMPACT ON WELLBEING

REHABILITATIVE

HUMAN DIGNITY FOCUS

REENRTRY/RESTORATION MINDSET

WORK TO FOSTER CHANGE

POSITIVE WELLBEING; PURPOSE

HUMAN DIGNITY



- Doesn't mean we are soft on crime.
- Holds in tandem the justice system/public safety responsibility and a redemption/reconciliation system.
- Investing in the recovery of the inmate is the other half of public safety.
 - 95% of those in state custody will return to society at some point.
 - Because of our values, we want society to be safe and every person restored to a right mind and a good life.

HUMAN DIGNITY & SECURITY PRACTICES



- Consequences of behavior are still enforced.
- Human dignity approach is compatible with safety and security.

“Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.”

-Jesus

- Discernment about your setting and potential of danger, yet always with an intention of goodwill (i.e., as with good parenting).

EVERY HUMAN HAS INTRINSIC WORTH



- I act based on my virtue, not based on the actions of others
- The intrinsic worth of others is not up to my judgment (dangerous slide)
- I treat others with respect based on who I am

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among those are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”

- Declaration of Independence, 1776

When we exercise this values muscle until it is strong and reliable, we no longer do the draining mental calculations to determine how to respond based on how we feel.

HUMAN DIGNITY EXERCISE



When you feel that rage/hatred/disgust well up:

- 1) Recognize the emotion & consider possible sources:
 - a. The evil this person is responsible for
 - b. Continued bad behavior
- 2) Remind yourself that justice is served; on-going bad behavior has consequences, but we don't exceed those limits
- 3) Recognize that your actions display your character, not theirs
- 4) Their intrinsic worth is not up to you (all men created equal)
- 5) Do I want to see them crushed or redeemed?

DEFAULT SETTING



- Physiologically, our “base” brain sees the offender as a threat, as an enemy.
- Our vigilance enhances the bad and filters out the good.
- Our state of burnout causes us to depersonalize and become callous and detached.
- Our “Place of Power” tends to want to suppress the growth and advancement of those under us.
- Our values and beliefs determine our position to be used for good for another. Character and virtue are displayed by the ability to rise above the base nature.

THE BRAIN'S FILTER FOR SURVIVAL



Negative Bias	Depersonalization	Power Role	Social Narrative
Trauma exposure & risk of injury causes the brain to have a negative filter	Stage 2 of Burnout- Brain shortcuts to Depersonalization & Detachment as a response to unmanaged stress	The brain sees social power/standing as a means of survival; wants more power & resistant to seeing others get it	Inmates seen as social outcasts & "bad" people
Vigilance & hypervigilance cause hyper-focus on the negative & filter out "good" as unnecessary for survival	Necessity of custody & control for the entirety of inmate population; inability to see the individual	Power roles cause a decrease in empathy	Social reinforcement allows for this type of treatment

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



- Have you ever witnessed when a promotion changed the attitude of a co-worker? How does this relate to what science suggests about power and empathy?
- Now consider the young, new CO, who has been given authority over those housed in his/her unit. How would you advise him/her on handling the role in a healthy way?
- Describe how one's values and beliefs can be used to interpret a power role in a positive way.

REHABILITATION ORIENTATION



- Desiring and investing in the recovery of offenders promotes a mindset of goodwill.
 - Promotes wellbeing and provides sense of purpose and encourages empathy.
 - Creates team approach among security and treatment staff.
 - Working to see good overcome evil promotes a sense of meaning in an environment of brokenness.
- This is actively working against the brain's survival default of a negative bias.
- This also works against the negative framework of vigilance (we find what we are expecting to find).

HUMAN DIGNITY/REHABILITATION



- Helps us understand our own position of worthiness.
- Helps heal the “us vs them” divide, and allows us to interface with humanity at work and at home.
- Helps ground us in reality, and in the present, resisting the default to the “should” world.
- Protects against the gripping and lasting effect of rage/hatred; opting for wisdom and good leadership.

BE THE CHANGE YOU WANT TO SEE IN THE WORLD



"Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that."

- Martin Luther King Jr., 1963

MORAL INJURY?



- A significant study revealed that **1 in 10** current correctional staff experience suicidal thoughts.
- The rate increases to **1 in 7** after retirement.
- Perhaps this is from the accumulation of unresolved and unprocessed trauma.
- Or perhaps it is related to what the military refers to as “moral injury”.

MORAL INJURY



- Moral injury can occur when an individual acts (or fails to act) in a way that violates one's own morals, values, or beliefs.
 - Work self vs. home self
- The goal of this training is to provide a place of integration, syncing up your values and beliefs with your everyday practices at work, reducing your risk of moral injury.

FOREIGN MODELS



- Better outcomes, for both staff and offender, are demonstrated when humanization and normalization models are employed.

- Germany
- Norway
- Brazil (APAC)
- Singapore

*Adopting a humanization model will require change at the individual values/beliefs/attitudes level.

WE MUST TAKE HOLD OF THE NARRATIVE

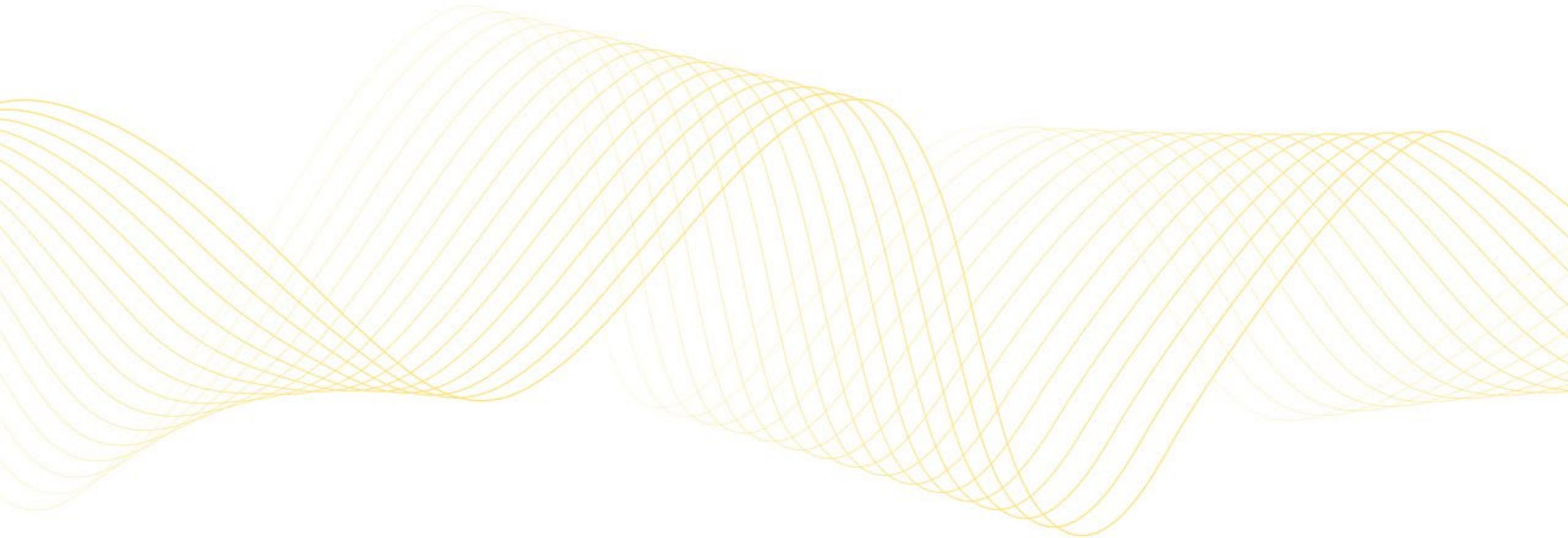


When we truly understand the importance of our own story, we can tell it compellingly.

PRISON HAS A PURPOSE



<https://vimeo.com/697002018>



ROLE PLAYS



- 1) You see an inmate whom you know committed a crime you find hard to deal with. His mother has recently died, and you can tell his mental and possibly his physical state is deteriorating. With one person being the inmate, and you as the staff member, how do you respond?
- 2) A colleague strongly dislikes an inmate and makes snide comments every time they pass. What do you do in the situation?
- 3) One of you act as an inmate and the other as an officer. Play out a negative count time experience then act out how that experience could become a more positive one in which human dignity was modeled.

CLOSING



- Poor staff outcomes have tended to become a normal part of corrections.
- The implementation of global best practices, particularly the values-based model of humanization, are needed to achieve better staff and offender outcomes.
- As we focus on values-based wellness interventions, we distinguish and elevate the corrections career, which will improve public perception and increase the valor of our workforce.

discussion

