

# Great Wardens Project

## Reducing Isolation for Corrections Leaders

January 23, 2025

# Tech Check

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Mute

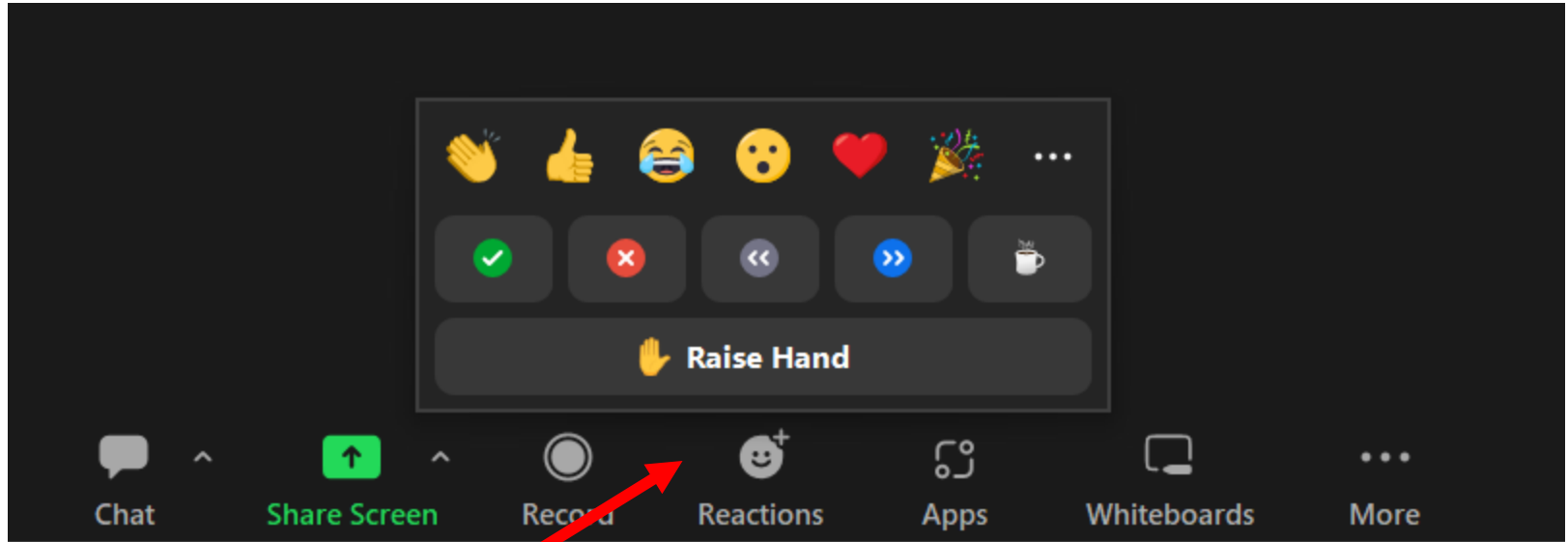
Video

Chat



# Join the Conversation

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# Mission

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The Great Wardens Project provides mentorship and training to develop bold prison leaders and build a corrections culture based on safety and dignity.

# Core Beliefs

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- Wardens and Superintendents have a responsibility to promote safe, secure, and healthy corrections facilities.
- Advocates and prison leaders can work together to reimagine how corrections facilities operate and shape a new generation of committed corrections professionals.

# Today's Speakers

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**Art Beeler**

Federal Bureau of Prisons, ret.



**Jessica Serrano Seipel**

Just Detention International

# Meet Our Task Force

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# Discussion

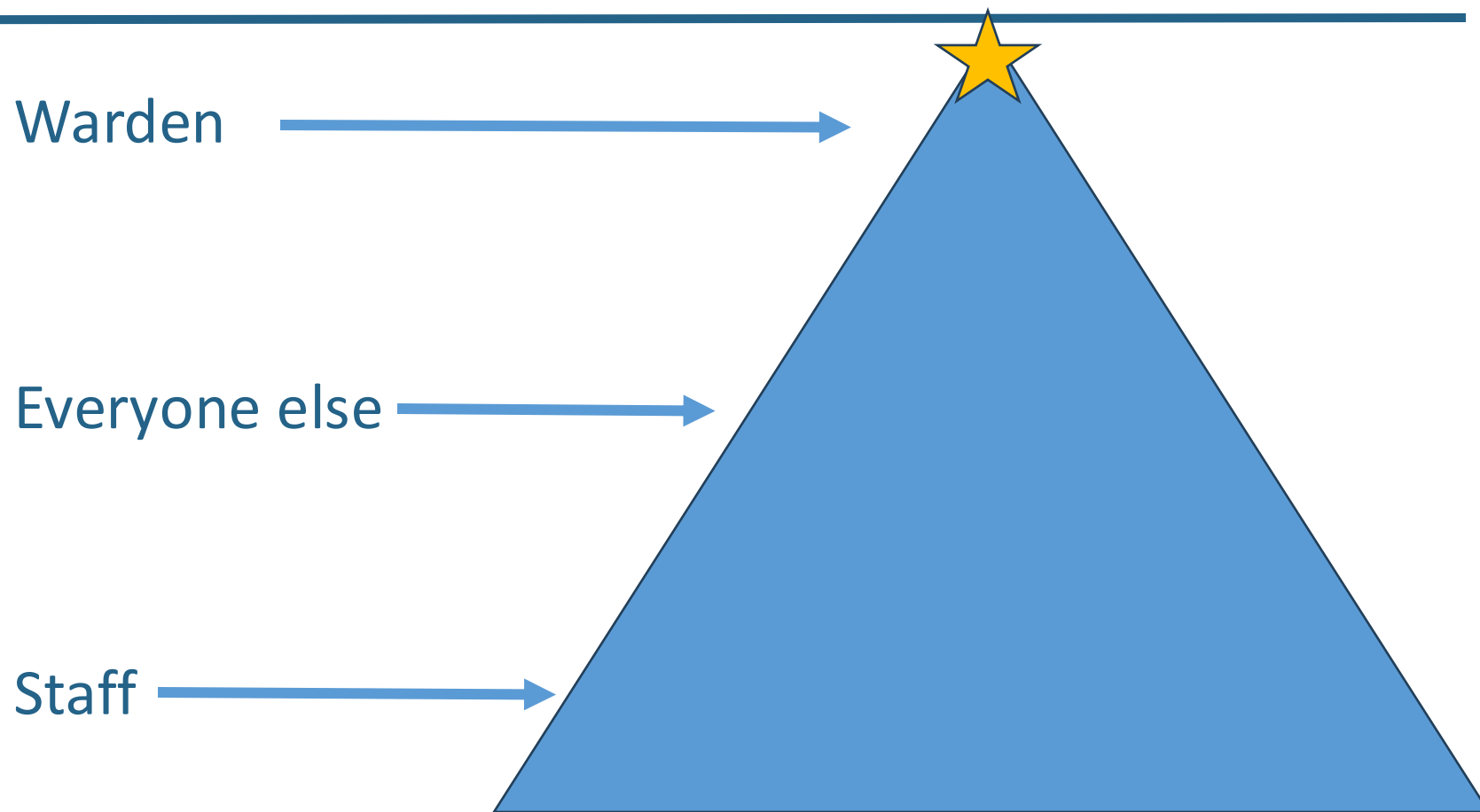
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**They say it's lonely at the  
top....**



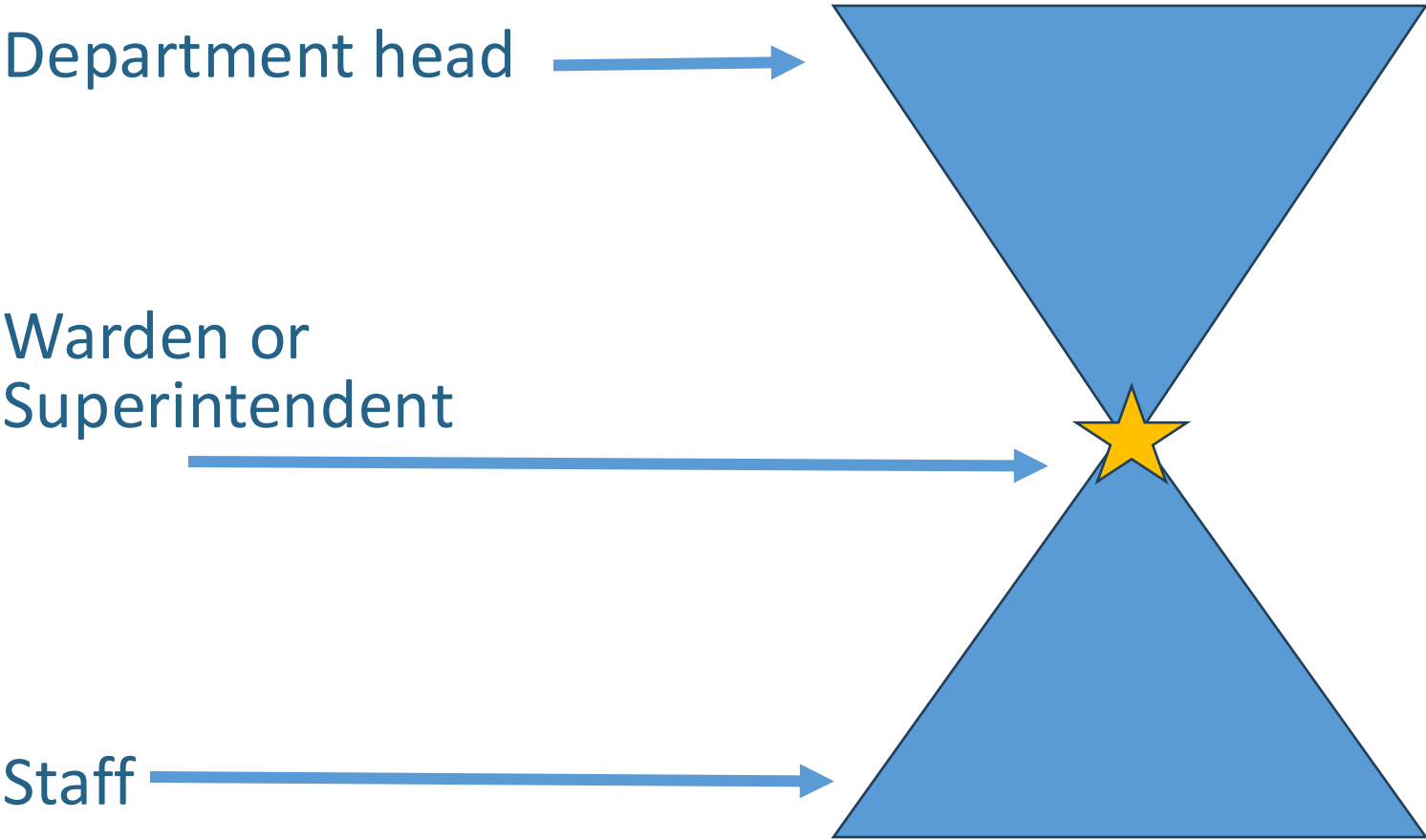
# Staff's Perspective

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# Warden Perspective

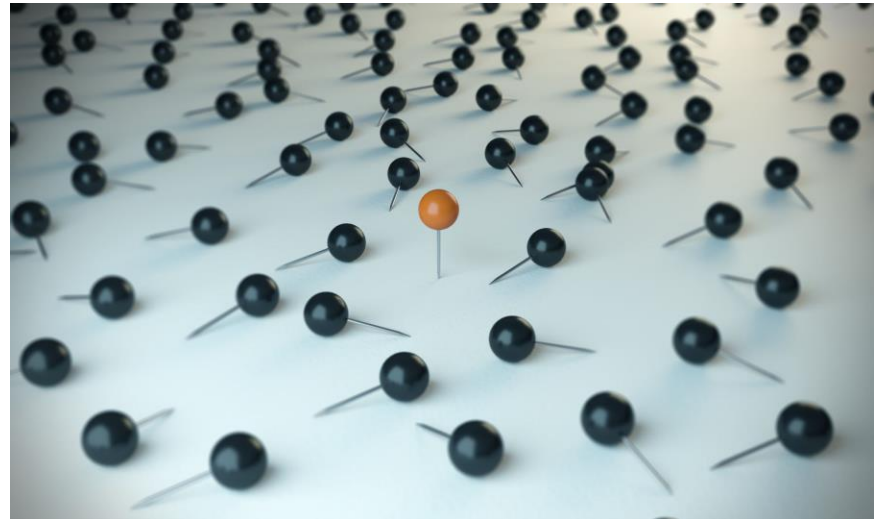
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# Leadership and Isolation

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- Weight of consequences
- Hierarchy and power dynamics
- Distance from on-the-ground work
- Project image of confidence
- Imposter syndrome



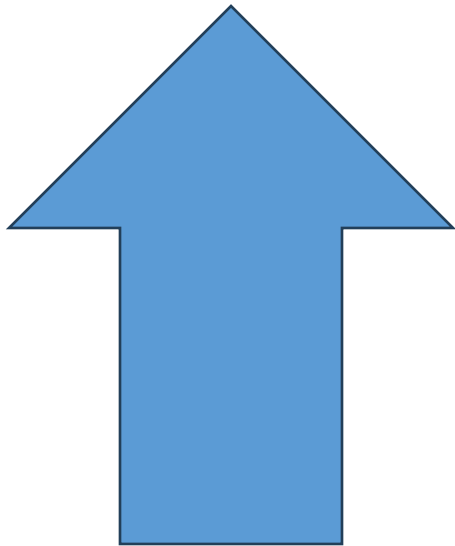
# Corrections Fatigue

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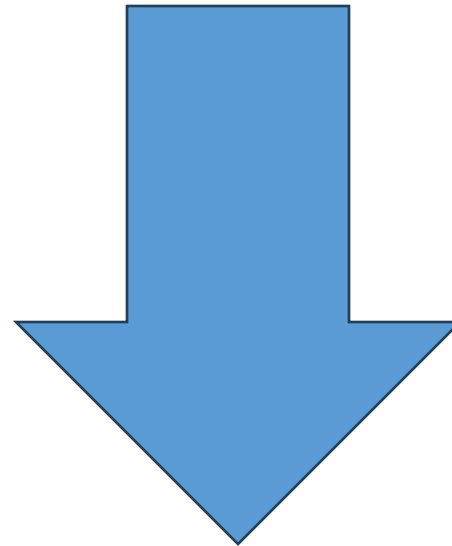
"The cumulative and commingled effects of operational, organizational, and traumatic stressors on an individual staff's personality, health, and functioning, as well as *core beliefs and behaviors*." - Dr Catarina Spinaris, Desert Waters

# Stage 1 of Corrections Fatigue

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High demand  
environment



Low capacity  
to cope

# Stages 2 of Corrections Fatigue

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Depersonalization

# Stage 3 of Corrections Fatigue

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**ISOLATION**



# Discussion

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How have you approached conversations about corrections fatigue in your facility?



# Shifting Mindsets

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- "Us vs them" mentality is common
- Creates an adversarial posture as the default
- Hostility begets hostility
- Finding positive meaning becomes challenging



# Creating Meaning

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- Rallying around a united vision
- Being intentional about making – and maintaining – connections
- Sharing the success stories



# Finding Balance

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- Safety and humanization
- History and possibility
- Strength and kindness
- *Us and them*



# Wellness Tips

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- Long-term goal rather than short-term effort
- Find your champions
- Initiatives must be bi-directional
- Wardens need wellness too!



# Discussion

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How do you create meaning in your work? How do you create meaning for your staff?

# Remember!

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- If it were easy, we'd all have it figured out by now
- Many hands make light work. You can do anything, but not everything.
- You are not alone!



# Get Involved

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For additional information, please visit our website at: [greatwardens.org](http://greatwardens.org)

**Direct questions**

**to:** [greatwardens@justdetention.org](mailto:greatwardens@justdetention.org)

**Connect with JDI:**



[www.facebook.com/JDIonFB](http://www.facebook.com/JDIonFB)



[www.twitter.com/justdetention](http://www.twitter.com/justdetention)



# Next Summit

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SAVE THE DATE!

April 17, 2025



# Resources

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[Corrections1: How 'us against them' causes corrections fatigue](#)

[Desert Waters: Mission Critical – Correctional Employee Health and Wellness](#)

[NAAWS – North American Association of Wardens and Superintendents](#)



# EVALUATION

Please take a moment to share your thoughts before logging off

Thank you!