

REENTRY PACKET

Your Customized Guide to Support your Successful Transition



National Web-based Reentry Resource Center

www.fairshake.net

This Reentry Packet has been customized for: SCI Camp Hill

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Relationships – Proceed With Caution

The Mental Health Foundation defines relationships as ‘the way in which two or more people are connected, or the state of being connected’. Relationships include the intimate relationships we have with our partners, ties that we form with our parents, siblings and grandparents; and the bonds that we form socially with our friends, work colleagues, teachers, healthcare professionals and community.

If you don't trust people, people will not trust you. – Lao Tzu

You don't see things as they are. You see them as you are. – Talmud

More from the Mental Health Foundation:

Relationships are one of the most important aspects of our lives, yet we can often forget just how crucial our connections with other people are for our physical and mental health and wellbeing. People who are more socially connected to family, friends, or their community are happier, physically healthier and live longer, with fewer mental health problems than people who are less well connected.

It's not the number of friends you have, and it's not whether or not you're in a committed relationship; it's the quality of your close relationships that matters. Living in conflict or within a toxic relationship is more damaging than being alone. As a society and as individuals, we must invest in building and maintaining good relationships and tackling the barriers to forming them.

Having close, positive relationships can give us a purpose and sense of belonging. Loneliness and isolation remain the key predictors for poor psychological and physical health. Having a lack of good relationships and long-term feelings of loneliness have been shown by a range of studies to be associated with higher rates of mortality, poor physical health outcomes and lower life satisfaction. In seeking to combat loneliness and isolation, however, we need to be aware that poor-quality relationships can be toxic and worse for our mental health than being alone. Research shows that people in unhappy or negative relationships have significantly worse outcomes than those who are isolated or have no relationships.

Longer working hours, money problems and less time to spend with family have been reported as some of the most important stress factors for relationships. Having few close relationships has been linked to higher rates of depression and stress in older adults.

Engaging in community helps us feel connected, supported and gives us a sense of belonging. Involvement in local activities, such as volunteering or playing sports as part of a team, has been shown to improve mental health and wellbeing.

When it comes to keeping physically well, we recognize that exercise and eating well require commitment and dedication. We need to adopt a similar approach to building and maintaining good relationships! For many of us, our approach to building and maintaining relationships is passive – it is something we do subconsciously and without deliberate effort. We often overlook that it requires an investment of time to maintain good relationships.

Five things we can do to build our feelings of connection:

1. Put more time aside to connect with friends and family.
2. Try to be present in the moment and be there for your loved ones.
3. Actively listen to what others are saying and concentrate on their needs in that moment.
4. Share how you are feeling, honestly, and allow yourself to be listened to and supported.
5. Foster healthy relationships: being around positive people can increase our mental and our physical health!

Tips for building relationships and learning to trust:

- Be honest with yourself. If you are honest with yourself, you can be honest with other people
- Express your concerns
- Go slowly! Do not idealize the situation; consider the relationship clearly and thoughtfully
- Build trust step by step. Start trusting each other in small matters
- Trust is a perception of honesty; competence and value similarly are essential
- We creatively build our reality through social interaction using social structure as our guiding behavior
- Remember: The judgments we make about others depend not only on their behavior but on our interpretation of the social situation

Love and Relationships

Regardless of how old we are, if we can think, we have thought about love. We know the definition is very broad, but we often allow ourselves to be duped into thinking "love" means "romantic relationship". Love certainly includes romantic relationships, but it is really so much more.

Almost everyone wants:

- To feel valued / valuable.
- To love and feel loved.
- To feel safe.
- To make sense of our life.
- To share joys and sorrows with close friends or family.

Why do we lie?

- To look good. We choose to present an image of ourselves as attractive and desirable. We are afraid to share information that may make us look bad.
- To avoid unpleasantness. We conceal information that we believe may cause conflict. We go to great lengths to create false, superficial harmony. We get to know ourselves and each other better as we reveal and negotiate our differences.
- To avoid hurting feelings. We don't want to upset people by saying something that might hurt or make them angry.

Detecting lies can be difficult. Scrutinize three elements: voice, body language, and facial expression. Other possible signs of loss of trust: withholding information, mixed messages, refusing to negotiate.

Basic Sociological and Relationship Concepts

Uncertainty Reduction Theory:

Uncertainty is unpleasant and therefore motivational; people communicate to reduce it.

Strangers, upon meeting, go through certain steps and checkpoints in order to reduce uncertainty about each other and form an idea of whether one likes or dislikes the other. The contents of the exchanges are often demographic and transactional. Where are you from? Do you have any pets? Demographic information is obtained: sex, age, economic, or social status.

When the new acquaintances are ready to get to know each other better, they begin to explore the attitudes and beliefs of the other by asking questions about values, morals, and personal issues. They feel less constrained by rules and norms and tend to communicate more freely with each other. One factor which reduces uncertainty between communicators is the degree of similarity individuals perceive in each other (in background, attitudes, and appearance).

Three basic ways people seek information about another person:

- Passive – observation only, no contact
- Active – ask others about the person in question
- Interactive – communicate directly with the person

The primary determinant of individual behavior is the social situation in which that behavior occurs. Social roles, competition, or the mere presence of others can profoundly influence how we behave. We usually adapt our behavior to the demands of the social situation, and in ambiguous situations we take our cues from the behavior of others.

Terms

Social Construction of Reality: Refers to the process by which individuals build reality through social interaction. While statuses and roles structure our lives, we shape our patterns of interaction with others. People build reality from the surrounding culture. Therefore, perceptions of reality vary both within a single society and among societies the world over.

Social Norms: “Unwritten rules.” Adjustment to a group typically involves discovering its social norms. Two ways: Noticing uniformities and observing negative consequences.

Social Reality: Subjective interpretations of other people and of our relationships. Social Reality determines whom we find attractive, whom we find threatening, whom we seek out and whom we avoid. The judgments we make about others depend not only on their behavior but on our interpretations of the social situation.

Principle of Proximity: Frequent contact best predicts our closest relationships.

Self-Disclosure: Sends signals of trust. “Here is a piece of information that I want you to know about me, and I trust you not to hurt me with it.”

Nonverbal Communication: This concept refers to communication using, not speech, but body movements, gestures, and facial expressions. Types of body language – smiles, eye contact, and hand movements. Most nonverbal communication is culture-specific. Three ways in which emotional life differs cross-culturally include: (1) what triggers an emotion, (2) how people display emotions according to the norms of culture, and (3) how people cope with emotions.

Similarity: People usually find it more rewarding to strike up a friendship with someone who shares their attitudes, interests, values, and experiences. If we have just discovered that we share tastes in music, politics, and attitudes toward education, we will probably hit it off because we have, in effect, exchanged compliments that reward each other for our tastes and attitudes. Most people find marriage partners of the same age, race, social status, attitudes, and values.

Terms Continued...

Expectancy-Value Theory: People usually decide whether to pursue a relationship by weighing the value they see in another person against their expectation of success in the relationship (Will the other person be attracted to me?). People with low opinions of themselves tend to establish relationships with people who share their views, that is, with people who devalue them. On the other hand, individuals who appear to be extremely competent can be intimidating; we fear they will reject our approaches. When highly competent individuals commit minor blunders, however, we like them better.

Cognitive Dissonance Theory: Mental adjustments that account for people who voluntarily undergo unpleasant experiences. When people's cognitions and actions are in conflict (dissonance) they often reduce the conflict by changing their thinking (cognition) to fit their behavior. This explains why smokers rationalize their habit.

Becoming an Ex: This experience is common to most people in modern society. Unlike individuals in earlier cultures who usually spent their entire lives in one career, one marriage, one religion, or one geographic locality; people living in today's world tend to move in and out of many roles in the course of a lifetime. It's hard to shake former roles, however, so the 'ex' must repeatedly demonstrate the behaviors of the new roles they are in.

Cooperation can change people: Working with diverse people we learn all people are just people, not objects to be hated and/or loved for their perceived and distant media or culture-derived social value. We share a small country and a small planet! We are mutually interdependent on each other. Whether we recognize this or not, we have a working relationship based on shared goals.

Power of the Situation: Can have a strong influence! What happens when you put good people in an evil place? Check out this simulation study of the psychology of imprisonment, called the Stanford Prison Experiment, conducted in 1971:
<http://www.prisonexp.org/>

Discrimination: A negative behavior, an action taken against an individual as a result of her or his group membership.

The source of discrimination and prejudice that is perhaps the most pervasive is an unthinking tendency to maintain conditions the way they are:

- Even when those conditions involve unfair assumptions prejudices and customs. If similarity breeds liking, then dissimilarity can breed disdain.
- Find commonalities! Social distance can make it easier to treat members of an 'out-group' with contempt.

Fundamental Attribution Error: We tend to attribute other peoples actions and misfortunes to their personal traits rather than to situational forces. This helps explain why we often hear attribution of laziness or low intelligence to people who aren't wildly financially successful.

For ourselves, however, we attribute our success to internal factors, such as motivation, talent or skill. We attribute our failures to external factors beyond our control, called a self-serving bias; probably rooted in the need for self-esteem due to social pressures to excel.

Prejudice: A negative attitude toward an individual based solely on his or her membership in a particular group. Prejudiced attitudes serve as filters that influence the way others are perceived and treated. Discrimination is a negative behavior, an action taken against an individual as a result of her or his group membership.

The Fair Shake Resource Directory

The Resource Directory is a n easy-to-use information clearing house! We gather and maintain links and addresses to services for all 50 states. Just enter your state, city and/or zip code, and distance you are able

to travel. The search tool will then look through the data base for goods, services and information at the national, state and local level.

Resource Directory features include:

- Over 14,000 Entries!
- Resources on every level; from National to Local
- Build a printable document to print by **+Save-**ing resources
- Members can create their own Resource Directory
- The directory is constantly growing and is well-maintained

Search

State: <input type="text"/> City or Zip Code: <input type="text"/> Within: <input type="text" value="5 Miles"/> <input type="button" value="v"/> <input type="button" value="Search Resources"/> <input type="button" value="Reset"/>	Guide to our Resource Directory: Click here to see the list of categories. Click here to find out where resources can be found. (Under the local, state or national heading) Resource Directory Tutorial Click to see State and Local Reentry Guides
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Categories and Sub-Categories

Citizenship Birth Certificate Community Development Community Involvement Consumer Services Expungement Dept. of Motor Vehicles Licensing Information Legal Assistance Protection from Discrimination Voting Rights	Employment Employment Services Second Chance Employers Job Training Licensing Information Employment Programs Temp and Permanent Staffing Agency Department of Labor Workforce Development	Food Food Stamps Free Meals Soup Kitchens Free Free Stuff Health Addiction Recovery American Red Cross Counseling Services Mental Health Support Rehabilitation Center Free/Sliding Scale Clinic Free/Sliding Scale Dental HIV/AIDS Services Homeless Health Care Dept. of Human Services Substance Abuse	Money Finances / Budgeting Reentry Resources Reentry Resources Reentry Programs Multiple Resources Available Shelter Energy Assistance Homelessness Assistar Homeless Shelter Low-Income Housing Shelters for Specific Gr Transitional Housing	Special Considerations Disability Support Veterans Youth Elders Sex Offense Reentry Volunteer Volunteer opportunities Your Leisure Time Leisure Activities
Clothing Free Clothes Thrift Stores Interview and Career Clothing	Family Family Services Child Care Child Support Mentoring Dept. of Human Services Parenting Food Food Pantry			

Where to Find Resources

Local Community Development Community Involvement Legal Assistance Interview and Career Clothing Free Clothes Licensing Information Job Training Temp and Permanent Staffing Agency Child Care Child Support Dept. of Health and Human Services Family Services Food Pantry Soup Kitchen Free Stuff Dept. of Human Services Counseling Services	Local Free/Sliding Scale Clinic Free/Sliding Scale Dental HIV/AIDS Services Homeless Health Care Mental Health Support Substance Abuse Finances/Budget Help Reentry Resources Reentry Programs Energy Assistance Homeless Assistance Low-income Housing Shelters for Specific Groups Transitional Housing Disability Support Elders Veterans Volunteer Opportunities Your Leisure Time	State Birth Certificate Consumer Services Department of Motor Vehicles Licensing Information Sex Offense Reentry Voting Rights Employment Services Workforce Development Child Care	State Child Support Dept. of Health and Human Services Food Stamps HIV/AIDS Services Low-Income Housing Reentry Resources Reentry Programs Energy Assistance Transitional Housing Disability Support Elders Veterans Your Leisure Time	Nationwide Sex Offense Reentry Voting Rights Free Stuff Finances / Budget Help Reentry Resources Reentry Programs Veterans Your Leisure Time
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Working Through Depression

Depression *noun* Severe, typically prolonged, feelings of despondency and dejection, typically felt over a period of time and accompanied by feelings of hopelessness and inadequacy. (source: the Oxford (online) Dictionary)

As Americans, it is common to feel like we are supposed to be happy. TIME magazine* recently announced “Americans are wired to be happy”, and reminded us that we made the pursuit of happiness “a central mandate of the national character” when we declared it a basic human right.

With so much emphasis placed on feeling good, it should come as no surprise that when we don’t feel happy, we may feel like something is wrong.

In fact, when we feel lonely, inadequate or disheartened as we search for meaning in our lives, our friends and family and even professionals often encourage us to strive to feel good again - as soon as possible - whether through distractions (shopping, media and superficial social connections, etc) or pain relievers (drugs, alcohol, food). It is rare to receive sympathy and support to simply *feel* our discomfort as we reflect, contemplate, grow, and become stronger and more capable through a natural and important process.

When we experience painful emotions we often feel alone. Sometimes we think we are the only person who feels this sad, hurt, alone or lost. However, people all over the world experience these difficult feelings.

Painful emotions are not bad; they are actually powerful guides to self-fulfillment.

- They help us clarify our values.
- They help us find meaning in our lives and see our unique perspective and qualities.
- They allow us to stop moving forward for a moment so we can reflect and think critically.
- They can motivate us through tough spots to more deliberately plot out our life course.
- They help us understand the suffering of others; and realize that we are not alone when we suffer.

All of our emotions - the pleasant ones *and* the difficult ones - are vital for our well-being!

We will most likely feel grief, loss, powerlessness, disrespected, compromised, inauthentic, abandoned, anxious, overwhelmed, unworthy, melancholy, or even a sense of hopelessness at some point in our lives, yet none of us will experience depression in the same way as anyone else. The good news is: we can work through most forms of depression without drugs. Everything we need is either already in our possession or can be found in the natural world around us.

There are many books, classes, groups, articles, and television shows on depression. The content of this brief document does not support or refute any existing information. Our sole intention here is to reinforce a positive and enabling perspective about growing through tough emotions rather than denying them through distractions or pain relievers. We grow in important ways through our human challenges.

Depression is related to our thinking; our perception of our memories, our fears, our failures, our hopes. It’s mostly a modern illness and has been growing consistently since the industrial age which, paradoxically, is celebrated for making our lives easier. According to Dr. Stephen Ilardi, author of *The Depression Cure*, indigenous cultures – who are dedicated to living in connection to their environment and to each other – do not experience depression.

When we feel sad, hopeless or depressed, we often feel like we don’t have a choice in how we experience these feelings....but we almost always do. We can’t eliminate depression by pretending we can ‘let it go’ without effort. We begin to rise out of it by looking at our situation through a different perspective. We can see different perspectives by considering philosophical, psychological and sociological concepts. This sounds rather ‘academic’, but we’ve been using techniques identified in these fields of study everyday since we were very young.

* TIME magazine: July 8, 2013

Below are just a few of these perspectives that we use everyday:

Pessimism vs Optimism: (inspired by Dr. Martin Seligman)

Optimism *noun* Hopefulness and confidence about the future or the successful outcome of something. (source: the Oxford (online) Dictionary)

Pessimism *noun* A tendency to see the worst aspect of things or believe that the worst will happen; a lack of hope or confidence in the future.

(source: the Oxford (online) Dictionary)

Optimists believe that tough times are temporary, that hurdles build character and that most problems are surmountable. An optimistic perspective uses a Specific, External and Temporary lens (see below). We are optimists when we can see solutions, and also when we realize situations will change and beneficial opportunities will again present themselves.

Optimism is a tool with a certain clear set of benefits: it fights depression, it promotes achievement and produces better health. ~ Dr. Martin Seligman

Pessimists focus on what's wrong and what's difficult; they believe they are victims. They blame others for their situation. They believe that they are inadequate to fend off tough times, which are constantly threatening. A pessimistic perspective looks through a Permanent, Personal, and Pervasive (PPP) lens. We are pessimists when we believe we are incapable of doing whatever it is we need / want to do, when we blame outside forces for our situation or experience, when we want to give up, and when we believe we cannot create the life we want.

The difference between Optimistic (SET) vs. Pessimistic (PPP) perspectives:

Pervasiveness: Specific (*I'm great at fixing bikes.*) vs. Universal (*I can fix things.*)

Personal: External (*I have no luck.*) vs. Internal (*I have no talent.*)

Permanence: Temporary (*I am not good at this right now.*) vs. Permanent (*I am bad at this.*)

Hope: Hopeful (*I'll be able to fix this.*) vs. Hopeless (*It can't be fixed, I have to buy a new one.*)

Each perspective can be interpreted as a personal belief system, a self-fulfilling prophesy. Most of us are both pessimists *and* optimists, depending on the situation and our perception of our capabilities. Just as we can pick up good habits and let go of bad habits, so, too, can we learn to be optimistic and to drop pessimism.

And as with any habit, we can improve our ability and change our perspective over time by staying focused on meaning, values, and the long-term results.

To lift ourselves out of depression, and switch from a pessimistic to an optimistic perspective, we need to have faith.

Filters of Faith:

Faith *noun* Complete trust or confidence in someone or something
(source: the Oxford (online) Dictionary)

We have faith when we believe in something even when we don't have proof.

Example: I have faith that I will get to the grocery store without getting into an accident.

Faith itself does not require belief in a particular religion; but belief in any religion requires *faith*!

To switch from a pessimistic perspective to an optimistic one, we need to have faith that optimism will help us reach our goal; and that pessimism is not how things really are. Remember *The Little Engine That Could?* "I think I can, I think I can." We are capable of doing very difficult things!

Can you **believe**

- that you have inherent worth, and that you are as important and valuable as everyone else?
- that your situation, problem or feeling is temporary?
- that a series of complex circumstances is what brought you to this point; not who you are?
- that all things change?...and that your situation is temporary and you will be able to get through it?
- that you have the power to change your attitude, your perception and your opportunities?

Dr. Stephen Ilardi, author of *The Depression Cure*, has been inspired by studying the resilience found in aboriginal groups who rarely suffer from depression. He suggests we integrate the following six elements into our lifestyle. Try the item that feels the most comfortable for you...and after a while add another. After a week or so, reflect on how you feel. Then add a 3rd and reflect on that experience, etc.

1. The Omega-3-Rich Diet: Sources of omega-3 essential fatty acids include fish, kidney and pinto beans, soybeans, canola and flaxseed oils, walnuts and vegetables such as broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, kale, spinach, and salad greens.

2. Exercise: Dr. Stephen Ilardi says: *Even moderate physical activity - brisk walking three times a week - has been shown in two landmark studies to fight depression as effectively as Zoloft. Simply put: exercise changes the brain.* You can start with small increments of time. Make exercise one of your healthy habits!

3. Plenty of natural sunlight: Get outside, even when it's cloudy. Sunlight supports the creation of vitamin D, a necessary nutrient for mental health and strong bones.

4. Quality Sleep: Sun, fresh air, exercise, and fully engaging in life will help you get a good night's sleep.

5. Social Connections: One of our most basic human needs is belonging. Calls and letters with family and friends, participating in team sports and/or book clubs, volunteering and helping others all contribute to the feeling we belong and are cared about. Another basic need is independence. Remember to take thoughtful and creative time just for you, then you can share your thoughtful and creative self with others!

6. Participation in Meaningful Tasks: This leave little time for negative thoughts. Consider concepts in philosophy. Another basic human need is having a sense of purpose, self-worth, and meaning. We determine these by our thoughts; we demonstrate them through our actions.

Inspiration from great thinkers:

"Participating in meaningful tasks" has been a central theme to many philosophers, psychotherapists and other great thinkers, and has played an important role in of the process of reducing or transforming suffering for thousands of years.

Buddhism, a 2500 year old philosophy practiced like a religion, focuses on creating a meaningful life to alleviate suffering. By studying Buddhist ideas, we can learn to understand why we suffer. People can participate in any religion and still benefit from The Four Noble Truths:

First Noble Truth: To live is to experience physical and psychological suffering. We have to endure physical suffering like sickness, injury, tiredness, old age and eventually death; we have to endure psychological suffering like loneliness, frustration, fear, embarrassment, disappointment, anger, etc.

Second Noble Truth: All suffering is caused by craving. (Getting what you want does not guarantee happiness / satisfaction). Rather than constantly struggling to get what you want, try to modify your wanting. Wanting deprives us of contentment and happiness.

The Third Noble Truth: Suffering can be overcome and happiness attained.

The Fourth Noble Truth: This is the path leading to the overcoming of suffering. This path is called the Noble Eightfold Path and consists of Perfect Understanding, Perfect Thought, Perfect Speech, Perfect Action, Perfect Livelihood, Perfect Effort, Perfect Mindfulness, and Perfect Concentration.

It's easy to find out more about Buddhism. Hundreds of books are available.

Some Buddhist authors include: Thích Nhất Hạnh, Pema Chodron, the 14th Dalai Lama and Alan Watts

Friedrich Nietzsche, the late 19th century German Philosopher offers some bolstering quotes:

- *To live is to suffer; to survive is to find some meaning in the suffering.*
- *He who has a why to live can bear almost any how.*
- *That which does not kill us makes us stronger.*

Victor Frankl – Psychiatrist, neurologist, Holocaust survivor and author of *Man's Search for Meaning* has many empowering thoughts on this topic. Frankl observed that depression is a person's 'warning light' that something is wrong and needs to be worked through. He believed that each of us needs to identify a purpose in life to feel positively about (meaning), and then immersively imagine that outcome. According to Frankl, the way a prisoner imagined the future affected his longevity.

*The one thing you can't take away from me is the way I choose to respond to what you do to me.
The last of one's freedoms is to choose one's attitude in any given circumstance.*

He believed that meaning can be found through:

- Creativity and self-expression
- Interacting authentically with others and with our environment
- Changing our attitude when we are faced with a situation or circumstance we cannot change

More recently, **Dr. Martin Seligman**, considered the father of the Positive Psychology movement, professor emeritus at Pennsylvania State University, and author of many books on improving one's quality of life, believes that meaning and character play an important role in creating a satisfying life. Seligman articulated an account of the good life, which consists of five elements called the PERMA model:

P: Positive Emotion

For us to experience well-being, we need positive emotion in our lives. Any positive emotion like peace, gratitude, satisfaction, pleasure, inspiration, hope, curiosity, or love falls into this category – and the message is that it's really important to enjoy yourself in the here and now, just as long as the other elements of PERMA are in place.

E: Engagement

When we're truly engaged in a situation, task, or project, we experience a state of flow: time seems to stop, we lose our sense of self, and we concentrate intensely on the present. This feels really good! The more we experience this type of engagement, the more likely we are to experience well-being.

R: Positive Relationships

As humans, we are "social beings," and good relationships are core to our well-being. Time and again, we see that people who have meaningful, positive relationships with others are happier than those who do not. Relationships really do matter!

M: Meaning

Meaning comes from serving a cause bigger than ourselves. Whether this is a specific deity or religion, or a cause that helps humanity in some way, we all need meaning in our lives to have a sense of well-being.

A: Accomplishment/Achievement

Many of us strive to better ourselves in some way, whether we're seeking to master a skill, achieve a valuable goal, or win in some competitive event. As such, accomplishment is another important thing that contributes to our ability to flourish.

Quotes by Dr. Seligman:

- *We're not prisoners of the past.*
- *Just as the good life is something beyond the pleasant life, the meaningful life is beyond the good life.*
- *We deprive our children, our charges, of persistence. What I am trying to say is that we need to fail, children need to fail, we need to feel sad, anxious and anguished. If we impulsively protect ourselves and our children, as the feel-good movement suggests, we deprive them of learning-persistence skills*
- *Self-esteem cannot be directly injected. It needs to result from doing well, from being warranted.*
- *Habits of thinking need not be forever. One of the most significant findings in psychology in the last twenty years is that individuals can choose the way they think.*

Positive self-talk you can try on to see if it fits: *Life is meaningful and engaging and human, even when it's hard. I will get through this, just like I've been able to get through so many other difficult things.*

We need: Food, air, water. These components will help to keep our bodies running, but our mind is a necessary part of our bodies and our mind is programmed with needs of its own.

We also need: To feel we are valuable. We need to be around others and to feel like we belong. At the same time, we need our independence! Being on our own helps us feel strong, capable, creative and unique.

Depression can happen when we don't believe we can change the course of our lives.

It can also happen when we feel we are incapable of doing things for ourselves.

Sometimes the source of suffering can come from our relationships to others. We may feel we don't fit in, or we are being used, or we feel like we are not valuable to others.

Sometimes we feel like all we need is a partner/lover/other intimate relationship to feel better about ourselves, but others cannot fill our inner void. Relationships can be supportive and beneficial; and they can also deplete our power and resources and challenge our self-worth. We must consider: *what must I give* and *what do I gain* by maintaining this relationship? Is it worth the cost? Am I valued, honored and respected? Can I offer the same? Remember:

- All relationships involve choices, compromises, and commitments (investments).
- We must weigh the degree to which we are willing to give up our authenticity and individuality to belong to a group or commit to an intimate relationship:
 - Do we raise the bar so high that no one is 'good enough' to be around us?
 - Do we drop the bar so low that we find we are involved with people who don't share our values, don't value us, or even abuse us or take us for granted?

Manufactured Desires

An especially tricky part to all of this is recognizing when marketers, TV personalities and even close family and friends try to influence our values, needs and desires to fit their motives or goals.

If we look deeper into our suffering we can find that some of the things we suffer from do not originate from our values, our needs or our desires, but are manufactured 'needs' as a result of the media's attempt to homogenize our fears and desires through news, TV shows, slick advertising and emotionally appealing marketing.

We are told we are inadequate, unsafe, unhealthy, and unattractive unless we purchase certain products, desire to look and think a certain way, or buy into fear. TV 'experts' are often just sales people wearing lab coats.

We take command of our lives when we raise our awareness and think critically about their intent. Do they really know what's best for us? When we know our core values, we can refer to them and hold them up to their attempts to influence our decisions. When we maintain control of our lives we feel strong, and when we feel strong, it is much harder to feel depressed and powerless. We are too busy driving our ship!

When we examine our core values, we realize that we know what's best for us. Our core values are necessary for healthy living; they help us make good decisions, gain confidence and fully engage our abilities.

Getting through...moment by moment...can be the hardest part. But we can do it!

Tips to encourage you during depression:

- Try to remember that how you are feeling is temporary and just your momentary perception, like a cloudy day seems to have no sun. The sun is there; we can have faith it will again brighten our day.
- Read uplifting and motivating books, articles, and Daily Motivators (www.greatday.com)
- Drink lots of water
- Start with small achievable goals and stay focused
- Talk with someone about your experience. Remember: you are not alone.
- Eat fruit, vegetables, and food high in Essential Fatty Acids
- Exercise outdoors! Get fresh air, sunlight and breathe deeply!
- Get involved in a meaningful, social activity such as volunteering to support your community.
- Have FAITH in yourself! You can conquer your depression and engage in life in a positive way!

Recommended reading:

Man's Search for Meaning.....Viktor Frankl PhD
"Learned Optimism" and "Flourish".....Martin Seligman, PhD
The Depression Cure.....Stephen Ilardi, PhD
Plato, not Prozac!.....Lou Marinoff, PhD
Books on Buddhism.....Thích Nhất Hạnh, Pema Chodron, Allan Watts
and many more

Handling Frustration

Dealing with frustration

Life is full of frustrations. From the minor irritations of losing your car keys to the major anxieties of continued failure towards a goal, frustration is not a pleasant emotion in any magnitude. Because of the unpleasantness of this emotion, people will often avoid anything that might lead to it. Unfortunately, many of the things we truly want to experience such as triumph, joy, victory and purpose require a great deal of frustration. Being able to manage frustration allows us to remain happy and positive even in trying circumstances.

In order to successfully manage frustration, you need to first understand what causes it. Frustration is simply caused whenever the results you are experiencing do not seem to fit the effort and action you are applying. Usually frustration is caused by a narrow focus on a problem that isn't resolving itself as you had hoped. This is a very simple concept, but it is an important step to solving frustrating problems.

Frustration is Energy Consuming

Our energy as human beings is our primary currency we use to do anything. Physical, mental, emotional and spiritual energies all fuel discipline, creativity, courage and motivation. Anthony Robbins includes energy as the first key to success in any area of life. Stress in excessive doses is a negative emotional state that weakens the immune system and raises blood pressure as the direct result from a lack of energy. When we run out of energy we become useless.

Frustrating problems are incredibly energy consuming. Because these problems consume our energy in such great quantities, we need to be extremely careful that we don't try to keep running with an empty energy reserve. When this happens we burnout and require a long time to recover. The initial reaction of most people is to work harder when they encounter frustration. Although the intention to work harder makes sense, it often results in trying to spend more energy than we have available.

Why are frustrating problems more energy consuming than normal tasks? The answer to this is relatively simple. Because your action is not producing the results you expect, your brain naturally goes into full gear, rapidly consuming mental energy to solve the problem at hand. In this time it is very easy to run out of energy. When your energy stores are depleted this is when you become irritable, tired, stressed and sometimes even angry.

To get a little perspective on your issue, try broadening your focus from your current problem outwards. Try thinking about how the problem looks when you view it from a few weeks, a year, or ten years from now or compared to your lifetime?

Go outside and look up at the sky. Viewing the incredible expanse of space and time will ultimately make your problems look very small indeed.

Getting perspective when you are frustrated isn't a particularly difficult practice; the difficulty is in remembering to do it. It will be difficult to do this at first, but after diligent practice it will become a habit and happen automatically.

Nobody likes to feel frustrated. Unfortunately, frustrations are part of life. Learn to manage your frustrations so they don't leave you stressed, burned-out or depressed. Take breaks from your frustrations to recover your mental and creative energies. Reward your actions, not just your results and remember to gain a little perspective when you begin to feel overwhelmed. Don't let your frustrations prevent you from setting goals and living your life to the maximum.

Thank you Scott Young! Find more about this information here:
<http://www.scotthyoung.com/blog/2006/06/10/dealing-with-frustration/>

The Fair Shake Resource Directory

The directory is a dynamic, expanding Do-It-Yourself resource-finding tool that is only available online or in the free Fair Shake software app.

It is FREE! It's EASY!

And it's like a phone book, where **YOU decide what's right for YOU.**

Everyone is welcome to search freely through more than 15,000 resources, located in all states. Just enter your state, city and/or zip code, and the search tool will find local, state and national resources. Select the ones that are right for you! The results go into a .pdf to print or save.

If you are in an institution that does not utilize the free Fair Shake software, please ask a friend, family member, case manager, housing unit support staff, reentry coordinator, church support group, activist, advocate, or mentor to use our FREE DIRECTORY to locate your resources! Be sure to also let them know there are Reentry Guides below the form, too!

Search

State:

City or Zip Code:

Within: 5 Miles

Guide to our Resource Directory:

[Click here to see the list of categories.](#)

[Click here to find out where resources can be found. \(Under the local, state or national heading\)](#)

[Resource Directory Tutorial](#)

[Click to see State and Local Reentry Guides](#)


National, State and Local Reentry Guides

Choose Your State

Florida

Florida

South Florida Reentry Guide

 File: south_florida_reentry_guide_2011.pdf

Veterans Reentry for Florida and Southern Georgia

Categories and Sub-Categories found in the Resource Directory

Citizenship

Birth Certificate
Community Development
Expungement
Legal Assistance
Social Security Card
Voting Rights

Clothing

Free Clothing
Interview and Career Clothing

Education

Continuing Education
Employment Education
Free Education
GED programs
Life Skills

Employment

Employment Programs
Employment Services
Job Training
Staffing Agency
Workforce Development

Family

Child Care
Family Counseling
Parenting

Food

Food Pantry
Free Meals

Free Stuff

Health

Counseling Services
Free / Sliding Scale Clinic
Free / Sliding Clinic w/ Dental
Free / Sliding Dental Clinic
Reduced Cost Medication

Money

Free Credit Report
Financial Literacy

Reentry Resources

Multiple Resources Available
Programs
Rights and Roadblocks

Shelter

Energy Assistance
Homeless Shelter
Low-Income Housing
Transitional Housing.

Special Considerations

Disability Support
Elders
Registrants
Veteran Support

Support Groups

Support Circles

Volunteer

Volunteer Opportunities

Your Leisure Time

Leisure Activities

Educate Yourself!

The Internet can be used as a powerful tool for growth; you can teach and learn many things by yourself! Education serves many purposes, among them: to help us understand things and also to understand ourselves, to help us make connections and decisions, to show others we are capable; to name but a few.

Basic academic education is not the key to knowledge. Knowledge involves many facets to learning: academic, experience, learning about yourself and your values, listening, learning to live in society, and more. The key to knowledge works when we integrate all of the aspects to make decisions and set goals.

Fair Shake brings together many free, online self-directed education resources for you to engage in education!

Knowledge is power. Information is liberating. Education is the premise of progress, in every society, in every family. ~ Kofi Annan

Traditional Education

Education Basics

Free support for learners through High School or GED

Higher Education

Free university level or professional development resources.

Non-Traditional

Life Skills

Tools for daily living, including finances, cooking, and creativity!

Employment Skills

Support from resume' building to professional development

Khan Academy: offers a library of over 3,500 videos which covers K-12 math, biology, chemistry, physics, the humanities, finance and history. Each video is approximately 10 minutes long. All materials and resources are free.



GCF Learn Free: Provides quality, innovative online learning opportunities to anyone who wants to be successful in both work and life. They believe there's freedom in the ability to learn what you want, when you want, regardless of your circumstances



Massachusetts Institute of Technology's free courses include materials from more than 2,000 courses, presenting virtually the entire curriculum of the Institute.



Coursera is an education platform that partners with top universities and organizations worldwide, to offer courses online for anyone to take, for free.



Academic Earth provides access to a world-class education and includes curated links to over 750 online courses and 8,500 individual online lectures, giving students of all ages unparalleled access to college courses they may otherwise never experience.



Codecademy is a great place to get started with programming! The lessons are very rewarding as your progress can encourage you with medals or allow you to post your progress on social media websites. The lessons are free; tests that offer certificates are available for purchase.



Acámica es el futuro de la educación superior en línea. A través de lo que llamamos microaprendizaje ramificado, ofrecemos cursos de calidad, accesibles, dinámicos e interactivos, que pueden ser tomados en cualquier lugar, en cualquier momento.



CLEP offers 33 Internet-Based Testing exams in five subject areas at over 1,800 college test centers, covering material taught in courses that you may generally take in your first two years of college. By passing a CLEP exam, you can earn 3 to 12 college credits. Exams cost \$80. There are text exams for you to use to prepare.



List of CLEP Exams: Match with OpenCourseWare Classes!

American Literature	Western Civilization I: Ancient Near East to 1648
Analyzing and Interpreting Literature	
College Composition and Modular English Literature	Western Civilization II: 1648 to the Present
Humanities Foreign Languages	Science and Mathematics
French Language (Levels 1 and 2)	Biology
German Language (Levels 1 and 2)	Calculus
Spanish Language (Levels 1 and 2)	Chemistry
History and Social Sciences	College Algebra
American Government	College Mathematics
Human Growth and Development	Natural Sciences
Intro to Educational Psychology	Pre-calculus
Introduction to Psychology	Business
Introduction to Sociology	Financial Accounting
Principles of Macroeconomics	Introductory Business Law
Principles of Microeconomics	Information Systems and Computer Applications
Social Sciences and History	Principles of Management
History of the United States I: Early Colonization to 1877	Principles of Marketing
History of the United States II: 1865 to the Present	

Motivation Tips

From the Fair Shake Ownership Manual:

Self Motivation - While managers often try to find ways to motivate people from the outside, the best way to get things done is simply by wanting to do them. The more we align ourselves with our goals, values and interests, the more easily we can find the necessary motivation to carry out our tasks. Sometimes we have to keep our 'eyes on the prize' and work through things we really don't like – and sometimes we have to wait patiently - to get to the ultimate goal that we value the most.

"Whether you think you can or whether you think you can't, you're right." - Henry Ford

"He is able who thinks he is able." – The Buddha

Often people use - and many people want - **EXTRINSIC MOTIVATORS** (outside forces) to get us to do things we don't desire to do. Do we want to be lured by a Carrot? Do we prefer to be scared by a Stick? Bribe... or... threat? Encourage you to buy a gizmo with a coupon or make you worry that you will not be hip if you don't have the gizmo? Do you recognize these *extrinsic motivators*? You will find more examples of extrinsic motivators all around you once you start to take notice. Alas, extrinsic motivators work well to get us to do some things, but not everything.

We cannot always be pulled or pushed. Sometimes we just want to be interested in what we're doing!

The forces that can energize us through our most challenging and creative tasks are often our **INTRINSIC MOTIVATORS** (inside forces) that bring satisfaction when we do tasks we don't care for but can find meaning in. For example, hanging laundry may be your least favorite thing to do, but you need clean clothes. This mundane task can transform to something beautiful when it happens on a warm, sunny day in the early spring. Just knowing that a beautiful day of hanging laundry is possible makes it easier to hang laundry on less desirable days. Intrinsic motivators make the tough stuff tolerable and can even connect us to the rest of the people on the planet who are going through tough stuff. And also to the people who are enjoying the spring sun while hanging out their laundry.

When we have an inner goal, a desire to solve a puzzle, the wish to work out something by ourselves, we are often motivated with speed, stamina, determination and creativity! Often our values and beliefs provide the fuel for our intrinsic motivation motors.

Motivation Tips:

1. **Systematically and deliberately create success.** Decide what you want to do and what you will do when you get there. Now explore the steps you need to take to get you to where you want to be. Remember to anticipate the hurdles!
2. **Don't let your excuses get in the way.** You will come up with every excuse in the book to not move forward. You will even believe many of your excuses are legitimate. When you believe your excuses you can become stuck. Are you a victim or are you a creative thinker who can solve a problem?

3. **Change habits and behaviors that lead you to procrastinate.** Are you doing things that are holding you back? Schedule time to do nothing and other than that time, stay on track with your goals.
4. **Several small jobs done over short periods of time are more manageable than one large task.** Instead of focusing on the difficulty of the large task, break it into smaller jobs and create a timeline for finishing them.
5. **Try tackling the more undesirable tasks early** so that you can pursue more pleasant activities later in the day.
6. **Exercise self-discipline.** Say 'no' when you need to...to yourself and to others. Keep your "eyes on the prize!"
7. **Overcome procrastination and block out human and media obstacles.** Sometimes we have to just get started, even when we don't feel like we're ready, or even up for the task. Often just the ACT of getting started is enough to get engaged and encouraged. Refuse to let others divert you from your path! Procrastination is a self-defeating behavior that develops - in part - due to the fear of failure and paradoxically, the fear of success!
8. **Reward yourself.** Your self-motivation will increase enormously if you give yourself a pat on the back for a job well done. It feels great to accomplish tasks!
9. **Have fun!** Learning to enjoy yourself keeps you enthusiastic and motivated and helps you keep stress to a minimum. After all, good vibes create more good vibes!
10. **Imagine what the rewards will be when you finally reach your destination** and keep that thought foremost in your mind. You can also imagine the bad consequences (pain, frustration, the feeling of defeat) that may occur if you don't, if you prefer to look at it that way. Carrot or stick?
11. **Tell someone about your goals.** Show them or mark stages on a calendar to emphasize and visualize your goal. Check in with them periodically to tell them of your progress.
12. **Review your habits; do you see yourself accomplishing your goals?** You must change the habits that lead you to procrastinate in the first place. Lose, shorten or refuse to participate in demotivating habits during inappropriate times of the day (watching TV, disengaging from your goals) and replace them with habits that lead to engaging in and control of your life.
13. **Find your true interest.** If you dislike certain tasks, just look at them in the big picture...they are character building steps on the path of getting you to your greater goal.
14. **Make lists of the smaller jobs then tick off the work that you have completed.** Prepare a list of the things you have to do. Prioritize the list and then start ticking off tasks as they are completed. If you do this right, you may become motivated to complete them all!

Transition Tips

Reentry can be both exciting and frustrating! Our attitude toward release from prison is that it should be a simple matter of getting resettled, resuming routines, and reestablishing your relationships; but reality proves there is much more to it than that. Here is a list of tips to consider that can help you go through the transition process:

1. **Mentally prepare for the adjustment process.** Be prepared for anything... especially the most challenging things like rejection, depression, anger and disappointment. Also, be prepared for things to be NOT as you expect them to be.
2. **Give yourself permission to ease into the transition.** Allow yourself the space and time to acclimate to your new environment. Don't worry if it takes you a little while to get used to things again. You'll need time to reflect upon what is going on around you.
3. **Understand that the familiar will seem different.** You have changed; home has changed. You will see familiar people, places, and behaviors from new perspectives.
4. **Expect to do some 'cultural catching up'.** Clothes, trends, language, and more have changed!
5. **Reserve judgments.** Reserve all judgments of others, but especially negative judgments; just as you would like to have others reserve judgments of you. Resist the impulse to make snap decisions.
6. **Expect mood swings.** It is entirely possible for you to feel ecstatic one moment and completely defeated a short time later. It's okay; it is a part of the process.
7. **Allow sufficient time for reflection and self-analysis.** Your most valid and valuable analysis of an event is likely to take place after allowing time for reflection. Consider your core values and determine how you can live within them.
8. **Respond to inquiries thoughtfully and carefully.** Prepare to greet surprise questions with a calm, thoughtful approach. If you find yourself being overly defensive or aggressive, take a deep breath and relax.
9. **Seek support networks.** Don't isolate yourself! There are people who want to help you through your transition. You will find them if you look...
10. **Volunteer.** A great way to connect to community, build references and network with people and possibilities is to volunteer.

To prepare yourself for upcoming challenges, it is safe to expect the following:

- You will have to prove yourself (over and over and over).
- People will make many assumptions about who you are now.
- You will be different than when you left; your family and friends will be different, too!
- People will expect a lot from you.
- The way you'd hoped things would be will be different from the way they are.
- You will feel down or depressed after the initial return 'honeymoon' period. Please refer to our Culture Shock! page for further transition considerations.

Introducing the **FREE Personal Web Page** and Member Card!

When a former felon arrives at an interview with a Fair Shake Member Card, employers and property managers can see that s/he has taken additional measures to demonstrate a commitment to successful reentry. The interviewer may then be able to see beyond the 'felon' stereotype to take a deeper look at the applicant through their Personal Web Page.

Personal Web Page benefits:

- ✓ Members differentiate themselves from other applicants!
- ✓ Members share information easily. No need to carry documents; they are stored in their account.
- ✓ Shows dedication to reentry success and provides a place to demonstrate interest in taking a proactive approach by sharing skills, character traits, and intentions.
- ✓ Employers and property managers can get to know members comfortably, reducing likelihood of auto-dismissal based on felony history.
- ✓ Fair Shake Member Card provides member information, url and password to the member's page.
- ✓ Member Web Page password is changeable! Access only given to current password holders.
- ✓ Fair Shake can verify references, even for volunteer work.



FairShake
REENTRY RESOURCE CENTER

Information on hiring or renting to a former felon
Employers page
Property Managers page

Alex Wikstrom

ABOUT ME
I have been working in kitchens my whole adult life. One year a family member gave me an old computer, once I started using it I found I was talented in it. About 10 years later and married I still learn new things about computers every day and enjoy them because they provide me with education, employment and the ability to contact my family in remote locations! I'm 28 and happily married to my beautiful wife Angela. We plan on having kids some day but for now just love having dogs!

EMPLOYMENT
Work / Experience History

- Tungsten Grill**
Grill Chef
2002-2004
My second kitchen. Hard work and being on time moved me from washing dishes, through food preparation and finally to grill chef.
- Eben Pizza Grill**
Head Grill/Pizza Chef (Management Position)
2004-2005
Temporary work for me after I moved to another state. Hard work with good people, I changed that kitchen by raising the cleaning and prep standards.

PERSONAL REFERENCES

Sue Kastensen
Previous Employer
She is a reference to my computer skills and my work ethic. She can also vouch for my team work skills.

Brian Wikstrom
Father
My father is a good judge of my character. He knew me growing up, when I got into trouble and also the good space I'm in now. He can tell you I'm a changed man.

MY DOCUMENTS
Resume.doc

HOBBIES
Hiking
Programming
Dog Training
Reading
Cooking

INTERESTS
Local History
Technology
Programming Languages
Speaking Languages
World Culture
Former Felon Reentry.

FAVORITE QUOTE
When you judge another, you do not define them, you define yourself.
Wayne Dyer

Skills

- Restaurant/Cooking skills**
Grilling, Sauteing, Jullennening, Roasting, Bringing food to temp, Proper cooling, Managing ticket orders, Keeping inventory, Managing staff and their vacation/sick days.
- Computer Skills**
Operating system support Windows 2000, xp, vista, 7. Driver management. Clerical/Networking software - Word processing, data management, backup software, virus software. Web Software/Coding - Html, css, javascript, php (LEARNING), mysql, server web-admin panel, vector imaging, photo imaging, and layered imaging.

Special Recognitions

- Employee of the month award - Received two, one for kitchen improvements and another for low sick day record at Eben Pizza.

Fair Shake supports employers and property managers directly through stakeholder pages that provide links to bonding programs, tax incentives, vouchers and more.

Member Card



FairShake
Supporting Successful Reentry

Fair Shake Member
Alex Wikstrom
Phone: 123-123-1234
alexwikstrom@fairshake.net

Personal Web Page
fairshake.net/member/?user=alexwikstrom
Password: free

For details about the Personal Web Page, please see other side

Questions from the Personal Web Page

Fair Shake members can create their own web page at www.fairshake.net! Membership is FREE for anyone who has spent time in prison or jail.

Personal Information

About Me
Interests
Hobbies
Favorite Quotation

Work/Experience - Add as many as you wish

Work Experience: can include employment (paid or not), work you volunteered to do in the prison, or anywhere you committed time and effort to something that includes service to others. Include the name of the organization, your position, time you worked with the organization and a description of the work you did while with them.

Skill Sets: include what you can do! Include types of skills and specific skills learned, for instance: if you want to work on a computer and you have the skills, list Computer Skills under type of skill and the programs you are familiar with in the specific skills section.

Special Recognition: use this section to list (efforts) where you have been recognized, such as Employee of the Month, Safety Certificate, Most Dedicated, etc. Share any public recognition you are proud of! Please include a description of the recognition.

Education - Add as many as you wish

Education: Includes traditional schools, non-traditional schools, workshops and other learning opportunities. Please list type of education, organization where you had the learning experience, time spent in program and also describe what you learned.

Training: this includes time spent learning a trade or skill from a knowledgeable person. Include type of training, time spent in learning, and describe what you learned.

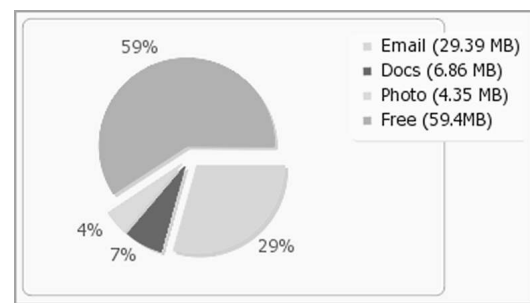
Photos and Documents

Greet visitors to your page with a smile! Share a photo of you spending time with your family or enjoying your favorite hobby. Adding photos to your Personal Web Page is perhaps the most personable aspect of the member area.

Fair Shake members receive 100 MB of storage in their free account. Members can upload as many photos or documents as they please, but the space is shared with email as well.

Data Manager

We have created this unique tool for you to manage your account. You can see what areas take up valuable space and consider removing unnecessary files or emails to make more room. We also teach image- and file-size reduction techniques in our tutorials for space conservation.



Dealing With Rejection

When we put ourselves in a position to be vulnerable to another person's opinion, we risk rejection.

Sometimes the risk is very small. Example: I tell a joke but my audience doesn't laugh. They look at me like I am speaking a language they don't understand. What does this mean? Do they reject my joke? Do they reject me? Maybe they don't share my sense of humor. Maybe they don't understand the joke. Maybe it's just not a good joke or maybe I need to learn how to deliver jokes. There are so many variables!

When I'm standing there in the silence, however, I find it hard to think of anything but "I'm not funny." or "I failed." I may even internalize these words and start to feel pretty rotten, as if I am incapable or unappealing. I told the joke to have fun and win approval; instead I feel deflated and rejected.

When I take a much larger risk, such as applying for a job, an apartment or a loan - where I've invested so much more of myself (time, information, hope, dedication) - the stakes are much higher. I may become discouraged when I hear 'we've chosen another applicant', 'we've rented the apartment to another person', or just plain 'no'. Again, it's hard for me to not internalize it. But just as in the case of the joke, there may be many variables that I am not considering. At this crucial time, I must remember to believe in myself and continue to pursue my goal.

It is hard to stay positive when we internalize rejection, and yet that is exactly what we need to do to persevere toward what we want. When we feel defeated, we would be wise to remember that we have taken many risks in the past and we have been successful. We must risk failure and rejection to feel the power of success. It is both scary and exhilarating!

Consider using these tools to keep your perspective as favorable as possible:

- First, remember you are important! Do not let rejection from any person or group lead you to believe you are not important, valuable, creative and necessary to the well-being of everyone.
- Be open to the possibility of rejection or criticism as the push you need to improve your approach, consider making other changes. Find ways to be positive. Positivity is magnetic!
- Consider the source. If you are doing what you believe is the right and best thing for you, keep doing it. It's okay to be rejected by people or groups that we do not wish to be a part of. Perhaps it's not a good fit and our view is clouded by a fog of unrealistic hopefulness. Try to remember to not take feedback or rejection personally.
- Keep focused on the big picture! Don't let minor set backs keep you from achieving your goals.
- Persevere! Keep doing what you are doing. Remember that you are the pilot of your goal, challenge, or position and you will not let rejection hold you back.
- Believe in yourself! If you don't believe in yourself, how can you expect others to believe in you? There are so many things that are special and incredible about you; don't forget what they are!
- This is an opportunity to build resilience. Getting through difficult challenges makes you stronger and more capable for your next challenges. Summon your fighting spirit that says "I will not quit"!
- Find your gratitude. Be grateful for the opportunity. Be grateful for allowing yourself to FEEL. Be grateful for the freedom to create your life, even though it may be very challenging. Be grateful for your critics. If it wasn't for them, we would not learn about ourselves.

Managing Anger

Flying off the handle sometimes causes hammers and humans to lose their heads...as well as their effectiveness. ~ William Arthur Ward



Everyone gets angry.

We are all familiar with anger; we see it demonstrated frequently. We see angry people in TV shows and movies; we hear angry politicians and radio hosts. Sometimes we experience anger with others around us, and we also experience anger in ourselves.

People sometimes try to use anger to solve problems or to relieve stress...but that often creates more problems, more stress and even more anger.

We can't eliminate anger, but we can manage it. We can make it a useful tool instead of one that demolishes relationships and other things.

Anger is often glorified as a key to unlock hidden strength and passion. Anger *feels* powerful.

Power alone is not good or bad. We need to feel powerful to feel capable. Feeling powerful is an important element of our American cultural self-image. But power alone...without caring emotions such as reflection, kindness, and humility...can cloud our perception of situations, others, and ourselves.

When we feel painful emotions such as sorrow, or hurt, because we've been rejected, disrespected, offended, forgotten, etc., we can find ourselves feeling like we have a loss of power. To try to reduce our discomfort, sometimes we respond with a powerful emotion like anger.

It's hard for us to feel pain! We are 'wired' to go toward pleasure and away from pain. Anger feels like it stops pain - at least momentarily.

The process of dealing with painful emotions is very hard and requires a great deal of strength and self-control. We become more powerful, capable and intuitive as we develop deeper problem-solving skills and tools for life's constantly challenging situations. Used positively, anger can help us realize deeper feelings about things so we can construct ways to avoid anger in the future.

Processing anger-energy through 'venting' (to ourselves; not others!) can be beneficial for focusing on and clarifying a problem. If we can be critical and clear about what is going wrong, we can then drive ourselves to go deeper to get the picture of what it would look like to go 'right', and then we can make changes to turn the situation around. Once we deeply reflect on the situation, other people's points of view (if applicable), and our deeper feelings, then we can see what we can do to make things better. We can then show others how we'd like to be treated!

Many of us experience a great deal of discomfort when we disagree with others. Many of us were not taught the value of listening or engaging in friendly arguments or debates. We say we believe that another person's opinion can be as valid and 'right' as our own, but do we mean it? For *every* person? Believe it or not, it's possible for people with opposing view points to work together to create the best possible solutions!

Anger needs to be expressed, yet aggressive displays of anger can result in violent eruptions that further hurt us socially, mentally, and physically. We need to find ways to process our emotions effectively. An out-of-control outburst could cost us a job. Or worse.

A hammer is a great symbol for anger because hammers can demolish....and they can build!

When we feel our anger building we need to stop and recognize triggers that can seize control of our power.

When you feel anger building, try to remember to:

- Take a breath (or many!)
- Identify
 - o your TRIGGER (what upset you? And then look again...was it something deeper?)
 - o your FEELING (how do you feel about what is upsetting you?)
 - o your REASON (why does it bother you and what is the best way to resolve this?)

Then ask yourself some questions about how and when you get angry. Questions like:

- Do I always get angry about this issue?
- Could I have seen this coming?
- Could I have avoided feeling angry by taking a different approach to this situation?
- What is my goal here? What do I hope to achieve?

Blaming others for our anger or frustration seems like an easy way to solve our problem: we want to say that someone or something “did this to me”. But blaming leaves us powerless and ineffective! How can we expect a situation to improve - in the way we would like to see it improve - if we put the task on someone else?

Did you know that no one else can *make* us feel angry? We choose to respond with blame and/or anger...and we can choose a different response. We are FREE to improve our relationships and live without rage when we decide to deal with our feelings in effective and purposeful ways.

Consider deeply what makes you angry and why. DIG for the answer that will transform anger!

Here are a few examples:

Why do I feel angry when others try to tell me what to do?

- Do I feel disrespected? As if they think I haven't thought about something carefully?

Why do I feel angry when it feels like others don't listen to or acknowledge me?

- Do I believe they think that my opinion is not valid or important?

Why do I feel angry when others are not respectful of an agreement we made?

- Do I feel like they think I am less important than they are?

Why do I feel angry when I stub my toe?

- Am I embarrassed because I missed something right in front of me?

Why do I feel angry when other drivers make travel difficult?

- Do I feel they are selfish, dangerous, disrespectful, and not paying attention?

Can you find the solutions you are looking for in your answers?

Be aware of your temper: your 'anger energy'.

Here are some ideas to help you keep your temper under control:

- **Try the Thermometer Technique** - Imagine your temper is red mercury in a large thermometer. When you're HOT, don't react! Wait until you are 'cool' to respond.
- **Count to 10, or 100!** – Count...and think of a time when you were calm and relaxed....to take your mind out of the immediate situation. Counting is an anger management tip that has worked for centuries! The Roman poet Horace (65 - 8 BCE) said, "When angry, count ten before you speak; if very angry, one hundred."
- **Inhale deeply** - Can you breathe so deeply that you get clean air deep down into your belly? Walk outdoors if possible! Your brain and your body work better with fresh air and plenty of water. Be sure to communicate with anyone you might be in a confrontation with that you are not leaving the problem; you're just clearing your head.
- **Exercise!** - Daily exercise allows you to work out stress. When you have less stress, you will feel angry less often. Regular exercise, including yoga and meditation, help you stay centered and keep things in perspective.
- **Vent** - Finding a safe spot to articulate your feelings...and maybe even yell (I find this particularly effective when I hammer my finger) can relieve enough stress to see the problem - and the solution - more clearly. Do not 'blow off steam' when anyone is nearby. Instead, go to the basement alone, or ride your bike and talk to the wind, or even stomp on a few aluminum cans to relieve frustration.

Our best way of dealing with anger is to find ways to make it useful. A powerful example is when someone uses the energy from anger to find the courage they need to protect someone who is being harmed!

Be Careful - When anger turns into poison: Sometimes we think that being angry and bitter all the time means we are smart, savvy and aware of the ways in which people and the media want to persuade us; as if it shows we are 'on to them'. Soon we are cynical, crabby people and, although people may think we are smart, they also think we are 'haters' and don't want to hang out with us. It's hard to have fun with angry people.

Sue's Anger Story

I live in a small town. We see our neighbors out and about and everyone knows I frequently ride my bike on the nearby bike trail. My dentist has an office just across the street from our bike trail and sees me on it all the time. He also likes to exercise outdoors; he runs.

One day I went to see my dentist for a routine check up. I enjoy talking with the staff when I'm there. When he checks my teeth we often 'catch up' for a minute, too.

After one of these friendly little chats, my dentist stood up and told me that his white coat identifies him as a health authority and said: "in the interest of health I have to tell you that I think you should wear a helmet".

I told him that I consider wearing a helmet sometimes, but most of the time I am comfortable - and prefer riding – without one.

I wish our discussion would have stopped right there.

Instead, he continued by saying "It's not like you're going to find a date out there." *WHAT?* I sat there, stunned, and thought: *Did you just say that? To a paying customer??? Is that sexist, or just stupid?*

Apparently he did not think that was enough because he went on to say: "My wife just broke her pelvis riding her bike. Of course, the helmet did not protect her, but if she would have hit her head it would have." *REALLY???* Well, now I was outraged!!! I yelled at him in my mind: *Your wife's injury has NOTHING to do with wearing a helmet! You don't even know what kind of a rider I am! You don't know that I have fallen a lot and I know HOW to fall!*

Out loud I said "I know that you think you are showing me that you care..." but in my mind I thought: *but I will never sacrifice my ability, confidence or strength to pander to your controlling and unjustified fears.*

Even though I was piping mad, I held my tongue and went out for a bike ride. I talked sternly to myself - out loud - in to the wind. I may have cussed. I talked and talked ...to him...to me...to really work through my frustrations to understand WHY I was so angry and upset.

It all came flooding in: I was disrespected! I was treated like I was stupid! Like somehow being a dentist makes him a 'health authority' over me? Like I've never considered wearing a helmet before. Looking for a date? Really? He did not ask what I thought, he just told what he thought and expected me to comply.

So...what did I do? Well, it took me until my next appointment to decide.

I considered going in and talking with him. I also considered sending a letter stating that I was so offended that I will no longer be a patient. I considered making a point to have a talk with him the next time I go in for a check up. And then I considered saying nothing and just letting it go.

But wait! That answer was clearly *not* an option. I realized I needed to tell him that I want to be respected.

I mean, if I really want to resolve my anger - to eliminate this frustration of disrespect - well, then I must talk with him; to help him realize how to understand that 'caring' can feel an awful lot like 'controlling'. How could he know if he didn't hear my point of view? I realized he needed to hear how thin and lame his arguments were so he could see things differently, *and* respect that I am also a health authority...of me! I have been healthy for nearly all of my 50 years. So I resolved to discuss this with him during my next appointment.

I have also realized that the *KA-BAM* burst of 'anger energy' from my frustration would be best reserved for bike rides, walks and other forms of physical release.

I've been working on using my "angry energy" appropriately for most of my life. Every year my new year's goals are 'be kinder and more patient'. I will not need another resolution; I still have a long way to go. This is big, tough, complicated work!

The first step to managing your anger is to decide that your anger will no longer be used for demolition; that your feelings of anger will only be used to construct new, better alternatives to challenges! Then you're ready to fully utilize the many great anger management resources available to you.

I wonder if my dentist would have told me I needed a helmet if I rode to his office on a Harley.

Fair Shake's (large and growing!) webpage for you: (I hope you will help me build it and make it more effective!)

Formerly and Currently Incarcerated People



outreach[at]fairshake(dot)net

Are you ready to get a fair shake? We exist to support your successful transition! Fair Shake is like a reentry hardware store: we have tools, resources and information to support you as you build your new life, including bridges of trust with your family, employers, property managers and the community.

Remember, many of America's most highly treasured stories are those involving redemption and pulling ourselves out of tough situations to create meaningful and fulfilling lives. This can be your story!

For those of you who are currently incarcerated and are able to email us, you can request a reentry packet, ask questions or send comments and suggestions to

Employment



Looking for information to help you find a job? Check out our Find A Job page!
If you're getting ready to apply or interview, check out our Prepare For Work page!

New to Computers?

Need help with your computer skills? Learn more about using your computer on our Building Computer Skills page!



Keep your documents safe(ish) in the cloud!
Google online storage

Educate Yourself!



Need more math skills? Concerned about your grammar? Looking to pick up more knowledge or skills? Visit our Educate Yourself page.

List of correspondence schools that offer paper-based formats:
Correspondence Schools

Financial Aid

Federal Student Aid Information Center
P.O. Box 84
Washington, D.C. 20044
1-800-433-3243
<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sai/>



Education not found in school:

The School of Life.

The School of Life explores unconventional education to assist people in the quest for a more fulfilled life.

Watch the introduction video here ->

Here are some topics we thought might interest you:

- Self:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PLwLwM28XmpcOvZ_AZJD7VM2p9-6N8v
- Relationships:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PLwLwM28XmpcOvZ_AZJD7VM2p9-6N8v
- Work + Capitalism:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PLwLwM28XmpcOvZ_AZJD7VM2p9-6N8v

You can find more on the School of Life on the Educate Yourself page!

Fair Shake Reentry Packet



Our Reentry Packet is loaded with reentry information including tools and materials for building bridges of transformation and trust.
Fair Shake Reentry Packet

Choose Your Perspective

You have the right to Choose Your Perspective regardless of what you may encounter in life. For further insight and documents by other authors, view our **Choose Your Perspective** page at <https://www.fairshake.net/reentry-resources/choose-your-perspective/>

- Swelling
- Handling Frustration
- Working Through Depression
- Managing Anger
- Dealing with Rejection
- Resisting Influence

Fair Shake Resource Directory

Find food, employment training, free stuff, housing, health care, family support, and nearly 15,000 resources and 400 reentry publications and links in our FREE Resource Directory!



RZero

<http://rzero.org/>
The RZero Solution resulted by compiling hard-won wisdom from those living through the difficult and often confusing experience of incarceration. FREE Resource Database! <http://rzero.org/resource-database-2>

2-1-1

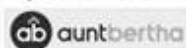
A FREE national resource service available by phone or internet to help folks in need find resources they seek. 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They list resources for food, shelter, employment, education, housing, mental and physical health, specific services for veterans, special needs and reentry, a safe path out of physical and/or emotional abuse. A service of United Way. www.211.org



Aunt Bertha

<https://company.auntbertha.com/>

Search for free or reduced cost services like medical care, food, job training, and more. Too many Americans are suffering, and they don't need to. We created a social care network that connects people and programs - making it easy for people to find social services in their communities, for nonprofits to coordinate their efforts, and for customers to integrate social care into their work.



Vital Documents

- Social Security
- Supplemental Security Income
- What Prisoners Need to Know
- More Publications
- Social Security Card
- <https://www.ssa.gov/numbers/>
- [social-security-card-info.pdf](https://www.ssa.gov/numbers/)

This is the ss-5 form.

- <https://www.socialsecurity.gov/forms/ss-5.pdf>
- [social-security-card-form-ss-5.pdf](https://www.ssa.gov/numbers/)

Write For Vital Records - All States

Certificates of Birth, Death, Marriage, Divorce

<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w.htm>

[vital-records.pdf](#)

DMV Request Outline:

There are many reasons you may wish to write to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to request relief. Perhaps you have very old parking tickets, or your license was suspended, et al. You may find some leniency from the DMV to help you drive again, especially to get to work. This form has been created by folks in the FCI Sandstone Career Resource Center and is meant to be used as a template or outline for you to use to create your own.

[DMV Change Request Outline](#)

- Motivation Tips
- Culture Shock
- How To Watch TV
- Ubuntu: Building Social Fabric
- Transition Tips
- Educate Yourself
- Gratitude

Fair Shake Peer Learning / Self Study Guides

A Self-Study/Workshop Guide for groups and individuals and we would like your input in order to create the most effective material.

Peer Learning / Self Study Guides

Fair Shake Inside Enews

Read the newsletters here

Sign up at outreach@fairshake.net

Looking for Books?

Check out our Free Books Programs page!

For Veterans

<https://www.fairshake.net/veterans-page/>

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE!



The veterans' page was created to assist veterans who have been incarcerated as well as their families. The programs and resources on this page can help reduce the pressures associated with reentry. Our hope is that you will find these resources helpful in providing relief as you face the challenges of finding and supporting an effective way of life after incarceration. Thank you for your service to our country.

The Transition Assistance Program (TAP) was established to meet the needs of veterans during their period of transition into civilian life by offering job-search assistance and related services. The guide books below were created specifically to support you by applying considerations from your service life to your job seeking. Check in with your local TAP program to find out about jobs that are available near you. To locate your local support office, click on this link:
<http://www.benefits.va.gov/vowtap.asp>

- Personal Appraisal & Career Exploration
- Job Search Strategies & Interviews
- Reviewing Job Offers & Support and Assistance

Become a Fair Shake Member!

- Personal Web Page
- Data Storage
- Save your Resources
- Tutorials

Become a Member, it's FREE!



Housing

We receive very little housing information, especially on a national scale. Recently, however, the two-part document came to us from a HUD representative. So began my attempt to connect you to HUD.

HUD regional locations

Two Part Reentry HUD Housing Request

Since HUD does not offer any documents (that I could find) of their locations (the book does not even offer office locations, only links and email addresses) please ask your people outside to investigate further.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20410
Telephone: (202) 708-1112

<https://portal.hud.gov/portal/hud>

HUD Programs

- Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) Program
- HOME Investment Partnership (HOME) Program
- Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8) at HUD
- Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8) at Benefits.gov
- Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP)
- Public Housing Programs
- Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly Program
- Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities

PREPARING FOR PAROLE?

You might want to consider the info in these

Parole Board Handbooks

- Ohio Parole Board Handbook 2017
- New Parole Board member (State, Federal, and Military) handbook

Tax FAQ's from the IRS

Get Right With Your Taxes

For Parents

It's important to stay connected!

- Children of Incarcerated Parents - Bill of Rights
- Children of Incarcerated Parents' Library
- Biblioteca sobre niños de presos
- Prison Parenting Programs - May 2016

Sesame Street: On Incarceration

- Tips for Incarcerated Parents
- Little Children, Big Challenges
- Tips for Caregivers

Can you change your child support order?

- State by State Guide
- Changing a Child Support Order

Improve Your Financial Outlook!

Check out the Money Management page!

- Improve your Credit Score
- Build a Budget Worksheet

InCharge Debt Solutions

InCharge offers a free credit counseling service that provides help with budgeting, solutions for becoming debt free and tips to successfully manage your money. The goal of credit counseling is to provide a solution that helps you achieve debt relief and get on a financially healthy path. The service can be done over the phone or online.

You may be able to:

- Lower your interest rates
- Reduce monthly payments
- Credit scores are not a factor
- Eliminate fees and over-limit charges
- Stop harassing calls from debt collectors
- Consolidate credit bills into one monthly payment
- Build a realistic budget and financial plan you can follow

InCharge Debt Solutions
5750 Major Blvd, Suite 300
Orlando, FL 32819

Mental and Physical Health

Visit the Swellness Page!

<https://www.fairshake.net/swellness/>

Physical Health Page (just getting started!)

Help Yourself Therapy.com

HelpYourselfTherapy.com is a website that offers free, confidential, practical advice from a therapist. The Self-Therapy model is easy to understand and self-disclosure is never needed. Everything is completely confidential. Click on the link below to view the list of topics from the website.
<http://helpyourselftherapy.com/topics/index.html>

Voting Rights

Voting rights vary from state to state. In two states, Maine and Vermont, incarcerated people can vote in prison. In all other states people in prison lose their voting rights all together. Voting rights are automatically reinstated at various times throughout the completion of the sentence. There are no longer any states with a lifetime voting ban!

According to The Sentencing Project, felony disenfranchisement (the loss of voting and other civil rights) is an obstacle to participation in democratic life which is exacerbated by racial disparities in the criminal justice system (and creates) a disproportionate impact on communities of color.

To find out more, please visit The Sentencing Project:

<https://www.sentencingproject.org/issues/felony-disenfranchisement/>

NATIONAL INVENTORY OF THE COLLATERAL CONSEQUENCES OF CONVICTION

Collateral Consequences of a Criminal Conviction

Collateral consequences are legal and regulatory sanctions and restrictions that limit or prohibit people with criminal records from accessing employment, occupational licensing, housing, voting, education, and other opportunities of a criminal conviction... This state / national resource is now a project of the Council of State Governments.

Website: <https://nccic.org/justicecenter.org/>

Culture Shock!

Most of the information Fair Shake shares is for everyone to read, because everyone plays an important role is creating opportunities for success after incarceration. This document has been created to increase generosity and understanding between the people who are coming home from prison and the people who have not experienced prison. Whether family, co-workers, neighbors, or friends, it's important to try to think about how hard it must be to 'hit the ground running' after living in such a stark and controlled environment, while gadgets, lingo, and trends are mutating quickly and constantly.

In many aspects, life in prison functions in opposite ways to life outside of prison.

Although we cannot grasp what prison culture is like, if we can imagine living for several years on a confined piece of land surrounded by fences while living, working and eating in cement buildings, we begin to scratch the surface of a very different daily life. Inside prisons (and outside of administrator's offices) we find few, if any, potted plants, curtains, pictures on the walls, or carpets on the floors to provide a little comfort and absorb sound. Sleeping quarters are often very small, sometimes made smaller by the addition of a toilet, a sink and possibly another person. Other sleeping spaces can include large dormitories filled with dozens of bunk

beds and little or no privacy or quiet. People in prison do things in large groups frequently, like dining and going to work, while everyone in prison is living within their own unique story, too, which may include difficult news from the doctor, a lawyer, or family and friends, at any time. Oftentimes people must bear their hard news alone.

Prisons have unique cultures, which can vary a great deal: over the years, within one institution, between institutions, and amidst the types of institutions (federal / state; or security levels). Not only do the people change, but also the philosophy and directive of "corrections".

We all become acculturated or "institutionalized" to places where we spend a lot of time: where we work, go to school, our neighborhood, etc. When we return home after spending time in another culture, our own customs can feel a little strange. We can adjust to a wide variety of conditions over time and even assume new cultural norms without consciously deciding to do so. Just as we need time to adjust to a new neighborhood or job, people coming home need time, generosity and understanding to adjust, too.

We have power! We can build relationships, trust and understanding by reducing expectations and projections; and by increasing listening and care.

Consider just a small sample of cultural and lifestyle differences:

Persona

IN PRISON: Survival in some prisons may require a tough appearance. Gentleness and kindness may be perceived to be weak, leading to a person being taken advantage of mentally, physically, or both. Maintaining a stoic exterior, keeping thoughts to one's self can be useful in prison.

OUT OF PRISON: Friendliness, smiles, and engaging conversations can show others we are open to interaction. These sociable attributes are critical for success many jobs.

Trust

IN PRISON: Trust is hard to give and hard to gain. Concealment of emotions is important in many circumstances but it can make trust more difficult to attain.

OUT OF PRISON: One of our most treasured character traits is honesty. Trust is an important element in any relationship; whether with family, friends, or work-related. We work hard to build long- lasting relationships. It is within these deeper relationships that we can learn more about ourselves.

Choices

IN PRISON: In addition to having an established schedule in prison, incarcerated people have few choices about where to go, what to wear, what colors they would like to see on the walls, or what they would like to eat for breakfast.

OUT OF PRISON: We constantly make decisions. Life moves at a brisk pace with frequent changes. We're constantly adjusting our plans, and re-prioritizing our goals to accommodate others and still keep time for ourselves. Lots of choice!

Gizmos

IN PRISON: There are few gizmos. One gizmo is the music player. For twice the cost that unincarcerated people pay for a single song, an incarcerated person – who often earns about 1/100th of what they would earn outside of prison – can add a song to their MP3 player. Another gizmo is the 'public computer', which offers email and news within the institution. The most advanced gizmos are the tablets, which may or may not be free to the user. They offer email, music and movie services that generally come with a cost, and may include free services, too, such as books from Project Gutenberg, prison and education programming, or even Fair Shake's free software.

OUT OF PRISON: Gizmos, such as phones, tablets and laptops are ubiquitous. The devices demand attention which many of us eagerly provide. They offer non-stop distractions from 'real life' in the form of videos (many of which people make and post themselves), TV, social media, email, music and radio. Gizmos are also able to offer two-way communication through text, voice or video options.

Social Media

IN PRISON: People watching TV together, people reading the same article and then talking about it, and even teleconferencing visits with family or friends are pretty much the extent of social media.

OUT OF PRISON: Social media is on almost every gizmo, and the pressure to join facebook, twitter, instagram and linkedin is great.

Many of us claim social media is 'pro-social' and boosts our awareness of current events and their meaning, but it has been tied to anxiety, depression and suicide.

Quiet Time

IN PRISON: Prisons are noisy places. They offer few quiet places or opportunities for time alone. The buildings are made of concrete and offer few furnishings to reduce noise. When people get upset, they may become loud. Many incarcerated people keep earplugs with them at all times.

OUT OF PRISON: Life is very busy and we are constantly interacting; the gizmos make sure of that. We have to be strong and determined to carve out time to be alone...to reflect on our day, our perspective, and life, or to sit quietly and listen. Quiet time can be rejuvenating and reaffirming.

Care-giving

IN PRISON: Incarcerated people are not able to provide daily, in-person physical or emotional care for children, partners, parents, or pets.

OUT OF PRISON: Caring for others is constantly affirming, taxing, challenging, and invigorating! We need to be needed, and we feel good supporting those we care about. Caring for others enhances our health!

Humanness

IN PRISON: Incarcerated people may be referred to as "offender", inmate, or by their last name or ID number.

OUT OF PRISON: We can insist upon being treated with respect.

Physical Contact

IN PRISON: Affectionate touch is brief and has been limited to family and close friends when they visit. Since COVID began, many visits have been replaced with teleconferencing.

OUT OF PRISON: Handshakes, hugs, back-patting, and other signs of affection are welcome and encouraged among relatives, friends, teammates and colleagues.

Information

IN PRISON: Incarcerated people can access a limited amount of information through magazines, newspapers, television, radio, and letters. But a person can think, weigh options, and philosophize with others, and without a gizmo buzzing at them constantly.

OUT OF PRISON: We are overloaded with information, misinformation and disinformation, with very few tools to differentiate one from another and very little desire to hear things from outside of our bubble. Online, we have limitless reinforcements for our beliefs.

Patience

IN PRISON: Incarcerated people must ask for - and wait for - assistance, services, and professional help including doctor visits, rides to see specialists, meetings with administrators, phone calls, and daily meals.

OUT OF PRISON: We are impatient. We want 'urgent care' and we can get medical help immediately, if necessary. We arrange meetings according to our schedule and we can spontaneously do things.

Consider these similarities, too!

- In prison, people continue to love children, partners, parents, grandparents, sisters, brothers, other relatives, friends, colleagues, clergy, advocates, etc.
- We all appreciate humor and many of us support our favorite sports people / teams
- We all feel sad, scared, excited, angry, caring, anxious, blue and vulnerable at times.
- We are all concerned about safety, security, and the future.
- We all need - and deserve - feelings of self-worth, agency, dignity and belonging.

Benefits of Fair Shake Membership

Bridges to working and networking in today's electronic world

The Member area of the website is exclusively for formerly incarcerated people and exists to provide access to and training in useful technological tools that can build opportunities. It includes free online tools such as a Personal Web Page, data storage area, and a Personal Resource Directory with tutorials to learn more about all of the above.

We recommend you engage in every way possible to demonstrate skills and knowledge you have acquired before, during and after incarceration. We believe that if you embrace this section of the website you will be able to put your best foot forward to demonstrate your intentions, your organizational skills, pride in your work, and commitment to the course you are now taking. We also believe that by utilizing these tools you can help others succeed!

Fair Shake offers the following FREE Benefits:

Personal Web Page: Your Personal Web Page is a comfortable environment to disclose the information you would like to share with people you permit to visit. Here you can introduce yourself, list your skills, your education and work history, show your photograph, link to your documents and provide relevant and important information not requested in many job applications.

Some people assume the worst when they hear you have been incarcerated and make incorrect judgments. Your Personal Web Page lets others learn about you at their leisure and provides an opportunity to make a personal connection in a non-threatening way.

Your page is password protected; you decide who has permission to visit. You can change the password at any time to control the amount of people that can view your page or have access to your documents such as your resume, identification, and certificates in education or specific skills.

Data Management: On the Data Management page you can upload documents and photos for storage. You will also see how much of your storage space remains available.

Personal Resource Directory: The Resource Directory is available to everyone, but when you are signed in to your Fair Shake account you can save resources to your own account, and thus create your own Personal Resource Directory. All the contacts you have saved and searches you have performed are here for your quick and easy reference. From this page you can review, delete and print. Printing makes these resources available to you while you are away from your Fair Shake account.

Tutorials: If only the world had a user's manual! This area is full of tutorials that will help you understand how to use your electronic tools. Tutorials we have written explain using all of the tools we give you within Fair Shake, and we also provide links to other tutorials on popular programs you may have access to.

Member Testimonial:

Fair Shake helped me to land the job I currently have. My boss was highly impressed with the array of resources I had at my disposal. What I like best about Fair Shake is that the member tools are restricted solely to inmates released from prison.




Potential employers see the information collected and displayed by and through your site and it gives them just enough pause to consider us as people. And for people like me, that was all I needed. I now have my own place to live, my own job, and I'm getting along just fine. Your site definitely played an integral part in this process.

~ Cody R.

WELCOME TO FAIR SHAKE! ➔ www.fairshake.net

PRINT THIS PAGE to guide you as you explore the Fair Shake Do-It-Yourself Reentry Resource Center. There is a lot of information on the website! This guide will help you get find your way around.

3 important items for you to remember:

1. If you ever get lost on the website (or any website), click on the logo to return to the home page.
2. Words in blue are links to pages on our website, other websites or documents that you can also print.
3. Icons you will see:
 -  Available off-line and on-line
 -  Available on-line only
 -  Documents available off-line and on-line



➤ [Resource Directory](#)
➤ [Resource Directory](#)

Fair Shake Website Home Page: ➔ www.fairshake.net



Do It Yourself!

- You are unique! No one knows what you need better than you do
- Explore new opportunities!
- No tracking, nudging, or monitoring



Fair Shake Reentry Tool Kit

- [Resource Directory](#)
- [Reentry Packet](#)
- [Ownership Manual](#)
- [Building Computer Skills](#)
- [Find a Job](#)
- [Become a Member!](#)
- [Educate Yourself!](#)

Find RESOURCES:

Resource Directory – search our huge data base!
Resource Guides – local, regional, and national brochures, books, and interactive websites

Find EMPLOYMENT

Prepare For Work
Find A Job (also includes Start Your Own Business)
Help an Employer Hire You!

Explore LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Formal, Informal, Non-formal
Higher Ed, Life Skills, Lifelong Learning

And Improve COMPUTER SKILLS!

Step-by-Step Tutorials and Internet Safety Tips

SEARCH the entire Fair Shake WEBSITE

It is like a REENTRY, DEVELOPMENT and COMMUNITY-BUILDING LIBRARY!

You can find all the pages on our website from almost any location on our website! By hovering over the four menu tabs on the left side of our home page, you will activate the menu bar to reveal links to pages organized under headings.

STEP BY STEP:

Look to the left side of any page and you will see a dark purple column. Do you see the words: Reentry Resources, Information Center, Member Menu and About Fair Shake? Hover your cursor (don't click) over the words Reentry Resources at the top of the column. To 'hover', move the cursor – which usually looks like an arrow – over a tab. You will see the cursor switch to the image of a hand. The Menu Title will then change to light-purple and the Menu will appear to the right. Next, you can move your cursor over the words in the menu. Hover over any of the titles and the color will change to orange and a line will be added underneath. Click on the title that interests you, and you will go to that page on the website.



Most websites work like Fair Shake:

- Click on the logo to return to the home page
- Find the sitemap at the bottom of almost every page
- Words that change color are often links
- Learn about an organization's Mission and Vision by visiting the "About Us" page.

Found at the bottom of each webpage, the Sitemap also shows all of the pages on the website:

Home / Sitemap / Privacy Policy / Help / Contact Us / Back to Top

Employment Tips

We often have to work our way up to the job we want; either because it is not available when we go to find it or we need more experience, education, preparation or time to get ready. Although we will spend time working at jobs that are not our preference, we can enjoy the interim more when we stay focused on our goals.

Start by asking yourself:

- What kind of job or career do I want?
- What am I willing to do, learn or sacrifice to get that job or career?

Before venturing out into the world of work you will have to obtain necessary documents.

The most frequently requested documents are:

- Birth Certificate
- Driver's license or Basic Identification
- Social Security Card

The birth certificate and driver's license forms offered in our Employment Documents are samples. You can find links to the applications that you need in our Resource Directory!

Next, ask yourself the following questions

- What occupations or industries in your area are in need of employees?
- What are your employment limitations due to your particular crime?
- What is the income you need in order to pay for housing, food, energy, phone, child support, restitution, transportation, etc? (check out our [Build a Budget Worksheet](#))
- Which strategies do you think would be most effective for "selling" your attributes?

To prepare to apply for a job you may want to create the following worksheets:

- Inventory your work history in and out of prison
- List your training, skills, limitations, and health considerations
- Gather all the information you will need to fill out employment applications. Are you ready to fill them out online? (Several companies only accept online applications.)

Considerations and Preparation

What are your employment resources?

- Classified ads (in the paper or locally found on-line)
- Applying for jobs with companies you want to work for
- Job Assistance and Job Training centers
- Craigslist, Monster.com, other job-search websites

Skills Assessment and Personal Strengths Evaluation

Consider taking a free online self-assessment test help us see what careers we are suited for. If you type the phrase 'self-assessment test' into any search engine, several options will be available for you to check out.

Do you need clothes for your interview or new job?

Check out Dress for Success, a global program that may have a location near you!

(www.dressforsuccess.org)

Resume' and Interview tips:

Two good places where you get the chance to show a company why they cannot afford NOT to hire you. Keep these tips in mind as you write your application or resume', and prepare for job interviews:

- Be cheerful in your in-person or telephone job interviews.
- Talk about the benefits of your experience and the relevant expertise you offer.
- Speak about the value you would bring to the company.
- Share stories in the job interview about success in prior assignments.
- Talk about your ability to work with a diverse group of people.

Typical Barriers to Employment:

- Lack of updated resume
- Appropriate clothing for job search
- Transportation
- Stable housing
- Substance abuse
- Poor interview skills
- Poor job search skills
- Not a high school graduate
- No documentation (ID, Social Security card)

SMART: What is your strategy for overcoming barriers and creating success?

You can create a clear strategy by following SMART guidelines:

Specific Measurable Attainable Realistic Timely (or Tangible)

Specific – what is the specific goal you wish to achieve?

Can you answer these questions?

- Who do you need to be involved?
- What do you really want to accomplish?
- When do you want to accomplish it?
- Where do you need to be to accomplish it?
- Why do you want to achieve this goal?
- Which things do you need to get in order and which are the constraints to achieving your goal?

Measurable – How will you know when you've achieved your goal? What criteria have you set up to measure your progress and reach your target dates?

Attainable – Can you see yourself achieving this goal? Can you see the path to get there and then see yourself in that place of having reached the goal?

Realistic – Are you willing and able to achieve the goal?

Timely – How long do you need to achieve your goal? Work out your goal date and then the smaller goals that must be met to meet that goal date?

Tangible – Imagine: can you taste, touch, smell, see or hear the results of achieving your goal?

COMPANY OR
EMPLOYER NAME: _____

POSITION APPLIED FOR: _____

APPLICANT TELEPHONE: _____

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER: _____

Employment Application

YOUR NAME: _____
Last First Middle

ADDRESS: _____

ARE YOU LEGALLY ELIGIBLE FOR EMPLOYMENT IN THE U.S.A.?

☐ Yes ☐ No (If yes, verification will be required.)

I AM SEEKING A PERMANENT POSITION: ☐ Yes ☐ No

IF NECESSARY FOR THE JOB I AM ABLE TO:

Are you able to perform the essential functions
of the position with or without accommodations?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Work (which shifts)? _____

Work overtime? _____

Provide a valid Alaska Drivers License? _____

IF NECESSARY FOR THE JOB, ARE YOU OVER (Please mark one) 14__ 15__ 16__ 18__ 19__ 21__

I WILL BE ABLE TO REPORT TO WORK ____ DAYS AFTER BEING NOTIFIED THAT I AM HIRED.

EDUCATION:	Yrs. Completed	Field of Study	Graduate or Degree
High School _____			
College/University _____			
Business/Technical _____			
Other (May include grammar school) _____			

MILITARY SERVICE: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Duty/Specialized Training: _____

REFERENCES: List two personal references who are not relatives or former supervisors.

Name	Address	Telephone	Occupation	Years known
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Name	Address	Telephone	Occupation	Years known
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

EMPLOYMENT: List last employment first. Include summer or temporary jobs. Be sure all your experience or employers related to this job are listed here, in the summary (following this section), or use an extra sheet of paper if necessary.

Employer Name and Address	Position Title/Duties Skills	Dates Employed from _____ to _____

_____		Reason for leaving
_____	Supervisor's Name: _____ Telephone: _____	

Employer Name and Address	Position Title/Duties Skills	Dates Employed from _____ to _____

_____		Reason for leaving
_____	Supervisor's Name: _____ Telephone: _____	

EMPLOYMENT CONTINUED...

Employer Name and Address	Position Title/Duties Skills	Dates Employed from to
		Reason for leaving
	Supervisor's Name: Telephone:	

Employer Name and Address	Position Title/Duties Skills	Dates Employed from to
		Reason for leaving
	Supervisor's Name: Telephone:	

Summarize other
employment related to this job: _____

Types of computers, other electronic or mechanical
equipment that you are qualified to operate or repair: _____

Typing speed: _____ per minute.

Professional Licenses, Certifications or Registrations: _____

Additional skills including supervision skills, other languages, or information
regarding the career/occupation you wish to bring to the employer's attention: _____

In case of accident or illness please contact: Name: _____

Daytime phone: _____

Address: _____

Relationship: _____

Information to the applicant: As part of our procedure for processing your employment application, your personal and employment references may be checked. If you have misrepresented or omitted any facts on this application, and are subsequently hired, you may be discharged from your job. You may make a written request for information derived from the checking of your references.

If necessary for employment, you may be required to: supply your birth certificate or other proof of authorization to work in the US, have a physical examination and/or a drug test, or to sign a conflict of interest agreement and abide by its terms.

I understand and agree to the information shown above:

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Equal Employment Opportunity: While many employers are required by federal law to have an Affirmative Action Program, all employers are required to provide equal employment opportunity and may ask your national origin, race and sex for planning and reporting purposes only. This information is optional and failure to provide it will have no affect on your application for employment.

Employer Section: _____

Interview Tips

Before you head to your interview, ask yourself these questions:

- Do you really want this job?
- Are you qualified for the job?
- Do you believe you can get the job?
- What attitude and information must you deliver to the employer to get the job?
- Are you ready for your interview?

If you decide you really want to get this job, consider these tips:

1. Keep your answers short yet full of information, unless you are asked to clarify. Try to put yourself in the interviewer's shoes; asking the same questions of many applicants! Fine tune your answers to the Sample Interview Questions and bring your authenticity and vitality to the interview.
2. Determine what your key strengths and assets are. Be sure to state them confidently a couple of times throughout the interview.
3. Prepare for a variety of interview questions. Consider the challenges you have overcome, the difficult interpersonal situations that you resolved with others, and several success stories.
4. Describe specific situations and accomplishments. Generalities fail to show the interviewer your strengths and assets and how they can benefit the company and the position that is available.
5. Put yourself on their team. Show how you fit in with the existing work environment and company culture. During the interview, align your language with the language of the team.
6. Observe your non-verbal communication. Are you saying what you mean to say? Practice answering some of the Sample Interview Questions in front of a mirror to see if your eyes and your gestures agree with your words.
7. Ask questions. Is this where you want to work? Find out what you need to know to accept the job. Also, the interviewer will see that you are taking interest in the company and work environment. That is an important quality in a team player.
8. Be sure to talk WITH the interviewer and not AT the interviewer. Interviews are stressful enough for both parties. Keep it human.
9. Research the company. Is it a right fit for you? Can you get behind the mission of the company? How much can you know about the work and the work environment before the interview?
10. Apply for jobs that you are skilled for and that you can appreciate...even if only as a stepping stone to your next job. If you truly want the job, you must be able to compete successfully with your competition. Authenticity shines through your words and your non-verbal communication.

Sample Interview Questions

The interview is your chance to show an employer your unique qualities and it is also the time you can ask more about the employer, the company culture and the job you are applying for. Before you interview be sure to find out all you can about the company so you understand who they are, and also so the interviewer knows you care.

Interviews can be stressful; the best way to manage that stress is to be prepared. If you are ready to answer the questions below you will be prepared for most of the questions that might come up.

There are many variables that make finding a job even more complicated if you have a criminal record. How much should you disclose and when should you disclose it? How do you explain your criminal record and still land a job? How do you address it during an interview? We explore these questions and more at the end of this document.

Possible Interview Questions: About the Job and the Company

- Why did you apply for this job?
- What experience, skills and characteristics do you possess to do the job?
- Why do you think you are the best person for this job?
- Why should we hire you?
- What have you learned about our company?
- How do you see your role in joining this or any company?
- Describe good customer service.
- Describe handling a challenge with a co-worker
- Are you willing to travel?
- Do you have any limitations that would inhibit you from doing this job?
- How long do you think you would like to be employed by this company?

Possible Interview Questions: About You

- Tell me about yourself.
- What are you passionate about?
- What is your greatest strength? What is your greatest weakness?
- What do you do when you're angry?
- If you know your supervisor is wrong about something, how would you handle it?
- Describe a difficult work situation and how you dealt with it.
- Describe your work style.
- How would you describe the pace at which you work?
- How do you handle stress and pressure?
- Tell me about how you worked effectively under pressure.
- What motivates you? Are you self-motivated?
- What are your salary expectations? (if it is not listed with the job posting)
- What types of decisions are difficult for you? What types are easy?
- If you could relive the last 10 years of your life, what would you do differently?
- If the people who know you were asked why you should be hired, what would they say?
- Do you prefer to work independently or with others?
- Tell me about your ideal work environment.
- How do you evaluate success?
- What are your career goals? How do you plan to achieve these goals?
- Give an example of a goal you reached and tell me how you achieved it.
- Give an example of a goal you didn't meet and how you handled it.
- Give an example of how you set goals and achieve them.
- How do you handle a challenge?

Possible Interview Questions: Your Work History

- Tell me about ____ company listed on your resume.
- What were your duties, responsibilities, expectations...for the position and as an employee?
- What challenges did you face? How did you handle them?
- What did you like about this job? What did you dislike about this job?
- What was your biggest accomplishment at this job? At any job?
- What were your favorite and least favorite aspects about the people you worked with, including supervisors?
- What attributes to you like to see in a supervisor?
- What do you expect from a supervisor?
- Tell me a little about your favorite and least favorite supervisor.
- Why did you leave this job? (why did you quit or why were you fired?)
- Have you been in a position when you did not have enough work to do? What did you do with your time?
- Have you made a mistake? How did you handle it?
- Have you ever dealt with company policy you weren't in agreement with? How?
- Have you gone above and beyond the call of duty? If so, how?
- When you worked on multiple projects how did you prioritize?
- How did you handle meeting a tight deadline?
- What do you do when your schedule is interrupted? Give an example of how you handle it.
- Tell me about a difficult situation with a co-worker? How did you handle it?
- Tell me about your experience working with a team.
- Have you motivated employees or co-workers? Tell me about it.
- Give me an example of when you did and when you didn't listen.
- Have you handled a difficult situation with a co-worker? How?
- Have you handled a difficult situation with a supervisor? How?
- Have you handled a difficult situation with another department? How?
- Have you handled a difficult situation with a client or vendor? How?

Possible Interview Questions: Incarceration

- Why were you incarcerated?
- What did you learn from that experience?
- Do you have challenges or limitations that could affect your work schedule?
- What have you been doing to prepare for employment since you came home?
- Were you employed or in school when you were incarcerated? If so, tell me about your work. Tell me about your education.

Illegal questions:

- What is your age?
- How many children do you have? Are you pregnant?
- How much do you weigh? How tall are you?
- Do you live with anyone? Who?
- Are you married or in a relationship?

Legal alternatives:

- Are you over 18 years old?
- Can you lift 60 pounds?
- Is there anything that might interfere with your work schedule?

Related to Your Criminal Record

An employer may not ask questions about a previous arrest or conviction. They may ask if you have been convicted of specific crimes if they are relevant to the position being applied for. An employer may not refuse employment to someone just because they have a criminal record.

Lisa Pollan, site coordinator at LIFT-DC, says they encourage formerly incarcerated clients to collect "evidence of rehabilitation." This evidence should prove to employers that the client has changed since their offense and is now a responsible member of society. Evidence of rehabilitation can include:

- letters of recommendation from employers or advocates
- proof of training program completion/certificates (including during incarceration)
- participation in a mentoring or support group

For Job Applications, LIFT-DC counsels clients to do the following:

- **Only answer what is asked:** If a question asks if you have been convicted of a felony, you can say no if you only have misdemeanors. If a question asks if you have been convicted of a felony in the last seven years, and you were convicted 10 years ago, answer no.
- **Answer truthfully:** A company may hire ex-offenders but have a policy of terminating anyone who lies on an application.
- **Demonstrate change:** If you answer a question about your record by writing, "Yes, but I got my GED while I was incarcerated," you show that you are educated, focused and want to make positive changes in your life. You can also attach a written explanation of your situation, and proof of your rehabilitation.

Check out LIFT-DC for more tips on interviewing! <http://www.liftcommunities.org/>

From the National Reentry Resource Center:

<http://www.nationalreentryresourcecenter.org/faqs/employment-and-education#Q8>

How should job-seekers respond to questions regarding past convictions?

- Acknowledge the previous mistakes in a concise and businesslike way
- mention any relevant skills or interests developed while in prison or prior to entering prison
- reinforce a commitment and an interest in the new job, by stating, for example, "I'm more mature now and my top priority is to work at [company] to use my abilities, focus on the work, and make a fresh start."

Applicants should be familiar with their criminal history to answer accurately specific questions on job applications and in interviews.

Race/Religion

An employer may not ask you about your religion but it may come up if they ask you what days/times you are available. An employer may not judge you for being a part of any race or religion but may decide not to hire you if you are unavailable for any crucial time for the position you are applying.

Interview Questions for You to Ask

In an interview both you and the employer are finding out about each other. Asking these questions will show general interest in the business, and the team you are applying to work with. These questions show you care about the position and how you might fit. Asking questions will also help you understand if you think the environment is suitable for you.

Please tell me important information I should consider about working with this company:

- On average, how long do people keep the position for which I am applying?
- What strengths and skills do you think I should have to best fill this position?
- What employee qualities are encouraged here?
- Is this a friendly environment or are people pretty serious?
- Would you tell me about the challenges I might find working here?
- Which companies, products or services are our competitors?
- Is there an opportunity for promotion from this position?
- How often will I be evaluated?
- What are the businesses strengths? What aspects need improvement?
- What will be expected of me in the first 3 months? 6 months? Year?
- Are we encouraged to participate in things outside of work, like a softball league?
- In what ways does the company recognize and honor work that has been done?
- Will I have an employment agreement?
- Will I work with alone or with a group?
- Who will I report to? What kind of person are they?
- Are we anticipating any major changes in the workplace?
- How many applicants do you have for this position?
- What training do you provide?
- Does the company provide or support higher education or advanced training for employees?
- Is there anything else I can provide you to help you make a decision?
- How soon can I expect to hear from you?

Not all of these questions would apply to any one position. These questions are just examples to either pick from or open your mind to asking questions that will help you make sure the job is acceptable for you!

Resume Guide

A good resume will open the door for an interview. But do you need a resume? Some employers prefer a resume and others require an application form. That depends on the kind of job you're applying for.

RESUME REQUIRED

- Professional, technical, administrative and managerial jobs.
- Sales positions.
- Secretarial, clerical, and other office jobs.

RESUME SOMETIMES REQUIRED

Professional positions: Baker, Hotel Clerk, Electrician, Drafter, Welder

RESUME NOT REQUIRED

Unskilled, quick turnover jobs: Fast Food Server, Laborers, Machine Loader, Cannery Worker

The Rockport Institute has generously donated the resume guide below. It is a shortened version of their full resume guide ***How to Write a Masterpiece of a Resume*** which can be found here:

<http://www.rockportinstitute.com/resumes>

WRITE A RESUME THAT GENERATES RESULTS

Before you begin, ask yourself: Why do you have a resume in the first place? What is it supposed to do for you? How can you differentiate yourself from hundreds of other applicants with qualified resumes? The prospective employer has the overwhelming task of looking over many resumes to find the special person that is right for the position and a great fit for the culture of the company. You are facing a great deal of competition.

The resume is a tool with one specific purpose: to win an interview. If it doesn't, it isn't an effective resume. A resume is an advertisement; nothing more, nothing less. A great resume doesn't just tell them what you have done but makes the same assertion that all good ads do: If you buy this product, you will get these specific, direct benefits. It presents you in the best light. It convinces the employer that you have what it takes to be successful in this new position or career.

Other reasons to have a resume:

- To pass the employer's screening process (requisite educational level, number years' experience, etc.), to give basic facts which might favorably influence the employer
- To establish yourself as a professional person with high standards and excellent writing skills, based on the fact that your resume is so well done (clear, well-organized, well-written, well-designed, of the highest professional grades of printing and paper).
- To use as a covering piece or addendum to another form of job application
- To put in an employer's personnel files. (which they may check out later for other openings)
- To help you clarify your direction, qualifications, and strengths, boost your confidence, or to start the process of committing to a job or career change.

It is a mistake to think of your resume as your work history, a personal statement or some sort of self expression. Sure, most of the content of any resume is focused on your job history. But write from the intention to create interest, to persuade the employer to call you. If you write with that goal, your final product will be very different than if you write it just to catalog your job history.

Most resumes are quickly scanned, rather than read. Ten to twenty seconds is all the time you have to persuade a prospective employer to read further and the decision to interview a candidate is usually based on an overall first impression of the resume, a quick screening that so impresses the reader and convinces them of the candidate's qualifications that an interview results. The top half of the first page of your resume will either make you or break you. You hope it will have the same result as a well-written ad: to get the reader to respond. You are selling a product in which you have a large personal investment: you.

The person who is doing the hiring often cares deeply how well the job will be done. You need to write your resume to appeal directly to them. Ask yourself: What does the employer really want? What special abilities would this person have? What would set a truly exceptional candidate apart from a merely good one? How can I demonstrate that I am the perfect candidate? Put yourself in their shoes.

Loosen up your thinking enough so that you will be able to see some new connections between what you have done and what the employer is looking for. You need not confine yourself to work-related accomplishments! Use your entire life as evidence of your character, skills and talents. If Sunday school or your former gang are the only places you have had a chance to demonstrate your special gifts for leadership, fine. What are the talents you have to offer the prospective employer? A great resume has two sections. In the first, you make assertions about your abilities, qualities and achievements. You write powerful, but honest, advertising copy that makes the reader immediately perk up and realize that you are someone special.

The second section, the evidence section, is where you back up your assertions with evidence that you actually did what you said you did. This is where you list and describe the jobs you have held, your education, etc. This is all the stuff you are obliged to include.

Most resumes are just the evidence section, with no assertions. The 'juice' is in the assertions section. When a prospective employer finishes reading your resume, you want them to reach for the phone to invite you in to interview. The resumes you have written in the past have probably been a gallant effort to inform the reader. You don't want them informed. You want them interested and excited.

THE OBJECTIVE SECTION

Ideally, your resume should be pointed toward conveying why you are the perfect candidate for one specific job or job title. Good advertising is directed toward a very specific target audience.

Targeting your resume requires that you be absolutely clear about your career direction—or at least that you appear to be clear. You would be wise to use this time of change to design your future career so you have a clear target that will meet your goals and be personally fulfilling. With a nonexistent, vague or overly broad objective, the first statement you make to a prospective employer says you are not sure this is the job for you.

Imagine the position of a software manufacturer looking at a sea of resumes. They all look so much alike until they come across a resume in the pile that starts with the following: "OBJECTIVE - a software sales position in an organization seeking an extraordinary record of generating new accounts, exceeding sales targets and enthusiastic customer relations". They are immediately interested! This first sentence conveys some very important and powerful messages: "I want exactly the job you are offering. I am a superior candidate because I recognize the qualities that are most important to you, and I have them. I want to make a contribution to your company." This works well because the employer is smart enough to know that

someone who wants to do exactly what they are offering will be much more likely to succeed than someone who doesn't. And that person will probably be a lot more pleasant to work with as well.

Secondly, this candidate has done a good job of establishing why they are the perfect candidate in their first sentence. They have thought about what qualities would make a candidate stand out. They have started communicating that they are that person immediately. What's more, they are communicating from the point of view of making a contribution to the employer.

Here's how to write your objective. First of all, decide on a specific job title for your objective. Go back to your list of answers to the question "How can I demonstrate that I am the perfect candidate?" What are the two or three qualities, abilities or achievements that would make a candidate stand out as truly exceptional for that specific job? Having an objective statement that really sizzles is highly effective. And it's simple to do. One format is:

OBJECTIVE: An xxx position in an organization where yyy and zzz would be needed (or, in an organization seeking yyy and zzz).

Xxx is the name of the position you are applying for. Yyy and zzz are the most compelling qualities, abilities or achievements that will really make you stand out above the crowd of applicants.

If you are applying for several different positions, you should adapt your resume to each one. Have an objective that is perfectly matched with the job you are applying for. Remember, you are writing advertising copy, not your life story.

If you have a limited work history, you want the employer to immediately focus on where you are going, rather than where you have been.

Examples of an Objective section:

OBJECTIVE: An entry-level position in the hospitality industry where a background in advertising and public relations would be needed.

OBJECTIVE: A position teaching English as a second language where a special ability to motivate and communicate effectively with students would be needed.

THE SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

The "Summary of Qualifications" consists of several concise statements that focus the reader's attention on the most important qualities, achievements and abilities you have to offer. Those qualities should be the most compelling demonstrations of why they should hire you instead of the other candidates.

This may be the only section fully read by the employer, so it should be very strong and convincing. Include professional characteristics (extremely energetic, a gift for solving complex problems in a fast-paced environment, exceptional interpersonal skills, committed to excellence, etc.) helpful in winning the interview.

How should you write to write a Summary of Qualifications? Look for the qualities the employer will care about most. Then look at what you wrote about why you are the perfect person to fill their need. Pick your qualities that best demonstrate why they should hire you. Assemble it into your Summary section.

The most common ingredients of a well-written Summary are as follows. Do not use all these ingredients in one Summary - use the ones that highlight you best.

- A short phrase describing your profession
- Followed by a statement of broad or specialized expertise
- Followed by two or three additional statements related to any of the following:
 - o breadth or depth of skills
 - o unique mix of skills
 - o range of environments in which you have experience
 - o a special or well-documented accomplishment
 - o a history of awards, promotions, or superior performance commendations
- One or more professional or appropriate personal characteristics
- A sentence describing professional objective or interest.

Notice that the examples below show how to include your objective in the Summary section. If you are making a career change, your Summary section should show how what you have done in the past prepares you to do what you seek to do in the future.

A few examples of Summary sections:

- Highly motivated, creative and versatile real estate executive with seven years of experience in development and construction. Especially skilled at building effective, productive working relationships with clients and staff. Excellent management, negotiation and public relations skills. Seeking a challenging management position in the real estate field that offers extensive contact with the public.
- Health Care Professional experienced in management, program development and policy making in the United States as well as in several developing countries. A talent for analyzing problems, developing and simplifying procedures, and finding innovative solutions. Proven ability to motivate and work effectively with persons from other cultures and all walks of life. Skilled in working within a foreign environment with limited resources.
- Performing artist with a rich baritone voice and unusual range, specializing in classical, spiritual, gospel and rap music. Featured soloist for two nationally televised events. Accomplished pianist. Extensive performance experience includes television, concert tours and club acts. Available for commercial recording and live performances.

SKILLS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In this final part of the assertions section of your resume, you do exactly what you did in the previous section, except that you go into more detail.

In the summary, you focused on your most special highlights. Now you tell the rest of the best of your story. Let them know what results you produced, what happened as a result of your efforts, what you are especially gifted or experienced at doing. Flesh out the most important highlights in your summary.

Here are a few ways you could structure your "Skills and Accomplishments" section:

SELECTED SKILLS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Raised \$1900 in 21 days in canvassing and advocacy on environmental, health and consumer issues.
- Conducted legal research for four Assistant U.S. Attorneys, for the U.S. Attorney's office
- Coordinated Board of Directors and Community Advisory Board of community mental health center. Later commended as "the best thing that ever happened to that job."

FUNCTIONAL RESUME FORMAT

The functional resume highlights your major skills and accomplishments. It helps the reader see clearly what you can do for them. It helps target the resume into a new direction by lifting up from all past jobs the key skills and qualifications to help prove you will be successful. The functional resume is a must for career changers and for those returning to the job market.

THE EVIDENCE SECTION - YOUR WORK HISTORY, EDUCATION, ETC.

Most resumes are not much more than a collection of "evidence," various facts about your past. By evidence, we mean all the mandatory information you must include on your resume: work history with descriptions, dates, education, affiliations, list of software mastered, etc. If you put this toward the top of your resume, anyone reading it will feel like they are reading an income tax form.

EXPERIENCE

List jobs in reverse chronological order. Don't go into detail on the jobs early in your career; focus on the most recent and/or relevant jobs. (Summarize a number of the earliest jobs in one line or very short paragraph. Put dates in italics at the end of the job; don't include months, unless the job was held less than a year. Include military service, internships, and major volunteer roles if desired! Because the section is labeled "Experience," it does not need to mean that you were paid.

EDUCATION

List education in reverse chronological order, degrees or licenses first, followed by certificates and advanced training. Set degrees apart so they are easily seen. Put in boldface whatever will be most impressive. Don't include any details about college except your major and distinctions or awards you have won.

- Do include advanced training, but be selective with the information.
- If you are working on an uncompleted degree, include the degree and afterwards, in parentheses, the expected date of completion.
- If you didn't finish college, start with a phrase describing the field studied, then the school, then the dates (the fact that there was no degree may be missed).

Other headings might be "Education and Training" or "Education and Licenses".

And then add your Awards, Civic and Community Recognition and Comments from Supervisors.

PERSONAL INTERESTS

Only list these if your personal interests indicate a skill or knowledge that is related to the goal, such as photography for someone in public relations, or carpentry and wood-working for someone in construction management. This section can create common ground in an interview.

REFERENCES

You may put "References available upon request" at the end of your resume, if you wish. This is a standard close (centered at bottom in italics), but is not necessary. You can bring a separate sheet of references to the interview, to be given to the employer upon request.

A FEW GUIDELINES FOR A BETTER PRESENTATION

The resume is visually enticing, a work of art. Simple clean structure. Very easy to read. Symmetrical. Balanced. Uncrowded. As much white space between sections of writing as possible; sections of writing that are no longer than six lines, and shorter if possible.

There are absolutely no errors. No typographical errors. No spelling errors. No grammar, syntax, or punctuation errors. No errors of fact.

All the basic, expected information is included. A resume must have the following key information: your name, address, phone number, and your email address at the top of the first page, a listing of jobs held, in reverse chronological order, educational degrees, in reverse chronological order.

Jobs listed include a title, the name of the firm, the city and state of the firm, and the years employed. Jobs earlier in a career can be summarized and extra part-time jobs can be omitted. If no educational degrees have been completed, it is still expected to include some mention of education (professional study or training, partial study toward a degree, etc.) acquired after high school.

It is targeted. First you should get clear what your job goal is, what the ideal position would be. Then you should figure out what key skills, areas of expertise or body of experience the employer will be looking for in the candidate. Gear the resume structure and content around this target, proving these key qualifications.

Strengths are highlighted / weaknesses de-emphasized. Focus on whatever is strongest and most impressive. Make careful and strategic choices as to how to organize, order, and convey your skills and background.

Use power words. For every skill, accomplishment, or job described, use the most active impressive verb you can think of (which is also accurate). Begin the sentence with this verb, except when you must vary the sentence structure to avoid repetitious writing.

Show you are results-oriented. Wherever possible, prove that you have the desired qualifications through clear strong statement of accomplishments

Writing is concise and to the point. Keep sentences as short and direct as possible.

Make it look great. Use a laser printer or an ink jet printer that produces high-quality results. A laser is best because the ink won't run if it gets wet. It should look typeset. Use a standard conservative typeface (font) in 11 or 12 point. Use off-white, ivory or bright white 8 1/2 x 11-inch paper, in the highest quality affordable. Use absolutely clean paper without smudges, without staples and with a generous border.

Shorter is usually better. Your resume should be just long enough to keep the reader's interest, and create psychological excitement that leads prospective employers to pick up the phone and call you.

Telephone number that will be answered. Be sure the phone number on the resume will, without exception, be answered by a person or an answering machine Monday through Friday 8-5pm.

WHAT NOT TO PUT ON A RESUME

- The word "Resume" at the top of the resume
- Fluffy rambling "objective" statements
- Salary information
- Full addresses of former employers or names of supervisors
- Reasons for leaving jobs
- References

Favorite Verbs For Your Resume

Originally "Our Favorite Resume Verbs" by Wendy Enelow

Accelerate	Collaborate	Differentiate	Expand
Accentuate	Collect	Diminish	Expedite
Accomplish	Command	Direct	Experiment
Accommodate	Commercialize	Discern	Explode
Achieve	Communicate	Discover	Explore
Acquire	Compare	Dispense	Export
Adapt	Compel	Display	Facilitate
Address	Compile	Distinguish	Finalize
Advance	Complete	Distribute	Finance
Advise	Compute	Diversify	Forge
Advocate	Conceive	Divert	Form
Align	Conceptualize	Document	Formalize
Alter	Conclude	Dominate	Formulate
Analyze	Conduct	Double	Foster
Anchor	Conserve	Draft	Found
Apply	Consolidate	Drive	Gain
Appoint	Construct	Earn	Generate
Appreciate	Consult	Edit	Govern
Architect	Continue	Educate	Graduate
Arrange	Contract	Effect	Guide
Articulate	Control	Elect	Halt
Ascertain	Convert	Elevate	Handle
Assemble	Convey	Eliminate	Head
Assess	Coordinate	Emphasize	Hire
Assist	Correct	Empower	Honor
Augment	Counsel	Enact	Hypothesize
Author	Craft	Encourage	Identify
Authorize	Create	Endeavor	Illustrate
Balance	Critique	Endorse	Imagine
Believe	Crystallize	Endure	Implement
Brainstorm	Curtail	Energize	Import
Brief	Cut	Enforce	Improve
Budget	Decipher	Engineer	Improvise
Build	Decrease	Enhance	Increase
Calculate	Define	Enlist	Influence
Capitalize	Delegate	Enliven	Inform
Capture	Deliver	Ensure	Initiate
Catalog	Demonstrate	Equalize	Innovate
Centralize	Deploy	Eradicate	Inspect
Champion	Derive	Establish	Inspire
Change	Design	Estimate	Install
Chart	Detail	Evaluate	Instruct
Clarify	Detect	Examine	Integrate
Classify	Determine	Exceed	Intensify
Close	Develop	Execute	Interpret
Coach	Devise	Exhibit	Interview

Favorite Verbs For Your Resume

Originally "Our Favorite Resume Verbs" by Wendy Enelow

Introduce	Organize	Recapture	Solve
Invent	Orient	Receive	Spark
Inventory	Originate	Recognize	Speak
Investigate	Outsource	Recommend	Spearhead
Judge	Overcome	Reconcile	Specify
Justify	Overhaul	Record	Standardize
Launch	Oversee	Recruit	Steer
Lead	Participate	Recycle	Stimulate
Lecture	Partner	Redesign	Strategize
Leverage	Perceive	Reduce	Streamline
License	Perfect	Regain	Strengthen
Listen	Perform	Regulate	Structure
Locate	Persuade	Rehabilitate	Study
Lower	Pilot	Reinforce	Substantiate
Maintain	Pinpoint	Rejuvenate	Succeed
Manage	Pioneer	Remedy	Suggest
Manipulate	Plan	Render	Summarize
Manufacture	Position	Renegotiate	Supervise
Map	Predict	Renew	Supplement
Market	Prepare	Renovate	Supply
Master	Prescribe	Reorganize	Support
Mastermind	Present	Report	Surpass
Maximize	Preside	Represent	Synthesize
Measure	Process	Research	Target
Mediate	Procure	Resolve	Teach
Mentor	Produce	Respond	Terminate
Merge	Program	Restore	Test
Minimize	Progress	Restructure	Thwart
Model	Project	Retain	Train
Moderate	Promote	Retrieve	Transcribe
Modify	Propel	Reuse	Transfer
Monitor	Propose	Review	Transform
Motivate	Prospect	Revise	Transition
Navigate	Prove	Revitalize	Translate
Negotiate	Provide	Satisfy	Trim
Network	Publicize	Schedule	Troubleshoot
Nominate	Purchase	Secure	Unify
Normalize	Purify	Select	Unite
Obfuscate	Qualify	Separate	Update
Obliterate	Quantify	Serve	Upgrade
Observe	Question	Service	Utilize
Obtain	Raise	Shepherd	Verbalize
Offer	Rate	Simplify	Verify
Operate	Ratify	Slash	Win
Optimize	Realign	Sold	Work
Orchestrate	Rebuild	Solidify	Write

Accomplishments and Skills Worksheet

Use this worksheet as a spring board to organize your work history and personal interests for your resume. Include all successes in your life! You have valuable talent, skills and traits to share. Remember: there are no wrong answers.

Examples--

- Shipped an average of 40 packages per day for 4 years with fewer than 3% damage in shipping.
- Volunteered at the Humane Society every Tuesday evening for 2.5 years. Walked, bathed and groomed dogs.
- Organized a fund-raising event for Fair Shake, generating over \$8300. Organized silent auction donations, secured entertainment and food and assembled volunteers.
- Managed a household of four on \$900 per month.
- Restored a 1961 Volkswagen Beetle to original condition.
- Successfully planted, nurtured and harvested an annual garden (8 years running!) and canned, froze or dried the harvest to provide nearly half of our family's dietary requirements.

Occupational Titles

Job titles to start your brainstorming when considering job goals.

Accountant	Graphic Designer	Manufacturer
Assembler	Grounds Keeper	Operations Manager
Carpenter	Inspector	Painter
Cashier	Lab Technician	Programmer
Chef / Cook	Librarian	Salesperson
Clerk	Machine Operator	Secretary
Data Entry	Mail Carrier	Snow-maker
Director	Maintenance	Teacher
Editor	Massage Therapist	Tree Trimmer
Engineer	Manager	Veterinarian
Firefighter	Mason	Welder

Job Skills

The following is a short list of job skills. (There are literally thousands of job-specific skills.) You will have to research the job skills specific to your occupation

Accounting	Drill Press Operation	Payroll / Accounting
Advertising	Driving	Planning
Auditing	Editing	Public Speaking
Brake Alignments	Electronic Repair	Researching
Building Maintenance	Filing	Sign Language
Carpet Laying	Hammering	Scheduling
Cleaning	Interviewing	Soldering
Cooking	Keyboarding	Technical Writing
Correspondence	Management	Telemarketing
Counseling	Marketing	Typing
Customer Service	Mechanical Drafting	Welding
Detailing	Metal Fabrication	Writing

Self-Management Skills

Follow instructions
Get along well

Get things done
Honest

Punctual
Responsible

Personality traits

Articulate
Assertive
Assume responsibility
Communicative
Competitive
Creative
Decisive
Dependable
Detail-oriented
Diplomatic

Enthusiastic
Emotionally strong
Flexible
Friendly
Highly motivated
Integrity
Quick thinker
Self-motivated
Sense of direction
Sense of humor

Sensitive
Sincere
Sociable
Tactful
Tolerant
Tough
Trusting
Understanding
Willing to learn

Physical skills

Agile
Assembling
Balancing, juggling
Crafts
Counting
Drawing, painting
Driving (CDL?)
Endurance
Finishing, refinishing

Flexible
Grinding
Hammering
Keyboarding, Typing
Manual dexterity
Mechanical
Modeling, remodeling
Observing, inspecting
Operating machines

Precise
Set standards
Strong
Thorough
Restoring
Sandblasting
Sewing
Sorting
Weaving

People Skills

Caring
Comforting
Communicating
Conflict Management
Conflict Resolution
Counseling
Consulting
Developing Rapport
Diplomacy
Diversity

Empathy
Encouraging
Group Facilitating
Helping Others
Inspiring Trust
Inquiry
Instructing
Interviewing
Listening
Mediating

Mentoring
Motivating
Negotiating
Outgoing
Problem Solving
Respect
Responsive
Sensitive
Sympathy
Tolerance

Data Sorting Skills

Analyzing
Auditing
Averaging
Budgeting
Calculating, Computing
Checking for accuracy
Classifying
Comparing
Compiling

Cost Analysis
Counting
Detail-oriented
Evaluating
Examining
Financial or fiscal
Analysis
Financial management
Financial records

Following instructions
Investigating
Inventory
Interrelate
Logical
Organizing
Recording facts
Research
Surveying

Leadership Skills

Brainstorm
 Competitive
 Coordinating
 Decisive
 Delegate
 Direct others
 Evaluate
 Goal setter
 Influential
 Initiate new tasks

Integrity
 Judgment
 Manage, Direct Others
 Mediate Problems
 Motivate People
 Multitasking
 Negotiate Agreements
 Organization
 Planning
 Results-Oriented

Risk Taker
 Run Meetings
 Self-Confident
 Self-Directed
 Self-Motivated
 Sets an Example
 Solve Problems
 Strategic Planning
 Supervision
 Work Schedules

Artistic Skills

Artistic ideas
 Dance, Aerobic
 Designing
 Drawing, Painting
 Handicrafts
 Illustrating, Sketching

Imaginative
 Inventive
 Mechanical drawing
 Model-making
 Perform
 Photography

Play an instrument
 Rendering
 Singing
 Visualize shapes
 Visualizing
 Writer / Editor

Descriptive Words to Use in Your Resume

Able
 Accurate
 Active
 Adaptable
 Adept
 Administrative
 Advantageous
 Aggressive
 Alert
 Ambitious
 Analytical
 Articulate
 Assertive
 Astute
 Attentive
 Authoritative
 Bilingual
 Broad minded
 Calm
 Candid
 Capable
 Cheerful
 Committed
 Competent
 Comprehensive
 Confident
 Conscientious

Considerate
 Consistent
 Constructive
 Continuous
 Contributions
 Cooperative
 Creative
 Curious
 Decisive
 Dedicated
 Deliberate
 Dependable
 Detailed
 Detail-oriented
 Determined
 Diligent
 Diplomatic
 Disciplined
 Discreet
 Diversified
 Driven
 Dynamic
 Eager
 Easily
 Easygoing
 Economical
 Effective

Efficient
 Effortlessly
 Empathetic
 Energetic
 Enterprising
 Enthusiastic
 Excellent
 Exceptional
 Experienced
 Expert
 Expertly
 Extensive
 Fair
 Farsighted
 Fast learner
 Flexible
 Forceful
 Friendly
 Generalist
 Hard-working
 Honest
 Imaginative
 Increasingly
 Independent
 In-depth
 Initiative
 Innovative

Descriptive Words (Continued)

Insightful
 Instrumental
 Inventive
 Knowledgeable
 Leadership
 Logical
 Loyal
 Major
 Mature
 Meaningful
 Methodical
 Meticulous
 Motivated
 Multilingual
 Objective
 Open-minded
 Optimistic
 Orderly
 Organized
 Outstanding
 Patient
 Perceptive
 Persistent
 Personable
 Personally
 Persuasive
 Pertinent
 Pleasant
 Positive
 Practical

Precise
 Problem-solver
 Productive
 Professional
 Proficient
 Profitable
 Progressive
 Proven
 Punctual
 Qualified
 Quality conscious
 Quick learner
 Realistic
 Recent
 Reliable
 Repeatedly
 Resilient
 Resourceful
 Respectful
 Responsible
 Responsive
 Risk-taker
 Routinely
 Satisfactorily
 Scope
 Self-confident
 Self-controlled
 Self-reliant
 Self-starter
 Sharp

Significantly
 Sincere
 Skilled
 Skillful
 Solid
 Sound
 Specialized
 Specialist
 Stable
 Strategically
 Strong
 Substantial
 Successful
 Superior
 Systematic
 Tactful
 Talented
 Team player
 Technical
 Thorough
 Timely
 Uniform
 Universal
 Up-to-date
 Valuable
 Varied
 Versatile
 Vigorous
 Well-educated
 Well-rounded

Cover Letter

Many employers today want to read a letter of introduction, or cover letter, when they review a resume. A cover letter should tell the employer which position you are interested in, why you think you are qualified for the position. Some information in your cover letter may also be on your resume; overlapping information emphasizes skills and characteristics. Read your cover letter carefully, check for spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors, then have another person proofread it one more time before you print it or press 'send'.

January 5, 2012

Alex Wikstrom
Sun Dog Manufacturing
123 Swiggum St.
Westby, WI 54667

Dear Mr. Wikstrom:

I am interested in the Shipping Manager position advertised in the Westby Times this week. I believe I would be a great fit for this position and welcome the opportunity to talk with you to find out more about the job and your company.

Your Requirements:

- Computer literate; able to learn software programs
- Compare multiple shipping criteria
- Self-motivated
- Friendly; work well with others

My Qualifications:

- I am experienced in shipping with USPS, Fed Ex and UPS and their software programs.
- I understand that each shipper offers different services. I can learn what I need to know for the safe delivery of products to the customer and the most cost-efficient route for the company.
- I enjoy my work and take pride in a job well done. I find this very motivating.
- I encourage you to follow up on my references as I am sure you will see that I am a 'team player' and understand how to recognize company culture and enhance the work environment.

I enjoy playing an important role in enhancing a customers' experience. I also enjoy balancing the technical skills, physical skills and social skills that are required to do a great job in this position. I take pride and ownership in my work and consider the perspective of the customer when packing an order.

My resume is attached for your review. I'm interested in talking with you and learning more about the position and Sun Dog. I read the mission statement and feel I really can get behind it.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I'm looking forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Signature Here

Sue Kastensen

For more examples, check out ***Best Resume's & Letters for Ex-Offenders*** by Wendy Enelow and Ronald Krannich, or simply search for 'cover letter examples' in your favorite search engine.

Thank You Letter

Writing a thank you letter allows you the opportunity to share your reflections from interview including topics that were discussed and your decision to accept the job if it is offered to you. If you do not want the job you can write a short thank you letter stating that you wish to withdraw your application. If you do want the job, restate the qualifications and social skills you possess related to the requirements of the position and culture of the company. Be sure to send your thank you letter within a day of your interview.

Sue Kastensen
PO Box 63
Westby, WI 54667
608-634-6363
sue@gmail.com

January 20, 2012

Alex Wikstrom
Sun Dog Manufacturing
123 Swiggum St.
Westby, WI 54667

Dear Mr. Wikstrom:

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me about the Shipping Manager job opening yesterday. I appreciate the opportunity to interview for this position.

Upon reflection, I believe I am a good fit for the Shipping Manager position and also for the company. I bring four years experience in shipping and receiving and I am familiar with nearly all of the tools you showed me. I learn quickly and will be able to master each of the computer shipping programs easily. My personality is well-suited to accommodate the variety of employees who will bring items to be shipped, and also the freight handlers that I will interface with.

Thank you for listening to me describe my past and what I have learned from my incarceration. Be assured that I have reflected upon, learned from, and moved beyond all types of criminal behavior. I am ready and willing to be a reliable benefit to Sun Dog Manufacturing.

I'm very interested in working with you and your team. I am a dedicated worker and can commit to supporting Sun Dog Manufacturing well into the future. Please feel free to contact me if you would like further information. My cell phone number is 608-634-1234

Thank you again for your time and consideration.

I'm looking forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Signature Here

Sue Kastensen

*** For many more examples, Search the Internet for *Thank You Letter Examples* ***