Incarceration and Addiction

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1. The offenders who are addicts must have a program of recovery inside prison. Habits form in there.
2. Attitudes towards incarceration, addiction and mental health must change.
RECOVERY

Two Schools of Thought on Addiction

1. Harm Reduction
2. Abstinence

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RECOVERY

- A program of recovery provides the addict with desperately needed tools for dealing with their addiction and life re-entering society.
- It is less likely to harm.
- It must start in prison!
- Without Recovery, reoffending is likely.

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PRISON MINDSET

• The mindset of the offender has to shift from a punishment to an opportunity.

• Never again will he/she be given an opportunity to work on themselves 24 hours a day mentally, spiritually, physically.

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What the research says:

• Research has demonstrated a strong relationship between substance abuse and criminal behavior.

• Drug use tends to augment involvement in crime and is more common among repeat offenders.

• A history of drug use also predicts various forms of prison maladjustment, including increased institutional misconduct, suicide attempts, and continued drug use during incarceration.

• Notwithstanding the growing number of prisoners with a history of substance abuse problems, there has not been a commensurate increase in treatment capacity for this population.

• Without treatment, offenders with substance use disorders are much more likely to return to crime following release from prison.

(Prevalence of DSM-IV Substance Abuse and Dependence Disorders Among Prison Inmates: Peters et al; pg. 574, 2-12)

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What the research says:

Previous studies that examined substance use disorders among prison inmates have reported rates of substance dependence that ranged from 28% to 91%.

(Prevalence of DSM-IV Substance Abuse and Dependence Disorders Among Prison Inmates: Peters et al; pg. 574, 1, 15-19)

What the research says:

Men:

• Alcohol abuse/dependence Seven surveys of alcohol abuse/dependence in men included a total of 4141 prisoners. Prevalence estimates of alcohol abuse/dependence in male prisoners ranged from 17.7 to 30.0%...

• Drug abuse/dependence We identified eight surveys that reported on drug abuse/dependence in male prisoners Prevalence estimates of drug abuse/dependence in male prisoners ranged from 10.0 to 48.0%...

(Substance abuse and dependence in prisoners: a systematic review Seena Fazel1 , Parveen Bains2 & Helen Doll; PG. 183 [4,21,22,69,71,73–75].)
What the research says:

Women:

• **Alcohol abuse/dependence** There were five identified studies which measured alcohol abuse/dependence in female prisoners. The estimates of prevalence ranged from 10.0 to 23.9%....

• **Drug abuse/dependence** Six relevant studies on drug abuse/dependence in female prisoners were identified [18–20,22,70–72]. The prevalence estimates ranged from 30.3 to 60.4%....

(RECOVERY

• By my estimates, 80% of the male inmate population in Texas prisons have substance abuse issues.

• Female prison populations percentages are even higher.)
The Reality of Recovery In Prison

- There are 3000 inmates on the Mark Stiles Unit.
- My estimates are that 80% (2400) have substance abuse issues.
- Every Wednesday, the AA/NA group, Spiritual Awakenings of Sober Offenders, meets in the Chapel of Hope.
- The group is voluntary, and never exceeds 80 inmates in attendance.

The Reality of Recovery In Prison

- You cannot realistically have a sponsor in prison because the environment is not conducive to the level of trust required for this relationship.
- This hinders the inmate from working their steps and working their program of recovery.
- Prison is not the optimal environment for positive growth.
The Reality of Recovery In Prison

- Drugs and alcohol are readily available in prison.
- Prescription drugs (especially opiates) are abused.
- UAs cannot keep up with synthetics.

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In Prison Therapeutic Community

- Six (6) month program at a minimum security facility.
- Everyone is given their exit date upon arrival.
- Go from Inmate to Client.
- Behavioral Modification Program.
- No 12 Step component.
- Recovery meetings are voluntary and often do not exceed 30 inmates (out of more than 500).
- Half-day programming.

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In Prison Therapeutic Community

- Three (3) phases for graduation.
- Client to counselor ratio often hovers around 25:1.
- Peer-driven = requires clients to hold each other accountable and discipline each other.
- TDCJ inmates share facility with SAFP offenders from county jails.

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AFTERCARE COMPONENT

- 18 Months of Classes and Meetings
- Assigned a counselor.
- Parole requires participation.
- Three (3) Phases for graduation
- Any positive UAs will result in discipline and possible revocation

- OUT OF THE 10 MEN WHO ENTERED AFTERCARE THE SAME MONTH AS ME, 8 WENT BACK TO PRISON FOR ADDICTION ISSUES.

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Today, 70 million Americans—one in three adults—have a criminal record. This is the result of nearly five decades of punitive criminal justice policies that fed mass incarceration. While 2.3 million people are imprisoned in the United States, 95 percent of people in state prisons will re-enter our communities at some point. More than 640,000 people are released from prisons each year. (Back To Business- ACLU Trone Reentry Report; pg.4)

Nearly 75 percent of formerly incarcerated individuals are still unemployed a year after release. (Back To Business- ACLU Trone Reentry Report; pg.4)
Public Attitudes Towards Incarceration, Addiction and Mental Health

GROUP DISCUSSION

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