

Adult Pre- and Post- Transitional Series

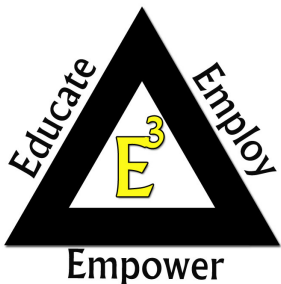


#1: I Choose My Path



We are a registered 501 (c) (3) dedicated to:

***Empowering, educating, and
employing the justice-involved***





If I want it, I can create it

Never forget the look on my kid's faces, a boy and a girl ages 10 and 8, when I saw them for prison visitation. When they saw me the first look on their small faces was pain and my daughter's eyes filled with tears. It broke my heart to see their initial expressions and I too choked up. I vowed in my heart once out, I would do what it took to stay out and be a good father.

Stick

Sometimes, no matter what you do, life can throw you a curve, and put a barrier between you and where you want to be.

Truth is, you are not where you want to be. Another truth—it's too late for "*what if's.*" It's NOT too late for "*what is,*" and the first step forward is to **see your situation as it is, evaluate how you got here, and make a commitment for freedom,** no matter the cost.

You have to wake up. Realize the past is gone and you can't change your past, but—**you CAN change YOUR future.**

Wake up, the past is gone; you can't change the past but you **can** change your understanding of where you've been and where you are, **and you can change where you go from here.**

Many of our contributors know firsthand the struggles, loneliness, uncertainties, and the constant doubts you face. Many also know NOW is not the time to game, NOW is the time to stand up, **stare that demon in the eyes and refuse to fall...**

Now is the time to choose what tomorrow is going to bring. Do you have the courage to choose?

Courage begins with self-awareness...and so will your journey.

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About 2nd Chance University

2nd Chance University does not see education as a technical process to be managed by specialists, but as a heroic journey, a challenging quest each undertakes with the support and guidance of the community, in essence, nurturing your sense of wonder.

2nd Chance University is based on the idea that each person finds identity, meaning, and purpose in life through connections to the community, to the natural world, and to spiritual values such as compassion and peace. Our Adult Alternative to Incarceration programs facilitate adult diversion from an arrest back to the community and family environment, partnering with each in becoming a productive citizen.

When an individual comes into custody, reintegration planning begins. 2nd Chance University strengthens and preserves their education, empathy and self worth. Upon completion of our structured program, all are given the tools to facilitate a successful transition back into the community AND stay on the right path throughout the many obstacles testing your path.

2nd Chance University believes everyone can reach their mountaintop no matter the obstacles in the way. Our programs rely on trauma informed care, behavioral best-practice approaches, cultural and holistic theories, and the most important element threading success: the human element empowering an empathetic approach of caring for others.

This powerful program was created, developed, and implemented by those who have been inside the walls of prison. Each member of our instructional staff gained the tools required to overcome roadblocks, internal as well as external, while forging their own path to personal empowerment.

The Ex-Offenders who helped develop our programs believe it is their duty to help reintegrate people back into society constructively. The tools they used to stay out of prisons and detention centers helped each achieve success in the Free World, even against insurmountable odds.



Today belongs to YOU.

Today is the day to build YOUR tomorrow.

Today is the day to rise above and create YOUR future.

Doing time: *A tall raw-boned red headed man sat next to me in the holding cell. He said his name was Red. We talked a little and he told me he was in for stabbing his girlfriend with a pitchfork. She didn't die.*

"But," he said, "She won't be looking at any other men now!"

I asked, "Why's that?"

Red said, "I stuck the pitchfork in her face and the prongs went into her eyes, so now she can't see."

A cold chill went up my spine as I looked at this pasty faced man, I didn't comment, but moved a few inches away.

Stick



Been told what to do for the past 13 years, what to wear, how to walk, when to go to store, when to take a dump, and when to keep shut. These months out is out of control; not used to making choices, prison took all that away.

Duck

Journal insight: What life and everyday choices are **you** willing to give up?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____



Identifiers

These are visual guides directing you on your journey. These guides aid in informing you what's expected as you learn how to visualize more effectively in the future. Soon, whenever you see these images, you will know what should be done and won't need them to be identified - but we'll keep the text anyway.



Affirmations

Through "self-talk," we create a positive future. Within each workbook you will be asked to develop your own affirmations and re-write affirmations on provided lines. For some, this exercise may seem silly (at first), but by practicing, you will soon know (firsthand) the power of positive thinking.



Visualizations

Accomplishments begin by picturing and planning positives in the mind. From the mind, we choose to become **ACTIVE** participants in our own destiny. The visualization activities are not limited to the present. By seeing the future, you WILL create is your guiding light.



Consciousness IQ

Examines how our mind interacts with the world through thoughts, feelings, emotions, actions, and reactions. By better understanding motivations behind what we do, and the consequences of what we do, making the right choices for a positive future become easier to make.



Looking Glass

Questions designed to help you become aware of other people's view about you and the surrounding world. Truth is, in order to create a promising future, recognizing (and overcoming) your surroundings is a key.

The Looking Glass Self-theory states the way we see ourselves is formed by the perceived views of others (in other words, I am who you think I am). To effectively blend into society with an arrest or conviction, it is essential you rid yourself of a self-defeating, us versus them mentality and focus on positive relationship building.



Computer Time

Questions and activities designed to be encountered within the digital world. These sessions will go hand in hand with our workshops (with a few surprises thrown in along the way).

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Mountain Guides

Throughout our journey, you'll come to know three individuals who have gone through (or currently going through) an arrest and its consequences: From their words, experiences, and challenges, you may even see bits of yourself, your struggles, your triumphs, and your story.



Name's Julie. I'm 24 years old and a single mother of 2 kids, who are 4 and 6 years old now. I haven't been fully employed since high school, and even then I only worked part time jobs at places like Taco Bell and Target. But I did work at a neighborhood day care for a while and loved it.

It's really hard to find a job when everyone says you don't have enough experience or that I have children and I'm not married. I may not have a high school diploma, but I did get my GED not too long ago. My kids deserve a better life than what I've had, but I don't know if I will ever be able to get it together for them—I guess things don't really change, though.

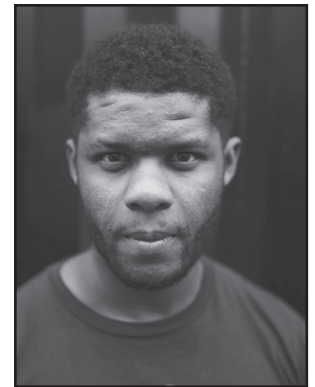
Journal insight: Do you agree with Julie when she said "things don't really change"? Explain why.

- I agree/do not agree because: _____
- _____
- _____

Hey, I'm Robert. I work in construction, or at least I did until a few months ago. My boss fired me because the company wasn't doing well but I know they are getting plenty of business so I'm pretty upset about not working.

True enough, I'm more of a construction laborer but I still have lots to offer. Now, I can't seem to find a job no matter how hard I try. I'm 43 years old and all I've ever done is construction work. They don't want to hire somebody my age or maybe they think I can't handle the job. It may be time for me to move on from manual labor, but I don't know how.

All the jobs I apply for wash out, and I can't live off unemployment forever. I need a job now, any job, but I am ready to give up.



Journal insight: Sounds like Robert has accepted defeat. What advice would you share with Robert if he was in the classroom right now? Have you ever accepted defeat?

- My advice to Robert would be: _____
- _____
- Here's what happened when I accepted defeat: _____
- _____
- _____



Used to get around fine, hitting around the block and doing enough to get things done. Got into some trouble and needed cash in a hurry. The guy I was delivering to was not who he was supposed to be.

Same old story, got busted and found a way out by going inside. Did some time in county and then a year in state. Not much time but enough to know I got the rest of my life with this on my back.

After getting released, not many places gave me a chance to do right. Got my GED inside, but that's not enough. Don't know if I am going to make it but hoping this series can help get me on the track and out of prison. Truth is, without a job, don't look like a good start.

Oh yeah, name's Mark and I got out 26 days ago.

Journal insight: In what ways can you identify with Mark?

- _____
- _____
- _____



Looking glass: Under what situations do you feel *out of place*? Why?

- I feel out of place when: _____
- _____
- _____
- Here's why: _____
- _____
- _____

On the flip side, consider barriers or obstacles as opportunities for growth.



Visualization: Beside your current sidetrack, explain where you want to be and the barrier(s) standing in the way. Then explain how you will **actively** overcome each one.



- Here's where I want to be: _____
- _____
- Two barriers standing in the way are: _____
- _____
- I WILL overcome barrier #1 by: _____
- _____
- I WILL overcome barrier #2 by: _____
- _____



Journal insight: Now is the time to share your story. Which path will you choose, personal growth and freedom, or stagnation and captivity?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

I Choose My Path...

This section builds on the very foundation of success, **YOUR** success.

For our first segment, we begin collecting tools necessary to climb any mountain, no matter how large or overwhelming they may seem.

Our time together, just like life, will find surprises, obstacles, and opportunities along the way. How we prepare and react to surprises, obstacles, and opportunities is what our workshops are all about.

The mountains in front of us, materials, and what we ask from you will not always flow as many would expect or hope. Then again, life rarely goes as planned so why should our time together be any different?

No matter where you are, the next step is your choice... **which path will you take?**



Key terms covered throughout this section:

- **Commitment:** To pledge, creating a promise or obligation not only to yourself, but to others.
- **Consciousness:** An awareness of life, thoughts, others, and sense of self.
- **Empathy:** The ability to recognize others as human beings with feelings just like you. It is a quality that underlies love, caring, and compassion.
- **Family:** A specific group of people that may be made up of partners, children, parents, aunts, uncles, cousins, and grandparents. Truth is, any social unit can be considered a family unit.
- **Goal-setting:** The act of establishing what we want.
- **Juvenile delinquent:** By definition, a juvenile delinquent is a person under the age of 18 who has committed a crime and has been taken into custody, charged and adjudicated for that crime.
- **Procrastination:** Putting off what one should do NOW until a later time.
- **Trauma:** An overwhelming event or events creating a sense of helplessness or powerlessness while creating a threat of harm or loss.

Setting Our Gear

Before getting started with our workshop, we need to establish some ground rules and expectations for everyone. Take a few moments to brainstorm in the space below. Think about the rules and expectations you have for the facilitator, as well as the rules you and your classmates will follow.

Before getting started, we need to establish ground rules and expectations from:

Facilitator(s) will ALWAYS:

- Respect student confidentiality
- Take an active role in student development
- Engage professionally and without judgment
- Believe students have the ability to determine destiny



Looking glass: A characteristic not mentioned above that you would like your facilitator/ instructor to have would be:

- Characteristic: _____
- _____
- Here's why: _____
- _____
- _____
- _____



Visualization: What type of ground rules and expectations do you have of the facilitator?

- Ground rule #1: _____
- _____
- Ground rule #2: _____
- _____
- My expectations are: _____
- _____

If I want it, I can create it

Student(s) will ALWAYS:

- Respect fellow students and facilitator(s)
- Take an active role in personal and professional development
- Be honest to themselves, as these books are designed for life-long reflection and guidance
- Create their own destiny by accepting responsibility for your actions and consequences



Visualization: Looking at the above student expectations, do you agree or disagree? Be specific and explain why each bullet is important as our journey begins.

• Bullet #1: _____

• _____

• Bullet #2: _____

• _____

• Bullet #3: _____

• _____

• Bullet #4: _____

• _____

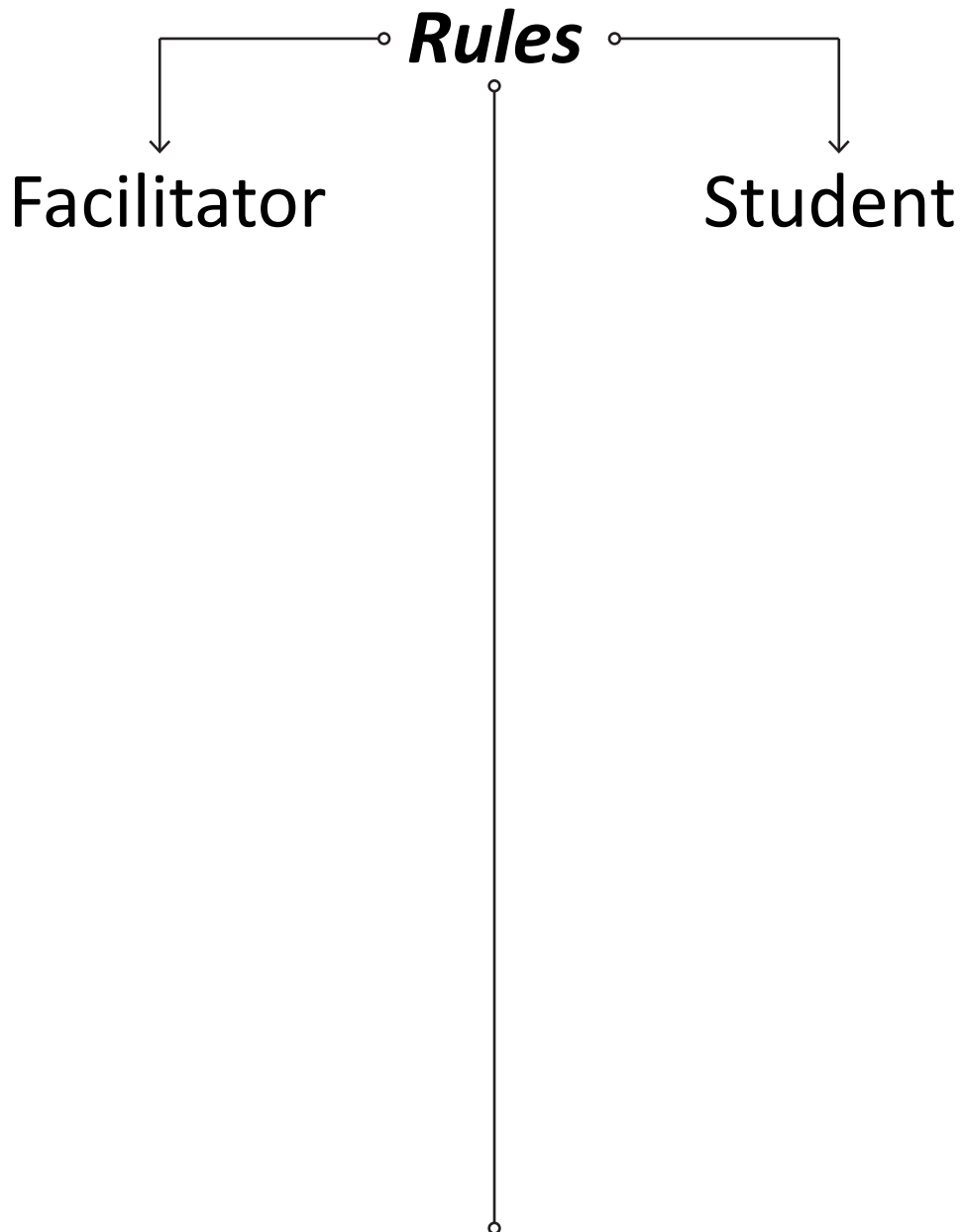
If I want it, I can create it

• _____



I commit to the rules my classmates and I created to ensure a productive and safe workshop

On the space below, list the agreed upon rules and expectations from the previous pages side by side for the facilitator and student. Take a second look and go ahead and sign (and date) your name across the page, indicating you are good with it.



I commit to the rules my classmates and I created to ensure a productive and safe workshop

- _____

The following page depicts the journey we will all be traveling. The five mountain ranges represent goals as we learn to visualize where we ARE going. As of this moment, **Your Journey Begins...**



