MAPPING YOUR FUTURE - OREGON EDITION

A REENTRY GUIDE

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Introduction

Getting out of prison can be an experience that causes a wide range of emotions. While this is something that you most likely feel good about, some people have been incarcerated longer than they've been out in the free world. Because of this, it is reasonable to be nervous about what you're going to be navigating now that you've been released. Whatever you are feeling is valid and normal, and it's okay to be overwhelmed. There's a lot to think about, prepare for, and get used to. Whether your release date is already set, or you want to prepare in advance for reentry, the goal of this guidebook is to provide you with the beginning tools, resources, and information you'll need to get started on your reentry journey.

There's a lot to get ready for, like searching for employment, achieving educational goals you may have, securing housing, reuniting with your loved ones, bettering your emotional and/or physical health and much more. Hopefully with the information provided here, all of these tasks will seem more manageable and you will be able to find somewhere to start that makes sense for you. You can use the table of contents to find specific things you may be looking for, as well as the resource directories in this guidebook that will list specific resources that may be of value to you.

The authors and editors of this guidebook would like to give a big thanks and recognize the Education Justice Project at the University of Illinois for writing the original reentry guidebook "Mapping Your Future." Thanks to them, we were able to create our own project using their book as a guide.

Prepare Yourself Mentally

Formerly incarcerated people often report that there's an initial "high" that occurs when you first get out of prison, before the full affects of your sentencing, crime, or past traumas catch up to you. While you should enjoy and take in all of your new surroundings, it's also important to engage in healthy mental practices to brace yourself for whatever emotions may come later. Additionally, you may have a lot of free time in the beginning while you wait to secure employment. It could be beneficial to you to pick up a new hobby in the meantime, or to find a community group or activity to partake in regularly.

To abide by your parole restrictions, and also to maintain your physical and mental health, it is important to abstain from using any drugs or alcohol. Arnoldo, a man who was formerly incarcerated in Oregon, says that doing this will take away from your reentry experience, and that you need to allow yourself to feel everything that you're going to feel throughout this process.

Practicing mindfulness and/or meditation can also be a way to begin to heal, or a way to create a more peaceful environment for yourself. The following page has a few tips on how to practice mindfulness and/or meditation. Some people may be hesitant or even feel a little silly for trying this coping mechanism at first, but it really does have the potential to improve some aspect of your life. A study done on the benefits of meditation amongst AICs showed that the effects of mindfulness and meditation can sometimes last longer than behavioral therapies and treatment. Obviously this won't be true for everyone, but it's worth giving it a try if you're uncomfortable with different therapies, or if you haven't been gaining the desired result from therapy. If this still doesn't seem like something that will be beneficial to you, this guidebook will also provide you with mental health resources as well as other suggestions on how to take care of yourself emotionally.

Mindfulness & Meditation Tips

1. Setting an intention for the day, waking up with a purpose or goal in mind
2. Find a breathing rhythm that relaxes you
3. Revisit your intention throughout the day
4. Enjoy the little things around you that relax or center you, it's okay to stop and smell the roses
5. Taking time to meditate or practicing other mindful exercises that work for you, even if it's only a few minutes
6. Schedule a time for these activities if you need to in order to ensure you're doing them
7. Research meditation/mindfulness resources to improve the experience for you

Relationships

Maintaining relationships in a healthy way can already be challenging without the added stressors that come with incarceration. While there hasn't been extensive research, there is overwhelming information that the stronger your support system is when you're released, the better your transition and reentry experience will be. 70% of AICs with three or more visitors throughout their sentencing were arrest free in the first year of their release. The average rearrest rate within the first year is 50%, so the stronger and healthier your relationships are, the smoother your transition may be. Within this part of the guidebook, healthy relationship tips, as well as red flags in intimate relationships will be described. Suggestions on rebuilding relationships with your children will also be provided, based on the writings of a formerly incarcerated father named Delonso Barnes.

Healthy Partnerships

Communication:
The first sign of a healthy relationship is strong communication. Practicing healthy communication includes speaking up when something is on your mind, listening and being respectful during difficult conversations you may be having with your partner, working towards compromise that meets both your needs to the best of your ability, and giving one another time, space, and privacy to process whatever exchanges you may have had.

It can be hard to open up or be vulnerable, especially after being released from prison - an environment where most people have to harden themselves to push through. Know that it's okay to break down those walls with someone you love, and practice reassuring them that it's not their fault if you're struggling to open up - this isn't your fault either. Vocalize what you need, and hold space for them to vocalize their needs as well. Try to start these challenging discussions before it leads to an argument, or a more serious problem than what it needs to be. Even if you're struggling to fully express your feelings, doing as much as you can to open up at least shows your partner where you're at, and how they can help you.

Trust:
In order to communicate effectively, you have to have trust. Building trust can be done by actively listening to each other and making the other person feel heard and ensuring that you're emotionally available in those moments. It also means being sensitive when handling your partner's feelings, and doing your best to validate their emotions or concerns. Establishing trust can also be accomplished by handling arguments in a respective and non-threatening way, and showing that you care for this person regardless of the disagreement. Lastly, it's important to ensure that your words and actions align, and that you're keeping promises you've made to one another.

Healthy Partnerships

Mutual Respect:
Ensuring that your partner feels respected is definitely important in maintaining a healthy and loving relationship. Giving them compliments that are specific and genuine, sticking up for them and standing by them, supporting them in their goals, passions, and ambitions, as well as respecting their boundaries and wishes are all examples of giving your partner the respect that they deserve.

Independence:
Having independent interests and activities outside of your relationship is important to allow your partner to have space for their hobbies and alone time. It's also important to allow and encourage them to spend time with friends and family alone when they may need to, and for you to do the same.

Shared Interests:
On the flip side, it's important to have shared interests with your partner as well. Finding activities you enjoy doing together is also valuable, as well as carving out quality time together. It's important to make each other feel prioritized.

Equality:
Equally participating in sustaining and improving your relationship is one way to practice equality. Equality also means giving each other privacy, mutual respect and compromising, and of course communicating equally as well.

Healthy Partnerships

Compassion:
Compassion can be displayed by showing concern and care, being kind, understanding, supportive at all times - but especially when your partner needs it most.

Financial Partnership:
It's important to communicate finances ahead of time so that you have a plan and are on the same page. Dividing up how things are paid for and by who is important to discuss, as well as being honest about the finances and financial responsibilities you share with your partner. It is also crucial to not be controlling over one another's finances, especially independent finances, bank accounts, credit cards, etc..

Responsibility & Accountability:
Practicing accountability and responsibility includes providing thoughtful and genuine apologies when you've done something to hurt your partner's feelings. It also means doing your best to avoid taking out your negative emotions on them when you're upset, stressed, tired, angry, etc.. It also means bettering the relationship by owning your mistakes, and being constructive in improving them.

Red Flags in Relationships

Physical Abuse:
Physical abuse is any intentional unwanted physical contact with someone's body. Any form of contact such as: strangling, punching, kicking, scratching, hitting, biting, pushing, grabbing, pulling hair, throwing things, using weapons, or restraining the person is considered physical abuse. Sleep deprivation is another form of physical abuse, and it can be an indirect side affect of physical abuse since people experiencing physical abuse have a harder time with sleeping, or it could mean actively preventing one's partner from sleeping. Sleep deprivation can make it hard to think or concentrate, cause memory issues, weaken one's immune system, cause an increased risk for high blood pressure, weight gain, poor balance and coordination, as well as an increased risk for heart disease.

How to Change Physically Abusive Behavior:
Some people who abuse their partners were themselves abused at some point in their life. While there isn't an excuse for these actions, it may be necessary for you to get help in coping with your own experiences with abuse. Alternatively, you may struggle with anger management, or a mental health issue (such as a personality, mood or behavioral disorder) that could be related or unrelated to your experiences as a child, or even your experiences in prison. A list of different mental health issues and symptoms begins on page 19 of the guidebook. The National Hotline for Domestic Abuse encourages someone acting in an abusive manner to identify what's causing them to harm their partner, and work to address the root cause of it. For more information you can visit thehotline.org

National Hotline for Domestic Abuse Hotline Number: 1-800-799-7233

Red Flags in Relationships

Financial Abuse:
Financial abuse can include concealing financial information, limiting one's partner's access to assets or reducing their ability to access finances, or making it difficult for them to leave the relationship due to financial dependency caused by the abusive partner. This usually is done by interfering in their access to school, housing, ability to go to work, etc.. Specific examples of financial abuse include: giving one's partner an expensive gift and expecting it to be reciprocated when the other person can't afford to do so, giving one's partner an allowance, not allowing one's partner to spend money on themself (but the perpetrator is allowed to spend money on themself), purposefully not paying bills, lying about bills, or intentionally paying them late, using money from various savings accounts without the other person's knowledge or consent, denying one's partner access to join accounts, credit cards, etc., preventing one's partner from going to work or sabotaging their work in hoping that they lose employment, hiding or stealing disability checks, maxing out credit cards without knowledge or permission from one's partner, refusing one's partner money for basic needs, and using their social security card number to ruin their credit score, open credit cards, etc.. It is important to not be controlling over finances, but instead to maintain open communication. Otherwise, the person being impacted by financial abuse will have to face lifelong consequences, such as setbacks in their career, a ruined credit score, and more.

How to Change Financially Abusive Behavior:
With any form of abuse, typically the person behaving in an abusive manner struggles with a lack of power and control. If you're doing these things to your partner because you're stressed or feel out of control of your finances, seeking counseling or treatment to alleviate you of those burdens could be one way to better your relationship and improve the way you're treating your loved ones. You could also research your questions and concerns surrounding finances in order to feel more in control and knowledgeable of your financial situation. Most importantly, working to undo whatever damage you may have done to someone's career or financial standing is extremely important. Regardless of if the relationship lasts, they deserve to have financial freedom and be successful in their life in spite of whatever harm may have already been done.

Red Flags in Relationships

Sexual Abuse:
Sexual abuse can be unwanted touching or kissing, rough or violent sexual activity that one party is uncomfortable with or not consenting to, rape or attempted rape, sexual contact with someone who is drunk, drugged, or too unconscious to give verbal, enthusiastic consent. Sexual abuse can also be threatening someone into sexual activity, or pressuring someone to engage in sexual acts. Reproductive abuse is also apart of sexual abuse and it can include prohibiting partners from using condoms or birth control, intentionally damaging one's method of birth control, or removing a sexual barrier such as a condom without someone's knowledge or consent. An example of this is "stealthing" which is a form of sexual abuse where someone removes the condom before having sex with someone, in spite of them being unaware, and not consenting to sex without a condom. This is a form of rape, since one party only consented to sex if a certain form of protection was used.

How to Change Sexually Abusive Behavior:
If you notice that your partner is uncomfortable, hesitant, or unexpressive when you engage in any intimate acts, you may be pressuring them into sexual acts that they're uncomfortable with engaging in. In order for someone to give consent, they must be fully conscious, not impaired by substances, and giving consistent signals (verbally or physically) that they are present and comfortable with you. You can ask for reinforcement that your partner is comfortable, simply by asking them if they're okay and feel safe with what's going on. You should discuss birth control methods as well as methods to prevent transmitting STDs (such as getting tested and/or using condoms), so that there is no miscommunication during or after sex. Maintaining healthy and consistent communication with someone you have a sexual relationship with is the best way to prevent someone from feeling uncomfortable with you. If you experienced sexual abuse in prior relationships or as a child, it's important to get help since at times, people who have been sexually abused go on to harm their partners in the same ways. But ultimately, the best way to be a safe partner engaging in healthy sex and practicing consent is constant communication, and checking in on your partner.

National Sexual Abuse Hotline Number: 1-800-656-4673

Red Flags in Relationships

Emotional Abuse:
Emotional abuse is one of the most challenging forms of abuse to notice, even if you have experienced emotional abuse. The way that emotional abuse can be carried out is through verbal aggression, intimidation, as well as manipulation and humiliation. Manipulation and humiliation often unfold in a pattern of behavior over time that aims to diminish another person's sense of self, identity, dignity, self worth, and often results in anxiety, PTS/PTSD, depression, or suicidal thoughts and behaviors. This method of abuse is used to control someone, but it's often much more subtle. Some specific examples can include: being jealous of platonic relationships, telling someone what to do, always demanding to know what the other person is doing/where they are, preventing one's partner from seeing their friends or family, keeping them from going to work, class, etc., controlling where they go, what they wear, who they see, threatening to harm them or other people/pets/objects that they care about, threatening to expose their secrets, accusing them of cheating for no reason, yelling or screaming, gaslighting, threatening to have their children taken away, hiding keys, medicine, or important objects, intentionally embarrassing one's partner publicly, using social media to intimidate them, damaging their property, hitting objects to scare them, lying about where they go/what they do, stalking their partner, threatening suicide if their partner leaves them, verbally degrading one's partner, making them feel guilty or immature when they deny sex/sexual acts, saying no one else will love them, and sabotaging their work, education, other relationships, etc..

How to Change Emotionally Abusive Behavior:
A psychologist named Dr. Stonsy writes that emotionally abusive individuals feel that they have been harmed or victimized, which drives them to harm others. While most of his work is focused on the side of the person being harmed by emotional abuse, the key points he brings up are that often times the things that someone says or does who is being emotionally abusive is due to their own insecurities, fears, or anxieties within themselves or the relationship. Again, getting help from a therapist or behavioral specialist could be the best idea here as it prevents you from continuing to emotionally harm your partner.

Red Flags in Relationships

Stalking:
Stalking is a pattern of behavior directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to feel fear. Stalking is considered a pattern once the stalker has engaged in at least two instances of threatening, harassing, or unwanted behaviors against their ex, current romantic interest, or whoever they may be following. Something may be threatening to the individual that isn't threatening to just anybody, because it has a specific meaning between both parties. Some stalking tactics and examples can include: sending unwanted emails, texts, etc., leaving strange or threatening "gifts" or items, leaving unwanted gifts or presents, sneaking into the individual's house or car, watching/following/spying on them, making unwanted phone calls/calling then hanging up, approaching them or hanging around specific locations that they regularly visit, non-consensual contact including by phone, text, email, social media, letters, or a third party person, tracking the individual electronically, tracking their movements or schedules, waiting for them outside of their place of work, their house, their school, etc., threatening them, committing other crimes to scare them such as breaking and entering, assault, burglary, criminal mischief, theft, or other interpersonal violence.

What to do if You Find Yourself Engaging or Planning to Engage in these Practices:
3/4 people who are stalked know the person who is stalking them, and typically it is someone that they were or are in an intimate relationship with. If you are stalking someone, or have the desire to stalk your current or ex partner, it's important to identify the causes. If you are together, are you jealous, untrusting, or concerned about something they may be doing behind your back? Rather than violating them and their privacy, having an open discussion with them about your insecurities would be a much healthier and safer way of handling this type of conflict. You could also consider couples counseling. If they have betrayed your trust, and this is how you've decided to ensure it doesn't happen again, this most likely isn't a relationship worth salvaging, and it's probably best for you both to move on. If the person you are planning to or have already begun to follow is an ex, focus your energy on healing and moving past the relationship rather than following them. Going to therapy, spending more time with friends or family, developing new hobbies, and creating a life for yourself outside of your ex partner are all much better ways to move on.

Red Flags in Relationships

Stalking, Continued:
Stalking someone could lead to criminal charges, restraining orders, and is most definitely a violation of your parole. Breakups and relationships that are approaching their end are incredibly sad, and it's normal to feel grief or to be mournful over your relationship. But if you have a chance of working things out in the future after you've had time apart, stalking them is a quick way to close any doors that may have led to a second chance. Being followed and feeling afraid that someone is watching you is an incredibly traumatizing experience, and one that you shouldn't want to inflict on someone you truly love; especially if there is potential for reconciliation in the future. The best thing you can do for you and your partner is to work on yourself, and your relationship if you are still together - rather than violating their privacy, and permanently losing whatever feelings of trust, safety, and comfort that they feel with you.

Gaslighting:
Gaslighting is a form of abuse used to make one person in a relationship feel crazy after the other party has done something to harm or abuse them in any way, shape, or form. This can include trying to convince one's partner that they are wrong, forgetful, or unstable when recalling both important and unimportant events. The abuser may also pretend to not listen or not understand their partner, and question their memory of the events being discussed or argued. They might also change the subject, or challenge and question their partner's feelings. They make their partner's needs or feelings seem unimportant, wrong, and invalidated. They also pretend to forget certain events that have taken place, and often go back on promises they have made to their partner.

How to Avoid Gaslighting Your Partner:
Like other forms of abuse previously discussed, gaslighting is one of the most common forms of abuse that someone may use to gain power or control over someone. You should never want to gaslight your partner, since it leaves psychological damages that can make someone feel like they are going crazy or losing their mind. This form of abuse toys with one's memory, recollection of events, and their entitlement to their emotions.

Red Flags in Relationships

Gaslighting, Continued:
Identifying what makes you want to have control over your partners emotions or memories is an important first step, do you lack trust in your partner or have trust issues in your relationships as a whole? Do you have a hard time apologizing, so you result to trying to pretend like nothing ever happened? Trust issues and struggling with being apologetic due to fear of rejection or being vulnerable are very natural and common emotions. However, letting these emotions turn you into an abusive partner and hurting people that you love is not worth it. Going to therapy alone and/or with your partner, and opening up to them about fears or reservations you may have that cause this behavior are much healthier alternatives, rather than causing them severe and long term emotional damage.

Academic Abuse:
Academic abuse is purposeful usage of abusive tactics to control, impair, or sabotage someone's academic/scholastic success. This can be done by: preventing someone from working on papers or studying for tests, calling/harassing them before tests or important assignments, getting mad at them for doing their homework, blaming them for bad grades, belittling their academic focus, or making fun of them for studying too much.

How to Change Behavior that is Academically Abusive:
Academically abusive behavior is typically attributed to either jealousy over how much time one's partner devotes to their studies rather than spending time with them, or due to jealousy caused by their partner's academic success. It could also be a control issue as the other forms of abuse described above are. If you're finding yourself to be jealous or missing your partner due to how time consuming school is, understand that school is incredibly demanding and odds are they much rather be able to relax with you, their family, and friends. Supporting them is the best way to make school easier, smoother, and potentially faster. Stifling them and their education could make it more challenging for them to graduate on time, so encouraging them to take their time and do things right the first time is the best way to ensure you'll get to enjoy more time together later.

Red Flags in Relationships

Academic Abuse, Continued:
If you simply want to advance your education as well, talk to your partner about when it's financially feasible, and surely they'll support you in continuing your education. Or if you have the financial means to, you could start school as well. If finances are a concern, read more about education later in the guidebook for information on appropriately financing your education so that this doesn't have to be a barrier for you. Counseling and therapy is of course always another option if you are struggling with self-esteem issues related to the amount of education you have completed.

Social Abuse:
Social abuse is when someone is prevented from spending time with their friends, family or socializing in any manner. It is done to gain more control or power in the relationship. It's done by isolating one's partner which allows the abuser to escalate their behavior by leaving their partner with no one left to talk to. Examples include: monitoring their partner's phone calls, texts, emails, etc., continuously criticizing their partner's friends/family, moving the person far away so that they can't see their loved ones, spreading rumors about their partner so that people don't want to be around them, deciding which friends and family they can/can't be with, limiting their contact with others, verbally/physically abusing them in front of others, making them ask permission before socializing with other people, not allowing their partner to have social media or controlling who they follow, posting degrading comments/photos online of their partner, taking away their partner's phone or laptop, creating a scene in front of people so that they don't want to be around their partner, telling their partner things like "you can only rely on/trust me" and encouraging them to engage with toxic people.

How to Change Behavior that is Socially Abusive:
Similar to academic abuse, the cause of this form of abuse could be due to jealousy. If you are struggling with feeling jealous of your partner's relationships with their friends or family, try building relationships with them too so that you feel more included. You could also try making new friends of your own so that you have support separate from your partner and relationship. If you've struggled with toxic familial relationships or friendships, then it could be best to get counseling for that. If this is an issue of control or jealousy for you, then therapy is also always a good option as well to prevent the continuation of this abuse.

Red Flags in Relationships

Other Red Flags:

1. Forcing your partner to do things that they don't want to do
2. Constantly checking up on your partner to the point of being intrusive
3. Picking fights often, seemingly for no reason
4. Being physically violent in front of your partner or others
5. Having a bad temper and not working to soothe it
6. Being controlling
7. Humiliating your partner
8. Guilt tripping your partner
9. Forcing your partner to take responsibility for your feelings that are not their fault and/or unrelated to them
10. Giving your partner ultimatums

Alternative Behaviors:

1. Allowing your partner to have a fair and equal say in the relationship
2. Showing care and concern, but respecting boundaries & personal space
3. Letting your partner know when you're having a bad/off day
4. Working on anger management, refraining from violence
5. Not taking anger out on your partner
6. Being trusting
7. Supporting your partner
8. Expressing your feelings of sadness, but letting them make their own decisions (if their decision(s) hurt you, decide what that means for you and the relationship)
9. Owning your emotions as your own, not blaming people who did not cause them
10. Setting up boundaries together & holding one another accountable to those promises/set boundaries

Healthy Relationships with Children

If you have children, rebuilding your relationship with them is going to be especially important to you once you're released. The book: "Fresh Start for Dads: Reconnecting After Prison and Absenteeism" by Delonso Barnes will be referenced throughout this section. Barnes is a formerly incarcerated father who has written multiple other books on parenting, and also runs a nonprofit called Daddy Everyday Inc..

Here are some of the main takeaways from his book on parenting while incarcerated and/or after incarceration:

- Acknowledge the negative impact that your incarceration has had on their life
- Maintain strong and open communication with your child
- Try to have a positive and healthy relationship with your child's other parent, regardless of your relationship status
- Be honest with your child about why you are/were in prison, share whatever you believe is necessary for them to know based on their age
- Make them feel loved and special
- Ask them questions about their life
- Make visitation time/quality time a positive experience
- Start conversations - prompt them with questions about schoolwork, their day or week, their friends/relationships at school, what they've been doing for fun lately, or anything that you think they'd be enthusiastic to discuss with you
- Reflect on what you did and didn't like about your relationships with your parents/parental figures, be sure to not follow the same parenting styles that harmed you or left a negative impact on you
- Reinforce to your child that your time in prison was not their fault, children who have experienced having an incarcerated parent may suffer from unnecessary guilt or abandonment issues
- Encourage them to remain childlike, behave their age, and remind them that there is no rush to grow up

A section on child custody related issues is coming soon.

Grieving while Incarcerated

The experience of losing a loved one, especially when it happens unexpectedly, or when you lose someone incredibly important in your life can be extremely difficult to go through. Grieving can cause mental health issues such as: depression or suicidal thoughts, anxiety, anger, and post traumatic stress.

Research has shown that there may also be unresolved, traumatic, or complicated grief, and a study done on incarcerated women showed that they were more likely to experience more complex forms of grief. This is largely due to the lack of freedom that adults in custody have to mourn. The women reported a lack of privacy, and that there's a natural tendency in prison to suppress one's emotions. All of these aspects that incarcerated people deal with make it much harder to begin to heal from their grief. Adults in custody (AICs) are unable to say their goodbyes before and after their loved one has passed, and this can leave hurtful and long-lasting impacts on someone's life. Know that just because you have committed a crime, it does not mean you or your loved one who you are grieving deserved to be separated in this way.

If this experience is still causing you emotional distress, or if the trauma from this loss resurfaces, consider finding mental health resources such as therapy, counseling, or a support group. It is especially important to get help if you are experiencing symptoms of certain mental health issues, have been diagnosed with a mental health condition or if you struggle with substance abuse. Resources and symptoms of mental health conditions will be listed in the next pages.

Mental Health & Substance Abuse

First of all, when it comes to struggling with a mental health issue or substance abuse, you are absolutely not alone**.** A study done on AICs showed that out of the people the researchers assessed, almost 98% had faced substance abuse problems in their lifetime. Additionally, 39% had anxiety or depression, 78% had issues with coping mechanisms, and 41% had been physically or sexually abused as a child. Other research has shown that the overall recidivism rate is in the 50% range, but that number is 10% larger for people who struggle with addiction. The Treatment Advocacy Center adds that approximately 20% of AICs struggle with mental illness, and having an untreated mental illness can lead to being arrested again. A large number of AICs also suffer from PTSD as a result of solitary confinement, violence they've been exposed to inside of the prison, or even due to preexisting trauma that gets exacerbated throughout their incarceration.

It is not your fault if you struggle with a mental illness, and/or addiction. However, it is important to do whatever you are able to do to get help. Mental health struggles as well as addiction is criminalized and stigmatized both inside and outside of prison, but it is nothing to be ashamed of. You can apply for the Oregon Health Plan, which covers mental health and addiction treatment.

This is the link to the Oregon Health Authority where their application is located: https://www.oregon.gov/oha/hsd/ohp/pages/apply.aspx
An additional link that may be useful is the link to find AA Meetings, here is the link for in-state meetings: https://www.aa-oregon.org/find-meetings/

If you skip to page 54 in this guidebook, there will be a directory with rehab and mental health centers throughout the entire state so that you are able to find one close to you.

Mental Health Disorders, Symptoms, & Treatment Options

Introduction:

The information provided below will cover different types of mental health issues or disorders, followed by symptoms of addiction. If you are experiencing the symptoms discussed, it is encouraged that you seek out the best form of mental health or substance abuse care that you can. You can also most likely talk to someone covered by your medical insurance to find out whether or not you should seek out consistent treatment based on the symptoms you are describing to them. It's also important to keep in mind throughout this section that each and every mental health condition is experienced differently depending on the individual and their mind. This also means that treatment options are unique, and there's not a guaranteed method that will work for you, so it's okay if you have to try different techniques or seek out multiple different forms of help. The mental and emotional pain we feel as humans is much more complex than physical pain at times, so have patience with yourself and your doctor(s). Lastly, national statistics on each type of disorder will be cited rather than prison statistics, since they are not as readily available or gathered consistently.

Anxiety Disorders:

There are multiple kinds of each and every form of a mental health disorder. The different types of anxiety disorders are: agoraphobia, generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, separation anxiety disorder, social anxiety disorder, and specific phobias. 40 million people in the U.S. above the age of 18 suffer from an anxiety disorder. Here are the symptoms of each disorder, as well as what treatment works to ease the symptoms amongst patients suffering from anxiety disorders.

Mental Health Disorders, Symptoms, & Treatment Options

Agoraphobia Symptoms: symptoms of agoraphobia include fearing situations or avoiding places that cause you to panic, feel trapped, helpless, or embarrassed. It can also mean fearing an anticipated or actual situation, and typically results in a panic attack when someone has to confront these difficult situations that they fear. A panic attack is different for everyone, but the most common symptoms are: shortness of breath, rapid heart beat, feeling a loss of control or safety, chest pain, nausea, and dizziness.

Treatment Options for Agoraphobia:

- Therapy - helps to identify triggers, develop coping mechanisms or relaxation techniques, and how to alter your responses to the anxiety to live more comfortably
- Medications - typically antidepressants or anti-anxiety medication
- Alternative medicines recommended by your doctor

Generalized Anxiety Disorder Symptoms: symptoms of generalized anxiety can include feeling restless/on edge, easily tired or fatigued, struggling to concentrate or losing your train of thought frequently, irritability, muscle tension, unable to control feelings of worry or stress, or unable to get adequate sleep. Generalized anxiety disorder is the most common form of anxiety, and typically just referred to as anxiety.

Treatment Options for Generalized Anxiety Disorder:
Cognitive behavioral therapy, or CBT is the most common form of therapy used to treat generalized anxiety disorder
Medications such as antidepressants or anti-anxiety medications can also be used if necessary for generalized anxiety disorder
Changing your life style in accordance to your doctor's recommendations can also reduce symptoms of anxiety

Mental Health Disorders, Symptoms, & Treatment Options

Panic Disorder Symptoms: Some symptoms of panic disorder are sensing danger, fearing death or losing control, rapid heart rate, sweating, trembling, or shaking, tightness in your throat or difficulty breathing, chills, hot flashes, nausea, abdominal cramping, chest pain, feeling dizzy, lightheaded, or faint, numbing or tingling sensations, and feeling detached from reality. Feeling these symptoms infrequently could just be a panic attack related to an underlying or separate mental health issue. Having them constantly without another condition would just be classified as a panic disorder, especially when the panic attacks are becoming frequent and/or unexpected.

Treatment Options for Panic Disorder:

- Cognitive behavioral therapy
- Specific medications meant to alleviate the patient of panic attack/disorder symptoms

Separation Anxiety Disorder Symptoms: Separation anxiety disorder is typically most common in children, however, adults still deal with this disorder. Rather than feeling anxious or fearful when separated from your parent or caretaker, you may instead feel anxiety when separated from your partner, children, or other close family. The way you respond to the disorder is also different from the way children act, which is normally just clinginess and crying excessively or acting scared when their parents are away from them. Adults with separation anxiety may be overbearing as a parent or partner, because they're afraid for their well-being. You may also experience creating hypotheticals in your brain about bad things that could happen to these people in your life, become extremely hesitant when being distant from your loved ones, have trouble sleeping when your loved one is away, and feel depressed or anxious due to any of the previous examples. The anxiety may also cause physical pains like nausea or stomachaches. In order to be diagnosed with this disorder, symptoms must be continuing for six months. This form of anxiety can also cause other mental health conditions, such as generalized anxiety, PTSD, panic disorder, social anxiety, or personality disorders.

Mental Health Disorders, Symptoms, & Treatment Options

Treatment Options for Separation Anxiety Disorder:

- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) - CBT is a more focused type of therapy that provides more tools than the traditional talk therapy
- Group therapy - talking with others who also are coping with separation anxiety has been shown to be an effective way to decrease the severity of your symptoms
- Family therapy - going to therapy with your family may improve your ability to communicate with one another in a more productive way
- Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) - DBT is similar to CBT in what conditions it's used to treat
- Medications (antidepressants)

Social Anxiety Disorder Symptoms: Social anxiety is different from being shy, your ability to work, go to school, or go out and develop relationships with new people are all impacted by the disorder. An estimated 15 million Americans suffer from social anxiety disorder, and it causes both physical and emotional symptoms. The physical symptoms include: blushing, nausea, excessive sweating, trembling or shaking, difficulty speaking, dizziness, lightheadedness, and rapid heart rate. The emotional symptoms include: worrying about social situations, worrying before events, trying to blend in or be less noticeable to avoid social interaction, worrying about embarrassing yourself in a social situation, worrying that other people will notice you're stressed or nervous, missing out because of your anxiety, and relying on substances to get you through a social event. You may also find yourself avoiding very necessary, normal outings like shopping, dining or eating in public, asking a question, job interviews, talking on the phone, and using public restrooms.

Treatment Options for Social Anxiety Disorder:

- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) - cognitive behavioral therapy is a more focused therapy meant to treat more complex mental health issues
- Exposure Therapy - exposure therapy is meant to expose the patient to the cause of their anxiety, it's sometimes used if CBT isn't showing as strong of an improvement
- Group Therapy - talking to others experiencing the same disorder has been proven to be effective in managing symptoms of social anxiety
- Medications - antidepressants or anti anxiety medications may be prescribed

Mental Health Disorders, Symptoms, & Treatment Options

Specific Phobias Symptoms: A phobia induces many of the physical and psychological symptoms described above, however, rather than being tied to a specific experience, the individual fears one or multiple specific objects, situations, or other odd circumstances. The fear around the situation is typically viewed as unwarranted or extreme by someone who doesn't experience the same phobia.

Treatment Options for Specific Phobias:

- Exposure therapy
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
- Medications
- Other home remedies to manage the anxiety around the phobia

Depressive Disorders:
Like anxiety, there are multiple types of depression. The symptoms and treatment options for major depressive disorder and persistent depressive disorder will be discussed here. There are other forms of depression that your doctor may diagnose you with or treat you for, but major depressive disorder and persistent depressive disorder are the most common diagnoses and those are the ones that will be covered here.

Major Depressive Disorder Symptoms: feelings of emptiness, hopelessness, and/or sadness, angry outbursts, irritability even over something small, loss of interest over things you used to enjoy doing, sleeping too much or too little (insomnia), lack of energy, exhaustion/tiredness, struggling to complete tasks, reduced appetite or weight gain, anxiety, restlessness, agitation, slowness in movements or speaking, feeling worthless or guilty, fixating on past mistakes, self-blame, trouble with making decisions, remembering things, or concentrating, frequent or recurrent thoughts of suicide/death, suicide attempts, unexplained physical problems such as back pain or headaches.

Mental Health Disorders, Symptoms, & Treatment Options

Treatment Options for Major Depressive Disorder:

- Medications such as antidepressants, or another medication that boosts levels of serotonin
- Psychotherapy
- Independent forms of therapy that your doctor can recommend
- Hospital or residential treatment (only in extremely severe cases)
- Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT) - used for patients who are unable to take medications for whatever reason, or who are at high risk of suicide
- Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS) - also used for people who are not responding well to medications, 50% of people who used this therapy felt all symptoms of depression subside after one round of treatment
- Lifestyle habits
    - Coping mechanisms & support systems
    - Mind-body connections (such as spirituality, art, music, meditation, etc.)

Persistent Depressive Disorder/Dysthymia Symptoms: loss of interest in usual activities, tiredness, sadness, low self-esteem or overly critical of yourself, feeling incapable, trouble concentrating or making decisions, irritability or anger, decreased productivity, avoidance of social events, feeling guilt over the past, poor appetite/eating problems, and struggling to sleep well.

Treatment Options for Persistent Depressive Disorder/Dysthymia:

- Medications such as antidepressants, or another medication that boosts levels of serotonin
- Psychotherapy
- Lifestyle habits
    - Coping mechanisms & support systems
    - Activities to help manage symptoms

Mental Health Disorders, Symptoms, & Treatment Options

Eating Disorders:
Eating disorders are a type of psychological condition that can cause many different issues in your behavior in relation to the way you eat or your body image. There are multiple types of disordered eating and they all impact how much food you consume, as well as how you view yourself. An estimated 30 million Americans suffer from disordered eating (20 million women, 10 million men), so it is a very common condition and it is treatable as well. If you think that you may have an eating disorder, read on to learn about the various types of eating disorders.

Anorexia Nervosa Symptoms: There are different ways that people who have developed anorexia act when coping with this condition. People may either be avoidant and restrictive of what they're eating, or they binge eat or eat excessively before throwing up or using certain medications (such as laxatives) to flush the food out of their system. Some people may use laxatives or other methods to pass the food from their bodies, while others may use calorie counting and "dieting." Typically individuals who are diagnosed with Anorexia also experience depression, anxiety, struggles with perfectionism, hyperactivity, and impulsiveness. People also experience a distorted body image, usually believing that they are bigger than they actually are which causes the unhealthy motivation to lose weight. Oftentimes this is done by looking in the mirror excessively or obsessing over flaws that someone believes they have, which causes another common behavior being excessive exercise. It's common to feel guilty or ashamed when one misses a workout and is further damaging to their self esteem. Denying one's hunger and refusing to eat is also common, as well as engaging in "food rituals." This can include: eating foods in a certain order or pattern, eating slowly, counting calories before intaking any food, etc.. Alcohol and drug usage is also relatively common amongst people experiencing eating disorders, and more information on alcoholism and drug addiction can be found on page (page number here). Lastly, an obvious consequence of anorexia nervosa is an unhealthy amount of weight loss.

Mental Health Disorders, Symptoms, & Treatment Options

Anorexia Nervosa Treatment Options:

- Hospitalization - may be necessary if one's body is severely impacted by the methods that have been used as a result of anorexia, a patient may be able to receive treatment at a clinic that specializes in eating disorders rather than stay in a hospital
- Physical care - regular check-ups may be needed in order to see improvements in hydration levels, weight gain, etc.
- Therapy - cognitive behavioral therapy has been shown to help distorted self images of one's body that causes anorexia
- Medications - medications such as antidepressants can help with symptoms of anorexia
- Ongoing and consistent treatment (regardless of whichever treatment option(s) you choose) is typically necessary to avoid relapse within patients who struggle with anorexia

Avoidant or Restrictive Food Intake Disorder Symptoms: common symptoms of ARFID include lacking interest in eating food, avoiding food based on texture, or being concerned about the repercussions of eating/eating too much. It can cause drastic weight loss, constipation or other digestive issues, and abdominal pain. Additional mental and emotional symptoms of ARFID include: dressing in layers to stay warm and hide weight loss, restricting types or amounts of food, only eating foods with specific textures, feeling sick before you're supposed to eat, fear of choking or vomiting, and continuing to restrict more foods over time.

Avoidant or Restrictive Food Intake Disorder Treatment Options:

- Therapy - addressing the fears one has of eating or eating certain foods can be addressed and improved through therapy to improve behavior around food
- Health Physician - checking in on the patient's body is extremely important to ensure that there aren't longterm physical consequences of ARFID that need treatment

Mental Health Disorders, Symptoms, & Treatment Options

Binge Eating Symptoms: symptoms of binge eating can include eating unusually large amounts of food very frequently, feeling out of control over how much you do eat or want to eat, eating even when you're full or not hungry, eating quickly, feeling uncomfortable after you eat, hiding from others how often/how much you're eating, feeling shame, sadness, or disgust over your eating habits, and trying to diet without results.

Binge Eating Treatment Options:

- Therapy - cognitive behavioral therapy, interpersonal therapy, and dialectal behavior therapy have all been shown to have positive impacts on people who suffer from binge eating
- Medications - antidepressants as well as other drugs your doctor may recommend have been effective in managing the desire to binge eat
- Behavioral weight loss programs - a weight loss program may be recommended to someone who has started to make progress in curbing their binge eating symptoms
- Sticking to treatment plans outlined by yourself and your doctor, eliminating foods from your household that tempt you to binge eat, getting healthy nutrients, and making an exercise regimen that your doctor approves of are all useful practices

Bulimia Symptoms: symptoms of bulimia can include fearing gaining weight, often thinking about the size and shape of your body, feeling out of control when binge eating, excessively exercising or vomiting after eating, using medications such as laxatives, fasting, restricting food intake, counting calories, and using dietary supplements or other medications to lose weight more rapidly.

Bulimia Treatment Options:

- Therapy - cognitive behavioral therapy and interpersonal therapy have been shown to improve symptoms of bulimia
- Medications - antidepressants are usually used to treat bulimia
- Nutrition education - dietitians can help to create a healthy diet and exercise regimen
- Hospitalization - may be needed in extreme cases where the patient is suffering from extreme physical side effects

Mental Health Disorders, Symptoms, & Treatment Options

Mood Disorders:
The most common types of mood disorders are depressive disorders (covered on pages 28-29) and bipolar disorder. This section will cover bipolar disorder, seasonal affective disorder, cyclothymic disorder, and premenstrual dysphoric disorder. While mood disorders, especially ones like bipolar disorder are overly stigmatized, they are very common. 1 in 5 Americans, or 20.9 million people above the age of 18 in the U.S. are diagnosed with a mood disorder. With the right treatment plans and a solid support system, you are very capable of learning how to manage symptoms that come with mood disorders.

Bipolar Disorder Symptoms: There are two different types of bipolar disorder, Bipolar I and Bipolar II. One is not worse or milder than another, but they have different ways of presenting themselves. People with Bipolar I have had at least one manic episode that is followed by hypomanic or major depressive episodes. Sometimes this mania can lead to psychosis (more information on psychosis on page). Bipolar II is when someone has had at least one major depressive episode and hypomanic episode, but they've never had a manic episode.

Symptoms of mania and hypomania can include feeling overly upbeat or jumpy, increased activity, feeling abnormally energized or agitated, an exaggerated sense of self-confidence or euphoria, decreased need for sleep, talkativeness, racing thoughts, being easily distracted, and impulsiveness (spending a lot of money, taking sexual risks, overall poor decision making). Symptoms of a major depressive episode can include a depressed mood, loss of interest or sense of pleasure in things that are normally enjoyable, unintentional significant weight loss or decreases/increases in appetite, either insomnia or sleeping too much, restlessness or slowed behavior, fatigue, loss of energy, feeling worthless, feeling excessive and/or inappropriate guilt, decrease ability to think or concentrate, indecisiveness, and suicidal thoughts, tendencies, or plans.

Mental Health Disorders, Symptoms, & Treatment Options

Bipolar Disorder Treatment Options:

- Medications - medications are typically given to immediately begin regulating your moods
- Continued treatment - regular check-ups to ensure your medication and other treatment plans are working is an important aspect in managing bipolar disorder
- Hospitalization - in some cases when you're experiencing psychosis or suicidal thoughts, hospitalization may be necessary
- Therapy - interpersonal and social rhythm therapy can help with mood management, as well as cognitive behavioral therapy, psychoeducation (for both you and your loved ones to better understand your condition), and family-focused therapy are all recommended therapeutic options for managing bipolar disorder

Cyclothymic Disorder Symptoms: cyclothymic disorder is incredibly similar to bipolar disorder, it's just less severe. People with cyclothymic disorder still experience hypomanic and depressive episodes. Symptoms of hypomania and depressive episodes are listed on the previous page (page 33).

Cyclothymic Treatment Options:

- Medications - your doctor may prescribe a medication used to treat bipolar disorder to prevent depressive episodes and/or hypomania episodes
- Therapy - cognitive behavioral therapy and interpersonal and social rhythm therapy are typically the two methods used to treat patients with cyclothymic disorder

Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder Symptoms: premenstrual dysphoric disorder is not the same thing as PMS which is easier to manage alone. PDD causes extreme sadness, hopelessness, anger, irritability, anxiety, and overall moodiness in the week leading up to one's menstrual cycle. It continues throughout your period as well. Typically this condition aligns with other diagnoses such as depression.

Mental Health Disorders, Symptoms, & Treatment Options

Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder Treatment Options:

- Medications - antidepressants, birth control, and nutritional supplements could all be possible medications that your doctor prescribes to treat the symptoms of PDD

Seasonal Affective Disorder Symptoms: seasonal affective disorder, usually referred to as SAD is a mood disorder that changes with the seasons. In most cases, people experience symptoms in the fall and winter. Symptoms of SAD can include feeling sad or depressed most of the day, losing interest in activities you usually enjoy, low energy levels, trouble sleeping, experiencing weight/appetite changes, feeling sluggish, irritability, difficulty concentrating, feeling worthless, guilty, or hopeless, and suicidal thoughts or behaviors.

SAD in the fall and winter has specific symptoms such as oversleeping, appetite changes and cravings for specific foods, tiredness, and weight gain. SAD in the spring and summer has specific symptoms such as trouble sleeping, poor appetite, weight loss, agitation, and anxiety. SAD can also be more prominent in people with bipolar disorder.

Seasonal Affective Disorder Treatment Options:

- Light Therapy - light therapy works to treat people who experience symptoms of SAD in the fall or winter, it's a warm light that mimics being outside when it's sunny
- Medications - antidepressants are used in severe cases
- Therapy - standard talk therapy is usually recommended for treating SAD
- Mind-body Connection - relaxation techniques, meditation, and music/art therapy are also methods that have shown improvements in SAD symptoms and behavioral patterns

Mental Health Disorders, Symptoms, & Treatment Options

Personality Disorders:
Personality disorders are mental health conditions that impact someone's thoughts and emotions in a way that causes distress to them and other people in their lives. There are 10 different types of personality disorders and they all impact at least two of the following areas in someone's life: your way of thinking of yourself or others, your way of responding to things emotionally, your way of relating to others, and your way of controlling your behavior. The 10 different types of personality disorders are: antisocial personality disorder, avoidant personality disorder, borderline personality disorder, dependent personality disorder, histrionic personality disorder, narcissistic personality disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), paranoid personality disorder, schizoid personality disorder, and schizotypal personality disorder.

Antisocial Personality Disorder Symptoms: the symptoms of antisocial personality disorder are no regard for right vs. wrong, lying to or exploiting others, disrespecting people, cynicism, using charm to manipulate people or for personal gain, arrogance, believing you're superior, violating others through intimidation or lying, impulsiveness, irritability, aggression, violent behavior, apathetic behavior, risky behavior that puts yourself or others at risk, abusive relationships, and not learning from negative outcomes of one's actions.

Antisocial Personality Disorder Treatment Options: antisocial personality disorder is one of the more difficult conditions to treat. Therapy is the largest recommended option, specifically with a specialist who specializes in treated people with this diagnosis.

Avoidant Personality Disorder Symptoms: The symptoms of avoidant personality disorder are avoiding work/school/social events in fear of being judged or rejected, feeling unwelcome at social events, low self-esteem, isolating yourself from others, afraid of speaking up and stumbling over your words, refuses to interact with people unless they know they are liked, showing restraint in intimate relationships in fear of being rejected, viewing yourself as unworthy, reluctant to take risks or try something enjoyable in fear of it going poorly.

Mental Health Disorders, Symptoms, & Treatment Options

Avoidant Personality Disorder Treatment Options:

- Medications - some medications such as antidepressants can work to treat avoidant personality disorder, but there is no approved drug to treat it directly
- Group Therapy - group therapy and discussing your symptoms and experiences with others has been shown to be effective in treating individuals coping with avoidant personality disorder
- Therapy - individual therapy is also highly recommended for people who have been diagnosed with avoidant personality disorder

Borderline Personality Disorder Symptoms: the symptoms of borderline personality disorder are fearing abandonment, going to extreme measures to avoid rejection, multiple unstable relationships, idolizing someone at one moment and then believing they're not good enough to you the next, having an inconsistent view of yourself (sometimes positive, sometimes negative), changing your goals or values frequently, stress-related paranoia, impulsive/risky behavior, threatening self harm or suicidal threats as a reaction to fear of abandonment, intense and long lasting mood swings, feeling empty, getting into physical fights, losing your temper, and ultimately struggling with anger issues.

Borderline Personality Disorder Treatment Options:

- Therapy - there are multiple forms of therapy to treat borderline personality disorder, they include: dialectal behavior therapy, schema-focused therapy, mentalization-based therapy, systems training for emotional predictability and problem solving (STEPPS), transference-focused psychotherapy, and good psychiatric management. The method that is used for you would be determined by your symptoms and what appears to work best for your individual symptoms and experiences with BPD
- Medications - medications such as mood-stabilizing drugs, antidepressants, or others may be prescribed but there is no specific medication for BPD
- Hospitalization - hospitalization may be necessary if the symptoms you're experiencing are intense or putting you at risk of a psychiatric emergency

Mental Health Disorders, Symptoms, & Treatment Options

Dependent Personality Disorder Symptoms: Signs of DPD are submissive behavior, allowing friends & family to make decisions for you, needing constant reassurance, feeling nervous when alone, being afraid of rejection, being overly sensitive to criticism, not being able to handle being by yourself (being nervous, anxious, having panic attacks, or feeling hopeless when alone) being naive, and fearing abandonment.

Dependent Personality Disorder Treatment Options:

- Therapy - personal therapy such as cognitive behavioral therapy have proven to show improvements amongst patients with DPD
- Medications - medications may be prescribed especially amongst patients who have overlapping conditions such as depression and anxiety disorders

Histrionic Personality Disorder Symptoms: The symptoms of HPD can include constantly seeking attention, trying to gain attention by being overly emotional, dramatic, or sexually inappropriate, having strong opinions and speaking dramatically but not having information to back up your claims, being easily influenced, having shallow emotions, having mood swings, being overly concerned with your appearance, and thinking that your relationships are stronger than they actually are.

Histrionic Personality Disorder Treatment Options:

- Therapy - the goal of therapy when treating HPD is to find the reason behind the patient's behavior so that they can be made aware of the cause and adjust their behavior accordingly over time
- Medications - medications may be used especially if a patient is experiencing HPD along with symptoms of depression and/or anxiety

Narcissistic Personality Disorder Symptoms: signs of narcissistic personality disorder can include believing you are superior to others or more special than they are, fantasizing about being successful, attractive, and powerful, not recognizing other peoples needs or emotions, exaggerating one's talents and/or achievements, expecting constant praise, being arrogant, believing that other people envy you, and taking advantage of other people or being manipulative.

Mental Health Disorders, Symptoms, & Treatment Options

Narcissistic Personality Disorder Treatment Options:

- Therapy - therapy will be able to help you learn how to regulate your behaviors and emotions to hopefully improve your relationship with yourself and others
- Medication - there's no medications for narcissistic personality disorder specifically, but if you experience symptoms of depression or anxiety as well, they may be prescribed

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) Symptoms: someone with OCD may experience being extremely perfectionistic to the point of a lack of perfection causing distress. An example of OCD in relation to perfectionism is struggling to do something because it isn't meeting your own standards or the standards you believe you have to live up to. OCD can also create a need to be in control of tasks and people. Additionally, one may neglect their family and friends in order to perfect a task they are doing. Being inflexible about personal belongings, money/finance management, and stubborn overall are also symptoms of OCD.

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder Treatment Options:

- Therapy - cognitive behavioral therapy is recommended as well as exposure and response therapy are recommended for patients with OCD. ERT gradually exposes the patient to whatever makes them afraid or uncomfortable until they are able to handle these fears in their day to day life on their own
- Medications - antidepressants may be prescribed and a doctor will evaluate which medication is best for you since some antidepressants are adequate at managing OCD symptoms
- Treatment Programs - programs incorporating multiple forms of therapy such as ERT may last several weeks and are typically recommended in severe cases of OCD
- Deep Brain Stimulation - DBS implants electrodes into certain part of the brain and is proven to be effective in treating OCD
- Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation - TMS is used when other methods have not provided any improvements in a patient's OCD symptoms. TMS is a noninvasive procedure that stimulates nerve cells in the brain to alleviate or at least improve symptoms of OCD

Mental Health Disorders, Symptoms, & Treatment Options

Psychotic Disorders:
Psychotic disorders are considered uncommon in the U.S., 1% of the population or 3.3 million people suffer from a psychotic disorder. Some studies have shown that the use of solitary confinement can create psychotic disorder symptoms, especially symptoms of schizophrenia or other hallucination experiences. If you've had hallucinations or symptoms of a psychotic disorder, you can read here about the different symptoms of various psychotic disorders including: brief psychotic disorder, delusional disorder, schizoaffective disorder, schizophrenia, schizophreniform disorder, and substance-induced psychotic disorder.

Brief Psychotic Disorder Symptoms: There are three different causes for brief psychotic disorder. The first cause is due to a traumatic event as a reaction to that experience, the second cause is unrelated to a clear trigger, and the third cause happens to women only within the first month after they've given birth. Symptoms include delusions, hallucinations, being unable to think clearly, speaking in a way that doesn't make sense, acting abnormally, being confused or struggling with your memory, changes in energy or sleeping patterns, weight fluctuation, and struggling with indecisiveness.

Brief Psychotic Disorder Treatment Options:

- Therapy - therapy is used to talk through whatever may have potentially caused the symptoms the patient is experiencing
- Medications - medications used to treat schizophrenia may be prescribed

Delusional Disorder Symptoms: Delusional disorder has various forms of characteristics depending on what someone is believing to be true. There's erotomania which is when someone believes that someone is in love with them and tries to interact with that person. It can often lead to dangerous behavior such as stalking. The second type is grandiose which is when someone behaves egotistically. The third type is jealousy, having this type of delusion can cause someone to believe their partner is cheating on them in spite of a lack of evidence. The fourth is persecutory, this causes someone to believe they or someone they care for is in danger or being mistreated in spite of no such thing occurring. The fifth is somatic which is when someone believes they have a medical problem that they don't actually have. The last possible form of delusional disorder is when someone experiences two or more of these delusions.

Mental Health Disorders, Symptoms, & Treatment Options

Delusional Disorder Treatment Options:

- Therapy - therapy doesn't always guarantee an improvement in alleviating a patient of delusional disorder symptoms, but it is still typically recommended alongside medications
- Medications - medications have shown to be more promising in treating delusional disorder

Schizoaffective Disorder Symptoms: There are two types of schizoaffective disorder. The first is a bipolar type which includes experiencing mania (see symptoms on page 33), and the second is a depressive type which results in major depressive episodes. The symptoms can include delusions, hallucinations, incoherent speech, abnormal behavior, depression symptoms (see more on page), periods of mania, struggling to function at your work or school, and struggling to maintain personal care.

Schizoaffective Disorder Treatment Options:

- Therapy - individual and/or family therapy may be recommended to a patient with schizoaffective disorder
- Medications - antipsychotics, antidepressants, and mood stabilizers may be recommended to help with schizoaffective disorder symptoms
- Rehab or life skills training
- Hospitalization in extreme cases where symptoms become more severe
- Electroconvulsive therapy - electroconvulsive therapy may be considered if a patient is not improving with medications and therapy

Schizophrenia Symptoms: symptoms of schizophrenia can include delusions, hallucinations, disorganized thinking, abnormal behavior that makes it challenging to complete tasks, as well as experiencing social withdrawal, neglecting personal hygiene, and not enjoying activities that were once enjoyed.

Schizophrenia Treatment Options:

- Therapy - individual and family therapy are typically recommended to patients with schizophrenia
- Medications - there are specific medications for treating schizophrenia that may be prescribed
- Rehab or life skills training may also be suggested

Mental Health Disorders, Symptoms, & Treatment Options

Schizophreniform Disorder Symptoms: symptoms of schizophreniform can include odd behavior, poor hygiene, not wanting to engage in usual activities or in social interactions, withdrawing from friends and family, hallucinations, delusions, lack of energy, and incoherent speech.

Schizophreniform Disorder Treatment Options:

- Therapy - therapy is typically the only thing recommended to treat schizophreniform because if symptoms don't improve with the help of a therapist after 6 months, the patient likely has schizophrenia

Substance-Induced Psychotic Disorder Symptoms: substance-induced psychotic disorder is caused by drugs or alcohol creating symptoms of psychosis. Typically people experience delusions, hallucinations, struggling to think clearly, and disassociation.

Substance-Induced Psychotic Disorder Treatment Options: most patients are first treated in hospitals or mental health clinics because a doctor has to determine if the patient's symptoms are fully due to substance abuse, or if they also have schizophrenia. Once this is determined, medications based on the patient's condition and diagnosis can be prescribed.

Trauma Disorders:
Trauma disorders are extremely common in the United States. It's estimated that 3.5% of adults in the U.S. will be diagnosed with PTSD every year, and that 1 out of 11 people will be diagnosed with PTSD in their lifetime. Trauma disorders also impact formerly incarcerated people at high rates due to repeatedly witnessing violence, living in a confined space, experiencing punishments such as solitary confinement, and more. It is normal to have symptoms of a trauma disorder after you've been let out of prison, but if you find these symptoms to continue on for a long period of time after your release, it may be best to seek out professional mental health assistance. The following disorders will be discussed along with their symptoms and treatment options: acute stress disorder, adjustment disorder, post traumatic stress disorder or PTSD, and other unspecified trauma and stress related disorders.

Mental Health Disorders, Symptoms, & Treatment Options

Acute Stress Disorder Symptoms: There are multiple types of ASD symptoms, disassociation, re-experiencing trauma, avoidance, anxiety and arousal, and distress. Disassociation symptoms include feeling like your environment is strange or unreal, depersonalization (or making your thoughts and emotions feel distant and like they're not yours), amnesia/struggle in memory caused by disassociation, reduced awareness of your surroundings, and feeling emotionally unavailable. Re-experiencing your trauma can mean having flashbacks in the form of images, thoughts, or nightmares about the traumatic event to the point of feeling like you're reliving it, and feeling distressed when someone or something reminds you of the event. Avoidance means one is avoiding people, conversations, places, objects, activities, or even thoughts and feelings that bring up memories of the traumatic event for you. Lastly, anxiety and increased arousal symptoms include struggling to fall asleep, irritability, struggling to concentrate, being antsy, being tense and on guard constantly, and being startled easily even when you shouldn't be.

Acute Stress Disorder Treatment Options:

- A psychiatric evaluation will be done first to determine the patient's specific condition
- Medications - anxiety, depression, and serotonin medications may be recommended
- Therapy - cognitive behavioral therapy, exposure-based therapy, and hypnotherapy may be recommended methods of treatment

Adjustment Disorder Symptoms: symptoms of adjustment disorder can include feeling anxious, frequent crying, increased feeling of sadness, not enjoying things that you normally would, difficulty sleeping, loss of appetite, struggling to concentrate, struggling to complete normal tasks, withdrawing socially, feeling overwhelmed, avoiding important things, and having suicidal thoughts or behavior.

Adjustment Disorder Treatment Options: Your treatment may be determined by whether or not you have acute adjustment disorder or persistent adjustment disorder. Persistent adjustment disorder is when symptoms last longer than six months. Treatment options include therapy, anti-anxiety or antidepressant medications, or lifestyle adjustments recommended by your doctor.

Mental Health Disorders, Symptoms, & Treatment Options

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Symptoms: there are different types of PTSD symptoms including intrusive memories, avoidance, negative changes in thinking and mood, and changes in physical and emotional reactions. There is also various intensity within these symptoms. Experiencing avoidance symptoms can include trying to avoid specific locations, activities, or people that remind you of the trauma or it can also mean trying to ignore it altogether. The symptoms of intrusive memories can include unwanted and reoccurring memories of the traumatic event(s), relieving the traumatic event(s) as if it's currently happening (flashbacks), having nightmares about the event(s), and having severe emotional or physical reactions to something reminding you of the trauma. Changes in your mood as well as your physical and emotional reaction to things can include having negative thoughts about yourself, other people or the world as a whole, feeling hopeless about the future, struggling to remember important details about the traumatic event(s), struggling to maintain relationships, lack of enjoyment in activities you once enjoyed, not feeling many positive emotions or emotionally numb, being jumpy or easily startled, feeling on edge or on guard, fearing danger often, self-destructive behavior, difficulty sleeping and/or concentrating, feeling guilt or shame, and having outbursts of anger or irritability.

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Treatment Options:

- Therapy - cognitive behavioral therapy, group therapy, and exposure therapy are all forms that may be recommended to you in order to treat or help alleviate some symptoms of PTSD
- Medications - anti-anxiety medications may help a patient who has the severe anxiety around a sense of danger or being on edge. Antidepressants may also be recommended
- Treatment Plans - treatment plans are often developed with patients who have PTSD. Plans can include therapy, medications, as well as self help tasks or hobbies meant to improve your mood or give you other outlets to focus on. It's important to not turn to substances such as recreational drugs or alcohol to dull or numb your PTSD symptoms. While this is a common coping strategy amongst people who suffer from PTSD, it ultimately leads to more problems later on that make recovery, healing, and treatment much more challenging

Mental Health Disorders, Symptoms, & Treatment Options

Unspecified Trauma Disorders & Other Trauma Related Issues: Sometimes if a patient does not meet all of the criteria for a trauma disorder such as PTSD they'll be diagnosed with a type of "other trauma disorder." One example is secondhand trauma which occurs in people who have witnessed other people experience firsthand trauma. This may be common amongst people who were incarcerated since you're often exposed to your friends or neighbors getting into fights or experiencing violence at the hands of correctional officers. Experiencing second hand trauma may result in symptoms such as feeling hopeless or helpless, feeling inadequate or like you're not doing enough to help others, hyper-vigilance, guilt, shame, fear, cynicism, negative outlook on life, and emotional fatigue. Another example of a different trauma issue is post traumatic stress. PTS causes the same symptoms as PTSD, however, it is self manageable. Symptoms no longer persist after days or at the most 3-4 weeks. If the symptoms of PTS/PTSD persist, then it is important to seek out help.

Your doctor may also diagnosis you with an "other/unspecified trauma disorder," this does not mean your symptoms are invalid or not severe enough. All it means is that you don't meet the full criteria for a distinct trauma disorder, and instead you may have symptoms that fall into different categories or only half of the symptoms of a diagnosis for example. Your trauma and your struggles will still be taken seriously by your doctor, regardless of whether or not you're classified with something more concrete. In some cases it may be easier to treat if you're experiencing less symptoms, and hopefully that means you won't need as many forms of treatment.

Unfortunately, trauma and mental health struggles are very common amongst people who are in prison. Most people in prison even had prior trauma or a mental health issue before their incarceration. This is a normal experience, and you're not weak or lesser than for having a struggle with trauma, or any of the previously discussed diagnoses. A lot of these mental health issues that people deal with are developed due to a product of one's environment, which is often out of our control - especially in prison. Hopefully reading through this information has helped, and you are ready to take the next steps to get the help that you deserve. Seeking out help for a mental health issue is brave and honorable, and will help you lead a better and healthier life.

Drug Addiction Symptoms & Treatment Options

Symptoms of Drug Addiction: feeling the urge to use the drug(s) regularly (whether it be daily or multiple times a day), thinking about using the drug(s) so much that other thoughts are blocked out, needing more of the drug(s) to get the same effect, taking a larger amount of the drug(s) over a longer period of time than you have planned, working to maintain your supply of the drug(s), spending money on the drug(s) even when you can't afford to, no longer fulfilling your responsibilities at work or attending social events due to drug usage, continuing the use of the drug(s) even when you're aware that it's causing problems in your life and/or damaging your health, doing things to get the drug(s) that you normally wouldn't do (such as stealing), driving or engaging in risky behaviors while under the influence of the drug(s), spending a lot of time using, getting, or recovering from the drug(s), failing to quit the drug(s), and experiencing withdrawal symptoms when you don't use the drug(s).

Symptoms of Withdrawal from Drugs:

- Marijuana - irritability, trouble sleeping, decreased appetite, anxiety
- Prescription Opioids - restlessness, muscle/bone pain, insomnia, diarrhea, vomiting, cold flashes with goosebumps, leg movements
- Prescription Sedatives & Tranquilizers - seizures, shakiness, agitation, anxiety, insomnia, overactive reflexes, increased heart rate/blood pressure/temperature & sweating, hallucinations, severe cramping
- Prescription Stimulants - depression, tiredness, sleep problems
- Steroids - mood swings, tiredness, restlessness, loss of appetite, insomnia, lowered sex drive, depression
- Tobacco - irritability, attention problems, sleep problems, increased appetite
- Heroin - nausea, vomiting, insomnia, agitation, diarrhea, dilated pupils, sweating, anxiety, abdominal cramping, muscle aches
- Methamphetamines - fatigue, agitation, insomnia, meth cravings, red & itchy eyes, dysphoric mood, suicidal thoughts, increased appetite, vivid, & unpleasant dreams
- Hallucinogens - stiff muscles, slow & ineffective breathing, convulsions, rapid heart rate, extreme changes in body temperature, cravings, headaches, sweating, seizures, flashbacks
- Cocaine - difficulty concentrating, slowed thinking, physical fatigue after activity, exhaustion, restlessness, inability to experience sexual arousal/inability to feel pleasure, depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts/actions, vivid & unpleasant dreams/nightmares, chills, tremors, muscle aches, nerve pain, increased craving for cocaine, increased appetite

Mental Health Disorders, Symptoms, & Treatment Options

Paranoid Personality Disorder Symptoms: someone with paranoid personality disorder may hold grudges, be distrusting and/or suspicious of other people and their motives when it's not justified, being hesitant to confide in people, feeling threatened or personally attacked by a comment or action that was harmless or nonthreatening, and getting angry when feeling slightly insulted.

Paranoid Personality Disorder Treatment Options: It is recommended that therapy and medications are administered together, because the symptoms of PPD can very hard to treat when the patient struggles to recognize that their thoughts are irrational. However, when one or both of these treatments are taken, symptoms typically improve drastically.

Schizoid Personality Disorder Symptoms: the symptoms of schizoid personality disorder can include preferring to be alone and/or having little to no interest in building relationships, being limited in your range or capacity to feel emotions, little to no desire in having a sexual relationship, coming across as cold to others and struggling to enjoy most activities.

Schizoid Personality Disorder Treatment Options:

- Therapy - cognitive behavioral therapy has been successful in helping patients with this disorder improve the development of their relationships
- Group Therapy - group therapy is useful in learning how to improve one's social skills with people who are understanding of and experiencing the same symptoms that you have
- Medications - antidepressants and anxiety medication may be prescribed

Schizotypal Personality Disorder Symptoms: symptoms of schizotypal personality disorder are behaving, dressing, speaking, or thinking in odd ways, abnormal perceptual experiences such as hearing voices calling you, lacking emotional responses or having inappropriate emotional responses, experiencing social anxiety or discomfort within close relationships, and believing in impossible things such as thinking you can influence others with your thoughts.

Schizotypal Personality Disorder Treatment Options:

- Therapy - cognitive behavioral therapy, family therapy, and supportive therapy have proven to be effective
- Medications - medications that improve stress, anxiety, and depression sometimes work by helping ease odd/irrational thoughts and behaviors

Drug Addiction Symptoms & Treatment Options

Symptoms of Drug Overdose:

General Symptoms: hyperthermia or hypothermia, passing out, unresponsiveness, loss of consciousness, skin color changes, abnormal breathing, fast, slowed, or irregular pulse.
Hallucinogens Overdose Symptoms: psychotic features, agitation, delirium.
Inhalants Overdose Symptoms: loss of consciousness, stupor or coma, sudden death.
Marijuana Overdose Symptoms: profound drowsiness, unsteady gait, vomiting, agitation, psychosis
Opioid Overdose Symptoms: depressed level of consciousness, respiratory depression/arrest, cold/clammy/bluish skin, constricted pupils (dilated if anoxic brain injury has occurred)
Stimulants: hyperthermia, tachycardia, hypertension, arrhythmia, agitation, hallucinations and other psychotic features, seizures, cardiovascular emergencies.

Call 9-1-1 immediately if you suspect you are having a drug overdose.

Treatment Options for Drug Addiction:

- The National Institute on Drug Abuse reports the following options on how to treat drug addiction:
  - "Behavioral counseling
  - Medication
  - Medical devices and applications used to treat withdrawal symptoms or deliver skills training
  - Evaluation and treatment for co-occurring mental health issues such as depression and anxiety
  - Long-term follow-up to prevent relapse"
- Typically, this treatment is provided through rehab programs or within rehab facilities
  - It is important to find out what your health insurance covers for rehab and drug addiction treatment if you are suffering from drug abuse

Alcohol Addiction Symptoms & Treatment Options

Symptoms of Alcoholism: drinking more or drinking for a longer time than you had originally planned, struggling to stop drinking, spending a lot of time being sick or hungover, spending a lot of time drinking, the craving for alcohol takes over all other thoughts/desires, having life problems because of your drinking and continuing to drink in spite of those problems, no longer partaking in activities as frequently or at all so that you have more time to drink, having to drink more and more to achieve the desired effect, continuing to drink even though it's damaging your health, makes you feel anxious or depressed, or has resulted in a black out, and experiencing symptoms of withdrawal.

Symptoms of Alcohol Poisoning:

- Confusion
- Vomiting
- Seizures
- Slow breathing (less than 8 breaths per minute)
- Irregular breathing (a gap of 10 seconds or more between breaths)
- Blue or pale skin
- Low body temperature or hypothermia
- Becoming unconscious or passing out, and being completely unresponsive

Symptoms of Withdrawal from Alcohol:

- Trouble sleeping
- Shakiness
- Restlessness
- Nausea
- Sweating
- Increased heart rate or feeling like your heart is racing
- Seizures
- Seeing, hearing, or feeling things that aren't there or happening

Not all symptoms of alcohol poisoning have to be present in order for the persons' life to be at risk. Call 9-1-1 if you develop any of these symptoms after consuming a large amount of alcohol.

Treatment Options for Alcoholism:

- Detox - some people choose to do this at a rehab facility due to the severe symptoms of withdrawal
- Seeing a counselor or therapist - helps to deal with triggers, set goals, and manage whatever feelings are causing you to drink
- Medications - some help with cravings, others make drinking undesirable by making you sick or blocking the buzz that alcohol gives you when you consume it
- Group therapy/A.A. Meetings - gives you a small community of people who understand you and you're all expected to hold each other accountable as you work towards your recovery goals and milestones

Healing & Moving Forward

Intro:
It can be challenging to know where to begin when trying to heal from whatever experiences you may have had before or during your time in prison. This section will discuss self improvement, maintaining relationships, community engagement, as well as different tips on how to take care of yourself mentally and how to remain sober if you struggle with addiction.

Self Improvement:
You may have the urge to complete a large amount of goals or tasks after being released from prison. However, this can be overwhelming and may not be the best strategy. There's going to be a lot for you to do and adjust to once you're released, and you shouldn't bite off more than you can chew. Instead, try making realistic goals and reasonable deadlines for yourself. Also, make sure you have time to include doing activities and being around people that create positivity in your life. It's important to give time and attention to both your work and your relationships. Another important thing to practice is to no longer label yourself as a criminal. Try your best to manage the labels that have been given to you during and maybe even before your incarceration. Do your best to ignore or tune out whatever negative stigmatism you hear about people who have served time in prison, you get to define yourself and choose which identities you align with.

It's also important to praise yourself for all of your accomplishments - no matter how small. Praise yourself when you've remained sober for a certain amount of days, weeks, months, or years. Praise yourself when you've started counseling, got a job interview, secured a job, moved into your first place, enrolled in classes or even one class, anything that you're proud of yourself for doing. Work everyday at becoming the person that you want to be, but do this at your own pace. Achieve your goals in a way that's mentally healthy and exciting for you, not in a way that is draining or exhausting.

Healing & Moving Forward

Maintaining Relationships:
Maintaining your relationships with others is one of the main contributors to a successful reentry. Surrounding yourself with people who make you feel supported, safe, and loved will all make a positive difference. Building healthy relationships with your friends, family members, partner, and/or children are all important in making a better reentry experience for you, and also in helping you to heal and move past what you have experienced in prison.

Community Engagement:
Giving back to your community may be a way to help you to see yourself in a more positive light. As written earlier, the stigmatism and shame associated with incarceration can be really hard to cope with. Doing positive work to benefit others may make you feel better about yourself, and could also change how people view you or formerly incarcerated people as a whole. Finding somewhere that you can volunteer your time, use your skills, or apply your knowledge can be helpful in making connections with your community as well as boosting your own self-confidence. Working with or for an organization that you care about is one way to do this. You can search for community organizations online, or search for an issue you care about and how that issue is being addressed in your community. Some good examples of community organizations or nonprofits that typically need volunteers are homeless shelters or donation centers, animal shelters, environmental cleanups or organization, women's shelters and church groups.

Coping with Shame & Stigma:
Brené Brown writes and speaks on shame and guilt, and how debilitating it can be to move past your feelings of shame. She once said: "Shame is 'I am bad,' guilt is 'I did something bad' . . . Guilt: I'm sorry. I made a mistake. Shame: I'm sorry. I am a mistake." Feeling shame is a normal emotion to experience while you're serving time, and also thereafter. But it can be incredibly debilitating to allow the shame to stay with you without an end to the pain you may be feeling. It may be helpful to get involved with organizations, such as the ones listed above to work towards believing you're a good person and worthy of your second chance. If the feelings of shame and guilt persist, it may also be best to talk with a therapist or counselor who can help to ease your emotions surrounding the crime(s) you may have committed. Some people also benefit from going to a church and talking with a religious leader, support groups, or even seeking out meditation between you and the victims of the crime to receive mutual closure. Just keep in mind, that you are more than your worst mistake, and you deserve to heal and lead a better life.

Healing & Moving Forward

Tips on How to Maintain Mental Wellness:

- Write down your achievements and what you're thankful for in a journal
- Drink tea or coffee in the morning (this habit is linked to lower rates of depression)
- Do things that you're good at that boost your confidence
- Set your goals but meet them at your own pace - don't overwhelm yourself
- Experiment creatively
- Surround yourself with love, give love to others
- Care for yourself hygienically
- Writing about upsetting experiences can reduce stress, depression, and other negative emotions surrounding those events
- Adopt a pet if you can
- Explore the places nearby you
- Prep your clothes and meals for the night or days before so that you feel more control over the week ahead
- Forgive yourself and others as much as possible
- Send thank you notes or give verbal thank you's to people who are positively impacting your life in small or large ways
- Make time for friends and family
- Enjoy sunshine when you can
- Connect with people that support you and make you feel like you belong
- Don't rely on technology to keep you connected to people, visit in person when you are able
- Maintain physical activity, do exercises that are enjoyable to you
- Give back to people/your community
- Practice mindfulness
- Learn or try something new, it gives you the opportunity to meet new people and can boost your self-esteem if it becomes a new talent or hobby

Healing & Moving Forward

Tips on How to Maintain Sobriety:

- Figure out what your personal triggers are, such as:
  - Stress
  - Something around you that makes you want to use again
  - People who aren't sober
  - Relationship troubles
  - Struggles with work or money
- Spot relapse signs early:
  - Trying to be around the substance(s) that you struggle with using
  - Irrational thinking or behavior
  - Compulsive behavior
  - The substance starts to feel like your only coping mechanism or escape
  - Having similar thoughts that you did when your addiction started, or when you began to battle your addiction
- Recognize other physical or emotional symptoms pushing you to use
- Avoid things that remind you of times when you used (locations, people, events, etc. that make you want to use the substance you struggle with)
- Surround yourself with supportive relationships, be with people who encourage you to remain sober
- Have structure in your life - goals, a schedule for each day, things you want or plan to do, etc.
- Care for yourself mentally and physically
- Don't be afraid to ask for additional help throughout your recovery
- Celebrate achievements and milestones, example: 1 month sober, 6 months sober, 1 year sober, etc.

Directory

Mental Health & Substance Abuse Resources:

Be sure to find out how much your insurance will cover before booking & paying for an appointment, some offices will be more affordable than others. You can also contact your insurance company directly to get a list of offices you can go to for the most coverage. If you can afford a speciality service, some doctors may be more knowledgeable or specialize in your diagnosis compared to others. Lastly, if you're a veteran, it's a good idea to look for clinics provided by the VA.

Beaverton:

PDX Mental Health Resources (http://www.pdxmentalhealth.com/)
Sequoia Mental Health Services (https://sequoiamhs.org/)
Western Psychological & Counseling Services - multiple locations (https://www.westernpsych.com/)

Bend:

Cascade Psychological Services (https://www.cascadepsychological.com)
Central Oregon Suicide Prevention Alliance (https://preventsuicideco.org/)
Deschutes County Mental/Behavioral Health (https://www.deschutes.org/health)
Peak Wellness Services
Sage View Psychiatric Center - psychiatric hospital
Still Serving Counseling & Services - ran by veterans and first responders (https://www.iamstillserving.com/)
Vista Counseling (https://vistapsych.com/)

Brookings:

Curry Community Health - does not deny services due to inability to pay (https://www.currych.org/services)

Christmas Valley:

La Pine Community Health Center (https://www.lapinehealth.org/services/behavioral-health/)
New Beginnings Intervention Center - crisis center for victims of domestic violence and their children (https://www.newbeginningsinterventioncenter.com/)

Corvallis:

Acme Counseling (https://acmecounseling.com/index.html)
Center for Developing Hope (https://www.centerfordevelopinghope.com/)
Corvallis Clinic (https://www.corvallisclinic.com/integrated-behavioral-health/)
Corvallis Youth Psychology (http://corvallisyouthpsychology.com/?utm_source=gmb&utm_medium=referral)
Oregon Counseling (oregoncounseling.com)
Yes House (http://www.milestonesrecovery.com/yes-house-residential-program/)

Eugene:

Center for Autism & Related Disorders (https://www.centerforautism.com/)
Center for Community Counseling (https://www.ccceugene.org/services/)
Eugene Center for Anxiety & Stress (https://www.eugeneanxiety.com/)
Insight Northwest Counseling (https://www.insightnorthwest.com/)

Eugene, Continued:
Oasis Mental Health (http://www.oasismh.com/)
Oregon Psychiatric Partners (https://oppclinic.com/)
White Bird Clinic (https://whitebirdclinic.org/)
Gladstone:
Avamere Rehabilitation of Clackamas (https://www.avamere.com/avamere-rehabilitation-of-clackamas/)
Brave Souls Counseling (http://www.bravesoulscounseling.net/)
Clackamas County Urgent Mental Health Walk-In Center (https://www.clackamas.us/behavioralhealth/urgentmentalhealth)
Everyday Counseling (https://www.everydaycounselingpdx.com/services.html)
Hilltop Behavioral Health Center (https://www.clackamas.us/healthcenters/hilltop.html)
Lifeworks NW - multiple locations (https://www.lifeworksnw.org/)
Klamath Falls:
People's Counseling & Consulting (http://www.counselingpeople.com/)
La Grande:
Blue Mountain Associates & Grande Ronde Recovery - addiction treatment (http://bluemtassociates.com/)
Grande Ronde Recovery - addiction treatment (https://www.grrumatilla.com/)
New Day Enterprises (https://www.newdayenterprises.org/)
Madras:
Best Care Treatment (https://www.bestcaretreatment.org/)
Madras Family Care Clinic (https://www.stcharleshealthcare.org/locations/madras-family-care-clinic)
Medford:
Aspire Mental Health & Wellness (http://aspiremhw.com/)
Family Solutions (https://familysolutionsoregon.org/programs/outpatient-therapy)
Paradigm Mental Health & Wellness (https://www.paradigm.clinic/)
Rogue Mental Health Solutions (https://rmh-solutions.com/)
Trinity Counseling Center (https://www.trinitycounseling.net/)
Wellspring Counseling of Southern Oregon (https://www.wellspringcounselingcenter.com/index.html)
Wild River Counseling & Consultation (https://wildrivercounseling.com/)
Newport:
Oceanmist Counseling & Wellness (https://www.oceanmistcounseling.com/)
Ontario:
Lifeways (https://www.lifeways.org/treatment)
TFP Therapeutic Services - veterans and families (http://tfpservices.org/)

Pendelton:
Enrich Therapy (https://www.enrichtherapy.org/)
Good Samaritan Ministries (https://www.gsmpendleton.com/)
Mind Matters Child & Family Psychiatry (http://www.mindmatterspc.com/)
Psychological Services of Pendleton (https://www.pendletonpsych.com/)
Portland:
A Healing Intention (https://www.ahealingintention.com/services-fees)
Amenda Clinic (http://amendaclinic.com/)
Anxiety & Panic Treatment Center (https://www.anxiety-treatments.com/)
Awakened Heart PDX (https://www.awakenedheartpdx.com/)
Cascadia Whole Health Care (https://cascadiabhc.org/)
Cedar Hills Hospital (https://cedarhillshospital.com/)
Central City Concern (https://www.centralcityconcern.org/services/health-recovery)
Coalesce Counseling Services (http://coalescecounselingservices.com/)
Crestview Recovery - addiction treatment (https://www.crestviewrecovery.com/)
David J. Ebaugh Trauma Recovery Specialist (https://www.traumafocusedtherapy.com/)
Heal Thrive Grow Behavioral Health (http://healthrivegrow.com/)
Mental Health & Addiction Association of Oregon (https://www.mhaoforegon.org/)
Mind Solutions (https://www.mindsolutionsusa.com/)
Native American Rehabilitation Association (https://www.naranorthwest.org/)
OHSU Intercultural Psychiatric Clinic (https://www.ohsu.edu/brain-institute/ohsu-intercultural-psychiatric-clinic-portland?utm_source=gmb&utm_medium=organic&utm_content=8535d7be-3b4f-5d67-b285-37591b16bb67)
Oregon Integrated Health - multiple locations (https://www.oregonih.com/)
Portland Anxiety Clinic (https://portlandanxietyclinic.com/)
Portland Mental Health & Wellness (https://www.portlandmh.com/)
Portland Mental Wellness (https://www.portlandmentalwellness.com/)
Portland Professional Counseling & Psychotherapy (https://portland-counseling.com/)
Portland Psychotherapy (https://portlandpsychotherapy.com/)
Portland Psychiatric Alliance (https://www.portlandpsych.com/)
Prism Health - specializes in LGBTQ (https://prismhealth.org/)
Providence Health & Services (https://oregon.providence.org/our-services/p/providence-behavioral-health/)
Shanti Recovery & Wellness (https://shantipdx.com/)
The North Portland Growth Place (http://www.thegrowthplace.com/)
Trillium Family Services (https://trilliumfamily.org/programs-and-services/)
Unity Center for Behavioral Health (https://www.unityhealthcenter.org/)
Redmond:
Brightways Counseling Group (https://www.brightwayscounseling.com/)
Brooks Respite & Recovery Center (https://www.brooksrrc.org/)

Roseburg:
Adapt Oregon (https://www.adaptoregon.org./)
Lifecare Collaborative Counseling Team (http://lifecarecounselors.com/index.html)
Mill Street Psychiatric (https://millstreetpsychiatric.net/)
Roseburg Counseling & Wellness (https://roseburgcw.com/)
Roseburg Therapy (https://www.roseburgtherapy.com/)
Valley View Counseling (https://www.valleyviewcounseling.com/index.html)
Salem:
Center for Addiction and Counseling Services (https://cacssalem.com/)
Salem Psychiatric Associates (https://salempsych.com/)
The Dalles:
Mid-Columbia Center for Living (https://www.mccfl.org/services/)
Mid-Columbia Medical Center (https://www.mcmc.net/our-services/wellness-services/)
One Community Health (https://www.onecommunityhealth.org/behavioral-health)
Tigard:
ADHD Child & Family Services - offer support for individuals and their family that are diagnosed with ADHD (https://adhdchildandfamily.com/)
MGA Crisis Intervention (https://www.mariongatleyassociation.com/our-locations/oregon/intervention-drug-rehab-association-12442-southwest-scholls-ferry-road-portland-or-97223/)
Rose City Counseling & Services (https://www.rosecitycounseling.com/)
Willamette Anxiety Clinic (https://www.willametteanxietyclinic.com/)
Tillamook:
Tillamook Family Counseling Center (http://tfcc.org/)
Warm Springs:
Bestcare Treatment - addiction treatment (https://www.bestcaretreatment.org/)
IHS Health & Wellness Center - confederated tribes of Warm Springs (https://warmsprings-nsn.gov/program/warm-springs-health-wellness-center/)

Employment

Multiple researchers have found that stable employment leads to a greater reduction in recidivism rates. It should definitely be a priority to seek out employment so that you have steady income and can hopefully get other benefits from your employer as well. Since starting this part of the reentry process can feel overwhelming and like you're under a lot of pressure, this part of the guidebook has laid out multiple different sections including: steps to take to find employment, how to find potential jobs, networking, online networking, online safety, record keeping, the application process, suggestions on how to address your criminal history, creating a resume, writing a cover letter, how to prepare for interviews, and more.

Other resources throughout the state that may be helpful to you in securing employment will also be provided at the end of this section. Obviously this will understandably be one of the most stressful parts of your reentry process, but hopefully having this information laid out makes it a bit easier to get all of your ducks in a row so that you can successfully find employment.

Preparing for Employment

Steps to Take to Prepare:
There is a lot to do in order to prepare for employment during the reentry process. Sitting down and thinking about all the various components of finding jobs, applying to jobs, and eventually being hired for a job can be very useful. In order to help you plan and prepare for employment, there are some brief descriptions below of two important starting points to the beginning of your job search.

Gather Your Important Documents: It is a good idea to make sure you have all your important documents available when you are beginning to look for employment. These documents can include your driver's license, social security card, citizenship documents, certificates, a resume or list of previous jobs and skills, and anything else you think might be important for the job you are applying to.

Determine What Field You Want to Work In: When you are looking for potential jobs it is helpful to have a field of work or interest to help guide your search. This could be based off of work you did before you were incarcerated that you enjoyed, work you did while you were incarcerated that you enjoyed, a trade you are interested in or have experience with, or any work you would like to get into. Having a set interest or a field of work you want to go into can help narrow the pool of potential jobs and keep you from being overwhelmed.

Finding Possible Jobs

Finding Possible Jobs:
Networking can be a great resource to find employment opportunities. Below are different tips and information on networking and networking online to give you some pointers on how to get started.

Networking: Networking is a crucial part of finding possible jobs upon release. Networking involves communicating with others in an effort to exchange information and build professional connections. These connections can help a lot as you start your search for work. While you try to expand your network it is important to keep in mind, not everyone you talk to will have a job offer for you. This does not mean those people are not worth talking to though. They might not know of a job for you in the moment, but if you take the time to connect with them, they might think of you next time they are looking to hire someone. They could also put you in contact with someone who is looking to hire a new employee. This is why networking is so important, by taking the time to talk about your interest, skills, and desire for a job to a few people, you create an entire web of resources and connections.

If you are networking in person, we suggest you start by reaching out to friends or family who might know someone who works in the field you would like to work in. If they know someone, ask them to help put you in contact with them. If they don't know anyone, try reaching out to a person who works in the field you're interested in, even if you don't personally know them yet. This can be done by sending an email or calling a phone number explaining who you are and why you are interested in learning about their job. Once a meeting is set up, it is important to ask them what work they do, what to expect in that field, any ideas or suggestions they have for you, and if they know of any available jobs. Another great option for employment opportunities is going to a staffing agency. A staffing agency will have a large variety of jobs available and will be able to best match you, the type of work you are interested in with the right employer for that type of work. Most jobs that staffing agencies have available are called temp to hire. That means that you will work for an employer for a set amount of time while being paid by the staffing agency. Once that set amount of time is up, the employer will likely hire you on to their own payroll. One of the other great benefit to applying for work through an agency, is that you can be open with them about your background because they know which of the clients they work with will be open to working with your criminal history.

Networking Continued

Online Networking: Online networking is a great option to expand your network without the face to face interaction. If you have been incarcerated for a long time, using online networking sources might seem a little overwhelming or confusing. The best thing you can do is be patient with yourself and ask for help if you need it. If you choose to do online networking there are many websites to check out. These include: ziprecrutier.com, indeed.com, careerbuilder.com, and glassdoor.com. These websites help you find available job opportunities based on what skills you have and the field you want to get into. If you are overwhelmed by the amount of job matching websites try www.indeed.com, which is the largest source of job postings in the world, collected from employer websites, job boards, association websites, publications, and more, is a good place to start. All of these sites could put you in contact with various employers and employees who can help you build your network, learn new skills, and find a job.

Another option for online networking is looking directly at the website of the places you are interested in working at. Most websites have a link on their homepage for available jobs usually titled, "Careers" or "Employment". These links can take you to a list of currently available jobs. These pages usually explain where to apply, how to apply, what skills they are looking for in a potential employee, and what the job requirements are. If you don't see a link to current jobs, you can usually find an email or phone number at the bottom of the website and use this to reach out to the owner, manager, or contact for the job to inquire about possible openings.

Another important aspect of online networking is the social networking sites. We suggest you use https://www.linkedin.com for any social networking you are looking to do. LinkedIn is currently the most effective professional social network. You can use your email to set up the account. The reason why LinkedIn is so useful is because it can expand your network and help keep you connected with people who you can work with in the future.

Additional Tips

Internet Safety: While using online sources to find job openings and create a network can be really helpful, it is important to remember that there are certain risks to doing anything online. If someone is requesting you send them sensitive and personal information for a job, suggest a face to face meeting to go over the information and fill out paperwork. If face to face meetings are not accessible try for a virtual face to face meeting. This way you can be sure they are who they say they are before you hand over information. Scammers may be on certain sites that you're using to look for employment since they may be able to easily access sensitive information. You shouldn't share any personal information that can identify you (social security number, date of birth, address, etc.) as well as any financial information (credit/debit card numbers, online payment information, banking logins or users, routing/account numbers, etc.). Don't be afraid to ask for help from people around you if you're not sure if a website or someone reaching out to you is trying to scam you, it's better to be safe than sorry since it can be difficult to handle the aftermath of being scammed.

Record Keeping: Keeping a clear record of people you connect with when looking for employment can be very helpful. If you have an in-person meeting with someone to expand your network, ask for their business card. They are easy to keep and have information such as their job, email, and phone number in case you need to reach out again or end up applying for a job at the same company. It may be useful to also digitally save their information in your phone or laptop's contacts, so that if you lose the physical business card you still have easy access to their contact information. You should also keep track of different places you apply to, and also document which employers scheduled interviews, follow up phone calls, etc.. On the next page there's an example image of an interview log so you can get an idea of how to track that information and which details may be important to write down.

Keeping record of the job title, the company name, contact info of the employer/interviewer including their phone number, mailing address, email address, etc., your resume status, your references sent, a description of the job, the application status/date, and the interview date can all be useful information to you. It can be challenging to juggle multiple job applications and interviews at once, and you don't want to accidentally confuse two companies or jobs for one another and make a mistake at an interview. Tracking this information and keeping it organized should make that more avoidable, and hopefully help you stay clear and focused on everything you're doing.

You can easily create a similar spreadsheet using Google Sheets, it is a fairly easy template to use and you can create similar columns to manage all of this information. Google Sheets and Google Accounts of all kind are 100% free.

The Application Process

The Application:
Your job application is the first step on your path to getting a job. A good application will lead to getting an interview and getting your foot in the door. Reviewing applications is the most common way employers thin the pool of applicants for their specific job and determine who they would like to interview for the position.

Your application is the first impression your potential employer will have of you. It is extremely important to make sure your application stands out. The best way to do this is to ensure your application is clear, concise, and professional.

You may be wondering what to list in the "employment" or "previous employment" section of your job application, especially if you have been incarcerated for a long period of time. It is completely acceptable to list "The State of Oregon," "Oregon Corrections Enterprises," or the name of the specific prison you were in. List whichever jobs you had inside, as well as the duties, skills, and expertise that you gained from each position. It is recommended that you don't list your salary or wages, and instead write "will discuss at interview." This is suggested so that you are not underpaid, or paid for less than what your skill set is worth. You should also consider planning your answers to questions for why you moved between jobs or left certain positions you had inside. This could be because you became more focused on your education, were moved to a different institution (or lost your job outside of prison after being arrested), wanted to try working in a different type of field, you were offered better pay in a different position, or because the work hours were set to a specific brief amount of time.

As for application references, it is not recommended to list family members as references for a job. Instead, references should be: former/current teachers, employers who you had a positive professional relationship with, social workers, anyone who you have volunteered with or for, or even people from your religious institution.

Addressing Criminal History (Application)

In Oregon, most employers are not allowed to ask about prior felonies on applications. This is due to Oregon's Ban the Box efforts. While most places will not ask about criminal history on the initial application, some still do. If you see this question and want to continue your application, don't be intimidated. The best thing you can do is answer honestly. If you didn't tell the truth on the application, and get the job or an interview because of it, it's more likely than not that you would lose the interview or position once a criminal background check is completed. Even worse, if you get through the application and interview process entirely and the criminal background check is completed when you've already begun to work for your employer, you would probably be fired. This would just make your job hunt more challenging, so it's best to disclose that information if you're required to rather than risk more drastic measures being taken later. You won't get in trouble for saying that you do have a criminal record, but there would definitely be consequences if you lied about it.

With that being said, it's understandable why you'd be hesitant to disclose that information or want to hide that piece of information so that you have a better chance at getting the job. Studies have shown that getting a job post-incarceration is one of the most challenging parts about reentry, and that is undoubtedly true. But the best thing you can do is take full responsibility for your actions and explain that you have learned from the situation. It's still definitely worth noting that Oregon is a more progressive state in trying to mend this issue of employment discrimination and job insecurity amongst formerly incarcerated individuals because of their Ban the Box initiatives. Cities like Portland have even gone a step further, making it so that employers must wait until a conditional job offer has been made before making an inquiry about an applicant's criminal record.

Resume & Cover Letter

Building Your Resume:
A good resume and cover letter are crucial when looking for employment. Most employers will require both a resume and cover letter along with your application. This is a secondary way to thin the pool of applicants for employers. A good resume and cover letter will help your potential employer see if you will be a good fit for the job.

A resume is a one page document that focuses on your previous work history, your skills and abilities, and could include a brief section on your education level. Once you have created a resume, you can submit the same document to each employer. It's important to work on your resume as soon as possible, even if you're not sure what types of jobs you're looking to apply to. Making a strong resume takes time, and you don't want to feel rushed when you do need it. If you're not sure how to make a solid resume, there are plenty of online resources that you can use as examples. Some helpful sites include: indeed.com and glassdoor.com (search for how to make a resume once you arrive on the webpage). Additionally, there is a free online tool called canva.com, Canva is completely free, and has resume templates that are already pre-made with an existing format - all you have to do is type in your specific information into each column provided. It is simple to use and there is also a help section so that you can get any information you need while you are working on it. Additionally, you can contact your local Goodwill Store and ask if they can direct you to the nearest Goodwill Job Connection. Not only will they make a resume for you, they will also have a list of job leads for you.

Building a Cover Letter:
A cover letter is a letter you will write personally to each of your potential employers. While you can reuse the format of the cover letter, it is important to write a new letter with updated information for each job you apply to. This is because different employers are looking for different things, so you should be specific and intentional about what you're writing to each individual employer. The letter itself should be one page long. It should include information on who you are, why you are interested in the job you are applying for, your background, and things you feel are important about you, such as skills or reasons why you think you are a good fit for the job. A cover letter may also take some time so be sure you give yourself the ability to write them strongly. You can also search for cover letter examples online to get an idea of the formatting, but typically you want to write about how your strengths and skill set will be applicable and necessary for the job, why you want the job/are interested in the field, and of course any previous experience that you have that makes you a strong applicant. There will be a sample cover letter on page 73 of the guidebook. Finally, if you are able to, it would be very beneficial for you if a friend, relative, or someone who works in the industry you're interested in reads over your resume and cover letter to check for any errors and provide you with feedback.

The Interview

After submitting your application, resume, and cover letter you will have to wait to be contacted by your potential employer. After they review your information, they will determine if they feel you could be a good match for their available job. If they decide to interview you, they will reach out either by phone or email to let you know when your interview will be.

It is important to be patient while waiting to hear back from a potential employer about interviews. Sometimes it can take a week or more for an employer to review all the applications they received. It is also important to keep in mind that not every application you turn in will result in an interview. Unfortunately, for one reason or another, you will not always be the right fit for the jobs you are interested in. Due to this, it is important to keep applying to jobs until you have fully secured employment somewhere.

It is normal to be nervous for an interview, especially if it's your first one on the outside since being incarcerated. It's okay to be stressed and overwhelmed, but there are plenty of ways to combat your nerves and reduce your stress. Preparing for the interview ahead of time can be one of the best ways to achieve this. Having someone prep you for the interview is one way of doing this, if you tell a friend or relative a little about the position you have applied for, they should be able to ask you questions similar to what you may be asked in the interview. Additionally, getting all of your important information and resources put together before the interview will help you be organized and completely ready on the actual day of the interview. Below are some tips on what to consider.

What to Bring:

The last thing you want to do is forget an important piece of information or document that your employer would have wanted to see in the interview. Even though you have most likely already sent them a resume and cover letter, you should always bring extras of both. Sometimes you may be interviewed by multiple people, and they all may want a copy. You should also bring a copy of your application in case they want to review that with you as well. It's also important to remember your identification cards (social security, ID, drivers license, immigration documentation, etc.). Lastly, bring a notebook and pens for yourself so you're able to write down any information you may need to remember.

Interview Prep. Continued

When to Arrive:
It is a good idea to leave early for your interview. If you are walking, driving, taking public transportation or biking you should plan your route ahead of time and check to see how long it will take you to get there. It is best to arrive for an interview about 10 to 15 minutes early. This ensures you are on time, able to get to where you need to be, fill out any paperwork you might have before the interview, and prepare. By showing up a little early you show your potential employer you have good time management, are responsible, and that you're eager to meet them.

What to Wear:
Planning your outfit the night before an interview is a good way to ensure you have an appropriate outfit and everything is clean and looks presentable. You should attempt to pick an outfit that is professional and on the formal side. If you don't have any clothes that you feel are interview appropriate, you can go to thrift stores or even check websites online where you can buy nice clothing secondhand (Poshmark, Mercari, thredUP, etc.).

What Questions to Ask:
Usually at the end of an interview, the interviewer will ask if you have any questions for them. We suggest you prepare a few questions ahead of time to ask them. Doing this shows you are interested, engaged, and came prepared. Some good questions include: What characteristics and abilities does a successful employee here generally have? What would I most likely be working on in my first few weeks here? What recommendations do you have for pursuing professional development and advancement at this company? What's the biggest challenge you've had working here? What are the next steps in this process, and when can I expect to hear from you?

These questions and others that you may find useful to prepare in advance (or think of during the interview) will show your engagement, curiosity, and enthusiasm for the potential work opportunity. All of those things will serve you well in an interview.

Addressing Criminal History (Interview)

Addressing your criminal record during an interview can be a difficult conversation to have. If you are asked about your criminal record it is best to be honest and forthcoming. In this section, there are some tips and suggestions provided on how to ease the conversation.

Comforting the Employer:
If your offense did not occur on the job or was not work related, that would be an important piece of information to provide. If your offense did occur during the job or in your place of work, it may be best to reach out to an employment counselor to help you develop a strong interview strategy on how to best address this. All Star Labor & Staffing in Salem, OR specifically works with people who were formerly incarcerated.

Owning It:
If you acknowledge that you made a mistake in your past, and express remorse, it will come across much better than justifications or over explanations. It's important to bring up what you've learned and changed since the time of your offense. This could be an opportunity to bring up programs you enrolled in while incarcerated, whether they be rehabilitative, educational, or both.

How to Keep it Positive:
Continuing on from discussing programs you completed on the inside, it's important to express continuation of those interests and activities now that you're free as well. Whether that be art, volunteer or community-based work, activism, etc., all of that is helpful information that shows that you've made changes in your life. You should also express your career goals and why you're interested in certain professional pursuits.

Encourage the Employer:
Solidifying that you're a hard worker, that you want the job, and need an opportunity to show your skills to an employer are all important things to add during this discussion at an interview.

Addressing Criminal History (Interview) Continued

Saying Enough:
It can be difficult to draw the line between saying enough and saying too much when talking about your criminal history. When you are talking about your criminal history there is a fine line between being honest and upfront with your criminal history and not talking too much about it. It is appropriate and necessary to disclose your record especially if they already have done a criminal background search on you. However, it is not appropriate to talk about the details regarding the crime, your time in prison, or anything outside of professional conversation. If you are doubting whether or not something is appropriate to talk about with a potential employer, it's most likely best to error on the side of caution and refrain from discussing it at all.

Conclusion:
Hopefully this section has provided useful information to you on how to best search and secure employment once you're released. It is definitely overwhelming, so try to celebrate the little accomplishments (completing your resume, purchasing. an interview outfit, etc.) and don't let yourself get discouraged. The next few pages will have example documents so you can see them clearly laid out, but don't forget about the websites and resources discussed in previous pages in case you need or want more references and examples.

Example Resumes

First Lastname

Construction Worker
Seattle, WA
firstlast@email.com
555-555-5555

Effective at using forklift's, hand trucks and pallet jacks to move merchandise. Skilled at inspecting stock, tagging product and updating computer tracking systems. Well-versed in warehouse operations, inventory audits and loading and unloading procedures.

Eligible to work for any employer in the U.S.

Work Experience

Construction Worker
NewCompany
January 2018 to Present

Unpacked and assembled all new merchandise using variety of power tools and lean manufacturing. Heavy Lifting. Measuring. Organize Building Materials. Read and Interpret Drawings. Safety. Supported technicians in equipment maintenance and repair. Organized Warehouse Operations.

Crew Lead
CompanyCo, Inc
July 2017 to December 2017

Trained employees so that they were well-educated in time management and the proper ways to complete their job duties. Utilized all machinery and equipment while observing various safety precautions and practices. Ensured that job tasks were completed to standards and in accordance with company guidelines. Maintained the job site on a daily basis and checked to see that all trash and refuse was removed. Completed daily forklift safety checklists. Located proper slots on storage racks and set pallets in place with forklift and pallet jack.

Education

High school or equivalent
Ged Program - NewCity, NC
April 2015 to February 2016

Skills

Lean Manufacturing - 1 year
Pallet Jack - 2 years
Packing - 1 year
Construction Labor - 2 years

F

FIRST LASTNAME

Construction Worker

Seattle, WA - 555-555-5555 - firstlast@email.com

Effective at using forklift's, hand trucks and pallet jacks to move merchandise. Skilled at inspecting stock, tagging product and updating computer tracking systems. Well-versed in warehouse operations, inventory audits and loading and unloading procedures.

Eligible to work for any employer in the U.S.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Construction Worker

NewCompany
January 2018 to Present

Unpacked and assembled all new merchandise using variety of power tools and lean manufacturing. Heavy Lifting. Measuring. Organize Building Materials. Read and Interpret Drawings. Safety. Supported technicians in equipment maintenance and repair. Organized Warehouse Operations.

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EDUCATION

High school or equivalent

Ged Program - NewCity, NC
April 2015 to February 2016

SKILLS

Lean Manufacturing - 1 year

Pallet Jack - 2 years

Example Cover Letter

123 Main Street, Anytown, CA 12345 · 555-212-1234 · josephq@email.com

August 17, 2020

Jane Smith
Director, Human Resources
Acme Company
123 Business Rd.
Business City, CA 54321

Dear Ms. Smith,

I am interested in the author's assistant position at Acme Company, as advertised on LinkedIn. I am currently employed as legislative director for Assemblywoman Nora Kiel, Chairperson of the NYS Assembly. I believe that the skills and experiences I have gained at this position make me an ideal candidate for the job of author's assistant.

As legislative director, I have developed strong writing and editing skills. For example, one of my main duties is to prepare Assemblywoman Nora Kiel's personal legislation, which deals with issues related to her position as Senior Member of the NYS Assembly Standing Committee.

This duty requires meticulous writing and editing skills, and an ability to convey complex legal ideas clearly. I have prepared dozens of pieces of legislation and received praise for the clarity of my writing.

I have also gained extensive experience in legal and policy research – fields that you state the author's assistant must be familiar with. My experience in the NYS Assembly has afforded me the opportunity to become familiar with the consolidated and unconsolidated laws of the State of New York. In particular, through my work with Assemblywoman Nora Kiel, I have become heavily involved in the current welfare and Medicaid reform movement. I am always eager to learn more about state legislation, reading up on these topics on my own time to become more knowledgeable. I would love to bring this passion for policy and law to your company.

I am confident that my experience in the Legislature and my research and writing skills qualify me for consideration. If you would like, I can provide you with current samples of my work. I have also enclosed my resume. I look forward to meeting with you and discussing my qualifications in more detail.

Sincerely,

Joseph Q. Applicant (signature hard copy letter)

Housing

Finding a home can be one of the most exciting as well as one of the most challenging parts of reentry. It's definitely one of the most important things to work on, as you'll want to create a stable living environment for yourself. This is another one of the many aspects of reentry that can feel overwhelming since housing can be costly and difficult to find. Hopefully it will become more clear what options are available to you throughout this section.

Throughout the next pages the following will be discussed: multiple housing options, leasing/renting, breaking your lease, and what to do if you're facing housing discrimination.

Housing Options:
As you start your reentry process, finding safe, stable, and affordable housing is crucial. With so many different housing options it can be hard to choose what is right for you. To help you decide what type of housing would suit you, there is a list of various housing options here in Oregon below.

Transitional Housing:
Transitional housing is a great option for anyone who is looking for somewhere to stay while they sort out long term housing plans, find a job, or just get back on their feet. Often times, transitional housing will be referred to as a "halfway house", so if you are hearing about options for halfway houses from family, friends, or online resources they are talking about transitional housing. There can be a lot of benefits of choosing to go into transitional housing out of prison. There are also some transitional homes that may be more specifically catered to your needs, such as transitional homes that focus on addiction support or even life skills training and employment help.

Housing Options

Transitional Housing Continued:
If you decide transitional housing sounds right for you we suggest you evaluate what type of transitional housing you would most benefit from, in terms of programs available. Once you know what you are looking to get out of a transitional housing situation you can look at some websites to find options near you. Some websites we suggest looking at to find the best transitional housing option for you are: 211info.org transitionalhousing.org/state/oregon or hudexchange.info/housing-and-homeless-assistance/.

Emergency Shelters:
Emergency shelters can be a good option for anyone who is experiencing housing instability. Maybe your housing plans fell through, or you realized you couldn't afford to rent and need to figure things out. Maybe you're looking for a place to stay for a bit before you can move somewhere else, or you're just unable to find adequate housing. If any of these situations apply to you, it's worth looking into staying at an emergency shelter. Luckily, there are many emergency shelters in Oregon. Some shelters may be for specific groups of people, like women and children who are victims of domestic abuse, additionally, some shelters may not allow people in who have sex offenses or other violent records. To find a shelter that's accessible for you and close by, you can go to this website: homelessshelterdirectory.org/oregon.html - this website should be able to help you find a shelter in your city.

Stigma Around Shelters & Transitional Housing:
There is definitely an unfortunate social stigma around having to live in a shelter or halfway house, but please understand that there is nothing wrong with seeking this out while you get back on your feet. It is better to have somewhere safe to stay than to not have any shelter. If there are multiple shelters or halfway homes in your location, maybe check out a few and choose whichever feels like the best fit. If you're able to get a job, shelters or halfway houses can be an even better resource for you while you save up some money so that you're able to get your own place.

Housing Options Continued

Subsidized and Affordable Housing:
Subsidized and affordable housing is a good option for those who are ready for a more stable living situation than a shelter or halfway home, but are not in a place where it is an option to rent or buy your own place. Subsidized housing usually works by automatically taking a certain fixed percentage from your paycheck every month. This is a great option to have so that you have the opportunity to live on your own, but there are usually many people looking for subsidized housing. Because of this it's important to do what you can to look for subsidized and affordable housing as soon as possible.

If you think that subsidized or affordable housing could be a good choice for you, you should get more information at hud.gov/states/oregon/renting, oregon.gov/ohcs/housing-assistance/pages/find-affordable-housing.aspx, or lowincomehousing.us/OR.html. These websites should all provide you with different information on subsidized housing in Oregon.

Restrictions on Subsidized Housing:
While the option of subsidized or affordable housing is worth considering, like many of these options there are pros and cons. The biggest thing to keep in mind when deciding if subsidized housing is right for you is the restrictions The Department of Housing and Urban Development has for individuals with a criminal record. They may deny access to subsidized housing if you have a lifetime sex-offender status, have a conviction for producing methamphetamines, felony convictions, violent offenses, and other offenses related to the production of drugs. Background checks are conducted and there's no guarantee of a denial or of an acceptance. They're allowed to deny subsidized housing funds to anyone for any of these reasons. While restrictions exist, it's still worth trying since there's no way of knowing for sure whether or not you'll get subsidized housing unless you try. Try not to be discouraged by these restrictions since many factors play in to whether or not you'll be given access to subsidized housing.

Housing Options Continued

Moving Away:
Moving away is another option worth considering as you try to find the best housing option for you. There are many benefits from moving elsewhere after release, but it is also really difficult to plan to move as you begin the reentry process. If you think moving away is the best housing choice for you, there is a lot to consider and plan for.

Many people who are released from prison return to the same home environment with the same set of circumstances that may have led to their initial incarceration. These factors proved to be detrimental to their behavior prior to incarceration, and having to navigate them during a hard reentry transition is a very likely contributor to the high levels of recidivism we see in our nation. Due to this, for many people who might be worried about having to be in the same potentially harmful community, moving away is a good option. It's been shown that a change of residency can lead to a reduction in recidivism rates.

If you feel moving away is the right option for you, we suggest you start with making a plan. Look into affordable housing options in the cities near you. Find out what employment options exist there. Try to save up money for any expenses you might have. Consider transportation, do you have a car or will you need to find public transportation? All of these things will help you in determining your options to move away.

Housing Options Continued

Private Housing:
If you are in a position where you are ready and able to consider private housing, there are a lot of different options for you across the state of Oregon. Private housing, like all the other types of housing we have discussed so far, has pros and cons. One pro to private housing is it is typically easier to find private housing when compared to subsidized housing. There are a lot of different private housing options in every city to look at and consider. The major con to private housing is it is often the most expensive housing option. Due to this, it is important to make sure you are financially ready and able to move into a private housing option.

If you decide private housing is right for you there are many different online sources you can turn to in order to find the right fit for you. Some websites worth looking at are: zillow.com, apartments.com, forrent.com, redfin.com, and salem.craigslist.org. If you do not have access to online resources you can also look in the classified section of your local newspaper, or walk, drive, or bike around town looking for "for rent" signs.

You may face difficulties finding private housing because of your criminal record which may make it challenging to find a landlord willing to rent to you. Some property management companies conduct background checks so it's worth looking at smaller complexes or private homes. If you know anyone on the outside who was formerly incarcerated, they would be incredibly useful sources of information on how to find private housing. It's also worth getting help from any friends or family as well.

Lastly, if you have a sex offense, you're not allowed to live 500 feet within any area that serves children. Please keep this in mind when looking for private housing options.

Housing Options Continued

Leasing or Renting:
After you have done adequate research on renting and leasing a home, you can begin contacting landlords to view different places and discuss lease agreements. If the landlord or apartment manager gets back to you about a time to meet up, make sure you arrive on time, dressed appropriately, and bring any relevant materials you might need. It is important to make a good first impression and by doing these things you will show you are responsible and care about hearing more about their property.

It's important for your financial safety that you don't pay anyone before you see the place you are looking to rent in person, and are probably beginning to fill out paperwork. Paperwork to fill out could include a rental application which sometimes have fees. Be sure to fill it out correctly and answer any questions honestly. Applications typically cover information like: social security number, your current employer, current address, and rent history. You may also be asked for references and can use the same references listed on your job application. Additionally, it's recommended to answer questions on your criminal background honestly to potentially save time on the background check. It won't automatically disqualify you, and it's always better to be forthcoming than to have them find out on their own. It's better to hear it from you directly alongside the work you're doing now to lead a better life. A final tip on the process of hunting for a place to rent is to be nice to landlords/apartment managers/etc. even if they're not offering you the place right then and there. They may offer it to someone else who cancels and choose to ask if you're still interested later on.

If you are able to find a home in your budget and sign for the apartment/house, great! Leases are typically a year long and your rent is set at a consistent price per month for that year. Rental agreements differ because they are usually a month to month payment arrangement, every 30 days either you or the landlord are allowed to back out of this arrangement.

Housing Options Continued

Leasing or Renting Continued:
It's important to thoroughly go through your leasing or renting agreement to ensure you can uphold your end of the bargain, these are legally binding agreements. You should hang on to a copy of any and all important documents related to your lease or rental agreement. You may be required to pay a downpayment as well as the first month's rent when you begin to move in, oftentimes along with a security deposit. Security deposits are meant to insure you for any natural wear and tear over the time that you live on this property. Leftover money from this deposit is typically mailed to you.

Breaking Your Lease:
If for some reason your plans change and you find yourself needing to move out before your agreed upon lease ends, there are options to end your lease. You are not stuck until the lease ends, however, you will likely be responsible for paying a fee for breaking the lease. The amount of the fee can usually be found on the lease agreement, but if it is not, it is a good idea to talk to your landlord and figure out what that amount is. In some cases it might even be continuing to pay rent until the space is filled, so it's best to find out what the fee is and come up with a plan for how to pay it even if you do not end up needing to break your lease.

What To Do if You Face Housing Discrimination:
Unfortunately, many people face housing discrimination. Due to this, The Department of Housing and Urban Development took action to help prevent housing discrimination for people with criminal records. It is important to know and understand your rights so you do not get unlawfully discriminated against. New guidelines state that landlords have to prove that they are reasonably protecting other tenants or their property from someone wanting to move into that property, rather than being able to turn someone down with a criminal background upfront. It is also illegal to discriminate on the basis of age, color, religion, sex, national origin, and disability.

Education

Education is one of the biggest factors that lowers recidivism rates. With a good education, individuals are more likely to secure jobs when released from prison, leading them to be much less likely to reoffend. Education is one of the most important things a person can have, as it enriches the mind and can teach many important skills.

Research shows that individuals who have participated in educational programs are 3.7 times less likely to reoffend than those who have not. The number one predictor of post-release employment is completion of education programs, and this is important because the number one predictor for not returning to prison is employment.

Every class you take or program you participate in is beneficial. Even if you are not getting a college degree, taking college classes is important because you can always learn something from a class, and you can put any class you take on a resume – even ones that are not college courses. Additionally, if you're taking class credits from universities or local community colleges close to your release, those classes may be able to count towards some educational certificate later.

This section will cover information on educational opportunities while incarcerated as well as how to seek out higher education and job training programs once you're released. How to pay for school and financial aid will also be discussed since that's typically one of the largest barriers in pursuing a degree.

Educational Opportunities Available While Incarcerated

There are numerous educational opportunities for adults in custody, ranging from General Education Development to vocational training. Education is an extremely important resource to utilize while in custody to prepare for release, and any class you take or program you are involved in can be put on a resume, even if it doesn't end up going towards a degree. Below is more information on different types of programs available inside.

General Education Development:
This program is available to adults in custody who have not yet received a high school degree. It allows them to earn their GED certificate. AICs will take five exams that demonstrate skills in writing, social studies, science, literature, and math. Upon successfully completing these exams, individuals will earn their GED certificate.

College Courses:
College courses are available at specific facilities where the Second Chance Pell Grant is offered. These courses are offered by community colleges with whom DOC is partnered, such as Chemeketa Community College, which offers courses at OSP. At Second Chance Pell sites, adults in custody can apply for Pell Grants and take classes. At facilities that do not offer Pell Grants, interested individuals can still take courses by paying for them themselves. The Second Chance Act provides grants to governments and organizations working to reduce recidivism rates and improve the reentry process. At DOC, this includes providing Pell Grants to community colleges that DOC has partnered with to provide educational programs to incarcerated individuals. Even if you do not earn a degree, taking college courses can be extremely beneficial, and any class you take can be put on a resume. It is important to take advantage of the opportunities provided to you: take as many classes as you can and participate in as many programs as possible. Any class you take you can apply to your own situation and can end up benefiting you.

Educational Opportunities Available While Incarcerated

Job Training & Apprenticeships:
Job training and apprenticeship programs provide individuals with unique skill sets for particular jobs. They can be used to gauge interest in a specific field or to develop skills to enter into a field upon release. Different facilities across Oregon offer different programs, all of which are provided by the DOC's partnership with a number of community colleges across the state. Many programs offer participants the opportunity to be paid for their work, providing AICs with the opportunity to learn and be paid at the same time.

Job Training & Apprenticeships Offered by DOC:

- Automotive Technologies
- Construction Technology
- Cosmetology
- Optical Training
- Welding
- Cabinet Making
- Custodial
- Heating, Ventilating, and Air Conditioning (HVAC)
- Limited Energy Technician
- Painting
- Structure Welding
- Sheet Metal Fabrication

Education After Release:
Most educational opportunities for formerly incarcerated individuals are through higher education. There are different options for those who choose to pursue higher education after release. While a college degree is not necessary to secure employment, furthering your education is always encouraged and can make it easier to find a job.

Different Types of Colleges:
There are three main types of colleges that offer different programs and each have their pros and cons. Those three types are community colleges, public universities, and not-for-profit private universities. All three will be discussed on the next page if you want to learn more about which may be best for you.

Different Types of Higher-Ed Programs

Community College:
For most individuals who haven't been in school for a while, the path towards a degree starts at community college. Community colleges offer a variety of classes and can be a step along the way to a four-year degree. If a four-year degree is not for you or if you only need certifications or an associate's degree, community college is definitely the best choice for that as well. Community colleges typically have the lowest tuition rates among all types of higher education, and Oregon offers a special grant that is available to individuals who completed their GED while incarcerated. This grant will be touched on more in the Financing Your Education section.

Public University:
Public universities offer four-year programs and have basic entry requirements for individuals with a high school diploma or a GED. Public universities also offer in-state tuition, which is a lower tuition rate for individuals who are residents of the state the college is in. Bachelor's degrees are offered at public universities, and there may also be graduate degrees available depending on the institution.

Private University:
Private universities offer four-year programs with entrance requirements that are typically stricter than those of public universities. Tuition rates are typically the highest of the three types of colleges, but they can also usually provide more generous financial aid packages. Bachelor's degrees are offered at private universities, and there may also be graduate degrees available depending on the institution.

As a warning, it's important to stay away from for profit universities. If you're unsure if a school is a for profit, you can search it online to quickly find out if it's a for profit university. Many for profit universities seem appealing because their programs are online, but it is incredibly difficult for students at these universities to ever pay off the cost of tuition at these schools.

Applying to College

Step 1: Start the Application
Most college applications are online, you would go to a college or university's website directly to access their application. Once you open that school's specific application, it will become clear what information you may need to fill out. Basic information on you is typically required, as well as educational history, work history, resume, test score information (see below), and essays are all often pieces of college applications. You can call a school or email their admissions office directly for questions on the application. Remember, it is okay to ask them for help. The schools want your application and multiple candidates, admissions recruiters are typically very nice and eager to help. They're used to speaking to people who are unfamiliar with the process - that's their job. Most of your questions or concerns are probably nothing they haven't heard before.

Step 2: Gather Your Information
The information needed is essentially what's described below. For more specific information on identifying pieces of the application, typically a social security card. ID or driver's license, and things of that nature will be required. Applications may ask about your criminal history and details on it in the application. Don't be discouraged - in most applications, there is space to explain in detail more about the conviction. A good rule of thumb for applying to college is that it's better to provide information where you can, so if that is available to you, provide some background and try to ease the person reading the application.

Step 3: Submit the Application
Once you have filled out all the necessary questions, you can submit the application. Public and private universities typically take months to email and/or mail you an acceptance letter, whereas community colleges will get back to you sooner. Some may give you a rough estimate of when they will send out acceptance information.

Applying to College

Admissions Test:
Some colleges require admissions tests to evaluate a student's ability to do college-level work. Admissions tests scores are also required to be eligible for some scholarships. The most common admissions tests are the SAT and the ACT, which both include sections that test reading, English, and math abilities, while the ACT has an additional science section. Both tests also have a writing section.

Test-Optional Colleges:
Many colleges and universities in Oregon are test-optional. This means individuals are not required to send scores from admissions tests and are not penalized during the application process for this decision. For many individuals, test-optional admissions may be a good option, especially if you have not been able to study for an admissions test. Some schools do require other information, such as submitting an essay, if you choose not to submit test scores.

Admissions Test Requirements at Oregon Colleges

Find the full list and more helpful information at oregongoestocollege.org

No Test Required

- All Oregon community colleges
- Most private career or trade schools

Test Optional

- Oregon State University
- University of Oregon
- Willamette University
- Eastern Oregon University
- Southern Oregon University

Test (Usually) Optional

- Corban University
- Pacific University
- Reed College
- University of Portland
- Warner Pacific University

Paying For College

Financing Your Education:
One of the biggest barriers to furthering your education is cost. It is important to know that there are many options available for financing your education, and anyone can use one or more of these options. If you want to go to college, community college is an inexpensive way to start, and these different types of funding can give you a number of ways to be able to pay for additional schooling.

FAFSA:
The FAFSA, or Free Application for Federal Student Aid is where every student should start when looking for ways to finance their education. Every school requires that a FAFSA be filled out, and you can fill one out between January 1st of the year you will be enrolled and June 30th of that school year. Some colleges have more strict deadlines for filling out the FAFSA, so it is important to know the deadlines for the school you hope to attend.

You can find the FAFSA online at **www.fafsa.org**

Loans:
Loans are a type of financial aid that you must pay back. Federal loans are better than private loans, as they typically have lower interest rates and more flexible repayment options. Borrow responsibly; only accept what you need and make sure you have a plan for how you are going to pay it back. You will leave college with an obligation to repay any money you have borrowed, so making a plan for how to pay back your loan is crucial as it will affect your future financial decisions.

Grants:
Grants are a type of financial aid that you do *not* have to pay back. This money comes from the federal or state government, and eligibility is usually based on financial aid.

Paying For College

Grants Continued:
Oregon offers two large grants: the Oregon Opportunity Grant and the Oregon Promise Grant. The Oregon Opportunity Grant is a state-funded need-based program which provides financial aid to students with financial need. The Oregon Promise Grant is a grant which helps cover tuition costs for community colleges. For those who completed their GED while incarcerated, the grant is available to individuals who intend to attend community college within six months of their release.

Scholarships:
There are many different scholarships available. Many private organizations offer scholarships to students they believe reflect their mission. This includes individuals such as African-American students or women who want to work in STEM. Essentially, there is a scholarship out there for everything. OSAC, or Office of Student Access and Completion, is an Oregon-specific database compiling over 500 different scholarships for students to apply for. It also provides applications for the Oregon Promise and Oregon Opportunity grants, as well as help filing a FAFSA.

Here is the link to OSAC to find out more about applying to scholarships and other financial aid: **https://oregonstudentaid.gov**

Work Study:
Another option to look into is work study. Work study is for people already enrolled in college. It is when a student works for their college and they have a variety of options for jobs and positions. You can keep the money to pay for personal costs (food, cost of living, etc.) or choose to put it directly towards tuition. You will be notified by FAFSA if you quality for work study, if you're unsure of whether or not you qualify you can also ask the financial aid office on your campus.

Getting Important Documents & Identification

Driver's License and Identification:
This website link will take you to the Oregon DMV website: https://www.oregon.gov/odot/dmv/pages/driverid/licenseget.aspx. Here you can access information on how to get your driver's license and different ID cards you may need. Recently Real ID has been required for traveling on planes, and you can pay a fee to make your driver's license a Real ID so that you don't have to purchase and worry about carrying a separate ID card. If you don't have or want a driver's license, you can just get a Real ID card at the DMV. You should also schedule an appointment in advance with the DMV to avoid waiting in long lines in person. You can call ahead or schedule an appointment online.

Birth Certificate:
This website link will take you to how to get your birth certificate in Oregon: https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/BIRTHDEATHCERTIFICATES/GETVITALRECORDS/Pages/index.aspx. They can even mail it to you directly.

Social Security Card:
If for some reason you can't get your social security card back or need a replacement, you can go to this website link to get a new social security card: https://www.ssa.gov/myaccount/replacement-card.html

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