

## July NEWS: Midsummer Edition

Hello Fair Shake readers!

It's been a hot summer, eh? Hottest on record, I've heard. All I know is it is a lot harder to focus and to accomplish tasks when I'm hot. My heart goes out to folks who grow and gather our food, fix and build our homes, streets, bridges and buildings, and everyone who must muster super-human strength to get through each day working outdoors.

Thank you generous, humorous (you know who you are!) and dedicated donors who keep Fair Shake up and running. You help me send 120 envelopes each month, filled with 1 oz. of FS documents, to our brothers and sisters in state prisons around the country who do not have access to email. YOU, awesome donors, are founders in building our "pro-social" safety net! Thank you!!! Ubuntu!!!

First Step Act Roll Out:

As usual, lots of news stories, but no details...except that about 900 First Step Act beneficiaries are transferring to detention centers. (not the 'reform' that FSA supporters were envisioning) I'm looking forward to hearing how the algorithms work out for everyone. Of course that's always a secret, so we only get to know what the result is, not the process.

As reported on NPR:

More than 3,100 people will leave Bureau of Prisons custody starting Friday, most of them have been living in halfway houses across the United States in preparation for their release, acting BOP chief Hugh Hurwitz told reporters at a news conference in Washington. About 900 of the inmates are subject to detention by immigration officials. And 250 more inmates who are elderly or terminally ill have transitioned into home confinement or compassionate-release programs.

Authorities unveiled a new risk assessment tool designed to identify prisoners who could benefit from prison programming that would allow them to win credits that count toward early release under the law. The Justice Department enlisted the Hudson Institute to assist with the assessment effort. Inmates will be reassessed every six months under that new program.

As reported on the BOP: On July 19, 2019, Dep. Atty Gen. (DAG) Jeffrey A. Rosen announced the release of the AG's Risk and Needs Assessment System report which encourages the use of evidence-based programming. By relying on assessments which identify the risk factors and criminogenic needs of all federal prisoners "to place prisoners in programs and activities to address their needs." Under the act, the system is required to provide the type, amount, and intensity of programming to which each prisoner is assigned, including information on which programs prisoners should participate in based on their criminogenic needs. Inmates earn incentives such as time credits for completion of programs.

And now, just when the public is starting to think the Trump Administration - with its Celebrity First Step Act Circus - is becoming smart on reform, the news today is that AG Barr and the BOP plan to compete with Texas for executing the highest number of people per month....after 16 years

without an execution. This is very sudden news. They plan to execute 3 men in December and 2 men in January. The last federal execution was in 2003. Many citizens are appalled.

Final BOP news: Bernie Madoff (pronounced "Made Off"...as in "Made off with your money.") has requested clemency.

### Correspondence Course Info Request

I recently received a letter from an incarcerated man in an Indiana Penitentiary who asked "Do you know any correspondence course within the \$100-\$500 range that is still based in something that will be transferable? I had the chance to do a Restorative Justice class and it was humbling and inspiring. I want to do something in that area because it is sorely needed to close the prison cycle of hate and violence."

I hope you can help me help him. The only correspondence courses I know about are available from Adams State University. I'm looking forward to hearing from you! I will do three things with the information you share. I will:

- \* Send them to the person who made the request
- \* Add them to Fair Shake's education resource database
- \* Send the compiled list out to all of you! Ubuntu!

(On a side note: a FS news subscriber shared a deep and beautiful personal Restorative Justice (RJ) story with me recently. Since I first heard of it, RJ has been an important idea in my mind, but once the deep and complex human story hit my heart, I felt a huge wave of both pain and possibility in one difficult yet captivating emotion. I'm very grateful to have this deeper understanding. I will add it to my 'reasons to remain very positive and upbeat' in dealing with all people, because we never know the struggles or the courage the person we meet has endured. I am reminded of the quote: "Be kind; everyone you meet is carrying a heavy burden" – John Watson.

CONTRIBUTION: Coaches Corner w/Team W.I.N.: What are your "STRENGTHS"?

How many of you struggle with your day to day jobs or hate the line of work you are in? How many people would rather be doing something you love and something you are great at? Something that would automatically afford you job retention, employer satisfaction, and self-fulfillment. What is that thing you would love to be doing? What is your signature strength? A signature strength is something you can do better than 10,000 people. For instance, can you converse across multiple cultures, can you write/type better than average, are you a team player that loves to fulfill your role, or can you get a persuasive message across by public speaking? No matter what your strength is, utilize it to your best benefit. We all have the ability to provide a service and that specific service is needed. You just have to find yours. I would like to reframe any negative connotation that anyone may have placed upon you, by not liking something you do. If you are always on the go and moving around a lot, you are not antsy- you are a multi-tasker that has the ability to focus on more than one task. Have you been told that you do too much and should scale it back? You are an achiever that takes initiative. Take a look at yourself and give some thought on who and what you are and OWN it. Give yourself an affirmation. "I AM A GREAT \_\_\_\_\_"

Tell this to yourself all throughout the day, every day. We always start from a place of strength and focus on our best qualities. By doing this, we are strong in every area.

So ask yourself:

What am I great at?

What do I love to do?

How can I best utilize these things?

What's next for me?

Always focus on your strengths. Until Next Time, Team W.I.N. Good Luck

## National Higher Education in Prisons Conference News

Fair Shake, a group of released Coaches, and the dynamo who created the term Freedom Potential Factors (and his colleagues, the Breaking Free Poets) banded together to create a 'panel discussion' which was accepted at the NCHEP conference. Our claim? When we talk about 'what works' for reentry success, the concept of 'recidivism reduction' is at the very heart of what is not working. For instance: whose definition of recidivism? How does the idea of 'likelihood of risk' (according to stats on other people, based in the past) apply to a person who is intentional and eager today? And is 'not going back' all we want to know? After all, a person could be living under a bridge and not going back, but is that reentry success? In the next newsletter I will ask for your responses to specific questions about 'what works'. What should we seek, focus on, build? After all, you're the experts, you know the challenges. What tools and information do you think people need to have to demonstrate a desire to engage and grow in society? What we focus on grows. Mandela Day!

July 18<sup>th</sup> marked the 10<sup>th</sup> annual celebration of Nelson Mandela's birthday. The day was created by the United Nations on his 91<sup>st</sup> birthday. He celebrated the day in his honor 3 more times until his passing at age 95 on Dec. 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013. He served 27 years.

I also missed the opportunity to inform you about the passing of Johnny Clegg. The far-reaching So. African musician died on July 16<sup>th</sup>. He wrote the popular Afro-pop anti-apartheid song "Asimbonanga" (1987), to honor Mandela when he was imprisoned on Robben Island, and to commemorate the loss of other leaders in the anti-apartheid movement.

Quotes from Nelson Mandela:

*"Do not judge me by my successes, judge me by how many times I fell down and got back up again."*

*"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."*

*"Resentment is like drinking poison and then hoping it will kill your enemies."*

*"When people are determined they can overcome anything."*

Sorry no book review this month! I'm reading a 692 page book called "The Age of Surveillance Capitalism: The Fight for a Human Future at the New Frontier of Power" by Shoshana Zuboff. More on that in the next issue. Yes...it is about AI, Algorithms, and web-based concerns from ubiquitous monitoring to mass behavior modification, and the data harvesters and resellers: Facebook, Google and Youtube...and their combined threat to our autonomy and democracy.

For those of you who have been wondering why I haven't shared racing news this year, it's because the track disqualified my car. (The rule book says "CRX" explicitly! I have not been able to find a new house for my engine/transmission yet but am planning to work on that over the winter to be ready for 2020! Thanks for your support and encouragement!!

Thanks for reading everyone, a special thanks to the Coach who said I'm not antsy, I'm a 'multi-tasker', and a huge thank you to the incarcerated donors who make this newsletter possible.

We are strengthening the 'pro-social' safety net and building reform inside...inside our hearts and inside all of our relationships.

To our successful transitions!  
Ubuntu, ~ sue

Fair Shake  
PO Box 63  
Westby, WI 54667

As always, remember to look up free support in your phone-gizmo:  
2-1-1  
Fairshake.net  
Rzero.org  
And HelpYourselfTherapy.com

DOC

As always, I must thank the generous, humorous (you know who you are!) and dedicated donors who keep Fair Shake up and running. If it wasn't for you, I would not be able to send a newsletter to Wisconsin readers! As it is, it looks like things will change in September. I understand my expenses will double so I will be looking at about \$140 each month. The donations cover 1/3 of that. I'm hoping this information will incentivize readers! One thing that will change when that

happens, is I will only be able to communicate with folks who can contribute to the cost of our conversations. As for the newsletter, I will commit to keeping it going until the end of the year and then I will figure out plan B.

## Request for Educational Support

I recently received a letter from an incarcerated man in an Indiana Penitentiary who asked “Do you know any correspondence courses within the \$100-\$500 range that is still based in something that will be transferable? I had the chance to do a Restorative Justice class and it was humbling and inspiring. I want to do something in that area because it is sorely needed to close the prison cycle of hate and violence.”

(On a side note: a FS news subscriber shared a deep and beautiful Restorative Justice story with me recently. It has been an important idea in my mind, but once the deeply (and only!) human story hit my heart I felt a huge wave of both pain and possibility in one difficult yet captivating feeling. A feeling that will always be with me when I look at others and try to remember the quote “Be kind; everyone you meet is carrying a heavy burden” – John Watson. I confess, however, that I find it easier to see this in people that are not ‘family’...)

PLUS:

Coaches Corner w/Team W.I.N.: What are your "STRENGTHS"?

How many of you struggle with your day to day jobs or hate the line of work you are in? How many people would rather be doing something you love and something you are great at? That would automatically afford you job retention, employer satisfaction, and self fulfillment. What is that thing you would love to be doing? What is your signature strength? A signature strength is something you can do better than 10,000 people. For instance, can you converse across multiple cultures, can you write/type better than average, are you a team player that loves to fulfill your role, or can you get a persuasive message across by public speaking? No matter what your strength is, utilize it to your best benefit. We all have the ability to provide a service and that specific service is needed. You just have to find yours. I would like to reframe any negative connotation that anyone may have placed upon you, by not liking something you do. If you are always on the go and moving around alot, you are not antsy- you are a multi-tasker that has the ability to focus on more than one task. Have you been told that you do too much and should scale it back? You are an achiever that takes initiative. Take a look at yourself and give some thought on who and what you are and OWN it. Give yourself an affirmation. "I AM A GREAT \_\_\_\_\_"  
Tell this to yourself all throughout the day, everyday. We always start from a place of strength and focus on our best qualities. By doing this, we are strong in every area.

So ask yourself:  
What am I great at?

What do I love to do?  
How can I best utilize these things?  
What's next for me?

Always focus on your strengths.

Until Next Time,  
Team W.I.N.

Good Luck

Releasing to Milwaukee?

Three things you might want to consider:

FREE Former Offender Pipeline to Employment Seminar:

“A program that helps those reentering with job readiness, skills assessment, better decision-making and financial literacy.” Call: 414-445-2005

Location: the Job Center of Wisconsin 4201 N. 27th Street Ste 602 Milwaukee, WI

Home To Stay Resource Fair – 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of every month 11 am – 2 pm

Information available on the Milwaukee Justice Council website:

<https://www.milwaukee.gov/EN/MCJC/hometostay>

Job Posting:

The RITUS Corporation (multiple locations) is hiring press operators and bench inspectors for \$10 per hour. Call 414-586-3535.

## Bullshit detector!!!

Sagan

Postman

Fake everything (your values, 'consider the source')

## THE POWER OF SELF-IMPROVEMENT

by Susan Fowler (Excerpt from an article in the NY Times in May)

Inspired by Benjamin Franklin, who methodically tracked his own development of 13 virtues (including sincerity, justice and humility), I sat down every day and asked myself if I had been good, if I had been truthful, if I had been kind, if I had been compassionate. I fell short almost every time. But something remarkable happened during those moments of self-reflection. Each time I held myself accountable for being compassionate, or slow to anger, or more generous, I managed to take a small part of myself out of the hands of others and put it back under my control. I learned then that even when I felt powerless to control my job or education — or anything else that seemed out of my hands — I always had control over my own mind and how I treated others. Even when I had nothing else, I could still be kind, just, generous, honest, loving and compassionate. Since then, I've found this to be the truest power. I know that the freedom and autonomy I have today is the result of years of very careful, deliberate work: work on myself, on the deepest parts of who I am; work on my character.

Every standard that I hold myself to is a standard of my own making, one that is fully under my control. My self-worth doesn't depend on anyone else. Even if the world were to fall apart today, my sense of who I am and my place in this world wouldn't be destroyed.

A commenter responded with the acronym THINK, reminding us to ask ourselves:

Is it

Thoughtful?

Honest?

Intelligent?

Necessary? and

Kind?

#### HALFWAY HOUSE BOOK WRITING OPPORTUNITY

Attention researchers, journalists and authors: incarcerated people, family members and BOP staff ask me for information about the halfway houses contracted by the Federal Bureau of Prisons (and often state DOC's and jails as well). As you know they are ALL private contractors and, as far as I know, they do not provide their information to anyone. With so much interest, and so little info, this is a great opportunity for opportunistic entrepreneurs!

“You never change things by fighting the existing reality.  
To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.”  
— Buckminster Fuller

“The key thing about all the world's big problems is that they have to be dealt with collectively. If we don't get collectively smarter, we're doomed.” Douglas Englebart

“Sometimes people hold a core belief that is very strong. When they are presented with evidence that works against that belief, the new evidence cannot be accepted. It would create a feeling that is extremely uncomfortable, called cognitive dissonance. And because it is so important to protect the core belief, they will rationalize, ignore and even deny anything that doesn't fit in with the core belief.”  
— Frantz Fanon, [Black Skin, White Masks](#)

“Our great democracies still tend to think that a stupid man is more likely to be honest than a clever man, and our politicians take advantage of this prejudice by pretending to be even more stupid than nature made them.”

— Bertrand Russell, [New Hopes for a Changing World](#)

### **Practical Ways to Improve Your Confidence (and Why You Should)**

Self-confidence is just one element in a triad of things that make up our overall “confidence.” Here’s what you can do to boost yours.

Dedicated to SURVEILLANCE CAPITALISM, PRIVACY, et al

**Data is history**, and people who can see a future change and assess its effects before they are apparent in data will be the best decision makers.

From a paper on Desistance from Crime” “The underlying theory is that by attending to criminogenic needs through proper treatment and control programming, one can affect offending behavior.” Why are academics, with no experience at all, using a medical model (surprise!) to tell us ‘what works’? Shouldn’t we be telling them?

We are a democracy, yet we lock up more people than any other country, regardless of the governance model. Doesn’t democracy reflect the wishes of its citizens? I read this as: we need to roll up our sleeves and figure this out because no one else is going to do this for us. Whining won’t work, blaming won’t work, nor will allowing academics to scientize the problem and use antiquated and inhumane behaviorism on us. We are smart! We have experience! Pointing out what is bad is not enough; we need to counter that with what we need, what works.

Digital Privacy / Surveillance Capitalism

Abolitionist Ruth and the Golden Gulag book

you start to think about your own value

They have purpose.

They can redefine who they are.

We have to do these things for OURSELVES.

No 'program' can do this.

"We 're not depending on society to rehabilitate us.

We have taken the reins to REHABILITATE OURSELVES."

"I want them to feel how wonderful they are. I want them to know they matter."

=====

Fair Shake works to reverse the effects (suffering of all kinds) from of the lack of education of ourselves and institutionalization...by encouraging THINKING of all kinds...esp. remembering to CHECK our thinking biases!!

NOT ONLY MANAGING FOR HERSELF...BUT GOING INSIDE AND INSPIRING

Maryam Henderson-Uloho served 13 years—spending more than half of that time in solitary confinement.

Started out selling thrown away items on the street.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/video/index/591364/sister-hearts/>

### **Sister Hearts Thrift Store**

<https://sisterheartsthiftstore.com/>

The thrift store provides work, shelter and a fresh future for formerly incarcerated men and women. We help build workplace competence and economic independence in a nurturing environment. By shopping with us, you make the work possible — and save a bundle!

Your support and contributions will enable us to meet our goals and improve conditions. Your generous donation will fund our mission.

## *Sister Hearts Thrift Store*

7519 W Judge Perez Dr., Arabi LA

[504-345-2276](tel:504-345-2276)

Evidence.....of self-directed growth.....

Institutionalization “you lose the ability to think on your own.

We’ve created an environment

“Pick a section of the store that is completely re-organize the section by themselves. And they also set the prices”

After Maryam Henderson-Uloho was convicted of obstruction of justice, she was sentenced to 25 years in a Louisiana prison. Ultimately, she served 13 years—spending more than half of that time in solitary confinement. When she was released, she felt dehumanized.

“You see, in prison, you’re broken—mentally, emotionally, and physically,” Henderson-Uloho says in the short documentary *Sister Hearts*. “I didn’t know what to do. I was alone. I was scared. I had no one.” An ex-felon, Henderson-Uloho was unable to open a bank account or a credit card. She couldn’t rent an apartment. Nobody would employ her. “I had to go inside myself and find something good about me,” she says. “I felt like trash ... I needed help.”

On a street corner, Henderson-Uloho began selling discarded clothing items out of a suitcase. The first day, she made \$40. “I just kept doing that,” she says in the film. “Three years later, I have a 15,000-square-foot thrift store and transition-housing facility for other female ex-offenders.”

[Mohammad Gorjestani’s](#) film, funded by [Square](#), is the story of how Henderson-Uloho turned her life around and used her success as a springboard to help others. Her New Orleans thrift store, *Sister Hearts*, is owned and operated by formerly incarcerated women, who have the opportunity to live on the premises while they work to regain economic independence. (The similarities between Henderson-Uloho’s work and the narratives of other ex-offenders are not lost on her. “We’re both getting second chances,” she says in the film.) Henderson-Uloho also leads group-therapy sessions for female inmates, in which she helps the women rebuild their self-esteem and empowers them to create positive change.

In the film, Henderson-Uloho describes how many ex-offenders adapt well to entrepreneurial work. “We know how to come up from the trenches,” she says. “We know how to make something out of nothing. We know how to take a dime and make it a dollar.”

Gorjestani told me that hearing Henderson-Uloho speak about her work was inspiring, but that witnessing the impact of her work was a truly profound experience. “She’s a true advocate for them,” he said. “In the prison, we watched Maryam sit down in front of a group of disinterested women with their arms folded, and within an hour she had transformed the room, giving them all a newfound hope and a sense of a bond based on their shared struggle. By the end, she had these

women hugging in a circle and smiling. It was one of the most moving experiences I have been a part of.”

“I want all ex-offenders to know they matter,” Henderson-Uloho says. “I want them to know that just because they’ve committed a crime, they’re no less of a human being.”

Incarcerated people are strong in many ways!

Let’s count them. Let’s recognize them.

They want to find their own resources.

They want to determine their values, make mistakes and have it be okay, et all!

New Section: CHECK YOUR BIAS (a new section in the FS News)

Reciprocity

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission: RISK FACTOR ASSESSMENT

(which should not be considered without recognition of the FREEDOM POTENTIAL FACTORS)

Criminal Record Risk Factor Assessment Checklist: The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) identifies the following factors as appropriate considerations when an employer assesses whether an applicant (or an incumbent employee) has a record.....: (yes, the EEOC uses the word ‘offender’)

- The number of offenses for which the individual was convicted.
- Age at release from prison
- The length and consistency of employment history before or after the offense or conduct.
- Employment preparation efforts
- References from former employers, particularly from post-offense employment.
- Character references and any other information regarding fitness for the particular position.
- Evidence of family responsibility, such as uniting with a spouse or partner and, if relevant, caring for children or dependent relatives.
- Additional rehabilitation after the offense, such as continuing participation in a 12-step program.

Source: EEOC

So, where do we start with an outline of, the demonstrations of, and the recognition and acceptance for FREEDOM POTENTIAL FACTORS?

NPIC: look for it.

Beware: the 'savior mentality' which can be felt in the