

FS News: Spring Cleaning Edition

Hi Fair Shake readers ~

My, how "time flies...whether we're having fun or not!" (quote by Mary Englebreit)

I hope this newsletter finds you waking up from our two-year trance with robust mental and emotional abilities. To get the best from that very difficult experience, we might do well to think about the skills we've acquired to make sure we can use them in future circumstances. Some of the tools that I aim to use, though not yet honed to perfection, include: patience, better listening skills and small gains in self-discipline.

My self-discipline is in fine form right now, as I burn the midnight oil each day to bolster the website. It's time to turn the website into software again (yay!). I'm building pages, adding documents, resources, and information; I'm also checking on - and clearing out - the resources that no longer exist, and information that is no longer relevant. Whew! With more than 15,000 resources on the website, I have a lot of spring cleaning to do!

I've also finished writing the Ownership Manual! It's now at hefty 196 pages and it will be 'perfect bound' like a paperback book. About half of the documents are new, and soon I will offer a different document in every newsletter...but if you're anxious to see some of the documents now, you can let your outside supporters - family, friends, activists, clergy, teachers, case managers, etc...print it (all, or single pages) from this page: www.fairshake.net/ownership-manual-2. The OM is getting printed right now and will be ready to mail next month!

Before I say anything more, I need to say THANK YOU, DONORS! for their constant support of this newsletter. Their donations make sure it is free, so those who cannot afford to make donations are still able to read it. The Corrlinks monthly correspondence expense is around \$480. The donations from the incarcerated readers don't currently cover that cost, but their donations all go to keeping the newsletter in circulation. Fair Shake, as you might remember is 100% donor funded (no grants support free, anonymous access to resources or the free, unmonitored use of reentry software).

Donations are lean these days, so I've had to come up with creative ways to keep this free library open to all. To generate financial support, I've decided to build a Go Fund Me page where folks can learn about Fair Shake, look through the new Ownership Manual, and check out some of the very kind comments that many of you have sent in the past few months. (I just pulled out a sentence or two; and I include no names or other forms of identification.) It is my hope that when they get a chance to read your words, and see the new book, they will support Fair Shake so I can continue to print books and burn software and drive around the country to talk with you in person!

As many of you know, I've been putting income-generating Plan B into gear, too. I am renting an office for Fair Shake in a space that I can also use for an in-person and online store. I plan to get my lip balm in distribution again, and also make and sell other products. It will be a crazy amount of work at first, but when I can afford to hire an employee or two, we will all be able to increase Fair Shake's capacity in every dimension. I will not organize that business as a non-profit, but all profits from the store will be donated to Fair Shake...so we can expand! Making lip balm and opening up a store, while also sending software DVD's and Ownership Manuals to prisons around the country, will add a lot more work hours to my 70-hour Fair Shake work week. I'm still the only person here at Fair Shake making this whole thing go and grow...but with a little luck, I'll be able to get back on the road soon.

FAIR SHAKE FUNDRAISER REQUEST

Would anyone like to donate art to the fundraiser? I'd like to use art on the GoFundMe page, and to print Thank You cards to mail to folks who donate \$25 or more. I know the donors would love to see your art, too! If you'd be willing to donate an image or even just art for the border of the card, please mail your

donation to PO Box 63, Westby, WI 54667. (and write 'do not bend' on the envelope! ~ :) I will respond to all donors and let you know what I'll be doing with your donation. How does that sound to you? I will start the fundraiser around the time that the March newsletter comes out.

PEN PAL LIST!

Thank you to everyone who shared information about pen pal organizations. I did not receive a lot of responses, but I will add the information that I received to the list that I already have (after I check to make sure they are all still valid and valuable) and send it out to you. If you would like to receive the FS '22 pen-pal list, start a new email to me with PEN PAL in the subject line and I'll send the list to you soon. (Sorry, but if you simply 'reply' to this message and change the subject, I won't be able to reply. The list will need a new, mostly empty message.)

NEWS FOR FOLKS WHO ARE RELEASING SOON:

RESOURCES ARE MOVING TO 'ONLINE' ONLY...SO CHECK STATE AND NATIONAL LISTINGS!

I've been noticing a trend over the past 3 years: organizations are removing their addresses from their website and replacing it with a form to fill out for those who want to communicate with them. I've comment some of the organizations when readers told me their letters were returned and the companies say they no longer have a person who answers letters; they do everything online. Also, they want people to use their website because office locations, contact people and phone numbers change quickly. Since many reentry-support organizations have national and/or state headquarters, be sure to check the STATE and NATIONAL resources - as well as local resources - for the resources you need! (You're your supporters, reentry advocates, ministry support folks, case managers, etc, too!) I scour the web for information so you don't have to! Fair Shake's vast database - the Resource Directory - will always be free for anyone to use 24/7 - on a computer, on a phone, or on a tablet. It is also free from tracking and nudging....which is almost impossible to find anywhere these days. You can search anonymously, and I will never tell you what you 'need'.

YOU MIGHT WANT FREE STUFF!

The Fair Shake Resource Directory includes a couple of 'free stuff' listings under National Resources. People find free household items, free clothes, TV's, wood for building, lamps, plates, cups, utensils, car seats and much more in the free section of Craigslist, and on Freecycle. Craigslist also lists 'gig' jobs (which are often paid the day you work or very shortly after), rentals and much more.

FREE COMPUTER TRAINING! LOW-COST COMPUTERS AND INTERNET

Everyone On wants to help unlock social and economic opportunity by connecting low-income people to affordable internet service and computers; and they deliver digital skills training, too! The training includes: Operating a device, Exploring the internet, Learning how to use email and Using Microsoft Office. (Fair Shake also offers tutorials and information about all of these topics, too!) Everyone On can be found online here: www.everyoneon.org.

FREE HIGHER ED: WITH CREDITS!

The University of the People (UoP) is an Education Revolution. It is the first non-profit, tuition-free, American, accredited, online university. Dedicated to opening access to higher education globally, UoP helps high school graduates overcome financial, geographic, political, and personal constraints keeping them from college studies. UoP is opening the gates to higher education by offering online, tuition-free, accredited degree programs to any qualified applicant. UoPeople is staffed by more than 26,000 volunteers! <https://www.uopeople.edu/>

EMPLOYMENT NEWS! TRUCKING JOBS:

In the NY Times, on Feb 9th, I found a story about "the fundamental reason for truck driver shortages: It is a job full of stress, physical deprivation and loneliness." Last year, trucking companies in the United States suffered a record deficit of 80,000 drivers, according to the American Trucking Association. Given that trucks move 72 percent of American freight, a lack of drivers spells substantial disruption. Trucking fleets are handing out raises to retain drivers while offering \$10,000 cash bonuses in a frantic effort to

court new hires. Truckers are absolutely essential to maintain our lifestyle and to have a steady food supply. The article also says that many Americans no longer possess the skills to spend time alone, appreciate travel on the road, love of wide open spaces, or self-discipline.

I received an email from an alert reader shortly after I discovered the NY Times article. He reinforced my thinking by saying "Due to the demand for drivers, there are programs that cover the cost of training and the CDL certification. Companies are also offering sign-on bonuses". He went on to say that driving today is "also supported by most probation now, because the trucks have location beacons on them".

Fair Shake has a large 'trucking' page on the website and in the software - with links, downloaded books and contact information to get started in a trucking career. The new Ownership Manual (OM) has a 2-page document with information, too!

HIRING OPPORTUNITY: KRAFT/HEINZ sent this recently:

The Kraft Heinz Company is one of the largest food and beverage companies in the world. With a 150-year history, we're producers of some of the most iconic and beloved brands, including Oscar Mayer, Velveeta, Lunchables, Ore-Ida, and Kool-Aid. Interested in helping us grow our future? We're currently hiring in our manufacturing plants across 17 states and 38 cities. No matter your experience, we'd love to hear from you! Standard benefits include a competitive hourly wage, comprehensive medical, dental & vision insurance, 401(k) options, and paid time off. Some plants provide benefits like sign-on and retention bonuses, job training, union membership, volunteer opportunities, subsidized transportation options, language courses, and more. Exact qualifications and benefits vary by position and location. Kraft Heinz believes in second chances. While background checks are required for employment, all applications are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. *Kraft Heinz is an Equal Opportunity Employer—minorities/females/veterans/individuals with disabilities/sexual orientation/gender identity.* Ask your outside supporters to check them out, or, to find out more once you're released, visit careers.kraftheinz.com.

LIBERATION QUESTION FOR YOU

I've received a request for your consideration. Would you be interested in writing a short essay or note on the topic: "What liberation means to you?" Or "how do you live a liberated life in prison?". If you're interested, you can add Wlprisonrecipes@gmail.com on corrlinks and share your response to the question! Everyone who sends a recipe and/or essay will get a copy of a magazine called 'Canteen Cafe'. Remember to include your address, and whether you are willing to have your name published. They just need to remember to put where they are at in their email and also if they want their name published. Sounds like fun! But remember: don't write to me! This is everything that I know, so I won't respond to questions about this. Write directly to Wlprisonrecipes@gmail.com.

RECOMMENDED READING: DON'T LABEL ME: An Incredible Conversation for Divided Times by Irshad Manji. The book offers deep and enduring lessons about labels, othering, belonging, and being messy, interesting and complex humans. It's written as a conversation between Irshad and a dog she rescued. She was raised to believe that dogs are evil, but Manji overcame her fear of the "other" to adopt her old, nearly-blind pup, Lily. It's a very easy book to read...fun, funny, engaging...while also very serious about the negative power of labels. She works hard to help us learn to honor our authenticity and unique gifts. Manji teaches people how to do the right thing in the face of fear. She helps us to hear others, and helps us express ourselves with the goal of being heard, and not to be right.

QUOTES

"If you wish to be heard, you must first be willing to hear." – Irshad Manji

"Relate, don't berate." "Neither shame nor blame will win the game." - Irshad Manji

"Diversity, for me, is superficial, if it does not include diversity of viewpoint." - Irshad Manji

“People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care” - Theodore Roosevelt

To our increasing interdependence! Ubuntu! ~ sue

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As always, when you are released, remember to find support in your phone-gizmo:

2-1-1 AuntBertha.com Fairshake.net HelpYourselfTherapy.com

Newsletters are available at FairShake.net for your family and friends to read or print.