

Mike's Closing Reflection

BECOMING

I'm now becoming who I always wanted to be-
even better, I'm becoming even more of me-
even better than that, I'm becoming even more of we
The doubts that held me back have disappeared
I held on to a faded image for all those years
American dreams faded and gave way to a sacred mission-
to become fully human-
and all it took was for someone to finally listen
think about my gifts, imagine my potential
envision wings on my back that fly through shackles and
prisons-
imagine my resilience to endure adverse conditions-
to take on heavy fire and still rise from the trenches
Now I'm flying- high above expectations
Can you see who I'm becoming?
Can you risk assess my destination?
If you could see where I'm going,
I'm blowing away all risk calculations,
because I'm becoming part of US again,
and that's beyond computation!

**WHAT YOU
FOCUS ON GROWS:**



**Rejecting '*Recidivism
Reduction*' Rhetoric and
Reframing '*Reentry Success*'**

**Readers Respond!
Fair Shake newsletter**

Workshop Outline

Moderator: Rodney White

Introduction: Spoken Word – Mike Newman
Reflection – Dawud Kennedy

Presenters:

Breaking Free Poet – Mike Newman (recorded)
Coaches: Anthony Boyd & Jason O'Malley
Rabble-Rouser: Sue Kastensen

DISCUSSION:

Question: What should we focus on to change the way we measure reentry success?

Voices From Inside –

Reflection – Dawud Kennedy
Rodney White

Recap and next steps!

Closing Words: Belonging by Mike Newman

If time allows: Q, A, and open dialog

Speaker Bios:

Anthony Boyd Anthony Boyd is Detroit's Just Cities Lab Project Manager. He is also a native Detroit. He served in the United States Air Force, attended the University of Michigan and received his Associates Degree in Computer Information Systems from Jordan College. Anthony is also a Certified Life Coach (Institute for Life Coach Training) and a certified tutor (US Department of Labor). Anthony has worked with HOPE (Help Other People Evolve) as a Life Coach and Mentor. His passion through this project and many others, is to help young men by assisting them in reconnecting with their inner wisdom and life purpose. At FCI McKean, Anthony facilitated the Victim's Impact Group. He was also instrumental in the development of The Peer Facilitator Learning Model, created to increase the effectiveness of peer facilitation in prison programming. Anthony is a partner, a father and a grandfather. Contact Anthony here: anthonyboyd2862@gmail.com.

Speaker Bios (cont):

Jason O'Malley Jason is a life-long learner and longtime educator: 20 years ago his mom was his first adult student, studying for her G.E.D. Most of his experience is in teaching incarcerated men algebra to help them achieve their G.E.D. He is a Certified Coach through the Institute for Life Coach Training. Mr. O'Malley is one of the founding members of the Re-entry Coaching Academy (ReCA), an organization to help coach and facilitate the smooth transition of men and women returning home from incarceration. He also started a company called BridgeGap to teach others mathematics using the coach approach, as well as traditional lecture style teaching via live stream. You can contact Jason at (814) 232-3946, jason@bridgegap.biz or jay.0mal.1979@gmail.com.

Mike Newman is co-founder of Breaking Free Poets, a creative writing and slam poetry group at FCI Petersburg, VA. His contribution to this discussion was recorded inside the Federal Bureau of Prisons, where he awaits release sometime in 2020. Mike has been working within the prison community on ways to unlock and uplift human potential, and he's reaching out to share these ideas with others. He hopes to continue his advocacy upon release by expanding Breaking Free Poets into a national platform for incarcerated writers, and working with other organizations focused on challenging the narratives about criminal justice involved people. Find Breaking Free Poets at breakingfreepoets.com or reach out directly to Mike here: mike@breakingfreepoets.com

Rodney White is an Offender Workforce Development Specialist (OWDS) for the Virginia Department of Corrections. He graduated with honors from the University of Richmond and North Carolina A&T State University, earning a Master's Degree in Adult Education with a concentration on Higher Education. Rodney worked in the North Carolina Community College System as an Academic Advisor and Assistant Director of Student Life. In his role as an OWDS, Rodney helps men and women transition back into society facilitating The Ready to Work Program which is a mandatory program for all Returning Citizens leaving the Virginia Department of Corrections. Additionally, he created R.E.A.D. to Succeed, a motivational and success program for returning citizens. Contact Rodney here: r.white@vadoc.virginia.gov.

Sue Kastensen is the founder and director of Fair Shake, a free software- and web-based resource center. Sue received her bachelor's degree in Individualized Learning at Viterbo University and her master's degree in Adult Education at Rutgers. She created Sun Dog Hemp Body Care in 1993 which is now incorporated into Dr. Bronner's Magic Soaps. While with Dr. Bronner's she founded Fair World Project, a fair trade publication, in 2010. You can find her at sue@fairshake.net and you'll find Fair Shake at www.fairshake.net.

FAIR SHAKE NEWSLETTER READERS RESPONDED TO THIS QUESTION:

What traits, strengths, skills, knowledge or other attributes could a person demonstrate to show they are adequately prepared to address safety and security, while simultaneously addressing needs for social engagement, civic participation, and the multifaceted challenges of reentry success?

- an inquisitive personality
- be thoughtful/mindful of other people's well-being
- be diverse in social conversations
- problem solving as a tool on your belt
- be goal orientated.

- social engagement
- and civic participation
- Humility.
- Responsibility.
- Perseverance.
- Good values

Hobbies
Improved employment skills
Reflect on maturing while in prison

how much work the individual has put in on their

- self
- hope
- faith
- charity
- brotherly/sisterly love
- relief
- truth

-Passion;
-Perseverance;
-Dedication;
-Discipline; and
-Patience...lots of patience.

Empathy for others.
Don't turn away from community, but toward it.
Participate- It doesn't have to be in a big way.
Let people know who you are.
Drop the fear of being open. Be there for others
(Not always easy)

Give Back to Community

'Democratic' (fair and just for all)

Health awareness (mind and body)

Holistic approach! ("risks" are fluid)

Expression of universal connectedness

Communication

Networking

Listening Skills

Vision

Foresight

Perseverance

Will Power

Dedication

Discipline

Sacrifice

Self-Control

Patience

Passion

Potential

Humility

Fallible

Humanness

Inquisitive

Family

Friends

Relational

Faith

Positive relationships

Ownership

Accountability

Resiliency

Involved

Creativity

Confidence

Trust

Loyalty

Integrity

Open-Mindedness

Critical thinking

Boundaries,

Tolerance

Compassion

Volunteerism

Adaptability

Initiative

Drive

Autonomy

Agency

Belief in yourself

Belief in opportunities

Support network

Generous in spirit toward others

Willingness to learn

Accrued life-long education

Active involvement in education of all kinds

Love & respect for self & others

Realistic and transformed perspective

Disengagement from non-supportive people

WHAT'S NEXT?

Let's focus on and grow this conversation ~

Check out the *What You Think On Grows* placeholder website: tinyurl.com/y6gpt4d8 or <https://sue4054.wixsite.com/whatyoufocusongrows>

Ask Questions! Leave Comments!
~ and contribute to Reframing, Redefining and Reform ~

NOTES:

***WHAT YOU
FOCUS ON GROWS:***



**Rejecting '*Recidivism
Reduction*' Rhetoric and
Reframing '*Reentry Success*'
Panel Discussion**

National Conference on
Higher Education in Prisons

2019