

2<sup>nd</sup> July 2016

## EVERY FOR 'HOW DO YOU REFORM PRISONS'

It's a very long fall, that first day inside. You feel trapped inside a barrel hurtling over a waterfall, gasping for breath, looking for light, seeking assistance, slowly dying. It's an experience that is lonely, desperate & life threatening.

DAY 1, WEEK 1, MONTH 1

The 'one' program, is designed to give the individual a raison d'être. Listen - Agree - Set - Listen (Repeat)

OMU plays a vital role. No! Sending a generic, mis-spelt, badly copied letter stating you are their OMU Officer is not good enough, and certainly not 3/4 weeks in. Together with a long serving prisoner / ex offender get x to every new inmate. It's tough for the prisoner, but while the emotion / hurt / sorry larger is still raw, ask, can we help you to not return? Can we guide you? Most importantly, what next?

2 Week 1, return, reassure and start rehabilitation. What are current skills? What new do you want? How can we together achieve this?

Month 1. Now it is upto the individual to make the most of their sentence. Yes, be there in a supportive & encouraging role, but now is the time for 'self responsibility'

If their chosen route is to take an English Literature Degree through Open University, then ensure OMU are taking strides to ensure it does not take

20 months from application to commencement.

Bring real skills, developing skills, future enhancing skills to the workshops & reward. Have the infrastructure to educate on budgeting, home skills, cooking & yes the drug/alcohol/porn addiction courses.

Reward OMO on successful non returns. Be aware of the self worth & life change you could bring as an OMO Officer to that individual

Two more simple steps I would introduce.

- Remove the seats from outside the Officers Office & encourage them to mingle, talk, listen & action on every association period

- Show that 'new individual' the success stories.

At Week 7, demonstrate how life can be turned around with a joint effort.

Yes sometimes the stick will be required more than the carrot. But, please, never stop offering the carrot.