

A Community of Restoration in a New Zealand Prison



Two Years On

- A 60 bed prison unit within a larger prison
- Prisoners volunteer to live within a community of restoration
- A range of offenders – convicted of rape, murder, robbery, serious assaults, drug dealing, child sex offences
- Last two years of sentence
- Community mentors pre-release and for two years following release

The Prison Culture in New Zealand

- Don't trust anyone
- Mind Your Own Business
- Don't Inform on other Prisoners
- The Prison officers are the enemy
- Don't share your emotions or feelings

The Community of Restoration

- Trust and share with your brothers
- Learn to love and tolerate one another
- Hold each other accountable for behaviour – prisoners and officers
- Prison Officers are your friends
- Resolve conflict in a peaceful way

What is a Value?

- "Values' within the context of this program means specific guiding principles that we believe in, and live by.
- A value is a standard or quality that is good, needed, and wanted

Core Values

- Unconditional Love
- Integrity
- Accountability
- Commitment to Personal Change
- Restoring relationships
- Community Building
- Productivity

Community Structure

- Daily accountability meetings
- “Family” Groups
- A peacemaking model – teaching prisoners and officers how to resolve conflict –
 - » Prisoner/Prisoner
 - » Prisoner/Officer
 - » Officer/Prisoner
 - » Prisoner/Victim
 - » Prisoner/Community
- Eldership
- Community Volunteers

Results after Two Years

- 2003 – 2004
 - 1 Murder
 - 3 Assaults
 - 2.5% Positive drug rate (random testing). National average 18%.
- 2004 – 2005
 - No violent incidents
 - 0% Positive drug rate (random testing). National average 15%
 - Low re-offending rate is indicated. (8-15%)

Implications for Corrections System

- Prison as a Sanctuary
- Restorative practice as a model for prisoner reintegration
- From individual offender-focused treatment and Corrections control to community-based social control and support
- Build social capital - Equip the community to reintegrate with prisoners
- Restorative Justice practice supports and guides socialisation and maturation processes

A Community of Restoration in a New Zealand Prison

