

GREY OWLS COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER

The Lifers and Long Term Committee is introducing a new sub-committee called the Grey Owls. This sub-committee will be composed of individuals age 50 and over interested in having mature conversations on certain issues. Send all request slips to the Attention Anthony Brown, HFC Treasurer and Grey Owls founder.

EATING HEALTHY AT 50 YEARS AND OLDER WHILE INCARCERATED.

Being incarcerated means that you have little control over the foods you eat. Here are some tips to get the most nutritional value out of the options you have.

DRINK WATER

One of the simplest and most effective ways to improve bodily functions is to drink water. Keeping in mind that each person's body is unique, so feel free to drink more than eight (8) oz. if you want to. Not drinking enough water can have major effects on physical and mental performance. Symptoms of just mild dehydration include: inability to focus attention, headaches, muscle weakness, constipation and tiredness. Start your day with drinking many ounces of water upon rising. That's a start of your daily intake already! Plus, drinking water first thing in the morning wakes up your digestive system in preparation for breakfast. For the rest of the day try to time most of your water intake between meals. Drinking a lot of water an hour before, during or just after a meal. (It is OK to take sips of water while your eat.)

LIMIT ADDED SUGAR

You've probably heard about the health effects of sugar. A diet high in sugar contributes to diabetes risk, creating inflammation, mood issues and a whole host of other things. It is suggested that the average adult consumes 60g. of sugar as a maximum. Check out the labels on the foods when you're able and try to keep your daily intake under 60g. If you can, you will be surprised how much sugar is in the foods you eat. If all you do in the realm of "sugar" is replace juice with water, that's an incredible step. If you are eating preserved fruit, drain the "juice" before eating it. Simple carbohydrates (like pasta) break down as sugar in the body. If you have the choice between rice or pasta, try going with rice. If it's

brown rice, even better. Rice is still a carbohydrate but processed more slowly than pasta by the body so it doesn't cause the blood spike that pasta can.

GENERAL TIPS FOR EATING FROM THE TRAY

If you can, try to eat every vegetable and fruit that's offered! There are essential vitamins and minerals in these foods that your body will love you for eating. They are also high in fiber which will keep your digestive tract running smoothly to support regular bowel movements.

If you eat fish, have it every time it's offered. There are fatty acids only found in fish that are crucial for brain health and function. Human brains love those special fats in fish.

Believe it or not coffee has great antioxidant properties in it. A cup in the morning with breakfast is great. (A cup of water afterwards is good.)

COMMISSARY SUGGESTIONS

There are generally some excellent choices in the commissary that can supplement some of the nutritional content you're not getting in the trays. IMPORTANT: trays tend toward being high in starch which breaks down into sugar.

- Fish: Commissary usually has a variety of fish options; Tuna, Sardines, Yellow fin Tuna, Salmon. Like I said earlier, the brain loves fish. Have it as part of a meal 1-2 days a week if you can, Substituting fish for a red meat based meal on your tray is a heart healthy choice
- Spices: Spices contain phytonutrients. Bring some with you to meals and add to your tray for extra flavor and nutrients. Try things like: Powered Garlic, Onion Powder, Cinnamon, even Mrs. Dash. There's a lot of good stuff in there!
- Pickles: Pickles are cucumbers (which are vegetables). Just be aware of the sodium content if that is a concern for you.
- Dark Chocolate: This is a super food with plenty of antioxidants. Portion it out to have a square a day or however it may be available to you. A little goes a long way.
- Good Grain Snacks: Tortilla chips and Salsa, Check Mix, Pretzels, Wheat Thins, and even wheat bread.
- Green Tea Bags: Another powerful antioxidant. In addition, green tea contains a compound called L-THENANE which helps the body relax if you have trouble sleeping at night.

AGING AND YOUR HEALTH

How age can affect your health. If you're older than age 40, you've undoubtedly confronted some realities of aging. You've probably peeked into a mirror at your face that has developed a few more wrinkles. You may have noticed that aches and pains linger a little longer after you exercise or spend time doing some labor. Until adults reach the age of 50

years of life, aging rarely means much to them-even though it's a lifelong process that begins at birth.

Most adults experience common physical changes as they get older.

Here are a few common examples:

- Your systolic blood pressure- the top number-increases as artery walls thicken and become less flexible.
- Your body redistributes fat, and your muscle mass declines
- Your maximum breathing capacity declines
- Your bladder loses capacity, leading to more frequent urination and sometimes leakage
- Your risk of falls increases.

DISCLAIMER These excerpts are for information purposes only. It is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis; or treatment. The information above is a general guideline that may or may not be appropriate for certain medical conditions. Always seek the advice of your physician or other health care provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition or treatment and before undertaking a new health care regimen. Never disregard medical advice or delay in seeking it because of something included in this article.

MAINTAINING YOUR HEALTH AS YOU AGE

Successful aging involves many factors that are within your control.

Begin with strategies to maintain your overall health

ADOPT A POSITIVE ATTITUDE

You're old only when you think you are. True, your body will age, yet your mind; for the most part, will stay as young as you feel. Stay focused on what's important and shrug off what isn't. A sense of humor and an ability to adapt to change are golden assets

EAT WELL

Studies indicate that a healthy diet when combined with regular physical and mental activity, can help you live longer and better as you age.

- To allow for the fact that your metabolism slows down, consider limiting serving sizes.
- Also limit the amount of sugar that is added to food and beverages
- Avoid drinking alcohol ("While Incarcerated")
- Avoid tobacco. Smoking has been linked to high blood pressure, heart disease, strokes, lung cancer and a variety of other cancers. If you smoke (or) chew tobacco, make plans to quit.
- Keep physically active.
- Stay mentally sharp.

PRACTICE THE ART OF BALANCE AND STRESS MANAGEMENT

You must lay the foundation for the work that lies ahead. One way to accomplish this is to establish more balance in your life by taking stock of strengths and weaknesses in your current lifestyle and developing goals for personal growth and self-improvement.

-David Marks-
NJ-3157

Sources

1. "eating healthy while incarcerated"
by Sarah Bauer, functional medicine health coach (Pittsburgh)
Let's Get Free Magazine, Issue 7, Winter 2022
2. Mayo Clinic Guide to Self-Care, Staying Healthy, Pgs. 221, and
Pgs. 235-236.



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The Power of Resilience and Wisdom

Incarcerated senior men and women sit at the center of life's oldest paradox: For many the closer we come to death, the more our emotional well-being seems to increase. After a lifetime of losing loved ones, suffering defeats, and experiencing physical decline, we as older adults still manage to take life's punches in stride. Resilience with aging is what gives us seniors an edge with wisdom. How we have adapted to the aging process speaks to the incredible resilience and wisdom. And it begs the question: what can youth learn from us?

Resilience is the ability to quickly recover from stress, whether physical mental, or emotional. Research indicates that resilient people have greater connectivity between areas of the brain linked to emotions; the prefrontal cortex is involved in decision-making and emotional control.

Ways to Build Resilience

- Develop a problem-solving attitude
Accept new challenges with the knowledge that you might fail. If or when you do, try to focus on bouncing back and learning from your mistakes.
- Spend Time
Focusing on your own well-being is key to aging gracefully. Work to actively build a positive self-image
- Surround Yourself . . .
With people who believe in you.

- **Put Your Situation Into Perspective**
Supporting and helping others through their challenges can benefit your own state of mind.
- **Build Confidence**
By challenging yourself with activities that push your comfort levels without threatening your own state of mind.
- **Build a Resilient Body**
To support a resilient mind by following a healthy diet and engaging in an active lifestyle.

As the United States recovered, the Baby Boomer generation grew up. Born between 1946 and 1964, they would go on to become the largest living adult generation in the United States, influencing everything from the Civil Rights Movement to Social Security reform. They witnessed the Korean and Vietnam Wars, the assassination of a president and a Cold War that hung a shadow of fear over everyday life. The fact that we have seen and experienced so much explains why 90% of seniors have experienced at least 1 traumatic event during their lives. It also helps explain their impressive resilience and wisdom.

To make it this far in life means seniors have accumulated a lifetime of experiences ranging from challenging to traumatic. Their ability to understand the Big Picture, see the Silver Lining, and not Sweat The Small Stuff allows them to feel more content and less psychopathologic than other population groups.

Attaining Wisdom:

And yet, even with this rich experience, a senior's resilience can become brittle. Negative perspectives and a resistance to growing old can work against them. We become overwhelmed with loneliness and sorrow, losing spouses and friends, seeing family members less, and disengaging from activities can be discouraging experiences for anyone.

Keeping the brain engaged is the key to Building Resilience. By seeking out new challenges and activities, seniors can take their resilience to the next level by developing wisdom. Wisdom is more strongly associated with life's satisfaction.

Wisdom allows people to understand and, more importantly, accept their reality. Ultimately, wisdom is what allows seniors to make sense of the paradox. It guides and protects us through the fear and hardship of life, comforting to the very end.

Concluding Thoughts:

Everyone of us will confront several challenges in our lifetime. How we choose to deal with these experiences will determine our future path and affect our sense of well-being. Resilience is earned over time by exercising a lot of patience. Wisdom comes with experience in the face of adversity. It is important to understand your limitations - what you can and cannot accomplish - by doing the best with what you have. The earlier we train ourselves to think this way, the richer our lives will be. Most of us did have access to resilience of older adults, whether they were our own relatives, neighbors, or other people in the community. When younger and older generations share their experiences, they work together to build a better community and a better tomorrow.

Resilience is the capacity to bounce back from the effects of stress (or) adversity. The following general strategies will help build your resilience:

- Recognize that loss and challenges are a common part of life. Facing difficult and painful situations directly and openly will make them easier to deal with.
- Recognize that change is also a common part of life. Adapting to and managing change is a form of resilience.
- Maintain an optimistic outlook, looking for and expecting the positive is a choice with clear benefits.
- Set goals for yourself and take active steps to achieve them
- Build open, supportive relationships with people who have a genuine capacity for caring.
- Be disciplined about self-care. It takes a regular investment of time and energy. Keep things in perspective. Remember that life is a journey with ups and downs; this helps make the challenges easier to deal with successfully.

We have been attempting to have our first Grey Owls meeting but encountered scheduling conflicts. We have recently resolved these conflicts and look forward to having our first meeting shortly. Thank you for your patience.

Grey Owls Chairman, Anthony Brown

Revving Up Your Resilience

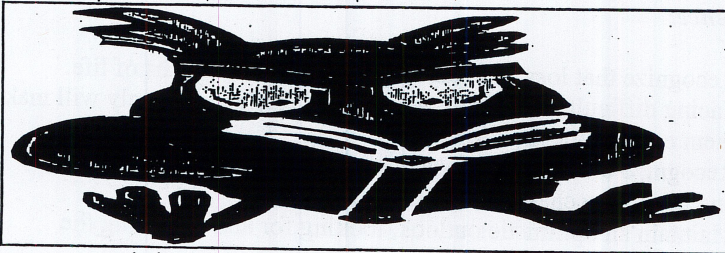
Resilience is a source that keeps you going, not by toughing it up or going emotionless. It's about adjusting and adapting to a challenged environment either internal or external. It's about going head up without challenges. However, we have to obtain and use the appropriate tools in order to own these challenges.

Prime example, "It's easy to go with the flow, but it takes strength to go against it." We have to live by what we believe in and what we're trying to achieve, which is acquired by our levels of strength..

Also we must not be afraid of change, anything is possible when revving up your resilience. Especially when we're determined on getting past the finish line of what we're trying to achieve. You are what you think.

By Co-Chair: David Marks

Sources: This entire article is taken from the Psychiatric Times, #33, May, 2022, Special Populations by Rashami Parmar, MD; www.psychiatrictimes.com



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ADDRESSING A GROWING AGING CRISIS

From a Right-to-Know Act request in May of 2022; there are 456 men in SCI Forest that are 50 years old and older. Currently 2,700 men & women doing life (or) long sentences in PA that are 50 years and older, which is considered geriatric by the PA DOC. There are over 10,000 that sit in SCI's in PA that are 50 years old and older. There are an estimated 265,000 elderly prisoners in the U.S. serving the remaining time they have left on their long sentences (or) doing life. That is around 13% of all inmates across the country, while there may be some newbies receiving their first sentences at the age of 50, most elderly prisoners are serving out time for crimes committed in their earlier years.

A Growing Burden:

According to the American Civil Liberties Union, it costs twice as much to maintain an elderly person than a younger one under the age of 50. As elderly within the prison system are living longer (a worldwide trend for all elderly people), their medical expenses become greater; placing a financial burden on an already encumbered institution. It costs approximately \$66,294 a year to maintain an elderly prisoner, depending on which state you look at. The highest annual estimate for an incarcerated elderly person was \$102,405, but the average is around \$66,294.

"The annual taxpayer burden of incarcerating the estimated 265,000 elderly inmate is roughly 16 billion dollars."

- The greater the amount of care needed, the higher the cost to the state and in turn tax payers who are now paying almost double of what was paid a couple decades ago. The annual taxpayer burden of incarcerating the estimated 265,000 elderly

inmates is roughly \$16 billion. To put that number in perspective, that is more than the Department of Education's budget for state improvements in Elementary and Secondary schools, and it is more than the entire Department of Energy's annual budget.

Proposed Solutions to the Economic Burden

There is little that can be done to ease the financial and still uphold human rights: human rights that guarantee inmates the right to dignity, to receive adequate Healthcare and medical attention, including mental health and disability accommodations, as well as the right to be treated with respect for their humanity, providing these fundamental human rights and the unintended consequences of a population aging in prison, a few solutions have been brought up for consideration and further review.

- Consider early release for an end of life issues over 50 years old. This would not only reduce medical costs within the correctional institution, it would allow for those released to be on parole and still under supervision, given the decreased likelihood that a frail elderly person would do anything to end up being put back in prison, this option would provide the biggest saving to an overburdened prison system and address the borderline elderly abuse and neglect concerns that are brought about by the system's failed geriatric infrastructure.
- Implement healthy self-care programs geared towards geriatric activities to reduce the risk of healthcare complications, including geriatric counseling to help inmates cope with the psychological aspects of aging in prison.
- Provide geriatric training to medical staff to improve early detection of common geriatric ailments that reducing responds to early intervention, e.g., arthritis, asthma, diabetes, poor eye sight, bad back, high blood pressure, Alzheimer disease, dementia, respiratory ailments, strokes. Along with poor nutrition that cause constipation (or) diarrhea and mental health such as Bi-polar, anxiety, depression and stress that will create significant challenges for prison.
- Based on average incarceration costs, the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections (DOC) is spending \$220 million per year to incarcerate 3,892 people who have already served at least 20 years, the true cost is undoubtedly higher, because incarceration costs increase dramatically as people age and need more medical care.

Extreme sentences harm Communities, Families, and the Economy

- Extreme sentences deprive the community of valuable human resources, many people serving extreme sentences could be productive economic assets in their communities if released and could play important roles in community violence intervention.
- Extreme sentences devastate families emotionally, psychologically, and financially, and contribute to poverty.
- Unless dramatic changes are made to sentencing and parole policies, the number of older prisoners could soar as high as 400,000 by 2030, posing a tremendous threat to state and federal budgets.

Quality of Life and Elderly Neglect Concerns

Getting the right medical attention is only one of the equations for allowing the prison population to age with dignity. The emotional and mental repercussions of aging in prison has a profound psychological effect. Prisons were not designed with the elderly in mind, and the system infrastructure reflects it's inability to care for elderly inmates financially or qualitatively, bringing up elderly abuse and neglect concerns.

A series of short term reforms are needed for immediate relief. There is a serious need to re-evaluate the necessity of keeping elderly people incarcerated. At what point does a sentence become cruel? At what point is an inmate no longer deemed dangerous to society or at what point has their punishment been sufficient, their behavior corrected, which is, after all the point of a corrections institution. The issue of aging in prison, raises difficult questions with no easy solutions, but talking about it openly is a step in the right direction.

Department of Corrections (DOC)

Seeks \$2.9 Billion from Pa.'s next state budget for 2023. The spending proposal for the DOC and the Board of Probation & Parole in Gov. Josh Shapiro's budget offer totals nearly \$2.9 Billion from the state's general fund. A 5.8% increase. The bulk of the proposed increase is for operations of corrections' 24 facilities, followed by elderly men & women inmates' medical care.

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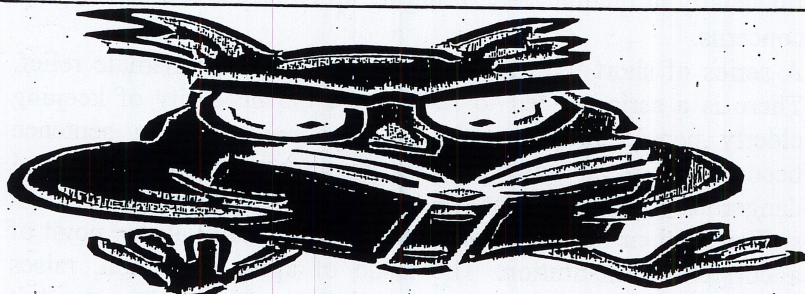
Grey Owl's Chairman, Anthony Brown

What is Re-Entry?

Re-entry is a process in which offenders nurture their personal transformation by managing and navigating their incarceration from the very beginning, because you do not want to waste time taking time for granted. Re-entry is active, not passive. It is marked by initiative, self-discovery, trial & error, personal application and by consistently seeking and engaging in positive opportunities for change. The process consists of, the level of understanding of what brought us to our present condition; prison. Acknowledging and accepting responsibility for the unhealthy values and attitudes we had nurtured and the levels of commitment to address those issues I can go on and on, re-entry should be a priority not something that is required to make parole. If you are trying to live a better, more productive life, rather here on the inside or in society, re-entry plays a valuable part in one's way of living. It is not something that we want to take part in, we have to apply it to our everyday way of living.

By Co-Chair: David Marks

Sources: Right-to-Know (May, 2022); Straight Ahead; Prison Health News (June, 2023); FAMM (January, 2023)



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ACLU AT AMERICA'S EXPENSE, PART 1

The United States is the largest incarcerator in the world, with 2.3 million people behind bars. Prisoners across the country are also getting older and experiencing all the same ailments that afflict those of the same age who are not behind bars, our extreme sentencing policies and a growing number of life sentences have effectively turned many of our correctional facilities into veritable nursing homes— and taxpayers are paying for it.

From 1980 to 2010 the United States prison population grew over 11 times faster than the general population. During this time, the general population increased by 36%, while the state and federal prison population increased by over 400%. According to the National Institute of Corrections, prisoners age 50 and older are considered “elderly” or “aging” due to unhealthy conditions prior to and during incarceration.

- In 1981, there were 8,853 state and federal prisoners age 55 and older. Today that number stands at 124,000 and experts project that by 2030 this number will be over 400,000. Amounting to over one-third of prisoners in the United States. In other words, the elderly prison population is expected to increase by 4,400% over this fifty-year time span.
- The United States keeps elderly men & women locked up despite an abundance of evidence demonstrating that recidivism drops dramatically with age.

- Given the Nation's current over-incarceration epidemic and persistent economic crisis, lawmakers should consider implementing parole reforms to release those elderly prisoners who no longer pose sufficient safety threats to justify their continued incarceration.
- State and Federal governments spend approximately \$77 billion annually to run our penal system. Over the last 25 years, state corrections spending grew by 674%, substantially outpacing the growth of other government spending, and becoming the fourth largest category of state spending. These corrections' costs are mainly spent on incarceration, and incarcerating aging prisoners cost far more than younger ones. Specifically, this report finds that it cost \$47,135 per year to house an average prisoner in PA, but costs \$68,270 per year to house a prisoner age 50 and older in PA if one type of medication is involved. To put that number into context, the average American household makes \$40,000 per year in income.
- Releasing many of these individuals will ease the burden on taxpayers and reunite prisoners with their families to care for them. While some of these prisoners may turn to the government for their Healthcare or other needs, government expenditures on released aging prisoners will be far cheaper than the costs of incarcerating them.
- Based on statistical analyses of available data, this report estimates that releasing an aging prisoner will save states, on average \$66,294 per year per prisoner, including Healthcare, other public benefits, parole and any housing cost or tax revenue. Even on the low end, states will save at least \$28,362 per year for each released aging prisoner.

As detailed in the ACLU's 2011 Smart Reform is Possible Report, States have enacted cost-saving. Some states like Louisiana, and New York have enacted laws that would allow for the release of many aging prisoners. At the hearing, the parole board can use a risk assessment instrument to decide whether the prisoner can be safely released. It then provides a fiscal impact analysis demonstrating the cost saving states can realize by

depopulating prisons of those elderly Americans who pose little threat to public safety.

This report makes a number of data-driven findings and issues recommendations for reform. Part 1 provides detailed statistics of our aging prison population and the lower safety risks associated with this population. Part 1 closes with so many men and women to grow old behind bars.¹

CADBI QUARTERLY UPDATE/ OCTOBER 3, 2023

Grey Owls News Alert:

On Tuesday, October 3, 2023, the PA House Judiciary Committee held a hearing on HB587, The Geriatric & Medical Parole bill, sponsored by Rep. Kinsey From Philadelphia. This is the same bill sponsored by Senator Street SB136. After hearing, Rep. Kinsey and other Representatives both for and against, the committee voted 15-10 in favor. All fourteen Democrats and one Republican (Rep. Schemel from Waynesboro) voted in favor of the bill.

The Bill will now move to the House Floor for a vote by the whole House. A date has not yet been scheduled. Once that happens, the Bill will head to the Senate for the same process, before going to Governor Shapiro's desk.²

Note: From the "How A Bill Becomes A Law In PA,"

The above Bill is at Step 4 of the "How a Bill Becomes Law." flyer.

Debate: When a Bill reaches the floor of the House or Senate, it must be considered on three separate days before final passage. This is intended to slow down the legislative process and make sure there is time for public input. The first day of consideration is a reading of the bill with no vote taken and no amendments. The second day can have amendments offered. If a bill requires expenditures of funds it must be sent to the appropriations committee for a "fiscal note" on how much the bill will cost prior to a third consideration. The third day is the vote. 102 are required for passage in the House and 26 in the Senate (constitutional majority).

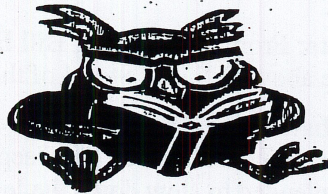
A New Hope Don't Let This Bill Go To Waste

Please contact your local State Representative(s) and your State Senator(s) and request their full support for Bill No. 587 (HB587). Representative Kinsey and Other. It's not only a major step into ushering the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania out of its stand-still state of existence, into a more fair and reasonable one, But also finally giving transformed lifers & long termers whom have matured and are not part of the solution, rather than the problem - a second chance at life in the free world, majority of the State throughout the entire country have either allowed parole to be an option for lifers & long termers, or they have changed their laws in order to make it a possibility. Pennsylvania is overdue for change so let's change it together.³

Sources:

1. Prison Health News, 8/15/23
2. CABDI West
3. Pennsylvania Lifers Work Profile Created by Lifers at SCI Graterford, 4th page insert.

We want to thank all the Grey Owls members and non-members, especially the Youth for taking time to read and digest these Newsletters. And also I would like to thank for all the positive feedback, encouragement and support coming in from SCI Forest.



Chairman— Anthony Brown
Co-Chair— David Marks

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ACLU's At American's Expense: Part 2 Demographics Of A Rapidly Graying Prison Population

There is an overwhelming consensus among correctional experts, criminologists, and the Nation's Institute of Corrections that 50 years of age is the appropriate point marking when a prisoner becomes "aging" or "elderly". The lack of appropriate healthcare and access to healthy living prior to incarceration, added to the heavy stress of life behind bars, accelerates the aging process of prisoners so that they are actually physically older than average individuals. This report therefore uses age 50 and older to define the population of aging prisoners and provides data on this age group.

Approximately 16% of the National Prison population is age 50 and older. There are several jurisdictions with far higher percentages of aging prisoners including West Virginia (20%), New Hampshire (20%), Massachusetts (19%), Florida (18%), and Texas (18%), Pennsylvania is (9.5%).

There are 246,600 aging prisoners nationwide. The four jurisdictions with the highest actual number of prisoners age 50 and older are California (27,680), Texas (27,455), Florida (17,980), and Pennsylvania (11,000). The population of prisoners age 55 and older is expected to increase by 4,400% from 1981 to 2030. In 1981, there were only 8,853 prisoners age 55 and older. Corrections experts project that by 2030,

there will be over 400,000 such prisoners, amounting to one-third of the prison population. This astronomical projection does not even include those prisoners ages 50-54 and is therefore a lower projection than the actual future elderly prison population.

As is the case with the overall American Prison population, America's Elderly prisoners are overwhelmingly male. Women make up a mere 6% of aging prisoners.

Black prisoners comprise the largest segment of aging prisoners (42%). However White (33%) and Hispanic (15%) of aging prisoners are over represented, meaning they make up a far higher percentage of aging prisoner population than they do the general U.S. population.

LOWER PUBLIC SAFETY RISK OF AGING PRISONERS

- The elderly prison population is increasingly comprised of individuals sentenced to prison for long periods of time (20 years or more) and increasing remain in prison into age. In 1979, only 2% of aging prisoners fell into this category nationwide.

Data collected from jurisdictions shows that this percentage is far higher now. For example, the percentage of aging prisoners falling into this category is now 15% in PA.

- The majority of aging prisoners are not incarcerated for murder, but are in prison for lower level crimes. For example, in PA., 65% of aging prisoners are in prison for nonviolent drug crimes, property crimes, and other nonviolent crimes.
- Research has conclusively shown that by the age of 50 most people have significantly outlived the years in which they are most likely to commit crimes. For example, arrest rates drop to just over 2% at age 50 and are almost 0% at age 65.
- There is also overwhelming evidence that prisoners 50 and older are far less likely to return to prison for new crimes than younger cohorts.

- The statistics taken together strongly suggest that the increasing of aging prisoner is not due to any "ELDERLY CRIME WAVE" but rather due to younger prisoner who are sentenced to longer terms in prison, often for not so serious crimes.
- As is the case with the overall American prison population, America's elderly prisoners are overwhelmingly male. Women make up a mere 6% of aging prisoners.
- **CONCLUSION:** The crisis of our aging prison population is not an accident but the result of policy choices that hurt incarcerated people their loved ones, families and communities fortunately we can address these policy missteps. States should follow the lead of advocates who are fighting to reduce sentencing like life without parole, and expand release mechanisms like elder parole, ensuring people have safe places to live in our communities.

Tools to reduce the aging prison population remain underutilized

While attention to the crisis has grown in recent years many of the available tools - such as parole and compassionate release - have been underutilized. The failure to release older adults from prison has had deadly repercussions. From 2001 to 2018, over 30,500 people aged 55 or older died in prison and almost all these deaths (97%) were due to illnesses

Burt Cain, Warden of Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola.

You actually create victims by not letting elderly prisoners go and using your resources on rehabilitation for the one that are going to get out... When I came here and saw the elderly population, I SAID "GOD. WELL WHY ARE THEY HERE? Our name is Corrections to correct deviant behavior but there's nothing to correct in the guys; They're harmless..."

Promote A Lifestyle of Wellness with David Marks

Get adequate sleep, flex your sleep muscles. When you don't sleep enough, the brain cannot do its housekeeping of removing cellular waste products. The resulting abundance of debris in the brain can eventually result in excess inflammation. Inflammation, as seen in study after study, exacerbates depression, anxiety, and a host of other mental health conditions. Very few of us can go to sleep based solely of willpower; you need to invite relaxation in. That could be through a ritual like taking a shower, reading a book, or journaling. If anxiety keeps you up, try progressive muscle relaxation. Lying in your bed, breathe in and tense a muscle group for about ten seconds. When you exhale, completely release those muscles. Take a few breaths and move on to the next muscle group. Start with your hands; move up your body and then down. Some people do three rounds - whatever it takes to help your body relax, which is one of many steps toward a lifestyle of wellness.

Gregory Scott Brown, M.D.
Men's Health May/June 2022

We want to thank all the Grey Owls members and non-members, especially the Youth for taking time to read and digest these Newsletters. And also I would like to thank for all the positive feedback, encouragement and support coming in from SCI Forest.

Chairman- Anthony Brown
Co-Chair- David Marks



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GREY OWLS Est. 2020 a Subcommittee of the
Lifer's and Long-Termers Committee
Founder: Anthony Brown, Co-Founder David Marks
Co-Founder: William "Cool Pop" Abbott (Deceased)


HOPE FOR CHANGE
Since 2011

GREY OWLS COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER

This sub-committee will be composed of individuals age 50 and over interested in having mature conversations on certain issues. Send all request slips to the Attention : Anthony Brown, HFC Treasurer and Grey Owls founder.

THE AGING PRISON POPULATION: CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES [PART 1]

New data from the Census Bureau reveals that the U.S. medial age rose to a high of 39.8 years: An increase of three and a half years in the last 23 years. This U.S. prison population is aging, too and at a much faster rate than the nation as a whole. The aging of the prison population is the result of a series of disastrous policy decisions in policing, sentencing, and reentry over roughly the last half-century. And while prisons and jails are unhealthy for people of all ages, older adults' interactions with these systems are particularly dangerous if not outright deadly.

AGING THROUGHOUT THE CRIMINAL LEGAL SYSTEM

Older adults are increasingly ensnared in all parts of the criminal legal process: According to the most recent available data on local jails across the U.S. from 2020 to 2024 - during the COVID-19 pandemic, which was particularly dangerous for older adults. Meanwhile, older people make up five times as much of the prison population as they did three decades ago. From 1991 to 2021, the percentage of the state and federal prison population nationwide age 55 or older swelled from 3% to a whopping 15%. This growth is seen even more acutely when looking at people serving life sentences; as of 2020, 30% of people serving life sentences were at least 55 years old, with more than 61,400 older adults sentenced to die in prison

THE DANGERS OF AGING IN PRISON

Prisons are unhealthy places for anyone of any age, but keeping older adults locked up is particularly dangerous. A robust body of research shows that incarceration itself accelerates aging: People face more chronic and life-threatening illnesses earlier than we would expect outside of prison, and physiological signs of aging occur in people younger than expected. In addition, a conservative estimate of more than 44,000 people 45 and older experience solitary confinement in state prison each year, in conditions that shorten lives and can be detrimental

to physical, mental, and emotional health. Years of limited resources, inaccessibility, and understaffing in prison healthcare have created a situation in which "each year spent in prison takes two years off an individual's life expectancy". The same factors of prison healthcare resources that jeopardizes older people's health is not just ineffective - it's also expensive.

THE HIGH COST OF INCARCERATING OLDER PEOPLE

State and Federal government spend increasingly more money on consistently inadequate healthcare for their growing populations of older adults. Considering the proportion of Pennsylvania's prison population over the age of 50 has risen from about 4% in 1994 to 25% in 2019, and that prison healthcare spending per person has ballooned in the intervening years. The cost of incarcerating adults only appears to be growing. As long as people are in prison, they should receive the care they need to be safe and healthy. But especially at the state and local level, every dollar spent in prisons is a dollar that could have expanded and improved community health services - and provided superior care. It doesn't make sense to spend so much money locking people up in places that are not only dangerous to their health, but more costly to care for them - especially when there is little public safety argument to justify doing so.

LOW RISK OF RE-ARREST AND RE-INCARCERATION FOR OLDER ADULTS

The older someone is, the less likely they are to be arrested following release from prison, according to the most recent government study of recidivism. In fact, people released at age 65 or older are the least likely of any age group to be re-arrested in the five years following release.

POLICING

The criminalization of mental illness among older adults is significant as well. Three in nine people age 65 and older have Alzheimer's dementia (one of many kinds of dementia). The most recent national data available indicate that people with cognitive disabilities are over-represented in jails and prisons: 31% of people in 2012 and 24% of people in state prisons in 2016 reported a cognitive disability. As greater numbers of older adults with cognitive disabilities encounter police, older prison populations are likely to grow.

SENTENCING

State and Federal sentencing policies from the 1970's to the 2000's resulted in what researchers have called "a prescription for increase in older inmates: more prisoners, more prison beds, more lifers, and less parole." State and Federal laws enacted in this time period resulted in more incarcerated people serving longer sentences via policies that:

- Increased sentence lengths and established mandatory minimums.
- Required people to serve upwards of 85% of their sentences in prison ("Truth in Sentencing" laws) before becoming parole eligible.

- Abolished Parole
- Reduced the allowed time earned for good conduct and,
- Instituted other “Tough on Crime” sentencing laws longer and harsher sentences top the list of the most obvious mechanisms by which the national prison population exploded in the 1990’s and 2000’s, but they also created the problem of today’s aging prison population: many of the people who received these sentences are still behind bars now that they are twenty, or thirty years older, in some cases, forty years older.

TOOLS TO REDUCE THE AGING PRISON POPULATION REMAIN UNDERUTILIZED

While attention to this crisis has grown in recent years, many of the available tools - such as parole and compassionate release - have been underutilized. The failure to release older adults from prison has deadly repercussions: from 2001 to 2018, over 30,500 people aged 55 or older died in prison and almost all of these deaths (97%) were due to illness.

PAROLE

In a study of parole in PA and Maryland, the Justice Policy Institute found that between 2017 and 2021, parole grant rates are higher for people between the ages of 31 and 35 (43%) with rates declining as age increases: people over 60 are paroled at a rate of 28%. Older adults serving long sentences are often denied parole, with boards focusing on the nature of their original offense instead of their preparedness for reentry. That being said, parole is not even a option for large swaths of the prison population. Almost half of all people serving life without parole (LWOP) sentence are at least 50 years old, and one in four is at least 60 years old. Even some “geriatric” or “elder” parole laws intended to facilitate the release of older incarcerated people, needlessly exclude many old people who would otherwise be eligible.

COMPASSIONATE RELEASE

Compassionate release (often called medical parole) is an important release mechanism for older adults, but is not used nearly often enough. The application process is cumbersome, and many people die before they ever receive a decision, In addition, decisions about medical eligibility for release are often filtered through state parole boards, whose membership often includes former corrections officials, former parole or probation officers and former prosecutors. These are not vocations particularly invested in release, much less promoting individual health and well being outside the carceral system. Parole boards lack knowledge about serious and terminal illnesses. As well as the general aging process, can create significant barriers to release. Physician reluctance to offer a prognosis, parole board rejections of medical recommendations, offense carveouts and barriers to discharge planning also factor into the underutilization of compassionate release.

To be continued in the next newsletter

Promote A Lifestyle of Wellness with David Marks

Fine tuning your emotional intelligence. Are you mentally fit? You do reps in the gym, but what about your mind? Here's how to boost your emotional sharpness. The skill of emotional intelligence is simply the ability to recognize your feelings and understand how you're responding to them. A few tips on how to increase your emotional intelligence. (a) When you're feeling something you don't like, such as disappointment, don't pretend you're not feeling it. Accept that you will experience difficult emotions. (b) After you identify a feeling, ask yourself what it might be telling you. Letting yourself have the feeling of frustration gives you the time and opportunity to figure out what to do about it. (c) Get familiar and personal about your feelings. The clearer you are, the more those feelings help you know the problem to address. Become more aware and comfortable with your feelings and increase your range of emotional intelligence.

- *March of this year marks our first year anniversary of the Grey Owls. We hope to continue on and progress as time passes.*
- *More members (must be 50 and older) are always welcome..*
- *Attendance at meetings is also very important. Your ideas and input is always welcome and often needed.*

Sources: Pennsylvania Prison Society. Written by: Emily Widra, August 2, 2023.
Men's Health 2022

We want to thank all the Grey Owls members and non-members, especially the Youth for taking time to read and digest these Newsletters. Also I am thankful for all the positive feedback, encouragement and support that we received from SCI Forest.

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HOPE FOR CHANGE
Since 2011

MARCH 2025

HFC

1st. EDITION

HOPE FOR CHANGE

THE YOUTH OUTLET NEWSLETTER

*Prior to establishing the GREY OWLS NEWSLETTER Publication, it was asked by many why won't you do something for the youth. "You are so right we all interact with each other." CHAIRMAN-Anthony Brown & Co-Chairman David Marks of the GREY OWLS with (HFC) HOPE FOR CHANGE is introducing a new Publication for our younger population @ SCI Forest, Called THE YOUTH OUTLET NEWSLETTER because you do matter, this newsletter is about you! But hear me out it's one thing to read this in the morning and forget about it at night. But it's another thing to read and use it during your incarceration so as you get older you are sharp as a tack. NOW! This does not mean all oldheads are sharp. So yes we need to talk with each other and have these talks. I know Co-Chairman and myself are willing to talk with you, the question is, are you? I look forward to working with our youth. I ask as you read this and other newsletters, may you pass this along, do not set it down on the table and walk away, pass it to another young man or anyone. **THANK YOU !***

JUST SO YOU KNOW: Healthy thinking, sometimes when you feel like you can not it take anymore or another minute, take some deep breaths. You are not alone in this journey. If you're incarcerated there are things that might make you feel depressed, alone, and sad: you have to recognize your triggers of those things that make you sad or feel depressed. I encourage you to talk to someone, a friend or counselor, or utilize the C.P.S. (Certified Peer Assistant). Let someone, anyone know you're depressed or just not feeling yourself. Please do not allow your Pride to stop you from seeking help. I say this to you because you are worthy to obtain the best possible way of life that you can make for yourself on the inside. "I came here by myself; I'm leaving by myself." When you came to jail you brought with you everyone you love and who loves you, every person whom you write or call, and when you leave you will take those people with you. We can not speak for everyone, but we will say this, **PEACE** is something you have inside of yourself. Peace is what can give understanding of somethings you can not understand. It might sound stupid but its actually true. Most incarcerated individuals go through hardship within themselves. Sometimes we are our own worst enemies. I know that to be true for most of us due to our incarceration. Sometimes when things go wrong we blame ourselves. Well ! It's not our fault all the time! I think that we on the inside need to **BELIEVE** in ourselves. Believe you can accomplish anything you set your heart and mind to. You can do anything positive that will increase positive thinking and energy. Take one step at a time and know that just taking the first step is doing something for yourself. I really want us on the inside to be more sure of who we are. There are so many obstacles that try to hinder our growth, mentally, and emotionally. Incarceration wasn't designed to be easy. It was meant to do exactly what it is doing {But this is a positive column so I will not go there now!}

(Continued from front pg.1)

Rise Up! Be better. Strive for something better. Don't let stinking deter you from doing new things. I believe in you. I believe that the best of you is yet to come. Get out of your own way. Try something different today... running, walking, reading, put in for weightroom. Do something! Always remember, you are not alone. If you need to seek help then do that. You have resources around you. This might not be the life you envisioned for yourself; but if you don't like it, change it by being your best self. Do positive things to change your current circumstances. Live for today and be better today than you were yesterday. Healthy thinking isn't a miracle to mental health. What is, is changing that way you think about yourself. (1.) I believe in myself. (2.) I am a good person. (3.) Loving myself is everything.

By: David Marks & Anthony Brown

Communication is Key

Anger Management *Is your temper hijacking your life? These tips and techniques can help you get anger under control and express your feelings in healthier ways.*

Understanding anger: Anger is a normal, healthy emotion, neither good nor bad. Like any emotion, it conveys a message, telling you that a situation is upsetting, unjust, or threatening. If you knee-jerk reaction to anger is to explode, however, that message never has a chance to be conveyed. So while it's perfectly normal to feel anger when you've been mistreated or wronged, anger becomes a problem when you express it a way that harms yourself or others. You might think that venting your anger is healthy, that the people around you are too sensitive, that your anger is justified, or that you need to show your fury to get respect. But the truth is that anger is much more likely to have a negative impact on the way people see you, impair your judgement, and get in the way of success.

CLUES THAT THERE'S MORE TO YOUR ANGER THAN MEETS THE EYE

The true goal of anger management isn't to suppress feelings of anger, but rather to understand the message behind the emotion and express it in a healthy way without losing control.

- When you do, you'll not only feel better, you'll also be more likely to get your needs met, be better able to manage conflict in your life, and strengthen your relationship.
- Do you feel that emotions like fear, guilt, or shame don't apply to you? If you are uncomfortable with different emotions, disconnected, or stuck on an angry one-note response to situations, it's important to get back in touch with your feelings.

"HELP GUIDE" EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN-CEEL PROGRAM. REQUEST TO HOPE FOR CHANGE (HFC) ABOUT THIS PROGRAM. THERE ARE OTHER PROGRAMS. ASK THE BLOCK REP. TO SHOW YOU.

FIND HEALTHY WAYS TO EXPRESS YOUR ANGER

Get moving- A brisk walk around the yard or dayroom. Learning how to resolve conflict in a positive way will help you strengthen your relationships rather than damaging them.

GIVE YOURSELF A REALITY CHECK

When you start getting upset about something, take a moment to think about the situation. Ask yourself:

HFC

MAY 2025

7th EDITION

GREY OWLS COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER

EVERYONE'S IN RECOVERY FROM SOMETHING

May is nationally recognized as Mental Health Awareness month. To honor this LET'S GET FREE & GREY OWLS is launching our "EVERYONE'S IN RECOVERY FROM SOMETHING". This message is intended to be used as a tool to fight mental health related stigma. It provides validation, is a reminder that you are **NOT ALONE**, and inspires **HOPE**. We believe this message will positively impact broad demographics and may even help to help and save countless lives. This collaborative movement aligns with the goals of our incarcerated brother's and sister's. On our GREY OWLS NEWSLETTER and the YOUTH OUTLET NEWSLETTER we always promote wellness and recovery information. GREY OWLS and LET'S GET FREE invite you to be part of this extraordinary movement, "EVERYONE'S IN RECOVERY FROM SOMETHING". This could be verbal, financial, psychological, or physical abuse; anger, fear, hate, addiction, depression etc. .

You need to put yourself in that recovery environment, physical or mental space. Help us so we can help each other to develop and promote wellness. Transform your mind into a recovery environment by thinking about moments you've felt joy, peace, and love. You can share your favorite of those moments. Of H.O.P.E. .

Healing

Optimism

Possibilities

Empowerment

How has H.O.P.E. helped you to cope with life's challenges? _____

You can write your moments of hope on a HFC Request slip and send to: Anthony Brown - Chairman of GREY OWLS.

From: Claudia Jones

The Mental Health Effects of Being in Prison

FN.# 1

According to the Prison Policy Initiative 11 million people go to jail and 600,000 people enter prison in United States each year. Many justice - involved individuals have pre-existing mental health issues. And some individuals who were considered mentally healthy prior to their arrest develop mental health symptoms once they are in prison. Being in prison can take a serious toll on an individual's psychological well-being. New conditions often develop, and pre-existing conditions may worsen. Sadly, many justice - involved individuals are released back into the community without ever receiving any type of treatment.

Mental Health Concerns Among Incarcerated Individuals

According to the American Psychological Association, 64% of incarcerated individuals in State prison report mental health concerns. Substance abuse is rampant among incarcerated individuals as well. Quite often, mental health issues and substance abuse issues occur alongside one another. Increased incarceration rates in the United States have disproportionately affected racial and ethnic minority populations. As of 2021 38.5% if incarcerated individuals are Black, 30% are Hispanic. A.P.A. estimates that between 10% and 25% of incarcerated individuals have a "serious mental illness" such as schizophrenia. In the general population, it's estimated that about 7 - 8% of individuals have a serious mental illness. Many other incarcerated individuals may experience depressive disorders, anxiety disorders, or P.T.S.D. . For some, these issues may be a pre-existing condition. For others, the issues may have started after their incarcerations.

THE TOLL PRISON TAKES ON PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL BEING

Separated From Loved Ones

We can no longer be with our friends and families. Missing our loved ones and not being part of their daily lives increases feelings of **Isolation** and **Loneliness**. Additionally, we can't be there for our loved ones, so we may worry about those we can't support, such as an elderly family member. We may also experience a lot of grief over missing out on a child's activities or not being able to be there for a partner.

Physical Environment Adds to Stress

Concrete walls, little natural light, and a lack of over all stimulation can take a serious toll on mental health. People in prison have few ways to relieve stress, and their sterile environment is likely to fuel boredom, which can be quite stressful in itself. But others are likely to develop mental health issues as a result of the extreme isolation. Studies show solitary confinement for the elderly increases the risk of anxiety, insomnia, paranoia, aggression, and depression.

Lack of Treatment

Even when mental health concerns are known, disorders often go untreated. Additionally, services in prison may not be all that effective. A 2024 study published in the American Journal of Public Health found that 26% of inmates were diagnosed with mental health conditions at some point during their lives. Only about 18% of them were taking medication for their condition when they became incarcerated. Of those who were taking medication, less than 50% were prescribed medication during their admission, so incarcerated individuals' conditions often go unrecognized. Quite often, inmates are given simple screening questionnaires to complete at intake. They aren't assessed by a mental health professional at all and likely never come into contact with one throughout their time in prison.

Consequences of Inadequate Treatment

The consequences of inadequate mental health care contributes greatly to the suffering of the affected individuals and their families. Untreated psychiatric conditions may increase the risk of recidivism. Justice - involved people who have mental health issues **Are 70% More Likely To Return To Prison** at least once.

State Hospital Closures

Since the 1970's there has been a big push toward the deinstitutionalization of individuals with mental health issues. On the surface, closing "Asylums" and institutions that housed people with severe psychiatric conditions seems like a good idea. Many of the institutions were understaffed and unable to give patients the individual treatment they needed. Closing the doors to psychiatric hospitals and other long - term institutions, however has had serious consequences. The community mental health centers intended to replace long - term institutions quickly lost their government funding, leaving a gap in the social safety net. The lack of long - term treatment options contributed to a major increase in incarcerations. Anyone who is facing incarceration should consider revealing any pre - existing mental health conditions. Disclosing those issues may increase the likelihood of accessing treatment. But bigger changes are needed at the systemic and legal levels. Better access to mental health services overall may prevent crime. Treating people during incarceration and providing access to ongoing treatment after they're released may reduce recidivism rates.

Health Life Style

Health Aging

By: Mayo Clinic Staff

FN. # 2

Talking Can Help

Talking about feelings can be hard and finding someone you can trust in prison isn't easy. Talking can help you cope with negative feelings. Every unit has a Certified Peer Specialist (CPS) Worker. They are trained to be listener and keep what said confidential. If you are experiencing problems or just need to talk, try the CPS worker.

Diabetes is likely the leading metabolic endocrine disease in the country; it afflicts approximately 35 million people in the U.S.A.. It is the result of insufficient or ineffective activity of insulin (hormone secreted from the pancreas). Untreated diabetics have elevated blood sugar (**hyperglycemia**). There are two major types of diabetes.

Type 1 Diabetes: Is caused by total destruction of insulin-producing cells in the pancreas. Type 1 diabetics must take insulin injections one to three times per day for the rest of their lives.

Type 2 Diabetes: The pancreas produces insulin, but in insufficient amount. An appropriate lifestyle change (diet, exercise, and weight management) may correct the problem. If this doesn't correct the problem then drugs called **oral hypoglycemic** are prescribed. If the pills don't work then they must take insulin also.

TYPE 2 TYPICALLY OCCURS AFTER 40 YEARS OF AGE

Kennedy & Masharani - 2015 - Basic and clinical pharmacology pancreatic hormones and antic drug

MEDICARE: Medicare is the federal health insurance program for people: • age 65 and older, • under 65 with certain disabilities, and of any age with End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) (permanent kidney failure requiring dialysis or a kidney transplant).

Even if you do not retire at age 65 you may need to sign up for Medicare within 3 months of your 65th birthday to avoid a lifetime late enrollment penalty.

FN. # 3

Promote A Lifestyle of Wellness With David Marks

Clarify Our Values Toward Wellness

Our values are the guiding principles and beliefs in what's most important to us. A big plus to a wellness way of living is when we act in ways that counter our value system, producing likely feelings of stress, guilt, and self betrayal. Are you making choices that are in alignment with your values? Well, just in case... Distinguish between the things we can and can't control in our life to direct our efforts into worthwhile outlets. Forgive yourself for past mistakes and learn from them. In order to do this we must face all of our mishaps, fears, and obstacles that may have hindered us from moving forward toward certain paths that can be beneficial in our lives. So therefore we must face these barriers to lead toward a better and clearer well-being. So let's embrace change, loss, and things we dread doing that must be accomplished, all in which amounts to us making healthy decisions and actively sought goals. When it comes to the road of clarifying our values, we have to be mindful that what we put in is what we'll get out, so let's not sell ourselves short when it comes to our own self worth, which also would amount to how much you value yourself. **Clarifying (Our) Values Enhances A Wellness**

Way of Living.

FN. # 4

How To Seek The Truth

1. Do not simply believe what you hear just because you have heard it for a long time.
2. Do not be quick to listen to rumors.
3. Do not confirm anything just because someone else believes it.
4. Do not foolishly make assumptions.
5. Do not abruptly draw conclusions by what you see and hear.
6. Do not be fooled by outward appearances.
7. Do not hold on tightly to any view or idea just because you are comfortable with it.
8. Do not accept as fact anything that you yourself find to be logical.

By: Demetrius Williams

FN. # 5

We want to thank all the **Grey Owls** members and non-members and especially the youth for taking time to read and digest these Newsletters. And also I would like to thank for all the positive feedback, encouragement, and support coming in from SCI Forest.

- "GREY OWLS NEWSLETTER" Written / Edited by: David Marks & Anthony Brown
- **Sources:**
 - FN. # 1 LET'S GET FREE By: Claudia Jones
 - FN. # 2 THE TOLL PRISON TAKES ON PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL BEING By: Mayo Clinic Staff, Health Life Style & Aging
 - FN. # 3 TALKING CAN HELP By: CPS Carl Selby
 - FN. # 4 PROMOTE A LIFESTYLE OF WELLNESS By: David Marks
 - FN. # 5 HOW TO SEEK THE TRUTH By: Demetrius Williams
- May of 2025 is Mental Health Awareness Month, and we hope to continue on and progress and celebrate this month each year.
- **More non-members are welcome to sign up (Must be 50 years and older)**
Send HFC Request slip to Attn: Anthony Brown, HFC Treasurer or GREY OWLS
- **Attendance at meeting is also very important, Your ideas and input is always welcome and often needed.**

GREY OWLS - MISSION STATEMENT

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The GREY OWLS cannot offer any legal advice.

✦ **Congratulations to FOREST 8** ✦

GREY OWLS Est. 2020

Founder & Chairman: Anthony Brown

Co-Founder & Co-Chairman: David Marks

Co-Founder & Co-Chairman: William "Cool Pop" Abbott (Deceased)

HOPE FOR CHANGE

Since 2011

- How important is it in the grand scheme of things? / Is it really worth getting angry about it?
- Is it worth ruining the rest of my day? / Is my response appropriate to the situation?

PROMOTE A LIFESTYLE OF WELLNESS WITH: DAVID MARKS.

TAKING CARE OF YOUR OVERALL MENTAL AND PHYSICAL WELL-BEING CAN HELP EASE TENSION AND DEFUSE ANGER PROBLEMS

Get enough sleep- A lack of sleep can exacerbate negative thoughts and leave you feeling agitated and short tempered. Try to get seven to nine hours of good quality sleep even if it's naps during the day.

Exercise Regularly- It's an effective way to burn-off tension and ease stress, and it can leave you feeling more relaxed and positive throughout the day. Good for mental & physical health.

TALKING ABOUT PERSONAL THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS

Talking can be a way to cope with a problem you have been carrying in your head for a while. In many prisons there are prisoners who have been trained as listeners and they offer a confidential service. We know them as (C.P.S.) workers. Talking to someone who is experiencing the same situation can help you to feel less isolated and feeling listened to can help you feel more supported.

KEEPING YOURSELF BUSY IS KEY. I FEEL BETTER WHEN I AM BUSY

Regular physical activity and exercise can help your physical and mental health. Researchers have found that even moderate exercise in a prison setting has a positive effect on mental health and is effective in reducing the risk of depression. You might want to be sport-related, anything that gets you moving can make you feel better. If you are slightly older, find out if the prison offers any special wellness time to help you manage your weight and blood pressure as well as any long term health conditions. Set yourself achievable goals such as getting a little fitter or losing some weight.

THINK MORE POSITIVELY

In difficult situations, your thoughts are more likely to be negative. This can lead to feeling anxious, guilty, or angry. This negative thinking can become habitual, particularly when life is challenging. Over time this can lead to depression or become a barrier to making changes and improvements to our lives.

Grounding Techniques

Grounding is an exercise that helps keep you in the present moment and reality. It can be helpful in managing overwhelming feelings, intense anxiety, or nerves.

(Name #5 things you can see) (Name #4 things you can feel) (Name #3 things you can hear)
(Name #2 things you can smell) (Name #1 thing good about you) **By: Carl Selby C.P.S.**

• **"THE YOUTH OUTLET NEWSLETTER"** Written / Editor by: David Marks and Anthony Brown. / Edited By: Rakim Jordan and Kennel Spady

• **Sources: Just so you know and Rise Up! Be Better. Strive for something better** By: David Marks & Anthony Brown (1st and 2nd pg.)

Promote a lifestyle of wellness with David Marks:

(Talking about personal thoughts and feelings pg.3) (Keeping yourself busy is key. I feel better when I am busy. pg.3)

• **BE SMART ABOUT ALCOHOL AND DRUGS, DURING INCARCERATION, JUST SAY NO!**

• **Anger Management by: Melinda Smith M.A. and Jeanne Segal PH.D (Communication is Key pg.2) (Clues that there's more to your Anger than meets the eye pg.2) (Find Healthy ways to express your Anger pg.3) (Give yourself a reality check pg.3) (Talk to someone you trust pg.3) (E-Cigarettes by: S. Radcliffe pg.4)**

• **Electronic Cigarettes or E-Cigarettes-** E-cigarette smoking is commonly called vaping. E-cigarettes work by heating a liquid (nicotine) to produce an aerosol that users inhale into their lungs. Lung injuries and death have been linked to the use of E-cigarettes and vaping products. As of Nov. 2019-2,290 related lung injury cases with 47 deaths. A study of 514 patients showed that 16% used only nicotine containing products. Some of the lung injuries had signs of Bronchiolitis Obliterans, referred to as Popcorn Lung Disease, which consists of airways (bronchioles) that are severely inflamed. (Radcliffe) The CDC has identified vitamin E acetate as a chemical of concern among people with lung injuries associated with E-cigarettes. **By: S. Radcliffe, Nov. 2019**

Vaping Lung Disease

MODELS OF ADDICTION

(A) Moral Model - Belief that people abuse alcohol and drugs because they choose to do so.

(B) Disease Model - Belief that people abuse drugs and alcohol because some biologically caused condition.

By: Carl Selby C.P.S.

• *It's important and hopeful to remember that some version of relational healing is possible at every age.*

Congratulations 5 v 5 Basketball Champs

Westside D- Block Team: LEOPARDS / Eastside F- Block Team: CRAIG

35 and Over B- Block

THE YOUTH OUTLET- MISSION STATEMENT

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Take care of yourself and each other!

GREW OWLS Est.2020

Founder & Chairman: Anthony Brown

Co-Founder & Co-Chairman: David marks

Co-Founder & Co-Chairman William "Cool Pop" Abbott (Deceased)

HOPE FOR CHANGE

Since 2011

THIS NEWS LETTER IS UNDER THE GREY OWLS UMBRELLA

MARCH 2025

HFC

1st. EDITION

HOPE FOR CHANGE

THE YOUTH OUTLET NEWSLETTER

*Prior to establishing the GREY OWLS NEWSLETTER Publication, it was asked by many why won't you do something for the youth. "You are so right we all interact with each other." CHAIRMAN-Anthony Brown & Co-Chairman David Marks of the GREY OWLS with (HFC) HOPE FOR CHANGE is introducing a new Publication for our younger population @ SCI Forest, Called THE YOUTH OUTLET NEWSLETTER because you do matter, this newsletter is about you! But hear me out it's one thing to read this in the morning and forget about it at night. But it's another thing to read and use it during your incarceration so as you get older you are sharp as a tack. NOW! This does not mean all oldheads are sharp. So yes we need to talk with each other and have these talks. I know Co-Chairman and myself are willing to talk with you, the question is, are you? I look forward to working with our youth. I ask as you read this and other newsletters, may you pass this along, do not set it down on the table and walk away, pass it to another young man or anyone. **THANK YOU !***

JUST SO YOU KNOW: Healthy thinking, sometimes when you feel like you can not it take anymore or another minute, take some deep breaths. You are not alone in this journey. If you're incarcerated there are things that might make you feel depressed, alone, and sad: you have to recognize your triggers of those things that make you sad or feel depressed. I encourage you to talk to someone, a friend or counselor, or utilize the C.P.S. (Certified Peer Assistant). Let someone, anyone know you're depressed or just not feeling yourself. Please do not allow your Pride to stop you from seeking help. I say this to you because you are worthy to obtain the best possible way of life that you can make for yourself on the inside. "I came here by myself; I'm leaving by myself." When you came to jail you brought with you everyone you love and who loves you, every person whom you write or call, and when you leave you will take those people with you. We can not speak for everyone, but we will say this, **PEACE** is something you have inside of yourself. Peace is what can give understanding of somethings you can not understand. It might sound stupid but its actually true. Most incarcerated individuals go through hardship within themselves. Sometimes we are our own worst enemies. I know that to be true for most of us due to our incarceration. Sometimes when things go wrong we blame ourselves. Well ! It's not our fault all the time! I think that we on the inside need to **BELIEVE** in ourselves. Believe you can accomplish anything you set your heart and mind to. You can do anything positive that will increase positive thinking and energy. Take one step at a time and know that just taking the first step is doing something for yourself. I really want us on the inside to be more sure of who we are. There are so many obstacles that try to hinder our growth, mentally, and emotionally. Incarceration wasn't designed to be easy. It was meant to do exactly what it is doing {But this is a positive column so I will not go there now!}

(Continued from front pg.1)

Rise Up! Be better. Strive for something better. Don't let stinking deter you from doing new things. I believe in you. I believe that the best of you is yet to come. Get out of your own way. Try something different today... running, walking, reading, put in for weightroom. Do something! Always remember, you are not alone. If you need to seek help then do that. You have resources around you. This might not be the life you envisioned for yourself; but if you don't like it, change it by being your best self. Do positive things to change your current circumstances. Live for today and be better today than you were yesterday. Healthy thinking isn't a miracle to mental health. What is, is changing that way you think about yourself. (1.) I believe in myself. (2.) I am a good person. (3.) Loving myself is everything.

By: David Marks & Anthony Brown

Communication is Key

Anger Management *Is your temper hijacking your life? These tips and techniques can help you get anger under control and express your feelings in healthier ways.*

Understanding anger: Anger is a normal, healthy emotion, neither good nor bad. Like any emotion, it conveys a message, telling you that a situation is upsetting, unjust, or threatening. If you knee-jerk reaction to anger is to explode, however, that message never has a chance to be conveyed. So while it's perfectly normal to feel anger when you've been mistreated or wronged, anger becomes a problem when you express it a way that harms yourself or others. You might think that venting your anger is healthy, that the people around you are too sensitive, that your anger is justified, or that you need to show your fury to get respect. But the truth is that anger is much more likely to have a negative impact on the way people see you, impair your judgement, and get in the way of success.

CLUES THAT THERE'S MORE TO YOUR ANGER THAN MEETS THE EYE

The true goal of anger management isn't to suppress feelings of anger, but rather to understand the message behind the emotion and express it in a healthy way without losing control.

- When you do, you'll not only feel better, you'll also be more likely to get your needs met, be better able to manage conflict in your life, and strengthen your relationship.
- Do you feel that emotions like fear, guilt, or shame don't apply to you? If you are uncomfortable with different emotions, disconnected, or stuck on an angry one-note response to situations, it's important to get back in touch with your feelings.

"HELP GUIDE" EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN-CEEL PROGRAM. REQUEST TO HOPE FOR CHANGE (HFC) ABOUT THIS PROGRAM. THERE ARE OTHER PROGRAMS. ASK THE BLOCK REP. TO SHOW YOU.

FIND HEALTHY WAYS TO EXPRESS YOUR ANGER

Get moving- A brisk walk around the yard or dayroom. Learning how to resolve conflict in a positive way will help you strengthen your relationships rather than damaging them.

GIVE YOURSELF A REALITY CHECK

When you start getting upset about something, take a moment to think about the situation. Ask yourself:

- How important is it in the grand scheme of things? / Is it really worth getting angry about it?
- Is it worth ruining the rest of my day? / Is my response appropriate to the situation?

PROMOTE A LIFESTYLE OF WELLNESS WITH: DAVID MARKS.

TAKING CARE OF YOUR OVERALL MENTAL AND PHYSICAL WELL-BEING CAN HELP EASE TENSION AND DEFUSE ANGER PROBLEMS

Get enough sleep- A lack of sleep can exacerbate negative thoughts and leave you feeling agitated and short tempered. Try to get seven to nine hours of good quality sleep even if it's naps during the day.

Exercise Regularly- It's an effective way to burn-off tension and ease stress, and it can leave you feeling more relaxed and positive throughout the day. Good for mental & physical health.

TALKING ABOUT PERSONAL THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS

Talking can be a way to cope with a problem you have been carrying in your head for a while. In many prisons there are prisoners who have been trained as listeners and they offer a confidential service. We know them as (C.P.S.) workers. Talking to someone who is experiencing the same situation can help you to feel less isolated and feeling listened to can help you feel more supported.

KEEPING YOURSELF BUSY IS KEY. I FEEL BETTER WHEN I AM BUSY

Regular physical activity and exercise can help your physical and mental health. Researchers have found that even moderate exercise in a prison setting has a positive effect on mental health and is effective in reducing the risk of depression. You might want to be sport-related, anything that gets you moving can make you feel better. If you are slightly older, find out if the prison offers any special wellness time to help you manage your weight and blood pressure as well as any long term health conditions. Set yourself achievable goals such as getting a little fitter or losing some weight.

THINK MORE POSITIVELY

In difficult situations, your thoughts are more likely to be negative. This can lead to feeling anxious, guilty, or angry. This negative thinking can become habitual, particularly when life is challenging. Over time this can lead to depression or become a barrier to making changes and improvements to our lives.

Grounding Techniques

Grounding is an exercise that helps keep you in the present moment and reality. It can be helpful in managing overwhelming feelings, intense anxiety, or nerves.

(Name #5 things you can see) (Name #4 things you can feel) (Name #3 things you can hear)
(Name #2 things you can smell) (Name #1 thing good about you) **By: Carl Selby C.P.S.**

• **"THE YOUTH OUTLET NEWSLETTER"** Written / Editor by: David Marks and Anthony Brown. / Edited By: Rakim Jordan and Kennel Spady

• **Sources: Just so you know and Rise Up! Be Better. Strive for something better** By: David Marks & Anthony Brown (1st and 2nd pg.)

Promote a lifestyle of wellness with David Marks:

(Talking about personal thoughts and feelings pg.3) (Keeping yourself busy is key. I feel better when I am busy. pg.3)

• **BE SMART ABOUT ALCOHOL AND DRUGS, DURING INCARCERATION, JUST SAY NO!**

• **Anger Management by: Melinda Smith M.A. and Jeanne Segal PH.D (Communication is Key pg.2) (Clues that there's more to your Anger than meets the eye pg.2) (Find Healthy ways to express your Anger pg.3) (Give yourself a reality check pg.3) (Talk to someone you trust pg.3) (E-Cigarettes by: S. Radcliffe pg.4)**

• **Electronic Cigarettes or E-Cigarettes-** E-cigarette smoking is commonly called vaping. E-cigarettes work by heating a liquid (nicotine) to produce an aerosol that users inhale into their lungs. Lung injuries and death have been linked to the use of E-cigarettes and vaping products. As of Nov. 2019-2,290 related lung injury cases with 47 deaths. A study of 514 patients showed that 16% used only nicotine containing products. Some of the lung injuries had signs of Bronchiolitis Obliterans, referred to as Popcorn Lung Disease, which consists of airways (bronchioles) that are severely inflamed. (Radcliffe) The CDC has identified vitamin E acetate as a chemical of concern among people with lung injuries associated with E-cigarettes. **By: S. Radcliffe, Nov. 2019**

Vaping Lung Disease

MODELS OF ADDICTION

(A) Moral Model - Belief that people abuse alcohol and drugs because they choose to do so.

(B) Disease Model - Belief that people abuse drugs and alcohol because some biologically caused condition.

By: Carl Selby C.P.S.

• *It's important and hopeful to remember that some version of relational healing is possible at every age.*

Congratulations 5 v 5 Basketball Champs

Westside D- Block Team: LEOPARDS / Eastside F- Block Team: CRAIG

35 and Over B- Block

THE YOUTH OUTLET- MISSION STATEMENT

We aim to address certain issues pertinent to the youth of our community. Through wisdom, fortitude, and resilience, we will seek to advance the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well being of our young men and in doing so benefiting our immediate community.

DISCLAIMER: The material provided in all newsletters is for information purposes and source.

The Youth Outlet cannot offer any legal advice.

Take care of yourself and each other!

GREW OWLS Est.2020

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