

INSTRUCTOR'S GUIDE
FOR
COUNTDOWN TO FREEDOM FOR MEN VIDEO SERIES

PREPARATION FOR RELEASE: PART TWO

VIDEO 2 OF 6

“How you spend your time is a choice. Time is a precious commodity.”

Overview

Staying out of prison can be a very hard thing to do. Being prepared for your release will help you. Achieving success after your release begins long before the day of your release. You have to decide what you will need and then make a plan to get it.

In this program you discover the importance of

- Examining yourself and your assets.
- Developing a realistic plan.
- Starting to work on your plan before your release.

Long before you are released, you need to take an honest look at yourself and determine what skills you have and where you need to improve. Take the time you have left to educate and improve yourself, taking classes, being mentored, or reading. Don't wait until the last few days to get ready. Understand that you have to motivate yourself to make the changes that will help you to be successful.

Ask yourself these questions:

- Do you really want to succeed on the outside?
- Are you prepared to change what needs to be changed?
- What assets or strengths can you build on?
- What do you need that you don't have?
- What will you do for housing when you're released?
- What type of job skills do you have?
- Is it likely that someone will hire you, even with a record?
- Have you done anything while in prison to build your existing skills or develop new ones?
- Who do you know who can help you?

You should begin to make a plan and to line up resources that you will need upon release, such as housing and clothing, well before you are released. You may call on your family, clergy, or community groups for help. Your plan should be realistic and specific. Consider the following needs and how you will handle getting each:

- Birth certificate
- Social security card
- Valid driver's license/photo ID
- Medical records
- Resume
- Personal budget
- Housing needs
- Job opportunities
- Addiction counseling
- Medical care

Start to put your plan in action before you are released. Write to others who could be of help in giving you work or helping you find housing. Ask your pre-release counselor to help you document any achievements you have had while incarcerated. If you have studied something while in prison, make plans to obtain certification in that topic when you get out. Start to pull together a resume.

The key to success after release is preparation you put in before you get out.

Presentation Suggestions

Use the board or overhead to write this question: *Do you really want to succeed on the outside?* Ask students to respond to this question. Do some people actually not want to succeed? Could the outside world be hard enough that many people commit crimes to get back in prison? Do they know of anybody like that?

Give them the **Anticipation Quiz** to complete prior to viewing the video.

Show the program. Encourage students to make changes to the answers they put down for the Anticipation Quiz while watching the program.

At the conclusion of the program, ask students to discuss any changes they made to the answers on the Anticipation Quiz as a result of watching the program. Follow up the discussion with the **Activities**.

Use the **Discussion Questions** to request oral or written responses from the students.

Give the **Quick Quiz** at the conclusion of class and review the quiz questions as a group.

Assign a **Take Away Activity**, if desired.

Anticipation Quiz

Directions: Answer these questions as completely as possible. You will revise your answers as you watch the program.

1. How long before you are released should you begin to plan for release?

2. Is there one plan for succeeding after release that works for everybody?
3. Who are some people who can help you plan for release?
4. Who should you expect to help motivate you to change?

Answer Key

1. Give yourself as much time as you can, even if you're not sure of your release date.
2. Everybody's plan will be unique, though there are some common sources of help.
3. Family, clergy, community groups, pre-release counselor.
4. You.

Activities

Activity #1

Title: Identifying Needs

Format: Small group

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: Paper and pens

1. Organize the class into groups of three.
2. Give each group paper and pens.
3. Write a few items on the board, such as "driver's license, housing, clothing."
4. Ask each group of students to build on this list by adding other items they might need when released. Give them 10 minutes to do this.
5. Collect the lists and post them around the room. Did anybody get ideas from another group's list that they hadn't thought of? Suggest that they each build such a list for themselves as the beginning of their personal release plan.

Activity #2

Title: Job Description

Format: Individual

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: Paper and pens

1. Ask each student to spend 10 minutes writing a classified advertisement for a job that he would like to get after release. The ad should include the type of business, the job title, the job duties, education or skills required, and salary.
2. Now based on the ad, ask each student to write down at least two things he would need to do to get that job.
3. Have volunteers read their ads and their two action items aloud. Suggest that the students make those two items goals that they will work on in the time before they are released.

Discussion Questions

1. One man in the program says “Don’t get a handout, get a hand up.” What do you think he means? What is the difference between the two?
2. What kinds of plans can you make to deal with your family or friends when you get out? What issues have they had to deal with while you were incarcerated that you can plan to help them overcome?
3. If you could change one thing about the way you’ve spent your time in prison until now, what would it be? Is it too late to make that change?

Quick Quiz

Note: You may read these questions out loud, allowing time for students to respond, or copy and hand this out as a written exercise. If you read the quiz, write responses on the board/overhead.

Directions: Indicate whether each statement is true or false, according to the program.

1. Preparation is the key to success after release.
2. You should change to be the way others want you to be.
3. Fantasizing that everything will be okay when you are released is a good approach.
4. Every reentry plan will be unique.
5. Networking with guys who got out and succeeded is a good strategy.

Answer Key

1. T
2. F
3. F
4. T
5. T

Take Away Activity

Write a list of your achievements and activities that you have performed while in prison. Include substance abuse or counseling you have been through, types of books you have read, courses you have taken, work skills you have gained, and so on. Bring that list to your pre-release counselor and ask him/her to help you document these achievements. If you find you have few things to list, list the things you plan to achieve between now and release and be sure to document those achievements before you leave.