

Foreword

It has been twenty years since the book *Houses of Healing: A Prisoner's Guide to Inner Power and Freedom (HOH)* was first published by The Lionheart Foundation. Since that time more than 100,000 copies, in both English and Spanish, have been distributed to prisons and jails nationally and internationally. As part of its National Emotional Literacy Project for Prisoners, Lionheart has donated more than half of these to prison and jail libraries, prison programs, and individual prisoners throughout the United States.

During the past two decades, *Houses of Healing* has become a pivotal force in helping thousands of incarcerated men and women change life-long patterns of violence and addiction and build productive lives. The program guides prisoners in taking stock of the life experiences that have propelled them into criminal activity while empowering them to take responsibility for their behavior. Houses of Healing has been incorporated into prison programming across the country and enthusiastically utilized by corrections professionals (psychologists, mental health counselors, chaplains, program specialists, recovery staff, etc.), prison volunteers, and prisoners alike.

The Houses of Healing Program (consisting of the book *Houses of Healing*, the facilitator's manual, and video series) has changed the nature of programming in some of the nation's most violent institutions. Yet, the need for programs like Houses of Healing remains enormous. In many prisons and jails, few opportunities exist for prisoners to receive effective support to help them heal the pain of the past and take responsibility for their past actions, present choices, and futures. Through Houses of Healing, The Lionheart Foundation continues to be committed to playing an integral part in redefining our nation's prisons as places for healing and rehabilitation.

Houses of Healing has also received national status in Canada and is listed among core programs recognized by the Correctional Services of Canada. It has been integrated into the Canadian Offender Management System whereby inmates are looked upon more favorably by the Canadian Parole Board if they have participated in a Houses of Healing program. Most recently, the reach of *Houses of Healing* has expanded with the Chinese translation, published in Taiwan (2011).

Revisions to the Program

While the book *Houses of Healing* continues in its original version, this revised edition of the accompanying facilitator's manual has undergone many changes. For those of you familiar with the first edition of the manual, you will see that this version is more structured and includes a wider range of emotional regulation and social problem-solving skills. Despite these changes, the purpose of the Houses of Healing Program remains the same. It is designed to increase participants' self-knowledge and their ability to relate effectively to others, while strengthening their personal accountability. These broad tasks are approached in a variety of ways that include helping participants create meaningful narratives of their lives, working toward healing experiences

of trauma and grief, and learning emotional regulation practices such as relaxation and meditation.

We have expanded on and refined the original components of the program to reflect advances in the fields of mindfulness and emotional regulation. Scientific knowledge in these two areas has grown exponentially in the last ten years and is emerging in a wide range of clinical applications. Increased focus on self-control capacities such as managing anger and developing positive coping strategies supports participants' success across settings and increases their feelings of competence. Without being able to manage one's emotions and responses to the environment, true personal power is always out of reach.

The program presented in this manual imparts the message and spirit of the *Houses of Healing* book while equipping participants with the skills to alter their lives in meaningful and impactful ways. As always, we encourage you to use the material in the way that most benefits the individuals you are serving.

“ I am confident every time I begin a new class with *Houses of Healing* that students at the jail will like it and will want to grow and change because of it. It is a joy to facilitate this class! I have taught over 50 classes over the last six years... and I always end up with a waiting list.

P. Keane, MPS, Teacher and Chaplain. DuPage County Jail, IL

“ I heard an inmate give you the highest accolade. He said, “You can tell who has taken her class and who hasn't by the way they act.” It is important for you to know how many lives you are touching and will continue to touch through your work. These guys are thirsting for what you have to offer.

S. Dubik-Unruh, M.S., Counselor. House of Corrections, Billerica, MA

“ It has only been a few days since we received *Houses of Healing* and the response from inmates has been tremendous. I hear inmates talking about its truthful, inspiring approach to dealing with incarceration and its effects on the human spirit.

Chaplains Mark Brown and Wes Sanchez. Okeechobee C.I., Okeechobee, FL

“ *Houses of Healing* is now and will continue to be an essential component of our A.S.A.T (Alcohol & Substance Abuse Treatment) curriculum. The material has been exceptionally well received. Obviously it is no small feat to actively engage this generally resistant population. *Houses of Healing* not only captures their attention, it inspires the desire to challenge themselves. A rare and refreshing phenomenon.

D. Arnesen, Counselor. Correctional Facility, NY