

THE LIONHEART FOUNDATION

April 26, 2017

Dear Friend,

I hope your year is off to an excellent start. I am so grateful to be able to write that this, Lionheart's 25th anniversary year, is indeed off to a great start with some groundbreaking projects in progress. Our first "Innovative Grant" from the CA Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) continues with exceptional results. About 450 prisoners in solitary confinement registered for and received the Houses of Healing Self-study Course. Lionheart has now received 150 final evaluations on the impact of the course. The scope of participation and feedback from prisoners in solitary is unprecedented.

I could not see myself making the progress I have made without the HOH self-study course. It was as if I was sinking in hatred and resentful quicksand that was stripping me of my humanity, health, and peace but someone reached out and I was willing to accept the helping hand.

Thank *you* so very much for the support you have given to Lionheart. Your great generosity and helping hands have made it possible for us to extend a helping hand to hundreds of thousands of incarcerated adults, highly at-risk teens, teen parents, and the professionals and volunteers who serve them over Lionheart's first quarter century. I know I have written this before, but truly.... no thanks is enough.

Houses of Healing

The Houses of Healing Self-study course for prisoners in solitary:

Prisoners were asked to submit evaluations on their experience with the HOH Self-study course. 95% of the 150 respondents reported an increase in (1) remaining in control of their behavior when upset, (2) taking responsibility for their actions, (3) handling anger in a more positive way and, (4) (amazingly in solitary) feeling more hopeful about life. 89% rated the course "very good" or "excellent." And 100% of respondents indicated that they would recommend the program to others.

I would definitely recommend this self-study course to others. Everybody can benefit from this program. If it helped me it could definitely help others. I say that because I was very skeptical about it being of any help. I am actually asking my family on the streets to buy the book and check it out.

Before participating in this course I felt that I had control over my life, but I found out how untrue that was. I realize now that I can't let my past define me or drag me down. It is up to me to better myself and beat the odds. No longer will I blame others, but will take full responsibility for my life and future actions.

Lionheart has applied for another major grant to bring “the Houses of Healing Self-study Program for Prisoners in Solitary” to 1000 additional prisoners nationally who are kept in this bleak and psychologically destructive environment.

The Power Source Training: A Program to Prepare Lifers and Long-Termers to Facilitate a High Impact Program for Young Adult Prisoners:

Three weeks ago I visited two prisons in California (CSP-Sacramento -also called New Folsom and Mule Creek State Prison) to launch Lionheart’s newest Innovative Grant from the CDCR. I was met with an enthusiastic response from more than a hundred lifers and long-termers. This grant involves training lifers and long-termers to deliver a program that integrates both Power Source and Houses of Healing with 18-23 year olds within the prison system. Because there were many more registrants than there were opportunities for participation, final registration was determined through a lottery. The training is an enormous gift to lifers who see no possibility of being released and to those who have many years of incarceration in front of them. The program opens the door to an opportunity to do something of real significance while incarcerated where they can make a potential life-changing difference for the younger men, many of whom will be released. The training starts this week. Lionheart is also applying for CDCR research approval for this program to gather data on the impact of the training for both the prisoner-facilitators and the young men.

Far and wide:

The impact of HOH continues to expand within and beyond the U.S. as it is utilized in Zimbabwe. It is being translated by a prison advocate and educator into Shona, the native language there. HOH in Spanish continues to be offered in Central and South America and in Chinese in Taiwan. Lionheart programs continue to expand in Canada as well.

The POWER SOURCE and POWER SOURCE PARENTING Programs:

Power Source in the Field: With the publication of the Power Source Workbook, Lionheart is now experimenting with various new avenues for distribution. We are seeking ways to have this new resource catch fire in the field as it offers an evidence-based program that is very economical, EASY to use, FAST to learn, SIMPLE to deliver, and HIGHLY ENGAGING for youth.

*Dear Powersource People. Thanks to you I have a better time controlling my anger. I was mad at everything and everyone. I did not no why until I read this book and found my inner self.
Thank you for writing this book.*

Tom, 15 years old. New York

When I picked Power Source off the shelf and started to look through it, I saw a lot of problems I had that I needed to solve. And as I kept reading through each chapter, I began to realize that I was not alone. It deals with all your problems and answers your questions. Power Source is an awesome book. Thank you for giving me motivation to start taking charge of my life.

David, Grove City, PA

Beth Casarjian, Lionheart's Clinical Director of Youth Programs, continues to support the students most at-risk in East Boston High School learn the social and emotional regulation skills that will empower them to be successful in school, work, and the larger community. Students use the new Power Source Workbook to learn skills such as anger management, reducing risk-taking behavior, while developing adaptive coping strategies to manage trauma and develop positive future orientations. Each week students come to group with stories of how they have used the skills and knowledge in the Workbook. A few weeks ago a student with a history of reacting with physical aggression when distressed told of how she used "Stop. Breathe. And Leave" during a conflict with a teacher. A young man was able to talk a friend out of a fight using "Cool Thoughts" that were covered in the previous session. Every week the students report real life applications of the PS skills during the weekly check-in.

Power Source Parenting (PSP): Beth is also conducting a weekly Power Source Parenting group for teen mothers at Centerboard in Chelsea, MA, a residential Teen Parenting Program under the auspices of the MA Department of Children and Families (MA DCF). She continues to use her onsite facilitation to train and supervise graduate students to carry their knowledge of PSP into their careers. In May, Beth will go to California to train staff from the multi-site Teen Success agency to use PSP as part of their larger "re-boot" grant from the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

I'm thankful for everything I have learned in the PSP program...

I tell other young parents that PSP is a great program...

I have a new positive perspective on myself and I realize I have control over a lot more in life than I thought...

Teen moms from Ruth House, Brockton, MA

EQ2: Lionheart's newest resource, EQ2: The Emotion Coaching Handbook continues to be piloted and revised through a bi-monthly group conducted at St. Mary's Center for Women and Children in Boston. EQ2 is a staff-facilitated handbook that brings the same emotional regulation skills taught in Lionheart's other programs to the staff serving trauma-impacted youth. EQ2 will also be piloted by staff from Suffolk University's Center for Restorative Justice who are working closely with the Department of Juvenile Justice in Connecticut. In addition, Lionheart has applied for a grant to run two additional rounds of EQ2 groups and finalize the handbook. In June, Beth will conduct a statewide EQ2 staff training for the MA DCF. Feedback from Beth's presentation on EQ2 at the Healthy Teen Network Conference in Las Vegas in November was outstanding. Comments included: "Great info." "This should be required for programs. Very helpful." "Great session." "This workshop was very powerful and important." "Great communication. You made the material easy to digest." "Thank you for giving me real skills that I can use on a day-to-day basis in foster care facilities."

Lionheart's growing web presence: Judith Perry, Lionheart's COO, will semi-retire next month after 14 years at Lionheart. She will be very missed at the Lionheart office, but will work two days a week for Lionheart from her new home in CA. Among her many significant contributions has been increasing our web presence over the years. In addition to landing the Google Adwords account, Judith recently secured its long-term continuation. Adwords provides \$310 in free advertising per day. With this exposure, and her continued site development, the website has grown from a few hundred visits a month to 7000-8000 visits (25,000 page views) a month. More than 60% of orders now come in through our website. (www.lionheart.org)

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There are many critical factors that have been integral to Lionheart's work and success over the past 25 years. There are, of course, the boys, girls, young and older adults whom it is our great privilege to serve. Our successes are unquestionably the result of a large group effort. We have a small yet very committed board of directors, volunteers who have donated hundreds of hours to support our outreach and many initiatives, a very dedicated staff who gives their all to keep Lionheart moving forward day after day. Last, but most certainly not least, you, our donors, who champion our efforts year after year and provide the financial support that makes Lionheart's impact possible.

Lionheart is now expanding its staff with a new office administrator, consultants that bring their expertise to distribution and research projects, and support with the development of new resources. I am very excited to step into our next phase as our roots grow deeper and wider and we secure our place as a leader in social-emotional learning with at-risk populations for decades to come. As you know, all of this work requires financial support. So once again I ask that you continue to partner with us and donate to Lionheart as generously as you can. Thank you ever so much.

I am, as always,
Most sincerely and gratefully yours,

Robin Casarjian
Executive Director

I have recommended the HOH self-study course to other prisoners for the good of the world.
Prisoner Participant