

Lionheart's Fall Update

October 24, 2018

Dear Friend,

As always, I am delighted to be sending you Lionheart's Fall update to share the many projects in process as well as those in the planning stage. We recently started working with SOAR Management Consulting Group which provides pro bono strategic planning for selected non-profits. SOAR's support could not have come at a better time. Our initial focus will be strategic hires as an expanded staff is now essential for moving the work forward and taking it to the next level. Thank YOU for helping to get us to this point and making it possible for Lionheart to positively impact so many lives.

Houses of Healing: The Prison Project

The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) Innovative Grants Program has given Lionheart exceptional opportunities to expand our programming and serve hundreds more prisoners over the past three years. These programs include:

The Houses of Healing Self-Study Program for Prisoners in Solitary Confinement:

As you may recall, our first Innovative Grant was to deliver programming to prisoners in the SHU (solitary confinement) at two CA prisons. The grant period ended in June 2017. Since then, **98 additional men in solitary** have participated in the program. Death row inmates at CA's San Quentin prison are also in solitary confinement and we are now offering the program there as well. To date, **35 men on death row** have participated. Feedback from the men in both the SHU and death row implores us to keep offering the program even though it is no longer funded by the CDCR. Even with Lionheart volunteers doing the lion's share of the administrative work for the program the cost of delivery for each participant is approximately \$70. Word of mouth by the prisoners and enthusiastic endorsement by staff keep requests coming in.

I recommend [this course to others] because it not only teaches you how to interact with yourself, it also contains exercises that develop the skills you need. One of the things I didn't appreciate in my life was when people said I should change, but then wouldn't show me how. I'm not saying my behavior was anyone's fault, but how do you ask a blind person to describe the color blue if they've never seen it? How can you? - they have no point of reference. Same philosophy applies when asking someone to think in new ways.

San Quentin Death Row

Houses of Healing has been a turning point in my journey. It has helped me heal and for that I am extremely grateful... I can go on and on about how it's impacted me but if I had to break it down to one word I would say I feel purified.

Pelican Bay State Prison SHU, CA

Last week on Death Row, two guys in my group couldn't wait to tell me how much they are loving the HOH Self-study program. After our Buddhist services, they both came up to the bars (chapel) arm in arm - a Black and a Hispanic man - and went on and on about how much they've gotten out of the program.

Chaplain, San Quentin

The work you continue to do in the SHU units and also now at San Quentin is phenomenal. It definitely supports the value of providing programs to men housed in those units, which was not the case for a very long time.

J. Brown, Grant Program Coordinator, Division of Rehabilitative Programs, CDCR

We have an unprecedented data set of approximately 200 evaluations from men in the CDCR SHU which is currently being written up for publication. We anticipate presenting these findings at the annual meeting of the American Correctional Association next August.

The POWER SOURCE Training: This grant, now in its second round, trains lifers and long-term prisoners to deliver Lionheart's Power Source Program for highly at-risk adolescents to the 18 to 24 year-olds on their yards. After more than a year-long process, our primary investigator on the project just learned that we have jumped the hurdle of institutional review board (IRB) approval from The CA Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects. This allows us to conduct formal research on the program. Publishing the findings from the Innovative Grants will give these new programs (designed for subsets of the prison population) visibility in the academic community as well as serve as a launching pad for promotion to prison systems nationally.

Since the existing facilitator's manual for the program was written explicitly for delivery by the lifers and long-termers, over the next few months Lionheart will revise the manual so that it can be delivered by staff and volunteers in a variety of settings (prisons, jails, juvenile facilities, residential treatment, and community programs – anywhere where this high-risk older adolescent population is served). There are systems/programs already inquiring and waiting to implement the revision.

Participating in this course has impacted my life dramatically. The program helped in ways I couldn't have imagined. Coming into the course I had little expectation. Now I would recommend this course because everybody deserves a chance to rehabilitate the way they think. Especially in this environment.

CDCR long-termer

Comments from young men who participated included:

- The impact has been great. There's so much I've learned & grown to understand. It's truly one of the best experiences I've had in growth.
- It gave me hope and an open mind towards a more meaningful life style.
- The stop & breathe thing... It's so good that now I don't have to be impulsive when I'm facing conflict.

When asked if they would recommend the program to their peers, responses included, "Yes because as a kid I thought I was stuck in my ways & that's not the case now. We just needed a 'lil guidance to return to our true selves." "Absolutely. It is a game changer... It helped me find my inner core and brought more self-awareness. It helps you find yourself."

The Reception Center Grant: Lionheart was recently awarded its third CDCR Innovative Grant. We were 1 of 8 proposals selected out of the 60 submitted. The Reception Center is the first stop in the prison system where prisoners spend 2-6 months being assessed for longer-term placement. Historically there has not been programming in Reception. As a result of this grant, Lionheart has created the **Making Time Count: Making The Most of Your Time Behind Bars** program. Over the next three years, **500 prisoners in Reception** will participate in Lionheart's new 6-session program. Breaking new ground, the program is designed to teach emotional regulation skills while offering practical guidance and inspiration in how to most productively do one's time from the outset. All participants will receive their own copy of *Houses of Healing*. Two exceptional facilitators with extensive experience working with prisoners will lead the groups.

POWER SOURCE (PS) and POWER SOURCE PARENTING (PSP):

With the addition of the PS Workbook, the PS Program continues to expand its reach. Recently, PS has become an integral component of community-based programs like this one in Sacramento:

We are generating SO MUCH buzz around Power Source here in Sacramento, it's very exciting! I had a Superior Court Judge come out and sit in class. He was so impressed he is telling other Judges and will be talking to some agency heads about how to get it funded for their clients. Very exciting!

M. Schubert, President/CEO GPS Social Enterprises

Native American Tribe Power Source Outreach: With funding from a long-term donor, Lionheart has recently engaged in a Power Source outreach to 18 Native American Tribes. 350+ Power Source books as well as other PS resources have been donated. Many tribes indicated that while they have significant need they have no funding to purchase resources to serve their high-risk youth. Feedback included:

Chemawa Indian Health Center, Oregon - This tribe has a boarding high school serving over 400 students from 70 different tribes. A high percentage have trauma histories and are at-risk. The Youth Programming Director indicated that they have been looking for a robust social emotional learning program and they feel that the Power Source Program is exactly what they have been looking for.

Northern Pueblo Agency, New Mexico - "Power Source will be the ideal addition to our new program."

Pueblo of Jemez, New Mexico - "We are in great need of programming." (Manager of the Behavior Health Program) The Principal and other stakeholders at the school loved Power Source and anticipate that it will be highly utilized with several newly initiated youth groups.

Beth Casarjian, our clinical director, recently facilitated another Power Source Parenting training for 40 youth service providers from across the state of Massachusetts hosted by the MA Department of Children and Families. Lionheart continues to be a vendor for the MA Department of Youth Services, providing trainings in both PSP and EQ2. The recent training that Beth conducted was extremely well received with one field-based employee saying, "*It gave me the confidence and skills I needed to go out and start helping young mothers.*"

EQ2: EQ2, Lionheart’s social and emotional coaching program for front-line staff working with individuals who have experienced complex trauma is in final stages of development. Lionheart will pilot EQ2 with residential treatment staff at the Home for Little Wanderers (est. in 1865 – thus the name) in Boston in the months ahead. We anticipate a publication date of the residential care edition of EQ2 by early Spring 2019. In April of 2019, we will be presenting data collected from the EQ2 pilot at the Association of Children’s Residential Centers annual meeting in New Orleans. Representative of the feedback we have received on the program, one participant wrote, *“Before, whenever I felt disrespected I used to react right away. But now before I react I breathe, take my time, and come up with a Cool Thought. EQ2 provided me with new skills and caused me to stop and think about all of the trauma that our kids have experienced.”*

Last week Lionheart completed its first EQ2 program for staff in a culinary training program for the chronically underemployed and formerly incarcerated. Katie Maxim, an experienced Houses of Healing and EQ2 facilitator with years of experience as an organizational development consultant facilitated the training. Feedback was incredible. Her exceptional work has resulted in two other inquiries about a similar training.

[As a result of the training] the renewed energy here is palpable—and the effect is already showing a positive result among the students.

J. Cuzzi, Executive Director. NE-CAT

Making an Impact!

Beyond what you have read here, we receive so many testimonials directly speaking to the life-changing impact of Lionheart’s efforts. A death row prisoner who participated in the self-study course wrote, “Thank you for the work you do... This was truly one of the best experiences of my life.” If only he had support much earlier! For thousands of young people and adults who are in great need of guidance and healing, ***Lionheart’s programs deliver***. For front-line staff in need of a more transformative approach to working with the youth they serve, ***Lionheart delivers***. For individuals who want their donations to make a truly significant impact, ***Lionheart delivers***.

Lionheart *needs* your continued support to expand the reach of our programming, impact more of our target populations, offer free resources to those who cannot afford them, and hire new staff who are, at this point in time, essential to our continued progress. *Please give as generously as you can.*

Again and again, *I offer my most heartfelt thank you* for making Lionheart’s impact possible.

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

Robin

PS. If possible, I ask that you share this letter with at least 5 people who you think would be interested. We are happy to send you an email version. Just contact Carol@lionheart.org