

LIONHEART'S FALL UPDATE 2019

Thank you for the opportunity to share Lionheart's recent progress while passing on the feedback from those who are most intimately impacted by our work.

A main focus of our efforts this year has been the creation of **EQ2**, Lionheart's trauma-informed program for direct-care staff working with youth in residential care; delivery of three major grants within the CA Department of Corrections; the completion of the revised Power Source Facilitator's Manual, as well as the projects, distribution, and trainings that are part of our ongoing mission.

INNOVATIVE GRANTS from the CA Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR)

Although our first CDCR grant (Round 2) has been complete for almost two years, we continue to deliver the Houses of Healing (HOH) Self-study Program in both **solitary confinement and on death row**. Registrations have significantly slowed, however as long as we receive requests Lionheart will continue to deliver the program to prisoners in these highly restricted settings. The following are from men in solitary in Pelican Bay State Prison.

Houses of Healing helped me look into some areas in my life that I wanted to bury and never attempt to look at. In reading HOH and being honest with myself I was able to not only bring them back up but to then work thru them. I've been doing time since the late 70's and I've never felt freer in my life. I can't praise the course enough.

First & most I want to say thank you for letting me be part of your program. Giving your time to mail the sessions to us. Believing in us that we could have a Second Chance in life if we are willing to change our ways and work hard to be a decent man in society. I might have life in prison but this program opened my eyes to see that I still have a life to live and I can hopefully help someone in the future. Thank all the staff there who give us hope in life. Thank you for making this program possible!

More to the point, we thank all our supporters for making it possible!

CDCR Grants in progress:

Round 3: Lionheart's Round 3 grant, **The Power Source Training: A Program to Prepare Lifers and Long-term Prisoners to Facilitate a High Impact Social-Emotional (Re)habilitation Program for 18-24 Year-olds** is nearing its completion (12/19). It has been a blessing to train and nurture positive purpose in many long-term prisoners who are walking the walk of rehabilitation. When the young men and older prisoner-facilitators were asked, "Would you recommend the program to someone else?", all were affirmative. A small sampling of comments from prisoner-facilitators included:

"I love this program!! It's life changing. It's one of the only programs that all the participants take seriously." "So many young people come up to me with smiles and thank me and tell me what the program means to them." "It gave me the opportunity to live the life I've always wanted. Today I treat everyone with respect." "The experience of being an inside-facilitator made me want to change the direction of my life. I now want to become a mentor and facilitator when I get free. It has shown me that I can be more in my life." "It's amazing how people can come into your life and change your whole outlook. Power Source provides the guidance to re-connect with your greater self so that you can live the sort of loving existence we are meant to live." "Being responsible is a blessing." "Words can't explain how good it feels to be of service. I am no longer part of the problem. I am part of the solution."

Round 4: Making Time Count: Making the Most of Your Time Behind Bars is offered in the Reception Center in San Quentin. This is where people spend their first 2-6 months in the prison system. Due to a quarantine and numerous lockdowns and unavailability of custody staff who are essential to the program's on-site delivery, Making Time Count is now being offered as a 6-session self-study program only. We anticipate serving approximately 600 men (500 in English and 100 in Spanish).

The CDCR requested that we deliver the Making Time Count program in Spanish as well. We were very fortunate to secure the translation services of Adriana Aristizabal whose company has translated more than 50 self-help books for Hay House Publishing. Adriana chose to translate this herself. If we receive strong interest in the course, which we anticipate, Lionheart will seek outside funding to continue to offer the program after grant funds are depleted. Offering Making Time Count as an in-cell program gives us the opportunity to provide it to hundreds more people just entering the system. This also means that hundreds more copies of the *Houses of Healing* book will circulate to others within the system.

Round 5: The newest CDCR 3-year Innovative Grant, "**The Houses of Healing Training: A Program to Prepare Lifers and Long-term Prisoners to Facilitate HOH, a High Impact Social-Emotional (Re)habilitation Program**" is in progress at the CA Medical Facility. There has been a very enthusiastic response from the men. We're thrilled to have the opportunity to train motivated prisoners to facilitate HOH programs for years to come. As you can see from the feedback above (Round 3), giving prisoners the guidance and opportunity to make a positive difference launches many of them on a more hopeful and life-altering trajectory.

Power Source: Lionheart's evidence-based program for highly at-risk adolescents and young adults

As a result of two targeted donations, Lionheart has completed the second Power Source outreach to Native American tribes. Most had very little relevant programming and after seeing the review copy, there was enthusiastic interest in the program. As one program director responded, "*it was a unanimous vote of WOW and yes, we need this.*" While another commented, "*I think it will be perfect for our youth.*" Tribes and programs included Yankton Sioux Tribe - Child Welfare, SD; Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate - Dakotah Pride

Center, SD; Crow Nation Recovery Center, MT; Tipi/Rosebud Juvenile Detention Center, SD; Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, WI; and the Kaw Nation, OK.

EQ2: A trauma-informed program designed to increase the self-regulation skills of direct care workers

EQ2, with its many components, is expected to be complete and ready for distribution by the end of 2019. This has been a major undertaking. First the program was extensively piloted. Lionheart has developed a 110 page workbook for participants and 150 page annotated workbook for facilitators. Additionally, EQ2 includes a Learning Management System (LMS) and an app, both of which are in the final stages of development. EQ2 has required the talents of a village in its creation. In addition to the exceptional and multi-faceted job that Beth Casarjian, our clinical director, is doing, Lionheart has secured the talents of a content editor, graphic designer, videographers, app creator, tech instructional support specialist, and the artist who has created incredible watercolor images that are being utilized in the workbooks, LMS, and app. This is unquestionably our most complex project to date. We are excited to play a role in positively impacting the culture of residential care, making it a more healing community for both the youth and those who have the very challenging and potentially very rewarding job of direct-care worker in residential care.

Houses of Healing:

Our first Houses of Healing class graduated this past Friday... The change in these women was phenomenal and clearly recognized and acknowledged by them... Our participants have shared that this is the best of all the classes they have taken and some have taken all that's been offered by their facility. Auburn, Alabama

Last month, The San Quentin News (circulation 22,000) published an article titled **“Power Source group commemorates first-ever YOP (Youth Offender Program) graduation.”** This article chronicles the creation and facilitation of the Power Source Program in San Quentin facilitated by long-term prisoners who have participated in rehabilitative programming and who are committed to helping others. The model of older prisoners facilitating the Power Source Program with young men on their yard is expanding.

Professional Trainings:

Last week, Beth conducted her second Power Source training for the NYC Department of Parole (DOP) as part of their Raise the Age initiative. Jess Linick, Ph.D., who has been re-writing the Power Source Facilitator’s Manual and contributing to Lionheart’s program development since last winter, delivered a part of this training as well. Jess will soon come on full-time at Lionheart. In addition to bringing her many other talents, Jess, who lives in NYC, will continue to work as a Lionheart trainer for the NYC DOP. Next month Beth will conduct another Power Source Parenting training for the MA Dept of Children and Families.

MOVING FORWARD:

As you have read, Lionheart keeps moving forward. I, along with our Board of Directors and everyone working at Lionheart, can’t possibly thank our donors and grantors enough for supporting our efforts.

With all the progress we have made, I honestly feel that the plane is just taking off! Lionheart has never had a designated sales/marketing person however if we are to expand, most effectively get our resources to those who need them, and become more financially independent, a designated marketing and sales person is needed. We hope to move forward with this hire at the beginning of 2020. We have 8 paid consultants contributing to EQ2. Additional part-time in-house staff are needed. We have a number of new printings (EQ2, HOH, HOH, PS,) totaling about 20,000 books/manuals to purchase in the near future. The list goes on.

Please help us to continue to make a life-changing difference in so many lives and move forward with increased impact. Generous support has brought us to this juncture. Please give as generously as you can.

Most sincerely and gratefully yours,

Robin Casarjian, Director

San Quentin Power Source Graduates



Photo from San Quentin News

We receive so many remarkable letters at Lionheart. I share the following as it is, in my opinion, an exquisite expression of what authentic healing looks like....

(names and other identifying information has been changed).

My name is Daniel and I am a 39 year old inmate in the state of California. My incarceration began on the fateful night of July 7, 1998, when I partook in the violent armed robber that

ultimately led to Mr. Georgio's death. For many years I struggled with the idea of having to serve a 26 years to life sentence for my part in the crime because I simply looked at it as just being the getaway driver. I lacked the sense and understanding to truly comprehend what my accountability was in Mr. Georgio's death. This led to the 12+ years of my incarceration to be filled with addiction to alcohol, drugs, and the criminal lifestyle. It wasn't until I finally transferred to another prison in 2010, that I started to distance myself from people and bad habits I had refined over the years. It was out of desperation that I finally chose something different for myself rather than to continue living a life of insanity (doing the same things over and over again expecting different results). I left one dire situation for another, but luckily 3 months after transferring to ____, another facility was accepting volunteers. I jumped at the opportunity and it turned out to be one of the best decisions I had ever made in my life. My journey to becoming a better man started to blossom. Where I had previously thought I could do things on my own, I was finally able to come to terms with all those positive outlets I needed. None of this was possible without the help of other inmates, my relationship with God, the many groups I attended and, of course, books.

The first book I ever read pertaining to change was the House of Healing. It opened my eyes to so many harsh truths about myself that I wasn't ever able to accept or acknowledge for most of my life. Being a victim of abuse (verbal, physical, sexual) during my formative years really played a huge role in shaping my mind in a distorted fashion. I grew up lonely, ashamed, burdened with guilt, and most of all angry at the world. It's no wonder I found it easy to turn to alcohol, drugs, and the gang lifestyle. My anti-social behavior left many victims in my wake, and I lacked the compassion to even realize all the harm I was causing myself and others. Taking the time to read that book helped me see deep within myself, and the light exposed a lot of those darkened areas of my past. I was now able to accept things for how they happened and know that it wasn't my fault at all. I was simply an innocent child who lost out on his childhood and didn't know any better. Having someone else share their experience with me allowed a measure of faith I didn't think was possible, but it proved to be pivotal in my path to living life to the fullest.

In short, this book has launched my career as a new and better man, and I can't help but think of how helpful it would be for others to get beyond their own troubles and experience the same type of healing I've been blessed with. When I left _____ State Prison, I never thought I'd lose access to this great and wonderful book. I was hoping that you could help me obtain the book and the curriculum that goes with it. This prison is known for being a reception center for inmates who go to fire camps, so it doesn't offer a whole lot when it comes to cognitive behavior treatment. I'm trying to get a group started so that I can continue to work on myself and help others. It's not just something I plan on doing in here, but something I plan to continue on the streets too. For there is no better way to live life today than to do it giving back to others. Any assistance you can give me pertaining to House of Healing would be most appreciated. I promise to continue living life to the fullest in all joy, and promote a wonderful life full of healing. Thank you for your help. I remain forever in your debt. ----- Sincerely, Daniel