



Introduction

How to get the most out of this program

It's best to move through **Making Time Count** in the order that it's presented in this workbook. Sometimes you will be directed to read a chapter from the book *Houses of Healing* before moving on. Sometimes you will be asked to do a worksheet. Sometimes you'll be guided to do certain exercises every day. Just choose the best time for you and do the best you can.

There are 13 sessions in Making Time Count. It's best to do **one session a week**. Doing the "self-work" is an *essential* part of the program. This is so important because if you are not doing the daily self-work, you won't get the most out of it.

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Every session starts with a section called **Doing Time** or **Doing Time in Seg**. These don't directly connect to topics covered in *Houses of Healing*. If you are in highly restricted housing like solitary (the SHU) or administrative segregation, the **Doing Time in Seg** section is offered to give you extra support, coping strategies, and inspiration. Being in any form of segregation can be incredibly challenging no matter how emotionally "together" you are when you first go in. **Doing Time in Seg**, along with the entire program, will support you with some of these challenges. (Even if you are general population you may find these sections very helpful.) The "tool kits" for anxiety and depression and the importance of following an exercise routine can benefit anyone, whether in segregation, general population, or even on the outside.

Exactly how challenging prison is for each person depends on many things: how restrictive your situation is; the circumstances that led you to be where you are; how long you will be/or have been there. Other factors include whether or not you have a cellmate and if you get along with them; whether there are others around who you can really communicate with; whether you have a TV to pass some of your time; and what access you have to books. Other key issues include how you feel you are treated by staff and others around you and the quantity and quality of mental health and medical services that are available when you need them; whether you have support from people outside the prison as well as whether you receive visits and can make phone calls

to people who are important to you. **The most important factor, however, is your emotional state/mental health and what support and skills you have for managing your stress (anxiety, frustration, anger, etc.).** These issues and others play a huge part in how challenging it is being locked up.

This program aims to help you manage your stress. It carefully guides you through techniques that have been scientifically proven to protect you from a downward spiral and increase resilience which is the ability to withstand or recover more quickly from challenging circumstances. These techniques keep the people who practice them more in control of their own lives and personal power. To support your success, you will be encouraged - again and again - to **give this program your best effort.**

The **Doing Time** section is followed by **Session Notes**. The Session Notes give an overview of the topics in that session and provide encouragement and suggestions on how to work with the lessons. The pages titled "**Self-work**" give you the assignments for the week, as well as worksheets for the assignments. *If you participate fully* I trust that this program will be a great support for you. Thank you for participating!

"Participating in this course has impacted me in ways I really didn't think was possible. It's given me peace of mind. I learned a lot of meaningful skills and concepts that I use on a daily basis now. I notice a big change in my attitude and behavior. Like for others, the course gave me a new outlook and a new direction." Ray

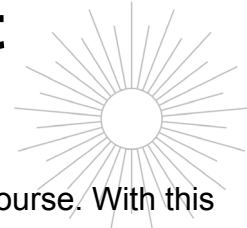
"I consider the actions I've made throughout life some of the worst crimes possible. I felt like I didn't deserve to live. This course has helped me see my actions and where I went wrong and I now understand that my actions don't define who I am but how I carry myself today is who I truly am. If I can change so can anyone else." Chaz

Like any self-study course, no one checks up on whether you do the assignments but like most of life, *you get out of it what you put into it. If you do the work, this program can be a true game-changer for you.*

"When starting Houses of Healing put aside pre-conceived notions. You might not buy all of it, but stay open. You can't get the power of the program if you don't make a commitment to it."

Walter, 8+ years in Federal Supermax

Ways to Use Making Time Count



Making Time Count can be used in many ways:

- 1) First, Making Time Count (MTC) can be used as a self-study course. With this workbook, the *Houses of Healing* book, and a pen or pencil, you have everything you need to move forward. If your movement is restricted and/or out-of-cell programs aren't available, MTC can provide a powerful program right where you are.
- 2) When possible, MTC can be used in groups. Participants can do the Self-work on their own during the week. In group, you can discuss the concepts, practice the relaxation exercises and meditation together, and share and discuss the completed worksheets. (If available, the Houses of Healing Video Series can add to the power of the program.)
- 3) You can also use the Making Time Count program more informally by working through it with one or two other people – whether it is a cellmate, someone else inside, or even by mail with a mentor, friend or family member.
- 4) If you are in an existing group focused on recovery, violence prevention, victim awareness, or anything else geared to emotional growth and healing, you can share the exercises in MTC and support others in learning from your insights.

IMPORTANT MESSAGE ABOUT PAST TRAUMA:

Many people in prison have had a lot of trauma and abuse in their past. You may be one of these people – and being in prison, especially when you are in a restricted setting, can make many people feel on shaky ground emotionally. A few chapters in *Houses of Healing* deal directly with past trauma. Some of the exercises and topics in these chapters can bring up painful emotions and memories. DO NOT delve into any topic or participate in any exercise if it brings up painful emotions that you don't feel ready to deal with at the time.

Since you're probably doing this course on your own, don't push yourself beyond what you feel ready to deal with without some support. As you will read in *Houses of Healing* and in this course, BE GENTLE WITH YOURSELF.

Just start at the beginning of this **Making Time Count** workbook, as you are already doing, and “keep putting one foot in front of the other.” The course is clearly laid out for you. **Give yourself the gift of seeing this program through to the end so that you can move into the future holding onto more and more of your personal power.**

Topics in Making Time Count

Check the boxes next to the topics where you would like to grow and see change in yourself. Then circle the two boxes that you feel would be most helpful to you.

- Learning positive ways to manage your stress
- Managing your anger
- Gaining greater self-understanding
- Learning ways to deal with challenging and difficult people so you don't give them the power to make you feel miserable or angry
- Learning healthy ways to relax and calm down. Learning how to center yourself (meditate)
- Healing pain and emotional wounds from childhood abuse and neglect
- Dealing positively with the losses in your life
- Learning to forgive others and heal your relationships
- Learning to forgive yourself
- Learning to be a more peaceful and loving person. Showing up as a more loving and caring parent, son / daughter, friend, and/or partner. Finding an inner power and freedom that can't be taken away from you
- Finding or deepening a connection to your experience of a higher power
- Getting a clearer sense of who you are and where you're going