



## Fall Update 2022

Welcome to Lionheart's Fall Update where we highlight the most recent progress in our major initiatives serving incarcerated adults, highly at-risk adolescents and direct care staff working with youth. *Thank you for your interest and support!*

### Lionheart's Prison Initiative

Today, nearly one third of the adult working age population has a criminal record.<sup>1</sup> Over half a million people are released from prison each year and according to the National Institute of Justice, almost 44% are rearrested within a year of release. They join a staggering twenty million Americans who live with a felony record.<sup>2</sup>

With its transformational programming, Lionheart's prison initiative is laser-focused on reaching exponentially greater numbers of incarcerated men and women to help turn the tide. Over the past six years Lionheart has garnered nine "Innovative Grants" from the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation – including one from the California Department of Juvenile Justice that is currently in progress. Not only has it been a blessing to deliver these grants and impact so many lives but these grants have proven to be a launching pad for the creation of new program resources and increasing national impact.

The grant that gave Lionheart the opportunity to offer the **Houses of Healing (HOH)** Program to more than 600 men in California's Special Housing Units (solitary) led to the publication of the Making Time Count workbook. This resource, used in conjunction with the HOH book as either a self-study program or to augment in-person classes, has now reached thousands of prisoners in other states. Just this week a community re-entry and addiction recovery program and a county jail in Indiana ordered a combined 600 copies.

*"We are using the HOH resources. I am getting so much out of the class myself by teaching it! In 15 years of prison chaplaincy this has been by far the best class I have ever taught and offered to the inmate population. Thank you so very much!"*

-Chaplain, Federal Bureau of Prison

The feedback that is most striking about the HOH Program is how many participants, after years and often decades in prison, tell us that HOH is the most impactful program they have experienced. Many share that for the first time they are able to make sense of their lives, heal, and feel genuine hope about their future. Just today we received the following with a request for a donated copy of the *HOH*:

<sup>1</sup> Brennan Center for Justice

<sup>2</sup> International Corrections and Prison Association

*“I have been in prison for the past 24 years. I came into the prison system when I was 17 years old and I am now 41. I have spent my whole adult life in prison and am serving a sentence of 43 years to life. I am currently enrolled in a HOH group and I really find myself digging deep and gaining a lot of understanding as well as the deep personal healing that I really need. This group has been life-changing.”*

### **HOH Learning Management System (LMS)**

A growing number of prisons and jails nationwide are providing tablets to prisoners. The tablets serve a number of functions, one of which is immediate and free access to educational and rehabilitative programming. Lionheart anticipates that this sea change within prisons and jails will offer Lionheart the unprecedented opportunity to provide its transformational programming to thousands more prisoners. In order to take advantage of this potential opportunity and reach thousands more incarcerated men and women, Lionheart’s Clinical Directors, Jess Linick, Ph.D. and Beth Casarjian, Ph.D. have been working tirelessly for the past nine months to create the Houses of Healing Learning Management System (LMS).

The LMS will integrate all aspects of the HOH program including the book as both an audiobook and e-book, exercises from the facilitator manual and the Making Time Count workbook, as well as the HOH video series. Additionally, significant new content has been developed including guided meditations and visualizations, credible messenger videos of men and women who have gone through the HOH program, and short, animated videos explaining key HOH concepts and skills. The projected completion date for the LMS is the beginning of next month.

ViaPath, one of the tablet providers we are in conversation with, currently has the largest share of prison tablet contracts with an expected 300,000 tablets with available programming online within the next few months. With the most recent “Request for Proposal” from the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (**CDCR**) Innovative Grants department, Lionheart will be seeking funding to get preliminary data on the LMS’s usage and effectiveness in the incarcerated population in California.

### **The Houses of Healing Victim-Offender Impact (VOI) Program**

With Lionheart’s most recent CDCR Innovative Grant, we are delivering the 16-session HOH VOI Program (2-year grant) at the California Health Care Facility. The program is being implemented by our talented team of facilitators in CA. There has been great participation by the men in the program right from the start. The program brings participants through the HOH program with four additional sessions focused on victim-offender impact.

### **The National Solitary Project**

Lionheart’s National Solitary Project offers men and women in the dismal and often highly destructive environment of solitary confinement, the opportunity to use their time constructively by participating in the HOH self-study program. Progress on making it available in prison systems nationally has been slow and steady. We have been providing the program to solitary units in California, Georgia, Florida, New York, Mississippi, Wyoming, Oregon, Illinois, Maryland, Washington, Indiana, and Texas. Yesterday a chaplain from a Texas solitary unit wrote, *“My Regional Chaplain expressed high praise for this program and encouraged immediate launch at the Allred Unit.”* There are 498 prisoners in this one highly restricted housing unit. We have found that about 15% of the population in solitary register for the program. That is 75 program packets at this one

institution at a cost of about \$25 per program packet - costing Lionheart \$1875 for this one prison. The life-changing impact that the program has for so many participants in the deleterious setting of long-term solitary inspires us to meet every challenge we encounter with resolve. As one participant wrote, *“Please take this program seriously and it will change your life for ever. Thank you so much for opening up a new chapter to my life.”* Another participant wrote:

*“I got to learn so much about myself. Its helped me in ways that I never knew I could be helped. It helps you deal with a lot of trauma. And very soon you will become a different person... I continue to grow and change in a positive way. I am more appreciative, more happy and have understanding for myself and others. My behavior is beautiful not only toward myself but to others as well.”*

We continue to reach out to states nationwide. A new marketing intern is now assisting with outreach which will add greater momentum to moving the project forward.

*“I have learned how to be positive. I no longer have to worry about the consequences that will come from my actions because my actions are no longer harming or hurtful.”* -James. IL DOC, solitary confinement

## **Lionheart’s Youth Initiatives** **Power Source**

*“Just wanted to reach out and tell you how thankful I am for your curriculum and treatment modality. I am loving every single one of the modules and finding it very useful... It is amazing to see how much the material/ concepts resonate with the young men I am working with... You and your organization have truly created something very practical, meaningful and powerful.”* -B. Isak, Psy.D., Oregon Youth Authority Correctional Facility

### **Power Source – The primary intervention in state Departments of Juvenile Justice:**

Four state Departments of Juvenile Justice have adopted Lionheart’s Power Source Program as their primary intervention for the youth they serve. In addition, the NYC Department of Probation and Parole is using Power Source as a primary intervention with the 16-24 year-olds whom they serve. Jess Linick, Lionheart’s Clinical Director of Youth Programs, has been providing extended training in the facilitation of mindfulness and the treatment of youth with serious offenses (e.g., homicide), as well as monthly consultation calls with clinical and supervisory staff in Oregon’s DJJ. She also provides as needed support to facilitators in the Texas DJJ and their affiliated partners. Texas DJJ recently told Lionheart that they hope to have data looking at the effects of Power Source on recidivism some time by the end of the year which they will share with us as it becomes available.

### **CDCR Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) Innovative Grant:**

Through a CDCR DJJ Innovative Grant awarded to Lionheart, staff from the Sacramento-based organization Self-Awareness and Recovery (SAR) continue to facilitate Power Source programs in DJJ facilities. As part of the grant, the Power Source Peer Leader Program has been introduced with great success. Five youth were chosen to participate in this training. They learned how to facilitate the Power Source content and, most importantly, embody the qualities of a Power Source facilitator. When asked what they would say to their peers about the program, the Power Source Youth Facilitators (16-21 years old) responded...

*...This group unlocks your potential, to improve yourself from within by identifying your problems and bad habits and replacing them with positive qualities. It helps you identify situations and traumas in your life that made you spiral down the wrong path. Don't quit on yourself.... We'll help you achieve your goals step by step. You have to be able to help yourself to save yourself... I now understand that people have bad habits and beliefs, but their inner core is pure no matter what.*

## **OJJDP - Enhancing School Capacity To Address Youth Violence**

We are delighted to report that Self-Awareness and Recovery, the organization that has been facilitating Lionheart grant programs in the CDCR adult and juvenile facilities in Northern California just received a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) – Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). SAR will facilitate Power Source programming with 240 youth and EQ2 with 60 staff in the Sacramento area. The goal of the grant is to (1) reduce the incidence of school violence through improved school safety and climate and (2) prevent youth violence, delinquency, and victimization.

## **Power Source Learning Management System (LMS)**

In early 2023, Lionheart will start its next major youth-focused undertaking and create an electronic version of Power Source for tablets. It will be a time-intensive, expensive undertaking as, among other contractors, Lionheart will hire professional animators for this project.

## **EQ2** **for direct care staff working with high-risk youth**

EQ2 offers practical tools to support direct care staff working with trauma-impacted youth. It offers coaching skills while increasing staff's own social and emotional well-being by helping reduce burnout and secondary-traumatic stress. In July, Lionheart gave a presentation on the development of the EQ2 app at the Association for Children's Residential and Community Services national conference in Louisville, KY. We also exhibited at the conference, broadening exposure of EQ2 and Lionheart's youth programs.

Together with the talented volunteer group based in Europe, Lionheart is beginning Phase 2 of the app development. The app is "**self-care, at work, made real**". The next version of the app will include an "SOS" button to guide staff through a series of self-regulation exercises in the moment when triggered, as well as additional videos, meditations, and visualizations. 85% of EQ2 subscribers have re-subscribed in the past year. As one direct care worker in residential care stated, "*EQ2 allowed me to step outside of the frustration of behavioral management and recall what drives me to do this work.*"

## **Your support makes Lionheart's life-changing work possible.** **Please DONATE today.**

Donations can be mailed to: **The Lionheart Foundation • PO Box 327 • Dedham, MA 02027**  
Make a secure online donation at [www.lionheart.org](http://www.lionheart.org) OR donate by phone at **781-444-6667**  
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