

've been living with HIV since before the virus was discovered. Back then, people were afraid to touch us, funeral homes wouldn't accept the bodies of our dead, families wouldn't let their children in the door, or served us food on disposable plates. The word "stigma" barely conveys how that felt.

Fighting for our lives, we demanded dignity. We organized for our right to participate in our own medical care and in the decisions and policies that would profoundly affect our lives. In June 1983, a group of people with AIDS wrote the Denver Principles:

"We condemn attempts to label us as 'victims,' a term which implies defeat," they wrote. "And we are only occasionally 'patients,' a term which implies passivity, helplessness, and dependence upon the care of others. We are 'People With AIDS'"-and, since the discovery of the virus, People Living with HIV (PLHIV).

We have had some tremendous successes, most notably the development of effective treatments that make it possible to live a normal lifespan with HIV-assuming access to healthcare. But stigma persists, especially for incarcerated PLHIV and millions of other people behind bars.

The Sero Project works to counter one extreme example of that prejudice: criminal laws designed only for PLHIV. We connect with people incarcerated under these misguided and dangerous laws, people like the man on the cover, Kerry Thomas. Their strength and example inspired us to publish TURN IT UP! to support incarcerated people who face the challenge of staying strong inside, whether they're living with HIV or any other health condition. Access to care is one way to stay strong; connection with others and self-empowerment are two more.

Below you will find the Incarcerated People's Health Bill of Rights, which takes the Denver Principles' legacy one step further. TURN IT UP! is our response to this urgent call for dignity.

-Sean Strub, Executive Director, Sero Project; founder, POZ magazine

INCARCERATED PEOPLE'S HEALTH BILL OF RIGHTS

Created by men behind the walls at Sing Sing and Green Haven prisons in New York.

- **1.** Ensure the use of gloves by care providers, including when dispensing medication.
- **2.** Prompt responses for medical emergencies.
- **3.** Staff to maintain confidentiality, limiting access to medical files and requiring officers to stand away from exam rooms.
- **4.** Clinicians to keep instruments sterile and inside packaging until in front of patient.
- **5.** Clinicians to notify patients of the medications being prescribed.
- **6.** Presence of emergency alarms in porter cells for quick responses to medical emergencies.
- **7.** AED devices accessible in program areas and dormitory areas.

We would add:

8. Consider people patients, not "offenders," and treat us as you would treat your patients in the free world.

With thanks to Akil Salter of the Osborne Association.



STAYING STRONG INSIDE

A One-Time Only Publication for Incarcerated People Single issue: Fall 2015/Winter 2016

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Published by Sero Project, Inc.

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in association with Prison Health News fight.org/programs-and-services/ prison-health-news

Thanks to these wonderful backers:

Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS H. van Ameringen Foundation Elton John AIDS Foundation

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Anthony Tafoya Joshua Shuck Blake McGrath Kenneth Kev Brian Carmichael L. Shavne Tabor Corey Crawford Larry Van Schaick David Bailey Lisa Brelsford Gary Brooks Lisa Strawn James Docker Mark Jarosik Jason Thomas Michael Jeremy Gillis Monroe MacRae Jesse Washington Natalie DeMola John Cookman Robert Auker Steve Passamante John Hernandez David Lee Terrance White Jane Dorotik Tim Hinkhouse John Orr Vinicio Jesus Garcia Jonathan Vernier

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IIII from the EDITORS

Dear Reader,

TURN IT UP! is for people in prison, and many of the people who created TURN IT UP! have served time behind the walls, fighting to stay healthy despite the many obstacles prison presents. We have experienced discrimination (from eye-rolling, to being denied housing, jobs, and other basic human rights) because of our prison records, race, HIV status, sexuality or gender. None of these things affect our humanity, but they do at times affect how we are treated by people who might themselves lack some humanity. (At right is a photo of some of us meeting to plan the magazine last September. The list of articles we came up with at that meeting would fill an encyclopedia, so we had to whittle it down to what you see in the magazine you are holding.)

TURN IT UP! is meant to help you protect your own health and welfare-whether that's an idea about how to eat or exercise, or a way to improve your medical treatment. You will find basic information on HIV, hepatitis C and other health conditions, suggestions from other incarcerated people about things they do to stay strong inside, and addresses to write to for many kinds of information and help. We know conditions and rules vary widely from one prison to another, and we tried to provide the most universal information we could find. But some things may not apply in the system or facility you are in-especially in immigration detention or jails—and we realize that can make things hard.



(I to r) Cindy Stine, Reed Vreeland, Laura Whitehorn, Sean Strub. Tré Alexander, Akil Salter (Suzy Subways took the photo)

We hope you feel, through the words on these pages, our support, respect and friendship. Those things helped some of us to feel powerful and dignified during our years in prison, even though prison seemed designed to rob us of those feelings. The incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people, as well as some of our strongest allies, whose voices fill these pages inspire all of us-on the outside as well as behind bars-to TURN IT UP! together for our health and the health of our families and communities.

> -Laura Whitehorn and Suzy Subways, Editors-in-Chief







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HOW TO

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Starting a Support Group

andling health problems or other challenges behind bars can feel lonely and confusing. And seeing other people's needs go unmet can make you feel powerless. Support groups allow you to figure out together how to deal with shared concerns. Here are some things I learned during my years in prison about how to start a support group.

1) Find at least one or two other people you trust, and talk about your goals-what you'd like to do and what you can realistically accomplish, given prison rules and limits.

2) Find a good spon-

chaplain was a wonderful help, so our AIDS education to trust you—and your group to offer real support. and support group ("the A-Team") was sponsored by



the chapel. In three other prisons where I did time, the psychology department and education staff provided legitimacy. We presented our plan to those departments, and they negotiated with the warden so we could meet, educate one another, and put on programs for the rest of the prison. (Can't get permission? You may need to wait for changes in administration, while supporting each other and sharing education one-on-one.)

3) Be clear on what it means to keep something confidential. If someone tells you something and says, "Keep this within this

sor, if needed. The joints I was in didn't permit groups of group" or "Don't tell anyone else," follow that to the people to meet without staff approval. In one prison, the letter. It's not easy, but it is necessary if you want people

-Laura Whitehorn, formerly incarcerated

COMPASSIONATE COMPANIONS

derly women with terminal illness shipped off to die in the skilled nursing facility in a prison 300 miles away. Most of these women had been incarcerated for many years, and the familiar surroundings at CIW were now their home. To ship them off to die was so cruel.

But creating a Compassionate Companions program here seemed to be a far-fetched, altruistic illusion. The proposal fell on deaf ears.

Finally, a new warden indilobbying by incarcerated women, our program was approved to pro-

California Institution for serious illness, grief, loss, or other Women (CIW), I saw el- catastrophic emotional events.



A woman who had just received a terminal diagnosis asked for help in expediting her petition for compassionate release, which her oncologist had written, but not cated sympathy. So, with a lot of in the correct format. She asked if one of us might be allowed to accompany her during a medical visit

hen I first came to the vide support for those experiencing with the chief medical officer, who would be making the final decision. We were very willing to help, and, I am happy to say, the compassionate release was approved.

> Compassionate Companions can bring about culture change in a system that is generally insensitive, steeped in dominance and unaware of individual needs. I think this is perhaps the most important aspect of our program—the ability to surround all of us with greater understanding and empathy for each other. After all, this world belongs to all of us, and the future is not a place we are going to, it is a place we are creating.

> > -Jane Dorotik, CA

Chow Time

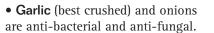
iven the limitations of prison diets-and how addictive junk food is-it's tough (sometimes impossible) to eat healthfully. Still, these guidelines may help:

NUTRITIOUS CHOICES,

if available (mess hall, commissary, or food packages):

- Vegetables (especially green leafies) and fresh fruits are rich in vitamins, minerals and • Garlic (best crushed) and onions fiber. Fresh fruit beats juice-it contains fiber without added sugar.
- tious. Unlike white potatoes, they don't spike blood sugar.
- Healthy fat sources: butter, olive Ginger (can be chopped and brewed oil, nuts, seeds
- Sardines and (less so) tuna are pain. rich in omega-3 fatty acids (see "Vitamins and Supplements," p. 7).
- **Eggs** provide a perfect protein.
- Whole wheat, brown rice, and oatmeal include nutrients, unlike releases caffeine white flour (often listed as "enriched" or "wheat flour"). People who are overweight or have diabetes need to minimize carbs (including fruit), which can balloon blood sugar levels. (Exercise can reduce these levels).
- Peanut butter is a good protein source; sugar-free brands are hard to find but better than those that • Sugar adds calories and steals contain sugar.

"Even when **FOR** the veggies in the chow hall don't look appealing, I eat them. Otherwise I feel less healthy." -David, NY



- Curry powder contains turmeric, • **Sweet potatoes** are highly nutri- which may help fight inflammation (but should be avoided if you have gallbladder disease).
 - as tea) eases digestion; may ease joint
 - Tea (unsweetened) has antiinflammatory compounds and more gradually than coffee (less "jolt").
 - Plain water is good for your

liver, especially with lemon added.

SOME FOODS TO LIMIT OR-IF POSSIBLE-AVOID:

- nutrients. It hides in many products as "corn syrup," "maltodextrin" or ingredients ending in "-ose" (like "fructose"). Worst is sugar-sweetened soda (high intake has been linked to earlier death), but artificial sweeteners should be limited as well.
- Soy products can produce constipation or diarrhea.

• You may want to skip seconds on deep-fried chicken or fish, French fries, margarine, and potato or corn chips-they contain harmful "trans" (or "hydrogenated") fat. And processed meats (hot dogs, ham, bacon, sausages, deli meats) contain unhealthful chemicals.

WORKS

ME!

"Try to get put on a special diet such as gluten free, low cholesterol, diabetic, kosher/halal or lactoseintolerant, because the food is better cooked, a little more edible and has more nutrients."

-Terrance White, CA

- Special mention: many Black and Asian people are lactose-intolerant, so must avoid all dairy products except yogurt.
- Too much salt can worsen liver disease or high blood pressure. (If you add other herbs and spices to your food, you may miss salt less.)

Finally, food's better digested if you eat slowly, chew well and avoid stressful conversation.

> -Bob Lederer. formerly incarcerated

A Disease, Not a Crime

decided how to handle being HIV positive when I was in county jail. I hung out with a few guys, and we never asked each other anything about our charges. One day when I was hauled off to court, my supposed



buddies went through my things and saw my paperwork: I had been indicted for transmitting HIV to my common-law wife.

When I returned, they didn't say anything. But that night was movie night, so we were all in the TV room, where there is no guard. When my head was turned, they commenced to beating the brakes off me,

using socks filled with 20-ounce bottles full of water turned upside down so that the hard, rough edges would hit me and do damage.

I made up my mind then and there never to hide my status.

When I got shipped to this prison, I immediately let everyone know that I am living with HIV. It makes some people uncomfortable, but it's the start of education. People act mean to those of us who are positive because they are uneducated about the virus, and they're scared. I'm not saying this is the way to go for everyone. But when guys say things behind my back or under their breath, I tell them, "If you have questions about me or my case, ask me anything. Maybe I can quiet some of your fears." That usually does the trick.

I choose to be an open book, so that no one-me or anyone-gets hurt. And this helps me educate people that HIV is a disease, not a crime.

I wish you all well and hope you find a road that works for you. My advice is to be your own guide and not let the words or deeds of others set you off your course. You have the power. It is in you.

-L. Shayne Tabor, IA

SOLITARY STRATEGY

fter a year in prison, I was sent to a supermax (solitary and total lockdown). I struggled with loneliness and depression.

Determined to take action, I chose to exercise my spirit, mind and body. I studied various spiritual, psychology and self-help books and a book on chess that helped me improve my game and my strategic thinking.

I weight-lifted, using a pillowcase filled with 50 pounds of my legal papers. (I tried to use bottles of water, but the guards took those away from me; they couldn't take my legal papers.)

I'm back in general population now, and I've added more cardio and

other exercise routines. But what's stayed the same is my commitment to be not just active but proactive, to maintain my health-body, mind -Blake McGrath, NC and spirit.

WORKS FOR

"I whip out my HIV-101 and share my info, and women here learn what's the truth."

-Lisa Brelsford, CT

"I document all medical visits on my calendar to keep tabs on my health."

-John Hernandez, TX

"In the hole, making a schedule and sticking to it allowed me some control over my days and moods."

-Laura Whitehorn, formerly incarcerated

Breathe, Stretch, Stay Strong

ven in the dismal reality of prison-even in **solitary, as some have** learned the hard way-you can do things to feel better. Some are pretty easy; others take more study or teaching. Here are some choices (and some places to write for instruction):

Deep breathing. A great stress-reducer and energizer you can do any time, for as long as you want. For each breath, let the lower belly get large as you inhale deeply through your nose, then exhale slowly through your mouth.

Meditation. Not necessarily religious-just a special time of calm, focusing on your breath and letting go of regular thoughts. It can help improve attention, stress management and self-control skills. Twenty minutes a day is ideal, but even 5 minutes can help.



Yoga. This ancient Indian practice doesn't require pretzel-like poses, and it can be learned from a book, though more easily from an instructor. Kath Meadows, who teaches yoga in a Maryland prison, writes, "Buildup of stress can have bad effects on our mental and physical health and immune system. Just a few minutes of yoga a day can help reduce suffering in the mind and the body."

Acupressure (self-massage).

This Chinese practice is based on study of body points where energy gets blocked, produc-

ing symptoms. Firmly pressing your middle finger on specific points for two minutes may relieve some aches and pains and build energy. (See the chart on the back cover of Turn It Up!)

Exercise. Walking, runninganything that gets a rhythm going-can help improve physical and mental health.

Laughter. Science confirms: a good laugh stimulates the immune system-and of course feels great, especially in dreary conditions. TV comedies, joke books-whatever makes you laugh—will be good medicine.

-Bob Lederer, formerly incarcerated

WORKS "I used to run, but the joint I'm FOR in only has cement exercise areas, and at my age (in my 80s), the impact hurts. So I took up yoga, and I highly recommend it. The breathing is the most important part, but don't underestimate the strain on your body from the stretching and holding poses. You have to go slow at the beginning, until

-Vinicio Jesus Garcia, TX

"Laughter is the best medicine, so I opened my mouth, smiled big and pretended to laugh. Air flowed into my lungs, my stress went down as I went 'Ha, ha, ha!' again and again. Every time, my mind calmed."

your body gets used to it."

-Michael Petrelis, formerly incarcerated

FOR INFO ON SOME OF THESE METHODS

Meditation: Path of Freedom (ask for a free book on meditation), Prison Mindfulness Institute, 11 S. Angell St. #303, Providence, RI 02906

Yoga: James Fox, Yoga: A Path for Healing and Recovery (a free 100-page yoga and meditation manual especially for people in prison): Prison Yoga Project, P.O. Box 415, Bolinas CA 94924; 301-792-5352

Kath Meadows, A Woman's Practice: Healing from the Heart (for women with a history of trauma or addiction); free to incarcerated people: The Give Back Yoga Foundation, 900 Baseline Road, Cottage 13B, Boulder, CO 80302

Acupressure: Introduction to Acupressure (booklet; also covers qi gung), \$8. Acupressure Institute, 1533 Shattuck Ave, Berkeley, CA 94709; 510-845-1059; acupressure.com

Acupressure Points: Instructions for Use (also covers breathing, exercise, stretching), free; School of Chi Energy, P.O. Box 2115, Apex, NC 27502; 919-771-7800; chienergyheals.com

HIV Education HE LEARNED ABOUT HIV—AND TAUGHT HIS DOCTOR



"The Library" by Jacob Lawrence

years when I tested positive for HIV in 2005. My T-cell count (a measure of the strength of the immune system) was around 800. At that time, the recommended threshhold for starting HIV drugs was 300 T cells, so I didn't need to start meds.

I did need to educate myself, though. I had my family send me the HIV treatment guidelines from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and a treatment handbook from Johns Hopkins Medical School. I read and re-read them both, then went to the prison library and checked the PDR (Physician's Desk Reference) for side effects of all the HIV medications. Whenever I saw a magazine or newspaper article about HIV treatment studies, I saved it.

I got sick in 2006 (H. Pylori, a common infection that can cause

had been locked up for about six stomach ulcers), and my T-cell count dropped to 400. I had seen studies saying it's best to start HIV meds when your T cells hit 500 (the recommendation now is to start meds as soon as you test positive). I took them to the prison doctor and argued that I should start. He knew very little about HIV, but I was able to convince him to let me start medication.

But the med regimen he chose was not listed among the top choices by the HHS guidelines—and it has some pretty bad side effects. So I brought him the guidelines and the side-effect information and asked for one of the top choices instead. The doctor agreed—and he let me pick my own regimen!

Today I am on that same regimen, with an undetectable viral load and T cells around 1,400. I always take my meds. Whenever it's close to time for a refill, I remind the medical department. If they don't fill my meds on time, I immediately file a medical grievance. The prison will never admit they were wrong, but in short time they will provide the meds, which is all that really matters. Same goes for all the monitoring and blood tests I need. Every time there has been a delay or other problem, I've been able to resolve it with a grievance-I've never had to file a state or federal claim.

Because many HIV meds can raise lipids (cholesterol and triglycerides) and lower levels of vitamin D, I also follow an exercise and nutrition

regimen. Many state and federal prisons have kosher diets available, and if you can get on a plan, it's worth it for the more nutritious food you'll get. You can also ask medical for supplementary vitamins and other nutritional support they might have in your joint.

I am open with my HIV status with family and close friends, and with other HIV-positive people in here. Beyond that, I always have to think, "What will this disclosure bring me? Benefit? Or harm?" This is not about shame or fear, but about being practical.

-Michael, KY

WORKS "I stay away from prison ME! tattoos and pruno (prison wine)." -Jason Thomas, CA

Vitamins and Supplements

o one needs a reminder that prison diets aren't the most nutritious. If the prison you're in allows you to get supplements and vitamins from commissary, an outside vendor or medical (if you have a health condition), here are some worth taking:

WORTH IT-IF YOU

• Multivitamin - contains the necessary vitamins and minerals. The American Medical Association advises all adults: "take at least one multivitamin pill each day." Some brands don't provide high enough doses, so consider taking two daily (no OD risk at that level). Excess iron can worsen liver problems, so

experts suggest a no-iron version if possible (unless the doctor says you're iron deficient).

WORKS

FOR "Because we had three hunger strikes in the past two years to protest our mistreatment and the lack ME! of attention to our medical needs, we gained a little momentum and now we can receive vitamins in our yearly packages from home, and we can buy multivitamins, Tylenol, Ibuprofen, Halls and Tums in our monthly canteen."

-Terrance White, CA

BRINGING DOWN THE PRESSURE

had a big scare when the prison doctor said my blood pressure was really high. I didn't want to take medication, so the doc told me to cut back on caffeine and spices and lose some weight.

I had been working out with weights but I was carrying too much myself-202 pounds on a 5'3" frame. I ditched the spices (except for garlic and oregano, so my food wouldn't be too bland). I took a out of here when my time expires. break from power lifting and went



the primary cause of death among Americans older

to light weight lifting, yoga, and the treadmill and elliptical machine.

It worked: My blood pressure and weight are down. It can be a struggle in this environment, but my job is to stay healthy and walk -Steve Passamante, PA • Vitamin B complex - contains all the B vitamins, which work to fight stress and build energy and brain function. The Public Health Service recommends folic acid for women of childbearing age-before and during pregnancy-to reduce risk of birth defects.

CAN GET THEM

• Vitamin C - helps fight viruses. Best is ascorbic acid.

- Vitamin D3 Protects bone, muscle, and general health. Dairy products don't contain enough D, but D3 capsules can help. Exposing skin to sunlight (without sunscreen) produces D, so try to get in the sun for an hour and a half to two hours a week if you can.
- Fish oil (contains omega-3 fatty acids) - good for heart health. If you have a fish allergy or bleeding disorder, check with a doctor. If you can get capsules, try for those marked "EPA" or "DHA," 1,000 mg daily.
- Milk thistle (an herb) doesn't cure or treat hepatitis C, but may ease symptoms. But be aware of side effects, which can include allergic reactions (for people allergic to ragweed) and lowering blood sugar levels.

If you have a health condition or take any meds, make sure your doctor knows you are taking any of these-they could interact.

> -Bob Lederer, formerly incarcerated

WORKS "Especially for **FOR** older people, take a multivitamin if you can get them. I did and noticed a significant improvement in mental processes and muscle response." -Vinicio Jesus Garcia, TX

Hepatitis C Behind Bars HOW TO AVOID OR MANAGE HEP C

he majority of people with hepatitis C virus (HCV) are baby boomers (born between 1945 and 1965). About a third of all incarcerated people have HCV. In prison and out, the most common source of infection is shooting drugs-even only once a long time ago.

Testing positive for HCV doesn't automatically mean you will get sick. Some people clear the virus with no treatment. For others, hep C becomes chronic, slowly causing progressive liver damage, including fibrosis and cirrhosis (mild and more serious scarring of the liver) and liver cancer. It can take years before the virus produces symptoms of liver damage-symptoms like abdominal pain, grey-colored stools, dark urine, and jaundice, in which the skin and whites of the eyes turn yellowish.

HCV IS SPREAD through bloodto-blood contact, including:

- Sharing razors, toothbrushes, nail or hair clippers or-riskiest of all-needles and rigs. Even rinse water and filters can spread HCV.
- Tattooing: While free-world tat parlors are regulated, with sterilizing equipment and disposable needles, those protections aren't available in most prisons. Bleach (if you can get it) doesn't work. Reused ink can spread HCV too.

HCV IS NOT SPREAD through casual contact (sharing food, dishes, eating utensils, cups or glasses, hugging, sharing a cell).

Test, Treat, Manage Hep C

It's important to be tested for hep C. The American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases recommends testing incarcerated people, so you're backed up by science when you ask for the hep C test.

If you have hep C, the next step is more tests-to see whether you need treatment. A "chem screen" blood test and sometimes a liver biopsy monitor liver function.

Learning as much as possible about monitoring and treating hep C empowers you to discuss your care with the doc. For info sources, see Resources, page 22.

Ways to protect your health: Exercising, drinking more water and eating less fat can help your liver health. So can avoiding hootch, cigarettes and drugs, including other people's meds.

If you also have HIV, be sure to take your HIV meds to stay healthy and help you manage coinfections like hep C.

Getting hep C treatment? Ask the medical staff for help managing any side effects. Discuss possible drug interactions, especially if you can get the newest HCV meds.

HEPATITIS C CAN BE CURED

here's no vaccine for HCV, but new treatments now make it possible to cure most cases. Older treatments cure about 50% to 75% of people, using up to a full year of interferon-based treatment, with the severe side effects interferon injections can cause. The new oral treatments work better and are a lot easier to take. Around 90% to 95% of people who can get the new treatments can be cured, most in just 2 to 6 months.

Getting treated-when and with what-depends on a few things. These include the stage of liver damage, HCV genotype (most people in the U.S., especially African Americans, have genotype 1); whether you've already been treated but not cured; and other health conditions you may have. Having both HIV and HCV (called "coinfection") doesn't exclude people from being treated, but it could mean using a different regimen to avoid drug interactions.

The new HCV treatments can work whether or not you have been treated before, and even if you are already developing cirrhosis. Older treatments didn't work well for some African Americans, but the new ones work the same regardless of race. With the new drugs, almost everyone with HCV genotypes 1 or 2 can now be cured without interferon, and researchers are working on better treatments for genotype 3.

For more information, see Resources, hepC/HIV, page 22.

TREATMENTS FOR **HEPATITIS C**

OLD SCHOOL:

Interferon shots plus oral ribavirin, often for a full year.

NEW SCHOOL:

Harvoni, a combination of sofosbuvir and ledipasvir: This is the first FDA-approved, interferon-free treatment for genotype 1, the most common strain of HCV (and formerly the hardest to cure). Harvoni is just one pill a day for only 12 to 24 weeks, and 95% to 100% of patients in research studies were cured.

Sovaldi (sofosbuvir) plus Olysio (simeprevir): With or without ribavirin for 12 to 24 weeks, they have higher cure rates (and fewer side effects) for HCV genotype 1 than older treatments. People with easier-to-treat genotype 2 can take Sovaldi and ribavirin alone for 12 weeks.

Viekira Pak (ombitasvir/paritaprevir/ritonavir; dasabuvir) with ribavirin for 12 to 24 weeks: This med is for people with HCV genotype 1. It doesn't require interferon, and the side effects are usually mild.

WORKS

FOR "I find it is essential to learn the specific federal and state legal rights for each correctional facility so I can show when they are being violated." -Jesse Washington, CA

Filing a **Medical Grievance**

f you have HCV and haven't been able to get the new treatments, you have a good basis for a grievance. Because medical experts (the Ameri-



can Association for the Study of Liver Diseases and the Infectious Diseases Society of America) recommend that everyone with active hep C can benefit from

treatment with the new drugs, you can clearly claim that denying the treatments is medical neglect. For a strong case, you have to prove that the decision to deny the meds wasn't medical-for instance, that it was based on the high cost of the treatment, a financial decision. You can file a grievance saying something like, "Because there's no medical reason for refusing the care, I request that this be remedied. Failure to do so would be deliberate indifference to a serious medical need."

As with any medical grievance, you must first put the request on paper and get a denial of the request on paper. And if you want your family or someone else outside to back you up with calls or letters to the prison, remember to sign a form to release medical information to them.

GETTING HEP C MEDS WHEN YOU NEED THEM

treated, the latest American Association for the dates; see Resources, page 23.) Study of Liver Diseases guidelines advise. People in Some studies show that using the new drugs is costeffective for prisons, because they cure hep C and prevent more serious liver disease.

But partly because the new drugs are so costly, many prison systems only use the new treatments for people who can't tolerate interferon and also have advanced liver damage. In most prison systems, you

So you may need to advocate for yourself to get the care you need (see "Filing a Medical Grievance," above right). Incarcerated people in several states have already filed class action lawsuits to get needed

Incarcerated people with chronic HCV should be hepatitis C treatment. (Prison Legal News carries up-

The Federal Bureau of Prisons and most state prison have a human right to effective medical care. systems have HCV treatment guidelines that govern all decisions about care. The same is true for HIV and other conditions. Ask the medical staff or your counselor for your prison's rules and the formulary (list of available drugs) for treating hep C. An outside friend or family member can get them from your state department of corrections (for federal prisons, the Bureau of Prisons).

On the street, many insurance programs only must have at least a year left on your sentence to get cover people with significant liver scarring (stage 3 or stage 4 fibrosis). If you're nearing release, ask a case manager for information on patient assistance programs and clinical trials that can cover costs. If you are released (or transferred), try to take copies of medical records to avoid repeating tests.



HIV Basics



Adapted from POZ magazine

WHAT IT MEANS

HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) is the virus that causes the disease AIDS, or acquired immunodeficiency syndrome. Both terms share the word immunodeficiency, a mouthful that means the immune system is too weak to work. This explains why having HIV infection threatens your health-it can weaken your body's own natural defense against sickness.

PEP and PrEP

NEW HIV PREVENTION TOOLS ON THE STREET

Post-exposure prophylaxis/PEP is a 28-day prescription that can prevent HIV transmission if treatment begins within two or three days after exposure to the virus. Healthcare workers often take PEP when they get a needle stick; it also works if someone is sexually exposed.

Pre-exposure prophylaxis/PrEP is a prescription treatment, tak-

en daily, that protects people from getting HIV before they are exposed to it.

HOW YOU CAN-AND CANNOT-CONTRACT HIV

HIV is found in semen, vaginal fluids, blood and breast milk. It can enter the body through open cuts, sores or broken skin; through mucous membranes, like those inside the anus or vagina; or through direct injection.

You **CAN** get HIV by having anal or vaginal intercourse without a condom with a partner who is either HIV positive or doesn't know their status.

Oral sex is lower risk, but HIV CAN sometimes be spread this way.

You **CAN** get HIV by sharing needles, syringes or other injection equipment with someone who is positive or doesn't know their status.

Babies born to HIV-positive women **CAN** be infected before or during birth, or through breastfeeding after birth.

IF YOU OR A FRIEND TEST POSITIVE:

Never forget: you CAN live a long, healthy life with HIV. Learning about HIV and connecting with other people who have it are the best defense against sickness. For more information, see Resources, page 22.

You CANNOT get HIV from kissing, hand jobs, hugs or tears.

You **CANNOT** get HIV by sharing food, utensils, cups or glasses with a positive person, or from a toilet seat (even if it's dirty).

You CANNOT get HIV by sharing a cell with a positive person.

You CANNOT get HIV from spit, sweat or skin contact.

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO GET TESTED

The longer HIV attacks the immune system, the more you risk developing serious infections and cancers. So it's important to get tested for HIV-and start treatment with HIV meds if you test positive—as soon as possible.

HIV? Or AIDS?

HIV and AIDS ARE NOT the same. With today's improved drugs, HIV DOES NOT always lead to sickness and AIDS. For people who are HIV positive, the best way to avoid getting AIDS is to treat HIV.

Diabetes Basics

Adapted from Real Health magazine

iabetes results when the body doesn't produce or can't store enough insulin-a hormone made by the pancreas and used by cells to process glucose (a form of sugar) for energy. Too much glucose builds up in the blood, causing high blood sugar. Untreated, this can damage vessels that carry blood to vital organs, raising the risk of stroke, heart and kidney disease, eye problems and nerve disorders.

In **TYPE 1 DIABETES**, the body doesn't produce any insulin. In **TYPE 2 DIABETES**—the most common—the body produces insulin but not enough to function properly. **GESTATIONAL DIABETES** affects women during pregnancy, usually around the 24th week.

WORKS "I choose food with less sugar and fat, and eat fruit and vegetables." -Gary Brooks, PA

RISK FACTORS FOR TYPE 2

- Being obese or overweight
- Not exercising
- Age over 45
- High blood pressure
- Insulin resistance Polycystic ovary syndrome
- Having had diabetes during pregnancy (gestational diabetes)
- Family members who have type 2 diabetes

Eating sugar doesn't cause diabetes, but it can make you overweight or obese, which can lead to diabetes.

SYMPTOMS

- Frequent urination
- Extreme thirst or hunger
- Unintended weight gain or loss
- Fatigue and feeling tired, listless and irritable
- Blurry vision
- Cuts and bruises that don't heal quickly or properly

• Numbness or tingling, particularly in the hands and feet

Signs of

Diabetes

Extreme

Blurred

Irritabilit

• Itchy skin; skin and yeast infections

Frequent Urination

- Gum infections and gum disease; red, swollen gums that pull away from the teeth
- Sexual dysfunction in men If you have one or more of these symptoms, it's time to see the doctor and ask for diabetes testing.

TREATMENTS

Treatments include maintaining a healthy weight, exercising regularly, monitoring your blood sugar, drinking plenty of water and eating in a healthful way (see "Chow Time," page 3). Doctors might prescribe insulin shots and oral medications.

HIV CRIMES?

KNOW THE FACTS

• "HIV criminalization" is the wrongful use of HIV status in a criminal prosecution. For example, 32 states have special laws to prosecute people with HIV who have sex-even safe sex, even with a condom-if they can't prove they told their sex partner in advance that they were living with HIV. In some states, exposing someone to "bodily fluids" like saliva or urinewhich do not transmit HIV-can result in prosecution. Whether a state has special HIV laws or not, people can be charged with more serious crimes just because they have HIV. A misdemeanor assault charge, for

example, might become felony assault or assault with intent to kill.

• HIV does not have to be transmitted for charges to be filed; in most cases, no transmission occurs. Scientific facts-like how HIV is (and is not) transmitted, that condoms and effective treatment prevent transmission or that saliva and tears do not transmit HIV-don't affect the outcome of the cases.

PREJUDICE AND BAD **HEALTH POLICY**

People charged with HIV "crimes"—most often people of color, people who live in poverty, sex workers, and people who inject drugs-get smeared in the media, often receive long prison sentences and can be required to register as sex

offenders-even when there was little or no possibility of transmitting HIV. That brands them as evil and makes it hard to find housing or a job.

HIV criminalization:

- discourages people from getting tested for HIV, for fear of prosecution;
- fuels the idea that people with HIV are inherently dangerous, a group that needs to be identified, monitored, controlled and incarcerated;
- undercuts the most basic public health messages on preventing HIV and sexually transmitted infections: that each person is responsible for their sexual health decisions.

For more info and resources: Sero Project, P.O. Box 1233, Milford, PA 18337; info@seroproject.com



mid slamming doors and jangling keys, there is no room for peaceful reflection. But then a voice I from the guards' control booth presents an avenue to relief: Upper tier, Yard's open!

Methodically, two by two, we leave our cells and descend the stairs, corralled into the ground floor sally port and eventually thrust out into brilliant sunlight. Blinking, we emerge surrounded by concrete structures designed to incarcerate. The track they enclose is less than ideal: jagged stone protruding from asphalt, broken every few feet by cracks and crevices. By midsummer in the desert Southwest, sweltering temperatures routinely exceed the century mark. Today is no exception.

I ignore the substandard surface and the blazing heat. I will run.

For me, brisk runs exceeding thirty minutes stimulate cognitive skills, concentration and sleep quality. They relieve stress and liberate anxieties. Even more important,

running satisfies my fervent passion to elude reality, if only temporarily. To reflect, to dream, to feel free.

As I circumvent the monotonous oval track, each lap inflicts escalating discomfort, straining knee ligaments, provoking fatigue. But like runners before me, I keep going and eventually reach a wondrously harmonious place of physical, mental and emotional balance known as the runner's zone.

I have 45 laps in, with just one to go to complete a half-marathon. I unleash a parting burst of energy, a final kick. The spurt propels me across the invisible finish line, a triumphal smile playing on my lips, clenched fists flung skyward.

Panting, I conclude my half-marathon in time to hear the squawking announcement from the guard tower: Yard recall! Yard recall! Take it home. If health and peace are my home, that is where I have arrived.

-Mark A. Jarosik, CA

TRANS HEALTH BASICS

EVERYONE HAS THE RIGHT TO LIVE AS THE GENDER THEY FEEL THEY ARE

Gender: Sense of being a woman, man or another gender *Transgender:* Being a different gender from the one given at

Sexual orientation: Attraction to people of one's own or different gender(s)

Care for transition: Hormones, and sometimes surgeries, may be prescribed to change physical appearance. Changes to hair, grooming and clothing can make our bodies feel more like home-even in prison.

Several courts have ruled that incarcerated trans people have a right to hormones (surgeries are still being contested). Yet prevent bone loss and early aging.

many prisons don't comply. This is once you've started. You may need to attend sick call, file a grievance and sue to get needed care. Asking legal prescription for hormones before prison, you may have to undergo psychological testing.

tor should make sure your hormone dose is right and watch for side effects. For example, estrogen may increase risk of blood clots and heart disease. If you have surgery, you may need other hormones to

Anyone, including trans men dangerous, especially because it's who've had breast-removal surgery, important to continue hormones can get breast cancer and should discuss breast pain, lumps, or family history of breast cancer with a doctor. Trans women over age 50 to see a transgender specialist may have a right to mammograms. If help. If you didn't have an active, you have a cervix (the inch-wide knobby bit between vagina and womb), you may need Pap smears to check for cervical cancer.

Checkups and examinations **Regular checkups:** The doc- are important. Medical staff must provide sensitive, respectful care that recognizes gender identity. It may help to tell the doctor what will make you feel comfortable.

> Sources: Prison Health News, Center of Excellence for Transgender Health, and TGI Justice Project



The Power of Our Unity STICKING TOGETHER CREATED A DIFFERENT KIND OF FORCE

have sarcoidosis, a rare hereditary disease that damages my lungs. I should be called down to medical at least four times a year for a checkup, but that doesn't happen. Since being at Pennsylvania's SCI Coal Township, I've kept my dealings with the infirmary to a minimum because I've heard so many horrifying stories, including charging chronic care patients for routine visits, and the coldness of attitude. The staff have a tendency to forget they're dealing with human beings.

We as prisoners do not make enough money to afford the co-pay. If you make \$30 or \$40 a month and you go to sick call, you might end up paying \$10 or more for treatment. So you learn to ignore medical issues that are not emergencies. Thus, the co-pay system is a dangerous deterrent.

In the summer of 2014, over half the men in the prison partici-



David Lee

pated in a chow hall boycott in an attempt to get justice on many fronts. There were 22 requests. One was elimination of charging chronic care patients for routine visits to medical. The substitution of the word "request" for "demand" was strategic and had everything to do with us wishing to peacefully protest for our rights. Many men went without food for days because they were fed up with being treated like incorrigible animals.

The chow hall boycott was one of the best periods I've spent in prison, because the men started to see the power of our unity. It showed what could happen if we used our heads and our unity as a weapon, rather than force.

Our unity sent shock waves through the Department of Corrections-they did not believe it was possible. They were ready for force, not for our thinking outside the box. But we paid dearly, because many men were arbitrarily transferred in retaliation. Prison activists don't grow on trees, and we're still trying to recover from the loss of leadership. Nevertheless, we did gain tremendous support from activist organizations, and our voices were heard outside.

We're still fighting for justice on many fronts.

-David Lee, PA

TO SAVE A LIFE



've been incarcerated since age 16, serving life without parole. I work as a peer health educator save a life. I wrote to organizations here at Central California Women's that do suicide prevention for more Facility. There is a high rate of

suicide attempts here. At times, the women don't trust the staff to confide in, and they ask their peers for help. But when I suggested to staff that we should be trained in what to do if someone is talking about suicide or if we see warning signs, the administration said that only mental health staff can respond and that there were only a few actual suicides-the rest were "only" attempts.

To me, an attempt will one day be successful. There are not enough mental health staff to respond right away, so we should be able to go into action to possibly information, and California Coali-

tion for Women Prisoners worked with me to get a pamphlet made and distributed in prisons to help incarcerated people know the signs of suicide, how to get help and what to say and do in the moment.

Everyone deserves healing. And a hero is in everyone, including you. True heroes are not just on TV-they are people like you and me who will go to any lengths to use what they know and save a life.

-Natalie DeMola, CA

For a free copy of the suicide prevention pamphlet, write to California Coalition for Women Prisoners, 1540 Market Street, Suite 490, San Francisco, CA 94102 (write "Attn: S.P. pamphlet" on the envelope)

"I Was Able to Address *Me*, But How Do I Help *Us*?"

nless you're a self-advocate, you fall through the cracks a lot," says Kerry Thomas. He found this out after he entered the Idaho State Correctional Center in 2009. The prison's medical staff told him they didn't have his HIV drug regimen and weren't sure when it would be available.

"I called my doctor in Boise," Thomas recalls. "My intent was to say,

'Hey, can you send some [meds] over until they catch up?'" Instead, the doctor called the prison to ask why Thomas was not getting his meds. Thirty minutes later, Thomas was summoned to the unit and, in his words,

Health Care
Advocacy
and
Empowerment
Behind Bars

By Victoria Law

staff to reorder for them. If the refill doesn't arrive, they must put in a sick call request. At sick call, generally 48 hours later, they are given an appointment for a week later. At that appointment, Thomas explains, the provider usually says, "Oh, we didn't order your medication" or, "Your prescription is expired. We'll have to reorder it." It takes another several days before the medication

arrives. The result can be a two-week lapse in medication—meaning someone living with HIV could become resistant to the HIV drugs.

It's stressful, too, Thomas says. "A lot of guys get









Kerry Thomas

"somewhat reprimanded" for calling his doctor rather than simply waiting. But the prison quickly got his pills.

Not getting necessary medications on time is common in jails and prisons across the country. What makes

his story unusual is that Thomas drew on his preexisting community ties and, as a result, got the meds. Others in the prison are less fortunate, Thomas says.

Until 2014, men at the prison would receive 30 days of pills in a bottle with a reorder strip. Halfway through the 30 days, they'd send medical the reorder form. But

now the prison contracts with a private company for medical services, and medication arrives with the strip already removed, forcing people to rely on medical

frustrated with the whole process and get to the point [of thinking], 'What's the point? Why am I even taking these anyway? I'm tired of the hassle."

So Thomas helps people navigate the procedures.

"It's going to take a lot of initiative.

But taking that initiative, that's what

keeps me healthy." -Kerry Thomas

He helps them write health services request forms clearly and make sure the form lands in the right pile. He's also a one-man information and support service.

Taking on this task pushed Thomas further—and moved others as well. He connected first with *POZ* magazine, then with the Sero Project, to fight HIV criminalization. After he joined Sero's board of directors, the prison administration saw the benefit of such involvement, and they were moved to give approval for Thomas to participate in Sero phone conferences.

Thomas faces an uphill battle, though. The prison

"I looked up names and addresses and sent letters trying to get somebody to listen." —Rusti Miller-Hill

offers no peer support services, no group counseling to people living with HIV/AIDS, no classes on transmission of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) including HIV. At intake, men are given a flier and, in a group setting, asked if they have questions. "If I'm 21 years old, even if I know my status, I'm not going to feel comfortable raising my hand," Thomas says. The prison states that more information is available "upon request," but many people don't know what information to ask for. Thomas is working with the administration to offer education and support, not only to people with HIV, but also to the general population. Such a program can make a huge difference, as Rusti Miller-Hill learned.

"I needed to live, and that was my way of fighting"

In 1991, while at Rikers Island, New York City's jail complex, Rusti Miller-Hill began attending a support group for women living with HIV. During one meeting, Iris de la Cruz visited and spoke with the women. "She was a heroin user, she had cervical cancer and an AIDS diagnosis," Miller-Hill recalls. After Cruz shared her story, Miller-Hill asked her, "Why would you put yourself out there like that?" Remembering the conversation, Miller-Hill explains, "She was a heroin user and everyone knew that. She was a prostitute and everybody knew that. My fear was that everyone was going to talk about me. So why would I do that?" But nearly 25 years later, she still remembers Cruz's answer: "You gotta talk about it, you gotta educate people, you have to fight for your rights."

"She lit the fire for me," Miller-Hill says. She began seeking information about HIV, no easy feat in a jail without a library. The support group facilitator was crucial. "She would bring us information, newspaper articles, stuff like that. We would read and talk about them," she says. Sentenced and sent to Albion Correc-

tional Facility, she continued to educate herself.

She was also forced to disclose her status to the women around her.

"I got sick," she says. "I had to figure out how to tell the other women I had HIV." When she did, the women bether caretakers, ing for her and

came her caretakers, cooking for her and nursing her back to health. This was necessary. "Correctional officers weren't willing to help," Miller-Hill says. "I saw them carry women to the medical unit in wheelbarrows just so they didn't have to touch them."

She began writing letters. "I was trying to draw attention to what was happening in Albion because the

Rusti Miller-Hill

majority of the women were Black and Brown like myself," she says. "I wrote to everybody. Prisoners' rights groups, TV stations, the commissioner. I went to the law library and looked up people's names and addresses and sent letters trying to get somebody to listen."

Eventually, the Prisoners' Rights Project of the Legal Aid Society responded, visiting the prison and interviewing her and other women. It filed a class-action suit against the entire prison medical system for failing to provide adequate care for people with HIV and AIDS. The suit was settled favorably in 2007, years after Miller-Hill was released. But reaching out for help—and getting a response—galvanized her to do more. "That was the beginning for me. I had never done anything like that before. I was not just fighting for my own rights. I was fighting for other women as well."

She enrolled in training to become a peer educator through Reach, an HIV/AIDS educational program offered to women at Albion through the Pathstone Corporation, an outside non-profit. Unlike people entering the Idaho prison, women entering Albion were required to attend Pathstone's five-day course about HIV, hepatitis C and STDs. There was also a support group, where women could ask questions and form a community. The program sponsored an annual World AIDS Day celebration, an

"Becoming an advocate empowered me to take my life back." —Rusti Miller-Hill

AIDS walk and other activities to raise awareness in the prison. "Because of the education program, [the women] were open to hearing the information and rise to the occasion," Miller-Hill says.

"I was scared to be a mother"

When Maria Caraballo gave birth in 2010, she did so while handcuffed to the hospital bed, despite New York State's 2009 law that prohibits restraining women during labor, delivery and postpartum recovery. As officers prepared to transport her from the prison to

the hospital, Caraballo reminded them it was against the law to shackle her. "You have no choice," the officers told her. "If you refuse we're going to write you up." The write-up would have removed her from the prison's nursery program—a program that would allow her and her baby to spend twelve months together. To avoid jeopardizing that opportu-

Handcuffed to the bed during and after giving birth, she held her daughter with her free arm for less than two minutes before medical staff whisked the newborn away to the hospital nursery. Caraballo remained cuffed for the next eight hours. She was not allowed to

nity, she allowed officers to cuff her wrists and ankles.

see her baby until the following day.

Three days later, she and her daughter returned to Bedford Hills Correctional Facility, which houses New York's only prison nursery program—a program fought for and staffed by Bedford's incarcerated women.

"Giving birth is nothing new to me," says Caraballo, who had had six children before prison. What was new, however, was parenting. "I was scared to be a mother." But the nursery provided a supportive atmosphere that helped quell her fears as well as her postpartum depression.

"My daughter was colicky," she says. "I was very tired and my daughter did not stop crying. One day, I put her in the crib. I lay on the bed, put the pillow over me and was like, 'I can't take it no more.' Next thing I know, I don't hear my daughter because one of the nursery mothers had taken her out of the room so I could get some rest"—the first rest she'd had since giving birth. Later, other mothers shared tips on soothing her infant, like bringing her into the laundry room so

the noise from the drier would calm her down. "It actually worked!" Caraballo says.

Being among other new mothers helped her come to terms with motherhood—and the opportunities she'd missed with her older children. "Sometimes I would just sit in my room and cry," she recalls. "Here I am with my baby and I wasn't able to do this with my other kids."

But the other women, many of whom had had children removed from their custody, understood and supported her through those times, with hugs and a listening ear from mothers with a similar experience.

Being inside a prison, the nursery program also had its limitations, including rules against practices considered normal on the outside, such as sleeping with the baby on the bed. When her baby was ten months old, Maria fell asleep with her daughter beside her. She was promptly expelled from the nursery. Although her daughter remained there while Caraballo made ar-

"Here I am with my baby and I wasn't able to do this with my other kids."

-Maria Caraballo

rangements for her care, she was only allowed to see her when she had a visit from the outside.

Now out of prison, Caraballo calls the nursery crucial to her development as a parent. "I'm now able to give my child all the love I have, because of the nursery," she says. "It has shown me how to be the person I am today."

"Taking control of my own life"

Kerry Thomas has never been in a prison with a formal HIV/AIDS program. Recognizing that many prisons lack HIV/AIDS education or support programs, he advises people to read everything and learn as much as possible. "Know who your medical provider is," he says. "Know the policies, what treatment you have access to, who your doctor is, who your nurse is, what



Maria Caraballo with her daughter

medication the prison approves, what the contract says. They're not always willing to give you that information, so it's going to take a lot of initiative. But what I learned is, taking that initiative, that's what keeps me healthy—taking control of my own life in an environment where

we have very little control." He also stays in touch with the outside community, including family, friends and advocates like people in the Sero Project, which has been a lifeline to information and feeling connected.

From there, he says, take the risk and reach out to other people who may be positive.

"I had to learn to take the risk to say, 'Hello, my name is Kerry. Do you want to talk?' That was not always an easy thing. You don't know what the response is going to be."

"Becoming an advocate empowered me to take my life back, to assume control in a role that I might not otherwise have taken," says Rusti Miller-Hill, who returned home in 1994 and has worked as an advocate and peer educator ever since. For those currently imprisoned, Miller-Hill has several pieces of advice. "First, learn who you are. For many of us, that's a secret. We don't know what our likes or dislikes are. So find out who you are and what your needs are, and begin to address those needs." She

"I had to learn to take the risk to say,
'Do you want to talk?"" -Kerry Thomas

recognizes that advocacy is often born from the need for self-preservation. From there, she says, it's not a large jump to move from the individual to the community. "It's not just about me, it's about us," she says. Then she adds, "You begin to take on the bigger issue of 'us.' How do I help us? I was able to address me, but how do I help us?"

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"We Don't Have to Wait for Other People to Treat Us Better"

Taking the Sting Out of Stigma in Prison

By Julie "JD" Davids

iving with HIV in prison, Lisa Brelsford feels isolated. "It can go to the extreme of they don't want ■ to be your roommate, sit next to you, be close to you, talk to you," she says. "They don't want accidental spit to get on them or in the air."

But Brelsford is not really alone: she's targeted by stigma. Stigma is prejudice-people make assump-

tions or judge you. Imprisonment can bring stigma. So can being a person of color; poor or lowincome; lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT); a drug user; or a sex worker; or living with mental illness. And due to prejudice, people from these groups are more likely to be sentenced to prison.

So when Lisa Brelsford's counselor told her, incorrectly, that her spit could give someone HIV, it wasn't the first time she'd heard this myth. She was already serving time in Connecticut for an assault count she says was up-charged due to the irrational

fear of her saliva. Lack of knowledge is one thing, but spreading misinformation when the facts are available is prejudice. Hearing that again-this time from her counselor—gave her a whole-body reaction: "I thought the top of my head was going to explode," she says. "My heart was racing. I thought I was in the

Brelsford offered the counselor a copy of an HIV magazine. "I knew better, and I was going to prove it," she says. Many people with HIV behind bars say how helpful it's been to distribute information and bring in HIV educators-especially people living with

HIV (PLHIV) who speak from firsthand experience—and expert groups like the Red Cross to teach the facts. Laurel Sprague, a woman with HIV who coordinates the

U.S. People Living with HIV Stigma Index, has found that educating health care providers about how stigma affects PLHIV changed the providers' behavior.

But one person's efforts are often not enough to educate those in power. Education takes repetition over time and is more effective when it comes from several sources. When Brelsford challenged her counselor's inaccurate, stigmatizing statement, the counselor simply walked away. "Other women came up to me, some

> hugged me and others talked to me," she remembers. Kindness and solidarity can help people find the strength to fight for the truth another day.



Lisa Brelsford

Stigma comes from systems

Part of the reason it's hard to fight stigma by yourself, without others at your side, is that it's so deeply rooted. Powerful social, legal and cultural structures are built around prejudice.

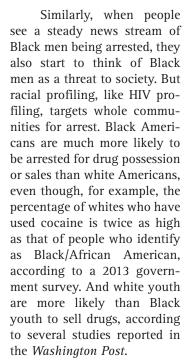
For example, people are sent to prison for allegedly not disclosing their HIV status to sex partners, or for spitting or biting-even if there was no risk

of transmission and no one contracted HIV. When the public hears about these cases, they're encouraged to think of people living with HIV as an inherent threat to society. PLHIV become defined by their virus, leading others to abuse or discriminate against them. More

"I knew better, and I was going to prove it."

-Lisa Brelsford

than 30 states have passed special laws that apply only to PLHIV. Other sexually transmitted infections can be fatal if untreated, but the laws are only for HIV.





Building power in numbers

Connecting with others who face prejudice is vital, whether through a support group, advocacy or just making friends one-on-one. "Every day of life in prison I have been stigmatized...for the fact that I am transgender," says Lisa Strawn, who is imprisoned in California. She's an active member of transgender and LGBT-friendly support groups that discuss medical, personal, and staff issues and share pride in who they are.

"It's like having a family of sisters and brothers inside prison."

-Lisa Strawn

An incarcerated person and a prison staffer started the LGBT-friendly group. Straight people can participate, as long as they're respectful. Strawn connects with the LGBT community in nearby San Francisco for information, support, and visiting speakers for the group. There's also a regular routine. "We start by doing a check-in to see how everyone is. Sometimes the groups are very emotional," she says, adding that a lot of the members have no support from family on the outside. "It's like having a family of sisters and brothers inside prison." The LGBT-friendly group has been so successful that a second one started up.



But we can't end

reaction was great."

The groups Strawn par-

ticipates in give her a way

to reach others, too. She was

named secretary of the largest of all the prison's groups, Al-

coholics Anonymous, where

she's the only transgender

member. When she spoke in

front of the 75 members about

not judging others because

you don't know what they're

going through, she says, "The

Making things better

prejudice without changing the systems that keep it going. The Stigma Index coordinator, Laurel Sprague, has lived with HIV for more than 20 years. She's part of the Global Network of People

Living with HIV, which trains members to advocate for social change. "We don't have to wait for other people to treat us better," she says. "We can mobilize to make things better for our own selves."

Brian Carmichael teaches HIV and hepatitis C classes to all new arrivals at the upstate New York prison where he is serving time. Back when he was imprisoned in California in the early 1990s, PLHIV there faced terrible conditions-so they organized and told outside

groups about the situation. AIDS activists from the area protested outside the prison, and the incarcerated men won their demand: the firstever AIDS hospice inside a prison.

The protest also made a powerful antistigma statement, leading others inside to view PLHIV with more respect. "I remember during the protests one time-when more than 100

demonstrators came to the front gates of the prisongoing around and playfully talking shit to my friends around the prison, the bikers or gangbangers who for so long had made fun of our protests," Carmichael says. "I challenged them: 'When was the last time all your homeboys protested outside the prison?"

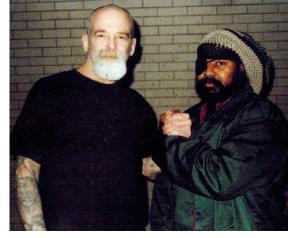
Formerly incarcerated people at the Center for NuLeadership on Urban Solutions challenge prejudice by changing how people use language. "Calling me inmate, convict, prisoner, felon, or offender indicates a lack of understanding of who I am, but more importantly what I can be," they wrote in 2007. "We are

Twilight Zone."

asking everyone to stop using these negative terms and to simply refer to us as PEOPLE. PEOPLE currently or formerly incarcerated...but PEOPLE."

Looking inward

In the pressure cooker of prison life, confidentially can be non-existent. Retribution, violence and sanctions from staff or others inside are very real threats. Correctional staff can play off hostility between groups to control them. No single strategy to fight prejudice will be best for everyone.



(I to r) Brian Carmichael with friend Patrick Ledger

messages we tell ourselves about ourselves—is critical. "With internalized stigma, the best thing to do is to have

"I challenged them: 'When was the last time all your homeboys protested outside the prison?" —Brian Carmichael

takes its power away. If we can't be present or sit with stands up for them against homophobia.

what it feels like to be afraid that we're inferior, we can't build bonds with other people who are discriminated against. And if we don't do that, then we can't work together to make things different."

For many people with HIV, connecting with other PLHIV to discover they were not alone helped start this internal process. It can be painful-and extra challenging in prison. Tim Hinkhouse, who is imprisoned in Oregon, recommends finding a mental health caseworker (and an HIV counselor, if you're living with HIV). He says his ability to ignore negative messages

comes from years of therapy during his sentence.

Peers can help you discover your inner strength in It breaks the ice and lets me educate them."

the face of prejudice, and you can do the same for them. While Maria "Cookie" Cruz Green was in prison in Pennsylvania the first time, she was afraid to tell anyone she had HIV. The nurses "treated me like I was going to kill them." But she found her voice when she served a second sentence. "I used to be around girls who would cry because the nurses used to make them feel bad," she says. "I used to let them know, 'You don't have to feel like that. Always walk with your head up, because, guess

But addressing internalized stigma—the negative what: You are living with HIV, but you are the one controlling it—that thing is not controlling you."

Breaking the ice

Experiencing prejudice can be an education in compassion. When Hinkhouse felt what it was like to be targeted by HIV stigma, he examined his own prejudices. He used to "judge someone by the color of their skin based on what other people were telling me," he says; now, "I've changed my perception a lot." He

the courage to look at it," Sprague says. "That's what once was prejudiced against gay people, but now he

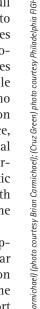
Living in a world so full of prejudice, it can be hard to feel compassion for ourselves and for each other, coming together across our differences to fight for justice. But people do find ways. "Anyone who has suffered discrimination or stigma, whether from race, medical condition, sexual orientation, or being incarcerated, should be empathetic and stand in solidarity with everyone else suffering the same," Carmichael says.

He takes a candid approach: "Usually, if I hear something racist, or based on

is to say 'Shut up, punk. I've got viruses older than you!'

ALL women, ALL righted

Maria "Cookie" Cruz Green



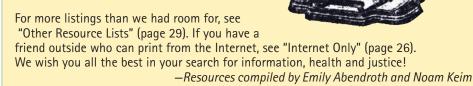


RESOURCE GUIDE

These groups can provide health or legal info or connect you with college classes, pen pals and people to help you fight for your rights.

When you write to a group, you can increase your chance of getting a helpful response by: 1) Stating clearly and briefly, in the first paragraph of your letter, exactly what you're asking for; 2) Keeping your letter short and to the point, offering to send more info if needed; 3) Asking if there is a specific person you should write or call; 4) Asking if the group has a branch closer to you; and 5) Printing your name, ID number and address in the letter as well as on the envelope.

Unless otherwise noted, none of these groups accept collect calls. Most are national, but some only answer mail from certain states. We included websites in case someone outside can contact them by computer on your behalf. If a listing says something is free, it means free for people in prison. When it says a resource can help "people," it means people in prison.



HEALTH RESOURCES

You have a right to participate in decisions about your health care, and getting info from these groups can help. It's important to keep your own records with dates and info from your doctor visits and tests. You may need to file a grievance to get medical care. If you have a loved one on the outside, they can help by calling medical staff if you sign a release form allowing them to discuss your medical care.

AIDS Library Philadelphia FIGHT

1233 Locust St., 2nd Fl. Philadelphia, PA 19107 215-985-4851 aidslibrary.org Write (better than calling) with questions on any health condition, not just HIV/AIDS. You can also ask for fact sheets, lists of groups with info on your health condition or info on HIV issues like treatments,

Protecting Your Health & Safety: A Litigation Guide for Inmates

\$16; a 325-page manual on health & safety rights & how to enforce them. Published by the Southern Poverty Law Center. To order, send payment to Prison Legal News, P.O. Box 1151, Lake Worth, FL 33460

Prison Health News

c/o Philadelphia FIGHT 1233 Locust St., 5th Fl. Philadelphia, PA 19107 215-525-0460 fight.org/programsand-services/ prison-health-news Free quarterly newsletter on HIV & hepatitis treatment, cancer screenings, nutrition, stress relief exercises you can do in your cell, mental health, getting better care for yourself & others and more. Publishes articles by people in prison. Spanish version coming

soon.

ASTHMA

Asthma & Allergy Network 8229 Boone Blvd., #260 Vienna, VA 22182 800-878-4403 allergyasthmanetwork.org Free: *Understanding* Asthma pamphlet, Breathe Better fact sheets on causes of bad air quality and 1 copy of Allergy & Asthma Today magazine.

ARTHRITIS

Arthritis Foundation Attn: CIC 1330 W. Peachtree St. NW, #100 Atlanta, GA 30309 404-872-7100 arthritis.org Free publications, including (English and Spanish) Coping With Arthritis, Managing Your Pain, Exercise & Arthritis; and (English only) Back Pain, Drug Guide 2015 and Walking Guide. Limit 4 pamphlets per request.

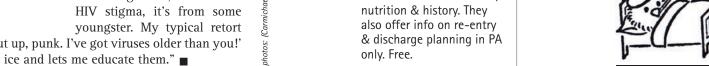
CANCER

Cancer Support Community

1050 17th St. NW, #500 Washington, DC 20036 888-793-9355 cancersupportcommunity. Free fact sheets about most cancers (specify the type), treatments, side effects & supporting someone with cancer.

CancerCare

275 Seventh Ave. New York, NY 10001 800-813-HOPE (4673) cancercare.org Free fact sheets by type of cancer. Lung and liver cancer fact sheets also available in Mandarin.



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IIIIIIIIII RESOURCES

Mental Health

National Alliance on Mental Illness 3803 N. Fairfax Dr.. #100 Arlington, VA 22203 800-950-6264 nami.org Free info packets: Bipolar Disorder, Depression, Schizophrenia, Borderline, & General Mental Health Concerns, plus fact sheets and brochures on specific mental health conditions. Each free mailing is limited to 5 brochures & 10 fact sheets per person.

Wings Beyond Walls P.O. Box 7019 Richmond, VA 23221 wingsbeyondwalls. wordpress.com Free program to connect incarcerated people who have mental health concerns to people outside, so they can correspond & have a space to discuss mental health concerns without judgment. A volunteer will read your first letter in order to find a good pen pal match. All volunteers self-identify as having mental health issues and/or experience with institutionalization ("self-identify" means it's what they say about themselves, not what a doctor or someone else said about them). They

work hard to match

each person seeking

support, but it may

take months.

DIABETES **American Diabetes** Association

Attn: Center for Information 1701 North Beauregard St. Alexandria, VA 22311 800-342-2383 diabetes.ora Free fact sheets on diabetes management, nutrition & meal planning, exercise, medications & complications, and legal rights to diabetes care in correctional facilities.

Prisoner Diabetes Handbook

c/o Prison Legal News P.O. Box 1151 Lake Worth, FL 33460 37-page handbook by & for people in prison. Single copies free.

HEPATITIS C AND HIV/AIDS

Center for Health Justice 900 Avila St., #301 Los Angeles, CA 90012 213-229-0985 Prison Hotline: 213-229-0979 (collect) centerforhealthjustice.org No legal help. Free HIV prevention & treatment hotline; takes collect calls from prison Mon.-Fri. 8 a.m.-3 p.m. (PT). People being released to Los Angeles County can get referrals for health care & insurance.

Hepatitis Education

Proiect 911 Western Ave., #302 Seattle, WA 98104 206-732-0311; 800-218-6932 hepeducation.ora Free newsletter & info on hepatitis, HCV treatments & how to get treated.



New Mexico AIDS InfoNet

P.O. Box 810 Arrovo Seco. NM 87514 aidsinfonet.org Free, easy-to-read fact sheets in English & 10 other languages on HIV prevention & treatment (including alternative/ complementary). Ask for Fact Sheet 1000, which lists all 802 fact sheets, so you can request the one you need. Free summaries of HIV & hepatitis C treatment guidelines, which tell doctors what care to provide in different medical situations.

POZ Magazine

462 Seventh Ave., 19th Fl. New York, NY 10018 212-242-2163 poz.com A lifestyle, treatment & advocacy magazine for people living with/affected by HIV/AIDS. 8 issues/year, with annual quide to HIV drugs. Free to people living with HIV in prison.

Positively Aware Attn: Distribution Manager 5050 N. Broadway St., #300 Chicago, IL 60640 773-989-9400 positivelyaware.com HIV treatment & research magazine. Annual guide to HIV drugs. 7 issues/year; free to people living with HIV in prison.

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE/STROKE

American Heart Association

7272 Greenville Ave. Dallas, TX 75231 800-242-8721 heart.org Will answer questions by mail and send free materials on high blood pressure, stroke & other heart problems.

WOMEN'S HEALTH

National Women's Health Network

1413 K St. NW, 4th Fl. Washington, DC 20005 202-682-2646 nwhn.org Free fact sheets on fibroids, osteoporosis, mammograms, hysterectomy & other topics. Ask health questions by mail or phone Mon.-Thur. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. EST.

Living and Wellness Project

c/o Justice Now 1322 Webster St., #210 Oakland, CA 94612 inow.org Free 53-page manual. Reproductive Health, including how to communicate with your doctor, abnormal pap smears & pain management. Free Navigating the Medical System manual for women in CA prisons.

LEGAL RESOURCES/PUBLICATIONS

Some of these groups work to change prison conditions (like physical abuse or medical neglect), while others help with post-conviction relief (fighting your case after you're convicted). Some groups offer info so you can represent yourself or file your own paperwork and grievances. A few file class action lawsuits (one or more individuals sue on behalf of a larger group of people, called "the class"). Class action lawsuits require that the issues are faced by all members of the group forming the class, and that so many people are affected that it's difficult to bring them all before the court. If a class action suit wins, it's supposed to help everyone affected, whether directly involved in the suit or not.

Prison Legal News (PLN) P.O. Box 1151

Lake Worth, FL 33460 561-360-2523 prisonlegalnews.org Monthly 72-page magazine on prison rights, court rulings & criminal justice in state, federal & some international arenas. Subs for people in prison are \$30/year. PLN also distributes Prisoners' Self-Help Litigation Manual, a 960-page book that explains the legal system (civil rights, tort, habeas corpus, workers' compensation, etc.), suing the right defendants, choosing a remedy, class action suits & the ways prison officials often defend themselves against charges. It describes how to file a suit & get it through the court system. \$45.95. Address payment to Prison

Legal News.

National Lawvers Guild **Prison Law Project**

132 Nassau St., #922 New York, NY 10038 212-679-5100 nlg.org No legal assistance. Jailhouse lawyers can join free: you get the newsletter, Guild Notes, the chance to vote on resolutions at the annual convention & responses to your letters.

Center on Wrongful Convictions

Northwestern U. School of Law 375 East Chicago Ave. Chicago, IL 60611 312-503-2391 law.northwestern. edu/legalclinic/ wrongfulconvictions Handles claims of innocence in DNA and non-DNA cases. If you write asking for legal representation, they review your request, decide if they can represent you & respond in a few months. They also have projects for wrongfully convicted youth (convicted or accused as adolescents or younger) and women; for those, put "Attn: Center for Wrongfully Convicted Youth" or "Attn: Women's Project" on your letter.

Jailhouse Lawyers' Handbook

c/o Center for Constitutional Rights 666 Broadway, 7th Fl. New York, NY 10012 212-614-6464 ccrjustice.org No legal help. Free Jailhouse Lawver's Handbook: How to Bring a Federal Lawsuit to Challenge Violations of Your Rights in Prison. (Can also be downloaded free at jailhouselaw.org.)

Blackstone Career Institute

1011 Brookside Rd., #300 P.O. Box 3717 Allentown, PA 18106 800-826-9228; 610-871-0031 blackstone.edu Low-cost paralegal/legal assistant course by mail. The oldest school of its kind in the U.S. Many of its students are people in prison. Write for catalog of current courses, degree programs & fees.

VISITING Prisoner Visitation and Support 1501 Cherry St. Philadelphia, PA 19102 215-241-7117 (accepts collect calls) prisonervisitation.org The only organization authorized by the Federal Bureau of Prisons & the Department of Defense to visit anyone in federal & military prisons. Top priorities: people serving long sentences far from home, those in solitary confinement & on death row and those frequently transferred. They respond to all letters even if they

can't fulfill your request.

40 Worth St., #701 New York, NY 10013 212-364-5340 innocenceproject.org No general legal advice or research. Accepts only post-conviction cases where DNA testing can conclusively prove innocence. To have a case considered, send a brief factual summary & list of the evidence used against the defendant. Include defendant's name & contact info; dates of the crime, arrest & conviction; what defendant was convicted of & where (city, county, state); the sentence; and the defendant's claim to innocence. Don't send documents. Info also available in Spanish. Note: Many states have local innocence projects—a few take non-DNA cases. The only complete list is on the Internet; case managers & those outside can get it at innocencenetwork.com.

Innocence Project

Equal Justice Initiative

122 Commerce St. Montgomery, AL 36104 334-269-1803 (accepts collect calls) eji.org Legal representation for indigent defendants & those denied fair treatment in the legal system (such as trials marked by blatant racial bias or prosecutorial misconduct). They mostly help death-row prisoners & children prosecuted as adults. They usually don't answer unless they're interested in the case.



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Lambda Legal

120 Wall St., 19th Fl. New York, NY 10005 866-542-8336 (accepts collect calls) lambdalegal.org They only take cases involving discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, and HIV that could significantly advance the rights of LGBT people and those with HIV. Otherwise, they can discuss your legal issue with you and may offer follow-up discussions with attorneys or suggest a lawyer in your area. Free toolkits on trans rights, including Transaender Prisoners in Crisis. Info available in Spanish.

Transgender Law Center Legal Information Helpline

1629 Telegraph Ave., #400 Oakland, CA 94612 415-865-0176 transgenderlawcenter.org Basic info on laws that affect transgender people, including health care, civil rights, family law & ID changes. The helpline doesn't offer legal advice but may review your case & refer it to the Center.

The Promise of Justice Initiative

636 Baronne St. New Orleans, LA 70113 504-529-5955 *iusticespromise.org* Litigates for humane, fair & equal treatment in the LA criminal justice system. They answer letters from people in LA, but it may take time. They only take cases that can improve conditions for lots of people. They sue to change conditions, not for monetary damages.

DC Prisoners' Project Washington Lawvers'

Committee for Civil Rights & Urban Affairs 11 Dupont Circle NW, #400 Washington, DC 20036 202-319-1000 washlaw.org Advocates for humane treatment & dignity of people charged under Washington, DC law-even if you're being held anywhere in the federal system. They focus on health & medical issues, abuse, religious rights, mental health, deaf issues & some parole matters. Letters should provide as much detail & chronology of the situation as possible. They sometimes accept collect calls, but mail is better.



Lewisburg Prison Project

P.O. Box 128 Lewisburg, PA 17837 570-523-1104 lewisburgprisonproject.org Legal representation for very few cases & only for those serving time in federal prisons in PA (Allenwood, Lewisburg, McKean, Schuylkill), 11 PA state prisons & 34 PA middle district county jails. People in PA can write to ask if their case fits. People anywhere can send a self-addressed stamped envelope for a free list of low-cost bulletins: Assaults, Legal Research, Medical Rights, Religious Rights, First Amendment, Access to Courts, Exhausting Administrative Remedies, Disciplinary Hearings & Racial/Religious

Discrimination.

NAACP Legal Defense & **Educational Fund**

40 Rector St., 5th Fl. New York, NY 10006 212-965-2200 naacpldf.org Nonprofit law firm that deals only with cases of obvious race discrimination affecting broad classes of people. They also handle a small number of death penalty & life-withoutparole cases. They won't answer letters unless they are interested in the case.

ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union) National **Prison Project**

915 15th St. NW. 7th Fl. Washington, DC 20005 202-393-4930 aclu.org/prisoners-rights/ aclu-national-prisonproject

No individual legal representation or help with criminal or post-conviction cases. No publications. They file class action lawsuits to ensure that prison & jail conditions are constitutional & consistent with health, safety & human dignity. Don't send original documents. You probably won't hear back unless they think your situation will make a major class action lawsuit.

American-Arab Anti-**Discrimination League** 1990 M St. NW, #610 Washington, DC 20036 202-244-2990

adc.org They can assist incarcerated members of the Arab community in filing institutional grievances as well as complaints to the Dep't of Justice or Federal Bureau of Prisons in national origin or religious discrimination cases.

They can also help file testimony with the federal Privacy & Civil Liberties Oversight Board on issues affecting people in privatecontracted facilities.

Uptown People's

Law Center 4413 N. Sheridan Chicago, IL 60640 773-769-1411 uplcchicago.org No criminal law cases or appeals, post-conviction or habeas corpus petitions. Works to protect the civil rights of people in state, federal & county facilities in IL. They help find pro bono (free) lawyers for people challenging denial of medical care, excessive force, denial of religious rights, access to the courts, discrimination, and cruel & unusual punishment. Unless they get your permission in writing, they can't discuss your case with family members.



Special Litigation Section U.S. Department of Justice **Civil Rights Division**

Attn: Criminal Section 950 Pennsylvania Ave. NW Washington, DC 20530 202-514-6255; 877-218-5228 usdoj.gov/crt/split Works to protect the civil rights of people in state or local jails, prisons & juvenile detention facilities. Send a detailed narrative of the issue/complaint, including a chronology and description of the incident(s), especially if you are in danger of harm. They usually don't respond, but if they get involved, they can make big waves.

SOLITARY CONFINEMENT

More than 80.000 people are being held in isolation in the U.S.—more than in any other country. Solitary confinement can cause mental health issues and other problems. Reaching out for support can help.

Survivors Manual: Surviving in Solitary c/o B. Kerness

89 Market St., 6th Fl. Newark, NJ 07102 No direct assistance. Free *Survivors Manual:* Surviving in Solitary, by & for people in isolation or control units.

Solitary Watch

P.O. Box 11374 Washington, DC 20008 solitarywatch.com Free quarterly newsletter. They welcome writings by people currently or formerly in solitary for possible publication on their Internet Voices from Solitary. Ask to be on a waiting list for Lifelines to Solitary, their nationwide. solitary-focused letterwriting program.

California Prison Focus 1904 Franklin St., #507 Oakland, CA 94612 Quarterly newspaper on CA prison conditions, policies & legislation, with writings from inside (some from beyond CA). Free subs on request to those with CA SHU addresses; \$6/ year for others in prison.

Stamps welcome.

DEATH PENALTY RESOURCES

The U.S. is one of very few countries that still execute people. These organizations offer help for people who have death sentences and/ or want to end capital punishment.

Campaign to End the Death Penalty

P.O. Box 25730 Chicago, IL 60625 773-955-4841 nodeathpenalty.org Free newsletter, The New Abolitionist, with writings by incarcerated people & their families.

Centurion Ministries

1000 Herrontown Rd. Princeton, NJ 08540 609-921-0334 centurionministries.org Non-legal, free investigative agency for people sentenced to death or life in prison, mostly those whose innocence of murder or rape is shown by facts. Send a letter with the facts (3-4 pages max. no transcripts or original documents). They review thousands of cases but take very few.

Southern Center for Human Rights

83 Poplar St. NW Atlanta, GA 30303 404-688-1202 schr.org GA & AL only. Legal representation for people on death row, at trial. on appeal and in postconviction review. People in GA or AL can write to explain their situation & request a lawyer.

SEXUAL ASSAULT

Rape and other sexual assault can happen to anyone—it's not your fault. These groups may help you protect vourself and heal.

Just Detention International 3325 Wilshire Blvd., #340

Los Angeles, CA 90010 24-hour hotline: 213-384-1400 (accepts collect calls) justdetention.org Free packet of info & resources about sexual abuse while in custody, prisoners' rights & how to get help. They don't provide counseling, legal representation, books, pen-pal services or investigations of sexual abuse reports. To help end sexual assault they share survivors' stories (with survivors' permission) with the public & in training sessions for corrections officials & victim services providers. They connect some survivors with journalists & policymakers to share their experiences. You can write to JDI via confidential, legal mail at: Cynthia Totten, Attorney, CA Attorney Reg. #199266 (see address, above).

Project on Addressing Prison Rape

c/o Jaime M. Yarussi Washington College of Law 4801 Massachusetts Ave. NW Washington, DC 20016 202-274-4385 wcl.american.edu/ endsilence No direct legal services. Write for info on your rights & specific laws that protect them. They may refer you to legal & mental health services in your area. Letters can be marked "legal mail."

SEX OFFENDER RESOURCES

People categorized as sex offenders can get help managing the extra requirements they face & support with healing & transforming themselves, if needed.

CURE-SORT (Sex

Offenders Restored **Through Treatment)** P.O. Box 1022 Norman, OK 73070 405-639-7262 cure-sort.org A chapter of Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants (CURE). Info & therapy referrals for incarcerated people who have perpetrated abuse. Free info on registry & residency laws and a free self-help quide with activities for self-care & healing. The Neighborhood Guide (\$5 for people on the sex offender registry) tells how to conduct community meetings & address concerns of residents as part of a positive restoration & re-entry process.

Reform Sex Offender Laws

P.O. Box 400838 Cambridge, MA 02140 nationalrsol.ora Monthly newsletter (\$9/year), The Digest, covers advocacy for evidence-based laws, a law-enforcement-only registry, and rehabilitation & reintegration of law-abiding former sex offenders into society. Includes a column answering readers' legal questions.

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IIIIIIIIII RESOURCES

ART, WRITING & EDUCATION PROGRAMS

These groups support your right to learn, grow and be creative.

PEN Writing Program for Prisoners

PEN American Center 588 Broadway, #303 New York, NY 10012 212-334-1660 pen.org/prison-writing Provides skilled writing mentors & audiences for your work. A free Handbook for Writers in Prison has tips on writing, addresses for free books & education programs, and guidelines for the annual PEN prison writing contest.



Ohio University Correctional Education 102 Haning Hall

1 Ohio University Athens, OH 45701 800-444-2420 ohio.edu/ecampus/print/ correctional Provides college-level courses and certificate & degree programs acceptable in most prisons. Free info packet on admission, course offerings & costs. Ask if their program is authorized in your state.

Prisoner Express

127 Anabel Taylor Hall Cornell University Ithaca, NY 14853 607-255-6486 prisonerexpress.org Free, twice yearly newsletter with descriptions of their writing & art programs. With drawings, poems, essays & fiction by participants.



Prisoners' Guerrilla Handbook to **Correspondence Programs**

in the U.S. & Canada c/o Prison Legal News P.O. Box 1151 Lake Worth, FL 33460 561-360-2523 prisonlegalnews.org Lists more than 160 programs for high school diplomas, associate, baccalaureate and graduate degrees; also vocational and paralegal certificates. Contact info for each school, tuition rates, textbook costs, courses offered, transfer credits, time limits for completing courses, whether the school is accredited and how to avoid bad programs, 221 pages; \$55.95. Address payment to Prison Legal

Prisons Foundation

2512 Virginia Ave. NW, #58043 Washington, DC 20037 202-393-1511 prisonsfoundation.org Publishes writing on the Internet, on any subject, by or about people in prison. Free. You retain full rights as author. No calls from prisons.

Safe Streets

Arts Foundation 2512 Virginia Ave. NW, #58043 Washington, DC 20037 202-393-1511 safestreetsarts.ora Free resource that exhibits & sells work for incarcerated visual artists. Ask for details on exactly what they can & can't provide. No calls from prisons.

ONLY ON THE INTERNET

If you have a loved one on the outside who can send you info printed from the Internet, these websites may be helpful.

The Prison Studies Project

prisonstudiesproject.org/ directory Internet directory of college programs in U.S. prisons. State lists of mostly on-site, degreegranting, post-secondary education programs, with start date, who it serves, how it's funded, contact info & some reviews.

The Other Death Penalty Proiect

P.O. Box 1486 Lancaster, CA 93584 theotherdeathpenalty.org No legal advice. They advocate for ending lifewithout-parole sentences. Run by people in prison, so they can't respond to mail. Online to print: The Other Death Penalty Project Prisoner Organizing Kit.

Prison Policy Initiative

prisonpolicy.org Research on all kinds of prison issues. List of legal resources by state: prisonpolicy.org/resources/ legal

News.

National Re-entry **Resource Center**

csgjusticecenter. org/reentry/ reentry-services-directory Re-entry services across the country, by state; no direct individual services.

Center for Prisoner Health & Human Rights,

Miriam Hospital prisonerhealth.org Info for family members supporting the health of a loved one inside; no direct help.

HCVAdvocate.org Info on all aspects of

hepatitis C.

HIVandHepatitis.com

All about living with both viruses.

POZ.com

Blogs, articles, fact sheets—all things HIV, hep C & more.

National Resource Center on Children & Families of the Incarcerated

nrccfi.camden.rutgers.edu List of programs (specify your state) for children & families of incarcerated people.

ADVOCACY & ACTIVISM

These national groups help people fight for better prison conditions or push for long-range social, cultural and policy changes—or try to do both. If you write them, ask if they have a chapter near you.

Families Against Mandatory Minimums (FAMM)-Nat'l Office 202-822-6700

famm.org Fights for fair sentencing laws. No legal services or fact sheets; they don't answer letters. People in federal prisons can add famm@famm.org to their Corrlinks account to sign up for email updates about laws on federal sentencing, clemency, commutations & compassionate release. Their email list is very large, and they can't reply to individual questions. Loved ones outside can print and mail info from famm.org/ affected-families.

Citizens United for Rehabilitation of Errants (CURE)

Nat'l Office: P.O. Box 2310 Washington, DC 20013 202-789-2126 curenational.org Works in 40 states to reform the criminal justice system. Free sub & 3 sample CURE newsletters (which list state & local chapters).

The Fortune Society

29-76 Northern Blvd. Long Island City, NY 11101 212-691-7554 fortunesociety.org Services for NY, but people incarcerated anywhere can get a free sub to Fortune News, 2 issues a year.

Critical Resistance (CR) 1904 Franklin St., #504

Oakland, CA 94612 510-444-0484 criticalresistance.org Free subs to their antiprison newspaper, The Abolitionist, 3 issues/year, in English & Spanish. If you are or have ever been in solitary, they'd like to hear your ideas on peaceful campaigns for change (put "Attn: Solitary Project" on your letter).

The Sero Project

Milford, PA 18337

A network of people

living with HIV (PLHIV)

& allies fighting stigma

& injustice, especially

inappropriate criminal

prosecutions of PLHIV

for nondisclosure of their

HIV status or potential or

perceived HIV exposure or

transmission. Write to ioin

their network of PLHIV who

are incarcerated or for info

about HIV criminalization

Building a Movement to

End the New Jim Crow:

c/o Chico Peace and Justice

newjimcroworganizing.org

Free booklet on organizing

against mass incarceration

an Organizing Guide

526 Broadway St.

Chico, CA 95928

in prison & out.

or advocacy.

seroproject.com

P.O. Box 1233

P.O. Box 1911

realcostofprisons.org/ coalition.html Get a monthly newsletter on the movement for prison reform by sending

a stamped self-addressed Lake Worth, FL 33460 humanrightsdefensecenter. If you've had books, educational resources or political materials denied by prison administration, HRDC may be able to advocate or litigate for you or for the publication.

Coalition for Prisoners' **Rights Newsletter**

Human Rights

P.O. Box 1151

561-360-2523

Defense Center

Santa Fe, NM 87504

envelope with CPR as the return address. Two free meditation booklets are also available:

Psychological Soldier: A Guide to a Healthy Life in Solitary and Doing Your Time with Peace of Mind.

4Struggle Magazine P.O. Box 97048

RPO Roncesvalles Ave. Toronto, Ontario, M6R 3B3 Canada 4strugglemag.org 3 issues/year. Articles by U.S. political prisoners & news on work to improve prison conditions & against injustice. Free subs, but stamp donations appreciated.

RESOURCES FOR INCARCERATED PARENTS

These groups can help you navigate prison regulations, family court and long distances to maintain or rebuild relationships with your children.

Legal Services for Prisoners with Children

1540 Market St., #490 San Francisco, CA 94102 415-255-7036 prisonerswithchildren.org Answers letters, mostly about family law, sends self-help legal manuals (in Spanish & English) on your question and helps you find info. Their expertise is mostly in CA; they're less able to answer questions from other states. Letters should be as specific as possible. If you send documents, they will make copies & return the originals. No direct legal representation.

Chicago Legal Advocacy for Incarcerated Mothers (CLAIM)

c/o Cabrini Green Legal Aid 740 North Milwaukee Ave. Chicago, IL 60642 Phone: 312-738-2452 ext. 451 (for collect calls: 312-675-0911) cgla.net Advice & some legal representation for incarcerated parents & their family members in IL on quardianship (short-term or courtordered), visitation and child custody, plus advice for foster care & divorce cases. Women: write to CLAIM. Men: write to Cabrini Green Legal Aid (at the same address). CLAIM can also send a free Illinois-focused resource guide, Caring for Children when a Parent Is Arrested: Guide to Legal Options and Resources.

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IIIIIIIIIII RESOURCES

ADVOCACY/SUPPORT FOR LGBTQI PEOPLE IN PRISON

A short support list for incarcerated lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex people. For an extended list, write Black & Pink (below).

Black & Pink

614 Columbia Rd. Dorchester, MA 02125 617-519-4387 blackandpink.ora A family of LGBTQ people in prison and "free world" allies. Free monthly newspaper includes instructions on signing up for their pen pal program & other services. They can sometimes help in a crisis (like sexual abuse or being in solitary) by writing to prison officials & getting public attention.

Transgender, Gender Variant, and Intersex **Justice Project**

1230 Market St. PMB 705 San Francisco, CA 94102 tgijp.org Transgender people in & out of prison united in struggle for survival & freedom. Free Stiletto Prison Newsletter. Still We Rise: Prison Resource Guide and Surviving Prison in California: Advice By and For Transaender Women.

National Center for Lesbian Rights

870 Market St., #370 San Francisco, CA 94102 415-392-6257 nclrights.org/ *legal-help-resources* No legal representation. Free info on laws that affect LGBT people and ways to protect against discrimination & other civil rights abuses.

Gay & Lesbian Advocates and Defenders (GLAD)

30 Winter St., #800 Boston, MA 02108 617-426-1350: 800-455-4523 (accepts collect calls Mon.-Fri., 1:30-4:30 p.m. EST) glad.org **Know Your Rights** info related to sexual orientation, gender identity & HIV status. People in New England can request a regional resource quide & pen pal list.

Sylvia Rivera Law Project

147 W. 24th St., 5th Fl. New York, NY 10011 212-337-8550 (ext. 308 for legal) *srlp.org* For transgender, intersex & gender nonconforming people in NY only: Prisoner Rights Project can help with name changes, getting trans-affirming health care, safety issues, gender-affirming placement & conditions & some re-entry issues. Free

T.I.P. (Trans* in Prison) Journal

pen pal program.

Gender Identity Center of Colorado 1151 S. Huron St. Denver, CO 80223 303-202-6466 gic-colorado.org Free quarterly newsletter for trans & gender variant people in prison.

RESOURCES FOR WOMEN

Along with these, Chapter 41 ("Special Issues of Women Prisoners") of the Jailhouse Lawyers Manual, by Columbia Human Rights Law Review offers info on reproductive rights, parenting from prison, rules on searches by male guards and more. For a copy, write Prison Health News clo Philadelphia FIGHT, 1207 Chestnut St., 2nd Fl., Phila., PA 19107. People outside can download the chapter at www3.law.columbia.edu/ hrlr/jlm/chapter-41.pdf.

California Coalition for Women Prisoners

1540 Market St., #490 San Francisco, CA 94102 415-255-7036, ext. 4 womenprisoners.org No direct legal representation. Women in any state can get free newsletter, The Fire Inside, 2 issues/year, with a section in Spanish. Women, transgender & gender nonconforming people in CA can ask for help with legal, medical, solitary, parole & re-entry problems.

Justice Now 1322 Webster St., #210 Oakland, CA 94612 510-832-4357 (accepts collect calls from CA women's prisons Tues.-Fri., 10 a.m.-6 p.m.) inow.ora No individual personal injury or federal civil rights lawsuits, appeals or writs. People in CA women's prisons can write for info & help with emergency/ life-threatening medical crisis, legal questions, compassionate release & post-release employment/ training.

Women in Prison Project

Correctional Association of NY 2090 Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd., #200 New York, NY 10027 212-254-5700 correctionalassociation.ora Serves women in NY but has info & brochures (many by incarcerated women) for those in any state. Write for My Sister's Keeper & a list of other pamphlets.

Tenacious

V. Law P.O. Box 20388 New York, NY 10009 resistancebehindbars.ora/ node/19 A zine (2-3 issues/year) of writings & art by formerly & currently incarcerated women. Free to women (including trans women) in prison. Men in prison are asked to send 2 stamps (or

National Clearinghouse

a \$1 check or money order

made out to V. LAW).

involving domestic

violence survivors charged

with crimes related to

their abuse. A very small

nonprofit organization,

they do what they can

to answer requests for

assistance promptly, but

it may take a long time.

Phone or write.

for the Defense of **Battered Women** 125 S. 9th Street, Ste. 302 Philadelphia, PA 19107 215-351-0010 (accepts collect calls) ncdbw.org No direct legal representation or advice, no social services. Assists defense teams on cases

> **Resource List Prison Book Program** c/o Lucy Parsons Center & Bookstore 1306 Hancock St, #10 Quincy, MA 02169 prisonbookprogram. org/resources/nationalprisoner-resource-list

This list includes both free services that try to match you with an outside correspondent and services that charge a fee to post your profile or request online. The free organizations (run by volunteers) often have long waiting lists, and the paid services can't guarantee a reply to your ad. So finding a pen pal requires a lot of patience.

PEN PALS

FREE TO PEOPLE IN PRISON: Pen Pal Project of the

Action Committee for Women in Prison P.O. Box 9867 Marina del Rey, CA 90295 acwip.wordpress.com/ positive-programs Connects incarcerated women only (with at least a year left to serve) to a woman pen pal outside. Only for CA, NM & TX prisons. They've matched more than 500 pen pals, but there's often a long waiting list. Write for an application.

Christian Pen Pals P.O. Box 11296 Hickory, NC 28603 cppministry.com National service providing Christian pen pals to engage in ministry by mail. Request a pen pal if you're seeking a faith-focused dialogue. Include your

name, ID#, address, date of birth, length of sentence, release date, religion, hobbies/interests and a statement about yourself & what you want in a pen pal. Backlog may be 1-2 years, depending on region.

Jewish Prisoner

Services Int'l P.O. Box 85840 Seattle, WA 98145 206-985-0577 (emergency collect line: 206-528-0363) ipsi.org Faith-focused national service for Jewish people. Write for an application that requires written confirmation that Jewish religious law considers you Jewish. They usually match people with a samegender pen pal within weeks. They also provide family assistance & some re-entry services.

Midwest Trans Prisoner Pen Pal Project

2002 23rd Ave. S Minneapolis, MN 55404 mwtppp.wordpress.com Midwest only; accepts requests across LGBTQI spectrum. Not a dating service. In your letter, include your name & chosen name (if different), ID#, address and a description of yourself & what you're looking for in a pen pal. They often have a long waiting list.

PAYING CUSTOMERS ONLY: Friends Beyond the Wall

Attn: New Ad Orders 2600 South Road, #44-244 Poughkeepsie, NY 12601 friendsbeyondthewall.com Finding pen pals since 1999. months): \$59.95 (for

FriendsBevondTheWall.com

c/o Boneshaker Books

Price: \$29.95 (for 6 2 years) for a pen pal ad profile. Write for an application. Got Corrlinks? Email: Info@

Meet-An-Inmate

Arlen Bischke P.O. Box 1342 Pendleton, OR 97801 meet-an-inmate.com Online pen pal site will list your address, photo & info starting at \$25 for 6 months.

Write a Prisoner

P.O. Box 10 Edgewater, FL 32132 386-427-5857 writeaprisoner.com Online pen pal profiles. Starting price, \$40/ year. Also available: free re-entry profiles for housing, legal assistance, employment & education after release.

OTHER RESOURCE LISTS (ALL FREE)



National Prisoner

6 pages; large-print version available.

Inside Books Project Resource Guide

12th Street Books 827 W. 12th St. Austin, TX 78701 insidebooksproject.org/ resource-quide 28 pages, national, emphasis on TX. Send 2 stamps if you can.

Prison Activist Resource Center P.O. Box 70447 Oakland, CA 94612 510-893-4648 prisonactivist.org/resources 24 pages, national & state.

Svlvia Rivera Law Project 147 W. 24th St., 5th Fl.

New York, NY 10011 srlp.org/resources 12 pages, national & state, legal support—prison rights, mainly (but not only) for lesbian, gay, queer, intersex & transgender people.

Black & Pink Prison **Resource List**

614 Columbia Rd. Dorchester, MA 02125 blackandpink.ora Queer & trans issues, activism, surviving prison. Stamp donations welcome.

PA Prison Directory Action

c/o Book 'Em P.O. Box 71357 Pittsburgh, PA 15213 paprisondirectoryaction. wordpress.com 7 lists of PA & national resources: LGBTQI; Women & Parents; Legal, Pro Bono & Advocacy on the Inside; Prison Justice & Advocacy Groups; PA Prison, Jails & Court Info: Education on the Inside; Tips for Survivors of Abuse. Self-addressed stamped envelope preferred.

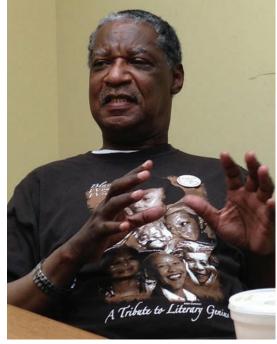
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Marshall "Eddie" Conway: "We Do Effect Change"

arshall "Eddie" Conway, a Vietnam veteran and former member of the Black Panther Party, had spent 33 years in Maryland prisons as a political prisoner when he reached a turning point. "Every Friday, 10 or 12 people would be released back to the community, and they were going back with revenge in their heart, an intention to go back into drug activity or do something else destructive," Conway says. "Part of the violence in the community is just the anger and frustration that come out of those prisons up there in those rural areas." The cycle had to be stopped.

So he joined with other imprisoned men, many of them also veterans, to mentor the younger generation. "We tried to figure out how we could meet their needs, what they needed to know in order to go home, stay home and be whole." Transferred to another prison, Conway brought the idea along.

He began talking with people one-on-one about their options and actions. He soon realized he was not the only one doing so. "Even in the street organizations, some gang members were pulling up the young people [and] saying, 'No man, don't do that. That's not how you behave." Conway began identifying those



Marshall "Eddie" Conway

men and, once he had gathered a core group, asked the American Friends Service Committee for help designing a curriculum and training for a formal organization. Friend of a Friend was born.

Participants came from gangs like the Bloods, Crips and Black Guerrilla Family, as well as from religious organizations and sports groups. They went through a sixmonth training to learn skills such as communication, negotiation and conflict resolution. They also held conversations, challenging each

other on ideas of manhood and masculinity and—given that most of the men in the group were Black—studied and taught African-American history and culture.

As graduates of the six-month training were transferred to other prisons, Friend of a Friend spread to five Maryland prisons and one federal prison. In each prison, Conway notes, violence has decreased dramatically.

On March 4, 2014, after serving nearly 44 years, Conway was released from prison and witnessed the program's lasting impact. "I went out to Morgan State University [in Baltimore] to speak. A guy ran up to me as I got in the elevator and said, 'I'm gonna

graduate this year!' When I first met him inside, he was talking about going out there and killing Shorty. [Instead] he got out, went to college, and now he's one of the leading fraternity brothers on the campus." The encounter made Conway realize, "Wow. We do effect change."

-Victoria Law

To contact Friend of a Friend: Dominque Stevenson, American Friends Service Committee, Suite 212, 3600 Clipper Mill Rd., Baltimore, MD, 21211 (240-707-0110)

Misty Rojo: "I Like That I Get Up and Fight"

t age 14, Misty Rojo was on the street, facing drug addiction. Nine years later, she was behind bars facing a life sentence.

It wasn't that she hadn't tried to make her life work. In her teens, Rojo took jobs, enrolled in classes, got married and gave birth to four sons. But her husband, from whom she contracted HIV, battered her. When she entered the Central California Women's Facility at 23, the world inside prison confirmed her sense that the world outside thought she was nothing.

Then she met Justice Now, a California organization that works in partnership with women and transgender people behind bars. Visiting members talked about social justice and a world without prisons—ideas Rojo had never heard before. "What changed me," she says, "was Justice Now giving me a lens to see how layers of oppression work. To fight back and not just be a victim."

At first, Rojo got involved with Justice Now to "piss off the prison." She took classes on substance abuse and developing an awareness of how crimes hurt ordinary people. She started helping people write appeals to the administration. She also joined a support group of HIV-positive people inside and learned,



Misty Rojo

Then she met Justice Now, a through peer education, about medornia organization that works in the stigma of HIV/AIDS.

When California threatened to close down the Justice Now program, Rojo helped restructure it into what became Justice Now's Living and Wellness Project, a curriculum that can work in any prison.

The project concentrates on health, family support and compassionate release. "We're the only organization," Rojo says, "that helps dying people come home." Justice Now's educational materials—such as a comprehensive chapter on reproductive health, which Rojo helped write—are produced by people inside and outside prison, working together. The result "em-

powers people to seek their reproductive care in a safer way," Rojo says.

Rojo was released from prison almost six years ago, and today she's hard at work as Justice Now's communications and campaign director. She recently received her Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Business Administration, which she calls her "bullshit degree"—but she admits it helps her do social justice work.

So how does someone survive in a world that thinks they're nothing? By trying to change that world to make it better for everybody.

"I'm proud of what I do," says Misty. "I like that I get up and fight, that somebody inside is a little safer because we wrote a bill or made a phone call. One hundred years from now, I want to be a name in a dusty textbook about people who did this work, after society's figured out that policing and prisons are horrible, torturous systems."

With people like Rojo around, we may not have to wait a hundred years.

-Susie Day

You can write for a free copy of Justice Now's 53-page guide, *Reproductive Health:* 1322 Webster St., #210, Oakland, CA 94612

PREP TIME:
What I did
(or wish I'd
done) to
prepare for

my release...

"I realized while inside that I shouldn't write my release plans in stone. I made plans for work and housing, but I kept things flexible, to allow myself to roll with what options might emerge."

-Mujahid Farid, 33 years behind bars, NY

"While I was inside, I joined other women in support groups where I could openly share my hurt to begin my healing process—healing from the trauma that landed me in prison in the first place."

-Teresa Sullivan, 5 years behind bars, PA

"Because of the conditions I encountered behind the walls, I became radicalized.

The experience of imprisonment served as a platform for the life-changing social justice work I continue to engage in 20 years later."

Robin McGinty,vears behind bars, NY

"A pre-release class provided a list of the resources I could set up when I arrived home. But I wish I could have gotten my housing, medication and doctor's appointments in place in advance."

—Ronald Stephens (Simone), 5 years behind bars, TX

How to Get Your Meds HEALTH CARE ON TIME

etting your prescription drugs can make the difference between sickness and health. If you have HIV it can be even more crucial-missing doses can make you resistant to the treatments.

These tips can help:

• If you learn the names of prison medical personnel, you can address requests and complaints about missed meds to the appropriate person. Treat medical staff politely so they'll be more likely to want to help you (and to avoid any charges of unruly behavior).

• You need your medications now-not in six months-but grievance systems can be slow. It can be

GRAYING BEHIND BARS

"Prison is especially punishing for the elderly," says a 2012 Human Rights Watch report. People over 50 are the fastest growing segment of the incarcerated population in the US, and they face particular health and social needs that prisons are ill equipped to provide. It is estimated that by 2030, elders will constitute 1/3 of all incarcerated people in the US-a 4,400% increase over the past 50 years. With support from one another, aging people can maintain strength and dignity living in daily prison conditions-and in applying for parole, medical release or clemency.



faster to ask your unit staff to call the medical department to retrieve your meds. If the prison won't follow the doctor's orders, you can complain in writing to your treating doctor. Write to the prison warden and medical officers too.

- It's good to store a copy of your prescriptions in your cell or on your person. If you learn the medication schedule and stick to it, you can't be blamed for missed doses. It's important to keep copies of every complaint you write and the replies you get. In any future grievance or litigation, these will prove a pattern of "deliberate indifference" to your serious medical needs.
- A phone call to the prison from someone outside-a family member or friend-asking why you are not getting your meds may produce results. You and your family can also write to legislators, state medical commissions and city, county and state health departments to bring attention to systemic problems in medication delivery.



• The Prison Litigation Reform Act of 1996 requires you to go through all levels of the prison grievance system before filing a federal lawsuit. Knowing your prison's grievance process and keeping the required forms in your cell to use if other steps fail may be helpful. Grievances need to be clear and concise, stating your medication needs, who prescribed the meds and how the prison is denying you

access. Being polite but firm about your rights will help show you at your best if you end up suing-letters and grievances may be court exhibits for a judge or jury.

• If, despite your best attempts, the prison is just too overcrowded or poorly run to deliver your doses, you can consider filing suit. You'll need to show a court that the prison did not provide prescribed medication as required. Medical lawsuits are hard to win, and you first have to go through the prison grievance process (except if you are suing for money damages after release). - Paul Wright, formerly incarcerated

For more, see "Filing a Medical Grievance," p.9. You can also get "Protecting Your Health & Safety" (\$10 plus \$6 for shipping) from Prison Legal News, P.O. Box 1151, Lake Worth, FL 33460; 561-360-2523 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (EST), weekdays; prisonlegalnews.org.

Paul Wright served 17 years in Washington State. He is the cofounder and editor of Prison Legal *News* (see Resources, p.23). A version of this article appeared in POZ magazine in summer, 2009.





Appalachian Prison **Book Project**

P.O. Box 601 Morgantown, WV 26507 aprisonbookproject. wordpress.com Sends reading materials to KY, MD, OH, TN, VA & WV prisons.

Asheville Prison **Books Program**

67 N. Lexington Ave. Asheville, NC 28801 For NC, SC, GA & TN.

Books Through Bars/NYC

c/o Bluestockings Bookstore 172 Allen St. New York, NY 10002 booksthroughbarsnyc.org To all states except AL. FL. LA, MA, MI, MS, NC, PA & OH, with a priority for NY.

Books Through Bars/ Philadelphia

4722 Baltimore Ave. Philadelphia, PA 19143 215-727-8170 booksthroughbars.org For PA, NJ, DE, NY, MD, VA & WV. People in PA prisons only can get their social justice-focused correspondence course, "Address This!"

Free Prison Book Programs

hen requesting free books from these volunteer-run projects, it's important to:

1) Pay close attention to which states each program serves; 2) Remember that most of these groups depend on donated books and may not have a particular book, so send a list of topics and types of books you want; 3) Include your name, number, and address in clear, legible print; 4) Be patient-due to money and resources, not lack of concern, it may take months to get a response. These programs always welcome donations of money or loose stamps. The Inside Books Project Resource Guide (See "Other Resource Lists," p. 29) offers a longer list of prison book programs in the U.S., including those serving only one state.

LGBT Books to Prisoners

c/o Rainbow Bookstore

labtbookstoprisoners.org

in every state except TX.

1631 Elysian Fields Ave.,

New Orleans, LA 70117

lab2p.wordpress.com

For AR. AL. LA & MS.

Quickest responses to

women and anyone

imprisoned in LA.

For LGBTQ-identified people

Cooperative

426 W. Gilman St.

Louisiana Books

2 Prisoners

#117

Madison, WI 53703

Books Through Bars/ Providence

c/o Paper Nautilus Books 5 Angell St. Providence, RI 02906 providencebtb.org Nationwide. Write with a list of subjects you're interested in.

Chicago Books to Women in Prison

c/o RFUMC 4511 N. Hermitage Ave. Chicago, IL 06040 chicagobwp.org For people in any women's federal prison or women's state prisons in AL, AZ, CA, CT, FL, IL, IN, KY, MS, OH & TN.

Inside Books Project

c/o 12th Street Books 827 W. 12th St. Austin, TX 78701 512-655-3121 insidebooksproject.org For TX prisons only. One request every 3 months. (See "Other Resource Lists" for their guide with national listings.)

Quincy, MA 02169 617-423-3298

IN DEMAND

Books are always in demand behind the walls. For people inside, this means you may have to wait and you may not get the exact book you want. For people on the outside, this is your chance to help. Donate your books and your labor. Contact one of the groups on this page. They can probably use your help, and you will meet good people doing good work.

Midwest Pages to **Prisoners Project** c/o Boxcar Books

408 E. 6th St. Bloomington, IN 47408 812-339-8710 pagestoprisoners.org For AR. IN. IA. KS. KY. MN. MO, NE, ND, OH, OK, SD, TN & WI.

Prison Book Program

c/o Lucy Parsons Bookstore 1306 Hancock St. #100 prisonbookprogram.org For all states except CA, MI, MD, NV, IL & TX. You can also get We the People Legal Primer, a free, 40-page booklet on the Constitution, key legal terms, and postconviction remedies.

Tranzmission Prison Books Project

P.O. Box 1874 Asheville, NC 28801 tranzmissionprisonproject. yolasite.com For LGBTQ people in prison nationwide.

Women's Prison **Book Project**

c/o Boneshaker Books 2002 23rd Ave. S Minneapolis, MN 55404 wpbp.org For women and transgender folks in federal prisons and all states except CA, CT, FL, IL, IN, MA, MI, MS, OH, OR & PA.

ACUPRESSURE POINTS

From centuries-old Chinese medicine, acupressure helps you ease symptoms with your fingertips.

For each point, press firmly with your middle finger or thumb and hold steadily for about two minutes while taking slow, deep breaths.

Adapted from a chart by Michael Reed Gach, Ph.D. (Acupressure.com); with thanks to Richard Reilly, MS, LaC and Paulette Pettorino, MS, LaC



"Joining the Valleys"

Location: Top of the hand, on the web where the thumb and the index finger meet.

Possible benefits: Helps relieve stress, headache, constipation, insomnia, neck pain and stiffness, toothache and sinus pain.



"Sea of Vitality"

Location: Lower back, two spots, each a few inches out from the spine at the level of the navel. Possible benefits: Helps

deal with stress, lower back problems and irregular menstruation; refreshes internal organs.



"Three Mile Point"

Location: Four finger-widths below the kneecap, one finger-width outside the shinbone.

Possible benefits: Supports proper digestion; eases abdominal disorders (like constipation); tones the muscles, building endurance.



"Outer Gate"

Location: Middle of outer forearm, three finger-widths up from the wrist crease.

Possible benefits: Strengthens resistance to colds and flu, eases wheezing, coughing and asthma symptoms; relieves wrist pain and frequent urination.



"Inner Gate"

Location: Center of inside forearm, three finger-widths (about 2 inches) up from wrist crease. Possible benefits: Eases nausea and indigestion.

(More on acupressure: "Breathe, Stretch, Stay Strong," p. 5.)



"Third Eye"

Location: Between the eyebrows, where the bridge of your nose meets the lower ridge of your forehead.

Possible benefits: Relieves sinus congestion, nosebleeds, hay fever, headaches and eyestrain. Eases insomnia and anxiety.

This copy of **TURN IT UP!** would not be in your hands without the generous support of our major funders:



The H. van Ameringen Foundation



Special thanks to *POZ* magazine

