

TYRO TIMES

IN THIS EDITION

GAMES TO PLAY ON THE PHONE

HOW TO HAVE GREAT VISITS

TIPS FOR DATING INMATES

SAVING YOUR MONEY

PARENTING FROM PRISON

LEARNING TO TRUST AGAIN

AND MUCH MORE!

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FOR TYROS

SPRING 2022 // 17TH EDITION

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WELCOME TO TYRO TIMES

About this Magazine. TYRO times is a quarterly publication created by TYRO Support Services. The vision is to share testimonials, events, inspirational stories, family and relationship coaching. Discover featured content from the world of TYRO. You will be sure to find each edition packed with testimonials from both those serving TYROs and real people who are experiencing the life changing TYRO curriculum around the world. Check out a variety of activities, from tips to plan a family night, cookbook recipes, and even a date for you and your partner.

WHAT IS TYRO? TYRO is Latin for novice, apprentice, someone learning something new, a warrior. Whether you are fighting for your family or helping others fight for theirs we can help you by providing training to take you further in your life mission. We are an international organization dedicated to empowering individuals and organizations through programs and content that produces life-changing outcomes.

We are committed to creating resources that empower, inspire and equip individuals and families to live. For more resources, visit tyroinstitute.com, tyro365.com or read our blog at www.tyro.blog. If you or a someone you love is in prison, you can find us on jPay tablets wherever they are available.

A message from TYRO Founders, Ron & Catherine Tijerina

THE FIRST WORD



Dear TYRO Friends,
Welcome to the Summer 2022 edition of TYRO Times! It is wonderful to see the green grass, blooming flowers, and children outside enjoying the sunshine. As we move into the busyness of summertime, it is easy to forget that fall and winter are following this warm season. Just as we hold onto the promise of summer during the bitter cold of winter, we need to remember that this season is temporary, too.

Life is full of seasons that are temporary. Some of these seasons last longer than we might expect or want, but we need to remember they are just seasons. There is a season of pain and a season joy in everyone's life. Although we don't always acknowledge it, that is the motion of life. As you stop to consider the past trials in your life, think about the experiences you have gone through. These moments often have a profound impact on our life. Not only do trials affect the way we see the world, it changes who we are.

Life is hard for everyone. If you are in a season of joy, now is the time to prepare for the battles that are coming. If you are in a season of hardship, there is a light at the end of the tunnel just around the corner. Each season grows our character. Despite the pain in a hard season, we become stronger and more resilient when we focus on the lessons we are learning. This strength gives us capacity to grow during our pain.

Everyone reacts differently to the winter seasons of life. You might be someone who gives up in the fall and winter season, biding your time waiting for better days to come. As the old things die off and you face a season that seems cold and unforgiving, you may feel hopeless. Difficult chapters in life can distract you from all the gifts in your life. The challenges that were designed to cause you to grow and develop resiliency may have left you feeling suffocated and lost. You may have given up and sat in the middle of the road of your catastrophe. If this is you, not only are you stopping your own



Today is a brand-new day. This new day offers you brand new opportunities. Today is not a rerun of yesterday, and no one has lived in this moment before.



progress, you are blocking the way for others to progress along their own journey. Your children, friends, and family may have to take a detour to avoid being slowed down by your mistake. It doesn't have to be that way. I believe you can do better.

Today is a brand-new day. This new day offers you brand new opportunities. Today is not a rerun of yesterday, and no one has lived in this moment before. It is a clean slate. Today, you have the

opportunity to decide what you will add to your story. It is time to get up and keep moving forward. A breakthrough is just around the corner. Practice makes permanent, not perfect. What you are doing every day has become a permanent part of you and how you view your world. When you begin to practice something different, you will see opportunities you missed before!

Do not let discouragement stop you from progressing toward your goals. A month from now you will either be celebrating 30 days of progress or lamenting another 30 days lost to excuses as

to why you are still stuck. There is still time to pursue your dreams and experience the adventures along the way. This is the pursuit of growth, to pursue a lifetime of continuous improvement. You are either paving the way for others or blocking the path.

It is time to build your vision and create your legacy!

We are rooting for you -

Ron and Cathy

GAMES TO PLAY

over the phone

Fun games to play on a phone call



“ Over the past two years, families have stayed connected over the phone more than in a generation. ”

For many reasons, phone calls have become a necessary part of staying connected with those we love. Whether you're talking to a family member on the phone due to COVID limitations, or talking to a loved one in prison, there are many ways to not only stay connected but have fun in the process. Whatever the reason, here are some interactive games to play over the phone.

20 Questions

This game is very simple, but tons of fun. You think of a place, animal, person, or thing, and then the person you're talking to asks you 20 yes or no questions in order to try and figure out what you're thinking about. You both can take turns being the one who asks or answers the questions, and you can even ask more than 20 questions if you want to. This game is extremely addicting and will surely make you want to talk and play over the phone more often. During your free time you might find yourself thinking about what you'll use next when you play over the phone again.

Madlibs

Madlibs are short and easy fill-in-the-blank stories. Whether you find a Madlib book in your local bookstore, or you find one online and print it out, Madlibs are fun for all ages. To play, take turns filling in the blanks on the Madlib page with the person you're on the phone with. Once you're finished filling in every word, read aloud the Madlib to each other. Sometimes the stories are so funny you might find yourself crying by the end of it.

5 Second Game

The 5 Second Game is another fun way to enjoy phone conversations with your friends or family members. To play, have one person pick a topic for the other person. The person must then name 3

things that are related to that topic within 5 seconds. For example, if you pick fruit, then whoever you're on the phone with needs to name 3 fruits within the next 5 seconds in order to earn one point. Keep track of the number of points you each have by the end of 10 minutes, or however long you want to play. If you are on family call, this game can also be played in a group setting.



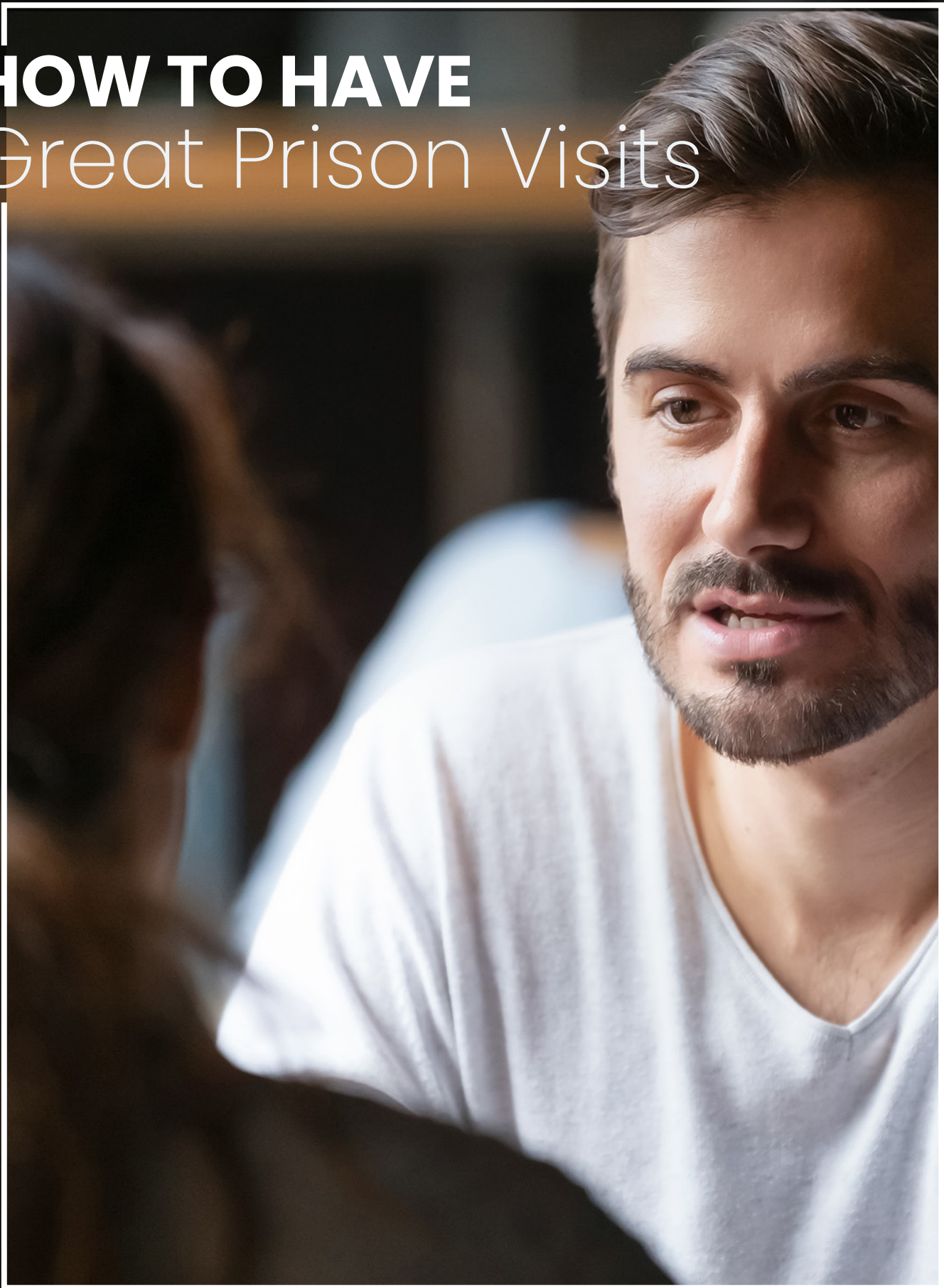
Crosswords

This age-old game is fun and challenging. Crossword puzzles involve using your brain in a fun and challenging way. Crosswords can be found everywhere. From newspapers and magazines, to books, and online publications. Try to find a crossword puzzle that relates to a specific genre or topic that you and the person you're talking to on the phone find interesting, such as a crossword about a movie you both enjoy. This will make solving the puzzle even more fun and engaging, hopefully making you want to do another one next time you call each other.

All too often we take for granted our time with those we care about. Being intentional about your next phone call can build memories and create a stronger connection. Whatever you choose to do, approach your next phone call with intentionality.

HOW TO HAVE

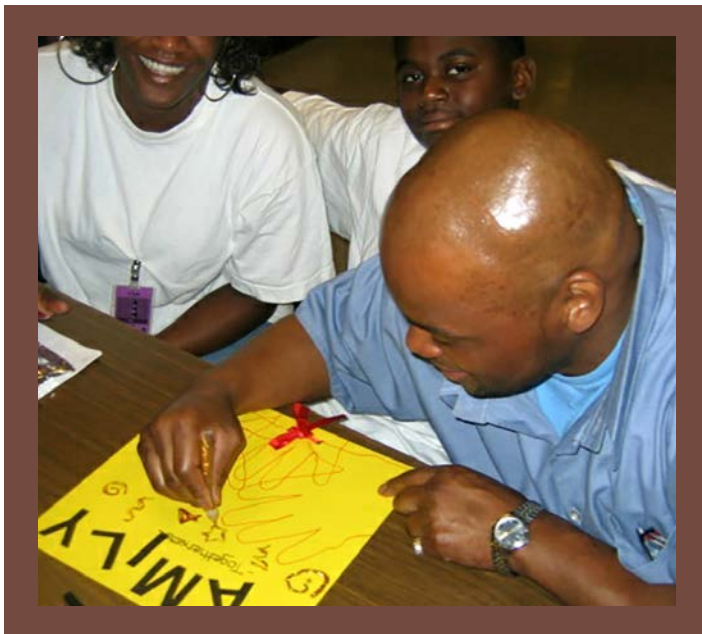
Great Prison Visits



“Knowing in advance what to expect in the visiting room alleviates some of the fear and pressure.”

When a loved one goes to prison, the entire family is affected. The challenges of incarceration can create long-lasting scars. Not just for those who are incarcerated, but also for the families of those who are incarcerated. Now more than ever, your loved one in prison needs the support of their family and loved ones. In fact, for the millions of families who have a loved one in prison, family time is one of the most important things to help them in their re-entry journey.

Knowing in advance what to expect in the visiting room alleviates some of the fear and pressure. Here are some things to know before taking your family on a prison visit.



Avoid Becoming Distracted - From the sights and smells, to the challenges that come with adjusting to interacting in a visiting room, there are many distractions in a prison visiting room. Do not allow distractions to interrupt your opportunity to connect. Think of some things that might be a distraction and talk about them up front, so that it does not take away from your time together. Determine to take advantage of every opportunity to connect and build happy memories together. Fight for your attention to be directed toward the things and people that matter most.

Write down important topics - When you are together, it can be overwhelming to try to remember covering crucial topics. Make a short list of things you want to talk about. This can be crucial topics, family news, life updates and such. If you have the opportunity, ask them to make a list as well so you are able to cover the things you both care about.

Get on the Approved List - Make sure you comply with the specific institutions rules to get on the approved list. This will ensure you don't travel all that way for nothing. Most institutions have a simple form that can be submitted by an inmate or sent from an inmate's prison to the loved one.

Plan a Meal Together - Eating together is one of the best ways to connect as a family. While a visiting room may not seem like an ideal way to have a meal together, it is a great way to bond as a family. Most locations will have vending machines. Be sure to take money to load a prison approved card for your next family visit.

Follow the Dress Codes - It's important to know the state's dress code visiting rules. Not following the dress code for an institution you visit may mean you will not be able to get into the visiting room that day. Everyone who wishes to get into the prison visiting room will need to abide by the visiting rules. Common clothes not allowed are revealing clothes, hats or clothing that resembles offenders' attire.

“When you visit a loved one in prison, you have the opportunity to make beautiful, meaningful memories together. These memories can become the glue to hold your family together. Don't let fear, past hurts and distractions stop you and your family from having a great time together in a visiting room.”



I CAME IN ALONE

- By Ron Tijerina

“The first time I actually said that phrase... it made me feel sick. I knew it wasn't true. I knew it was a lie. I didn't come to prison by myself.”

Have you ever used the term “I came in alone and I am going out alone”?

I remember the first time I heard that phrase; I didn't quite understand why anyone would say they came into prison alone. I guess if you hear something enough times, you begin to believe it. In fact, I heard it so much that I began to wonder if I was the one that was wrong. Maybe my incarceration only affected me. Everyone around me insisted that it was a true statement. The first, and only, time I actually said that phrase as if it pertained to me, it made me feel sick. I knew it wasn't true. I knew it was a lie. I didn't come to prison by myself.

I realized from the beginning that my family was doing time with me. My wife was doing time with me; my children were doing time with me. As much as I had tried to convince myself that I “came in alone,” I knew I was not doing the time by myself. There were a lot of other people that were affected, and infected, by my imprisonment. My family and friends who loved me were doing time with me.

It is easier to pretend that your circumstances are not creating pain for others. Nobody wants to be responsible for hurting so many people- especially those that we love. As I began to think about that phrase, “I came in alone and I'm leaving alone” I realized that believing that was a way to ignore the extent of my responsibility to my family and friends. I knew the first person who said this had to be a very bitter person who could not bear the weight of the sorrow he had created for others. So, whenever I would hear somebody say that, I began to question them and to hold them accountable.

When you are hurting, you will recognize the impact of your actions. Most begin to use denial as a self-hypnosis to justify your attitude and behavior. You will convince yourself that you are alone. It is less of a risk to be alone because you have nothing to lose. At that point, you are so lost than nothing else matters. You've heard the saying, “misery loves company,” well this is what this lie looks like in real life. When you believe that it's all about you, you will continue to do things that undermine your success and freedom.

“Whatever caused you to be where you are today doesn't have to dictate your future. You can change your story.”

This self-destructive attitude will begin to infect all those around you and create a world of hurt, pain, and chaos. The truth is, when you begin to realize that many other people are doing this time with you, you will recognize that you have the power to influence and bring healing to the wounds you inflicted. You can begin to impact their lives in a positive way. To make the best of this experience, you must be awake and face the truth of what IS, not what you wish WAS. Whatever caused you to be where you are today doesn't have to dictate your future. You can change your story.

Prison should not make you bitter, but it should make you better. So, the next time you hear somebody say, “I came in alone, and I'm going out alone.” I challenge you to confront them and ask them to really look at the selfishness of that statement. Show them that it is not true; there are a lot of people on the streets that are doing time with you. When you acknowledge the power of your influence in other's lives, you will be empowered to create a new legacy. Accept the responsibility of your actions and make a list of those who have been infected by your poison, then start rebuilding, renewing, and reinvesting. If you still have breath, you still have a chance to change your story. You did not come in alone, and if you do not want to come out alone, it is time to get to work.

-Ron Tijerina

TYRO Word Search

L E A D E R S H I P
O C F T Y R O O Y U
R N O W A R R I O R
L F S M J Y E D B S
I G A T M I F T A K
S R P M O U P I P I
T O E G I R N P B L
E W C R S L Y I G L
N T T L J E Y Z T S
C H I I C T H P F Y

leadership
growth
skills

community
story
dtip

warrior
tyro

family
listen

Push Past Your Limits

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Great for
BEGINNERS & EXPERTS!



Modified Versions - No Weights - Anytime - Anywhere



- Upper

- Lower

- Full Body

Join Lead Coach Tramain Hall and Brandon Tijerina in this **8 week - 30min workout program**.

STHENOS is a Greek word meaning strength. TYRO FIT STHENOS workout program is designed to equip participants of all ages and skill levels with interactive OnDemand videos that guide you through each exercise with modifiers, examples and descriptions.

Build Your Mental, Physical & Spiritual Self

START YOUR BODY
TRANSFORMATION AT:

tyroinstitute.com



My partner is in prison

Now what?



Who could ever imagine that your significant other would be in prison? Finding yourself here can be so overwhelming that you could become paralyzed.

When the most important person to you is essentially taken out of your day-to-day life, it can be a traumatic event. This devastating moment has a ripple effect on everyone in your circle. Having a significant other in prison can instantly change the way others treat you, how you treat yourself, and how you are viewed by society.

As you adjust to the new normal for your relationship, it's important to create some stability in your life. Not only are you navigating through the challenges of your day-to-day life, you will now need to juggle the extra layer of effort needed to stay connected with your incarcerated partner. Managing these new methods of communication will become the life blood to your relationship.

You will need to give yourself some time to adjust to the “new normal” for both of you. From now on, you will need to be intentional to communicate and connect. It's likely you will need to re-think the way you communicate with your partner altogether. From phone calls, to visiting rooms, emails, and letters, there are many things you will need to change. The health of your relationship depends on it.

During the beginning stage of being in prison, your partner is in self-survival mode. This often causes them to build walls to protect them self from the emotional trauma. You must be intentional about connecting with your partner and building your friendship. The challenges facing your partner in prison may seem overwhelming to them. Just as the challenges facing you on the outside may seem overwhelming; it is going to take both of you supporting each to make it through this experience.

While your partner is incarcerated, you will need to surround yourself with a support group. In the midst of this challenging time, it can be tempting to isolate yourself. While it is important to give yourself time to grieve, you cannot allow yourself to cut out the people who care about you the most. The emotional, mental, spiritual, and physical aspects of incarceration

will take time to recover from, and you will need people who care about you to lift you up. A friend who is there to encourage, support, and challenge you will be the difference between becoming a victim or a victor of your circumstances.



In this season, it is vital you do what is right for your family. You will encounter people who will not understand what you and your family are going through. While some of them may mean well, others might even bring you down. It may be necessary to distance yourself from some of these negative voices for a time.

“You and your family can survive this storm. Incarceration is a heavy burden to carry, but do not lose hope.”

Although you may feel alone, there are many others like you who have weathered this storm. We at TYRO have heard countless stories of families who have been restored in the midst of this challenging moment in their lives. Overcoming this means sticking together, now more than ever. It requires determination and a steadfast resolve to support each other and your family. For more resources, reach out to TYRO or visit tyro365.com.

A friend who is there to encourage, support, and challenge you will be the difference between becoming a victim or a victor of your circumstances.

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

TYRO AROUND THE WORLD



The RIDGE Project

McClure, Ohio

The Mission of The RIDGE Project is to build a legacy of strong families for generations to come. This outstanding organization is the birthplace of the TYRO program. It is also the parent non-profit organization of TYRO Support Services and is co-founded by Ron & Catherine Tijerina. Ron & Catherine Tijerina founded the organization while Ron was incarcerated and have lead an award-winning team of programs and curriculum through schools, institutions and communities in Ohio.

This year, The RIDGE Project celebrates 21 years of transformative work in Ohio prisons, correction centers, halfway houses and community outreach centers. From providing direct services, to offering re-entry job training and connecting to housing and other services, The RIDGE Project serves men, women and families throughout the state of Ohio.

If you or someone you know is a returning citizen in Ohio, or is currently incarcerated in Ohio, visit www.theridgeproject.com or write to:
The RIDGE Project
J169 St Rt 65
McClure, OH, 43534

Anthem Strong Families

Dallas, Texas

Anthem Strong Families is a 17 year old 501.c.3 in Dallas, Texas working with under-resourced populations. Their mission is to educate, equip and empower men, women and youth to

be the champion for their life, their marriage, their children and their family, serving both English and Spanish speaking populations.

The Dallas area has the largest childhood poverty rate in the country along with one of the largest disenfranchised youth populations. Over 180,000 children in the Dallas area are living without their father in their home. To date, ASF has been the recipient of over \$35 million in federal and state funding, having served over 50,000 families partnering with dozens of state and local government entities, schools, churches, hospitals and community entities, private and public organizations.

During the past 15 years, ASF has grown to a staff of over 28 people serving several dozens of partner locations throughout the Dallas metroplex and covers 8 counties. Current federal funding for over \$15 million has been awarded to ASF for two grants. Their Family Champions project offers healthy relationships and family strengthening targeting women and men who are not dads.

The TYRO Champion Dads project works to bring workforce, fatherhood and family strengthening to under-resourced area dads. Additionally, they serve as one of the sites for the RIDGE's teen SRAE program. Twelve years ago ASF was excited to bring the TYRO program (as well as, CORE, Couples Communication and JET) to Texas and its impact on men, women, couples and teens has brought hope and transformed lives.

ASF are TYROs to the core and hundreds of testimonials express their gratitude. Anthem Strong Families has been recognized by two Dallas mayors for their transformative work

and featured in print and radio media. We are TYRO's!

City of Refuge

Atlanta, Georgia

We are incredibly excited to announce the Family Reunification Reentry Program, powered by TYRO Atlanta, at the Atlanta City of Refuge. Last August, TYRO Atlanta began their housing initiative with a two-bedroom house to use for their Reentry Housing Program. TYRO Atlanta identified that housing is one of the number one barriers for returning citizens.

This housing program is designed to help returning citizens get the credibility they need to strengthen their credit and gain a housing history. This 6 to 12-month program will help participants by providing a fresh start and support on the re-entry journey. Every time they pay their rent, it is reported to all three credit agencies. After being in this housing program for 6 to 12 months, other creditors will give our TYRO's an opportunity to rent from them.

Another new and exciting thing for TYRO Atlanta is "From the Inside Out Podcast." This podcast will allow our TYRO Alumni to tell their stories. The framework of the Podcast will be based around Family Reunification and Reentry. We will use the TYRO program that addresses the five Rs. The TYRO challenge of "Breaking Generational Cycles of Poverty, Incarceration and Broken Families." Every episode will show how TYRO helps break down these barriers.



Relationship tips **for dating inmates**

Take a few seconds and think about this question: Is it possible to keep a prison relationship alive and healthy?

If you answered yes, then you are right. Keeping a relationship alive and healthy is possible! In the midst of life, work, and yes, during a prison sentence. It is going to take effort, but when you care about someone, it is worth the effort.

But guess what... you are not the only one who is or has gone through it. To be sure, having a relationship with someone incarcerated comes with its unique challenges. You might be surprised to know how many couples have made it through the other side of a prison sentence stronger than ever. Relationships in prison are going to require a little more effort, but these tips can serve as a reference to make a prison rela-

tionship work.

First and foremost, let's talk about some of the challenges you'll face dating someone who is incarcerated. Whether you just met someone, or were in a relationship with them prior to their incarceration, applying these can help your relationship grow and overcome some of the challenges that will come your way.

Writing Letters - At TYRO, we



talk about writing letters to each other often. That's because writing and receiving letters are the bloodline of any prison relationship. This is a crucial aspect to dating someone in prison. Writing letters has a different impact than sending an email. For people on the outside, receiving a letter or card can brighten someone's day so much more than an email. Think about - who sends the most letters? That's right! Bill collectors. So, receiving something else in the mailbox carries more weight than a typed out email.

“Letters are the most effective way to maintain and build a deeper level of communication with someone who is incarcerated.”

Set realistic expectations - One of the biggest challenges of a prison relationship is adjusting to the difficulties. Be real with yourself. Allow the person you are dating to be real about themselves also. As you communicate, it is important for both of you to be open and honest with each other.

Check in with them - Be mindful of the struggle your loved one is going through (inside and outside). Be sure to connect with them often to see what their current struggles are. Writing letters, phone calls or emails are great ways to see how they are doing.

Respect their time - It can be difficult to keep up with someone's life, their routines and events, when you don't see them all the time. Making plans ahead of time for phone calls, visits and communicating how often you write to each other can be helpful ways to respect their time.

Make meaningful connections together - When you have the chance to talk to your partner, you will likely be met with an overwhelming amount of things to talk about. But with the time constraints of phone calls and visits, it's important to prioritize what you talk about.

These conversations might include important life updates, plans for the future, family events, etc.



Stay involved with their family - This is typically more applicable if you have already been in a relationship with the prisoner prior to incarceration. Even if not, this is still important to read. Thus, staying involved with the family can be beneficial to all involved. By showing their family you still want to be part of their life, you show your loved one that their family still matters to you. This further helps you by still feeling connected to your loved one.

If you want your prison relationship to make it, you will need to invest time and energy into making it the best it can be. As you talk and get to know each other, be sure to be open, honest and have fun as much as possible. No matter the challenges in front of you, prison relationships can work. We at TYRO are cheering you on!



SAVING YOUR MONEY

It's been said that if you save money, it will save you. Although this may be somewhat tongue-in-cheek, there is some truth to it. Saving money can be challenging for many reasons, it can be discouraging when, despite your best efforts, you fall short of your money-saving plans. Here are some helpful ways to get you on your way to saving money for a fresh start at your family's finances.

Budget planning

Budgets are one of the best things you can do to monitor where your money is going. Keeping track of how much money you will spend each month can help you plan how much you will have left over. To do this, calculate your monthly income, then add up your expenses for the month, and subtract them from your income.

A good rule of thumb is to save at least 50-75% of the remaining amount, with the other 25-50% being used to buy things you may not necessarily need, but

“As you begin to start saving, it's important to think long term, not short term. Your new life of saving your money will be empowering, not diminishing.”

that you want throughout the month. Using a budget planner improves the time it takes for you to add your expenses. It also serves as a template to help you save your money. You can find many free budget planners online to print out and use every month. If you are new to budgeting, try using different formats of budget planners each month to see which one you like more, then stick with the right budget planner for you.



Freeze your savings account

This can be a helpful resource when you are getting used to staying within your budget. Most people freeze their savings account when they think someone has stolen their card information, but did you know that you can freeze your savings account whenever you want to, for no reason at all?

Although most account freezes typically last around three weeks at a time, those three weeks can help you stop spending out and start saving. Freezing your account takes away your ability to make withdrawals, purchases, or transfers from your savings account, only allowing for deposits to be made. Temporarily freezing your bank account can give you the extra push to begin saving your money.

Don't be hard on yourself

When tasked with creating and keeping a balanced budget, most people become discouraged or frustrated. Learning how to save your money is something that will require time and patience, but don't stop trying. Saving your money is something that is worth it in the end. As you begin to start saving, it's important to think long term, not short term. Your new life of saving your money will be empowering, not diminishing.

“There are days you will find yourself struggling to save your money. Don't be afraid to ask your friends or family for help. You will discover those who care about you will be more than willing to help you save your money.”

Ask for help

There are days you will find yourself struggling to save your money. This time of developing the skill of saving your money can be discouraging and overwhelming. In this season, don't be afraid to ask your friends or family for help. You will discover those who care about you will be more than willing to help you save your money. It's okay to admit that you may not be able to meet your expectations yet. Just know that you can overcome the challenges it takes to save your money.

building your

CREDIT

score



Building your credit score is much like exercising, it takes time and consistency to get results. Before you can build your credit score, you will need to learn some fundamental disciplines.

When you're making purchases, ask yourself if you really need the things you're buying. When more of your purchases are things you want, and not things you need, then you may need to focus on saving your money first.

1 Pay on-time. Making your payments on-time is the biggest factor that affects your credit score. Know when your payments are due each month. Make an effort to pay them several days before the due date. Consistency will cause your monthly payments to become natural over time. Setting a monthly reminder on your phone is a great way to help you make your payments on time.

2 Pay in full. Although it's not always possible, paying the full balance on your credit card every month will allow you to avoid paying interest. Not only will this reduce the cost of your payments each month, it will save you extra money that many spend on interest. If you find yourself struggling to pay the balance from month-to-month, paying the earliest you are able is better than waiting. Paying early will also lower the amount of interest that will accrue on the payment.

3 Normal payments. Using a credit card to purchase things you would normally pay for on a weekly basis is a great way to build your credit score. Every time you go to the grocery store, start using your credit card instead of your cash or your debit card. This method will help you manage your monthly expenses while building your credit. Some credit cards allow you to get extra rewards for purchasing things like groceries, allowing you to save up to 6% each time you go to the store.

4 Higher credit limit. Increasing your credit limit instantly lowers your overall credit utilization, and therefore improves your credit score. If your income has increased, or you've added more years of positive credit experience you have a better chance at getting a higher credit limit. However, if your credit balance does not stay the same when you increase your credit limit, then you will not be able to increase your credit limit.



5 Become an authorized user. If you have a family member who owns a credit card with a high credit limit with a great history of making their payments on-time, then you can be added as an authorized user. This action adds their credit to your credit reports, thus helping your credit utilization with their credit limits. The great thing about being an authorized user is that you don't even need to use a card of the friend or family member for your credit score to increase, you can keep using your own.

At the end of the day, building your credit is a challenge all of us have to face. As you start your journey on building your credit, don't be afraid to ask for help. Learning how to save your money can be hard for anyone, especially when you're first starting to build your credit score. If you are looking for other money-saving resources, www.tyro.blog has several free money-saving articles and resources available.

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a blue backpack and a light-colored top, stands on a rocky mountain peak. She is looking out over a vast, hazy landscape of mountains and valleys. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow and lens flare effects. The overall mood is one of hope and resilience.

OVERCOMING INCARCERATION TOGETHER

A blog for families
with a loved one
in prison.

CATHERINE TIJERINA
AUTHOR, TYRO CO-FOUNDER

START YOUR JOURNEY TODAY AT

WWW.TYRO.BLOG

TYRO

“Meeting Youth
Where They
Are At”



Over 500,000 served with TYRO Youth

TYRO YOUTH FOCUS

- Diversion
- Truancy
- Character Development
- Overcoming Offenses

RESULTS

- Improved Self-Worth
- Owning Your Story
- Decision Making Skills
- Self Regulation

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The day those heavy, metal doors slam shut, it's very apparent you are in a whole new world. The daily pleasures we are accustomed to are all but a memory that quickly fades. Trying to stay brave, learning spoken and unspoken rules, and trying to stay connected to your family can seem impossible, but there is hope in navigating this new complex culture. A culture with its own languages and dialects, sometimes exclusive to a single prison or stretches across a thousand. Each unit will have a unique makeup on guards, inmates and supporting staff. Surviving your time in prison means learning these rules, and much more.

Stay true. Your first few weeks, you will be tested. Are you who you say you are? Despite helpful advice, nothing can prepare you for those first moments behind bars. Staying true to your core beliefs can be a matter of life or death. You can't let fear stop you from saving your integrity and reputation.

Learn who to trust. Having a group of people you can trust that won't get you into trouble is important. The longer you are at one institution, the more you will know who to trust. Joining a small group or club is a good place to

SURVIVING YOUR LO

“ **Prison is a small community. When you commit to something, stick to it. As others begin to hear you are a person of your word, you will gain respect and friends.** ”

seek out friends you can trust. In the end, you will know someone is of good character not only by what people say about them, but what they do.

Invest in others. As you build your reputation, set aside time to invest in someone around you. Whether it's in a book club, support group, or religious study, investing your time and resources in others will build new friendships and give purpose to your time in prison. The longer you are at a prison, the bigger your impact will be on your peers.

Keep your word. Your word is your honor. And a prison is a small community. When you commit to something, stick to it. As others begin to hear you are a person of your word, you will gain respect and friends.

Listen to others. Listening to others is the most crucial part of communication and is invaluable in prison. When you take the



focus off yourself and take time to listen to others, you will form new friendships. Learning to listen to others allows you to create new groups of friends. When we actively listen to others, leaving behind our agendas, we make space for the person talking to trust us. Trust is a great place to form new friendships.

Set boundaries. As a new offender, one must quickly learn not everyone in prison is to be trusted. You will quickly encounter pressure in many forms. Do not give personal information to people you do not know. Personal information can be used against you. It is important you know not only what you are allowed to do in the prison but understand

the makeup of the prison you are residing in. Although it may be tempting to take out small loans in the prison, you should avoid owing anyone anything.

Prison, like life, is what you make of it.

Countless men and women have made the most of their time in prison; using it as an opportunity to have a fresh start. From earning college degrees and trades, to bettering one's self and improving family relationships, this is your opportunity to start fresh on your mistakes and press the reset button. You have the capacity to grow and thrive during your time in prison, you need only to start.

Parenting

A photograph of a man and a young boy sitting on a grassy field. The man is on the right, wearing a dark t-shirt and glasses, looking towards the left. The boy is on the left, wearing a light-colored t-shirt, also looking towards the left. The background is a blurred forest of trees. The overall tone is somber and contemplative.

Over 2.7 million children
in the United States have
parents that are
incarcerated.

from **Prison**

Every parent struggles with immense challenges every day. Over 2.7 million children in the United States have parents that are incarcerated. If you are a parent who is incarcerated, you are not alone. Learning how to be the best parent you can be while in prison will take time and patience, but it's not impossible.

Communication is key

Communication can be the most important thing for a happy and healthy relationship with your family members. Your child may have many questions about prison, especially if they are very young. It's important that you make sure to answer any questions that your child may have about you being in prison. They might ask things like, what it's like to be in prison, where you sleep, what you eat, and many simpler, but important questions for them to ask and for you to answer. Do not overwhelm your child with your responses to their questions and try to address only specifically what they asked about, and nothing more. Every child is different when it comes to what they might want to know about one of their parents being in prison, and when they want to know it.

“Your child will be excited to do things with you. Doing activities will further strengthen your bond, even while you are still in prison, because it gives them hope.”

Whenever your child visits you, it's important to avoid asking closed-ended questions like, “how are you” when you are talking with them. Instead, it can be better to ask them if anything funny has happened in school recently, or things they've done with their friends. You can only expect to receive simple and boring answers if you are asking them simple and boring questions. Not only can asking them about more specific things help improve the communication that you have with your child, but it can also show that you care more about what's going on in their life, rather than that their life has just been going “okay” or “good”.

Share interests with your child

Your child is going through the period of their life when they learn what they're most interested in. Ask what type of shows they enjoy watching, what is their favorite sport, or which subject they enjoy learning most in school. It is important to learn what their interests are, either through them or the other parent. If they like a show or movie series, try to read about the show, and even watch it yourself if you can. If they like a favorite sport or sports team, then inform yourself on this sports team. You want to become informed about things your child likes so that you can talk about them with your child to help form a stronger bond with them.

Learn what activities your child likes to do and tell them that you can do those activities with them when you're out of prison. This will give you and your child things to look forward to once you are able to come home to your family. Your child will be excited to do so many activities with you in the future and will further strengthen your bond with them even while you are still in prison, because it gives them hope.

Talk often with the caretaker of your child

Whether it's the mother/father of your child, or a guardian taking care of them, keeping a good relationship with the parent or guardian that is taking care of your child while you are in prison will make parent-



ing less stressful and easier for you. Sometimes, your child may not be telling you things that are going on in their life, but the caretaker of your child can. You may not know how your child is doing in school, or if something bad has happened to them recently, or even activities that your child doesn't realize they like, but their caretaker does.

If you don't have a good relationship with your child's caretaker, then it's time for that to change. You must put your child first, because they are dependent on you and are what matters most in your life. If you want to see your child live a healthy and happy life, then setting a good example of healing your relationship with their caretaker is something that needs to happen. Not only will it make things easier for your child when they come to visit you, but it will also make your job as a parent easier and less stressful.

Bring back the memories

If you've had happy memories with your child before you went to prison, then bring them back. Recall past events you went to together, or the time you spent on a rainy day. Recalling memories with your child can help them remember the good times and make them want to continue those good times once you are out of prison. Even remembering good times you had with them when they were visiting you can help brighten their day and help remind them that you love them.

Write letters to your child

Writing letters to your friends and family can have so many benefits, especially writing to your child. There's just something about writing letters that makes it so unique and powerful compared to a call or text. You can express yourself through the letters you write to

your child, and eventually they will be able to see you on the page through your handwriting. It's allowing you to diversify the way you communicate with your child. When they receive a letter from you in the mail, it's enjoyable and exciting for them. They can keep your letter and hold on to it for memories or to just enjoy reading every so often. It allows you to focus on what you want to say before you say it, giving your words more meaning than they might have had during a conversation.

Tell them how you feel

Don't be afraid to express your feelings towards your child. Tell them you love them, miss them, and can't wait till you're able to be at home with them, even if it might be hard to show how you feel.

You and your child both know you are in a challenging situation. but things will get better if you don't give up. Be strong. Don't stop encouraging your child. Continue to be a parent even when you can't always be there with your child. It's up to you to make the right choices, but don't be afraid to ask for help when you need it.


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INCARCERATION
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A blog for families
with a loved one
in prison.

CATHERINE TIJERINA
AUTHOR, TYRO CO-FOUNDER

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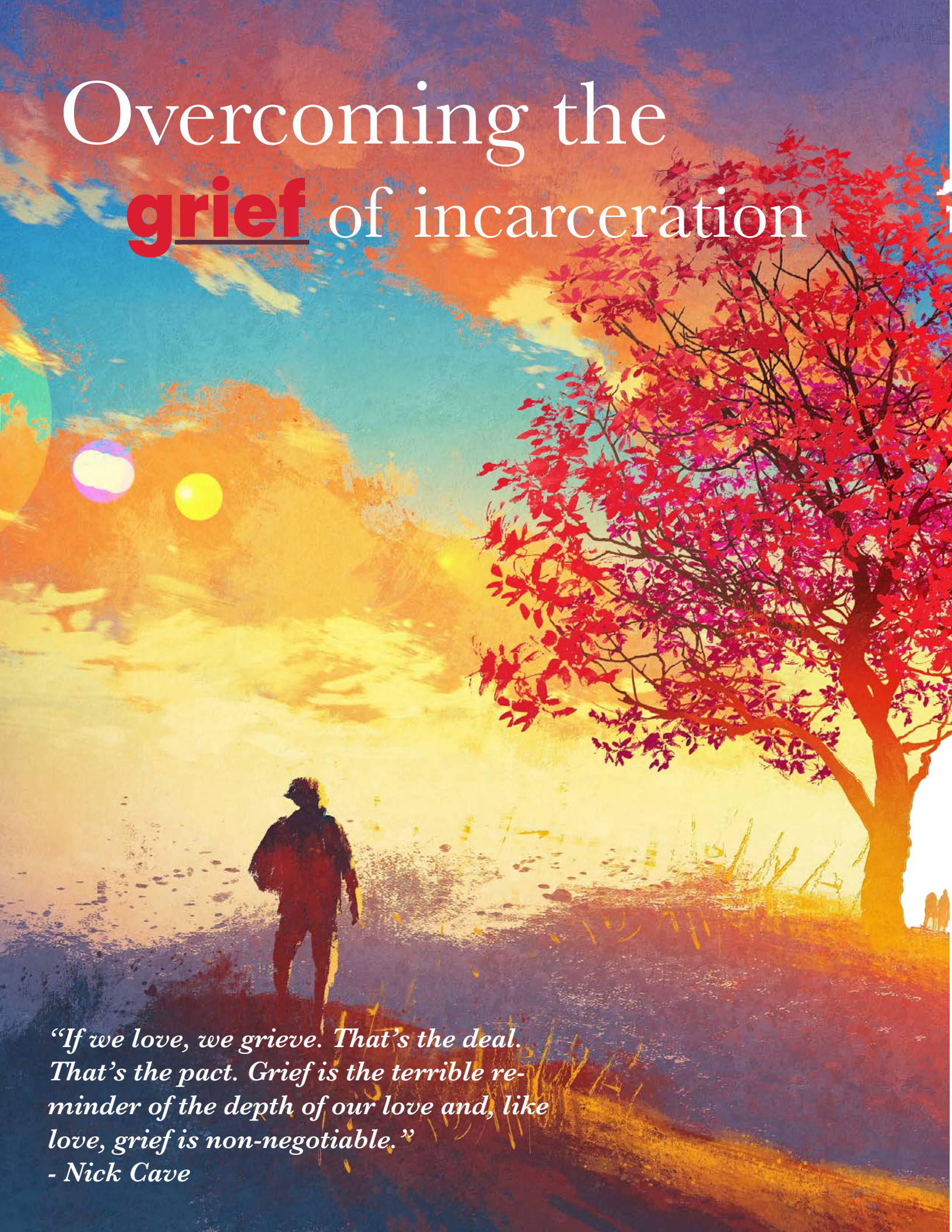


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A surreal, painterly landscape. In the foreground, a person stands on a path, looking towards a bright, hazy horizon. To the right, a large tree with vibrant red and pink leaves stands prominently. The sky is a mix of blue, orange, and yellow, with several glowing, colorful spheres (purple, yellow, and white) scattered across it. The overall mood is contemplative and evocative.

Overcoming the **grief** of incarceration

“If we love, we grieve. That’s the deal. That’s the pact. Grief is the terrible reminder of the depth of our love and, like love, grief is non-negotiable.”

- Nick Cave



Hope that you, like so many others, have recovered and become stronger in the midst of this moment in your life. For those of you who are in this moment, here is the cycle of healing from grief.

Shock This is an unavoidable moment in every person, family and community that experiences the loss that comes with incarceration. It may last a matter of days, weeks, or months.

Denial - Unlike shock, many people can be stuck in denial. Denial of the situation they are faced with. This denial can often seem like a coping mechanism that prevents the painful reality from setting in. At some point, denial will be met with reality and grief will set in.

Anger - Once the shock wears off, you are faced with the grim reality that your loved one is going to prison. This inescapable reality will affect people in different ways.

Grief - This is a normal and healthy process that you must embrace in order to heal. No one should have to go through grief alone. While you are grieving, you should seek out someone you can trust to help you process your emotions. Once you are able to, begin to pick up the pieces of your heart and begin the process of helping your family heal from this moment in their lives.

Acceptance - When you are in acceptance, you are able to accept your reality. Many people live in anger and grief and never move to acceptance. In fact, this cycle of healing is an opportunity to step into the future with your head held high. Acceptance is a powerful opportunity to take hold of your moment and make the most of it. When you can learn to accept the things you cannot change, you become empowered to heal from the trauma that led you to this moment.

As you move past the trauma that led to your grief, you are growing into a stronger version of yourself. This stronger you can lead your family and friends through their dark days too. That's the power of grief; it offers the opportunity to grow and become a vessel to help others overcome trauma in their lives. At TYRO, we believe your past does not have to define you but it can qualify you for your future if you overcome it.

Throughout life, there are moments of profound pain. The moment a loved one goes to prison is, without a doubt, one of those moments. The inconsolable pain of incarceration is felt by those who are incarcerated and the families of those who are going through it with them.

For anyone who has experienced this painful season, it goes without saying that it will take time to recover. When a loved one goes to prison, it can feel like a loss in the family. Although they are still living, the life you lived together will change so dramatically it will feel like a loss.

Although everyone grieves in their own way, there is a process to grieving. At the moment it may feel like this moment will never end, but there is hope. In fact, the process of grieving is cyclical. Grief, in all its faces, is known to all because we have all experienced pain. This reality should give you hope.

Communication Tips

Six fundamental communication steps to create healthy and productive communication in your life.



“Good communication is the bridge between confusion and clarity.”

– Nat Turner

As anyone who has had a challenging conversation can attest, communicating your expectations, needs, and frustrations can be difficult to manage. Although there are many ways to approach conversations, here are a few tips to help you navigate your next important conversation.

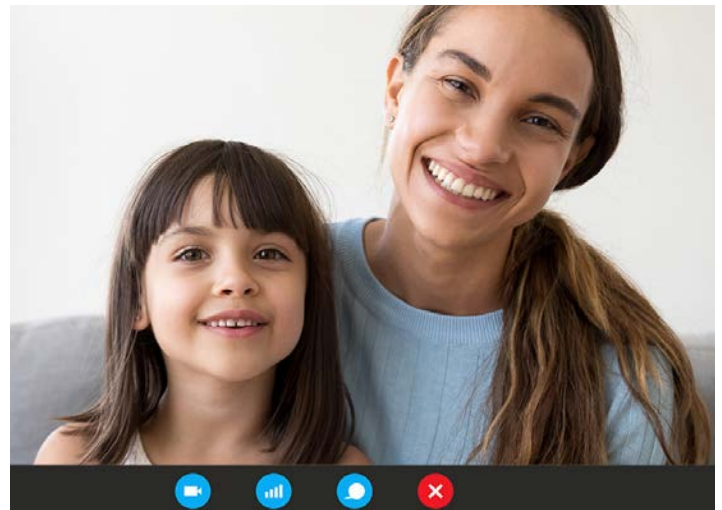
“Although it is not always possible to know how the conversation will go, it’s helpful to have a transparent plan about the conversation in advance.”

Plan ahead. Before you start a conversation, it’s important to have a plan. Although it is not always possible to know how the conversation will go, it is helpful to have a transparent plan about the conversation in advance. This can help you avoid misunderstanding and communicate in an understanding of where the conversation will go.

Be engaged. Engaging in conversation will ensure that others feel validated and have their voice heard. An example of this is eye contact. Eye contact allows the other person to know you are paying attention to what they have to say. Learning to use non-combative hand gestures and body language can also further help to create an open environment for communication.

Be yourself. This is one of the most important things to remember when approaching a conversation. For many, depending on your personality, it can be tempting to compromise on everything or nothing. Taking yourself, and your needs, seriously will mean others are more willing to listen to your

wants and needs. Being your true self will show that you aren’t hiding anything. Being yourself allows you to be relaxed and confident around others.



Be positive. A positive attitude will carry you a long way. Staying positive offers a new perspective. In fact, a positive attitude will not only improve the outcome of your conversation, it can build trust in the relationship.

Don’t be afraid. Sometimes the only way to get to the heart of a conversation is to not be afraid. Although it can be intimidating, don’t be afraid to have these conversations. Don’t be afraid to speak up during a conversation when it’s needed. If you know something needs to be said, then you must be brave and say it.

Know your boundaries. Interrupting someone is almost never a good thing to do during a conversation. Let the other person speak what they have to say. Going too off-topic and oversharing are some pitfalls to avoid. Using these tools can help your next conversation by providing a healthy platform to communicate with others and have a better outcome.

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#1 TRAINING FOR REAL-WORLD LEADERSHIP APPLICATION

Learning to Trust Again

// Trust can be fragile... for those who have experienced a breach in trust, there is hope for you to learn to trust again. //

Trust can be fragile. It can take a lifetime to earn and a moment to lose. When you lose your trust in someone, it can feel like a betrayal. This betrayal can leave you with a feeling of loss and hopelessness. For those who have experienced this, there is hope for you to learn to trust again.

There are many reasons why you may have lost your trust. It can come from a traumatic moment in a relationship, or a lifetime of microaggressions that, when added up can cause a rift and anything in between. The more times a person has cause to distrust someone, the more they tend to be skeptical of people. This can prevent someone from letting others in.

When trust is broken, it is traumatic. This trauma can feel like a severing of oneself with another. It's important to allow yourself to grieve the pain you feel. Grief is a healthy and necessary process to recovering from trauma. Failing to allow yourself to feel this pain may lead to suppressing it, leading to a negative cycle.

Mistrust can become a self-defense mechanism, protecting oneself from potential pain. Some have the natural tendency to trust while others are more skeptical. Learning to trust means you will need to be vulnerable. The level of vulnerability and trust you are willing to give others is up to you. It may take time to offer your trust freely to others again and that's ok.

In moments of trauma where trust is lost in a relationship, you may even lose trust in yourself. Rethinking an incident, or conversation over and over again can cause oneself to not only mistrust others, but lose trust in yourself as well. In moments of doubt, it is crucial to listen to your instincts. Often after a traumatic experience, we doubt our instincts that led us to that event or relation-



ship. Learning to trust your instincts will help you regain trust in yourself.

As you heal from mistrust, another part of your healing process is forgiving others. Even the idea of forgiving a person who has broken your trust may seem impossible. This may be a process that will take time. Like recovering from a wound, trusting another person again will require forgiving others. This doesn't mean excusing actions done to you, but the process of forgiving releases you from the burden placed on you from the initial trauma.

Healthy relationships are an essential part of your life. Being in relationship with others means you find purpose and an identity through your relationships. Creating these types of relationships requires trust. In learning to trust, you can control how much you trust others. This is a key aspect of learning to trust again. The push and pull in relationships means that you can grow in trust with others, all the while healing from past trauma.

The reality is that people will hurt you. There will be moments when you will have to go through the process of learning to trust people over and over again. Throughout your life you will encounter moments of pain. In those moments, it can be difficult to convince yourself to trust others again. In these moments, consider how your life would be different if you shut everyone out of your life. This isolation may prevent you from experiencing pain, but how would your life look if you did not allow anyone in? The exchange found in meaningful relationships gives meaning to your life.

Gaining the freedom to trust again is a critical part of connecting to others. Trust means you have the potential to build meaningful relationships. Your meaningful relationships throughout your life will give you purpose and will shape who you are. These types of connections cannot come without trusting people. Do not allow yourself to be limited by the trauma others have imposed on you. You are not only capable of trusting others, but you can have healthy, thriving relationships again.



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