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Breaking Free From Fear

by Emily Andrews

From an early age, Ashley Hale would get what she wanted, at least in the form of material things. Her single mother made good money, and they never had to ask others for help.

But money couldn't buy everything.

Like many teens, Ashley dealt with feelings of insecurity and of wanting to fit in at school. She was outgoing and athletic, but she also feared failure and never tried out for sports. "The other side of that was, well, I can go to the games, and I can party," Ashley remembers.

Parties became an easy place for her to belong—and to dabble in alcohol, pot, and cocaine. Ashley told herself she could stop whenever she wanted, but by college, she was using ecstasy and meth. Drugs made her feel numb and carefree.

As Ashley sank deeper into addiction, she moved out of her college dorm to live in a house alone off-campus. She started selling drugs for extra cash and kept throwing parties so she'd never be lonely.

At age 21, Ashley was arrested for the first time. She spent six months in a prison-style boot camp. Then she moved to Arizona, stayed clean



Photo by Prison Fellowship

From an early age, Ashley Hale got what she wanted—but money couldn't buy joy. Prison showed her what could.

for a few years, and even attended cosmetology school. But later, she moved back to Oklahoma and returned to the party scene. By her late 20s, Ashley was a mother

with a full-time job and a full-time addiction.

Overcoming fears

Ashley struggled when her son was diagnosed with a developmental

disorder. Meth numbed the pain, and she used it to help her stay awake at night to research his condition. "I just thought

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MENTAL HEALTH SPOTLIGHT: Maintaining Personal Identity Through Meaningful Occupation

by Shelly Gutensohn

I am a parent. I am a therapist. I am a spouse. I am a teacher. I am a Christian. I am a writer.

These are my "I am" statements. Regardless of where I am or what I am doing, these things remain true.

These personal roles are examples of *meaningful occupation*. The word *occupation* is typically used to describe employment, but meaningful occupation is a term to describe personal roles or activities that give

our lives value. These occupations connect us with others, and they are an important part of our personal identity and mental well-being.

On the flip side, *occupational deprivation* is when someone is restricted from these meaningful activities

for long periods of time. Losing that sense of purpose is devastating and can create or make mental illness worse. It can trigger depression, anxiety, and paranoia. Occupational deprivation chips away at both your personal identity and your relationships.

Men and women experiencing incarceration are at a high risk of losing these roles and relationships. Everyday isolation, neglect, and hopelessness can strip away identity and ultimately make it more difficult to transition back to family, work, and community life once released.

Despite the obstacles, it is possible to maintain a meaningful relationship with yourself and others during incarceration.

Start by telling yourself: **You are not a number; you are**

a person! You have purpose and goals. But you will need to do a little exploring to find new meaning in how you spend your time. Challenge yourself with activities that strengthen your identity. Here are some examples.

Activity 1:

Explore the difference between the "you" you show others and the real you. The "mask" you wear while incarcerated is likely tough and assertive and doesn't show

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SIphotography: Getty Images

Letters to the Editor



Ekely: Getty Images

Jennifer in California

Lord knows I don't want a lukewarm "jailhouse religion"—I want the real deal! Amen! Can you please pray for me and my children to have a stronger bond during our storm? [I'm] a newfound believer. Everything is accomplished through prayer.

Brittney in Tennessee

I'm in prison doing a 10-year sentence for robbery. Since being locked up, I have faced many trials. The unknowing makes it difficult to hold on to hope. It seems when everything is going OK, I forget about God, but as soon as something goes wrong, I find myself crying out in anger asking Him why. I'm

writing in hopes you can help me get a closer relationship with God. ... Also, I would love to have an easy-read Bible.

Dear Jennifer and Brittney:

We will be praying for you both. Stay focused on Jesus and not on the storms. Learning to live as a Christian and change your way of thinking is a process. You're both headed in the right direction. Keep praying and reading the Bible, getting to know the God who loves you. For our free Inside Journal Life Recovery Bible and workbook, see ad below, and for the Doing HIS Time devotional book, see ad on page 7.

Sincerely,
The Editorial Staff ■

Dear Readers: We want to hear from YOU!

Do you have tips for looking or feeling your best while behind bars? Do you know of any good recipes using commissary items? Do you have a good parenting or Angel Tree story? You can give back right from where you are! Inside Journal is looking for tips/advice, poems, recipes, or inspiring words to share with our readers. To be considered for this, please write to us at: SUBMISSIONS, c/o Inside Journal, P.O. Box 1790, Ashburn, VA 20146-1790. Please also write "I give Prison Fellowship my permission to publish this submission" somewhere on your letter. NOTE: Submissions may be edited for content or space. Not all submissions will be printed. If selected, your works will be printed with your first name only; no last name or personal information will be included.

Breaking Free Continued from page 1

that was how I was going to survive," says Ashley. "It just became a way of life."

That lifestyle led Ashley to a short stint in rehab and, finally, to prison. Broken and tired, she began an in-prison substance abuse treatment program to start her recovery. But soon she wanted an even deeper transformation.

Ashley's cellmate knew Tammy Franklin, a Prison Fellowship staff member who served as manager of the Prison Fellowship Academy®—an intensive, in-prison program. Using targeted curriculum and restorative community, the Academy helps participants replace criminal thinking and behaviors with new purpose. Tammy had previously been incarcerated at the same facility as Ashley, before being released and turning her life around. Ashley wondered if the same restoration was possible for her, too.

Ashley enrolled in the Academy and discovered a place to belong. Caring staff and volunteers guided her through a yearlong journey to develop biblically based values like community, integrity, and responsibility. With curriculum like Celebrate Recovery,

Ashley learned to process difficult emotions and to heal from past hurts. She practiced living in healthy community without fear of failure, knowing that Jesus loved her unconditionally.

"That was the first time that I had been told that my feelings are normal," Ashley says of her time in the Academy. "It's OK to have them and then process whatever it is, and then move forward. A lot of healing came from just that."

Living with purpose

After three and a half years, Ashley was released. A Prison Fellowship volunteer picked her up, bringing her new clothes to change into. She moved into Hope House, a transitional home for women in Oklahoma City, where she spent several months. Right away, she got involved with Bible studies and found a church community.

Reentry wasn't easy. Ashley juggled work, school, serving the community, and being a mom, all while learning to adjust to society again. She had to set healthy boundaries with family and friends and commit to her sobriety. But even in tough times, she experienced joy and purpose like she'd never known before.

In February 2021, Ashley was baptized at her church as a public expression of her faith in Jesus. Today she is in a program to become a



Photo by Prison Fellowship

licensed peer recovery support specialist. Her relationship with her now 19-year-old son is growing stronger. And she works with Prison Fellowship's Academy Graduate program. She loves helping others—especially other women who struggle to ask for help, like she did.

Ashley is still the woman who gets what she wants. But now, what she wants has completely changed.

"Because I was a perfectionist, I always wanted to be the better mom, the better this or that—to be better than you," says Ashley. "But knowing God was going to meet me right where I was ... I knew nobody else's opinion mattered. Before, I would ask, 'Am I pretty enough? Am I smart enough? Am I doing enough?' And for anybody else that's wondering, the answer is yes. Because that's what God says." ■

NEED A BIBLE?

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Attn: Inside Journal Bible
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Include this information to make sure your Bible or Workbook gets delivered:

- ✓ Your complete name and prison ID number
- ✓ Your facility name
- ✓ Your facility address for prisoner parcel delivery
- ✓ Whether you want English or Spanish*

*Bibles and Workbooks are available in English or Spanish. You can order a Bible and Workbook together, or separately. Limit one order per person.

Be a FROG, Take a Leap

by Stacia Ray

When I was 22 years old and longing for an adventure, I decided to leave behind everyone and everything I knew and move across the country to a huge city by myself. After saving up a few hundred dollars, I loaded my car with a suitcase of clothing, a 13-inch television, and a couple boxes of knickknacks and personal items.

I didn't know anyone and was surrounded by unknowns. But I didn't fear this new move. I had something so much bigger than fear on my side: GOD. I had prayed over this move and trusted that God would be with me every step. I was taking a leap of faith.

Leap of faith: That expression is about jumping far out of your comfort zone while keeping the faith that your feet will land on solid ground. But *what* we put our faith in matters.

To fully rely on God, we need to actively seek Him—and then follow Him. This is not a half-hearted commitment.

If we put our faith in humans or in things of this Earth, we will sometimes (maybe even often) be disappointed. You can probably think of examples of this in your own life. But if we put our faith in God—almighty, all powerful, and perfect—He provides a solid

foundation in our shaky life. There's an acronym some people use called FROG: *Fully Rely On God*. Not "sometimes rely on God," or "halfway rely on God," but *fully*.

Proverbs 3:5–6 says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek His will in all you do, and He will show you which path to take." Notice how it doesn't say seek His will in *some* things, but "in *all* you do."

To fully rely on God, we need to actively seek Him—and then follow Him. This is not a half-hearted commitment. That word "fully" is the key.

Throughout the Bible, many followers of God took a leap of faith, some with very huge dangers and very bad odds. But when those believers fully relied on God, God guided them through their darkness.

One of my favorite examples is in Matthew 14:24–33. The disciples were in a boat in the middle of the sea when a major storm set in, and they began to panic. In the middle of the night they saw Jesus walking on top of the water toward them. They were scared and thought Jesus was a ghost. (*I picture them rubbing their eyes and thinking, "Whoa, my mind is playing tricks on me!"*)

Peter asked Jesus to prove the men weren't just seeing things by having Peter walk across the water toward Jesus:

Peter went over the side of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus. But when he saw the strong wind and the waves, he was terrified and began to sink. "Save me, Lord!" he shouted. Jesus immediately reached out and grabbed

him. "You have so little faith," Jesus said. "Why did you doubt me?"

When Peter put all his trust in Jesus, he was able to literally walk on water. But the moment he took his focus off Jesus and onto the danger of the storm, he sank.

Had I put all my focus on the dozens of things that could go wrong during my big move across the country, I would have sunk. But instead, I kept my faith focused on the almighty God.

My first six months in the new city were rough. I was living at poverty level in a roach-infested apartment with very little to eat. I was struggling with everything from physical hunger to an abusive roommate. But I kept the faith in God, trusting that He would provide a path for me—even when my troubles could have tempted me to think differently. This was no time to lose focus on Him. I needed to be faithful—and patient.

One Sunday morning, after losing my job and learning my landlord wasn't renewing my lease, I went to a new church. At the back of the sanctuary, there was an unsupervised offering plate. Had I stolen money from the plate, it would have bought me a couple meals for the week. But instead, I filled out a

READY FOR A LEAP OF FAITH?

What or whom are you putting your trust in each day? Do you fully rely on others? On yourself? Have you ever wanted to rely on something that's always faithful and dependable?

Psalm 59:9-10 talks about how reliable God's love is: "You are my strength; I wait for you to rescue me, for you, O God, are my fortress. In his unfailing love, my God will stand with me." And Isaiah 26:4 says, "Trust in the Lord always, for the Lord God is the eternal Rock." God sent His only son to bring eternal life to those who believe in Him. Putting all your full faith in Jesus is about more than just trusting Him with your risky leaps.

It's about having a relationship with the almighty, all-reliable Creator of the entire universe! And just like you wouldn't put all your faith and relationship efforts into someone you knew nothing about, the more you *know* God, the more you'll grow to trust Him. Get to know God by reading His Word and talking to Him in prayer.

Not sure where to begin? Start with this simple prayer:

"Dear Jesus, I want to stop relying on things and people that aren't dependable. I want to fully rely on You. I surrender my life to You as my Savior. Please show me how to take this leap of faith and live for You. Amen."

Want to learn more about Jesus or have other comments? Write to us at "FROG," c/o Inside Journal, P.O. Box 1790, Ashburn, VA 20146-1790. Need a free Bible or accompanying workbook? See our ad on page 2.

prayer card, dropped it in the offering plate, and left.

The next morning, I got a call from the pastor, who read about my pending homelessness and unemployment on my prayer card. He offered to help me find another apartment and told me about a church member named Kathy who was hiring. She called me moments later, and

during our brief phone call, she offered me my dream job, without having ever met me.

That amazing job led me to a steady income, good friends, and even my future spouse. I never got to meet Kathy, but she is always in the back of my mind as my reminder that God is working for our benefit even when we don't know or see it. ■



TomasSereda: Getty Images

Q&A with Lecrae and Jeff Walker

by James Murray,
Prison Fellowship
field director

Lecrae and Jeff Walker headlined a Prison Fellowship Hope Event™ in a South Carolina facility last year. Lecrae is a Grammy-winning Gospel and hip-hop artist who has partnered with Prison Fellowship through the years. Jeff, also known as SWAAG, is a Prison Fellowship Academy® graduate and a former prisoner at this same South Carolina facility.

During the Hope Event, Jeff and Lecrae answered questions from the incarcerated men. Answers have been edited for clarity.

JAMES MURRAY:

How do you hope to inspire prisoners through

the way you live and through your music?

JEFF WALKER:

I want people back here to know that there's hope. It's possible for you to actually [get] out ... and stay out of prison and work and grind and do something positive. Start a business. Be a family man. Stay loyal to your wife. These things are possible.

A lot of times in prison, we reach these dark points where we forget truth because our judgment is clouded by our circumstances. We can't get a call through [to home], nobody put money on the books, ain't nobody sending letters or pictures. When we're in those moments, we forget that this is not my life forever. If I don't die back here, this is not my life forever. So, I still have

to grind and perfect what I'm doing back here so I can do that same thing on the street.

JAMES:

This next question is for Lecrae: "Your song *Background* has kept me and my wife grounded about selfishness and who's in charge or who should make the decision. ... Could you share how that song was created and why it's so important?"

LECRAE:

The whole idea of it is that the Bible says God opposes the proud but exalts the humble (Proverbs 3:34, James 4:6). There's a story of an individual in the Bible, Uzziah, who started off as a man who dug his hands in the soil. He was low to the earth; he was helpful to people. But then he became king. He got more and more prideful, more and more full of himself, more and more filled with selfish ambition. And he ended up stepping outside of the boundaries that God had given him, and he [was] cursed with [a crippling disease] (2 Kings 15:1-7, 2 Chronicles 26).

It's so easy to get full of yourself. It's so easy to just get self-consumed and not remember that you're part of a bigger story. You know what I mean? You're part of God's story.

JAMES:

"What is the hardest thing for you living as a Christian?"

"I'm already accepted by God ... if you live for other people's acceptance, you're going to die from their rejection."

JEFF:

[There's] a certain part of us as men that's like, *man, you're not going to play me*. ... That little alpha part of us that's like, *man, even if I'm a Christian, I will still do something to you*. I think, for me, that's the hardest thing because of my background, how I was raised, and just me and my personality. I'm very bull-headed. I have to tame that, though, man.

I've gotten way better over the years. I was a wild child when I was little. I'd just fight and do all kinds of crazy stuff. But over the years, I've learned to tame that aggressive energy into more talking, into more trying to at least explain the situation before I go off. I'm still working on that, y'all.

LECRAE:

Everybody's different, and everybody has different struggles, so what may be hard for me may not be hard for you. But the thing about it is, [there's] something that we all got—what I will call blind spots—an area of your life that you don't really recognize is hindering you and holding you back. ... Your blind spot may be anger, or your blind spot may be you bend too much, or you lie too much, or you care about stuff you shouldn't care about.

The hardest thing for me is remembering I'm already accepted. Right? Remembering I'm already accepted by God. Because if you live for other people's acceptance, you're going to die from their rejection. You know what I'm saying? When you realize you're already accepted, you don't really have to get extra bent out of shape over somebody disrespecting you. Because it's like, *man, I'm already somebody. You can't really disrespect me because I'm already somebody. So, what you're saying to me, really, it don't really matter. That's your problem, really, not mine*.

But I understand there's politics at play all the time. We're always worrying if they see I went out soft, then everybody going to try me. It's the politics at play.

But at the end of the day, I'm already accepted. I'm already respected. I don't have to prove nothing to you. But that's the hard part that I struggle with. *All right, 'Crae, you're already accepted. You ain't got to prove nothing. And just live in that reality.* ■



Photo by Robert Minder

Lecrae, on left, with Jeff

BEING RELEASED SOON?

Check out the Colson Scholarship started by Charles Colson, founder of Prison Fellowship. The Colson Scholarship is available to eligible returning citizens who want to attend Wheaton College in Illinois (wheaton.edu).

To learn more, visit prisoninstitute.com/colson-scholarship. Or to get more tips and tools for a successful release, ask your chaplain to email us at insidejournal@pfm.org to order our free Inside Journal Reentry specialty edition.

Who is eligible? Applicants must:

- Be a Christian
- Be a U.S. citizen
- Have a felony record (Note: Felonies must NOT include sexual offenses, arson, or repeat violent offenses)
- Be out of jail or prison for at least one full year by April 1 of the application year
- Be established in a local church
- Be accepted into Wheaton College undergraduate or graduate school

FROM THE INSIDE OUT:

Frogs and Sparrows

by Chaplain
Jeff Freeman

What is the price of two sparrows—one copper coin? But not a single sparrow can fall to the ground without your Father knowing it.
—Matthew 10:29

Last week I received a call from an officer at our Women’s Section. One of the residents found out her brother died in an accident, and she wanted to speak with the chaplain. I met with the resident,

doing my best to provide comfort and care.

As the resident went back to her living unit, along with another resident, they both let out an excited scream—“There’s a frog in the window! No, there’s two frogs in the window!” The officer I was speaking with walked over to the window, after which I followed, and sure enough, two tiny little frogs sat on the outside windowsill. The residents were so excited and started giving the frogs names.

God was able to remind these women, through His sights and



aussiesnakes: Getty Images

sounds of nature, that there was hope that stretched far beyond those facility windows. The letters that spell F.R.O.G. have been called an acronym for “Fully Rely On God.”

It’s sometimes easy to feel trapped inside the cold, hard, lifeless concrete walls of your unit. But those frogs represented

companionship with something from outside the cell walls. They represented new life.

The sparrow is the most common bird in the world, with a population of more than 1.5 billion. Back in the days when Jesus walked the earth, two sparrows were worth one penny. The poorest Israelite at the time would even eat sparrows because

they were so cheap. They weren’t considered “high value” animals.

Yet as Matthew 10:29 says, God still cared about each sparrow enough to know when one fell or got hurt. Now just imagine how much He cares about His people! About YOU! In fact, Matthew 10:31 goes on to say, “So don’t be afraid; you are more valuable to God than a whole flock of sparrows.”

To read more about fully relying on God, see page 3. And to make your own origami frog that you can place in your own cell window or shelf, see page 7.

Jeff Freeman is a chaplain in the greater Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota, area who works with the Good News Jail and Prison Ministry. ■

Mental Health

Continued from page 1

much emotion. This is normal; it’s a defense mechanism. However, it’s important not to let this mask take over your entire self. Ask yourself, how are the *outside you* (the mask) and *inside you* (the real you) different? How are they similar?

Look for chances to drop the mask by finding a community. Where can you be yourself? Who can you trust to have an honest and real conversation? Find people with common beliefs. Form connections. Real relationships are best formed when connecting with others *daily*.

Activity 2:

You may not be able to participate in the same favorite activities you did before incarceration or may have a hard time finding fulfilling activities that are healthy. But determine the purpose your preferred activities gave you, and think of available alternatives that might meet that same purpose.

Example: I used to play video games to have fun and take my mind off problems in my life. Now I can read a book, exercise, or join an art class. [OR] I used to play video games to be social. Now I can get a job, enroll in classes, or join a peer-support group.

Activity 3:

You also may not be able to work the same job you did in the past, or perhaps you’ve never worked before. Be open to opportunities to get trained in new skills. What are your strengths and weaknesses? Which skills can you carry over into another career?

Example: I was a mechanic. I’m good at working with electrical systems. I like technology and can figure out how to fix things quickly when they go wrong. I might like to work as an electrician or a welder.

Not sure what you want to do? Find out what the facility offers and try something new. Keep trying different roles until you find what sticks.

Activity 4:

Staying socially connected is extremely important for mental wellness. Look at your relationships with others. Now think of your own “I am” statements (like in the beginning of this article) and do the following with each:

1. Write “I am ____.” (Fill in the blank.)
2. Ask yourself, *What are the most meaningful jobs included in this role?*
3. Ask yourself, *What purpose do these jobs serve?*
4. List purposeful activities you did from home.
5. List how you can still fulfill those same purposes while incarcerated.

Example:

1. *I am a parent.*
2. *Most meaningful jobs? To give love, educate, discipline, help problem-solve.*
3. *Purpose of those jobs? Give emotional support; raise them into independent and successful adults.*
4. *List of purposeful activities: Uphold daily structure, laugh, have family traditions, be involved in their school and outside activities.*
5. *List how to fulfill those purposes behind bars: Make regular phone calls, write letters, send artwork, ask family to send pictures and artwork, ask my kids questions about their personal lives (friends, sports, school), help them with homework, read or make-up stories together over the phone, tell them I love them and ask about their feelings.*

Activity 5:

Self-improvement is also an important part of your identity journey. Choose one of those same “I am” statements and do the following:

1. Write “I am ____.”
2. Ask yourself, *What are my strengths?*
3. Ask yourself, *What could I do better?*
4. List steps you can take to improve.

Example:

1. *I am a spouse.*
2. *I tell my spouse I love and miss them and call as often as I can.*
3. *I don’t always ask about how they are doing, and I talk a lot about myself. I have a negative mindset and don’t feel as close to them since being away.*
4. *I will start writing letters; I can probably say more that way since it’s more private than talking on the phone. I will talk about what I’m doing to better myself, and I’ll allow myself to make plans for the future (for visits or after release). I will make gifts to send home. I will think about things to ask about before we talk so the conversation isn’t always focused on me.*

It is my hope that some of these strategies work for you. Remember that it takes time and practice to establish new routines. Be kind to yourself, be creative, and be persistent. Incarceration can be difficult. Finding yourself, opening up to others, and speaking to a mental health professional/prison counselor* can help.

**Your conversations with counselors/therapists are confidential and private (with the exception of threatening harm to yourself or others).*

Shelly Gutensohn is a licensed therapist who regularly works with men and women behind bars. ■

DAILY DEVOTIONAL TEAR-OUT

Tear out this daily devotional and start each morning and/or end each night saying it and praying over it. You’ll be amazed how a healthy spiritual habit like this can bring encouragement and focus to each day!

All Things New

by J.C. Faulknier

Springtime often makes us think about all things new, fresh, and alive. The drabness of winter fades away as trees bud, flowers brightly bloom, and animals give birth. But even though springtime symbolizes “newness,” the new year actually began months ago. Did you make a resolution or at least a decision to do anything different this year? Were you determined to do something new or stop doing something old? How is that working out? Did you take that first step yet? What is keeping you from taking the next one?

“I will make a pathway through the wilderness. I will create rivers in the dry wasteland.”

IN ISAIAH 43:19, THE LORD SAYS,

“For I am about to do something new. See, I have already begun! Do you not see it? I will make a pathway through the wilderness. I will create rivers in the dry wasteland.”

If you have any doubts about your ability or worthiness to take that next step, meditate on this verse. Are you viewing it from merely a human perspective, or are you looking through the filter of how God sees you? God is taking your “dry land” of fear and doubt and turning it into a “river” of hope and purpose! He is making a pathway through the wilderness for you—but you must take that next step.

“Jesus looked at them intently and said, “Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But not with God. Everything is possible with God.” Mark 10:27 NLT

When you accept Christ’s sacrifice on the cross and surrender to Him as Lord of your life, you become a child of God, a new creation in Him. The impossible then becomes possible for you. You’re now empowered to do what He has purposed for you to do.

You are new, so do something new! Take the class, write the letter, offer forgiveness, make amends, read that book, start to exercise. And remember that you are not the old you; you are new, and your life can be too. It’s not too late to begin. Start today!

RECIPE CORNER:



BaileysTable: Getty Images

Not all ingredients will be available at all facilities. Be sure to comply with your facility’s rules and regulations whenever cooking.

Mountain Pies

Submitted by Seth in New York

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 slices of bread
- Jelly (pie filling, marshmallow fluff, etc.)
- Butter

Butter one side of the slices of bread lightly. Place jelly, pie filling, or fluff on other side. Fry until golden brown. (If you don’t have a hot plate, microwave until warm and gooey.) Enjoy!

On-the-Go Mashed Potatoes

Submitted by Elizabeth in Texas

INGREDIENTS:

- Single-serve bag of BBQ potato chips
- Package of chicken soup or picante beef soup (or similar)

Open the package of soup. Open the seasoning pack and pour it into the bag of soup. Pour hot water into the bag (you may want to place this bag in a cup just to hold it in place). Let it simmer. Stir the mixture. Pour out a small amount of the soup liquid into the chip bag until chips are soggy like mashed potatoes. Mix with spoon and enjoy! ■

ACTIVITY: Origami

Use construction paper, plain paper, or even part of this Inside Journal newspaper to create a frog friend with the steps shown below. See pages 3 and 5 to learn more about fully relying on God.

NOTE: When folding, make sure the edges of your paper are lined up, and use your nails to press down the creases really well.

Find a square of paper. If you don't have a square, take a rectangular piece of paper (like a piece of construction paper) and fold it into the shape shown in Figure A., cutting off the bottom row to make a square from the leftovers.

STEP 1:
Fold the square exactly in half. Do this horizontally and then again vertically.

STEP 2:
Fold a corner into the center.

STEP 3:
Repeat for all four corners to create a smaller square.

STEP 4:
Take one side and fold it into the center, and then do the same with the other side, making an upside-down kite shape.

STEP 5:
Fold the bottom of the "kite" (the shorter side) upward/inward, making a triangle.

STEP 6:
Take the lower points of the triangle and fold them into the center, creating the shape of a narrow house with a long roof.

That's it! You made a cute origami frog! (Or if not, at least you tried! It might take a few attempts, but you'll eventually get there.) Set your finished frog in a place you can see it, as a daily reminder to take a leap of faith and **Fully Rely On God**. Or send it to your kids along with these instructions to make their own frog. ■

STEP 7:
Fold the bottom of this "house" upward, stopping where the triangle/"roof" begins (like a rectangular boat).

STEP 8:
Take the top half of the "house/boat" (everything below the "roof/sail") and fold it in half, downward. (Note: the paper will be quite thick by now, and if you started with thicker paper, this fold will be the most difficult.)

STEP 9:
Take the point (the top of the "roof/sail") and fold it down about a third of the way.

STEP 10:
Turn everything over. Now you can use markers to create the eyes and any other details. If you followed the steps correctly, your frog should even be able to "flip" when you press on its rear end.



Photos by S. Ray

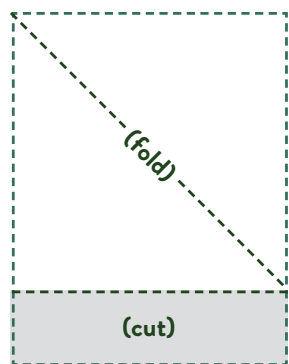
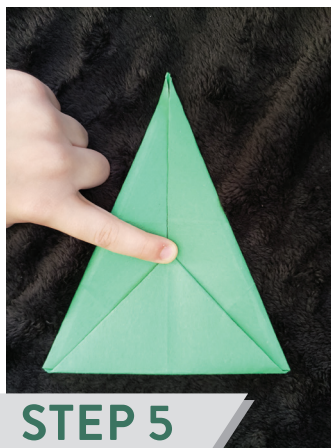
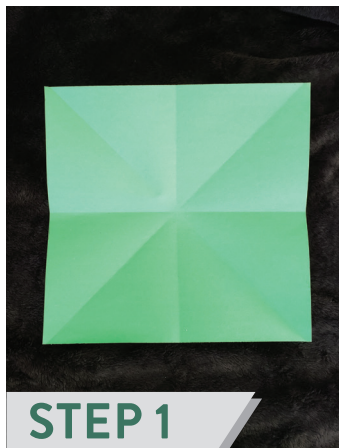


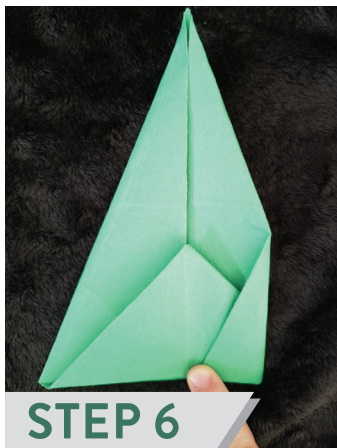
Figure A.



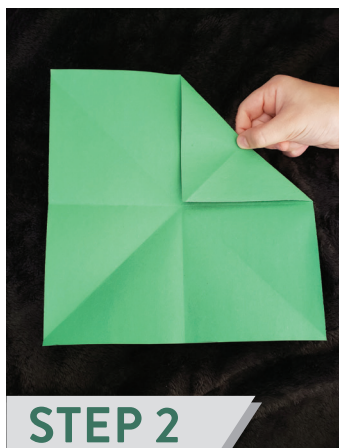
STEP 5



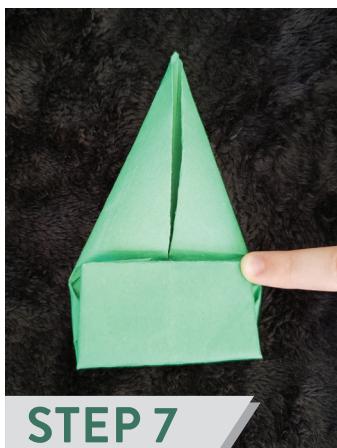
STEP 1



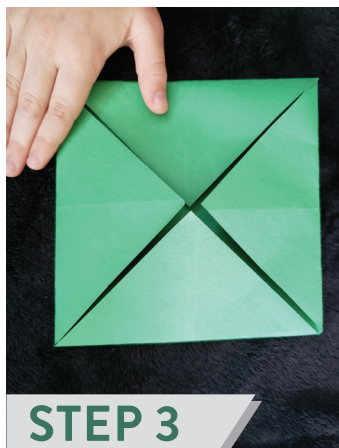
STEP 6



STEP 2



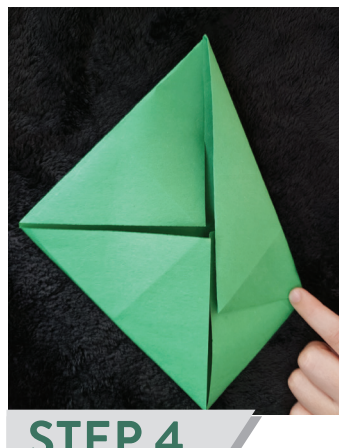
STEP 7



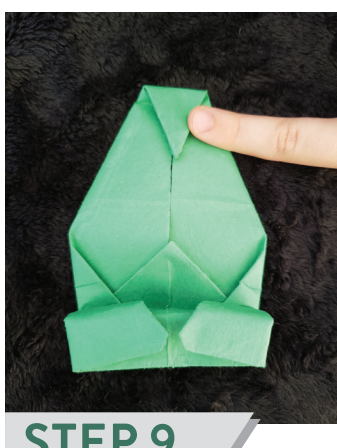
STEP 3



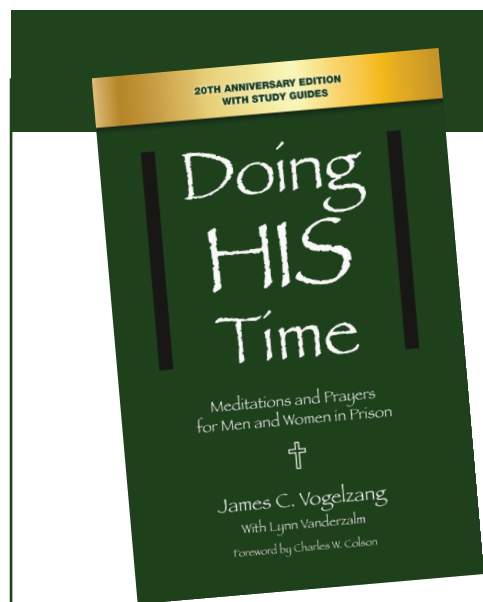
STEP 8



STEP 4



STEP 9



DOING HIS TIME

This is the 20th Anniversary, study-guide edition that has added new meditations and pages of study guides. More than **500,000 copies** have been distributed to prisons in **50 countries** in **17 languages**.

We cannot send copies to individual inmates. For the facility or chaplain to receive **FREE** cases (approx. 30 copies per case) of the devotional (in English, Spanish, or both), ask the chaplain or religious services coordinator to contact suzy@doinghistime.org or write to:

Doing HIS Time Prison Ministry
P.O. Box 91509
Santa Barbara, CA 93190

NEWS + NOTES

Protecting the Dignity of Incarcerated Mothers

In September, North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper signed a bill called “Dignity for Women Who Are Incarcerated,” which focuses on expanding the privacy of women in the prison system.

The bill also helps improve health care for pregnant incarcerated women, unborn children, and women in postpartum recovery, according to The Daily Tar Heel newspaper. Specifically, the bill limits the use of restraints on pregnant women.

Gov. Cooper was very supportive of the changes

created by the bill, which he said were a great way to make sure pregnant women remain safe while incarcerated.

Republican Senator Amy Gale (North Carolina) says this legislation will address some of the negative effects stress can have on pregnant women and babies during incarceration.

The bill stipulates that the Department of Public Safety and the correctional facility administrator must provide sufficient food and dietary supplements for pregnant women behind bars, as prescribed by a physician

or correctional facility nutritionist. Hygiene products, such as sanitary napkins and underwear, must also be provided.

“This legislation takes important steps to protect women who are incarcerated during and after pregnancy and labor,” Cooper said in a statement.

Former Miss USA Visits Prisoners’ Families

In November, Miss USA of 2020, Asya Branch, visited children and families at a Prison Fellowship Angel Tree event in Birmingham, Alabama. Kids made

crafts and got a chance to listen to and ask questions of Branch, 23, whose father spent 10 years in prison.

Having a parent behind bars was a struggle for Branch. She wrote her father letters with Bible verses and words of hope while he was away. Her faith in Jesus Christ carried her through the hard times.

“[My situation] gave me a new perspective on life and incarceration,” says Branch. “It really pushed me to want to make a difference and erase the negative stigma surrounding incarceration and to be a voice for other children.”

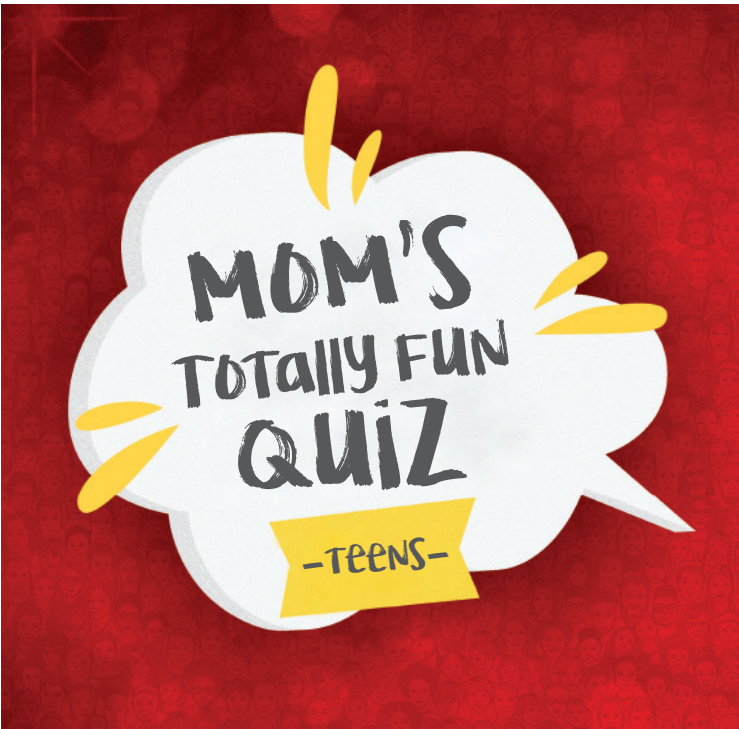
Branch also visited prisoners at the Julia Tutwiler Prison for Women and talked with



Photo by Prison Fellowship

Miss USA 2020 Asya Branch

incarcerated mothers about their children. She sang *Amazing Grace* to them, and some sang along. ■



Answer the questions about yourself and mail them to your child. Then, ask your child to answer the same questions and mail them back to you.

- 1

What’s one activity you’ve never done that you wish you could do?
- 2

If you could live anywhere in the world, where would you live?
- 3

What’s the most exciting thing to happen recently?
- 4

By this time next year, what do you hope to do?
- 5

What’s one piece of advice you would give to someone younger than you?

- 6

If you could meet one movie or book character, who would you want to meet?
- 7

Your favorite time of day is:
- 8

Your favorite book is:
- 9

Your favorite sport to watch is:
- 10

Your favorite sport to play is:
- 11

Your favorite television show is:
- 12

If you could spend a whole day doing only one thing, what would it be?
- 13

The most fun thing that has happened to me is:
- 14

If you could change one thing about the world, what would it be?
- 15

What is your favorite dessert?
- 16

What is your top pet peeve?
- 17

If you won a million dollars, what would you do with it?

Use this space to send a note to your teens. And teens, you can also send a note back to your mom...



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