

IN THIS ISSUE:



Angel Tree,
p.5



Recipe, p.6



Origami,
p.7

When Redemption Repairs a Broken Life

by L.C. Aggen

Torrance remembers the day his world flipped. He was searching for coins in his mother's purse to use at the arcade when he found a crack pipe. He discovered his mother was struggling with addiction.

Up until that day, Torrance thought he had a normal childhood. Born to middle-class parents in Houston, Texas, he enjoyed gaming, got good grades, and stayed out of trouble.

But just four years after Torrance's frightening discovery about his mother, his father left. Torrance and his mother could no longer afford their house and had to move. His new neighborhood was surrounded by drugs, and his mother's addiction got worse.



Torrance (center) broke free from his cycle of crime and incarceration, and he now runs a successful construction company with his wife Alisha (right) and colleague Salvador (left).

Torrance saw how much money the dealers made. So when one of them offered him \$20 to make a delivery, he accepted. That moment, he started on the path to becoming a dealer.

He was once arrested as a teenager and sent to a youth boot camp. But instead of rehabilitation, Torrance felt like his time in the center prepared him to run

from the police. He left unchanged. Later that same year, he had his first child, a daughter. He continued dealing drugs and avoiding conviction—until he assaulted a police officer. He was sentenced to four years in prison.

While there, he signed up for Angel Tree® Christmas, a Prison Fellowship® program that works with local churches to provide gifts for

children with incarcerated parents. It helped him keep up the relationship with his daughter.

The same old cycle

After Torrance was released, he got married and found work. The marriage didn't last, and neither did the job. He turned back to drug dealing.

Over the next several years, Torrance

would remain stuck in a cycle he couldn't seem to escape. He had three more children. He went to prison two more times. But God kept reaching out to him with second chances.

While in jail awaiting trial for his last offense, Torrance was visited by the chaplain, who told him his grandmother had lung cancer. She was the only person in his life who lived out her faith. Each time he was arrested, he knew she was praying for him. Now it was his turn to pray for her.

Torrance was allowed a phone call, where he prayed over her. After the call, Torrance continued praying. It started angrily—he was mad that God would take his grandmother.

But then something changed. He started

Continued on page 2

6 Ways to Beat the Summer Heat

by A. Mengistu

When the weather gets hot, it is extremely important to keep your body temperature at a healthy level. The ideal body temperature for an adult is typically 98.6 degrees Fahrenheit. A body temperature hotter than 101 degrees can lead to heat exhaustion, which can cause nausea, dizziness, cramps, and headaches. If you

get hotter than 104 degrees, you are at risk of heatstroke, which might lead to organ damage, seizures, and even death.

Cooling off in the summer can be challenging, especially in prisons without air conditioning. However, there are several simple things you can do to manage your body temperature and avoid getting overheated.

1. STAY HYDRATED.

A cool drink is one of the best

ways to beat the heat, but all drinks aren't equal when it comes to keeping you hydrated. When you're very hot, it's important to drink water only. Drinks with sugar or caffeine can increase your body temperature and make you more dehydrated.

2. COOL YOUR SKIN.

When you put a cool, wet cloth on



Umesh Negi/Getty Images

your forehead or the back of your neck, the water in the fabric absorbs the heat from your body. As the cloth heats up, replace or re-wet it as frequently as possible.

3. REDUCE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY.

Your body releases heat when you exercise or do hard

Continued on page 8

Letters to the Editor

Brent in New York:

Please send me the Inside Journal [from 2022] ... because I want to send my son the article that deals with seven principles when dealing with money. Thank you.

Dear Brent:

Unfortunately, we do not currently keep an inventory of back issues. However, in partnership with the National Fatherhood Initiative®, we do offer free financial planning pamphlets in English and Spanish. Ask your chaplain or counselor to visit chaplains.prisonfellowship.org to place their free order (in bulk units of 10). And if you (or your son) have access to the internet, past editions of Inside Journal can be found on our website at prisonfellowship.org/resources/inside-journal-archives.

Johnny in North Carolina:

I came across your information in a prisoners’ resource directory and on my tablet through Edovo. I watch Prison Fellowship

videos and take the courses they make available on my tablet. ... I’m preparing for reentry back to society. I desire to get accepted into a Christian-based reentry program. Do you have any information about programs or Christian-based organizations that can help me when I’m released?

Amos in West Virginia:

I found an Inside Journal laying in my unit and read it for the first time and really enjoyed it. ... I wanted to see if you may have any additional material to help me find more help upon release. Any help: financial, housing, clothing, counseling, [addiction recovery], etc.

Dear Johnny and Amos:

It’s good that you’re already looking toward your release and how to successfully shift into life outside of prison. Before your release, ask your chaplain to visit chaplains.prisonfellowship.org to place a bulk order of



Ekely: Getty Images

our free Inside Journal Reentry special edition. Then after your release, search job sites such as 70millionjobs.com and indeed.com. Also visit prisonfellowship.org/resources and scroll down to the section called “Preparing for Reentry.” It lists helpful resources, tips on writing a resume, a national directory for reentry, and more. Call 211 (or visit 211.org) to find a community resource specialist in your area. And if you struggle with any “hurts, habits, or hang-ups,” get connected with a local Celebrate Recovery chapter, or find a similar program in your community (many 12-step programs offer free group meetings). Be sure to follow all your release conditions and parole rules. God bless your next chapter!

Sincerely,
The Editorial Staff ■

Broken Life

Continued from page 1

thanking God for the 33 years he had with his grandmother, and his gratitude turned to surrender.

Torrance treated this time in prison differently. Every Sunday, he was in church. He was approached by the chaplain again, but for a different reason than before. He wanted to recommend Torrance to the Prison Fellowship Academy®.

“Before you say yes, just know it’s not a cakewalk,” the chaplain told him. “It’s an intense discipleship program.”

That sounded exactly like something

Torrance needed.

Walking a new way

He was transferred to the Carol Vance Unit in Richmond, Texas. As promised, the program was intense. Torrance soon felt himself healing from old wounds.

He took courses on criminal addictive behavior and embracing his heavenly Father. He remembers the day he read Proverbs 27:10: “Though my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will receive me.” Unlike his earthly father, God would never abandon Torrance.

The Academy taught Torrance to keep Christ at the center of his life. He began to see his

prison term as more than time to be served; it became his mission field: a place to serve others and share the Gospel. And even though he was behind bars, Torrance says he felt free.

Upon release, Torrance began working with a nonprofit called C.H.A.R.M. Prison Ministry in Houston. He stayed connected with participants in the Academy program, who helped keep him accountable.

Torrance got married and now has a blended family with six children. They joined a local church, where Torrance would eventually become a staff member. Right before the COVID-19

pandemic began, he left his church job to start a construction company with his wife. His connections to the church helped his business make it through the pandemic.

Torrance also volunteered at a summer camp that works with Angel Tree to provide a free week of camp to children with incarcerated parents. He knew some of the parents of kids at camp from when he had served time and was able to share the very same thing he wanted his own children to know: It’s not your fault, and your parent still loves you.

Torrance has also participated in

Redemption Wash, a car wash where formerly incarcerated people clean vehicles for police officers. Having once run from the police, he now embraces them with a heart of respect.

When reflecting on his life—from his early feelings of abandonment to the tears of gratitude he cried in a prison cell—Torrance says, “By God’s grace, I’ve risen above every circumstance.” ■

Have a story idea or recipe to share with readers? Write to: SUBMISSIONS, c/o Inside Journal, P.O. Box 1790, Ashburn, VA 20146. If your facility does not regularly receive Inside Journal, have your chaplain email insidejournal@pfm.org to learn more.

NEED A BIBLE?

Get a free Inside Journal Life Recovery Bible!

NOW WITH A WORKBOOK!

INSIDE JOURNAL
THE LIFE RECOVERY BIBLE
LARGE PRINT

FREE

INSIDE JOURNAL
THE LIFE RECOVERY WORKBOOK
A Biblical Guide through the Twelve Steps
STEPHEN ARTERBURN and DAVID STOOP

WRITE TO:

Tyndale House Publishers
Attn: Inside Journal Bible
351 Executive Drive
Carol Stream, IL 60188

Include this information to make sure your Bible or Workbook get 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.

2

INSIDE JOURNAL | Summer 2023

Cool Water for Any Fire or Drought

by Dillon Shaw

I have recently experienced what feels like the most intense season of my life. In just the past couple years, I was released from incarceration, got married shortly thereafter, accepted a position as a director at our church, lost my mother and then my father, processed their deaths (both relationships were broken, toxic, and unresolved at the time of their passing), successfully completed parole, put new siding and a new roof on our house by myself, journeyed through the darkness of two miscarriages, and felt stretched so thin that I wasn't sure I was going to make it.

Then my wife and I welcomed our daughter, Eden, into the world. And here I thought I was stretched to the maximum extent before she was born. I had no idea! Who would have thought such a tiny human could demand so much of one's life. Although some of the major events of my past couple years reflected God's love in my life, especially Eden, many of these challenges seemed like heaps of trouble I didn't ask for or want.

James 1:2 states, "Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy." How was I supposed to be able to look at all of that as opportunities for great joy? In the midst of the hard work of trying to build a life after 13 years in prison, much of that has felt like the oppressive heat of summer beating down on me, rather than the enjoyable rays of warmth you might experience when life's a cool breeze.

Joy in the fire

Unlike the heat I'd felt in the past, these recent fiery trials came with even more pressure: There's a little girl watching me now, learning from me, taking her cues on how to handle life from me. This is my "opportunity for great joy"—to choose to respond to stress in a healthy way, to lead by example.

It sounds inspiring to think of life's troubles as "an opportunity for great joy." But what's so joyful about fiery trials? The next verses, James 1:3-4, offer some insight: "For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needed nothing."

To be able to see problems as an opportunity for great joy, to develop endurance, and to survive the heat of life, you must first be rooted in something, Someone, greater than yourself. Jeremiah 17:7-8 has been a life passage for me:

"Blessed are those who trust in the LORD and have made the LORD their hope and confidence. They are like trees planted along a riverbank, with roots that reach deep into the water. Such trees are not bothered by the heat or worried by long months of drought. Their leaves stay green and they never stop producing fruit."

Without roots planted firmly in an unshakable God, our confidence can bend and break in the storms of life.

Harvest in dry seasons

Yesterday was the first anniversary of my



vitanovski/Getty Images

father's death. My heart is still trying to heal. But when the scars of loss ache, I remember that Jesus is my hope. When a drought in my life brings thirst and exhaustion, I draw fresh water from the river that flows from God's presence within (John 7:37-39). When I feel like I'm a fragile plant about to break, I remind myself of where I'm planted. When I feel like I'm stuck in self-doubt, foolishness, or brokenness, I remember that the confidence I have is in Someone greater than myself: Jesus. When I feel like I'm failing to lead the

precious little one who watches me now, I cry out to the Lord as the only One capable of producing a harvest in me that I can pass down to her.

What about you? When the blazing heat of life blasts you, will you be planted along the riverbank with your roots stretching down deep into the cool water, or will you be faced with the overwhelming reality of shallow roots in desert sand? How will you produce fruit in the seasons of drought that will surely come? How about the season you're in now? Are you

flourishing in your unit, at your facility, in the lives of your children?

Whether you're struggling with literal heat and you just can't handle another day of pressing your face against an eight-inch fan in the concrete oven of your cell, or the metaphorical heat of life's stress, you can find nourishment that comes from the living water (John 6:22-69, 7:37-39). Apart from God, you won't survive the heat of life. But with God, you can stretch out your roots with great hope and confidence. God will never leave you high and dry! ■

ARE YOU HOT-TEMPERED?

Are you the type of person who is easily irritated or quick to yell at people?

Cooling off when you're heated up is often easier said than done—especially when you're living in the pressure cooker of prison, where you can't always walk away from an argument or take a long walk in nature when you're feeling upset. Living in close quarters with people who frustrate or disrespect you can cause tempers to overheat.

Holding onto anger or bitterness can lead to unhealthy physical side effects such as headaches, stomach aches, insomnia, high blood pressure, and even heart attack. It can also lead to depression, anxiety, paranoia, and an overall sense of unhappiness. The Bible talks about how Jesus felt anger, much like us. But unlike us, He actually kept His cool around people who mistreated Him or mocked Him—helping, healing, or praying for those who treated Him like an enemy. Jesus only showed anger toward people who were wronging God.

In Psalm 37:8, it says, "Stop being angry! Turn from your rage! Do not lose your temper—it only leads to harm." And Ephesians 4:26-27 says: "'Don't sin by letting anger control you.' Don't let the sun go down while you are still angry, for anger gives a foothold to the devil." These and several other verses talk about how anger is harmful if left unchecked. One common saying puts it bluntly: "Holding onto anger and resentment is like drinking poison and expecting the other person to die."

Anger is a strong emotion, and forgiving someone might not come naturally. That's why you need a strength that is supernatural: the power of God. *For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength. —Philippians 4:13*

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

"Dear Jesus, sometimes my anger and bitterness are like a raging fire. I need Your cool peace in times when I get upset. I surrender my life to You. I confess my sins and ask Your forgiveness. Please bring me Your strength to stay cool and let frustrations wash right off me. Amen."

To learn more about Jesus or to sign up for a free correspondence Bible study through one of our trusted partner organizations, write to us at "COOL DOWN," c/o Inside Journal, P.O. Box 1790, Ashburn, VA 20146-1790. For a free Bible or accompanying study guide/workbook, see our ad on page 2.

DAILY DEVOTIONAL TEAR-OUT

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

Stretched but Not Broken by L. Haviland

2 CORINTHIANS 4:17-18 SAYS:

“For our present troubles are small and won’t last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever! So we don’t look at the troubles we can see now; rather, we fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen. For the things we see now will soon be gone, but the things we cannot see will last forever.”

Does it ever feel like the hurts and challenges you’re going through will eventually break you? Like there’s no end in sight?

It may seem that the problems you’re having today—issues perhaps with finances or loved ones—feel like a car stuck in the mud, spinning its wheels, making absolutely no progress.

When Paul wrote his second letter to the church in Corinth, he described some of what he and his friends were enduring: they were beaten, put in prison, chased by angry mobs, and made to work to the point of fatigue. They suffered sleeplessness as well as hunger.

And yet, in verse 17, he calls these troubles “small.” For many of us, the inconvenience of having to wait on a long line might be what we would consider “small.” But mockery, loneliness, being hated by others? Those can be devastating experiences, and they can feel anything but small.

Paul’s attitude is a lesson in perspective. Next time you’re overwhelmed by life’s at-times unbearable experiences, don’t lose your cool. Fix your eyes on God and His promises in the Bible; choose to focus not on these temporary stresses, but instead on those heavenly riches that “will last forever.”

Let’s strive to live like Paul, whose attitude was based not on what he could see with his eyes or what he could do through sheer willpower, but on his simple, childlike faith in Christ. He achieved this attitude only through a life surrendered to God, moment by moment, filled with His grace.

FROM THE INSIDE OUT: Mending Broken Relationships

by A. Mengistu

Like many dads, Reggie struggled to stay connected with his kids while in prison, especially around Christmastime. Then he learned about Prison Fellowship Angel Tree, which helps incarcerated parents connect with their children.



Photo by Prison Fellowship

Since he signed up, Reggie says that Angel Tree has helped to “rebuild the brokenness that [my kids] experienced with me leaving their life.” When his children receive gifts from him on Christmas morning, Reggie says it sends a clear message: “Daddy is locked up, but he hasn’t forgotten about me. He’s still reaching out to me.”

His 12-year-old daughter appreciates the gift she received with a message from her dad through Angel Tree last Christmas. “It was good, getting a gift from my dad,” she says. “It just made me feel happy.” She also had the opportunity to participate in a basketball sports camp for Angel Tree kids held at Oklahoma City’s Paycom Center. At this special event, she received training from professional coaches and former WNBA players.

“They gave out basketballs, and they gave out gym shoes,” Reggie recalls. “They didn’t have a size for her, but then they got her information, and they still sent the shoes to her several weeks later. It’s things like that ... just shows the love of God.”

Reggie now works as a chapel clerk in his facility. One of his responsibilities is helping to host Angel Tree parent days. At these events, Reggie shares his story and explains to other dads how Angel Tree can help them reconnect with their children.

At last year’s parent day event, Reggie gave presentations to six groups over two days, and more than 100 people signed up. This was triple the number of Angel Tree applications from the previous year. “A lot of times, [people] come to prison, and they’re not involved with their kids,” Reggie says. “I encourage everyone to be in their children’s lives because, in reality, the child didn’t ask to be here.”

Reggie looks forward to one day being able to volunteer for Angel Tree when he leaves prison: “I want to be able to give back the same way that I have received ... [I want] to be able to give gifts to someone else’s children.”

WRITERS WANTED!

If you’d like to write a devotional for Prison Fellowship, please list a Bible verse, followed by a personal short story (2-3 paragraphs) that ties in to that verse, and end with a daily prayer/meditation on that verse or topic. Please add the line “I give Prison Fellowship my permission to publish my works.” Send it to “DEVOS,” c/o Inside Journal, P.O. Box 1790, Ashburn, VA 20146. No previously published works allowed. Submissions may be edited for content. Only your first name/state will be used. Not all submissions will be chosen.

THIS YEAR, GIVE YOUR CHILDREN A PRICELESS GIFT:

A present and a personalized message from you, their parent who loves them!

Through Prison Fellowship Angel Tree® your child can receive a gift, a Bible, and a personal note from you this Christmas—all at no cost to you! And throughout the year, your child can also participate in Angel Tree® camping or sports camps. Call Prison Fellowship at 800.55.ANGEL (26435) to learn more.

- ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:
- 1. You must be the parent, stepparent, or mother/father figure.
 - 2. There must not be a court order restricting your contact with the child(ren) or their caregiver(s).
 - 3. Your child(ren) must live in the United States.
 - 4. Your child(ren) must be 18 years old or younger.
 - 5. The form must be filled out completely and legibly and then signed.



ASK YOUR CHAPLAIN OR PROGRAM COORDINATOR FOR AN APPLICATION TODAY!

Forms must be postmarked by Oct. 1. Ask your chaplain about your facility’s deadline to submit completed forms.

Contact your child(ren)’s caregiver to gather the most current information for your application.

IMPORTANT: If your information is incomplete or inaccurate, if local volunteers are unable to locate your child(ren)’s caregiver, or if the caregiver refuses to participate, we may not be able to deliver gifts to your child(ren).



© Copyright 2023 Prison Fellowship®
Angel Tree® is a registered trademark of Prison Fellowship®

2023 ANGEL TREE CALENDAR

JUNE

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

JULY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

AUGUST

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

SEPTEMBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

OCTOBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

NOVEMBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

DECEMBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

HOLIDAYS

June/July – Begin filling out your Angel Tree form

July 4 – Independence Day

July/Aug./Sept. – Submit your Angel Tree form

September 4 – Labor Day

November 11 – Veterans Day

November 23 – Thanksgiving Day

December – Angel Tree gifts are delivered

December 25 – Christmas Day

IMPORTANT DATES

10 Parenting Tips for Dads Behind Bars

Adapted by
C.L. Bopape

If you have children, you can use your incarceration to build strong relationships with them. Even if you don't think you've been a very good dad in the past, you can now use this time to make a fresh start in parenting.

Be sure to follow all court orders. If you have a restraining order or visitation restrictions, some of these ideas will need to wait. Here are 10 fatherhood tips that might help your relationship grow*:

1. Take the initiative to reach out and connect.

Your children might not be able to visit you often, but

2. Become a long-distance coach or fan.

Does one of your kids like basketball,

you can still write to them. Even if they don't write back, keep writing. As much as possible, try to talk with your kids whenever you call home. Learn more about their personal lives, school, and friendships. What are your children's favorite hobbies? What do they like to do in their spare time? Some children are learning a new language in school. Why not learn it along with them? You could even write simple letters to each other in the new language.

football, or some other team sport? Does another want to be the next great figure skater? Is one child a fan of games like chess or Scrabble? Learn all you can about the activities that mean the most to your children. When you do, you'll be better equipped to encourage them. You'll also have more to share in letters, in phone calls, and during visits.

3. Assure your children that they are not responsible for your absence.

Children often think they are somehow to blame for a parent's imprisonment. Reassure them that they are not at fault. If they ask questions about your situation, give age-appropriate answers. Be truthful. Lying can trigger anxiety, build distrust, and cause them to withdraw from you.

4. Tell your children you love and accept them, no matter what.

Think about how you communicate with your kids. How often do you compliment them? Boost your child's confidence by regularly affirming their unique qualities. When a child is assured of their parents' love, they're less likely to look for it in other—sometimes unhealthy—ways.

5. Get involved in available programs.

One way you can show your love is through Prison Fellowship Angel

Tree® (see page 5). Through Angel Tree, you can sign up your children to receive Christmas gifts purchased and delivered by local churches but given in your name. You can even include a personal message to your children. Angel Tree Every Day™ offers year-round opportunities, resources, and encouragement, along with events such as sports clinics and summer camps in participating locations. For more information, ask your chaplain or religious services coordinator (or they can call 1-800-55-ANGEL).

6. Be willing to take risks for your children.

Admit to your kids you have made some bad choices. Ask them to forgive you for the ways you have hurt them. This may not be easy, but by taking this risk, you will begin to rebuild strong bonds with your children. Be willing to receive their anger or other strong emotions. These feelings are normal, so let them respectfully express themselves. This helps them see you are a safe person for them.

7. Respect your children's caregiver.

It's hard when you can't have daily input on your children's upbringing. You may not always agree with what your child's caregiver is doing. Even so, be careful to speak about and treat the caregiver respectfully. Hearing you insult or criticize the person taking

care of your children will only add to their stress and confusion.

8. Help your kids to be kids.

Many children of prisoners take on more adult responsibilities—such as helping care for younger brothers and sisters or doing more chores in the home. When they come to visit you, make time to relax and play with them. Avoid the temptation to vent your frustrations to your children.

9. Seek help to become a better father.

Look for programs and other resources to help you become a better father. Perhaps your facility offers the National Fatherhood Initiative's InsideOut Dad program or Prison Fellowship® parenting courses. Check with your chaplain or prison administration staff to find out what's available.

10. Pray for your children.

Pray several times daily—during count, as you're standing in the chow line, and while folding laundry. Dull moments in prison can become meaningful as you keep your children in your thoughts and lift them up to the God who created them and loves them dearly!

**Much of the information above is adapted from National Fatherhood Initiative's "Staying Involved with Your Children While Incarcerated" brochure and is used by permission. If you are allowed internet access, visit fatherhood.org for more resources that promote father involvement.* ■

READER RECIPES

Birthday Cake

Submitted by Anna in South Carolina

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 honey bun
- Several sandwich creme cookies (Oreo, Duplex, or similar)
- 1 candy bar of your choice



Afi Hermatova/Getty Images

DIRECTIONS:

Take the honey bun and flatten it out. Then cut it in half and set aside the two halves. Take the tops off the sandwich cookies and scrape the cream out and into the honey bun wrapper (which will later serve as a "frosting piping bag"). Set aside. Crush up sandwich cookies. Find a bowl, such as a disposable bowl from single-serve cereal cups. Place half the honey bun in the bottom of the bowl, then layer the crushed cookies on top, then the other half of the bun, then more crushed cookies. Run the wrapper of icing under hot water to "melt" the cream icing (careful not to get any water in the bag). Crush up the candy bar and sprinkle on top of the cake. Once icing is melted, drizzle on top of the cake. Enjoy! ■

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

ACTIVITY: Stay Cool With Origami

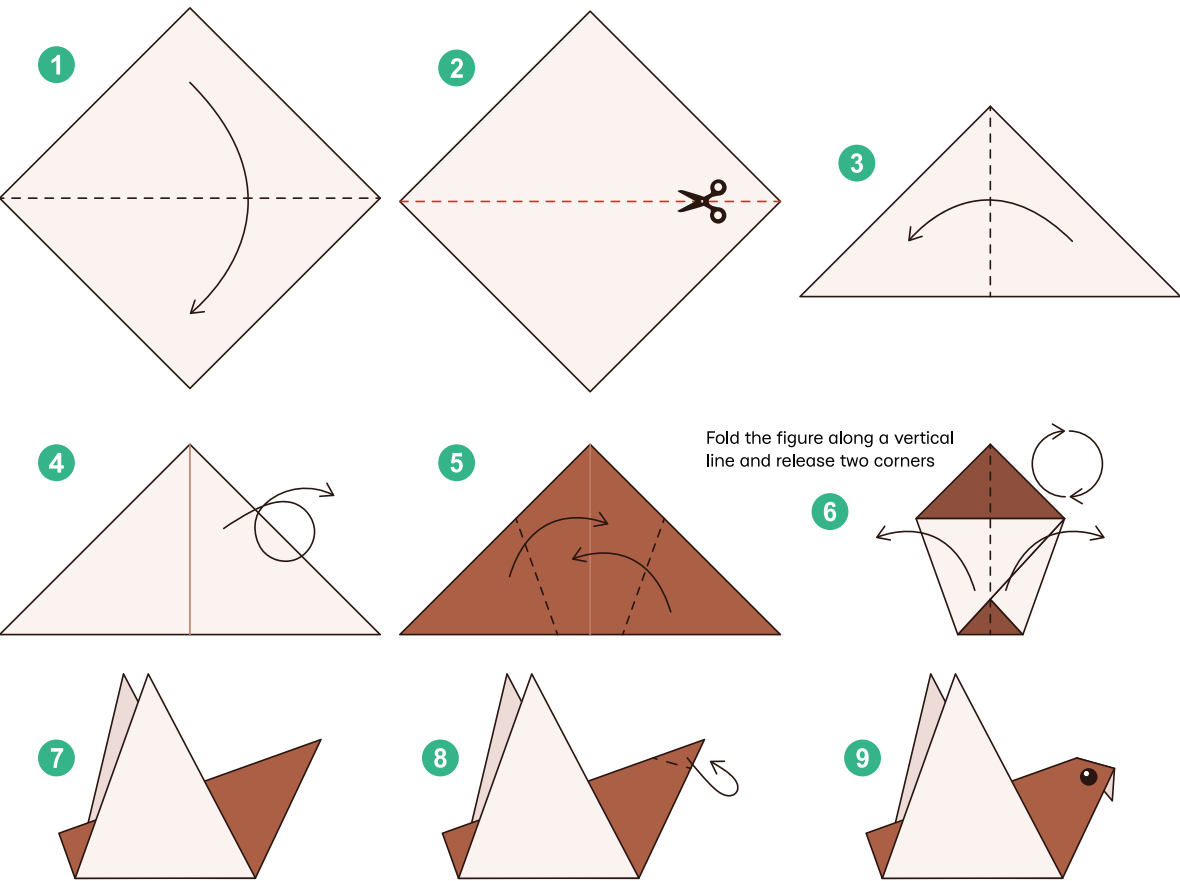
FAN:

Desperate to beat the heat this summer? Turn a piece of notebook paper, construction paper, or even this newspaper into a hand-held fan. To use this newspaper (after you’ve read it all, of course), fold it back to its original size (with page 1 showing). Then turn the paper vertically so it’s shorter left-to-right and longer up-to-down. Then starting from the top, fold down a 1/2 to 1 inch crease. Flip the paper over so the crease is facing down. Fold another crease of equal size. Flip it over and repeat until the entire paper is folded to the same size. Pinch the bottom together and fold it over into a handle. Voila! You have a homemade fan to wave in your face when you get hot!



ClaireLucia/Getty Images

SPARROW:



Fold the figure along a vertical line and release two corners

Julia Savko/Getty Images

Ready to try a more advanced origami? Follow the illustrations to make a sparrow. This one starts with a square, so you may need to get creative with the “lick and fold” method of cutting rectangular paper. Then leave your sparrow somewhere visible, as a daily reminder of Matthew 10:29–31: “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. And the very hairs on your head are all numbered. So don’t be afraid; you are more valuable to God than a whole flock of sparrows.”

POETRY CORNER

A few of our favorite poems recently written and submitted by readers.

IN SEARCH OF A FRIEND

by Jessie in Michigan

I roamed the streets
In search of a friend
Someone to fill
The emptiness within
From the Midwest to the west end
You can’t imagine the cities in which I’ve been
In search of a friend
Then I met the man with nail prints
In His hands — an outcast in the land — who said
I couldn’t imagine the cities in which he’d been
In search of a friend
So our friendship began and the emptiness within
Has been filled by the man with nail prints
In His hands

CONFUSED

by Henry in Indiana

Am I coming or am I going?
Which direction is it I face?
Am I giving or am I taking?
Why do I roam from place to place?
Is this my morning or my evening?
Did the sun rise or has it set?
As I look beyond the horizon
Has my goal this day been met?
Am I still the same person
As I was the day before?
Have I changed, am I much better
Or gotten worse within my core?
Let my heart hold fast Thy word
Allow my wisdom to now grow
Take away all my confusion
Give me insight that I may know

RECOVERY CORNER

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF WEIGHT GAIN AND RECOVERY

Approximately what percentage of people in addiction recovery experience weight gain?

- A) 25%
- B) 45%
- C) 65%



MicroStockHub/Getty Images

QUIZ ANSWER: C) 65%. Nearly two-thirds of people in addiction recovery gain weight. This is normal and healthy. Remember, you might have mistreated your body for several months or years. As you prioritize your recovery, you may be uncomfortable with your appearance—especially if you’re no longer getting compliments for being slim. But returning to drugs isn’t a good option. Recognize this trigger when it surfaces. Learn to love your body as it heals. Try changing your eating habits or exercising instead. You deserve to get better!

PAINFUL REFLECTION

by Leo in Oregon

Warm trail of tears
Disappears
Beneath my quivering cheek
While my mind seeks
Out the reason
Why I ended in prison

Was the fault my own?
For senses or rational thoughts
Have yet brought
And shown
The foundation
To my question

Perhaps a lapse of judgment
Or made a mistake of taking
A wrong direction?
Whatever it may be
Do I truly deserve
Such a torturous time of misery?

My heart breaks
For the ache
I feel my family must be in
And yet all I ask for
Is forgiveness and redemption
For what I know not of my sin ■

NEWS + NOTES

Second Chance Month 2023 a Success

Hundreds of churches and organizations joined Prison Fellowship earlier this spring to celebrate Second Chance Month®, a nationwide celebration of the dignity and potential of people with a criminal record.

Second Chances prayer walks were held, and many churches presented the Prison Fellowship short film, “From Darkness to Light: A Story of Second Chances.” The documentary demonstrates how a church offered a second chance to Michelle Payette, a church partnership manager with the ministry. Michelle said, “Everybody is made in the image of God, and when you love them like they are and provide

accountability to them and a second chance, the possibilities are endless.”

Nearly 1 in 3 American adults has a criminal record, which limits their access to education, jobs, housing, and other opportunities needed to reach their God-given potential.

Since launching the first Second Chance Month in 2017, Prison Fellowship has led the nationwide effort to raise awareness of the barriers faced by returning citizens and to advance justice that restores. This was Prison Fellowship’s seventh consecutive year celebrating April as Second Chance Month, with more than 800 organizations, congregations, and businesses joining as official Second Chance Month partners.

Prison Fellowship CEO James J. Ackerman said recently, “We believe the 70 million Americans with criminal records ... can rise from their mistakes, regain their dignity, and reach their God-given potential in life. Second Chance Month enables us to create more flourishing and productive communities.”

Prison Debate Team Defeats MIT

In late 2022, five members of Maine’s Department of Corrections debate team—all incarcerated persons pursuing various degrees—defeated the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) team.

MIT, one of the most prestigious academic institutions in the world, boasts a debate team

that’s rarely beaten. Until the Maine DOC debate team—made up of a pre-law student, a business management student, a graduate student in peace and reconciliation, and two master’s degree students—came along.

The 90-minute debate, held virtually, centered on the issue of United States Supreme Court justices and whether or not they should be assigned term limits. Currently, justices serve lifetime appointments.

MIT argued for term limits for the justices, noting that they currently stay on the job until they retire or pass away. This, the school’s debate team noted, has led to justices serving incredibly long terms, sometimes well into their 80s.

Maine Correctional Center’s team, however, winningly convinced all five of the debate’s judges that term limits would be “a grave threat

to the foundations of our Republic.”

Professor Jarrod Atchison of Wake Forest University, who served as chief judge at the event, said of the Maine prison debate team, “What the audience is seeing today represents the power of preparation. These students are not just speaking off the cuff.”

Daniel Throop, the founder of the National Prison Debate League (NPDL), which made this debate possible, wrote of the prison team’s win on the organization’s website, “All of these amazing human beings with diverse backgrounds and life experiences came together and personified the power of uncaged minds and unrestrained humanity. It was awesome to witness, and the NPDL thanks all of these incredible participants for creating such a transcendent collaborative experience.” ■

Beat the Summer Heat

Continued from page 1

labor. Sweating is your body’s natural way of cooling off, but this doesn’t work as well in humid environments where it takes longer for sweat to evaporate. When it’s hot and humid, try to avoid intense physical activities, or if you must work outside, pace yourself and take breaks if possible.

4. CREATE A SUPERFAN.

If you can afford a fan from the commissary and have access to ice, you can create a makeshift air conditioner by setting a bowl of ice in front

of the fan and turning it on high. The air cools down as it passes over the ice. Sit close to the fan to get the coolest breeze.

5. AVOID CERTAIN FOODS.

Eating certain foods can make it harder to cool off in the heat. Spicy foods make your skin feel warmer, making a hot day even more uncomfortable. Soft drinks, coffee, and tea (regardless of whether served hot or cold) cause your body to lose water, which can make dehydration worse. Meat and other high-protein foods require more

energy for your body to digest, which increases your body heat. Eggs and most fruits and vegetables require less energy, which means less body heat. Choose foods/ beverages wisely whenever possible.

6. TRY BREATHING EXERCISES.

There may be situations where there is very little you can do about the temperature around you, but you can still have some control over your body’s response to the heat. Meditation and breathing exercises have been known

to help people stay calm even when they can’t control their environment.

One particular breathing technique called sitali may help you feel calm and relaxed and may even help you feel cooler. To do this, curl the sides of your tongue like a taco and breathe through it like a straw. (If you can’t curl your tongue, you can purse your lips with your tongue pressed against your bottom teeth.) Then, take deep breaths through your mouth, exhaling through your nose. Repeat this for several minutes until you feel relaxed.

NOTE: Different facilities offer a variety of cooling options/devices. Be sure to comply with your facility’s rules and regulations. ■



© 2023 by Prison Fellowship
INSIDE JOURNAL®

is published four times a year by Prison Fellowship, P.O. Box 1790, Ashburn, VA 20146-1790.

prisonfellowship.org
877.478.0100

Editorial Manager:
J.R. Breault

Editor in Chief:
S.L. Ray

Writers:
L.C. Aggen,
C.L. Bopape,
L. Haviland,
A. Mengistu,
Dillon Shaw

Designer:
A. Raquel

A member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability and the American Correctional Association.

Inside Journal® is a registered trademark of Prison Fellowship®.

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@pffm.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