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The Hope That Brought Rochelle Back to Life

by Emily Andrews

As a little girl, Rochelle had big dreams: Move from down South to New York City, work for an advertising agency, and make TV commercials.

She also dreamed of settling down in one place, but she moved around a lot. Her mother suffered from mental health issues and couldn't always take care of her. For a time, Rochelle lived with her grandmother and later stayed with her father.

It was a difficult upbringing, made worse by the physical and sexual abuse she experienced. At age 13, Rochelle became pregnant. She had another child at age 16. As a teen mom, Rochelle struggled in school, but her grandmother encouraged her not to drop out.



Photo by Shana Thompson

Rochelle spent years running from the hurt, shame, and brokenness of her past, until that long road led her to prison—the unlikely place where she discovered a new beginning.

“Growing up in the ‘70s, no one, especially in the African American community, ever really spoke about trauma or mental illness,” says Rochelle. “Without really knowing what that was, and no one really asking me what

happened, it caused me to try to find myself.”

Rochelle says she saw herself as “damaged goods.” She joined the military after high school, hoping a new purpose would help her forget the past. She also longed to prove

to her family—and to herself—that she could do something important.

But underneath the uniform, Rochelle was still the same hurting young woman she was when she left home.

The battle within

Rochelle served in Operation Desert Storm for a year. After coming home, she had another child. Then she married a man 20 years her senior and found herself in another abusive relationship.

Rochelle tried to maintain the appearance of a perfect family. Her husband was a deacon at the church. They lived in a nice home with their children. But behind closed doors, Rochelle says, “it was a dark place.” She struggled with codependency and shame.

Then Rochelle’s husband began an illegal

business venture selling things they didn’t have. He convinced Rochelle to open fraudulent bank accounts in her name.

One day, in desperation, Rochelle cried out to God.

“Lord, I’m just tired,” she remembers praying. “I don’t want to do this anymore. Can you get me out of this situation?”

That same day, Rochelle was arrested.

She was found guilty of identity theft and theft of property. She went to prison in December 1999, leaving behind three children. Soon after, her marriage ended.

Rochelle spent sleepless nights feeling guilty and worrying about her children. She wondered if she would ever forgive herself for the choices that led her to prison.

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

Angela in Vermont

I am writing to ask for any information about being lonely and anything that could help me in my journey getting to know Jesus.

Dear Angela:

It's common to sometimes feel lonely while incarcerated, but the key is not to stay in the loneliness. Try to keep busy with healthy activities and to find positive friends who bring out the best in you. Journaling, exercising, and joining classes or Bible studies can also help. To sign up for a free Bible study, see info in the blue box on p.3.

Rebecca in Missouri

I have been reading your newspaper since I have been at [my facility]. I appreciate all you do. I am particularly inspired by the story of Tammy and the Prison Fellowship Academy. Stories like these give me hope for the future. Today is my earliest possible release date. The Lord has me here for a reason! What could we do to get this program

or one like it here at my prison?

Dear Rebecca:

Prison Fellowship Academy® (a months-long, biblically based program that uses targeted curriculum, compassionate coaches, and restorative community to transform behaviors and thinking patterns) and Prison Fellowship Connection Classes® (small-group studies and seminars led by volunteers in a supportive, Christian atmosphere) are available in select facilities nationwide. Ask your chaplain which programs are offered at your facility. If there are currently no Prison Fellowship programs available, your chaplain or other staff can contact us at 1-800-206-9764 to talk about setting them up.

Tracy in California

I am an inmate who is struggling with being sober, drinking since 13 years old (now over 50). I am ready to accept help on my recovery. I would like a recovery Bible and



Ekely: Getty Images

Inside Journal and any other reading material you can send.

Dear Tracy:

To receive your free large print Inside Journal Life Recovery Bible in English or Spanish, see ad below. Also, Inside Journal will soon be launching a recurring feature on addiction recovery (see p.7 for a sneak peek). And ask if your facility has Celebrate Recovery Inside or similar programs. Addiction recovery can be a long, difficult journey, and multiple relapses are common, so be sure to give yourself grace—and don't give up!

Sincerely,
The Editorial Staff ■

Back to Life Continued from page 1

Hope in the valley

Rochelle had only been in prison a few weeks when a Prison Fellowship® volunteer, Miss Emma, visited her unit and offered her a Bible. Rochelle hadn't opened one in a long time and wasn't ready to open it again, so she tucked it away.

Then one day, Rochelle walked into a church service in the prison gym. It sounded inviting, but she felt nervous and reluctant.

"Surely the Lord doesn't want me," Rochelle thought.

In that service, she heard the Bible story of

when God showed the prophet Ezekiel a valley of dry bones and said, "Look! I am going to put breath into you and make you live again!" (Ezekiel 37:5, NLT).

Rochelle thought about the valleys in her own life. She thought about her children back home, who needed a strong mother. She believed that if God could make dry bones live again, like in Ezekiel, He could help her live again, too.

"I had an encounter with the Lord, and it began my Christian walk that day," says Rochelle.

Rochelle began attending Bible studies led by Prison Fellowship volunteers like Miss

Emma. Soon, Rochelle was mentoring other women in prison. Every day, she began writing down personal thoughts and honest prayers—a habit she continues to this day.

"Journaling became the healing balm for me," says Rochelle.

After her release in 2004, Rochelle struggled to balance working and motherhood. She worried about how people would judge her for having a criminal record. But with her bold faith, a strong work ethic, and the kindness of friends and family, she kept going. She knew she wasn't the same person as before.

She was forgiven and transformed.

"I just love the way the Lord whispered to me and said, 'I've redeemed you, and I've pardoned you,'" Rochelle says.

Today, Rochelle's old prison Bible is worn, the pages' handwritten notes a great reminder of her healing journey with Jesus.

Rochelle is married and living in Tennessee with her husband, Anthony. In their beautiful, blended family, they have six grown children and several grandchildren.

In her current role as field director for Prison Fellowship, Rochelle has ministered inside the same facility where she

once served time. The first time she returned to her old housing unit was surreal. Rochelle remembers: "A chaplain told me, 'You're the reality of a promise fulfilled.'" ■

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!



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.

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 annoyed or often feels like someone has wronged you?

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 parents, 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).



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2023 ANGEL TREE CALENDAR

JUNE							JULY							AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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SEPTEMBER							OCTOBER							NOVEMBER						
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DECEMBER							HOLIDAYS							IMPORTANT DATES						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	June/July – Begin filling out your Angel Tree form													
					1	2	July 4 – Independence Day													
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	July/Aug./Sept. – Submit your Angel Tree form													
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	September 4 – Labor Day													
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	November 11 – Veterans Day													
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	November 23 – Thanksgiving Day													
31							December – Angel Tree gifts are delivered													
							December 25 – Christmas Day													

10 Parenting Tips for Moms Behind Bars

Adapted by
Cherise 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 mother 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 motherhood tips that might help your relationship grow*:

1. Find out what your children like and make a connection.

Some children are easier to engage

than others. If you have trouble getting details from your child, think about asking an open-ended question instead, such as: "Tell me about the highs and lows in your day." If your child is learning a new language in school, maybe learn it along with them. You could even write simple letters to each other in the new language.

You may be sad when you realize you no longer know your child's preferences in music, fashion, foods, or friendships. Don't beat yourself up. Instead, ask about some favorite things and make a note of them. Then be sure to ask for an update the next time you connect.

2. Become a long-distance coach or fan.

Does one of your kids like basketball? Does another want to be the next great figure skater? Is one child a fan of games like chess or Scrabble? Visit your facility's library and learn all you can about the activities your kids love. When you do, you'll have more to share in letters, in phone calls, and during visits.

3. Assure your children that they're not responsible for your absence.

If your kids don't know you're behind bars, don't hide your whereabouts. And if they ask you hard questions, give honest but age-appropriate answers. Secrets and lies can breed distrust, trigger anxiety, and cause your children to withdraw from you. Children often think they are somehow to blame for a parent's imprisonment. Reassure yours they aren't.

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

Think about how you communicate with your kids. How often do you give genuine compliments? 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.

Programs like Prison Fellowship Angel Tree® (see page 5) strengthen relationships between incarcerated parents and their children. Angel Tree Christmas lets you sign up your children to receive gifts purchased by churches but given in your name. And 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.

As a mom, you probably don't like admitting fault to your kids. Ask them to forgive you for the ways you've hurt them. By taking this risk, you'll begin to rebuild 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.

As a mom, you'd probably like to 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.

Children of prisoners often take on more adult responsibilities—such as helping care for younger siblings or doing more chores in the home. If they visit you, make time to relax and play with them. Avoid the temptation to vent your frustrations to your children. Save that discussion for an appointment with a counselor.

9. Seek help to become a better mother.

Look for programs and other resources to help you become a better mother. Don't rule out self-care programs. For example, a class on boundaries may not be labeled as a parenting resource, but all mothers should have healthy boundaries in place. Check with your chaplain or prison administration staff to find out what's available.

10. Pray for your children.

A mother's prayer is powerful. 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!

**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.*

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

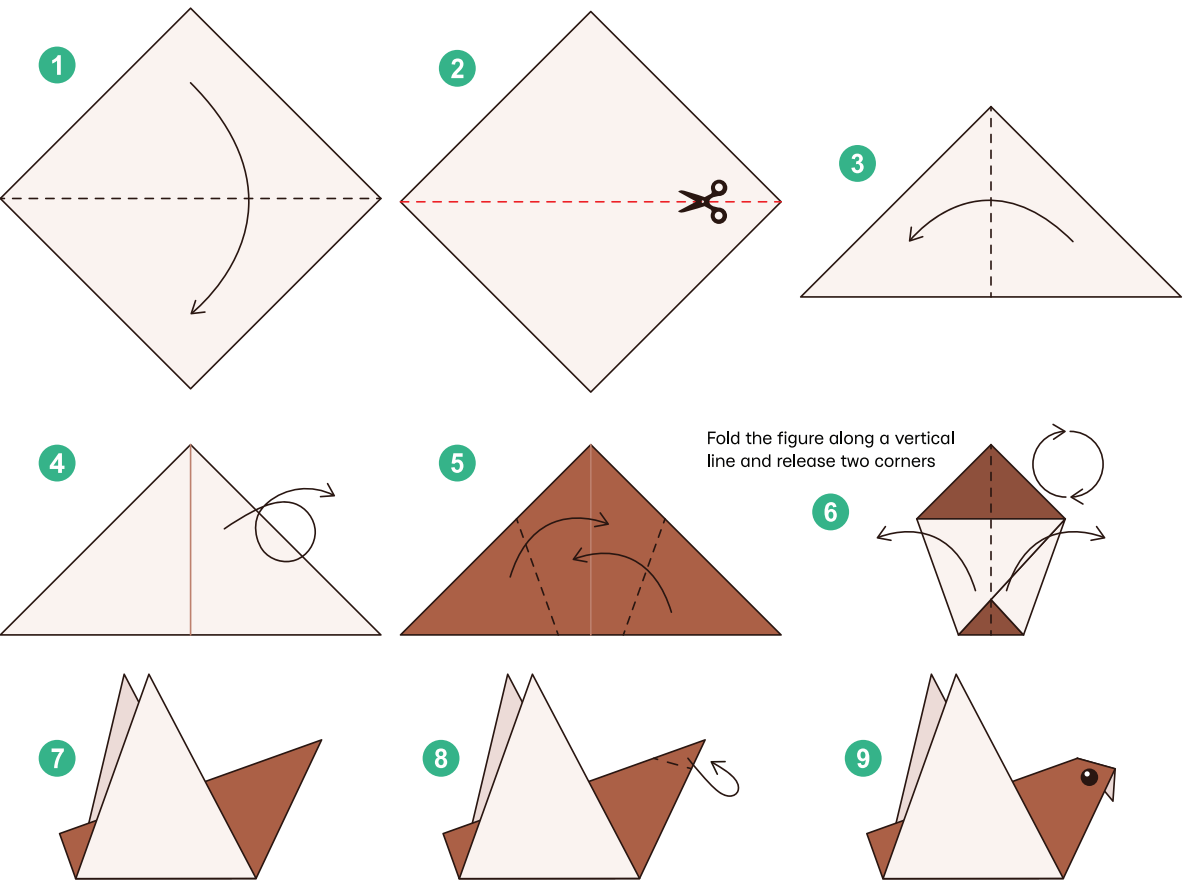
FAN:

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:



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.”

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

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!

QUIZ ANSWER: C) 65%.

POETRY CORNER

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

RISE UP

by Brandi in Georgia

The pain is such a constant flow
To be sent where all the bad ones go
No one can imagine what you endure
Only God has the cure
The things we see and come to know
Pierce our souls and make us grow
Facing your fears is all you can do
While others surround us black and blue
Mind your business, look the other way
It’s what you do, it’s what you say
All the while you’re missing home
The ones you love, everything you’ve known
How many trials must be given
Before you think, “He is risen”?
It’s Him who brought me to my knees
Showing me things others will never see
It’s for a reason, now I know why
I believe I have to testify

They don’t understand why my heart is weak
But the Master I serve knows why I weep
There are so many hearts grown cold
They need the oldest story told
I was worth saving and they are too
Hearts replenished, souls renewed
Some of these women will never leave
All I can do is plant a seed
Break the chains, stop the fight
Surrender to Him, it’s all you’ve got
Open your heart, let Him in
He will carry you through until the end
Whenever I go, I will tell others
Especially the ones through addiction suffers
Don’t let where the bad ones go
Teach you what you need to know
The highest highs you’ll ever get
Is when you’re done, when you quit.
Trust in Him and do live right
For now it’s Him who fights your fight

HOUSE BLEND

by Kandyce in South Carolina

I am still here
Because I want to be
Not because I have to be

Exposure therapy
Umpteenth degree

The only place
A safe place
Expressed vulnerability

Finally I understand
What’s been comprehensible to many

Knowledge is power
A room full of it
One I don’t mind sitting down in
Respectfully ■

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. ■



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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