



The Prison Fellowship Good Citizenship Model:

A VALUES-BASED FRAMEWORK FOR TRANSFORMING
PRISONS AND PRISONERS

The Prison Fellowship® Good Citizenship Model® (GCM) represents an innovative approach to guiding the transformation of both individual prisoners within rehabilitative programs and entire prison cultures at the facility level. The GCM asserts that positive and enduring change is actualized through the development of a set of highly socially functional and beneficial values: community, affirmation, productivity, responsibility, restoration, and integrity. These Values of Good Citizenship (VGC) serve as the fundamental building blocks of good citizenship (healthy culture) and are proposed as essential for fostering a supportive, authentic, and transformative prison environment.

CULTIVATING VALUES, CHARACTER, AND IDENTITY

The GCM provides a framework in which corrections professionals are committed to both developing and modeling the VGC for prisoners. Through practice, educational activities, and positive reinforcement, the VGC qualities are cultivated within individuals and across the prison culture. This process leads to a gradual progression from values development to value-laden character-attribute development, ultimately resulting in enduring identity changes.

BENEFITS OF A VGC-DRIVEN CULTURE

A variety of published studies reveal that prison cultures perceived as supportive and safe, and characterized by staff who collectively demonstrate the VGC, yield a range of positive prison outcomes. These include lower stress levels for staff and prisoners, reduced violent incident rates, improved prison program performance, enhanced post-release outcomes for prisoners, and increased overall well-being. By focusing on positive identity development through the VGC, the GCM also indirectly addresses

criminogenic risk factors at a deeper, values-based level—that is expected to generate more enduring changes in people.

TRANSFORMING PRISONS INTO PROGRAMS

Under the GCM, corrections professionals essentially transform the entire prison into a rehabilitative program by modeling the VGC. This approach extends the therapeutic benefits to the entire prison population, beyond the limited reach of traditional and proportionally small and culture-embedded prison programs. Intensive transformative programs, such as the Prison Fellowship Academy®, can then build upon this foundation to further support prisoner rehabilitation. Prison programs that are structured to promote the VGC also provide a bottom-up contribution to culture change, based on the transformation of prisoner participants and their contact with the general prison population.

A SUITE OF ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Systematic implementation of the GCM is made possible through Prison Fellowship's rigorously developed suite of assessment scales. The Prison Culture Assessment (PCA) measures the extent to which staff manifest the VGC based on input from both staff and prisoners. The Prison Fellowship Well-being Index (PF-WBI) provides insights into the overall wellness levels of staff and/or prisoners across key dimensions. The Corrections Professionals Attitude Scale (PF-CPAS) assesses staff attitudes toward prisoners (e.g., indicating the extent to which staff members maintain a fundamental belief in prisoners' ability to change), which can also influence various prison outcomes.

A NEW PARADIGM FOR CORRECTIONS

The GCM represents a paradigm shift in prisoner rehabilitation and prison culture transformation. By emphasizing the development of values, character, and identity through the VGC, the GCM fosters supportive, authentic, and transformative environments that benefit both corrections professionals and prisoners. This innovative approach holds the potential to revolutionize the way prisons approach rehabilitation, ultimately leading to safer communities and more positive outcomes for all stakeholders.