

CORRECTIONAL OASIS

**A PUBLICATION OF DESERT WATERS CORRECTIONAL OUTREACH
A NON-PROFIT FOR THE WELL-BEING OF CORRECTIONAL STAFF AND THEIR FAMILIES**

VOLUME 6, ISSUE 4 Combined Federal Campaign #82466 ♦ Combined Colorado Campaign #3908 APRIL 2009

How To Get You One....Or Four

We recently received this document with the accompanying comments. Notice the instructions on how to stand out in the crowd of offenders and be noticed as an individual. Also, suggestions on how to create attachment by being attentive, validating, caring, respectful, and seemingly sincere. All these are to be strategically used to target the potential victim's emotions and self-esteem needs, and to earn her trust.

The following represents the content of a handwritten letter discovered in the possession of an inmate. It outlines instructions on how to initiate undue familiarity with female staff.

The title and content are exactly as they appeared in the letter. Staff should always keep in mind certain inmates practice to deceive and will target you. Do not be drawn in to their manipulation.

Be memorable. Charisma will get a woman's attention, but you have to have something to say once you have their attention. A little sarcasm, a little obnoxiousness.

Be well-read and well-spoken. Learn as much as you can about art, psychology, music. Have a place to start with a woman—try to be on the same page.

Always have something to say. Even if it's "How you doin', mam'?" Always say something. That at least gets you noticed, and let's them know that you notice them. Then when you have a chance to talk 1 on 1, she'll remember all the "Hi, how are you" stuff.

Always be respectful. All women want validation. You don't have to agree with every word (you

shouldn't), but don't shut her down. Listen before you speak, and speak when they aren't speaking.

These girls need to know they are safe with trusting you. Let them know that the only way you'll get in trouble is if they have proof. Only if you tell on her or if she tells on you. It doesn't matter what they think, it matters what they can prove. Let her know you can keep your mouth shut and that you know you're playing for high stakes.

Be honest. Be sincere. Try to be understanding and even compassionate. Take interest in her. Ask her about herself. Her life, her free time, her family & friends. Why she took this job. What her plans for the future are.

PAY ATTENTION!! If she looks tired, sad, angry or flustered, ask her how she's doing. Keep her talking.

(Continued on page 3)

IN MEMORIAM
Clarence Bray, Jr.
 Senior Officer Specialist
 February 7, 2009
 FCI Fairton, FBOP
Vytautus Thomas
 Dental Officer
 February 21, 2009
 FCC Forrest City, FBOP
Scott H. Lape
 Sports Specialist
 February 24, 2009
 FDC Honolulu, FBOP
James Robert Hicks
 Correctional Officer
 March 8, 2009
 CCF, Colorado DOC
Louis Canchola
 Correctional Officer
 March 12, 2009
 FCF, Colorado DOC

INSIDE THIS ISSUE	
UNDOING STRESS	2
HOW TO GET YOU ONE	3
UNDOING STRESS	3
STAFF RESOURCES	4
MANY THANKS	4

DWCO's 2nd Annual Conference
WELLNESS THROUGH POSITIVE LEADERSHIP
May 7 & 8, 2009 at The Castle at Glen Eyrie, Colorado Springs, CO
Strategies that promote staff wellness & exceptional performance through powerful positive principles.
Details at www.desertwaters.com

Undoing The Stress Response

© Caterina Spinaris Tudor, Ph.D.

Imagine being ambushed by a mountain lion while hiking through the Colorado Rockies. As soon as the big cat knocks you to the ground, you automatically go into fighting mode. Your heart rate and blood pressure shoot up, sending extra blood to your limbs so you can have the strength to fight. Glycogen in your liver and muscles becomes converted to glucose to give you extra energy. Digestion stops. Cholesterol is released in your bloodstream to be an additional source of energy. Blood clotting factors kick into action, so you won't bleed to death. Endorphins flood your brain to enable you to ignore the pain of bites and broken bones, so you can continue to fight. The adrenaline that floods your system increases your aggression, helping you maintain your fierce determination to survive. This simplified description of physiological changes that occur during a life-threatening attack constitutes "the stress response."

The good news is that the stress response can help keep you alive in the case of a physical attack. The bad news is that *any* perceived threat, biological or psychological, real or imagined—even a simple insult—can throw your body into the stress response. Becoming irate at a colleague or your supervisor sets off the same biochemical changes in your body as being attacked by a mountain lion.

Our bodies can handle infrequent, isolated bursts of "going from 0 to 100 in 5 seconds." After the threat is over, they bounce back, reverting to normal levels of functioning. Problems start to occur when the body is subjected to a prolonged and/or frequent stress response. When that happens, at first people start complaining about symptoms such as headaches, muscle tension, sleep disturbances and stomach upsets. They may also begin to exhibit signs of irritability, hostility, anxiety, pessimism, and "the blues." As conditions that trigger the stress response persist, organs and tissues begin to be seriously affected. Eventually disease sets in, such as high blood pressure, arteriosclerosis, heart rate irregularities, heart attacks, strokes, immune system disturbances, peptic ulcers, and diabetes. That is why stress is a reality that must be confronted. Stress is not just about staff becoming demoralized or in a bad mood. Inescapable, prolonged stress translates into poor performance, high rates of sick leave, rising medical costs, early retirements due to disability, and

even death.

Corrections environments are notorious for being rife with stressors, such as inmate overcrowding, staff shortages, mandatory overtime, shift changes, failing equipment and aging buildings, violence, death, communicable diseases, heat, noise, and conflict among staff.

Working in a correctional facility stimulates the stress response to various degrees on an ongoing basis, due to the ever-present potential of danger. The very nature of the job requires a level of heightened vigilance and monitoring of the environment which are mediated by the stress response. In other words, while working in a prison or a jail, you have to remain stressed at least a little—on the lookout, ready to note emergencies and to respond. Corrections staff is expected to keep offenders under control, to prevent outbreaks of violence and to avoid being attacked. Staff may also engage in verbal and even physical confrontations with offenders. Many correctional workers have shared with me that they feel their adrenaline surge the moment they report to work. And, of course, this state of hypervigilance does not end with their shift, as the stress response does not come with an on-and-off switch. It follows them home.

As time goes on, and as the toll of the chronic stress response mounts, staff may become prone to acting aggressively. Since they operate in a culture where the basic assumption is that only the strong survive, corrections staff try hard to not be perceived as weak. In their interactions with others they may tend to be forceful and intimidating, frequently expressing anger and hostility. They may also overreact, due to their fear of being taken advantage of or humiliated. On the whole, they may strive to dominate their environment and eliminate threats by overpowering others. These behaviors not only exacerbate the wear-and-tear of the staff's physical bodies, they also create potential

DWCO MISSION

To increase the occupational, personal and family well-being of staff of all disciplines within the corrections profession.

THE CORRECTIONS VENTLINE™

866-YOU-VENT

youvent@desertwaters.com

(Continued on page 3)

How To Get You One....Or Four

(Continued from page 1)

My girl? I dropped a kite on her and told her to read it. She said she wouldn't. I told her, "Don't ask me to take it back. I won't. Just read it and if you don't like what I have to say, send me to the hole." In the kite I told her I felt a connection to her, that she was beautiful. That I admired her courage and that I had to risk going to the hole or risk her not knowing how I feel. Now I have that girl. I think I really do love her. That comes later.

I can't tell you what kind of girl to look for. I've had whores and angels. New girls, but start small. They don't know what to expect, either. Make them confident that you know what the deal is and make them trust you.

Above all, make them trust you.

Always talk to these girls. Always have something to say. Look them in the eye. Smile often. Be cool without trying too hard. Be honest. "I like you." Tell them you find them attractive and you want to get to know them better. That she interests you and she can start a P.O. Box in a different town, with cash, under any name. Don't be scared to be goofy or look like an ass.

I guarantee you that every woman – every nurse, every guard, knows my name and remembers me. Make them remember you.

Don't get caught with this. Copy it down to where you won't get in trouble for it.

Undoing The Stress Response

(Continued from page 2)

liabilities for their department, and are stressors for the other staff.

To counter the impact of the stress response, staff needs to learn to reduce their physiological arousal and instead, induce states of relaxation and well-being.

To achieve this, the first step is for staff to figure out ways for down time when they leave work, to give their bodies a chance to calm down by gradually turning off the stress response. Time outdoors, walking or running, and taking in the beauty of nature, cleanses the soul. Physical exercise helps metabolize adrenaline and other stress hormones faster. Deep, slow breathing helps induce a peaceful state of mind. Laughter counters the stress response and helps release "good" chemicals in the body as well as sending more oxygen to the brain. Engaging in fun-filled hobbies and playing with children and animals can also be wonderful counters to the stress response.

Corrections staff must also learn to guard their sleep time. Eight hours of restful sleep are a necessity for most of us to recover from the day's demands. This oftentimes becomes an elusive ideal for correctional workers due to rotating shift work, overtime, and emergencies. Healthy nutrition that does not tax our pancreas with high-sugar foods or our cardiovascular

system with high-cholesterol items is also vital. Avoidance of stimulants such as caffeine and nicotine keeps us from driving our bodies harder.

Engaging in thoughts of thanksgiving, appreciation, gratitude, caring and love helps us feel good, normalizes heart rhythms, and boosts immune system and brain function. To try this, close your eyes and think of persons for whom you feel appreciation, gratitude or love. After doing this for a couple of minutes, notice how your body feels and what your emotions are like as a result. Hand-holding and hugs also reduce stress-related chemicals. Moral of the story: Cultivate loving and supportive relationships. They will preserve your health! Pursue positive relationships where appreciation and caring are expressed, both at work and at home. The research is clear that loving thoughts and actions are major health boosters. And last, but by no means least, the management of angry reactions spares people the flare-up of the stress response. More on that in a future issue.

★ **Staying Well: Strategies for Corrections Staff** ★
★ **Read it, give it to a coworker,** ★
★ **share it with your family!** ★
★ **Now available from DWCO** ★
★ **www.desertwaters.com** ★
★ **719-784-4727** ★

Desert Waters

Correctional Outreach



*a non-profit organization
for the well-being of correctional
staff and their families*

Caterina Spinaris Tudor, Ph.D.
Executive Director

P.O. Box 355
Florence, CO 81226
(719) 784-4727

DESERTWATERS@DESERTWATERS.COM

WWW.DESERTWATERS.COM

Contributions are tax-deductible.
www.desertwaters.com/a-donations.htm

MANY THANKS!

Individual donors: Anonymous donors, William James Becker, Paul & Cindy Bowen, TC & Joellen Brown, Wes Connett, Peter & Susan Hoppen, Harold & Becky Hutson, R. G. Lins, Than Lundquist, Jeff & Connie Mueller, Kevin Rivard, Russ & Cherrie Scharf, Julie Smith, Charles & Earlene Wolfers

Business donors: Janice Barnett, CPA; Bridge to Life Assembly; Hoppen Advertising Specialties

Foundation: The Abdoulah Family Fund

Special thanks also go to: Vergel Bautista, Tom & Debby Beneze, TC Brown, Wes Connett, Brian Dawe, Florence United Methodist Women, Randy Foshee, Anne Gard, Jim Martin, Mike Raneses, Arlene Pennington and Karen Swanson

Ventline Sponsors: Aramark; Black Hills Energy; City of Cañon City; Colorado Jail Association; Credit Union of Colorado; Doing HIS Time Prison Ministry; High Plains Correctional Facility; King County Corrections Guild; Hoppen Advertising Specialties; Prison Health Services; The Vineyard Fremont County; Wells Fargo Bank

Additional Corrections Staff Resources

In addition to DWCO, there are three other national organizations focused on corrections staff needs. These are:

American Correctional Officer

<http://www.cointel.net/>

The mission and purpose of the American Correctional Officer (ACO) is to promote the well-being and safety of publicly employed Correctional Officers and corrections professionals.

Correctional Peace Officer Foundation

<http://www.cpodf.org/index.html>

The purpose of the Correctional Peace Officers (CPO) Foundation, Inc. is to operate and maintain a general fund for the perpetuation of the memory of those Correctional Peace Officers killed in the line of duty; to provide for their spouses, children or other beneficiaries; and to promote and project a positive image of the Corrections profession, both internally and to the general public.

Corrections Staff Fellowship

<http://www.csfministries.org/index.htm>

Corrections Staff Fellowship, Inc. (CSF) is a faith-based association of corrections staff working in probation, prisons, and parole. The mission of CSF is to encourage corrections staff to be men and women of integrity; to equip and encourage them to integrate their faith and values in their career; and to strive toward the highest standards of ethics and professionalism in corrections.

Presentations are now being accepted for the IACTP Trainers Conference October 25-28, 2009.
The deadline is April 30. The website www.iactp.org has the details under *Conferences*.