

CORRECTIONAL OASIS

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

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Legendary Leaders

© By Caterina Spinaris Tudor

Over the years correctional workers have shared with me examples of leaders—supervisors and executive staff—who impacted them positively. Here are some of these examples. As you read this article, think about areas where you, as a leader, can put similar behaviors to practice. Proactively make “deposits” in your “bank account” with staff to have “funds” to draw upon during challenging times.

First and foremost, legendary leaders care about their staff as individuals, and they prove their caring with their actions.

Legendary leaders want to know, truly know, how their staff is doing and what kinds of working conditions they deal with. They take time to frequently walk the yard and the housing units of their institutions to talk to staff and inmates.

Legendary leaders ask questions about the various facility operations and take time to listen, expecting real answers from their subordinates, not politically correct, “I’m telling you what I believe you want to hear” talk. If someone responds with empty platitudes, they confront that and ask again pointedly what is going on and how they are doing.

Because they take time to find out how their employees are doing, legendary leaders know when their staff is going through hard times. And they act on that knowledge by calling their staff at home when they are out on sick leave. When

concerned about their welfare, they have been known to even stop by employees’ houses to see how they are doing.

Legendary leaders are truly concerned and try their best to find effective solutions when an employee confides in them that they are struggling emotionally.

Legendary leaders pay attention and remember details about their staff and their families.

One such leader told me that he used to manage his large metro jail by the “toilet paper square” method. He said that at the time there were rolls of toilet paper instead of tissues at staff posts. The paper was glossy and hard. When he made his rounds, he would ask staff how they were doing. A CO might say that his daughter was graduating next week. The jail administrator would cut out a toilet paper square and write that piece of information on it. Upon returning to his office, he would transfer that information onto his calendar. When he made rounds again a week later, he would stop by that employee’s post and ask how the daughter’s graduation went. Invariably, people would be amazed that he remembered the event and cared enough to

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Quote of the Month

- The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality.*
- The last is to say thank you.*
- In between, the leader is a servant.* Max DePree

ALLURE: Detecting Deception & Truth—Part 2

By Rick Nielsen

Rick Nielsen is a Community Corrections Officer (i.e., Probation and Parole Officer) in the Washington State Department of Corrections. For comments or questions, email him at richard.nielsen@doc.wa.gov. This is the second in a series of five articles on this subject.

Last time I introduced the topic of detecting deception and truth. This time I'll delve a little deeper into the subject and conclude with the Text Cues of deception. Remember your ALLURE (ALLURE is copyright ©2009 Richard A. Nielsen):

1. ASK unexpected questions that bring out behavioral responses. (Vrij et al 2009)
2. LOOK for stress and controlling behaviors. Don't just focus on deception cues. (DePaulo et al 2003)
3. LISTEN to the voice & the words. (DePaulo et al 2003)
4. UNDERSTAND everything in context. (Porter 2009, Vrij et al 2001)
5. REPEAT the process often; keep scanning. (Porter 2009, Vrij et al 2001)
6. ERRORS: Beware of errors. (Herbert 2007)

If you look for it, you'll find ALLURE in this article .

Before we go further, let us discuss our definitions and answer some questions in the process.

What is deception? Let's expand our definition of deception to include three types:

1. Providing false information
2. Concealing information through cover-up or masking (DePaulo et al 2003)
3. Withholding information by holding it back, reducing it, restricting it or denying it (DePaulo et al 2003)

What is truth? For our purposes we'll call truth: Informa-

tion given with no recognized evidence of deception. In other words, if we don't see deception, we'll accept what we hear as truth. This fits with our legal system as well—innocent until proven guilty.

What are reliable deception cues and how are they detected? Reliable cues are based on solid scientific evidence, not personal opinion or experience or philosophy. That means the cues themselves must generalize across culture and gender. You should be able to use the reliable cues with anyone, anywhere, anytime. (Ekman et al 1999, Frank et al 2007, Vrij et al 2004, Vrij et al 2009, Vrij 2008)

Reliable deception cues support one or more of the three lie types:

1. False information cues consist of observed evidence which is contrary to the lies being told. Detecting false information includes looking for **Contrary cues**, like body and head cues that do not agree with the statement being made, thus confirming the liar's own disbelief in his/her own statement(s).

Detecting false information also includes searching for the two courtroom staples:

- a) Physical evidence
- and b) Witness testimony.
2. Concealment cues, or **Masking cues**, are masking attempts seen as such. We'll use these too.
3. We'll also be spotting **Withholding cues**, as well as some context-relevant stress signs. "Context-relevant" means that the stress signs must be signs of holding back a response. Otherwise, stress signs are indicators of stress only. Incidentally, the lack of consistent context-relevant stress signs makes polygraphs and voice stress analysis machines poor lie detectors.

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New Season of the *Correctional Oasis*

This is the first issue of the *Correctional Oasis* that is sent exclusively electronically. Since we are no longer limited to the four pages of the hard copy format, we can expand the material offered in each issue as needed.

We plan to continue publishing a variety of articles on subjects such as correctional worker wellness, interpersonal skills, supervisory and leadership skills, post-traumatic stress, family issues, women working in corrections issues, and other topics of interest to correctional workers and their families. We publish articles either anonymously or we list the author's name and contact information.

If you wish to submit an article to be considered for publication, please email it to caterina@desertwaters.com. ■

The Cost of PTSD

© By Caterina Spinaris Tudor

Sadly, the corrections workplace is one of the “natural” environments for the development of PTSD. That is because correctional workers are exposed to incidents that are considered traumatic, as they may experience, witness, or are confronted with events that involve actual or threatened death or serious injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of self or others.¹

Correctional workers are directly or indirectly exposed to violence, death, physical assaults, assaults with weapons, and threats of bodily harm or death, all of which are known to increase the likelihood that individuals exposed to such conditions will develop PTSD symptoms.

In response, at least early on in their careers, correctional workers exposed to such incidents may experience helplessness, terror or horror, among other emotions. However, over time staff may become so hardened or emotionally numb (emotional numbing is a PTSD symptom, by the way), that they respond to traumatic incidents at work with anger or indifference.

Most people do not realize the toll PTSD takes on an individual’s overall health and well-being, their professional functioning, and their relationships with significant others.

When we hear about the condition of PTSD we may think of someone having nightmares and perhaps fear or anger issues. From the outside a PTSD diagnosis may

not look like a big deal. We may even wonder if purported PTSD sufferers are exaggerating or why they can’t just “get over it.” If things were only that simple!

The reality is that PTSD is a complex condition that affects those who suffer from it to various degrees in just about every facet of their lives.

The reason for this is that PTSD is not simply a psychological state or a bad mood. **PTSD involves biochemical and structural changes in the brain of people exposed to events which to them were traumatizing.** That is, PTSD is a tenacious neurobiological condition that manifests as a variety of physical, psychological, social and spiritual symptoms.

Here is a very brief summary of some key areas impacted by PTSD.

PTSD affects people’s physical health. Those afflicted by it may experience heart palpitations and arrhythmias, high blood pressure, headaches, muscle tension and gastro-intestinal problems, among others.

PTSD can be devastating on the sufferer’s psychological health and social interactions. Social dysfunction and violence increase with PTSD. People withdraw, act “paranoid,” or become easily enraged. Substance abuse increases with PTSD. And to make matters worse, in

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Legendary Leaders

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ask. The resulting morale boost was automatic.

Legendary leaders invite staff input and try to incorporate others’ ideas into their decision making.

Legendary leaders allow staff to vent frustrations, but expect them to be respectful in the process.

Legendary leaders periodically get involved in the day to day operations, such as patting down inmates or operating the metal detectors. In times of crisis they may join with their troops in conducting key operations.

Legendary leaders stand main line during chow together with their executive staff to be available to any inmates who have questions to ask or grievances to air.

Legendary leaders create opportunities for staff to unwind, have fun and laugh together.

Legendary leaders protect and stand by their staff and make it their Number One priority that their workers go home safely at the end of their shift.

Such leaders know how to motivate and earn the trust of their subordinates. They genuinely care for their employees, and aim to support them so they can continue overcoming adversities and enjoy a lengthy and distinguished corrections career.

So ask yourself. What kind of a leader do YOU want to be? How can YOU, through your day to day actions, help elevate the noble profession of corrections to a higher level? ■

The Cost of PTSD

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addition to its own symptoms, PTSD often co-exists with other disorders, such as major depressive disorder, generalized anxiety disorder and panic disorder. Suicidal thinking also increases with PTSD symptoms independently of any other existing disorder. Individuals and their families suffer. Quality of life plummets.

Spiritually, PTSD is characterized by bleakness, indifference and lack of hope. It deals a serious blow to people's capacity for compassion, perhaps our highest spiritual quality.

Those who suffer from less than the required number symptoms for a PTSD diagnosis, that is people who have partial (subclinical) PTSD, similarly experience its devastation, only to a lesser degree. Trauma-exposed individuals who meet some, but not all, criteria for PTSD have clinically significant distress; co-morbid disorders, such as major depressive disorder; and associated impairments in functioning comparable to that of full PTSD. The presence of partial PTSD also significantly raises the risk of suicidal thoughts.

Therefore, substantially greater numbers of individuals are impaired or disabled after trauma than is suggested by simply considering the rates of full PTSD.

How do these realities impact the corrections workplace?

Not surprisingly, PTSD ends up being very costly to administrators. PTSD has been found to result in increased staff turnover, sick leave, use of health services, and short-term and long-term disability. It also lowers morale and results in under par performance on the job. (For a literature review and additional research findings, see <http://www.rpnas.com/public/pdfs/PTSDInCorrections.pdf>.)

For example, due to their difficulty in concentrating, correctional staff is more prone to make mistakes. Due to increased anger and irritability, they are more likely to go off on inmates, use excessive force, or make coworkers' life harder than it already is. With fears for their safety, they are more likely to be compromised by inmates, such as to bring contraband or to overlook inmates' illegal behaviors in exchange for protection for themselves.

Given the toll of PTSD on individuals, families and their employers, it clearly behooves us to do our utmost to ensure preventative, resilience-building trainings for correctional workers as well as provision of sufficient specialized treatment services. The alternative—doing nothing—is simply much more costly in the long run. ■

¹American Psychiatric Association. (2000). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (4th edition). Washington: American Psychiatric Association.

ALLURE—Part 2

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Is there a best way to detect deception? The best way includes looking for changes in baseline behaviors first. Then looking for Contrary cues, Masking cues, and Withholding cues.

Who are the best liars? Science reveals that the best liars have learned the most that can be learned by watching the responses they see in their audiences while they talk, and adapting their behavior accordingly to remain convincing. The best liars are professional actors and prisoners. Good actors help the audience suspend disbelief that what they are seeing is faked, make-believe. (Johnson et al 2004, Johnson et al 2005, Mann et al 2004, Sebanz et al 2009, Vrij et al 1996). What makes a "rotten liar"? Rotten liars leak the reliable signs of deception we can understand.

Who are the best deception detectors? The evidence points to three kinds:

- Naturals or "Wizards", less than ¼ of 1% (0.25%) of the population, who develop this ability from childhood (Ekman et al 1991, Ekman et al 1969, Ekman 1992, Frank et al 1993, Frank et al 1997, Ekman et al 1988, Haggard et al 1966)
- Women, who are socially more adept than men (Tilley et al 2005)
- Trained adults. The good news is that most people can be trained to detect deception and truth. (Ekman et al 1991, Ekman et al 1969, Ekman et al 1991, Frank et al 1993, Frank et al 1997, Ekman et al 1988, Johnson et al 2004, Johnson et al 2005, Sebanz et al 2009, Vrij et al 2005, and personal correspondence with Frank and Vrij)

What is the best way to train people to detect every part of deception and truth, including all the cues? The best training includes examples from all the cue channels, (text cues, verbal cues, body cues, and head cues), using pre- and post-tests and presentation modules. (Docan-

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DWCO Miscellanea

DWCO In the News

On 9/6/10 the article entitled *Counselors Monitoring Prison Officers with PTSD* by the Associated Press Reporter Catherine Tsai appeared in the press. We thank Ms. Tsai for mentioning Desert Waters and the work we do in the area of PTSD with correctional workers.

Recent Trainings Offered by DWCO

- August 18, *Corrections Fatigue*, Corrections Staff Fellowship Summit, Glorieta, NM
- September 17, *Taking Care of Our Own: Post-traumatic Stress in the Corrections Ranks*, Minnesota Sheriffs Association, Jail Administrators Conference, Brainerd, MN
- September 18, *Post-traumatic Stress in the Corrections Ranks*, American Correctional Officer Intelligence Network Conference, Minneapolis, MN
- September 20, *Professional Boundaries for Women Staff*, Women Working in Corrections & Juvenile Justice Conference, Denver, CO
- September 20, *Post-traumatic Stress in the Corrections Ranks*, Women Working in Corrections & Juvenile Justice Conference, Denver, CO

Staff Feedback

We received the following email from an individual who attended our PTSD training at the ACO Conference. *I met you in Minnesota at the ACO Conference last weekend and we had a brief conversation. I want to thank you for sharing DWCO with us. I was watching the room as you presented your information. The expression on the*

faces of the Officers from across the nation (mine included) was like you were hitting EVERY button/symptom that we have felt or are current dealing with. I brought the information back and have shared it with my fellow staff and the feedback has been very positive. Don't be surprised if e-mails or requests for more information starts coming in from Oregon. Tomorrow I will be going to the AOCE membership to ask them to become a sponsor of this great organization. Sgt. Michael Van Patten, AOCE President. Reprinted with permission.

Sponsoring the Corrections Ventline

You or your organization can continue to help us help you by sponsoring our hotline, the Corrections Ventline. In 2009 we received 198 Ventline contacts from across the nation, and this year to date we have had 108 Ventline contacts, some of which involved suicidal correctional staff. Our Ventline sponsors are noted in the monthly *Correctional Oasis* and on our website,.

You can sponsor the Ventline in one of three ways to help cover some of its operational costs.

1. Your tax-deductible gift of \$1,000 sponsors the Ventline for twelve months.
2. Your tax-deductible gift of \$500 sponsors the Ventline for six months.
3. Your tax-deductible gift of \$250 sponsors the Ventline for three months.

Thank you for considering partnering with DWCO by sponsoring the Corrections Ventline! ■

ALLURE—Part 2

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Morgan 2006; and personal correspondence with same) What are the cue channels? They are: Text, Verbal, Body, and Head.

Text cues are found in:

- Letters
- Emails
- Text messages

Verbal cues come from:

- Dialogue
- Non-word speech sounds, like paralinguistics, including voice pitch, “um’s”, “ah’s”, etc.
- Transcripts of dialogue
- Audio and video recordings of dialogue

Body cues are movements of the body, (but not the

head), found in:

- Context-relevant and involuntary (i.e., autonomic) bodily responses to stress
- Online avatar-mediated communications (i.e., via accurate animated character representations of the subjects). Avatar communications mostly take place within the online video gaming community. This community includes users who participate in Second Life™, (<http://secondlife.com/>), The Sims™, (<http://thesims.ea.com/>), or other massive, multiplayer online games, like World of Warcraft™, (<http://www.worldofwarcraft.com/>).
- Video recordings of body cues

Head cues include:

- Facial expressions of emotions
- Context-relevant autonomic responses to stress displayed on the face

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- Context-relevant neuro-imaging of the brain
- Video recordings of head cues
- Online, face-only, avatar-mediated communications

Who are the best and worst interviewers? Science shows that the best interviewers are (Frank et al 2006):

- Excellent communicators
- Listen well
- Build good rapport with their interviewees
- Skilled at perceiving and interpreting verbal and non-verbal behavior changes as clues to deception. They look for changes and discrepancies in an interviewee's behaviors, statements, and description of events, more than looking only for deception cues; and
- Allow for uninterrupted accounts from the interviewee and the careful selection of questions designed to elicit what the interviewee is actually thinking and feeling.

The evidence also shows that the worst interviewers oppress their interviewees and pressure them toward a confession. (Frank et al 2006, Vrij et al 2007)

Is there a hierarchy to the quality of deception cues? Yes, there is. The hierarchy is as shown below:

Class 1 Cues are generalized across all human cultures and both genders. They are found in meta-analysis literature. (A meta-analysis merges several studies, often hundreds of studies, which address similar research.) Class 1 Cues seem to be universal due to the multitude of scientific evidence. One example of a Class 1 Text Cue is the use of more negative description words, like how angry someone made a person feel.

Class 2 Cues are contrary cues which illustrate non-support of the statement(s), affect, or emotion of the interviewee. Class 2 Cues may be universal, but they have a little less support than Class 1 Cues. Class 2 Cues seem to be generalized across genders, within most cultures. A Class 2 Body Cue is the shoulder shrug shown at the same time the person is saying something that's supposed to be a sure thing.

Class 3 Cues are not universal. They may be generalized, but there's less scientific support than Class 1 and Class 2 Cues. These can include culture-specific cues, like the two-fingered "two" or "peace" sign in the U. S.,

which is offensive if displayed to a European audience.

Class 4 Cues are not universal or generalized, but they still have value. They seem to be the best opinions of the vetted authorities who study them. Class 4 Cues include culture-specific cues, individual idiosyncrasies and "tells," like poker tells.

In this series, we'll focus on Class 1 and Class 2 Cues only. We want to have the strongest foundation of generalized cues, which are useable with anyone, anywhere, anytime. Class 3 and Class 4 Cues don't deliver that yet.

With all this in mind, let's now take a look at the Text Cues. Text Cues are found in letters, emails, and text messages. They may also be found in a few transcripts of verbal dialogues. But they are never text descriptions of body or head movements, gestures or expressions.

Class 1 Text Cues

Liars do not want to be pinned down. These cues indicate both *Masking* and *Withholding* attempts. Liars use more words overall, including more sense-based words and descriptions, like seeing or touching, a high diversity of words, and an abundance of superfluous words or meaningless expressions. But they actually communicate less, with less cognitive complexity. Liars use less abbreviations (i.e., "USA" for United States of America) and contractions (i.e., "won't" for will not) and ellipsis (i.e., ". ." for "and so on"). Even though they don't want to say much, liars still want to give the impression of "completeness." Liars use fewer exclusive words like "that", "this", and phrases like "that blue sedan on the left with the Colorado plates". Liars use less self-oriented pronouns, like "I", "my" and "mine". Liars use more other-oriented pronouns, like "he", "she", and "it". They do not want to draw attention to themselves; they want to direct attention onto others. (Hancock et al 2005, Hancock et al 2008, Keila et al 2005, Newman et al 2003, Zhou et al 2002, Zhou et al 2008)

Liars use more negative emotion words. These are *Masking Cues*. Negative emotions include anger, contempt, disgust, fear and sadness. So any words denoting these emotions can indicate deception. They want to appear better than or distanced from the person, situation or thing they are describing. (Keila et al 2005, Hancock et al 2005, Hancock et al 2008, Newman et al 2001, Newman et al 2003)

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ALLURE—Part 2

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Class 2 Text Cues could not be found in the studies I reviewed. But this makes sense. There are no body cues, or verbal cues, or head cues in text, with which to compare the text.

That's it. Not a lot to remember with Text Cues.

So here's your "homework": Review your own correspondence—emails, letters, or text messages, and see if you find signs of not wanting to be pinned down, or the use of many negative emotion words.

Good luck and stay safe! And join me next time for a review of verbal deception cues.

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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

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ALLURE—Part 2

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