

Prison SMART Europe

Stress Management and Rehabilitation Training
For prisoners and prison personnel



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Since its inception in 1992, Prison SMART has become a worldwide successful program. More than 250.000 prisoners and prison staff in around 30 countries have already experienced its benefits.

Prison SMART serves the needs of all people involved, incarcerated or working in the criminal justice system: incarcerated adults, juveniles, and their families; ex-prisoners; victims of violence; correctional officers and law enforcement personnel and administrators.

The program teaches advanced breathing techniques which bring relief from the accumulated effects of stress and negative emotions. Practical skills and knowledge teach participants how to handle stressful situations, deal with emotions, live up to their highest potential and contribute in a positive way to society.

Prison SMART is a holistic program that offers innovative and effective tools to reduce the rate of recidivism, offer the possibility of genuine rehabilitation to offenders, heal the victims, and improve the performance of law enforcement personnel. It is a first of its kind program to break the cycles of violence in society and contribute to violence prevention.

“Without a doubt, I will strongly recommend this course to not just persons, but to all humankind.”

Inmate, UK

“This course does what no therapy does: it goes directly to the core.”

Inmate, Belgium

PRISON CONDITIONS

It is well known that in general prisons are places with a high stress level. Among both prison staff and prisoners this stress can manifest directly, such as in aggression, depression, unalertness, burn-out and stress-related illnesses, but also indirectly in addictions or deterioration of interpersonal relations. The staff in prisons is expected to work professionally, with a sense of responsibility and reliability and with a decent and humane attitude. Stressful working conditions, however, can undermine such well functioning. In extreme cases, they can also lead to a higher degree of absence among personnel, a factor that increases the pressure on the personnel that remains active. The effect of stress in our personal lives and in our work place is often underestimated.

Apart from “the natural stress level” which is characteristic of prisons, the common situation of overpopulation in many prisons in the world leads to extra stress and tension, both for overburdened prison staff and the prisoners themselves.

In many prisons the constitution of the population is changing rapidly and the big cultural and linguistic diversity brings with it new and specific challenges with regard to coexistence in a penitentiary institution.

In certain prisons one can also observe an increase in the number of prisoners with medical and psychological problems.

These challenges add to the problems of the harm resulting from the daily life in a penitentiary institution.

In addition, also the use of drugs in prisons is a point of serious attention.

VIOLENCE IN SOCIETY

Many societies in Europe witness an increase of various forms of violence: physical, psychological, cultural, religious, sexual, and others. Globalized communication makes us of course more aware of the violence that is committed in various corners of our world, from the domestic to the social, regional and national levels. Previously peaceful neighbourhoods and communities are shaken by sudden shooting attacks, teenagers start committing their first crimes and murders at ever younger age, innocent civilians are attacked for no reason at all or on the basis of race or religion, not to speak about domestic violence, drug-related violence, xenophobia and racism, Islamophobia, mafia-related violence, or exclusive ideologies. On the other hand, an increasing number of people in Europe is suffering from depression and burn out, and some countries are confronted with a very high level of suicides. The “hardening of society” is probably one of the biggest challenges today. A proper response requires a multi-dimensional approach which deals with both the outer and inner aspects of this phenomenon.

Prison SMART is a practical and effective stress management program mainly based on breathing techniques. The powerful breathing techniques remove accumulated stress from the organism and have a strong cleansing effect on body and mind. The cornerstone of the program, the Sudarshan Kriya (purifying action) technique, is a no-cost, self-empowering tool that transforms overpowering emotions and restores calm and alertness. The program teaches prisoners to deal more constructively with their often deep-rooted feelings of fear, guilt, depression, despair and revenge. Feelings such as rage, aggression and frustration make way for enthusiasm and a positive frame of mind. Prison SMART provides a basis for self-management, increases self-confidence, strengthens human values and reduces reliance on addictive substances. The prisoners learn skills to deal with future conflict and stressful situations successfully. The SMART program cuts through the cycle of violence as detainees become more conscious of the consequences of their actions, take responsibility, and search for the solutions to their problems within themselves rather than in the outside world. As such, the prison becomes an opportunity for self-reflection and the program lays the foundation for genuine rehabilitation and reintegration into society. The participants can make use of the knowledge and the set of techniques that they learn during the training for the rest of their lives.

Prison SMART can become the component of the prison system that is responsible for the prevention and management of stress and aggression.

“The course has made me feel free from inside. And isn’t that a wonderful feeling for a prisoner?”

Inmate, Belgium

“I was stressed and aggressive. I was imprisoned in my previous mistakes and failures. I was used to think that I was worth nothing. After the course I feel different. I have started to love myself.”

Inmate, South Africa

IN PRISON

Contribute to a safe, efficient and humane detention climate for both prisoners and personnel.

Foster a positive detention climate characterised by:

- decreased aggression and violence
- less tensions and conflicts
- better mutual understanding among prisoners
- better and more respectful relations between prisoners and prison staff

“I used to actually look forward to fights, but now, since doing the course, I am a totally different person. I can now walk away from a fight.”

Inmate, Pollsmoor Prison, South Africa

“If all the people here would take the course, there would be considerably less aggression and a better atmosphere.”

Inmate, Belgium

FOR PRISONERS and EX-PRISONERS

Decrease the harm due to detention among prisoners and allow for genuine rehabilitation in the long term by teaching practical exercises and knowledge in order to:

- learn to deal with negative and overwhelming emotions, about their past, present and future
- find inner peace and self-confidence
- become less dependent on drugs
- rediscover and strengthen universal human values
- obtain more energy, focus and creativity
- be able to build better relationships
- take responsibility for their own life
- increase stress resilience
- develop better physical well-being (such as better sleep, less fear, less depression, better immunity)

FOR PRISON STAFF

Stress Management and Stress Relief for prison staff in order to decrease the negative consequences of over-population and the overburdening of prison staff by teaching practical exercises and knowledge in order to:

- function efficiently in stressful circumstances
- experience more job satisfaction
- improve physical well-being (such as better sleep, less fear, less depression, better immunity, normalised blood pressure) and decrease absence rates
- obtain more energy and focus

FOR VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE

- Prevention of serious psychosomatic symptoms and depression (with little or without medication)
- Healing of deep rooted emotions, stresses and traumas
- Empowering, overcoming fear
- Providing deep rest and energy to live life with hope and contentment
- Support initiatives for restorative justice

The training

Trained instructors deliver the Prison SMART training in 16-18 hours spread over 8 days. The Prison SMART training produces results from the very first session. For the full benefit of the training, participants are expected to commit to attend all sessions. The training is given in group, with no maximum number of participants.

During the training, participants are instructed in a personal practice that can be used on a daily basis to further the benefits of the training. They can be supported through weekly follow-up sessions to reinforce the effects of the training.

The effective contribution of Prison SMART to a more humane detention climate depends on the participation of the greatest possible number of people who are directly or indirectly involved in the prison system. More specifically, the training of both personnel and prisoners can create a strong synergetic effect.

Benefits

Positive medical and psychological effects of the training as reported by the participants:

- normalized sleep patterns
- reduced depression and anxiety
- decreased reliance on medication and drugs
- increased energy
- increased focus and clarity of mind
- increased resilience to daily stressors of life
- increased self-esteem and confidence
- decreased interpersonal conflicts
- decreased engaging in destructive behaviour
- improved immunity and physical well-being
- freedom from traumatic scars of the past
- greater positive outlook on the future

“In the short span of the Prison Program I have learnt so much! I never even suspected that it was at all possible to live in another way! I have opened up myself to life.”

Timofeeva Olga Aleksandrova, Russian prison

“Before this course I had decided to start taking anti-depressants again, but now I believe I do not need them any longer. I am going to practice these techniques every day for the rest of my life. I hope other people are lucky enough to be able to participate in this course. It has given me more than I would ever have believed possible. Thank you.”

Inmate, USA

Prison Smart teaches a comprehensive program of breathing practices, including the Sudarshan Kriya (SK), that has been the subject of independent investigation and research in hospitals and research institutions worldwide. Findings indicate that the Sudarshan Kriya and its accompanying practices significantly:

- Reduce levels of stress (reduced cortisol—the “stress” hormone)

- Relieve anxiety

- Relieve depression

- Decrease symptoms of trauma

- Increase optimism

- Enhance overall well-being and peace-of-mind

“Before I took the course I was always thinking of the past or the future and of all the things I was not in control of. Now – when I get sad – I turn my focus inward, breathe in deeply a couple of times and start the breathing exercises. I have found a tremendous peace inside.”

Reno, 22, serving a drug sentence in Horsørød State Prison, Denmark

“I used to worry, thinking about what will happen in the future, about what lies ahead...But after doing this course, my thoughts have reduced a lot, and I’ve started feeling good.”

Inmate, India

“It’s a fantastic course! I feel more calm, peaceful and ready to deal with what life has in store for me. I feel my depression lifting and I have a new way of looking at things.”

Debbie, Inmate, Christ Church Women’s Prison, New Zealand

“The course triggers a lot. I did not expect that. You often hear so many big words, but when you really feel it yourself, then you know it is really true. I am amazed. Really super.”

Inmate, Belgium

Prison SMART acknowledges the broad spectrum of needs within the criminal justice system and offers stress management techniques that train law enforcement and prison personnel to dissolve job-related stress. Law enforcement officers are often the first line of defence in dangerous and life-threatening circumstances. The day-to-day challenges of their profession tax the body, mind and emotions. Also prison staff work under very stressful working conditions on a daily basis.

A specific Stress Management Training is offered to all people, organisations and institutions involved in the fight against crime and violence in society, such as prison guards, administrative staff, management personnel, respective ministries, police, judicial staff, mediators, social workers, etc. The Stress Management Training has become part of the standard curriculum of some police training schools, such as in New Delhi.

Charles H. Ramsey, Chief of Police, Government of the District of Columbia, Metropolitan Police Department, Washington DC, USA

“I took the course a year ago to learn some personal stress management tools to support me in my role as chief of the Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Columbia. The techniques are simple, powerful and effective. I am now exploring making them available to members of my police department.

The role of police officer is one of the most intensely demanding and challenging in the arena of public service. While increasingly being directed to enact community policing and develop effective problem-solving relationships with public and private stakeholders, police continue to be the front-line response in the most difficult and dangerous situations, including gang violence, drug dealing, and terrorism. Over time, the accruing stress of this profession can and frequently does, as statistics show, impact the physical and emotional health of active and retired police officers. As the chief of a major police department, I feel a responsibility to address policing-related health concerns as well as provide tools that can help prevent stress-related issues. From my experience, the Stress Management Training of Art of Living offers techniques that work.”

This Stress Management Training consists, just like Prison SMART, of effective breathing techniques that calm down the mind and transform negative or overwhelming emotions. The core of the training, the breathing technique Sudarshan Kriya, removes accumulated stress from the organism and has a strong purifying effect on body and mind. Participants get insight in the causes of stress, become more stress resistant, and learn skills to deal more successfully with conflicts, stressful situations, aggression and violence in the future. The training also deals with responsibility, contentment, and health.

The training is given in around 18 hours spread over minimum 3 consecutive days.

Prison SMART is adaptable to serve the needs of institutions, law enforcement departments and social rehabilitation organizations. The Prison SMART program is a valuable tool for all those working to end the cycle of violence and abuse in society. The Prison SMART team works in tandem with probation departments, family and juvenile court systems, administrators and correctional officers of penal institutions, and law enforcement departments, to deliver the common goal of uplifting human values within the criminal and the law-enforcing justice community. In addition, the team forms strategic alliances with social service agencies and organizations whose clientele deal with the aftermath of crime and violence - i.e. ex-offenders' reintegration programs, domestic violence shelters, rape crisis centers, substance abuse programs, families of murder victims - to offer tools that alleviate the experience of trauma.

Ministries of Justice & Prison Directors

- Ideally the Prison SMART program becomes a partner with the penitentiary institution as the stress and anger management component of the facility. On a political level measures can be taken in order to make Prison SMART a structural component of the penitentiary system as such, contributing to the aims of reducing recidivism and promoting rehabilitation on the long term.
- A holistic approach can be developed for all those who are confronted with violence, conflict and crime, with attention for:
 - stress resistance of law enforcement personnel and police
 - rehabilitation and trauma-relief of victims of violence
 - empowerment of families of prisoners
 - prevention and healing in the society as a whole, including youth delinquents and drug addicts.
- The Stress Management Training for personnel can be integrated in the training and education of the staff.
- Prison staff can be trained to become Prison SMART trainers (average training is 3 years)

“It was heartening to get to know the Prison SMART program, as it offered just what was necessary – the removal of stress, the relaxation of the mind and emotions and bringing the best of an individual's potential to the fore. The same prison which once was cursed by prisoners is now blessed! Some detainees even remarked that everyone should go to prison once, to be able to experience the positive effects of the programme!”

Dr. Kiran Bedi, former UN Civilian Police Advisor, Joint Commissioner of Police, Delhi

“It is a pity I had to do 6 years of imprisonment before I was offered to attend this course. This course should definitely be part of the mandatory programme in prisons. Very, very, very good!”

Inmate, Norway, 42 years

“The Prison SMART team made it his own vision and mission to make themselves available and notably effect a difference in the lives of criminals who seemed to have been rejected and abandoned by society. The course has significantly impacted and subsequently transformed many inmates’ lives. These services are asserted to be indispensable to offenders whose crimes could only be perceived as symptomatic to a “cry for help” and “acting out” behaviours emanating from a number of factors demanding appropriate attention. The fact of the matter is that these urgently needed services are not sustainable since they are charitably offered on a free of charge basis. It would be vital for concerned individuals and organisations which have a financial muscle to back up such services in order to significantly contribute in the reduction of crime rate and recidivism, thereby ensuring a more safer living environment for all of us. Time has come for us to change our perception and drastically break this vicious circle of crime in our land.”

Hlalele, Resident Chief Psychologist, Baviaanspoort Prison

Social workers

Social workers have an important role to play, since also communities suffer a wide range of effects of crime and violence. 90 percent of all incarcerated individuals will be released into society one day. The majority of these individuals will be released into urban areas already struggling with economic problems, fear, victims of violent crimes and substance abuse.

Ex-prisoners

Freedom from the impact of incarceration does not end at the moment of release. The harm due to detention accompanies ex-prisoners during their entry in society. Some return to drugs, violence and crime, and find themselves not before long back behind the bars. Prison SMART / Breathe SMART helps ex-prisoners to reintegrate in society.

Youth delinquents

Children and young adults are important to society; they are seeds of the future. Prison SMART recognizes their special needs and offers youth enrichment programs and self-esteem building/reinforcement programs especially designed for incarcerated teens.

“Practicing the breathing and meditation exercises taught by the trainer in an experiential manner helped the youth to feel at ease by providing a recipe with which they can handle stressful situations and challenging circumstances. By participating in the program, the youth learned to not be bothered by minor annoyances and thereby decrease the likelihood of unreasonable reactions on their part. We look forward to hosting similar programs in the future under the auspices of IAHV.”

Jason Hutchinson, Director, Terrebonne Parish Juvenile Detention Center, Louisiana, USA

Drug addicts

Substance abuse takes a high toll on a human being and his/her environment, not only leading to health damage but often also to crime and relationship problems. The de-addiction rehabilitation program supports addicts to get out of the vicious cycle of substance abuse, deal with underlying causes of abuse and take a fresh start in their lives.

“I never realized I could get so high on breathing! Wow! I feel so relaxed and peaceful. And I’ve done it just on my own breath.”

Inmate

“When I first heard that we had to do this course, I was really irritated. But when I did this course, I got so much joy, so much bliss! I’ve drunk alcohol, I’ve smoked cigarettes, I’ve done drugs, but I never got from them the kind of joy that I got from this.”

Inmate, India

“In the beginning I had reservations about the course, but it’s great. Earlier I only felt so calm after smoking hashish. Since I followed Jakob’s course I haven’t smoked hashish. I also haven’t been having a fight with anyone for two weeks. I now dare to look at things I was too afraid to have a look at before. I do the exercises every evening before bedtime in order to get rid of my aggressiveness and feel calm. It works wonders.

Christian, Horserød State Prison (Denmark)

“We have had around 20 clients attending the Breathe SMART course as part of their drug addiction treatment. The participants have been very satisfied with the course and have been able to reduce their anxiety and negative trail of thought and several have shared that they do not feel depressed anymore. And even more have become completely drugs free after the course.”

Christian Solholt, Project Leader (Hash and Cocaine Project Copenhagen)

“We have conducted a training for our Director, senior doctors and management staff of the Institute on Addictions. We have received excellent feedback for this seminar. Among the many benefits, we experienced higher energy levels, a calm and focused state of mind, freedom from stress and improved well being. We have started the program for 13 drug addicts and the response from these participants is very encouraging. Our Institute is the largest drug rehabilitation institute in Serbia and has residential and non residential programs for rehabilitation. We believe this program will help in the rehabilitation of drug addicts and highly recommend it to other organisations working in this area.”

Dr. Jasna Daragan Saveljic, Director, Institute on Addictions, Belgrade, Serbia

Interview with inmate Sebastian, 32, in Horsørød State Prison (Denmark)

- In what way has the course changed you as a person?

I have become calmer and I think more clearly. I live more in the present moment after having meditated. It has also helped me to stop smoking pot. Even though others start again, I don't.

- Do you behave differently in conflict situations?

I think more about the consequences of my actions. While I was smoking pot I didn't care, but now I don't smoke anymore.

- Will it also help you when you get out of prison?

Of course. I am determined not be put in prison again. The exercises give me something else to do, instead of what I was doing before I got to prison.

- What's the most difficult part of the course?

To have to look at yourself and our feelings. It requires that you really want to try something new.

Victims of Violence

People fall victim to physical or psychological violence on a daily basis. Generally the experience of violence undermines the physical, mental, emotional and existential quality of life. Some victims experience deep rooted trauma's on the physical and psychological level which they can only overcome with specialised guidance.

The rehabilitation programs for victims have a deeply healing and preventive effect on body and mind and can remove deep rooted emotions, stresses and trauma's. They can help to prevent serious psychosomatic consequences of violence and mental depressions with little or without medication. Scientific research shows that the programs are effective in decreasing stress, fear and depression, and that they enhance the restoration of stressful stimuli. The programs help people to gain deep rest, move towards acceptance, and they give them the energy to live a happy and joyful life.

Rehabilitation programs for victims have been conducted in war torn areas, such as Iraq, Israel, Kosovo and Kashmir, after terrorist attacks, such as 9/11, Mumbai, Madrid or Beslan, and after natural disasters, such as the tsunami or Katrina. They have also been conducted for victims of domestic violence.

The mission of Prison SMART is to contribute to the creation of a stress-free and violence-free society.

The vision behind Prison SMART is that crimes are often committed out of ignorance and because of accumulated stress in the nervous system. Neither at home nor in school, however, do we learn skills to deal with stress and negative emotions such as hatred, jealousy, greed, anger or frustration. Individuals for whom it is difficult to handle these stress factors, turn more easily to violence and crime. The teaching of practical techniques in combination with the underlying knowledge of how our mind, emotions and body function, and the special role that breathing plays in this, can greatly help people to find a constructive and less damaging way (for themselves and others) to cope with difficult situations.

From the above follows that Prison SMART does not regard criminals or prisoners only as offenders, but also as victims who can use help. Prison SMART offers practical knowledge to free the victim inside the criminal from the vicious circle of violence.

Prison SMART is rooted in human values, such as care for life, responsibility, and service, and starts from the human dignity of prisoners. Prison SMART holds that universal human values are present in every human being, but they manifest less when stress and ignorance increase. By reducing stress and ignorance, Prison SMART creates the space and the conditions for the universal human values to come to the surface. Rather than focusing on the negative things or analyzing mistakes from the past, Prison SMART focuses on the positive that is already present, potentially or manifested.

The detention period often leaves deep scars in the emotional, mental and physical well-being of prisoners. Often the circumstances of detention increase violence tendencies and negative emotions, such as anger, aggression, bitterness, depression and frustration. Prisoners have little control over their circumstances or future, can suffer from lack of self-confidence, and are often suppressed by worries, fear and despair. The circumstances of detention lead to the paradoxical situation that some prisoners are more dangerous when they become free than when they were incarcerated, both for society and for themselves. The detention period can reinforce destructive and criminal behaviour, as such fuelling the very activity it seeks to deter. Freedom from the impact of incarceration does not end at the moment of release. The harm due to detention accompanies ex-prisoners in their entry in society. Some return to drugs, violence and crime, and find themselves not before long back behind the bars. Prison SMART wants to break this vicious cycle of violence in society by working on the level of the deepest causes.

“Today I regret deeply not having done this course long before. Had I done it earlier, I would not have landed in this state.”

High Security Inmate, Presidency Correctional Home, Calcutta

“Caught in a vicious circle, I always ended up in despair. But this Program has changed me totally in an unrecognizable way, and what I thought was impossible, has become possible! Thank you! Life has meaning once more!”

Inmate, Russia

Prison SMART also wants to reduce and avoid the loss on valuable “human resource” due to crime and detention. It aims to transform valuable human resources and support them for the well-being of the individual and society. Prison SMART opines that positive individuals with a progressive outlook form the foundation of a vibrant and thriving stress-free and violence-free society.

Prison SMART does not interfere in questions of penitentiary law, but does emphasize the importance of the rehabilitation component during the period of punishment. Punishment in and by itself does not make much sense if the mentality, attitude and behaviour of offenders does not change. Prison SMART regards the successful rehabilitation of prisoners as a fundamental criterion for a successful detention system and an important responsibility of society.

Testimony of an inmate, Belgium, after 2 years of daily practice:

“My psyche is much more in balance now. I was suicidal because of the crime that I had committed myself. My whole life I have been suffering from depressive and aggressive moods. And I have a strong desire for justice. Now I can channel all of this much better. Sometimes I still wake up depressed, or something makes me angry, but after some yoga or meditation I feel I can overcome these feelings of depression, inertia and aggression. One learns to let go of things that challenge your mood constantly in prison. I have personally experienced how I have changed in thinking, being, and behaving, and wish this rehabilitation for everyone. The internal transformation of the course can be felt within a week and on the long term you become a total different human being: balanced, strong in body and mind, more flexible, creative, optimistic. I feel 20 years younger and freer in my body than a person outside prison. It is an internal transformation from depression, self-destruction and despair, towards contentment, positive emotions, hope and love for life. It is a must for each prisoner for his rehabilitation.”

In Europe Prison SMART has already taken place in Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Kosovo, Lithuania, Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Serbia, Spain and UK.

BELGIUM

The first Prison SMART training in Belgium took place in the prison of Leuven-Central in October 2007. It was a very positive experience, so that a second Prison SMART training was organised in the same prison in October 2009. Also in the prison of Ruiselede a Prison SMART training was organised in March 2009 in the framework of the Believe project for drug addicts. In the prison of Dendermonde the first Prison SMART took place in November 2009 and has been repeated two more times because of the positive experience of the participants.

Testimonies from prisoners in Belgium:

“I feel like I’m born again. I feel like I’m a new person”

“You have given me the best time I ever had here in jail.”

“I want to do these exercises every day for the rest of my life”

“These lessons are of vital importance to everyone”

“All the stress and your worries and fears disappear by practicing the breathing techniques.”

“It gives you self-confidence and pleasant thoughts that we can really use. Being a detainee is very stressful.”

“I have learned to control myself and relax, which gives me an entirely different feeling in myself.”

“The course has taught me how to deal with negative influences. By doing the course and the breathing techniques, one becomes much more resistant against negative influences and easily frees oneself from that vicious negative cycle.”

BULGARIA

In Bulgaria Prison SMART has taken place in all prisons in the country.

CROATIA

In Croatia, Prison SMART has been conducted since 2002 in penitentiary institutions, juvenile prisons and among officials of the entire prison system. Prison SMART was first organised in Lepoglava Prison, the facility in the country with the highest security. The experiences of the inmates were so beneficial that Prison SMART was also introduced in Turopolje Juvenile Prison for offenders aged 15-21 yrs. These youth are imprisoned for serious criminal offences such as murder and attempted murder. They come from troubled social backgrounds, or dysfunctional families, or they have been victims of abuse, or adhere to a deranged set of social values inherited from the war. The latest facility where Prison SMART was introduced is Glina Prison. The Ministry of Justice has requested the Prison SMART team in Croatia to conduct trainings for its employees working in the prisons.

DENMARK

Prison SMART has achieved remarkable success in Denmark. The programs work with prison inmates, drug addicts, juvenile delinquents, therapists, social workers, prison staff and private clients. The efficiency of the courses is now being recognised by many official institutions and organisations. The Justice Department does not send juvenile offenders to prison, but orders them to undergo the Prison / Breathe SMART program. Since 2008, Prison SMART has been part of the special program under the Danish Prison and Probation Service, which gives selected inmates permission to attain a trial release. The State Prison of Horserød cooperates with Prison SMART since 2001. Around 500 inmates have participated in Prison SMART through the 8 courses that it organises each year. Cooperation is also established with institutions of the criminal judicial care system for youth, such as Engelsborg, and with the Probation Department for Community Service. The city of Copenhagen runs and finances the Breathe SMART courses for people who want to drop out of drug abuse.

One of the driving forces behind the Prison / Breathe SMART program in Denmark is Jakob Lund, who has a personal experience of drugs and violence. Jacob dedicates his life to helping some of the world's toughest criminals for whom violence has become their whole identity as well as their strategy in order to obtain respect and acknowledgement. "One of the big problems is that when you put people in prison, they come out even angrier. I personally don't care whether they have killed somebody or have stolen a bike. I focus on their potential – not on what they did, but on what they do," he says. Many participants have stopped taking drugs and have gone off anti-depressors after following the Prison/Breathe SMART program. Many continue of their own free will to follow the courses Jakob gives a couple of times per week in his own private home in northern Copenhagen. The course has become very popular in the criminal circles in Copenhagen. Some of the ex-prisoners have also become Prison / Breathe SMART trainers themselves.

ITALY

Prison SMART Italy is active in the prisons in Bollate, Opera and San Vittore (in and around Milan). They have trained around 200 prisoners, including men and women, and organise regular follow-up sessions. The team distinguishes itself by its groundbreaking work with sex-offenders. Dozens of sex-offenders have undergone the Prison SMART program and initiatives have been organised to break the discrimination and harassment of sex-offenders by other inmates. The results were presented at the Congrès International Francophone sur l'Agression Sexuelle (the International Congress on Sexual Crimes) held in Paris in 2007. The team has also trained 20 medical staff and the Prison SMART program has become officially part of the rehabilitative therapy of the medical staff. Prison Smart has also started a cooperation with CIPM (Italian Centre for Promotion and Mediation) which has the purpose to take care of the ex-prisoners during the social reintegration after release.

KOSOVO

The Prison SMART program in Kosovo began in 2004, with a pilot program at Lipljan Prison. Since then, hundreds of prison staff and prisoners have undergone the program every week. Reaching out to all ethnicities – Serbs, Albanians, Romas – the programs have brought about such positive transformations that the Department of Justice in Kosovo has opened the door for Prison SMART in all of Kosovo's prisons.

NORWAY

In Norway Prison SMART has taken place in Ringerike Fengsel, Bredtveit Fengsel and Ullersmo Fengsel, reaching out to around 35 prisoners so far.

POLAND

Prison SMART is very renowned and well known in Poland. Since the start of Prison SMART in 1999, more than 7.000 prisoners in more than 56 prisons have followed the training. In total around 600 programs have been organised. In 2009, Anetta Jaworska published a dissertation on Prison SMART under the title "Alternative Therapy in Penitentiary Resocialisation".

SERBIA

In Serbia the Prison SMART team has trained 45 prison staff in the Central Prison in Belgrade, the Padinska Skela Prison in Belgrade and the Zabela Pozarevac Prison.

SPAIN

Prison SMART has been organised in several prisons in and around Madrid: the men's prison Ocana 2, the mixed prison Soto Del Real, and the prison for young adults Madrid 4, as well as in the Alcala Meco Women's prison and in Arrecife on Canary Islands. In total around 170 prisoners have undergone the Prison SMART training.

UK

Since 2004 around 350 prisoners have been trained in the UK, namely in Les Nicolles State Prison in Guernsey, HM Prison Lindholme in Doncaster area and Highdowne Prison in Surrey.

Attempting to cut national reconviction rates, the UK Prison Service spent around 300.000 euros for courses in over 100 prisons in England and Wales. However, research conducted over 2 years found no decline in the reconviction rates. During the first ever Prison SMART training in the UK at HM Prison Lindholme in 2004, both inmates and staff agreed that the training does meet the expectations of an efficient rehabilitation program. The prison chaplains supported the training and expressed their interest in attending, and also the prison staff requested a program to be conducted for them.

"Before the course I was very upset with myself, the decisions I've made in the past. It was quite easy to push my buttons. This course helped me to release a lot of pain I had locked up inside and showed me how to love myself and be happy with who I am. If everything happens for a reason, this course was the reason I came to jail. I would recommend it to anyone, it helped me to forgive myself and others. Every body should give it a try I hope it helps others the same way it helped me."

Inmate, UK

The Prison SMART program has reached more than 250,000 prisoners worldwide, from Denmark, the Balkan States, Poland, Italy, England, Germany, USA, India, South Africa, Mexico, Namibia, Kenya, Dubai, Australia to Russia. It is often conducted with the support of the Ministries of Justice.

As UN Advisor for the Civil Police and former Joint Police Commissioner in New Delhi Dr. Kiran Bedi testified: "Prison Programs were conducted for the Delhi Police Training College, with the idea of getting the police to learn to manage stress and deal with offenders and criminals in a humane way. The results were impressive. So satisfying has been the experience that I strongly recommend that these programs be conducted throughout the world in all prisons and all through police force, in addition to schools, hospitals, other organisations and just about everywhere else."

The efficiency of the Art of Living courses is also recognised within the national legal system in Denmark so that courts of justice no longer send young criminals to prison but to the Prison SMART (youth) program. A prison inspector in Denmark remarked that Prison SMART also caused a reduction in the number of threats and violent actions against prison staff.

In Kosovo the organisation of Prison SMART in all prisons has been supported by the Ministry of Justice. The Ministry of Justice in Croatia has asked Art of Living to organise the programme for all its prison staff.

In India, the Prison SMART program has been used in more than 100 prisons in almost all states. Many state-governments have requested the help of Art of Living in restructuring their prison programmes. In the prison of Tihar, the largest in Asia, more than 30,000 detainees, among whom many hardened criminals, have experienced the positive effects of the course.

In the United States of America Prison SMART has been included in the Violence Alternative Program in the biggest Juvenile Detention Center in the world in the County of Los Angeles Probation Department.

Also in Africa, the Prison SMART program has been recognised by prison directors as an efficient way to reduce crime.

Sample of Recommendation Letters “Prison SMART” from Ministries of Justice, Prison Directors, Prison Personnel

BELGIUM

G. Verschueren, Director, Leuven-Central Prison, Belgium

“The participants were extremely enthusiastic and happy with this training. It is therefore self-evident that this training can be recommended to other institutions.”

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

Hasan Hadzic, Director, Tuzla Prison Camp

BULGARIA

Petr Vasilev, General Director, Incarceration and Punishment Department, Ministry of Justice (Cooperation Agreement)

D. Bongalov, Vice-Minister, Ministry of Justice, Bulgaria

Katja Yanulova, Director Probation Service Stara Zagora, Bulgaria

I. Karushkov, Director, Stara Zagora Prison, Bulgaria

M.Petrova, Director Sliven Prison, Bulgaria

“The participants share that they felt exceptionally beneficial influence, which helped them to cope with the stress, as well as a feeling of relief of the accumulated tension, aggression and bad thoughts. With gratitude, we wish to continue our cooperation.”

R. Zhelyaskov, Director, Varna Prison, Bulgaria

Bozhiya Ivanov, Chief Inspector, Plovdiv Prison, Bulgaria

B. Zebenov, Director, Bobov Dol Prison, Bulgaria

DENMARK

Ina Eliassen, Head of Unit, Directorate for Prison Service – Unit for the Execution of Sentences, Denmark (on the experiences of her staff members)

“The course opened my eyes to the fact that meditation is highly efficient and helps you to get rid of stress and it gives you more energy not only during meditation but all around the clock.”

“This course made me give up all my prejudices about meditation and about what meditation, breathing and yoga can do for you.”

Bente Larsen, Deputy Superintendent, Engelsborg

“Common for all of them [prisoners and ex-prisoners], is that meeting Jakob Lund as a person and Breathe SMART as a concept has been an enriching experience for all and also a personal developmental experience for most of them. It is the experience of Engelsborg that the residents have found their own resources.”

Jorgen Maltesen, Project Leader (alcohol and drug addicts), Alfa-Fredensborg

“The open mind of the Prison/Breathe SMART team and their way of being have made it much easier for the residents and the staff members to receive this new offer. It has been easier for several of the residents to receive the therapeutic treatments after they have participated in the Breathe SMART courses.”

Lene Moller-Nielsen, Prison Inspector, State Prison of Horslerod

“Since 2004 we have continuously offered the Breathe Smart courses to our inmates and about 8 five-day courses take place per year. Our experience is that inmates who take Jakob’s Breathe Smart Course and remain in contact with him after the course reduce their consumption of drugs considerably, and many times they get totally out of drugs abuse. These courses are quite popular among the inmates, so we do not need to motivate them to participate, whereas they are reluctant to follow other kind of courses we offer. Some inmates who have stayed in contact with Jakob over a longer period manage to break the pattern of crime and get into education or labour market. The courses are also popular among staff members. They learn to handle the aggressiveness of the inmates in a constructive way.”

Lene Skov, Probation Department for Community Service

“We would be very sad if we would no longer have the option of sending our clients to the Prison / Breathe SMART program.”

Susanne Ludvigsen, psychotherapist, AIDA

Christian Solholt, Project Leader (Hash and Cocaine Project Copenhagen)

INDIA

Ajay Agrawal, Director General Prisons

Dr. Kiran Bedi, Former Joint Commissioner of Police, UN Civil Police Advisor

Ranjan Dhar, Home for De-toxification, Correction and Rehabilitation, Delhi

D.R. Karthikeyan, Former CBI Director, Director General, National Human Rights Commission

O.D. Mathur, Central Reserve Police Force, Jammu & Kashmir

R.Ramalingam, Commissioner of Police, Bangalore City

Balkar Singh, Inspector General of Prisons, West Bengal

D. Sivanandhan, Joint Director, West Zone, CBI

R.C. Upadhyay, Superintendent, District Jail Bahraich

KOSOVO

Mike Newman, Director, Dubrava Prison, Kosovo Correctional Service, Kosovo

Kujtim Zylfiu, Director, Gilan Detention Center, Kosovo Correctional Service, Kosovo

“110 prisoners and prison staff in Gilan Detention Center have undergone Prison SMART. The experiences of those who took the trainings are very positive and beneficial. The course participants were Serbs and Albanians. They had experience of peacefulness and great relief from depression, anger, insomnia and irritability. I strongly encourage others to benefit from Prison SMART.”

Ago Kolic, Director, Peja Detention Center, Kosovo Correctional Service, Kosovo

“Prison SMART is an ongoing program at Peja prison, whereby nearly half of our prison staff has been given the tools to dissolve job-related stress. Our staff members have been impressed with the effectiveness of this program. They have reported an experience of deep peace, contentment, self-esteem and empowerment. We admire the dedication of IAHV UK as they continue to enhance the overall well being of the prison population in this facility, as well as other Kosovo Correctional Institutions.”

Rasim Selmani, Director, Pristina Detention Center, Kosovo Correctional Service, Kosovo

“Prison SMART is an ongoing program at Pristina Detention Center. More than half of this facility’s population have been involved. This program has turned out to be very effective and helpful to our prison staff.”

Samih Shala, Director, Prizren Detention Center, Kosovo Correctional Service, Kosovo

“80% of our staff members have already learnt this program. My personal experience and the experiences of our staff members have shown that these simple, yet powerful breathing techniques bring deeper sleep, relaxed state of mind and inner peace.”

POLAND

Jan Hernik, Director, Heryn Prison, Poland

Alicja Wojciechowska, Vice-Director, Lodz Prison, Poland

“The Prison SMART sessions met with great interest both from personnel and from the group of participating inmates. I believe that programs like this, its content, well-developed structure and goals, are an extremely valuable initiative and I deeply support you. I am really counting on the fact that this first meeting will develop into further cooperation and subsequent courses with new groups of inmates.”

Marek Gajos, Director, Prison in Wolow, Poland

“The courses were extremely popular, both among staff and inmates, so we look forward to further cooperation.”

SERBIA

Dr. Jasna Daragan Saveljic, Director, Institute on Addictions, Belgrade, Serbia

Borislav, Maric, Director, Department for the Execution of Penal Sanctions, Ministry of Justice, Serbia

SLOVENIA

Irena Kosovel, General Director of Police, Ministry of Interior, Slovenia

“After more than one year of regular anti-stress courses for the employees in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, now also the Centre for the Removal of Foreigners and Asylum Home has organised the training. The participants reported that they felt more relaxed, less aggressive, pessimistic and desperate, already during the program as well as after it. The experts of the Centre assess that the anti-stress program is of high quality and are considering how to finance the anti-stress program and how to include it in one of the regular forms of organised activities for foreigners in the Centre.”

SOUTH AFRICA

N.O. Dayimani, Chairperson Parole Board, Pollsmoor

Hlalele, Resident Chief Psychologist, Baviaanspoort Prison

J.J. Jansen, Head of Prisons, Pollsmoor

“Prison SMART impacts positively towards stabilizing the situation among the inmates, and let them develop a culture of tolerance. This kind of development provided by an organisation like Prison SMART is very relevant and significant within an environment like a prison. What makes their involvement even more special is the fact that it is being done in a highly overcrowded environment where circumstances are not always conducive for activities like these.”

Kubxeka, Operational Support, Baviaanspoort Maximum Correctional Centre, Department of Correctional Services, South Africa

“Almost all offenders at this centre, which currently has over 650 offenders, have completed the stress management course. Since its inception, the fights, gangsterism and misbehaviour have tremendously gone down. It shows that the course has completely changed the attitude of the offenders.”

Smit M., Medium Correctional Center, Leeuwkop, South Africa

SPAIN

Mrs. Lopez-Pelegrin, Deputy Director-General, General Coordination Department for Prisoners, Ministry of Interior

Dr. Cuevas Crespo, Director Correctional Facility Madrid I – Mujeres, May 2008

Director Correctional Facility Madrid IV, March 2008

Dr. Moreno Garcia, Deputy Director Inmates Program, Correctional Facility Ocana II (Toledo), March + July + August + November 2008

UK

Mr. D. Clark, Principal Officer, States Prison, Guernsey

“I have had nothing but positive feedback from prisoners saying how useful they found the week and how much they enjoyed the course.”

Rev. J. Mc Cready, Chaplain, HMP Lindholme Prison, Doncaster

“The courses have proven popular with a number of inmates. The course leaders are very professional in their approach. I would be pleased to welcome another course in the chaplaincy area.”

USA

Charles H. Ramsey, Chief of Police, Government of the District of Columbia, Metropolitan Police Department, Washington DC, USA

James Chambers, Department of Corrections, Maximum Security Facility, Government of the District of Columbia, USA

Scott Billif, Program Coordinator, Madison County Juvenile Detention Home, Probation and Court Services Department, Illinois, USA

Sergeant Terry Haynes, Office of the Criminal Sheriff, Louisiana, USA

Jason Hutchinson, Director, Terrebonne Parish Juvenile Detention Center, Louisiana, USA

James Greathouse, Correctional Officer, Northern Regional Jail and Correctional Facility, West Virginia, USA

KOSOVO CORRECTIONAL
SERVICE

DUBRAVA PRISON

To Whom It May Concern

22nd of July 2005

Prison Stress Management and Rehabilitation Training (PRISON SMART), conducted by Art of Living Foundation Kosovo, with the support of International Association for Human Values from United Kingdom (IAHV UK), is an ongoing program at Dubrava prison – the biggest prison in Kosovo with 700 inmates and 700 staff members.

Since 15th of May 2005, nearly one third of this facility's population have been given the tools to reduce mental and physical stress and to improve their health, and they continue to be given an opportunity to take Prison Smart Program.

Here are the basic overall benefits that participants report after Prison Smart program, based on the recorded interviews with staff members and the written responses from the inmates who have taken this program:

1. 75% of the participants (both inmates and prison staff) report **better quality of sleep**, as a result of this program
2. 35% of the participants who smoke report **less need for cigarettes**, as a result of breathing exercises
3. 60% of the inmates report **less projection of anger**, increased sense of control over themselves, more self esteem and positive approach toward life, and they attribute these changes to their participation in the workshop.
4. 80% of correctional officers who have taken the training, report increased ability to de-link or **dissolve job related stress**
5. 55% of **staff members have requested that we conduct this program for their families**. They report that working in prison effect the life of their families as well.

It did not take long for us to observe the changes and remarkable benefits this program have had on the inmates and staff. Such a simple, effective program could have the far reaching value in our fight against crime.

The experiences of inmates and staff speak for themselves about the potential of this program. This program works, and we are grateful to AOLP Kosovo and IAHV UK for their efforts in providing Prison Smart to inmates and staff at this institution.

Mike Newman
Director
Dubrava Prison





**DEPARTMENT: CORRECTIONAL SERVICES
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

Private bag X2, BRYANSTON, 2021, Tel. (011) 208-9500 Facsimile (011) 260-0241
Main Road, Kyalami, Midrand

International Association of Human Values
P O Box 13357
LAUDIUM
0037

Ref No	:	1/4/7
Date	:	2005-07-13
Inquiries	:	M Smit
Tel no	:	(011) 208-9555
Fax no	:	(011) 208-9532

Dear Sir/Madam

**FEEDBACK ON THE IMPACT OF THE PRISON SMART PROGRAMME ON OFFENDERS :
LEEUWKOP MANAGEMENT AREA**

The prison SMART programme was facilitated at Medium A Correctional Centre from 2001. Many offenders became involved in the programme and the demand for the programme became so high that offenders needed to be placed on waiting lists. As offenders were transferred to other Correctional Centres, the need for the programme also raised in those centres. Consequently the programme was growing and became part of the repertoire of programmes at the other three (3) institutions at the Management Area.

Offenders who went through the programme became more positive in their outlook on life, they became more involved in other rehabilitation programmes and less offenders were involved in gangster activities. Offenders were more focused on preparing themselves for life after their release.

Unfortunately there is a shortage of facilitators of the programme. This lead to fewer programmes less often at all the institutions and is the impact of the programme not so strong as it used to be when offenders could attend the programme more often.

Prison SMART is really an effective programme that offenders enjoy to attend. Some offenders attended the programme more than once.

If more information is needed, please feel free to contact the social worker at the above-mentioned contact numbers.

Yours faithfully



For HEAD: MEDIUM C CORRECTIONAL CENTRE
M SMIT
CHIEF SOCIAL WORKER



Danish Prison and Probation Service
State prison of Horserød
Post Box 532 – 3000 Helsingør
Prison inspector

1st of June 2010

Summary Note on the cooperation between the Danish Prison and Probation Service – State Prison of Horserød and Jakob Lund / Art of Living – Breathe SMART

In 2001, we started our cooperation with Jakob Lund, Breathe SMART on an individual contract for a young inmate, who was serving a 1 year sentence.

Today, almost 500 inmates have completed the course. Since 2004 and until today, 8 annual courses have been held each with 12 to 14 participating inmates.

Since 2008, Prison SMART has been part of the special program under the Danish Prison and Probation Service, which gives selected inmates permission to attain a trial release in accordance with the Criminal Law, section 40a – trial release after completing detention of half the time of the full sentence.

The majority of the inmates are emotionally dominated by feelings of anger, aggression and fear.

The techniques, which are taught on the course, enables the inmates to get in touch with more subconscious feelings, which they learn to embrace and deal with instead of "escaping" by using drugs or getting caught up in criminal behaviour.

The inmates themselves express that they become better at accepting what is, as well as being more in touch with how they feel. Also, they feel better at discriminating between which choices are better or worse for them.

They gain increased self-awareness and improve their ability of expressing their needs and wishes. Furthermore, they show increased empathy as well as an increased attention on how their action as well as lack of action can affect other people.

The state prison can say from a long term experience, based on the inmates, who have had a regular long term contract with Jakob Lund, that they substantially reduce their addiction of illegal drugs – and in most cases, not only reduce but cease their addiction.

Furthermore, the state prison has an overall understanding that the inmates have a very high motivation during the process. Prison SMART is very popular and inmates often recommend participation on the course among themselves. Consequently, the prison need not work as hard to motivate the inmates to participate as it is often required for the other programs, being offered.

The prison sees this as a very positive statement.

Jakob Lund has also been conducting very successful courses for the prison personal.

Some of the inmates, who remain connected to the project over a longer period, have been able to cut free from the criminal life pattern. They are now established within the educational system or part of the labour market.

The state prison can clearly state, that it is the close connection to Jakob Lund / Breathe SMART which has had the extremely positive effect on many of the inmates, who has participated in the courses, held in the state prison.

However, it is of crucial importance to continue the process over a longer period after the serving of the sentence is completed. It requires time, stability and continuity to break free of the life patterns, which have lead to addiction and criminal behaviour.

I, therefore, convey my warmest recommendations for financial support to the rehabilitation programs.

I am available for detailed information, questions etc. on telephone no. 0045 72 55 20 01 / 20 02.

With kindest regards,

Lene Møller-Nielsen

State prison inspector



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
 MAXIMUM SECURITY FACILITY
 Leesons, Virginia 22199

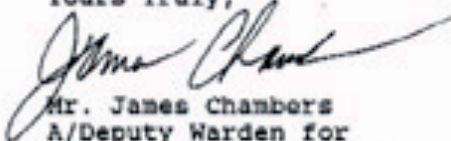
In my career as a Deputy Warden for the District of Columbia D.C. Department of Corrections, Maximum Security Facility. I have always believed in the importance of educating offenses in ways that positively enrich the persons intellectual and emotional well-being. I am taking this opportunity to express my personal recommendation of the Prison SMART Healing Breath Program as a program that has greatly reduced the potential for violence in the D.C. Department of Corrections. When the inmates are in more control of their emotions and thinking more objectively about their lives as a result of their participation in the Prison SMART Program, they create a less hostile environment for my staff.

In the past two (2) years of application of the Prison SMART Program, many of the staff have requested the services of the Prison SMART Foundation to help them defuse their own stress that results from working in a Penal institutions. Both the staff and myself are very impressed with the benefits gained by the participants. I also wish to mention that I am very pleased with the professional behavior of the Prison SMART Volunteers, Mr. Duffy and Mr. Cupp. They are very skilled in finding solutions to the inmates' problems. Their focus on training the participants in finding their own solutions from inside of themselves is a very important point to educate a person in.

The staff of the District of Columbia Department of Corrections always tries to seek solutions to the challenges that face our country's correctional facilities. One very positive application that we have found was to allow Mr. Duffy and Mr. Cupp to come into our facility and do their job to reduce the stress level of the staff working in the facility and to support the inmates in moving forward in life.

The various psychologists working in the facility have reported that the program has been very successful in facilitating criminal rehabilitation as well as a program that can be designed to meet the needs of the staff. I would like to encourage other Prison Administrators to give the program a try. We at the D.C. Department of Corrections did and we are very grateful to the SMART Foundation for its professional productive services.

Yours Truly,


 Mr. James Chambers
 A/Deputy Warden for
 Support and Programs



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

November 13, 2001

To Whom it May Concern,

I took the Art of Living course a year ago to learn some personal stress management tools to support me in my role as chief of the Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Columbia. The techniques are simple, powerful and effective. I'm now exploring making them available to members of my police department, since both officers and command members have expressed an interest in learning effective and healthy ways to cope with the demands of their positions.

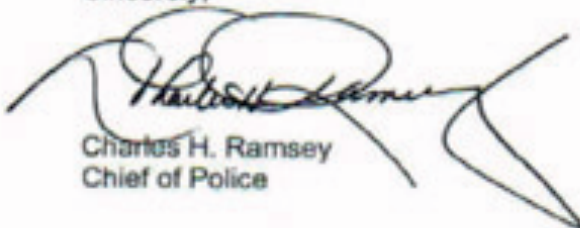
The role of police officer is one of the most intensely demanding and challenging in the arena of public service. While increasingly being directed to enact community policing and develop effective problem-solving relationships with public and private stakeholders, police continue to be the front-line response in the most difficult and dangerous situations, including gang violence, drug dealing, and terrorism. The men and women committed to the diverse rigors of policing deserve an effective response to the toll this field can take.

Over time, the accruing stress of this profession can and frequently does, as statistics show, impact the physical and emotional health of active and retired police officers. As the chief of a major police department, I feel a responsibility to address policing-related health concerns as well as provide tools that can help prevent stress-related issues.

I am not alone in exploring the opportunity to make these techniques available to police and emergency workers. In the past month the Art of Living has provided programming and assistance to the New York Fire Departments and there is interest from the New York Police Department.

In all honesty, the need for effective tools helping police and other emergency personnel deal with the stress of their work has existed for some time. From my experience, the Art of Living course offers techniques that work.

Sincerely,



Charles H. Ramsey
Chief of Police

P.O. Box 1606, Washington, D.C. 20013-1606



PROBATION AND COURT SERVICES DEPARTMENT
Third Judicial Circuit
Madison County, Illinois

DARRELL L. McGBANY
Director

STEVEN M. BOWKER
Superintendent of Detention
100 West Fifth Avenue
Edwardsville, IL 62025
Phone: (618) 692-1002
Fax: (618) 656-4591

Letter of Recommendation for PRISON S.M.A.R.T.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

The Madison County Juvenile Detention Home has been in receipt of a most interesting and unique program appropriately titled "PRISON S.M.A.R.T." PRISON S.M.A.R.T. is a combination of lecture, instruction and practice session presentations in which special breathing techniques and relaxation exercises are demonstrated and performed repetitiously, the effects of which can induce positive changes within individuals.

Acting under the directives of Mr. Thomas Duffy, founder of the PRISON S.M.A.R.T. FOUNDATION, facilitators Bryan Wagner and Martina Roudreau conducted themselves professionally in manner and ability being punctual, courteous and flexible, at all times remaining sensitive to the over-changing demands of the restricted detention environment.

The program is an enlightening experience, offering a refreshing change from usual curricula which attempt to educate from the "outside looking in," whereas PRISON S.M.A.R.T. does just the opposite; empowering individuals to seek understanding within themselves first, giving rise to an opportunistic perspective on life. Along with all of this, participants are taught a technique they can use and take with them for the rest of their lives. The simple, yet profound breathing exercises coupled with the philosophy of this ancient art demonstrated nothing less than a spiritual awakening for many of the participants. Seeing with my own eyes, the effectiveness of the program in terms of helping individuals gain personal insight into stress, conflict, anger, as well as promoting a sense of well-being, has made me a believer. With this in mind, I personally and professionally recommend PRISON S.M.A.R.T. to everyone, especially those who feel alone, misguided, distressed or discontent. It can make a world of difference.

Respectfully,

Scott J. Elliff
Scott J. Elliff
Program Coordinator





Northern Regional Jail and Correctional Facility

CECIL UNDERWOOD, Governor
PAUL KIRBY, Warden



RD 2, BOX 1
MOUNDSVILLE, WEST VIRGINIA 26041

April 20, 1998

Tom,

Last October you and Brian brought your Prison SMART program to West Virginia and the Northern Correctional Facility. It has long been my belief that correctional personnel, all correctional personnel, must find a creative way of limiting the effects stress has on their lives. Stress from day-to-day living coupled with their workplace stress, takes an unrecognized toll on them until their health, family relationships and careers are affected and sometimes shortened.

When you arrived I was having some problems. I was sleeping, but not resting. I woke up most mornings still feeling fatigued. I was having tension headaches and muscle cramps in the middle of the night. My digestion was all out of whack as well. Coffee was a mainstay for me since I was not sleeping at night and needed a "boost." My powers of concentration were down. My levels of frustration were up which was leading me to verbal confrontations with staff and inmates. Not a good thing in a Maximum/Close Custody facility. My family was not immune, to its effects, either.

The breathing techniques taught have made my life and work better in ways you cannot imagine. I'm awake and feeling rested generally now before the clock goes off. I don't have to drink near as much coffee which has also improved my sleep not to mention my digestion. The headaches and muscle cramps-gone. Concentration is back frustration is down. People no longer dread seeing me come through their door. My home life has gotten better, too. In fact sometimes my wife tells me to go somewhere and breathe.

I never realized that something as simple as breathing could have all these benefits. I've recommended the program to everyone I have contact with at work. I've asked my peers to just give it a try and see if they feel they can recommend it to their subordinates. Thank you for coming here and sharing these techniques with me.

Sincerely,

James L. Greathouse,
Correctional Officer IV

“From the first day I was in jail, I felt that this was the worst thing to happen to me. But now, the Prison Program has given me a lot of peace. The thoughts have gone and I feel so good in my mind and heart!”

Inmate, India

“To tell you the truth, this class was the opposite of what I believed it would be. It is more than breathing. It is finding out who you really are, and once that happens, life seems to become a little easier. The breathing takes out all the tension that flows through your body and especially the mind.”

Minor, Challenger Memorial Youth Centre

“I’ve learned to look within myself and not react so aggressively to things I don’t agree with. I have begun to smile again!”

Alena, Russian prison

“Before this course I was afraid of the future, but now we have the feeling that we are also wanted. It is as if the division between criminals and normal citizens has ceased to exist.”

Inmate, India

“My first reaction was “No way!! I’m not going to sit there and meditate.” But I really feel that it helps. I am calmer inside and take things easier.”

Ronnie, Horserød State Prison, Denmark

Interview with inmate Dan, 23, in Horserød State Prison (Denmark)

- In what way has the course changed you as a person?

I now have some tools to relax more. I have a higher self esteem. And therefore it has become easier to choose not to smoke pot.

- Do you behave differently in conflict situations?

Recently I was going to be released conditionally. But only 17 days before my cell was checked for stolen goods and they found some. That means that I will now be released 6 months later. Normally I would run amok and destroy everything. When you are about to be released and then in the end you don't, your whole world breaks down. At that point it helped me a lot to meditate. So even though it was a nasty situation I felt ok anyway.

- Will it also help you when you get out of prison?

I think it will. And I know that I will continue to follow the courses at Jakob's place twice per week.

- What's the most difficult part of the course?

Many of us inmates have had a tough life and our feelings have been stoved away. It can be hard to meet those feelings again.

“I have discovered that I can attain an inner peace through the breathing exercises and that there exists peace for our mind.”

Inmate, Belgium

“The course gives the possibility to feel happy independent of the circumstances one finds oneself in.”

Inmate, Belgium

“If something bothers me, I do not express it, but store it inside. The course was very good. I sleep better. Thoughts that made me angry last week, don't affect me any longer. I have learned not to live in the past and not to postpone happiness. That I have to be happy NOW.”

Inmate, Belgium

“I had subscribed for the course in order to be away from my cell. I did not expect to experience so much benefit. I learned that using the breath I can release a lot of stress and aggression. There should be more courses like these.”

Inmate, Belgium

“This period in prison has been one of the worst experiences of my life. I was very sad and depressed. I felt within me that my whole system was in prison. I found it very difficult to interact with the other inmates. But since I have been in this course with the Prison SMART I feel better. I feel within my soul that I am free. I have a better connection with the other inmates. So I want to say thank you to Prison SMART for coming into my life at a time where I needed it the most.”

Woman, inmate, Norway, 32 years

“I never realised how much tension I had until I started this course. I was definitely more stressed and angry before. It's a better place now. It feels like a weight has been lifted and there is no more worries. This course has done wonders for me and I have taken more from this course than any other. Just like to say thanks for giving me this chance. Thanks.”

Inmate, UK

“My state of mind before the course, I was stressed out, in so much regret, I just couldn't forgive myself for being in prison, couldn't stop thinking about the set back and what people will be thinking of me. I was heart-broken and felt like I wanted to die. I learnt all about the bullet points, how to forgive myself, how to be in control of my emotions, ego, and be aware of my entire environment. I also learnt how to breathe out all the pain and stress. My state of mind after the course is freedom within me and being very aware of my emotions, ego, and of everything. This course is very encouraging. I have learnt a lot that I didn't know before. I have forgotten and forgiven myself about the past. I'm a happy man within. When I am anywhere I know how to control my ego, emotion, and be aware of everything around me.

The teacher is very good, the process she uses to teach is very effective, encouraging and educating. It would be nice if all prisoners can get a chance to attend. Thank you for letting me in this course.”

Inmate, UK

In most countries Prison SMART is administered by the partner organisations International Art of Living Foundation and the International Association for Human Values.

The International Art of Living Foundation is a non-profit, educational and humanitarian organisation active in more than 140 countries. The aim of Art of Living is to create non-violent and stress-free societies via multilateral activities, which bring about peace at the level of individuals, communities, nations and the world.

IAHV is an international humanitarian and educational non-governmental organization committed to promote resurgence of human values in all aspects of life across the globe. The Association partners with governments, educational institutions, other NGOs, corporations, businesses and individuals, to develop and promote programs of personal development to encourage the practice of human values in everyday life.

The Art of Living Foundation along with its sister organisation IAHV enjoy special consultative status with ECOSOC (United Nations) and cooperate with various commissions on health, education, sustained development, conflict resolution and emergency help. In 27 years they have grown to be one of the largest voluntary organisations in the world. Their social and humanitarian projects and programmes for trauma relief, self development and stress reduction have reached more than 200 million people of all nationalities, cultures and religions worldwide.

Contact

Dr. Katrien Hertog
Director Prison SMART Europe
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0032-495-625818
www.prisonsmart.eu