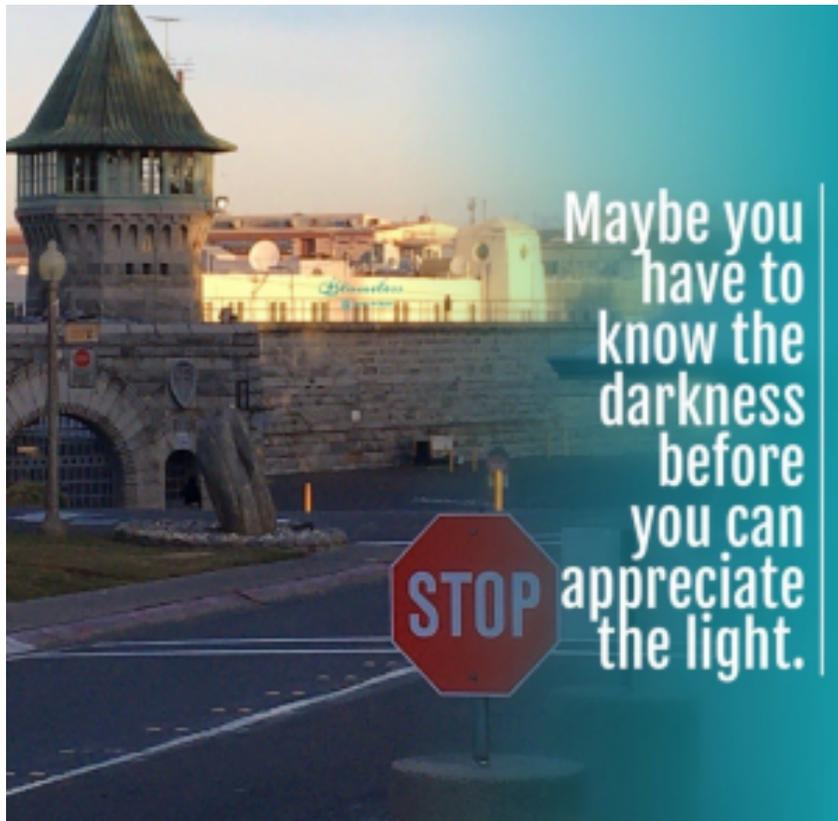




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## **From Prison To Community - Where Punishment Ends and Healing Begins!**

### **Hurt People Hurt Others, But Healed People Heal!**

We want to share an amazing story with you today, tragic as it may be; but one we believe will save lives. According to the renown Dr. Robert Block, “**Adverse childhood experiences [ACEs] are the single greatest unaddressed public health threat facing our nation today.**”

And with that knowledge, we **MUST** never lose sight of the fact that **hurting children grow into hurting adults!**

The trauma of the past notifies us of the pressing issues and challenges of today. Trauma exists in the hearts, minds and bodies of many of our incarcerated. And we get this opportunity and honor to help our residents inside Folsom State Prison as they write the next, more profound, restorative chapters of their lives.

**Working together, we not only receive healing ourselves, but future generations will also reap the benefits of what we sow. And that is the goal of the ACE-Aware Initiative; reducing ACEs and trauma by 50 percent in the course of one generation.**

**Education and awareness about adverse childhood experiences are the essential first steps** in understanding the stories of our incarcerated.

In order to decrease criminal recidivism, treatment intervention must focus on the effects of early-life experiences the moment one first enters state prison. If we don't, generations of offenders will be born. And with our prison systems overwhelmed with over 2.2 million residents with the highest levels of trauma and ACE scores ever, it's obvious our carceral system no longer works; in fact, it never did!

ACEs screening helps us to connect, engage in and collaborate with the residents inside the prison who are in pursuit of healing and wellness. This is the driving force, after all, of **Dr. Nadine Burke Harris' work** as the first California Surgeon General in leading system reform, and why Blameless is honored to be a part of the ACE-Aware Initiative, prioritizing rehabilitation, through recognition and response of the effects that ACEs have on our biological systems while addressing the lifelong impacts of trauma.

### **No App Can Replace Human Contact!**

The ACE-Aware Initiative and the strength of our community safety net **exposed a tremendous need: No app can replace human contact!** Humanity craves connection and relatedness. It taps into our emotional lifeline that we all need in order to survive what COVID has deprived!

Trauma screening is a twofold blessing in that its early intervention serves also as a prevention. In walking through the screening itself, we get the opportunity to connect with and be a buffer zone that is not only caring and empathetic, but a resilience builder, to the resident's stressors.

Trauma-informed care (TIC) recognizes and responds to the signs, symptoms and risks of trauma to better support the health needs of residents inside our prisons who have experienced ACEs and toxic stress. Research shows that early detection, early intervention, and TIC can improve health outcomes significantly.

It's through these teachable moments and engagement, by educating others about the effects of trauma and offering new tools of feedback and possibilities, we get blessed with another door opening encouraging the disruption of the perpetuation of generational trauma by developing new skill mindsets.

### **Hurt people may hurt others, but healed people heal!**

There's no way to further rationalize that healing can or will occur without human connection and presence in fellowship. **No app can replace human contact!**

Due to the isolation and loneliness that has wreaked havoc on the [2,100 residents alone sitting in Folsom State Prison](#), after being in lockdown for a year now, their physical, mental and cognitive health has deteriorated, causing depression and suicidal ideation. This has been triggered by social isolation due to COVID-19 and the instability and forfeiture of the programming and activities inside the prison being compromised.

Lack of social connection heightens health risks as much as smoking 15 cigarettes a day or having an alcohol-use disorder, according to Dr. Julianne Holt-Lunstad, PhD. She also notes, "**There is robust evidence that social isolation and loneliness significantly increases risk for premature mortality, and the magnitude of the risk exceeds that of many leading health indicators.**"

**This is our collective impact opportunity to transform lives and culture** and shift the paradigm by building a network of care that our communities are in dire need of; focusing on healing and wholeness for safer communities along with severing generational cycles of crime.

How can we be supportive, empathetic and more nurturing to one another? We are being called to add more humanity, connectivity and forgiveness to how we care for, engage in and support ourselves and those we serve. **Predictability and consistency lead to stability**; that's what solid relationships in community offer others impacting physical and mental needs for life.

### **Raising awareness that's inspirational, educational and relational.**

Blameless decided to write new programming; to continue to somehow meet the behavioral needs and changes during isolation. Writing new programs is one thing, but printing out lengthy coursework is another. It's not only costly, timely and piecemealed, but inefficient due to shipping demands and governmental restrictions.

With over 2,100 residents alone at Folsom State Prison, **"facilitation"** became the **"key" missing link** tying it all together due to the relational element of community that delivers safety, predictability, accountability and stability. We all need a

consistent, invested community to surround us while promoting changed behaviors. Safety and consistency is an essential element needed for trauma-informed prison care.

Failing to recognize that 95% of our offenders will be released back into our communities as our new neighbors, with or without rehabilitation, yields nothing but mass incarceration, overcrowded prisons and a homeless epidemic. The majority of our residents re-enter society in worse shape than when they entered state prison in the first place because of a lack of focus on rehabilitation and we wonder why our recidivism rates are so high.

If we look at the men and women who are incarcerated, they have the highest levels of trauma and abuse in their lives due to adverse childhood experiences and environments. And we put them in a system that was NEVER designed to work with people with that kind of history in the first place. What were we thinking?

Our overcrowded prisons and jails are filled with caged and traumatized residents, leaving many children and families suffering. We need to invest in people, not prisons, in order to initiate transformation that changes the culture and that requires rehabilitation. Transforming our prisons through trauma-informed care is essential for healing and wholeness and restored lives for all affected by crime.

That is why we are asking for your generous support and gifting of tablets/laptops that will help change and save many lives and help us bring healing, wholeness and second chances to our incarcerated through constant programming and connection.

The founder of Blameless used to be like most people; never gave much thought to our prison residents until her own family's generational dysfunction exposed the need behind a need and the great cause that so many turn their backs on: Re-Offenders Lack Relationships!

Having a facilitator's presence on a tablet/laptop screen fulfills that consistent, stable human need for comfort and trust, along with facilitating the class and instruction. It also opens the door virus-free for all to participate at selected times in order to continue the healing process in keeping the stability of the programs intact and ongoing through communications, education and human contact.

Our board of directors is enthusiastic about this program and eager to launch it **since we aim for Folsom State Prison to be an iconic symbol of healing and wholeness where all parties transform culture through trauma-informed practices. But we need to start rehabilitation on day one, not five or ten years down the road of their incarceration. Healing takes time!**

We understand how many feel about our incarcerated, but please hear the founder's heart out before any more judgment arises:

**We can't just pretend to love others. We have to really love them!!! Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good (Romans 12:9). Yes, they're someone's child who came from a rough childhood, but redemption is possible and transformation occurs when we invest in lives, not prisons!**

We have all lived through this past year in some sort of shackles ourselves and isolation. And I'm sure we've even felt a snippet of what it's like to be imprisoned due to COVID-19's restrictions.

We are honored to meet so many amazing residents inside our prisons. Most are not the monsters the media portrays, and many committed their crimes before the tender age of 18 when their brains were still developing and processing, and their lives have significant worth and value. In fact, most of them are loving, compassionate, hard working and quite humble. They just want to give back, receive forgiveness and learn how to be successful members of society upon release.

They are dealing with old traumas that they never understood how or why the triggers from their violent and traumatic pasts contributed to criminal conduct and the generational strongholds that have molded and entangled the behaviors of their lifestyles and their families.

**Taking the time to be silent and listen changes lives! If only we could all seek to understand before seeking to be understood!**

It's time to change the narrative and bring healing into our communities through communication instead of division and discrimination. Our incarcerated deserve love, forgiveness and second chances, but it's going to take every fiber of our community's safety net to help in some way with this great need!

Changing the residents' environment, first of all, is of the utmost importance! They need contact, connection and communications.

Blameless will continue facilitating our healing circle groups along with the coursework through the internet, but our emergency situation herein lies with the **GRAND NEED** of an influx of approximately [2,066 tablets/notebooks for our men's prison side at FSP, along with 63 tablets/notebooks for our women's side.](#)

We are excited to have this **HUGE NEED** because every new challenge fulfilled is a gift from above and we would love to partner with you personally as one of our many donors in helping make Folsom State Prison the first healing center pilot experiment where staff, incarcerated members and their families can participate together in being a bridge created solely to solve problems that restores lives in our communities while severing this intergenerational cycle of violence!

Today's offender will be tomorrow's neighbor and changing today's environment will benefit everyone affected by crime, especially our littles! We have to not only protect our children, but also equip them with awareness and preventive tools. Isn't that what life is about, loving and serving our communities for the benefit of mankind?

Equipping residents with new tools to exist in their communities as productive members of society does not excuse the crime they've committed; rather, it ushers in changed lives leading to safer communities, accountability, lowering recidivism rates and severing generational offenders through transformation and restoration.

And let me share, love wins! When you've grown up in dysfunction without the stability of love, safety, nurturing or healthy relationships; being loved on and supported is the greatest gift you can give to anyone and its trickling pours out and reaches other hurting beloveds offering healing.

Blameless and Forever Free Ministries' mission is to break the cycle of intergenerational trauma and crime DUE to adverse childhood experiences while restoring broken lives through God's Great Love infused with restorative justice practices and trauma-informed care.

We would be honored to partner together by putting tablets directly into the hands of all of our residents at Folsom State Prison to initiate a new campaign for healing centers with continued programming. We understand this is a huge undertaking, but before more lives are lost and countless others destroyed, we must step in and change the paradigm that has failed us.

Thank you for your consideration of our request. We look forward to hearing from you along with suggestions as to how you feel our partnership/collaboration can continue to bring awareness to the rehabilitative needs of our incarcerated population and for safer communities leading towards redemption and transformation.

Warm Regards,

*Tammy M. Ingram*

***Tammy M. Ingram, Founder/Executive Director***

**Blameless and Forever Free Ministries**

**Generous Hearts, Valiant Voices**

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