

METANOIA

(10-15 minutes maximum. Discussion, poster and summary sharing. This talk is given by an inside team member.)

Please limit your talk to 10-15 minutes. Try to follow the outline as close as possible. The most important part of this talk is your own story. Please be as much open, honest and sincere as possible.

PREPARING YOUR TALK: Before writing anything you must understand what "metanoia" means. Metanoia is a greek word that means change of heart. This talk is about your change of heart. This talk is very much like the part of the Prodigal Son story when the son decides to return to the Father. But the focus on this talk is not on forgiveness and acceptance but on repentance, your own repentance.

Repentance means to die to yourself, to turn away from sin and dedicate yourself to the amendment of your life. To repent means to feel regret for what you have done. The main point of this talk is to share with the whole group how you have experienced repentance. Write down and answer these questions. How have you repented? How did you do it? Why? What made you to repent? Did anything special happen to you that made you repent.

This change of heart involves changes in your way of living, in your way of thinking, in your way to treat other people. This change is also the realization that you are not the center of everything. Once you have changed Jesus becomes the center in your life. Jesus becomes the reason for what you do. He becomes your friend and your brother. Write down and answer these questions: How did you make the decision to change? Did anyone help you to change? How did you feel when you made the decision to change? Is there peace in your heart? How do you feel? How do you feel about Jesus becoming your friend and your brother? How do you feel about the person who helped you to change?

This change of heart takes time, it doesn't happen overnight. It takes courage to change your way of living. It's not easy to change your way of thinking. You have to work hard at it. Explain in your own words how do you feel about this tremendous task that you have undertaken. Write down and answer these questions. Can you do it along? How do you feel when you slip? How do you keep Jesus at the center of your life? What happens when you fail to do it?

It is very important that you share why you are telling your story to the group. Your experience may be a lesson to others and you may be helping a lot of people sharing your story. There may be more than one person in the same situation. Write down and answer these questions: What do you expect to accomplish by sharing your story? Why are you sharing your most inner and private feelings with others? Is this the real you or are you wearing a mask?

It is very common to wear masks inside a correctional facility in order to survive. You may want to look tough and wear a macho mask. When you experience Metanoia you take off all your masks, you become a real person. When you get rid of all your masks you are free. Having Jesus at the center of your life gives you the only real freedom you can ever have. Everyone can fail you, Jesus never does.

You may answer some of the questions, all the questions or none at all. They are here to help you in writing your talk only. You can answer your own questions and share your experience in your own

way. Remember, you are the most important part of this talk.

GIVING YOUR TALK: Open with a short prayer
 Read what you have written

NOTE: You must have your talk ready for one of the inside meetings. You will be notified in advance of the date and time. On that date you will read your talk to the teams and they will make suggestions for improvement. Listen to the suggestions and make the necessary changes. Explain your point of view if you don't agree with any of the suggestions. Remember, you are the most important part of this talk, not the words you use or the way to say it.

At the inside team formation meetings the Lay Director will meet on a one to one basis with the assignee for this talk to coach him. The message of repentance and the way the resident shows his change of heart in his behavior and relationships must be clear.