

2nd September 2008

BOURNEMOUTH THRESHOLD DIALOGUE

Where everyone learns
but nobody teaches

PRISON DIALOGUE: HMP GUYS MARSH

Tuesdays 9–10:30am ETS Room

How we respond to our environment (Talking about our b*****s!)

Participants: 5 Offenders & 4 Others (Prison Officer, Housing Officer & PD)

LEARNINGS

"I'm in for a stabbing. The judge said it was extreme provocation but will they take any notice of that when they look at my HDC? I haven't got my hopes up but I've put in an application just in case. I wish someone would tell me if I'm not going to get it because of my offence." (Offender)

"I like coming to these sessions because I get to talk about my b*****s (laughs). It's good to do that because otherwise everything builds up inside me and then comes out sideways on the wing." (Offender)

"I've done all the courses available here, there's nothing left for me to do. How do I stay motivated, I don't want to go backwards. Should I think about transferring out to another prison for a new start?." (Offender)

People need a reason to get up in the mornings and do something purposeful.

"I listen to your story and think 'there but for the grace of god go I'. I'm the kind of person that would have gone out to help the guy too. But then what if the attacker hits his head on the pavement and I'm in prison for manslaughter. It could happen to any of us. This is helpful to understand the true stories behind the people we see on the wings." (Housing Officer)

There are lots of ways the system can raise your expectations. If you don't manage that you can be let down with a thud.

"People aren't coming because they're not compelled to be here." (Offender)

"When my alarm went off at 6am this morning I didn't want to get up. I knew I'd get my **** kicked if I didn't come. If it wasn't for that compulsion, I don't know if I'd make it." (PD)

"X & Y enjoy coming. They may just be having a bad few weeks and want to keep out of the way." (Offender)

"I'd like them to come in when they ARE having a bad day so we can work it through. It's the bad days when you go back to heroin or offending. You need to know different ways to handle it." (PD)

It's not external events that define you, it's how you respond to those events.

"I got knocked back for parole on my birthday. I kept it to myself for a couple of days. Officers had said if anyone was going to get it it was me. If I'd let my expectations get up I'd have a real problem accepting it, but I didn't let the build up get to me, so it's been easier. But I know I'm being a bit different in my behaviour." (Offender)



Bournemouth Threshold Dialogue brings Bournemouth offenders together in open conversation with the agencies responsible for their supervision and support. Dialogues are themed on the issues affecting re-offending. The process starts in custody and continues post-release in the community, emphasising support, challenge, responsibility and early intervention. Threshold Dialogue is supported by Bournemouth Safer and Stronger Communities Partnership.