

26th August 2008

BOURNEMOUTH THRESHOLD DIALOGUE

Where everyone learns
but nobody teaches

PRISON DIALOGUE: HMP GUYS MARSH

Tuesdays 9 – 10:30am ETS Room

How to help yourself

Participants: 7 Offenders & 6 Others (Prison Officer, IMB, Housing Officer, PD, Agency Ex-offender)

LEARNINGS

"I've been where you are. I've been in prisons for 19 years and believe me, the system is not set up to give you an easy ride. I can hear so much frustration for everyone in this room. What is easier to change, the system or yourself? I think we know the answer to that."
(Agency Ex-offender)

"I wanted to do a bricklaying course but I got knocked back because I can't read or write. I want to learn, but it's difficult for me to do something like that in prison - your head's not in the right place."
(Offender)

"It's about my relationship with myself. So many frustrations but I let it all fly past me. If you get sucked into it you'll get angry and when you carry anger around it only hurts you in the end."
(Offender)

It's easy to feel like a victim in prison.

"The system's out to get me - always has been. In (prison x) they accused me of head-butting an officer, but the guy didn't have a mark on him. I was black and blue. All they offered me was Rule 43 but I didn't want it so I stayed on the seg for 3 months. It was pure mental torture, I cut up. He got away with it and I got 21 days. How can I trust anyone in authority?"
(Offender)

Building self awareness and personal responsibility is a big step to coping and developing.

Lots of offenders struggle with authority because of their past experiences.



"I've put applications in - five times - no response. Now I document everything - what and who I asked and when. I ask officers to document the fact that I asked onto my wing file. So when they look at what I've done and it's not much, I can prove that I tried and tried to reduce my re-offending."
(Offender)

"I want to pick you up on that - you say that no-one gives a **** about you. I've been burgled four times - my grandmother's wedding ring was stolen. When that happened, no-one gave a **** about me. I was a victim of a crime and no-one cared. It's not just you."
(IMB)

"As of Monday we're having NA on a Monday, AA on a Tuesday, CA on a Wednesday. It's a real start and we're going to be running it on Saxon. What we're short of is literature for the sessions - Big Book, leaflets, stuff like that - can anyone help?"
(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.