

Exodus Cadre, College & Contact Program

In the early 70's a concept that was developed by The Exodus Cadre provided three programs that operated in prison and a post-release program that provided support when men were released. The programs inside were The Exodus Cadre, The College Program, and The Contact Program. The Cadre and College programs were for long-term inmates and the Contact Program was designed for short-term transitional preparation. The post-release program provided six weeks room rent and fifty dollars a week stipend. Attached to the programs was a research consultant who measured the success of the participants upon release.

Some of the results were obvious and expected. The men coming out of the long-term programs had a much lower recidivism rate than those coming out of the short-term groups. One day, however, our research consultant brought to our attention an interesting pattern that developed in a group of about thirty men who had served long sentences and had been released. About two years out, an unconscious pattern began to develop that was common to all. It seemed that without being aware of it they decided that they "can't make it out here," and began a pattern of failure that pointed them in a direction to return to prison. The following elements were involved and common to all in the group:

1. Separation and alienation from family, spouse, and friends
2. Moved out to single room or street
3. Set themselves up to get fired from job
4. Reestablished old relationships with people from prison
5. Developed old habits and dependencies

The time element seemed particularly significant with this group. This process seemed to begin right around the beginning of the second year. It also wasn't tied to success or failure. Many of the men were considered to be doing quite well. Some concluded at the time that there is a big

difference between short-term and long-term success.