

READY STEADY GO!

**Be Your Own
Boss: Meet
two women who
founded their
own businesses
after prison!**

**Poetry Workshop
from poet and
performer Lady
Unchained**

**Cell Workout
from personal
trainer Lee**

**Word Search and
Sudoku Puzzles**



**Women
in Prison**

Tell us about your experience of the Covid-19 lockdown

Our lives have been turned upside down by the current coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis. Many people are experiencing changes in their daily routine and face greater restrictions because of the increased lockdown measures inside prison. These restrictions have reduced the ability to stay in touch with family and friends, while impacting mental and physical health.

Drawing or writing down your thoughts can be a helpful way to work through these challenging times and by sharing your experience you may help others to process their own feelings.

You can share your experience of the coronavirus crisis in different ways; you could submit a diary entry, a drawing, a poem, a short story, an interview or a personal essay. We want you to be as creative as possible!

Submission guidelines:

- We accept submissions via post, please include a completed consent form (see p63) with your entry and send it to Freepost – WOMEN IN PRISON (in capitals)
- We may publish your entry in the next magazine, on social media, or use in our campaigning (only if you give us permission using the consent form on p63)
- If your work is published in the magazine, you will receive £10!

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Women in Prison (WIP) is a national charity founded by a former prisoner, Chris Tchaikovsky, in 1983. Today, we provide support and advice in prisons and run three community women's centres: the Beth Centre in Lambeth, London, the Women's Support Centre in Woking, Surrey and WomenMATTA in Manchester.

WIP campaigns to reduce the number of women in prison and for significant investment in community-based support services for women so they can address issues such as trauma, mental ill-health, harmful substance use, domestic violence, debt and homelessness. These are factors that are often the reasons why women come into contact with the criminal justice system in the first place.

WIP's services are by and for women. The support available varies from prison to prison and depends on where a woman lives in the community. If WIP is unable to help because of a constraint on its resources, it endeavours to direct women to other charities and organisations that can. WIP believes that a national network of women's centres, properly funded, that provide holistic support, is the most effective and just way to reduce the numbers of women coming before the courts and re-offending.

WIP's services include...

- **Visits in some women's prisons**
- **Targeted "through the gate" support for women about to be released from prison**
- **Support for women in the community via our women's centres in London, Surrey and Manchester**
- **READY STEADY GO! A magazine written by and for women affected by the criminal justice system with Magazine Editorial Groups in some women's prisons**
- **WIP's services are open to women affected by the criminal justice system in England. Women can choose to attend, leave, or return to our services. None are compulsory.**



Got something to say?

Please contact Women in Prison at the FREEPOST address below.

Please also send a consent form, turn to p63 for details

Write or call free:

Freepost WOMEN IN PRISON
Call us free on 0800 953 0125

Email us on:

info@wipuk.org

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5 STOCKWELL MEWS
LONDON
SW9 9GX
TEL: 0207 359 6674

WIP's freephone is not an emergency phone number. Please know that whatever you are going through, a Samaritan will face it with you, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Call the Samaritans for free on 116 123.

CONFIDENTIAL

Our service is confidential. Any information given by a service user to Women in Prison will not be shared with anyone else without the woman's permission, unless required by law.



Welcome



to the latest edition of WIP's magazine. For those of you familiar with our magazine, you may notice some changes in this edition. After

consulting with you and collecting general feedback about the magazine, we felt it was time for a rebrand. Subsequently, we have introduced a regular Health and Wellbeing section sponsored by our new Healthy Foundations project and a Know Your Rights section to advise on your legal rights. Please let us know what you think about the new look and feel of the magazine. The next step is a new name, so please keep your ideas coming in. We want to hear from you!

We hope you find some peace and enjoyment in this edition of the magazine. We have tried to include lots of activities for you to do such as a high intensity interval training (HIIT) workout, a poetry workshop and puzzles. There is also a think piece by writer, researcher and activist Amelia Horgan discussing different forms of work, such as care giving and housework, which are often undertaken by women and go overlooked. The same is true of the care giving that

happens between those in prison, and in women's centres, with women so often giving other women a 'lift' and sharing both the dark days and the bright. We know that this has never been more important than during these very difficult last few weeks of the Covid-19 crisis.

Here, at Women in Prison, we are wishing you all well and our thoughts are with you every day. Please know we have been campaigning hard to make sure those in prison are not forgotten and the government focuses on early releases and significantly reducing the prison population. We have also been ensuring that our virtual Women's Centres are providing vital frontline support to women and their families. Do consider sharing with us your experiences of the lockdown with our writing exercise set out on the inside cover of this magazine.

Robert Louis Stevenson said we should judge each day not "by the harvest you reap but by the seeds you plant" – as we enter summer, a special thanks goes to those of you grafting through the year to make prison gardens look so beautiful, bringing joy and hope to so many of us.

Kate

Chief Executive of Women in Prison

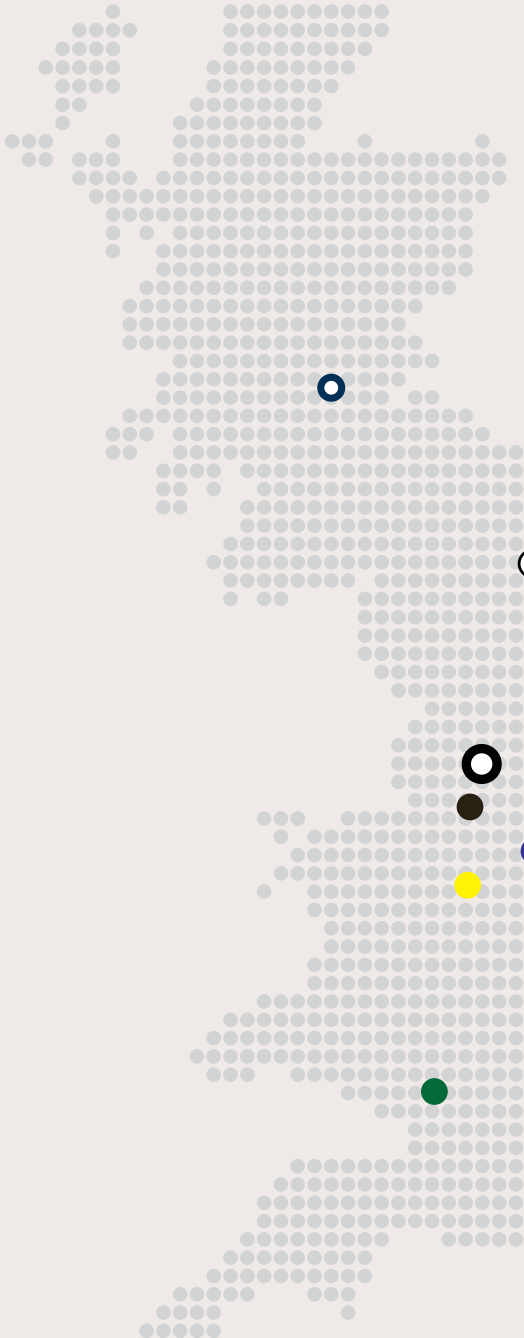
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The magazine you are reading is free for all women affected by the criminal justice system in the UK.

We send copies to all women's prisons and you should be able to find the magazine easily. If you can't, write to tell us. If you are a woman affected by the criminal justice system and would like to be added to our mailing list for free, please contact us at Freepost WOMEN IN PRISON or info@womeninprison.org.uk.

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Registered charity number 1118727



Women's Centres run by WIP

- WomenMATTA – Manchester
- The Beth Centre – Lambeth, London
- Women's Support Centre – Woking, Surrey

Women's Prisons

- HMP Low Newton – near Durham
- HMP Askham Grange – near York
- HMP New Hall – near Wakefield
- HMP Foston Hall – near Derby
- HMP Styal – near Manchester
- HMP Drake Hall – Eccleshall, Staffordshire
- HMP Peterborough
- HMP Eastwood Park – near Bristol
- HMP Downview - Sutton, Surrey
- HMP Send – Ripley, Surrey
- HMP Bronzefield – Ashford, Surrey
- HMP East Sutton Park – Maidstone, Kent
- HMP Cornton Vale – Scotland



**“It all of a sudden just made sense.
This is the journey that was written
for me to take. Now I can teach my
fellow brothers and sisters that:**

**It’s not about anger,
it’s about peace;**

**It’s not about power,
it’s about grace;**

**It’s not about hatred,
it’s about love.**

**These are the lessons I learnt while
in prison, so you don’t have to go
there to learn the same lessons.**

**The choice is yours,
I choose to be Unchained.”**

— Lady Unchained

Working women

How care work
makes the world
go round

Words: Amelia Horgan

Illustration: Millie Chester

Amelia Horgan, writer, researcher and activist, reflects on the meaning of 'work' and why women's unpaid labour should be recognised.



TO DO:

coffee ✓

shopping

Wash

Wash

Adults love to ask young children what they want to be when they grow up. Usually, this means “what job do you want?” And usually, adults think what children say is unrealistic. Adults like to think that this question is asked for the sake of the child, to show that they are interested in what that particular child has to say, but, in reality, it is for the sake of the adults. In doing so, adults make themselves smug or sad by drawing attention to the gap between youthful expectation and adult reality. How is it that our idea of what is possible diminishes so quickly? We might want to do all kinds of things when we are young. More importantly, we believe that we have a fair shot at doing what we want. Yet, as we grow older we face the harsh reality that most enjoyable jobs are only available to a small number of people in society. Some people get to be pop stars, others get to clean their houses. Some people get paid a little, others get paid a great deal.

Another thing that adults like to tell young children is that the quickest way to be successful is to work hard. In reality, a lot of people who are rich, who have enjoyable and interesting jobs, or don't have to work at all, were born into rich families. Others get lucky. As we spend much of our time at work, this unequal access to jobs has a large impact on people's everyday lives. Poorly paid, stressful jobs where workers have little control over what they do, makes people miserable and sick. These workers may even face harassment from employers or customers, which is particularly true for women working in the service sector, such as cleaning and waitressing. At school, we learn an official curriculum and an unofficial one. The official curriculum includes the stuff of classes, exams, homework, and so on. The less obvious, unofficial cur-

riculum, teaches the justifications for inequality, instructing people in how to understand the failings of the system as their own personal failings. If you tell people that working hard brings success, you're also telling them that unsuccessful people simply haven't worked hard enough.

I often wonder why some things are recognised as jobs, and paid as jobs, and others aren't. How is it decided whose effort is financially rewarded, and whose isn't? Women know, more than most, that you can't just stop, you've got to find ways to get money, to keep yourself and others afloat. While some things are widely recognised as jobs, such as waitressing and working on checkout tills, other jobs are not given this weight.

There are over 1.5 million single mothers in the UK, with over a million women as the main or only carer of their children. Looking after children involves a huge amount of effort: preparing food, cleaning the house, bathing the children, helping them with homework, and getting them to school. When added up, the hours of work done by a single mother can be much higher than those of a full-time job. Mothers, or at least some mothers, receive money for this, usually in the form of Child Benefit. But they receive this money (in increasingly minimal amounts), not in recognition of their efforts or contributions to society, but as begrudging charity.

Care work in the home, raising children and looking after elderly family members is seen as something women 'naturally' do, and remains largely invisible. This supposed naturalness plays a part in why it remains unpaid. Why would you pay someone for something they would do anyway? This divide — between those whose everyday effort is recognised with a wage and those whose isn't — is often a question of

“There are over 1.5 million single mothers in the UK, with over a million women as the main or only carer of their children. When added up, the hours of work done by a single mother can be much higher than those of a full-time job.”

gender. While legal recognition or payment does not make a job enjoyable or non-exploitative, it does allow workers to make formal complaints about their jobs and organise together to change practices in their workplace. Instead, housework is privatised and individualised; work is done by individuals, not together in workplaces. Because of this, women’s work in the home involves a multiplication of tasks. Imagine how much quicker washing could be done or food could be made if an entire street coordinated these tasks. We might call the forced privatisation of housework ‘drudgery’ — work that involves more effort than it really needs to.

Feminist groups have tried to show the effort that goes into women’s work in the home. One way they’ve tried to do this is by striking for one day each year. They hope that, by withholding their work, they will show just how busy women are and how much they keep the world going. These campaigns demand reforms of the welfare system, asking for enough money for people to actually live, not merely survive, and for benefits to not unfairly penalise single mothers

or large families, as the government’s ‘benefit cap’ has done. Their strike challenges the idea of what ‘work’ is, questioning the unfair distribution of jobs, and why some things are defined as jobs, and others aren’t. They ask the question that many women have wondered: “what would happen if I stopped, who would pick up the pieces?”

From the Grunwick strikers – South Asian women workers at a North London film processing plant in the 70s who fought for better working conditions – to recent campaigns about tipping for waiting staff; women are at the forefront of the fight to transform work. They’re fighting for unpaid care work to be recognised as work and for their concerns as working women to be taken seriously. They demand a re-understanding and reorganising of the world, pushing us towards a future without misery or drudgery. ●

*Amelia is currently completing a PhD on the place of work in the feminist political imaginary and writing her first book, **Lost in Work: Escaping Capitalism** (Pluto, 2020).*

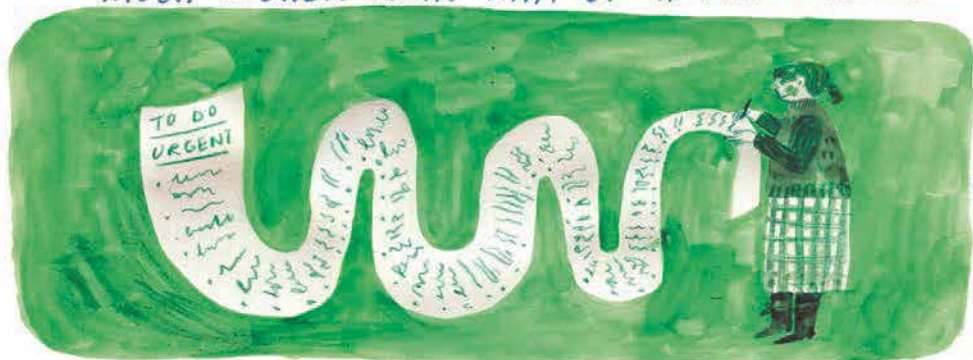
WHEN WE ARE YOUNG WE BELIEVE WE CAN BE FOOTBALL PLAYERS OR POP STARS. BUT VERY FEW PEOPLE GET TO LIVE THIS REALITY



WOMEN KNOW MORE THAN MOST THAT YOU CAN'T JUST STOP - BUT WHY IS IT THAT SOME THINGS ARE RECOGNISED AS JOBS AND OTHERS ARE NOT?



WHEN ADDED UP, THE HOURS OF WORK DONE BY A SINGLE MOTHER CAN BE MUCH HIGHER THAN THAT OF A FULL-TIME JOB





Behind



d Bras

A stylized illustration of a hand holding a magnifying glass over a purple bra cup. The hand is rendered in shades of pink and red with black outlines. The magnifying glass has a purple lens and a black frame. The background is a dark teal color with a fine, repeating pattern.

We chatted all things bras and business with **Barbara Burton**, the woman striving to provide employment opportunities in the fashion industry for women affected by the criminal justice system.

Words:

Hareem Ghani &
Raeesah Akhtar

Illustration:

PPaint



Tell us a bit about yourself and your business.

I'm Barbara, in my mid-sixties, mother of three and grandmother of four. I've always worked

in personal development and Human Resources (HR) for large corporations such as Wireless, British Gas and Premier Inn. In 2008 a crime was committed and I was imprisoned four years later. Before my charge, I put together a plan for a lingerie business, so when I left prison I started to put the business plan into action.

What inspired you to start your business?

Initially, I wanted to make lingerie because I knew it would be hard to find a job as a woman in her late fifties. I also love anything and everything about fashion! For me, when you put your lingerie on, regardless of the brand or price, you wear it close to your heart. I think there's a feel-good factor with underwear and that's why I love lingerie.



Were you able to prepare for your business in prison? If so, how?

During my last four months in prison, my ROTL (Release on Temporary Licence) was a secretary role for a London-based charity that helped men to train as carpenters. When I turned up and sat down with the director who gave me the job, he said, "So, tell me the real reason you're on ROTL?" And I said, "Well, I have this business plan", and I explained "but

I need to understand how to make lingerie and how to set up a lingerie business." There used to be a charity called Changing Past that paid for me to go to London College of Fashion to learn how to make lingerie. They forked out quite a lot of money, around £4-5000 for me to do an undergraduate level course in lingerie manufacturing and lingerie business, which helped me develop my practical skills.

How were you able to get the business off the ground?

I started off wanting to make beautiful lingerie and I now have a collection of eight pieces, with another line planned. Halfway during last year, I had little funding and no sales so I changed my focus slightly to prioritise setting up BehindBras Fashion Foundation, rooted in employment, training and education. With this change, I'm hoping that, in 2020, I can sell lingerie and train others.

What role did social media play in your business development?

I made my website and social media profiles myself (I set them up before I actually had a product). I attended some evening courses on social media through an organisation called TechPixies. Social media has played a really important part in my business. The name of the business has also helped because people are quite inquisitive about it – they usually call it 'Behind Bars' and I have to correct them!

What are your future hopes for the business, and in general?

My future hopes are not to rely on grants. I am changing the business model so that I'm not chasing grants or spending time filling out applications; but instead doing

“I am changing the business model so that I’m not chasing grants or spending time filling out applications; but instead doing what I really want to do, which is to help women who have been in prison and women still serving their sentences.”

what I really want to do, which is to help women who have been in prison and women still serving their sentences. I am in the process of setting up a programme called ‘Inspiring Women Inside and Out’ offering personal development courses, both in prison and in the community, to help women find out what type of career they would like in the fashion and creative industries, ranging from textiles and social media, to film and photography. I’m honing in on the fashion industry because I think there is a shortage of skilled, experienced people in Britain that can sit behind a sewing machine. My vision is to upskill these women so they can work for BehindBras as associates or set up their own businesses.



If you could give one piece of advice to someone interested in setting up their own business, what would it be?

You have to be prepared to persevere. It’s only now, six years after setting up my

business, that it’s starting to make a mark. It’s becoming easier to proudly say, “Yes, I have been to prison but I am doing something about it.” There are a lot of women who want to turn their own lives around, some just need more support than others to get back on the right track.

What’s next for Barbara?

Over the next four months, I plan to visit every women’s prison and get support from governors and learning skills officers, so that I can spread the word about upcoming employment days. Most importantly, I want to reach out to women and show them that there is someone who has been in their shoes. I refer to the women’s prison estate as the ‘forgotten women’ because they only account for 5% of the prison population. I want ‘forgotten women’ to realise that there is someone out there trying to help them and that I will be seeing them in the next six months. ●

You can learn more about Barbara’s business by visiting www.behindbras.org.uk; alternatively, you can follow @BehindBras on Twitter.

We meet the gardener who became her own BOSS

Words: Samantha Wilson & Raeesah Akhtar

Illustration: Chenna

We sat down with professional gardener and landscape designer, Samantha Wilson*, to speak about pursuing her passion for gardening and eventually setting up her own business.

**Name changed to protect identity.*





Tell us a bit about yourself and your business.

I live in a small town in Gloucestershire with my partner. I was released from a six-and-a-half-year sentence in 2014. Life feels settled, which some might say is boring, but I love it. I have lots of interests: food and cooking, bike rides, allotments, wildlife, and nature. I am a self-employed gardener who does the odd bit of landscaping; I take on gardens that require development and ones where I can have some autonomy – most gardeners are control freaks!



What inspired you to start your business?

I never had the intention of becoming a self-employed gardener on release, although my interest in gardening sparked from a young age with my grandad's homegrown vegetables. I'd had a few gardening jobs before beginning my sentence, so on arrival to prison I took solace in working in the gardens and took a distance learning course in horticulture (the study or activity of growing garden plants, especially for decoration), as well as completing NVQs in horticulture production. Much of my inspiration came from the encouragement of supervisors and education staff at the prison, which I was lucky to have. I once read a quote in prison, "Find something you have a passion for and follow it". Getting turned down by employers after prison made me reconsider the likelihood of employment, and inspired me to become my own boss.

Were you able to prepare for your business while in prison? If so, how?

Yes, in retrospect. I was fortunate enough to be in an open prison with a fairly decent education block and outstanding teachers. I studied as much as I could in horticulture, information technology (IT), English and maths. All my work experience was in the horticultural field, and I was able to complete a degree course in my last two years. Looking back, the degree and the knowledge I gained while in prison have contributed to the success of my business.

What were some of the highs and lows in setting up your own business?

The first year was very difficult. I was working on a good landscaping project that came to an end in the autumn, which can be a tricky time for new gardening opportunities. I then had a brief spell with unemployment benefits, which was actually a blessing. Soon after, I set up my business and did as much networking as possible, which made a huge difference. As spring began, so did the job prospects. One job led to another, which soon led to me being in control of my own employment, time, and life.



How were you able to get the business off the ground?

Mine was quite a low-cost start-up, though I did get some help from the Longford Trust. It's worth mentioning that gaining support from charitable organisations can really give you a good foot up if you are thinking of setting up a business – they have mentors and a whole load of networking opportunities at hand.

“Much of my inspiration came from the encouragement of supervisors and education staff at the prison, which I was lucky to have. I once read a quote in prison, ‘Find something you have a passion for and follow it’.”



What are your future hopes for the business, and in general?

Future and general hopes...I stay fit and injury-free! Right now, everything is great – I have quite a few years of enthusiasm and energy left in me. For the future, I would like to explore more environmental work, with the luxury of splitting my time 50:50 indoor-outdoor for when I have been put out to pasture!

If you could give one piece of advice to someone interested in setting up their own business, what would it be?

One?! Make your time in prison count for you, manage your expectations, and be prepared to be flexible about your future. ●

What is The Longford Trust?

The Longford Trust is a registered charity offering university scholarships for people affected by the criminal justice system. Since 2014, the organisation has supported over 300 people access higher education. To learn more about The Longford Trust, please visit their website on www.longfordtrust.org or write to them at The Longford Trust, PO Box 64302, London, NW6 9JP.

Maria Minnesota

M. 07917 xx xx xx

E. mariam@email.com

Available for an immediate start

Profile

With extensive experience in various aspects of the retail sector, I am presently looking for a sales assistant role that will allow me to use my customer service skills. My preference would go to children's wear, either in a specialised boutique or a department store, but I also have a good knowledge of – and a passion for – fabrics and textiles.

Core skills

- Communication skills to anticipate customers' needs and positively influence their choices. Proven ability to win over challenging or unhappy customers
- Attention to detail in displaying the products to their best impact and keeping the shop floor clean and tidy
- Technical skills to operate stock-checking systems
- High-level numeracy resulting in rapid and accurate transactions
- In-depth product knowledge: materials origin and maintenance, value-for-money, awareness of similar products sold by competitors
- Positive compliance with the store's/the company's policies and procedures
- Teamwork: supporting colleagues and happily covering for them if late/absent, etc

Employment history

- July 2019 – November 2019 **Kitchen Assistant in a Staff Canteen** Name of canteen, City
- Improved the range of food on the canteen to include healthy items and responded to dietary requirements of our customers
 - Improved the look and layout of the canteen so we could seat more customers whilst ensuring a positive dining experience
- February 2017– June 2019 **Sales Assistant: fabrics for interiors** Name of store, City
- Took responsibility for visual presentation and cleanliness of the store
 - Succeeded in getting fabrics customers interested in our fashion textiles
 - Contributed to widening our range of products through positive rapport with customers
- April 2014 – December 2016 **Sales Assistant: children's wear** Name of store, City
- Part of a team of three in charge of boys' and girls' wear age 0-6 years
 - Served on average 25-30 customers per day, more at weekends
 - Exceeded sales targets by offering additional products

Education, qualifications and training

| | | |
|------|--|-------------|
| 2012 | Customer Service Level 2 (NCFE) | Online |
| 2012 | Health & safety in the workplace Level 2 | Online |
| 2011 | Certificate in IT User Skills Levels 1 and 2 | XXX College |
| 2009 | GCSE English (C), Maths (D), Spanish (C) | XXX College |

Activities and Interests

Swimming – at least twice a week
Volunteering at my local swimming pool to support toddlers' swimming lessons
Visiting the Fashion and Textile Museum with friends

References: available upon request.

Need some inspiration to create a professional CV? Take a look at our template with top tips on how to showcase your strengths, put your best self forward and increase your chance of job success!

Use a clear and professional font (e.g. Arial, Calibri, Cambria, or Times New Roman) in a font size between 10-12. For your main heading and section headings, use a larger font and/or bold.

No postal address.

No unnecessary words, such as 'Mobile' or 'Email', as one can see what these numbers and letters refer to.

It is preferable that your email address directly reflects your first and last names only.

Employers prefer gmail.

No underlines, boxes, etc., as they cannot be 'read' by ATS (the Applicant Tracking System used by a number of large companies in various sectors).

Honesty: her experience is short, but she shows confidence, demonstrating she has her employer's interest in mind.

Specifying areas of interest/experience gives the sense of a 'real person' rather than a CV downloaded from the Internet. Passion and enthusiasm are always a plus, specially in customer-facing roles.

Illustrate how the skills listed directly contribute to effective performance in this specific role.

Saying only 'excellent communication skills' is a waste of time.

Here the list of skills mentioned shows the candidate's sound understanding of a sales assistant role.

For any job, make sure you mention compliance with policies and procedures! This reassures the employer.

Employers don't like gaps on CVs. But in every part of life you will be building skills that an employer is looking out for. Raising children requires multitasking and people skills! If you've spent time in prison, lead with the work, education or experience on ROTL that you gained during this time.

Talk about your achievements in the job and not just a list of what the job involved. For example, did you improve the look of the store? Did you improve the company's reputation by setting up a recycling bin? Or improve staff wellbeing by getting the air-conditioning fixed?

If a company is a chain/has many stores in the same city, then mention the address of the shop. If possible, quantify the importance of the company e.g., number of customers/staff/turnover.

No longer called 'hobbies'.

Avoid mentioning solitary activities. Evidence your social skills. Some sport or gym is always good, as it shows you are healthy and motivated.

A voluntary activity is extremely welcome, particularly if it involves working with others and demonstrates some organisational skills.

When you have completed your CV, always do a spelling and grammar check or get someone else to have a look over it.



Carl's Corner

Words: Jodie Beck
Photo: Urszula Soltys

**For part two of
Carl's Corner, WIP's
Jodie Beck interviews Carl
Cattermole, author of
*Prison: A Survival Guide.***

Carl Cattermole made his debut as an author in June 2019 with *Prison: A Survival Guide* – labelled ‘the cult guide to UK prisons’ – offering a comprehensive breakdown of the rules and jargon you may encounter when experiencing the criminal justice system. Carl spent a year in Wormwood Scrubs prison and Pentonville. It was out of this lived experience that *Survival Guide* was born. Starting out as a print-out that he had to ask mates to photocopy, Carl recounts the beginnings of what would later become a book published by Penguin. “People often leave their jail experience at the point where they know the most about the system ... I thought, I’m gonna make a sacrifice,” he grins, “I’m gonna talk about jails after getting out ... in order to help people who are preparing for it.” Asked how he feels about being approached by the famous publisher, Carl replies, shrugging his shoulders, “I don’t really care about those big names ... I just see them as ways to get critical information across.”

The book seeks to provide an accessible guide to ‘surviving’ prison, or as Carl describes in the first chapter of the book, navigating the ‘C.R.A.P.’ (Confusing Rules Applied Patchily). The book is broken down into four main sections – The Basics, Taking Care of Yourself, What Next? and Resources – usefully providing a range of information from how to cook meals in your cell to how to submit a complaint (see the previous edition of this magazine, Winter 2019, featuring extracts from *Survival Guide*). I ask Carl about what motivated him to produce *Survival Guide*. “When I was preparing for prison, I remember seeing a government printout or website,” Carl reflects candidly “I can’t remember what it was, but it said when you get to jail you’ll be welcomed by a lovely prison officer and you’ll be given a nice clean set

of bedding and all of the courses you need to rehabilitate yourself.” And he bursts out laughing. He goes on to say that the prison experience “is always being told by politicians, journalists and scriptwriters who haven’t been to jail ... it’s about time that someone who’s been to jail talks about jail stuff.”

Laughter is a common theme throughout our interview with Carl, who weaves humour throughout his writing. Asked about this humorous approach when writing about the seemingly dire prison system, Carl explains “the whole situation needs warming up a bit. You can reel off the horrific facts about the prison system until the cows come in ...” he laughs again, “that’s excellent for the maintenance of an inhumane system.” It’s no surprise, then, that the book’s combination of humour and practical information, as Carl recounts, has “revolutionised” the prison experience for readers. “I do get letters once every week or two ... whether it was an inmate or a person supporting an inmate,” he smiles, “that’s what I do it for.”

When presented with the opportunity to publish *Survival Guide* with Penguin, Carl used this as a chance to platform the voices of others experiencing the system in different ways. *Survival Guide* has a number of contributors including Darcey Hartley, who writes about her experience of parental imprisonment, and Julia Howard who writes about her experience of being a mother in prison. I ask what prompted Carl to evolve *Survival Guide* into a collaborative project. “My experience of the criminal justice system is one aspect of it ... there’s a lot more people going through this system than just big 6’ 7” guys with shaved heads which I’m one of,” he laughs. When pressed on this, Carl stresses the importance of capturing the

“The prison experience is always being told by politicians, journalists and scriptwriters who haven’t been to jail ... it’s about time that someone who’s been to jail talks about jail stuff.”

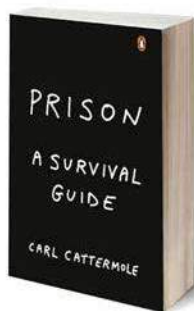
reality of people’s encounters with prison, “there’s a lot of women [in the system], there’s a lot of women supporting men, there’s a lot of children supporting a parent ... all of those experiences ... need to be represented like that.”

What is striking about *Survival Guide* is how practical information is set within a broader criticism of the prison system. I ask about Carl’s vision for transforming the system. “There are short-term gains like making the visits booking system better ... but people should really talk about their long-term ideals as well,” he explains. Carl is clear in his writings that he is a prison abolitionist. Taking this into account, I ask how he envisions abolition. “Abolition is like a house on the other side of the river that you wanna live in but you’ve got no real way of getting over the river so you’ve got to start building slowly.” For Carl, it is clear that reimagining and crafting new systems of justice, instead of prioritising the fixing of broken ones, is a priority.

In the final section of *Survival Guide*, Carl reflects honestly on the challenges after prison, writing that “the whole idea of ‘going straight’ often sets you up to fail”. When asked to expand on this, Carl speaks about the various pressures placed on you upon release. “Probation will give you big dreams you can get to, but

no route,” he explains. “Your family and friends are often unrealistic because they don’t understand the experience ... they expect you to be strong at a time when you’re possibly at your weakest.” When asked for his advice on navigating post-prison reality, he sighs and says “being realistic is really important.” *Survival Guide*, for Carl, was about articulating the realities of life after prison as much as it was about providing information on how to navigate prison itself. Without a stark, but honest, understanding of what life is like post-release, he asks, “how are you meant to be that person you’re supposed to be?”

In 2020, Carl will continue to promote *Prison: A Survival Guide* in prisons and communities across the UK, using his platform to shed an honest light on the injustices occurring within the prison system. ●



Prison: A Survival Guide by Carl Cattermole published by Penguin, £8.99.

You can keep up-to-date with Carl’s work by following @HMPSurvival on Twitter.



Secrets to a successful interview

Illustration: Chioma

Going for a job interview can be a daunting experience for most people, especially for individuals with experience of the criminal justice system. Below, we have provided a list of ‘top tips’ from people in the know about interviewing to help calm your nerves and prepare you for future job interviews.



‘Make sure you turn up on time, wear clothes you feel smart (but comfortable) in, and ensure you have spent some time reading up on the business and the job – not too much information that you can’t remember it or feel too worried, but just enough to feel confident answering questions about your suitability for the business and job. Also, prepare two or three questions you can ask the interviewer, as this shows you are interested but also want to make sure it is the right job for you.’

**Roisin, Retail Ops and People Director,
Greggs**

‘Smile! – showing enthusiasm goes a long way; it shows you are excited about the job and that you are a positive and friendly person to work with. When the interviewer asks you if you have any questions, a good question to ask is something like ‘What is your favourite thing about working at your organisation?’ People like being asked questions about themselves and it shows you are interested in them. It’s also a great way to find out more about the organisation and what it’s like for employees there.’

Fredi, Services Manager, WIP

'Before the interview, always do as much research as you can on the organisation. What are their values? What are their projects? Go beyond the website's home page! Take a look at their social media or latest news on their website to see what's been going on in the organisation recently.'

Lynne, WIP Trustee



'Try to answer questions in an interview by giving examples. Instead of just saying I'm really good at handling customers who are rude, for example, try to show this by giving a real-life example. Use the STARR system to help you describe your example:

Situation: I was working as ... for ... then describe the situation to be addressed or solved

Task: What had to be done?

Action: What did you actually do?

Result: What was the positive outcome? Quantify, give figures if possible.

Reflection (lessons learned): 'Looking back, I think I would have done even better if I had ...'

Martine, WIP Trustee

'Lots of preparation and practice is key. You may feel a bit silly but it is best to have a practice run-through of your answers by

saying them out loud or to do a mock interview with a friend. Every interview is a really useful learning experience – afterwards, it's worth writing down the questions you were asked so that you can prepare for these in the future.'

Claire, Campaigns and Public Affairs Manager, WIP

'Make sure you have the answer worked out on why you want that specific job or want to work for that company in particular. And make sure you do something nice for yourself afterwards!'

Georgette, Bluebird Service Manager, WIP

'Write things down and take a notebook in with you. Instead of relying on memorised answers, prepare an additional list of your most relevant skills, attributes, and real-life examples. Each question you address will be an opportunity to provide some of this information to the interviewer. That way, you can be sure you'll get your most suitable qualities across – even if the specific questions you were hoping for don't come up.'

Narinder, Complex Mental Health Projects Coordinator, WIP

'As part of my role, I have the amazing opportunity to meet and welcome new candidates coming into Greggs through

“Before the interview, always do as much research as you can on the organisation. What are their values? What are their projects? Go beyond the website's home page!”

“Look the people interviewing you in the eye! It doesn’t matter if you are nervous, this just shows that you care. And if you don’t know the answer to something, give the best possible answer you can think of.”

our Fresh Start programme. When I am talking to candidates about their work experience, I find it really interesting to hear all about their responsibilities and duties held while in prison. For example, being a Listener or a peer mentor can show an employer some really great transferable qualities that you have. We have all made mistakes, but take the positives and let this be what you talk to the employer about.’

Beckie, Recruitment Advisor for Community Placements, Greggs

‘Do a trial run of your journey, and aim to get there half an hour early. It’s much better to sit and have a coffee nearby while you wait than to be panicking because your bus is late or traffic is bad!’

Hannah, Manager, WomenMATTERA

‘Look the people interviewing you in the eye! It doesn’t matter if you are nervous, this just shows that you care. And if you don’t know the answer to something, give the best possible answer you can think of around the subject they are asking, rather than just saying “I don’t know”. You can also ask to come back to a question later if you are really stuck.’

Cath, Manager, The Beth Centre

‘Wear clothes that are smart (if you can) but make sure you are comfortable wearing them.’

Trish, Project Coordinator, WomenMATTERA

‘If you’re not sure what a question means, don’t guess. Take a breath and ask them to repeat it, or to explain it another way.’

Naima, WIP Trustee



‘Try your best to relax and smile – which will let your personality shine through.

Embracing anything that you might have in common with the interviewer will help you to do this. When I was interviewed for my current role, a familiar accent triggered a short conversation about shared Yorkshire roots, which helped put me at ease straight away. I also believe exercise – whether it’s walking, jogging or cleaning the house – helps to relieve stress and nervous tension, and so, if circumstances allow try and fit in some sort of physical activity in the run up to your interview. Last but not least, think about how you will treat yourself once it’s out of the way – a slice of cake works for me!’

Cassie, Corporate Communications Manager, Greggs ●

ALLY

In our winter edition, we asked you to tell us about your experience of work and what work means to you. We received lots of exciting entries, revealing the different ways in which you interpret work – from long days of labour and pitching business plans, to care work and being a Listener. Here are some of the winning entries.

Work

by D



Work, for me
 Ain't what it used to be
 As a chef for years
 Working splits and AFDers*
 I'd get home to my yard
 -Tied accommodation on a farm
 I was tied to work more hours
 Cheffing, farming, interspersed with
 showers
 16-hour days were the norm
 I'd eat, then sleep, curled up in the warm
 This was my life, I was happy this way
 All up until, that one fateful day

My car, it crashed.
 My friend, he died.
 Unconscious for months, I woke and I cried
 3 years on with injuries, life-changing.
 Hurt caused to many, impacts far-ranging
 Now locked in a cell, deemed "unfit" for
 work
 But my efforts, made daily, I cannot shirk
 The work I do now, is harder than ever
 Repairing myself, this work it stops never.

**AFD is a term used in the trade, meaning
 All F***ing Day*

OURS

Business Relaunch

by Dawn

Sat, waiting, looking smart
 Suited and booted
 Feeling slightly uncomfortable
 Wondering what they'll think of me
 Will they like my ideas?
 Did I remember all the figures?
 Does my plan read well?
 Did I bring enough supplies?
 Should I have brought samples?
 What questions will they ask?
 Will they like or understand my answers?

I believe in what I do,
 But will my passion, vision and drive
 shine through?
 Will others see the journey
 I want this venture to take?
 Will they criticise for criticism's sake?
 Or genuinely help me by getting me to
 think?
 Do they know my market?
 Are my skills appreciated?

I need to make the time invested
 worthwhile
 I need to show that I can, will and do adapt
 That I have thought about many a situation
 That this is my dream.
 That this wasn't thought about over just
 one night,
 But for twenty years of days and nights
 All the things that I have done,
 Everything that I have learned
 Has led me to this point.

This time I won't get distracted
 I will get the success that I have worked for
 The reward that I deserve
 So why am I nervous, apprehensive,
 Feeling quite small?
 Time to control the future,
 Channel fear into strength and courage
 And be the best version of me
 To sell my company, my products
 I also need to sell myself.

Why I Became a Listener — Giving Back

by Netti

When I was sentenced I was numb.

It's already dark outside, I have no clue what time it is. Not knowing what to expect from prison. The only knowledge I have is from TV documentaries and movies. Prison looks like hell on earth! I am petrified, never been so scared in my life!

The van door opens and I hear keys; an officer is unlocking my cubicle. I see the entrance of my "new home". Little did I know how scared I would be for many months, just to hear the sound of keys.

More officers are coming. More waiting. I am being interviewed. Back to the room they call the "holding cell".

Suddenly, I am taken into a small, cosy room where someone is smiling at me telling me she is a Listener here, trained by the Samaritans. Telling me that she is a prisoner herself and that I am safe! Explaining to me that the Listeners care for the emotional support they can offer to myself and all the women who are upset or distressed. And that I can press the buzzer in my cell, so that I can call for a Listener at any time. Listeners are available 24/7 and working on a voluntary basis.

The lady treated me with kindness and care. She understood my fears. For the first time that day, I could finally exhale and breathe normal again. I never thought this care existed in prison. It felt genuine. She explained more to me about the prison system, reassuring me that I am safe here. And I was.

Since I arrived, everything she said to me that first day was true. Whenever I needed a Listener – and, believe me, I needed them nearly every night for the first few months – they came to see me and calmed me down after the panic attacks I had. Every Listener I met was a great support for me.

I am now a Listener myself and even if I am woken up in the middle of the night, it gives me a great feeling knowing that callers walk out of the Listener suite with a little smile on their face, or that I could comfort someone just by listening!

A Letter on Work

from K

Years ago, when it was possible, I had a full-time job as a dental nurse earning £900 a month. I loved the job, but, after qualifying and having a senior position, taking on ordering stock and supplies, I found I couldn't really rise any higher – I couldn't become a dentist!

I felt there was more than just a job out there. So, I applied to become a Community Care Assistant, visiting people in their own homes, providing practical and physical support while promoting as much independence as practicably possible. This turned out not to be very financially beneficial. You don't do care work for the money, but it really wasn't working out.

I then applied to work in a local care home for the frail elderly, which I found so enjoyable. I loved getting to know the residents, hearing their stories, and being part of a group of people trusted enough to work and assist them very closely and personally. Unfortunately, even though, on paper, the home didn't have any residents living with dementia, at least half of the residents deteriorated into symptoms of the condition. The result of this not being recognised by the home led to the ratio of staff to residents becoming unbalanced. Staff were overworked and residents did not have the best person-centred care they should have had. It was a distressing situation and sadly, not uncommon.

I moved to a local care home that focussed on neurological care and this is where I learnt most of my specialised experience - (tube feeding, stoma care etc.), and had the privilege of looking after people with extremely rare conditions. I became a palliative care nurse – it was very rewarding, but emotionally challenging.

Eventually, I realised that I felt my happiest when being able to assist people living with dementia. I got a job with a nursing home and received fantastic training, working with people who actually cared about the residents. The home treated people with the dignity and respect they deserved. My most favourite, humbling memory was Remembrance Day 2015. For the 2-minute silence, a table of elderly (some very elderly) gentlemen, all dressed in shirts and ties looking so smart, managed to come together and help each other to stand for a 2-minute silence, tears rolling down their faces in memory of the horrors they had faced, for all of us. It was one of the most emotional and moving scenes I have ever witnessed and I feel proud to have met and cared for them.

Once upon a time... in Downview

Illustrations: Kee & Chenna

Earlier this year, WIP organised a series of writing workshops at Downview prison. Below, we have published a selection of modern-day fairy tales written by women who participated in the workshops.

The Lost Boys

by Tay.D

The Lost Boys is a story about boys who never grew up, in a place called Neverland. I saw it once in Peter Pan, but, when I grew up, I came to understand there is no such thing as Neverland. The lost boys in my story are real, and, if I am honest, it's quite sad because they did once have plans.

Now, I want to take you on a trip – I'm sorry but we won't be flying ships or soaring past Big Ben. I don't know why, but life is just not this way, but let me take you anyway ...

Caramel skin, a distinctive lisp (his older brother would pick on this), dimples embedded in each cheek, two pigtailed, and the cutest smile that could turn the strongest weak. He wet the bed every night. I realise now that was out of fright.

Behind closed doors wasn't safe, but he was taught from young "not to say." His little heart overwhelmed with pain that came with an uncontrollable reach that was unleashed on anyone who tried to play with his calm state.

By the age of 6, he'd lost his cat; the bad man who lived with him scared him bad, so the cat never came back. He'd cry when he was told it was his fault. He slept with the cat's photo under his pillow every night because he thought it was his only friend. If I could go back, I swear I'd love him better then.

My name is Amy, he called me Tamy. It was just the cutest thing, to think he looked up to me. I now wish I showed him better things. He'd sing "I wanna be a billionaire so freaking bad" – that was his song. He wasn't lying, and trust me when I say he grew up trying. He'd say, "Tamy, when I'm big, I'm gonna build you and mum a house." I'd giggle and tell him, "Hurry up!"

He'd come into my room at night. I'd cuddle him and tell him everything will be alright. I hope that he forgives me because I lied. Now, he's 16 years old looking at life. I'm sorry mum, I guess you were right. It's my fault and now he's the one that's got to pay the price.

I'd pick him up from football and take him out to eat. I don't think he knows how proud he made me. From there, he became my right-hand. I know that sounds quite bad, but he'd beg me not to send him home, so he became accustomed to the roads. They never saved us, but they raised us, just to let you know.

Then, by 11, smoking weed with him. I'm

ashamed. God, why has he got to share my pain? He's not evil, it's not even him to blame. Now he's lost in the system. Still a lost boy in pain. Did I mention he still keeps his cat photo by his side till this day?

Black:

1. very dark colour
2. human with dark skin
3. without milk
4. marked by disaster
5. distressing
6. full of anger/hate, prisoner
7. untrustworthy
8. evil, damaged and destroyed

To a judge, all he is seen as now is black. No matter how I tried to raise him, even I couldn't have changed that.



The Wolf of Little Red Riding Hood

By Kim

Once upon a time, the Big Bad Wolf was listening to his favourite song, 'What did the Fox Say?', getting ready for his day of drug dealing. Suddenly, the woodcutter banged his door very loud.

Bang Bang!

"What do you want?" Wolf moaned.

The woodcutter opened the graffitied door, walked over to Wolf and gestured with his hands.

"That young girl with the red hoodie is making her way around the estate. Maybe we can get her to join the firm, Wolf. She'd be a good disguise and we could shift a lot of drugs with her on the job. What do you think?"

Wolf listened to what the woodcutter was saying and thought that he was right, so he turned down his music and said, "Where is she?"

"Well, she is ten minutes away from here and, if we catch her in time, no one will know she's missing – we can have her shifting today."

So Wolf made his way out of the one-bedroom, run-down flat and followed the woodcutter to the location.

When they got to the council-funded park, the little girl in the red hoodie was swinging on the swings.



The Girl in the Red Hoodie

By Dawn

My mission is to get to the rough area of town where Gramma lives, deliver her basket of food, check she's ok and get home again, as quickly as I can. I mustn't lose the basket, I mustn't take too long, can't get taken in or fooled by anybody. I can trust nobody. I have to look cool, calm, collected; taller than I am, older than I am.

I'm going to stand out in my red hoodie, but, if anything should happen, I'll hopefully be easily remembered by witnesses. I'll hopefully be memorable. Somebody will be looking out for me.

I'll need my wits about me: all my senses, my instincts, my streetwise knowledge – those self-defence classes I took in school will all play their part, maybe. I won't get lost, I'll stay safe, stick to the well-lit parts, the busy streets, for as much of the route as I can. I'll walk fast so that no stalker can catch me. If I'm going now, I can cut across the park, but not on my way back – I'm not chancing that when it gets dark.

I wish Gramma wasn't so old and frail. I miss the times when she would come here. But life has caught up with her, so I have to be brave, be safe, stay alive – get there, deliver her basket of food, get back.

Not sure why my step mum can't take the basket, but I guess getting your hair fixed is more important.

Turning over a New Leaf

By Alicia and Francine

Innocence is out walking around, looking at which items he wants to steal from the school. As he's big and scary, he will most likely go unchallenged by the shop security guards/staff.

The familiar blue lights come and he's arrested. He has his day in court and is found guilty and sentenced to five years, as this wasn't his first offence.

As he comes into reception, it quickly dawns on him that he is better off being quiet or he could snap and turn on the staff.

He's being beaten down daily by the regime, and he's a bit withdrawn. He has no proper outlet for his emotions and this leads him into adjudications. Arguments quickly escalate and he's locked behind his door. He's thinking about the Independent Adjudication as he waits in the segregation unit. His charges are read out by the Governor. He realises there's no way out of this situation unless he changes. He falls into a trance and the Fairy Godmother appears and encourages him to be a better Wolf, saying he has more to live for.

He starts feeling better about himself. He takes his punishment and carries himself with a bit more pride. He is now a Peer Mentor and thinking about becoming a Listener. He finally accepts he cannot change what has happened to him, but he can change what will happen to him.

BAN

THE

BOX



In October 2013, award-winning charity Unlock paired up with Business in the Community (BITC) and other charities to launch ‘Ban the Box’; a campaign encouraging employers in the UK to remove the criminal record tick box from application forms. WIP’s HAREEM GHANI explores the inspiration for the campaign, its impact so far, and why fair recruitment practices are essential for marginalised communities with experience of the criminal justice system. □

In the UK, over half of people with a criminal record would not apply for a job where they needed to disclose their record. This means, of the 11 million people with a criminal record, more than 5 million experience the ‘chilling effect’— a term popularly used to describe a fear of discrimination which prevents people from applying for certain jobs. This fear is not unfounded. In 2018, Unlock published research showing that almost 75% of large employers ask about criminal records at application stage. In 2010, a study conducted by Working Links concluded that 75% of employers discriminate against applicants on the basis of a criminal record. As most employers are risk-averse, they incorrectly assume those with a criminal record are a liability, rather than an asset, and reject these applicants from jobs they might be qualified for. As Unlock rightfully points out, there is a strange irony in a criminal record only becoming a problem once someone decides to get on in life; “a criminal record check isn’t a barrier to selling drugs or joining a gang, but it is to getting a job.”

But things are changing. Launched in Hawaii in the late 90s, Ban the Box gained traction in the US following sustained campaigns by civil rights groups (e.g. All of Us or None and the National Employment Law Projects) advocating ‘fair chance hiring’ practices. The campaign hoped to enable people to display their skills and qualifications in an application process, before disclosing their criminal record. In doing so, supporters of Ban the Box argued it created a fair chance for people with convictions to compete for jobs, allowed employers to recruit from a wider talent pool, and ensured the best possible candidate was hired.

In 2015, then-President Barack Obama ‘banned the box’ on applications for federal government jobs. Meanwhile, the state

of California imposed a state-wide Ban the Box law entitled the ‘California Fair Chance Act’. In the city of Minneapolis, where the city council banned the box, 57.4% of applicants with convictions dating from the last seven years were hired (2007-8), compared to just 5.7% before the box was removed (2004-6). The initiative has now been implemented in 27 states.

Following its success in the US, Ban the Box has been adopted globally. In the UK, Unlock have been working with employers to remove the criminal record tick box from application forms. More recently, the charity unveiled its #FairChecks campaign to reform the disclosure of criminal records so that minor and very old crimes do not appear on standard and enhanced criminal record checks conducted by employers.

A total of 135 employers have now signed up to Ban the Box, including multinational investment bank Barclays, the National Health Service (NHS) and the Civil Service. In 2018, Bristol City Council became the first local authority to Ban the Box after lobbying efforts from Operation Black Vote, a grassroots organisation devoted to racial justice and equality throughout the UK.

There is evidence to suggest the inclusion of the criminal record tick box on application forms penalises communities already facing greater criminalisation. The Lammy Review (2018), an independent inquiry into the treatment of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic individuals in the criminal justice system, found some groups heavily overrepresented in prison. For example, Black people make up around 3% of the general population but accounted for 12% of adult prisoners in 2015/16. Similarly, those experiencing mental health conditions comprise a large section of the UK prison population. Subsequently, marginalised groups are much more likely to be

“There is evidence to suggest the inclusion of the criminal record tick box on application forms penalises communities already facing greater criminalisation.”

impacted by discriminatory recruitment practices.

Rachel Tynan, the Policy and Practice Lead at Unlock, points out that campaigns like Ban the Box are especially important for women. For one, poverty is often at the heart of women’s contact with the criminal justice system. Narrowed employment opportunities post-conviction foster a cycle of poverty, forcing women to reoffend as a means of survival. Additionally, the circumstances around women’s offending are often linked to other people’s criminality, for example, aiding and abetting or committing crime to fund someone else’s drug use. Since application forms don’t usually include space to explain these circumstances, employers do not understand these distinctions and many operate with a blanket ban on hiring people with a criminal record. Lastly, the few industries and employers that actively employ people with a criminal record often fail to provide flexible working, which, as Tynan points out, “is especially difficult when you have dependents.”

Ban the Box has already had a positive impact for many people with a criminal record. Recounting her story to Unlock, Christine* points out that she was rejected for several jobs because of her record.

Nonetheless, Christine chose not to become disheartened by these experiences and continued applying for jobs. Within weeks, she was invited for an interview. On this occasion, Christine chose to disclose her conviction at the interview stage. When she was invited back for a risk assessment meeting with the manager, Christine explained why she was equipped for the role despite her criminal record. “I’d pretty much convinced myself that the job offer would be withdrawn,” Christine recalls. “As I sat in front of the HR manager I could feel my eyes welling up,” she says, “but she [the manager] told me to relax and just explain my convictions in my own words.” Shortly after the meeting, Christine was offered the job.

Christine’s story, one of many, demonstrates that Ban the Box allows for people to reimagine themselves and for employers to support the rehabilitation of people in the criminal justice system. ●

**Name changed to protect identity.*

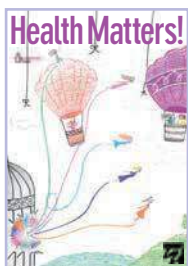
Unlock is a national charity that provides support for people with convictions who are facing stigma and obstacles because of their criminal record. You can learn more about their services by visiting www.unlock.org.uk

Health (still) Matters!

In 2016, Women in Prison launched Health Matters, a project set up to provide women in prisons and in the community with support, advice, and information about their health. Thanks to funding from the National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF), Health Matters was able to run for three years. As the project came to an end in November 2019, WIP's Sofia Gullberg reflects on its successes.

Empowering and supporting women to have a better understanding of their health was at the heart of the Health Matters campaign. Health Matters set out to shift attitudes among women in prison and in the community, by highlighting the importance of looking after your mental and physical wellbeing. Support workers and advocates of the campaign worked with women and healthcare staff to assist with hands-on things, such as ensuring women got the appointments they needed, and clarifying any confusion

or misunderstandings around their health. Support workers were also able to give reliable information and advice about women's health issues; a support worker was often another person for women to talk to about their health. A highlight of the project was the WIP health booklet produced in Summer 2018, titled Health Matters! The booklet was made with the help of women we supported in prisons and the wider community and included lots of advice and information on a number of health matters.



“The team partnered up with women who were working as gym assistants to deliver 45 (!) stress management workshops to their peers.”

The Health Matters project also ran lots of workshops. The team partnered up with women who were working as gym assistants in one of the prisons to deliver a total of 45 (!) stress management workshops to their peers. Training as a peer mentor is a great way to gain work experience in prison, to learn new skills, and to increase your confidence. It can also help with things like Home Detention Curfew (HDC), parole and job opportunities in the future.

Against Violence & Abuse (AVA), an independent charity working across the UK to end violence against women and girls, evaluated the Health Matters project to find out what women in prison thought about the service and how it could be improved. This included gathering feedback from women on the workshops they had attended, one-to-one support they had received, and their general experiences of the service. AVA wrote a report for Health Matters about what they had observed. The report included some key findings, for example: one-to-one support made women feel listened to, cared for and valued; workshops were useful and engaging; information made women feel more confident and in control of their health; and women felt that prison healthcare staff now listened to them

more. Above all, women were in strong agreement that the support they received had made a difference, and generally improved their health and wellbeing.

Thanks to this detailed feedback, the Health Matters team were able to make changes to improve the project and include more of what women liked. The positive feedback highlighted the success of the project and the fact that women wanted it to continue. Because of this, the National Lottery felt that there was a need for this sort of service, and have agreed to fund WIP to deliver a new health project for three years!

The new project, Healthy Foundations, will offer Through-the-Gates (TTG) services in Bronzefield prison and Downview prison, and community support to women in London, who need specific support around their health.

We want to say ‘thank you’ to all the women we worked with and who took the time to give us feedback. Your feedback really matters: it is a chance for you to have your voice heard, make suggestions for change, and for services to improve.

WIP will continue to campaign for better healthcare for women in prison, and will share AVA’s evaluation of Health Matters with those in power, so that your voices continue to be heard. ●



Your guide to medication in prison

Words: WIP's Jade Coulon,
Health Advocate, Healthy Foundations Project



People in prison are entitled to the same quality and range of healthcare services that are available in the community. Since 2011 the NHS has overseen prison healthcare, including services in privately run prisons. For some, it may be an opportunity to raise health concerns they may not have been able to address in the community. However, feedback from the women we work with in prison tells us that not all healthcare services they receive mirror those in the community. One of their major concerns is that the medication prescribed to them in the community was stopped, changed or reduced when they entered prison.

When you arrive at prison, you should receive a healthcare screening where a nurse will ask you a number of health-related questions, including what medication you are taking. They will also ask you for the details of your GP in the communi-

ty. This information allows the healthcare team to access your GP medication summary online. In certain situations, your GP may need to be contacted for more detailed records. Until these records can be confirmed, some drugs cannot be prescribed to you, or prescribed at the dosage you're used to, particularly if they are 'controlled medications'.

Controlled medications* can cause serious health issues if not used properly and can also be addictive, therefore, extra safety measures must be put in place when prescribing them. Some of the more commonly encountered drugs on the controlled drugs list include methadone, oxycodone, pregabalin and many others. Being in such high demand, access to these lucrative (meaning 'profitable') medications can often result in a number of serious safety concerns, including risk of overdose and bullying among peers. For





“Controlled medications can cause serious health issues if not used properly and can also be addictive, therefore, extra safety measures must be put in place.”



example, individuals who are prescribed these highly sought after medications may find themselves targets of harassment. Alternatively, some people may sell these medications to their peers. Subsequently, these medicines may be prescribed at a lower dosage, or not prescribed as in-possession medications, if at all. However, some of these medicines can also be a necessity for those who rely on them to manage their health and wellbeing. Making these medications available to those that need them, while also ensuring the safety of the residents by minimising trading, is a complex problem with no simple answer. Each prison develops its own protocol to minimise misuse of medication.



Some medications have restricted use in prison for other safety reasons. For example, medications that can cause drowsiness, such as zopiclone and other sleeping pills, may put residents in danger if they become too drowsy overnight, in their cell and are unable to raise the alarm if something is wrong.

In other cases, medications may not be prescribed, or the dosage may be

adjusted in prison because the prison GP may have reviewed your health needs and decided that, that particular medication is not the best thing for you. In the community, it's common for your medication not to be reviewed for a long time – it may not be helping you anymore, or in some instances, may even be doing you more damage than good and thus may be replaced by alternative treatments available.

If you don't think your medication is correct, you can ask for a medication review with a prison GP and ask them to explain why your medicines have changed. They may not be able to prescribe a medication or change a dosage, but they should be able to explain why, and potentially offer you alternative treatments or support services. For example, if you're experiencing pain you may be able to attend a nurse-led pain clinic to discuss ways of managing pain without medication, like making adjustments to your room, or wearing compression bandages. Alternatively, you may be able to attend specialist gym activities to target pain through exercise or physiotherapy. ●



*Controlled medications in prison include dexamphetamine, clonazepam, codeine, diazepam and diamorphine.



Debunking common HEALTH MYTHS

Words: WIP's Jade Coulon,
Health Advocate, Healthy Foundations Project

Illustration: MKS

We all encounter health concerns at some point in our lives. With misinformation, these concerns can become even greater than they need be. Getting the right information is key and could potentially save you from unnecessary worry. Here, we debunk fact from fiction, as we set the record straight on some common health myths you may have heard.

MYTH: It is risky to get the flu vaccine, as it could give you flu.

FACT: The adult flu vaccine contains inactivated flu viruses, so it can't give you flu. You may experience some minor symptoms a couple of days after the flu vaccine, such as a sore arm (where injected), a slight temperature, or aching muscles. It's important that you have a flu vaccination every year, as the antibodies that protect you from flu decline over time, and flu strains can also change from year to year.

MYTH: You can catch psoriasis from unwashed sheets and clothing, or from sharing a living space with someone who has it.

FACT: Psoriasis is a skin condition that causes skin cells to produce quicker than normal, which can lead to red, flaky patches of skin covered with silvery scales. These patches tend to appear on your scalp, elbows, knees, and lower back, but can appear anywhere on your body. While it's thought to be caused by a problem with the immune system, doctors still don't fully understand why psoriasis occurs. Psoriasis is not contagious, so it can't be spread from person to person or from items of clothing, bedding, or any other objects or materials.

MYTH: There is a high risk of transmitting HIV;

therefore you should declare your HIV status to others in prison.

FACT: HIV cannot be passed on through touching and kissing, or sharing cutlery, cups, toilets and showers. HIV can be passed on through sex without a condom and sharing needles, but only if a person is not on effective treatment. Although it isn't a cure, the excellent treatment available means that if you are diagnosed in good time and take your medication, you won't pass it on to anyone else and you can live a long and healthy life like everyone else. Your individual right to privacy means that you do not have to declare your health status if you don't want to.

MYTH: You don't need to have a sexual health check-up as long as you don't have any symptoms.

FACT: Even if you're not experiencing any symptoms, you can have a sexually transmitted infection (STI) without knowing it and potentially infect others. Many STIs have no symptoms at all but may cause long-term damage. The only way to know for sure is to get tested. Just like any appointment, your check-up will be confidential and you can ask to be seen by a male or female doctor if it makes you more comfortable – though you may be required to wait longer if you request to see the latter. Regardless, there should always be a female chaperone present, whether the GP is male or

“HIV cannot be passed on through touching and kissing, or sharing cutlery, cups, toilets and showers. HIV can be passed on through sex without a condom and sharing needles, but only if a person is not on effective treatment.”

female. You should receive your results within two weeks of being tested. If you do not hear back from your doctor within the specified timeframe, it means you tested negative (you do not have an STI). However, remember you can always follow up with healthcare for confirmation if you want to be sure. Please note, some STIs can take up to 6 months to show on a blood test, so you may need to come back for a second test to be sure you're clear. It is important to remember that there is no shame in having an STI, and once treated, there is nothing stopping you from having a healthy sex life in the future.

MYTH: If a health condition affects your ability to do your job, it's understandable if your employer fires you.

FACT: By law, employers must make “reasonable adjustments” for workers with disabilities or long-term physical or mental health conditions to ensure they are still able to do their job. These could include changing working hours or providing appropriate equipment. If the help you need at work is not covered by your employer making reasonable adjustments, you can apply for an Access to Work grant which can pay for special equipment, adaptations or support worker services to help you do things like answer the phone, go to meetings, or help getting to and from work. To apply, you must have a paid job. The money does not have to be paid back and will not affect your other benefits. ●

For more information on healthcare in prison, please write to Freepost WOMEN IN PRISON to request a Health Matters booklet.

Beating hepatitis C together

Julia and Jane from The Hepatitis C Trust share their personal experiences of hepatitis C, and how they plan to eliminate the virus in women's prisons across the UK.



The Hepatitis C Trust

The Hepatitis C Trust is a national patient-led organisation seeking to put an end to hepatitis C (hep C) in the UK through raising awareness about the virus. In doing so, the Trust wants to address some of the common misperceptions around hep C. Julia and Jane form part of the Trust's women's prison team who are responsible for encouraging women across the 12 women's prisons in England to get tested and treated.

Both Julia and Jane have experience using class A drugs, contracting hep C, and curing it. They also both know what it's like to be in prison with hep C. As women with experience of the virus, they want to encourage other women to come forward and get help as soon as they can. According to them, "If there was ever a 'good time' to have hepatitis C in prison, it would be now – the new treatment is classified as a 'cure', side effects are minimal, and the course of tablets is just 8-12 weeks."

Julia's story

I was first diagnosed in 2006/7 on one of my many admissions to hospital. I remember being told, "You are positive for the hepatitis C virus," but given no more information on treatment or even what hep C actually was. As an injecting drug user, I had often heard of hep C within my circles and was aware I was at risk, but I still found the diagnosis a shock. I guess it's that thought, "It's not going to happen to me." Well, it did.

Facing and dealing with my hep C was not

my priority at that time. My life was chaotic and denial was my friend, so I pushed it to the back of my mind.

In 2015, I was given a custodial sentence and sent to Holloway prison. It was during my time there that I started engaging with healthcare and met with a doctor about my diagnosis. But it was not like it is today – I was released before I could get any help.

The game changer for me happened a few months later when a good friend of mine lost his battle with hep C and died. I didn't want that to happen to me. My ability to bury my head in the sand and ignore it had suddenly disappeared, and I was now filled with an urgency to face it and see how I could get rid of it. Somewhere between my time in prison and the loss of my friend, a new treatment had become available... a cure! To me, it was a miracle: with a few tablets a day for 12 weeks, and no side effects, I was cured of hep C.

Today, women in prison have the amazing advantage of fast access to diagnosis and treatment. With this, I would encourage every woman to get tested. Let's all support each other and eliminate hep C together.

What's next?

This is an exciting time; there is an elimination goal for the women's prison estate! So far, we have successfully eliminated hep C in two prisons, Foston Hall and Low Newton. It was an amazing experience to be a part of the elimination, and to know that the conversation about hep C is finally out in the open – for the elimination to be a success, this is how it needs to stay. Over the



Julia (left)
and Jane

“If there was ever a ‘good time’ to have hepatitis C in prison, it would be now — the new treatment is classified as a ‘cure’, side effects are minimal, and the course of tablets is just 8–12 weeks.”

next two months we are aiming to eliminate hep C in five more prisons: New Hall, Askham Grange, Bronzefield, East Sutton Park and Drake Hall, and eventually the whole women’s estate. During our elimination work, anyone who tests positive will be fast-tracked on to treatment. There is no need to be scared, as no one needs to live with or die from hep C any more.

We look forward to meeting anyone who needs our support. If you would like any further information, please contact healthcare and ask for one of our booklets. —*Julia and Jane*

What is Hepatitis C?

Hepatitis C, or hep C, is a virus that is caught through blood-to-blood contact. The blood from an infected person must directly enter your bloodstream. Risks include:

- Sharing someone’s razor, toothbrush, or nail clippers
- Being tattooed or pierced with unsterilised needles
- Sharing self-harm tools

- Sharing needles for injecting drugs.

Hep C is not passed on through saliva, urine or sweat. It is not sexually transmitted either, although unprotected rough or anal sex can be a risk if skin is broken. You also cannot catch hep C from bloodstains on the floor/wall, toilet seat, or shower. If you do have a cut or wound, you should cover it right away.

People infected with hep C often do not exhibit any noticeable symptoms until their liver has been significantly damaged. Additionally, when symptoms do occur, they can easily be mistaken for another condition. Typical symptoms include:

- Loss of appetite
- Abdominal pains
- Feeling nauseous
- Flu-like symptoms such as muscle pains and a high temperature

The only way to know for certain if you’re infected with hep C is to get tested. ●

For more information go to www.hepctrust.org.uk or you can call the confidential helpline on 02070 896 221

Lee's HIIT Workout

My name is Lee Marriner and I am a personal trainer from Durham. Fitness and HIIT workouts are my passion, and since introduced into my life, they have enabled me to help myself and others. HIIT workouts, or high-intensity interval training, are short workouts that aim to get your heart rate as high as possible, around 90% MHR (Maximum Heart Rate). These workouts are done for short bursts of time, followed by even shorter rest periods. I'm a fan of HIIT-style workouts because they are quick and easy to do and require no equipment, or weights. Your body is used as the weight, therefore HIIT workouts can be done anywhere, and require only a small space. This is an ideal form of workout that can be performed in a prison cell and can achieve great results.



1 Starting in a press-up position with your body weight on both hands, bring your knee up to your chest, and then return to the original position. Repeat the exercise, alternating your leg and increasing speed as you go.

HIIT workouts burn maximum calories in a short amount of time, providing you give maximum effort with each exercise. Giving 100% effort to each exercise will get your heart rate up to 80–95% MHR. This is in your maximum heart rate zone and will ensure you are working out anaerobically. When your body works out anaerobically, it produces lactic acid. When lactic acid is produced alongside adrenaline, it helps move fat through the body, which creates fat burn. Fat is still being burned for up to 48 hours after completing a HIIT workout, therefore spending 20 minutes on a HIIT workout will be much more beneficial than spending an hour on a treadmill or cross trainer. As these workouts are quick, they require concentration to maintain the high intensity levels. This will help distract you from worrying about stress and anxiety and will release endorphins, which lift your mood. Working at high intensity will also tire you out and, if you have problems sleeping, these types of workouts can be great for a good night's rest.



2 Lie on your back with your arms stretched back above your head. Raise your legs in the air, keeping a slight bend at the knee. Reach your hands forward towards your feet, raising your shoulders up off the floor, squeezing your abs as you go. Return arms back to original laying position, and repeat.



3 Stand in an upright position, feet hip-width apart. Lower down into a squat position, keeping your knees behind your toes. Keep your head and chest facing forward and upright. Bring your body back to the original upright position, pushing your weight through the balls of your feet. As you return to standing, turn your body 90 degrees to the side, keeping your palms together in the centre of your body. Repeat on the opposite side.



4 Lie on your back with your feet on the floor, hip-width apart. Bend your knees and place your arms down by your sides. Raise your shoulders up off the floor, bending forward. Hold this position for 3 seconds and slowly lower back down. Repeat.



5 Stand in an upright position; keep your shoulders back and your head straight. Step forward with one leg, placing the bodyweight forward, until both legs are at a 90 degree angle. Return to the upright position. Repeat.

Workout Duration

This workout may be performed with different levels of intensity.

Beginner's level

I would recommend 30 seconds for each exercise, with 15-second rest intervals in between. Repeat the workout from the beginning 3 times.

Total workout time: 14 minutes 35 seconds.

Intermediate level

I would recommend 45 seconds for each exercise, with 15-second rest intervals in between. Repeat the workout from the beginning 4 times.

Total workout time: 19 minutes 20 seconds.

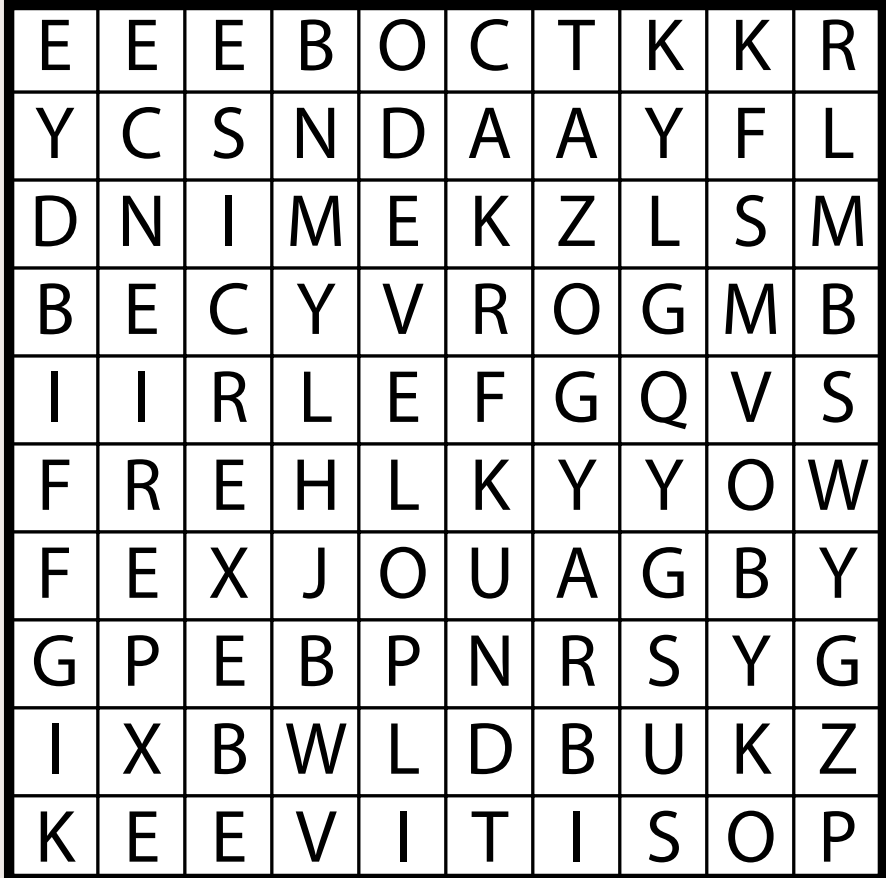
Experienced level

I would recommend 45 seconds for each exercise, with 10-second rest intervals in between. Repeat the workout from the beginning 5 times.

Total workout time: 23 minutes 5 seconds.

WORD SEARCH

Find the words — time yourself!



Exercise

Calm

Energy

Positive

Develop

Experience

SUDOKU

How to play? Fill the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9, without repeating the number.

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | | | | 1 | 6 | | 4 | |
| 2 | 4 | | | | 7 | | | |
| | 7 | 1 | | 2 | | | | 6 |
| | | 2 | | 9 | | 4 | | 3 |
| | | | 1 | | 2 | | | |
| 3 | | 9 | | 4 | | 2 | | |
| 6 | | | | 8 | | 3 | 2 | |
| | | | 4 | | | | 6 | 1 |
| | 8 | | 2 | 6 | | | | 5 |

Answers

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| D | N | I | M | E | K | Z | L | S | M | Y | C | S | N | O | A | Y | F | L | 2 | 4 | 6 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 1 | 8 | 9 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| B | E | C | Y | V | R | O | G | M | B | 7 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 9 | 8 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 8 | 7 | 1 | 9 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 6 | 1 | 8 | 4 | 7 | 5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| S | I | R | L | E | F | G | O | V | S | 4 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 9 | 7 | 4 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 9 | 7 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 7 | 9 | 8 | 6 | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| W | F | R | H | L | K | T | V | O | 3 | 6 | 9 | 7 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 8 | 6 | 9 | 7 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 8 | 3 | 6 | 9 | 7 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 8 | 6 | 9 | 7 | 5 | | | | | | | |
| P | E | X | J | O | U | A | G | B | Y | 6 | 9 | 7 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 9 | 7 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 9 | 7 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 9 | 7 | 5 | | | | | |
| Z | I | X | B | W | L | D | B | U | K | 1 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 9 | 7 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 9 | 7 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 9 | 7 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 9 | 7 | 5 |
| K | E | V | I | T | I | S | O | P | 1 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 9 | 7 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 9 | 7 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 9 | 7 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 9 | 7 | 5 | |



HELLO Women of Change...

... This is how I will address you in my section of this magazine. I run poetry workshops with a group of women at Pecan Women's Centre called Unchained Women of Change. I believe we all have the power to create positive change for ourselves and others.

I am Lady Unchained, a poet, performer, mentor, radio host for Straightline Mix on the National Prison Radio, TedX speaker and founder & Creative Director of Unchained Poetry. Unchained is an artistic platform for people with lived experience of the justice system. I host Unchained Nights in partnership with Artsadmin, shout out to Siobhan! The night showcases work from artists who share stories of their own experience of the justice system through poetry, rap and song.

My mission is to prove that there is 'life after prison' and, so far, I am doing exactly that through creating spaces where my artists can grow and be supported at different stages of their creative journeys. Poetry has been the lead force in my journey after prison; that and prayer, obviously.

Long story short: I went to prison aged 21. It was my first ever offence. I got a two-and-a-half year prison sentence for GBH. Honestly, it's like my life flashed before me.

"My life ended and began with a prison sentence, those metal doors awoke the faith in me." – Lady Unchained

I can't lie; when I first began my sen-

tence, I did not see myself finishing it in a healthy way. Prison is a dark place, and even though there are so many people in prison, it's lonely. That really confused me when I was inside, but all I can say is: use that time to learn who you are when alone. When I think about it, it's like a crazy break-up where you actually have to deal with your feelings. On the out, we hide behind bars, clubs and friends we know we really shouldn't be with, and try to convince ourselves we're over the break-up, when we really ain't.

So, in prison, I started writing little notes to myself. A lot can happen in a day in prison – preaching to the choir here, I know, lol. I never planned to become a poet, but I did want to help people in some way, and poetry has just helped me find my place in this crazy society. All these things I have achieved after prison demonstrate that it's possible to rebuild after prison. I hope that, by sharing my story with you and some of the positives steps I have taken, I will help someone reading this. I will also share some of the steps that turned out to be negative, and, hopefully, it will help you spot the signs to avoid when you're out. I don't know it all; this is just my advice.

I hope that I inspire some of you to write and send in your work. You never know, some of your writing may be used at the next Unchained Nights. It's happened before and the guy is now out and planning to

perform at the next Unchained event. I did not set up my platform for just me; it's for all of us. I believe I went to prison for a reason that's to do exactly this, and, honestly, I wouldn't change a thing. Well, I wish I didn't have to go to prison to create Unchained Poetry, boiiii, that's life innit? Lol.

This is my Unchained Story written for the first time in this way. I really hope it makes sense. For the first time, it seems like the outside world is actually interested in what we are saying, so this is our chance to share the truth about prison, tell our stories the way we want them to be told.

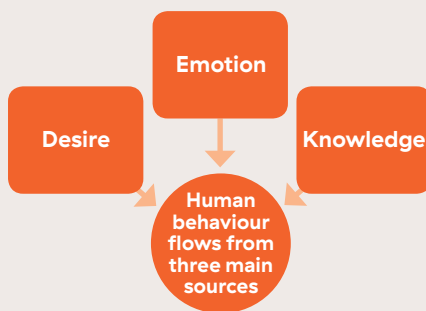
Enjoy the poetry xx

So, ladies, I hope you don't mind me passing on some of the information I have found on my journey to becoming Lady Unchained.

It has not been easy, and the battle still continues, but, trust me, I'm in a much better place because I chose to be. Getting out is the easy part, dealing with life after prison is the real test. So I am going to share some of the steps that helped me identify I had a lot more going on than I wanted to believe lol, it's maaad.

Step 1: Find a pen and paper and sit somewhere you can avoid becoming distracted.

The chart you see top right is just a little something I made to make it look the part, I got this information when I attended DBT (Dialectical Behaviour Therapy) which I got to do for FREE in group therapy. So it's only fair I share this with my prison family, because I really did not believe I needed it. I sat and listened in the first session, and, by the time we had got half way through, I had my notebook and a pen in hand. I never leave my house without it, and that's how I still have access to this amazing information. FYI, Make sure you always have a



notebook and pen nearby, you never know who you may bump into or what you may hear and need to take note of.

This is my take on the chart that states that human behaviour flows from three main sources:

● Desire ● Emotions ● Knowledge

Step 2: Look at the chart above, try and define each of the terms to yourself. What does the chart say to you? What does Desire mean to you? What does Emotion and Knowledge mean to you? There's no right answer; it's your story, your words, your truth.

Step 3: Try and construct a sentence which incorporates every word that is listed in the chart. Here's mine:

"If we have the Desire to gain the Knowledge to understand our Emotions, then we have the power to change our paths in the right direction" — Lady Unchained

Step 4: Keep repeating this process so you can elaborate on the sentence you've already written. Can you say more about Knowledge? How does Desire manifest in your everyday life?

These are just quick and creative ways to begin to write your own stories; a lot can come from a few lines. My advice is to never throw away anything you write; it will always help you with something else you're working on. So, keep everything! ●

LEGAL & GENERAL ADVICE

PACT (Prison Advice & Care Trust) Helpline:
0808 808 3444

Prison Reform Trust Advice and Information Service:
0808 802 0060

Open Monday
3:30pm–5:30pm

Wednesday
10:30am–12:30pm

Thursday
3:30pm–5:30pm

Prisoners' Advice Service (PAS):

PO Box 46199, London,
EC1M 4XA

0207 253 3323

Open Monday, Wednesday
and Friday
10am–12:30pm
and 2pm–4:30pm

Rights of Women

● Family law helpline

020 7251 6577

Open Tuesday-Thursday
7pm–9pm, Friday 12–2pm

● Criminal law helpline

020 7251 8887

Open Tuesdays 7pm–9pm

● Immigration and asylum
law helpline

020 7490 7689

Open Mondays
10am–1pm & 2pm–5pm

Thursday
10am–1pm & 2pm–5pm

HARMFUL SUBSTANCE USE SUPPORT

Frank Helpline:
0300 123 6600

Open 24 hours,
7 days a week

Action on Addiction Helpline:

0300 330 0659

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Women's Aid Helpline:

0808 2000 247

LGBTQ+

Bent Bars

A letter writing project for LGBTQ+ and gender non-conforming people in prison
Bent Bars Project, P.O. Box 66754, London, WC1A 9BF

Books Beyond Bars

Connecting LGBTQ+ people in prison with books and educational resources

Books Beyond Bars,
PO Box 5554,
Manchester,
M60 0SQ

HOUSING

Shelter Helpline:

0808 800 4444

NACRO

information and advice line:

0300 123 1999

FAMILY SUPPORT

National Prisoners' Families Helpline:

0808 808 2003

OTHER

Cruse Bereavement Care

0808 808 1677

Monday-Friday 9:30am-5pm
(excluding Bank Holidays),
operating until 8pm on
Tuesday, Wednesday and
Thursday.

Disclaimer: please be aware that some helplines will be operating under new opening hours due to COVID-19 outbreak.



Women in Prison (WIP) Consent Form

We love to receive artwork, poetry, stories, articles, letters, knitting patterns, recipes, craft ideas, etc., for publication in the magazine from women affected by the criminal justice system in prison or the community. Please complete and tear out this form to send along with your piece so that we know you are happy for us to publish your work and what name you would like to use.

Please note that we are unable to return any of the written pieces or artwork that you send to us for publication.

Thank you for your contribution! All the best, the Women in Prison Team.

Please use CAPITAL letters to complete

First Name Surname

Prison or Women Centre (if applicable) Prison No. (if applicable)

Any Contact Details (email, address, phone)

Title of your piece (if relevant)

Basic description (A letter in response to... or a poem or an article on...)

I give permission for my work to be used by Women in Prison (PLEASE TICK):

WIP's magazine (READY STEADY GO!) Yes No

WIP's Website www.womeninprison.org.uk & Twitter @WIP_live Yes No

WIP's Publication & Promotional Material (i.e. Reports, leaflets) Yes No

Please note we only publish first names (no surnames) and the name of the prison or Women's Centre only in the magazine (we don't publish prison names in other publications or online). You can of course choose to be Anonymous (no name used) or write a nickname or made up name.

I am happy for my first name to be published Yes No

Please write exactly what name you would like to be used:

Freepost – WOMEN IN PRISON (in capitals)
(no stamp is required and nothing else is needed on the envelope)

TOGETHER WE CAN #OPENUP WOMEN'S FUTURES IN EVERY COMMUNITY

Become global leaders and set an international example in how to reduce the human and financial cost of imprisonment and create healthier, safer communities

#OPENUP PATHWAYS AWAY FROM CRIMINAL JUSTICE INTERVENTIONS

Prevent women affected by abuse, childhood trauma, mental ill-health, addiction, poverty, homelessness and inequality from entering the criminal justice system

#OPENUP THE SUPPORT SERVICES WOMEN NEED

Invest and grow the UK's unique network of specialist women's centres that are proven to be more effective than prison at addressing the root causes of offending

#OPENUP OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN AND THEIR CHILDREN

Build a system enabling those who have experienced the harm of prison to have access to housing and support to rebuild and move forward with their lives

10 solutions to

#OPENUP

**WOMEN'S
FUTURES**

- 1 Use the **£80m** received by HM Treasury from the sale of Holloway prison to deliver the Ministry of Justice's women's strategy.
- 2 For every local authority area to have a **women's centre**.
- 3 A **trauma-informed diversion programme** in every police force so women can be referred into community support.
- 4 Significantly **reduce the use of remand** in prison.
- 5 An end to prison sentences relating to the punishment of debt including **non-payment of council tax and TV licence**.
- 6 A legal presumption against **short prison sentences**.
- 7 When sentencing primary carers ensure alternatives to custody are used to **minimise the harm to children**.

All those serving **indeterminate sentences of imprisonment for public protection (IPP)** (abolished in 2012) are given a release date and intensive support to rebuild their lives.
- 8 For every women's prison to have '**Women's Centre Link Workers**' so that women can build trusting relationships to prepare for life after release.
- 9 An end to '**Post Sentence Supervision**' to reduce recall to prison and shift the focus on to support.

What does Women in Prison believe? How does that influence how we work?

Chris Tchaikovsky set up Women in Prison (WIP) over 30 years ago, after she had served a sentence in HMP Holloway. She lobbied tirelessly to improve conditions inside prison, to widen the knowledge and understanding of the judiciary about women affected by the criminal justice system, and to end the use of prison for all but a tiny minority of women.

Chris said: "Taking the most hurt people out of society and punishing them in order to teach them how to live within society is, at best, futile. Whatever else a prisoner knows, she knows everything there is to know about punishment – because that is exactly what she has grown up with. Childhood sexual abuse, indifference, neglect – punishment is most familiar to her."

- **Women in Prison** continues to campaign for the radical reduction of the women's prison population and for significant investment and growth in community-based support services, especially the network of Women's Centres.

- **Women in Prison** recognises that every woman has her own assets and capabilities. These are valuable tools in making real and lasting changes to their lives, but they are too often undermined by the experience of prison.

- **Women in Prison** is a women-only organisation. It believes that the male

and female experience of the criminal justice system have some similarities, but many more differences. Too often these differences, such as being a single parent and primary carer, fail to be properly acknowledged and understood, which adds to the punishment already exacted.

- **Women in Prison** workers, inside and outside prison, endeavour to offer individual women a consistently professional relationship based on trust and mutual respect and kept within appropriate boundaries. Their aim is to work with women affected by the criminal justice system, so they can achieve the change they choose to make.

- **Women in Prison** believes that most women pose no risk to the public and should not be incarcerated. For the very few who do, the design, location and regimes of women's prisons are totally inadequate.

- **Women in Prison** knows, from both research and experience, that prison is expensive and ineffective in breaking the cycle of crime.

- **Women in Prison** believes that the most effective way to reduce women's offending is to deal with its root causes – which generally rest with gender inequalities and social injustice – through community alternatives.

Women who come to WIP do so voluntarily. WIP is not part of the punitive system.

GOT SOME THING TO SAY?

We want to hear from you and would love to publish your letters, opinions, articles, poems and artwork in this magazine.

Send your work to us for free.


On the envelope write:

Freepost WOMEN IN PRISON

(In capitals – no need for a stamp)

Don't forget, to publish your work we also need you to complete and include a consent form — see p63.

The national magazine of Women in Prison written and led by women affected by the criminal justice system

 **Write a winning CV** Cell workout from personal trainer Lee Poetry Workshop from Poet and Performer Lady Unchained Fairytale from HMP Downview Interview with writer and campaigner Carl Cattermole **Unlock's Ban the Box Campaign** The secrets to a successful interview How care work makes the world go round **Know Your Rights: medicine in prison** Sudoku Puzzle & Word Search **Beating Hepatitis C together** Debunking some common health myths.