

Recommendations for Provision of Treatment to Long-term Offenders

by Ned Rollo

1. Correctional agencies need to develop explicit, goal-directed, insight-based policy statements concerning the management of long-term inmates. Care should be given that policies permit and encourage ongoing, active development of self-change and human development opportunities to inmates regardless of length of sentence.

Such policy statements should incorporate the values, principles and policies articulated by the Council of Europe (1987) in its *European Prison Standards*. This should include study and development of effective ways to counter-balance the negative effects of long-term incarceration and increase the potential for post-release success.

The primary goal of management of long-term prisoners should be to minimize the potential secondary, cumulative effects of confinement, such as those described by Gresham Sykes in 1958 as the "pains of imprisonment."

2. Policy makers, administrators and correctional staff must learn to understand the differences in the perspective and potential community adaptation of short-term versus long-term inmates, thus recognizing "long-term inmates" as a unique sub-population:

Short-term orientation - (five years or under):

- o Focus on streets: embrace the memories
- o Freedom oriented: lives for the future
- o Transient perspective: just passing through
- o Partial absorption in prison value system
- o Potential for post-release success: marginal

Long-term orientation - (five years and over):

- o Focus on prison: abandon the memories
- o Survival oriented: lives in the here and now
- o Resident perspective: this is "home"
- o Full absorption in prison value system
- o Potential for post-release success: minimal

3. Correctional jurisdictions, state and federal, should establish a standing administrative committee responsible for development and oversight of policy and procedures regulating a "Long-Term Offender's Program".

Committee members should be drawn from a wide mix of critical interests and disciplines, including but not limited to: social worker; psychologist; teacher; warden with classification experience; unit case worker; management administrator; pastoral counselor; client representative, post-release or community representative.)

These administrative committees should, in turn, adopt a universal program model for long-term inmates that includes the following characteristics:

- Focus on doing constructive time: maintain and renew
 - Sustaining activity: ongoing series of events
 - Provides fresh energy and community-based contact
 - Enables usefulness: specific projects
 - Promotes systematic self-development
 - Contains a self-help component/capability
4. Establish a broad professional and political support base. Conduct briefing sessions at all levels of correctional management: seek universal buy-in based on multiple benefits to facility, community and clients.
 5. Seek public and private funding to advocate for development of Long-term Offender Programs and advancement of respective policy and program models in all state and federal jurisdictions nation-wide.
 6. Establish consistency and continuity through legislative adoption into law.

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