

# LEADERSHIP IN CORRECTIONS

By John Guy

## ABSTRACT

This paper outlines the need to plough the fields with sound and efficient equipment before casting the seed. The bare field is the need to fix the 'tooth ache' before inviting prisoners to education and training. The obstacle to responsiveness to rehabilitation lies in the 'tooth ache' of despair (without hope) symptoms seen among prisoners in suicide, substance abuse, violence and crime. These symptoms are seen to be death centred rather than life centred. Death here refers not only to physical death from such activities as suicide but also to emotional, spiritual, and psychological death seen in the vacant stare of people in deep pain. All societal problems seem to be drawn from fear rather than courage. Prisoners have expressed anger at the way Corrections seems intent on dealing with symptoms (e.g. anger is treated with anger management courses rather than the disease that causes the symptom of anger) and then insisting on participation on vocational training and education. The ploughed field requires the input of the antidote to despair in courage. The word 'courage' comes from the Latin 'cor agere' meaning to come from the heart underlining the need to be life centred and life giving to the point that one would give up ones life. Thus the dentist's chair of rehabilitation is daunting and correctional staff need to be carefully selected, trained, and mentored to be equal to the task of being role models of life centredness. With such leadership, prisoners can be invited successfully to raise their EQ and responsiveness and reach a space where it becomes 'natural' for the majority of prisoners to successfully undertake IQ based training and education in rehabilitation.

**'Correctional Staff'**. Please note that the term 'correctional staff' relates to custodial and none custodial personnel (staff and volunteers) involved in interacting with prisoners.

# LEADERSHIP IN CORRECTIONS

By John Guy

## Introduction

This paper is written in the face of a concern over the despair (without hope) symptoms seen among prisoners in suicide, substance abuse, violence and crime. These symptoms are seen to be death centred rather than life centred.

Death here refers not only to physical death from such activities as suicide but also to emotional, spiritual, and psychological death seen in the vacant stare of people in deep pain.

All societal problems seem to be drawn from fear rather than courage. The word 'courage' comes from the Latin 'cor agere' meaning to come from the heart. Thus courage is seen as being life centred and life giving to the point that one would give up ones life. This is in stark contrast to the life view of most prisoners which sits more with despair from the Latin 'de sperare' meaning 'without hope'.

Prisoners have expressed anger at the way Corrections seems intent on dealing with symptoms (e.g. anger is treated with anger management courses) rather than the disease that causes the symptom of anger and then insisting on participation on vocational training and education.

This article discusses the nature of healing the prisoners' 'dis-ease' through real Australian style leadership by looking at Nature and resultant ANZAC values as a means to increase responsibility before taking on rehabilitation.

In sum, this paper outlines the need to plough the fields with sound and efficient equipment before casting the seed.

## EQ before IQ

The treatment of psychological and emotional pain or low emotional intelligence (EQ) has proven an essential precursor to approaching cerebral (or IQ) issues in areas like education. Working with EQ creates an opportunity for the prisoners to become more self aware, so that they can make meaningful choices in their lives and then action those choices. It has been the experience at the Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre that if core programs and cultural activities emerge from this principle then a firm foundation is laid for getting prisoners to attend and complete both Vocational and Literacy Programs.

To illustrate this point, the improvements in remand prisoner attendance in literacy/numeracy classes at the Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre are a clear indicator. In 2003, a new contract came into place that demanded, among other things, that 15,000 annual curriculum hours (AHC) in numeracy and literacy be delivered. The journey to this point looks like this:

- In 2001 pre new contract, 2,000 AHC were achieved using the normal application process.
- In 2002 pre new contract, 3,665 AHC were achieved with a heavy advertising program through the prisoner peer support system. This demonstrated that achieving the new Contract target of 15,000 was not going to be achieved without a major change in the modus operandi.

- In 2003, AGCC achieved 16,118 AHC and proved that a major change in the modus operandi worked. This change involved the setting up of an Education Unit where students had to complete EQ based courses in core programs before undertaking IQ courses. Without this level of therapeutic intervention, AGCC would not have achieved Contract standards.
- In 2004, AGCC achieved 17,641 AHC confirming the direction taken. It was also noteworthy that there was a significant increase in A&TSI participation due to the Cultural Centre activities.

### **EQ and Responsivity**

According to the Queensland Department of Correctional Services (DCS), responsivity factors are those individual offender factors that interfere with or facilitate learning. (O'Dempsey, 2001). The Responsivity Principle insists that the personality and cognitive characteristics of offenders must be attended to both in training methodologies and content material in order to maximise the benefits of treatment. Motivation for treatment was also named as a significant responsivity factor in poor conditional release outcomes.

Utilising an EQ approach prepares prisoners by setting up realistic expectations of their future and insists that the prisoner move away from the 'victim' status to take responsibility for their lives. The victim mentality is a major barrier to responsivity at all levels of program and psychological intervention.

Thus, for the purposes of this paper, EQ and Responsivity are treated as basically the same thing.

### **The Central Issue for EQ and Responsivity**

'Life is a journey' is an often used and true phrase. This journey is like the course for a ship where we can either stay in port and go nowhere, or we can drift off to goodness knows where and end up ship wrecked, or we can take the helm, take command and take our chances. Within this last, there are two choices and they are to work with Nature or work against her. Sailing a ship while working with Nature is a risky and adventurous business requiring vision and grit. Interestingly, it is from this concept that the word 'leadership' has its origins. It is only when we captain our ship in accord with the rules of Nature that we can find true happiness and fulfilment.

'Leadership' is a term which comes from an old North European word 'laed' meaning a journey or a course for a ship. Implicit in this is the metaphor of setting a destination, organising a trip and getting there. In the analogy of the course for a ship, there are many key elements:

- sailing often to unknown places over uncharted waters to move with the law of evolution or change;
- the requirement for a crew and a ship who can and will achieve the mission even in the face of uncertainty and possible set backs in gales, ship wreck and deprivation; and
- a sense of adventure and humour in the face of challenge.

Thus, if we are on our truly human path to fulfilment and destiny, we are all leaders in our own individual ways and, for better or worse, we affect the lives of other people. Whether we do this in a life giving way or in a death giving way depends on how we are treating ourselves in leadership terms.

'Management' comes from the Latin word 'manus' meaning hand. The military in medieval times nicknamed the horse handlers as 'hands' and then this term grew to include any matter requiring control over what we would call logistics and administration. During the Industrial Revolution, 'management' of mechanised processes came to a new focus in the face of rapid technological change. Thus, management really had to do with the efficiency of an operation by the organisation of things and structures rather than people as individual growing organisms. Much of what is presented in programs has to do with developing prisoners' ability to manage their lives better. However, this training on its own cannot work.

Often we manage our lives well but lead poorly and then we are not happy. We need both management and leadership in our lives.

Lord Louis Mountbatten insisted that any effective person or organisation only needs to be efficient and happy. He also claimed that you could not have one characteristic without the other. Our society has stressed the management side and leadership has often been left out of the equation with disastrous results.

### **The Leadership Issue of Morale**

In supporting the people and him or her self, a leader facilitates an essential need because, when all philosophy is distilled, it comes down to the fact that we are on this planet to be happy. Fulfil this need and people will follow you anywhere! This search for happiness requires application, wisdom and, therefore, much learning. What is obvious is that many people and their nominated leaders suffer at the wrong end of the continuum between happiness and despair. 'Despair' is a word from the Latin 'de sperare' meaning without hope. Despair or lack of hope behaviour is evident in the statistics surrounding dysfunctional behaviour in and out of the work place. This clearly undermines all the technological advances for efficiency. Indeed, Einstein put it well when he said that advances in technology have far outstripped our humanity. We have managed well but led poorly. We need leadership that empowers our humanity beyond our technology so that we can take some pro-active control of our journey to the destiny of the human race.

### **The Enemy - Despair**

There are three key indicators of despair in any society. These are:

- suicide,
- substance abuse and
- violence.

These have a 'death centredness' in common in some or more of the areas of the psychological, physical, emotional, and spiritual. Here we have escape and victim mentalities.

### **The Counter to Despair - Leadership**

Leadership is measured by morale and here we find people who are free to be themselves. They seem to have the *courage* to not just 'follow the herd' and submit to peer pressure but to hear their own drum and follow it come what may. They come from an inner locus of control. They respect themselves, others and the world at a spiritual level and this is the essence of the word *honour*. They are people who take responsibility for their own lives and who thus ignore the victim state and the temptation to blame. We find people who are unconditionally caring.....who give without counting cost or the need for return or 'kick

back'. These are people of gentleness and *service* who can apply great power in a manner that ennobles and empowers others. The simple training and education requirement lies in facilitating visionary and ethical leadership where the template for all behaviour and attitudes is courage, honour and service.

- **Courage.** The word 'courage' comes from the Latin 'cor agere' meaning 'to come from the heart'. Thus it means to come from the centre of life and living and demands that all possibilities and full potential be explored with energy and enthusiasm. This is the positive approach that sees beyond the threats that underpin fear, insecurity and uncertainty etc.
- **Honour.** According to the Oxford Dictionary, this means to respect self, others and the environment at a spiritual level.
- **Service.** Having demonstrated courage and honour, the aspirant in chivalrous times, graduated as a leader with the title 'gentleman' or 'gentle lady'. 'Gentle' in old English means 'to ennoble'. These 'gentle' men and ladies wore velvet as a symbol of this balancing of new found power with the ability to apply it in a manner that 'ennobled'. The 'velvet glove over the mailed fist' spoke of power that was understated, gentle and serving but powerful none the less in the truest sense. Today this means to empower in a life giving way, to lead others to lead themselves, and the call to service with courage, honour and gentleness.

Obviously many people fluctuate somewhere around the middle between happiness and despair, but, perhaps, a good and effective leader is a self actualised person who knows how to be more himself or herself at the happy end for most of the time and who can take others there.

### **The Cycle Away from Despair in the 'Medicine Wheel of Courage'**

The above concepts are ancient and universal among traditional cultures. The American Indians have taught the 'Medicine Wheel of Courage' where you go clock wise from belonging through mastery to generosity for positive growth to courage or you go anti clockwise losing belonging, generosity through to loss of mastery. The positive sequence is:

- **Belonging.** Develop a sense of belonging to a group, heritage etc. This has been demonstrated in the Cultural Centre as a key to EQ maturity. This same principle needs to be extrapolated to other groups.
- **Mastery.** Develop a skill in an area of talent to build confidence and self-esteem.
- **Independence.** Develop values that are put into action without following the herd.
- **Generosity.** Give to the community or group.

Most prisoners adopt the reverse cycle and:

- **Refuse Belonging.** Develop a sense of not belonging to normal law abiding society with a resultant low EQ and victim mentality.
- **Refuse Generosity and Become Ego Centric.** This is exemplified in the belief where the prisoner sees himself at the centre of the Universe and cannot understand the negative impact of his actions on others. Teaching methods with this prisoner using normal inner locus of control paradigms becomes lost. Here consequences need to be immediate, hard, public, and fair and the Justice System fails to deliver this.

- **Refuse Independence.** Prisoners often opt to simply follow the herd and refuse to offer their own independent values in public.
- **Refuse Mastery.** With the low self concept from the above, the prisoner moves into low self esteem and does not respond to invitations to participate in programs.

This last is the low point of responsivity and it is here that we need to be prepared to meet the prisoner.

### The Role of Correctional Staff

The positives attributes of role modelling leaders/ correctional staff need to be:

	<b>Courage</b>	<b>Honour</b>	<b>Service</b>
	Life Centred	Respect self, others and Nature	Empower and improve
1	Have a go	Fair dinkum	Be a good mate
2	Inner locus of control	Self esteem	Help others progress
3	No ego	See goodness in others	Facilitate a team effort
4	Positive	Not confuse behaviour with + human essence	People first, things second
5	Go for change	Compassion and empathy	Setting standards of excellence
6	Life giver	Professional manner	Setting challenges
7	Able to change paradigms	Positive humour	Facilitate morale

The negative attributes of immaturity that can be discarded by role modelling leaders/ correctional staff are:

	<b>Suicidal</b>	<b>Substance Abuse</b>	<b>Violence</b>
1	Disown power	Excess eating	Win lose paradigm
2	Social withdrawal	Excess drinking	Lose win paradigm
3	Negative and lazy	Illegal drug use	Put downs
4	Blaming others	Low energy/frequency music	Excessive gossip
5	Victim mentality	Non involvement	Back stabbing
6	Unfit	Running away from reality behaviour	Bullying
7	Give power to others	Malingering	Excessive vulgar language

Enacting the spirit of the above means using and acting on the template of courage, honour and service in everything.

### Conclusion

Prisoners in pain cannot be rehabilitated. There is a need to fix the tooth ache before inviting prisoners to education and training.

The dentist's chair is daunting and correctional staff need to be carefully selected, trained, and mentored to be equal to the task of being role models of courage, honour, and service.

With such leadership, prisoners can be invited successfully to raise their EQ and responsivity and reach a space where it becomes 'natural' to successfully undertake IQ based training and education.