



*"Embracing the Person, Rebuilding the Family  
& Breaking the Cycle"*

**Presenter: Teela A. Mickles—Founder/CEO  
Since 1994**

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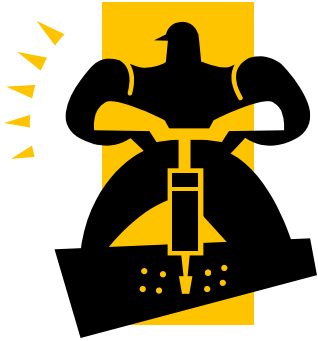
## **The Forgotten Population in Neighborhood Development and Improvement**

### **THE FACE OF AN INMATE**



- Consider the origin of each man and woman confined in the prison system
- The origin of a person puts value on them before life took that value away
- We all began life in the same manner (innocent, dependent with expectations)
- Each one, special, unique, valuable, gifted and accepted in their own right of being.

# Before the Bust.....



Relationships

Family—Home— Education

Social—

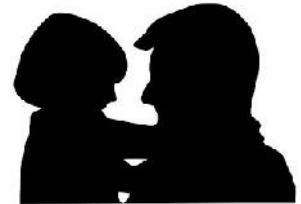
Business-

Church—

In the circle of life, there is a person, family, neighborhood and community. Everyone has a special part to play and each part is important for the circle.

## Family—Neighborhood- Community

- Son— Daughter— Father— Mother— Aunt— Uncle— Grandparent
- Student
- Neighbor
- Friend
- Co- Worker



## City—State—Nation

- Citizen
- Tax Payer
- United States Military
- Potential Entrepreneur
- Community Asset
- Family Member



## Environment

- Accepted - “normal”
- Two Parent Home—Support System for crisis
- Poverty—temporary—generational—hopeful
- Single Parent Home (Absent Positive Male Role Model)
- Nurturing—Supportive
- Spiritual
- Material—needs being met—or not
- Thrive or Survive



## Education

- |  |                           |
|--|---------------------------|
| • Day Care—Head Start—Pre-Kindergarten | foundation                |
| • Elementary School                    | availability              |
| • Middle School                        | visibility                |
| • Junior High                          | stability                 |
| • High School                          | sensitivity               |
| • College                              | credibility               |
| • College Graduate Advance             | reliability—accessibility |

## Society

- Family
- Neighborhood—Community
- Sports—Entertainment—Social Events
- Church—Temple—Synagogue— Nature
- City—State-National (Involvement)
- Employment—Tax Payer



# Life Happens To Us All—Some Planned—Some Not

- Childhood—mishaps
- Neglect—Abandonment-Abuse
- Health Issues
- Alcoholism—Drug Abuse
- Unemployment
- Domestic Violence—Sexual Abuse— Rape
- Military tour ended
- Divorce
- Natural Disaster
- Social Stigmas
- Discrimination (Racism)
- Death of a Loved One
- Limited Education
- Housing Issues
- Transportation
- Accident (s)

## The path inside the circle gets lost—Plans, Dreams, Hope for the future

*Breakdown in Communication*

*Broken Relationships*

*Anger-Frustration*

*Power of Negative Influences*

*Drug Abuse*

*Violence— Illegal Gain— Criminal Acts—Crime Committed*



## Life Outside of the Circle of Life



- Stressful
- Disconnected—*New Norms— Negative Adjustments*
- *Criminal Mindsets —Survival*
- *Fear—Mistrust—Hate—Hurt*
- *Loss of personal worth—no value for others*
- *Hurt people hurt people*

## Criminal Justice System—New Circle of Life

- Loss of Personal Identity
- Individuality is Internalized
- Creativity is Compromised
- Dreams Shattered
- Vision for the Future is limited (blurred)
- Personal Space is Violated
- State of 'natural' being becomes unnatural
- Fear of the Unknown
- Mental Stability becomes difficult to maintain
- Physical health is threatened
- Intellect becomes twisted to accommodate the environment
- Dependence upon professional power in authority
- Serious personal "Reality" Check
- Guilt & Depression go hand in hand
- Regret sinks into despair and despair fosters depression
- Progress and personal growth is restricted
- Fear and self-doubt distort hope for any future



## Effects of Life's Circle in Correctional Confinement

1. ***Anger & Resentment***
2. ***Frustration & Resistance***
3. ***Survival & Adjustment***
4. ***Hopeless & Acceptance***
5. ***Compliant & Dependant***
6. ***Institutionalized***



## Transitional Changes for .....Family

- Emotional stress—fear—anger—frustration—hopelessness
- Absent Parent—Son—Daughter—Sibling—Relative—Spouse
- Introduction to the Judicial System
- Inexperience to navigate for legal representation
- Lack of finances for legal transactions
- Disruption in family 'norms' & operations, daily schedules
- Restructure to accommodate disruption
- Lack of support & inexperience in the transitional process
- Family & Friends embarrassment/judgment—Social Stigma

*Foster Care—Systemic Influence— Institutionalized*

*Breakdown in Communication*

*Broken Relationships*

*Anger-Frustration*

*Power in Negative Influences*

*Drug Abuse —Gangs—Violence— Criminal Acts—Crime  
Committed— Cycle begins or continues*

...Children



## .....Neighborhood—Community—City



- Property loss
- Employment / Education terminated
- *Community liability rather than an asset*
- *Out of sight/Out of mind/Non existent Person*
- *Transference of Economic Status from tax payer to tax burden*

## What Part Does the Community Play?

- Commit to be 'open minded' don't group individuals as "one"
- Consider your personal involvement in the rehabilitation process
- Educate yourself on the Criminal Justice System
- Become a community advocate for families incarcerated
- Visit your local state correctional facility
- Become an active volunteer through the Self-Betterment Clubs
- Join a group that works with inmates on a progressive basis
- Make your efforts 'genuinely' personal BEFORE they become that
- Empathy vs. Apathy— "walk a mile in another's shoes"
- Sensitivity— "No line is so fine that it doesn't have two sides"
- Be a light in the darkness, financially support effective groups.



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## Why?

- It takes a community to break any cycle of social disparity
- Everyone is affected by crime one way or another
- One person incarcerated is a family 'locked up'
- Systemic influence for negative outcomes affect us all
- To impact the economy on the 'positive' not the negative

## Friend or Foe?.....Advocate or Adversary?

- 1. Revalidate persons confined with personal worth*
- 2. Learn of their journey and assist in a new route*
- 3. Accompany them to the 'new playgrounds'*
- 4. Introduce them to those 'new playmates'*
- 5. Support Family Reconstruction*
- 6. Walk them through Community Re-Establishment*



# OMAHA 360 PLEDGE FOR PEACEH "BEHIND THE WALL" 2013

## Take the Omaha 360 Challenge!

United for PEACE AND PROSPERITY!

### A COMMUNITY PLEDGE FOR PEACE & ACTION: BEHIND THE WALLS!

We have lost too many of our friends, family, neighbors, co-workers, and community members to gun violence. Please join in our efforts to help save lives and transform our community. Let's come together to our community safe! Help keep our families and community safe! This is a community call for PEACE Behind the Walls and PEACE On the Streets!

#### DO YOUR PART! TAKE A STAND FOR PEACE

Make a formal commitment to PEACE and PROSPERITY for our families and community!

1. **Parents and family members**, make a family commitment to peace and non-violence. You have the greatest influence. Tell family members it's time to put down the guns.
2. **Students and young adults**, make a commitment with friends and peers to peace and non-violence. Talk to your friends about keeping the peace.
3. **Gang members and former gang members**, make a commitment to peace, solve issues "beefs" in a non-violent way, and get connected with groups and organizations that are providing positive alternatives and opportunities.
4. **Become a positive role model for current and new inmates.**
5. **Join a self-betterment club or other self improvement classes.**
6. **Maintain a positive peaceful attitude toward administration when concerns arise.**
7. **Support efforts of all self-betterment groups and positive classes & initiatives.**
8. **Adopt a new inmate. (select and direct a new inmate in the positive direction)**
9. **Partner with community volunteers, colleges, employers for opportunities to give back.**
10. **Speak up and Step forward to promote peaceful solutions in the time of crisis.**

In April 2013  
88 inmates  
from 6  
different Self-  
Betterment  
Clubs  
committed to  
do their part  
to promote  
peace 'Behind  
the Wall" in  
partnership  
with the  
communities  
they once  
offended. It  
was the first  
time the  
leadership of  
each club was  
allowed to  
come together  
in unified  
effort, for  
peace.



Omaha 360

*A City United for Peace & Prosperity in Every Zip Code and Neighborhood*

**PLEASE SUPPORT OMAHA 360 Collaborative Partners & others making a difference every day!  
FOR A COMPLETE LIST, please go to [www.empoweromaha.com](http://www.empoweromaha.com) and click on Omaha 360.**



## **Neighborhoods USA "ALL THE WAY"**

- **Every neighborhood that needs improvement has an element of crime.**
- **People who commit crime usually live within an environment that fosters criminal acts.**
- **Families who live below the poverty level may have a family member incarcerated.**
- **People in prison have children at risk for gang membership and criminal behavior.**
- **Neighborhood Associations & Citizen Patrol Groups need to know who has a family member confined in prison and support that family in areas of need.**
- **Community Agencies (HHSS), medical groups, employers, faith groups, college students should know who in their area of influence, has a family member in prison.**
- **These same groups should consider a visit to the correctional facility in their area through the invitation of a 'self-betterment' group. (education from the other side is vital)**
- **Incarcerated individuals who have come to know themselves beyond their crime take full responsibilities for their actions and long for an opportunity to prove they are changed.**
- **The organization of the 'self-betterment' groups are under the leadership of individuals who are serving long term & life sentences. (they are not coming out) Therefore.....**
- **They recruit and empower others who are short term to assist with a successful reentry back into society and their efforts are rewarded when that person does not come back.**
- **The efforts of those 'self-betterment' groups are in vane without the assistance, participation and support of the community. (all those mentioned above)**
- **The criminal element each neighborhood has to deal with, look to those who are in prison and see them as their 'heroes'. (most believe that will be their 'natural' future.)**
- **Active community involvement and support in symposiums presented by the "self-betterment" groups will turn their 'heroes' into our 'champions' upon their release.**
- **Our champions (the forgotten populations) can address the issues of crime in the "hood".**

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# Self Betterment Clubs

7th Step Foundation	All Inclusive
Mexican Awareness Through Association (MATA)	Latino
Harambee Afrikan Culture Organization (HACO)	African American
Native American Spiritual & Cultural Awareness (NASCA)	American Indian
Viet Now Club	U.S. Veterans
Alcoholics Anonymous	All Inclusive
Toastmasters	All Inclusive
Survivors Club (Nebraska Correctional Center for Women)	Life Sentence Servers*

\*This group of women who are serving life sentences have fund raisers and give the money to community organizations who are making a difference on their behalf.

**All cultural group are open for inclusive membership but are usually limited by the administration both internal and external for volunteers who wish to participate.**

## What does the complete "Circle of Life" look like in our neighborhoods?

WE all begin life within the Circle of Life

Life causes some of US to fall outside the Circle of Life

Some of US are hurting and angry and do bad things with negative consequences

Now some of US are missing from our original place within the Circle of Life

WE are not dead, We are missing from our place within the Circle of Life

WHO of US will hear US when WE cry out for help from outside the Circle of Life?

WE did not come from City Hall, the State Capitol Building or the White House.

WE came from a home in a neighborhood in a community within the Circle of Life.

WE are coming back to a home, in a neighborhood in a community.

WHO among US will help US get back into our rightful places within the Circle of Life?

Here WE come, ready or not.....Help US get ready so WE can stay within the Circle!!!!

**Teela A. Mickles, Founder/CEO**

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Compassion In Action Inc., is a faith based, 501 (c)3 non-profit organization and all donations are tax deductible. Thanks for Your Support.

**"Embracing the Person, Rebuilding the Family & Breaking the Cycle"**



Compassion In Action (CIA) is breaking the cycle from cradle to crime through the R.A.W. D.A.W.G.S. Youth Corps Gang Prevention Program for boys 5 to 13. This program was originally created and facilitated by the late Dr. Joseph "Kambul" Jennings, Sr., who partnered with CIA in 2012 to bring his program to Omaha, NE.

The R.A.W. D.A.W.G.S. is an incentive program with a focus on the personal validation of each member to instill in them the power of making choices as a 'valued' individual. This is done through a strong spiritual foundation accompanied by developmental disciplines through military drills and committed positive male role models.

The R.A.W. D.A.W.G.S. are challenged to pursue excellence in personal validation, family, school, peers, community and nation. They are provided a multitude of positive alternatives to gang membership. The R.A.W. D.A.W.G.S. motto is:

***"We are Radical, Responsible, Respectful and Winners"!!***