

SIX WORDS.

I have a yellow Post-it hanging prominently on my desktop computer. On it, printed with a thick Sharpie, are six words. These six words are God's whisper to me this year—my anchor point, magnetic north, marching orders, and daily reminder for the work I believe God has called me to. They tell me, throughout each workday...

Why I need to persevere.
How I need to behave.
What I need to feel.

I have this yellow Post-it hanging prominently on my desktop computer because I find it all too easy to get distracted or discouraged or to drift. Most of us need reminders from time to time to refocus on what matters. I know I do. In fact, I need them daily.

Here are the first two words: "Remember those..." This is a reference to a verse in the Bible (Hebrews 13:3) that reads, "Remember those in prison as if you were in prison with them." Think about that. It's all too easy to completely forget about those in prison. But we're not just to avoid forgetting them, to call them to mind occasionally and casually. We're to remember them in the most visceral way—as if we were there in prison with them.

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INDISPENSABLE: ION INTERNS

Since ION began working with interns in the summer of 2020, we've had about 55 individuals participate in our internship program. It's safe to say that each and every one of them has contributed to the growth of our organization.

To connect with those who are interested in being ION interns, we've developed partnerships with several universities. The majority of our interns have come from Arizona State, but we also have had a few students from Portland State University in Oregon. In addition, we have now begun partnerships with the University of

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INDISPENSABLE: ION INTERNS

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Arizona, Ole Miss, and Mississippi State. These various universities share our information with prospective students, who then apply directly to our director of operations.

Those who are selected for a given semester typically work 135 hours over 16 weeks, or 9-10 hours per week. While our internship is mostly virtual, we stay connected through weekly staff meetings, email check-ins, demos with providers, one-on-ones, and optional in-person learning opportunities.

While most of our interns are college students, we are open to sharing this opportunity with anyone who is interested (age 18+). Interns are trained in the ins and outs of the Inside Out Network, how to connect with service providers in different communities (their primary role), how to assist returning citizens with reentry, and how to form relationships with department of corrections staff in various states. We help prepare them for employment post-graduation and expose them to a newer sector of the criminal justice system. Last but not least, we tie in their educational studies with the work they do during their time in our program. We have a new group of interns every fall, spring, and summer semester, and we are so grateful for all of the work that they do!

Interesting fact: Most of our staff here at ION, including our director of operations, program manager, both program assistants, and our inmate registration coordinator, all started as interns. We love to hire and promote from within and support the development of our staff.



Fall 2023 ION interns Nicholas LaRosa and Ana Larson participate in a reentry simulation hosted by the Arizona Supreme Court- Adult Probation Services Division to help Dept of Economic Security staff better understand the hurdles facing returning citizens.

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Take a moment to imagine yourself in prison right now. Today. All day. Imagine the faces around you. Imagine the intense sense of urgency and passion and concern and solidarity that you'd have.

When I find myself starting to get bogged down or distracted by the challenges involved in the work we're doing, the words "remember those" help me reconnect with who this is for and why I need to persevere.

At the same time, I see the next two words, "**Be patient.**" Patience is a trait that never came very naturally to me. God seems to have wired me for action, for making a difference, for results. But the art of networking and the wildly different (and wildly wonderful) people we work with require a patient attitude and long-term commitment. I've learned, from experience, the truth of the saying that it's easy to overestimate the change that can happen in one year and easy to underestimate the change that can happen in five. God's

counsel to me, on a daily basis, is to cultivate a patient attitude and way of being.

And then, finally, there's "**Feel contentment.**" I don't know about you, but I'm prone to focus my attention and emotions on my never-ending to-do list, on what I didn't do yet, or on what hasn't happened. God's whisper to "feel contentment" helps me put out my emotional antennae and tune in to all the good things that are happening through our joint efforts: all the inspiring stories of returning citizens turning their lives around and all the dedicated officials and workers and volunteers who are making a difference through the services they provide. I don't have to do it all. Neither do you. We can feel content knowing that we've played our part and played it well.

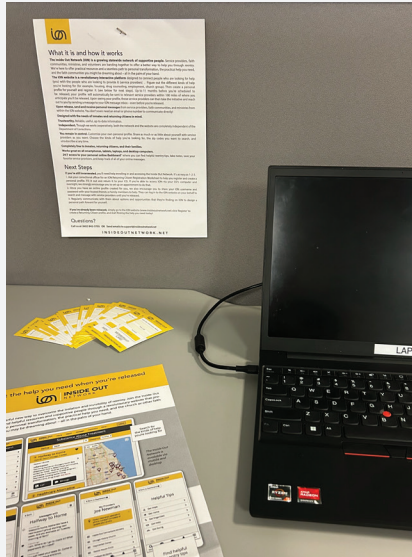
My six-word Post-it is telling me to stay passionate, be patient, and feel grateful. What's your Post-it telling you?

~Fred

SERVICE PROVIDER PROFILE NEW LIFE WELLNESS AZ

New Life Wellness AZ in Phoenix, Arizona, makes a connection with soon-to-be returning citizens by receiving applications up to a year prior to release. Upon an inmate's release, New Life Wellness provides transportation to Thomas Suites sober living housing, from which men and women have access to an array of support services, including job training, health support, and substance use treatment.

Tory LaRoche, administrator of the reentry and recovery program at New Life Wellness, and full-time intern Carol Gold, who describes her role as "happy camper," talked with us and shared a general overview of processes and programs at the center, including the role of their onsite ION Technology Hub and



Employment Resource Center. New Life Wellness has a dedicated resource station where clients can access the Inside Out Network to further their reentry process.

For a lot of clients, Carol said, technological literacy is lacking. With a New Life team member on hand for guidance, ION becomes both a reentry tool and a chance to learn how to use a computer to find resources of all kinds.

A couple of recent graduates stand out for Tory and Carol. Elizabeth graduated several months ago and is now employed doing peer support work. Another recent client, Bethany, went to work at a fast food chain, has already been made a shift lead, and is in line for paid training for a management position.

New Life Wellness is currently redoing their website. Check with them soon for more info!

THE REENTRY CONGREGATION INITIATIVE: DELAYED, BUT BACK ON TRACK

Nearly two years ago, we first started mentioning a project called the "Reentry Congregations Initiative." It was an idea both sparked and funded by one of our friends and generous donors. Briefly, we began by undertaking a broad survey of what's happening in congregation-based reentry ministry across the country. We were looking to discover the kinds of ministries congregations are engaged in, what's working well (and why), and what's challenging (and why). We hoped to discover reproducible models of reentry ministry and pathways that ordinary congregations can follow. Our eventual goal was, and is, to create a practical how-to guide, "Effective Reentry Ministry for Ordinary Congregations," and to empower more ordinary congregations to engage in reentry ministry in a way that fits them.

Though not officially closed (we remain open to more input), the survey wrapped up in 2023, and we've had an opportunity to analyze the results. The final step of the process—the writing of the how-to guide—was slated for the fall of 2023, but unrelated funding challenges, our expansion to Mississippi, and the breakthrough with the inmate tablet distributors all combined to commandeer our attention and postpone the writing process.

We're happy to report that the long-delayed how-to guide has been mapped out in detail and that the writing has finally gotten underway. We'll keep you posted on the progress and share the link with the finished product as soon as we're ready to make it public.



DID YOU KNOW? ION HAS A YOUTUBE CHANNEL

ION's channel on YouTube has introductory videos for returning citizens and service providers as well as recorded webinars to help service providers navigate all that the ION platform has to offer. You can find the complete current playlist by clicking [here](#), or go to [YouTube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and search for Inside Out Network.



WE'RE GETTING CLOSE: TABLET UPDATE

The lead article in this edition talks about being patient and feeling contentment. Good thing, too, because the last four months of efforts to deploy the ION platform on inmate computer tablets have called for us to do exactly that! Arranging this kind of transformation involves a series of interlocking complexities, legalities, technological issues, security concerns, operational challenges, scheduling conflicts, and layers of communication between and within government bureaucracies and for-profit corporations.

It's one thing to say—as we did in our last newsletter—that we have a green light to a path forward. But green lights can, and do, lead to the reality of stop-and-go traffic and the occasional detour to navigate. Given the fact that we're proposing a first-of-its-kind connection and communication tool between inmates and reentry service providers, it's surprising that we've made as much administrative and legal progress as we have in recent months.

Suffice it to say that we're getting close. Once the contractual ink dries and we begin the six-month IT development process on our side with our tech team from WebCitz, we'll let you know. So, all together now: *Be patient. Feel Contentment.*

Oh, and a big shout-out to our legal eagle board member and all-around awesome person, John McLees, and our wonderful legal team from Baker McKenzie (we're a pro bono client), who are making this much easier for us from a legal perspective. We're in good hands!



OREGON UPDATE

In the second week of May, Fred Nelson, ION's executive director, visited Oregon for the pilot launch of registering Adults in Custody on the ION platform. He visited two ODOC facilities, Deer Ridge and Warner Creek, where he had the opportunity to coordinate with staff, help individuals register on the platform, and show them how to search for and connect with providers pre-release. These sessions also provided good feedback on how the process works for the inmates, allowing for helpful adjustments on ION's part.

Fred was also able to visit with some providers in the community and meet with Oregon Correctional Enterprises (OCE). It was a great launch week. We appreciate everyone who helped make it possible.

Stay tuned for additional information as we close in on our launch metric (70 providers) and begin to register individuals in all ODOC and OCE facilities across the state.

**Oregon Scorecard (as of May 20, 2024):
65 service providers enrolled, 5 to go!**

COLOR ME YELLOW CAMPAIGN HITS \$60K TARGET



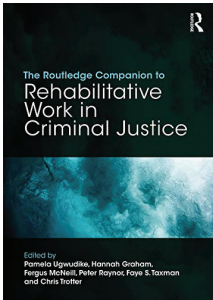
Thanks to more than a hundred individuals and couples who donated to ION's Color Me Yellow fundraising campaign and to generous supporters who matched those contributions, Color Me Yellow brought \$60,000 of support to our efforts to expand to Mississippi and migrate onto inmate tablets.

What a difference every contribution makes!

We're grateful beyond words to each person who stepped up to help returning citizens connect with the service providers and ministries who want to support them—and vice versa. You're the best!

Remember: You can make a tax-deductible donation to the Inside Out Network at any time at <https://secure.myvanco.com/YGKR/home> or by sending a check to Inside Out Network, 3247 S Sun Splash Dr, Tucson AZ 85713.

WHAT WE'RE READING...



The Routledge Companion to Rehabilitative Work in Criminal Justice. Edited by Pamela Ugwu-dike, Hannah Graham, Fergus McNeill, Peter Raynor, Faye S. Taxman, and Chris Trotter. New York: Routledge, 2020. 1187 pages.

You've probably heard the saying, *"How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time."* In

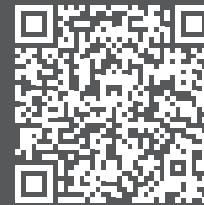
the same way, *"How do you wrap your head around the overwhelming field of rehabilitation in prison and reentry? One bite-sized ten-page article at a time."* For a 1187-page behemoth, this Routledge Companion is surprisingly readable. For the most part, each of the 90+ articles is short enough to be read fairly quickly but long enough to introduce its topic, treat it in some detail, and then direct the practitioner or student to further resources. The editors also have helpfully organized the material thematically (instead of alphabetically) so that a sustained reading through a particular section can build momentum and reinforce learning. Think of this as half a dozen books artfully stitched together. As with most things Routledge, the studies lean quite heavily toward the UK scene. Though it would be nice to read more about similar studies in the US, it's refreshing and instructive to learn from scholars and research from outside the American bubble.

THE MORE YOU KNOW: MADDI ON NEIGHBOR'S TABLE PODCAST

Maddi Briguglio, ION's director of operations and an instructor in criminology at Arizona State University, was featured on the February 13 edition of the Neighbor's Table podcast, which aims to facilitate restorative conversation around the realities of criminal justice and mass incarceration. On the podcast, Maddi talks about how she got interested in criminology and the justice system, her role at the Inside Out Network, criminological theories she covers with her students at ASU, and more.

Find the podcast by searching for Neighbor's Table or via this link:

<https://tinyurl.com/MADDIPODCAST>



Or scan this QR code

BE AN ION VOLUNTEER

If you have just a little free time most weeks and would like to use it to make a significant difference for people leaving incarceration, ION could use your help. ION volunteers help out by entering registration info from scanned paper forms into the ION website. It's easy to do. The only requirements are a willingness to handle registration forms fairly quickly when you receive them and a careful approach to detail to make sure everything is entered correctly.

If you'd like to know more, please get in touch with Emilee Martin at emilee@insideoutnetwork.net. Your help would be greatly appreciated!



Candy Gamboa (ION intern, summer 2021) volunteers with ION in Oregon. Here she is in March at the 4D Recovery Resource Fair in Gresham where she shared information about our platform with other providers in the area. Thank you, Candy, for all of your support!

WE COULDN'T DO WHAT WE DO WITHOUT...

Thanks to our foundation donors, without whom we would not be able to make the difference we make or pursue the goals out there ahead of us. So far in 2024, ION has received significant funding from: the W. B. White Foundation, the Arizona Cardinals Foundation, the Grand Canyon Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and Ministry Partners for Christ. Thank you for your support!



"Inside Out Network is a revolutionary network platform for returning community members. The compassion and empathy that the staff provide are second to none. This type of service is contagious and challenges others to step their level of service up." ~ from an inmate in Gilbert AZ



INSIDE OUT
NETWORK

The Inside Out Network is always a free service for returning citizens

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