**RETURNING HOME**

**Life Coaching Program**

**Participant Manual**

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**Welcome from our Executive Director**

*Welcome to Returning Home. We are glad you have chosen to participate in our programs as we desire to help you successfully transition back into society. But, your successful transition will be up to you. We will provide opportunities, relationships and services, but you will have to do your part to access and apply these programs.*

**Description and Mission**

Returning Home seeks to improve the quality of life in Northwest Arkansas by helping to break the cycle of imprisonment. With partner organizations, The Returning Home Center provides a variety of services for men and women returning to our community from incarceration.

**Life Coaching Program**

The Life Coaching program is one of the services we provide and works alongside your case management.

**Section 1: Overview of Life Coaching Component**

**TERMS**

**Life Coach** - a person who has a stable life and is willing to offer guidance and support to Participants.

**Participant** - a justice-involved adult who is willing to be coached as he or she transitions back into society.

**Life Coaching** - a relational process where Coaches provide consistent, non-judgmental, practical support and guidance to Participants as they transition from incarceration to the community and make positive lifestyle changes.

**BENEFITS/CONCERNS**

* Participants who complete a Life Coaching program are more successful in their transition from incarceration to society.
* Having a Life Coach is NOT another form of reporting but a relationship with a person who is supportive of you in your transition.
* Adults in all walks of life have a Life Coach (a peer) who invests in them by helping them with their career and life which is different from an adult/youth mentor.

**PARTICIPANT**

**Participant Goal**

To successfully transition and prepare yourself to move beyond the Life Coaching connection.

**Participant Role**

Life Coaching is a voluntary partnership between two individuals, the Life Coach and the Participant. Each must be faithful to fulfill their roles and responsibilities for the match to be successful.

* **Learner.** Your role is to learn from your Life Coach’s wisdom, experience, and knowledge in completing your transition plan.
* **Friend.** Your role is to be a friend by helping to build trust, communicating honestly, ask for help when needed, and receive the support provided by your Life Coach.

**Participant Characteristics/Responsibilities**

* **Eager to learn and takes initiative.** Willing to ask for help and apply what is learned. Your life coach has been successful in living a prosocial life and this is an opportunity to learn from him or her. Ask specific questions that will help you meet your transition goals.
* **Open minded.** Willing to listen to your Life Coach.
* **Honest and open.** Tells the truth and communicates struggles and temptations when they first surface.
* **Faithful.** Fulfills program commitments and commitments made to your Life Coach. Keeps the Life Coaching relationship a priority.
* **Communicates.** Return phone calls, texts, emails promptly and be on time for meetings.

**Realistic Expectations for Participants**

* Your Life Coach is NOT your ATM and Taxi Service but will provide emotional, social, and spiritual support in your transition. Do not expect financial or material gain from your participant in the Life Coaching Program.
* Your Life Coach is your friend, NOT your parent. You will be treated as a peer.
* Your Life Coach is NOT perfect and can’t fix what he or she doesn’t know. You will need to communicate your expectations and frustrations with your Life Coach about your relationship.
* Your Life Coach is NOT your junior parole officer, but may hold you accountable for short-term goals that you set as a way of helping you in your transition.
* Your Life Coach WILL hold what you say in confidentiality according to the program confidentiality policy.

**Section 2: Program Policies and Procedures**

**CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY**

*In order to build trust, Life Coaches are required to keep conversations with, and information about, their Participants in confidence. There are four exceptions to this rule:*

**Confidentiality Exception 1: Speaking with the program staff.** A Life Coach may talk to program staff at **any time** about **any information or issues** brought up in the Life Coaching sessions. Staff are there to help problem-solve and to assist individuals with the dynamics of the relationship.

**Confidentiality Exception 2: Conversations with fellow Life Coaches during staff-run Life Coach meetings.**  During Life Coach roundtables, Life Coaches are allowed to discuss their respective participants so that Life Coaches can receive feedback and suggestions from fellow Life Coaches and program staff. However, Life Coaches must maintain a “group confidentiality” –that is, they are not allowed to discuss anything about other Participants to anyone outside of the program.

**Confidentiality Exception 3: Receiving permission from the Life Coach to contact others about a specific problem.** The Participant may give the Life Coach permission to talk to others about him or her when a situation arises where the Life Coach is seeking outside assistance or support.

**Life Coaches should also make a report to program staff when the Participant:**

* Reports child or elder abuse, neglect or endangerment by him/herself or others
* Discusses drug use or intended drug use
* Indicates a possible violation of the terms of his or her parole or probation
* Indicates an intention of hurting him/herself or others, or of putting him/herself in danger
* Reports that another person has an intention of hurting him/herself or others, or of putting the mentor in danger
* Demonstrates a marked change in functioning (ie. appears depressed or manic or has noticeable changes in hygiene, sleeping and/or eating).

**PARTICIPANT AGREEMENT**

**As a Participant in the Returning Home Life Coaching Program, I agree to:**

* Having my information shared with a potential Life Coach.
* Accept emotional, spiritual and practical support from my Life Coach.
* Accept being matched with a Christian Life Coach for one year.
* Not ask my Life Coach for money, material goods or transportation.
* Be humble and learn all I can from my Life Coach.
* Work toward building trust with my Life Coach.
* Be honest and open with my Life Coach.
* Be faithful to commitments made with my Life Coach and communicate 24 hours in advance of any changes to commitments.
* Communicate struggles and temptations with my Life Coach when they first surface
* Work hard to complete my Transition Plan.
* Contact the Program Coordinator:
	+ If my Life Coach violates any program policies.
	+ If my Life Coach is not meeting with me and contacting me weekly.
	+ With any concerns expressed to my Life Coach that are not resolved.
	+ With any concerns I do not feel comfortable talking with my Life Coach about.

Signature of Participant Date

**Exercise 1: Ideal and Worst Life Coach and Participant**

*Fill in the boxes by identifying the ideal qualities and characteristics of a Life Coach and Participant. Identify worst qualities and characteristics of a Life Coach and Participant which are NOT the opposite of the ideal qualities and characteristics.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **IDEAL** | **WORST** |
| **LIFE COACH** |  |  |
| **PARTICIPANT** |  |  |

**Exercise 2: Realistic and Unrealistic Expectations**

1. **Make a list of your expectations of your Life Coach.**
2. **Make a list of your expectations of yourself as a Participant.**
3. **Place a check besides expectations you believe are realistic.**