

MESSY MISTAKES CHAPLAINS AND VOLUNTEERS MAKE: HOW TO PREVENT AND HOW TO RESPOND TO THEM

PRESENTER: DR. VANCE DRUM

CORRECTIONAL MINISTRIES AND CHAPLAINS ASSOCIATION – MAY 3, 2025, 9:00 A.M.



MESSY MISTAKES

- Introductions
- Format
 - Interactive
 - Tabletop exercise
 - I'll save my biggest mistake for last.

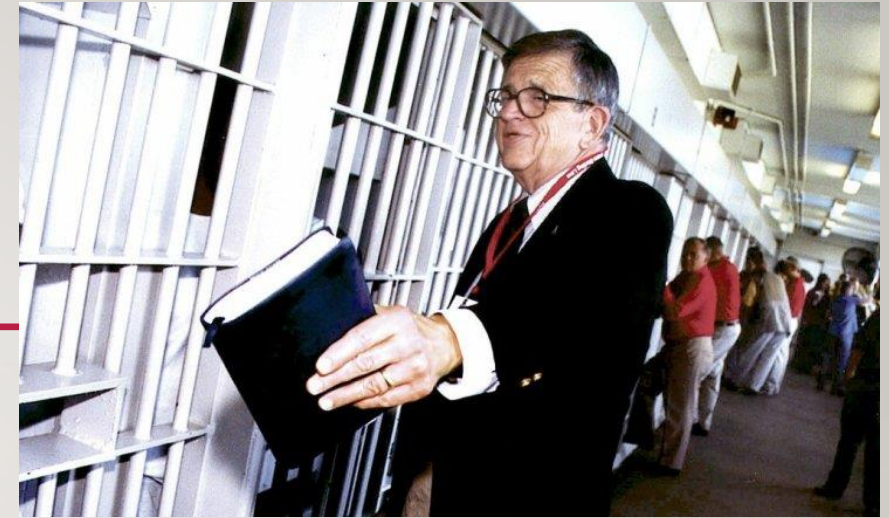
MESSY MISTAKES

- Three Objectives
 - Messy mistakes chaplains and volunteers make
 - How to prevent them
 - How to respond to them



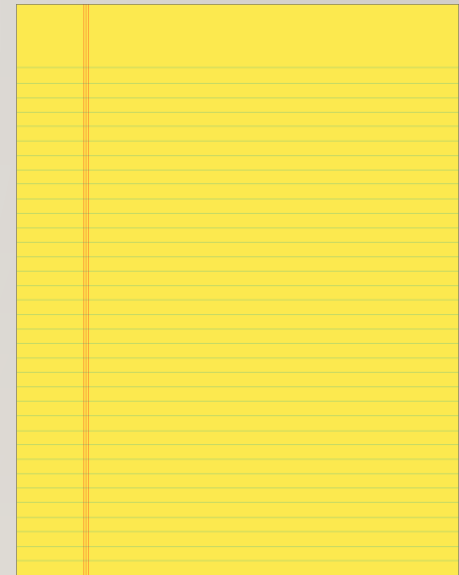
MESSY MISTAKES

- Bad Q: Do we all make mistakes?
- Correctional environment distinctives
- Some mistakes/Other mistakes...Never make a mistake?
Check your pulse.
- Why are some mistakes more serious than others?
- How could this photo scenario go bad?



MESSY MISTAKES

- First mistake (1985): Pencils, eraser, legal pad sent % chaplain for...
- I stayed 27Y on this unit, so the mistake wasn't fatal. (Thank God)
- What was the mistake? (Integrity goes a long way.)
- How could it have been prevented?
- How would you respond?



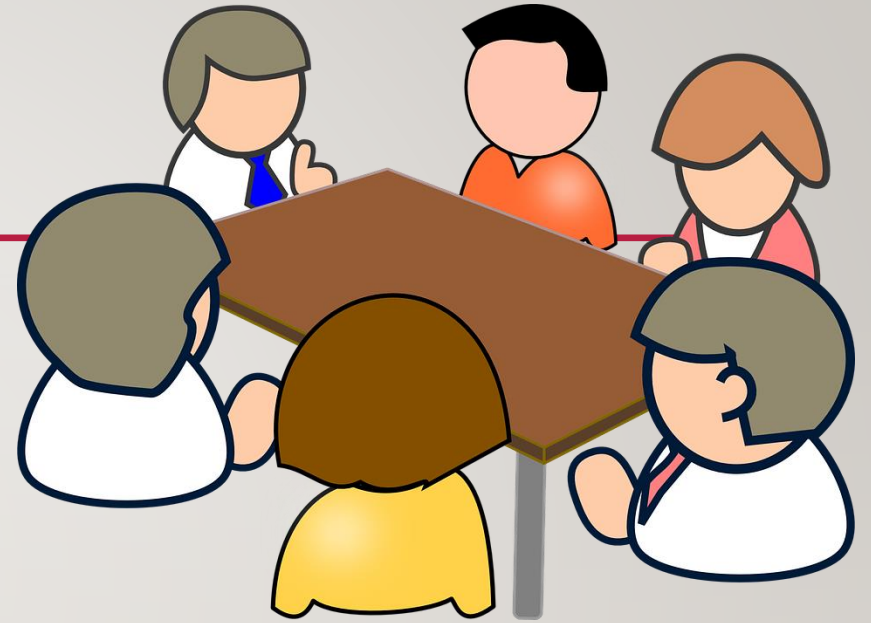
MESSY MISTAKES

- Volunteer letter writing
 - Volunteer was exited for a long time.
 - What's good to write?
 - Not good to write?
 - “I didn’t get my.....”



MESSY MISTAKES

- Tabletop exercise
 - Groups of 3-4-5
 - A mistake you've seen or done
 - Preventable? Response?



MESSY MISTAKES

- Volunteer preachers:
- Same song, 19th verse
- What would you do?
- Preventable?
- What happened...



MESSY MISTAKES

- Warden threw me out
- Was this a mistake? Whose?
- How would you have responded?



MESSY MISTAKES

- Extra heavy box of New Testaments
- What happened?
- Your response?
- The outcome



MESSY MISTAKES

- Tabletop exercise
- Role play with Louis, managing prisoner leadership
- Was there a mistake?
- What was it?
- What corrective was called for?



MESSY MISTAKES

- Parole support letter for Steven B
- What is your thought? Yes? No?
- Was this a mistake?
- Our policy
- The outcome



MESSY MISTAKES

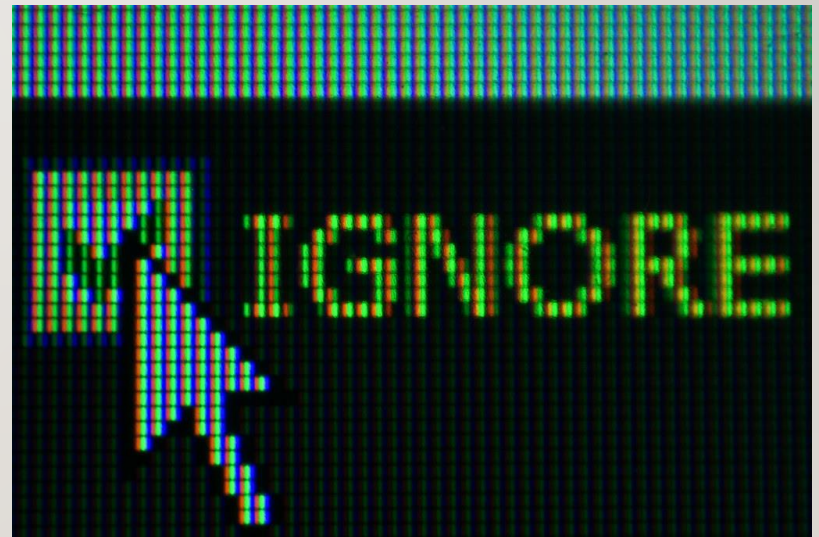
- What about volunteer defense witness at murder trial?
- Volunteer's camera at the baptism. Permissible? When?
- What about: Taking written messages out? Address?
- What about: Overlooking Kairos weekend food theft?
- What about: Group stole 500 leftover Kairos cookies?

MESSY MISTAKES

- Your mistakes
- Violation of policy, or just poor judgment?
- What happened?
- Preventable?
- Your response?

MESSY MISTAKES

- My big one (meeting with Warden Lee Heuszel, 1993)
- What happened?
- How did I respond?
- Preventable?
- What would you have done?



MESSY MISTAKES

- Bio
- Vance Drum, D.Min. served as a chaplain in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice 32 years (27Y in one maximum security Texas prison); retired as the TDCJ Director of Chaplains
- Work with Prison Seminaries Foundation as Chaplaincy Consultant
- Pastor of a 122-year-old non-denominational country church, in 26th year