



Emphasis on Recovery Houses at Bradenton, FL Training

More and more people are recognizing the need for faith-based, life-skills courses for individuals transitioning from addictions or incarceration. Just giving residents food and shelter is not enough. Left to themselves, many will just influence each other in undesirable ways. We are very pleased with the fine group shown above who received their one-day training on February 18 at Journey Church at Bradenton, FL. It was unique because nearly everyone present was being trained to use our program in Christian recovery centers. These included Learn to Fish Recovery House for Women, Bradenton, FL; The Lighthouse Recovery House for Women, Palmetto, FL; The Lighthouse Recovery House for Men; and the new Hope Now Recovery House for Women, Lakeland, FL.

FIT congratulates each of these organizations for their work. Each has carved out the time necessary for this vital part of their ministry. It is all too easy to let all the resident's time be taken up with work, required meetings, and other concerns and neglect this part of their development. At left in the photo are trainers President Don Pratt, Vice President Don Batterman, and Treasurer Fred DeMouey.

FIT Program a Combination of Two Curriculum Sources

The FIT program of eight courses draws from two publishing houses – Living Free/Turning Point and FIT itself. Living Free materials include Godly Parenting, Insight: Discovering the Path to Christian Character, Free to Grow, Anger, and Handling Loss and Grief. The FIT materials include Parenting 101, Dating and Marriage, and Financial Success from Scratch. FIT also uses portions of the Living Free training materials as part of its own training sessions.

Why is this approach necessary?

FIT has used other publishers from the beginning, being more interested in effective program than in publishing. Our unique mission, however, led to our writing some of our own materials to fill in the some of the gaps in order to be approved for use in Florida State prisons. Later on, even after approval, materials had to be written for more practical reasons. These included things like copyright issues, costs of materials, and formats required for jail and

prison use. Further, all FIT materials were written specifically for the indigent, recovering, recently-released, and incarcerated. Format was adjusted to the reading levels of clients as well as relevance to them.

FIT also found it necessary to adapt its training sessions to the special needs of its clients, most of whom are incarcerated, in recovery centers, or recently-released. The April Newsletter will further elaborate on our leader-training rationale and suggest practical solutions to the problems that are unique to this type of Christian ministry.

FIT Steps Up the Pace in Prisons

With the increasing demands from the prisons to provide transition programs due to budget cutting, FIT has been asked to deliver its 100-hour program at a faster pace. Up until this year, the whole program took about a year to complete. Typically, individuals would take the 50-plus two-hour lessons, one after the other. Now, we have two programs that are offering the minimum six courses simultaneously.

Hardee Correctional Institution, Bowling Green, FL

At press time, FIT is delivering the entire 100-hour program in 10 weeks at Hardee Correctional (men). Two 2-hour sessions are presented each day, Monday through Friday. Monday it is Free to Grow; Tuesday, Financial course, then Parenting 101; Wednesday, Dating and Marriage; Thursday, Anger; and Friday, Insight.

Hernando Correctional Institution, Brooksville, FL



At Hernando Correctional (women), a different course is being offered every night of the week, Monday through Friday. Our courses are also being offered across the street (literally) at the Hernando County Jail. Board member Elena Bozzi supervises this operation. Here is her report:

"Well, we are rejoicing here in Hernando Correctional. Family Integrity Training is earning its new name with its emphasis on family for the women at the prison. "Family" is also emphasized in the local jail, where we serve both men and women. There are 10 facilitators in Hernando Correctional, the prison for women. Every night for the last 6 months, the women inmates are getting blessed with our curriculum. They come anxiously and hungry to learn. There are approximately 18 women per class. So we are ministering to 90 women a week each having 2 facilitators for each class. I am happy to say that 8 of the facilitators are from my church. Chaplain Mitchell is very pleased with the program going so smoothly. One of the members of his staff is Mirabel Cresente, also a member of my church, Grace World Outreach. She works with us to organize the books when I order them and to order the certificates when due. So there is wonderful cooperation all the way up to Assistant Warden Ms. Trivino, who schedules the women for each class. I give a big thank you to her.

We are looking forward to the day when the adult inmates have completed their courses, then perhaps the younger ones will be allowed to take FIT. The older women are from 20 and older where the youth group is 18 to 25 years of age. So with the help of God, we will be there for them for a very long time. Let us follow the footsteps of Jesus Christ as He said in Luke 4:18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed me [and us] to preach the good news to the poor; He has sent Me [and us] to announce release to the captives and recovery to the blind; to send forth and deliver those who are blind deliverance to the oppressed, downtrodden, bruised, crushed and broken down by calamity."