



meet
JOE JOHNSICK
and
TED GAINES

*(from the Ft. Myers,
FL area)*

When Joe Johnsick and Ted Gaines came to our training session at Bradenton, FL on April 21, 2012, they indicated they wanted to get into prison ministry right away. That is what they did, and more. In the year and a half since then, this team has pioneered new FIT programs at Desoto Correctional Institution, Arcadia, FL and at Charlotte Correctional at Punta Gorda, FL. They are credited with the issuing of 46 course certificates representing 918 contact hours with clients. This included all of these courses: Parenting 101, Personal Insight, Free to Grow, Anger Management, Dating and Marriage, Financial Recovery, and the 100-hour program completion.

Their commitment and dedication has turned heads, both among the prisoners and prison authorities. Being offered classes with only two or three in them did not deter them. They drove great distances week after week, anyway, to be sure those few received the best we could offer them. This caught the attention of a chaplain who then helped open other avenues for them to be of service.

It is outstanding service like this that makes FIT the great organization that it is. This month both Joe and Ted were elected to the FIT Board of Directors. The following client testimonies are examples of why they do what they do. We do not measure success by the huge numbers of clients that we help in tiny ways. We are more interested in having a huge impact on a few.

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Inmate testimonies from Ted and Joe's anger class

"I'm still a work in progress, and, thank God, with the help of His fellow servants and by brothers-in-Christ, Joe and Ted. They've helped me along with dealing with 'anger', understanding it better, the role it plays in our life, and how 'anger should be out servant and not our master'. The sessions ... held every week are inspiring and quite helpful. Joe and Ted make the environment comfortable enough for everyone there to speak freely without fear of being judged. The Lord has blessed with a good group of guys that are comfortable around each other. And in an environment like this, that's not common...I look forward to being part of the other courses that they have to offer. I want to thank Joe and Ted and everyone else that is responsible for supporting and sponsoring these courses. May God bless you. – Pablo Rosales.

More Testimonies

Bruce Kreitman, 10 year sentence

My name is Bruce Kreitman. I am an inmate at the Charlotte Correctional Facility here in Punta Gorda, FL. I have a ten-year prison sentence with 7 ½ more years left till my release. I signed up for this class approximately 8-9 weeks ago not even knowing that it was a Christian-based class. No, I am not a Christian. I am an Orthodox Jew. But as the classes and weeks went by I realized that I need to learn to control my anger at any cost. No matter what, I needed some help. So I decided to stick it out and learn something from others that I never would have figured out myself. I have learned that no matter what faith you are, you should put religion aside and go with faith. You see, if I couldn't do things on my own then it is time to listen and learn what others are doing in order to improve their anger as well as their lives. So I am very grateful for our two facilitators for allowing me to be a part of this class and look forward to attending future classes that might be offered. Thanks for your blessings and your time. I also learned that Jesus loved everyone no matter who you are. God bless, Bruce Kreitman

Donald Kritzman, sentenced to life

My name is Donald Kritzman but my friends and family call me Donny. I want to share with you my testimony of how I found Christ and how the anger management class sponsored by two wonderful Christian brothers named Ted and Joe. I've become to love and respect these gentlemen in a very short time because in my world it's hard to find men of such high quality.

I'm currently 47 years old (1-31-66) and am doing life in the Florida Department of Corrections for being in the back seat of a car when one of my friends brutally murdered a man. I was 19 years old on escape from the Louisiana Department of Corrections where I was sentenced to nine years for armed robbery. Then on June 13, 1986 at the age of 20 years old I was sentenced to death by way of the electric chair. At that time of my life I had no sense of direction but while in the county jail I got a blessing one day during mail call. I got a letter from a wonderful lady named Verlyn Dawson, a born-again Christian who has since gone home to heaven. She told me God loved me and so did she. Like everything else in my life I ignored all the good stuff and did all the bad. So I didn't write her back because I didn't need Jesus – I needed a lawyer. But once on death row and going through my property, I found her address and decided to take her kindness for a weakness. I lied to her and took advantage of her. I told her I had found God and thanked her for being my friend only because I knew it would sweeten the pot for me and I got more money. Sure, I read my Bible but I never truly believed in anyone except myself. Then on February 25, 1988, the Florida Supreme Court vacated my sentence of death sentenced me to life. I was 22 years old and for the next 19 years of my life I sold drugs, took drugs, drank homemade wine and wouldn't even think about touching a Bible. Then in 1995, I saw my beautiful little sister Darlene in the visiting park at Union C.I. for the first time in nine years. Happy reunion? Really! I was so strung out on drugs I started taking advantage of her. I lied to her for her money and when she had no money to give me I started taking her jewelry to feed my sickness. Well, in three months' time she had had enough of me and went back home to Michigan. I didn't see her again until 2007 at Hardee C.I. I didn't care, I tell you. I was sick and totally out of control, but I still had Verlyn and a gold card to get whatever I wanted or needed. However, in 2000, Verlyn died of a stroke. I was devastated – not for her but for my addiction. So for the next seven years I continued by journey, living stealing and whatever it took to get by.

In 2007 I was transferred to Hardee C.I. and things began to change for me. I was 42 years old. I renewed my relationship with my sister but she wasn't totally convinced yet. In 2008 I signed up for a program named DIRECT – Direct Involvement Reduces the Effect of Criminal Thinking. I finished that program and went on to enroll in education. I had a fifth grade education in 2010, but I got my G.E.D. and became a certified inmate teaching assistant. I had also accepted Christ as my savior for real this time. I'm happy to tell you that today, September 21, 2013, I am drug free and my sister that I love dearly has moved back to Florida. She came to visit me on a regular basis. Now I'm not telling you I don't still struggle because I do but with God next to me for strength, I continue to move in the right direction.

Continued on next page.

Donald Kritzman continued

Let's not forget my brothers Ted and Joe who sponsor the anger management class here at Charlotte C.I.

"One sows and another reaps." I sent you to reap what you haven't worked for. Others have worked hard, and you have joined in their work. John 4:37-38 NIV

These gentlemen are a breath of fresh air to me and their class has gotten me closer to Jesus as well – not to mention how to control my anger. I'm still doing life and have been locked up for 32 years. I don't know if I'll ever walk out of these gates alive but I do know I'm drug-free and do know when I die I'm going to heaven. Once there I owe my friend

an apology for using her when she was alive. Praise God. I will see all those who are believers in heaven. Yes my little sis will be there, too. God bless you all. Donny Kritzman.

Tavares Oates

My name is Tavares L. Oates, Sr. I was asked to write about if the anger management class I attend helps and, if so, how? To answer that let me first explain something about myself.

First and foremost, all honor and glory to God. Because without Him I probably wouldn't be writing this. To say I came from a broken home would be an understatement. It was more like a shattered home. I went through things children, male or female, shouldn't have to endure. I turned to the street for love and guidance and ultimately became a product of my environment. Fueled by headache, pain and fear, my heart turned cold. I began to hate, despise, and resent all authority. I resented people who said they loved me because they had what I didn't: a family. I got involved with a brotherhood I choose not to name at this time. We know how that turned out. I'm in prison. But the class has opened my eyes to a few things:

Through God all things are possible. The pain I harbored through the years is only hatred because I didn't know how to let it go or who to give it to. I've learned that the Bible can help me locate the cause of my human tendency to be angry and that it doesn't have to master my life. Even though it is a common emotion, I can learn to control it, not suppress it or hold it in, but to truly control it, and if need be, to release it in positive or non-explosive ways.

The second important point is that my temper and patterns can easily be passed off to my boys. Truthfully, that can't happen. I won't let it happen. The third point is that I can understand my anger though examining God's word and know the difference between anger (righteous) and anger (sin). To not give place to the devil by allowing my hurt to become frustration, and frustration to fear, fear to anger, anger to wrath, wrath to hostility, hostility to hate, and hate to my death, whether it be spiritual or physical.

I've also learned to forgive, not just to be forgiven by my father in heaven but because it's the first step to heal myself. It's not my place to seek vengeance. If I live my life right, there is not need to worry about people looking for vengeance in me. James said to be slow to anger. Paul's letter to the Ephesians (4:31-32) says "...let anger be put away from you... and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." It doesn't mean I can't get angry, it just means that I've got a lot of work to do and "anger management" helps. Brother Joe and Brother Ted help. God's Word helps. And a class to breathe helps.

It helps. Thank you! With my sincerest respect and gratitude, Tavares Oates.

Turn the page for Official FIT Statement on Why We Do What We Do.

Why We Do What We Do

- **Our Clients**

- Are Underserved
- Want to Know how to Live the Christian Life



They want...

- Application Examples and not just Facts
- To be Listened to and Respected
- Practical Examples from real Human Beings

- **Our Volunteers want a Program that provides...**

- A Fulfilling and Effective Christ-Centered Ministry
- The most Impact for the Time Spent
- The best Delivery Methods
- The most Interaction and Problem Solving among the Clients Themselves
- Being Part of a Greater Community
- A High-Quality Program with Structure and Focus
- A Practical Program that is both “Life Skills” and “Biblical”