Life Behind Bars: Drug Workshop to Reduce Recidivism

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Abstract
This paper creates a group drug workshop for prisoners to reduce the recidivism rate, who have been arrested after released from prison. This paper also touches on certain areas that need to be addressed to successfully reduce the recidivism rate. There are thousands of prisoners sentenced to serve time in prison each year for felony crimes in the United States, 95% of those prisoners will one day be released back into the community. About 74% of prisoners will re-offend and return back to prison for new charges. The United States has one of the highest incarceration rates in the nation due to drug abuses and mental health issues.
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Life Behind Bars: Drug Workshop to Reduce Recidivism

America's incarceration rates have reached the turning point in the last century, compared to other countries. Each year, thousands of perpetrators who committed felony crime offenses, are prosecuted and sentenced to prison. Of the perpetrators, 95% will one day be released back into our communities. These perpetrators are prosecuted to the full extent of the law; with little to no support, they will one day repeat the same ordeal. In this research paper there is information on the following: the prison history in America, the type of therapy treatment being administered in prison to address prisoners' behaviors, the negative environment issues within the prison walls, and challenges faced by prisoners with addiction.

Prison History

Correctional facilities are sanctioned by the courts to deal with criminals committing felony offenses. When thinking about correctional facilities, most people would see them as a place to house dangerous people away from the rest of society. What will happen to these people while they are in correctional facilities? Will there be any services to help rehabilitate them? Once the criminals are released, are there any programs to help them? Today, our prison system offers many treatment programs for drug abuser, sex offenders, and mental health services to help prisoners cope or control their desires. Historically, prisons did not offer services to help inmates, but rather thought of them as uncontrolled animals that could not be saved. Prisoners were locked in their cells with not much to do; thus, some became insane.

Prior history: The first documented prison that was formed in the United States dated back to the late 1700's early 1800's. According to Rolston (2011), the first real establishment that housed prisoners was the Walnut Street jail when the Pennsylvania system was adapted in 1790 to keep inmates isolated from one another (p. 106). The development of the Pennsylvania
system was to have the inmates in isolation think deeply about what they had done and hopefully turn them back around into society, as obedient citizens. In 1816, in the New York Auburn Prison, a new system was developed called the Presbyterian Auburn system, which followed much of the Pennsylvania system, with the exception of allowing contact with other inmates. Even though the Presbyterian Auburn system allowed inmates to be around each other, they were not allowed to speak to one another during the day.

During the early stages of the correctional system, isolation was a form of trying to rehabilitate inmates; the goal was to dig deep and look within themselves in hopes of helping them change their actions. This was to help them choose whether they wanted to continue their path of crime, or change and follow the laws like other citizens. Rolston (2011) stated, "Proponents of both systems hoped that prisoners would experience incarceration in terms of a narrative of death and rebirth: as the 'narrative arc of quasi-death, resurrection, and spiritual transformation' of the conversion narrative" (p. 107). Instead of harsh punishment, for example, the death penalty, as it was done before the start of the Pennsylvania and Presbyterian Auburn system, eaders wanted criminals to be able to reflect on the consequences of their actions by isolation to help the individual see how their actions affected not only themselves, but others. In the early prison setting, there were no known treatments to help inmates, but rather they were looked at as bad people instead of understanding what caused these individuals to break the law.

At the start of the century with forming prisons and implementing systems, rehabilitation was looked at differently compared to today's society with treatments, such as therapy or medication to help control inmates with their sociological issues. The turning point of refocusing the prison system away from isolation was from 1945 to 1980; this is where programs slowly incorporated throughout the decade. As Rolston (2011) stated, "During this period,
prisoners were to be rehabilitated, or 'corrected', according to the newly named American Correctional Association's mandate, not punished” (p. 108). A thought about isolation among prisoners can be seen as some form of punishment, because of the lack of communication and connectedness with others. A person can only think and talk to oneself long enough, until a mental breakdown occurs, which in turn can lead to other problems.

Rehabilitation started to take shape during this era in the mid 1940's with the first program of teaching prisoners to read and write which is still being offered in most prisons today. This type of rehabilitation program was a form of treatment that allowed inmates a chance to be educated, as well as giving them an opportunity to tell their stories. As the education piece was adapted in prisons for many decades, during the 1980's the rise of drug abuse was proliferating in the United States so that a new treatment program was established to help incoming prisoners. Humphrey and Valle (2002) noted during Ronald Reagan's presidency, President Reagan promised to combat the drug problem America was faced with, by placing strict laws which formed the drug treatment programs we see today in the correctional system.

The war on drugs was a big epidemic in the 1980's with not only increasing the incarceration rate, but also the start of drug abuse treatment programs in prisons to help offenders stop re-entering into the criminal justice system. Humphrey and Valle (2002) expressed that things did not improve even after efforts to decrease the crime rate of drug use, enforcing harsher punishments and offering treatment programs. Having an addiction can be hard to overcome, because of the sensation of being high and feeling some sense of relief. Offering drug treatments, while in prison can be beneficial, but once an offender is released back into the same environment as well as lack of support can draw the individual back into the old lifestyle.
Having tougher laws on drugs does help clean the communities as well as giving the offenders an opportunity to talk about their problems while incarcerated; viewing their past with drug use and criminal history to reflect on their life and future helps these offenders. Plus, having nothing productive in prison to do, while waiting release, can either make a person become insane or tougher and more violent toward one another.

Although there are many types of programs and services supporting inmates in the past century, rehabilitation will be pushed to the next level by expanding its goal not only to help inmates while incarcerated, but returning to their community as contributing members. Society has not fully understood what goes on behind the prison walls. Many inmates serving time behind bars are not any more dangerous than a suburban teen that goes on a rampage and shoots up his school on a bad day. Not every inmate incarcerated is a murderer, sex offender, or a robber. Most inmates housed in today's correctional facilities are for drug offenses. The 1980’s war on drugs is a failure of the American criminal justice system that costs millions of dollars to keep inmates behind bars. In 2008 there was a new strategy to prevent inmates returning to prison once they were released.

The United States of America has a growing population of inmates returning to our communities each year. Many of these inmates have hopes and dreams of returning to their community to live a productive law-abiding life. Once inmates are released, many of them face life obstacles, which often discourage, frustrate, and shatter their hopes and dreams leading them to re-offend. With the growing amount of population of inmates released yearly, in 2008 former President George W. Bush signed the Second Chance Act into law.

The Second Chance Act provides reentry programs which target high-risk offenders released from state and local correctional facilities. These programs provide a variety of services
that help newly released offenders to have a chance at life as a law-abiding citizen. As mentioned,

In 2008, former President George W. Bush signed into law the Second Chance Act, a bipartisan effort which was intended to help break the recidivism cycle by fostering and funding transitional and skill-building programs for offenders returning to the community (Gottschall, & Armour, 2011, p. 34).

These programs provide chemical dependency treatment, career training, education, mentoring, and other services.

Inmates who return into the community are uneducated, with substance abuse or mental health problems and lacking positive support systems. Moreover, many of these prisoners released back into the community lack access to resources and information which can help address these issues (Gottschall, & Armour, 2011). The Second Chance Act was awarded federal grants to help government and nonprofit organization to assist prisoners with employment assistance, housing, mentoring, and substance abuse treatment. The goal of the Second Chance Act is to address and improve the outcome of prisoners returning home to their families and loved ones.

The Second Chance Act will serve as a stepping stone for the prisoners who are willing to change their life around and live as a law-abiding citizen. The Second Chance Act provides prisoners and their families with the hope of the prisoners never to return to prison. The Second Chance Act provides many different services for prisoners once they are released back into the community. The services and programs will help prisoners with employment assistance, housing, mentoring, and substance abuse treatment.

**Summary**

Currently, the United States is reported to have the highest incarceration rate and has the most crimes committed compared to the rest of the country. Moreover, the United States does
not enforce the death penalty for all crimes committed; compared to other countries, if someone was caught stealing they would either be severely beaten or parts of their limbs amputated. Also, 95% of prisoners in America sentenced to serve time in a correctional facility will eventually be released (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2003). Of the 95% being released, they will need support and services to help prevent them from re-offending. Prisoners leaving prison usually face difficult challenges and hardships before being sentenced to serve prison time (Pettit & Westen, 2004).

Correctional facilities in the United States have dated back to the late 1700’s to early 1800’s. Prisoners have been viewed by society as dangerous people. Without the support while incarcerated, such as treatment programs, prisoners have no chance to live a normal life as a law-abiding citizen. Today, our correctional facilities offer treatment programs for drug abuse, sex offenders, and mental health services to help prisoners address their behavior issues while incarcerated.

The Walnut Street jail was the first establishment in 1790 to adopt the Pennsylvania system which kept and isolated inmates from one another (Rolston, 2011). The use of the Pennsylvania system was to have the facility enforce isolation of inmates, which was believed to help criminals rethink about the crime they’ve committed; thus, hoping they would return to society as law-abiding citizens. In 1816, the New York Auburn Prison established a new system called the Presbyterian Auburn system which followed the Pennsylvania system with the exception of allowing contact with other inmates.

Initially, when the correctional system started they used isolation as a form of rehabilitation for inmates. The officials thought this approach would force the inmates to look deep within themselves to change their behaviors that caused their incarceration in the first place.
The Pennsylvania and Presbyterian Auburn system wanted criminals to reflect on what they did and the consequences of their action. The placement in isolated was a way to help prisoners search and see the damage they caused to others and themselves. In the 1700’s-1800’s, inmates were plainly known as bad people or law breakers with no known treatment programs to help them. Rehabilitation in the earlier years was looked at differently, but in today’s society, treatment is either therapy or medication to help control an inmate's behavior.

During the mid 1940’s, the first rehabilitation program started where the facility taught prisoners to read and write. With the success of the reading and writing rehabilitation program, the prisoners became more confident in themselves, as well as allowing them a chance at life once they were released. During the 1980’s, drug abuse started to rise and Ronald Reagan promised to combat the drug problem in America and established the war on drugs; however, because of combating drugs and arresting abusers, the incarceration doubled as well as established new treatment programs to help prisoners with substance abuse.

In 2008, advocates pushed for more resources available for prisoners once released from states and local correctional facilities. President George W. Bush signed the Second Chance Act into law which provided reentry programs that targeted high-risk offenders, with the hope of reducing the recidivism rate. The Second Chance Act goal is to address and improve the prisoner's outcome of never returning to prison and live a law abiding life.

Corruption in the Prison System

There are many problems in prison, which are never reported or released to the public. The prison systems are secretive and most of the things that happen in prison get swept under the rug. Fixing the two million prisoners currently incarcerated in our correctional system in America, the prison system must first work on its structure (Gottschall, & Armour, 2011, p. 31).
The structure of a prison and its operation includes: correctional officers, nurses, therapists, cooks, and maintenance workers. The correctional staff often produce the main prison problems such as having inappropriate relationships and bringing in drugs for the inmates.

Whenever there is corruption inside a correctional facility involving correctional staff, there is little to no action taken against the staff. There are many forms of corruption, but the most common one is inappropriate relationships between correctional staff and prisoners. Building a relationship with inmates can lead to a much bigger problem for the correctional systems as well as putting the honest correctional officer’s life in jeopardy. Once there is an allegation and evidence proving the correctional staff's involvement with inmates in any type of criminal activity then the correctional staff is usually forced to resign, so the public is not aware of these issues. Fixing corruption in the correctional system is not an easy task, but it could be done only if the general public was aware of the corruption going on behind the prison walls.

Reducing the recidivism rate should start with the prison system structure, therefore, harsher punishment should be implemented on authority figures such as correctional staff. There should be rules, laws, and guidelines in place of the different types of punishment when an authority figure fails to cooperate with the code of ethics. Prisoners are held accountable for their action; therefore, correctional staff should be held accountable and punished to the full extent of the law.

Authorities and their corrupted ways are not only seen in the prisons, but also where offenders originally start, in the county jails. The correctional staff in the county jails typically don't have relationships with offenders or smuggle drugs, because of the short stay of offenders before being transferred to prison. The county correctional staff display more of a physical and neglectful environment toward the offenders. Hounmenou (2012) pointed out detainees are more
prone to physical abuse by other detainees due to multiple offenders being housed together before being transferred or appearing for their scheduled court date. Sometimes, the physical abuse can also come from the correctional staff, because of their role in the criminal justice system (pp. 276-277). When correctional staff is being abusive to inmates, it's usually that they're showing off to the other corrupted correctional officers, because they know nothing is going to be said or done. Also, it is letting the offenders know who is in control and who has the power. As for being neglectful, it is another way to have someone else do the dirty work for the corrupted correctional staff and keeping their hands clean.

**Drugs In Prison**

The demand for drugs among American people is high, even when people are incarcerated and are serving time in correctional facilities. Stopping the drug trade in the United States and in correctional facilities will not likely happen. Drugs will always find its way into the American system. With the continuous drug trafficking and drug addiction problem, there should be services such as educational and treatment programs offering positive skill-building for prisoners to use; once a program is released, it will possibly provide the best tools.

Although the correctional facilities in America are well secured and in a controlled environment, drug use among prisoners is still on the rise. It is disturbing to know that prisoners serving long sentences can continue to abuse drugs. Even though the general public has some idea on how drugs are getting into the prisons, the correctional system has ways to prevent the drugs from getting into the hands of the prisoners. How are drugs being distributed into a well controlled environment? There are only two ways drugs can get inside a correctional facility, either with the help a prisoner’s loved ones, during visitation, or from someone with access such as correctional staff and inmates around the premises.
All correctional facilities in the United States have visitation hours for a prisoner's loved ones to go inside a secured perimeter and visit. Correctional facilities have policies for visitors to follow or visitation can be terminated, if correctional staff feel the visitors or prisoners fail to comply with the policy. Visitors have to go through metal detectors and secured gates to be able to see the prisoners. Visitors are not allowed to bring in anything but their identification card.

Although there are many measures to prevent visitors from bringing in contraband for the prisoners, some visitors will go to the extreme for their loved ones and do unthinkable things. Visitors will conceal contraband on their body, for example, women tend to hide the contraband in their vagina whereas men in their anus. By concealing the contraband within the body cavity, it makes it undetectable to authorities as well as easier to transfer the contraband to inmates. Once the visitors gain access for a visitation session, they tend to use the restroom as an excuse to somehow dispose of the contraband. Depending on the situation, the prisoners will retrieve the contraband either from the help of corrupted correctional staff or devising a plan with other inmates who work the rounds during visitation hours. For prisoners, they must pass an unclothed body search after visitation because prisoners can conceal contraband inside their body cavity as well.

The profit on drugs in prison is worth more than on the street. Because of the limited amount smuggled in through a controlled environment, prisoners will pay the requested amount for their drugs. Prisoners who use drugs usually have their family members on the outside pay their debt to the dealer's family on the outside. The prisoner's loved ones on the outside have nothing to do with the illegal drug trade inside the prisons and can be threatened if the debt is not paid. According to Beard (2014), "The prison gangs step up the pressure by threatening more violence and coordinate with outside allies to harass and intimidate inmate family members"
Jeff Beard is secretary of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and has seen the devastating effects when prisoners cannot meet the demands to pay their debt.

Corrupt correctional staffs are a better resource for prisoners to manipulate and have them bring in contraband into correctional facilities. Not every corrupt correctional staff starts their career with the mindset of helping out prisoners by smuggling drugs into a correctional facility. Correctional staff, having that everyday contact with prisoners, will usually fall for the prisoner's trick and violate some minor violation of correctional policy. Some correctional staff are easy prey when they are alone and outcast by the rest of the correctional staff. The corruption process starts out by doing little favors for the prisoners and eventually leads to much bigger more serious violations of correctional policy. Whenever it leads to more serious violations the correctional staff is helpless and will do what the prisoners demand.

**Drugs Problems among Prisoners**

Drug use has been an ongoing issue in America for many years. Whether it is peer pressure, stress, or depression that causes drug use, the trend has been increasing in many other factors. To understand the continuous problem of drug use among prisoners, evaluating one's upbringing, the environment, and family relationships should be a focus to help gain a better knowledge of the interaction between drug use and a person's background.

Drug-related offenses is a type of crime much different than homicide, rape, robbery, crimes of passion, and white-collar crimes. “All parties involved -drug producers, smugglers, distributors, sellers and users- in general make transactions on a voluntary basis” (Oleinik, 2013, p. 186). Not all willing participants in drug-related crimes see themselves as a law-breaker since there is no victim involved, but all participants make transactions voluntarily. Is there really a right or wrong involving drug-related offenses, when all participants are voluntary participants?
There could be a different point of view when it comes down to drug-related crimes. For example, does it make it right for someone to drink alcohol? Some might argue that it is wrong, but who is to blame when the participant voluntarily causes damage to his own health. Alcohol is one of the number one causes of vehicle death in the United States compared to drugs. Alcohol is legal for anyone over the age of 21. Alcohol is also one of the most commonly used drugs, but since the government is receiving tax on alcohol it is legal to use. There has been current debate over legalizing marijuana use and some states already legalized the use of marijuana. What about the prisoners incarcerated for marijuana in recent decades, should these prisoners be free with all the new laws legalizing marijuana use in the United States? Not all prisoners incarcerated for marijuana offenses should be free, but treatment should be offered to every prisoner incarcerated for drug-related offenses.

According to Friestad and Kjelsberg (2009), about three-quarters of prisoners entering into a correctional facility with active symptoms of mental illness meet the criteria for co-occurring disorder (para. 2). Many of those prisoners will never receive treatment that they need. For the past two decades, prisoner population has almost tripled in size. The fast increase is related to the war on drugs and convictions for drug-related offenses (Wormer, & Persson, 2010, p. 363). Due to harsh punishment for drug-related offenses, correctional facilities are overcrowding. “More than half of all the people arrested in the United States test positive for illegal drugs” (Wormer, & Persson, 2010, p. 364). More than 65% of prisoners meet the criteria for substance abuse when they get arrested, but the disturbing fact about these prisoners is that they cannot get the help they really need. The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University found that 11% of the prisoners eventually received treatment, while serving time in a correctional facility (Sack, 2014, para. 7). Because of the poor structure
and lack of treatment in the prison system, most of the prisoners who will eventually be released with addiction go into relapse and get arrested for new charges.

The war on drug laws should be replaced with new drug laws and revised changes to adapt to current society. Since the war on drug laws is a failure of the American system and incarcerates more prisoners, treatment should be the first line of defense. David Sack mentioned that the United States is backing away from the "lock'em up and throw away the key" mindset that has characterized the failed system war on drugs (Sack, 2014, para. 1). In recent decades, many states are giving drug related criminals less time for punishment, therefore, the federal system is in the process of doing the same. The use of illegal drugs in the United States is nothing new, although the consequences of using illegal drugs are becoming more dangerous. Government officials and independent program evaluation researchers have evidence supporting treatment for drug-related offenses to be beneficial for crime reduction and are cost-effective (Lo, & Stephens, 2000).

Drug abuse goes further into an individual's life from childhood experiences as well as the environment surrounding an individual's upbringing. According to Friestad and Kjelsberg (2009), living in poverty with limited means played a big part in the lives of people with drug abuse problems (p. 243). Growing up, for most offenders, poverty is the reality of life and having access to seeing drugs being sold or used in their neighborhood was a factor of becoming abusers themselves. A thought could be that prisoners incarcerated for drug offenses, saw the profit drug dealers were making and chose to live that life, as a way to support their family; however, with the excessive access to the illegal drugs, they become users as well. The environment and lifestyle are what triggers people who live in poverty to seek financial gain and become drug abusers.
As mentioned earlier, marijuana has been legalized in some states as with the war on drugs increasing the incarceration rate, a reevaluation should be conducted since there have been changes to marijuana usage as well as distribution since the 1980's. As Friestad and Kjelsberg (2009) noted in their study, marijuana was reported to be the most used illegal drug by participants as well as 20% of the participants reported only using marijuana before being incarcerated (p. 239). To help decrease the high incarceration rate, inmates who were detained for marijuana use or distribution should be released and monitored in the states that currently legalize marijuana. Monitoring inmates after release can help determine if they are distributing again, and can be fined or taxed if they are. In addition with the fine or tax collected, it could be used to form organizations such as Alcoholics Anonymous for marijuana abusers. As Caulkins, Hawken, Kilmer, & Kleiman (2013) stated: Besides lower taxes, Colorado's proposition allows any individual over age of 21 years (no license necessary) to grow up to six cannabis plants (p. 837). Even though Colorado state law allows licensed businesses to sell cannabis, the federal laws still consider cannabis illegal.

With the high incarceration rate and prisoners re-entering back into the criminal justice system, there needs to be more effective rehabilitation or financial programs to help prisoners stay on track once released. Also, implementing treatment programs while incarcerated can be beneficial for prisoners to think about their actions as well as the consequences that affected them, their family, and their community, because of their drug abuse. According to Wormer and Persson (2012) the Federal Bureau of Prisons organizes multiple treatment programs for prisoners while in prison as well as during supervised release. The programs are offered to those who choose to volunteer with certain qualifications required, as well as for prisoners with court orders (p. 366). The idea of offering treatment programs based on voluntary or court order only
helps a little when the increase in the incarceration rate is due to drug abuse prisoners. The programs should be mandatory for all prisoners with a drug conviction to help rehabilitate them in prison and released.

According to Wormer and Persson (2012), "Access to treatment services within correctional settings is minimal-less than 10% of adults in prison across all settings receive the treatment that they need" (p. 365). Treatment programs in prison should be individualized to fit the prisoners with the goal for prisoners to find the reason for their drug abuse. For example, financial problems to support the family could have been the main reason for the drugs, but eventually lead to drug abuse. The treatment program can give counseling to help stop the drug abuse, but also help the offender with a job while in prison, as well as having the prisoner participate in educational programs. Understanding what is needed to help the prisoner succeed, especially once back in the community and with their family, can give them more opportunities to stay on the clean path. With the mass incarceration and high recidivism rates, current prison systems shift the focus on prisoner reentry (O'Hear, 2007).

As mentioned before, about 10% of the prisoners will eventually receive treatment that they need (Wormer and Persson, 2012). Some of the prisoners receiving treatment for their addictions do not want the service given to them, but the prisoners that want to better their life and overcome their addictions will never receive treatment. There is a glitch in the prison structure that needs to be fixed to help those desperate for treatment. To fill the glitch, there should be mandated treatment for all prisoners incarcerated for drug offenses, therefore, no prisoners will be released without proper treatment.
Summary

The problems in the prison systems are never reported or released to the general public due to the secretive procedures and codes all correction staffs must follow. The prison systems do not want the media or the general public to know the things that happen inside a prison. Usually, the things that happen in prisons are prevented from getting into the hands of the media and released to the general public. There is corruption inside prisons. The two most common types of corruption are inappropriate relationships with prisoners, which leads to sexual relationships, and bringing in drugs for the prisoners for personal profit.

Minnesota has recently passed a new law to stop the sexual relationship between prisoners and correctional staffs. Any correctional staff in the State of Minnesota involved with or convicted of sexual relationship with a prisoner will have to register as a sex offender. Prisoners are considered vulnerable adults therefore, authorities determine that correctional staff will be held accountable for their action when they choose to have sexual relationships with a prisoner. In 2011, there were 8,763 reported allegations of sexual victimization in prisons, jails and other adult correctional facilities. About 49% of the allegations involved correctional staff sexual misconduct or sexual harassment toward prisoners and 78% of the correctional staff were either fired or resigned (Bureau of Justice Statistic, 2014, para. 2). Even though there are some sexual misconduct reports, many incidents go unnoticed and most of the corrupt correctional staff never get punished. To reduce the recidivism rate, the prison system will first fix the prison structure which will implement punishment on all corruptive correctional staff. Everyone will be held responsible and accountable for their actions just like all prisoners are punished to serve time in a correctional facility.
Authorities with their corruptive behavior are not only seen in the prisons, but also where prisoners originally start in the county jails. Smuggling drugs for prisoners in the county jails is uncommon due to the short stay the prisoners have before being transferred to prison. Hounmenou (2012) pointed out prisoners in county jails are more prone to be physically abused by other prisoners due to the fact that multiple prisoners are housed together before being transferred or appearing for their court date. Some physical abuse comes from the correctional staff because of their role in the criminal justice system (pp. 276-277).

More than half of the prisoners arrested in the United States are for drug-related offenses due to the demand of street drugs being used by the American people. With the continuous drug trafficking and drug addiction problems, education, and positive skill-building should be offered to the prisoners before they are released. With the limited treatment programs and services offered to the prisoners while incarcerated, many of the prisoners serving long sentences continue to abuse drugs in prison. It is disturbing to know that prisoners can continue with their drug use in prison. There are several ways drugs can be distributed into a well controlled environment. Drugs usually get inside a correctional facility with the help of the prisoner’s love ones during visitation or from correctional staff with access around the premises.

Friestad and Kjelsberg (2009) stated that about three-quarters of the prisoners entering into a correctional facility have an active symptom of mental illness which meets the criteria for co-occurring disorder (para. 2). In recent decades, the prison population almost tripled in size because of the war on drugs and convictions for drug-related offenses (Wormer, and Persson, 2010). The overcrowding in the prison system is due to harsh punishment and long sentences for drug-related offenses. There should be new drug laws to replace the war on drug laws since more prisoners are incarcerated for non-violent crimes like dealing or using drugs. The new drug
laws should mandate all first and second drug offenses for treatment instead of punishment in prison. Sack mentioned that the United States is backing away from the "lock'em up and throw away the key" mindset which characterized the failed system war on drug (Sack, 2014, para. 1).

**Current Group Therapy Administered in Prison**

There are many different therapy techniques being administered in prison, however, one technique most commonly used is known to be the cognitive behavioral therapy or CBT. "Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) has a comparatively strong level of empirical support across a range of psychiatric disorder" (Carroll, Kiluk, & Nich, 2014, p. 436). Although other therapy techniques are administered in prison, CBT focuses more on the present, limited on time and problem-solving, therefore, prisoners learn skills they can use. By administering CBT in a prison setting, prisoners can improve by modifying their beliefs, relating to others in a different ways, and changing their behaviors. Lad (2013) stated when conducting therapy, it is important for the therapist to understand the individual pre-existing beliefs and assumptions the individual may hold by exploring the prisoner's life experiences (p. 790). By exploring the lifestyle of the prisoners, the therapist can start helping the prisoner's healing process. Perhaps, acknowledging a prisoner's background or beliefs can be helpful in understanding his or her current state.

Miles, Ellis and Sheeran (2012) stated mental health problems among prisoners are compounded by lack of involvement in educational programs, limited coping skills, low self-esteem, and vulnerability to stressful events (p. 690). Most prisoners have mental health issues which lead to depression and cause them to repeat their negative patterns. CBT is an effective treatment for depression, where the goal of CBT is to help prisoners learn the skills to recognize the negative pattern, evaluate their validity, and transform the negative behavior into more positive thinking. CBT is being administered in prison due to the rate of depression. Depression
can work both ways where either a prisoner has depression before entering prison or prison causes the prisoner to develop depression.

Prisoner's mental health symptoms can be triggered by previous traumatic events. CBT approach in a prison setting would encourage prisoners to seek help, because they know they are safe from harm as well as having a more effective result from being out of their usual environment.

**Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) Group Therapy**

CBT is currently one of the most commonly used programs in the prison system. Professionals in the mental health field need to address the current issues that arise in the prison system. Baker, Mcfall, & Shoham (2009) noted that the rise of CBT is due to several factors, but primarily on the focus of evidence-based practice and accountability in delivering behavioral health services. The prison system lacks resources and mental health professionals to determine which prisoner should be placed into the CBT program, but when the prisoner shows signs of self injury, treatment is provided.

CBT techniques can help prisoners become aware of the reasons as to why things occurred in their lives and give them an understanding to find closure, so they can become a more productive prisoner. Depending on certain situations, humans vary in thinking and can create meanings about different events and that affects how they see themselves and the world. CBT allows a person to learn how to respond when they are feeling distressed, so changes in their behavior can occur. This only happens after a person feels safe that problem focused skills can be offered as a treatment. Problem focused skills helps prisoners overcome negative behaviors and fears of past experiences.
As mentioned earlier, there has been a tremendous change in the American prison systems due to the mentally ill prisoners reentering with the same behavior from when they were first released. Without the care prisoners really need, prisoners who are diagnosed with mental health issues are at the mercy of the prison system. Moreover, to reduce the recidivism rate rate and cost-efficiency for the taxpayer, prisoners who are placed into the CBT program should be offered to those who really need the service and will benefit from the program when they complete it. Prisoners who will not benefit from the program should be ruled out by addressing the issue that there needs to be more mental health professionals to help reduce case loads.

Another benefit from CBT in group therapy is time limited and the use of homework between the therapist and prisoners. Time in the prison system is vital, because everything in prison is designed to fit the time for prisoners to move from one place to another. As our prison system faces high recidivism rates, the prison system has attempted to make changes to reduce recidivism. CBT has been identified as building skills of individual self-monitored thinking and by using techniques to build cognitive skills. Integrating more group therapy programs into the prison system will furthermore reduce the current recidivism.

The National Institute of Justice (2010) stated that cognitive behavioral therapy does reduce recidivism in adult prisoners and juveniles as well (para. 3). There is a positive outcome for the CBT program to be implemented in a prison environment setting where prisoners can become conscious of their feeling, thoughts, and behaviors to make positive changes. "A person's thoughts are often the result of experience, and behavior is often influenced and prompted by these thoughts. In addition, thoughts may sometime become distorted and fail to reflect reality accurately" (National Institute of Justice, 2010, para. 2).
Prison Environment Doing Group Therapy

Over the past decade, there has been focus on what works in the prison system, then treatment programs are created and redesigned to treat prisoners with mental health and drug problems. Most research is done on preparing prisoners for life back in the community once their sentencing is over. Few studies to none are done to prepare prisoners to serve their time more productively in prison. Often treatment and intervention in prison address barriers and behavior the prisoners may have physiologically.

There should be a therapy program just for long term prisoners to help them cope and adjust to prison life. Providing group therapy in prison can be harmful to some prisoners, like a child molester or prisoners with a sex crime. Prisoners with these types of crime do not really want the general prison population to know about their crime. The prison system often fails to rehabilitate and usually targets prisoner's behavior to prevent recidivism. The current design of prison systems does not work. Additional modifications, adjustments, and teaching of learning principals could be a more effective way to change the prisoners’ behaviors. Group therapy in a prison environment has its advantages and disadvantages like everything else. One thing prisoners can gain from group therapy is the ability to relate their mistake to many other prisoners. Support from one prisoner to another is important to enable reinforcement of positive values. Positive values are ideas and beliefs from one prisoner to another; therefore, one prisoner can support another for a positive change and become law-abiding citizens. Group therapy in prison is helpful, when the group of prisoners brainstorm together to solve a problem, it teaches them the skills to communicate. Through communication, the group of prisoners can provide feedback to one another and address the negative behavior.
For example, prisoners who got away with crime that will put them in prison for the rest of their life might not let the secret out to the group; however, sometimes due to guilt and remorse prisoners end up sharing with the group to end his guilt. Knowing what is behind the prisoner's criminal behavior will best help with treatment and intervention. For example, a prisoner who commits crimes when he is drunk or on drugs, and now when he is sober, is likely suffering from an addiction problem.

Mental health and drug problems are not the only problems that cause depression. Men and women prisoners incarcerated are parents themselves and when they do hard time in prison for punishment, the children suffer the consequences as well. The children with an incarcerated parent are likely to follow the same footsteps of their parents and be incarcerated themselves. Duwe and Clark (2012) mentioned that prisoners with supportive visits from family members and loved ones were significantly less likely to reoffend and return to prison than the one without visits (p. 47).

The advantage of group therapy is that prisoners are able to relate and help each other cope with the stresses about their children. Although corrections officials encourage visiting, it is impossible for a child to visit their parents when there are obstacles keeping them apart. In black and white it seems promising for incarcerated parents and their children to have contact; however, in reality keeping contact is a challenge for prisoners. “In state prison, only 12.3 percent of fathers and 14.6 percent of mothers reported personal visits from a child at least once a month” (Christian, 2009, p. 4).

A disadvantage of group therapy can be that it serves as entertainment for some prisoners, due to the amount of down time in prison where most of the day’s prisoners have limited areas to go. Prisoners who participate in therapy can show that they are weak and soft
which can lead them to be overrun by other prisoners. Some prison system run therapy groups by handcuffing prisoners to tables or place them in a cage. Group therapy will not be effective when prisoners are treated like dogs. When one is taught in a negative environment, chained to a table or in a cage, the individual will soon portray a creature

Professionals in the prison setting do not have the time to build rapport with the prisoners due to the lack of staffing. Ongoing therapy with prisoners does not occur because of the amount of responsibility one mental health professional has to oversee hundreds of prisoners. Adding more mental health staff in the prison environment will reduce case loads and can result in more productive treatment for the prisoners.

**Social Learning Group Therapy**

In trying to understand human behavior, there have been many therapy approaches created in helping and treating patients. As Corey (2009) expressed in early 1960, Albert Bandura developed the social learning theory which has a more in-depth approach in viewing influential aspects that drive individuals to behave the way they do. This incorporates the classical and operating conditions with the observational learning approach (p. 235).

Corey (2009) classical conditioning is based on what is learned beforehand that influences how an individual may respond through paired association (p. 235). For example, a drug addict always smokes marijuana after eating dinner to relax and unwind after a long day of work. Now, for the drug addict this becomes a routine where dinner time is the stimulus and the craving to smoke marijuana is the response that triggers the classical conditioning of pairing (dinner time to smoke marijuana).

Operant conditioning, is where one's behavior is learned through past experience that is influenced by the consequences resulting from one's action. If the more reward is shown or given
because of one's action, the behavior will continue to increase. If one’s action is not supported, then the behavior will lessen and decrease (Corey, 2009). For instance, when someone is introduced to drugs and the usage brings satisfaction and pleasure, the individual will find it more rewarding from the learned behavior of keeping and using drugs. If one's reaction to the drug use has a negative experience, such as serious side effects, that experience can help stop drug use.

"Social learning theory is one of the most recent approaches to addressing people in need and applying the theory to human problems within a social context" (Chavis, 2011, p. 471). To better understand the behavior of prisoners, tracking back into a prisoner's past will be beneficial to stop the cycle of violence and reduce the current recidivism rate. As a result of getting the answers, the prisoner’s behavior can be traced from the home as a child.

**Adlerian Group Therapy**

Prisoners are unique and special in their own way, some might experience challenging mental health issues, but these conditions can be overcome with the right techniques to help achieve recovery. Some theories might focus on goals, others focus on emotions, while others focus on behavior patterns. Therefore, different and similar techniques can be useful in prison to help prisoners overcome their challenges.

Adlerian theory, techniques such as lifestyle, social interest, early recollections, and encouragement will address some of the mental health and drug abuse prisoners. Lifestyle in a group therapy, helps a person understand the individual environment where he lived, thought, and goals he tried to achieve that were important to him. Adler saw us as actors, creators, and artists so each individual strives for goals that have meaning for them (Corey, 2009, p. 101). The prisoners' style of life is created during their first six years of life which follows throughout their
life. Prisoners follow the same lifestyle as their parents and it can be frustrating to address and help the prisoner break the cycle.

Social interest helps the group to rethink the criminal activities that have caused heartache not only to them, but to their family. Adler’s social interest refers to the individual community and their positive attitude toward people in the world (Corey, 2009, p. 102). Early recollection (ER's) is important with the prison population due to the negative events, and violence experienced throughout their lives. Early recollection will not only benefit the therapist, but the group to obtain the prisoners' behavior patterns and violence revolved around them. Similar recollection events from different backgrounds will teach the prisoners that every prisoner’s values and beliefs are similar, but when they come from different cultures, they bring self-awareness to the group. Early recollection is traditionally used in Adlerian therapy to interpret the client's lifestyle.

The Adlerian encouragement process is important as prisoners are looking for a change in their lives. "Encouragement entails showing faith in people, expecting them to assume responsibility for their lives, and valuing them for who they are" (Corey, 2009, p. 114). A discouraged prisoner might be suffering from a mistaken belief and would not even know until their emotions are drawn out.

Adlerian “Creative Self” technique gives the prisoner the ability to create their own lives either by influence, change or direct how they want their lives to play out. It is up to the prisoner what direction he chooses for his life once released from prison. Prisoners in group session will create their life and measured the consequences of each choice together to measure there is no regret for their actions and brainstorm to not only to better oneself, but the group.
Most prisoners are like neglected children striving for perfection and show antisocial behaviors due to the personal lifestyle shown by the parents. According Alfred Adler theories, a child who is neglected or abused learns what the pampered child learns, but in a more direct manner. Perhaps the prisoners learn inferiority because they are told and shown by their parents that they are of no value. Prisoners who have not known love do not develop capacity for it just like a selfish prisoner because they are taught to trust no one.

The experiences humans encounter in life helps them learn from the mistakes they made, but mistakes can also block a person’s view of their future and hold them back. Sometimes, asking a prisoner to recall their past event can cause more damage to themselves than avoiding it during group therapy. For example, a prisoner who has been sexually molested and later became a child molester himself can be challenging for the therapist to break through, especially in a prison environment. The fear of reliving the terrifying event can cause painful memories for the prisoner and even cause withdrawal from group therapy due to mistrust of other prisoners in the group. Human beings can create and choose the lifestyle they want to live, but some refuse due to discouragement and lack of confidence. The Adlerian creative self and encouragement combined can redirect the prisoner’s ability to choose the direction just like the imaginative life created by the prisoner.

**Preparing Prisoner for Employment and Release Back Into the Community**

Addressing the prisoner’s mental health and drug addiction problems will not reduce the recidivism rate. Reducing recidivism has been an ongoing challenge in the criminal justice system in the United States. Every year, over 630,000 adult prisoners are released from state and federal prisons back into the community (Luther et al., 2011, p. 475). These prisoners are more likely to return to prison with new charges without the proper skills to successfully compete with
others in the employment market. Offering prisoners the knowledge and employment skills they need should be a main focus while the prisoners served their time in prison.

At first glance, it seems that vocational education programs are offered in all prisons; however, a closer look prisons revelas the lack vocational training offered to prisoners. Wikoff, Linborst, and Morani (2012) state many ex-prisoners do not receive assistance either pre or post release to prepare them back into the community (p. 290), even though most of the prisoners returning to the community have minimal job skills. Many ex-prisoners lack the basic skills to start looking for employment once they are released from prison. The stress of unemployment by ex-prisoners puts them at higher risk of drug abuse, especially for prisoners with a history of drug problems.

While the prison system tries to make adjustments to help the prisoners with jobs inside the prison walls, there is not really any funding that will help the prisoners prepare for the outside world. Most prisoners being released back into society have not held employment in their lives and know only the criminal activities that brought them to the criminal justice system. To stop the cycle of violence and reduce the recidivism rate, there must be programs put in place to help prisoners prepare for the job search.

Vocational programs, supporting all prisoners before returning to the community, should be implemented in all prisons in the United States. As the economy is slowly recovering from the recession, competition for employment is high for both ex-prisoners and individuals without a criminal record. A person with a criminal conviction on their record is usually ruled out due to the amount of applicants in the job market.

Although some ex-prisoners’ conviction are for non-violent crimes, most crimes can result in a life sentence of unemployment for most ex-prisoners. Most state job application
forms have a box that asks if you ever been convicted of a crime. Applications marked indicating a criminal conviction usually never make it past the first round to have a face-to-face interview with the employer. Every prisoners eventually is frustrated about marking the box or not, leaving it and explaining to the employer during the interview. Moses (2012) states regardless of prior criminal convictions, prisoners cannot live a law-abiding life without gainful employment unless the prisoner independently wealthy (p. 106).

Prisoners will need more than work experiences to compete against individuals without a criminal record. All prisoners should be mandated to participate in basic job search skills and vocational programs should be offered in every prison. Job coaches and employment counselors on site to provide assistance to the prisoners will help the prisoners overcome the unemployment problems once they return to the community. Supporting prisoners with job skills is essential so that they have the opportunity to compete against others in the workforce.

Vocational programs implanted in prisons will require the prisoners to complete different steps such as: basic computer skills, creating a resume, writing a cover letter, basic interviewing and job search skills. Each step will require completion before moving on to the next step, therefore, prisoners have the basic skills once they are released from prison. Teaching prisoners the different job skills can benefit the prisoners. Nally et al., (2013) states that "Many ex-prisoners and ex-felons struggled in the labor market before their convictions and likely would have continued to have problems even without trouble with the law" (p. 51). Prisoners struggled with employment, as mentioned by Nally, are likely to have no vocational skills.

Most prisoners do not have basic computer skills or even touch a computer to learn the minimal use of a computer. With basic computer skills, the prisoners will be able to use Microsoft software to create a resume and a cover letter. Giving prisoners the basics of creating
a resume and cover letter will help the prisoners with their job search the minute they are released. Other important skills the prisoners need to learn are basic interviewing and how to respond when employers ask about their criminal record.

In the past, prisoners released from prison without vocational skills often were at high risk of returning to prison. Prisoners that participated in vocational training were more successful out in the community compared to the ones without any vocational skills. Most prisoners who cannot find employment will go right back doing what they know. The lack of vocational skills and steady employment history make it harder for ex-prisoners to build employment history and find work.

11 Sessions Drug Group Treatment Workshop for Prisoners

The Drug Group workshop is designed for prisoners to overcome drug addiction while incarcerated. Prisoners who participate in the group will learn techniques to cope with their drug problems, understand the vicious cycle of addiction, understand how to identify triggers, control their cravings, learn refusal skills, explore the consequences of using drugs, and learn from each prisoner who retells their story of what will enhance their recovery process. The workshop consists of eleven sessions and a variety of activities both within the sessions and homework. A twelve follow-up meeting are scheduled for six weeks after the eleven sessions.

Structure

The workshop is planned for eight to ten prisoners who meet weekly with a Counselor for a total of two hours. Each session covers different techniques to help the prisoners overcome their drug problem. Ten minutes before the session starts, the group use relaxation techniques to relax their muscles, 50 minutes discussion on last session's homework, 50 minutes focus on new techniques and 10 minutes discussion the prisoners' take away from the session.
Environment

The group meets in a room large enough to allow the prisoners to sit in a circle without touching each other.

Session 1

1. Introductions and Commitment

The counselor and prisoners introduce themselves, their goals for the workshop and what they expect to gain from the workshop. The prisoners will have to commit themselves to the 8 sessions or may leave the group if they cannot make the commitment.

2. Relaxation Techniques

Before each session, the counselor will introduce basic relaxation exercises with the prisoners. The prisoners will complete muscular exercise before the session can begin. The purpose of relaxation exercises is to teach the prisoners that they have the ability to relax and control themselves during difficult situations. Relaxation decreases the stress on the mind and body. Lovas (2015) states that relaxation training can improve people's cognitive functions and reduce anxiety (para. 3).

3. Identified Problem and Accepting Responsibility

In a group, the prisoners identify their drug problems and recurrent thoughts regarding drug use. Each prisoner will take a few minutes to rethink their drug use and admit if they have a drug problem or not. Until the prisoners admit that they have a drug problem, the treatment and intervention does not help. The group then brainstorms to see if that individual has a drug problem.
4. What Stood out and Take Away

At the end of each session, each prisoner will have the opportunity to express what stood out and what they will take away from the session.

5. Homework

A lifestyle questionnaire is created for the prisoners to complete for next session.

Session 2

1. Review of Homework

The homework is to help prisoners identify family history, communication, family relationships, and patterns that pass from one generation to the other generation. The "Life Style Assessment" is used to uncover the unique way each prisoner solves their problems in life and how the prisoners cope with their life tasks. A lifestyle analysis helps the counselor gain insights into the prisoner’s drug problem. "Lifestyle is a set of convictions that allows the individual to evaluate, manage, and predict events within one's experience" (Kazakeviciute, Ramanauskaite, & Venskute, 2013, p.158).

2. Lifestyle

Due to a professional code of ethics involving confidentiality, responsibility, and informed consent the group will break out for individual therapy. For sessions 2, 3, and 4.

Lifestyle

3. Homework

Prisoners will use a self-monitoring log to document any cravings or urges they have to use drugs. The prisoners will have a daily record to discuss with the group. Every time the prisoners have a thought related to drugs, document it. The purpose of this homework is to have a better understanding on about what triggered the prisoner to have the urge to use drugs.
Session 3

1. Review of Homework

The counselor and prisoners work to help specific individuals to understand and identify triggers in drug use. Prisoners will learn a variety of strategies for coping with cravings. Prisoners will write down the negative consequences about their drug use to keep as a reminder for them to talk to other group members, when craving occurs, to reduce the feeling of anxiety. Let cravings occur and experience it without fighting or giving in, and do self-talk to identify the automatic craving thoughts and counter it with positive self-talk.

2. Lifestyle (Individual Therapy Continues..) Group Discussion On Drug Abuse

The group will start the discussion on why they use drugs. It could be for social, physical, emotional or moral use. In pairs, they will discuss the good and bad consequences of abusing drugs and then discuss with the group the impact drugs have had on their lives. While the group participates in this activity, the counselor and one prisoner will continue with individual therapy.

3. Homework

Continue with self-monitoring logs.

Session 4

1. Review of Homework

Check in with the prisoners on self-monitoring logs. Having prisoners reflect on the positives and negatives of drug use can help them visually see the reasoning behind their addictions. A more thorough outlook of what is written down can be talked about in detail to understand what may have triggered the use. Prisoners write down the positive and negative about their past drug use and consequences for using drugs.
2. **Lifestyle (Individual Therapy Continues..) Group Practice Thought Stopping Technique**

   The counselor and one prisoner will continue with individual therapy. The group will identify the stressful thoughts, write down the thoughts about the anxiety to create positive thoughts to replace the negative ones. Imagine themselves in a situation which the thought occurs and for about two to three minutes shout "Stop." Repeat and replace the thought if it comes back. Tell yourself that you are in control of your own life.

3. **Homework**

   Practice thought stopping technique to stop craving.

   **Session 5**

1. **Review of Homework**

   Check in with the prisoners to see if the thought stopping technique works or not.

2. **Early Recollection (ER's)**

   The counselor will use early recollections to help the prisoners identify their mistaken beliefs. Mostly, when people use drugs they want to change something about their lives. The (ER's) used in this session are for collecting and interpreting early memories. From the ER's the counselor can determine the reasons why the prisoner is in his present situation. ER's also provide a means for an individual lifestyle and unique outlook on their life (Pomeroy & Clark, 2015, p. 25).

3. **Homework**

   The prisoner researches about the vicious cycle of addiction and stages of drug dependence. Hanson, Venturelli, and Leckenstein (2015) stated "Drug addiction develops as a process; it is not a sudden occurrence" (p. 68).
Session 6

1. Review of Homework

The counselor teaches the prisoner the vicious cycle of addiction and each stage of drug dependence that has a lasting impact on their lives. Every time the prisoners abuse drugs, the wheel starts to go into its circular motion over and over again.

2. Role-Play Say "NO."

Prisoners will learn drug refusal skills to prevent relapse. Most drug abusers find it hard that they don't know how to say "No." Prisoners pick an actual situation where a friend offered him drugs and role-play with basic refusal skills. 1. Have good eye contact. 2. Respond with a clear and firm "No." 3. Keep conversation brief. 4. Leave the scene.

3. Homework

Continue with self-monitoring logs.

Session 7

1. Review of Homework

Check in with the prisoners on self-monitoring logs. Did the techniques given to the prisoners in session 4 help with the triggers and cravings? Teach different techniques to the prisoners if the techniques used in session 2 did not work. Everyone is different, so one technique that might work with one individual may not work on others. The prisoners learned new strategies to cope with craving. When the prisoners identify the triggers, engage in non drug related activity, use thought stopping, and breathing techniques.

2. Push-Button Technique

Prisoners will be asked to imagine and recall their feelings during a pleasant and unpleasant event in their life. For each life experience, the prisoner will be asked to remember the feelings when they weren't on drugs and the feeling when they were on drugs. The prisoners
will be instructed to alternate from the good feelings of the pleasant experience with the negative feelings of the unpleasant experience within every minute for five minutes, so prisoners can learn the power of change within their own self about their feelings. Conte (2009) states that the reader imagine a large box with two red buttons on it and each button take a certain direction (pp.128-129).

3. Homework

Continue the push-Button technique.

Session 8

1. Review of Homework

Check in with the prisoners to see if the push-button technique helps stop the craving. Prisoners will then discuss what they learned from the Push-Button technique in a group session to gain feedback on each other.

2. Relapse Prevention Techniques

Have prisoners write a list of any situations that may cause them to relapse. Once the list is completed, prisoners will categorize the items from the list in groups such as emotional contributor, behavioral patterns, and environmental factors so prisoners can have a guide to prevent relapse. Witkiewitz, and Marlatt (2011) states that relapse intervention strategy is designed to prevent initial lapses and provide skills to enact when lapses do occurs (p. 1).

3. Homework

Continue with self-monitoring logs.
Session 9

1. Review of Homework

Prisoners will have a group discussion about which techniques they felt best suited them in their rehabilitation process. Each technique will be reviewed.

2. Role-Play Say "NO"

Prisoners will continue role-play to say "NO." Prisoners can pick a different situation where drugs are offered to them and role-play with basic refusal skills. 1. Have good eye contact. 2. Respond with a clear and firm "No." 3. Keep conversation brief. 4. Leave the scene. At the end of each role-play the prisoner has a chance to talk about their experience.

3. Homework

The prisoner will write down what is important to them and what they lost for using drugs. For the next session, the prisoners can retell their story with the group.

Session 10

1. Review of Homework

Check in with the prisoners on their homework. The prisoners will discuss what is important in their life and what was lost due to drug use. The purpose of this activity is to remind other prisoners that everyone who uses drugs have the same or similar story.

2. Story Telling

The prisoners will retell their lifestyle story by using what they learned from their one-on-one therapy session with the counselor. Each story is unique to the prisoner and how he will use the story to enhance his recovery.

3. Homework

Prisoners will use what they learned and apply it to their daily lives to be discussed for the next session.
Session 11

1. Review of Homework

The Counselor and prisoners will discuss the different techniques the prisoners learned during the sessions. Prisoners will then tell the group when they used that technique and if it helped afterward.

2. Evaluation of the workshop

The prisoners will have the opportunity to evaluate the workshop. The counselor then makes necessary changes to best help the prisoners overcome their addiction.

Session 12

Follow-up Session (6 Weeks Later)

The follow-up session is for each prisoner to report on their progress during the past few weeks. The discussion will be based on the different techniques the prison uses and what works and what does not work.

Research question

Which group therapy helps prisoners overcome their drug issues and reduce recidivism by more than the current rate and other areas the prison systems need to address.

Final Summary

The United States of America is considered as one of the countries with the highest incarceration rate, justifying through the courts and legal processing a way of suitable punishment for a variety of offenders. In other countries, even for crimes such as stealing, it is looked upon as heinous, where severe beatings or amputating one's limb is the punishment an offender can receive. In the United States, the prison system is ultimately used as a punishment method to secure individuals who break the law, but some studies have shown that this is not an
effective way to help offenders from repeating the same cycle once released. Bureau of Justice Statistics (2003) mentioned 95% of prisoners who are released from prison will need some type of support system as well as services to help offenders to stay on track so they will not reoffend (para. 1).

Over the years, the correctional system has had many changes and incorporated different approaches to help rehabilitate inmates. In the earlier years, during the 1700's and 1800's, the first approach used was isolation. The Pennsylvania system was the method of having prisoners isolated, then they would reflect on their actions and reform into law-abiding citizens. The second approach used, Presbyterian Auburn system, incorporated much of the Pennsylvania system, but instead of isolating prisoners from one another all day, they were allowed to have some contact during the day. The two approaches were used as ways to rehabilitate prisoners at the beginning, the justice community believed isolation would help prisoners realize that their actions not only affected them, but others as well.

In more recent years, new approaches of incorporating schooling as well as reentry programs were established to focus more on the aftermath of a prisoner’s life; once released from prison there was a way to help direct them from offending and returning back to the correctional system. The schooling program was pushed to help prisoners learn how to read and write to build confidence and self-esteem so they could seek opportunities in life once released from prison. The Second Chance Act, was another approach that targeted more of the high-risk offenders being released from prison with resources such as halfway homes and support systems to help offenders stay on track and not return to the prison life.

The prison systems have implemented and utilized different groups of therapy treatment in prison to best treat the prisoners for their mental health and drug problems. One current group
therapy administered in prison is known to be the Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT). Carroll, Kiluk, and Nich (2014) stated that CBT has a comparatively strong level of empirical support across psychiatric disorder. Utilizing CBT in the prison setting helps prisoners modify their beliefs, relate to others in a positive ways, and includes behavior changes (Lad, 2013).

Miles, Ellis, and Sheeran (2012) stated earlier around p. 23 that prisoners' mental health problems are due to lack of involvement in educational programs, limited coping skills, low self-esteem, and they are vulnerable to stressful events (p. 690). Prisoners' depression is often caused by down time where prisoners stay in their cell most of the day with really little things to do and have no communication with other prisoners.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) techniques help the prisoners be aware of their reasons and give them a meaning to things. Human's thinking creates meaning for certain situations and develops beliefs about themselves and how they view the world. CBT also helps the prisoners learn how to respond when they are distressed and changes their behavior.

Due to the amount of mentally ill prisoners currently serving prison time, without the treatment to care for the prisoners, the prisoners suffering from mental health issues are at the mercy of the prison system. Mental health staff is in needed in the field to reduce the recidivism and cost-efficiency for the taxpayer. Mental health staff in the prison system is overloaded with cases and more time is spent on paperwork than on care for the prisoners.

The benefit of CBT in the prison system is time limited and the use of homework between the therapists and prisoners. CBT is identified as individual accountability, learning, self-monitor thinking, and building cognitive skills in areas that prisoners are lacking. The National Institute of Justice (2010) stated that cognitive behavioral therapy does reduce recidivism in adults prisoners or juveniles as well (para. 3). The prisoner can become conscious
of their feelings, thoughts and make positive changes. "A person's thoughts are often the result of experience, and behavior is often influenced and prompted by these thoughts. In addition, thoughts may sometime become distorted and fail to reflect reality accurately" (National Institute of Justice, 2010, para. 2).

Over the past decade, the focus on the prison systems has been to rule out treatment programs and redesign programs that will work. However, design programs in the prison system are meant to prepare prisoners for released. Often there is no program to help prisoners cope and adjust to prison life.

Group therapy in a prison environment has its advantages and disadvantages depending on the circumstance of the prisoners. In group therapy, prisoners have the ability to relate their mistakes to other prisoners and get support from other prisoners in order to make positive changes in their life. Whereas, prisoners without the support from other prisoners suffer emotionally and it leads to more negative behavior.

The advantage of group therapy is that most prisoners feel helpless to care and provide for their loved ones while incarcerated. The group will be able to help one another cope with the stresses about loved ones who are sick or the child for which they cannot provide. Although, corrections officials encourage visitation for prisoners and their loved ones, sometimes it is impossible for a child to visit when there are obstacles keeping them apart.

CBT has been proven by researches and studies to be effective in a prison setting to reduce recidivism. Implementation and design of more programs to treat the mental health and drug problems in prison will help reduce the current recidivism rate. Applying Social Learning Therapy (SLT) is beneficial for the prisoners and the prison system.
In trying to understand human behavior, there are many therapy approaches to treat patients. Early 1960 Albert Bandura developed the social learning theory which has a more in-depth approach in viewing influential aspects driving individuals to behave the way they do through incorporation of the classical and operating conditions with an observational learning approach (Corey, 2009).

For example a drug addict who uses drugs after dinner to relax and unwind after a long day of hard work. For that drug addict, this becomes a routine activity craving the response that triggers the classical conditioning. Corey (2009) explains that classical conditioning is based on what is learned beforehand that influences how an individual may respond through paired association (p. 235).

To have a better understanding of a prisoner’s behavior, therapy should start from the beginning with knowing the family history, living conditions, family relationship, and upbringing. Gaining more in-depth information about the prisoner’s lives can help to evaluate behavioral problems that exist. "Social learning theory is one of the most recent approaches to addressing people in need and applying the theory to human problems within a social context" (Chavis, p. 471).

Most prisoners experienced being neglected and abused, which contributed to their lack of trusting anyone who offers answers to them; that makes therapy sessions tough for the individual to not speak about their problems, as well as allowing the therapist into their minds.

Even with the therapy in place, the recidivism is still a work in progress, trying to keep individuals with mental health and drug abuse from re-offending. Luther et al. (2011) expressed that over 600,000 adult prisoners are released yearly from state and federal level prisons back into the community. With the stigma of being a prisoner and having a criminal record, the job
process is tough for offenders. There needs to be a more functional vocational training available in prison that gives the right skills to help offenders approach and secure employment.

   As technology is an ever evolving part of our society's future, allowing prisoners to have computer skills is essential in furthering their life outside the prison. Adding to vocational programs for prisoners, in respect to preparing them with life skills, such as interviewing techniques, creating a resume, and teaching them social etiquette can prevent offenders falling back to old habits to survive. Along with therapy, there should be more focus on rehabilitating prisoners to enable them to become a law abiding citizen. A person today needs steady employment to support a family and live as a law abiding citizen to reduce the recidivism rate.

   Conclusion

   This paper has touched on several areas needed to be addressed by the prison system to fully successfully reduce the recidivism rate. Although this paper focuses on providing drug treatment for the prisoners, it is necessary that all the areas mentioned be addressed. As the prison systems continue to make changes, it is best to involve community agencies to participate in helping the prisoners with their needs.
**References**


