

**TRANSFORMATIVE INTERVENTIONS:
STUDYING PARTICIPANT PERCEPTIONS OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF
VARIOUS CORRECTIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM ELEMENTS**

THESIS

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ABSTRACT

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This qualitative phenomenological study inquired into the experiences and perceptions of 8 successful graduates of the Convicted Offender Re-Entry Effort (CORE) boot camp and Construction Gateway rehabilitative program sequence in Austin, Texas. CORE boot camp provides military discipline and life skills training for first time felons. Gateway is a vocational training program providing further life skills training, vocational training, and job placement. The research questions focused on participant perceptions of which program elements were most salient in aiding successful reintegration into society.

Elements seen as having the greatest significance include personal matters (a child, a steady job, good income, and returning to school), life skills (learning to learn, learning to take orders, and learning to get along), elements more closely related to CORE (exercise, discipline, and not wanting to recidivate), and elements more closely related to Gateway (developing a sense of accomplishment and greater self-esteem, and acquiring a good job). Many reported important rehabilitational benefits accrued for them merely because of their participation in the combined CORE/Gateway program.

This study supports the findings of prior researchers that ex-offenders who do not recidivate tend to be those who have developed a working self-regulatory system that is based on self-monitoring and self-control.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction to the Study

Much attention has been paid by researchers to both the causes of and potential solutions to America's crime problem. In most cases, this research seems to reflect the professional interests of respected experts in the field: criminologists, academics, penologists, and correctional authorities (Duguid, 1997; Eisenberg & Fabelo, 1996; Gerber & Fritsch, 1995; Tewksbury & Vito, 1994; Wenda, 1997; Wright, 1997).

While these studies have shed considerable light on the nature and causes of crime, research into programs that might help solve the crime problem by habilitating or rehabilitating former offenders seems less illuminating. Often, the inquiries appear to be focused principally on the institutional and programmatic dimensions of these projects that are of the greatest interest to the researchers. Even those who do seem somewhat curious about the inner changes that occur in the minds and hearts of the ex-offenders often use a quantitative methodology in their studies that results in their being focused more on statistical evaluations of the rehabilitation programs under investigation than on the actual experiences and changes that have occurred within the lives of the inmates that the programs seek to deter from committing further criminal behavior (Burton, Marquart, Cuvelier, Alarid & Hunter, 1993; Gunn, 1999; McCarthy-Tucker, Gold & Garcia, 1999; Winters, 1997).

Little has been studied regarding the experience and perceptions of ex-offenders who receive a comprehensive combination of rehabilitative program elements such as psychological counseling, life skills training, literacy education, and vocational training during and after their incarceration, and are supported with job placement and aftercare following release. Not much is known regarding the perceptions of the combination of people and programs helped meet their needs. Correctional education

researcher Gunn (1999) reports that her review of the literature revealed the needs of inmate learners and their instructors have long been overlooked by research.

As a teacher in the Construction Gateway vocational training program at Austin Community College, I work teaching incarcerated young offenders from the CORE boot camp program at the Travis County Corrections Center the attitudes and skills needed to obtain a job and successfully reintegrate back into the community after release from confinement. Because of both my professional role as an educator and my close personal relationships with the students, my research interest concerns the change of perceptions and worldview these program participants have experienced within themselves as a result of the impact of CORE and Gateway on their lives.

This thesis is a preliminary effort to bring further research interest to bear on the qualitative aspects of corrective, remedial and rehabilitation programs. It studies the experiences and reactions of the participants of these programs, in their own words and from their own points of view, as to just what it is about the staffs and programs they found to be significant in motivating their change from anti-social criminality to productive citizenship.

Rationale for the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study, which was conducted according to the principles of the phenomenological tradition, was to make inquiry into the experiences and the perceptions of some participants in the CORE boot camp and Construction Gateway programs. The goal of the research was to learn what significance participants attached to the experiences they underwent in the various elements of these rehabilitative programs and with their combined staffs, and whether and in what way or ways they believe their lives were changed by the experiences they underwent during the time period beginning with their incarceration in the CORE boot camp and ending with their final graduation from the Construction Gateway program.

Most of the literature on studies into offender rehabilitation and correctional education is focused on programs designed to reform the older and invariably much more hardened inmates incarcerated in state or federal penitentiaries (Bossler, Fleisher, &

Kreinert, 2000; Duguid, 1997; Eisenberg & Fabelo, 1996; Tewksbury & Vito, 1994; Wenda, 1997). It seemed to this researcher that a study into efforts to rehabilitate younger and less criminally experienced offenders at the level of their first serious encounter with the judicial system might yield valuable information about changing their attitudes and behavior to deter them from continuing on the path toward becoming career criminals.

Since those studies that have been published about this population are principally focused on the programmatic aspects of the change process, it was felt that a study of the perceptions and feelings of the participants about which elements of this rehabilitative program had been significant for them offered a chance to gain important new insights.

Role of the Researcher

As a teacher in ACC's Construction Gateway program working closely with young offenders for five years, two of them concurrently as a graduate student at SWTSU educating himself about the design and implementation of rehabilitative programs such as these, I wanted to find out what was going on as students complete the program sequence and move on, and how they believe the mechanism of rehabilitation worked for them.

I am personally very interested in the program, the students, and their outcomes. My participation in the Developmental and Adult Education program at SWTSU came about because of this interest. This topic deserves thorough research and knowledgeable explication to develop new understandings that could help other troubled youngsters.

Being an insider, personally known to and deeply involved in the lives of the informants for this study over the past five years, gave me an inestimable advantage in the successful completion of this research (Spiggle, 1994). I am familiar with the culture and customs that exist in the paradoxical lives of these boot camp cadets who are students at Austin Community College during the daytime and inmates locked away behind the razor-wire fence of the Travis County Correctional Complex at night.

I have empathetic understanding, considerable experience, and the trust of a group that Guerin & Denti (1999) describe as usually being unresponsive, suspicious, antisocial, and isolated. I know them well enough to see events in their lives from their own points

of view, and am thus uniquely qualified as an observer-participant researcher (Gunn, 1999) to tell the story from their own angle.

Although my insider status brought certain advantages to doing this research, I am aware that it also brought risks. It presented the challenge of remaining neutral as I talked with the respondents, despite my desire to see them succeed in life and not have to return to incarceration. This was aided by the fact that I honestly did not know what, beyond a deep, sustained involvement in the rehabilitative process, brings about changes in the participants' lives. I worked to bracket my personal desire and views to maintain validity (Kirk & Miller, 1986), dependability, confirmability, and trustworthiness to prevent this potential source of inherent bias from unduly affecting the outcome. I learned in a prior 20-year career as a print and broadcast journalist and investigative reporter that objectivity was mandatory if one was to maintain credibility. Toward this necessary end, another educator and a counselor not involved in the CORE/Gateway program were utilized as co-researchers to provide analysis and interpretation of my work.

Beyond this, even my successful efforts at bracketing my own potential bias might not have been adequate to overcome respondents' perceptions of what they could or could not say to me, and the possibility that the 'halo' effect might have colored their responses and influenced them to tell me what they believed I wanted to hear. This study was designed to minimize this tendency as much as possible.

As Gunn (1999) wrote of her study of 115 adult inmates in a county correctional facility in Washington State, "the instructor, as the observer-participant researcher, made observations," as a part of what she described as "a qualitative technique in which the researcher occupied the roles of observer and in-group member" (p. 75). Implicit in Gunn's statement is the idea that the status of being an insider, known to and trusted by the informants, gives the researcher access to comments and observations which might otherwise be withheld by members of a potentially unresponsive, suspicious group.

Context of the Study

Respondents were former inmates of the Convicted Offender Re-Entry Effort (CORE) boot camp who have graduated from the Construction Gateway vocational training program. CORE is located at the Travis County Correctional Complex. Its inmates are young offenders convicted of their first, usually minor, felony offense. Offenders are provided with a rigorous military-style boot camp environment lasting six months that encourages them to develop mental and physical discipline and personal responsibility. The rehabilitation program offered by CORE includes a traditional 12-step drug and alcohol counseling component similar to that of Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous, a unique life skills training component that includes stress and anger management, consideration of cognition, reasoning and behavior, parenting and family interaction, and GED completion (Institute of Justice Policy Research, 1995).

Construction Gateway is a five week vocational training program that provides participants with occupational training in all aspects of the construction industry, access to further educational opportunities and encouragement to become life-long learners, more life skills training to develop their self-discipline, self-confidence, self-esteem, leadership, and cooperation, and employability training to prepare them for the many challenges of finding, obtaining, and keeping a good job after graduation. Gateway is located in the Building Construction Technology department on the Riverside campus of Austin Community College. The program receives funding from Travis County, the City of Austin, and member companies of the Austin region's construction industry, and is administered by the Capitol Area Training Foundation (CATF Gateway brochure, 1999).

Participation in the CORE boot camp is an alternative to a penitentiary sentence offered to first-time felons. They are mostly 17-25 years of age, but some may be as old as 35. While educational backgrounds vary, those who have graduated from high school are the exception; most have completed or are still working on their GED. Participation in Construction Gateway is offered to CORE cadets with 'a clean folder' (few violations while incarcerated). Those who are eligible are given the Test of Adult Basic Education to determine their ability to master the reading and math components of Gateway, and are

then individually selected to be participants by the Capitol Area Training Foundation's Gateway case manager.

The schedule for CORE/Gateway students is an arduous one, with reveille at 4 A.M., followed by several hours of running and such rigorous physical exercise as 100 pushups. After breakfast, students are transported to ACC's Riverside campus for Gateway classes, which begin at 8 A.M. and end at 4 P.M., with a 30-minute break for lunch. The curriculum varies, beginning with a week of life skills, employment theory, math, and blueprint reading, and progressing in later weeks into carpentry, masonry, electrical, plumbing, and other related experiential learning activities. After classes are over, students return to the Travis County Correctional Complex, have further exercise and drill programs before supper, then clean their boots and equipment, and prepare for lights out at 8 P.M.

Two recent CORE/Gateway students are representative of other members of their group. Reynaldo is an 18-year-old Hispanic convicted of selling drugs. He has grade equivalent scores on the Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) of 6.1 in reading and 4.9 in math, no job skills, and comes from a home with an income of less than 50% of the poverty level. Daymon is a 17-year-old African American convicted of violating his probation for drug possession by carrying a pistol. His income and employment situation is similar to Reynaldo's, and his TABE results show grade equivalent scores of 5.4 in reading and 6.9 in math. Both were satisfactory students; neither believed they would ever have an opportunity for legitimate employment before CORE/Gateway.

Other students in the Construction Gateway program are not incarcerated. Many are on probation, after release from the Travis County Correctional Complex, or are on parole, after release from the Texas Department of Corrections or a Federal Correctional Institute. Some others are residents in a Texas Youth Commission halfway house, or are released former felons residing in a halfway house. Others are homeless, and may be living in the Salvation Army Men's Workers' Dormitory, or, in some cases, are still living on the streets or loading docks of downtown Austin. A few more have homes, but are unemployed or changing careers, are displaced homemakers, or are transitioning from welfare to work.

Although the Construction Gateway program is open to other underemployed or unemployed persons, about half of the participants come from the CORE boot camp. They are seen by some as having the greatest social liabilities and being the hardest population to serve effectively. For that reason, the study herein detailed is focused on the outcome of the difficult task of rehabilitating these young offenders. The programs in which they were involved include elements to improve basic literacy and further their educational development, teach better skills for daily living and coping with stressful situations, teach necessary occupational skills, and provide ongoing job placement service following graduation.

Research questions

The purpose of this study was to determine the significance program participant's placed on the various elements of the overall rehabilitational process. Several research questions arose from this purpose statement:

1. What experiences, good or bad, did the participants in the CORE boot camp and Construction Gateway programs perceive as being most significant?
2. Did the participants believe these programs changed their lives in any way? If so, how?
3. Which rehabilitational elements seemed most significant to the participants?
4. What is it about these elements that made them more salient to participants than other elements?
5. If participants believed these elements contributed to personal change in their perceptions and behavior, how do they believe this occurred?

Definition of terms

Some of the terms used in the fields of corrections, correctional education, rehabilitation, and vocational training are specific to those disciplines, or are in certain cases terms that may be familiar to practitioners in other related fields but have specific

meanings used in the fields under discussion in this study. For that reason, definitions of terms are here supplied to avoid possible misunderstanding.

1. adjudication: a judicial determination, decision, or sentence (Neilson, 1955).
2. adult education: activities intentionally designed for the purpose of bringing about learning among those whose age, social role, or self-perception define them as adults (Merriam & Brockett, 1997).
3. aftercare: a program providing counseling, support, life skills, employment and other services for ex-offenders following their release from confinement (Bossler, Fleisher, & Kreinert, 2000).
4. alternative education: educational services that are offered outside of the usual preschool-through-university system, and that may be of short duration and for a specific purpose.
5. anti-social behavior: actions which are averse to society or hostile to its well being or existence (Neilson, 1955).
6. at-risk youth: individuals aged 21 years or less who have some or all of the following characteristics: poor literacy and academic skills; inadequate social, emotional, and behavioral skills; alienation from school; low self esteem; limited language proficiency; target of ethnic or racial discrimination, impulsivity, and poor judgement; limited or unavailable family support; antisocial peer influence; and lack of positive adult role models (Guerin and Denti, 1999).
7. basic academic skills: the ability to read, write, speak, compute, and solve problems at a level of proficiency necessary to function effectively on the job and in society (National Adult Literacy Survey, 1992).
8. career criminal: a person exhibiting a repeated pattern of criminal behavior as a substitute for a legitimate career (Tewksbury & Vito, 1994).
9. cognitive awareness training: developing a metacognitive understanding of cognitive functioning so that compensatory mechanisms can be developed to deal with one's cognitive weaknesses (Gregg, Hoy, & Gay, 1996).

9. co-morbidity: the condition of more than a single state of disease, sickness, or disability co-existing simultaneously within the same person.
10. Construction Gateway: a vocational education program at Austin Community College's Riverside campus funded by the Capitol Area Training Foundation that gives participants training in job and life skills, and provides them with ongoing job placement after graduation (CATF Gateway brochure, 1999).
11. CORE Boot Camp: a program at the Travis County Corrections Center that gives young, first-time felony offenders military discipline, physical training, and a comprehensive series of rehabilitative training programs including stress and anger management, substance abuse prevention, counseling, parenting, and GED preparation (Institute of Justice Policy Research, 1995).
12. correctional education: an organized and individualized self-help strategy to interrupt nonsocial or antisocial behavior through vocational and academic learning activities that foster social attitudes and equip students in contact with the criminal justice system for lives as responsible community members (Wolford, 1989).
13. critical thinking: a means to evaluate and understand intellectual processes so that one can be freed from the emotionally supercharged reasoning, poorly substantiated beliefs, and unchallenged attitudes upon which decisions leading to inappropriate or ineffective behavior are often made (Elder, 1997).
14. Drill Instructor: staff of CORE boot camp at the Travis County Correctional Complex; all are deputies of the Travis County Sheriff's Department; many have a military background; DI's provide CORE cadets with military style discipline and training. (Institute of Justice Policy Research, 1995).
15. ex-offender: a former inmate of a jail or prison who has been released back into society following a period of incarceration, or a former inmate who has been adjudicated and placed on community supervision (probation or parole).
16. G.E.D.: General Education Development test, the equivalent to a high school diploma for those persons who did not graduate from high school.
16. habilitation: to provide the means for one to succeed in life (as differentiated from rehabilitation's goal of restoring one's lost former ability to succeed).

17. interpersonal skills: the ability of an individual to maintain effective relations with other members of society.
18. job placement: providing a trained employee with the resources and support to obtain an appropriate job at which they can develop a career, maintain gainful employment, and earn a living wage (Mann, 1997).
19. learning disabilities: a disorder in one or more of the central nervous system processes involved in perceiving, understanding and/or using concepts through spoken, written, or non-verbal language (Rehabilitation Services Administration, as cited in Hawks, 1996).
20. life skills training: programs designed to build self-esteem, teach needed social, relational, coping and living skills, and plan for post-program life.
21. literacy education: reading and writing programs such as Adult Basic Education (ABE), General Educational Development (GED), or English as a Second Language (ESL), especially when taught in a non-traditional setting.
22. mentoring: a one-to-one relationship between a pair of unrelated individuals interacting on a regular basis, usually characterized by a special bond of mutual commitment and an emotional character of respect, loyalty and identification (Townsel, 1997).
23. physical fitness training (PFT): running, pushups, obstacle course completion, and other elements of a military style physical exercise program (Institute of Justice Policy Research, 1995).
24. phenomenological research: a study seeking the essence or meaning of a lived experience, or phenomenon, shared by a group of people (Creswell, 1998).
25. psychotherapeutic counseling: mental treatment of an illness or a social maladjustment by a process of suggestion, psychoanalysis, or re-education (Miller & Keane, 1978).
26. qualitative methodology: research mostly concerned with studying a complex situation in a natural setting to learn its essential nature; likely to have more variables but fewer cases than a quantitative study (Creswell, 1998).
27. quantitative methodology: a study mostly concerned with examining

measurable or statistical aspects of phenomena with a limited number of variables but many cases (Creswell, 1998).

28. recidivism: the reoccurrence of criminal behavior, measured by indicators such as re-arrest, re-conviction, or re-incarceration (Fabelo, 1997).
29. rehabilitation: restoring one's lost former ability to have a successful life by providing education, training, counseling, and job skills and placement.
30. remedial education: an educational intervention designed to provide for a learner's educational deficit (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999).
31. Tests of Adult Basic Education: a test to establish an individual's academic ability, scored to reflect the grade equivalency of his or her proficiency.
32. transformative intervention: an intervention which may involve educational, therapeutic, correctional, societal, familial, or other processes that are utilized for the purpose of transforming an individual's perceptions and behavior.
33. vocational training: a program providing a person with the skills, techniques, and attitudes needed to obtain and hold gainful employment.

Significance

Numerous researchers have examined the reported links between illiteracy, unemployment, and criminal behavior (Anderson & Anderson, 1996; Bossler, Fleisher & Kreinert, 2000; Duguid, 1997; Fabelo, 1997; Montross & Montross, 1997). These studies show three-fourths or more of all prisoners are illiterate, and most have not completed high school. As Wenda (1997) describes the typical male inmate, he is invariably quite poor, unskilled, undereducated, and underemployed or unemployed before incarceration. Most function at or below the fifth grade level in reading and spelling, and somewhat lower in mathematics. Their annual income was at or below the poverty level, and two-thirds had a record of either alcohol or drug abuse (p. 25). Tewksbury and Vito (1994) report that first time offenders have a literacy profile that is virtually indistinguishable from that of older, repeat offenders (p. 1).

It seems apparent that, since youthful first offenders exhibit nearly identical

characteristics to current prisoners, they are thus at-risk to become the future generation of inmates who will inhabit the rapidly growing system of state and federal penitentiaries (Duguid, 1997; Young, 2000). Society has a legitimate interest in wanting to know how best to steer its young offenders back into honest lives, and prevent them from becoming career criminals who cycle back and forth between prison, careers of crime, recidivism, and reincarceration.

Rehabilitation of young offenders is held out as being the most effective and least expensive option to divert them from further criminality. Building many new prisons and operating huge penal systems that fail to reform those who continue to commit crimes costs billions of taxpayer dollars annually. As a Texas government report phrases it, the state “cannot afford to build its way out of crime, nor...afford to have approximately one half of offenders released from the system return to the system” (Texas Department of Criminal Justice, 1997). Programs that foster self-discipline, treatment for substance abuse and emotional disorders, life skills, literacy education, and vocational training can help young offenders reenter the community, find and hold employment, and “withstand the pressures to return to criminal behavior” (Bossler, Fleisher, & Kreinert, 2000, p. 1). The other option, that of just punishing them without providing for their rehabilitation, is quite unappealing, for, as Stevens and Ward (1997) say, the act of returning unprepared, uneducated, and unusually bitter individuals to the community could represent a further threat to public safety and serve to enhance recidivism levels.

If the choices appear fairly obvious, the nature of the optimum process seems somewhat less so. Rehabilitation programs come in a great many shapes and sizes, and have a correspondingly wide range of results. This study is intended to look into the combined CORE boot camp and Construction Gateway programs and learn what elements of their programs are helpful in returning graduates to productive, honest lives (Institute of Justice Policy Research, 1995; CATF Gateway brochure, 1999).

What is it about the CORE/Gateway program sequence its participants believe makes it effective ? If more were known about the elements that make this combination work for them, then other similarly successful programs could be designed, and existing programs improved. As Bolson (1998) reported in her study of the relationship between correctional education and reduced recidivism, very limited qualitative research has been

done to understand program effectiveness from the participant's perspective. With this key knowledge, it might be possible to find an answer to the ultimate question posed by Duguid, Hawkey, & Knight (1998), of "what works for whom, and why?" (p. 92).

Limitations

The greatest limitation of this research is that African American respondents are underrepresented. Young African American males represent 36 percent of the graduates of the CORE/Gateway program sequence. Statistically, with eight participants in this study, two or three should have been African Americans; however, only one could be located to be interviewed. This underrepresentation may significantly affect the findings of this study. Although the reason for African American males' apparent reluctance to participate is not known, it may be because, as Guerin and Denti (1999) report, such ex-offenders as these young men, regardless of ethnicity, have often been found to be "transitory, unresponsive, suspicious, antisocial, and isolated" (p. 85).

Another limitation arises as a result of the nature of the population being studied. They are young, mostly from 18 to 25 years of age. Many are not well educated, and may have cognitive deficits (Ross, Fabiano, & Ewles, as cited by Henning & Frueh, 1996). As a group, they tend to be volatile, and, when living in the free world, may change their addresses, telephone numbers, and jobs at what seems to some a dizzying pace.

Some of the potential informants were not from Austin, and, after their release from custody, returned to family and friends in their hometowns. Others, although they were native local residents, may have decided to leave this area to make a new beginning elsewhere. Still more may have stayed in town, but could not be located because of their characteristically informal and changeable living arrangements that often involve a rather turbulent mix of accommodations with various family members, friends, roommates, coworkers, or lovers. It is not uncommon for such temporary arrangements as these to change several times each month.

Part of this population graduated from CORE and Construction Gateway and will never be heard from again. Others stay in touch, and may drop by the ACC Riverside campus to visit with faculty members and relate their personal stories about how their

lives have gone since graduation and give eagerly awaited firsthand reports to the current class of students about what they can anticipate in their own futures.

Their job stability lies along a broad spectrum. Some took a job, settled down, and went to work. Others have changed jobs more frequently, and may have been unemployed for a while after leaving one position before obtaining another.

Some have recidivated, being returned to jail, and others have been sent on to the penitentiary. There is no way to track these recidivists. Official records of recidivism are kept only by individual probation or parole officers, and, as a matter of policy, are not made available to researchers. There is no central registry, although there have been discussions for more than a decade about plans to create a computerized database.

There may be concerns for the accuracy of the self-reporting by the respondents. They have an intimate understanding of the positive changes that these programs are intended to produce, and, being possibly subject to the “halo effect,” may have reported results that were what they believed the interviewer wanted to hear.

Another limitation is that of generalizability. Although findings are reported and conclusions are drawn about the CORE/Gateway program, since only graduates of this unique sequence of programs were studied, readers must still necessarily form their own judgements about the transferability of these findings to other programs.

Summary

Thousands of at-risk youth face adjudication or incarceration in Texas every year because of their criminal behavior. After coming into contact with the criminal justice system, they face the probability of punishment with only a hope of rehabilitation. Some incorrigible persons will not wish or be able to reform, and will continue their criminal behavior and be rearrested after release, and recidivate. Others will be willing or able to profit from their participation in rehabilitative programs.

Researchers have studied in considerable detail the mix of various programmatic elements that are offered for the rehabilitation of offenders. Almost all of the published studies evaluate the statistical results of various programs or combinations of programs; consequently, much is known about the nature of the programs.

Rather less information is available, however, concerning the experiences and

perceptions of the participants in rehabilitative programs. While much is known about what is being done to and for inmates to bring about their rehabilitation, far less is known about their reaction to this training, and about which elements of these programs they regard as significant. There is a gap in the literature, and this study is a preliminary effort to stimulate further research on understanding the qualitative aspects of corrective, remedial, and rehabilitation programs.

The experiences, perceptions and reactions of the participants of rehabilitative programs have been studied to understand, in their own words and from their own points of view, what dimensions of the programs they consider as significant in motivating their change, if any, toward productive citizenship. This information, developed about young offenders after their first serious brush with the law, may help to design more effective programs to better return these inmates to legitimate society, and prevent them from becoming career criminals and cycling endlessly through the spiral of incarceration, release, repeated criminality, and recidivation.

CHAPTER 2

Review Of the Literature

Introduction

The literature concerning at-risk youth and their problems, the many correctional, educational, counseling, and vocational programs offered for their rehabilitation, and the political and economic ramifications of their behavior and treatment, is extensive. There are many factors that put young people at risk for criminal behavior, and many more that determine the punishment and treatment accorded to those that become offenders.

Although the current research described in this thesis involves cadets in the CORE boot camp who have graduated from the Construction Gateway program, most of the other studies reported in this review of the literature were conducted in penitentiaries. In many important ways, such as by their lower educational attainments and cognitive abilities, poverty, unemployment, drug and alcohol use, and dysfunctional family backgrounds, the respondents in this survey are very similar to the prison inmates.

And, just as the backgrounds and deficits of more hardened prisoners closely match those of the younger offenders, so do effective techniques for their rehabilitation. Identifying and understanding the most effective of those techniques is the focus of many of the studies reviewed here. None of the thorny issues confronting those who educate and rehabilitate these troubled youth seems more important than the need to more clearly understand “what works for whom, and why” (Duguid, et al., 1998, p. 92).

Characteristics of at-risk youth

The population upon which this study focuses is often described as at-risk youth. Members of this group are generally defined as having some or all of the following characteristics: poor literacy and academic skills; inadequate social, emotional, and behavioral skills; alienation from school; low self-esteem; limited language proficiency; subject of ethnic or racial discrimination; impulsivity and poor judgement; limited or unavailable family support; antisocial peer influence; and lack of positive adult role models. They can be very transitory, unresponsive, suspicious, antisocial, and isolated. As Guerin and Denti (1999) conclude, a disproportionately high percentage of youth in detention have learning, emotional, cognitive, and neurological disabilities.

This is a troubled group of youngsters, many of whom will come into contact with the criminal justice system. Anderson and Anderson (1996) report that an unusually high percentage of incarcerated juveniles possess mental, emotional, and physical handicaps. Forty-eight per cent were found to have learning disabilities, and to be at high risk for delinquent behavior. As with their delinquent peers, they may be detached from prosocial institutions such as school, church, or community organizations, may lack a law-abiding parent, may lack empathy toward others, and are likely to exhibit impulsive behavior and to use alcohol and other drugs (Quinn, Sutphen, Michaels, & Gale, 1996).

The six major correlates indicating youth are at risk are given by Holsinger (1999) as: (a) lower-class origins, (b) personal distress and/or psychopathology, (c) lack of educational and/or vocational achievement, (d) negative parental and/or family factors, (e) temperament or misconduct and personality, and (f) anti-social attitudes or associates (p.22). The behavior of young people who fit into this category, as well as their numbers, is alarming to many. Approximately half of American adolescents are at moderate or greater risk for engaging in: unsafe sexual behaviors, teenage pregnancy, and teenage child-bearing; drug and alcohol use and abuse; school underachievement, failure, and dropout; and delinquency and crime, often of a violent nature. In fact, the report says, 50% of all 10- to 17-year-olds engage in two or more of these risk behaviors, and 10% participate in all of them (Lerner, Entwisle & Hauser, 1994).

Low Literacy

One of the most disturbing things about the population of at-risk youth is the degree to which their academic shortcomings match those of the inmates held in state penitentiaries. As these youth fall behind, fail classes, drop out of school, and thereafter become unable to find jobs, their demographic profiles ever more closely resemble those of prisoners. Wenda (1997) found most inmates to be poor, unskilled, undereducated, and unemployed or underemployed before incarceration, functioning academically at the fifth grade level in reading and spelling, and at an even lower in mathematics.

The National Adult Literacy Survey (1992) defines literacy as using printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential. The NALS report found that individuals demonstrating lower levels of literacy were more likely to be out of the labor force because their lower literacy skills imposed a greater limitation on their employment opportunities; thus, individuals with poorer skills have less 'human capital' to bargain for a better job, and consequently are condemned to lower earnings, more limited choices, and a reduced quality of life.

Wenda notes the connection between illiteracy, poverty, and incarceration when he reports the annual income of the average inmate was at the poverty level before being jailed (1997). In a study of 131 drop-outs 15 to 23 years of age focused on the link between school failure and delinquency, it was found that those who fail, particularly males, are more likely to engage in delinquent behavior during their school years. Those with the least education generally showed the highest crime rates (Hartnagel & Krahn, 1989). Reporting in *Adolescence*, Winters (1997) says that youths' levels of scholastic attainment, school attendance, and graduation rates play very important roles leading to their possible future involvement in the criminal justice system, and concludes that poor academic achievement often foretells delinquency and criminal behavior.

Learning Disabilities

Another frequently cited characteristic of at-risk youth is learning disabilities,

which may begin in childhood, persist through adolescence, and are likely to interfere with the expected level of functioning even during adulthood. These disorders are central nervous system dysfunctions that cause deficits in cognitive processing. Language and communication difficulties may be the primary problems for many learning disabled people, with deficits involving words, the concepts of language content, or the rules of syntax. A concurrent deficit is frequently that of organizational or problem solving skills (Gregg, Hoy, & Gay, 1996).

Griswold and Myles (1998) find both juvenile delinquents and adult offenders have educational disabilities, including mental retardation and behavior disorders. Their study of retrospective self-perceptions from 61 incarcerated adult males developed data supported by Guerin and Denti (1999) and L. Smith (1998), who report that incarcerated youth also have many learning, emotional, cognitive, and neurological disabilities. Ross, Fabiano, and Ewles (as cited by Henning & Frueh, 1996) found several cognitive deficits were common among inmates that appear to be related to their criminality, including cognitive impulsivity, concrete reasoning, a lack of social perspective taking, and poor interpersonal problem solving.

Because offenders often do not see others as coequal people, which is a hallmark of the absence of empathetic cognitive reasoning, they are unable to distinguish between their own emotional states, thoughts and views, and those of other people. As they lack the ability to see matters from the perspective of another person, they misread the social expectations and misinterpret the actions and intentions of others. This in turn impairs their ability to form satisfactory relationships with people and to develop acceptable means of dealing with interpersonal problems (Koski, 1996).

Learning disabilities often signal co-existing psychological conditions that are likely to gradually increase through the individual's lifetime, and become critical issues effecting social and emotional functioning in their adult years. Psychiatric disorders appear to occur more often among learning disabled people than among those with other handicaps, and the ensuing psychopathology may well create new problems that become even more debilitating than their learning disabilities (Gregg, Hoy, & Gay, 1996).

Some of the most troubling elements of psychopathology are widespread low self-esteem, often accompanied by even more severe psychiatric problems like depression,

anxiety, isolation, and behavior disorders. Those with phobias, disorganized thinking, and obsessions and compulsions are more prevalent among the learning disabled, and are likely to misuse psychoactive substances. Up to 70% of learning disabled youth may also exhibit comorbid symptoms of Attention Deficit Disorder (Gregg, et al., 1996).

Anti-social Attitudes

Another fundamental indicator of at-risk youth is their anti-social attitude, which, as Holsinger (1999) says, is highly predictive of criminal and/or antisocial behavior. In fact, he asserts, the stronger the presence of these anti-social attitudes, the more severe may be the nature of their offenses. These anti-social attitudes are highly correlated with such anti-social behaviors as drug taking. Holsinger defines an anti-social attitude as one that demonstrates: (a) denial of responsibility, (b) denial of injury, (c) denial of the victim, (d) condemnation of the condemners, and (e) appeal to higher loyalties.

Such an attitude may lead to what Walters (1997) calls an anti-social identity, which in turn can become a fundamental part of a criminal lifestyle. He believes that the four principal behavioral styles diagnostic of a criminal lifestyle are:

1. irresponsibility: poor accountability and failure to meet obligations.
2. self-indulgence: the active pursuit of immediate gratification and a concomitant disregard for the negative long-term consequences of one's actions (in such areas as substance misuse, problem gambling, and sexual promiscuity).
3. interpersonal intrusiveness: characterized by violations of the rights, personal space, and dignity of others (by such acts as rape, robbery, and murder).
4. social rule breaking: repeated violations of the rules, norms, and conventions of the home, school, neighborhood, and society (p. 294).

Drugs

The use of consciousness-altering substances in America today is endemic. The spectrum ranges from comfort food like chocolate down to narcotics like morphine, and from the minor lift of coffee all the way up to serious stimulants like crack cocaine. Legislators attempt to prohibit ingestion of these substances by criminalizing their use, which results in the arrest and adjudication or incarceration of hundreds of thousands of citizens annually, many of whom are at-risk youth. As van Wormer (1999) says, "like its predecessor, Prohibition, America's War on Drugs represents a desperate attempt to curb the unstoppable. The focus is placed on punishment rather than treatment. More Americans are imprisoned today for drug offenses than for property crimes" (p. 38).

It seems now to be a rite of passage for many young people, especially members of the at-risk population, to experiment with drugs. DeGuire and Thyrum (1999) report that by the time students finish high school, only 10% will not have experimented with alcohol or other drugs, and that 1 in 10 teenagers graduating from high school will develop an addiction to psychoactive substances. A survey of jail and prison inmates shows that two-thirds have a record of either alcohol or drug use (Wenda, 1997).

With drugs more readily available than jobs, some youths begin selling illegal substances. Centers and Weist (1998) report that one in six urban adolescents have sold drugs, with even higher rates for African-American males over 16, and that they often experienced related problems, including juvenile arrest, involvement in violence (both as victims and as perpetrators), behavioral and emotional difficulties, academic failure, and dropping out of school. Drug dealing youth, their report shows, may also have deficits in cognitive and emotional processes. They are likely to demonstrate immature problem solving, and to rely rather heavily on concrete reasoning, denial, and wishful thinking.

Substance usage problems cut across all levels of the socioeconomic spectrum. Even supposedly clean-living athletes are not immune from the difficulty, for, as DeGuire and Thyrum (1999) discovered, participation in sports is frequently correlated with increased alcohol and drug use.

Reasons for using drugs may begin at home. According to Amey and Albrecht (1998), parental rejection, particularly when combined with the presence of deviant peers, low self-esteem, and avoidance coping style, was quite predictive of adolescent drug use.

Where other family members (especially parents) also use substances, the home may be characterized by “chaos, unpredictability, and inconsistency,” and children are likely to “learn to accept and expect the unexpected,” and probably will “mimic what they see, thereby continuing the cycle of destruction” (Poitier & Niliwaaambieni, 1997, p. 175).

Families

Some researchers hold that the home is the location where behavioral, academic, social, and criminal problems for young people are likely to either arise or be prevented. It has been shown that underprepared learners and criminal offenders often come from very similar backgrounds of parental neglect and disconnection from their communities (Trusty, 1998, and Zellman & Waterman, 1998).

Many factors related to the family can put a youth at risk for delinquent behavior, including poor parental supervision and child-rearing practices, criminal acts committed by parents and siblings, and social deprivation in such forms as low income, large family size, low educational attainment, unemployment or underemployment, and poor housing (Quinn, Sutphen, Michaels & Gale, 1996). Amey and Albrecht’s (1998) study finds a connection between family characteristics and adolescent drug use. Disputing those who hold that family structure is the key, however, Koski (1996) asserts that the relationship between family structure, education, and criminality is not dictated by family structure, but rather is driven by poverty, and is often exacerbated in the context of single parent householding. Lack of parental supervision and discipline are often predictors of juvenile delinquency (Quinn, et al., 1996).

In a frightening preamble to the 21st century, Poitier and Niliwaaambieni (1997) warn us we are witnessing the intergenerational transmission of antifamily values, with two or more generations of a family addicted and “unable to pass down cultural wisdom,” finding that many families have now become so dysfunctional that disrespect between parents and children, between children and children, and between both and the many articulations of an invasive social structure, are the norm (p. 176).

Rehabilitation Programs

When at-risk youth commit criminal acts, they can come into contact with the criminal justice system. The first time, they are likely to be adjudicated and placed under community supervision (probation). The next offense may very well result in their being incarcerated in the county jail, and possibly being placed in a rehabilitative program like the CORE boot camp at the Travis County Correctional Complex. Those who are unable or unwilling to change their attitudes and perceptions by participating in rehabilitative programs while incarcerated are likely to recidivate and be sentenced to a penitentiary.

Rehabilitation has become a vital part of the correctional process. Where once offenders were just sent to “the prison system as a dumping ground” (Acorn, 1991), the fact today is that “times have changed. We need those people to be productive citizens” p.74). The reintegration of offenders back into society saves both human and financial resources (Wenda, 1997), preventing taxpayers from having to bear the financial burden of their further crimes or reincarceration. In fact, says Wenda, the rehabilitated offender most often becomes a productive member of society and contributes tax dollars and talents to society as a whole.

Unfortunately, the myth is still alive that the way to deter future crimes is to “teach someone a lesson” by treating them badly while they are incarcerated (Halstead, 1999, p. 42). If retributive punishment is the goal of corrections, and not rehabilitation, what hope can there be, Halstead asks, “that offenders will emerge from our retribution centers more responsible and ethically fit? If offenders do not ‘learn their lesson’ while incarcerated, should we really be puzzled by high re-offending rates?” (p. 43).

Perhaps the best news about rehabilitation is that it is effective for the majority of inmates, even the ones who are most hardened. According to Duguid (1997), intensive rehabilitation efforts can have the greatest impact among high-risk offenders. In many cases, however, these offenders are held by vengeful authorities who subscribe to the “punishment paradigm of incarceration,” and see correctional rehabilitation programs as being “among the least important activities of the institution” (Wenda, 1997, p. 28).

Boot camps

Most states, many counties, and the federal government now use various forms of boot camp incarceration, punishment programs modeled after military basic training that the Texas Department of Criminal Justice described as emphasizing physical exercise, strict supervision, and discipline (1995). Because recidivism rates of early incarnations of such programs did not differ noticeably from the usually high level of repeat offenders reported by traditional jails and penitentiaries (MacKenzie, 1990), innovative correctional authorities have begun to mix rehabilitational programs into the boot camp regimen.

Boot camp incarceration offers an attractive package of benefits. It satisfies the public's demand for punishment. Offenders can be provided with skills that help them make a successful readjustment into society. The problems associated with lengthy terms of imprisonment are avoided. Expenses to the taxpayer of long-term confinement are not incurred (Burton, Marquart, Cuvelier, Alarid & Hunter, 1993). Moreover, and perhaps most importantly for the funding and official support of these programs, boot camps "show the public that the politicians are being tough on crime" (MacKenzie, 1990, p. 44). As the executive director of the Texas Criminal Justice Policy Council puts it, boot camps can provide a 'tough' alternative for judges that is more cost effective than prison, due to the shorter time that offenders spend in boot camps, while still allowing judges to incarcerate offenders (Fabelo, 1997).

The successful Buffalo Soldier boot camp program in the desolate area around Uvalde, Texas has a rugged Wild West mien. Its commanding officer, Colonel Robert Nolan, told the *San Antonio Express News*:

Our mission is to teach these young people here to utilize their abilities to be useful members of our society ... We put them through training so that when they get back on the streets, they will have the discipline to turn their lives around (Winingham, 1997, E1).

The Convicted Offender Re-Entry Effort (CORE) boot camp in Austin, Texas, located at the Travis County Correctional Complex, provides a military-style boot camp environment encouraging mental and physical discipline and personal responsibility. Drug and alcohol counseling, life skills training, and GED completion are elements of CORE's rigorous rehabilitation program (Institute of Justice Policy Research, 1995).

Education

The most effective rehabilitation programs for offenders are educational (Duguid, 1997; Gerber & Fritsch, 1995; L. D. Smith, 1999; Wenda, 1997). Remembering that over 80% of the prison population have not completed a high school education, and that from 60% to 80% are functionally illiterate (Wolford, 1989), “we can now assert definitively what most of us knew intuitively all along: education works” (Duguid, 1997, p. 153).

Wolford (1989) offers an excellent description of correctional education:

An organized and individualized self-help strategy to interrupt nonsocial or antisocial behavior through vocational and academic learning activities that foster social attitudes and equip students in contact with the criminal justice system for lives as responsible community members (p. 357).

Corrections and education are separate endeavors with the mutual characteristic of working to prevent criminal behaviors (Wright, 1997, p. 10). When they are combined, as correctional education, they may provide offenders who are younger and lack a high school education a good “second chance at starting a law-abiding life” (Duguid, et al., 1998, p. 97).

The positive effects of education can be substantial. Offenders can become more conscientious, morally developed, and self-aware through education, and may find more opportunities after release by obtaining better educational credentials (Gerber & Fritsch, 1995). Inmates with biographies, ages, and criminal records that put them at high risk to recidivate receive a number of benefits from education that might improve their chances of success (Duguid, 1997). Correctional education is an economic investment in the future of our society that can transform offenders from “publicly supported persons into taxpaying citizens.” (Gehring, 1997, p. 46).

The six commonly accepted goals for correctional education programs are:

1. To provide inmates with basic academic and vocational skills.
2. To provide inmates with an opportunity to change their personal behavior and values.
3. To reduce recidivism.
4. To provide passive control of inmate behavior.
5. To support the operational needs of the correctional institution.

6. To provide institutional work assignments (Wolford, 1989, p. 359).

From the perspective of a professional educator, what is ultimately necessary, according to Wright (1997),

Is a developmentally grounded curriculum that integrates the cognitive, social, moral and affective elements into a pedagogical whole through moral discursive practices, enhanced with neo-Piagetian cognitive developmental strategies, Vygotskian socio-cultural approaches, and strategic experientially mediated, process-oriented, and transformationally-driven educational practices (p. 20).

Literacy is the foundation of an education, especially with a population that, on average, functions at the fifth grade level in reading and spelling, and even lower in mathematics (Wenda, 1997). Reading and using documents are important parts of life, and necessary aspects of both managing a household and performing well on the job. The National Adult Literacy Survey (1992) encourages teaching document competency in correctional education and vocational programs, “if inmates are to possess the skills needed to succeed” after release (NALS, Literacy behind prison walls, p. 5).

Yet, educational rehabilitation programs must provide a broader curriculum than merely the literacy and vocational training programs advocated by the NALS. As L.D. Smith (1999) suggests, the scope of correctional education can reach much further, into the area of enhancing life skills, through such diverse means as improving inmate self-esteem, teaching time management, and increasing self-responsibility.

Not all offenders receive rehabilitative services. Most, in fact, do not. “Only one-third of inmates who might benefit from academic programs in correctional facilities are enrolled in such programs” (Montross & Montross, 1997, p. 179). Wenda (1997) explains that education and rehabilitation of offenders has long been ignored and subordinated by policy makers who still adhere to the punishment paradigm of incarceration. As Wright (1997) found, there is a “general anti-educational bias” in existence at many correctional institutions, and an ideological sub-current among some custodial staff that disassociates educational interventions from the offender’s personal development (p. 11).

Successful educational programs value and encourage academic achievement, work to improve academic performance, and provide an inclusive atmosphere for student participation. Duguid (1997), who studied the post-release outcomes of 119 high-risk

Canadian offenders, says teachers should focus particularly on those students who show signs of improvement, and encourage and facilitate their continued education following release. Wenda finds that participants in correctional education programs have lower recidivism rates as well as higher employment rates after release (1997). Even high-risk prisoners, Duguid (1997) says, can benefit from education to “maximize their opportunity to beat the odds and prove themselves to be successful” (p. 156).

One of the most interesting findings concerning the outcomes of rehabilitational education programs is that the mechanism of change may not be specific courses or sets of subjects but rather “the process of a sustained, intensive and participatory educational experience” (Duguid, 1997, p. 153). He focused on “the quality of participation” in the educational program (p. 155), and said “tenure in the program was a stronger indicator of success than academic achievement” (Duguid et al., 1998, p. 97).

Yes, Duguid reports, “education works.” He provides inspiration for the current study into the perceptions of incarcerated offenders about their rehabilitational programs with his observation that “education could be made to work even better if we mastered the match between mechanisms and students” (Duguid, 1997, p. 159).

Life Skills

Locking up young offenders because of their anti-social behavior, separating them from society, and punishing them without rehabilitation, is counterproductive. While it may satisfy society’s desire for vengeance and retribution, it only further dehumanizes troubled youth and, far from deterring their future criminality, is more likely to promote the very behavior that their incarceration is supposed to prevent (Young, 2000).

Because many troubled youth suffer from learning, emotional, cognitive, and neurological disabilities (Guerin & Denti, 1999, and Anderson & Anderson, 1996), it is vital that students receive services to address their cognitive deficits, help modify their behavior, and provide them with an adequate education. Without such interventions during incarceration, they are released with no better discipline or ability to manage their anger or peacefully resolve conflicts than before their arrest (Maughan, 1999).

Training in problem-solving skills, interpersonal functioning, and practical skills

in living help students develop greater self-esteem and gain badly needed social abilities (Gerber & Fritsch, 1995). A comprehensive program of correctional rehabilitation can interrupt antisocial behavior by immersing the offender in an environment of life skills training, self-discipline, and academic and vocational learning activities. In a program of this type, an inmate can learn appropriate social attitudes, and, with an education and job, become a responsible member of the community (Gehring, 1997, and Wolford, 1989).

A comprehensive program would cover all or most of such areas as stress and anger management, substance abuse counseling, parenting, GED completion, mental and physical discipline, and personal responsibility, as the CORE boot camp program does (Institute of Justice Policy Research, 1995), and would build on that experience with a vocational training program that further develops physical, intellectual, and educational abilities, builds up critical thinking and problem-solving skills, enhances self-esteem and self-confidence, and, after graduation, places one into his or her choice of a skilled job that pays a living wage, as Construction Gateway does at ACC (Capitol Area Training Foundation, 1999). The sequence of elements in the combined CORE/Gateway programs is unique because it provides for the full spectrum of needs identified by researchers.

A comprehensive program sequence like the one described from CORE/Gateway teaches offenders productive job skills as well as the literacy and interpersonal skills they will need for success after incarceration (Brandon, Chard-Wierschem, & Mancini, 1999). If an individual is to become “the agent of his or her own decision-making,” they must have remedial education, programs in substance abuse, individual therapy, and vocational training (Bossler, Fleisher, and Kreinert, 2000, p. 18), plus what Montross and Montross (1997) term “social and ethical decisionmaking” (p. 184).

Courses must encourage critical thinking, mature thought processes, and a greater ability to understand and respond appropriately to “the complex social issues which are an integral part of ‘getting on’ in the world without resorting to crime” (Duguid, et al., 1998, p. 89). It may be the failure to resolve their “social maladjustment” that accounts for the high failure rates among returning ex-offenders (Wenda, 1997, p. 24).

This maladjustment may be expressed as a reluctance to participate in educational programs, by negative attitudes toward school, and in a lack of self-control and positive problem-solving skills. Many of these youth are social isolates or gang members, in great

need of learning self-motivation and behavior management, and building academic and social skills (Guerin & Denti, 1999).

Among the life skills components found to be most helpful, anger management is a useful strategy for providing coping skills to incarcerated adolescents with a history of violent crimes and aggressive behaviors. McCarthy-Tucker, Gold, and Garcia (1999) administered two widely-accepted anger inventories to a group of 20 juvenile residential treatment facility inmates who attended 12 anger management classes, and found that their post-program scores showed reduced expression and perception of anger.

Another important element in successful rehabilitation programs is substance abuse counseling. Alcohol use was significantly reduced among offenders who received a normative beliefs component in their training aimed at modifying the belief that alcohol usage is acceptable among youths (DeGuire & Thyrum, 1999). Not all substance use prevention programs work, especially those in public schools, because, as DeGuire and Thyrum say, "few school-based prevention approaches have been based on empirically evaluated prevention models." Often, these inept programs feature "a narrow focus on the individual which ignores the impact of the family system" (p. 144). One study of the politically popular Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) program, for instance, showed that DARE's previous claims of short-term success had "evaporated," and that there had actually been "significant increases in drug use after participation in DARE" for suburban students among the 1,798 surveyed (Rosenbaum & Hanson, 1998, p. 381).

As efforts are exerted to rehabilitate young ex-offenders, it must be remembered that success occurs only when releasees have the attitudes and skills necessary to become productive citizens. Life skills training gives one a more positive self-perception and an increased sense of self-worth (Wenda, 1997). Society, in any event, "must continue to support former inmates who choose to help themselves" (Bossler, et al., 2000, p. 18).

Literacy

Lack of literacy is seen by many as the driving force behind criminal behavior. Most young offenders have the same academic shortcomings as older inmates held in state penitentiaries. As they are typically undereducated, function at the fifth grade level

in reading and spelling, and even lower in mathematics (Wenda, 1997), providing them with adequate remedial education must be a paramount concern of society.

As Duguid (1997) reminds, offenders need a solid education, “not just skill acquisition and certainly not just cognitive skills therapy programs thinly disguised as education” (p. 153). To accomplish this, rehabilitational education should be guided mainly by “the values and practices of the field of adult education.” Thus, correctional educators need to build bridges with individuals, groups and organizations doing the “most creative adult educational work out in the community” (Warner, 1998, p. 131).

To be effective, correctional education must rethink traditional literacy programs, which are still heavily biased by the three R’s, and convert them into “integrated, holistic teaching” addressing the full range of needs, “the cognitive, affective, social, and moral development of the offender” (Wright, 1997, p. 10). To meet the entire range of their needs, as Tewksbury and Vito (1994) see it, these students must gain full proficiency in math, spelling, grammar, computer technology, problem solving, communication, critical thinking, and organizational and personal skills.

Vocational

The societal goal of educating offenders is to make them honest, self-sufficient taxpayers when they leave the criminal justice system. A knowledge of “at least basic adult skills in reading and math are required for acquiring a good job or training for a profession” (Winters, 1997, p. 454). Without a meaningful job paying a living wage, their chances of returning to crime and recidivating are greatly increased.

As Gerber and Fritsch (1995) say in their oft-cited study of vocational education, Most of the research conducted in recent years shows a correlation between vocational training and a variety of outcomes generally considered positive for either society or correctional institutions: lower recidivism rates, lower parole revocation rates, better post-release employment patterns, and better institutional disciplinary records (p. 131).

Other researchers find that most instructors and supervisors perceive vocational training as increasing inmate’s personal skills as well as work skills, with the result that

they gain confidence in themselves and pride in their work. In a study of 430 educational supervisors and 389 randomly selected incarcerated students in New York state, Brandon, Chard-Wierschem, and Mancini (1999) found the inmates agreed that vocational training helped them develop better thinking skills, and gave them pride in their newly found self-sufficiency.

Learning

Typical offenders, being poorly educated school dropouts, usually have a maladaptive, passive learning style, and attribute their lack of academic success to “extraindividual factors” (Winters, 1997, p. 452). Most of them are “action-oriented, non-reflective, and impulsive,” and are rarely affected by advice or warnings, since they have been unable to develop “the critical thinking skills necessary to reflect back on their behavior and its effects” (Montross & Montross, 1997, p. 180).

Underlying their considerable social deficits are issues of “moral, social, and cognitive developmental delay” (Wright, 1997, p. 18). As Montross and Montross (1997) point out, “from a Piagetian perspective, it is evident that the offenders fall somewhere between the pre-operational and concrete developmental stages. That is, they have the cognitive development of an 11 year old” (p. 182). The finding that this same group has educational abilities similar to fifth graders (Wenda, 1997) seems to support this finding.

Very few people seem to understand this elusive and only slightly reported point, and persist in treating these troubled youths as though they were competent adults who had made informed decisions to engage in criminal behavior. A review of the literature by Gunn (1999) reveals that the needs of inmate learners, instructors, and correctional institutions have often been overlooked by the research community (p. 74).

As Wright (1997) asserts, rehabilitational education programs need to be solidly built around “a developmentally grounded curriculum that integrates the cognitive, social, moral and affective elements into a pedagogical whole” (p. 20). Concepts of important theorists need to be considered, like Mezirow's vision of education as a process that leads to genuine change in the fundamental assumptions that a person holds (Warner, 1998), Habermas's discourse model that holds learner's perceptions of self and reality must be

challenged through “critical reflection and dialogue” (Wright, 1997, p. 17), and Freire’s vision of transformational learning that places emphasis strongly on social change rather than just on individual empowerment (Warner, 1998, p. 129).

The moral development theories of Piaget and Kohlberg (cited by Wright, 1997) hold that concepts of good and bad are comprehended only in terms of the “punishment consequences”, an approach that is often used in hopes of teaching children fairness, moral decision-making, law and order, and tolerance, empathy and respect for others. “The punishment/obedience orientation is the very lowest level of this continuum – the least mature,” Halstead (1999) says, terming it “unsophisticated and pre-conventional and, sadly,...also the way that most correctional institutions operate “(p. 43).

Teaching

Good practices for teaching troubled young offenders are clustered around the critical themes of classroom climate, teaching methods and curriculum, and trying to help institutions overcome their own frequently unresponsive natures (Guerin & Denti, 1999). These researchers quote a Government Accounting Office report that:

In highly effective programs, teachers and staff were able to accomplish the following: build self-esteem; plan for post-program life; teach social, coping and living skills; coordinate services; involve the family; create a positive peer culture; enforce a firm code of discipline; provide post program support; and provide a supportive, family-like atmosphere. Success of program graduates depended on these clearly identified program characteristics (p. 87).

Correctional education is difficult, in part because so many young offenders have learning disabilities (48%, Anderson and Anderson, 1996; 42% to 60%, Guerin & Denti, 1999). Few teacher preparation programs provide instructors with the full range of skills and experiences that they need to serve this population (Guerin & Denti, 1999). Consequently, there exists a nationwide shortage of qualified educators that “especially impacts incarcerated youth with disabilities” (Ashcroft, Price, & Sweeney, 1998, p. 113).

In their report, Guerin and Denti found that successful teachers in such settings as correctional facilities needed unique competencies and experience, including attitudes,

knowledge, and strategies appropriate for students with deviant behavior and diverse economic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds. Their other needs were quite similar to those of instructors in other alternative education settings: more effective assessment and instructional methods, better classroom management techniques, more knowledge about handicapped youth, and more help with counseling and interpersonal relations, materials and curriculum, and service delivery (Guerin & Denti, 1999).

Guerin and Denti concluded that the most important areas of knowledge that must be acquired by teachers working in alternative settings include:

1. The learning and behavioral needs of youth with learning disabilities and emotional disturbances.
2. Effective teaching/learning strategies that are applicable in alternative education settings.
3. Models for effective instruction to multicultural/multilingual classes in alternative settings.
4. Strategies for effective transition and reentry.

Other necessary competency areas for teachers in alternative education include development of “streetwise knowledge,” and creating a curriculum linked to social, coping, and self-esteem building strategies (Guerin & Denti, 1999, p. 86). While Klug (2000) proposes simply that the key to success is keeping students busy and interested, others believe that critical thinking is the key to obtaining a positive outcome.

Teachers must demonstrate critical thinking so that both they and their students may better learn to reason scientifically, mathematically, historically, morally, and philosophically, in ways not determined by dogma and relativism, making them better able to understand and answer the many great questions of human existence. Both the structures of their courses and their teaching tactics must be rethought if a new means of instruction that teaches students to reason well is to be designed (Elder & Paul, 1994, p. 35).

One study says that the style typically used by facilitators can be more effective than the methods that are often used by traditional teachers because of the open, honest style of risk-taking and sincere personal expressiveness (Galbraith, 1992). He proposes that there are nine principles by which facilitators should guide both themselves and the members of the groups that they serve, implying that teachers might do well to consider the same possibilities:

1. Develop a philosophy: provide a rationale and purpose for their style and personal beliefs; provide an organizing vision; answer “what and why” query.
2. Understand each learner is unique: pay attention to differences; recognize, validate, and utilize the multifaceted nature of each member of the group.
3. Eliminate load factors: make sure no psychological, physical, or social barriers to learning exist; encourage consensual rules and collaboration.
4. Provide a vision: help them see where they’re going; provide guidelines; follow the plan; show how objectives will be reached; explain the options.
5. Be authentic and credible: reveal emotions; admit frailties and failures; present knowledge, experience, skill, and expertise; build trust with group.
6. Provide challenges: confront group with opportunities to scrutinize ideas and develop alternatives; initiate and stimulate critical thinking experiences.
7. Foster praxis: let learner’s experiment: act, reflect, try a change, reflect again; identify and explore assumptions; promote self-evaluative basis for decisions.
8. Understand each learner’s process: pay attention; notice approach of each to confront and deal with unfamiliar issues; see what arouses anxiety, anger, etc.
9. Encourage independence: incorporate into all other principles; ultimate goal; teach learners to teach themselves autonomy, empowerment, and self-direction (Galbraith, 1992, p. 10).

Employment

Realizing that “criminality is a functional substitute for a legitimate career” (Tewksbury & Vito, 1994, p. 55), it is clear offenders with “low levels of human capital” in possession of few skills that are well rewarded in the legal job market, are more likely to commit economically motivated crimes. Others, who earn a living wage from their employment after release, are not as likely to commit new offenses, not even drug sales with high potential gains, because they earn sufficient income (Bossler, et al., 2000, p. 1).

Employment of ex-offenders has been linked to a lower recidivism rate because it increases the self-esteem and the financial stability of individuals who might otherwise reengage in criminal behavior (Albright & Denq, 1996). Vocational education, job skill training, and industrial experience while incarcerated provide rehabilitation through job training that leads to successful reintegration (Mann, 1997), resulting in a desirable outcome for releasees (Bossler et al., 2000).

Employment provides the stable base that aids ex-offenders in their post-release success and acceptance into mainstream society. Jobs commensurate with their skills are integral to reintegration; likewise, low-paying menial labor can negatively affect an “ex-offender’s unstable self-image” (Albright & Denq, 1996, p. 125). These researchers report that nearly half of those released from Texas institutions were earning less than \$6.00 an hour (p. 119).

The process that is most beneficial to ex-offender and society alike is described by Tewksbury and Vito (1994) as providing job skills before release and assistance in securing employment upon release. Connecting the released offender with a job is a realistic terminal point of the corrections experience and is considered by many to be “the most cost effective option available to corrections managers and their community partners” (McCollum, 1998, p. 89). Literacy is important along with vocational training, for, as Albright and Denq (1996) say, as the level of education increases, an employer’s willingness to hire the ex-offender increases notably.

As efforts are exerted to rehabilitate young ex-offenders, it must be remembered that their success will be greater if chances of legitimate employment are as easy to find and as accessible as the illegitimate opportunities. As Bossler et al., (2000) point out,

“illegal drug markets are freely available to former inmates with ties to street gangs in their home neighborhoods” (p. 18).

Aftercare Programs

Post-release success often depends upon the support services that are provided to the ex-offender to prevent their return to their former culture of criminality. Almost all that are released, except those that have served out each and every day of their sentence, are placed on community supervision (probation from county jail, parole from state or federal prison). The problem is that “overworked...officers and underfunded social agencies are part of a patchwork that offers no comprehensive approach to the difficult task of integrating ex-convicts into workaday life” (Slevin, 2000, H-1). While former inmates can count on judicial supervision from a parole or probation officer, finding the necessary personal support from a community agency or social service organization is often much more difficult. Paradoxically, community support is often the more effective element in making the ex-offender’s reintegration into society a successful one.

As Bossler, et al. (2000) report, community solutions may focus on well-developed, long-term aftercare programs centered in neighborhood therapeutic communities in which intensive substance abuse therapy, individual counseling, and progressive involvement in the job market are offered to former inmates in a safe environment. Such aftercare programs continue the rehabilitative efforts that may have begun during their term of incarceration. The program emphasis reported by Bossler, et al., on substance abuse therapy, psychotherapeutic counseling, and job placement cover the problem areas most often cited as contributing to recidivism.

Unlike the 585,000 former offenders released from state and federal prisons in the U.S. this year, the CORE boot camp subjects of this thesis were given some life skills training that included substance abuse prevention, counseling, and job services as part of their rehabilitation. Just like the more than half million released prison inmates, however, they face the self-same problem of having an insufficient number of aftercare program openings available to support them in remaining free of criminal behavior after release.

Where the rehabilitated boot camp cadets do not have aftercare support, they are prone to commit probation violations that may elicit criticism from those who complain that boot camps do not reduce recidivism. As the National Institute of Justice (1996) says in agreeing that some boot camps may not be lowering the rate of recidivism much, “this situation may be the result of shortcomings in aftercare for boot camp graduates” (p. 1).

A new aftercare program that holds great promise for helping the CORE/Gateway graduates stay crime-free is the University Community Care Center (UCCC) in Austin, a non-profit social service agency that has recently begun to make its services available. The UCCC offers continued life skills training and counseling for the ex-offender and his or her family, as well as a mentoring program based on existing community resources. As the National Institute of Justice (1996) remarks, making aftercare programs available to those who have graduated from boot camp holds the promise of “retaining the benefits of the boot camp experience when the graduate reenters the community” (p. 2).

Recidivism

With the previous experiences of having once lived a criminal lifestyle, and more recently having been incarcerated with a group of other offenders, it is not difficult to imagine how a person might have trouble after release from confinement fitting back into legitimate society. As Berkholder (2000) found, learning to adjust to the community and reintegrate into the working world can be difficult for ex-inmates. The inability to return to the community often results in recidivism. Sims and Jones (1997) go so far as to say that “the best prediction of future offending is past offending” (p. 325).

The executive director of the Texas Criminal Justice Policy Council (TCJPC) describes recidivism as the reoccurrence of criminal behavior, and defines this criminal behavior as re-arrests, re-convictions, or re-incarcerations (Fabelo, 1997). The rate of recidivism in Texas, Fabelo says, includes 48% of offenders released from prison or county jail (44). In the twelve months ending August 31, 1999, authorities in Texas released 35,381 inmates (Slevin, 2000, H-1), suggesting that, by Fabelo’s approximation, nearly 17,000 ex-offenders among them are likely to be returned to confinement.

The indicators that most reliably indicate the probability of recidivism are given by Sims and Jones (1997) as: (a) gender (females are more successful than males), (b)

age (older is positively correlated with success), (c) marital status (marriage is positively correlated with success), (d) education level (higher is positively correlated with success), (e) race (white is positively correlated with success), (f) state of employment (working is positively associated with success), (g) prior criminal history (negatively correlated with success), (h) being a property offender (negatively associated with success), and (i) sentence length (higher likelihood of failure for sentences of more than five years).

Rates of recidivism vary widely by factors that include the offense for which the offender was originally incarcerated, and their age at the time they were released from confinement. Fabelo (1997) gives these rates as:

Offenses:

Burglary	56%
Robbery	54%
Theft	52%
Assault	44%
Drugs	43%
Homicide	40%
Sexual assault	39%
DWI	37%
Sex offense	34%

Ages:

17-25	56%
26-30	52%
31-35	48%
36-40	46%
41 or older	35% (p. 44).

One of the most encouraging findings by researchers seeking solutions to the problem is that those with a higher level of education experience lower recidivism rates (Albright & Denq, 1996). Another study, by Jancic (1998), showed the most successful were those who, while incarcerated, did at least one of the following: (a) successfully completed the requirements to earn a GED, (b) participated in correctional academic and

vocational programs, (c) completed high school requirements, (d) participated in and/or completed post-secondary programs (p. 152).

Success may be based on a combination of the factors that are included in a comprehensive rehabilitation program sequence such as the one offered by CORE and Construction Gateway under study here. Wenda (1997) finds that the more education, quality of job and self-esteem a person possesses, the less likely he or she is to recidivate. Programs that combine life skills training with literacy and vocational educational are an effective way of providing for all three of these fundamental needs at once.

Critics assert that education alone has not proven adequate to significantly reduce the rate of recidivism among offenders (Wolford, 1989). Others believe employment may be the most important factor (Albright & Denq, 1996; Mann, 1997; Bossler, et al., 2000). The truth could be that all these factors that are vital.

While providing basic educational and vocational skills may lead to acquiring employment upon release, the essential problem is not the acquisition of a job, but the retention of the job. Koski (1996) asserts that the literature persuasively confirms that much promise for both job retention and avoidance of recidivistic behavior lies in the area of cognitive education of inmates, including the importance of learning self-control.

Walters (1997) says the problem of ex-offenders remaining stuck in a criminal lifestyle relates to their “antisocial identity, intrusiveness of the confining offense, family/interpersonal conflict, and poor school/work adjustment” (p. 294). Other determinative factors include: fewer address changes, a higher level of education, and some financial stability, all of which decreased the odds of recidivating more than being married, having stable employment, or even being motivated to change (Sims and Jones, 1997).

Discussions over which factors lessen or increase the likelihood of recidivism are rendered nearly moot by a more troubling revelation from Tony Fabelo (1997), Executive Director of the Texas Criminal Justice Policy Council, that the real root of the difficulty in determining the recidivism rate is “the lack of a centralized computerized repository of data.” The Texas legislature approved construction of this central database in 1989, but, in the years since, never passed an appropriation to fund its implementation (p. 44).

Another vexing problem for the operators of rehabilitation programs is the rigid insistence of many politicians that the success of these programs be measured solely by their impact on recidivism, even though that may not be the program's central goal.

Although the use of recidivism as a measure of education programming success is understandable from a political sense, its use is difficult to comprehend when one appreciates the reality of both the offenders' correctional and life experiences... [their] woefully limited academic and vocational education [and] a myriad of other social and personal problems (Wolford, 1989, p. 366).

As Fabelo (1997) asserts, recidivism rates can be used as a measure of program performance, when programs have as their primary goal the reduction of recidivism. Burton, et al., (1993), who conducted a quantitative study of attitudinal change in 389 inmates of a Houston, Texas boot camp, suggest that researchers, rather than using only recidivism rates to measure the success of a boot camp intervention, should also evaluate them based on the extent to which offenders participated in super-intensive probation, interpersonal and family counseling, and employment services (p. 52).

Diversion Programs

Far better than programs to rehabilitate offenders after they have been adjudicated or incarcerated are those that seek to prevent young persons from initially entering into a pattern of life-long criminal behavior. These diversion programs mitigate the influences of familial and societal problems that may predispose at-risk children to later criminal acts. Poitier and Niliwaaambiemi (1997) find that positive role-modeling, empathetic nurturing, and appropriate expectations are among the essential elements for rearing children to become healthy, self-sufficient and responsible adults. For those born into dysfunctional or broken families and shattered neighborhoods, early childhood programs like Operation Headstart, providing nutrition, education, and a supportive environment, function as the community's first line of defense against the influences that may later put these children at risk of becoming offenders.

Other programs attempt to mitigate the risk factors associated with criminality. Called risk-focused approaches, they seek to identify and eliminate the factors that place

an adolescent at a higher than normal risk for alcohol or drug abuse. The risk factors fall into two categories. The first are contextual factors, which include the availability of drugs and alcohol, extreme economic deprivation, neighborhood disorganization, and laws and norms that are favorable to such behavior. The second category, which covers both individual and interpersonal factors, includes family conflict, early and persistent problem behaviors, academic failure, early onset of drug use, and association with drug-using peers (DeGuire & Thyrum, 1999). In neighborhoods where many families have substance misuse or addiction problems, community-based prevention programs may most effectively identify and modify the factors that put young people at risk.

Other programs attempt to provide corrective influences to troubled youngsters in school, before eventual dropout, failure, or disciplinary dismissal occurs. Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Programs permit removing these students from regular classrooms into alternative education placements where they may be taught in a more restrictive and structured learning environment (Maughan, 1999). Her study finds that addressing the student's behavior early is much less costly than waiting to deal with it when the student becomes involved in the criminal justice or welfare systems a few years later.

The problem is a complex one, interleaved with a mixture of personal, social, and political issues. As Glenn Castleberry, Director of Information for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, told the author during an interview:

To reduce crime, stop teenaged pregnancy. It is a socioeconomic problem. We could probably go into the maternity wards right now and assign TDC [Texas Department of Corrections] numbers to the newborn children of young, poor, uneducated, single mothers with poor job skills. We either deal with these children when they are 2 to 4 years old, or 10 to 15 years later build them a prison cell. We need to deal with their education and upbringing as children, but can't, because it looks too much like welfare to the voters, who prefer punishment to welfare (Castleberry, 1997).

Castleberry's understandings are echoed by Wayne Scott, the Executive Director of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, who suggests:

If you want to address the problem in the long term, it gets around to looking at at-risk children and identifying those individuals very early on and trying to

influence them in a positive direction. I think you have to look at pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and first grade. You really have to put a lot of emphasis on children. Those are the formative years (quoted in the Dallas Morning News, 1997, A1).

Correctional Issues

The population of Texas prisons is growing at a startling rate. It has tripled in the past decade, from fewer than 50,000 inmates in 1990, to more than 150,000 this year. If the present rate of incarceration continues, Texas will be imprisoning citizens at a higher rate than any other jurisdiction in the free world, including the US government, and at a rate exceeded only by the opprobrious governments of Russia and China (Fabelo, 1997).

The statistics are dauntingly impressive. Texas has a total population of about 14,067,392 (JPI, 2000). The Texas Department of Corrections imprisons approximately 151,095 (Ward, 2000). There are 602,000 in city or county jails, 63,000 locked in state jails, 503,000 more on probation or parole, plus another 33,000 being held in federal prisons in Texas (NDIC, 2000). The combined total of 1,353,000 persons under criminal justice control in Texas represents nearly 10% of the state's population.

These figures become all the more noteworthy when they are compared with equivalent statistics from other states. "The scale of what is happening in Texas is so huge, it is difficult to contrast the size of its criminal justice systems to the other states' systems it dwarfs." Texas has more residents under criminal justice control than the entire population of Alaska, Vermont, or Wyoming, and nearly as many as all three combined (JPI, 2000, p. 2).

Those persons whose incarceration is causing the burgeoning rise in Texas prison population may not be the same individuals that many believe them to be.

Contrary to the view that most of the people entering Texas prisons represent a threat to public safety, the majority of prisoners in the Lone Star State are serving sentences for non-violent offenses. When the composition of the prison population is examined, it appears that most are being incarcerated for low level crimes (JPI, 2000, p. 3).

An even more telling indication of the nature of Texas justice may be seen in the evaluation of the offenses of newly admitted inmates. Of almost 37,000 entering the state prison system in 1998 (the last year for which complete figures are available), more than two out of every three were incarcerated for violating a condition of parole or probation. Of these, “half were charged not with breaking the law by committing new crimes, but for committing technical violations, such as missing a [parole] meeting” (JPI, 2000, p. 3).

Racial Inequality

The racial disparity disclosed by a closer examination of these figures indicate “the African American community has disproportionately born the brunt of the state’s high incarceration policies.” While one out of every ten Texans citizens are under some form of state criminal justice control, the rate rises to one in every four for adult black males, and to the figure of one of every three for young black males between the ages of 21 and 29 (JPI, 2000, p. 3).

The incarceration rate for whites in Texas is 555 behind bars for every 100,000 in the state population. Blacks are imprisoned at a rate seven times greater than whites. There are “an astonishing” 3,862 African Americans locked up for every 100,000 in the population. This rate is nearly 63% higher than the national incarceration rate for blacks of 2,366 per 100,000 (JPI, 2000, p. 3).

Although African Americans total 12% of the Texas population, they are 44% of the state jail and prison load. Whites, by comparison, represent 58% of the population, and comprise just 30% of those who are incarcerated. Blacks are also underrepresented amongst those receiving less severe forms of punishment; they account for 20% of the total probation caseload, as compared to 45% for whites (JPI, 2000, p. 4).

As the director of probation for Brazoria County, Texas, says, the reason for this racial disparity may be because African Americans can be prosecuted with less trouble than others with more money and social standing. “The socioeconomic environments they inhabit make it relatively easy to detect, arrest, prosecute and incarcerate them compared to the white population in more affluent environments who possess monetary resources to pay for expensive drug treatment and legal counsel” (Marshall, 2000).

It is difficult to draw accurate conclusions regarding the Latino population of Texas, because many jurisdictions in the state have conflicting methods of statistically categorizing their prisoners, including some who include Latinos in the same category as Anglos, and others who categorize them by their country of origin.

Correctional Politics

At the same time the rate of incarceration is soaring, crime rates are dropping. Wright (1997) finds this paradox leads to an “increasing public skepticism regarding the effectiveness of correctional institutions,” and suggests that the problem is rooted in the emotions of an ill-informed populace (p. 11). The implications are at once political.

Because the public demands retributive justice (Wright, 1997), posturing by some politicians becomes a factor, especially the ones that, as Stevens and Ward (1997) say, “concern themselves with correctional populations and neglect correctional outcomes” (p. 106). Elected officials such as these are yielding to what the former director general of England’s prison system called a lynch mob mentality (Warner, 1998).

Electoral and financial supporters who respond to the emotional appeals of these politicians seem to vote their personal opinions and emotions in apparent disregard of the facts. Information in the legislative process is to a great extent “generated by interest groups that select facts to market their position” (Eisenberg & Fabelo, 1996, p.307). Some, according to Stevens and Ward (1997), sincerely believe that incarceration alone will prevent further criminal activity. In addition, the researchers find that those same politicians and voters are often opposed to rehabilitation and correctional education, contending that criminal tendencies learned on the outside cannot be ‘unlearned’ on the inside, and that offenders gave up their rights to amenities such as education when they took away the rights of others. As Gehring points out, after a ten year effort by some members of congress to curtail Pell grants for inmate students, the 1995 Crime Bill finally prohibited inmates from eligibility, which should serve to remind us just how “vulnerable Americans are to demagogic politicians” (1997, p. 46).

As Warner (1998) asserts, vindictiveness erects barriers between people, isolates them, and prevents them from constructing together the cooperative, communal social

organizations that are so necessary for meaningful, satisfying human existence. It is ironic, he says, that it is just these social structures that contain the true solution for our crime problem. Despite the position of some ideological politicians and their supporters that rehabilitation and education of inmates amounts to being 'soft on crime', Wolford (1989) finds that "it appears that the general public understands the need for, and is supportive of, correctional education programs that enhance the basic literacy and employment skills of offenders" (p. 359). Stevens and Ward's study relates the case of the director of South Carolina's prison system, who held a strong personal opinion that convicts should not get free education. He persisted in holding this view until he was finally confronted with the fact that inmates receiving a post-secondary education in his state's prisons had a 4% recidivism rate versus the customary rate of 33%.

A consequence of this heavily politicized social environment is that our prisons are being built on what Warner (1998) describes as misleading stereotypes, fueled by attitudes of fear and vengeance. An outgrowth of the situation is that policies which call for the ever "greater use of imprisonment, and the use of more destructive forms of imprisonment, are creating far more bitter, alienated, and damaged people" (p. 124). As Albright and Denq's (1996) research paradoxically discovers, while on the one hand, inmates are likely to spend a much greater portion of their sentence incarcerated, on the other hand, they are also likely to receive much less access to rehabilitative programs.

Control over rehabilitation programs, as with almost all governmental endeavors, is ultimately a matter of the power to make or withhold financial appropriations. As the Capitol Area Training Foundation's Executive Director John Fitzpatrick told the author, "there is a real question mark now, politically, whether there is a will and a desire to spend resources on this hardest-to-serve population" (Fitzpatrick, 1998). Programs such as these are often the early victims of institutional budget reductions, losing out to more mundane services like food, medicine, laundry, and custody. As Wolford (1989) reports, many correctional administrations assign these programs low priority, and the general absence of strong, autonomous education administrations has resulted in a lack of coordination, and, in some cases, under-funded and ineffective programs.

A number of knotty rehabilitative issues rife with political implications remain to be resolved. They include the questions of making participation mandatory for inmates,

providing programming for learning-handicapped offenders, the development of linkages among training, industries, and education programs, sex equity and the right to treatment, transitional and aftercare services for released offenders, and making more meaningful evaluations of program outcomes (Wolford, 1989). Another concern, best expressed by Stevens and Ward (1997), is the possibility that some in the field of law enforcement and penology may be adopting contrary views opposing prisoner rehabilitation as a matter of personal enrichment for themselves. As the researchers point out, if an inmate receives law-abiding values while incarcerated, and does not thereafter recidivate, it follows that correspondingly fewer job openings might then be available for prosecutors, attorneys, judges, correctional personnel, and parole and probation officers (p. 107).

Correctional Funding

Spending per student per day in Texas schools is about \$25 (Alexander, 1997), whereas spending per prisoner in the Texas correctional system is about \$40 a day (Fabelo, 1997). Expenditures for construction in the Texas higher education system are less than \$650 million a year (Texas Almanac, 1998), whereas construction expenditures for the Texas prison system surpassed \$2 billion for the last reported biennium (Fabelo, 1997). In the landmark Texas School Dropout Survey (1986), it was reported that the total expenditures for crime, incarceration, and unemployment compensation had cost tax-payers \$17.5 billion, whereas completing the education of the same people through high school and college would have cost less than \$2 billion (Texas Education Agency). The American Federation of Teachers estimates that for the \$1,750 cost of diverting a disruptive student to an alternative placement before he becomes an offender, the public gains \$14,000 in student learning time that would have been lost, \$2,800 in reduced grade repetition costs, \$1,750 in reduced welfare costs, and \$1,500 in reduced prison costs (U.S. DOE, 1996). Clearly, education is much less expensive than incarceration.

It is in the public interest to educate inmates, Winters (1997) finds, because it decreases the amount of money spent taking care of them. Stevens and Ward (1997) affirm this assertion, saying that it is considerably less expensive to educate inmates than it is to reincarcerate them, because the main goal for inmate education is to reduce crime.

“When the costs of accredited correctional education are compared to the costs of reincarceration, results support funding for correctional education” (p. 109).

As the Texas Department of Criminal Justice report on their prison construction program and continuing problem with recidivism concludes, Texas cannot afford to build its way out of crime, nor to have nearly half the offenders released from its system return (Putting the Pieces Together, 1997). It makes neither financial nor philosophical sense to save money by denying rehabilitation to offenders whose predictable future crimes after release, their ensuing adjudication, and their likely reincarceration, will cost society far more money. As the CATF’s John Fitzpatrick says, “Even if our elected leaders are not interested in education for humanitarian reasons, they should be for basic reasons of profit and loss” (Fitzpatrick, 1998).

Transformative Interventions

The lives of ex-offenders after their release from confinement are filled with a complex set of decision making events (Bossler, et al., 2000). They may have been incarcerated because of their lack of self-control, because of the impact of learning disabilities and lack of education on their ability to think clearly and make appropriate decisions, because of dysfunctional behavior, because of activities related to poor mental health or problems with addiction, or for other reasons. If the detainee has received no rehabilitative treatment while incarcerated, he or she may actually be worse off after release than before, subject still to all the affects of the original problems, now reinforced and amplified by the brutalizing influences of imprisonment (Berkholder, 2000).

Many have been caught up in the so-called ‘War on Drugs’ as users; others, who have served time for drug sales, may have committed economically motivated offenses actually more related to their state of illiteracy and unemployability (Bossler, et al, 2000). As van Wormer (1999) asserts, the War on Drugs “has become a war on people, a policy that promotes criminalization over counseling persons with addictive problems” (p. 36). It is often the propagandistic use of the metaphors of war, she says, that distract us from the human and social aspects of addiction, and demonize troubled people. It appears that many of those incarcerated for committing criminal acts might more accurately have been convicted of lacking self-control, or of not having acquired clear thinking skills, or of

using poor judgement. The most successful rehabilitative programs for many inmates are those that address an offender's cognitive functioning (Henning & Frueh, 1996). After studying outcomes of 196 participants of such a program, Henning and Frueh reported that "criminogenic thinking errors" had to be recognized and changed, and that offenders had to be taught to recognize their own cognitive distortions and understand the role of these distortions in their prior criminal behavior (p. 527).

The process Habermas calls transformative learning occurs when "meaning systems are restructured, in other words, when the 'habits of expectation' which limit the learners perceptions of self and reality are challenged through critical reflection" (Wright, 1997, p. 17). In much the same way, the process of transformative intervention requires surveying the individual, the family, and the community to identify the factors that place individuals at risk for criminal behavior, and then undertaking the particular sequence of events and programs that are necessary to improve that individual's situation.

Transformative intervention is much like transformative learning, and can be said to include similar changes in meaning systems and perceptions of reality and self-definition. This transformative intervention may involve, for instance, something like providing nourishment and support for younger children, education and counseling for older youth, education and other rehabilitation and employment for adults, and aftercare and mentoring programs for all that need them.

It is difficult and often arbitrary to attempt to separate these programs into distinct components. As Warner (1998) reminds, "Mezirow expects educators to provide learners with skillful emotional support and collaborate with them as co-learners" (p. 128).

Transformative interventions best begin before the onset of delinquent behavior, through enrollment in Head Start or similar programs. At later ages, alternative education and juvenile detention programs precede involvement with the adult criminal justice system and incarceration in a county jail or a state or federal penitentiary, beyond which point transformative interventions become necessarily rehabilitative and more difficult.

Fundamental to making healthy decisions is the basic need to have an adequate education, not just for literacy and document competency, but to enable clear thinking, the absence of which may underlie much anti-social and deviant behavior. One means of clarifying thought is the technique of teaching critical thinking skills, a means to evaluate

and understand one's intellectual processes so that one can be freed from the emotionally supercharged reasoning, poorly substantiated beliefs, and unchallenged attitudes upon which decisions are often made that may lead to inappropriate or ineffective behavior. By understanding how thinking affects feelings and thus behavior, it becomes possible to change behavior by redirecting the thoughts that impel the feelings that give rise to the behavior (Elder, 1997).

Critical thinking skills can perhaps best be explicated through the stage theory advanced by Elder and Paul (1997), in which they outline the progression of steps that define what critical thinking is and how it may be taught:

- Stage 1: The Unreflective Thinker – must be helped to discover their problems and decide they want to learn how to think clearly and fair-mindedly.
- Stage 2: The Challenged Thinker – must be challenged in a supportive way through discussions and activities which require them to think about and begin to understand their own internal thinking processes.
- Stage 3: The Beginning Thinker – must be made aware of the importance of taking charge and applying intellectual standards to their thinking, and encouraged to practice regularly, as in sports, to overcome egocentrism.
- Stage 4: The Practicing Thinker – must be taught to focus on their intellectual processes: their purpose, points of view, concepts, assumptions and inferences, and shown connections between subject matter of all areas.
- Stage 5: The Advanced Thinker – (most will not reach this stage until after the undergraduate level) help them work on consistency, perseverance, humility, integrity, empathy, courage, honesty, and fair-mindedness.
- Stage 6: The Master Thinker – now deeply committed to fair-minded thinking, but still lacking perfect mastery over human egocentric nature, needs to make continual practice and self-assessment a part of daily life (p. 35).

Educational programs of any nature, whether life skills, literacy, or vocational, provide one of the very few positive, change-oriented programs available to inmates (Wolford, 1989). It must be remembered, also, that the majority of inmates are denied rehabilitational services. Some of those who receive any treatment beyond punishment are put in what Warner (1998) calls superficial programs, where “prisoners jump through the required hoops because life is more bearable for them if they do so” (p. 128). The key seems to be to provide real education, whereby the inmates are actually transformed.

Larsgaard, Kelso and Schumacher’s (1998) report gives insight into the mutually interactive nature of the experience of teaching and learning:

1. Learning is directly related to the quality of the relationship between the student and instructor, though the nature of that relationship may vary greatly.
2. Teachers are mentors and leaders who provide, through their own example of personality and enthusiasm, powerful motivation for change.
3. Teaching is a giving and proactive profession which constantly works to foster receptivity (learning requires accepting that which is offered).
4. Educational endeavors are more effective when the teaching takes place in a warm, mutually respectful and caring atmosphere (p. 20).

Educational goals, in addition to meeting literacy and vocational needs, must also address an individual’s need to acquire appropriate social and life skills. Deficits in this area seem to be universal among delinquents and incarcerated offenders (Wenda, 1997). Wright (1997) describes the goals of teaching social skills as teaching one “to calculate the consequences of his behavior and to stop to think before he acts,” and to “broaden his social perspective; and go beyond an egocentric view of the world” (p. 11).

In greater detail, Wright quotes Ross and Fabiano (1985) in listing the particular social skills that one needs to acquire:

1. To learn to comprehend the views of others and to improve his inter-personal problem-solving skills.
2. To develop coping behaviors which can serve as effective alternatives to anti-social or criminal behaviors.
3. To learn to view frustrations as problem-solving tasks and not just as personal threats.
4. To develop a self-regulatory system which includes self-monitoring of self-imposed goals.
5. To learn that he can control his life, that what happens to him depends on his thinking and the behaviors it leads to (p. 11).

As Wright (1997) puts it, offenders must develop a “self-regulatory system based on self-monitoring and self-control” (p. 16). Bossler et al., (2000) find that people with or without jobs commit crimes for the same reason, “low self-control” (p. 2). Thus, the authors hold, unemployment may not in and of itself lead to crime; rather, it may be the case that both unemployment and crime have a common underlying factor.

Koski (1996) has developed an unusual view about public secondary education , holding that while the poor education of this nation’s children is often cited as the most significant factor in the crime equation, the failure of education is important only insofar as it is relevant to the “formal education system’s inability to remediate the lack of self-control among adolescents attributed to single-mothering” (p. 182). As he envisions the solution, “a more fundamental change is needed in the thinking and behavioral processes of offenders: a teaching of self-control” (p. 186).

Some might describe a curriculum that helps inmates develop social, civic, and work responsibilities, and adopt cooperative, ethical practices as behavior modification, but it is how Klug (2000) describes a correctional training program in welding job skills.

You can be the best welder, but if you are not dependable and you can’t get along on the job, then you are not benefiting yourself or others. Lack of a GED or lack

of welding skills did not get these guys [incarcerated] – it was their behavior – and that is the part we need to work on the most (p. 14).

Wenda (1997) reiterates the need for all these factors to be kept in mind and given balanced attention in structuring rehabilitation programs, saying that the more education, quality of job, and self-esteem a person possesses, the less likely he is to recidivate. He finds that the best way of providing for all three of these needs is through programs such as the CORE/Gateway program sequence, combining the elements of life skills, literacy, and vocational education. Such a correctional rehabilitation program, say Duguid, et al., (1998) “may offer prisoners who are younger and do not have a high school education a ‘second chance’ at starting a law-abiding life” (p. 97).

An interesting finding in the study by Duguid, et al., is that tenure in the program was a stronger indicator of success than academic improvement. In a previous study, Duguid (1997) had found that the mechanism of change was not specific courses or sets of subjects but rather the process of a sustained, intensive, and participative educational experience. The findings of benefits accruing from longer tenure and sustained program participation are similar to the report by Black, Brush, Grow, Hawes, Henry, and Hinkle (1996) that focused on the duration of juvenile correctional placement, wherein they say that removal from a dysfunctional home environment for less than six months duration may be too short a time frame to learn new patterns of thought and behavior. The study by Black, et al. studied outcomes of 207 releasees from a Virginia juvenile correctional education program.

For those who are enrolled in rehabilitational programs, new insights are needed to help them understand themselves, their behavior, and the ways of the world. They must learn to be more concerned with the process and less focused on the content, that the process of decision making may be more important than the decision, that the process of problem solving may count for more than the solution itself, and that the process of communication is often much more meaningful than the subject of the communication (Wright, 1997).

Following release from confinement, a vital part of successful reintegration into the community can be an effective aftercare and mentoring program. Aftercare should follow through with counseling, education, and employment elements from earlier stages,

(Mann, 1997), and may be enhanced by the presence of a mentor. Townsel (1997) called mentoring “a one-to-one relationship between a pair of unrelated individuals, of different ages, interacting on a regular basis, usually characterized by a special bond of mutual commitment and an emotional character of respect, loyalty and identification” (p. 125).

Summary

This review of the literature expresses the breadth and depth of concern about what society is to do with its numbers of at-risk youth. Their characteristics mirror those of the 151,095 inmates that are now held in Texas prisons at an annual cost of more than a billion dollars. As the Texas Department of Criminal Justice says, the state “cannot afford to build its way out of crime, nor...afford to have approximately one half of offenders released from the system return to the system” (TDCJ, 1997). Many youth are at risk to join them in the cycle of incarceration, release, rearrest, and reconfinement.

Beyond the human tragedy and economic outpouring, eventual political decisions loom regarding the attitudes of influential political leaders and their wealthy backers who support an ideological policy of only confining and punishing offenders, rather than also rehabilitating and educating them, before their return to society . The literature suggests that the destructiveness inherent in some current practices creates results that are counter-productive as public policy, and reports that more effective alternatives are well known.

Options are available to divert troubled children from the life patterns that are likely to lead them to anti-social behavior and ensuing criminal adjudication. Where such contact with the criminal justice system can not be prevented, there are now rehabilitative programs working to teach young offenders how to function effectively as members of legitimate society. “Correctional vocational training and educational programs, as well as treatment for substance abuse and emotional disorders,” say Bossler, et al. (2000), “improve inmates’ ability to find and retain gainful employment while withstanding the pressures to return to a criminal lifestyle” (p. 1).

Given the social and educational handicaps common among at-risk youth, young inmates, and ex-offenders, it is clear that, for both preventive and curative reasons, their education is vital. If, as Tewksbury and Vito (1994) say, “offenders are to return to their

communities and maintain law-abiding lifestyles, they must be provided with a variety of readily accessible tools. Critical among these tools are formal educational skills” (p. 55). Offenders must learn to think more clearly. Most real changes seem to occur after one has first learned how to learn. Successful rehabilitation appears to follow in the footsteps of education. The point is critical, because if offenders are returned to the community still uneducated, anti-social, and perhaps even more bitter following a term of brutal treatment in prison, they may put public safety further at risk by continuing their criminal behavior, following which they are likely to recidivate (Stevens & Ward, 1997).

The findings on incarceration outcomes, even with rehabilitative and educational programs, while hopeful, can not be called unrestrainedly good. “It is clear that younger subjects do much better, that robbers and thieves and opiate addicts do poorly, that men who pursue education after release do much better than expected, and that the intensity of engagement may be significant” (Duguid, 1997, p. 154). Perhaps the dictum offered by Gehring (1997) is the key to understanding why the rehabilitation of these offenders is in our own self-interest, because, as he points out, “the overwhelming majority of prisoners will eventually be released to become our neighbors” (p. 46).

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

This methodology of this study was chosen to meet the goals of understanding the perceptions of a group of young ex-offenders about which elements of the rehabilitational program sequence they underwent as participants in the Convicted Offender Reentry Effort (CORE) boot camp located at the Travis County Correctional Complex and the Construction Gateway program at Austin Community College were of most significance to them, and why. The program elements include such rehabilitative components as counseling and life skills training, and literacy and vocational education.

Most published research on offender rehabilitation and correctional education is the result of quantitative studies of older, hardened inmates in state or federal penitentiaries. This qualitative inquiry, focused on the rehabilitation of younger offenders at the time of their first serious encounter with the judicial system, has yielded data explaining the significance troubled youth attach to elements of the rehabilitation programs that are intended to change the attitudes and perceptions associated with the behavior for which they were incarcerated.

A qualitative study was chosen because of its superiority in revealing the nature of a person's subjective experience (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Spiggle, 1994), because of its usefulness in investigating phenomena about which little is known (Harre, Clark & De Carlo, 1985), and because of its effectiveness in presenting the many intricate details of complicated phenomena that can not be well described by quantitative means.

Phenomenological Framework

A phenomenological study is one that seeks to learn the essence or meaning of an experience, or phenomenon, that has been shared by a group of people. By its nature, such a study delves into the perceptions of group members about the experience that they have lived in common. As Creswell (1998) explains, phenomenological research builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting.

The phenomenological tradition was followed because of its philosophical aim of attempting to understand the experiences of another person. The researcher seeks to gain an appreciation of the subject by relying on the respondent's account of events, and by adhering to their point of view during the analysis. Through this technique, data that accurately describes the subjective experience of the respondent can be properly gathered and accurately analyzed (Hammond, Howarth, & Keat, 1991).

Research questions

1. What experiences, good or bad, did the participants in the CORE boot camp and Construction Gateway programs perceive as being most significant?
2. Did the participants believe these programs changed their lives in any way? If so, how?
3. Which rehabilitational elements seemed most significant to the participants?
4. What is it about these elements that made them more salient to participants than other elements?
5. If participants believed these elements contributed to personal change in their perceptions and behavior, how did they believe this occurred?

The Sample

The sample in this study was 8 informants chosen from among graduates of the CORE boot camp and Construction Gateway program sequence. They had finished both their terms of incarceration and their participation in the rehabilitation programs, and had

since returned to the community and taken gainful jobs. These respondents were chosen purposefully, rather than randomly. The basic criterion for selection was their apparent success at internalizing the lessons learned during the rehabilitative programs of CORE and Gateway and successfully reintegrating into the community, as indicated by such factors as their ability to maintain a stable home, family, employment, income, and continue their education. Those chosen for the study were selected from among the participants who had been released from confinement for 90 days or more and had demonstrated an apparently successful reintegration according to these standards.

Although the sample was not a large one, it was carefully chosen to represent a group of specific individuals who have been successfully rehabilitated. As Patton (1990) says, “the validity, meaningfulness and insights generated from qualitative inquiry have more to do with the information-richness of the cases selected and the observational/analytical capabilities of the researcher than with the sample size” (p. 185). These cases were selected from records maintained by the Capital Area Training Foundation's program manager for Construction Gateway, and included every person on the list that could be contacted and expressed a willingness to participate in the study.

The greatest limitation of this research is that African American respondents are underrepresented. These individuals comprise 36 percent of the total graduates of the CORE/Gateway program sequence. Statistically, with eight participants in this study, two or three should have been African Americans; however, only one was located to be interviewed. This underrepresentation may significantly affect the findings of this study. Although the reason for African American males' apparent reluctance to participate is not known, it may be because, as Guerin and Denti (1999) report, such ex-offenders as these, regardless of ethnicity, have often been found to be “transitory, unresponsive, suspicious, antisocial, and isolated” (p. 85).

The situation may also reflect the disproportionate role that African American males hold in Texas' incarceration statistics. Although just 12% of the Texas population, African Americans are 44% of the state jail and prison load. While one in ten Texans citizens are under some form of state criminal justice control, the rate is one in four for adult black males, and one of every three black males in the age range of most of the participants in this study (JPI, 2000, p. 3).

Fifty five African Americans have graduated from the combined CORE/Gateway program sequence. Of that number, three were ineligible because they did not meet the 90 day minimum period of release qualification, two were known to have been sent back to prison, another one was thought to have recidivated, one was believed to be a fugitive, and one more was reported to be in a residential drug detoxification program.

Of the 47 possible African American respondents remaining, 39 could not be located, despite mailings to their last known addresses and several hundred telephone calls. Of the eight that were thought still to be in the community, only one responded to a repeated series of telephone calls leaving messages for them at their homes, at work, with families, and with friends. Other members of the Gateway faculty assisted, as did the Capital Area Training Foundation program manager and his staff, the Sergeant and Drill Instructors of the CORE boot camp, both the Travis County Probation Officers who have had contact with these inmates, and the last dozen CORE/Gateway graduates. The single African American respondent willing to be interviewed was reached by the researcher through the efforts of that former student's Probation Officer.

The study utilized an intensity sampling strategy (Miles & Huberman, 1994) to find exemplary, but not unusual, examples of success in rehabilitational program outcomes, for the purpose of focusing on these success stories to learn what they had in common. The informants were to some extent self-selected, in that they were chosen from among those CORE/Gateway graduates whose recent life and job history had been sufficiently stable for them to be located for participation in this study of the apparent success that their stability indicates. Some other members of this volatile population had apparently moved on to different jobs and new addresses.

When they were contacted, respondents were informed of the nature of the study, and of the possible benefits that the results could yield towards improving existing rehabilitation programs and designing new and more effective future programs. All informants had completed their terms of incarceration and tenure in the rehabilitation program, and acted voluntarily as free citizens when they chose to participate in this research project. There were no interview questions relating to any past or present illicit activity, and thus no issues of legal liability on the parts of either the researcher or the participants.

Procedures

The interview questions were asked of informants during an orally administered in-depth face-to-face interview (Griswold & Myles, 1998). The researcher observed the informants, recorded their responses to open-ended questions on an audio tape recorder, and took written notes throughout the process. The data was saturated before the series of interviews ended, and, although each respondent made interesting observations and comments, by the end, no enlightening new information was being developed.

Data collection

Gathering the data began with understanding the process by which members of the sample perceived and reacted to significant events in their lives. A full appreciation of both the informants and their experiences was necessary. This understanding allowed the researcher to bracket his preconceptions by setting aside personal experience and opinion so that the voices of the informants could be heard above the investigator's own ideas. The researcher also reviewed all of his findings with another teacher and a counseling professional that were not personally involved with the CORE or Gateway programs.

The interview was semi-standardized, with open-ended questions in an interview guide (Polkinghorne, 1989). This process was chosen because its nature was systematic enough to limit the particular domains of issues being explored to insure that responses yielding comparable information were obtained from each respondent, and yet flexible enough to accommodate individual variations in age, race, and culture of the informants, while also permitting the researcher to make spontaneous follow ups to illuminating responses (Patton, 1990). Open-ended questions allow for probing or follow-up questions to get respondents to provide some additional information about especially interesting or relevant answers (McCracken, 1988).

The questions were administered orally during a face to face interview that lasted for approximately an hour. Interview questions were designed to begin with eliciting general information, then probing further for specifics, with follow-up questions for answers that indicated additional pertinent information might be obtained. Informant's responses were

recorded for transcription, analysis, and comparison. The researcher also took notes and began preliminary analysis of responses during the interview, which were of value in directing follow-up questions.

Interviews were conducted in locations of the respondent's choosing. One invited the researcher into the living room of his home. Another selected the office of the mechanic shop where he was employed. Still another chose the premises where the meetings of his Alcoholic Anonymous group are held. The library of St. Edwards University was nearby and convenient for one respondent. Several other interviews took place in the familiar environs of the Riverside campus of Austin Community College, where classes had been held during participants' tenure in the Construction Gateway program. The interviews began in August, 2000 and concluded in November, 2000.

Respondents were asked to recall their personal perceptions concerning the significance of their experiences during the CORE/Gateway program sequence. The progression of interview questions led respondents through considering which of the experiences held the most significance to them (RQ 1), whether they believed these experiences changed their lives (RQ 2), which elements of the programs they felt had been most significant to them, and why (RQ 3), why they believed particular program elements had created life changes (RQ 4), and how CORE/Gateway influenced those changes that occurred (RQ 5). Other questions probed the respondents' background to determine dates of involvement in CORE, Gateway, and return to the community, the stability of their lives since release, and their anticipations for the future.

Interview Guide

The interview guide is located in Appendix A. The relationship of the questions in the interview guide to the research questions is shown in the following matrix.

Table 1

Research question #	Interview guide question #
RQ 1	5, 6, 9, 10
RQ 2	7, 11, 14, 16
RQ 3	8, 12
RQ 4	13
RQ 5	15
Background	1, 2, 3, 4, 17
Future	18

Pilot study

The interview questions were tried first with several CORE/Gateway students during early August 2000. Although these five students had not graduated yet, and were consequently not eligible for the actual study at the time they were interviewed, they had nonetheless completed nearly all of the combined programs, and were thus able to answer knowledgeably the questions that were presented.

The pilot study gave the researcher an opportunity to determine if the research questions were germane to the study, whether the questions had been phrased in such appropriate language as to enable the informants to properly understand the point of inquiry, and to assure that the questions were such that their responses elicited the desired type of information.

Several questions that did not seem to be well understood and that did not produce appropriate answers were revised before actual interviewing for the study began. It was found that the formal wording of some of the questions made them rather difficult for respondents to comprehend. The language of the interview questions was therefore changed to a less formal usage that was somewhat closer to the way participants normally spoke. For instance, the earlier version of the interview guide was phrased much more in the language of the research questions. As an example, the words 'shall' and 'participants'

seemed to be making respondents uncomfortable, and they apparently perceived it as being impersonal. The words were changed to 'will' and 'student,' and there were no further reactions. The interview guide presented in this report as Appendix A reflects those revisions that were made to enhance clarity and comprehensibility.

Data analysis

Inferences in this qualitative research project were developed by a combination of analytically dividing the data into its constituent parts and construing its meaning by an interpretive process (Spiggle, 1994). Preliminary analysis began while the interviews were still in progress, as the researcher made analytic memos that took note of hunches about patterns and tentative key words for coding. These early insights directed later choices concerning the focus of follow up questions and further probing inquiries.

After the interviews had been conducted, the informant's responses were transcribed verbatim so that a complete record of the narrative was available for analysis. Notes taken by the observer-researcher, document data from CORE and Gateway that described the activities of the programs, transcribed responses from the interviews, and other pertinent materials were gathered together and reviewed several times. Files were created to organize the material for efficient location and comparison.

Formal analysis began with reading through the transcriptions and other material, and annotating them to point out similarities, patterns or themes. The data were divided into numbered groups (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992) that described the respondent's various reactions to elements of their shared experiences, and analyzed by horizontalizing these similar responses into categories, and determining the themes or patterns that linked these categories (Crabtree & Miller, 1992).

A good example of coding is to be found in the variety of answers that reflected the participants' judgement that they had been treated unfairly at some time during their tenure in the CORE program, or felt that a Drill Instructor had acted unprofessionally. The researcher heard these comments recurring in each interview, and realized that it was a significant issue to the respondents. These statements occurred in response to a wide variety of questions, and, beyond the horizontalization of similar answers to similar

questions together, the coding revealed that these beliefs went beyond the boundaries of those questions where such responses might logically have been anticipated. Statements referring to unfair treatment or unprofessional conduct by drill instructors were present as factors in the midst of a variety of other issues concerning the participants' assessment of their experience in the CORE boot camp.

The coding and horizontalized categories helped to identify the clusters of meaning, as patterns began to emerge from all the informants' responses. From these were developed the textural descriptions of respondents mutually experienced events and the structural descriptions of the significance of those events. While the participant's experiences were generally similar in a structural sense, their reactions often varied greatly. Out of this analysis emerged the researcher's understanding of the essence of the CORE/Gateway experience, and the perceptions of the significance of the events in these programs that helped create the changes that occurred in the lives of program graduates (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992).

Files were maintained in a desktop computer and on back up-disks to store the data and prepare them for evaluation and comparison. Related data *were* grouped together within the word processing software so they could be sorted to bring out the information that best described the essence of the CORE/Gateway experience.

Respondent rights were assured by presenting students with, explaining, and getting them to sign a human subjects release which protected their rights, and affirmed their freedom to abandon the interview at any time without prejudice or consequence. The entire process was discussed with each participant, to insure they fully understood both the nature of the interview and the measures that protect their rights.

Summary

This study was designed to provide a qualitative phenomenological inquiry into the significance that young offenders attach to the various elements of a unique sequence of rehabilitation programs in which the respondents had all participated during their incarceration. The researcher has been a teacher in this rehabilitative sequence for five years, and is known and trusted by the population of informants.

The research questions focused on experiences that participants underwent during the course of this unusual rehabilitative sequence of incarceration, education, discipline, and employment, seeking to learn participant perceptions of which program elements had been most salient to them in aiding their successful reintegration into society.

The survey was orally administered to informants during in-depth face-to-face interviews that continued until the data were saturated. Questions were tested in a pilot study before the full project began. After the interviews, all answers were reviewed and discussed with respondents to assure that the researcher fully understood their meanings.

Interviews were tape recorded and transcribed verbatim. Data was then coded and grouped in computer files for evaluation and comparison. As patterns emerged, clusters of meaning were identified, the textural and structural descriptions of informant's experiences in the rehabilitative programs were gleaned, and the essence and relative significance of elements of the rehabilitative experience were examined and explored.

CHAPTER 4

Results

The explication of findings revealed by this study is organized by the relationship between the answers elicited by the interview guide questions and the research questions from which each of the interview guide questions devolved. For instance, RQ #1 revealed answers that came as responses to interview guide questions #5, #6, #9, and #10. The depth and breadth of the information developed by each research question varies: RQ #3 was answered by just two interview guide questions, while the information developed by RQ #4 came from the aggregate responses to twelve different interview guide questions. For complete information explaining the relationship between the research questions and the interview guide questions, please see Appendix A.

The findings of this study revealed that the respondents rank some areas of their rehabilitative process in the CORE/Gateway program sequence more highly than others. Those elements seen as having the most significance include the following: personal matters (like having a child, a steady job, a good income, and going back to school), life skills (such as learning to learn, learning to take orders, and learning to get along), elements more closely related to the CORE boot camp (such as exercise, discipline, and not wanting to return to jail), and elements more closely related to the Gateway program (like developing a sense of accomplishment and greater self-esteem, and acquiring a good job).

RQ #1 What experiences, good or bad, do the participants in the CORE boot camp and Construction Gateway programs perceive as being most significant?

The central focus of this study of ex-offenders who have graduated from the CORE boot camp and Construction Gateway programs was to learn the respondents'

personal views about which elements of the rehabilitative program sequence that they experienced were of the greatest significance to them as influences toward becoming contributing citizens and not committing any further acts of criminality.

As a report from the Government Accounting Office (as cited in Guerin & Denti, 1999) describing exemplary rehabilitation programs put it,

In highly effective programs, teachers and staff were able to accomplish the following: build self-esteem; plan for post-program life; teach social, coping and living skills; coordinate services; involve the family; create a positive peer culture; enforce a firm code of discipline; provide post program support; and provide a supportive, family-like atmosphere. Success of program graduates depended on these clearly identified program characteristics (p. 87).

For research question #1, the data was horizontalized by grouping similar answers from each respondent to the interview questions that elicited answers to the central query of the question “What experiences, good or bad, do the participants in the CORE boot camp and Construction Gateway programs perceive as being most significant?” Data was then grouped into units of meaning, and themes developed by clustering the similar quotes together. The matrix relating research questions to interview guide questions is given in Appendix A, and details of the horizontalization of interview data are given in Appendix D. While respondents’ experiences usually had a structural similarity, their textual reactions were often quite varied.

Positive experiences

Most respondents had positive perceptions of both the CORE boot camp and the Gateway program, with reports of good experiences outnumbering the bad experiences. For CORE, participants rated their interactions with Drill Instructors and the benefits of physical exercise highest. In Gateway, the most favorable reports were those recalling student satisfaction at actually being able to meet the intellectual demands of the college classroom. Across the combined curriculum of both programs, activities that resulted in participants learning to master personal encounters with others and teambuilding were highly regarded. In all cases, the positive perceptions of respondents seemed to indicate their satisfaction with difficult program elements that spurred personal growth.

CORE.

Most respondents had positive perceptions of the CORE boot camp, sometimes strongly so. Response was about evenly divided between those who rated the nature of the Drill Instructors as most important, and others who felt the rigorous regimen of regular physical fitness training (PFT) and teambuilding had been the greatest positive benefits of boot camp. One response that well-describes these elements was

I think it was all really positive. You're getting a bunch of people that you've never known, that you'll never see again, but for that amount of time that you're there, you have to get together and work as a team to accomplish a goal, which is getting out. I think that in life, that's the hardest thing, to really depend on somebody else. When we would run our PFT's [Physical Fitness Training] in the mornings, there would be some guys who were older or larger, and couldn't run as fast as the younger, smaller guys. The faster ones would run, then wait for them, and it didn't matter if they got a slower time, because it's all about being a team, and having confidence: "Hey, I'm right behind you," and that's with somebody you don't even know off the street. In life now, you see somebody with a flat tire, you aren't going to just pass him or her up. You've helped people that you haven't even known before; you've got to all come together, like a family almost.

And there were some Drill Instructors there, like Sergeant Y, that, even though he was a pain, deep down, he was a good guy, and DI X, and some others. They were all hard, but they gave you that security that "Hey, we may be hard on you, but we're just human, we're not some machine, just because we came from the military."

Of those reporting that the nature of the Drill Instructors was the most positive thing about the CORE boot camp, there were two illuminating responses. One found that the DI's toughness was most important, while another reported a more tender moment had been of greatest meaning to him. The more traditional tough experience is given by the respondent who recalled an experience where

Three of the drill instructors that everybody despised and everybody feared came after me for about a week straight. I wondered why they were picking on me, and

what they were doing. They pushed me to my limits, to where I was about to quit, but I didn't give up, I didn't snap, I didn't buck, I took it, and I kept rolling on. In the end, I earned their respect. They did it in a difficult way, and they were on my ass hard, but it really, really helped me to have them break me down and build me back up. I got a lot of shit from them, but I took it all without snapping.

Another former CORE boot camp cadet recalled how an entirely different side of the DI's had helped him and left a good impression

Two of the drill instructors sat down with me as an individual once, and talked with me about my problems at home, with my family, and listened to me. It was really unusual, but very positive. They're not there to be your friend. I didn't take it as them being soft or softhearted, just that they were people, after all.

Those respondents reporting favorably on the benefits of CORE's PFT program seemed to be most affected by the way that they had learned to handle the relentlessly difficult nature of the boot camp. In several accounts, the more difficult experiences were the most important ones.

The most positive experience was when it was flooding, and all the CORE cadets were down on the pavement on their knuckles in push-up position. We were having a contest, the Drill Instructors and everybody, in about a foot of water. People learned a lot about teamwork and taking instruction from the Navy Seals who had been in real survival situations like that directing the whole deal.

A fellow cadet felt that learning to deal with the difficulty he encountered in CORE was an important step towards learning how better to maintain appropriate behavior on the street.

The most positive thing about CORE was the overall respect that they taught me and patience. It was a bunch of different things that happened. Having to deal with people testing you and yelling in your face basically made me very angry. I hated it most of the time, but now, after I got out, and started getting into real life situations, the respect I learned has helped me to cope better with customers I work with, and deal with life a whole lot better. It gave me respect for myself, not to have to disrespect other people and act like a fool to get what I wanted.

To a different participant in the program, the discipline acquired in CORE was one of the key steps in his rehabilitation.

It's really, I would say, the discipline. Not the discipline that came from punishment, but the regimen of getting up and going to sleep at a set time and doing everything in an orderly fashion. Once you get back out into the world, there's no structure. I think CORE gave me structure, and that was the most positive aspect of it.

Another respondent recalled that the PFT element of the boot camp program first changed his physical development, and then changed his state of mind. He thought the best thing was seeing

The results of my physical training go up. When I first got there, my physical ability was way down there. A month later, totally different. It made me feel good about myself, and look at other things differently. It really increased my self-esteem, and made me want to get more involved.

The cadet who seemed to give the most all-encompassing response described the CORE boot camp by saying

It really is not as bad an experience as people make it out to be. Some of the Drill Instructors are awesome. It's real stressful, but as long as you have something to push towards --- getting out, seeing your kid, or whatever, you can make it. Also, I like the fact that I went in there weighing 250 lbs. and came out at about 200. They ran me until I didn't have any fat left on my body [about 6'2"]. I was in the best shape of my life. I felt really good about myself. I was a more outgoing person, and wasn't afraid to take on challenges, because, after going through that, I felt like I could make it through anything.

Gateway.

Nearly all respondents reported that the best things about their participation in the Gateway program was their sense of satisfaction, derived from mastering the intellectual challenge of succeeding in college level work while attending Gateway classes on the Riverside campus of Austin Community College, and their subsequent move into gainful employment. One respondent articulated his good experience by saying

Gateway made me feel like I was somebody. I had never gone to school or anything. I never thought I could do the mental things I did in Gateway. When I want a job now, I just show them my resume and the Gateway diploma and they say “Okay!”

Another graduate had a more detailed answer about what Gateway had offered him towards his goal of successfully reintegrating back into the community.

With Gateway, you have a totally different way of accomplishing something. CORE, of course, gave you a structure that you needed. But I think Gateway really gave us an opportunity. For a lot of these guys, and for myself, as well, you know, once you've committed a crime, society puts you in this group [criminals]. But Gateway gives you a way out. Some of these guys had never worked before in their lives. I was totally amazed to find that 97% of the guys in CORE had dropped out of high school. And then here you are in Gateway, getting a chance to learn how to earn a living. You don't have to be out there selling drugs. You don't have to be out there robbing, and doing all that. Here, they've got an opportunity to get themselves some education, and a legitimate job. My training in Gateway is what got me through the door for this job I've applied for, and I'm down to the third interview now, and it looks like I'm really going to get it, and it's because I got certified in Gateway as having been trained on their particular brand of power tools.

To one of the participants, there were no negative recollections at all concerning his tenure in the Gateway program. As he said, “There was nothing negative about Gateway. I loved it. I got to be free every day while I was in jail. I got to do things that I loved to do. I got a great job. I loved it.”

Another gave an illuminating response about the value he placed on the job offers that were made to him even before graduation:

The most positive thing about Gateway to me is definitely that Mr. A [the program manager, who handles job readiness] brought in 15 people from different companies, and let us sit down and interview for jobs with them when we were still in jail. Finding people that are willing to hire someone out of the CORE program can't be easy to do, so I know he must have done a lot of time-

consuming research to find them. I'm sure it's not easy finding people who are willing to take a con on, and look at you as a valuable employee, and not just as a grunt laborer. They know we've learned something out of this program.

Many of the program graduates are deeply touched by the graduation ceremony at the end of the Gateway program. Each delivers a short speech. Families often reunite, and errant sons and daughters are often forgiven and welcomed back. There are inevitably tears and laughter, followed by a joyous feast. As one recalled,

Graduation. Graduation was the most positive. Everybody marched out, and we were all in there together. [One student] got up to talk, and then his dad, and I can't remember what was said, but I remember how much we had all gotten out of Gateway, and how we were all up there, one at a time, talking about it, and how our lives had changed.

To a fellow student, the reuniting of families and sharing of good feelings at the graduation ceremony was the peak experience in Gateway.

It was the graduation. When I saw my family, and everybody else's family, and everybody cared for us, and wanted us to do good for ourselves, I felt that I had to live up to that, and repay the people that had helped us.

Another reported that a good experience had occurred for him during the Gateway program when his parents saw him and other members of the class in a television report on the evening news and realized he was doing something credible.

It was that roofing we did, when the [TV] news people came over, and they showed it on the news. My family saw it on TV, and they were happy to see that something positive was coming out of me being in jail for so long. That made me feel good. It was the highlight for the whole year of '98. My family realized that I was in Gateway learning something, not just sitting around in jail learning how to be worse. It was a really positive thing, and really made me feel like a part of Gateway, which let me call Mr. A [the program manager] and he hooked me up with this good job [\$9.50 an hour to start] that I've got now.

A final respondent learned the feeling of doing something worthwhile that results from performing community service work. He felt the best thing that happened for him in Gateway came from

Doing work for [Dotty's] House [a Safe House for kids after school] in Montopolis. It felt good to actually help somebody. She does a good thing. She doesn't have a lot, but she is blessed with the gift of caring about a lot of people. It felt good to help her out, knowing that she was helping out a community like Montopolis that is terrible with drugs and crack. It felt good to help out, and to put my skills to a good use. I felt good. It takes some of the stuff that you did wrong in life, and it makes up for it.

Negative experiences

The negative perceptions by participants in the CORE and Gateway programs were strikingly similar to one another. In most cases, they were recollections of behavior that some respondents thought was unprofessional by the CORE DI's or the Gateway instructors, or treatment that was considered unfair. One person reported that he thought both the DI's and the instructors had taken out problems brought from home on him.

CORE.

Among the reports of perceptions regarding aspects of the CORE boot camp that were regarded as negative, the responses fell into two categories: Drill Instructors (DI's) who were felt to have acted unprofessionally, and treatment that was believed to have been unfair. Among the examples given of unprofessional behavior by DI's was a report by one student that

Some of the Drill Instructors are just cops, and don't have any military bearing, or do any good. They can't even march or call cadence [while we march]. The DI's need to care, and not just be there bragging about how much they're getting paid to put up with us. Some of them seem to just care about getting the paycheck and not about helping the cadets change. They just have this attitude that 'yeah, I'm an asshole, but I'm a cop, and you can't do nothing about it.'

A respondent with some previous experience in counseling and rehabilitation had a deeper view of the negative part of CORE.

The worst in CORE was the absence of a therapeutic model. Having had counseling in my background, and trying to understand the reason for CORE and

what it stood for, I found that a lot of the [Drill Instructors] had the perspective of it being only military and a jail. The therapeutic programs didn't take precedence there, and what was most important to a lot of the Drill Instructors was how much pain they could put you in.

Another student recalled incidents reflecting acts by DI's which did not seem to him to have any bearing on his training or discipline:

There are some things in CORE that I don't think have anything to do with straightening a person out: making you eat every bite of your food, or else wear it on your head; giving you only two minutes to shower, or else having to go roll in the mud; eating with your heels together, or else you have to eat standing up. Small things, that you can handle, but that don't do anything to straighten you out and that I don't think need to take place, like waking up at 2 in the morning to find a Drill Instructor squeezing toothpaste on everybody's face while they are sleeping, then tickling them so they'll rub it in. There's no need for those kind of things, and then laughing about it, and playing games like that.

Two other respondents believed that some DI's lacked proper self-discipline themselves, and acted sometimes in ways that were reflective of their personal emotions rather than of an appropriate professional demeanor. As one said, "The Drill Instructors at CORE sometimes bring things to work with them. If they are angry about something at home, sometimes they took it out on us." The other student said the problem was in

How some of the DI's react to a situation. One morning, on the run, one cadet didn't want to run, and DI W, who had been military, showed that he had no limits. The guy sat down, and said he wasn't going to do it, and so DI W got provoked, and threw his flashlight at him. It made me feel bad. This is a guy who went through the military, and something so small provoked him.

A final respondent's answer about the negative influence of CORE reported still another perception of unprofessional conduct on the part of a Drill Instructor.

I think it was the way this one drill instructor talked to me. He was like he didn't really give a damn if we went to prison or not, he didn't really give a damn what happened to us. I felt real bad. It made me angry. And I knew he was right, that he

really didn't give a damn about us. It made me feel like I didn't give a damn, either, to the point that I wanted to do something bad. But I didn't.

Incidents reflecting perceptions of unfair treatment include two in which students felt they had been wrongly 'recycled' (moved back to an earlier stage in the boot camp program and required to work their way back through it toward the end again). One said

After Gateway, I had 2 weeks to go to be out of jail for good, and I got recycled. I was PUA [present in an unauthorized area] during work release time. I went with [another cadet] to the mall, and he ended up going inside and stealing. I didn't know what he was gonna do, but they blamed me for being there with him. We had the same job, and were supposed to go to work together and return together. I got recycled to day 1 of third platoon [back to the beginning of the third week of the six month-long program], and had to start all over again.

Another reported that, to him, "the most negative thing was an unfair demotion that I got in the last week before I got out of CORE." A final respondent related that he felt being punished for other cadet's transgressions was the worst experience for him.

The most negative part is dealing with the other people in there that don't have a reason to make it out. They just don't care, and you get punished for their mistakes. When you get that one person who doesn't give a crap, then you're paying for him, you know?

Gateway.

Among respondents' answers describing their negative reactions to the Gateway program, most echoed the complaint that instructors behaved in ways that were thought to be unprofessional. Some were believed to have brought problems to class with them from home, and another was faulted for his teaching method. One participant's facetious complaint about the program was that "the classes were too damn short. I wish we could have stayed until 8 or 9 p.m. [instead of having to go back to jail at CORE]."

The most frequently reported bad experience in the Gateway program centered on the conduct of a particular part-time instructor (a content specialist with no training or background as a teacher). As one student said,

The most negative experience was the guy who taught [a trade] class. He taught us the stuff, but didn't seem to care whether we had learned it or not. He just taught it, and didn't test us much, and just left us with whatever we'd learned.

The other bad recollection of Gateway involving this same instructor was from a student who found fault with "the [trade] part of it. The teacher had us get ready for a big test, and then said, 'Well, there's not really a test.' If he's going to say it, then there ought to really be a test."

One respondent found that the behavior of a certain CORE DI had contaminated his learning experience in Gateway.

Something that needs to be addressed is the part that some of the negative influences from CORE can play on cadets who are students in the Gateway program. Like the deal that happened with the Drill Instructor sneaking around [disguised in a phony beard, with a cap pulled down over his eyes, lurking behind a trash dumpster], spying on the CORE cadets in the Gateway program. That totally distracts and takes away from the experience you have here [in Gateway]. You're a cadet, but you're a student, but you're a cadet, but you're a student. Some of those DI's believe that you're just a prisoner, and you're always going to be just a prisoner, and so they treat you that way.

As with his similar feelings about the CORE DI's, one participant believed that some events in the Gateway classroom were driven by an instructor's unrelated personal angst. In his words, "too many bring in problems from home and take it out on us."

The other negative impression reported about Gateway was that some relational difficulties existed among the extremely diverse group of students, nearly all of whom while in the Gateway program were currently incarcerated, freshly released on parole, on probation, living in shelters or halfway houses, or unemployed. The troubles were not based on racial or gender differences, but rather reflected disparities in age and culture [the worst being a scuffle between a Texas Youth Commission halfway-house resident who was young and white, and a much older, white homeless man living in the Salvation Army's Men's Worker's Dorm]. One respondent commented that "there needed to be better communication between the students. If we hadn't had such a hard time communicating, we could have done more together."

The data in this section may have been biased by the 'halo effect' which could arise from a Gateway faculty member interviewing his own former students about their satisfaction with his personal actions as a teacher. Respondents may have reported what they believed the interviewer wanted to hear, and may have decided that the desired report was of satisfaction, rather than the full and possibly even unflattering truth that was actually being sought.

Summary of positive and negative perceptions about the CORE and Gateway programs

Bolson (1998) found in her study of correctional education students that all participants had strong opinions about both the programs and the faculty, and that their sense of self-worth and self-esteem was related to how they were treated. There were no respondents interviewed for this study who did not similarly have strong feelings about the experiences that they had undergone in the CORE/Gateway program. On balance, reports of bad experiences in this study were outweighed by recollections of good events.

In the CORE program, favorable responses were given about the positive results received from encounters with the Drill Instructors and the benefits received from the rigorous daily PFT. Those who reported bad experiences often cited the unprofessional conduct of some DI's, and incidents in which they felt they had been unfairly treated.

For the Gateway program, respondents named satisfaction with their academic achievement, graduation, and getting a worthwhile job as the good things that had come of their efforts in the program. As with CORE, most reports of bad experiences in the Gateway program were related to the belief that instructors had acted unprofessionally.

RQ #2 Do the participants believe the CORE boot camp and Construction Gateway programs changed their lives in any way? If so, how?

The perception of change in an individual's life is a highly subjective matter, both with regard to the nature of the perceived change, and perhaps even more so concerning the cause or means by which the change is believed to have taken place. Notwithstanding the difficulty in describing either the change or the supposed reason, it is a major goal of

this study to delve into respondents' impressions of whether and how they believe their lives were altered by their participation in the CORE/Gateway program.

Making positive changes in an ex-offender's life is regarded as the cornerstone of efforts to assist them with making a successful reintegration back into the community following their release from confinement. These changes are indeed necessary because, as Berkholder (2000) found, these individuals may have been incarcerated due to their lack of self-control, because of the impact of learning disabilities and lack of education on their ability to think clearly and make appropriate decisions, because of dysfunctional behavior, because of activities related to poor mental health or problems with addiction, or for other similar reasons. If the detainee received no rehabilitative treatment during the term of incarceration, he or she may actually be even worse off after release than before, subject still to all the affects of their original problems, now reinforced and amplified by the brutalizing influences of imprisonment.

Bossler, et al., (2000) found some people commit crimes because of low self-control. As Wright (1997) put it, offenders need to develop a "self-regulatory system based on self-monitoring and self-control" (p. 16). He reports having success with teaching social skills to releasees, so that they may learn to calculate the consequences of their behavior and stop to think before they act, broaden their social perspective, and go beyond an egocentric view of the world. As Wenda (1997) found, effective correctional educational programs, in addition to meeting one's literacy and vocational needs, must also address the need to acquire appropriate social and life skills, for such deficits seem to be universal among delinquents and incarcerated offenders.

For research question #2, after horizontalizing the data by grouping similar answers from each respondent to the interview questions that elicited answers to the central query of the question "Do the participants believe the CORE boot camp and Construction Gateway programs changed their lives in any way? If so, how?" into units of meaning, themes were developed by clustering the similar quotes together. While the respondents had experiences that were generally similar in a structural sense, their textual reactions often varied greatly. Among the respondents in this study, their perceptions regarding change fell into the categories of better self-discipline and self-assessment and more appropriate behavior due to the influence of the CORE boot camp, and an increased

sense of self-esteem, educational and vocational competency, and accomplishment from successfully completing Construction Gateway.

Self-discipline, self-assessment, and appropriate behavior

Every respondent was able to articulate clearly the change or changes that had taken place in his life as a result of his participation in the CORE/Gateway program. With regard to the changes wrought by CORE's regimen of military training, exercise, and life skill instruction, former cadets all said that they had a better understanding of themselves and the real life situations that they encountered, and that from this they had developed improved control over their behavior. As one succinctly reported, "the impact of CORE is that I am out of prison. Before, I couldn't stand anybody telling me what to do, so I couldn't keep a job. Afterwards, I held a job at Discount Tire for a whole year, by far the longest time I'd ever worked."

It does not seem either possible or realistic to subdivide arbitrarily the categories of self-discipline, self-assessment, and appropriate behavior into smaller units, for each is inextricably intertwined with elements of the other. As another respondent said,

They helped me a lot. I'd always been a real stubborn person, and liked to voice my opinions a lot, and piss people off, and fight, and things like that. But through CORE, you learn that it's not all about that. If you can turn your head and walk away, and take the abuse they give you, it's easy out here. I had an incident at a car dealership where they took advantage of me and wouldn't give me my down payment back. The business manager came out and wanted to fight me. I could have taken the guy, and kicked his ass. But I thought about what would happen if I let him get me into a fight, and I got in trouble again, and I had to go to prison, and I never got to see my son again. I just blew it off, and walked away from it.

Another young man spoke clearly about the linkage between self-assessment and self-discipline, especially as it regards appropriate social behavior. He said that CORE Had an impact on my life, as in what direction I wanted to take. It was me all along, but I was just blind, and couldn't see my direction. Now, I've got to move on, and just keep on trucking. It changed me by calming my temper down a lot. I'm a bigger person, so I've never really had to fight for anything. It made me see

things differently. There's other people out there, and they make mistakes, too, you know. You can't judge everybody, can't judge them just on what they've done, like society does. They think that even if you have a Master's degree from Harvard, if you've been to prison, well, that's it.

As his classmate put it, the training developed attitudes that translated into more socially acceptable behavior.

Basically, it gave me a lot of patience and a lot of respect. It's just like, when somebody comes up to you out anywhere you go, and they do something that you don't like, the negative consequences of you doing something back to them are a lot worse than just being a man and doing the right thing by walking away and not letting other people make you react to them.

A different respondent characterized his changes in life from CORE by saying that

It taught me how to relate to people better. When I got into the [legal] situation that I got into, it was because of frustration, and I lost the self-control I used to have. CORE gave me time to reevaluate my life, and where I wanted to go, and what I wanted to do. I thank God for the opportunity to sit still for a while, because out in the world, you never sit still and listen to your heart and your higher power and what's going on with yourself.

Another graduate, who prospered well enough in the first year after his release to buy and operate his own knife and tool sharpening business, related how the training had affected his professional interaction with his customers.

In everyday life, when you're trying to get things accomplished, I think back on taking orders, and taking instruction, and remembering how the outcome worked out. Then I think, "I remember that; I'd better do this." They teach you integrity throughout the whole course [CORE]. Today, if a customer drops off a knife to be sharpened and comes back for it in a week, and it's not ready, I could give him an excuse, but instead, I just tell him the truth. It makes me feel better.

One respondent had a view of his change process that was not predicted by the literature, and has not been extensively reported by other researchers. He believed that the greatest influence had come from parenthood, rather than a rehabilitation program. Referring to the CORE program, he said

It changed me, sure. Before you go in, and when you're there, and after you get , you feel what's going on. But what really changed me a lot more, after I got out, was my son [who was vocalizing in the background during the interview]. I've quit doing what I used to do before, but CORE isn't 100% what changed me ---I know it was him. But CORE was definitely an experience I won't forget.

Self-esteem, educational and vocational competency, and accomplishment

As with the personal innovations that occurred because of training received in the CORE boot camp, the group of changes that arose in respondent's lives attributed to their participation in the Gateway program are not easily divisible. To put the concept into a single statement, one might say the sense of accomplishment derived from successfully completing the educational and vocational classes resulted in students gaining a greater sense of self-esteem. The essence of this connectedness was best stated by the student that said of Gateway

Yeah, it helped a lot. The best thing was the skills I learned there. Just having the opportunity to go to college. I only had my GED, but now, I've got some college credits, because of going through Gateway. It was a real confidence boost.

In the experience of many graduates of Gateway, the benefits of the program are most immediately visible to them through the increased employment opportunities they enjoy as graduates. As one said of his Gateway outcome,

I have something to show for it, certificates and a diploma, showing that I went through the training, and have some experience --- maybe not much, but enough to make an employer take a second look at me. Now, I can get my foot in the door, and it makes me feel like I can get a job wherever I want. Now, I can be whatever I want to be.

Others are more aware of the lasting intellectual improvement they developed in the Gateway course, and the new skills that they learned.

The schooling and knowledge and learning did me the most good, learning the equations and what not. I could still go out and layout a building site, just from what I remember from Gateway, and I could never do anything like that before.

Students also developed improved social skills during the Gateway program, as a part of the teamwork that resulted from putting a diverse group of people in close contact with one another and assigning them tasks that could only be completed successfully by working cooperatively. As one said of Gateway,

It showed me a lot, different things I can do. I look at things differently. It was an opportunity for me to learn something besides what I knew, which, at the time, was just selling drugs. Knowing that I can build a picnic table or wire a house, I can do whatever. All the Gateway instructors were real nice. It was like a seesaw, because you have a different group of people, and they've all got different ways, and so there's a different way you've got to approach them. It's like a job. You've got a different boss on different days, and some are more intense, and it gives you a chance to look around, and see the array of different people.

Another student echoed the benefits of learning how to interact effectively with a group of people unlike himself, saying that his participation in the classes

Helped me get along with people. In Gateway, I had to deal with people who were older, or younger, or different from me. Before, I wouldn't have been able to get along with them, or have known what to do to work together, or to get help with a problem by letting them know where I was coming from.

A final participant summarized much of what his classmates had said in this description of his reaction to Gateway.

My experience is different from some of the other guys. I've had some college. I've had a legit job, and worked, and made money, and had everything that some of them haven't. I had a setback in my life, but then Gateway gave me another opportunity to go out there and make something out of my life. If I had gone out looking for a job, straight out of CORE, I wouldn't have done nearly so well. But coming out through Gateway, it gave me options. I had job offers, and they have afforded me and my family different avenues to earn a decent living, and I wouldn't have had that without [Gateway]. It's been very beneficial to me, and it's something I am very grateful for.

The difference in respondents lives after CORE/Gateway, as compared to before

The changes in students' lives following the Core/Gateway experience often seem to be quite remarkable to observers. In the cases of the respondents of this survey, who were all selected because of their successful reintegration back into the community, their reports indicate that the CORE and Gateway programs have done what Wright (1997) described as helping these ex-offenders develop a self-regulatory system based on self-monitoring and self-control.

Their reports provided the greatest illumination about the nature of these personal changes when each respondent's answer to the question, "How would you describe the difference in your life now as compared to how your life was before your participation in the CORE/ Gateway programs?" was paired together with his answer to the question "Can you give an example of how you've solved a problem recently in a way that is different from how you might have dealt with it before?"

Respondent #1.

Difference: Totally different. My life before was nothing but drugs, going downhill, hanging around with the wrong people, didn't hold a full-time job, didn't have my own place to live, not getting along with the family. Since then, everything has totally changed: not even one argument with my Mom, my brother is my best friend now, and I have a business and a home and a family of my own.

Example: At the gas station the other day, a drunk came on me in a confrontation, and wanted to go on me blow for blow. I could have stomped him, and lots of people standing around wanted me to. But if they'd been through what I have, they'd know that it doesn't mean anything to whoop somebody, it just doesn't mean a thing, especially a drunk just talking trash for nothing. Before I was in CORE and Gateway, I wouldn't have been able to just get in my truck and drive away.

Respondent #2.

Difference: You change, but you're still the same person. Your mind is somewhere else while you're in CORE, like you're not even living, and you miss

that whole time of your life. Gateway and CORE is blocked out of my mind. I'm older now, and before, it was just my childish ways. There was trouble there before, and it's still there, but it's my choice now, and I just didn't go back to it. I don't think I've changed. I think my ways have changed, but I don't think I've changed, other than just staying away from criminal activity and looking towards the future.

Example: If my car payment or bills or something was due, before, I'd probably go steal something, just to get the money, because I know I can do it, and I know I can get away with it, in my mind, you know, I'm thinking that, and, most of the time, I did get away with it. Now, I'd rather ask somebody for a loan and owe them, instead of going out there and stealing and taking that chance. You get caught, you know, and then --- damn, there go years of your life.

Respondent #3.

Difference: One of the main things is the self-discipline. I'd never had a lot before, so far as being able to get up and go to work, to put up with other people that I don't get along with, and to know right from wrong. And now I have a son, and the idea that I might not be able to come home from work and throw him up in the air and play with him just tears me apart on the inside --- to think how messed up his life would be if I wasn't there for him because of some stupid shit I'd done.

Example: I had an asshole superintendent at a house I was finishing. This guy had been giving us a lot of trouble already for a week over nothing. It was raining, and we had the windows open for some air, but the rain wasn't coming inside. This guy comes marching in, and was cussing at us and getting on us. I just looked at him, and laughed, and turned around and walked away, instead of cussing back at him or fighting, and let my crew leader deal with it.

Respondent #4.

Difference: Before, I was lost. I didn't know what I wanted, I didn't know what I could do, I didn't know anything. Whatever happened, happened. I would

just react, and whatever the results were, I wouldn't even try to make it work out okay. I would not deal with the problem, or try to fix it --- nothing. I'd just hold it inside of me. I was a total mess. Now, with respect, getting along with people, learning critical thinking, being in good physical shape, and all that, you put it all together, and, if you use it right, you don't have to worry about a thing.

Example: Before, my girlfriend was always acting up, and it would drive me crazy, and I would always end up with another case [a criminal charge]. That was how I ended up in CORE. But after I got out, the same thing would happen, that person would still be like I was before, and I would just walk off. I learned in cognitive thinking class to picture a stop sign, and stop and think, and think about what was going to happen, and don't react in the same old way. I'd just tell her that this situation didn't feel right, and that I was just gonna go on, and she could do whatever she wanted to, but I was leaving. I left her the car and everything, and just took off walking. I do that all the time now, with anybody.

Respondent #5.

Difference: My life before was more dealing drugs, partying, getting drunk. I never really did drugs. I was into selling them more than using them. Now it's more calmed down. I've looked at life a little bit more. I try to get into church a lot. The only thing that hurts now is no love life. My life changed dramatically because I don't think about selling drugs; I don't think about that life. I don't drink any more. I never did smoke. I'm probably the cleanest I can ever be. I know myself now.

Example: I've seen people that I dislike, that before, I would have jumped at the chance to fight them. I'm in very good physical shape, and I've learned a lot of martial arts. It wouldn't be hard to beat somebody now, but I've learned that I can always walk away from a fight. I can just let somebody talk, and be more of a man, and just walk away from it.

Respondent #6.

Difference: I live like a legal citizen now. I don't break laws like I used to. I'm a father now, and I've had a job for a year. That's the longest job I've ever had. It's the only legal job I've ever had. Always before it was something under the table. I never actually had a job before. I was a full-time drug dealer from the time I was 17 until I went to CORE at 21. I could have done something else, but I loved the lifestyle. So, the main difference between then and now is that now I have a kid and a job, and I work and pay taxes.

Example: I got a ticket the other day and actually paid for it. I'd never really done that before. I don't know how many times I had to send off \$2,000 for back tickets.

Respondent #7.

Difference: The difference in now and before is, now I have responsibilities. I have trust from people I have never had trust from before; like my Mom, now she trusts me a whole lot. And I've stayed clean, off drugs and alcohol. So, I feel like my life did a 360, from being an irresponsible drug user and gang member, into being a responsible father, parent, employee, and taxpaying citizen.

Example: My financial situation. Now, I have a lot of bills to pay. Before, I would of said "forget it, I'm not going to work, I'm quitting work, I'm tired." But now that I've been through all this, and I've come so far, I know I have to wake up early in the morning and go do what I've got to do.

Respondent #8.

Difference: The difference is my positive outlook on life. Gateway and CORE had an influence on that. But also, I am a Christian, and everything that happens, I believe that my higher power allowed it to happen. I'm really thankful for the opportunity to be here talking to you now, and for the experiences I've had along the way. I listen more now, and don't take things as personally as I did before.

Example: Being in a relationship. Before I got into CORE and Gateway, I was just single and really didn't have anyone to answer to or be responsible to. I can tell a big difference now, because I'm in a relationship, and I have a lot of

responsibilities, and I have two kids as well. I'm able to handle that a lot better because of the experience of Gateway and CORE. Patience is a biggie, and I learned a lot of patience through the programs.

Summary of respondents' perception of the nature of their change after CORE/Gateway

The data supports the findings of other researchers concerning the nature of the changes that enable ex-offenders to reintegrate successfully back into the community. Those changes are described by these respondents in clusters of meaning that group better self-discipline and self-assessment together as the general result of the CORE program, and increased self-esteem arising from a sense of personal accomplishment for successfully completing Gateway's life skills training and vocational classes.

As the literature reports, former inmates who succeed in not recidivating tend to be those who have made changes in their lives that allowed them to develop self-control, improve their education, learn to think clearly and make more appropriate decisions, understand consequences, stop and think before acting, and go beyond an egocentric view of the world and other people. Those who learn to become contributing citizens seem to be those who have been able to, as Wright (1997) said, develop a self-regulatory system based on self-monitoring and self-control.

RQ #3 Which rehabilitational elements seem most significant to the participants?

Participants in the combined CORE/Gateway programs each have highly individualistic views about which of the elements in the rehabilitative process they all underwent were most important to them. It is vital for this process to change the behavior and motivation of the offender effectively, for, otherwise, they are at much greater risk to recidivate. Where once a high rate of recidivism was found acceptable, authorities now understand that reintegrating offenders back into society is much less expensive in terms of both human and financial resources (Wenda, 1997), and that intensive rehabilitation efforts can have the greatest impact among high-risk offenders (Duguid, 1997).

For research question #3, the data was horizontalized by grouping similar answers from each respondent to the interview questions that elicited answers to the central research query "Which rehabilitational elements seem most significant to the participants?" Responses were grouped into units of meaning, and themes developed by

clustering the similar quotes together. While students' experiences often were markedly similar, their reactions frequently showed wide variation. Among the young felons comprising the respondents of this study, perceptions regarding which elements of the rehabilitative process they believed were the most effective fell into four distinct categories: training, discipline, employment, and the non-specific general benefit that many of them felt they had derived from their participation in the program overall.

The training benefits were articulated by one respondent as

Knowing that those people at Gateway were there to help me. When you're in a boot camp like CORE, it's their job to help you. But when you go to a school like ACC, as a college student, and the teachers there do everything they can to help you, it makes you feel like people really do care about you. CORE helps you stay away from crime, violence, and drugs. Gateway is trying to teach you something that otherwise you wouldn't have a chance to learn, and you'd end up working at a fast food chain instead of having a good job. I remember that the guy that sat beside me only had a 6th grade education, but [the instructor] taught him how to do that math and blueprint reading, and he's working now, and free, because of it. It was things like that.

Another connected the benefit of training to his employment, observing that the blueprint reading instruction was most important to him, "because I deal with schematics all day long. Where I'm at now, I can read a schematic like there's no tomorrow. And on my job, reading the schematic is probably one of the hardest things to do."

A third respondent found that the clarity of his thinking and decision making improved because of his newly developed mastery of basic mathematics received during the educational portion of Gateway.

Because of the math, I can think things through, and put it together in my head, and lay it out on a piece of paper. I learned how to think from math, and solve problems, and understand things better. It helped me open my mind.

In a very similar vein, another told of changes developed from CORE's life skill training regimen: "I learned in cognitive thinking class to picture a stop sign, and stop and think, and think about what was going to happen, and don't react in the same old way." As his classmate added,

The training, like [the life skills] class. A lot of the things I thought I couldn't do, like when [the teacher] was showing us how to figure out all the dimensions of a building, and it took us so long, and we finally got it right, and then at the end found out that we were actually doing algebra. I never thought I would ever be able to do any algebra.

For many, discipline was the key to their subsequent success. As one remarked, "In everyday life, when you're trying to get things accomplished, I think back on taking orders and taking instruction and remembering how the outcome worked out. I think, 'I remember that; I'd better do this.'" Another attributes it to

The discipline in CORE. Without it, I would have had some new cases. But ever since I've been out, not a single new case. I'm still on probation, but I've got no new cases. Before, I would just react on my emotions, on how I felt right then, but now, I stop and think."

A third respondent reflected on the environment in which discipline was instilled in the boot camp.

What changed me, and made me want to not have to go back to jail, was getting up at 4 in the morning every day, no matter what kind of freezing weather or whatever, and having to exercise and stay awake until 8 at night. You can't lay down, you can't sit down, you can't close your eyes --- nothin'!

That response was echoed by classmates who said " The physical training kept you in line, and made you do things that you didn't want to do but that you knew were good for you," and the fellow participant who described the benefit as " I think the structure part of it. Out in the world, there's an absence of structure. CORE gives you a lot of structure."

Several respondents reported that the access to a living-wage job was one of the most significant aspects of the program. As one said, " The experience of learning a trade, or learning something new. It just opened so many good doors for me and the other guys. It was a great avenue to a better life."

Another reported that

The job is the most important part of the program. Guys that don't go through this program, and don't have a job lined up when they get out, are much less likely to

succeed. Or if they get a job and they're only making \$7 an hour, instead of \$11 like I'm making, the less likely they are to succeed. I guarantee you that 90% of the people that are going through the program are going through it because of drugs, and that's a really hard thing to get out of. Money is the only thing that's going to solve their problem. The main thing is getting a good job.

Others were less specific, and seemed to be supporting the findings of Duguid (1997), that the mechanism of change was not to be found in certain courses or sets of subjects but rather in the process of a sustained, intensive, and participative educational experience. One respondent felt the significance lay in "the whole thing, but especially getting such a good job" [\$11 an hour, in his case]. Another said he couldn't "remember a specific part. Everything helped me --- a little of this, a little of that --- the whole program helped me out. I wish it had been even longer." The best summation may have been offered by the student who found that the significance of "the whole thing was important more than just any one part. I absorbed the whole thing like I was a sponge."

Summary of which rehabilitational elements seemed most significant to the participants

Each student seemed to have found different components among the variety that were offered to be of singular value to them as individuals. Training was reported most often as the factor of greatest significance. Slightly fewer found discipline or employment to have been most important, and nearly half reported that they had found some important rehabilitational benefits accrued for them simply because they had participated in the combined CORE/Gateway program.

RQ #4 What is it about certain elements of the CORE/Gateway programs that make them more salient to participants than other elements?

In an effort to learn more about the reason that certain elements of the CORE/Gateway rehabilitative training program seemed more meaningful to participants than various other elements, respondents were asked to rank the importance of each element on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest. This was done to gather more data about each participant's perception of which program elements were

believed to be most useful to them as individuals in their own process of making a successful reentry from incarceration back into society.

For research question #4, after horizontalizing the data by grouping similar responses from each respondent to the interview questions that elicited answers to the central query of research question #4, “What is it about certain elements of the CORE/ Gateway programs that make them more salient to participants than other elements?” into units of meaning, themes were developed by clustering the similar quotes together. The matrix that shows ratings by each respondent of the individual program elements is given below. The matrix relating research questions to interview guide questions is to be found in Appendix A, and horizontalization details of the of interview data is in Appendix D. While experiences of the respondents were often quite similar structurally, their textual reactions frequently showed considerable variation.

Table 2 Matrix indicating each respondent’s ratings of program elements

<u>Respondent ></u>	<u>#1</u>	<u>#2</u>	<u>#3</u>	<u>#4</u>	<u>#5</u>	<u>#6</u>	<u>#7</u>	<u>#8</u>	<u>Average</u>
Developing Self-esteem	9	10	10	10	9	10	10	8	9.50
Exercise	10	9	7	10	10	10	10	9	9.38
Interacting with Others	10	8	7	10	10	10	9	10	9.25
Gateway Faculty	9	8	10	9	10	9	8	10	9.13
Discipline	7	9	10	10	8	10	10	7	8.88
Job Placement	4	10	8	10	9	10	10	10	8.88
Problem Solving	8	7	10	10	10	~	9	8	8.86
Vocational Training	4	2	10	10	7	10	9	10	8.00
CORE DI's	8	7	8	8	8	9	8	5	7.63
Parenting	~	10	0	10	~	10	~	4	7.50
Drug & Alcohol	~	~	5	9	7	5	7	6	6.80
Counseling	2	5	0	10	5	1	~	~	3.83
<u>Total</u>	71	85	90	116	93	94	90	87	8.88

Note. ~ = No response was given to this question.

Scale was 1-10, with 1 = lowest, 10 = highest.

For purposes of a more orderly and easily understood analysis, the responses shown in the matrix above have been categorized into related topics. The system of organization chosen was one that divides the program elements into categories on the basis of whether they are more prominently a part of the CORE program or of the Gateway program, and then further subdivides the elements in each of those categories into groupings of related activities, as explained by the list which follows.

CORE

1. Physical and mental training
 - (a) discipline
 - (b) exercise
2. Life skills training
 - (a) counseling
 - (b) drug and alcohol abuse prevention
 - (c) parenting

Gateway

1. Life skills training
 - (a) problem solving
 - (b) interacting with others
 - (c) developing self-esteem
2. vocational training
 - (a) job skills training
 - (b) employability and job placement

CORE

The Drill Instructors seem to be the living embodiment of the entire CORE program to the CORE cadets. The assessments given by respondents reflected their individual experiences and reactions to the DI's. Some saw the positive aspects of what the DI's did with them, while others formed a more negative perception.

Those who had gained a positive impression of the DI's behavior and endeavors reported that "Their training was important," "They did a good job at what they were

doing,” and “Most DI’s are doing what they’re there to do: a good job.” Respondents who had a negative perception said that “Some DI’s take the military part too seriously,” “Too many bring in problems from home and take it out on us,” and “A small percentage are just there because they make good money.”

Mental and physical training

Discipline.

Conditioning young felons to accept external discipline as a first step toward developing self-discipline and becoming self-directed is a key component of the CORE boot camp. Most respondents gave this part of the process among the highest marks reported for its strong significance to them. As one plaintively said, “I needed the discipline.” Another acknowledged that the discipline was “pretty important for getting ready to be on the street.” It was explained by a different student as “That’s what it really takes when you get out of here, to develop the discipline to get up and go to work and stay away from bad things.” His classmate related that “It helped me to become more responsible, and keep my priorities straight, and do what I needed to do.” Perhaps the clearest insight came from the young man who said of the disciplinary program, “When I got there, I couldn’t do it, and when I left, I could.”

Two respondents had more ambivalent impressions of the discipline. One said, “It could be either a good thing or a bad thing,” apparently referring to the problems he had while learning to become self-disciplining. Another seemed to have couched his answer in the context of the difference between the rigidity of the CORE boot camp program and the chance to be more self-determining as a college student in Gateway, saying “The mix of freedom and rules was good for us.”

Exercise.

Although developing the strength to run for 2 to 5 miles every morning before breakfast and routinely perform more than 100 push-ups is very strenuous, respondents ranked their accomplishments in physical fitness training as being among the most significant of all program elements. As one said, “It was the best thing we had. I wish we’d had even

more.” Others related that “It made me feel good, and built lots of self-esteem,” “It gave me a lot of confidence in myself, and learned that I was physically capable of doing things that I didn’t think I could do,” and “They did a really good job of getting my body in shape.” Some have carried the training on after release, like the young man who said that his physical fitness training “let the stress out, and carries on with me today in the way I have a daily workout and go running twice a day.’

Perhaps the clearest explanation of the value of hard exercise for these young men during their confinement was expressed by the respondent who related that “It helped us to get in shape, to get rid of the drugs and alcohol still in our system, and to, how can I say this, deal with being horny.”

Some of the cadets were already acquainted with the rigors of physical exercise. As one related, “Being an athlete myself, I know the benefits of physical exercise. It’s not something that you get out in the world, and I know how much it can help. The exercise leads to a cleaner, better quality of life.” Another ex-offender, who seemed to value the exercise highly but rated it lower than others had, explained his scoring by saying that “It was good for most of the guys that went there, but I had been working in a gym before I went in, and was already in pretty good shape.”

Life skills training

Counseling.

Perceptions of the significance of the psychological counseling varied widely, from one who reported that it had been a strong positive factor to others who found it equally insignificant. Most respondents did not believe the counseling they had received had been important, of high quality, or consistent. One who received cognitive thinking training felt it was of value. Several stated the counseling was not offered on a regular schedule, and was not always available when they felt it would have been of greatest benefit to them.

The positive impression was simply put as “It helped a lot.” Negative responses were equally succinct, with one man saying “There wasn’t much of it, and what there was didn’t do much good,” and another relating that he “Had very little, and it made no real

difference.” Those who found counseling unavailable when they wanted it reported, in one case, that “When we needed it, they wouldn’t let us go get it. They were trying to break us down, and get us to where we could take it” [the rigorous military discipline and exercise], and in another case observed that the counseling was offered “only after I was recycled [demoted back to a point just two weeks after the beginning of the six month program], and it wasn’t very much, or very effective.” Another admitted that he went to counseling only to escape the relentless discipline. As he said, the counseling “made no sense; I took the class just to get out of the daily CORE drill.”

Drug and alcohol abuse prevention.

In a similar manner as to participant perceptions of the counseling program, the drug and alcohol abuse prevention program in the CORE boot camp received rankings which ranged from positive to unimportant. Several cadets had not received any training in the area at all, one reporting that he “Did not take D&A,” and another explaining more fully that “I wasn’t in on a drug charge, so I didn’t get sent to the D &A classes.”

Of those who did attend the drug and alcohol abuse prevention classes, only one recalled it as being significant, saying simply “It was important.” Others who participated in the training described it as being similar to Twelve Step program meetings. One said “It was just like going to a NA [Narcotics Anonymous] meeting --- just speak your mind,” another felt that the activity of the meeting often amounted to little more than merely keeping track of the participants’ presence, “It was like a NA meeting, and a lot of times they just baby-sat us.” Other cadets thought, “It was like an AA meeting. It would have been better out in Gateway,” “It helps only so much, because it’s still up to you when you get out,” and “You really could not achieve any true therapeutic value. You go into this classroom setting, and you receive this information, and then you go right back into the tank with a bunch of guys that aren’t in the program, and they all negate and nullify everything you have just been hearing.”

Parenting.

Positive reports were received concerning the parenting program offered to some of the CORE cadets. About half did not participate, with two reporting in the same words

that they “Did not take parenting,” and a third saying “My kid wasn’t born yet, so I didn’t go.” Others found a lot of meaning and value in the meetings, which were sometimes structured as classes and on other occasions were more like family gatherings, where spouses and children met with the cadets in a celebratory [although still in jail] setting. One respondent said that he enjoyed “Being with my little girl, so that she remembered what I look like.” Another, now raising his child as a single parent, felt the classes had “been very important for raising my daughter with no Mom.” Their classmate had a more ambivalent report, saying “I don't think the instructors were qualified to teach the class. The class started late, and all we did was just sit in there. What was most important to the other participants was that they got to see their kids. I didn't have any at the time, but I wanted to take the class, and maybe learn something.”

The final, and most illuminating response, was that

I got a lot of benefits, and it was cool that they let me in the class even though I didn’t have a kid yet. It was the best thing they did, actually let someone take time away from CORE to hold their kid. Just seeing them interact with their kids taught me a lot, and made me feel good about myself.

Gateway

The Construction Gateway program seemed to have been valued by participants more for the things it taught and the outcome of worthwhile employment than for the appreciation of the program itself. One respondent, who had made a similar observation about the CORE Drill Instructors, commented on the Gateway faculty that “too many bring in problems from home, and take it out on us.”

Others felt they had gotten more meaningful results from the program. One recalled simply that “I learned a lot.” Others observed that Gateway’s teachers “Push to make you learn. You’re going to learn it,” and “They show you that it can be easy, even if it looks hard.” The final responses evinced stronger feelings of appreciation for what they had gotten from Gateway. As one said, “They helped us, just like feeding a dog that doesn’t have a home.” The last student related that “They took care of me, and helped me solve my problems. I wish I’d stayed in touch with you guys even more.”

Life skills training

Problem solving.

Some sections of the Construction Gateway program are structured *so* as to lead students onto the pathway of developing more insightful and analytical ways of thinking, in a manner similar to what might otherwise be called Critical Thinking, or, in the CORE program, Cognitive Thinking. Those students who absorbed the meaning of the process found value in it. Some of the others did not, including the student who recalled that “It was hard to think [in Gateway] after the Drill Instructors had yelled at me all morning. I was way too stressed to think clearly. It was too much.” Another did not have much recollection, saying “It’s so faint in my mind, I barely remember that part of it.”

Insights into methods of orderly thinking and logical reasoning that were garnered from such academic subjects as algebra, geometry and basic math, as well as the associated activities of measuring areas and calculating volumes, provided students with lessons in clarifying, analyzing, and rationalizing their thought processes. As one student reported, “I got confident that I could do something I had never done before, and could think my way through it, even if I didn’t know anything about it.” Another said more simply “I don’t make the same stupid mistakes any more.” A final response definitely locating the source from which students learned these techniques came from the student who reported that “Gateway had good problem solving for life situations, not CORE.”

Interacting with others.

One of the lessons in Construction Gateway most highly valued by respondents is not found on the official curriculum, but is an inescapable consequence of the interactions that the remarkably diverse group of students in the program have with one another. The importance of this teamwork is often underscored by employment recruiters who attend the job fairs held by Gateway in hopes of being able to hire graduates to work for their firms. They have told faculty and students repeatedly that the chief reason employees get fired is because they are unable to get along with their supervisors and other workers.

One respondent had learned his lesson about getting along with others previously, and said, “I already knew how. It was really good for those that didn’t.” Another had

found some of the same meaning in his training process in the CORE boot camp, and reported “Both CORE and Gateway taught us to come together as a team,” while still another recalled that this “was the hardest part for me to learn, because, if you got into it [had a fight] with somebody, then you were out of there.” The essence of the lesson may have been best expressed by the student who said “I learned how to get along with people that I had nothing in common with,” a sentiment echoed by the response “Now, I can talk and work with all kinds of different people all day long.” Another participant said “It allowed me to learn how to interact with people that I have nothing in common with. I feel that it has helped me now since I’ve been out, because I’m still dealing with people I have nothing in common with, in a lot of situations, and I can deal with them effectively.” The final statement about learning teamwork seemed to wrap much of the sentiment into the phrase “It made a big difference in what I do.”

Developing self-esteem.

The element of the entire rehabilitative process undergone by those who went through both the CORE and Gateway programs that received the most consistently high ratings was the portion that resulted in their development of greater self-esteem. This was done in CORE by cadets learning to handle the rigors of military discipline and strenuous physical exercise. In Gateway, development of higher self-esteem resulted from giving students with little history of prior academic success various assignments that they found to be extremely difficult, and previously impossible, and teaching them ways to meet such daunting intellectual challenges (to a person with often only 4th or 5th grade math skills) as calculating the hypotenuse of a right triangle, determining the volume of a cylinder, and converting fractions into decimals. The obvious signs of their increased self-esteem were often visible within a matter of hours.

One respondent credited both CORE and Gateway, relating that “The Gateway instructors did a lot, and CORE taught me to go to the limit.” Another observed that “You can sure get a lot of good out of it, if you take it right.” A classmate said “It gave me a positive outlook. When I got out, I knew I wasn't going back [to incarceration], but I still had these questions about how was I going to achieve the high standard of living that I

wanted with a felony on my record. The programs allowed me to see the light, and gave me a positive perspective."

Some other responses were even more effusive, such as the student who called development of greater self-esteem "the biggest thing" in the Gateway program, and another who enthused that it had really been "The very best! That's what it's all about!" The other responses were similarly articulate, one reporting "It was a big change, believing in myself and what I can do," another saying "That was the main thing. I had very low self-esteem when I went into jail, and with all the physical training and the training in Gateway, it went up as high as it could go," and the final student simply saying "I really believed in myself when I got out of there."

Vocational training

Job skills training.

Participants in the CORE/Gateway programs acknowledge the importance of a worthwhile job in reintegrating back into the community. Their responses to interview questions indicated a difference in value for vocational training between those who already knew how to get a job and those who did not seem to have the confidence or believe they possessed marketable skills. As one student replied to a probing question asking if he could explain why he had given job skills training such a high rating in the interview, "Sure. I can get jobs now." Another credited his current employment to the training, saying "The resume training helped me get a job. My boss told me that my neat resume and application is why he hired me." A deeper insight came from the cadet who reported that You have a lot of the [CORE] cadets and [Gateway] students that have never had a job in their life. The programs give them a lot of discipline, and the job skills, so that they can go out and get a legitimate job and earn a good living."

Other respondents also realized the benefits and importance of the courses of employment preparatory training they received in Gateway. As one commented, "It was a rude awakening to find out how much I had to learn." Another compared the contents of the boot camp program to the level of vocational training offered by Gateway, saying "I got nothing in CORE. We all looked forward to maybe getting to go to Gateway, and

they were right, it really helped.” A third respondent described the vocational training as being “the most awesome part of Gateway, the job-finding skills and the resume and the computer skills. I learned a lot from it.”

Others were not so enthusiastic. One, who was already self-confident and had a satisfactory work record, reported that the training “didn’t help me much; I already knew how to work.” The final respondent had an altogether different view on the job market in general and Gateway’s employability training in particular. As he said, “It [the training] has nothing to do with a job. It’s all in who you know. If you get hooked up by somebody like [Mister A, the Gateway program manager] did for me, then you can get it [a job].”

Job placement.

Beyond the training and education, and the final release back into the community, the real test comes at the moment of showing up at the employer’s office, filling out an application, and obtaining a good job that pays a living wage. Again, the respondent with a previous work record found the employment service less important because, as he said, “I already knew what I wanted to do, so it helped others more than me.”

For the rest, it was clearly one of the most highly coveted aspects of the overall rehabilitative program sequence. As one said of the job placement assistance he received, “The job placement is what helps. If you get out [of jail], and you don’t have a job or goals, you’re going to go right down the drain.” His classmate said “That really was the best part, the thing I appreciated the most.” Another student, who had developed his confidence and learned how employment worked, reported he had “made myself a connection and got myself a job at Gateway’s job fair.” Another reflected on how much the job placement had helped him make a successful transition back into the free world, saying “That’s what got me started [reintegrating into society].” A third student recalled that the service “was very important,” and continued that “the construction skills are useful. I wish there had been [a program like Gateway that was] more high tech.” Another graduate said “ The job fair brought the employers out, and they offered people jobs. But even after that, I had to call on [Mr. B, on the Gateway program management staff, who is responsible for job placement], and he was there, and helped me out with the things that I needed. I would still have gotten a job without him, but he was there for me,

and helped me out, and I think that's a very admirable and really the very most important part of the whole program." The best summarization came from the respondent who explained "You have a choice of how much money you want to make. You can have not just a job, but a career. You don't have to go out there and steal, or bitch about what color you are and can't get a break."

Summary of why certain elements of the CORE/Gateway programs are more salient to participants than other elements

Participant reactions to the CORE boot camp seemed to vary according to their perceptions of the Drill Instructors, whom generally embodied the program to the cadets. Those who found merit in the DI's behavior ranked the program more highly than did others who believed that some of the DI's acted in an unprofessional manner. Discipline and physical training were the most highly rated program elements. Parenting was seen as being positive. Psychological counseling and drug and alcohol abuse prevention training received a variety of responses, from high to low, depending on individual factors.

Reactions to the Gateway program were generally high. Respondents seemed to value the subjects they learned and the outcome of worthwhile employment more than the program itself. The most highly rated elements of the entire rehabilitational program sequence were the Gateway components that led to development of self-esteem, and the vocational training and job placement. Learning to interact with others was rated as important, and problem solving was seen as positive.

RQ #5 How do participants believe the programs contributed to their personal change?

The personal views of the participants about how they believe the combined CORE/Gateway programs affected their lives, and in particular contributed to their decisions to forego further criminality in favor of productive citizenship, are central to the understandings sought by this study. One of the accepted goals of correctional education, which is a fundamental description of both the CORE and Gateway programs, is that the

detainee/students in the programs should be provided with the means and an opportunity to change their personal behavior and values (Wolford, 1989).

Students report that the changes in various areas of their lives have occurred in a variety of ways. The three most frequently mentioned areas of change are related to their punishment in the CORE boot camp, and their training in both CORE and the Gateway program. Some of the Drill Instructors in the CORE boot camp use their own actions to model desired behavior for the cadets. Not all cadets adopt the behavior that is modeled for them, but nearly all learn what sort of behavior is considered to be most desirable and acceptable for them as citizens living in a free society. In like manner, these students also learn from the professional language, way of dress, and behavior of the Gateway faculty how they might most appropriately act after graduation when they go to work on a job-site in the construction industry. While some students seem to learn by being pushed into educational and intellectual challenges that they had never attempted before, and learning to their surprise that they could accomplish successfully, still others reported that the punishment they received had been the greatest disincentive to further offending.

For research question #5, the data horizontalized by grouping similar answers from each respondent to the interview questions that elicited answers to the central query “How did the CORE/Gateway experience influence [your] change?” Answers were grouped into units of meaning, and themes were developed by clustering the similar quotes together. While students' experiences often were similar in nature, their responses tended to vary considerably. The prevalent themes of the factors that respondents believed motivated their change were punishment and training.

One cadet felt that a prime impetus for change came in CORE from “the abuse they give you, and learning to deal with it.” Several more reported that the punishment in their CORE experience contributed to their change. As one said, “it’s the threat of knowing that I might have to go back and do something like that again if I screw up that makes me stop and think about things before I do them now.” As he elaborated, “Not wanting to go back to jail; that’s how I changed, not wanting to go back. Not wanting to see all those drill instructors.” Another agreed, also crediting the punishment with his change, saying, “I don’t ever want to go back. The punishment, man, and being away from my family. No way. It was the hardest thing I ever went through, absolutely.” And,

as he added, “More than likely, I wouldn’t get another chance at CORE and Gateway. I mess up again, and I’m gone for good [to prison].”

Several more reported that the intellectual difficulty of the training in Gateway contributed to their change. As one said, “in Gateway, while I was in jail and boot camp, doing college level work. If that doesn’t make you open your eyes and realize what you’re capable of, then I don’t know what else it could take.” Another similarly felt that the change occurred because of the CORE and Gateway programs “teaching me that I could do it...that it was really possible for me to change my life.” A third respondent echoed that thought, saying he believed his change came from “learning everything from integrity to motivation to teamwork, then helping other people with what I’ve learned.”

The fact that each student seemed to learn different lessons about himself, and to change in different ways, suggests that while each may have some similar needs, most have personal styles and ways of viewing themselves and life that are so different from one another that the outcome of the process varies widely. Several students seemed to be more motivated by the ‘stick’ of the punishment, and their desire to not have to repeat it, while others seemed to respond better to the ‘carrot’ of the lessons they were learning. The only thing that the students seemed to have in common with one another is that each changed, in his own way, in response to the same set of stimuli.

The nature of the changes each respondent underwent merits further explanation. The clearest explication of this comes in pairing together their answers to two questions, “What did you imagine your future to be before participating in CORE and Gateway?” and “After CORE and Gateway, what do you imagine your future to be now?” Although some of the responses seem to be more realistic than others, all are revealing of the way that the attitudes and expectations of program graduates changed.

Respondent #1.

Before: I wanted to own my own company, but didn’t have the right path to get there, and that wasn’t happening. The path I was on was either going to lead me to the penitentiary, or to being dead, until I went through CORE and Gateway.

After: I imagine myself employing about 15-20 people here in Austin, owning and running a reputable company, and having 2 or 3 more kids, and making their life and my wife's the best they can be.

Respondent #2.

Before: In and out of jail. I'd probably have become a pretty good criminal. I would have just stayed focused on that. That would have become my job skill. That was my whole life --- criminal behavior, gangs, stuff like that. I was more of a car thief than a burglar, and the first time I broke into a house, it was an assistant district attorney, and I got caught. But before, I think I would've been looking towards low income housing, and poverty, not having the confidence that I have right now --- knowing that I'm going to make money, and that everything'll be okay.

After: I'm going to be on a sailboat in three years, my own sailboat, just chillin' out. As much as I'll be making on this job, I don't even need to save any. That'll just be two checks to make a good down payment on a nice boat. And I'll have a nice car and a nice house, maybe start with a trailer house and some land, and build a house, have a nice place. I guess that is a pretty big change, isn't it?

Respondent #3.

Before: I knew that the jobs I'd had weren't much, and that I could accomplish more, but I just did not have the self-discipline to do it.

After: Bright. I have goals, more goals. I want to give more back. I want to stand out from everybody else by having these goals that I want to reach. I want to get my electrician's license, go back to school, raise my son, make more money, and pay off the new car that I've bought. This has all helped me tremendously.

Respondent #4.

Before: I didn't even have sense enough to think about the future. I just thought about the day, and what was happening right now, and what was gonna

happen in the next 20 or 30 minutes. I didn't do an inventory check [as one might do in a Twelve Step program]. I didn't think, I just lived day by day, and however I felt, that was what I was gonna do.

After: I know what I'm gonna do in my future now, what my goals are. I think about what I'm doing, and how it's gonna affect me now, and what's gonna happen from it in 2 or 3 years. Now, I can fix a problem before it even happens. My plan now is to go into the service --- into the Marines. I've already got a recruiter. I still have to wait until I get off probation, but that's just the way it goes. I'm gonna go to court and ask for an early release, and since I made it okay through intensive probation and haven't had any dirty U.A.'s (urine analysis), I think I'll probably get it. The Marine Corps will be a good thing for my daughter, with the health benefits and everything like that. Boot camp is the reason I want to go in the service, because I found out that it would fit me perfectly.

Respondent #5.

Before: Prison. Prison, a long time. Living the life I was living, it was really going to be either prison or dying. Even at the time, I wished there was someway I could have gotten out of it, but I was in so deep, too deep to get out. You'd look both ways, but all the doors were closed. You only have one path, and it either led to prison time or death.

After: I have goals now. I got another chance on life. I have had a chance to make a change. Now, I want to get my Bachelor's degree, in computer science or electrical engineering, and that's what I plan to do. It's a hard degree, with all the math, but that's what I'm interested in, and what I want to do now. And I can do it now. It's a goal that I've set for myself.

Respondent #6.

Before: I thought I was going to be able to do that shit forever (drug dealing). I wasn't at the level that I thought I would ever get caught, and have to quit doing it. I didn't expect much out of life, or think that I would really get very far. I had dropped out of school and gotten a GED at 17, I hadn't gone to college,

and I never thought in a million years that if I ever did quit selling drugs that I would get a good job like I have now as an engineer. And I never, ever thought that I would actually want to settle down with a woman and have a kid.

After: Just like it is right now. I'm going to be a father, and a husband, and pay my taxes and have a job and raise a family. I'm about to get back into school, like my wife is already doing full-time while she has a part-time job, and get my Associate's degree in engineering. My job will pay 90% of the cost of education as long as I make A's.

Respondent #7.

Before: I thought I was going to end up being in prison for a long time. Basically, just thought I was going to be in prison. I was glad I had a chance to go to CORE. When I went to CORE, I didn't even imagine I would get to go to Gateway. I just thought that I was going to go to prison for a while, and then get out, and be a felon --- be in prison for a long time, and be forgot about.

After: I've got so many goals, I can't hardly --- what I got planned right now, after I finish paying off this six month lease on my apartment, I'm going to get a trailer home and own my own land. I barely got my first credit card; I'm using it, and paying it off. I'm building up my credit with my credit card and my new car, making my payments on time. I'm 19. In two years, hopefully, I'll trade in the car. By then, I'll be already paying on a trailer home. And then, if everything goes good, and I get a better job, by the time I'm 25, I want to be in and paying for my own house, own my own home. And if I can get in a better job, get into a career, I plan on putting her [indicating his three-month old daughter in his lap] through college. By the time she gets that old, I want to have the house paid off, have some credit, and have some tuition money saved for her.

Respondent #8.

Before: I really thought I was going to be going to prison. My father passed away, and I kind of gave up on life, and held a lot of things in instead of using my resources, and I let things get the best of me, and I developed a substance abuse

problem. That led to the attitude, and the problems I had to face with the law after I got into an altercation with a guy. It's something that I now know today I could have walked away from, but at the time I couldn't. Everything was dark. All I could see was incarceration. I had left a good job, and just started living the party life, staying up all night, chasing girls, and jet-setting and all that, and once all the legitimate money ran out, I started hustling [dealing drugs], and that whole trip is a dead end. No way you can win. What I saw at the end of that game was death, destruction, and life in an institution.

After: It's lovely, lovely. Hope. Optimism. Everyday is sunny and beautiful, like it is now [the interview was held on the first clear day after weeks of rain]. Today I have a choice. Today I have a future. I'm working now, I've got an even better job lined up, I just bought a brand new car two weeks ago. Everything's going pretty good.

Summary of how participants believe the programs contributed to their personal change

Students reported that the changes in various areas of their lives occurred in a variety of ways. The three most frequently mentioned motivations of change are related to their experiences of punishment in the CORE boot camp, and the various sorts of training they received in both CORE and the Gateway program.

While some students seemed to learn by being pushed into meeting educational and intellectual challenges that they had never attempted before, and learning to their surprise that they could accomplish these goals successfully, still others reported that the punishment they received had been the greatest disincentive to further offending.

Summary

Respondents seemed each to have found different components among the variety that were offered to be of singular value to them as individuals. Overall, some areas of their rehabilitative process in the CORE/Gateway program sequence were more highly rated than others. Those elements seen as having the most significance include personal matters (such as having a child, a steady job, a good income, and going back to school), life skills (such as learning to learn, learning to take orders, and learning to get along),

elements more closely related to the CORE boot camp (like exercise, discipline, and not wanting to return to jail), and elements more closely related to the Gateway program (such as developing a sense of accomplishment and greater self-esteem, and acquiring a good job). Nearly half reported that important rehabilitational benefits had accrued for them simply because they had participated in the combined CORE/Gateway program.

A review of these findings indicates that the respondents seem to find the most significance in those program elements that were of the most obvious value to them, such as physical exercise, developing greater self-esteem, and learning to work as a team with other people. Conversely, they seemed to attach a somewhat lower significance to some of those elements that were of less obvious or immediate value, such as counseling, drug and alcohol abuse prevention, parenting, problem-solving, and vocational training.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusions and Implications

Summary of findings

The data developed by this study support the findings of other researchers concerning the nature of the changes that enable ex-offenders to reintegrate successfully back into the community. As the literature reports, those who do not recidivate tend to be those who have made changes in their lives that likely include developing self-control, continuing their education, thinking more clearly and making more appropriate decisions, better understanding consequences, stopping to think before acting, and going beyond an egocentric view of the world and other people. Those who can rejoin the community as contributing citizens seem to be those who have been able to, as Wright (1997) said, develop a self-regulatory system based on self-monitoring and self-control.

Other findings reaffirmed the importance of such previously well understood requirements of correctional rehabilitation as increasing ex-offender's functional literacy, furnishing them with vocational training and connection with a job that provides gainful employment and a living wage, involving them in life skills training to provide for the development of their self-esteem, self-discipline, and self-respect, and improving their problem-solving and critical thinking skills. An unexpected discovery was that many of the respondents cited their children as the source of a strong stabilizing influence that supported their readjustment and development of a new life in the free world.

What experiences, good or bad, do the participants in the CORE boot camp and Construction Gateway programs perceive as being most significant?

All respondents interviewed had strong feelings about the experiences that they had undergone in the CORE/Gateway program. On balance, reports of bad experiences were outweighed by those recounting good events.

In the CORE program, favorable responses were given about the positive results received from encounters with the Drill Instructors and the benefits received from the rigorous daily PFT. This correlates well with reports from Winingham (1997) and the Institute of Justice Policy Research (1995) about effective boot camp training methods.

For the Gateway program, respondents named satisfaction with their academic achievement, pride at their graduation, and getting a worthwhile job as the best things that had come of their efforts in the program. This well supports the earlier findings of Duguid (1997), Gerber and Fritsch (1995), and Wolford (1989) that vocational education and employment were some of the most important elements in a successful correctional rehabilitation program.

Those reporting bad experiences in CORE most often cited what they believed to be unprofessional conduct by some DI's, and incidents in which they felt they had been unfairly treated. Similarly, in the Gateway program, most reports of bad experiences were related to the belief that an instructor had acted unprofessionally. As Ashcroft, Price, and Sweeney (1998) found, there is a national shortage of trained faculty and staff. The need for trained personnel with unique competencies and experience, including attitudes, knowledge, and strategies appropriate for students with deviant behavior and diverse economic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds, was reported by Guerin & Denti (1999).

Do the participants believe the CORE boot camp and Construction Gateway programs changed their lives in any way? If so, how?

The data developed in answer to this question support the findings of other researchers concerning the nature of the personal changes that have enabled ex-offenders to reintegrate successfully back into the community. Those changes were described by

the respondents of this study in such clusters of meaning as the better self-discipline and self-control that seemed to accrue from the CORE program, and as increased self-esteem arising from a sense of personal accomplishment for successfully completing the life skills training and vocational classes in the Gateway program, and getting and keeping a worthwhile job.

As Gerber and Fritsch (1995) reported, training to improve problem-solving skills, interpersonal functioning, and practical skills in living can help students develop greater self-esteem and gain badly needed social abilities. Vocational education and job training lead to successful reintegration (Mann, 1997), to a lower recidivism rate because of more self-esteem and financial stability among individuals who might otherwise recidivate (Albright & Denq, 1996), and to a desirable outcome for all (Bossler et al., 2000). The findings of this study are also congruent with those of reports issued by Gehring (1997), the Institute of Justice Policy Research (1995), the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (1995), and Wolford (1989), all of which connect the acquisition of improved living and coping skills by ex-offenders with a lower rate of recidivism.

Which rehabilitational elements seem most significant to the participants?

Each student seemed to have found different program elements of greatest value to them individually. Life skills training was reported most often as the factor of greatest significance, supporting the findings of Gerber and Fritsch (1995), and Maughan (1999). Slightly fewer found discipline or employment to have been most important, factors that were named as important ones by the Capitol Area Training Foundation (1999), and the Institute of Justice Policy Research (1995).

Some respondents were less than specific, and their data may support the findings of Duguid (1997), that the mechanism of change was often found not just within certain courses or sets of subjects, but rather within the process of involvement in a sustained, intensive, and participative educational experience. With a group of associates, Duguid later reported that tenure in such programs had been found to be a stronger indicator of success than academic achievement (Duguid et al., 1998). Duguid found in both studies

that the extent of benefits which accrued for students had more to do with the intensity and duration of their involvement and participation in the rehabilitative program, and less to do with the specific curriculum of the program itself.

What is it about certain elements of the CORE/Gateway programs that make them more salient to participants than other elements?

Participant reactions to the CORE boot camp seemed to vary according to their perceptions of the Drill Instructors, whom generally embodied the program to the cadets. Those who found merit in the DI's behavior ranked the program more highly than those who did not. Discipline and physical fitness training were the most appreciated elements of the CORE program, followed by the parenting classes. Psychological counseling and drug and alcohol abuse prevention training received a variety of responses, from high to low, depending on individual factors such as access and need. As the Institute of Justice Policy Research (1995) found, a comprehensive correctional rehabilitation program like the CORE/Gateway sequence needs to cover all or most of such areas as critical thinking, problem-solving, stress and anger management, substance abuse counseling, parenting, GED completion, mental and physical discipline, and personal responsibility.

Reactions to the Gateway program were generally high. Respondents seemed to value the both the outcomes and the program itself. In fact, the most highly rated elements of the entire rehabilitational program sequence were the Gateway components that led to development of self-esteem, and the vocational training and job placement. This supports the findings of Albright and Denq (1996), linking lower recidivism to the self-esteem and the financial stability of employment, and Mann's (1997) report that such rehabilitation as vocational education and job skill training provided led to successful reintegration. Participants rated learning to interact more effectively with others as important, along with problem solving, supporting the findings of Gerber and Fritsch (1995).

The only negative reports about CORE and Gateway were from students who believed they had been treated unfairly, or felt that a Drill Instructor or teacher had acted

unprofessionally. As Guerin & Denti (1999) reported, a nationwide shortage exists of qualified personnel with the special skills needed to be effective for incarcerated youth.

A confounding variable in this study was the evolution of both the training regimen in the CORE boot camp and the curriculum of the Gateway program. CORE is administered by a Drill Sergeant who changes every year or two, under whose supervision varying elements may be emphasized or reduced (as reflected by respondent statements that some did not find program elements available for them that others had received). Gateway has increased the extent of life skills training it offers (with plans for a considerable increase in 2001), and has a vocational emphasis that periodically shifts to reflect the training needs of the local construction industry firms that hire the program's graduates (sheet metal forming was recently added, to meet the need of mechanical contractors for employees with this skill).

How do participants believe the programs contributed to their personal change?

As might have been expected, each respondent seemed to have found different components from among the variety that were offered to be of greatest value to them as motivators of their individual change process. Overall, some areas of the rehabilitative process in the CORE/Gateway program sequence had consistently higher ratings than others. Those elements seen as contributing most importantly to their changes include: personal matters, such as having a child, a steady job, a good income, and going back to school; life skills, such as learning to learn, learning to take orders, and learning to get along; elements more closely related to the CORE boot camp, like exercise, discipline, and not wanting to recidivate; and elements more closely related to the Gateway program, like developing a sense of accomplishment and greater self-esteem, and acquiring a good job. These changes reflect Cranton's (1994) findings that transformative learning is based on the reconciliation of new ideas with prior learning. Nearly half the students could not cite a specific cause for their change, indicating that important rehabilitational benefits may have accrued for them simply because of their steady participation in the combined CORE/Gateway program, an effect reported by Duguid (1997), and Duguid et al. (1998).

A review of these findings indicates that the respondents seemed to have found the greatest significance in those program elements that were of the most obvious value to them, such as physical exercise, developing greater self-esteem, and learning to get along well with other people. Conversely, they seemed to attach a somewhat lower significance to some of those elements that were of less obvious or immediate value, such as counseling, drug and alcohol abuse prevention, parenting, problem-solving, and vocational training.

There is little way to link these findings of individual personal evaluation of program elements to the literature. Almost all studies of this population and of similar programs are quantitative in nature, and offer very little related qualitative data for use as a basis of comparison. Generally, however, the findings of this study are congruent with those findings and recommendations that can be extrapolated from such other reports as those of Albright & Denq (1996), Fabelo (1997), and Guerin & Denti (1999)].

Some findings have not been reported by other researchers, and appear to be unique to this study. All of the respondents who are fathers reported that one of the most important factors in their rehabilitation was the influence of their child or children. While the literature mentions the stabilizing effect of a marriage or family, there has been no previous report made of children exerting a rehabilitative influence on an ex-offender parent. Similarly, some participants in this study gave high ratings to such previously unreported elements in the rehabilitative program as learning to learn, learning to take orders, and learning to get along with other people. While these particular factors have not been reported before by other researchers, they do not contradict any related findings that have been published.

Limitations

This study confirms the findings of other researchers, and has developed new data that has not otherwise been reported. There are, however, several important limitations. These are related to the comparability of this study to others, the consequent difficulty in generalizing these findings to other situations and populations, the demographics of the young ex-offender population that was studied, and, despite a lengthy and exhaustive

effort, the researcher's inability to locate a representative number of African American graduates willing to be interviewed for this study.

Comparability

For several reasons, the outcomes of this study are difficult to compare directly to findings reported by other researchers. In the other studies most closely resembling this one, a different methodology was used, the population was dissimilar, and the programs did not resemble the CORE/Gateway sequence well enough to draw clear conclusions. While Burton et al. (1993) studied boot camp participants, theirs was a quantitative study of a boot camp without the rehabilitative classes of CORE. Gunn (1999) studied ESL students in a county jail, and Winters (1997)] looked at learning disabilities affecting youths in the juvenile justice system.

This study is unusual, in that a qualitative methodology was used. More often, correctional rehabilitation programs are studied by quantitative means, with statistical findings about common issues like the number of participants, the program content, and the rate of recidivism being numerically compared to the results of other quantitative studies of a similar nature. Few qualitative studies have been performed of correctional rehabilitation programs, and fewer still that assess the significance of various elements of the programs from the perspective of the participants, as did Bolson (1998)].

The population of graduates from the CORE/Gateway program sequence studied here varies considerably from those populations typically used in studies of correctional rehabilitation programs. For the most part, researchers inquire into offender populations that are older, have committed more serious offenses, and are serving longer sentences in a state or federal penitentiary, as in the case of findings reported by Duguid (1997), Eisenberg & Fabelo (1996), and Gerber & Fritsch (1995)]. In this case, respondents were younger adult males, 18-25 years old, that had just committed their first minor felonies, and were serving a six month sentence in the CORE boot camp facility of the Travis County Correctional Complex as an option to a longer term of incarceration in the Texas state penitentiary. Predictably, there are many clear differences in the attitudes, behavior, and probable outcomes of these two disparate populations of offenders.

The nature of the correctional rehabilitation programs offered by state and federal penitentiaries and the CORE boot camp at the Travis County Correctional Complex are also very different from one another. Offenders that are incarcerated in prisons are much more likely to serve time under conditions that can best be described as punitive, with little or no emphasis on rehabilitation (Halstead, 1999), whereas cadets in the CORE boot camp, although similarly subjected to the punishment of incarceration, are also involved in rehabilitative activities during almost every waking hour throughout the term of their confinement.

Generalizability

Because the nature of the programs studied in this report is unique, and thus quite different from the usual experience of most other incarcerated offenders who have been studied, it is difficult to make valid comparisons between the CORE/Gateway program sequence and the typically much more limited programs that are usually found in state and federal penitentiaries.

Confinees in Texas prisons, for the most part, get little to no rehabilitation in a system of penal institutions that are run on the punishment paradigm (Fabelo, 1997). Five thousand drug and alcohol treatment beds are available for the 151,095 prisoners (Fabelo, 1995). There are scattered prison industry programs, and some correctional education available to inmates through the Wyndham school district, but no focused, concentrated rehabilitation programs that are similar in nature to the CORE/Gateway program sequence.

Federal detainees may receive a somewhat broader spectrum of services than state prisoners, but even this is typically limited to just a few hours a week, as opposed to the CORE/Gateway model that immerses prisoners in rehabilitative programs almost every hour of each day. In that federal sentences are usually much longer than state sentences, inmates confined there may suffer more of the desocializing effect of institutionalization.

The differences of outcomes between the CORE/Gateway program sequence and the much more limited rehabilitational services provided by state and federal prisons are often measured by the benchmark of recidivism. The rate for most prisons or jails with

limited rehabilitative services tends to average more than 50% (Fabelo, 1997). Among graduates of the CORE/Gateway program sequence, recidivism is believed to be much lower, with unofficial anecdotal reports from CORE Drill Instructors and the CATF Gateway program manager's staff ranging around 10% to 15%.

Because of these differences in the population, the institutions, the nature of the programs, and the expected outcomes, it is difficult to generalize the findings of a unique program like CORE/Gateway to other dissimilar programs. Indeed, the CORE/Gateway program sequence is so much different from the usual nature of correctional rehabilitation programs that it is considered by some to be an exemplary model upon which innovative new rehabilitative programs could be based.

Demographics

The population under study was a group of young men aged 18-25. Many are not well educated, and may have cognitive deficits (Ross, Fabiano, & Ewles, as cited by Henning & Frueh, 1996). They tended to be a volatile group, with frequent changes of addresses, telephone numbers, and jobs after returning to the community.

A number of the potential informants were not from Austin, and, after being released from custody, returned to families and friends in their hometowns. Others, while native local residents, decided to leave the Central Texas area and make a new beginning elsewhere. Still more may have stayed in town, but have protective families and live a private lifestyle that makes it impossible to find them. Many may have been unreachable because of their characteristically informal and changeable living arrangements that often involve a rather turbulent mix of accommodations with various family members, friends, roommates, coworkers, or lovers, in domestic combinations that may change several times each month.

Some have recidivated, being returned to jail, and others have been sent on to the penitentiary. There is no way to track these recidivists, because no central registry is kept. Official records are maintained only by individual probation or parole officers, and, as a matter of policy, are not made available to researchers. Information concerning freedom or reincarceration of potential respondents for this study has come mostly from records kept by the Gateway program manager from the Capital Area Training Foundation and

other graduates of the CORE/Gateway program sequence, out of what might be termed an unofficial "ex-offender's grapevine."

African American Respondents Underrepresented

The most glaring limitation of this study is its shortage of African American respondents. These individuals comprise 36 percent of the graduates of the CORE/Gateway program sequence, so their underrepresentation as participants in this study may significantly affect the transferability of findings. The reason for their reluctance to participate is not well understood.

As Guerin and Denti (1999) report, ex-offenders of any race can be "transitory, unresponsive, suspicious, antisocial, and isolated" (p. 85). Many young men like these live a private lifestyle that, because of their informal and changeable living arrangements based upon ever-evolving ad hoc accommodations with various members of their family, friends, roommates, coworkers, or lovers, makes it impossible to reach them unless they choose to get in touch.

Nearly 500 persons have graduated from Construction Gateway in the six years it has been in operation. In the combined CORE/Gateway program sequence, 153 students have passed through, of whom 55 were African American. Of that number, three were not eligible for the study because they had not yet been released for the 90 day minimum period that was a qualification for participants, two were known to have been sent to prison, another one was thought to have recidivated, one was believed to be a fugitive, and one more was reported to be in a residential drug detoxification program.

Of the 47 possible African American respondents remaining, 39 could not be located, despite mailings to their last known addresses and several hundred telephone calls. Of the eight that were thought to still be in the community, none responded to a repeated series of telephone calls leaving messages for them at home, at work, with families, and with friends. Other members of the Gateway faculty were asked to assist, as were the Capital Area Training Foundation program manager and his staff, the Sergeant and Drill Instructors of the CORE boot camp, both the Travis County Probation Officers that have had contact with these inmates, and the last dozen CORE/Gateway graduates. None of these exhaustive measures located a single willing African American respondent.

There may also be issues relating to the 'insider/outsider' status of the researcher. As Bartunek and Lewis (1996) say, while insiders are members of the social world under study, it is not as simple as just being a member of the group (Merriam & Muhamad, 2000). Although the researcher was accepted as an insider for the duration of the Gateway program, afterwards, he may have been relegated to outsider status on the basis of his being white, much older, not a member of their African American ex-offender culture, and not a resident of their home neighborhoods.

Implications of this Study

The findings of this study strongly support the findings of previous researchers. Although this study raises interesting questions that would benefit from being answered by a more representative group of respondents, and by further investigation into the exact mechanism by which rehabilitative programs create change in the lives of ex-offenders, it would seem that the knowledge to develop appropriate curricula, guidelines, and methods of helping these former inmates make a successful reintegration back into the community is already quite well known, as explained by, among others, Duguid (1997), Halstead (1999), and Wenda (1997). The challenge, then, appears to be mainly one of convincing the political leaders, criminal justice authorities, correctional program planners, and faculty and staff members to better utilize this knowledge to improve the existing correctional rehabilitation programs, and to more fully incorporate these known recommendations into the design and implementation of future programs.

Implications for practice

Much is known about the nature of at-risk youth, the influences that are believed to be instrumental in the development of their anti-social attitudes, and the delinquent and ultimately criminal behavior that often follows, as reported by Anderson & Anderson (1996), Guerin & Denti (1999), Holsinger (1999), and Quinn et al. (1996). Prevention and diversion programs are demonstrably effective, but are often opposed by politicians and their supporters who liken such programs to welfare (Castleberry, 1997). The methods of rehabilitating students after they become offenders are likewise well known,

but are often similarly opposed by those who prefer social vengeance and punishment to a regimen that furnishes education, life skills training, discipline, vocational readiness, and job placement.

A further dilemma involves practitioners who focus on only one or a few of the elements known to be useful for rehabilitation, such as Twelve Step models aimed only at ending substance use, or faith-based models that seek to change the lives of ex-offenders solely by developing their religiosity. While such methods periodically succeed, it has been well demonstrated that the best results accrue from using a combination of many effective elements tailored to fit an individual's personal deficits, needs, and problems (Duguid, 1997, and Wright, 1997). Logic, reason, and experience must all be used to design effective programs, not simply one's individual preferences, political beliefs, personal opinions, and emotions. Austin Community College, the Capital Area Training Foundation, and the University Community Care Center are currently preparing a new life skills training program based on CORE/Gateway to provide similar enhancement to other workforce development programs (University Community Care Center, 2000).

Concerning students.

At-risk youth grow up to become persons more likely than others to commit delinquent and then criminal acts. These individuals tend to display such characteristics as: poor literacy and academic skills; inadequate social, emotional, and behavioral skills; alienation from school; low self esteem; limited language proficiency; limited or unavailable family support; antisocial peer influence; and a lack of positive adult role models. Like their delinquent peers, they may be totally detached from prosocial institutions like church or community organizations, may lack a law-abiding parent, may not have empathy toward others, and may be likely to exhibit impulsive behavior, have poor judgement, and use alcohol and other drugs. They can be transitory, unresponsive, suspicious, and isolated (Guerin & Denti, 1999, and Holsinger, 1999).

Forty-eight per cent were found to have learning disabilities (Anderson & Anderson, 1996), and, compared to the general population, an unusually high number also have mental, emotional, and physical handicaps, as well as cognitive and neurological disabilities (Quinn et al., 1996). This often leads to various forms of

psychopathology, with low self-esteem common, frequently accompanied by far more severe psychiatric problems such as depression, anxiety, isolation, and behavior disorders (Holsinger, 1999). It is vital that students receive services to address their cognitive deficits, help modify their behavior, and provide them with an adequate education. Without these needs being met, they are released with no better self-discipline or ability to manage their anger or peacefully resolve conflicts than before their arrest and incarceration.

Every respondent in this study gave highest ratings of importance to development of self-esteem, self-confidence, and feelings of accomplishment as the most important outcomes of their participation in the CORE/Gateway program sequence. It may be that this is the necessary precursor for the further changes in beliefs and behavior that are required for ex-offenders to make a successful transition from incarceration into productive citizenship. Continuing with their education, receiving life skills training, learning to think clearly, becoming re-united with their families, and other experiences leading to the development of prosocial values seem to follow the development of self-respect based on higher self-esteem.

Concerning rehabilitation programs.

The well-known problems and deficits described above must be treated in toto, not fragmentarily, or in isolation. The greatest criticism that might be made about many correctional rehabilitation programs is that they are very well intentioned, but, in that they deal with only a selected few of the above problems, these programs could therefore be considered ineffective. The model offered by the combined CORE/Gateway program sequence for comprehensive treatment deals with the full spectrum of these needs, and is thus considered by some to be a uniquely effective program.

Such a comprehensive rehabilitation program should cover all or most of such areas as stress and anger management, substance abuse counseling, parenting, GED completion, mental and physical discipline, and personal responsibility, as the CORE boot camp program does, and should build on that experience with a vocational training program that further develops physical, intellectual, and educational abilities, builds up critical thinking and problem-solving skills, enhances self-esteem and self-confidence,

and places one into a skilled job paying a living wage, as does Construction Gateway. Counseling, mentoring, and ongoing job placement and aftercare can also be important.

From the perspective of a professional educator, what is ultimately necessary, according to Wright (1997),

Is a developmentally grounded curriculum that integrates the cognitive, social, moral and affective elements into a pedagogical whole through moral discursive practices, enhanced with neo-Piagetian cognitive developmental strategies, Vygotskian socio-cultural approaches, and strategic experientially mediated, process-oriented, and transformationally-driven educational practices (p. 20).

One of the most important issues concerning the outcomes of such rehabilitational programs is that the mechanism of change may not be found in specific courses or sets of subjects, but rather may be within the process of a sustained, intensive, and participatory educational experience, in which tenure and the quality of participation in the program can be a stronger indicator of success than academic achievement. Such a result was found by this study, amongst respondents who felt that Gateway had provided them with unspecified benefits that were accrued by the act of their participation in the program. Yes, Duguid (1997) reports, “education works,” and could be made to work even better if we learned how to master the match between mechanisms and students (p. 159).

Concerning teachers.

Good practices for rehabilitating ex-offenders are clustered around the critical themes of classroom climate, teaching methods and curriculum, and helping institutions overcome their own frequently unresponsive natures. Guerin and Denti (1999) quote a Government Accounting Office report that

in highly effective programs, teachers and staff were able to accomplish the following: build self-esteem; plan for post-program life; teach social, coping and living skills; coordinate services; involve the family; create a positive peer culture; enforce a firm code of discipline; provide post program support; and provide a supportive, family-like atmosphere. Success of program graduates depended on these clearly identified program characteristics (p. 87).

Another burgeoning issue is the nationwide shortage of qualified educators with the special skills needed to rehabilitate incarcerated youth with disabilities (Ashcroft et al., 1998). As this study found, most of those respondents who held a negative perception of their experience in the CORE/Gateway program sequence attributed their poor assessment to the actions of a teacher or Drill Instructor that was felt to have acted unprofessionally.

Teachers who work with this population need to have unique competencies and experience, including attitudes, knowledge, and strategies appropriate for students with deviant behavior and diverse economic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds (Guerin & Denti, 1999). Their other needs were quite similar to those of instructors in other alternative education settings: more effective assessment and instructional methods, better classroom management techniques, more knowledge about handicapped youth, and more help with counseling and interpersonal relations, materials and curriculum, and service delivery. Other areas of competency necessary for teachers working with this population include development of 'streetwise knowledge,' and creation of a curriculum that links education and training to social, coping, and self-esteem building strategies.

Guerin and Denti (1999) concluded that the most important areas of knowledge that teachers working in such alternative settings must acquire include:

1. The learning and behavioral needs of youth with learning disabilities and emotional disturbances.
2. Effective teaching and learning strategies that are applicable in alternative education settings.
3. Models for effective instruction to multicultural and multilingual classes in alternative settings.
4. Strategies for effective transition from incarceration and successful reentry into the community.

Implications for research

While this study meets its goal of reporting on the perception of ex-offenders as to which elements of their rehabilitational program they believed were most significant to

them in their effort to successfully reintegrate back into the community, there are still a number of other related questions that have yet to be asked or answered.

Perhaps the largest unaddressed query is that which would seek to explain the exact mechanism by which change is brought about in the lives of those who participate in such programs as CORE and Gateway. It is clear that these programs work, and that the former inmates value some elements of these programs quite highly. But the exact means whereby these program elements help to bring about the change in the lives of participants has yet to be fully understood and completely explained.

A question that seems to be related, and that may confound the understanding of the above point, concerns the role of prior inner attitudinal change on the part of the participant relative to the outcome of the program. It is possible that some respondents to this study may have succeeded because of a self-directed internal decision on their own part to change their life made even before the beginning of the rehabilitational program. It would be illustrative to learn what changes in attitudes and beliefs had already occurred prior to the start of the CORE/Gateway program sequence.

The small number of respondents in this study (n=8) needs to be increased by other researchers, and the results herein compared to those obtained from a larger and more representative group. The underrepresentation of African American respondents in this study needs to be remedied by future researchers, and a better means found to locate members of this population and induce them to become willing respondents.

Procedurally, it might be wise to use a team of researchers which included African Americans, perhaps some as trained assistants who had themselves been through the process of incarceration and rehabilitation, and were residents of the neighborhoods in which the potential respondents lived. Such an approach would tend to mitigate outsider effects and diminish the possible hesitancy of respondents to participate (Bartunek & Lewis, 1996).

A longitudinal survey that tracks the progress of participants from the time they are identified as at-risk youth, through their involvement in the criminal justice system, and on into the period of their rehabilitation as ex-offenders, could reveal a great deal of valuable information about how better to address the needs of this population.

Perhaps the greatest challenge remains that of convincing the political leaders, criminal justice authorities, correctional program planners, and teachers to better utilize the findings of this study, and the much more detailed panorama already painted by prior researchers, to improve existing correctional rehabilitation programs, and to more fully incorporate this knowledge into the design and implementation of future programs (Duguid, 1997, and Wright, 1997).

A related issue is that of public awareness and education. Politicians and other authorities feel they must enjoy the support of the voting public, many of whom hold vengeful attitudes (Holstead, 1999). The benefit of rehabilitation is often lost upon those who desire only to inflict punishment upon offenders, and who ignore the consequences that society faces when these former inmates are finally released unchanged, uneducated, unenlightened, unskilled, unemployed, and unrepentant back into the community.

Summary of Implications

This study supports the findings of prior researchers that ex-offenders who do not recidivate tend to be those who have made changes in their lives that are likely to include developing self-control, continuing their education, thinking more clearly and making more appropriate decisions, better understanding consequences, stopping to think before acting, going beyond an egocentric view of the world and other people, and who have developed a self-regulatory system based on self-monitoring and self-control. These changes can be made by increasing ex-offender functional literacy, furnishing vocational training and jobs that provide gainful employment and a living wage, involving them in life skills training to further develop their self-esteem, self-discipline, and self-respect, and improving their problem-solving and critical thinking skills. It was also found that the children of ex-offenders can be the source of a strong stabilizing influence supporting their readjustment and development of a new life in the free world.

While confirming the findings of other researchers, and developing some new data not previously reported, this study has several limitations. These include the unique nature of the program sequence studied, making comparability of this study to any other studies difficult, and the consequential problem in generalizing these findings to other

situations and populations; the volatile nature of the young ex-offender population that was studied, and the problem in locating potential respondents; and the researcher's difficulty in locating African American graduates to interview.

The methods of rehabilitating those who become offenders is well known, but is often opposed by those who prefer to exact vengeance by providing punishment in lieu of a regimen furnishing education, life skills training, discipline, vocational readiness, and job placement. The best results have been shown to accrue from using a combination of effective elements tailored to fit an individual's personal deficits, needs, and problems. Further research needs to address the actual mechanism of change, and the influence of prior attitudinal change by participants on their successful outcome. A longitudinal study of longer duration with a greater number participants is needed, of whom a properly representative number of respondents should be African American. The final challenge, and perhaps the greatest, is that of getting politicians and correctional authorities to put into practice the information about effective rehabilitative programs that is already well known, and educating members of the public and electorate to help them understand the social benefits of supporting these reforms.

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Table I

Matrix indicating the relationship of Research Questions to Interview Guide Questions

1. What experiences, good or bad, do the participants in the CORE boot camp and Construction Gateway programs perceive as being most significant?
2. Do the participants believe these programs changed their lives in any way? If so, how?
3. Which rehabilitational elements seem most significant to the participants?
4. What is it about these elements that make them more salient to participants than other elements?
5. If participants believe these elements contributed to personal change in their perceptions and behavior, how do they believe this occurred?

Research question #	Interview guide question #
RQ 1	5, 6, 9, 10
RQ 2	7, 11, 14, 16
RQ 3	8, 12
RQ 4	13 A-L
RQ 5	15, 17, 18
Background	1, 2, 3, 4

Table II

Coding Matrix

Respondent>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Coding									
1	+	o	o	o	o	+	+	+	Married
2	+	+	+	+	o	+	+	+	Child
3	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	Steady job
4	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	Good income
5	+	+	+	o	+	+	o	o	Going to school
6	+	o	o	+	+	o	+	+	Learning about teamwork
7	+	+	+	+	o	+	+	+	Learning to take orders
8	+	o	+	+	+	+	+	o	Learning to learn
9	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	Learning to get along
10	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	Learning good values
11	+	o	+	o	+	o	+	+	Learning problem solving
12	+	o	+	o	+	+	+	+	Learning to change my life
13	-	-	-	-	-	o	-	-	CORE DI acting unprofessional
14	+	o	o	+	+	+	+	+	Physical training and exercise
15	o	o	+	+	+	+	+	+	Discipline
16	o	+	+	+	o	+	+	+	Don't want to go back to jail
17	-	-	o	-	-	o	o	o	Gateway acting unprofessional
18	+	+	+	+	o	+	+	+	Graduation: accomplishment
19	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	Employability and job placement
20	o	o	o	o	+	o	o	o	Performing community service

Note. + = positive factor

- = negative factor

o = did not respond to question

Table III

Matrix of respondent ratings of program elements

<u>Respondent ></u>	<u>#1</u>	<u>#2</u>	<u>#3</u>	<u>#4</u>	<u>#5</u>	<u>#6</u>	<u>#7</u>	<u>#8</u>	<u>Average</u>
Developing Self-esteem	9	10	10	10	9	10	10	8	9.50
Exercise	10	9	7	10	10	10	10	9	9.38
Interacting with Others	10	8	7	10	10	10	9	10	9.25
Gateway Faculty	9	8	10	9	10	9	8	10	9.13
Discipline	7	9	10	10	8	10	10	7	8.88
Job Placement	4	10	8	10	9	10	10	10	8.88
Problem Solving	8	7	10	10	10	~	9	8	8.86
Vocational Training	4	2	10	10	7	10	9	10	8.00
CORE DI's	8	7	8	8	8	9	8	5	7.63
Parenting	~	10	0	10	~	10	~	4	7.50
Drug & Alcohol	~	~	5	9	7	5	7	6	6.80
Counseling	2	5	0	10	5	1	~	~	3.83
<u>Total</u>	71	85	90	116	93	94	90	87	8.88

Note. ~ = No response was given to this question.

Scale was 1-10, with 1 = lowest, 10 = highest.

Appendix A

Interview Guide

Background

1. When did you enter the CORE boot camp?
2. When were you admitted to Construction Gateway?
3. What was the date of your final return to the community?
4. Please describe your home, job, and financial stability since graduation.

CORE

5. Thinking back to all of the experiences that you underwent in CORE, what stands out in your mind now as being the most positive experience? What happened? Who was involved? How did you feel about it?
6. Thinking back to all of the experiences that you underwent in CORE, what stands out in your mind now as being the most negative experience? What happened? Who was involved? How did you feel about it?
7. Do you believe that these experiences had an impact on your life? Can you give me an example of this impact [e.g. maintaining a job, relating to other people]?
8. Which aspects of the program do you think influenced this impact on your life?

Gateway

9. Thinking back to all of the experiences that you underwent in Gateway, what stands out in your mind now as being the most positive experience? What happened? Who was involved? How did you feel about it?
10. Thinking back to all of the experiences that you underwent in Gateway, what stands out in your mind now as being the most negative experience? What happened? Who was involved? How did you feel about it?
11. Do you believe that these experiences had an impact on your life? Can you give me an example of this impact [e.g. maintaining a job, relating to other people]?
12. Which aspects of the program do you think influenced this impact on your life?

Rating particular program elements

13. Please rate the significance of each of the following elements of the combined CORE/Gateway program sequence in terms of its impact on you. Please rate them on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest, and explain why you have rated them this way.

- a. CORE drill instructors
- b. Construction Gateway faculty
- c. discipline and/or regulations
- d. physical exercise
- e. psychological counseling
- f. drug and alcohol counseling
- g. parenting and relationship training
- h. problem solving and critical thinking
- i. learning to interact effectively with others
- j. developing self-esteem
- k. vocational training
- l. job placement

Life since graduation

14. How would you describe the difference in your life now as compared to how your life was before your participation in the CORE/Gateway programs?

15. How did the CORE/Gateway experience influence that change?

16. Can you give an example of how you've solved a problem recently in a way that is different from how you might have dealt with it before?

17. What did you imagine your future to be before CORE/Gateway?

18. What do you imagine your future to be now?

19. What have I not asked you that you feel needs to be said?

Appendix B

Transcriptions of respondent interviews

Case #1

Sept. 11, 2000

1. July '98
2. October '98
3. December '98
4. I got married, and have a son. I had a first job, with an air conditioning company, and then started my own air conditioning company, and made \$100,000 that year. So far as my home, I've moved once, from a mobile home in Kyle, into this house by St. Ed's where we live now. Since then, I've bought another company that does knife sharpening with my earnings from the air conditioning company.
5. The most positive experience was when it was flooding, and all the CORE cadets were down on the pavement on their knuckles in push-up position. We were having a contest, the drill instructors and everybody, in about a foot of water. People learned a lot about teamwork and taking instruction from the Navy Seals who had been in real survival situations like that directing the whole deal.
6. The most negative was when my best buddy in CORE, Cadet Young, had called somebody a name. So, when it came down to getting in trouble, I lied for him, and told the drill instructors he didn't call him that name. They weren't dumb; they knew what had happened. And we admitted the lie, so we got punished, but not in a whole lot of trouble. We had to dig a hole, 10' by 10' by 10', and find a letter that somebody had buried in a bag about a year before. We found the letter eventually, about 10 o'clock that night, and took it to the drill instructor. He had us write "I will not lie" 100 times on the back of the letter, and then bury it again, and fill the hole back in, and then still get up at 4 o'clock the next morning.
7. In everyday life, when you're trying to get things accomplished, I think back on taking orders and taking instruction and remembering how the outcome worked out, I think "I remember that; I'd better do this." They teach you integrity

- throughout the whole course. Today, if a customer drops off a knife to be sharpened and comes back for it in a week, and it's not ready, I could give him an excuse, but instead, I just tell them the truth. It makes me feel better.
8. There's lots of them. Everyday, I remember something that makes life better in the long run because of all the different things we learned.
 9. Graduation. Graduation was the most positive. Everybody marched out, and we were all in there together. John-Mark got up to talk, and then his dad (Reverend Carter), and I can't remember what was said, but I remember how much we had all gotten out of Gateway, and how we were all up there, one at a time, talking about it, and how our lives had changed.
 10. The most negative experience was the guy who taught the electrical class. He taught us the stuff, but didn't seem to care whether we had learned it or not. He just taught it, and didn't test us much, and just left us with whatever we'd learned.
 11. The schooling and knowledge and learning did me the most good, learning the equations and whatnot. I could still go out and layout a building site, just from what I remember from Gateway, and I could never do anything like that before.
 12. Nothing more to add.
 13.
 - a. 8 Most DI's are doing what they're there to do: a good job
 - b. 9 Push to make you learn; you're going to learn it.
 - c. 7 Could be a good thing/could be a bad thing.
 - d. 10 The best thing; wish we'd had even more.
 - e. 2 Made no sense; took class just to get out of daily CORE drill.
 - f. -- Did not take D&A.
 - g. -- Did not take parenting.
 - h. 8 I rate that pretty high
 - i. 10 Now, I talk/work with all kinds of different people all day long.
 - j. 9 A big change, believing in myself and what I can do.
 - k. 4 It didn't help me much; I already knew how to work.
 - l. 4 Already knew what I wanted to do; helped others more than me.
 14. Totally different. My life before was nothing but drugs, going downhill, hanging around with the wrong people, didn't hold a full-time job, didn't have my own

place to live, not getting along with the family. Since then, everything has totally changed: not one argument with my Mom, my brother is my best friend now, and I've got a business and a home and a family of my own.

15. Learning everything, from integrity, to motivation, to teamwork, and helping other people with what I've learned. My brother-in-law is on the run right now, and I'm trying to help him come in and face his charges. I sure would like to see him be able to get into CORE and Gateway, and get what I've gotten from that.
16. At the gas station the other day, a drunk came on me in a confrontation, and wanted to go on me blow for blow. I could have stomped him, and lots of people standing around wanted me to. But if they'd been through what I have, they'd know that it doesn't mean anything to whoop somebody, it just doesn't mean a thing, especially a drunk just talking trash for nothing. Before I was in CORE and Gateway, it wouldn't have been able to just get in my truck and drive away.
17. I wanted to own my own company, but didn't have the right path to get there, and that wasn't happening. The path I was on was either going to lead me to the penitentiary, or to being dead, until I went through CORE and Gateway.
18. I imagine my self employing about 15-20 people here in Austin, owning and running a reputable company, and having 2 or 3 more kids, and making their life and my wife's the best they can be.
19. There are some things in CORE that I don't think have anything to do with straightening a person out: making you eat every bite of your food, or else wear it on your head; giving you only two minutes to shower, or else having to go roll in the mud; eating with your heels together, or else you have to eat standing up. Small things, that you can handle, but that don't do anything to straighten you out and that I don't think need to take place, like waking up at 2 in the morning to find a drill instructor squeezing toothpaste on everybody's face while they are sleeping, then tickling them so they'll rub it in. There's no need for those kind of things, and then laughing about it, and playing games like that.

Case #2

Sept. 19, 2000

1. January '98
2. April '98
3. December '98
4. I've had the same place, of my own, ever since I got out --- a mobile home in Bastrop. I've had three jobs in that time. The money's been okay. I mean, I'm living, you know? I left the last job, and called Tom Seraphin, and he hooked me up right away with this sheet metal job I've got now.
5. Two of the drill instructors sat down with me as an individual once, and talked with me about my problems at home, with my family, and listened to me. It was really unusual, but very positive. They're not there to be your friend. I didn't take it as them being soft or soft-hearted, just that they were people, after all.
6. After Gateway, I had 2 weeks to go to be out of jail for good, and I got recycled. I was PUA (present in an unauthorized area) during work release time. I went with (another cadet) to the mall, and he ended up going inside and stealing. I didn't know what he was gonna do, but they blamed me for being there with him. We had the same job, and were supposed to go to work together and return together. I got recycled to day 1 of third platoon (back to the beginning of the third week of a six month-long program), and had to start all over again.
7. It made me miss a whole year of my life! It made some changes, like being responsible for my own actions, like paying attention to what I'm thinking about doing and what the consequences are gonna be. It helped me out. I've already gone back to school for computer classes.
8. What changed me, and made me want to not have to go back to jail, was getting up at 4 in the morning every day no matter what kind of freezing weather or whatever and having to exercise and stay awake until 8 at night. You can't lay down, you can't sit down, you can't close your eyes --- nothin'! It's the threat of knowing that I might have to go back and do something like that again if I screw up that makes me stop and think about things before I do them now.

9. It was that roofing we did, when the (TV) news people came over, and they showed it on the news. My family saw it on TV, and they were happy to see that something positive was coming out of me being in jail for so long. That made me feel good. It was the high-light for the whole year of '98. My family realized that I was in Gateway learning something, not just sitting around in jail learning how to be worse. It was a really positive thing, and really made me feel like a part of Gateway, which let me call Tom (Seraphin) and he hooked me up with this good job (\$9.50 an hour to start) that I've got now.
10. There were no negative things in Gateway.
11. Yes, it did. I have something to show for it, certificates and a diploma, showing that I went through the training, and have some experience --- maybe not much, but enough to make an employer take a second look at me. Now, I can get my foot in the door, and it makes me feel like I can get a job wherever I want. Now, I can be whatever I want to be.
12. Can't remember a specific part. Everything helped me --- a little of this, a little of that --- the whole program helped me out. I wish it had been even longer than six weeks (the program actually runs only 5 weeks).
13.
 - a. 7 Too many bring in problems from home and take it out on us.
 - b. 8 Some of them had the same problem, sometimes.
 - c. 9 The mix of freedom and rules was good for us.
 - d. 9 Get in shape, get rid of drugs and alcohol, and deal w/ being horny.
 - e. 5 It was only after I was recycled, and wasn't very much or effective.
 - f. - Was not in on drug charge, so didn't get sent to the D & A classes.
 - g. 10 Being with my little girl, so she remembered what I look like.
 - h. 7 It was hard to think after the drill instructors had yelled at me all morning. I was way too stressed to think clearly. It was too much.
 - i. 8 Learned to get along with people I had nothing in common with.
 - j. 10 You can sure get a lot of good out of it, if you take it right.
 - k. 2 It has nothing to do with a job. It's all in who you know.
 - l. 10 You have a choice of how much money you want to make. You can have not just a job, but a career. You don't have to go out there

and steal, or bitch about what color you are and can't get a break.

14. You change, but you're still the same person. Your mind is somewhere else while you're in CORE, like you're not even living, and you miss that whole time of your life. Gateway and CORE is blocked out of my mind. I'm older now, and before, it was just my childish ways. There was trouble there before, and it's still there, but it's my choice now, and I just didn't go back to it. I don't think I've changed. I think my ways have changed, but I don't think I've changed, other than just staying away from criminal activity and looking towards the future.
15. Not wanting to go back to jail: that's how I changed, not wanting to go back. Not wanting to see all those drill instructors. Not wanting to waste all that time. Most people just do six months. I got recycled and did a year. It makes me sick just thinking about it.
16. If my car payment or bills or something was due, before, I'd probably go steal something, just to get the money, because I know I can do it, and I know I can get away with it, in my mind, you know, I'm thinking that, and, most of the time, I did get away with it. Now, I'd rather ask somebody for a loan and owe them, instead of going out there and stealing and taking that chance. You get caught, you know, and then --- damn, there go years of your life.
17. In and out of jail. I'd probably have become a pretty good criminal. I would have just stayed focused on that. That would have become my job skill. That was my whole life --- criminal behavior, gangs, stuff like that. I was more of a car thief than a burglar, and the first time I broke into a house, it was an assistant district attorney, and I got caught. But before, I think I would've been looking towards low income housing, and poverty, not having the confidence that I have right now --- knowing that I'm going to make money, and that everything'll be okay.
18. I'm going to be on a sailboat in three years, my own sailboat, just chillin' out. As much as I'll be making on this job, I don't even need to save any. That'll just be two checks to make a good down payment on a nice boat. And I'll have a nice car and a nice house, maybe start with a trailer house and some land, and build a house, have a nice place. I guess that is a pretty big change, isn't it?

19. The graduation was the best of all. I felt like I had something to show for my time. I got my GED, and never had a graduation, and never thought I'd go to college or any school again. At graduation, my Mom was real happy, real proud, not proud that I was in jail, but proud I was doing something good. She's been working for the Sheriff for 20 years, you know, and in her mind, this helped her know that I wasn't acting bad.

Something you need is more time to get alone with the individuals, you know, individually --- not the whole class, and ask them what they want to do and what they want to be. Like when you help each person prepare their own resume, talk to them individually, and see what's on their mind, and just talk to them a couple of minutes, like you and I are. You can find out pretty quick whether they are going to go out and do crimes again, or really get a job, or what.

Case #3

Sept. 22, 2000

1. August '99
2. January '00
3. February '00
4. When I got out, I'd lost everything, so I was staying with my mother with my girlfriend, who was about to have our baby, and we were working to get our money saved up, so that's what I did. I went to work the week I got out, and I've been there ever since. I started at \$8 an hour, and I've already had 2 raises in the 7 months I've been there and am up to \$9 an hour now. It's based on performance, so I'm doing good. I get about 16 hours a week of overtime, so that's going to end up being about \$20,000 for the year for a first job with an electric company with no experience at all but what I learned in Gateway.
5. Three of the drill instructors that everybody despised and everybody feared came after me for about a week straight. I wondered why they were picking on me, and what they were doing. They pushed me to my limits, to where I was about to quit, but I didn't give up, I didn't snap, I didn't buck, I took it, and I kept rolling on. In the end, I earned their respect. They did it in a difficult way, and they were on my

- ass hard, but it really, really helped me to have them break me down and build me back up. I got a lot of shit from them, but I took it all without snapping.
6. The most negative thing was an unfair demotion that I got in the last week before I got out of CORE, but I made it okay.
 7. They helped me a lot. I'd always been a real stubborn person, and liked to voice my opinions a lot, and piss people off, and fight, and things like that. But through CORE, you learn that it's not all about that. If you can turn your head and walk away, and take the abuse they give you, it's easy out here. I had an incident at a car dealership where they took advantage of me and wouldn't give me my down payment back. The business manager came out and wanted to fight me. I could have taken the guy, and kicked his ass. But I thought about what would happen if I let him get me into a fight, and I got in trouble again, and I had to go to prison, and I never got to see my son again. I just blew it off, and walked away from it.
 8. The abuse they give you, and learning to deal with it.
 9. Knowing that those people at Gateway were there to help me. When you're in a boot camp like CORE, it's their job to help you. But when you go to a school like ACC, as a college student,, and the teachers there do everything they can to help you, it makes you feel like people really do care about you. CORE helps you stay away from crime, violence, and drugs. Gateway is trying to teach you something that otherwise you wouldn't have a chance to learn, and you'd end up working at a fast food chain instead of having a good job. I remember that guy that sat beside me only had a 6th grade education, but you taught him that math and blueprint reading, and he's working now and free because of it. It was things like that.
 10. The classes were too damn short. I wish we could have stayed until 8 or 9 p.m. (instead of having to go back to jail at CORE).
 11. Yeah, it helped a lot. The best thing was the skills I learned there. Just having the opportunity to go to college. I only had my GED, but now I've got some college credits because of going through Gateway. It was a real confidence boost.
 12. The whole thing was important more than just any one part. I absorbed the whole thing like I was a sponge.
 13. a. 8 A small percentage are just there because they make good money.

- b. 10 They helped us, just like feeding a dog that doesn't have a home.
 - c. 10 That's what it really takes when you get out of here, to develop the discipline to get up and go to work and stay away from bad things.
 - d. 7 It was good for most of the guys that went there, but I had been working in a gym, and was already in pretty good shape.
 - e. 0 Had very little, and it made no real difference.
 - f. 5 It was like a NA meeting, and a lot of times they just baby-sat us.
 - g. 0 My kid wasn't born yet, so I didn't go.
 - h. 10 I got confident that I could do something I had never done before, and could think my way through it even if I knew nothing about it.
 - i. 7 I already knew how. It was really good for those that didn't.
 - j. 10 The very best! That's what it's all about!
 - k. 10 It was a rude awakening to find out how much I had to learn.
 - l. 8 I made a connection myself and got myself a job at the job fair.
14. One of the main things is the self-discipline. I'd never had a lot before, so far as being able to get up and go to work, to put up with other people that I don't get along with, and to know right from wrong. And now I have a son, and the idea that I might not be able to come home from work and throw him up in the air and play with him just tears me apart on the inside --- to think how messed up his life would be if I wasn't there for him because of some stupid shit I'd done.
15. They were there to help me in any way that they could, to learn, to develop the discipline and respect for myself, and the self-confidence. They taught me things that I never had any idea about, and made my self esteem just go zoom, zoom, zoom, right on up. I never graduated high school, and there I was in Gateway, while I was in jail and boot camp, doing college level work. If that doesn't make you open your eyes and realize what you're capable of, then I don't know what else it could take.
16. I had an asshole superintendent at a house I was finishing. This guy had been giving us a lot of trouble already for a week over nothing. It was raining, and we had the windows open for some air, but the rain wasn't coming inside. This guy comes marching in, and was cussing at us and getting on us. I just looked at him,

- and laughed, and turned around and walked away, instead of cussing back at him or fighting, and let my crew leader deal with it.
17. I knew that the jobs I'd had weren't much, and that I could accomplish more, but I just did not have the self-discipline to do it.
 18. Bright. I have goals, more goals. I want to give more back. I want to stand out from everybody else by having these goals that I want to reach. I want to get my electrician's license, go back to school, raise my son, make more money, and pay off the new car that I've bought. This has all helped me tremendously.
 19. Some of the drill instructors are just cops, and don't have any military bearing, or do any good. They can't even march or call cadence (while we march). The DI's need to care, and not just be there bragging about how much they're getting paid to put up with us. Some of them seem to just care about getting the pay check and not about helping the cadets change. They just have this attitude that 'yeah, I'm an asshole, but I'm a cop, and you can't do nothing about it'.

Case #4

Sept. 19, 2000

1. May '98
2. June '98
3. Nov '98
4. My financial status has been pretty good. I worked a year at the Discount Tires job that Gateway fixed me up with, and since then for my Dad at his garage. I bought some cars at auction and fixed them up and sold them. Don't know how much I made, because I didn't put the money in the bank, but I had to pay \$3,000 in taxes. I had my own house with a roommate when I first got out, but since then my daughter and I have stayed with my parents. She is one of the big reasons I have stayed straight; she gives me that extra boost.
5. To see the results of my physical training go up. When I first got there, my physical ability was way down there. A month later, total difference. It made me feel good about myself, and look at other things differently. It really increased my self-esteem made me want to get more involved.

6. Every bad thing that happened I learned how to turn into a challenge, and ended up learning something and making something good happen out of it.
7. Definitely. The impact of CORE is that I am out of prison. Before, I couldn't stand anybody telling me what to do, so I couldn't keep a job. After, I held the Discount Tire job for a whole year, by far the longest time ever.
8. The discipline in CORE. Without it, I would have had some new cases. But ever since I've been out, not a single new case. Still on probation, but no new cases. Before, I would just react on my emotions, on how I felt right then, but now, I stop and think about it.
9. Gateway made me feel like I was somebody. I had never gone to school or anything. I never thought I could do the mental things I did in Gateway. When I want a job now, I just show them my resume and the Gateway diploma and they say "Okay!" Because of the math, I can think things through, and put it together in my head, and lay it out on a piece of paper. I learned how to think from math, and solve problems, and understand things better. It helped me open my mind.
10. There needed to be better communication between the students. If we hadn't had such a hard time communicating, we could have done more together.
11. Yes. It helped me get along with people. In Gateway, I had to deal with people who were older, or younger, or different from me. Before, I wouldn't have been able to get along with them, or have known what to do to work together, or to get help with a problem by letting them know where I was coming from.
12. Nothing further to add.
13.
 - a. 8 Their training was important.
 - b. 9 I learned a lot.
 - c. 10 I needed the discipline.
 - d. 10 Made me feel good, and built lots of self-esteem.
 - e. 10 It helped a lot.
 - f. 9 It was important.
 - g. 10 It has been very important for raising my daughter with no Mom.
 - h. 10 I don't make the same stupid mistakes any more.
 - i. 10 It made a big difference in what I do.

- j. 10 That's the biggest thing.
- k. 10 Sure. I can get jobs now.
- l. 10 That's what got me started.
14. Before, I was lost. I didn't know what I wanted, I didn't know what I could do, I didn't know anything. Whatever happened, happened. I would just react, and whatever the results were, I wouldn't even try to make it work out okay. I would not deal with the problem, or try to fix it --- nothing. I'd just hold it inside of me. I was a total mess. Now, with respect, getting along with people, learning critical thinking, being in good physical shape, and all that, you put it all together, and, if you use it right, you don't have to worry about a thing.
15. I believe that once you get the proper training, you can use that knowledge and experience in a good way for your own benefit.
16. Before, my girlfriend was always acting up, and it would drive me crazy, and I would always end up with another case. That was how I ended up in CORE. But after I got out, the same thing would happen, that person would still be like I was before, and I would just walk off. I learned in cognitive thinking class to picture a stop sign, and stop and think, and think about what was going to happen, and don't react in the same old way. I'd just tell her that this situation didn't feel right, and that I was just gonna go on, and she could do whatever she wanted to, but I was leaving. I left her the car and everything, and just took off walking. I do that all the time now, with anybody.
17. I didn't even have sense enough to think about the future. I just thought about the day, and what was happening right now, and what was gonna happen in the next 20 or 30 minutes. I didn't do an inventory check. I didn't think, I just lived day by day, and however I felt, that was what I was gonna do.
18. I know what I'm gonna do in my future now, what my goals are. I think about what I'm doing, and how it's gonna affect me now, and what's gonna happen from it in 2 or 3 years. Now, I can fix a problem before it even happens. My plan now is to go into the service --- into the Marines. I've already got a recruiter. I still have to wait until I get off probation, but that's just the way it goes. I'm gonna go to court and ask for an early release, and since I made it okay through

intensive probation and haven't had any dirty U.A.'s, I think I'll probably get it. The marines will be a good thing for my daughter, with the health benefits and everything like that. Boot camp is the reason I want to go in the service, because I found out that it would fit me perfectly.

19. The drill instructors at CORE sometimes bring things to work with them. If they are angry about something at home, sometimes they took it out on us. I had to learn that it didn't matter how they felt or how they acted, that if you couldn't handle the way they acted, that you hadn't learned anything yet. Even if they were mad, and it wasn't fair --- no big deal, you were alive, and think of what you've got. It doesn't make any difference. Use what you know to your benefit.

Case #5

8/17/00

1. July '98
2. November '98
3. February '99
4. I've always had a good home. I never had to struggle. I've made some bad choices in life. Financially, I'm pretty well set, pretty good, investing money in a 401k, and stuff like that. I've only got two months left on paying for my car, and that's it. I've got two credit cards, and they're mostly paid off, so I'll be debt-free in about two months. I wasn't a perfect person when I first got out. That first job, at Intertech flooring, was just a job. It wasn't my thing. I wasn't happy doing carpet, but I had to be doing something. There's a lot of people who don't want to give you a chance. That's a hard thing. No matter how good you can be, they'll see that you've got a felony, and it doesn't matter how hard you work, they'll discriminate against you. The people at the Texas Workforce Commission got me this job at US Filters. They just loved me, right off the bat. I'm a hard-worker, and when you love something you do, you're going to enjoy it.
5. I think it was all really positive. You're getting a bunch of people that you've never known, that you'll never see again, but for that amount of time that you're

there, you have to get together and work as a team to accomplish a goal, which is getting out. I think that in life, that's the hardest thing, to really depend on somebody else. When we would run our PFT's (Physical Fitness Training) in the mornings, there would be some guys who were older or larger, and couldn't run as fast as the younger, smaller guys, the faster ones would run, then wait for them, and it didn't matter if they got a slower time, because it's all about being a team, and having confidence "Hey, I'm right behind you," and that's with somebody you don't even know off the street. In life now, you see somebody with a flat tire, you aren't going to just pass him or her up. You've helped people that you haven't even known before; you've got to all come together, like a family almost. And there were some Drill Instructors there, like Sergeant Leo, even though he was a pain, deep down, he was a good guy, and DI Ybarra and some others. They were all hard, but they gave you that security that "Hey, we may be hard on you, but we're just human, we're not some machine, just because we came from the military.

6. How some of the DI's react to a situation. One morning, on the run, one cadet didn't want to run, and DI Lopez, who had been military, showed that he had no limits. The guy sat down and said he wasn't going to do it, and Lopez got provoked, and threw his flashlight at him. It made me feel bad. This is a guy who went through the military, and something so small provoked him.
7. They had an impact on my life as in what direction I wanted to take. It was me all along, but I was just blind, and couldn't see my direction. Now, I've got to move on, and just keep on trucking. It changed me by calming my temper down a lot. I'm a bigger person, so I've never really had to fight for anything. It made me see things differently. There's other people out there, and they make mistakes, too, you know. You can't judge everybody, can't judge them just on what they've done, like society does. They think that even if you have a Master's degree from Harvard, if you've been to prison, well, that's it.
8. The breaking down. In Zero platoon, they would treat you like dirt. And then they set up your growth as a goal toward reaching 1st platoon (0,3,2,1). As you achieve more, you carry it with you. I've been nothing, and now I've achieved something.

9. Doing work for Florence's Safe House (for kids after school) in Montopolis. It felt good to actually help somebody. She does a good thing. She doesn't have a lot, but she is blessed with the gift of caring about a lot of people. It felt good to help her out, knowing that she was helping out a community like Montopolis that is terrible with drugs and crack. It felt good to help out, and to put my skills to a good use. I felt good. It takes some of the stuff that you did wrong in life, and it makes up for it.
10. The electrical part of it. Teacher had us get ready for a big test, and then said, "Well, there's not really a test." If he's going to say it, then there ought to really be a test.
11. It showed me a lot, different things I can do. I look at things differently. It was an opportunity for me to learn something besides what I knew, which, at the time, was just selling drugs. Knowing that I can build a picnic table or wire a house, I can do whatever. All the Gateway instructors were real nice. It was like a seesaw, because you have a different group of people, and they've all got different ways, and so there's a different way you've got to approach them. It's like a job. You've got a different boss on different days, and some are more intense, and it gives you a chance to look around and see the array of different people.
12. The blueprint reading, to me, because I deal with schematics all day long. Where I'm at now, I can read a schematic like there's no tomorrow. And on my job, reading the schematic is probably one of the hardest things to do.
13.
 - a. 8 some DI's take the military part too seriously
 - b. 9.5 show you that it can be easy even if it looks hard
 - c. 8 pretty important for getting ready to be on the street
 - d. 10 let stress out; carries on with me today
 - e. 5 wasn't much of it; what there was didn't do much good
 - f. 7 like an AA meeting; it would have been better out in Gateway
 - g. dna was not in the PET class
 - h. 10 Gateway had good problem solving for life situations, not CORE
 - i. 10 both CORE and Gateway taught us to come together as a team
 - j. 9 Gateway instructors did a lot; CORE taught me to go to the limit

- k. 7 nothing in CORE; Gateway was looked forward to, and helped
- l. 9 very important; construction skills useful; wanted more high tech
14. My life before was more dealing drugs, partying, getting drunk. I never really did drugs. I was into selling them more than using them. Now it's more calmed down. I've looked at life a little bit more. I try to get into church a lot. The only thing that hurts now is no love life. My life changed dramatically because I don't think about selling drugs; I don't think about that life. I don't drink any more. I never did smoke. I'm probably the cleanest I can ever be. I know myself now.
15. By teaching me I could do it. I always knew I could. I just needed that kick to get me jump-started, to learn that it really was possible for me to change my life.
16. I've seen people that I dislike, that before I would have jumped at the chance to fight them. I'm in very good physical shape, and I've learned a lot of martial arts. It wouldn't be hard to beat somebody now, but I've learned that I can always walk away from a fight. I can just let somebody talk, and be more of a man, and just walk away from it.
17. Prison. Prison, a long time. Living the life I was living, it was really going to be either prison or dying. Even at the time, I wished there was some way I could have gotten out of it, but I was in so deep, too deep to get out. You'd look both ways, but all the doors were closed. You only have one path, and it either led to prison time or death.
18. I have goals now. I got another chance on life. I have had a chance to make a change. Now, I want to get my Bachelor's degree, in computer science or electrical engineering, and that's what I plan to do. It's a hard degree, with all the math, but that's what I'm interested in, and what I want to do now. And I can do it now. It's a goal that I've set for myself.
19. Everybody has the will to change. Everybody. It's in there. You've just got to find it, and bring it out, and help people change their life. Help people do the inner part, and learn how to change. What does it feel like to be different? It's all right not to sell drugs; it's all right not to fight; it's all right not to drink. You have to look at the chance you have now. And if you don't have any money or family to back you, you go to prison. It's all about money and politics.

Case #6

Sept. 21, 2000

1. January '99
2. June '99
3. July '99
4. I had a job within a month of getting out that Tom Seraphin set me up with out of a job fair that you guys had here at Gateway. They put me on at \$11 an hour, and I had no trouble paying my bills, and actually took some on because I didn't really have any when I got out. I bought a house within 3 months, and took on a car payment, and insurance, and utilities, and whatever else. My wife is going to school here at ACC, and I have to pay for that. I stayed with my Mom and her Mom right after I got out, and have lived in the home I bought ever since.
5. It really isn't as bad an experience as people make it out to be. Some of the drill instructors are awesome. It's real stressful, but as long as you have something to push towards --- getting out, seeing your kid, or whatever, you can make it. Also, I like the fact that I went in there weighing 250 lbs. and came out at about 200. They ran me until I didn't have any fat left on my body (about 6'2"). I was in the best shape of my life. I felt really good about myself. I was a more outgoing person, and wasn't afraid to take on challenges, because, after going through that, I felt like I could make it through anything.
6. The most negative part is dealing with the other people in there that don't have a reason to make it out. They just don't care, and you get punished for their mistakes. When you get that one person who doesn't give a crap, then you're paying for him, you know?
7. It changed me, sure. Before you go in, and when you're there, and after you get out, you feel what's going on. But what really changed me a lot more, after I got out, was my son (Screaming in the background on the tape). I've quit doing what I used to do, but CORE isn't 100% what changed me---I know it was him. But CORE was definitely an experience I won't forget.

8. I don't ever want to go back. The punishment, man, and being away from my family. No way. It was the hardest thing I ever went through, absolutely.
9. The most positive thing about Gateway to me is definitely that Tom brought in 15 people from different companies, and let us sit down and interview for jobs with them when we were still in jail. Finding people that are willing to hire someone out of the CORE program can't be easy to do, so I know he must have done a lot of time-consuming research to find them. I'm sure it's not easy finding people who are willing to take a con on, and look at you as a valuable employee, and not just as a grunt laborer. They know we've learned something out of this program.
10. There was nothing negative about Gateway. I loved it. I got to be free every day while I was in jail. I got to do things that I loved to do. I got a great job. I loved it.
11. It has made a huge impact on my life. I work on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, and have the rest of the week to just hang out with my son. It's awesome.
12. The whole thing, but especially getting such a good job.
13.
 - a. 9 They did a good job at what they were doing.
 - b. 9 They took care of me, and helped me solve my problems.
I wish I'd stayed in touch with you guys even more.
 - c. 10 When I got there, I couldn't do it, and when I left, I could.
 - d. 10 They did a really good job of getting my body in shape.
 - e. 1 When we needed it, they wouldn't let us go get it. They were trying to break us down, and get us to where we could take it.
 - f. 5 It was just like going to an NA meeting --- just speak your mind.
 - g. 10 I got a lot of benefits, and it was cool that they let me in the class even though I didn't have a kid yet. It was the best thing they did, actually let someone take time away from CORE to hold their kid. Just seeing them interact with their kids taught me a lot, and made me feel good about myself.
 - h. -0- It's so faint in my mind, I barely remember that part of it.
 - i. 10 That was the hardest part for me to learn, because, if you got into it with somebody, then you were out of there.
 - j. 10 I really believed in myself when I got out of there.

- k. 10 That was the most awesome part of Gateway, the job-finding skills and the resume and the computer skills. I learned a lot from it.
- l. 10 That really was the best part, the thing I appreciated the most.
14. I live like a legal citizen now. I don't break laws like I used to. I'm a father now, and I've had a job for a year. That's the longest job I've ever had. It's the only legal job I've ever had. Always before it was something under the table. I never actually had a job before. I was a full-time drug dealer from the time I was 17 until I went to CORE at 21. I could have done something else, but I loved the lifestyle. So, the main difference between then and now is that now I have a kid and a job, and I work and pay taxes.
15. I didn't want to have to go back, and go through it again. More than likely, I wouldn't get another chance at CORE and Gateway. I mess up again, and I'm gone for good.
16. I got a ticket the other day and actually paid for it. I'd never really done that before. I don't know how many times I had to send off \$2,000 for back tickets.
17. I thought I was going to be able to do that shit forever (drug dealing). I wasn't at the level that I thought I would ever get caught, and have to quit doing it. I didn't expect much out of life, or think that I would really get very far. I had dropped out of school and gotten a GED at 17, I hadn't gone to college, and I never thought in a million years that if I ever did quit selling drugs that I would get a good job like I have now as an engineer. And I never, ever thought that I would actually want to settle down with a woman and have a kid.
18. Just like it is right now. I'm going to be a father, and a husband, and pay my taxes and have a job and raise a family. I'm about to get back into school, like my wife is already doing full-time while she has a part-time job, and get my Associates degree in engineering. My job will pay 90% of the cost of education as long as I make A's.
19. The job is the most important part of the program. Guys that don't go through this program, and don't have a job lined up when they get out, are much less likely to succeed. Or if they get a job and they're only making \$7 an hour, instead of \$11 like I'm making, the less likely they are to succeed. I guarantee you that 90% of

the people that are going through the program are going through it because of drugs, and that's a really hard thing to get out of. Money is the only thing that's going to solve their problem. The main thing is getting a good job.

Case #7

Nov. 11, 2000

1. October '98
2. April '99
3. May '99
4. I lived with my Mom for about 6 to 8 months after I got out, and started working a fulltime job by then. I met my now-wife when I first got out, and she got pregnant last November. She and I both were working fulltime, and within a couple of months got our first apartment. We haven't been able to save that much because of the baby, and rent, but we're doing okay. We made a down payment on a new car, and moved into a 2-bedroom apartment. It isn't easy, but we're making it all right.
5. The most positive thing about CORE was the overall respect that they taught me, and patience. It was a bunch of different things that happened. Having to deal with people testing you and yelling in your face basically made me very angry. I hated it most of the time, but now, after I got out, and started getting into real life situations, the respect I learned has helped me to cope better with customers I work with, and deal with life a whole lot better. It gave me respect for myself, not to have to disrespect other people and act like a fool to get what I wanted.
6. I think it was the way this one drill instructor talked to me. He was like he didn't really give a damn if we went to prison or not, he didn't really give a damn what happened to us. I felt real bad. It made me angry. And I knew he was right, that he really didn't give a damn about us. It made me feel like I didn't give a damn, either, to the point that I wanted to do something bad. But I didn't.
7. Basically, it gave me a lot of patience and a lot of respect. It's just like, when somebody comes up to you out anywhere you go, and they do something that you don't like, the negative consequences of you doing something back to them are a lot

- worse that just being a man and doing the right thing by walking away and not letting other people make you react to them.
8. The physical training kept you in line, and made you do things that you didn't want to do but that you knew were good for you.
 9. It was the graduation. When I saw my family, and everybody else's family, and everybody cared for us, and wanted us to do good for ourselves, I felt that I had to live up to that, and repay the people that had helped us.
 10. I got hooked up with a job at the Gateway job fair. When I got out, I found out that I couldn't get transportation to get to the job I had gotten. I was really down, because I just couldn't get there. And I was hired, and he was going to start me at \$8.25 an hour, and an apprenticeship program, but I couldn't get to the job.
 11. Gateway made me want to try my best whenever I got out, and to do my best by way of thanking everybody who worked for Gateway and supported us so much.
 12. The training, like [the life skills] class. A lot of the things I thought I couldn't do, like when [the teacher] was showing us how to figure out all the dimensions of a building, and it took us so long, and we finally got it right, and then at the end found out that we were actually doing algebra. I never thought I would ever be able to do any algebra.
 13. a. 8 They're the ones that put me in the state of mind that I needed to do what I had to do.
 - b. 8 They gave me that extra push, and some extra skills, and let me know that I could make it when I got out, that doors were open for me, and that I wouldn't have to go back to just the same things.
 - c. 10 It helped me to become more responsible, and keep my priorities straight, and do what I needed to do.
 - d. 10 It gave me a lot of confidence in myself, and learned that I was physically capable of doing things that I didn't think I could do.
 - e. ~ Did not receive counseling.
 - f. 7 It helps only so much, because it's still up to you when you get out.
 - g. ~ Did not receive parenting training.
 - h. 9 Knowing I could do something like that gave me an extra push.

- i. 9 It helped me get a job.
 - j. 10 That was the main thing. I had very low self-esteem when I went into jail, and with all the physical training and the training in Gateway, it went up as high as it could go.
 - k. 9 The resume training helped me get a job. My boss told me that my neat resume and application is why he hired me.
 - l. 10 The job placement is what helps. If you get out [of jail], and you don't have a job or goals, you're going to go right down the drain.
14. The difference in now and before is, now I have responsibilities. I have trust from people I have never had trust from before; like my Mom, now she trusts me a whole lot. And I've stayed clean, off drugs and alcohol. So, I feel like my life did a 360, from being an irresponsible drug user and gang member, into being a responsible father, parent, employee, and taxpaying citizen.
15. By giving me the hope and the self-confidence to just go out and give it a shot. Basically, through the discipline and the job training, and getting the confidence that I could do something with my life, that there were people there to help me.
16. My financial situation. Now, I have a lot of bills to pay. Before, I would of said "forget it, I'm not going to work, I'm quitting work, I'm tired." But now that I've been through all this, and I've come so far, I know I have to wake up early in the morning and go do what I've got to do.
17. I thought I was going to end up being in prison for a long time. Basically, I just thought I was going to be in prison. I was glad I had a chance to go to CORE. When I went to CORE, I didn't even imagine I would get to go to Gateway. I just thought that I was going to go to prison for a while, and then get out, and be a felon --- be in prison for a long time, and be forgot about.
18. I've got so many goals, I can't hardly --- what I got planned right now, after I finish paying off this six month lease on my apartment, I'm going to get a trailer home and own my own land. I barely got my first credit card; I'm using it, and paying it off. I'm building up my credit with my credit card and my new car, making my payments on time. I'm 19. In two years, hopefully, I'll trade in the car. By then, I'll be already paying on a trailer home. And then, if everything goes good, and I get a better job, by

the time I'm 25, I want to be in and paying for my own house, own my own home. And if I can get in a better job, get into a career, I plan on putting her [indicating his three-month old daughter in his lap] through college. By the time she gets that old, I want to have the house paid off, have some credit, and have some tuition money saved for her.

19. They're good programs. Y'all do as much as you can to help a person, and that's all that needs to be done basically. You do all that you can, and from there, you send them out of the nest. But, at least they were given a chance, and another chance is something not too many people get. Not too many people that go to jail get to go to boot camp, and, then on top of that, get some college hours and some training, and then get sent on their way. It's that extra chance that y'alls programs give, not too many people get when they commit a crime, and that's the best thing about it, Gateway and CORE.

Case #8

Nov. 19, 2000

1. February 2000
2. July 2000
3. August 2000
4. I was able to get a job with MCI after leaving Gateway. However, the 'everyday's-a-party' environment there of drugs, drinking, and lots of women wasn't conducive to the sort of life I was wanting to lead. I met [a woman] there, and we decided MCI wasn't right for us as a family [with her 2 kids], so we moved in together and quit MCI and both went to work for BCO Delivery. Right now, I'm interviewing for a much better job with Hilti Power Tools.
5. It's really, I would say, the discipline. Not the discipline that came from punishment, but the regimen of getting up and going to sleep at a set time and doing everything in an orderly fashion. Once you get back out into the world, there's no structure. I think CORE gave me structure, and that was the most positive aspect of it.

6. The worst in CORE was the absence of a therapeutic model. Having had counseling in my background, and trying to understand the reason for CORE and what it stood for, I found that a lot of the [Drill Instructors] had the perspective of it being only military and a jail. The therapeutic programs didn't take precedence there, and what was most important to a lot of the Drill Instructors was how much pain they could put you in.
7. It taught me how to relate to people better. When I got into the [legal] situation that I got into, it was because of frustration, and I lost the self-control I used to have. CORE gave me time to reevaluate my life, and where I wanted to go, and what I wanted to do. I thank God for the opportunity to sit still for a while, because out in the world, you never sit still and listen to your heart and your higher power and what's going on with yourself.
8. I think the structure part of it. Out in the world, there's an absence of structure. CORE gives you a lot of structure.
9. With Gateway, you have a totally different way of accomplishing something. CORE, of course, gave you a structure that you needed. But I think Gateway really gave us an opportunity. For a lot of these guys, and for myself, as well, you know, once you've committed a crime, society puts you in this group [of criminals]. But Gateway gives you a way out. Some of these guys had never worked before in their lives. I was totally amazed to find that 97% of the guys in CORE had dropped out of high school. And then here you are in Gateway, getting a chance to learn how to earn a living. You don't have to be out there selling drugs. You don't have to be out there robbing, and doing all that. Here, they've got an opportunity to get themselves some education, and a legitimate job. My training in Gateway is what got me through the door for this job I've applied for, and I'm down to the third interview now, and it looks like I'm really going to get it, and it's because I got certified in Gateway as having been trained on their particular brand of power tools.
10. Something that needs to be addressed is the part that some of the negative influences from CORE can play on cadets who are students in the Gateway program. Like the deal that happened with the Drill Instructor sneaking around [disguised in a phony beard, with a cap pulled down over his eyes, lurking behind a trash dumpster], spying

- on the CORE cadets in the Gateway program. That totally distracts and takes away from the experience you have here [in Gateway]. You're a cadet, but you're a student, but you're a cadet, but you're a student. Some of those DI's believe that you're just a prisoner, and you're always going to be just a prisoner, and so they treat you that way.
11. My experience is different from some of the other guys. I've had some college. I've had a legit job, and worked, and made money, and had everything that some of them haven't. I had a setback in my life, but then Gateway gave me another opportunity to go out there and make something out of my life. If I had gone out looking for a job, straight out of CORE, I wouldn't have done nearly so well. But coming out through Gateway, it gave me options. I had job offers, and they have afforded me and my family different avenues to earn a decent living, and I wouldn't have had that without [Gateway]. It's been very beneficial to me, and it's something I am very grateful for.
 12. The experience of learning a trade, or learning something new. It just opened so many good doors for me and the other guys. It was a great avenue to a better life.
 13.
 - a. 5 Some DI's were concerned with you as an individual, and some weren't. Some trust you, and make you want to do good. On the other hand, some are just hardcore military, and do nothing more than punish you. So, on average, it's a 5.
 - b. 10 I experienced a genuineness, people that were really concerned with helping you be a better person, with giving you another outlook on life.
 - c. 7 Because of the incident [when the CORE DI came spying at Gateway]. CORE has its rules, and Gateway has its, but somehow they need to meet.
 - d. 9 Being an athlete myself, I know the benefits of physical exercise. It's not something that you get out in the world, and I know how much it can help. The exercise leads to a cleaner, better quality of life.
 - e. ~ Did not receive counseling.
 - f. 6 You really could not achieve any true therapeutic value. You go into this classroom setting, and you receive this information, and then you go right back into the tank with a bunch of guys that aren't in the program, and they negate and nullify everything you have just been hearing.

- g. 4 I don't think the instructors were qualified to teach the class. The class started late, and all we did was just sit in there. What was most important to the other participants was that they got to see their kids. I didn't have any at the time, but I wanted to take the class, and maybe learn something.
- h. 8 Instructors [at CORE and Gateway] showed a concern and a genuineness, and an interest in helping people solve their thinking problems.
- i. 10 It allowed me to learn how to interact with people that I have nothing in common with. I feel that it has helped me now since I've been out, because I'm still dealing with people I have nothing in common with, in a lot of situations, and I can deal with them effectively.
- j. 8 It gave me a positive outlook. When I got out, I knew I wasn't going back [to incarceration], but I still had these questions about how was I going to achieve the high standard of living that I wanted with a felony on my record. The programs allowed me to see the light, and gave me a positive perspective.
- k. 10 You have a lot of the [CORE] cadets and [Gateway] students that have never had a job in their life. The programs give them a lot of discipline, and the job skills, so that they can go out and get a legitimate job and earn a good living.
- l. 10 The job fair brought the employers out, and they offered people jobs. But even after that, I had to call on [Mr. B, on the Gateway program management staff, who is responsible for job placement], and he was there, and helped me out with the things that I needed. I would still have gotten a job without him, but he was there for me, and helped me out, and I think that's a very admirable and really the very most important part of the whole program.
14. The difference is my positive outlook on life. Gateway and CORE had an influence on that. But also, I am a Christian, and everything that happens, I believe that my higher power allowed it to happen. I'm really thankful for the opportunity to be here talking to you now, and for the experiences I have had along the way. I listen more now, and don't take things as personally as I did before.

15. The structure that you get from CORE and the opportunity that you get from Gateway make the difference. The experience in Gateway of meeting new people, and getting professional training, and knowing people that have a genuine interest, and empathy for you, as opposed to the correctional side where a lot of the [DI's] just really didn't care. And once you came through Gateway, just before you get out, it gave you a feeling that, okay, there really are people that care for you, people that care about what happens to me once I get out of here. I never once here at Gateway ever heard anyone say 'well, this guy is gonna go back [to jail or prison]. He's not gonna make it.' That's something you hear everyday in CORE.
16. Being in a relationship. Before I got into CORE and Gateway, I was just single and really didn't have anyone to answer to or be responsible to. I can tell a big difference now, because I'm in a relationship, and I have a lot of responsibilities, and I have two kids as well. I'm able to handle that a lot better because of the experience of Gateway and CORE. Patience is a biggie, and I learned a lot of patience through the programs.
17. I really thought I was going to be going to prison. My father passed away, and I kind of gave up on life, and held a lot of things in instead of using my resources, and I let things get the best of me, and I developed a substance abuse problem. That led to the attitude, and the problems I had to face with the law after I got into an altercation with a guy. It's something that I now know today I could have walked away from, but at the time I couldn't. Everything was dark. All I could see was incarceration. I had left a good job, and just started living the party life, staying up all night, chasing girls, and jet-setting and all that, and once all the legitimate money ran out, I started hustling [dealing drugs], and that whole trip is a dead end. No way you can win. What I saw at the end of that game was death, destruction, and life in an institution.
18. It's lovely, lovely. Hope. Optimism. Everyday is sunshiny and beautiful, like it is now [the interview was held on the first clear day after weeks of rain]. Today I have a choice. Today I have a future. I'm working now, I've got an even better job lined up, I just bought a brand new car two weeks ago. Everything's going pretty good.
19. No additional information.

Appendix C

Horizontalization

#4 Please describe your home, job, and financial stability since graduation.

4-1

I got married, and have a son. I had a first job, with an air conditioning company, and then started my own air conditioning company, and made \$100,000 that year. So far as my home, I've moved once, from a mobile home in Kyle, into this house by St. Ed's where we live now. Since then, I've bought another company that does knife sharpening with my earnings from the air conditioning company.

- Got married
- Had a child
- Moved once
- Bought his own business

4-2

I've had the same place, of my own, ever since I got out --- a mobile home in Bastrop. I've had three jobs in that time. The money's been okay. I mean, I'm living, you know? I left the last job, and called Tom Seraphin, and he hooked me up right away with this sheet metal job I've got now.

- Moved once
- Held 3 jobs

4-3

When I got out, I'd lost everything, so I was staying with my mother with my girlfriend, who was about to have our baby, and we were working to get our money saved up, so that's what I did. I went to work the week I got out, and I've been there ever since. I started at \$8 an hour, and I've already had 2 raises in the 7 months I've been there and am up to \$9 an hour now. It's based on performance, so I'm doing good. I get about 16 hours

a week of overtime, so that's going to end up being about \$20,000 for the year for a first job with an electric company with no experience at all but what I learned in Gateway.

- Held steady employment
- Earned \$20,000 first year

4-4

My financial status has been pretty good. I worked a year at the Discount Tires job that Gateway fixed me up with, and since then for my Dad at his garage. I bought some cars at auction and fixed them up and sold them. Don't know how much I made, because I didn't put the money in the bank, but I had to pay \$3,000 in taxes. I had my own house with a roommate when I first got out, but since then my daughter and I have stayed with my parents. She is one of the big reasons I have stayed straight; she gives me that extra boost.

- Held 2 jobs
- Rebuilt and sold cars
- Raising daughter as single parent

4-5

I've always had a good home. I never had to struggle. I've made some bad choices in life. Financially, I'm pretty well set, pretty good, investing money in a 401k, and stuff like that. I've only got two months left on paying for my car, and that's it. I've got two credit cards, and they're mostly paid off, so I'll be debt-free in about two months. I wasn't a perfect person when I first got out. That first job, at Intertech flooring, was just a job. It wasn't my thing. I wasn't happy doing carpet, but I had to be doing something. There's a lot of people who don't want to give you a chance. That's a hard thing. No matter how good you can be, they'll see that you've got a felony, and it doesn't matter how hard you work, they'll discriminate against you. The people at the Texas Workforce Commission got me this job at US Filters. They just loved me, right off the bat. I'm a hard-worker, and when you love something you do, you're going to enjoy it.

- Held 2 jobs
- Nearly debt free

4-6

I had a job within a month of getting out that Tom Seraphin set me up with out of a job fair that you guys had here at Gateway. They put me on at \$11 an hour, and I had no trouble paying my bills, and actually took some on because I didn't really have any when I got out. I bought a house within 3 months, and took on a car payment, and insurance, and utilities, and whatever else. My wife is going to school here at ACC, and I have to pay for that. I stayed with my Mom and her Mom right after I got out, and have lived in the home I bought ever since.

- Held steady employment
- Bought a house
- Sending wife through school

4-7

I lived with my Mom for about 6 to 8 months after I got out, and started working a fulltime job by then. I met my now-wife when I first got out, and she got pregnant last November. She and I both were working fulltime, and within a couple of months got our first apartment. We haven't been able to save that much because of the baby, and rent, but we're doing okay. We made a down payment on a new car, and moved into a 2-bedroom apartment. It isn't easy, but we're making it all right.

- Held steady employment
- Got married
- Became a parent

4-8

I was able to get a job with MCI after leaving Gateway. However, the 'everyday's-a-party' environment there of drugs, drinking, and lots of women wasn't conducive to the sort of life I was wanting to lead. I met [a woman] there, and we decided MCI wasn't right for us as a family [with her 2 kids], so we moved in together and quit MCI and both went to work for BCO Delivery. Right now, I'm interviewing for a much better job with Hilti Power Tools.

- Held steady employment
- Got married

#5 Thinking back to all of the experiences that you underwent in CORE, what stands out in your mind now as being the most positive experience? What happened? Who was involved? How did you feel about it?

5-1

The most positive experience was when it was flooding, and all the CORE cadets were down on the pavement on their knuckles in push-up position. We were having a contest, the drill instructors and everybody, in about a foot of water. People learned a lot about teamwork and taking instruction from the Navy Seals who had been in real survival situations like that directing the whole deal.

- Learned teamwork

5-2

Two of the drill instructors sat down with me as an individual once, and talked with me about my problems at home, with my family, and listened to me. It was really unusual, but very positive. They're not there to be your friend. I didn't take it as them being soft or softhearted, just that they were people, after all.

- DI's were helpful

5-3

Three of the drill instructors that everybody despised and everybody feared came after me for about a week straight. I wondered why they were picking on me, and what they were doing. They pushed me to my limits, to where I was about to quit, but I didn't give up, I didn't snap, I didn't buck, I took it, and I kept rolling on. In the end, I earned their respect. They did it in a difficult way, and they were on my ass hard, but it really, really helped me to have them break me down and build me back up. I got a lot of shit from them, but I took it all without snapping

- DI's pushed me to the limit

5-4

To see the results of my physical training go up. When I first got there, my physical ability was way down there. A month later, total difference. It made me feel good about myself, and look at other things differently. It really increased my self-esteem made me want to get more involved.

- Physical training was helpful
- It increased my self-esteem

5-5

I think it was all really positive. You're getting a bunch of people that you've never known, that you'll never see again, but for that amount of time that you're there, you have to get together and work as a team to accomplish a goal, which is getting out. I think that in life, that's the hardest thing, to really depend on somebody else. When we would run our PFT's (Physical Fitness Training) in the mornings, there would be some guys who were older or larger, and couldn't run as fast as the younger, smaller guys, the faster ones would run, then wait for them, and it didn't matter if they got a slower time, because it's all about being a team, and having confidence "Hey, I'm right behind you," and that's with somebody you don't even know off the street. In life now, you see somebody with a flat tire, you aren't going to just pass him or her up. You've helped people that you haven't even known before; you've got to all come together, like a family almost. And there were some Drill Instructors there, like Sergeant Leo, even though he was a pain, deep down, he was a good guy, and DI Ybarra and some others. They were all hard, but they gave you that security that "Hey, we may be hard on you, but we're just human, we're not some machine, just because we came from the military.

- Teamwork was good
- Physical training was good

5-6

It really isn't as bad an experience as people make it out to be. Some of the drill instructors are awesome. It's real stressful, but as long as you have something to push towards --- getting out, seeing your kid, or whatever, you can make it. Also, I like the fact

that I went in there weighing 250 lbs. and came out at about 200. They ran me until I didn't have any fat left on my body (about 6'2"). I was in the best shape of my life. I felt really good about myself. I was a more outgoing person, and wasn't afraid to take on challenges, because, after going through that, I felt like I could make it through anything.

- Physical training helpful
- Increased self-confidence

5-7

The most positive thing about CORE was the overall respect that they taught me, and patience. It was a bunch of different things that happened. Having to deal with people testing you and yelling in your face basically made me very angry. I hated it most of the time, but now, after I got out, and started getting into real life situations, the respect I learned has helped me to cope better with customers I work with, and deal with life a whole lot better. It gave me respect for myself, not to have to disrespect other people and act like a fool to get what I wanted.

- Learned respect
- Can deal with people better

5-8

It's really, I would say, the discipline. Not the discipline that came from punishment, but the regimen of getting up and going to sleep at a set time and doing everything in an orderly fashion. Once you get back out into the world, there's no structure. I think CORE gave me structure, and that was the most positive aspect of it.

- Benefitted from discipline
- Benefitted from structure

#6 Thinking back to all of the experiences that you underwent in CORE, what stands out in your mind now as being the most negative experience? What happened? Who was involved? How did you feel about it?

6-1

The most negative was when my best buddy in CORE, Cadet Young, had called somebody a name. So, when it came down to getting in trouble, I lied for him, and told the drill instructors he didn't call him that name. They weren't dumb; they knew what had happened. And we admitted the lie, so we got punished, but not in a whole lot of trouble. We had to dig a hole, 10' by 10' by 10', and find a letter that somebody had buried in a bag about a year before. We found the letter eventually, about 10 o'clock that night, and took it to the drill instructor. He had us write "I will not lie" 100 times on the back of the letter, and then bury it again, and fill the hole back in, and then still get up at 4 o'clock the next morning.

- Got in trouble for lying

6-2

After Gateway, I had 2 weeks to go to be out of jail for good, and I got recycled. I was PUA (present in an unauthorized area) during work release time. I went with (another cadet) to the mall, and he ended up going inside and stealing. I didn't know what he was gonna do, but they blamed me for being there with him. We had the same job, and were supposed to go to work together and return together. I got recycled to day 1 of third platoon (back to the beginning of the third week of a six month-long program), and had to start all over again.

- Treated unfairly by CORE

6-3

The most negative thing was an unfair demotion that I got in the last week before I got out of CORE, but I made it okay.

- Treated unfairly by CORE

6-4

Every bad thing that happened I learned how to turn into a challenge, and ended up learning something and making something good happen out of it.

- Turned problems into challenges

6-5

How some of the DI's react to a situation. One morning, on the run, one cadet didn't want to run, and DI Lopez, who had been military, showed that he had no limits. The guy sat down and said he wasn't going to do it, and Lopez got provoked, and threw his flashlight at him. It made me feel bad. This is a guy who went through the military, and something so small provoked him.

- DI acted unprofessionally

6-6

The most negative part is dealing with the other people in there that don't have a reason to make it out. They just don't care, and you get punished for their mistakes. When you get that one person who doesn't give a crap, then you're paying for him, you know?

- Unfairly punished for mistakes of others

6-7

I think it was the way this one drill instructor talked to me. He was like he didn't really give a damn if we went to prison or not, he didn't really give a damn what happened to us. I felt real bad. It made me angry. And I knew he was right, that he really didn't give a damn about us. It made me feel like I didn't give a damn, either, to the point that I wanted to do something bad. But I didn't.

- DI acted unprofessionally

6-8

The worst in CORE was the absence of a therapeutic model. Having had counseling in my background, and trying to understand the reason for CORE and what it stood for, I found that a lot of the [Drill Instructors] had the perspective of it being only military and a jail. The therapeutic programs didn't take precedence there, and what was most important to a lot of the Drill Instructors was how much pain they could put you in.

- DI acted unprofessionally
- Lack of a therapeutic model

#7 Do you believe that these (CORE) experiences had an impact on your life? Can you give me an example of this impact [e.g. maintaining a job, relating to other people]?

7-1

In everyday life, when you're trying to get things accomplished, I think back on taking orders and taking instruction and remembering how the outcome worked out, I think "I remember that; I'd better do this." They teach you integrity throughout the whole course. Today, if a customer drops off a knife to be sharpened and comes back for it in a week, and it's not ready, I could give him an excuse, but instead, I just tell them the truth. It makes me feel better.

- Learning to take orders
- Learning to tell the truth

7-2

It made me miss a whole year of my life! It made some changes, like being responsible for my own actions, like paying attention to what I'm thinking about doing and what the consequences are gonna be. It helped me out. I've already gone back to school for computer classes.

- Made me more responsible
- Returned to school

7-3

They helped me a lot. I'd always been a real stubborn person, and liked to voice my opinions a lot, and piss people off, and fight, and things like that. But through CORE, you learn that it's not all about that. If you can turn your head and walk away, and take the abuse they give you, it's easy out here. I had an incident at a car dealership where they took advantage of me and wouldn't give me my down payment back. The business manager came out and wanted to fight me. I could have taken the guy, and kicked his ass. But I thought about what would happen if I let him get me into a fight, and I got in trouble again, and I had to go to prison, and I never got to see my son again. I just blew it off, and walked away from it.

- Learn to not fight
- Learn to think before acting

7-4

Definitely. The impact of CORE is that I am out of prison. Before, I couldn't stand anybody telling me what to do, so I couldn't keep a job. After, I held the Discount Tire job for a whole year, by far the longest time ever.

- Learned to take instruction
- Can hold a job now

7-5

They had an impact on my life as in what direction I wanted to take. It was me all along, but I was just blind, and couldn't see my direction. Now, I've got to move on, and just keep on trucking. It changed me by calming my temper down a lot. I'm a bigger person, so I've never really had to fight for anything. It made me see things differently. There's other people out there, and they make mistakes, too, you know. You can't judge everybody, can't judge them just on what they've done, like society does. They think that even if you have a Master's degree from Harvard, if you've been to prison, well, that's it.

- Learned to see my way in life
- Learned to not fight
- Don't judge people

7-6

It changed me, sure. Before you go in, and when you're there, and after you get out, you feel what's going on. But what really changed me a lot more, after I got out, was my son (Screaming in the background on the tape). I've quit doing what I used to do, but CORE isn't 100% what changed me---I know it was him. But CORE was definitely an experience I won't forget.

- CORE helped change me
- Son was principally responsible for changes

7-7

Basically, it gave me a lot of patience and a lot of respect. It's just like, when somebody comes up to you out anywhere you go, and they do something that you don't like, the negative consequences of you doing something back to them are a lot worse than just being a man and doing the right thing by walking away and not letting other people make you react to them.

- Learned patience and respect

7-8

It taught me how to relate to people better. When I got into the [legal] situation that I got into, it was because of frustration, and I lost the self-control I used to have. CORE gave me time to reevaluate my life, and where I wanted to go, and what I wanted to do. I thank God for the opportunity to sit still for a while, because out in the world, you never sit still and listen to your heart and your higher power and what's going on with yourself.

- Learned how to relate better to people
- Learned to be calm and listen to himself

#8 Which aspects of the (CORE) program do you think influenced this impact on your life?

8-1

There's lots of them. Everyday, I remember something that makes life better in the long run because of all the different things we learned.

- Whole program helped

8-2

What changed me, and made me want to not have to go back to jail, was getting up at 4 in the morning every day no matter what kind of freezing weather or whatever and having to exercise and stay awake until 8 at night. You can't lay down, you can't sit down, you can't close your eyes --- nothin'! It's the threat of knowing that I might have to go back

and do something like that again if I screw up that makes me stop and think about things before I do them now.

- Don't want to recidivate
- Think now before I act

8-3

The abuse they give you, and learning to deal with it.

- Punishment helped

8-4

The discipline in CORE. Without it, I would have had some new cases. But ever since I've been out, not a single new case. Still on probation, but no new cases. Before, I would just react on my emotions, on how I felt right then, but now, I stop and think.

- Discipline helped
- Think now before I act

8-5

The breaking down. In Zero platoon, they would treat you like dirt. And then they set up your growth as a goal toward reaching 1st platoon (0,3,2,1). As you achieve more, you carry it with you. I've been nothing, and now I've achieved something.

- Discipline helped

8-6

I don't ever want to go back. The punishment, man, and being away from my family. No way. It was the hardest thing I ever went through, absolutely.

- Punishment prevents recidivism

8-7

The physical training kept you in line, and made you do things that you didn't want to do but that you knew were good for you.

- Physical training helped

8-8

I think the structure part of it. Out in the world, there's an absence of structure. CORE gives you a lot of structure.

- Structure helped

#9 Thinking back to all of the experiences that you underwent in Gateway, what stands out in your mind now as being the most positive experience? What happened? Who was involved? How did you feel about it?

9-1

Graduation. Graduation was the most positive. Everybody marched out, and we were all in there together. John-Mark got up to talk, and then his dad (Reverend Carter), and I can't remember what was said, but I remember how much we had all gotten out of Gateway, and how we were all up there, one at a time, talking about it, and how our lives had changed.

- Graduation was the most positive event

9-2

It was that roofing we did, when the (TV) news people came over, and they showed it on the news. My family saw it on TV, and they were happy to see that something positive was coming out of me being in jail for so long. That made me feel good. It was the highlight for the whole year of '98. My family realized that I was in Gateway learning something, not just sitting around in jail learning how to be worse. It was a really positive thing, and really made me feel like a part of Gateway, which let me call Tom (Seraphin) and he hooked me up with this good job (\$9.50 an hour to start) that I've got now.

- Reuniting with family was most positive event

9-3

Knowing that those people at Gateway were there to help me. When you're in a boot camp like CORE, it's their job to help you. But when you go to a school like ACC, as a

college student, and the teachers there do everything they can to help you, it makes you feel like people really do care about you. CORE helps you stay away from crime, violence, and drugs. Gateway is trying to teach you something that otherwise you wouldn't have a chance to learn, and you'd end up working at a fast food chain instead of having a good job. I remember that guy that sat beside me only had a 6th grade education, but you taught him that math and blueprint reading, and he's working now and free because of it. It was things like that.

- Gateway faculty really cared about me
- Gateway helped me learn and get a good job
- CORE kept me away from crime

9-4

Gateway made me feel like I was somebody. I had never gone to school or anything. I never thought I could do the mental things I did in Gateway. When I want a job now, I just show them my resume and the Gateway diploma and they say "Okay!" Because of the math, I can think things through, and put it together in my head, and lay it out on a piece of paper. I learned how to think from math, and solve problems, and understand things better. It helped me open my mind.

- Gateway helped me learn and get a good job
- Gateway taught me how to think more clearly

9-5

Doing work for Florence's Safe House (for kids after school) in Montopolis. It felt good to actually help somebody. She does a good thing. She doesn't have a lot, but she is blessed with the gift of caring about a lot of people. It felt good to help her out, knowing that she was helping out a community like Montopolis that is terrible with drugs and crack. It felt good to help out, and to put my skills to a good use. I felt good. It takes some of the stuff that you did wrong in life, and it makes up for it.

- Public service made me feel good

9-6

The most positive thing about Gateway to me is definitely that Tom brought in 15 people from different companies, and let us sit down and interview for jobs with them when we were still in jail. Finding people that are willing to hire someone out of the CORE program can't be easy to do, so I know he must have done a lot of time-consuming research to find them. I'm sure it's not easy finding people who are willing to take a con on, and look at you as a valuable employee, and not just as a grunt laborer. They know we've learned something out of this program.

- Gateway helped me get a good job

9-7

It was the graduation. When I saw my family, and everybody else's family, and everybody cared for us, and wanted us to do good for ourselves, I felt that I had to live up to that, and repay the people that had helped us.

- Graduation was the most positive event

9-8

With Gateway, you have a totally different way of accomplishing something. CORE, of course, gave you a structure that you needed. But I think Gateway really gave us an opportunity. For a lot of these guys, and for myself, as well, you know, once you've committed a crime, society puts you in this group [of criminals]. But Gateway gives you a way out. Some of these guys had never worked before in their lives. I was totally amazed to find that 97% of the guys in CORE had dropped out of high school. And then here you are in Gateway, getting a chance to learn how to earn a living. You don't have to be out there selling drugs. You don't have to be out there robbing, and doing all that. Here, they've got an opportunity to get themselves some education, and a legitimate job. My training in Gateway is what got me through the door for this job I've applied for, and I'm down to the third interview now, and it looks like I'm really going to get it, and it's because I got certified in Gateway as having been trained on their particular brand of power tools.

- Core provides structure

- Gateway provides opportunity
- Gateway teaches how to earn a legitimate living

#10 Thinking back to all of the experiences that you underwent in Gateway, what stands out in your mind now as being the most negative experience? What happened? Who was involved? How did you feel about it?

10-1

The most negative experience was the guy who taught the electrical class. He taught us the stuff, but didn't seem to care whether we had learned it or not. He just taught it, and didn't test us much, and just left us with whatever we'd learned.

- Gateway faculty member was unprofessional

10-2

There were no negative things in Gateway.

- No negatives in Gateway

10-3

The classes were too damn short. I wish we could have stayed until 8 or 9 p.m. (instead of having to go back to jail at CORE).

- Enjoyed Gateway

10-4

There needed to be better communication between the students. If we hadn't had such a hard time communicating, we could have done more together.

- Wish students had communicated better

10-5

The electrical part of it. Teacher had us get ready for a big test, and then said, "Well, there's not really a test." If he's going to say it, then there ought to really be a test.

- Gateway faculty member was unprofessional

10-6

There was nothing negative about Gateway. I loved it. I got to be free every day while I was in jail. I got to do things that I loved to do. I got a great job. I loved it.

- No negatives about Gateway
- Gateway helped me get a good job

10-7

I got hooked up with a job at the Gateway job fair. When I got out, I found out that I couldn't get transportation to get to the job I had gotten. I was really down, because I just couldn't get there. And I was hired, and he was going to start me at \$8.25 an hour, and an apprenticeship program, but I couldn't get to the job.

- Gateway helped me get a job

10-8

Something that needs to be addressed is the part that some of the negative influences from CORE can play on cadets who are students in the Gateway program. Like the deal that happened with the Drill Instructor sneaking around [disguised in a phony beard, with a cap pulled down over his eyes, lurking behind a trash dumpster], spying on the CORE cadets in the Gateway program. That totally distracts and takes away from the experience you have here [in Gateway]. You're a cadet, but you're a student, but you're a cadet, but you're a student. Some of those DI's believe that you're just a prisoner, and you're always going to be just a prisoner, and so they treat you that way.

- Unprofessional CORE DI's can negatively effect Gateway

#11 Do you believe that these (Gateway) experiences had an impact on your life? Can you give me an example of this impact [e.g. maintaining a job, relating to other people]?

11-1

The schooling and knowledge and learning did me the most good, learning the equations and whatnot. I could still go out and layout a building site, just from what I remember from Gateway, and I could never do anything like that before.

- Education was the best thing in Gateway

11-2

Yes, it did. I have something to show for it, certificates and a diploma, showing that I went through the training, and have some experience --- maybe not much, but enough to make an employer take a second look at me. Now, I can get my foot in the door, and it makes me feel like I can get a job wherever I want. Now, I can be whatever I want to be.

- Diploma from Gateway was helpful
- I can get a job now

11-3

Yeah, it helped a lot. The best thing was the skills I learned there. Just having the opportunity to go to college. I only had my GED, but now I've got some college credits because of going through Gateway. It was a real confidence boost.

- Training was the best thing in Gateway
- Gateway helped boost my self-esteem

11-4

Yes. It helped me get along with people. In Gateway, I had to deal with people who were older, or younger, or different from me. Before, I wouldn't have been able to get along with them, or have known what to do to work together, or to get help with a problem by letting them know where I was coming from.

- Learning to get along with people was valuable

11-5

It showed me a lot, different things I can do. I look at things differently. It was an opportunity for me to learn something besides what I knew, which, at the time, was just

selling drugs. Knowing that I can build a picnic table or wire a house, I can do whatever. All the Gateway instructors were real nice. It was like a seesaw, because you have a different group of people, and they've all got different ways, and so there's a different way you've got to approach them. It's like a job. You've got a different boss on different days, and some are more intense, and it gives you a chance to look around and see the array of different people.

- Gateway training was valuable
- Learning to get along was valuable

11-6

It has made a huge impact on my life. I work on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, and have the rest of the week to just hang out with my son. It's awesome.

- Gateway helped me get job with good hours

11-7

Gateway made me want to try my best whenever I got out, and to do my best by way of thanking everybody who worked for Gateway and supported us so much.

- Gateway made me want to do my best

11-8

My experience is different from some of the other guys. I've had some college. I've had a legit job, and worked, and made money, and had everything that some of them haven't. I had a setback in my life, but then Gateway gave me another opportunity to go out there and make something out of my life. If I had gone out looking for a job, straight out of CORE, I wouldn't have done nearly so well. But coming out through Gateway, it gave me options. I had job offers, and they have afforded me and my family different avenues to earn a decent living, and I wouldn't have had that without [Gateway]. It's been very beneficial to me, and it's something I am very grateful for.

- Gateway gave me opportunities
- Gateway gave me options

#12 Which aspects of the (Gateway) program do you think influenced this impact on your life?

12-1

Nothing more to add.

12-2

Can't remember a specific part. Everything helped me --- a little of this, a little of that --- the whole program helped me out. I wish it had been even longer than six weeks (the program actually runs only 5 weeks).

- Whole program was helpful

12-3

The whole thing was important more than just any one part. I absorbed the whole thing like I was a sponge.

- Whole program was helpful

12-4

Nothing further to add.

12-5

The blueprint reading, to me, because I deal with schematics all day long. Where I'm at now, I can read a schematic like there's no tomorrow. And on my job, reading the schematic is probably one of the hardest things to do.

- Gateway training was helpful

12-6

The whole thing, but especially getting such a good job.

- Whole program was helpful
- Gateway helped me get a good job

12-7

The training, like [the life skills] class. A lot of the things I thought I couldn't do, like when [the teacher] was showing us how to figure out all the dimensions of a building, and it took us so long, and we finally got it right, and then at the end found out that we were actually doing algebra. I never thought I would ever be able to do any algebra.

- Life skills and problem solving was important

12-8

The experience of learning a trade, or learning something new. It just opened so many good doors for me and the other guys. It was a great avenue to a better life.

- Learning a trade improved his life

Layout of subjects in question #13

CORE	A
Mental and Physical Discipline	
Discipline.....	C
Exercise.....	D
Life Skills Training	
Counseling.....	E
Drug and Alcohol.....	F
Parenting.....	G
Gateway.....	B
Education	
Problem Solving.....	H
Interacting w/ Others.....	I
Developing Self-Esteem.....	J
Vocational	
Job Skills Training.....	K
Job Placement.....	L

#13 Please rate the significance of each of the following elements of the combined CORE/ Gateway program sequence in terms of its impact on you. Please rate them

on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest, and explain why you have rated them this way.

CORE drill instructors

13a-1

- 8 Most DI's are doing what they're there to do: a good job.
- DI's a positive factor

13a-2

- 7 Too many bring in problems from home and take it out on us.
- DI's a negative factor

13a-3

- 8 A small percentage are just there because they make good money.
- Some DI's are a negative factor

13a-4

- 8 Their training was important.
- DI's a positive factor

13a-5

- 8 Some DI's take the military part too seriously.
- Some DI's are a negative factor

13a-6

- 9 They did a good job at what they were doing.
- DI's were a positive factor

13a-7

8 They're the ones that put me in the state of mind that I needed to do what I had to do.

- DI's were a positive factor

13a-8

5 Some DI's were concerned with you as an individual, and some weren't. Some trust you, and make you want to do good. On the other hand, some are just hardcore military, and do nothing more than punish you.

- DI's could be positive or negative

#13b Please rate the significance of each of the following elements of the combined CORE/ Gateway program sequence in terms of its impact on you. Please rate them on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest, and explain why you have rated them this way.

Construction Gateway faculty

13b-1

9 Push to make you learn; you're going to learn it.

- Faculty was a positive factor

13b-2

8 Too many bring in problems from home and take it out on us.

- Faculty was a negative factor

13b-3

10 They helped us, just like feeding a dog that doesn't have a home.

- Faculty was a positive factor

13b-4

- 9 I learned a lot.
- Education was important

13b-5

- 10 They show you that it can be easy even if it looks hard.
- Faculty was a positive factor

13b-6

- 9 They took care of me, and helped me solve my problems. I wish I'd stayed in touch with you guys even more.
- Faculty was a positive factor

13b-7

- 8 They gave me that extra push, and some extra skills, and let me know that I could make it when I got out, that doors were open for me, and that I wouldn't have to go back to just the same things.
- Faculty was a positive factor

13b-8

- 10 I experienced a genuineness, people that were really concerned with helping you be a better person, with giving you another outlook on life.
- Faculty was a positive factor

#13c Please rate the significance of each of the following elements of the combined CORE/ Gateway program sequence in terms of its impact on you. Please rate them on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest, and explain why you have rated them this way.

Discipline and/or regulations

13c-1

- 7 Could be a good thing/could be a bad thing.
- Discipline can be good or bad

13c-2

- 9 The mix of freedom and rules was good for us.
- Discipline was a positive factor

13c-3

- 10 That's what it really takes when you get out of here, to develop the discipline to get up and go to work and stay away from bad things.
- Discipline was a positive factor

13c-4

- 10 I needed the discipline.
- Discipline was a positive factor

13c-5

- 8 It's pretty important for getting ready to be on the street.
- Discipline was a positive factor

13c-6

- 10 When I got there, I couldn't do it, and when I left, I could.
- Discipline was a positive factor

13c-7

- 10 It helped me to become more responsible, and keep my priorities straight, and do what I needed to do.
- Discipline was a positive factor

13c-8

- 7 Because of the incident [when the CORE DI came spying at Gateway]. CORE has its rules, and Gateway has its, but somehow they need to meet.
- Unprofessional behavior by DI was negative factor for discipline

#13d Please rate the significance of each of the following elements of the combined CORE/ Gateway program sequence in terms of its impact on you. Please rate them on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest, and explain why you have rated them this way.

Physical exercise

13d-1

- 10 The best thing; wish we'd had even more.
- Exercise was a positive factor

13d-2

- 9 It helped to get in shape, to get rid of the drugs and alcohol still in our system, and to, how can I say this, deal w/ being horny.
- Exercise was a positive factor

13d-3

- 7 It was good for most of the guys that went there, but I had been working in a gym before I went in, and was already in pretty good shape.
- Exercise was a positive factor

13d-4

- 10 It made me feel good, and built lots of self-esteem.
- Exercise was a positive factor

13d-5

- 10 It let the stress out, and carries on with me today in the way I have a daily workout and go running twice a day.
- Exercise was a positive factor

13d-6

- 10 They did a really good job of getting my body in shape.
- Exercise was a positive factor

13d-7

- 10 It gave me a lot of confidence in myself, and learned that I was physically capable of doing things that I didn't think I could do.
- Exercise was a positive factor

13d-8

- 9 Being an athlete myself, I know the benefits of physical exercise. It's not something that you get out in the world, and I know how much it can help. The exercise leads to a cleaner, better quality of life.
- Exercise was a positive factor

#13e Please rate the significance of each of the following elements of the combined CORE/ Gateway program sequence in terms of its impact on you. Please rate them on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest, and explain why you have rated them this way.

Psychological counseling

13e-1

- 2 Made no sense; took class just to get out of daily CORE drill.

- Not an important factor

13e-2

- 5 It was only after I was recycled (demoted back to two weeks before the beginning of the six month program), and wasn't very much, or effective.
- Not an important factor

13e-3

- 0 Had very little, and it made no real difference.
- Not an important factor

13e-4

- 10 It helped a lot.
- Counseling was an important factor

13e-5

- 5 There wasn't much of it, and what there was didn't do much good.
- Not an important factor

13e-6

- 1 When we needed it, they wouldn't let us go get it. They were trying to break us down, and get us to where we could take it.
- Not an important factor

13e-7

- ~ Did not receive counseling.

13e-8

- ~ Did not receive counseling.

#13f Please rate the significance of each of the following elements of the combined CORE/ Gateway program sequence in terms of its impact on you. Please rate them on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest, and explain why you have rated them this way.

Drug and alcohol counseling

13f-1

~ Did not take D&A.

13f-2

~ I wasn't in on a drug charge, so I didn't get sent to the D &A classes.

13f-3

5 It was like a NA meeting, and a lot of times they just baby-sat us.
• Not an important factor

13f-4

9 It was important.
• An important factor

13f-5

7 It was like an AA meeting. It would have been better out in Gateway.
• Not an important factor

13f-6

5 It was just like going to an NA meeting --- just speak your mind.
• A somewhat important factor

13f-7

7 It helps only so much, because it's still up to you when you get out.

- Success is up to the individual

13f-8

- 6 You really could not achieve any true therapeutic value. You go into this classroom setting, and you receive this information, and then you go right back into the tank with a bunch of guys that aren't in the program, and they negate and nullify everything you have just been hearing.

- Not an important factor

#13g Please rate the significance of each of the following elements of the combined CORE/ Gateway program sequence in terms of its impact on you. Please rate them on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest, and explain why you have rated them this way.

Parenting and relationship training

13g-1

- ~ Did not take parenting.

13g-2

- 10 Being with my little girl, so she remembered what I look like.
- An important factor

13g-3

- 0 My kid wasn't born yet, so I didn't go.

13g-4

- 10 It has been very important for raising my daughter with no Mom.
- An important factor

13g-5

~ Did not take parenting.

13g-6

10 I got a lot of benefits, and it was cool that they let me in the class even though I didn't have a kid yet. It was the best thing they did, actually let someone take time away from CORE to hold their kid. Just seeing them interact with their kids taught me a lot, and made me feel good about myself.

- An important factor

13g-7

~ Did not receive parenting training.

13g-8

4 I don't think the instructors were qualified to teach the class. The class started late, and all we did was just sit in there. What was most important to the other participants was that they got to see their kids. I didn't have any at the time, but I wanted to take the class, and maybe learn something.

- Was not an important factor

#13h Please rate the significance of each of the following elements of the combined CORE/ Gateway program sequence in terms of its impact on you. Please rate them on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest, and explain why you have rated them this way.

Problem solving and critical thinking

13h-1

- 8 I rate that pretty high.
- An important factor

13h-2

- 7 It was hard to think (in Gateway) after the drill instructors had yelled at me all morning. I was way too stressed to think clearly. It was too much.
- Not an important factor

13h-3

- 10 I got confident that I could do something I had never done before, and could think my way through it, even if I didn't know anything about it.
- An important factor

13h-4

- 10 I don't make the same stupid mistakes any more.
- An important factor

13h-5

- 10 Gateway had good problem solving for life situations, not CORE
- An important factor (in Gateway, not CORE)

13h-6

- ~ It's so faint in my mind, I barely remember that part of it.
- Not an important factor

13h-7

- 9 Knowing I could do something like that gave me an extra push.
- An important factor

13h-8

- 8 Instructors [at CORE and Gateway] showed a concern and a genuineness, and an interest in helping people solve their thinking problems.
- An important factor (in Gateway and CORE)

#13i Please rate the significance of each of the following elements of the combined CORE/ Gateway program sequence in terms of its impact on you. Please rate them on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest, and explain why you have rated them this way.

Learning to interact effectively with others

13i-1

- 10 Now, I can talk and work with all kinds of different people all day long.
- An important factor

13i-2

- 8 I learned how to get along with people that I had nothing in common with.
- An important factor

13i-3

- 7 I already knew how. It was really good for those that didn't.
- Not an important factor

13i-4

- 10 It made a big difference in what I do.
- An important factor

13i-5

- 10 Both CORE and Gateway taught us to come together as a team.
- An important factor

13i-6

- 10 That was the hardest part for me to learn, because, if you got into it (had a fight) with somebody, then you were out of there.
- An important factor

13i-7

- 9 It helped me get a job.
- An important factor

13i-8

- 10 It allowed me to learn how to interact with people that I have nothing in common with. I feel that it has helped me now since I've been out, because I'm still dealing with people I have nothing in common with, in a lot of situations, and I can deal with them effectively.
- An important factor

#13j Please rate the significance of each of the following elements of the combined CORE/ Gateway program sequence in terms of its impact on you. Please rate them on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest, and explain why you have rated them this way.

Developing self-esteem

13j-1

- 9 It was a big change, believing in myself and what I can do.
- An important factor

13j-2

- 10 You can sure get a lot of good out of it, if you take it right.
- An important factor

13j-3

- 10 The very best! That's what it's all about!
- An important factor

13j-4

- 10 That's the biggest thing.
- An important factor

13j-5

- 9 The Gateway instructors did a lot, and CORE taught me to go to the limit.
- An important factor

13j-6

- 10 I really believed in myself when I got out of there.
- An important factor

13j-7

- 10 That was the main thing. I had very low self-esteem when I went into jail, and with all the physical training and the training in Gateway, it went up as high as it could go.
- An important factor

13j-8

- 8 It gave me a positive outlook. When I got out, I knew I wasn't going back [to incarceration], but I still had these questions about how was I going to achieve the high standard of living that I wanted with a felony on my

record. The programs allowed me to see the light, and gave me a positive perspective.

- An important factor

#13k Please rate the significance of each of the following elements of the combined CORE/ Gateway program sequence in terms of its impact on you. Please rate them on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest, and explain why you have rated them this way.

Vocational training

13k-1

4 It didn't help me much; I already knew how to work.

- Not an important factor

13k-2

2 It has nothing to do with a job. It's all in who you know. If you get hooked up by somebody, like Tom did for me, then you can get it..

- Not an important factor

13k-3

10 It was a rude awakening to find out how much I had to learn.

- An important factor

13k-4

10 Sure. I can get jobs now.

- An important factor

13k-5

7 I got nothing in CORE. We all looked forward to maybe getting to go to Gateway, and they were right, it really helped.

- An important factor

13k-6

10 That was the most awesome part of Gateway, the job-finding skills and the resume and the computer skills. I learned a lot from it.

- An important factor

13k-7

9 The resume training helped me get a job. My boss told me that my neat resume and application is why he hired me.

- An important factor

13k-8

10 You have a lot of the [CORE] cadets and [Gateway] students that have never had a job in their life. The programs give them a lot of discipline, and the job skills, so that they can go out and get a legitimate job and earn a good living.

- An important factor

#13l Please rate the significance of each of the following elements of the combined CORE/ Gateway program sequence in terms of its impact on you. Please rate them on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest, and explain why you have rated them this way.

Job placement

131-1

- 4 I already knew what I wanted to do, so it helped others more than me.
- Not an important factor

131-2

- 10 You have a choice of how much money you want to make. You can have not just a job, but a career. You don't have to go out there and steal, or bitch about what color you are and can't get a break.
- An important factor

131-3

- 8 I made myself a connection and got myself a job at Gateway's job fair.
- An important factor

131-4

- 10 That's what got me started (reintegrating into society).
- An important factor

131-5

- 9 It was very important. The construction skills are useful. I wish there had been (a program like Gateway that was) more high tech.
- An important factor

131-6

- 10 That really was the best part, the thing I appreciated the most.
- An important factor

131-7

- 10 The job placement is what helps. If you get out [of jail], and you don't have a job or goals, you're going to go right down the drain.
- An important factor

131-8

10 The job fair brought the employers out, and they offered people jobs. But even after that, I had to call on [Mr. B, who is on the Gateway program management staff, and is responsible for job placement], and he was there, and helped me out with the things that I needed. I would still have gotten a job without him, but he was there for me, and helped me out, and I think that's a very admirable and really the very most important part of the whole program.

- An important factor

#14. How would you describe the difference in your life now as compared to how your life was before your participation in the CORE/Gateway programs?

14-1

Totally different. My life before was nothing but drugs, going downhill, hanging around with the wrong people, didn't hold a full-time job, didn't have my own place to live, not getting along with the family. Since then, everything has totally changed: not even one argument with my Mom, my brother is my best friend now, and I've got a business and a home and a family of my own.

- Before: Drug scene, bad friends, no home or job, family problems
- After: Own a home, own a business, married and child, close to family

14-2

You change, but you're still the same person. Your mind is somewhere else while you're in CORE, like you're not even living, and you miss that whole time of your life. Gateway and CORE is blocked out of my mind. I'm older now, and before, it was just my childish ways. There was trouble there before, and it's still there, but it's my choice now, and I just didn't go back to it. I don't think I've changed. I think my ways have changed, but I don't think I've changed, other than just staying away from criminal activity and looking towards the future.

- Before: Trouble, childish ways
- After: Better decisions, stay away from crime

14-3

One of the main things is the self-discipline. I'd never had a lot before, so far as being able to get up and go to work, to put up with other people that I don't get along with, and to know right from wrong. And now I have a son, and the idea that I might not be able to come home from work and throw him up in the air and play with him just tears me apart on the inside --- to think how messed up his life would be if I wasn't there for him because of some stupid shit I'd done.

- Before: No self discipline, couldn't get along with people
- After: Have a son now, and thinking of him helps me stay straight

14-4

Before, I was lost. I didn't know what I wanted, I didn't know what I could do, I didn't know anything. Whatever happened, happened. I would just react, and whatever the results were, I wouldn't even try to make it work out okay. I would not deal with the problem, or try to fix it --- nothing. I'd just hold it inside of me. I was a total mess. Now, with respect, getting along with people, learning critical thinking, being in good physical shape, and all that, you put it all together, and, if you use it right, you don't have to worry about a thing.

- Before: Lost, reactive, suppressed emotions
- Now: Think clearly, more appropriate behavior

14-5

My life before was more dealing drugs, partying, getting drunk. I never really did drugs. I was into selling them more than using them. Now it's more calmed down. I've looked at life a little bit more. I try to get into church a lot. The only thing that hurts now is no love life. My life changed dramatically because I don't think about selling drugs; I don't think about that life. I don't drink any more. I never did smoke. I'm probably the cleanest I can ever be. I know myself now.

- Before: Deal drugs, get drunk
- After: Calmed down, go to church, no dealing

14-6

I live like a legal citizen now. I don't break laws like I used to. I'm a father now, and I've had a job for a year. That's the longest job I've ever had. It's the only legal job I've ever had. Always before it was something under the table. I never actually had a job before. I was a full-time drug dealer from the time I was 17 until I went to CORE at 21. I could have done something else, but I loved the lifestyle. So, the main difference between then and now is that now I have a kid and a job, and I work and pay taxes.

- Before: Deal drugs, break laws, didn't work
- After: Legal citizen, no dealing, steady job, raising child

14-7

The difference in now and before is, now I have responsibilities. I have trust from people I have never had trust from before; like my Mom, now she trusts me a whole lot. And I've stayed clean, off drugs and alcohol. So, I feel like my life did a 360, from being an irresponsible drug user and gang member, into being a responsible father, parent, employee, and taxpaying citizen.

- Before: Used drugs, gang member, didn't work
- After: responsible father, parent, employee, and taxpaying citizen.

14-8

The difference is my positive outlook on life. Gateway and CORE had an influence on that. But also, I am a Christian, and everything that happens, I believe that my higher power allowed it to happen. I'm really thankful for the opportunity to be here talking to you now, and for the experiences I have had along the way. I listen more now, and don't take things as personally as I did before.

- Before: Negative outlook on life
- After: Christian, grateful for opportunities.

#15 How did the CORE/Gateway experience influence that change (in you life)?

15-1

Learning everything, from integrity, to motivation, to teamwork, and helping other people with what I've learned. My brother-in-law is on the run right now, and I'm trying to help him come in and face his charges. I sure would like to see him be able to get into CORE and Gateway, and get what I've gotten from that.

- Learning integrity, motivation, and teamwork

15-2

Not wanting to go back to jail: that's how I changed, not wanting to go back. Not wanting to see all those drill instructors. Not wanting to waste all that time. Most people just do six months. I got recycled and did a year. It makes me sick just thinking about it.

- Don't want to recidivate

15-3

They were there to help me in any way that they could, to learn, to develop the discipline and respect for myself, and the self-confidence. They taught me things that I never had any idea about, and made my self-esteem just go zoom, zoom, zoom, right on up. I never graduated high school, and there I was in Gateway, while I was in jail and boot camp, doing college level work. If that doesn't make you open your eyes and realize what you're capable of, then I don't know what else it could take.

- Learned, developed discipline, respect, and self-esteem

15-4

I believe that once you get the proper training, you can use that knowledge and experience in a good way for your own benefit.

- Training is a positive factor

15-5

By teaching me I could do it. I always knew I could. I just needed that kick to get me jump-started, to learn that it really was possible for me to change my life.

- Teaching me to change

15-6

I didn't want to have to go back, and go through it again. More than likely, I wouldn't get another chance at CORE and Gateway . I mess up again, and I'm gone for good (prison).

- Don't want to recidivate

15-7

By giving me the hope and the self-confidence to just go out and give it a shot. Basically, through the discipline and the job training, and getting the confidence that I could do something with my life, that there were people there to help me.

- Training is a positive factor

15-8

The structure that you get from CORE and the opportunity that you get from Gateway make the difference. The experience in Gateway of meeting new people, and getting professional training, and knowing people that have a genuine interest, and empathy for you, as opposed to the correctional side where a lot of the [DI's] just really didn't care. And once you came through Gateway, just before you get out, it gave you a feeling that, okay, there really are people that care for you, people that care about what happens to me once I get out of here. I never once here at Gateway ever heard anyone say 'well, this guy is gonna go back [to jail or prison]. He's not gonna make it.' That's something you hear everyday in CORE.

- Training is a positive factor

#16 Can you give an example of how you've solved a problem recently in a way that is different from how you might have dealt with it before?

16-1

At the gas station the other day, a drunk came on me in a confrontation, and wanted to go on me blow for blow. I could have stomped him, and lots of people standing around wanted me to. But if they'd been through what I have, they'd know that it doesn't mean anything to whoop somebody, it just doesn't mean a thing, especially a drunk just talking trash for nothing. Before I was in CORE and Gateway, it wouldn't have been able to just get in my truck and drive away.

- Learned to avoid fights

16-2

If my car payment or bills or something was due, before, I'd probably go steal something, just to get the money, because I know I can do it, and I know I can get away with it, in my mind, you know, I'm thinking that, and, most of the time, I did get away with it. Now, I'd rather ask somebody for a loan and owe them, instead of going out there and stealing and taking that chance. You get caught, you know, and then --- damn, there go years of your life.

- Learned to solve problems by legal means

16-3

I had an asshole superintendent at a house I was finishing. This guy had been giving us a lot of trouble already for a week over nothing. It was raining, and we had the windows open for some air, but the rain wasn't coming inside. This guy comes marching in, and was cussing at us and getting on us. I just looked at him, and laughed, and turned around and walked away, instead of cussing back at him or fighting, and let my crew leader deal with it.

- Learned to avoid fights

16-4

Before, my girlfriend was always acting up, and it would drive me crazy, and I would always end up with another case. That was how I ended up in CORE. But after I got out, the same thing would happen, that person would still be like I was before, and I would just walk off. I learned in cognitive thinking class to picture a stop sign, and stop and think, and think about what was going to happen, and don't react in the same old way. I'd just tell her that this situation didn't feel right, and that I was just gonna go on, and she could do whatever she wanted to, but I was leaving. I left her the car and everything, and just took off walking. I do that all the time now, with anybody.

- Learned to avoid fights

16-5

I've seen people that I dislike, that before I would have jumped at the chance to fight them. I'm in very good physical shape, and I've learned a lot of martial arts. It wouldn't be hard to beat somebody now, but I've learned that I can always walk away from a fight. I can just let somebody talk, and be more of a man, and just walk away from it.

- Learned to avoid fights

16-6

I got a ticket the other day and actually paid for it. I'd never really done that before. I don't know how many times I had to send off \$2,000 for back tickets.

- Learned to solve problems by legal means

16-7

My financial situation. Now, I have a lot of bills to pay. Before, I would of said "forget it, I'm not going to work, I'm quitting work, I'm tired." But now that I've been through all this, and I've come so far, I know I have to wake up early in the morning and go do what I've got to do.

- Learned to be responsible

16-8

Being in a relationship. Before I got into CORE and Gateway, I was just single and really didn't have anyone to answer to or be responsible to. I can tell a big difference now, because I'm in a relationship, and I have a lot of responsibilities, and I have two kids as well. I'm able to handle that a lot better because of the experience of Gateway and CORE. Patience is a biggie, and I learned a lot of patience through the programs.

- Learned to be responsible
- Learned patience

#17 What did you imagine your future to be before CORE/Gateway?

17-1

I wanted to own my own company, but didn't have the right path to get there, and that wasn't happening. The path I was on was either going to lead me to the penitentiary, or to being dead, until I went through CORE and Gateway.

- Going to penitentiary
- Path towards death

17-2

In and out of jail. I'd probably have become a pretty good criminal. I would have just stayed focused on that. That would have become my job skill. That was my whole life --- criminal behavior, gangs, stuff like that. I was more of a car thief than a burglar, and the first time I broke into a house, it was an assistant district attorney, and I got caught. But before, I think I would've been looking towards low income housing, and poverty, not having the confidence that I have right now --- knowing that I'm going to make money, and that everything'll be okay.

- Criminal behavior
- Low income housing
- Poverty and unemployment

17-3

I knew that the jobs I'd had weren't much, and that I could accomplish more, but I just did not have the self-discipline to do it.

- No self-discipline

17-4

I didn't even have sense enough to think about the future. I just thought about the day, and what was happening right now, and what was gonna happen in the next 20 or 30 minutes. I didn't do an inventory check. I didn't think, I just lived day by day, and however I felt, that was what I was gonna do.

- Lived day by day
- Acted out my feelings

17-5

Prison. Prison, a long time. Living the life I was living, it was really going to be either prison or dying. Even at the time, I wished there was some way I could have gotten out of it, but I was in so deep, too deep to get out. You'd look both ways, but all the doors were closed. You only have one path, and it either led to prison time or death.

- Prison-bound
- Path towards death

17-6

I thought I was going to be able to do that shit forever (drug dealing). I wasn't at the level that I thought I would ever get caught, and have to quit doing it. I didn't expect much out of life, or think that I would really get very far. I had dropped out of school and gotten a GED at 17, I hadn't gone to college, and I never thought in a million years that if I ever did quit selling drugs that I would get a good job like I have now as an engineer. And I never, ever thought that I would actually want to settle down with a woman and have a kid.

- Drug dealing
- School dropout

17-7

I thought I was going to end up being in prison for a long time. Basically, I just thought I was going to be in prison. I was glad I had a chance to go to CORE. When I went to CORE, I didn't even imagine I would get to go to Gateway. I just thought that I was going to go to prison for a while, and then get out, and be a felon --- be in prison for a long time, and be forgot about.

- Going to penitentiary

17-8

I really thought I was going to be going to prison. My father passed away, and I kind of gave up on life, and held a lot of things in instead of using my resources, and I let things get the best of me, and I developed a substance abuse problem. That led to the attitude,

and the problems I had to face with the law after I got into an altercation with a guy. It's something that I now know today I could have walked away from, but at the time I couldn't. Everything was dark. All I could see was incarceration. I had left a good job, and just started living the party life, staying up all night, chasing girls, and jet-setting and all that, and once all the legitimate money ran out, I started hustling [dealing drugs], and that whole trip is a dead end. No way you can win. What I saw at the end of that game was death, destruction, and life in an institution.

- Prison-bound
- Path towards death

#18 What do you imagine your future to be now?

18-1

I imagine myself employing about 15-20 people here in Austin, owning and running a reputable company, and having 2 or 3 more kids, and making their life and my wife's the best they can be.

- Own and grow a business
- Raise a family

18-2

I'm going to be on a sailboat in three years, my own sailboat, just chillin' out. As much as I'll be making on this job, I don't even need to save any. That'll just be two checks to make a good down payment on a nice boat. And I'll have a nice car and a nice house, maybe start with a trailer house and some land, and build a house, have a nice place. I guess that is a pretty big change, isn't it?

- Own a house, a car, and a sailboat

18-3

Bright. I have goals, more goals. I want to give more back. I want to stand out from everybody else by having these goals that I want to reach. I want to get my electrician's

license, go back to school, raise my son, make more money, and pay off the new car that I've bought. This has all helped me tremendously.

- Give back to the world
- Get electricians license
- Continue education
- Raise son

18-4

I know what I'm gonna do in my future now, what my goals are. I think about what I'm doing, and how it's gonna affect me now, and what's gonna happen from it in 2 or 3 years. Now, I can fix a problem before it even happens. My plan now is to go into the service --- into the Marines. I've already got a recruiter. I still have to wait until I get off probation, but that's just the way it goes. I'm gonna go to court and ask for an early release, and since I made it okay through intensive probation and haven't had any dirty U.A.'s, I think I'll probably get it. The Marines will be a good thing for my daughter, with the health benefits and everything like that. Boot camp is the reason I want to go in the service, because I found out that it would fit me perfectly.

- Join the Marines

18-5

I have goals now. I got another chance on life. I have had a chance to make a change. Now, I want to get my Bachelor's degree, in computer science or electrical engineering, and that's what I plan to do. It's a hard degree, with all the math, but that's what I'm interested in, and what I want to do now. And I can do it now. It's a goal that I've set for myself.

- Get my degree

18-6

Just like it is right now. I'm going to be a father, and a husband, and pay my taxes and have a job and raise a family. I'm about to get back into school, like my wife is already doing full-time while she has a part-time job, and get my Associates degree in engineering. My job will pay 90% of the cost of education as long as I make A's.

- Raise a family
- Continue my education

18-7

I've got so many goals, I can't hardly --- what I got planned right now, after I finish paying off this six month lease on my apartment, I'm going to get a trailer home and own my own land. I barely got my first credit card; I'm using it, and paying it off. I'm building up my credit with my credit card and my new car, making my payments on time. I'm 19. In two years, hopefully, I'll trade in the car. By then, I'll be already paying on a trailer home. And then, if everything goes good, and I get a better job, by the time I'm 25, I want to be in and paying for my own house, own my own home. And if I can get in a better job, get into a career, I plan on putting her [indicating his three-month old daughter in his lap] through college. By the time she gets that old, I want to have the house paid off, have some credit, and have some tuition money saved for her.

- Build up credit
- Buy a home
- Save for daughter's college tuition

18-8

It's lovely, lovely. Hope. Optimism. Everyday is sunshiny and beautiful, like it is now [the interview was held on the first clear day after weeks of rain]. Today I have a choice. Today I have a future. I'm working now, I've got an even better job lined up, I just bought a brand new car two weeks ago. Everything's going pretty good.

- Hope and optimism

#19. What have I not asked you that you know I need to hear from you to better understand what you have learned from your experience in CORE/Gateway?

19-1

There are some things in CORE that I don't think have anything to do with straightening a person out: making you eat every bite of your food, or else wear it on your head; giving you only two minutes to shower, or else having to go roll in the mud; eating with your heels together, or else you have to eat standing up. Small things, that you can handle, but that don't do anything to straighten you out and that I don't think need to take place, like waking up at 2 in the morning to find a drill instructor squeezing toothpaste on everybody's face while they are sleeping, then tickling them so they'll rub it in. There's no need for those kind of things, and then laughing about it, and playing games like that.

- Some CORE DI's act unprofessionally

19-2

The graduation was the best of all. I felt like I had something to show for my time. I got my GED, and never had a graduation, and never thought I'd go to college or any school again. At graduation, my Mom was real happy, real proud, not proud that I was in jail, but proud I was doing something good. She's been working for the Sheriff for 20 years, you know, and in her mind, this helped her know that I wasn't acting bad.

Something you need is more time to get alone with the individuals, you know, individually --- not the whole class, and ask them what they want to do and what they want to be. Like when you help each person prepare their own resume, talk to them individually, and see what's on their mind, and just talk to them a couple of minutes, like you and I are. You can find out pretty quick whether they are going to go out and do crimes again, or really get a job, or what.

- Graduation was a positive factor
- Students need more individual time with faculty

19-3

Some of the drill instructors are just cops, and don't have any military bearing, or do any good. They can't even march or call cadence (while we march). The D.I.'s need to care, and not just be there bragging about how much they're getting paid to put up with us. Some of them seem to just care about getting the paycheck and not about helping the

cadet's change. They just have this attitude that 'yeah, I'm an asshole, but I'm a cop, and you can't do nothing about it'.

- Some CORE DI's act unprofessionally

19-4

The drill instructors at CORE sometimes bring things to work with them. If they are angry about something at home, sometimes they took it out on us. I had to learn that it didn't matter how they felt or how they acted, that if you couldn't handle the way they acted, that you hadn't learned anything yet. Even if they were mad, and it wasn't fair --- no big deal, you were alive, and think of what you've got. It doesn't make any difference. Use what you know to your benefit.

- Some CORE DI's act unprofessionally

19-5

Everybody has the will to change. Everybody. It's in there. You've just got to find it, and bring it out, and help people change their life. Help people do the inner part, and learn how to change. What does it feel like to be different? It's all right not to sell drugs; it's all right not to fight; it's all right not to drink. You have to look at the chance you have now. And if you don't have any money or family to back you, you go to prison. It's all about money and politics.

- People benefit from learning how to change their lives

19-6

The job is the most important part of the program. Guys that don't go through this program, and don't have a job lined up when they get out, are much less likely to succeed. Or if they get a job and they're only making \$7 an hour, instead of \$11 like I'm making, the less likely they are to succeed. I guarantee you that 90% of the people that are going through the program are going through it because of drugs, and that's a really hard thing to get out of. Money is the only thing that's going to solve their problem. The main thing is getting a good job.

- A good job is the most important thing

19-7

They're good programs. Y'all do as much as you can to help a person, and that's all that needs to be done basically. You do all that you can, and from there, you send them out of the nest. But, at least they were given a chance, and another chance is something not too many people get. Not too many people that go to jail get to go to boot camp, and, then on top of that, get some college hours and some training, and then get sent on their way. It's that extra chance that y'all's programs give, not too many people get when they commit a crime, and that's the best thing about it, Gateway and CORE.

- People benefit from learning how to change their lives

19-8

No additional information.

Appendix D

Coding categories

Personal data

1. + Married
2. + Child
3. + Steady job
4. + Good income
5. + Going to school

Life skills

6. + Learning about teamwork
7. + Learning to take orders
8. + Learning to learn
9. + Learn to get along with people
10. + Learning good values
11. + Learning problem solving
12. + Learning how to change my life

CORE

13. - CORE D.I. acting unprofessionally
14. + Physical fitness training and exercise
15. + Discipline
16. + Don't want to go back to jail

Gateway

17. - Gateway instructor acting unprofessionally
18. + Graduation: sense of accomplishment
19. + Employability and job placement
20. + Perform community service

Note. + = positive factor, - = negative factor

Appendix E

Schedule of Typical Day for CORE/Gateway student

4:00 am	Reveille for CORE Cadets (shower, shave, dress)
4:15 am	Physical Fitness Training (run 2-4 miles, 100 push-ups, etc)
6:30 am	Breakfast (bologna sandwich)
7:00 am	Transport to Austin Community College
8:00 am	Gateway Classes begin for the morning
12:00 pm	Lunch break (bologna sandwich)
12:30 pm	Gateway Classes resume for the afternoon
3:30 pm	Gateway Classes end for the day/Capital Area Training Foundation program manager conducts conferences with students as needed
4:00 pm	Transport back to Travis County Correctional Complex
5:00 pm	Drill and Physical Fitness Training
6:00 pm	Supper (bologna sandwich)
7:00 pm	Clean boots and equipment
8:00 pm	Taps (lights out)