

## FS News: Ch-Ch-Ch-Changes Edition

Hello Lifelong Learners ~

I hope you all are easing into your unique way of living with constant change, because this is what the foreseeable future promises for us. We are in a liminal time...between who we were before tech took over our lives and how we will decide to live in the world together in the future.

Rising costs and rising surveillance techniques expose our limitations and vulnerabilities, but if we stay curious and open to learning, we will be able to 'think on our feet' to navigate our lives through the upheaval. We prepare for a healthy future by keeping our body strong, flexible and well nourished, and this perspective also applies to our mind.

This is a 'critical thinking' edition, to try to add a few more perspectives for your consideration to make life more satisfying as we all deal with constant change.

THANK YOU, DONORS, for making this newsletter possible!

### REENTRY TIP: LEARN TO TYPE!

Texting, emailing, writing resume's and other documents, and pretty much every job requires us to use computers. One-finger typing is slow and difficult. If you can, practice typing as much as you can!

### HACK FOR YOUR JOB APP

Some folks say that 'white fonting' helps you get past the initial application screening, when an artificial intelligence bot or digital filter might scan résumés and look for keywords. White Fonting is when you change the color of your letters to white, then add the text to your résumé. A human will not see it, but digital filters will. This trend comes at a time when about half of all employers are turning to technology, including artificial intelligence, for hiring. "Does it work? Yeah," says Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic, chief innovation officer at staffing firm Manpower. Some systems expose all letters, however, so include the white fonting as if you believe a human will read it. After all, if your resume passes AI, a human WILL read it. "You want to be trustworthy from the beginning," said Marisol Maloney, a tech recruiter at defense contractor Firebird AST. "The truth always comes out."

FREE NATIONAL REENTRY PUBLICATION! Write for your copy! "Mapping Your Future – National Reentry Guide" (available in English and Spanish). Send your request to:

Education Justice Project  
1001 South Wright Street  
Champaign, IL 61820

NATIONAL REENTRY HELPLINE! Take note!!

The National Reentry Network  
1200 U Street, NW  
Washington D.C. 20009  
info@thereentrynetwork.org  
National Reentry Helpline (24/7): 844-916-2577

### SUPPORT FOR ROBERTA BELL

Last month, I shared a story here about former Louisiana correctional officer Roberta Bell who lost her job when she took care of a baby born to an incarcerated mom. (The mom was released two months after her son's birth and they both live with Ms. Bell now.) When I read the story, I did not see any way to support Ms. Bell. A FS newsletter reader checked in with me last week and asked if there was a Go-Fund-Me page her and when I went back to the article, I found that there is! If you know of folks who would like to support her as she sets up a place for other incarcerated moms to place their children until they release, you can direct folks to the page here: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/the-serenity-centers>

MARK MANSON's Newsletter asks us to think about WHY:

He says "Three questions that determine 99% of the happiness in your life:

1. What am I working on and why? 2. Who am I spending time with and why? 3. How well am I treating my body and why?" He concluded with "Everything else is noise."

Is this true for you? Test it out to see! For me, it's kind of true: I think it's important to ask why...yes, but I think it's just as important to ask "Why not?" Why not push my limits and race my car on the ice? Why not live without running water when my children are tots to understand, slightly, what it was like for most people throughout history? Why not build a powerful reentry tool for a nation that claims to be a democracy while it locks up more citizens than any other country? Why not question everything? ~ : )

Speaking of contrarian questioning, Dan Pink, best-selling author of *To Sell is Human*, *The Power of Regret*, *A Whole New Mind* (and many more) says that, in addition to writing a TO DO LIST, we should also write a TO DON'T LIST. He recommends that we "write down all of the things you DON'T want to do anymore. Look at the list each day. Treat the list equally as important as your To Do list. Don't do the things any more...and then start to fill your time with the things from the To Do list!"

TOM ASACKER: It's a bird! It's an... X?

I'm sure you've heard the news. Twitter has been "rebranded."

From a cute little bird. To a dystopian-looking X.

So what? It's a publicity stunt.

Musk's malarkey is largely irrelevant (or at least it should be).

Because what matters is what you are up to. What you're trying to create.

Are you launching a new venture? Or perhaps hoping to grow an existing one?

Either way, you're also immersed in branding. But branding as a continuous, progressive process.

One that answers some very simple questions.

Who. Who informs everything you'll do. Your perspective and intention. Your look, feel, thoughts and behaviors.

Your vision of the future. Who is your karma.

Because who you choose to focus on, will ultimately define who you become.

What. What is your laser focus. Your passion. Your unique point of view and expertise. It's your daring, meaningful and believable value proposition. The one that attracts your who.

What is your why. It gets you up in the morning.

How. How communicates your what, your passionate point of view. How is the motivating language, stories and experiences you create and share. How is your art and your voice. It sets you apart from others who say they do what you do.

Successful branding is simple. Who, what and how. Yes, it requires nuance, subtlety and focus.

But it's simple nonetheless. What's hard is the discipline and unwavering belief necessary to pull it off.

"One of the really tough things is figuring out what questions to ask. Once you figure out the question, then the answer is relatively easy." ~ Elon Musk

I THOUGHT DEMS WERE AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY:

In July 2021, Attorney General Merrick Garland declared a moratorium on executions while the DOJ reviews its execution policies and procedures. He noted "[s]erious concerns have been raised about the continued use of the death penalty across the country, including arbitrariness in its application, disparate impact on people of color, and the troubling number of exonerations in capital and other serious cases." The same Merrick Garland - appointed by Democratic President Joe Biden - pursued the death penalty for Robert Bowers and, on Aug. 3, 2023, achieved it's goal. Where are the activists???

TOP 5 NATIONS THAT EXECUTE THEIR CITIZENS

This is a reflection about how each nation treats - and builds - its citizenry.

China, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and the U.S., in that order.

As far as how MANY of our citizens are housed in prisons? According to World Population Review, "when looking at both incarceration rates as well as the number of people incarcerated, the United States is ranked the highest in the world." (STILL)

FS CHANGES:

Like everything around us, Fair Shake is in a state of change as well. Sadly, no large donations have come our way here so we have to reduce costs where we can and yes, the newsletter is changing. FS spends about

\$450 each month sending messages, and more than 120 hours of time. To cut back on both, I'll be sending the news every other month, with shorter responses and fewer messages. This will save nearly \$3000 each year and I'll have the time I need to get the for-profit business off the ground. I'm getting close...but I haven't been able to consistently apply the time that it takes to get all of the pieces in place. I'll let you know when I'm ready to sell products to fund Fair Shake!

#### WISCONSIN COMMUTATION CAMPAIGN –

The organizers of WISDOM, a Christian prisoner advocacy organization said: "We call on Governor Tony Evers to consider requests to commute sentences that are excessive" If this sounds like something you and your supporters would like to get behind, write to [wisdomcommutation@gmail.com](mailto:wisdomcommutation@gmail.com) to get involved.

#### SHARE YOUR STORIES AND POETRY:

The Incarcerated Writers Project extends a special invitation to incarcerated writers to submit their work on an ongoing basis. Writers may submit work by mail at no fee. They accept submissions in the following categories:

Fiction (up to 5,000 words) Nonfiction (up to 5,000 words) Poetry (up to 5 pages)

All submissions are eligible for general print and/or online publication. All published writers will receive a copy of one print journal and may be eligible for an honorarium if included in a print edition. All submissions will receive a response. Send your work in a standard envelope on standard size 8.5 x 11 paper. All work must be previously unpublished. Only one submission per genre is accepted for review, but each writer can include work of all three genres in one submission. The editors will return manuscripts with hand-written feedback, and if applicable, possible offers for publication.

Writers should send their work to:

Incarcerated Writers Project: phoebe Journal  
George Mason University  
The Hub Suite 1201, MSC5  
4400 University Drive  
Fairfax, VA 22030

#### QUOTES to PONDER:

"Prison is not where you are, it's about where you're not..." - Bob Stinson

"Resentment is like taking poison and waiting for the other person to die." - old adage  
(1943 Christian Monitor: "Hate is a poison more deadly to the hater than the hated.")

"Three can keep a secret, if two of them are dead." Benjamin Franklin

"In school, rarely do we learn how data become facts, how facts become knowledge, and how knowledge becomes wisdom." - Neil deGrasse Tyson

"If the old walls aren't putting any color in your life, then it's time for some new paint." - Clifton Posey

"Live for tomorrow as you remember the past that brought you forward." - Shane Berg

'It is no measure of health to be well adjusted to a profoundly sick society.' - J. Krishnamurti

To our successful transitions!

Ubuntu and gratitude, ~ sue

As always, after release, remember to find support in your phone-gizmo: 2-1-1 Fairshake.net  
FindHelp.org HelpYourselfTherapy.com Reentry Helpline: 844-916-2577

Newsletters are available at FairShake.net for your family and friends to read or print.