



Newsletter, Autumn 2017



COUNT ON IT!



Sometimes, your head may be so full of hurt, or anger, or sadness or self-loathing that you know exactly what people mean when they say, “I can’t think straight.” Maybe something kicked off on the wing, or a decision was made that didn’t go the way you wanted. Perhaps some news from home, or just an accumulation of memories and years of a hard life set it off.

As a reaction to feeling overwhelmed, you might go into a freeze and want to sleep all the time, or get out of your head with whatever drugs are around, or feel like you’ve just got to keep moving, or that you want to punch something, or hurt yourself. These reactions may have served you well in the past, giving you a feeling of safety or relief from the feelings. Maybe reacting like that gave you a sense of control over life.

It’s awful being hijacked by your emotions. No one enjoys being in the middle of it. And even as it’s happening, part of you knows there is another way of being with all the strong feelings. You sense that there is a way of slowly unravelling the thoughts that led up to these feelings, but you just can’t get to it. So where on earth do you start when you are being swamped by feelings?

Of the options above, keeping moving is probably the best, if you’ve got excess energy. Running, the rowing machine, spinning, sun salutations or the strong standing postures of yoga help take some of the heat out of what’s going on inside.

Afterwards, as you are cooling down, make use of your breath and mind together. Even if you feel unable to exercise, but are completely stuck, maybe curled up on your bed in a foetal position, you can still use your breath. Making it a little deeper and counting your out-breaths up to 10 really brings relief. When

you count, don’t try to figure anything out, or make things better. You don’t have to get anything right. Let it be simple: just count your breaths. When you count, what’s happening (without you trying) is that your attention is on the breath, not on the thoughts and feelings. Your attention might drift back to the thoughts, but that’s okay: just bring it back to counting the breath.

If you start out lying down, bring yourself to sit upright on a chair or the edge of your bed after about five minutes of counting. (Sometimes, I spend five minutes unable to get much past ‘2’ and just have to keep going back to start at ‘1’ again and again. That’s okay too.)

If after 15 or 20 minutes of counting your breath (including losing count and starting again at 1, which you may have to do lots of times), you notice that you feel different inside, bring your attention to that feeling as you continue to count. Appreciate that feeling

without using words. Is it completely calm? Could it be deeper? What happens if you just keep counting for another 10 minutes, without looking for anything, just continuing to absorb yourself in the counting?

When the whirlwind of your feelings has died down and you let go of the counting, and stand up and go about your day, you may find you are in a better place to understand what was happening. You may be able to clarify this by writing about what was going on (including writing to us here at the PPT). Or you may find you’re able to talk with someone about what was going on, or do some art or poetry or something else creative.

You have a great capacity for peace and understanding. Counting the breath is an easy, free way of developing these qualities, even in the thick of an emotional storm.



Finding peace through the breath
in Winchester Prison



ABOUT THE PRISON PHOENIX TRUST

The Prison Phoenix Trust supports prisoners in their spiritual lives through meditation, yoga, silence and the breath. It recommends breath-focussed stretches and meditation sensitively tailored to students’ needs. This safe practice offers students ultimate peace of mind. The PPT encourages prisoners and prison staff through correspondence, books, CDs, newsletters, free taster workshops and weekly classes.



Love Sam – and Lucy, Sally, Jason,
Clive, David, Kaye, Victoria & Brent



**“May the Great
Mystery make sunrise
in your heart.”**

~ Sioux blessing

Check out the yoga and meditation column each month in Inside Time and tune into our radio programme 3 times a week on National Prison Radio.



From HMP Lewes

Dear Eleanor,

Your empathy and understanding have gone a long way in helping me delve deep inside myself, making it easier to deal with my demons. You allowed me to see that the fire that was inside me burnt brighter than the fire that blazed around me. Yoga and meditation can bring me one with myself.

While I was on bail I was alienated by people that were meant to be my friends. I came into this place thinking that I was dumped by society, written off so to speak. You showed me that regardless of what I done in my lowest moment, that I still had a place in society. You played a big part in saving my life. I would like to write (if I'm allowed once I am released) to fill you in on how life is going.

Yours,
A friend

Dear friend,

Yes, it would be great to keep in touch after you leave prison. The Prison Phoenix Trust's work includes exchanging letters with people after they are released, which, as we all know, is a really difficult time, especially in the first few months or years. There are some people who have been out of prison for many, many years – decades even – who we are still in touch with. So yes, do stay in touch. I would love to hear how your life works out after prison. You built up so much confidence



From HMP Lewes, for Eleanor

and inner strength to help you deal with whatever arises. I wish you all the best for now, and hold you in my thoughts.

Eleanor



From HMP Isle of Wight

For ten months now I have been in prison - in Parkhurst for six having been moved from HMP Exeter. When I first got here I found it unbelievably mentally hard to adjust to my new surroundings, being my first time in prison and my last. I felt that I needed something to help calm down my worrisome mind to control my anxiety and to focus my mind. I started listening to National Prison Radio and all the tunes and the shows have been a great help. I came across the *Freedom Inside* show on Sundays and within minutes I had found what I was looking for: in cell yoga and meditation sessions. I found that it really helped me find inner peace. The one hour sessions are told in a very easy to understand way; I didn't think yoga and meditation was for me. I thought it was only for posh people (lol). I am hoping you can send me a free copy of the CD and one of your books?

From HMP Barlinnie

For many years I've had an interest in meditation but never really practised it, but in the last year I have been trying out mindfulness exercises. After reading your book *Peace Inside* recently, in my view there doesn't seem to be much difference between the two, mindfulness is maybe a more modern way of saying meditation which can only be a good thing if it helps more people.

The mindfulness exercises have helped me cope while inside both on the external and internal aspects of my situation. I have now started to meditate a bit more. I'm a bit limited as my cell mate is never out so I do what I can, usually at the start of the day. I find this helps clear my mind a little and lets me plan what I'll do for that day, giving me some focus rather than thinking of the usual "ifs" and "whys", plus "what will happen in the future".

I am short term although long enough to be 'conditioned' to prison life. Soon I'll be leaving to spend the rest of my sentence outside on licence. The prospect



Prisoners'

of release is changing the way I'm thinking from the 'stability' of prison life to the apprehension and anxiety of getting out and then staying out. I get the feeling that I'll be in a war of attrition as I do everything I can to make sure I don't break my conditions while the authorities try and find anything they can to bring me back in – a bit cynical perhaps but that's the perception.

To help me I know I will need to focus on my meditation to clear my mind, allow me to arrange each day in a safe manner and very importantly, have a positive outlook on my situation – I am an eternal pessimist. Therefore I am wondering if there are any other aids which will help me focus even more, help me to carry out immediate assessments of my situation, help me to get rid of any negative thoughts, basically have control of the way I think – have a positive regime. I really do want to restart my life without the possibility of ending back in prison. My social worker mentioned Buddhist meditation but I'm not sure if that would help.

From IRC Morton Hall

Your recent letter and the book about meditation have been very useful. I am getting better day by day. The yoga really works wonders for me.



Nowadays I have not been using antidepressants at all as I used to when I was outside. I started going to the gym but I found that very tiring and I can sleep the whole night. But I don't have similar experiences with the yoga. Whenever I do the yoga it seems a big burden has been lifted from my entire body and my confidence level rises up.

I feel motivated by your letters and the books and CDs you sent. I have not got a job in the detention centre now so it also raises up my spirit and confidence, even though I had a major setback last week because the Home Office refused my release from detention centre. But the yoga is helping me to cope with some day to day life challenges, hopes and disappointments.

I will try again, and perhaps next time my bail will be granted. Everything will happen at the right time and at the right place.

Letters



From
Discovery
House

I've just finished a yoga session with a man I know only as "Les". He comes to Discovery House, a locked rehab in Lincoln every Monday. I'm just so grateful that he comes. When I first started yoga, I found it really hard to stay motivated because I was in a really bad place, but I stuck with it until we did a session about the yogic voice, the woodcutter, something like that. It was a terrific ice-breaker and it relaxed me and we were able to connect. Now I don't miss a session if I can help it. Like today I felt so much brighter doing yoga with Les; he brings out the best in me. It frees up my mind and, not because I'm actively looking to feel better but because I am so absorbed in the work that my mind does the work while I'm not looking. I'm finding it hard to explain. Les says, "Yoga works." I think that is the best and simplest way to put it.

I am working hard to put myself to rights again, but it is hard when you



have mental health problems because it is hard to recognise when you are actually ill. At least, it is that way for me. I recently had an episode and I tried to get an electric socket out of the wall. The next day I had an emotional hangover and spent the whole day asleep. Then the day after I made myself get up, made myself have a shower, made myself have breakfast and I did it again today. Then I had yoga, I've gotten over the hill quicker. I worked hard in yoga today; I put a lot in and I came out grinning like an idiot. I FELT BETTER. What Les brings onto the ward is so valuable and I knew your entire Trust must work hard to bring people relief in tough situations. I don't think about how I am locked down and detained when we're doing yoga; the entire world is contained inside the small room where we are working, everything else is forgotten. My ex sent me a letter that I got this morning and in it she told me she wanted to die and wrote down a lot of painful soul-searching. Earlier I was going to react angrily to her for doing that to me. Now I have had time to think and relax. I think I will still tell her I am angry but I can and will integrate compassion into my response. Things are going to be OK. Thank you for doing the work you do so good men like Les can help heal

messed up lives like mine.

p.s. I'm asking for the *Peace Inside* book. I think it will be like my AA literature, like people walking together as peers who are drawn together by the same struggle (detention) but who are all different. By sharing I really believe we can help each other, even from afar. It's a great idea. Whoever had it deserves a clap on the back!

From HMP Risley

For three weeks now, I've been doing yoga and meditation from your book *Freeing the Spirit*.



I feel more relaxed and stress free and more at peace within my own head. Also I have found it a lot easier to give up smoking since starting. The illustrations in the book are a massive help, with the pictures being so big and colourful. It's easy to see which position I should be in. The guy who drew them, Korky Paul, should get some thanks for that. I still can't complete the full 12 cycles of the sun salutations but I am getting there. Seven is my best so far!



Meditation Corner

How would you describe the feeling of needing to smoke? Perhaps it is like feeling hungry and needing something to eat. You get irritable. You can't focus. You notice other people smoking. You convince yourself that the only way you'll ever feel better again is if you light up. It sneaks up on you. Bored? Have a smoke. After a meal? Time for a smoke. Stressful situation? Smoke. And now everyone's worried about smoking being banned. Best reach for that fag whilst you can!

On the other hand, maybe you're tired of the demands that smoking makes on you. There is always a sneaking feeling that life can run acceptably without smoking. It might even clear your lungs and give you better health. More cash to spend on other things is always useful.

Meditation can help you feel less dependent on smoking. But really this needs to be done on the fly, when the urge hits you. You probably know that the desire for a cigarette often arises in a social setting - during association on your wing, queuing for the phone or feeling

Where's My Fag?



By Jason

anxious before a hearing. These are probably not times where you want others to know that you are trying to meditate, so let's be unobtrusive about it.

This practice requires focus and the breath is always effective for focussing. It seems appropriate that clear breathing will be one of the benefits of not smoking, and so your personal oxygen tank can become your new pack of fags. As soon as you notice the first hint of needing a smoke, immediately start to focus upon your breath. Notice the cool air entering the nose, travelling through the nostrils, through the tiny hairs and then down to the back of the throat. Your chest and belly will expand and then pause for a short while - notice how the air stops moving as it is absorbed into the lungs and carried around the body. Now the chest gradually empties and the used, stale air is pushed



silently out of the nose. The process starts again, and with every inhalation clean air is allowed to circulate. There is no need to light up - just keep noticing this exchange of air in the same way you would draw on your cigarette. Enjoy the feeling and know that breathing is the key to feeling relaxed and free from stress.

Once you begin mastering your breathing, you will find the need to smoke diminish quite naturally - and you will have the satisfaction of knowing that the breath is always with you, no matter what the situation.

The Eight Limbs of Yoga



By Victoria



The eight limbs of yoga are skills to help you find more peace and self-awareness. They come from *The Yoga Sutras*, an ancient yoga philosophy text.

The limbs are guidelines for a meaningful and purposeful life. A recipe for ethical conduct and self-discipline, they focus on your physical and mental health and can make the spiritual aspect of life stronger. The philosophy outlined in *The Yoga Sutras* says that through clarity, intuition and understanding the timeless nature of the Self, we can reduce the knee jerk reactions that create problems. Many people who regularly practise yoga try to work on all aspects of the eight limbs. While reading this, you may have ideas about how you can work on each of the limbs.

Just like practising the postures and movements of yoga, the other seven limbs are part of a developing journey, a work in progress for our whole life. To the right is a list of the eight limbs, and below, more detail on the first two. “Restraint” is how both *yama* and *niyama* are usually translated from Sanskrit, the original language of *The Yoga Sutras*.



Yamas

These are five attitudes which influence our behaviour and help us develop ethical standards and a sense of integrity. They are universal practices that relate to the Golden Rule of *the Bible*, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” While often understood as things to not do, they are also encouragement to act in positive ways.

- **Non Harming**
Not causing physical violence or harm to others or ourselves. Non-harming helps us to practise compassion, respect for others, patience, love, self-worth and understanding. It involves us being aware of how our thoughts, words and actions can cause hurt, sadness or other negative emotions.
- **Truthfulness**
Honesty, forgiveness, non-judgement, owning your feelings, using mindful communication, developing tolerance, letting go of our defensive masks. Being honest with ourselves is the biggest step, not blaming others or looking for an excuse.
- **Non Stealing**
Not just about stealing property or possessions, but also trying not to waste someone else’s time, or take away their happiness or self-confidence with how we speak.
- **Sensory Control**
Channelling emotions positively, being in control of ourselves. This means letting go of jealousy, cultivating a sense of self-sufficiency, not wasting time on trivial things.
- **Non Grasping**
Not being greedy, not wanting others’ possessions. Being honest about what we need rather than what we want. Letting go of old ideas about ourselves. Accepting change.

1. **Yamas**
Conduct towards others and ourselves through non-violence, truth, non-stealing, conserving energy and non-grasping
2. **Niyamas**
Self-disciplines for a healthy life through cleanliness, contentment, austerity, study and dedication
3. **Postures**
Exercise using yoga postures to build strength and flexibility in body and mind
4. **Breathing**
Breath awareness and expansion through yoga exercises and relaxation
5. **Sense withdrawal**
Learning not to be distracted by constant sensory stimulation
6. **Concentration**
Aided by focussing on a single point or object (like counting the out-breaths)
7. **Meditation**
Seeing deeply into the nature of things
8. **Realisation**
Self-awareness, a sense of knowing your connection to everything, seeing the bigger picture



Niyamas

The observances are practices to develop to help clear the body and mind. Attending temple or church services, saying grace or a food reflection before meals, developing your own personal meditation practice, and helping others without needing any reward are some of the ways you can carry out the *niyamas*.

- **Cleanliness**
Keeping the place where you live and work clean, paying attention to personal hygiene. This can also mean keeping a clear, clean mind.
- **Contentment**
Having an attitude of gratitude, acceptance, peace and calmness in the face of success or failure. While celebrating what we have achieved, not letting pride make others feel worse, or cause problems for ourselves.
- **Austerity/Purifying**
Zeal, determination and perseverance. Removing harmful substances or habits from the body and mind, finding the discipline to practise consistently even when you don’t feel like it.
- **Study**
Expanding knowledge, reflection, self education, reading helpful texts. Improving our knowledge, skills and education doesn’t have to be formal education.
- **Faith/Dedication**
Doing whatever you do wholeheartedly and with devotion to whatever higher power you believe in, not being attached to the positive things that might come from actions, not disappointed if they don’t turn out the way you would prefer.

Lord as I begin this day
Be my smoke alarm.
Staunch the flame that feeds the
fray;
Let me do no harm.

Others seem to saunter through
The tumult of the storm.
I cannot, so turn to you;
Let me do no harm.

When the red rag looms in sight
Help this bull stay calm.
Who cares if I'm wrong or right?
Let me do no harm.

I know I depend on you.
Hold me in your palm.
Teach me what to say and do;
Let me do no harm.

From a prisoner HMP Wymott, who wrote: I have felt quite stressed recently, mainly around my relationship (or lack of it) with my probation officer. I try hard to practise the principles of peace and I struggle. Hence this poem, which is both a prayer and a mantra.



It's Not Easy

From a former prisoner

This man began writing to the PPT from prison in 2000. It gave Ava and others great joy to read his letters. Below, he relates the ups and downs of life after prison. He also volunteers at The Firm (see bottom of page).

This is my fifth year living life on the outside. I am writing to you on a Sunday morning here in London at the start of summer. Rain is due this afternoon.

It would be fair to say the consequences of my actions eventually brought about a change in my attitude to life, this following an indeterminate sentence for the protection of the public back in 2006.

I was no stranger to the system having been through the familiar pattern of boarding schools, children's homes, young offenders institutions and arriving eventually in prison.

I spent over 16 years in total in prison. It became a way of life. I would come to meet men I knew as children in the care system, walking the same landings in various prisons over the years.

Unfamiliar roads

I would like to be able to say that after five years I am sorted out, that my life is functioning well. The truth is that choosing to go down unfamiliar roads,

trying to live a clean, sober and crime free life is difficult.

I have managed to stay out of prison for all this time, mainly through attending AA meetings frequently, though to be honest I have found recovery to be really tough at times.

There's a saying I heard once, that to move on you need to change your playground and playmates. But I still live in the same area of London. I have not managed to hold down a job or a relationship for any long period. One thing I have done is not resorted back to drinking and using or committing crime. It's not easy changing my life from all that I once knew – having to be a worker amongst workers.

Life is good today despite the challenges. I am a father now too. Having my daughter gives me a reason to keep out of trouble and prison.

Having my own place is a true blessing too. I still see people around I know in active addiction. It's a sad thing to see, for there is a way out if you want it enough. It isn't easy, but it beats jail any day.

If you're going to be in London once you're released or if you're living there already and wanting to carry on your yoga, The Firm (Fun in Recovery Management) runs a free yoga class every Sunday from 11 a.m. to noon. The Firm is a registered charity run by ex-users for other ex-users. Their other activities during the week include complementary therapies and a theatre workshop run by Outside Edge ("changing the lives of people affected by addiction through theatre and drama"). Many people have said The Firm has been a safe haven for them in the early days of their recovery. The Firm, 61 Munster Rd, Fulham, SW6 5RE (t: 0207 384 3656).



Chaplains' Tea

From Hazel, Pagan Minister at HMP Dovegate



Iwas drawn to the What If? article in your last newsletter. I had a right giggle to myself when it asks if all the founders of the world's religion gathered what would happen.

We aren't the founders but I can tell you what happens in our chaplaincy team in Dovegate. I'll make the drinks or the Quaker/Rastafarian Minister (a small lady with white hair who volunteered to facilitate the Rastafarian meetings) might. The Sikh Minister brings in samosas his wife made, and the Free Church Minister normally has pasties, buns and juice.

We then all sit down and talk shop: what was on TV last night or what's in the news. There is massive respect between each and every one of us. It is one of the most profound meetings you will ever sit in, and you are welcome any time.

So now you know "What If?"

This Gift Called Life

from HMP Sudbury

Since 2016, this prisoner has been writing to the Trust. With the approval of his prison he has begun teaching yoga to other prisoners. In these letters he shares his approach to release.

May 2017

The weekly yoga classes I teach here are going well. People especially seem to enjoy the guided meditation and relaxation techniques we do at the end. I have started doing a bit of one to one teaching too, helping people who want to develop their own cell routine. Some need to work around old injuries and these sessions help them to devise a suitable program. I focus on people working to their own level, as I do mine. There will always be someone more flexible or have more strength, but learning to work within our own limits is one of the things that makes yoga and meditation accessible to all.

After the session, we sometimes discuss things that I bring up in the guided sessions – it brings me so much joy to see people telling me that darkness has to exist but that it can't occupy the same space as light, so they choose light whenever they can.

As with everything in life, the more I know the more there is to learn. I am yet a sapling in the scheme of things. What I do know is that by doing 90 minutes each morning before I leave my cell, I feel I achieve something positive which carries me through the rest of the day. Instead of trying to control things as I used to, I simply do my best and try to learn to love myself. This helps me to love my neighbour as myself.

We can't always see the bigger picture, but if I am to be incarcerated, I am grateful to be a prisoner in these times, in this country and in open conditions. I am looking forward to the future, to work, to doing charity, to being with my family, sleeping in my own bed, feeling carpet under my toes, soaking in a hot bath.

June 2017

You asked about the feeling achieved during and after meditation. It is different each time but generally, I feel as though the self, the 'I' disappears. I often feel as though I 'just am', part of something, no more or less than anything or anyone else. I imagine that space and time are woven through me and that the consciousness or 'higher self' is in there somewhere, in this vessel that I am lucky enough to be in.



I have started to imagine the space between us as something that is as real as material objects I can touch. I sometimes focus on compassion – towards myself, other prisoners or people I struggle to forgive. We are all just people trying our best to get through the day, and knowing the mistakes I have made on my own journey, it's easier to have compassion for all people. I am learning to love those who I feel anything but love from – after all, loving those who love us is relatively easy. Showing love in every situation, though I don't always manage it, helps me to feel more at peace.

I am learning that imagination is the beginning of creation, that thoughts create feelings and feelings result in actions, so starting with right thoughts and imagining the right things, no matter how insignificant it may seem as it is only in my head, creates a ripple effect that has far reaching consequences. As I give love out and do the 'difficult' thing, it liberates not only me but shines a light to others, who just may feel inclined to do the same.

One small act of kindness can change more than I know, and the more I do it, the more I notice others do it. The more others do it, the more the world changes.

I feel connected – to everything. The biggest thing I have got from meditation is the ability to enjoy the journey instead of constantly reflecting on the destination or where I've already been. That is priceless

to me.

I have only two more months to go before I can take the new me into the big world – and I really can wait – there is no rush – there never was. Everything happens according to the moment it was supposed to, and feeling that brings me comfort. Getting three years turned out to be the best thing that ever happened to me. Fancy that!

June 2017, later

Well, I now have less than 800 hours to serve. I remember adding it up when I first came in – over 10,000 hours to do – it felt daunting. When I think back to those first few days, I realise now that I was in a very different place. I was using cannabis and drinking strong cider after work every evening, to the tune of over £200 a week. I was covered in psoriasis. My stomach was swollen due to a fatty liver. When I came to prison I was so angry that I had been handed a three year sentence for something I hadn't done. My life was at a crossroads. I remember telling my drug support worker that life without drugs was pointless – boring. I really didn't care if they threw away the key. Suicide was a genuine option.

I had always wondered about meditation and once attended a six week course in Bristol. I enjoyed it but didn't implement it into my daily life. I once saw graffiti on

a toilet door that said "Try meditation – it beats sitting around doing nothing!" Then I saw snippets about the Phoenix Trust in the prison newspapers. After writing to you, you sent me a free book and CD and my journey began.

One year on, I am drug, alcohol and smoke free. My health is much improved. My mind is clearer, I am three stone lighter, more flexible. I begin my day with 30 minutes of meditation followed by 60 minutes of yoga, which finishes with five minutes in the corpse pose. I remember thinking what a morbid name that was, but after months of practice (I realise I'm still a beginner) I came to realise something. I must look a sight when the observation flap goes and I'm lying there on the floor, but imagine a person dead on the floor in a room – everything that goes on around

him or her is irrelevant – the stresses and strains of life no longer matter to a corpse – and I came to wonder whether that was the point of the name.

The intangible present

I certainly feel this way after meditation: I'm able to go through the day more serene. Sometimes I just focus on my breathing; other times, I focus on an object such as a stone or a feather that I have in my cell; and at others I try to capture the intangible present. I love trying to do that one. There are times again when I focus on love or compassion or on someone in particular, and then I am lucky enough to get the odd time where I think of nothing at all and am covered in peace – with the monkey mind at rest.

I have achieved so much. I have done courses in horticulture, art, and TEFL, and become a competent plasterer. I'm fitter, have read lots of great books (something I only ever did on holiday), drug free and I have a plan for release. I honestly believe that much of this started with meditation and yoga. I want to qualify through the British Wheel of Yoga and continue to teach classes as I have here at HMP Sudbury. I intend not to waste a day of this gift called life. I'm glad I decided to make prison a positive experience. Life hasn't been on hold while I've been incarcerated. It has been a chance to reflect, change course, consider new options, learn new skills and create new horizons.

My thoughts are with you all at the PPT and everyone in prison.

Escape

*When we get out of the glass bottles of our own ego,
And when we escape like squirrels from turning in the
cages of our personality
And get into the forest again,
We shall shiver with cold and fright
But things will happen to us
So that we don't know ourselves.*

*Cool, unlying life will rush in,
And passion will make our bodies taut with power;
We shall stamp our feet with new power
And old things will fall down,
We shall laugh, and institutions will curl up like burnt paper.*

~ D.H Lawrence



Our friend at HMP Woodhill has designed this year's Christmas card (144 x 103mm). He said he wanted to show animals who would normally be hunter and prey coming together in peace. The inside is left blank for your own message. You can see it in full colour on our website. To order, send the form to the right with payment to: The PPT, PO Box 328, Oxford, OX2 7HF. If your prison is sending payment for you, you still need to send us the form.



Christmas Card Order Form

- Please send me _____ packs of cards at £5 per pack of 10
- I enclose a cheque payable to the Prison Phoenix Trust for £ _____

Name _____

Prison number (if in custody) _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

☐ I've asked my prison to send you payment.



Clear and Strong



By Lucy

If you can't get a weights session as often as you'd like, or you prefer quiet to the music and noise that usually goes on in the gym, you're in luck. You can keep up your strength right there in your own cell, with this set of postures. After warming up all your joints and getting your blood flowing, we suggest starting out holding each posture for five long, slow breaths, but you may find you can build up to much longer. For best results, include other postures that have a stretching emphasis. And don't skip the sitting at the end: the deepest strength comes from building clarity and focus in your mind.



Down Dog
breathe out

← flow between
these poses
5 times →



Plank
breathe in



Warrior 2



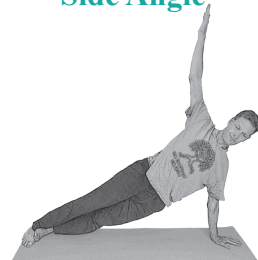
Side Angle



Triangle



Boat



Side Plank



Seated Twists



Sitting

Sit for 10 minutes, counting your
breaths (see front page)

**“ Some of us think holding on makes us strong;
but sometimes it is letting go.”**

~ Herman Hesse, German poet and novelist (1877 - 1962)

This newsletter goes to members of the prison community and to our many friends on the outside who continue to offer us their encouragement. Many thanks to those supporters who already contribute towards the £5 annual cost of producing and sending newsletters to each person. All donations to help meet this cost are welcome.

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