

A 501c3 Nonprofit Corporation, is an inmate and ex-offender directed, self-help, service organization.

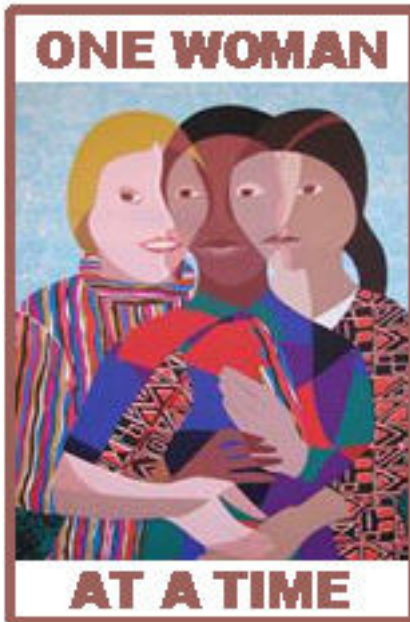
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Help from women who've been there ...

"Constant follow-up after release, non-judgmental listening (often a most time-consuming process), and making the right referrals ... the last-named because even the best social-work organizations will let this one slide in the press of daily work. So many folks have been shunted from pillar to post and remained mired, not because of a lack of education, organization, or drive, but because many do-good services do not do the good that the ex-prisoner requires." Reverend Walter Perry, Interfaith Counselor, Monmouth County Correctional Facility

One Woman At A Time is a one-of-a-kind, intensive reentry program for women leaving prison to begin a new life. This program begins sometimes weeks, sometimes years, before release as an incarcerated woman corresponds with the Alumni Network of Redeem-Her, all formerly incarcerated women themselves. In this correspondence period,



relationships are built, victories and failures alike are shared, wisdom is imparted and a release plan begins to take shape. The pinnacle of the program comes at the prison gates when women from the Redeem-Her Alumni Network are there to usher the newly released woman into her new beginning in the way only other women who have been set free can do. After the celebration, the jubilation, the hugs, and a good meal, the real work begins.

The most common feeling that women in prison express as they look forward to release is not joy or excitement as many would expect. The most commonly reported feeling is fear. To some, who have been incarcerated for a long period of time, that outside world represents a vast unknown. They have been segregated from and feel out of touch with the real world. To those with a shorter incarceration season, it can represent a return to problems that dogged them prior to prison ... illiteracy, homelessness, unemployment, addiction, debt and separation from their children. It is rare that a period of incarceration has any positive effect on these problems. Most commonly, they have only lain in wait for her release, multiplying in her absence.

Experts agree that the first 36 hours are critical. It is during this time that Redeem-Her Alumni are at the newly released woman's side, providing critical emotional support and sorting out and piecing together the various programs and social services provided by the community into a reentry that works. Our reentry approach doesn't begin with pages of application forms and end with bureaucratic acrobatics. It doesn't end when one area of need is met. It doesn't close at 5 o'clock. This is a reentry program that will persevere and endure, arm in arm, with a newly freed woman in the way only someone who has stood in that place before can do. This is a reentry program that will never drop you off on the corner at the end of the day, but instead brings you home to sleep on the couch until suitable, safe, drug-free housing can be found.

True success comes when that same woman pushes through to a place of stability and is then able to turn her attention outward and give back to those following through the gates after her. It is at that moment that her season of incarceration becomes an asset, instead of a liability, and equips her to help someone else.

"None who have always been free can understand the terrible fascinating power of the hope of freedom to those who are not free." Pearl S. Buck