

Groundbreaking Art of Soulmaking Program in Prisons Reaches 50,000 Incarcerated Participants

The program re-envisioning prisons as monasteries expands reach across the US, transforming prison environments and fostering connection and self-reflection

NEW YORK, NY, USA, August 22, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Unconditional Freedom, a 501c(3) nonprofit, today announced that their hallmark Art of Soulmaking program had reached 50,000 participants across over 800 facilities in the United States. This innovative correspondence program teaching yoga, meditation and contemplative practices took root in the American prison system during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, offering those incarcerated transformative teachings and a platform for human connection.

"Our program offers people in prison the opportunity to truly transform, using the time and structure for healing and penitence, as prison was originally intended," said Caryn Roth, Executive Director of Unconditional Freedom. "We offer tools for people to work with the pain and impulses that got them into prison, and transform that into purpose, becoming positive contributors to society."

The Art of Soulmaking book was written specifically for those incarcerated, and licensed for free, unlimited usage by author Nicole Daedone and renowned publicist Beth Miller under a publishing company, Soulmaker Press. Unconditional Freedom offers a free physical copy of the book to anyone incarcerated, receiving hundreds of letters a month requesting copies. It is also offered for free on digital tablets in prisons across the country.

Charles D., an incarcerated program participant, writes, "Prison is the place where you cannot escape, even yourself. Lots of time for reflection. And as long as one takes the time to do such, like with this soulmaking class, and meditation, then you can face yourself. And it is through that process of really "facing" myself that I can see so much more light in the end. I can accept being here."

At the heart of the program lies the unique opportunity for incarcerated individuals to exchange letters with a community of over 400 registered and trained volunteers from Unconditional Freedom. This bridge connecting those in prison and those outside has shown to be transformative for both volunteers and the incarcerated.

The program's profound impact is further underscored by its recent survey assessments, which was measured using questionnaires completed before and after the program by over 100 participants:

- 23% reduction in reported stress levels among participants
- 17% decrease in feelings of anger
- 21% reduction in symptoms of depression
- 14% decrease in verbal confrontations

Unconditional Freedom envisions a shift in the purpose of the prison system, from punishment to penitence. They champion the belief that individuals, when restored to their true essence, inherently become positive contributors to society.

Ezra Hermann
HeraldPR
+1 212-220-3898
[email us here](#)

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