

# Brewing up Second Chances

## Entrepreneur coffee roaster creates opportunity for people released from prison

*This lesson can be presented over 1-2 sessions. If you choose 2 sessions you can use the discussion questions, journal writing and extended activities designated by session (A) and session (B). Instructors should feel free to use whichever activities you think best for your class or group. We advise giving students the sheet with the definitions of the virtues before each session.*

### Lesson Goals

Help students:

- believe that we as individuals, even if we have made serious mistakes, can change the course of our lives for the better.
- value community by seeing and understanding how the support of others can encourage us as individuals, and promote a sense of self-respect.
- appreciate how by taking responsibility for our actions we can better move forward by putting mistakes behind us.
- understand and appreciate resiliency as the ability to recover, or to constructively adjust to setbacks and difficulties in our lives.
- realize the importance of giving others second chances, which often involves taking the risk of trusting others even if they have previously let us down.
- understand the value of business in giving us the opportunity to experience the dignity of work in creating value for others, and through work to improve our own lives.
- appreciate the value of being an entrepreneur in creating new opportunities for ourselves and others.

### Primary Virtues

**Hope** - confident expectation of achieving a goal or wish

**Resiliency** – the ability to recover from, or to constructively adjust to difficulties.

Choosing to use setbacks as opportunities to learn and grow

**Responsibility** - being accountable for our actions and their consequences, accepting and meeting the demands of our duty in life, pursuing excellence

**Trustworthy** – to be a person worthy of confidence where others can rely on us to do or to provide what is right or needed

## Secondary Virtues

**Caring** - to help others; a caring person lives with empathy in trying to understand another person's situation, compassion in desiring to help others, and then with generosity in acting to help

**Courage** - the capacity to meet danger and difficult situations without giving way to fear; to have the courage of one's convictions; to be willing to put one's opinions into practice.

**Respect for Others** - showing full appreciation of the worth and dignity of others; living by "the golden rule" - do unto others as you would want done unto you

**Solidarity** - being present with others; unity from a shared common purpose and / or interest; mutual support and loyalty within a group

**Wisdom** - ability to apply knowledge, experience, understanding in ways that are effective and good. The ability to discern or judge what is true, right, or lasting

## Leader Introduction

Many people look down on those who have been in prison with attitudes such as "why should we trust someone who has committed a serious crime? They won't change". This attitude may be one of the causes of recidivism, which is when a person released from prison commits another crime and goes back to prison. Within three years of release, 67.8% of former prisoners end up back in prison. Within five years of release this number is 76.6%. These statistics reflect a startling failure for the individuals returning to prison and for us as a society - *and we need to do better*. Some of the causes of recidivism are lack of societal support, not enough work skills, unwillingness to trust, the inability to obtain a job as well as the individual person continuing to make wrong decisions.

Some people and organizations have been trying to make a difference in the lives of individuals released from prison by creating opportunities for them to work, and importantly to also change the attitudes that we have about former prisoners. The video we are about to see recounts the stories of those who have been given a second chance to rebuild their lives. Some of the virtues and actions highlighted in these stories are motivated by the individual's religious beliefs. Our program doesn't endorse any one religion but we do endorse the virtues these individuals are living out. Let's watch how the virtues in this story have been a powerful force in transforming lives.

### Film Clips:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eGNYqM52MpU&feature=youtu.be>

This link has 2 video clips. We recommend showing the first clip, and the second if you have time and think it would resonate with your group.

### Leader Summary

These are powerful stories that challenge us to consider our own views on whether those returning to our communities from prison can change. These stories also challenge us to consider what are the virtues, and other factors that may enable us to change, and to help others that we interact with to change for the better.

### Discussion Question Options *(discussion prompts / answers are in parentheses if needed)*

Before beginning our discussion let's read over the virtues and their definitions *(included within the online lesson as a separate document)*.

1. What motivates Pete to want to help former prisoners by taking the risk of hiring them into his business, and what virtues is he living out? **(A)**

*(Pete truly cares about those released from prison, and believes people have the right to redeem themselves and to change their lives for the better. Pete also lives with hope in that he believes and expects that people can change their lives. Pete uses his creativity and skills in ways that are effective and good in helping create opportunities for others to work- wisdom. Pete lives out his beliefs in helping released prisoners and takes risk in doing so – courage.)*

2. Amy said, "You need to own what you did. As soon as you do that, you can move forward." What did she mean by this and what virtue does her statement reflect? **(A)**

*(Responsibility in that Amy realized she had to first be accountable for her past actions and come to terms with these actions. She could then move forward with a clean slate and strive to become the person she wants to become.)*

What does Amy's statement mean to us in our lives today, in our relationships within our families, among our friends and peers? Let's talk about hypothetical examples and real-life examples, without using names, where us or someone else "owning what we / they did" helped repair a relationship, or helped us / another the person to move forward in a better path.

*(This is also a journal writing option below)*

3. Duke discussed that when he was released from prison, he was concerned about his future. What were his concerns, and what did Pete do to allay these concerns? (B)

(Duke was fearful that no one would trust him and he couldn't find a job. Pete saw him coming early to work, and after only one week of employment gave him a key to the coffee shop so he would not have to wait outside.)

How did Duke feel after Pete placed his trust in Duke, and what virtues are illustrated in this simple yet powerful act?

(Duke felt support, affirmation and *trust* from Pete, and this gave him *hope*. Other virtues lived out in this action are *respect for another and solidarity*.)

Let's share some stories of when someone demonstrated that they trusted you, and this encouraged you to improve, or to strive for something better in your life. (This is also a journal writing option below)

Do you think trust should be earned? If yes, always? If someone has violated your trust under what circumstances would you give them another chance? How does the Golden Rule speak to this question? Let's discuss some examples of second chances from our own lives and without using names.

How does the story of Pete and Duke speak to this issue? (Pete expressed a level of trust in Duke when he first hired him, and then gave him a much higher level of trust as Duke began to earn it.)

4. Pete mentioned that former convicts are often considered the bottom of society, but in their coffee business they are creating a product that is top quality. How do you think being a part of this work affects their perspective and how they view themselves? (B)

(It gives them a sense of pride and greater self-worth knowing they have the ability to do something well, and this likely gives them the strength to continue to move forward with a positive attitude.)

5. How have Duke and Amy lived out the virtue of resiliency? (B)

(They made the decision to be accountable for their previous mistakes, yet also believe in their own dignity and value and that they deserve a second chance. They are committed to improving their lives by working. Within their job they work hard, have done well and take pride in their work.)

6. Has this story changed how you view business? What positives do we see from this story that business can offer to individuals and to our communities? (B)

(Businesses give individuals the opportunity to work, to provide for themselves and for their families, to serve others through their work and to strive to do their best. All of this can help create a sense of *dignity and self-respect*. Communities with successful businesses can generate the money through taxes to build and maintain services and structures that benefit us all such as good park districts, libraries, roads, bike paths, and well trained police and fire departments.)

7. Does anyone know what the word entrepreneur means? (B)  
(An entrepreneur is someone who is creative in coming up with an idea for a new business, has the ability to start and manage the business and is willing to take the risk of losing money in launching the business)

Seeing Pete's journey as an entrepreneur, what are some of the virtues and attributes that you think are needed to be a successful entrepreneur?  
(*creativity, wisdom, perseverance, hope*)

### Journal Writing Options

1. Write about a time you "owned up to" an action or decision you made that had a negative impact on your life and / or someone else, and how in owning it you were able to move forward. (A)
2. Write about a time when you experienced a second chance. How did this make you feel and how did you respond to the opportunity? Please incorporate into your writing some of the virtues covered in this lesson. (B)
3. Write about a time when someone demonstrated that they trusted you, and this encouraged you to improve or to strive for something better in your life. (B)

### Extended Activity Options:

1. Organize a debate or class discussion on the following statement/s:

It should be against the law for employers to ask an applicant for a job if they have been convicted of a crime, with the only exceptions being businesses involving physical or financial security.

Once a person convicted of a crime has served their sentence we as a society should no longer hold their past crimes against them as they have served their punishment.

Persons who have been convicted of a crime and have completed their punishment should have all rights restored, or all rights restored except for \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.

We can do better in helping former prisoners to return to society and to live productive and fulfilled lives by \_\_\_\_\_.

2. Organize your class or group into teams and ask each team to pretend they are entrepreneurs and need to come up with an idea for a new business. Each team will be asked to share their idea with the group.

Each team presentation should include:

- the need that their business will address and the product and / or service they will offer to satisfy the need
- who their competitors will be (if any) and how their product or service will offer an advantage compared to their competitors
- their plan for attracting customer
- whether they would be willing to hire former prisoners into their business.

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