Returning Citizens Accompaniment – LSSI/OBK Reentry Center
12 STEPS: Life Skills and Employment Skills School

➢ **Day 1: Beginning to Heal personally by facing the traumas of your imprisonment.**

  o **Goal:** Help all clients feel safe that they are in very good and caring company … so that they are comfortable enough and encouraged to open up and share their experiences, their confirmations, their feelings, concerns, frustrations and situations.
    ▪ We need to better understand each other have needs and be able to help each other now and going forward … since it is critical that everyone opens up, or else we cannot go forward if even just one is afraid.

➢ **Day 2: Beginning to Heal by facing the traumas of returning to family and community.**

  o **Goal:** Show incarceration creates barriers for maintaining relationships with family, friends, and loved one. All need time, patience, and openness as you work to get to know each other again.

➢ **Day 3: Home, Family, Employment, Community and Life are all about TEAM WORK.**

  o **Goal:** Each one of us must come to the realization that it is very hard for us to succeed in life on our own. Fact is we very much need each other to get along and work together not only to accomplish great deeds … but also to be happy … and to survive. Unfortunately some people struggle to realize or understand this basic principle of life … and live unhappy lives as they struggle to survive day after day, year after year.

➢ **Day 4: Applying Life Skills and Behavioral Work Ethics in the community, on the job and in the world.**

  o **Goal:** Helping clients to have a little better idea of what is currently deemed acceptable conduct, acceptable practices, responses on the job, and appropriate lifestyles in the community.

➢ **Day 5: Evaluating Job Benefits, Risks and Income to meet individual and family needs and dreams.**

  o **Goal:** Just getting any job may not be enough to meet life’s financial needs. Surely you don’t want to be forced to go back into illegal income sources and sooner or later end up back in prison. Clients must evaluate their whole financial situation to come up with a realistic plan so you have a better idea as to what kind of job and pay you will need to meet personal and family financial obligations and enjoy a comfortable lifestyle.
Day 6: Budgeting Skills everyone needs to master because money matters.

- **Goal:** Money problems can be extremely stressful, can break families apart, and can make life very difficult and depressing. You will be happy for the rest of your life if you get serious about getting the money management skills RIGHT NOW!

Day 7: Smart Buying Strategies for housing and shopping.

- **Goal:** There’s no avoiding spending money … but we can teach ourselves to spend money wisely. We have shopping advice from experts in the industry who will share their tips with our clients so they can become smart shoppers.

Day 8: Benefits plus important Rights and Responsibilities for returning citizens.

- **Goal:** Encourage clients to take advantage of benefits, resources, rights and assistance programs available from the State of Illinois, educational facilities, and potentially from employers (and consider these benefits or lack of benefits when they are seeking employment). We also want to encourage our clients to register to vote and VOTE!

Day 9: Beginning realization of mistakes in life, giving forgiveness, restoring faith and repairing harm.

- **Goal:** Restorative Justice classes underscore the realization of mistakes in life and the impact of behavior, forgiving failures in our societies and court system, restoring faith in our justice system, repairing harm done and becoming part of the solution, with bridging of individual and community relations.

Day 10: Computer Skill Classes

Day 11: Employment resumes, job applications, successful job interviews and steps to successful employment.

Day 12: Mock job interviews and job searching online.