



Skyline, Fall - 2014

Earthlines

By Diane Pendola

Peace from the Inside

Dear Friends,

We want to thank each of you for contributing to our second graduating class of "Panthers". Whether you contributed financially to the printing of the Panther Facilitator Manual/Workbook Packets; or through your emotional and spiritual support; or through in-kind services and hands-on help, this success belongs to all of us. We can't thank you enough!

We're also very pleased about an article highlighting our LiT-uPP graduation that appeared on the *CDCR Inside* website. I've copied it below. It contains a photo of our nine graduates and four core group members. This is the first photo that we've had since beginning this program nearly five years ago. So it is even more appreciated in how long we've waited!

I'm also including the comments that came in after the article first appeared in early September. I encourage you to follow the link to the CDCR website to make a comment as well. I'm sure that the more support that we receive from folks on the outside, the better it will be for the future success of the program. Here is the link: <http://www.insidecdcr.ca.gov/2014/09/central-california-womens-facility-self-help-group-shines-light-on-promoting-a-better-life/> (Or you can follow the links in the comment section below). Please, don't be shy... just one sentence of support is effective!

Also, we brought in enough money from our request for help in covering the printing costs of the Panther Packets that we can provide 36 copies of *The Lioness Tale* to the three new groups, of twelve participants each, that the new Panthers will be starting in October. Woo-hoo!

As I promised, I will be taking the names of those of you who made financial contributions into the prison to share with the women this Thursday, September 24. They will know there are eyes and hearts open to them and their well-being from people on the outside. Here you are:

Ernie Tamminga, Suraya Keating, Chris Price, Kathleen Denison, Jesse Golden, Dorothy Charles, Ken Hartman, Cathie Roy, Mary Eve Peek, Sheila Colombana and Martha Hyde, Hope Raymond, Maia, Terry and Anne Riley, Yakshi Vadeboncoeur, Marilyn Pendola, Dick and Shirley Dickard, Carmel of Reno, Mark and Char Jokerst, Chris and Bill Newsom, Carole Thomas, Bill and Delight Pendola and the on-going support of the Sisters of the Holy Family.

Thank you!

Diane and the LiT-uPP team

Here is the article:

Central California Women’s Facility self-help group shines light on promoting a better life

**By Lt. Brian Davi, A.A., Public Information Officer,
Central California Women’s Facility -- September 9, 2014**

Nine inmates at the Central California Women’s Facility (CCWF) graduated from The Lioness Tale Prison Project (LiT-uPP) on Aug. 27.

This was the second advanced class to graduate with participants completing over 96 hours of preparation. The session was led by core LiT-uPP facilitators, who were previous graduates of the program, and Diane Pendola, creator of the LiT-uPP program.

“I am so proud of these women who have found meaning in their lives through this self-help group,” said Warden Deborah K. Johnson. “It is small steps like these that will help each of them re-integrate, one day, back into society as positive contributors to their community.”

At the conclusion of the graduation, each Lioness, now known as Panthers, took a candle from the podium, which had signified their “intentions” to promote a better life inside of CCWF thereby creating a more peaceful environment within the prison setting from the inside out.



Nine inmates at the Central California Women’s Facility (CCWF) graduated from a self-help group intended to help them create a more peaceful environment within the prison setting from the inside out.

7 Responses to *Central California Women's Facility self-help group shines light on promoting a better life*

1. *April Seligman* says:

I feel inspired reading about a program for inmates geared toward healing, creating self-awareness, and fostering compassion amongst one another. As a lawyer and aspiring family therapist, I have seen snapshots of both the trauma the system can create as well as the growth which can come from a self-guided practice. Hopefully this is an indicator of a trend toward favoring humanistic, rehabilitative programs in the correctional system instead of ineffectual punitive and retributive measures. Thank you and congratulations to the women who participated in the program, and many thanks and much admiration to those who've led, founded and supported this program. I hope to see many more graduates in years to come.

2. *Diane Pendola* says:

Thank you Lt. Davi for your article and wonderful photo! Journeying with these women to the depths of our common humanity has been as transformative for me as it has been for them. Thank you CCWF for being willing to pilot this new program. My hope is that it will continue to grow and strengthen throughout CCWF and beyond.

3. *Dr. DeAntoni* says:

Glad to hear you are acting in the best interest of yourself and others. Pass it on. We need you out in society being the best you can be. God bless you all.

4. *Shirley DicKard, RN* says:

I had the recent honor of driving 5 hours to attend this Lit-uPP graduation. These ladies, and their peer facilitators who had been through the Lit-uPP training program over the last 4-plus years – truly felt lit-up from deep within – with a palpable glow. A strength of this program, and what may set it apart from others, is the women own the process and have been trained to carry it forward peaceably into the prison. The Administration is to be commended for their visionary support of such a healing and strengthening process.

5. *Russell Jensen* says:

So progressive, it's refreshing to see some glimmers of change. I commend any administrators who had the insight to hold a space for fostering self-help and peer support. I look forward to hearing more success stories!

6. *Christine Price* says:

It's been rewarding to be a guest teacher in this high quality program. Thanks to all those who have supported its presence at CCWF over the past 4 years. Your foresight in backing this program is a service to to the women involved and to the public at large.

Congratulations to all the women who did the hard work of looking at difficulty and opening hearts and minds to new ways of being. And to those who are now teaching this inside, may your efforts bring new possibilities to many others and offer you fulfillment, too.

7. *Sunni K. Harley* says:

Would love to be involved in this program.

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