

*" If not you, who ? If not now, when ? "*

*-- Hillel*

# Prison-Ashram Project

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PRISONS AS CENTERS OF KINDNESS







## THE GREAT CONVICT SMOKE-OUT

Here's one of those great ideas where everybody wins: How about starting a project in your prison for inmates and staff to quit smoking, and donate all the money that would have been spent on cigarettes into a charity pool?

At a women's prison recently, I looked around and did some quick calculations: 600 women, nearly all of them smokers, most of them at least a pack a day and many smoking two or three packs a day. Averaging a conservative estimate of \$1 a day over 600 people, that's \$600 a day being spent in that one prison, going toward nothing except poor health. \$600 a day equals **\$219,000** a year!!!

Many of these women feel terrible that they can't help their kids, they can't help society, they can't make a difference in anyone's life. Hell, \$219,000 could fund an entire shelter for battered women, abused children, or homeless people in a good-sized city. It could even fund a halfway house. And that's just one medium-size prison. Imagine how much total money is going up in smoke and into lung cancer from all the prisons across the world.

I think this idea could catch on and do a lot to change the connection between prisoners and society. If you're interested in starting this project in your own local prison (whether you're inside or outside of it), my advice is to talk with a few staff people to see who's friendliest to the idea, and keep us informed so we can share the encouragement with you all. An inmate/staff committee could be formed in each place to decide how the money would be spent. Community organizations could even apply to this committee for grants. Wild idea, huh?

## NEW BOOK, NEW TAPES

The Human Kindness Foundation is getting ready to publish our first book of fiction, *Lineage And Other Stories*, by Bo Lozoff (ISBN 0-9614444-1-X). The longest of the stories, *Lineage*, about a wise, eccentric elderly convict, is currently being considered as the basis for a movie, so please send us all your best vibes and wishes for that to happen. We feel a movie like *Lineage* could do a lot to change the way people think about prisons and prisoners.

*Lineage And Other Stories* will be free to prisoners and \$7/copy to our outside friends and supporters. We're taking orders for them now. If you're a prisoner, please don't write us for a copy; you'll be sent one automatically as our Christmas gift to you this year. If you're not a prisoner, please include payment with your order, as we need all the help we can get in paying for a first press run of 15,000 copies. You can expect shipment of the book no later than early December.

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As mentioned in our last newsletter, *We're All Doing Time* is being put on audio tape and will also be available shortly. It looks like it will be a set of at least six tapes. A complete set will be available to friends and supporters for a \$30 donation (we're taking orders now). Because of the expense involved, we can't offer unlimited free sets to individual prisoners, but we'll certainly send free sets to prison groups, libraries, education departments, chaplains, etc.

If you're a prisoner who has trouble reading, (or if you know such people) please ask around various departments of the institution and I'm sure you'll find someone willing to receive a set of these free tapes for you and others to use.

### FURTHER DOWN THE LINE...

Our Spanish-language edition of *We're All Doing Time* is now being typeset, but it looks like it'll be several months before we can finish all the difficult work of pasting up and laying out the new text with illustrations. We also need to find the money to print it (we've applied for one grant already). Feel free to spread the word that a Spanish edition is in the works, but it'll take some time to fill the requests.

And, we're still collecting information for our upcoming book, *The Freedom of Kindness*, about humanitarian projects accomplished by prisoners. Please let us hear from you if you know of any such programs. Also let us hear from you if you have specific ideas about programs which could be done by prisoners in your prison or community. We'd like to include those ideas in the book as well.



being vegetarian, maybe you should make sure you're getting enough protein and other nutrients. Being a healthy vegetarian doesn't mean you just stop eating meat. It takes some awareness to have a balanced diet.

If you'll notice, everything I've said to you so far falls under one category: Accepting responsibility. Your letter tends to pass off the responsibility for your state of mind, like "Am I just not ready to understand?," and "How do I start on the path...?," as if destiny or ignorance might be holding you back. All I'm trying to get across to you is, NOTHING is holding you back. You're moving along your spiritual journey all the time. Whether you move unhappily or happily is another question, and that's what these suggestions are about.

But even if you do nothing at all, if you're the laziest, most unmotivated son of a bitch in the world and hate yourself until you die, that's still a spiritual journey, and you're still a beautiful, beloved child of God. That can't be taken away. So the best reason to get up off your ass is simply to enjoy the ride more. You obviously don't feel good with the way things are. Why suffer like this when you don't have to?

I love you, Bo  
Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y

Dear Bo,

Please send me a copy of your book, *We're All Doing Time*. I get out in a few months but I would still like a copy. A cell mate has one but he will be leaving shortly.

I never knew where my life was going until I got run over by a train in December '84. When I'm not in jail I live on the streets. I've been all over California for 2 years, Canada, the Keys -- hitchhiking mostly. Both my legs are gone and I get out in my wheelchair and panhandle at shopping malls and go from town to town.

I enjoy this kind of life because I get to meet so many people of all sorts. And I think my purpose in life is to help other people. By just being myself I give hope and inspire other people to look at themselves. I carry only a few clothes and books -- not much at all -- a blanket too; and I try to tell people that even though I have very little, I really have a lot, because everything I need is provided by God. People give me money and I buy food, a little beer and whatever.

*But I never take more than I need and I stress that I'm a very rich man -- as long as I have a few clothes and a blanket and can panhandle enough for a big mac and a six-pak -- I'm very rich. I stress the fact that people in other countries would give anything for what the average bum on the street gets everyday. And people ask me how I can live this way and be happy, and I tell them "Because my nature is to be happy. I could be sad, but why?"*

*I'm very into what you teach in your book but don't yet know all the facts. Some of the things you talk about I've known for years but didn't know it was connected to anything else. But I've always felt love and compassion for my brothers and sisters. I love to give. Maybe your book will help me onward.*

Thanks a lot, Ed

PS: Love is not love 'til you give it away.

Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y

## RESOURCES

Unisight News -- for those who choose a better life. This newsletter is a project of the Unisight Foundation, a nonprofit spiritual organization founded in 1982 with headquarters in Los Angeles. We focus on health-related matters, personal development and spiritual awareness, with a special outreach to those in prison. For a free copy, write to:

**UNISIGHT FOUNDATION  
DISTRIBUTION, DEPT. G  
4427 WEST 135TH, UNIT 2  
HAWTHORNE, CA 90250**

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"Let's Heal Our Planet Together" World Healing Meditation December 31, 1988, Noon - 1 PM, Greenwich Time. At this date and time, millions of concerned people around the world will gather to think, visualize, pray and meditate for peace in our world. This extraordinary global event is a time for the entire human family to join in experiencing the power of the mind. We can change our world. I invite you to join others and participate in whatever way you find appropriate. Contact friends everywhere to give them the news to join together December 31st, 1988. You can make a difference. If you desire more information, please contact me:

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Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y**

Bo, I want to thank you for your help and support in my project to produce a book for the benefit of CURE (Newsletter, summer '88). However, the ad says "payment will be a free copy of the book..." but it should say, "payment will be a free copy ...to those whose articles are published." Please try to squeeze this in.

**PAUL C. KRUGER, CURE OHIO  
CHAPTER  
BOX 7010  
CHILLICOTHE, OH 45601  
Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y**

## STRANGER THAN FICTION....

*This is a real newspaper article, we swear!*

### In A Cockroach War, Unplanned Casualty

JERUSALEM (UPI) -- An Israeli woman's all-out war on a cockroach launched a series of mishaps that put her unsuspecting husband in the hospital with burns, two broken ribs, and a cracked pelvis.

The Jerusalem Post reported yesterday that a woman from the Tel Aviv area found a cockroach in her living room last week and tossed it into the toilet after stomping it. When the bug refused to die, she sprayed an entire can of insecticide into the toilet bowl to finish it off.

Her husband came home moments later, perched on the toilet seat and lit up a cigarette. When he finished smoking, he tossed the butt into the toilet.

The cigarette ignited the insecticide fumes and burned his "sensitive parts," the Post reported.

As paramedics carried the man down the steps of his house, they asked how he received the burns.

When he responded, they laughed and accidentally dropped the stretcher, causing the man the further injuries, the Post said.

### UPCOMING TALKS, WORKSHOPS

Bo will be giving a weekend retreat at Southern Dharma Foundation in Hot Springs, NC on October 14th-16th. No specific topic, just a relaxing, invigorating time including discussion, meditation, chanting & singing, badminton, frisbee, walks, and watching the leaves change colors. Cost is \$50, everything included. Contact us for further information.

Bo will also be speaking at the Church of Religious Science in Salt Lake City, Utah, on Sunday, October 23rd, and doing at least one prison workshop in nearby Draper. If you can help us to set up a workshop in the maximum-security unit, or if you'd like Bo to do any other public or university talks in the Salt Lake area, please contact us as soon as possible.

Bo and Sita will both be travelling to Europe in late November - early December, to speak in England and Holland. Contact us if you wish to connect with that trip in any way.

The Human Kindness Foundation is non-profit & tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the IRS code. Donations, bequests, and gifts are always needed and are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law. Besides the Prison-Ashram Project, the Foundation also sponsors various other events, including free lectures and workshops given by director Bo Lozoff on topics such as human service, careers in non-profits, public speaking and other subjects. Our materials are offered free to prisoners, and at nominal cost to others. Currently available are Bo's books, *WE'RE ALL DOING TIME* (\$10 U.S.) and *LINEAGE AND OTHER STORIES* (\$7 U.S.), plus his folk/rock album *STUMBLING TOWARD THE LIGHT* (tape or LP, \$8 U.S.), and the audiotape set of *WE'RE ALL DOING TIME* (\$30 U.S.). Please add \$2 postage per total order. All proceeds go directly to the foundation, and help us to continue producing and distributing free copies for prisoners.

newsletter editor Bo Lozoff; c 1988, Human Kindness Foundation.