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Chronicle

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zone ends!**



Legends of the Fall 2017



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Chronicle



Volunteer Valor

Memory Lane

Guess Who Trivia

WALL POSTS

Entrepreneur of the month

Perspectives

Special Dedications

VCP

Express yourself...



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Adios Amigos!

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From The Editor

It was just after Christmas and my wife and I were at her last monthly check up, before our child was scheduled to come into this world. I never liked going along with her, because I always felt completely awkward as the gynecologist would conduct her "normal" procedures on my wife and I'd be just sitting in the chair next to her confused. Now for those of you who are familiar with this process, you can understand my pain lol. Don't get me wrong, the visits always had their perks and one was to be able to hear my son's subtle thumping heartbeat.

Well on this specific day the doctor left the room for a few minutes, then came back with some surprising news. You see, my son was expected to arrive three days later, but the doctor had prior plans to go on vacation in two days, meaning she wouldn't be there to deliver the baby. And after she explains this, all that's going through my head is "okay, well that's too bad; oh well!" However, that wasn't all the unexpected news, because the doctor really wanted to be there to deliver the baby safely, so her solution to my wife and I, was that she was going to go ahead and induce labor that day.

At that point I'm absolutely stoked, because my son's coming sooner, but when I look down at my wife; she looks like she's going to be sick. She starts saying "wait what? Are you sure we can't wait...Does it have to be now?", but the doctor's determined to have her way. Ha-ha! I began to grin from ear to ear, because my son was coming sooner than expected- a late Christmas present indeed. Of course Dolores' pleas were to no avail; but regardless, we knew that our baby boy was fixing to be born.

Later that night, a few minutes before 11pm, my son Blaine was born and after, I cut his umbilical cord, stamped his foot prints and swaddled him up nice and tight; I was the first person to hold him. I remember him being safely set between my arms with these big brown eyes staring up at me with such wonder and amazement at the world around him. It was in this moment that I truly believed that there was a God and that He had given me a true "Fresh Start Outlook" at life.

-Michael G. (a.k.a. Baby Simba)



Writer's Corner

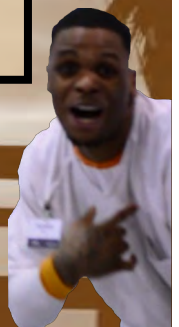


Dear Cherry Dr. Pepper,

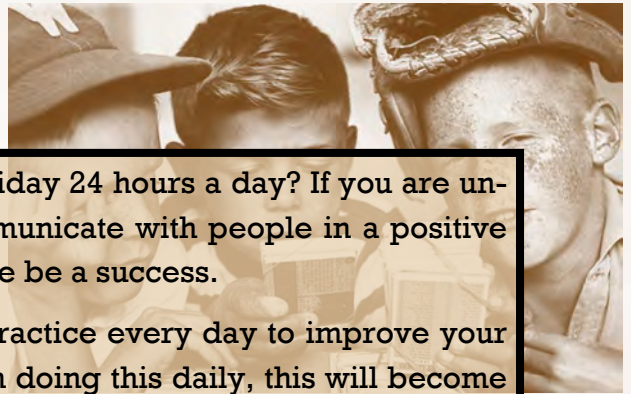
I've recently been told by several people that I'm unapproachable and that I'm very hard to talk to. Also that my facial expressions aren't really too positive to others. That I always look upset. I don't understand why? I don't cause any trouble. I'm real quiet. I'm never angry. I don't mess with anyone. I stay out of the way so I don't get in the way. Simply that I'm about my business. My own business. I'm stiff. But in a sense, I do kind of understand why other people say that. I've been locked up 13 years and I'm used to doing time by myself. What other people think of me really doesn't bother me. So it's different to come here and work on my character. Can you give me some pointers on how to become a more approachable person? Or better yet, how can I become a better friend to others?

Dear Mr. Square Business,

This is so funny. I'm only laughing because I have this same problem. Hahahaha. But I can tell you this future friend that I've been working on it and it has improved tremendously from what it was the first day I came to PEP to now. Our character is always a work in progress and I'm thankful for the environment that PEP offers us to work on ourselves and to work on each other. I read a book once that said if a person had a great personality and beauty beyond this world but had no character, don't marry that person. I thought about this and it became very true to me. Character makes the person. The way other people think and feel about you is how you come off to them. When we get out, we are going to reintegrate back to society and that will be a greater task at hand. The way we present ourselves is a major factor to how our children are going to respond to us, to how our wives welcome us back home and adapt to having us around on a daily basis. For the past 13 years, your wife and kids know how you are on Saturdays and Sundays for 4 hours a day each day. That's it. But how are you when you wake up. How are you when the bills are stacking up? What kind of person are you during hard times? What kind of person are you when you're at work or when you're with your friends? What kind of person are you when your neighbor needs help? What kind of father are you after work? What kind of husband are you after you put your kids to bed? Mainly



Writer's Corner



what kind of person are you Monday through Friday 24 hours a day? If you are unapproachable and haven't learned how to communicate with people in a positive manner, how can any relationship you have in life be a success.

So what I have for you is 6 principles you can practice every day to improve your character and become a more likable person. In doing this daily, this will become habitual. Eventually it will be normal.

Principle 1: **Become genuinely interested in other people.** Just say Hi to anyone and ask questions. How are you? How was class? Did you pass your test? Do you need some help? How's your family? It's not about you. It's about them.

Principle 2: **Smile.** To everyone. All the time. Everyday. Even those you don't know and those you don't like. You'll be surprised how many people open up to you because you smiled at them. Smiling at someone makes them feel welcomed.

Principle 3: **Remember a person's name.** To that person the sweetest and most important sound in any language is their name. Just remember, how dumb you would look if you asked someone how their kids were doing and then asked them, "Oh yeah what's your name? I forgot it again."

Principle 4: **Be a good listener.** Encourage others to talk about themselves. Listening is part of communicating and probably the most important part of communication. Like I said before, it's not about you. It's about them.

Principle 5: **Talk in terms of the other person's interest.** Talk about what they're talking about. Don't interrupt them and change the subject and talk about what you want. That's rude. Be considerate and sympathetic to what they're sharing with you.

Principle 6: **Make the other person feel important.** And do it sincerely. Act like you care.

In the long run people will approach you because you have an inviting persona. When they do, stop everything you are doing. Don't multi-task. Give them eye contact and your full attention then smile. Now open up to them.

Have a great day future friend.

Sincerely,

Cherry Dr. Pepper



WALL POSTS



Affirmations

Since coming to Cleveland Unit, Quang H. has been an positive influence on everyone in his presence. Upon his arrival here, he was not part of PEP even though he had received an invite and acceptance letter well over a year ago. As soon as his property showed up, his persistence payed off and he was enrolled into the Fall '17 class. I have never seen this man have a bad day and is always up beat and an inspiration to all of us around him. I think this is an amazing feat considering this man has spent the last 21 years of his 40 years old life in TDCJ. In the past 8 months I've known Quang, he has shown nothing but love to all those around him pouring his knowledge into others, helping his classmates study, filling the dayroom with laughter and every time he cooks a spread, he feeds at least one or two that are less fortunate. I am blessed by having Quang as my PEP brother and I look forward to living life with this true legend!

-James P. "Mrs. Doubtfire"

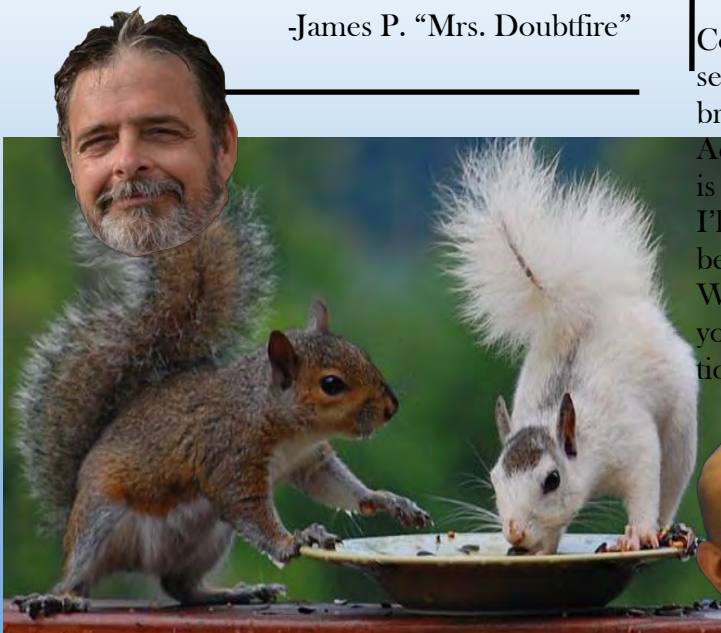
I would like to give a shout-out to Rocky G. He has changed his perspective on life and is overcoming any challenge that may come his way. His dedication and love for his son is like no other, he has finally found his "why" in life and is determined to do anything to better himself in order to give his son a life that he never had. With that being said, Rocky has shown that he is capable of completing this program and I will be there to congratulate him at graduation. I salute you my friend—my brother! Keep pushing forward and know we are all here to help you along the way.

-Francisco R. "Itty Bitty"



Congratulations to all Fall '17 for their transition to the second phase—Kudos guys! But especially to one PEP brother; Warren R. (Baby Buzzard), since Leadership Academy he has been studying hard, stays focused and is always willing to help out another individual. At times I'll challenge him to do better, to never settle for less, because I don't want to see him fail or return to prison. Warren, you know what you have to do! I want to give you recognition for all your hard work and determination for being humble and also a good friend of mine.

-David P. "Uncle Fester"





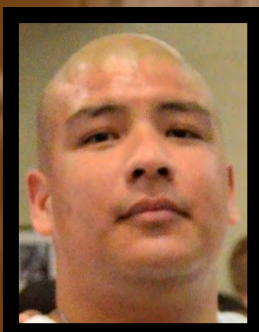
I would like to congratulate all of my Fall 17 brothers, for doing such an excellent job at the VCP Event. Hearing my brothers pitches I could see that we were ready to leave a Legendary impact.

We all have a vision to build something big and extraordinary. I am convinced that we all have the skills and mental toughness to overcome anything that is put in our path.

The fact that we have the support and motivation from the executive volunteer, and servant leaders, will help us put these skills to use.

I believe the event had such an impact on the Legends of the Fall to want to make a bigger impression and to do that much better in our next presentation.

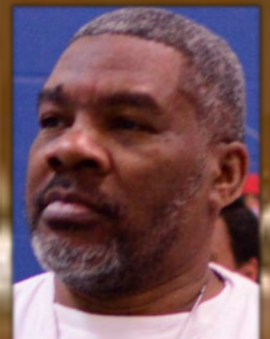
Thanks to PEP and the man upstairs for making all this possible, also to our families we would like to thank them as well, for all the support that they have contributed to each and everyone of us, we love you all and look forward to seeing you guys at graduation.

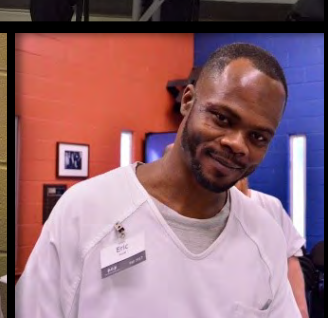
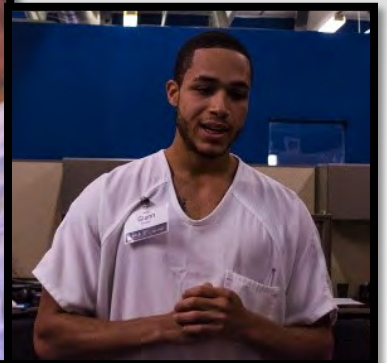
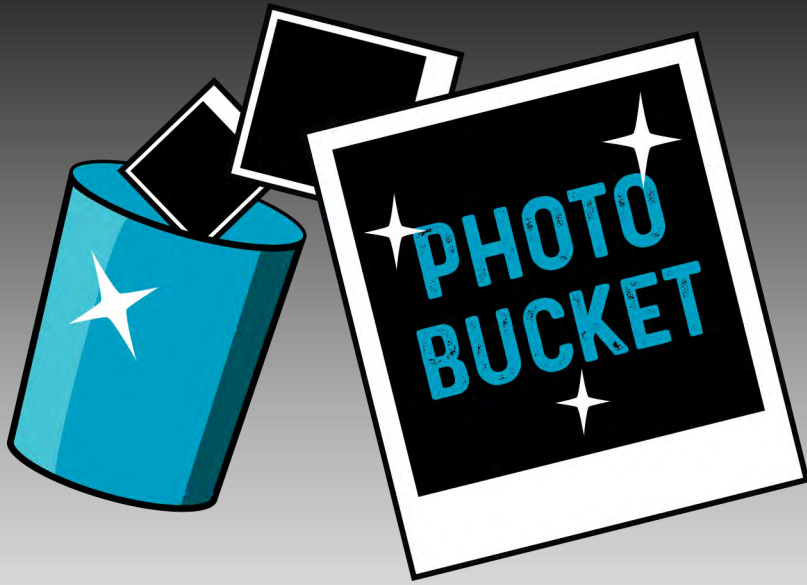


Sincerely,
Ronny V.
(a.k.a. Ron Cakes)

The Prison Entrepreneur Program's Legends of the Fall class of 2017 experienced the real deal in business savvy when it comes to persuasive sales talk. The Fall class began the event in an up roaring welcome to the executives of PEP during the opening ceremony of the class' first Venture Capital Panel Event. This event captured the full throttle excitement of both the executives and participants from the Cleveland Correctional Center. There were approximately 109 participants and 60 executives poised to present and evaluate the business plans of the participants in what felt like by many of the participants as a rigorous mental shakedown. The professionalism exhibited by the executives set the stage for a real business world dialogue that took place in an unlikely setting where men who are more familiar with slang spoke as men of business and maturity. There were smiles and handshakes for a job well done and real sense of accomplishment that surpassed boundaries never thought to be obtainable, but most of all it was the real deal.

**Sincerely,
Kimothy T.
(a.k.a. Hula Hoop)**











Internal

The wind whispers gently as I look out to the sky,
Have I made my time worthwhile or just a half-hearted try.
I've seen the sun's vivid colors doused in many shades of blue,
Still I am tried and bound wandering what to do.
I have witnessed great sceneries as a dog would in a cage,
I remain listless waiting to turn the page.
It is naïve to remain idle in my life,
I turn the tides of my pain and my strife.
Seen through ominous eyes—I am withdrawn from the look;
Now my future will be brighter because I am the author of my book.
I am not where I want and that is to be free,
My feet are on a path to freedom—exactly where they need to be.

-John P. (aka "Lollipop")

Soul Searching

*When we lose our way, do we ever stay lost?
When it's time to pay, is it ever worth the cost?
So many questions may come, like the waves of the ocean,
the search has begun, when the soul longs for devotion.
The answers you may seek, always dwell some where within,
when the tears touch your cheek, don't ever hold them in.
Let them fall when you can, because every soul cries, for every woman and man, it's only the flesh that dies. The soul continues on . . . Still asking the same question,
if the answer is right or wrong, remember that life was our lesson.
So let love be the reason, let love lead the way, pain is just another season . . . That'll soon fade away.
Sometimes the only way to know . . .
Is to let the soul ask the same questions again,
before you ask which way to go
—remember where you've been.*

- Alex P. "Tinky Winky"



Servant-Leader of the Month

Unsung Hero?

I think it is important to recognize the unsung ones; for me that would be the men in this program who teach me every day about patience, loyalty, and friendship. We are, for better or worse—a community and I am so thankful that I can count the past graduates and current class among my brothers.

Biggest priority since graduating?

Since graduating, priorities come at us at break-neck speed and for me I have a lot of repair work to do beyond these walls. I owe it to my daughter and her mother to begin that process.

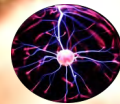
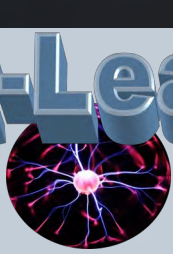
My memory that always makes me laugh?

While at a pre-school Christmas social and choir event I saw a group of dads standing in the corner drinking punch. They saw me walk in with Nolah, and I could tell they wanted to talk to me. After a few minutes they shuffled over to me and introduced themselves. "So, you are Nolah's dad huh?" I shook my head as I took a sip of punch. The one that spoke leaned in closer and said "Did you know she has minions?" I laughed and he continued, "My son thinks she can do no wrong." the other fathers agreed telling me of Nolah's reputation at their homes—proof that my daughter is a princess!

You have been recognized as our Servant-Leader of the month, how do you define "Brotherhood"?

Brotherhood is refuge and longevity. We are legion. **WE ARE PEP!!!**

-Nathan H. (aka Mr. Rogers)



Entrepreneur Of The Month



TECH AND
TEA SOCIAL



My name is Jaime G., proud founder and owner of Tech and Tea Social. We are the Tech Bar Lounge specializing in artificial reality technologies. This includes virtual reality, mixed reality, and augmented reality hardware and software. Tech and Tea Social also offers courses and sessions within both virtual reality and mixed reality.

You can visit Ripley's Believe it or not, take a tour in our escape rooms, or explore nature and space without ever actually going there. We also provide group sessions for yoga, martial arts and dance sessions. Every course and session is unique, interactive and 4D. Here at Tech and Tea Social we have the finest health conscious-tonics, teas and coffees, both foreign and domestic.

A little about myself, I was born in Abilene TX, and as far back as I can remember, I have always wanted to visit places and enjoy experiences that were not readily available. But now I can do both and provide for others with the same passion to do the same.

I am determined to give my all to PEP, so I can network and utilize all the tools they have to offer, and in doing so not only will my life change but we'll change the lives of others, starting with one experience at a time.

- Jaime G. (a.k.a. Muffin Top)



Executive Of The Month

ALFONSO IS ONE OF THE MANY EXECUTIVES WHO DONATES HIS TIME TO PEP, MONTH AFTER MONTH THIS GENTLEMAN COMES TO OUR EVENTS TO SHARE HIS KNOWLEDGE AND HIS WISDOM WITH US. WE BELIEVE THAT HE ALSO LOVES THE COOKIES AS WELL. WE AT PEP WOULD LIKE TO THANK ALFONSO, FOR ALL THE TIME AND EFFORT THAT HE PUTS INTO OUR ORGANIZATION. SO TO SHOW OUR GRATITUDE, WE WOULD LIKE TO HONOR HIM, BY MAKING ALFONSO OUR EXECUTIVE OF THE MONTH. IN ADDITION, WE ASKED HIM SOME QUESTIONS TO GET TO KNOW HIM A LITTLE MORE.

TELL US A LITTLE SOMETHING ABOUT YOU ALFONSO.

I WAS BORN IN CALI, COLOMBIA, I LEARNED FROM MY MOM AND DAD THAT IF YOU WORK HARD; YOU WOULD NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE VALUE OF WORKING. I CAME TO THE STATES 33 YEARS AGO, COMMITTED A CRIME THAT SENT ME TO FEDERAL PRISON FOR 10 YEARS. I HAVE BEEN 20 YEARS TROUBLE FREE AND IT IS BY THE GRACE OF GOD THAT I AM WHO I AM TODAY.

WHY DO YOU CHOOSE TO SUPPORT PEP?

I BELIEVE IN THE HARD WORK OF DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS. THE VOLUNTEERS WERE THE FORCE OF HELPING ME CHANGE, AND IT'S BECAUSE OF THEM THAT I CONTINUE TO STRIVE. PEP PROVIDES THAT VOLUNTEER SUPPORT EVEN BEYOND THE PRISON FENCES.

WHY DO YOU KEEP COMING BACK?

BECAUSE I LOVE TO COME TO PRISON. THERE IS NO GREATER JOY, THAN SEEING MEN BEING CHANGED AND TRANSFORMED THROUGH THE POWER OF GOD. THE PROGRAM AND THE PRISON ADMINISTRATION BOTH, IT REALLY HUMBLER ME TO SEE THE OPPORTUNITY TO SEE INMATES CHANGE THEIR LIVES.

ANY FINAL WORDS OR THOUGHTS FOR OUR PEP BROTHERS?

KEEP FOCUSED IN THE OPPORTUNITY THAT WE HAVE IN FRONT OF US. LOOK FOR GOD, FOR GUIDANCE AND KEEP STAYING BETWEEN THE WINGS. THE TIME WILL COME WHEN YOU WILL BE RELEASED, IT IS THEN THAT WE SHALL NOT FORGET ABOUT THOSE WHO ARE STILL INCARCERATED.

