FORGE

FORGE FACILITATOR GUIDE

FORGE Your Success

The weekly class of FORGE Successful Reentry

Orientation and a 12-class cycle

Table of Contents

How FORGE Your Success Works 3

Orientation Landing 9

Class 1 Thinking Under Pressure 17

Class 2 The Officer and Other Authority 24

Class 3 Getting Hired: Your Story in Two Minutes 31

Class 4 Keeping the Job 39

Class 5 Money on the Outside 47

Class 6 Coming Home to Family 55

Class 7 Old Friends, Old Places 63

Class 8 On Guard 71

Class 9 Recovery and the Stages of Change 79

Class 10 When It Goes Wrong 87

Class 11 Giving Back 94

Class 12 Your Next Address 101

How FORGE Your Success Works

Why This Class Exists

FORGE inside teaches men to know themselves, build others, and lead and serve. Then the gate opens, and the hardest test of all of it begins. The first months home are full of moments FORGE prepares men for, in places it could not practice: a parole office, a job interview, a family table, a corner with the old crew on it, a paycheck that doesn't cover the bills. One bad choice in those months can undo years of work.

FORGE Your Success is the weekly class at the center of FORGE Successful Reentry, POD Society's program for the men living in the Reentry Home. Each class takes one FORGE tool and puts it to work on one part of life after release. The tools are the same ones FORGE teaches inside: the Think-Feel-Act cycle, thinking errors, the escalation curve, the conflict resolution model, accountability, the Stages of Change, service. The setting is new.

Not every resident did FORGE inside. Some did all 36 weeks and are certified FORGE mentors. Some did part of it. Some never heard of it. Every class explains its tool from the beginning, in a few minutes, so a resident who moved in this week can use it right away, and a FORGE graduate can help teach it.

The FORGE Your Success Philosophy

Five ideas carry over from FORGE and run through every class:

- **Stakeholder, not passenger.** You shape what happens in your house, your job, your family and your neighborhood. Nobody is coming to do it for you, and nobody can stop you from doing it.
- **Think, feel, act.** Between every situation and every reaction there is a thought. Catch the thought and you can change the outcome.
- **Accountability.** Own it fully, with no "but." Your history explains how you got here. It doesn't excuse what you do next.
- **Trust is earned.** With your family, your employer, your officer and this house: one honest moment at a time.
- **Service over self.** Turn time served into time that serves others. The man who helps the next resident is building his own success at the same time.

Format

A 12-class cycle with open entry. The Reentry Home takes residents as beds open, not as a cohort. So the class runs as a cycle of 12 weekly classes, and a new resident joins at whatever class comes next. Every class stands on its own. None of them depends on having been at the one before.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Two times through. A resident who stays about six months goes through the cycle twice:

- **First time through (Land and Build stages):** as a participant, learning each tool and using it on his own Reentry Plan.
- **Second time through (Build and Launch stages):** as a **peer helper**: sharing what he tried, playing the hard part in role-plays, coaching a newer resident, and leading parts of the class with the facilitator's support.

This is FORGE in miniature: know yourself, build others, lead and serve.

Length: 90 minutes, once a week: 85 minutes of class in the shape below, and five minutes to settle in and start on time. Schedule it around residents' jobs. If several residents work evenings, run the class twice a week at different times rather than excusing them.

Group size: up to 12. With more residents than that, run two groups.

Every Class Follows the Same Shape

Part	Time	What happens
Opening circle	10 minutes	The elevator speech, said together. Then the talking piece: one win and one challenge since last class. New residents are welcomed by name.
Reentry Plan check	10 minutes	In pairs (a newer resident with a peer helper where possible): one area of each man's plan, one step done, one step next.
Teach	20 minutes	The class's FORGE tool, explained from the beginning, then applied to life after release.
Practice	30 minutes	Role-play, scenario work or a written exercise, using the FORGE simulation format: set the scene, try it, freeze, coach, replay.
Commit and close	15 minutes	Each man writes one action for this week into his Reentry Plan and says it to the group. Closing round.

The same shape every week matters. Men coming home are rebuilding routine. A class they can predict is one more steady thing in a week that may not have many.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

The Elevator Speech

FORGE inside has an elevator speech every man learns by heart. FORGE Your Success has its own, for a man who is home:

> *"FORGE — Facilitating Opportunities for Reentry, Growth and Empowerment. I'm home, and I'm building a new life — one where I lead by example, keep my word, and make a positive impact on my family and my community. My goal is simple: to turn time served into time that serves others. My purpose: to show what a second chance looks like — through honest work, real accountability and service — and to help the next man coming home do the same."*

It keeps FORGE's central line ("to turn time served into time that serves others") and says it in the first person, because out here a man answers for himself: to an employer, his officer, his family, the men on the corner.

- **Orientation:** the mentor reads it with the new resident, from the inside cover of his book.
- **Every class:** the group says it together, out loud, before the opening check-in.
- **Second time through the cycle:** ask one or two men each class to say it alone, without looking. By the time a man completes FORGE Your Success, he should be able to say it from memory.

The Book

Every resident gets his own copy of **FORGE Your Success: A guide for men coming home** at Orientation. It is his to keep, write in and take with him when he leaves the house. It has a chapter for every class: the same tool and the same situations as the class, written for a man reading on his own, with "Try it" pages to write in, an "After you leave the house" section in every chapter, the tools at a glance, a page for the numbers he'll need, and a reading list.

Use the book in every class. Point the men to the chapter at the start of the Teach section, use its Try it pages in the Practice and Commit parts, and remind them at the close that the chapter is there for the week ahead, and for the years after they leave.

Loose forms. The Reentry Plan, the thinking report and the My First Week checklist are also printed as photocopy masters (*FORGE Your Success: Forms*), for men who need a fresh copy.

The Reentry Plan

Every resident writes a Reentry Plan at Orientation and keeps it in a folder. It has eight areas:

Area	The question it answers
Housing	Where do I live now, where will I live next, and what's my backup?
Identification	Do I have a state ID, Social Security card and birth certificate?

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Area	The question it answers
Work	What job do I have, and what's my path to a better one?
Money	Do I have a bank account, a budget and savings? What do I owe?
Health and recovery	Medication, mental health care, recovery support, a doctor or clinic.
Family	Which relationships am I rebuilding, and how?
Supervision and legal	Every check-in and condition; any open legal matters.
Service	How am I giving back?

The first five areas are the ones FORGE mentors learn to plan for in Phase 2 (Session 65: housing, identification, employment, healthcare and family reconnection). FORGE Successful Reentry adds money, supervision and service.

Each class connects to one or two areas. Over a full cycle, every area gets a class. The plan is reviewed with the resident's mentor every week, and the "Commit" part of every class adds one concrete step to it.

The Cycle

Class	Title	FORGE tool	Reentry Plan area
Orientation	Landing (one-on-one, at move-in)	The FORGE commitment	All eight: the first plan
1	Thinking Under Pressure	Think-Feel-Act, thinking reports, STOP	All
2	The Officer and Other Authority	Composure with people who hold power; STOP	Supervision and legal
3	Getting Hired: Your Story in Two Minutes	The accountability spectrum	Work
4	Keeping the Job	The 5-step conflict model; SBI feedback	Work
5	Money on the Outside	Budgeting and financial literacy	Money
6	Coming Home to Family	The 4-step accountability conversation	Family
7	Old Friends, Old Places	The relationship map; pressure decisions	Housing, Service
8	On Guard	The escalation curve; trauma responses	Health and recovery
9	Recovery and the Stages of Change	Stages of Change; the support network map	Health and recovery
10	When It Goes Wrong	Accountability without shame	All

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Class	Title	FORGE tool	Reentry Plan area
11	Giving Back	Service over self; OARS	Service
12	Your Next Address	Planning with a backup	Housing, Money

Roles

Facilitator. A POD Society staff member or a certified FORGE mentor. Runs the class, keeps it safe, and holds the line on the house agreement and the class agreements.

Co-facilitator (when available). A second staff member, a credible messenger, or a certified FORGE mentor who is home. Two facilitators make role-plays and pair work much stronger.

Peer helpers. Residents on their second time through the cycle. Before each class, the facilitator gives each peer helper one job: sharing a story from his own reentry, playing a role in the practice, leading the Reentry Plan check for a newer resident, or teaching one part of the tool. Peer helpers are not staff. They don't enforce house rules or hear private disclosures for the facilitator.

Participants. Residents on their first time through the cycle.

New arrivals. A man at his first class sits next to a peer helper (his "anchor" for the night), who explains the format and helps with the Reentry Plan check.

Class Agreements

Read these at the first class each new resident attends, and post them where the class meets. The group can add to them.

1. What's said here stays here, except when someone's safety is at risk (see Limits of Confidentiality).
2. One person speaks at a time. The talking piece means it.
3. Speak for yourself. "I," not "you" or "we."
4. No one is forced to share. Passing is allowed.
5. Challenge the idea, not the person.
6. Be on time. Your job comes first; tell the facilitator before class if work will make you late.
7. What you commit to in this room, you report on next week.

Limits of Confidentiality

Residents need to hear this plainly, at their first class and at Orientation:

- If a man says he intends to hurt himself or someone else, the facilitator will act on it.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

- If someone discloses abuse of a child or a vulnerable adult, the facilitator will report it as the law requires.
- The facilitator does not report class discussion to supervision officers. But the facilitator cannot keep a resident's safety, a new crime or a house-agreement violation secret, and residents should not expect peer helpers to either.

Facility contacts to fill in before the first class:

- Crisis and mental health: _____
- Recovery support: _____
- Legal and parole questions (POD Society legal services): _____
- Program lead after hours: _____

Facilitating Men Who Are Home

They are not in a dorm anymore. Inside, the program shaped much of the day. Now jobs, family, parole and money compete for every hour. Respect that. Start on time, end on time, and make every class worth leaving work for.

Lead with lived experience. The strongest voice in the room is usually the resident who was in the same spot six weeks ago. Use peer helpers' stories before your own lecture.

Practice, don't preach. Every class has a role-play or exercise because a skill that has never been tried under pressure will not show up under pressure. Keep the teaching short and the practice long.

Use the FORGE simulation format. Set the scene, let the resident try it, freeze, coach (the resident first: "What's your plan? What do you need?", then the group), and replay. One or two coaching points per freeze, not ten.

Never shame a setback in the circle. A resident who missed a check-in, lost a job or used will often say so in the opening circle, or won't come at all if he expects to be humiliated. Thank him for the honesty, keep the circle moving, and talk one-on-one after class. Class 10 teaches the whole group how to handle setbacks.

Know the line. FORGE Your Success is not therapy, legal advice or a parole office. When a man needs more than the group can give, the job is to listen, validate and refer, using the contacts above.

Write it down. After each class, note on each resident's record: attended or not, the action he committed to, and anything his mentor should know. The mentor follows up on the commitment before the next class.

Completion

A resident completes FORGE Your Success when he has:

- attended all 12 classes at least once (make-ups with his mentor count for no more than two),
- served as a peer helper in at least four classes, and
- kept a Reentry Plan with at least one step completed in every area.

Completion is recognized at the house circle and noted in his FORGE Successful Reentry record. Residents who complete the program are invited back as alumni guests: often the most powerful voice in the room.

 Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Orientation: Landing

Facilitator Notes for Orientation

Orientation is the first hour a resident spends with his mentor, one-on-one, on move-in day or as close to it as the day allows. It is not a class. There is no circle and no role-play, and the facilitator here is the resident's mentor. It comes first because the first days home are the most crowded days of reentry: papers to find, a check-in to make, rules to learn, family calling, old friends calling, and a head full of noise. A resident who leaves this hour knowing the house agreement, holding a first Reentry Plan with a step in all eight areas, and knowing exactly when and where his first check-in is, has landed. A resident who leaves it with a stack of forms and a lecture has not. The hour covers the welcome and the house agreement, the FORGE commitment (stakeholder, not passenger), the first Reentry Plan, the three identification documents, the first supervision check-in, the first week's schedule, the limits of confidentiality, and meeting the anchor and the class schedule. Hold two things in mind. You will not fix everything in an hour, and you should not try; the goal is a first step in every area and the two urgent ones, papers and check-in, nailed down. And listen more than you talk. This may be the first time anyone in the house hears this man's story, and how you listen tells him what kind of house this is.

What to Watch For

A resident who is flooded. Men often arrive tired, wired, or both. If the resident goes quiet, can't follow, or seems agitated, slow down and cut to the essentials: the house agreement, where his papers are, the date of his first check-in, and your name. Everything else can wait for your next meeting. Say so, so he doesn't feel he failed the first hour.

Urgent things hiding in ordinary answers. A check-in that is two days away. Medication that runs out this week. Nowhere safe to keep papers. Ask directly, area by area, and write the date next to anything with a deadline.

"I've got it handled." Some residents don't want to look like they need help. Respect that, and ask for specifics: "Good. When's your check-in? Where's your birth certificate right now?" Specifics show what is handled and what isn't, without anyone having to admit anything.

Mistrust of the house. To a man coming out of prison, a house with rules and staff can look like one more institution. Don't argue with that. Trust is earned, one honest moment at a time, and that includes the house earning his.

Signs of crisis. If the resident says anything about hurting himself or someone else, stop the plan and use the crisis contact. The plan can wait. He can't.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Common Challenges

"More rules. I just got done with rules." Fair. Say it: "I hear you. Here's the difference. Inside, rules were done to you. Here, the house agreement is what lets a house full of men coming home live together safely, and you're one of the men who make it work. That's what a stakeholder is."

"I don't have any of my papers." That's common, and it's exactly what the plan is for. The first step isn't getting the documents; it's finding out what each office needs to see. Write that down as the step.

"I did FORGE inside. I know all this." Good. Then you know a commitment is only as good as the next choice. Tell him his FORGE work counts here: the facilitator will ask him to share how he used the tools, and the second time through the cycle he'll be a peer helper, welcoming a new man in the chair he's sitting in now.

"I don't know my conditions," or "I lost my release papers." Don't guess, and don't let him guess. Find out before the hour is over if you can, by calling the supervision office together, and write down exactly what you are told.

Preparing for Orientation

- Make sure POD Society has filled in the house rules (in the House Agreement part below) and the contacts in How FORGE Your Success Works. Don't run Orientation with blanks.
- Know the house's policy on what it shares with supervision officers, so you can say it plainly.
- Put together the resident's folder: a blank Reentry Plan, the My First Week page, a thinking report sheet, the class agreements and the class schedule.
- Know where residents apply for each identification document, and write it on the My First Week page ahead of time.
- Ask a peer helper to be this resident's anchor, and to come in for the last part of the hour.
- Know the date of the next class and which class of the cycle it is.
- Book a private room for the full hour. Phone off.

Orientation Overview

Purpose: Land the resident in the house: make the house agreement and the FORGE commitment, write the first Reentry Plan across all eight areas, and pin down the identification documents, the first supervision check-in and the first week.

Format: One-on-one with the resident's mentor, 60 minutes, at move-in. A private space, not the class room.

Reentry Plan area: All eight. This is the first plan.

Builds on FORGE: Week 1, Session 1 (Welcome to FORGE: the stakeholder model and the Participant Commitment), and Week 22, Session 65 (Reentry Preparation: the identification documents a man needs).

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Materials:

- The resident's folder: blank Reentry Plan, My First Week page, thinking report sheet, class agreements, class schedule
- A copy of the house agreement for the resident to keep
- The contacts list (crisis, recovery support, legal services, program lead after hours)
- The resident's release papers and any documents he brought
- Two pens

Learning Objectives

By the end of Orientation, the resident will be able to:

1. Say in his own words what the house agreement asks of him
2. Explain what "stakeholder, not passenger" means for his time in this house, and make the FORGE commitment
3. Name one next step in each of the eight areas of his Reentry Plan
4. Say which of the three identification documents he has, and the next step for each one he doesn't
5. Give the date, time and place of his first supervision check-in, if he is on supervision, and what to bring
6. Say what stays private between him and his mentor, and what doesn't
7. Name his mentor, his anchor, when he next meets his mentor, and when the next class is

Orientation Checklist

- ☐ House rules filled in by POD Society before the meeting
- ☐ Resident welcomed and asked what he needs right now
- ☐ House agreement read together; resident's questions answered
- ☐ Limits of confidentiality explained, including what the house shares with supervision
- ☐ Elevator speech read together
- ☐ FORGE commitment read, discussed and signed, with the mentor as witness
- ☐ First Reentry Plan written: a next step in all eight areas
- ☐ Identification documents checked: state ID, Social Security card, birth certificate
- ☐ First supervision check-in written down: date, time, place, officer, what to bring
- ☐ First week's schedule written on the My First Week page
- ☐ Anchor introduced; class schedule and next class given
- ☐ Next mentor meeting set
- ☐ Record updated: plan written, documents, check-in date, anchor, first class

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Orientation Plan

Welcome and Landing (5 minutes)

Set up: Two chairs, no desk between them. The folder on the table.

> **Mentor:**
>
> *"Welcome home. My name is [name], and I'm your mentor. That means you and I meet every week while you're here. We look at your plan, we look at what's working and what isn't, and when something goes wrong, I'm the first person you call.*
>
> *Before anything else: how are you doing, right now? Honestly. Have you eaten? Is there anything you need before we start?"*

Listen. Deal with anything urgent first. If he is exhausted or overwhelmed, say: "We're going to do just the most important parts today and the rest at our next meeting." Then do the House Agreement, Papers and the First Check-In, and the Close.

> *"Here's what we'll do this hour. The house agreement. A commitment. Your first Reentry Plan. Your papers and your first check-in. Your first week. And you'll meet the man who'll sit next to you at your first class. By the end you'll know what's next, and you won't have to keep it all in your head."*

The House Agreement (10 minutes)

Read the house rules together. Give the resident a copy to keep. Pause after each rule and ask if it's clear.

House rules (POD Society to fill in before first use):

- House rule: _____
- House rule: _____
- House rule: _____
- House rule: _____
- House rule: _____
- House rule: _____
- House rule: _____
- House rule: _____

> **Mentor:**
>
> *"Is there anything here you can't commit to? Ask now. If you agree to this, it's not a formality. It means something."*

Answer questions honestly. If you don't know an answer, say so and find out by your next meeting.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Then the limits of confidentiality:

> **Mentor:**
>
> *"Here's what stays between us and what doesn't, so you never get surprised.*
>
> *Most of what you tell me stays with me. I write down what we agree to do, so our next meeting starts where this one ended. I don't report our conversations to your officer.*
>
> *But there are three things I can't keep to myself. If you tell me you intend to hurt yourself or someone else, I will act on it. If you tell me about abuse of a child or a vulnerable adult, I will report it, because the law requires it. And I can't keep a new crime, someone's safety, or a house-agreement violation secret. The peer helpers can't either, so don't put them in that spot.*
>
> *One more thing: here's what the house shares with supervision officers: _____."*

The FORGE Commitment and the Elevator Speech (8 minutes)

> **Mentor:**
>
> *"If you did FORGE inside, you'll know this idea. If you didn't, it's the one this whole house runs on.*
>
> ***You're a stakeholder here, not a passenger.*** *A passenger sits in the back and lets things happen to him. A stakeholder knows that what happens in this house, at his job, in his family, depends partly on him. Whether the house is calm or tense, whether the new man gets help or gets ignored: that's shaped by the men who live here. Nobody is coming to do it for you, and nobody can stop you from doing it."*

Read the commitment together. Its promises are printed on the My First Week page, where the resident signs it.

> *"By living in this house, I accept both the privilege and the responsibility of being part of a community built on discipline, peace and service. I understand that my actions, words and attitude shape the safety, growth and success of this house.*
>
> *I commit to: lead by example in every circumstance; respect every person as I wish to be respected; keep this house safe, free from weapons, violence and fear; practice Service Over Self by helping the next resident grow; and live by the principles of Opportunity, Growth and Empowerment.*
>
> *My commitment is to live with integrity, serve with humility, and mentor with purpose. I will turn time served into time that serves others."*
>
> *"Same question as before: anything here you can't commit to? 'Mentor with purpose' might sound like a lot right now. It's where this goes. The second time through the class cycle, you'll be the one helping a man who just walked in."*

The resident signs; you sign as witness. If he isn't ready to sign, don't push. Say: "That's honest. We'll come back to it at our next meeting." Note it on his record.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Then the elevator speech. Show him the FORGE Your Success elevator speech inside the front cover of his book, and read it together once:

> *"FORGE — Facilitating Opportunities for Reentry, Growth and Empowerment. I'm home, and I'm building a new life — one where I lead by example, keep my word, and make a positive impact on my family and my community. My goal is simple: to turn time served into time that serves others. My purpose: to show what a second chance looks like — through honest work, real accountability and service — and to help the next man coming home do the same."*
>
> *"Every class starts with the group saying this together. Learn it by heart in your first few weeks. When someone asks what you're about (an employer, your officer, your family, a man on the corner), this is your answer."*

The First Reentry Plan (15 minutes)

> **Mentor:**
>
> *"This is your Reentry Plan. Eight areas. You'll keep it in this folder, we'll look at it every week, and every class adds one step to it. It doesn't have to be complete today. Today we just want to know where you are in each area and one next step.*
>
> *One rule: write actions, not wishes. 'Get my papers together' is a wish. 'Call the vital records office and ask what they need for a birth certificate' is an action."*

Go through the eight areas. One question each. The resident writes, or you write while he talks if he prefers.

Area	Ask
Housing	"How long can you stay here, and where would you go after? What's your backup?"
Identification	"We'll do this one in a minute."
Work	"Do you have a job or a lead? What kind of work have you done?"
Money	"Do you have a bank account? Any money coming in? Anything you owe?"
Health and recovery	"Any medication with you? How many days' worth? A doctor, a clinic, recovery meetings?"
Family	"Who do you want to reconnect with? Who's already in your corner?"
Supervision and legal	"We'll do this one in a minute too."
Service	"Nothing yet is fine. The house will give you chances."

Facilitator note: Write a date next to anything urgent, like medication running out. Use the contacts list for anything you can refer today. Don't get pulled into solving one area for the whole fifteen minutes; write the step and move on.

Papers and the First Check-In (10 minutes)

Part 1: The Three Documents (5 min)

 Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

> **Mentor:**
>
> *"Three papers open almost every other door: a job, a bank account, an apartment.* ***A state ID. A Social Security card. A birth certificate.*** *Do you have a valid state ID? A Social Security card? A birth certificate? Where is each one right now?"*

Fill in the documents table on the My First Week page together. For each one he doesn't have, the next step is finding out what that office needs to see, so he doesn't make the trip twice.

> *"Every original goes in this folder. Lose a birth certificate and you start over."*

Where residents apply (fill in before first use):

- State ID: _____
- Social Security card: _____
- Birth certificate: _____

Part 2: The First Supervision Check-In (5 min)

> **Mentor:**
>
> *"If you're on parole or probation, your first check-in is the most important appointment you have this week. Let's read it off your papers together. When? Where? Who's your officer? What do you need to bring?"*

Write it on the My First Week page and under Supervision and legal on the plan. Then plan the trip: how he gets there, and what time he leaves so he arrives early.

> *"Early, not on time. If anything comes up that might make you late, you call before, not after. Class 2 in our cycle is all about working with your officer. And any legal question goes to POD Society legal services, not to me and not to the other residents: _____."*

If the resident is not on supervision, use this time to write down any open legal matters under Supervision and legal, and point any legal questions to legal services.

The First Week (10 minutes)

Part 1: The Schedule (5 min)

> **Mentor:**
>
> *"Let's put your first week on paper, day by day. Your check-in first. Then the ID trips. Our next meeting. Your first class. Anything the house needs from you. Leave room. A first week packed full is a first week that falls apart."*

Fill in the schedule on the My First Week page. Use Day 1 to Day 7, starting from move-in.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Part 2: Meeting the Anchor and the Class (5 min)

Bring in the anchor. Introduce him by name.

> **Mentor:**
>
> *"This is [name]. He'll be your anchor at your first class. He'll sit next to you and help with anything that doesn't make sense.*
>
> *The class is called FORGE Your Success. It meets _____. It runs as a cycle of twelve classes, and you can start at any one of them, because every class stands on its own. Your first one is Class [number]. The first time through, you learn the tools and use them on your plan. The second time through, you help teach them."*

Ask the anchor to say one thing about his own first weeks in the house: what helped, and what he wishes he'd known. Keep it to a minute or two.

If the resident did FORGE inside, ask how far he got, and tell the facilitator before the next class.

Close (2 minutes)

> **Mentor:**
>
> *"Last question. Of everything on that page, what's the one thing you'll do first?*
>
> *Good. Write it at the top. We meet next on _____. If something goes wrong before then, you call me. That's what I'm here for. Welcome home."*

After Orientation: record on the resident's file that the plan is written, which documents he has, his check-in date, his anchor, his first class, and whether he signed the commitment, and copy the signed My First Week page for the file. Tell the class facilitator a new resident is coming, and whether he did FORGE inside.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Class 1: Thinking Under Pressure

Facilitator Notes for Class 1

This class is the foundation the other eleven stand on, which is why it opens the cycle. The single most useful idea FORGE teaches is that between every situation and every reaction there is a thought, and the thought, not the situation, drives what we feel and do. Inside, residents practiced that on the chow line and in the dayroom. Home, the situations are new and the stakes are different: a supervisor who talks down to you, a "no" on the third job application this week, a family member who brings up the past, an officer who changes your check-in time. Old automatic thoughts ("They'll never give me a chance," "He's trying to send me back," "I'll show them") come back fast under that kind of pressure. This class gives every man the Think-Feel-Act cycle, the thinking report and the STOP technique, whether he did 36 weeks of FORGE or none. Hold two things in mind. Residents who completed FORGE may say "I already know this"; turn them into teachers, because the test now is using it out here, not knowing it. And keep the examples from life after release, not from inside; the point of the class is that the tool travels.

What to Watch For

The "I already know this" resident. FORGE graduates often know the Think-Feel-Act cycle by heart. Ask them for a thinking report from *this* week, out here. Knowing it and using it under pressure on the outside are different skills.

Thoughts that sound like facts. "Nobody hires felons." "My PO is out to get me." "My family will never trust me." These feel like reality to the person saying them. Don't argue. Ask: "Is that a fact, or is it a thought? What's the evidence for and against it?"

Newcomers who are overwhelmed. A resident in the first days home may be flooded: too many choices, too much noise, too many appointments. If a man goes quiet or seems agitated, don't push him to share. Check in after class.

Stories about other people. Thinking reports drift into "what he did." Steer back: "That's the situation. What was the thought in *your* head?"

Common Challenges

"It's not my thinking. The situation really is unfair." Sometimes it is. Agree out loud: "You may be right. The situation may be unfair. The question is what thought will get you through it without losing what you've built." The cycle doesn't say the situation is fine. It says your next move comes from your thought, not the situation.

"I don't have time to stop and think when it's happening." That's why we practice here. STOP takes a few seconds, and like any skill it gets faster with repetition. The first goal is just to catch it once this week.

"Writing isn't my thing." A thinking report can be said out loud to a peer helper, or written in a few words per column. Honesty matters more than spelling.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Preparing for This Class

- Ask one peer helper to bring a real thinking report from his own first weeks home, and to share it in Part 2 of the Teach section.
- Ask a second peer helper to play the supervisor in the practice role-play, and walk through the scene with him before class.
- Print spare thinking report sheets (from *FORGE Your Success: Forms*) and check that every man has his book.
- Write the Think-Feel-Act chain on the board before residents arrive.

Class 1 Overview

Purpose: Give every resident the core FORGE tool (the Think-Feel-Act cycle, the thinking report and STOP) and use it on the pressures of life after release.

Reentry Plan area: All areas. Every plan area has moments where a thought decides the outcome.

Builds on FORGE: Week 2 (Sessions 4 to 6: Thinking Controls Behavior, Thinking Errors, Cognitive Restructuring), with the STOP technique (Session 6), which Week 3 uses again for emotional regulation.

Materials:

- Talking piece
- Board or easel paper with the Think-Feel-Act chain written on it
- Thinking report sheets (*FORGE Your Success: Forms*), 2 per resident
- Each man's FORGE Your Success book (Chapter 1, with its Try it pages)
- Residents' Reentry Plan folders

Learning Objectives

By the end of this class, residents will be able to:

1. Explain the Think-Feel-Act cycle in their own words
2. Tell a thought from a fact in a situation from their own life since release
3. Complete a thinking report about a recent situation out here
4. Use the STOP technique in a role-play with a supervisor
5. Write one specific action into their Reentry Plan for the coming week

Class 1 Checklist

☐ Elevator speech said together, out loud

☐ Think-Feel-Act chain on the board before class

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

- ☐ New residents welcomed by name and paired with an anchor
- ☐ Class agreements read aloud (if anyone is new)
- ☐ Opening circle completed: one win, one challenge
- ☐ Reentry Plan check completed in pairs
- ☐ Think-Feel-Act cycle taught with an example from life after release
- ☐ Peer helper shared a real thinking report from his first weeks home
- ☐ STOP taught
- ☐ Supervisor role-play run with freeze and replay
- ☐ Each resident wrote a thinking report or said one aloud
- ☐ Each man wrote one action into his Reentry Plan and said it to the group
- ☐ Men pointed to Chapter 1 in their books
- ☐ Attendance and commitments recorded for mentors

Class Plan

Opening Circle (10 minutes)

Elevator speech (2 minutes). Before the check-in, the group says the FORGE Your Success elevator speech together, out loud. New men read it from the inside cover of the book. From a man's second time through the cycle, ask one or two men to say it alone, without looking.

Set up: Chairs in a circle. Talking piece in the center.

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Welcome. If this is your first class, welcome home, and welcome to FORGE Your Success. Your anchor is sitting next to you; he'll help you with anything that doesn't make sense.*
>
> *Check-in round. Two things:* ***one win since last class, and one challenge.*** *A win can be small. You made it to every appointment. You opened a bank account. You didn't say the thing you wanted to say. Challenges can be small too. Pass the talking piece when you're done."*

If anyone is new: read the class agreements before the round, and remind everyone of the limits of confidentiality.

Facilitator note: Listen for challenges that connect to this class's topic: a man who almost lost his temper, a man who got a "no." With permission, come back to them in the Teach or Practice section.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Reentry Plan Check (10 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Pair up. Newer residents with a peer helper if you can. Take out your Reentry Plan. Each of you: pick one area, say one step you finished this week and one step that's next. Five minutes each. Peer helpers, ask the newer resident one question that helps him get specific."*

Facilitator circulates. Watch for plans with nothing in an area for weeks, and note it for the resident's mentor.

Teach: Think, Feel, Act on the Outside (20 minutes)

Part 1: The Cycle (8 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"If you did FORGE inside, you know this. If you didn't, this is the most useful thing you'll learn in this house.*
>
> ***Your thinking drives your behavior.*** *Not the situation. Not the other person. Your thinking.*
>
> *Look at the board:*
>
> ***SITUATION → THOUGHT → FEELING → ACTION → CONSEQUENCE***
>
> *Something happens. You have a thought about it: fast, automatic, usually without noticing. That thought creates a feeling. The feeling drives an action. The action has a consequence. Every time.*
>
> *Here's one from out here.* ***Situation:*** *Your supervisor at work says, in front of everybody, 'You missed a spot. Do it again.'*
>
> ***Thought A:*** *'He's disrespecting me in front of everybody. He thinks I'm nothing because I've been locked up.'*
> ***Feeling:*** *Anger. Shame. Face gets hot.*
> ***Action:*** *You throw the rag down. 'Do it yourself.'*
> ***Consequence:*** *You're fired by the end of the shift. Maybe a call to your officer about losing the job.*
>
> ***Thought B:*** *'He's having a bad day, or he talks to everybody like that. I need this check.'*
> ***Feeling:*** *Irritated, but steady.*
> ***Action:*** *'Got it.' You redo the spot.*
> ***Consequence:*** *You keep the job. Next Friday you get paid.*
>
> *Same supervisor. Same words. What was different?"*

Pause. Let someone answer: the thought.

> *"The thought. And notice: Thought B isn't 'my supervisor is a great guy.' You don't have to like it. You just have to pick the thought that keeps your plan alive."*

Part 2: Thoughts That Feel Like Facts (7 min)

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"The thoughts that do the most damage out here don't feel like thoughts. They feel like facts. 'Nobody's going to hire me.' 'My officer wants me back inside.' 'My family will never forgive me.' When a thought feels like a fact, you stop questioning it, and it starts making your decisions for you.*
>
> *Two questions break that open:* ***Is this a fact or a thought? What's the evidence for it, and against it?****"*

Peer helper shares the thinking report he brought from his own first weeks home: the situation, the automatic thought, what happened, and what he would think now. Keep it to three or four minutes.

Part 3: STOP (5 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"When the feeling is already coming up, you need something fast.* ***STOP:***
>
> - ***S****top. Don't say or do anything yet. Take one breath.*
> - ***T****hink. What's the thought in my head right now? Is it a fact?*
> - ***O****ptions. What are two or three things I could do?*
> - ***P****lan. Pick the one that protects my plan, and do that.*
>
> *It takes a few seconds. You won't get it right every time. The goal this week is to catch it once."*

Write STOP on the board next to the chain.

Practice: The Supervisor (30 minutes)

Purpose: Use STOP and the cycle under pressure, using the FORGE simulation format.

Part 1: Simulation (15 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"We're going to run a scene. [Peer helper] is going to play a supervisor on a job site. It's your second week. I need a volunteer to play the new hire."*

Set the scene (to the group and the volunteer): It's 4:45 on a Friday. The new hire has been on time every day. The supervisor walks up in front of two other workers and says: "Who taught you to stack it like that? This is why I don't like hiring people out of programs. Fix it, and you're staying late."

Run the scene for about two minutes. Then **freeze.**

> **Facilitator (to the volunteer):**
>
> *"Freeze. What's the thought in your head right now? What are you feeling? What's your plan?"*

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Then the group: "What thought would keep this job? What could he say? What should he not say?" Take two or three answers. Pick one or two coaching points only.

Replay the scene with the volunteer using STOP. Run it once more with a second volunteer if time allows.

Debrief (3 min):

> *"What did you notice in your body when the supervisor said 'people out of programs'? That's the moment. That's where STOP lives. And notice: staying calm didn't mean agreeing with him. It meant keeping the job long enough to decide what to do about it later, on your terms."*

Facilitator note: If someone says "I'd just quit," don't argue. Ask: "Okay. Walk it forward. Then what happens Monday? What happens at your check-in?" Let the consequence do the teaching.

Part 2: Your Own Thinking Report (15 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Now your turn, on your own life. Take a thinking report sheet. Pick one situation since you came home (since you got out, or since you moved into this house) where you had a strong reaction. Write the five columns. Then, at the bottom, write a different thought and where it would have led.*
>
> *If writing isn't your thing, write a few words in each box, or talk it through with your anchor."*

Facilitator and peer helpers circulate. Help anyone who's stuck:

- "What happened, just the facts?"
- "What was the very first thing you thought?"
- "Is that a fact or a thought?"
- "What's a thought that would have protected your plan?"

Ask two volunteers to read theirs aloud if there's time. Thank them by name.

Commit and Close (15 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Open your Reentry Plan. Pick one area where you know pressure is coming this week: a job interview, a check-in, a call with family, a bill. Write one action, and write the thought you'll use when the pressure hits.*
>
> *For example: 'Work: on Thursday I ask my supervisor for more hours. If he says no, my thought is: no today isn't no forever.'"*

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Give residents 5 minutes to write. Then a closing round:

> *"Closing round. Say your one action out loud. That's your commitment to this room, and next week you'll tell us how it went."*

After the round:

> *"This week, catch one thought. Just one. Write a thinking report on it or tell your mentor about it. That's the homework. See you next class."*

Point the men to Chapter 1 in their books: the Try it pages for this week, and "After you leave the house" for later.

After class: record attendance and each man's commitment for his mentor. Follow up one-on-one with anyone who seemed flooded or shared something heavy.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Class 2: The Officer and Other Authority

Facilitator Notes for Class 2

For most residents, the person with the most power over their freedom right now is a supervision officer. That officer can change a check-in time, ask for papers on short notice, or be having a bad day at the exact moment a resident is having one too. Old habits with authority come back fast in that room: some men get hot and argue, some go silent and don't ask the question they need answered, and some stop going because every visit feels like a trap. FORGE mentors learn a position on staff inside, and it travels: respect the role, even when you disagree with the person. This class gives every resident that position and the composure to hold it, using the escalation curve and STOP, and the plain habits that protect a plan: knowing your conditions exactly, being early, keeping a record of every appointment, payment and paper, and calling before, not after. The same habits work with a case manager, a court clerk, a landlord or house staff. Hold two things in mind. In the opening circle, don't defend officers and don't pile on; just listen. And hold the line on what this class is: it is not legal advice. When a question is legal ("Can they do that?"), it goes to POD Society legal services, and you say so every time.

What to Watch For

Stories of unfair treatment. Some will be true. Don't argue with them and don't add to them. Ask: "What did you do? What would protect your plan next time?"

Overcorrection. Some residents hear "respect the role" as "say nothing." That's not the goal. Say: "Respecting the role doesn't mean disappearing. You can be respectful and still have a presence." A resident who won't ask his officer a question he needs answered is at risk too.

Legal questions in the circle. "Can my officer make me do that?" "What happens if I miss one?" Don't answer them, and don't let the group answer them either. Write the question down and point it to legal services.

A resident close to missing a check-in. Listen for a man without a ride, with a shift that conflicts, or who has stopped going. Talk with him after class and tell his mentor.

Common Challenges

"Why am I always the one who has to be the bigger person?" The honest answer: "Because you're the one who's changed. And because right now your officer has more power in this situation than you do. Using the power you do have, composure and a record that shows up early every time, is how you protect your plan."

"My officer is out to get me." Go back to Class 1: "Is that a fact or a thought? What's the evidence for it, and against it?" Then: "Even if it's true, the moves are the same. Be early, keep the record, stay composed. That's what protects you."

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

"Should I tell my officer about _____?" Don't answer the legal part. Say: "That's a real question. Take it to your mentor and to legal services this week. What this class can tell you: don't lie to your officer, and don't let anyone in this house tell you to."

"Writing everything down feels paranoid." It's not about catching anybody. It's so you don't have to remember. A clear record helps you and your officer both when there's a mix-up.

Preparing for This Class

- Fill in the legal services contact in the Try it pages of Chapter 2 before you copy it.
- Ask one peer helper to share a check-in from his own first months home, one that went wrong or one that nearly did, and what he did. He shares it in Part 3 of the Teach section.
- Ask a second peer helper to play the officer in the practice, and walk through the scene with him before class. Realistic, not cruel.
- Write the five stages of the escalation curve and STOP on the board before residents arrive.
- Make a sample supervision folder to show: a pocket folder with a record sheet, a copy of a set of conditions, and a receipt.
- Check that every man has his book.

Class 2 Overview

Purpose: Give every resident the FORGE position on authority (respect the role, even when you disagree with the person), the composure to hold it under pressure, and the habits that protect a plan with a supervision officer: exact conditions, early arrival, a written record, and the call before.

Reentry Plan area: Supervision and legal.

Builds on FORGE: Week 30 (Session 88: Working with Staff), STOP from Week 2 (Session 6: Cognitive Restructuring), and the escalation curve from Week 3 (Session 8: Emotional Regulation).

Materials:

- Talking piece
- Board or easel paper with the escalation curve's five stages and STOP
- A sample supervision folder
- Each man's FORGE Your Success book (Chapter 2, with its Try it pages)
- Residents' Reentry Plan folders

Learning Objectives

By the end of this class, residents will be able to:

1. Explain "respect the role, even when you disagree with the person" in their own words

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

2. Name the five stages of the escalation curve and where to step in
3. Use STOP in a role-play with a supervision officer
4. Say the four moves for when something seems unfair: stay composed, write it down, ask legal services, never argue at the counter
5. Make a "call before" for a missed or late appointment
6. Write one specific action into the Supervision and legal area of their Reentry Plan

Class 2 Checklist

- ☐ Elevator speech said together, out loud
- ☐ Escalation curve and STOP on the board before class
- ☐ New residents welcomed by name and paired with an anchor
- ☐ Class agreements read aloud (if anyone is new)
- ☐ Opening circle completed: one win, one challenge
- ☐ Reentry Plan check completed in pairs
- ☐ "Respect the role" taught
- ☐ Exact conditions, being early, the record and the call before taught; sample folder shown
- ☐ Escalation curve and STOP taught; the four moves for unfair moments taught
- ☐ Peer helper shared a real check-in from his first months home
- ☐ Check-in role-play run with freeze and replay
- ☐ Each resident wrote his conditions and practiced the call before
- ☐ Legal questions written down and pointed to legal services, not answered
- ☐ Each man wrote one action into his Reentry Plan and said it to the group
- ☐ Men pointed to Chapter 2 in their books
- ☐ Attendance and commitments recorded for mentors

Class Plan

Opening Circle (10 minutes)

Elevator speech (2 minutes). Before the check-in, the group says the FORGE Your Success elevator speech together, out loud. New men read it from the inside cover of the book. From a man's second time through the cycle, ask one or two men to say it alone, without looking.

Set up: Chairs in a circle. Talking piece in the center.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Welcome. If this is your first class, welcome home, and welcome to FORGE Your Success. Your anchor is sitting next to you; he'll help you with anything that doesn't make sense.*
>
> *Check-in round. Two things: **one win since last class, and one challenge.** Today we're talking about officers and other people with authority over you, so if your win or your challenge was a check-in, a caseworker, a landlord, a boss, say so. Pass the talking piece when you're done."*

If anyone is new: read the class agreements before the round, and remind everyone of the limits of confidentiality.

Facilitator note: Don't defend officers and don't add to complaints about them. Just listen. Note anyone who sounds close to missing a check-in.

Reentry Plan Check (10 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Pair up. Newer residents with a peer helper if you can. Take out your Reentry Plan. Each of you: pick one area, say one step you finished this week and one step that's next. Five minutes each. Peer helpers, ask the newer resident one question that helps him get specific."*

Facilitator circulates. Watch for plans with nothing in Supervision and legal, and note it for the resident's mentor.

Teach: Composure With People Who Hold Power (20 minutes)

Part 1: Respect the Role (6 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Inside, FORGE mentors learn one position on staff, and I want everybody to have it out here:*
>
> ***Respect the role, even when you disagree with the person.***
>
> *Your officer's role is real. They have authority over your supervision. You don't have to like them. You don't have to agree with every call they make. But arguing with the role costs you, every time.*
>
> *Some officers will be on your side. Some won't care either way. Some will be skeptical: they've seen a lot of people say they've changed. All three are real, and you have to be able to work with all three. If yours is skeptical, don't take it personally, and don't try to talk them out of it. You can't. What you can do is let your record speak.*
>
> *FORGE mentors build credibility with staff by being low-maintenance: they show up where they're supposed to be and don't create problems. They keep it short, clear and respectful when they speak. Out here that looks like four habits. Let's go through them."*

Part 2: Know It, Keep It, Write It Down (6 min)

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"**One: know your conditions exactly.** Not roughly. Exactly. They're on your papers. If one isn't clear to you, ask your officer what it means, write the answer down in front of them, and read it back: 'So I report on the 15th at 2, with two pay stubs. Is that right?' If it's a legal question, it goes to legal services.*
>
> ***Two: be early.** Early is on time. On time is late. Plan the bus, the ride, the traffic.*
>
> ***Three: keep a record.** Every appointment: the date, who you saw, what was said, what you were told to do next. Every payment: the receipt goes in the folder. Every paper you hand in or get handed: keep a copy."*

Hold up the sample folder. Show the record sheet, the conditions, the receipt.

> *"**Four: call before, not after.** If you're going to be late or miss an appointment, you call before it, not the day after. If nobody answers, leave a message: your name, the appointment, what happened, when you can come, your number. Then write down when you called.*
>
> *These four habits work with anybody who holds power over you: a case manager, a court clerk, a landlord, house staff."*

Part 3: Composure at the Counter (8 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Now the hard part. You're at the counter. The officer says something that feels wrong. What happens in your body?*
>
> *Look at the board. **The escalation curve** has five stages. **Stage 1: calm.** Thinking clearly. **Stage 2: agitated.** Heart picks up, jaw gets tight, thinking starts to narrow. You still have options. **Stage 3: flooded.** Tunnel vision; everything feels urgent. This is where most bad decisions get made. **Stage 4: crisis.** Things get said that can't be taken back. **Stage 5: recovery.** You come back down, and that's usually when the regret shows up.*
>
> *The further up the curve you go, the harder it is to come back down. So you step in at **Stage 2**, and the tool is **STOP.** Stop: don't say anything yet; one breath. Think: what's the thought in my head, and is it a fact? Options: two or three things I could do. Plan: pick the one that protects my plan."*

Peer helper shares a check-in from his own first months home: what happened, where he was on the curve, what he did, and what he'd do now. Three minutes.

> *"When something seems unfair, you have four moves. **Stay composed. Write it down. Ask legal services. Never argue at the counter.** You won't win an argument at the counter, and you shouldn't try. Arguing there is a Stage 3 decision. Writing it down and taking it to legal services is a Stage 1 decision, and you can make it after you've left the building."*

Write the four moves on the board under STOP.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Practice: The Check-In (30 minutes)

Purpose: Use STOP and the four moves with an officer under pressure, using the FORGE simulation format, then practice the call before.

Part 1: Simulation (15 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"We're going to run a scene. [Peer helper] is going to play a supervision officer. I need a volunteer to play the resident."*

Set the scene (to the group and the volunteer): The resident has a new job, 8 to 4:30, three weeks in. He arrived at the check-in twenty minutes early with his folder. He's been waiting an hour. The officer finally calls him in, doesn't look up, and says: "I don't have your payment from last month. And starting next time, you report at 10 in the morning. Anything else?"

The resident has the receipt in his folder. Run the scene for about two minutes. Then **freeze.**

> **Facilitator (to the volunteer):**
>
> *"Freeze. Where are you on the curve right now? What's the thought in your head? What's your plan? What do you need?"*

Then the group: "What would keep this calm and protect the plan? What should he say about the payment? About the 10 a.m. time? What should he not say?" Take two or three answers. Pick one or two coaching points only, for example: show the receipt without an edge ("I have the receipt here; can I show you?"), and ask about the time instead of refusing it ("I start work at 8. Is there another time that works, or who should I talk to about it?").

Replay the scene with the volunteer using STOP. At the end, have him write down what was decided and read it back to the officer. Run it once more with a second volunteer if time allows.

Debrief (3 min):

> *"What did you feel when the officer said 'I don't have your payment' after you'd waited an hour? That's Stage 2. That's where STOP lives. And notice: staying composed didn't mean staying silent. He asked his question. He showed his receipt. You can be respectful and still have a presence."*

Facilitator note: If someone says "I'd tell them they lost it, not me," don't argue. Ask: "Okay. Walk it forward. How does the rest of that check-in go? What does the next one feel like?" Let the consequence do the teaching. If the scene turns into "Can they really change my time like that?", say: "Good question for legal services. Write it down."

Part 2: My Conditions and the Call Before (15 min)

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Open your book to the Try it pages in Chapter 2. First, write your conditions the way you remember them. Then, if your papers are in your folder, check what you wrote against them. Anywhere you were wrong or not sure: that's a question for your officer or for legal services. Circle it.*
>
> *If you're not on supervision, write down any other appointment or obligation you have with someone in authority: a court date, a caseworker, a fine, a landlord."*

Give residents 7 minutes. Facilitator and peer helpers circulate.

> *"Now pair up. One of you is the officer's voicemail. The other one makes the call before. Name, the appointment, what happened, when you can come, your number. Say it out loud like it's real. Then switch."*

Pairs practice (6 min). Listen and coach: "Slower." "Say the time." "Don't explain for a minute; one sentence on what happened is enough." Close with one pair saying theirs to the group (2 min).

Commit and Close (15 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Open your Reentry Plan to Supervision and legal. Write one action for this week. Make it specific.*
>
> *For example: 'Start my supervision record and put every receipt I have in the folder by our next class.' Or: 'Take the two conditions I circled to legal services this week.' Or: 'Leave 30 minutes earlier for my next check-in.' If you're not on supervision, pick another person who holds power over part of your plan."*

Give residents 5 minutes to write. Then a closing round:

> *"Closing round. Say your one action out loud. That's your commitment to this room, and next class you'll tell us how it went."*

After the round:

> *"This week, be early to every appointment, and write every one down. When something feels unfair: stay composed, write it down, ask legal services, and never argue at the counter. See you next class."*

Point the men to Chapter 2 in their books: the Try it pages for this week, and "After you leave the house" for later.

After class: record attendance and each man's commitment for his mentor. Follow up one-on-one with anyone who sounded close to missing a check-in or who wrote down a legal question, and help him reach legal services if he wants help making the call.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Class 3: Getting Hired: Your Story in Two Minutes

Facilitator Notes for Class 3

Sooner or later every resident with a record has to talk about it with someone who decides whether to hire him: on an application, in an interview, after a background check. Residents tend to get it wrong in one of two ways. They shrink it ("It was just a misunderstanding") or they tell too much (twenty minutes on the case, the lawyer and the judge). Both cost the job. This class puts two FORGE tools to work. The accountability spectrum from Week 7 (denial, minimization, blame-shifting, partial ownership, full accountability) shows residents how their answer sounds to the person across the desk. And the elevator speech from Week 1, where every FORGE participant learned to explain FORGE in thirty seconds because people would ask, becomes each resident's own story in two minutes: what happened, owned; what changed, with evidence; what he offers now. Hold two things in mind. Full accountability is not full disclosure: owning it does not mean telling every detail, and nobody has to name his charge in the circle. And this class does not give legal advice about what a man must disclose or what is on his record. If a resident isn't sure, or has an open case or appeal, point him to POD Society legal services before he settles on his words.

What to Watch For

"Just" and "but." These two words give away minimization and partial ownership. "It was just a fight." "I made a mistake, but..." Every word after "but" erases what came before it. Teach the room to hear them, kindly.

Oversharing. A resident who has never told the story briefly will tell all of it. Pull him back: "Two sentences. The person across the desk doesn't need the case. They need to know you own it."

Shame. "Who'd hire someone like me?" That's shame talking. FORGE draws the line this way: guilt says "I did something bad"; shame says "I am bad." Guilt can be owned and changed. Shame just hides. Bring the resident back to the action and what has changed since.

Words without belief. Some residents learned the right words inside and say them flat. Employers hear that too. Don't call it out in the group. Afterward, ask: "The words are right. Do you mean them?"

A heavy charge. Some convictions are hard to say out loud in a room. A resident can practice with "[my charge]" in place of the words, and practice the full version with his mentor.

Common Challenges

"It's none of their business." "Whether and when it comes up is a question for legal services, and it can be different for each job. When it does come up, you want to be the one who tells it, and tells it well. And don't lie about it, on an application or in an interview. A lie that's found later costs more than the truth told well."

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

"My case was unfair." "That may be true, and legal services is the place to work on it. In an interview, though, it sounds like denial, and the person across the desk stops listening. Your history explains how you got here. It doesn't excuse what you did, and it doesn't get you the job."

"I don't have any evidence that I've changed." "Yes, you do." FORGE or other programs inside, a GED, a certificate, work you did inside, living in this house, every check-in made, every class attended, a reference from your mentor. Every week here adds to it.

"I freeze in interviews." That's why we practice. The first time someone hears your story should not be the interview.

Preparing for This Class

- Fill in the job center and POD Society employment contacts in the Try it pages of Chapter 3 before you copy it.
- Ask one peer helper to bring his own two-minute story, the one he used to get hired, and deliver it in Part 2 of the Teach section.
- Ask a second peer helper to play the hiring manager in the practice, and walk through the scene with him before class.
- Write the five levels of the accountability spectrum and the three parts of the story on the board before residents arrive.
- Know which employers in the area have hired residents of this house, if any, and the job center's address and hours.
- Check that every man has his book. Have a watch or phone to time two minutes.

Class 3 Overview

Purpose: Help every resident tell a prospective employer about his record honestly and briefly (what happened, what changed, what he offers now), practice it in a mock interview, and know where to look for second-chance employers.

Reentry Plan area: Work.

Builds on FORGE: Week 7 (Session 19: Personal Accountability, the accountability spectrum) and Week 1 (Session 1: Welcome to FORGE, the elevator speech).

Materials:

- Talking piece
- Board or easel paper with the accountability spectrum and the three parts of the story
- A watch or phone to time two minutes
- Each man's FORGE Your Success book (Chapter 3, with its Try it pages)
- Residents' Reentry Plan folders

 Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this class, residents will be able to:

1. Name the five levels of the accountability spectrum and hear them in an interview answer
2. Tell the difference between full accountability and oversharing
3. Write their own two-minute story: what happened, what changed, what they offer now
4. Deliver it in a mock interview and improve it on a replay
5. Name two places to look for second-chance employers
6. Write one specific action into the Work area of their Reentry Plan

Class 3 Checklist

- ☐ Elevator speech said together, out loud
- ☐ Accountability spectrum and the three parts of the story on the board before class
- ☐ New residents welcomed by name and paired with an anchor
- ☐ Class agreements read aloud (if anyone is new)
- ☐ Opening circle completed: one win, one challenge
- ☐ Reentry Plan check completed in pairs
- ☐ Accountability spectrum taught with interview examples
- ☐ "Full accountability is not full disclosure" said plainly
- ☐ Peer helper delivered his own two-minute story
- ☐ Second-chance employers discussed; job center contact given
- ☐ Each resident wrote a two-minute story and said it to a partner
- ☐ Mock interview run with freeze and replay
- ☐ Questions about disclosure or records pointed to legal services, not answered
- ☐ Each man wrote one action into his Reentry Plan and said it to the group
- ☐ Men pointed to Chapter 3 in their books
- ☐ Attendance and commitments recorded for mentors

Class Plan

Opening Circle (10 minutes)

Elevator speech (2 minutes). Before the check-in, the group says the FORGE Your Success elevator speech together, out loud. New men read it from the inside cover of the book. From a man's second time through the cycle, ask one or two men to say it alone, without looking.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Set up: Chairs in a circle. Talking piece in the center.

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Welcome. If this is your first class, welcome home, and welcome to FORGE Your Success. Your anchor is sitting next to you; he'll help you with anything that doesn't make sense.*
>
> *Check-in round. Two things: **one win since last class, and one challenge.** If either one was about work, an application, an interview, a shift, say so. Pass the talking piece when you're done."*

If anyone is new: read the class agreements before the round, and remind everyone of the limits of confidentiality.

Facilitator note: Listen for residents who have had a "no" this week, or who haven't applied anywhere yet. With permission, come back to them in the Practice.

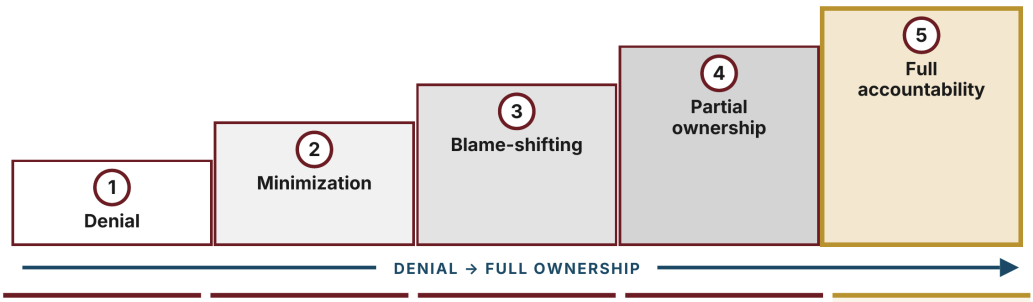
Reentry Plan Check (10 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Pair up. Newer residents with a peer helper if you can. Take out your Reentry Plan. Each of you: pick one area, say one step you finished this week and one step that's next. Five minutes each. Peer helpers, ask the newer resident one question that helps him get specific."*

Facilitator circulates. Watch for plans with nothing in Work for weeks, and note it for the resident's mentor.

Teach: Your Record, Your Story (20 minutes)

Part 1: The Accountability Spectrum (8 min)



The accountability spectrum, from FORGE Week 7: where a record story sits decides how an employer hears it.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Somebody across a desk says: 'I see you have a conviction. Tell me about that.' What you say next is somewhere on this line. FORGE calls it the accountability spectrum. Five levels.*
>
> ***Denial.*** *'I didn't do it. I shouldn't have been convicted.'*
>
> ***Minimization.*** *'It was just a little thing.' Listen for the word 'just.' It's an eraser.*
>
> ***Blame-shifting.*** *'I was hanging with the wrong people.' 'If they hadn't started it...'*
>
> ***Partial ownership.*** *'I made a mistake, but the sentence was way too long.' Every word after 'but' erases what came before it.*
>
> ***Full accountability.*** *'I made a choice that hurt people. There's no excuse for it. I served my time, and I spent it changing.'*
>
> *Full accountability has no 'but.' It doesn't mean the system was fair. It doesn't mean your circumstances didn't matter. It means you own your choices. And here's what people get wrong:* ***full accountability is not full disclosure.*** *You don't owe an employer every detail. You owe them the truth, told briefly and owned."*

Pause. Ask: "Which of these have you heard in an interview, or said in one?" Take two answers.

Part 2: Your Story in Two Minutes (7 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"If you did FORGE inside, the first thing you learned was the elevator speech: what FORGE is, in thirty seconds. Why? Because people would ask. Some curious, some mocking. Either way, you had to own it.*
>
> *Same idea now, except the story is yours, and the person asking decides whether you get the job. Two minutes. Three parts:*
>
> ***One: what happened.*** *One or two sentences. Owned. No 'just,' no 'but,' no case details.*
>
> ***Two: what changed, with evidence.*** *'I've changed' is a claim. Evidence makes it believable. A program you finished. A certificate. Work you did inside. This house. Every check-in made. A mentor who'll speak for you.*
>
> ***Three: what you offer now.*** *What you can do, why you'll be reliable, and why this job.*
>
> *Then stop talking. Let them ask."*

Peer helper delivers his own two-minute story. Time it. Then ask the group: "Where was part one? Part two? Part three? Did you hear a 'just' or a 'but'?"

> *"Three things to check when you say it: Is it clear? Is it confident? Is it believable? Slow down. Look the person in the eye. Say it like you mean it, because you do."*

Part 3: Finding Second-Chance Employers (5 min)

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Some employers hire people with records, and some say so openly. Three places to find them. The job center: _____. POD Society's employment contacts: _____. And this room: who here has been hired since he got home? Where?"*

Take one or two answers from peer helpers.

> *"One more thing. Some employers use two federal programs when they hire people with records: the **Work Opportunity Tax Credit** and the **Federal Bonding Program.** You don't have to be an expert on them. A job center can explain both, to you and to an employer. Ask about them this week.*
>
> *And if you're not sure what's on your record, or what you have to say about it, that's a question for legal services, not for this class: _____."*

Practice: The Interview (30 minutes)

Purpose: Write each resident's own two-minute story, then deliver it under pressure using the FORGE simulation format.

Part 1: Write Your Two Minutes (12 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Open your book to the Try it pages in Chapter 3. Three boxes: what happened, what changed, what you offer now. Write a few lines in each. Nobody has to name his charge out loud in here. If you'd rather, write '[my charge]' and practice the full version with your mentor.*
>
> *When you're done, say it to your anchor or a peer helper. Partner: time it, and listen for three things. Did you hear 'just' or 'but'? Was there evidence? Did it end on what he offers?"*

Give residents 7 minutes to write and 5 to say it. Facilitator and peer helpers circulate. Help anyone stuck:

- "What happened, in one sentence, with no 'but'?"
- "What's one thing you've done since that someone could check?"
- "Why would you be good at this job?"

Part 2: Simulation (18 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"We're going to run a scene. [Peer helper] is going to play a hiring manager. I need a volunteer to be interviewed."*

Set the scene (to the group and the volunteer): It's an interview for a job on a warehouse floor. It has gone well for ten minutes. The manager looks down at the application and says: "I see you checked the box about a conviction. Tell me about that." After the answer, the manager asks: "How do I know it won't happen again?"

 Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Run the scene for about two minutes. Then **freeze.**

> **Facilitator (to the volunteer):**
> *"Freeze. Where on the spectrum was that answer? What's the thought in your head right now? What's your plan? What do you need?"*

Then the group: "Did you hear a 'just' or a 'but'? Was there evidence? Did it end on what he offers? Was it too long?" Take two or three answers. Pick one or two coaching points only.

Replay the scene with the volunteer. Then run it with a second volunteer and a harder manager: "We hired someone from a program last year and it didn't work out."

Debrief (3 min):

> *"Notice what the manager needed. Not the details of the case. Three things: Do you own it? Has something changed? Can you do this job? Answer those three, and stop. And notice that 'How do I know it won't happen again?' isn't an attack. It's a fair question. Your evidence is the answer."*

Facilitator note: If someone says "I'm not telling them anything," don't argue. Ask: "Okay. Walk it forward. The background check comes back. What does the manager think now?" Let the consequence do the teaching. If a man's story makes the room heavy, thank him by name, keep the class moving, and check in with him after.

Commit and Close (15 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
> *"Open your Reentry Plan to Work. Write one action for this week. Make it specific.*
> *For example: 'Say my two minutes out loud to three people before next class.' Or: 'Go to the job center and ask for a list of employers who hire people with records, and ask about the Work Opportunity Tax Credit and bonding.' Or, if you're working: 'Help one newer resident practice his two minutes.'"*

Give residents 5 minutes to write. Then a closing round:

> *"Closing round. Say your one action out loud. That's your commitment to this room, and next class you'll tell us how it went."*

After the round:

> *"This week, say your two minutes out loud until you can say it without the page. The first time somebody hears your story should not be the interview. See you next class."*

Point the men to Chapter 3 in their books: the Try it pages for this week, and "After you leave the house" for later.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

After class: record attendance and each man's commitment for his mentor. Tell mentors about any resident who struggled to say any part of his story, or who has a question about his record for legal services.

 Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Class 4: Keeping the Job

Facilitator Notes for Class 4

Getting hired is one moment. Keeping the job is every shift after it. A job can be lost over things that have little to do with the work itself: a late bus and no call, a correction that felt like disrespect, a coworker who keeps pushing, a bad day that ends with "I quit." Each of those moments is a communication moment, and FORGE has a tool for each one. The four communication styles from Week 5 (aggressive, passive, passive-aggressive, assertive) and the "I" statement give residents a way to call in properly and to say what they need. The SBI model and the six steps for receiving feedback, also from Week 5, turn a supervisor's correction into something a resident can use instead of something he has to survive. And the FORGE 5-step conflict resolution model from Week 6 (Pause & Posture, Name the Heat, Facts > Stories, Needs & Options, Agreement & Check-Back) gives them a way through a conflict with a coworker. Hold two things in mind. Not every job is fair, and some are worth leaving; the line this class draws is that you never decide it in the moment, at the top of the curve. And this class is about ordinary friction. If a resident describes something unsafe or seriously wrong at work, such as threats, harassment or not being paid, that goes to his mentor and to POD Society legal services, not to a role-play.

What to Watch For

"I'd just quit." Some residents say it as armor. Don't argue. Walk it forward with them: rent, the next application, the check-in where they explain it.

The quiet ones. A resident whose default is passive may say "it's fine" about everything at work until the day it isn't. FORGE teaches that passive people swallow it until they explode, and it looks like aggression out of nowhere. Ask him directly how work is going.

Corrections that land as disrespect. For men who have been talked down to for years, a supervisor's correction can feel like the same thing. Name it gently: "That sounded like it hit something. What was the thought?"

Schedules that don't fit. A new job, check-ins, recovery meetings, and this class can collide. Listen for residents who are about to drop one of them, and tell their mentor.

Common Challenges

"The five steps are too much to remember in the moment." The answer FORGE gives inside: "The model lives in your head. You practice the steps so they become instinct. In the moment you're not thinking 'Step 3.' You're thinking 'I need to understand what actually happened.'"

"If I say 'I feel,' they'll think I'm soft." "Try it and see. The person who stays calm and says 'Here's what I need' while everyone else is losing it, that person has the room."

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

"My supervisor is just wrong." Maybe. Step 4 of receiving feedback is to look for the truth, even a grain of it. You don't have to agree with everything; find the part you can own. If it's a pattern and not a moment, write it down and talk to your mentor.

"Calling in feels like begging." It's the opposite. A call before your shift is you running your job like a professional, instead of leaving your supervisor to find out.

Preparing for This Class

- Ask one peer helper to share a time in his first months home when he almost quit a job, or did, and what he would do now. He shares it in Part 3 of the Teach section.
- Ask a second peer helper to play the supervisor in the practice, and walk through the scene with him before class.
- Write the four communication styles, SBI, the six steps for receiving feedback and the five steps of the conflict model on the board before residents arrive.
- Check that every man has his book.
- Set the room so groups of three can work apart from each other in Part 2 of the Practice.

Class 4 Overview

Purpose: Give every resident the FORGE tools for the hard moments of keeping a job: calling in properly, taking correction from a supervisor, working out conflict with a coworker, and deciding about a job on purpose instead of quitting in the moment.

Reentry Plan area: Work.

Builds on FORGE: Week 5 (Session 14: Communication Styles; Session 15: Giving and Receiving Feedback, the SBI model) and Week 6 (Session 16: The FORGE Conflict Resolution Model), with the escalation curve (Week 3, Session 8) and STOP (Week 2, Session 6) for the moment you want to quit.

Materials:

- Talking piece
- Board or easel paper with the four styles, SBI, the six steps for receiving feedback and the five-step model
- Each man's FORGE Your Success book (Chapter 4, with its Try it pages)
- Residents' Reentry Plan folders

Learning Objectives

By the end of this class, residents will be able to:

1. Name the four communication styles and their own default under stress
2. Make an assertive call-in to a supervisor

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

3. Receive a correction from a supervisor using the six steps
4. Use the five steps of the FORGE conflict model with a coworker in a role-play
5. Say what they will do instead of quitting in the moment
6. Write one specific action into the Work area of their Reentry Plan

Class 4 Checklist

- ☐ Elevator speech said together, out loud
- ☐ Styles, SBI, receiving steps and the five-step model on the board before class
- ☐ New residents welcomed by name and paired with an anchor
- ☐ Class agreements read aloud (if anyone is new)
- ☐ Opening circle completed: one win, one challenge
- ☐ Reentry Plan check completed in pairs
- ☐ Four communication styles taught; the assertive call-in taught
- ☐ SBI and the six steps for receiving feedback taught
- ☐ Five-step conflict model taught for a conflict you are part of
- ☐ Peer helper shared a time he almost quit, or did
- ☐ Correction role-play run with freeze and replay
- ☐ Coworker conflict practiced in groups of three
- ☐ Each man wrote one action into his Reentry Plan and said it to the group
- ☐ Men pointed to Chapter 4 in their books
- ☐ Attendance and commitments recorded for mentors

Class Plan

Opening Circle (10 minutes)

Elevator speech (2 minutes). Before the check-in, the group says the FORGE Your Success elevator speech together, out loud. New men read it from the inside cover of the book. From a man's second time through the cycle, ask one or two men to say it alone, without looking.

Set up: Chairs in a circle. Talking piece in the center.

> **Facilitator:**
> *"Welcome. If this is your first class, welcome home, and welcome to FORGE Your Success. Your anchor is sitting next to you; he'll help you with anything that doesn't make sense.*

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

> *Check-in round. Two things:* ***one win since last class, and one challenge.*** *If you're working, tell us one thing about the job, good or bad. If you're looking, tell us where. Pass the talking piece when you're done."*

If anyone is new: read the class agreements before the round, and remind everyone of the limits of confidentiality.

Facilitator note: Listen for a resident who had a hard shift, a correction, or a coworker problem this week. With permission, come back to them in the Practice.

Reentry Plan Check (10 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Pair up. Newer residents with a peer helper if you can. Take out your Reentry Plan. Each of you: pick one area, say one step you finished this week and one step that's next. Five minutes each. Peer helpers, ask the newer resident one question that helps him get specific."*

Facilitator circulates. Watch for plans with nothing in Work for weeks, and note it for the resident's mentor.

Teach: The Hard Moments at Work (20 minutes)

Part 1: Showing Up and Calling In (5 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"In your first months on a job, the most important thing you do is be there, on time, every shift. When you can't, how you call in tells your supervisor who you are.*
>
> *FORGE names four communication styles. Watch them in a call-in.*
>
> ***Aggressive:*** *'Bus didn't come. What do you want me to do about it?'*
> ***Passive:*** *no call. You just don't show up and hope it blows over.*
> ***Passive-aggressive:*** *you text a coworker to tell the boss, and act surprised when it goes badly.*
> ***Assertive:*** *you call your supervisor yourself, before the shift. Who you are. That you'll be late or out. What happened, in one sentence. When you'll be there. 'Is there anything you need from me?'*
>
> *Every job has a call-in rule: who you call, how, and how early. Find out yours this week, and write it down.*
>
> *The engine of assertive talk is the 'I' statement: '****I feel ___ when ___ because ___.****' It says what you need without attacking anybody."*

Part 2: Taking Correction (7 min)

 Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Facilitator:

*"FORGE teaches a way to give feedback called **SBI: Situation, Behavior, Impact.** When and where. What the person actually did. What it caused. 'Yesterday at close, the cooler door was left open, and we lost a case of product.'*

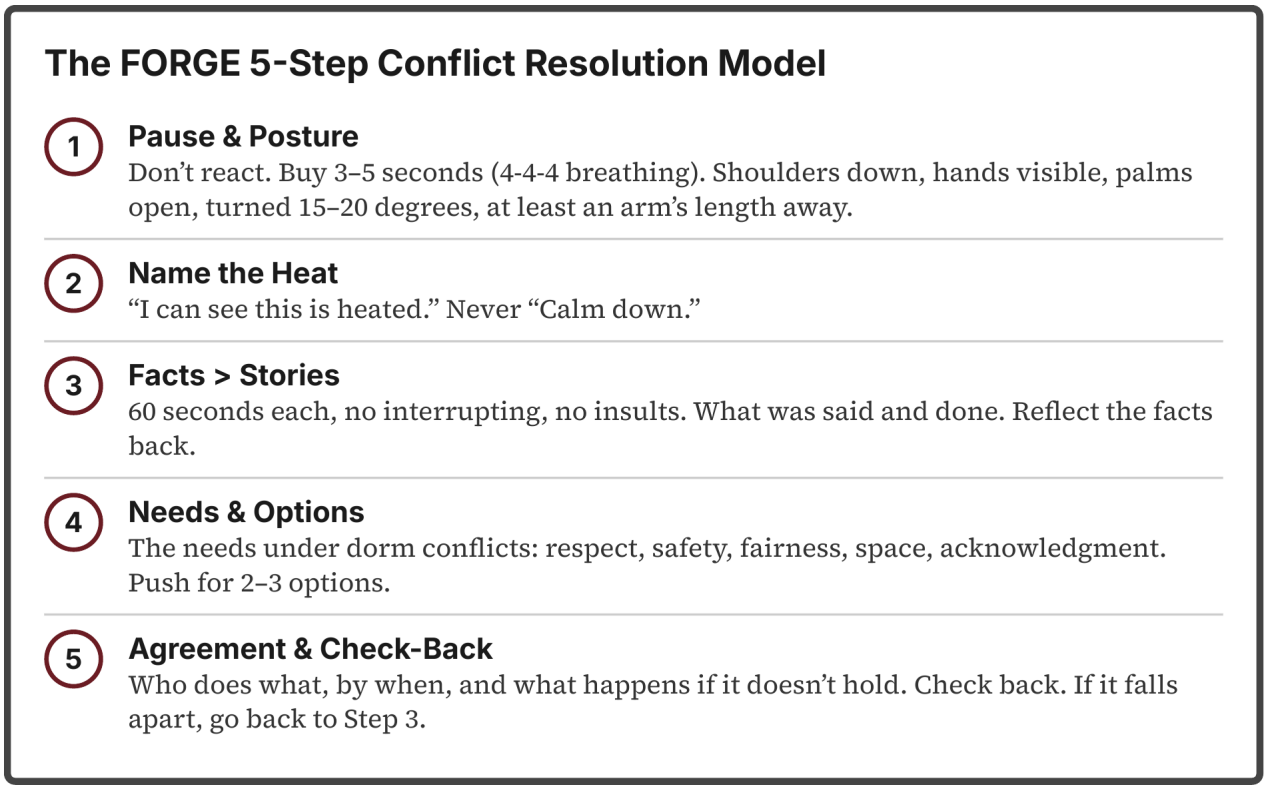
Your supervisor may not give you clean SBI. They may just say 'You're slow.' Translate it in your head: When? What did I actually do? What did it cause? Then you know what to fix.

Then receive it. Six steps:

1. ***Listen fully.*** *Don't interrupt.*
2. ***Breathe.*** *Buy yourself three seconds.*
3. ***Reflect it back.*** *'So what you're saying is...'*
4. ***Look for the truth, even a grain of it.*** *You don't have to agree with everything. Find the part you can own.*
5. ***Say thank you.*** *Even if it stings.*
6. ***Don't retaliate later.*** *At work, retaliation looks like slowing down, complaining to coworkers, or the silent treatment. It kills trust.*

A correction is not a verdict on you. It's information about one thing you did."

Part 3: Conflict With a Coworker, and the Moment You Want to Quit (8 min)



The FORGE 5-step conflict resolution model, from Week 6.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Inside, FORGE mentors use the five-step model to help two other people settle a conflict. Out here you'll often be one of the two. The steps still work.*
>
> 1. ***Pause & Posture.*** *Don't react. Buy three to five seconds; breathe. Shoulders down, hands visible, stand a little to the side, at least arm's length.*
> 2. ***Name the Heat.*** *'I can tell we're both frustrated.' Never 'calm down.'*
> 3. ***Facts > Stories.*** *'They're trying to get me fired' is a story. 'They told the supervisor I left the cooler open' is a fact. Talk about what was said and done. Use SBI when you give your side.*
> 4. ***Needs & Options.*** *What do each of you actually need: respect, fairness, space? Come up with two or three ways to get there. Don't take the first one.*
> 5. ***Agreement & Check-Back.*** *Who does what, by when. Then check back. 'We're cool' is not an agreement.*
>
> *If it's threats or anything physical, you don't run the steps. You step away and go to your supervisor."*

Peer helper shares a time in his first months home when he almost quit a job, or did: what happened, what he was thinking, what he'd do now. Two or three minutes.

> *"Here's the line for this whole class: **never quit at Stage 3.** FORGE's escalation curve runs from calm, to agitated, to flooded, to crisis, to recovery. Stage 3 is flooded: tunnel vision, everything feels urgent. 'I quit' feels like power there. It's a decision made with your thinking offline.*
>
> *Instead: **STOP.** Stop, one breath. Think: what's the thought, and is it a fact? Options: two or three things I could do. Plan: the one that protects my plan. Finish the shift if you safely can. Call your mentor that day. Sleep on it. If you still want to leave after that, leave on purpose: give notice, and line up the next job first if you can."*

Practice: On the Job (30 minutes)

Purpose: Use the six steps for receiving feedback with a supervisor and the five-step model with a coworker, using the FORGE simulation format.

Part 1: Simulation (15 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"We're going to run a scene. [Peer helper] is going to play a supervisor. I need a volunteer to play a new hire."*

Set the scene (to the group and the volunteer): The new hire is three weeks into a job in a restaurant kitchen. The bus has been late twice this week; he called in once and the other time didn't. At the end of the shift the supervisor pulls him aside: "You've been late twice this week and you're the slowest one on the line. I've got people waiting for this job. One more time and you're done."

Run the scene for about two minutes. Then **freeze.**

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

> **Facilitator (to the volunteer):**
>
> *"Freeze. Where are you on the curve? What's the thought in your head? What's your plan? What do you need?"*

Then the group: "Which of the six steps did he use? Where's the grain of truth here? What could he say about the bus, as an 'I' statement and a plan?" Take two or three answers. Pick one or two coaching points only, for example: reflect it back and own the grain ("You're right. I was late twice, and I only called once"), and offer a plan ("I'm taking the earlier bus starting next shift").

Replay the scene with the volunteer. Run it once more with a second volunteer if time allows.

Debrief (3 min):

> *"Did he have to agree he's a bad worker? No. He found the part he could own, he had a plan, and he kept the job. 'Slowest one on the line' might still sting. That's a thought to take home, not a fight to have at the end of a shift."*

Part 2: The Coworker (15 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Groups of three. Peer helpers, spread out, one to a group if you can. Two of you are coworkers, one is the observer.*
>
> *The scene: Your coworker has been leaving their part of the closing work for you most nights. Yesterday they told the supervisor* **you** *left the cooler door open. You're both at the time clock now.*
>
> *The resident playing himself uses the five steps. The coworker: be realistic, but give your partner a chance to practice. The observer watches for each step and gives one coaching point at the end. Four minutes a round, then rotate, so everybody plays each part."*

Run three rounds (12 min). Facilitator circulates. Coach:

- "Did you pause before you spoke?"
- "Was that a fact or a story?"
- "What does your coworker actually need?"
- "Who does what, by when? When will you check back?"

Debrief (3 min): "Which step was hardest? Where did it start to go well?"

Commit and Close (15 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Open your Reentry Plan to Work. Write one action for this week. Make it specific.*

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

> *For example: 'Find out my job's call-in rule and write my call-in in the Try it pages of Chapter 4.' Or: 'Ask my supervisor for one thing I could do better, and use the six steps when they tell me.' Or: 'Use the five steps with the coworker I've been avoiding.' If you're not working yet, write the call-in you'll use at your next job."*

Give residents 5 minutes to write. Then a closing round:

> *"Closing round. Say your one action out loud. That's your commitment to this room, and next class you'll tell us how it went."*

After the round:

> *"This week, show up early to every shift. And before you ever quit in the moment: STOP, finish the shift, call your mentor. See you next class."*

Point the men to Chapter 4 in their books: the Try it pages for this week, and "After you leave the house" for later.

After class: record attendance and each man's commitment for his mentor. Follow up one-on-one with anyone who described a job he's close to losing or leaving, and with anyone who described something unsafe at work.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Class 5: Money on the Outside

Facilitator Notes for Class 5

Money is where a good plan meets arithmetic. The first paycheck is smaller than men expect, the bills come due before it, and the people and businesses who want a piece of it show up on payday. Some residents were never shown a pay stub, a bank account or a budget, and many come home owing money they have never looked at closely: fees, fines, restitution, child support. Inside, FORGE mentors learn the basics in Session 64 (budgeting, banking, debt traps and saving) so they can teach them to other men. This class puts the same basics to work on a resident's own first paycheck. Hold two things in mind. You are not a financial advisor or a lawyer; the job is to teach the basics and point men to the office that has the answer. And money is private. Never ask a resident to say his pay or his debts out loud; use the example paycheck on the board for group work.

What to Watch For

Shame about money. A resident who owes a lot, or who has never had a bank account, may go quiet or make jokes. Keep the group work on the board example.

"I'll figure it out when I get paid." A plan made after payday gets made by whoever asks first. Steer every resident to a rough plan for his next check.

Debts nobody has looked at. Some residents don't know what they owe, to whom, or when. Don't work it out in class. Note it for their mentor; the commitment this week may simply be to find out.

Money pressure from home. Family who put money on a resident's books for years may now expect help, or want it back. Old friends will ask too. Listen for it in the opening circle; it's what the practice scene is about.

Common Challenges

"There's nothing to budget. I don't make enough." Then the budget matters more, not less. On a small check, a budget is how you see a shortfall before the bill is late instead of after, and how you find the few dollars that become savings.

"I don't trust banks." Often there's a real reason: an account closed, money taken, a bank that turned him away. Say so honestly. Then lay out what having no account costs (Part 3 of the Teach section).

"What I owe is a legal question." Part of it is, and that part goes to POD Society legal services or to the office that holds the debt. The part that belongs in this room is the plan: find out exactly what you owe and to whom, get it in writing, and put the payment in the budget.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Preparing for This Class

- Write local numbers on the board: a typical first-job wage here ($_____ an hour), hours (_____ a week), how often it pays, and about what one check takes home ($_____, from a peer helper's real stub or a payroll calculator). Add the house program fee, if any ($_____ a month), a bus pass ($_____) and a basic phone plan ($_____).
- Ask one peer helper to share his first paycheck out here, in Part 1 of the Teach section.
- Ask a second peer helper to play the family member who calls in the practice scene, and walk through the scene with him before class.
- Fill in: banks or credit unions nearby that open accounts for residents _____; where residents find out what they owe in fines, fees and restitution _____; the child support office _____.
- Write the example pay stub on the board, and print the Try it pages of Chapter 5 (the budget sheet), 2 per resident.

Class 5 Overview

Purpose: Give every resident the money basics FORGE teaches its mentors (budgeting, banking, debt traps and saving) and put them to work on a first paycheck out here.

Reentry Plan area: Money. Do I have a bank account, a budget and savings? What do I owe?

Builds on FORGE: Week 22 (Session 64: Financial Literacy, Teaching Others: budgeting, banking, debt traps and saving) and the STOP technique from Week 2 (Session 6), which residents met in Class 1.

Materials:

- Talking piece
- Board or easel paper with the example pay stub and the local numbers filled in
- Each man's FORGE Your Success book (Chapter 5, with its Try it pages)
- Calculators, or phones with a calculator
- Residents' Reentry Plan folders

Learning Objectives

By the end of this class, residents will be able to:

1. Read a pay stub and tell gross pay, deductions and net (take-home) pay apart
2. Build a simple monthly budget from take-home pay, with savings first
3. List what they owe (fees, fines, restitution, child support) and how they'll find out exactly what, and to whom
4. Explain what a payday loan, a rent-to-own deal or a buy-here-pay-here car costs, in dollars
5. Say no to a request for money in a role-play without breaking the relationship

 Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

6. Write one specific money action into their Reentry Plan for the coming week

Class 5 Checklist

- ☐ Elevator speech said together, out loud
- ☐ Example pay stub and local numbers on the board before class
- ☐ New residents welcomed by name and paired with an anchor
- ☐ Class agreements read aloud (if anyone is new)
- ☐ Opening circle completed: one win, one challenge
- ☐ Reentry Plan check completed in pairs
- ☐ Pay stub taught: gross, deductions, net; peer helper shared his first paycheck
- ☐ Budget order taught: savings first, then what must be paid, then the rest
- ☐ Bank account basics and "find out exactly what you owe and to whom" taught
- ☐ Payday loans, rent-to-own and buy-here-pay-here explained in dollars
- ☐ Each resident built a monthly budget in the Try it pages of Chapter 5
- ☐ Payday role-play run with freeze and replay
- ☐ Each man wrote one action into his Reentry Plan and said it to the group
- ☐ Men pointed to Chapter 5 in their books
- ☐ Attendance and commitments recorded for mentors

Class Plan

Opening Circle (10 minutes)

Elevator speech (2 minutes). Before the check-in, the group says the FORGE Your Success elevator speech together, out loud. New men read it from the inside cover of the book. From a man's second time through the cycle, ask one or two men to say it alone, without looking.

Set up: Chairs in a circle. Talking piece in the center.

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Welcome. If you're new, welcome home, and welcome to FORGE Your Success. Your anchor is sitting next to you; he'll help you with anything that doesn't make sense.*
>
> *Check-in round. Two things:* ***one win since last class, and one challenge.*** *This class is about money, so if one of yours is about money, use that one. A win can be small. You got paid. You didn't spend it all the first day. You found out what you owe. Pass the talking piece when you're done."*

If anyone is new: read the class agreements before the round, and remind everyone of the limits of confidentiality.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Facilitator note: Listen for money stress: a check that didn't cover the bills, a relative asking for money, a fee nobody explained. With permission, come back to it in the Teach or Practice section. Never ask anyone for a dollar amount.

Reentry Plan Check (10 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Pair up. Newer residents with a peer helper if you can. Take out your Reentry Plan. Each of you: pick one area, say one step you finished this week and one step that's next. If your Money area has been empty for a while, pick that one. Five minutes each. Peer helpers, ask the newer resident one question that helps him get specific."*

Facilitator circulates. Watch for residents with no bank account and no ID yet. Without ID, the first money step is often an Identification step; note it for their mentor.

Teach: Money on the Outside (20 minutes)

Part 1: Reading Your Paycheck (7 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Nobody is born knowing how to read a pay stub. Here's one on the board. The numbers are made up and round, so they're easy to follow. Yours will be different.*
>
> ***Hours:** 40 at $15.00 an hour.*
> ***Gross pay:** $600.00. That's what you earned before anything comes out.*
>
> ***Deductions,** the money taken out before you ever see it:*
>
> - *Federal income tax: $40.00*
> - *State income tax: $24.00*
> - *Social Security and Medicare (some stubs say FICA): $46.00*
> - ***Total deductions:** $110.00*
>
> ***Net pay:** $490.00. That's your take-home: what actually lands in your account.*
>
> *Some jobs take out more: health insurance, uniforms, union dues. Some men will see money taken out by court order, like child support. If there's a line on your stub you don't understand, or the hours look wrong, ask payroll. Ask calmly, with the stub in your hand. That's a STOP moment, not a fight.*
>
> *Here's the rule: **budget from your net, never your gross.** The $600 is not yours to spend. The $490 is."*

Peer helper shares his first paycheck out here: what he expected, what he got, and what happened to it in the first few days. Keep it to two or three minutes.

Part 2: A Plan for Every Dollar (5 min)

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Facilitator:

"A budget is a plan for your money. That's all it is: money in, minus money out. When you don't plan it, the money still gets spent. It just gets spent by accident, or by whoever asks first.

Decide where every dollar goes before payday, not after. *In this order:*

1. ***Savings first.*** *Pay yourself first, before you spend anything. Even $10 a week is $520 in a year. That's the start of a deposit on your next place.*
2. ***What must be paid:*** *housing or the program fee, getting to work, your phone (your job and your officer need to reach you), food, and what you owe on a schedule.*
3. ***Then everything else.***

Paid every week? Plan on four checks a month; when a month has a fifth payday, that check goes to savings. Paid every two weeks? Plan on two, and a month with a third check is a savings month.

On our example, four checks of $490 is $1,960 a month to plan with. Not $2,400. Plan on the gross and you're $440 short before you start.

For savings, start with a small goal. An emergency fund of $500 is a good first one. When it's there, a car repair or a missed shift is a bad week, not a crisis."

Part 3: A Safe Place for It, and What You Owe (4 min)

Facilitator:

"Put it somewhere safe. ***Open a bank account.*** *Without one, you pay a fee every time you cash a check, you carry cash where it can be lost or taken, and there's no safe place to save. Bring your ID, and ask: Is there a monthly fee? A minimum balance? What happens if I spend more than I have? If a bank turns you down over an old problem with an account, ask about a second-chance account, or try a credit union.*

Now the part men avoid. A lot of men come home owing money: supervision fees, court fines and fees, restitution, child support. Don't hide from it. It's part of the plan, like rent.

Find out exactly what you owe and to whom. *Get it in writing: how much, who it's paid to, how often and how to pay. Then put the payment in your budget as a must. If you can't make a payment, ask the office that holds it before you miss it, not after. We don't give legal advice in this room; questions about the debt itself go to POD Society legal services."*

Part 4: Debt Traps (4 min)

Facilitator:

"Some businesses are built for people with no savings and no credit, and they're designed to keep you paying. Here's what they cost, in dollars. Round numbers, as an example; the real terms depend on the lender.

Payday loans. *Say you borrow $500 and the fee is $75 every two weeks. Payday comes and you can't pay back $575, so you pay the $75 to roll it over. Keep doing that every two weeks for a year: 26 payments of $75 is $1,950 in fees, and you still owe the $500. That's $2,450 for a $500 loan.*

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

> ***Rent-to-own.*** *A TV that's $400 in a store, for $25 a week. A year of payments is $1,300, and if you miss one near the end, it can go back to the store with everything you paid.*
>
> ***Buy-here-pay-here car lots.*** *The lot is also the lender. The price is high, the interest is high, and if you miss a payment, the car can be taken back after you've paid into it.*
>
> *Before you sign anything about money, ask one question:* ***What will I pay in total, in dollars, by the time this is done?*** *If they can't or won't tell you, walk out. And don't sign anything about money the same day. Take the papers home and show your mentor."*

Write on the board: *Net, not gross. Savings first. Find out what you owe. Total in dollars before you sign.*

Practice: First Paycheck (30 minutes)

Purpose: Build a real budget, then protect it under pressure, using the FORGE simulation format.

Part 1: Build the Budget (18 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Take a budget sheet. If you have a job, use your own numbers; nobody else needs to see them. If you don't have a job yet, use the first job on the board: $_____ an hour, _____ hours a week, paid _____. It takes home about $_____ a check."*
>
> *"Work down the sheet, top to bottom: take-home for the month, savings first (an amount you will actually do), the musts, what you owe, everything else. If you don't know what you owe yet, write a question mark; that question mark is your homework. Then add up the total out and subtract it from your take-home. If what's left is below zero, something has to change. What?*
>
> *If writing isn't your thing, work it through with your anchor."*

Facilitator and peer helpers circulate. Help anyone who's stuck:

- "Is that your take-home, or your gross?"
- "How much will you really spend on food in a month?"
- "What's one thing you'd cut if this doesn't balance?"
- "Do you know what you owe, or is that a question mark?"

Debrief (3 min): "What surprised you? What didn't fit? You don't have to say any numbers." Take two or three answers.

Part 2: Simulation: Payday (12 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Now let's put that budget under pressure. [Peer helper] is going to play a family member. I need a volunteer who just got paid."*

 Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Set the scene (to the group and the volunteer): It's payday. The volunteer's check is in the bank and his budget is written. His cousin calls: "Hey, you got paid, right? I need $200 till next week. Come on. I put money on your books the whole time you were down. You owe me."

Run the scene for about two minutes. Then **freeze.**

> **Facilitator (to the volunteer):**
>
> *"Freeze. What's the thought in your head right now? What are you feeling? What's your plan?"*

Then the group: "How could he say no and keep the relationship? What could he offer that isn't the rent money? What should he not say?" Take two or three answers. Pick one or two coaching points only. Points that often help:

- Be grateful and still say no: "You were there for me. I won't forget it. This check is already planned."
- Offer something that isn't money: a ride, help with a job application, time.
- If you want to give, decide it with your budget, not on the phone: a set amount next month, as a gift, not a loan.

Replay the scene with the volunteer using STOP. Run it once more with a second volunteer if time allows.

Debrief (2 min):

> *"Notice 'you owe me.' That's a thought that feels like a fact. The help they gave you was real. Paying it back out of the rent money isn't the only way to honor it."*

Facilitator note: If a man says "Family comes first. I'd give it," don't argue. Ask: "Okay. Walk it forward. What happens when the program fee is due? When your phone gets cut off and work can't reach you?" Let the consequence do the teaching.

Commit and Close (15 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Open your Reentry Plan to Money. Write one action for this week: something you can finish, with a when.*
>
> *For example: 'Money: this week I take my ID to _____ and open a checking account.' Or: 'Money: I call _____ and get in writing what I owe in fines and fees.' Or: 'Money: from my next check, $10 goes into savings before anything else.'*
>
> *If you don't have your ID yet, your money step may be an ID step. That's fine. Write it."*

Give residents 5 minutes to write. Then a closing round:

> *"Closing round. Say your one action out loud. That's your commitment to this room, and next week you'll tell us how it went."*

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

After the round:

> *"Before your next payday, fill in the Planned column on your budget sheet for that month. After payday, fill in what really happened. That's the homework. See you next class."*

Point the men to Chapter 5 in their books: the Try it pages for this week, and "After you leave the house" for later.

After class: record attendance and each man's commitment for his mentor. Note anyone with no bank account, no ID or unknown debts. Follow up one-on-one with anyone who seemed overwhelmed by what he owes.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Class 6: Coming Home to Family

Facilitator Notes for Class 6

Family is where the picture men carry home meets the life their family actually lived. Inside, many residents built up an image of the reunion: the hugs, everyone glad, things back the way they were. Sometimes that happens, for a day, and then reality sets in. Children grew up, partners moved on or stayed and carried resentment, parents got older, and someone else made the rules and paid the bills. Coming home is not picking up where you left off; it's starting over. This class uses three things FORGE teaches: the hard look at expectations about going home from Session 65, the 4-step accountability conversation from Session 62, and the Week 1 idea that trust is not a starting point but is earned one honest moment at a time. Inside, mentors learn the four steps to hold someone else accountable. Here, residents turn the four questions on themselves, to own their part with someone they hurt, without demanding forgiveness. Hold two things in mind. This class will hit close to home for nearly everyone; passing is allowed, and some of the real work will happen afterward, one-on-one with mentors. And safety comes first: a no-contact order, a supervision condition about contact, or a relationship that isn't safe comes before any plan to reconnect. Never coach a resident toward contact that an order or a condition does not allow.

What to Watch For

The reunion picture. "My kids are just waiting for me." "Everything's going to be like it was." Don't crush the hope. Help the resident build a plan so the hope has something to stand on.

Residents who go quiet. Talk about children in particular can shut men down. Don't push. A quiet check-in after class ("That was heavy. How are you sitting with it?") does more than a question in the circle.

Forgiveness as a demand. "I said I was sorry. What more do they want?" That's the line between accountability and asking to be let off the hook. Name it gently when you hear it.

Signs a relationship isn't safe. Abuse in either direction; a partner or relative pulling the resident back toward using or old activity; a no-contact order mentioned in passing. Talk one-on-one after class and refer. If a child or a vulnerable adult is being abused, follow the limits of confidentiality.

Common Challenges

"They should be glad I'm home." Maybe they are. They also lived years without you, built routines and carried things you didn't see. Ask: "What did they have to handle while you were gone?" Let the resident answer that before deciding what his family owes him.

"I can't talk about my kids." Then don't. Passing is allowed, and you mean it. Add: "If you want to talk about it, your mentor is a good place to start." Then let it go.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

"Why should I own anything? They hurt me too." That may be true. Two things can be true at once: you were hurt, and you hurt people. Neither cancels the other. An accountability conversation is about your part. Their part is theirs to own, and you can't have their conversation for them.

Preparing for This Class

- Ask one peer helper to share what coming home to his family was really like, in Part 1 of the Teach section: what he expected, what happened, and one thing he did that started to rebuild trust.
- Ask a second peer helper to play the family member in the practice scene. Walk through it with him before class: realistic, not cruel, and not quick to forgive.
- If you know a resident has a no-contact order or a supervision condition about contact, talk with him before class about how he'll take part (for example, planning a conversation with someone else, or watching the scene and coaching).
- Fill in referrals before class: family or parenting support _____; domestic violence support _____; POD Society legal services, for custody, visitation and child support questions _____.
- Write the four accountability questions on the board.
- Check that every man has his book.

Class 6 Overview

Purpose: Help residents meet the family they came home to, not the one they pictured; take their roles back slowly; and use the FORGE accountability conversation to own their part with someone they hurt, without demanding forgiveness.

Reentry Plan area: Family. Which relationships am I rebuilding, and how?

Builds on FORGE: Week 22 (Session 65: Reentry Preparation, family reconnection and the misconceptions about going home; Session 66: relationships and parenting), Week 21 (Session 62: Accountability Conversations, the 4-step model) and Week 1 (trust is earned, not a starting point).

Materials:

- Talking piece
- Board or easel paper with the four accountability questions written on it
- Each man's FORGE Your Success book (Chapter 6, with its Try it pages)
- Residents' Reentry Plan folders

Learning Objectives

By the end of this class, residents will be able to:

1. Name ways their family changed while they were away, and one expectation they need to adjust

 Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

2. Describe what taking a role back slowly looks like, as a parent, partner, son, or sibling
3. Plan an accountability conversation with someone they hurt, using the four questions
4. Own their part in a role-play without a "but" and without demanding forgiveness
5. Recognize when a relationship isn't safe, and know that no-contact orders and supervision conditions come first
6. Write one specific family action into their Reentry Plan for the coming week

Class 6 Checklist

- ☐ Elevator speech said together, out loud
- ☐ Four accountability questions on the board before class
- ☐ New residents welcomed by name and paired with an anchor
- ☐ Class agreements read aloud (if anyone is new)
- ☐ Opening circle completed: one win, one challenge
- ☐ Reentry Plan check completed in pairs
- ☐ Misconceptions about coming home discussed; peer helper shared what coming home was really like
- ☐ "Trust is earned" and taking roles back slowly taught
- ☐ Four-step accountability conversation taught, with "no 'but,' no demand for forgiveness"
- ☐ Safety first: no-contact orders and supervision conditions named
- ☐ Family role-play run with freeze and replay
- ☐ Each resident planned an accountability conversation in the Try it pages of Chapter 6
- ☐ Each man wrote one action into his Reentry Plan and said it to the group
- ☐ Men pointed to Chapter 6 in their books
- ☐ Attendance and commitments recorded for mentors

Class Plan

Opening Circle (10 minutes)

Elevator speech (2 minutes). Before the check-in, the group says the FORGE Your Success elevator speech together, out loud. New men read it from the inside cover of the book. From a man's second time through the cycle, ask one or two men to say it alone, without looking.

Set up: Chairs in a circle. Talking piece in the center.

> **Facilitator:**
> *"Welcome. If you're new, welcome home, and welcome to FORGE Your Success. Your anchor is sitting next to you; he'll help you with anything that doesn't make sense.*

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

> *Check-in round. Two things:* ***one win since last class, and one challenge.*** *This class is about family. If one of yours is about family, you can use it. You can also pass. Pass the talking piece when you're done."*

If anyone is new: read the class agreements before the round, and remind everyone of the limits of confidentiality.

Facilitator note: Listen for family moments from the week: a hard visit, a call that went well, a child who wouldn't come to the phone. With permission, come back to them later in the class. Don't push anyone who passes.

Reentry Plan Check (10 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Pair up. Newer residents with a peer helper if you can. Take out your Reentry Plan. Each of you: pick one area, say one step you finished this week and one step that's next. Five minutes each. Peer helpers, ask the newer resident one question that helps him get specific."*

Facilitator circulates. Watch for Family areas that say only "get my family back" or "see my kids." Note them for the resident's mentor; this class will help make them specific.

Teach: Coming Home to Family (20 minutes)

Part 1: The Family You Pictured, and the One You Came Home To (7 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"A question for the room first.* ***What's the biggest misconception men have about coming home to family?****"*

Take four or five answers. Common ones: "Everything goes back to normal." "My family is just waiting for me." "I'll pick up right where I left off." Validate each one.

> *"Every one of those comes from love. And here's what's usually true: your family changed while you were away. Children grew up, some of them without you. They may be angry, distant or confused, and that's normal. Partners moved on, or stayed and built up resentment. Parents got older. Brothers and sisters have their own problems. Somebody else made the rules, paid the bills and answered the hard questions.*
>
> *Coming home is not picking up where you left off. It's starting over. Love doesn't erase hurt."*

Peer helper shares what coming home to his family was really like: what they expected, what happened, and one thing that started to rebuild trust. Keep it to three or four minutes.

Part 2: Trust Is Earned, and Roles Come Back Slowly (5 min)

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Facilitator:

"If you did FORGE, you heard this the first week: ***trust isn't a starting point. It's earned, one honest moment at a time.*** *That's true with your family too. You can't demand it. You can only build it.*

The family ran without you. So don't walk in and take over. If you're a parent, the person who raised your kids while you were gone has been making the calls. Ask before you decide. Learn the rules your kids live by now before you add your own.

Ask yourself three questions: ***What kind of parent, or partner, or son, do I want to be? What's standing in the way? What can I start doing now?***

Small promises kept beat big promises broken. Call when you said you'd call. Show up when you said you'd show up. Let the other person set some of the pace.

And some relationships may not come back. That's painful, and it has to be okay. Questions about custody, visitation or child support go to legal services, not to this room."

Part 3: The Accountability Conversation (6 min)

The 4-Step Accountability Conversation

Punishment says: "You're bad." Accountability says: "You did something that caused harm, and I believe you're capable of doing better."

1. **What happened?**
   Facts, not accusations or interpretations. "I'm not asking why yet. I'm asking: did this happen?"
2. **Who was affected, and how?**
   Ask; don't tell.
3. **What needs to happen to make it right?**
   The repair comes from him, not from you.
4. **How do we move forward?**
   "What can I count on from you going forward?" Then follow up next session: the follow-up IS the accountability.

Not in this model: shame, threats, punishment, power plays.

The 4-step accountability conversation, from FORGE Week 21.

Facilitator:

"Inside, FORGE mentors learn four questions for holding someone accountable. Out here, the first person to use them on is you, when you sit down with someone you hurt. Look at the board.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

> ***1. What happened?*** *Start with the facts and your part. 'I missed most of your school years. I missed your graduation.' Not 'Things happened.' Not 'I had my reasons.'*
>
> ***2. Who was affected, and how?*** *Ask, then listen. 'What was that like for you?' Don't tell them how they felt; let them tell you. And don't jump in with your side. This is the hardest step.*
>
> ***3. What needs to happen to make it right?*** *In FORGE, the repair comes from the man who did the harm; nobody forces it on him. So ask what would help, and offer what you can really do. 'Sorry' is a start. A change they can see is the repair.*
>
> ***4. How do we move forward?*** *One promise small enough to keep, and when you'll check back. FORGE says the follow-up is the accountability. If you don't follow up, the conversation didn't happen.*
>
> *Notice what's not in it: excuses, a 'but,' a deadline for trust, or a demand to be forgiven. Forgiveness is theirs to give, on their time. You can own it fully and still hear 'not yet.' That's not failure. That's the start."*

Part 4: When Family Isn't Safe (2 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"One more thing, and it comes before everything else.* ***If there's a no-contact order, or a supervision condition about who you can contact, that comes first.*** *Before you plan any conversation, check. If you're not sure, ask your officer before you reach out. A conversation the order doesn't allow isn't accountability. It puts the other person, and your freedom, at risk.*
>
> *Some family relationships pull you back: to using, to the old crowd, to the old version of you. Some are abusive, in either direction. If you're being hurt, or you're afraid you'll hurt someone, talk to your mentor or to me after class. We'll help you find the right support."*

Practice: The Conversation (30 minutes)

Purpose: Practice owning your part with the four steps, using the FORGE simulation format, then plan a real conversation.

Part 1: Simulation (15 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"We're going to run a scene. [Peer helper] is going to play a family member. I need a volunteer to play a man who's been home about a month."*

Set the scene (to the group and the volunteer): The volunteer has asked his older sibling to sit down and talk. The sibling took care of their mother through a long illness while the volunteer was away. The sibling opens: "So now you want to talk. I took Mom to every appointment for five years. Where were you? And don't tell me it was complicated."

Run the scene for about two minutes. Then **freeze.**

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

> **Facilitator (to the volunteer):**
>
> *"Freeze. Which step are you on? What's the thought in your head right now? What are you feeling? What's your plan?"*

Then the group: "Did he start with the facts and his own part? Did he ask what it was like, or explain? Was there a 'but'? What could he say next?" Take two or three answers. Pick one or two coaching points only.

Replay the scene from the top with the volunteer using the four steps. Run it once more with a second volunteer if time allows; this time the sibling can say, "I don't want your sorry."

Debrief (3 min):

> *"Where did you want to explain yourself? Usually it's Step 2, when they tell you how it really was. That's where STOP lives. You don't have to agree with every word. You have to hear it. And notice: nobody forgave anybody in that scene, and the conversation still did something."*

Facilitator note: If a man says "I'd just leave," don't argue. Ask: "Okay. Walk it forward. What happens the next time the family gets together? What does your mother hear about it?" Let the consequence do the teaching.

Part 2: Plan Your Own (15 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Now your own. On the Try it pages of Chapter 6, pick one person you hurt and want to rebuild with. Only someone you're allowed to contact. Write the four steps the way you'd use them: what happened and your part, the question you'll ask them, what you could offer, and one promise you can keep.*
>
> *You don't have to have the conversation this week. Plan it. And show the plan to your mentor before you have it.*
>
> *If there's no one in your family you can or should contact right now, plan it with someone else you hurt, or write the conversation you'd want to have someday. That counts. If writing isn't your thing, talk it through with your anchor."*

Facilitator and peer helpers circulate. Help anyone who's stuck:

- "What happened, just the facts and your part?"
- "Is there a 'but' in that sentence?"
- "What do you think it was like for them?"
- "What's a promise small enough that you'll keep it?"

Ask one or two volunteers to read their Step 1 aloud if they're willing. Thank them by name.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Commit and Close (15 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Open your Reentry Plan to Family. Write one action for this week: small, specific, with a when.*
>
> *For example: 'Family: I call my daughter when I said I would, and keep it short and kind.' Or: 'Family: I ask my mother what she needs help with at the house, and I do one thing she names.' Or: 'Family: before I reach out to _____, I ask my officer whether contact is allowed.'*
>
> *If family isn't part of your plan right now, your action can be about the people you're choosing to lean on: your mentor, a recovery sponsor, someone in this house."*

Give residents 5 minutes to write. Then a closing round:

> *"Closing round. Say your one action out loud. That's your commitment to this room, and next week you'll tell us how it went."*

After the round:

> *"This week, keep one small promise to someone in your family, and tell your mentor how it went. That's the homework. See you next class."*

Point the men to Chapter 6 in their books: the Try it pages for this week, and "After you leave the house" for later.

After class: record attendance and each man's commitment for his mentor. Follow up one-on-one with anyone who went quiet or shared something heavy. Act on any safety concern under the limits of confidentiality.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Class 7: Old Friends, Old Places

Facilitator Notes for Class 7

The old neighborhood is still there when men come home, and so are some of the people: the corner, the house where everybody gathered, the friend with the car who always had something going, the numbers still saved in an old phone. They pull for real reasons: they're familiar, and for a long time that's where you were somebody. FORGE inside teaches that the right people hold you up and the wrong people pull you back down. This class brings two FORGE tools home. The relationship map from Week 8 (three circles, and a +, − or ? next to each name) shows a resident who is in his life now and what each relationship does to him. The pressure-decision tools from Week 9 (pre-deciding, personal rules, the 10-10-10 rule, a third option and the ripple effect) help him decide before the car pulls up, not while it idles at the curb. The class touches two plan areas: Housing, because where you live decides what you walk past every day, and Service, because new circles get built by showing up for something. Hold two things in mind. Don't tell residents to cut everyone off; that isn't realistic and isn't always right. Help them choose how much access and influence each person gets. And supervision conditions about who a resident can be around come first. Residents follow them, and ask their officer when they're not sure. Nobody in this room interprets a condition for them.

What to Watch For

Loyalty talk. "That's my people. They held me down." Loyalty is a real value; don't attack it. Ask whether this relationship supports the life the resident is building now. FORGE inside puts it this way: real loyalty supports your growth, not your comfort.

The right answer in the room. Some residents will say "I'd walk away" while their face says something else. Don't call it out in the group. Ask after class: "You said you'd walk away. What's the real answer?"

Housing near the old places. A resident whose family home, or next address, is on the same block as the old crowd. That's a housing question. Note it for his mentor, and for Class 12.

An empty map. Pulling back from the minus marks can leave a resident alone, and loneliness pulls men back too. Give real time to building new circles.

Common Challenges

"I can be around them. I'm not the same person." Maybe so. Ask: "Are you willing to bet your plan on it? What's your way out if it turns?" Pre-deciding exists because the moment is the worst time to make the decision.

"Those are the only people I know." Then the work is new circles, starting small: this house, people at work, a recovery meeting, a faith community, a service project. One new plus mark this month is a real goal.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

"My officer's rule about who I can be around doesn't make sense." You can disagree with it and still follow it. Ask your officer about anything unclear, and take legal questions to POD Society legal services. Don't argue the condition with the friend on the sidewalk. It's simply the answer: "I can't. It's a condition."

Preparing for This Class

- Ask one peer helper to share a story from his own reentry in Part 1 of the Teach section: an old friend or an old place since coming home, what he did, and what he'd do now.
- Ask a second peer helper to play the old friend in the practice scene, and walk through it with him before class. The friend is warm and glad to see him, not a villain; that's what makes the pull real.
- Draw three circles on the board (you in the center, an inner ring, an outer ring) and write the 10-10-10 questions next to them.
- Fill in local options for new circles before class: recovery meetings _____; volunteer and service opportunities _____; house activities _____.
- Check that every man has his book. It has the circles for the map.

Class 7 Overview

Purpose: Help residents see their relationships and the old places honestly, decide before the pressure hits, say no without starting a fight, and start building new circles.

Reentry Plan areas: Housing (where I live, and what's near it) and Service (how I'm giving back, and the new circles that come with it).

Builds on FORGE: Week 8 (Session 24: Building Pro-Social Relationships: healthy and toxic relationships, boundaries, the relationship map) and Week 9 (Session 25: at least three options before you choose; Session 26: pre-deciding, personal rules and the 10-10-10 rule; Session 27: the ripple effect).

Materials:

- Talking piece
- Board or easel paper with three circles and the 10-10-10 questions
- Each man's FORGE Your Success book (Chapter 7, with its Try it pages)
- Residents' Reentry Plan folders

Learning Objectives

By the end of this class, residents will be able to:

1. Draw a relationship map of their life since release and mark each person +, − or ?
2. Name the people, places and things that pull them back, and one boundary they'll hold
3. Write personal rules for situations they know are coming

 Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

4. Use the 10-10-10 rule and a third option to say no without starting a fight, in a role-play
5. Explain that supervision conditions about associations come first, and ask their officer when unsure
6. Write one specific action into the Housing or Service area of their Reentry Plan

Class 7 Checklist

- ☐ Elevator speech said together, out loud
- ☐ Three circles and the 10-10-10 questions on the board before class
- ☐ New residents welcomed by name and paired with an anchor
- ☐ Class agreements read aloud (if anyone is new)
- ☐ Opening circle completed: one win, one challenge
- ☐ Reentry Plan check completed in pairs
- ☐ People, places and things taught, supervision conditions first; peer helper shared a story
- ☐ Relationship map and boundaries taught
- ☐ Pre-deciding, personal rules and the 10-10-10 rule taught
- ☐ Saying no without a fight: the third option and the ripple effect
- ☐ Old-friend role-play run with freeze and replay
- ☐ Each man drew his map and wrote a boundary and personal rules
- ☐ Each man wrote one action into his Reentry Plan and said it to the group
- ☐ Men pointed to Chapter 7 in their books
- ☐ Attendance and commitments recorded for mentors

Class Plan

Opening Circle (10 minutes)

Elevator speech (2 minutes). Before the check-in, the group says the FORGE Your Success elevator speech together, out loud. New men read it from the inside cover of the book. From a man's second time through the cycle, ask one or two men to say it alone, without looking.

Set up: Chairs in a circle. Talking piece in the center.

> **Facilitator:**
> *"Welcome. If you're new, welcome home, and welcome to FORGE Your Success. Your anchor is sitting next to you; he'll help you with anything that doesn't make sense.*

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

> *Check-in round. Two things:* ***one win since last class, and one challenge.*** *A win can be small. You took a different way home. You didn't answer a number you knew you shouldn't. You met someone new at work. Pass the talking piece when you're done."*

If anyone is new: read the class agreements before the round, and remind everyone of the limits of confidentiality.

Facilitator note: Listen for old-neighborhood moments: a man who ran into an old friend, a call from an old number, a family home near the old crowd. With permission, come back to them in the Teach or Practice section.

Reentry Plan Check (10 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Pair up. Newer residents with a peer helper if you can. Take out your Reentry Plan. Each of you: pick one area, say one step you finished this week and one step that's next. Five minutes each. Peer helpers, ask the newer resident one question that helps him get specific."*

Facilitator circulates. Watch for Service areas that are still blank, and Housing plans whose next address is back in the old neighborhood. Note them for the resident's mentor.

Teach: Old Friends, Old Places (20 minutes)

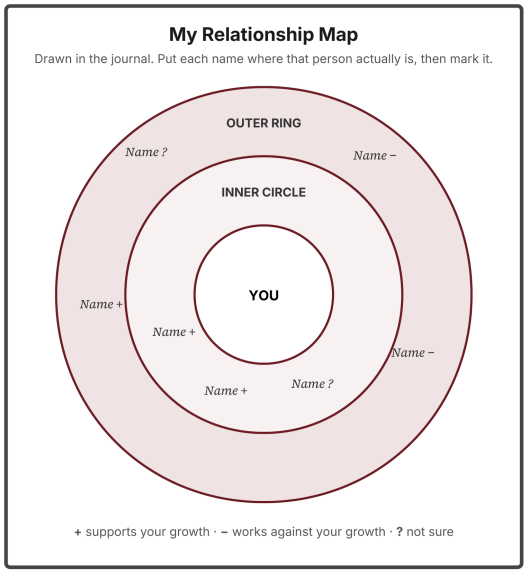
Part 1: People, Places and Things (5 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"When you come home, the old neighborhood is still there. The corner. The house where everybody went. The friend with the car who always had something going. The numbers still in your phone.*
>
> *They pull, and the pull isn't weakness. It's familiar. People there knew you. For a long time, that's where you were somebody. But old places come with old routines, and old routines come with old outcomes. People, places and things: they don't have to be bad to put your plan at risk.*
>
> *And before anything else:* ***if your supervision conditions say who you can be around, or where you can't go, follow them.*** *If you're not sure whether someone or somewhere counts, ask your officer before, not after."*

Peer helper shares a story from his own reentry: an old friend or an old place, what he did, and what he'd do now. Keep it to two or three minutes.

Part 2: The Relationship Map (6 min)

 Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.



The relationship map, from FORGE Week 8, as a resident draws it.

Facilitator:

"If you did FORGE, you drew this inside. Look at the board. Three circles. You're in the center. The ring around you is your inner circle, the people closest to you. The outer ring is people who are in your life at more distance.

Put people where they actually are, not where you wish they were. Then put a mark next to each name:

- ***A plus (+)** for people who support your growth. They tell you the truth, they want to see you make it, and they hold you to it.*
- ***A minus (−)** for people who pull you back. They make it easy to slide, they keep score, they make fun of the work you're doing: 'You think you're better than us now?'*
- ***A question mark (?)** for people who could go either way.*

*Here's what FORGE says about the map: you have more control over it than you think. You can't always remove people. But you choose how much access and influence each one gets. That's a **boundary**: a line you draw about what you will and won't accept. It's not a wall, and it's not a weapon. 'I'll get food with you, but I'm not going back to the block.' 'I care about you, but I'm not going to lie for you.'"*

Part 3: Decide Before the Pressure Hits (5 min)

Facilitator:

*"Under pressure your thinking narrows. You stop seeing options and see one path, usually the old one. So don't make the decision in the moment. Make it now, while you're calm. FORGE calls that **pre-deciding.** A firefighter doesn't decide how to fight a fire while the building is burning. They decided in training.*

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

*Turn your pre-decisions into **personal rules.** They start with 'I will always' or 'I will never,' with no 'unless.' Out here they might sound like this:*

- *'I will never get in a car when I don't know what's in it.'*
- *'I will always leave when drugs or a weapon come out.'*
- *'I will never say yes to easy money on the spot.'*
- *'I will always call my mentor before I go back to the old block.'*

*And when it's hot, use the **10-10-10 rule.** How will I feel about this in 10 minutes? In 10 months? In 10 years? Most bad decisions feel good at 10 minutes. The right one is usually the one that still looks good at 10 months and 10 years."*

Part 4: Saying No Without Starting a Fight (4 min)

Facilitator:

"The trap is either/or: 'I go with them, or I lose them.' FORGE says come up with at least three options before you choose. There's almost always a third one.

- *Keep it short and warm. 'Not this time. I'm good.' You don't owe anybody a speech about your program.*
- *Say no to the thing, not the person. 'I can't ride with you. Let's get lunch this weekend.' (With a minus on your map, you may not offer even that.)*
- *Don't lecture, and don't call names. Leave them their pride, and keep yours.*
- *Leave. Walking away is a complete answer.*

When it's hard, picture the ripples. You're in the center. Then the people close to you: your kids, your family, this house, your mentor. Then further out: the employer who took a chance on you, and the next resident this house can help. One decision, and look how far it goes."

Practice: The Old Friend Pulls Up (30 minutes)

Purpose: Use personal rules, the 10-10-10 rule and a third option under pressure, using the FORGE simulation format, then map your own circles.

Part 1: Simulation (15 min)

Facilitator:

"We're going to run a scene. [Peer helper] is going to play an old friend from the neighborhood. I need a volunteer who's been home about two months and has a job."

Set the scene (to the group and the volunteer): The volunteer is walking from the bus stop after a long shift, two blocks from the house. A car slows down and the window comes down. It's an old friend, glad to see him: "Look at you! Get in, I'll run you home. Matter of fact, I got something going this weekend. Easy money, couple of hours. You need it. I know that job ain't paying you nothing."

 Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Run the scene for about two minutes. Then **freeze.**

> **Facilitator (to the volunteer):**
>
> *"Freeze. What's the thought in your head right now? What are you feeling? Where is this person on your map: plus, minus or question mark? What's your plan?"*

Then the group: "What personal rule fits here? What does 10-10-10 say? What's a third option between getting in the car and starting a fight? What should he not say?" Take two or three answers. Pick one or two coaching points only.

Replay the scene with the volunteer using what the group came up with. Run it once more with a second volunteer; this time the friend pushes back: "What, you too good for us now?"

Debrief (3 min):

> *"Notice the pull was warm. Nobody threatened anybody. That's what makes it hard. And notice: saying no to the car and the money wasn't saying no to the whole person. You decided how much access they get."*

Facilitator note: If a man says "I'd take the ride. It's just a ride," don't argue. Ask: "Okay. Walk it forward. What's in the car? Who else is in it? Who sees you get in? What happens if it gets pulled over?" Let the consequence do the teaching.

Part 2: Your Map and Your Rules (15 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Now your own. On the Try it pages of Chapter 7, draw your map: the people in your life since you came home, where they really are, with a plus, a minus or a question mark. Use initials if you want; nobody needs to see names.*
>
> *Then write three things. One boundary you'll hold with a minus or a question mark. Two or three personal rules for situations you know are coming this month. And one place you'll start a new circle: work, a meeting, a faith community, a service project, this house."*

Individual work (8 min). Keep the room quiet. Then **pair share (5 min):** "What did you notice about the balance? More plus marks or more minus marks? What does that tell you about where you're living and who's around you?" No names needed.

Full group (2 min): "Where are men starting new circles?" Take two or three answers, and connect residents with peer helpers who already go to the same places.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Commit and Close (15 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Open your Reentry Plan. Write one action for this week, in Housing or Service, or wherever it belongs.*
>
> *For example: 'Housing: this week I take the long way home from the bus so I don't walk past _____.' Or: 'Service: I go to the _____ volunteer day with [a peer helper].' Or: 'Supervision and legal: I ask my officer whether _____ is someone I can be around.'"*

Give residents 5 minutes to write. Then a closing round:

> *"Closing round. Say your one action out loud. That's your commitment to this room, and next week you'll tell us how it went."*

After the round:

> *"This week, read your personal rules every morning. Notice one time you used one, or one time you wish you had, and tell your mentor. That's the homework. See you next class."*

Point the men to Chapter 7 in their books: the Try it pages for this week, and "After you leave the house" for later.

After class: record attendance and each man's commitment for his mentor. Note any resident whose housing plan puts him back near the old crowd. Follow up one-on-one with anyone whose "I'd walk away" didn't sound like it.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Class 8: On Guard

Facilitator Notes for Class 8

Many men come home and find that the outside is too much: a whole aisle of choices, strangers standing close behind in line, a loud bus, more noise than a man can track, sleep that comes light, with one ear open. Inside, staying on guard kept men safe. That doesn't switch off at the gate; as FORGE puts it in Week 4, the brain doesn't automatically turn off what it learned for survival when the environment changes. POD Society uses the term Post-Incarceration Syndrome (PICS) for these lasting effects of prison, and some clinicians use it too. In this room it is a name, not a diagnosis, and the point of the name is simple: this has a cause, other men live with it too, and it is not weakness. This class brings two FORGE tools home: the escalation curve with 4-4-4 breathing, 5-4-3-2-1 grounding and STOP, and the four survival responses (fight, flight, freeze and fawn) with the difference between reacting and responding. Hold two things in mind. FORGE is trauma-aware, not therapy: listen, validate and refer, and never ask anyone for his story. And have the crisis contacts confirmed before the class starts.

What to Watch For

"I'm fine." Freeze can look like calm, and flight can look like being busy or tired. Watch for residents who have stopped going anywhere but work and their room, or who sleep through every day off. Check in after class.

A man checking out during the practice. A blank stare, no eye contact, not really in the room. Stop the scene and ground him gently: "[Name], come back to the room. You're here. You're safe. Take a breath."

Using to get through it. Alcohol or pills to handle a crowd, or to sleep. Talk one-on-one and refer; Class 9 takes up recovery.

A man in crisis. Talk of self-harm or suicide, or distress beyond what the group can hold. Stay calm and stay with him. Ask the co-facilitator or a peer helper to keep the class going, take the resident aside, use grounding, and use the crisis contacts. Follow up within a day.

Common Challenges

"Breathing exercises? Really?" Fair question. They're not for when someone is swinging at you; in real danger, do what keeps you safe. They're for all the moments that feel like danger but aren't: the checkout line, the bus, a crowded waiting room. FORGE puts it this way: regulation isn't weakness. Regulation is strategy.

"If I let my guard down, I'll get hurt." Don't argue. The guard kept him safe. The goal isn't to throw it away; it's to choose when it's up. Ask: "Is there real danger here, or does this just feel like the dayroom?"

"I don't need a counselor. I'm not crazy." Nobody is calling anyone crazy. A broken bone needs a doctor, and a mind that won't stop scanning for danger may need a professional too. There's no shame in it, and asking early is easier than asking late.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Preparing for This Class

- Confirm these contacts and write them in the Try it pages of Chapter 8 before you copy it: Mind C.A.R.E. _____; mental health _____; crisis _____.
- Ask one peer helper to share what his first weeks outside felt like in his body, in Part 1 of the Teach section.
- Ask a second peer helper to play the cashier in the practice scene, and agree on the limits before class: noise and standing close only, no touching, and anyone can step out.
- Draw the escalation curve on the board, with Stage 2 marked as the place to step in. Check that every man has his book.
- Have a co-facilitator in the room if you can. This class can bring things up.

Class 8 Overview

Purpose: Help residents understand why life outside can feel overwhelming after prison, notice where they are on the escalation curve and which survival response they go to, use breathing, grounding and STOP to come back to the present, and know when and where to get help.

Reentry Plan area: Health and recovery.

Builds on FORGE: Week 3 (Session 8: Emotional Regulation: the escalation curve, 4-4-4 breathing, 5-4-3-2-1 grounding), the STOP technique from Week 2 (Session 6), and Week 4 (Session 10: trauma as an explanation, not an excuse; Session 11: fight, flight, freeze and fawn, and reacting versus responding; Session 12: the early warning signal and "my person" from the Safe Coping Card).

Materials:

- Talking piece
- Board or easel paper with the escalation curve drawn on it
- Each man's FORGE Your Success book (Chapter 8, with its Try it pages)
- Residents' Reentry Plan folders

Learning Objectives

By the end of this class, residents will be able to:

1. Explain in their own words why life outside can feel overwhelming after prison, and that it is not weakness
2. Name the five stages of the escalation curve and where to step in
3. Name the four survival responses and the one they go to most
4. Use 4-4-4 breathing and 5-4-3-2-1 grounding in a crowded, loud practice scene
5. Say when to get help, and who they would call
6. Write one specific Health and recovery action into their Reentry Plan for the coming week

 Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Class 8 Checklist

- ☐ Elevator speech said together, out loud
- ☐ Escalation curve on the board and contacts confirmed before class
- ☐ New residents welcomed by name and paired with an anchor
- ☐ Class agreements read aloud (if anyone is new)
- ☐ Opening circle completed: one win, one challenge
- ☐ Reentry Plan check completed in pairs
- ☐ Why the outside feels like too much taught; PICS named as POD Society's term, not a diagnosis
- ☐ Peer helper shared what his first weeks outside felt like
- ☐ Escalation curve and the four survival responses taught
- ☐ 4-4-4 practiced together; 5-4-3-2-1 and STOP taught; when to get help and the contacts given
- ☐ Crowded-store scene run with freeze and replay
- ☐ Paired coaching completed and Chapter 8's Try it pages filled in
- ☐ Each man wrote one action into his Reentry Plan and said it to the group
- ☐ Men pointed to Chapter 8 in their books
- ☐ Attendance and commitments recorded for mentors

Class Plan

Opening Circle (10 minutes)

Elevator speech (2 minutes). Before the check-in, the group says the FORGE Your Success elevator speech together, out loud. New men read it from the inside cover of the book. From a man's second time through the cycle, ask one or two men to say it alone, without looking.

Set up: Chairs in a circle. Talking piece in the center.

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Welcome. If you're new, welcome home, and welcome to FORGE Your Success. Your anchor is sitting next to you; he'll help you with anything that doesn't make sense.*
>
> *Check-in round. Two things:* ***one win since last class, and one challenge.*** *A win can be small. You rode the bus. You stayed in a store long enough to finish the list. You slept through the night. Pass the talking piece when you're done."*

If anyone is new: read the class agreements before the round, and remind everyone of the limits of confidentiality.

Facilitator note: Listen for residents who avoid stores, buses or crowds, or who aren't sleeping. With permission, come back to it in the Teach or Practice section. Don't push anyone to say more than he offers.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Reentry Plan Check (10 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Pair up. Newer residents with a peer helper if you can. Take out your Reentry Plan. Each of you: pick one area, say one step you finished this week and one step that's next. Five minutes each. Peer helpers, ask the newer resident one question that helps him get specific."*

Facilitator circulates. Note Health and recovery areas with no doctor, clinic or medication plan for the mentor.

Teach: Still on Guard (20 minutes)

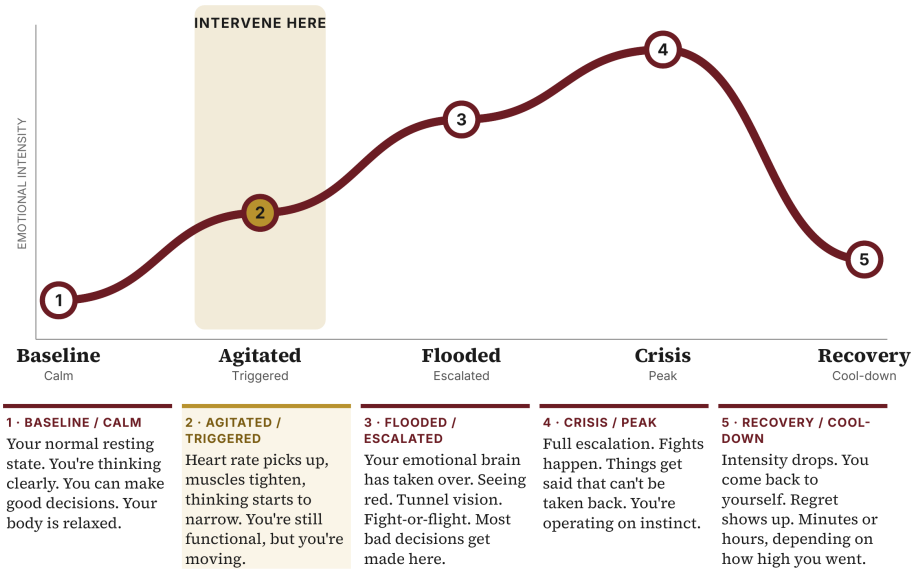
Part 1: Why It Feels Like Too Much (6 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Raise your hand if any of this has happened since you came home. You walked into a store and walked right back out. You stood in an aisle and couldn't pick. Someone came up behind you and your whole body got ready. You sat with your back to the wall in a restaurant. A door slammed and you were on your feet. You sleep with one ear open.*
>
> *Inside, being on guard kept you safe. Watching the room. Reading every face. Never letting anybody get behind you. Your body learned that, and it learned it well. Here's what FORGE teaches:* ***your brain doesn't automatically turn that off when the place changes.*** *You walked out the gate. Your survival system hasn't gotten the message yet.*
>
> *POD Society has a name for these lasting effects:* ***Post-Incarceration Syndrome, or PICS.*** *Some clinicians use the name too. It's not a diagnosis anybody in this room can give you, and you don't need a label to use the tools we're about to practice. What the name tells you is this: it has a cause, you're not the only one, and* ***it is not weakness.****"*

Peer helper shares what his first weeks outside felt like in his body: the first store, the first bus, and what helped. Keep it to two or three minutes.

Part 2: The Escalation Curve and the Four Responses (6 min)

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.



The escalation curve, from FORGE Week 3: the window to act is Stage 2.

Facilitator:

"Look at the board. This is the escalation curve: how you go from calm to crisis.

- ***Stage 1, Baseline or Calm.*** *You're thinking clearly.*
- ***Stage 2, Agitated or Triggered.*** *Heart picks up, muscles tighten, thinking starts to narrow. You still have options.*
- ***Stage 3, Flooded or Escalated.*** *Your emotional brain has taken over. Tunnel vision. This is where most bad decisions get made.*
- ***Stage 4, Crisis or Peak.*** *Things get said and done that can't be taken back.*
- ***Stage 5, Recovery or Cool-down.*** *You come back to yourself, and that's usually when the regret shows up.*

The further up you go, the harder it is to come back down. So the goal is simple: ***step in at Stage 2.***

When your system senses danger, it picks one of four survival responses, fast, before you think:

- ***Fight:*** *someone bumps your cart and you square up.*
- ***Flight:*** *you leave a full cart in the aisle and walk out, or you stop going anywhere at all.*
- ***Freeze:*** *you stand in the aisle and can't choose, or you go blank when the cashier asks you something.*
- ***Fawn:*** *you agree with whatever the person in charge says, or say yes to the extra shift when you mean no.*

None of these is weakness. Each one kept somebody safe somewhere. The trigger is in the present; the reaction is from the past. ***Reacting*** *is automatic.* ***Responding*** *comes after the pause, when you choose. Every tool we have is about making that pause."*

Part 3: Three Tools (5 min)

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Three tools. If you did FORGE, you know them. If you didn't, you can learn them right now.*
>
> ***4-4-4 breathing,** for when your body is climbing. Breathe in through your nose for 4 seconds. Hold for 4. Breathe out through your mouth for 4. Three rounds takes about 36 seconds, and nobody has to know you're doing it. Let's do it together."*

Lead three rounds: "In... 2... 3... 4. Hold... 2... 3... 4. Out... 2... 3... 4." Then ask: "Notice anything? Even a small shift counts."

> *"**5-4-3-2-1 grounding,** for when your mind is racing. Name 5 things you can see, 4 things you can touch, 3 you can hear, 2 you can smell, 1 you can taste. By the time you get to 1, you're back in the room, in the present, which is the only place you can do anything.*
>
> ***STOP,** for when you have to decide: Stop, Think, Options, Plan.*
>
> *Body climbing: breathe. Mind racing: ground. Decision to make: STOP. Sometimes you'll use all three, in that order."*

Part 4: When to Get Help (3 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"These tools help. They don't fix everything, and you don't have to carry this alone. Talk to someone if it isn't easing after a few weeks home, if it's getting in the way of sleep, work or family, if you're having nightmares, flashbacks or panic that won't quit, or if you're using alcohol or drugs to get through it.*
>
> *Here's who. Mind C.A.R.E.: _____. Mental health: _____. Your mentor, any time.*
>
> *And if you're thinking about hurting yourself or someone else, that's not a 'wait and see.' Tell someone now: me, staff, your mentor. The crisis contact is _____, or call or text 988. If anyone is in danger right now, call*
>
> *1. Asking for help is using your tools."*

Write the contacts on the board next to the curve, and leave them up through the Practice.

Practice: The Checkout Line (30 minutes)

Purpose: Catch Stage 2 and use a tool in a crowded, loud place, using the FORGE simulation format.

Part 1: Simulation (15 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"We're going to build a crowded store, right here. [Peer helper] is the cashier. The rest of you are the line and the crowd. I need a volunteer who's shopping."*

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Set the scene (to the group and the volunteer): A store at the busiest time of day. The volunteer has a basket and a short list. The line is long. Someone stands close behind him. The crowd talks over each other, a cart crashes, a phone rings and rings. The cashier calls out, "Next! I said next!" and the person behind says, "Come on, move up."

Ground rules for the crowd (say them out loud before you start): noise and standing close only, no touching, and anyone can step out at any time. Keep it at a medium level, not the hardest day of anyone's life.

Run the scene for about a minute. Then **freeze.**

> **Facilitator (to the volunteer):**
> *"Freeze. Where are you on the curve, 1 to 5? What's your body doing? Which response is showing up: fight, flight, freeze or fawn? What's your plan?"*

Then the group: "Which tool fits here: breathing, grounding or STOP? What could he do that nobody else in the store would even notice?" Take two or three answers. Pick one or two coaching points only. Points that often help:

- 4-4-4 works standing in line, with your eyes open.
- 5-4-3-2-1 works in a store: the gum rack, the price sign, the handle of the basket, the music, the smell of the bakery.
- STOP gives you options: step out of line and come back, put the basket down and shop at a quieter time, or say "One second" to the cashier.

Replay the scene with the volunteer using a tool. Run it once more with a second volunteer if time allows, on a crowded bus: the bus brakes hard, someone sits right behind him, and two people argue up front.

Debrief (3 min):

> *"Leaving the store because your body ran: that's a reaction. Taking a breath, deciding to come back when it's quieter, and walking out on purpose: that's a response. Sometimes the response is still to leave, and that's fine. The difference is who decided."*

Facilitator note: If a volunteer seems truly flooded rather than acting, stop the scene, thank him and ground him: "You're here. You're safe. Take a breath with me." Check in with him after class.

Part 2: Coach Each Other (15 min)

> **Facilitator:**
> *"Pair up, newer residents with a peer helper if you can. One of you describes a stressful moment since you came home. Not the heaviest thing in your life; something medium. The other one coaches him through 4-4-4 or 5-4-3-2-1, whichever fits. Then ask: 'Where are you now, 1 to 5? What shifted?' Then switch.*
> *You're not a therapist. You're just walking someone through the steps."*

Five minutes each. Then give **5 minutes** to fill in the Try it pages of Chapter 8: where they feel it first (their early warning signal), the response they go to most, one hard place out here and the tool they'll use there, and their person.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Facilitator and peer helpers circulate. Slow down pairs who rush the count. If a pair goes too deep, redirect: "Keep it medium for now."

Commit and Close (15 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Open your Reentry Plan to Health and recovery. Write one action for this week.*
>
> *For example: 'Health and recovery: this week I go to the store at a quiet time and use 4-4-4 in line.' Or: 'Health and recovery: I contact Mind C.A.R.E. and ask how to get started.' Or: 'Health and recovery: I tell my mentor what's been keeping me up at night.'"*

Give residents 5 minutes to write. Then a closing round:

> *"Closing round. Say your one action out loud. That's your commitment to this room, and next week you'll tell us how it went."*

After the round:

> *"This week, use one tool three times: 4-4-4, 5-4-3-2-1 or STOP. Notice where you were on the curve before and after, and tell your mentor. That's the homework. See you next class."*

Point the men to Chapter 8 in their books: the Try it pages for this week, and "After you leave the house" for later.

After class: record attendance and each man's commitment for his mentor. Check in one-on-one with anyone who seemed flooded or shared something heavy, and act on any safety concern under the limits of confidentiality.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Class 9: Recovery and the Stages of Change

Facilitator Notes for Class 9

The first months home are full of triggers: the first paycheck, the old block, a fight on the phone with family, a night alone with nothing to do, a friend who shows up glad to see you and holding something. Inside, the walls did some of the work. Out here the choice comes every day. This class gives every resident two FORGE tools for it. The Stages of Change (Precontemplation, Contemplation, Preparation, Action, Maintenance) show where a man is with a change and what kind of support he needs. The support network map shows who is actually around him when the pull comes. Recovery here means any change a resident is working to keep: drinking or using, but also gambling, a temper, fast money, an old crowd. Hold two things in mind. Nobody has to say what he is recovering from; the tools work the same either way. And the honest message of the class is that a slip is information, not the end, which only lands if the room is a place where honesty is safe. You are not a counselor in this class. When a man needs more, listen, validate and refer, using the recovery and crisis contacts.

What to Watch For

"That's not me." A resident in Precontemplation may say the class doesn't apply. Don't push. FORGE's advice for that stage is a relationship, not a lecture. Plant a seed: "I hear you. The tools work on any change. Use them on something else this week."

War stories. Talk about using can turn into the good old days. Steer it, without shaming: "That's what it felt like then. What did it cost?"

A man in trouble right now. A resident who looks or sounds like he is using again, or who says he is close to it, needs a one-on-one after class and a referral the same day. Don't work it out in the circle.

Maintenance overconfidence. A resident with months clean may say he's got it handled. FORGE teaches that relapse is possible in Maintenance, especially under stress. Ask what his plan is for a bad week.

Common Challenges

"I don't have a drug problem. Why am I here?" "Good. Then pick the change you are working on: your temper, your spending, the people you used to run with. The stages are the same. And someone on your map may need you to know this."

"Meetings aren't for me." "That's your call. There's more than one kind of meeting and more than one kind of support. Try a couple before you decide. What matters is that you have something, and someone, before the pull comes."

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

"If I tell anybody I slipped, I'll lose my bed or get violated." Be honest about the limits. Say what the house policy is (fill it in below), that you cannot keep a house-agreement violation secret, and that lying about a slip usually makes everything that follows worse. Legal and supervision questions go to POD Society legal services. Never promise an outcome you don't control.

Preparing for This Class

- Fill in the recovery resources before class, on the board and in the Try it pages of Chapter 9: meetings near the house (times and places), the recovery support contact, where residents can get naloxone (Narcan), and the crisis line.
- Know the house policy on a slip in recovery: _____
- Ask one peer helper to share a trigger he ran into in his first months home and what he did, in Part 2 of the Teach section. He chooses how much to say.
- Ask a second peer helper to play the old friend in the practice role-play, and walk through the scene with him.
- Print support network map sheets (or use blank paper) and the Try it pages of Chapter 9.
- Write the five stages on the board before residents arrive.

Class 9 Overview

Purpose: Give every resident the Stages of Change and the support network map, and use them on the triggers of the first months home: what to expect, what to do when the pull comes, what to do after a slip, and who to call.

Reentry Plan area: Health and recovery.

Builds on FORGE: Week 16 (Session 46: the Stages of Change), Week 33 (Session 97: the support network map), and the relapse-prevention questions mentors learn in Week 22 (Session 66).

Materials:

- Talking piece
- Board or easel paper with the five stages written on it
- Support network map sheets or blank paper, 1 per resident
- The house's recovery resources list, filled in
- Each man's FORGE Your Success book (Chapter 9, with its Try it pages)
- Residents' Reentry Plan folders

Learning Objectives

By the end of this class, residents will be able to:

1. Name the five Stages of Change and say which stage they are in with one change they are working on
2. Name two triggers they expect in their first months home

 Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

3. Explain why a slip is information, not the end, and what to do in the first hours after one
4. Draw a support network map and name its gap
5. Write one recovery action into their Reentry Plan for the coming week

Class 9 Checklist

- ☐ Elevator speech said together, out loud
- ☐ Five stages on the board before class
- ☐ Recovery resources filled in (meetings, recovery support, naloxone, crisis line)
- ☐ New residents welcomed by name and paired with an anchor
- ☐ Class agreements and limits of confidentiality read aloud (if anyone is new)
- ☐ Opening circle completed: one win, one challenge
- ☐ Reentry Plan check completed in pairs, on the Health and recovery area
- ☐ Stages of Change taught with examples from life after release
- ☐ Peer helper shared a trigger from his first months home
- ☐ Tolerance and naloxone point stated plainly
- ☐ Support network map taught
- ☐ Invite role-play run with freeze and replay
- ☐ Each resident drew a support network map and named the gap
- ☐ Each man wrote one action into his Reentry Plan and said it to the group
- ☐ Men pointed to Chapter 9 in their books
- ☐ Attendance and commitments recorded for mentors

Class Plan

Opening Circle (10 minutes)

Elevator speech (2 minutes). Before the check-in, the group says the FORGE Your Success elevator speech together, out loud. New men read it from the inside cover of the book. From a man's second time through the cycle, ask one or two men to say it alone, without looking.

Set up: Chairs in a circle. Talking piece in the center.

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Welcome. If you're new, welcome home, and welcome to FORGE Your Success. Your anchor is next to you.*
>
> *Check-in round.* ***One win since last class, and one challenge.*** *And if you want to add one more thing: something since you came home that pulled at you, that you didn't expect. You can pass on that part."*

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

If anyone is new: read the class agreements and the limits of confidentiality before the round.

Facilitator note: If a man says in the circle that he used or slipped, thank him for the honesty, keep the circle moving, and talk with him one-on-one after class. Don't open it up in front of the group.

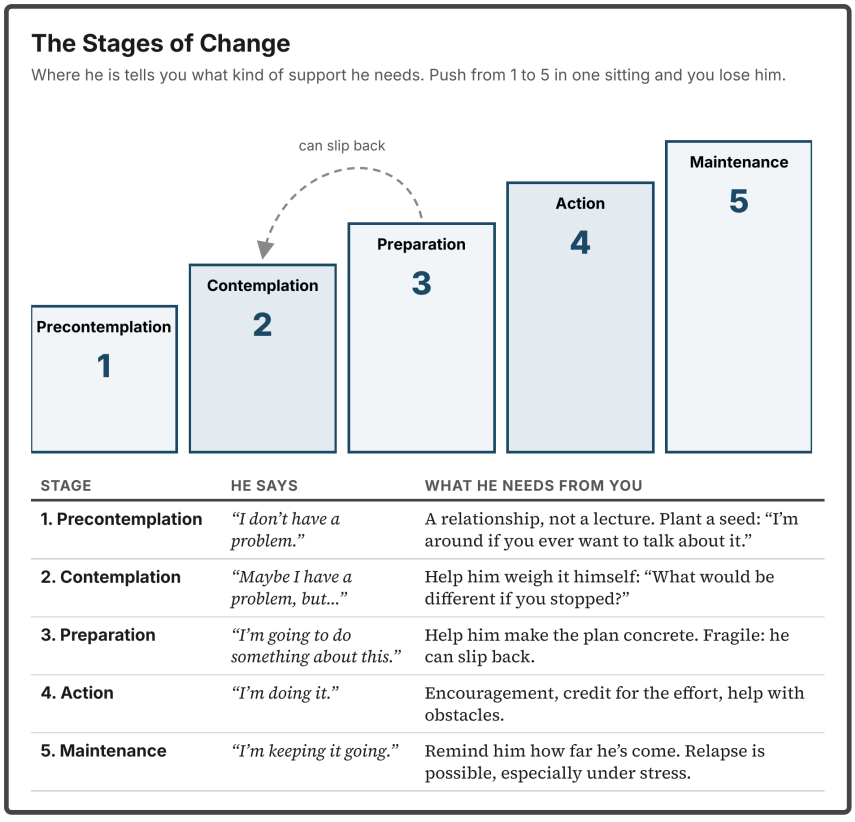
Reentry Plan Check (10 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Pair up. Newer residents with a peer helper if you can. Everyone open to **Health and recovery**: medication, mental health care, recovery support, a doctor or clinic. Say one step you've done and one step that's next. If that area is empty, that's what this class is for. Peer helpers, ask one question that helps him get specific."*

Facilitator circulates. Note any resident with medication or mental health care not yet set up, for his mentor.

Teach: Change Happens in Stages (20 minutes)

Part 1: The Stages of Change (8 min)



STAGE	HE SAYS	WHAT HE NEEDS FROM YOU
1. Precontemplation	*"I don't have a problem."*	A relationship, not a lecture. Plant a seed: "I'm around if you ever want to talk about it."
2. Contemplation	*"Maybe I have a problem, but..."*	Help him weigh it himself: "What would be different if you stopped?"
3. Preparation	*"I'm going to do something about this."*	Help him make the plan concrete. Fragile: he can slip back.
4. Action	*"I'm doing it."*	Encouragement, credit for the effort, help with obstacles.
5. Maintenance	*"I'm keeping it going."*	Remind him how far he's come. Relapse is possible, especially under stress.

The Stages of Change, from FORGE Week 16.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Facilitator:

"Nobody goes from 'I'm fine' to a whole new life in one day. Change happens in stages. FORGE mentors learn these to know what kind of help a man needs. You can use them on yourself. Look at the board.

1. Precontemplation: 'I don't have a problem.' *'Everybody drinks on payday.' From where he sits, nothing needs to change.*

2. Contemplation: 'Maybe I have a problem, but...' *'I know that crowd is bad news, but they're the only ones who picked me up when I got out.' Weighing it. Going back and forth.*

3. Preparation: 'I'm going to do something about this.' *'I'm going to a meeting after my first check.' A decision and a plan. This stage is fragile. Men slip back to 'maybe' easily.*

4. Action: 'I'm doing it.' *Six weeks without using. Going to meetings. Changing the route home so it doesn't pass the old spot. Bored, irritable, and doing it anyway. This is where the work is, and where it's hardest.*

5. Maintenance: 'I'm keeping it going.' *Months in. New habits. But relapse is always possible, especially under stress: bad news from home, a lost job, a lonely holiday.*

Two things. You can be in different stages on different things: Action on drinking, Contemplation on the old crowd. And men don't move in a straight line. They go forward and back and forward again. Which stage are you in, with the thing that matters most to you right now? Don't say it out loud. Just know it."

Part 2: Triggers, and a Slip Is Information (7 min)

Facilitator:

"A trigger is anything that pulls you back toward the old way. Out here, they come from places you might not expect: payday, a celebration, the old block, a fight at home, a night alone, a 'no' on a job, even good news. Knowing yours ahead of time is half the plan.

FORGE mentors ask four questions before release. Ask yourself: ***What's my plan for staying clean? What are my triggers? Who's in my support network? What will I do in the first 48 hours if I feel the pull?****"*

Peer helper shares a trigger from his first months home: what pulled at him, what he did, and what he would do now. Three or four minutes.

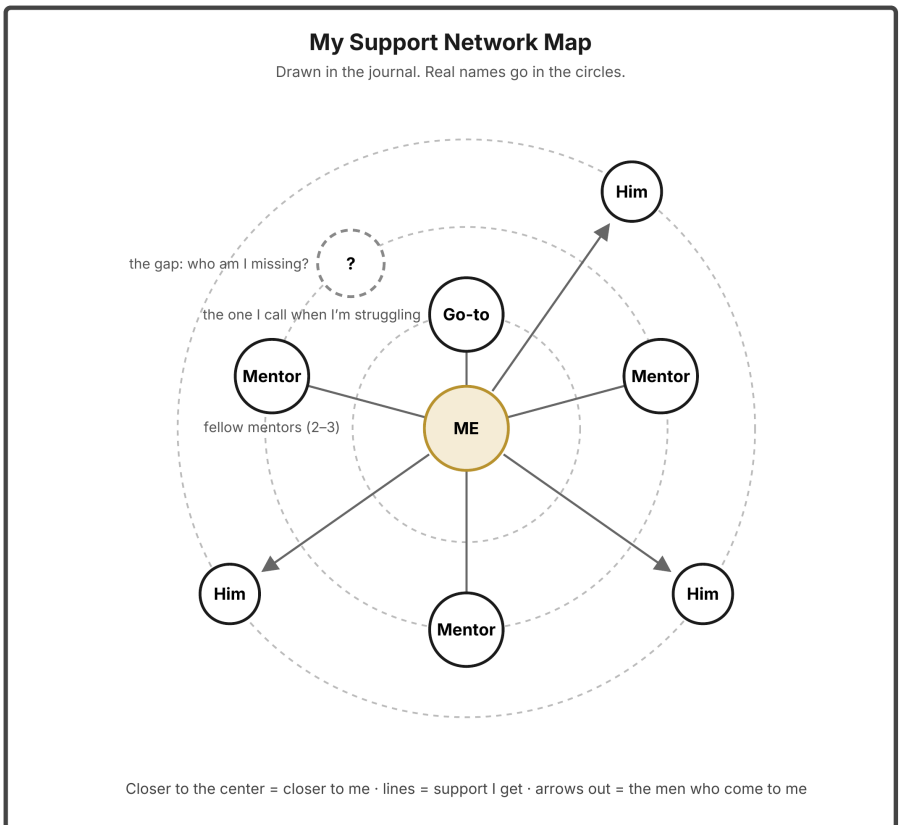
Facilitator:

"Now the hard part. If you slip, it is information, not the end. One setback does not erase the growth before it. The question after a slip is not 'Am I a failure?' It's 'What triggered it, what was I thinking, and what's my next right step?' The worst thing you can do after a slip is hide it, because hiding it is how one slip becomes the old life. Tell your mentor or your go-to person, the same day.

And one safety point, said plainly. ***While you were inside, your tolerance dropped. If you use the amount you used before, it can cause an overdose. Naloxone, also called Narcan, reverses an opioid overdose.*** *Know where to get it. Here it's: _____. In an emergency, call 911."*

Part 3: The Support Network Map (5 min)

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.



A support network map, from FORGE Week 33.

Facilitator:

"In FORGE, mentors draw a map of the people who hold them up, because nobody carries this alone. Put yourself in the center. ***Your go-to person*** *goes closest: the one you call when you're struggling. Around them,* ***2 or 3 people who support you****: people who get it, maybe from a meeting, maybe from this house. Then the people* ***who come to you****. Then the most important part:* ***the gap.*** *What kind of support are you missing? A sponsor? Someone sober to spend the weekend with? Someone who'll answer at 2 a.m.?*

If your map has you in the middle and nobody around you, that's the most important thing you'll learn in this class. Fix that this week."

Draw a simple map on the board: a circle in the center, one close, three around it, a dotted circle for the gap.

Practice: The Invite (30 minutes)

Purpose: Use the stages and the map under pressure, using the FORGE simulation format.

Part 1: Simulation (15 min)

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"We're going to run a scene. [Peer helper] is going to play an old friend. I need a volunteer to play a resident who is six weeks home and in the Action stage."*

Set the scene: It's payday. The resident just cashed his first full check and is walking out of the store. An old friend pulls up, glad to see him: "Look at you! Working! We have to celebrate. Get in. Just one, I'm buying. You earned it." (If drinking or using isn't the volunteer's issue, make the invite the dice game, the old block, or a quick way to make fast money.)

Run the scene for about two minutes. Then **freeze.**

> **Facilitator (to the volunteer):**
>
> *"Freeze. What's the thought in your head right now? What stage are you in? What's your plan? Who on your map could you call in the next five minutes?"*

Then the group: "What could he say? What should he not do?" Take two or three answers. Listen for "just ride with them" or "one won't hurt" and ask the group to walk it forward. Pick one or two coaching points only.

Replay the scene with the volunteer using a plan: a line ready to say, a way to leave, and a call to his go-to person. Run it once more with a second volunteer if time allows.

Debrief (3 min):

> *"What was the trigger? It wasn't only the friend. It was payday, and the feeling of having earned something. That's the moment to know ahead of time. And notice: saying no didn't mean cutting the friend off forever. It meant not getting in the car today."*

Facilitator note: If a man says "I could handle one," don't argue. Roll with it: "Maybe. Walk it forward. Then what happens the next payday? What happens at your next test or check-in?" Let the consequence do the teaching.

Part 2: Your Support Network Map (15 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Now your own. Draw your map. You in the center. Your go-to person closest, with their number. Two or three supporters around them. The people who come to you. Then circle the gap.*
>
> *Under the map, write three things from the resources on the board: one meeting or support you'll try, the recovery contact, and where to get naloxone. If writing isn't your thing, talk it through with your anchor."*

Facilitator and peer helpers circulate. Help anyone who's stuck:

- "Who did you call the last time things were bad?"
- "Is that person good for your recovery, or just good company?"

- "Who in this house could be on your map?"
- "What's one step that would fill the gap?"

Ask two volunteers what they noticed about their map (not who is on it). Thank them by name. Anyone whose map is empty gets a check-in after class and a pairing with a peer helper this week.

Commit and Close (15 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Open your Reentry Plan to **Health and recovery.** Write one action for this week that fills the gap on your map or gets you ready for a trigger. Make it specific.*
>
> *For example: 'Health and recovery: I go to the meeting at _____ this week and get one phone number.' Or: 'I ask _____ to be my go-to person.' Or: 'I pick up naloxone at _____.'"*

Give residents 5 minutes to write. Then a closing round:

> *"Closing round. Say your one action out loud. That's your commitment to this room, and next week you'll tell us how it went."*

After the round:

> *"This week, know your triggers before they show up, and make one call to someone on your map, on a good day, so the number works on a bad one. See you next class."*

Point the men to Chapter 9 in their books: the Try it pages for this week, and "After you leave the house" for later.

After class: record attendance and each man's commitment for his mentor. Follow up one-on-one with anyone who disclosed a slip, whose map was empty, or who seemed close to using, and make the referral the same day.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Class 10: When It Goes Wrong

Facilitator Notes for Class 10

Something will go wrong for almost every resident in this house. A job ends. A check-in gets missed. A visit home turns into a shouting match. A slip in recovery. A violation. What decides the next six months is usually not the setback. It is what the resident does in the next few hours: hide it, blame someone, disappear, or own it and tell the people who need to know. This class gives every resident FORGE's accountability spectrum and the line between guilt and shame, so he can own a setback fully without deciding he is worthless. It also teaches the whole group what to do when the setback is another resident's, using the case presentation format FORGE mentors use in supervision. Hold two things in mind. This class is about accountability without shame, so it has to be safe: no one is asked to tell a current setback in front of the group, and anything happening right now is handled one-on-one after class. And never let the class suggest hiding anything from an officer. Telling early is the point. Questions about what a violation means legally go to POD Society legal services, not to the circle.

What to Watch For

The "but." "I got let go, but the manager had it in for me." The word "but" takes back the ownership that came before it. Point it out gently and ask for the sentence without it.

Shame spirals. "I always mess it up." "I'm just going back anyway." That is shame, not accountability. Bring it back to the specific action: "You did one thing. Stay with that one thing. What's the next step?"

A resident in a setback right now. A man who is quiet, missed last class, or said something in the opening circle may be in the middle of one. Talk one-on-one after class. Don't make him the example.

Piling on. When the group hears a setback, some will lecture ("You should have known better"). Hold the line: help, not judgment.

Common Challenges

"If I tell my officer, they'll violate me." Don't argue and don't guess. "I can't tell you what your officer will do. I can tell you that being found out later usually goes worse than telling early, and that hiding something from your officer is never the answer in this program. If you need to know what your conditions require, call POD Society legal services today."

"It wasn't my fault." Sometimes part of it wasn't. Agree with what's true: "Maybe the schedule was unfair. What was your part? That's the only part you can change."

"I've already been punished enough." "Consequences are what happened to you. Accountability is what you do next. They're different things."

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Preparing for This Class

- Ask one peer helper, ahead of time, to share a past setback from his own reentry (one that is over and that he chooses to tell) and what he did next, in Part 3 of the Teach section. It will also be the case for Practice Part 2.
- Ask a second peer helper to play the mentor in the practice role-play, and walk through the scene with him.
- Have a written backup case ready (below) in case no peer helper's story fits.
- Write the five levels of the accountability spectrum on the board before residents arrive.
- Check that every man has his book.

Class 10 Overview

Purpose: Give every resident a way to handle a setback (own it, tell it early, take the next right step, ask for help) and teach the group how to respond when the setback is another resident's.

Reentry Plan area: All areas. A setback can come from any of them.

Builds on FORGE: Week 7 (Session 19: the accountability spectrum, guilt and shame, the accountability statement), Week 26 (Session 76: the case presentation format), and Week 31 (Session 91: one setback does not erase growth).

Materials:

- Talking piece
- Board or easel paper with the accountability spectrum written on it
- Each man's FORGE Your Success book (Chapter 10, with its Try it pages)
- Residents' Reentry Plan folders

Learning Objectives

By the end of this class, residents will be able to:

1. Name the five levels of the accountability spectrum and catch the "but" in their own words
2. Tell guilt ("I did something bad") from shame ("I am bad")
3. Say what to do in the first hours after a setback: own it, tell it early, take the next right step, ask for help
4. Tell a mentor about a setback in a role-play, with full ownership
5. Respond to another resident's setback with help instead of judgment, using the case presentation format

Class 10 Checklist

- ☐ Elevator speech said together, out loud
- ☐ Accountability spectrum on the board before class
- ☐ New residents welcomed by name and paired with an anchor

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

- ☐ Class agreements and limits of confidentiality read aloud (if anyone is new)
- ☐ Opening circle completed: one win, one challenge
- ☐ Reentry Plan check completed in pairs
- ☐ Accountability spectrum taught with examples from life after release
- ☐ Guilt and shame taught
- ☐ The four steps after a setback taught
- ☐ Peer helper shared a past setback and what he did next
- ☐ Telling-the-mentor role-play run with freeze and replay
- ☐ Case presentation run, with the group giving help, not judgment
- ☐ Each man wrote one action into his Reentry Plan and said it to the group
- ☐ Men pointed to Chapter 10 in their books
- ☐ Attendance and commitments recorded for mentors

Class Plan

Opening Circle (10 minutes)

Elevator speech (2 minutes). Before the check-in, the group says the FORGE Your Success elevator speech together, out loud. New men read it from the inside cover of the book. From a man's second time through the cycle, ask one or two men to say it alone, without looking.

Set up: Chairs in a circle. Talking piece in the center.

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Welcome. If you're new, welcome home. Your anchor is next to you.*
>
> *Check-in round.* ***One win since last class, and one challenge.*** *Today's class is about what to do when things go wrong, so if your challenge is a big one, you can name it in one sentence or just say 'a hard week.' Either is fine."*

If anyone is new: read the class agreements and the limits of confidentiality before the round.

Facilitator note: If a man names a setback, thank him by name for saying it and keep the round moving. Don't ask for details in the circle. Talk after class.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Reentry Plan Check (10 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Pair up. Newer residents with a peer helper if you can. Pick the area of your plan that is going worst right now. Say what's not working, and one step that would move it, even a small one. Peer helpers: no fixing, no lectures. Ask one question that helps him find the step."*

Facilitator circulates. Note any area that has gone wrong and that the resident's mentor should hear about.

Teach: Accountability Without Shame (20 minutes)

Part 1: The Accountability Spectrum (8 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"When something goes wrong, everyone lands somewhere on this line. FORGE calls it the accountability spectrum. Look at the board. Here's a lost job:*
>
> ***1. Denial:** 'I didn't do anything. They just fired me.'*
>
> ***2. Minimization:** 'I was just a little late. It wasn't a big deal.' Watch the word 'just.' It shrinks things.*
>
> ***3. Blame-shifting:** 'The manager had it in for me. If the bus had come on time...'*
>
> ***4. Partial ownership:** 'I messed up, but they never gave me a chance.' Everything after the 'but' takes back what came before it.*
>
> ***5. Full accountability:** 'I was late three times after they warned me. I lost the job. That's on me. Here's what I'm doing next.'*
>
> *Full accountability doesn't mean the manager was fair or the bus was on time. It means you own your part, all of it, with no 'but.' Here's why it matters out here: the only part of a setback you can fix is your part. If it's all somebody else's fault, there's nothing for you to do but wait for it to happen again."*

Part 2: Guilt, Not Shame (5 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Here's why men get stuck at 2, 3 and 4. **Guilt says, 'I did something bad.' Shame says, 'I am bad.'***
>
> *Guilt is about an action. Actions can be owned, repaired and changed. Shame is about who you are, and if you're bad, there's nothing to fix, so why try? Shame is what makes a man hide a missed check-in, stop answering his phone, stop coming to class. A man drowning in shame doesn't think 'I should do better.' He thinks 'what's the point.'*
>
> *Accountability without shame sounds like this: 'I did this. It caused this. I'm the kind of person who owns it and fixes it.' And remember: one setback does not erase growth. Six good weeks and one bad day is still six good weeks."*

Part 3: After a Setback (7 min)

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Four steps, in the first hours, not the first weeks:*
>
> - ***Own it.*** *Say it to yourself the way FORGE writes an accountability statement: 'I [what I did]. It caused [what it caused]. I take full responsibility. I'm committed to [what I'll do].'*
> - ***Tell it early.*** *Your mentor first, the same day. If it touches your supervision (a missed check-in, a change of job or address, contact with police, anything your conditions require you to report), your officer, as your conditions require. If you're not sure whether it has to be reported, ask the same day: your mentor, and POD Society legal services at _____. Not knowing is not a reason to stay quiet. And never hide anything from your officer. Being found out is worse than telling.*
> - ***Take the next right step.*** *Not the whole fix. One step: call the temp agency, reschedule the appointment, go to a meeting, apologize.*
> - ***Ask for help.*** *Your mentor, your go-to person, this group. You don't have to carry it alone."*

Peer helper shares a past setback from his own reentry, one that is over and that he chose to tell: what happened, where he landed on the spectrum at first, and what he did next. Three or four minutes.

Write the four steps on the board next to the spectrum.

Practice: Telling It Early (30 minutes)

Purpose: Practice owning a setback out loud, and practice responding to another resident's, using the FORGE simulation format and the FORGE case presentation format.

Part 1: Simulation (15 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"We're going to run a scene. [Peer helper] is going to play a resident's mentor. I need a volunteer to play the resident."*

Set the scene: The resident was let go from his job two days ago for being late three times after a warning. He hasn't told anyone. His mentor stops him in the hallway: "Hey, I thought you worked the early shift. What are you doing home?"

Run the scene for about two minutes. Then **freeze.**

> **Facilitator (to the volunteer):**
>
> *"Freeze. Where on the spectrum were you just now? What's the thought in your head? What's your plan?"*

Then the group: "What did you hear: denial, 'just', blame, a 'but'? What would full accountability sound like? Who else needs to know, and when?" Take two or three answers. Pick one or two coaching points only.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Replay the scene with the volunteer owning it with no "but," and naming one next step and who he still needs to tell. If time allows, run it again with a second volunteer and a different setback: a missed check-in with his officer.

Debrief (3 min):

> *"How did it feel to say it without the 'but'? Often it feels worse for ten seconds and better after. That's the weight coming off. Notice the mentor didn't have to drag it out of you. That's what telling early buys you: people who still trust you."*

Facilitator note: If a man says "I'd just wait and see if anyone finds out," don't argue. Ask: "Walk it forward. What happens when they do? What does your officer think of you then, compared to if you'd called first?"

Part 2: When It's Someone Else's Setback (15 min)

> **Facilitator:**
> *"Sooner or later a man in this house will have a setback and you'll be the one he tells. FORGE mentors use a case presentation format so the group gives help, not judgment. [Peer helper] is going to bring his story back as a case."*

Run one case, about 12 minutes, using the format:

1. **The situation** (2 minutes): what happened, just the facts.
2. **What I did** (1 minute): how he responded.
3. **What I was stuck on** (1 minute): the question he couldn't answer.
4. **Group response** (5 to 8 minutes): clarifying questions first, then suggestions. No judgment. No "I would have done it better." Just help.
5. **Takeaway** (30 seconds): the presenter says what he would do next with the group's help.

Backup case, if no peer helper's story fits: "A resident, three months home, went to a family cookout, got into an argument with a cousin about money, and left angry. He didn't come back to the house until after curfew and didn't answer his phone. The next morning he's embarrassed and thinking about just packing up and leaving. He's stuck on: how do I face the house?"

> **Facilitator (after the case):**
> *"When a man tells you about a setback, start with presence, not disappointment: 'I heard what happened. I'm here. What's going on?' Don't avoid him because it's awkward. Help him find the next step, not the whole fix. And remember what FORGE mentors learn: you are responsible for your effort, not for his outcome. If it's about safety, a new crime or the house agreement, that goes to staff. That's not betrayal. That's the job."*

 Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Commit and Close (15 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Open your Reentry Plan. Two choices. If something is going wrong right now, write the next right step for it, and who you'll tell. If nothing is, write your early-warning plan: the first person you'll tell when something goes wrong, and their number.*
>
> *For example: 'Supervision and legal: I call my officer about my job ending before my next check-in, and I tell my mentor first.' Or: 'Family: if it goes bad at the cookout, I call _____ before I do anything else.'"*

Give residents 5 minutes to write. Then a closing round:

> *"Closing round. Say your one action out loud. That's your commitment to this room, and next week you'll tell us how it went."*

After the round:

> *"This week, if something goes wrong, tell someone the same day. Own it with no 'but.' Take one next step. And if it's another man's setback, show up for him. See you next class."*

Point the men to Chapter 10 in their books: the Try it pages for this week, and "After you leave the house" for later.

After class: record attendance and each man's commitment for his mentor. Follow up one-on-one with anyone who named a setback, and make sure supervision or legal questions reach POD Society legal services the same day.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Class 11: Giving Back

Facilitator Notes for Class 11

FORGE is built on Service Over Self, and the line residents who did FORGE inside know by heart is the end of its elevator speech: "to turn time served into time that serves others." Out here, service can look like a luxury: there are bills, a job, a check-in, a family to rebuild. This class makes the case that giving back is part of staying out, not something to get to later. A man who is helping the next resident has a reason to be who he said he would be, and another man watching to see whether it's possible. The class gives every resident Service Over Self (what it is and what it isn't) and the four OARS skills FORGE mentors use to talk with a man who doesn't want to be talked to: Open questions, Affirmations, Reflections and Summaries. The practice is the conversation every peer helper in this house will have sooner or later: a new resident who wants to leave. Hold two things in mind. Service is not control: peer helpers are not staff, and the class should make that line clear. And this is the class where FORGE graduates and peer helpers should do the most teaching. Let them.

What to Watch For

The fixers. Some residents will want to tell the new resident what to do. That instinct comes from caring. Coach it: "Your caring is an asset. We're redirecting how it comes out."

"I've got nothing to give." Residents early in their stay, or in a hard week, may feel this. Push back gently: the newest man in the room can still hold a door, sit with someone, or show up on time for someone else.

Service as performance. Help that is done for credit, or to look good to staff, isn't service. Don't call it out in the group; ask about it one-on-one.

Peer helpers acting like staff. Listen for residents who want to enforce rules or report on each other "to help." Restate the line: peer helpers support; staff handle house rules and safety.

Common Challenges

"I need to take care of myself first." "You do. Service doesn't mean giving away your rent money or your sleep. It means using some of your time and influence for something bigger than your own comfort. And taking care of yourself is what keeps you able to serve."

"This feels fake." About OARS: "Everything feels fake the first time. The first time you used STOP it felt fake too. It gets real with practice."

"Why can't I just tell him the truth?" "You can, and sometimes you should. But when a man is digging in, telling him what to do usually makes him dig in harder. OARS helps him find his own reasons, and his reasons last longer than yours."

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Preparing for This Class

- Fill in the POD Society service opportunities before class: _____
- Ask one peer helper to share how helping someone else has helped him stay on track since he came home, in Part 1 of the Teach section.
- Ask a second peer helper to play the new resident who wants to leave in the practice role-play, and walk through the scene with him.
- Write OARS on the board before residents arrive, one letter per line.
- Check that every man has his book.

Class 11 Overview

Purpose: Show why giving back is part of staying out, give every resident the four OARS skills, and practice using them with a new resident who wants to leave the house.

Reentry Plan area: Service.

Builds on FORGE: Week 1 (Session 3: Service Over Self and the elevator speech), Week 13 (Session 37: the credible messenger), Week 16 (Session 47: OARS), and Week 35 (Session 103: legacy and the ripple effect).

Materials:

- Talking piece
- Board or easel paper with OARS written on it
- The POD Society service opportunities, filled in
- Each man's FORGE Your Success book (Chapter 11, with its Try it pages)
- Residents' Reentry Plan folders

Learning Objectives

By the end of this class, residents will be able to:

1. Explain Service Over Self in their own words, including what it is not
2. Explain what a credible messenger is and why their own experience counts
3. Use the four OARS skills in a conversation with a new resident
4. Name three specific acts of service they can do in the house or the community this week
5. Write one service action into their Reentry Plan for the coming week

Class 11 Checklist

☐ Elevator speech said together, out loud

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

- ☐ OARS on the board before class
- ☐ POD Society service opportunities filled in
- ☐ New residents welcomed by name and paired with an anchor
- ☐ Class agreements read aloud (if anyone is new)
- ☐ Opening circle completed: one win, one challenge
- ☐ Reentry Plan check completed in pairs, on the Service area
- ☐ Service Over Self taught, including what it is not
- ☐ Peer helper shared how helping others has helped him
- ☐ Credible messenger explained
- ☐ OARS taught with examples from the house
- ☐ New-resident role-play run with freeze and replay
- ☐ Acts of service list made; each resident chose three
- ☐ Each man wrote one action into his Reentry Plan and said it to the group
- ☐ Men pointed to Chapter 11 in their books
- ☐ Attendance and commitments recorded for mentors

Class Plan

Opening Circle (10 minutes)

Elevator speech (2 minutes). Before the check-in, the group says the FORGE Your Success elevator speech together, out loud. New men read it from the inside cover of the book. From a man's second time through the cycle, ask one or two men to say it alone, without looking.

Set up: Chairs in a circle. Talking piece in the center.

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Welcome. If you're new, welcome home. Your anchor is next to you, and that's the first thing we'll talk about today, because sitting next to you is an act of service.*
>
> *Check-in round.* ***One win since last class, and one challenge.*** *And if you want: one time since you came home that someone helped you without being asked."*

If anyone is new: read the class agreements and the limits of confidentiality before the round.

Facilitator note: Listen for the stories of being helped. Come back to one or two in the Teach section.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Reentry Plan Check (10 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Pair up. Newer residents with a peer helper if you can. Everyone open to **Service**: how am I giving back? For a lot of men this area is empty. That's fine; this class fills it. Say what's there, or say what you'd want to be there. Peer helpers, ask one question that helps him get specific."*

Facilitator circulates. Note who already serves somewhere (church, a meeting, family, the house) for his mentor.

Teach: Time That Serves Others (20 minutes)

Part 1: Service Over Self (6 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"FORGE participants inside learn an elevator speech in their first week. It ends: **'Our goal is simple: to turn time served into time that serves others.'***
>
> *Service Over Self is not submission: it doesn't mean letting people walk over you. It's not performing: helping only when someone's watching is image management. And it's not control: 'I know what's best for you' isn't service.*
>
> *Service is a daily decision to make things better for the people around you, even when it costs you something. It's the man who sits down with the new arrival and says, 'Let me show you how things work here.'*
>
> *Here's why it matters for staying out. When somebody is counting on you, you have a reason to be the person you said you'd be. And a newer man is watching you to see if it's possible."*

Peer helper shares how helping someone else has helped him stay on track since he came home. Two or three minutes.

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"FORGE calls this the **credible messenger.** A man who has walked the road can say things nobody else can: 'I know what you're going through. I've been there. I found a way through it.' Your past is not a disqualification. It's a credential, if you've done the work. And it spreads. You help one resident; he handles something better; he helps the next one. You'll never see most of it, and you won't get credit for it. It happens anyway."*

Part 2: OARS (10 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"When a man is about to make a bad decision, your instinct will be to tell him what to do. It almost never works. When someone pushes, people push back. FORGE mentors learn four skills that help a man find his own reasons. They spell OARS: you're rowing alongside him, not dragging him to shore.*

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

> ***O: Open questions.*** *A closed question gets one word: 'Are you okay?' 'Fine.' An open one gets him talking: 'What's going on with you today?' 'What would it take for this to work for you?'*
>
> ***A: Affirmations.*** *Not flattery. Not 'Good job.' Something specific, genuine, and about effort: 'You've made every shift for three weeks, even with the bus. That takes discipline.'*
>
> ***R: Reflections.*** *Say back what you heard, as a statement, not a question. Simple: 'You're tired of people being in your business.' Deeper, the meaning underneath: 'You got out to be free, and this doesn't feel free yet.'*
>
> ***S: Summaries.*** *Pull it together and check: 'So you want your own space, you're worn out by the rules, and part of you knows this is the steadiest place you've had. Did I get that right?'*
>
> *While you listen, listen for the part of him that wants to change, or wants to stay: 'I know I need this.' 'I don't want to go back.' That's what you reflect back and put in your summary."*

Part 3: Where You Can Serve (4 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Out here, you have more ways to serve than you think:*
>
> - ***In this house:*** *be an anchor for a new resident. On your second time through this class, be a peer helper.*
> - ***With POD Society:*** *_____.*
> - ***In your neighborhood, your family, your meeting, your place of worship:*** *show up for somebody.*
>
> *One line to keep clear: peer helpers are not staff. You don't enforce house rules, and you don't carry a man's secrets about safety. If a man is in danger, or says he'll hurt someone, that goes to staff. That's not snitching. That's the job."*

Practice: The Resident Who Wants to Leave (30 minutes)

Purpose: Use OARS in a real house situation, using the FORGE simulation format.

Part 1: Simulation (15 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"We're going to run a scene. [Peer helper] is going to play a new resident. I need a volunteer to play a resident who's been here a few months."*

Set the scene: The new resident has been in the house four days. He's on the porch with a bag packed: "This is prison with a nicer door. Curfew, chores, classes, everybody in my business. My cousin says I can stay with them. I'm out of here this weekend." The volunteer's job: use OARS. Don't give advice. Don't try to talk him into staying. Just explore.

Run the scene for about three minutes. Then **freeze.**

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

> **Facilitator (to the volunteer):**
>
> *"Freeze. Which OARS skill did you just use? Did you slip into advice? What did you hear that sounds like part of him wants to stay?"*

Then the group: "Which question was open? What affirmation was there to give? What reflection would land?" Take two or three answers. Pick one or two coaching points only.

Replay the scene with the volunteer using at least one open question, one affirmation, two reflections, and a summary that ends "Did I get that right?" Run it once more with a second volunteer if time allows.

Debrief (3 min):

> *"What was the hardest part? Most men say not giving advice. But notice what happened when you stopped trying to convince him: he started giving his own reasons. And notice what the volunteer didn't do: threaten, lecture, or promise anything. A good way to close: 'Would you be willing to talk to your mentor before you decide?' That's an offer, not an order."*

Facilitator note: If the group asks what happens to a resident's supervision if he leaves, don't answer it as fact. That's a question for staff and POD Society legal services, and it's the new resident's to ask.

Part 2: Acts of Service (15 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Groups of three or four. Make a list of **ten specific acts of service** you could do this week, in this house or in your community. Concrete, not 'be a good person.' Things like: help a new resident get to his first appointment, cook for the house, sit with someone having a bad day, show someone how to use the bus, help with a job application."*

Groups brainstorm (7 min). Facilitator and peer helpers circulate, pushing for specifics. **Share out (4 min):** each group gives its best three. Write them on the board.

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Now pick three you'll actually do before next class. Three rules, the same ones FORGE uses inside: it's for someone else's benefit, you don't ask for credit, and you write down what you did and how it went."*

Commit and Close (15 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Open your Reentry Plan to **Service.** Write one service action for this week, with a who and a when.*
>
> *For example: 'Service: I walk the new resident to the bus stop and show him the route before his first shift.' Or: 'I sign up for _____ with POD Society.'"*

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Give residents 5 minutes to write. Then a closing round:

> *"Closing round. Say your one action out loud. That's your commitment to this room, and next week you'll tell us how it went."*

After the round:

> *"This week, do your three acts of service and have one real conversation using OARS. Ask an open question, give one real affirmation, reflect what you hear. Turn time served into time that serves others. See you next class."*

Point the men to Chapter 11 in their books: the Try it pages for this week, and "After you leave the house" for later.

After class: record attendance and each man's commitment for his mentor. Note residents ready to be peer helpers or anchors. If the role-play stirred up anyone's own thoughts of leaving the house, check in one-on-one.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Class 12: Your Next Address

Facilitator Notes for Class 12

The Reentry Home is a place to land, not a place to stay. Every resident will move out, and the move is one of the riskiest points of reentry: new rent, new neighbors, no curfew, no house circle, no staff down the hall. A move that was planned months ahead, with savings and a backup, is a step up. A move that happens in a rush (a cousin's couch, an offer that sounded good, a fight that ended the plan) can undo what the house built. FORGE mentors learn in Week 22 that housing comes first, that planning has to start early, that every plan needs a backup, and that family housing is not always safe or stable. In Week 33 they write a Personal Sustainability Plan, so the habits that keep them steady don't disappear when the setting changes. This class puts both to work on the resident's next address. Hold two things in mind. This class matters as much for the resident who moved in last week as for the one moving out next month: the plan starts now. And keep it practical. Don't give legal advice about tenant screening or tenant rights; those questions go to POD Society legal services.

What to Watch For

"My family said I can come home." That may be the right place. Ask the questions anyway: is it safe, is it stable, what happens if it falls through?

"Nobody will rent to me." That is a thought that feels like a fact. Some landlords will say no. Some won't. Plan for several no's, and for the yes.

Rushing out. A resident who wants to leave early, before the savings or the backup are in place, may be running from something in the house. Check in one-on-one.

Fear of leaving. Some residents are scared to go. Name it as normal, and point them to what goes with them: their routines, their mentor, their support network.

Common Challenges

"I can't save anything. Everything goes to bills." FORGE teaches "pay yourself first": save before you spend, not after. Start small, build the habit first, then the amount. Refer to the budget from Class 5.

"I'll figure it out when it's time." "When it's time is when the options are fewest. What would you need to have in place to leave with a choice instead of out of a rush?"

"What can a landlord legally ask me?" "That's a legal question, and this class doesn't answer legal questions. Ask POD Society legal services. What I can help with is how you answer, honestly and briefly."

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Preparing for This Class

- Fill in before class: the POD Society housing contact _____ and how residents stay connected after they leave (alumni circle, mentor check-ins): _____
- Ask one peer helper, or an alumni guest, to share how he planned his own move, what went wrong, and what his backup was, in Part 1 of the Teach section.
- Ask a second peer helper to play the landlord in the practice role-play, and walk through the scene with him.
- Write the three questions (first night, first month, backup) on the board before residents arrive.
- Print the Try it pages of Chapter 12, which has the move-out plan table.

Class 12 Overview

Purpose: Help every resident plan the move out of the Reentry Home (a place to go, a backup, a savings target, what landlords look at, and how to stay connected) and keep the routines and people that work.

Reentry Plan areas: Housing, Money.

Builds on FORGE: Week 22 (Session 64: pay yourself first; Session 65: housing, planning early, the backup plan, talking about a record), and Week 33 (Session 97: the Personal Sustainability Plan and the support network).

Materials:

- Talking piece
- Board or easel paper with the three housing questions written on it
- The POD Society housing contact and alumni information, filled in
- Each man's FORGE Your Success book (Chapter 12, with its Try it pages)
- Residents' Reentry Plan folders

Learning Objectives

By the end of this class, residents will be able to:

1. Answer the three housing questions: where after the house, for how long, and what's the backup
2. Say why an offer of family housing needs the same questions as any other
3. Name what their savings target has to cover, and their first step toward it
4. Answer a landlord's questions about their past honestly, briefly and looking forward, in a role-play
5. Name the routines and people they will keep after they move, and write one housing or money action into their Reentry Plan

 Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Class 12 Checklist

- ☐ Elevator speech said together, out loud
- ☐ Three housing questions on the board before class
- ☐ Housing contact and alumni information filled in
- ☐ New residents welcomed by name and paired with an anchor
- ☐ Class agreements read aloud (if anyone is new)
- ☐ Opening circle completed: one win, one challenge
- ☐ Reentry Plan check completed in pairs, on Housing and Money
- ☐ Planning early and the backup plan taught
- ☐ Peer helper or alumni guest shared his move-out story
- ☐ Savings target and what landlords look at taught
- ☐ Keeping what works taught (sustainability plan)
- ☐ Landlord role-play run with freeze and replay
- ☐ Each resident started a move-out plan
- ☐ Each man wrote one action into his Reentry Plan and said it to the group
- ☐ Men pointed to Chapter 12 in their books
- ☐ Attendance and commitments recorded for mentors

Class Plan

Opening Circle (10 minutes)

Elevator speech (2 minutes). Before the check-in, the group says the FORGE Your Success elevator speech together, out loud. New men read it from the inside cover of the book. From a man's second time through the cycle, ask one or two men to say it alone, without looking.

Set up: Chairs in a circle. Talking piece in the center.

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Welcome. If you're new, welcome home. Your anchor is next to you. You may have just unpacked, and today's class is about where you go after this house. That's on purpose. The best time to start that plan is now.*
>
> *Check-in round.* ***One win since last class, and one challenge.*** *And if you want: picture the place you want to live next. One word for it."*

If anyone is new: read the class agreements and the limits of confidentiality before the round.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Reentry Plan Check (10 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Pair up. Newer residents with a peer helper if you can. Open to **Housing** and **Money.** Housing asks: where do I live now, where will I live next, and what's my backup? Money asks: do I have a bank account, a budget and savings? Say one step you've done and one that's next. Peer helpers, ask one question that helps him get specific."*

Facilitator circulates. Note any resident with no savings started or no answer to "what's next" for his mentor.

Teach: Planning With a Backup (20 minutes)

Part 1: Plan Early, Plan a Backup (7 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Housing is the foundation. Without a stable place, the job, the check-ins and the family all get harder. FORGE mentors learn to start housing plans early, long before the day, and to ask three questions. Look at the board:*
>
> ***Where will I sleep the first night after I leave this house? Where will I be in a month? If that falls through, what's my backup?***
>
> *A plan with no backup is a hope. Things fall through: an apartment goes to someone else, a roommate backs out, a family member changes their mind.*
>
> *And one more thing FORGE teaches: **family housing is not always safe or stable.** Just because someone offers doesn't mean it's the right choice. A room at your cousin's is not a good plan if the old crew is on that porch every night. Some households aren't safe to go back to, for you or for them. Ask the same questions about a family offer that you'd ask about any place."*

Peer helper or alumni guest shares how he planned his move: what his plan was, what went wrong, and what his backup was. Three or four minutes.

Part 2: Money for the Move (7 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Your savings target is the money you need in hand on moving day. Write down what it has to cover: a deposit, the first month's rent, getting the lights and water turned on, a bed and the basics, the move itself, and a cushion for the first month in case something goes wrong. Put real numbers on it with your mentor. Then work backward: how much a week, starting when?*
>
> *FORGE teaches **pay yourself first.** Savings come out when the check comes in, before anything else. Small amounts count. The habit matters more than the amount at first.*
>
> *What do landlords look at? It varies, so ask each one. In general they want to know you can pay: proof of income like pay stubs, an ID, the deposit. Many ask for references and where you've lived before. Some run a background or credit check. Ask POD Society about references from the house: _____.*

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

> *If your record comes up, talk about it the way FORGE mentors learn to:* ***honestly, briefly, and looking forward.*** *What happened, in a sentence. What you've done since. What you can show them now. Questions about what a landlord is allowed to ask, or about your rights as a renter, go to POD Society legal services."*

Part 3: Keep What Works (6 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Before FORGE mentors are certified, they write a* ***Personal Sustainability Plan****: their warning signs, their daily and weekly practices, their go-to person, a backup person, and what they'll do when they notice a warning sign. The idea: the things that keep you steady don't keep themselves going when the setting changes.*
>
> *When you leave this house, the structure stays here: the curfew, the circle, the staff. What goes with you is what you've built. Your routines: the time you get up, the meeting you go to, the check-in you never miss. Your mentor. Your support network. This class, if you come back as an alumni guest. Moving out is not the end of the relationship. Plan how you'll stay connected before you go."*

Practice: The Landlord (30 minutes)

Purpose: Practice the conversation that gets a place, using the FORGE simulation format.

Part 1: Simulation (15 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"We're going to run a scene. [Peer helper] is going to play a landlord showing an apartment. I need a volunteer to play a resident who's ready to move: steady job, savings for the deposit."*

Set the scene: The apartment is small but clean, on a bus line. The landlord is friendly until they ask, "So where are you living now?" When the resident says a reentry home, the landlord says: "Oh. So you've been locked up. I'll be straight with you, I've had problems with people coming out of programs."

Run the scene for about two minutes. Then **freeze.**

> **Facilitator (to the volunteer):**
>
> *"Freeze. What's the thought in your head right now? Is it a fact? What do you want this landlord to know? What can you show them?"*

Then the group: "What would honest, brief and looking forward sound like? What should he not say?" Take two or three answers. Pick one or two coaching points only.

Replay the scene with the volunteer answering in three parts (what happened, what he's done since, what he can show), then asking the landlord, "What would you need to see to feel comfortable?" Run it once more with a second volunteer if time allows.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

Debrief (3 min):

> *"The landlord may still say no. That's why you have a backup. No today isn't no forever, and one landlord isn't every landlord. Notice what helped most: something to show. Pay stubs, savings, a reference. That's what the next few months in this house are for."*

Facilitator note: If a man says "I'd just lie about where I live," don't argue. Ask: "Walk it forward. What happens when they call your reference, or find out later? What does that do to the trust you need for a lease?"

Part 2: Your Move-Out Plan (15 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Take the Try it pages of Chapter 12 and start your move-out plan. Fill in what you can: Plan A and Plan B, your savings target, what you have now, how much a week, a target month to move. Then the two routines you'll keep and the people you'll stay connected to. Blank spaces are fine. They tell you and your mentor what to work on.*
>
> *If writing isn't your thing, talk it through with your anchor."*

Facilitator and peer helpers circulate. Help anyone who's stuck:

- "If Plan A fell through the day you moved, where would you sleep?"
- "Is that place safe for you, and are you safe for it?"
- "What's one thing you could save this week, even small?"
- "Which routine here has kept you steadiest?"

Ask two volunteers to share one line of their plan if there's time. Thank them by name.

Commit and Close (15 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Open your Reentry Plan to **Housing** or **Money.** Write one action for this week that moves your next address closer.*
>
> *For example: 'Money: I set up a transfer to savings on payday, before I spend anything.' Or: 'Housing: I ask _____ about a reference and call two places on my list.'"*

Give residents 5 minutes to write. Then a closing round:

> *"Closing round. Say your one action out loud. That's your commitment to this room, and next week you'll tell us how it went."*

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.

After the round:

> *"This week, answer the three questions for yourself, and say your plan out loud to your mentor: Plan A, Plan B, and your savings target. Pay yourself first, even a little. See you next class."*

Point the men to Chapter 12 in their books: the Try it pages for this week, and "After you leave the house" for later.

After class: record attendance and each man's commitment for his mentor, along with any resident with no backup plan or no savings started. Follow up one-on-one with anyone who seemed to be rushing to leave or afraid to.

Copyright © 2026 Positive Outreach Development Society, Inc.