



PHASE 1 — FOUNDATION

Week 10 of 36

Mindset and Purpose

Sessions 28–30

Tuesday • Wednesday • Thursday

FORGE — Facilitating Opportunities for Reentry, Growth & Empowerment

Dooly State Prison

FORGE Curriculum

Phase 1: Foundation — "Know Yourself"

Week 10: Mindset and Purpose

Week 10 Overview

Purpose: This is the capstone week of new content in Phase 1. Everything before this — cognitive skills, emotional literacy, trauma awareness, communication, conflict resolution, accountability, empathy, problem-solving — was building toward this question: **Who are you becoming, and why does it matter?** Week 10 ties it all together. Growth mindset gives participants the mental framework to keep developing when things get hard. Purpose gives them the reason to keep going. The stakeholder identity gives them something bigger than themselves to live for. By Thursday, every participant should be able to articulate not just what they've learned but who they're choosing to be.

Sessions This Week: - Session 28 (Tuesday): Growth Mindset - Session 29 (Wednesday): Finding Purpose - Session 30 (Thursday): The Stakeholder Identity

Materials Needed: - Journals/notebooks (ongoing) - Pens/pencils - Talking piece for circle process - Easel paper or whiteboard (if available) - Lined paper for "Letter from My Future Self" exercise (Session 29) — participants can use journal pages - Stakeholder commitment template for Session 30 (can be hand-drawn — see Session 30)

SESSION 28: Growth Mindset

Day: Tuesday **Duration:** 2 hours **Facilitator(s):** Program Lead + Senior Mentor (if available)

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to: 1. Define fixed mindset and growth mindset and explain the difference with personal examples 2. Explain why "yet" is a powerful word in changing self-perception 3. Reframe failure as information rather than identity 4. Identify at least 3 fixed-mindset beliefs they hold and rewrite them as growth-mindset statements 5. Describe how incarceration can function as a crucible for growth rather than a period of stagnation

Session Plan

Opening Circle (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Check-in round. How are you doing today? And did you use the 6-step problem-solving model for a real decision this past week? If you did, tell us what happened — briefly. If you didn't, tell us why."

Send the talking piece. Listen for whether the problem-solving framework is becoming a natural tool or still feels forced. Both are data.

Review and Reflection (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"We're in Week 10. Take a second and let that register. Ten weeks ago, most of you walked into this room not sure what you were getting into. Some of you were skeptical. Some of you were going through the motions. Some of you were hungry for change but didn't know where to start.

In 10 weeks, you've learned how your thinking drives your behavior. You've learned to identify and manage your emotions. You've learned about trauma and how it shows up. You've practiced active listening, assertive communication, and giving feedback. You've worked through conflict resolution and de-escalation. You've taken accountability — real accountability, not the performative kind. You've built empathy, learned to read a room, and evaluated your relationships honestly. You've learned a system for solving problems and making decisions under pressure.

That's not a small thing. That's a foundation.

But here's the question this week answers: now what? What do you do with this foundation? And more importantly — who do you become with it? That's what this week is about."

Instruction: Fixed Mindset vs. Growth Mindset (25 minutes)

Facilitator:

"There's a psychologist named Carol Dweck who spent 30 years studying why some people keep growing and others plateau. What she found is simple but powerful. It comes down to what you believe about your own ability to change.

She identified two mindsets."

Fixed Mindset:

"A fixed mindset says: my abilities, my intelligence, my character — these are set. I am who I am. I'm either smart or I'm not. I'm either talented or I'm not. I either have it or I don't.

In a fixed mindset:

- **Challenges are threats.** If I try something hard and fail, it proves I'm not good enough. So I avoid challenges.
- **Effort is pointless.** If I have to try hard, it means I don't have natural ability. Real talent shouldn't require effort.
- **Feedback is an attack.** When someone criticizes my work, they're criticizing me as a person. So I get defensive.
- **Other people's success is a threat.** If you succeed, it makes me feel like a failure. So I tear you down or withdraw.
- **Failure is permanent.** If I failed, I'm a failure. That's my identity now.

Sound familiar? Most of us have lived with fixed-mindset beliefs our entire lives. 'I'm not a school person.' 'I'm not smart enough for that.' 'That's just how I am — I've always had a temper.' 'People like me don't change.'

These beliefs feel like facts. They're not. They're stories. And they keep you stuck."

Growth Mindset:

"A growth mindset says: my abilities can be developed. I'm not finished. I can get better at anything with effort, strategy, and help.

In a growth mindset:

- **Challenges are opportunities.** Hard things are how I grow. I lean into them.
- **Effort is the path.** Trying hard isn't a sign of weakness — it's how mastery happens. Nobody gets good at anything without effort.
- **Feedback is information.** When someone tells me what I can improve, they're giving me a tool. I don't have to like it, but I can use it.
- **Other people's success is inspiring.** If you can do it, maybe I can learn from you.
- **Failure is data.** If I failed, I learned something. I adjust and try again. Failure is an event, not an identity."

Pause.

Facilitator:

"Here's the most important word in a growth mindset: yet.

'I can't control my temper.' That's fixed. Add one word: 'I can't control my temper YET.' Now it's growth.

'I don't know how to be a good father.' Fixed. 'I don't know how to be a good father YET.' Growth.

'I can't read well.' Fixed. 'I can't read well YET.' Growth.

'I don't know how to handle conflict without aggression.' Fixed. 'I don't know how to handle conflict without aggression YET.' Growth.

That one word changes everything. It takes a closed door and cracks it open. It says: this is where I am, but it's not where I'm staying.

Every single man in this room has said something about himself that's fixed-mindset. 'I've always been this way.'

'That's just who I am.' I'm asking you to challenge those statements today. Not because they're lies — they might be accurate descriptions of who you've been. But they don't have to be descriptions of who you're becoming."

Discussion (5 min):

"Let me hear from you. What's a fixed-mindset belief you've carried — something you've told yourself about who you are or what you can't do? Be real."

Let 4-5 people share. After each one, the facilitator or group adds "yet."

"Did you hear that? Every single one of those statements changed when we added 'yet.' That's not a gimmick. That's a shift in how you see yourself. And it opens up possibilities that the fixed version closes off."

Instruction: Failure as Information (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Let's talk about failure. Because in a fixed mindset, failure is the worst thing that can happen. It proves you're not good enough. It confirms your worst beliefs about yourself. So you avoid anything that might lead to failure — which means you avoid growth.

In a growth mindset, failure is just information. It tells you what doesn't work. It tells you what to adjust. It tells you where you need to learn more. Every successful person you've ever heard of failed repeatedly before they succeeded. They didn't fail less — they learned more from each failure.

Michael Jordan was cut from his high school basketball team. He said, 'I've missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. I've been trusted to take the game-winning shot and missed 26 times. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.'

In this program, you're going to fail. You're going to lose your temper after you promised you wouldn't. You're going to fall back into old thinking patterns. You're going to have days where you feel like nothing has changed. That's not evidence that you can't do this. That's evidence that you're doing something hard.

The question isn't whether you'll fail. The question is: when you fail, what do you do next? Do you quit and say 'I knew I couldn't change'? Or do you get up, figure out what went wrong, and try again?

In FORGE, failure is not the end of the road. Failure is a data point. What matters is what you do with the data."

Personal connection:

"Let me ask you this: think about a time you failed at something in this program — a moment where you didn't live up to what you've been learning. Maybe you lost your temper. Maybe you didn't do the homework. Maybe you said something to someone that you wouldn't have said if you'd been using your tools.

Now — did you learn from it? Did it change what you did next time? If so, that failure was valuable. It wasn't a sign you can't change. It was part of changing."

Let 2-3 people share briefly.

Practice Exercise: Rewriting Fixed-Mindset Beliefs (20 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Get out your journals. I want you to identify 3 fixed-mindset beliefs you hold about yourself. Things you've accepted as permanent facts about who you are.

Write them down on the left side of the page. Be honest. These might be things you've never said out loud.

Then, on the right side, rewrite each one as a growth-mindset statement. Add 'yet.' Add 'I'm learning to.' Add 'I'm working on.' Whatever language makes it true for you."

Examples on the board (if available):

| Fixed Mindset | Growth Mindset |
|---|--|
| I'm not an educated person. | I haven't had the education I need yet — but I can learn. |
| I'll always have anger problems. | I'm learning to manage my anger. It's getting better. |
| I'm not the kind of guy who talks about feelings. | I'm not comfortable with it yet, but I'm building the skill. |
| Nobody will hire me with my record. | It will be harder, but people with records get hired every day. I need to prepare. |
| I'm a bad father. | I've made mistakes as a father. I'm learning to be better. |

Individual work (8 min). Facilitator circulates. If someone is stuck: - "What's something you've said 'I can't' about? Start there." - "What would someone who believed in you say about that statement?"

Pair share (5 min): "Share your three statements with a partner. Read the fixed version first, then the growth version. Let the other person hear the difference."

Full group debrief (5 min):

Facilitator:

"What shifted when you rewrote those statements? What felt different?"

Let 3-4 people respond.

"The fixed version keeps you where you are. The growth version gives you somewhere to go. Both versions might be honest descriptions of today. But only one of them has a future in it.

Here's your challenge: every time you catch yourself saying a fixed-mindset statement — 'I can't,' 'I'm not,' 'I'll never' — stop yourself. Add 'yet.' Retrain how you talk to yourself. Because the conversation you have with yourself every day is the most important conversation you'll ever have."

Instruction: Incarceration as a Crucible (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"I want to address something directly. You're doing personal development work inside a prison. Some people would say that's ironic. Or pointless. 'How are you going to grow in a place designed to hold you in place?'

Here's my answer: some of the most profound personal transformation in human history has happened in confinement. Nelson Mandela spent 27 years in prison and came out the leader of a nation — not in spite of prison, but partly because of what he built in himself during that time. Malcolm X discovered his entire intellectual identity in prison. Viktor Frankl — you'll hear about him tomorrow — developed his life's philosophy in a concentration camp.

I'm not comparing your situation to theirs. I'm making a point: confinement does not determine growth. YOU determine growth. This environment strips away distractions, excuses, and escape routes. You can't run from yourself in here. And that means — if you choose it — you can do deeper work on yourself than most people ever do in their entire free lives.

Out there, people fill their lives with noise — jobs, screens, substances, busyness — so they never have to sit with themselves. You don't have that luxury. Which means you have an advantage that most people will never have: the time and space to actually change.

Whether you use that advantage is up to you. But don't ever let someone tell you that growth isn't possible in here. The men who built this program are living proof that it is."

Closing Circle (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Closing round. Complete this sentence: 'Something I used to believe I couldn't do, that I'm now beginning to believe I can, is ____.'"

Send the talking piece. Facilitator goes last.

Facilitator (closing):

"Homework tonight: In your journal, write about one failure in your life that taught you something valuable. Not the failure itself — what it taught you. What did you learn that you couldn't have learned any other way?

Tomorrow we talk about something even deeper than mindset. We talk about purpose — the reason that keeps you going when growth gets painful. Viktor Frankl. The 'why' that makes every 'how' possible. See you Wednesday."

Session 28 Checklist

- Room set up in circle
- Opening circle completed with problem-solving homework check
- Week 10 framed as capstone week of new content
- Fixed mindset defined with examples
- Growth mindset defined with examples
- "Yet" as transformational word — demonstrated and practiced
- Failure as information (not identity) — taught with examples
- Rewriting fixed-mindset beliefs exercise completed (3 beliefs, individual + pairs)
- Incarceration as crucible — addressed directly
- Closing circle completed
- Homework assigned (journal about a failure that taught you something)

SESSION 29: Finding Purpose

Day: Wednesday **Duration:** 2 hours **Facilitator(s):** Program Lead + Senior Mentor (if available)

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to: 1. Define purpose and explain how it differs from goals 2. Explain how purpose functions as a protective factor against destructive behavior and recidivism 3. Describe Viktor Frankl's core insight about meaning and suffering 4. Write a detailed "letter from my future self" articulating who they are becoming and why it matters 5. Identify at least one source of purpose in their current life

Session Plan

Opening Circle (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Check-in. How are you today? And what failure did you write about last night — not the failure itself, but what it taught you?"

Send the talking piece. Listen for depth of reflection. By Week 10, participants should be moving past surface-level answers. If someone gives a deep, honest reflection on what failure taught them, acknowledge it: "That's growth mindset in action. You turned pain into learning."

Review and Reflection (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Yesterday we talked about mindset — the difference between believing you're fixed and believing you can grow. Growth mindset gives you the HOW. But it doesn't give you the WHY.

Think about it. You can believe you're capable of change. You can have all the tools. You can know the six steps, the regulation techniques, the communication skills. But on a Tuesday night when you're exhausted and frustrated and someone is pushing your buttons and the old way is calling — what keeps you on the new path?

It's not tools. It's not knowledge. It's not even discipline — discipline runs out.

What keeps you on the path is purpose. A reason that's bigger than the moment. A 'why' that outweighs the cost of doing the hard thing.

Today we're going to find that 'why.' Or at least start looking for it."

Instruction: Goals vs. Purpose (15 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Let me start by making a distinction that most people miss. Goals and purpose are not the same thing.

Goals are specific, measurable things you want to achieve. 'I want to get my GED.' 'I want to make parole.' 'I want to get a job when I get out.' 'I want to reconnect with my kids.' Goals are important. They give you direction and milestones.

But goals have a problem: you can achieve them and still feel empty. You get the GED — then what? You make parole — then what? You get the job — then what? If all you have is goals, you're always chasing the next one without ever feeling like you've arrived.

Purpose is different. Purpose isn't something you achieve — it's something you live. It's the ongoing reason behind everything you do. It's the answer to the question: **why does my life matter?**

Goals are destinations. Purpose is the direction.

Let me give you an example. Goal: 'I want to be a good father.' That's specific. You can measure it. But what's the purpose underneath it? Maybe it's: 'I exist to break the cycle — to give my children what I didn't get, so they don't end up where I am.' That's not a goal you check off. That's a reason you live by. Every day. In every decision.

Purpose is what gets you up on the mornings when your goals feel unreachable. Purpose is what keeps you on the path when nobody's watching and nobody would blame you for quitting."

Discussion (5 min):

"Has anyone ever achieved a goal and then felt lost afterward? Or felt like it wasn't enough? What was that like?"

Let 2-3 people share. This is a common experience and naming it validates the distinction between goals and purpose.

Instruction: Viktor Frankl and Meaning in Suffering (15 minutes)

Facilitator:

"I want to tell you about a man named Viktor Frankl. He was an Austrian psychiatrist — a doctor of the mind. In 1944, he was sent to Auschwitz — a Nazi concentration camp. His wife was killed. His parents were killed. His brother was killed. He lost everything.

He spent three years in the camps. Starving. Beaten. Watching people die every day. In conditions that make anything any of us have experienced look mild.

*After the war, he wrote a book called **Man's Search for Meaning**. In it, he described something he observed in the camps: the people who survived weren't always the strongest or the healthiest. They were the ones who had a reason to live. Some had work they needed to finish. Some had a person they needed to see again. Some had a God they refused to stop serving. The reason didn't matter as much as having one.*

*Frankl wrote: **'Those who have a WHY to live can bear almost any HOW.'***

Read that again in your mind. Those who have a why to live can bear almost any how.

He said that the last human freedom — the one freedom that no one can take from you, not even in a concentration camp — is the freedom to choose your attitude. The freedom to choose what your suffering means.

Frankl didn't say suffering is good. He said suffering is inevitable — and when it comes, you have a choice: let it destroy you or let it reveal what matters most to you."

Pause. Let it sit.

Facilitator:

"I'm not comparing this facility to a concentration camp. But the principle applies. You're in a place you didn't choose. You face conditions you can't fully control. You've lost things — time, relationships, opportunities, freedom. That loss is real.

But you still have the freedom Frankl talked about. The freedom to choose what this time means. You can choose to let incarceration be the thing that defined you. Or you can choose to let it be the thing that refined you. The crucible that burned away what didn't serve you and revealed what does.

That choice — that's purpose. It's deciding that your suffering has a direction. That it points somewhere. That you're not just doing time — you're using time."

Discussion (5 min):

"Frankl said the last freedom is the freedom to choose your attitude. Do you believe that? Is it possible to choose your attitude in here, with everything you're dealing with? Be honest — if you think it's easier said than done, say that."

Let 3-4 people respond. Don't argue with skeptics. Acknowledge the difficulty and the reality:

"It IS easier said than done. Frankl would agree with you — he said it was the hardest thing a human being can do. But he also said it was possible. And the fact that you're sitting in this room, doing this work, suggests that part of you already believes it."

Instruction: Purpose as a Protective Factor (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Let me connect this to something concrete. Research shows that people who have a sense of purpose — a reason for living that goes beyond their own comfort — are significantly less likely to reoffend, less likely to use substances, less likely to engage in violence, and more likely to maintain healthy relationships after release.

Purpose protects you. Not like a shield that blocks everything — like an anchor that holds you in place when the current is pulling.

Think about it. When you know WHY you're staying on the path, the temptations don't disappear — but they lose their power. The old crew is still out there. The substances are still available. The shortcuts are still tempting. But when you have a purpose — 'I'm alive so I can raise my daughter differently than I was raised' or 'I'm here to prove that a man from where I'm from can become something' or 'I exist to help other men find what I found' — that purpose becomes the filter for every decision.

'Does this serve my purpose, or does it undermine it?' That's the question purpose gives you. And when you have that question, the decisions get clearer."

Practice Exercise: Letter from My Future Self (35 minutes)

Purpose: This is one of the most powerful exercises in Phase 1. Participants write a letter to their present self from the man they are becoming — 5 years in the future. This exercise forces them to articulate a vision for who they want to be, and it creates an emotional connection to that future identity.

Facilitator:

"We're going to do an exercise that participants in programs across the country call one of the most meaningful things they've ever done. It's called 'Letter from My Future Self.'

Here's what I want you to do. Close your eyes for a moment. Take a breath.

Now imagine yourself 5 years from now. Where are you? What does your life look like? Not what you hope happens to you — who have you become? What kind of man are you? What are your relationships like? What do you do with your days? What do you stand for? What has changed about you?

See that man clearly. Feel what it would be like to be him.

Now — that man is going to write a letter to you. The you sitting in this chair right now. He's going to tell you what he sees in you. He's going to tell you what to hold onto and what to let go of. He's going to tell you what matters and what doesn't. He's going to tell you why the work you're doing right now is worth it."

Write these prompts where everyone can see them (or read them aloud twice):

"Start the letter with: 'Dear [your name]...'

Your future self should address:

- 1. Where are you now, 5 years later? What does your life look like?*
- 2. What did you have to let go of to get here?*
- 3. What did you have to hold onto?*
- 4. What do you wish you could tell your present self about the hard days?*
- 5. What is your purpose — the reason you kept going?*
- 6. What are you most proud of about the man you've become?*

Write at least a full page. Take your time. Be honest. Be specific. Don't write what sounds good — write what's true."

Individual writing (20 min). This exercise requires extended quiet time. Facilitator does not circulate aggressively. Sit down. Write your own letter if you haven't before. The room should be quiet. If someone looks stuck: - Quietly: "Just start writing. Don't edit. Let the words come." - "What does that future man want to say to you right now?"

Voluntary sharing (10 min):

Facilitator:

"This letter is yours. You don't have to share it. But if anyone wants to read theirs to the group — or part of it — this is a safe space to do that."

Let anyone who wants to share read their letter. Do not force this. If 2-3 people share, that's powerful. If no one shares, that's fine too — the value is in the writing.

After each reading, the group responds with silence or a brief acknowledgment. No commentary, no critique, no "you should add..." Just witnessing.

Facilitator (after sharing):

"Put this letter in the front of your journal — right next to your personal commitment from Week 1 and your personal rules from Week 9. When the hard days come — and they will — read it. Let that man remind you why you're doing this."

Debrief (5 min):

"What was that like? What came up for you as you wrote?"

Let 3-4 people share their experience of the writing process (not the content, unless they choose to).

"For most people, this exercise does something unexpected. It makes the future feel real. It makes the man you're becoming feel possible — not distant and theoretical, but concrete. You just heard his voice. You just read his words. He exists inside you already. The work you're doing is giving him room to emerge."

Closing Circle (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Closing round. In one sentence, what is your purpose — the reason that keeps you going? If you don't know yet, say 'I'm still finding it.' That's honest and that's enough."

Send the talking piece. Facilitator goes last.

Facilitator (closing):

"Homework tonight: Re-read your letter from your future self. Then write a response — a letter back. The you sitting in this chair right now writes back to the man you're becoming. Tell him what you commit to. Tell him what you're afraid of. Tell him what you need from him."

Tomorrow is Session 30 — the last session of new content in Phase 1. We're going deep on the stakeholder identity. Everything in this program has been building toward this: not just who you're becoming, but what that means for everyone around you. Bring everything you've got. See you Thursday."

Session 29 Checklist

- Room set up in circle
- Opening circle completed with failure/learning homework check
- Goals vs. purpose distinction taught
- Viktor Frankl presented — meaning in suffering
- Discussion on choosing your attitude in confinement
- Purpose as protective factor explained
- "Letter from My Future Self" exercise completed (20+ min writing time)
- Voluntary sharing facilitated with care
- Letters placed in front of journals
- Closing circle completed (one-sentence purpose statement)
- Homework assigned (write a response letter to future self)

SESSION 30: The Stakeholder Identity

Day: Thursday **Duration:** 2 hours **Facilitator(s):** Program Lead + Senior Mentor (if available)

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to: 1. Explain the FORGE stakeholder model in their own words with depth and conviction 2. Articulate what changes when you accept that you are a stakeholder, not a bystander 3. Connect their personal transformation work (Weeks 1-9) to collective responsibility 4. Write a specific, actionable stakeholder commitment (5 actions) 5. Commit to living as a stakeholder for the remaining weeks of Phase 1 and beyond

Session Plan

Opening Circle (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Check-in. How are you today? And did you write the response letter to your future self? If you did, what was one thing you committed to in that letter?"

Send the talking piece. This is a deeply personal check-in — honor whatever people share.

Review and Reflection (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"This is Session 30. The last session of new content before we spend Weeks 11 and 12 integrating and assessing everything you've learned. We're going to circle back to where we started — the very first thing I told you in Session 1.

Anyone remember?"

Let someone recall. If no one does:

"I said: 'We are stakeholders in this system.' Some of you nodded. Some of you looked skeptical. I told you then that you wouldn't believe it because I told you to — you'd believe it because you'd live it.

Ten weeks later, here we are. You've done the work. You've looked at your thinking, your emotions, your trauma, your communication, your conflicts, your accountability, your relationships, your decision-making, your mindset, your purpose. All of that was about you — knowing yourself.

Today is about the shift from 'I' to 'we.' From personal transformation to collective responsibility. This is the session where everything comes together."

Instruction: Deep Dive on the Stakeholder Model (25 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Let me tell you what a stakeholder is, at its core.

*A stakeholder is someone who has a stake — an investment — in how things go. Not just for themselves. For the whole system. A stakeholder isn't a passenger, riding along and hoping things turn out okay. A stakeholder isn't a victim, blaming the system and waiting for someone else to fix it. A stakeholder is someone who says: '**What happens here is partly my responsibility. And I'm going to act like it.**'*

In a prison, the default identity is the opposite of a stakeholder. The default is: I'm here against my will. This place is designed to hold me. I have no power. I have no influence. Nothing I do matters. My only job is to survive, do my time, and get out.

That mindset is understandable. And it's a trap. Because when you believe you have no power, you give up the power you actually have. And you have more than you think."

What power do you actually have?

"You don't control the sentence. You don't control the policies. You don't control the COs. You don't control who you live with. Let's be clear about what you DON'T control.

But here's what you DO control:

- *How you respond to every situation you face*
- *How you treat the people around you*
- *What standards you hold yourself to*
- *Whether a conflict in your dorm gets resolved or escalates*
- *Whether a new arrival gets tested or gets helped*
- *Whether your dorm is a place people dread or a place people can breathe*
- *Whether the culture in your space is one of fear or one of respect*
- *Whether the man sleeping ten feet from you feels safe tonight*

That's not nothing. That's enormous. And when you multiply it — when 10 or 15 men in a dorm all decide to be stakeholders — you change the entire reality of that space. Not because you have authority. Because you have intention."

What changes when you accept the stakeholder identity?

Facilitator:

"Let me be specific about what shifts when you go from passenger to stakeholder.

Bystander mentality dies. *You stop watching things happen and saying 'that's not my problem.' If it's happening in your space, it IS your problem. Not because you're the police — because you're a stakeholder.*

Excuses lose their power. *'The system is broken' might be true. But a stakeholder doesn't use that as a reason to do nothing. A stakeholder says: 'The system is broken, AND I'm going to improve my corner of it.'*

Accountability becomes natural. *When you see yourself as a stakeholder, taking responsibility isn't a burden — it's an expression of who you are. You own your behavior because you understand that your behavior shapes the community.*

Service becomes purposeful. *Service Over Self isn't a nice idea anymore — it's a direct expression of your stakeholder identity. You serve because the community you're invested in needs your service.*

Your actions gain meaning. *Every small thing matters. The way you handle a disagreement. The way you talk to a new arrival. The way you respond to disrespect. None of it is trivial — because all of it shapes the culture you live in.*

You stop waiting to be saved. *Nobody is coming to fix this place. The administration isn't going to solve the culture problem. External programs come and go. The only people who can change the culture of a dorm are the people who live there. That's you. That's the stakeholder reality."*

Pause.

Facilitator:

"I know some of you are thinking: 'That's a lot to put on me. I'm trying to survive my own situation. You're telling me I'm responsible for the whole dorm?'

I hear that. And I'm not saying you're responsible for everything. I'm saying you're responsible for what you can influence. And your influence is bigger than you think — especially after the work you've done in this program.

You now have skills that most people in this facility don't have. You can manage your emotions. You can communicate without aggression. You can resolve conflicts. You can solve problems. You can see things from other people's perspectives. You have tools. And with tools comes responsibility — not to fix everything, but to use what you have.

That's what a stakeholder does."

Instruction: Connecting Personal Transformation to Collective Responsibility (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Let me connect the dots on everything you've learned.

Week 2: You learned how thinking drives behavior. *As a stakeholder, you don't just monitor your own thinking — you help others examine theirs. When a man in your dorm is operating on a thinking error, you have the skill to help him see it.*

Week 3: You learned emotional regulation. *As a stakeholder, your calm becomes contagious. When the dorm is heated, you're the one who brings the temperature down — not by ignoring the emotion, but by modeling how to handle it.*

Week 4: You learned about trauma. *As a stakeholder, you see the man who's reacting disproportionately and you understand that there's something underneath the behavior. Instead of matching his energy, you respond to the person, not the reaction.*

Week 5: You learned communication. *As a stakeholder, you model how to talk — assertively, respectfully, honestly. You change the standard of communication in your space.*

Week 6: You learned conflict resolution. *As a stakeholder, you step into conflicts that would otherwise escalate. Not as a hero — as a resource. Someone who has a process that works.*

Week 7: You learned accountability. *As a stakeholder, you hold yourself and others to a higher standard — with care, not with force.*

Week 8: You learned empathy and social awareness. *As a stakeholder, you see people others miss. The man who's struggling quietly. The new arrival who's terrified. The tension building between two groups before it breaks.*

Week 9: You learned problem-solving and decision-making. *As a stakeholder, you bring rational thinking to situations where everyone else is reacting emotionally.*

This week: You learned growth mindset and purpose. *As a stakeholder, you believe in the possibility of change — not just for yourself, but for every man in your dorm. And your purpose gives you the staying power to do this work when it's hard and thankless.*

Every single skill you've learned has a personal application AND a community application. That's the parallel process. You do the work on yourself. Then you live it in your community. That's the FORGE model."

Practice Exercise: My Stakeholder Commitment (25 minutes)

Facilitator:

"We started this program by asking what it means to be a stakeholder. Today, you're going to answer that question — not with a definition, but with a commitment. Specific, concrete actions.

In your journal, I want you to write your stakeholder commitment. Five specific actions you will take as a stakeholder in your dorm — starting now and continuing for the rest of the program and beyond.

These should be:

- **Specific** — not 'be a good person.' What will you actually DO?
- **Observable** — someone else could see you doing it
- **Consistent** — things you'll do regularly, not one-time acts
- **Connected to your skills** — use what you've learned in this program
- **Honest** — don't write what sounds impressive. Write what you'll actually commit to.

Let me give you some examples to spark your thinking — but your commitments should be yours, not mine:

- 'I will check in with at least one person in my dorm every day — someone who seems like they're having a hard time.'
- 'I will step into conflicts early — before they escalate — and use the conflict resolution model.'
- 'I will welcome every new arrival personally and orient them to the dorm.'
- 'I will model emotional regulation — when I'm angry, I'll use my tools instead of reacting, so others can see it's possible.'
- 'I will hold my FORGE brothers accountable when they're slipping — privately, with care, using the accountability steps.'
- 'I will refuse to participate in gossip, and I'll redirect conversations that tear other people down.'
- 'I will keep my area and the common areas clean without being asked — because the environment reflects the culture.'
- 'I will practice active listening with at least one person every day — not just hearing them, but really listening.'"

Individual writing (12 min). Facilitator writes his own commitment alongside the group.

Circle share (10 min):

Facilitator:

"This is important enough to share. We're going to go around the circle. Read your 5 commitments to the group. When you read them out loud to these men, they become real. These men become your witnesses. And they become the people who will hold you to what you just said."

Send the talking piece. Each person reads their 5 stakeholder commitments. No commentary between — just listening and witnessing.

Facilitator (after everyone has shared):

"You just heard [number] commitments from [number] men. If every one of those commitments is lived out — not perfectly, but consistently — think about what that changes. Think about what this dorm looks like. Think about what this facility looks like.

That's the stakeholder model. Not one man saving the world. A community of men, each doing their part, each holding the others accountable, each choosing to serve. That's FORGE."

Closing Circle (15 minutes)

Facilitator:

"We're going to close Week 10 the same way we opened Week 1 — with a go-around. But the question is different now.

In Session 1, I asked you: 'Name one thing you want to be different about yourself in 9 months.'

Today's question: 'What IS different about you now — 10 weeks in? And what's your purpose — the reason you're going to keep going?'

Take a moment. Think about it. Then we'll go around."

One minute of reflection.

Send the talking piece. Facilitator goes last.

Facilitator (after everyone has shared):

"Listen to what you just heard. Ten weeks ago, you walked in here uncertain, skeptical, maybe a little scared.

Today you just told this group who you're becoming and why it matters. That's not nothing. That's transformation in progress.

Here's your homework — and this one is different from anything I've assigned before. This one isn't a one-night assignment. This is for the next two weeks:

Start living your stakeholder commitment. Every day. Journal about it daily — even if it's just three sentences.

What did I do today as a stakeholder? What was hard? What impact did it have?

Weeks 11 and 12 are integration and assessment. We'll combine everything you've learned, practice it in complex scenarios, and get ready for the Phase 1 gate. The learning doesn't stop — but the foundation is built. What you've done in these 10 weeks is real. Now you prove it by living it.

Service Over Self. See you Tuesday."

Session 30 Checklist

- Room set up in circle
- Opening circle completed with response letter homework check
- Session framed as final new-content session — connection to Session 1
- Stakeholder model deep dive completed (what you control, what changes)
- Personal transformation connected to collective responsibility (Weeks 2-9 skills mapped to stakeholder actions)
- Stakeholder commitment exercise completed (5 specific actions written)
- Circle share — all commitments read aloud to group
- Closing circle completed (what's different + purpose statement)
- Homework assigned (live stakeholder commitment daily, journal for 2 weeks)

FACILITATOR NOTES FOR WEEK 10

What to Watch For

Emotional depth: Week 10 is the most emotionally charged week since Week 4 (trauma). The "Letter from My Future Self" exercise and the purpose discussion can break things open for participants who have been intellectualizing their growth. Be ready for tears, for silence, for someone who can't finish their letter. That's not failure — it's the program working.

Authenticity vs. performance: By Week 10, you know each participant well enough to distinguish between genuine reflection and performing what they think you want to hear. The stakeholder commitment exercise is especially susceptible to performance — people writing impressive-sounding commitments they have no intention of keeping. Push for specificity and realism: "Is that something you'll actually do every day? Or is that something that sounds good on paper?"

The arc from Week 1: Make the connection explicit. Reference specific moments from earlier weeks. "Remember when [participant] said in Week 1 that he wasn't sure he belonged here? Listen to what he just shared." This reinforces the reality of their growth and makes the program feel cohesive, not like a series of disconnected lessons.

Participants who haven't connected to purpose: Some men will struggle with the purpose material. They may not be able to articulate why their life matters. That's not unusual — many of them have never been asked the question. Don't push for a polished answer. "I'm still finding it" is a valid response and it's honest. Purpose often emerges gradually. The letter exercise plants seeds that may take weeks or months to bloom.

Common Week 10 Challenges

"Growth mindset is just positive thinking." Response: "No, it's not. Positive thinking says 'everything is fine.' Growth mindset says 'this is hard AND I can learn from it.' Growth mindset doesn't ignore reality — it believes you can work with reality. It's realistic optimism, not fantasy."

"Frankl was in a concentration camp — that's different." Response: "It is different. I'm not comparing your situation to his. But the principle is the same: when you can't control your circumstances, you can still control your response to them. That's not a comparison of suffering — it's a universal human truth."

"I don't have a purpose." Response: "Maybe you don't have the words for it yet. But you're here. You show up. You do the work. Something is driving that. Let's figure out what it is. Sometimes purpose doesn't announce itself

— it reveals itself through action. The fact that you care enough to be in this seat is evidence that something matters to you."

"The stakeholder model sounds nice, but the system doesn't care about us." Response: "You might be right that the system doesn't care about you the way it should. But the stakeholder model isn't about the system caring about you. It's about you deciding to have influence regardless of whether anyone gives you permission. The system may not change because you decide to be a stakeholder. But your dorm will. The men around you will. Your family will. And you will. That's enough to start."

Resistance to the closing exercise (what's different about you): Some participants may feel like they haven't changed enough, or may be uncomfortable claiming growth in front of the group. Normalize this: "Growth isn't always dramatic. Sometimes it's a man who used to blow up in 2 seconds now taking 10 seconds to breathe. That's growth. Name the small shifts — they add up."

Preparation for Week 11

- Review all Phase 1 content — be ready to design integrated scenarios that require multiple skills
- Prepare 3 multi-layered scenarios for Session 31 that combine cognitive restructuring, emotional regulation, active listening, conflict resolution, and problem-solving
- Prepare the self-assessment questionnaire for Session 32
- Review each participant's engagement throughout Phase 1 — who is ready for Phase 2 and who needs additional support
- Plan for the peer evaluation process in Session 33
- Begin gathering materials for the Phase 1 knowledge check (Week 12)
- Bring energy and intention — this is the week where you show participants that everything connects