

NMCD'S DIGITAL MAGAZINE

VOLUME 2 - EDITION 3

JULY 2026

Metamorphosis: Becoming The New You.





**You Have
Something
to Say!**

**So
Say it!**



*Ask your
Supervisor of Education
(SOE) how to submit
an essay or artwork
that might be featured
in NMCD's Parallels
digital magazine!*



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**EVERY
NEW DAY
IS ANOTHER
CHANCE
TO CHANGE
YOUR LIFE!**

**Do you have a talent for tech?
Are you good at teaching others?
Looking for volunteer work?**

**You might be a great
candidate to become a
Resident “Tablet Tech!”**

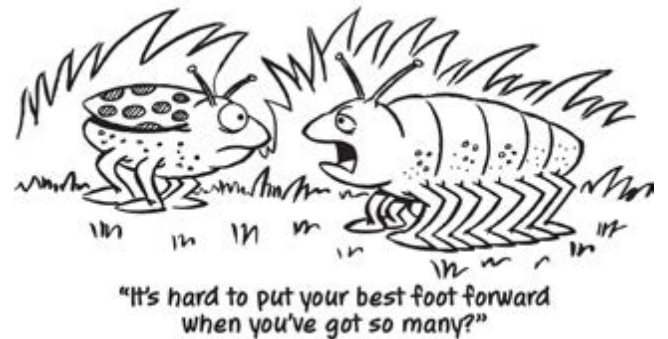


**Ask your facility's
Supervisor of Education
(SOE) if you may be eligible
to train to become a
Resident “Tablet Tech!”**

**Then get ready to
make a powerful impact
on your community!**



Putting Your Best Foot Forward



Interviewing for Jobs After Incarceration can be Intimidating but NOW is the Time to Lay the Groundwork for Success!

As an incarcerated person, there is undoubtedly a long list of things that you haven't done for a while. Driving a car, eating at a restaurant, and shopping in a store are just a few of the things that you haven't done since you came to prison.

While those are things that you likely miss about life outside, there are also other things that you haven't done for a while that you probably don't miss as much: paying taxes, budgeting, and interviewing for jobs are some examples of these "less fun" aspects of adulting on the outside. But even though these activities may not be fun, they're nonetheless necessary aspects of living a happy and successful life in society.

Going in to sit for a job interview is nerve-racking for everyone, but it's especially stressful for returning citizens. This is not only because it's probably been a long time since you've done it (and you likely feel a bit "rusty"), but there's also the possibility that you've actually never done it before at all.

For those who were never a part of the traditional workforce prior to their incarceration, there is a real possibility that they never had to sit for a job interview in their pre-incarceration life. This makes the prospect of interviewing for a job a completely foreign and mysterious (not to mention scary) concept. As with most things in life, the representations of job interviews in movies and on TV can't be relied upon as accurate. So, if you've never done it before, there's no way you could be expected to know how a job interview actually plays out.

"Always put your best foot forward, because you never know where your next step may lead you."

~Stephan Labossiere

"Hard Skills" Versus "Soft Skills"

Hard skills are teachable, measurable technical abilities acquired through education or training. Soft skills are interpersonal, behavioral traits that dictate how you work. Both are important for getting and keeping a job.

Which category do you think the skills below fall into?



Of course, another aspect of interviewing that makes most returning citizens nervous is the need to figure out how to address their criminal conviction and the time they've spent in prison. Some incarcerated people may mistakenly believe that their criminal history makes them unemployable or ensures that their job interviewing will go poorly. But that's simply not true. While interviewing for jobs is certainly made somewhat more complicated by having a felony record, there are many ways to prepare yourself for addressing your criminal history with your potential employers and emphasizing that it's just that: your history.

By the time you leave prison, you may have completed one or more CareerTechnical Programs. The NMCD Reentry Division makes many of them available, and they cover a wide variety of industries, so hopefully you will have found one that suits you perfectly. The training that you receive and the certificate that you earn will put you at a valuable advantage as you pursue a job in your post-incarceration life.

But it's important to realize that even completing a Career Program doesn't comprise the "complete package" that will be required for career success. The missing piece that you'll likely need to fill in before you embark on your career is something called "soft skills."



YOUR "HARD SKILLS" MIGHT GET YOU A JOB INTERVIEW, BUT YOUR "SOFT SKILLS" ARE WHAT WILL MAKE YOU STAND OUT AS AN APPEALING APPLICANT.

Soft skills are essentially "people skills," or skills that enable you to interact with employers and coworkers more effectively and make you a better employee. These skills include (but are not limited to) the ability to communicate positively and effectively; the ability to dress and speak appropriately in a professional environment; the ability to be on time; and the ability to understand and carry out directions correctly. Other "soft skills" might include characteristics like enthusiasm; helpfulness; politeness; creativity; resourcefulness; and honesty. So, whereas "hard skills" include WHAT you've learned and how

effectively you're able to do your job, "soft skills" are represented more by your personality traits, or HOW you're able to do your job and show respect to those around you.

We should never underestimate soft skills, because the reality is that they can often make or break someone's shot at a job (not to mention their ability to be successful at the job once they get it).

Imagine, for example, two job applicants are applying for the same job as an HVAC (Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning) technician. Both are formerly incarcerated. Both completed their GED and NMCD's HVAC Program while inside.

Applicant number one shows up about ten minutes late to the interview and is dressed in a stained t-shirt that reads "Is it Friday yet?" and greasy, ripped up jeans. He's on his phone, arguing with his girlfriend, when the receptionist leads him to the office where the interview will take place. He greets the interviewer with indifference and slouches back in the chair that's provided for him, then pulls a bag of sunflower seeds out of his pocket and starts munching on them (and spilling them on the floor). The interviewer asks him some technical questions about an HVAC system, and he answers them briefly, but correctly. He scoffs before answering, implying that the questions are too basic for his level of training. The interviewer asks the applicant if he has a criminal record. The applicant answers, "Yup." When the interviewer asks if the applicant would be willing to elaborate, he says, "Nope." Toward the end of the interview, the interviewer asks the applicant if he has any questions about the company. The applicant, assuming that he will be hired, says, "When do I start?" Upon leaving the parking lot, the applicant cranks up his stereo, throws an empty soda can out the window, and peels out, speeding down the street.

Now, imagine the second applicant. He shows up fifteen minutes early and is dressed very similarly to the other people in the office. (He had called and spoken to the receptionist a few days before and had asked about the nature of the company dress code.) He enthusiastically greets the receptionist and reminds her that they spoke a few days ago about the dress code. She remembers speaking to him and happily greets him. She leads him to the office where the interview will take place and he thanks her for her help. When the interviewer arrives, the applicant is sitting upright in his chair, eagerly awaiting the interviewer's arrival. When the interviewer comes into the room to greet him, he shakes the interviewer's hand and hands him a copy of his resume. The interviewer asks him some technical questions about an HVAC system, and the applicant stumbles a bit, but finally conveys the correct answer and apologizes for being a bit nervous, explaining that his interview skills are a bit rusty. The interviewer asks the applicant if he has a criminal record. The applicant answers, "Yes, I do, sir." When the interviewer asks if the applicant would be willing to elaborate, the applicant explains, "Well, I'd be happy to. As a young man, I started struggling with substance use, and some

Dress for Success!

When attending a job interview, the clothes you wear are an important part of the impression you'll make on your prospective employer. Here are some guidelines for making the best wardrobe choices.

- **Wear a professional shirt or blouse with pants or a skirt.**
- **A jacket and tie are optional, but men should wear a dark belt and shoes.**
- **Make sure the clothes you wear fit well (shirt sleeves, pant legs, and skirts that aren't too short or too long; clothes that aren't too tight or too loose).**
- **Avoid jeans, graphic t-shirts, sneakers, sandals, and flip-flops.**
- **Choose neutral colors (black, white, tan, gray, blue, etc.).**
- **Wear minimal jewelry. If possible, remove face piercings.**
- **Keep makeup natural, elegant, and refined.**
- **Make sure your hair is styled neatly; get a haircut if possible.**
- **Choose natural nail polish colors and keep nail length conservative.**
- **Wear professional but comfortable shoes (don't wear shoes that are too tight or high heels that you're not used to, for example).**
- **If possible, wear clothes that cover as many tattoos as possible (long sleeves, high neck line, etc.).**
- **Make sure that the clothes you wear are not in disrepair (ripped, torn, stained, etc.).**
- **Remember that you can find affordable professional attire at thrift stores and you can save money by purchasing just one outfit that you designate as your interview "uniform." You can also request assistance from your Probation / Parole Officer if you need help getting clothes for your job interviews.**



of the poor choices I made caused me to go to prison. During my time inside, however, I focused on my recovery and rehabilitation, and not only did I complete NMCD's HVAC Program, but I also finished a number of Behavioral Health Programs that have provided me with the tools I need to maintain my sobriety. So today, I 'm ready to move forward with my life in a positive way and I hope that your organization will be willing to give me a chance to prove my ability to make a positive contribution to your team." The applicant then adds, "I've brought letters of recommendation from the Pastor at my church, where I volunteer; my HVAC Program instructor; and my supervisor from the time I spent working for the State of New Mexico, driving a forklift in the Corrections Industries warehouse." Toward the end of the interview, the interviewer asks the applicant if he has any questions about the company. The applicant says, "Well, I did spend some time reviewing the company website, but I was still curious about the territory that this position would cover." He also asks the interviewer, "How soon do you think you'll be selecting a candidate for this position?" The applicant then kindly thanks the interviewer, as well as the receptionist, on his way out.

So, out of these two candidates, which one do you think will get the job? The answer lies in their soft skills.

Hard skills are teachable, measurable technical abilities (for example, HVAC certification, coding, accounting, or foreign languages) acquired through education or training. Soft skills are interpersonal, behavioral traits (like communication, teamwork, and adaptability) that dictate how you work.

While the hard skills that you include on your application may secure you an opportunity to interview for a job, your soft skills are what an interviewer will likely use to inform them about what type of person you are – and what type of employee you'll be.

You may have noticed that the first applicant answered the questions about the HVAC system correctly, while the second applicant stumbled a bit. However, despite this, the second candidate's soft skills made up for this slight shortcoming. A job candidate can have perfect technical knowledge and skills, but if they lack the soft skills that make them a likeable person, then they will have an uphill battle ahead of them.

Think of it this way: Most employers are willing to overlook a lack of skills or experience if they get the impression that the applicant is a teachable person who is pleasant to work with. If, however, an applicant has a perfect resume but comes off as a difficult person who isn't interested in learning from his coworkers, then an employer probably won't be that interested in trying to work around that problematic personality. Generally, it's easier to teach an employee skills than it is to try to teach them how to have a pleasant and cooperative personality.

It's also noteworthy to focus on how the two applicants in our example answered the questions about their criminal history. While the first candidate was vague and unwilling to discuss any specifics about his history, closing the door on the subject immediately, the second candidate "took the storm head on."

He provided an explanation, but not an excuse. He acknowledged his felony record but quickly moved on to how he used his time inside to improve himself. He expressed his hope that the company would be willing to give him an opportunity to demonstrate his rehabilitation and he made it clear that he's eager to make a positive contribution to the company.

While it surely stirs up anxiety for you to think about how you might answer these types of interview questions about your criminal history, it's imperative that you spend some time thinking about how you can do what the second candidate did so well: 1) provide an explanation (not an excuse); 2) highlight what you've done to improve yourself during your incarceration; and 3) express your eagerness to "put your money where your mouth is" and prove yourself worthy of a chance to shine. Keep it simple and emphasize the positive. Stay focused on what you have to offer the employer rather than telling your whole life story.

Approach this with humility but also remember that you can't expect anyone else to have confidence in you if you don't have confidence in yourself. So be sure to project self-esteem and communicate your belief that you can make a positive contribution to the employer's team.



NOW IS THE TIME TO START THINKING ABOUT WHAT QUALITIES WILL HELP YOU STAND OUT AS THE BEST APPLICANT FOR THE JOB YOU WANT.

Write On!

Do you love to write?

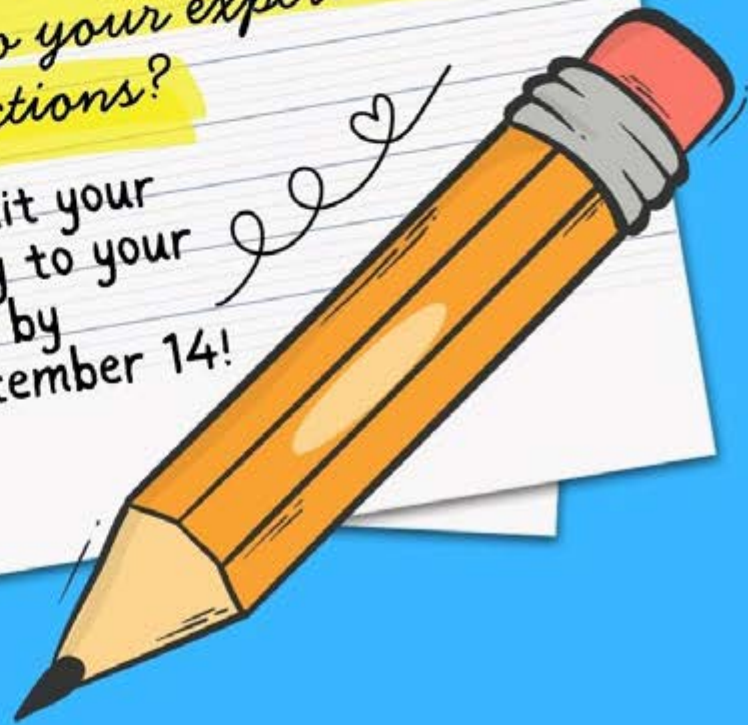
Would you like to see your writings published in Parallels magazine?

We provide a writing prompt in each issue to help you focus your essays.

This issue's prompt is:

What does the word "metamorphosis" mean to you in regard to your experience with corrections?

Submit your essay to your SOE by September 14!



Which of these people are dressed appropriately for a job interview?

It's also noteworthy that the first candidate made another big mistake: he assumed that he had the job before the interview was even over. By asking the interviewer, "When do I start?" he was suggesting that he'd already been offered the job – which he most definitely had not been.

The second candidate, on the other hand, asked "How soon do you think you'll be selecting a candidate for this position?" Asking this question establishes two things: 1) it acknowledges that the applicant realizes that he may or may not be chosen for the job and 2) it informs him regarding how long he should expect to wait for an answer regarding whether he'll be hired or not. If the interviewer were to tell the applicant that his team intended to make a decision by the end of the week, then the applicant would have a time-frame in mind and would hope to hear back from the company by the end of the week or maybe the following week. If the applicant had failed to ask this question, then he could potentially spend several weeks waiting to hear about the job when the decision had actually already been made. Asking this question will help you conduct a more efficient job search and guide you on when it might be appropriate to follow up on a job after your interview.

The fact that you have a felony conviction may not come up until you sit down for an interview with a potential employer. This is because New Mexico's "Ban the Box" law (Senate Bill 96), effective June 14, 2019, prohibits public and private employers with four or more employees from asking about an applicant's criminal history on initial job applications. This law mandates that employers must wait until after reviewing the application and discussing employment with the applicant (e.g., an interview) to inquire about convictions.

Remember that employers conduct background checks to verify qualifications. So, it's important to be upfront and honest regarding your criminal history during your interview, even if it might mean missing out on some opportunities.

Notice too that our second candidate from the example had done something very important: he had done his homework. He had not only called a few days prior to his interview to ask the receptionist what type of dress code is expected in this workplace, but he had also spent some time reviewing the company's website.



"TALK TO YOURSELF LIKE YOU WOULD TO SOMEONE YOU LOVE."
~BRENE BROWN

The key here is to express confidence, optimism, and hopefulness but avoid assuming that you'll get the job. Remember, it's not a done deal until the interviewer has officially offered you the job, so don't turn off the hiring agent by coming across as arrogant or overly confident.

So, yes, it's a lot to balance. Be confident, but not overly confident. Speak frankly about your criminal past, but don't dwell on it. It might seem impossible to get it right, but the more you practice these conversations, the easier it will be to strike the right balance.

Also notice how the second candidate in our example went an extra step and offered up letters of recommendation from people who are familiar with his personality and work ethic. These letters are sure to help make his case for why the interviewer should consider hiring him.

These actions not only demonstrate to the potential employer that the applicant is committed to doing research and being prepared, but these efforts also provide the applicant with an opportunity to determine if the company will be the right place for him. (Remember, an interview should be a two-way conversation wherein both the job applicant and the hiring representative of the company get to know one another and gain information that will help them both decide if they'll be a good fit.)

Being called in for an interview is an important milestone in your job search. It means that the employer was interested enough in your application that they want to learn more about you. It's both an opportunity for you to showcase your own assets and to learn more about the company that is considering hiring you.

Before you go in for a job interview, it's advisable to not only

Best versus Worst

Ways to Nail a Job Interview



👍 DO

Be honest about your past.

Talk about all the skills and experience that you can bring to the job you want.

Explain how you used your incarceration time to improve yourself.

Be confident about your ability to be a positive member of the company's team.

Be punctual and respectful of the interviewer's time.

Research the company and read (and re-read!) the job description prior to the interview.



Take plenty of time to prepare.



DON'T 👎

Lie about your past or mislead the interviewer.

Spend a lot of time asking about what the company can do for you.

Dwell on the mistakes of your past.

Assume that you have the job before the interview is over.

Be late, cancel the appointment at the last minute, or ask to reschedule the appointment at the last minute.

Arrive with no clue about what the company does, their values, or their mission.

Be nervous. You got this!



Amber is trying to choose an outfit for her job interview. Color her wardrobe and then choose some appropriate pieces for her.

Ask your SOE to print this coloring sheet for you.

research the company, but also to spend some time thinking about what your personal goals and plans are beyond (hopefully) getting this job. Many interviewers will ask questions like, “Where do you see yourself in five years?” This isn’t a trick question; it’s simply a way for a potential employer to try to understand what’s important to you and to ensure that you’re the type of person who thinks about and plans for the future. (Employers want to hire someone who isn’t simply letting the wind blow them from one day to the next without a plan; they want to hire someone who has ambitions for a better future and who has some form of a road map in mind for getting there.)

If an interviewer does ask you about where you see yourself in the future, be honest. The fact is that any honest answer will likely be better than meeting this question with a blank stare (which will reveal to the interviewer that you simply never think about your future).

Maybe you have a goal to advance your professional training or obtain more education; perhaps you have ambitions to save up for a down payment on a house; maybe you want to start volunteering for a local charitable organization; or maybe all of the above! No matter what your future ambitions include, be sure to share them with the interviewer if the opportunity arises. They will want to hear about what’s important to you and how you envision your future. Sharing these dreams with the interviewer will also help them understand that this job represents more to you than just a paycheck; it represents a ladder that will help you reach your highest goals and live your best life.

Those of you who read *Parallels* frequently know that we are strong advocates of journaling. Preparing for job interviews can actually be supported by journaling by helping you get your thoughts organized and practice the answers to potential interview questions.



IF A POTENTIAL EMPLOYER VOICES CONCERNS ABOUT YOUR TATTOOS, AND IF YOU PLAN ON HAVING THEM REMOVED, BE SURE TO LET THEM KNOW THAT THAT IS ONE OF YOUR GOALS FOR YOUR FUTURE.

You will find a few journaling prompts that can help you get into the “interview headspace” in the pages of this issue of *Parallels*.

As you consider how you might approach job interviews after your incarceration, here are a few more tips:

- Talk the Talk.** Avoid using prison slang during your interview (or when interacting with coworkers after you get the job). Focus instead on learning and using industry-standard language. Research the terminology that is used in your new field, then practice using it even when away from the job. Practice makes perfect, and learning a new language (whether Italian or “HVAC speak”) takes lots of practice. Learn the lingo and use it, and doing so will help you rise through the ranks of your career. Prison slang represents your past; the language of your new industry represents your future.

- Dress for Success.** Dress conservatively in such a way that covers your tattoos as much as possible. If your tattoos come up during the interview, ask whether the company’s dress code will require you to cover them during work hours and if so, let it be known that you will be happy to comply with that requirement. If you may be planning on having your tattoos (such as face tattoos or gang-related tattoos) removed eventually, then explain that to the interviewer.

- Focus on the Positive.** If the interviewer insists on asking a lot of questions about your incarceration, try to focus your answers on how you used your time inside to improve yourself rather than indulging their curiosities about prison life.

- Honesty is the Best Policy.** Never lie about your past; doing so will erode trust and practically ensure that you won’t get the job.

Potential employers will conduct a background check, so they will find out about your criminal history even if you try to hide it.

- Listen and Don't Judge. If the interviewer expresses concern about your criminal past, don't take offense. Take it as an opportunity to try to understand their hesitations. Let them know that you understand why they might have concerns, but reassure them that they won't regret giving you a chance to shine. Keep the focus on how your life experience can contribute to their company's success. Yes, you need the job, but emphasize the ways in which your skill set (both hard and soft skills) will benefit them.

- Fill the Gap. If an interviewer has questions or concerns about the long gap in your work history, don't focus on how long it's been since you had a job on the outside. Instead, highlight all the jobs, trainings, and other programming that you completed during your time inside.

So, while interviewing for jobs as a returning citizen may seem like a scary prospect, remember that there are many ways in which you can not only level the playing field, but also stand out as the best possible candidate for the job you want.

But also remember that the best time to do your future self a favor is now! Lay the groundwork for future employment success by enrolling in Education, Career Technical, and Behavioral Health programming. Apply for jobs inside your facility. Participate in inmate clubs. Volunteer for worthy causes in your prison community. Work on your resume. Brainstorm all of the ways in which your incarceration has made you a better person and will make you a better employee. (Be sure to check out some of the journaling prompts that appear in this issue of *Parallels* to get started.) Right now, you have an abundance of time, which will be a rare commodity once you're released. So, use that time to set the stage for your post-incarceration success!

PARALLELS

*"THE PAST IS A PLACE OF REFERENCE,
NOT A PLACE OF RESIDENCE;
THE PAST IS A PLACE OF LEARNING,
NOT A PLACE OF LIVING."
~ROY T. BENNETT*

PAST



FUTURE

NMCD's CAREER TECH PROGRAMMING

IS NOT
JUST
ABOUT



MAKING A LIVING, IT'S ABOUT MAKING A LIFE!



**Ask Education
how to get started!**

Flipping the Script

Your Incarceration Experience Can't Possibly Help You Get a Job, Right? Well, Think Again.



SINCE PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYERS DON'T NECESSARILY REALIZE HOW YOUR INCARCERATION EXPERIENCE MAY HAVE MADE YOU A STRONGER JOB CANDIDATE, YOU'LL HAVE TO HIGHLIGHT THESE QUALITIES DURING THE HIRING PROCESS.

As discussed throughout this issue of Parallels, it can be tricky to navigate the process of disclosing your criminal history to potential employers during a job interview. While it may seem that talking about your time in prison with an interviewer will be a guaranteed negative experience, it is possible – believe it or not – to make this conversation a very positive one that can actually help demonstrate some of your most marketable qualities.

Some of the very challenges that you've encountered; the lessons that you've learned; and the coping skills that you've developed during your time inside can actually serve as some of your greatest strengths when seeking a job and can even give you a competitive edge against someone who has never been incarcerated.

Don't believe us? Well, here is a list of a dozen ways in which your incarceration experience can translate into highly marketable "soft skills." (Refer to the article in this issue titled, "Putting your Best



Talking About Your Past During a Job Interview



Avoid telling "your side of the story." Even if you believe that you were wrongly convicted, this will make a negative impression.

Stay focused on the assets that you can offer the employer. Don't tell your whole life story.

Keep it simple and emphasize the positive.

Share details about your work history that highlight your strengths.

Focus on the present, your goals, and your plans for the future.

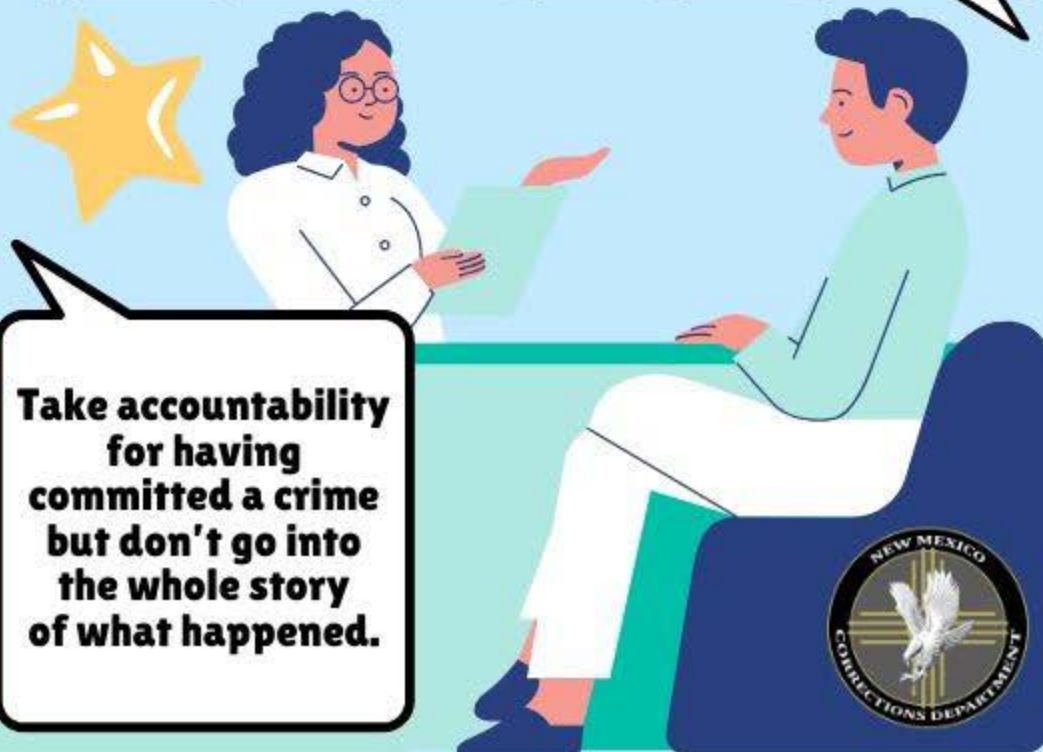
List the specific ways in which you've changed your thinking and behavior. (Programming, recovery, etc.)

Talk about the changes you've made to create your new, more positive lifestyle.

Consider the concerns or hesitations that an employer might have about hiring you; explain that you understand why they might have reservations; and reassure them that they can have confidence in you.

Highlight the "soft skills" that you've gained from your incarceration.

Take accountability for having committed a crime but don't go into the whole story of what happened.



Foot Forward” for a better understanding of what soft skills are.)

1 Lived Experience

For those of you who are involved with the Certified Peer Support Worker (CPSW) Training Program, you know that the very history that landed you in prison is also one of the most valuable assets that you can offer your peers – and even future employers.

Your lived experience may allow you to relate to others with substance use disorders, mental health challenges, criminal histories, and other hardships. With hope, your lived experiences have also influenced your world view to include insight, empathy, and compassion for everyone you encounter. These can be valuable qualities not only for those who want to pursue a career as a CPSW, but for anyone.

So, be sure to think about how your lived experiences have made you a better person and a better prospective employee, and don’t hesitate to discuss this with your potential employer should the opportunity arise.

(If you are interested in learning more about NMCD’s CPSW Training Program, be sure to talk with your facility’s Supervisor of Education.)

2 Patience

Anyone who has been incarcerated knows that, on the inside, “life moves at the speed of prison.” Nothing happens quickly and so one of the most valuable qualities an incarcerated person can have is patience.



DURING YOUR INCARCERATION, YOU HAVE INHABITED A UNIQUE WORLD THAT OTHERS HAVE NEVER EXPERIENCED. IT’S IMPORTANT TO TAKE AN INVENTORY OF THE MANY WAYS IN WHICH THIS MAKES YOU A BETTER PERSON AND A BETTER EMPLOYEE.

So, when speaking with potential employers, be sure to highlight the ways in which your lived experience can actually make you the best candidate for the job you want.

For example, if you will be working in customer service, the hardships of your past may make you a better listener. Having been incarcerated may make you more sensitive to customers’ frustrations regarding long waits or restrictive company policies. Your lived experience may also simply instill in you a humility that enables you to recognize every person’s (and customer’s) dignity and entitlement to fair treatment.

This may not seem that important, but patience is actually a trait that many people on the outside simply don’t have. By having successfully navigated your incarceration, you have demonstrated your ability to be patient and that is something that many employers will be pleased to see.

Believe it or not, having been incarcerated for any amount of time has likely served as a “digital detox” for you, meaning that, during your time on the inside, you have not been able to scroll social media platforms constantly (as many people do in today’s world). This may mean that you’ve had to develop a longer attention span, a more focused presence, and an ability to occupy your mind with



PRESENTING YOUR LIFE EXPERIENCE AS AN ASSET (VERSUS A LIABILITY) MAKES FOR A WINNING STRATEGY IN LIFE AND IN YOUR JOB SEARCH.

out non-stop entertainment and external distractions. It may be hard to believe, but these qualities may give you an advantage over an applicant who has difficulty putting their phone down for any length of time.

Embrace this significant difference between yourself and other applicants and explain to your potential employer that you have been forced to develop the now rare ability to focus on tasks without constant digital distractions. Employers certainly appreciate a digitally literate applicant, but they don't necessarily want someone who can't function without a smart phone in their hand at all times.

3 Resilience

Even though you may not be familiar with the word, resilience is a soft skill that you, as an incarcerated person, can most definitely boast about having developed.

Resilience is the ability to adapt well to adversity, trauma, tragedy, difficulties, or significant stress, allowing individuals to "bounce back" from difficult experiences and hopefully even grow stronger. It involves mental, emotional, and behavioral flexibility in response to internal and external demands, acting as a dynamic process rather than a fixed trait. Therefore, resilience is not something that you have, but rather something that you demonstrate. Sometimes being resilient might be described as being a survivor, and a person can't claim to be a survivor without having survived something significant.

Your having navigated and grown from your incarceration experience is evidence of your resilience. Resilience is important to

many employers because it allows you, as an employee, to endure and work through tough situations. After having weathered the difficulties of incarceration and emerging from the experience as a strong, determined, and hopeful person, persisting through the challenges involved in any job will likely be far easier in comparison.

Working outdoors in the rain? "This is nothing compared to what I've been through," you think to yourself. Being asked to work a double shift at the last minute? "Piece of cake!," you think, "I'm so glad to be out of my old lifestyle that I'm just happy to have this job."

You'll notice from these examples that an important component of resilience is gratitude. Once a person has been down and out and lived through some really hard times, they tend to realize how much there is to be grateful for in their new, post-incarceration life. Don't be shy about letting a prospective employer know about how grateful you are for the chance to live this new life and to prove your worthiness in this new job.

4 Routine

Most people who have successfully completed a prison sentence discovered somewhere along the way (hopefully sooner rather than later) that sticking to a routine is one of the best ways to stay on track and out of trouble. If you are one of the many incarcerated people who have found comfort, guidance, and motivation in routine, then letting a prospective employer know about that can be a good idea.

12 Ways Your Incarceration Can Make You a STRONGER Job Applicant!



Many employers will be glad to hear that you were able to maintain a schedule during your time inside. They know that that discipline will translate to the workplace and will prepare you for maintaining a healthy routine in your work life.

Don't hesitate to explain to an interviewer that, during your time in prison, you developed a structured routine for yourself and stuck with it, and describe the activities that made up that routine (for example, working out, working a job, studying, programming, participating in clubs, pursuing spiritual studies, reading, journaling, etc.). Doing so will assure a prospective employer that you have the ability and desire to not only manage your work tasks with consistency, but also establish a healthy work-life balance.

5 Resourcefulness

Resourcefulness is the ability to find quick, clever, and creative ways to overcome difficulties, solve problems, and achieve goals, particularly by utilizing available resources, tools, or information. It combines a proactive mindset with strategy, focusing on working with what you have to adapt to new or challenging situations.

Some of you may remember that TV show of years past called, "MacGyver." The main character could notoriously improvise a solution to all manner of complex challenges and emergencies using whatever bits & bobs and everyday items that he may find nearby. He was so widely recognized for being able to fix anything with creativity and a few random pieces of trash (paper clips, rubber bands, toothpicks, etc.), that many of us still refer to applying extreme resourcefulness to a problem as "MacGyvering" our way out of the situation.

Those who grew up in the country may also refer to resourceful solutions such as this as "farm fixes." (You know, holding your pickup truck together with baling wire, "jerry-rigging" a repair on a tractor, or patching a watering hose with a scrap of innertube and some zip ties; whatever it takes to keep operations running until you can make a trip to the hardware store.)

This certainly sounds like a quality that most employers would value, doesn't it?

When speaking with a job interviewer, don't be afraid to offer specific examples of how you developed and exercised resourcefulness during your incarceration. Have you developed creative recipes using the products that are available to you through commissary? This type of activity is a great example of how you're able to "make do with what you have" and accomplish goals despite having minimal resources.

It's actually quite likely that an interviewer may ask you to describe a time when you came up with a creative solution to a problem. Your time in prison has surely been filled with numerous examples of how you have had to utilize your resourcefulness in order to achieve a goal. Don't be afraid to highlight those experiences.

6 Compliance

Anyone who has been incarcerated must quickly learn how to comply with laws, rules, instructions, directions, and mandates. If there's anything that incarceration teaches you, it's how to be compliant.



THE SOFT SKILLS THAT YOU'VE DEVELOPED DURING YOUR INCARCERATION CAN MAKE YOU A UNIQUE AND IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTOR TO YOUR TEAM IN THE WORKPLACE.

New Mexico Corrections Department **CULINARY CLASS**

**TAUGHT BY “FOOD NETWORK”
CHAMPION CHEF FERNANDO RUIZ**

Ask Education For More Information.

CULINARY SCHOOL & SERVSAFE

CERTIFICATION

**12 MONTHS OR LESS TO
RELEASE.**

**MUST HAVE GOOD
CONDUCT.**

HAVE A JOB WAITING OUT THE DOOR!

New Mexico Corrections Department
School of Culinary



The definition of compliance is the act or process of adhering to official requirements, laws, regulations, or standards, often within a business or legal context. It means acting in accordance with established rules, including, in the working world, internal company policies or industry-specific regulations.

In the context of being a justice-involved person, compliance means not only following the rules of a prison facility, but also living within the restrictions placed upon you by the conditions of your parole after your release.

This can be important to employers because if you have been able to learn and adhere to the many laws, rules, mandates, and conditions that surround your experience with the criminal justice system, then you certainly won't have any difficulty learning and adhering to any job-specific rules.

Don't be shy about explaining to a job interviewer that your experience as a justice-involved person has given you an extensive education in how important it is to learn and comply with rules.

7 Adaptability

Adaptability is the ability or willingness to change, adjust, and thrive in response to new, changing, or uncertain circumstances. It is a vital soft skill involving cognitive, emotional, social, and behavioral adjustments to effectively manage unexpected challenges or shifting environments.

Basically, it's the ability to be flexible in the face of a rapidly changing landscape. Sounds like something that you've definitely had to master as an incarcerated person, doesn't it?

It's also something that employers love to see in job applicants. If an employer has to make last minute changes to a plan, schedule, project, method, or approach, they'd much rather have an employee that says, "No problem! Let's change direction and get this done!" rather than, "Um, I'm not comfortable with this. This wasn't the plan and I can't adjust to this new approach."

If there's anything that your incarceration has taught you, it's how to "go with the flow." There are so many rapidly changing circumstances in a prison setting that you absolutely must become comfortable with last minute changes. Security concerns, facility maintenance, staffing changes, volunteer availability, and so many other factors can potentially change up scheduled activities on very short notice. Your ability to accept that and adjust to the unexpected is actually a valued soft skill when it comes to holding a job.

Don't hesitate to make sure a potential employer knows that your time in prison has taught you how important it is to bend rather than break and explain that you'll be able to bring that dynamic attitude to your new job.

8 Punctuality

Punctuality, or the ability to be on time, is a key characteristic that virtually all employers seek out in job applicants.

Obviously, you can demonstrate this trait by being on time for your job interviews, but another important way for you to highlight your punctuality is to explain that you spent many months or years (depending on your sentence) adhering to the regimented schedule of a prison facility.



THE ABILITY TO BE PUNCTUAL IS JUST ONE OF THE MANY SOFT SKILLS THAT YOU'VE HONED DURING YOUR INCARCERATION.

Multiple times a day, you have reported for count at a very specific time, which has conditioned you to respect and comply with a very rigid schedule. You've had to get up at a certain time, go to bed at a certain time, show up for your meals at a certain time... the list goes on.

If a job interviewer brings up the importance of being on time, be sure to tell them that you have had months or years of practice being on time for count, meals, programming, and other important time points during your incarceration. This should help instill confidence that you will be able to report for shifts and / or job-related appointments in a timely manner.

incarceration that you were not mandated to complete, then you have shown exceptional self-direction.

Don't be shy about explaining to a potential employer that, even though you may not have been required to do so, you completed a GED, HiSET, college degree, career certification, and / or recovery program during your incarceration. Completing a legally mandated program (such as a GED, HiSET, or DWI program for some) is certainly something to highlight when speaking with an employer. But completing a program that you have chosen to pursue on your own demonstrates another level of motivation and should absolutely be showcased during a job interview.



*"EVERYTHING YOU WANT IN LIFE LIES JUST OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE."
~ROBERT ALLEN*

9 Self-Direction

Self-Direction is a quality that many employers like to see in their job applicants. It is basically the quality of having initiative.

Self-direction is the ability to make your own decisions, manage your own work, and set your own goals rather than being controlled by outside forces or agencies. It emphasizes autonomy, enabling individuals to control their own actions by setting personal schedules.

This is somewhat related to the ability to maintain a routine, which we discussed earlier, but it has more to do with making things happen for yourself rather than just letting things happen to you.

Think about this: if you have completed any Educational, Career, or Behavioral Health programs during your

Many employers want to know that you can do more than just check off the tasks on a list and follow directions. They want to know that you will go above and beyond what is required; that you can design your own plan, follow the steps on that path, and push yourself to the finish line – not because someone is making you do so, but because it's important to you. They want to know that you will be willing to help out coworkers with tasks that may not be "your job," but that will help the team succeed. They want to know that you have aspirations beyond the "bare minimum."

Now is the time to lay the groundwork for demonstrating to future employers that you possess that quality of self-direction and that you have the ability to design and manifest the future that you want for yourself. One of the best ways to do this is to speak to your Supervisor of Education (SOE) about enrolling in an Educational, Career, or Behavioral Health Program. He or she can

help you map out your own unique plan and work toward your goal.

10 Work Ethic

A person's work ethic is reflected by a set of moral principles, values, and attitudes that guide their approach to their job.

People with a strong work ethic recognize that hard work is inherently valuable, virtuous, and character-strengthening. Someone's work ethic determines how they approach tasks, and how they demonstrate reliability, discipline, and dedication to producing quality work. If someone has a strong work ethic, they are likely to do their very best job even if no one else will ever know about it. Work ethic, then, involves thinking of yourself as your own supervisor and striving to meet your own high standards when completing any task, no matter how big or small.

Have you had a job while in prison? Have you worked as a pod porter, warehouse worker, tutor, or in another paid role during your incarceration? Have you crafted products in your facility's wood shop, weaving studio, metal shop, print shop, chemical shop, or other manufacturing facility? Have you shown pride in the job that you've done or the products that you've produced and demonstrated care for detail, making sure that you only put out the best quality products and results? If so, then you have demonstrated your strong work ethic.

It can never hurt to have a letter of recommendation from your in-facility job supervisor, describing the evidence that they've seen of your strong work ethic. But even just explaining to a potential employer that you understand the meaning of a strong work ethic and that you sought out opportunities to exercise yours inside prison can make a powerful impact on an interviewer.

As with the other programming that we discussed, if you have sought out a job while on the inside – even though you haven't been required to do so – then you are showing that you are interested in doing much more than the “bare minimum” in life and in your new job.

11 Situational Awareness

Even if you've never known what to call it, you, as an incarcerated person, have most definitely developed a strong sense of situational awareness. And having done so can benefit you in any professional setting.

Situational awareness is the ability to perceive, understand, and predict the elements of one's environment to make informed, safe decisions. It involves knowing what is happening around you, comprehending the significance of those observations, and anticipating how the situation may evolve. This cognitive state is critical for safety and performance, and especially in any dynamic, high-pressure situation.

This cognitive ability to identify, process, and comprehend the critical elements of information about what is happening around you might be described as “having eyes in the back of your head” or “a sixth sense.”

In a prison setting, those “Spidey senses” help keep you safe and help you determine who is likely to be a good influence and who might be a bad one. In a professional setting, not only can situational awareness help keep your job site safe, but it can also help you excel at customer service, come off sharper in meetings, help you work as a more effective team member, and contribute to so many other important job functions.

Situational awareness has to do with being able to “read the room,” “size people up,” and assess whether you're in a potentially hostile, dangerous, or vulnerable situation. It “keeps you on your toes,” so to speak.

This can not only be a valuable soft skill, but it is one that your time in prison has actually helped you develop. Furthermore, this is a quality that many people in the general public simply don't possess. Many people who have never been in prison have never been required to develop this trait, putting them at a disadvantage for many jobs.

When talking with a potential employer, be sure to provide them with some examples of how your situational awareness could potentially contribute to your suitability as a candidate.



“OPPORTUNITY IS MISSED BY MOST PEOPLE
BECAUSE IT IS DRESSED IN OVERALLS AND LOOKS LIKE WORK.”
-THOMAS EDISON

12 Accountability

Employers are always eager to hire job applicants who are willing to take ownership of their actions, as doing so is a sign of reliability and trustworthiness. A person who demonstrates responsibility can be counted on to meet deadlines, admit mistakes, and take corrective action when required.

The time that you've spent in prison represents accepting accountability for the mistakes of your past. Speak of it in this way

when talking with potential employers. Explain that your sentence has provided you with the time and support required to reflect on the actions that resulted in your incarceration. Make sure that the interviewer knows that, in the same way you have embraced accountability for your crimes, you will be an employee who takes responsibility for any mistakes, errors, or miscalculations that you may make in the workplace.

A prospective employer will respond much more favorably to an attitude of humility and humbleness rather than one of blame-shifting or excuses. Most people, interviewers included, will tend to respect your ability to admit to your mistakes, accept the consequences associated with them, and move forward with your life, having learned from the experience.

Your having served time proves to a potential employer that you can not only “talk the talk” of accountability, but you can actually “walk the walk,” having lived the consequences of your actions over the course of the past several months or years of your life.

So, there you have it: a dozen ways in which your time in prison has potentially made you a more attractive job applicant in the outside world. As the title of this article suggests, the key is to “flip the script” when thinking about what you have to offer a prospective employer. Think long and hard about how you can present a seemingly negative part of your story as a very useful and positive one.

Your task is to use the bricks that life has hurled at you to build a platform that will lift you up. Education, Career, and Behavioral Health Programming will serve as the mortar for that platform. So, start building toward that future dream job!

PARALLELS



“THE ONLY PLACE SUCCESS COMES BEFORE WORK IS IN THE DICTIONARY.”
-VINCE LOMBARDI

Growth

What Personal and Professional Growth Look Like to Me.



PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH WILL LOOK DIFFERENT FOR EVERYONE BUT EVERYONE MUST FIND THEIR UNIQUE PATH UPWARD.

An essay by an inmate contributor at the Penitentiary of New Mexico (PNM) in Santa Fe

I feel I have grown and matured a lot. I've learned so much, yet there is always more to learn. Becoming an adult is not about age, but about how we act. I've been taking a lot of courses on the tablet; I have done over a hundred now. I have also been taking yoga classes and have done the Forklift Program. Personally and professionally, I have grown and gained skills I've never had before. It has not been easy, but I wanted to better myself. I'm still bettering myself today. I want to be the best version of myself that I can be. I know we can all do great things if we want to, and if we apply ourselves. We should never want to stay the same. When I was younger, I thought differently than I do today. I know I've grown and matured in a lot of ways, and I'm glad to say that I do so much better now and have been able to help other people along the way. When you see growth in yourself, you feel better about yourself, and are able to navigate the world a little easier. I hope every one of us can have professional and personal growth in our lives. Use your time wisely and I know you will be successful and see your own personal and professional growth.

PARALLELS

NOW AVAILABLE AT ALL PRISON FACILITIES

GET **FORKLIFT** CERTIFIED!



Now you can do the course work
right on your tablet.

ON YOUR TABLET, GO TO "EDUCATION."
THEN CLICK ON "REENTRY."
THEN, "SMARTED."
GO TO "COURSE CATALOG" AND SELECT "LEARNING PATHS."
THEN, CHOOSE "FORKLIFT LEARNING PATHWAY" TO GET STARTED.

The image shows two screenshots of the SmartEd website. The left screenshot shows the 'My Courses' page with a red arrow pointing to the 'Education' tab in the sidebar. The right screenshot shows the 'Course Catalog' page with a red arrow pointing to the 'Learning Paths' link in the sidebar. A red arrow also points to the 'Forklift Learning Pathway' course card on the main content area. Handwritten red text 'Click here' and 'Then here' with arrows points to the 'Learning Paths' and 'Forklift Learning Pathway' respectively.

The “Forklift Learning Pathway” course is a self-paced, two-course certification, with a simple test at the end of each course.

Once you have passed both courses, contact Education to set up a time to do the “hands-on driving” of a forklift at your facility.



Searching for a Job the “Write” Way

Journaling Can Not Only Support Your Mental Health,
But Can Also Help You Prepare for Employment Success.

Many Parallels readers have discovered the numerous ways in which journaling can help you focus your thoughts and work through your feelings. The theme of this issue of Parallels is “metamorphosis,” and there is perhaps no better way to work through a dramatic reinvention than by writing about the changes you’re going through.

But did you know that, in addition to supporting your mental health, journaling can also be a helpful tool in preparing for success in the working world?

There are many ways in which this can be the case. Journaling can help you get to know yourself better and help you clarify what you want out of a future job and career. It can help you better understand the work conditions that might be the most suitable for you (working alone versus as part of a team; focusing on small projects and details as opposed to “the big picture;” or following specific, pre-determined steps rather than having the freedom to creatively solve problems as they present themselves, for example).

One of the keys to being a great employee is knowing yourself well, and journaling is one of the best ways to get to know yourself better. Understanding your strengths and weaknesses; exploring how the experiences of your past may have influenced your current personality; and recognizing the triggers that may present challenges for you in a professional environment are all important tasks as you transform into a working professional. Journaling, of course, is an ideal way to accomplish all of these goals.



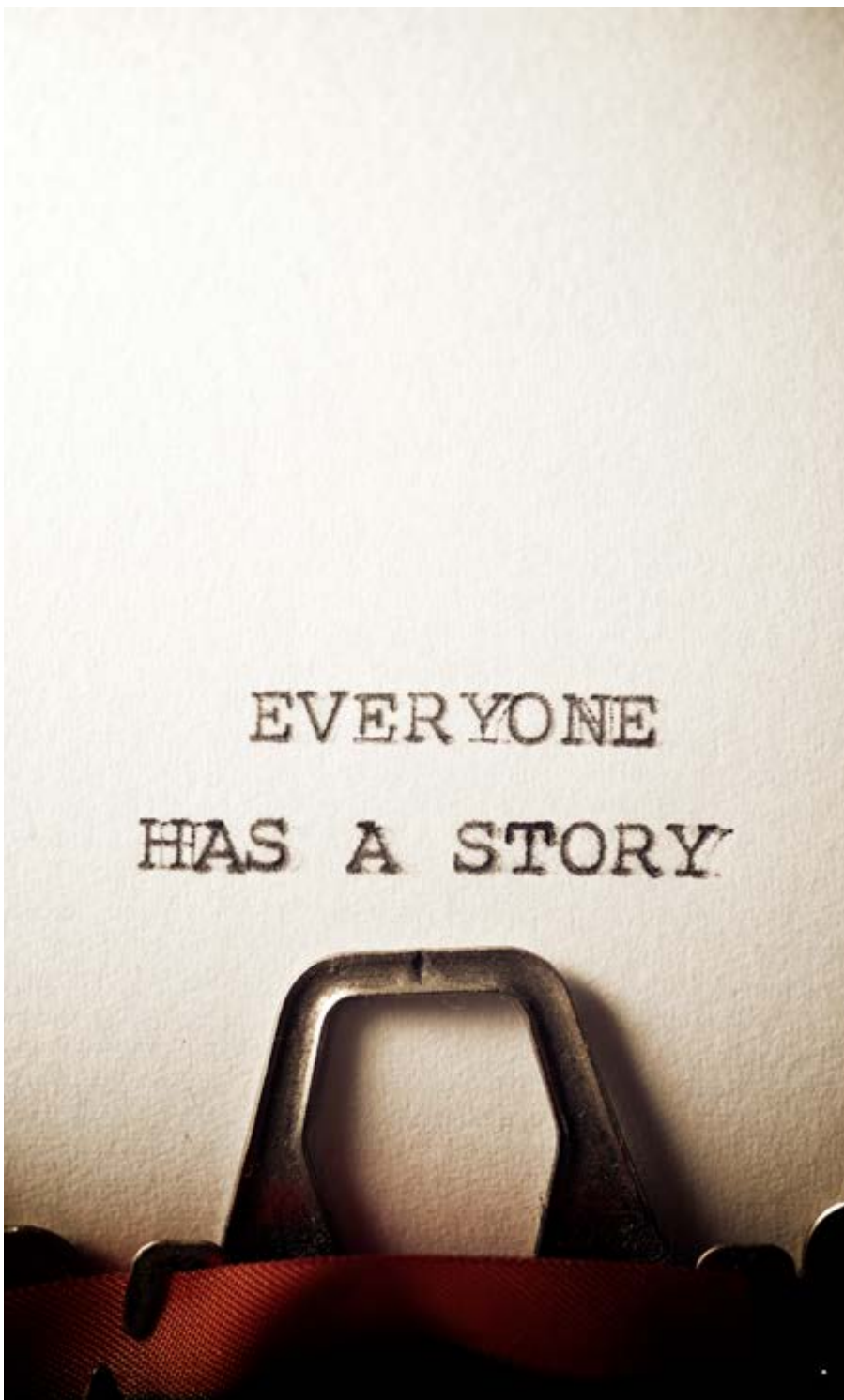
HVAC TRAINING

NOW ENROLLING

GET CERTIFIED
DEVELOP NEW SKILLS

NATE CERTIFICATION
OSHA-10 CERTIFICATION
18 MONTHS OR LESS TO THE DOOR
MUST HAVE CLEAR CONDUCT

Contact
The
Education
Department
To Enroll.



"EVERYONE HAS A STORY. ...AND EVERY STORY IS WORTH TELLING.
BUT MORE THAN THAT, IT'S WORTH LIVING."
~SAVI SHARMA

You will find various journaling prompts throughout this article, which can help guide and optimize your hand-written journaling. You may also find it helpful to log into the "Atlas" app on your tablet and look for an interactive journaling assignment called "Seeking Employment" under the "Courage to Change Program." The chapters of this interactive journaling activity include:

- "Where am I Today?"
- "Considering Education"
- "My Motivations, Interests, and Skills"
- "Planning the Job Search"
- "Practice for Applications and Interviews"
- "My Career Pathway"

This interactive journaling assignment on the Atlas app is a convenient way to start tailoring your future job search on your tablet before you ever leave prison, at your own pace, and whenever it's convenient for you.

In addition to the journaling prompts you'll find in the following graphic and on the Atlas app, here are some other ideas for focusing your journal entries on your professional growth:

- What does having a job mean to you? (Independence? The ability to take care of your family? Making a contribution to society?)
- If you could design your own dream job (no matter how far-fetched), what would it be?
- If, upon your release from prison, you suddenly won the lottery and didn't have to work ever again, what would you do with your life? (Your answer will give you an important clue as to what type of career you might enjoy.)
- Besides earning a paycheck that will finance your life, what other rewards do you hope to gain from a job? (The opportunity to help others? The chance to learn new things? The chance to work with others as part of a team?)
- Which activities cause you to totally lose track of time (and establish what is known as a "flow state")?
- What are the top three things that you can do better than almost anyone you know?
- What types of things do your friends, family, and others often ask you for help with? (Writing letters? Fixing cars? Organizing cluttered spaces? Listening to problems and offering support?) This will give you some important hints as to where your natural talents lie.
- What types of problems or puzzles do you enjoy solving? (Crossword puzzles, Sudoku puzzles, word finds, mathematical story problems, riddles, jigsaw puzzles, arranging geometric shapes, vocabulary games, electrical wiring issues, building challenges, balancing accounting books, spatial design, etc.)
- What accomplishments have made you feel the most proud of yourself?
- What is it that you know how to do so well that you feel comfortable teaching others how to do it?
- Do you prefer to spend time indoors or outdoors?
- Are you an early bird or a night owl?
- What is your tolerance for stress and tight deadlines?

Journaling prompts that can help you organize your thoughts before a job interview:



Write a short summary of your past, mentioning your incarceration, but focusing on the positives that have come from it.

Make a list of lessons you've learned from your mistakes.

Answer the question, "Where do you see yourself in five years?"

Answer the questions, "What are the qualities that make you a great employee?" and "What is your greatest strength?"

Answer the questions, "What are some of your shortcomings or challenges that worry you about having a job?" and "What are some of your weaknesses as an employee?"

Answer the questions, "What is your ideal work environment?" and "Do you prefer to work independently or with others?"

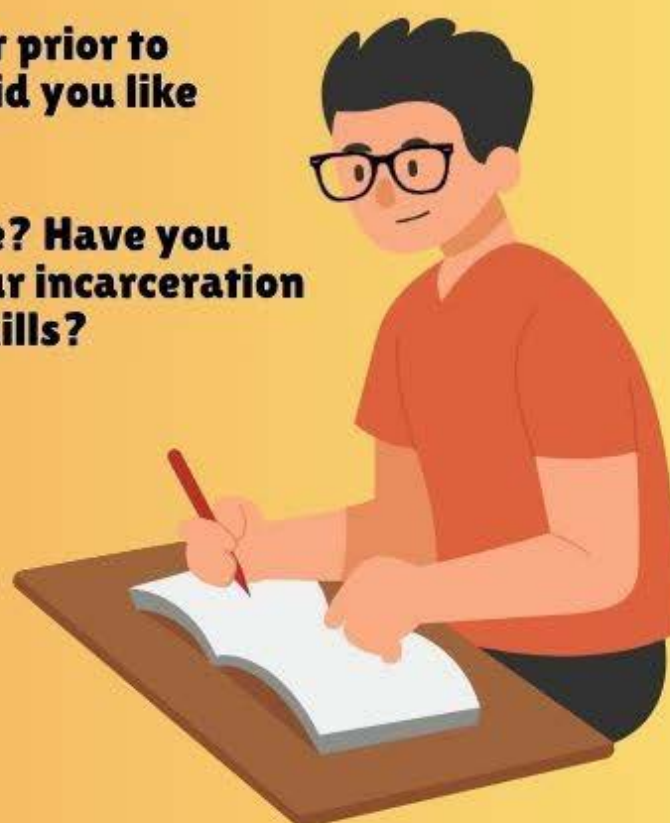
Answer the questions, "How do you evaluate success?" and "What motivates you to succeed?"

What life skills, job experience, and / or lived experiences do you have that would make you a good employee?

Make a list of all the ways in which you've been working on improving yourself during your incarceration. Then write about how these actions will contribute to your ability to be a better employee.

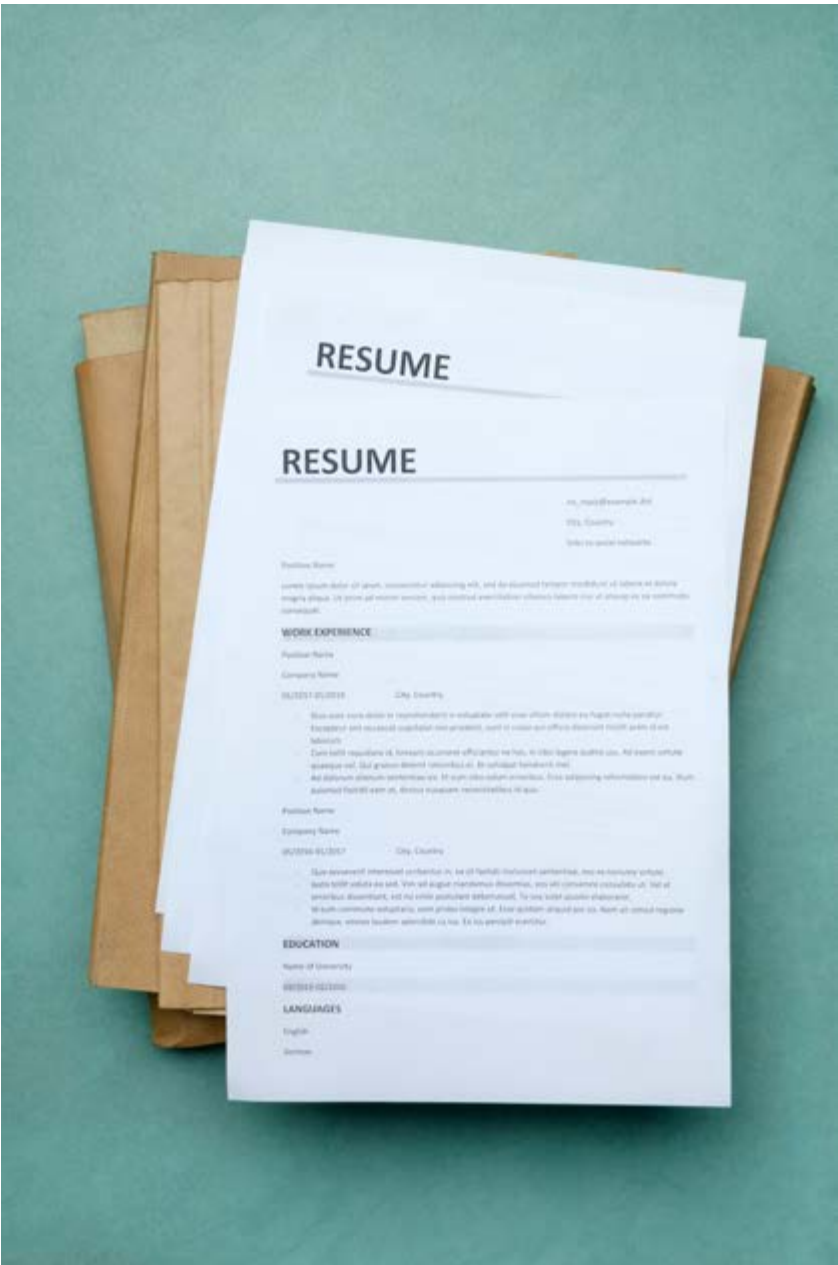
What has been your favorite job (either prior to or during your incarceration)? What did you like about that job?

How do you handle stress and pressure? Have you done any work on yourself during your incarceration to improve your stress management skills?



- What impact do you want to have on your community or the world?
- How important is it for you to see an “artifact” of your work at the end of the day? (An artifact is a visible, physical piece of evidence that represents your efforts, like a fence that you’ve built, an article that you’ve written, or a mural that you’ve painted).
- What makes you excited to jump out of bed in the morning?
- Do you tend to succeed in a more structured environment or in a setting in which you’re able to have more freedom and flexibility?
- Make a list of your skills, using two columns: one for “hard skills” and one for “soft skills.” (Read the article in this issue of Parallels titled, “Putting your Best Foot Forward” to learn more about the difference between these two types of skills.)
- Now make another list of the hard skills and soft skills that you want to obtain or develop before you embark on your post-incarceration career. (Maybe you’d like to finish a particular Career Technical Program; develop some anger management strategies; learn another language; or work on your ability to work collaboratively with a team.)

If you find that journaling helps you focus your thoughts surrounding choosing a career field and finding the right post-incarceration job, why not consider writing an essay about it? Submit your piece to your Supervisor of Education (SOE) for it to be considered for inclusion in an upcoming issue of Parallels.



JOURNALING CAN HELP YOU GET YOUR THOUGHTS SORTED AS YOU APPROACH YOUR JOB SEARCH AND HELP YOU DETERMINE WHICH HARD AND SOFT SKILLS YOU WANT TO HIGHLIGHT ON YOUR RESUME, ON JOB APPLICATIONS, AND DURING JOB INTERVIEWS.



TO HEAR MORE ON THIS TOPIC, LISTEN TO “INSIDE VOICES” SEASON 3, EPISODE 2, TITLED, “JOB INTERVIEW.” IT’S FREE TO LISTEN TO AND LOCATED IN THE INFORMATION SECTION ON YOUR TABLET.

Commissary Cuisine

All of the ingredients for “Commissary Cuisine” recipes are available for order from NMCD commissary.

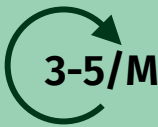
Chili Dog Bowl



Chili Dog Bowl
for 1 Person



A chili dog bowl is a classic American comfort food dish that combines a spicy, thick chili sauce with a hot dog (in this case, Spam) and a variety of toppings, all served in a bowl for easy eating.



Preparation Time
3-5 Minutes

INGRIDIENTS.

- 1 Can Back Country Hot Chili with Beans (item #77329)
- 1 Pouch Hormel Spam Classic Single Pouch (Item #78006)
- 1 Bag Pepe’s El Original Chicharrones Pork Rinds (Item #85237)
- 1 Food Express Bakery Pre-Sliced Plain Bagel (Item #83751)
- 1 Cup Eastview Farms Jalapeno Cheese Cup (Item #75570)
- 1 Pouch Sayulita Sliced Jalapeno Wheel (Item #79008)
- 1 Bag Coyote Valley Sour Cream & Onion Potato Chips (Item #85197)

HOW TO COOK IT STEP BY STEP.

- Step 01**
Pour contents of a packet of Back Country Hot Chili with Beans into a microwave safe bowl.
- Step 02**
Chop up the contents of a Hormel Spam Classic Single Pouch into 1/2 inch cubes and mix them into your chili.
- Step 03**
Now, mix in a bag of Pepe’s El Original Chicharrones Pork Rinds.
- Step 04**
Tear up a Food Express Bakery Pre-Sliced Plan Bagel into about 1 inch cubes and mix them into the bowl.
- Step 05**
Pour an Eastview Farms Jalapeno Cheese Cup over the top of the bowl.
- Step 06**
Top with Sayulita Sliced Jalapeno Wheels.
- Step 07**
Heat your chili dog bowl in the microwave for 30 seconds at a time until hot.
- Step 08**
Top your chili dog bowl with crushed chips from a bag of Coyote Valley Sour Cream & Onion Potato Chips and enjoy!



SMARTED



Attention:

If you have completed the self-paced, two-part forklift course titled, “Forklift Safety” on your tablet in SmartED / Cypherworks, then you qualify to take the hands-on portion of the certification.

Reach out to your “Supervisor of Education” to put yourself on the list.

If you completed the tablet class at a previous facility, let your SOE know so that you can enroll in the hands-on portion of the certification at your current facility.



"IF YOU CAN'T FLY, RUN. IF YOU CAN'T RUN, WALK. IF YOU CAN'T WALK, CRAWL. BUT BY ALL MEANS, KEEP MOVING."
~MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

A Job Search is a Marathon, Not a Sprint

Don't Bank on Your First Job Interview Being Your Only One.
Landing a Job Will Likely Take Some Time.

When you get out of prison and you land your first job interview, it's going to feel great. And when that happens, you should feel proud of yourself and savor that success. All of the hard work that you're doing during your incarceration now – Education, Career Technical Programs, Behavioral Health Programming, and more – will eventually earn you the chance to sit down with a potential employer and prove to them that you can be a valuable asset for their company.

However, even once you've been scheduled for that first job interview, you can't kick back and relax quite yet. Your first job interview simply represents the starting line for what will hopefully be a sprint - but may turn into a marathon.

Even job applicants who have the ideal qualifications, lots of experience, and no criminal record can spend many months searching for a job. So, someone with a gap

in their work history and a criminal record should be prepared to go through more than a few job interviews before they land that perfect position.

The United Way of the National Capital Area conducted a national survey of 1,000 current job seekers in the U.S. to answer the question, "How long does it take to find a job in 2026?" The study authors looked at, among other things, how many applications people submitted, how many interviews they sat through, and how many hours a day the participants dedicated to job hunting.

Key findings of this study included the following:

- The average job search takes 6.6 months, suggesting that people are spending over half a year hunting for a job before landing their ideal position.



**Do you have
a high school diploma
or GED?**

**Considering
your path toward
a college degree?**

**Filling out your FAFSA
is the first step!**

**Ask your SOE
how to get started
today and you could be
enrolled for Fall Semester!**





"SUCCESS IS NOT FINAL, FAILURE IS NOT FATAL: IT IS THE COURAGE TO CONTINUE THAT COUNTS."
~WINSTON CHURCHILL

- On average, participating job seekers applied to 62.2 jobs and spent about 45 minutes on each application.

- During their job search, participants submitted 62.6 applications but landed just five interviews in total from those applications. (That means that only about 8% of the applications they filled out resulted in their being invited for a job interview.)

- The average length of a job search, broken down by industry, is as follows:

- o Construction: 3.7 months

- o Manufacturing: 3.9 months

- o Hospitality: 4.2 months

- o E-commerce / Retail: 4.7 months

- o Consumer Services: 5.2 months

- o Finance: 5.6 months

- o Healthcare: 6 months

- o Education: 6 months

- o Insurance: 7 months

- o Technology: 9.7 months

- Nearly 70% of the job seekers included in the survey spent 1-3 hours per day job hunting on the days they searched.

- 94.3% of participants had at least one experience wherein they applied for a job and never heard back from the employer.

- 30.4% of participants had at least one experience wherein they had interviews rescheduled or delayed repeatedly by the employer.

- On average, job seekers say they never heard back from 67% of the jobs they applied to (about two out of every three applications).

- New Mexico ranks number four in the country for the longest amount of time people spend on unemployment (6.1 months).

So, if this study proves anything, it's that job hunting is not for the faint of heart and that job seekers had better be prepared to commit to the long haul. This is why we say that you'll need to be prepared for a marathon rather than a sprint. But just because it will likely be a prolonged endeavor doesn't mean that you should be discouraged. Nothing worth having comes easy, right?

Here are a few suggestions for staying motivated, maintaining your stamina, and preparing for your post-incarceration job search:

Trade One Orange Uniform For Another!

Wildland Fire Fighters Certification Course!
It's more than a certification, it's a career!

- 5 Day class
- 12 Months or less to the door
- Must have good conduct
- Must have GED/HSE
- Great Pay

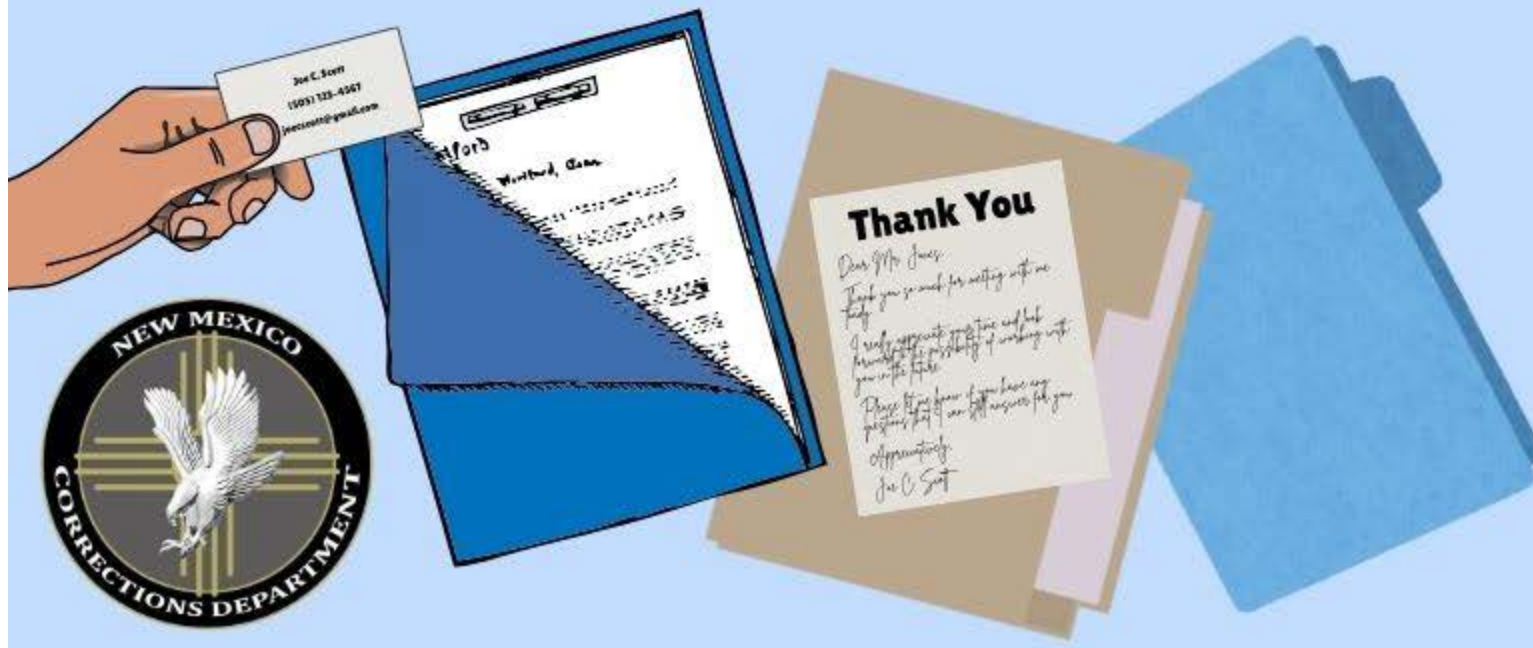


Contact your Supervisor of Education (SOE)
for more information on how to enroll.

Assembling a Turnaround Packet to Leave with Your Interviewer

➔ What to include:

- **Custom Thank You Note:** A personalized message expressing gratitude for the opportunity to apply for the job. (Thank the interviewer for their time and for considering your qualifications.)
- **Contact Information:** A customized cover page or professional business card with your name, phone number, e-mail address, and LinkedIn profile if you have one. You can also simply include all of your contact info in your thank you note.
- **Resume:** A clean, updated copy of your standard resume.
- **30–60–90–Day Plan:** An actionable, forward-looking roadmap detailing how you plan to tackle the role's primary responsibilities and add value in your first three months.
- **Professional References:** A neatly formatted list of 3–4 references, complete with their titles, companies, contact information, and a brief note on how you are connected.
- **Work Samples:** 2 to 3 tailored examples of your past work (writing samples, project recaps, etc.) that demonstrate your ability to execute the tasks required for this new role.
- **Supporting Documents:** Copies of degrees, certificates of completion, awards, and letters of recommendation. If you have completed any vocational programming during your incarceration, be sure to include your certificates.
- **If you have questions about what to include or how to format your documents, ask your Probation / Parole Officer for help!**



An illustration of a woman with dark hair, wearing a grey hoodie, looking at a map. To her left are three directional signs on a post: a yellow arrow pointing left labeled 'Opportunity', a blue arrow pointing left labeled 'Rejection', and a pink arrow pointing right labeled 'Reinvention!'. The background is a green landscape with trees, butterflies, and a small caterpillar. The New Mexico Corrections Department logo is in the upper right.

Remember:

**Every job interview
won't result
in a job offer.
But don't let a "No"
discourage you!**

**Don't get angry. Don't get frustrated.
Each "No" brings you closer to a "Yes!"**

**Turn rejection
into reinvention!**



• **Structure your job search by designing a schedule for yourself and sticking to a routine.** Commit to spending at least a few hours on your job search each day (maybe breaking up the time into a morning session and an afternoon session) and don't let anything interfere with or distract you from your plan. Basically, treat your job search like a part-time job (but not a 24/7 obsession). Don't let yourself become overwhelmed and burned out. After your daily goals are met, make sure that you're taking some time off from your job search to rest, enjoy some time with family, and do other things that you enjoy. Also remember that the industry in which you're searching will determine the days and hours that are most appropriate for your job search efforts. For example, you wouldn't expect a government office to be open in the evenings or on the weekends, but it might not be unusual to receive a call from a restaurant manager at those times.



FINDING A GREAT JOB REQUIRES DETERMINATION, PATIENCE, AND STAMINA. REMEMBER THAT EACH REJECTION REPRESENTS A LEARNING OPPORTUNITY AND BRINGS YOU ONE STEP CLOSER TO SUCCESS.

• **Track your progress.** Create a spreadsheet - or simply keep notes in a notebook - to log job search details like applications submitted, date applied, status, and contacts including who you spoke with (make a note of their name, title, and contact info). Even include photocopies of the applications you've submitted and staple hiring agents' business cards into your notebook. This will help you document and organize your efforts. It will also allow you to look back over your accomplishments and help you realize that you're not just spinning your wheels. Additionally, this will be helpful to show your Probation / Parole Officer that you are making consistent efforts towards finding employment and taking

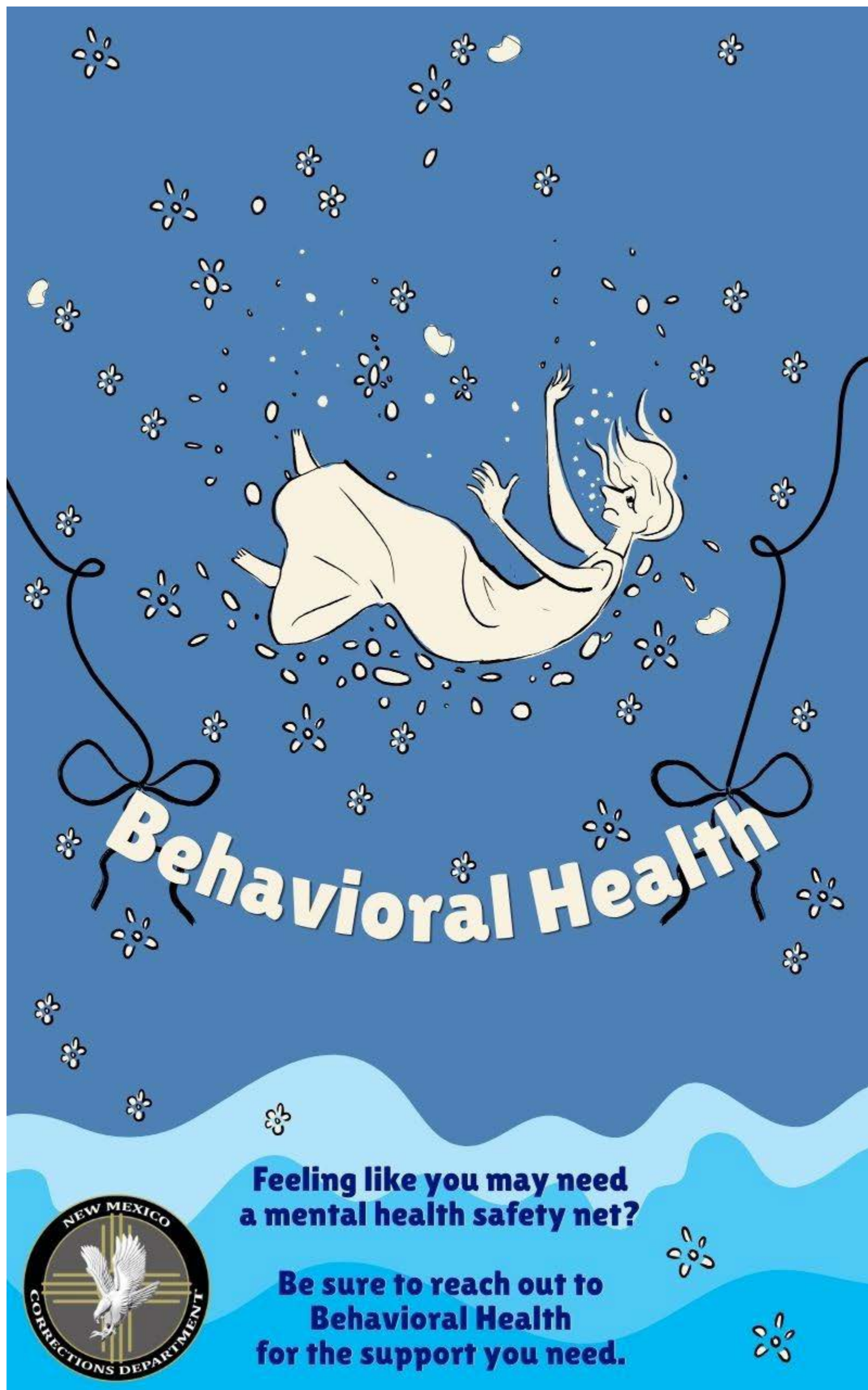
the process seriously.

• **Just because you have one or more job interviews on the books, don't hesitate to schedule more.** Keeping in mind the experiences of the job seekers who participated in the previously cited survey, remember that you will likely have to sit for multiple interviews before being offered a job. Don't say, "No" to additional job interviews until you have an official job offer and have actually started your new job. Don't be afraid of receiving two or more job offers around the same time; that's actually a great problem to have! Having to choose just one and turn the others down might sound stressful, but that's just part of making professional choices and developing your career.

• **It will be difficult, but don't get discouraged.** Don't allow yourself to feel as though you're the only one having a hard time finding a job. You need only refer back to the aforementioned survey to realize that everyone has to fill out lots of applications and attend many job interviews in order to settle into the perfect position - it's not just you.

• **Celebrate even small wins.** Recognize the many tiny milestones that you will achieve along the path to being hired. These celebrations need not involve spending money (and should definitely not jeopardize your sobriety). They might be as simple as giving yourself a silent "pat on the back;" writing a celebratory journal entry; saying a gratitude prayer; or sharing your happy news with a loved one. Even if it doesn't result in a job offer, being invited to sit for a job interview is an important accomplishment worth recognizing. And every application submitted is a small triumph in your journey toward your new work life. (Don't forget, too, that you will LEARN from each and every interview you do. And learning is always worth celebrating!)

• **Be persistent.** Throughout this issue of Parallels, you'll find references to the "turnaround packet" that you'll want to create and leave behind when you do land a job interview. This will help a potential employer remember you and your qualifications after you've parted ways. But don't hesitate to also follow up after the interview too. During the interview, ask, "When does your team plan on choosing a candidate for this role?" Then, use that input to decide when you'll call, send an e-mail, or stop by to check back in with the interviewer regarding whether a hiring decision has been made. If you're told that they have chosen another candidate, don't let that discourage you - and don't express anger or frustration toward the person who tells you. That information will simply inform you that that door has - for now - been closed and will allow you to move on to the next opportunity. But also be willing to "keep the door ajar." Tell the hiring agent that, while you're disappointed that you weren't chosen for the position, you hope that they will keep you in mind if any similar job openings become available in the future. The positive way you handle rejection may impress the hiring agent and cause them to keep you in mind for



Behavioral Health

**Feeling like you may need
a mental health safety net?**

**Be sure to reach out to
Behavioral Health
for the support you need.**



future openings. If you're especially determined to get in with a particular company, even consider checking back in with the hiring agent periodically and reminding them that you'd still love to work with them (even if you haven't seen any new job postings). Your persistence will surely be noticed, and sooner or later, your determination may very well be rewarded with a job. (Hint: this is where your spreadsheet or notebook will come in handy. It will keep you organized regarding when you last reached out, what was discussed, and when the hiring agent may suggest that you touch base again.)

- Be realistic, be prepared for a prolonged job search, and accept the help you need while you're looking for employment. When you're released from prison, you'll be so ready to get back on your feet that you'll wish you could start working on day one. For a lucky few, that may be possible. But, for most returning citizens, it will take a while to find work and start rebuilding your life. Accept the fact that sliding into the perfect job will take some time (and if it doesn't, you'll be pleasantly surprised!). As folks often say, "hope for the best but prepare for the worst." Rest assured that, while you're searching for your post-incarceration job (even if it takes a long time), not only will your Probation / Parole Officer (PPO) be available to help you find suitable application opportunities, but they will also be able to help you stay afloat until you find work.

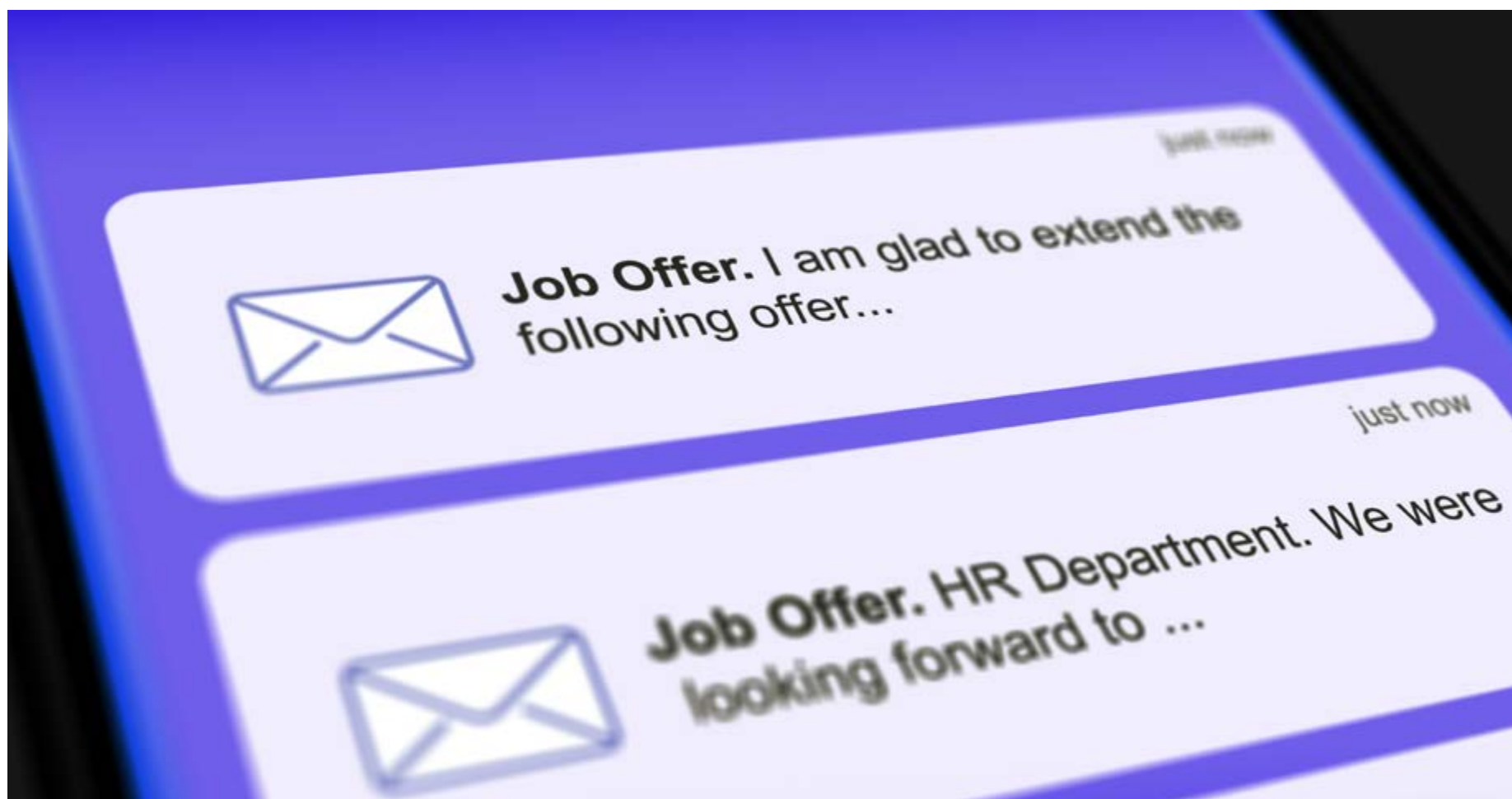
Your PPO can help you directly or provide resources for assistance with housing; food; transportation; getting appropriate clothes for interviewing and for work (including items like steel-toe boots or other job-specific gear); arranging childcare; and many other supportive services that will carry you through your job search. So, don't hesitate to let your PPO know what you need during your job-hunting journey. They'll be happy to help and will be among those most proud of you when you finally land a great job!

So, as is the case with so many aspects of life, the key to a successful job search is endurance. It can be hard to hear "No" when looking for work, but remember that every "No" brings you one step closer to a "Yes." And you only need one "Yes" to launch your new career into the stratosphere!

If your family members would like to learn more about The United Way's 2026 job seeker survey, they can visit:

<https://unitedwaynca.org/blog/how-long-does-it-take-to-find-a-job-2026-survey/>

PARALLELS



THERE WILL BE HURDLES ALONG THE WAY, BUT THE DAY YOU GET THAT JOB OFFER IS GOING TO FEEL GREAT!

Writing a Professional Thank You Note



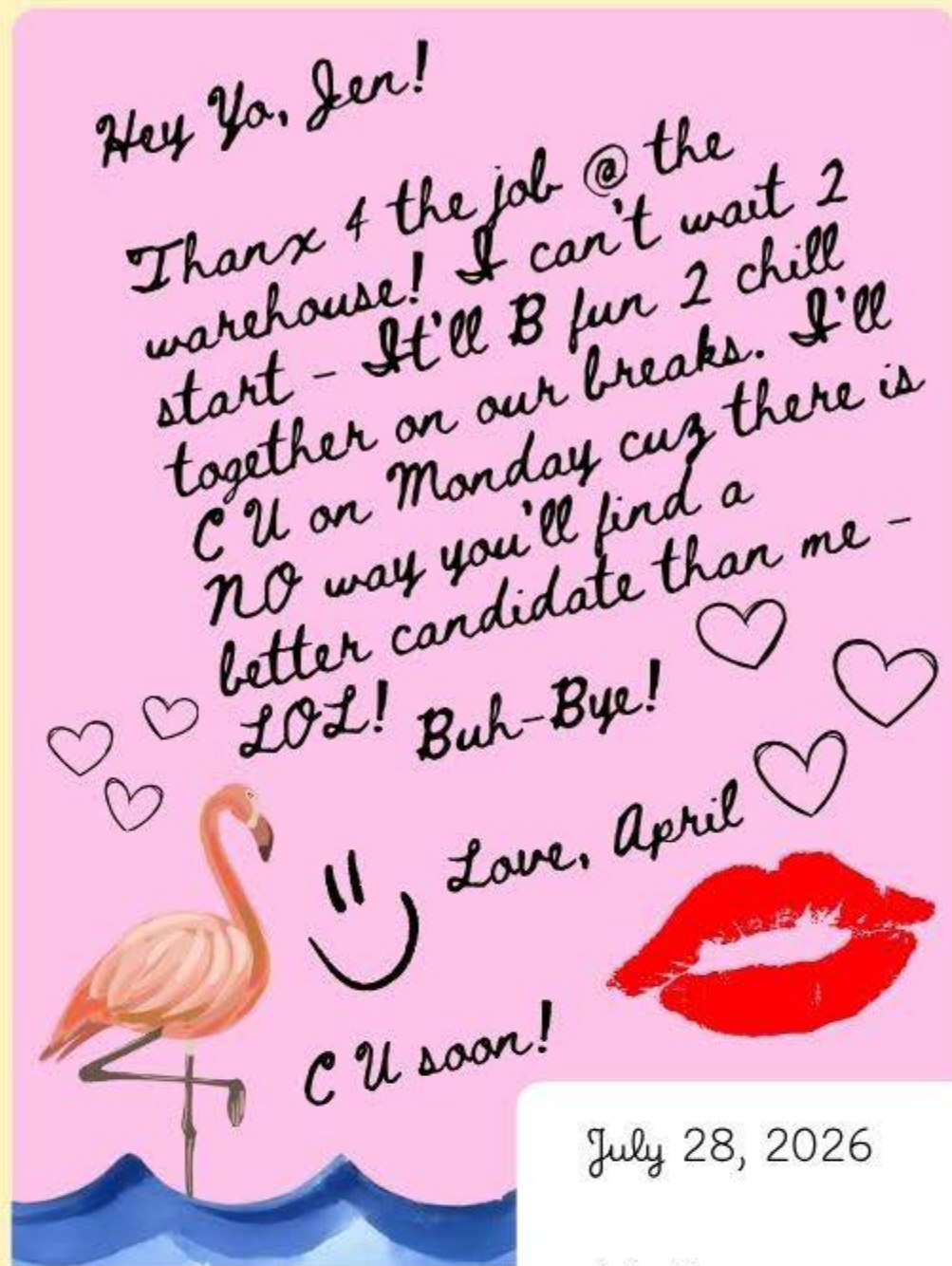
April has an appointment for a job interview tomorrow.

She wants to include a thank you note to the interviewer in the turnaround packet that she will leave behind on her way out.

Look over the sample thank you notes on the following pages and help her decide which one is the most appropriate.

Then think about what makes it the best choice and what makes the rest of the samples less appropriate.





1

July 28, 2026

Ms. Jones,

Thank you so much for meeting with me today about the Forklift Operator position at the Albuquerque Amazon warehouse.

I really appreciate you taking the time to talk with me and considering my qualifications.

I hope you'll reach out to me if any additional questions come up about my skills and work history.

Thanks again and I hope to be able to work with you in the future!

Appreciatively,

April Ramirez
 (505) 123-4567
 aprilramirez@gmail.com

2



Ocean View Motel
Fort Lauderdale, Florida
(954) 123-4567
www.OceanViewMotel.com



Ms. Jones,

Thank you so much for meeting with me today about the Forklift Operator position at the Albuquerque Amazon warehouse.

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Thanks again and I hope to be able to work with you in the future!

Appreciatively,

April Ramirez

3

July 28, 2026



Jennifer,

Thanks for meeting with me today about the job.

I hope I get the job. I really need it. My rent is due in a few days, so I was thinking that maybe I can get an advance on my paycheck when I start on Monday.

We didn't talk about it at the interview, but I also need to take Fridays off because I have another part-time job that needs me on Fridays.

Your Friend,

April R. 😊



Attention Albuquerque Amazon
Warehouse, 1234 Main Street,
Albuquerque, New Mexico:

I been down in prison because
I was wrongly convicted of a
crime that I didn't commit. I
really deserve this job because I
been wronged by the system and
society owes me. Thank you for
giving me this job.

Sincerely,

April Ramirez
NMCD Inmate
#123456

5



6



July 28, 2026

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today about the Forklift Operator position
at the Albuquerque Amazon warehouse.

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skills and work history.

Thanks again and I hope to be able to
work with you in the future!

Appreciatively,

April Ramirez
(505) 123-4567
aprilramirez@gmail.com

MISS J ~

THANK YOU SO, SO, SO, SO MUCH FOR GIVING ME A
CHANCE TO SHOW YOU WHAT A SUPER DUPER,
AMAZING, FANTASTIC EMPLOYEE THAT I WILL BE.

YOU WILL SEE THAT I WILL BE THE VERY BEST EMPLOYEE
THAT YOU HAVE EVER HAD IN YOUR WHOLE LIFE!

SO, PRETTY, PRETTY, PRETTY PLEASE GIVE ME THIS JOB!

HUGS,

APRIL RAMIREZ

P.S. I DON'T HAVE A
PHONE RIGHT NOW,
SO HIT ME UP ON
INSTAGRAM
IF YOU WANT TO TALK.



July 28, 2026

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meeting with me
Thank you so much for ~~talking to me~~
today about the Forklift Operator position
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Appreshiatively,

April Ramirez
(505) 123-4567
aprilramirez@gmail.com

9

10



ANSWER: THE BEST CHOICE IS EXAMPLE NUMBER TWO.

EARN YOUR GED/HSE
right from your tablet.
It's free.
Learn at your own pace.
Leave with more than time served,
leave with an education!

*“I got my GED and career certification while I was down.
If I can do it, so can you!”*



ASK EDUCATION TO ENROLL YOU TODAY!





MUCH LIKE A BUTTERFLY, YOU ARE UNDERGOING AN AMAZING TRANSFORMATION THAT WILL ALLOW YOU TO SOAR TO NEW LEVELS OF SUCCESS!

Ready to be a Butterfly Expert?

The theme of this issue of Parallels is “metamorphosis,” and it’s widely known that no other creature from the Animal Kingdom represents reinvention more than the butterfly. Of course, everyone knows that they’re beautiful symbols of transformation and freedom, but here are 52 more amazing facts about these colorful, graceful shapeshifters. If you memorize one of these amazing butterfly facts every week, after a year, you’ll be a butterfly “eggs-pert!”

1 They’re related to moths – Lepidoptera is the word that refers to an order of insects that includes butterflies and moths.

2 But they’re different than moths – Adult butterflies are active during the day, while most (but not all) moths are active at night. When at rest, butterflies hold their wings together above their back; moths hold their wings horizontally, spread out flat on the surface there they’re resting on. Butterfly antennae are thickened, or clubbed, at the tips, while moth antennae are usually straight or feathered.

3 Symmetrical wing patterns – The two wings of a butterfly typically mirror each other perfectly.

4 Chemical communicators – Adult butterflies communicate with one another mostly through chemical cues. The males produce chemicals called pheromones to attract females. But a few butterfly species communicate using sound. The male Cracker butterfly (Hamadryas), for example, can make loud noises with his wings!

5 They’re tricksters – False eyes on the wings of some butterflies startle or misdirect attackers. Known as eyespots or ocelli, these circular, eye-like wing markings are made of contrasting-colored rings and resemble the eyes of a predator’s own natural enemies (such as owls or snakes). Eyespots situated on the edges or rear of the wings of some butterflies draw a predator’s strike away from the butterfly’s vulnerable head and vital organs. Eyespots are a brilliant evolutionary defense mechanism used to deceive, frighten, or distract predators. Studies indicate that the most effective eyespots feature tiny light-reflecting scales in the center, referred to as sparkles. These mimic the natural corneal light reflection (a twinkle) of a vertebrate eye, making the fake eyes appear astonishingly real!

6 Their iridescence comes from structure – Some species like Morpho butterflies feature a brilliant iridescent blue color, achieved through microscopic architecture, not pigment.

7 Their wings are covered in scales – While butterfly wings appear spectacularly colored, they are naturally clear membranes covered in thousands of tiny, overlapping scales. These scales reflect light to create the vibrant colors and patterns that we see.

8 Some have transparent wings – Glasswing butterflies (Greta oto) have see-through wings with minimal scales.



WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATION

IN DEMAND CERTIFICATION!
GREAT PAY!
1 WEEK COURSE!
STARTING AT GCCF & ROSWELL!

ASK EDUCATION FOR MORE
INFORMATION ON THIS PROGRAM
AND HOW TO PARTICIPATE.

9 They're masters of migration – Monarch butterflies travel up to 3,000 miles to specific overwintering sites during their annual migration. The journey is so long that it is actually completed by multiple successive generations of butterflies.

10 They're puddle lovers – Males engage in a behavior called “puddling” wherein they gather at mud puddles to extract minerals, particularly sodium, that they’ can’t get from flowers. So, if you see a butterfly that appears to be “stuck in the mud,” don’t worry; he’s probably just stopping by for a salty sip.

11 They go clubbing - “Puddle clubs” are groups of male butterflies that gather at the edges of puddles to suck up those salts and minerals together.

12 They don't really sleep - Butterflies don't sleep like people do, but many species do take a rest in groups, a behavior called “roosting.” Some may pause for just a night, while others roost for the entire winter season. Roosting together helps protect butterflies from predators and preserves energy for long migrations.

13 ButtEARflies - Scientists thought that butterflies were deaf until the first butterfly ears were identified in 1912.

14 The name game - One theory for how butterflies got their name references the fact that common sulfur butterflies, like the male Brimstone, have wings that are bright yellow - the exact color of freshly churned butter. Incidentally, the Brimstone butterfly (*Gonepteryx rhamni*) has the longest lifespan of all adult butterflies (9-10 months).

15 Caterpillars can predict the weather - Some people say that the wider the black bands are on the Woollybear caterpillar - which will eventually transform into the Isabella tiger moth (*Pyrrharctia isabella*) - the colder the upcoming winter will be.

16 They gather in flutters - A group of butterflies is sometimes called a flutter.

17 No butterfly bathrooms – Many adult butterflies never excrete waste – they use up everything they eat for energy!

18 They don't just flap - Butterfly wings don't just flap up and down; they actually move in a “figure eight” motion.

19 They're egg eaters – The first meal a caterpillar eats upon hatching is usually the eggshell from which it just emerged!

20 They can be loud eaters – At certain times, in some areas, you can actually hear masses of caterpillars munching on plants!

21 They don't live very long – The adult lifespan of most butterfly species is only 2-4 weeks, though some can survive for months.

22 They eat (or rather, drink) a liquid diet – Butterflies have a long,

**S o m e
b u t t e r f l y
s p e c i e s
h a v e b e e n
f o u n d a t
e l e v a t i o n s
o f a l m o s t
4 m i l e s u p
i n t h e a i r !**



straw-like tongue called a proboscis that they use to sip nectar from flowers, sap from trees, and even juice from rotting fruit. Adult butterflies don't have mouths for chewing. When not in use, their proboscis curls up into a spiral. Sometimes, you can watch a young butterfly curling and uncurling its proboscis immediately after it emerges from its chrysalis or pupal case ...just to make sure it works properly.

23 Some have a super proboscis - The Morgan's Sphinx Moth from Madagascar has a proboscis that is 12 to 14 inches long and allows them to get the nectar from the bottom of a 12 inch-deep orchid that was discovered by Charles Darwin.

24 Some are on an extreme diet - Some moth species never eat anything as adults because they don't have a proboscis or a mouth! They must live on the energy they stored as caterpillars!

25 They're near-sighted - Butterflies have good eyesight within 10-12 feet, but anything further away than that will look blurry to them.

26 They play hide & seek - Some butterflies have developed wing colors and patterns that make them invisible in their surroundings (known as camouflage).

27 They engage in identity theft! - Predators have learned to avoid brightly colored butterflies because so many of them are toxic. Monarch caterpillars, for example, ingest the leaves of poisonous milkweed, making their own flesh poisonous to would-be predators. Some other non-toxic butterflies have evolved the patterning of these poisonous butterflies, prompting predators to avoid them, too.

This protective evolutionary impersonation is known as mimicry.

28 Biblical history - In 1958, Entomologist W.G. Bruce published a list of Arthropod references in the Bible. The most frequently named bugs from the Bible are: Locusts: 24; Moths: 11; Grasshoppers: 10; Scorpions: 10; Caterpillars: 9; and Bees: 4.

29 They're charged by the sun - Butterflies achieve thermoregulation through basking; they spread their wings to absorb solar radiation before flight. So, if you see one with their beautiful wings outstretched, they're not showing off; they're just "warming up for takeoff."

30 Cool temps keep them grounded - Butterflies cannot fly if their body temperature is less than 86 degrees.

31 Ancient beauties - Representations of butterflies can be seen in Egyptian frescoes at Thebes, which are 3,500 years old!

32 Inside out - Butterflies and other insects have their skeletons on the outside of their bodies; it's called an exoskeleton. This protects the insect and keeps water inside their body so they don't dry out.

33 Butterflies taste with their feet - Chemoreceptors on their tarsi (toes) help butterflies identify host plants for laying eggs. By stepping on or drumming their feet against a plant, they can instantly taste it to determine if it is the right food source or a safe place to lay eggs. So, if a butterfly lands on your arm, be sure to ask them, "What do I taste like?"

34 There are so many species - There are about 24,000 species of butterflies and about 140,000 species of moths throughout the world! Lepidoptera represents one of the largest insect orders.

35 They can see ultraviolet light - Butterflies' vision extends beyond human capability, revealing patterns invisible to us. Their compound eye - made up of thousands of individual lenses - can detect colors that are completely invisible to humans, including ultraviolet (UV) light. This helps them spot hidden patterns on flowers to find nectar.

36 They're Cold-blooded - Butterflies cannot regulate their body temperature and rely on external warmth (hence the basking behavior mentioned earlier).

37 They have a four-stage lifecycle - Butterflies transition through four stages of life: egg, larva (caterpillar), pupa (chrysalis), and adult butterfly. These four stages represent the creature's complete metamorphosis, and depending on the species, can take 10 to 15 days.

38 Male and female butterflies look different - The wings of male and female butterflies often display different colors and patterns. This is called sexual dimorphism.

39 They have no nose - Since they don't have a nose, butterflies

"smell" and find their food using their antennae.

40 There are six butterfly Families - There are six butterfly Families, including Papilionidae (swallowtails), Nymphalidae (brush-footed), and Pieridae (whites and sulphurs).

41 They live almost everywhere - Butterflies are found on every continent on Earth except Antarctica! Their adaptability is remarkable.

42 They love the tropics - While butterflies are found on almost every continent, tropical rainforests harbor the greatest species richness.

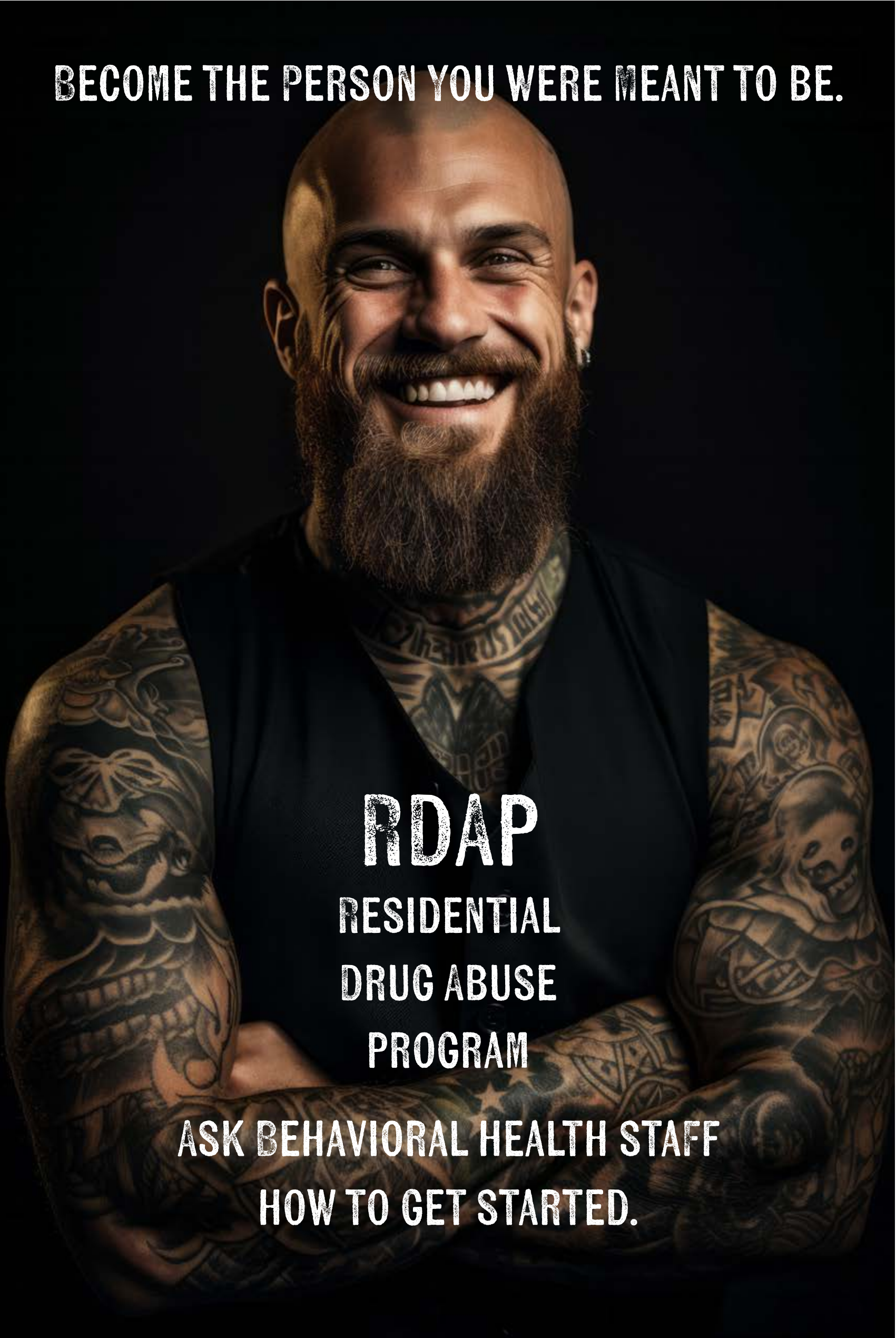
43 They are an endemic species - Many butterflies exist only in specific geographic regions. So, if you want to see as many butterfly species as possible, you'll have to travel the entire world!



**WHAT IS THE MOST SURPRISING FACT YOU'VE LEARNED ABOUT BUTTERFLIES?
FEEL FREE TO WRITE AN ESSAY AND SUBMIT IT TO YOUR SOE.**

44 They are an indicator species - Butterfly populations reflect ecosystem health. When scientists notice that butterfly populations are dwindling, they know that their ecosystem is in trouble! Habitat loss due to deforestation and development negatively impact butterfly diversity.

45 They enjoy CITES protection - Certain butterfly species require

A close-up portrait of a man with a shaved head, a full brown beard, and a wide smile. He has extensive tattoos on his arms and neck, including a large skull on his right arm and a bandolier across his chest. He is wearing a black tank top. The background is dark and out of focus.

BECOME THE PERSON YOU WERE MEANT TO BE.

RDAP
RESIDENTIAL
DRUG ABUSE
PROGRAM

ASK BEHAVIORAL HEALTH STAFF
HOW TO GET STARTED.

permits for international trade under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species treaty.

46 They symbolize transformation and rebirth - In Navajo (Diné) culture, the butterfly (k'aalógii) represents joy, vitality, and resurgence.

47 They can be huge – The wingspan of the largest known butterfly species, the Queen Alexandra's Birdwing (*Ornithoptera alexandrae*), measures up to about 11 inches!

48 They can be tiny – Western Pygmy Blue butterflies, the smallest known species, measure less than a half an inch across!

49 No speeding tickets for most - Most butterflies fly at 5 to 12 miles per hour.

50 But some are speed demons – Skipper butterflies, the fastest known butterfly species, can reach speeds of 37 miles per hour, making them able to outpace a horse!

51 Some of them fly with eagles – Some butterfly species have been found at elevations of almost 4 miles up in the air!

52 They have an ancient lineage – Butterfly fossils date back 56 million years!

So, there you have it. Did you have any idea that butterflies were such phenomenal creatures?! As you move through your own metamorphosis from an incarcerated person to a returning citizen, take some inspiration from these incredible transforming insects! If you'd like to learn more about them, be sure to check out the article in this issue of *Parallels* titled, "Lessons in Metamorphosis," which provides a Gutenberg Library reading list on the subject.

PARALLELS



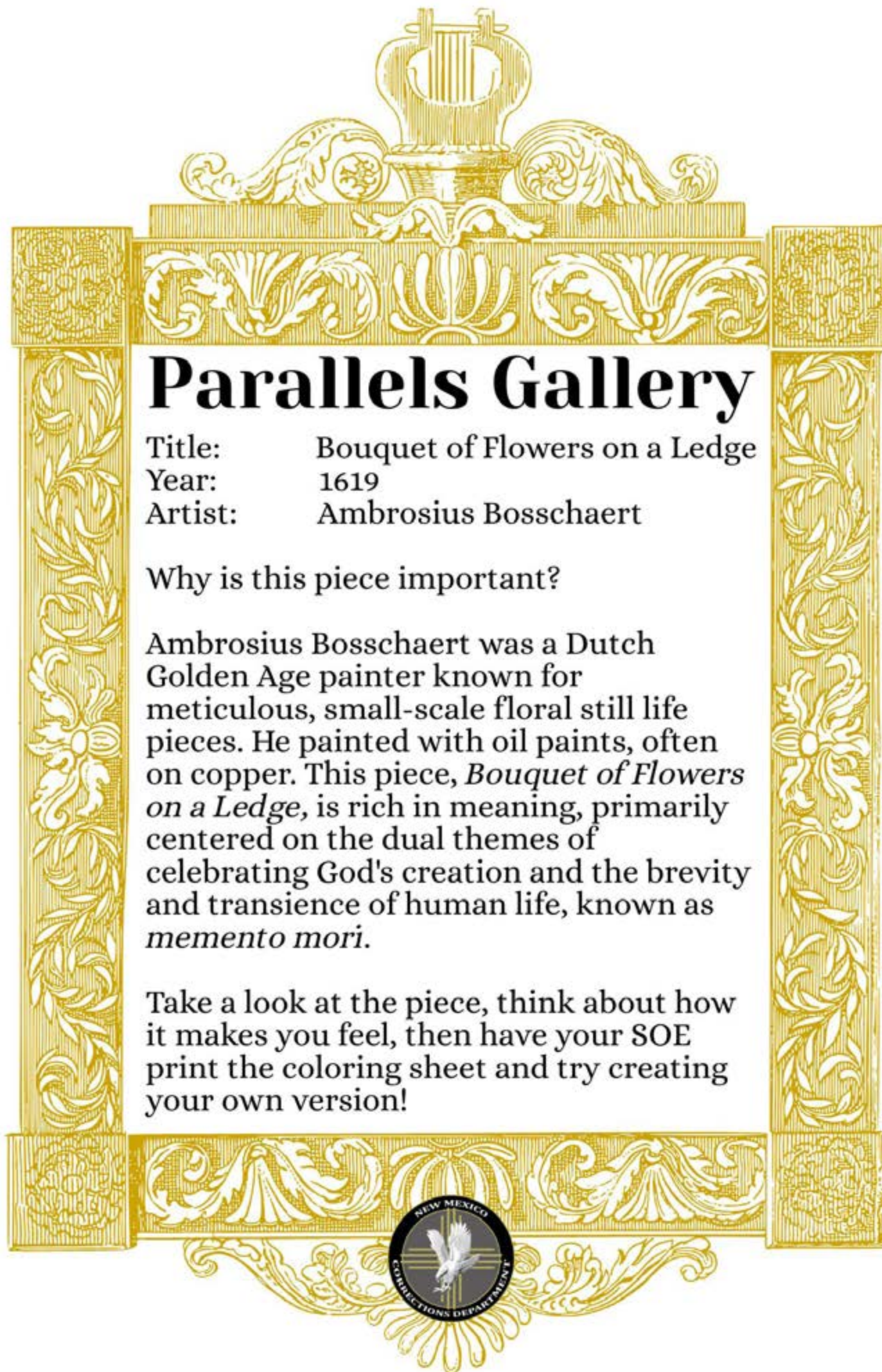
"WE DELIGHT IN THE BEAUTY OF THE BUTTERFLY,
BUT RARELY ADMIT THE CHANGES IT HAS GONE THROUGH TO ACHIEVE THAT BEAUTY."
~ MAYA ANGELOU



Ask Education how to get started today!

“This one skill I will use for the rest of my life. No matter what I do, I need to be able to read. It was easy and fun.”

-Inmate at SNMCF



Parallels Gallery

Title: Bouquet of Flowers on a Ledge
Year: 1619
Artist: Ambrosius Bosschaert

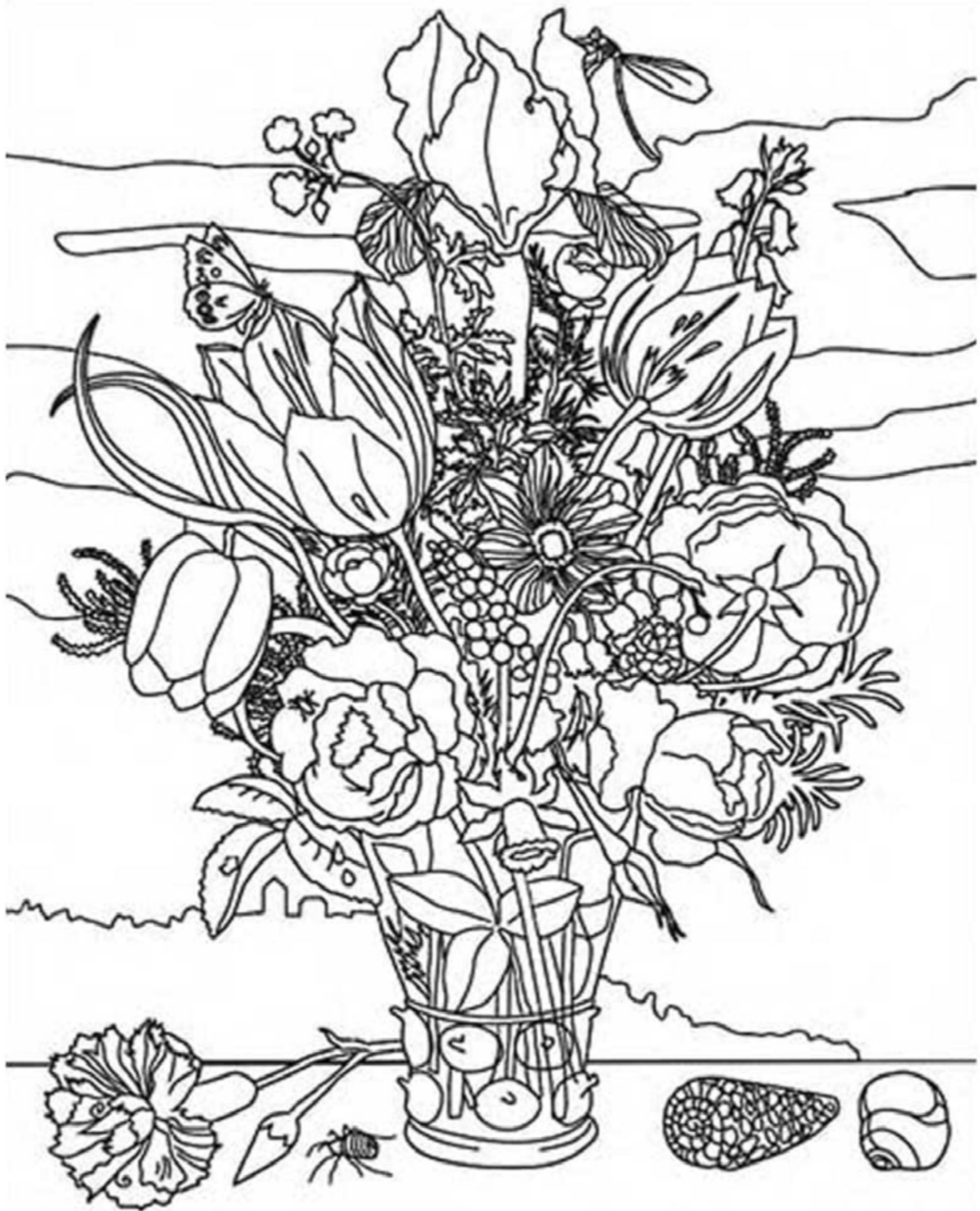
Why is this piece important?

Ambrosius Bosschaert was a Dutch Golden Age painter known for meticulous, small-scale floral still life pieces. He painted with oil paints, often on copper. This piece, *Bouquet of Flowers on a Ledge*, is rich in meaning, primarily centered on the dual themes of celebrating God's creation and the brevity and transience of human life, known as *memento mori*.

Take a look at the piece, think about how it makes you feel, then have your SOE print the coloring sheet and try creating your own version!



"Bouquet of Flowers on a Ledge"
by Ambrosius Bosschaert, 1619



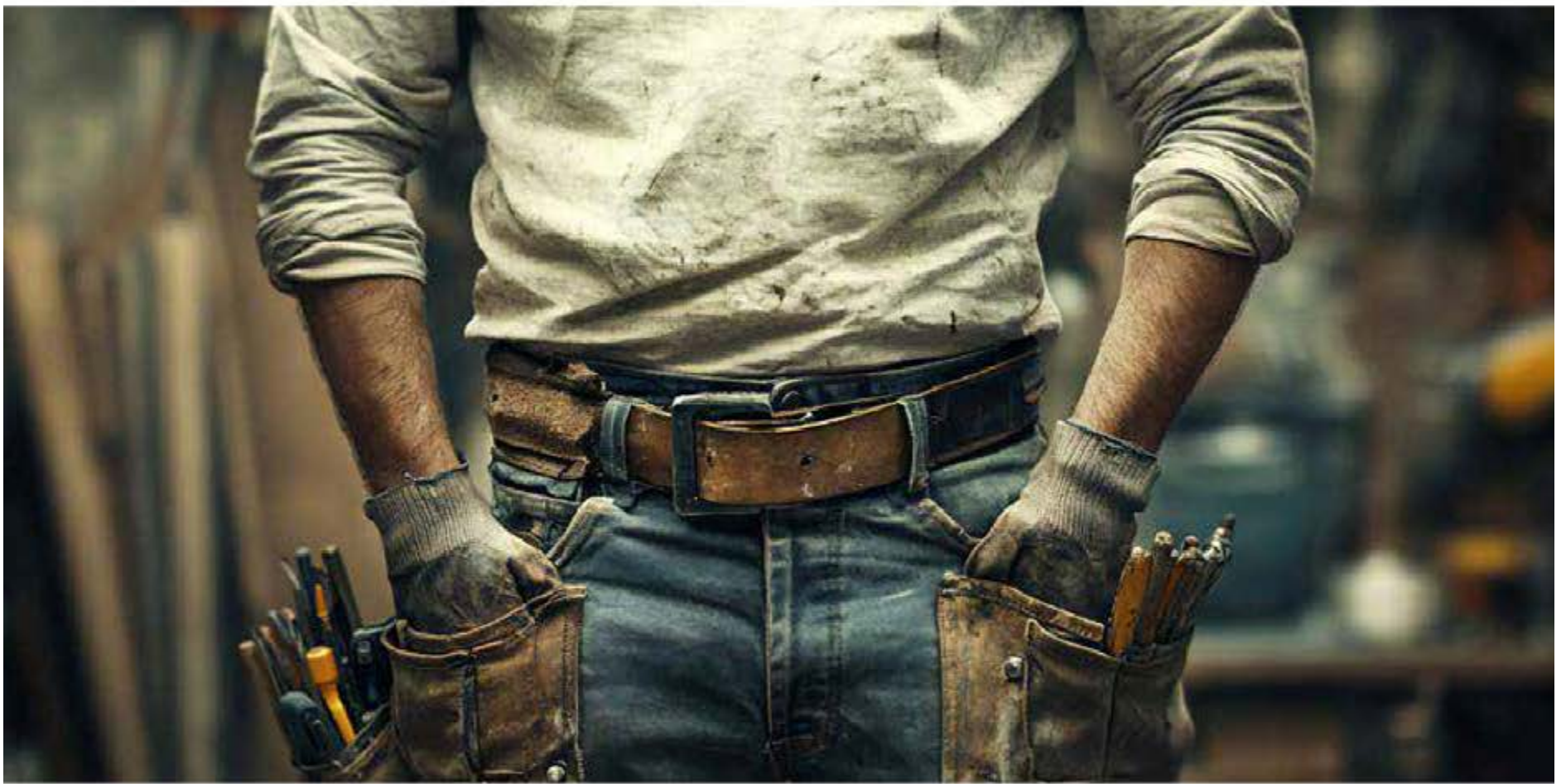
"Bouquet of Flowers on a Ledge"
by Ambrosius Bosschaert, 1619

Colored by: _____

Looking for a Career?
If You're 3-18 Months to Release, Sign Up for the
Residential & Commercial Maintenance
Technician 1 Course.

**Furnace
Maintenance
Basic Plumbing
Drywall**

**Fuse Box
A/C Maintenance
Wiring System**



**Reach out to Education
for more information.**

6 Week Course!
Great Pay!
Work Anywhere!

So, Do You Have Any Questions for Me?

40 Smart Questions to Ask a Hiring Agent During a Job Interview



SHOWING UP PREPARED FOR A JOB INTERVIEW INVOLVES NOT JUST HAVING ANSWERS READY, BUT ALSO A FEW QUESTIONS.

Once you start interviewing for jobs, you'll quickly realize that, usually, there will come a point in every job interview when the interviewer asks you, "So, do you have any questions for me?"

This often comes toward the end of the interview. If you don't see this question coming, you might find yourself breaking out in a cold sweat and drawing a blank. However, if you're prepared for this moment, this is actually an excellent opportunity for you to really shine as a job applicant.

When given the chance, the questions that you ask about the job, the company, or the culture of the workplace can almost instantly make you the most memorable and strongest candidate for the position you want.

Asking the right questions at the end of an interview shows you are engaged, proactive, and evaluating the company as much as they are evaluating you. It also shows that you are sincerely interested in and serious about joining the company's team.

But it's important for you to only ask questions if you actually care about the answers. Don't just randomly ask questions; choose a few that really mean something to you and make sure that you pay close attention to the answers.

Ideally, you will want to ask just 2 or 3 questions, so choose wisely. Whether you get the job or not, you will learn a lot from the answers you receive (which will help you tailor your approach to applying for other jobs in the future).

Here are 40 appropriate and effective ways to respond when, during a job interview, you're asked, "So, do you have any questions for me?"

- 1) "How will you measure success for this role?" Or, "How are the success metrics and performance for this role defined?" (This will show the interviewer that you are interested in clarity and establishing expectations before you even get started.)
- 2) "What's the performance review process like here? How often would I be formally reviewed?"
- 3) "What specifically about my background caught your attention for this role?" (This will help you determine which qualities you may want to highlight in other interviews in the future.)
- 4) "What are some of the ways in which this company supports its employees?" (This can help you learn about any benefits, perks, discounts, or other advantages that come with the job.)
- 5) "How would you describe the company's values?"
- 6) "What hard and soft skills are you prioritizing most for this position?"
- 7) "What characteristics and abilities does a successful employee here generally have?" (This will give you a valuable hint as to what qualities are valued at this company.)
- 8) "What kind of opportunities exist here for employee growth?" (This will help you learn whether the company provides any continuing education, professional development workshops, or optional training opportunities.)
- 9) "Do you expect my main responsibilities in this position to change in the next six months to a year?" (This can help you determine if the position will enable you to evolve and grow as an employee.)
- 10) "Which part of this position has the steepest learning curve?"



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What can I do in order to get up to speed quickly?"

11) "How long has your longest-tenured employee been here and what is the secret to their career longevity?" (This will give you valuable information regarding what qualities the company values and how you can help ensure long-time employment with them.)

12) "Why is the company investing in this role right now? Is it a new position or an existing position?" (This might tell you whether the company is growing and how you might be able to play a role in that growth.)

13) "What is the work culture like here?"

14) "How easy or difficult is it for you to maintain a work-life balance as a team member here?"

19) "Do you have any concerns that could keep me from obtaining this position? And if so, how can I reassure you? Is there anything I can clarify for you?" (This might provide you with an opportunity to put the interviewer's mind at ease if they tell you that your criminal history is a concern for them.)

20) "Is there anything on my resume, or that we discussed today, that leaves you with any hesitation about my fit for this role?" (This demonstrates confidence and gives you a crucial opportunity to clarify any concerns while you are still face-to-face.)

21) "What is your favorite part of your job?" (People love talking about themselves.)

22) "Why do you love working for this company? And what is one thing that you would change about it if you could?" (This will



THE QUESTIONS YOU CHOOSE TO ASK A HIRING AGENT
CAN HELP YOU STAND OUT AS A MEMORABLE JOB CANDIDATE.

15) "What do you think is the main reason employees choose to stay at this company long-term?"

16) "Is there anything in my resume or in the interview that prevents me from being the best candidate for this role?"

17) "What would you expect from me within the first 6 months of my employment for me to be deemed a successful hire?" Or, "What does success look like in the first 6 to 12 months in this position?" (This will show the interviewer that you are forward-thinking, ready to hit the ground running, and eager to make a fast impact.)

18) "What will the first 90 days of training and / or employment be like?" (This will not only allow the interviewer to envision you working in the role, but will also prepare you for your work life there.)

help you build rapport with the interviewer, will reveal genuine insights into the company culture, and will help you assess the work environment.)

23) "Why did you choose to work here, and what has kept you at the company?"

24) "What's different about working here than anywhere else you've worked?"

25) "How has the company changed since you joined?"

26) "Do you have any hesitations about hiring me? If so, I'd be happy to address any concerns you might have."

27) Ask an industry-related question about how the interviewer feels about something that has recently changed in the industry.

7 Questions to **AVOID** During a Job Interview.

We've offered you 40 smart questions to ask if you're given the opportunity during a job interview. But here's a list of what **NOT** to ask about:



Don't ask for information that can easily be found via a simple Google search. ("What does your company do?" or "Who is your competition?") This wastes the interviewer's time and makes it seem like you're not willing (or able) to do simple, "bare minimum" research.



Don't ask about gossip. Even if you've heard something about the company "through the grapevine" or from someone who already works there, keep your questions focused on public information rather than hearsay.



During your initial interview, avoid asking about pay, pay raises, and promotions. These are certainly important topics, but they will be discussed later, as part of the job offer process.



Don't ask if the company will conduct a background check. Assume that they will. Asking about this will make you look like you have something to hide.



Don't ask whether the company will monitor your social media posts. Assume that anything that you post publically on social media **WILL be seen by your employer and, if you do plan to use social media, post accordingly.**



Don't ask any questions of the interviewer that may be considered too personal or invasive. You don't want to make them feel uncomfortable or defensive.



Don't ask any questions about specific employees who already work there or may have worked there in the past. You can certainly state the fact that a friend of yours works there, or that a current employee referred you to the job, but don't expect the interviewer to be able to answer any questions about other employees' former or current employment. There are a variety of legal and privacy reasons why they can't answer those types of questions.

(This shows them that you're up-to-date and genuinely curious about the industry.)

28) "Is there anything you were hoping to see from your ideal candidate that I have not shown you yet?"

29) "What is the single biggest challenge the team is currently facing that you hope this new hire can help solve?" (This will reveal the hiring manager's current needs, allowing you to highlight how your specific skills can fulfill them.)

30) "What does a typical day or week look like in this position?"

31) "How would you describe the team culture and dynamics that exist here?"

32) "Can you tell me about the team I would be working with and how collaboration happens here?"

33) "What is the biggest challenge the person in this role will face?"

34) "What do your top performers do differently here?" (This will show the interviewer that you are interested in learning how to succeed in this role.)

35) "What are the next steps in the hiring process? And when should I expect to hear back?" (This helps you clarify the hiring timeline and allows you to follow up appropriately. It also shows the interviewer that you are thinking ahead.)

36) "How soon do you plan to choose a candidate for this position?"

37) "If I'm not chosen for this position, should I expect to receive notification that you've chosen someone else? And if so, how soon do you think that might happen?" (This shows that you're realistic about the fact that you may not be offered this job, and that you're already thinking ahead about a "plan B.")

38) "Between now and the next round of interviews, is there anything specific you recommend I read up on or research to prepare myself?" (This shows the interviewer that you are eager to do what it takes to make yourself the best candidate for this position.)

39) "If I'm not chosen as the best applicant for this position, what would you recommend I do to make myself a more competitive candidate for other openings that might become available here in the future?" (This communicates to the interviewer that you are committed to self-improvement, you are persistent, and you are eager to meet their expectations.)

40) "If I am chosen for this position, is there anything that you'd recommend I read or research before I start that will help me prepare for success in this role?" (This shows your initiative to be

prepared and to excel in your work.)

So, while the answers that you provide during a job interview help determine whether you'll be offered the job, don't forget that the questions you ask can also help you stand out as a thoughtful, curious, and motivated applicant.

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THE MORE YOU LEARN ABOUT HOW AMAZING BUTTERFLIES REALLY ARE, THE MORE YOU'LL WANT TO LEARN ABOUT HOW AMAZING BUTTERFLIES REALLY ARE!

Lessons in Metamorphosis

Dig Into the Gutenberg Library to Learn More About the Amazing Life of Butterflies

This issue's theme is "metamorphosis." Perhaps the most appropriate symbol of metamorphosis in nature is the butterfly. Butterflies start their life cycle as caterpillars and go through a dramatic transformation that involves their body being literally liquified in a chrysalis that they produce with their own body before eventually emerging as a beautiful – and entirely different - new creature. These tiny, winged insects then spend the rest of their lives migrating across continents in order to reproduce.

So, in light of this theme and the ways in which your own transformation might mirror that of the miraculous butterfly, we thought that you might be interested in learning a bit more about these amazing animals.

You will find all of the following books in the "Book Library" on your state-issued tablet, as part of the Gutenberg Library. As

is the case for all of the 75,000+ titles in the Gutenberg Library, you can read these books for free at your leisure. You may also find additional books about butterflies in your facility's library. As always, if you feel compelled to write a book review or essay about what you learn, feel free to do so and submit your writings to your SOE to be considered for publication in a future issue of Parallels.

One of the words that you may see in some of the titles on this list is "Lepidoptera," which refers to an order of insects that includes butterflies and moths.

Non-fiction books about butterflies:

Mimicry in Butterflies by Reginald Crundall Punnett

This is a scientific publication written in

the early 20th century. The book explores the fascinating topic of mimicry in butterfly species, examining how variations in appearance among butterflies can provide them with adaptive advantages against predators. It highlights key cases and theories, notably the distinctions between Batesian and Müllerian mimicry, aiming to make complex biological concepts accessible to a broader audience. The opening of the work establishes the author's motivation to provide a comprehensive yet concise examination of mimicry, mentioning that the book targets various readers, including those visiting tropical regions where butterflies are abundant and diverse. Punnett sets the stage by discussing the historical context of Darwin's theory of natural selection while introducing the concept of mimicry as an exploration of adaptation in nature. He emphasizes how mimicry serves as a pivotal example of evolutionary processes and invites readers to consider the intriguing aspects of butterfly life and the intricate relationships between models and mimics in the animal kingdom.

New Zealand Moths and Butterflies (Macro-Lepidoptera) by George Vernon Hudson

of these studies in understanding species origin and the evolutionary theories that apply, setting the stage for in-depth chapters on various groups of moths and butterflies that will follow in the work.

“Foreign Butterflies” by James Duncan

This book is well worth looking at if only to admire the gorgeous artwork that it features. With dozens of beautifully artistic, full-color illustrations throughout, this scientific publication (written in the mid-19th century) focuses on the diverse species of butterflies found in warmer climates, particularly highlighting their beauty and intricate forms compared to their temperate counterparts. It presents a detailed examination of various genera, enriching the reader's understanding of entomology and the characteristics that differentiate tropical butterflies from those found in other parts of the world. The author introduces the concept of the vast diversity and stunning aesthetics of foreign butterflies, describing their unique structures, colors, and the peculiarities of their caterpillars and chrysalides, setting the stage for a deeper exploration of these intriguing insects throughout the subsequent chapters.



THE BEAUTIFUL ILLUSTRATIONS THAT APPEAR IN “FOREIGN BUTTERFLIES” BY JAMES DUNCAN MAKE IT WELL WORTH BROWSING. THIS ONE FEATURES ORNITHOPTERA PRIAMUS AND ORNITHOPTERA REMUS.

This scientific publication, written in the late 19th century, serves as an extensive guide for anyone interested in studying New Zealand's native Lepidoptera, focusing particularly on larger moths and butterflies. It touches on aspects like the structure and transformations of these insects, as well as Darwinian theories relevant to their diversity. The opening of the book starts with a preface detailing the author's intention to provide valuable reference material for both enthusiasts and general readers. Hudson highlights the joy found in observing nature and the intricacies of insect life, leading into a discussion on the classifications and transformative stages of Lepidoptera, including eggs, larvae, and pupae. He emphasizes the importance

“Winter Butterflies in Bolinas” by Mary D. Barber

This nature-focused book was published in the early 20th century. It provides a detailed account of the migration and winter habits of the Monarch butterfly at Bolinas, a scenic coastal town in California. The narrative beautifully intertwines poetic descriptions of the locale with informative insights about the life cycle and behaviors of these butterflies. The book chronicles the Monarch butterflies' remarkable migratory journey from the Sierra Nevada and Rocky Mountains to their winter home in Bolinas. It vividly describes their physical characteristics, migration patterns, and the peculiar instinct that leads them to the same tree every winter.

Through engaging observations and lyrical prose, Barber captures the butterflies' interactions with the environment, such as their feeding on winter flowers and their resilience in the face of storms. The narrative also touches on the relationship between the butterflies and their surroundings, presenting a touching reflection on life, survival, and nature's cycles.

"Butterflies and Moths, Shown to the Children" by Theodore Wood

This scientific guide was written in the late 19th century. The book serves as an educational resource aimed at introducing children - or readers of any age - to the fascinating world of butterflies and moths, detailing their life cycles and characteristics. Through dozens of detailed and colorful illustrations, the reader is introduced to the many butterfly species that can be found in the British Isles. The opening of the book begins with a preface that sets the tone for educating young readers about the life-history of butterflies and moths. It explains how these insects start as eggs and then hatch into caterpillars, which undergo multiple molts before becoming chrysalids and finally emerging as fully formed butterflies or moths. Wood provides vivid descriptions while encouraging readers to observe these transformations and their vibrant physical features, such as the beautiful patterns on their wings, while also introducing concepts like the anatomy of insects and differences between butterflies and moths. Throughout this portion, the author maintains an engaging and accessible language aimed at fostering curiosity and appreciation for these delicate creatures.



THIS IS YET ANOTHER LOVELY ILLUSTRATION FROM JAMES DUNCAN'S "FOREIGN BUTTERFLIES," FEATURING SPECIMENS FROM CHINA AND SURINAM.

"Life Among the Butterflies" by Vance Randolph

This scientific publication was written in the early 20th century and features many simple educational diagrams. This work focuses on the biology, classification, and life cycle of butterflies, examining their anatomy, metamorphosis, and ecological interactions. The book serves as a comprehensive guide for butterfly enthusiasts and researchers alike, delving into the intricacies of these fascinating creatures. In "Life Among the Butterflies," Randolph begins by outlining the historical context of butterfly literature before diving into detailed descriptions of the anatomy of butterflies, including their head, thorax, wings, and abdomen. He explores the complete metamorphosis process in butterflies, describing their life stages from egg to caterpillar, chrysalis, and finally, the adult butterfly. The book also categorizes butterflies into families and subfamilies, illustrating their differences and similarities, with thorough insights into their behaviors, protective adaptations, and ecological roles. By focusing on both scientific terminology and engaging descriptions, Randolph aims to enhance the reader's understanding and appreciation of butterflies, making this work a valuable resource for naturalists and lepidopterists.

A few fictional stories about butterflies (these are great choices for reading to little ones during in-person or video visits):

"A Butterfly Chase" by P.J. Stahl

This children's storybook was written in the late 19th century. The charming narrative revolves around two young characters, Minnie and Bertie, who embark on a whimsical adventure to collect butterflies. Their journey highlights themes of curiosity, innocence, and the connection between children and nature. The story begins with Minnie and Bertie eagerly prepared with butterfly nets and a guidebook provided by their uncle, who is a professor. They venture into a daisy-filled meadow, hoping to capture beautiful butterflies, particularly peacock and emperor varieties. As they chase after these enchanting creatures, they face various mishaps and humorous moments, such as inadvertently falling into a ditch. Ultimately, when Bertie captures a butterfly, he is struck by its beauty and life; persuaded by Minnie, he decides against harming it. Their adventure concludes with feelings of joy as they learn the value of kindness towards all living beings, vowing never to chase butterflies again.

"Miss Elliot's Girls: Stories of Beasts, Birds, and Butterflies" by Mrs. Mary Spring Corning

This is a collection of children's stories likely written in the late 19th century. The book features themes of nature and animal life, focusing on the interactions between children and the creatures they observe, particularly through the eyes of the character Miss Ruth Elliot, who shows a keen curiosity and an affectionate connection to the natural world. The opening of the book

introduces young Sammy Ray, who is enlisted by Miss Ruth to find tobacco worms for her to keep and observe. Throughout their interactions, Ruth demonstrates a nurturing spirit, as she prepares to accommodate the worms, naming them Greeny and Blacky. The narrative delves into the process of transformation, drawing a parallel between the metamorphosis of the worms into butterflies and the broader theme of change in life. The lively conversations between Ruth and the children about the worms provide a charming glimpse into their world, establishing connections between nature, education, and personal growth, setting the tone for the delightful stories that follow.

“The Tale of Betsy Butterfly” by Arthur Scott Bailey

This is a children’s storybook written in the early 20th century. This lighthearted tale revolves around the life of a charming butterfly named Betsy, showcasing her interactions with various characters in Pleasant Valley, and exploring themes of beauty, friendship, and jealousy in nature. The narrative is crafted to both entertain young readers and impart gentle life lessons about kindness and acceptance. The story introduces Betsy Butterfly, who is admired for her beauty but also faces jealousy from other woodland creatures, particularly Mrs. Ladybug. Johnnie Green, a farm boy, adds tension by attempting to capture Betsy for his butterfly collection, while various other insects and animals contribute to the colorful cast around her. Through a series of events, including misunderstandings and a quest for self-acceptance, Betsy encounters challenges but always maintains her cheerful disposition. Ultimately, the story highlights the importance of being true to oneself and the value of friendship, leaving readers with an uplifting message about embracing one’s individuality amidst external opinions.

So, if you’re looking for some “uplifting” reading material, and want to learn as much as you can about lepidoptera, don’t just “wing it!” Search the Gutenberg “FLY-brary” on your state-issued tablet for one of these butterfly-themed books!



“YOU DO NOT JUST WAKE UP AND BECOME THE BUTTERFLY.
GROWTH IS A PROCESS.”
~RUPI KAUR

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Countdown to Your Job Interview!

So, you've got an appointment. (Congrats!)
Follow these guidelines to prepare for the big day!

Start doing these things as soon as you know you have an appointment:



Research the company.

Read (and re-read!) the job description.

Practice talking about yourself and what you can bring to this position.

Review your resume, make any necessary updates, and print at least five copies to take with you.

Assemble your "turn around packet" to leave with the interviewer.

Plan what you'll wear and shop for anything you're missing (don't forget about shoes & socks, a belt, a handbag, etc.).

Map out the location of the interview and even consider making a "trial run" beforehand so that you know how to get there and where to park. (Avoid last minute surprises!)

The night before:



Go to bed early and get plenty of sleep.

Assemble your outfit so that you know that everything is clean, ironed, and ready.

Prepare your printed resumes, your turn-around packet, your ID, and any other documents that the interviewer has requested.

Set multiple alarms so that you don't oversleep.

Get up and leave early to allow for any unexpected issues such as traffic jams.

Eat a healthy breakfast that will fuel your brain for the day.

Plan to arrive early (even if you have to wait in your car or a coffee shop across the street) and walk into the building or office about 15 minutes prior to your scheduled appointment.

Take a deep breath and give yourself a pat on the back! You're gonna do great!

And don't forget to call or send an e-mail shortly after your appointment to thank the interviewer for their time!

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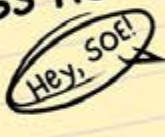


JOB



Ready

To Do List:

- ☒ Finish GED. 
- ☐ talk to SOE about applying for Lewis University's Bachelor's Degree in Professional Studies with a Business Administration minor. 
- ☐ Complete the Lewis application. 
- ☐ Complete the FAFSA form to apply for financial aid. 



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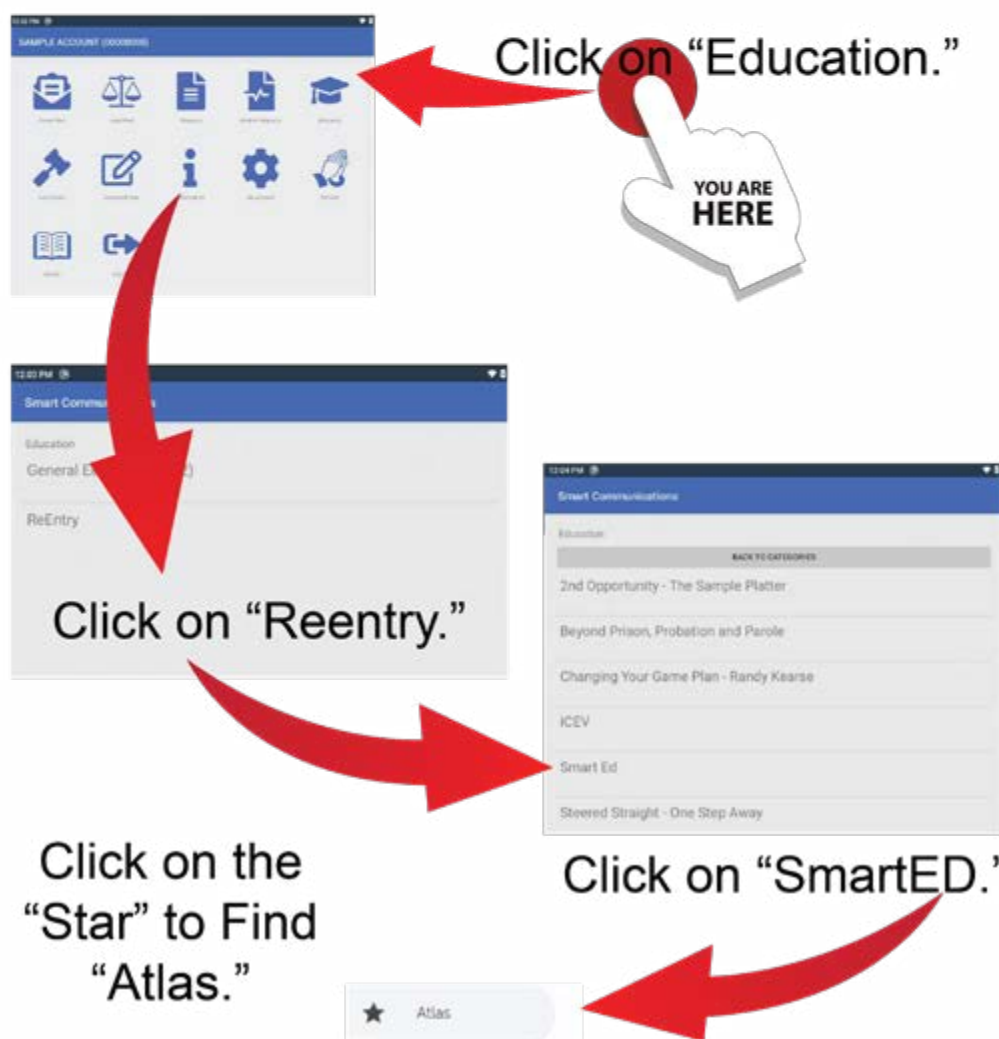
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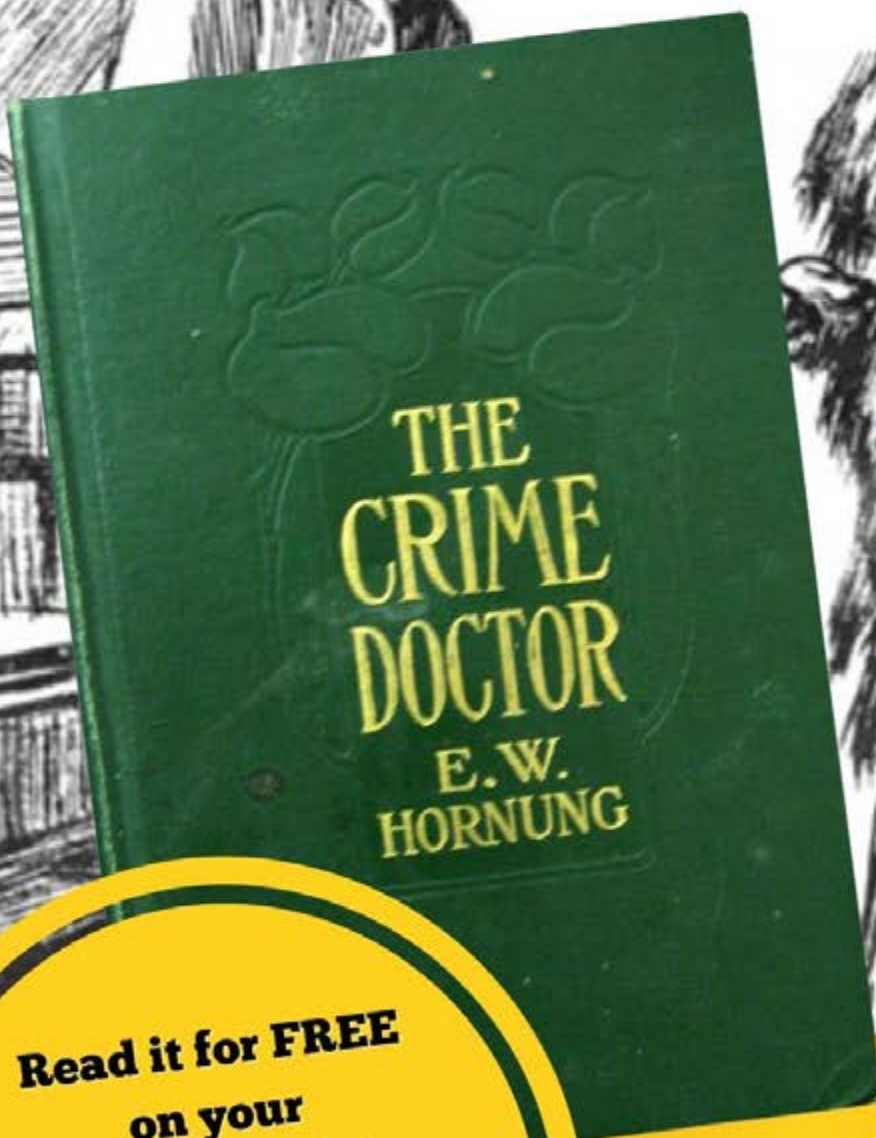
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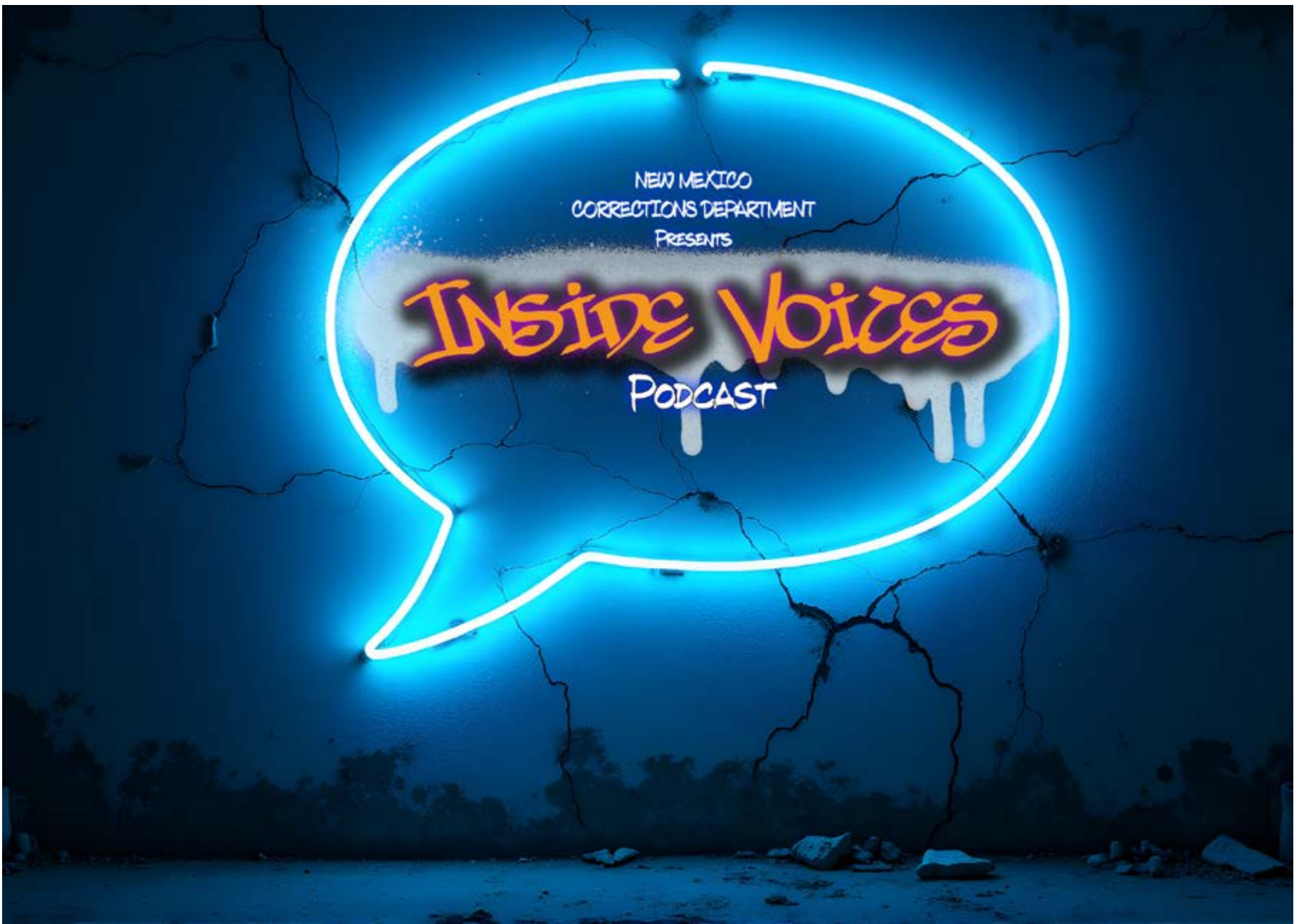
The Crime Doctor

By E.W. Hornung



**Read it for FREE
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Go to "Entertainment,"
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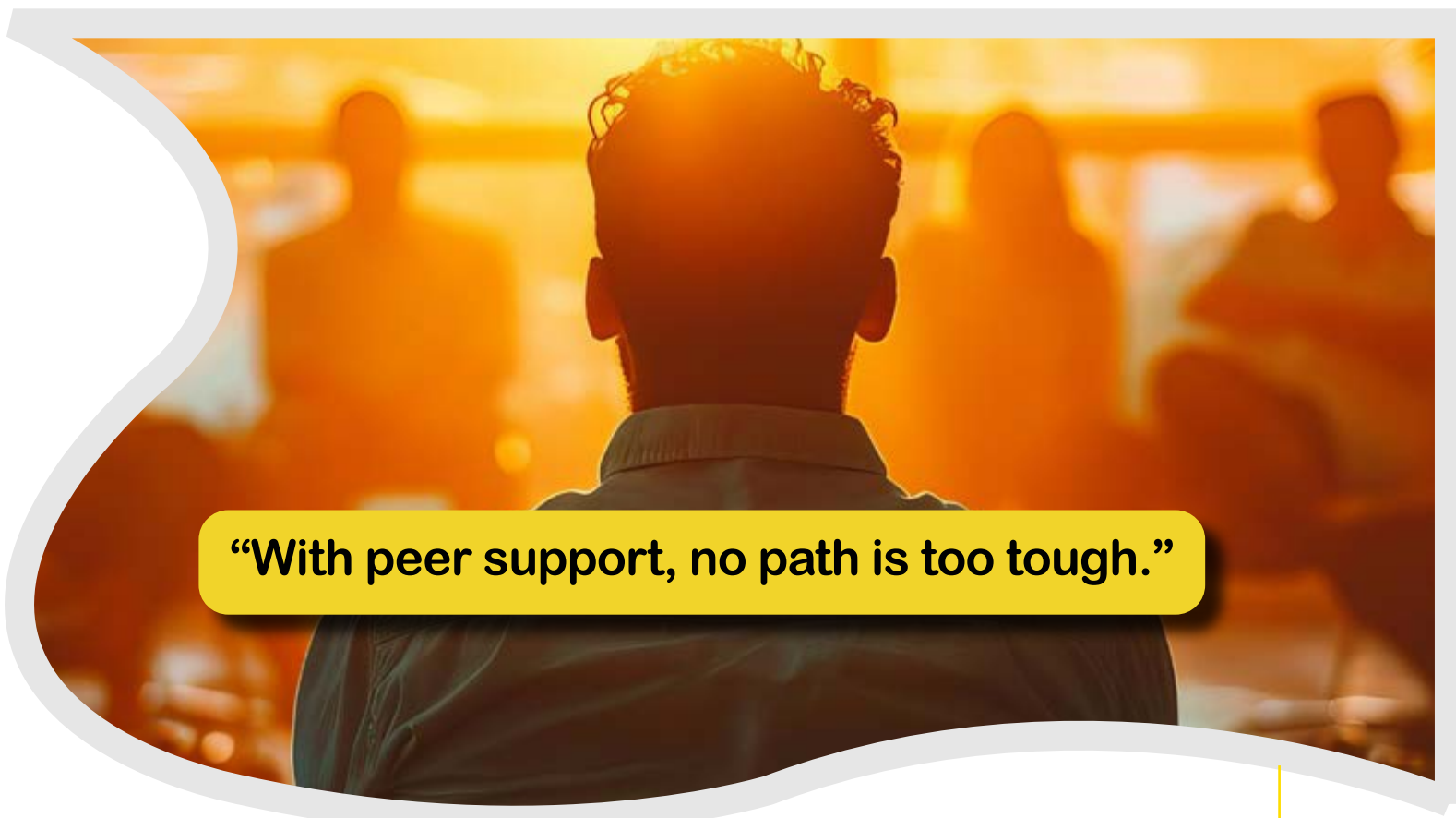
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how to participate
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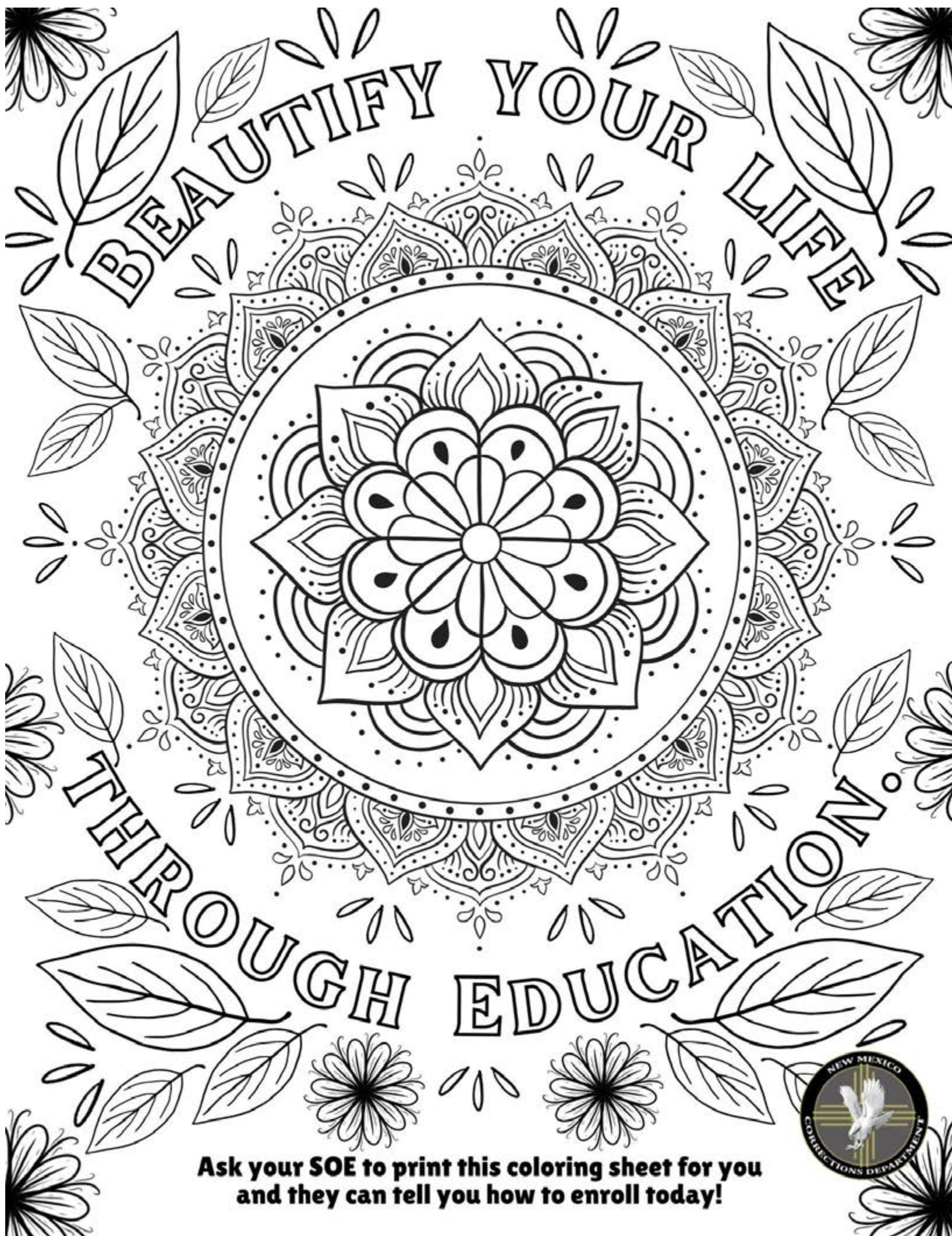
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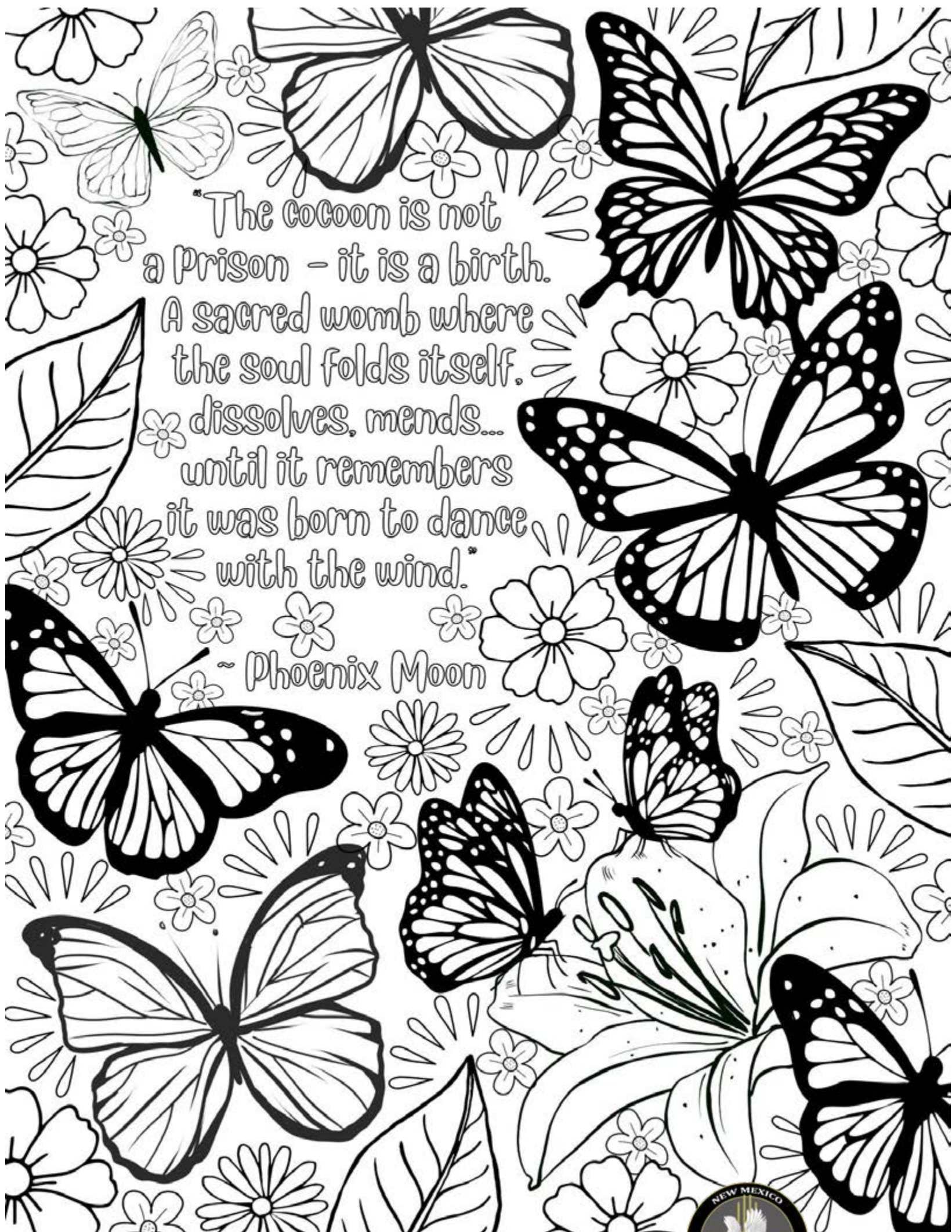
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"The cocoon is not
a Prison - it is a birth.
A sacred womb where
the soul folds itself,
dissolves, mends...
until it remembers
it was born to dance
with the wind."

~ Phoenix Moon







PARALLELS WORD SEARCH



YOU WILL FIND THE ANSWERS



TO THE WORD SEARCH ON THE NEXT PAGE.

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SELF	REHABILITATE		
COURAGE	REINVENTION		



Reflections on Corrections

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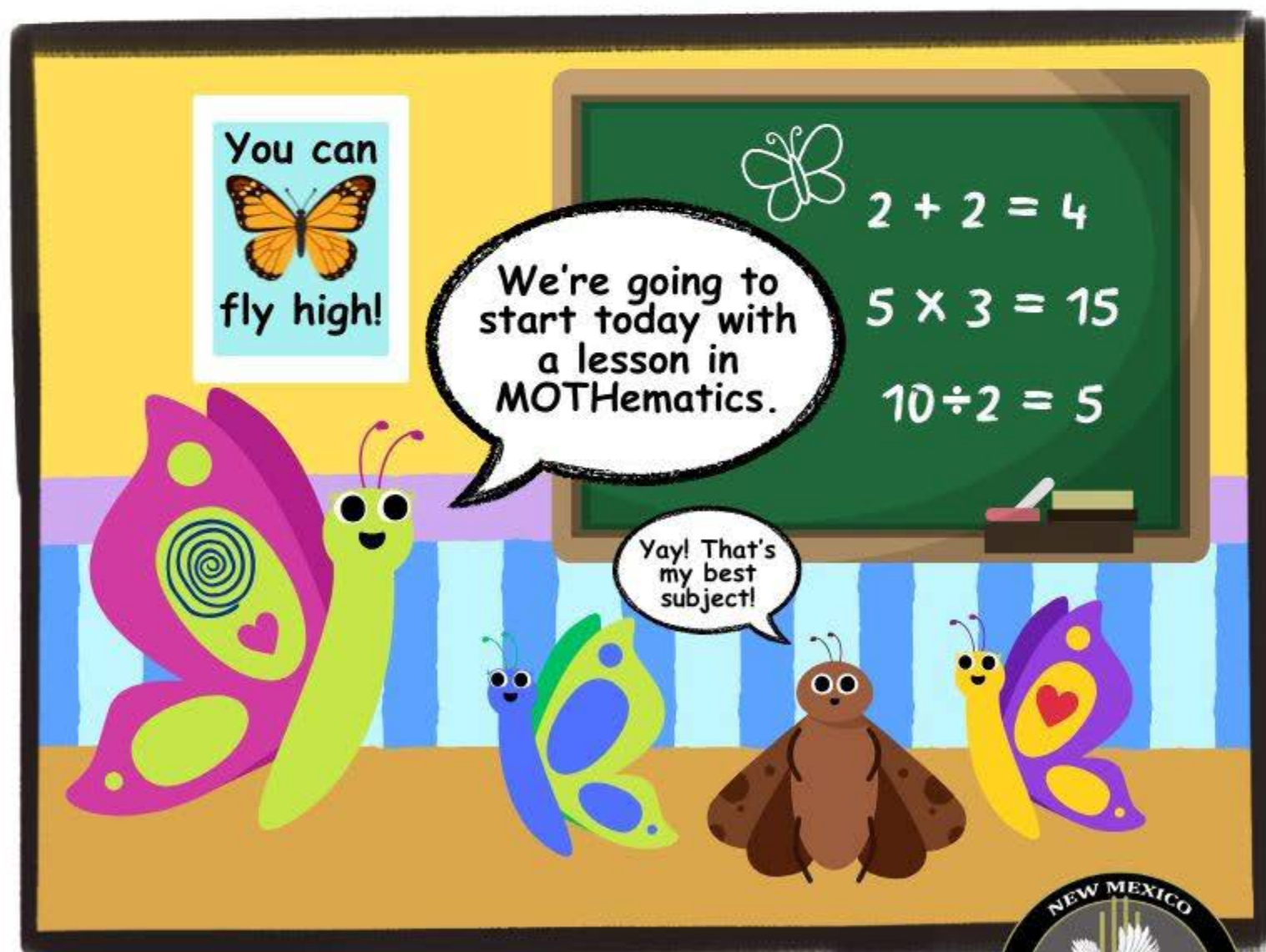
*The redemption
of the mind,
is equally important,
as the redemption
of the heart.*

- Wayne Chirisa

”



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"It's an Inside Joke"





Vocab Zone



This glossary of terms provides the definition of some of the words used throughout this issue of Parallels and will help you TRANSFORM your vocabulary.

Accountability: The obligation or willingness to accept responsibility for your actions, decisions, and outcomes.



Adaptability: The ability and willingness to easily modify your behaviors, ideas, or methods in order to respond successfully to new, changing, or unpredictable circumstances.

Adversity: A difficult situation, condition, or a state of continued misfortune and hardship.



Aspiration: A strong ambition, hope, or driving desire to achieve something significant.

Chrysalis: The hard outer pupal stage of a butterfly or moth during which the larva undergoes metamorphosis to become an adult.

Cocoon: A silken casing spun by a moth caterpillar to protect its vulnerable pupa inside.



Compassion: The emotional response to recognizing suffering combined with an authentic desire to alleviate it.

Competitive: An adjective describing situations, behaviors, or items that involve rivalry, where individuals or groups strive to outdo others or achieve dominance.



Component: An individual part, element, or ingredient that combines with other parts to form a larger, complex whole.

Comprehend: To mentally grasp or understand the full nature, meaning, or significance of something.



Consistency: The quality of staying the same over time, acting in a reliable and predictable manner, or maintaining a uniform state.

Determination: The firm resolve or unwavering commitment to achieve a goal, regardless of the challenges or setbacks encountered.



Digitally Literate: Having the cognitive and technical skills to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information using digital devices.

Dignity: The state or quality of being worthy of honor, respect, and self-esteem.

Discipline: The ability to obey rules, follow standards, or exercise self-control.



Vocab Zone



This glossary of terms provides the definition of some of the words used throughout this issue of Parallels and will help you TRANSFORM your vocabulary.

Disclose: To make secret or hidden information known to the public or to specific individuals.

Discouraged: The emotional state of having lost one's confidence, enthusiasm, or hope regarding a specific task or goal.

Elegant: Graceful, stylish, and attractive in appearance or manner.

Emerge: To come out into view, become visible, or rise from something.

Empathy: The ability to understand, share, and experience another person's emotions and perspectives.

Endurance: The ability to sustain prolonged physical or mental effort, or to withstand hardship, stress, and fatigue.

Entitlement: The condition of having a right to certain benefits, or the belief that one inherently deserves privileges or special treatment.

Entomology: The scientific study of insects and their relationship to humans, the environment, and other organisms. It is a vital branch of zoology that explores insect biology, behavior, ecology, and taxonomy.

Glossary: An alphabetical list of specialized, technical, or uncommon terms used in a specific book, document, or field of study, along with their definitions.

Hearsay: Information you have heard from others but do not know to be true firsthand, functioning essentially as a rumor, gossip, or word-of-mouth.

Highlight: To emphasize, focus on, or visually mark information.

Humility: The quality of having a modest, accurate view of one's own importance and abilities.

Insight: The capacity for gaining an accurate, deep, and intuitive understanding of a person, situation, or complex problem.

Instill: To gradually and gently introduce a feeling, idea, or principle into someone's mind over time, so it deeply influences their behavior.

Iridescent: An adjective that describes something displaying glowing, shifting rainbow-like colors.





Vocab Zone



This glossary of terms provides the definition of some of the words used throughout this issue of Parallels and will help you TRANSFORM your vocabulary.

Jerry-rig: To hastily put together, repair, or construct something in a crude, makeshift manner using whatever materials are on hand.

Lepidoptera: The large scientific order of insects that includes butterflies and moths. The term translates directly from ancient Greek to "scaly wings," perfectly describing the minute, overlapping, and often brightly colored scales that cover their wings and bodies.

Mandate: An official order, a command to do something, or the authority granted to someone to act in a certain way.

Marketable: Describes a product, service, or skill that is in demand and easy to sell because people want to buy it or employers want to hire it.

Metamorphosis: A profound, transformative change in physical form, structure, character, or circumstances.

Miscalculation: An error in judgment, planning, or actual mathematical figuring that leads to an incorrect outcome.

Navigate: To plan, direct, or control the course of a journey (like steering a ship or driving a car).

Persistence: The determined, voluntary continuation of a goal-directed action despite obstacles, difficulties, or discouragement.

Potential: Refers to an unrealized ability or capacity. It describes something that is dormant but capable of developing into actuality, given the right conditions, actions, or circumstances.

Proactive: The quality of controlling a situation by causing things to happen, rather than waiting to respond to events after they occur.

Prospective: An adjective that means likely to happen, expected to become, or relating to the future.

Refined: Refers to something that has been made pure, polished, or improved through a deliberate process.

Regimented: Describes an environment, system, or routine that is extremely organized, strictly controlled, and governed by inflexible rules.





Vocab Zone



This glossary of terms provides the definition of some of the words used throughout this issue of Parallels and will help you TRANSFORM your vocabulary.

Reliability: The quality of being dependable, consistent, and trustworthy.



Resilience: The ability to adapt, recover, and grow in the face of adversity, trauma, or significant stress.

Resourcefulness: The ability to find creative, practical, and ingenious solutions to challenges, especially when faced with constraints, obstacles, or limited resources.



Significant: An adjective that describes something that is sufficiently important, meaningful, or large enough to be worthy of attention.

Stamina: The physical or mental energy and strength required to sustain a tiring, stressful, or difficult activity over a long period.

Stratosphere: The literal definition is the second major layer of Earth's atmosphere, sitting just above the troposphere (where we live) and below the mesosphere. In casual and journalistic language, "stratosphere" is used to describe an extremely high or record-breaking level, position, or rank.

Taxonomy: The scientific study and practice of classification. It involves establishing an underlying scheme of categories and systematically organizing items (like organisms, concepts, or data) into a structured, often hierarchical format based on shared traits and relationships.

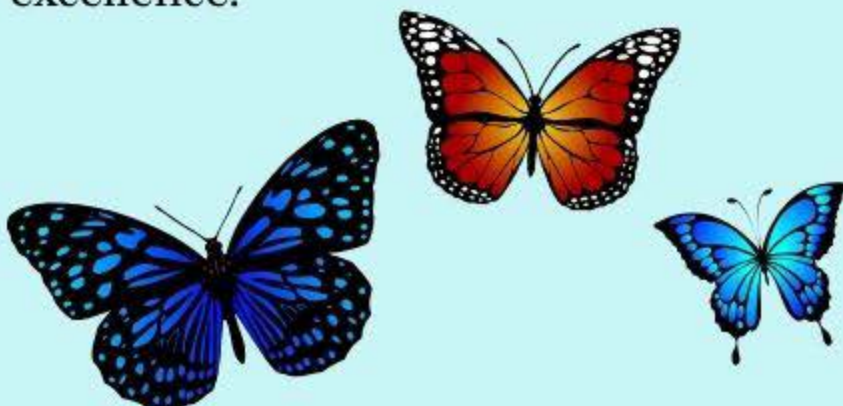


Trustworthiness: The quality of being deserving of trust, confidence, and reliance.



Utilize: To make practical and effective use of something, often employing an item or resource for a specific purpose, function, or profitable end.

Worthiness: The quality of having adequate merit, value, or excellence.





Parallels Self-Quiz

So, you've read this issue of Parallels cover to cover?
Take this self-quiz to see how much you learned!

True or False?

- 1) Butterflies and moths belong to an order of insects called Coleoptera.
- 2) An example of a soft skill would be the ability to drive a forklift.
- 3) You should aim to arrive at your job interview five minutes before your appointment time.
- 4) Butterflies taste with their feet.
- 5) If you weren't born with a particular soft skill, then you will never be able to develop that skill.
- 6) One of the purposes of a job interview is for you to learn about the company and decide if it is a place where you'd want to work.
- 7) You will probably be able to get a job the first week after your release from prison.
- 8) Journaling is a great way for you to start getting into the headspace of looking for and applying for jobs.
- 9) When an interviewer asks you whether you have a criminal record, you should either say, "No," or, if you say, "Yes," tell them the entire story of your criminal offense, including exactly what happened, who did what, and every single specific detail of your crimes, charges, and sentencing.
- 10) The "Ban the Box" law refers to the fact that it's illegal to steal a package from someone's porch.

Multiple choice:

- 11) Some helpful ways to prepare for a job interview include all of the following except:

A - Reading the company's website.

B - Calling or visiting the place of business to find out how the people who work there dress.

C - Sitting down with a friend or family member and "role playing" how you think the interview might go, having them ask some of the questions that you anticipate.

D - Thinking of some excuses that you can provide when they inevitably ask you about your criminal history.
- 12) Which of these would be a good wardrobe choice for a job interview?

A - Flip-flops (which will show that you're an easy-going person).

B - Neon green fingernails (which will help you stand out and ensure that they remember you).

C - A clean, ironed white dress shirt (which will demonstrate that you are professional and conscientious about your appearance).

D - A tank top (so that you won't get too hot and sweat during your interview).

13) If, toward the end of a job interview, the interviewer asks you, “Do you have any questions for me?” you should:

A - Say, “No,” because it’s considered rude for an applicant to ask questions during a job interview.

B - Say, “When do I start?”

C - Say, “No,” because asking questions suggests that you weren’t paying attention during the interview.

D - Ask a few strategic questions that will help you learn about the job, the company, and the work culture of the jobsite.

14) The theme of this issue of Parallels is

A - Determination.

B - Redemption.

C - Metamorphosis.

D - Flexibility.

15) An example of a “hard skill” would be

A - The ability to show up to work on time.

B - Having a sense of humor.

C - Having your GED or HiSET.

D - Being willing to remain dedicated to solving a problem until it has been resolved.

16) In the context of this issue of Parallels, metamorphosis refers to

A - Transforming from an incarcerated person to an employed returning citizen.

B - Undergoing a life-changing process that allows you to become a better person during and after your incarceration through programming and self-reflection.

C - Spending some time in an environment that redirects your life and supports your self-improvement efforts, including developing both hard and soft skills.

D - All of the above.

17) Some butterflies use an evolutionary survival tool called mimicry to protect themselves from predators, which means that

A - They use their wings to make a sound similar to their predator to trick the predator into thinking that they are attacking a member of their own species.

B - Despite being non-toxic, they have evolved the patterning of poisonous butterflies to trick predators into avoiding eating them.

C - They have developed eyes in the back of their heads so that they can see their predators coming.

D - They emit a strong, foul-smelling spray from a gland (like a skunk does) that makes the predator avoid them.

18) Asking an interviewer how they feel about a recent change in their industry during a job interview helps communicate

A - That you don’t know anything about what’s going on in the industry.

B - That you’re smarter than them.

C - That you are genuinely curious about what is happening in the industry and that you have been paying attention to the changes that are happening within it.

D - That you have the upper hand because you are doing a “power play” and trying to trip them up by asking them a question that they’re not expecting.

19) If an interviewer asks about why there is such a long gap on your resume since the last time you had a job, you should

A - Tell them that you were on a spiritual retreat at a monastery in the Himalayas for a while.

B - Tell them that you won the lottery and didn’t have to work for a few years, but now you’ve run out of money and have to get a job again.

C - Tell them that during that time, you were incarcerated. Then highlight the various jobs, programming, and other self-improvement activities you participated in during that time.

D - Tell them that you were abducted by aliens and only just recently were returned to earth.

20) Some of the ways in which your incarceration can actually make you a better job candidate include

- A - Your having developed situational awareness.
- B - Your having had to embrace patience and persistence.
- C - Your having learned the importance of compliance in life and in the workplace.
- D - All of the above.



Answers:

- | | |
|--------|--------|
| 1 – F | 11 – D |
| 2 – F | 12 – C |
| 3 – F | 13 – D |
| 4 – T | 14 – C |
| 5 – F | 15 – C |
| 6 – T | 16 – D |
| 7 – F | 17 – B |
| 8 – T | 18 – C |
| 9 – F | 19 – C |
| 10 – F | 20 – D |

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