Fostering Empowerment for Incarcerated Women: Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail; A Book Study Curriculum

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Abstract
Incarcerated women historically have prior membership in marginalized communities, resulting in high rates of under-education, unemployment, single parenthood, poverty, intimate partner abuse, and low self-esteem. This 6 week-long book study curriculum, grounded in transformative learning theory, is designed to wholeheartedly foster the educational growth of female inmates through development of self-competence and specific life skills in areas of literacy, oral communication, and critical thinking. Through engaging, collaborative, and critical exploration of a woman’s memoir entitled Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail, incarcerated women will reflect on their lived experiences and their place in family and society. Regarding these female inmates as life-long learners, this book study curriculum consists of five thematic parts: The Ten Thousand Things, Tracks, Range of Light, Wild, and Box of Rain. This self-inquiry learning, coupled with empathic group discussions, will bring awareness to shared experiences, social struggles, personal conflicts, and reflective thinking. The ultimate outcome of this book study curriculum that the author hopes for is empowerment for incarcerated women to develop new habits of heart and mind on life, family, and the world in which we live.

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