



IT'S NEVER TOO LATE

Teaching Offenders Empathy, Forgiveness and Resilience.

Presentation by Craig Plunkett

Learning Objectives?

Greater Awareness and insight into the life of an offender convicted of murder and other crimes, from the offenders perspective? Childhood, to an adult doing 30 to life.

Roger Ollison's childhood:

1. 1a. When I was a teenager I didn't forgive anyone. In fact I would have told you then that I "hate everyone." I was a thousand miles from a relationship with God, but I had been saved. It was I who turned my back on God. In my youthful ignorance I thought God had left me. I was the worst person you would ever want to meet! I stole from everyone I knew, used and abused others. And, I was active in my addiction. I lived my life from one horrible deprived moment to the next, trying to outrun the destruction that I was causing.

Roger Ollison Cont.

2a. On September 20, 1989, I couldn't run anymore! I committed a murder to get away with two burglaries. My victim was my own aunt, melody. Through my young life was fraught with physical & sexual abuse as well as the violent murder of my biological mother, I know today these were not reasons to act the way I did.

3a. Back then, I wanted the world to pay for my pain. It was easy to put blame on a person who hurt me and I blamed Melody for much of my pain – most of it was not her doing.

Roger Cont.

What will it take to reenter society?

First I need to be in recovery. I can't do anything without being clean and sober. Living a lifestyle of accountability. The minute I start to think I could go back to the way I was before, I have doomed myself to repeat my past.

What has been your experience of being able to have "victims" come into classes?

Craig's classes allowed me to have surrogate victims, people that had not harmed me, but had been harmed the way I harmed my family. I was able to hear in their sharing how much pain I put my family through. I was able to open my heart & feel empathy & eventually forgiveness. Meeting Craig & attending these classes changed my life.

ROGER OLLISON CONT. NEW HEALTHY BEHAVIORS
AND WAYS OF THINKING THAT WILL EQUIP YOU TO
BE MORE SUCCESSFUL ONCE PAROLED?

- 1. Put others first.
- 2. Make Amends.
- 3. Take responsibility.
- 4. Give thanks to God.
- 5. Forgive others.
- 6. Love others.
- 7. Be a leader for God.
- 8. Share my story.
- 9. Ask for help.
- 10. Be humble.
- 11. Give credit to God.
- 12. Pray.
- 13. Listen.
- 14. Allow my feelings to show.
- 15. Honesty.
- 16. Open mindedness.
- 17. Willingness.
- 18. Do the right thing-even when nobody is looking.

A few of Craig's rules of success for the offenders in class?

1. Treat everyone that you meet with respect. That goes for guys inside, and people on the outside.
2. Surround yourselves with people that will lift you up, instead of tearing you down. Surround yourselves with mentors, pastors, successful business people. Seek higher education, etc.
3. Get involved with volunteer groups, feeding the homeless, etc. Reach out and make someone else's day great. Most of the guys in the class are in service clubs, New Horizons, Solutions & Family First, etc.
4. Favorite saying that I harp on: What gets the mind gets us, and what gets us is reported through our thoughts, attitudes, words & actions(I have this one on my business card.)
5. So, who are these people that can build you up and not tear you down?

People that come into class to speak:

1. Mary Bittler- 14 Year old Daughter raped and murdered across the street from Mary's home.
2. Vivian Andaur- 14 Year old son shot and killed by a gang member at a birthday party.
3. Judge Tom Kohl- 22 year old daughter murdered, it was a contract hit.
4. Michele Kohler- Father murdered when she was 15 years old. Became a defense attorney.
5. April Rains- 15 year old son incarcerated for sexual assault against her daughter.
6. Mary Zinkin- Shot at sitting in her car at a 7-11 store when she was 22 years old.
7. Rachel Cunliffe- Domestic Violence survivor.
8. Svava Brooks- Sexually molested as a child.
9. Keith Christenson- Offender, did 14 years in prison.
10. Clifford Jones- Offender, did 13 years of a 50 year sentence, Pastor at Son Rise Church
11. Ricky Russ Jr. – 3 time offender, late learner?

Continued.

12. Naseem Rakha- Restorative justice, death penalty opponent, wrote a book about empathy, RJ. & the death penalty.

13. James Demry- Offender, imprisoned at OSCI.

14. Phil Verdoon- Offender.

15. Rick Schermerhorn- CEO/President of a 50 million dollar a year company in Troutdale.

16. Randy- Father murdered in the yard of Oregon State Prison, when Randy was 13 years old.

17. Sarah Lazzari- Inside Development Group (IDG).

18. Leslie Neale – Actress, Restorative Justice, Producer/Director at Chance Films

19. Darold & Barbara Bigger – Daughter murdered, Professor at Walla Walla University.

20. Jessica Trimmer – Hit by a drunk driver that was 18 years old. Totaled the car, and she lived to tell her story.

DVD'S USED IN CLASS?

1. From Murder to Forgiveness, by Azim Khamisa
2. Forgiveness, A time to love & a time to hate, by Helen Whitney
3. The Power of Forgiveness, by Journey Films
4. Beyond Right & Wrong, series of justice and Forgiveness
5. Juvies, director Leslie Neale, Chance Films
6. Unlikely Friends, director Leslie Neale, Chance Films
7. I killed my BFF, Silent Screams, Eric's story of his murder.
8. On The case with Paul Zahn & Kindness is Contagious

BOOKS USED IN CLASS

1. The Bible – Proverbs
2. Losing Megan – Judge Kohl
3. The Crying Tree- Naseem Rakha
4. You can make it on the outside – Richard “ Bear” Morgan
5. A Life to Die For – Retired pastor Clarence Schilt
6. The Book of Job – Ricky Russ Jr.
7. PCS & PHD – Ricky Russ Jr.
8. A Time to Forgive – Darold & Barbara Bigger