

#Everyone's Column is made up of submissions from inmates, desistors, staff and volunteers. It aims to allow you a space of reflection and promote a sense of community. We hope that you will inspire and be inspired.

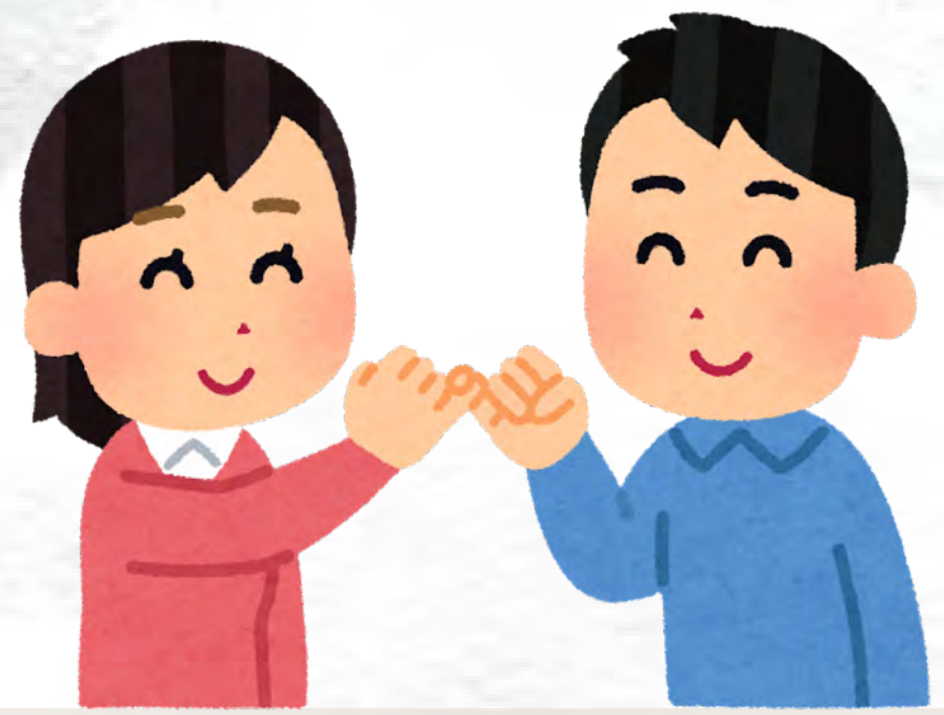
FEATURING SUBMISSIONS FROM RCU

RCU, also known as the Resolute Correctional Unit, is a transformative environment that supports and strengthens renouncees' prosocial identities and their resolve towards a gang-free lifestyle. Renouncees live as a community with a shared purpose and opportunities are provided to further strengthen their prosocial identity through a series of programmes and practices.

#EVERYONE'S COLUMN

ISSUE #10A: REBUILDING TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS

THANK YOU, I LOVE YOU



Coming into DRC for the second time has put many of my relationships to the test. Getting cuffed again, I was reminded of the looks of disappointment on the faces of my loved ones—but this time, that disappointment was mixed with the pain of the promises I had made and broken. It was then that I realized how much of a letdown I had been, not only to myself but also to the people around me who had placed their hopes and expectations on me.

Through their actions, I came to see that they had never given up on me—and I know that was a conscious choice. I understand how easy it is to walk away when a situation feels impossible or when someone seems unwilling to change. Yet they chose to stand by me and remain my pillar of support.

From them, I learned what it means to love unconditionally: to trust, to have faith, and to let go of the idea that you always have the option to walk away. Instead, it means doing what it takes to make things work.

It's strange how only when we are hurting do we begin to think of those we have hurt, and feel the weight of remorse. But the truth is, it is never too late to start making amends. I hope this letter inspires you to take the first step: to reach out to your loved ones, to own up to your actions, to make peace with them, and to say the simple yet powerful words, "Thank you, and I love you."

CHANGE FROM WITHIN

Relationships are built on trust, and without it, they can easily become fragile. Rebuilding trust is not impossible, but it is often challenging. It requires consistency and a proven track record that shows genuine change.

The most important lesson is this: change must come from within. You must find your own reason to change, because no one else can do it for you. External solutions may provide temporary fixes, but lasting transformation comes only when you draw strength from within and commit to becoming better.

Finally, trust can only be rebuilt if a chance is given—so give others a reason to grant you that chance. Everything happens for a reason, and even in difficult times, it is important to stay strong and keep moving forward. Hold on to the hope that there is always light at the end of the tunnel.



THE LONG ROAD BACK TO TRUST

The biggest challenge I am currently facing in rebuilding trust with my wife is accepting the fact that, for now, there is simply nothing more I can do. With her absence during my last two visits, our only form of communication has been through e-letters. But written words often fall short—they cannot fully capture the tone, emotions, and feelings we wish to express. That has been a huge setback. My only coping mechanism now is to stay positive, to believe that I will one day be able to rebuild the trust between us and restore our relationship.

This experience has taught me many lessons. The most obvious is to never consume drugs again. On a deeper level, it has taught me about patience, boundaries, and communication—especially the importance of pausing before reacting to words that stir unpleasant emotions. Above all, I have learned that being present is the most important thing anyone can do when rebuilding a relationship.

My struggles with my wife are far from resolved, but I hold onto faith that when I return to her, we can begin the process of rebuilding together. For now, all I can offer are words, but I know it is only through consistent actions that I will truly be able to regain her trust. Rebuilding broken trust requires both freedom and boundaries, and above all, time. It is not something that can be rushed.



This journey of rebuilding trust with my wife has only just begun. For anyone else experiencing something similar, my advice is to stay strong—mentally and physically. Be patient, and have faith that things can fall back into place. At the same time, never stop working on yourself. Strive to become the best version of yourself, because only then can you truly rebuild not just your relationship, but also trust in yourself and in the person you hope to reconcile with. It will not be easy, but with time, heartfelt actions, and genuine effort, it can be done.

FAMILY TRUST

My biggest challenge right now is rebuilding trusting relationships with my family. I believe that vision without action cannot succeed. To rebuild trust, I must take responsibility, stay committed to my own growth, and show consistency through my actions. Beyond that, I recognize the importance of regular family gatherings and open communication to strengthen our bonds and make our relationships more amicable.

If you want a relationship to last, never threaten its foundation. For me, rebuilding and sustaining family ties means setting healthy boundaries and embracing values such as accountability, responsibility, trustworthiness, commitment, and sacrifice for the ones we love. It also means cherishing time spent together and remembering the saying, "Blood is thicker than water," to emphasize that family connections will always hold greater importance than other types of relationships.



AS ANTONIO PORCHIA ONCE WROTE, "IN A FULL HEART THERE IS ROOM FOR EVERYTHING. AND IN AN EMPTY HEART THERE IS ROOM FOR NOTHING."

THE 4 A'S TO REBUILD TRUST

I was a creature of habit,
Hoping to break free from a dreadful curse.
Lured by the fruit that God forbade,
Each indulgence only made it worse.



Acceptance was the beginning;
Trust was the struggle that set me free.
All I did was reach beyond
The walls that once imprisoned me.

Apology was the hardest step,
Yet "sorry" eased the weight of pain.
First to myself, then to the ones
I'd broken—my beloved again.



Appreciation followed next;
Grateful to Him, to life, to them.
They are my sunshine, my ray of hope—
Thank you for loving me as I am.



Affirmation crowned it all:
To see the good in every other.
The 4 A's for rebuilding trust—
Habits worth mastering, one after another.

THANK YOU FOR READING THIS ISSUE OF #EVERYONE'S COLUMN!
THIS PUBLICATION IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY DRC(S1) CRSES.