

## **Insight Questions for a Parole Hearing**

### **1. Who were you at the time of your crime?**

- Describe who you were at the time of your crime.
  - How did you feel about yourself?
  - How did others feel about you?
  - What kind of lifestyle were you living?
  - Who were the important people in your life?
  - What did you know and what did you not know?
  - How did you deal with peer pressure/anger/gang culture/etc.?
- Consider how the following things affected who you were:
  - Difficult things that happened to you (physical, emotional, or sexual abuse; losing a parent or family member; witnessing crime or violence; adoption/foster care; bullying/teasing; poverty; mental illness; substance abuse; etc.)
  - Your relationships (parents/grandparents, siblings, other family, romantic partners, etc.)
  - Your environment (school, neighborhood, home, etc.)
  - The choices you made in your life
- Identify the issues that led you to the choice to commit your crime.

### **2. What did you do – what was your crime and how do you feel about it?**

- Describe your crime – every detail – the good, the bad, and the ugly.
- Fully describe your responsibility for the crime – how each choice you made and each action you took resulted in the crime. Begin each sentence with “I” or “I chose to.”
- Describe your “thinking” at the time of the crime.
- Describe the impact of your crime – really put yourself in the shoes of your victim, the victim’s family, your family, the community, etc., and try to see things from their point of view.
  - List ALL the victims in your crime.
  - How did your actions hurt the victims?
- Describe your remorse for your crime and your victims.
  - How do you feel about what you did?
- How have you worked to make amends for the damage you have done?

### **3. Why did you commit the crime?**

- Work backwards and describe the choices that led you to be involved in the crime.
- Look back at who you were at the time of the crime and explain how that affected your choices.
  - The Board calls these reasons “causative factors”
    - Examples: anger, low self-esteem, selfish and uncaring attitude, wanting to fit in with negative influences, drug abuse, culture of violence, fear

- Sometimes you need to understand the causative factors of your causative factors :
  - Why did you join a gang?
  - Why did you use drugs?
  - Why were you angry?
  - Why didn't you care about anyone or anything?

#### **4. Who you are today?**

- What kind of a person you are today?
- How you are different from the person you were at the time of the crime?
  - How do you think differently now?
  - How do you deal with the “causative factors” of your crime?
  - How have you grown and matured?
- Why did you decide to change?
- How did you work to address the issues that led you to choose to commit the crime?
- How do you handle situations like the situation that led to the crime differently today?
  - How do you respond to peer pressure?
  - How do you deal with confrontations or disrespect?
  - How do you deal with your anger?
  - How do you feel about other people?