

Willie –

You were released after serving your most recent sentence for felony assault. This time you are ready to reconnect with your family in a different way than last time. Your kids are older as are your mother and sister and you want to be able to spend time with them. Last time you came out wasn't good, you could not find a job that anywhere near covered your expenses – helping support the kids, those court costs which are a lot, rent, food, and you ended up living back at your mother's place. You felt completely humiliated, hooked up with your former life and blam – you were back in prison in 5 months.

This time is going to be different. You are going to get one of those new identicards and when you were at Monroe you worked in sustainable horticulture, and your buddy who is out and said they can get you a job at a nursery.

You really want to apologize to your family – your sister was so mad when you went back in she said you could never live with your mom again. They don't realize how hard it is to get a steady gig doing something honest after having done time.

You want to try to begin at a new place with them and at least get invited to a family meal.

Judge –

Willie has been before you in the past but this time you see something different – maybe he is getting older, maybe this last time the programs at Monroe connected with him differently. You have recently been made aware of restorative processes in the community and you think he would be a good candidate for a reentry circle. You know through your personal experiences with the people who have been tried in your court room that it is really difficult to get started again after coming out of prison, and that being accepted back into the family can be really a positive impact.

Willie's sister made it pretty clear that she doesn't want him around after what happened last time – that she said it almost killed their mom when he went back in.

You have reached out to the sister and asked her to attend this circle gathering. You are a bit concerned about what she will say and do, but you want to give Willie another opportunity.

DOC-

You have seen all of this before, every 5-6 years the system wants to recreate itself and here they go again. Willie is a hardened felon and just because he was an A student at the new program up at Monroe everyone thinks he has changed. Well you know better than that. Last time Willie was out he said the same stuff, well maybe not the same there is a difference in his manner/attitude now, maybe a little more serious – but still this circle idea is just fluff. You are worried about the family being burned by him again, the sister was really hurt last time and you heard that the mother ended up in the hospital. God only knows about those poor kids.

You know though that it is really hard to get started when people get out, that if people don't get a good beginning that things can spin out of control pretty quickly and that was what happened with Willie last time. If he ends up back in for the 3rd time he won't be getting out.

Sister –

Willie is your older brother and always covered for you when you were a kid. You didn't realize that part of the reason he was so good at covering is because he is a lying sociopath. Now he is out and wants to some how reconnect with the family, be forgiven, make amends – all lies all over again. You really don't want him around your mother again because of what happened last time. When he was convicted of felony assault AGAIN after having only been out of prison for 5 months she ended up in the hospital and it took months for you to get her back on her feet again.

You have no trust and no faith, last time he was out and living at home with mom his scumbag friends were hanging around and you know that they stole stuff – how could he ever let that happen – what is the matter with him? And his poor kids – they are nice, you see them at family gatherings and things are OK, they are lucky their mom and her family are able to help out. Hard to think of them being 16 and 18 already.

You realize it is hard to get restarted, in fact you were surprised at how many jobs he applied for last time and how he never got any call backs– no wonder he couldn't get a real job. But that still doesn't excuse what he did. Now he says he's changed, that he took some program at Monroe which changed his thinking. Even the judge asked that you give this circle thing a try. Well there is no way mom is coming to this, you will check it out. If there is one thing you did learn from him it is how to pick out a lie so you will be watching closely.

Guideline

How would you like to see other people in our circle treat each other during this conversation?

Guiding Questions

What is the most important lesson in life you have ever learned?

Guiding Questions (Exploring Conflict & Harm)

What happened, and what were you thinking at the time of the incident?

What have you thought about since?

Who has been affected by what happened and how?

What has been the hardest part for you?

What do you think needs to be done to make things as right as possible?

Guiding Questions (Taking Responsibility)

What needs to be done to repair the harm?

Brainstorming Solutions

What will you do to make sure these agreements are followed?

Reflection

What are you taking from this circle that supports you?

What have you learned?