

HEART TO HEART

Annual Report

2022

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Introduction

A Year of Change and Growth

COVID prevented Heart to Heart from entering the prisons where we worked and served for almost two years. We worked from home and wondered how we could still serve our community and beyond. We expanded our vision to include three interrelated programs:

Families

We offered six parenting and family classes via Zoom, supporting the greater Baltimore community and collaborating with The Quincy Community Action Program in Massachusetts.

Schools & Communities

Our work continues to thrive in partnership with the Medical Mission Sisters in Philadelphia, and with the high school seniors of Fontbonne Academy in Milton, MA.

Prisons & Reentry

In September, Bayside prison opened its doors to 10 volunteer organizations serving in their facility Pre-Covid. We were one of them. River Dunavin has returned to this community, offering weekly 2-hour sessions to an average of 12 men. We look forward to bringing our program to the Pondville Correctional Center in Norfolk, MA, in March 2023.

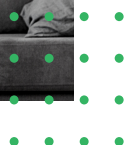
Our Mission

Heart to Heart brings life-changing education to people affected by incarceration and trauma, helping them to heal, thrive, and become the leaders they are called to be.

Key Skills

Heart to Heart teaches Nonviolent communication skills to help learners break destructive habits and achieve healing. Nonviolent communication is centered around four key communication skills:

- **Mindfulness**
- **Empathy**
- **Decision-Making**
- **Conflict Transformation**



Director's Note

On behalf of the Board of Directors, and the staff at Heart to Heart, thank you so much for your support. Without it, we would not be able to continue our work which helps people impacted by incarceration and trauma learn ways to heal themselves and their relationships.

I believe that everyone in our country has been impacted negatively by our incarceration system in some way. One way is that people who have been imprisoned are viewed by many, due to cultural conditioning, to have less value than those who have not been incarcerated. People who have been incarcerated have all experienced the effects of dehumanization, which causes a whole new level of trauma in their lives. One of the most important things we do here at Heart to Heart is to help this community reconnect with their value as humans, understand that they matter, and give them hope.

I have experienced the healing effects of the programs and workshops Heart to Heart offers in my own life, which has enabled me to repair and improve my relationships with others, and within myself. I wish everyone could experience this, which is why I continue working within this community.

With gratitude and appreciation,

Deborah Diggs, Executive Director

Programs

1

Heart to Heart Prisons and Reentry

Spending time in jail or prison is one of the hardest challenges millions of Americans face. Many men and women are racked by feelings of guilt and the pain of separation from those they love. Others cry out against an unjust verdict or harsh sentence. Just surviving prison takes inner resources and outer support. Heart to Heart learners in jails and prisons tell us they are doing more than surviving. They are learning, growing, healing and using their time to become their best self. Heart to Heart helps its learners develop the skills they need to heal, thrive, and be the leaders they are called to be.

3

Heart to Heart Communities

We held various workshops, classes, and retreats focused on an aspect of Nonviolent Communication. Led by a trained facilitator, these workshops allow participants to explore a specific topic in-depth and practice new skills.

2

Heart to Heart Families

Heart to Heart helps parents, caregivers, and educators who are called to be a healing presence in their families and communities raise thriving children. We do this by forming supportive learning communities and teaching four essential skills based on Marshall Rosenberg's Nonviolent Communication and other sources. These skills are mindfulness, empathy, decision-making, and conflict resolution (MEDC).

"Steve's training was a pivotal moment for our department. It was profound. We learned how to talk and how to listen ... The way people let their guard down, it blew my mind. It's been ten months since that two-day workshop and I continue to see its impact."

-Yolanda Smith, Executive Director of Public Safety, Tufts University

Your Impact in 2022

Heart to Heart Prisons and Reentry

For years before the Covid pandemic, Heart to Heart volunteers worked with incarcerated men in the Bayside State Prison Program. Located in Maurice River Township, New Jersey. In September 2022, one volunteer from each of the ten organizations was invited to return, including Heart to Heart.

Throughout each twelve-week program, we meet weekly with twelve men. **We are excited to have resumed the Bayside Prison Program. In 2023, we will begin working in two new locations.** The Pondville Correctional Center, Norfolk, Massachusetts, will begin in March 2023 with eight sessions.

Heart to Heart Families

In 2022, several classes ran under the Parenting and Families programming umbrella, **enrolling 42 individuals in 29 sessions.** These classes included Parenting with NVC, Parenting Intro Lunch & Learn, Heart to Heart Parenting AM Class, Heart to Heart Parenting PM Class, Heart to Heart Parenting QCAP, and a 2-week Head Start Class.

Heart to Heart Communities

In 2022, online and in-person classes and workshops ran under the Schools and Communities programming umbrella, enrolling **174 individuals in 24 sessions.** These classes and workshops included work with Medical Mission Sisters NVC Practice Group, Peace Leadership Academy (online), Heart to Heart Saturdays (online), Fontbonne Academy, Milton, Massachusetts, Weekend Retreat, Cape May, New Jersey, Anchor of Hull, Massachusetts, Tufts University, Medford, Massachusetts, and the Egyptian Association for NVC in Psychotherapy (online).

We began an exciting **new 10-month program** In September called the Peace Leadership Academy, created and facilitated by Steve Tumolo. This program is offered to individuals interested in improving or developing new skills to facilitate their NVC groups or join us in leading our classes and programs.



We thank you for your ongoing support of Heart to Heart!

Acknowledgements

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