

# Summary Report

## Values in Criminal Justice

A residential seminar for people who work within  
offender management

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HELD AT

The Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University

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## Exploring Values

This was an opportunity for participants to explore their own values through the use of reflective questions, a technique that enables people to connect with their deepest values.

*Who is your favourite hero or heroine and say why?*

*Recall a favourite song/poem/text which resonates with you. Why?*

*Recall a time when you stood up for some cause. What were the qualities evoked?*

Participants discussed the outcomes in small groups.

## Understanding Values

The objective of the session was for participants, through the provision of time for personal reflection and interaction with others, to discuss values, particularly organisational values, in a constructive format and to become more aware of and to further understand the meaning and importance of values.

Ann set the context of values in the world today and facilitated an interactive discussion around the following issues:  
a) absence/disappearance of values today  
(b) importance of values in directing human behaviour, (c) the need for a restoration of values today.

Ann then guided participants through the following questions.

**- What are the three most important values to you today?**

**- What are the most important values in your place of work?**

The responses to these two questions are shown in Appendix 1

**- Are those values compromised and if so, when and why?**

**- Is a mismatch between personal values and organisational values? If so, what effect does that have on me?**

**- How do you maintain and strengthen your values?**

The discussions became a natural lead in to the next session, *Values in Action*, and so key issues and questions arising here are addressed

and reported in the next section and are unattributed.

## Values in Action

Conversation led by **Wendy Marshall**, Trainer, with **Kevin Baker**, Deputy Governor, HMYOI Kirklevington Grange; **Maria Byrne**, IMB; Wormwood Scrubs, **Lisa Lambert**, Senior Investigator, Prison's and Probation Ombudsman's Office.

The viewpoint was shared that, in general, prisons are geared towards preparation for prisoner release through identifying the needs of the individual, empowering them to have the opportunity to change, facilitating that, and encouraging an individual's responsibility for their own life. The discussion that followed shows how both organizational and personal values play a key role in this

## Relationship between organizational values and personal values.

Exploring the relationship between organizational and personal values, Kevin Baker said that the Prison Service has a statement of its own values which may or may not be your own personal values but which, in principle, you agree with. It was also recognised the importance for people to have ownership of those values and what can happen when they don't.

*"One of my core values is compassion. As an officer you have clear guidelines about what you are able to do in terms of policies and rules within the prison. Generally speaking the answer is either 'yes' or 'no' and so the element of compassion is largely removed. However, within management, you have more authority to interpret the rules. For example, when considering a request for temporary release from prison for compassionate reasons, there are a lot of other, factors that need to be taken into consideration. These will influence the expression of that core value."*

*"All too often there is an association between compassion and weakness. You need courage to show compassion, you really have to believe it and that takes something from deep within."*

Are organizational values and personal values always aligned? A personal perspective was shared by Lisa Lambert who was working in Wormwood Scrubs as a Senior Officer in 1998

at the time of the allegations of staff ill-treatment of prisoners.

*“The prison was in quite a bit of turmoil and there was a lot of resistance from officers who had seen colleagues suspended. The overriding view, to which I didn’t subscribe, was that it was understandable the things that staff had done or that they were fabricated or that ‘they were prisoners and so what do you expect.’ Some people there stated very clearly that they did not subscribe to the organizational values. I believe there was a gulf between what the organisational values stated and what I actually found on the ground.”*

Referring to the increasing awareness for a value-based Prison Service, Kevin suggested that,

*“Twenty-five years ago, there was no emphasis on values, you never thought about your values in that sense. The way prisoners are treated today is so much better than at that time.”*

*As my career progressed so my values began to change, to become richer and stronger because of having more authority, different priorities, more responsibility, etc. Whatever actions you conduct, whether thinking about risk assessment or allowing prisoners to be temporarily released from prison, potentially have a huge impact on a wide scope of people.”*

One shared value that came up time and again was that of ‘respect.’

*“I think the issue of respect within prisons and within the criminal justice system has to be at the heart of our work. Certainly, my work in the ombudsman’s office has been very much connected to Martin Narey’s ‘Respect’ agenda. This has meant that prisoners are able to raise complaints and that there is accountability by staff. It’s not about supporting prisoners all the time but being able to justify any decision you make.”*

Respect was central to the challenges that Maria Byrne faced in revitalising the education department at HMP Wormwood Scrubs after she joined as Education Manager in 1999. The department was completely rundown with very few prisoners attending classes. Recognising that she couldn’t turn this around on her own, Maria sought the help of

Georgina Long, a teacher with the Brahma Kumaris.

*“We began to transform the department, firstly by bringing on board the right teachers and raising the quality of teaching. The teachers developed greater self esteem because more was expected of them and they accepted the responsibility.”*

*Secondly, we created an environment where prisoners, walking into the education department, felt they were walking into a college and not in a prison. The atmosphere, the decoration, the environment, all contributed to this change.*

*Additionally, we changed the way we treat the prisoners. At the end of classes, instead of coming in and barking ‘time,’ the officers were encouraged to use their own values and respect prisoners. It worked. We got results and obtained extra funding.*

*Through respecting each other and respecting each one’s abilities these sorts of things can happen. Having members of the Brahma Kumaris work along side was invaluable. Their energy was marvellous; they came from a place of respect, didn’t engage in criticism and blame, and always encouraged us to move forward.”*

Presently, Maria is with the Independent Monitoring Board which focuses on values that emphasise efficiency and fairness, the need to look at ourselves and see that we are doing the best we can.

*“When someone has been in post a long time they are often happy with what they have got, they know how it works, and feel in control. The value I have to fall back on is discernment - how to say what I have to say without rocking the boat to much. I need to develop peace and courage within myself to allow me to do that.”*

**How important it is to recognize that somebody may have completely different values to yourself?**

*“Values are very personal, some of which are quite clearly promoted while others are not. It’s only through working closely with individuals, through observing them, seeing how they interact, what decisions they make, what they’re doing, how they are caring, how they respond to you, that you begin to truly learn what their values are. This takes time and a conscious effort to look for values. But*

*once you begin to find them, you see them ever more frequently.”*

*It was suggested that staff ‘have an aura around them.’ You see which staff prisoners go to and the sort of things they ask of particular staff. People have a sense of whether you can approach somebody spontaneously or whether you have to plan your approach.”*

*“In the past, if I wanted to get something done I would have done it myself - I was setting myself up for burn out. I made decisions based on superficial things. Now, I realize that it is about being open, about listening to other people’s ideas, using other people’s values to enrich my work, finding out what is important to other people; what they really care about, too. I can’t assume other people know what is important to me or that I know what is important to others until we actually communicate that.”*

### **What happens when you don’t uphold a value and how does that feel?**

Expanding on her time at Wormwood Scrubs, Lisa shared,

*“Because I did face opposition from people who didn’t want me to be there or who didn’t want our treatment of prisoners to be at the heart of what we were doing, I compromised certain things, albeit small things, as a means of psychological survival. For example, moving from a prison where people were called by their first names, to one where they were called by their surnames, I too began to do the same. It was only later that I began to think ‘that wasn’t really me.’ I felt I should have stuck to my personal values, not made it an issue of it but just decided that this is what I am going to do.*

*We have this fear that if we say too much we will rub people up the wrong way. But, on the other side, if we don’t express certain things, whether through what we say or what we do, we feel like a little bit inside of us dies. It’s a fine balance!*

*The fact that the whole episode about staff discipline had taken place turned out for the better. Gradually you begin to identify those who are positive, those who are looking for somebody else who shares the same values. When you step back you see people who are positive, who have decent values, who want to*

*see others in management positions, with those values, come to the fore.”*

Reflecting on a previous experiences of not upholding a personal value, Kevin said,

*“I felt bad for allowing things that should not have happened, to continue. It is vitally important that senior managers instill and ensure that values are adhered to. If you don’t, if you are tolerant of things that are incorrect, it will perpetuate. The higher up you go, the more important it is.”*

### **If someone else doesn’t respect a value or values, what advice would you give to change the environment?**

*“It is difficult to turn a blind eye and it requires courage to challenge. As an officer it was easier to turn a blind eye and not do what I should have done, even though it was against my values. There came a turning point in my life when, with the courage of my conviction, I stopped an officer from doing something with a prisoner that he shouldn’t have. By taking that first, difficult step in upholding a value, you feel much stronger.*

*Also, other people need to know what is expected of them and to what standard. You need to demonstrate and promote that. Then, if they have not done what you expected of them, you can challenge them. This is about changing a culture which of course can take many years.*

*I do find conflict about trust. There are two separate elements to trust depending on whether it relates to prisoners or staff. The Prison Service rules and regulations empower me to give a certain element of trust to prisoners. For example, regarding temporary release, it’s about trusting that person to behave and that they will return to the prison. That is not my own personal trust. If a prisoner abuses the trust, because it is within the guidelines allowed, I don’t feel that personally, I don’t feel emotionally damaged.*

*However, dealing with staff is different for that is about personal trust. If that trust is abused in any way, it is felt personally. This is how I psychologically deal with it; I separate the two as a personal protection.”*

**In a situation where there isn’t respect what are the little things that you can do that will make a significant impact? How might you help others who maybe don’t have a strong**

**values system, to build up their own values and self respect?**

*“We mustn’t underestimate the influence we have on other people. Bearing in mind that many prisoners have not had a normal, functional upbringing and that for many, values have not been instilled or demonstrated it is important to be demonstrating our own values. Where we show respect, we receive respect.”*

*Generally speaking, the smaller the prison population, the more time you have to give to prisoners, to share with them and guide them. Every prisoner that comes into or leaves Kirklevington Grange is interviewed by me or another governor. In the first interview I tell them of my expectations for them. This is about letting them know the responsibility that they have towards respecting themselves, respecting others and respect for the community.*

*At their exit interview, I ask every prisoner who has been in prison before, ‘What failed last time.’ Perhaps surprisingly, quite a lot of them have not thought about that question. I’ll point it out to them and encourage them to connect this with the opportunities that they have had in which to address this. They need to think about future failings. It is helping prisoners to identify where they have gone wrong.”*

*“All prisoners, with the exception of a few, will be released back into the community. If we haven’t treated them with respect in prison, how can we expect them to treat others with respect?”*

*“If I continue believing in my own inner values and expressing that on a one to one level, gradually that will spread. It is important to be true to yourself. In one way or another, you will touch that person and, at some point, acknowledgement will come; you are nurturing a seed.”*

*“I am reminded of a complaint from the prisoner about an officer. While the complaint was upheld, there was a refusal to implement it by both the officer and the Prison Service. There still exists the resistance to what are often the smallest things that show respect. Resistance implies a fear of loss of control or of a system collapse? I believe we have to be tenacious about even the smallest things.”*

**You are working with individuals whose values development was limited so that they failed to make informed choices at the crucial moment prior to offending. It seems that you need an environment that is ‘super-rich’ in values to actually compensate for their lack of exposure to values. How do you enrich or empower your own values?**

*“It is about consistency in your decisions, your attitude, and your approach. Yes, we all have off days but that doesn’t change your values.”*

*“You can empower staff through giving appropriate recognition where a particular job is being done well or to people who are motivated are committed. However, this does raise the question, if you have a policy of equality how can you give preferential treatment to one person and not another?”*

*“I believe you have to take some time every day for reflection, to think about what went wrong, what went right, to be in touch with myself. I need to ask myself, did I get across what is really important to me, what I believe in. You have to think about how you communicate.”*

**When we see the percentage of prisoners who return to prison, can we say that prison works?**

A minority in the audience suggested that it is wrong to lock people up although it was recognized that there is no alternative at present.

*“I believe prisons are only providing a sticking-plaster solution. We need to look at the whole of the criminal justice system and address what is going wrong back at the beginning of someone’s criminal life.”*

A majority concurred with the statement that there is a need for people to be locked up as retribution; there has to be seen to be an element of punishment to what they have done, “although it does have to be done in a dignified manner and with humanity.”

*“Does prison work? Yes! However, there needs to be a greater sharing of good practice. I am convinced that with proper preparation, support, foresight, and the three elements of stable family, employment, and being ready for release, they are less likely to re-offend.”*

*“The struggle I have is also with people who believe that others can’t change. I involve myself in a lot of talking with staff. It is also about creating hope in people that they can change”*

**Maintaining Values During Times of Change** with Sister Jayanti, European Director, Brahma Kumaris

For many years we heard about I.Q., the way to measure intelligence. More recently, we started to hear about E.Q, emotional intelligence. For the last few years we have been hearing about spiritual intelligence, S.Q., which is about looking inwards.

When you reach a point of looking inwards, there comes a fundamental shift - you begin to recognize that whatever is going on inside creates the circumstances and situations outside. This infers that whatever is currently going on in the world is something that we are all responsible for, at one level or another.

*“That can be scary. We don’t always want to accept the truth of this. Yes, of course we are responsible for amazing achievements in technology, feats of human endurance, and brilliance but are we responsible for the mess that’s going on in the world? Of course, if you are responsible for one, you have to accept responsibility for the other.”*

However, it was recognised that, once we accept responsibility we have the potential to implement change but while we feel a victim we are helpless and unable to influence.

*“Just by default, I give permission for all things going on to multiply and become more intense as we see in the world, right now. When I take responsibility, I am beginning to effect change in the world around me, not just in my personal life but also with the system.*

*If we simply attack the system we get nowhere; it is not very constructive. Instead ask, ‘what is it that I am able to do to adjust the system, within my own capacity?’ As I explore my values and live my life accordingly, those values are made to manifest within that system. The power is such that a change is brought about within the organizational structure. In addition, my own change inspires others to change. A groundswell is being created and the system automatically begins to change. This is a value-based approach.”*

This raised the question of, ‘whose values, your values or my values? Are they different or are they the same?’

Sister Jayanti shared her own experience of growing up in the 60’s.

*“I was faced with the traditional western norms and ideas and also the permissive society of the sixties. I was also experiencing the influence of growing up in an Indian family in which there were two strands, that of orthodox religion as well as a more meditative, spiritual approach which was much softer and whose values were quite, quite different to all the other influences. At that time I was attracted by something in each of the different strands but nothing I felt I could give a commitment to.”*

It was a trip to India and a meeting with Dadi Janki, then a senior teacher with the Brahma Kumaris, which provided Sister Jayanti with the clarity needed. Dadi, a person who spends time in her inner world experimenting with and understanding silence had explained how external influences can prevent us from understanding many things; that the conscience is like a filter which can become clogged with all sorts of influences - society, education, peer pressure, media, etc. - so that it doesn’t function properly. When the filter becomes dysfunctional there is confusion; you can no longer understand the difference between right and wrong.

One can see how various influences can affect values, particularly in the youth of today. Young people are exposed to very many different influences in terms of technology, fashion, language and these all contribute to cultural values. However, it is important to separate cultural and generational influences and differences from the core values of the human being. When you connect at a heart to heart level, a spiritual level, you discover the commonality of values.

Why has the filter become blocked? Why has the conscience become so unclear whereby the intellect (the power of reason and understanding) or the conscience no longer guides the mind? As the mind moves according to external stimuli then that is no basis for stability in my life. Recalling the statement, ‘Whatever is going on in my inner world determines what goes on in my own external world,’ then that instability is projected out into society.

The result is that, today, we have a situation where things are highly unstable and very volatile. This emphasises the importance of returning to values, to a conscience that is functional and strong, that doesn't bow to society, to peer pressure, which is able to 'speak' to me and to others.

*"To arrive at a state where the conscience is strong requires the removal of all these other layers of influence. This process of cleaning up is the process of meditation, of silence."*

*In a world that values high speed, we have also learned to apply it to our mind. However, research indicates that a mind that is working at high speed is working at a mundane level. However, the intention is not to make the mind become silent but to use it actively, in a way where thoughts slow down. Someone who learns to cultivate a quiet mind and to be selective about the quality of their thoughts is able to access and develop their inner potential to a higher and higher degree."*

A calm mind releases creative energy. Creativity is not just for poets, artists and dancers but is the energy that allows each of us to change a situation from being a problem to one where I can find a solution.

*"Creativity is at the heart of each one's pursuit to be able to do something better, to gain success, rather than sitting down at the end of the day and thinking, 'Did it have to be like this?' 'Could I have done something different?' If I create the space for silence, I allow the possibility of finding a different approach to dealing with a problem. One is also able to allow intuition to work. How often has it been that intuition helped resolve a situation, where logic could not?"*

Like an iceberg, in which only 10% is visible above the water and 90% remains below the water, what you see in another person is the 10% above the water; there is so much that remains invisible. Have I taken time to know what is below my own surface? If I have, I will understand where my feelings and emotions are coming from and will be able to manage them. This helps in creating stability for myself, my family and work colleagues. If one's feelings and emotions remain stable, their colleagues are going to trust them. Such stability creates a powerful environment and positive energy in which to be working. Whatever atmosphere you create will have an

impact on everyone else around you which will then filter through the entire system.

Deeper than feelings and emotions are personality traits. These are, in part, acquired, (nurture) and in part inherent, (nature.)

*"I would like to suggest that our core values, those which I return to again and again, are associated with that deepest, original part of me, my inherent state of being. To me, this is an important reminder of the inherent goodness in every human being, which is imprinted into the consciousness as the original personality traits. These may not always be visible for the acquired tendencies and habits of societal influence, created afterwards, mask them."*

*For me, it is important that I connect to my core values, that original goodness within, for then I can trust myself and I can trust others."*

*If I've gone through this process for myself and done that inner work, then when I connect with others, in whatever capacity, I'm going to understand them in a different way and be able to recognize what is going on within them. Thus it is very important to begin working with spiritual intelligence."*

**Q.** What is the role of emotions?

**A.** *"Our emotions can play either a very positive and powerful, role or can make us dysfunctional, depending on the quality of the emotion that is being tapped into."*

Sister Jayanti gave the example of research work carried out in America. Students had been asked to watch a five minute cartoon (vis-à-vis Tom and Jerry) involving scenes of violence and then to report back. For many, the cartoon invoked feelings of aggression. They were then asked to watch a five minute video of Mother Teresa. This time their feedback spoke of emotions of care and compassion being invoked.

Sister Jayanti asked participants why they had entered the Prison Service.

*"There can be an incongruence between the hours that some people work and the financial remuneration. There must be something of the spirit, something of that human quality, and the values that that individual holds, which enables them carry on like that."*

*And in terms of negative emotions, there are many experiences that leave deep scars at a sub-conscious level, scenes where maybe we have witnessed an accident, a flood or a bomb blast. And then something happens and triggers a reaction!*

*And yet there is a process where we can heal the emotions. For me, this happens through silence and connecting with the Divine and experiencing that divine love. Looking at the state of the world and of human beings, there is a lot of healing that needs to happen!"*

Comment. The more I open my mind to spirituality and the natural, innate core values the more I hear and recognize. This creates a greater resonance. There is a continual search to do the right thing at the right time and it's a quest that I feel familiar with. It's so simple yet it's such a challenge.

Response. These are things the heart, things of the spirit and yet we forget them. We need to come back within a safe environment to be reminded of these things. Spirituality is simply a reminder, not new information.

Comment. Something that affects my emotional stability is fatigue; tiredness. I have learned that I have a responsibility to allow myself to rest.

Response. We carry not only physical fatigue but emotional and mental fatigue as well. Dealing with that requires more than just rest. It means dealing with my attitude, my awareness, and my priorities.

**Building My Future** with Doug Stephenson, Prison Outreach Co-ordinator, Brahma Kumaris

Doug facilitated an interactive session that invited participants to explore and connect to inspirational experiences, envisage a future in which the key elements of that experience were in place at all times and construct a personal action plan to make that preferred future a reality. The key steps in that process are shared here.

Opening Question: During your life, you will have come across some remarkable stories that touched or inspired you in some way. You will have had moments of personal experience that have become turning points in your life or the life of others, or inspired you to do something differently. Recall one of those stories or moments and share it with a partner.

- What was the memorable moment and what made it so special that you recall it now?
- In what way were you able to draw from the inspirational experience?
- How did you change as a result and how have you been able to sustain that change?
- What are the values that underpinned the experience?

Develop the Vision Building on the opening question, participants were asked to identify what they wanted their future to look like; develop aims for the next 'chapter' of their life; learn how to clarify their priorities. The resultant elements of the vision were translated into 'Provocative Propositions' or 'Beacon Statements,' statements that bridge the best of 'what is' with one's sense of 'what might be.' They are provocative to the extent to which they:

- a) stretch the realm of the status quo,
- b) challenge common assumptions or routines,
- c) help suggest real possibilities that represent desired possibilities.

Below is a sample of a 'Beacon Statement':

*"The garden team of HMP Nuneham Park has a working relationship in which every individual experiences themselves as a valued and essential member of the team. The function of the team is theirs to improve, change and help fulfil its potential. This happens because at a future-building level, the big picture purpose is shared by all, at the strategic level, decisions are reached through discussion and at a psychological level, individuals are authentically involved. The team recognises that key to this are feelings of respect, open communication, active listening and co-operation."*

The planning process involved in achieving the vision, expressed in the form of the beacon statement, was broken down into key steps, each of which build towards the one above.

Vision: (2-3 years ahead) the ideal state which you can see yet cannot presently reach. It is well defined and full of feeling and enthusiasm for the life you wish to live.

Goal: (The next 6 months) That which you can see and can reach. Goals should be: specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-bound.

Strategy: (The next 3 months) How to reach what you can see. A major direction that you will adopt for a period of time (90-day plan) in order to achieve a goal.



Action Step: (The next 15 days) A strategy, broken down into 'one-off,' smaller, short-term tasks to be implemented immediately.

How might this work for the beacon statement above. For example, by focussing on the self in the context of the statement, the following might be pertinent:

*Proposal (Vision):*

Increased self-respect to deal with differing opinions and accept criticism without reacting.

*Strategies:*

- Take a course in self esteem.
- Daily meditation on self-acceptance.
- Through reading, understand the causes and reasons for lack of self-acceptance.

*Actions:*

- Investigate courses in self esteem.
- Buy appropriate meditation tape.
- Get a book that explores self-acceptance from the library.

To begin this journey, in the form of a 90-day plan:

- a) What steps will you take immediately to get you moving in the right direction? Identify what choices you need to face.
- b) Decide what are you going to give up? (a 'NOT-to-do' list).
- c) Identify the 3 or 4 'habits or routines' that are critical to achieving your vision along with the 3 or 4 habits or patterns that you need to remove from your life in order to achieve your goal.