

# **THE BRIDGES TO LIFE VOLUNTEER FACILITATOR**

## **BASIC DESCRIPTION:**

The Bridges To Life (BTL) program is conducted inside prisons and treatment center facilities, meeting for one 2-hour session each week over the course of 14 weeks. Inmate participants are divided into groups of 10, and each group is facilitated by 2 BTL volunteers (co-Facilitators) who guide them through weekly lessons utilizing the *Restoring Peace* book and study guide. The role of the Volunteer Facilitator is to support and encourage the inmates/residents through the 14-week BTL process.

## **Qualifications:**

- Age 18 or older.
- Willing to facilitate the Bridges To Life program utilizing the curriculum materials provided, and without adding concepts or materials from other programs.
- Able to listen to difficult issues (criminal actions, violence, abusive behavior, drug and alcohol use, etc.) in an open and nonjudgmental manner.
- Able to set aside personal religious or political beliefs and avoid preaching or proselytizing.
- Able to accept participants where they are, exercising unconditional positive regard while encouraging new insights and growth.
- Able to manage small group discussion, insuring that all are heard.
- Possess good interpersonal and communication skills.
- Willing to adhere to BTL and TDCJ (or other state's) guidelines, and accept supervision by BTL Regional Coordinator.

## **Requirements:**

- Apply to be an approved volunteer with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ), or Department of Corrections in your state, *including background check*.
- Attend TDCJ's (or other state's) Volunteer Training and complete re-certification requirement every two years (or as required in other states).
- Attend BTL facilitator training and commit to following BTL policies and procedures.
- Attend all weekly sessions of the 14-week program.
- Notify Project/Regional Coordinator as soon as possible in advance of an absence.
- Treat all inmates/residents with courtesy and respect throughout the program.
- Facilitate group discussions by asking curriculum-related questions rather than teaching or lecturing.
- Refrain from imposing personal religious beliefs, ethics, or morals on participants.
- Take attendance for your small group and record completion of graduation requirements.
- Ensure that participants in your small group complete all graduation requirements.

## **Time Commitment:**

- Two hours per week at the location, plus commuting time.
- Additional 1-2 hours of preparation for each week's meeting, as needed.