

Leon Wed. 11/6/02 A

I was in a Milwaukee Jewish vocational service where they had a new program that contracted with the United States Office of Rehabilitation where they were going to try to rehabilitate chronic patients in the hospital. They had to be very chronic, had been there many many years, and they were going to try to get them into the community by teaching them work skills. It all revolved around vocational rehabilitation. It was vocational services they were about. And so I got the job there. My first job \* was a counselor at University of Wisconsin Counseling Center, that time as a student, a graduate student. And then--a pretty interesting experience--I wasn't made for the mold, you know, how I wouldn't mold myself, you know. The project was developing certain ideas (in mind) as to how to be \*\* prove that they're going to be successful, it's the opposite from a scientific hypothesis. "We'll make this work and then we can show that this works and we'll get more people to follow and do this kind of thing." And it was like a workshop they had right there which was like, there were retarded workshops or whatever, mentally ill people just do a little bit of work and teach them work habits. And they had therapy, and that was my job. We had these charges, the people who were participating in that program who were for the first time in 15 or 20 years--10 I think was the minimum--been hospitalized in the mental hospital, and now they were in the community. They were just bringing them there and they'd spend their day in the workshop and (talking) and so forth. And there was this young lady who was not very (quiet, anything like that), she liked to get out of the hospital, she liked to be there, but to be on time and the job and the hours, it was--she couldn't handle it. So she'd always come for counseling or whatever, looking for help. It was really hard to get out of it, you know, hard to (just live) without going through this torture, which was to her torture. Well at any rate, I started to make some noise but they kept pushing this training, you know, and eventually--I

mean I was there maybe close to a year, but it was, the issue with these patients because I thought that she shouldn't be kept being forced to do this job \* and they were disappointed in me because vocation wasn't my religion, and so we parted company. I took a job in the mental hospital, Furnace Falls in Minnesota. A couple months after I left her this young lady committed suicide. So that remained to me as a signal \* I was kind of, a little bit self justified in everything \*\*\* and saying I don't want to be (part of this), but that didn't happen.

\*\*\* Hospital, that was in Minnesota. It was an interesting place. It was an old fashioned place. It was a huge farm. They had the patient from way back. \* maintained a farm. It was actually a producing, you know, vegetables and other things they were doing, and it was farm work. Furnace Falls. We had the South Dakota border \* northern Minnesota. The place was started--the first--I think it was the first director there, he was still there, it was a Dr. Patterson. Dr. Patterson was a graduate from Yale or Princeton or one of those -- I don't remember which of the two it was, but it's one of the two -- and he got this job and he drove up there in a coach \*\*\*\* an older man. And he was still there. When he started the hospital his idea was that women had more susceptibility to smoking tobacco than men. Men could tolerate it but not women. So he forbade women to smoke. At Furnace Falls State Hospital women were not allowed to smoke, and consequently they had some number of fires that got started in the closets where they would hide out to smoke. Anyhow, that gives you an idea of what kind of a hospital or doctor or psychiatry was going on there at the time.

And when I got there, also there was another important -- two other important aspects of that place which is not the usual anymore. His wife -- first of all, the superintendent, I guess that's what they called him, lived him on the grounds with his family. It was a big building. And I, a psychologist, and my quarters were

right next to theirs too, and we had a separate dining room where professional people were eating. The patients would do the cooking of course. But that was the situation. It was an old aristocratic arrangement. We had -- not the lecturers, we were the professors. And Dr. Patterson's wife had an affair with a psychopath who was there, ordered by the courts to the hospital. When he was there he finally \*\*\* had a little affair, \* whatever. Dr. Patterson, he's a psychopath. (Of course.) People would send \*\* cards. But he had to accept him because it was the law. So every morning we'd have our lunches and dinners together in this professional dining room in the quarters that we lived and we could do whatever we wanted. The idea was to start bringing in new content and try to do things that weren't done before. They were just sitting around on the ward so we tried \*\* approaches and there was a lot of staff \*\* they had \*\*\* sending money for staff to try and do things. But it was also very cold there, in Minnesota. In the wintertime, the buildings and the hospital were connected by terminals underground so you didn't have to be outside in the sleet and cold. That's how cold we were. And I decided to go to coastal California mostly because I had heard in California you can go sailing all year long.

Q: You had become a devotee of sailing.

Extremely so. From Wisconsin. In my four years in graduate school in Madison we were on Lake Mendota, we were the closest building to the lake. You could run out there any time and just grab a boat and run around and come back to do some work or whatever, all day long. And sailing was fun. I learned how to sail there and it was a lot of fun. I still do now, I just think about \*\*\*\* But that's why I came to California because I was going to try and go sailing, and took my first \*\*\* So I applied to civil service in California, it was a psychology job, and I took the civil service exam, and lo and behold, I turned out to rank number two. Rank number two, even though I didn't have a Ph.D. and

I didn't have five points for veterans, I still \*\* second. Civil service -- I think they still probably do for all I know -- they have a regulation that all available jobs have to be first offered to the top three candidates. So I started to get telegrams from all over, you know, and I remember especially one from the Meyers place in Los Angeles. They wrote a long telegram. "We have a psychologist who's been working here for two years and we all love him and he likes his job and he's got a family and everybody's happy but he doesn't have all the requirements for the bureaucracy to qualify for the job, and so the job is to be opened and offered to (someone) who would qualify, and so if you want the job, please let us know, but if you don't want the job please let us know also so we can \*\*..."

So those kinds of -- they're happy, they had had a job, before they gave it to anybody else, as one of its three top ranks they had to offer it to me first. So I went around and looked, they had jobs in Stockton, etc., and I took a job in San Quentin that was interesting for several reasons. Number one, it was just close by the bay. It was across the bay \* Tiburon right there. There was a social worker who became a parole officer and he had a little house on the shore at the end of Tiburon on stilts, and \* so one could tie up a boat right in front and be ready to go sailing all year long. So that was a big attraction to the unit. But actually the job was interesting. They had what they called intensive treatment program. An intensive treatment program was a research project that was carried out in two places, one in south, in Chino, and one north, in San Quentin. Our part in San Quentin at that time was \$300,000 a year. They had twelve psychiatric social workers. There was a very scientific -- it's one thing they do a lot in prisons is they do tests and tests and tests and tests, and they have plenty of people to match criteria. So our caseload was over a hundred people, and we had to match groups by intelligence and one of the criteria was, so they could be matched, treated and untreated. The treated would

get once a week to see a psychiatric social worker -- we had twelve psychiatric social workers -- for a year, a determined time. Then, when they went on parole there was a criteria we'd establish whether the program was effective or not, and that was recidivism. If more people from the control group broke parole on the first year of parole, then the treated were doing better.

This program had been in effect for three years and politically it was a very -- I mean look how progressive California was. They don't want just to warehouse people in prisons, they were really trying, they'd give you money and the staff. We had what was the \* in San Quentin, a whole floor up there, separate from other things that were going on in prison. We were not involved in any of the prison activities. We were just placed there. And three years were up and it was the first results of the \*\* coming in, and lo and behold there was no difference. Treated or untreated, they broke parole on the first year equally without any statistically significant differences. What's going on? What are we going to do? We need to -- That was at a time when I was looking for work. The job for me as a psychologist would be to come in, do whatever I want to do, whatever I can do, find out what's going on, why are \*\*\* I mean you see people a whole year, (every) week, you see some difference, what's -- why aren't we effective? And so your job is to find out. And then I'd suggest modifications and things to them. So that was an interesting job \*\*, very interesting.

My teacher the last year in school was Carl Rogers, and he was excited about the \*, he said "Oh yeah, that's really good, you know, not much done in \*\* because everybody wants punishment in the \* group and their offerings is away from punishment. Also, see if you can help. I took the job and was really interested. So my job would be to consult with the psychiatric social workers, and we had a psychiatrist, a consultant, his name was David Sherman from San Mateo, he lived in Woodland. That's where I met Mrs. (Constantinople). At

that time her husband was a (European salesman) \*\*\*\*\* and David Sherman, our psychiatrist consultant, we became very good buddies. I was invited for dinners at his house \*\*\*\* the elite so to speak in that situation. Anyhow, also why I got to take the job, I said Hey, I'm --

Q: So arriving in California \*\* was this 1960 more or less?

1957 -- September-October 1957. And I had this house on the edge of Tiburon on stilts on the bay and I'm working right here in San Quentin having this very interesting job. I'm not part of any of the routine functions that they had, the \* or whatever, and my job is to find out what's wrong and to see what we can do to make some improvements. I was driving around a car, driving \*\* (to other persons) in California to look around and see and come here to look at this job, I hadn't taken it yet, and I arrived in San Francisco and was driving around at night, you know I didn't know the town at all, and actually North Beach was the place where things were still going on at night and stuff and I stopped and parked right next to the Swiss American Hotel and Rico's had a sidewalk type thing or whatever, and I was reading a Time Magazine and I wandered around. And around the corner is the Coffee Gallery, and I stopped in there. So I just came here just to get a job in San Quentin, check out the area a little bit, and I just landed in the middle of the North Beach in Beatnik land. And I was talking to the bartender at the Coffee Gallery, his name was John, he was British, and I told him what I'm, you know, I'm a psychologist, there's this \*\* job in San Quentin here, and this is what we are supposed to be doing. He said, "Oh!" he says, "\*\* San Quentin! You got to look up Neil Cassidy. Neil is there." I did read some articles when Keraouc wrote On The Road. Time magazine, they were describing the beatniks a little and stuff, so I heard something, but that was my only acquaintance with that social phenomenon. And that is what I did. When I came, I took

the job and I set myself up in the office and I got to start finding out what's going on, and said, well they are talking to \*\*\* maybe they are not telling them everything that, whatever want to hear, I called in Neil, you know -- I could issue dockets, "I want to see these people," they would just bring them to me there -- anybody I wanted to see. And so I sent out a docket to Neil \*\* Of course he was in prison in San Quentin, and now he's in my office, I'm a psychologist, we are (behind) closed doors, nobody's bothering us or whatever, and I tell him, "Hey, a friend of yours, John, the guy who's a bartender, the coffee guy, said \*\*\*\* So that's how we met. And that's how we became friends to start with.

They were interesting tales, I mean there's a bunch of interesting -- The job. I find out for example, \*\*\*\* While all this was going on in (the City), going quite right in the City, I'm making my own research. I had to get clerks -- I mean I will need a clerk, yes? I saw many people at the interview, who's going to be my clerk. And one of them was a guy named Gene Fowler. Gene Fowler would later become a known poet. He's a very interesting person. I haven't talked to him, I don't know what happened to him. But at that time he was a young kid. His father was a chemist in Berkeley at the university, a professor of chemistry. But the kid for somehow wasn't taking -- he was a very harsh man or something, he wasn't taken to the family, and he went into the army and was in Korea. Those years were the Korea years. When he came back from Korea, he tried to rob a gas station. I mean, \*\* I tell you, this was a poetic statement. You really have to think how is a man expressing his poetry (to that extent) \* because he was not a guy -- He was a gentle guy, he wouldn't -- totally gentle person, but he did it. And what he told me was that, well they trained him in Korea to do that, you know? He didn't see much difference between people here and there, they were -- Nevertheless, I explained to Gene, I said, "Hey, here I am, I have a free hand, we can do our own research. We don't have to be just

with this intensive treatment program is going on at the same time. Well he found some other people to come in and be my clerks and a group of us, there were six of us, decided what we wanted to do, what kind of things would give us a better understanding of things, what was going on. Interestingly enough -- I mean obviously it is very interesting \*\*\*\* We used Leary's questionnaire. That was before we knew anything about LSD or his \* or anything like that.

Q: The Personality Assessment Questionnaire or something?

Yeah. And there was another psychologist who was in Sacramento and he'd come by. He was the relative overseer of things or whatever. He went to school with Leary at Berkeley at the same time. And he was telling me that Leary was the most ambitious student in his class, he wanted to be -- The questionnaire was just a list of 128 adjectives. So we used this questionnaire because it would apply, not necessarily the way Leary was trying to use it, his concept of using a series of adjectives, 128 adjectives. We set up columns for myself, my mother, my father, my best friend, the average person, the ideal person, and so we had a matrix of cells.

I found out there the most interesting thing that I still think is the most interesting thing that happened. We called in a hundred convicts, administered them the questionnaire, my clerks did all that there. We found an amazing phenomenon. There were a couple of people who endorsed every one of the cells -- 128 times 7 or 9, I forget -- except one. There was empty cell, not one endorsement. And what was that? That was spineless for one person -- mother. Nobody -- nobody was saying my mother was spineless. They said I was spineless, a couple, there were a couple that said the ideal person is spineless, the average person is spineless, my wife is spineless \*\*\* what I am saying, it's not a bad chance because there was just very few

endorsements but there were some. But one was zero. Empty cell. No spineless mothers \* at San Quentin. I thought that was very interesting. So we thought maybe it was a fluke. So we sent in another group of a hundred people. Replicated. Guess what? Zero spineless, the same cell: mother. Spineless. No \*\* convict at San Quentin would say that his mother was spineless. Some said his girlfriend, his father, he, his friends, ideal person, average person -- somebody in a hundred said yes, but nobody said for mother.

So this is what we were doing, going on with, time by time, and by that time they were ready to fire me, and I was hoping to get the data and work with it a little more. Nope, that's our property. I was out of the office \*\*\* and never saw his data again. I remember very well what it was, \*\*\*\*\*

Q: So what happened?

While I was doing the different things -- Once a year, every psychiatric social worker writes a report to the adult authorities about the client, the person you have seen. Suppose you're a convict and you get to see now a social worker and you're going to see him for a year and you have a chance to get him to write a report that might be a little better, you might have a better chance to go on parole. You'd have to be crazy not to try to -- would you tell him, "All right, I know what I'm going to do when I get out, I'm going to go out and rob a bank the next day"? So you have already capped off any possibility of them being honest and relate to you etc., and I said, well how can you expect to be effective when you are writing a report? And so I started to say that much \*\* about this report. The chief of research, David Grant, from Sacramento, came down to the warden's office, Dixon was the warden, and I got called in by the warden to his office to see the chief of research. "He wants to talk to you." \*\*\* "Well what are you doing? You don't understand corrections?" You know, they got my memo saying this is never wrong.

"You're looking what's wrong, here's number one already." "Yeah, well you don't understand corrections." We wouldn't even be allowed to be here. The only reason they let us be here is, they say "Well you've seen these people for a whole year and we have a responsibility to let them out on the street and you don't trust us? Maybe you learned something that could help us to decide whether they (should be paroled)?" They are the governor's \*\*\* They are the people who are the power in the prison. They go to different prisons and they have their jobs because they did a lot of \* for the governor who -- elections \*\*\* and we need something now this is a little slander given for the job and they are a bigshot. They are treated -- \*\* we wouldn't even be allowed to be there, you know, \*\* I wrote a memo, what did they expect, he said well yesterday David Grant was sitting here in his office and explained to me that the reason why they had to do this, however I don't really understand this because they are this, the top authority are reasonable people and they are competent people and they wouldn't be there, and he explained to them that \*\*\* we are trying to be confidential and someone should talk to him and \*\*\* big favor or \*\* favor they would understand and not expect it, you know, and you can let them know, you can --

Well, I was already a troublemaker there, \*\* terminated. They wanted me out of there already then and they started to look for things. But guess what? That was the end of the first year. By that time going back and forth and various other things, they rescinded. Not only rescinded, but they said, "Ah! That was the reason \*\*\*" They had to get approval to spend another \$300,000 a year here for the project. The problem was that they were reporting to the \* authority and that's why, the reason now, we are going to eliminate reports to top authorities. It took a year. I said, "Wow!" You could do something, you know, a little bit, you know. I really took a stand and I --

[tape side B]

I said "Well, that's interesting," and look up the rules, and there's a rule that says employees of the Department of Corrections are not allowed to associate with ex-convicts or their families. \*\*\* I'm going to write to Sacramento and I'm going to ask them for permission. \*\*\* Gene was extremely -- he doesn't want to do anything that's not totally straight anymore, you know. So I wrote a memo again, said my \* clerk \*\* is leaving on parole and he's been working with me on research projects and just want \*\*\* that we have permission. He was my chief -- I taught him and now he's a very, he was really a very good student \*\* we worked very closely. I said we worked very closely together and I would like to have permission to see him sometimes, and he asked if he can call on me if he is in trouble. I got a memo back: "Due to the fact that you \*\*\* your clerk and what you \*\*\* it is understandable that you might want to see him after he has been paroled. So permission is granted. And of course it is understood that no personal matters will be discussed. Check with your parole officer and let him know whenever you are going to see him" and all that. I realized, we're \*\*\*\* No personal \* So I told Gene what I got for permission and said, "Hey, what do we do?" "No. This is going to be trouble." So I never saw him. When he left for parole, we just left, but I told him, "Hey, Gene. We just got the report to the parole \*\* received it for our clients now, what we have a rule that you're not allowed to associate with ex-convicts and you expect us to do treatment with people for a whole year but then you got to tell them, but once you get out of here don't contact me because I'm not allowed to associate with you. That is \*\* material I was trying to work on.

Well, got to the close of another year, and it was I think around March, the \*\*\*\* they were -- absolutely, you're right! That was maybe -- and then it was wrong. We are going to change the first intensive treatment

program and it is no longer going to be intensive treatment program, but it is going to be an all follow-through program. We will start seeing them inside the prison and we are going to follow them out when they are paroled. Now you have the job of designing the new parole follow-through program, and you've got to be ready by July. It was March \*\* through July, because July is the new fiscal year and they're going to get money. And \*\* said this is \*\* effective. Ah, but we've learned what's wrong and they are making changes again. And so I wrote them back and I'm like, Well, we have no experience with people who are leaving the prison after they go on parole. I mean it may be that here they loved us here because we take them out of their miserable situation for an hour and it doesn't hurt them in any way, but outside, we are in prison. Come crawling back in and it's a different situation and we don't know yet how that would work out, whatever, I didn't know how to set it up. I got a memo back from the chief of research in Sacramento. It is your job to find out whatever you can and by July 1 we want, it is your job to have ready with operational procedures, etc. etc.

It is then -- by now I've seen Neil for about a year. He comes to my office and we talk and all this stuff. He's going out on parole, I think in June it was. And he says to me, "Leon, my wife, she never came to see me after the very beginning. She just wrote to me not to expect her and the family because she's taking the kids and going to Scotland when he's coming out on parole." He says, "I want to ask \*\*\* with the family..." you know \*\*\* to where he was talking. And I don't want to make any promises, however, whatever, but you know, I -- Could you talk to her? he said. She knows all about you, I've written her \*\*\* Could you talk to her and see maybe if she could stay and not go?" It was just that time and I had that memo that says "Of course \*\*\* anything you \*\* with them would not be doing a professional job. And you find out whatever you can and then have the program ready." I said, well that's a

godsend, you know. I'm not going to make a mistake again and write to them for permission to see another ex-convict and his family, because I know what I'm going to get eventually it's going to be something like Gene and I never saw Gene. But I'm going to take -- because the rule that says if I was not allowed to associate with ex-convicts and their families unless their job requires them to. It has that provision, "unless the job requires." Well how much more can it be my job requires me to when it says you need to find out what changes go on when you've seen him here and he goes on parole with family. I say clearly it's my job. I say yep, I can \*\* and that's when I call Carolyn. He was still in prison at that time. and I talked to her and she asked me, Could she count on me to help if they needed help? I said yes, certainly. She says okay, she isn't going to Scotland, she is going to stay with the family there. So that is what happens. So when Neil left out in \*\*\* Neil was ready to start the parole follow-through program. It was still about -- I think June, maybe another month, something like that. And so I told him, "But I'll come down and see you when you're at home, because I promised to do that too, but be sure that you let your parole officer know." I was going by what they wrote, gave me the permission with Gene Fowler: "You can see him if you let your parole officer know." \*\*\* He says all right. This job, I'm preparing, getting ready to set up office hours, and we were working with the parole office \*\*\* we hadn't yet set up (operations), we were working on them. So I went out and see them and when he came out and so \*\*\* He let his parole officer know, and his parole officer says "What? A psychologist from San Quentin came to see you and your family? That's against the rules." And they all were looking for me anyway. I was this awful trouble-maker who's causing all these troubles from the very beginning. He called over there, "One of my parolees, a psychologist from San Quentin, Leon Tabory, he came to see him and his family and they were talking personal things \*\*\*" They got the thing in Sacramento, then something else happened in the meantime. I don't

remember the exact \*\*\* They \*\* me out in San Quentin. There's going to be no more parole follow-through program. They're going to dump the whole thing and get me out of there, they put me in Vacaville. "Because of the critical shortage of psychological services in Vacaville, you're hereby transferred." They have the right to do that. So now I'm living in Tiburon and that job is over, parole follow-through is over, and I'm going to work in Vacaville. But I was there only a very short time because this parole officer's report has gone through the channels and whatever and it got to \*\*\* I get a telegram. I'm fired. For willful disobedience and insubordination, because I went to visit, violating the rules above the law but \*\*\*\*

So I was fired. And I didn't \*\*\* So I still, I didn't take another job and I was \*\*\*\* And I continued to see Neil and Carolyn because now I was no longer \*\* anyway. It was very interesting -- to me it was interesting, it may not be all that interesting -- but I went to the State Employees Association to ask for help. I thought I had a reasonable case. They \*\* no, they have a tough and short case against you. The rule is clear and you violated it and they wouldn't represent me. So then I went to \* lawyers. Same thing. I couldn't get a lawyer to take the case because they would check with the Department of Corrections, and there's nothing \*\* You didn't have permission and you violated the rule. And so I just decided to fight myself. By the time, you know, wheels grind slowly, by that time I did get another job though. I got a job -- no, not yet. Excuse me. I didn't have a job yet. Not until after this was resolved. But I had a hearing. Carolyn, Neil's wife, was with me there at the hearing. She was with him still then. And I won. The hearing officer said, Mr. Tabory acted reasonably under all the circumstances, because I explained all these things at the hearing, I had documentation from all these things. They just didn't know. They just knew that I'm a psychologist and under the \*\* psychology research department this year I was a trouble-maker, any excuse to get -- they had been

looking for a way to get rid of me some time ago. Anyhow, I'm supposed to be reinstated, I never \*\* about two years \*\* it was 62 by that time when I had the hearing, and, but after I won the case, after reviewing all the circumstances, they had appeal whatever, this personnel board, and I had to go to the personnel board, and they told me, well Mr. Tabory, it may have been a moral victory, but the research department says that they can't work with you because you have philosophical differences, so they don't have to take you back. And so that's how that ended, and that's when I started a good job. I got this job in San Jose, at a clinic in San Jose, a mental health clinic, and it was really pretty nice. And I was near Neil's house, I moved in with the Cassidys.

R: They were living in Los Gatos?

Yeah, they were living in Los Gatos. When Neil had the accident on the train, they got \$30,000 from the Federal Pacific or whatever where he was a brakeman.

R: He had a job as a brakeman on the train?

Yep.

R: And there was an accident?

Yep.

R: What, did the train crash?

I don't know exactly what happened. It derailed or something, and he fell and got hurt or something. And he seemed fine by this time by there was some medical or whatever, he got \$30,000. That was in San Jose, I forget now what his name was, he had a very big lawyer, I can't think of his name right now, but \*\*\* he was helping out the family while they were fighting and eventually won the \$30,000 so they used that money to buy a home in Los Gatos.

R: Okay, I think we should stop here.