

Welcome to Changing Lives Through Literature (CLTL)! We'll be working together every other week for twelve weeks reading literature, maybe writing about our lives and the world around us. I hope you find it interesting and inspiring.

Here are some guiding principles behind CLTL:

- literature is empowering
- discussions enhance that power
- the process of reading leads to reflection
- reflection leads to change.

The course responsibilities include: attendance, participation, and maintaining reading/writing materials. I'll be providing assignments that give you food for thought (I hope!), and each session we'll work together to create an environment where you feel free to express ideas, opinions and hopes to each other. This means there should be cooperation, mutual support, and encouragement as we work with each other.

Everyone is expected to READ and then DISCUSS their thoughts. A helpful hint: write down your thoughts as you read. You can write them down in the margins of the reading materials, in a notebook, or on post-it notes. If you do this, then you will have something to share. These could be questions, observations, connections, opinions...ANYTHING! You will NEVER be wrong!

You are required to attend all sessions and the graduation, to read all the materials, and contribute to the class conversations. You must call Probation Officer Jeff Whiteman if there is a problem and you must make up work missed. **MISSING A CLASS MAY CAUSE YOU TO BE DROPPED FROM THE PROGRAM.** Read a little each night so you finish the novel in your two weeks.

Your notes should include questions you have about the reading, and also your specific thoughts. Maybe there is a specific line that speaks to you. **SHARE IT!** These notes should also include, in particular your thoughts on the following questions:

- What did you think of the story?
- What was the reading experience like for you?
- What kind of people are these characters?
- Why did these people do what they did?
- Do they change during the course of the story?
- Is it possible for people to change themselves?
- Why is it so hard for us to tell the truth about what we feel?

**Listed below are assignments for the six sessions of the program.**

Session 1-September 12, 2013—short story which will be provided to you in class, and we will read it as a group.

THURSDAY

Session 2- September 26, 2013 THURSDAY

*The Other Wes Moore* by Westley Moore

Session 3- October 9, 2013 WEDNESDAY

*Night* by Elie Wiesel

Session 4- October 23, 2013 WEDNESDAY

*Always Outnumbered, Always Outgunned* by Walter Mosley

Session 5- November 6, 2013

*Articles of War* by Nick Arvin WEDNESDAY

Session 6- November 20, 2013 WEDNESDAY

TO BE ANNOUNCED

Session 7-GRADUATION

We will provide the texts to you, and YOU are responsible for returning them back to us in the condition in which you received them!

### Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Changing Lives Through Literature program (CLTL) to espouse the Socratic notion that "the unexamined life is not worth living." It is our mission to reach out to offenders who have the motivation to change behavior that has over and over again caused them to end up as statistics in the criminal justice system. Through literature, we ask participants in CLTL to explore their identity and actions through reading about and making connections with the characters or ideas in a text and to rethink their own behavior in light of these characters or ideas. It is our mission to aid the participants of CLTL to investigate and explore aspects of themselves, to listen to their peers, to increase their ability to communicate ideas and feelings to men and women of authority who they thought would never listen to them, and to engage in dialogue in a democratic classroom where all ideas are valid. It is our mission to help the participants to stop seeing their world from one angle, to begin opening up to new perspectives and to begin realizing that they have choices in life. Thus, literature will become a road to insight.

BOOKS READ:

*Always Outnumbered, Always Outgunned* by Walter Mosely  
*The Art of Racing in the Rain* by Garth Stein  
*The Rapture of Canaan* by Sheri Reynolds  
*Articles of War* by Nick Arvin  
*The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison  
*Plainsong* by Kent Haruf  
*Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson  
*Night* by Elie Wiesel  
*The One Eyed Man is King*  
*The Other Wes Moore* by Westley Moore  
*Black and Blue* by Anna Quindlen  
*Bastard Out of Carolina* by Dorothy Allison  
*The Sweet Hereafter* by Russell Banks

SHORT STORIES:

"Bullet in the Brain" by Tobias Wolff  
"Greasy Lake" by T.C. Boyle  
"Girl" by Jamaica Kincaid  
"The Story of an Hour" by Kate Chopin  
"A Woman on a Roof" by Doris Lessing  
"The Visit" by Walter Dean Myers  
"Ask Me, Ask Me, Ask Me" by Roddy Doyle  
"Jolene" by E.L. Doctorow  
"A Jury of Her Peers" by Susan Glaspell  
"Everyday Use" by Alice Walker  
"The Lesson" by Toni Cade Bambara  
"Three Questions" by Leo Tolstoy  
"The Head Gardener's Story" by Anton Checkov