

For Immediate Release
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Goal of New Book: Keeping Couples Separated by Prison Together

With over 90% of the prison population returning to society and more reentry studies citing the impact of families on recidivism and reintegration, this book seeks to promote healthy dialogue between couples separated by distance and time.

(Norfolk, Virginia) - Prisoners' Wives, Girlfriends, & Partners (PWGP) released its first publication Separated by Prison, United by Conviction – a journal ([ISBN 978-0-615-50956-3](https://www.pwgp.org/ISBN-978-0-615-50956-3), \$14.99). The journal consists of over 250 simple yet-thought provoking questions addressing relationships, love and the prison experience allowing both partners to express thoughts from different points of view. In addition, the journal contains quotes and partner exercises couples can refer back to as each year passes whether they are sentenced to five years or less or decades.

Questions include: *What are you sacrificing so your partner will feel loved? What are your insecurities and how have you learned to handle them? What is your definition of a healthy relationship?*

A fact sheet published by the National Healthy Marriage Resource Center, entitled *Incarceration and Family Relationships (2010)*, offers this: *Being married or in a committed relationship has been associated with lower levels of criminal activity and re- incarceration. Research suggests that the quality of the relationship, and not just the arrangement, is responsible for future avoidance of criminal activity. While a study by the Urban Institute, Returning Home (2004), finds: Former prisoners living in married or like married relationships have lower odds of recidivism.*

Separated by Prison, United by Conviction –a journal was created with such studies in mind. Keeping couples separated by prison together has a positive effect not only on the couples but on the community to which the prisoner must return and the family must live.

“The prison experience doesn’t always lend itself to open communication. Often times both parties are suppressing emotions of fear, anger, and hurt. With the right tools, couples can stay connected without growing apart while being apart,” says Patricia Suhre, Vice-President of PWGP, who has supported her incarcerated husband for twelve years. “We believe these emotions need to be addressed while a person is incarcerated and before the family reunites. Both partners are changing through this process. A healthy relationship begins with two healthy people. If couples are not communicating as openly as they need to, they run the risk of being strangers at homecoming and thus becoming vulnerable to the cycle,” she continues.

When used to its fullest potential, Separated by Prison, United by Conviction – a journal will bridge the gap between what couples are thinking and what they are actually saying. Its goal is to strengthen bonds and to prepare two healthy partners for the rigors of reunification. “Having this journal will ensure

couples separated by prison will not have to endure life without the possibility of a healthy relationship,” adds Suhre.

Separated by Prison, United by Conviction – a journal is published by Prisoners’ Wives, Girlfriends, & Partners (PWGP), an organization dedicated to supporting those with an incarcerated partner. Its founder Reesy Floyd-Thompson is a Life Coach, who deals exclusively with incarcerated families. She is also the wife of an incarcerated husband. The book is available online through separatedbyprison.com and amazon.com.

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