

ALPHA

IN PRISONS

It says in Proverbs,
'Hope deferred makes the heart sick.'
– and I know there are a lot of people
like that in prison.

Revd. Paul Cowley MBE | Founder of Alpha in Prisons

FOR PRISONS

Like all people, we know that those who find themselves in prison or detention often experience a sense of loss and may have a hunger to find purpose and meaning in life. **Alpha is a well established and professional tool that enables the opportunity to explore the big questions of life, ask questions about the Christian faith and share their point of view** in an informal, friendly and open environment.

Since established in the UK in 1995, Alpha has been run in prisons across 46 countries in more than 900 prisons and secure facilities around the world.

Our hope is that by running Alpha in Prisons and youth detention centres in Australia, people's lives would be positively impacted and relationships would be established, providing greater opportunities for prison leavers to link with connections after release.

WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF ALPHA IN PRISONS?

Alpha gathered feedback from over 500 guests after participating in Alpha in Prisons across the world with a diverse range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds represented. The Barna Group research study showed:



said the course had a very positive impact on their lives.

would highly recommend Alpha to their friends.

WHAT IMPROVEMENTS WERE SEEN?

Since participating in Alpha in Prison, how have you improved in these areas, if at all?

% of guests who said they became better in the following...

93% my ability to deal with daily challenges

87% my ability to deal with anxiety

95% my relationship with Jesus

WHAT DOES AN ALPHA SESSION IN PRISON LOOK LIKE?

Alpha is a series of interactive sessions hosted by trained facilitators, typically run over several weeks and can be adapted to fit within the time table available in prisons or youth detention centres. Session topics, format and delivery modes (either in person or online where relevant technology is available) can be selected. This includes professional video content and/or a choice of live scripts, allowing for relevant guest speakers.

It's also an opportunity for participants to hear from others in small groups and contribute personal perspectives with no obligation to say anything.

No two Alpha's look the same but they all have 3 main elements:

Connection

Whether in person or virtually all sessions start with at time to connect which is a great way to build community and get to know each other in prison.

Content

The talks are designed to engage and inspire conversation on big issues around faith. Usually around twenty to thirty minutes long for adults, and with a different format for youth, they can be played as a video or given as a live talk.

Conversation

At Alpha the goal is to love people well. It's all about a space to be real, open and authentic, where questions are encouraged and friendships are built.

WHAT GUESTS SAID ABOUT ALPHA IN PRISONS

"I have enjoyed my personal experience, found ways of coping with my past, and found buried issues that have driven me in a negative way."

- Alpha guest, Men's Prison, Western Australia

Alpha has had a positive impact on me in here, shown me different perspectives on life, beliefs and a lot of other things. It has helped me improve my ways, try to stay calm in certain situations, be kind... stay out of trouble in here - I have a more positive mindset.

The Alpha program should continue here, it will help many prisoners.

- Alpha guest, Women's Prison, Queensland

"Although I am not a Christian and I do believe in a different God this has still been an extremely beneficial program. Thank you for giving me the necessary tools needed in order to improve and better myself."

- Alpha guest, Women's prison, Queensland



“From a prison chaplain’s perspective, tools like Alpha have been particularly effective as they enable the (the men) to be listened to by non-judgemental people and able to express their thoughts and concerns in an open, trusting forum.”

– Ollie, Prison Chaplain

If you’re interested in Alpha running in your prison please connect with our National Prisons Director Liza at liza.kelder@alpha.org.au or 0404 133 863.

To find out more information about Alpha visit us at alpha.org.au

