**Additional helpful info when tutoring at the jail! (In addition to the SCJ’s JAIL’s docs/rules)**

**(from my gleanings, my colleague Duane, and a book he highly recommended, Teaching on the Inside by Pauline Geraci)**

***1st of all…Remember there are cameras in every room and hallway wherever you are. And a button/call system right near each door where you’ll be tutoring. Plus an emergency huge red button. So you don’t need to be overly “alarmed” because of the stark atmosphere and LOUD banging of doors and perhaps initially “tough acting” or “nice acting” inmates. Cautious, wise, alert, could be good descriptors of your demeanor.***

***“Don’t ask them why they are there.”***

***“Don’t tell them your last name or where you live.”***

***Have a “Yes Face”, but don’t be too open about your personal info nor encourage them to share their personal life story or info. (Try to stick to “Literacy business” and what they want to learn/work on.)***

***Give no opportunity for something to be “snatched”, even a pencil.***

***Sorry…no snacks/food brought in or given to them. NOR accepted from them. Not even a piece of gum or candy.***

***NOTHING given to them that you can’t give to ALL inmates. That inmate could be in jeopardy of getting rough housed to “get” what someone like a tutor gave them.***

***They should bring in a “jail pencil” if working on something already, but if they don’t, you can bring in 2 (ONLY TWO) pencils. One for you and one for them to use while with you. BE SURE TO COLLECT IT BEFORE THEY GO BACK TO THEIR CELL. If you want to keep a personal pen in your pocket, that’s fine.***

***Dress more ” professionally”, than casually.***

***Avoid loose clothing, like a scarf. Or expensive jewelry. Or long, dangling jewelry.***

***No flip flops. (That’s a hard one for me to remember in warm weather!)***

***Brief handshakes are great to greet and to say goodbye. But no other touching like a hug or anything else.***

***If a student complains about something regarding the jail, ALWAYS remember and find out the OTHER SIDE of the story by asking jail staff about it. (dictionary example)***

***And be careful about giving your opinions on jail-related issues. They can be twisted or used against the jail, you, or our Literacy program.***

***Feel free to talk with or ask questions of any jail staff or myself if you have a concern or something to report as inappropriate or questionable. I will also have a spot inside our Jail Literacy folder where you or I can list names of any inmates who presented a problem of any kind, and therefore refuse to see them, at least for awhile.***

***And now…From Geraci’s book:***

***2 concepts she wants tutors like us to “get” and not forget:***

1. ***“Trust no inmate. Remember where you are tutoring and do not let your guard down because an inmate seems nice. Always look at why someone says something or does something, because they usually want something in return.”***
2. ***Always remember with whom you work/tutor and where you are tutoring—the jail.***

***~ Report all incidences; do not hide anything.***

***~ Never bring in anything for a specific inmate. (unless it is Literacy related, like books or materials)***

***~ Never get intimately involved with an inmate.***

***~ Do not let inmates become an audience to your problems.***

***~ Never give an inmate a personal item.***

***~ Do not bring in contraband. (That would include something with a staple or paper clip! Or glitter!)***

***~ Never let inmates get away with breaking the rules, even if no one but you and the inmate know.***

***~Do not accept anything from an inmate.***

***~ Under no circumstances should you project weakness or uncertainty about your position as a tutor. Just be professional, fair, and “keep at your Literacy business” with the inmate while there.***

***~ Know the jail’s rules because the inmates know them better.***

***~Do not ignore sexual comments or innuendos.” Although this is an unlikely issue, it is possible and you would need to immediately tell the learner that it is inappropriate behavior and will not be tolerated.***

***~ If your gut tells you something is wrong, listen to it. And then tell/ask the Literacy Coordinator or jail staff.***

***\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\****

***In closing, this all might seem overwhelming and quite frightening. Try not to let your imagination run away on you or be looking for “the bad” all the time. True, you must be wise and on guard. But also allow yourself to “love what you do and do what you love”. Use appropriate humor when you can. Jail is a morose place, so learners there really appreciate humor. Enjoy your tutoring and have fun doing it, remembering that these are “flesh and blood” individuals rather just like you. It’s a fine line, but it can be done, especially as you acquaint yourself with this new culture and place for you, as well as your learners, to grow!***

***~Deb Helquist, Sawyer County Adult Literacy Coordinator, document updated Oct 2019***