



**FOCUS Ministries**  
**New Beginnings Transition Program**

June 26, 2018 Update (SJS)

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## **FOCUS Ministries Transition Program**

### **FOCUS Ministries Vision and Mission**

FOCUS Ministries is East Tennessee's Christ-centered, holistic prison ministry. FOCUS strives to help incarcerated men and women find the pathway to new beginnings by fostering faith, strengthening families, and reducing recidivism. This mission is carried out by what is called the FOCUS Pathway. This includes inspiring students behind the walls, empowering them beyond the walls, assisting in family reconciliation, and engaging men and women in the workplace.

### **New Beginnings Transition Program**

FOCUS seeks to provide the highest level of residential re-entry programming available in Knox and surrounding counties. The New Beginnings Transition Program has two current housing locations:

- 1) New Start Apartments -- 826 N. Broadway, Knoxville
- 2) Grace Place -- 2330 Old Callahan Drive, Knoxville

The FOCUS re-entry programming targets character development, recovery support, workforce engagement, family reconciliation, adventure recreation, and strategic community service.

### **Staffing**

The *FOCUS Executive Director* provides oversight and support to the transition staff and program.

The *FOCUS Men's Transition Coordinator* oversees entry interviews for the transition house as well as executes the day-to-day operations of the program; case management, course-work, classes, transportation, discipline, and leveling evaluations.

The *Residential Living Coordinator* provides watch over the men of the house during evening, weekend hours and outside of regularly scheduled program times. This individual works closely with the Transition Coordinator and the Transition Team to provide a safe and secure program environment at all times. (Only students who have graduated can apply for this role)

The *FOCUS Transition Administrator* assists the Coordinators with class scheduling, curriculum procurement, paperwork processing, and case management of students in the program.

The *FOCUS Transition Team* is made up of the *FOCUS Executive Director*, *Transition Coordinator*, *Transition Administrator*, *Residential Living Coordinator*, and FOCUS counseling partners. This group works together to award approval to program applicants, discuss leveling evaluations, handle discipline needs, and make adjustments to the transition program process as needed.

The *Transition Student Lead* is a student or students, at level 4 or 5, that demonstrates exceptional maturity and leadership. This role offers assistance to the *Transition Coordinator* and *House Manager* as assigned each week. This person or persons will receive a reduced rent as long as he/they continue to adhere to the tenets of the program and maintain a high level of responsibility.

# **FOCUS TRANSITION PROGRAM**

## **Program Level Lengths / Key Components**

### **Challenge Retreat**

Weekend retreat, optimally held during Level 1 of the program. A vision of biblical manhood will be shared at the retreat as well as a challenge toward living the 1-year program with excellence

### **Level 1: EYES on JESUS**

*6 weeks*

New Beginnings Transition Program's FOCUS Christian Academy Outside classes begin  
Students have a re-entry adjustment emphasis

### **Level 2: SURRENDER**

*6 weeks*

Students begin employment with a workplace partner

### **Level 3: ENDURANCE**

*3 months*

Students learn about endurance and responsibility with new levels of freedoms

### **Level 4: SACRIFICE**

*3 months*

Students focus on community service and long-term success planning

### **Level 5: VICTORY**

*3 months*

There is a strong focus on Reintegration  
Optional Independent Living (based on approval)

## **Uniqueness & Innovations of the Program**

- 1) Structured 12-week minimum pre-release program in East Tennessee jails and prisons
- 2) Intentional and individualistic case management
- 3) Strong recovery programming, vibrant therapeutic community, professional counselors
- 4) High emphasis on generational mentoring (i.e. - Recovery, The Cloud of Witnesses)
- 5) Incentivizing success, progress, and healthy pride nurtured by leveling achievements
- 6) Stringency to program tenants for success and development of strong self-discipline
- 7) FOCUS Adventure Team experiences (i.e. - Hiking, Camping, Rafting, etc.)

## New Beginnings Transition Program Overview

The FOCUS New Beginnings Transition Program (NBTP) provides a one-year Christian re-entry program serving men released from Tennessee prisons and jails. The program includes residential services for the first nine (9) months and support services for the following three (3) months, with full graduation after one year of successful Christian living. The goal of this program is to provide a safe, Christian environment for students with excellent support services in an atmosphere designed for students to succeed.

Students will take advantage of spiritual growth studies and life skills classes all while developing an individual recovery plan to deal with any life-controlling issues. Each of these components will begin during level one and continue into advanced levels. Students will also enter the workplace with an opportunity to employ skills and develop new ones in meaningful employment opportunities.

Students are expected to **make a one-year commitment**, with nine (9) months in the residential phase and three (3) months in the independent living phase. Please remember this is a transition program. Program participants are in the process of moving from minimum freedom to total freedom. Therefore, students are encouraged to be patient with the staff, themselves and God.

### Benefits of the New Beginnings Transition Program

- Opportunity to live in a Christian environment and to discover God's plan for life
- Christian counseling; space is given for students to deal with re-entry issues of spiritual growth, relationships, financial, vocational and addiction recovery
- Transitional living skills provided through continuing education (job readiness, budgeting, computer training, time management, etc.)
- Transportation to and from court, probation & parole, and doctor appointments
- Employment opportunities with local employers and transportation provided (minimal fee)

### Program Fees

*Admission Fee* - After a student is accepted an admission fee of \$200 will be required. Students who successfully complete the nine (9) month residential portion of the NBTP Program, and are current on all financial obligations, qualify to receive a refund of their Admission Fee to be used only for establishing independent living needs (rent or utility deposits, etc).

*Level 1 Scholarship* - A conditional scholarship for Level 1 students has been established for program fees up to a maximum of six (6) weeks or \$750. The scholarship is granted on the condition that the student completes nine (9) months of residential living.

*Weekly Rent* - Student will be placed in a sustainable job upon reaching Level 2 of the program and will be expected to begin paying rent a weekly of \$130 with their first pay period.

*Program Fees and Savings Account* - Student will be required to fund a non-accessible savings account as defined in the Financial Transactions in the General Guidelines section. Level 2, 3, and 4 student rent and savings account funds will be maintained by a student from the weekly paycheck.

*Student Levels* - As in our spiritual and physical lives, we grow to new levels. FOCUS has determined that students will progress through certain levels as they grow toward "total freedom," becoming who God wants them to be in their communities and families. Each student is expected to complete all 5 levels of the program to qualify for graduation.

## THE LEVELS

### **FOCUS on Scripture**

Scripture is both a voice of authority as well as a guide for all that FOCUS Ministries seeks to accomplish. The passage below, selected from the book of Hebrews, serves as a guide to describe the theme and intent of the FOCUS Transition Program levels.

*“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.” - Hebrews 12:1-2*



### **The Cloud of Witnesses**

*“Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses”*

Student support systems are crucial for any transition program to reach high levels of success. FOCUS strives to maximize its support structure through what is called *The Cloud of Witnesses*. In the biblical context, this “Cloud of Witnesses” is the sum total of Israel’s heroes of the faith, shared about in Hebrews 11. The writer of Hebrews argues that in view of these former faith heroes, all believers ought to live a life of heroic faith and obedience to God.

FOCUS has developed a similar support group to champion all student progress, as well as the FOCUS Pathway in general. The Cloud includes male FOCUS staff and Board of Directors members, select pastors, counselors, vital volunteer leaders, and former program graduates.

At the onset of the program (Challenge Retreat), the completion of levels, and at program graduation, *The Cloud of Witnesses* is available to pray, offer spiritual encouragement, and celebrate the success of students in the program. *The Cloud* is available for the process of *Leveling* when students progress from one level to the next. This method of cross-generational, age-and-stage mentorship enhances the therapeutic community for all students, leading participants into lasting life change.

One of the greatest joys of this mentoring group is how it will continue to grow through the years. Students that complete the one-year program are asked to join *The Cloud of Witnesses* and become a coach for current and future students of the transition program. Creating a lineage of changed lives is the heartbeat of FOCUS’ mission.

## (Manhood) Challenge Retreat

*“A real man 1) rejects passivity 2) expects the greater reward  
3) accepts responsibility and 4) leads courageously.” - Dr. Robert Lewis*

### Description:

Once approximately 5-10 new students enter the FOCUS Transition Program, a retreat experience will be planned. Groupings of 5-10 new students are called *Generations*. As close as possible to the start of each *Generation*, students will be taken on a retreat to set expectations and create an anticipation for the 12-month experience. The weekend is led by members of *The Cloud of Witnesses*. Below is a sample retreat schedule.

### Sample Retreat Schedule:

SCHEDULE	AM (7AM-12PM)	PM (12-5 PM)	NIGHT (5-10 PM)
FRIDAY	----	Foothills Retreat Center in Louisville.	Dinner Session: “A True Vision of Manhood”
SATURDAY	Breakfast Manhood Challenge 1 ETA Time: Manhood & Life Plan Work	Lunch Group Hike	Dinner Manhood Challenge 2  Pledge & Anointing
SUNDAY	Breakfast Worship Gathering Manhood Challenge 3	Head Home	----

\* *ETA stands for Extended Time Alone (with God)*

## **Level 1: EYES ON JESUS (Blue Band)**

*“Looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith”*

### **Description:**

During the initial 6-weeks of the FOCUS Christian Academy (NBTP) outside program, students are challenged to fix their eyes on Jesus in strategic ways. This level is one of the most challenging in the whole program due to its minimal amount of liberty. While the level of encouragement, support and communicated belief in each student’s ability to complete the program successfully will be strong, the guidelines during this phase are stringent. The intentional structure and accountability early on are designed to build greater self-discipline for success during later levels of the program.

### **Curriculum:**

Curriculum during Level 1 of the program enhances how students daily look to Jesus. No matter the level, students are challenged at a heart, mind, and body level to develop healthy habits and routines for success. Class topics include: the gospel, life of Jesus, prayer, SHAPE, scripture study and memorization, identity and integrity, and time management.

### **Recovery Component:**

The theme of this level parallels the character building of partner recovery program pieces. Students attend such programs every Tuesday night and every fourth Thursday of the month. The first three of the 12-steps mirror the Level 1 “Eyes on Jesus” theme.

- 1) *Step 1: We admitted we were powerless over our addiction-- that our lives had become unmanageable.*
- 2) *Step 2: We came to believe that God could restore us to sanity.*
- 3) *Step 3: Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God*

### **Student Expectations**

- To be obedient and respectful to program authorities: Transition Coordinator, Administrator, House Manager(s), and teachers, volunteers
- To be respectful of other students; their rooms and possessions
- To give full effort to program classes and the weekly schedule
- To be aware of the discipline and dismissal policies outlined in the appendix
- To be subject to random drug testing, as with all subsequent levels

### **The Expectation of The Cloud:**

All staff, mentors, leaders and life coaches of The Cloud are encouraged to call, visit, and spur students on specifically as it pertains to how they relate to Jesus. Discussions should center on one’s personal devotional time and intimacy with Jesus, as well as any doubts or issues people may have relating well to the person of Jesus.

It is the expectation of the Transition Team and the FOCUS Staff that each member of The Cloud take part in *one whole group activity and pray intentionally for the men in Level 1.*

### **Student Freedoms / Level Restrictions**

- There will be no cell phones permitted during this level of the program
- Television and house phone privileges are allowed but are not to be abused
- Students are permitted to smoke in designated smoking areas only. Chewing and vaping are not permitted inside the house at any time.

- ❑ Students are not permitted to leave the house under any circumstances unless given proper approval from a member of the FOCUS Transition Team. Anyone who breaks this rule will be subject to the disciplinary and dismissal rules in the appendix.
- ❑ Students will take part in all FOCUS sponsored service projects, activities
- ❑ See General Guidelines (page 20-21) for information on day passes and visitations

**FOCUS Adventure Team Elements**

All Level 1 students attend the Manhood Challenge Retreat soon after arrival in the program. A specially coordinated adventure event will be held for all graduates of Level 1 as well.

**Level 1 Schedule:**

A sample week for a Level 1 participant shown below. \* *TC signifies Transition Coordinator*

<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>AM (7AM-12PM)</b>	<b>PM (12-5 PM)</b>	<b>NIGHT (5-10 PM)</b>
<b>MONDAY</b>	Daily QT	Class	House Meal/Meeting Devotional Work
<b>TUESDAY</b>	Daily QT Level Work	Class Rec/Free-Time	Recovery Community Night
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	Daily QT Class	Level Work	Store Shopping Night
<b>THURSDAY</b>	Daily QT Class	Class Weekend Plan Work	Mentoring Night
<b>FRIDAY</b>	Daily QT Class	Level Work: Rec/Free-Time	Open Night
<b>SATURDAY</b>	Follow Weekend Plan	for each student	Open Night
<b>SUNDAY</b>	Church	Rest	Store Shopping Night

**Level 1 Completion**

Level 1 is complete when a student completes all necessary coursework and the Transition Team confirms a student has demonstrated the heart and maturity needed for the second level of the program. A *Leveling* ceremony will be held for progressing students with members of The Cloud of Witnesses on second Monday of the month.

## **Level 2: SURRENDER (White Band)**

*“Lay aside every weight and sin which clings so closely”*

### **Description:**

Level 2 of the program centers on the theme of surrender. For the second 6-weeks, students focus on the habits and hang-ups which fed their addictions (chemical or not). This is a crucial stage as it addresses the root of deep-seeded issues in the heart and minds of students. Students will grow to understand that surrendering to Jesus is necessary for a successful future. During Level 2 of the transition program, students will also obtain full-time employment.

### **Curriculum:**

Curriculum during Level 2 of the program emphasizes surrender, that students might find new life in Christ. Class topics include “inventory” components of the recovery program, a study through key passages in Romans, and spiritual warfare.

### **Recovery Component:**

The focus of this level parallels the character building of partner recovery programs. The next four of the 12-steps mirror the Level 2 “Surrender” theme.

- 1) *Step 4: We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.*
- 2) *Step 5: We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another the exact nature of our wrongs.*
- 3) *Step 6: We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.*
- 4) *Step 7: We humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.*

### **Student Expectations**

- Students will have the privilege to purchase a personal cell phone
- To be obedient and respectful to program authorities: Transition Coordinator, Administrator, House Manager(s), and teachers, volunteers
- To be respectful of other students; their rooms and possessions
- To give full effort to program classes and the weekly schedule
- To be aware of the discipline and dismissal policies outlined in the appendix
- To be subject to random drug testing, as with all subsequent levels
- Keep maintaining a daily quiet time journal to share from at the house meeting
  
- NBTP Students are required to pay a weekly rent of \$130 as the scholarship ends. Students will also be required to cover work-related transportation cost and savings account requirements.
- The usage of savings account funds requires a written request
- Students will receive an overall health care assessment to determine what services are required to help you maintain a reasonably healthy lifestyle – physically and mentally
- Each student will work with addiction counselors to determine a “Risk Assessment” and “Relapse Prevention Plan” for life-controlling issues

### **The Expectation of The Cloud:**

All staff, mentors, leaders and life coaches of The Cloud are encouraged to call, visit, and spur students on specifically as it pertains to life struggles. Members of The Cloud are encouraged to discuss how they experience victory over personal wrestlings with sin and the spiritual warfare that takes place in day-to-day life.

It is the expectation of the Transition Team and the FOCUS Staff that each member of The Cloud take part in *one whole group activity and pray intentionally for the men in Level 2.*

### Student Freedoms / Level Restrictions

- Television and mobile/house phone privileges are allowed but are not to be abused.
- Students are permitted to smoke in designated smoking areas only. Chewing and vaping are NOT permitted inside the house.
- See General Guidelines (page 20-21) for info on day, overnight, and weekend passes
- Students are NOT permitted to leave the house under any circumstances unless given proper approval from a member of the FOCUS Transition Team. Anyone who breaks this rule will be subject to the disciplinary and dismissal rules found in the appendix.

### FOCUS Adventure Team Elements

All students of the program participate in a FOCUS Adventure Team outing during this level of the program. A specially coordinated event is held for all graduates of Level 2 as well.

### Level 2 Schedule:

A standard week for a Level 2 participant shown below. \* TC signifies Transition Coordinator

<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>AM (5AM-12PM)</b>	<b>PM (12-5 PM)</b>	<b>NIGHT (5-10 PM)</b>
<b>MONDAY</b>	Daily QT Work	Work	House Meal/Meeting Devotional Work
<b>TUESDAY</b>	Daily QT Work	Work	Recovery Community Night
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	Daily QT Work	Work	Store Shopping Night
<b>THURSDAY</b>	Daily QT Work	Work	Mentoring Night
<b>FRIDAY</b>	Daily QT Work	Work	Open Night
<b>SATURDAY</b>	Follow weekend plan	for each student	Open Night
<b>SUNDAY</b>	Church	Rest	Store Shopping Night

\*\* See Appendix for Daily QT Guide for students

### Level 2 Completion

Level 2 is complete when a student completes all necessary coursework and the Transition Team confirms a student has demonstrated the maturity and the heart needed for the third level of the program. A *Leveling* ceremony will be held for progressing students with members of The Cloud of Witnesses on the second Monday of the month.

### **Level 3: ENDURANCE (Green Band)**

*“Run with endurance”*

#### **Description:**

Level 3 is appropriately named “Endurance” because instead of six weeks, this level lasts three months. It essentially doubles the time a student has between a leveling up ceremony, the set measurement of program success. FOCUS defines endurance in Level 3 as a steady and collective set of healthy decisions that students make to achieve long-term success.

#### **Curriculum:**

Curriculum during Level 3 of the program centers on one’s steady, daily obedience to Christ. There is a strong emphasis placed on reconciling family relationships and broken friendships. Of course, no matter the level, students are challenged on a heart, mind, and body level to develop healthy habits and routines for success. Class topics include: the family, enhanced budgeting, and the biblical accounts of both Jacob and Joseph (Genesis 25-51).

#### **Recovery Component:**

The theme of this level parallels the character building of partner recovery program pieces. Steps 8-10 of the 12-step process work together well with the FOCUS Level 3 “Run with Endurance” theme.

- 1) *Step 8: We made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.*
- 2) *Step 9: We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.*
- 3) *Step 10: We continued to take personal inventory and when wrong promptly admitted it.*

#### **Student Expectations**

- To develop a future family and/or family reconciliation plan, coinciding with the amends making of the 12-step program
- To be fluent in the transition program processes, be a blessing to incoming students
- To take initiative and reach out to members of *The Cloud* for mentorship and help during times of struggle or need
- Discipline warnings, outlined in the appendix, are for students that do not cooperate

#### **The Expectation of The Cloud:**

All staff, mentors, leaders and life coaches of The Cloud are encouraged to call, visit, and spur students on specifically as it pertains to family and friendship reconciliation. Discussions should center on places a student struggles to “run with endurance” with great faith in God.

It is the expectation of the Transition Team and the FOCUS Staff that each member of The Cloud take part in *one whole group activity and visit with 3 men during the 3 months of Level 3.*

#### **Student Freedoms / Level Restrictions**

- See General Guidelines (page 20-21) for info on day, overnight, and weekend passes
- Television and phone privileges are allowed, but are not to be abused
- Students are permitted to smoke in designated smoking areas only. Chewing and vaping are not permitted inside the house at any time.
- Students are not permitted to leave the house under any circumstances unless given proper approval from a member of the FOCUS Transition Team
- To be aware of the discipline and dismissal policies outlined in the appendix

### FOCUS Adventure Team Elements

All students of the program participate in a FOCUS Adventure Team outing during this level of the program. A specially coordinated event is held for all graduates of Level 3 as well.

### Level 3 Schedule:

A standard week for a Level 3 participant shown below. \* *TC signifies Transition Coordinator*

<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>AM (5AM-12PM)</b>	<b>PM (12-5 PM)</b>	<b>NIGHT (5-10 PM)</b>
<b>MONDAY</b>	Daily QT Work	Work	House Meal/Meeting Devotional Work
<b>TUESDAY</b>	Daily QT Work	Work	Recovery Community Night
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	Daily QT Work	Work	Store Shopping Night
<b>THURSDAY</b>	Daily QT Work	Work	Mentoring Night
<b>FRIDAY</b>	Daily QT Work	Work	Open Night
<b>SATURDAY</b>	Follow weekend plan	for each student	Open Night
<b>SUNDAY</b>	Church	Rest	Store Shopping Night

### Level 3 Completion

Level 3 is complete when a student completes all necessary coursework, including Scripture memory verses, and the Transition Team confirms a student has demonstrated the maturity and heart needed for the fourth level of the program. A *Leveling* ceremony will be held for progressing students with members of The Cloud of Witnesses on the second Monday of the month.

## **Level 4: SACRIFICE (Red Band)**

*“For the joy that was set before him endured the cross”*

### **Description:**

Level 4, the second 3-month level of the program, is aptly named “Sacrifice” as it addresses a man’s need to make strategic sacrifices in life for a greater good. This sacrifice is modeled by Jesus in Hebrews 12:2. Students in Level 4 are challenged to embrace selfless service and purposeful mission. This is fulfilled first by planning and executing a community service project. Secondly, students are to outline a life purpose and mission plan. In other words, *“What great work does God have for them in the future?”* and *“How might they give back to others?”*

Level 4 students will also be eligible to pursue vocational or college classes, as far it does not interfere with ongoing requirements of the program and one’s work schedule.

### **Curriculum:**

Curriculum during Level 4 will center on the sacrifice of Jesus to leave heaven, become man, and die for mankind. This sacrifice serves as the benchmark for our service. Class topics include upper room readings (John 13-17), themes of sacrifice and service, SHAPE revisited.

### **Recovery Component:**

The theme of this level pairs well with Step 11 of the 12-Step program. This step takes sacrifice and strong self-awareness.

- 1) *Step 11: We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.*

### **Student Expectations**

- Students will be expected to plan and execute a community service project
- Students will be expected to develop a personal mission and purpose plan (exit plan)
- Students will be expected to take initiative and reach out to members of *The Cloud* for advice on being a man of both great sacrifice and great purpose
- To be aware of the discipline and dismissal policies outlined in the appendix
- To receive random drug screenings

### **The Expectation of The Cloud:**

All staff, mentors, leaders and life coaches of The Cloud are encouraged to call, visit, and spur students on specifically as it pertains the themes of work and purpose, sacrifice and service.

It is the expectation of the Transition Team and the FOCUS Staff that each member of The Cloud take part in *one whole group activity and visit with 3 men during the 3 months of Level 3.*

### **Student Freedoms / Level Restrictions**

- See General Guidelines (page 20-21) for info on day, overnight, and weekend passes
- Be connected to a church family in accountability, ministry, and tithing
- Maintain godliness and sexual integrity in all relationships
- Provide a change of address form to Transition Team, Probation & Parole to the postal service in preparation for independent living
- Complete “Checklist for Independent Living” (Financial, Property, ARP, Graduation Date)

### FOCUS Adventure Team Elements

All students of the program participate in a FOCUS Adventure Team outing during this level of the program. A specially coordinated event is held for all graduates of Level 4 as well.

#### Level 4 Schedule:

A standard week for a Level 4 participant shown below. \* *TC signifies Transition Coordinator*

<b>LEVEL 4</b>	<b>AM (5AM-12PM)</b>	<b>PM (12-5 PM)</b>	<b>NIGHT (5-10 PM)</b>
<b>MONDAY</b>	Daily QT Work	Work	House Meal/Meeting Devotional Work
<b>TUESDAY</b>	Daily QT Work	Work	Recovery Community Night
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	Daily QT Work	Work	Store Shopping Night
<b>THURSDAY</b>	Daily QT Work	Work	Mentoring Night
<b>FRIDAY</b>	Daily QT Work	Work	Open Night
<b>SATURDAY</b>	Follow weekend plan	for each student	Open Night
<b>SUNDAY</b>	Church	Rest	Store Shopping Night

#### Level 4 Completion

Level 4 is complete when a student completes all necessary coursework, including both the service project and mission/purpose plan, in addition to approval of the Transition Team. A *Leveling* ceremony will be held for progressing students with members of The Cloud of Witnesses on the second Monday of the month.

#### **NOTE:**

**Level 4 will not be considered complete without a Transition Team approved home plan.** The students savings account payout detailed in Level 5 will not occur without this approval.

**Level 5: VICTORY (Yellow Band)**  
*“Seated at the right hand of the throne of God”*

**Description:**

When Jesus completed the victorious work of salvation, the author of Hebrews reports that He sat down at the right hand of the Father. This is a beautiful picture of spiritual victory. Jesus had done exactly as the Father had asked and returned to a place of perfect relationship at His side.

In Level 5, students have completed all the curriculum pieces of the program. This phase is all about successful reintegration into everyday life, society. Students are given the option to move into the independent housing of their choosing or stay in FOCUS housing.

**Curriculum:**

Curriculum during this final stage includes any ongoing recovery work and of course personal devotional journaling. Students will still share from personal devotional readings during the house meetings on Mondays.

**Recovery Component:**

The freedom and sending components of Level 5 parallel the final step of the 12-step program. In light of all that has been learned and applied, students are encouraged to become one that helps others caught in the traps of addiction.

- 1) *Step 12: Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to others with life-controlling issues, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.*

**Student Expectations**

- To be role models of discipline and responsibility for men in lower levels of the program
- To demonstrate maturity in the midst of their new level of independence
- Maintain godliness and sexual integrity in relationships
- See General Guidelines for info on day, overnight, and weekend passes
- To continue developing and implementing exit plan
- To attend Monday House Meeting and recovery meetings
- To meet with NBTP Transition Coordinator at minimum once a month for consultations
- Students will have the right to transfer their savings to a private bank account
- Remain completely alcohol and drug-free and submit to random drug screenings

**The Expectation of The Cloud:**

All staff, mentors, leaders and life coaches of *The Cloud* are encouraged to call, visit, and spur students on. It is the expectation of the Transition Team and the FOCUS Staff that each member of The Cloud take part in *one whole group activity and visit with 3 men during the 3 months of Level 5.*

**Student Freedoms / Level Restrictions**

- Greater freedom and greater responsibility to foster greater society re-entry
- See General Guidelines (page 20-21) for info on day, overnight, and weekend passes
- Strong daily integration of faith and life practices

**FOCUS Adventure Team Elements**

All students of the program participate in a FOCUS Adventure Team outing during this level of the program. A specially coordinated event is held for all graduates of Level 5 as well.

**Level 5 Schedule:**

A standard week for a Level 5 participant shown below. \* TC signifies Transition Coordinator

<b>LEVEL 5</b>	<b>AM (5AM-12PM)</b>	<b>PM (12-5 PM)</b>	<b>NIGHT (5-10 PM)</b>
<b>MONDAY</b>	Daily QT Work	Work	House Meal/Meeting Devotional Work **
<b>TUESDAY</b>	Daily QT Work	Work	Recovery Community Night
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	Daily QT Work	Work	Store Shopping Night
<b>THURSDAY</b>	Daily QT Work	Work	Mentoring Night
<b>FRIDAY</b>	Daily QT Work	Work	Open Night
<b>SATURDAY</b>	---	---	Open Night
<b>SUNDAY</b>	Church	Rest	Store Shopping Night

\*\* Designated Mandatory moments for all Independent Living Students

**Level 5 Completion**

Level 5 is complete when a student has completed all necessary requirements and demonstrates the needed maturity for successful independent living. After Transition Team approval, students will be ready to graduate. The *Graduation* ceremony will be held for all eligible students with members of The Cloud of Witnesses, friends, and family.

## Graduation & Beyond

*“Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.” - Hebrews 12:3 (ESV)*

### **Description:**

At the conclusion of graduation, students will be inducted into The Cloud of Witnesses. Graduates then have the great privilege and opportunity to pour back into the lives of men in the program. Mentoring takes on a special significance having once been a student.

All graduates are encouraged to remain dedicated to their ongoing recovery, as well to remain closely linked with the FOCUS family. It goes without saying that students will have struggles and face adversity. The FOCUS family, The Cloud, and partner recovery programs will serve as guides to help graduates not *“grow weary or fainthearted.”*

Graduates are given the opportunity to apply to work for FOCUS as potential House Managers and Student Leads if so desired.

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## GENERAL GUIDELINES

The New Beginnings Transition Program (NBTP) has a sincere desire to assist our students in following a new direction that Jesus is mapping. We understand that students are not always going to step “perfectly” and FOCUS will encourage and counsel participants not to continue in a direction(s) leading away from intimacy with Jesus and serious life consequences. FOCUS wants students to understand that the NBTP is serious about obeying God’s precepts, therefore, some choices will lead to immediate termination of residential status and employment opportunities. In the Appendix, there is a list of violations of general guidelines that will cause immediate termination of residential status.

All NBTP Students have foreknowledge and confirmed understanding of guidelines before entering the program. This understanding will be reaffirmed during orientation and all students will agree to abide by them while an NBTP student. All students will be issued a copy of the guidelines for clarity and quick reference.

**Respect:** Show respect to other students and staff. Disrespect of any kind will not be tolerated and may lead to immediate dismissal from the program. In light of this:

- A student should only enter another student’s room when that student is present
- Doors should not be locked – we should respect each other’s property

**Financial Transactions:** FOCUS feels it is important to help its students start and maintain a financial relationship, such as checking and savings accounts, also when needed and desired credit restoration with the bank or financial institution of their choice. It is forbidden for any student to enter into any financial transactions (lending, borrowing, buying, or selling) with other students, staff, mentors or any other person or business without prior approval from the Transition Coordinator.

Students must also understand that maintaining financial accounts in good standing is a responsibility. Students agree to be accountable to the NBTP Staff by allowing them to review account(s) monthly or when there is just cause for concern.

- All single purchases of more than \$25 must be **pre-approved** by the Transition Coordinator.
- Gambling** of any type (e.g. football pools, poker, etc) is not permitted by students in the program, on or off FOCUS properties or work sites.

**Savings Account:** Students are required to fund a non-accessible savings account beginning the first week of employment. The savings requirements per level are as follows.

- 50% of the net pay in Level 2
- 25% of the net pay in Level 3
- 10% of the net pay in Level 4

**NOTE:** If for any reason the student chooses to leave the program early or is dismissed from the New Beginnings Transition House (NBTP), the student will be responsible for reimbursing NBTP for the \$750 conditional scholarship received the first six weeks of their stay. This amount and any past due rent will be deducted from the student's savings account at the time of dismissal.

**Language:** Students should use language that builds up and does not tear down the body of Christ and the FOCUS family. Profanity of any kind will not be tolerated while participating as a student in the NBTP, on or off FOCUS properties or worksites.

**Phones:** As a student at NBTP, communication is very important. Therefore, a landline with unlimited long distance has been provided. Students can use the phone to keep in touch with family and making appointments, but because it is a "shared phone" keep the following in mind:

- Be considerate in the time of day and amount of time spent on the house phone
- Always return the phone to its proper place so students do not have to search for it
- Personal cell phones are permitted for Level 2 and above after pre-approval from FOCUS Transition Team and when one's budget indicates if can be afforded
- Student cell phones are subject to search by staff at any time
- Workplace usage must be limited to breaks and before/after work hours
- Violators of this policy will be subject to consequences, up to dismissal from the program

**Curfews:**

Level 1 - 4 Students: Curfew is 8 PM Sunday through Thursday

All Students: Curfew is 10 PM on Friday and Saturday nights.

Curfew can be superseded by staff and/or probation/parole. NBTP staff and probation/parole offices must both approve any changes beforehand.

**Relationships:** Sexual purity is expected while a student/tenant is in the NBTP and in a housing agreement with FOCUS. Relationships outside marriage have been the cause of many students stumbling and ultimately returning to jail or prison; therefore, relationships are not permitted in Level 1 - 3 unless a student is legally married. We encourage all relationships be conducted with Christian honor, respect, and dignity.

- It is best for students in Level 4 to keep their relationships public
- If a student enters into a relationship while a Level 4 or above student, this needs to be communicated to the NBTP program staff.

- ❑ Relationships that cause a student to stumble and/or make bad choices will not be permitted to continue (*as determined by staff*) as long as the student is enrolled in NBTP.
- ❑ Married students will have the opportunity to spend time with their spouse unlike unmarried students; therefore, NBTP encourages students to involve spouses as much as possible in many of the activities students will be involved in while in the NBTP. After Level 1 is complete, and it is not in conflict with FOCUS program scheduling, married students will be permitted to spend one weekend a month with their spouse provided they are up-to-date on all requirements and have staff and Probation & Parole approval.

**Mail:** All incoming mail will be received at Student's location and distributed by staff to students. NBTP understands the importance of communicating with family and friends through cards, letters, and emails and encourages our students to stay connected. However, we reserve the right to intervene and view any correspondence we feel has the potential to be deceptive or unhealthy. While one is a student of NBTP, limited access to social media will be maintained.

**Passes & Visitation:** Since NBTP is responsible to Probation & Parole for our students, the following guidelines govern passes which are required for NBTP students to leave FOCUS property for four (4) hours or more. **Note:** Leaving the premises for less than 4 hours still requires staff **approval in advance**.

- ❑ **Level 1:** Students can request 1, 8-hour pass per month with approved family and friends. No overnight or weekend passes allowed.
- ❑ **Level 2:** Students can request up to 2, 8-hour passes with approved family and friends. No overnight or weekend passes allowed.
- ❑ **Level 3:** Students can request 1, 8-hour pass per weekend with approved family and friends. Students can also request 2, 24-hour passes per month. Eight hour passes and 24-hour passes cannot be used during the same weekend.
- ❑ **Level 4:** Students can request 1, 8-hour pass per weekend with approved family and friends. Students can also request 2, 24-hour or 48-hour passes per month. Eight hour passes and 24/48-hour passes cannot be used during the same weekend.
- ❑ **Visitations:** Students can substitute a 4-hour on-campus apartment visitation for any 8-hour pass for which they are eligible.
- ❑ Passes should be submitted during the Monday house meeting for the upcoming week and students should allow up to three days for approval.
- ❑ Special events or mandatory programming can override any or all pass requests.
- ❑ Any passes involving a Sunday will require students return by Sunday 6 PM. All students granted a pass will be required to submit to a drug test upon return.

**Food:** Students will be permitted to apply for Food Stamps, but understand that Food Stamps will be monitored by NBTP Staff to ensure proper stewardship. FOCUS will also help to supplement some food items if the need arises.

- ❑ Students are expected to coordinate food needs and meal preparation with other students who share the same residence
- ❑ The actual card will remain in the student's possession while participating in NBTP
- ❑ NBTP staff reserves the right to intervene if suspicion of inappropriate use is suspected

**Drugs and Alcohol:** In order to provide a safe, drug-free and alcohol-free environment for all NBTP Students, we have a Zero Tolerance policy for possession or use. Each new student will be tested for drugs and alcohol. If a participant tests positive, he will not be permitted to continue the program.

Random drug testing, as well as, testing based on suspicion of use will take place. Appropriate disciplinary actions up to and including immediate discharge from the program will take place on failed tests. NO student will be accepted or permitted to stay at NBTP who is required to take any narcotic (pain medication) or extensive psychotropic prescription medications.

## Employment Program

### Level 1

- ❑ In Level 1, students will learn to write a resume and turn in samples to the Transition Team.
- ❑ Students do not work in Level 1 and all students will participate in ministry service or fundraising activities without expected compensation.

### Level 2 - 4

All students will be provided an approved sustainable wage job during Levels 2 - 4. At Level 4, students have the option to obtain approved employment outside an initially provided job. At the appropriate time, NBTP Staff will work to help in job placement.

It should be understood that NBTP will work with the student to attempt to put them in the best work environment possible during their enrollment at NBTP, but NBTP has limited control of the independent companies' work environments. Ultimately it is the student's responsibility to conduct themselves in a Godly manner and stay clear of any situations that might cause them to stumble, reporting anything that is inappropriate. (Ephesians 5: 3-15)

### Forbidden Work or Employment Opportunities

- ❑ *Self-employment.* No student in Level 4 or 5 will be permitted to declare self-employment without 1) tax structure and accounts in place, 2) Insurance and bonding 3) Clear and reasonable business plan in place.
- ❑ *Cash Employment:* At no time during a student's stay at NBTP will one be permitted to maintain a full or part-time job where taxes are not withheld and one does not do not receive a statement (stub) with details.

*\*\* NBTP Students agree to work in any area that provides stable employment while a student.*

# APPENDIX

## Disciplinary Policy

**If a student demonstrates any of the following, a plan disciplinary action will be enacted:**

- Disrespecting any member of the Transition Team staff
- Refusal to participate in required elements of the program
- Disrespect of another student's property or space
- Leaving the house without permission
- Activity deemed suspicious or unhealthy, or a blatant lie
- Possessing contraband items (i.e. - a phone without permission)

**The following steps will be taken to carefully discipline a student:**

- A written discipline form will be filled out by a Transition Team staff member
- The student in question will be informed of the disciplinary issue and given a chance to explain his behavior, verbally and in writing
- The discipline forms will be given to and discussed by the whole transition team
- If a student is deemed out of compliance with the house rules, he will be subject to the D2R Discipline (Detour) approach. This approach is meant to deter unwanted behavior.

**The D2R Discipline (Detour) Approach:**

- 1) For **2** weeks, a student in discipline will be **Reverted** to a prior level and its privileges. If at Level 1, students will need to complete 8 weeks at this level before entering Level 2.
- 2) For **2** weeks, disciplinary students will be given a **Double-duty** of household chores.
- 3) At the end of the 2 weeks, students will be considered for reinstated to former Level and its privileges.

## Dismissal Policy

**If a student breaks any of the following rules, a dismissal plan will be enacted:**

- Any violation of substance abuse and/or a failed drug test screening
- Repeated refusal to participate in group activities and scheduled programming
- Blatant and repeated curfew violations
- Any relationship that causes a student or other person to violate the program guidelines
- Discovery of blatant deception and/or dishonesty by a student in any area

### Dismissal & Reinstatement

FOCUS believes in second chances, but we also value tough love. Sometimes both are possible. Sometimes the dismissal is what leads to a true *prodigal son's* surrender and return.

Every student dismissed will be required to leave the program for a minimum of 28 days. FOCUS will do all that is possible to help a student find another program or temporary housing. If a student would like to return to the transition program after the 28-day hold, he must submit a written request for consideration and be interviewed by the Transition Team. Re-entry candidates will be informed of the team's decision either for or against reinstatement within 24-hours.

# DAILY STUDENT QT GUIDE

## SAMPLE GUIDE

Date: September 1, 2017

Passage: Matthew 26:69-75

**First Reading: STICKS** - What word or phrase from the scripture sticks out to you?

— “I don’t know the man”

**Second Reading: STARS** - How does this passage make you feel? Emotions stirred up in you?

\*\* Sadness: I felt a heavy sadness at seeing all the courage of Peter drained during his adamant denial of Jesus as both his friend and Lord. That same sadness was eventually Peter’s sadness as he left the courtyard weeping bitterly.

**Third Reading: SIGNS** - What direction or invitation to obedience does God have for me today?

> “My child, draw so close to Me that any betrayal of Me would feel like self-betrayal. Help those who would say, ‘*I don’t know the man*’ catch a greater glimpse of Me.”

\*\*\*\*\*

## STICKS, STARS, & SIGNS

Try practicing the Sticks, Stars, and Signs method using your own passage and journal

**Date:**

**Passage:**

**First Reading: STICKS** - What word or phrase from the scripture sticks out to you?

**Second Reading: STARS** - How does this passage make you feel? Emotions stirred up in you?

**Third Reading: SIGNS** - What direction or invitation to obedience does God have for me today?