

## ***Down But Not Out* Instructor's Guide**

This instructor's guide is for use with *Down But Not Out*, a 40-minute documentary available from JIST Publishing. This guide includes an overview, discussion points, and exercises.

### **Overview**

*Down But Not Out* tells Alphonso Bailey's inspirational story about losing one's way, making the wrong choices, self-discovery and self-redemption, finding forgiveness, and going passionately after one's dreams.

The video is ideal for use in group settings with individuals who can benefit from an inspiring story of one young man who took what appeared to be a hopeless situation and turned his life around. To help your students or clients get the most from the documentary, two versions of the video are on one tape. The first version is an uninterrupted documentary. The second version is the documentary with pauses for discussion points. (See more details under "Discussion Points" below.)

Alphonso Bailey had everything going his way. He was in college on a football scholarship and was a good student making the dean's list. As a result of his father's death and an unexpected sports injury, Alphonso made some bad and dangerous choices that landed him in prison. In prison, he could have given up but he found the healing discipline of boxing. A prison recreational officer, his first amateur boxing trainer, one of his professional fight managers, and a personal mentor are interviewed in this documentary. They talk about not only his good work ethic in boxing, but also a good man in life. Boxing is the backdrop for these interviews, and viewers get inspiration and personal tools for turning their lives around, no matter their current situation.

The overall themes of this inspirational documentary include:

- Overcoming obstacles
- Learning from your mistakes
- Taking control of your life
- Doing the right thing

### **Discussion Points**

These discussion points appear on screen in version 2 of *Down But Not Out*. You have the option of pausing for discussing these points while watching the video. Another option is to watch version 1, and then hand out the questions as an in-class written assignment or as a take-home written assignment that you can discuss the next time you meet as a group.

Segment 1:

Story: The Friday before he leaves for college, Alphonso gets into a street fight with two guys from his neighborhood, loses control, and shoots one of them as all the kids run away. The injury was not serious, and Alphonso goes to Juvenile Center for the weekend.

He gets parole and leaves for college on a football scholarship to Kentucky State University the following week.

Segment 1 Discussion Points:

1. Have you ever lost control?
2. What happened as a result?
3. What did you learn?
4. What can you learn from Alphonso's actions?
5. How could this shooting have been prevented?
6. Discuss the meaning of "You're always going to be remembered for the things you say and do."

Segment 2

Story: Alphonso is at KSU on his scholarship (while serving probation). Alphonso makes the dean's list; he is playing football, and overall doing great. Then his father dies and shortly after that, he severely injures his kneecap. He uses drugs and alcohol to numb his emotional pain. High on drugs, Alphonso and his friends commit armed robberies. All of this leads to his arrest on football field in front of his teammates and coach. He is taken off to prison. Now he has ruined any chance for a future as a professional football player.

Segment 2 Discussion Points:

1. How are you affected when someone close to you dies or moves away?
2. Identify healthier ways that Alphonso could have dealt with his loss and anger.
3. What is a better way to deal with a life setback like Alphonso's leg injury?
4. Have you ever felt like you were "losing it"?
5. Discuss how your actions affect other people.
6. Discuss the meaning of "What you bring to the table is what you're gonna end up with."
7. How are you influenced by the people you hang around with?
8. Most people don't make it to the professional athletic level. What are other career options for your talents?
9. Discuss Alphonso's statement, "and now look at me." What can you do now to define your future?
10. Discuss the question, "Can you handle it?" Can you handle the consequences of your bad choices?

Segment 3

Story: Alphonso describes going into prison, the process, and the pain of his individual identity being taken away. But Alphonso believed in himself. Robert Cahill, a prison recreational officer, describes the dark and brutal world of prison and how Alphonso kept his personal vision, focused on training, and kept out of trouble.

Segment 3 Discussion Points:

1. Discuss the process of entering prison.
2. How does it feel to lose your individual identity?

3. Discuss the meaning of “you have to find inside a way to overcome what you’re dealing with.”
4. Alphonso was self-led in prison. Can you motivate yourself?
5. Discuss the meaning of “When I got it in my mind and heart that I wanted to be better, my rehabilitation began then.”
6. Does Robert Cahill’s description of prison sound like a place you’d choose to handle?
7. What can you focus on to improve your current situation?
8. What can you do if you don’t have anyone to help you?
9. Alphonso motivated himself with positive statements. Can you do this for yourself?
10. Can you believe in yourself like Alphonso believed in himself, even if someone laughs at your dreams?

#### Segment 4

Story: Alphonso describes his boxing career from prison to being ranked number 1 amateur in the country in less than one year, to going professional. Alphonso introduces JC Davis, his first professional trainer. JC, who has helped train eight world-class fighters, talks about Alphonso’s work ethic and the importance of his attitude to learn.

#### Segment 4 Discussion Points:

1. Are you hungry to learn? What about?
2. Discuss what it means, “to see things with different eyes.”
3. Do you agree with the JC’s statement, “You have to change yourself”?
4. What does JC mean when he talks about Alphonso seeing positive people after he changed himself?

#### Segment 5

Story: Alphonso talks about making it as a professional fighter all the way to New York City, “the Mecca of boxing.” He introduces Mr. Jim Wiley, one of his professional boxing managers. Mr. Wiley talks about his beginning relationship with Alphonso, his doubts about working with a convicted felon, and how Alphonso gained his respect.

#### Segment 5 Discussion Points:

1. How do you feel when you reach your goal?
2. “There are people out there to help you.” How can you find them?
3. What does respect mean to you?
4. Name positive ways you can earn someone’s respect.
5. Do you believe the statement, “The harder you work, good things will happen?”
6. Are you willing to work for your goals?
7. Could Alphonso have made it if he weren’t athletic?
8. Can you be successful if you’re not athletic?

#### Segment 6

Story: Alphonso introduces Mr. Warren, a mentor. Mr. Warren talks about how he met Alphonso and the mentoring relationship that developed.

Segment 6 Discussion Points:

1. What is the importance of a mentor?
2. What if you don't have one?
3. Do you have a good role model?
4. If not, how can you find one?

Segment 7:

Story: Alphonso describes leaving professional boxing, starting a family, and his excitement for what life has to bring.

Discussion points after Alphonso's life now:

1. What do you think of Alphonso wanting to leave the fame of boxing to settle down and have a family?
2. How do you value everyday life?
3. Discuss the importance of coming through for those counting on you.
4. Discuss what it means to "do the right thing."

Segment 7:

Story: Alphonso, JC, Mr. Wiley, and Mr. Warren all provide words of inspiration.

Discussion points after wrap up:

Identify your choices to overcome life's problems.

1. What is your drop of power to excel?
2. How can you find your niche, your dream?
3. Identify how you do your best
4. Identify your surrounding influences.
5. Are they positive or negative?
6. Identify how you can change the negative.
7. Are your friends a positive influence?
8. Where can you look to find good people to help you?
9. Discuss the meaning of "what affects one affects all."
10. What does "champ" mean to you?

### **Exercises:**

#### **Positive Statement Exercise**

**Format:** Group

**Time:** 20-30 minutes

**Materials:** pen, paper

In *Down But Not Out*, Alphonso motivated himself by speaking positive thoughts to himself. This made a big difference in how he handled prison. Many people tend to speak to themselves in a negative manner. This exercise helps to raise awareness

about this self-destructive habit and shows individuals in the group how to turn their negative thoughts and sayings into empowering and inspiring statements.

1. Have students make a personal list of ways in which they think of themselves in the negative, those little ways in which we all talk to ourselves negatively. For example, “Beth, you’ll never be able to do this.”
2. Next, have students spend the next few minutes to rephrase their personal negative statements into positive statements. For example, Beth could rewrite “You’ll never be able to do this.” To something like “You can do anything you set your mind to do.” It is important that each student use his/her own language.
3. After students have done this, ask volunteers to share one of their examples with the rest of the class.
4. Discuss with the class how important it is that they talk to themselves in the positive.
5. Suggest that this exercise could be ongoing and does not have to end with the class.

### **Write-Your-Own-Script Exercise**

**Format:** Group

**Time:** 20-30 minutes

**Materials:** paper, pen

Life Scripts is an exercise that will help your students identify a particular goal they want to reach and then start building a mental foundation to achieve that goal. A key element to building a successful foundation is to become self-aware. Life Scripts is a beginning point for the students to become self-aware. In other words, it provides them a reason to start being more aware of themselves, their daily actions, and the consequences of their actions, while providing them with a visual image, which they have created for their own lives.

1. Have students write a goal they have. It could be anything depending on their situation, from a better grade, getting a GED, being a better parent, or staying out of trouble. The goal should be personal and meaningful.
2. After they have written their goals, have students spend the next few minutes writing down the exact way they want to see their goal happen. For example, if the goal is to get a certain job, they could write about sending in their resume and getting a job interview. This is called a Life Script. It can be as simple as

I mailed in my resume and then followed up with a phone call and told them exactly how much I wanted the job and how willing I was to work hard for their company. Two days later, I got a call from the woman in human resources, and she asked I was still interested in coming to their office for an interview! I said yes and we scheduled the interview for the next day.

*Note:* A suggestion for a follow up for this individual example would be to write a new script describing a very successful job interview, detailing that scene out exactly as the individual would like to see it.

3. After students have written their script, have an open discussion about the impact each individual's approach has on his/her life. Another point of discussion is the importance of "self-awareness." Use Alphonso's story as an example to open the discussion. When Alphonso did not think, but reacted to circumstances around him, his life got more and more out of his control. When in prison, Alphonso had to become very self-aware. To be able to reach his goal of becoming a successful professional fighter, he had to first learn how to survive in prison. He had to be aware of what he ate, how he spent his time, stay out of trouble, training, and other aspects of his life.

4. Discuss how these Life Scripts can be a beginning to a new self-awareness for students. If they can begin seeing themselves being successful, making the right decision, staying out of trouble, and doing good in life by writing it on paper, they can use that "visual image" that they've created to start becoming more self-aware of what they are and aren't doing in their lives to support and move toward the goal they've written about.

5. This could lead to students keeping a journal with "self-awareness" as the theme. If this idea works within your framework, the journal could become part of their "homework." Or use Life Scripts as you see will work best for your group.

### **Self-Awareness Exercise**

**Format:** Group

**Time:** 20-30 minutes

**Materials:** pen, paper

This exercise refers to what Alphonso talks about in the end segment.

*A human life is like this great computer. You receive so much information.*

*Everything that comes in you comes out. What are you putting in you? What are you reading? What are you hearing? Who are you sitting around with? Who are you meditating with?*

Please use this exercise as you see appropriate for your particular group. These are some hard questions for some individuals to ask themselves.

1. Have students make a list of the following:
  - The 10 songs you listen to the most.
  - The five most recent books you have read (on your own).
  - The five people you hang with the most.

2. Ask students to look at their individual lists and ask themselves the following questions:

- Do the songs on your list make you feel empowered? If so, how?
- Do the lyrics make you feel respected or do they make you feel bad?
- Do the books you've named help you see yourself more clearly?
- Do the books help you relate to the world? How?
- Do the people you hang with make you feel good about yourself?
- Are they supportive of your individual dreams and goals?

3. Answering the questions could be open for discussion right there. Or you could ask your group to write their answers and then have a group discussion. Another option would be to use this exercise as part of a journal.