



A Different Kind of Justice

Lesson Plan

For Classroom Viewing & Discussion (for classes 45 min to 75 min)

Who this lesson plan is for: University instructors, community college faculty, justice system educators, and grade 7–12 teachers hosting watch parties with students.

Duration: This Lesson Plan is broken down into two sequential classes. Each lesson is approximately 45 minutes, but timing is flexible.

Learning Goals: By the end of both lessons, students will be able to:

- ☐ **Explain** how leadership approaches in prisons and jails influence employee well-being, institutional outcomes, and broader social impacts.
- ☐ **Analyze** how leadership approaches shape school and workplace environments outside of corrections.
- ☐ **Describe** the role of psychological safety in people's ability to learn, grow, and succeed.
- ☐ **Identify and evaluate** strategies that could strengthen psychological safety and support more effective leadership across corporate, non-profit, and government systems.

Materials Needed

- Film: *A Different Kind of Justice*
- Projector or screen with sound and access to Wi-Fi and YouTube
- Conversation prompts (below)
- Optional: homework assignment and handout with small group discussion prompts (all included below)

B. Course Integration

Instructors can connect the film to:

- restorative justice
- organizational psychology
- ethics and leadership
- public policy
- sociology of institutions
- trauma-informed practice
- civics and community engagement

Lesson (Part 1)

1. Opening (1 min)

Invite students to settle in and share the purpose of the session:

“Today we’re watching Part 1 of *A Different Kind of Justice*, a documentary about a new strategy that policy makers are considering to transform culture and improve outcomes. After the film, we’ll break into small groups to reflect on our own thoughts, and have a discussion to understand what the implications could be for the future of the justice system, and the workplace in general. In our next class we’ll watch and discuss Part 2.”

2. Watch Part 1 of the Film (20 min)

Watch Part 1 of the film, and then stop the film at minute 20, after the fade to black and before Part 2 begins.

3. Break into Small Groups (1 min)

After the film, ask students to move their seats or turn around to form groups of **3 or 4**. If they don’t know each other already, have them introduce themselves briefly.

4. First Student Discussion Prompt — Emotional Resonance (~4 min)

Let students know they will have 5 minutes in their small groups to discuss the question:

What parts of the film stayed with you, and why?

Instructor Debrief (~5 min)

When the 4 minutes is up, ask each group to share one “aha moment” or insight from their conversation. (If there are more than 7 small groups, just ask 3-7 groups to share out to support the timeline.)

5. Second Student Discussion Prompt — Systems Thinking (~7 min)

Let students know they will have 7 minutes in their small groups to discuss the next question. If they finish the first question early, suggest they try the bonus question:

What would need to shift to make psychological safety and/or Human-Centered Leadership the norm in prisons and jails?

****Bonus question: If YOU were a warden, HOW would you seek to make those shifts, especially if most people were used to the traditional top-down practices?**

Instructor Debrief (~5 min)

Same as earlier. When the 7 minutes are up, ask each group to share one “aha moment” or insight from their conversation.

**Bonus conversation: If you have insight and more time for this section, help students understand why getting people to change their attitudes, habits, and behaviors is so hard, and push them to discuss strategies for addressing that effectively.*

6. Wrap up (1 min)

Close by naming a few themes that surfaced in the discussion, and ask students to consider what strategies leaders might employ to address some of the challenges in the correctional system. Let them know that in the next class, they will watch how one leader took on the system to create psychologically safe prisons, and that you will discuss the implications for the rest of the system.

Lesson (Part 2)

1. Opening (1 min)

Invite students to settle in and share the context and purpose of the session:

“In the last class we watched Part 1 of *A Different Kind of Justice*, which spoke to the challenges in the correctional system. Today we’re watching Part 2, which explores a solution that is currently being explored in policy circles and correctional agencies around the country.

Like last time, after the film, we’ll break into small groups to reflect on our own thoughts, and have a discussion to understand what the implications could be for the future of the justice system and the workplace in general.

2. Watch Part 1 of the Film (20 min)

Watch Part 2 of the film, which begins at about min 20.

3. Break into Small Groups (1 min)

After the film, ask students to move their seats or turn around to form groups of **3 or 4**. If they don’t know each other already, have them introduce themselves briefly.

4. First Student Discussion Prompt — Emotional Resonance (~5 min)

Let students know they will have 5 minutes in their small groups to discuss the question below and if they have time, they can try to answer the second question as well:

What parts of Part 2 of the film stayed with you, and why?

****Bonus Question: Does Part 2 of the film sufficiently address the challenges described in Part 1 of the film? Why or why not?**

Instructor Debrief (~5 min)

When the 4 minutes is up, ask each group to share one “aha moment” or insight from their conversation. (If there are more than 7 small groups, just ask 3-7 groups to share out to support the timeline.)

5. Second Student Discussion Prompt — Systems Thinking (~7 min)

Let students know they will have 7 minutes in their small groups to discuss the next question. If they finish the first question early, suggest they try the bonus question:

What shifts would need to happen to make Human-Centered Leadership the norm in or outside of prisons (i.e. government institutions, schools, hospitals, nonprofits, or any workplace environment)?

****Bonus Question: If YOU were a leader of an organization, what would you try to help shift the system?**

Instructor Debrief (~5 min)

Same as earlier. When the 7 minutes is up, ask each group to share one “aha moment” or insight from their conversation.

**Bonus conversation: If you have insight and more time for this section, help students understand why helping to shift attitudes and habits is so hard, and push them to discuss strategies for addressing that tension.*

6. Wrap up (1 min)

Close by naming a few themes that surfaced in the discussion, and remind students that they are the leaders of tomorrow. And whatever they choose to do, or not do, in their roles at work will help determine the direction of future work.

7. (Optional) Homework Assignment

Ask students to engage in research to further develop their understanding. For example:

- Compare and contrast human-centered leadership to another leadership models (i.e. Adaptive Leadership, Autocratic, Servant Leadership, Kaizen, etc.).
- Analyze a real-world institution through the lens of psychological safety.
- Write a short response connecting the film to course readings.

Small Group Discussion Prompts

A Different Kind of Justice (Part 1)

After Part 2 of the film *A Different Kind of Justice*, please move into small groups of 3-4. Introduce yourselves, then answer the following questions one at a time. Be prepared to share out some insights from each of your conversations with the larger group.

Discussion Prompt 1 (4 min)

What parts of the film stayed with you, and why?

Discussion Prompts 2 (7 min)

What would need to shift to make psychological safety and/or Human-Centered Leadership the norm in prisons and jails?

***Bonus question: If YOU were a warden, HOW would you seek to make those shifts, especially if most people were used to traditional top-down practices?*

Small Group Discussion Prompts

A Different Kind of Justice (Part 2)

After Part 2 of the film *A Different Kind of Justice*, please move into small groups of 3-4. Introduce yourselves, then answer the following questions one at a time. Be prepared to share out some insights from each of your conversations with the larger group.

Discussion Prompt 1 (5 min)

What parts of Part 2 of the film stayed with you, and why?

***Bonus Question: Does Part 2 of the film sufficiently address the challenges described in Part 1 of the film? Why or why not?*

Discussion Prompts 2 (7 min)

What shifts would need to happen to make Human-Centered Leadership the norm in or outside of prisons (i.e. government institutions, schools, hospitals, nonprofits, or any workplace environment)?

***Bonus Question: If YOU were a leader of an organization, what would you try to help shift the system?*