Coming Full Circle

“You’re still fussin’.”

Shawn Frances O’Brien made the observation to her husband Robert A. Pedersen, president & CEO of Goodwill Industries of North Central Wisconsin. The comment came more than a year after longtime employee Carol Braun was discovered to have embezzled over $500,000 from Goodwill.

“There was a humming in the background of my head,” Pedersen acknowledged. “I was angry. You’ve got to permit yourself to be angry for a while. But I knew I had to get past the residual emotion. Carol Braun walks through the door of Goodwill every day, only in a different form. We give people another chance. One of our corporate values is to put people first. I knew that if we can do that for everybody – all except for Carol Braun – we didn’t deserve to put that motto on our wall. We couldn’t run our organization like that.”

Pedersen contacted Karen Dorn, an executive facilitator who, with program co-coordinator Cheryl Stinski, brings crime victims and perpetrators together as part of the Restorative Justice process. Dorn and Pedersen knew each other from Rotary Club and by virtue of Goodwill’s Restorative Justice programming for clients.

“When Bob came to us, he was angry,” Dorn said. “He still felt very betrayed. For Bob to be at peace, he has to know where he stands with himself and the other person. He needed to work at forgiveness. If he couldn’t have gotten there, it would never have been finished. He had to move forward. To let it go.”

Restorative Justice

Restorative Justice emphasizes repairing the harm caused by criminal behavior, according to Prison Fellowship International. It is best accomplished through cooperative processes that include all stakeholders.

Four key values characterize the program:

1. Encounter: Create opportunities for victims, offenders and community members – who want to do so – to meet to discuss the crime and its aftermath.

2. Amends: Expect offenders to take steps to repair the harm they caused.
3. Reintegration: Seek to restore victims and offenders to whole, contributing members of society.

4. Inclusion: Provide opportunities for parties with a stake in a specific crime to participate in its resolution.

Dorn’s and Stinski’s approach as Restorative Justice professionals is to bring the crime victim face-to-face with the perpetrator in the presence of a facilitator. The purpose is to restore peace of mind to the victim by addressing the harm of the crime and healing the sense of loss. The offender has the opportunity to take responsibility for the criminal behavior by explaining why it occurred and making amends, which most often includes apologizing to the victim.

The goals of the process are for:
1. The victim to be repaired.
2. The offender to understand the significance of his or her acts.

To be successful, Dorn stresses that the efforts from all sides must be entirely voluntary. Often, the victim puts the Restorative Justice process in motion. In other cases, Restorative Justice is court ordered. Regardless of who initiates the process, the victim and perpetrator determine the final outcome. “The problem is not ours to fix. That responsibility rests with the parties directly involved in the crime.”

Dorn informed officials at the John C. Burke Correctional Center in Waupun, Wis., where Braun was incarcerated, that Pedersen was interested in establishing a Restorative Justice effort with Braun, and that Dorn and Stinski were available to serve as co-coordinators of the process. Prison supervisors agreed that the program would be good for Braun and encouraged her to participate.

In December 2004, which was 13 months after she was convicted and sentenced to prison, Braun began meeting individually with Dorn and Stinski. They met weekly, then every other week, in an effort to begin to repair the harm she had done to Goodwill.

**Journey to Bottom**

On November 5, 2003, a doleful Wednesday afternoon, Braun had been sentenced to five years in prison and five years of extended supervision for embezzling from Goodwill.
With a gesture of compassion, Judge Robert A. Hawley allowed the 64-year-old Braun to remain free on bond until Friday afternoon to put her affairs in order before reporting to the Winnebago County Jail to begin serving her time.

Her husband and four adult children drove Braun to Oshkosh and dropped her off at the jail. She recalls many tears. “It was a very sad day,” Braun said. “I knew I had to break ties in order to survive.”

“Shock” was the word she chose to sum up the initial ordeal. “I never thought I would find myself in such a situation. It was an experience I would never want to go through again. I cried all day long.”

Isolated in a cell the size of a closet, crying herself to sleep on a concrete slab with one blanket, her first weekend under complete lockdown was an agonizing blur that she termed as the worst part of her punishment. Braun found out later that her despondency led one guard to be concerned about her welfare.

On Monday, Braun was transferred from jail to prison at the Dodge Correctional Institution in Waupun. At the time, Dodge was the reception center for both male and female adult felons committed to the Department of Corrections in Wisconsin. It was the classic prison setting with bars, the noise and numbers. New inmates were watched, assessed and evaluated to determine how and where they should be incarcerated to serve their sentences.

Braun got in trouble once, for giving an envelope to her cellmate. She was trying to be helpful and unaware such actions were against the rules.

In December 2003, Braun was assigned to the Burke Center, a women’s minimum security facility that was more like a dormitory setting. She got a job in the kitchen. “I decided to try to make the most of things and be an example. I wasn’t going to be put on drugs and just sleep,” she said.

**Struggling Back**

By the time Braun was encouraged to take part in the Restorative Justice program, she had moved up in jobs to cleaning offices within the Burke Center. She also was instrumental in the startup of a Gamblers Anonymous (GA) chapter. It was the first GA program in the state’s correctional system, and Braun was elected chairperson at Burke. In addition, she attended Bible
studies and religious services at the center and completed two phases of a Cognitive Thinking course.

When the Restorative Justice sessions began, she found them extremely difficult to get through. “I hated the program. I was uncomfortable with the activities, reliving the horrible things I had done, being accountable for my crime, realizing the impact I caused to all the people I had victimized. I felt an incredible amount of shame and contempt about myself,” she said.

Braun had known Karen Dorn from her previous life because she was responsible for cutting checks to pay for Dorn’s services performed for Goodwill’s Restorative Justice programs. “I prayed every single time to God to help me get through the meetings,” Braun said.

To one of the sessions, Dorn brought Goodwill’s BETRAYAL book. “My stomach just churned reading about my atrocious crime,” Braun said. At first, she couldn’t finish the book. It was too painful. She “shut down” as part of the process to realize the gravity of her acts, and the meetings stopped.

After a matter of weeks, Braun was able to go back to the book and complete it. “It was so difficult to read. I was reading about me. It was so sad how I was hurting the people I really loved.”

The book profoundly affected Braun. Through it, she was confronted with the truth of the situation, and self-serving barriers of denial began to crumble.

It dawned on her that the Restorative Justice process had been going nowhere. Braun went to her supervisors and asked why no more meetings were scheduled. Not until the sessions resumed did Braun realize that Dorn, Stinski and the authorities were waiting for her to get back to them – it was Braun’s responsibility.

Painful Recovery

While Dorn and Stinski worked with Braun, they also met separately with Pedersen. Like Braun the perpetrator, Pedersen the victim needed to be prepared for a portentous personal encounter.

Since the embezzlement came to light in May 2003, Pedersen felt “it took me off my game.” In addition to the pain of betrayal at the hands of someone he considered a valued personal friend, he had been frightened for his organization and career. Dealing with all of the issues related to the crime also had been a huge distraction from the core duties of his role as chief
executive and community leader. “Two years later, I was still welling up inside,” he said. “I’m a prideful person. I had worked my butt off to get where I was professionally. This had put all of that in jeopardy.”

Dorn and Stinski spent nearly eight months helping Pedersen and Braun work through their respective mazes of issues. “Because of the nature of this situation, it took time,” Dorn said. For Pedersen, it meant coming to grips with anger and bitterness caused by layers of complex feelings. He felt violated and no longer safe in the world. Braun needed to acknowledge she was solely responsible for the harm, that she had made the choices, there was no one else to blame, and she had no right to do what she had done.

“People want to be whole,” Dorn said. “They need that sense. It matters.”

For victims to heal, according to Dorn, it means a great deal when perpetrators have the courage to meet with them to apologize, explain why, and take responsibility for their behavior. Some perpetrators are willing to go to great lengths to be forgiven or make amends, even though they would rather do almost anything than sit across the table from their victims and have to look them in the eyes.

A family member was leery of Braun meeting with Pedersen, fearing that such an encounter would reopen the past and possibly a new can of worms. Braun’s response was, “I have to meet with Bob. I’ve hurt him. I have to at least let him know I am very sorry. That it wasn’t him. I knew it was also very important to him to get through all this.”

Dorn and Stinski have seen firsthand that if victims and offenders achieve resolution, it can have profound effects, including significantly improving recidivism rates among criminals.

**Coming to Resolution**

When Dorn and Stinski felt both of their clients were ready to face each other, an encounter was scheduled at the Burke Correctional Center on Friday, July 26, 2005. The meeting took place 26 months after the embezzlement was first discovered.

As part of her facilitation, Dorn gave Braun a list of anticipated questions that Pedersen might ask. The meeting day approached, and, “Every night, I prayed for God’s help,” Braun said. “I didn’t ever look at those questions. God said, ‘Don’t even bother with that.’”

Friday arrived, and Braun awoke ready to meet with Pedersen. “I wasn’t worried about Bob. God had lifted me. He was such a relief to me,” she said.
This would be the first time the two would speak and look into each other’s eyes since May 30, 2003, when police questioned Braun in Pedersen’s Goodwill office. Their last contact had occurred when police took her into custody. Before being led away, she had sought one last hug from the man who had championed her work for the previous 13 years. With mixed emotions of anger and compassion, Pedersen had given her that sorrowful embrace before privately suggesting to the arresting officers that Braun might be a candidate for a 72-hour hold to assess her mental state.

Now, as the Burke Correctional Center door slammed behind him and he was led to the room where he would meet Braun, it registered with Pedersen that this was no cakewalk for the people incarcerated here. A sense of anxiousness pervaded the intimidating, sterile environment. As he waited for Braun in the meeting room with Dorn, he resolved that he would not allow himself to be victimized again by her. He told himself not to tolerate any excuses. “I needed Carol to say it was her fault, not that ‘the devil made me do it.’ She would have to take full responsibility for what she had done,” Pedersen said.

In walked Braun. Among her first words to her former boss and friend were, “You have no idea how sorry I am or how bad I feel.”

They were both on edge as the meeting began. But Dorn and Stinski had been “masterful at setting the stage,” according to Pedersen. “For me, part of the day was carried by the warmth and compassion I felt for Carol. The rest was carried by the principles of Goodwill,” he said.

Braun and Pedersen had a very personal chat for two hours about what had happened in their lives during the 26 months since she had been led out of his office in handcuffs. “We plowed new ground, untypical ground,” Pedersen said. “At the end, I needed to say, ‘I forgive you.’”

And he hugged her.

“When Bob hugged me and said he forgave me, I knew that God had forgiven me also,” Braun said. “It was like God had lifted a rock off my shoulders. The meeting with Bob was just blessed. It was a beautiful meeting. It was a turning point. From that day on, every day was a blessing. That experience taught me things about myself. I learned there is real goodness in the world. My hurt, fear and shame were converted to love, acceptance and forgiveness on that day.”

The encounter also released the demons that had been churning inside of Pedersen. He had found forgiveness in his heart for Braun. But he did not want to be her pen pal or regular prison visitor. He longed to throw his cleansed heart and soul completely into Goodwill. When it was


time to say good-bye, Pedersen told Braun, “If there’s something we can do when you get out, let us know.”

Every Day a Blessing

Braun discovered, “You can make the most of every day if you want.” Her daily objectives were to help people and be a positive model for other inmates.

She also earned work release privileges and secured a job at a nearby canning factory. Working 12-hour night shifts in the office, she performed computer duties and communicated with truckers.

When her shifts ended, she returned to the Burke Center, went to sleep, awoke and prepared for her next shift. She sent half of each paycheck to Goodwill as part of her obligation to make restitution. “It made me feel very good to send them money. They received something every month,” Braun said.

From her job, she also had to pay “rent” to the Burke Center. She strived to spend as little money as possible at the prison canteen and to purchase such items as clothes and shoes. Besides deriving satisfaction from the value of work and being able to return some of the money she had taken from Goodwill, Braun found purpose and solace in her new life through her faith, attending classes and recovery meetings, and by helping other inmates in whatever ways she could.

Regular phone calls, letters and visits from family members also bolstered her. Although her crimes were “very hard on my children and family. They all stood behind me,” she said. While she was incarcerated, a week did not pass without someone coming to visit her. One grandson wrote to her “every single week.”

After working at the cannery for two years, Braun secured a better paying job at a nearby cheese factory. She was “paid like a regular worker” and qualified for benefits. It was a “neat job,” she said, allowing her to work “right along with people” who were not imprisoned. Her primary duties on the 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. shift were packaging and sanitation – tough work for a 66-year-old, especially when she had to climb high atop tanks to clean them. The job was unlike anything she had ever done. But she was treated well, enjoyed the experience, and was able to increase her restitution payments to Goodwill.

Her cheese factory career ended after 18 months when she fell at the Burke Center and broke a hip. Her recovery was set back dramatically four months later when, with her walker, she
slipped on a wet floor and rebroke the joint. Surgery had to be repeated. When she returned to
the Burke Center from the hospital, inmates cheered and applauded the well-liked Braun when
she came through the door with her walker. “I helped a lot of people,” the motherly figure said.

She completed her five-year sentence working as a librarian in the facility and as a driver,
transporting prisoners to and from their work release jobs. When her five years were up, a larger
entourage arrived at the Burke Center to bring the now 69-year-old Braun home – her husband,
four children and even more grandchildren. It was almost a festive trip on a journey to begin five
years of parole, extended supervision and continuing restitution.

Recovery on Another Front

By the time Braun emerged from prison, Goodwill Industries of North Central Wisconsin was
a different organization.

“We’re much smarter and more mature,” said Nancy Heykes, who chaired the board of
directors when the embezzlement was uncovered. “It taught us. Humbled us. This was the point
in the development of our organization where we learned that the values of our culture are alive.”

Heykes is an attorney. Most of the situations she deals with are “head issues. This was more
of a heart issue. I had felt slapped in the face. We bring a lot of heart to our work, and I don’t
know if I’d ever been so hurt,” she said.

“If you ever doubted the process of good financial practices, this proved how important they
are. We certainly had rules in place, but Carol knew them, too, and she was not thinking about
mission.”

After board members recovered from the initial shock and anger caused by the crime, they
resolved to “get to the bottom of this,” according to Heykes. “Once we saw that other board
members were going to stick with Goodwill, everybody hung in there. We became determined
that we were going to prevent anything like this from happening in the future.”

In retrospect, Heykes termed the crisis “a real gift. You’ve got to keep hope, even in the face
of bad stuff. You can’t stop trusting people just because you got burned once.”

Like survivors of a horrific storm, the trauma caused the board’s directors to be more
introspective. An urgent, true commitment to integrity evolved, and the result was a life-
changing experience for the organization.
“Looking back, it was an opportunity to reprove ourselves,” said Heykes, who now serves as Goodwill’s vice president of Development. “There’s an appreciation for surviving and what it took to survive. We have an understanding of how important it was to live out and act on our values.

“It didn’t make us cynical or jaded. It taught us forgiving, practical steps to help people. Among other things, we found out it’s not healthy for people to walk on water at their jobs and always take work home. We have a Circles of Care program and train team leaders to look out for that, to be preventive and protective, to recognize people with personal problems. More people than ever participate in our Team Member Assistance Program, and we see that as a good thing.

“Bottom line, we have a better understanding of who we are and what people need. Our desire to work more with people through the criminal justice system comes from that. Their issues are the same issues that exist in our communities. If all this hadn’t happened to us, I don’t know that we would be in such a position to help reintegrate people back into our communities. And that will be one more of those things that Goodwill is known for.”

Evolving Changes

When the embezzlement was discovered at Goodwill, attorney Gregg Curry was a relatively new member of the board and legal committee. Because of his expertise, Curry was called upon to be heavily involved with the internal investigation and strategies to recover the stolen funds. By the time Carol Braun served five years in prison, Curry was chairman of Goodwill’s board.

“In an odd way, the embezzlement helped us to evolve,” he said. “The board came together. There was a lot of constructive, ‘here’s what we should do next’ type of response. There wasn’t any finger-pointing or trying to find a scapegoat. We didn’t see any bickering. Personally, it strengthened my role here and cemented a bond with me to the organization.”

To resolve the nightmare, Curry recalled that the board realized, “The community needed to be involved. What we needed to do was pretty obvious. But how it was handled – being transparent and forthright – was still pretty bold.”

The result was, “The community was really good to us at that time. There was a lot of support. ‘Thanks for sharing it.’ How can we help you?” I never felt once that people were going to desert
us. The community should be very proud of that. For an organization like Goodwill, there are 1,000 reasons to give. But it only takes one reason not to give.”

In addition to efforts to manage the crisis by being completely open and honest, Curry credited the public’s response to Goodwill’s reputation in the community and commitment to ethics – strengths that had been forged over the years, long before he became involved. “That was all part of us being ready for this, although we didn’t realize it, and that’s not why things have been done. It just worked out that way.”

For Curry, “the People (human resources) team has really evolved since then. That’s one of the things that has changed. Our True North here is that we put people first. It was important for our organization to close the loop on the embezzlement. The personal piece of it needed to be resolved. Financially, it has been resolved for quite a long time. But it was more humane for all of us to come to terms with this emotionally, rather than just let it fade away. This is an environment where people want to do good. It’s not about a paycheck. It’s a mission, a purpose, a passion. The people live it every day here. We no longer have a human resources department. We have a People team. We have outstanding team members. That all came from everybody who went through the process. The insights. The respect. It’s shown us the real importance of Restorative Justice and what it can do. It benefits everybody.”

Goodwill’s board of directors also has restructured and changed. The number of members decreased from 20 to 10. The lessons learned have led to a model of governance that emphasizes compliance and business oversight.

“The strength of our business areas determines the reach of our mission,” Curry said. “Unless we have dollars, we can’t do the things we need to do.”

Dealing with Misplaced Guilt

Jackie Draws, senior vice president of Operations for Goodwill, was the organization’s finance director and Braun’s direct supervisor when the embezzlement was uncovered. A CPA with 10 years of experience as a senior manager with a public accounting firm, Draws was hired by Goodwill 14 months prior to the discovery to oversee a department faced with demanding challenges brought on by Goodwill’s remarkable growth.

During the previous two decades, Braun had more or less headed the day-to-day accounting functions for Goodwill. When Draws was hired, she assumed Braun’s leadership role and was
responsible for transitioning the department toward more sophisticated practices, all the while being sensitive to Braun’s dignity in the people-oriented organization as Braun approached retirement.

Essentially, Braun trained her new leader in the ways of Goodwill during the 14 months they worked together. What Draws didn’t learn until the very end of that time was that Braun had been siphoning money out of Goodwill for years.

When accounting irregularities surfaced during the 2003 audit of Goodwill, Draws was caught in the middle of a scandal – in an innocent, yet very threatening, vulnerable and uncomfortable position.

Billie Jo Higgins, CPA, was the senior accountant assigned to the Goodwill audit performed by Virchow Krause & Company, the public accounting firm that had been Draws’ previous employer and which had won the bid to perform Goodwill’s annual audit for several years. Because of her auditing role, Higgins (like Draws) found herself cast in a most uneasy position because of the embezzlement.

“It happened on our watch,” Higgins said.

Although the scope and materiality level of detail of the audit was not designed to detect transactions in the amounts that Braun stole incrementally, “We had to come to terms with it,” Higgins said. “We did everything we were supposed to do. It wasn’t anything we missed.”

Still, a cloud of responsibility hovered over people involved in the financial area.

Because of her knowledge, duties and position within Goodwill, Braun was completely aware of the financial practices, guidelines and policies of the organization. She also knew of shortcomings and holes in the system. All that allowed Braun to operate under the radar and pull off hundreds of “small” heists over the years, totaling more than a half million dollars.

Ultimately, the investigation led Draws, Higgins and other accounting personnel to arrive at a place where they realized and understood that they were not at fault. “It was a choice that Carol made. The rest of us aren’t her,” Higgins said.

A big part of that absolution came from within Goodwill, according to Draws. While the initial investigation was going on, and there was nothing to indicate that anyone had worked in collusion with Braun, Pedersen specifically told the Finance team, “I trust you all.”
“That was a huge statement that was really important for us to hear,” Draws said. “It was incredible, especially in the middle of all the emotion. It allowed us to just keep going, to carry on to see what was going to happen next.”

Higgins, who is now Goodwill’s director of Finance, concurred and noted that members of the Finance team enjoyed good lines of communication with the board immediately after the embezzlement and since then. “We never felt threatened or like there were eyes constantly watching over us,” she said.

Speaking for the board, Heykes said, “We found out how professionally cut the surviving members of our financial team were. We knew and understood how important it was to support them.”

After Braun went to prison, several members of the Finance team departed Goodwill to pursue different directions in their lives. None of the departures had anything to do with the crime. Priscilla Schultz, Nancy Thiel, Steve White and Clare Zimmerman were among those who moved on.

In 2003, Goodwill’s Finance team was made up of six people. The organization had 750 team members, and revenues totaled $24.5 million. By 2012, nine people worked in the Finance area, and revenues more than doubled to $56 million. The number of team members on the payroll increased to 1,207 people, not including 356 paid program participants.

“We’re a bigger and better department because we’re in a different financial category,” Higgins said. “We’re more sophisticated and have adequate staffing. In the past, Carol had a hand in everything. She controlled it all. Now, we rely on more people to do their jobs. They own it, are responsible for it, and are accountable for it. And we continuously fine-tune things. There’s a whole different set of standards.”

The refined standards include:

• Separation of duties and divided up responsibilities.
• Documented and more diligent internal controls.
• Safe, anonymous reporting procedures.
• Different levels of auditing.
• Adhering to Sarbanes-Oxley practices, even though nonprofit organizations are not mandated to follow them.
• The establishment of an audit committee that includes people from outside the Finance team and meets separately with outside auditors.

• Up-to-date technology that allows for closer monitoring and more checks and balances.

“When it comes to accounting, we don’t allow being casual,” Draws said. “We don’t share passwords. We have cross training. Everyone takes vacations, and when they do, there’s a backup doing their job. ‘Trust but verify’ are words that are more often heard.”

Higgins pointed out, “Cash is king. Cash better always reconcile. If there’s anything going on, cash is where it’s going to happen. We make sure experienced people are responsible for reconciling cash. It’s not something for a trainee to do. I’ve also learned to never accept photocopies as documentation. It’s way too easy to doctor a photocopy. Sure, where there’s a will, there’s a way, even if you have the most secure system. But we’re constantly putting more controls in place to get it caught quicker and shut off the valve.”

In addition to stricter procedures, policies and practices, a change in organizational culture is responsible for making Goodwill more secure, according to Draws. “Our management style used to be more top-down. That’s changed. Now we have team members, not employees. Team leaders, not managers. We instituted a Caring Leaders series. The name of the Public Relations Crisis Plan changed to the Loss of Public Trust Plan.”

Draws added, “We’re a stronger organization now. There’s a loyalty to each other and to the organization. That’s what happens if you can come through a situation like we did and be able to overcome all the adversity. We put people first in our core values, and not just some people.”

Higgins agreed. “It showed Goodwill can be life changing for team members, as well as clients. Goodwill is a more open, honest and transparent organization.”

From the perspective of an outside auditor who was asked to join the internal staff after the embezzlement, Higgins also observed, “Teams used to operate by themselves in separate silos. Finance is brought into the mix more now. Walls have come down. People come first. Team members. Clients. Everything we do is based on how it’s going to impact people. How it affects our financial future, the planet and landfills 10 years from now.”

“I’m glad we have the BETRAYAL book,” Draws said. “We have a formula now if something bad happens to us. The book has so many recipes for how to do things when things go wrong. We use it to teach new people who join our team. History informs us today.”
The Journey Forward

After Carol Braun’s release from prison, Bob Pedersen reached out with a handwritten note, inviting her to meet for coffee.

Braun accepted Pedersen’s invitation, despite further advice from some family members who thought she should move on with her new life and put the past behind. Pedersen and Braun – former beloved boss and trusted employee, former friends, former adversaries – embarked on the next leg of a transformational journey.

Like many people who come together in a coffee shop after years of not being in contact, they caught up with each other’s lives, discussed feelings, and talked about where they were and where they hoped to go. Braun again told Pedersen how sorry she was for the hurt she caused and how badly she felt. By the time they met, she had secured two part-time jobs – as a librarian at a public library and as a representative of food distributors during sampling demonstrations and events – and continued making restitution payments to Goodwill.

At the end of their get-together, they scheduled another meeting. Pedersen asked Braun if he could bring Jackie Draws. He thought it would be helpful and meaningful if the new Goodwill CFO and Braun also could find final closure.

Draws found Braun to be emotional and somewhat broken. “She was tearful, but peaceful. Carol was a calmer person, not as frantic. She had taken responsibility and was remorseful, and we came to an understanding about how I felt,” Draws recalled. “Seeing her in person was wonderful.”

On a later day, Draws and Braun ran into each other in a parking lot. They talked, and there was “no awkwardness,” Draws said.

Pedersen told Braun during one of their meetings that he had been making Victim Impact presentations to inmates at prisons. He suggested that he and Braun might “present together, and she liked the idea.”

While discussing the possibility, Pedersen told Braun, “You’re going to hear some hard stuff. I’m not going to sugarcoat anything.”

Braun was not dissuaded. She wanted to collaborate with Pedersen. But because of her conviction, there were yards of red tape to cut through with the parole and correctional systems. Ultimately, appropriate authorities granted approvals, and Braun prepared remarks to share with audiences of prisoners.
Julie Reinke leads the Victim Impact Program at the Oshkosh Correctional Institution. According to Reinke, a retired chaplain who has served 14 years as a Department of Corrections intern, employee and volunteer, the group therapy program allows each offender an opportunity to accept responsibility for past criminal actions, understand the impact of crimes on victims, and contribute to communities in a way that will prevent further victimization.

The program does not replace any other treatment need, prompt custody reduction or influence release. Involvement is based on willingness to acknowledge the harm caused to the victim and motivation to change destructive behavior. The group meets for two-hour sessions, twice a week, for 15 weeks. As follow-up training, an alumni group of prisoners who have completed the program meets once a month.

“I wouldn’t teach the program if it were mandatory,” Reinke said. “Not everyone wants to change.”

Inmates must apply to participate and be accepted. If they do not buy into the principles of the program or abide by the rules, they can be eliminated from the group. After each session, a participant is required to write a thank-you letter to the presenter and submit a reflective paper to Reinke.

Pedersen and Braun made their first joint Victim Impact presentation to a group of inmates at the Oshkosh prison in July 2009. Pedersen introduced Braun as an interested friend who asked to accompany him and observe. While Pedersen reiterated the cold, hard facts of the Goodwill embezzlement and the ensuing feelings of betrayal, pain and anger, Braun sat and listened.

After Pedersen finished and fielded questions from inmates, he introduced Carol Braun again, only this time as the person who perpetrated the crime. Most members of the group were stunned. But a few had intuitively figured out Braun’s role and why she was present.

Choices

Nervously, Braun read her prepared statement to a roomful of male inmates:

Choices

I was brought up in a loving family, by parents who always were there for me. They taught me to love and help others and to do all the right things. My mother died when I was 33, and
I missed her dearly. I adored my father. In church, if he moved his hand on the rosary, I would move mine. If he ate five potatoes, I ate five, and so on. I did what he did.

I graduated from high school and got a job right away. As it turned out, I eventually was part-owner in the company. My boss made sure I was to own one-third of the company.

I married at age 21 and am still married to the same person. We had four beautiful children who also were raised well with a lot of love. Now I have 10 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. All my children married and left home.

Life was really great. I was well liked in the community, and things were going well.

In 1974, I sold my stock in the heating and fuel company because I had major back surgery, and I couldn’t handle it any more. I stayed home with my children but got very bored when they were in school, so I decided to look for another job. I started at Goodwill Industries in September 1976. I advanced very fast, worked hard, and loved the job and the people I worked with. I watched Goodwill grow and loved every part of it. Life was good.

Start of Bad Choices

In the early 90s, all my children had married and they were all on their own. My husband worked in the contract business on houses, so he was tired at night and wanted to sit in front of the TV all the time. I didn’t enjoy that for a hobby. I sought more. I started gambling.

My father died in 1993, and I lost a very important part of my life. The gambling increased. Two of my children divorced. It was a very sad time. I inherited a nice sum of money, and the gambling got worse. I never thought it would take over my life.

Bad Choices Turned Worse

Bob Pedersen started at Goodwill in the early 90s. I really enjoyed working with him. He is very intelligent and a wonderful person, and Goodwill really started to grow. Bob had a lot of trust in me. I loved my job and worked hard, but it wasn’t enough. I really got into the gambling. I had written many personal checks to the casino, and they knew me well and trusted me. So, when I started losing, I wrote more checks. My money ran out. I had overdrawn my bank account and needed money to cover my checks. So, I was going to
borrow the money from Goodwill and started writing out checks to myself to cover my losses. But I was sure I would win big and be able to pay it back. This lasted until I was fired in May of 2003. This was the first time in my life that I got fired.

I was in a big black hole as a result of my bad choices. Overnight, I lost everything, including the respect of my children. I hurt my family and the people I loved. Everything good I had ever done was gone. I was so ashamed of myself. I was a criminal. Life had to change.

I was charged with business theft. This was also the first time I was ever in court. What an experience. I was sentenced to five years in prison.

New Choices Had To Be Made

I had to start with me. I had to leave my family. It was extremely hard. I never would have made it without God and the support from my family. I turned my life over to God and have made it through incarceration and the return to the community.

Upon my arrival at the John C. Burke Correctional Center, I began the steps to my growth by working institution jobs. Then I met the criteria for work release jobs. I worked in factories – a big change from all my other jobs. I worked as many hours as I could and pushed myself to work very hard at the jobs offered to me. I wanted to do this so I could make decent restitution payments to my victim and, at the same time, regain the trust of the community. I have learned how to appreciate the trust given and opportunity to prove myself.

I also actively participated in programs at the center, such as 12-step programs through Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous, until I was instrumental in the startup of Gamblers Anonymous at the center. I attended Bible studies and religious services, took part in walks for cancer, and completed the Restorative Justice program.

My willingness and desire to give back to the community were, in part, an effort to repay society for my wrongful actions. But, more so, I wanted to demonstrate the depths and nature of my true character. I tried to make the best of every day by helping someone or just being there for others. I learned how to be very tolerant and thoughtful of others and to remember rules first, before myself. That alone has made me a better individual.
I learned a hard lesson – one I do not want to repeat again in my lifetime. Being in prison, I was put at a place I have never imagined I would be at in my life. This experience has opened my eyes to a whole other world. I learned a great deal about myself during this time, and I never want to repeat my mistakes or devastate my family again. I gained strength that I never knew I had within me. I have come to terms with myself. I have no hope of changing the past, but I have great hope for the future and all the positive days ahead of me.

It is no secret that my addiction is gambling. I am a compulsive gambler, but that does not excuse my past criminal thinking and behavior. I still do not fully understand what I was thinking when I crossed that line and committed illegal acts, betraying the trust of so many. The consequences were not only incarceration and separation from loved ones, but also the loss of a treasured relationship with an employer who trusted me with everything.

I do feel that punishment by incarceration was the only answer. I am thankful for the time and resources given to me to learn about criminal thinking and intervention processes. I am thankful to endure this humbling experience of incarceration and thankful for the chance to really appreciate the meaning of life and love. I hope I never take anything for granted again. In no way, directly or indirectly, do I try to minimize my actions that led to my criminal behavior.

By the way, while incarcerated I never received a conduct report, and the only ticket I got was for speeding with my walker.

Since my release, I really appreciate everything in life. I enjoy working to make it possible to pay restitution. In fact, I am working two jobs. I’m thankful for my health and that I can still go out and work. I’m thankful for my family. Every day is a blessing, and I try to make the most of it. It is still hard to run into people that I haven’t seen for a while. I am truly embarrassed about my past. However, I can’t change it, and I do have control over the future.

I’m glad to say I’m back to making good choices.
Reactions from Inside

Inmates’ comments and questions to Braun and Pedersen vary from group to group. They range from, “Do you have trouble being able to trust your employees today?” to “Do you think your prison sentence was too long?”

Pedersen’s response to the first question was, “I wonder ‘if’ a lot. It’s in the back of my mind all the time. I learned that I did way too much trusting and not enough verifying. We strive to be a straight, stand-up, honest organization. That requires trust – and we work well as a team – so we must have a lot of trust to do that. But, at the same time, we’re a lot smarter than we were.

“The other day, I had three accountants in my office. They’re outstanding people, and I trust them completely. But I couldn’t help it. The thought occurred to me, ‘These are sharp, smart people, and there are three of them. How easy it would be for three of them to fool me if they all worked together.’

“We constantly watch for asset shrink in every aspect of our business. It doesn’t matter if someone is stealing office supplies, time, the Internet, money from the cash register, donations that we’re asked to pick up, whatever. Every time assets are eroded, it takes down our mission capability.”

Regarding the length of her prison sentence, Braun said, “I needed the five years. I knew my first night in complete lockdown that I wouldn’t ever break the law again. My whole life was gone. I threw my whole life away and I felt like a nothing in this world. But I needed to go to prison. I needed to change my life. I needed time to reflect about what I had done and what I would do in the future. Time also helped heal my husband’s bitterness, although he still carries resentment and hatred for what I did.”

Pedersen, who has become somewhat of an authority on embezzlement and is sought out for advice by organizations victimized by the crime, also observed, “When businesses handle it in-house and make it go away with a signed agreement or termination, perpetrators do it again. They must have consequences, or it will be repeated.”

When asked if he was still angry, Pedersen said, “I felt violated. Unsafe. The district attorney who prosecuted the case told me that victims of property crimes can have a harder time adjusting than some survivors of victims who suffer from more serious crimes. They feel, ‘I’m no longer safe in the world.’ I was angry. We were all mad. We all felt abused, and the maximum sentence didn’t make our anger go away. You have to go through this cycle, go through a process to undo
the anger. Eventually, though, you have to give it up. Forgive. Otherwise, the hate and anger will
overcome you. Some people want to go through life angry. But I have no resentment to Carol
now. ‘How can I help you?’ is where I’m coming from today.”

An inmate asked, “Would you hire Carol again?”

“Sure. There could be a place for Carol in Goodwill – not in accounting, though,” Pedersen
said, appealing to the group’s sense of humor. “When people out of prison come to us for help,
we look at how they’re doing now. We try to have open communication throughout Goodwill
and be ‘care-fronting’ versus ‘confronting.’”

Another inmate inquired if Braun had tried to make amends with any Goodwill employee
other than Pedersen. After Braun responded that she had not, Reinke pointed out that the
Department of Corrections’ and Office of Victims Services’ stance on the matter is that it’s
“never offender initiated” because “we do not want to revictimize the victim.” On their own
volition, people who feel victimized can make contact with perpetrators.

When asked if she was rejected for any position in her job search after prison, Braun answered
she wasn’t hired by an agency that provides tax preparation services. Despite her extensive
accounting experience, Braun’s criminal record prevented her from working with such sensitive
financial and identity information.

Wherever she applied for work, Braun said she was up-front with prospective employers and
went out of her way to specifically tell them, “You won’t regret hiring me.” She credited her
kitchen and librarian experience in prison with securing her current food service and library jobs
on the outside.

Reinke drove home the final point. The chaplain reminded participants that their work and
everything they did in prison was important. They could include it on their resumes and put their
experience to work in the future. “You’re being watched, and everything you do is noticed.”

Perpetrators’ Words

Perhaps letters from inmates best summarize Bob Pedersen’s contributions during Victim
Impact group sessions. The following excerpts are representative of dozens of letters he has
received.
...Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to come and talk with us. I have not had many opportunities to see how crime affects others. I have only been concerned with how my crime and sentence affect me. Hearing you talk about what happened really opened a new world of thought for me.

...One of the issues I fight with is holding on to resentment. I need to learn to forgive, and seeing you and Carol made me realize how petty some of my resentments are. I hope with time to have some greater level of compassion and forgiveness.

...You gave me assurance that I can make it. I was afraid to hope because I have been hurt so much in my life. I had so many disappointments, I didn’t think I could face the pain of another one. I refuse to hope so I won’t be disappointed.

...It opened my mind to how much a single crime can affect so many people even if it wasn’t intended to.

...I believe a lot of times, when people commit a crime against a large company, they don’t think of any specific person being victimized. I know I never really have. You being able to forgive and work toward Restorative Justice not only for you and your perpetrator, but the community as a whole, shows us that we can be forgiven, too, and help make a difference.

...I always thought that embezzlement was a white-collar crime that only hurt wealthy business executives. Now I know the truth. Embezzlement can damage many people’s lives. I’m very thankful to know someone like you is a supporter of Restorative Justice. You are an inspiration for many people like myself.

...It showed me that there are people out there who are willing and trying to give people like me another shot at being a productive citizen in society.
...By coming to these prisons, you are truly doing a public service to us inmates, as well as the public. I have two victims who in this lifetime could never forgive me for what I did. But it makes me feel better knowing that there are people in the world like you who do find it in their soul to forgive people for wronging them.

...The odds of me victimizing someone in the future are far less because of your firsthand knowledge. I see the importance of taking responsibility on my part. Too often in the past, I assumed the role of victim as a means to justify my actions. Seeing what my behavior does to an individual, a family, a company and a community has opened my eyes to a truth I never saw before. You taught me that a victim carries much more than the physical scars of a crime. The social, economic, psychological and spiritual scars are just as damaging.

...The part that hit me like a freight train was the ripple effect that the crime had on the company as a whole. Coming into “group” that morning, I was thinking this was only going to be something that impacted you or one or two other people. It turns out, the victimizer had a mass group effect. To be in your position would have been devastating to me. I wouldn’t even know where to start telling people, “I have to lay you off” or “I’m sorry I can’t afford that raise you were expecting.” That would hurt me more than the money loss itself. I also liked that you brought up that it was her and not the gambling addiction that made her do it. It took me about a year before I accepted it was me and not the drug I was addicted to.

...My perspective of things over the years has been quite flawed, selfish and just plain blind to the consequences of my actions. Your story has helped greatly in changing my perspective.

...Your recovery told me that healing from anything is possible and there are people out there willing not only to grant our reprieve, but help us move forward in a positive direction.

...I asked you if there was a difference between speaking to us – a bunch of society’s misfits – and society’s upper crust, and you responded, “No.” I appreciate you not judging us for our
present condition. You have opened my eyes wider, to not allow my past define who I am. It truly, truly has been my honor to encounter your person.

...I was especially moved by your “crossroad revelation” and your recognizing the need to change and be healed, restored, and “set free” from the bondage of bitterness. Your phrase, “Hurt people hurt people, but healed people help to heal people” will now influence me to help people instead of hurt them.

...It is one thing to “talk the talk” about Restorative Justice, but it is something else entirely to “walk the walk.” Seeing a man like yourself put these concepts into action is very encouraging and helps me to have hope...hope that there may yet be a “healing of the spirits” of my victims and myself.

...You’ve helped me ponder on how my terrible crimes have affected more than just the insurance companies and just how many families had to suffer because of my self-centeredness.

...I never stopped to think about how my actions hurt so many people in so many different ways, but your sharing your story made me aware of how I hurt so many.

...Your speaking was that of forgiveness. You seemed to say it over and over without saying it over and over. And without forgiveness, there is little hope.

...For once I understand what the saying “the ripple effect” means. Not only is the victim hurt in crimes, but the families on both sides, the community, and the peers around you in everyday life. You are an inspiration on my journey of change.
A Different Carol

Carol Braun has lived 72 years and spent more than 50 years in the workforce. During that time, she said Restorative Justice “was, by far, the best program I have ever gone through.”

“I learned there is real goodness in the world. My hurt, fear and shame were converted to love, acceptance and forgiveness. I will continue to do everything in my power to try to make up for all the wrong I have done. A changed attitude is a changed life. I never want to hurt someone again.”

By the time Braun’s Goodwill career ended, she “was very addicted to gambling. It had taken over my life very sadly. I led a double life. I let gambling take the place of my family.”

The price included her freedom and her home. “I also lost some dear friends. And I ruined my husband’s life,” she said.

After completing her five-year prison sentence, there was $17,000 in her Burke Center savings account. She accumulated the sum from jobs worked during incarceration, even after paying rent to the institution and making monthly restitution to Goodwill.

Braun was surprised at the amount, and her parole officer had never worked with a parolee who was able to save that much money while in prison. Braun was allowed to keep $3,000 to help start her new life. Goodwill received the rest as restitution. From 2003 to mid-2012, she had paid back a total of $89,640.

At a time in her life when many people are enjoying retirement and the fruits of decades of labor, Braun works two jobs to continue making restitution. She has made amends with her family and lives with her husband Wes, who served a year in jail and has been beset with a variety of health issues. In addition, she collaborates with Bob Pedersen on their Victim Impact presentations, which she finds rewarding “even if we change only one person.”

Braun has no urge to gamble and “wouldn’t go into a casino again.” She no longer attends Gamblers Anonymous meetings regularly because she found it troubling to hear people speak of the thrills of gambling. However, she stands ready to help anyone with a gambling problem.

When she was approached about participating in the “Coming Full Circle” portion of the BETRAYAL book, Braun was hesitant. Some family members advised against it. Her parole officer also was leery, thinking it could be detrimental to her well-being and her future.
However, Braun decided to go against their advice. She was motivated by her affection, loyalty and respect for Pedersen and Goodwill, as well as the possibility of her story helping others.

She continues to exist with the fear that someone on the street will recognize her for her past acts. Once, a patron at the library where she works asked for assistance in obtaining a copy of BETRAYAL. The patron didn’t know who the helpful librarian was. Only Carol Braun can understand the angst she felt while locating the book and checking it out for the woman.

Although Braun has forgiven herself, “I’ll never forget what I’ve done,” she said.

“I’m very thankful to have a second chance to right what I’ve done wrong and very appreciative for forgiveness. Hopefully, I can live long enough to get through all this and make the best and most of each day. I’m a different person.”

In her own way, Carol Braun was able to say, “I’m at peace.”

Inmates’ Letters to Braun

As Braun moves forward in life, the healing process continues. She derives strength from her faith, work, making restitution, family members and people around her, including inmates who write letters of thanks.

...It must have taken a great amount of courage to face Mr. Pedersen and our group. I don’t know if I could do the same. You showed me there can be redemption and life after prison, which was something that concerned me.

...It would have been so easy for you to have turned your back on prison and went about your life. You did your time and owe the rest of us nothing. Yet, you still took the time out of your personal life to relate to me and my fellow group members. For a long time now, I have envisioned doing the same thing myself, and I will be able to take so much from the courage you showed today and incorporate it into my own future.

...Your story was one akin to many behind these walls. However, you are one of the few fortunate ones. Some of us never get the chance to be forgiven by our victims or have the
opportunity to rebuild the relationships we destroyed due to our crimes. You’ve seen the bottom. Go to the top.

...For me, you provided a living example of a truth that I was intellectually aware of, but hardly, if ever, have gotten to see – that prison is not the end of the road, that for those with enough perseverance and determination, there is a life worth living on the other side of these walls.

...I want you to know that you are a great inspiration to me, knowing that no matter what, I can make it through this negative experience and turn it into a positive like you.

...I know you will make a difference in society. I, too, would one day like to face my victims and apologize, as well as make right what I’ve wronged. It’s people like you who can and will make a difference in the criminal process by your willingness to speak to others about your activities. Your story inspired me to want to do right and become a law-abiding citizen.

...I also suffer from an addiction, and that is alcoholism. I really do hope you keep on doing your steps of recovery, not only for you, but for the rest of us who are still inside.

...Thank you for sharing your story. I’ve always been a person who didn’t even like talking about my addiction, let alone tell my story to strangers. You are very brave and honest. Seeing how talking about it helped take away some of your pain makes me want to talk about my addiction.

...I know from being an addict myself that you don’t think of the outcomes of your actions when you want your next “fix.” Yours being gambling, and mine being alcohol and drugs, it’s all the same when you break it down. For you to tell your story and take accountability for your actions, rather than blaming them on your addiction, shows we are still responsible for our own actions.
...With me being an alcoholic, I always thought I could handle it and change when I wanted to. I wouldn’t let anyone tell me what to do. It took me 40 years and a car accident to figure out the alcohol and drugs controlled me. With the help of people like you and Bob and others I meet along the way on the road to recovery, I think I’ll be okay.

...I learned from your story that “good people happen to bad things, not bad things happen to good people!” It was so inspiring that you decided to come forth and share your experience. That was courageous of you. It showed me that there is a God, and there is hope. No matter what we may do, big or small, we can make a genuine change when we can surrender and look to God for guidance and forgiveness.

...I really liked that you came in and shared your story with Bob. With both of you telling each side, it completes the story.

A Renewed Pedersen

Bob Pedersen could be a poster child for Restorative Justice.

In addition to the thefts that occurred to Goodwill and the resultant healing he felt he had to undergo, Pedersen said he dove headlong into the program because “I don’t like the way we handle crime in this country. Retribution versus rehabilitation and restoration. My nature is to be nurturing and caring.”

He feels comfortable going into prisons and speaking to convicts. “My entire career has been providing services to people, and there hasn’t been hardly anything that I haven’t seen,” Pedersen said, acknowledging that it’s important to be careful not to be conned.

“I like to think that you can have breakthrough moments and help people to think differently by providing insights. You sit and listen to people who have done horrible things. By the time you’re done, you like these guys. There’s a shared humanity. It’s a razor thin edge we walk on as human beings.”

His main messages to perpetrators involve the power of reconciliation and forgiveness – for their victims, as well as themselves. To do that, he tells his audiences, “You have to break the
cycle. You can change it. You can really fix it. You can put your life ahead with some sweat equity. But it’s your decision.”

Pedersen’s work with prisoners has attracted many positive responses.

“He’s just done a wonderful job,” Reinke said. “He gets the guys thinking about things they have never thought of.”

Judy P. Smith, warden at the Oshkosh Correctional Institution, wrote, “The men get so much out of the program when they actually listen and put a face to the victim, rather than reading about it in a book. The reality of the crime committed really hits them in regards to understanding not only what they may have done to their victim, but how it can affect so many different people that they may not even know.

“We have high hope that your influence on these men will make a difference in their lives while they are incarcerated and when they are released back into the community.”

Besides being contacted by institutions and businesses for his experience and expertise to combat internal theft and its aftermath, Pedersen has spoken at conventions and symposiums, including one conducted by the Marquette University School of Law. The BETRAYAL book is part of the ongoing Restorative Justice curriculum at the law school. Goodwill has distributed more than 20,000 copies of the book nationwide at no charge. “It’s our gift to others who are in pain,” Pedersen said.

“Every time I visit a prison, I feel like I made a difference. It’s affirming when you see thinking change, and a little door opens. It’s a human and humane experience. It’s one of my favorite things to do these days,” he added.

Because of the total experience, Pedersen believes he’s a much more capable and better leader. “There’s no longer churning inside, and I’m able to be a better role model as an executive. I’m just happy I was surrounded by the resources to make this happen.”

As for his new venture with Carol Braun, he said, “She’s a courageous woman. She went to prison. Atoned. And now wants to be useful. She’s carrying on, on her own. That’s powerful stuff.

“Carol and I are on a mission now. We’re plowing new ground once again, she and I.”
Aftermath at Goodwill

Nearly a decade after being crushed and besmirched by a half-million-dollar embezzlement, Goodwill is “stronger than ever,” according to Pedersen.

Donors and revenues have increased dramatically.

Perhaps the most significant measure of its success, however, is virtually impossible to quantify. How do you put a number on the value and growth of people?

When the internal theft scandal devastated Goodwill, the organization was in the process of changing its employee culture by becoming a learning organization that put people first. Some members of the organization thought they were well on their way to achieving the goal.

In fact, one comment made when management gathered to confront the embezzlement was, “We’ve been getting ready for this,” referring to an enlightened approach of running the business that would rescue Goodwill from crisis.

That comment was probably right on target. But few people realized how close they were to the starting line of a long journey and how far they were from their destination.

As a student and practitioner of strategic business planning, Pedersen believes changing the culture of a workplace is an evolutionary process that “takes a decade” to accomplish. The seeds of the transition had been planted, but the embezzlement served to “accelerate the pace once we got through it,” he said.

“We received good feedback about how we dealt with the situation. Our corporate values were aligned, and we had the courage to go public. The community said, ‘You’ve been open. You’ve been honest,’ and appreciated it. Our people responded beautifully on all levels. It all made for a stronger organization, which is a tribute to our team and the way we handled it,” Pedersen said.

Consequently, cohesiveness exists at Goodwill that may not have developed without the crisis. Pedersen describes it as a camaraderie, a sort of “Band of Brothers” dynamic that is achieved when a group of people live through trauma together.

At a time when Goodwill was aspiring to become a learning organization, a traumatic challenge “presented us with an opportunity to learn and opened a whole new dimension of learning,” Pedersen said.
Not only surviving the ordeal, but emerging with self-respect and the respect of the community, built trust. The trust, according to Pedersen, helped transform the organization into one that is “really living our values.”

Pedersen believes Goodwill has grown from a “strong organization” into an “amazingly strong organization.” He credits the development to Goodwill’s becoming a “people centric” organization that truly puts people first.

For example, an active Corporate Chaplaincy program has been instituted. It is surrounded by a series of Circles of Care offerings to serve team members. As a result, “People are more willing to be thoughtful of their own lives and take risks to heal,” he said.

The tragedy that Goodwill overcame has been at least partly responsible for creating a different corporate culture.

“The loop has been closed. We’ve come full circle,” Pedersen said. “We’re on a new journey and still discovering. We put complete closure on the first chapter and now we’re writing new chapters. And they’re really healthy ones.

“But we couldn’t say that with pride if we hadn’t gone back to Carol.”