DAVID ONEK: Welcome to the Criminal Justice Conversations podcast, a coproduction of the Berkeley Center for Criminal Justice and the Berkeley School of Journalism. I’m your host, David Onek. The podcast, recorded in the Berkeley School of Journalism studios, features in depth interviews with a wide range of criminal justice leaders: law enforcement officials, policy makers, advocates, service providers, academics and others. The podcast get beyond the sound bites that far too often dominate the public dialog about criminal justice, to add detailed, nuanced conversations about criminal justice policy.

Today’s guest is Dr. Joe Marshall, the co-founder and executive director of the Omega Boys Club in San Francisco. Dr. Marshall co-founded Omega with Jack Jacqua in 1987, and since that time, the program has produced 150 college graduates supported by the Omega Scholarship Fund. The mission of the Omega Boys Club is to keep young people alive and free, unharmed by violence
and free from incarceration. Dr. Marshall is also the host of Street Soldiers, a nationally syndicated violence prevention radio talk show and the author of the best selling, Street Soldier: One Man’s Struggle To Save A Generation, One Life At A Time. Dr. Marshall also serves with me on the San Francisco Police Commission, where he is the commission president. He has been awarded the prestigious MacArthur Foundation Genius Award, the Children Defense Fund’s Leadership Award and the Essence Award, among many other honors. And he joins me today in Studio. Dr. Marshall, welcome to the program.

JOE MARSHALL: Thank you for having me, David.

ONEK: Take me back to 1987, the year you and Jack Jacqua founded the Omega Boys Club. You were a middle school math teacher in San Francisco. What motivated you to start the club?

MARSHALL: The loss of my own students. There’s this joke that I always tell is I figure it, middle school, right, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth grade primarily, teaching math. And I figured if the kids could survive me as an instructor, they’d be OK. I was a pretty demanding instructor. I used to worry
the kids wouldn’t, not that you have a lot of choice in middle
school, but I don’t want that teacher. He’s too hard. But the
kids did really well with me. Young people actually used to
get kicked out of other people’s classes to get into mine, and
that sort of surprised me, because really very strict, gave a
lot of homework. And so when the young people graduated from
middle school, I fully expected them to do well in high school
and go on to college. But I began to get horror stories about
my former students, everything from them being on drugs, selling
drugs, girls getting pregnant at an early age, and actually
ended up going to the funerals of some of my former students.
So I use the phrase, my kids were getting As in math but Fs in
life. And it’s pretty tough to have a kid get an A in geometry
at the age of 13 and be dead at the age of 20. So I said, being
a good teacher’s not enough. And Dave, you know, when you’re
a teacher, and the kids graduate, and you lose connections, my
thing was to keep them connected with me, and that vehicle was
Omega Boys Club.

ONEK: Could you ever have envisioned then what Omega has become
now?
MARSHALL: Not at all. I mean, and I’ve got to say, even though it’s called Omega Boys Club, we have young women in the organization from the beginning. The second week, this girl showed up and says, my male friends are there. And I said, come on in, and it’s been young men and young women every since. Our whole thing, Jack and my whole thing was making sure we had a meeting every Tuesday, and you know, you put a bunch of Tuesday together, and things begin to happen. So the big, the early turning point for me was the second week they came, I told them if they stuck with me, stayed away from drugs, stayed away from violence, got out, if they were in, that I committed to helping them go to college and even raising money for their college, if that was the case that they wanted. And when we sent our first young person to college, and he graduated, he came back. He really did it. Yeah.

ONEK: Well, let me ask you about that. I recently attended a celebration of Omega’s milestone, the 150th college graduate. Now, that’s not just sending 150 people to college. That’s actually having 150 people graduate from college. You made that promise early on, as you say, before you had the money to pay for it. How could you be so sure you’d be able to deliver to
those kids to get them to college?

MARSHALL: You see me drawing it out, because I didn’t have a dime, had no business plan, had no prospects for money. We have certain sayings that we use all the time. If you do good things, good things come to you. And if you’re willing to do things right, people are willing to help you. And I just felt that if these young people would do this, people would pitch in and say, I want to help. And I remember the first time it happened. Somebody was, a lady was watching me on television, and she had a foundation up in Marin, and she called me in. So I went up there, and she gave me a check for $10,000. Those things started to happen. Channel 7 came in and gave me some publicity, and the anchor turn, I remember Russ Coggin, he was an anchor in those days. He’s departed now. He turned to the audience and said, if you like what you see, send in money. And people sent in $30,000. So it’s little stories like that, and people became interested. And you remember, I was a teacher. I wasn’t an executive director, and so I had to learn how to do all that, raise money and so forth. It’s just been the good work of the young people, and people like what we do, and they’re willing to help.
ONEK: Now, the first cohort you sent off to college, you’ve talked about how they really struggled, and some of them dropped out. What happened, and how did you revise the program at Omega in response to what happened to that first group you sent off to college.

MARSHALL: Oh, you did your research. [LAUGHTER] You know, in those days, if you knew what you knew, you’d do things differently, if you knew what you know now. No, I used, and in fact, a lot of folks use this model. This is the model I used in those days. I call it opportunity and good intention. You know what I wanted to do was give young people the opportunity to succeed in school like I had. And they had the good intention to do well. And that served me. When I had the opportunity to go to college, I did well. And my, I found out, well, here’s my wakeup, again, another wakeup call. I prepared a young man academically for college. He was very, very smart. I sent him away, and he sold drugs on the college campus. So what did that tell me? That says, you prepared him academically, but there are other things operating inside of him that are circumventing the opportunity I’m giving him and the
good intention that he has. So we then changed things to purge young people of those things that derailed them. And then it shifted from sort of a program to this thing of keeping young people alive and free. And that’s when I began to discover, you just can’t give them opportunity. Their good intention is not enough. And it subtly shifted to, I have to purge them of those things that circumvent their chance of success. And that’s when this whole thing of keeping them alive and free and finding out what those things were to do that. Now when we send young people to college, our success rate is, we’re like 92-93%, because they now can really go ahead and not mess things up.

ONEK: And one of the ways you do that, you talked earlier about some of the expressions or the rules that you’re constantly saying at Omega. One of my favorites is, a friend will never lead you to danger. And I think that one is so simple. I can picture a young person hanging out with their friends, facing peer pressure to do something unsafe, unsure of what to do. And then they hear you saying that in their mind, and it heads them in the right direction. How did you come up with that rule? And why do you think that resonates so much with Omega kids?
MARSHALL: That’s one of my rules for living as we fight what we call the disease of violence. We believe that young people are infected with a mindset that leads them to violence, and we want to counter that mindset with some simple rules to live by that directly impact violence. And certain peer pressure is huge. I mean, think of our own upbringing, how many time we got into trouble with or behind our friends. Peer pressure is the Achilles heel of young people. So I knew if I wanted to keep them alive and free and have them have a chance to succeed, I had to have, be able to counter peer pressure. So I gave them a rule. And it’s funny, young people, they get, they understand rules. All the sports are governed by rules. They know that if they get five fouls or six fouls, you foul out. They know if you get a penalty in football, it penalizes the whole team. So the rule is very simple. A friend is someone who will never lead you to danger. And the friend to them is anybody they can talk to, anybody they have a long standing relationship with, somebody who has their back. I had to frame their relationships with everybody, friends, family and love in context of the one word, danger. And I actually got that from watching Roots, the early film, when his father tells him, never run towards any dangerous animal. I just updated it to today’s times and put it
in the terms of, a friend will never lead you to danger. And I always tell them, if you have a problem, and honestly, my friend getting on, your [UNINTELLIGIBLE] can’t be your friend, because he led you to danger.

ONEK: There you go.

MARSHALL: And it sticks. It sticks. They use it. And my young people, when they get it, don’t have a problem with peer pressure.

ONEK: What’s an example of another rule, just one more the Omega rules that you think have been very influential in young people’s lives?

MARSHALL: Well, this might surprise people, but the basic one we start with is one we call the rule for life. And that is, there is nothing more valuable than the individual’s life. And I had to start there, because my young people don’t value their lives. They don’t value other people’s lives. They will say things like, when you’ve got to go, you’ve got to go. Life is promised to no one. I’m not going to live to be 40 anyway.
So the whole notion of life is just, it’s almost, there’s a terminality to the way they look at things. And so, I had to get them to begin to value their lives and value other people’s lives, so that’s the first rule we teach. And we go back to the basics, like to say, these young people don’t know basics. So I have to teach them basics. And there is nothing more valuable than an individual’s life. And then there’s a couple of others. There’s just [UNINTELLIGIBLE] if you want things to change, change begins with you. And then the, this is the toughest one. It’s about respect, because disrespect and respect is a huge thing. But respect comes from within. No one can disrespect you if you respect yourself. And those rules, I can actually inoculate a young person, if they get those rules as early as they can, I can take a seven year old and make sure he’s going to, it’s like giving them an immunization when they go to the first grade. And there’s a good chance that he won’t get infected, or she won’t get infected with the disease.

ONEK: Now, one of the places that you inoculate the young people is at your Tuesday night family meetings, which are kind of famous at Omega. And I was fortunate to attend a recent meeting over the holidays, when many Omega graduates were back
from college and shared their experiences with the rest of the
group. And what really struck me was their honesty. Many
of them were doing very well, but some were struggling, even
considering dropping out. And they had no problem sharing their
struggles with the group. How do you create a space where
people feel comfortable being so honest?

MARSHALL: We knew we had to do that. Part of the prescription
in combating the disease of violence is having them deal with
their emotional issues. We call it emotional residue of anger,
fear and pain. And in order for us, for them to do that, you’ve
got to create a safe place for them to do that. So we’ve done
that from the beginning. For young people, and I think maybe
it started because of my relationship with them as a teacher,
but they’ve always been willing to talk very candidly about
their struggles, then to elicit help, not just from me, but from
the other young people in the room. One of the basic rules
we have is, there’s no laughter. If you share your personal
story, a word of, is your mother on drug, or whatever you’re
going through at home or away from home, and somebody laughs
at you, that’s going to shut you down. So from the beginning,
we’ve always asked them to be serious. We’ve always asked the
group to be serious. And we do not permit any laughter. The
other thing, there’s no judgment involved. If you think of the
notion of illness, and you go and tell your doctor, and this is
a very blatant example, but if you tell your doctor you have an
STD, and he laughs at you, you’ve got a problem. Doctors don’t
do that. They’re trying to cure the infection. So there’s no
judgment involved, because we see violence as a disease. And
the fact that we’re non-judgmental and don’t permit the laughter
I think goes a long way to creating that safe space.

ONEK: Let’s talk about your radio program, Street Soldiers.
the show get started, and how many stations carry it now?

MARSHALL: The legendary start of Street Soldiers, how many
times have I told this story? It was a fluke. It was one of
those things that is just so happenstance. Back in 1991, there
was [UNINTELLIGIBLE] had a show called the Love Zone. And there
was a gentleman named, you remember the rapper, MC Hammer.
Well, he was trying to reconnect with the streets, because he
thought his street credibility had sort of eroded. So he talked
to the DJ, let’s not do a love show tonight. Let’s just have
young people call in, and I’ll talk to them about what’s going on in the street. He showed up late, and he wasn’t there when the DJ opened and said, let’s, tell me what’s going on in your home, your neighborhood, your community, and all these calls came in. And the DJ didn’t know what to do. He had no referrals. He had nothing. Hammer came, and sort of said, stay strong, and then he took off. But they had this outpouring, and a couple of weeks later when they ran the show again, they asked me to come in and be a guest host. What they say is that when I got on the microphone and began to talk to the people, there was some sort of magic occurred. And to me, it was just like talking to young people at the club. Spring of ’92, they said, this is going to be permanent show. Then it was on Monday nights, and they asked me to be the host, and it’s been on the air ever since. It’s now syndicated in about ten cities. But the main station here is KMEL, because, and it’s a great station, because it’s a hip hop station, a young people’s station, and everybody listens to it. So it’s, and the effect of that show has been astounding. I remember one day being in Los Angeles, for a while we were simulcast in Los Angeles. And this young man walked up to me and said, you’re that guy. You’re that guy on the radio. You’re the Street Soldier. I’ve
been listening to you for four years. When I was in high school, you kept me out of trouble all four years. So the show is maybe the biggest thing that we do, because it reaches the most people.

ONEK: And I think one of the keys to is, hearing you talk on the show is really the same way you talk to young people in person at the neighborhood house. On that note, you really take on callers on the show. I listened to a recent program where a young man argued that it’s OK for someone to sell drugs to support their family because they have no other options, and let me tell you, that was the wrong argument to make with Dr. Marshall. You picked his argument to pieces and just tore him apart.

MARSHALL: I am the quintessential non-negotiable adult.

ONEK: Well, yes, that’s what I wanted to get to. You tell callers clearly that certain things, staying away from violence and drugs are non-negotiable, and you said, and that there are no excuses for engaging in those behaviors. Now, some young people might get turned from this message and say, you don’t
understand what it’s like for them out on the streets. What do you say to those youngsters?

MARSHALL: I don’t want to understand them to the death or jail. And I think, it has nothing to do with understanding. I’m trying to save their lives. I’m trying to save the lives of the community. If they take this step, the consequences are devastating. Nobody wins with that behavior. So no, I’m pretty non-negotiable. These young people to me are victims of a lot of bad information, bad advice, bad example bad instruction. That looked good. They get into this because they think it will help them to survive. And that’s the misnomer. They’re not going to survive. So David, it’s the equivalent of somebody getting ready to jump of a bridge, and they tell me, you don’t understand what’s going on. I know I’m going to stop you from jumping of the bridge. And it’s the same thing to me. So I’ve had so many, thank you for not listening to me when I was in that. I know pretty much that this is the best thing to do.

ONEK: A theme on one of your recent radio episodes was, why are we harder on the police than we are on ourselves? Can you tell me what you mean by that, exactly?
MARSHALL: We are really, really, and we’re on the commission, and when the police do something that the community thinks is wrong, it’s wrong. And probably the most glaring example is Oscar Grant, an obvious example. I mean, and that went over to an extreme, because there was rioting. But the reaction that you get when they believe the police are not doing things as they should is, I mean, they’ll march. They’ll show up at the police station and do all of this. When your neighbor does that, when your brother does that, when anybody in the community does that, the reaction is, I can’t get a peep out of people. And so they hold everyone else accountable, the police should be held accountable. They don’t hold themselves accountable. And if you think about it, they’re far more in danger from their neighbor, their brother. I mean, there was a shooting this past weekend at a church in Richmond. Guys walked into a church.

ONEK: Yeah, that’s amazing.

MARSHALL: You know, so I want them to be as vocal and as upset and as challenging to the people that are actually doing these things to them, as they are to law enforcement when law
enforcement is in the room.

ONEK: And speaking of the Police Commission, you’ve been on the commission now since 2004, and serve as the commission president. Obviously there’s a historic distrust in this country between young people of color and police departments. And you’ve talked yourself in your book about police putting a gun to your head for no reason after the Watts riots when you were growing up. So given this, how do the Omega kids feel about you being on the commission? Have any of them accused you of selling out?

MARSHALL: No, they’re glad I’m on. I mean, and I got on the commission because of the gap between the police and the community. I felt I had to do something about that. But I also know the best way for me to do something about it is to keep young people from committing crimes. So it’s interesting. You know both sides when you’re on the commission. You know what the officers go through. You know what the young people go through. You try and bridge that gap. No, they’ve never said that. In fact, they are very, very proud that they’re on the commission, because I’m able to clear up a lot of misconceptions
on both sides. I’m able to get police to have an idea what the young people go through. But I tell young people all the time, if you don’t commit any crimes, you won’t have a problem. And when there’s police misconduct, and you know we deal with this all the time, we’re able to rein those officers in and do something about that. I mean, there is a gap, but if you give well meaning people on both sides, you can do something about that. And so it’s been great being on the commission. I wish we, you know all the challenges we face. But no, they’ve never, ever said that themselves. They really appreciate my efforts on the commission.

ONEK: Well, and I’m sure that’s a great example for them to see someone they look up to like you from the community working collaboratively with the police department. That sends a message to them that the police aren’t always the enemy, and that their collaboration is important.

MARSHALL: They actually, in many ways, the guy sitting next to them is probably the greater enemy, or is a greater enemy than the police officers themselves. And I’m there to be both about it. I mean, in the book I said, the bad cop and the bad homie
are the same thing to me. And you’ve got to do something about both.

ONEK: Now, you’ve helped countless young people over the years. Can you give us an example of one Omega’s biggest success stories? I know it’s hard to choose, but can you just give one example to give people a sense?

MARSHALL: Oh, wow. I mean, there’s a documentary, Street Soldiers, that came out in ’97, narrated by Danny Glover that has examples of a couple of young people Anita Caukins and, God, I can’t think of the other one. But one I’m thinking of right now is a young man named Mike Gibson who I met in the California Youth Authority for three counts of armed robbery and attempted murder on a police office. And he was very sick. And I use this medical term, because his mindset was infected. And meeting Michael there, being able to get out, come to Omega. And you’ve heard this phrase, young people are really smart, very, very bright. He was very, very bright. We were able to send him to Morehouse College. It took him a while. He graduated, and now he’s running his own young program right here in the Bay Area. And so Mike took the medicine. It’s
another thing. You can prescribe the medicine, but they’ve got to take it. Fortunately the medicine we give is the correct prescription. And if they take the medicine, they’ll be fine. Mike is probably a great example, but like I say, we’ve got a lot more.

ONEK: Let’s talk, then, about those who don’t take the medicine. Obviously you can’t save everyone. Can you give an example of a kid you work with who didn’t make it?

MARSHALL: Oh, sure, sure. And he might be listening. This is a young man that, again, came to the doctor’s office, got the medicine. I sent him to college. He got into a brawl at college, came back home. Maybe because he felt ashamed, but you know, he decided he knew more than the doctor. And I’m saying, Dr. Marshall, but also the doctor in the form of the medicine that we prescribe. And he then robbed a drug dealer, and he’s been in prison. He got life in prison. He got life plus 11. And yeah, again, he writes me all the time and tells me I’m sorry. And I say, well, you know, you didn’t take your medicine. You take your medicine now. You can still take it even while you’re in prison. And I always say I’m responsible
for the output, I mean, the input. I’m not responsible for the outcome. And like a doctor gives you the pills, and I’m sure you’ve had pills the doctor told you to take. It’s your responsibility to take them. The doctor feels good in the medication that he’s prescribing.

ONEK: What distinguishes the young people who take the medication who make it from the kids who don’t?

MARSHALL: You know, that, well, again, I’ve got to, in order for me to do this work, I have to have phrases to help guide me. Some get it right away, some get it sooner or later, and some never get it. You don’t know who’s who. That’s why you give it to everybody. That’s a question I can’t answer. It depends on their readiness at the time. I mean, if a doctor asked you, David, do you want to live, from a medical standpoint, I assume you’re going to say yes. So when I ask them that question, it just depends on all the factors going around them at that time. Some are more ready than others. Some say, wow, I get it right away. I’m ready to take it. Some are, they feel they’re too far in it. That’s the one thing you can’t regulate with this, is when somebody is ready. The thing is that you’re ready to
give it to them when they are ready, and you don’t know who it is and when that happens, so you just keep giving it and giving it and giving it. And that’s what makes it, this work so challenging, is you really don’t know. That’s the part we have control over is what we give. So that’s a tough question to answer.

ONEK: But you stick with them, even if they do something wrong. You’ll stick with them, and that’s something that really –

MARSHALL: When you come back, and I don’t take it personal. Because it’s not about me. It’s not about me, and I can’t predict their readiness. Their readiness is on them. And like I say, some are ready right away. Some are ready at two or, they may go home, and a year later they say, wow. And I’ll tell you what. A kid just called me the other day on the radio. And he said, do you remember me? My name is Angelo. I said, Angelo, I remember. You did a stint in Juvenile Hall. You came to Juvenile Hall and did a show. And I was one of the kids. And I got out, but I went back. But now I’m ready. He said, will you still send me to school? So I said, sure. In fact, I’ve got to call him today when I leave here. I’ve got to call
Angelo and hope he shows up tonight. So yeah, I’m there. The doctor’s always there when the patient’s ready.

ONEK: And I think your colleague, Jack Jackwa, definitely has the same attitude. I mean, I’ve seen his tremendous work up at Juvenile Hall in San Francisco, and he, if a young person’s doing right, there’s no stronger advocate than Jack for that young person. But if that young person isn’t going to their Omega meetings, they’re not doing what they’re supposed to do, Jack will be the first person to tell the judge, this person isn’t doing what they’re supposed to be doing and holding that person responsible. But he’s always there for them whenever they’re ready to work with him.

MARSHALL: That’s the non-negotiable adult. The problem with young people, they have too many people who understand, too many people to negotiate, and you’ve got to be non-negotiable. And two plus two is four. You can’t pretend it’s 4.5. That’s what America did. That’s why we’re in this financial boondoggle we’re in now. They play hard and fast. They played loose with numerical truths. No, so they need non-negotiable adults, and that’s what I think young people just don’t have in their lives
today.

ONEK: One of the reasons you’ve been so successful is that you and Jack are always there for the Omega kids, as we were just saying. They can call on your 24/7, and they do. But saving other people’s kids, by definition, means spending less time with your own. And so I’m wondering about how your own kids felt about all the time you spend at Omega, and how you were able to strike a balance between your own family and all the young people who didn’t have a father figure in their life who you were filling that role for.

MARSHALL: Yeah, I get asked that question a lot, and I always say, it’s best to ask my kids. [LAUGHTER] Because, you know, I mean, you can ask them. I mean, my son, I used to take him with me to all the meetings, so he had a pretty good idea. And my two daughters, they were younger, because I live quite a way, I lived in Pittsburg and Concord and most of the time come to San Francisco. So I always say how they felt about it. One of my daughters used to say, Daddy, it’s nice for you to be everybody else’s Daddy, because they don’t have one. So for me, the models, I mean, I think of Martin Luther King, and him being out
there, and not necessarily, or Malcolm X. These are two of my heroes. And so I used to tell them all the time, I’m doing this because I can’t be around you 24 hours a day. And if some young person who was misguided does something to you, we’re going to have a real problem. So I’m doing this with other young people, also to make sure that your safety is insured. And there were probably times they wondered why, because all kids want their dad. But I think they understood the larger mission and the larger purpose for the work.

ONEK: What are the policy implications of the work you’ve done? How can a city struggling with young violence issues learn from Omega?

MARSHALL: I think we have a prescription. And this has become the larger work. As I learned this prescription of how to keep young people alive and free, how to prevent balance, how to intervene, how to rehabilitate, you know, we did some of this work with the call in strategy. I’m like a doctor I feel that has a cure. And so if you have a cure, and your city is spending, the municipality is spending all this money on violence, and you’re not getting any results, and we are, then
the logical question is, what are you doing? I frame this in a health perspective because the youth issue is such a turf issue, your kids, my kids, my city, your city. And I think violence is like heart disease. It’s pretty much the same here as it is anywhere, whether it be Columbine or pick a foreign country. And so we had a breakthrough when Mayor Gavin Newsome, the mayor of the city and county of San Francisco, said, you’re getting results. A lot of my programs aren’t getting results. And he then adopted our prescription as the basis for violence prevention in the City of San Francisco. And he’s asked me to train pretty much everyone who gets funding from the city in this prescription. It doesn’t mean they change what they do. But it does mean they learn these rules for living. It does mean they learn the risk factors of violence. It does mean that they help young people deal with their anger and pain. It does mean that they use this as a basis. And so we’ve started that. Because of budget implications it’s a little bit slow. But this was the first time a municipality said, this is the way we need to go. This is the direction we need to proceed. And I’ll tell you what, David. It’s way beyond Omega now. I call, I mean, I am now defined as the creator and founder of the Alive and Free Movement. And my movement is much like the Civil Rights
Movement. You know the Civil Rights Movement was, you had, Dr. King wanted to do something about discrimination and racism and equal opportunity. Well, my, this is a movement to do something about violence, wherever it is. And the calls I’m getting from places are just amazing. I mean, South Africa. I have a whole group in South Africa that says, we’ve got problems with youth there. Come here and help. I just got back from Thailand. And the Thailand trip was, to get a call from an agency of a foreign government, another country, and say, come to my country and help young people is amazing. So I think this treatment, this prescription to do something about that we developed is something that we’re trying to get to everyone, and anyone who’s interested, please come get it.

ONEK: If you could get one message out to people about how to save young men and women in the inner cities, what would it be?

MARSHALL: Wow, one message. Usually I always leave people with this, because it’s something they can teach. For one, they’re eminently savable. They need non-negotiable adults. But teach them this rule, that rules that you cited. I mean, that’s the one thing I leave with people all the time, wherever I speak,
whether it be in Thailand or in Cape Town, South Africa, or Los Angeles or Chicago. It’s the whole thing about friends, family and love. A friend will never lead you to danger. Love will never lead you to danger. And family will never lead you to danger. And every relationship should be filtered through the word danger. If you can do that, you’ve got a very, very good chance of not being around people that will put you in situations. There is no wrong place, wrong time. Bullets have no name. I think that’s a rule that everybody can adopt. And then the other thing is, don’t write these young people off. Give this, give them a chance to stay alive and free. And certainly, if you want help with that, 1-800-SOLDIER. That’s the number to call. That’s how you get Dr. Marshall.

ONEK: Doc, thank you so much for being with us today. Dr Joe Marshall of the Omega Boys Club. Please join us next week when we’ll be joined by Matthew Cate, the Secretary of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. Thank you very much. The technical director of the Criminal Justice Conversations podcast is Milt Wallace. The show is edited by Angela Kilda. And our program intern is Eve Ekman. Thank you very much for listening.