



CHESS FOR FREEDOM

Online Conference & Demo Chess Tournament 11 May 2021

Chess and Redemption



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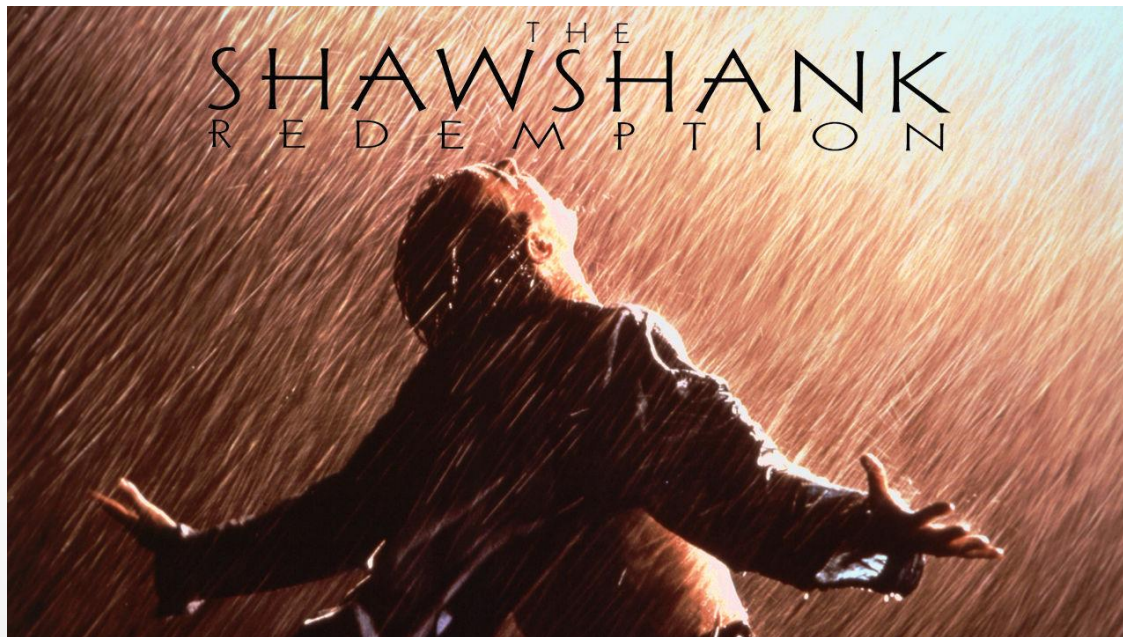
English Chess Federation
Manager of chess in prisons
Author: *Chess Behind Bars*





What does redemption mean anyway?

- Setting free
- Liberation
- *Deliverance from sin and damnation*
- *Shawshank redemption*



Basically, why not aim for a better life and just not go back to prison?



How does chess help?

- Problem Solving
- Critical thinking
- Decision making
- Self-improvement
- Reasoned arguments
- Feeling empowered



What else?

- Health
- Friendship
- Social development
- Productive use of time
- Comfort
- Reform?



Fine words, but where is the evidence?

- In my case, from English prisons, hundreds of letters from prisoners over several years
- Real testimony about the power of chess
- The influence it has on use of time, relationship with others (communication and behaviour) and being self-critical
- **OVERALL BENEFIT = THINK BEFORE YOU MOVE**

Some real-life testimony



- I go to chess club now at 7pm, instead of burgling houses
- Helped me to think and even speak better
- Made new friends that I never would have before
- Made contact with my father after many years through chess
- It gave me the focus to set up my own business
- I learned to think before I moved. I did not accept drugs
- Helps my autism and Asperger's Syndrome.
- I got better at other things like mathematics and English
- Chess makes me realise – actions have consequences

Chess behind bars is not a bar to chess



- Write to your local prison/politicians
- Get chess on the prison agenda
- Start small and grow
- Visit prisons and promote chess
- Remember the Holy chess Trinity



**There is a dream
behind every door**