

Pragmatism

Why does it matter? What's at stake?



The story you're telling:

By using a commonsense approach to solving problems in our criminal justice system and our communities, we can decrease crime, enhance public safety, and make more responsible use of our resources.



Strategic way to redirect thinking away from patterns such as:

Determinism; Fatalism; Individualism; Politics as Usual; System Is Fine



How you might use this frame element:

- Sense of agency: We can solve problems with a bit of **effort** and cooperation.
- **Commonsense, step-by-step** approaches allow us to make real progress on longstanding challenges and obstacles.
- This is a change that makes the most of our collective ability to be **practical**.
- **Realistic, sensible** policies and programs lead to long-term improvements.
- We are focused on applying ideas that are **feasible** and **effective**.
- It's more practical and **responsible** to focus efforts on proven solutions and alternatives, rather than spending limited resources by over-relying on prisons.
- Let's take a **level-headed** approach to tackling this problem.
- The **commonsense conclusion** that our current approach is

Continued on back.

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unsustainable is what's leading to greater consensus on this issue at the moment.



User Notes:

- Introduce race equity issues by priming with Pragmatism and then pivoting to statistics that illustrate disparities in arrests, sentencing, etc.: "Thinking about this practically, we can't afford to continue with a system that treats African Americans more harshly than it treats whites. Let's take a level-headed look at this data."
- The value of Pragmatism has been shown to have more powerful frame effects than commonly used Values such as *Cost-Efficiency*, *Equity/Fairness*, and *Prevention*.