

Conform and Reform

Conform: adapt to rule, pattern, custom, etc. Reform: form again; reconstruct; reclaim; amend, improve, abandon evil practices.

The words conform and reform are spoken and written more in my environment and studies. Now understanding their meanings I am understanding how ~~individuals~~ individuals inside the Prison Industrial Complex (PIC) are reforming and being conformed. Less often does it seem to be in positive ways for society as a whole. Ask yourself when we move towards reform are we improving; are we abandoning evil practices? In writing this I will briefly explain parts of the system of the PIC and how those involved around the PIC are reforming and being conformed.

We have some examples of ways our government reformed and it did not improve the lives of those incarcerated and their families. For instance the Higher Education Reform Act, the Prisoners Reform Act and the Welfare Reform Act. These ~~reform~~ reform acts caused negative effects on ~~the~~ individuals and their families. With there being nearly 2.5 million people incarcerated everyday in this country it is safe to say that these reform acts were not an improvement for society as a whole.

Now lets make our ~~way~~ way inside the fences, gates, and walls of these institutions. Inside this environment peoples minds are being conformed. We must find ways for them to conform in positive ways for them to conform and reform successfully for their families and themselves. We must hope that they are not too corrupted by the environment inside these institutions. Not exclusively do the physically strong survive. It takes mental and spiritual strength to survive and to survive intact. Sadly many prisoners stay unaware and unconscious of options, laws, and rights that would help them become more successful. These things are not always openly shown to prisoners.

A person has to gain true knowledge, ~~no~~ peace, and

wisdom. Though many times we find prisoners developing barbaric, and caveman, and thug mentalities. These unwritten policies are also a start and way to recidivism.

A persons thinking is also conformed and reformed negative by being taken out of society and held captive with so many others who failed to conform to or follow ~~the~~ certain rules of society. Then this prisoners access to family, friends and certain education and training skills are all severely limited. All of which have been shown to lower recidivism. But again they seem to be being more and more limited. For example the growing use of post card only policies and video ~~no~~ monitor visits. Instead of restricting the access to these objects we should be allowing the access to them to grow.

Also inside these institutions many are incarcerated for only drug crimes, parole, and probation violations. Yet, they are held with mentally ill and traumatized individuals. Some who never adopted restraints of conscience, law, or religion. Not all are violent and many may be ~~the~~ institutionalized. Though they had to adapt ~~to~~ to their environment and endured it causing them to be reformed and being conformed. Many of these individuals started ~~as~~ as only drug addicts. This usually is the first charge a person is ever charged with, possession.

However they must and we must work on changing ~~the~~ their thought and behavior patterns if they have ~~an~~ ~~impact~~ ~~on~~ ~~those~~ conformed in negative and unsuccessful ways. Once released they will have an impact on those around them. Those people observing a released individual and their behavior may imitate or resent the released individual and their behavior. This again is why we must work on improving these individuals lives while incarcerated. If we do not the released individuals may find themselves re-incarcerated.

Another conforming epidemic inside the PIC is inter-institutionalization. Which is what happens after a person

spends a great amount of time in solitary confinement. This sort of confinement is painful and disturbing to ones mind. This writer commends all who have done months and years in solitary confinement. This issue truly needs reform. We have organizations out there working on improving the issues of solitary confinement. They need all the support that they can get.

Furthermore, while we work towards improving conditions of confinement we must remember the greatest thing we can do is to have respect for all. Especially when it comes to inmate ~~staff~~ and staff relationships. Both parties need to remember that underneath our uniforms we are the same, human beings. Inmates need to realize staff, mostly are just doing a job. And show respect. Staff should realize that inmates are not only letters and numbers. Staff should also not sadistically treat inmates.

In conclusion I ask everyone to excel in positive thinking. Educate yourself and encourage others. Especially those inside or released from the PIC. Do less to form a criminal mind and negative thinking. Inspire a great mind. Adapt to improving and abandoning evil practices.

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