

WHAT SYSTEM !?

Whether society acknowledge it or not, the prison/jail industries are part of the system we call society.

So the question that I pose to society as a whole : What is the purpose of incarcerating people ?

- Is it to cover up or justify abusive authority ?
- Is it to control a particular race of people ? (Population Control)
- Is it the price one has to pay for being unfit for society ? (I won't say breaking the law or committing a crime, because those who make the law break the law with absolute immunity for their actions)
- Is it to punish/silence people for having ideologies contrary to an oppressive/capitalist society ?
- Is it for those who consider themselves in charge of these industries, to abuse and violate those who are incarcerated; human rights, pride, dignity, etc. ?

What is the purpose of prison/jail, I ask, and how does it effect society as a whole ?

A large percent of Society feels (I use the word feel to emphasize the emotional, aspect for their reasons and not the well thought out reason), people incarcerated deserves to be where they are or they had to do something to land them where they are.

What about those that are actually innocent or imprisoned due to their race & political views ? Do they deserve to be imprisoned too ? I will stay away from the sensitive point of those who are incarcerated due to their circumstances and/or limited resources/option to thrive. The majority of society brushes that off as an excuse. But in the eyes of the less fortunate, drug addicts, ignorant, and recently released people who can't get a decent job because they have a felony; it is a very valid fact.

Many men/woman are released from prison with high hopes of restoring their lives, strengthening their family bonds, placing their past behaviors in their rear-view mirrors, and thriving like every other citizen in society. But what happens when they are faced with prejudice, because they have a felony ? How do they cope with being frowned upon for paying a debt to society and not being able to get employment, or just be accepted as a person who made a mistake and needs to be forgiven ? Can a person actually pay a clean debt to this society ?

There are many views to support the title of this piece, but I need to stay focused on the so called intended purpose of imprisoning a human and what many have experienced. Words from the wise : **"People are incarcerated as a punishment, NOT TO BE punished/taunted daily !"** Being locked in a cage the majority of the day, far away from your family & love ones, deprived of serving your purpose as a man/woman in your family, being told when & what to eat, forced to be among people that you normally would not be around, absolutely no privacy or control of the limited property allowed, micro wage labor, etc ; is suppose to be the punishment. Does society agree or is there something I left out ?

Society may think incarcerated people are provided with all the necessary tools to convert them into morally better people, than who they were when they were dumped in these hells called prison. Such as fulfilling real therapeutic, educational, and vocational needs. How many prison programs actually work on it's own ? Most of these programs are push through's to meet annual quota. Don't think so ?

Remember the first sentence in this piece, "this system is a reflection of this society ". In today's society the public school system and therapeutic programs are under serious scrutiny for pushing students & participants through the school system (No Child Left Behind), just so schools and teachers could appear as if their schools are a success. That way they get future funding & promotions for having a high turn out. But that high turn out is a smoke screen. Same thing with the therapeutic programs, if a certain amount of participants makes it through the program and it appears that the program is a success, the following year that program can seek more funding from the state & federal government.

If this is clearly going on in our society with this society's children of the future, is it really that far fetched to believe, in prisons, where society cares very little about those incarcerated ? Don't be surprised if some of those same push through's wind up right here confined within these gates of hell.

These are not words from a disgruntle old angry repeated felon slickster, looking to manipulate society's thoughts/veivs of incarcerated people. But from a young man who was abducted at 17 years old, for a crime he is innocent of and has been incarcerated for 23 years; at the time of this writing.

Everything I learned since my incarceration that has made me a better person and the man I am today, came from the grace of God and those that are incarcerated with me. I learned more from imprisoned men than from the institutional programs. I am autodidacted, with the help of some very good educated men and outstanding family support. This system did little to nothing to rehabilitate me. I am not bitter nor angry, but numb.

I acquired this numbness from years of suppressing provoked ill feelings towards the system that has me confined and has abused me in many ways. I have been verbally & psychologically abused many times and physically assaulted by staff on several different occasion and served lengthy solitary confinement penalties as a result of such.

One thing I did learn from this system about this system is, they try to break you in every possible way; instead of trying to build you into a better person then the one that entered these prison gates. Do you think, incarcerated human beings should be placed in a corner, constantly being poke at, heckled, antagonized, mentally, emotionally, physically abused; and then released back into society ? Right next door to you and your family !?

From my overstanding, I thought the whole prison theme was/is to pay a debt to society, rehabilitation, mental & spiritual growth, skills development, and exiting the prison gates with a high priced lesson learned from past mistakes/behavior. What is your take on the purpose of the CAN ?

But if this is true, why is the recidivism rate so high ? Has society asked this question ? Does society even care about the people returning to society from prison ? I am sure they, have to, realize that these same individuals might be their neighbor or work in the same environment that they work in, or possibly be , blended into their family some how.

Hold on, are we speaking of the same system who gives very little to no interest in the mental state of individuals returning from serving this country/system overseas, that have serious cases of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder issues, that barely gets therapy after discharge ? Wow !

My apology, I am going too far into the caption again, I have to stay the course. I just have so much that I would like to express, but I am not certain if society cares for all I have to express. So I have to try to make my point without going too deep or all over the place.

I have been informed by the people who are suppose to be counseling me, that I am labeled as defiant, based on what they think or what's in my files. But, not predicated on the cause and effect process, of why this might be. We all know the cause & effect process, but if you don't know, ask yourself; What causes a person to be effected the way he/she is ?

In my case, the ill perceived notion by prison staff, comes from my lack of fear and lack of compliance towards the intimidation tactics enforced throughout the prison system, by the prison system.

Yeah, that's right, prison thrives off of intimidating or bending your will into submitting to their intimidating ways. If they don't instill that fear in you immediately or break you over the course of years; you earn the label of being Defiant or combative. Instead of strong and resilient. What a system ! Is this system really designed to build or break you ?

Now some may say, hell yeah, the system should intimidate an incarcerated person to the point where they never want to return to prison. I agree too, if that was the real purpose. But where is the balance and how are these intimidating practices being employed ? You can not just intimidate some one with brute force and not expect them to carry that with them throughout their time of incarceration. Intentionally or inadvertently, that method is creating a monster/animal that will be released back into society with no guidance.

Most of these sadistic prisons are in rural (Up-north) New York State area's; far from where the majority of the prison population is from. The majority of incarcerated people are from the five boroughs or surrounding areas of, New York City.

So, the prison system staff do not care about incarcerated men/woman returning to the communities they come from, with all the built up anxiety, frustration, anger, confusion, and other ill feelings. Most of these individuals will be returning to their old N.Y.C. neighborhoods; no where near these, way up north, prison's or prison staff.

That brings me to another point. Why are so many N.Y.S. prison's way Up-north in rural areas, when the majority of the N.Y.S. prison population come from the five boroughs or surrounding area's of N.Y.C ? Is that by design or another punishment for being incarcerated ?

•Is it to cause a hardship on the families & love one's, who has to travel such long distance, to visit; family/love one's in prison ?

•Is it to deter the families from visiting, so family ties can't be kept or broken ?

•Is it to give the back wood farmers a job, to commemorate slavery ? Based on my experience with staff, they definitely have the slave master/oppressive concept down to a science. (The entire N.Y.S prison Staff is predominantly white, and we all know the prison population is predominantly black & hispanic. I'm just presenting the facts. Some of us heard of prison being modern day slavery, 13th Amendment.)

If none of the above, then why, I ask ? Please answer this question.

Does society really want those that are being released from prison, back in their communities, as reformed law abiding citizens ? If so, than please get more involved with what therapeutic/pyschological treatment, educational programs, and character development skills programs, are available, to those incarcerated. As well as, how those that are incarcerated are being treated and cared for..

At this time, there are no modern technology programs that could be applied to todays society. There are no pre release programs that has a curriculum on how to operate/function cell phones, the inter net, lap tops, etc.

Furthermore, most of the equipment that is used in most of the vocational trades, are out dated, to the point that the training on the type of equipment in prison, won't be useful in today's society. ie. most car's worked on in auto mechanics are from the 1980's. Are parts from a 1980 car, part of the 2000's car's ? I don't know just asking. Because I know a lot of men who were released from prison with earned Vocational Certificates and those Certificates were not sufficient to qualify for a job in that vocational field, without further (modern) training, in that field.

This is just one of the many ways of bridging the gap with society and those incarcerated . No matter how one feels or what one thinks, incarcerated people are very much, part of our society, and always will be.

One more thing, just ask yourself, how are these Correctional Facilities and Correction Officers, actually correcting incarcerated men/woman, previous behaviors & mentalities ?

Words from : Frans Sital, currently incarcerated in Attica Correction Facility.