

SAINTS INSIDE

TUESDAY, AUGUST 30, 2011

The Millionth Prisoner

"Ones happiness lies in direct proportion to the character of one's thoughts."

I am Texas prisoner 145, 256. I was assigned that number just over 10 years ago. Those people just entering the system are in the 1, 750, 000 range.

Many old-timers tell me how much prison has changed over the years. I've heard all the stories of how bad -- a violent cutthroat -- things used to be in here. Bt apparently things begin to change shortly after I arrived, somewhere around the 1 million prisoner, I think. There's been a real change of consciousness throughout the prison system, and I've noticed it become even greater and more widespread during my own time inside. It's obvious to anyone who's been here a while. Even the guards, who tend to be the most mean-spirited people in this place, seem to be affected by it. As a whole, the prisons in Texas -- and I'm sure around the country -- have become more and more peaceful. They would be unrecognizable to what they were 15 to 20 years ago.

The fact is, prisons are no longer the violent hellholes they once were and as they are continually portrayed. Of course, there'll always be problem inmates and those who need to be kept away from society forever, but even they are relatively docile compared to the monsters of the public's imagination. It is the young gangsters who tend to cause the most trouble, but that's something they'll eventually grow out of in time and with proper mentoring. The vast majority of prisoners are just normal people who screwed up and want to do better, given the chance. Prisons today are more like monasteries ; they truly have become places where penitence and spiritual reflection are possible. A noticeable change in consciousness seems to be the reason for this. Can this be possible?

As human beings we all share collective consciousness. Countries, towns, and communities each have their own collective consciousness as well that is shaped and affected by the thoughts and emotions of the people who live there. All of the various ethnic groups and different types of people of the world also have their own collective consciousnesses that they share. I believe prisoners and prisoners are no exception.

ABOUT ME



ERIC REMEROWSKI

I am a former boat builder, physiotherapist, commercial diver, and chef. Since my incarceration in 2001, I have been a student of history, philosophy, theology, and theoretical physics. I am an avid outdoorsman and animal lover and cannot wait to hug a tree and pet a dog again. Please visit my website at:

WWW.MYSTICMINISTRIES.ORG

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Scientists refer to something they called the "100th monkey" phenomenon. It comes from a famous study of monkeys spread throughout a chain of islands somewhere. These monkeys regularly ate a type of sweet potato dug from the ground. One day, on one island, in one community of monkeys, the scientists noticed a monkey rinsing its potato in the ocean before eating it. Soon, other monkeys caught on and also began washing the dirt from their potatoes. Then something strange and unexpected happened: at the point where about 100 of the monkeys were doing this, suddenly all the monkeys in every community throughout all the islands began washing their potatoes before eating them. It was as if they all shared a collective consciousness. Since this discovery, the same phenomenon has been observed and documented in many other instances with a variety of animals. Why should humans be different ?

Our collective consciousness is like a river of information each of our subconscious minds accesses without even trying; it just happens automatically. Our thoughts and emotions are directly affected by what we absorb from this invisible "River". Our brain filters this information as it does all the other data we receive from our senses, so only a small fraction is ever brought to our conscious awareness. Without noticing, we begin to share the same ideas and feelings as other people within whatever groups we belong to, especially as more and more people do likewise. Our collective consciousnesses are continually growing and evolving.

In prison, living in such close contact with another, we can't help but rub off upon each other. We all share the same suffering, fears, hopes, and dreams of freedom. The 3,000 of us here on the Clements unit have essentially the same mindset as the 3,500 on the Coffield, the 1600 on Eastham, or the 2,000 at the Walls. We all share a collective consciousness, and it is growing and evolving to be one of patience, tolerance, kindness and compassion. Once a certain threshold was reached -- maybe at the 1,000,000th prisoner mark -- every inmate in the system was able to feel the positive consciousness and energy that had come to dominate and replace the negativity that was here before. Even without a prison system focused on rehabilitation, left to her own devices, enough of us over time have raised their collective level of consciousness throughout the state and, no doubt, throughout the country.

Prison today is a place to raise one's consciousness as well as get one's act together. I want the public, who tend to be so afraid of ever letting us out, to know that the time spent in prison can be extremely productive and that someone leaving here can be a great person, a top-notch citizen, better than ever before. I look forward to the day when society welcomes newly released prisoners with open arms -- when people say, "Oh, you spent five years in prison? Then you must be really have your heart and mind right." Perhaps that day will come when you all raise your own level of collective consciousness.

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"A solitary fantasy can totally change one million realities." -- Maya Angelou

I'd like to see our prisons turned into schools. Instead of guards-mentors and role models. A handful of teachers on the unit could give classes on ethics and morality, spirituality, communication, life skills, and health, as well as the various trades offered now. But the real teachers could be the inmates themselves, the "seniors" schooling the "freshman" so to speak.

The minimum attendance/sentence would be three years; the maximum 10 for first offense, regardless of the crime. There'd be no such thing as parole. A second offense would mean another 5 to 20 years; and the third 10-50 more. Only the most extreme crimes would warrant a life sentence. (but 50 pretty much is a life sentence, as I know all too well.)

Every prisoner would receive individual and group counseling, including hypnosis, which I believe is the most effective form of psychotherapy. Short – and long-term goals would be established and plans will be made for one's release/ graduation well in advance. Family and friends and other members of the community would be free to participate, however possible: through letters, audio and video messages, visits, telephone calls, pre-release support, etc. Mentoring programs would match older, wiser, and more experienced inmates with younger ones.

In addition to the core curriculum, many audio and video courses would be available. Inmates can study whatever educational and spiritual materials their hearts desire. Computers and computer training would be available with limited access to the Internet. Any spiritual/educational material could be downloaded or ordered online. Inmates would be allowed to send and receive e-mail as well as regular mail.

Also, nothing but healthy food would be served in chow halls: rice and beans fruit and vegetables, salads, eggs, oatmeal. Maybe a burger once in a while. Nothing but healthy foods would be sold the units commissaries. (There are way too many obese and diabetic prisoners today, and taxpayers just foot their medical expenses.) Exercise and meditation classes would be offered and taught by inmates.

There would be zero televisions in my prison – schools, except for those used for educational and spiritual programs. Radios with headphones would be sold in the commissaries as they are now. There would be no dominoes or playing cards.

Time in prison should be spent on rehabilitation and self-improvement, not entertainment and recreation. but of course there would be books. Books books and more books, with no restrictions on what is allowed. (though if I wanted to be a real dictator about it, I would outlaw every cookie-cutter crime novel, or least any book with a serial killer or

prosecutor anywhere in it, which would eliminate the majority of trash being printed and consumed by the masses these days.) Each unit's library would be large and managed by inmates. Craft classes are essential. (See my previous blog on their rehabilitation potential.)

The prison schools' main goal would be to turn lead into gold and to eliminate inmate recidivism. Every person who enters the system should leave new and improved and much better off for the experience. I know for fact it's possible for people to look back on their time in prison as the most positive turning point in their lives; and if that can happen with the sorry state of affairs that our prisons are in now, just think of the possibilities.

"Vote"for me, and I will run our prisons more effectively,more humanely and more economically. There's actually no reason tax payers have to pay so much to incarcerate so many, only to have the majority (70%) get locked right back up again. Our prison and parole system is a disaster and disgrace. Prisons nationwide are nothing but mismanaged warehouses. Rather than solve any criminal or social problems, they make them worse. Put me in charge, and I promise to turn every prison farm into a center for higher moral and spiritual learning. Give me one hour of primetime television, and I will recruit tens of thousands of caring, intelligent people to the cause. Our country's prison system can easily become the benchmark for rehabilitation worldwide and the solution to crime and punishment everywhere.

As always, thanks for listening and caring. Bye for now.

-- Eric

POSTED BY ERIC REMEROWSKI AT 8:55 AM

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