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Dear **A.P.W.A.**;

I'm a forty-four year old prisoner who has been incarcerated for approximately twenty-eight years in two different states, and fifty-different institutions. I've literally grown up, as well as educated in prison. It wasn't some prison ran or organized educational program by which I obtained my education. On the contrary it was the isolation and frustration of solitary confinement and the generosity of Books to Prisoners organizations coupled with my personal desire to try to understand why I was born into circumstances so bad and evil it was profound that I even lived through it. A child born of rape, alcoholic violent sadistic father, teenage victim mother. Father sent to prison when I was six for crimes of beatings and rapes of his own family. My mother put me into foster homes after he went to prison. However she refused to allow adoption which ensured me no permanent resident loving

family. Instead short stays at temporary homes. Youth homes, reform schools, prison at the age of sixteen. My crimes were running away from abusive places and people. Because they kept just catching me and taking me back I began stealing cars to run further and further.

I've taken the time to go into all this first to provide perspective.

I'm reminded of what Roy Masters wrote in his book "How your mind can keep you well", he wrote, "the way the judicial system, and corrections systems punish crime does far more to create the modern criminal than temptation ever could." I am a prime example.

Emotionally immature abused child with no steady loving adults in my life acting out in non-violent ways begging for help. Instead of receiving love, understanding, counseling and therapy my poor status financially ensured my incarceration, punishment, abuse, and degradation created a violent and even more unstable adult male guaranteed to return to prison, because the isolation of a single-man cell is the only place I've ever been where I've ~~never~~ ~~felt~~ ~~safe~~.

Children raised in dysfunctional families aren't given the emotional

discipline needed in which one knows how to properly deal with certain situations. While there are exceptions to every rule its a documented statistical fact that over eighty percent of men in prison were raised in single female households. So the source of the constantly worsening of morality and the recidivism in prisons is the emotional dysfunction of our youth. By punishing the crime we are punishing the symptom and ignoring the root cause. Then we send these emotionally unstable youths to houses of torture and abuse and wonder why they come out worse, and are almost guaranteed to return. To obey the law or rules one must have both self-discipline and respect for the institution which creates them. When those in positions of authority abuse that authority it reinforces feelings of anger, resentment, distrust, and contempt for all authority, at this point it becomes a revolving cycle of hate and abuse. Prisons don't hire the best and the brightest as employees, and they don't promote those who speak out against corruption and abuse. Most of those hired to work in prisons have as many problems as those their given absolute

power over, and when you give someone who is uneducated and suffers from low-self esteem and have never really been in positions of power and a bureaucracy designed to cover up and suppress problems.

Its an entire system built on pain, destruction, and abuse. Its not in the self interests of politicians to lower recidivism rates when the more they incarcerate the more money and power it gives them. By removing the fathers from the families it creates a void that government steps in and fills with all their handouts in the name of compassion when what they really ~~are~~ forcing is servitude, and enslavement. In order to change the systematic incarceration of our society you have to do one of two things. Either quit funding it, or design a system by which the emotional problems of the inmates can be healed. This being my first essay I wanted to deal with the overall view of the problem. Now I'll give examples of the only system that can work under current circumstances, as I said earlier it takes those on the outside, families, friends, activists working together with those of us on the inside not to change the prison industrial complex but instead to change the hearts and

minds of inmates directly by using the access available - Phone calls, visits, mail ect. al.. The organizations that are supposed to be doing this like the A.C.L.U., the churches ect. al. collect millions in tax payer dollars, and take a few cases and highly publicize those then use 80% of the funds to back political candidates they claim will help us yet never do. Its all a big scam. We have to deal directly with each other by-passing all the organizations.

First off we must organize. We need a crew of activists on the outside who can obtain the names and addresses of everyone in this country who has a loved one incarcerated, and convince them that using their resources that they send their loved ones which is used for drugs, sex, and gambling can better be used to educate and deal with the emotional issues that landed them in this situation. Once we are able to organize the activists and families together then we can find groups of leaders in every institution in this country, starting with the biggest ones, and send them the educational materials needed to teach them how to be self-led and self-motivated towards success, then

the emotional maturity needed for success. The more sins we commit the more guilt builds up and that guilt is the destructive voice that always leads us to failure in our lives. Once we reprogram that guilt into forgiveness then inspiration we can completely retool ourselves for success.

Napolean Hills "science of Success", Roy Masters "How your mind can keep you well", the Twelve Steps of AA, and the Bible even if your not a believer the Bible is filled with wisdom. These publications together can completely change, and ~~do~~ teach inmates how to be successful. Every incarcerated inmate must have each of these books. That should be the number one priority of any prison organization trying to reduce prison recidivism.

I've had institutional mental health "treatment" since I was six. What a waste of time and resources. Yet when I arrived here at my present location which has a private company running the psychiatry department which since their goal is to make money rather than treat mental disorders you can't imagine the torture and abuse that is perpetrated on

those their supposed to be treating. This prison has a much deserved reputation for brutality by guards against inmates yet the prison administrators made this the institution where they send the worst mental health cases, because those with the worst mental conditions are less likely to have the mental abilities to complain in such a way to bring problems to the department when guards abuse them. I've watched repeatedly as inmates have emotional outbursts and ask for mental health assistance by declaring a psych emergency and the guards either beat them or go into their cells and destroy and throw away their personal property because the inmate involved "made them work". Despite the fact that almost all the officers and administrators have changed several times. We once had a mental health specialist, or doctor who reported abuses to the U.S. Congress. She was transferred to an institution the state was about to shut down and guess who became unemployed, the doctor. When the highest prison officials create such protections against abusers and corruptions it reinforces inmates anger, frustrations, and lack of respect for any and all forms of

authority. I have been incarcerated almost 30 years in a lot of different institutions in two different states. I only speak about what I have suffered myself or seen with my own eyes, or have read about in court documents.

There could easily be a strategy designed that would create an environment in prisons that would rehabilitate the havoc created by destroyed families, cut costs of corrections, even make the entire system financially independent of tax payers, and cut 80% of recidivism. However there are wars to many bureaucrats with their greedy fingers in the prison industrial complex pie for them to allow such changes to the system. However by inmates, their families and advocates can bypass the officialdom and by dealing with each other can circumvent the system and bring about change.

I didn't learn how to read and write in the prison school but with a dictionary provided by a Book to prisoners program and a little help from a christian lady via mail. I didn't learn how to overcome the negative emotional problems in the prisons mental health

department. Roy Masters donated one of his books "How your mind can keep you well," which I used to learn to control destructive emotions, by sitting in this Isolation cell practicing the meditation and concepts in the book. We all need to wake up; and if we want to help each other we have to deal directly with each other.

How many times have we heard of charities and individuals, and governments misusing resources intended to help those in need. Yet people still give money to them and wonder why we continue to have the same problems.

The Departments of Corrections nationwide can't be changed from dealing with administrators, and politicians, it has to be done via inmates dealing directly with those in society also dedicated to bringing about positive change in the conditions of prisons; but more importantly change in the inmates themselves.

I commend you their at The American Prison Archive because to destroy evil one must shine the light of the public conscience on it. There is a reason prisons and governments whisper warn-

ings before visitors or outsiders are allowed to see the inner workings.

Only with the kindness and dedication of those who donate their time and resources directly to those in need can one be truly dedicated to change.

Shalom:
① Danny Brank
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