

HELL HOLE

The Effects of Long-Term Segregation

Most people in society has no ideal of what goes on inside these prison walls, but here is a few reasons why you should... I have been in prison for the past fourteen (14) years, with the last five (5) of those years spent in solitary confinement, and had I not experienced this type of mental torcher for myself, I probably wouldn't even believe it existed...

I had never witnessed human beings act in such a manner before this day... One morning I decided to attend recreational yard, and how it is set up for segregation inmates is structured: About a hundred paces from the backdoor exit of the building is a row of twenty (20) fenced cages with each cage being approximately fifteen (15) feet long and about eight (8) feet wide. Inside the cages, towards the back, is a metal workout station to where inmates can do exercises such as dips and pull-ups... And this is just to give you a visual.

Well on this particular morning I was just out to get some fresh air and trying to shake the "Cabin Fever" of being locked in a cell for ~~23~~ twenty-three (23) hours out the day when I heard two other inmates a few cages down from me begin to argue. At first I thought nothing of it until I noticed both inmates pull out small sandwich bags, fill them up with urine and feces, and start launching them at each other as if they were having a water balloon fight... I couldn't believe what I was seeing... Two grown men who had become so upset with each other, that since they couldn't attack each other physically, resorted to animalistic activity. And unbeknowest to me

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at the time, this was common practice in segregation. I was disgusted to say the least.

Segregation... It is a place where suicide is all too common and their ideal of Mental Health care is to load inmates up with medication where the side effects does more harm than the original problem.

Now, if you would, take a look at the punishment of inmates for minor infractions... No books, No writing material, no family photos, no sense of time, and you are subject to be placed in a cell with no windows to see outside... Total sense deprivation.

I once wrote a love letter and gave it to a female guard and for punishment I was forced to strip down to my boxer shorts and then thrown into a cell with not even a mattress in it with the temperature of the cell barely touching thirty (30) degrees... I was forced to live like that for three days.

Just the other day a young man was in his cell crying out for Mental Health staff because he was having suicidal thoughts, and for hours no one responded... This young man then attempted to hang himself on his cell bars to which the correctional officers finally responded by first spraying the young man in the face with chemical agent (mace) while he was hanging... Then pulling him out and dragging him to the infirmary... Then contacting Mental Health.

If you don't understand the history of Long Term Segregation it was first recognized as a major problem when they were releasing inmates back into society from segregation and realizing how mentally ill these inmates really were. Mass killings, serial rapes, and

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all kinds of violent crimes were the "ripple effect" of long term segregation inmates. They were mentally ill! And these are the same men that are being released back into our society.

With no programs to try and restore the mental health of these inmates due to lack of staffing, should long term segregation be deemed unconstitutional? And with correctional officers being trained to act in such violence towards the mentally ill, is that not in turn training the mentally ~~is~~ ill to adapt and react in violence? And these are the same men being released into our society.

Being isolated becomes so disturbing that sometimes you are forced to act out in bad behavior just to avoid losing your sense of self. It often becomes normal to converse with yourself, and if you are ignorant to the law, your only weapon to right any type of wrong is to go on hunger strike... Sometimes in here we are forced to starve ourselves just to get things changed. This is how we are trained to act.

Segregation... A place where we are treated like animals.. Where we are fed through a food slot, cuffed behind our backs and walked around by a leash everywhere we go, like dogs... And these are the men being released back into our society.

Right now in Hutchinson Correctional Facility, in Kansas, over half the prison population is in segregation with over half of those inmates being within a year of release back into society... From long term segregation with no job skills, no education, and mentally ill, back into society... There is no such thing as rehabilitation in prison if a man doesn't choose to do so himself.

After experiencing long term segregation you unconsciously develop a disposition of rage... You mentally panic in settings where there are a lot of people, and you lose so much of your social intelligence that it becomes scary... And these are the men being released back into our society.

Most people in society has no ideal of what goes on inside these prison walls, but for all of the above reasons they should.

by Author Zab Real