

① Random thoughts about overthinking as I contemplate my prison experience.

Being held against my will in a small room and having my movement outside of this room micromanaged by others is the punishment I receive daily. The men and women who have been designated as authority figures, that are here in a security aspect, are an aggregate of brainwashed people. They're inclined to exhibit a certain degree of assertiveness, combativeness and hostility. This is part of the training that is worked indelibly into the mental and moral constitution of the security staff here in Illinois department of "Corruption". I'm sure you are thinking my story here is biased by my position as an inmate and I would agree that is the natural texture of an opinion.

This being so there is only one way to reform a person and that is to change the way the person thinks. The only way to change the

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way you think is to have a mind of your own. Interventions can either hinder my ability to change the way I think or they can facilitate it. Making people do what you think they ought to do does not lead toward clarity and consciousness. The dictated individual may do what they are forced to do, at the time, only to avoid punishment. Every day I watch people become less open to suggestion and I cringe inwardly while growing confused and more defended. When an agenda or value system is imposed on a person, through use of force and fear of consequences, it distracts a person's focus towards facilitating coercion. I can not ^{get} the much needed sense of self responsibility from ~~the~~ developing a very real dependancy on a belligerent dictator. I sit here and wonder how it is possible for the most

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intelligent minds, that are educated in the theories and practice of penology, ~~are~~ not understand that punishment will never effectively cause me to control my behavior. Since fear is the method utilized, as an approach at teaching, it will not work on the intellectually challenged mind. Reason is what binds me to see my needs in relation to the needs of society. Reason comes out of a desire for consistency. An intelligent man can understand the needs and wants of society and adjust his actions to those needs. If you can't understand some thing why would you adjust yourself to accomidate the needs of the misunderstood? All I hear about daily here is what I should and shouldn't do. Any bit of resistance I dare to exhibit is met with a calculated, manipulative response of punishment. The very best that can be expected from myself, and

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also those around me, is a crude imitation of compliance because I am discouraged to think for myself. There is a deeper resentment for the criminal justice system building up inside of me and everyone else being held here. In general we don't break down the system into parts and blame individuals. We "blame" the system and the resistance we have is suspended and harbored inside of us all. It will spill out onto society once we are released. Why is it so hard for the experts to see that moral insights, individual consciousness, and achievements are both necessary and relevant to the life of society, the individual, and also for breaking the pattern of criminality? The reason is, I believe, the practice of imposing morals and instilling socially acceptable virtues and values can not give anyone a total comprehension of

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the social situation in which they stand. The ability of reason to check impulse is not able to be instilled from the current concept that Illinois prisons use. You can not impose morality on people who can not understand. Even if it could be imposed the use of fear will never do it. I believe that the main causes of social conflicts can be summed up from ignorance and selfishness which are only natural instincts needed for learning and retaining knowledge. However the hope to find social harmony through increasing intelligence and goodwill should be renewed whenever possible. There is a pressure from society to fit in or be socially acceptable in character. This pressure is related to the rational mind and impulsive human nature. I am able to gain almost every aspect of mental and behavioral

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Characteristics of myself, as an individual, here in solitude. However the same solitude that allows me individual understanding also deprives me of psychosocial aspects involving a group. If I was forced to live in a group of self governed conformist then I could be expected to develop into a wholesome example of such. It only stands to reason that forcing me to live in a closed society of criminal minded troublemakers would in fact limit my character and narrow my mind to conform to the society I am in. The average mind here can not process the duality of the mixed messages being imposed on them. We are constantly discouraged from broadening into any type of brotherhood here. However

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any society can have no positive affect without some degree of intimacy and without a interest in broadening into, at least, some type of unified brotherhood there can be no intimacy. The ability of reason to check impulse does not prevent the conflict of the collective impulses in society. I sit here year after year as technology advances and society is overcome with new social conflicts that come with it. The people in these places are not them, those or that. It is us, we, ourselves that we banish, boot, cast out and dismiss. We always say that "someone" should do something about the injustices that we find out or that are brought to our attention. Often we will go to great lengths to persuade or provoke "someone" to do something

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to rectify any given thing we see as a problem. Rarely do we stop to realize that we are "someone". No man is an Island but rather a piece of the continent. If it is able to diminish another then it diminishes me because I am involved in man kind. It is time to stop worrying, so much, about human rights and realize human obligations. Use your brain to reach the heart, and remove the practice of polished lying, Say what we think and think for ourselves.

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