

# Doing Life IN PRISON: WHAT WILL BE MY LEGACY

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I wake each morning to the profound reality of doing Life in prison. Now, having served over 38 years of my life in prison, guilty or innocent, this is not what I or any man was created for.

But here I am in a box, cage like an animal, and often, as the tours come through, I am looked upon as such. Yes a man, human no less, but looked at as other than and treated inhumanly, the wretched of the earth.

I have a friend who wrote a book titled "A Costly American Hatred", his name is Joseph Dole. In the foreword of the book he states "At one time lepers were segregated from society and exiled for life to leper

Colonies. These types of leper colonies are mostly a thing of the past, but a new type of leper and leper colony has taken their place in America. People who commit crimes are now the new leper. The new leper colonies are prisons, which has sprung up across our nation like Starbucks.

Doing Life in prison is not easy. Of course one has to adjust and continue to adjust as the hours, days, months, and years go by.

And as life, my life, plays out, one has to remain hopeful. I first entered prison without a care. I still had a woman, and family. In a span of a few years they were gone. The losses were unimaginable. I spoke to my mother on the phone weekly and got an occasional visit, but life as I knew it had changed the

moment the Judge found me guilty.  
When you enter the belly of the  
beast, if you decide F\*ck it, trust  
your life will change too, that's a fact.

I had no heart when I first  
entered prison. I was as cold as the  
steel that confined me. I often ap-  
plauded the misfortune of others that  
played out on the news and before my  
eyes.

Sometimes, I played a part in  
the demise. I was a young son with an  
estranged woman, who became hook-  
ed on drugs, and a mother trying to  
be the conduit of help and good  
grandmother and parent to me.

I was doing time, gang bang-  
ing, getting high, and doing much of  
what I was doing on the street. I  
was numb to the time I had to do. I  
had yet to realize that I was doing  
the best I could to escape reality

Each year the time gets harder and harder as the prison industry dries up. The prison crafts took back their prison and Commerce dried up as well. As an artist; the end of arts and craft shows and us being allowed to sell our art to officers and visitors was a game changer.

I went from earning a few hundred dollars each month to depending on a State Stipend of \$10.00, and trust me that does not go along way in prison

Now, I sit here in prison with no family. My mother now gone, and a brother whom has not spoken to me or my son in over twenty years. No other family. Huda woman friend for over twenty of the thirty plus years, was a rock in and out of my life.

She would early on help me to

Weather a many a storms, but at 70 plus years of age and chronic everything, time has crippled her in many, many ways and the years have gone by and all there is now is silence. This is the profound effect of doing life in prison. Time waits for no one.

I too have aged. I'm blessed to have my son here with me in prison; but it's certainly not where I want him to be. As an elder, our relationship affords me a bit of comfort many my age do not have here in prison. Life has taken a toll on my body, but not my spirit. I hold onto hope and dreams of being free! but I also face the awesome reality that I may die in prison. That's real and something I think about often.

I often ask myself, what will my legacy be? Up until the pg (3) →

point when I changed my life,  
I was enroute to further failure  
and the banner of having been  
born and died and absolutely no-  
thing else.

It's my hope, my fervent pray-  
er, that my legacy will be that  
of a man who help shaped the  
futures of young men who come  
through this penal institution, esp-  
ecially those now in the free  
world, and help them to change  
their life for the better. And that  
I have given them some hope, some  
insight into making better decisions  
and choices.

As to my son, I am honored  
to show him the other man, not the  
gong-banging ice cold, uncaring  
man who caused harm and damage  
to men, women and community, but  
a visible man of YAH (God). A  
man who shows and teaches the

the lessons of love, respect and compassion. To show how important it is to extend our hands to our elders. A man who has always extended his hand to the many sons I've adopted during my journey in prison.

I want my legacy to be that I was a man of YAH (God) who with each new breath of life represented the banner of his Holy name - Ananyah - which means He has Covered or the covering of YAH. I would like my legacy to be that I was truly my brother's keeper. I want my legacy to be that my writings that I once did for the youth provided a teachable moment, a vision, that led readers to see, know and hear the truth of my words and heart.

I want you to think of your favorite part of the day, when every - ps(4) →

thing else stops. Taking your children to the park. The warm embrace of a loved one. Waking to the one you love. Or just a simple cone of ice cream. Your favorite home-cooked meal. Or just a nice refreshing shower. WOW!, imagine that moment to be gone FOREVER, that's doing LIFE IN PRISON, my friend.

A sentence of Life without the possibility of parole is a Death Sentence. Worse, it's a long slow, dissipating death sentence without any of the legal or administrative safeguards rightly awarded to those condemned to the traditional form of execution. LIFE in prison is indeed the other death penalty. It exposes our society's concealed belief that Redemption and personal transformation are not possible, thus no one is vested in us, except for the monetary value our incarceration



provides.

I want my legacy to be even while in prison I charted a different course. and its possible for all that may read this, who thinks there are no other decision or choices that will allow them to not sit in one of the many cells available in the U.S. penal system like I am.