

Jamil Hayes / King Mills
Coping with Prison

The other Day I had A conversation with My Former 10th grade Math Teacher. He was telling Me About A situation He was going thru and I gave him ~~my~~ My Perspective on it. When we Finished Talking He said "Wow! Its Amazing How well You put words Together. I Feel Bad How I Spend Most of the cell Telling You about My Problems. Your In There dealing with way worse But yet You still Manage to smile and laugh like its nothing. How do you do it ~~maa~~? I'd go Nuts living in those conditions." I laughed and replied: "I dont know. I Just deal with it." AT That Time I didnt Really Put Any thought into it. But when I sat down I Really thought About The question - I thought About Some Body In A cell Asking them selfs How do I cope with Being In Prison? How do I do it? And those two questions inspired Me to write this article.

I want To start By saying That I didnt start My Time Being calm Cool and collect. I didnt start it By writing or any of the Positive things That I do Now. I was eighteen when I was arrested and sentenced to 25 yrs In The Georgia State Penal System. At first I didnt come to terms with it. I In Simple terms didnt cope well Being 18 with 25 years to do in Prison. Being Young I dealt with it like I did with any thing else I didnt understand. With anger And violence. I spent My Time Being Angry with The world and every 1 in it. People I thought cared left and The People who did I ~~pushed~~ pushed away. hope less with More Time than I lived, I quickly grew accustomed to the Prison life style. Being At A Prison where 90 percent of the In Mates were 90 Bangers with 20 yrs or More, I began gang Banging like I did on the street. Not abiding By The Rules and aggressive Towards authority. I set in my mind that I didnt care. I had 25 yrs, no family support and wasnt Trying to fight My case. I gave up and Took on A negative approach and it showed in my Actions.

Joining The crowd of hope less, I Ran Around robbing, Fighting, str Biting and expressing my hurt And Pain in violence. But ONE Thing about Georgia, they Plan ahead and always Have A Place For the extremely violent. Its called The TEK Program. I had To change My way of thinking or continue to experience unwanted experiences. I had to learn that the things I did only Hurted Myself. not The Judge, not The District Attorney or the People oppressing me. Being rebellious only got Me a longer sentence in lockdown.

The first Rule with coping with Prison is deciding How ~~youre going to~~ Youre going To ~~do~~ do Youre

Time. That Must Be Decided First. If You decide to do good Time. You'll Take advantage of the classes and Programs The Government Provides. G.E.D. Motivation For change And classes like that. You Must Make Goals For Yourself. Short Term And long. Find out who You are. What You want out of life. The classes will help You with Finding that out. It's a must to find Peace of mind. Coping is coming to terms with A situation. Having Peace of mind helps You cope. Yes You might have made a mistake But mistakes ~~don't~~ ^{don't} define you As A Person. Prison isn't The end of the Road. It isn't Your last stop. Just A pit stop. A Time out. So go ahead dust Yourself off. Build your Body and Mind and Spirit And Prepare to Return to your Family. By using Your Time To educate and Better yourself, Your Time will go By ~~smoothly~~ and quickly. But there's two sides to A coin.

You Can decide to do hard Time. In stead of Bettering Yourself You don't sign up for Educational classes. Instead You Surround yourself Around Men who have also given up on Themselves. You start doing drugs, Robbing People for food that cost Fifty cents at An actual gas station. Fighting, stabbing And Acting As if You're not Ready to return to Your community. Doing Your Time like this takes no effort But will land You in Bad situations. Like lock down or worse High Max or Death roll. I started My Time off The ~~Wrong~~ way. Now I'm Changing The way I think Because what You think gives Birth to Your Actions. And Your current situation won't change until Your way of Thinking changes first.

In Prison You're already surrounded By negative so You have to Be Positive for Yourself. I write novels and what ever else That ~~can be~~ done with A Pen. I Read, Meditate, work out. Having A Positive mindset helps alot. Your situation won't immediately change But the way You look at The situation does. You stop Thinking Poor Me and start Thinking How you can Be a Better Person? How you will use Your Time positively. Part of Being A Man/Woman is understanding That If You are dealin with An unpleasant situation, You change it or Accept it and adapt to it. Being negative won't change Your situation so why waste energy Bein negative? Time ~~wastes~~ waits and NO Man. Don't allow Precious Time to By pass you. No Matter where You are or what or in War. One of The greatest gifts we As human ~~beings~~ have is our Mind. No Man can Touch it or Take it. So even in The worse situations We can think Positive which will Help us Get threw it. I had to realize that I'm not The only Person going threw struggle. I'm not The first or The last to experience Hardship. we ~~all~~ all go threw hardships. I had to stop sayin Poor Me and start Thinking. What Can I learn From This? How can I use my

Experiences To help others? When you stop Thinking "I" Things will change For you. When you stop Thinking negative. Negative Things will stop ~~occurring~~. Occurring. I stand firm on The concept Because I was at one Time always negative. I now channel My negative energy into My working. I now motivate others to Think Positive. Another Thing I learned is that you'll never stay in a Bad situation. It'll get Better For you But you Have to Believe it. It Takes nothing To Give up. But it Takes A strong Mind To Be Positive through The negative. To Be a light In the Darkness. It'll Take you along way.

So what I am saying isnt For coping in Prison only, But in life Period. You must set Goals. Have A Plan. IF not, The Smallest Mishap will crush you. You Have to have a Positive Mindset. We all experience struggle. But it wont last. IF it dont kill you. It will only Make you stronger. So when A Person Asks Me How I do it through The harsh living conditions, 24/7 lockdown. And The mental stress? My Reply is this. I know It'll never last And Any situation that Arises I will over come it. It will Make Me stronger. Life is all about experiences. Its not About what you go through But what you learned For it. A baby might Fall hundreds of Times Before They learn how to walk. You dont Remember How Many Times they Fell or Hurt themselves But The day They learned How To Walk. IF A Baby can Have a Positive Mind to ~~continue~~ To get back up, Cant you Also? And last. IF you dont Remember nothing else I say, Remember this. To cope with anything, Rather its Prison. Just of A Job or a loved one. What ever The case might be. Its all about Taking it on with a positive Mindset, Positive approach. The Battle First starts in Your Mind. So To Be able to cope you Must Take on The Winner attitude. Lebron James doesnt say at An Pre game interview. "well I Think we're going To win. Instead He says. ~~well~~ ^{we're} Capable of winning Tonight and I will." So IF you in A cell wondering How you going To do that Time or Make It throw what ever you're going through stop! Talk with A Winner's language. I Am going To Make it. You Can do Any thing. I Mean, Any thing that you Put your Mind to. Thats How I cope with Prison and with Life. With A Winner's attitude!