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I am 42 years old, and I grew up in eastern North Carolina. I came to California and stayed with my uncle in 2000. Thought I could leave my drug habit(s) and prison visits behind, but of course

wherever you go there you are. So I have been in California since 2002, mostly incarcerated.

Lots of people say they are not the person they were when arrested, or when they committed their crime. I am here to tell you that I am the same person who started committing crimes at an early age. I am the man who committed 2 robberies / 2 attempted robberies in the San Jose area, and 2 more robberies in two separate counties in the Bay Area in 2009.

I am that same man, but I do not think the same way that I used to. I have taken my life experiences and used them to allow myself to realize all the pain, trauma, heartache, and chaos I have caused people that I have come into contact with. This includes strangers, friends, relatives, and especially my loving Mama/Dad/Daddy William.

One of the best classes in prison is Victims' Awareness. I hear men say they are incarcerated for a victimless crime. THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A VICTIMLESS CRIME! No matter what type of crime one commits, someone is negatively effected. Victims' Awareness teaches one to realize who crime effects, how it effects people, and to realize and admit who was effected by your own crime(s).

The robberies I committed were bank robberies done with notes. Just because I did not hold a gun to someone's head does not mean they were not traumatized or scared. Nobody was physically harmed, (thankfully) but many forms of trauma cannot be seen from the outside.

Prison has taught me to make choices that I can be proud of in the future. Be cognizant of how my choices today effect my future, and the people around me.

I do not enjoy prison, but I have learned many valuable lessons here.

Craig Shipley 5-1-19