

THE STRUGGLE WITH-HIM

\*\*\* Active Gang Politics V's SNY-Sensitive Needs Yards \*\*\*

As a young boy, being half mexican and white, i experienced racism at home. I didn't have to travel or even go outside of my own family to be judged by my heritage and have my future foretold for me."Your a no good mexican just like your father", is what my grandma would scream at me,when i was seven. I never quite shook that my whole life, regardless of the tone of my skin, because in some settings i could pass as white, depending on how much sun i had got...Internally, her words never left me, in fact i let those words define me much of my life.

In my small rural town it was a big deal when we got a stoplight put up at the top of the hill, it was all dirt roads and kids with bare feet. We had two small stores referred to by racials slurs, because of who hung out in front of or owned that particular store, i guess it's fair to say the topic of race was always present, just not easy to grasp as a child. All i knew was some adults were mean to you for no apparent reason, and it didn't make much sense. So coming to prison as a kid and being fed into a segregated system was just another part of the incarceration process. It was difficult, not just to be sentenced to die in prison, but to be separated from your family for the rest of your life and combine that with thoughts of survival...welcome, to not just my life, but over a hundred thousand others, the majority of which already come from broken homes. I was conscripted immediately to defend my races boundaries, such as; drinking fountains, pullup bars handball and basketball courts and showers, phones and tables, etc. This was my segregated life in the gang.

We all have our values, however at some point we must examine those values to see if they are in line with who we want to be as people. There's no shame in having an evolving moral standard, principles change and as we age, we usually get wiser and not the opposite.

In my addiction to the gang lifestyle, i justified segregationist values as a way to keep the peace. I've been on an sny yard now several years and it's the craziest thing we all use the same drinking fountain without any problems. Prison is a microcosm of society and though we've lost our physical freedom; we still have the freedom to choose how to live our lives. Do we let our past define us or do we rise above who we used to be? I break bread now with brothers of all races, without fear of repercussions. The values we carry each day rub off on others like wet paint, so we must ask ourselves, exactly what values do we want to see in our own children and how do we want others to treat them? There comes a point in a mans life when he realizes, that, the person he fights with the most, is him-self. The struggle with him is a continuous battle within, but it is one we must dare to embark upon in the pursuit of achieving our full potential.

Where we stand on equal rights, freedom from gangs and racism shouldn't even be a question...it should be as simple as, **The sky is blue.**

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active gang yards=racism/violence  
sny-yards=freedom to change  
if you mix them=dangerous mess

#FREEJESSIEMILO  
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*Jessie D Milo*

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"I AM NOT A GUN"  
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