

## ANATOMY OF A CONVICT: AMERIKKA'S CREATION

My first experience of prison was a soul numbing experience. From the initial strip search @ Kern County (Bakersfield, CA) to the intake process @ USP Leavenworth in 1993. The dehumanization aspect(s) mirrored each other: "Strip naked! Hands out! Turn over! Raise arms to show armpits! Open mouth! Lift tongue! Behind ears L to R! Lift your scrotum... pull back your foreskin! Turn around... R foot! Now L foot! Bend over at waist... now squat! Cough thrice!" With the degradation complete, I was given a number ( [REDACTED] ) & a bed roll! Into the jungle I went...

My entrance into the unit was met by a chorus of convict questions: "Where you from cuz (Crip talk)? Where you from - bloody (Bloody talk)? Who you rock wit homie? What that paperwork like? Word (i.e. What are my charges?)" I said nothing... all that I could think about, was getting to my cell. And making a weapon for my survival! You see... My older home boys had trained me/us from a young age, that we/I had to not only keep a weapon! But also adhere to a set standard of daily protocols (i.e. convict rules)! One was expected to never fraternize with guards! In addition, one was directed to never send any request forms (i.e. kites) to any prison staff, without having let my celly read them! I learned that "convicts" were cut from a different cloth. That they/we held ourselves to the highest of standards! Stood on a platform of "Death before Dishonor"! Meaning... one was expected to be respectful of all! In turn, demand the same in return! Violations, both real and perceived! Had to be met with brutality!



A CASE IN POINT... A VERY DISRESPECTFUL GUARD MADE THE MISTAKE OF VER-  
 BALLY DISRESPECTING A VERY HIGHLY RESPECTED "LIPER". I WAS CHOSEN TO  
 DELIVER THE "LAW" (i.e. THOSE UNDER LAW STRUCTURES (GANGS) RESPON-  
 -SE: AFTER INSTIGATING AN INTERACTION WITH HIM, I FRACTURED BOTH NOSE,  
 BONE AROUND EYE. MY CHARACTER & COURAGE WERE SOLIDIFIED. MY  
 FIRST "CONVICT" TEST, NETTED ME (2) ADDITIONAL YEARS, CONSECUTIVE TO THE  
 1 1/2 YRS. I ALREADY HAD! AND A TRANSFER TO USP TERRA HAUTE... A MORE  
 VIOLENT PRISON STW. OVER THE NEXT 1 1/2 YRS., I ACCUMULATED A SLEW  
 OF: ASSAULTS, WITH & WITHOUT WEAPONS: RIOT(S), MULTIPLE WEAPONS  
 CHARGES! THE "GRADUATION" FOR ME AS A "CONVICT", CAME IN 1995!!  
 WHEN I WAS SENT TO THE HIGHEST SECURITY PRISON IN AMERICA - ADX  
 - FLORENCE IN COLORADO! THERE, ONE MET A VIRTUAL WHO'S WHO OF  
 USA GANGLAND & WAS IN TURN, GROOMED TO BE A LEADER AMONGST  
 "CONVICT" CLASS! I WAS SOCIALIZED TO FORMALIZE ABNORMALITIES.  
 A MORE apt DESCRIPTION WOULD BE... "ONE WAS TRANSFORMED FROM A  
 HUMAN, INTO AN ANIMAL".

THE HUMAN NATURE OF: EMPATHY, COMPASSION, KINDNESS, ETC.  
 WHICH IS TYPICAL FOR SOCIETY CITIZENRY! WAS, IN PRISON(S) A WEAK-  
 NESS, OR CONVICT WEAKILITY! THE SORDID AND ULTRA VIOLENT WORLD OF  
 LEVEL 5 & 6 FEDERAL PRISON(S) CONSUMED ME IN 1995! LEAVENWORTH, TERRE-  
 -HAUTE, LEWISBURG, ADX (TWICE FOR 7 YRS. TOTAL), KOMPOC, ATWATER,  
 -BIG DADY, HECHT, DEANMONT, ATLANTA! ALL SAW ONE'S EXIS-  
 -TENCE AS AN ANIMAL! A TRIP & PROVED TRUE "CONVICT".

TODAY, I FIND MYSELF QUESTIONING IT ALL!! AT TIMES LONGING  
 FOR THAT FAIRLY NAIVE YOUTH THAT ENTERED PRISON @ 23! YET ALSO  
 SIMULTANEOUSLY ACCEPTING THE BEAST THAT BOTH CALIFORNIA &  
 FEDERAL PRISON(S) CREATED! I CAN ALSO ACKNOWLEDGE (ALBERT-  
 -GRUDGINGLY) THAT, INCARCERATION AS IS, WARPS A CAPTIVE! HOW-  
 -EVER, YEARS OF S.H.U. (ISOLATION) TRULY DESTROY THE SPIRIT.



I AM LIVING PROOF OF THIS - I EXITED FEDERAL PRISON IN 2009 w/ A VERY ACUTE CASE OF P.T.S.D. SOMETHING THAT, ALTHOUGH ONE WAS GETTING PROFESSIONAL HELP WITH IT! ONE TODAY, STILL HAS DIFFICULTIES MAINTAINING QUALITATIVE RELATIONSHIPS, WITH BOTH FAMILY & OTHERS! My SLEEPING PATTERNS HAVE BEEN PERMANENTLY ALTERED. I AVERAGE 4 TO 5 HRS. OF SLEEP DAILY. Typically, FLASHBACKS OF VARIOUS VIOLENCE AND/OR TRAUMA(S) AWAKE ONE. One IN PARTICULAR, ME IN A COFFIN BEING BURIED ALIVE! HAS BEEN A RECURRING NIGHT VISITOR! Occurring DURING MY FIRST 4 YRS. @ APX BTW! Maybe, it WAS THE 15-20 MIN WALK FROM INTAKE TO THE HOUSING UNIT(S), WHERE WE WERE MOVING IN ERRATIC L TO R TURNS, YET GOING DOWNWARDS CONSISTENTLY! WHICH CREATED THIS NIGHTMARE? I DK...

WHAT I DO KNOW, IS THAT EVERYDAY I STRUGGLE TO BE "NORMAL" - WONDERING EXACTLY WHAT "NORMAL" IS ANYMORE!! I QUESTION THE 'CONVICT' ETHOS, AS THE MAJORITY ARE NOT 'CONVICERS' BUT RATHER 'INMATES' - AND LIVE BY SKEWED PROTOCOLS YET! ENJOY QUALITATIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH ALL! AND ARE ACCEPTED BY THEIR PEERS, ALBERT WITH A LITTLE VERBAL HARASSMENT(S)! I, ON THE OTHER HAND AM MORE FEARED THAN LOVED! DETENTIONS ALONE UPON THE "REAL" PATH (i.e. NEVER AIDED LAW ENFORCEMENT)! WITH MINIMAL OUTSIDE CONTACTS! My ANGER OFTEN TIMES CONSUMES ME... HOW DOES ONE GET 45 YEARS FOR A CASE WHERE NO ONE DIED? HAD ANY SERIOUS INJURIES? THE FACT THAT AN EVENTUAL RETRIAL IS LIKELY, GIVES ONE THAT THING CALLED 'HOPE'! IT IS THIS, WHICH KEEPS THE INHERBEAST ENGAGED, AS ONE WALKS WITHIN THE JUNGLE(S) OF PRISON.



This, which helps one ignore the multitude of disrespect  
 one's subjected to, by both captor & fellow captive(s)! Hope  
 that there shall be eventual justice... that one still shall  
 have time to live some semblance of a life<sup>21</sup>! A life free  
 of bars & faux bravado! I wonder... will the "convict condition-  
 ing" which I've internalized, over a 30 plus virtual career of  
 outlaw adherence! overcome the 5 years which one's lived as a  
 devout Muslim<sup>21</sup>. Time will tell. My struggle continues

Asad Malik Kamali



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