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## Believe In Me

By

Shon Pernice

When you get locked up, the metal door slams, clothes don't fit, and you are around a bunch of strange people staring in your direction. You fight the feelings of being lone, not worthy, scared, and less than human. You messed up, your loved ones are upset, and it seems like your life is over. I know this feeling all too well.

I had been in prison for seven years straight--and alone. I received a book, and a letter, one cold Midwestern February day from someone I never met. She believed in me. I was shocked because I was not used to that. So I listened, embraced the message, and started to change the destructive path that I was on: because somebody believed in me.

The person that believes in you could be a family member, youth service officer, law enforcement, staff member, mentor, or even a stranger. When that someone believes in you--listen. It may not happen immediately or overnight. Sometimes we push those people away that believe in us and it becomes a missed opportunity. Whether it is due to our stubborn pride, depression, self-destructive style, denial, or blindness to a gift: Do not let that door shut. Write about the experience because it may inspire someone else in need of a life vest to stay afloat when weighted down in the sea of despair.

I could not give this advice if I had not experienced it myself. Now I live my life "Worthy of their sacrifices." <sup>(1)</sup>

1: Quote to Shon Pernice from Gold Star Mom Debbie Lee

