

## "The Abyss of Defeat"

8/27/20

How many have ever had feelings of despondency? Defenselessness? Vulnerability? Well, these feelings are not at all uncommon amongst prisoners. We are all too familiar with them, unfortunately.

These feelings have solidified into a harsh reality for those of us within these concrete prison walls. However great our needs may be, we are brushed aside and our needs made microscopic, or even invisible altogether. We no longer matter as all we have become is a seven digit number to the administration. They do not look at us, but through us it seems. As I said, invisible.

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And speaking from years of experience, to cry out and be ignored creates the sensation of sheer defeat. And defeatism is.. well, a feeling indescribable. I cannot tell you how many tears I have shed as a result of such. It is so hurtful when another human being can look you square into your eyes and still not see you. Not see you as a human being as well with needs and feelings, but rather as a nuisance instead. It is dehumanizing to say the least.

Do we live in a hurried world? Yes. Do prison officials have heavy workloads? Absolutely! However, the ultimate goal of prison is reformation and rehabilitation. I am sad to say that that

is not what is taking place here in Fluvanna Correctional Center for women. In fact, the complete opposite is true. People have lost themselves in a system of injustice, abuse, and corruption.

People whom have experienced drug addiction have fallen back into the lifestyle. People who have health conditions have become debilitated. People with mental health disorders have attempted suicide. All while the administration appeases us by offering the response they think we want. No. What we want is to be heard and taken seriously! What we want is our concerns addressed, investigated, and rectified in a timely manner! What we

want is to be treated like the human beings that we still are in spite of our mistakes! Is that too much to ask from a system designed to reform us? I don't think so.

So what can we do to make ourselves visible? The answer remains to be seen. But what I do see, yet understand not, is how the most problematic offenders receive the attention and help while us quiet, respectful offenders are waved off, literally, and shooed away like a bothersome insect. It is so bass-ahwards! Must I pout and throw a tantrum like a two-year-old toddler to get my way? It seems to work for others, yet

is not my nature to do so;  
And so, I continue to be  
ignored. Invisible. Unseen  
and unheard.  
Defeated.

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