

I begin with salutations of respect, and love. I use respect because whether one agrees with or contends a particular persons approach or pressing cause, when their is respect one shall be seen, and heard oppose to quickly dismissed by those whose respect has been earned. Now the strong word of love comes in here because I know it could not be anything other than love that propels so many to fight a fight that can intimidate the most ferociously built warrior. Yet love is in the hearts, and limbs of you all providing bravery and the acknowledgement that victory is obtainable for so many different injustices that are methodically there, and some that just exist.

So I say I love you all because for decades love hasn't always been present enough for me to see but though I been removed of some of the bare essentials of life, and have been denied in many instances interactions where decency is available. I know love when I feel it, when I see it, and when I hear it in the tones of many of you beautiful people.

These words are geared toward mental health.

As a child, I was diagnosed with an array of mental health issues even prior to prison. Some of my issues were intensified by Draconian nature of being a prisoner, which resulted in more medications being administered to me. My journey seeking out help started when no matter how much exercise I did no matter how I invested all my time I still suffered from nightmares and anxiety, depression, and fear. I started attending, and seeking

out safety in houses of healing groups, I started doing all the courses at my disposal, which were little to none about mental health.

I started speaking my truth about what was going on in my head with individuals that were titled mental health staff. Which was comprised of a handful of overwhelmed people with often an indifferent disposition. Strangers who I am supposed to open up to about the trauma, the noise, the pain, and uneasiness I feel. I am on the mental health roster because currently I am prescribed three different medications.

Therefore, to say the least I have issues. I know I been diagnosed with psychological issues. Yet I was not evaluated differently than my peers before trial, and absolutely no differently when I was sentenced. The issues did not deem me infallible but much more vulnerable. Now, I live combating these feelings of uneasiness daily, and I am made to be responsible for the many individuals that have an over success of mental health issues that don't believe in talking with staff or participating in groups.

That seem to be reserved because though I been in some of these groups, to have a consistent seat in getting help that does not exist here. I requested to see mental health on a few occasions in the past few weeks, and to no avail because I have yet to be seen. Though I been denied the enrollment in mental health groups

recently, I been denied my enrollment in violence prevention in cell group work because I have a life sentence, and when unit teams have been addressed about this they afforded me pictures to be colored in as though I am a 3 year old child.

Yes, I do have the pictures, and yes, I actually have the request slip saying because I have life I cannot be in any group at this time. It is a common theme I been faced with for 22 years though now the Covid-19 experience is what is used often as the new excuse. I have seen men kill themselves, some turned shells of themselves because of the alterations the generic medications produced.

There is many Walter Wallace's in here. When you experience 23 hours in a cell there is a lot that can be negatively affected in one's head. Charles Dixon once said prison is cruel and does things to the normal human mind. Fathom if you will those that already are injured by abuse, poverty, drugs, and violence. I was told I have post-traumatic stress disorder from my childhood experiences.

Surely I am not alone especially with the non-funding of institutions do not provide proper help for those suffering mentally. Though I have enough faculties to speak about my experience many are muted because they cannot find the words to say how clouded their minds are, or how much noise there is inside their heads. Have you ever been challenged with having to be a

poster child for change, to not fight when everyone around you is acclimated to violence? Have you ever had to ask strangers for help over, and over again because you do not want to let the people that love, and support you down because you gave up on a system that never believed in you in the first place?

Embarrassed completely after you explain some of the root of the mental turmoil yet it was not documented, and the next time your seen it is by a new stranger that does not know anything about you. Mind you, I am not the man trying to manipulate or to be catered to after I have done something to violate a rule. I am the man asking on my own regard about help, about arming myself with tools to help combat some of the issue's that make every day a struggle but make everyday a nightmare.

Kind regards,  
Matthew Garcia