

The Growth of a Prisoner

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Just the other day, I told my father, "I am NOT bitter... Prison made me into a better person. We can no longer be upset over the blessings of other people, so when I hear this person got this time for a crime worse than mine, I'm happy for them because that's Jehovah blessing them..." That thinking and understanding did not come easy. You see, for so many years I made myself believe it was OK to be bitter because I was the one who deserved less time. You could not have convinced me or my family that what was done to me was fair or justice. In fact it was NOT fair or just, but if I wanted to find my purpose in life I had to become (1) Responsible for my role and (2) accept that my Peace of Mind was in My hands. Hands that no longer wanted to hold onto Misery.

It took years to become the man I am today. With a honest perspective [as I look back] on my life, I was NOT ready to go home when I was crying in my cell. Praying, begging My God Jehovah to let me out. I kept assuring him, I was ready. Through eyes full of tears and a hurting heart I told God I learned my lesson. "Oh Please Jehovah God! I'm Better Now!" as if I was cured from a disease. Watching everyone around me enjoy their Countdown, I felt like a Rain drop on an inferno. Which didn't dry as quick as I'd liked it. Although useless to the flame, the hurt, the pain, and the confusion only

Seemed to make the fire pits more difficult to contain. I had No idea how putting that rain drop (Me) into that inferno (Prison) would have / was going to make me better. I was literally a child lost in a Wilderness.

When I came to prison, it forced me to adapt and adjust to a life I never knew ~~existed~~ existed. I remember standing at my cell door watching the c/o pass mail out and would get butterflies in my stomach as he got closer to my cell, hoping I got some mail. My breathing slowed yet my heart raced for what seemed like an eternity lasted 3 seconds as he walked pass my cell. Which would cause me to go lay on my bunk and cry. I can't tell you how many nights I stood at that door and been disapanted. I thought maybe it wouldn't hurt so much if I didn't stand at the door as he walked pass. So the moment he got closer to my cell I'll go lay down to save face. I began to wonder if the guys standing at their cell doors was watching my embarrassment.

Due to my mental battles, I began to lose more than my Freedom during this journey. I've lost friends and opportunities. While in prison, I suffered a heartbreak that has now forced me to ONLY see Females as Friends. Prison has created wounds on my heart that became so infected that if not for the need of it, I would have gotten it cut out!

OK, I want to talk more about the mature and understanding outlook on prison. That's the reason I decided to keep going, and never giving in to the thoughts of homicide or suicide. I am very religious, so I must say I would not have been able to keep going without my Heavenly Father. When I prayed during those painful nights, I never knew the situation at hand was making me stronger. With Jehovah's help I was able to put out that inferno. I was blessed to have my mind made anew, which expanded my understanding.

I can't tell you the date I made these changes, but it started when I started to see good in people. I wanted to associate with everyone on an equal level. Even if it was C/O's, Counselors, Nurses, [Male or Female] or Prisoners; I felt the need to humanize myself in the eyes of everyone. The way a Young Black Man is judged by the eyes of our adversaries and oppressors, is what I took as a step into NOT being what people who don't believe in me wanted me to be. Like if you think about it, why do we listen to people who don't believe in us in the first place? Can't keep giving these Naysayers too much power... OK, I got carried away, My bad. #Had-a-Moment... Now I met so many good people in prison. People who believed in me and wanted me to succeed began to take scabs off my wounded heart. Through all that, what mattered more was I wanted better for

Myself, I didn't want to be in prison anymore, so I had to free myself Mentally first.

I No longer wanted to be just an inmate, so I worked on my interactions with staff. I No longer wanted to be "in-the-way" as most Prisoners say. I started to be more considerate, mindful, understanding, and patient with the guys I had to live around. When I realized that, the things I was going through most of the men around me all experienced it, I still saw flaws in their ways because they all were still In Prison! I took drastic steps to NOT want to be the old head that the Next Young Black man look at in disgust for being a Statistical failure. NOT Me! I told myself, I will NOT turn 50 in prison. I knew I had to be dedicated to getting out of Prison. That's why Im leaving all my negative thoughts, experiences, and glorified "Bull-shit" stories in the Pass with the inferno. While Im in this inferno, Im going to defuse it from within, because reality, while in Prison we determine how bad the fire will be.

10 days after I turned 16 I was arrested for my role in a home invasion. the Role [My only Role] was to steal the things and leave. So I took the X-Box and a camera. As we left the house, I Began to run down the block. ~~and~~ Two of the guys with me stayed and shot the lady in front of her kids. thank God she survived. Of the 4 of us one was an adult. He was sentenced to

20 years. The two guys who shot her received life plus over 100 years. I was sentenced last, and for my role [also for lying to the police] I received 4 life sentences plus 10 years. Still at 16 years old I was on a Bus heading to Prison, given my state number. Today I'm 29 years old, still incarcerated, but I'm no longer in prison. I promise myself to keep freedom on the brain and that keeps me free mentally. That prepares me physically because I know my prayer - Yes! the one I prayed all those hurtful years ago - will be answered... I will be home one day. Thanks to me staying strong, focus, motivated, and growing EVERYDAY...

Thank you for your time.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my prison experience

Written & Thought of by

Poetik Just - I