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"FACING THE REAL ENEMY WITHIN"

Pondering thoughts of whom the real enemy is within this correctional facility. Is it opposition? Correctional officers or employees? Inmates? Law-enforcement? What about self? These are some tough questions to answer carefully.

Prisoners foes varies depending on their individual circumstances and outside influence. I have my own strife to solve this puzzle. How many of us have been unable to solve this puzzle. How do I put these pieces together perfectly?

We each have our own demons to identify. Unfortunately, I personally have more than the average person. My adversaries are directly in my face without noticing it. Have anybody been as blind as me? A mountain of problems evolving from a pebble.

One of those dilemmas is networking, regardless of this dog eat dog world... I meant that literally. This environment keeps people close-minded and isolated. Mainly because the limitations of confinement and active case status. A domain known for stereotyping and obstructing inmates from success. There's a stigma that inmates don't deserve prosperity, even if we worked for it. If GOD forgives us, who can condemn us?

Being an inmate is dangerous for many reasons. For example, humbleness taken for weakness, could lead to physical altercations that may be deadly. Some are very timid not able to mentally or physically cope in these conditions, resulting in a suicide. Last but not least, the abandonment of family and friends or monetary resources cause some to become jailhouse switches or confidential informants. As a pretrial detainee in Hampton Roads Regional

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Jail; this can be the only incriminating evidence to convict you, which may be entirely fabricated or supplied by law-enforcement.

Programs and resources are scarce for prisoners self-improvement and re-entry into society. The meager wages for employment of inmates are equivalent to slave work. Education is rarely sufficient in jails and prisons.

The living conditions are inhumane. Flooding of pods by toilets dispelling urine and feces. Bleach and cleaning supplies aren't given on a normal basis to avoid COVID-19 outbreaks. Constantly quarantined when a positive result of COVID-19 is returned, really is burdensome.

Law library is remote to them who need to make copies of legal documents including rotary, research and study, by specified deadline. Programs ceased, slowing down attainment of information needed to achieve goals. Medical appointments stalled due to COVID-19 spikes in population; and many of us refusing to take vaccination in fear of adverse effects.

Why do minorities over-populate these facilities? Is it because a crime pays? Yes, crime pays but sometimes the outcome is imprisonment. Does poverty play a major role in engaging in illegal conduct? In my personal opinion, I would say so because for the love of money is the root of all evil. How come African-Americans are more prone than Caucasians to seek shortcuts to success? Are we least likely to indulge in crime, if afforded the same opportunities as Whites or Asians? There are plenty of conjectures arising from that last question. African-Americans have less hard work ethic to legitimately acquired the lifestyle desired. Sadly, shortcuts usually lead to incarceration. Poverty seem to be an enemy we're facing within these

③ Correctional facilities and communities.

How do we neutralize the enemies of ex-felons within our communities? The proposal I've got is to eliminate guns and drugs from these neighborhoods. Unaware of the statistics but I'm pretty sure it's a myriad of arrests because of guns and drugs. Secondly, let's get rid of all illegal gambling while limiting, legal gambling. A proven fact is that crime is higher in areas of gambling. Third, failure to provide affordable housing for ex-felons and certain felonies eliminating public housing options causes homelessness and ultimately recidivism. Fourth, destroying illegal and legal prostitution; and sexual exploitation of women that implants thoughts of rape. Provocative clothing should entice, not provoke rape!

Then you can't have healthy relationships between inmates and employees because it's fraternizing. For the small minded; healthy relationships are considered to consist of drug trafficking, illegal contraband, sexual encounters, and etc. equaling fraternizing. These are the negative aspects of building healthy relationships. What about the positive outcomes? Communication between inmates and staff members could avoid unnecessary disciplinary offenses; and lockdowns making employees' job easier and prisoners temporary residence more comfortable. Negative healthy relationships is an enemy within correctional facilities only resulting in criminal investigations, maybe indictments, and even more time adding on to your sentence.

Then you've got the few pretrial detainees or convicts; that are married and may be able to save their marriage despite the distance between them if they can have conjugal visits. (L.O.L.) Sex is desired in marriage to have a deeper

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connection, assuring one another their love for each other. Minimizing masturbation offenses known as "gunning" (L.M.A.O.) and rape (one of the most forbidden crimes). The marriage rate for prisoners would increase with a higher percentage of success.

Gangs and religion are some of the most debatable topics usually without closure. Gangs are confusing and not standing upon the foundation in which they was built upon. Some gangs were created to protect their communities and/or race from racism, oppression, sexism, and etc. However, it has become a fad as in a fashion sense to appease other inmates, employees (mainly the opposite sex), and a means to promote violence, manipulate, and become an oppressor. In all actuality we suppose to have discipline, intelligent, and structured men and women. Shouldn't be advertising drug dealing, extortion, pimping, and robbery. These gang characteristics have to be replaced by principles which most gangs are based equality, freedom, justice, loyalty, peace, and unity. These principles have been avoided. Everybody isn't fit to be gang affiliated. When they do join gangs it's because they're an asset, which may not necessarily be good if you're a pawn.

I say religion probably is the most controversial subject in jail and prison.

I think this is what causes violations of:

- 1) Free Exercise Clause
- 2) Establishment Clause
- 3) Fourteenth Amendment
- 4) Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA)
- 5) Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA)

My personal belief of these violations stems from people own religious beliefs,

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Concepts, and ideas; that conflict with other people's religious beliefs. Clashing instead of enlightening and embracing each other's religion which may have similarities and slight differences, that could be respected by agreeing to disagree. It's difficult to actually have faith in the unknown that's based upon family upbringing. How do we **confirm** the accuracy of the authors? Are these religious books true? Has science proven otherwise? Normally it's trusting the authors' word. An individual shouldn't be penalized to practice his/her religion. Institution refusing to conform to your religious belief.

Pretrial detainees face numerous issues such as law enforcement being unethical in obtaining evidence in circumstantial cases. You've got to be on alert for censored mail, mail tampering, delayed notary, copies of legal documents supplied to confidential informants or jailhouse snitches. Commonwealth Attorney's or detectives contacting the jail to postpone use of law library; deprive you of private legal calls which are violations of right to access courts, as well as the attorney-client privilege. Your mail could be censored without a legitimate cause. In pre-trial motion hearings and trial bailiffs may form opinions before a verdict is decided; and relaying those judgments to transportation officers, creating bias and prejudice towards defendants. Inmates must be vigilant to reveal whom are the individuals; seeking time reductions by interacting in board games, posing as a jailhouse lawyer, or interacting in sports to be captured by cameras. An attempt to act as if you're discussing your case details with them. Certain offenses have scrutiny written all on the warrant due to America's acceptance of committing that particular crime. Being likeable may decide your fate in this realm. This makes an untrustworthy and uncomfortable environment for anyone; trying to have a fair and impartial trial by jury according to Sixth Amendment rights.

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Medical treatment sometimes can be inadequate and/or unprofessional. Of course each employee isn't responsible for another employee action or inaction. All errors don't result in a deliberate indifference or malpractice suit. However, too many men and women have died here making local and national news. Medical records have been disclosed to others in violation of confidentiality agreement between healthcare providers and patients. This is regularly done out of spite for inmates or to prevent the opposite sex, from developing relationships with those inmates. Falsely accusing us of being uncivilized humans. The medical personnel shouldn't be held accountable for abiding by company policy. I'm questioning the adequacy of healthcare for the scheduling of sick call appointments or follow-up visits. Both are required for verification if medical treatment should continue or cease. The company incentives for reducing transportation to outside healthcare facilities for testing or medical procedures not performed at this jail, are of more importance than the patients needs!

Family and friends are very reliable in these times. Even if you're independent you'll hate feeling burdensome but the extra support only can help. As time elapse their direction in life can change causing distance between ya'll. Your abundance of appreciation will strengthen ya'll relationship. Don't push nobody away that genuinely care about you. Sometimes inmates are inconsiderate to the daily lives of those that support them. Blood thicker than water is true indeed, but there are some exceptions for water. Make time for them whether it's video visitation, credit/debit call, or whatever form of communication. Enjoy their company because its valuable. Take no soul for granted!

Media is definitely an enemy to those that are confined. Media can commit libel, slander, or defamation of character. Planting guilty seeds in the public minds. Media can also avoid interviewing inmates or publishing their stories, in fear of

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backlash from the community. Media has been known to be bribed by law-enforcement or by wealthy people of any wrongdoings by them. Viewer ratings are the most important thing to the media.

Who is the real enemy? Self, the Devil, and demons that are contrary to our purpose. I've done seen myself lose focus as a result of these things. Society can be an enemy in itself, especially from a world full of people with cruel intentions. Why do envy and jealousy exist? People simply praying on your downfall? How come you ain't praying for my success? Am I a book never read? I finally came to the conclusion that the world want inmates to forever suffer. Inmates got to think outside the box by whatever means. Its beneficial to have thoughts expanding pass the reins of confinement. We're too complex as humans to be one track minded! Imagine being successful while incarcerated. Strive for self-preservation and don't let a bid deter you from dreaming. Have no idle time. You'll be rewarded if you'll continue to putting action towards those imaginations. Demons are always lurking, trying to hex, so stay prayed up! Different types of Devils trying to lead you astray. Therefore, learn to discern people motives. In that manner you can weed out those bad crops. The harvest will be so much more beautiful.

There are always distractions but you can't let them bother you. Why would you be an enemy towards yourself? An improbable decision if you truly care about self. I'm sure you do (L.O.L)! Why not remain on the right course? We'll get to our destination sooner, so don't prolong it. Ultimately the real enemy is within ourselves.

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However, there are other forms of enemies. Choose to not let any of your enemies stall your progress. I will carefully design a path to achieve my goals. You can accomplish a lot while being imprisoned. Although my hands are fettered and my feet shackled, my mind is free. Therefore, allow your mind to freely roam around to find your destiny. My purpose can't be the next man's purpose. We're all striving to be the people God has created us to be; by our uniqueness and characteristics that define who we are. The real enemy is within ourselves. To direct our lives while minimizing our errors. Don't let opportunity pass you. Opportunity may not come again. I say that to advise you, when you're freed from this place, don't let the enemy within this place leave with you. Are you facing your real enemy???

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