

THE VIOLENT

By James W. Harkleroad

Why are some people prone to violence?

(1) Because they can. Certain individuals are simply more willing to engage in violence because they can.

(2) Because they benefit from it. The simple threat of violent behavior can produce the desired result as individuals - in seeking to avoid being victimized - cater to those who they feel threatened by. This includes the prison staff who do not want to be assaulted, nor do they wish to do the paperwork associated with a rule violation.

(3) Because they are permitted to get away with rule violations. Benefiting from the simple threat of violence they routinely violate the rules and inevitably step over the line into actual violence.

(4) Perceived discourtesy and disrespect creates frustrations that can eventually find release in violence.

(5) Because it feels good. Physically and mentally (if one is the winner of the altercation!).

(The author is a former Death Row prisoner who has been serving time in Florida since 1971.)