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Wrong Side of the Right Coin

Coming to prison in 2013 I didn't know what to expect. I had just turned 18 and was impressionable as an older inmate who was doing life had told it to me when I was having a conversation with him one day. I could say I definitely gravitated towards those who had bigger influence over the masses, but I couldn't elucidate why that was. I wasn't looking for protection and was fearless to any situation that presented itself. I didn't know that unconsciously I was studying those around me. This was an attribute that I appreciated about myself as life went on and I honed in on said characteristic. Being impressionable was not something I wanted to be remembered as. When I read in the dictionary that one of the definitions of the word was easily impressed I, from that day forward, made efforts to eradicate this from my persona. Although I looked up to many who came before me that didn't have to come off as being easily impressed did it? This was a question I was seeking to answer until it came to me one day when I met my cousin Dwayne in 2014 who was also doing a life sentence. I realized I appreciated those who had respect and that was something I wanted for myself and sought to have throughout the remainder of my

life. Where does respect come from? Is it how one carries themselves? Is it what you do for another? Is it the amount of money you have? Whatever the answer may be, it, in my opinion, should include the fact that your moral compass should be aligned with what is right. Respect, from the observations I've made in life, should come naturally or it isn't genuine. The more I've educated myself with the knowledge of self the more I've come to know that there is no need to want something outside of myself. To do that would be to fall victim to my desires as the book '*The Quest for Hermes Trismegistus*' by Gary Lachman writes about. Whatever your destined to have in life will come to you whether you're ready for it or not. As I near the acquisition of the AAS degree I've been working hard for almost two years to obtain I've found a new since of desire. One that doesn't come from outside sources or that is influenced by another person's perspective. This new desire will gift me with a natural high that can't be gained through any drug but that has been said to have been attained, as '*The Quest*' (Lachman, 2011) talks about, through the use of *Mescaline*, a psychedelic that opens up the brain's reducing valve, thus allowing more of reality into one's consciousness. Sitting here in prison helps me understand many things but something that has stuck out to me is when I actually challenge myself to use greater parts of my brain and the results that come from said use. I experience an almost surreal exchange between myself and reality. Its as if I've elevated to another mental plane and, metaphorically speaking, have went on auto-pilot. By continuing my pursuit of knowledge of all kinds I continue to surprise myself with what I come

across. Although, in my current position, I am limited to how much knowledge I may try to acquire, I am readying myself for the big world I am soon to return to so that I may continue my expedition and challenge myself in even greater conditions.