

Missing the Wrong Turn

The Hidden Treasures of My Mind

Having a support system or a 'family' dynamic was not something I was lucky to have growing up. Yes, I had a mother who took care of me and my siblings at all cost up until the age of 13 and a father who always 'said' he couldn't wait for the chance to have his children back in his care, but where was the undying loyalty that I watched so many of my friends' parent's give to them? I wouldn't ever blame my parents for the prison sentences that I've done back to back for the past 11 years, but I do believe that if I had a more stable and loving environment to grow up in it would have at least given me a better chance to succeed rather than fail as many times as I have. Here I am at the age of 28 and finally feeling like I have a fresh start and a foundation even though I haven't made it out of these concrete walls yet.

I wasn't taught how to be a man I learned by watching men inside and outside of prison. Picking up the pieces of my life that I had lost became too heavy of bag for me to fill and carry so I chose to throw the old pieces away and start anew. Although this means that I also shed my skin of protection which left me vulnerable and having to deal with new emotions that I've never experienced before, at least I have the knowledge of self and life that I wasn't given through anything but practice. Deciphering people is something that intrigues me and the anatomy of the human brain and how it works is something I avidly study which is why, since I've been locked up, I've read and studied books like *'The Law of Success'* by Napoleon Hill or *'The Lost Knowledge of the Imagination'* by Gary Lachman which helps those of us who are on a quest for knowledge understand the complex ever-changing physiological make-up of the two brains we have. Inside these walls you never know what type of person you might deal with on any

particular day. Its best to read and exercise to prepare yourself so that you don't run right into someone who might be having a bad day. Now more than ever I have practiced what older people have always told kids from their own experience's "turn the other cheek". As I've learned that it is not necessary to be that angry person that I once was, searching for love and guidance in all the wrong places, I have been able to grow as a man. Prison has aided in my ability to see a situation from afar and notice the things that trigger myself to act irrationally. To grow I have had to remain patient and determined to show restraint when I have been presented with a negative situation or something I struggle with. From Correctional Officers coming to work with their problems from home and taking it out those of us who are forced to be here, to inmates not being able to cope with where they are in a comprehensible manner it takes preparation to deal with these adversities.

Having a conversation with an older gentleman yesterday (July 16, 2022) who I confide in on a daily basis he said to me "You know Nutty the wrong turn which landed us in prison didn't start when we committed our crime, the wrong decision was made 'way back'". As he puts it. "And since we weren't prepared for the future we missed the signs of us going down the wrong road the whole time". As I look back at every situation I come to know that he is right. Every situation I have been through that has impacted me negatively could have been prevent if I looked into the decision I was making a little deeper and had tried to identify 'kinks' in my plan before deciding that it was the best plan of action for me. This of course is more knowledge of self that I can now add to the unique way in which I think and utilize in the future so that I don't continue down the 'wrong road'.