

Prison reform is a big topic in this country today, and there are as many suggestions for change as there are people to suggest them. This essay is my attempt to give an informed opinion. Three ways I think we can fix the prison system are focus on rehabilitation, base restrictions on custody level, and learn from our Foreign allies.

When it comes to rehabilitation the "First Step Act," was a good start. It falls short in the fact that it doesn't apply to all offenders equally. Another way to help rehabilitate inmates is to change how we deal with tattooing in prison. Instead of wasting time and money to prevent it, we should set up a program to teach interested inmates how to do the tattoo work and how to set-up and run a shop. Something else I think we could do is to take art from being something to keep inmates busy, and show inmates how to make a career out of it. Tablets with art instruction videos would be useful here.

My next idea is to base the prison restrictions on your custody level. I say this because as I write this I am sitting in a low, yet it feels so different from the medium I started my time in. When I was getting ready to transfer I was told that lows had open moves. The reality is, at this one at least, there

are five minute, one way moves. That means we have five minutes to go from our unit to the rec yard, education or the chapel, or five minutes to get back to the unit depending on whether it's an inbound (to the unit), or outbound (from the unit) move. Also, recently, my facility stated that they want us to get our personal property to the limits in the A+O Handbook, which states that we can have it if it fits in our locker. The limits they want us to have are taken off the list of what we can transfer with when we change facilities.

I also think, since this is a low, that they should ease the restriction on sexually explicit content and nudity. I say this since one of the workers here is using it as an excuse to reject anything that they feel goes against their religious beliefs. Mostly this means manga. Two issues with them doing this is: 1) they actually work in R+D according to the captain, and 2) the only person who can reject anything is the warden who never sees the material in question.

My final suggestion is to study our allies and see if we can make their ways of keeping the crime rate low work for us. Why is it the United States has 25 percent of the worlds prison population when there are countries with more people who have less of their people in prison? What are countries like Belgium,

Japan, Germany, and others doing right that we seem to be doing so wrong? Personally, I think it's time we do what we're afraid of doing and ask for the help we so desperately need.

Rehabilitation, Restrictions based on custody level, and learning from our allies are the suggestions I explored in this essay. Of course, nothing will change unless we put our differences aside and start working together. I am Lazarus Kayne, and I'd like to hear other suggestions if you don't think mine will work.