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## "On Hold"

How do we cope with prison. How do we deal with the stress of the prison system. We don't. Our ability to effectively make a difference in our own lives, let alone a meaningful difference, is reduced at best.

You see, they remove our ability to pursue solutions to problems in any time sensitive manner. Hiding behind paper-work and imposed timelines that have no bearing on the validity of our claim.

They shield themselves behind vague answers and bureaucratic bull shit instead of addressing legitimate concerns. I just spent an hour with the health "provider" discussing how I am "on hold" for a replacement Bi-pap that I need in order to breath at night.

Keep in mind: I already had a machine; it stopped working, but it is under warranty; I could die due to suffocation on my sleep because of Central sleep Apnea, a rare type of sleep Apnea that affects the Brain's function while sleeping.

They are not willing to use the manufacturer's recall method to switch machines. Saying they are looking for "Security Suite" machines. Again I am "on hold". I have been "on hold" for 22 days as of the writing of this essay (7-6-2021 to 7-28-2021)

I do not understand how so much responsibility can fall on my shoulders, while at the same time, the ability to do what needs to be done is either exponentially more difficult or removed all together.

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They play Russian Roulette with my life each night, yet I am expected to just accept it, find a way to cope. It just "is"; The lack of empathy shown in these circumstances seems to me like just another form of compartmentalization.

Maybe I am just trying to "fill in the gaps" with my own wishful thinking; giving them more credit than they deserve. I don't believe the bulk of the people involved with D.O.C. are evil, uncaring people. I have seen enough of this world that I believe most of them got into this with at least a spec of good intentions.

But then I watch people in Green Court state issue uniform here) push through a line of people with legit needs so they can lie to a C.O.'s face, in an effort to make sure "they get theirs" Even if they don't deserve whatever they are after.

But inmates aren't really the bad guys in that scenario either. We are pushed away and neglected, ignored until we act out; our eventual misbehavior only further reinforcing the Staff's need to not see us as people.

It's a sociological cess pool; all this vile behavior feeding off of each other and working as an echo chamber to support even more mistreatment on both sides. I can see it happening when I talk to the Staff - watching them draw that line in the proverbial sand.

When I was speaking with the Health provider I could actually see the change from her viewing me as a person, to her viewing me as a problem.

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I was drawing my own line in the sand & admit, I had ceased using my empathy to try to see her side because it became obvious that she was not interested in Acknowledging the Danger I am in.

I stopped asking her questions, & stopped trying to Appeal to her Compassionate side. In turn she treated me as some thing she needed to get off her workload. She Rushed the rest of my Appointment and said she would have to schedule a separate Chronic care Appointment because we ran out of time.

I had just told her my shoulder pain was impacting my ability to even pick up a pencil; Responding to her curt question of "is there anything else I need to look at?" I mean I am grateful for the 2nd appointment but her Distaste for my presence had become palpable. I wish I could explain it better, in writing it almost sounds petty on my part.

Maybe that's the truth of it and I merely need to paint the situation as worse than it was because of everything else going on, or maybe I am seeing clearly. It's hard to tell, each negative situation I have to deal with in D.O.C. seems to go through a series of "Gas lighting" events.

I keep hearing that I am "exaggerating the severity" as an initial response to my complaints, that I actually start doubting my own sanity, until I overcome the other persons dismissal of me at least.

Once I can explain the full scope of the situation, they almost always apologize for not understanding. As you can probably tell from how this essay is written; sometimes I take a while to make my point understandable.

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What we actually need is a true Advocate. Our case manager is supposed to be one in a sense. They submit applications for programs and deal with making sure we are in compliance with any court ordered programs, they try to follow up on some "inner office" stuff for us but ultimately are another road block.

There is no consistency from one to the next, think of high school teachers "I don't care how your last teacher did things, I do them this way". Admittedly, I understand that is sometimes needed to get past unrealistic expectations; however there needs to be something more they could do.

If not them then create a new liaison position, a civilian who's only job is to fight for our rights. Supposedly the P.P.M.U. is there for just that, but with no oversight, they have no incentive to keep it honest.

The A.P.W.A. asks what helps us cope. For me just knowing that some one, some where, cares enough to read this helps me cope. Seriously; you, the reader give me hope. I don't care if your only reading this essay because it is assigned or because you were just curious about what prison was like, the fact that you are aware means we are 1 step closer to reform. If the rest of society truly understood this life style they would feel it was inhumane in many respects.

When I was on the outside I was one of these people who looked the other way, "it can't be as bad as they claim", "this is the U.S.A. Not Communist Russia, even our prisoners have it good", all bullshit aside some of the U.S. prisons are just as bad, but you want see that on T.V.

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Due to Security concerns (supposedly) there is no way to do a surprise inspection. They have a grievance process that is limited to being boiled down to an argument where they can do what ever they want and just shut you down. No one cares enough to look beyond the ranting of someone pushed to the limit. they don't care to get to the root cause of your grievance, No one will investigate anything beyond your word against the systems, unless your lucky enough to have some evidence on your side. It is always presumed you are lying.

The only thing ON Hold here is Integrity and Human Compassion. Society wants those convicted of a crime to be held accountable, payment in full, 1 pound of flesh coming up! What about the ones in charge of us, going out of their way to make things more difficult, to turn a blind eye to blatant ~~dis~~ Disregard for our safety & piece of mind. Who is holding them accountable?