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Title:

Organization or Agency:

Topic: Meeting Date Not Listed

NA

Testimony:

I have been told of how something is being done for prisoners or something like that. I would like to share some thoughts if I may.

The first thing I believe is to teach prisoners what they can do once they get locked up. This is because I have learned that the time to change to get better starts when that door closes behind us. I have learned that by taking a long look at myself over many years of doing time I am responsible. Not all will have the time to do this or even know how. So there has to be a way to reach the prisoner on their level. It is by not taking a look at myself and what I can do to get better, that pointing the finger becomes easy and keeps my eyes off me.

There has to be a basic way to let each prisoner start to see their self worth. To get the help they need from others. But not to depend on them. This will not be an easy thing to do, nonetheless, it will be a healthy thing to do. It will also allow the help given to not go wasted.

I wanted to say a few things and I hope in some way it can help them.

My thought to assist another prisoner is to find that one thing they really want to change as a starting point and start there. Because the truth is we have to change. But can not do it all at once. Also find something positive to put in its place.

My first long stretch of 25 years, when I got out I had no place to live or any kind of work. I collected cans. What would really be helpful is if the prisoner when released had a place to call home and a job of some kind. Once they get on their feet they can find their own place or pay the rent where they're at. Cover the first two months. Also let them know to put on soft pants no jeans. And walking shoes.

This help would be useful for someone with 10 years or more that is getting out. I think it would be good to have someone work with them to let them know of the changes in the world. Of course in the beginning everybody is there. But things change. So if that help is needed. If some kind of hope can be given. Maybe the prisoner has someone to reach out to. Something to keep them out of trouble. Something to keep them out of prison.

There is so much that has to be fixed in the system. But no matter what is done there is a problem that is going to make it harder. It is those whose care we are under. Let me use myself as your example. When I was moved from one block to the next. The sink in the cell wouldn't drain. I started using a cup to take the water out. Later water was coming up into the sink mixed with human waste. I hit the door and told the co ASAP. My hope was to be moved out the cell. But I was told that they will call the plumber and it will be fixed that night. It wasn't. I found out that the two cells next to me were like that for a week already. After two days more I decided I will go to seg rather than to live like that. However, the Dept. Warden came in. That night he had it fixed. I can't speak of those before me but I know it's not right to be moved into something like that or to be left in it. That is just one example of mine.

My point is no matter what is done to fix things for us to treat us as human, there will be those that will make things harder for you.