

Dearest,

I typed my testimony for this project via Jpay and I'm unable to re-type it due to cost. I edited the paper to the best of my ability and I give permission to re-type, rewrite, or reword any of the material.

Thankyou, Godbless you. Stay safe.

Sincerely, Mr. Reece #437961

P.s. I will be more than willing to answer any questions about any topic, or willing to elaborate on any thing. Just write me and ask.

~~... I agree to attend the~~
African cultural events and my brothers agreed to attend the Mormon services. what captivated my bros attention and desired them to continue to keep attending our church was the way that we all greeted one another as brother and

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Christopher Reece #437961
Bellamy Creek Correctional Facility
1727 west blue water highway
Ionia, Mi 48864

I was born May, 1st 1986 in Kalamazoo, Michigan to a single mother and eighteen month old older sister. I don't remember my father because he left when I was two years of old. I do however remember being a toddler in the nursery room at a Mormon church that my mother had become a member of. every Sunday me, my mother, and sister were the only three attendees of the one hundred or so congregation.

By age five I joined the cubscouts which was led by a brother elder of the church. I really enjoyed being in cubscouts. I enjoyed being the pinewood Derby's, camping, playing capture the flag, and going to the safe Halloween downtown. (at the time I was also diagnosed with ADHD and prescribed Ritalin which I really did not like taking. and so I didn't. after refusing to take the medication over and over again, while still having major impulsive and angry outburst, my mother gave my school principal permission to hide the Ritalin in a poptart and give it to me to consume everyday at a certain time. I then began to notice that every time I consumed the poptart that I'd become to lazy and drowsy and couldn't play with the other kids during recess. so one day I told my sister about the poptarts and she told me that the school hid pills in the poptarts. I then made since to me then why the poptarts were always in halves. so the next day at school I found the pill in the poptarts and I literally went crazy. I haven't eaten a poptart since then and I am now thirty four years old.) so cubscouts was my outlet from the ADHD.

by age eight I had graduay from being a cub scout to Boy scout. I earned merit badges in archery, fishing, swimming, first aid, cooking, ice fishing, knot tying, fire starting, and several others. by this time I was blessed with a five year old brother who participated with me in the safe Halloween except for this time instead of doing the trick or treating we were the ones dressed up as Sparky the fire dog and Scuff Mcgruff the crime dog. so you had two young black boys dressed up as Sparky and Scruf, holding, hugging, giving candy to, and playing with babies and small children of all races. we enjoyed doing it more than ever.

at age eight I was also baptised and ordained the first black deacon with the church of Jesus Christ of latter day saints congregation on Croydon and Drake Ave. in Kalamazoo, Mi. my duties as a deacon were to pass out the sacrament every sunday and greet all of the congregation as they entered.

at the age of ten my grandmother had passed away so we moved from out of the housing project to live in my grandmas house. moving from the projects was like moving to another town because living out there a person (child) literally rarely left the projects for anything because everything that was needed was accessible either in the complex or directly near it. I.e. Laundromat, food store, thrift store, community center, baseball park, and not to mention the entire complex was one close knit community. living in the new home was definitely different. we had a few friends around the neighborhood who we weren't close with but acquainted with from the few times out of a year visiting my grandma. changing schools was the hardest and in general things had gotten even harder because we were out of section eight housing (more bills), my mother worked longer hours (so I had to be at home and could no longer play basketball ball for the salvation army), and we had no supervision while she was at work. the only supervision we had was from a beautiful older lady who we called Ms. Christine, and she was unwantedly designated to watch every kid on the short block.

speaking of the block. me, my brother, and sister had become targets for violence by other kids (in reality young gangs) who lived on the other side of the block. we were forced to fight everyday. not because we wanted to, but because we were attracted. one day I specifically remember we were walking home from the store buying food and snacks and we were jumped by twelve boys who in the event stole our groceries. after countless violent engagements with this tribe of kids we eventually gained their respect (if that's what you want to call it) and eventually, oddly became their friends. probably because they knew that we would never back down from any form of bullying nor would we tolerate any abuse. what they didn't know about us that distinguished us from other kids they terrorized is that we had previously been in a abusive relationship with a step dad who abused us for years and viciously beat us everyday, me and my sister was kidnapped, molested, and rarely escaped before the white man could murder us, and we simply were just fed up with being victims. we held onto lots of unhealthy anger. (at this time no one knew about the sexual abuse. they only knew about the kidnapping)

1998 I was twelve years old. I met a group of boys who lived directly across the street from us and we instantly became best friends, like brothers. they were part of a cultural organizations called "Ujima Project" which I really didn't like attending, and likewise they didn't like attending the all white church I attended. so I agrees to attend the African cultural events and my brothers agreed to attend the Mormon services. what captivated my bros attention and desired them to continue to keep attending our church was the way that we all greeted one another as brother and

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Sister no matter their race, ethnicity, or financial class etc. and the brothers and sisters our age related to us (more than we imagined) and they spoke our language even though they were suburban and we were inner city. that year during the summer me and the boys obtained jobs doing corn detasseling in order to lighten the load on our mothers during school shopping. we enjoyed going to the YMCA to play ball. I also spent a lot of time alone going to the museum, art gallery,

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the library, and places such as the Radisson Hotel to apply for a job that I knew I wasn't eligible for. one particular night after going to the Y solo for a swim, I was chased and jumped by literally thirty members of the Woodbury street kids gang. (well actually only approximately ten of them put hands on me.) the only thing that saved me that night was two of the girls who were sisters of the gang told the boys to stop because they had realized who I was and then another gang member realized that I was his neighbors cousin who he friended and neighbored for a long time. I was safe that night but that didn't stop individuals from this gang from pursuing me. I mean I couldn't go anywhere without being chased around or jumped after being convinced that I'd be engaging in a one on one fight. eventually I'd become fed up and fearless. I started to hunt and single out these kids and beat them up one by one. sometimes I'd attack two or three of them win, lose, or draw. after about a year or so I somehow had lots of friends who gravitated to me and want to fight for or with me. (I didn't want that to happen). as time went on I began to get acquainted with some of the Woodbury gang and I didn't have any problems with them but the psychological damage was already done. I'd become a fighter and used violence to solve all of my problems.

by age fourteen I was arrested for the first time for retail fraud. initially I was afraid to steal because my mothers way of discipline was short of child abuse and very unapologetic. she played no games. but after three months of seeing my friends (another group of friends from around the corner, not my brothers.) steal nice clothes, shoes, videos, games, and other things, I decided to be learned on how to shoplift. after stealing several of times it had become like second nature to the point of me having money to buy things yet I would steal the merchandise anyway. overtime the ideas of crime had progressed from retail fraud to more serious crimes.

During my tenth grade year right after completing drivers education, I was sentenced to two weeks juvenile detention and had become ward of the court for a retail fraud and B&E. (B&E for waiting on the inside porch of an abandon house. I left my report card in there, although I didn't vandalize the house I was charged. I was guilty because it was B&E no matter how I put it.)

after two weeks in the juvy I was placed in juvenile school which was connected to the detention center and next to the court house. I did extremely good in school and obtained a job at McDonald's. so everyday after school I had to run twelve blocks home, wash up, get dressed, then catch the metro bus to work. I really enjoyed working because I was able to have guaranteed risk free income to buy shoes, clothes, pay my cell phone bill, (cricket phone) and do something nice for somebody.

one day after being chewed out for being late for work I was told that I would be fired and I was upset because I couldn't control when our school let out. the time fluctuated due to it being juvenile school. but my boss wouldn't listen to me so I had no intentions to return to work. I decided to hang out with the misunderstood children of society who in my opinion never had a chance because just like my situation the courts were way to quick to lock me up and take me out of public school and place me in alternative. I should've remained in public schools because my grades were great. but I still had my mother, a home, a support system. many of these kids had nothing. what we all needed as children was someone to listen to us, ask us what we wanted and needed in order to become healthy. we all needed love, support, understanding, and taught how to cope with our situations. (we needed a protective force). but we all understood each other so of course we connected and from that point on our crimes progressed and some of us were sent to prison or jail at age sixteen.

late 2004 I was now eighteen years old and finally off court supervision. I was back in good terms with my former scout leader/ mentor and things were going great. (SEE ATTACHED ESSAY TITLED "ROBBED BY THE SYSTEM")

After the 2005 incident I had completely given up. in my mind any productive healthy life was over with. I honestly believed that at any given time I could be incarcerated for no reason again. I just wish that I had somebody back then who would've bought to my conscious the reality that the chances of ME being falsley accused and locked up again were very low percentage. maybe I would've used that experience to grow and used that anger in a healthy way. looking back, knowing what I know now, and looking forward, I know that God has a great purpose for my life and me being his child has everything to do with why I went through what I went through and how I survived so much.

My very first prison was Michigan reformatory Ionia in 2007 when it re-opened. MR was a level four maximum security prison where inmates are locked down for twenty one hour a day minus the walk to and from the chow hall, yard, and shower times. I was twenty one years old at the time and MR was nerve wrecking. the prison looks like a castle from the mid evil era and due to us reopening the prison there weren't any real structure on how and when things were going to be run. everyday was something different. There were no family or friends. just me. others were lots of gangs, religious organizations who operate like gangs, lots of prison made knives, and in order to be in

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certain places on the yard you had to be apart of a gang, group, or know someone. the showers were public showers meaning absoluety zero privacy.(just like in the movies). the older inmates in my opinion were categorized as the following: A. Physical threatening predators which use threats or violence to get what thy want, B. manipulative social predators who prtened to be like a cool O.G and act as if they schooling

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younger inmates when really they have some ulterior motives, and C. real O.G.s who are like big brothers who kept everything real with the younger men and instead of trying to gain from yo they gave to you. they were clean, had values and morals, educated, and zero tolerance for bullshit and will tell you flat out if you are on bullshit. most of the C. category were in the Nation of Islam.

I only stayed at MR for three weeks I believe and was transferred to Ionia Bellamy Creek in December 2007. IBC was another level four facility. it also was extremely violent. there were stabbings everyday that we weren't on lockdown. I wasn't part of any gang at the time but I did hang around some guys who were from my neighborhood who were affiliated with the gangster disciples. the officers in my opinion were simply doing what was expected of corrections officers. unfortunately for these officers their job was to control the gangs and maintain order. so if a prisoner were a in group, large or small, they were going to be harassed and shook down regularly. IBC I believe at the time was so crazy because of the overall young population and aggressiveness of the officers tactics toward the large age gap, and the fact that most of the inmates were minority. (in fact I think that the large population of minorities in certain places and the age gap of the white officers, you have a bunch of young men who grew up fatherless and unguided, in prison being overseen by older white men who were for the most part guided by dad or protective factor and they a have different perceptions, and outlooks in life going back and forth in unhealthy dialect, anger, and all sorts of insanity trying to "habilitate" a human in an inhumane department of incorrections and the fact that the inmates do not understand the guards and vise versa only self habilitation is possible.)

My Third Prison was St. Louis Correctional facility. SLF was another level four facility and a lot like IBC as far as the violent nature was concerned. by this time I had become a close acquaintance of the Bloods gang. while at IBC I decided to beat up a supporter of another gang who tried to extort me. by the Bloods being small in number at the time, when I was in segregation we all agreed to rock out if it was to ever go down. with that said I wasn't necessarily obligated but I was personally obligated to assist those who assisted me because if it weren't for us sticking together one of us would've gotten seriously hurt at IBC. (it was nicknamed Bloody creek for a reason).

so now I was one of those people who preferred to be alone, workout, go to church services or whatever, but very so often there I was with a group of inmates on the yard and of course rightfully harassed by officers. after settling in and finding a routine I eventually was able to maintain jobs which turned my twenty two hour lockdown into seventeen hour lock down and I also spent a lot of time in the law library. I experienced my first sense of unfairness at SLF when I was prosecuted and acquitted they basically used an officers word against my word and took our chances at trial but the jury believed me so that says a lot about lies and corruption that gets exposed. when I was in segregation based on a lie of a corrections officer (which it is way to easy for them to do) I was very outraged to the point where I wanted the officer harmed. I actually hated the officer. but we all know what Shakespeare says about hating people... we become just like them. so we hate ourselves. I never experienced being actually beat up by any officers at SLF but I did hear lots of stories about inmates getting beat up and experiencing racially motivated incidents in a certain place leading to segregation where there weren't but now are cameras.

After SLF I was sent to Muskegon level four, Carson city level four, and oaks level four, all of which I wasn't there long enough to experience or observe. I was sent from oaks to Ionia Maximum facility which is a level five facility. I max was a twenty three hour lockdown unless you had a job or some form of schooling. (by this time I was receiving treatment from mental health. I wasn't outpatient and on medication but I was in the crisis intervention sect.)

I remember being in the transport van on my way to I max talking to the officers about my situation and they told me flat out that I was on my way to doing my entire maximum sentence. so instead of doing my minimum of ten years I would end up doing upward towards my thirty year max. their words hit me hard especially while I was in segregation at I max where I witnessed several inmates max out on 15, 25, and 30 year sentences !. I decided right then and there to make a plan, set some goals, and work towards executing the plan. my goals were to get out of segregation, obtain a job, participate in groups, reduce my custody level points, and eventually parole.

once I got out of segregation everything went according to plan (accept for falling in love with my psychologist who was only months older than myself) up until I was placed in segregation for allegedly participating in another inmates escape. me and another guy was placed in segregation for two months because we both resembled the guy who tried to escape but at the time me and the other guy had no idea as to why we were being detained. all they wrote on our paper work was that they had us on camera "participating in another inmates escape". my first day in segregation for the alleged escape I literally cried nonstop because I made a vow to my mother that I was done with making bad decisions and also I thought that I was going to be railroaded and sentenced to five more years. in my mind I thought

"these white people are about to railroad me." these thoughts came after my mother wrote me saying that she called the facility and the administration told her that I was seen on camera and I was being investigated by the state police. I also found out that

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being in segregation on a Notice of intent to conduct an investigation for what I was in for I was only supposed to stay in segregation until the conclusion of the investigation by the state police.

while in segregation the officers were foul towards me. they made nasty comments every time they came by. they took food off of my trays. they used racial slurs and comments. they refused to advance me in levels in their incentive program, and they refused me for yard everyday. that's when I finally broke and tried to cut my wrist off. after being cleared by my psychologist the same day I tried to do it again. and once again she cleared me the same day. her decisions were based on not wanting to keep me on suicide watch for three days and me needing to write in order to cope. I began to keep my cell dark and pace back and forth thinking about death all day. I also thought about harming officers. that's how hateful being in such a helpless place as such seeing officers intentionally starve inmates for days, give your mail to some other inmate on purpose, or you see your family photos torn up and in the toilet. (that happens way too much.)

after numerous calls to the state police and writing a grievance I was eventually transferred to Marquette Branch Prison level five. MBP was built exactly like MRI in the form of a castle with bars just a lot bigger with a open gallery that you could jump be pushed from. I was relieved to be away from Imax and although I was across the bridge I was in a good space because I was still misconduct free and in a position to carry on and achieve my goals. I also was able to patch things back up with my mother and obtained her trust and undying support back. while at MBP I obtained employment as a unit porter and worked out a lot. the officers were respectful towards me. however I did see them do some foul play and talk down on gang members and other troubled inmates. (which in don't expect on a moral level but of course in prison officers are going to be aggressive to out do the predators.) my perception of the MBP custody staff being decent people changed when I had finally worked my points down to level one custody points and a situation occurred where I refused to help another inmate lie on several officers alleging that they tore up all of his legal mail and through a bunch of his personal property away. the prisoner who I'm referring to I'll name him D'andre.

D'andre showed everyone the grievance response where I told the Sgt. overseeing the investigation that I didn't see, hear, or know anything and that I don't witness for nobody. as a result lots of inmates sided with me, but unfortunately due to a large population of inmates not liking the officers in question, a lot of inmates sided with D'andre. the Bloods who I'd been avoiding for the past three years got wind of the situation and approached me basically telling me that I'm always going to be a Blood and that they were riding with me. they offered me a knife and a wall that they had planned to set up so that I could stab D'Andre and get away with it. I had so much anger and frustration at the time that I wanted to stab him. I then found out exactly how bad the officers didn't like D'Andre when one day while on the yard they took him in the officers station for a shake down and then let him go. they then took me in for a shake down and told me that D'andre wasn't armed and that they wanted me to stab him. they said he was a rat and needed to get taken care of.

A few days after the Superbowl 2-2-15 D'andre attacked me on the fourth gallery and had absolutely no choice but to fight back. I was taken to segregation and placed on administrative segregation after being found guilty of the misconduct.

on 2-28-15 I locked two cells away from an inmate who's last name was ReeSe. one night he decided to expose his penis to a female officer. the next night I was awoken by a Sgt. who reviewed the sexual misconduct with me with ReeSe's name on it and my lock on it. I talked to the woman who wrote the misconduct the next day and she told me that there was nothing that she could do about the misconduct and I had to deal with it. I was furious because I had now accumulated eight points which were still level two points but the chances of me transferring were slim due to the segregation placement and sexual misconduct. I had major major thinking errors at the time because I began to self sabotage. I had it in my mind that since I was in trouble for something that I didn't initiate I may as well actually do something to mess up things for myself. (yeah, sounds crazy but I did it.) so every officer who walked past I exposed myself to, male and female. the male officers thought that I was just doing my thing for the most part. some of the women said nothing and wrote no tickets. some gave warnings but still never wrote a ticket. after accumulating two self imposed sexual misconducts, a older inmate told me that if I kept on receiving those type of misconducts that I would be labeled a sexual deviant and would never parole. so I stopped exposing myself to officers. I even apologized to most of them which was even more embarrassing. I really did feel bad because the women were mothers, aunts, sisters, nieces, wives, and they deserved to be able to work in a men's facility without being disrespected.

after being released from segregation I obtained a job as a food service worker. I tried countless times to force the issue to get to level four. my psych at the time kept saying that custody issues were out of his jurisdiction and not for mental health professionals to sort out which in my opinion is bullshit when the issues were clearly affecting my mental health.

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on 7-31-15 I was attacked again but by a member of D'andres organization. I could've potentially beat the ticket but I had blacked both of his eyes. the only reason I didn't stop fighting at the demands of the officers was because I was blinded by the gas and he wouldn't stop fighting so why in the hell would I stop!?

January 2016 I was transferred to Baraga level five after accumulating twenty nine points (level five points). (each time I went to segregation at MBP I received seven points. so basically I worked hard for two years to get my points down and in only seven months I managed to work them right back up to twenty nine points which are level five.) Baraga was the ideal prison for success. inmates had to either go to school or work a job. there was no way to run a prison store, gamble and ^{pay}, metal detectors were in every building, and there was controlled movement. so for a prisoner who was actually trying to work his points down and either reduce his custody level or parole, Baraga was the perfect prison. I immediately obtained a job as a painter which allowed me to be out most of the day along with gym and law library. the officers at the facility were some of the most laid back that I've been around. if you followed the rules and didn't draw attention to your self you really didn't exist. 2016 was my first time seeing the parole board so I didn't know much about the process and how everything worked but once I found out that they wanted to see me I called people to set up housing, a job, and other support contacts. so my hopes were high as well as those in my support system up until one week before I was scheduled for an interview I received a twelve month continuance with out interview. I was devastated and didn't eat for two days. the very next week I was transferred to Chippewa correctional facility aka (URF). URF was by far the most openly racist prison in Michigan. not only do you hear verbal racist remarks but you can also see it visually in the officers eyes and body language. for example; there was this one officer I say who was approximately twenty eight years of age at the time. I watched him as he stood by the basketball court with a look of disgust on his face watching the black inmates play ball. he had this same look as he watched the Latinos play hand ball and baseball. I then watched this same officer stand by and watch white inmates during multiple activities and his ^{demeanor} ~~expression~~ was more light in the face. the look of disgust wasn't present and it was as if he was watching his own relatives enjoy themselves. during chow lines as this same officer scanned prison I.d's I watched this same officer paying close attention to his eyes (because the eyes never lie) and the look that he gave minorities was something dark and he greeted the majority of the white inmates unless they were swagged out as if they were with the culture. but he wasn't the only one. I directly observed officers use racial slurs toward minorities, I've witnessed officers lie on inmates and write them up for threatening behavior and insolence, I've seen officers shake guys down and make them spread their legs almost to the point of doing the splits. this is just a brief testimony of what I've seen.

on 2-15-17 I was attacked while on my way to lunch by a prisoner who was a part of D'andres organization. I didn't fight the prisoner back because I was on my way to level two and I planned on earning a parole. but that's how fast a problem can catch up with you in prison which makes you vulnerable if you are trying to do the right thing. about two months later I was moved to level two finally. it was a lot more movement and the only time I was in my cell was from ten at night until six in the morning and the three count times throughout the day. I established a routine (schedule) so that my ADHD wouldn't be out of control but for some reason even after running for a hour and half every morning I still had too much energy. only days after being in level two the parole board initiated another interview with me which triggered major anxiety and depression. and just like the last time I received a twelve month continuance without interview. I was shocked. I had reduced my custody level to a level two, I was eighteen months misconduct free, I was just assaulted and didn't fight back because I wanted to parole, and yet I still get the f you flop without an interview. I became so depressed that I started to drink and take other inmates psych medication. I obtained a job and stayed to myself. after a week or two I felt better and my low went to a high and I was back to moving one hundred miles per hour.

one day while in the bathroom with four to five white inmates a officer came and asked me why I was so loud and demanded my I.d. all of the white inmates stated loudly in my defense " so you're just going to single out the only black guy huh...he wasn't even talking."

I knew that this specific officer didn't like me because since my first day in level two he had been watching me the looks that he gave were unpalatable. I could see the dislike in his eyes. so I told him right then and there in front of both of the counselors that I think that he's a racist or I look like someone who really did him wrong before. but I told him that I notice everyday he'd write black inmates tickets and let the white inmates get away with whatever. that same day this officer wrote approximately fifteen white inmates tickets !. then when he saw me he asked me was he still a racist.

a week later a weapon was "found" in my mattress and I was taken to segregation and released back to level two a few weeks later due to me previously being misconduct free for a few years. the new unit was more relaxed due to the number of older inmates. I received a wheelchair job really fast but was ultimately fired because of receiving tickets for breaking sanctions. there are two types of sanctions in level two. one is loss of privileges (lop) where you can't use the phone or go to yard. top lock is where you have to have permission to leave the cell and you can't use the toilet until

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The officers made a ^{routine} round and then ask to use the bathroom and even then they can tell you no. so often times inmates (me) who have to use the bathroom and its very urgent decide to go without permission and risk a ticket which results in more top lock or lop. as a result I had lost my job. after losing my job and no longer having a routine I became (what I know now) as manic. I was ziggady boom full fledge manic. I couldn't sit still, I was all over the place, gambling, selling candy, versions spending, flights of ideas, and everybody that knew me was telling me "to sit down somewhere". in those words. there was a friend of mines who I grew up with and was like a brother to me transfered in the unit and after a week or so he sincerely refereed me to see a psychologist. I then crashed to a extreme low. the parole board initiated another interview with me and this time I was reluctant to even try to parole. I began to give away all of my belongings and I didn't realize why until I learned later on about my mental illness but I was preparing to commit suicide. I spent my entire secure pack food order on sleep medication and I definately wasn't aware of what was happening.

about thirty days before I was scheduled for my parole interview I was once again attacked by another one of D'andres people. I once again simply restrained him against the glass and dodged most of his punches. after realizing my strength and the fact that I could've easily beat him up he backed away. but I was son enraged that I went and got a knife because I ha it in my mind that if I was going to stay in prison because of these other inmates creating problems with me then one of them was going to suffer a loss also whether it was an eye, a lung, or worse. while walking to the prisoners cell weapon visibly in hand, I was restrained by a few Blood, GD's, and even some of the people from the targets organization. they told me that I was about to completely throw my life away and that I should really think about what I was doing. my homeboys told me to think about my family. the other inmates told me that I was too intelligent and that I had something special and that I should just let them deal with it. or I could fight the guy one in one in he cell that way we don't go to segregation. I decided to disassociate myself with everybody from that day forward. I was done with prison activities.

May 2018 I was transfered to Alger correctional facility level four. Alger was laid back and reminded me of Baraga accept that there were more prison festivities. i.e. prison stores, gambling, knives, and gangs claiming phones and kiosks. the officers were okay as long as you were doing what's expected of you as an inmate. there weren't a lot of gang violence. I for the most part stayed to myself and worked my Porter detail that I was assigned to. I was in constant communication with he psychologist (weekly) who kept initiating and suggesting that I be placed on out-patient and recieve medication. (he obviously saw something that all of my previous psychologists missed) I was reluctant because I didn't like the idea of being labeled crazy. but he was persistent and for some reason he kept asking me what I was going to do if I were to get flopped by the parole board. I kept giving him easier said than done answers but I knew that I had other plans and I was prepared. I eventually became so down that I wrote the psych a kite and he percieved me as being suicidal, when i was really just venting, and I was placed on suicide watch for two hours after convincing him that I wasn't suicidal. as the weeks went on he kept asking me to be placed on out-patient. I kept refusing. he then had a psychological evaluation done and the doctor concluded that I did not suffer from a mental illness and I was glad. one week before seeing the parole board my unit manager stopped and talked to me while I was working and said that he noticed that I was struggling (guess I wore it on my face) and the if I needed to talk that I could stop by his office or talk to the psychologist. he said that I do good time and keep to myself and that if I go one year misconduct free he think I'd earn a parole. in my mind I was going to be free in 2018 no matter what the parole board decided. after seeing the board I felt confident but the psychs and he unit manager kept telling me that I needed to be ticket free and they weren't saying that for no reason. but the little hope that I held onto almost killed me. late August I received a ~~twelve~~ month flop for the third time. that night I was extremely sick and trapped in my own mind. I felt as if I was locked in the trunk of a car and someone else was driving it. I wanted my thoughts to stop. the next day I refused to lock down in my cell. I was then taken to segregation. the psych came to talk to me and told me that I'd probably do if three months in segregation and I literally thought to myself, "over my dead body". he left for the day and I was there trapped in a cell for twenty four hours with nothing but the very thoughts that I wanted to go away. that night I slept anxiously waiting for shower time so that I could get a razor. morning came and I didn't have an appetite. I looked out of the window for hours thinking to myself that this is the last time that I'm going to see the blue sky, trees, white cloud, birds, bees and nature in general. but I was happy knowing that my pain would soon be with.

shower time had now arrived. I was placed in the shower and received a razor. I broke the razor down and turned on the water. at first I took the razor to he left side of my neck because I knew that that was where the main vein was located. the paid was too unbearable(and I know now that it was because I was going too slow. I was supposed to cut in a fast motion)

so I decided to go for my left wrist. once I saw blood flowing fast I began to hit the vein located on the inside of my left arm. (inner elbow). blood began to

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flow so fast that I was excited because I was about to not exist any longer. so I could no longer be hurt no one or be hurt ever again. after two minutes or so the officers came to take me back to my cell and when they saw me they were beyond shocked. the look on their faces were indescribable. they picked me up and placed cuffs on me while applying pressure on my wounds. once in the nursing area of the segregation unit the officers surrounded me. the care and concern that they displayed totally erased my boxed in hostile bias that I held on to because I saw beyond the corrections officer in these human beings that day. they comforted me beyond what their job required. they asked me questions about my life, what I wanted to do once released, what they could do for me to make my stay at Alger better, and they told me that I wasn't weak, I was human. the nurse told me that she had a son and that if I succeeded in killing myself that I would've destroyed my mother. she would've been crushed. as I was taken to observation there was a rookie officer who was every bit of twenty three years old and he motioned for me to keep my head up. that brought tears to my eyes because they showed their humanity. I witnessed officers laugh and encourage suicide and even if they didn't mean that's nothing to joke with. (or I witnessed officers be nasty towards inmates who were suicidal).

August 24, 2018 I was transferred to Woodland correctional facility. (WCC).

WCC is a prison psychiatric hospital for acute care. it was not a lock down facility. the officers are trained to work around prisoners diagnosed with a mental illness. the units are designed in a therapeutic setting to accommodate the inmates in getting stable so that they can be reduced to a lower level of care. my first three days in the hospital I had to be on observation. once cleared by the treatment team I was able to be in general population (WCC). I was then prescribed cymbalta, an antidepressant medication, and set up a treatment plan which consisted of goals that would get me back on track and stable enough to transfer to a lower level of care.

after three weeks at WCC I was transferred to Adrian regional facility which was a level four but also a residential treatment program. ARF was a lot like WCC because the officers were trained to deal with mentally ill inmates and they worked closely with the treatment team which consisted of nine psychologists, three recreational therapist, two lead psychologist, one nurse practitioner, and one psychiatrist. the officers were really laid back and relaxed because they knew what they were dealing with. they weren't worried about the usual normal prison activities. they were more worried about inmates self harming and always on the look out for a unexpected episode from an inmate. RTP was designed to educate inmates diagnosed with a mental illness about their diagnosis, teach coping skills in order to have balance in their lives, and ultimately live healthy functional lives inside and outside of prison. the overall goal is to have a therapeutic environment consisting of various groups and more time out of the cell. I happened to be one of the higher functioning inmates while in RTP which was even more stressful but in the end I learned true patience and built a tolerance for the less functioning inmates. I also enjoyed helping people read, write, learn, and they also helped me when I was down and out. the officers there trusted me way too much. I mean too much. but that trust gave me confidence and made me feel worthy and also made me want to be trustworthy more and more. all of the nursing staff, wardens, social workers constantly gave me encouragement and confidence.

June 2019 I was up to see the parole board again and was continued again. the parole board member who I was interviewed by had initially told me that he was voting for me to get a parole but that he wanted a psychological evaluation due to me recently being diagnosed with bipolar and because of a 4th degree CSC that I managed to pick up when I was fifteen years of age. during the psychological evaluation I told the psychologist about everything from being sexually abused by women from ages eight to twelve, being kidnapped, beat by a step dad, bullied, everything. I was then continued again by the parole board for what they described as having an "unstable social and family history". I was ecstatic because I was constantly seeing violent inmates parole after having multiple assaults and fights. I was confused and thoughts of suicide crossed my mind. I just wanted some control over my life and I felt as if dying would show "them" that they don't have the authority to keep me locked up. but I used my coping skills and I managed to not completely give up and go back to that dark place. I did however become distant and secluded.

March 20th 2020 I was transferred back to Bellamy creek correctional facility. (IBC) I was sent to level four, unit four. the officers were feisty and for no reason disrespectful. I had to let them know on several occasions that I know how to get in contact with their boss and I know how to push my ink and leave my mark. they have codes of conduct also and I know how to document times, places, and camera angles as well. (each camera has an identification and location.)

I kited the deputy warden of housing a long heartfelt letter and I asked him to be waived to level two. it was a long shot but (God is Good) it worked. he placed me on the level two list and wished me good luck. I began to get overwhelmed and wrote the inspector who I remembered from 2007 and I told her everything that I was going through. she called me out and listened to me. I basically told her my life story. (lol).

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but she was more down to earth than I thought. I sometimes wonder why as people we tend to forget that no matter ones career or job path they are human beings at the end of the day. but I believed that encounters as such learns each

individual. (even at SLF I an interrogation by the STG Sgt. (older white woman) turned into a two hour conversation about life and what has to change if us as a society were going to survive. it was amazing and life changing for me who was only twenty five at the time and a older mid fifties woman who knew more about my struggle than I thought. but as she put it, my struggle ^{gives} me absolutely no right to chose to do ^{wrote} by humanity. I have way to much to offer the world. (in her words and countless others through out my life.))

after only two weeks in level four I was ^{move} to level two, unit six, which was strickly for inmates who were required to take Michigan's sex offender program. my very first day in the unit the officers were verbally abusive and disrespectful. they literally put every inmate ^{in the} exact same category. I let the officers know right away that I wasn't the one to take no shit from no body. that night ^{with} the warden, unit manager, inspector and mental health team and told them what had happened and that I wasn't about to allow their officers to abuse me in any way and "ticket trap" me as they threatened to do. I would rather be in segregation alone and away from everybody. because the officers were starting to affect my mental health. since then I haven't ^{had} any issues with those specific officers and in fact its been almost a months and those officers haven't even worked the unit.

today is May 14th 2020 and this is my testimony of my fourteen years in the Michigan department of corrections.

Conclusion...

I came to prison when I was twenty years old. I was sentenced to ten to thirty years but only because I refused a plea deal to testify against my codefendants. I remember being approached by the prosecutor during my forth settlement conference and he offered me one year ^{if} I was to plead out. at the conference he state that I was intelligent, had potential, and could do great things. after my conviction and sentencing the same prosecutor stated that I was a menace to society, a danger to people in the justice system, and deserved to be sentenced towards the high ends of my guidelines.

I use this as an example as to why our prison population is overcrowded because I've been in now for almost fourteen years. why ? . am I really a menace to society ? . I mean I was offered one year and at the time I had seven months in. what about this man I know who was offered eight years on a plea deal but decided to exercise his constitutional right to trial and after ^{losing} he received a life sentence !. ^{how} does that work. many men and women are incarcerated serving long intermediate sentences when they could be free because they are not menaces to society. they were menaces to the courts bank accounts. men and women are serving way too much time in prison cells for crimes where no other human was physically harmed or a fatality occurred. (I'm not minimizing the ^{Psychological} Trauma that victims suffer). I just in my opinion see no benefit in incarcerating a human for beyond ten years for a crime where no fatal harm was done. the topic of mandatory minjimums and prison can be disgust later on.

I also believe that prison should have ^{core} programming ^{upon} entrance. most programming in the MDOC is for inmates who are near or past their earliest release dates. (erd) I think that due to an inmate being automatically classified to a level four if sentenced to eight years or more, the inmate should be able to have core programs available so that they can learn and use the skills and things learned in the classes while in prison. I've seen men take self help programs such as CYR (cage your rage) early and were able to exercise the skills in everyday life for a few years. then they would take VPP later on nearing their erd and succeed. then ^{these} were inmates who took VPP six months before going home and they'd drop the ball making the identical programs look ineffective.

when I was twenty years old and in prison I completed my GED and Custodial Maintenance in my first two years. afterwards I was merely just a young inmate in a violent environment and during the course of that time I had lower custody level points but because of the three year rule I was left in an environment where even if I decided to grow I was still amongst weeds and thorns. prison is abnormal therefore prisoners thinking and most of their behaviour will be abnormal if they aren't taught coping skills and life skills in general. this brings me back to RTP where I learned how in the right environment with the right classes a person can learn and grow. but there aren't enough financial resources and personnel to facilitate these classes which is why major prison reform is needed. inmates need to spend less time being punished and more time being rehabilitated. the choice is totally up to the individual but one ^{can't} chose what doesn't exist.

mental health is another factor in our prison system. there are a large percentage of mentally ill and undiagnosed prisoners in the system. and of course with out the proper treatment there will of course be missed opportunities for correction. believe me or not the majority of incarcerated people have dreams and aspirations (and the talents to succeed) but they don't have the proper early on treatment and only receive help months before paroling. they will not be able to function in society.

I believe that the officers definitely need to be retrained. they should be required ^{very} a brief curriculum as the officers in every mental health unit in order to identify potential ^{inmates} who may need to talk to a QMHP. (funding for mental health

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in my opinion should be unlimited because mental health is the most important.)
training officers in this area will also deescalate unnecessary altercations. I've seen inmate finally receiving treatment after numerous psychotic episodes which in turn earned the prisoner many misconduct reports, and after treatment

were able to cope and recognize their triggers and ultimately make the right decisions. officers will also be able to use what's they've learned and know how to calmly prevent intentional created situations. (ninety percent inmates even "model prisoners" who get along great with officers will testify that officers knowingly create problems.)
prison is a very stressful environment and most people will think " well good prison isn't suppose to be peaceful put punishment". but prison needs to be as therapeutic to keeping the idea of violence, aloneness, and separateness as possible because taking one sway from self, family, and literally making them property in itself causes a human to become bitter at him/ her self and society. (at which the skills in the core and psychological programs will com in to change the learned false beliefs and survivor to victim mentality like I had.) prison should be a place of growth around more growing roses and less weeds and thorns. and last buy not least, the very last thing that we need I more human being going to prison and becoming more violent or if not violent willing to resort to the worst of violence even when not even no violence is even necessary. (all of my statements where I use prisoners mentality on a collective perception I'm going based on what I've heard inmates speak and what I've seen in my thirteen years in prison.) I've seen several clear cut school boy suburban kid who made on bad mistake come in with ten years and became extremely violent. one kid in mind was sentenced to eleven years straight A's. on his way to college, good athlete. (I knew several inmates).

one day in 2007 another older inmate tried to take the kids T.V.. the kid had options. fight, lock up, or to to the police. if he decide to lock up he has to literally stay there because he's labled a coward and perceived to have snitched which makes him a target for eleven years. he also has to deal with the occasional verbal abuse from officers calling them, cowards, hos, bitches, mice. etc verbal abuse from other inmates. and many restrictions. if he goes to the police they may not take him serious and cause a scene which put the inmate in danger which was in fact very dangerous around that prison at that time. or he could fight and now as a result be offered to join a gang or group with security and help which in turn now makes you obliged to commit violent acts, or be a lone wolf who everybody knows will stand up for him self so now for for he next eleven years he would have to always look over his shoulder, or be a prisonse with thd attack first and ask questions later mentality. unfortunately his cycle of violence was created by his choice initially, and because of his need for survival thereafter.

as for troubled youth placement in a detention center should be a last resort. there should be other alternatives including psychological evaluations, mentors, tutors and crisis intervention.

for me, being locked up and taken out of public schools was the worst decision because although I had broke the law (two retail frauds and B&E) my grades were magnificent and I was active in sports. after lock up and placed in alternative school I no longer had the sports, coach, and after school routine.
juvenile detention is the gateway to prison.

*You have received a **jp**ay letter, the fastest way to get mail*

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 To : Eli Hager, CustomerID: 13479316
 Date : 5/18/2020 6:14:54 PM EST, Letter ID: 824847258
 Location : IBC
 Housing : 06139BOTB

Reflections:

for
 incarceration for meant being punished my crime but I also knew that it would mean a lot more being that this wasn't me first incarceration however it was my first (and only" prison term. I know however that as cliché as it sounds I would've died had I've not been incarcerated. I was literally living day to day completely aimless, goalless, and purposeless. I was a zombie expecting to kill or be killed due to my day to day activities.) fortunately, being incarcerated gave me a second chance at life although it seems as that I went through hell. I mean prison is extremely violent. you are away from your family. and all of your day to day human rights are stripped away. people tell you when to sleep, wake up, where to work, shower, eat, and even sometimes use the bathroom. they tell you when to call your family or even write at times. I know that prison is designed to "break" the inmate and destroy the entire family. families can grow apart to the point of being cold strangers. it was always easier for me to keep minimum contact with the outside. even my own immediate family and good friends. I found it easier to just live in "my own world" because what's going on out there I had absolutely no control over nor could I help with anything. I didn't even have control over where I was in prison besides the choice on how to feel and react in given circumstances. phone call endings are bittersweet just as visits were for the inmate as well as the visitor(s). for me prison played a major psychological toll on me. I personally expected to go in and be my true sober self. friendly, smiling a lot, sharing, playing basketball, going to church, and trying to get back on appeal. I never actually once thought that I'd actually serve ten plus years. I did how ever expected to learn, grow, and use my time wisely. but that's not what happened. it was the total opposite due to what I couldn't control which is other people, and I chose to protect myself physically. I just didn't have the knowledge and skills to protect myself psychologically and as a result I made horrible abnormal decisions in a abnormal environment. what really terrorized me were my dreams. I had innumerable dreams to where I thought that I was liberated!. I was deceived by my dreams. I dreamt the day that my liberation had come and. that I was set. free, had returned home, greeted my family only for the sound of prison doors or some officer screaming on the intercom bringing ending the all to real dream which triggered major psychological issues when it comes to the ability for me to feel pleased. or there were the times where I'd wake up thinking that I was going to go to the store and then I'd wake up and realized that I was behind a locked door. some nights I'd sit there unable to slow down my thoughts about the world and in general and how people can so easily lock up another human being in such conditions for so long without any emotion. for example the parole board kept me in prison three and a half extra years because of my institutional conduct. (that's what they told me on 5-14-20 at my hearing). so I had to do three extra years because of my fights and weapons which I understand to an extent. however there should be logic involved in decisions where in my case I had four fights in my thirteen years and I started off at the three most violent prisons. not to mention I had a six year gap in between the fights.(2008, 2009, and two fights in 2015). its obvious that I wasn't looking for fights my entire time in and believe me I resisted lots of fights. and on top of that I was assaulted, didn't fight back, and still received a "flop." I've seen a inmate assault three inmates while on a flop and still earn parole...there isn't any consistency with the parole board. prison administrations should be aware of their own moral conduct as well. I sat back in my seg cell watching the officers, counselors, warden(s) etc. getting in their cars to go homes and I thought to myself that those were the people that I want to live like and then I see them conspire through chain of command and cover scandals and wrongings on other inmates, and then I experience it on two occasions. it made me feel as if why in the hell do I want to change for the good and become vulnerable because the only way I ever knew how to survive is to be a wolf and now I realize that the people who oversee me in prison are scandalous sinners just like me!. now I don't know how to live because I want to live right and make the right decisions because I want to for me. but I realized that even in a man who is already driving the straight and narrow road, or a man who has experienced the low road and decides to drive the highroad, if he's on the road with a bunch of drunk drivers and crooked people, he's constantly in a position to crash unless he chooses to speak up and force the drunk drivers to stop or some other action that would lessen the detriment to him which in turn could lead to trouble for the driver who's trying to drive right. once a person in prison decides to grow, he or she is like one flower amongst many weeds and thorns trying not to suffocate. and in today's world where ~~the~~ definitely live in a Sodom and gommorah society lacking morals and values from " leadership" Washington on down, I personally began to sometimes feel that I could not exercise my growth in here without being vulnerable because I am physically trapped. once released I can have more avenues and outlets to cope and in eccense I could surround myself with other flowers.

essayRobbed by the System

February 15, 2005 was a cold winter night in Kalamazoo, Michigan. I was pacing back and forth from the first house on Ada street to the first house on Simpson street of a friend that I was visiting, smoking Weed and talking to my girlfriend, Marquitta, on my cell phone. surprisingly no one else was out that night in the high drug zone area buying or selling drugs which was unusual for that time of night. one thing that did stand out to me was that the front yard of every house was beautifully decorated with fresh white snow, and the subsidized housing area looked like a winter wonderland suburb. as I conversed with my girlfriend about the Valentines gifts that I gave her, I heard foot steps behind me. I turned around, startled, to see someone that I knew who lived on the neighboring street. he embraced me and told me that I may want to leave the area because there were about to be police everywhere. I decided to stay because I had no reason to be worried about the police. although I had a lengthy juvenile record and several offences as an adult ranging from 2000 to 2004, I had now been discharged from probation and on a straight path. I was enrolled at New city highschool and set to graduate June, 2005. I was employed at taco bell. I was journaling in a laptop computer and working on a car that my former boyscout leader had given me. I was also really passionate about pursuing an acting career at the time. since I was a child I wanted to see myself on the big screen watching my creativity and working with other actors and actresses. but all of this would change this night. the guy had ran through a shortcut in the backyard of my friends house. I continued talking on my phone. I started hearing police sirens off in a distance. about a minute later I could see blue and red lights flashing down the street. moments later two police cruisers drove past me occupied with officers who I was familiar with. we made eye contact which turned into a stare down. once they got down the street they pulled into a drive way. then I noticed a K-9 officer walking my direction. I also noticed a perimeter being set up around the block. that's when I decided to go inside of my friend, Jeff's house. I used the side door that led to the basement where all of our friends and family did our singing, rapping, smoking, and partying. I could hear every one up stairs debating sports. I went into the bathroom that had not one working faucet. I began to hear commotion upstairs and that's when I cut my conversation off with my girlfriend and went into the stairway of the basement. I could see police officers through the basement windows and I heard some man screaming..." we know he's in here. we're not leaving until we find him...we'll tear this motherfucking house apart!". I decided to go up stairs. as soon as I made it into the kitchen and turned towards the front door where everyone was confronting the police, I heard a officer say..."that's Reece?...Cuff him up!". I was place in cuffs and put in a police car. at that moment I was confused and all I could think about was the guy who had just came running up to me and telling me to leave the area. what could he possibly have done and why am I in a police car?. I could see all of my friends talking to the police regarding me and I remember the police officers walking up to the police car looking me in my face and then talking amongst them selves. after about twenty minutes a police officer entered the vehicle. I asked him why was I under arrest and he told me that I was being arrested for Armed Robbery. I was literally confused and in shock. my breath was lost and my weed high was now extremely low. the ride to the crosstown parkway police station was quiet but I do remember the song by Jojo " get out" on the radio. I was thinking about everything. my mom, my job, my girl friend, graduation, my mentor. being in a police car again was the last thing I imagined because I vowed to never see the inside of a uncomfortable claustrophobic portable jail cell again and there I was sitting in one. once downtown inside the garage area of the station I took a deep breath. the smell of a police station, jail garage, or courtroom holding cell is undescrivable. and the feeling is overwhelming. once in the interrogation room I waived my rights and decided to talk. I tried so hard to convince them that I was not involved in any crime and I explained to them that I was on a good path and that they needed to believe me. after a few hours of interrogation, the detectives charged me with Armed robbery and had me transported to the Kalamazoo county jail. when I arrived to the jail several of the deputies who knew me were upset and in disbelief because we had talks before I was released the last time and they had high expectations for me. they said that I was way too intelligent and had too much potential to be in jail. after a short conversation with some of them I was strip searched, showered, given a bed roll, and placed in holding. I knew most of the inmates in the holding area. they all began to ask me questions regarding my charges and I told them exactly what happened but of course everyone made comments favoring a belief in my innocence when really they believed that I was guilty. the holding area is a long narrow hallway with bars separating the officers walk from the cells. there is six cells and each cell is long and narrow with a concrete slab on each wall where three inmates sleep head to feet on each side. there is one toilet and sink in each cell. at the end of he hall way is one shower that is always flooded with used soap and other unidentifiable items. it is disgusting. as usual, the first day in jail is so depressing and overwhelming. I was extremely tired and decided to go to sleep. I kept waking up periodically and each time realizing that I was in jail. a few times I'd stay up just long enough to pray before going back to sleep.

way to get mail

the next day I was arraigned and my bond was set at \$ 10,000. shortly after the arraignment my court appointed attorney, Charles Anderson came to interview me. the information that he had given me shed light on the case and I was optimistic about the outcome. he told me that the description of the perp was an individual who was a light brown skin black male, 5' 9", slim build and was wearing a black hooded sweater, blue jeans, and a pair of black and red shoes. this information was good news because at the time of my arrest I was wearing an entire baby blue sweater and pants, a pair of baby blue and black Nike air force one shoes, and at the time I was only 5'7", dark skinned, and medium build. I had \$400 on my person and my own cell phone. I also learned that the victims were robbed for \$7 and a phone and that these descriptions were given by the two victims as well as two other witnesses. my attorney explained the purpose of the preliminary examination and said that he was almost 99% sure that I'd have the case dismissed. two weeks later my pre- exam was held in front of honorable Carol Husum. the evidence was presented and the victims testified that I was too short and dark to be the person who robbed them. the two witnesses who had seen the perps face testified that my face wasn't the face that they had seen and that I was too short. my attorney argued the point of my description of clothing being that I had on all blue and the suspect wore black and red. he also argued the fact that I had \$400 of my own money and the victims was robbed for \$7. after my attorneys arguments, the judge recited all of the evidence verbatim. I could see the expression on my supporters faces. just like me, they knew that the case was going to get dismissed. all of a sudden the judge stated that the pre- exam wasn't a trial but only a probable cause hearing and that due to the description being that the suspect was a black male and since I was a black male in the area where the crime occurred and the K-9 tracked to the house that I was in, her court had probable cause to bound the case over for trial. I couldn't believe it. at that very moment I realized that my skin color meant more to me then ever. I felt helpless and hopeless. I was transferred back to the jail and moved to B-south where all of the Robbers, Murderers, and high profile inmates were housed in single man cells and was set up the exact same way holding was just a lot cleaner. I knew pretty much everyone there which didn't help because they were going through their own court battles facing long prison terms. that night I received letters from my girlfriend and her cousin Ericka. the letters gave me hope and encouragement by the things that they said. they believed that I'd get through it and they said they'd support me until the end. as the months went on my depression was triggered by the simplest things. for example, taco bell commercials reminded me of the job that I'd lost. as June approached I was reminded that I wasn't going to graduate. my mentor was very upset with me because he felt that I shouldn't have been in that high crime area in the first place and that I should've been at home journaling. I had become so depressed that I wanted all of the thoughts to stop. this was the first time that I wanted to commit suicide but I didn't know how. one day I took a staple and began to cut my wrist. I then tried to hang myself but I didn't know how to do that with out suffering. I believe that at that time had I knew a fast way to commit suicide, I wouldn't be alive right now. I was eventually referred to mental health by some anonymous inmates and I agreed to be prescribed the antidepressant- cymbalta. jail was so miserable. Kalamazoo jail was a 24 hour lock down unless you had a visit which was only for thirty minutes. the food was bad and hardly enough. I survived mostly off of commissary, other peoples sleeping meds, and praying. after a while I couldn't handle being around other severe depressed inmates so I asked one of the deputys I knew from the juvenile home to move me to A- west. A- west held mostly short term suburban inmates with a few federal detainees. it was also directly across from the women which was cool. the environment was more relaxed and the daily routine consisted of bible study, monopoly, and helping each other stay mentally strong. by August 2005, there were three frivolous trial adjournments. at each adjournment a plea deal was offered. the first was 108 months, the second was 56 months and the third was 23 months. I refused all three offers. on September 28, 2005 I was set to go to trial in front of the notorious Judge Philip D. Schaefer. my attorney came down to the courthouse holding area and informed me that a offer for 7 months jail time was on the table. I declined the offer. he left very upset. about ten minutes later a sheriff's deputy came down and told me that the judge wanted to see me and I initially refused up until the deputy and several other inmates talked some sense into me. I was escorted to the court room. the judge wasted no time dismissing the charges. I had to spend one more high in jail due to a minor in possession of alcohol warrant. the last day of jail was overwhelming. instead of being happy I was extremely depressed. I had lost so much in the nine months being in jail and I didn't know what the future held for me. I really hated police officers, lawyers, prosecutors, and judges. I felt apart from the rest of the world. I turned to ecstasy and alcohol to cope and I was overly sexually active with random women just to feel connected to some one. I was so traumatized that police sirens caused paranoia and I was belligerent to officers. looking back, I simply didn't care anymore. I just knew that from that point on that no matter how good I was doing in my life that at any given time I could be locked up just for being a black man in the area where a crime occurred