

Never Forget

by Timothy J. Muise

When I walk these grounds, I am amazed at how many men are oblivious of the gravity of their circumstances. As life ebbs and flows outside of the razor wire, we worry about what's for chow or who is the latest topic of gossip. When did we forget that it is "Us vs. Them"? The Captor vs. the Jailed? Where did it all go south? How and why did we forget that we are in PRISON!

Prisoner apathy is one true villain holding back the push for humane treatment. Unity is the cure for this disease, but we are facing an uphill battle. The control measures employed by our captors can slowly drain our souls and mold us into their model of hopelessness.

The time has come to fight against the machine, to rebel against the oppressor. The old days are gone, reduced to distant memories, and we are in the midst of new times that require new tactics.

We must begin to show the metal of our convictions and the strength of our souls by refusing to react to the petty control measures of the jailer. When you are "patted down" going in or out of the chow hall, never comment. When you are stripped searched after a visit, never make eye contact with the shell of a man who wishes to see you naked. Resist idle banter with our captors – keep it a business relationship – yes or no answers, minimal information sharing. What purpose does this serve? It strips our captors of their power.

If we fail to allow their little control measures to change our behavior, to take us out of char-

acter, then we disarm them.* One reason they feel they are powerful because we allow them to feel that way. We know they are not powerful, but years of losing privileges and enduring little abuses have worn our thresholds thin. This can make it instantly gratifying to argue over small matters. But this wasted energy has caused us to lose sight of the big picture, and this is what the evil jailer wants.

Earlier I spoke of new tactics. These are the meat and potatoes of the new "movement," and a "movement" we must turn it into. We must begin to document the malfeasance of our captors, logging dates, times, and jailers involved. These logs of serious malfeasance must be specific, documenting medical failures, policy violations, and guard upon prisoner abuse.

We then coordinate these logs and send them to the many grassroots organizations that are actively fighting for true prison reform. This will be the ammunition for the grassroots "guns." They can bring this to the State House. They can detail it at community meetings where state officials are present and have educate them to the serious failings of the system. Will this method work? Absolutely! It has already been battle proven.

The grassroots agencies I speak of were "armed" with this type of information when they defeated the DOC in its attempt to make the visitation regulations more restrictive. They used this loaded gun to drive the insurgence for CORI reform, one battle in this war that was substantial.

Former bad guy Harold Clarke was driven from his roost

as the top abuser with the facts of his failures. Now he is someone else's "bad guy," not ours. These modern war tactics (and this is in fact a war) are battle proven. We just need more troops. Can I count on you to enlist?

You know who the men or women are at your facility who have contact with the outside grassroots battle forces. Seek these people out and beg to be involved. Take a step by getting your family, friends, and associates on the other side of that razor wire or wall involved. When we strip our captors of their power by failing to respond negatively to their control measures, while working to overthrow the abusive jailer mentality, we forge a connection with the forces of good that transform the system!

Our captors struck a bargain with the forces of evil and it will take our collective outrage and action to right the wrongs they have penetrated upon society. Are you ready for this epic struggle? Is it time for you to stop your sobbing and pick up the sword of righteousness? Only you can answer that question – and it must be answered with actions.

Look around. Take in what you see. Is this the world you envisioned in your youth? Is this the dream you had as a young person? Never forget – YOU'RE IN PRISON – and it is time to do something about it!

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