

Greetings to everyone here with me in "cyberspace," welcome to my blog ([//betweenthebars.org/blogs/012](http://betweenthebars.org/blogs/012)). I'm very excited about entering this world inside the computer known as the "blogosphere." Having my own blog will be like keeping my personal diary where I will share my thoughts, recollections, reflections, hopes and life inside this other world known as "the penitentiary" and/or "prison." I will be offering a personal view from the inside looking out. I take pride in my ability to establish, develop and sustain personal relationships. With this in mind, I look forward to maintaining those relationships I have already built and the possibility of building new relationships here on my blog.

While the blogosphere is new to me, I am very familiar and have become a very active participant in cyberspace. As a matter of both practicality and necessity I set up an email address back in 2007 in order to keep up with the changing world (I know late huh?) and enjoyed the feedback that I was receiving from family, as well as friends, using this as a means of communication. After some coaxing from several friends and a bit of reluctance on my part, I joined facebook just last year. I was pleasantly pleased and surprised by the results, which were overwhelming. It has a been a small taste of freedom to feel like I am not confined by a cage, wall and/or bars. If nothing but in spirit alone, "it felt as if I was out of prison." After all these years, "I was not forgotten."

Someone called my friend Beau soon after I joined Facebook to tell him all excited, "Wade is out of jail!" Beau, whom I had been talking to regularly, said, "No, he's still locked up, I just spoke to him." Still persistent, this person insisted, "No, I'm telling you he is out, I just saw him on Facebook!" After Beau told me this over the phone, we both got a nice chuckle out of this (laughs).

That said, I have been incarcerated twenty-one years now and over the years my main means of communication with the outside world has been via visits, letters and telephone calls. Each means has been waning to the point where there are few visits, fewer letters and collect calls. I wish that I had access to Facebook fifteen years ago, maybe then I wouldn't have lost so many friends. When you come to prison, you find out who your friends really are. I read somewhere " A friend is not known except during a time of need." I have close to five hundred friends now on my Facebook page, however, this number really holds no weight on the scale of measuring friendships. It is just a word on Facebook with very little meaning attached to it. Only a select few on my list of "friends" have visited me, written me letters and/or accepted my calls collect.

Time, I believe, measures friendships. Time tests friendships. Either strengthening or weakening the ties that holds friends together. More so than distance and space, time also has the ability to separate friends. In the context of prison, after a certain amount of time passes by, people forget about you. Friends remember friends. If it is nothing more than remembering them in their thoughts and prayers from time to time. As I come to the end of this time, I reflect on "Time really isn't the thing that hurts you the most, it's the people who forget about you that you thought were close."