

DEAR OUTSIDE WORLD,

4-19-11

HAS ANYONE OUT THERE EVER LOOKED IN THE MIRROR IN THE EARLY MORNING AND SAID, 'THERE HAS TO BE A BETTER WAY?' I'M SURE SOME OF YOU HAVE. I SAY THAT TO MYSELF EVERY MORNING WHEN I OPEN MY STILL CURIOUS BROWN EYES INSIDE THIS BELLY OF THE BEAST. THERE HAS TO BE A BETTER WAY.

I'M SICK AND TIRED OF PEOPLE TELLING ME HOW I SHOULD DO MY TIME AND LIVE MY LIFE. SINCE I'VE BEEN INSIDE THIS BELLY OF THE BEAST (PRISON) I'VE LEARNED A LOT ABOUT MYSELF AND WHAT I WANT AND NEED FROM LIFE. I FINALLY FIGURED OUT THAT I ROCK! I'M SOLID AS A ROCK. I'M A COLLECTION OF CHARACTERISTICS BOTH PHYSICAL AND MENTAL THAT MAKES ME COMPLETELY UNIQUE. NO ONE ELSE ANYWHERE IS EXACTLY LIKE ME, AND I REALIZE THAT NOT EVERYONE WHO CROSSES MY PATH WILL BE INTERESTED IN WHAT I HAVE TO OFFER. BUT MY STRENGTH COMES FROM MY BELIEF THAT SOMEONE SOMEWHERE CAN AND WILL APPRECIATE ME FOR WHO I AM AND WHAT I AM.

STOP TELLING ME HOW I SHOULD ACT AND BE!! NO ONE CAN DETERMINE WHO I AM BUT MYSELF. THEY CAN OFFER ME ADVICE, THEY CAN GUIDE ME, BUT IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS THE PROBLEM IS COMPLETELY MINE, FOR I HAVE ABILITIES THAT ARE COMPLETELY UNIQUE TO ME AND THE CHALLENGE IS

FOR ME TO DISCOVER THEM, TO DEVELOP THEM AND TO USE THEM, FOR THEM AND ONLY THEN WILL I KNOW WHO I AM...

NOW TELL ME, WHO'S YOUR SELF-ESTEEM?

IS IT OTHER PEOPLE WHO MAKE YOU SEEM?

IS IT WHAT YOU WEAR AND ALL THAT GLAMS?

IS IT THE COLOR THAT MAKES YOU BLACK, WHITE, BLUE OR GREEN?

IS IT OWNERSHIP, BORROWED, GIVEN OR STILL UNSEEN?

CAN YOU TASTE, TOUCH, SMELL OR EVEN KEEP IT DIRTY OR CLEAN?

NO IT'S YOU AND ALL YOUR THOUGHTS IN BETWEEN IT'S HOW YOU FEEL

AND WHAT YOU KNOW

IT'S HOW YOU ENCOMPASS YOUR POWER TO CHANGE AND GROW.

YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE TO MAKE THAT PERSONAL IMAGE WORK

EVEN IF YOU HAVE A COUPLE OF SECONDARY QUIRKS

IT'S UP TO YOU TO ACKNOWLEDGE IT

AND ACCEPT YOURSELF AS A GIFT

IT'S UP TO YOU TO TAKE THAT OPTIMISTIC CHALLENGE AND UPLIFT YOURSELF...

DESPITE MY CIRCUMSTANCE OF BEING INSIDE THE BELLY OF THE BEAST (PREEN). I AM THE BOSS OF ME! I CAN SEE, HEAR, FEEL,

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THINK, SAY AND DO. I HAVE TO TOOLS TO SURVIVE,
TO BE CLOSE TO OTHERS, TO BE PRODUCTIVE, AND TO
MAKE SENSE OUT OF THIS CRAZY WORLD. NO ONE
CAN TEAR DOWN WHAT I'VE BUILT UP INSIDE
OF ME.

I KNOW I'M SPECIAL AND THAT I STILL HAVE A
LOT TO OFFER. IF PEOPLE CAN'T SEE THAT THEN
THEY ARE NOT ONLY IGNORANT BUT BLIND ALSO.
I'M STRONG BUT HUMAN!

BY: Christopher Trotter