

A new pen-pal recently expressed a curiosity about everyday life in prison, and listed several questions which I would like to answer here on my blog for the benefit of other readers as well.

Q: What do you do all day? Do you have some sort of schedule?

A: There is a daily schedule: 0600-0730 Breakfast Release, when rain or shine we walk 150 feet or so outside to the chowhall where we will sit from anywhere from 5 minutes to half an hour. (Q: What is the food like? A: Menu enclosed). Then we return to our cell (Mandatory Double Occupancy), until 0745 workers release. Those of us unassigned to any vocational/school/work duties, will be released to the Recreation Yard at 0830 to 1100, or have access to phones and showers in the building. At 1130 or so, everyone not performing assigned duties will return to their cell for a noon security count. Then at 1230 only a privileged group of prisoners may go outside to the Rec. Yard until 1530 Yard Recall if they like. Work and school release is at 1400 - and they may stay outside or return to their building to shower and such. By 1600, everyone is in their cell for another security count, and 1700 to 1830 Dinner Release trip back outside - the last fresh air of the day. Back into our cell... 1900 building release of privileged group to shower/phone/or play table games in the dayroom until everyone is back in their cell for the night at 2100.

But what do I do on a typical day? I awake at about 0400 - pissed that I'm still in prison (every day!). I spend about an hour watching my mind run its own diagnostic analysis of current events that may involve me. I eventually take the reins and concentrate my Mind on wholesome prayers to ward friends and family and then rest confidently that All is working out its brief experience Karmically. In this realization I express an attitude

of gratitude ... for my many blessings; for my families welfare; for our good health and opportunities to evolve and enjoy our lives - be they what they may. Then, from this attitude of gratitude, I silence my Mind and begin my Morning Yoga Meditations. Since I have no assigned duties, I usually remain in my cell until a 1045 yard release, spending my time working on my many art projects, be they color-pencil greeting cards or pastel pieces which I in turn trade for canteen items (list enclosed) to customers here, or as gifts to patrons out there who help make my life in exile more pleasant, be that by accepting my collect calls, or ordering a Care Package* of vittles and stuff, or simply writing me to share their life.

Okay... 1030, I carry my portfolio of cards outside, along with any pastel pieces, to see if I can barter for bites and stuff. - I also run a lil second-hand outlet on the side, too. An hour out there is about all the "socializing" I can stand... so lunch back in my cell is usually a Ramen Soup with all the fixin's. Chips are a rare treat, and sodas or ice cream rarer still.

Okay, after lunch I'll either write letters, continue artwork or study some book (list enclosed).

Q: Is there anything I look forward to every day?

A: Mail. And when the mail passes me by, I look forward to sleep - hoping for pleasant dreams.

Q: Do I watch T.V.?

A: My sister Sue, just purchased a 250\$ Hitah Flat-screen with CD Player, and I use the CD Player more often. Primetime trash stupifies me to sleep, but I'll watch Extreme MakeOver - Home Edition; How I Met your Mother; FRIMBZ; V (when it was on); 2 1/2 Men; Big Bang Theory; Nova; Frontline; Antique Roadshow; and an occasional old re-run. Oh, and then there are the weekly movies (list enclosed) this place airs on our cable.

Q: Permission to Pee?

A: Really? No, but I have learned to appreciate sitting to pee (only in my cell), and insisting my cell-mate does likewise. Its a "sanitary" thing, I say.

Q: Visitors?

A: I wish! Its been over a decade since I've seen my wife and kids - at the County Jail (all of us in custody)

Q: Smoke?

A: A lil one-hit issue of weed costs 10\$ of Food items, so its a rare head-change I get to enjoy.

Q: Do I have money?

A: No. The Canteen items I get come from my art or my second-hand enterprise.

Q: Postage?

A: People send me stamps (2 books of 30-max) which I use to mail artwork. But letters I mail using "metered" indigent envelopes.

Q: What do I miss the most (besides family)?

A: Life. Ive been exiled since 1997, so Im almost numb to what I miss the most (besides family). Fishing? Driving back roads? Mountain roads? Camping? Ocean surf? Puppy breath? Friends?

Q: Do I have friends in here?

A: Sadly I cant say that I do. Im acquainted with everybody and their quirks, and can honestly say I wouldnt send any Ive met in exile out to meet my family. Im a friendly peddler, bartering this for that and all ... but "Friends", not in prison. This is why mail is so important and why it is the only thing I look forward to every day. This is why Im such a prolific writer trying to validate my existence through the mail and this blog-site.

Any more questions are welcome in the "comment" section, if you like.

Be Blessed.

10/17/11 (2100)