

Between The Bars  
P.O. Box 425103  
Cambridge, MA 02142

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Peter K. Holmes  
c/o 01113292, Neal  
9055 Spur 591  
Amarillo, Texas [79107-9696]

I know that it has been awhile since my last post. So let me see if I can remember exactly where I left off since I only make some brief notes as to where I ended. I believe that I had said about my going into the service at the age of 17 and volunteering for duty in Vietnam. My hopes were that I would go over there and be killed, yet, little did I know in my ignorant youth that being in the Navy I wouldn't be around any of the heavy fighting going on so my idea of being killed over there was kind of squashed. Bummer!

Anyway, the next few years I will pretty much skim through in order to bring you up to the present. I got out of the Navy in April of 1976 and spent the next year simply hitchhiking around the country and enjoying the freedom of life. Smoked a lot of weed, did a lot of acid and was just being useless as most of the potheads and acid freaks were around that time period...sex, drugs, and rock-n-roll (heavy metal of course). That truly was pretty much the mind set of the "hippie" type mentality then, of which I did my part in contributing to.

I met my first wife at the ripe old age of 22 and our son was born the next year. With her I had 2 boys and 1 daughter before we were divorced. With my second wife I had no children before she ran off with my best man when her and I were married.

With my third wife I had 1 daughter and with my fourth wife I had 1 son. Needless to say I am now divorced yet again, which is no surprise since I am in prison. I now have 6 or 7 grandchildren that I know about. Don't really know if there are any more since none of my children will write to me.

The way that I see it is that they are all grown men and women now so whatever decision they make is their choice. As for me...I still love each one of them as much as I did on the day that I found out that their mother was pregnant with them! I can only hope that they all are alright and turn out a whole lot better than I did.

I came to prison at the age of 46...I will be 57 on July 8th. Between the ages of ...who knows when, and the age of 46 I lost complete control of my life somewhere along the line. Whose fault was it? Well let's see. I could blame my mother and brothers for the abuse I went through. I could blame my tour in Vietnam. Maybe I could blame God, or even you out there in society. But, where does the blame actually lie? Within only myself!

I spent the years starting at the age of nine until I was 46 being totally self destructive. I was totally addicted to alcohol, cocaine, weed, and who knows what else. I've sliced my wrist three times, overdosed on purpose...who knows how many times...and seriously tried to drink myself to death for most of my life. No wonder I've been divorced

4 times and am in prison. I mean, come on...what person in their right mind would ever tolerate living with a person who was never functioning in his right mind?

The funny part is, I actually thought that I was in my right mind. I mean, after all I worked, paid the bills, cooked, help with the kids and the house...of course I was in my right mind. Now I don't believe that any one person can be blamed 100% for their failure at a relationship, but if anyone comes close to being 100% at fault...well, it has to be me.

I sit here now and contemplate the days of my life and am in absolute awe that I am still alive to even be writing this. I have wondered over the past almost 11 years now how it was humanly possible for anyone to survive what I put my body and mind through and to have survived in as good a shape as I am in.

Then I realized that the grand design of life has its purpose for each and every one of us. I am in prison and alive still because if I had not came to prison then I most certainly would be dead by now at my own hand. Maybe I wouldn't have cut my wrist, overdosed, or anything else which could be construed as suicide. But as surely as I sit here and write this I would be dead by my own insane way of life.

It may have been by a car wreck, or maybe alcohol poisoning, or who knows what, but I would be dead by my own hand just the same. So, where has all of this really lead to, and why exactly am I writing this? Because I want others out there who may hopefully read this and who feel as if all hope in this world is gone and that there is nothing else left to live for, will begin to understand that there is real hope in this life and that it is most assuredly NOT wrapped up in what you do or don't have. It is NOT wrapped up in whether you failed miserably at relationships or not. It is NOT about the abuse and other trying ordeals you have had to deal with in this life.

It is about your own mental attitude toward life and just how you choose to look at any given situation.

I have always been a pretty easy going and laid-back person who was always willing to lend a hand. This is part of what I believe helped to save me from myself. Since being incarcerated I have had the opportunity to clear the fog completely from my mind and see life as it truly is. Simple.

It is not because that alcohol, drugs, sex, and just about whatever else you might want is not available in prison, oh no...it is available for those who can afford it. And no matter how much the so-called justice system tries to tell you that it is not available...they lie.

No...I've discovered some real truths about life because I made the honest choice to not let this experience be the end of me. It was most definitely not easy at first, but for some strange reason not of my own thinking, at least I don't believe it was, I had no desire whatsoever right from day one when I was arrested to smoke, drink, do drugs, or anything like that anymore. Nor did I ever have any withdrawals, which I should have, or cravings for any of that junk anymore.

Now understand, this is definitely not a campaign against tobacco or alcohol, or



even the recreational use of some drugs. What anyone chooses to do to physically damage their body is their business as far as I'm concerned, I just know what all of that abuse whether in moderate use or excessive, did to me.

What I'm really attempting to explain is just how much life truly has to offer each of us as individuals by not falling into that mold of being what others think you should be. Now I know, because I was one, that there are those out there who will state emphatically that they are not how anyone wants them to be...that they are their own person and they do and act just how **they** want to act and by their own design.

Fine. But I say hogwash to the majority who **think** that they are their own person. OK...so I'm going to hurt some feelings or make a few waves, and even maybe some enemies, but those who have some insight to themselves will see and understand exactly what I am talking about as I continue describing my own experiences. Have to take a break for right now and get ready for chow...Be back shortly.

Hello again. Well I'm back from chow now. A delicious meal of a hamburger patty that is roughly 3/16 of an inch thick...yum yum. But that's not what I'm here to talk about.

Prison is an indeed strange environment. There are those who are incarcerated for a wide variety of criminal activity, as well there are those who are most assuredly innocent, but are railroaded by the so-called criminal justice system. In my honest opinion they really should leave out the JUSTICE part and simply call it a criminal system. At least within the State of Texas anyway. Personal opinion.

The truly sad part of prison life is sitting here day after day and watching the different individuals who will become an integral and significant part of this system, and do so by their own choice, whether knowingly or unknowingly. Many it is which I have seen say; "This is my 3rd, or 4th, even 5th time down. The sadness of that is that they wear that ?honor? as if it were a badge of significant achievement.

There are so very many within the "Prison Industrial Complex" who cannot or will not recognize any other form of life. I have seen those in here who are placed into juvenile detention at maybe 14 or even 16 and then sent to prison once they are considered an adult straight from juvenile detention. Their whole life from, let's say 16 years of age until they are, sometimes in their early 30's before they are ever released.

These people, although they are adult in physical years, are still children in their minds because the Industrial Prison System does nothing to change that fact. In this way they are able to get these select individuals right back into the system in order to keep their own cash flow up and continue to rape the general public of their hard earned taxes which they pay to the state and the federal government.

Fortunately for me, and the lives of some whose path I have crossed, I have realized very early in the game just how corrupt the state system is here in Texas. Legally it does me no good because they are determined to get their ounce of blood from me, but they will never take away from me the person who I am.

I was quite fortunate to learn very early on just how blessed I was in life with

the ability to realize and understand the depth of the hatred toward inmates both within the system and on the outside. Fortunately for me I have the ability to absorb the legalities of both the system rules for inmates and for correctional officers, and also those of the outside world.

In this way I am able to help those who are less fortunate, and there are many. As I believe I have stated before (maybe not), I did a survey on my own which lasted a period of approximately four years.

Out of about 7000 - 8000 inmates out of well over 100,000 in the state of Texas, I gathered their IQ scores and the Education Equivalence (EA) scores. I then totaled up all of those scores and averaged them. The average IQ score within the Texas Department of (SO-CALLED) Criminal Justice is roughly 63, and the average educational level is around the 5th or 6th grade. No wonder we have so many of our people incarcerated. Just what would those scores be if we averaged the nation and all of its prisoners.

The Late Great United States has more of its people incarcerated per capita than any other individual country. We have more crime than almost any other country. Why is this? Because We, The People, as written in our Constitution, turn a blind eye to those who are in need. Mainly our Educational system and the Parents who have to both work in order to survive.

As for myself there is not much which I can do about that since I am one of the statistics who is incarcerated. But I am at least thankful that I can help others in here survive the system.

I have found that there really is nothing in here that really matters. No matter what they may do to us...it really doesn't matter. You see, this, and what I am attempting to express to others is that no matter what they may say or do to us, as long as we don't give in and forget who we are as human beings, they will never win and we will never succumb to being a "CONVICT" as so very many in here are proud of.

There are those, even among the Officers, who have seriously become institutionalized. There are those who actually wear the title of convict with pride. As well there are "bosses" (what Officers are called) who wear the title of "Convict Boss" with pride. Why? I do not know, nor will I ever understand it.

I am simply thankful that there are those in here whom I have the opportunity to work with to get them to understand that whatever they do to us within these confines is simply like water off a ducks back. None of it matters as long as we do not lose sight of who we are.

I am frowned upon by many of the inmates, and have even been accused of being a "snitch", simply because of my nature as a person. I am, and have always been, an outgoing friendly person who enjoys helping others. I get frowned upon because I have absolutely no problem with saying hello to the bosses and ask them how their days going.

Why shouldn't I. They've never done anything wrong to me. There are some who have turned their nose up at me as if they are better than me, and to those few, I simply do not talk to them.

On one particular morning I had asked a boss how they were doing. They said just fine and then asked me how I was. Which I responded, "I'm doing great." After giving my response I was then questioned as to just how I could be doing great when I'm in prison. I simply told them that a person, especially me, cannot allow the circumstances dictate who I am as a person. End of subject which left a most dumbfounded look upon their face.

So with that I will close for now. From this writing forward I will be writing much more often. I really do look forward to any comments, good, bad, or indifferent which you may wish to give in response. But, in closing I really do wish that for each and every person out there that the joy, peace, and Love which is life, fill your hearts and homes in great abundance.

In Love and Light...May you each be Blessed in your own way,

A handwritten signature, likely the name 'Peter', written in a cursive style.

Peter