

## Prison Life II

It's difficult to wake up to this place every single morning. I use to try to sleep the time away, but all I did was waste precious moments that I can never get back. Sure, prison sucks big time, but I make the most of it.

The food is terrible most of the time. You've got C.O.'s (Corrections Officers) constantly telling you what to do, and right or wrong, you must comply. There's no privacy to use the toilet or wash up; our cell interior must be visible at all times. And the space we live in, with our toilet, is about the same size as a middle class family's bathroom (approx. 10x14'). No matter how much I scrub and clean it, there's a strong lingering odor, and dust everywhere.

I think dealing with the variety of colorful characters is a very difficult part of this. Behind locked doors, there's a lot of crowing from both sides (C.O.'s & prisoners). Warring neighbors like to bang on the walls and metal objects in their cells all day & night. A C.O. with a bad attitude can disrupt the orderly conduct of the unit by refusing to perform his duty professionally & humanely. We've had C.O.'s intentionally stir up trouble just to get out of working on our unit. Others just were spiteful and got a kick out of harassing us. There's also the sickening cries of the mentally unstable screaming at some unseen demons that haunts them at all hours of the day & night. Some nights I want to do a little screaming myself, but I stay strong.

There's the constant random cell searches, pat downs & strip searches. I don't like the C.O.'s constantly touching me in search of contraband; stripping me naked to take a look around my ears, mouth, hands, armpits, feet, genitals & anus. It's so humiliating!!!

Every 90 days, we're shuffled around like a deck of cards. We never know where we're going, and it's unsanitary because the previous occupant could've been sick or unclean (some prisoners have contracted diseases, don't clean their cells or shower). We can clean the cells once we're in it, but our property &





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lungs has already been contaminated. Haz-mat (Hazardous material) cleaning is only conducted in extreme cases of contamination (blood spills, contagions, etc.).

Our cells are under 24/7 constant illumination. This "night light" is so bright that I can read the text of this print 10' from across the cell. The only time that our cells need to be lit up is when the C.O.'s are making their rounds, and for that they have used their flashlights. So it makes no sense for the "night lights" to be on when there's no C.O.'s around to look in. I complained about this, even went to medical complaining of headaches & eye trouble. I was told to take an Ibuprofen and cover my eyes. Basically, get use to it.

The grievance system is a joke, but a necessary evil to exhaust all procedures if we tend to file a civil action. Even when we're in the right, our claims are dismissed as meritless or frivolous all the way up the chain of command. I was once told, "you may be right, but we're not going to do anything about it." In the past, we've had to resort to protesting-- hunger strikes, paperwork campaigns & taking only single cages in the yard (this disrupted normal operations).

All visits a non-contact, one per week, Sunday-Saturday for 2 hrs. An extended visit could be approved upon request. We meet our visitors in a private booth where we're separated by a shatter proof glass wall mounted in the center of a desk-barrier.

We're permitted 3 phone calls a week (collect or direct). A phone is brought to our cell, and we're handed the receiver through the slot in the door. All calls are monitored. Prison phone rates are designed to exploit both prisoners & their families. Phone companies' contracts aren't granted on the lowest rates & best services provided to the prisoners; instead, it's based on the highest commission (kickback) paid to the government agencies. My phone call to England (\$3.75) is much cheaper than a call within the state to Philadelphia (\$5.75).



Daniel Gwynn Blog Update

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I don't get much mail, visits or phone calls, so I'm doing time the hard way. There are some wonderful people I've met over the years through various organizations. They've written and even visited me, and through the eyes of these new friends, I've learned new depths of compassion & humanity. And combined with my art therapy, I've reached a new spiritual plateau that's helped me transcend beyond the chains that bound my physical being.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Daniel Gwynn". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "D".