

HOW BEING IN PRISON HAS AFFECTED MY FAMILY RELATIONS 1/3

I find it difficult in not so impossible to write objectively when the concerning issue is my family. Some thing very personal and me, as the subject of this. Yet prison has affected my family relations in ways that I couldn't have imagined and untold ways that prison, has had a possitive affect also.

Not only does the old adage come to mind... 'out of sight, out of mind' when it comes to my family and I imprisoned but I see it's operations on a daily basis. Coming to jail at 15 years of age, like cancer hitting and caring family's, mine's were worried and filled with sadness no doubt. "That spunky young one is not with us no more", must have been on some minds. As all should protect our care for the young, my family was the foundation in which I took refuge, kept my sanity and knowing that I had support and someone that loved me was of such importance, not only did I lean on that but slept on it too. Visits were a ordinary occurrence during my (15-18 age) imprisonment. Even though I was still within a big cage, for a brief moment I was free and able to let go of some worrys and talk to my family. Their letters always brighten up my day, they have that affect, as someone described them "treasure filled envelopes". Not only am I able to "hear" from family but get informed on their progress, ups, downs, pains and happiness and although not physically there, I too, was part of that, more, I was able to feel all that and connect in levels that letters provide.

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My family is very low-income, below the poverty line you can say, therefore, telephone calls weren't all that welcomed in the house. Pictures, were a way to obviously) still time and capture in that second what all were doing and feeling. Like skyscrapers, I seen my family grow and mature, lil cousins weren't lil, teenagers became ~~men~~ ^{Adults} and wommin were giving birth to the next generation that shall come after ours.

With technology "advancing" in a steady pace nowadays, who really writes letters? And I'm not talking about bills etc, etc. In a way, the phone lets you connect with someone on certain levels and the same goes with letters but with letters there's a lil- something more. It's even more intimate. You express yourself a lil differently. None theless you also must put more time and mind power to it. At one time my writing was sloppy and now it's improved. My lil sister I seen progress in leaps and bounds. Not only is her writing more neater, but what she says and how has impressed and made me proud!

Restricted on all levels in prison not only haven't I been not able to be with family but at the same time I'm viewed upon as the "bad sheep", that rebel one who said fuck this and doing it my own way. Will I be looked upon with cautious attention? New family members are born and I don't know them, yet when I do get out of prison, what would they think of me? Just the word "prisoner" and prison can automatically bring up stereotypes, new members in my family might be weary to know about this family member. Prison took the one thing that families have and that's contact. Literally, I can't be with them, no parties, family gatherings, weddings even the dreaded funerals. All I have at ~~this~~ this time is pen, paper, envelopes and stamps to ask of what, when, who, where is going on. With the pace of society, who has time to sit down, read a letter and answer back? That takes time and as I have plenty of that, my family, unfortunately doesn't. They have jobs, kids, errands and plenty of more urgent things that take priority before me, therefore, even widening the gap of contact and a relationship. A couple write on a shaky, steady basis, then life comes calling and once again I find myself baned and ostracized from them. I hope it's not of their choosing but of their material circumstances. Ones that I ~~were~~ were close with are somewhat distant now.

Separated by a world consumed of strife, violence, cement, bob-wire and the other with phenomena at such a pace,

it speaks for it self. Along with all this it has brought anger and sadness to me in ways untold. The expectations of mail, visits brings on other factors that I must deal with, lashing out in anyway I can. Bringing antagonisms between me and my family.

And in what is not really a conclusion, but me ~~being~~ being in prison it has caused heartbreaks, sadness, anger and disappointment to my family members, however, more than them, I am the one taking the burden of all these feelings and emotions. I struggle with it daily, for I am the cause of it all, my actions caused all this drama. The burden is mine but I have ones to help me hold it and that's my family! I can't be mad at them for not writing every week, can't hold no grudge. What I can do is learn from this experience and turn negative into positive and know that my attitude is key to staying positive and knowing that I want and can't let prison fully disrupt my family relations any more then ~~prison~~ already.

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