

Daniel Gwynn
Blog Update
Date: 6/10/13
"Prison Violence"

This is difficult to share, but it must be told. During my pretrial detention in 1995, my celly attempted to rape me. I was a part of a drug program in Philadelphia's county prison, working to get my mind right. He thought that I was soft because I was committed to actually working the program; while he worked the system to avoid the penalties of his domestic violence & other related charges. The way he'd go on about abusing people, especially women, was very offensive and I couldn't escape him. We shared the same 8x10' cell & unit program, so I endured by ignoring him as best as I could just to get along.

Over 6ft. tall, 250+ lbs., he was very imposing & overbearing. After our initial sizing up, I thought we were good, and it was safe for me to close my eyes during lights out. He didn't bother me for a while, but the conversations were weird. I didn't see the signs of his intentions until it was too late.

One day, while talking on the phone with my grandmother, he walked over to me and placed his oversized paws on my shoulder and proceeded to grope me. He then leaned over and whispered that we should go up to our cell so I could suck him off. There was no time for good byes to grandma, as I leapt to me feet and swung the phone receiver at his head. We then stood toe-to toe for only a moment, for the guards rushed in to separate us, but I defended myself.

During my interview with the unit management team, I tried to explain that I was sexually assaulted and was only defending myself. But my explanation & good conduct record did not prevent them from kicking me out of the program. They implied that I had somehow led him on?! I was furious & shamed for how I was treated. It took some time for me to get through what happened. I was scared, alone & angry, and to this day I'm still a little leery about the prisoners around me. I'm overly self-conscious, and constantly concerned about whether my actions are drawing some unwanted attentions. I witnessed my mother's rape & abuse as a child, and I don't wish that on anyone.



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I could've let this incident derail the progress I had made in my recovery, but I refused to let it. Just because the system & drug program gave up on me, didn't mean that I should give up on myself. So in spite of the ugly conditions of my confinement & lack of support, I rose above my drug addiction & assault, and made something of myself.

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