

JULY 5, 2013 (4:00pm)

I AM SITTING HERE LISTENING TO A CHRISTIAN ROCK BAND, RED, THE SONG IS ONE OF MY FAVORITES, "HYMN FOR THE MISSING". SOMETIMES IN MY LIFE I FEEL LIKE I'M MISSING. I'M NOT JUST MISSING OUT ON LIFE, I'M MISSING IN PEOPLE'S LIVES, THE PEOPLE WHO CARE ABOUT ME. I RECEIVED A FEW COMMENTS TODAY FROM READERS AND I WANT TO REPLY TO THEM ALL NOW. BUT FIRST I WANT TO THANK EVERYONE WHO READS WHAT I WRITE AND WHO HAVE TAKEN THEIR TIME TO SEND ME COMMENTS. WITHOUT YOUR COMMENTS, WRITING WOULD BE EVEN HARDER, GRAZIE (THANK YOU). MY FIRST COMMENT WAS FROM "hannaBoe". BUT FIRST I HAVE TO SAY, COMPUTERS ARE FAIRLY NEW TO ME. WE WERE TOO POOR TO HAVE ONE GROWING UP SO I HAVE NEVER HAD ONE. BUT HOW ON EARTH DO PEOPLE CHOOSE NAMES? SHORTENING THEIR NAMES? FAVORITE FLOWERS? I CHOSE PRISON DAD BECAUSE I AM A FATHER IN PRISON. ANYWAY, hannaBoe, YOU ASKED HOW DO I KEEP MY MIND POSITIVE? IT'S NOT EASY. EVERY DAY IS A STRUGGLE. I RECENTLY WENT TO THE DOCTOR AND FOUND OUT I HAVE A PARTIALLY TORN HAMSTRING AND IT IS VERY PAINFUL. I'LL TRY NOT TO DRAG OUT MY ANSWERS BECAUSE I CAN RAMBLE AND JUST GO ON & ON WHEN I'M BORED (: I'M NOT A VERY POSITIVE THINKER. SO MANY PEOPLE HAVE COME INTO MY LIFE AND MADE PROMISES, ONLY TO BE THERE ONE MINUTE AND GONE THE NEXT. IT'S VERY HARD TO STAY POSITIVE. I'M NOT AN OPTIMISTIC MAN, BUT I'M TRYING TO CHANGE THAT. I STRIVE EACH DAY TO DO BETTER, BE BETTER, BUT IT TRULY IS HARD TO SEE THE GLASS AS HALF FULL INSTEAD OF HALF EMPTY. YOU ASKED, WHAT DO I CONCENTRATE MY MIND ON? I WATCH WAY TOO MUCH TV, MY NEIGHBOR LETS ME READ HIS NEWSPAPER EACH DAY AND I DO THE CROSSWORD PUZZLE (USA TODAY PAPER). I TRY TO THINK OF WAYS TO RECONNECT WITH THE PEOPLE IN MY LIFE AND THE ONES WHO HAVE BAILED ON ME. BUT IT'S HARD. THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO FOR THEM, SO IT TENDS TO BE A ONE WAY STREET I GUESS. YOU SAID LIFE IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO BE BETTER AND I COULDN'T AGREE MORE. I WAS NOT A GOOD KID. I CAME HERE WHEN I WAS A KID. I WAS 21, I WASN'T A MAN. AND EACH DAY I WANT TO DO SOMETHING POSITIVE, SOMETHING GOOD. I DON'T WANT MY JUSTINE TO LOOK DOWN ON ME FROM HEAVEN AND BE DISAPPOINTED IN ME. SHE WAS THE ONE PERSON NOT OF MY BLOOD THAT I WOULD GIVE MY LIFE FOR IN A SECOND. I DON'T WANT HER TO LOOK DOWN ON ME AND SAY, YOU STILL HAVEN'T CHANGED. SO LIFE TRULY IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO DO BETTER, BE BETTER. I JUST WISH I COULD BE BETTER FOR MY DAUGHTER. THANK YOU FOR READING, FOR COMMENTING, AND IF YOU EVER HAVE QUESTIONS, JUST ASK. CIAO.

NEXT IS FROM "bluelotus". I'M NOT VERY EDUCATED BUT I'M SURE THATS A FLOWER AND SINCE MY FAVORITE COLOR IS BLUE, I IMAGINE IT'S ONE I WOULD LIKE. THANK YOU FOR THE INFO ON MURMURS. I WAS WORRIED AT FIRST BUT I THINK IF I DO HAVE A MURMUR, IT'S NOTHING TO BE WORRIED ABOUT. I AM IN GOOD HEALTH,

I EAT AS HEALTHY AS I CAN, I LIFT WEIGHTS AND DO HI INTENSE CARDIO AND CROSS FIT WORKOUTS DAILY. BUT WITH THIS TORN HAMSTRING MY EXERCISING WILL BE LIMITED TO UPPER BODY ONLY AND LIGHT CARDIO. BUT I SEND THIS QUESTION OUT TO ANYONE WHO HAS THE KNOWLEDGE, THE PRISON DOCTOR SAYS I TORE MY HAMSTRING, PARTIAL TEAR, AT THE TOP OF MY RIGHT LEG, WHERE IT MEETS YOUR BUTT. THE PAIN IS SO BAD SOME DAYS THAT IT THROB ALL THE WAY DOWN TO BEHIND MY KNEE. WHAT CAN I DO FOR THIS INJURY? I'M TOLD THAT I SHOULD STILL WORK OUT TO GET FRESH BLOOD TO THE MUSCLE TO AID IN THE HEALING. DOES ANYONE KNOW WHAT I SHOULD DO AND ANY SPECIFIC EXERCISES TO DO? I'M TOLD TO PUT ICE ON IT BUT THEY CHARGE \$10 FOR ZIP LOCK BAGGIE OF ICE FROM MEDICAL SO I BUY FREEZE POPS AND PUT THEM ON THERE WITH AN ACE BANDAGE UNTIL THEY MELT. BEST I CAN DO IN HERE. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COMMENTS. I LOOK FORWARD TO MORE CIAO.

AND FINALLY TO MY LAST COMMENT FROM "ndschram". YOU HAVE A UNIQUE IDEA AND THE ONLY FLAW I SEE IN IT IS THAT MOST PRISON OFFICIALS DO NOT WANT TO HELP PEOPLE OR REHABILITATE. THEY SIMPLY WANT TO PUNISH. IN THIS STATE WE ARE ALLOWED TO PURCHASE GUITARS, KEY BOARDS AND A DRUM MACHINE. THOSE ARE THE ONLY MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS ALLOWED. FOR THE GUYS WHO CANNOT AFFORD THE HIGH COST OF THESE INSTRUMENTS, THEY JUST HAVE NO WAY TO PLAY, LEARN OR PRACTICE. I DO THINK THAT PRISONERS WOULD BE OPEN TO EXPLORING OTHER MUSIC GENRES. THERE ARE SOME VERY TALENTED GUITAR PLAYERS IN HERE. YOU HAVE A GOOD IDEA AND I WOULD LOVE TO SAY THAT IT'S POSSIBLE BUT THE PROBLEM IS THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION MUST BE WILLING TO ALLOW THIS. MOST PRISONERS WANT TO BE INVOLVED ON SOMETHING, TO BE KEPT BUSY. WE WANT TO FORGET THAT MOST OF US WILL DIE IN HERE ONE DAY. WE WANT TO LEARN, HAVE NEW EXPERIENCES. I THINK THE FIRST STEP WOULD CONTACTING THE PRISON THAT YOU WANT TO START IT IN AND SEE WHAT MUST BE DONE TO GET THIS APPROVED. I DON'T KNOW IF I'M BEING MUCH HELP TO YOU BUT I HOPE SO. I WOULD LOVE TO LEARN TO PLAY THE GUITAR, BUT I GET PAID 21¢ PER HOUR TO WORK, HOW COULD I EVER AFFORD A 200\$ ACOUSTIC GUITAR ON THAT. AND YEAH, THATS ALOT TO PAY FOR A CHEAP GUITAR BUT THEY COST \$100 AND THEY GET MARKED UP TO \$180 THEN S&H, +TAX, YOU'RE CLOSE TO \$200. THERE ARE GUYS IN HERE WHO THOUGHT THAT COULD TEACH THEMSELVES TO PLAY THE KEYBOARD SO THEY SPENT THE \$200+ ON ONE AND IT COLLECTS DUST. REMEMBER THAT OLD SAYING, MUSIC SOOTHES THE SAVAGE BEAST, I FIND IT TO BE TRUE. MUSIC SOOTHES EVERYONE. MUSIC CAN CHANGE LIVES. ANY LOVER OF MUSIC CAN USE IT TO CALM DOWN, THINK, LOOK AT ME, I WRITE BETTER WHEN I HAVE GOOD MUSIC TO LISTEN TO A GREAT GROUP, BREAKING BENJAMIN. A MUSIC LOVER CAN USE MUSIC TO GO SOMEWHERE ELSE IN THEIR MIND. IN THIS PRISON OF 2,000 MEN, ATLEAST 1,500 LISTEN TO MUSIC DAILY. YOUR IDEA IS REALLY GOOD AND I THINK THAT IF IT WAS EVER APPROVED, YOU WOULD HELP CHANGE THE LIVES OF THE MEN &/OR WOMEN WHO

PARTAKE IN THE CLASSES BUT GETTING APPROVAL WONT BE EASY. YOU HAVE A WONDERFUL IDEA AND I THINK IT WOULD BE HARD TO GET THAT STARTED IN A PRISON, ~~BECAUSE~~ BECAUSE OF THE RED TAPE AND BUREAUCRATS (THE PRISON OFFICIALS WHO RUN THE PRISONS) BUT IF THEY APPROVED IT, I DO BELIEVE THAT YOU WOULD HELP CHANGE THE LIVES OF EVERYONE WHO PARTICIPATED. I DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT CLASSICAL MUSIC BUT I HAVE RECENTLY LEARNED THAT I LOVE ITALIAN OPERA. I RARELY HEAR IT BUT WHEN I DO, I ENJOY IT. EVERYONE IN HERE NEEDS SOMETHING DIFFERENT, BUT THE ONE THING WE ALL NEED IN HERE, IS TO BELONG. AND TO BELONG TO SOMETHING LIKE YOU ARE SUGGESTING, IT WOULD BE GOOD FOR ALOT OF PEOPLE. DON'T GIVE UP ON YOUR IDEAS. MOST PEOPLE WASH THEIR HANDS OF PRISONERS. THEY FORGET THAT THOUGH WE DID SOMETHING BAD, WE'RE STILL HUMAN. IF YOU HAVE ANYMORE QUESTIONS OR IF I CAN BE OF ANY HELP, PLEASE DON'T HESITATE TO DROP ME A LINE. I HOPE I HELPED A LITTLE. I WANT TO END WITH THIS, SOMETHING SOMEONE SENT TO ME, "FAMILY ISN'T ALWAYS BLOOD. IT'S THE PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE WHO WANT YOU IN THEIRS. THE PEOPLE WHO WANT YOU TO SUCCEED, THE ONES WHO ACCEPT YOU FOR WHO YOU ARE. THE ONES WHO WOULD DO ANYTHING TO SEE YOU SMILE, TO KNOW THAT YOU ARE HAPPY, AND WHO WILL LOVE YOU NO MATTER WHAT. THAT'S A FAMILY".

I KNOW THIS IS KINDA LONG BUT ONE LAST TIME, THANK YOU FOR RESPONDING TO MY WORDS AND FOR READING. I HOPE TO HEAR MORE. MY FINAL QUESTION IS FOR "hannaBoe", YOU SAID YOU LIKE TO HEAR ABOUT PRISON LIFE. MY QUESTION FOR YOU IS WHY? (THIS IS THE PLACE WHERE HOPES & DREAMS GO TO DIE. SO MUCH HATE & MISERY IN HERE). I FORGOT ONE THING, WHEN YOU ASKED ME WHAT DO I CONCENTRATE MY MIND ON, I MISSED A KEY ANSWER. ALL PRISONERS, ESPECIALLY ME, WE FOCUS, WE DWELL ON THE "WHAT-IFS"? I DWELL ON MY REGRETS. NOT A DAY HAS GONE BY IN 15 YEARS THAT I HAVEN'T TORTURED MYSELF WITH THE QUESTION, WHAT-IF? AND WHEN MY JUSTINE DIED I LOST MY PURPOSE FOR LIFE. AND I STILL STRUGGLE TO FIND PURPOSE. "VIVERE SENZA RIMPIANTI", "TO LIVE WITHOUT REGRETS." THATS ONE THING I AM TRYING TO LEARN. BUT IT'S AVERY HARD STRUGGLE. TAKE CARE, GOD BLESS. CIAO.