

Dear readers this is an Introduction to a New Me.

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In my first post titled "An Introduction to Me," I sought to answer three questions. The questions were; (1) what my role is as a blogger; (2) what do I feel my purpose is, and (3) what are the goals I've set for myself on this site? After answering these questions two years passed and my answers to those questions began to change; there is a saying that goes "As time passes ideas change as much as people do." I don't remember who the saying is from, but I do know that it does seriously apply to me. Why? you may ask, well the answer is one that has three parts; the first part is I began doing a self-evaluation and by doing so I began learning more about my habits and abilities. The second part is as I learned more about my habits and abilities I began to have conflicting emotions and thoughts; the emotions actually came from the thoughts which were mostly negative due to my belief that the people who read my blogs couldn't possibly understand how to overcome a persons life of incarceration without actually talking to or somehow knowing that person and that thought led me to the belief that more than likely I along with others were being denied respectability. The third part is after doing more self-evaluations my outlook began to change and I took my site more seriously, I also began to ask myself a question that never crossed my mind until I began to look at myself and my life more seriously and that question is: How did I get here?, now that I think about it I have two questions, the other being what will it take for others not to get here?. The answer to how did I get here is I finally began to realize I had something to say. The second question's answer is more complicated, especially after reading a

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a paper titled: Educated in America: College graduates and high school dropouts, The declining American high school graduate rate: Evidence, sources, and consequences by James J. Heckman and Paul A. Lofstrom (Feb 13, 2008). In this paper the Authors stated something that truly caught my attention; They referenced a paragraph from Goldin and Katz, 2003, which stated in part "... Throughout the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, each new cohort of Americans was more likely to graduate high school than the preceding one. This upward trend in secondary education increased worker productivity and fueled American economic growth." you may ask why would this make the answer more complicated?; The answer is: it begins to make me wonder which is more important, higher education open-mindedness, hope, and living or experience, realism, sharing my opinion, and loving myself. Well I believe that James J. Heckman and Paul A. Lofstrom have found some statistics that answer that question; For example in their article they stated "During the past 25 years, growing wage differentials between high school graduates and dropouts increased the economic incentives to graduate high school. The real wages of high school dropouts have declined since the early 1970's while those of more skilled workers have risen sharply. Heckman, Lochner, and Todd (2008) show that in recent decades, the internal rate of return to graduating high school compared to dropping out has increased dramatically and is now over 50 percent..." After reading this you may wonder what the answer is to my question - well here's the answer; During my reading of the above information it finally hit me (and this is only my opinion)

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without completing high school the chances of making it in the real world are between slim and none, so it is better to complete high school and that does not include a GED because according to a substantial body of scholarship summarised in Heckman and LaFontaine (2008) "... The GED program does not benefit most participants, and GED's perform at the level of dropouts in the U.S. labour market..." With that being said, I'll make my answer simple, if you only have a GED it will make getting a job in an advanced market harder for you than if you had a college education. Now you may be reading this wondering what this has to do with the changes I will be implementing in my ~~blogging~~ and my life in general ~ well I'll get to that now. I have been in prison multiple times, my first being in 1995 and my last being my current incarceration in 2016; It has been proven and backed up by research by Tyler and Kling (2007) and Tyler and Holstrom (2008) that "when released, prison GED's earn at the same rate as non-prison GED's and the GED does not reduce recidivism". That is why I chose to enter college, mature, and take myself and life seriously; How seriously you may ask? Serious enough to blog my thoughts, I was surprised that the self-evaluations led me to realize that I wasn't as prepared to handle life as I thought I was, but I was happy to learn that I'm strong in areas that make my being a "new me" easier; areas such as thinking and diversity, but at the same time I learned that I was weak in other areas such as making time to study myself, reading educational things and getting the points of life,

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because I always looked at it from my point of view which can't  
will make changing harder. Now I realize this and I will be changing  
the habits I have built over a lifetime in regards to how I take  
in information for example; I will be more open to educators,  
people, and ideas, etc, while also being more willing to compromise  
in order to have a versatile way of learning; I will make time and  
be more willing to study myself harder, and I will implement the  
things I learn in every day life by listening to people with an open-  
mind, understanding that not every one learns the same way or lives  
with the same ideas. All in all, the things I've learned about myself  
will make life and the choices involved easier. Well my dear  
readers, I'll close now, but before I do, if any of you want to  
write me, please contact me At my new address:

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