

Comment Response

Susan,

Thank you for your continuing support and encouragement. I sometimes wonder if the fear, anger, and stereotypes popular culture promotes concerning X-offenders will preclude me from using my experience to help others after my release. Is there a large enough portion of society that believes a person can both make terrible decisions that deeply hurt others and that that same person can take responsibility, do the work of healing and growth, and eventually become someone who can lead a healthy, responsible life that contributes to the well-being of others? Sometimes I fear that too few people believe this is possible, despite our love of redemption stories.

Your comments, and the supportive comments of others, keep the spark of hope alive that, yes, we do believe ~~that~~ a person can both fall to terrible laws and find healing and redemption, that the human potential for good is not ~~not~~ limited by our past mistakes. For upon my release from prison shall I enter society believing that there is no hope of becoming a responsible, contributing member of ~~my~~ my community, that I'll always be labeled as a lost cause, thus ensuring failure, increasing the risk of returning to old, dysfunctional coping skills and reoffending, or shall I enter society with the belief that I can make a meaningful contribution and that there will be a place for me where the lessons

I've learned and transformation I've experienced will be a source of healing and hope for at least someone, if not many others, who ~~would~~ need it? Whether this is what others believe or not cannot be a concern of mine, my only choice is to believe it for myself and so make it a reality, to believe anything else, especially the comments of those who are wrapped up in anger and woundedness, would only guarantee my failure, risk the harmony of the community I return to, and be ~~the~~ the ultimate act of disrespect toward those I've already hurt, and the pain I caused them.

Thanks again for your persistence in believing in the human capacity for healing and change, and your continued support. We are always teetering on the edge of self-destruction and if it wasn't for the wise, compassionate work of people like yourself we would have destroyed ourselves long ago.

Peace — never doubt the human capacity for healing, ~~and~~ change, and goodness! 😊