

Things Happen For A Reason

I met Whitey while in prison. He was from Boston and I was from Philly, so we usually end up talking about how we lived growing up on the east coast. Over the years we also became good friends. It wasn't always like this. Before we became friends, we couldn't stand each other. We both had had that "prison politics" mentality. An example of prison politics would be a white inmate not sitting at a table with a black inmate, or exercising with each other, etc., that's just one example. When you mix these so called prison politics with rumors, instigating and so on, it becomes easy to judge someone before really getting to know them. Me and Whitey had judged each other for years.

About two years ago, when I signed up for my first Alternative to Violence class, I was surprised to see Whitey in that class also. Something happened in that class. Whitey's mother had passed away and I felt his pain. I didn't know this at the time, but a few years later, my mother would also pass away.

After the AVP class, me and Whitey became good friends. We found out that we were actually a lot alike and that all that prison

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politics stuff was garbage. When my mother passed away in 2013, two weeks before Christmas, Whitey was there for me like a brother. He was the one who invited me to attend Chapel that day because he was speaking. I went to the Chapel and that same day, in the Chapel, I became a Christian and turned my life over to God. God took two guys who were in prison, who in the past couldn't stand each other, and brought them together. Sometimes we both look back of what we used to think of one another and we both say, "man were we crazy".

Of course there are a lot of inmates who aren't too happy that we're friends, but we don't care about that, that's their problem. Just because we've changed, we can't expect everyone else to. And we leave it at that.