

## Taking the reigns and stock of your life after prison

Every parolee should have an agenda upon release, really before release but at least after. All of your thoughts, dreams, plans, hopes, aspirations and goals must be addressed, tackled head on then applied to your life. There are many reasons why this should take place but the two that are at the top of that list are *you want to become a productive, law abiding citizen and remain out of prison* and two, you want to be able to overcome *the adversity and many challenges* you will face in a positive manner. **He who is ready for everything but is prepared for nothing will fail.** The first phases of failure is when you give up but know that when you do so, you are allowing someone else to fail, because you do not know when that someone is taking a queue from your daily walk and by them doing so it may help them in some way, or others are rooting for you not to fail so, failure must be deleted from your mind at all times no matter how tough things get. Do not use the excuse that you *cannot fit in or function* in society to be the one to allow you to give up. No excuses. Do not be so caught up in doing what you are used to doing that you will be too afraid to do something different and take chances that may challenge you. You never know where your strengths lay unless you challenge yourself. We are all fallible but that does not suggest we continue to make avoidable mistakes. You will succeed because, while you were in prison you promised yourself that when you are released you would pay it forward, give back to the community, stick with your aspirations and goals and remove all negative thoughts from your mind so that you can retain your freedom; negative pride free. You must not only walk, act, look and be a part of the foundation in which you say you want to be but you must also imbed its fabric in the very essence of every thought of who you wish to be and put it into action. Wants and needs of a parolee are as different as the sun and the moon but are an essential part of the body of work needed to be successful, especially when you do not feel hope is hopeful. The parolee's thoughts of wants will cover a variety of those things he has talked and thought about while still behind the walls such as; a good meal, large soft bed that he can roll over in without falling off and his thighs going numb, a hot bath, back rub, massage, sex and all of those personal items he feels he should own or wants to own, the normal things that makes life comfortable. What he needs are those essential things that will keep him out of prison, a productive member of society and goal orientated; report to his parole officer,

abide by his parole conditions, a residence, employment, transportation, I D, Social Security card and to be that law abiding citizen who has the integrity to remain a part of societies norm, never go against the grain and also be able to cope with *rejection* and being *judged*. How he handles these last two may determine his fate in the area of his freedom. Just think for a moment, how would you respond when you are released and your family rejects you, for whatever reason, or are all deceased? You must condition your mind to understand that you are all alone, starting from scratch and with nothing. You must face the reality of living and what it in-tells to do so and not just how you think things should be. Reality is way different from fantasy. It is time to begin thinking and executing a plan. Every parolee must understand, no attorney can change the law, only negotiate a lighter sentence after their client chose to commit a crime, which is not what you want if you intend to keep your word to yourself in remaining free and achieving anything, and, providing the district attorney and judge agree to the deal, which will not be in your favor either way because you still lose. Imagine never having to hear these words again: all inmates get down, stop all movement! It does not matter if you were a lifer, first timer or short timer, you must do all that you can to succeed upon your release, verses those things that will send you back to prison (No repeats in this area).

Remember, it is up to you to succeed personally, not anyone else. It does not take much to return to prison, especially when you are not trying to do your best. Something as simple as not reporting a change of address can get you violated. You are the one who walked those yards for so many years making plans about your future success and you know what you need to do to be successful so, why stop upon your release? Go man go!

All people share one thing, they tend to accept one drop of evil, verses every drop of goodness. Those times should be behind you. You do not have to beat yourself up over it but you should never forget that you committed a crime no matter the level and will forever owe a debt to society. Not only that, always remember those years you were closed custody and could not be outside and just how alive you felt and how invigorating it was when you were no longer closed custody and could actually see the moon without having to crane your neck to look through a narrow window.

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