

**Ex-Felon Etiquette
Guide**
How to properly function in society
Paid for your past
Giving back
Paying for your future



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Introduction

Each month there are tens of thousands of inmates being released across the country with no place to go, no resources, no employment and no guidance. No matter the gender every ex-felon must abide by rules and deal with a variety and long laundry list of issues that will help them be a part of society's norm. Aside from personal demons, some new, some old like, depression, substance abuse, suicidal thoughts, adversity, alcohol abuse, PTSD, domestic violence, self-esteem issues, not knowing how to cope in society and a whole host of other issues, they all must be conquered and gotten under control in order to be a part of any community. These individuals must adjust and adapt to the normalcy of the outside world, be able to navigate through this new course of life and remain committed to doing so. This must be done in a manner which will not interrupt the flow of society or its residents or causing the ex-felon to become a felon again and return to prison, even when hope does not seem hopeful. Every step he/she takes must be executed with commitment, care, precision and tenderness. Where it is planted must be delivered delicately with hope of landing it solidly from every last step to the very next one. He/she must not only ready himself for everything but also be prepared for everything, good and bad. Readiness and preparedness can always be achieved through a simple formula; fully understanding that you can easily get along really well with others socially when you allow them the freedom of allowing you to have their way. In the fast moving pace of the outside world you must find ways in which to fit in, overcome adversity and leave behind the very slow pace of prison life as you lived it. The below guidelines are to be utilized to assist you in making the right decisions, encourage and help you remain free. In no way or area is this handbook intended to take the place of professional counseling and is only the knowledge and experience this writer shares with the reader. The handbook's primary purpose is to assist and provide guidance to those ex-felons who could use its guidance, but is not a 12-step program or your regular daily bread.

Act Normal

If your goal is to be a part of society's norm, work on yourself, assist others, be transparent, and be successful, you must not only do so on a higher level but you must act normal. You cannot lean to any one side. You must fully bend over backwards to complete this quest, succeed in all areas and do not be afraid to ask for and accept help. Your very first challenge is for you to realize the ex in ex-felon translates to "way back" meaning, that person is no longer you. You must be willing to leave all of the old abnormal and negative learned behavior you developed and hardcore persona you walked in for so long far behind the walls. There is not only no need for it but there is also no reason nor room for it in your new life of freedom. Your background does not have to be your crutch but you should remain mindful of it to motivate you to achieve. You must locate your square space in the world. This is not a suggestion you become a square, it only means that in order for you to remove all of those old negative thoughts, words and actions from your daily walk of life, treat others with care, humility and respect, you must locate that square space that separates you from your old behavior. You should never walk around seeking unnecessary or negative attention. If you are not on any medication, why walk around as though you are? Seeking medical assistance and sympathy attention from others are two entirely different things. Do not fake it through the remainder of your life. You are not an animal. There is no need for you to make uncommon noises or sounds. **Make your life then make it through the rest of your life.** Know what you want out of life. Add value to your life every day after stepping out of bed and continue to seek ways in which to improve yourself and your part in being a valued part of society's norm with clarity. You must be solely responsible for gathering up those necessary tools that will make you who you ultimately want to be in society. Never allow that ex-felon person to surface in the free world. Always face each day with the goal of well meaning and providing assistance to others. Always trust that you will not go against the grain of society's norm by committing any crime, being anti-social and not making your very best effort to improve. Learn the meaning of empathy and

kindness. Always put yourself in the other person's shoes when you have the notion of wrong doing and think of how he/she will feel. It is not your job to show society how an ex-felon can misbehave or how tough you can be. That was your old world. You are now residing in their/your new world of freedom and you are the only one who can screw it up. The more you learn to function positively in this new world the healthier you will get. Always travel in your life's lane; not too fast but not too slow either. Flow evenly with society. Do not go out in the world blind, moving erratically and with your arms spread wide open. You will be run over, lost and bound to your old ways if you do so. There is no need to get overwhelmed, hurry or rush through the vastness and speed of your new world. Accept all of the open space and opportunity it has to offer. Simply adjust and move forward with caution. Every layer of your old self must be shed to give your new self the best chance there is, especially if you want to give yourself the best chance of being a part of society's norm. Do not be filled with deceit, manipulation and laying in wait. This is the old you. Do not be from a different world. Instead, fill each day with hope, inspiration and step closer to completing your goals. Sneaking around is in no way normal, as is not just hanging in the streets after midnight when you are not working or at a positive function. Your ultimate goals will include everything positive. We already know what the negative can bring. You just got out of it when you left prison. You have nothing to lose and everything to gain. Move forth as though others expect you to fail and let this be the only time you go against the grain of society's normal workings, because you have been meticulous in planning not to fail. Remain normal through out, which means you should not carry with you the abnormal things you thought were normal when you were inside like washing your clothes in the sink, toilet or shower, storing food under your bed, leaving leftovers out on the counter to be eaten the next day, walk around with utensils in your pockets, use toilet paper as a table napkin and walking around with your hands shoved down your pants, etc.

Remember, you are the one who must adjust to society. Society does not have to adjust to you. Your very image is your normal and it must positively shine in the face of all adversity and reflect what society's norm truly is. The life you want to succeed in should be a normal one where you will act normal.