

## One Lifer's Perspective

Depression is stalking me; it is a struggle to remain productive. The constructive activities that normally occupy my time seem pointless. Free time goes to waste because of the hopelessness of my outlook. The future looks bleak.

The prison system is broken in California. Prisoners who are likely to hurt someone in the future get released daily; yet, ones who statistically would not reoffend are held indefinitely. A Parole Board Commissioner mentioned to me in a consultation that I would most likely never return to prison if I was released. However, my chances of paroling are slim. A false accusation may keep me here until my demise.

The commitment to serve God and my fellow inmates needs to be reaffirmed by myself every couple of years. The Parole Board either fails to acknowledge much of my service or it goes unnoticed by the commissioners. The motive for assisting others needs to be a genuine love and concern for them. Still, the Parole Board penalizes many of us that honestly help others; conversely, it rewards the liars and manipulators that come before it with false documentation of being leaders in rehabilitation. The results are maddening. The occurrences sap a lifer's motivation. The will of most indeterminate sentenced inmates to change is undermined by the status quo. I get discouraged along with the vast majority.

The barriers to parole are changed at a whim so that it appears hopeless to try to get released. Hence, the source of my gloom is revealed. The system gives me no quarter for this life.

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I will likely remain here until I am too old to do myself or anyone else any good on the streets; or, I will be buried on the grounds of a prison.

By: Patrick Rathsack T-45624

CIM A3-SH-148up

PO BOX 368

Chino, CA. 91708-0368

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