

Keira,

Thank you for your comment you left. I write in the hopes that what I share will at least touch one person and make a difference. I have an Instagram page that my sister keeps up for me - @cagedbuttafly. I share my thoughts and some of my experiences here in prison. Some are not pretty and can be a bit sad, but I like to share the real emotions that come from inside me. How can you reach others by sugar coating or lying about what the heart and mind think? People want to know they are not alone in the struggle we call life and the only way to do that is to be real with ourselves about the good, the bad and the ugly we experience. Prison is not a place just behind razor wire and fences, most people are incarcerated by their mindset and circumstances and don't even realize it. I was for a long time... it took me to experience being locked away to realize that I had been locked up long before I ever came to a correctional facility. The simple fact that you appreciate my words and reached out show that you realize what most don't. True reform is not always achieved by coming to a place like this, true reform comes from within, the opening of the mind to better things, the way you respond to experiences are essential to you being truly free mentally and physically. You see I may be incarcerated physically but mentally and emotionally I am free from the things that truly held me captive; the past hurts, the negative thinking, the need to please others, the need to belong to something or someone, the assumption that I must conform and do what makes others happy and reject self. I must say this is not the ideal place for anyone, but I have to admit without this experience I probably never have come to this point in my life where I am now. Mistakes were made, and bad things happened. I regret a lot of choices I made due to ignorance, or just plain stubbornness, yet I will not dwell on those and let them keep me imprisoned. These things are the things that imprison a person; holding on to what can't be changed, trying to fix things or people who don't want to be fixed or just can't be fixed. I could go on and on for days about the lessons learned while sitting in this place, yet I will merely close with a poem dedicated to you:

TRUE CHANGE

The first step to escaping the cage you are in,
Is to realize it is now that you truly begin...
Begin to let go of the past that holds you,
Reach for something better; something new,
Look back on the choices you made,
Most had to do with your mindset and age...
You see you were not grown, didn't know better,
No one sat down and took the time to write you a letter...
With words that were raw and uncut, skipping the lies,
You are wearing rose colored glass on your eyes.
Life is not simple it is often very complexed...
Even grown folks don't know what must come next.
The next step I think - is facing yourself...
Look deep within; you will be surprised at the depth.
It's within you to become the person that you need to be,
Time to remove the rose colored glasses so you can see...
Don't just look at the flaws, look at your potential,
Everything about you is so essential.
It's important to know where you stand, your morals and values,
All of these things are what truly makes you, you.