

Entry 11

Okay, I'm going to cover a couple of things that I don't need to spend a lot of time explaining, but these are things I think I should tell you about,...

After the crack riots I went back to work on the rec yard until I learned that I could earn a lot more money by working out in Unicore. They had a print plant and I had prior printing experience from working on a newspaper printing press before coming to prison. A friend of mine who lived in my unit worked in the print plant and told his boss about me and my prior printing experience, and I was quickly called out for an interview and offered a job on the spot. I was given a job as a paper stacker/loader, feeder operator on a big computer operated two color Heidelberg speed master sheet fed printing press. Over the years of working in the print plant I not only learned that press from one end to the other, but I became the lead man on that printing press as well as learning how to operate other medium sized printing presses they had in the shop. Working in the printing industry is something I really enjoy and I hope to be able to find employment in the printing industry when I am finally allowed to go to work release as the last stop of serving my sentence and preparing for my release back into society.

I also worked my way from living on the flats (the bottom tier) up to a single cell on the top tier. Once I was up there, I lived in the same cell for well over ten years straight. Having your own cell to live in is as close to having privacy in prison as you will ever get, and it makes doing time that much better. Some people prefer to have a cellie, but given the choice, I would take a single cell hands down. I guess I can attempt to give you an idea of what my cell was like? It had a sink, a toilet, a bunk and a locker that I could lock my personal property up in with a combination lock that I purchased from the inmate store and three shelves on the wall where I could put stuff. And there were rows of small windows (I believe it was five windows wide and either 7 or 8 rows tall) with one larger window that I could pull open to allow fresh air into the cell. When I first moved into my single cell it had a really wide big bunk that took up a lot of room in the cell. So as soon as someone moved out of a cell that had a smaller bunk that fit across the back of the cell, I swapped bunks which gave me a lot more room in my cell to move around. Over time I had one of the work crews come install a small lift up desk that was bolted to my wall so I would have a place to sit and write and do beadwork, plus another small shelf so I'd have more storage space. In the feds you were allowed to make changes to your cell like that but you will never be allowed to do anything like that here in the state prison system. The difference between the federal prison system and the state prison system is like being on two different planets.

I just thought of something that I've gotten so used to, I don't even pay them any attention anymore but you might be interested in knowing about them? Its strip searches, I have been strip searched so many times by so many random people over the years that I don't think I have any modesty left? There's nothing like getting naked while someone watches you and having to lift your genitals, turn around, bend over and spread your cheeks and cough so they can make sure you're not hiding something on or in your body. At least the showers in my living unit allowed you a little privacy while you used them. When you entered the shower area on each tier, there were three individual shower stalls designed for a single person to use. I've been places where there is simply a big open shower area with multiple shower heads and you have to shower around everyone else.

I know I will continue to think of random things that might be of interest to you and as I do, I will write about them. I've simply gotten so used to everything in here that nothing really stands out to me anymore. Like I've said, this is all I know anymore. I have a hard time trying to remember what it was like to be out there in the free world now and it sucks!!!!!!