

**UP
FOR
THE
*CHALLENGE***

An Interview

With Coyote

By: Anthony Rayson

UP FOR THE CHALLENGE:

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1. Greetings, Brother! You were nice enough (& conscious enough) to do a serious interview with me & now I want to return the favor. First off, how'd you get the name "Coyote?" Where'd you grow up? What was your family like?

Answer: Working with you has been a fulfilling experience, and it is always a blessing to be able to do something with you, Bro. I feel honored to be interviewed by you, and I've felt honored by your kindness from the very first correspondence, and ever since we've first started collaborating, things have definitely been taking off with my movement out here in Nevada. It is because of your inspiration along with the support from ABC of the Burning River chapter, and the efforts of Ryan of the Houston chapter. I'm honored to be able to share in these struggles with true, dedicated, anarchist comrades, and I just want you to understand that I have a tremendous amount of respect for you.

Oh, yes the interview. Well, not to sound too boastful, but I was really pleased with the interview that I did on you. I honestly thought it was the best interview you've done thus far. That was until I read the "Each One, Teach One" interview series that you and Talib Y. Rasheed put down. That was some serious stuff. Talib talks about Spiritual-Humanism. That was deep and when he says that prisoners must resist and defeat the internal forces that gives birth and feeds the criminal mentality and recidivism, that really had me thinking about the internal forces, rather than the "external" which is what we usually stay focused on. All the answers that Talib gave to your questions were thoughtful and deep. Anything that makes you think is good and Talib Y. Rasheed made me think. Your answers to his questions about anarchy were just as thought provoking. I especially loved how you wrote that "nature is anarchy." I can really dig that! All I can say is that we need to start putting more material like that out, because that is the type of truth that needs to be told! It is the type of truth that needs to be heard, acknowledged and embraced.

Now, to get to your questions. I hope you understand that talking about my childhood is never an exciting thing for me. My story doesn't really differ from the stories of the rest of the prisoners who dwell behind these crooked lines of piggish territory: broken home, poverty, gangs, drugs, growing up in the ghetto, in and out of juvenile facilities and institutions; etcetera, etcetera. Have you ever read Fox Butterfield's book, *All God's Children*? Well, if you get a chance to read that book, you'll have a basic outline of my scarred and charred childhood.

I feel that there was a lot of neglect, abandonment and even betrayal in my childhood, and I'm still trying to get over it, still trying to deal with it, still trying to heal and still trying to forgive my mother who I love with all my heart, never-the-less. Unconditional love. That's what that is.

As a youth, I was very connected to nature, loved being in the sunshine, loved playing with bugs and insects, loved the ocean, loved being under the blue sky...

I was born in Long Beach, California and grew up in in Long Beach and all throughout the harbor area: San Pedro, Torrance, and my "Father" 3 lived in Paramount, (South L.A.) right on the other side of the bridge from Compton. I could walk over the bridge and be in Compton in 5 minutes. We lived in the most rundown neighborhood of Paramount. We called it "Segundo-Territory." I spent almost half of my time in Long Beach, the other half in Paramount. My "parents" weren't married, so it was whoever wanted me at the time.

That was until I started getting "locked up" if that's what you want to call it. I prefer to call it as being locked up against my will, but we'll get into that later. So anyways, I lived in California for the first 16 years of my life.

My father was a "pill addict." He was addicted to "downers" like Quaaludes, valiums, yellow-jackets. His bedroom was the living room, and I'm not even being sarcastic. The living room was officially my father's bedroom. We had these old "army cots" and whenever I wanted to stay in the living room and sleep by my dad, we'd break out one of these cots and I'd sleep on a cot, on the floor, next to my dad's couch, but most of the time, I'd sleep in the bedroom with "Super-Mom."

We had lots of antiques in the house and in "chicken boxes" in the back yard. "Super-Dad" mostly had old, Model T, Model A and Model B car parts, and lots of antique hub caps. My father's collected a lot of antique pharmaceutical products. That was our hustle. Every weekend, we'd get up at 4:00 in the morning, load up the van and load up the station wagon and drive to the swap-meet. Then we'd spend the entire weekend sitting in the hot ass sun, trying to sell antique car parts. We lived "the swap-meet life."

My father kept lots of guns in the house. He had books and a collection of magazines, all about guns. And on a good day, when he wasn't all zoned out on pills, he'd take a couple hits off the bong and he'd sit down with me, with book opened and guns laid out on the living room floor and he would teach me everything I needed to know about guns; from the history of certain guns to gun safety: "Always point the gun down towards the floor or up in the air;" to gun ethics; "Never point a gun at somebody unless you plan on pulling the trigger," to how to break a gun down and take it apart, how to clean it and then how to put it back together. He would always make sure we'd wipe off our fingerprints before putting it away.

Guns played a big role in our household. It was how I bonded with my father, and when I went from a "B.B. gun" to my first gun at the age of 13, it was like an initiation or rights of passage from boyhood to man. I guess now, that I look back on this, I can say that it was all a part of my "early guerilla education."

When I turned 13, my father bought me my first gun for my birthday. We went to the gun store and picked it out together. He wanted to get me a 30/30 winchester, but they were out of stock, so the rifle he ended up buying me was a .44 winchester, Remington-mag, lever-action and it held 9 rounds. It was the most powerful gun that I've ever held or fired in my life, to this day. He would take me to the shooting range all the time and we'd spend the evenings doing "target practice" at "J.R.'s Shooting Range" in Paramount.

Even before my "sacred rite of passage," my grandfather bought me a B.B. gun and I'd sit out in the backyard all day shooting cans. I'd take the B.B.'s out of the cans and pick them out of the wooden fence that served as a backdrop and I'd use them over and over again. I would spend the entire day, just sitting out in the backyard shooting cans.

Until my cousin got out of the Marines, when he got out of Camp Pendleton, he came back to Paramount and moved back in with us. He had a pellet gun. It was an air-pump that shot pellets and B.B.'s and I had a Daisy B.B. gun with lever-action. Just cock it and shoot, cock it and shoot. Mine was quicker, but his was more powerful. My cousin would sit out in the backyard with me and shoot with me for a couple hours each day, teaching me how to aim, how to shoot and we'd practice hitting "moving targets" and stuff like that.

It was a good way to connect and bond with family. Then, my cousin got tired of shooting cans and he came up with a new method: shooting birds. We had a church that sat on the other side of the fence and behind the church there was a field that sat directly on the other side of the fence from our back yard. My cousin would get a couple slices of wonder bread, break them into little pieces and throw them over the fence, into the field and then we'd wait for the sparrows to gather on the telephone wire or on the roof of the church and then we'd pick 'em off, one by one.

I think that's all the Marines really did for my cousin: turn him into a bird killer. Because his life turned out shit after that, and I really liked spending time with him. I really felt "at home" in that house. I had 3 cousins (all older) and my dad, my grandfather ("Super-Dad") and my grandmother ("Super-Mom") bless her soul! She was supposedly a Christian woman with a mouth of a truck driver, chain-smoking like crazy, which was the death of her. She had her own bedroom and Super-Dad had his own bedroom down the hall, which now seems kind of strange to me, but I never thought about it then.

Whenever Super-Mom would go grocery shopping, we'd go with a whole clip full of coupons that she'd cut out of newspapers and magazines. We'd go from one grocery store to the next, buying everything with coupons. It would take us 5 hours to buy all of our groceries. Nobody wanted to go grocery shopping with Super-Mom because it would take all day, so I was the only one who'd go with her, helping her out.

My other cousin was named "Digger." He was a gang-banger, convict and "sherm-head." He liked smoking PCP. Whenever he'd get out of prison, his parole officer would come banging on the door, looking for him. We'd have to hide him out in a closet or get him to run out the back door and hop the fence and have him stay in the field behind the church, because he was always high on sherm or coming down from it and the parole officer was always trying to make him pissin' in a cup, and we didn't want him to get a parole violation, so we'd always have to tell the parole officer that "Digger" was out looking for a job. But, he would always get out of prison, get all "shermmed-out" and do something stupid, and end up getting caught and thrown back in prison.

My female cousin, Denise, who is my heart and soul because she was like a second mother to me, was a "strawberry." She would sleep with men for crack and all her homegirls were strawberries, too. She damn near raised me. I'd go everywhere she'd go and through her, I learned all about the "ghetto life" all about gangs and drugs and evading the police. The ghetto was home to me. I loved everything about it.

When I was 13 years old, my mother revealed to me that my "father" ⁵ was not my real father and that meant that nobody in that family – who I loved so much – was really related to me. And that hurt. I didn't know how to cope with pain, so I acted it out in anger. I was already angry, from being locked up against my will, and this new development about me being a bastard, added to my anger. Realizing that my mother waited 13 ½ years to tell me that I've been living a lie all this time, really fucked me up. I felt confused. I felt betrayed.

As for the name Coyote, in my culture a coyote is someone who smuggles people – and sometimes narcotics – over the Mexican border into the United States. A Coyote is someone who doesn't recognize borders or boundaries and who has no regard for the law.

In many different Native American cultures, a coyote is a "trickster." Usually a mythical figure, but, sometimes even a human being who uses shock tactics, deceptions, humor, lack of seriousness (levity) and the element of surprise, to help people "wake up" – opening their eyes, hearts and minds to reality or a higher realm of consciousness, breaking through mental or emotional barriers and overcoming old, destructive behaviors, bad habits, bad ways and self-destructive patterns. Sometimes a coyote is just there to help someone out in a difficult situation, kinda like an "angel" or a spiritual guide. But it's usually a "mixed blessing." It's believed that a "trickster" uses an element of misfortune to open someone's eyes, heart or mind, which will eventually set them on a more fortunate path in life.

In white American culture, a coyote is usually regarded – or disregarded – as a scavenger and scavengers are considered to be amongst the lower-class of animal species, whereas hunters are always among the upper echelon.

I can definitely relate, identify and connect with all 3 of these legends and myths attached to the coyote, but I was told that I was named after my great grandfather. Most of my life my family and close friends have always called me "Coy." But it wasn't until this period of incarceration where I began to take a deeper look into myself, a deeper look into culture and a deeper look into my life and life in general. With this higher understanding of self, life and culture comes a level of consciousness and with this understanding of consciousness I began to embrace who I was or who I am.

On paper my name says "Coy" or it might say "Coyote," but in my heart I know who and what I am. While beginning to embrace myself, I simultaneously began cutting all ties with the so-called standard of society and the so-called social order of things. Because according to the standards of our society, people cannot be out there running around with animal names. We can't go to work everyday and say to our co-workers, "Hi, Eagle." Or "How are you doing today, Bear?" Animal names are just not permitted in our everyday society and the way I understand things, 700 years ago, everybody had animal names; earth names; star names.

So you see, I am Coyote because that's who I am on the inside and out. I am the guy who has no regard for borders, laws or limits. I am the trickster, who will do whatever it takes to help others see themselves and their lives, more clearly. I am the scavenger, living among the lower-classes, living off scraps, living off the land. But, just like a real coyote will, I'll hunt if I have to!

What was my family like, you ask? We were poor. Half of my family ⁶ was Hispanic, and white the other half – mostly white. I am mixed. I am mixed with Sicilian, Hispanic, white and a small amount of Osage blood runs surreptitiously through my veins. When people ask me, I just tell them I'm Chicano, because that's the heritage I identify with the most. My cousin, Ashkea (Ashkea means "one with a loving heart" in Yaqui) who is Hispanic, Yaqui, Indian, white mountain Quero Apache, Sicilian and white, says that there will be no more white people in the next generation of our family, which is so true, because right now I have a very multi-cultured family. My cousins, who are Sicilian and white (English and German) all have children by black women. My beautiful little baby cousins are half black and half Sicilian/white. And it's like this with all my family on my mother's side. My little half-brother, David, has step-children who are half black / half white. Those little rugrats are my nephews. I have cousins who are 1/2 Sicilian / 1/2 Hispanic. I have cousins who are 1 part Sicilian and 3 parts white. I have cousins who are 1 part white, 1 part Hispanic and 2 part Native American, like my baby cousin, Marika. Marika means "velvet black eyes" in Yaqui. And, it goes on and on.

People in prison like to look at me upside my head, wondering why I'm not racist, why I get along with people of all races and nationalities, when all of the foundations of these prison organizations are built on the foundations of race. So people are trying to figure me out in here. Some of my own "jente" question why I'm cool with blacks and whites in here, and the whites don't like it that I'm cool with black people, and the blacks are wary of me 'cuz I'm cool with some of the whites.

But hey, I am who I am. This is the way I was raised man. It's how I was brought up and I can't change who or what I am, you know what I mean?

My comrades know where loyalty lies. They know who I'll stand and fall for, if push comes to shove. With the way things are right now, I don't see any serious reasons for me to conform to any of the racist ideologies, especially when the color of our true enemy is dressed in a green, pickle-suit. So I try to stay out of all of the racist bullshit in here and replace it with solidarity, when the opportunity arises, 'cuz I'm not racist and everything about me is against racism. It's the way I was raised man, I can't hate people because of the color of their skin. That's not me.

So, to answer your question, if you were to ask me what my family is like right now, well, we are a multi-cultured family.

2. When you were born (1977?) I was 23 and just getting married for the first time. What was it like growing up post-Vietnam? What were the cultural influences (music, etc.)? What were the political influences as you came of age, in the '80's & '90's?

Answer: Well, I never considered it as being "post-Vietnam" but I guess that's a new way for me to look at it. The cultural influences for me were the influences of the ghetto. You'd see the pimps with the nice cars, shiny jewelry and good-looking women; you'd see the gangsters and hustlers, the ex-cons with all the tattoos and muscles, and you'd see all the lowriders. Those were the people everybody wanted to be like.

And then you had the taggers, the ravers and the rebels. Everybody else was an addict or a fiend; crackheads and tweakers.

My mother, she's from the baby boom generation. The article you wrote, *"Baby Boom Betrayall"* hit the nail right on the head! My mother was down with the whole "Hippie / Peace / No-Nuke Movement" before I was born. Flower-power, you know? Growing up I was exposed to a lot of good, healthy and nutritious food, fruits and vegetables, that most of the people I associate with, don't even know what that stuff is. But I was exposed to that "be healthy" food, just like the smell of good ganja always sulked through the air, in each room in our house. Growing up I got to hear a lot of my mom's music - The Doors, Creedence Clearwater, Pink Floyd, Led Zepellin, Cream, Janis Joplin, Fleetwood Mac and good stuff like that. And I still like listening to that.

My cousins, they were all a bit older than me and Denise liked listening to all that funk music. Like Parliament, Rick James and Boatsy Collins and every Saturday we'd sit in her bedroom and watch "Soul Train" together!

My other cousin, "Digger" LOVED LISTENING TO OLDIES FROM THE 70'S, LIKE Rose Royce, the Delfonics, Blue Magic, the Temproes, the Stylistics and stuff like that.

My "Father" would pop some pills, lay on his couch and turn on some blues music, like B.B. King, Muddy Waters and his favorite: John Lee Hooker.

So, all of that music had a big influence on me. I still like to listen to all of that. To tell you the truth, music has always been a big part of my life and it's the same with my family. We didn't just listen to music, man, we felt it, we lived it! We'd get excited about it, we'd talk about it, dance to it, groove to it, have serious conversations about the music and the musicians. Music has always been an important factor in my life. There's magic in music, man, because it has the ability to bring people together. Music moves us, it motivates us, it brings out the best and worst in us.

I love music. I love all kinds of music, but as for my generation, I grew up on that hard-core gangsta rap! When N.W.A. came out with that song, "Fuck the Police" - forget about it! I was hooked.

I like 2-Pac, the Geto Boyz, the Outlawz, Nas, Dead-Prez. Because of the political elements in their lyrics and the music is good, too. I also like Eminem.

I love music. I can't live without it. I listen to reggae. I like Bob Marley and Ziggy Marley. The first time I really got into Bob Marley, I think I was like 12 years old. The first song I remember listening over and over again by Bob Marley was "No Woman, No Cry" and I couldn't really understand if he was trying to say no woman, don't you cry, or if he was saying that *he* wasn't gonna cry because he lost his woman. But now that I'm sitting up in prison, with no woman, I know what he was trying to say. It all makes sense now! I also like Sublime, System of a Down, Rage Against the Machine, Korn and Papa Roach. I like No-Doubt, the Distillers, Nirvana. I like it all, from rock to rap to punk. I even write punk songs in my free time. I like oldies, funk and soul. I've gotta have some Joss Stone in my life or things wouldn't be right. I also like Los Lonely Boys. There really isn't any kind of music that I don't like, because music seems to speak to my soul.

Political influences. To tell you the truth, most people in prison don't become political until they come to prison, 'cuz this is where we really start to question the way things are with our lives and stuff. Before prison,

there were small conversations here and there on the likes of Pancho Villa, Emilio Zapata, Cesar Chavez, Ernesto "Che" Guevara, and Jesus Malverde. But it wasn't until I came to prison where I really began to further my studies on all of these political people, along with other political people like George Jackson, Dennis Banks, Huey Newton, Ward Churchill and some of my personal favorites are Tecumseh, Crazy Horse and Assata Shakur. A lot of people don't know this, but Assata means "she-who-struggles" and Shakur means "the-thankful-one." So to me, that's like saying that Joanne Chesimard was truly thankful for all of her struggles, which is something that really speaks to me, because I'm thankful for all of my struggles. I'm thankful for all the pain I've endured and the hardships I've suffered.

I'm a political person, but I'm not. I just want to live, to be free. I want to be in tune with nature and unchained from societies' shackles and unrestrained from the systems' handcuffs. I want to be like the truth: set free! Too many people try to put limits and restrictions on the truth. But they say that the truth will set you free. So, if truth is correlated with freedom, then that tells me that there can't be any restrictions put on the truth. The truth must always remain unchained, unrestrained and unrestricted. The truth cannot be confined, contained or detained. It must always be free. And I just want to live my life my life like that Bro. Truthfully. And in freedom.

My political consciousness stems from my resistance to all that's untrue. It has sprouted out of the seeds of resistance, disgust and contempt towards all elements of the system and the American culture. But there's something deeper that lies beneath all of that, something deeper than politics, something unexplainably profound. The seeds have sprouted, but the tree is still growing.

SO you see Comrade, I'm a political person, but not really. I'm not as politically versed as say, you, Sean Swain or Ward Churchill, all who I respect and admire, but I'm political because I am and will forever be set against the system. I mean the entire system. Not just the justice system and the prison system, which is in fact only the limbs of the system; the arms and legs of the system; the belly of the beast, but I'm talking about the government, the educational system, the church, the state, the military. And, I'm against the so-called social order, the mainstream, the public. Fuck the public! That's how I feel. That doesn't mean that I want to go out and act like an ass in public. It just means that I'm not trying to fit into all of that. I don't want to ever have to ever live up to those standards, because to me it's all backwards, like a bunch of lies and hypocrisies, man, and like I said, I need truth in my life, and nothing but...

My heart is with and for the poor, the oppressed and the imprisoned. I don't give a fuck about the public 'cuz they don't give a fuck about me, man. So, in that sense I am a political person, I mean I'm in this for the duration. When I say that I'm an anarchist, I'm not thinking about it like it's just a way of life for a rebellious, youthful spirit, but to me it's a deep-rooted philosophy, a way to see the world and a way to be in the world. This is something that me and the "Comrade Abe" have been focusing with each other in our letters, and I thought I'd bring some of that to light in the interview. But, the thing is, I have my own understandings and realizations of things, for my own reasons. It may have all started for me as an avenue to rebel, but like I said, the tree is still growing. But there are deeper truths behind all of my actions and reasons. My life is real, my struggles are real and I am the way I am for a real reason.

3: When I was a kid, we'd go to school with cherry bombs in our pockets - and set them off! Nowadays, kids are strip-searched & expelled for having cold medication on them. How did you run afoul of the "law?" 9

Answer: Believe me Brother, the "law" does not need *me* to be run afoul of, because the law is foul all on its own. If you ever get a chance to read Fox Butterfield's book, All God's Children, you will see that the history of this so-called justice system was founded on racism and genocidal oppression, which seems to be pretty damn foul to me.

Not much has changed from then to now, they've just got bolder and slicker at deceiving the public and in knowing how to get away with their capitalistic dishonesties.

The law. Naturally I've never cared for it. Never recognized it. I mean, do we honestly need all of these laws to tell us what's right from wrong? I mean we got the law telling us what's right and we got all these organized religions trying to tell us what's right - and still, nothing is right! Nothing is right about the way the world is right now. If there are all these laws - and there are thousands of them - to prevent us from doing wrong, then there must be something deeper going on.

Before Columbus, before Pizarro, and before Hernando Cortez came to this land, there wasn't thousands of laws to tell people how to live or what to do and what not to do. There wasn't even any prisons on the land and people got along just fine. Why is that? You don't read about kids shooting up schools, kids killing their parents and parents killing their own kids, before Columbus. You don't read about drug addiction before Pizzaro. You don't read about rape, child molestations and baby killing before Cortez.

Are all these laws and prisons truly helping society? Is that really the answer? Or is there a better way? If you ask me, I'd say there's something deeper going on, man...

So, like I said, I'd never adhered to these laws made by men. Made by men that I don't even know. Made by men that don't even give a fuck about me. Does that make me a bad person? Yes and no. I was a bad person before I came to prison. I wasn't born a bad person, I wasn't raised a bad person. It's just what I turned into, it's what I became while taking up violence, vengeance and addiction. I was no better than the capitalists - the oppressors, as I myself was trying to capitalize by the means of oppression, even though I didn't understand that until later. I was a pawn in a pig's game and didn't even know it.

I came to prison at the age of 19 for a gang-related stabbing. I joined a gang at the age of 18 because I didn't want to be a citizen or civilian and I had no intentions of working for the man or even trying to conform to the social order of things. So to me, becoming a gangster was my way to disassociate myself from this backwards ass society. It was my way to rebel and it was my way of saying "FUCK THE WORLD!"

Too bad gang-bangers don't bang on pigs, mayors and governors, huhn? Imagine that: "What set you from fool? Democrat or Republican? Where you from fool?"

No, instead, the sets we bang on wear the same clothes as we do, maybe different colors, but the style is the same. Everything is the same,

our rivals are no different than our homies, the same style of dress, the same style of hair, the same lingo, the same names, the same kinds of cars, music and the same taste in women. It's all one culture, divided.

I was walking down the street with 2 females and a car came by and 5 men from an opposing set jumped out and then it was just me against them and I had a knife...

So that's how I ran afoul of their laws, by living by the laws of the street and that's what landed me in the slammer, ten years ago.

I understand now, the error of my ways, and not because the system showed me, but because I took it upon myself to re-educate myself on all levels and I haven't come any closer to acknowledging "the law." I may be lawless, but I'm definitely not heartless. And to me, that's the difference between being good and bad and like I said, Bro, 600 years ago, we didn't have prisons on this land, but, the people still maintained a natural sense of order. Look at the shape of things now. It's sad.

There's something deeper going on. You and I know what it is. We understand that the people who push these laws on us are only doing it so that they can stay in power and so that they can stay in control. But the power they have isn't doing us any good, the control they have isn't doing any good for the people. And if we were to take over, and replace that power with another kind of power, it still wouldn't make things better. Power is the enemy, not people.

I understand what's going on, you understand what's going on, but the people of the public, the ones who like to judge, criticize and scorn the people who are less fortunate than them, I don't think they understand. They don't understand that the justice system doesn't work because it wasn't made to work. They don't understand that this justice system is more of a problem than it is a solution.

It's because they won't allow themselves to see beyond this. They limit the truth and when people put limits on something as sacred as the truth, there could never be freedom.

People won't allow themselves to look beyond this system to a system where there is no system. They won't allow themselves to look beyond this system to a system where there is no power, no control and no oppression.

They're quick to oppose it, to say it could never work, because they're too scared to stand up and make a change. They're scared of change because people are always scared of the unknown. Why? It's because, psychologically, people need to feel a sense of control and stability in their lives.

So, they say anarchy means a state of chaos to objectify their fears. But anarchy does not mean chaos. Anarchy means bringing a natural sense of order into our lives. We don't need these laws to tell us how to live. These laws are not preventing crime and they're not solving any of the problems we face in this country. These laws are no good. Do you know what a placebo is? That's what these laws remind me of, a bunch of placebos. People swallow these pills, thinking it is doing something, but it's not doing anything. These laws are no good.

4. What was the "scene" like for you as a teenager? What was your mindset going through that period and was there a sort of epiphany that set you on a collision course with the state?

Answer: My life as a teenager? Man, Bro, you're going to make me dig up all kinds of dark, cold memories, man. My whole mentality as a teenager was: "Fuck the World," "Fuck Authority" and "Fuck Anybody Who thinks They're Better Than Me."

How do I explain this... Is this an interview or an autobiography?
Damn!

I feel that I was "robbed of my innocence" before the age of 12. Robbed of my freedom, robbed of my youthful happiness and stripped of my childhood. I'd like to say that I was born a free-willed, free-spirited, intelligent child, Anthony. I had a natural contempt for authority and I naturally despised the concept of confinement and limitations. I was an anarchist before I even knew what anarchy was, man.

But it was more than my mother (a single-mother) could handle. She took me to the doctors, to find out what was "wrong" with me. They said that I "suffered" from A.D.H.D. (Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder.) Them and their labels. Fucked up my whole life, bro, and then, that's when the real suffering began.

I remember, with chills in my spine, the first time my mother betrayed me. I was 11 years old and she told me to get in the car 'cuz we were going for a ride, to go see some people, to talk to somebody. It was so subtle, so cold. We walked into the adolescent unit of a mental hospital in Torrance, California. Del Amo Hospital. I didn't know it then, but in Spanish Del Amo means "from the soul," but this is the place that tried to strip me of my soul.

I knew something wasn't right when I seen all those other kids in there and none of them had smiles on their faces. The moment the door closed behind me, I felt it inside of me man, that something very unnatural was about to take place.

Walking down that hallway was like walking the plank on a pirate ship. It took me to get all the way to the end of the hallway, to where the day room was at; the place where the kids with no smiles on their faces were at, to realize what was happening. They were "checking me in!" They wanted to turn me into one of those kids with no smiles on their faces!

Man bro, I turned around and sprinted down that hellish hallway and ran for the door as fast as I could! It was locked!!! No way out. Panic set in, then fear, then anger. All I could do was kick the door, cuss, cry and scream. I was helpless. Powerless. Like when a cat corners a mouse, I felt like a helpless, little mouse, caught in a corner.

Then when one of the staff members came back down the hallway with my mother, to try to calm me down and reassure me, the only thought in my mind was: "Who do I attack? Do I attack my mother or do I attack the staff member?" Both of them became instant enemies. My mother was the one who took me there, but the staff member was the one who wanted to keep me there. So, as you can guess, I started bombing on the staff member! They called a code green over the loudspeaker: "Code Green! Adolescent Unit! Code Green!" Then all kinds of staff members came bolting through the door, they took me to the ground, hard! Bam! I was down. They kept telling me to "Spread eagle! Spread eagle!" I didn't know what that meant, but all I know is I wasn't trying to spread no eagles, so I writhed and wiggled and tried to resist, but there was really nothing I could do. Then they carried me to the "timeout room." On the way there, I tried

to bite, kick and yell. I never once tried to stop resisting, 'cuz I *knew* in my heart that they were doing me wrong, man. Once they got me into the 12 time-out room, they tied me down to a cold bed, with leather straps. They tied me down in 4-point restraints— both arms and both legs.

It was "war" after that! Every time they let me out of restraints, every time they let me come out of the time-out room, the first staff member I saw, I violently attacked! It was back to the time-out room, back in restraints. After a while, they went from 4-point restraints to putting me in 5-point restraints, adding an extra strap around my waist, 'cuz I kept slipping out of my arm straps. I'd get one hand free and then wait until somebody came into striking distance!

All my mind could think of was to strike, hit, kick and attack. There was no feeling of remorse and there was no way that I was going to be friendly with any of the people who held me captive against my own will. I was like a snake in a cage! All I know is that I was betrayed, deceived and handed over to the custody of strangers, by the person who was the closest to me in my life. After that I couldn't trust anybody. Something inside of me would not allow me to. I was deceived, so the natural thing for me to do was to be deceitful towards my captors, until I could get them into striking distance, then I'd unleash all my rage and fury on any and all authority figures.

So, then, the doctors came in. I don't want to talk to them. I don't want to answer their punk-ass questions. I refused to cooperate. I just wanted to go home. *"I don't belong here, I'm not crazy, there's nothing wrong with me."*

So, the doctors break out their little clipboards and their fancy little pens and scribble down their nasty little lies about me, coming up with diagnosis after diagnosis, a new label every time they came to visit me. A new diagnosis, a new disorder. Man, I went from being A.D.D. to A.D.M.O. to impulsive, violent behavior disorder, to manic depressive disorder, to paranoid-schizophrenic. These motherfuckers man, they even tried to tell me that I had frontal-lobe epilepsy. I asked them, *"what's epilepsy?"* They said it means I suffered from seizures. That's when I knew they were full of shit, that's like telling me I was missing my arm, when all I had to do was look at myself and see that my arm was still there. So I railed at them: *"I'm not flopping on the floor. I don't have no fucken seizures!"* They said, *"No, frontal-lobe epilepsy, it means you black-out and go into fits of rage."* I told them that they could go to hell and that they better get out of my face or else I'm gonna have a case of frontal-lobe epilepsy on their ass right now!

They wrote in one of my charts that I was "suspicious and angry." I have the paper right here in my cell. Of course I was suspicious, Moms dropped me off and just left me there, and that they come in and write things about me in their little notebooks, and when I asked them what they wrote they wouldn't tell me and when I asked them to show me, they wouldn't show me. So, of course I was suspicious and of course I was angry. But for them to twist that up and turn that into "delusional, paranoid and violently impulsive" now that was going too far, and even if it were true, it was because that's what I was turned into by my situation, surroundings and circumstances. But deep down inside, I knew there wasn't a damn thing wrong with me.

These doctors are so cold, man, they had my own mother believing 13
everything they said about me, so she signed the waiver to allow them to
put me on medication. And so they doped me up and I became one of their
little fucken lab-rats!

There was nothing wrong with me bro, other than the fact that they
deceived me and locked me up against my own will, my own mother
betrayed me, I felt neglected, I felt abandoned and that was the only source
of my anger. I just wanted to go home. I felt powerless and the only way
for me to take my power back was to attack the staff.

Every time my mother came to see me, I cried and begged for her to
take me home. But, with a sad look on her face she would say, "I can't." I
said, "You signed me in here, so you can sign me out." She said, "I can't."
So after the visit, I'd look out the window and watch her drive away without
me and after she was gone, it was back to the battlefield with a fresh dose
of anger to juice me up!

From the age of eleven to the age of 18, I spent the majority of my life in
placements, institutions, juvenile facilities and mental hospitals. That's
seven years of bad luck. I resisted the entire time. I fought and rebelled
against the staff and against every authority-figure that tried to tell me
what to do or when to do it. I wanted to make it clear to them that the only
person who was in control of me, was me. They had my body and they
could fuck with my mind, but they couldn't kill my soul.

So you see, that was part of my epiphany that set me on a collision-
course against the state, as you say. Against the state of California,
against the state of Colorado, against the state of Nevada, and against the
state of mind!

You call it a collision-course, and that's exactly what it was, colliding
against the course of misfortune, but my epiphany started before that. It
actually started in the 80's, the state of California kicked lots of people off
of welfare. I don't remember why and I can't really research it because I'm
locked in this cell and my research is limited, but I remember that we were
on their little chopping block. They cut us off like a cold turkey. We ended
up losing our housing too and we were forced to live on the streets and in
shelters for a while. Then the child protection services threatened to take
me away from my mother because they declared her unfit to take care of
me, to support me, just like the government was deemed unfit to take care
of and support us.

That was some cold shit, man. So you can begin to see how all of this
has helped shape my anarchist attitude and turned me into a cold hater of
the system, of the government and of all types of authority. Like I
mentioned earlier, my life is real, my struggles are real and I am the way I
am for a real reason.

It always takes me to a cold place when I look back on my childhood. I
never went to high-school, never had a job, and I've never lived a normal
life. I started reading and writing at an early age, 'cuz my mother and step-
father would always take a little extra time with me each day to encourage
me to read and write. It was a good way for me to connect with my
parents, just like guns were what bonded me with my father. But when I
was first institutionalized, it put an abrupt end to all connections with
family, love and life. And all I want is what I've always wanted - to get out
and live a good life.

I don't want people to cry for me when they read this, because there's thousands of people in the system who are just like me, so if people want to cry, then cry for all of us, not just me. But, I just sit in here thinking about Assata Shakur, "She Who Struggles / The Thankful One" and I become more and more thankful for my struggles each day. And just like Bob Marley said: "*No woman, no cry.*"

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5. You're a clear-sighted, active anarchist - a very refreshing phenomenon in this intellectually gunked-up world. Who were your main theoretical influences (both writers, activists & those you've known personally?)...

Answer: Thanks for the flattering comments. Hold on, let me get my sponge out so I can soak those up! The only way for an anarchist to be is active. If we are to reach anarchy then it's necessary to stay active. We have to strive for it, because nothing happens while sitting on your ass, nothing's gonna happen if you just sit back and wait for it to happen. We are human, not spiders. A spider can spin a web, sit back and wait all day, knowing that everything is gonna come in its own. We can't do that. We can't wait for things to happen, because, the way things are, everything's getting worse, nothing is getting better, you feel me?

So it's important that we stay active, it's essential that we keep up the struggle and I'm saying this from a prison cell! Even in a prison cell I can get things done, even from a prison cell I can get things organized, even from a prison cell I can set goals and accomplish them!

I might be confined to a prison cell at the moment, but I'm still as active as a live grenade, and if I can do all of this from a prison cell, there should be no excuse for the people out there who call themselves activists. Nothing is going to happen unless people get up, go out, get together and make things happen.

One of the most important messages that I always try to get across to fellow prisoners in Nevada is that we need to organize ourselves and each other. Have you ever read the book, Ten Men Dead by David Beresford? The way those Irish prisoners were organized - both on the inside and out - is the way we need to be organized.

The people behind enemy lines, especially, need to open their eyes and recognize that it's time for us to get organized, it's time for us to get politicized. It's time for people to recognize the elements that keep us divided and the elements that keep us conquered. Recognize the propaganda that's being fed to you. Recognize the lies that are being told to you. That's one of the things that ABC is real good at - raising awareness! We try to flood these prisons with all kinds of good materials, literature and educational stuff, so that prisoners can take this opportunity to lift themselves up and each other.

I wasn't sentenced to life in prison because I never killed anybody, but it really doesn't matter what kind of sentence these pigs give me man, because in my heart I know that just like the rest of the men and women in prison, I was handed a life sentence to poverty. I was handed a life sentence to drugs and addiction. I was handed a life sentence to struggle.

To be active is to be alive, man. We must provide ourselves and each other the tools to elevate ourselves, the tools to build things up for

ourselves; the tools to rise above oppression, the tools to rise against the system and the tools and teachings that will help us become better people.

I'm not just talking about Guatemalan guerrilla tactics man, 'cuz you could give criminals an opportunity to educate themselves and provide / 5 them books that will teach them knowledge and they can turn around and use that knowledge to become better criminals. So, if we are going to provide nutrition for the mind, then we also need to provide nutrition for the heart, because it's the heart that holds and retains the truth. We can be brain-dead and still be alive, but if the heart dies, the people die. The heart is more vital than the mind and we can't forget that. Just like everything else in life, the heart and mind are connected.

Since I've been in prison I've really dedicated myself to my studies and I've dedicated myself to bettering myself on all aspects, including mind, body and spirituality. I've been struggling to shed my gangster / criminal mentality and transform it into something more meaningful, something more purposeful and I try to connect to things on a higher, more elevated level.

Over the years most of my studies have been on indigenous culture, indigenous history and indigenous spirituality. I am not indigenous but I believe that the indigenous people had a good system, before Columbus, Pizarro and Cortez had to come and fuck everything up. There was a natural sense of order among the people, and, so I'm trying to get to the root of all that, 'cuz therein lies my idea of anarchy.

The indigenous people were truly connected to nature and to the ways of Mother Earth. They knew how to speak to insects and animals and they knew how to listen to what the animals and insects had to say; they could perceive the messages and the gifts that the insects and animals came to bring. They knew how to listen to the plants and the trees. They knew the language of the stars, the sun and the moon.

There used to be a natural system of time on this land, the Mayan people, for example had (and still do) their own calendar system called the Tzolkin, and they could keep track of time by following the stars, the sun and the moon. The calendar we use today is called the Gregorian, and it is out of synch with natural time. We are out of synch with natural time. The ancient people - they understood things that we have become out of touch with.

They didn't have anything around them but nature and each other, so their main source of knowledge was, in fact, nature. They would study, observe and learn from insects and animals. They learned practical ways of living from observing nature. They learned strategy, survival and spirituality from watching the ways of animals. They learned all they needed to know from Mother Nature.

There wasn't anything beyond that and there didn't need to be. The answers were all there, in front of them and around them. Our culture is so fucked up compared to that man, all this technology, people think it's taking us closer to something. Fuck no! It's taking us further away from the root of "all that is."

So, my studies on indigenous culture have been my main theoretical influences. Anarchy, to me, means a natural order of things. I think I'm more of a spiritual person than I am political. But as far as my political influences, I've been reading the work of Alexander Berkman and I have

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een able to get more of a basic understanding of anarchism from his book, The ABC's of Anarchism. George Jackson's book, Soledad Brother was inspiring. I definitely dig George Jackson because I can relate to the way he broke down the racial barriers between prisoners and helped unify that whole prison movement.

I've read Blood in My Eye which is about vanguardism, but that's one of those books where I'd have to read it 3 more times before I actually start to understand it. Not to take anything away from his deep, intellectual mind, cuz I definitely respect and admire the way he educated himself while in prison, but to tell you the truth, I'd rather use the time it would take me to understand Blood in My Eye to read 3 other books that I can understand.

You see Bro, I've never been able to finish a book by Lenin, Marx or Mao. That shit is just too complex for me.

I like reading about the Panthers, 3 or 4 years ago, 'cuz I liked how the Panthers talked about taking control of their own communities and how they talked about taking control of their own lives.

I started out believing in socialism and I wanted to learn about communism, but the more I started to learn, the less I wanted to know. I guess it just wasn't for me.

I'm definitely down with Che, though. His ideas on guerrilla warfare definitely strike a chord with me. I sometimes wonder what he would think about Cuba now, if he were still alive, because if it weren't for Che, Castro wouldn't be anything.

I've had round-about conversations with Sean Swain about Che and Swain had some good theories of his own, but one thing we both agree on is that Che was still "traveling," still searching for his true political identity.

Guerrilla warfare can definitely be related to being and surviving in prison. Even though some might wonder how doing a mental death sentence in solitary enslavement can correlate with guerrilla warfare, Che was able to display to us that guerrilla warfare is a poor man's war, a war for the people, one that teaches you low-tech methods on how to combat - and defeat - an enemy that is more powerful than you. I can dig that. I'm a politically conscious prisoner, so I'm aware of who the true enemy is and I also understand that our very survival while in enemy territory sometimes consists of guerrilla methods and through the means of low-tech guerrilla tactics, because in prison we, sometimes, have to use low-tech methods to make tools, weapons, crafts and other things that help us get by in here.

I like to read about things like guerrilla warfare because I like how it's connected to the whole idea of survivalism. The people on the streets really don't understand that in these graveyards we are already at war, the whole mentality in here is a warrior's mentality, because these pigs are really trying to knock us off in here. It's called **death by incarceration**. So, it's always good to read books like Guerrilla Warfare in order to stay mentally prepared, because like I said, we are already engaged in battle and a soldier who goes to war unprepared might as well cut his own throat before even going to war. We must prepare ourselves mentally and physically, for battle, for survival, for struggle and for everything in between. To be prepared for anything a warrior must train for everything. Study, prepare and train.

As for the people that I've known personally, in prison, who have been influences on my, well first off, I'd like to point out that they've got us

living real foul out here in Nevada, especially up here in Ely's maximum lockdown prison. They've got us slammed down and they purposefully and intentionally put p.c.'s - informants and psych-patients in cells next to us and all around us. It's precariously foul in these graveyards, giving birth to predacious minds and all I see in these locked down units is so much foulness and degeneration. 17

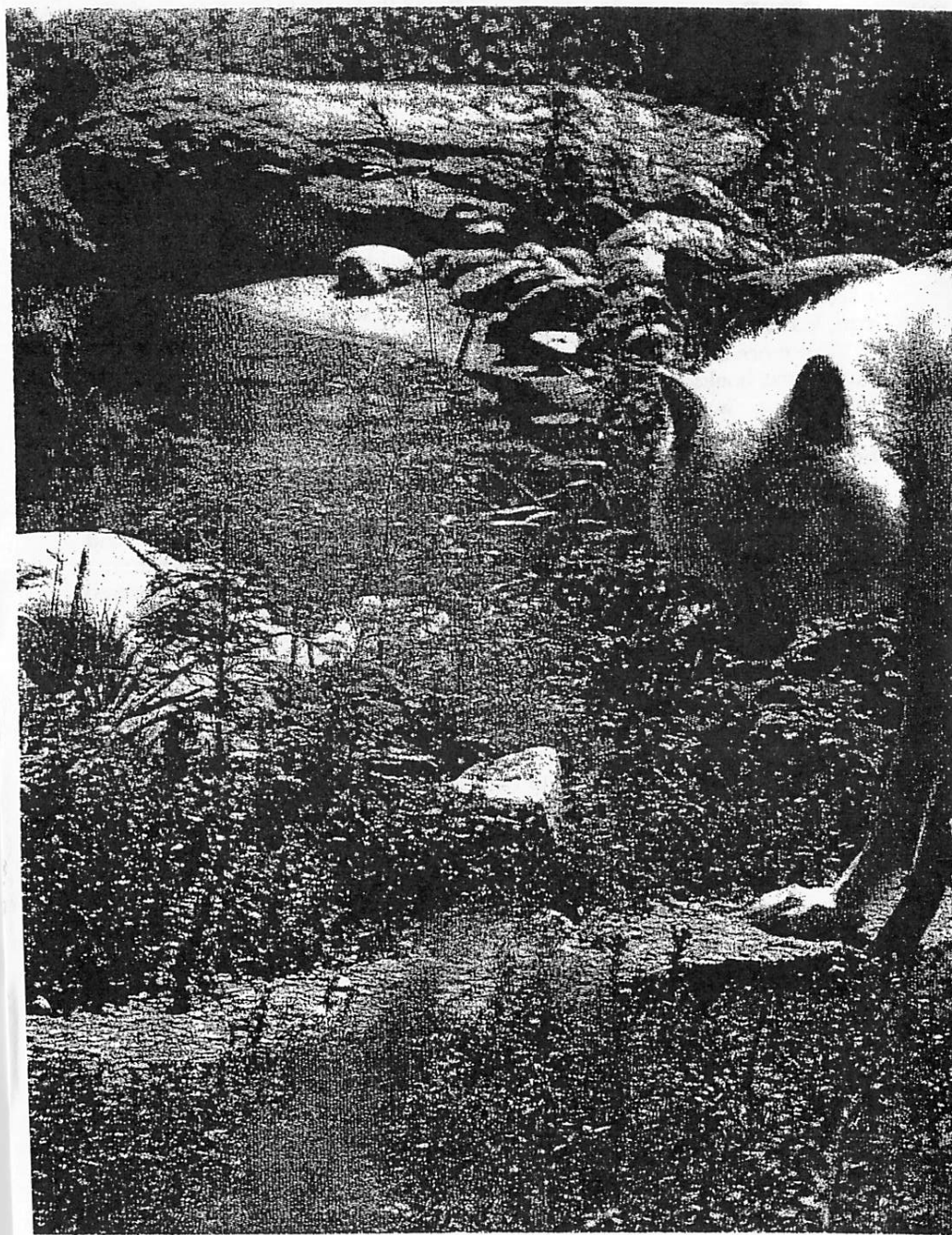
Since I've been down I've always surrounded myself with comrades, brothers and friends who are militant on some level or another. It's always good to see people using this time wisely, to better themselves on different aspects and those are the types of people I can relate to in here.

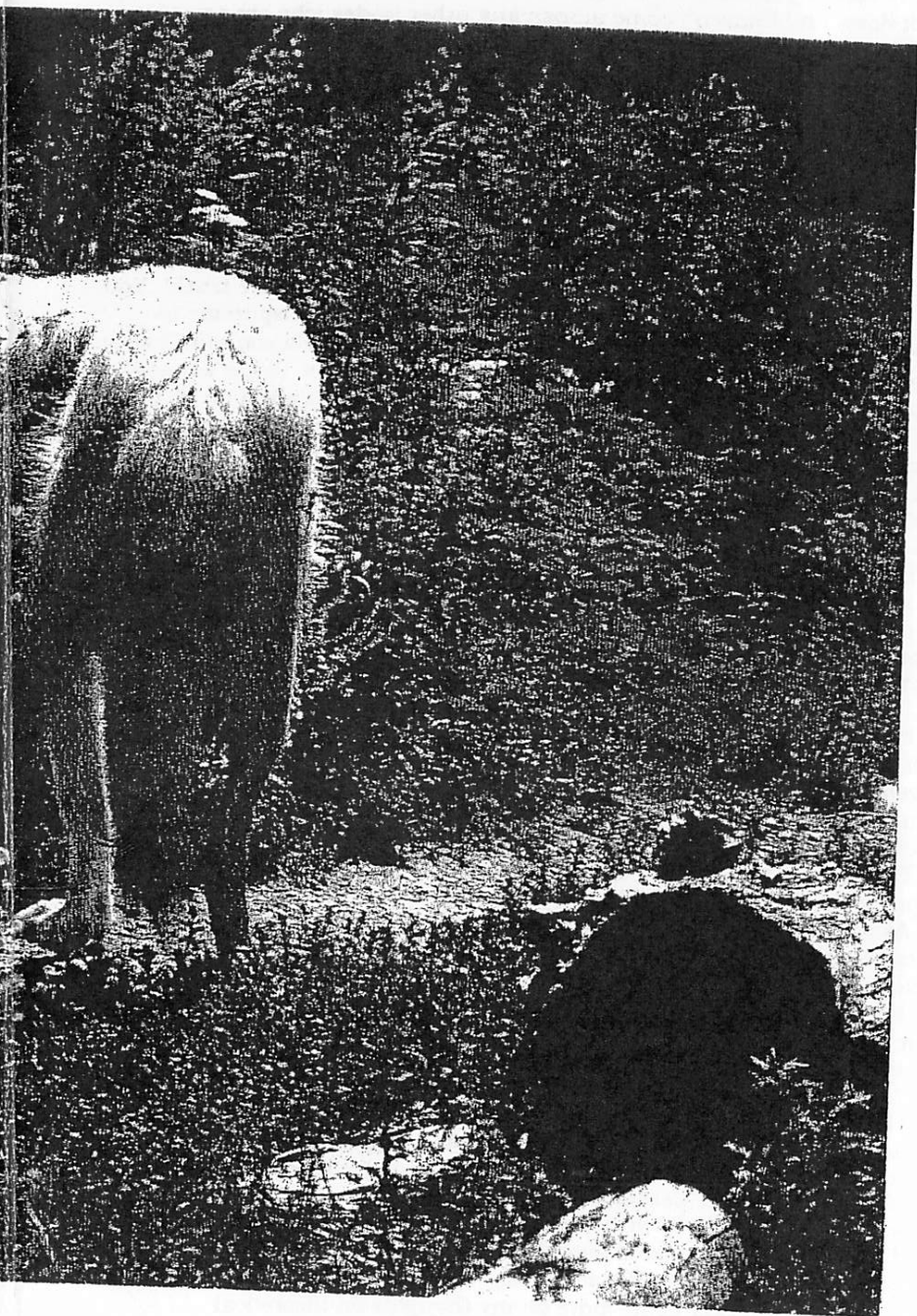
Our resources are limited and our source of materials consists of what our families and friends send in and what other prisoners are willing to share and pass around to other prisoners. This is one of the reasons we need people on the outside to start sending in more books, as often as they can, 'cuz otherwise our education is limited.

There are a few brothers of mine in here, as well as friends, who have passed me books and literature and who have encouraged me to pursue my studies. When I first arrived here at ESP, over 8 years ago, there have been some solid convicts in here who even went as far as studying with me holding discussions and writing book reports with me, and sharing their ideas and insights with me and then questioning me about my ideas and insights, challenging me to think and then make me want to go back and re-think what I had written or said. There have been a couple prisoners in here who I've met that had tremendous writing skills and they've inspired me to start writing my own stuff, and they'd even take the time to give me little pointers here and there, helping me develop my writing skills.

That's the type of schooling I came up under when I first came to Ely State Prison in 1998, and that comes from surrounding myself with people who have a strong desire to rise above all of this degeneration around here and that also comes with being a solid, stand-up convict and because of that schooling, I have always made it a point to share good books and literature with other prisoners, to hold discussions and study sessions, to encourage other prisoners to further their own studies, to develop their artistic and writing skills, to study and practice the law, to exercise, to take a stand, to organize and to unite.

I said that there's a lot of foulness here at E.S.P. and there really is. But on the flip side, there are also some very deep, intelligent and ingenious minds in here, as well. Some of the most resourceful, most brilliant people can be found in prison, believe it or not, and I'm proud to say that there's a lot of good stuff coming out of E.S.P. People are becoming more aware of everything. With awareness comes organization. And, people out there on the streets are beginning to hear more and more about prisoners in Ely, Nevada. Have you heard about the "letter bombs" that put fear into the government's hearts a couple years ago? Allegedly, someone hooked up a match and a striker inside like 20 letters and then sent them out to governors and senators in different states. When they would open the letters, the match would strike the striker and catch the letter on fire. They televised it on the local news, the Utah News and even on CNN. They claimed the letters came from a prisoner here at E.S.P. And, if that's true, that should give you an idea on how brilliant and intelligent the prisoners here at Ely are, and in the minds of these pigs that type of brilliance and intelligence translates into us being "dangerous."





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As far as the people on the streets who have been influences on me, well, of course you have been a great influence and inspiration. You really put it down and I haven't come across any other 'rades who are as dedicated as you are. You do so much and your help goes so far. You send literature to thousands of prisoners and you write and put out good stuff on your own, and then you put that 2007 ABC catalog of yours together in a jiffy and I was pretty impressed with that, especially for the fact that many of the other ABC chapters don't even have catalogs. You write letters to prisoners, you go to rallies, meetings, attend political events and you get up and speak on the issues that need to be spoken on. You are the most active person that I know, and you live up to your words, you don't just speak it, but you live it every day - all day!

I don't say any of this to flatter you. I say it because it's the truth! You give me inspiration with your dedication and spirit. You inspire me in other ways, too like, sometimes I think about how you said you didn't start getting serious into being an anarchist until the mid-90's. What's that - your late 30's or early 40's? Well, I'm only 29, and if you put it down like you do in your 50's, what do you think I can do? What do you think I can accomplish by the time I'm 50? You've done so much in such little time and that inspires me in so many ways, Bro!

Other people who have been an inspiration to me, indirectly, are people like Ed Mead, Dennis Banks, Bobby Sands, Assata Shakur and Tecumseh.

Ed Mead, who has done time in the Washington State Prison system, got out of prison and he's still actively involved in the struggle to this day. He does the *California Prison Focus Newsletter*, which is very empowering to prisoners and he does all kinds of activist work. To get out of prison and continue to struggle and get things going like he has is an inspiration to me.

It's the same thing with Dennis Banks, who co-founded AIM (American Indian Movement.) When he got out of prison and he was a warrior! If you haven't read his book, Ojibwa Warrior, then you're slipping! Dennis Banks is an elder now, but he still does the sacred runs every year and he really puts it down for his people, to this day! That's heart!

Bobby Sands dies for his people and his cause. He's an inspiration. Read the book, Ten Men Dead, by David Beresford.

Assata Shakur. "She Who Struggles." These pigs are still after her. They recently put a million dollar bounty on her head and these punk ass bounty hunters are talking about how they're gonna go out to Cuba and get her. But, they must not be knowing about that Santeria and Voodoo that them Cubans practice. These bounty pigs are gonna go out there and get turned into lizards! They better leave Assata alone! Straight up!

Tecumseh, he was the Warrior of Warriors. His medicine was so strong that he could reflect bullets! The way he took a stand to try to unite all the natives from all the tribes to take one last stand against the European settlers, he was the last of a dying breed! He was from the Shawnee tribe, but to mew, he is the "Last of the Mohicans!"

As for theoretical influences, being in prison has put a limit on my studies; especially in regards to anarchism; which is why I'm always trying to emphasize to people on the streets the importance of sending books into prisoners. But, I'll elaborate more on my thoughts on theoretical influences in the answer to your next question.

6. How would you define yourself as an anarchist? What principles do you particularly feel driven by? How do you apply them to your daily work?

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Answer: Before I get too deep into this question, I want to tell you a little something about myself, to give you a better understanding of who I am as a person.

When I was young, like 8 or 9 or 10 years old, I used to see a lot of homeless people outside of the grocery stores, on benches at the bus stops and outside the local liquor stores. If I had change or extra food, I'd always be inclined to share it with the homeless people.

I used to tell my mother that when I grew up I wanted to be a "bum" and she would get mad. To me, homeless people seemed to be free. They weren't in any hurry to go anywhere or to do anything and it seemed like if they wanted to go somewhere, that they could go anywhere they wanted, just drifting on the land. They didn't seem to care what other people thought of them.

I guess that's when I really started to grasp the concept of freedom, and I guess I felt that's because everybody else in the world seemed to be a slave to some kind of restrictions; always in a hurry, always having somewhere to go.

It was only natural for me to want to help someone less fortunate than me, even though we were poor ourselves. Today, I see a lot of stuff on the news about teenagers and people who throw bottles, rocks and bricks at homeless people and who hit, kick or beat homeless people and to me, that's a reflection of how sick and unmerciful our society is.

I'm disgusted with the way our society is. And if you think about it, 700 years ago, everybody on this land was a vagrant or a "bum" - taking shelter in make-shift houses. Living off the land, etc. And if the people had more than they needed and came across someone who didn't have much, they would give whatever extras they had to the less fortunate ones. It was the natural way to do things. No one starved and nobody went without. The people took care of the people.

So, I guess it just made sense to me when I was young to share my extras with the homeless people. It just seemed like the natural thing to do.

So, when you ask me how do I define as an anarchist, I guess the most basic answer would be to say, "I am what I am" like *Popeye* used to say. Have you ever looked up the word "altruism" in the dictionary? It says "unselfish interest in the welfare of others." To me, altruism is another word for anarchism. Not another word, but a definition to part of what anarchism is.

When I was held captive in those mental hospitals as a youngster, the doctors tried to say that I suffered from "anti-social / psychotic disorder." The truth is that I used to be very social before they stuck me in a completely unsociable environment. And now that I see how sick the society is, it seems like "anti-social" is a good way to be.

In my studies, I read somewhere that anarchy means to be against the system. Before I even knew or understood what anarchy was, I got a necklace tattoos around my neck that says: "Rise Against The System." Those words are inked on me for life, but I guess something inside of me felt like I Would spend the rest of my life trying to rise against the system.

So, I guess I could say that as an anarchist, I define myself as being 22
against the system.

It's kind've funny how the doctors were always trying to say that I suffered from some kind of **disorder**. If you were to ask someone who didn't know any better what they "thought" anarchy meant, one of the most common answers would be "without law and order." So I guess these doctors might have been on to something. Maybe they were saying that I was an anarchist? You think?

Wait a minute, did you ask me what **PRINCIPLES** did I feel driven by? I thought anarchists were supposed to be unprincipled? Are you trying to contradict me, man? You better watch out because you know I have anti-social / psychotic disorder, right? I mean we *are* unprincipled right? How else are we gonna participate in our scheme to cause chaos and disorder across the world, right?... right?... right?..... Hello?

Okay, I'm back. I had to go see "the doctor" real quick. Now, what were we talking about? Oh yeah....

As a member of Anarchist Black Cross, I believe in the work I do as a prison abolitionist. I believe that it is essential to provide prisoners with good, uplifting and educational books, literature and reading materials, so that they can take it upon themselves to better their position, to better themselves and to try to rise above these oppressive circumstances. It feels good to be a part of that.

But, particularly I feel driven by my resistance to authority, my resistance to oppression. I feel driven by my resistance against organized religion and I feel driven by my resistance against wanting to fit in with the idea of the so-called American Dream. I feel compelled to help people, especially the people who have a hard time helping themselves.

I could sit here and list all the things that I'm against but I'd probably sound like a "hater." When the truth is I'm the opposite of a hater. There are too many comrades who are motivated by hate and not enough who are inspired by love. I think that we should love the people, love ourselves, each other and the struggle more than we hate the system, hate the injustices of the government and more than we hate the greedy and abusive people in power. Let our love be the reason, not just our hate.

How do I define myself as an anarchist and what principles do I particularly feel driven by? I feel driven by all principles of anarchism, or else I'd be be a "half-assed" anarchist or a punk like you call them. As far as how I define myself as an anarchist, well besides being against the system, I am also for the people.

When I write I try to educate, inspire, heal. Uplift and motivate. Most of us are so oppressed (especially the people in prison) that no one takes the time or make the effort to try to lift others up. I want to spark some type of reaction. I want to get people to think. People these days don't take enough time to sit back to think. Everybody's constantly on the go. Thinking is good. Thinking sparks creation, thinking sparks revolution. Have you seen all the stuff that comes out of prison, the artwork, the crafts, the writings, the poetry? You'd never imagine that so much beauty could come out of such a dark, ugly place. But it's because people in here are using their time wisely and putting a lot of thought into their creations. Thought gives birth to creation.

So, yeah I am driven by the will to want to inspire people to think and

especially to be able to think for themselves. Also, from most of the anarchist literature I've seen, it's mostly all political. I mean that's good, anarchy is definitely a political philosophy and we definitely need to raise awareness, but we can't forget that most anarchists are also very spiritual. We are spiritual, humanistic people. I know I am and I would kind've like to start putting more of a spiritual element in some of my writings, because I don't see enough of that. 23

Spirituality to me is growth and development. It's what gives birth to creation. When we go through hard times in our lives, when we struggle, when we suffer, when we fall, after we get back up and dust ourselves off, we become stronger, we become wiser, we become whole and we become complete again. We grow from our pain, we develop from our struggles and we take all that and create beautiful things out of all the bad things that have happened to us. That's part of what spirituality is to me and that's also how I define myself as an anarchist.

To be humanistic, is to help people who suffer, help the people in prison to become better people, help the people who just got out of prison, to re-adjust in an unbalanced world and to help them get back on their feet. Sometimes, we have to lift each other up and help others through critical situations. That's the essence of being human.

One of the reasons that I couldn't get into communist literature is because there's no soul in it. There's plenty of stuff in their literature to feed the mind, but, there wasn't anything in there that my soul could connect to.

To me, anarchy is full of spirit, full of soul, not just in our literature but also in our activism. And as long as there's something for my soul to connect to and something that will strengthen my mind, I'm all for it.

I'm not an expert on anarchism. But I am just now beginning to delve deeper into my studies. I think it takes at least 10 years of study - regardless of what topic - before someone becomes an expert. I mean you can't just read one book and then, all of a sudden, you're an expert and you can't just read 3 - 4 books and then you become an expert. It takes time, study and dedication, and when it comes to anarchy, you can't read about it, but you've got to live it, too.

I am what I am, and all I can be is who I am. This is anarchy from the heart. I don't need books to tell me how to be an anarchist, all I truly need is the basic principles of anarchism and I can live off of that or build off of that if I choose to.

I'm not knocking study, because I definitely encourage everybody to study as much as they can and study all things. I'm just knocking conformity, where people just go along with things out of blind obedience and also I don't think anarchy or anything for that matter should be shoved down anyone's throat.

I guess, if I wanted to become an anarchist theorist or an anarchist philosopher it would become even more necessary for me to delve deeper into my studies, but if I was to become an anarchist philosopher I would be a philosopher of life, based on deeply rooted anarchist beliefs.

For now, all I can continue to do is go by what my heart knows naturally, and try to teach the things that I've learned along the way. I don't need to read books about anarchy to be what I already am naturally. Because anarchy is in my heart and all I can do is live by what's in my heart. Living by what's in your heart is kind've like living off the land. All

of your resources are already made available to you. You don't need 26
anything 'cuz everything that you truly need in life is already provided to
you. Living off the land and living by my heart, that's the type of stuff I'm
on.

I've sat in solitary for many years, since a young age and when you sit
in solitary and in resistance, you do a lot of thinking. You think so much
that you learn to think for yourself. When you're able to think for yourself
not only are you able to formulate your own ideas, but you don't allow
yourself to be confined to anyone else's thoughts or ideas. There is nothing
more empowering or liberating than to be able to think for yourself. The
dictionary says that a philosopher is a reflective thinker, and I can attest to
the fact that there are a lot of reflective thinkers in prison.

I am an anarchist comrade. I am a free-spirited, free-willed person. I
am passionate about life; passionate about love, passionate about equality
and I am passionate about freedom!

I am a compassionate, caring, and understanding person. I will remain
engaged in struggle. I will remain engaged in resistance. I will remain
engaged in activism and I will remain engaged in combat.

I strive to combat oppression. I strive to combat power. I strive to
combat government. I strive to combat slavery (which still exists in this
country.) I strive to combat all levels of the system, because the system
oppresses, because the system divides and because the system conquers.

I resist the powers that be. I resist the powers that brainwash. I resist
the powers that force a systematic education down our throats and down
the throats of our children. I resist the powers that promote conformity
and I resist the powers that try to control the minds of the masses with the
ideas of organized religion.

I struggle for the People. I struggle for the poor, the oppressed and the
imprisoned. And by myself or with others, I will continue to struggle
against all that conforms, confines and restricts.

What is a comrade? I am a comrade. I'm a worker. I strive to uplift
myself and others. I strive to elevate myself and others. I strive to rise
against the system, either by myself or with others.

And here I lay, in the belly of the beast, and I refuse to lay down and
die. I refuse to drown or be digested. I refuse to give up or give in, and if
this beast don't spit me out or shit me out, I'm going to bust his belly open
from within!

**7. How do you cope with being in prison with such a deep longing for
freedom? What do you have to do to ward off assaults and bogus
ticket write-ups?**

Answer: A deep longing, indeed! But, it's all about being in the here and
the now. It's all about resistance. Resistance is what gets me through this
madness, man. It's all about keeping apposite outlook on life,
maintaining a strong and positive mental attitude. When I write letters to
people on the streets, they always seem to be so surprised that I'm such a
positive person in the face of all this adversity. People are attracted to
positive people. Nobody wants to be around someone who is always
negative. They'd rather be around people who laugh and smile; they would
rather be around people who are happy, outgoing, bright, snappy and

positive. So, I try to keep that in mind, because that always helps me get through this-

I like to read, I like to write, I like to eat good and stay healthy. I try to exercise as often as I can. I take vitamins, drink lots of water, because to me, it's all a part of resistance. They might have my body confined to these cells, but at the end of the day, the only person who is in control of my body is me. That's what it's all about, resistance. I stay off psychotropic drugs. That's a slow death. You've got to stay about your wits in here, man, 'cuz if they kill your mind, they kill your soul. They got my body, and they'll never get my mind and as far as my soul goes, I keep that above the treetops, like Tecumseh says. So they can't ever touch that. They could never get a piece of my soul.

I'm not going to get into details, Bro, but they tried to set me up for my downfall in August 2006. They tried to do me in like George Jackson, but I stood up and fought for mines, and instead I ended up getting 2 years in the hole, because they exaggerated their story in my write-up. So yeah, they're foul, and I've got to stay on my toes and be ready for the unexpected.

This is madness. On all levels, this is foul. So, my survival in here consists of trying to rise above all of this degeneration. And everything is locked down. This prison has been locked down for years. Every unit is locked down except the worker's unit and they'd never let me go to that unit because of alleged "internal problems." I wouldn't want to go to the worker's unit, anyways. I wouldn't feel right to have all of these privileges while everyone else is being punished for nothing.

So to me, I'm just trying to co-exist while under these locked down situations. I'm trying to co-exist with my comrades, with my enemies, co-exist with these pigs and co-exist with just about everybody around me, 'cuz everybody is locked down, just like me. The cold part about it is that these pigs even have strategies to make sure that we aren't co-existing, even while locked down and one of their main strategies is to keep informants, P.C.'s and psych-patients all around us, in each wing, on each unit. They have lots of strategies because they're heartless.

As long as no one's trying to put their hands on me, I'm cool. As long as these pigs aren't constantly in my face, telling me what to do, when or how to do it, I'm cool. As long as they're not fucking with my mail, I'm cool. As long as they're not fucking with my music, I'm cool. And as long as they show respect to my friends and family when they come up to visit me, I'm cool. As long as they're not going out of their way to fuck with me, I'm not going to go out of my way to catch another "assault on an officer" case.

There is no true solidarity in here. There is no true unity. So, we are taught to believe that we can't trust anybody and we assume mentalities of selfishness, corruption and predation which keeps the foulness going. It's disgusting.

The people on the streets don't truly understand the situations we are going through in here and they don't understand that this system is cutting us off from our abilities to be social. They don't understand that this system is cutting us off from our abilities to be loving, caring, kind and compassionate people. They don't understand that this system is cutting us off from our abilities to be humans,

The people on the streets need to understand that we need people to get involved in our individual struggles as prisoners, as well as our collective struggles. We need people to help us with our transitions back into society. We need to know that we are loved and cared about. We need to be supported on all levels and treated like human beings. We need our friends, families and activists to get involved with our lives, on an individual basis. Activists especially, need to understand that we need them to get more involved with us on deeper levels, helping us build in here, helping us organize in here, helping with transforming ourselves back into a sociable, caring and understanding people and helping us overcome the true nature of our oppression and assisting us with our transitions back into society. We need people out there to get involved and help us with the process of de-institutionalizing ourselves! 26

I'll get more into that in a minute, but first let me focus on your question about warding off assaults. The best way to ward off assaults is by not putting yourself in confrontational situations. You've got to respect people and not allow people to disrespect you. You've got to show others respect and at the same time, you've got to let it be known that you're not the type of person who's going to let people walk all over you. There might be a few who walk around like "King Kong" but deep down inside, people just want to get along, because nobody really wants to live in a constant war zone all the time. Nobody wants to always have to be looking over their shoulders, watching their backs all the time. That ain't living. So, deep down inside, people just want to get along. But we're all men and we all have our egos and our foolish pride. So, you know how it is. In an environment like this, our minds become warped and that pride and our egos - in a mixture of prison madness - provides a combustible combination.

In a primitive society such as prison, the normal thing to do seems to be for prisoners to repress their emotions and to never express their feelings. Because to do so, would be the same as exposing your vulnerabilities and displaying weakness. Because we have been taught to believe that everybody is out to manipulate us in one form or another, that others prisoners are out to get us, out to use us, and we are trained to believe that if others know what makes you tick and click, they can wind you up like a jack-in-the-box doll. So we repress our emotions and consider a display of certain emotions to be equivalent to a display of weakness. Without emotions, we aren't truly human. So, we undergo a type of de-humanizing process in here.

If people began to realize that "getting along" could actually be our best survival tactic, instead of the other way around, then we'd really be making some progress in here. I would suggest that prisoners look up the word "co-exist" in the dictionary and learn the definition of "co-existence" - not what it means on paper, but what it means in our everyday lives.

As far as bogus write-ups, I really don't care. If they're gonna write me up, then, they're gonna write me up. Oh, well! When it comes to the police and their write-ups, I just keep an "I don't-give-a-fuck-attitude." I'm already locked down, so who gives a fuck? That doesn't mean I'm gonna go out of my way to get into trouble. It just means that when they come at me with all their petty ass rules and regulations, there's nothing they can say or do to affect me. They've got us all locked down, no programs or group

recreation or nothing. There's really no reason for anyone to cooperate with these pigs and they're not giving us any kind of incentive to even want to follow their rules.

The rules are so petty. They treat us like kindergarteners. No, I take that back, they let kindergarteners run around on the playground, swing on the swings and play in the sandbox together. They don't let us do that. They belittle us with all of this pettiness and degrade us with their rules and none of this is going to help us. It stunts our growth and development. It doesn't rehabilitate us. It doesn't do anything to help us get back into society and become better individuals. It's actually part of their de-humanizing process. They know exactly what they're doing. It's a sad situation bro, and what's even sadder is that the people on the streets have no idea of what we're going through in here.

This is why I say people need to get involved in our lives and get involved with our struggles on an individual level. We need people to help us with some type of de-institutionalizing process, especially for the people who are getting out. They should be willing to want to go through a de-institutionalizing process at least 2 years before they're released. It should be like a 2-year program.

The more that a prisoner keeps his mind on the prison setting and on prison life, the more the prisoner becomes comfortable with his/her surroundings and warped environment, the more institutionalized the prisoner begins to become. It is a subtle process. It's a process that happens even though you don't realize it's happening.

Like I've already pointed out, prison is such a primitive place that it's inevitable that most prisoners get sucked into the idea that a prisoner must adapt to his surroundings in order to survive. Although it may seem like it's better to try to fit in just to keep your head above the water, for those who will eventually be released, it's a self-destructive process in the long run, because it doesn't do anything for a prisoner's adjustment back into society. If a prisoner were to get released with the hard-core prison mentality, he's bound to end back up in the bonds of incarceration.

When you put someone in prison for a long time, the prisoner is cut off from society for so long that he/she becomes institutionalized, whether they realize it or not. Society takes it for granted that prisoners are becoming reformed or rehabilitated while in prison. They don't seem to understand that prisoners cannot expect any true help from the system. They're not here to rehabilitate prisoners and it's not their job to rehabilitate prisoners. They're not going to do anything to get a prisoner ready to re-enter society.

For prisoners to de-institutionalize themselves, in order to prepare for a healthy life of freedom, they must go through a process of breaking down the hard-core mentality, while replacing it with a healthier outlook on life and providing ideas on how to live and maintain in society.

We have to take it upon ourselves to initiate these types of processes or start our own programs for prisoners, while implementing suitable principles of honesty, equality and self-sufficiency, pertaining to each prisoner's own culture. We have to take it upon ourselves because we cannot and should not depend on the same system that imprisons us - to help us?

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I went through my first 8 years of incarceration without being able to imagine my release. Sometimes I would close my eyes and try to imagine myself walking through those prison gates, and trying to get myself to feel what it would be like, but I would draw a blank each time. I was so caught up in the prison madness, ripping and riding against the police and trying to be a gangster and a convict that the last thing I was thinking about was going home. Now that it's getting closer to the time for me to get out of here, I know I need to start making mental plans for a life beyond these prison walls, but it's still hard to get myself to think about a life after prison.

We need people out there to get involved with prisoners on a real, more human and deeper level. We need help with understanding ourselves and our struggles, both inside and outside of prison and we need people to connect with us on all types of levels, just like people out there need to connect with them on all types of levels. We need real, true, genuine help from people out there.

8. Survey & critique the anarchist landscape. Who's doing serious work, who isn't and why? Do the same for non-anarchist progressives and revolutionaries.

Answer: Well, I'm still traveling that landscape bro, but I will point out that ABC has given me a tremendous amount of support, especially in helping start up this prison chapter in Nevada, which also allows me to continue with the movement that I already had going out here, which aims to bring a solid support structure for Nevada prisoners.

Also, I must give a shout-out to Charles Perroud in Canada, who has given me much needed support. I'll be getting things going with him very soon, which will also involve some of the comrades of ABC. So things are starting to come together on this end.

I'd like to give a shout-out to all of the warrioresses who have either been involved in my struggles with me or who have offered me encouragement along the way. Warrioress Abigail of the Burning River chapter, Warrioress Katy in Oakland, Warrioress Gina in San Francisco, Warrioress Julia of the Chicago chapter of ABC and last but not least, Warrioress Amanda (Ms. Charm) in Reno. Soon we will be coming together to start a collective and also we will be doing some benefit shows this summer.

On another note, the thing that upsets me is a lot of these free books for prisoners places that say they don't provide books to Nevada prisoners. Man, we don't have nothing going on out here for us, why don't you want to help us out? So, I've spoken to Ryan of the Houston chapter of ABC and I think he's going to try to help me get things cracking with some of these P.A.R.C. people in Berkeley, CA (Prison Activist Resource Center) On their form letter, they have all these "well known" names like Angela Davis and Dr. Mutula Shakur and I'm thinking "Damn! These people must really be serious! They must really have things going on. Maybe I can get at them and see if we can get something going." But, when I sent them my letter, "*Greetings From the Graveyard*" all they sent me was an old, outdated resource guide (the same resource guide they sent me four years ago) and a form letter that starts out "we apologize for this form letter." Then it goes

on to suggest that they're overwhelmed with thousands of requests and letters from prisoners and I guess that means they are already too involved with previous projects and other prisoners to take up any new projects. But, this is the *exact* same letter they sent me four years ago! It just makes me wonder, you know? If they're really involved with anybody or anything, I kind've wonder with who and what they're doing and I'd really like to know why they wouldn't want to get involved with me, with our struggles out here in Nevada? So yeah, I'm a bit disappointed and I wonder if Angela Davis is really involved with this P.A.R.C. thing?

There are a lot of different groups out there that I'm still trying to figure out exactly what they're about and what their involvement with prison abolition, or prisoner support work. I'd like to collaborate with as many of these groups as I can and try to see if we could "network" - if we could help each other out.

Everybody seems to have the same problem - they're getting overwhelmed with too much mail and they don't have enough staff to answer all the letters on time. Do we really truly need all these different political groups and organizations if nobody can get anything done when everybody's trying to do the same type of work? Why can't all these different groups come together under one flag, since we all aim towards the same objectives? I mean if you have one group or organization over here with only one person involved, answering letters, making calls, etc. and one group over there with only one person involved doing the same thing, well then why can't they both agree to make some-kind of sacrifice to come together and do the same thing, together? Wouldn't we be able to get more done this way? Maybe it sounds easier when said than it is when done, I don't know?

But, is that what activism has come down to? Writing and answering letters? I thought there was more to activism than that? It's important to get the message across, that we really do need serious support from people on the streets, especially if we're to get anything accomplished in here. We need to get things established both inside and out. We are living foul in these graveyards and this system isn't here to rehabilitate, educate or reform us in no way, shape or form, do you understand? We need to take it upon ourselves - both inside and out - to really get things going for ourselves. We need to take it upon ourselves to build, organize and educate ourselves. The people in prison cannot do it without a real level of support from the outside and the people on the outside can't do it unless the people on the inside are serious about making serious changes.

Let me talk more about activism. Why do we call ourselves activists? Why? I mean this is something each person has to think about, because some people call themselves activists to try to fit into a specific lifestyle and some people are activists because they are driven by the idea that things need to change. So, I believe that each of us, myself included, must get in touch with our own personal reasons for calling ourselves activists, radicals, revolutionaries, or whatever, and once we've examined ourselves closely enough, then we should consider which struggles, movements, changes we'd like to get involved with and then, we must ask ourselves how are we going to make successful, positive and productive changes? What needs to be changed and what are we going to do to bring those changes about? Is it just a lifestyle for us, or is it also a chance to

something real; a chance to do something good, not only for ourselves, but for others, and especially for those who suffer, struggle and starve? 30

I don't know Anthony, you know, I've tried to reach out to lots of people man, but I guess they don't take me seriously because I'm a prisoner, or maybe it's because I'm not a political prisoner. I don't know. But even from my solitary confinement cell, I've been able to get a lot of things going for the movement of Nevada and for ABC as well. So I think that says something, right?

I've seen a lot of nothing everywhere. Everybody seems to be stuck in the mud. Not enough people, not enough money, not enough resources, not enough time, not enough heart, not enough dedication, not enough commitment.

It's a combination of a lot of things. Not enough of this and too much of that. Not to mention that we really need to change our tactics (in my opinion) devise new strategies and come up with new plans. We need to be willing to take certain risks at appropriate times, make specific sacrifices when it's necessary and advantageous, and we need to come together, unite and organize.

Think about it, all of these years we've been doing the same stuff, and with little to no changes or accomplishments. I mean is it even appropriate to call ourselves prison abolitionists? How many prisons have we abolished? That's a bold term to be calling ourselves, maybe too bold.

We call ourselves revolutionaries but are stuck to an old, tired-out pattern. We call ourselves revolutionaries but we've been following the same path and the same blueprint for over 30 years. If you ask most revolutionaries what revolution means, they'll tell you it means change. But what has changed? To make changes, we ourselves must change! To make effective changes in the system (if that's our goal) we must make changes in our strategies, we must make serious changes in life. That's like a "leader" calling himself a leader when he's following the same design that the leader before him was following. Not that I believe in the idea of dictatorship, 'cuz I don't, but if we're going to make any real changes for the better of humanity, we must first change our thinking, and we have to stop following the same old patterns we've been following for so many years and we have to start taking direct action more often. Sitting behind a desk doesn't get things done. We must get more physical in our activism. We must make changes through our direct actions.

So for now, I'd like to give a "shot-out" to all of the ABC networks, to Charles Perroud, to the people of the D.R.I.V.E. movement, to Bonnie Kerness, to the people of A.F.S.C. and I'd like to give a shot-out to Eunice McAllister in South Carolina. She's an 80-year old woman who is still going strong for the people in prisons all over!!! Now *that's* dedication.

As for everybody else, I'm still trying to figure you out. I'm not saying nothing bad about you, I just want to know how serious you really are, how committed you are to your work, to our struggles, to your activism? So, if you're reading this interview, get at me, let's collaborate. We don't have anything going for us in Nevada. We could use your support, if you'd like to branch out and start a chapter out here in Nevada, we could get something going. We need that type of love. We need that type of commitment. We need that type of support! And for the individual people out there who would like to get involved in some type of activism but don't

know what to do or where to start, I hope you have enough courage to write me a letter. We have a lot of things going on here in Nevada and we could really use your spirit and support. It doesn't matter where you're at, 3 / there's plenty of ways you can get involved in this cause! Please contact me!

9. Do you have a parole date? What do you hope and plan to do, if & when you join is in "minimal" - the "outs?"

Answer: Parole isn't freedom. Parole is a less restricted form of imprisonment. It's like a dog on a leash, man. If I were to get out on parole, I'd have all kinds of people breathing down my neck - people I don't know and who could care less about if I'm free or if I go back to prison - I'd have my parole officer breathing down my neck and then he'd make me go work for the man and then there's another motherfucker I've got to worry about breathing down my neck!

As an anarchist, I can't have that. I can't live like that. So, yeah, I have a parole date, but unless something serious comes up like an illness in the family or if the revolution starts or something like that, then I'm not really concerned with parole. I'd rather expire.

I just want to get out and live my life. I've been living this crazy, sad, locked up life on and off since the age of eleven (11.) Right now, I am 29 years old with my whole life ahead of me. I'm feeling good about my life, I'm feeling good about my health, I'm feeling good about my body, I feel good about my future, because whatever happens from here on out could never be as bad as all that's already happened. All the bad times are behind me now.

From the early part of this interview, you'd think my life is nothing but a sad story, but I don't feel that way. It feels like my life is just now about to begin. It feels like I have my whole life ahead of me, man.

I still have my doubts and I have fears about getting out, but fear has always been there to challenge me.

To be completely honest with you, I am going to need so much support from the anarchist community to help me make the transition from being a prisoner to being a free person, because you've got to understand, I've never went to high school, never had a job, never drove a car. I don't know how to live out there in that society. I don't know how to make it. I don't want to live like that either.

When I turned 18, the system couldn't hold me anymore. They wanted to hold me, but I knew they had to let me go. They tried to convince me to commit to outpatient programs, half-way houses, adult group homes, etc. But I had enough of the system. I didn't want any more "assistance" from the system. I didn't want nothing more to do with the system. I was through with that.

So, I got out and said to hell with a job. I don't need nobody telling me what to do, I said to hell with the public, I don't fit into that scene. So instead I did what seemed to be the best choice for me at the time and I joined a street gang.

I still have my homies. I could still go back to that if I wanted to, but there's nothing for me to go back to. There's nothing back there for me man. I'm hoping to go forward not backwards. Going back to that means

coming back to this and if that's all I've got, then fine, but, I think there's more out there for me.

This is all I know. This is all I've known for the past who knows how many years. But I have enough sense to know that this ain't life - this ain't "living." So, it may sound sad, but it's going to take a lot to break these chains that hold me down. It's going to take a lot of love and a lot of support from friends, comrades, family and loved ones, to help me free myself of these oppressive and psychological chains that keep me bound to the ground, you feel me? 32

People don't understand the psychological factor to this oppression that prisoners face. They might think that once you get out of prison, it's all over and everything goes back to normal. But I don't know what normal is and it seems like there's a bigger prison out there than the one I'm in now. I might get out of prison but it's still going to take a lot to lift the "psychological chains" that bind me! People need to understand that a lot of us are still chained by psychological shackles even after their release. You don't just get out of prison and everything's okay. There's an important transition that has to take place. It's not going to be easy to make that transition and maintain, but nothing has been easy and anything worth struggling for is worth living for, you know? So, I'm definitely up for the challenge.

Before I get out I'd like to study a little bit on things like communal living and stuff like that because those are the options that I'm leaning towards. There's a lot of things I'd like to research before I get out, a lot of thinking to do. I don't want to leave this place until I'm ready and I don't want to walk out of here without a plan.

I need support from the anarchist community, to help me become self-sufficient and if they can do that there's no doubt that I'll be there for them on any level, on anything they need me for, you know? I am committed to whoever's committed to me, and I am down for whoever's down for me and I'll get up for you if you'll get up for me.

Right now I'm studying a little bit on things like "consensus decision-making" and "direct action" because I'd like to remain active and involved after my release. I'd like to do a lot of the type of stuff you do, speak at conferences, run a chapter and a zine distro, support prisoners and lots of others things. It's not just a lifestyle for me, you know? I mean, it is a lifestyle, but I feel like I'm dedicated to being an anarchist and dedicated to trying to make effective changes. But I have to delve deeper into my own personal reasons of being an anarchist as well, because I don't want to chase illusions and I don't want to become disillusioned, do you understand?

My heart goes out to the poor, the oppressed and the imprisoned. My heart goes out to the children of the ghetto, my heart goes out to the children of addiction, my heart goes out to the abused and neglected children. My heart will forever be with these people. With this struggle, because these are my people, this is my struggle.

I definitely want to get involved and I'd like to remain active after I'm released from the belly of the beast, as of right now I don't really have a plan, but I hope to have one before I'm released. All I really know is that I want to get myself together and my life in order first and foremost, and I really don't know what I'm going to do or how I'm going to do that, because

the last thing I want to do is get out and work for the man, because that's an accident waiting to happen!

If there's a way for me to get out and become self-sufficient without having to be a wage-slave, I'm all for it. Also, I've been entertaining the idea of maybe getting a job working outdoors, or in a national park or something, so if I do have to get a job it can be one where I'm closely involved with nature.

So you see brother, there's a lot for me to think about before I'm ready to get out of here. Like I said, I don't want to leave without a plan and I don't want to leave unless I have something to go out there to, I don't want it to be like it was the last time around.

Up until now my life has never been easy, all I truly believe that life is not supposed to be easy all of the time for anyone. Everybody must endure pain, hardships and struggle in some point of their lives. Things can't be good all of the time. Life just doesn't work that way. There can't be good without the bad. There can't be yin without the yang you know? Our hardships, our struggles, our pain, it's all there for a real reason, to help us, to strengthen us, to make us wiser and more caring individuals.

I feel good about life, because I can take the good with the bad, the bitter with the sweet and keep on moving. All my pain and suffering, to me, that's like a gift. I feel blessed to have been given so much pain and so much heartbreak in my life man, 'cuz now I can go out and enjoy the sunshine. I can live with the bugs and the insects. I can go out and live under the blue skies. I can enjoy life now. I can go out and share my joy with others, share my stories, share my struggles. I can take my heart out of my chest and put it in someone else's hands for a moment or for an eternity.

Do you understand what I'm saying bro? I'm ready for the world (almost.) Pain and hardship has prepared me, and life has shown me that I could get through and past any obstacle or situation put in front of me.

10. Thanks, Brother! Expound at length at what you think we need to hear!

Answer: Thanks for the interview bro. I feel these interviews are a very important addition to the literature we put out - especially these written interviews, because you can really take your time answering the questions. You can research something before giving an answer and you can put a lot of thought into what you are saying, and like I said, thought gives birth to creation.

There are a couple of things I'd like to expound on before we wrap this up. Where I come from I've seen a lot of people chasing the illusory idea of power, thinking they have to be better than the next man, thinking they have to be stronger, wiser or have more money than the next man and that's crazy.

There can't be any unity or organization when everybody's chasing after something as slippery as power. The only thing power brings to us is corruption. I've seen too many good dudes turn into scandalous individuals - chasing after power and money.

Chasing power is like chasing a pipe dream. Have you ever seen a dog race where the dogs run around the track chasing after a rubber rabbit?

Well, it's kind've like that. We're not in control, the pigs put the rubber rabbit out there and we chase it. But the only one who wins is one of the pigs. Think about it, what power do we really have over life and destiny? In prison what power do we have? The only power we really have as people is power over ourselves. It's called "self-empowerment!"

Self-empowerment, now there's an ideal! If you have control over yourself, then nobody can control you. You don't have to be more powerful than the next man to survive. All you have to do is maintain control over yourself, over your choices in life, over your thoughts, over your feelings. Because when you let others do your thinking for you, you're giving your power away. If you let others control your choices and options, then you give your power away. If you let others control how you feel, then you're giving your power away.

Chasing power is bullshit. Chase knowledge, for the right reasons, not the wrong reasons. Chase freedom, because all of the other things you're chasing, man, those things aren't getting you free and when you get them, they're not going to make you any happier. Rubber rabbits, that's all they are. They were probably put there by operatives of the system in the first place, because they probably want you to chase them, probably so they can control your options - while you're out there thinking you're gonna get something. But all you're really doing is running around in circles, and the only one who wins is the asshole who put the rubber rabbit out there for you to chase.

Look at all of the people who are in power now. What good are they doing for the people? None! They don't care about the people, they don't give a fuck about us, all they care about is being powerful. With their power, they keep us down, they keep us oppressed and they keep us divided. A divided people is a conquered people. Just 'cuz we are all on the same track together chasing after the same rubber-rabbit doesn't mean we're together, believe that, 'cuz we're gonna be fighting for the rubber rabbit as soon as one of us gets it by the neck! With their power, they got us chasing rubber rabbits and running around in circles, like damn fools.

So I say, "Fuck Power!" Power is bullshit. Do you really want to be like the people in power? Do you want to climb the hierarchy just so you can go from being oppressed to being the one who oppresses people? Is that what life is about to you?

Before I end all of this, there's one more thought I'd like to share with the people on the outs. I just want the people out there to understand how important it is to get involved with the struggles of prisoners. And try to get them to realize that the struggles we go through in here are all combined to the struggles of the community.

So, it could be said that by helping prisoners overcome these oppressive circumstances, you are helping out your community. You're even helping out your community by helping the prisoners who have life-sentences, if you're helping them with vital things like acquiring a genuine respect and kindness for humanity.

There are so many ways that people out there can get involved in prisoner's struggles, because there are so many people in prison and we all have different struggles as well as common struggles. A lot of us in here have been in prison for so long that we've been institutionalized, even to the point that some of us have become scared of getting released.

"Why go back out into a world we know nothing about, when we've become comfortable with living like this?"

That's one of the many diluted thoughts that often floats in the back of our minds. It's a very sad situation, but a very real situation.

So if you can get involved with a prisoner and help him with the process of de-institutionalizing himself before his release, help him with his transition back into society, help him overcome the psychological chains of oppression, then you'd be involved in something very real and very humane.

We need support from people on the outside. We need to overcome these tragedies. We need help with becoming loving, caring and generous people. We need help with transitioning back into society, and lifers need help with connecting with their humanity while living in such a lifeless place. It's a process. It's a mental process, a spiritual process and it's an important process of life and we need help with that process. Whether we're going to be getting released soon, or in 10 years from now, or if we're doing a life sentence, prisoners need help with these natural processes of life, while living in an unnatural, locked down environment.

This is real, probably one of the realest struggles you'll ever get involved in! Please understand that we cannot get that help from the system. We need help from our own people, from the concerned people out there, because this system wasn't built to turn us into reformed individuals and even if it was, what would we be "reforming" to? We'd be reforming to their sick culture and their sick standards. That's more like conforming than being reformed. But this system doesn't really care, either way. The point is, we need all the support we can get from the outside if we are to overcome this oppression. We need all the support we can get from the outside if we are going to rise above this degeneration.

So please, get involved with a prisoner's struggle if you can! We may not be able to abolish all prisons (or maybe we can) but we can still get involved with some important things that will help in bettering humanity. There's lots of stuff people can do to get involved. You can call it prison abolition work if you want, or you can call it something else. It doesn't matter what you call it. It only matters what you do and what you get done! So, please get involved! My heart goes out to all of those who have been a positive force in our lives. Thank you for all your compassionate blessings!

In Truth and Towards Anarchy,
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