

"How Prison Has Affected Me"

Prison over the years has impacted my life in a variety of ways, and I doubt that I'm alone in feeling this way and or suffering from these effects. First and foremost is the stigma attached to the fact that I had been in prison. Often times an employment opportunity dries up immediately upon seeing that I have a criminal background and then knowing this, frequently kicks me into lower paying jobs. Many jobs that I'm qualified for I never get to show or prove myself because I'm turned away without being given an opportunity for an interview which an interview affords prospective employers to get a better feel of who I am. Then there is the self disappointment over what winded me up having to go to prison in the first place. Also the difficulties of being a father and husband while in prison. It's hard to do these things over the phone. Not to mention the ways prison affects communities by taking men and women away that otherwise could be positive and influential for our youth. Another way prison has affected me is the fear for my race. When I see the disproportionate number of African Americans incarcerated and the sentences they are given it really makes me wonder about our future as a nation. At the end of the day, I guess it all boils

down to me and what I want out of life. And partly because of prison, I am stronger and more determined to have a good life despite any mistakes or whatever life throws my way. So, most definitely prison has affected my life as well as those closest to me but it is up to me to determine how it affects me as a person.