

Joel Hayden

91319

Maine State Prison

807 Cushing Road

Warren, ME 04864

I'm looking at my watch and it's about time for a change to come. Why put off till tomorrow, what can be done today. My release date on paper is Neveruary 31st 9999. But I have faith that will change in due time. I read on Westlaw that on July 1st, 2021, that the state of Vermont passed a bill that states that a prisoner serving a sentence of life without parole on or after July 1st, 2021, or an inmate serving a sentence of life imprisonment shall be eligible for parole consideration during the prisoners 25th year of incarceration. Why can't prisoners in Maine be afforded the same opportunity to get an out date? Everyday, I am waiting for either my release date or my death date, whichever comes first. I feel like I am on death row just waiting to die. And I never lost hope. I thought we were all created equal, one nation under God with liberty and justice for all. There's no justice if we don't get parole in this state because every other state in New England is afforded that privilege. Tell me where is the justice in that?!

Prisoners in Maine are capable of change, and some are case plan compliant. So why are we punished more severely than prisoners in the other states in New England. Why are lifers denied any possibility of reintegration into society? In my opinion lifers are viewed as they lack the capacity to reform and re-enter society. And lifers are some of the calmest most respectful ones in most cases. Prisoners can change and if you can be a productive member of a prison population you could definitely be a productive member of society. A lot more disrespect occurs in a prison setting than in society.

Some lifers in here look like they have been locked up, since the 1800s. For an example, you have a man in my pod, who in my eyes is as old as a 150-year-old sea turtle, who sits down, and when he gets up, he starts shaking, so I get nervous and try to hold him up he is more frail than a new born baby fresh out the womb. I hold him up so he don't fall and die and I don't catch a manslaughter case, just for asking him, if he is doing okay today and if he needs anything that is the last thing I need while still fighting my case. The point I am trying to make is this, when you're 80 years old or more in prison you should get a compassionate release. Who

is he going to hurt out there on the street? I can't imagine being that old and still being in prison that's some of the thoughts that go through my mind while serving a natural life sentence.

The only hope we have is overturning our conviction, which chances at a appeal are thinner than a ten speed wheel, either that or hoping for parole or taking your last breath in a prison cell yard or in the hole. I don't know the long timers that you know but the ones that I know are case plan compliant, doing classes, getting educated, learning new things, and having jobs so they could be the best version of themselves and be a positive influence to those they come in contact with in life.

I pride myself on being the best man that I can be, everyday that I wake up. I am a positive individual who has a good heart and a spiritual soul. I have taken many classes over the years, I have been in prison because I believe that being the best man I can be everyday is not only good for me, but also for all of the people I encounter on a daily basis. My motto is each one teach one, meaning that everything that I learned in these classes can be passed on to someone that is receptive to learning something new. I believe that we all learn from our past mistakes and failures and also through the mistakes of others.

The following is a list of programs that I have completed since being incarcerated here at Maine State Prison.

1. Psychology of incarceration, June 2015
2. Peer Facilitator Training, December 2016
3. Houses of Healing Program, November 2016
4. Long Distance Dads, April 2017
5. Inside Out Dads, March 2017
6. College Readiness Program, April 2018
7. Math Lab, April 2018
8. Beginning Genres Class, August 2018
9. Impact of Crime Program, October 2019
10. Living in Balance Substance Abuse, August 2021
11. CBI-IPV, November 2021
12. Criminal and Addictive Thinking, April 2022

Also, from 2015-2017 I peer facilitated a class called the Challenge Program in hopes of getting the men in my group to change their thinking errors and challenge their criminal addictive thinking that landed them in prison. So that they do not become an administrative burden and become productive members of this prison

population. Encourage them to stay focused and receive all of their good time credits so that they can get back to their lives and loved ones and become productive members of society and never have to see the inside of a prison again. The way that I see it they deserve to change for themselves and their families so they could be present in their family's lives.

From March 2021 to the present day I am facilitating a program called New Freedom, which like the challenge program is intended to help men take a look at their past and make better choices today. So that they can be the best in the present moment and have a brighter future upon release. As long as they make good choices from here on out. I believe that anyone can change as long as they want to change and keep a positive attitude. The longest journey starts with the first step in the right direction and the first mile is usually the most difficult.

I want to sincerely thank you for your time and attention in reading this letter. I will be hoping and praying that you support our heart felt request to re-establish parole in the state of Maine. Take care and God bless.

Respectfully,

Joel Hayden

