

Jeremy Hiltz
Recovery Connections Maine/Lewiston
LD 696

My name is Jeremy Hiltz. I am a person that has spent in estimation 2 years in solitary confinement. I have been out of incarceration for about 14 years. Still to this day the mental and

emotional toll that it had on me is still present. Either threw flash backs or nightmares. I became

familiar with solitary confinement at the age of 14 in the Maine Youth Center then at the Maine

Correctional Center, and then the Maine State Prison. At one point I was held in Solitary Confinement for over 3 months for suspicion of trafficking prison contraband Most of the traumatic experiences that I remember were of witnessing and hearing other peoples agony. The screams, the banging on the doors, the self mutilation. I also witnessed a person commit suicide and watched as the Correctional Officers and Medical Staff wheeled the lifeless body down the corridor. I've never been able to understand how punishing a person with a traumatic

event (solitary confinement) would somehow create a positive change in a person. When I would be released from solitary confinement I would be angry, I would also not have a real understanding of consequences once in general population so the path back to solitary was clear. Solitary confinement has never worked to change behavior. It has been proven time and

time again. Our State can do better. We do not have to return citizens to the communities that they come from in a worse position then they went in. It is dangerous for the community, the person and their loved ones. We need mental health, substance use disorder treatment and life

skills in prison rather then solitary confinement.

Jeremy Hiltz, LADC, CCS. Founder Recovery Connections Maine/ CEO / Counselor.