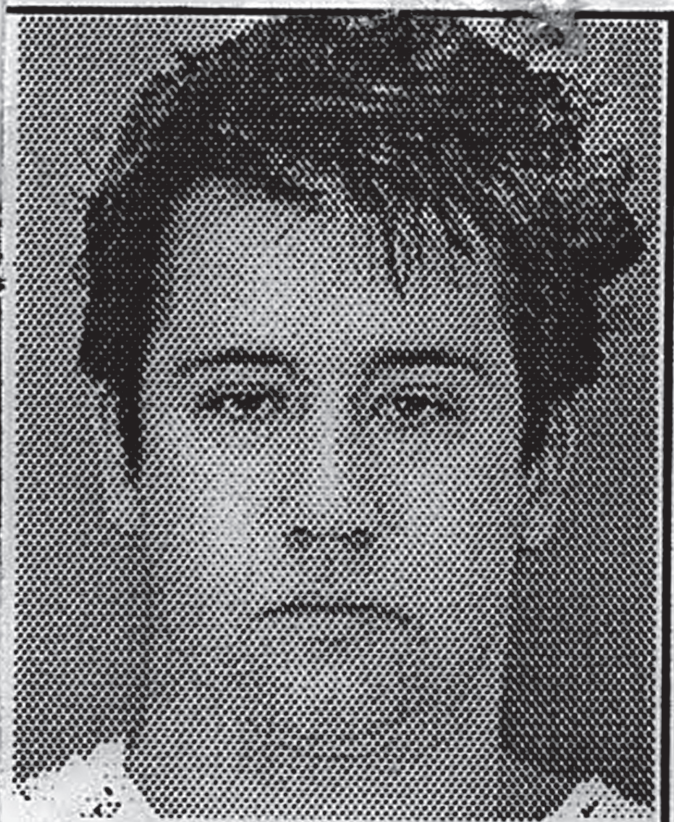


Philosopher Stoned



INCARCERATED
TAVIUS DYER

Philosopher Stoned

INCARCERATED

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Under the Underground
Any Angle

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FORWARD

San Jose, California
March 17, 2006

Dear Tavius:

Here, I offer my reflections on your collection of creative writing. As I told you, I would never be able to place so much of my personal history onto any one page, much less collect so many personal pages, to reveal to the world. This is a true gift!

Tavius, we have known each other now for over six years. While some of the experiences you write about take place before we met, much has occurred since. I have seen, heard, and felt you live through times of dark days, depression, and hopelessness. But I have also seen, heard, and felt your bright creativity, your powerful smile, your resilience, and the deep Love you show for people in your life. Your message is loud and clear -- you care.

There is much you have chosen to reveal about this "Philosopher Stoned." These poems reveal a Life that was sometimes wracked with pain, but that has survived, God willing, to its current 28 years. We, your readers, mirror our own experiences, brought to mind by your writing, and filter our own life stories through the crucible of your texts. We come to a better understanding of our own situations. We enjoy a better perspective on how much one's spirit can grow in life through the various stages of consciousness, experiment, consequence, and finally, breakthrough.

In early conversations after you were taken away, I had suggested you write down some of your experiences during incarceration. In hurried phone calls, as you would briefly describe people, places, and things, I could tell that these were unique, and that this was a singular moment in your life, never again, hopefully, to be revisited or repeated. At the times when we spoke, you would share your day-to-day reality, a different world. I urged you to take advantage of this moment, and try to capture some of your emotions, experiences, and perceptions on paper.

At the beginning, my suggestion to write was to help you get your mind off other negative issues, and to help you keep busy during

the tedium and empty hours of life behind bars. You chose to follow this path and soon responded, by putting pencil to paper, through the media of poetry and short story. It started slowly, one or two works at a time, folded carefully and inserted with a letter. Then, as I would transcribe each work into print and mail a fresh copy back to you, you would make editorial changes, and send me 3 or 4 more. This continued, week in and week out, month after month...

Your letters would include briskly written narratives. But more and more often, you would take daily events in your life, and take your memories of past times that were bubbling up in your consciousness, and take your reactions to these thoughts, and you would reflect them back through the prism of creative, written art. Vivid images and sharp, piercing words jump off each page. You express difficult, complex emotions and experiences in a way that captures how these were impacting you, and how they were affecting and forming the man you were gradually becoming. Evolution. Feelings were exposed from deep inside your heart, and fresh spirituality was arising from deep within your soul.

To answer the rhetorical question I had posed aloud to myself:

Yes, Change – incrementally, perhaps imperceptibly – change is possible, and it was taking place in my friend's life.

This insight of your lived experience gives hope and optimism to any one of us.

The many hurried (and expensive) phone calls are now distant memories. The occasional visits of rushed time, and the raw emotion of seeing each other through video, bulletproof glass, and over monitored intercoms, start to fade. Even those visits toward the end, when we were close to really being able to communicate with each other across the metal picnic benches, even those minutes together begin to blur...

Poetry and short stories remain, rough hewn, polished, and now printed in all their sharpness, for me and for the world to read, and hear, and contemplate....

With deepest gratitude and friendship,
Ed Basanese

PREFACE

Gold golf pencils and yellow legal pads of paper allowed my mind escape from the situation and environment in which I had found myself. Until then, I took no real responsibility for anything, and my reality wasn't real at all. The story I told myself wasn't even being heard. I had no self-talk, no clue, no rules, specifically, to live by, but to survive day by day in some sort of pseudo-working more so socializing lifestyle, a play between mindless self indulgence and fear of rejection or avoidance of pain — the basic drive of our nature, towards pleasure and away from pain. Unfortunately, my pleasure led to more pain, and pain to my ultimate pleasure.

I had isolated myself since High School and my first heart break. Otherwise, I kept scanty ties with old friends, hung out by myself, or with girl friends when I had one. Typically, it was a year or two between one year relationships, so most of my time was completely alone, or completely absorbed in my girlfriend and her friends. I don't describe myself in this way thinking I am different than everyone else, in fact, I hope you relate to some, but not too much of what I have to share.

Read-throughs of this project now provide awe as I realize how crazy my life really has been. Truth is, it didn't have to be. I made it that way. I didn't know, or accept this simple fact, either. Instead, I chased experience, mainly internal self absorbed longing for the Love of someone else, which I did not have for myself. My relationships were as addictive as my other tendencies which were away from maturity, reality, responsibility, and towards, self abandonment, destruction and Oblivion. I found drugs and alcohol assisted me here, and to great affect nearly succeeded many times at ending what I had never begun, my life. I was a garbage can, the more substances I could be on, the better, always chasing new "conscious" experiences, places never before ventured.

The first free verse piece was written as is dated in September of 2004, after five months in lock down at Santa Clara County's Elmwood facility in California. I was fighting two strikes for bar

room violence under the influence of Prozac, Wellbutrin, pot, and alcohol. And the second incident “PASSED OUT UNDER A CAR BLEEDING TO DEATH” Methamphetamine, too.

During the final stages of production of this book it was suggested I consider using an excerpt of the other book I wrote while Incarcerated, the novel “Painkiller”, instead of the other short story I also wrote while Incarcerated, “White Light”, which ends in a serendipitous hanging. I had just got fairly negative feedback from a writing group I recently joined, and submitted “White Light” as my first piece for their review. The novel, “Painkiller” was written better, and ended this project on a lighter note, while providing a lead into my next book. “Painkiller” was written to get out of me obsessive thoughts that kept me from sleeping. I imagined what it would be like if I got released and made the worst choices possible. I used personal experience, stories I had heard from other inmates, and the darkness of my imagination at that time to explore my greatest fears, hate, and pain.

My fiction writing skills are underdeveloped and fairly unskilled. However, some of the power of my poetry shines through the interesting imagery of my fiction. I will have four poems, two from this book, published in the De Anza literary magazine, Spring Issue 2007. I have yet, to publish fiction outside of this project. I hope enough of these book sell so that I can produce a second edition with more content and better craft.

Tavius Dyer

Dedications and Acknowledgements

This book is dedicated first to the Truth, God Almighty, my Son Gabriel whom has given me the greatest reason to Live, my Mother, Kandee for having that special bond, understanding and unconditional Love that only we share, and Father Larry for keeping it real even when it's unreal and his giving spirit which has inspired me, and to those who teach me how to Love by loving so much, my step-Father Mark for fathering me and instilling positive aspirations, Brothers Ian, for his undying loyalty and Love, Beau, and Robbie, Sisters K.D. and Sarah for their unconditional Love and the wonderful feeling it gives me. To family, particularly those acting as, Kay and Al Aiton for being my actual Grandparents, and my own family, Lorraine and our kitty cat Rafael. The other families who have been my own: the Rays, Averys, Hagamans, and Whites. To my Aunts, Uncles, cousins, especially Randi, Shannon, and Tara.

To my Uncle Dave, may God's Grace favor you.

To my dear friend Ed, who assisted editorially, typing every hand written page while I was incarcerated, and sending them back to me printed on the page for my gratification and review. This project would not have been possible without him, and the writing process he supported quickly became my semblance of sanity, and lasting lessons.

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The boys behind bars, BFR you're the spread master! Troy, find your prostate? Mike and Tony, thanks for the bedroom when I needed it.

Cisco, givin' us "What Gravity?"

Halleh, beautiful Halleh... Erin, thanks for being a great friend and setting boundaries when I could not, Tarena and Jeff, congratulations, and thanks so much Tarena for help on the Under the Underground record release! Sorry for getting locked up the week before your wedding.

Matt, my spiritual hound who can bark at me, Jodie and Samantha, you beautiful princesses!

Alex, stay strong.

Bob Donohue, my brother in Christ.

Trent and Rosemary, I pray you find easier softer ways.

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To those who have led so many out of darkness, a special thanks to Jack and others from Gorilla, and my men at Seeking Guidance. To Santa Clara County Milpitas Adult Education in custody M8 programs, Ms. Dee and George Gates, Michelle Delk, and the Robinsons of Mustard Seed Ministry in Milpitas...

...Today, I celebrate a very special 70 year birthday with the friends of Bill W.!

6/10/05

Passed Out
Under a Car
Bleeding to Death

Passed Out Under a Car Bleeding to Death

1.

I ritualistically grabbed the handle to the fridge and flung the door open as if to expect somehow something had either migrated there, or given birth to something I had not, yet, seen. Four large brightly colored Gatorade bottles stuck out like neon signs in the window of a liquor store. Thirst. A moment later I was out the door of my place and on my way to the radio station, chugging bright blue fluid, and cursing a little more than normal as I wove in and out of traffic as if to be sewing some imaginary seam through the belly of the unconscious beast, a mass of migrating steel horses with rubber tires instead of long lean legs.

A shaggy dark-haired kid and his girl-next-door ego-boost ignored me coming in to the radio station. He called himself DJ Rude, but came on the air with the unstable voice of a suicidal kid on too many meds, unsure what to do with himself.

Moments later I was alone in the studio dropping needles on records, as the groove I began on the streets seemed to follow me into the building and well up into twirls of words, like shavings spill and gather around the base of a whittler at work. I was carving myself a place in the space of people's minds.

The rush that followed was unmistakably more than the 32 oz. foam cup of Guatemalan drip that I traded for a shout-out in good faith.

Listeners became callers.

Finally catching up with myself, I fell planted into my chair taking in the wavering objects of the room. Oscillating lights seemed to vibrate as a halo around the shapes I saw. I reached a finger to the mix board, brought the mic to my mouth.

"I think someone spiked my drink, if the radio goes dead, someone call an ambulance" – I spoke half-jokingly, half in wonder, as the taste of chemical shit, like acid, clung to my teeth and tongue like fur reminding me of how I had come to hate methamphetamine.

The next DJ came in late giving time to my growing craze. By then, the main lights were out, and shades of green, red, and blue dotted the board with its knobs, back-lit buttons and bouncing needle-like level monitors. Colored Christmas lights strung out

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across the room seemed to draw unseen curtains between me and the imaginable world beyond the basement of this 11 story freshman college dorm.

2

I arrived back home to the one bedroom apartment I had been fronting while my Dad fought to get his tweeker girl, younger than me, out of County and home instead of rolled up to the Joint. She was running around, what would seem to be aimlessly, as my Dad denied any ties to dope in the bottle.

I decided to call my boss, ask for an advance, and meet at our spot to discuss business, Carrows.

Later, my shifty disposition and darting eyes must have done more than worry him, because he insisted on driving me home. I lay in bed several hours, lost in thought before I was fed up with the achy sickness brought on by the raw dope. I gave my boss a call back for a ride to my car after preparing some fried eggs and downing a leftover beer not quite the size of most that found refuge in our fridge.

A quick cold shower got me straight enough to see my way out into the world again. A nearly quiet ride to my car, some questions as to my condition, and apologies broke the white noise of mainstream radio. A door slam later and I was cranking the engine of my boxy silver rust-spotted 1976 BMW. The sign in the back window exclaimed “dispose of sanitary napkins in receptacle provided,” put there by a girl inspired enough to tear it down from a bathroom wall and plant it in my rear window, after I drove smoke circles around the movie theater parking lot.

Old ways become habits hard to break. This had once been routine. Spun out, get money, buy the best buds I can get and smoke and drink myself to some kind of contentment within myself.

After cashing my advance and checking in with my next destination over the phone, asking to hang out and hook up, I was on my way, arriving to my smiley face dealer-friend, a huge glass candy jar full of “blueberry” bud on the table, \$40 down on a personal sack, and 2 or 3 thick-ass joints later, and I was on my way to happy hour at what I’d come to name Coochi Coo.

Halfway through my second Mondo 25 oz. stein of Redhook ale, and a half-full mini-disk recording conversations with Lucy, (the sophisticated Russian bartender), my good friend E. showed up with her newfound professional dress.

Halfway into her Mondo Redhook she asked to do shots.

“How about tequila?” she suggested nonchalantly.

With a grimace probably on my face, “I haven’t drank that shit since I had alcohol poisoning in High School!” I think I took a moment, “But it’s been a while...” wondering, and wanting to be able to handle it, I concluded, “All right but keep the bucket close because even the smell of it turns my stomach.”

With that, Lucy’s lips tucked into a smile as she turned her deep dark seemingly endless eyes back towards the shelf.

“Something good,” I barked.

“Cuervo Gold?” the bartender responded.

“Souza,” E. chimed in.

And with a nod of my head Lucy reached the top shelf on tippy-toes, calves clenched and ass tight, took the bottle to the counter, grabbed short tumblers instead of shot glasses and poured more than doubles. With a turn of our heads we shot eyes at each other and tipped the glasses back to open mouths and gurgling throats. A quick gulp, and gone. I took a moment, both girls watching me as if waiting for some great geyser to come up out of me. But instead, a brief burn in the throat turned quickly to a warm welcome belly.

Another double shot. A phone call. An offer to go to Los Gatos to meet E.’s friend. “She’s my ride,” I think to myself, “fuck it,” even against the sickening feeling in my gut, something was wrong.

I don’t recall the ride, but I’m sure we got our smoke on, even though I only faintly imagine it, because that was our style. I can clearly picture our entry to the upscale bar because the bright yellow “Soul Fly” concert shirt, exposed green shiny soccer shorts, cargo shorts hung off my junk by an orange and black bungee cord, and \$2 baby blue Longs Drugs sandals must have caught an eye or two if my jerky slip and slide movements through an imagined crowd didn’t.

A table in the back called us into a corner where E.’s friend sat waiting. After an introduction I sat silent watching them converse, waiting for something, but not knowing what. The waitress came, took an order for a round of tequila shots, which we all took immediately to what I think was some kind of toast. The next time the waitress came I shouted out for another round as the young lady in a black skirt and dark stockings circled the table taking orders. Her exposed legs held my eyes. I reached out slowly in disbelief and gently touched her skin. She must have handled it well, because

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I didn't notice her noticing my reaching, not for her, but to test the reality of the image before my eyes.

Later, I found a middle-aged lady alone at the bar. We spoke for a while, about what I don't know, but soon my sympathy turned to lust. I'm sure I came on to her. It was reported, later, that I told some girl "I'd kick her ass", and that I seemed to be "more than intoxicated," but could that have been on my way to the bathroom where I faintly remember an exchange with a beautiful passerby in the hallway?

On my way out of the bathroom back into the growing mix of things, I noticed a man across the room that I had never seen before, nodding his head back and forth. Concerned and confused, I stepped towards him, head forward to project across the room, asking what I had done. I took a step toward him, but before I could get halfway to him, a hand motion signaled brutes who seemed to come from everywhere and in no time I was being muscled out the door. My yelling incessantly, "What did I do? What did I do?" didn't lessen their grip, or open their mouths for more than profanities, now no longer specific to the distant movie my memory has become.

I was left huffing and puffing before the structure of this upscale bar which seemed to expand and contract with each breath. The image of beautifully colored plate-glass windows came into focus, as lack of understanding quickly lit fire to rage, until window after window gave way to my clenched fist, thrusting arm, and torquing body.

Rattling the cage must have brought attention as a small mob scurried down the stairs. I kicked off my flip flops and took to the streets like the track star I should've been, but something was all too familiar. I knew I would not outrun them.

Instinct and fear of returning to jail took me around a corner, between two cars rolling underneath a van quieting my breath so as not to be heard. Feet scampered about. Shouts all around till finally, loud as the bark of a dog in my ear, "He's under here!!!"

3.

I awoke to a trauma surgeon, not much older than I, sewing down, around my elbow bone, a huge chunk of flesh hanging away, arm pulled open in other areas exposing bubbly red and white tissue. I immediately dug in – "What happened?"

"You were minutes from death found passed out under a car. If you had bled any more, you wouldn't have made it. Your main

artery into the arm was severed. I decided to remove the staples and stitch it up so that it might heal better. Keep still.”

“Morphine doesn’t work well on me.”

“Nurse.”

“Yes?”

“Give him some more Morphine.”

The cold chill crept out the IV and up my arm. I itched. “Keep still.”

I kept talking till finally asking, “I’m not supposed to talk either?”

“Yes,” he answered, calling the nurse over again as if finally believing Morphine didn’t work.

“Give him —,” and I don’t remember what it was, but he turned to me, “A cousin to Morphine.”

The nurse yelled back, “but we just gave him” —

“Yeah, I know.”

Another cold slow creeping chill through the veins up my arm. A few moments pass. More conversation out of my uncontrollable mouth. Frustrated, the doctor yelled to the nurse again.

She replied stubbornly as if unable to help, “What?! But I can’t.”

“Yes, you can.”

I turned to the doc with worried eyes, I’m sure not believing the nurse didn’t even want to give it to me.

He told me, “This oughta do it.” A few minutes passed and the nurse returned with yet another full syringe.

“Something totally different,” he said almost proud of himself. The syringe spat, and then entered the IV line. This time, my veins burned hard as if to set my insides on fire. The light in my head faded between the bounce of my eyelids fluttering for consciousness.

The doctor replied, “That’s better, much better.”

4.

In the morning, a man in uniform came to relieve another who had been in the room with me all night. After short hushed conversation, the young cop approached with a look of disbelief and shock caught up in his face, eyes wide, and mouth open, head shaking.

“I didn’t see what happened last night, but was on the scene this morning. I haven’t seen a pool of blood like that since a car wreck where someone died. You’re lucky to be alive.”

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This story is a Creative Non-Fiction account of an actual event in my life as I remember it retold in the months sober incarcerated following this April 15- 16, 2004 near death experience that has led to two years of recovery in sobriety facing myself, my life, and the fact that I liked neither. I abused and manipulated myself and others causing the root of all my problems self-absorbed in destructive tendencies abusing God, myself, family, friends, drugs, and alcohol, the gift of my life.

It's not about me (which seems hypocritical in a book about me). But, really, this book is about life and death, incarceration, the disease of addiction, the insanity of the mind, finding self and guidance, getting real, opening up, trusting others, and being honest. These are the pillars in the foundation of my new life, alive, perhaps, for the first time.

I was on Prozac, Alcohol, and pot daily for about a year before this event nearly took my life. I had added Wellbutrin to the mix, causing a slew of outbreaks around rejection from bar scenes and my inability to leave without feeling I understood. Have I understood any of my pain, my life, my feelings? No, I didn't allow myself to. I didn't allow myself to feel without exacerbating the feeling with drugs or alcohol, or isolating to become my feelings completely cut off from reality, others, and myself.

I had been in the outdoor hippie-fest, rave and club, college, and tweaker scenes to name a few. Psychiatric medication was merely an angle or spin I hadn't put on things as far as drug and alcohol abuse was concerned. Drinking, smoking pot, and taking antidepressants was about as normal as I got. I actually saw myself as sober at that time, not yet knowing what sobriety really was.

In reference to my Dad's "tweaker girlfriend" in this story, it's not fair to call her that, for the sake of the story I used that expression. However, she was way too cool and probably further from a tweaker out of any us.

Reflections on Youth

Must Everything

I sip cold coffee,
 try to remember
my first kiss, or
 the cul-de-sac
drive-through childhood
I did not order
 (and since
super-sizing my mind
never made me Jesus,
the sky has become a puzzle
 I have not yet
picked up the pieces and
put back together)
 instead,
I am afraid of affirmation
 and art
has become
the act of learning
 to love myself,
Nothing but,
 the exploration
of everything,
until
 I
 settle
 on
something.

Tavius Dyer — September 16, 2004

I was well kept and had more than I needed all my life, materially speaking. That is our culture. Something about my childhood felt pointless, lacking depth, fractured. Perhaps it was due to not having a Father figure for the first ten years of my life. Not knowing him, was like not knowing myself. There has always been the feeling that something was missing from my life until I realized how I felt about myself and my life. I didn't like either. The "issues" I had always claimed shown face and gave me something to recognize in myself.

First Fuck

That is what

I call you
after all this time

So many men
I must remember
how to pee at the urinal
without saying your name

because

you stood before me
as I let my pants down
in the High School
parking lot

after
your mouth
made magic
left me unable
to dress myself

while you drew
fingers into smiley faces
and

“We had sex”
on cold steamed
car windows

before a

high speed car chase
round town,
found
by friends
who stuck fists
up for us
and
fought snickers
for how long
we'd

been Gone.

Tavius Dyer — October 5, 2004

I also reminisced about my first infatuation and intercourse. The story goes from being at the pisser incarcerated, to the mantra her name had become for me being able to piss, after I had done so in front of her after we had sex. She said, "doesn't it feel so good, after sex?!"

The car chase is as real as any of my crazy adventures, only adding punctuation to the evening, as if there had to be something else as intense.

Mellifluous

I borrow bees,
build a hive of my hollowed head

perhaps, an escape
from the clutch of your leg

as if
you hadn't

become
apparition,

Everything, but

still silent prayer
or
an empty playground.

Tavius Dyer — December 7, 2004

Consciousness as a drone of bees, now, since she left me clutching nothing on the empty playground of my mind.

Teenage Travel

Flying fish flew

out of rippled powder sugar sand into

bathtub water that lapped at our sinking feet.

Panama City beach lit the scene
as fireflies in Queborn spit their phosphorescence like
glow stick tracers at a rave,

woke up cradled in Montana's Giant hillside ruts
from years of "reasonable and prudent" truck driving.

The Principal suited up, warned us of recess and
the soccer that would surround our blue tarp and
brown sleeping bags in 15 minutes.

After a night of martinis between rounds of ale, shooting pool
and catching the 10:30 pm sunset
over the east side of the Pacific,

I tried my French on a 16 year old
version of swim suit model
Kathy Ireland,

I told her

I do for myself

what I wanted her
to do to me –

the baby porcupine's soft quills.
2 am in the stark naked moonlight.

Tavius Dyer — March 4, 2005

Again, a piece of collected memories, this time from travels to France at the age of 16 and around the United States and Canada the Summer after High School graduation at the age of 19, with my good friend Silas to the Olympic Games in Atlanta. Some of these events triggered an image outside of the parameters I just discussed, "glow stick tracers at a rave."

Penelope

1 ton
dirt caked
rough neck
alcoholic

pot belly pig

pour a 12 pack down her upturned
snout
till she snorts and gallivants
with a high step strut

this half acre of mud is hers
she'll show ya' too
in a minute
she'll wreck her pig pen
ram the bent wood fence
to greater leans

angles that defy
her captivity.

Besides,

this is It

other than

the dilapidated tractor
paint curled in hues of rust red

Ranch style home

just up the stone laid walkway
on the slightest of inclines

there's just horizon

from here
to heaven.

Tavius Dyer — March 9, 2005

After months of sobriety and time in lockdown, my past came back to me in clear day dreams. This particular piece is about a gigantic pig I met once in my youth. The things I heard and observed that day are what I discuss. Linguistic imagination does the rest.

Yeah Verily

- I. I bought into It
 bandwagon & all
- made as many moments
 precious as stones are gems
- Nothing mattered, as long as
 It didn't bother me –
- II. Slaphappy slung body gloves,
 red hand prints on my back.
- Comeback King always had a cup,
 pissed like a race horse in the forest.
- Grease Lightning's turquoise Beetle
 sped victory laps without 2 min. warning.
- III. I would take Easter to Easter
 to come to terms and let go –
- why hold back?
 what is there to ponder
- really,
- when writing?

Tavius Dyer — March 9, 2005

The title is a phrase my poli-sci teacher used at Santa Clara University. His "conceptual connections" above and beyond the material we utilized in class (movies, documentaries, books, lecture notes, etc.) changed me forever. He was absolutely a God when it came to grading. He fathomed all the possible answers to his essay questions before a test, and awarded point values for each. My mid-term test grade was one of the worst in the class. My final was the best! I had studied to find conceptual connections beyond the material and came up with a few he hadn't. It was an amazing confirmation I needed to believe in my intellectual potential and strength.

Around the Block

Existential Crisis

1.

i

pour
to the page

strung out
as letters

over
lines.

2.

Clouds
wander

clung

to the hillside

blanket
the moist

Earth

in cold
sweat.

3.

The
Devil

drunk

INCARCERATED

on the couch

looks
out the window

wanting
a smoke.

4.

Trees
undress

perhaps
burn

from too much
cold.

5.

God
lurks
naked

in the rain with a grin

waits

for beautiful things
to look at him

again

beautifully.

Tavius Dyer — September 16, 2004

Here is a piece begun from my last complete journal before incarceration. My dear friend, Erica, had been typing it up, and sent the completed writings to me in jail. I was hurtin' for it, and it came right when I had gotten most desirous. I read through it several times picking pieces of it to work with, which I broke into these different sections and reworked into what is printed. It deals with the whole "I really am good. Don't you Love me?" idea at the end. Drugs had become my evil, my devil, and they were still a part of my life when I originally wrote this material, so the peculiar awareness of the evil going on around, and inside of me, was intensely inspirational.

INCARCERATED

God Girl

Naked embarrassment
to the lapping
sprung
where
I cooked sweetly
till
sweat became
well oiled movements
driving deeper
as mouth
wide open
smiles
lit by
flushed faces
burned our pleasure
seeking
Nothingness
into
the breath we shared
and a
Beauty
only
found
when pushed
through
the
Appearance
of
You.

Tavius Dyer — September 16, 2004

My favorite word comes to mind, mellifluous. I changed the title of this piece to Mellifluous, but it really is more about this title, "God Girl" for me. The connection of pleasure created with another through sex. The beauty only you two people become in the sharing of such experiences. And for me, too, the will to live.

Rock Bottom Renaissance

Stoned stupid
smart on

Purple Cush
Prozac and
dollar pints

I pushed snakes through crowds
so proud of themselves
smiles forced face lifts
and tucks

as if age
couldn't get the better of them

but my
bun-gee cord belt
buck ninety-nine baby-blue flops
neon tee and pant shorts
hung off
my junk
did

exposing
bright light
green soccer shorts
tight to my tush,
till

I turned my insides out
too many times
to bloody stool
and beer glass in fist
upside the bouncer's heavy head

to the floor —
cop car
steel cuffs

and a concrete room with a metal bunk
only to ponder Hegelian History
as Brahms' second symphony
brings past to present
shaped
as a river flows.

Tavius Dyer — September 16, 2004

Here is another juxtaposition of my life before, and during, incarceration. What led up to and the events that occurred are in detail. The funny thing is that as I was writing this one and was also reading a philosophy book and listening to symphony music on radio headphones. Jail renewed my reading career; as the first book I read through since college was over the first ten days I did awaiting bail on my first charge. Many books fell over the next twelve months, the next time around.

Fright Finds Eyes in Us

Vision
 becomes

cascades on canvas
 until
a stir of silence
 into
 sound

paints a picture

that thinks

a product
 of the words
 we threw
over shoulders
 when

 pupils pointed

bounced in
 our
 helium heads
 as we
passed

rolling white
 clouds
 inside
burnt out glass

that
cracked back
as we coughed
and wheezed
to pull air
into
breath
with
all the legs
our lungs
had
left.

Tavius Dyer — September 16, 2004

INCARCERATED

Ultimately, it's the first major idea here that really grabs and wrestles with me, the idea that thought arises from the senses, thus being Nothing more than the product of our experience both micro and macro-ly speaking - a reaction, if you will, with no real autonomy. And I wonder why it is said the body loses 21 grams when it dies.

“There’s a party in my head –”

Winged carnivore

atop

cyclone
fence

too far to hear
my barrowed
thoughts

(the noise
of
Butterflies

pinned to the page)

for the better half
of another
breath

knuckles
knocking on my
brow

“It’s All Good
under my
hood”

INCARCERATED

Full frontal lobotomy?

Poetry
not as Perfect
as a

Crackhead's Jive
on
Front Street.

Butt naked honest?

I killed the critic

They know not what they do.

Tavius Dyer — October 12, 2004

The first image in this piece is what I saw one day out the window where I was being held. The words came to mind, and I began writing. The image of butterflies penned to the page came from something I had seen in my youth. The oddity of such thoughts triggered the madness of remembering my states of insanity under the influence of as many drugs as possible. I remember my girlfriend at the time coming in to the room where I had been silent, staring, nothing in focus. She asked if I was all right, and I responded with, "There's a party in my head." And "It's all good under my hood," knuckles knocking on my brow. The conclusion is two fold, the greatest poetry I ever heard came when I listened to a crackhead spit his jive (we both nearly lost our minds), and the critical mindset that holds captive the creative flow of energy we call being self-conscious.

Event Horizon

Smoked Death,

went off like a firecracker
in my Bobble head –

drugstore puppet
on the dance
floor

swallowed by
bass cones & horns
as tall as buildings

(look ma!
no strings)

instead,

fluorescent wire
bent into
makeshift

halos

we would
toss into pitch black

INCARCERATED

like frisbees
in Golden Gate Park

or

Dodge ball with pebbles
stoned on the beach

hi fi slo mo',
gathered chi

like the smoke we blew
to keep alive our lies

but still

stood firm,

and stared
through

Everything.

Tavius Dyer — December 4, 2004

Another tail of wicked ways. I had danced my way through the Rave and Club scenes into a drug crazed oblivion, (the first time, the beginning, never again, and always most beautiful, unobtainable.)

"On One"

1.

I knew the dying
candle's
pain,

took in
the offspring
of fire,

exhaled
the apparition
of my soul –

slow to empty,

I ran
from
myself

running to you.

2.

How many
people

must pass

away

before

I find
myself?

3.

The Distance

between my

thinking & doing

becomes

my Being,

thick

as air

after breath

dissipates,

becomes

atmosphere.

Tavius Dyer — December 4, 2004

The first line is a product of my reactionary senses as a thought in my mind, words and a phrase, or two. Then it grew from this seed. The idea of what we say versus what we do. Air and breath as an abstraction of life's precious balance, abused by my self destructive ways, my "looking" self, which is how one is lost, in the "looking."

Karaoke Killer

been called that

when Nothing frightened me
more than what I wanted –

chased pills with precious poison,
puffed blueberry bud

till purple haze
became
a mic in my mouth

sung Nine Inch Nails closer en Français –
the Police's Roxanne like a drunken Jap

shoutin' out

got bopped in the head
wrestled to the ground

between

the booze and blood
I chucked from the bottom of my gut

eighty-sixed as quick
as a hot dish

and when they
had no Reason

I gave them one

threw the PA
across the stage

while a square
sang along
to anotha's song

INCARCERATED

And didn't die enough
to cry

instead

cut smiles

slit heavy
as eyelids
wouldn't
lift

and

snicker –
chuckled

at
the
Nothing

but my own

humorous

hell
in
my
head.

Tavius Dyer — January 4, 2005

I came into the San Jose scene with a San Francisco club/rave past. My loose approach and dance, weird ways, and the admiring eyes were too much for the bouncers and regulars just about anywhere I went. I didn't understand this, then, but wanted so badly to know why I was being 86'd everywhere I went. My "need" to know only made it worse.

Speak Pain into Love

I remember
The Moment

Santa Cruz nearly became mine –

Alone in my tin can
truck, grounded
rubber isolation
allowed rain
showers
digital
pour
into
white noise –

I built
Myself

(a bomb)

slid
beneath
self absorbed sabotage

considered (my life)

if I lived
on

Sea Cliff

felt
cool as sweat
evaporates
off
clammy skin –

INCARCERATED

“All that

Ever
Remains

Is

Love” –

I spoke
aloud
to
myself
as
past
wreckage
assembled
volumes

of beautiful conversation,

standing ovation.

Tavius Dyer — January 30, 2005

A reconciliation at a moment of decision. Do I stay, or do I go? I wanted Santa Cruz so much more than the Silicon Valley bust (as big and ridiculous as a porn star's fake tits). Pain transforms into Love. Past failures amount to “standing ovation” upon introspection, extremes are wholly weighed, perhaps unrealistically.

Philter Failure

Slingshot ecstasy

like rocks
through
dealership windows

to pour
milkshake
on leather
seats –

Mitsubishis

for the thrill of a
super
high
way

fast lights

and fuzzy
beats

felt against our sweat

till

She
was

reduced

to a rollie
polлие

(splayed
arms and legs

INCARCERATED

at odd angles)

sucked
water bottles

till they crinkled
inside
out

with

Oslin eyes

and allowance
for anyone's
touch,

eventually

Her shoulder
instead of mine

left me a

mindless shatter

into
the Love

we never
really made

Tavius Dyer — January 31, 2005

Another glimpse of my past filled with self-destruction and ruin. Again, the disappointment of another failed relationship is reflected upon. Somehow, no matter how painful the past, I tend to look back with a longing for return that squashes my will to live in the present - remarkably insane.

Incarceration

Earthworms

Red spindled scars

burrowed beneath

the thin dark hairs of my arm

(a wishbone walks with a dinosaur head

below a large matchstick taking light near

an unhappy smiley face, mouth tipped into drip)

stories of white light & marigolds

I have not

yet

seen.

Tavius Dyer — September 4, 2004

After months in jail the scars on my arm began to look as clouds do after gazing upon them a long time, something else. This short piece featured the shapes I saw carved into my arm as a result of the events leading to my arrest, which are outlined in the first short story, creative non-fiction, "Passed Out Under a Car Bleeding to Death".

Wet Brain

Hippie-cat says he's a
"con-artist with a gypsy hustle...
drunk hunts for the pimp,
even gets free leg for it —"

stutters into silence,
rubs his bald spot
as if to be
a genie bottle

(perhaps conjures
sense into sentences, or
head out of water
pleas)

before he
drops
his fish bowl
head

to the floor.

Tavius Dyer — September 4, 2004

A man I met in the courthouse holding tank while awaiting a court appearance gabbed about this and that between long awkward silences and head down stares between his knees. In fact, the "this and that" was quite interesting, and became the first stanza. I met this man again. Long hair and beard (like Jesus) to shaved head and face (like Buddha) in 6 months. He talked about astro-gliding souls as if to take them somewhere beyond this reality. He counted the number at over one hundred. It seemed he gained something from the activity, and each soul was some kind of celestial bounty.

Rusher Lust

Beautiful booty
hung

from Baby Doll
face,

shirt creases
where nipples
harden –

sprung my lungs legs to shout,

but instead, swallowed air

and spoke in tongues

till blush brushed cheeks
tuck,

and
lips lift at their corners

as flashes of gnashing teeth

flicker into fist to face

lifestyles.

Tavius Dyer — September 22, 2004

Everyone yearned for this black Hispanic, with booty for days, downtown in the courthouse holding tanks. Cute milk chocolate skin and practically pear shaped body said it all. We were starved. It looked better every time. The title and some of the rest of this piece came to me after contemplating what I had just told you about the lady Sheriff. We were dogs. My desire had, at times, ventured into something beyond lust, once so much so that I wrote about it. It wasn't a kind of desire I had experienced before. It felt too animalistic and needy.

Rack Status

Pekoe
orange cut
black tea

brings on

the only sweat
I have
become

as I
mull around
my mind

(brush
hairs splayed

on the painter's
palette)

till my
guts swell

(Buddha belly
activity) –

google eyes
gouged out

to Police
my past in

the dried out
Fish Tank

my existence
has become

since a
curling iron
couldn't warm
the rigor mortis
of your loins –

Tavius Dyer — October 3, 2004

Here is the existential realization of my condition after months of incarceration. Guys worked out with water bags doing “burpies” in wanna-be gangs claiming, “Big Body Activity”. I held my own, playing jungle ball on the court, but did nothing of like kind with these others. I claimed, “Buddha Belly Activity” as my childhood sweet tooth came back with vengeance, and my ex-hitman biggest-belly-in-the-place friend, Big Fucking Rey, made “spreads” with Ramen noodles, and whatever we could find and chop, from meat, to chips, salad, and any condiment possible, especially mayonnaise.

Writing Orgasm

Mind
pointed

as pencil to the page,

pours heart –

a wave
rises
out

the well of my Lovepain,

crashes as ripples
across paper

concentric
as crossed eyes
twist

The Truth,

chokes me
flaccid,

a fight for feeling
before
pleasure
drools,

spread

as wind
on wet
skin –

bumps
raise hairs,

stand

as flags

on conquered

land.

Tavius Dyer — October 17, 2004

The release of writing is like masturbation emotionally, mentally, and to some degree physically. I don't like this piece much, but it goes "there" a bit and is a powerful idea in my experience.

Telephone Holiday

This year's
roast beef
will be
pre-cooked.

My brothers
and sisters
still Believe
in Santa.

My Mother
pours out
about
whatever.

All I can
Do to
Love is
listen.

It's my
Being
locked
up

that

is the real problem.

And she asks me,

“What’s
This
All
about?”

As our Silence
gives way
to line
noise —

300 miles
away,

and
I smell
her
banquet,

every detail
fills
my senses

puts me

There.

Tavius Dyer — December 27, 2004

After months of incarceration I had gained perspective and become more comfortable to share. This led to an opening of another kind, in my Mother, as she poured out over the phone to me about everything. And I was able to open up as well. I felt her sounding wall. Love led to the remembrance of her Holiday cooking, made with great care, skill, and love — her gift to us.

Hoppa Allure

As if Spring
sprung

Indie-attitude,
peppered

mignon composure

collected
petite –

angel eyes
flutter as
butterfly
wings

over

chrysanthemum bulbs,

sprout
through
deep –

dappled
almond
speckles

from where fairies kissed

(so many smiles,
they tickled) —

her heart
face
frames

plump crescent lips
pillowed perfect as

April flowers
bloom

petals dance

in the
breath
of

Sky

before the Sun.

Tavius Dyer — December 27, 2004

This piece was written for April about Anna Mae. Both shared the White/Japanese mix referred to as Hoppa. April taught art on Wednesday mornings. I, as most, got up early for her freckled face and animated red hair. I made small talk until finally having a conversation which led to her telling me I needed focus. To me, this translated into going back to school. I appreciated and respected her opinion. I was inspired to write and give this poem to her.

Man Mind Everywhere

Reduced
to heavy
breath,

speaks
aloud
to him

self

as if

amongst everything,

gathers attention

without

having to give any,

posts up

to peer at people

shakes and sweats

loud as a boiler

room.

Tavius Dyer — January 4, 2005

Probably the most interesting man I may have ever met, Mario, about 40 years old, looking athletically 18, singing aloud to himself almost always. I am surprised he wasn't beat down, for how much people said they despised him.

Lover Made

I make my bunk regularly
these days
remember
How
ruffled mounds of comforter
made mountains in the moonlight,
cast shadows
Thought
to be my
Lover
in the courtyard
of my mind.

Tavius Dyer — February 7, 2005

I remember returning to my glass palace in the sky overlooking Monterey Bay, near Castle Rock, evening after evening with an unmade bed. Often, at first sight upon returning home the moonlight through the window against the mounds and ruffles of comforter allowed me to see someone curled in my own bed awaiting my arrival. This first thought became a common reaction night after night.

At First Glance

1.

The Best American Poetry 2004

reads as the Bible did
before I believed –

2.

Notice myself

overgrown hair
dangled before

downcast eyes

head bent
to dive

but where?

3.

Pages flip
tongue bit.

Jane Hirshfield

(I've been published
with before)

writes of Poe and England

in the madness of moth soot gray

the scratch of his quill

heard in the silence
between her words.

Tavius Dyer — February 7, 2005

My dear friends Nicole, Scott, and Erin, wrote me consistently, and also sent books about writing prose, poetry, and other interests. The poetry books were for inspiration with my writing, as the books teaching fiction writing were about gaining ideas about an area of writing I have yet to venture with much, prose. The two short stories and the novella I wrote while incarcerated far outweigh any amount of prose writing I have ever done, aside from journaling. Much of the readings of poetry I was sent were stale, unfamiliar, unengaging pieces, aside from a couple authors, one of which I had been published with before. The title of this book was, "Best American Poetry 2004". Jane Hirshfield wrote of Poe. I identified with the industrial gray of that era, and Poe's madness. I felt honor in my connection with one of the year's greatest poets.

Shared

“Drop me off
wherever it was
that you left me?
Then maybe I’ll
be able to find
 Myself.”
wrote Michael Ollis
my “bitter beer faced” bunky
reminds me of myself
lost to Loves
dismissal
somehow
taking me with it,
along with the memory
of my father
who jumps
out his face
grimaced quirky
expression after expression
told in fish tales
we reminisce
a past we never
shared.

Tavius Dyer — February 7, 2005

*Michael’s statement, “drop me off wherever you left me, so that I might find myself”
won me over. I promised him I’d do something with it.*

Peppered Steak

Yesterday

my coffee
tasted of peppered steak.

Today
it smells
of it.

A conversation
nearby
is audible
but unintelligible.

I'm dragged away from the teacher,

turn around
with a hand out

turn an imaginary
knob –

“please turn the volume up,

I can't quite make out
what you are
saying” –

turn back around
to face the front

INCARCERATED

reach for my 50 weight

motor oil mix
of instant
coffee

(warmth to hold
substitution)

and struggle
to endure
my weakness

to turn

again.

Tavius Dyer — February 8, 2005

Class was a blessing. Five hours a day Monday through Friday. Most didn't care, talked through lectures, cracked jokes, and picked on people. It was Elementary School all over again, but only the worst kids went here. Instant coffee was like gold. I mixed mine thick, the thickest. Many wanted a drink, or a pour. Mine was like concentrate for the masses.

I've learned to pay better
attention to the road –
I'm not their White Boy

He's a little man,
snores like a dragon,
carries the keys
to the Homies'
“car.”

We attempted
Everything

when hit
with
an empty
cardboard lunch box.

A minor amongst Minorities
(the educated
professional)

I am what they think
is their oppression.

Pancho
looked down

almost
face to face
as I

lay on my rack

another
from over the pony wall

behind me

INCARCERATED

yet another
sprung off his rack
approaches

these scavengers
all
want a piece of me –

I'm their ignorance
I'm their excuse
to hate

I'm the pain that shrouds their fear.

I'm their prejudiced racism.

But

I'm not their
violence

because,

I laugh

instead of bite.

Tavius Dyer — February 8, 2005

My self-made affluence consisted of pay checks throughout the year while incarcerated and an education that told me to shut up and write. I felt the minority of minorities. This piece sketches the last of major offenses against me, based on slander for power play previous to this incident, by my own race. I left, yet, another dorm "for my safety." I would not fight, but that was not enough, it only made things worse.

Drug Addict's Son

His Aunt
picks up the phone

“there’s parole officers
here!”

“are they there
for me?”

“No,
For your Mom.”

She puts down
the phone

walks to the mantle
removes her

and hands the cold urn to the officers –

“Here She is. Take her Away.”

Tavius Dyer — February 8, 2005

A man attempted to fight me and dislocated his shoulder after his third swing. I sat motionless, and took the blows. I was not going to fight, but did, in a way, win without fighting. This guy befriended me, told stories of his Mother's addiction and how she died. I overheard a conversation about a phone call home, and made stark sense of it all.

Nothing Here Amuses Me

I don't want
Anything
enough
to ask for It,

so, I write
myself into
lockdown
on my rack.

Imagine
myself
a Monk

meddling
in his own
madness

(mind becomes a movie

I have done Nothing
to be)

my cellie

Jabber (walkie's) gibberish
in a maniacal
tongue –

If Life is a quickie
God is your condom –

shadows flash lickety split

beyond the threshold

herds of Turtles
hurry

as

Lemmings to the Sea

the Voice in my Head
is an Endangered Species

(seems to be talking
to someone else
Anyway) –

Now, he spits
random rap verses
and Alternative Rock
choruses...

Is mind's grammar
meant to conjugate
the Verb of our Heart?

I tell him
to be mindful
as his Spirit
returns
to

Conversations with God.

He opens a Bible

and

begins to read aloud.

Tavius Dyer — February 18, 2005

*Cell living before the court date to end all court dates, after too many months down.
My cellie was an interesting type (too much too soon). I could relate, somewhat. It
was Minimum Camp and eventually, freedom from lockdown, after this.*

Serenity Amongst Convicts

So simply mistaken

Loving kindness

for

Weakness

to give

was to give in

when

all you had to do is take –

but you can't take

what

I have

I am

laxed into lean

so comfortable

bones and body

where's your mind?

Mine is Everywhere all at once

don't know what to do with yourself, do you?

Ladies
like me

can have anything
they want

I just sit, nonchalant
smile you can't read.

Tavius Dyer — March 9, 2005

My giving spirit seemed a weakness, but when received, carried the power of attraction, consumerisms drive for more, always more. People befriended me I didn't want within the same country as me. But, nonetheless, I gave most to those who tried to take most. This was a good lesson for me. The Lady is a symbol for having what most want.

Nature is a Whore

On
back

knees up
legs spread

birth
pressure's expulsion

stale
swamp
ass

smell the gut of it

this

“sweet

suck and fuck

machine”

lives a lie

for Your

Pleasure—

Righteous

deprivation tank.

Why even

bother

offering

so much

if you didn't

want

to give it

to

us –

The Father

The Son

The Sexual Spirit

searches for you,
too.

It's not

All

about us, anymore – Is it?

Tavius Dyer — March 4, 2005

This piece is imagery and feelings commonplace to the end of my time in jail. So much of it on a rack with my feet up on the rail of the rack above. It made homophobes uncomfortable seeing someone in that position. It was jail, not Prison. I was surrounded by old men and dumb kids. When they got together, though, it became a little dangerous at times, but 11 months down and you could give a shit. And people know it. When you are too comfortable there people respect you, think you're crazy for it. Probably you are. We adapt. It's human nature. Do so and survive. Forced adaptation is a disease of our minds and society. We must be responsible for it. The quote "sweet suck and fuck machine" comes from a homosexual poet whose ideas of light and the shine of things between us helped me understand the word a little more.

INCARCERATED

All Meds and Miracle, Like Magic

1.

Space break

Fantasy

Hit

And

Keys rain

2.

Feelings I don't yet know

How to be responsible for

3.

Flipped my shirt off my eyes

Came off the liminal line

4.

Headphones tuned to college radio

Mr. Morales,

"In Frozen Trees"

on Ruccor

Park with Trinity

5.

BEAT JAZZ BOP

BLEW

6.

Empty glass bottles

Huddles like linemen

Till sunslant casts

Shadows fingers

Toppled over.

This piece came to me on Minimum Camp near the end of my term as I heard a friend's song on the radio headphones we were allowed. It felt so close to me I cried. This was my sign. Something from my past came beautifully to bring me to the present moving forward. Connection.

Philosopher Reborn

The Shape of Forgiveness

“I forgive you”
spoken plainly as a cubist’s repertoire —
misfires —

performative utterance
nonetheless,

no matter
how disjunct
its geometry.

Tavius Dyer — October 12, 2004

The book “Philosophy of Forgiveness” was sent to me while incarcerated by my dear friend Erin. I wanted to work on Forgiveness especially as anger towards particular people surfaced from the depths of my “Lovepain.” The philosophical writing style of the book was tough as any since college. I ate this in careful bites, chewing more often than ever in hopes to digest and assimilate. A few other lines from art and math sunk in here to round out a brief overview in the form of a statement, as seen in the piece preceding.

Coping Behavior

Self-talk
apparent
in your

body
language

as you
“knee jerk”
react –

warped
record

distorts
playback

slow
pull

draw

yourself Out
as

bruised veins bulge
teeth darken
become brittle like chalk.

Tavius Dyer — October 12, 2004

The first stanza is an idea out of work in Recovery where Self-Talk was what we ultimately felt, acted, and became. Body language is the most outward opinion of mood and attitude we have. So, if one were to be slouched, looking away, and tapping their foot we may assume they were bored, uninterested, and not caring. “This is stupid.” “I don’t want to.” “I don’t have to.” “I am better than this.” These are some of the things one might say to themselves to trigger feelings, attitudes, and moods such as these. Ultimately, we act from what we think or how we feel, which are, really, our body’s reactions to those thoughts as feeling, and our actions reciprocate the reaction self-reinforces what we are routinely in any given situation. X happens. I think Y. I feel Z. I do X.

Love Made Me

With rain
comes

The season of My Release –

and Yesterday
grew wings

wind cannot resist

(a behavior
that took

The World away)

turned me
into
My Own

a spiraling
descent

chaotic,

if not for
Destination –

constant arrival.

Tavius Dyer — October 29, 2004

Summer had come and gone. The first rains of winter were upon us. My understanding was I would be released in Winter. At the thought of this I was happy. Inspired, I took notice and added reflective criticism of my old ways towards the middle, along with a noteworthy statement at the end.

Astronaut Embryonic

Whirling
devils
gathered
stardust

(runaway
cell
division

if not for
fetal feet
suspended),

God
spoke air
into breath

as
birth
burns
all that
surrounds
into

The Senses –

Consciousness –

merely,
the result of
incessant
name calling,
until

Aware

(without being
Self-conscious)

becomes

Now.....

a long way
from bones
we've come
to Beauty.

Tavius Dyer — December 16, 2004

A fusion of major ideas converge here in this piece. The one to inspire this version was the idea of language creating the distinction our mind becomes as we grow to be self conscious. Our name is the first word we learn to recognize, as our self, separate from everything else. The reality of our being an idea, such as a word in language, symbolic, is grounded in the constant repetition of a single sound in association with us, being called out of everything, to be one thing. The beginning are images inspiring the connection to conscious awareness mentioned towards the end, regarding "Now" and being "aware without self-conscious." Finally, the favorite line I had written in college according to one of the most important people in my life, Geoff G — "a long way from bones we've come to beauty."

Pandora's Black Box

Each waking
a new life

programmed
by the last

to champion
the heroic cycle

archetype
unobtainable

defined by obsessive

object
relations

projected-

tuned in

passive
receptacles

unknowingly
meditative –

Silver Screen Technicolor magic

pixel by pixel
in Real time

till

riddled with ADD –
our children never had a chance
Alien in their own head,
an optical illusion.

Tavius Dyer — February 7, 2005

This piece stems from my research at Santa Clara University, where Joseph Campbell's study of world mythology, Psychology's "Object Relations" theory, and Communications theory about interlace technology inducing meditative states provide the pinnacle of my world view, philosophically speaking. Sleep and wake are interpreted as a life and death cycle, consciously. Some direct connections with the way we communicate and mental disorders are common scientific understanding now.

Master of the Obvious

Quite uncommon sense

not like

John Madden's
play by play
account of
pigskin folly,
junked on juice
call it pro ball —

but I do
attack
my writings
and ideas

with his
scribble all over the screen
techniques

call it critique
call it craft
call it

what it
wants

to be

called

Nothing,

nameless,

just take it in
without
division of the Senses

wanton, or
thought's irrational
(deconstruct irrelevant)

symbology's
nonexistent

(pull back distraction)
separate, until alien
in your own Universe

all around
the Moment
expands

contracts

each breath
opens
life's door
into

God's magnificent Creation

systems and forms
merely
entangle,

much like madness,

whatever happened

to
just
Being?

Can I write myself back there?

Tavius Dyer — February 25, 2005

They Do as You Do

Pre-pubescent
butterfly

forget the cocoon
cycle of the doldrums
scotch on the rocks
pearl necklace
and faggot
between
pointer and thumb
perched at what is to become hips
cocked her tilt
cloth gathered in the remaining?

Nothing else
but her little shoulders
hold up that blouse

her body already captive self-image
without reflection
pouty little lips
an eyebrow raised
above
big beautiful eyes
nearly the color of Monarchs.

Tavius Dyer — March 6, 2005

In class out on minimum camp. Before being released we had classes and one day slides were brought in depicting different characters. An image of an early teen dressed up in her Mother's oversized elegant clothes, smoking, drinking, and looking for a little adult fun struck me dumb. We learn how to act most from our parents. They are our "Gods" until we find our own, or settle on self. The picture I mentioned brought the addict's child into clearer view, a miniature version with all the dysfunction at an even earlier age, as if to magnify generation after generation.

He Takes With Him What I Have

His Love

walks away

with him

in Presence

outside my heart

Tavius Dyer — March 6, 2005

My dear friend Ed who helped me with editing would come and visit as often as he could. His efforts to edit my writings so that I could continue to work with them by sending them back to me was integral in this project and the productivity of my time away.

Don't Squash the Messenger

Truth, not Standing Ovation

Not
to fall
to, or, shall I say
succumb to Intellectualism's
Denial,

perhaps
language's symbolic realism
ran away
with
itself

like the monologue in your mind
which
when met
with the possibility
of feeling
becomes
conversation —

God forbid
emotion's
overwhelming
audience

and the crowd of
silence
instead of
applause.

Tavius Dyer — March 9, 2005

This one goes out to Cis. It is he who inspired my pseudo-intellectualism during this period and was of more than enough interest to inspire. I guess, this piece, is about the mind's loneliness, and ability to scramble the truth into whatever necessary. I tend towards the mind being "symbolic" of the body, or shall I say derived, or evolved through symbolisms such as language and whatnot.

Pen Point

Mind pointed
as pen to the page
Why such a pointed thing
Everything
One

time & space's

relativity
projects
reflection's
introspection

rippled
water like bodies
in motion
sweat
beads run
curves

It's all gravity

not a nickel arcade

fantasy flash
lights burn
and buzz

pop

the points
tally

tilt

drop another coin
and return to the womb

where Rumi tells tales
of the outside world

Be melting snow

wean yourself
of yourself

until

the thirsty fish inside of you
has enough of what it's thirsty for

He must be hallucinating
What spirit is he drunk of

synesthesia

I'm drunk on dreams
my days are dreams

so many pages in a picture book
not my own

a story I cannot read
until written

Tavius Dyer — March 23, 2005

The ultimate testament to my spiritual roots with Rumi is quoted here, and my having read his book half through before realizing his drunkenness came not from wine, but from God. To be drunk with God ... selfless.

Jaded Tumult Obsidian Dance

1.

Psycho –
soliloquized
alacrity out the cacophony of

Cognitive

Dissonance –

2.

Distance

listen to me
Denial

your need to survive
is an addiction
too somehow organic

3.

Glass storms
stole upon
inhaling

spoiled secrets
stripped

shadows cement
set to spring

hollow hungers
clutch you
dying

4.

From the quiet.

Tavius Dyer — April 1, 2005

This piece comes from an extraction of words I found interesting from Billy Corgin's book of poetry, along with other placeless ideas.

Expiration

I sin
With
Knowledge

Perhaps

The worst way

I bit
At the
Well

Burst

Built up
Below

“self-mutilation”

Brought

Discovery

Of the
Prostate

From
Within

And
Orgasm
Anew

Like never before

And

I thought of you
I did

Cotton in the throat
Without the
Nerve to

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Chuck
The
Sickness
My emotion
Had become

IT held
Me
Down

Wrestled me weightless

Nothing

To throw around
But my
Body temple

Christ promised to rebuild in three days

I ponder worship

Want so bad
To witness
To a

Woman

Like the time
I ate pot brownies
And goo balls
At
The High Sierra Music Festival
And fell to the ground
Pants down
Legs spread
Beating
Myself
Out the awe
Of your

Milky
Moonlit
Mountain sky

Until

Finally

Choosing

Selflessness

And taking
Nothing
More

Not water or
Food or
Another

Breath

Than is necessary
To sustain

This passing

Back

To what is

Everything.

Part of this piece is confession, another realization, and finally the Self versus God battle in my life ending with the decision to take Nothing more, and pass into death. I came to the realization living was selfish after a Rave party in Oakland, looking out the window coming off acid in 1998. I felt, to live, we must take (food, water, shelter, etc.). The things that subsist life taken without real collective purpose seem wholly selfish. The greater idea, live with collective purpose, or don't live, may be too harsh to extrapolate from this and carry as a message, but a part of me believes it to be this way, at the core.

Dream State

Kids

Cult

Branded

Sex

Idol

American

Mickey mouse media

Freedom is false

Ownership

Foxhole atheist consumer

So many

Versions

I don't belong to

The throw

away

kind

addiction has Need

to survive

too

only one

thing

instead of everything.

Gobble-de gook, chop suey, and stuff like that, this one. A bit of one, and another-put together. More social criticism, here, too. The myriad addiction is our way, outlined above. Disney holds the keys to the "magic" kingdom, producing Britney Spears and Justin Timberlake, two of pop culture's main youth sex icons furthering the adage that "sex sells," especially to our youth.

Release

Chapter One of the Novel “Painkiller”

Chapter 1 - Release

An Excerpt from the Novel "Painkiller"

"Amazing, the potential inside each and every one of us, only begun to be realized as we decide to do something."

I hear my name mumbled over the intercom, "Roll it up." A few people cheer, knowing I am released to a program as part of Probation. The courts as well as I understand the advantage of a sober living environment. A second chance to put my life together will clear some of the wreckage of my past, and move me forward into a healthy life.

I give back the men's magazines I had borrowed; having obsessed over every image I could get my hands on. Always more, more, more, never enough after a County year bunked up with 64 other men in our concrete room – two pair of community underwear, socks, a T-shirt a week, one pair of green cotton pants and over-shirt, two sheets, two blankets and an inch of foam on a steel bunk.

I pop open my green plastic container and pass my things along as unsentenced convicts scurry around greedily, grabbing with excitement in their eyes, for whatever I would give. A packet of mustard is good as gold.

My paperwork, pictures, letters, and a few sentimentals are stuffed into a clear plastic garbage bag.

"Don't forget your razor. Can't leave without it!" Proudfoot, says, face admonishing the sun. "People try to collect them to kill someone, or themselves, like that guy who cut his sheets with them, fastened a noose, and hung himself."

"Yeah, thanks, here's a soup" I say. Ramen is the basis of all convict-cooked meals off the hot-pot. "Take care of yourself, now, you hear. I hope you make it back to school so you can become an addiction counselor."

"Mr. Dyer. To the gate, now!"

I wave with a smile as I flip my clear plastic sack of belongings over my shoulder, push my long hair out of my bearded face with the other hand and make my way to the door, weaving my way between the stainless steel tables past the red line that separates us from the corridors back into the world.

I push the black button. A voice comes out the speaker in the wall like a radio down a tunnel – "Whaddya want?!" The correctional officer says angrily.

"I was called to roll it up, Sir."

The lock snaps hard and lets the steel reinforced door away

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from the wall. I pull the handle as a cheer wells up from over my shoulder. "Nah nah nah nah – hey hey hey – good-bye," sing the inmates with jubilant cacophony.

I flash 'em my last "Its all good" smile in my face, and add an open hand raised about my head in admiration of their ceremony –

The heavy door slams behind me. A man in blue kicked back in a chair with his feet on the counter is thumbing through the latest Playboy, no doubt sent to an inmate still waiting to receive it. Two other uniformed men are posted up in front of the open closet room across from me; playing Madden 2005 on the TV used for instructional videos and the occasional movie.

"Excuse me sir, I was called out to be released."

A heavy sigh followed by a look over his shoulder and a nod to the other side of the room tells me to wait in the cold room.

I lug my stuff over to the 5' x 5' concrete hole with a metallic shitter-sink combo in the corner across from a hard wood bench. I can hear them playing around the corner. Just then, the door down the hall unlocks loudly. "Shit, man. It's the Sarge! Close up shop guys!"

I can't see much from the narrow windows of the cement tank, and decide to lie down and listen to the correctional officers scramble to look good.

"Hey Sarge!"

"How are things?"

"All right, I guess, no problems here."

"We've got one release in the holding cell, and the nurse is preparing her cart for pill call."

"Who's taking the release?"

"Dunno."

"I got nothing to do."

"What is he?"

"White."

"All right."

He shuffles to the door in Browns, belt down in the front, up in the back exposing a healthy belly below his Sheriff's patch.

"You ready, boy?" The sergeant says with a grin hung from his folded brow.

"Yes sir."

"Well, let's get on with it. What are you waiting for?"

I pick up my head from the toilet paper roll it had been resting on; and reluctantly I pick up myself and my stuff.

With the sight of the Sarge coming back down the hall, the door lock slams open. He hums a tune under his breath, as I keep quiet.

"Hey Sarge... Howdy, Sir." Shouts come from the building's central control station as we negotiate the heart of this cold, cement

complex. Down the next hall, another loud pop of a heavy steel door opening.

There is silence in the main holding tank area. Cold rooms line either wall facing a cheap counter where behind hang orange colored chains and handcuffs. "We'll have to put these on, young man. Turn around against the wall."

The cold metal links cinch up into my gut tight. I hold my breath in, and push my belly out as I learned from the countless trips I made to court before sentencing.

"Okay. Nice and easy, let's make our way." An arm extended towards the door shows me the way out into the air under the ominous winter sky - cold, crisp, yet blindingly bright.

I shuffle past the "farm" where misdemeanors and minor post-sentenced felons stay before being released. The open grounds contain dilapidated barracks. Stucco fallen off whitewashed walls in chunks exposes chicken wire and wood rot like dung. Paint-peeled window frames, rickety if at all movable, dirt fields with patches of brown grass, gravelly cement cracked weeds fighting for sun under basketball hoops, rims bent, nets torn or missing.

"What a sight," slips out my mouth to what I hoped was under my breath.

"Oh yeah. With all the State Prison funding cutbacks, and the uncertainty of Prop 66 Strike Law's effect, we've got to work with what we've got till Sacramento can get its head out of its ass and come to an agreement on the State Budget."

"Hum, yeah." Not wanting to get in a political or philosophical debate with the Man only hours from my release, I look down instead, keep my eyes off him, and kick a rock. I watch it skip off the pavement and into the sparse foxtails.

The admin building is full of inmates awaiting transfers or release. The Trustee behind the desk gives me a head nod as two men in blue sit behind flickering computer monitors munching on ODR food. The TV is turned up too loud. The aluminum housing holding it buzzes, spitting out unintelligible sounds, Spanish, I think, Caliente. Nobody is listening anyway, as young Latino women bounce and squirm in bikinis to the upbeat rhythms and hard hitting beat.

"Got another one here, boys." The officers stiffen up behind the counter and reply while still chewing, "Yes sir." Motioning with a turn of the head and dart of the eyes toward the uniform responsible for my release.

"Oh yeah" I walk over slowly, unsure of what to do.

"Put your stuff over there," not looking up from the desk. I take a few steps and drop my bag in the only floor space left seeming to be out of the way.

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"Over there you idiot, behind the red line."

"Sorry, sir."

The Sarge pipes up, "Alrighty then. You guys have a good one!" as he leans into the door letting in the late afternoon which has kicked up the wind.

The correctional officers stand there, wondering what to do, before they bark again – "Around the corner, give 'em your wristband and when you've changed come out and take a seat."

Without a word, I try lifting my arm to show them I am still handcuffed.

"Godammit man! Get those things off him." The younger and less overweight of the two shakes his head, as if to dread having to move his ass like it was the end of the world. "Alrighty, man."

The change area is filled with a few huge green dumpsters for clothes and has an opening, chest high, large enough to pass a paper grocery sack of belongings.

An elderly Oriental man barks at me, "Name, number." I approach offering my hand for him to take the information off my plastic wrist band, waterlogged clear to white. The first letter of my last name has somehow disposed of itself as paste at the inside edge of the band. He looks up at me as if to wonder what I'm doing.

"Umm. T – A – V – " ...one letter, one number at a time, spells out about all the information my life had thus far amounted to, other than a terrible credit report, fine college marks, and an ever-increasing record. The little man disappears from view. Steps are heard scurrying about between heavy breaths and angry mumbles. After several minutes a brown paper grocery sack appears top folded over itself as if to keep what little I had when brought in from escaping. Somewhere behind the frayed creases stands the old man huffing and puffing.

I reluctantly take the paper grocery bag wondering what could remain from a year ago. I lift the flap and peer inside. A Ziploc with random pocketable items, wallet flung open from being too full, cell phone, numerous rings of keys strung to a blue "I Love You" band I bought from a deaf man on Nob Hill, flip flops from Longs, soccer shorts I wore for boxers, various papers, match book, lighter, and trash.

"No clothes," I call out to the opening in the wall. A minute later a frown with wrinkles appears.

"What?"

"I have no clothes," I repeat loud enough to know that he can hear me.

"Oh, okay then. Be right back." He looks me up and down with quizzical eyes, nodding his head, "Um, hmm."

Gone again, as if apparition. I wonder what will return. Him?

More importantly, what will I wear? Suddenly, little fists shoot up into view. White creased paper is dangling from the grip. I grab at what I see in disbelief. The slick surface of the lightweight material gives easily between my fingers as I tug, unveiling a jumpsuit looking like a joke prop for a low budget High School theater performance of Space Odyssey 2001.

With that, the metal slats of the roll-up window slam shut.

“Damn,” I think, “I ain’t gonna wear just this out there. I’ll freeze my ass off looking like some kind of mad scientist wacko.” I begin to pull the uni-suit over my county clothes, and realize it is large and loose enough to conceal what I am already wearing.

I make some noise in the bins where my county issue clothes are meant to go before returning to the waiting room. I walk slowly so as not to disclose my “undergarments” and put my arm on the counter as scissors are already in hand. Snip. My identification slips off my arm and on to the linoleum floor.

“Sit down and shut up.” I turn about face, find a chair, sit down, and zone out through and beyond the white noisemaker screwed to the upper corner of the room as almond bellies, pitted olive belly buttons pierced with sterling silver flowers, more than Mother baring hips gyrate, full firm booty and jugs bounce to the rhythm and beat we can only imagine.

When I come to, it seems hours have passed. I am lost in thought, not remembering where I have been. I turn towards the window and my eyes hurt from the light still outside.

A voice comes at me over my shoulder from across the room, “Mr. Dyer, you are free to go” as if some precise measurement of time has occurred. Somewhere a clock strikes the moment of my freedom. I shoot up, shuffle over to my belongings, and begin dragging the clear plastic garbage bag of things towards the door.

“Pick it up!” He shouts. I let it fly by me as I open the door and lift my bag. Outside air gusts up around me as if to lift me off the ground. The contents in my bag strain and stretch out the plastic. My surroundings grow around me. Overexposed. I feel my weight let go. I glide across the empty parking lot, off into the first chapter of my new life.

As my struggle subsides, light from the sun grows brighter all around until it consumes me.

I had just received some fairly negative feedback from a writing group I recently joined, and submitted “White Light” as my first piece for their review. The novel, “Painkiller” was written better, and ended this project on a lighter note, while providing a lead into my next book. My fiction writing skills are underdeveloped and fairly unskilled. However, some of the power of my poetry shines through the interesting imagery of my fiction.

Addiction, Mental Health, and Incarceration

Addiction, Mental Health, and Incarceration

Addiction is a treatable brain disease. The medical communities have accepted this for decades. Why are medical communities not trained sufficiently to screen for this disease, even though it may be the leading disease causing greater needs for health care resources, drying up the limited resources available? Why are prisons not providing treatment when a mass majority of the people incarcerated are addicts and alcoholics who were under the influence while committing their crimes? Many people who suffer from treatable mental health issues use drugs and alcohol to self-medicate due to lack of knowledge of the underlying psychological issues or lack of medical resources. Dual Diagnosis (abnormal psychological issues coupled with addiction) is the most at risk group for incarceration, yet treatment is not sufficiently provided in and out of our prison systems to rehabilitate. We are locking up mental health patients also suffering from addiction and other addicts, even though our prisons are already over-populated.

There are many misconceptions due to uneducated judgments, and arguments around semantics rather than actions. Drug and alcohol use changes neurochemical balance of the brain, not only while someone is under the influence, or through the body's detoxification, but often for prolonged periods and even permanently. These effects are often intensified with more frequent use which begins to replace the normal mental, emotional, and physical responses to regular activities such as playing with children, seeing a good movie, getting a raise at work, even exercise and sex. The reward system of the brain which triggers these feelings of joy, elation, connectedness, etc. is slowly and sometimes immediately substituted with the use of substances. The brain's "no" system, or judgement system is often immediately inhibited while under the influence and diminished over time so that users become compulsive in their behavior despite the most severe consequences, eventually unable to control not only

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their use, but many other behaviors ultimately detrimental to their social, financial, physical, and mental health.

Predisposed users for abnormal psychological conditions can trigger these conditions by abusing drugs and alcohol, adding to their challenge of recovery and risk of incarceration or death. Those, perhaps, not genetically predisposed to abnormal psychological conditions may develop symptoms during regular prolonged use of substances, or even after one episode. Sometimes, conditions of psychosis, depression, paranoia and other conditions of mental illness remain permanently.

Often drug and alcohol use can trigger genetically predisposed mental illness. Drug and alcohol use also creates its own mental illnesses, often causing addiction, depression, psychosis, paranoia, anxiety and more abnormal psychological conditions. Whether or not the user is predisposed genetically to addiction or mental illness, the probability is that, with enough continued use, addiction and/or accompanying mental illness will result.

Studies show that 80% of inmates suffer from addiction. Over half of them were under the influence while committing their crime. It could be argued, in my opinion, that addicts under the influence are not in control of their actions, and may not be entirely responsible for their crimes, especially, if they are suffering from a brain disease responsible for compulsivity of action despite negative consequences. It is true that the highest recidivism rates among inmates are with addicts, and the biggest factor in career criminals is addiction. However, what are we doing with this “captive audience” while we have the opportunity to intervene?

Less than 5% of addicts, incarcerated, receive treatment. They are released after being detained in a highly violent, racist, gang related environment, without knowledge or treatment of their disease, only to return typically to the same environment and people who helped get them there in the first place. These environmental influences may reinforce genetic and neurological conditions of mental health and addiction.

Treatment must not only be provided during incarceration to

addicts who commit crimes as an alternative to prison, but must also be provided during their transition to society with outpatient after care, safe housing, transportation, and job opportunities. Attempting to get a job after conviction of a crime is not an easy accomplishment. Even when addicts have recovered, their record remains an issue.

Addicts can recover and return to society as productive citizens. I am an example of one. I have met countless others. Finding a job is second to staying sober once having committed a crime. Employment opportunity is sometimes vital to recovery and rehabilitation.

What should be examined is the incredible positive impact just one recovered addict makes in just one year. The reduction in crime, police, fire, ambulance, medical, court, and detention costs exponentially outweigh treatment costs. Further benefits derive from income and sales taxes paid, and the reduction of welfare and unemployment expenses. In addition, the emotional, mental, financial, and safety burdens of the addict's family, friends and communities are alleviated. Often, not only do the addicts get their lives back, but families are reunited and the most likely people to become addicts, their children, are given positive necessary role models in their parents to help reduce their children's risk on following in their footsteps.

This is not only a disease needing treatment. It is a disease needing education and prevention. We are not getting the education and treatment to enough people, especially those most susceptible, early teens. Their brain chemistry makes them even more susceptible to drug and alcohol use and addiction due to their natural compulsivity at those key developmental ages. Peer pressure may be at its highest influence, along with the rebel attitude of finding their own identity. Families must not approach their children with anger, as these children may already have too much anger as it is, but with understanding, guided appropriate intervention, and ongoing treatment, both for the addict and the family. Otherwise, parents may unknowingly be enabling, or fostering unnecessary guilt and shame.

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An individual has a choice, however influenced, to start drinking and using. Many people are predisposed genetically to being susceptible to addiction, and craving. Though it may not begin with the first drink or use, addiction may be inevitable for them, leading to obsession, and inability to quit even in the face of incredible negative consequences. There are those who suffer knowingly or unknowingly from underlying mental illness who abuse drugs and alcohol in a feeble, and often dangerous and violent attempt to self-medicate and cope with their condition. Others, may or may not be genetically predisposed to addiction. However, with regular use of alcohol or drugs their natural brain chemistry changes to associate chemically the use of substances in place of more common activities, such as sex, conversation, etc., that might normally elicit similar response. Though the initial experience may be one of elation, and euphoria, eventually, anyone, with enough regular use will undergo changes in the nature of his or her brain chemistry resulting in dependency, cravings, mental obsession, compulsive behavior and other symptoms of addiction and/or mental illness such as psychosis, depression and paranoia.

What if children knew what was really at risk before they took their first drink, or used their first drug? What if they understood the chance that their lives would inevitably be changed, unable to avoid compulsive behaviors despite all negative consequences, even jail, institution, and death?

What if incarcerated addicts received rehabilitation for the source of their criminal behavior through addiction and mental health treatment, transitional and ongoing care after their release?

What if our criminal court, health and social service industries could be alleviated from one of the most determined impacts existing today due to inadequate health care and treatment for addicts, mental health patients and the overrun prison population?