

WISH

(washington incarceration stops here)
presents



PLAN

A

Cut Along Dotted Line

jails and courts are bad for our communities.
How would you like to see these resources
used instead?

Washington Incarceration Stops Here
1463 E Republican St.
#B57
Seattle, WA 98112

INTRODUCTION

So often, we are told that our best ideas about how the world could be a better place are impractical. We are told that we must embrace incremental or compromised change that does nothing to move us in the direction of where we want to be. But we know better!

The communities we are a part of are vast—we are building, thriving, growing, making mistakes and trying new ways of being over and over again. We see people coming together to have conversations and work on projects and take action that is brave, that is beautiful, that is sometimes messy and never perfect, but always pushing us to think beyond what is immediately before us.

In April 2012, the first meeting of what has become WISH (Washington Incarceration Stops Here) was convened by an activist immigrant mom who has experienced criminalization and the horrors of the child welfare system. We came together as a group of people from different experiences to oppose King County's plans to spend \$210 million dollars to build a new youth jail and court buildings in the Central District of Seattle. We believe that incarceration, racist policing, immigration enforcement, child "welfare" programs, and the gentrification and environmental consequences that come with them are tearing our communities apart. These punishment-based strategies have failed. We believe that everyone's needs for housing, education, healthcare, and so much more should be met while putting an end to cycles of poverty, criminalization, and violence.

Plan A is what happens when we prioritize the voices of those most affected by these systems of oppression. When we dare to demand the end of incarceration as a solution to anything and share instead plans and ideas for what we might build. When we break down why the current system isn't only broken, but *meant to be* broken. So what is Plan A? Abolition! And also art, advocacy, accessibility, amazing anthems . . . you tell us! Our hope is that this zine will serve as a launching place for more conversation and collaboration.

With fierce love, **WISH**

Cut Along Dotted Line





Resources

WISH—Washington Incarceration Stops Here

nonewyouthjail.wordpress.com

nonewyouthjail@riseup.net

Who You 'Callin Illegal

Whoyoucallinillegal.wordpress.com

Critical Resistance

criticalresistance.org

crnational@criticalresistance.org

Decarcerate PA

decarceratepa.info

decarceratepa.pgh@gmail.com

Black and Pink

blackandpink.org

members@blackandpink.org

Prisoner Correspondence Project

prisoner Correspondence Project.com

info@prisoner Correspondence Project.com



ABOUT WISH (washington incarceration stops here):

<http://nonewyouthjail.wordpress.com>

WISH is a grassroots group dedicated to opposing prisons, criminalization and immigration enforcement. We started in April 2012 as a group of people who want to stop King County's plans to spend \$210 million dollars to build a new youth jail and court buildings at 12th and Alder in the Central District of Seattle. The plan also includes building commercial spaces that will further gentrify the Central District.

Incarceration, racist policing, immigration enforcement and child "welfare" programs are tearing our communities apart. We believe that these punishment based strategies have failed and we are working together to move our region in a new direction—toward meeting everyone's needs for housing, education, healthcare, food and justice, and stopping the cycle of poverty, criminalization and violence.

Here are the points of unity that we organize around:

1. People should be able to make decisions about their own lives
2. Nobody should be poor
3. Nobody should be in jail or behind bars
4. Police are dangerous to our communities
5. We can keep each other safe

By Shaunel Burt

**Close your eyes and close your mind
Hear nothing but my voice
And if you try I know you'll find you've
made the perfect choice
Please shed no tears, this I ask
For the fact I am condemned
But have no fear as I shed my mask
And reveal the woman within
The papers paint my story well
No doubt you've seen the news
But know they can't begin to tell
A fraction of the truth
You judge me based on tainted facts
And lock me in a cage
You're made to think the way I act
Is because I'm a monster full of rage
But tell me this do monsters cry
As they lie alone at night?
Do they reminisce with teary eyes
And mourn a wasted life?
Do monsters' families beg the lord
Please bring our Shaunel home?
Do they feel within true remorse
From their head down to their toes?
Do monsters learn to love and trust
To help someone in need?
I often pray you'll learn the truth
And see I am no imposter
I hope the day is coming soon
You'll believe I'm not a monster**

"Holding Us" por Jasy Ore

I wanna see you
I wanna see you fully
in your own way, your own body
to hold your body close and
call you us - inclusive, exclusive us
You are here.
Community conscious, Us, can
carry you, care for you, keep you
close
to our house - no, I mean homes.
Come into Our Home,
encircling the once-encarcerated
with now-compassion and always-
love.
Flow into a whole community
who will care for you
who will teach with you
who will grow with you
-and anyone you may have hurt or
those who have hurt you.
Not a criminalized class, but a class
that can use care.
As the blood in me screams,
Shrieking to respect the way things
once were in dense jungles and
grasslands far from here which
I was forced away from and I
am now trapped by more white-man-
made enclosures.

Assured that my ancestors' cries of
seeking
A land-without-evil,
a land without colonized, con-
trolled bodies
and brains
and borders
and lands being disappeared
- with none of us illegal to be
thrown
cell to cell to cage to cage to
chains to change that may not
come
without our bodies suffering too
like the pain our bloodlines hold.
Why remove Us from Us?
Why create a perpetual cage of cell
blocks,
and detention centers,
and cities,
and borders?
Why are 'they' - whoever they can
be like corporate cages
politicians, nations, Evil Spirits
made flesh and cold blood
- afraid of Us connecting?
Because we can make them disap-
pear
with seeing each other outside all
the Evil?
Because the Land-Without-Evil is
without them
and all that separates Us from Us
and it'S already within our reach?
I just want to see you
and care for you and
to tell you that I know you're You
and you're gonna be alright.
Because you're the community, too.
You are Us.

doesn't matter if its 6 months later you get out or 60 years later, you still have that 85% chance of relapse. In my own opinion, it makes absolutely no sense to lock up a drug addict for a long period of time. I can understand like a 30 day detainer here and there for failing drugs tests because yeah, those 30 days will give that addict some time to clear their mind and start thinking about things. But to sentence an addict, I find that crazy and nothing good is going to come of it because that addict is going to be in the exact same spot when they get released if they don't get the proper help. (And there is no proper help when locked up... The drug programs suck...)

8.) How do we fight back?

*** This my friend I believe is an unanswerable question. Its disgusting because the more and more you tell people this, yes, the more aware they become but it seems like nothing ever gets done...

9.) I'm interested in your thoughts on how economic status and white privilege have played a part in your status as a convict. For example many people when paroled have no transportation to meetings or can't afford bus fair to a meeting; as a result they miss the meeting and wind up back in jail. You have not run into this problem.

*** I have not run into this problem because I have a loving family that supports me when I am doing the right things and I am entirely grateful for everything they have done and are doing and i will forever be grateful. Some people have just completely burned their bridges with absolutely everyone and its sad. Hopefully for those, they can build those "bridges" again and it will take time but its not impossible. At the same time there are alot of programs and things that can help these people that have absolutely nothing. The just needed to be guided to these things before they give up and fall back into their old ways.

10.)The blatant problem of racism in the U.S. is reflected in the court system, I think, wherein racial bias will determine the outcome of a convict's hearing. As a white male from a financially privileged background, you haven't had this experience. So, I guess what I'm asking is, do you have any thoughts on your white privilege in the drug court?

*** I hate racism... I got detained for failing a drug test for opiates which is understandable, the kid next to me gets deported for failing a test for a very low level of marijuana. The weird thing is, out of the four jails/prisons that I have been too, the predominant race is white. We out number everyone. In my opinion when it comes to racism within the court room, it is all up to the judge for the most part.

Be easy
your brother

My name is Dylan and I have been locked up not only physically but also mentally since the age of 8 years old. I was sent to foster care when I was 8 – that's when my behaviors made a dramatic change. I was a very abusive person. I used to get into a lot of fights once I was a ward of the state. I remember when I was in foster care I would run away, go to my brother's foster home, and get him so we could run away back to our house to see our parents. It was very stressful for me and I became a very dangerous person. I got locked up for assaults, run aways, theft, and home invasions. I eventually got sent up or did a lengthy amount of time in a juvenile prison at the age of 12.

When I was released, I was back in the state's hands and resorting back to my old ways. While I was incarcerated I didn't really do anything that helped me when I was released. I was in school but that didn't help m change my behaviors – in fact, I think it made them worse because I am around more people that did the same things as me – so I was still fighting and stealing things. The way I see it, it actually put me in an environment that was even worse than the one I was in while I was in the community.

So after I was back home in the state's custody I got locked back up at the age of 15. I got sent to another juvenile facility in Chehalis, WA called Green Hill School where I am currently residing, doing 4 ½ years. So, obviously, my first time being incarcerated didn't help but I thought about it when I first got here at GHS. I thought that it was my own fault for not trying to help myself. This time I was more motivated to get all the help I could because when I got out I would be 19 turning 20, and I would go to DOC if I got into any trouble with the law. So I got my high school diploma which was one of the things that I knew was going to make a major impact in my life upon my release.

The next thing I wanted to do was get into as many treatment groups as I could in the 4 ½ years that I would be here. So I got into ART – or anger management therapy. While I was in it I thought it was kinda dumb, because everything they taught you was basically that it's all your fault no matter what happens in any situation because "it takes two to tango." If you ever got into a problematic situation with staff, it's also your fault, even if the staff is the real one at fault. Either way you are bound to get into trouble no matter what happens. These staff that work here, well, at least most, which is about 80% of them, have a mindset of "the staff are always right, even when wrong." We are a bunch of convicts, so we are never going to tell the truth or do the right thing – at least that's the way these staff see us as a whole.

I was just in a DBT skills group, which teaches the same things as ART. "You are always going to be the one at fault." Well anyways, right when I got in they were talking about how we need to know these skills so we can pass a test to get more privileges. That might not make sense to you as the reader but maybe this will. These groups should be designed to help you learn how to put them to use so when you do get released you can understand what you need to do in any given situation, but no, they want you to study these skills for tests to get more privileges. These "treatment" groups aren't helping anyone to do better. It's really stupid and I really think these staff are stupid because obviously if they wanted us to do good in the community one we are released they would provide adequate treatment.

So you see, this place is of no benefit to me and other juvenile offenders. The only thing that is helping is the educational opportunities which JRA is not providing – the Chehalis school district are the ones providing the educational and vocational trainings, which in a way are not so helpful because they give us the easiest stuff to graduate. Pretty much everyone is on an individualized education plan.

But anyway, like I was saying, these staff are really useless. If you heard the things they say and saw the things they do you would be surprised how they still work here. These staff aren't at all the good, easygoing treatment providers their community portrays them to be. These staff sexually harass us daily by saying things like, "now here comes the fun part," or "it's not the smallest one I've seen" while doing strip searches or UAs on us. Sometimes they will even physically sexually harass us. There have been numerous occasions where the certain staff will bend over, look back at his own ass, and smile at us mischievously.

Tell me - how we are supposed to enter an environment to change our ways when the staff aren't helping us, only making our situations and circumstances worse?!

Dylan Webb
An inmate at Green Hill School
Chehalis WA

person. Of course these people are going to have give me the chance to prove to them which is hard when applying for jobs and such because first impressions are huge. But at the same time you would be surprised at how many people are understanding and have a past of their own and are willing to give you the chance. Also when it comes to finding employment, there is a lot of help out there for convicts and drug abusers. There are plenty of 'quarry friendly jobs' out there, and a lot of programs like I said will help you find work and other things.

6.) What about parole? Do you want to talk about your experience with Parole?

***Parole... well I can say that parole is better than being locked up, that's for sure. The thing is, if they had wanted to send me to another half-way house program while on parole then I would not have done it. So far the parole is really not that bad at all. For now the 10pm curfew doesn't bother me or anything. (what would I be doing out after ten other than getting in trouble). and I will be on parole for a short time. And god forbid I screw up on parole you only go back to jail for the rest of the time on your sentence, no time gets added, unless you pick up a new case or something... But anyway I plan on doing the right thing so parole is no problem at all.

Be easy
Your brotha,
xxxx

HEYY, Here are some more answers for you. I hope I answered them good enough for ya.

7.) I'm currently reading a book that you'd be interested in called "The New Jim Crow: Colorblindness in the Age of Mass Incarceration." The author's thesis is as follows: The War On Drugs explains the huge increase in incarceration rates in the US, and mass incarceration has become the method by which the social order keeps black men on the bottom of the American totem pole. From 1982 to the present, the inmate population has gone from 300,000 to TWO MILLION, and black men are incarcerated at grossly disproportionate rates. Now, in an earlier response, you touched on how Drug Court sets inmates up for relapse and, as a result, recidivism. The system sets you up to relapse, and turn to crime to survive. What are your thoughts on this? Sorry that this question is a bit wordy; my coffee is kicking in.

***The drug court system is, in my opinion, set up for failure like I said. The drug court is supposed to help addicts achieve sobriety but with my experience they didn't really help you out at all or even care if you failed or succeeded. And when they just throw you in jail it's all over. For the most part if you throw an addict behind bars, does not matter if it's for 6 months or 60 years, if they do not get the proper help for their addiction, there's a chance of relapse stays the same which is about 85%. and like I said it

3.) When I visited you in Middlesex HOC a couple months ago, in one of our conversations you talked about the mental health diagnostic process at Cambridge where you were held last year. I specifically remember you saying that you tried all you could to answer the medical practitioner's questions in such a way that would guarantee a void/nonexistent diagnoses, yet she prescribed you Lithium anyway. Will you talk about this?

*** At Cambridge, probably 90% of the inmates are diagnosed with Bi-Polar and are prescribed Lithium. The inmates, we all joke about it because when you come in and a couple days later get called down to medical we already know what is going to happen...its inevitable. And yes like you said I specifically went into her conversation answering the questions so that I would not be diagnosed Bi-polar and still walked out of the room with a new script. And since Lithium is a mood stabilizer I believe that is why she prescribes it, so that no one is over happy and no one is depressed, we just sit there emotionless like zombies waiting to get released or sentenced. (either that or they have stock shares in Lithium the drug) Once again, disgusting.

4.) Suboxone...Big Pharma's way of cashing in on the opioid crisis in the U.S.? Do you think the PIC and pharma are linked in this regard?

*** This is a very tough question to answer but I am going to give it a shot. Okay,

Suboxone can actually be one of those miracle drugs in my own opinion. The thing is with suboxone and methadone, which I recommend suboxone, if you are actually trying to become sober and do the right thing, these drugs are amazing and will really help you. the problem is though, a lot of the people that use these drugs are using them to get/stay high because the effects are that of any opiate. people will get on the clinic trying to get clean and then they don't ever wean themselves off of their dose. And then they technically slowly become addicted to the suboxone or methadone. And they try to justify their using by saying well its from the government or well im not shooting heroin anymore, when in the end it is all the same thing. But like I said earlier, it can be a miracle drug too if you are actually trying to do the right thing and get clean, I know plenty of great people who have years sober who first started out kicking with suboxone or methadone.

5.) You have at least one felony conviction. I know from my research that felony convictions for non-violent, drug-related offenses result in stripping of voting rights, ineligibility for public housing (by law), discrimination by private landlords, ineligibility for foodstamps, and the stigma of always having to "check the box" on virtually all job applications. Do you feel comfortable talking about your experience with these things, or how a felony conviction will effect you when it comes to re-entering mainstream society?

***I do believe that my record will effect me in the future, but at the same time I believe that if I keep on doing the right things, then I can prove to myself and others that my record is in my past and that I have become a new

The new youth jail being planned by King County is a big problem, but it's not the only problem with the plans. The proposed Children and Family Justice Center will also be the site of dependency proceedings. Dependency proceedings separate families and communities and lead directly to increased youth incarceration. A "dependency proceeding" is a child-welfare proceeding where the State removes a child from their parents' care because of allegations of abuse, neglect, or allegations that the parents are unable to care for the child. Once the allegations are made, the parent and child go before the dependency court, and the court decides where the child will be placed, what kind of visitation they will be able to have with their parents, and what services the parent needs to complete in order for the family to be reunited. The court also decides where a child will attend school and what services a child will be required to participate in. The court can order parents to get mental health care or drug treatment, but it will not pay for parents to get that care, help them deal with missing work, or provide other meaningful support that might make it possible for parents to follow the orders. Where parents are unable to do what the court tells them to do within the designated timeframe, the State will ask the court to permanently terminate the parents' relationship with the child.

Court-ordered separation from their parents leads to increased incarceration for youth. Youth in dependency proceedings are often placed into foster care. Even where family members are willing to care for a young person, strict background checks exclude many from doing so. Even a minimal criminal history can make a court decide that a family member isn't allowed to take in the child. The disproportionate rates of families of color in the dependency system and the over-policing of communities of color result in a higher percentage of youth of color being placed in foster care.

The statistics are staggering:

Approximately 9,600 youth are in foster care at any given time in Washington State, of which approximately 6,000 are placed with non-relative caregivers.

African-American youth make up 4.5% of the general child population in Washington, but 10.5% of the youth in foster care.

Native youth make up 2% of the general child population in Washington, but 8.4% of the youth in foster care.

Once in foster care, youth of color are more likely to move from one foster home to another, and are more likely to remain in the foster care system for longer periods of time. For older youth in foster care, and those who are pushed out of the foster care system because they turn 18 years old (or, if eligible for extended foster care, 21 years old), the likelihood of incarceration and contact with the juvenile punishment system is significantly increased. The termination of parental rights – the process where the courts permanently destroy the parents' right to see or know the location of their child – means that youth exiting foster care or the juvenile detention center may lack family support when they find themselves on their own.

A dependency proceeding in itself can lead directly to the caging of youth. Youth can be jailed for failing to follow the provisions in dependency court orders, such as attending school. Although theoretically meant to protect children from their parents, the court orders stating where a youth will be placed, where a youth will go to school, and what services a youth must participate in, have to be followed by youth or the youth risks getting locked up. If a youth runs from a foster home, the youth can be locked up in the juvenile jail for up to seven days. When they get let out of jail, the youth may be forced to return to the foster care placement—even though they might have had very good reasons for running away from it (approximately one third of youth report maltreatment or abuse while in foster care). Thus, the dependency courts are inextricably linked with incarceration of youth: a child that we see in the dependency courtroom in the new Children and Family Service Center may very well end up in the criminal courtroom and the new juvenile jail. It's a system that pushes youth of color and low-income youth into jail and separates them from their families, many of whom have also been through the dependency system and the adult prison system because of the same targeting.

Spending \$210 million to build the Children and Family Service Center will not help families in crisis. One of the ways the county is justifying the project is that families need more privacy when they are brought to court to be torn apart. They say there are too many families crowded into one area and, without appropriate space for parents to meet with their attorneys, parents are forced to discuss intimate details and histories where others can overhear.¹ Although this is true – the court proceedings that go on in the current facility are humiliating and traumatic for parents and their children – giving people a little more privacy does not get at the root of the issue. Let's not make the courtroom in which we separate families more comfortable, but rather let's stop separating families in the first place.

One way to do this is to spend the \$210 million actually providing services to the families. Spend this money to give families access to health care, income support, housing, drug treatment, mental health care, family counseling, and childcare. These are the things that would relieve the crises people facing poverty and racism are experiencing – not new rooms in a brutal, racist family court system.

Courts and jails – no matter how much money we spend – do not keep families safe. In fact, we know the opposite to be true. Rather than investing the money in shinier courts and sturdier cages, we should invest in communities, education, housing, and health. Through this approach, we can end systems that work together to feed the juvenile jail and serve to oppress and separate families.

¹. Although an alternate, seemingly contradictory, justification is that the Center was designed with private hearings in mind, and now that the hearings are open to the public, the courtrooms need to have sufficient space for observation.

The following Q & A is an email exchange between my younger brother and I when he was on parole. I was in the midst of reading New Jim Crow among other things and felt the need to connect w/ him in this way. -Lym

Sup Sistaaaa,

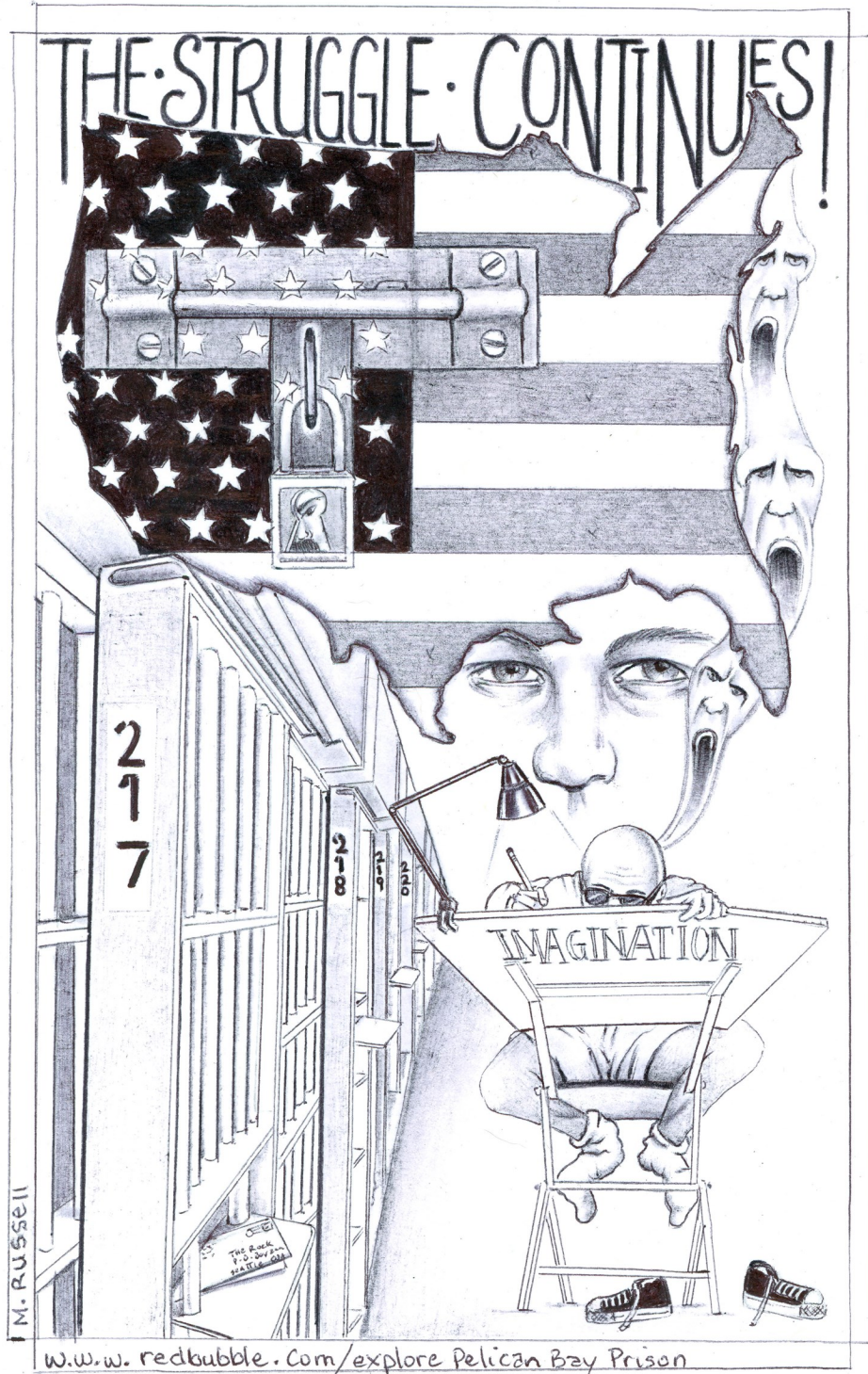
Here are my answers to the questions you asked, if you think of more questions, feel free to send em this way

1.)Ok so, you've been probated, held, and incarcerated for nonviolent, drug related offenses dating back two years to when you were 19. Can you start by talking about your experience in drug court?

*** In my own opinion, whether you are trying to stay or continue using your drugs, the actual drug court itself is a complete set-up. The entire drug court system is set up for failure. Depending on where your drug court is out of, you will have certain rules. For instance, in South Boston drug court it is mandatory that you graduate from a half-way house. And if you do graduate a half-way house they make you go to a sober house from there usually. Now some of these HWH have some crazy rules so people can get kicked out for some crazy reasons like having their cell phone go off in group. And if your on drug court and you get kicked out of the house, then your going back to jail. So if someone who is an addict gets kicked out of a house for not even relapsing, chances are they are now going to relapse since they know they will be going back to jail shortly. Now, when I was on Framingham drug court and didnt have to go to halfway house, it was still ridiculous. Its almost impossible to do all the things that they want you to do... 3 AA/NA meetings a week and a mandatory one at the court house. Before that meeting at the court house we had a drug group for an hour. then 3 days a week we had drug counseling at 2 different facilities. and on top of that you need to have a full time job to pay for these drug counseling groups (100's of \$\$\$) and you need to pay your probation fee. (50\$-80\$). With everything they ask you to do, there is absolutely no time to work at a fulltime job with the schedule they give you. making it impossible to find the job because when you tell the business owners the times you can't work, they look back at you like, "well when the fuck can you work?"

2.)What about the Bob Barker uniforms? (The Senator, not The Price is Right guy)

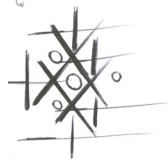
*** Fuck Bob Barker. The guy makes millions not just off prisons and jails, but if you go to any facility like detox's and holdings, everything is from the bob barker company. The shampoo, deoderant, tooth past...EVERYTHING. And honestly all the products are horrible for you and your skin. its awful. the shirts you get in prisons and jails are bob barker and they are made in pakistan. prolly cost about one cent to make 100 shirts. Its disgusting.



SECURITY HOUSING UNIT



CRIST GARCIA 2013



Seattle,

6-19-13

Hello, my name is Zachary O'Neil & I am writing to give you a dose of reality. After all, truth hurts so I hope you have some band-aids & ointment with you. I am 28 rite now. You can definitely say that I've been waiting to leak how I feel regarding the Juvenile system, it's law, & the Juvenile headquarter at 1211 East Alder. Crazy how I remember that very address after having not been there for over ten years. Not because I love the thought of the place, but something like out of misery.

So, clear your ears, turn your phones off, do whatever you have to do to be able to fully comprehend my story & my outlook. I've been booked through the Juvenile system 21 x times, & sent to Juvenile prison once through 1211 E. Alder.

I must say, I laugh everytime the Juvenile comes to mind. Strait joke. You'd figure that being at such a young age, the authorities would want to nip problems in the butt, however problems are embraced & prolonged there. The only good thing that I can say about the Juvenile is they have a generic school program where youth can work towards their high school diploma. Was the quality generic established?

Thinking back, as a youth I remember it being like the foundation & beginning to mine & pretty much everybody who walked through the door there. I say foundation & I mean foundation & school to all our

I then went to Victorville prison, where I did my time on the yard with that label and somehow made it through the most violent federal prison at the time. It was a miracle. I kept my nose out of shit - I kept my nose clean, out of everybody's business. And I read a lot.

That reading planted the seeds that made me a revolutionary. It was a process that built over time, after getting out and then going back in for violations for dirty U.A.'s and such. The fear that I felt during prison was great, but I was hard-headed and walked the yard.

The fear I've carried as I've organized of my redemption being thrown away because of my past actions has had a heavy toll on me. The fear of releasing this is great as well. But hopefully this can shed some light on what it's like. I wish I could be of more help, and I will try - if I can remember more then I will comment and add it on later to comments and discussion. But it's hard because this was a long time ago and it's been a block to remember it, because it's a source of shame for me. It's become more of a source of shame over time as I've learned what it was - what my actions meant.

My next step is to try to contact my codefendant, who has seen me recently at Black Coffee Coop. I want to follow through on what I wanted to do, and make recompense. If I need to take a bad ass-whuppin', I'll do that, because I understand. I wish I could have understood then.

This is why I'm so dedicated to stopping the state - what they turned me into when I did that was shameful. What that experience turned me into is a work in progress of a revolutionary. I am willing to give my life in this fight against the state. That is my redemption. So nobody will have to go through this, or any sides of this coin again, whether it's being told on, or whether it's being too weak and breaking, or whether, like me, it's both. Hopefully, I'll maintain some friends and hopefully I'll be able to organize and bear this on my shoulder for life, but let it be a testament to how far I've come from where I was.

Thank you to Mamos for helping with this; I dictated it and he wrote it down and helped me edit it.

Yet at the time, I do want to emphasize, I had no political concept, so no understanding of how great an enemy was really standing in the room in front of me. My mindstate would have been much different if I knew then what I know now. If I had the mindstate then that I do now, there would be no room. There would be no cooperation. No matter how much of a conflict I had with the others or how much time I was looking at.

As they interviewed me, they would lead me with the questions. They would insinuate the answer they wanted to hear. It's really hard to regurgitate a specific question, because it was so long ago. When I would say "that wasn't how it happened", all three (the prosecutor and two U.S Marshalls) would ask multiple times "are you sure?" They would ask me about other folks, and show me pictures in a lineup, and ask me if I know any of them. I would say no. They would say "are you sure none of these look familiar", while casually putting their hand next to a particular picture. I continued to tell them that I did not recognize those folks.

Then, as I went through the situations that were applicable to what had happened, I would tell them there was no pimping or kidnapping because those were untrue allegations. They would ask me why I was saying that and if I was scared of it carrying more time. I would insist that these things didn't happen. And they would repeat questions multiple times around these areas, then would finally give up on trying to coach me into saying those things.

The whole interview, from what I can remember (which is vague because of the time and mental blocking) persisted like that, until they would take the information they had gotten from me that validated their performance on particular drug charges concerning all of us, including my two codefendants who were not cooperating. That's when they accepted my plea.

Before my sentencing, I went down with my lawyer to take my plea back because it was close to the date of the grand jury and I wasn't willing to follow through on testifying against my codefendants. Instead, I was hoping to receive 10 years without cooperation or a plea. Then, my lawyer informed me that my codefendants had plead out, so there was no need for that.

The prosecutor asked for 42 months, and we asked for 24. The judge knocked off 6 months because I had already done 6 months in the state; he then shot between what we were asking for and what the prosecutor was asking for, and gave me 30 months.

Criminal Careers. With nothing to do there, we made it our own school. School of hard knocks. All the Juvenile is, is a place to learn new crimes, how to get better at crimes, become gang members, meet new crime partners, & everything else to do with blossoming a Criminal Career.

They say Marijuana is a gateway drug. That's exactly what the Juvenile is. Gateway to a Criminal Career. You can violate your probation for staying out too late & receive 30 days in jail for the violation. Wouldn't you say that's pretty minor & instead of any jail time, some kind of community service can be given out. Rite now, there is countless miserable children at the Juvenile. Miserable young men & women who need help with their problems. Not set-backs.

I think back to when I was young, & alot if not all my problems could have been prevented with a helping hand instead of a pain full backhand. Heres ~~the~~ ~~trues~~ truest shit I've ever wrote. Juvenile incarceration = Problems! The only thing that Juveniles receive from being locked up is a faded glimpse of reality. Goals & dreams are lost. Families are broken apart, children are punished, when they should be corrected, & given the rite tools they need & deserve. A new Juvenile or the old one is not only Unneeded, it is also unnecesary. Nothing is gained except hardships. Think back when we were they're age. We were the Up in Comming. Now things are ran by

our generations. They're the upcomings, But where will they be if their problems are prolonged & worsened by juvenile incarceration

When asked if I thought they should build a new juvenile or rebuild on the old one, I laughed pretty hard cause it was the stupidist question that I've ever heard. Then I quickly calmed down at the thought of the possibility of more juvenile lives being taken away from them instead of them being given the help they deserve. The money they are planning to use to build a new juvenile can be used in many different ways to assist struggling youth

For instance, alot of youth's problems come from anger/stress issues. Take me as an example; When I was 13, I was enrolled in a anger management program at a place called, "Ruth Dykeman Center." Everything was going well until my parents could not afford the services any longer & I had to drop out of the program. Now, take the money it cost to keep me incarcerated that year, Call low level crimes, & put it towards a stress/anger management program & things most likely would have turned out alot different.

Alot of problems as a juvenile stem from lack of hope or very little at all. Think back to being a youth. Couldn't nobody tell me nothing, & since I didn't really have any kind of job skills, I was going to do exactly what it took to further my financial situation. Like me;

My codefendants and I had a serious falling out, way before we were ever incarcerated. The only reason I mention this is so that people understand that at that period we were not friends. I do not claim this gives any justification for cooperation with the feds - just context.

When I met with my lawyer, he informed me that the information I had provided could only be used against me, and not against my codefendant, unless I cooperated further. During conversation with my lawyer, he explained to me that nothing I was to say from this point on could be used against my codefendants until I was to go in front of a grand jury. Being scared of my prior actions, and the consequences that could happen to me in prison - especially if I was incarcerated for a long period of time - provided me with the idea that if I could squeak in with a time frame where I could take a cooperative plea without having to go to the grand jury (because others may plead out), then I could slip under the radar.

The main focus of this is what I can remember from the proffer (meeting with the prosecutor) to attempt this. So hopefully you can extrapolate and use the information that I have from this experience against the state, to bring awareness to people. I also want to record my emotional state during and a little bit after the situation, and how hard it was to live with.

So when they called me down to talk to the prosecutor to do the interview to decide whether to give me that plea, they asked me questions in a way that aimed to direct a narrative. They would ask me about the details of the situation, which I would reluctantly go through while they continued to pressure me, seeing my reluctance. They would put this face of "trying to be your friend" and trying to convince you that you're a victim, as a main way of applying pressure. They tried to demonize my other codefendants and use information provided to them by a different cooperating witness to use physical conflicts between me and one of the other codefendants as a way to make the other two codefendants the "bad guys". They also used examples of the other codefendant trying to manipulate me and others, and presented these as a way to try to demonize him. They did not make up any of these situations. They just tried to exasperate them, just like an instigator would, but with "sympathy", to make you feel as if they're trying to protect you.

Now in this situation, I was no fool. I was just scared. And that's why it turned out the way it did, instead of me going home, because I was unwilling to lie, or even agree to some things that may or may not have been true, for the prosecution. Because I didn't feel like they were my savior; I felt like I was surrounded by enemies on all sides, and I was alone.

Open Letter to All Comrades

by Matthew Erickson

My name is Matthew; I've been a revolutionary active in Decolonize/ Occupy, and I'm a cofounder of Seattle Copwatch. I've been indicted for rioting charges for 2012 May Day.

I'm coming out with this account of my past experiences of incarceration so that we could use this knowledge against the state, and also so everyone can know this about me, which I've held with secrecy and shame for years while organizing against the state.

Many people will judge me and I'll probably loose a few friends but the benefit will outweigh any damage that it does to the way people perceive my character.

I've spent a lot of time organizing. I feel like I put as much into proving myself and redeeming myself as possible. Now, because of current interactions, I feel it's time to let everyone know about this in detail.

Back when I was 19, I caught a federal case for drug trafficking, conspiracy to kidnap, kidnapping, along with other charges, a lot of which was based on allegations which were false. Some, particularly the drug trafficking, was obviously true, given the situation where I was already caught with drugs multiple times and had been incarcerated in state custody for these charges when the feds came to get me.

I remember being the Lower Rs jail cells in Shelton prison when I got called down to a meeting room and the feds informed me that I was being charged with seven different counts, and some of those ranged from 20 to life, to 10 to life. I was very scared, and I said a lot of things communicating with them, incriminating myself and others. It was kind of a blur that day because I was so scared I kind of shut down. This is something that I have found the most shame in throughout my whole life.

When they transferred me from state to federal custody I was then at Seatac, around a lot of people who were doing a lot of time - some were being sentenced to 20 to 25 years; 10s, 12s, but rarely 5 or less. Especially with the ranges I had seen, my fear took deep grips of me.

#4
most youth do what they do because they don't think they can do any better & don't see a way out. That's where the big brothers & sisters, (us) come in & show them they can do it. Instead of wasting all this \$money & time on a new Juvenile, a program for youth to go to school & receive job training at the same time must be set up. Let's give them a foundation that'll take them off the streets & put them in the classrooms. Education, is the most important tool to help keep our little brothers & sisters off the streets.

Instead of wasting money on a new Juvenile, let's take a look at the reasons why our youth do what they do. Locking them up only provides them with boatloads of resentment, new connections, & time to think of the next big come up. Pretty much every Juvenile has inherited a drug & alcohol addiction to motivate their actions. Instead of throwing them away from society by incarceration, they can be put into drug & alcohol tx. & placed back into the community with a new found glory. By tx, youth are being shown what's going on & given new avenues to change. Incarceration only prolongs problems & makes them worse. Let's make them better.

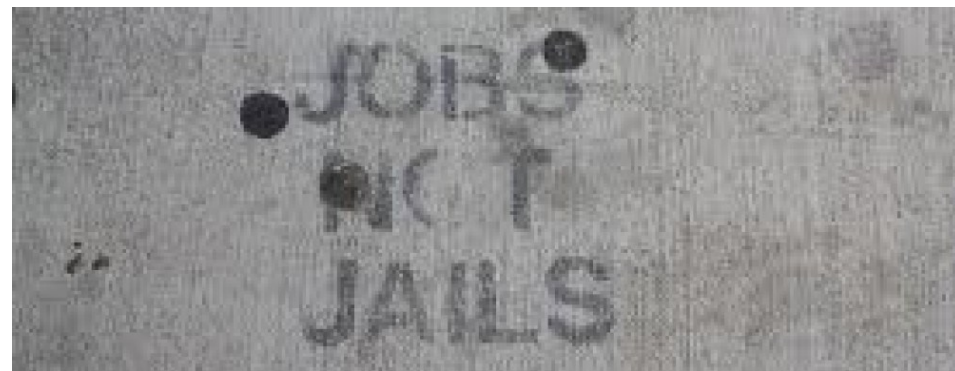
Instead of wasting money on a new Juvenile, a big brother / big sister program needs to be established. Not an ordinary one, but taking the place of the elders from people who's been down & the same road as the youth are heading. Are you going to listen to people who's gained their knowledge second hand

through books. No, I am someone who's been through the most, I have something they're gonna wanna listen to, someone ~~as~~ they need; someone who can give them a foundation. Everybody needs a big bro or big sis who can help them from all angles. So, what are we waiting for!

By building a new Juvenile, we are failing these youths & by failing them, we are failing our selves. These are our little brothers & sisters. Seattle's future. They deserve a future, not lost time. Spending, waisting money on a new Juvenile is taking away opportunities for the youth. Instead, of funding a new place, we need to fund new programs to help assist them. Incarceration = prolonged problems. ~~Not~~ Nobody wins cause we all loose. When they suffer, we all suffer. More than you can imagine. When children need help, you help them. You don't punish them & put them through hell on earth by incarceration. We all have sons, or daughters, or nieces & nephews. One small mistake & that could be them sitting there. Let's give them the programs & assistance they truly need. They deserve it. Any money taken away from building a Juvenile & spent on beneficial programs for the youth, is also going to benefit us as well as them. Let's set the pace. Respectfully Yours, Zachary O'Neil Doc #85421 aint beneficial.

About the Author:

My name is Lindsay Brandon and I am a graduate of Seattle U Law currently working as a contract attorney. I worked as a Rule 9 (limited license attorney) at the juvenile prison, and my first client was this amazing kid. We were sitting in one of the conference rooms with my co-counsel when the topic about the new juvie came up. Though his words were simple, and very teenager-like, if you will, it truly displayed the fact that absolutely NO ONE, not the drafters of the initiative, not the County council members; not even the voters considered how the kids felt about it: the most important and most affected population by this decision. As advocates, we sometimes lose sight of our mission to our clients, and we'd rather have a fancy and shiny place to work. We need to remember that no matter how "nice" a new juvie may seem to the community, it's still just prison bars to the kids. I stand with my former client and all of the kids affected by this facility in agreement: this is stupid. Let's build schools, community centers, and playgrounds. No new juvie!



And He Said

Walked through the metal detector
My purse tips over on the belt, spewing change
Amateur – they all think.

The lights give an orange tinge to everything
Like looking through sunglasses from the gas station
Can't seem to find him anywhere.

The heat is miserable and suffocating
Quelling the otherwise anxious and impatient
How many times do I have to dry clean this goddamn suit?

Finally - there he is - chatting
He's made too many friends here
This isn't the place for that.

We sit down to chat, take care of business
He trusts me now; he talks about life
He is so much more than his existence in this place, after
all.

We are getting ready to go in
I'm teetering on a broken chair
Piece of shit, we're all thinking, but no one says.

I tell him:
"You know, they want to spend a lot of money to rebuild
this place"

And he said:
Why?

And he said:
What's the point?

And he said:
That's stupid. It should go to something important.

Guerrilla Films (Anti-Juvie) Artist & Ex-Felon Studio Live work Loft Space, Film studio & School Proposal.

Writer, Producer & Director of Guerrilla Films.

Christy X-NC17

6/13/2013

The primary goal of Guerrilla Films is to bring a positive and wide media platform built on professional Guerrilla style filmmaking to the most underserved populations of people in our society. This means: Bringing good media to the folks who need, deserve and benefit from it, the most. Guerrilla Films tackles the most challenging, complex and difficult topics, we address the real issues that people face. I am proposing to spend the ridiculous amount of \$210 million dollars on a live work loft art space, film studio & film school that is specifically designed to serve both local artists and ex-felons. This may be the first of its kind in the u.s. – This encompasses: **Housing, working, screening, building and learning under one large studio roof.** The goal is to train folks who are coming out of jail/prison (and local low income artists) with professional film skills. The highest priority artists and ex-felons are: **Single Moms, homeless folks and parents coming out of jail/prison.** This unique program incorporates: Spacious loft style housing, film studies, addiction support, guerrilla gardening, studio space, daycare, film screenings, equipment, medical support and a large 300 seat capacity theater to screen kick ass films in. This is just for starters.

DISCLAIMER: We are not a "case management" facility, but we are 100% sober living – This means absolutely no drugs or alcohol will be used on the premises, this includes pot. I will be a hard ass about this because the majority of our residents and students may have substance abuse issues. If anyone is caught using period, they will be asked to leave until further notice – **Safety comes first.** The protection of the women and children on site, meshed with the folks who are coming out of jail/prison is the most important component to sharing this sacred film space. In addition to this, all tenant and staff decisions will be held by tenant/working groups.

Phase 1:

Design from scratch or renovate/refurbish a large building space with roughly 100-200 apartments/units. The apartments/units would consist of large open individual studio spaces, fully equipped with bathrooms, kitchens, washer and dryers and central heat and air. Eco-based/recycled products would be used on all spaces. Tenants and supporters of the project are welcomed to donate their time to help build (they would receive studio time/equipment rental discounts/free classes or housing discounts for their time). Also, all tenants are gifted a parking space.

The property's main structure would be completely in doors (with the exception of the parking spaces which would be built below the building structure or adjacent to it near the largest garden area).

The facility would include: 2 or 3 large open community spaces or rooms that could be used for meetings or teaching. 1-2 large rooms with offices for our medical staff, nurses triage center.

Tenant mailboxes are located in the entry way of the building and art work would be displayed throughout the lobby and on each floor. Tenants can rotate their art work, this includes: Individual sculptures, paintings, sketches, graffiti work, TV monitors displaying film/video work, etc. A large office is located on the main floor for administration use. Phones, computers, a stereo/intercom system, electrical panels, emergency equipment, etc. would be stored and made available to all tenants.

Total: \$100 million

The large 300 seat capacity movie theater is located on the bottom floor of the building, with a concessions stand/barista bar.

Total: \$10 million

Regular weekly film screenings will held open to the public.

The child care center should be located on the bottom floor adjacent to the movie theater. This wide open space, will hold 2 offices and 3 or 5 classroom spaces that can accommodate up to a 100 people/children.

Total: \$20 million

Classes taught (example only): Lighting, Producing, Directing, Acting, Writing, Cinematography, Film and TV History, Film genres, etc. Class size and weekly curriculum will be determined by the staff and tenants.

Total: \$50 million

Misc. and staff expenses: \$ 20 million

Additional monies TBD by working group expense: \$ 10 million dollars.

Total: \$210 million dollars.

and institutions, ever. In handing community members over to ICE, King County has decided that a person's immigration status is their defining characteristic. Let's turn that around and work to make it irrelevant. Every person in King County should be able to access services, education and other necessities without fear of imprisonment and deportation. Only when immigration status is treated as fully irrelevant will immigrant youth and families survive and thrive.

2. Let's transform the way we talk about immigrant youth with criminal histories. This will involve transforming the way we talk about immigrant youth who have managed to escape the dangers of the criminal punishment system. Let's stop dividing immigrant youth into "good immigrant youth" and "bad immigrant youth." Let's stop pushing for a "Dream Act" for youth who are billed as deserving because they have managed to avoid becoming enmeshed in the criminal punishment system, have graduated high school, and gone on to college and the military. Let's stop pursuing strategies that portray some youth as deserving of jail/deportation and others as deserving of legal status. One first step is making legal status irrelevant in the lives of youth (see bullet point above). Another step would be to stop making arrest and caging a precondition to providing supportive services for youth. The 'wrap-around services' King County touts in their proposal for the new youth jail and court buildings require youth to become enmeshed in the very system that would hand them over to ICE and possible deportation before they can begin to receive supportive services.

We need to interrupt King County's jail expansion program. We need to interrupt the logic that says that some youth deserve a Dream Act and others deserve permanent exile. We need to put forward a vision that actually serves immigrant youth and their families, rather than making them more vulnerable to caging and deportation.



4. Within the immigration system (before the immigration judges and other decision makers), immigrant youth face the stigma of having been in youth jail. At the same time, within the youth jail system, they face the stigma of not having lawful immigration status. Immigration jails will treat youth as if they are still in criminal proceedings even if they have left the youth jail system. Immigration courts treat youth with a youth jail record as criminals, not making a distinction between youth jail and adult convictions. Probation officers may charge immigrant youth with a violation of their probation for circumstances beyond their control, such as failing to appear for a youth court date because of being transferred to an immigration jail in another location. Youth have to rely on probation officers as part of their release plan, even though probation officers themselves can turn youth over to immigration authorities.

5. The current proposal for the new youth jail includes space for cages for 154 youth. Currently, the average daily population in the juvenile detention center is 70 people – primarily youth of color who have been jailed for actions like missing school, getting in a fight, or running away from foster care. Building a youth jail with a capacity more than double the current daily population of the jail begs the question: who will fill these cages? One likely answer: so-called gang members. ICE explicitly focuses on detaining and deporting gang members. King County Sheriff and Seattle Police Department publicly emphasize identifying and jailing gang members as a priority. Police label youth “gang members” based on things like how they dress and who they know. Young men of color, including many immigrant youth, are disproportionately identified as gang members through racial profiling. The expansion of youth jailing in King County increases the probability that local police will use their partnership with ICE to effectively exile youth who are labeled as gang-affiliated – by referring them to ICE, who will deport them – without ever addressing the underlying issues facing youth of color and their families.

Immigrant youth and their families stand to lose if the current jail and court buildings move forward as planned. What if we diverted the money and resources away from a jail-building project and towards one that actually supported immigrant youth and families? Here’s two suggested starting points:

1. Instead of putting immigration status (and the accompanying fear of detection by ICE and deportation) at the center of the lives of immigrant youth, make it irrelevant! No city agency, county agency, school program, housing program, health care program, food support program – no program that provides youth and their families with the keys to survival – should ever inquire about immigration status or make provision of services depend on immigration status. No questions about social security numbers, about place of birth, about citizenship status should be asked by these agencies

I work primarily with the No New Jim Crow Seattle Campaign (NNJCSC). I’ve also participated in some really good discussions and events with WISH, EPIC, Common Good Café, Who You Callin Illegal, ISO, Occupy NE Seattle (ONES), and UW Bothell, which recently held a “mini-conference” called “Ending the Carceral State” with the keynote given by Emi Koyama. There are many groups in Seattle and King County working on dismantling the criminal justice system as we know it.

Something I learned in Occupy Seattle is the importance of envisioning positive alternatives. For King and other civil rights activists, that alternative vision was of the beloved community. Andre Gide and the anarchists use the metaphor of the window or doorway, open just enough so that we can look outside of our current “box,” our current reality, into the next society, the one we want to live in. The point is that while we work to dismantle the system whose cruelty we can no longer tolerate, we must constantly and creatively offer the alternative, affirmative vision.

For me, the alternative affirmative vision in respect to “criminal justice” is transformative justice, restorative justice. Transformative or restorative justice draws on community-based practices of many indigenous people—for example, the Navajo, West Africans people brought as slaves to America, and the Maori of New Zealand. New Zealand’s entire juvenile justice system was revamped in 1989 using the Maori system as a significant model for a healing, community-based approach to youth justice.

What are the tenets of transformative/restorative justice? Wherever it is practiced—whether in schools, cities, counties, or entire countries, in communities struggling with domestic violence, for example, and sometimes within prisons like the women’s correctional center in Hawaii—TJ or RJ adheres to some central tenets:

1. Terms like perpetrator, victim, law-breaking, and crime, are replaced with terms like “harm,” “the person who was harmed,” “the person who did the harm,” and “healing.”
2. The person who is harmed is especially cared for. The person who did the harm is held accountable but is also given a chance to tell their story, which might include their own experiences of harm in the past or present.
3. Both the harmed and the harmer are brought together with other people in their community/communities who know them: family members, friends, counselors, teachers, spiritual advisors, and medical professionals, for example. Everyone is given a chance to speak; everyone is listened to. These group sessions might be called “family group conferences” or “peacemaking circles.” They might use a talking stick to ensure that the person speaking is allowed to speak fully and without interruption.

4. In these conference groups, the group tries to understand why the person did the harm—the individual reasons, the historical reasons, the societal reasons. In this way, the group tries to understand root causes as well as more immediate causes. As much as possible, the group looks not just at the tip of the iceberg but at the entire iceberg and the ocean surrounding it. Rather than blame the person doing the harm exclusively for their poor “choices,” TJ/RJ encourages the larger circle to consider the poor “choices” it too might have made, ones that contributed to the harm.

5. This conferencing or circle process makes possible a significant moral and emotional recognition because the person doing harm, the person harmed, and their communities have to sit together, see each other, be with each other around the table or in the circle, and listen to one another. This is the setting for truth telling, “emotional clearance,” and thus healing.

6. Rather than a judge delivering a sentence based on a crime that someone is found guilty of, the conference or circle group discusses an appropriate response. The purpose of this response is not punishment but healing for all the people involved including the entire community. In some cases, as in New Zealand juvenile justice, that response is arrived at by consensus.

Many of the people I work with in the No New Jim Crow Seattle Campaign and WISH are calling for the \$210 million that King County is raising for a new juvy to be spent instead on programs that help youth rather than cage them. I agree. But I also want some of that \$210 to be spent on tearing down the old juvy and building the spaces that house these programs. Tear down the building that holds the current 200 jail cells. We don’t need them. Tear down the building that holds the tiny courtroom and insufficiently private conference rooms—these rooms belong to a cruel and antiquated system. Build instead rooms that will house the peacemaking circles and family group conferences of a new King County Transformative Justice System for Youth and Families. And on the rest of land at 12th & Alder, where the current juvy sits, work with the people concerned to create spaces for the beloved community. Ideas for these spaces include an urban farm, a co-operatively owned café where youth can learn coffee, tea, and food preparation, a place to perform and record music and dramatic productions, a place to make and display art, a place to get personal and group help with mental health and addiction, and a place to get linked with the many educational, vocational, mentoring and tutoring programs in the area.

King County is preparing to spend \$210 million dollars to build a new jail and court building that will target youth of color and their families for caging and family separation. At the same time, King County actively cooperates with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (the federal immigration police, known as “ICE”). King County’s current policy is to hand over both youth and adults to ICE, from the cages of the King County Jail and the juvenile jail at 12th and Alder to the cages of immigration detention and the exile of deportation. Local activists are fighting this deadly partnership between the county and ICE. But even if this cooperation decreases, the dangers a new youth jail and courts present for immigrant youth and families would remain. Here’s why:

1. Immigrant youth can be deported simply for being present without legal immigration status in the U.S. One of the key ways ICE identifies and targets undocumented youth is the criminal punishment system, including the youth jails. In King County, ICE is currently placing ‘immigration holds’ on immigrant youth in the youth jail. An immigration hold is a request from ICE to the local jail to hold an individual for 48 hours past the time they normally would be released, so that ICE can pick them up. The local authorities don’t have to hold anyone or hand them over to ICE. ICE’s ‘immigration hold’ is just a request from one agency to another. In King County, as in most places in the U.S., the local authorities always comply with these hold requests. Immigrant youth who are jailed and get an immigration hold placed on them face continued detention, even if they would otherwise have been released through diversion programs. They will be jailed longer than they would have been if they were U.S. citizens. Immigrant youth may also be denied services and treatment offered to U.S. citizen youth, because local authorities assume immigrant youth will be deported.
2. Even without an immigration hold, being jailed and having a juvenile record creates serious and dangerous consequences, including deportation, for youth who are not U.S. citizens. Even if youth can avoid deportation, they can be prohibited from applying for legal status because of their juvenile record. Even if they aren’t prohibited from applying by law, their application may be denied based on their past record. If they have lawful immigration status, they can lose it. If they are deported, they can be barred from applying to re-enter the U.S., sometimes permanently.
3. Youth who are targeted by ICE for deportation can often fight their deportation from the relative safety of their own homes, or from a group home or foster home. However, ICE labels immigrant youth who have been in jail as ‘dangerous,’ and this affects how ICE treats them. Having been in youth jail makes it more likely for ICE to place youth in an ICE-run youth immigration jail pending their deportation. This immigration jail will often be miles from a youth’s family and community and from their attorneys, making it very difficult to win a fight against deportation. Youth will often be held until they win their cases, or until their deportation.

Proposal on a way to invest the \$210 King County has set aside to support communities and youth.

- *an edible forest; to feed the community and all who are hungry (animal and human alike)
- *a free wall: where one could just let off steam and make art
- *a really really free market: because really, who doesn't like free stuff?
- *a community center
- * a city library: because there are no libraries for the 12th and alder area
- * an open field to be reclaimed through the natural process germination, pollination and just the good old fashioned practice of letting nature take it's course (ie rewilding the 12th and alder space)



My name is Hailie, I'm 34, I'm currently residing in a womens prison barely missing my third strike. I've been in the system for 24 years. I started my first bid at barely 14.

I was a four time felon at 12 and should have been barely setting down my barbie dolls. I smoked crack and sold it and heroin. I was charged with multiple "controlled buys" (VUCSA) and a brutal assault first degree, when I should have been in counseling and preparing for high school. I've never even been inside a high school.

In 1994 I was almost 14, pregnant, severely strung out, I had seven felonies and was thrown into a juvenile prison. I gave birth to a little boy I named Johnny Angel. I was cuffed to a bed, no family just a nurse from the facility and a bunch of strangers. I was able to hold my baby only 11 hours, and terrified, confused, angry and ultimately lost, I was back at the facility 17 hours after that first contraction, as if it had never happened.

My anger has since then festered. My heart continues to ache, and life has been a complete mess since then. No one reached out to me, no one was around to love me, no family, just a bunch of random overpayed babysitters there to stuff me full of medications and shake their finger at me or take away privileges when I acted up. No one ever asked what or when and how I felt. All they saw was what was on paper about me and treated me accordingly.

Reach out to children all ages, you never know what they been through. Whats happened in their lives. Punishing them might give you justice, but where's my justice? Where's the help and protection I missed out on at the hands of my upbringing, at the hands of the system?

Why keep chasing monsters when your helping them manifest? Why not consider the source of the problem and chase that with just as much rigor as you do the child committing the crime?

Some of us never had a chance. I'm more than just a monster. I have the battle wounds to prove it.



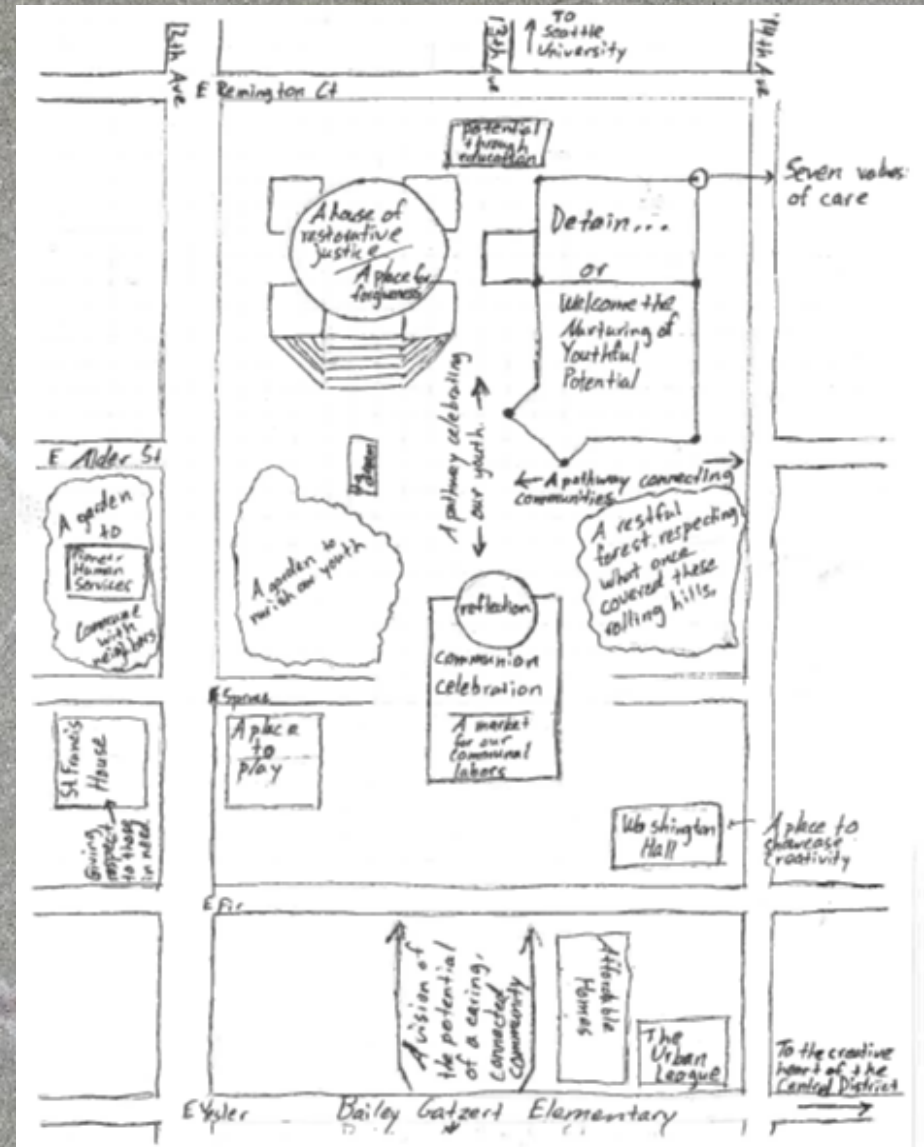
Proposal on a way to invest the \$210 King County has set aside to support communities and youth.

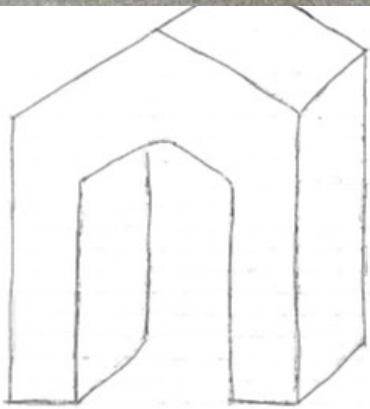
mandatory prescriptions when it suits it, and the withholding of life saving ones when they do not feel like it. Because prisoners are expendable to them.

I know that the only class available for you to take is Accounting and I wonder why a system on the outside already so biased against "ex-cons" would make it most appropriate to those who run your prison to try to give all of you in there money counting skills when I think that would be one of the hardest types of jobs to get. I did recently hear that you are in an Art Therapy class which is really great, but that from what you say, the majority of treatment classes: anger management, parenting and other technical skill classes are all being cut drastically, if they are not already gone. Having a father who spent some time in prison, I know we heard about some of his experiences inside and they were much different in this regard just 40-50 years ago. During times of government imposed "austerity" and budget cuts it is always the poor, black, brown, queer, mentally ill and otherwise disenfranchised who feel it the worst. And since these are the people that are targeted and fill the prisons of America I guess it should not be much of a surprise that not only are you losing your freedom, you are losing any helpful tools to help you get out and stay out under the guise of saving money in there too. And I know that the system is so bad in that regard (reflected in recidivism rates), that it is hard to come up with any conclusion other than the fact that the prison system does not actually want you to succeed and is in fact designed to promote your return to them.

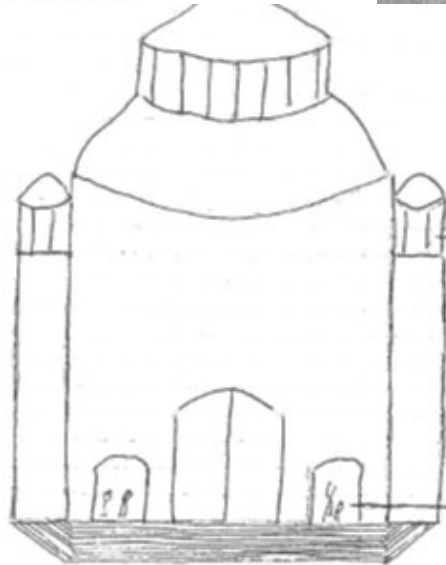
What I really know is how enraged I feel. Enraged at a system that has taken you from me for any meaningful length of time while I have lived here for the last 10 years. Mad at myself that I did not keep in adequate touch with you because it hurt too much to know you while you were in there. All I can do is fight for you now out here, while you fight for yourself in there. I can't wait until I get to see you again. I miss you.

Love and Hugs,
Your Big Sister - Who Can See You





What stands to entice one to courageously step out of childhood and grasp hold of their potential through advancing themselves and their community through the empowerment of higher education?



Places of refuge to calm troubled minds and hearts
Rooms to look out on a community that cares.

Justice is found in the restoration of the offended, the offender, and their community.

What does a house of justice look like that heeds the courageous words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.,

"We must develop and maintain the capacity to forgive. He who is devoid of the power to forgive is devoid of the power to love."

Dear Brother,

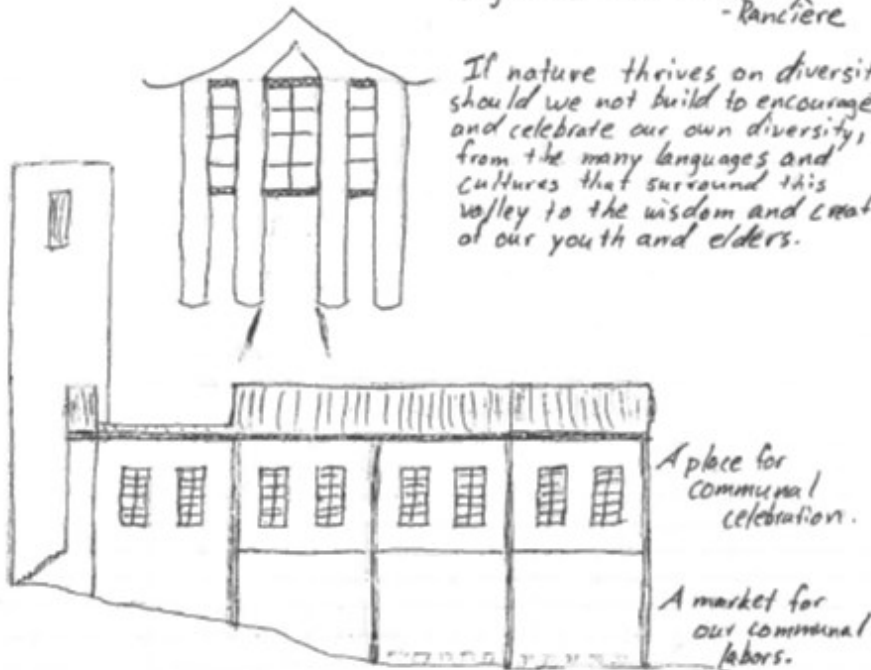
I miss you. I miss growing up with you. I didn't get to meet you until I was 19 and you were 13, but by then you had already been to the juvie here in Seattle but were out now. I am still not sure what that fact being told to me shortly after our meeting was meant to convey.

Fast forward. For the past 15 years I know that the longest stretch you have ever been out was for 9 months. I think that is so awful that most often I cannot even allow myself to process that. Especially given the person that I know you to be and the circumstances I know you were raised in, and how I feel that shaped the ways things played out. I know our father died 2 years after I met you, when I was 21 and when you were 15. I know that you grew up in White Center in an extremely poor household filled with oxygen tubes and inhabitants that necessarily move very slowly. I know that we have lots of kinds of family members and that you had committed Grand Theft Auto before you turned 14. I know that you acted out often and were diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder very young which meant a prescription for Adderall, that ended up being a precursor to a pretty serious methamphetamine (and other things) addiction. I also know that you are one of the most sensitive, caring individuals that I have ever met, when you let me see that person, that I still know exists. The person I for a time thought had been forced out of you, because it is not helpful to *feel* if one is incarcerated.

Most recently, I know that you feel dizzy often, have a hard time sleeping and feel lethargic. Since you sent me your medication regiment recently, I know that the criminal justice system is giving you enough Lithium to ruin your liver in a very short time and I feel that it is very connected to keeping people who are locked up docile enough to not rebel against the injustice that they face inside. You also have a condition that causes you to have seizures if you do not get your medication very regularly and that at least one time you did not get it against your adamant pleas for it; which resulted in you having a very severe one, hitting your head on the wall and having to get stitches. I know that the prison medical industrial complex is killing you slowly through its imposition of

If "no social order is based on nature, no divine law regulates human society."
-Rancière

If nature thrives on diversity, should we not build to encourage and celebrate our own diversity, from the many languages and cultures that surround this valley to the wisdom and creativity of our youth and elders.



"We cannot long survive spiritually separated.... I must not ignore [my neighbor], because he is a part of me and I am a part of him. His agony diminishes me, and his salvation enlarges me."

Martin Luther King Jr.

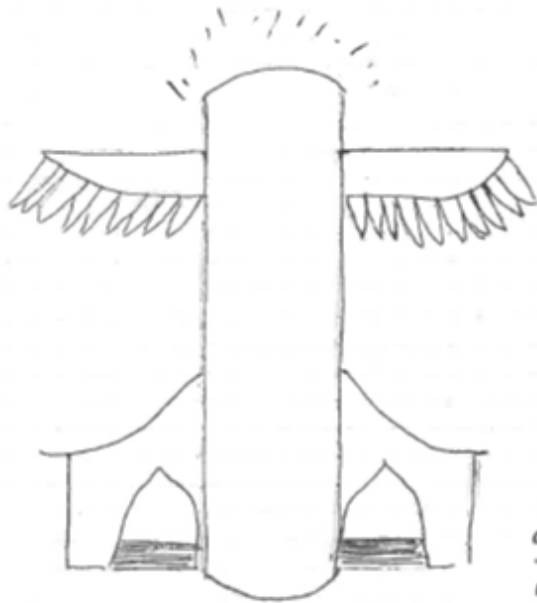
May we build with the intent to bring us all together to celebrate our potential.

Raised ^{UP} With Solid Footing
She Fearlessly Dreams



Within the commons we can give inspiration to youthful eyes, eliciting visions of standing atop a solid foundation and wildly dreaming.

Let us build to elicit the inspiration and courage to become a community willing to stand as that solid foundation breaking the chains that hold back and drag down so many youthful dreamers.



May we respect not only the dreams of our youth but also the histories of our past.

Northwest totem poles have many meanings. They can commemorate our success. They can also be reminders of ridicule.

↓
"When in countries that are called civilized, we [send]... youth to the gallows, something must be wrong in the system of government."

↑
- Thomas Paine, whose words helped spark the fire that gave birth to our nation.

What we build must stand as a rejection of the communal fears that allow us to incarcerate our fragile youth, many of whom we have already failed. May a bright red light shine over the community and into the rooms of imprisoned youth reminding us all that we have work to do.

Atop the spiralling stairs within the totem could be a quiet room that elicits similar emotions found in Mark Rothko's Houston, TX Chapel, offering space to contemplate life's pains in the backdrop of nature's resilient beauty.



Openness inspires youth and the community to aspire to together work to breakdown what allows us to detain our future generations

To the South open windows invite in the sun's warmth and encourage youth to look out to see themselves as a part of their community.

Have each corner share a value of a caring community

A garden and space to step away.

Have a youth run radio station. Music has the power to heal.

An art wall. Speak to the future

What speaks to a community empowering them to actively share in guiding the futures of our youth?

A place of shelter.
A place of vision.
A place to discover.
A place to find mentorship.
A place to be quiet.
A place to be loud.
A place to be silly.
A place to be serious.

May we share the beauty and courage within shared stories

