

# Low morale of prisoners

Psychology, Psychotherapy



The prison employees safety is in jeopardy. Prison positions always carried a moderate amount of risk. Prisons are filled with people who believe that rules and regulations serve no purpose. These people violated the rules to the extent that they were removed from society. Prisoners never deny nor apologize for their behavior. Making excuses for uncivilized behavior allows the low morale to never be acknowledged. Refusing to acknowledge the low morale problem among prisoners stops solutions from being possible.

### Causes of the Low Morale Among Prisoners

There are as many outside influences for the low morale of prisoners as their own beliefs and opinions. Giving in to easily to persuasion, wanting to be accepted, wanting friends and associates are the factors that are least acknowledged. Psychiatrists analyze behavior and characteristics by social skills. However, wanting to have friends and please people leaves an opening to be influenced into unacceptable behavior. Today, no one can be certain if associates are really friends or enemies.

Some of the current studies are mental illnesses, malnutrition, isolation, guards behavior and lack of rehabilitation and psychiatric programs are causing prisoners to have a lower regard for human life. Psychological games the guards use to cause the inmates to lose their individuality and focus contribute to low morale. The system is set up so the prisoners frame of mind never changes for the better.

### Segregation in Maximum Security Prisons

In maximum security prisons, “ The prisoners spend 23 hours a day in small well lit cells, for one hour a day they have access to one small concrete recreation area” (Bender, November 4, 2005, P 15). According to the study from Psychiatric News, segregation worsens behavior. With conditions like these, the prisoners learn is if they survive another day, they are doing the right thing. They lose all knowledge of social skills. The only mental health treatment they are allowed is a brief time with the psychotherapists. The counseling is conducted in front of other inmates cells.

Lack of treatment for drug and alcohol addiction is another problem in the prisons. “ So far, one prisoner who repeatedly ends up in prison cost tax payers over \$200, 00” ( Imse, 2007). The system does very little to correct the situation. The drug addicts cannot overcome the habit on their own. According to the Rocky Mountain News, the expenses of the medication and therapy is one of the reasons many prisoners do not get the proper treatment they need.

According to the Human Rights Watch article, prisoners spent at least 23 hours during their daily activities alone. The majority of damage to the prisoners is psychological. There is very little or no evidence of physical abuse. Mental humiliation and torture is impossible to prove.

## Conclusion

Maximum security prisoners have a very low morale because of the psychological abuse they go through day after day. According to the latest research, isolation has the biggest impact on prisoner’s behavior. They are

isolated, but are constantly watched. People in maximum security prisons are segregated because they have come across secrets they were not supposed to.

Bender, E, Psychiatric News (November 4, 2005), Volume 40, Number 21, P 15

© 2005 American Psychiatric Association

Human Rights Watch (2000) HWR. ORG

Imse, A, (Feb 16, 2007) Rocky Mountain News. Revolving Door to State Prisons

Human Rights Watch, (February 2000) Vol. 12, No 1 G

Out of Sight: Super-Maximum Security Confinement in the United States