

Chad smoke

Years ago, when I landed myself in prison, I had basically accepted that my life was over. I had a very lengthy sentence with no future to look forward to. The only skills I had were the skills that got me in prison to begin with, and that is what I would probably fall back on upon my release. I took a job in the physical plant as a painter only to get me out of dishing out chow during meals. I had worked as a painter growing up before turning to a life of crime, so painting was easy for me. I was punctual and worked hard to keep this job as it was an escape from doing time. Joedy Marlatt saw my work ethic and asked me if I'd ever thought about being an electrician. When Mr. Marlatt hired me, my life changed. I began studying every day after work and sometimes before. The apprenticeship program is very strict and demanding. It teaches not only trade skills, but life skills. Under direct supervision you are taught how to do electrical work according to the National Electrical Code. When I passed the electrical exam after 5 years of being an apprentice, I felt a huge weight lifted off my shoulders. I was now a Journeyman Electrician.

It has been almost 6 years since my release from prison and I've been working as an electrician the whole time since. I have also passed another exam to become a supervising electrician and because of this program I am not only a supervising electrician, but I am also a husband, son, brother, and a productive tax paying person in society. I will never have to return to the lifestyle I once led that landed me in prison. I work hard every day using the skills that I learned in the electrical program. Instead of being a burden on society I now contribute. The program is lifechanging, it is the best program the Department of Corrections has to offer. More trade programs need to be implemented because the demand for tradesmen is huge and the need for rehabilitation is even greater. I can't thank Mr. Marlatt enough for giving me the opportunity and for believing in me.

Chad Smoke
Manufacturing Plant Supervising Electrician

I want to share with you the transformation my life has taken the last 6 years. In December of 1994, I committed several robberies, which cost me 5½ years of my life. I wound up at EOICI in February 1995, not to leave again 'til July 1999. My first couple of years incarcerated were hellish for me. As you can imagine at 19 years of age I still had some very strong ideas as to what life was "really" about. Boy was I lost! But when I was needed, you could always find me in Seg! Really it's not funny. These were quite painful times for me. I smile now, because I've come so far. I couldn't figure out why I did the things I did. It's like I lacked the common sense buffer between my brain and my mouth. I had no goals or ambition, I just wanted out. I was scared and alone with myself for the first time in my life. I could go on and on about the tyranny begot of my hands, but that's not what this letters about. I want to tell you, Thanks!

During spring of 1998 something happened that would forever change my life, and who I am. I met Joedy Marlatt.

I remember asking "Boss" (that's what we all call Joedy) for a job everyday. I wanted what he gave his crew. I noticed the respect Boss received from his crew and everyone else he encountered. Finally, after a few months, Boss called me for an interview. He told me he was sick 'n tired of me hounding him for a job every time he walked by. That I was to get my hair cut, shave everyday and have my previous nights homework completed. I was thinking, "Wow, I just want a job working for you cause I thought you were cool." I didn't understand what he wanted from me, little did I know how valuable Joedy's direction would be in my life. The high standards Joedy laid before me changed who I am as a person today. Joedy, all-in-all modeled what it takes to be a man. He showed me the only limitations I truly have are the ones I place on myself. I learned I am a good student when I apply myself. I got my first ever straight "A" report card in EOICI from a math class using the study skills taught to me in the Electric Shop. I was lucky to receive "C's" all through school.

Upon my release, I was armed with drive and motivation, unlike I've never known. I have a skill, due to Joedy, that brings \$2,400 to my family every month. I'm functioning in a world I've never been able to do well in. I just bought my first new car (1996 Dodge Stratus), pay my bills on time, and most importantly, I'm out here with my family where I belong. Thank God for Joedy and the program he shared with me. I have a skill I feel good about that pays well thanks to Joedy.

The person I work for tells me I'm the best worker he's ever employed. He says I exhibit the work ethic of the olden days. Joedy taught me how to think, not what to think. He encourages me as I exercised new ways of thinking. The thinking that has given me a successful integration back into my community. I know I wouldn't be where I am today had Joedy not given me the job.

Thanks for your time.

Sincerely, Chris D. Briggs

To whom it may concern ,

My name is William Cody Brooker. I spent roughly 8 years incarcerated in ODOC. I learned alot about myself when I was doing my time. Some was hard to face and some was a pleasant surprise . I'm thankful for the good and bad that happened in there. It has helped me form a better me. I believe that one of the most important things I did for myself was learn my trade. This gave me focus on the future, confidence in myself, and the ability to become a productive member of society. Without the hands on triaining I received working in the HVAC/R shop at EOCI and DRCI, and also the valuable skills and knowledge I acquired during my electrical apprenticeship, I don't know what path my life after prison would have taken. With the changes I made, the skills I learned, and the certifications/electric license I achieved, I was able to get a job doing exactly what I trained to do...and love to do. I've been gainfully employed at the same mechanical company since my release andmy success is due to the opportunities that were given to me by the DOC. I'd like to say thank you to JATC the security staff that support the physical plant and it's workers and to anyone that has been helping the spread of trade skill training in the DOC. I also want to give a special thank you to a few key individuals: Mr. Cleveland for your support over those years. Mr. Marlatt for all the things you do to advance the electrical program and for pushing me to learn ; Mr. Austin for seeing the potential in me, giving me all the opportunities to advance, challenging me and supporting my development as a technician and a person.

Thank you all for helping me change my life.

Sinerely,

William Cody Brooker

Harrell L. Spive

NOV. 90, WAS WHEN I WAS SENTENCED TO A 12 YR. SENTENCE IN THE OREGON DEPT. OF CORRECTION WITH A CONCURRENT 22 YR. SENTENCE IN FEDERAL COURT.

HERE I WAS AT 26 YRS OLD AND FACING WHAT CAN ONLY BE DESCRIBED AS A BLEAK FUTURE. THIS WAS MY FIRST TIME IN PRISON SO ALL I BROUGHT WITH ME WERE MY STEROTYPE "FEARS AND THE SAME COPING SKILLS THAT LEAD TO MY INCARCERATION IN THE FIRST PLACE "ANGER" INTIMIDATION.

THE RECORD REFLECTS THAT PERIOD OF TIME IN MY LIFE SUFFICIENTLY. I WAS THEN THE EPITOME OF THE ANGRY BLACK MALE, AND IT CAN NOT BE STATED ENOUGH THAT PRISONS BY THEIR VERY NATURE ARE A RETARDING ENVIRONMENT GENERALLY STIMULATING DEFORMATION RATHER THAN MATURITY, AND HERE I WAS ABOUT TO BE A PRODUCT OF THAT DEFORMATION I BELIEVED, UNTIL I WAS GIVEN ONE OF THOSE OPPORTUNITIES THAT A PERSON IN MY POSITION EVERY GETS THAT BEING THE SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE TO FOSTER THE HOPE & DESIRE FOR A BETTER LIFE.

LITERALLY A SECOND CHANCE.

IT WOULD BE QUITE IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO STATE HERE ALL OF THE THINGS TVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN & EXPERIENCE IN MR. MARLATT ELECTRICAL COURSE. BUT I WILL SAY, THAT HAVING LEARNED SUCH A MARKETABLE SKILL HAS ALLOWED ME THE ONE THING EVERY MAN NEEDS, HOPE

Joedy,

Well I just wanted to write and say thank you. I am thankful that you put up with me for so long and had the patience to teach me all the things I learned. I am doing great because you took a chance on me. I will do my best to make you proud. Well, I will go for now and write to some of the guys.

Sincerely,

Nate Herrington
Nathan Herrington
