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## **TIME WELL SPENT**

A depiction of my most recent stay at the Bergen County jail and the awakening I had there.

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## TIME WELL SPENT

### Chapter 1

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#### It's About Time

This is the first and only time I have ever quoted from the bible. It is the only quote I know, it is the only quote I need to know, for now.

Matthew 12:43-45; “When an unclean spirit leaves a man he goes through dry places, seeking rest and finds none. Then he says “I will return to my house from which I came.’ And when he comes he finds it empty, swept, and put in order. Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of the man is worse than the first.’ So shall it be with this wicked generation.”

That’s it in a nutshell. That’s what happened to me. My last state was worse than the first.

I know it happens a lot and I am not the only one, but what has happened as a result of this I think might be kind of rare.

The abovementioned verse was contained in a religious pamphlet that was handed to me on my third day in jail, actually my most current third day in jail. Having had many third days in jail I count this one as my entrance into recover, actually my most current entrance into recover.

My name is Greg and I am a gratefully recovering addict, again.

From roughly 1973 to 1993, I was on the wrong side of the law, addicted to heroin and cocaine, and all that goes along with it. I have been to prison twice. I have been in the tombs of NYC, on Ricker’s Island, N.Y. and in numerous county jails. During those years Bergen County Jail, N.J. was a second home to me. I have been in several in-patient therapeutic communities, and outpatient rehabs including: Straight and Narrow in Paterson NJ, and Renaissance House in Newark, N.J., as well as methadone maintenance, both short and long term. I have kicked so many dope habits so many times in so many jails that I couldn’t possibly count them all. Point being, I have been around the block a couple of times. I have done extensive research in the field of addiction/recovery.

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I have earned the right to tell my story. Both sides.

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During that twenty-year period a little over half was spent in some jail or institution. I thank God for every one of those places. They made me what I am today.

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From roughly 1995 to 2013, I was on the right side of the law. Following my last release from the NJ prison system in 1995, where I attended and graduated from their prison P.I.E.R program (Persons Incarcerated Entering Recovery) I was clean, sober, hardworking and honest.

A shining example of a Catholic School education, with some parenting on the side, and a product of jails and institutions I had visited up to that point. During these years I married a good woman and fathered two fantastic children (I have three in total, each one better than the other.) I own a nice home in a wonderful town with really nice people - recently voted a top 50 town in the country to raise a family. I am, at the time of this writing, still a member of the N.J. State Department of Banking and Insurance, with a career in finance. My last full year employed I earned just over two hundred thousand dollars. I was a success by most standards.

Due to a series of medical misfortunes I found myself in Hackensack Hospital in need of a partial lung amputation. Pleural Effusion was the diagnosis. Pre and post op meds included oxycodone and morphine in fairly high doses through an "IV." A few days after the operation I was released from the hospital with a home care intravenous kit that allowed me to continue my recovery with a full regimen of meds-in the comfort of my den, in my nice house, with my great family, in that wonderful town, with really nice people.

This series of events awakened in me a compulsion-disease if you will-I thought I had long ago left behind. Soon cocaine was included and I was once again on the wrong side of the law.

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My parents split up when I was 4 or 5. My first memory of my father was of him asking me, at that age, who I wanted to live with, him or my mother. I chose my mother and he left.

He did stop back a few years later for a short time, but he did not stay long.

Thank God I did choose my mother. During that short lived reconciliation every time my father put his hands on me he drew blood. An angry man who was good with his hands. As it turns out, he did me a favor. I'm not afraid to take a punch. I can take one or give one, either way is fine, a very healthy attitude to have in jail. It also translates well into society to some degree. I am not afraid to fail, make a mistake, or be a success. I have no fear of what is to come. I feel great about my prospects for the future and I don't even know when I am getting out.

My mother, younger sister, and I moved around a lot, same town, just different apartments. We always seemed to be asked to move once our new home was cleaned, repaired, and painted. Naturally all the work was paid for by my mother. She was a good woman. I should have appreciated her more than I did. I am sure some of my actions were the reason for us exiting.

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Each new move brought on a new fight with whatever new kids were on the new block. Each new fight brought on a new set of friends. These events would repeat themselves several times in my life, an addition to an already existing blessing.

I don't know who toughened me up more, my father, the kids, the Franciscan Sisters (who knew how to swing a triple edge ruler,) or my years in jails and institutions. I guess I have them all to thank.

Feeling a part of anything was always difficult for me. I have always felt like an outsider, always different, and less than. A very familiar feeling among drug addicts I would later come to learn. I only briefly bring this up to illustrate how good drugs felt when I used them. There is more that I could disclose but suffice it to say I had a problem. I felt a lot different than I thought everyone else felt. Not having anyone to discuss this with to correctly process through it, I relied on my own devices to make myself feel the same as I thought everyone else did, a big mistake on my part.

The best explanation I've ever heard about the way some people react to drugs was from, Rev. Charles Hawkins, who was the director of the P.I.E.R program at the Southern State Prison prior to my release in 1995.

The way I remember it told, most people function within a pretty average range of human emotions. If you take a ruler and stand it on end with 1 down and 12 up it can be visualized pretty easily. 1 being the death of a loved one, the loss of a limb in an accident, ect...and twelve being a marriage, the birth of a child ect...On average most people function daily between 5 and 8. When these people use some sort of mind or mood altering substances they experience a bump to maybe a 9 or a 10, a nice little jump but nothing to write home about.

Some people however, function daily within the 2 to 4 range, not quite enough for suicide although I have made a few half ass attempts as one who was regularly a 3, but not real happy either, never feeling optimistic about life, or even grateful for having a life to being with. When someone like this gets high and hits a 10 the difference is much more dramatic and can be overwhelming.

There are many "gateway" drugs and I've used most of them in an effort to inch my way up the ruler. But, the first time I used heroin I hit an 11. I thought I found God. The first time I used heroin and cocaine I hit a 12, I knew I found God. I truly believed that if God made anything feel better than a speedball he would have saved it for Himself.

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The summer between my ninth and tenth grade was 1972 and it was spent in Mike's basement smoking pot, drinking and doing pills. His parents and younger sister left each June to vacation until September. We partied pretty hard with no regard for consequences. Mike's father was a town official and I had an uncle through marriage that was Chief of Police, there was no such thing as getting into trouble, it just didn't exist.

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In the early seventies drugs were almost legal, or at least not as illegal as they are now. Parents and police alike had no idea what drugs were or how serious a problem substance abuse would later become. An almost blind eye was turned away from what was thought of at the time as “growing pains.” Soon it would all pass, and be replaced by adulthood and the same responsibilities our parents bore, just growing pains.

One night, a friend of Mike’s came over and asked if he could use his basement for a while as he wanted to get high. Mike was a few years older than me and Charlie a few years older than him. Mike was a normal enough looking guy, average height and weight. Charlie on the other hand was a big guy with tattoos and long hair with a menacing look about him. He soon became my partner. He was a real standup guy.

Charlie walked down the ten or so carpeted stairs into Mike’s basement and sat down in between both of us on a long sofa, which Mike and I flanked. He asked Mike if he would get some water and Mike quickly returned with a glass half-filled from a sink in the next room.

We knew that Charlie was shooting heroin, the rumors were no secret to either one of us. I’m not sure about Mike but I couldn’t take my eyes off of all that Charlie was doing. It was a ritual like none other I have ever seen, having only previously been witness to those of the Catholic Church.

He had with him a then metal bottle top with a large paper clip wrapped around the upper perimeter twisted into a sturdy enough handle at its end.

The rubber gasket separating the bottle top from the discarded soda bottle had been removed and a white crust lining its inner rim half way between the top and bottom was visible.

Charlie removed a few small, folded, and taped closed, glassine bags from a hip pocket. From the opposite hip a set of works made its way to the table. A glass eye dropper with a babies bottle nipple cut off at its narrowest point closer to the rim than the bulb was affixed to the dropper with a wound up rubber band. Next to the dropper was a blue tipped needle enclosed in a clear plastic cover.

The glassine bag was opened with a buck knife slid in between the folds cutting the clear tape holding the parcel together. Opening the top of the bag by pinching opposing middles, moving both creases to the center, and ripping down the sides produced an easy way to empty its contents into the crust encased cooker.

Charlie squeezed the nipple on the eye dropper and placed the sharp end into the half-filled glass of water. As the dropper drew up the liquid, matches and a belt were added to complete the tools of that trade. The eye dropper, now filled with water, was pulled out of the glass. Charlie grabbed the needle by the clear plastic sleeve then pushed the blue collar onto the dropper’s narrow end. Having exited the needle from its clear plastic case he then squeezed the nipple and directed the stream of water into the bottle top.

Lighting several matches, he positioned them under the cooker and removed them once a

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quick boil appeared. A small torn off piece of cigarette filter provided a base for the needle placed point down into the cooker as it drew up the mixture. The leather belt used as a tourniquet began winding its way around Charlies arm in between his pit and his bicep with the buckle end on the outer side of his arm and the balance of the belt being grabbed by his teeth tightening down till his veins were apparent.

Mike was next, then I.

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When I got to that point, I was 16. I spent the next twenty years or so chasing that feeling. The first ten years of that period no one could tell me I was doing anything wrong. I found my calling in life and I was all in. I was a thief and a drug addict and I was proud of it. As far as I was concerned, life was for people who couldn't handle drugs, and I could handle it.

Drugs were a lot cheaper than they are today, and better too, I think. Petty crimes were all I needed to finance my habit. I got locked up a few times, and ended up in county jails with short sentences, thirty days here, sixty days there, a program for a year, whatever, no problem. The time did add up in small doses but it was easy to do.

When I was strung out I could never maintain a habit for too long, it was just too difficult. I was usually ok with a bust from time to time, it all worked out well.

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In 1974, as part of a jail and probation sentence, I spent sixteen months in St. Dismas house in Paterson, N.J., now called Straight and Narrow. Father Charles Grecco ran the program. He also ran as many young men through his in house live in apartment as he could, very convenient. I never did visit his apartment. I guess there were enough kids around without having to add me to his flock. Fr. Grecco is no longer with us. Two blessings for the price of one.

I did learn the upholstery trade at St. Dismas House, when not being counseled or punished for not correctly responding to the counseling. Dublin Guild Upholstery was the business name. It was run by a man named Phil Brennan. He was a third generation upholsterer. A transplant from Ireland and extremely good at what he did, a rear craftsman who I respected. This was to help me, sort of, fit in to a society upon my release. Once out in 1976, I did manage to find work and acted like a citizen for a while.

It was shortly thereafter that my mother passed away. I was twenty by then and my younger sister was fifteen. I accepted some responsibility and did the best I could to keep us together. My compulsion to get high had not left me yet and soon my sister and I split up. I stayed and she moved out on her own near my father and his new family, as his wife requested.

My sister has grown into a woman of considerable substance. Adversity does breed character and she has an abundance of it. She will always have my love and respect, the later earned the

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former a given. She has her own story of triumph over tragedy, and the more she tells me the more I am inspired.

I moved onto a deeper drug habit than ever before. This lasted the balance of my first ten years of field research.

During the following ten years I knew I had a problem, and like most of my other problems the problem was me. I may not have understood that completely, but I did know for sure that no one was going to fix things if I didn't. I signed myself into Newark Renaissance House, a long term drug program in 1985.

This program was a satellite location for "Odyssey House" one of the first drug programs in the country. It was founded by Dr. Judianne Desengerber, the wife of then Chief Medical Examiner of NYC, Dr. Gross. The Director of Renaissance House was Mr. Wiley Griffin, he was also a graduate of Odyssey House himself. His wife Julie Carpozi-Griffin was the head of treatment and today holds the position of Director.

Renaissance House functioned with a series of phases that the residents would mature through, ending in the production of a clear minded, responsible, hard working drug free adult.

My stay at Renaissance House lasted about twelve months, with some county jail time in between. Judge Madden, of Bergen County, NJ Superior Court who I had a matter in front of at the time, during sentencing thought it would be wise for me spent a few months in jail before returning to the program. I did just that. I graduated from that program in 1986.

Meeting my first wife and fathering my first son was the high point of my release from Renaissance House. She truly was a good woman, she still is. She never used drugs and never broke the law. She lived a life that, at the time, I could only marvel at.

I will always feel as grateful as guilty for how she raised our son. My involvement with him in that respect was minimal. Both prison terms I would later serve were during that marriage.

I am grateful though for spending regular time with him each week from about middle school to his college days. We now talk often, and see each other regularly.

I cannot express how proud I am of my son who has fashioned a good life for himself. He is a college graduate currently working on a Masters Degree. He is employed at a world class company. He did that all by himself.

The years following my exit from Renaissance House were filled with good intentions and bad decisions. At that point in time, even after all of the de-programming and re-programming and lifestyle changes, something inside me still craved what heroin could produce. I could not change myself from the outside in.

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I just did not know what I did not know.

Between 1986 and 1995, to make a long story short, drugs were used, laws were broken, and two prison bids were served.

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The pamphlet containing the verse I read earlier on my most current third day in jail, lay under my mattress, it was that night that its true meaning and nature and importance to me became clear. It became clear like nothing had ever become clear to me.

Being raised Catholic, and never having been violated by the church or its members I often, without reservation, prayed the prayer of the misguided, asking for what I thought I needed, when I thought I needed it, a very poor effort at problem solving to be sure. I always did know, or feel that I was being listened to by someone or something. Some version of my request would always be honored in some way, providing me with enough confidence to repeat my chosen method of pulling the plug on the fan once a sufficient amount of shit had passed through it.

As I lay in my bunk on that night, and having just enough clear mindedness to contemplate the verse again, I began to think a little deeper about its meaning, and the notion that I still might have access to whatever it was that I felt was listening to my meager attempts at correcting my wrongs, was extremely comforting. In that solitary state I did not feel alone.

My first day in jail was pretty much a blank. I had gotten roughed up a bit on my way in, and was just glad to finally get to a bunk. The one I was given was in a medical unit, as part of my prescription package from the head of the Psych Department who took pity on me in our first meeting. My meds included a prescription for: blood pressure, diabetes, sleeping pills and for the first time in my life anti-depressants.

I was very incoherent and not able to concentrate on anything for too long, but my new surroundings were familiar to me and the inmates in that unit were so distant on meds and their own individual brand of issues that I never even gave them a second thought.

Day number two included phone calls of apology and tears of guilt and remorse. I stated to eat a little from each of my meal trays, which felt good, no matter how bad the food was. Still feeling beat up, I muddled through the day and on occasion would raise my eyes long enough to absorb some of the smaller details of my new familiar surroundings.

Although capable of movement I was broken and empty in every way. I was grateful though to have finally had an end come to my addiction. Not being capable of stopping myself from using once I had started, it was always a matter of time, each and every time, before some law enforcement agency graciously and firmly assisted me in my desire for sobriety. The end would always materialize, coincidentally, right in line with my inability to continue using.

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Throughout my life it had always seemed like a major realization was just outside my reach. Mostly a feeling like I could never quite grab the ring no matter how many times I went around the carousel. I would always get close but no cigar.

Everywhere I've been, and there have been quite a few places, every drug program, every rehab, jail, or prison, has always held me for some words of wisdom, or nugget of truth, a phrase or insight, that I have remembered as a separate idea, or, a wise thought. The work of stringing these articles of perception together to form a belief system that I could live by had never once occurred to me.

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If you can picture the inner workings of a bank vault, an old large secure expensive one, built in the early nineteen hundreds, with its multitude of tumblers and cogs and levers all working in unison to open and close the doors to the treasure within, you can imagine what happened inside my head or heart, as it were, on that third night.

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As was my habit, when pulling the plug on the fan was required, I began to pray. This time, I had no idea what I was praying for, so I just prayed.

I started by thinking about what I had read in the pamphlet earlier in the day and decided to read it again. Once I did, I knew right away that no other words in that big book of words, lessons, teachings, and insights, called the Bible could have been written more directly for or to me.

Then it occurred to me that the idea of a God, or the Source or whatever you want to call it had occasioned to imprint upon someone the notion to pend such words, capable of moving a read two thousand years his senior, brought me deeper into additional thought. The fact that I wasn't the first and won't be the last person to read these words, and be moved by them astounded me. Not an easy thing to do. How many others could there have been? How many others would there be? How many others should there be?

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For thousands of years, people have reacted to certain writings contained in the Bible and elsewhere in a way that has been described as profound, and life changing, sometimes as part of a process, sometimes all at once. Epiphany, and Awakening are words used to illustrate what can happen to someone who comes across the right information at the right time in the right place.

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The idea that this event or series of events like the bank vault unlocking was all being woven together to bring me to another deeper awareness had filled me with such gratitude and calm and happiness and love and peace and every other word you can muster to capture the realization,

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that no longer did I need to ask for help, but rather, all I ever need to do is acknowledge, that I have already been blessed with everything I could ever ask for. I need ask for nothing. I already have everything I could possibly need.

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I do not have to ask, I just need to thank. Big difference. Big difference. I was no longer broken I was complete.

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As with the people of “El Dorado” in the classic “Don Quioti”, who didn’t even understand what asking God for something meant, since they all knew how to do with God, was to thank Him, or Her, or whatever, for all they had because they wanted for nothing, and they knew they were truly blessed. They were in paradise, Eden, even Heaven.

Buddha too, sits because there is no reason to move. He is so filled with joy that the trivial pursuits of life hold no interest to Him. There are so many examples of this state of awareness, and I am sure that all I know of is a hand full of those whose lives are there for us to look at and try to understand.

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While I am not so presumptuous as to view myself in that league, or any league, or in any way so special that I somehow have been influenced by Divine Providence, assuming that Divine Providence is even the topic of this dialogue, I am also not so stupid as to not recognize comfort when I feel pain, compassion when I hurt, encouragement when I have failed, and love when I feel hated. I felt all of those feeling that night.

That had to have come from somewhere. Even if it was already in me, the act of pointing me in the right direction had to have been produced somewhere. Even if it was already in me, the act of pointing me in the right direction had to have been produced elsewhere. I could have never been so clever as to have done that for myself. The switch that turned on that light was well outside of my reach.

I finally got it. It’s about time.

There was a reason why Jesus Christ spoke in parables, what he had to say was just too hard to put into words. It has to be felt. All he could do when asked to explain his message was to say “it is like”, ect...ect...ect..., and hope for the best. I am certain though, that he was pretty convincing, and never really needed a whole of words to begin with.

Joseph Campbell, in one of his books, titled, “Myths and legends” points out the similarities between all the great teacher/hero/messiah types who at various intervals and various places have all put forth the same message within the context of some specific religion. The stories are all leading to the same consciousness from different angles, different religions and different cultures.

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“In the blink of an eye you somehow see the light” is how Steven Tyler of Aerosmith describes his “awakening” in song. I’ve heard it sung a thousand times but never understood it enough to feel it. Nothing external needs to change it’s all an inside job, as they say.

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This shift in thinking however it was received, acquired, realized, gifted, or whatever, made all the difference in the world to me.

No longer was I need, I was blessed. I was blessed beyond belief. I was filled with so much gratitude that I just laid on my bunk and cried. The more I cried the more I thought. The more I thought the more I thanked.

Then over the next few days all sorts of things started to make sense, all the words of wisdom, the bits and pieces I’ve heard over the years that I somehow knew I should remember for some future date all started to connect together. The tumblers and cogs and all the inner workings of the vault lock slid into place, the doors opened, the dust cleared and the treasure was exposed.

Notwithstanding, I do know that once I go to jail all prior responsibilities cease to exist. My only concern at that point, since all basic needs are sort of covered in these places, was where and when and with whom my first fight would be with. I have been in this position plenty of times, with nothing else to contemplate outside of my own survival, but the abovementioned epiphany was a first. Nothing like what I am trying to describe had ever happened to me before.

In the Alcoholics Anonymous Big Book a “pink cloud” is referenced as a short lived mindset one experiences soon after some sobriety is maintained. I am aware of its existence and would be grateful for it if that’s what this is.

I know that I have not done justice to explain the awareness that this event brought about, but this is the best that I can do.

It was about a week or so later in a different unit that I began looking for additional reading material. Naturally I picked up another religious pamphlet since the last one held such a blessing I thought I’d try my luck again. Sure enough, the second one had a series of daily meditations all with the intentions of helping people share their new revelations, stay connected and build a stronger relationship with their maker.

The Vatican Counsel II, included in the term, “Evangelization” as the act of communicating our own personal experience of redemption to others. This apparently is necessary for the furtherance of the church itself. In this way the church and its teachings become personal, and get passed on by word of mouth. This information was contained in that second pamphlet.

I am by no means a Preacher, or a Bible thumper of any kind, but to ignore what I felt and how it happened to me on my most recent third day in jail is not something I choose to do. My intentions are to tie this awareness into the province of recovery and pass it along. One of the golden nuggets stored in my memory, is that of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous

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reference to a “spiritual awakening” as the only cure for the hapless Bill, whose numerous attempts at sobriety had never materialized in any long lasting respite from such an insidious disease. It needs to be given away in order to be kept.

And this I intend to keep.

There are so many fragments of what I now consider clear thinking in my head that I don't even know when or where to insert what. I feel like all the pieces of my life like broken glass have been glued together and I am filled to the brim with all good substance, for the lack of a better word.

Notwithstanding, I do also know, antidepressants may have played a part in my recent revelation, but after only three days in my system I find it had to believe that a medical explanation alone is required for the clarification of what I experienced.

My wife of fifteen years, (with a background in psychology) has often suggested I get treatment for depression. I never took her advice since I never knew what depression was or how it felt. I am very grateful for having been prescribed them here at the Jail, and, if they did induce or contribute to what I consider a spiritual awakening I suggest anyone who suffers from any addiction give them a try. I have been taking them now for about two months and will continue to do so. I firmly believe that is something is working you should leave it alone.

In the book “From Onions to Pearls” written by a mid to high level cocaine dealer from the seventies who went through a similar occurrence, whose name I do not remember, the author points out that the spirit of someone can become covered with layers like that of an onion and its heart and peel. Remove the peel and expose the heart, and give rise to the spirit.

The act of shedding the peel is not so apparent or easy to do. When I read the book I kind of knew what was being said, but again not quite. Close, but no cigar. I did though retain what I can now understand as sort of the whole crux of the biscuit, so to speak. The onion needs to be peeled. The heart needs to be exposed. The spirit needs to be awakened.

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There was an institute that opened in the mid-sixties called “Esalen.” It was nestled within the California woodlands of Big Sur. It was a community of the “Healing Elite” of the day who would each ply their respective trades in an attempt to free the residents of their inner restrictions and thus make their spirits shine. Very familiar I would say, to peeling an onion to get to its pearl.

In the book titled “Self Actualized Man”, the psychotherapist Dr. Maslow, understood that anyone who manages to free themselves from their inner restrictions can lead what he called a self actualized life, truly living up to their full potential as a Human Being as opposed to a Human Doing, with no encumbrances restricting their thinking. He wrote that book at Esalen as he had no patients to treat with talk therapy. They were all engaged elsewhere within the institute and had shown such progress that he had nothing to do but write.

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Freud understood how pockets of negativity, residing in the unconscious could restrict someone's thinking, and tried talk therapy to relieve his patients of them. Ron Hubbard, of Dyanetics fame, called these pockets "engrams" and used the same type of talk therapy in an attempt to offer similar relief.

A woman whose last name was Rolf (I forget her first name) said that these pockets of negative energy would manifest in physical places within the body, and she could intuit where they were, and offer relief through deep tissue massage. She made her way to Esalen in the late sixties. If I remember correctly she is the mother of Deep Tissue, Reiki and other hands on therapy.

The North American Shaman guide people through trance states, in an attempt to access universal understanding, and ultimately the power need to function through some difficulty or other, which was the reason for their visit in the first place. Another example of getting through the layers, to access the heart, and give rise to the spirit. I have been lucky enough to have taken part in such ceremonies lead by Dr. Jason Martin and Jhoti Crystal at a wellness center called Starseed in Montclair, N.J. along with other forms of New/Old Age Healing I managed to do well for twenty years. Starseed is also a Yoga and Meditation Center and still does great work.

The list of name and modalities and their ideas of freeing people from their inner restrictions goes on and on. All the standard saying like "it's an inside job" "look within" and more point to the concept of a spiritual awakening once the obstructions whatever they may be, have been cleared away.

Turning point, of Verona, an in-patient drug and alcohol rehab was opened almost a century ago knowing that you cannot predict when, where or by what words a person "wakes up and sees the light". Their fare offers its patients a daily regimen of reading from both the NA and AA big books, as well as lectures with a specific word track designed to offer the most bang for the buck, again not knowing when a "turning point" would occur. They just maintain the flow of information and wait for the miracles to happen. They did happen and still do. The light switch goes get turned on. It may be just as much as a process as a miracle. Or vice versa.

What all these healing milieus have in common, which never seems to be discussed, (since the natural pecking order of importance is totally consumed by either the process or the results or both) is a secure setting where the business of healing can take place. Jail is such a place.

When the first prison in the United States opened, their version of rehabilitation/punishment included twenty four hour lock-in with a copy of the Bible. On the surface a seemingly good idea at the time, close but no cigar

Here at the Bergen County Jail, the staff makes every effort to provide a setting where introspection is possible. Whether we choose introspection or not is obviously up to us. Whether they do their jobs with this thought in mind is a non-issue. When I am hungry, I do not care why an apple tree has apples on it. I'm just going to pick them and eat them. After all I am hungry.

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At a recent point in time the question for me became, does God's plan/my destiny, really exist? My answer has become, yes. I do not make this statement without due consideration. Given the multitude of serendipitous events that have peppered my life that continue even now, it is impossible for me not to at least see myself as a grain of salt. A substantial grain of salt that has taken some time to squeeze through the holes of his shaker.

