

Making Your Move

Among the many disadvantages of being in prison there is often one advantage that goes unnoticed. The man in prison gets the opportunity to make his “move” all over again. Having been cut off from society he now has the opportunity to reshape and remold his life in a new direction.

The general course of a man’s life is usually the result of some basic “move” he has made at some point in the past. This move, or decision, has set his style of life in motion, a style that unfolded in a definite pattern. For some, it was the first in a series of events which ended in prison. For others, it may have been a pattern that took him far from the prison door. In making your “move” you are deciding the meaning and content of your life. Every man sets a pattern to his life that will probably develop into a predictable style, although we should always allow plenty of room for the unpredictable aspects of life. Michitaro Tanaka has offered us this thought:

Tomorrow will probably be a continuation of much of today, but
tomorrow is not today and something entirely unexpected may
happen.

Some men have long decided that they will live for self. You can usually tell this type of person. In fact, they will give you the message in many ways. The whole of their lives will be spent in a rather well-defined self-serving style.

There will also be some who will make the move to live for others, live for the people, or for the community. They are not so common, but there are probably more people like this than most men in prison will want to believe. The man in prison generally thinks less of his fellow inmates than does the general society. He will generally give little credit for good intention and motivation. The fact remains that there are many men of good intention in our prisons. These are the ones who have chosen to live for the good of humanity. If you offer them another road to travel on they would still choose this one. Their move has been made in a very specific direction.

Others have made the move to “cop out.” The road they travel is paved with drugs, wine, and other things that sometimes seem to give relief to the pain of life.

I said in the beginning that the man in prison may get to make his move all over again. This is why some men who have chosen drugs the first time around may move in a new direction the second time. Still others, when that second chance comes, cop-out before they ever leave the prison. They are high on wine or drugs before the gates of the dungeon open. What chance do they have when they hit the street? They have made their move even before they were released.