



Sometimes I socialize a little

By Seth, 23 years old, in prison in Texas For 7 years

Being in prison at age 15 is like living in an incredibly violent day care with really strict staff. On a less physical, more psychological note, you're in denial and simply can't believe any of it.

If I were free, I would probably be working a minimum wage job, living paycheck to paycheck and struggling to take care of a bunch of kids. That's pretty standard for my family, and at the time of my incarceration I hadn't conceived of any other way of life.

5.30 am: I begin waking up. I enter that state where one is half asleep. It's in this state that all of my best ideas come to me. This morning I found a really good piano riff drifting around but usually it's poetry or song lyrics and (rarely) images for art.

6 am (ish): I get up, write down or sketch any ideas out in my notebook - which is almost full now. As are several large envelopes and folders. I get ready for work.

6.30 - 7 am: I'm let of my cell and head for the day room. Since I'm not a morning person, I hate everyone at this time of day (especially the ones who try to talk to me!).

7.30 am: I go to work at the cafeteria.

8 - 9.45 am: After a brief cleaning session I enjoy lots of coffee and politely dodge anyone who tries to talk to me. I use this time to organize my day and plan out projects.

10 am - 1 pm: I serve food - yay! It's so exciting.

1.30 - 3.30 pm: I get off work, shower and change clothes. Then I head back to the day room where I read, write letters, draw and work on music or poetry (just a few of those things on any given day, of course). Sometimes I socialize a little. But only *sometimes* and only a *little*.

3.30 pm - 12 am: I go back in my cell and read, write letters, draw and work on music or poetry... Well I wish I did. Usually though, I just relax, take a nap and daydream the day away until it's time for bed.

Naturally I daydream about getting out and making up for all the lost time, pulling my family out of the gutter, and enjoying the rest of my life.

I remember life before prison - I've relived everything I remember hundreds of times and even filled in some of the blanks. I miss my family most - it's sad knowing my brothers and sisters grow up without me - I wish I could be a better influence.

There's really not any variation to my schedule because my options are limited and I've already chose the best ones available to me. When college starts back up in a few weeks, I'll have five classes mixed into my schedule at all the most inconvenient points possible (college is never convenient and always hectic on purpose, to keep people away). And of course homework will eat up my nap time and day dreaming so I've resolved to enjoy it while it lasts.

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