



# Freedom Inside

A National Newsletter For Inmates  
Based on the CWG Material  
Issue # 8 September 2002

## Is Life a Crapshoot?

Freedom Inside  
P.O. Box 47007  
Phoenix, AZ 85068

*It's hard to miss the fact that some people's lives are more difficult than others. I often look at my life and think how incredibly grateful I am to be so blessed.*

*Was I just born lucky? Were others just born unlucky? That's one of the most disturbing questions that I've asked myself.*

*Is it easier to be kind and wise when our lives are going well, when we have everything we feel we need? Or do we need to have gone through painful experiences before we become softer, somewhat like meat being clobbered to make it tender? (Ouch!)*

*Is there a point where too much hardship makes people hard or too little makes them selfish?*

*"Was I just born lucky? Were others just born unlucky?"*

*Is it luck or destiny that gave us the life we are living? Is life a crapshoot or do we have free will and are creating our experiences?*

*The only answer I have found that makes any sense to me is...what does it matter?*

*Whether luck or destiny, my life is as it is. Just as yours is. Whatever happens, happens. The only thing under our direct control is our reaction to the circumstances of Life.*

*Whether big or small, our experiences are ours to label. Will we decide they are "good" or "bad"? Will we see pain as one of Life's experiences or as suffering, something "bad" that must stop before we can be happy?*

*Will we live Life comparing ourselves to others and feeling superior as self-righteous people do?*

*Or will we live comparing ourselves to others and feeling inferior as victims do?*

*I choose to live in gratitude for my life as it is now and with loving kindness toward others. Is that my destiny, my purpose or is it meaningless in the grand scheme of things, a crapshoot?*

*Whatever the "truth" of the matter is, this choice brings me joy in my sorrow, happiness in my pain. It works for me. That's the only measure that matters to me. I will continue to make this choice until it stops working for me.*

*In Peace and Joy  
Janine*

## From a New Reader

Greetings, Janine and All

I was pleasantly surprised when I received my first copy of "Freedom Inside". It is an excellent way for people to connect with each other in consciousness who might otherwise not have such an opportunity.

I myself have been struggling with my own self imprisonment, that is

to say I was a prisoner of having to have life turn out the way I thought it should, and I was miserable a lot—my own choosing—because only occasionally were my efforts ever successful. I was a control freak, plain and simple. I was violent outwardly occasionally, inwardly mostly. I had a lot of health problems as a result. I now have none.

As a child, I learned that if I didn't get someone's attention somehow, especially if I was in pain, that I was not going to survive; I was very dependent on others to validate me in whatever way it would take, "kiss it and make it better" so to speak. Thus I learned to control, that is to say that I came to believe in the illu-

(continued on page 2)

### From a New Reader

(continued from page 1)

sion of control.

My highest consciousness has helped me to become aware of what the source of my problem is. That part of me which likes rigid adherence to structure...EGO. I now understand why HEB's do not live in cities or live in buildings or communicate using words. One longing glance at the society we have created and I can see structure everywhere, even in our written language.

I was trying/fighting to survive because I believed in death, and as a child I came to believe that pain and death were equal. I now understand, after listening to tape six of Friendship With God for the umpteenth time it finally became clear to me that my survival is guaranteed, that to survive is not a choice, and how I experience each moment is a choice.

My definition of detached (J.M. Arizona, issue #7) is the same as yours. I would add only that detached and disconnected are not the same thing.

As to R.C. in Texas, I would respond that for the sake of clarity we could substitute the word "diversity" in place of the word "adversity".

I've also become aware that no one is going to hear an answer when they haven't asked the question, and not to offer unsolicited advice. If I have so here I apologize.

"We Are All One. Ours is not a better way, Ours is merely another way. Oneness Now Everywhere."

J.T.

Maryland

Do you have a poem that reflects the message in Freedom Inside? If so, send it in, it just may be chosen for a future

#### POETRY CORNER

*Because the Skeptic's articles have gotten such strong responses, we decided to give him a corner of this newsletter. His thoughts make us think. His skepticism makes us want to be very clear. What better addition to Freedom Inside, please enjoy it. Janine*

## THE SKEPTIC'S CORNER

Hmmm....

The more I think about things, the more I realize I don't know about them. Is that natural, or is it just me?

For instance, there was a time when I thought that going to prison was a really, really bad thing, and now I'm not so sure. I mean, of course prison sucks, but a lot of good has come out of it, not only in my life, but in the lives of may of the prisoners I know.

Remember me? The Skeptic? Well, right now the immeasurable amount of doubt within me is focused on the stereotypical prison experience. Pretty much everyone I know will tell you that prisons reinforce criminal mentality, suck up too many tax dollars, and are not nearly the deterrent of crime that they're supposed to be. And they're right, in my humble opinion. Surprised? Yep, the Skeptic actually agrees! But I also feel that this is only part of the story.

Like many prisoners, life was crazy for me before I came here. I was by no means a model citizen or even a good man. I was on a path to self-destruction. And eventually, I got there (here). What I'm trying to say is that I needed a bit of a time-out from life.

In prison, I've had plenty of time to reflect, gain a little perspective, and take some steps toward becoming the next grandest version of Who I Really Am. I've accomplished personal goals that I never even would've set for myself if I hadn't come to prison. And I've begun to know where happiness comes from. And that brings me to you. I'd like to know what you have to say about the "prison experience". Am I the only guy that's been able to find some good in the midst of all this chaos? What have you been able to pull out of this mess that you wouldn't have otherwise been able to do?

More importantly, can you truly accept that things are exactly the way they're supposed to be?

Don't get me wrong here. I mean, we all know that prison sucks. But did we...I mean "We", choose to be here? Did you? Why?

Once again, my friends, I'm asking you to put your pens to paper and help me figure all of this out. Why would a soul choose to be a prisoner? Is it working? Are you doing what you came to do? Experiencing what you came to experience?

Please, fill me in on your situation. Let me know if I'm as loony as I feel. I'm having trouble with this one. I just don't...get it., I guess.

Ponder this: If We choose to be here....if things really are exactly how they should be, then We've been free all along!! And, all this time, freedom hasn't been "out there", it's been inside.

Hmmmm...

Respect,  
J.M.  
Arizona

### REACHING OUT

*I would like to increase the number of people who have access to Freedom Inside. One way of doing that might be to send a few copies to PRISON LIBRARIES. Do any of you know how I might do that? Who to contact? If you know or can find out, please write me a note at the usual address.*

*Thanks, J*

## An Answer for R.C. of Texas

I feel that some very important issues came out. There are many things that are so. We Are One, that it so. I am reading Friendship With God for the third time. In that book it states that there are no victims or villains. There is only the experience of now. The alpha and the omega. The beginning and the end. People seek to better who they are, but they may not know that they know who they really are. Your mind will argue all day with what is so. You cannot experience the Realm of the Relative if you are experiencing the Realm of the Absolute. That is one of the things God states in FWG. I am trying to understand that as I learn more. It also states that the truth to all of life's questions is right on the tip of your tongue. I believe that we can make our truths. I have had a past history of being humble and passive, but I am learning that if I humble me, I humble God. So if I hate anyone, "punks and lames", then I hate God. God is us, we are God. We Are One. God is with us always. I choose to love everyone and it starts with me. That's a tough one, "me", but I am learn-

ing and getting better at it. I want to remember that there is no "better" way simply another way. On the subject of violence, I feel that you, Janine, have made a very clear message. If we accept everything and expect nothing, that could be one of the first steps to creating a peaceful, happy world. Why should I expect anything from anyone? I could never be what someone else wants me to be. I can be the grandest version of the greatest vision ever I held about who I am. In FWG, it states that there are two questions that we can ask ourselves. Whenever a situation or experience arises and you don't know what to do, ask, "Is this who I am? What would Love do now?" I believe that we are Love, we are One. The love is already there. It's that what we create in our minds, that may or may not allow us to experience the love. Pure unconditional love. I have so much to do and so little time. I thank you for your newsletters. I would like to experience the seven steps to friendship with God/you: I thank you, I know you, I trust you, let me use you, let me

help you, because I love you and embrace you. I hope that you will find this letter helpful. Thank you and Blessed Be  
L. H.  
Pennsylvania

Dear L.H,

*Thank you so much for this lovely and loving contribution. Your light shines brightly and I am truly grateful that you chose to shine it on Freedom Inside. There are a couple of things in your letter that made me think...and question. If I accept the world and expect nothing, then can I also wish for a peaceful earth? Is that a contradiction? I'm not clear on that. I know hope and expectations are very different. But isn't acceptance and hoping for world peace also a contradiction? We can say (and I do) that Peace is what all the souls are. But if We Are All One, if we are really the alpha and the omega, are we not also War? Can I love unconditionally and still prefer the other to change, for their own good, of course? Hmmm as our Skeptic said! Anybody out there with thoughts on this?*

*I have to disagree on one of your statements, though. You do have all the time in the world and not one thing to do.  
Just Be.  
You are Everything.*

*In Peace  
Janine*

### Books For Friends

Providing the ... *With God* books to those who do not have resources or access to them. Contact Donna Goswick, P.O. Box 129, Eugene, OR 97440.

### God's Pen Pals

Prisoners sharing, exploring and applying the message in the CWG material by corresponding with supportive people 'outside'. Contact Paula Lynam, PMB #141, 1257 Siskiyou Blvd., Ashland, OR, 97520

### Study Groups Inside

In-depth exploration and understanding of how the message can transform lives and experience. Contact Julia Dekker, PMB #1150, 1257 Siskiyou Blvd, Ashland, OR 97520.

## POETRY CORNER

Today,

*Today...I wish you a day  
of ordinary miracles.  
A fresh pot of coffee  
you didn't make yourself,*

*An unexpected phone call  
from an old friend,  
Green traffic lights on your way  
to work or shop,*

*I wish you a day of little things  
to rejoice in...*

*The fastest line  
at the grocery store,*

*A good sing-along song  
on the radio,*

*Your keys right  
where you look.*

*I wish you a day of  
happiness and perfection...  
Little bite size pieces  
of perfection that give you*

*The funny feeling that  
the Lord is smiling on you,  
Holding you so gently  
because you are someone*

*Special and rare*

*I wish you a day of Peace,  
Happiness  
and Joy*

- Author Unknown

In Answer to R.C. of Texas,

I feel that some very important issues came out. There are many things that are so. We Are One, that it so. I am reading Friendship With God for the third time. In that book it states that there are no victims or villains. There is only the experience of now. The alpha and the omega. The beginning and the end. People seek to better who they are, but they may not know that they know. Your mind will argue all day with what is so. You cannot experience the Realm of the Relative if you are experiencing the Realm of the Absolute. That is one of the things God states in FWG. I am trying to understand that as we are all learning. It also states that the truth to all of life's questions is right on the tip of your tongue. I believe that we can make our truths. I have had a past history of being humble and passive, but I am learning that if I humble me, I humble God. So if I hate anyone, "punks and lames", then I hate God. God is us, we are God. We Are One. God is with us always. I choose to love everyone and it starts with me.

That's a tough one, "me", but I am learning and getting better at it. I want the re-member that there is no "better" simple another way. On the subject of violence, I feel that you, Janine, have made a very clear message. If we accept everything and expect nothing, that could be one of the first steps to creating a peaceful, happy world. Why should I expect anything from anyone? I could never be what someone else wants me to be. I can be the grandest version of the greatest vision every I held about who I am. In FWG, it states that there are two questions that we can ask ourselves. Whenever a situation or experience arises and you don't know what to do, ask, "Is this who I am? What would Love do now?" I believe that we are Love, we are One. The love is already there. It's that what we create in our minds, that may or may not allow us to experience the love. Pure unconditional love. I have so much to do and so little time. I thank you for your newsletters. I would like to experience the seven steps to friendship with God/you: I thank you, I know you, I trust you, let me use you, let me help you, because I love you and embrace you. I hope that you will find this letter helpful.

Thank you and Blessed Be

Lori

Pennsylvania

*Dear Lori,*

*Thank you so much for this lovely and loving contribution. Your light shines brightly and I am truly grateful that you chose to shine it on Freedom Inside. There are a couple of things in your letter that made me think...and question. If I accept the world and expect nothing, then can I also wish for a peaceful earth? Is that a contradiction? I'm not clear on that. I know hope and expectations are very different. But isn't acceptance and hoping for world peace also a contradiction? We can say (and I do) that Peace is what all the souls are. But if We Are All One. If we are really the alpha and the omega, are we not also War? Can I love unconditionally and still prefer the other to change, for their own good, of course? Hmmmmm Anybody out there with thoughts on this?*

*I have to disagree on one of your statements, though. You have all the time in the world and not one thing to do. Just Be. You are everything.*

*In Peace*

*Janine*

**Dear Friends,**

**I have placed myself in an illusion where I have been surrounded by people who “seem” to be unpleasant. It came to me. As someone is unpleasant to me, I ask myself, “Is this who I am? What would love do now? Is that who they are? What would love do now?” That is one of the many gifts that we all have to offer. My first thought is to get angry. Then I realize that through the differences, we can find ourselves. We can learn who we are and who we are not. I think that as each person has had their own experiences through their lives, we have all shared them together. I have been in very harsh situations that I have struggled with. I realize that if I didn’t, I wouldn’t have learned. I think that as I feel love inside, that I’m receiving love from others (everyone). When I see a stranger smile, that’s who they are. Maybe someone who is a neighbor to that stranger would say they are mean, because of some experience they had with that stranger. The neighbor wouldn’t know that they knew who that stranger really is.**

**I am learning so much, there is no end to the learning. That, I feel, is why there is change. These are all insights that I have chosen to remember from Friendship With God. When I’m experiencing anger, I try to catch my thoughts. I try to think about what it is that I’m thinking. I embrace the thought and then let it go. There are some people I’m struggling to love. It’s the me in them that I don’t love and that’s what I would live to work on. That’s exactly what I want to do, work on my lesson. The illusion that I have created is to help me find me. To learn who I am not. The gifts that we all have is that we all “help” each other through the experience. Through so many songs, I have heard that We Are All One. Music is one of the many ways that I get happy. I hear and feel so much through the day. Through the words of others, through the earth, through the silence, I got this yesterday: Be quiet so I can Hear.**

**Lose your leaves so I can see who you are.  
You are never alone because we are all one.**

**Thank you all, that I know you because I know you, I trust you, to trust you I must use you and I also want to help you; to help you I would love you and to love you is to embrace you. These are also from Friendship With God.**

**I would like to choose to think and feel good, happy thought so others can feel it too. I’m not saying that I don’t, because at times I feel just the opposite. I can keep trying though. It’s as if I’m trying to learn how to ride a bike without training wheels. I can give up or I can get back up and keep trying. I choose to keep trying and leaning with an open mind and heart. I choose to remember from CWG that, “Ours is not a better way, ours is merely another way”. This is who I am, this is what love would do. We are Love. We are one.**

**God bless you**

**Love**

**Lori**

**Pennsylvania**

***Thank you, Lori, God has blessed us all with having you in the world.***



**Freedom Inside**  
**P.O. Box 47007**  
**Phoenix, AZ 85068**

**Know anyone who would like to receive this newsletter?**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Send to : *Freedom inside / subscriptions*  
*P.O. Box 47007*  
*Phoenix, AZ*  
*USA 85068*

**DONATIONS**

*It is my intent to continue sending Freedom Inside to you at no cost. Donations would be gratefully accepted from anyone able to contribute.*

*Thank you,  
Janine Gutierrez*

*P.S. Please make checks or money orders payable to me personally as there soon will be fees involved in keeping a bank account for Freedom Inside*