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#### CHANGE IS WITHIN US ALL

I have been teaching my peers for over a decade. Yet I quickly became a student when I came to realize how dynamic human beings can be -- even prisoner human beings. In 2007 I was asked to instruct peer-led classes here on the Progressive Programming Facility, in Lancaster, CA. What I learned is that all of the creativity, intelligence and capacity for innovation I could ever want or need is right here, within reach.

Once we got past all the gossip, war stories and superficial, anti-social traditions of prison culture, we were able to see the unlimited potential and dynamic worth in each other. Want an awesome painting, a life-like portrait, or to be taught either? We got that. Need to learn about financial planning, or want some real estate tips, or perhaps guidance on how to overcome stress and traumatic events? Yep, we got that, too.

There's so much gift and talent here, and surely at other penal institutions -- because people are fantastic and awesome -- when we spend the time to develop their gifts and invest in the apparatuses they need to grow. When I see Rick helping others transform in phenomenal ways, or John paint master pieces, or Fred publish books that are both educational and transformative, I am compelled to ask why they're even in here. Of course, it then dawns on me that they, like the rest of us, made some bad decision in