

## THE ZOMBIE MEDICATION LINE IN PRISON

By Larry Stromberg, Contributing Writer

All across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, there is a Zombie Medication Line in prison that forms immediately after it is announced over the loudspeaker. A large and insane stampede comes rushing like a pack of ravishing wolves with one purpose in mind: "I want and need my medication now! Get the hell out of my way, before I run you down!"

It's known as "The Zombie Medication Line" and it's controlled by the Department of Corrections for a specific purpose and endgame. "Show me the money!"

This "Zombie Medication Line" is common in every state and federal prison across the country to control the incarcerated population with prescribed medications — instead of getting inmates the psychological and psychiatric help that they so desperately need.

At one time, there were multiple mental health facilities in Pennsylvania to treat individuals who have mental health issues or were considered criminally insane for the crimes they committed against society. These facilities were more equipped to treat individuals with psychological issues. But due to a lack of funds, most of these mental health institutions were shut down.

Now, most inmates with severe mental health issues are housed and treated by the Department of Corrections SCI State Institutions. They are given prescribed medications by a prison psychiatrist, but with very little therapy treatment to help them deal with whatever mental health issues and disorders they have.

In essence, these people have become drug addicts. The Department of Corrections is the drug dealer. The incarcerated become addicted to the substance supplied by the DOC, and the pharmaceutical companies with contracts with the state and federal prison system.

At one time in my early incarceration, I was put on psychiatric medication prescribed by a state prison psychiatrist to deal with my heavy depression and anxiety. I was put on Ativan, Sinequan, and Risperdal. But once I started taking those mind-controlling medications. I went into a deeper depression.

I became part of the Medication Zombie Line. I gained over thirty pounds, had no motivation, and slept all of the time. I moved like a zombie. I didn't even feel human. I'm grateful that I was able to wean off all three medications with the psychiatrist's approval — especially Risperdal. It's been medically proven that long-term consumption of Risperdal can cause men to develop breasts, which have to be surgically removed.

So eventually, I was able to get off all psychiatric medications. That was 25 years ago. I believe if I continued taking those medications, I would be dead today, six feet under. I would have never started my creative writing process, grown in my faith, completed my institutional programs, became a Certified Peer Support Specialist or started college in the Villanova University Program at SCI Phoenix. The medications would have controlled me and I would have been a zombie.

Then there are the drug addicts dealing with heavy addictions before coming into the prison system. They turn to psychiatric meds prescribed by a prison psychiatrist to feed their addiction. They also consume other drugs that are being sold by the drug-dealing prison population. They are willing to fight or even kill to get their medicated utopia high. Many even die from overdosing in the process. Their bodies are carried out in bodybags or rushed out on prison gurneys to the local county morgue.

Just recently, a SCI Resident accidentally set himself on fire trying to light up synthetic drugs with an e-cigarette and a charger that caught on fire which ended up burning 90% of his body. He's in a Pennsylvania Hospital in a coma at the point of death. He became a zombie to the drugs that controlled him. It's no different from the drugs the psychiatrist subscribes to the inmate population.

They consume you to the point of mind control. Some of these men in the penitentiary try to fool the guards during the medication line by not taking their medication, by hiding the pills deep in their mouths or somehow stick the pills up their buttock and end up selling those pills to all the drug addicts on the block. That's a common thing in prison.

The truth be told, the Department of Corrections has big business contracts with the pharmaceutical companies to have as many incarcerated people on prescribed medication.

So, the Zombie Medication Line is alive, thriving, and well in the prison system in Pennsylvania. Something has to change to heal the sick, and addicted.

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