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A baby was born to a young mother not old enough to be of school leaving age. The baby grew up to a child being guided by his grandmother. The nan was an important role in the eight year olds life until her passing when this child was eight. He was actually sitting with his Nan at the time of her heart attack.

The sudden fear in a child , the safety of his wellbeing was taken away. He floundered around as his mother had gone on to marry a man who was not his biological father. He now had a mum and stepdad who had 3 children of their own.

We will call this boy John for the purpose of this story.

It was a family but.....John was only family to his mother not to the stepdad. You can imagine the loneliness of John and too young to express verbally those feelings. He was rejected as a son. His mum had young kids and no other income except the stepdads wages to keep her and the kids and house them.

There were continuing arguments over the way stepdad treated John. Mum felt suppressed in the sense of, she as the mother could do nothing.

John began to find friends at that young age that were similar in life circumstances to his own. Put downs being hit made to do disciplinary things like sit on a chair at a birthday party while other brother and sisters ran and played.

The mental anguish displayed by him such as swearing and yelling , throwing things clearly showed a kid without the love and inclusion from his family. John had a terrible life with the stepdad treating his children differently to John.

John became aggressive to life and grew with mates that lead to a survival of disrespect to property and people.

Alcohol became a company. Stealing , police arrests , court over and over.

No-one looked at Johns life. The system ran on to commit him to a boys institution .

His mother also began to get comfort in alcohol as a way to block out the hurt .

John as a kid had experienced issues from birth to the age of 14 being handcuffed put onto a plane with officers and flown away to this institution and not even seeing his mother to say goodbye. These issues are mind destroying to this stage of the story and I haven't even touched on his life to the way it is now. In an institution an for law breaking as a kid. As a society who really cares how kids end up this way? Too late now as John was in a place where kids were in similar law breaking situations.

John after a time in that place was released , again no support mechanisms to retrain a young mind so, what else but to contact those he had met inside. The way of life now was crime.

The young years of abuse and neglect and no interventions after release had now taken a 17 year old to gaol for 17 years.

Johns life was now in a world of control and criminals that were in gaol for many years. I cant imagine how he at 17 , a kid in reality, coped in that world . In a maximum security gaol . What happened to him

in there ? Imagine the anxiety , the panic and fear when older hardened criminals guided him through life. How brain destroying it would be.

No worldly life experiences as most 17 year olds do and consider that as normal growth. John had none of this.

His mother was now emotionally drained and lived those years without sleep , and fear of never seeing him again. Alcohol became more and more as a comfort in her life. John had tried to escape to his mother he told officers because he was sick and mum would look after him. I wonder if John was offered help for this in the sense of counselling and Dr interventions. He had tried to self harm , slashing wrists . John had wounded wrists that required hospitalisation. Instead he was put into a prison van and taken on a 9 hour trip to Sydney long bay gaol. Upon arrival Johns wrists were bleeding . Why did he have to go in a truck with such injuries. ? He then was then handcuffed to a hospital bed. John was also classed now as an E classification.

I cannot write what happened in gaol all those years as I don't know. I am sure John could tell us the things that all of us don't want to hear that did happen. Remember now Johns family were now the inmates , his home the gaol and his parents the Correctional Officers.

After 17 years John was released, mentally wounded, institutionalised , and a methodone client. He was given a disability pension for intellectual disability.

One would now think its over get on with life. WRONG . How could it be ? That is an expectation of the Law and those that did not see the impacts upon John from injustices.

John was left to his own survival outside. He had a mother who tried for many years to retrain John. Two Aunts now have taken some of the stress off his mother to help John as His mother has become so unwell.

Since his release John has been gaoled time and time again. The system does not understand the lack of support for people like John, How can John survive with such a horrific life outside? Who really cares? except a drained sick domestic violated mother and two aunts who can see what is needed and nowhere to turn too for help for John.

John lives thirty kilometres from the clinic that's a sixty km round trip.

Where is the transport to do this seven days a week? Where is the Mental health services ? Where are the NGO services ? All we see is John trying to get to town to a parole office and its ok so long as he turns up , that's it. no programs no connection to services to learn lifestyle ways.

John has had limited education. He gets a pension on release and expected to budget and shop like you or me.

John has no such skills. No domestic cooking skills. As Aboriginal people we advertise to eat healthy .

John has no interaction skills and that in itself affects most of his survival on the outside. John has gaol mentality.

Always in control of everything be it right or wrong. His addictions of alcohol and drugs blocks out the past but... has become a huge addiction now.

An Aboriginal man with so many untreated issues is now again in gaol. He tried to self harm , he was arrested. taken to a cell bleeding and later taken to outpatients. He was patched up and quickly taken back to the police station to charge him.

Once again who really cares?

I rang the hospital , said John tried to self harm get a mental assessment , The reply was he has left here and its a fine line to get assessments done. I said its a shame and a disgrace that he has to go to gaol again with mental health issues.

Where does an Aboriginal man with mental health issues go if he is homeless on release? Is this what abused , traumatised , institutionalised , addicted, neglected, uneducated Aboriginal men are guaranteed to get on release when it all starts out as no fault of their own.

We have a Law system that has the key rule as punishment. This does not suit all cases. We have correctional Centres , What is corrected?

John is a hard case. He has lived an horrific life. John needs an enormous amount of help to function on the outside.

What will the future hold for John? He may get so sick , He maybe homeless, he may offend again badly and gaoled

again . Who knows. Is this what the system waits for? A lot of unresolved issues for John from a child.

