Prison

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The latest tabloid scare story is - 500,000 crimes a year committed by repeat offenders released from prison.

And the tabloid answer is - make prison nastier.

Not that anybody ever bothers to ask those who work in prison and see it every day or even those, like myself, who have spent time inside.

Well, if anyone cares about reality as opposed to headline simplicity, I'll tell you what happens to most of those career burglars, sex offenders, petty criminals etc. They hibernate.

The frightful experience of prison can only be coped with by most people in one way. They go into a temporary coma, obey the rules, slow down. Their metabolism grinds to a halt. Without rehabilitation (no money) they simply press the pause button.

It makes no difference how unpleasant the regime is (this hybernation is most notable in segregation where there is nothing and nobody). To cope you become still, almost asleep, out of it,

Then, on release, you return to your old routine.

I was the exception in that I found the world inside fascinating and valuable. I observed and contributed and became very busy. But the majority do not. I was there. I know.

But is anyone interested? No. A headline is so much less trouble to think about.