

My name is Anthony Lial for the record.

I'm going to be sharing my story of my first arrest and first conviction.

In December of 2001, a month after my seventeenth birthday, I was arrested and charged with Robbery I. The crime was not malicious, and no one was physically hurt. My intent wasn't to cause harm.

I took responsibility for my actions and pled guilty. I knew I was going to be away from my mother and grandmother for a long time.

My sentencing judge, near tears, explained her feelings on the unjust sentence. She was bound by Measure 11, and a grudge holding D.A., to impose a 90 month sentence, seven and a half years. Keep in mind, first interaction with police, and the justice system, in my life.

To add salt to the wound, another six months was added on, after I had already served a few years of my 90 month sentence, by the Multnomah County D.A. It was like getting sentenced twice, for the same crime.

After serving 8 years in adult prison, and gaining an education in gang politics, drug use, and violence, I was back on the streets of Portland. A new man. Much different than when I left my moms house, and entered the justice system. Although my weight, barely 120 pounds, didn't change much.

It's taken me many years to unlearn behaviors, and negative ways of thinking, that I had to learn to survive in prison.

I have a voice to try and affect change, so my son doesn't have to live through and experience the horrific things I have. No kid deserves to go through what I did. The sentence in no way came close to matching the crime.

I still suffer from severe PTSD, have nightmares almost every night and am extremely paranoid in public and around law enforcement.

I've taken responsibility for what I've done in life. The State of Oregon should hold itself to the same standard. Acknowledging mistakes and trying to fix them is only right.