

BROCK TURNER from STANFORD
Lessons for all of us!
6-10-16

The offense of Brock Turner against an unconscious woman on his college campus was something both of them will remember for the rest of their lives. For the person who was victimized, any thoughts or beliefs she may have had that the world we live in is peaceful, safe and just likely disappeared from her mind immediately upon regaining consciousness. Since those who have been victimized experience what happened to them in different ways, we cannot, nor should we, assume that their lives are over, that every one of them is damaged forever. However, we can assume that for many, the experience changes their lives in an enduringly negative way.

For those who commit such offenses, what they once knew as a “normal life” will forever be altered. Some will spend time in jail and/or prison, on probation and/or parole, and most will be on the sexual offender registry for the rest of their lives. The justice system, in an attempt to protect those who have been victimized, isolates those who have sexually offended by denying them housing, jobs, and opportunities to participate in many community activities. Those who have children may not be allowed to attend any of their school plays, programs or graduations. As people with a conviction grow older, they are likely to be turned away from adult day programs, assisted living facilities, and care centers, a fact that renders many of them homeless in their old age.

Those who have been victimized deserve as much protection, counsel and support as they believe they need. They also deserve to heal and move forward with their lives as they desire and are able. They deserve to be supported in that moving forward. Those who have committed a sexual offense, once they have done whatever time and experienced whatever consequences and treatment the system says that they deserve, should be assisted in moving forward with as normal a life as possible. Research shows that people who have offended are not likely to recidivate if they have jobs, housing and pro-social support systems. States such as Colorado with lifetime sentencing and lifetime registration for many (not just for law enforcement but public registration) make it incredibly difficult for those with the “sexual offender” designation to succeed in any normal definition of the word. Those whose primary job is the support of those victimized generally state that since victims have to suffer for the rest of their lives, those who have offended should do the same. We believe that many who have been victimized choose not to suffer for the rest of their lives; we also believe that many who have committed this offense choose not to suffer for the rest of their lives, in spite of the many conditions and sanctions that frequently hold them back.

At CSOR, it is not our desire to see people victimized sexually or in any other way. We believe that those who have offended need to review their inappropriate choices and actions, and re-weave the fabric of their lives in a way that assures that they will not victimize anyone again! We believe that those who have been offended against deserve all of the support and unconditional acceptance that they want and need; our desire is that they are able to recover from the pain of their victimization, and live a productive and fulfilling life. Those who committed an offense can change their behavior for the present and the future if they choose to do so, and with support, can live safe, productive and healthy lives in a world that is willing to let them!