Written by Larry (T.C.) Lowe
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In 1988, while running as a candidate to become president of the United States, the Rev. Jesse Jackson stood before a rousing crowd at the Democratic Convention, and stated, “You see the house I’m running to (The White House), but you don’t see the house I’m running from. I was born in the ghetto, but the ghetto wasn’t born in me.”

I can relate with that. You see, the house I am running from is a prison cell.

For 13 years, I spent time behind bars for a felony possession of firearms charge. While in prison, I spent time thinking about what I was going to do when I got out. I knew it was going to be a hard road to get back home. It would be hard to get a job, hard to face family and friends and hard to survive, period. So many times, I would start to think negatively instead of positively.

But somehow, with the grace of God Almighty, I was able to turn my thinking around.

Since being released from prison in 2005, I have crawled over and under walls to get where I need to go.

Most importantly, I have gotten to where I need to go. With the help of people like Spike Moss and the people at Uhuru, Inc., I immediately got a job when I got out of prison. Uhuru helped me work in the community to guide young brothers to stay on a positive path after being released from prison.

After working at Uhuru, I was hired at the Minneapolis Urban League I always joke that, “I went in their door and I refused to leave until they hired me.” Truth be told, it’s really no joke.

In the years since 2005, I have had my parole sentence reduced by two years, purchased a home and started a business called Check Mate Bargain Clothing.

It is my hope that my brothers who are released from prison realize that they are worth walking in the doors of businesses and staying until they are hired. It is my dream that more people are blessed to receive the wonderful assistance that organizations like Uhuru and the Minneapolis Urban League provide. It is my wish that my brothers find themselves worthy enough of starting their own businesses.

Most of all, it is my desire for everybody to know that there is life on the other side of adversity if you have a dream . . . and work the dream.

It is then, and only then . . . that folks will look at the house you’re running to instead of the house you’re running from.