

Human existence and interaction is essentially characterized by a contest between individuals who at times have diametrically opposed social, political, and economic ideals. Due to the forceful nature of our idiosyncrasies, we always perceive our ideals infallible and hence as fit of being enforced on others. This attempt makes human interaction teeter precariously on the axis of dominance and the desire to overwhelm on one hand, and resistance on the other. Moreover, resistance is not realized in similar degrees in all individuals; there are those who are easily intimidated, while others have amazing levels of resilience and they would go to any length to defend their convictions.

This fact is also explained by the observation that in all of us there is a paradoxical collocation of two natural and almost instinctual desires; desire to dominate others, and the desire for self-defense and self-preservation against domination by others. This preservation goes beyond protection of the body to include even the preservation of self dignity and personality. However, in the context of overwhelming subjugation, denial, and dominance, the oppressed lack effective avenues through which a conventional defense for the self would be enacted. This scenario is particularly witnessed in the context of imprisonment. In prison, the passage of time exposes the prisoner to vulnerability and a possible loss of self identity, which is made extremely painful by the severance of all meaningful human interactions.