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You Are What You Allow Yourself to Be Exposed to

by Sterling D. Allan

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When I was a teen, I read an excellent book by Jack R. Christanson (ended up being one of my bishops at BYU) about the powerful influences what we watch on TV and listen to on the radio has on us; hence the need to be highly discerning so that these influences are good. This is one of the reasons why I stopped watching TV^{back then} and didn't resume until a couple of years ago, when I saw that there was enough good content to make it worth while. And for the past ~15 months, I've been watching nearly exclusively RAV TV (Real America's Voice), which is both awake and God-loving. It feels like hanging out with friends I can relate to.

I've heard it said periodically that who you are is largely a function of your four best friends, so if you want success, you should hang out with successful people. Being in prison, and not being able to find anyone on the outside to correspond with that I can relate to, I've wondered about the impact of this alleged truism on me.

I feel like I'm in a good place spiritually and emotionally, having a very positive outlook, despite being surrounded by negativity here in prison — which I don't pay attention to.

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On 7/23 early morning, I received a flash insight that I wrote down and have made the title of this piece: "You are what you allow yourself to be exposed to." That includes things like books you read, ^(esp. scriptures etc) movies you watch, TV and radio shows you select, music (lyrics & mode) you listen to, thoughts you think, people you talk to, friends you spend time with ^(context of those interactions), things you look at, ^(art, photos, paintings) things you value, what you think about what you're exposed to.

A key word in that statement is "allow" - which is a function of choice. When I almost always have something to read with me to pull out while I'm waiting for something. When I go to the infirmary (usually takes 2-3 hours), I have note cards of scriptures I want to memorize in my pocket to pull out.

Things like this have kept the prison culture from rubbing off on me, and have enabled me to improve my walk with God, despite ^{sometimes / often} the hellish environment I'm in (if I let it ~~be~~, which I don't).

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It's up to us as to what we are influenced by. It's an ongoing choice, driven by the habits we allow to undergird our lives.

Remember, God will guide you in everything you do, every choice you make, every habit you break,

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every habit you make (will remind you, so that the new thing becomes a habit in a timely way). (2 Ne. 32:3,5; Eph. 3:16.)

For me, with my unique mission in life, which includes bringing forth and utilizing the AB (Alphabets) code, I've had the benefit of the wisdom of the ages that is behind AB being my main "friend" in life to inform my world view. And that influence has only increased (significantly) since coming to prison. I'd say that all the holy prophets that make up the source of the AB code make for an excellent companion in life, guided by the Holy Ghost (^{AB} makes it easier for the Holy Ghost to be clear).

