

# POST-PRISON **DESISTANCE** AND **PERSISTENCE** IN THE NETHERLANDS

THEMES, STORYLINES AND MESSAGES IN DIVERGING LIFE STORIES

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# PROGRAM

- I. Prison re-entry
  - II. Desisting or persisting offenders
  - III. Narrative criminology
  - IV. Our research
  - V. Interactive part a/o
  - VI. Discussion
- 
- 50 m.
- 25 m.

# I. PRISON RE-ENTRY

- Prisons: **BEEHIVES** and part of our societies.
  - **SOMETIMES EVEN** integral part of the local community.
  
- Re-entry :
  - **HIGH RISKS** of reoffending.
    - personal factors
    - contextual factors
    - prison related factors / **DETENTION DAMAGE**
  - **ADJUSTMENT PROBLEMS**
  - **UNREST**
  - **ECONOMICAL**
    - costs and loss of production
    - community alternatives

# PERCEPTIONS

## ▣ Policy-focused research

- ▣ programmatic and quantitative perspective.
- ▣ focus on individual risks and needs
- ▣ governments responsible for safety issues
  - ▣ what about community interactions?
  - ▣ community challenge handled as a government challenge
  - ▣ medical approach mixed with solution-focused approach

## ▣ Client focused research

- ▣ insider perspective
- ▣ exchanges and processes that lead to desistance or persistence of crime after re-entry.
- ▣ life stories: narrative criminology.

## II. DESISTING AND PERSISTING

- Process
- Factors
- Role of probation

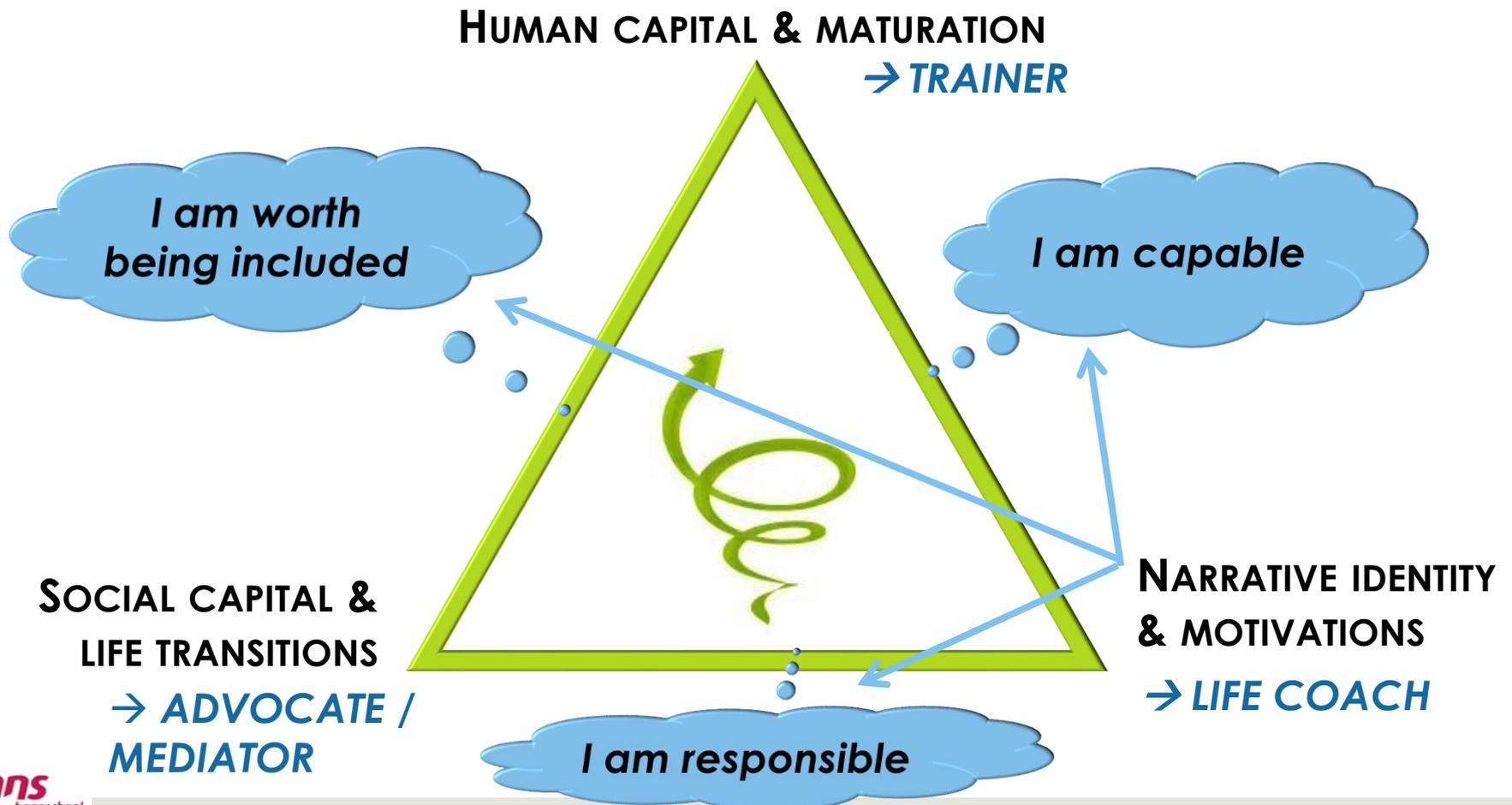
# PROCESS: DESISTING 'VS' PERSISTING?

- It is not a crime-free gap in time (*primary desistance, or behavioral change*), but the movement from the behavior of non-offending to the assumption of a role or **identity** of a non-offender or crime-free person (*secondary desistance, or second-order change*).
- It is a complex process involving not only the offender, but also the (**interactions** with) judicial institutions, the social context and material / social-economical conditions.

■ Shadd Maruna 1998

# DESISTANCE FACTORS

Based on McNeill 2007



# III. NARRATIVE CRIMINOLOGY

- Life stories
- Implications for probation practice

# LIFE STORIES

- Underexposed

- objectivity: telling the truth?
- Maruna 2001: making good
- Laub & Samson 2003: life transitions

- Strength

- how people give meaning / closer to life

- Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008:210

- Sools, 2010

- van Gemert & van Swaeningen, 2012

# ROZ

- **Roz** is a 32 year old woman. She lives with a partner – who is abusive - and their 7 year old daughter.
- She has been working as a maid in a hotel, but was discovered to have stolen from some of the guests and was immediately dismissed.
- She is being prosecuted and the prosecutor's office has indicated that this is a serious abuse of trust and they will push for a severe sentence to punish her and to deter others.

# ROZ



- **My name is Roz.** I am 32 years old. I live together with my husband and our daughter. She is 7, and very beautiful.
- I never had trouble with the law before. I know that stealing is wrong. I deserve to be punished, I can understand that. But I saw no other way, because my husband is not supporting me financially. I need to pay the rent and other bills, and I want to provide for my daughter, you see?
- When I stole these things I thought *'these tourists are rich people, they must have insurance'*.
- I grew up very poor. My father abused me as a child. I promised myself never to look back so I can be a good mother for my daughter. That is my goal in life.
- Now I feel ashamed, and afraid. [Cries] Am I going to prison? Maybe child protection will take my daughter away? She will not be safe then.

# LIFE STORIES

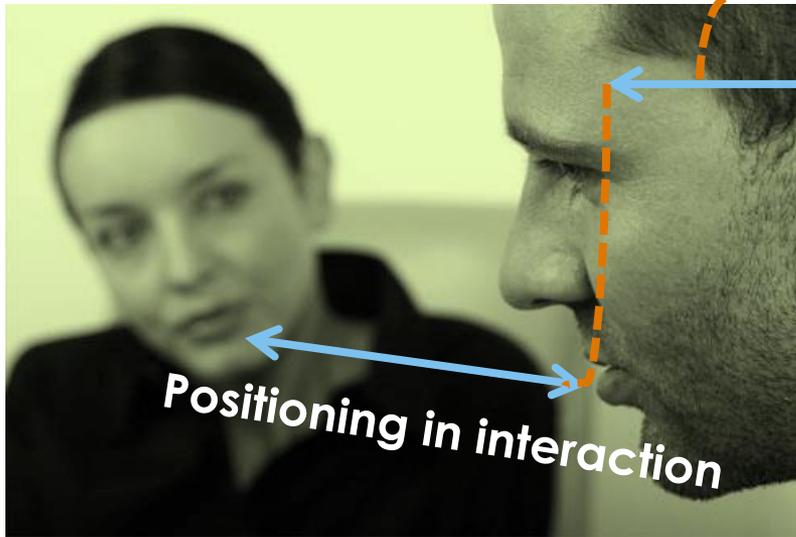
- **“A culturally guided interpretation of the narrator’s life”**  
(Nijhof in Bohlmeier et al. 2007: 146).
- Bi-directional
  - Interaction – expression - presentation – positioning
    - Significant others
    - Themes
    - Storylines
  - Symbolic interactionism: we act in the world giving meaning
  - Life story: giving meaning (social act) to giving meaning (life events)

# IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT

IDENTITY AND INTERACTION ARE A 2-SIDED COIN

## Frontstage

Telling my story to her



Positioning in interaction

## Backstage

**My known story / identity:**

Meaning given to:

- Acts and events
- Roles

Tools for giving meaning:

- Culture
- Important others

# IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT

IDENTITY AND INTERACTION ARE A 2-SIDED COIN

## Frontstage

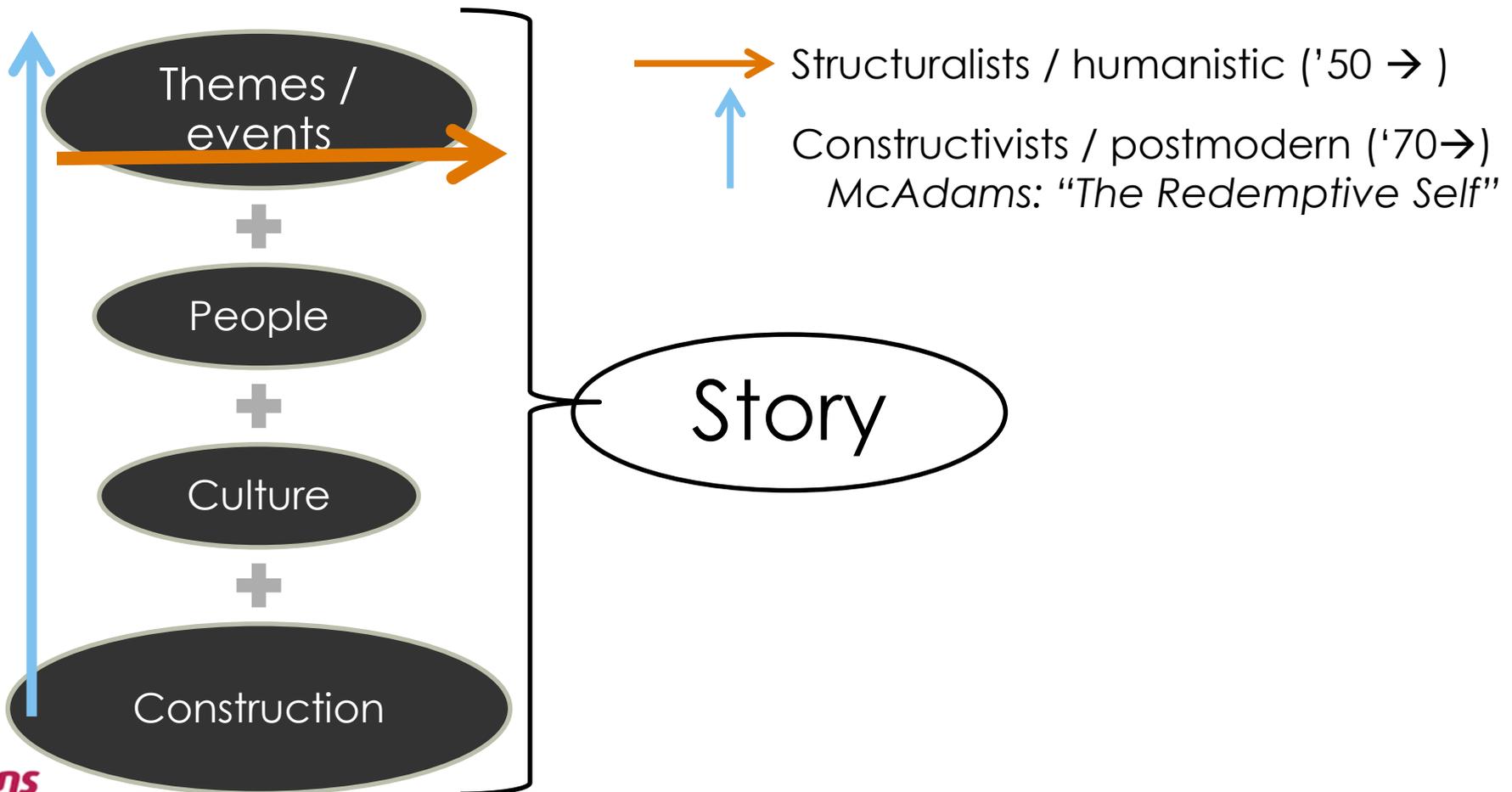
"A persons identity is not found in behavior, nor -  
important though this is - in the reactions of others, but  
in the capacity to keep a particular narrative going."  
(Giddens, 1991: 54 ).

Positioning in interaction

- roles
- Tools for giving meaning:
- Culture
  - Important others

# STORY ANALYSIS:

## HORIZONTAL AND VERTICAL



# VERTICAL ANALYSIS: (RE)PRESENTATION UNDER CONSTRUCTION



*.... all of the active sample members will almost surely go straight themselves in the near future. They are simply taking longer to do so. (Maruna, 1998, p. 49)*

# YOUNG ADULT OFFENDER WORKBOOK: LIFE STORIES AND SOLUTION FOCUSED WORK

Mij

Je hebt al heel  
Kijk eens terug  
had je nooit wil  
had je liever ni  
en is belangrijk  
speelde crimina

Kies zelf hoe je  
vertellen. Teke  
een collage, sch  
of verhaal. Of  
anders. Het is

## RECLASSERINGSWERKBOEK

VERSIE 1.1



Verlavingsreclassering

Reclassering Nederland



# YOUNG ADULT OFFENDER WORKBOOK: LIFE STORIES AND SOLUTION FOCUSED WORK

## Mijn levensverhaal

Je hebt al heel wat meegemaakt.  
Kijk eens terug op je leven. Wat  
had je nooit willen missen? Wat  
had je liever niet gezien? Wie was  
en is belangrijk? Wat voor rol  
speelde criminaliteit? En nu?

Kies zelf hoe je over je leven wilt  
vertellen. Teken een strip, maak  
een collage, schrijf een rap, gedicht  
of verhaal. Of maak iets heel  
anders. Het is jouw leven!

# YOUNG ADULT OFFENDER WORKBOOK: LIFE STORIES AND SOLUTION FOCUSED WORK

## Wat vertelt mijn verhaal?

Wat jij vertelt over jouw leven, zegt veel over jou. Meer dan je denkt. Daarom gaan jij en je reclasseringswerker samen heel goed kijken en luisteren naar jouw verhaal. Wat is je secret message over jezelf?

voor je het weet, doe je iets dat niet mag. Dat gaat sneller dan je denkt.

Wat zie en hoor ik zelf?

Wat ziet en hoort jouw reclasseringswerker?

Ik heb steun aan:

Ik krijg stress van:

Mijn eigenschappen zijn:

Ik heb last van:

Ik doe wat ik doe omdat:

# IV. THE RESEARCH

- Brabant region
- Questions and method
- Results by theme
- Discussion / recommendations

# THE BRABANT REGION



# QUESTIONS

- Aim: to better **understand the process** of desistance and persistence by getting an insiders view
  - Policy / program recommendations
- *What insights can we derive from the trajectories of ex-offenders about factors that contribute to life after imprisonment with or without crime, and which recommendations for prevention and re-entry policy can we extract from these?*

# METHOD

- Last phase of detention:
  - Demographic questionnaire
  - Life Story interview McAdams before release
    - Focus on own story + imprisonment, life after prison, the role of crime
    - Working with chapters
- Interview 6 months after re-entry + family members
- Explorative, small scale, intensive, time consuming

# HORIZONTAL / THEMATIC SEARCH: LIFE EVENTS

## ▣ Relationships

- ▣ 1. Domestic violence
- ▣ 2. Family substance abuse
- ▣ 3. Criminal family members
- ▣ 4. 'Wrong' contacts
- ▣ 5. Leaving of loved ones
- ▣ 6. Loss of loved ones
- ▣ 7. Family feuds
- ▣ 9. Love relationships
- ▣ 10. Children
- ▣ 11. Family support

## ▣ Work & Income

## ▣ Health & Addiction

## ▣ Personal development

## ▣ Accommodation

## ▣ Education

## ▣ Criminal justice

- ▣ 1. Sanctions / detention
- ▣ 2. Risk of being caught
- ▣ 3. Victim Confrontation
- ▣ 4. Probation

# HORIZONTAL / THEMATIC SEARCH: LIFE EVENTS

## Relationships

- 1. Domestic violence
- 2. Family substance abuse
- 3. Criminal family
- 4. 'W...

- 5. "My childhood"
- 6. "Delinquency"
- 7. "Death of my brother + Cheating girlfriend"
- 8. "My little daughter"
- 9. ...
- 10. ...
- 11. Family support

## Work & Income

### Victimisation

### Development

### ...on

### Justice

- 1. Sanctions / detention
- 2. Risk of being caught
- 3. Victim Confrontation
- 4. Probation

**Remko's chapters:**

"My childhood"

"Delinquency"

"Death of my brother + Cheating girlfriend"

"My little daughter"

# VERTICAL ANALYSIS / CONSTRUCTION SEARCH

- Accountability: openness / moral / restorative perspective around negative events
- Agency: strength / autonomy perspective
- Generativity: future social / inheritance perspective
- Narrative strategy: course / systemic perspective
  - Contamination sequence
  - Redemption sequence
- Based on McAdams, Maruna

# HORIZONTAL + VERTICAL: STORYLINES WITHIN THEMES

	Accountability	Agency	Generativity	Narrative strategy
Relationships				
Work & Income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>causes / blame for adversity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>perceived control</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>concern and commitment for others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>consistency</li> </ul>
Health & addiction				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>coherence</li> </ul>
Personal development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>responsibility, action</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>contamination or redemption</li> </ul>
Accommodation				
Criminal justice				

**Tabel B. Invloedrijke gebeurtenissen desisters, categorie 'relaties'**

Invloedrijke gebeurtenissen die bijdragen aan criminaliteit			
Volledige lijst	Subcategoriën	Betekenisgeving per subcategorie	Code
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mishandeld door vader (1, 8)</li> <li>- Slaan vriendin moeder (1)</li> <li>- Afglijden familielid (1, 2, 3)</li> <li>- Gebruikende broer (2)</li> <li>- Criminele vader (2, 3)</li> <li>- In op aanbod baan criminele ondernemer (4)</li> <li>- Vermijden vader leidt tot contact verkeerde vrienden (4)</li> <li>- Door ziekte contact verkeerde vriend (4)</li> <li>- Door drugsgebruik in contact 'foute figuren' (4)</li> <li>- Vergelding vermoedelijke inbreker (4, 8)</li> <li>- Loyaal aan criminele kennis (4)</li> <li>- Emigratie beste vriend (5)</li> <li>- Broertje doodgereden (6)</li> <li>- Negatieve gebeurtenissen in huiselijke kring (7)</li> <li>- Probleem huisvesting door relatiebreuk (7)</li> <li>- Zoekt vrijheid in huwelijk (7)</li> <li>- Scheiding (7)</li> <li>- Uit het bedrijf gezet (8)</li> <li>- Scheiding ouders (8)</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Huiselijk geweld</li> <li>2. Gebruikende gezinsleden</li> <li>3. Criminele gezinsleden</li> <li>4. Verkeerde contacten</li> <li>5. Vertrek dierbaren</li> <li>6. Verlies dierbaren</li> <li>7. Relatieproblemen</li> <li>8. Familieruzies</li> </ol>	<p><b>1.</b> A. Huiselijk geweld is mij overkomen, zelf had ik er betrekkelijk weinig invloed op. Het heeft me getekend voor de rest van mijn leven. Ik heb het nog niet goed verwerkt en het verklaart voor een groot deel waarom ik ben afgegleden.          B. Ik ben op twaalfjarige leeftijd weggelopen bij mijn moeder om bij mijn vader te gaan wonen. Mijn moeder heeft me slecht behandeld. Ik had veel ruzie met haar en werd geslagen door haar vriendin. Die vriendin heb ik uiteindelijk wel teruggeslagen. Zelfs toen kon die vrouw het niet van mij winnen.</p> <p><b>1/2/3.</b> Een lid uit ons gezin gebruikte en dwaalde door het middelengebruik ernstig af. Ik heb geprobeerd te helpen. Zijn gedrag lag mede ten grondslag aan het delict dat ik heb gepleegd. Mijn daad is verschrikkelijk, maar hij heeft er zelf aan bijgedragen. Nu was ik de pleger, maar het had evengoed iemand anders kunnen zijn.</p> <p><b>2.</b> A. Een lid uit ons gezin gebruikte. Via hem ben ik voor de eerste keer in aanraking gekomen met drugs. Het vormde een belangrijke opstap naar mijn eigen drugsgebruik. Gebruik waarmee ik wil stoppen.          B. Een lid uit ons gezin gebruikte. Via hem ben ik voor de eerste keer in aanraking gekomen met drugs. Het vormde een belangrijke opstap naar mijn eigen gebruik. Ik weet nog niet of ik volledig wil stoppen met het gebruik.</p> <p><b>2/3</b> Een lid uit ons gezin gebruikte en verhandelde drugs. Dit vereenvoudigde voor mij het gebruik en het dealen. Dealers kom je overal tegen.</p> <p><b>4.</b> A. Door een positieve ontwikkelingen in mijn leven die ik grotendeels zelf heb afgedwongen, ben ik in contact gekomen met mensen die de drempel naar criminaliteit hebben verlaagd. Criminaliteit zorgde voor extra inkomsten. Door de aard van de criminaliteit heb ik daar geen grote problemen mee. Anderen gedragen zich vaak veel slechter.          B. Ik ben door een vervelende situatie in contact gekomen met verkeerde mensen. Dit verlaagde de stap naar criminaliteit, het had op dat moment een praktisch nut.          C. Ik ben door een vervelende situatie in contact gekomen met een verkeerd persoon. Ik kon weinig aan de situatie doen, maar achteraf gezien had ik er anders mee moeten omgaan. De persoon die ik leerde kennen moedigde het plegen van het delict aan. Het was nooit de bedoeling.          D. Ik ben door een vervelende situatie, die ik voor een deel over mezelf heb afgeroepen, in contact gekomen met verkeerde mensen. Je gaat dan mee in het gedrag van anderen, maar mijn bijdrage aan het delict was minimaal.          E. Ik ben door een vervelende situatie in contact gekomen met verkeerde mensen. Ik heb een delict met ze gepleegd omdat het voordelen voor me had. Ze hebben mij bedrogen. Een onschuldig persoon is slachtoffer geworden, dat was nooit de bedoeling.          F. Ik heb een criminele kennis een dienst bewezen en ben mede daardoor in detentie geraakt. Het was iets kleins, waar anderen te veel van hebben gemaakt.</p> <p><b>5.</b> Een dierbare emigreerde in een voor mij moeilijke periode. Ik heb zijn vertrek als erg vervelend ervaren. Ik voelde mij achtergelaten. Hoewel ik zijn vertrek daar niet gelijk aan relateer, heb ik in deze periode uiteindelijk mijn delict gepleegd.</p> <p><b>6.</b> Een dierbare overleed door de schuld van een ander. Het was een gebeurtenis die de haat op mijn omgeving en de onvrede met mijn eigen positie verder versterkte. Ik ben zelf verhaal gaan halen, want justitie deed niets. Het was illustratief voor het fenomeen waar ik mijn hele mijn leven mee heb geworsteld. Het systeem is tegen mensen zoals ik.</p> <p><b>7.</b> A. Ik kreeg, voor een klein deel door mijn eigen gedrag, problemen met mijn toenmalige vrouw en haar familie. Ze hebben mij het leven zuur gemaakt. Die mensen zijn voor mij niets waard. Ik heb ten onrechte veel verloren en verschrikkelijk veel moeite moeten doen om mijn zoon te kunnen blijven zien. Mijn detentie is naast loyaliteit aan criminele contacten, vooral door hen. Het Nederlandse systeem keerde zich weer tegen mij. Het is een belangrijke periode in mijn leven.          B. De relatie ging over en ik verliet het huis. Permanente huisvesting had ik weer niet meer.</p>	<p><b>1A.</b> VE5, AG1-</p> <p><b>1B.</b> RE1, AG3</p> <p><b>1/2/3.</b> VE4</p> <p><b>2A.</b> VE6</p> <p><b>2B.</b> RE2</p> <p><b>2/3</b> RE2, RA2</p> <p><b>4A.</b> AG3, RE2, RE3</p> <p><b>4B.</b> VE6</p> <p><b>4C.</b> VE6, VE7, AG3-</p> <p><b>4D.</b> SB2, VE6, VE7</p> <p><b>4E.</b> SB5, VE6</p> <p><b>4F.</b> RE2, VE3</p> <p><b>5.</b> GE4, NS2</p> <p><b>6.</b> RE1, RE3, GE1, AG1-, NS2</p> <p><b>7A.</b> SB2, VE3, VE8, GE2, AG1-</p> <p><b>7B.</b> VE6, AG3-</p>

## Accountability:

- causes/blame for adversity
- responsibility, action

## Agency:

- perceived control

## Generativity:

- concern and commitment for others

## Narrative strategy:

- coherence
- contamination or redemption

# TWO TYPES OF STORIES

- **8 DESISTING AND 5 PERSISTING STORIES (4 lost):**
  - Strong desire not to reoffend
  - Assertive action
  - Reoffending before second interview
  
- **SNAPSHOT:**
  - Insiders view
  - Not completely different:
    - *... informants in the two groups conformed or at far more than they differed*
    - *... all of the active sample members will almost surely go straight themselves in the near future. They are simply taking longer to do so. (Maruna 1998, p. 49)*

# PERSISTING STORIES

Offender	
Roger	
Remco	
Kees	
Michael	
Chantal	

**"(...) if I can prevent it, I will, but most of the time you cannot prevent quarrels. I you get into a quarrel with me, you won't even make it to the door."**

# PERSISTING STORIES

Offender	Key
Roger	A
Remco	(C
Kees	P
Michael	T
Chantal	a

"It can go either way, you know. (...) I'm going to try, to do well, but the city government should also be a bit cooperative. Because I will leave prison with a garbage bag and only twelve euros in my pocket. "

# PERSISTING STORIES

Offender	Key theme
Roger	An
Remco	(C
Kees	Pa
Michael	Tr
Chantal	

"Will I be strong enough not to let all those people in my house again?  
I must surely try, for a while. I hope I will be strong enough, but I do not know. "

# DESISTING STORIES

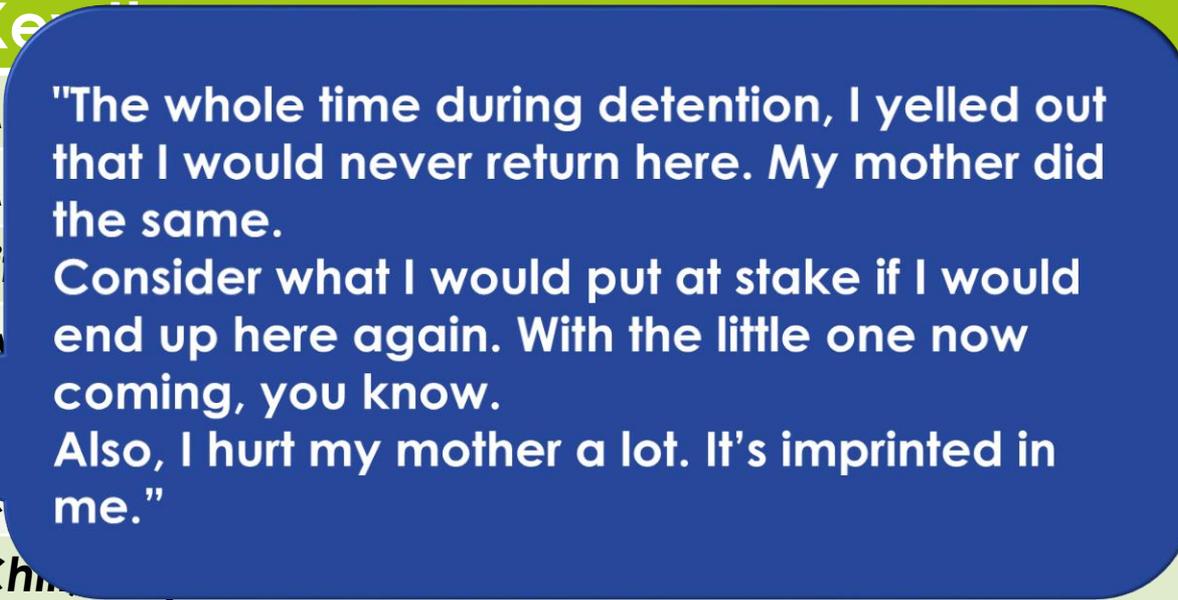
Offender	Key theme
FARHID	<i>A negative youth harmed my personality</i>
HARRY	<i>Abused by my father</i>
ABDEL	<i>Life is a struggle. Life worked against me</i>
KEVIN	<i>Everything is possible, everything is allowed</i>
WIM	<i>Have fun. I don't need you to tell me what to do</i>
NICK	<i>Capricious living situation</i>
CORNÉ	<i>Chill, stay relaxed. Not too much stress</i>
AHMED	<i>Survival, nobody will give you anything.</i>

# DESISTING STORIES

Offender	
FARHID	<p>"I went with [my wife] to the supermarket, and this guy I used to know walks out [saying]: 'What, you dirty filthy motherf * er ...' (...)</p> <p>He hits me full on my jaw, so hard that he probably thought I would go down. But yeah, I can still have a lot, I've done a lot of martial arts.</p> <p>So I stopped and I just pulled my wife back. 'No' I said, 'come'."</p>
HARRY	
ABDEL	
KEVIN	
WIM	
NICK	
CORNÉ	<i>Chill, stay relaxed. Not too much stress</i>
AHMED	<i>Survival, nobody will give you anything.</i>

# DESISTING STORIES

Offender	Key Message
FARHID	A
HARRY	A
ABDEL	Li
KEVIN	E
WIM	
NICK	C
CORNÉ	Ch
AHMED	<i>Survival, nobody will give you anything.</i>



"The whole time during detention, I yelled out that I would never return here. My mother did the same. Consider what I would put at stake if I would end up here again. With the little one now coming, you know. Also, I hurt my mother a lot. It's imprinted in me."

# DESISTING STORIES

Offender	Key theme
FARHID	A n
HARRY	Ab
ABDEL	Life
KEVIN	Eve
WIM	H
NICK	
CORNÉ	Chi
AHMED	<i>Survival, nobody will give you anything.</i>

"Crime .... I say, enough is enough".

# RELATIONSHIPS

- Major problems in both groups, no exceptions
  - Childhood: physical and psychological abuse, repeated abandonment.
  - Persisters: committed & greater impact on criminal behavior.
- Accountability
  - Hardly any responsibility
- Generativity and responsibility
  - Desisters: strong sense of responsibility
  - Persisters: support for their behavior
- Narrative strategies
  - Desisters: more detailed
  - Persisters: error

***Family member desister:***  
**“After his parents separated, he lived with his father. His mother threatened to burn all family pictures. That was a very damaging experience for him”.**

# RELATIONSHIPS

- Major problems in both groups, no exceptions
  - Childhood: physical and psychological abuse, repeated abandonment.
  - Persisters: continuation & greater impact on criminal behavior.
- Accountability
  - Hardly any
- Generativity and
  - Desisters: stronger
  - Persisters: support
- Narrative strategy
  - Desisters: more c
  - Persisters: erratic,

***Family member persister:***  
**“He was at war with his sister to such an extent that he actually took a knife with him to their father’s funeral.”**

# RELATIONSHIPS

- Major problems in both groups, no exceptions
  - Childhood: physical and psychological abuse, repeated abandonment.
  - Persisters: continuation & greater impact on criminal behavior.
- Accountability
  - Hardly any
- Generativity and...
  - Desisters: stronger
  - Persisters: support
- Narrative strategy
  - Desisters: more coherent
  - Persisters: erratic, u

***Family member desister:***  
“As a young boy, after being abandoned, he was constantly asking everyone who was a little bit nice to him “will you be my dad?”

# RELATIONSHIPS: FAMILY FINDINGS

- Desisters:
  - explicit expectations
  - stick to goals and responsibilities → accountability
  - full family member
  
- Persisters:
  - hope given up / limited expectations
  - resolving issues difficult / impossible
  - not full family members
  - outside-family attempts stumble
  - *not knowing how to quit*

# RELATIONSHIPS: FAMILY FINDINGS

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  - outside-family atten
  - *not knowing how to quit*

**Family member: "I won't let him, a man like him, live in our house. It won't work. You can't trust him, and I will start missing things in the house again. We cannot afford that"**

# WORK & INCOME

- All stories: unemployment and financial deficits never have positive effects and are directly related to criminal history (**contamination**).
- Desisters + family + profess. help:
  - successfully getting and keeping jobs (**agency**).
- Persisters:
  - lost hope, negative about professional help
  - 'emergency' aid
- Emerging: **bonding / social capital and a focus on solution / closure**

# WORK & INCOME

- All stories: unem... positive effects (contamination)
- Desisters:
  - successfully g...
- Persisters:
  - lost hope, r...
  - 'emergency'...
- Emerging: **bono**  
**closure**

*Well, there's no future in crime. All these police contacts.... you'd better start working. These 2 buddies I knew, they went on with it. I quit seeing them, completely.*

*'Look here. With my prison history... you see a boss welcoming me? And sticking labels to boxes and remove them again? I don't call that work. Come on!'*

# HEALTH & ADDICTION

- Frequent drug use, directly or indirectly associated with crime.
- Desisters:
  - drugs for entertainment (agency)
  - family expects change
- Persisters:
  - drugs as coping
    - less connection, less focus
    - agency` / difficult to change
    - family loses hope
  - mental health problems and crime only reported with addiction problems and severe childhood problems

# PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Desisting stories:
  - maturation of mood and emotion management
  - in conjunction with talking about offences
  - important example of accountability

# PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Desisting stories:
  - maturation of mood and emotion management
  - in conjunction with talking about offences
  - im

**Desister: "I know who you are. And because of that, I know who I am, you see? If you just look around and observe everything, lessons will come out of that. About what's good, and what's not good. Out of that you can keep something that is helpful. Well, that's where I am now."**

# ACCOMMODATION

- Key issue in many stories
- Desisters:
  - bonding & focus → success
- Persisters:
  - family support stops
  - complaints about professional support

# ACCOMMODATION

- Key issue in many stories
- Desisters:
  - bond... & focus → success
- Persis...
  - fo...
  - co...

**Desister: "My first priority will be a house. I haven't had that since 2007. Never had my own place since then. That's priority no.1. I will very much pressure probation to achieve this."**

# EDUCATION

- Small stimulating and preventing effects on crime reported in both types of stories (agency).
- Already marginal social position at school, not repaired

# CRIMINAL JUSTICE

- Risk of being caught has deterrent effect for some desisters
  - (agency **paradox**, primary desistance, stepping stone).
- Detention: cumbersome and heavy for desisters and persisters.
- Only desisters (+ family) also mention positive effects of imprisonment (**redemption** sequences)
- Family: no (correct) information
- Persisters: prison as school of crime (negative **agency**)

# CRIMINAL JUSTICE

- Risk of being desisters

- (age)

- Detention: persisters.

- Only desist imprisonment

- Family: no

- Persisters: prison as school of crime (negative agency)

**"You sit here with ten boys, and eight or nine of them lose their wife or girlfriend. Really, that happens a lot. (...) These women fool around, mess with other guys, sometimes your best friend, and then you find out. Such things kill you, they really do. Happens a lot here. Very tough. (...)**

# CRIMINAL JUSTICE

- Risk of being desisters
  - (agency)
- Detention: persisters.
- Only desister imprisoned
- Family: no
- Persisters: pr

**"From the moment I arrived here I felt better in my head, I must say. That may sound crazy, but I'm happier now in my mind and in those two years before [Interviewer: How come?] It was a moment that I had to be awakened, to start thinking."**

# CRIMINAL JUSTICE

- Risk of being caught has deterrent effect for some desisters
  - (agency police)
- Detention: curbs persisters.
- Only desisters benefit from imprisonment
- Family: no support
- Persisters: prison

**Persister: "Everybody talks about crime all day, so you hear a lot. And when you come out you just know exactly what to do to make money. (...) And that's the only option I had. "**

# FOCUS ON PROBATION

- unclear role in stories (not part of a coherent whole)
- not a dominant factor for desistance
  - function unclear
  - strict and impersonal
  - no family contact
- emerging: probation needs to clarify itself more clearly as much more than a controlling service

# DIVERGING LIFE STORIES

		Persisting				Desisting			
<u>Accountability</u> <u>Generativity</u>	<u>Agency</u> <u>Narrative Strategy</u>	Ac	Ag	Ge	Na	Ac	Ag	Ge	Na
<b>Relationships</b>		●		●	●	●	●	●	●
<b>Work &amp; Income</b>		●	●	●		●	●	●	
<b>Health &amp; Addiction</b>		●			●	●	●		●
<b>Personal development</b>						●			
<b>Accommodation</b>		●	●			●	●		
<b>Education</b>							●		
<b>Criminal justice</b>		●	●			● ●	● ●	●	●

# STORYLINES TOWARDS DESISTANCE

**persisting**

**desisting**

“painful but growing connectedness and power for focused closure”

## ACCOUNTABILITY

Justification  
+ freedom of total loss

**Justification**  
+ solution focus

Confession  
(maturation)

## AGENCY

Powerlessness  
+ lost hope

Future orientation +  
Recognition & (prof.) support

Empowered

## GENERATIVITY

Open wounds + scattered /  
limitless behavior

Mutual attachment,  
focus and closure

Care for (future)  
others

## NARRATIVE STRATEGY

Contamination

**Contamination**  
+ Redemption

**Contamination**  
+ Redemption

# STORYLINES TOWARDS DESISTANCE

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## NARRATIVE STRATEGY

Contamination

**Contamination**  
+ Redemption

**Contamination**  
+ Redemption

**SLOW DOWN**

# RECOMMENDATIONS

- Early prevention
- Criminal justice / supervision
- Families

# EARLY PREVENTION

- Strengthen law diversion / promote citizenship
  - Make strong efforts to keep juveniles out of justice
- Prevent marginalization of young offenders in school
- Align juvenile probation with combating domestic violence

# PROBATION (+ OTHER PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT)

- Consistently ask about domestic violence
- Support offenders to break contact with negative / anti-social friends and acquaintances
- Support both starting offenders and persisters with
  - restoring their life story into a coherent whole
  - focus on (resolution of) problems within the context they arose
- Caution with a hasty solution focused approach / rushing to the future
  - Future? Persisters are confused about the **past & present**
  - Desisters: domestic violence, and substance abuse in the family of origin.

# FAMILY

- Involve family members much more
  - during detention
  - foremost in preparation of the re-entry process
  - after re-entry
- At least, give information
- At best, make relapse prevention plans together

# INTERACTIVE PART

- We all once took a successful decision to change
- Reflect for a minute and choose one 'chapter'
- Interview each other for 5-10 minutes
- Chapter title or key message. Why?
- How was this change related to your
  - **SKILLS** and/or your **MATURITY** ?
  - certain **PEOPLE, OPPORTUNITIES** and/or **CONTEXTS** ?
  - **MOTIVATION** ?
  - **IDENTITY: A 'NEW ME'** ?

# VI. DISCUSSION / QUESTIONS

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