

The blurring of boundaries between penal voluntary organizations and the Correctional Services

– Lived experiences of desistance support during resettlement



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Troublemakers, firefighters and safe havens

Lived experiences of staff support for
desistance during resettlement

[Troublemakers, firefighters and safe havens \(usn.no\)](https://www.usn.no/en/research/publications/2023/01/01/troublemakers-firefighters-and-safe-havens)



Leaving prison ...

... and leaving it behind



Why would this be of any interest?

1. Because of the recent changes in the Norwegian penal context, such as:
 - The challenging conditions for staff support
 - The greater responsibility taken by the voluntary sector

Why would this be of any interest?

2. My research has shown that:

- Staff and formerly imprisoned persons experience common ideals for desistance support
- Only the NGO's appeared to practise close to, and sometimes even in line with, the ideal

Why would this be of any interest?

3. This raises the questions of:

- What consequences this might have
- Who should 'own' resettlement

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Resettlement in the
Norwegian context

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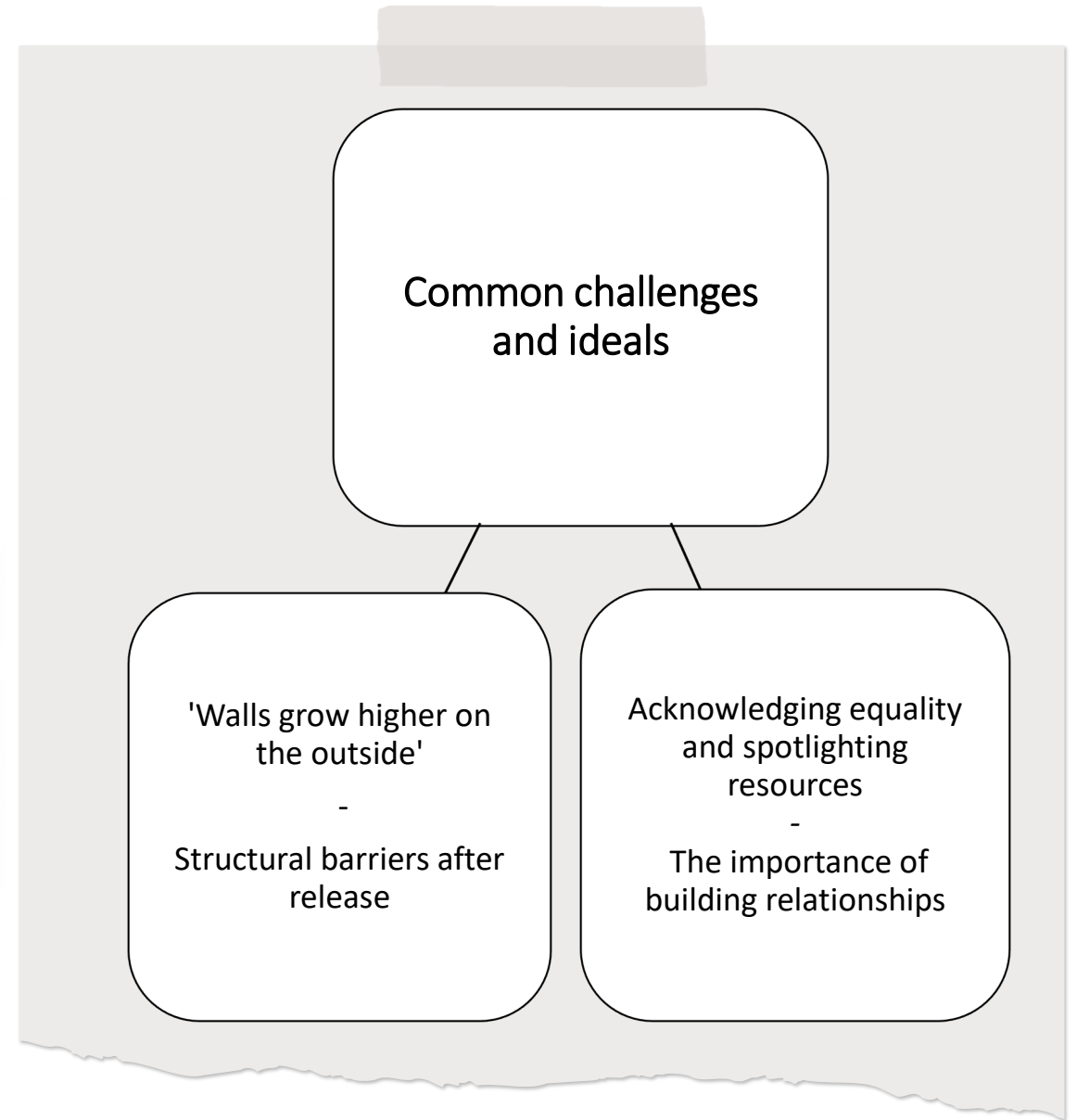
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Material and participants

19 individual interviews with 13 resettling persons
5 focus group interviews with staff from
probation offices and voluntary organizations

WayBack, a non-profit foundation *for* and *with*
people with lived experience of resettlement,
contributed throughout the project







Common challenges

'Walls grow higher on
the outside'

-

Structural barriers after release

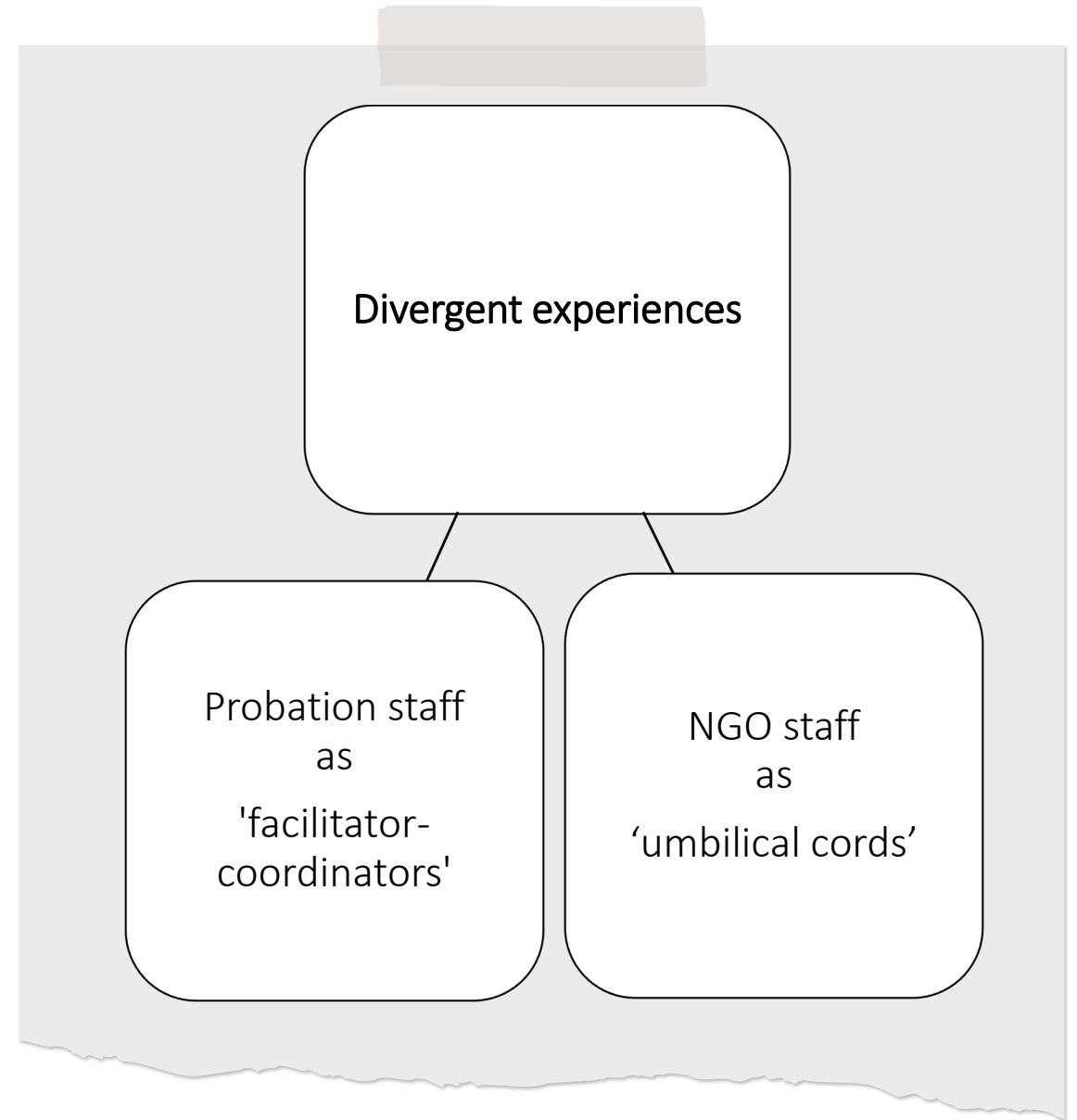


Common ideals

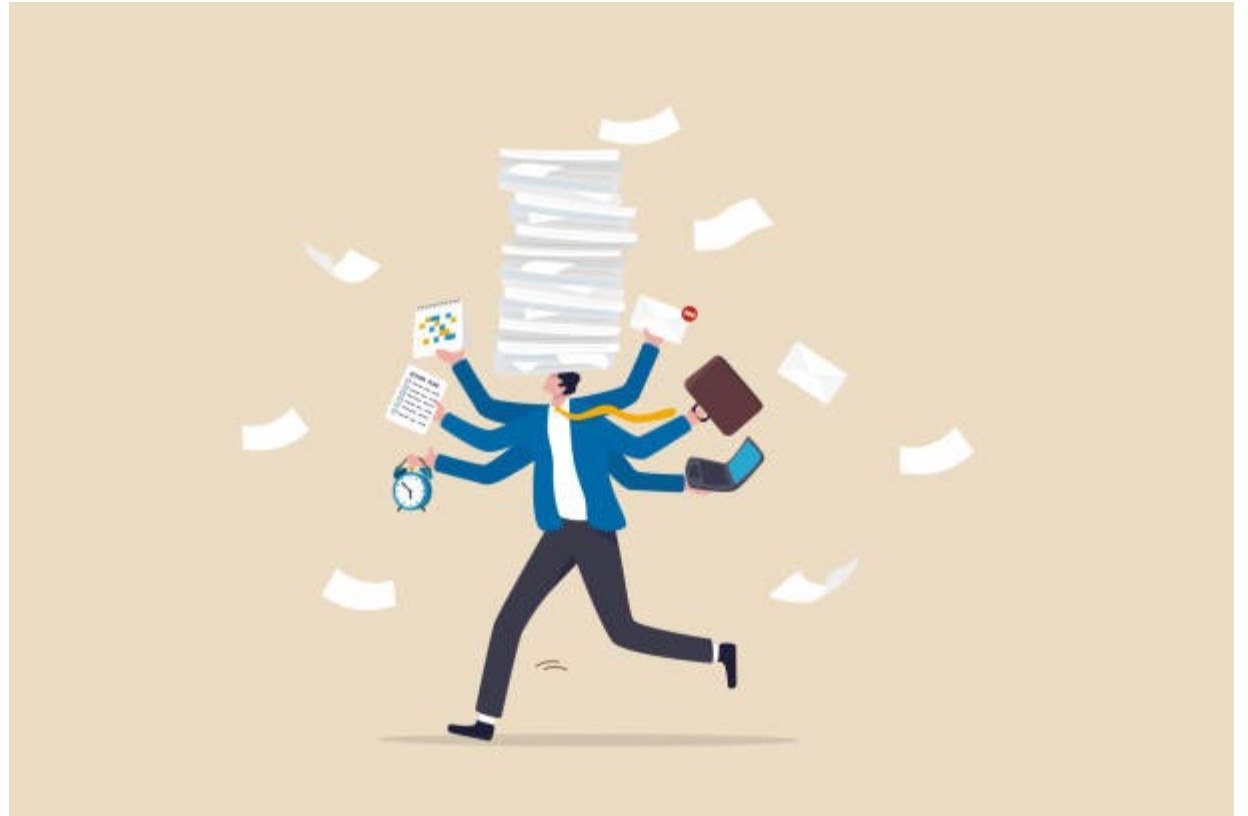
Acknowledging equality and
spotlighting resources

-

The importance of building
relationships



Probation staff
as
'facilitator-coordinators'



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NGO staff
as
'umbilical cords'



Buymeacoffee.com



Anwar's story

Anwar is in his early forties.
He served his first prison sentence
of almost 10 years
for drug-related offences.

He was interviewed
ten days after release,
as he was serving the last part
of his sentence at home.

Probation staff
as
'safe havens'



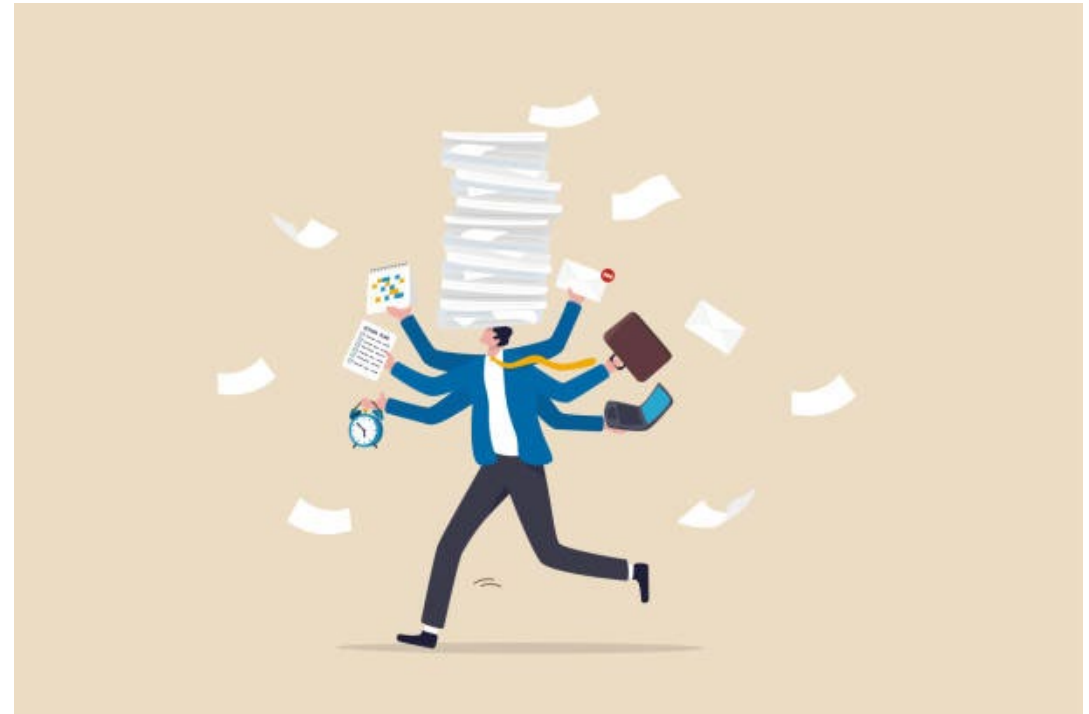
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Consequences

The frustration of probation staff,
of knowing what the ideal is,
and at the same time experiencing
to move away from working in line with it



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Consequences

Some participants considered it odd and absurd that the assistance from voluntary organizations was not provided by the Correctional Services





‘Take home reflection’

1.

Who should meet people
at the gate?



‘Take home reflection’

2.
Who ‘owns’
resettlement?

Maruna (2006)



Civil society's role
in welcoming its returning
citizens

Based on statistics of those transferred from prison to the community in 2021, post-prison measures by the probation service only applied to 24%

76% walked through the gate without probation follow-up

Koffeld-Hamidane (2023: 17)





Blurred responsibilities
of the state