

Co-producing Desistance

Beth Weaver

Aims

- Key points: desistance research
- Co-producing desistance
 - With individuals
 - With families
 - With groups
 - With communities

What is desistance?

- Stopping offending and keeping it up.
- Ontogenic: Age and maturation: growing out of crime
- Sociogenic: Investment in social relationships, impact of turning points / key events: work and family.
- Narrative: Subjective, internal shifts in identity, motivation, empathic concern.
- Integrative: Interrelationships between all three for individual & interaction with other concerns (Weaver and McNeill 2007; McNeill and Weaver 2010).

Dynamics of Desistance #1

- Motivation and hope are critical in the early stages (LeBel et al 2008).
- Acquiring sense of control / choice over one's life.
- Relational & social contexts critical to user engagement and desistance supportive practices (Weaver 2011; 2012).
- Development of social capital – different kinds of relationships between people are a key concern.
- Generative activities facilitate identity shifts, offset stigma, promote self worth (Maruna 2001; Maruna and LeBel 2009; McNeill and Maruna 2008) (for an overview also see McNeill et al 2012)

Dynamics of Desistance #2

(for an overview see Weaver and McNeill 2010)

- **Triggers**
 - Openness to change: negative events/experiences, advancing maturity, new relationships / roles.
- **Maintenance**
 - Characterised by increased agency, shift in attitudes, values & beliefs; sustained by new social and economic opportunities: family and work: embed change, realise / consolidate identities
- **Motivations and Supports**
 - Stability, belonging, recognition, health, well-being, being listened to and heard, opportunities for social participation (Barry 2006, 2007).

So what can we do about it?

- Collaborative practice: service users, informal/social networks, professional services & communities.
- Co-production
- Different forms and levels of involvement in different aspects of service design, development, delivery & evaluation.
- Continuum / typology: individual, group and collective forms.
- Beyond agency-led interventions with individuals → interaction with users, families, volunteers and communities.
- (See Weaver 2011, Weaver and McCulloch 2012)

Individual co-production

(see McNeill and Weaver 2010)

- Collaborative approach to support individual pathways to desistance.
- Approach: active and participatory, mutually respectful, transparent.
- Placing individual at centre of change process – not programmes / procedures.
- Personalised assessments (narratives) and holistic but tailored packages of support.

Working with families

- Eco-maps / social network analyses.
- Parenting classes
- Recognition of caring responsibilities.
- Problem-solving family work.
- Mutual aid groups
- Resource mapping

(See for example Shapiro and DiZerega 2010; Trotter 2010)

Group co-production

- Currently – for delivery of cognitive behavioural correctional programmes.
- Group co-production: groups of service users shape / provide services.
- Desistance focussed: strengths based, collaborative, development of social capital and new social networks, opportunities for generative engagement.
- Activism / advocacy → helping, mutual aid
 - Prison councils / user led consultation fora → mutual aid groups, mutual aid based group work.
(see for example Weaver and McCulloch 2012)

Collective Co-production: communities

- Community engagement, development and community social work approaches:
 - multi-agency innovations i.e. community justice centres, one-stop-shop.
- Community navigators:
 - identifying and facilitating access to and aligning available community resources;
 - cultivating new partnerships, and promoting collaboration between individuals, organisations and communities
- Community Resource Mapping

Cooperatives and mutuals

(Weaver and Nicholson 2012)

- Multi-stakeholder co-ownership
- Provide and create employment and support for their members both in prison and in the community.
- The professional facilitates the promotion, development, and success of each social cooperative
- Contribute to pro-social identity, self-esteem, self-efficacy; provide a sense of purpose, promote active citizenship and generate social capital.

Concluding comments

- Task: promote social participation, capitalise on strengths, build capacities, recognise lived realities, offer meaningful and sustainable opportunities to live differently.
- Beyond simply reducing re-offending and extant service provisions to good lives and collaborative, innovative practices.

References

- Barry, M. (2006) *Youth Offending in Transition: The Search for Social Recognition*, Abingdon: Routledge.
- Barry, M (2007) Youth Offending and Youth Transitions: The Power of Capital in Influencing Change. *Critical Criminology* 15 (2)185-98
- LeBel, T.P., Burnett, R., Maruna, S. and Bushway, S. (2008) 'The "Chicken and Egg" of Subjective and Social Factors in Desistance From Crime'. *European Journal of Criminology* 5 (2) 131–59.
- McNeill, F., and Maruna, S. (2008) 'Giving Up and Giving Back: Desistance, Generativity and Social Work with Offenders. In: G. Mclvor and P. Raynor (eds) *Developments in Social Work with Offenders. Series: Research highlights in social work* (48). London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers; 224 - 339.
- McNeill F, Farrall, S., Lightowler, C., and Maruna S., (2012) *How and Why People Stop Offending: Discovering Desistance*. Published online at: <http://www.iriss.org.uk/resources/how-and-why-people-stop-offending-discovering-desistance>

References

- McNeill, F., and Weaver, B., (2010) Changing Lives? Desistance Research and Offender Management. Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research Report No. 3/2010 available online at: http://www.sccjr.ac.uk/documents/Report%202010_03%20%20Changing%20Lives.pdf
- Maruna S (2001) Making Good: How Ex-Convicts Reform and Rebuild their Lives American Psychological Association Books, Washington DC.
- Maruna S., and LeBel, T.P (2009) Strengths-based approaches to reentry: Extra mileage toward reintegration and destigmatization. Japanese Journal of Sociological Criminology 34, 58-80
- Shapiro C and DiZerega M (2010) 'It's Relational: Integrating Families into Community Corrections' in McNeill, F., Raynor, P., and Trotter, C (2010) *Offender Supervision: New Directions in Theory, Research and Practice* Willan Publishing.

References

- Trotter, C (2010) 'Working with Families in Criminal Justice' in McNeill, F., Raynor, P., and Trotter, C (2010) *Offender Supervision: New Directions in Theory, Research and Practice* Willan Publishing.
- Weaver, B (2011) Co-producing Community Justice: The Transformative Potential of Personalisation for Penal Sanctions. *British Journal of Social Work* 41 (6) 1038-57.
- Weaver, B (2012) The Relational Context of Desistance: Some Implications and Opportunities for Social Policy. *Social Policy and Administration* 46 (4). 395-412
- Weaver, B and McCulloch T (2012) *Co-producing Criminal Justice: Executive Summary* published online at http://www.sccjr.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Co-producing_Criminal_Justice.pdf
- Weaver B and McNeill F (2007) *Giving Up Crime: Directions for Policy*. SCCCJ available online at http://www.esrc.ac.uk/images/Giving_Up_Crime_tcm8-2569.pdf

References

- Weaver B and McNeill F (2010) Travelling hopefully: desistance research and probation practice. In: Brayford, Jo, Cowe, Francis and Deering, John (eds.) *What Else Works?: Creative Work with Offenders*. Willan, Cullompton
- Weaver, B and Nicholson B (2012) Co-producing Change: Resettlement as a Mutual Enterprise *Prison Service Journal* no. 204 available online at http://www.crimeandjustice.org.uk/opus1972/PSJ_November_2012_No._204.pdf



University of
Strathclyde
Glasgow