

19th Council of Europe Conference of Directors of Prison and Probation Services

**RNR. Desistance. Who Works. Inclusion.
The need for further integration**

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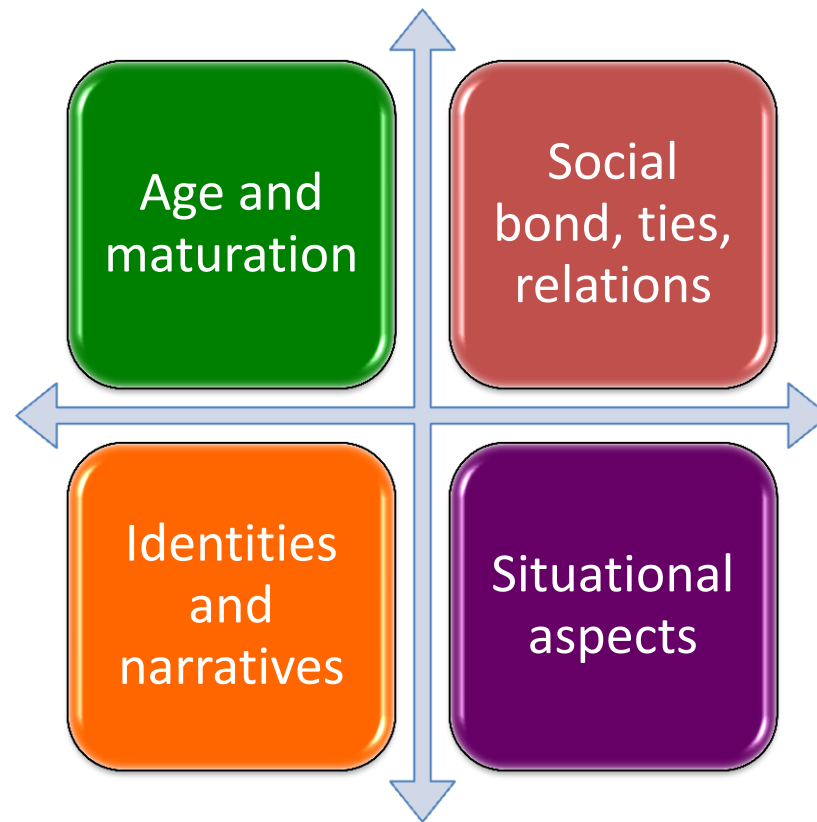
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What do we know about why people stop offending?

1. Risk/Need/Responsivity Paradigm

- the importance of the principles of risk, need and responsivity
- responsivity – cognitive-behavioral interventions (e.g. role play, learning by doing etc.)
- the application of all three principles – reduction in recidivism by 26-30%

- Desistance



But ...

- These paradigms speaks mainly about the content of interventions.
- What about:
 - the way of delivery (implementation gap?),
 - the organizational context of delivery (the organizational environment),
 - the social context of the offender
 - the legal context of reintegration

3. Who Works?

- The importance of staff skills and characteristics
- Pro-social modeling and reinforcement
- Problem solving and role clarification
- Core-correctional practices: effective use of authority; anti-criminal modeling and reinforcement; problem solving; use of community resources and quality of interpersonal relationship between staff and client
- PO with higher levels on the skills scale – significant improvements in the LSI-R
- The right balance between counselling and controlling skills - the '**synthetic officer**' – caring and fair relationship but also concerned with control and limit setting – the balance between 'law enforcer' and 'the therapeutic agent'.

4. The **organizational environment**

- Prisons and probation organizations often severely under-budgeted and over-crowded.
- The volume and the quality of the rehabilitation interventions have to suffer – prisoners as ‘waste management’ or ‘people processing’.
- PO working in **large probation agencies** and **supervise large caseloads** – emphasize punitive supervision strategies
- PO experiencing **positive staff perceptions** of leadership, greater integration with service providers and with lower level of cynicism for change – more inclined towards rehabilitation strategies
- PO with greater **levels of satisfaction and commitment** more likely to have positive attitudes and behaviors on the job – positive views of rehabilitation as a strategy.

5. The **social context** of the offender

- Especially for ex-prisoners
- Availability of employment:
 - especially for those over 26
 - strong link between training and real job opportunities – the mismatch has negative impact
- The quality of the neighborhood
 - The presence of more social services within two miles led to lower recidivism
 - If return in severely disadvantaged areas – recidivism – avoid concentration of disadvantages
- The importance of the family
- Access to services such as: health services, drug addiction, housing etc.

6. The **legal context** of reintegration

- Important to have a legislation that places CSM as real alternatives to imprisonment
- The legislation facilitates the reintegration and 'new identities' and not create barriers – see the criminal conviction certificate
- That deals in a wise and flexible way with breaches – back door sentencing

Towards a 'new orthodoxy'

- Based on principles such as:
 - Individualization
 - Empowerment
 - 'Whole person approach' – not just 'offender'
 - Interventions based on RNR but include also practical help and access to opportunities
 - Well trained and 'positive' staff
 - Interventions should be supported by real investments and strong learning and positive organizations
 - Inter-agency partnership combined with community development – avoid areas of deprivation
 - Inclusive legislation – for both sanctioning and reintegration segments

- Most of these principles are based on a collection of short essays commissioned by CEP – **‘Probation Works’** – 10 essential questions
 - Edited by Rene Butter, Fergus McNeill and Ioan Durnescu
 - Various authors: Rob Canton, George Mair, Faye Taxman etc.
 - Soon at: <http://www.cep-probation.org/news/254/1135/probation-works--state-of-art-knowledge-on-probation>
 - Soon a book.

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Thank you!!

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