

Preventing or repairing the rupture: A restorative justice approach to individual radicalisation

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Abstract

A theoretical reflection about the possible contribution of restorative justice in broader individual de-radicalization initiatives has been conducted. It is believed that RJ can offer something special, with due modesty, as one tool among others needed (Walgrave, 2015; Marshall, 2007). For the purposes of the present article we analyse a particular type of support circle, namely the Huikahi restorative circle (Walker, 2009; Walker, Sakai & Brady, 2006). We describe *how* some aspects of traditional peacemaking circles can be incorporated into a support circle to reentry, *inspired* in the Huikahi restorative circle and, applicable in preventive and de-radicalisation contexts. In addition, we explore the restorative power of the *wounded healer* (Maruna, 2014) in mentoring as part of preventive and de-radicalisation efforts. Finally, we analyse how these restorative tools are compatible with a Good Lives Model (GLM) approach to face individual radicalisation.

Keywords

Prevention; De-Radicalisation initiatives; Peacemaking Circles; Support Circles to reentry; Mentoring; Wounded healers

1. Introduction: Addressing individual radicalisation with a restorative justice approach

The 2016 Guidelines for prison and probation services regarding radicalisation and violent extremism from the Council of Europe defines radicalisation as the *'dynamic process whereby an individual increasingly accepts and supports violent extremism. The reasons behind this process can be ideological, political, religious, social, economic or personal'*. According to the same Guidelines *'violent extremism consists in promoting, supporting or committing acts which may lead to terrorism and which are*

aimed at defending an ideology advocating racial, national, ethnic or religious supremacy or opposing core democratic principles and values’.

In addition, according to Schmid (2013: 20, 26-27) it is relatively well-established that radicalisation is usually a gradual process that *‘appears to be similar to the one we can also see in street gangs’*. Following the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Handbook on the Management of Violent Extremist Prisoners and the Prevention of Radicalization to Violence in Prisons, *‘radicalization to violence is a process of belief and attitude change towards an extremist orientation that justifies the use of violence to achieve its goals’* (2016:70). In the same line of Schmid (2013), the UNODC states that *‘in some cases, the process may take many years; with other people, it may take only a few months.... becoming radicalized to violence is, for most people, a gradual process that requires a progression through distinct stages and happens neither quickly nor easily. A person does not become a violent extremist overnight, although the influence of an incident which may act as a “catalyst event”, such as ... a “moral crisis”.., may accelerate the process’* (UNODC, 2016:70).

Based on the premise that if an *‘individual can adopt radical beliefs and attitudes that lead to violent extremism, then that individual can also abandon the use of violence through changing those beliefs and attitudes that justify its use’* (UNODC, 2016:70), according to Horgan (2009: 153) de-radicalisation corresponds to *‘the social and psychological process whereby an individual’s commitment to, and involvement in, violent radicalization is reduced to the extent that they are no longer at risk of involvement and engagement in violent activity’*. De-radicalisation *‘involves an increase in confidence in the system, a desire to once more be a part of society and the rejection of non-democratic means.’* (Demant, Slootman, Buijs & Tillie, 2008: 13).

Some view de-radicalisation initiatives as *‘any effort aimed at preventing radicalization from taking place’* (Bjørngo & Horgan, 2009) while for others they are *‘generally directed against individuals who have become radical with the aim of integrate them into society or at least dissuading from violence’*. The last definition was adopted by the UN Counter –Terrorism Implementation Task Force (UN/CTITF). Based in an analysis of 34 countries, the UN/CTITF identified nine types of de-radicalisation programmes, from which we highlight prison programmes, education programmes and programmes promoting the alliance of civilisations and inter-cultural dialogue (UN/CTITF, 2008: 5). However, besides very general conclusions such as *‘prisoner treatment plays a crucial role’, ‘the importance of civil society involvement’,*

'the value of education' and that *'reactive measures should be situated within more proactive approaches'*, scarce detail exists regarding *'good practices'* for de-radicalisation (Chowdhury Fink & El-Said, 2011). A survey of existing de-radicalisation programmes conducted by the Institute for Strategic Dialogue, based on thirteen case studies, concluded that *'programmes are effective when they are voluntary – personal commitment is vital'*; *'it can be useful to involve former extremists in de-radicalisation and disengagement programmes because they have a deeper understanding of the challenges facing the individual and more credibility'*; *'programmes need to be tailored to the individual'*, *'projects need to address a participant's social as well as individual needs'* and finally that *'projects need to consider family and social networks too'* (Schmid,2013: 48). In this context, the present article explores the potential for the application of restorative justice's methods and tools in preventive and de-radicalisation initiatives.

As Marshall (2007: 383) explains *'(...) terror groups themselves are kinds of community association gone bad... These groups are so attractive to young men because they offer a sense of identity, power and self-respect to those who feel disempowered by their circumstances and disconnected from others.'* This proposition seems to fit well with the evidence that the radicalisation process is similar to the process of formation of street gangs (Schimid, 2013).

In these circumstances, according to Marshall (2007: 383), RJ *'offers an alternative, non-violent form of community empowerment'*. For the author RJ can give a crucial contribution for the re-humanisation of the parties, confidence building and understanding among peoples. The role of RJ in individual de-radicalisation has been also defended by the French judge Denis Salas (2015). However, flexibility of practice is important considering that face-to-face encounters with victims may not be considered appropriate in these intervention contexts¹.

Now, according to the Rome Memorandum on Good Practices for the Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Violent Extremist Offenders (2012) *'as part of the effort to counter violent extremism ... there is an increasing focus on prisons'*. Underpinning the special focus on this setting is the fact that *'most imprisoned*

¹ Nevertheless, Horgan and Braddock (2010:281) observed in the analysis of five case studies, namely, Colombia, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, Northern Ireland and Yemen, that meetings with victims in reconciliation or restorative justice initiatives were part of individual de-radicalisation programmes in these countries.

extremists will eventually be released’ and ‘in order to reduce the likelihood that these individuals will return to terrorism after their release, it is essential to find ways to help them disengage from violent activities’.

Another relatively well established conclusion in de-radicalisation literature is the particular vulnerability of prison populations to radicalisation. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) (2016:110-111), *‘imprisonment can be the environment that provides the motivation, stimulus and opportunity for embracing violent extremism. It can be driven by ... intrinsic motivation ... result of a personal crisis/trauma, experiences of discrimination and/or alienation’.* Moreover, *‘imprisonment can increase the isolation of an individual from his/her former life, encourage him/her to adopt and accept a new social identity, provide religious instruction that is based on violence, and open up opportunities for training in violent extremist activities’.* Furthermore, *‘violent extremist prisoners may seek to attribute their imprisonment or the way they are treated in prison to discriminatory policies and may interpret their situation as yet another signal that the government seeks to humiliate members of their group’.* In this context according to the UNODC (2016:111), *‘embracing a violent extremist group may thus be a way for prisoners to deal with perceived unfair or unjust treatment that comes above and beyond the deprivations caused by imprisonment, and to pursue the satisfaction of social and epistemic needs in the face of adversity’.*

As Schmid (2013:33) sums up *‘we know that people in prison are very vulnerable because many of them find themselves in some kind of existential crisis. They need comradeship and support which a gang, religious belief system or a combination of the two can provide’.* According to the Prison Management Recommendations to Counter and Address Prison Radicalization (2015), in this vulnerable context, the *‘recruiters may be able to tap into the prisoner’s anger, frustration and sense of injustice about being incarcerated’.*

Considering this particular group of risk, Walgrave (2015) suggests restorative justice processes set up in prison as a potential prevention tool to radicalisation in this particular setting. A powerful example of the potential of restorative justice processes applied in prison is the Restorative Conferencing Scheme at Magilligan Prison in Northern Ireland. *‘Many offenders explained that they had previously considered themselves victims of an unjust ... judicial system’* (Barr, 2013: 406). After the participation in the RJ process, Barr (2013) observed a positive improvement both in the

relationship between prison staff and the inmates and in the offenders' own perception regarding the legitimacy of their prison sentences and their quality of life in prison.

These results seem to support the pertinence of RJ processes set up in prison in the context of de-radicalisation efforts, since according to the conclusion of the Guidelines for prison and probation services regarding radicalisation and violent extremism (CoE) of 2016, *'prisoners' feelings of safety and trust in the legitimacy of staff's actions are likely to induce positive change and facilitate their rehabilitation and resettlement. Every effort shall therefore be made to preserve and build on such relations of trust in order to help offenders start or develop a crime-free life'*. Finally the same guidelines even refer that frontline staff *'should be trained in particular to use intercultural mediation ... in case of crisis management'*.

So, as we can observe from above, a first level theoretical reflection about the possible contribution of restorative justice in broader individual de-radicalization initiatives has already been developed by imminent authors of the RJ field. It is believed that RJ can offer something special, with due modesty, as one tool among others needed (Walgrave, 2015; Salas, 2015; Marshall, 2007).

But what specific RJ practices could be set up in prison or in the community as preventive and de-radicalisation tools? In this second question resides the object of the present article. We conduct a second level theoretical reflection focused on some of the possible operationalisations of Marshall's (2007) and Walgrave's (2015) proposals. In the following sections we shall explore two specific RJ tools: support circles to reentry and mentoring. We believe that these can be adapted to the specificities posed by radicalisation and have a place in de-radicalisation programmes, applied both in prison and/or community settings. *Not as a panacea, but only as some of the tools in the box.*

2. RJ tools in de-radicalisation initiatives in a nutshell

Two basic assumptions underlie the RJ tools proposed in this article as specific strategies that can have a place in de-radicalisation programs, in the context of a broader set of measures. The first aspect is the idea that restorative practices are about *'doing things with people rather than to them or for them'* (Wachtel, 2016). This is reflected in the fact that both the support circle to reentry and the mentoring activity are entirely voluntary, something identified as important in the de-radicalisation literature (Schmid, 2013: 48), since personal commitment seems to be of the essence for the success of this

type of intervention. The second aspect is that restorative dialogue is always a core concern. In restorative dialogue, *'facilitation is conducted in such a way that participants are free to communicate as fully as they wish with each other by sharing experiences, perceptions, emotions and perspectives'* (Raye & Warner Roberts, 2007: 218) and *'attention is placed on relationships ... so that offenders can (re)gain their sense of identity as people with a rightful place in the community'* (Schiff, 2007: 233). These ideas seem to fit well in de-radicalisation efforts considering that a sense of identity is one of the primary needs many times linked to the radicalisation process (Marshall, 2007; UNODC, 2016).

2.1. Support circles to reentry: Traditional peacemaking circles & Huikahi restorative circles

According to Raye and Warner Roberts (2007) the prototypical facilitated all party dialogue model is the circle. *'In this model, government officials and/ or community members join the victims, offenders and communities of care in a facilitated conversation'* (Raye & Warner Roberts, 2007: 221). For Stuart and Pranis (2006:122) *'circles ... give participants opportunities to find a way to peacefully interact, and therefore might best be called peacemaking circle'*. Ehret, Dhondt, Fellegi, & Szegö, (2013) state that the peacemaking circle is the most inclusive model of restorative justice. This type of RJ process was recently experimentally piloted in Belgian, Germany and Hungary under the framework of the European Project *Developing Peacemaking Circles in a European Context (2011-2013)* (financed by the Justice Programme 2010).

More specifically, for Aertsen (2004) peacemaking circles can be divided into two typologies: healing or support circles and sentencing circles. Healing or support circles are held with the aim of *'let the person know that he/she is supported, that are people who care for him/her'* but also *'to give the support persons and community a better understanding of what the person in need of healing gone through'* (Ehret, Dhondt, Fellegi & Szegö, 2013: 31). Support circles can also be held *'as a strategic meeting about prevention of future offenses'* (Fellegi & Szegö, 2013: 58-59). Sentencing circles were introduced to Criminal Justice in Canada as an alternative to sentencing (Pranis, Stuart & Wedge, 2003). This type of RJ process has been conceptualised as a holistic reintegrative approach to justice issues (Rieger, 2001; Bazemore and Umbreit, 2001).

In the words of Stuart and Pranis (2006: 129) *'circles are more appropriate for complex conflicts where the underlying causes of conflict must be addressed and where significant changes in relationships and innovative solutions to seemingly intractable problems are needed to realize and sustain changes'*. In the same line, the Belgium practitioners, in the context of interviews with experts under the framework of the European project referred above, seem to support the idea that circles should be applied in more severe and complex cases or cases where the offender has problems in different areas of his life (Ehret, Dhondt, Fellegi & Szegö, 2013: 109). Examples that seem to meet several criteria mentioned above are the Canadian *Circles of Support and Accountability* (CoSA) for high-risk sex-offenders upon release from prison (Fox, 2014; Hannem, 2013) and the use of peacemaking circles with *'chronic offenders on probation to break cycles of destructive behavior'* (Stuart & Pranis, 2006: 125).

Negrea (2011) defends the application of circles in the prison setting both for individuals preparing for release from prison and those *'facing ... crisis during their imprisonment'*, something that according to the radicalisation literature is closely connected to the particular vulnerability of prison populations to radicalisation (Schmid, 2013). Stuart and Pranis (2006: 126, 128) stress the usefulness of peacemaking circles *'as prevention as well as intervention'* since *'circles are a proactive tool as well as a reactive tool'*.

Finally, considering that peacemaking circles require significant more time and resources than other restorative processes, according to Fellegi and Szegö (2013:21), they should preferably be used when, in the context of the Criminal Justice System, the crime: *'affected multiple victims/ and or offenders; 'had an impact on people who were not officially considered as offenders or victims'* and *'the primarily effected people are deeply and emotionally impacted'*. The tenses used reflect the authors' perspective on the application of circles as a reaction to crime, as it happens commonly with other restorative processes. But, as we already observed, it is defended that circles are also useful proactive and preventive tools. So, if we change the tenses used in the above criteria to the future we observe that the use of circles as part of preventive and de-radicalisation efforts, actually meet all the criteria referred above: Terrorism², which

² According to Schmid (2013: 49) there is an increasing endorsement of the *'more general notion of 'Terrorist Risk Reduction Programmes' given that reducing the risk of involvement (or re-engagement) in terrorism is the one clear common feature'* of all preventive and de-radicalisation initiatives and programmes.

ultimately is what we aim to prevent, *'will affect multiple victims and offenders; 'will have an impact on people who are not officially considered as victims' and 'the primarily effected people will be deeply and emotionally impacted'*.

For the purposes of the present article we shall now analyse more closely a particular type of support circle that has been developed in Hawai'i. The Huikahi restorative circle project began in 2005 at the Waiawa Correctional Facility, on the island of O'ahu, (Walker, 2009; Porter, 2007). A Huikahi restorative circle is described as a group planning process for imprisoned individuals or individuals being accompanied in the community (e.g. probation, parole), their community of care (more frequently their family) and prison or probation staff. The circle aims to facilitate the preparation of a detailed transition plan for the offender preparing to leave prison or already in the community³ (Walker, Sakai & Brady, 2006; Walker, 2009).

'According to John Braithwaite "Hawai'i is a world leader in innovation for reentry planning for prisoners because of its work on restorative circles' (Walker & Greening, 2010: 64) which *'are an example of ... processes ... important for promoting desistance from crime'* (Maruna, 2007: 14 cit in Brady & Walker, 2008: 4,11). Considering the theoretical conclusions of RJ authors such as Marshall (2007), Walgrave (2015) and Salas (2015) about the potential application of restorative justice in the framework of de-radicalisation initiatives, the particular vulnerability of prison populations to radicalisation (Schmid, 2013) and, in connection, the UNODC (2016:121) conclusion that prison-based interventions should be put in place to prepare prisoners for their release and reentry into the community, we shall propose along this article that the development of support circles to reentry, *inspired* by the Huikahi restorative circle methodology and properly adapted to the specificities posed by radicalisation, might be a suitable RJ tool to contribute to the broader preventive and de-radicalisation efforts.

Consequently, we will devote the following lines to the detailed presentation of the prototypical Huikahi restorative circle, pointing its major differences regarding traditional peacemaking circles and presenting some of the main reasons why this RJ method is compatible with preventive and de-radicalisation initiatives. In a final subsection we shall describe how some aspects of traditional peacemaking circles can

³ For example, these circles were piloted in California for offenders on probation (Walker, 2012:12).

be incorporated into a support circle to reentry, *inspired* in the Huikahi restorative circle and, applicable in preventive and de-radicalisation contexts.

In Lorenn Walker's (2016) recent presentation of the Huikahi restorative circle in Leuven, the author explained the process as guided by the facilitator and driven by the incarcerated person. In this type of process, and differently from traditional peacemaking circles in which the opening ceremony is performed by the keeper (Pranis, 2014), the offender opens the circle in a personal, meaningful way for him (e.g. reading a quote, a poem).

Moreover, the Huikahi restorative circles do not use a talking piece. This results in a considerable different dynamic by comparison with traditional peacemaking circles, in which the talking piece is '*(...) passed around the circle clockwise from person to person. The specific use of the talking piece is that only the person holding it may speak... The talking piece invites all participants to speak and obliges all participants to listen*' (Fellegi & Szegö, 2013: 39). According to Stuart and Pranis (2006:132) '*the circle gently challenges the patterns of inequality by giving everyone voice*' and the talking piece plays a crucial role on this respect. As a consequence, this "*equalising effect*" is significantly reduced in the Huikahi restorative circle, in which the offender "*stars*". Moreover, without the talking piece, the keeper in the Huikahi restorative circle clearly takes greater control over the dialogue, which results in significantly lower levels of self-responsibility assumed by the rest of the participants, by comparison with the traditional peacemaking circle.

In the beginning of a traditional peacemaking circle, all participants of the circle (and not just the offender) are invited to '*to share something about themselves*' when they hold the talking piece. Following this introduction phase, the circle moves on to a building trust segment during which the circle's values and guidelines are established by consensus⁴ in the group. The talking piece is passed and every participant is invited to share with the group a value '*they feel would be important in order to work through this conflict or issue in a good way*' (Pranis, 2014:17). Moreover, according to Pranis (2014:17) '*in some circles is crucial to take the time for people to share stories from*

⁴ According to Pranis (2014: 12) '*consensus in the circle is defined as "everyone can live with the decision". It does not require that everyone be enthusiastic, but does require that everyone in the circle can support the decision.*'

their own lives to increase understanding of one another or to build empathy. Stories often shatter stereotypes or assumptions’.

Differently, the Huikahi restorative circle starts by exploring the offenders’ past accomplishments and applies a strength-based approach. The keeper asks the offender for whom the circle is held *‘Please tell us what you are especially proud of having accomplished since being in prison here’*. In the following moment *‘the incarcerated person’s strengths are identified by the group’* (Walker, 2010:87). This approach may seem counter-intuitive in a de-radicalisation context but, in fact, it is quite in line with the recommendation from the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (2012:14-15) when it is referred that *‘it is critical to be sensitive to achievements and lessons in the past, present and future’*. This strength-based approach seems to be also in line with the recommendation of the Rome Memorandum on Good Practices for the Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Violent Extremist Offenders (2012). The Rome Memorandum refers that *‘States could encourage their prison authorities to consider finding ways to recognize the achievement of inmates in rehabilitation programs’* since *‘this practice may give the inmate a sense of accomplishment and underscore the importance of what they have done to turn their lives around’*.

The keeper closes this part of the circle highlighting that *‘another strength of ... is his/her asking for this circle and taking responsibility for trying to make things right, which brings to the reconciliation stage of the circle’* (Walker, 2010:87).

Globally, the reconciliation phase of the Huikahi restorative circle invites the offender to reflect upon the impact of his actions on his victims, his family and the larger community. This is in line with the goal of other restorative initiatives with no victim participation currently applied in prison settings such as the awareness and empathy program *‘Focus on Victims’* applied in Hamburg, Germany (Hagemann, 2003). During the reconciliation section of the circle three RJ questions are dealt with. Firstly, the keeper asks the offender *‘Who was harmed by your past behavior?’* and after the offender’s response the keeper asks him *‘How were they harmed?’* (Walker, 2010: 87). Then, the keeper asks *‘Back when you did those things what were you thinking?’* and *‘And what do you think now about what you did back then?’* This part of the circle process was adopted from the *“Real Justice Conferencing”* methodology (O’Connell, Wachtel & Wachtel, 1999; Walker, 2002) and represents an important stage of the process because *‘sharing their transformation with others and hearing themselves*

saying it, can strengthen and reaffirm their commitment to better behavior' (Walker, 2010: 87).

At this point, considering that we propose the Huikahi restorative circle as an inspiring model to the design of a support circle to reentry applicable both as a preventive and as a de-radicalisation initiative, we clarify that in a support circle to reentry held as a preventive strategy to radicalisation (set up in prison or in the community) the reconciliation phase of the circle would be focused on the harm that resulted from the offender's crime that lead to his imprisonment and/or probation. In the case of a support circle to reentry held as part of a de-radicalisation initiative (set up in prison or in the community) the reconciliation phase of the circle would be focused on the harm that resulted from his radicalisation and possibly other offenses.

As in the Huikahi restorative circle the victims of the offender's crime are not present, in the following moment each member of the offender's community of care present in the circle is invited to share how the offender's past actions affected them (Walker, 2016). This is considered fundamental since the offender's family and significant others are usually also harmed by his actions and correspondent consequences and they are simultaneously a fundamental part in the offender's reintegration in the community once he is released from prison (Walker, 2016).

Exploring the issues referred above and, in the following round, what the offender can do to repair the harm he caused to his own community of care is considered important to rebuild ties that, in turn, play a significant role in the path of desistance (Walker, 2010: 88). As Schiff states (2007:234) relationships, in particular with family and friends *'are key to maintaining law-abiding and productive behaviour over time'*. In the same line, the UNODC (2016:124) defends that *'relationships can be a primary vehicle for disengagement from violent extremism'* and in consequence it is considered important to *'help violent extremist prisoners maintain, or re-establish, contact with their family during their time in custody and particularly in the stages prior to release'*.

In this context, the Huikahi restorative circle seems to successfully operationalise an important strategy identified in de-radicalisation literature, namely, the involvement *'of family and peers, both as a support group'* and *'as a group towards which the repentant has responsibility, as a father, son, husband, friend'* (Schmid, 2013: 44; Horgan & Braddock, 2010).

Moreover, this strategy of the Huikahi restorative circle seems to successfully operationalise the recommendation provided by the Rome Memorandum on Good

Practices for the Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Violent Extremist Offenders (2012), which defends that *'programs could include inmate family members'* considering that this type of measure would *'help the family understand and be sympathetic to what the inmate is going through and be more readily able to provide a supportive environment for the inmate once he or she is released'*.

In the following moment, the keeper introduces the impact suffered by the victims and their need for reparation: *'What about anyone else who is not here today who has been hurt?'*. Starting with the offender, all the participants in the circle reflect about what can be offered by the offender to repair the harm suffered by his victims and the conclusions of the reconciliation phase of the circle are included in the plan for reconciliation (Walker, 2010: 88). However, when it is not possible or considered in the victims' best interest that they should not be contacted, the plan for reconciliation regarding the reparation of the harm caused to the victims is formulated as *'be a productive member of the community'* in the future (Walker, 2010:88). This seems to be the case, at least in the short term, in the de-radicalisation context.

In a traditional peacemaking circle, the building trust phase is similarly followed by the exploration of the key issue of the circle. But the underlying dynamic is quite different. The keeper passes the talking piece, posing a question about the issue and every participant has the opportunity to speak about the feelings, impacts and concerns they have regarding that issue, resulting altogether in a phase less driven by the offender. Moreover, during the reconciliation phase of the Huikahi restorative circle, the reparation of the harm caused by the offender to his loved ones and his victims is already explored while in traditional peacemaking circles this discussion is integrated in the fourth and last part of the circle that aims to generate plans for a better future (Pranis, 2014). As a result, while in traditional peacemaking circles the development of plans for the future is primarily focused on the reparation needs of the victims (Fellegi & Szegö, 2013: 45), in the Huikahi restorative circle the final stage of the circle is exclusively focused on *how* the offenders' needs (e.g. housing and employment) for living a good life in the future may be met, as the circle is explicitly designed to support his reentry into the community. The offender identifies his goals and he plans *in collaboration* with all the other circle participants *how* to live a successful law-abiding life in the community. The keeper invites the participants to brainstorm possible ways for the offender to meet his needs (e.g. housing and employment) and the strategies agreed upon are included in a final transition plan (Walker, 2016; Walker, 2010:88).

Again, this approach seems to be in perfect line with the recommendations provided by the Rome Memorandum on Good Practices for the Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Violent Extremist Offenders (2012) and the UNODC. On one hand, the Rome Memorandum states that *'employment can reduce the need and the appeal to rejoin a terrorist group and can facilitate the former inmate's reintegration into society. As such ... employment assistance could be important'*. On the other hand, the UNODC (2016: 123) suggests that *'the lack of suitable housing is one of the major challenges that all ex-prisoners face at the time of re-entry, and ...that pre-release interventions for violent extremist prisoners must therefore include a plan for securing appropriate housing'*.

Finally, in the "check-out round" of a traditional peacemaking circle the keeper passes the talking piece around and asks participants *'to share their thoughts about the Circle or one word that sums up how they are feeling right now as the Circle comes to a close'* (Pranis, 2014: 17). Illustrating the Huikahi restorative circle offender focus and strength-based approach, to close the process *'beginning with the prison representative and following the order until the last person sitting closest to the incarcerated person, each shares what goodness they noticed about the offender'* (Walker, 2010: 89). The keeper asks the offender *'Please tell us how this circle was for you'* and the circle is terminated (Walker, 2010: 89).

According to Walker (2016) to the present moment 138 circles were provided, with a total number of 596 participants (including family members and prison/probation staff). To date all the participants evaluated the process as having had a positive impact in their lives. Participants believe that the circles increased the social support for the offender (Walker, 2016; 2012). However, to date there are no results regarding the recidivism rates of offenders that had had these circles but a full evaluation will be completed in 2016-2017. This support circle to reentry model is currently being replicated in New York, Virginia, Texas, California and Washington DC (Walker, 2016; Walker, 2012).

2.1.1. Designing a support circle to reentry in the context of preventive and de-radicalisation efforts

As Ehret, Dhondt, Fellegi and Szegö (2013:431) state *'peacemaking circles have proven to be a flexible tool'*, a characteristic that seems to make this restorative process particularly suitable to very complex and severe cases, both as a preventive and a

reactive tool. Considering this flexibility of practice and, especially, the need for it when thinking about the use of restorative methods in the context of preventive and de-radicalisation initiatives, we conclude that the Huikahi restorative circle may provide an inspiration for the design of a support circle to reentry specifically tailored to the specificities posed by radicalisation. In that sense, using the overall structure of the Huikahi restorative circle and its strength based approach, we consider that it may be relevant to mesh these with some structural elements of traditional peacemaking circles (not included in the Huikahi restorative circle) that appear especially relevant in a support circle to reentry designed to prevent radicalisation or support the ongoing de-radicalisation process of individuals in prison or recently placed under supervision in the community (e.g. parole, probation). In the next few paragraphs we advance some suggestions in this sense. These should be viewed as explorative rather than conclusive.

A first aspect in which a combination of the Huikahi restorative circle and the traditional peacemaking circle may be relevant concerns the participants of the circle. In the first circle process, the participants include the offender in prison or being accompanied in the community, his community of care, especially his family and loved ones, and prison or probation staff while the latter can also include community members who personally feel committed to strengthening community and crime prevention (Fellegi & Szegö, 2013: 23). In the design of a support circle to reentry, in the context of broader preventive and de-radicalisation efforts, it may be important to include these members of the macro community besides the community of care and the prison or probation representatives. This option seems to be in line with Marshall's (2007), Chowdhury Fink & El-Said (2011)'s and Schmid's (2013) conclusion that de-radicalisation initiatives should include the local community. Following this line of thought, for example, the participation in the circle of imams from the community mosque may be relevant for the clarification of Islam related misconceptions⁵. The

⁵ A relevant example in this context may be the Yemen's Religious Dialogue Committee. In this case, according to Horgan and Braddock (2010:275) religious scholars "dialogue at eye level" with the imprisoned radical militants about 'the place of jihad in Islam and its justifications, the relations of the Muslims and others, the concept of the State, government, and ruler rights within Islam'. The base for the debate is mutual respect. In the same line, the Religious Subcommittee of the Saudi Arabia's Counseling Program 'is composed of clerics, other religious experts, and university scholars' that engage 'the participants in open discussion about their experiences and interpretations of the Qu'ran and Islamic duty' and help the participants by explaining how their interpretation of Islam may be misguided (Horgan & Braddock, 2010: 277-278).

participation of these religious representatives of the local community seem to be in line with the proposition of the CoE 2016 Guidelines for prison and probation services regarding radicalisation and violent extremism, since these guidelines explicitly mention that the *'involvement of religious representatives ... may be very beneficial for efficient reintegration of offenders'*.

Moreover, following Pranis (2014:13) although the circle process can have moments during which the keeper assumes greater control over the dialogue, the talking piece should be always used at least during part of the circle. For the author, the circle should also always have a *"check-in round"* for all the participants. We consider that the inclusion of this *"check-in round"* and the use of the talking piece are pertinent in a support circle to reentry held in the context of de-radicalisation because these seem to be crucial elements for the *"equalising effect"* of the circle and for the identification of common ground between all the participants around their shared humanity.

Consequently, although the support circle to reentry in the context of de-radicalisation should maintain the Huikahi restorative circle's strength-based approach and offender focus, this process could not start (following the opening ceremony) with the exploration of the offenders' past accomplishments but instead start with a *"check-in round"* for all the participants using the talking piece. Moreover, the phase of building trust from the traditional peacemaking circle could be included before inviting the participants in the circle (family, friends, prison or probation staff and macro community members) to identify strengths in the offender. Following Stuart and Pranis's line of thought (2006:127), the embedment of these structural elements of traditional peacemaking circles in a support circle to reentry inspired in the Huikahi restorative circle would *'generate a deeper awareness within the circle of how their human journeys have generated similar experiences, expectations, fears, dreams and hopes'* and *'creating guidelines together (would provide) ... an opportunity for the group to experience finding common ground in spite of serious differences'*, aspects that seem extremely relevant in the de-radicalisation context. In this sense *'discovering shared values (should reduce) the sense of "other", the social distance between groups or individuals that results in harmful behavior towards others'* (Pranis, 2007:67).

Prepared the field, and still using the talking piece, the participants could then be invited to identify the offender's strengths and the offender could be invited to share important achievements in a *'strength based-approach round'*. Following this round, the reconciliation phase of the circle could start in similar terms to the structure of the

Huikahi restorative circle. The talking piece would be excluded for the period during which the keeper formulates the questions *'Who was harmed by your past behavior?'* and *'How were they harmed?'* (Walker, 2010: 87), which would be offender focused. The talking piece could be reintroduced in the circle when the other participants, in particular the offender's loved ones, would be invited to talk about the harm they suffered in consequence of the offender's actions. The rest of the reconciliation phase and the final stage of formulation of a plan for a positive future could be structured in similar terms to the Huikahi restorative circle.

2.2. Mentoring in the context of preventive and de-radicalisation efforts: the restorative power of the wounded healer

According to Ehret, Dhondt, Fellegi and Szegö (2013: 182) the action plan resulting from a circle should ideally *'make use of positive traits or skills of the accused for making amends. For example ... their verbal skills could be used for public presentations ... with the purpose of preventing others from making similar mistakes'* and *'at best, an action plan also makes use of the support persons participating in the circle. This way some supervision and/or support for the accused can be provided and maybe more importantly, they can receive support for the time after the circle as well'*.

In practice, according to Walker (2009:429) *'many of the incarcerated people who have had circles also make plans to help others, including... by being mentors'*. This is illustrated, at least in part, by the account of one offender in a Huikahi restorative circle saying *'I want to go back to my old neighbourhood. I helped mess the place up, and I need to go back and help make it better'* (Walker, Sakai & Brady, 2006:72).

Therefore, considering that an individual for whom a support circle to reentry was held can later be a support person for other offenders during and/or after their support circles to reentry, Ehret, Dhondt, Fellegi and Szegö's proposition (2013) give the *motif* for the second restorative tool proposed in this article in the context of broader preventive and de-radicalisations efforts: the mentoring activity as part of the de-radicalisation journey of the individual and, simultaneously, the use of *"wounded healers"* in the prevention or de-radicalisation process of other individuals as mentors.

Revisiting the work of RJ pioneer Albert Eglash, Shadd Maruna (2014) explores Eglash's concept of *wounded healer* and its importance for RJ. According to Maruna (2014) the intervention of ex-offenders as mentors of other offenders, in initiatives

where ex-offenders are seen as guides in the transformational process of others, are examples of flexible RJ practices, following Eglash's inspirational thought. *'Our greatest resource, largely untouched, to aid in the rehabilitation of offenders is other offenders'* (Eglash, 1958: 239). And as Schiff (2007: 237) defends *'a significant component of the restorative process is to involve and include community members who can serve as ... mentors for ... offenders in need'*.

Following Eglash and Maruna's reflection, the remorse and contrition of the offenders would be facilitated by the participation of ex-offenders in restorative initiatives, such as support circles to reentry. As Maruna (2014: 20) notes, on one hand *'transformed offenders have legitimacy among their pre-transformed peers that established social works, prison officials and Law Enforcement personnel do not have'* and on the other hand *'the transformation process that begins with the self ends with the transformation of others'*.

This conceptualization appears perfectly in line with the conclusion from the Institute for Strategic Dialogue (2012: 22-23 cit in Schmid, 2013:48) that *'(...) it can be useful to involve former extremists in the de-radicalisation and disengagement programmes because they have a deeper understanding of the challenges facing the individual and have more credibility'*.

Nevertheless, according to Horgan and Braddock (2010: 274) *'the Indonesian initiative remains unique in its utilization of ex-terrorists as central'* to the preventive and de-radicalisation efforts. As an example, we can refer the Indonesian case of Ali Imron, imprisoned for his part in the 2002 Bali bombing. Using his past experience and his own abilities to counter Jemaah Islamiyah's (JI) message, Imron *'wrote a book, produced cassette tapes, and publicly described how he would tell family and friends about the "mistakes" he made'*. He has actively participated in efforts both to prevent radicalization of Indonesian youth, since he knows *'how the terrorists recruit new members and who is most vulnerable to the radical message'* and to *'deprogram other jailed terrorists'* (Horgan & Braddock, 2010: 273).

Another relevant example is provided by Indonesian case of Bin Abbas, a former operational commander of JI's Mantiqi 3 and administrator of the Hudaibiyah training facility. Australian Federal Police Commissioner (AFP) Mick Keelty has claimed that the past of Bin Abbas *'yields respect from those that have been captured'* and that such respect can be instrumental in the rehabilitation effort of others (Horgan & Braddock, 2010: 273-274). Bin Abbas dialogues with other JI members when these are imprisoned

and *'challenges detainees Islamic justifications for armed action against civilians'* (Horgan & Braddock, 2010: 274). According to Horgan and Braddock (2010: 273) *'Indonesian officials believe that the success of their program is heavily contingent on the involvement of former JI personnel'*.

In this context, the UNODC (2006:77) reports that *'specific mentoring programmes are ... used to support violent extremist prisoners who are participating in disengagement activities, as well as for individuals deemed vulnerable to radicalization. A mentor can provide one-to-one, individually tailored support to meet the specific needs of the prisoner'*. And the CoE Guidelines for prison and probation services regarding radicalisation and violent extremism of 2016 refer that *'special programmes, including the use of mentors, shall be developed for and offered to prisoners and probationers, where appropriate, and in particular for those who are considered susceptible to radicalisation, in order to help them find life options free from crime and violent extremism'* and that *'former violent extremists who have renounced violence may serve as legitimate actors for the rehabilitation of probationers or prisoners'*. Read together, these set of guidance seem to support the intervention of *wounded healers* in mentoring activities as part of preventive and de-radicalisation efforts.

In the same line, according to the Rome Memorandum on Good Practices for the Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Violent Extremist Offenders (2012) *'reformed extremists, particularly those who have been through the rehabilitation process themselves, may be influential with inmates participating in these programs. The testimonials of former terrorists can be dramatic evidence of the benefits of change'*. In addition, the Prison Management Recommendations to Counter and Address Prison Radicalization (2015) also acknowledges that *'positive outside influences may provide inmates with a structure to work with and a goal to work towards'* and *'under the right circumstances, former, radicalized individuals may be helpful'* in providing those alternative influences.

However, a RJ framework, in the tradition of the process of recovery proposed by Alcoholics Anonymous⁶ - that itself inspired RJ pioneer Albert Eglash – also hints how *the mentoring activity can be a part of the de-radicalisation journey of the individual,*

⁶ In the words of Alcoholics Anonymous (2013: 89, 97) *'helping others is the foundation stone of your recovery'* since *'practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics. It works when other activities fail.'* while simultaneously stressing that *'you can help when no one else can'*.

how mentoring can help the one who helps in his own reintegration into the community, in his own restoration, in his own journey to belonging.

As Zehr states (2002: 21) *'alienation as well as its opposite – belonging – are central issues for those who offend'*. Radicalisation, like gang crime, also seems to be connected to feelings of woundedness and alienation from the community (Marshall, 2007: 383). This is explicitly acknowledged by the Prison Management Recommendations to Counter and Address Prison Radicalization (2015), when it refers that *'a feeling of isolation and lack of belonging can contribute to the conditions that allow violent extremist radicalization to occur'*.

In this context, according to Cordella (1991: 42 cit in McCold, 1995) *'if the community itself does not reestablish trust with the transgressors, they remain isolated and alienated from the community'*. We believe that the reestablishment of trust on an individual in an ongoing process of de-radicalisation is *at best* potentialised by the participation of community members in his support circle to reentry *in combination* with mentoring, because in this case, the former radicalised individual's path of reintegration, indeed the former radicalised individual's journey to belonging, is directly experienced by his community not as a burden but as a crucial contribution for larger peacemaking efforts. In Eglash's words (1958:237) *'a mutual-help principle effectively leads troubled persons on the road from stigma (to be set apart, as marked or branded) to dedication (to be set apart, for special service)'*.

In this particular case, the special service of the former radicalised individual requires him to use his past experience to help prevent the radicalisation of other individuals as well as to help others during their ongoing process of de-radicalisation to proceed with success in that path. As a result, the engagement of *wounded healers* in mentoring as part of de-radicalisation efforts allows to fulfil the identified need for *'some form of continued/subsequent monitoring to avoid recidivism'* after de-radicalisation initiatives (Schmid, 2013: 44; UNODC; 2016:140), while at the same time the feeling of belonging to the community should be potentialised in the *wounded healer*, considering that according to Schiff (2007: 234) *'the degree to which the offender feels responsible to others is central to belonging'*.

As Walker (2009: 423) states *'for successful reintegration, incarcerated people need a functional role in the community'* and, it seems to us, this also stands for successful de-radicalisation in prison or in community settings.

3. Facing individual radicalisation with a Good Lives Model (GLM) approach

The current research on de-radicalisation, following the well-established Risk Need Responsivity model (RNR) (Andrews, Bonta & Wormith, 2011), has been focused on identifying risk factors for radicalisation. This is clearly endorsed by the UNODC's Handbook on the Management of Violent Extremist Prisoners and the Prevention of Radicalization to Violence in Prisons (2016) and the CoE 2016 Guidelines for prison and probation services regarding radicalisation and violent extremism. According to this guidelines, *'special attention shall be paid to identify offenders vulnerable to radicalisation'* and *'in order to establish individual treatment programmes aimed at successful rehabilitation of prisoners and probationers, assessment tools specifically tailored to identify risks of radicalisation shall be developed and used from the outset of the implementation of a penal sanction or measure'*. Coherently, recent research calls at the European level also focus on the construction of risk assessment tools of radicalisation along with the design of de-radicalisation programmes targeting the individuals at risk.

Moreover, considering our own assertions in this article, according to Walker (2009: 430) *'circles should be offered regularly to anyone in prison'*. Although, as ideal as the author's proposition may seem, the reality is still that most restorative programmes are applied outside prison (Van Ness, 2007). In this context, it seems to us that the use of support circles to reentry as a restorative prevention tool to radicalisation should target at least offenders identified as *at risk* of radicalisation according to the assessment tools being developed. This would mean that offenders considered at risk or in the ongoing process of de-radicalisation could be invited to participate in the support circle to reentry.

As a result, it seems that the RNR approach would be used during the eligibility evaluation of cases for the circles and, more specifically, the principle of risk would be considered in the criteria for the selection of cases. However, the use of support circles to reentry or mentoring would mainly reflect a GLM approach to de-radicalisation. To propose to use the rationales posited by the GLM in de-radicalisation initiatives means not to counter the general application of the RNR logic found in current de-radicalisation research calls for program development, but to propose to be a bit more ambitious than that. Effectively, according to Ward, Fox and Garber (2014: 27-28; also see Ward, Melsner & Yates, 2007:209-210) the GLM is complementary to the RNR

model *'in the sense that it incorporates the RNR principles into its structure while extending the scope of rehabilitation beyond a stress on risk factors'*.

According to Ward, Fox and Garber (2014: 27-28) *'a core assumption of the GLM is that offenders, like all human beings, are goal directed and live their lives according to their prioritized set of primary human goods'*, which represent *'the things that individuals strive for, whereas instrumental or secondary goods represent concrete means or activities that are undertaken in pursuit of primary human good'*. As such, following the rationale of Ward, Fox and Garber (2014) and Ward and Brown (2004: 246) radicalisation seems to relate to the secondary goods or, in other words, the means that the individuals employ to try to achieve *'a sense of identity, power and self-respect'* (Marshall, 2007: 383) and not these primary needs themselves. Accordingly, using the GLM framework, once it becomes clear what constitutes a good life for an individual at risk of radicalisation or in the process of de-radicalisation, de-radicalisation initiatives should formulate *'collaboratively'* with the individual *'future oriented secondary goods aimed at satisfying his or her primary goods in socially acceptable ways'* (Ward, Fox & Garber, 2014: 29). This GLM approach to radicalisation seems to be in line with the Institute for Strategic Dialogue's conclusion that projects in this context need to address the participants' social as well as individual needs.

Now, according to Ward and Brown (2004: 254) and Ward, Fox and Garber (2014: 29) restorative justice fits well with the GLM because *'from a RJ perspective, all human beings have intrinsic value and this means their core interests should be taken into account when taking important decisions about their lives'*, a crucial assumption of the GLM. More concretely, an even more straightforward match is found between the Huikahi restorative circle and the GLM. According to Purvis, Ward and Willis (2011: 6, 17) *'the GLM is a strength-based rehabilitation framework that is responsive to offenders' particular interests, abilities, and aspirations ... the aim is to help offenders construct plans for living'*, something clearly operationalised in the Huikahi restorative circle structure and strength-based approach. In Walker's (2012:14) words *'individuals, no matter what sorts of problems they face, know more about their capacities and goals than anyone else, including the highly educated ... professionals ... working with them'*.

Finally, Ward and Langlands (2009: 213) recognise as an effect of restorative tools, such as the Huikahi restorative circle and mentoring, that offenders may *'become aware that other people care about them and that they have some meaningful choices about how best to proceed. In the language of the GLM, this may open up alternative avenues*

to community connectedness', an aspect that seems particularly relevant in the case of radicalisation, its effective prevention and de-radicalisation efforts (Marshall, 2007; Walgrave, 2015; Salas, 2015; Schmid, 2013).

4. Conclusion

Schmid (2013: 49) identifies dialogue, reconciliation and reintegration as some of the main objectives enunciated by existing de-radicalisation programmes. In this context, the design of a support circle to reentry, *inspired* in the Huikahi restorative circle and part of broader preventive and de-radicalisation efforts, seems to fit very well within these objectives. As the Huikahi restorative circle, a support circle to reentry specifically adapted for the prevention and de-radicalisation contexts would be a dialogical process which would permit individuals in prison or being accompanied in the community to *'find ways to reconcile with themselves and others harmed by their behavior; and to create plans to meet their needs for achieving a positive life'* (Brady & Walker, 2008: 4).

Moreover, according to Schmid (2013:49) *'offering young people alternative identification objects and role models and thereby the possibility to develop a different and positive identity is a road that needs to be explored more thoroughly'* in preventive and de-radicalisation programmes. Well, in Walgraves's (2008: 109) words a restorative process is precisely *'an opportunity for the offender to discover positive ways of being somebody'* and according to Walker (2009: 422) Huikahi restorative circles in particular *'provide ... modeled learning opportunities'* since *'the person having the circle observes and learns from the participants who share their ideas and knowledge about how the preferred future might be obtained'*.

Nevertheless, after the support circle to reentry life will carry on for these individuals, in prison or in the community, and the obstacles and challenges they faced before will not have magically disappeared. Regarding this particular point, we believe that the transition plan formulated during the circle process can be an invaluable tool to help the individual move forward, providing him with a positive direction, from which he can draw motivation when in need of it, and concrete strategies to start building a new life. In combination, the intervention of former radicalised individuals as *wounded healers* may be an important source of continuous support, helping the individual face

the challenges and obstacles in his path and keep his motivation and hope in a better future.

Together, we believe that support circles to reentry and mentoring can work as *stepping stones* in the journey to *belonging* to the community. And, if as Zehr (2002:21) proposes '(...) *the journey to belonging often involves a journey to identity*', we should expect that the two restorative tools proposed would also help the individuals at risk of radicalisation or in the process of de-radicalisation to fulfil their primary need for a positive identity. As Lilles states (2002) '*the supportive elements made in the circles by community members usually surprise young offenders*' because '*this community support contrasts with the negative feedback these ...people often receive... on a regular basis*' and '*hearing what others say are your strengths helps reconstruct a new positive story*' (Walker, 2009: 427). Supporting another individual at risk of radicalisation or in the process of de-radicalisation as a *wounded healer* can mean actively take the responsibility for the writing of a new chapter in that tale of redemption, transformation and ultimately triumph.

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