

“Community Well-Being and Resilience”

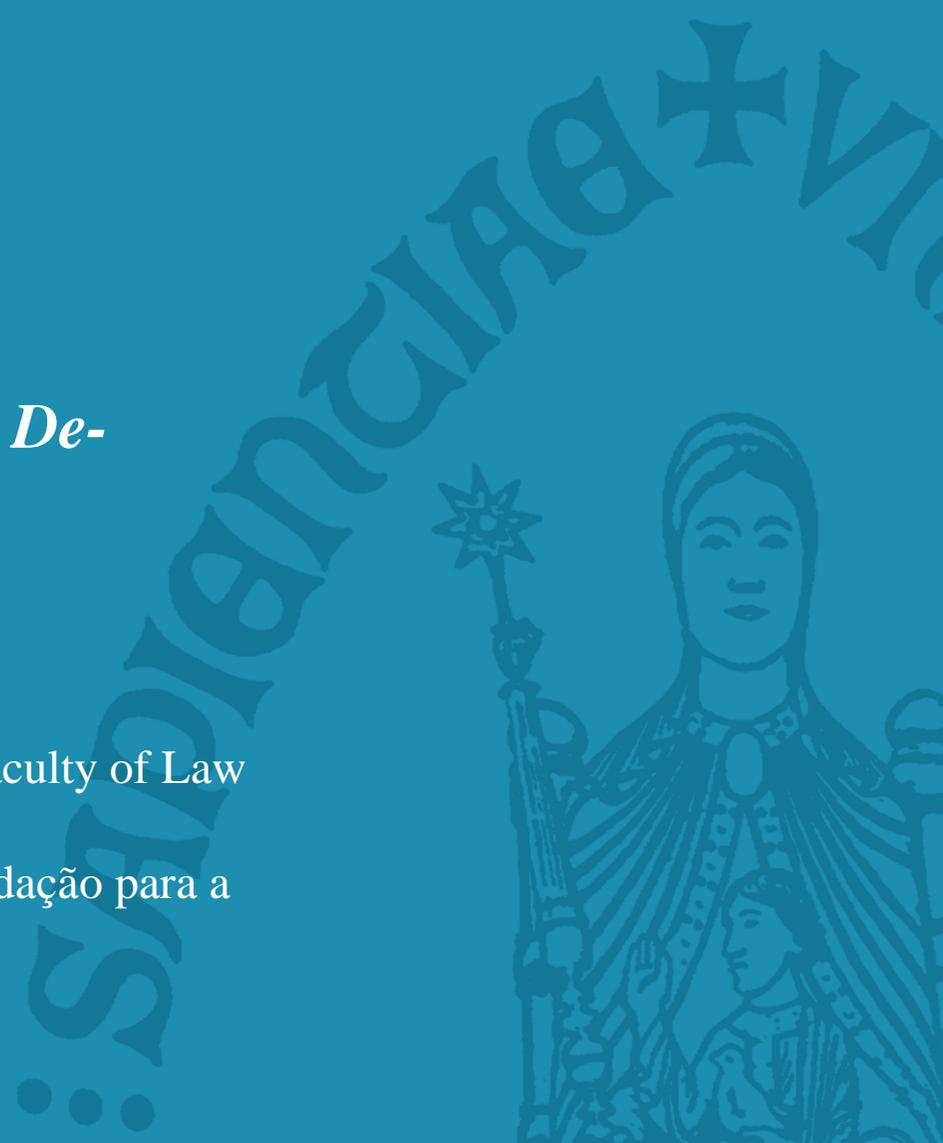
IIRP Europe Conference,
May 15-17, 2019, Kortrijk, Belgium

‘The Restorative Power of Wounded Healers in the De-Radicalisation Context’

Ana Pereira

Ph.D researcher in Criminology, Leuven Institute of Criminology (LINC), Faculty of Law

Ph.D Grant by the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology (Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia (FCT))



The concept of community in restorative justice

Aertsen (2018) conceptualisation of community:

3 important dimensions to consider when we analyse community in the perspective of RJ:

- Geographical dimension
- A certain level of interdependent relationships
- A notion of belonging and linked to it a notion of identity.

The concept of community in restorative justice

Aertsen (2018) conceptualisation of community:

- ✓ Community of care = includes family members and other significant people in the person's life;
- ✓ Local community = points to the geographical environment;



- ✓ Community of groups or networks = the base groups are being replaced by groups of affinity and identity.

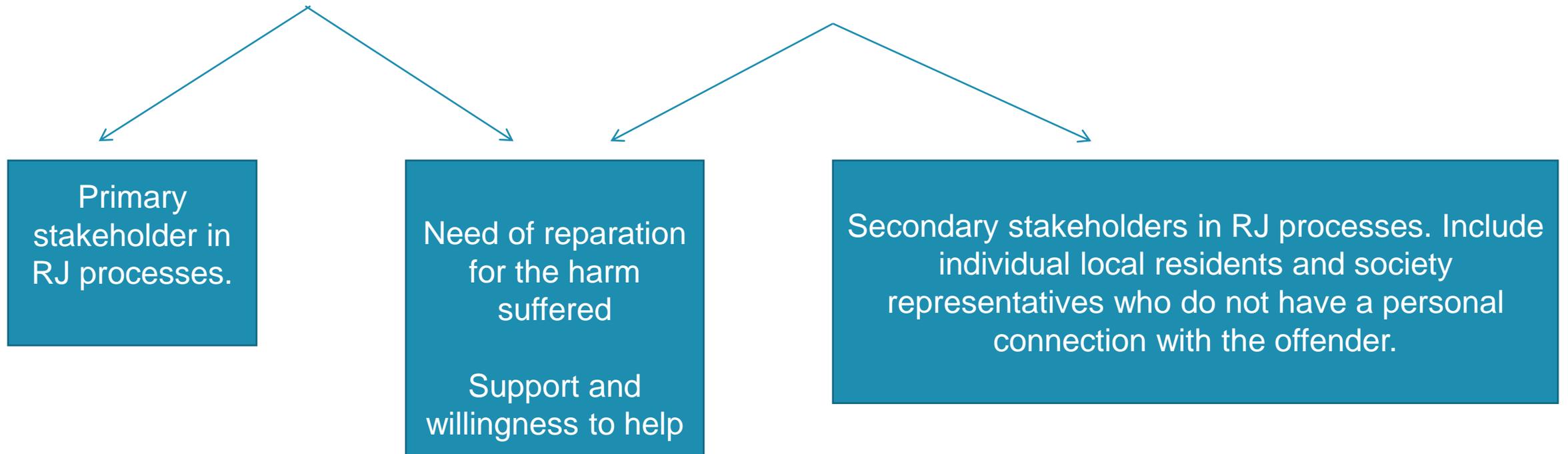
The concept of community in restorative justice

Community of care

- Micro community

Local community

- Macro community



Community & Radicalisation

Following Aertsen (2018) line of thought:

- When we speak about radicalisation and the harms caused by violent extremism there is **a crucial societal dimension of this harm:**



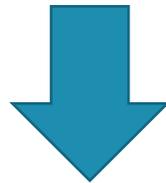
Vicarious Victimization

- The people in the community and larger society experience a generalised **loss of trust, feelings of insecurity and disempowerment.**

Community & Radicalisation

Following Aertsen (2018) line of thought:

- It is not just about the analysis of the radicalisation path of certain individuals;
- It is about the circumstances around that in a given context;
- People do not live isolated. People live in relation.



What is wrong in our communities, and societies, so that these things happen?

Critics from the RJ movement

‘Communities are hierarchical formations, structured upon lines of power, dominance and authority. They are intrinsically exclusive And may solidify and define themselves around notions of ‘otherness’ that are potentially infused with radicalised overtones.’

(Crawford & Clear, 2001: 137)

The process of individual radicalisation

- Gradual dynamic process

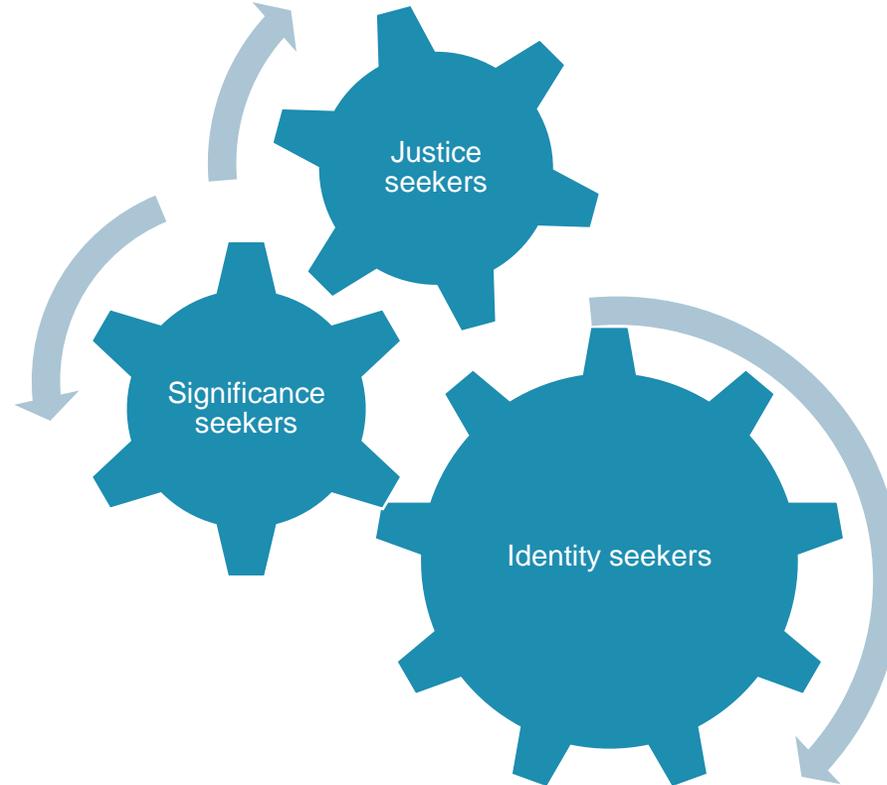
(Borum, 2003; Moghaddam, 2005; Horgan, 2009; Vidino, 2011; Porter & Kebbell, 2011; Helfstein, 2012; CoE 2016 Guidelines for prison and probation services regarding radicalisation and violent extremism).

- Theoretical explaining models (considering both cognitive and behavioural components):

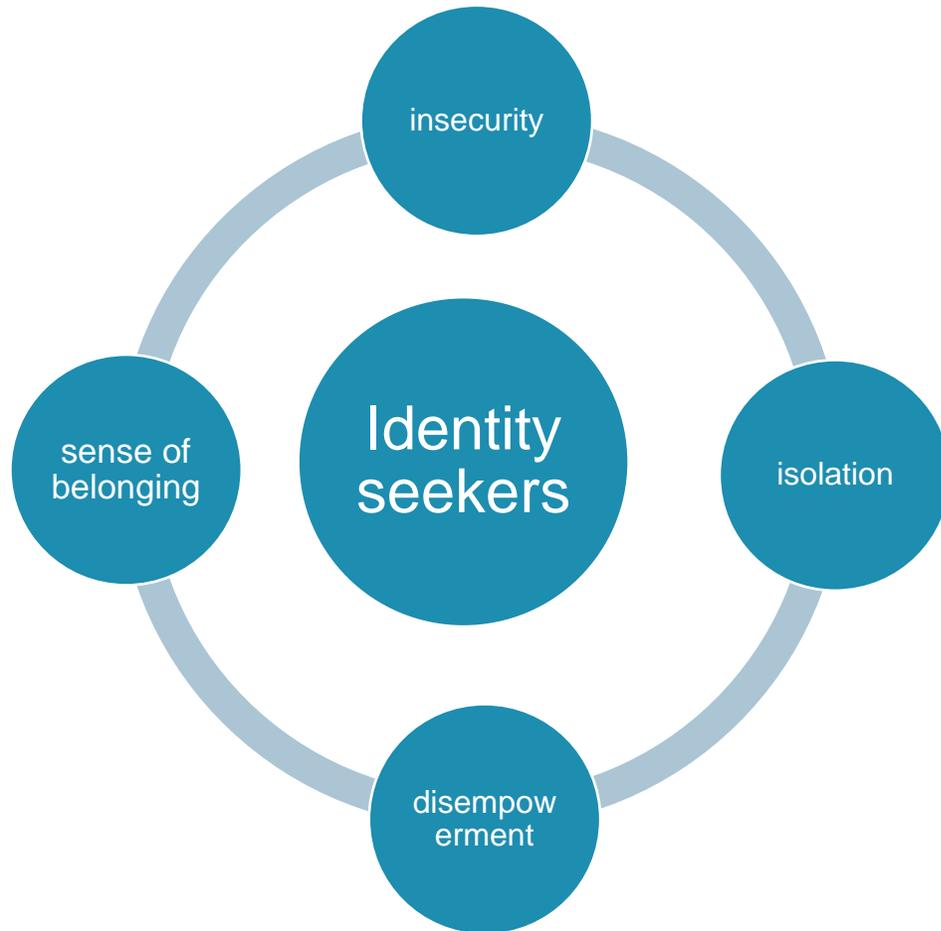
why radicalisation occurs *versus* how radicalisation occurs

Why radicalisation occurs:

- Feddes (2017)

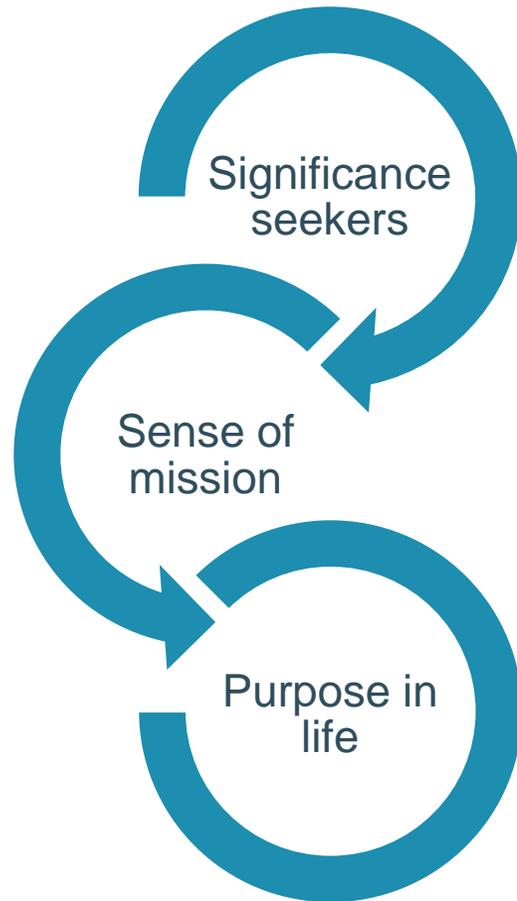


Why radicalisation occurs:



- De Bie (2016:32): “brotherhood” as a highly valued asset offered by the jihadist extremists
- Porter and Kebbell (2011): the main driver to violent extremism was the access to a collective identity

Why radicalisation occurs:



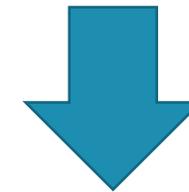
- The need for status as one of the main triggers of the process of individual radicalisation

(Van der Veen, 2016 cit in Miller & Chauhan, 2017: 36)

Why radicalisation occurs:



- Example: as Muslim communities are targeted by counter-radicalisation measures;
- put under increased surveillance in the context of the “War on Terror”,



Muslims increasingly experience feelings of humiliation, stigmatisation and alienation from society (Hafez & Mullins, 2015:963; Thomas, 2017: 119, 129).

How radicalisation occurs:

- Moghaddam's (2005) Staircase to Terrorism metaphor
 - The **“foundational ground floor”** is occupied by vast populations of hundreds of millions of people, who perceive themselves as suffering deprivations and an unfair and unjust treatment;
 - **Only a few every year** move to the upper floors, following a path that may lead to radicalisation;



Relationships of interdependency between the root causes involved in the process of individual radicalisation (Hafez & Mullins, 2015:970)

The role of ideology

- To encourage the construction of a rebellious identity against the existing order,
- To justify and legitimatise the use of violence against target groups;
 - Many of the religiously radicalised individuals in the West support their actions based on common Islamist ideological themes

(Hafez & Mullins, 2015: 967)

- Research seems to suggest that violent extremism may not simply be an ideological imperative but may be used by individuals - that perceive it as the only means at their disposal - as a utilitarian strategy oriented towards satisfying the primary human goods of a positive identity, sense of belonging, purpose in life and acquisition of status.

The Good Lives Model

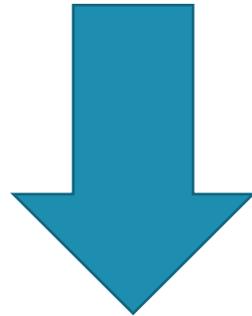
'(O)ffenders, like all human beings, are goal directed and live their lives according to their prioritised set of primary human goods'

'Primary human goods 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 goods.'

(Ward, Fox & Garber, 2014: 28)

‘an emphasis on its underlying ideological doctrine may have masked a simple factor’: ‘the spread of extremism may be just as much a function of self-interest as ideological fervor.’

Helfstein (2012:6, 69)



Following the rationale of the Good Lives Model, it means that successful desistance might be accomplished if the individuals find stable pro-social ways in society to satisfy those primary needs at the root of the problem.

The prison context

- Prosecutions and condemnations by the criminal justice system: counter-intended effect of facilitating the process of individual radicalisation

(De Bie, 2016: 38)

- Negative consequences of imprisonment:

- ❖ Individuals get frustrated with the perceived unfair treatment by the criminal justice system and, ultimately, by society (De Witte, 2018);
- ❖ “*loss of identity*” and weaken of pro-social bonds (Maruna & Ramsden, 2004:135)



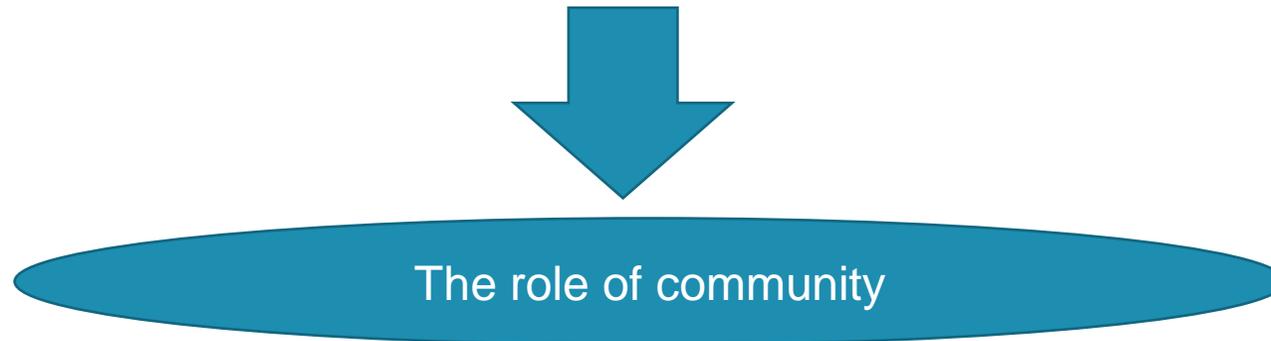
root causes of individual radicalisation

De-radicalisation and the restorative re-entry approach

- De-radicalisation programmes:
 - Tertiary prevention
 - Exit programmes (Gielen, 2017).
- De-radicalisation is conceptualised as the process of change and reconstruction of the de-radicalising individual's pro-social identity: e.g. Horgan, 2009)
- Walgrave (2015) suggests the use of restorative focused tools in the prison de-radicalisation context

Desistance of crime research & relevance of restorative re-entry approach

- Paternoster and Bushway (2009: 1117, 1132-1133):
 - feelings of isolation, lack of belonging and legitimate identity are recurrent root causes identified by offenders in general in their life stories
 - relationship between the reconstruction of one's identity and the process of desistance from crime
 - changes in identity require the support of a realigned pro-social network



Desistance of crime research & relevance of restorative re-entry approach

'From a desistance perspective, a crucial part of the reintegration puzzle is community responsiveness and this requires some degree of reaching out to those offenders seeking social acceptance.'

(Ward, Fox & Garber, 2014: 39)

The relevance of a 'strengths-based' or restorative re-entry approach

- New lens to re-imagine successful reintegration into the local community (Maruna & LeBel, 2003: 97)

1) the individual's strengths: assessed, targeted and the work he/she develops based on the use of those strengths should help him/her (re)build a pro-social identity (Burnett & Maruna, 2006:84);

The relevance of a 'strengths-based' or restorative re-entry approach

2) Restorative focused tools:

- restore or rebuild previous pro-social relationships damaged by his/her actions (Bazemore, 1998: 787)
- contributing to the realignment of a pro-social network willing to support him/her upon re-entry into the community.

Restorative focused tools in de-radicalisation programmes

- **What restorative focused tools?**

- Support circles to re-entry;
- Mentoring activities by wounded healers;

- **When?**

‘rehabilitation [correctional treatment] takes offenders part of the way, but their social situation upon release ... are critical ingredients in the overall change process.’

(Ward, Fox & Garber, 2014: 33)

□ final segment of a de-radicalisation programme:

- ❖ former radicalised individuals prepare their release from prison
- ❖ they return to their community.

The Huikahi restorative circles: A relevant example for the de-radicalisation context

- **Strengths-based stage of the circle:**

- In the final segment of a de-radicalisation programme in prison, the individual could share the challenges and obstacles he/she overcome
- His/her achievements and accomplishments since the beginning of the programme;
- The other participants are invited to identify strengths in the individual (Walker, 2010:87).

- **Reconciliation stage of the circle:**

- Restoration of significant pro-social bonds between the ex-offender and his/her community of care:
 - ex-offender's community of care shares how his/her past actions have affected them;
 - what the ex-offender can do to repair the harm he/she has caused (Walker, 2016).
- Restoration of local community and larger society:
 - commitment to be 'a productive member of the community' in the future (Walker, 2010:88)

The wounded healer

The intervention of former offenders as mentors of other ex-offenders less far along in the process of desistance are examples of flexible practices of ex-offender rehabilitation that present a restorative focus

(Maruna, 2014)

The wounded healer

- reinforcement of personal learning,
- increased feelings of interpersonal competence,
- a sense of meaning and purpose in their lives,
- improved self-esteem,
- a sense of accomplishment
- social approval.

(Lebel & Maruna, 2015: 111)

The restorative power of the *wounded healer* in the de-radicalisation context

- The restorative contribution of *wounded healers* in the de-radicalisation process of other individuals,
- The mentoring activity as part of their de-radicalisation journey, as part of their restoration into the community,
- The contribution of *wounded healers* to restore/ (re)build their community and larger society.

The restorative power of the *wounded healer* in the de-radicalisation context

- *The 'strengths potentials'* of assuming the role of wounded healer, acting as a mentor of de-radicalising individuals:

'identity reconstruction, removal of stigma and full restoration into citizenship'

(Burnett & Maruna, 2006:98)

1) Identity reconstruction:

For the individual for whom the support circle to re-entry is held: listening to the life story shared by a wounded healer, having the chance to share his/her own life story, and receive positive feedback from the wounded healer and other significant people present in the circle maybe a fundamental step in the process of creating a redemption script and reconstruct his/her identity based on it (Maruna & Ramsden, 2004:140; Lebel, 2007:4).

Identity reconstruction and Multifocal Intelligence theory (Cury, 2017)

- Why those aspects of wounded healing help in the construction of a redemption script and reconstruction of a pro-social identity?

re-edition of traumatic windows of
memory

building parallel healthy windows

The memory

‘There is no remembrance of the information stored in the memory but only the reconstruction of that information’ (Cury, 2017:73)

‘We store the information in our memory, but when we read the memory and use the information, that is not exactly the same information that was stored in the first place.’ (Cury, 2017: 74)

- The MAR (Memory's Automatic Registration) Mechanism

'But the PSRs (Psycho-Semantic Representations) are always "poor" and restrictive compared with the original experience .. The first diploma, the first salary, the first defeat will never be recovered in a way so pure, so intense as the original experience.'

(Cury, 2017: 79)

- Impossibility to erase or destroy the PSRs registered in the memory
- By maximum, the self can critically recycle the PSRs
- The management of the old PSRs leads to new PSRs (Cury, 2017:163)



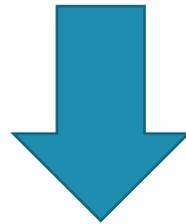
Reconstruction of the individual's story archived in memory

The trigger of memory & the windows of memory

- Operates in fractions of a second at the unconscious level
- Opens the windows of memory

'The self represents our self-consciousness ... of our identity (who we are), of our social role (what we do) and of our location in time and space (where we are).'

(Cury, 2008: 68)



- You know where you are, what you are doing, your position in space and time not because of the conscious and programmed action of the self, but because the trigger of memory is anchored in hundreds of windows that allow this immediate perception.

- The process of interpretation:
 - ✓ 1^o reading of the archived story by the trigger of memory
 - ✓ 2^o the formation of matrices of historical essential thoughts
 - ✓ 3^o the psychodynamic intervention of these matrices in the field of emotional and motivational energy
 - ✓ 4^o the process of virtual reading of these matrices to produce the dialect and anti-dialectic thoughts
 - ✓ 5^o the self only enters in action at this stage, right after the formation of the dialectic and anti-dialectic thoughts.

(Cury, 2017: 166)



The self does not have the power to control the four first stages of the process of interpretation

Change & the information warehouse

Individual identity:

- in a process of change, even if it happens through micro transformations
- change happens when the windows of memory that form its basis change

Killer windows:

- Traumatic windows or areas of conflict
- Back wholes of the human mind – e.g. destruction of empathy, solidarity, support for the use of violence

Why change is difficult?

- *‘the intention or the desire for change produces an isolated window’*
- *Need for ‘a platform of windows, a whole “neighbourhood” in the city of the memory in order to have sustainability, so that the unconscious mechanisms at work, like the trigger of memory, can spontaneously find these archives and open these windows.’*

Reconstructing identity & building a redemption script

'What can we do? We cannot erase it. So the possibility we have left is to re-edit the memory and construct parallel windows ...next to the traumatic windows.'

(Cury, 2008:86)

Building a redemption script: *'The re-edition of the film of the unconscious does not consist in the cutting of scenes, nor the elimination of images, but in inserting new texts in these contexts and new messages in the areas of conflict.'*

(Cury, 2008: 90)

'In order to do this, we should act directly in the focus of tension ... in the exact moment in which ... the mental image appears in the mind of the person ... , the self must immediately act, criticise, argue, examine, in sum, to bombard with intelligence/reasoning this area of conflict' (Cury, 2008: 91)

- ✓ listening to the life story shared by a wounded healer,
- ✓ having the chance to share his/her own life story,
- ✓ receive positive feedback from the wounded healer and other significant people present in the circle

Acting as a wounded healer

- In a later stage, assuming the role of wounded healer, participating in circles held for other individuals and acting as a mentor for them gives the former radicalised person **the chance to continually share his/her redemption tale.**
- Following O'Reilly's (1997, p.123 cit in Maruna & Ramsden, 2004:140) line of thought these actions should feed in the former radicalised person 'a sense of purpose, a sense of ... belonging to something, and a sense of direction'.

*'helping others may become a way of ensuring **one's own transformation and identity** as a person who "makes good" by doing good'*

(Bazemore & Boba, 2007:38)

Acting as a wounded healer



‘The fundamental objective is to construct light areas, parallel mental windows that will support the self so that the self is able to maintain ... coherence in moments of crisis ... These parallel windows will work as a filter to fear ... in the times of crisis.’

(Cury, 2008: 89)

The platform of healthy windows: This platform must be sufficiently large in order for a new pro-social identity to be cemented.

- MAR mechanism and the privileged registration of intense experiences in more accessible areas of the memory;
- > PSRs archived in memory, > more accessible to spontaneous reading by the trigger of memory
- > chains of thoughts produced based on the reading of those PSRs; > more new PSRs archived in memory, of similar positive content.

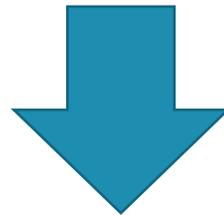
The restorative power of the *wounded healer* in the de-radicalisation context

2) Removal of stigma and restoration into citizenship:

... radicalisation seems to be first connected, in part, to feelings of injustice and alienation from society (Borum, 2003; Moghaddam, 2005; Marshall, 2007; Feddes, 2017)

‘the notion of “rehabilitation” ... is a construct that is negotiated ... Not only must a person accept conventional society in order to go straight, but conventional society must accept that person as well’

(Maruna, Lebel, Mitchell & Naples, 2004: 273)



The mentoring activities of the former radicalised individual may signal to the community that his/her path of redemption, indeed his/her journey to belonging (Zehr, 2002), is not simply a burden to the community and larger society but he/she is him/herself participating in crucial peacemaking efforts in the community.

The restorative power of the *wounded healer* in the de-radicalisation context

... and back to identity reconstruction

- approval and praise from pro-social members of the community regarding their efforts as wounded healers should influence process of identity reconstruction around a redemption script.

'helps to reinforce commitment to an alternative course of life and to vindicate ex-offenders in their belief that they have permanently moved on from previous illegal activity.'

(Burnett & Maruna, 2006:95)

The restorative power of the *wounded healer* in the de-radicalisation context

Dwyer and Maruna (2011: 293-294; 300-302)

- 35 semi-structured interviews with Northern Ireland politically motivated former prisoners, many of which formerly convicted for terror-related offences

‘repeatedly echoed the theme of wanting to “give something back” and make a contribution to their communities and the wider society’

‘self-help groups have been viewed as an important and crucial facility to integrate former prisoners into the community as “useful citizens”

Designing a support circle to re-entry with *wounded healers* in the context of de-radicalisation efforts

I. The participants in the circle:

- ❖ The community of care (many times family members)
- ❖ Prison staff
- ❖ The wounded healer

'reintegration is something that happens between the returning prisoner and the wider community'

(Maruna, 2011:17-18)



The macro community should take part in reintegration rituals

Who is this community?

Aertsen (2018): If the dynamic is not truly communitarian the conversation does not really address :

- what is common/shared between them;
- what is their identity,
- what are their shared/different values, shared/different also with the community of care of the offender

Who is this community?

In cases such as the sample depicted by Porter and Kebbell (2011), in which radicalised individuals started by struggling with problems combining a Muslim identity with the development of a national identity, being attached to the local Muslim community but not to the wider society, what members of the community would be relevant to invite into the circle?

The participants in the circle

- Participants from relevant groups or networks, from the local community and/or larger society?
 - Schools
 - Youth organisations
 - Workplaces
 - Sports/ leisures activities
 - Religious community
 -



Muslim and non-Muslim participants

The participants in the circle

- Muslim and non-Muslim participants?
 - acknowledge participants with different world perspectives;
 - acknowledge the diverse interests of various collectives within the community/society and provide for inclusion of representatives;
 - acknowledge the image of community both as a place of potential collective solidarity and of exclusion;
 - challenge some the perceived inter-group difference;
 - work towards a process that changes beliefs and perspectives of participants;
 - promote the identification of common ground between all the participants;
 - reduce distance between different groups of people
 - experiencing positive relations with non-Muslim people in the circle could help the former radicalised individuals to develop wider social bonds.



Increasing the ability to identify as a Muslim and a member, an active citizen, in their wider society

Development of compatible religious identity and national identity

(t)he problem with emotional energy is that without further positive interaction rituals it is likely to decay'.

(Rossner, 2011:181)

- the intervention of *wounded healers* - continuous support
- the community members participating in the initial circle of support to re-entry could also accompany the continued efforts of both the wounded healer and the former radicalised individual receiving his/her help.

- For the wounded healer and former radicalised individual receiving help:



On-going validation for their efforts and progresses from the community
Progressive restoration of trust from the community

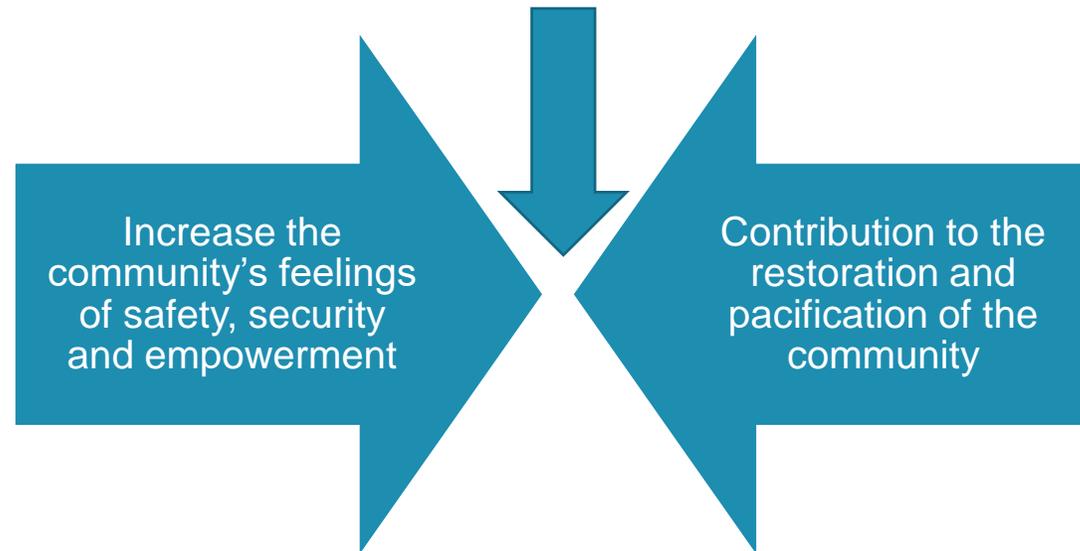
- For the wounded healer:



Support network to discuss concerns/ needs of the former radicalised individual he/she is helping

For the Community:

- The chance to witness the continuous contribution the wounded healer gives to peacemaking efforts in a very practical way;
- The chance to witness the progress of the former radicalised individual being helped.



Inspiration from the COSA Circles of Support and Accountability

- prolonged intervention
- should be maintained until the individual is considered functional within the local community

‘typical release of a ‘high-risk’ sexual offender goes something like this: offender released ... media frenzy... community panic... offender driven out of said community or into hiding.’

(Wilson, Picheca & Prinzo, 2007: 290)

The inspiration from the COSA Circles of Support and Accountability

- during the first 60 to 90 days of the COSA circle:
 - one primary volunteer meets with the core member once a day
 - a full circle is organised once a week

(Wilson, Cortoni & McWhinnie, 2009: 415)

In the de-radicalisation context:

- **wounded healer as the primary volunteer** - providing an intensive dose of social support during a particular vulnerable period of adjustment for the recently released person and, many times, for the community of care (e.g. family members) that receives him/her.

For the community:

- The organisation of weekly circles: **the platform** for community members to accompany the efforts and progresses of the former radicalised individual recently released from prison & of the wounded healer helping him/her



'Restoring community is advanced by a proliferation of restorative justice rituals in which social support around specific ... offenders is restored. At this micro-level, restorative justice is an utterly bottom-up approach to restoring community'

(Braithwaite, 1996: 5)

For the community:

- The organisation of weekly circles: the opportunity for members, of different collectives and networks, from the local geographical environment and wider society, that form a community of support for the former radicalised person being helped:
 - To reflect on the experiences and stories shared by the former radicalised person being helped and the wounded healer
 - To reflect on what is going wrong in the community and society so that identity problems, lack of belonging and meaning in life and strong perceptions of injustice and humiliation are identified as important for the process of 'becoming' radicalised.

For the community:

- Following the example of the wounded healer, opportunity at the community level, to use past mistakes as sources of knowledge about what should be done differently in the future.



Promoting the active responsibility of the community members to tackle problems of discrimination within the community



Prevention of radicalisation of other individuals in the community

The emergence of a new wounded-healer: A renovated person

End of the support circles:

- A renovated person - ready to move on with his/her life without such an intense involvement of this support network;
- Restoration of local community and larger society:
 - Commitment to be 'a productive member of the community' in the future (Walker, 2010:8)
 - Possible adoption of the role of wounded healer;
 - Signal to the community, and larger society, their value as special servers



Community, and larger society, to publicly recognise their re-established trust in them



This public validation should help them cement their new pro-social identity and finally experience the sense of belonging to the community and larger society.

The focus of our presentation today...

Conceptual Design

Theoretical frameworks: (de) radicalisation literature; desistance of crime literature; restorative justice literature

General Hypothesis:

- Restorative focused tools will help reintegrate former radicalised individuals into the community
- Restorative focused tools will contribute to the restoration of community, and wider society in the de-radicalisation context

For the future ...

Empirical Proof

```
graph TD; A[Empirical Proof] --> B[RJ services role in the organisation of experimental, innovative initiatives in the de-radicalisation context]; A --> C[Alliance between RJ services and academia in Action Research];
```

RJ services role in the organisation of experimental, innovative initiatives in the de-radicalisation context

Alliance between RJ services and academia in Action Research

‘No amount of experimentation can ever prove me right. A single experiment can prove me wrong’ – Albert Einstein

Contacts:
anacatarina.alvespereira@kuleuven.be