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Creativity and Rehabilitation: What Else Might Work in Changing Sex Offenders' Behaviour?

Charlotte Bilby

Introduction

Sexual offenders' behaviour is addressed and challenged within many criminal justice systems through the use of cognitive-behavioural treatment programmes. These interventions are primarily group-based, manualized programmes, aimed at encouraging offenders to understand the triggers for their behaviour and act to change it. These programmes sometimes require a reasonably high level of cognitive function and verbal sophistication of the participants. If we accept that offenders' levels of educational attainment and emotional intelligence are lower than the general population, then might these programmes be demanding much of a population who find it difficult to engage in processes that require these skills in order to achieve? Enrichment activities, a term that covers projects including creative, artistic and spiritual elements, and focusing on these rather than educational or vocational outcomes, can be acknowledged as having a role in a strengths-based approach to rehabilitation. Notably, they may fit within the notions of the good lives model (GLM) (see e.g., Ward and Brown, 2004) as well as helping to explore journeys towards desistance from crime (Giordano et al., 2002; Maruna, 2001, 2007; McNeill, 2006; McNeill et al., 2012). However, for criminal justice researchers, policymakers and practitioners alike, there are problems when trying to evidence the positive changes that arts practitioners witness participants experiencing, and the whether these have a lasting impact on reducing reoffending (Bilby et al., 2013; Burrows et al., 2013a, 2013b; Sparks and Anderson, 2014). This chapter will consider the role that enrichment activities might play when trying to address the rehabilitative needs of sexual offenders.

Arts and the relationship to changing behaviour

Within criminological literature, there is a history of acknowledgement that the arts have roles to play within criminal justice systems. Goffman (1961, pp. 67–68) suggested that 'removal activities', 'little islands of vivid, encapturing activity', including visual and performing arts, helped prisoners to deal with the psychological pressures of being incarcerated in a total institution. Visual and fine arts have long been used within criminal justice and secure mental health settings to therapeutically address issues associated with offending behaviour and emotional harm (Gussak, 2004, 2006). From a policy perspective, the Department of Business Innovation

and Skills and the Ministry of Justice (2011, 19) noted that ‘we recognise the important role that the arts, collectively, can play in the rehabilitation process through encouraging self-esteem and improving communication skills as a means to the end of reducing reoffending’. It would seem that even governments that consider their role to ensure ‘proper punishment’ (Ministry of Justice, 2010) understand that artistic and creative activities have a place within the criminal justice system.

Enrichment activities are taking place within criminal justice and secure institutions, as well as community settings, throughout the world. They encompass the breadth of arts: visual, performing and textile arts, and, acknowledging the links between creativity and faith, include practices such as yoga. While a definition of enrichment leans more towards Goffman’s notion of ‘removal activities’, the enterprises are often at the periphery of education and vocational training. For example, cooking and catering, gardening and landscaping (Carter and Pycroft, 2010), joinery and woodworking, and creative writing and graphic design can be considered to be situated between creativity and education. For many prisons, the only way to retain funding for creative activities is to badge them as courses that provide certificated outputs for both the prison and the education provider. While classes that blur the boundaries are often run on a long-term basis by staff who are associated with the criminal justice agency or education provider, not-for profit organizations are usually those that provide short-term creative activities. In the United Kingdom, organizations such as Music in Prisons (Digard and Liebling, 2012; Music in Prisons) facilitate week-long courses; Geese Theatre and Clean Break (a performing arts organization which includes many former prisoners amongst its team of actors) run day and 3-day workshops, as well as productions that are delivered on a weekly basis for up to 2 months. Subject to risk and security assessment, all types of activities are available to different categories of offenders, and it is acknowledged by arts practitioners that they often deal with the most vulnerable in the criminal justice system (Bilby et al., 2013), including sexual offenders who are just about to start, or who have just finished taking part in offending behaviour programmes.

Rather than using arts activities as a tool to manage the psychological stress of taking part in an offending behaviour programme, they might be used as an integral part of a strengths-based model of rehabilitation and offenders’ journeys towards desistance. The links between programmes designed to change offenders’ behaviour and desistance processes are beginning to be highlighted in the literature on sex offender treatment. Laws and Ward (2010) suggest that treatment programmes may help support the natural desistance processes by replicating the social and psychological capital that is usually supported by peers and communities

outside of criminal justice settings. But the question posed is then, what might the role for the arts be within interventions to address offending behaviour?

Andrews and Bonta's (2006) risk need responsivity (RNR) principles are those on which some consider effective practice must be based. They are shown by Hanson et al. (2009) to be effective at changing sexual offenders' behaviour, as well as having an impact on the general offending population. While the model has 'been criticised for leading to an almost exclusive focus on avoidance strategies for managing risk' (Barnett and Mann 2011, p. 143), it is in the responsivity element of this triangle that art practice might have the most to offer. Arts practitioners are able to identify and meet the needs of difficult to reach offenders in a highly disciplined (Bilby et al., 2013) setting. However, the practice demonstrated in much of the literature on arts and creativity in criminal justice settings does not seem to fit well with the deficits approach to addressing the needs of offenders. Rather, it seems to sit much more comfortably with the GLM (Ward and Brown, 2004), taking a strengths-based approach in addressing offending behaviour. Striving towards primary goods, such as 'friendship, enjoyable work, loving relationships, creative pursuits, sexual satisfaction, positive self-regard, and an intellectually challenging environment' (Ward and Stewart, 2003, p. 142) suggests that there may be elements that help 'protect' against offending behaviour, and these may be different for each offender. For Hudson et al. (2007, p. 637) the implication is that, '*agency* is as important as – if not more so than – *structure* in determining whether or not people commit crime, and, in particular, whether or not they desist from an offending career' [italics in original]. For many arts practitioners, creativity is inextricably linked to individuality and all of the positive and negative connotations that might have.

Desistance is the process by which people who have offended stop offending (primary desistance) and then take on a personal narrative (Maruna, 2001) that supports a continuing non-offending lifestyle (secondary desistance). Many researchers have noted that change is not a linear process, and that some will offend again on the journey to secondary desistance. In order for desistance from crime to take place, Giordano et al. (2002, pp. 999–1002) suggest that there is a 4-stage process which includes: an openness to change, exposure and reaction to 'hooks' for change (or turning points), the imagining and belief in a 'replacement self' and a change in the way that offending and deviant behaviour is viewed. Maruna (2007, p. 652) sums this up by noting that 'desistance is typically understood to be more than just an absence of crime. Desistance is the maintenance of crime-free behaviour and is ... an active process in itself ... it involves the pursuit of a positive life'. The links between the theoretical discussions on the nature of desistance and the philosophical basis for the GLM are clear, and arts practice has a role to play in accentuating the positive. A desistance-focused approach to

changing offenders' behaviour needs to be empathic, collaborative and person centred (McNeill, 2006), and 'engagement with families, communities, civil society, and the state itself' (McNeill et al., 2012, p. 2) is necessary for desistance to be achieved and maintained. Desistance might be considered a subjective notion that relies on positive self-change, rather than a negative risk-based approach that focuses on offenders' personal deficits.

If agency is at least as crucial as structure in maintaining a positive life course and abstinence from offending, then the outcomes from arts-based activities within the criminal justice system may have an important role to play. A number of reports (e.g., Arts Alliance, 2010; Hughes, 2005) have noted that arts-based interventions seem very effective in producing what are often called soft or 'intermediate outcomes' (Burrows et al., 2013a, 2013b), for example, higher levels of reported self-esteem and positive self-image, and improvements in social skills and relationships. These elements help support social bonds and the development of social capital, which are thought to be essential in the journey to desistance (Farrall, 2004). Indeed Farmer et al. (2012) found that for a cohort of sexual offenders, having a place within a social grouping supported their ongoing desistance from crime.

Goffman (1961) identified over 50 years ago the relationship between removal activities and self-management and identity within the criminal justice system, which are understood as not only being an integral part of artistic endeavour, but also essential elements in desistance narratives. Despite having a long, yet complex, history (Cox and Gelsthorpe, 2012), the relationships between arts and creativity and their place in criminal justice systems have been relatively under researched and under-evaluated (McLewin, 2011). Yet, there are strong reasons to consider arts in criminal justice an area of significance and innovation, which is important in a system that is constantly searching for resource-effective ways of reducing reoffending. The value of engaging prisoners in purposeful activity has long been recognized, and is part of the criteria against which prisons are assessed by the inspectorate. Arts practice most often aims to bring about a positive affective experience for the participant (Parkes and Bilby, 2010) rather than having a direct impact on offending behaviour (although there are notable exceptions to this assertion). The affective experience, which can include a sense of community cohesion, that time is passing at a different pace, or an improved feeling of self-satisfaction and achievement, is linked to the notion of desistance from crime and adheres to the strengths-based approaches of the GLM.

A case study on the impact of arts activities

Research into the links between arts participation and desistance demonstrates the existence of primary goods needed to live a crime-free lifestyle. Data for this case study was gathered over a 3-year period, with formal and informal interviews taking place on regular occasions, and the data was analysed using a thematic content approach. This short case study considers the impact of taking part in long-term visual art classes, as part of the suite of learning and skills activities, on the life sentenced men living in a unit for those with personality disorders in a high-security prison in England and Wales. The group of 11 men, aged between 28 and 50, included those who had been sentenced for sexual offences. The prison has a history of men submitting artistic and creative work to external exhibitions and winning awards. In art classes, which took place 5 times per week, men worked on their own projects and towards qualifications. Numbers in the classes varied, but no more than 8 men signed up for each class, and on each occasion the research team visited no more than 5 men took part in the classes.

The themes that emerged from this case study, of high-risk, sexual and non-sexual offenders, were: cooperating with other people, including prisoners, staff and the regime; considering the role of arts within their sentence; working within set boundaries; and getting acknowledgement for their work. All of these elements are linked to desistance (McNeill et al., 2012). The participants and the art teacher identified that the art classes build hope, and that people's strengths and capabilities are acknowledged and celebrated. This hope can be sustained in a programme that is embedded within the prison setting. There is an ongoing support structure that can help the men achieve their personal and artistic aims over a longer period, re-enforcing Laws and Ward's (2010) suggestion that there are elements within criminal-justice-led activities that replicate the social and psychological capital people experience outside prison.

Cooperation

Cooperating with others in a prison setting was new approach for many of the men. The notions of cooperation, self-management, discussion with others and finding solutions to problems are all part of the regime within the unit, and are drawn into the art classes too. Over half of the men talked about cooperating with others in the art class, with Participant S saying 'you share paint, glue. It sounds stupid, but you know what it's like in here.' As well as sharing the art resources, 4 of the men interviewed had taken part in a collaborative art piece that had been displayed in an art exhibition. The men worked together to decide how the plaques should be hung, and discussed the impact of selecting certain panels to sit next to each other. The art teacher talked of the impact of

this working relationship and noted that it was something that the men had not experienced before, and that discussion was always positive, if sometimes heated.

I had never been involved in a group piece before: being part of something, making something, being profound from found objects, a first. [Participant Ri]

The work has been admired within the prison, and the art class was commissioned to create a piece for the health care unit, again using found objects. This demonstrates positive reinforcement of the men's achievements, from both within and outside the prison environment. This example of celebrating achievement is important in changing participants' views of themselves. It helped to develop their social capital by creating a sense of community within the class.

Despite the positive discussion of cooperation within the art classes, both from the men and the art teacher, there were incidents of sabotage of work.

Recently a piece of art which I had spent a significant period of time producing was defaced by a group of inmates. My initial reaction was anger and the need to distance myself from the problem. However, upon reflection I tried to understand why this attack had been made (indirectly) upon me ... It's such I must accept that challenging issues *will* face me and that I must begin to use the various skills I am learning within treatment to neutralise 'old me' unhelpful thinking and behaviour. Moreover, I must ... continue in my pro-social endeavours (art class) and not allow other people's negative actions to de-rail my own progress. [Participant Ca from his reflection about art, completed at the suggestion of the art teacher]

This demonstrates the negative elements, or non-cooperation, that can happen within the art classes, but it also shows how Participant Ca has used this experience to reflect not only on what he has learnt in the art classes, but also on how this incident can help him see his progress towards a 'new me', an important element in secondary desistance. Taking part in art classes was seen as helping the men in 3 ways: as an important element in their rehabilitative process; as something to help manage their sense of self and identity; and simply as an enjoyable activity in its own right. It was clear from the interviews that these 3 elements were not mutually exclusive and often overlapped.

Helping in the rehabilitative process

The men talked about how art classes helped them to work through issues from the treatment sessions that they are required to attend. Rather than simply being about learning how to cooperate with other people on their

wings, they considered art classes to help them with their own rehabilitation and therapeutic endeavours. Art classes were often a place to practise skills learnt elsewhere. This starts to demonstrate the competing nature of the RNR approaches in prison-run offending behaviour programmes and the GLM approach identified in the art classes.

The men reported that art allows them to think about their past lives, to reflect on their offences and to address their own behaviour. It enabled them to be empathic and to think about the importance of the work that they created, and to equate this with other things and people had meaning. For Participant Ca, the impact of his work is profound and helps him consider the harms he has caused.

[W]hen I put some of myself in that painting it became precious to me, whilst at the same time making me vulnerable. Opening myself up like this is new and to have that destroyed by a group of individuals without a moment's thought left me feeling powerless; that made me reflect that my victims must have felt the same during my [offences]. Only, for me, it was simply a painting that could be rectified, whilst for my victims it was their sense of safety and rights to be treated respectfully ... The emotional turmoil I have recently felt is but nothing compared to the trauma I must have generated in my victims.

For Participant Ch, art helped in changing his attitude about what was important in his life. Through art he realized that he could not continue to destroy things he loved or felt were important. Ch, who had a history of being aggressive and confrontational in prison, said that being allowed to hang his own artwork on the walls stopped him from damaging his cell after disagreements with other prisoners. He reported that he had no desire to destroy his own work because many of the portraits were of his children and he felt he could not destroy them: 'different to a DVD player or PlayStation, you don't give a f*** about those.'

The art teacher is instrumental in helping support this self-reflection, and has given the men the opportunity to write about whether, and how, they feel that taking part in art classes has had an impact on their thoughts, behaviour and states of mind.

I went through a lot of different emotions with this painting, frustration one minute then elation the next, then back to frustration. I think you get the picture. I feel I went on a journey with it, but in the end I felt a kind of peace of mind, a sense of achievement. I feel there are comparisons with the treatment I'm involved in at the unit. That too has been a journey, a journey I'm continuing. I'm heading towards that 'new horizon', more positive, happy and with a more hopeful expectation for my future. [Anonymous reflection on a painting]

For some men, taking part in art classes was difficult as the art teacher often challenges their behaviour and thinking, and not only in relation to the art work they are producing. She is very clear that certain images are not acceptable for depiction, for example, sexualized images of women or children. For Participant B, the environment was frightening because he put his faith in the art teacher and allowed her to guide him, something he had never done before in his life. She set boundaries, but expected mutual trust. This engagement indicated another milestone for B, which was the acceptance of his guilt and the acknowledgement that he ‘deserved to be here and nowhere else’. Taking part in art classes was a step towards ‘coming to terms with what I had done, but it was also a way of improving who I was’. He found that once he had placed trust in another person, he was willing to try with other people too and he found the courage to engage with treatment programmes that he had avoided previously. Engaging with the art meant that B could make links to the rest of his life.

Art classes within the unit helped change the men’s thinking and behaviour. Men who were convicted of violent offences, who carried this violence into the prison regime, started to change their behaviour. Over half of the men interviewed talked about the calming effects of classes and the impact that putting emotions into paint and onto canvas had on them. They often talked of the combined impact of the environment of this part of the prison, taking part in therapeutic activities and art classes. Art allowed them to work out ideas that had been identified in other areas, but also encouraged them to think about new possibilities for change and improvement. Art was identified as a catalyst for change in behaviour.

Helping manage the sense of self and identity

As well as wanting to change and to improve their lives psychologically, some of the men talked about wanting to achieve qualifications through their work. There is a sense that taking part in art classes is used as an instrument in managing self-identity within the wider prison environment.

Participant N talked about wanting to achieve in art classes because qualifications were important to him. Men who had previously taken part in art classes in the prison’s main wing talked of wanting to be able to achieve work like another man, who is considered by a great proportion of the art class to be the best artist in the prison. This sense of competition and wanting to achieve is not unusual for some of the men who took part in the research – 3 talked of being perfectionists who needed to succeed in everything they tried. However, some of the men talked about the trusting relationship they had developed with the art teacher, and how she pushed them to achieve more in their art work, to take part in qualifications, to experiment with different styles of working and to send their work out of the prison for exhibition.

The supportive art class environment enabled the men to take risks, even though this was sometimes difficult to manage. The art teacher noted that she tried to get men to stretch their artistic boundaries and to try new styles or media. She is experienced in working with vulnerable populations, and understands how and when to try to get the men to explore other ideas and techniques and the impact that this might have on other areas of their lives. The arts classes challenge the participants to change their views of themselves and what they can achieve.

For example, M started working in the art classes on controlled but sophisticated images of still lives. He then moved onto larger canvases, painted in acrylic, emulating a local Victorian artist, 'but with my own twist. They're not strictly copies, but I've taken most of what he did and added a bit more.' With the encouragement of the art teacher he is now considering ideas of movement within his work. He is creating abstract works, based on golf swings, with different mark-making materials on the end of willow branches. This relates to his interest in sport and working out. It can be seen that his art continues to support his identity as a man who is interested in keeping fit while in prison.

The example of using art to support a self-identity is expressed clearly here, but other men talked about self-identity in broader terms, not always explaining fully what they meant, but demonstrating a sense of well-being and positivity.

[I] forget about where I am and what I am doing. No one judges you here; you can be yourself.

[Participant N]

[Art is] relaxing and therapeutic, an opportunity to be someone else really. [Participant Ro]

The changing sense of self that is brought about through art is demonstrated. Sometimes this sense of change is about fantasy – about being someone else – but more importantly it is about making steps towards changing what the men understand about themselves, and making change positive.

Art for art's sake

The sense of positive change that taking part in the art classes has had on all of the participants is mixed with a notion of spending time doing something that is absorbing, engaging and ultimately enjoyable. Participants talked about the relaxed and calming environment of the art classes, but they also noted time going at a pace that is unusual. This is often associated with being engaged with an activity that is absorbing and affective (Csikszentihalyi, 2002).

Participant Ri said that art allowed him to relax, something he found a bit ‘hard to do in these places; always got to be on your toes ... not a place to relax’. He described how he forgets the time while in the art classes and feels more ‘chilled’ after the sessions.

Time really just flies by in these classes and that is a great help when time is something that you have far too much of. [Participant B]

The sense of relaxation and of enjoyment is a challenge to many of the men. It requires them, again, to be trusting of the art teacher and others in the class. So while men report enjoying art classes just for their own sake, there is also a notion that this enjoyment comes from a mixture of self-expression, discovery and implementing change which has been learnt in therapeutic activities on the unit. Arts activities that are enjoyable lead to improvements in well-being, and have an impact on levels of aggression and support for pro-social problem-solving.

Getting acknowledgement for their work

Accepting acknowledgement for artwork was often seen as a negotiation between the participants and the art teacher. Praise was often difficult for the men to accept, and criticism met with the same, if not worse, results. Participants Ro and Ch both talked of reacting with violence to criticism in the past, but said that taking part in art classes had helped them address these aggressive outbursts. There was discussion about the trusting relationships built and maintained in the art classes. This was felt to be due to the art teacher’s boundary-setting within the class, which means that all participants have an understanding of what is acceptable and what will win additional praise and encouragement.

While the men were receiving praise in the sessions, they also learnt how to give praise. Four of the men, Ch, Ca, I and M, commented on the expertise of the art teacher.

[Name of art teacher] knows her stuff. She knows what she’s talking about. [Participant M]

[Name of art teacher] gets us to do exercises. She knows how we can mix the paints to get the results we want, but she wants us to do it. Not just show us. Sometimes I just want to get back to it, but this is going to help me get the finish I want. [Participant I]

The art teacher said that positive comments about her teaching were important to her and that it often took people from outside of the prison to elicit these reactions: ‘it’s important that you come in and tell them these

things. We can say how great the exhibition looked, but it's more important coming from someone else. It's powerful that students from an art school are interested in their work'.

There was an acknowledgement that for many of the men it will be some time before they are released and that gaining an art qualification will have little impact on their ability to gain employment after release. However, gaining these qualifications and gaining feedback from outside agencies is important for the self-esteem of the men.

Within this prison, the learning and skills manager notes that:

Art is used to develop prisoners' social skills and gain accreditation, but it is also used to develop a more reflective and independent response to their work, helping them to find links between what they discover both in treatment and in their art practice. [It also helps] ... prisoners to identify the creative distance they have travelled, showing that there is an opportunity for positive change, questioning preconceived ideas and rigid thinking. Art provides the safe space to explore these challenging questions and to make work which allows prisoners to discover that they have a creative eloquence and confidence not seen before.

The men who took part in the research for this project are serving very long sentences, and it will be some time before they are able to practise the skills they have learnt outside of a prison environment. However, this group of men spoke of being positively affected by the artistic activities they took part in. For some this is enough. They have achieved qualifications and external validity and praise for their work. They report their behaviour changing as a consequence of taking part in art classes at the same time as therapy sessions. They use the trusting environment of the art class to practise their skills, but also to test the boundaries. At least 3 of the participants had taken part in art classes earlier in their sentences, but had found the environment too difficult to deal with and had left. Art is making their sentences less difficult for them to manage,

I would be lost without art. Back in the system, on drugs and thinking 'f*** it, f*** them, f*** the lot of it'. [Participant Ch]

For others, art classes are a place to relax and enjoy a bit of time 'outside of the prison zone' [Participant D].

Art classes contributed to each man's journey to desistance by helping them reframe their own narratives. They are part of a community and can succeed in producing work that they are proud of. This work is valued inside the prison and outside. The men value their own work and are proud of it. They were able to give

praise to others about work. In the classes positive relationships were built between the participants and the art teacher, and these relationships were built on mutual trust and learning to take risks in a supported environment.

Evidence to support the claims

While the positive responses to taking part in enrichment activities are demonstrated above, and in the literature gathered in the Arts Alliance's Evidence Library, the evidence to support the impact they may directly have on reoffending rates is not considered in some quarters to be robust. In a recent rapid evidence assessment of the research on arts in criminal justice system (Burrows et al., 2013a, 2013b), only 16 pieces of internationally available research met all of the inclusion criteria, and only 2 pieces of work were Maryland Scalelevel 5 quality - a randomized control trial, (Sherman et al., 1997). The review 'did not find any studies that illustrated a clear relationship between an arts project and a reduction in reoffending' (Burrows, et al., 2013b, p. 12). Other included research acknowledged the link between arts and intermediate outcomes leading to reductions in reoffending, such as improved in-prison behaviour and individual psychological factors, such as lower levels of depression and increased sense of purpose. Despite this identification of elements that lead onto reductions in offending, the assessment could not identify the impact on different groups of offenders. At present, there is no high-quality research evidence to show that taking part in arts activities will change sexual offending behaviour. This is problematic, not only for the psychological and criminological research communities – for example, RNR proponents castigate those involved with GLM by suggesting that there is little empirical evidence to demonstrate that it works in changing offenders' behaviour (Andrews et al., 2011) – but it is also problematic for criminal justice policymakers.

In the policy context of rapid change in the criminal justice system in England and Wales, there is a call for increased development of offenders' vocational skills, which aims to ensure increased levels of employability of former offenders. This does not exclude the use of other types of education and activity within the criminal justice system, nor does it mean not addressing offending behaviour. There is an acknowledgement of the important role for other types of learning within the criminal justice system that might improve physical and mental health. This, along with the belief that learning opportunities need to address responsivity and diversity issues (NOMS, 2012), suggests that there is a role for arts activities within the criminal justice system.

There is a need to evidence the impact that the arts have on offenders' motivation, intentions and journey to desisting from crime and realizing their potential as crime-free citizens. The National Offender Management Service states in the most recent documentation that it will concentrate on commissioning services

that have a proven track record of reducing reoffending. Evidence based on peer-reviewed, quantitative research will take precedence over ‘case studies and anecdotal reports’ (NOMS, 2012, p. 8). It does, however, recognize that for many interventions it will not be possible to gather a level of quantitative data that is methodologically robust. This is particularly true of new and innovative projects delivered by smaller providers, and it is likely that many arts practices fit within the categorization of small and innovative projects, yet this should not stop arts providers from endeavouring to capture data that will help evaluate outcomes. Data need to be able to measure outcomes appropriately, in the light of the aims and objectives of a project, but quantitative data alone cannot accurately measure the outcomes of projects with small numbers of participants, and which take place over a short period of time, as often arts activities in the criminal justice system often do.

As desistance is a complex notion, so too are the ways in which it can be measured. Identifying primary desistance – stopping offending – can be done by collecting reconviction data on those who have taken part in arts-based activities. Identifying movement towards secondary desistance is more difficult and needs not only to be evidenced quantitatively, but also qualitatively. Identifying changes in behaviour and attitudes by using reconviction data and changes in psychometric test scores is very useful, but this needs to be supported by the changing narratives that former offenders tell about themselves. It is important to capture the movement away from an identity of an offender, to one of a crime-free life where primary goods are met. Evidence is tentatively starting to demonstrate that arts practice, which sits firmly within a strengths-based GLM approach, is an approach to help facilitate change.

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