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Weaver, Beth (2013) *Co-producing desistance*. In: Gloucestershire PT Staff Conference, 2013-06-04 - 2013-06-05, Gloucester. (Unpublished)

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# Co-producing Desistance

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# Aims

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

# What is desistance?

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

# Dynamics of Desistance #1

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

# Dynamics of Desistance #2

(for an overview see Weaver and McNeill 2010)

- **Triggers**

- Openness to change: negative events/experiences, advancing maturity, new relationships / roles.

- **Maintenance**

- Characterised by increased agency, shift in attitudes, values & beliefs; sustained by new social and economic opportunities: family and work: embed change, realise / consolidate identities

- **Motivations and Supports**

- Stability, belonging, recognition, health, well-being, being listened to and heard, opportunities for social participation (Barry 2006, 2007).

# So what can we do about it?

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

# Individual co-production

(see McNeill and Weaver 2010)

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



# Working with families

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

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

# Group co-production

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

(see for example Weaver and McCulloch 2012)

# Collective Co-production: communities

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

# Cooperatives and mutuals

(Weaver and Nicholson 2012)

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

# Concluding comments

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

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