Transition to Non-Offender Self-Narratives: *The Emotional Closure Model of Desistance*

A thesis

submitted to the Victoria University of Wellington in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science

in Forensic Psychology

by

Lydia Littlejohns

Victoria University of Wellington

2017

ABSTRACT

Although studies have shown that a transition from an 'offender' to a 'non-offender' self-narrative appears to be associated with desistance, the psychological mechanisms involved in this transition phase have not been explored adequately. This may be because desistance research has primarily been conducted from a criminological perspective, thus social factors (e.g., employment or relationships) have been the focus of enquiry. What little psychologically focused forensic literature there is is held back by the dominance of the cognitive perspective. Because of this, the role that emotions may play in psychological changes that must take place in order for a person to successfully transition to a non-offender is overlooked. Advances in clinical neuroscience research are increasingly highlighting the significance of emotional processes in psychological functioning. In this thesis I introduce a psychological model of self-narrative by Peter Goldie, who incorporates emotions into his description of the psychological processes that constitute self-narratives. Importantly, Goldie also describes a mechanism of transition from a maladaptive (non-agentic) to an adaptive (agentic) self-narrative. Application of Goldie's conceptualisation may help to understand how a person who commits offences due to a lack of agency could increase their personal agency and desist. However, as I discuss in chapter one, some persons who commit offences act in a goal-directed manner and thus not due to a lack of personal agency. I will extend Goldie's conceptualisation of this transition mechanism in order to apply it to the self-narratives of offenders. The adaptation I make to the conceptualisation, which I term, the *Emotional Closure Model (ECM)*, crucially, may explain the transition from

offender to non-offender self-narratives for those who both lack *agency* as well as those who lack *motivation* to desist. Improved understanding of the psychological mechanisms involved in the transition phase to non-offender self-narratives will have far reaching implications for psychological treatment programmes.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Table of Contents

Thesis outline

This thesis is divided into six chapters. Chapter one is a review of the narrative desistance literature, in which I highlight three key conceptual issues. Firstly, narrative theories of desistance lack a psychological explanation of the transition phase from offender to non-offender. Secondly, the conceptualisation of agency as a moral process is problematic because it precludes explanation of offenders who exhibit agency but have no intention of desisting. Thirdly, I suggest that the conceptualisation of emotions within forensic literature is impoverished, and should be corrected so as to include them into the discussion of psychological processes. Thus, acknowledging the role that emotions play in psychological processes may increase our understanding of the psychological mechanisms involved in self-narrative change and desistance.

In chapter two I describe a psychological model of self-narratives, developed by the philosopher Peter Goldie. He provides a thorough discussion of how self-narratives are constructed and the function they have in our lives. I propose that Goldie could add depth to the understanding of desistance narratives by delving beyond the social implications of self-narratives to the psychological mechanisms that constitute them and are involved in identity and behaviour change processes. In developing his theory, Goldie draws from a wide range of literature including philosophy, research into emotions, neuroscience, clinical case studies and narrative theory. Considering the recent literature (reviewed in chapter one) highlighting the need to include emotions into explanations of psychological functioning (Ward, 2017), what is particularly noteworthy about Goldie's conceptualisation is the

emphasis he places on emotions in processes that constitute the self-narrative. He suggests that emotions are fundamentally involved in self-narrative processes that support the development of character traits and virtues, and personal development more generally. Goldie also describes how a person can experience an emotional gap in their self-narrative when emotional distress has been experienced, which must be repaired in order for the person to move on with their lives (i.e., re-establish a sense of agency).

In chapter three I extend Goldie's model of self-narratives and outline the *Emotional Closure Model (ECM)* of the desistance phase between a person identifying as 'offender' and 'non-offender.' I describe how this model could be applied to offenders who lack agency as well as those who lack motivation to desist. In chapter four I discuss the theoretical implications of the ECM for narrative desistance theories, suggesting that it adds value in terms of unpacking the psychological processes involved in the transition phase between offender and non-offender. In chapter five I discuss treatment implications of the ECM, using a standard group treatment programme for high-risk violent offenders to illustrate the implications. Finally, in chapter six I shall evaluate the ECM according to a number of epistemic criteria (such as consilience with other research and practical utility) which were developed for evaluating theories in science (Hooker, 1987).

PROLOGUE

I was inspired to investigate the process of offender self-narrative reconceptualisation due to the potential implications for offender treatment programmes. A more sophisticated understanding of the psychological processes involved in a person transitioning from identifying as an offender to a non-offender, could be relatively easily incorporated into treatment for offenders and could have far reaching benefits. Ultimately, improved treatment programmes will lead to reduced recidivism rates and fewer children being caught up in cycles of offending without fair chances at a successful prosocial life and the opportunities for work, travel and freedom that this brings.

During the course of writing this thesis I have commenced work in a treatment programme for high-risk violent offenders, which has provided a context within which I have been able to inbed the theoretical investigation.

CHAPTER ONE

Literature Review

In this chapter I identify three conceptual issues within narrative theories of desistance. Firstly, that narrative theories have not accounted for the psychological mechanisms involved in forming a new self-narrative. I discuss research that suggests that the cognitive focus may have held back developments in this area. Secondly, I suggest that the moral perspective of agency has precluded an exploration of agentic criminal behaviour (i.e., offending which is goal directed), and what can be done to support desistance in this instance. Thirdly, I discuss the emerging research on emotions and psychological functioning. I propose that increased recognition of the role of emotions in psychological processes may further our understanding of the psychological mechanisms involved in forming a desistance self-narrative.

Narrative theories propose that desistance is a process of change in self-conception, whereby individuals cease to identify as 'offenders' and develop 'non-offender' identities (e.g., Bushway & Paternoster, 2011; 2014; Farrall, 2005; King, 2013*a*; 2013*b;* Maruna 2001; Paternoster & Bushway, 2009; Vaughan, 2007*).* Narrative desistance theories are the most recent of the triad of desistance perspectives and combine elements of earlier *maturational reform* and *social bonds* theories. Maturational reform, or 'ontogenic,' theories (e.g., Glueck & Glueck, 1940; McNeil & Whyte, 2007; Rocque, 2015) use well-established links between the reduction of certain types of offending with age, or the 'age-crime curve' (Moffit,

1993) as their basis. Social bonds, or 'sociogenic,' theories stem from social control theories (Farrington, 1992) and suggest that social ties to family, a stable partner, employment or educational programmes can explain reduction in criminal behaviour over time. This perspective on desistance proposes that as the stakes rise in a prosocial life (e.g., with marriage or employment), criminal behaviour reduces because of its threat to these perceived benefits. Thus, according to sociogenic theories, desistance lies in external opportunities that are presented to an individual.

Rather than rely solely on external explanations for change (as sociogenic theories do), or on developmental explanations (as ontogenetic theories do), narrative theories explain desistance as located in the interface of the individual (who exercises personal agency) and their environment (e.g., social, educational and cultural groups and opportunities; Vaughan, 2007). The narrative perspective of desistance, developed from narrative identity theory, offers an explanation for the evolving sense of identity over the life course and emphasizes the power of identity to guide and explain behaviour (Matsueda, 1992; Reynolds & Ceranic, 2007; Sparks & Shepherd, 1992). There is a well-established link between narrative identities and the aetiology, continuation and cessation of criminal activity (e.g., Brownfield & Thompson, 2005; Maruna, Lebel, Mitchell & Naples, 2004; Matsueda, 1992). Maruna and Farrall (2004) conceptualise desistance as comprising two distinct phases, *primary desistance* and *secondary desistance*. While *primary desistance* refers to any period of non-offending in a criminal career, *secondary desistance* refers to the progression from non-offending behaviour to having taken on the identity of a "changed person." That is, secondary desistance involves not only behaviour change, but the fashioning of an identity based on living a prosocial life.

Self-narratives

Outside of the desistance literature, self-narratives, which have coherent links from past events and behaviour to current experience, have been shown to be adaptive, and are associated with increased wellbeing (Baerger & McAdams, 1999) and lower suicide rates (Chandler & Proulx, 2006). Others claim that self-narratives allow us to experience a sense of purpose (McAdams, 2001) and coherence (Bruner, 1987; 2002; McAdams, 1988; 1997; 2006; Polkinghorne, 1988). Pals (2006) claims that a coherent self-narrative can also be especially helpful when processing difficult experiences. Giddens (1991) comments that while life goals give us direction, self-narratives provide shape and coherence to our lives. Stevens (2012) summarises the perspective of narrative theory aptly, explaining that as one's life unfolds:

> one creates and internalises a self-narrative or life story, which provides unity, purpose and meaning, and conjoins, in a personally (and probably socially) acceptable and plausible way, the disparate elements of one's life and the past to the present. To enable this narrative to 'keep going,' one may have to refine certain aspects of it in the light of new plot developments, or rhetorically emphasize, interpret and revise key auto-biographical events, in order to craft a consistent and temporally coherent storyline ('emplotment') and so justify why it was necessary (*not* causally, but morally, socially, psychologically) that the life had gone a particular way' (Bruner, 1990: 121, emphasis in original). Thus, 'the whips and scorns of time', mistakes, lessons learned from those mistakes, turning points, pleasures, triumphs and serendipitous incidents all life stories contain must be, consciously or unconsciously, incorporated, edited, evaluated and refashioned to reflect the desired overarching life story

and adequately express the (it is to be hoped) wisdom, self-awareness, resilience and emotional maturity such significant life events will have conferred (p. 528).

As offenders typically lead volatile lifestyles, often experiencing extreme levels of distress, for example, emotional and physical abuse (Schlosser, 2015), the ability to form a coherent self-narrative could be particularly significant for this population. Aligned with Pals' (2006) research, parallel research in criminology shows that self-narratives of offenders seem to be helpful in enabling an individual to account for past antisocial behaviour and to make sense of how they have changed their lifestyles to become "reformed selves" (e.g., Giordano et al., 2002; Laub & Sampson, 2003; Vaughan, 2007). Furthermore, Presser (2009) has argued that narrative is valuable as an organizing concept for criminological theory because it applies to both individuals and aggregates and is 'methodologically viable,' meaning that narratives are accessible and readily collected (p. 190).

Transition to a non-offender self-narrative

In what is widely regarded as the most important study of its kind, Maruna (2001), strongly influenced by the work of McAdams (1988; 2006) on identity, used narrative theory to investigate the process of identity reformation of individuals who had committed crimes, some of whom had desisted, others of whom had persisted with criminal careers. Maruna found that persons who desisted from crime had fashioned what he termed 'redemptive scripts'. Individuals with redemptive scripts shifted from seeing themselves as an antisocial person, destined to a life of offending, to viewing themselves as having discovered their 'true natures,' which were inherently good. Maruna reported that redemptive scripts were characterised

by the presence of personal agency. Those with redemptive scripts tended to seek out opportunities for personal growth and, importantly, they believed that their life had meaning. Individuals who had persisted with crime, on the other hand had markedly different self-narratives, which Maruna termed 'condemnatory scripts.' Condemnatory scripts, by way of contrast, lacked any sense of personal agency. Those with condemnatory scripts believed their lives to be predetermined, by chance or childhood experiences, and, although they expressed a desire to desist, they saw no hope for themselves living a crime-free life. Essentially Maruna's theory is one of moral agency, whereby individuals with 'redemptive scripts' mine their past for glimpses of *good* which they can attribute to their 'true selves' and use to re-establish pro-social ways of acting.

As a moral interpretation of agency is taken, Maruna's (2001) study does not account for those offenders who desist due to factors other than morality. Nor does it explain the behaviour of offenders who possess agency but have no interest in desisting from crime. (The inability of the moral perspective of agency to explain goal-oriented offending is an important point to which I will return later in this thesis). Despite this set back (which is common to narrative desistance literature generally, not only Maruna's theory), Maruna's work has inspired many studies that have supported the importance of a shift in self-narrative on a person's ability to desist (e.g., Barry, 2006; Marsh, 2011; Presser, 2009).

Narrative theories may be methodologically viable and provide a useful framework for linking the concepts of agency and structure (e.g., Farrall, 2005; Maruna, 2001; Vaughan, 2007), however, as Serin and Lloyd (2009) criticise, the transition phase from an 'offender' narrative to a 'desistance' narrative (or the transition to *secondary desistance*) has received little scrutiny and thus remains

'veiled in mystery' (p. 348). This point is reinforced by Healy (2010; 2014) who criticises that without an explanation of the transition phase, the practical utility of narrative explanations of desistance is limited.

Conceptualisations of the desistance phase

There have been many conceptualisations in the narrative desistance literature of the transition phase from 'offender' to 'non-offender.' However, none of the narrative theories of desistance have attempted to explain the mechanisms underpinning this transition (Healy, 2014). Laub and Sampson (2001) describe a conceptualisation of the transition phase which is influenced by their earlier (1993) social bonds theory of desistance, as *turning points* at which continuing with crime simply becomes the less attractive option. Giordano et al. (2002) incorporate personal agency into their conceptualisation of the desistance phase by suggesting that the individual is not solely at the mercy of external influences and that the individual must be *open to change* before they can benefit from external opportunities (or *hooks*), such as marriage or an employment opportunity. Thus Giordano et al. expand upon Laub and Sampson's conceptualisation of a *turning point*, adding that this crucial junction involves a process of internal change. McNeil and Whyte (2007) construe this junction as a phase involving natural maturation, social bonds and narrative change but do not unpack the processes involved. Healy (2014) proposes that the process of forming a desistance narrative is enabled through being able to first *imagine a new future self*. Although conceptualised slightly differently in each account, what is common to all these theories is the idea that there is a 'desistance phase' between identifying as an offender and a 'non-offender.' However, none of these theories adequately explain the mechanisms behind the desistance moment. That is, none describe the processes that enable an individual

to become *open to change*, arrive at a *turning point*, form a *redemptive script* or simply '*mature* out' of crime.

The cognitive influence on narrative desistance literature

Further investigation into narrative theories of desistance reveals that there is a focus on agency as a cognitive process. Giordano et al. (2002) propose that a 'hook for change' (p. 992) is enabled by a *cognitive* shift and an accompanying identity transformation. Laub and Sampson (2003) follow suit by conceptualising agency as a function of choice, and identity shifts as essentially cognitive in nature. This viewpoint is evident in the remark: "What is most striking in the narratives we collected is the role of human agency, or choice, in desistance from crime and deviance…" (p. 141). Giordano et al. underline the focus on cognition in their summary of emerging theories of desistance: "Our stance on the desistance process contrasts with emerging theories of desistance that emphasize cognitive transformations or identity shifts as necessary for desistance to occur…" (p. 278). In Laub and Sampson's (2003) amended theory of desistance, they focus on maturation and transition points but note that personal choices interact with these naturally occurring processes during transition points. Laub and Sampson explain that this interaction results in *cognitive shifts* and a *new sense of self and identity* as the individual desists. Clearly, here the emphasis is cognitive and reflects an interpretation of desistance as a purely rational or cognitive process. This is also seen in further desistance literature, for example, Farrall and Bowling (1999) conceptualise agency as *choice*, commenting, '…the process of desistance is one that is produced through an interplay between individual choices, and a range of wider social forces….' (p. 261).

As stated earlier, what has been missing from desistance research is an explanation of the psychological processes underpinning the transition to desistance. This may be because most desistance research has been conducted from a criminological rather than psychological perspective, thus social factors have been the focus of investigation. A potential reason as to why there has been a lack of understanding regarding the psychological processes involved in desistance is the social control influence on the interpretation of agency within criminological research (Paternoster, Bachman, Bushway, Kerrison & O'Connell, 2015). The dominance of the social control perspective has meant that agency is interpreted in an overly rational manner, which, Paternoster et al. (2015) say lacks the "basic components of strong human agency – intentionality, reflexivity and the capacity for self-examination or monitoring" (p. 3). Mackenzie (2009) also criticises the rational interpretation of agency, noting that it implies that a person should only be considered fully responsible for their actions when in control of their emotions. She says that this notion is engrained in our minds, as evidenced by a *crime of passion* being deemed somewhat less condemnable than a crime that is the result of a well thought through plan. The separation of mind from body and emotions has "lead to the implication that one is only an agent when one can rationally overcome their embodiment" (MacKenzie, 2009, p. 3). Hollis (1977) also objects to the idea that agency is a purely cognitive process, stating that a person "… acts freely, only if he has good reasons for what he does (and no better reasons for doing something else). He has good reasons, only if he acts in his ultimate interests. His ultimate interests derive from what he essentially is" (p. 101).

Reconceptualising agency within narrative theories of desistance as neither entirely cognitive, nor moral but as involving intention that arises from primary

desires and their associated emotions, could further our understanding of how agency is implicated in desistance. A conceptualisation that includes emotions, which are what give us reason to move toward a particular goal (Elster, 1999; Hollis, 1977; MacKenzie, 2009; Ward, 2017), would be more in-keeping with the established definition of agency, as acting in a way that is in aligned with personal goals (Durrant & Ward, 2015). Neither the moral nor the purely cognitive conceptualisations of agency can explain why individuals, who do not lack agency (i.e., the ability to act in a goal-directed manner), offend. Individuals who possess agency, and use it to commit offences have been defined by Ward and Hudson (1998) as 'self-regulated' offenders (whom I will return to discuss further in subsequent chapters). The cognitive and moral interpretations of agency that narrative accounts of desistance have taken, have thus far not offered an explanation of how the self-regulated type of offender transitions to a desistance self-narrative. Thus, agency may be better conceptualised as an emotional-cognitive rather than simply a cognitive or moral process. The implication of this move for narrative desistance literature would be that agency would be conceptualised as involving a motivational component. An emotional-cognitive conceptualisation of agency could thus account for why a person who possesses agency may offend. Thus, while desistance for some may be supported through increased capacity to act in a goal directed manner (i.e., increased agency), for others, it may require finding other means of meeting their needs.

Emotions and psychological functioning

Emotions do not only help enhance improve our understanding of agency, emerging research is indicating that they could also guide us toward a more sophisticated understanding of the psychological processes underpinning action.

That is, research is revealing that emotions underlie our reason for undertaking any action, due to their crucial role in the establishment of meaning (e.g., values, attitudes, life plans, etc.; Ward, 2017). As Elster (1999) sums up, 'without emotions, we would have no reason for living, nor for that matter, for committing suicide. Emotions are the stuff of life' (p. 403). Far from being the product of cognition, research is increasingly bringing emotions to the fore as primary, adaptive processes in all facets of human functioning, involved fundamentally in sense-making (Thompson & Stapleton, 2009; Ward, 2017), values, beliefs and meaning (e.g., Amstadter & Vernon, 2008; Archer, 2000; Goldie, 2012; Varga, 2014; Ward, 2017). In a comprehensive review of the conceptualisation of emotions within the forensic literature, Ward (2017) suggests that emotions have been sidelined within the correctional area due to a preoccupation with risk, the modulisation of treatment programmes and because correctional practice has been overly driven by pragmatic concerns. Ward argues that far from being of secondary importance to cognition, emotions should be considered to play a critical role in human behaviour as "cognition is guided by emotion right from the start" (p. 7). Empirical neuroscience research (reviewed by Thompson & Stapleton, 2009; Ward, 2017) as well as considerable theoretical work (Archer, 2000; Furtak, 2010; Goldie, 2012) provides strong arguments that emotion and cognition are highly and necessarily interconnected processes and that the distinction between them has been exaggerated by cognitivist theories.

As Ward (2017) discusses in his paper, emotions are evaluative phenomena and as such have an adaptive function in guiding us towards wellbeing-enhancing situations and resources, and away from threatening or disadvantageous situations. As emotions help to classify situations as advantageous or disadvantageous, our

emotional response to situations will impact on whether or not we seek out similar situations or avoid them in the future. Thus emotions are fundamental to learning and to deciding upon actions in the future.

Emotions are inherently motivational as their function is to highlight the needs and values associated with different courses of action. The experience of emotion signals that a need or value is obstructed (by negative emotions) or, alternatively, is recognised (by positive emotions). The Good Lives Model (Ward & Brown, 2004) conceptualises eleven universal primary human needs. Ward and Brown (2004) describes that these primary needs are central to what motivates all human behaviour. Recent research on emotions (Ward, 2017) adds that movement toward or away from these primary needs is what elicits positive or negative emotions, respectively. Aligned with this view, Archer (2000) states that emotions arise from interactions between a subject's concerns (needs or values) and the actual or anticipated consequences of an event. This also aligns with Turner and Stets' (2005) theory of emotion, which asserts that emotional expression varies in degree of intensity according to the degree of mismatch between expectations and experience. This hypothesis explains why we may feel 'annoyance' on some occasions and 'rage' on others. Outside of the forensic literature, emotions are increasingly regarded as essential to change (Greenberg, 2008; Pavio, 2013; Ward, 2017), for which an experience of emotional distress over one's current experience may be necessary (Serin, Mailloux & Kennedy, 2007). This proposition aligns with the idea that emotional tension is what compels us to action. Thus emotions indicate what is important to us.

Emotions are not only vital to understanding our own needs and values, but emotional competency is also essential for understanding the reasons why other

people act the way they do and to effectively communicate our own point of view and attitudes to others. Emotional states, as communicated through facial expressions, are essential for our survival. As human beings are 'ineluctably social beings' (Baker, 2016), we rely on social interaction for survival and reproduction. According to Fredrickson's (2004) *broaden and build* theory of emotions, positive emotions have a crucial role in learning and integrating material by fuelling creativity and ingenuity. Fredrickson argues that it is not only negative emotions that have survival value (i.e., in threat detection). She claims that positive emotions are required for learning new strategies and skills and thus also have evolutionary advantages. Thus finely tuned emotional expressions (understanding) are arguably the foundation upon which social connection is enabled and safety is ensured (Porges, 2011).

This research on emotions aligns with the prospection theory, which proposes that human beings are able to act in accordance with future goals rather than simply being driven by past events and that imaginative and affective skills are essential components of this psychological capacity (Seligman, Railton, Baumeister & Sripada, 2016). Thus nuanced conceptualisations of emotions indicate that they are fundamentally involved in psychological processes and inseparable from cognition (functionally and anatomically). This research suggests that emotions arise as signals to our needs (or fundamental concerns), rather than being purely derived from cognitive processes. This literature also suggests that emotions guide learning, through responding with positive or negative emotions, in differing valence, which influences whether or not we seek out similar situations in the future. Positive emotions may also have a particular role in enabling the psychological capacity to integrate new information. Thus if we wish to further understand the processes

involved in the psychological mechanisms of desistance, emotions should also be considered as part of these processes.

Further support for involving emotions in psychological investigations of desistance is found in the emerging research on the effectiveness of emotionally focused therapies. With regard to offender populations, therapies such as acceptance commitment therapy (ACT) is increasingly being found to be effective for reducing propensity for violence (e.g., Zarling, Bannon & Berta, 2017; Zarling, Lawrence & Marchman, 2015) and treating substance addictions (Lanza, Garcia, Lamelas & González-Menéndez, 2014), which are both commonly associated with offending behaviour (Andrew & Bonta, 2010).

The current status of emotions in desistance literature

In desistance literature the importance of emotions in the change process is typically only indirectly referred to. McNeil and Whyte (2007) infer the importance of emotion in their reference to the role of meaning: ". . . desistance resides somewhere in the interfaces between age and maturation, developing social bonds associated with certain life transitions and the subjective meanings that individuals attach to these bonds and transitions" (p. 181). However, they do not explore the processes of how one attaches meaning to a relationship or transition point. McNeil and Whyte discuss motivation and readiness to change, stressing factors such as the desire to avoid negative consequences, wanting to lead a quieter life, and embarking on a committed personal relationship. However, as with the process of attaching meaning, these factors are not expanded upon. Farrall (2003) implies that emotions play a role in desistance, distinguishing between offenders who are confident, optimistic or pessimistic about their desistance likelihood. He found that

'confidents' had shorter criminal careers than 'optimists' or 'pessimists.' While these self-appraisals clearly have emotional underpinnings, emotions are not mentioned as important aspects of these categories. In a later article, Farrall and Calverley (2006) noted that negative emotions (regret, shame and guilt) are replaced with positive emotions (hope, pride and a sense of achievement) as desistance occurs. However, although Farrall and Calverley show a rare interest in the influence of emotions on desistance, their criminological perspective means that they only discuss the role of emotions in terms of their social, rather than psychological value. That is, they do not talk about the important role of emotions in psychological human functioning (outlined above) and thus the implications of emotions in psychological mechanisms of desistance. Similarly, Giordano, Schroeder and Cernkovich (2007) modified their earlier (2002) theory of cognitive transformation to acknowledge the role that emotions play in desistance. Giordano et al. (2007) emphasise the need for 'openness to change' before a 'hook for change' (such as a pro-social relationship, children or a satisfying job) can take effect. That openness, they say, can be impeded by negative affective states. They note that emotional reactions to ongoing difficulties that offenders face provide a proximal, mediating link to continued involvement in crime. They stress the influence that anger and depression have on persistent offending and go on to suggest that affective states may be one of the most important factors for supporting desistance. Giordano et al. claim that emotions are involved in well-known desistance factors such as a good marriage or religious coping. They propose that marriage can provide the emotional openness needed for hooks for change to take hold and desistance to be successful. Giordano et al. also hypothesise that religious involvement may be helpful as it can replace illicit substances (which would have impeded the individual's ability to desist) as an

emotional coping mechanism. Although Giordano et al. (2007) suggest that emotions play a role in the psychological mechanisms of desistance, a thorough investigation has been lacking (Healy, 2014).

Conclusions

The exclusion of emotions from conceptualisations of agency and psychological function has arguably held back developments in further understanding these processes. If agency is defined as acting in a goal-directed manner rather than simply in terms of cognitive processes, then it can be understood to involve a motivational aspect. This is important as desistance requires motivation (a notion which I will return to in later chapters) as well as capacity.

Incorporating emotions in the conceptualisation of psychological functioning could also enable a more nuanced understanding of processes that need to occur for behaviour change. A better understanding of the mechanisms involved in desistance could have far reaching consequences in terms of better informing psychological offender treatment programmes and reducing recidivism rates.

In the following chapter I will examine Goldie's (2012) psychological model of self-narratives. Importantly, Goldie's model of self-narratives also includes a conceptualisation of how a self-narrative can transition from maladaptive to adaptive, which support agentic functioning. Goldie also includes a conceptualisation of how self-narratives can become maladaptive in a way which does not impede a person's agency but may lead them to act in ways that are inappropriate. I will expand upon this idea in subsequent chapters to suggest that it provides an explanation of self-narratives of offenders who commit goal-directed offending. I continue to suggest ways in which offenders with this particular maladaptive self-narrative could find motivation to desist.

CHAPTER TWO

Goldie's Model of Self-Narratives

The previous chapter highlighted the lack of understanding of the desistance phase, which, while identified in many theories of desistance, has not been explored. It was noted that this may be due to the criminological perspective, which most desistance research is undertaken from and which focuses on social factors associated with desistance (such as relationships and employment). A psychological understanding of this phase could be valuable as it can inform psychological treatment programmes for offenders. Due to the emerging research on the importance of emotions in psychological functioning, and to the notable exclusion of emotions in the forensic literature (see Ward, 2017), a discussion of psychological processes should involve a thorough description not only of the cognitive aspects, but also emotional components of these processes. Thus there is a need for a comprehensive understanding of the psychological processes (which involve emotions) that are involved in self-narratives, and that may be involved in the self-narrative transition phase from 'offender' to 'non-offender.'

The following chapter outlines a theory of self-narratives by Goldie (2012). As Goldie's perspective is psychological, rather than criminological, he provides a thorough description of the constitution and evolution of self-narratives. Importantly, he draws from a range of literature and incorporates a thorough discussion of the role of emotions in the psychological processes that are involved in self-narrative formation.

Goldie's model of self-narratives

Goldie steers a middle ground between anti-narrativists, who assert that the idea of self-narratives is problematic, and possibly harmful, (e.g., Strawson, 2009) and narrativists who claim that self-narratives constitute the self (e.g., Schectman, 1996). Goldie's view is aligned with Baker's (2016) conclusion that self-narrative researchers should concern themselves with the 'characterisation question' rather than the 'identity question.'[1] Goldie says that the self-narrative is essentially a sense making mechanism through which we interpret and respond to the world around us. Thus, while not actually constituting the self, the self-narrative is an essential part of a fully functioning human being. This conceptualisation fits with research on emotions, in terms of communication, motivation and memory (see Ward, 2017). It also aligns with research on prospection, in that our minds function to influence our behaviour both by looking back at the past and forward to the future (e.g., Seligman et al., 2016). It should be noted that Goldie uses the term 'narrative sense of self,' rather than 'self-narrative.' This subtle variation in term emphasises the dynamic nature of self-narratives, indicating that they are not fixed but are essentially about how one's current self-conceptualisation is influenced by past experiences and, in turn, influences future experience. Throughout this discussion I will continue to use the term 'self-narrative' with a view to maintaining consistency throughout this thesis. However, Goldie's term provides a useful frame to understand self-narratives as a sense of ourselves with a past, a present and a future, that arises from reflection, imagination and present experience.

---

[1] Schechtman (1996) differentiates between the 'characterisation question,' and the strictly narrativist concern with the 'numerical identity question' (p.73), or the question of identity itself (Baker, 2016, p. 2). Baker asserts that the abililty to form a self-narrative presupposes a self, and therefore narrative research should rightly concern itself with the former question only. A middle ground between narrativist and anti-narrativist viewpoints has thus been touted as the most functional conceptualisation (e.g., Baker, 2016; Goldie, 2012).

Goldie draws upon narrative theory to investigate some of the complexities of self-narratives, which, he describes, bear a natural resemblance to publically narrated narratives. He postulates that narratives typically have three key features that, he explains, give them their special explanatory, revelatory and expressive power. These key features are: coherence, meaning and emotional and evaluative import. The first characteristic feature, *coherence*, distinguishes narratives from mere lists or annals, in which events are not necessarily connected and do not possess, what Ricoeur (1984) terms 'emplotment.' Like narratives, lists and annals are separate from what they represent and thus they also have a referential dimension. However, what is special about a narrative is that it is a representation of events, which is formed and ordered by the characters within the narrative. Thus narratives are perspectival (a point which I will expand upon presently). The second characteristic feature, *meaning*, spells out why the characters in the narrative acted in certain ways. He uses the example:

In spite of being a loving father, Mr Jones shouted at his child *because he was having a stressful time at work and could not stand his manager*.

Thus narratives allow the reader or audience to make sense of the behaviour of the characters within it. Finally, and crucially for Goldie's conceptualisation, a narrative has *emotional and evaluative* import. Emotional and evaluative import tells us how the characters within the narrative interpret situations. Thus narratives give us insight into the motivations of the characters within them. He uses the following example to illustrate this point:

Mrs Jones was silent in her first meeting with her consultant, who had a domineering manner.

This sentence suggests that Mrs Jones was silent because of the consultant's domineering manner, giving us some depth of understanding of Mrs Jones' situation.[2] Goldie stipulates that, like publically narrated narratives, self-narratives involve *coherence*, in that we have a sense of having a past, present and future; *meaning* in that we can reflect on our past experience to understand the reason behind the behaviour of ourselves and others; and *emotional import*, in that our emotional responses to lived and imagined experiences (explained later) guide our learning and the types of experiences we seek out in future. Thus, Goldie proposes that when a self-narrative involves coherence, meaning and emotional import, it can provide a psychological conception of the self through time and across contexts, through which we make sense of our lives and our place in the world around us.

The role of perspectives

Goldie says that to further understand the influence of narrative on our lives, we must have a thorough understanding of the role that perspectives play. He points out that publically narrated narratives have internal (character) and external (narrator) perspectives. He uses the idea of character and narrator to describe the interplay of internal and external perspectives in self-narratives. While the *internal*

---

[2] Goldie notes that we do not, however, *know* that this is in fact the reason for Mrs Jones' silence. Refuting the possibility that this uncertainty diminishes the worth of narratives, he asserts that the inherent ambiguity of narratives parallels the inherent complexities of the psychological processes that constitute *self*-narratives. Thus, Goldie states, the ambiguity of narratives further advances our appreciation of the complexities self-narratives.

perspective is the present moment, conscious experience of a situation, the *external perspective* is the perspective from which we reflect on the experience. This, Goldie refers to as narrative thinking. If we could not think like this, he argues, we would have only a stream of consciousness from the internal perspective. Narrative thinking weaves together past experiences and influences what we perceive the future to hold, thus what plans we make, what actions we take and ultimately, what experiences we create that we later reflect upon and incorporate into our self-narratives. As such, narrative thinking (or the external perspective) plays an essential role in the formation of self-narratives and has profound implications for our experiences of life.

Literary devices

Goldie continues to draw upon narrative theory to enrich our comprehension of how the self-narrative is formed and evolves. Goldie proposes that the interplay of perspectives between an internal character and external narrator or audience is at the heart of narrative thinking about the past. This interplay between perspectives is what supports the dynamic nature of the self-narrative. Goldie uses two key literary devices to illustrate this; *dramatic irony* and *free indirect style* (FIS).

Dramatic irony. Dramatic irony comes into play when there is a difference between the internal and external perspectives (i.e., there is an ironic gap). This ironic gap can be epistemic, evaluative or emotional in nature. He illustrates the meaning of dramatic irony by using examples from its theatrical origins. In theatrical productions, dramatic irony plays out when the audience (an external perspective) has a different understanding from that of the character's (an internal perspective). That is, there is an *ironic gap* between what the external perspective (the audience)

thinks, feels or knows about something compared to the internal perspective of the character. The gap can also be doubly or triply ironic when more than one element differs between perspectives (i.e. evaluation, knowledge or emotional import).

Goldie illustrates dramatic irony with well-known pieces of literature that take advantage of this device. One example is Shakespeare's King Lear, where Gloucester, recently blinded and wishing to take his own life, asks Edgar to take him to the Cliffs of Dover. Edgar leads Gloucester to falsely believe he is at the cliff edge by convincingly describing the scene. Thus an ironic gap is created between the audience's and Gloucester's perspectives. While Gloucester believes that he is standing on the edge of Dover's cliffs, the audience knows that Gloucester is not in fact only a jump away from death: there is epistemic, emotional and evaluative dramatic irony. There are differing amounts of knowledge, which result in differing emotional responses and presumably differing evaluations between the audience's and Gloucester's perspectives.

With respect to self-narratives, Goldie explains that dramatic irony can also occur in autobiographical narratives representing one's past (internal perspective) and present selves (external perspective). In this way he uses dramatic irony to explain how narrative thinking about one's past can be infused with dramatic irony when one's current point of view (external perspective) differs from the point of view one had at the time (internal perspective) in evaluative, emotional, or epistemic value. To illustrate, Goldie tells a story of a person getting drunk at an office party and standing on the tables, singing to his colleagues. He says that although at the time the person's feeling may have been one of delight at seeing his friends thoroughly enjoying the performance, the next day the feeling becomes one of shame as the realisation sets in that the friends were laughing *at* rather than *with*

him. Thus there is a triple ironic gap: the realisation that he was being made fun of (epistemic gap); he no longer thinks what he did was a good idea (evaluative gap); and he now feels shame rather than joy (emotional gap). Thus internal and external perspective can differ in self-narrative as with publically narrated narratives.

Free indirect style (FIS). Goldie then introduces the concept of FIS, which further illustrates the impact dramatic irony has on self-narratives. Free indirect style both emphasises the ironic gap between the perspectives and, at the same time, fuses it together. Thus different perspectives are fused together so that they are no longer attributable to one character over another or, in the case of autobiographical narratives, one perspective over another. He uses the example, "I watched the orchestra through stupid tears." In this sentence, the external evaluation of the crying as 'stupid' is infused into the description of the character's internal perspective of the situation (watching the orchestra).

The importance of FIS to our self-narrative is in the telling of those narratives of our past, present, future or imagined selves; the viewpoint of the internal characters in those narratives is infused with our own (now external) attitudes toward them. Goldie incorporates dramatic irony, along with FIS, as an integral part to the role of narrative in our lives, proposing that our own internal perspective infuses with narrative thinking (about the past and future) such that perspectives become inseparably enmeshed.

The special character of emotions

Throughout the discussion of dramatic irony and FIS, Goldie explains that emotions have a special role in self-narrative construction due to their 'transparent' quality. Being transparent, he explains that they become a lens through which we view the world. That is, we cannot feel the same way about an event in the past, if

we now have a different emotional response to it. Thus, the emotional response penetrates the memory of the experience, overpowering previously felt emotions (emotional experience from the internal perspective). Returning to the previous example of the office party saga, in remembering the events of the previous night, with a now external perspective, the subject can reflect that he shamefully made a ridiculous fool of himself last night, getting up on the table and gleefully singing some stupid song. In his now sobered state, he is unable to remember the glee of his internal perspective as the shame he now feels taints the memory. The capacity of the external emotional response to overpower the original emotional experience, Goldie states, is due to the special *transparent* character of emotions. As such, external evaluative or epistemic perspectives do not overpower the original experiences in the same way. That is, although one can still imagine the internal perspective that differed in evaluation or epistemic value, one can no longer imagine the internal perspective that differed in emotional import once a different emotional response has been experienced.

Narrative thinking about the Past

Drawing from the cognitive research literature, Goldie argues that we have different types of memories, which can be divided into experiential and semantic (or propositional) memories. *Experiential* memories (which also include 'flashbulb' memories that appear in one's mind only fleetingly) are memories of an event as they happened: 'I remember walking into the lecture theatre late on my first day of university.' *Semantic* memories are memories that someone has *of* something: 'I remember that I walked into the lecture theatre late on my first day of university.' Rowlands (1999) persuasively argues that the difference between these types of

memory is one of degree and not of kind. That is, memories that may have started as experiential gradually fade over time to become semantic.

Goldie hypothesises that different types of memories are linked together in autobiographical narrative, such that semantic, episodic, and fragments of flashbulb memories combine with traces of thought and imagination in a dreamlike sequence, and with differing levels of conscious awareness, become indeterminately infused together. Goldie further highlights the importance of FIS by illustrating the importance of its memory equivalent, saying, "memories are infused with what we now know, and with how we now feel about what happened in light of what we now know" (p. 54). He points out that because of the infusion of the external perspective, which can differ (in epistemic, emotional and evaluative nature) from the internal (past) perspective, through the memory equivalent of FIS, memories should be more correctly thought of as constructed and not strictly as retrieved.

As memories constitute the basis for how we learn and decide what actions to take in the future, and an external perspective can mould memories, the importance of FIS for the self-narrative is greater than it may initially seem. That is, because the external perspective can differ in evaluative, emotional or epistemic value, and can fuse together with the internal perspective, external evaluations have a significant impact on the self-narrative. This highlights the malleable nature of self-narratives.

The special character of emotions, self-survival and self-development

While some theorists, for example Schechtman (1996), argue that for a continuous sense of self one must have empathic access to past selves (i.e., be able to feel the same way now as they did at the time of a particular remembered event or period in their life), Goldie holds that a sense of self supersedes emotional constancy. The consequence of this capacity to 'overwrite' past emotions is that the

way we feel about an experience or period in the past colours the memory of the experience, such that if we look back on an experience from the external (i.e., current) perspective with fondness, we will remember the experience fondly. So, while we can remember *thinking* differently (i.e., we can remember having those thoughts) during a particular experience in the past, we cannot remember *feeling* differently (i.e., we cannot re-experience the feeling if we now feel differently about the event). Goldie objects to the notion that empathic access is necessary for survival of the self, stating that not only is it unnecessary, empathic access would preclude personal development. Not having empathic access to a past self may mean that one is less likely to notice a change in self-narrative due to the current emotion infusing and colouring the past experiences. Thus the narrative sense of self could be more dynamic than it is commonly perceived to be, so that we have a sense of a self-narrative, which seems more constant than it actually is. As such, Goldie claims that emotions are not only one of the essential elements of a self-narrative, but he also flags them as having special relevance for self-narrative evolution.

Narrative thinking about the future and imagining

Goldie then develops a future focused arm of narrative thinking, emphasising the importance of emotional responses for future directed thinking: in planning, decision-making, agency and the acquisition of virtue. Briefly, he describes how we learn from our mistakes, for example, we may feel regret at thinking about a past event. Thus he observes the functionality of emotions as guiding phenomena, steering us toward advantageous possible outcomes and away from disadvantageous ones, and toward wellbeing enhancing situations (as discussed in Ward, 2017). That is, the feeling of regret steers us away from repeating similar

actions in the future. This process is also paralleled in the mental process of imagining.

Goldie proposes that we can also learn from counterfactual narratives: imagining an alternative course of action and the emotional response that arises from that. He argues that in order to plan and make decisions one must first imagine different future scenarios. He goes on to suggest that when we imagine scenarios, we anticipate our emotional responses to them, which guides our decision making process. We are able to imagine emotions from the internal perspective, for example, imagine feeling embarrassed at asking a question that reveals our ignorance in front of a large audience (i.e., centrally imagined emotion). We can also imagine emotions from the perspective of another 'audience member', seeing ourselves blush (i.e., a centrally imagined emotion). Goldie notes that it is also possible to experience an actual emotion from the external perspective as narrator, in response to our imagined scenario. Thus we could come to *actually feel* embarrassed from *imagining* doing something foolish.

Goldie states that this capacity to have a real emotional response to an imagined circumstance plays an important role in planning. That is, feeling embarrassed about imagining doing something silly prevents us from enacting that scenario, and prompts us to find alternative options, with more favourable emotional responses. This idea is consistent with the literature on emotions as evaluative phenomena (e.g., Ward, 2017), which describes emotions as signalling to individuals whether something is advantageous or otherwise, thus pushing them towards or away from something, respectively. Thus it is the psychological correlate of FIS, that is, the external emotional response to the emotion of the imagined counterfactual self, which can motivate a person to better actions. Goldie explains,

…By imagining, one can form policies which become character traits, such that I no longer need to take them into account. Rather, character traits work in the background, so that when I attempt to imagine myself happily taking a foolish risk, I react with discomfort or distress, steering me away from such reckless courses of action (p. 89).

Thus, narrative thinking, not only actual lived experience, can inform our future behaviour. Ultimately, therefore, character traits are formed due to emotional responses to experiences, both actual and imagined; hence the aforementioned conceptual alignment with Baker's (2016) suggestion that self-narratives are concerned with the 'characterisation' question. This is how emotions are thought to play out in the acquisition of self-governing policies, which, over time, develop into character traits. Goldie also touches on the similar process of how emotionally responding to imagined situations is the route to the acquisition of virtue on the road of moral progress. Thus narrative thinking about the past is malleable and can combine with emotional responses from the external perspective, and by doing so, influence future policy building, character traits and virtues.

Summary of self-narrative development

To summarise Goldie's view of how self-narratives are constituted, he postulates that they are formed by the layering of experiences and our responses to those experiences from internal and external perspectives. These perspectives can differ between time points and become infused (which he explains as the psychological correlate of ironic gaps and FIS, respectively). The result of the ironic gaps and their infusion is an evolving self-narrative. Emotions play a particularly prominent role in the evolution process, due to their transparent nature and thus

27

capacity to 'overwrite' previous emotional experience. The capacity to overwrite past emotional experience renders 'remembering' more akin to a process of *reconstruction* than *retrieval*. Reconstructed accounts of past experiences in turn influence future experiences by influencing emotional responses to imagined scenarios implicated in planning and decision-making. Thus Goldie sheds light on the psychological mechanisms and the important roles of emotions in those processes involved in the formation, function and evolution of a self-narrative. In the next section I will discuss Goldie's conceptualisation of how a self-narrative can be disrupted so as to become ineffective, or in some cases, even problematic.

Emotional distress and the breakdown of the self-narrative

Goldie explains that the sense making function of self-narratives can break down when someone has experienced significant emotional distress. He considers emotional distress to comprise both other-imposed and self-imposed distress, involving emotions of grief as well as shame. Goldie says that when a person has experienced emotional disruption to their self-narrative, the confusion that they feel is due to the missing emotional response, from the external perspective. One has emotionally loaded memories (from the internal perspective), but is unable to take an appropriate emotional attitude toward them (from the external perspective). Failing to integrate their past through narrative means that no emotional closure can be found. Goldie explains:

> …Looking back on it, one might feel shock, puzzlement, horror, anger, or surprise, but these emotions that one now feels may be little more than a painful 'echo' of the response that one felt at the time. Inadequate in themselves, responses like these reveal that one is failing to have the appropriate emotional response from the external perspective that the 'art

of recollection' requires; all one has is 'indifferent memory' (with the qualification that indifference here include emotions such as surprise, shock, puzzlement, horror, or even just numbness) (p. 70).

In these situations, Goldie says, the person is unable to make sense of the situation, and is thus effectively 'locked' into their past by the emotional gap. In cases of emotional distress, people can remember what happened (think through causal explanations that meets the minimal conditions of a narrative) but do not know how they should think or feel about the event. This non-evaluative account is unsatisfying to the narrator. As such, the person experiences difficulty in finding a way of working through the distressing experience and reconciling it with the present, and ultimately integrating the experience into their self-narrative; which has been found to be crucial to overcoming distress (Pals, 2006). Thus, the unresolved emotional distress leaves a fracture or hole in a person's self-narrative.

Due to the role of the self-narrative in helping us make sense of our lives, when a person experiences an emotional gap in their self-narrative, their overall ability to function effectively is compromised. The emotional gap jeopardises the person's ability to understand the emotional implications of a situation, thus decreasing their capacity to evaluate experiences (as advantageous or disadvantageous), and inhibiting learning, and personal development (aligning with Ward, 2017). Goldie says that when a person has experienced emotional distress, the person has *memory* of the event but no *recollection*. He calls upon Kierkegaard's (1967) *Stages of Life's Way* for a distinction between memory and recollection, where memory is 'a minimal condition', and recollection 'involves effort and

responsibility… Hence it is an art to recollect' (as cited in Goldie, p. 54). Goldie explains that following emotional distress, people either have field or observer memories, both of which are 'unsatisfactory.' This is because they are mere memories without the emotional import that 'recollection' allows. With *field* memories (which are sensational or experiential) people find themselves stuck in a seemingly endless repetition of all negative feelings that they had at the time. With *observer* memories people tend to remember a chronology of events with no emotion, reporting just the facts in a journalist style. So they either repeatedly re-experience the negative emotions from a field perspective, or if they adopt an external, observer perspective, they have no emotions at all. Either way the person is unable to make sense of the situation, as emotional processing is disrupted.

Disruption to processing: separated emotion and cognition

A considerable amount of research supports the assertion that emotional distress creates difficulties with emotional regulation (Amstadter & Vernon, 2008b; Siegel, 2015) and the processing of emotions (e.g., Siegel, 2015; Tambini, Rimmele, Phelps & Davachi, 2017). The mechanism by which this disruption occurs seems to be via the separation of emotional and cognitive processing (Arden, 2016; LeDoux, 1996). Clinical research into emotional distress reveals that highly emotional events may result in affective and cognitive avoidance, referred to as dissociation, denial, or numbing (Foa & Hearst-Ikeda, 1996; Young, 2003). Common to these constructs is diminished awareness of one's emotions or thoughts. This disruption to emotional processing has been shown to not only affect the present situation, but also influence the processing of future information and the formation of future memories (Tambini, et al., 2017); which fits with Goldie's suggestion that emotional distress impacts a person's ability to make sense of their life. Due to the role of self-

narratives in creating personal meaning, an emotional gap in someone's self-narrative creates not only confusion about oneself but also confusion regarding their everyday experience of life.

Goldie goes on to suggest that when a person has experienced emotional distress and is left with an emotional gap in their self-narrative, the need for *closure* that they may experience is a need for *emotional* closure. Emotional closure means not just seeing connections and making sense of what happened at the time, but also making an external evaluation and having emotional responses that one feels are *appropriate*. That is, Goldie suggests that the person wants to attain the 'right' perspective on the past distressing event. In order to do that, he claims that they need to be able to evaluate and respond emotionally to those past events, perhaps with forgiveness, shame or regret, but certainly with emotions that are appropriate to what happened from the external perspective.

If a person is able to find an emotional response from the external perspective, then they may be able to achieve emotional closure. With emotional processing once again functioning, general sense making functions will be restored, and the person can begin interpreting and responding to situations as usual. Emotional closure allows one to understand events or episodes in their past in a new light, think differently about their future and to regain a coherent self-narrative. The realigned self-narrative restores the ability to see beyond the event, to other elements of their past, present, and future and link them together in a coherent manner. Thus the self-narrative's crucial roles in learning, self-development and planning are recovered. Old patterns of thinking that were associated with the emotional distress may also begin to become less relevant or founded as restored reflective capacity enables renewed ability to emotionally respond and steer oneself

on alternative patterns of thought and more agentic courses of action (e.g., Archer, 2000).

The emotional response must allow closure

An important caveat to the value of emotional responses is that shame is not an appropriate emotion for individuals to experience. While it may seem in some circumstances that shame is prima facially the 'right' response, in the interests of behaviour change and moving forward, shame is always inappropriate. The self-focused emotion of shame inhibits personal recovery by (as Goldie puts it) assuming hegemony over someone's life and insinuating that forgiveness or a pardon should first take place before recovery is possible (or permitted!). Thus we must overcome the shame of the past in order for self-development to occur as "in shame one is still riveted to one's past" (Goldie, 2012, p. 140).

The case for self-forgiveness

Sometimes, when forgiveness is needed, this should take the form of self-forgiveness. This is the case when to ask for forgiveness from a wronged person(s) would cause further pain or if he or she were no longer personally available. Goldie states that there are five steps to self-forgiveness: (1) the offence: there must be a wrongful act against someone; (2) reactive emotions: the offended against person must experience a range of negative emotions related to the offence (resentment and anger are the most obvious); (3) there should be a narrative accounting: an account of what the person did and why they did it; (4) contrition: where the offender acknowledges the wrongness of his or her actions, regrets it; and sincerely wishes never to do it again; (5) there is a commitment to enduring change: the offender must commit to changing themselves for the better and then take serious steps to live up

to that commitment. This, Goldie proposes, may be necessary for a person to overcome shame and be able to move on with their life. He says this is in no way an 'easy way out,' as the person must make serious steps towards changing their character in order for self-forgiveness to be effective.

Inappropriate emotional closure

When a person has an emotional gap in their self-narrative that is due to emotional distress that they have caused themselves, the person may attempt to avoid the uncomfortable negative emotions that result from reflecting on their actions. Goldie proposes that in order to avoid the negative emotional response, the person may settle upon an emotion that is far from the truth and deeply self-deceptive. He suggests that the desire for emotional closure can transmute into 'unwarranted vindication' or 'smug self-satisfaction.' This is problematic as an inappropriately positive emotional response to something that the person *should* have regretted and worked to avoid in future, enables avoidance of the experience of the negative emotion and thus no reason to avoid behaving similarly in future.

Finding the appropriate emotional response

Although Goldie does not discuss what can be done in the case of inappropriate emotional closure, he gives an indication what a person can do to resolve an emotional gap in their self-narrative. In order to come to the appropriate emotional response, Goldie suggests that it can be helpful to tell the story to another person, or write it down or even sometimes to simply think it through. The first method, telling the narrative out loud to someone, can be difficult. He says that when a person has experienced distress, they wish both to tell the story to someone and to not do so. The person wants to tell it because of the desire to find emotional closure

and understand the situation from the proper perspective. At the same time one desires not to tell the story, partly because of the pain that the story evokes and partly because of the attention it may draw to the self and other, and the confusion one still feels. However, talking can help one gain an external perspective through having to make explicit links for the listener's understanding that narrative thinking alone does not demand (Varga, 2014).

Goldie stipulates that hearing their story told by others can also foster an external perspective, as different parts of the narrative can be emphasised, which may allow a fresh take on a small but newly significant part of the story. Of course the person telling the story could have a large impact on the person whose narrative it is, so responsibility must be taken by the teller to adhere to the proper, impartial perspective as much as is possible. Goldie also suggests that hearing one's story told by another can also awaken the desire for emotional closure that one was not conscious of.

While the emotions of the time are likely to be irretrievable (Robin & Swanson, 1993; Berntsen & Rubin, 2006), not to mention unhelpful (due to their distressing nature), the person must somehow view the event and evaluate and emotionally respond to their actions as others would. This idea has been referred to as reflecting in the 'looking glass' in which we see ourselves as perceived by significant others (Cooley, 1902) or a through the eyes of a 'generalised other,' abstracted from the norms of society (Mead, 1934). The difference Goldie brings to the issue is that he talks about the need for the appropriate *emotional* appraisal, rather than a *rational* one. Hence 'using the art of recollection,' which requires 'effort and responsibility,' (Goldie, 2012, p. 54) incorporating the emotional response into one's reflection is what is needed to be able to understand what one must do to move forward.

The role of the emotional response in self-narratives

Goldie places great importance on the emotional response to experiences, for three reasons. First, the importance of emotions as evaluative phenomenon gives them an important role in learning, memory, and in decision-making processes involved in the constitution of self-narratives. Second, an emotional response is necessary for changes in self-narratives and self-development to occur, due to the 'transparent' nature of emotions and consequent capacity of the external emotional response to overpower emotional experience of the past (emotions remembered from the internal perspective). This overpowering capacity that emotions have, in Goldie's view, is what allows changes in perspective and self-development to occur, with the according changes in self-narratives. The third key role that Goldie talks about emotions as having in self-narratives is with regard to their role in establishing closure after distress has been experienced. Here, Goldie claims that re-establishing emotional functioning, through finding the appropriate emotional response, is paramount. Finding the emotional response is what allows a person to integrate the distressing experience into their life, reintegrate their self-narrative and move forward with their life with restored agency. Through his discussion of the ironic gap that may exist between past, present and imagined future perspectives and which can become infused through free-indirect style, Goldie's theory offers an explicit linking of psychological processes to self-narratives.

In my view, Goldie's ideas on emotional closure provide the required theoretical depth to make it clearer why and how interventions can help individuals recover from emotional distress, and also, what role emotion may play in mediating the transition from an offending to non-offending (desistance) lifestyle.

Conclusions

Goldie's theory of self-narratives can contribute to our understanding of how self-narratives of offenders transition from 'offender' to 'non-offender.' He provides a thorough analysis of the complex psychological mechanisms that may be involved in disruptions to self-narratives, and in adaptation after disruption. Through this exploration of the psychological processes and their implications for self-narrative, he sheds light on the role of emotions in mechanisms of self-narrative change. This is a crucial point of difference from desistance self-narrative literature and is an advantage, given the emerging literature on the importance of emotions in our lives (e.g., Archer, 2000; Greenberg, 2008; Thompson & Stapleton, 2009; Varga, 2014; Ward, 2017).

While Goldie's conceptualisation of emotional closure and self-narrative change is a theoretically innovative and interesting idea, I argue that his account of how to find emotional closure is too impoverished to be clinically useful. Further exploration of the implications of *inappropriate emotional closure* could be useful, particularly with regard to the self-narratives of offenders, some of whom may have experienced inappropriate emotional closure; to live with the emotional distress that their offences (or other aspects of their lives) have caused them. I shall extend these ideas in the subsequent chapter in order to give a richer account of how self-narratives transition from maladaptive to adaptive, using a diagram to illustrate a model of emotional closure. I shall then apply the model to desistance literature to ascertain whether it can further our understanding of the transition of offender self-narratives to desistance self-narratives. In subsequent chapters I shall explain the implications for desistance theory and practise and then evaluate the models utility and fit to the wider research base.

CHAPTER THREE

The narrative desistance process from an emotional perspective

As outlined in chapter two, Goldie (2012) provides new insights into self-narratives by drawing from a wide range of literature (including neuroscience, philosophy, narrative literature, as well as clinical case studies). This allowed him to speculate upon the possible psychological processes involved in the formation of self-narratives, and importantly, through his description of emotional closure, identify possible mechanisms of transition from a maladaptive to an adaptive self-narrative. In this chapter I shall first briefly summarise Goldie's model of self-narratives, highlighting the important insights he had for the involvement of emotions in the psychological processes that constitute them. Incorporating Goldie's sophisticated conceptualisation of self-narratives and his insights into possible mechanisms of the self-narrative transition process will arguably further our understanding of the psychological processes involved in the transition towards a prosocial self-narrative that supports a person on their desistance journey. However, in its current form the model does not offer a clear understanding of what can be done to support the transition to adaptive self-narratives for persons with *inappropriately closed emotional gaps* in their self-narrative. I shall first extend the model to also describe how to support these people transition to adaptive self-narratives. Then, I apply the extended model to the desistance literature to identify the contribution it could make to our current understanding of the self-narrative transition process to that of a 'non-

offender.' I contend that this move increases the scope of offenders that Goldie's model of self-narratives could inform transition processes of.

Summary of Goldie's Model

What sets Goldie's conceptualisation of self-narratives apart from criminological perspectives is the incorporation of emotions into his description. This move allows him to provide a richer view of the psychological processes involved in self-narratives. In his model Goldie described the role of emotions in guiding and influencing core psychological processes involved in behavioural change, such as remembering, planning, imagining and decision-making. He hypothesised that a person reflects on their past and incorporates related evaluations and emotional responses into their self-narrative. This is achieved through the psychological correlate of *free-indirect style* (FIS), which fuses together *ironic gaps* between current and past perspectives. Thus Goldie described the self-narrative as a dynamic construct, which continually evolves due to new information from the current 'external perspective' (particularly the emotional responses) being infusing into memories of past events. The way in which a person remembers their past, or a particular event, is implicated in their sense of who they are currently, and also effects future decision-making and planning, through influencing the emotional responses to counterfactual narratives (i.e., imaginings of future possibilities). Thus the self-narrative is formed by present experience, past reflection and future imagining which infuse through FIS to result in a layered and integrated self-narrative.

Goldie's intricate description of the psychological processes involved in the construction of a self-narrative forms a basis upon which he explains how self-

narratives can become disjointed and thus no longer coherent nor functional. He speculates that a person's self-narrative can become dysfunctional (i.e., lose its sense-making capacity which maintains a person's sense of a coherent self) after they have experienced an emotionally distressing event. Goldie speculates that a process of emotional closure restores a person's self-narrative to functional capacity. This process of emotional closure may also be implicated in the transition of offender self-narratives from maladaptive to adaptive, during the desistance process.

Goldie postulates that the transition from a maladaptive to an adaptive self-narrative is an emotionally involved process. He claims that until the appropriate emotional response can be found, the distressing event disrupts a person's self-narrative, along with their personal agency, due to the fundamental role of the self-narrative in helping a person make sense of their life. Without the ability to make sense of experiences and learn from them, acting in a goal directed manner (i.e., with agency), will inevitably be impeded. Goldie suggests that looking back on the distressing event in a way that is objectively 'appropriate' enables the person to integrate the experience into their self-narrative, which restores a sense of coherency to their self-narrative. By restoring the capacity to reflect, learn and act with agency, the person will ultimately be able to make behavioural changes necessary for moving forward with their life.

Goldie describes that the emotional response is the mechanism of transition from a maladaptive self-narrative (i.e., one which does not enable reflection, sense-making nor agency), to an adaptive self-narrative (which enables reflection, learning and behaviour change). The process of emotional closure is particularly powerful due to the special 'transparent' characteristic of emotions, which enables emotional responses to penetrate memories of events in the past and 'colour' them so that the

memories of the event may become slightly altered (hence Goldie's assertion that memories are *constructed* rather than *retrieved*). This emotional response has a profound impact on a person's ability to make decisions. This would appear to be due to the person no longer being exhausted by emotional turmoil and being again able to imagine alternative future scenarios. As the experience of actual emotions from imagined scenarios is a key mechanism through which we plan and make decisions, effectively functioning emotional and imaginative capacities are vital for being able to make effective decisions. These processes contribute to the process of agency (i.e., acting in a goal directed manner), as agency requires reflecting and learning to be able to move toward goals. Thus, Goldie highlights the importance of emotions in the processes involved in self-narratives and the transition process from maladaptive to adaptive self-narratives.

Goldie also warns of the possibility that someone will form inappropriate emotional closure to the emotional gap in their self-narrative. This, he says is a protective mechanism against negative self-appraisal but is deeply self-deceptive. I will discuss how this maladaptive emotional closure could be implicated in terms of maladaptive self-narratives of offenders and what it may mean for the process of desistance.

From maladaptive to adaptive self-narratives: The Emotional Closure Model

Although Goldie does not discuss self-narratives in the context of offenders, he provides valuable insights into emotions and psychological change processes that may be involved in forming an adaptive, desistance-supportive self-narrative. Goldie describes two problematic self-narrative types; those with emotional gaps and

those with emotional gaps that have been inappropriately closed. Those with emotional gaps in their self-narrative, Goldie says must find appropriate emotional closure to restore an adaptive self-narrative and a sense of agency.

While Goldie gives a full description of transition from a self-narrative with an emotional gap to an adaptive self-narrative, Goldie's description falls short of explaining what can be done to resolve *self-deceptive self-narratives* (i.e., when inappropriate emotional closure occurs). While this response prevents the experience of enduring negative emotion, it is self-deceptive. Goldie does not indicate how to transition from inappropriate emotional closure to appropriate emotional closure (i.e., an adaptive self-narrative).

I will elaborate on his inappropriate emotional closure concept within the model and assert that, for this self-narrative type, an inappropriately closed emotional gap must first be *re-opened,* before it can be appropriately closed (see figure 1 below).
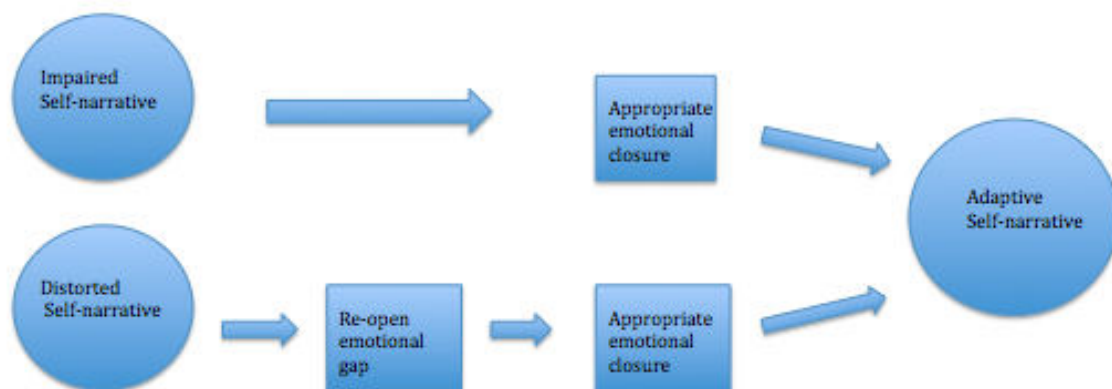

Figure 1. Emotional Closure Model

Emotional Closure Model applied to self-narratives of offenders

With regard to the self-narratives of offenders, it is conceivable that many have been affected by what Goldie conceptualises as an emotional gap. The lives of persistent offenders are often characterised by emotional distress, in the form of relationship instability, drug addiction, violence and abuse (e.g., Schlosser, 2015). Thus the *Emotional Closure Model* (ECM) is applicable to the self-narratives of offenders. These emotional gaps could be the result of their offending (e.g., the distress of killing someone whilst driving under the influence of alcohol) or other distressing life events (e.g., the death of a child or a violent and abusive upbringing).

The ECM could aid our understanding of the desistance phase that has been identified by various criminological theories with a number of different terms (e.g., *turning point*, *openness to change*, etc.) but has never been fully explained. An attribute of the ECM is that it could describe not only the desistance phase for those offenders who lack agency but also those who lack motivation. Within the desistance literature, these two types of offenders have been identified, described by Ward and Hudson (1998) as 'impulsive' and 'self-regulated' types. The ECM could potentially explain the transition process for both of these maladaptive self-narrative types to adaptive self-narratives. I will describe how the ECM could fit to self-narratives of these offender types.

Impaired self-narrative

Applying the ECM to desistance literature, we can see that there is a type of offender that fits the self-narrative characteristics of someone with an emotional gap. Ward and Hudson (1998) describe an 'impulsive' type of offender who is characterised by impulsive behaviour such as drug abuse, emotional dysregulation

and unplanned offending; perhaps committing robberies to fuel their drug habit. Offenders with this type of self-narratives have high levels of mental health and substance abuse issues and may want to desist but lack the means (agency or skill) to do so. Thus their ability to function with agency is compromised due to the enduring negative emotions (such as shame, grief, chronic anxiety or depression) that are characteristic of a person with an emotional gap in their self-narrative. Powerful negative emotions will prevent a person from reflecting due to the utilisation of mental resources (such as abstract reasoning, memory, perception and attention) that are required for reflection (Ward, Polaschek & Beech, 2006). Substance abuse and mental health problems will likewise prevent an individual from being able to reflect upon their life (Archer, 2000) which in turn may inhibit learning (Goldie, 2012; Ward, 2017) and their capacity to make proactive, adaptive changes to his or her lifestyle. Impulsive offenders, with 'emotionally unresolved' self-narratives are henceforth referred to as having an *impaired* self-narrative. This type of self-narrative can be compared to what Maruna (2001) conceptualised as a *condemnatory script*, which was characterised by a lack of agency. Both the *impaired self-narrative* and *condemnatory script* belong to persons with enduring negative self-appraisals that prevent them from actuating self-reflective agency. Goldie's suggestion, that finding an emotional response to the gap may help facilitate a transition to an adaptive self-narrative could therefore be applicable to those offenders whom Maruna conceptualised as having a condemnatory script.

The ECM would suggest that these offenders have not found an emotional response to their emotional distress (caused by their offending or other life experiences) and thus have either a fragmented or reprehensible sense of themselves. Due to the social repercussions of persistent offending and of the

characteristic substance dependence of offenders with impaired self-narratives, it is likely that offenders with impaired self-narratives will experience some form of shame. As Goldie describes in his model of self-narratives, when a person experiences shame, then they may also need to go through a process of forgiveness (which may mean self-forgiveness if the victim is unwilling or unable to forgive them). Thus it is likely that a process of forgiveness (in Goldie's model as outlined in chapter two) will be beneficial for many offenders with impaired self-narratives before they can move on from the past.

The ECM suggests that people with emotional gaps in their self-narratives must find the appropriate emotional response in order to restore their sense of self and agency. The appropriate emotional response may be regret or sadness, but the important thing is that the emotion is appropriate according to an 'external perspective' (i.e., that a 'generalised other' may have). If an appropriate emotional response is settled upon, the person will be able to incorporate the distressing event or events into their self-narrative, which restores coherency to their sense of themselves (Pals, 2006).

Once the event has been emotionally responded to and classified, the repaired self-narrative allows reflection on one's past (as the mental resources are no longer consumed by intense emotional experience). Once reflection is enabled, Goldie explains that the process of learning can occur and the person can move forward with their life; with what Archer (2000) refers to as 'self-reflective agency.' That is, the person can reflect upon and make sense of a given situation by understanding the emotional import of it and classifying the situation according to how advantageous or disadvantageous it was to them. Once the appropriate emotional response is found, as recent research on emotions as evaluative

phenomena would suggest (e.g., Ward, 2017), the event can be classified as either beneficial or harmful, and thus as one to be sought out or avoided in future, respectively. When an offender with an impaired self-narrative has found emotional closure (possibly through a process of self-forgiveness) their cognitive resources are no longer exhausted by being focused on the feeling of shame (or other enduring negative emotion) and they can begin to see beyond the distressing event (e.g., abuse suffered as a child or violently offending against a partner). Their emotional capacity to guide their behaviour may then be restored. When emotional processes are functioning effectively, Goldie argues that a person is able to build upon experiences, which enables them to develop their character and make decisions based on past experience rather than according to immediate emotional states. When a person is able to learn from an experience and adjust their actions according to their emotional responses to those experiences, the possibility of taking a different life path may open up. Thus offenders with impaired self-narratives must find the appropriate emotional response to the distress of either an isolated event or of distress they have experienced over their lifetime if they are to transition to an adaptive self-narrative. Goldie suggests that the transparent nature of emotions means that memories will be 'coloured' by the response, which is what allows the person to view their past in a new light. This 'repaired' self-narrative allows not only the past to be viewed more adaptively but also allows future focused psychological processes to function effectively as the person can draw upon past experience to imagine future scenarios; essential to planning and acting with agency. The emotional response, which repairs the impaired self-narrative, may increase a person's ability to function in the present, ability to reflect on the past and thus the ability to imagine and plan for the future.

Impaired self-narrative case study: Samuel

Samuel is still haunted by the memory of his offence that happened over ten years ago. He was at a party with his girlfriend, Amy and they were drinking. They got into a fight because Samuel became jealous of her talking to other men. The fight became escalated and Samuel punched Amy in the face. The force of the blow knocked her over and she fell onto the concrete patio. An ambulance was called but Amy died in hospital three days later. Samuel went to prison for six years but does not feel that was enough punishment for taking a young girl's life. He has not been in a committed relationship since then; any relationship he enters into quickly becomes very volatile and fraught with verbal and physical abuse. Samuel has not talked to anyone about the events surrounding Amy's death since coming out of prison and the only people who know about it are his family and a couple of friends who were there at the time. He says that he does not deserve to be alive after what he did. He takes drugs to "block out" the memories.

Samuel has an impaired self-narrative. He experiences emotional distress on a daily basis and uses drugs to avoid the negative feelings. According to the ECM, he needs to find the appropriate emotional response to his actions which resulted in Amy's death. Due to the shame he experiences, according to ECM, Samuel may also need to be involved in a process of forgiveness to move on from his chronic shame. In this case, as his victim is no longer alive (if the family are not willing to forgive Samuel), self-forgiveness may be necessary. For self-forgiveness Samuel will need to fulfill the five criteria that Goldie describes (i.e., there must be: *an offence, reactive emotions, an account of why the act was committed, contrition, commitment to change*). The first criterion is met as there was clearly an offence. In this case the reactive emotions will be from Amy's family and friends. They are the

only offended people who are able to have reactive emotions and those emotions are sure to be every bit as real as Amy's would have been. There is an account of why Samuel punched Amy, that is, because he was jealous of her talking to other men and presumably used violence due to a lack of other communication or self-management skills. Contrition is apparent as he believes that his six years in prison was not sufficient punishment for the crime. Finally, Samuel must make a commitment to change himself so as not to commit similar offences in future. If Samuel is able to make a commitment to change, he may be able to 'accept' self-forgiveness and overcome the shame. Talking over the events may help him frame it in an appropriate light as a serious wrong-doing but, with a commitment to changing; possibly with regret rather than shame. This may enable him to reduce his drug use as he may no longer need to block out emotions and allow him to make the changes necessary for 'self-transformation'. For example, being proactive about learning more effective ways of communicating so that he does not feel jealous or threatened in future social situations with girlfriends.

Distorted self-narrative

Ward and Hudson (1998) also describe the self-regulated type of offender who is emotionally regulated, does not use drugs, possesses distorted beliefs about themself or the world around them, and commits calculated crimes. Lack of motivation rather than impaired personal agency is likely to prevent the self-regulated offender from desisting from further crime. This is because their needs are met through their offending, and as such, they see little problem with continuing to do so. The ECM would suggest that this type of offender may gain inappropriate emotional closure to what would otherwise be emotionally distressing experiences of offending or of the lifestyle they lead. This inappropriate emotional closure leaves the

individual with a positive appraisal of themselves but which is maladaptive as it is deeply deceptive. The offenders with 'inappropriately resolved' self-narratives are henceforth referred to as having *distorted* self-narratives.

As a distorted self-narrative leaves an individual with a positive view of themself (and their criminal activity) they lack motivation to desist from acting in antisocial ways. Thus the first step towards desistance for offenders with a distorted self-narrative will be finding the motivation to adopt pro-social goals. Such individuals do not suffer conflicting or overpowering, enduring negative emotions. These offenders are those with characterological issues, such as narcissistic traits; a strong sense of entitlement; and deep seated, distorted beliefs (Ward, Hudson & Johnston, 1997). According to the ECM, offenders with distorted self-narratives must *re-open* the emotional gap before they are able to find the *appropriate* emotional response to this gap. Re-opening the emotional gap means that in order for individuals with distorted self-narratives to change, they must first allow themselves to become vulnerable to criticism from others (and themselves) and to experience uncomfortable feelings that may have been suppressed and avoided for years. Persons with distorted self-narratives must find an emotional response that allows them to move forward with their lives with a more authentic self-narrative. When a person is able to be open and authentic, acknowledge wrongdoing that may have occurred, by (and possibly to) them, they may be able to experience some of the painful emotions that the inappropriate emotional response had enabled them to avoid. By re-experiencing these negative or painful emotions, the person may acquire motivation to act in alternative ways, which may allow them to respond to the need that the emotion was signalling to them was important (e.g., a person may realise that they had felt rejected from a past relationship or parent which they had

responded to by being dismissive of others; criticising others before they could be criticised themselves). By identifying ways to meet the original unmet need (e.g., of connection or intimacy) the person may be able to stop avoiding the experience of negative emotions and be more confident to face uncertainty and change in the future without the need to be dismissive of others to protect themselves from re-experiencing the same negative emotions.

Distorted self-narrative Case study: Fetu

Fetu moved from Samoa to New Zealand when he was in primary school. He was bullied because he had little English language knowledge when he arrived so he was an easy target. Fetu would go out and beat up the other children after school to stop them from bullying him. Therefore, from a young age he learnt that it is better to strike out at people (as potential threats) before they get you. Fetu believes that such aggressive proactive strategies help people to understand that he means what he says. Violence and aggression have been part of 'who he is.'

Distorted self-narrative case study: Nathan

Nathan is a convicted child molester. He enjoys being sexually intimate with children and does not believe, as long as they seem to enjoy it, that there is a problem with his behaviour. Nathan had a relatively normal upbringing but gave up talking to girls in high school after multiple attempts resulted in public humiliation. He finds children more receptive to his advances and so intends to continue using children to meet his sexual and intimacy needs.

According to the ECM, both Fetu and Nathan have found an inappropriate emotional response for the purpose of avoiding negative emotions. In Fetu's case

the purpose may have been to make sense of, and protect himself from, negative emotions associated with the violence (e.g., inferiority). In Nathan's case the motivation may be to make sense of and meet his needs for intimacy (whilst avoiding the chance of further rejection from female peers). In both of these cases, the resultant behaviour is antisocial. For Fetu and Nathan to change their distorted self-narratives, they will need to *re-open the emotional gap* (which will involve understanding what caused the emotional distress in the first place) and find an adaptive response to the emotional gap. This response must be something that allows them to understand the event from the external perspective of a 'generalised other.' For Fetu this may be recognising his perceived need for safety (physical and emotional), which he ensures though maintaining a 'tough' persona. For Nathan it may mean recognising the hurt that the girls at school caused him to feel and the resultant avoidance of these feelings through identifying with children sexually and intimately.

Once they find the appropriate emotional response, they will once again achieve (adaptive) emotional closure and their self-narrative can evolve into one that supports desistance. Again, as with impaired self-narratives, appropriate emotional closure and the transition to an adaptive self-narrative will shape the way a person reflects upon the past, through the capacity of emotions to 'colour' memories of past events. When the person has transitioned to an adaptive self-narrative through opening the emotional gap and appropriately closing it, he may be able to view the past in a new light, and be able to project alternative possible plans into the future, which influence decision-making and ways of behaving. Thus appropriate emotional closure influences present, past and future focused psychological processes involved transitioning from impaired or distorted to adaptive self-narratives.

Conclusions

Goldie's model of self-narratives, which the ECM is established upon, is set apart from conceptualisations offered by desistance literature, due to his emphasis on emotion and its associated psychological processes. By exploring the complex psychological mechanisms underlying our thinking and perception in the context of self-narratives, emotion, and behaviour change, Goldie moves beyond a focus on the social or practical explanations of behaviour change to also considering some important psychological mechanisms of change. Through an in-depth exploration of the role that the internal and external perspectives may play in self-narratives, Goldie builds a foundation upon which he describes *emotional closure* as a possible psychological mechanism of the self-narrative change process. The ECM extends the explanatory value of self-narrative transition from maladaptive to adaptive by conceptualising the transition mechanism from distorted as well as impaired self-narratives (i.e., inappropriately closed self-narratives as well as those with emotional gaps). These maladaptive self-narrative types align with established types of offenders, namely, impulsive and self-regulated (Ward & Hudson, 1998). The ECM may extend the explanatory opportunities of narrative desistance theories, which have a preoccupation with agency, in its over simplistic, moral or rational conceptualisation (see chapter one). Due to the moral or rational interpretation of agency, a discussion of motivational barriers is often missing from narrative desistance literature. The ECM thus may contribute to a narrative understanding of desistance by accounting for possible mechanisms of change for both offenders lacking agency (i.e., those with impaired self-narratives) as well as offenders lacking motivation to change (i.e., those with distorted self-narratives).

In the following chapter I will consider what implications the ECM has for treatment of offenders. I will describe implications for a standard group treatment programme for high-risk violent offenders to illustrate the treatment implications of the ECM.

CHAPTER FOUR

Implications for standard treatment

The previous chapter described how the ECM, as an extension of Goldie's psychological conceptualisation of the transition phase to an adaptive self-narrative, can aid our understanding of the psychological processes involved in the shift from 'offender' to 'non-offender' self-narratives. The ECM broadens the theoretical utility of the concept of emotional closure to enable the application of the concept to the desistance phase for both impulsive and self-regulated types of offenders. That is, the ECM describes possible psychological mechanism of the desistance phase for offenders who lack agency as well as those who lack motivation to desist. The ECM suggests that when a person who has experienced shame or other enduring negative emotions is able to find emotional closure (possibly through self-forgiveness), they may overcome the enduring negative emotions, and transition to an adaptive self-narrative with restored agency. The ECM proposes that when a person who has found inappropriate emotional closure to a distressing event is able to open up to those painful emotions (through opening the emotional gap) they may find motivation to act in different ways that work towards addressing their emotional distress and identifying ways to resolve it rather than avoid the distress through maladaptive strategies for meeting their needs, such as a retaliatory interpersonal style to meet their need for power or autonomy (such as Fetu from case study 2 in the previous chapter) or identifying with children to meet their need for intimacy and pleasure (such as Nathan from case study 3). In this chapter I will discuss the

implications that the ECM has for treatment of offenders. I will discuss these implications with reference to a standard group treatment model for violent offenders to illustrate points.

A typical treatment programme for violent offenders contains a series of modules (including emotional regulation, alcohol and drug and cognitive problem solving skills) which are all based on cognitive-behavioural models of therapy. Each session typically begins with a short mindfulness exercise and then facilitated group discussion ensues, generally for a three-hour period.

From the perspective of the ECM, appropriate emotional closure to past events in offenders' lives is a psychological mechanism underpinning the transition process to an adaptive, 'non-offender' self-narrative. Thus treatment that enables a person to experience an appropriate emotional response to an event that they have not found emotional closure to, or have found inappropriate closure to, may allow this transition to occur. From the perspective of the ECM, offenders with impaired self-narratives experience enduring negative emotions, including shame, grief, guilt, general maladaptive emotional functioning and emotional dysregulation. This defective emotional experience, the ECM indicates, is due to the emotional gap in their self-narrative, which disrupts the sense-making function of the self-narrative. Goldie suggests that in order to find an appropriate emotional response to the emotional gap, it can be helpful to write down the narrative of the proceedings surrounding the event or tell the story to others. He also says that hearing the story from others can help the person view the event in a new light and guide them towards the 'external perspective,' which is what can be lacking when a person has experienced distress. These are all things that are possible to facilitate in a supportive group treatment setting, providing there is time allocated for individuals to

share their own stories and the sessions are not overly content-driven, as can be the case with rigidly manualised programmes.

The experience of strong, positive emotions could also act as an 'anchor point' (Russel & Fehr, 1987) for a person who may experience dysregulated, enduring negative emotions or a general lack of emotional comprehension. This anchor point could provide an emotional experience from which the person may be able to make a relative comparison to previous experiences, which may allow them to settle upon an emotional response. Again, the relative nature of emotions (Russel & Fehr, 1987) may mean that experiencing a strong emotion, particularly that is different from their usual dysregulated or negative emotional state, may allow the person to settle upon the appropriate emotional response due to recognition that the current experience is different (more positive) than their normal emotional experience. It is possible to elicit positive emotional experience in a group treatment setting through therapeutic relationships with facilitators and, if safe interpersonal relationships are able to establish between group members. Careful attention must be paid to establishing group safety, in order for group members to allow themselves to become vulnerable and open up to establishing connections within the group and with facilitators. Porges (2011) suggests that even subtle threat signals can impede social connection through the activation of defence mechanisms, which 'switch off' mechanisms designed for social interaction so as to prepare the body for 'flight,' 'fight,' or 'freeze' modes. These bodily changes that prepare a person for different situations are so subtle that they may often be unobservable to another person (such as movement of the inner ear bone so as to focus attention on lower pitched sounds, which are more strongly associated with threat than higher pitches) but can nonetheless have a large impact on engagement. Thus the impact of these defence

mechanisms may have a greater effect than programmes may accommodate for, in that facilitators often expect group members to be open and share their experience possibly before a high enough level of safety can be established. This may be particularly the case for a high-risk group of offenders, who have typically led very volatile lives and often experienced abuse themselves (e.g., Schlosser, 2015). Porges suggests that with people who have especially low threat detection thresholds (as high-risk offenders may have), rather than using purely talking based therapies, experiential therapies, such as movement-based (e.g., yoga) or creativity-based (e.g., art) practises can be an emotionally 'safer' way to begin engagement in a therapeutic process. Thus, to ensure emotional safety within the group environment, including alternative forms of engagement (such as yoga or art) could enhance the therapeutic value of a group treatment programme. Fredrickson's *broaden and build* theory of emotions also asserts that positive emotions are necessary for learning to take place. Creating trust within the group members as well as between facilitators and group members will be necessary for openness and honesty and for the integration and learning of material.

For both types of maladaptive offender self-narratives, mindfulness could be a helpful exercise, encouraging openness, acceptance of emotional experience and allowing a person 'distance' from which they may be able to reflect on past negative experiences and thus find emotional closure to them. Mindfulness allows the experiencing and accepting of emotions that may have been previously inaccessible. The emotions may have been inaccessible due to conscious suppression of them (in the case of distorted self-narratives) or due to emotional dysregulation or substance abuse (in the case of impaired self-narratives). Group treatment programmes for violent offenders often incorporate a mindfulness component. However, due to the

pervasiveness of cognitivism within forensic literature, mindfulness practises are often overly cognitive. Mindfulness practice, if focused solely on cognitive aspects, could also be difficult to engage in. This is especially the case for a population with high levels of impulsive behaviours, often years of drug abuse, and possibly lower than average cognitive functioning.

For offenders with distorted self-narratives to transition to adaptive self-narratives, the ECM would suggest that guided experiential emotional exercises may be helpful for re-opening the emotional gap and allowing the suppressed emotions to re-emerge. For those offenders with distorted self-narratives and associated cognitive distortions, the ECM suggests that finding the underlying cause of the problematic self-narrative and cognitive distortions may be necessary to re-open the emotional gap. A person with a distorted self-narrative may need to experience emotional safety in order to be able to allow themselves to be vulnerable to address distressing emotional experiences that the inappropriate emotional response has allowed them to avoid experiencing. Thus for transition from both impaired and distorted to non-offender self-narratives, the ECM would suggest that treatment should aim to create emotional safety so that painful emotions from the past may be re-experienced, and appropriate emotional responses can be established.

For offenders with impaired self-narratives, the ECM proposes that the enduring negative emotional experience associated with the emotional gap, must be addressed before an individual will have the capacity reflect upon issues that are not immediately facing them (such as their antisocial thinking patterns). This assertion also aligns with the conceptualisation by Polascheck, Ward and Beech (2006) of the finite nature of mental resources, which can be consumed by overpowering negative emotions. Thus these emotional disturbances need to be addressed before an

offender will be able to reflect upon the Risk Need Responsivity model's (Andrews & Bonta, 2010) conceptualisation of 'criminogenic needs'.

For offenders with impaired self-narratives to transition to adaptive self-narratives, the ECM would suggest that self-forgiveness processes may need to occur. This could be the focus in treatment for those who find it difficult to make progress because they experience shame (either as a consequence of abuse that they may have suffered or of crimes they have committed, or both). A process of self-forgiveness may be guided in group sessions in accordance with the guidelines set out by Goldie (as described in chapter two), which importantly, must include a final step of commitment for change. The group treatment environment may enhance commitment for change due to the peer encouragement and potential support of other group members.

In his review of emotions in correctional settings, Ward (2017) states that for treatment of offenders we should work *with* values and emotions rather than against them. To improve long-term emotional understanding and stability, consideration may also need to be given to the way emotions are conceptualised within treatment programmes. That is, a conceptualisation as signalling mechanisms to underlying needs, rather than solely as problems to be controlled, could improve effectiveness of reducing emotions that are associated with antisocial behaviour (e.g., anger). This could be achieved by understanding what is driving the emotion (e.g., a feeling of powerlessness) and then working to resolve the underlying need for a sense of power or autonomy. This approach may also increase motivation and engagement in the programme.

While programmes for *high-risk* offenders often have a Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) component, and therefore some focus on emotion regulation, *medium* or *low-risk* programmes are invariably purely Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) in orientation and offer little room for emotion-focused exercises. While emotional disturbances of offenders in low or medium risk bands will likely be fewer or at least less severe, these offenders too will likely lead unstable lives, be highly sensitive to threat signals, have substance abuse issues and may also experience shame (e.g., due to not providing for their family). Thus while their 'offender identities' may not be as entrenched as those within the high-risk band (who may have had longer criminal careers or have committed more serious crimes), many offenders in these lower risk bands are still likely to have maladaptive self-narratives due to their offending lifestyle. Therefore the implications outlined in this chapter apply also to medium and (to a lesser extent) low risk programmes, where programme evaluation may be more urgently needed due to the exclusive CBT perspective of these programmes.

Conclusions

In summary, emotions should be a central focus of treatment for offenders to encourage motivation to change, emotional safety, deeper commitment to change (rather than superficial strategies that are unrealistic) and to increase mental resources required for further reflection on personal goals. Positive emotions should be elicited which can allow a person to reflect upon the past and make a comparison of what is most meaningful to them (particularly if they have not had positive, safe emotional experiences in their past and distorted self-narratives were used to protect

themselves from emotional distress). Positive emotions are also important for learning and integrating new material necessary for learning and changing one's behaviour. These positive emotions may be elicited by reflecting on their values and 'good life plans,' (see Ward, 2002*a* for further information) which allows a person to understand how to meet their needs (thus elicit positive emotions) without offending.

Alternative treatment strategies, for example, movement or art-based therapies may elicit positive emotions in ways that do not raise the threat level that treatment, which focuses solely on self-disclosure, may inadvertently do (e.g., Porges, 2011). Experiential exercises may supplement the core treatment programme by eliciting positive emotions that are necessary for engagement, learning and ultimately emotional closure. While self-disclosure may be necessary for connecting with others, for forgiveness and overcoming shame, intervention that focuses solely on talking could prevent a person from engaging fully. Respite from emotionally threatening aspects of treatment (e.g., though creative or relaxation components), may help deactivate their defense mechanisms and increase participants' ability to engage with therapy.

In the following chapter I will describe how the ECM may contribute to theories of desistance by offering an explanation of the psychological mechanisms underlying the transition phase between offender and non-offender.

CHAPTER FIVE

Implications for Theory

The previous chapter described implications of the ECM for standard offender treatment programmes, suggesting that there may be a need to increase attention paid to emotional experiences in treatment. This attention should be paid to the emotional safety of the group treatment environment which will allow openness to experiencing potential painful past memories. Attention should also be paid to enabling acceptance of those experiences, possible self-forgiveness and the establishment of the appropriate emotional response which allows emotional closure.

The following chapter describes implications of the ECM for the theories of desistance that were outlined in chapter one. Firstly, it should be noted that a major implication of the ECM for desistance theories generally, is that the ECM could account for the transition to a non-offender narrative, which is not only due to increased agency, but may be due to motivational factors. This marks a point of difference from most narrative theories of desistance, which (due to their moral perspective of agency), assume that the increase in agency will lead to desistance. In terms of specific implications for the various desistance theories, I will describe how the ECM may provide insight into the psychological mechanisms underlying the 'desistance phase' of these theories, which were defined as: *openness to change* (Giordano et al., 2002); *imagining a new self* (Healy, 2014)*; turning points* (Laub & Sampson, 2001); *maturation* (McNeil & Whyte, 2007; Rocque, 2015); and *the formation of redemptive scripts* (Maruna, 2001).

*O*penness to change

Giordano et al. (2002) suggest that an individual must experience an initial internal *openness to change* before a *hook for change* (external opportunity) can be taken advantage of in the process of desistance. The mechanisms underlying the process of openness were not considered. The ECM could add to the concept of *openness to change* by explaining that this process takes place on an emotional, as well as a cognitive level. The ECM suggests that the internal changes that Giordano et al. suggest need to take place in order for a *hook for change* to take hold involve either the opening of an inappropriately closed emotional gap (for offenders with a distorted self-narrative) or a process of forgiveness to overcome shame (for offenders with an impaired self-narrative).

Turning point

Research suggests that offenders typically have underdeveloped emotional regulation or skills in emotional expression (Garofalo & Velotti, 2017; Roberton, Daffern & Bucks, 2014). The ECM would suggest that this is due to an emotional gap and thus a confusing or overwhelming emotional experience (in the case of impaired self-narratives) or avoidance of emotional experience (in the case of distorted self-narratives). Laub and Sampson's (2001) conceptualisation of a 'turning point' is likely to be something that is personally meaningful (e.g., marriage or a job) and thus will elicit strong positive emotions (Ward, 2017). The positive emotional experience of a life event, which becomes a 'turning point' (e.g., love or happiness associated with marriage, or pride or excitement associated with a job). In the case of the impaired self-narrative, the positive emotional experience could establish an *anchor* from which they are able to reflect from. An experience of strong, positive emotions can

act as an anchor from which a person may be able to compare past emotional experience and thus perhaps come to an emotional response that allows emotional closure (this suggestion is explained further in the next section).

Social bonds

As well as adding depth to the conceptualisation of a 'turning point,' the ECM may also describe a potential mechanism of change behind the social bonds theory of desistance more generally. From an ECM perspective, social bonds could support desistance by providing a positive emotional experience from which someone is able to reflect upon previous emotional experiences of an offending lifestyle. Positive emotions that are elicited through social bonds could have implications for self-narrative change for both distorted and impaired self-narrative types. In the case of the impaired self-narrative, a positive reference point, from which an appropriate emotional response to a less positive event can be established, may be the extent of what is required for appropriate emotional closure to take place. Thus positive emotional experience (e.g., of a meaningful relationship) may be all that is required for the transition from an impaired to an adaptive self-narrative. In the case of the distorted self-narrative, the positive emotional experience of the therapeutic relationship may also aid in opening the emotional gap, by demonstrating validation for the distress that may have been experienced that led to the original emotional gap. Once that emotional gap has been opened, the positive emotional experience of the social bond also acts as an anchor point from which to find the appropriate emotional response (as with the impaired self-narrative). Thus the ECM could describe the mechanisms underlying the ability of empathic relationships (in the form of intimate, familiar or therapeutic) to support desistance, through one or both of ability and motivation.

Maturation

Maturation is also a component that some narrative desistance theories conceptualise as being implicated in the desistance phase (e.g., McNeil & Whyte, 2007). The ECM goes some way to explaining the psychological processes underlying the proposed maturational component of desistance. It could explain processes for both impaired and distorted self-narrative transition to an adaptive self-narrative. In the case of the impaired self-narrative, the person experiences an emotional gap due to unresolved distress (because of a particular event, a pattern of emotional instability, substance abuse, or enduring negative emotions such as shame, grief, or even boredom due to lack of direction). As a person grows older, they naturally accrue a broader range of experiences through which they become increasingly likely to establish projects and to partake in activities that are personally meaningful and thus provide purpose in their life. The involvement in meaningful life projects elicits positive emotions, which signal that these activities are aligned with that person's values and thus are meeting their needs (e.g., Ward's primary human goods of relatedness, creativity or spirituality). Usually the person with an impaired self-narrative may struggle to relate to their emotional experience or maintain emotional regulation or be present with themselves, due to the need to distract themselves from the uncomfortable enduring emotional experience. However, the involvement in meaningful projects establishes positive emotions. Again, because of the relative nature of emotions, these meaningful experiences (which naturally elicit positive emotions to signal that the activity is in some way advantageous to us) provide an anchor from which to evaluate other emotional experiences. Thus, the emotional gap that is characteristic of the impaired self-narrative, may be resolved by the establishment of the appropriate emotional response to a past event, once

comparisons can be made from the positive experience of being involved in meaningful life projects. In the case of distorted self-narratives, the involvement with something personally meaningful, aligned with their personal values may elicit emotions, which may begin the process of *opening the emotional gap.* That is, the experience of something that gives them a sense of meaning may open up the possibility of desisting from antisocial activities which they may previously have relied on for a sense of meaning in their lives (e.g., being a well-respected drug dealer). Thus the person is able to emotionally respond to their past behaviour in a way that classifies it as less advantageous than they had previously identified it as. Thus the new founded means of meeting their needs lessens the motivation to continue offending (this aligns with Ward's GLM perspective). This interpretation assumes that those who 'mature' from offending will do so because of the establishment of more meaningful activities, which the person has increased opportunity to experience as they grow older and broaden their social networks and life experiences. Thus, once the person establishes activities that they experience as personally meaningful, they are able to make an emotional comparison to previous (less personally meaningful) activities. This enables emotional closure of the impaired self-narrative and *adaptive* emotional closure from distorted self-narrative and emergence of an adaptive, non-offender self-narrative. This description of how the ECM could aid our understanding of the transition mechanism underlying the maturation explanation of desistance also aligns with conceptualisations of self-narrative formation by Ward and Marshall (2007) and Archer (2000) who describe self-narrative development as a process of reflecting on personal projects and values. The ECM may add to this description by suggesting that it is the emotional responses to these personal projects and values which, when compared to

emotional responses to previous projects, activities and values, enables the

transition process to a new, non-offender self-narrative.

Imagining a new self

Healy (2014) suggests that imagining a new self is the mechanism that

precedes the ability to acquire a desistance supportive self-narrative and to desist.

However, according to Goldie (2012) emotional gaps impair a person's ability to

engage in the psychological process of imagining. Other researchers (e.g., Archer,

2000) argue that substance abuse and mental health issues can impair our ability to

reflect on our lives, which Goldie proposes we do from the *external perspective* of

narrative thinking; which is also engaged for imagining our future. Therefore, as

emotional closure is necessary for those with impaired self-narratives to reflect on

their lives in a meaningful way, it may also be necessary in order to imagine the

future. Thus emotional closure may precede the ability to imagine a new future self.

The emotional response may also be the mechanism through which imagining a new

self establishes commitment to the imagined actions associated with and enabled by

the imagined new self. Goldie would explain that, because of our ability to have an

actual emotional response to imagined events, if we experience a positive emotional

response, we would be motivated towards this action. This, he suggests, is how the

process of imagining guides decision-making. The emotional response may not only

be a necessary step before a person can imagine a new self (through emotional

closure), it could also be a mechanism by which imagining a new self establishes a

person's commitment to that imagined action. While Healy (2014) suggests that the

ability to imagine is a mechanism through which agency is established, the ECM

describes that before imagining is possible, emotional closure may first need to take

place. The ECM also describes a possible mechanism through which imagining a

new self (and the associated behaviours with that new self) may lead to a person enacting those behaviours, thus acquiring agency. That is, the emotional response (providing it is a positive response) to the imagined self and behaviour may establish our motivation to follow through with the action.

In the case of the distorted self-narrative, re-opening the emotional gap might increase a person's ability to imagine new possibilities as emotions are crucially implicated in the psychological process of imagining. Goldie discusses the interconnection of emotion and imagination for decision-making and for the planning of future behaviour (see chapter two). Seligman et al. (2013) also describe how affective and imaginative skills are closely linked in the ability to make decisions based on future possibilities, in their paper on prospection (i.e., the representation of possible futures). Thus for both impaired and distorted self-narratives, the ability to imagine a new self will likely be in part an emotionally implicated process. This process may involve opening an emotional gap in order to imagine alternative possibilities (for individuals with distorted self-narratives), or finding appropriate emotional closure in order to restore the resources necessary for reflection on the past and imagining the future (for individuals with impaired self-narratives).

Redemptive scripts

Maruna (2001) found that in order for someone to see themselves as a good person (capable of living an offence-free life), it seems that they had to play off their past transgressions as being the result of external influences, and not the actions of their "true self." A point of difference between the ECM and Maruna's (2001) self-narrative theory of desistance is the type of self-evaluation required of an individual to form a desistance supportive self-narrative. According to the ECM, an individual

must evaluate their actions *appropriately*, rather than necessarily *positively*, in order to adapt their self-narrative to one that supports their pathway to desistance. Thus someone must be able to accept their previous behaviour, and themselves, possibly in spite of the behaviour, to be able to form an adaptive self-narrative.

The ECM precludes an inappropriately positive self-appraisal. The ECM states that an overly positive appraisal can prevent an individual from taking responsibility and can lead to distorted self-narratives. Maruna's (2001) conceptualisation of the process of forming a desistance supportive self-narrative involves mining one's past in order to find a "true self," who has been downtrodden by external influences. However, this may not allow the individual to accept enough responsibility for their actions in order to deter them from similar action in the future. That is, given a similar future scenario, the external influences may overpower them once again. As emotional responses are what guide our learning processes (Goldie, 2012; Ward, 2017), an appropriate response (albeit negative) will likely be most beneficial (as long as the response is not shame).

Thus emotional closure may be the psychological mechanism behind the transition from an offending supportive self-narrative to a desistance supportive self-narrative, which underpins the various conceptualisations of the desistance phase. For the impaired self-narrative, emotional closure may be a psychological mechanism by which a person is able to accept themselves as a 'non-offender;' no longer racked with guilt, shame or confusion that prevents them from reflecting on their past in a way that enables imagining a credible offending free future. Being 'set free' from negative self-evaluation may allow a person to reflect upon, and emotionally respond to, positive life projects and goals, which may encourage the formation of an adaptive self-narrative. In the case of the distorted self-narrative,

opening the emotional gap may enable an experience of being more vulnerable to criticism but also more authentic and re-establish their true value that they may not have reflected upon for many years. Those with distorted self-narratives may then be able to reflect upon these 'reawakened' values from which meaningful life projects that are aligned with a desistance supportive self-narrative may develop.

Another outcome of an overly positive appraisal of one's behaviour is that positive appraisal may allow the individual to avoid practicing distress tolerance to negative emotions (which are ultimately what maintain the emotional gap). Thus by avoiding negative emotions associated with the appraisal of regretful past behaviour, the opportunity to tolerate other distressing situations, that may lead to substance use or violence (and subsequent further offending) may be missed.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the ECM may add to narrative desistance theory by adding a psychological depth of explanation to purely cognitive and social theories of desistance. It adds a possible psychological mechanism of change to theories that use the association of relationships or employment with desistance as an explanation. The ECM also adds sophistication and depth to the idea that an internal openness to change must occur before an external opportunity can be taken to commit an offender on a pathway of desistance. Important implications for Maruna's (2001) study may also be proposed by the ECM, that is, the requirement of *appropriately* viewing one's past, rather than *positively* viewing it.

CHAPTER SIX

Evaluation of the Emotional Closure Model

So far I have described how the ECM could further our understanding of the psychological mechanisms underlying the transition from offender to non-offender self-narratives. I have suggested possible implications of the ECM for offender treatment programmes that may allow for emotional closure and the transition from offender to non-offender self-narrative to take place. I have also suggested that this may contribute to narrative theories of desistance by providing possible insights into the desistance phase, which has been identified by many theories but not investigated. In this chapter I will briefly describe how the ECM may align with research outside of the desistance literature as well as future research opportunities that it may open. In my evaluation I apply a number of epistemic criteria developed for evaluating theories in science (Hooker, 1987).

Scope

The ECM can explain a range of relevant phenomena associated with the desistance phase, for example, *openness to change*, that Giordano et al., (2002) speculate enables a person to seize a *hook for change*. It could also explain how *turning points* (Laub & Sampson, 2001) may steer a person on a non-offending pathway, through being able to make a relative comparison of emotional responses to the different possible life paths that the turning point makes available. As explained in the previous chapter, the ECM could also add a depth to the maturational component of desistance that some narrative researchers emphasise

(e.g., McNeil & Whyte, 2007). The ECM also aligns and suggests possible further insights into Healy's (2014) conceptualistion of desistance as residing in a person's ability to imagine a 'new self.'

In terms of accounting for transition phases in the psychological literature more generally, emotional closure could be seen to allow a person to proceed through different steps of Prochaska, DiClemente and Norcross' (1992) transtheoretical model of behaviour change. Prochaska, DiClemente and Norcross propose that when a person effects any behaviour change, the person will move through a series of stages (namely, pre-contemplation, contemplation, preparation, action and maintenance). Emotional closure may be needed for a person to understand how best to effect change in their lives. This may be because a person needs to have a sense of themselves before they can make sense of their life, integrate learning and establish behaviour change. Once a person has found appropriate emotional closure, their newly adopted adaptive self-narrative may allow them to proceed through different stages of change. For those offenders with an impaired self-narrative, emotional closure could move them from the contemplation to preparation. For those offenders with distorted self-narratives, the extra step of opening the emotional gap could be seen to move a person from pre-contemplation to contemplation. If the person is then able to find appropriate emotional closure, they may move from the contemplation stage on to the preparation stage of change (as is proposed may happen with the impaired self-narrative types).

Accounts for relevant empirical evidence

The ECM could also present a possible mechanism through which the therapeutic relationship can support desistance. A strong therapuetic relationship

can increase positive emotions which provide an anchor point from which a person with an impaired self-narrative can reflect and make a relative comparison to past emotional experience. A strong therapeutic relationship may also establish an emotionally safe environment to be able to open an inappropriately closed emotional gap in a person's self-narrative. Opening the emotional gap may encourage a deeper understanding of what is truly of value to the person and thereby support a reconceptualisation of themselves and motivation to change their offending lifestyle. Thus the ECM may also explain how the therapeutic relationship could support desistance for those with distorted as well as impaired self-narratives.

Consilience

The ECM has conceptual similarities to aspects of emotionally focused therapies as well as emerging research on emotions more generally. Inappropriate emotional closure can be compared to Young's (2003) conceptualisation of *schema* formation. That is, both inappropriate emotional closure and schemas are formed as protective mechanisms against re-experiencing the negative emotions after a distressing emotional event has occured. Inappropriate emotional closure and schemas are protective in the way that they encourage avoidance of engagement in similar future events (e.g., viewing close relationships as dangerous after being hurt). In Young's conceptualisation the schema is a subconscious phenomenon, whereas inappropriate emotional closure may be more explicit. Possibly because, unlike schemas, inappropriate emotional closure more often occurs in adulthood and thus is a conscious decision.

Another conceptual similarity between the ECM and emotionally focused therapies is the notion of *opening the emotional gap*, which can be compared to

Linehan's (1993) *corrective emotional experience*, used within *dialectical behavioural therapy* (DBT). DBT is a therapy designed to improve emotional regulation for persons with border personality disorder (BPD). Linehan describes that a person develops characerics of BPD due to experiencing unstable attachment during childhood. The *corrective emotional experience* functions to allow a person to re-experience an uncomfortable emotion, which can then be resolved therapeutically, within the safety of a group treatment environment, so that past emotional experiences are no longer suppressed. Thus the *corrective emotional experience* is a similar idea to that of *opening the emotional gap* in a person's self-narrative. The fact that DBT was orignially designed for treatment of persons with BPD, who are disproportionately represented amoungst offender populations (Indig, 2016), further supports the use of working with experiences of past emotional distress in treatment of offenders. The concept of finding an appropriate emotional response also fits with *acceptance commitment therapy* (ACT) and mindfulness principles of accepting what has happened, acknowleding the emotion and letting it go. ACT has been found to be effective for reducing both physically and psychologically aggressive behaviours in clinical samples (e.g., Zarling, et al., 2015) as well as male domestic violence offenders (Zarling, et al., 2017) and for reducing substance use behaviours amongst female offenders (Lanza, et al., 2014).

Another key area of consilience is the ECM with research and practise on forgiveness processes, such as restorative justice, which has proven effectiveness amongst offender populations, and has been found to be particularly useful for overcoming shame (Kim & Gerber, 2012). The ECM also fits with Porges (2011) explanation of the need for emotional safety to be established before therapeutic intervention can be effective.

The ECM also fits with the idea that reflecting on a *good lives plan* (GLP) (Willis, Gates, Gannon & Ward, 2013) can encourage motivation to desist. The ECM would suggest that reflecting on a GLP, which works with a person's values and primary human goods (PHGs), elicits the positive emotions necessary for comparative reflection on past emotional experiences. This increased ability to reflect may allow appropriate emotional closure. Working with values and PHGs may also begin the opening process of the emotional gap in distorted self-narratives by connecting with a person's core sense of who they are.

The notion of needing to find the appropriate emotional response to establish emotional closure could also be seen to conceptually reintegrate emotional with rational processes. As was discussed in chapter one, the integration of emotional and rational processes is essential for the exercise of agency. Empirical research (e.g., Gross & Thompson, 2007) as well as clinical case studies (Arden, 2016) have also suggested that the experience of emotional distress can dissociate these aspects of psychological functioning; which need to be reintegrated if the person is to have a realistic chance of moving on from the distress (Le Doux, 1996; Arden, 2016). The interconnectivity of emotional and rational processes is fundamental to sense-making processes (Archer, 2000; Haidt, 2001; Thompson & Stapleton, 2009; Ward, 2017). Thus a person may become stuck in habitual patterns of behaviour when they are unable to make sense of their life and reflect effectively.

Research and practical utility

The ECM provides a context to acknowledge the implications of the high levels of mental health needs amongst offender populations (e.g., Indig, 2016). The ECM would suggest that emotional disturbances need to be addressed before

cognitively focused interventions will be effective. The idea of inappropriate emotional closure may contribute to the understanding of the cognitive explanation for offending, which has been criticised as being oversimplisitic (e.g., Gannon, 2016). Inappropriate emotional closure results from a person's attempt to find self vindication in order to avoid negative emotional experience. Thus (like a schema), it functions as a mechanism to protect against feeling vulnerable to negative appraisal from oneself or from others. A distorted cognition can also be viewed in a similar way, that is, as a protective mechanism against a negative experience (e.g., criticism from self or other). For offenders with distorted self-narratives, appropriate emotional closure may support dispelling distorted cognitions, along with the distorted self-narrative, due to them no longer serving their protective function. By viewing distorted cognitions as forming in order to protect against negative emotional experiences, rather than solely leading to negative emotional experience (i.e., taking an embodied rather than cognitivist perspective of emotions), we may be able to open an avenue to directly target the cause of the problem (negative emotional experience), rather than the symptom (distorted thinking style). By addressing the problem at its root (the emotional gap), the cause of the enduring negative emotions can be identified and efforts made to close the emotional gap (appropriately).

Thus the ECM suggests that for transition from both maladaptive self-narrative types, treatment should be aimed at an emotional as well as the cognitive level. This aligns with recent research with offender populations (Gannon, 2016), which suggests that cognitive focused treatments can be overly superficial and are unlikely on their own to support fundamental changes to lifestyle. Thus working with emotions is more likely to effect fundamental, long-term change, rather than superficial, limited change which is the extent that changed thinking patterns

achieves for most offenders (Gannon & Polaschek, 2006; Maruna & Copes, 2005; Stanley, 2009).

In terms of practical utility, the treatment implications (i.e., involving emotions in treatment programmes) are simple and readily achievable. Programme manuals should allow for experiential emotional exercises within the programme content and group facilitators must be well trained in order to guide experiential emotion focused exercises in order to ensure the emotional safety of the group. This increased implicit and explicit attention on emotions in treatment should enable the opening of the emotional gap and the establishment of the appropriate emotional response (through processes explained in chapter four).

Originality, creativity or excitement (Sternberg, 2006; Ward et al., 2006)

The ECM is unique in its description of the role of emotions in psychological mechanisms of desistance. It aligns with recent findings regarding the importance of emotions for effective human functioning and behaviour change (Ward, 2017). An intervention that focuses on emotions is also promising due to the fact that offenders frequently have lead such emotionally distressing lives (e.g., Schlosser, 2015), have extremely high levels of mental health needs (Indig, 2016) and until recently, emotions have been overlooked in offender rehabilitation (Giordano et al., 2007; Ward, 2017). Importantly, involvement of emotions in discussions of psychological functioning also allows for consideration of the motivation (which the purely cognitive or moral interpretations of agency as a substitute for psychological function precluded). Thus the ECM adds to theories on how reflection on one's life can aid in desistance (e.g., Giordano et al., 2002; Vaughan, 2007) but accounts for desistance, which is not morally motivated.

Conclusions

In summary, the ECM could account for a range of relevant phenomena (e.g., *turning points, openness to change*) that have been conceptualised by narrative desistance theories as implicated in the transition to a non-offender self-narrative. The model aligns with nuanced literature on emotions as important processes in many aspects of psychological processes as reviewed by Ward (2017).

The practical utility of the ECM is established as the treatment implications are simple and readily available in the form of emotion focused exercises (based on ACT or other mindfulness-based therapies) and increased training for facilitators of programmes, who are responsible for ensuring the emotional safety of individuals within the group who have often suffered deeply distressing experiences. As a psychological (rather than purely cognitive or moral) account of the desistance phase, the ECM increases the applicability of a narrative perspective to explain not only how a person may desist through increased agentic capacity (i.e., increased ability to successfully achieve their goals) but also how a person whose offending was goal-oriented, may be motivated to desist through a re-evaluation of their goals to align with a prosocial lifestyle.

Overall Conclusions

This thesis has outlined how the ECM can contribute to the narrative desistance literature by beginning to explore possible psychological mechanisms underlying the transition to a non-offender self-narrative. An advantage of the ECM is that it incorporates a sophisticated understanding of emotions as evaluative and adaptive phenomena, which has been missing from desistance literature (Ward, 2017).

The ECM develops Goldie's notion of *emotional closure* and the role it plays in psychological transition to an adaptive self-narrative, to provide a possible explanation for desistance for both those who had (prior to the emotional closure process) lacked agency and also those who had lacked the motivation to desist. Thus the problem of the moral interpretation of agency is avoided and an account of desistance which is due to increased agency as well as a change in values and goals is included. This aligns with existing literature on offender types (Ward & Hudson, 1998).

The ECM contributes to existing narrative theories of desistance by describing possible psychological mechanisms underlying the various conceptualisations of the transition phase to non-offender self-narratives. It could also add to Maruna's (2001) study by suggesting that a person needs to reflect *appropriately* rather than *positively* on their past in order to gain an authentic self-narrative. Finding the appropriate response to their past rather than a self-deceptively positive one will better enable the person to accept their past actions, and be guided towards better actions by their appropriate emotional response (Goldie, 2012; Ward, 2017). That is, the emotional response which is appropriate rather than positive categorises their actions in a way which guides them away from similar situations in the future. Thus the ECM aligns with general literature on emotions as evaluative and guiding phenomena (see Ward, 2017). It also aligns with emotionally focused therapies such

as DBT and ACT which emphasise the importance of accepting emotions, 'letting go' and moving forward. it also aligns with the practice of restorative justice in terms of the possible need for forgiveness in order to move on. This is particularly the case when shame, which can 'rivit someone to their past' (Goldie, 2012, p. 140), inhibits what Goldie term 'narrative thinking' (or thinking about one's past and future). When narrative thinking is prevented, effective imaginative capacity is also inhibited, along with the capacity to plan for the future. Thus, an appropriate emotional response (which precludes shame) can have far reaching effects on a person's ability to function. Goldie's description of the transparent nature of emotions could be what enables the emotional response to 'colour' a person's past and allow them to view it in a new light. His description of dramatic irony and free-indirect style elucidates how these emotional responses can infuse into our narrative thinking about our past and into our future. Thus the emotional response not only 'colours' our perspective of the past, it also influences the emotional responses we have to counterfactual narratives, which are what inform decision making and planning for the future.

Implications for treatment are that emotions should be worked *with* rather than *against*. A sophisticated conceptualisation of emotions describes them as phenomena that guide us towards what is personally meaningful and thus motivate behaviour (and behaviour change). For persons with distorted self-narratives, the ECM suggests that careful attention must be paid to implicit emotional experience in group treatment programmes in order to establish emotional safety. Emotional safety enables a person to become open to sharing their shameful or otherwise distressing pasts which they may have suppressed. Becoming open to sharing distressing events from their past, can guide a person towards understanding what is personally meaningful and may motivate a person with a distorted self-narrative to different

courses of action. That is, if they find emotional investment in living a prosocial lifestyle through a process of *opening an emotional gap* in their self-narrative, they will be more likely to do so.

For persons with impaired self-narratives, the appropriate emotional response may be found through hearing reflections from others or similar stories which they can relate to (which Goldie suggests can increase the desire to tell one's own story and find emotional closure). Thus the implications for treatment are that emotions should be focused on both explicitly in programme content (to increase emotional understanding of how to resolve emotional distress), and implicitly through emotional safety and guided emotion-focused exercises. The experience of emotional safety and connectedness with other group members or facilitators may elicit emotional *anchor points* (Russel & Fehr, 1987) from which they are able to find a comparative emotional response (which until then had been missing) to past events which caused the emotional gap.

Through the establishment of the appropriate emotional response, those with impaired self-narratives may regain sense-making capacity and with it, the ability to act with agency. Through opening the emotional gap and increasing motivation to find the appropriate emotional response, those with distorted self-narratives may regain authenticity and acceptance of themselves (despite their past), and the ability to begin to imagine an alternative future lifestyle, with re-evaluated goals. Once the appropriate response is found, the emotion infuses into the narrative account and 'colours' the memory so that the event can be left in the past and future behaviour is no longer affected by the emotional distress of it.

With emerging research supporting the important roles that emotions play in psychological functioning (including agency and motivation), the ECM marks a timely

and plausible conceptualisation of an emotional perspective of transition from offender to non-offender self-narratives. Further research could explore self-narratives of offenders who have completed intensive treatment programmes in order to establish whether the ECM can be empirically supported. This exploration could firstly establish whether these offenders adopt a desistance self-narrative, and secondly, whether they identify experiences of emotional closure within the programme that enabled or motivated the reconceptualisation of their self-narrative. Empirical support would suggest that increased focus on emotions in offender treatment programmes, with a view to establishing appropriate emotional closure, could have far reaching benefits for self-narrative reconceptualisation and desistance.

References

Amstadter, A. B., & Vernon, L. L. (2008). Emotional reactions during and after trauma: A comparison of trauma types. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma*, *16*(4), 391-408.

Andrews, D. A., & Bonta, J. (2010). Rehabilitating criminal justice policy and practice. *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*, *16*(1), 39.

Archer, M. S. (2000). *Being human: The problem of agency*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Arden, J. (2015). Brain2Brain: Enacting client change through the persuasive power of neuroscience. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons Inc.

Baerger, D. R., & McAdams, D. P. (1999). Life story coherence and its relation to psychological well-being. *Narrative Inquiry*, *9*(1), 69-96.

Baker, L. R. (2016). Making sense of ourselves: self-narratives and personal identity. *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences*, *15*(1), 7-15.

Barry, M. (2006). *Youth offending in transition: The search for social recognition*. Abingdon, England: Routledge.

Berntsen, D., & Rubin, D. C. (2006). The centrality of event scale: A measure of integrating a trauma into one's identity and its relation to post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms. *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, 44(2), 219-231.

Brownfield, D., & Thompson, K. (2005). Self-Concept and Delinquency: The effects of reflected appraisals by parent and peers. *Western Criminology Review*, *6*(1).

Bruner, J. (1987). Life as narrative. *Social Research*, 11-32.

Bruner, J. (2002). Narrative distancing: A foundation of literacy. In K. Brockmeier, M. Wang, & D. R. Olsen (Eds.), *Literacy, narrative and culture* (pp. 86-93). Richmond, England: Curzon Press.

Bushway, S. D., & Paternoster, R. (2011). Understanding desistance: Theory testing with formal empirical models. In J. MacDonald (Ed.), *Measuring crime and criminality: Advances in criminological theory.* (Vol. 17, pp. 299-333). New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.

Bushway S.D., Paternoster R. (2014) Identity and desistance from crime. In J. Humphrey, P. Cordella (eds.) *Effective interventions in the lives of criminal offenders*. New York, NY: Springer.

Chandler, M., & Proulx, T. (2006). Changing selves in changing worlds: Youth suicide on the fault-lines of colliding cultures. *Archives of Suicide Research*, *10*(2), 125-140.

Cooley, C. H. (1902). *Human nature and the social order*. New York, NY: C. Scribner's Sons.

Durrant, R., & Ward, T. (2015). *Evolutionary criminology: Towards a comprehensive explanation of crime*. London, England: Academic Press.

Elster, J. (1999). *Alchemies of the mind: Rationality and the emotions*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Farrall, S. (2003). Rethinking what works with offenders: Probation, social context and desistance from crime. *Probation Journal*, *306*(50), 3.

Farrall, S. (2005). On the existential aspects of desistance from crime. *Symbolic Interaction*, *28*(3), 367-386.

Farrall, S., & Bowling, B. (1999). Structuration, human development and desistance from crime. *British Journal of Criminology*, *39*(2), 253-268.

Farrall, S., & Calverley, A. (2006). Understanding desistance from crime: Theoretical directions in rehabilitation and resettlement. Maidenhead, England: Open University Press.

Farrington, D. P. (1992). Criminal career research in the United Kingdom. *The British Journal of Criminology*, *32*(4), 521-536.

Foa E.B., Hearst-Ikeda D. (1996). Emotional dissociation in response to trauma. In: Michelson L.K., Ray W.J. (Eds.), *Handbook of dissociation* (pp. 207-224). Boston, MA: Springer.

Fredrickson, B. L. (2004). The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions. *Philosophical transactions of the Royal Society of London series B: Biological Sciences*, 1367-1378.

Furtak, R. A. (2010). Emotion, the bodily, and the cognitive. *Philosophical Explorations*, *13*(1), 51-64.

Gannon, T. A. (2016). Forensic psychologists should use the behavioural experiment to facilitate cognitive change in clients who have offended. *Aggression and Violent Behaviour*, *27*, 130-141.

Gannon, T. A., & Polaschek, D. L. (2006). Cognitive distortions in child molesters: A re-examination of key theories and research. *Clinical Psychology Review*, *26*(8), 1000-1019.

Garofalo, C., & Velotti, P. (2017). Negative emotionality and aggression in violent offenders: The moderating role of emotion dysregulation. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, *51*, 9-16.

Giddens, A. (1991). *Modernity and self-identity: Self and society in the late modern age*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Giordano, P. C., Cernkovich, S. A., & Rudolph, J. L. (2002). Gender, crime, and desistance: Toward a theory of cognitive transformation. *American Journal of Sociology*, *107*, 990-1064.

Giordano, P. C., Schroeder, R. D., & Cernkovich, S. A. (2007). Emotions and crime over the life course: A neo-meadian perspective on criminal continuity and change. *American Journal of Sociology*, *112*(6), 1603-1661.

Glueck, S., & Glueck, E. (1940). *Juvenile delinquents grown up*. New York, NY: The Commonwealth Fund.

Goldie, P. (2012). *The mess inside: Narrative, emotion, and the mind*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

Greenberg, L. S. (2008). The clinical application of emotion in psychotherapy. *EMOTIONS*, 88.

Gross, J. J., & Thompson, R. A. (2007). Emotion regulation: Conceptual foundations. In J. J. Gross (Ed.), *Handbook of emotion regulation* (pp. 3-24). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Haidt, J. (2001). The emotional dog and its rational tail: A social intuitionist approach to moral judgment. *Psychological Review*, *108*(4), 814.

Healy, D. (2010). *The dynamics of desistance: Charting pathways through change*. Cullompton, England: Willan Publishing.

Healy, D. (2014). Becoming a desister exploring the role of agency, coping and imagination in the construction of a new self. *British Journal of Criminology*, *54*(5), 873-891.

Hollis, M. (1977). Models of Man: philosophical thoughts on social action. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Hooker, C. A. (1987). *A realistic theory of science.* New York, NY: State University of New York Press.

Indig, D. (2016). *Comorbid substance use disorders and mental health disorders among New Zealand prisoners*. New Zealand Department of Corrections.

Kierkegaard, S. (1997). *Without authority* (Vol. 18). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Kim, H. J., & Gerber, J. (2012). The effectiveness of reintegrative shaming and restorative justice conferences: Focusing on juvenile offenders' perceptions in Australian reintegrative shaming experiments. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, *56*(7), 1063-1079.

King, S. (2013a). Early desistance narratives: A qualitative analysis of probationers' transitions towards desistance. *Punishment & Society*, *15*(2), 147-165.

King, S. (2013b). Transformative agency and desistance from crime. *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, *13*(3), 317-335.

Lanza, P. V., Garcia, P. F., Lamelas, F. R., & González- Menéndez, A. (2014). Acceptance and commitment therapy versus cognitive behavioural therapy in the treatment of substance use disorder with incarcerated women. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, *70*(7), 644-657.

Laub, J. H., & Sampson, R. J. (1993). Turning points in the life course: Why change matters to the study of crime. *Criminology*, *31*(3), 301-325.

Laub, J. H., & Sampson, R. J. (2001). Understanding desistance from crime. *Crime and Justice*, *28*, 1-69.

LeDoux, J. (1996). Emotional networks and motor control: a fearful view. *Progress in Brain Research*, *107*, 437-446.

Linehan, M. M. (1993). Dialectical behaviour therapy for treatment of borderline personality disorder: implications for the treatment of substance abuse. *NIDA Research Monograph*, *137*, 201-201.

Mackenzie, C. (2009). Personal Identity, Narrative Integration and Embodiment in S. Campbell, L. Meynell, & S. Sherwin, (Eds.) *Embodiment and Agency* (*pp*. 100-125). Philadelphia, PA: Penn State University Press.

Matsueda, R. L. (1992). Reflected appraisals, parental labelling, and delinquency: Specifying a symbolic interactionist theory. *American Journal of Sociology*, *97*(6), 1577-1611.

Marsh, B. (2011). Narrating desistance: Identity change and the 12-step script. *Irish Probation Journal*, *8*, 49-68.

Maruna, S. (2001). *Making good: How ex-convicts reform and rebuild their lives*. Wasington, D. C: American Psychological Association.

Maruna, S., & Copes, H. (2005). What have we learned from five decades of neutralization research? *Crime and Justice*, *32*, 221-320.

Maruna, S., & Farrall, S. (2004). Desistance from crime: A theoretical reformulation. *Kolner Zeitschrift fur Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie*, 42, 1-24.

Maruna, S., Lebel, T. P., Mitchell, N., & Naples, M. (2004). Pygmalion in the reintegration process: Desistance from crime through the looking glass. *Psychology, Crime & Law*, *10*(3), 271-281.

McAdams, D. P. (1997). The case for unity in the (post) modern self. *Self and Identity*, 46-78.

McAdams, D. P. (1988). Biography, narrative, and lives: An introduction. *Journal of Personality*, *56*(1), 1-18.

McAdams, D. P. (2001). The psychology of life stories. *Review of General Psychology*, *5*(2), 100.

McAdams, D. P. (2006). The problem of narrative coherence. *Journal of Constructivist Psychology*, *19*(2), 109-125.

McNeill, F., & Whyte, B. (2007). *Reducing reoffending*. Cullompton, England: Willan Publishing.

Mead, G. H. (1934). *Mind, self and society* (Vol. 111). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Moffitt, T. E. (1993). Adolescence-limited and life-course-persistent antisocial behavior: a developmental taxonomy. *Psychological Review*, *100*(4), 674.

Pals, J. L. (2006). Narrative identity processing of difficult life experiences: Pathways of personality development and positive self- transformation in adulthood. *Journal of Personality*, *74*(4), 1079-1110.

Paternoster, R., & Bushway, S. (2009). Desistance and the" feared self": Toward an identity theory of criminal desistance. *The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, 1103-1156.

Paternoster, R., Bachman, R., Bushway, S., Kerrison, E., & O'Connell, D. (2015). Human agency and explanations of criminal desistance: Arguments for a rational choice theory. *Journal of Developmental and Life-Course Criminology, 1*(3), 209-235.

Paivio, S. C. (2013). Essential processes in emotion-focused therapy. *Psychotherapy*, *50*(3), 341.

Polkinghorne, D. E. (1988). *Narrative knowing and the human sciences*. New York, NY: State University of New York Press.

Porges, S. W. (2011). *The polyvagal theory: Neurophysiological foundations of emotions, attachment, communication, and self-regulation (Norton Series on Interpersonal Neurobiology)*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company.

Presser, L. (2009). The narratives of offenders. *Theoretical Criminology*, *13*(2), 177-200.

Prochaska, J. O., DiClemente, C. C., & Norcross, J. C. (1992). In search of how people change: Applications to addictive behaviours. *American Psychologist*, *47*(9), 1102.

Reynolds, S. J., & Ceranic, T. L. (2007). The effects of moral judgment and moral identity on moral behavior: An empirical examination of the moral individual. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *92*(6), 1610.

Ricoeur, P. (1984). The reality of the historical past. Milwaukee, MI: Marquette University Press.

Roberton, T., Daffern, M., & Bucks, R. S. (2014). Maladaptive emotion regulation and aggression in adult offenders. *Psychology, Crime & Law*, *20*(10), 933-954.

Robinson, J. A., & Swanson, K. L. (1993). Field and observer modes of remembering. *Memory, 1(*3), 169-184.

Rocque, M. (2015). The lost concept: The (re) emerging link between maturation and desistance from crime. *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, *15*(3), 340-360.

Rowlands, M., 1999. The Body in the Mind. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Russell, J. A., & Fehr, B. (1987). Relativity in the perception of emotion in facial expressions. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, *116*(3), 223.

Sampson, R. J., & Laub, J. H. (2003). Life- course desisters? Trajectories of crime among delinquent boys followed to age 70. *Criminology*, *41*(3), 555-592.

Schechtman, Marya. (1996). The constitution of selves. New York, NY: Cornell University Press.

Schlosser, J. A. (2015). *Inmates' narratives and discursive discipline in prison: Rewriting personal histories through cognitive behavioural programs* (Vol. 24). New York, NY: Routledge.

Seligman, M. E., Railton, P., Baumeister, R. F., & Sripada, C. (2016). *Homo prospectus*. London, England: Oxford University Press.

Serin, R. C., & Lloyd, C. D. (2009). Examining the process of offender change: The transition to crime desistance. *Psychology, Crime & Law*, *15*(4), 347-364.

Serin, R. C., Mailloux, D. L., & Kennedy, S. M. (2007). Development of a clinical rating scale for offender readiness: Implications for assessment and offender change. *Issues in Forensic Psychology*, *7*, 70.

Siegel, D. J. (2015). *The developing mind: How relationships and the brain interact to shape who we are* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Guilford Publications.

Sparks, P., & Shepherd, R. (1992). Self-identity and the theory of planned behaviour: Assessing the role of identification with "green consumerism." *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 388-399.

Sternberg, R. J. (2006). The nature of creativity. *Creativity Research Journal*, *18*(1), 87-98.

Stevens, A. (2012). 'I am the person now I was always meant to be': Identity reconstruction and narrative reframing in therapeutic community prisons. *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, *12*(5), 527-547.

Strawson, G. (2009). Selves: An essay in revisionary metaphysics. Oxford, England: Clarendon Press.

Tambini, A., Rimmele, U., Phelps, E. A., & Davachi, L. (2017). Emotional brain states carry over and enhance future memory formation. *Nature Neuroscience*, *20*(2), 271-278.

Thompson, E., & Stapleton, M. (2009). Making sense of sense-making: Reflections on enactive and extended mind theories. *Topoi*, *28*(1), 23-30.

Turner, J. H., & Stets, J. E. (2005). *The sociology of emotions*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Varga, S. (2014). Cognition, representations and embodied emotions: Investigating cognitive theory. *Erkenntnis*, *79*(1), 165-190.

Vaughan, B. (2007). The internal narrative of desistance. *The British Journal of Criminology*, *47*(3), 390-404.

Ward, T. (2017). *Emotion, cognition and motivation*. In T. A. Gannon & T. Ward (Eds.), *Sexual offending* (pp. 1-16). Chichester, UK: John Wiley & Sons.

Ward, T., & Brown, M. (2004). The good lives model and conceptual issues in offender rehabilitation. *Psychology, Crime & Law*, *10*(3), 243-257.

Ward, T., Hudson, S. M., & Keenan, T. (1998). A self-regulation model of the sexual offense process. *Sexual Abuse*, *10*(2), 141-157.

Ward, T., Hudson, S. M., Johnston, L., & Marshall, W. L. (1997). Cognitive distortions in sex offenders: An integrative review. *Clinical Psychology Review*, *17*(5), 479-507.

Ward, T., & Marshall, B. (2007). Narrative identity and offender rehabilitation. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, *51*(3), 279-297.

Ward, T., Polaschek, D., & Beech, A. R. (2006). *Theories of sexual offending*. Chichester, England: John Wiley & Sons.

Willis, G. M., Yates, P. M., Gannon, T. A., & Ward, T. (2013). How to integrate the Good Lives Model into treatment programs for sexual offending: An introduction and overview. *Sexual Abuse*, *25*(2), 123-142.

Young, J. E., Klosko, J. S., & Weishaar, M. E. (2003). *Schema therapy: A practitioner's guide*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Zarling, A., Lawrence, E., & Marchman, J. (2015). A randomized controlled trial of acceptance and commitment therapy for aggressive behaviour. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, *83*(1), 199-212.

Zarling, A., Bannon, S., & Berta, M. (2017). Evaluation of acceptance and commitment therapy for domestic violence offenders. *Psychology of Violence.*