

# Individual, customized support: mentoring, individual development/training and learning paths



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## **INDIVIDUAL, COSTUMIZED SUPPORT: MENTORING, INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT/TRAINING AND LEARNING PATH**

*Mészáros Mercedes, Váltó-sáv Alapítvány (HU)*

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„So if you can form a good relationship with the helper that literally helps you through everything”

(Excerpt from an interview made with imprisoned and released youngsters)

### **Theoretical context: helping relationship**

A helping relationship means that the helper helps another person through a human relationship, endeavours to achieve changes in the helped person's emotions, thinking, actions and behaviour, even in one's moral judgement of it. The goal of helping relationships is to contribute to the helped person's better conformation to one's environment. Its predominant characteristic is that it mostly tries to achieve mental health and personality development. Ultimately, the essence of helping relationships is leading the individual to self-help. A helping relationship includes regular meetings, an emotional relationship between two people and a particular sequence of joint experiences. So finally helping is nothing else than making someone do particular actions, changing.

One of the fundamental conditions of helping is forming a favourable atmosphere between two people. Not only the helper has to accept the helped person, but also it is absolutely necessary that the client accepts the helper.

A helping relationship endeavours to achieve changes. The changes happening inside the helped person can be achieved by identification with the helper. This does not mean a whole identification with another person, it actually means finding one's own personal identity.

The process of identification is an essential element of the helping relationship. The sympathy, trust, attraction to the helper make the changes of thoughts, emotions, etc. possible. To sum it up, the words of the helper have a weight and mean a lot to the helped person.

One of our clients describes practically this process:

“They could influence me, unintentionally, you know, they just said the things, and I found it interesting because I liked them and took their advice. And not always advice because they don't give any a lot of times, we were just talking and I started to think about myself, like, oh my God, I see thing wrongly. So this was nothing like I had imagined and unintentionally, well I say that they influenced me. But this is a very bad word, but still they did influence me. And I started to change this way...”

(Excerpt from an interview made with imprisoned and released youngsters)

Under normal circumstances by the inner self-independence the original dependency from the helper decreases; this helps the constructive ending of the helping relationships. The meetings of the client and the helper are decreasing in number, the time between the meetings is getting longer and longer and in the end the work stops.

## **Helping work in the activities of our organization: “through-care”**

The essence of our activities is continuous (after)care (in the English professional literature it is called “through-care”: the building of the contact with clients already starts in the penal institution and continues during the crisis before, through and after release), moreover, the civil support system ( = mentor system, helping relationship). According to our belief and experience the building of a safe human/helping/civil relationship already starts inside the penal institution. In addition, winning and strengthening of trust, the forming of continuous emotional safety and the help of an accepting community form the basis of decreasing the crisis of release and the prevention of recidivism.

### Our main activities in this context:

- crime prevention (primary, secondary, tertiary) – organizing and implementing informative and prevention discussions;
- prevention of recidivism (tertiary criminal prevention);
- securing continuous (after)care, operation of a civil support system ( = mentor system), socialization – re-socialization; supporting the elimination of prison socialization;
- help with life management, help with overcoming socio-cultural disadvantages;
- supporting the reintegration, re-socialization, rehabilitation of criminal and addicted juveniles;
- health development, health education;
- securing social information service for the client group and their relatives;
- psycho-social treatment, solving of personal problems, mental hygiene service;
- help and development of problem and conflict management skills;
- securing training/educational programmes, moreover, supporting the joining of these kinds of programmes – especially supporting high school studies and preparation for graduation exams, in addition, organizing and implementing special, individual-centred learning/teaching programmes and care related to these;
- organizing, securing, implementing special helping, problem-exploring groups, which support the (re)integration into the society;
- involving youngsters who used to lead a criminal life style into the care work, supporting their training of helping work;
- family care;
- reduction of discrimination;
- organizing professional meetings, coordination of method exchanges, moreover, doing method and research work related to deviancy and its treatment forms, especially from the aspect of criminal life style;

- overall: realization of social work (primarily) in the case of young offenders or people accused in criminal proceedings;

## **Mentoring, helping relationship, coaching**

Personal care, counselling and development are methods of continuous, personal care about prisoners, which give an opportunity to form the psychological-mental-ethic self-control against recidivism and in this way prevent it. Aftercare can be started in the penal institution, 1- 0,5 year before release, so it provides a way for processing the crisis of release and the difficulties of the following time period, in addition, the non-stop support of the client which continues in the post-release life. The tasks of the helping relationship in details:

- psycho-social treatment, solving of personal problems; mental hygiene service, psychical care;
- conscious support of the development, changing of the client;
- securing support in crisis;
- information-flow from the outside world, its goal is the preparation for release (under detention);
- representation of interests, advocacy (e.g. towards the organization's staff);
- help in formulating, exploring, processing problems;
- conscious recognition and applying of one's own skills and knowledge;
- feedback for the current situation;
- confirmation in (positive) decisions, positive confirmations;
- contact keeping, cooperating with relevant professionals;
- helping of relatives, family members;
- supplying administrative duties;
- social administration;
- talking about the future – realistic – plans (planning, shaping/development of future-orientated thinking);
- support of forming an individual life style in compliance with the value and norm system of the majority society;

The helping relationship can expand to any life situation of the client and continues up to the point when the client can live an independent, adult, responsible life. So the goal is to form the skill of self-help, independent solving of one's own life problems, in other words the development/widening of communicational, conflict management and problem solving repertoire.

The interactions between the individual and his/her environment are the focus of the helping work. It gives the client an opportunity to cope with his/her life tasks, so the goal is the development of problem solving and coping capacity.

The helper's task is to induce changes, furthermore, to constantly monitor the intent/will. As a result of this the client (released and/or prisoner) can form a corresponding picture of his/her personal incitements and the given resources, taking advantage of opportunities.

Competencies, self-power, optimism and emotional intelligence form the basis of personal motivation. Motivation being basically one of the defining factors of personal development typically helps use personal resources in the field of personal life and work and at the same time it helps the professionals plan the interventions. It is important to emphasize to the clients that motivation does not come from “outside”, but from “inside”, so everyone is responsible for their own decisions.

So case management/helping work can be defined as problem solving. From the point of view of the case leader/helper professional this is a regular and conscious process, which is based on an (written and/or oral) agreement between the client and the helper/mentor. The agreement includes:

- problems to be solved;
- distribution of tasks;
- deadlines;

The topics of a helping conversation can be the following:

- getting to know myself, self-esteem (competency development);
- mapping personal resources and skills;
- mapping external resources, helper (natural social system and/or other organizations);
- rehabilitation of human relationships;
- solving housing;
- job search, job keeping (job coaching) – career planning, career orientation, working competencies;
- opportunities for education/training (supported, personally paid);
- livelihood, money management;
- other practical knowledge;

Excerpts from some interviews made with our clients which plastically show the theoretical context:

„... a good relationship with M has formed during that.

*How has it formed?*

I don't even know, I just know that it is good. He was the one who cared about us when I came, and I went back to him when I had a problem, since he was the one who I knew...he was very positive about everything, so I willingly came back to him after a while...

*What does this good relationship mean?*

You could talk with him. And he wasn't that overbearing. I mean, he was all the time, but in his way, and it wasn't bothersome.

*How was he overbearing?*

I have to do this and this, take this exam and that exam...blablabla.... but he was like you should do this, please, read it...he was overbearing in a totally different way, which was not annoying.

*What did you tell him?*



I talked with him about everything. Everything. And I was totally at my ease, because he said that I should know that he is tied by the secrecy, I can totally calmly speak with him, so I was totally okay with it, discussed everything with him.”

*„ What is very important in the programme?*

The role, personality of the helper. So if you can form a good relationship with the helper that literally helps you through everything. I'll tell you the truth with the other teachers, helpers, we can tell them anything, so with anyone else I am not in a good relationship. I don't mean we have a problem, we just simply don't have that atmosphere, which I have with M. And this is not bad, all I want to say is that in the case of a group therapy like this or what, helping, as far as I realized the helping concentrates on one person ... and that person is the source of helping. So it's interesting that I can't involve Cs. And can't involve P. Or maybe you, or anybody into this relationship, but the most interesting thing is that I don't even want to. For me that one person is more than enough.

*I think that it also depends on that you don't want to. Do you know why you don't want?*

I don't know, I can't find common points, I don't find ... clammers... nothing in Cs. We have good expectations from each other, he tries to suit me, I try to suit him, but I can't build a closer relationship with him, probably I don't even want to. And I think this is why it is very important that it already happened with one person, and then it is a secure point. I don't depend on loads of people, I just depend on one. When I say depending, I, of course, do not mean it literally.

*Do you depend on him?*

Actually yes, because if he wasn't here I would be in trouble a little bit, because I don't know who I would be able to talk to about my problems, going through these things, I don't know who could influence me as much as him. So from this point of view, yes, I depend on him, but this is not the closest thing in any ways, not a question of life and death, but I think a depending relationship forms on every occasion. Another question is that we have to know how to dismantle it in the future, but now I am actually consciously fighting against this, to make him unable to do it, being a little bit sly, and I won't let this happen this simply, because I already realized that it is planned, but I will not let this happen, let him “unbuild” this. Seriously.”

“Helping inside prison can be very good too, you can lean on something, but the period after getting out is more significant, important, and if the released can have a positive life perspective ... that is definitely the period after getting out.

*Because there is somewhere you can go?*

Yes, it is not like you get out into a big nothing, and you just stand there, and look around like a jerk, and then you are like okay, now I am going home, whatever... No, your mother tells you to go to school and you know you have to go there, because you are released, and everything will be solved immediately. You will get into a medium, but you are not outside, not alone, and it is actually not important what kind of company they are, but you are in a company, and it is extremely important, I think... And you get there with goals, what's more is that this little group or person or helping teacher or we can call it anything, define your program for a while and that time you perfectly live through and it is good and secure. And you got the first point. And it is not like I'm outside standing there and being unsure about everything, but I already have a direction that I can move towards. And the 99% of people who have a higher quality thinking trying to get this. And they have to. Because of a well understood self-interest... That is it not only depends on you, but also on me, and this makes it even more important.”

“I don't know, maybe it is that there is always peace. Joyful people, without any concerns, you don't run up and down like the average people, like jeez... You are calm and paying attention, trying everything. Everyone comes, friendly it is like a ... I could say family but it is a too strong word for me.”

“People coming from the outside who don't want to hurt me, but help me had a great influence on me... But now I feel very good here, it helps me to get myself together, my thoughts and not to think



about everything. I don't start to do stupid things, and this is the peace when I am done with everything, and I come here to study, and it feels so good, and I don't have any problems after this for hours."

"What is very important is that when I have problems I can talk with someone about them... and I always had somebody to ask help from. Or if I have problem, or I am upset about something I come here, tell you, and you listen to me, we laugh about it, or something."

"It was very good that we thought that the three people you have will be very tough, because we are criminals, and no talking, or anything. We thought this, but it was a pleasant disappointment. Everyone was totally humane.

*What does humane mean to you?*

It's just humane. Other people who came inside, worked inside, built something there, those people were looking down on us. When they brought me out to the dentist or the hospital it was also the same. Or if the doctor came inside he talked very phlegmatically to me. The things he could do to make us feel bad or humiliated he did them all."

"Here it is like we can recharge our energy. And in the end I am charged up with energy, because I see happy faces. They don't have the attitude that is like hey, it is vulgar. I can be around normal people, and it is cool."

... "After all we can discuss everything, if I have any kind of problem. Maybe if I have family problems, or if I bump into difficulties, like getting a job and we can talk about these. And this is very important. Because if someone can't talk about it, because it is also very important to talk about it, and the other important thing which is even more important to talk about with someone. So I get an answer, or also get examples like XY can get out of this, or how someone can get out of this according to them. And also some phone numbers and ideas, like how I can get a job and where and it is very good. It is good, because these are real ways, and can fit into everyone's value system. Nothing is out of place or has a negative effect. So you can only get positive experiences here...

I feel like I got everything that I needed. Anything which is necessary for studying or a little pi jaw, or anything, and these can be done always. So this is a whole."

"And it wasn't like you come inside, and you act like we are criminals, and it is because you have to, but you come to us like a human to humans. Humanely. if there was any kind of problem you tried to help solve it. It was not like you tried to keep aloof from the thing happening with us inside or outside... You were interested in us. That is how we were, humans. And this means a lot inside ."

*„At present do you get any kind of help from us except studying? Since you were released...*

"Yeah, I do. When I was being released more people paid attention to me, but I ruined it, and it narrowed down only to one person, specifically to A. I feel like he is not only my teacher but also my friend. I got so many things from him, inside and outside, he was designated. Every kind of human goodness. He wrote me a letter when I didn't go to my exam, and he was there even when I didn't call him, and wrote me, to make me know that he is there, when I didn't even call him. At least I should have called him. He has such a big patience for me, that I am surprised, but also everyone else, I don't know how you can do it, like you when we sit down and learn maths. You have so much patience for people..."

*"Yes, you said you got other kind of help too..."*

I got mental help. Obviously I need more mental help here, than inside. Inside I didn't really have time for anything, because I did so many things, but I also couldn't do a lot of things, and I was like I didn't really do anything. But it was loads of course. There I didn't really need a mental care. Now it is also not that necessary but it is more needed.

*Why is it needed more now?*

"Because sometimes I have had enough."

"It can be felt that you don't come here because of some bullshit, but because you are actually interested in our opinions, caring about us."

"The person can talk about topics that he never or just rarely talks about with another fellow. And my mood is just so good sometimes, like I was outside, and I could go through the prison's wall. And it is good!"

"You light up that I am a human too, and I am not different than anyone else in no way except my past. I have goals, dreams and emotions."

"The group can totally get me out from the dull everyday life, and it also charges me up, gives me an extra, so it is easier to bear the isolation."

"What did they help you in?"

"When I have a really bad day, they sit down with me and just talk. And they talk with me as long as it is needed to get me calm again."

(Excerpts from interviews made with the clients of the organization)

## Finding and supporting personal learning ways

For this target group different training-learning programmes mean the increase of life chances. Moreover, learning allows the acquisition of several skills; goes hand in hand with conceptual work, complying with dates and deadline, reports, etc. Skills and abilities are developing during this process which plays a major role in the shaping of future plans. Learning also means the basis of work socialization. The following programmes related to learning are secured by our organization:

- **competency development:** from time to time we start and organise groups and programmes which serve the development of a particular social and/or life management competency. This year we put the emphasis on the development of parenthood competencies, and we dealt with this topic with youngsters (girls and boys) on 10 occasions. Obviously, this was connected with health development, getting basic knowledge about their own bodies; in addition, abused-abuser relationship was also mentioned. We started a mother and father group in the case of adults. Some topics and problems by way of illustration:

"L said that he didn't have any other solution, he had to beat up his wife, because she made him that angry, but he always cared about that his son couldn't see it. He always made his son sit in the car, then he started to systematically beat his wife. According to his story his son couldn't notice anything. Then he realized that once when he was under the influence of drugs he couldn't calm himself down and beat up, shouted at his wife in the presence of his son. His son saw everything, started to cry, didn't understand what had happened. L didn't see this as a problem. He thinks they live in a happy marriage with his wife."

"E already told us that her partner forced her to have a sexual intercourse. And most of the cases she felt pain. It can be easily seen that she hasn't been able to process this yet; moreover, she hasn't cleared up her feelings. Her partner is in prison, too. E said that she wants to finish this relationship, but doesn't know how to. At the meetings and in letters she writes that she doesn't want to continue this relationship, but her boyfriend doesn't believe her, and also doesn't care about this question. E thinks that she has to love her partner, because he is the father of her daughter. Actually, she is afraid

that her partner will abuse her when they both will be outside. And if she moved to another place she is sure that her boyfriend would follow her and also severely hurt her. She tried drugs because of her boyfriend, and became an addict. She doesn't feel strong enough to stop using drugs after release, even though she has her daughter and their relationship which should be settled."

"S told us that his life is drugs. He loves his family, kids, etc. – but he would give up and leave everything behind for drugs. He has been monitored for 15 years, but hasn't been convicted for anything. He had a crystal business. He admits that he has addiction problems, but if something is good then what is the problem with it?! He thinks that if he "works" all night, brings breakfast to his wife and 3 children, and then sleeps the whole day then this doesn't affect the healthy development of his kids. He wants to do everything for his kids, because where he lives in the countryside, it is not a thing to finish school, go to college, university, and it is impossible to move forward in life in a legal way. His life goal is that all three (later I found out five) of his kids don't have to work at all later in life. When we talked about that maybe this is not the most appropriate or best thing for his kids, that even though they improve, but they don't have everything and that they should fight for something, too – he doesn't get it. He also doesn't understand learning, studying. He is Romany, well situated, they have everything (a nice house, existence, dishwasher, 2 cars, etc. – he showed me pictures) – after the initial distrust, he liked me, but from my point of view the meetings and discussions were not enough for a significant change (note: under follow-up)."

(Excerpts from case diaries)

Competency development gives the biggest space and opportunity for non-formal and/or informal learning as a method. The helper's personality is very important here, too (the sample and model person, the "significant other") – the helper's examples, experiences, sharing are definitely pivotal during the process of development.

- our accredited adult training programmes, already formal, structured and conceptual, give an opportunity for finding and developing one's own learning ways. The licensed adult training programmes have a defined pedagogical content and hour number; the participants get a certification after the successful completion of the programme. Our organization secures the following trainings:
- Competencies in focus (competency development programme) (20 hours):  
E-000363/2014/D001  
Peer counselling (30 hours): E-000363/2014/D002  
Tolerance strengthening, anti-discrimination training (10 hours): E-000363/2014/D003  
Communication and self-knowledge training (30 hours): E-000363/2014/D004  
Digital competency development (50 hours): E-000363/2014/D005
- Work in focus – development of labour market competencies (30 hours): E-000363/2014/D006

"(Note: a participant of a communication and self-knowledge training) R 40 years old, has been using amphetamine in his whole life (for 16 years continuously). He has a hard personality; the other in the training doesn't really tolerate him. His relationship with his mother is problematic. His mother operated pubs, he helped in that. He used to be a homeless for a long time, collecting plastic bottles, etc. He is very afraid of release. After release he really wants to go to a drug rehabilitation home immediately. He is absolutely unsure about himself. Another civil organization who visits them inside operates one; he is trying to get in contact with the manager, to talk about the opportunities. He wrote the exam for 93%, which is very strange, since he was unsatisfied a lot of times, because he couldn't smoke any time. He also goes to high school, and attends a electrician training + works too, so he is

always tired, doesn't have time for anything. He needs help now, a supporting relationship would be necessary, because he is motivated for change. He has difficulty connecting, but needs social relationship."

(Excerpt from a case diary)

- Change Programme: a combination of high school studies and helper/re-integration work. The basis of Váltó-sáv Alapítvány's activities and practically all of our services, has developed from this. According to the basic concept learning is a very good and effective method of helping work. Moreover, it also ensures a concrete and useful activity during imprisonment and also after release. At the same time participants who get into this programme don't have the usual school career, meaning that a significant knowledge and skill deficit is characteristic for them. In addition, they don't have good methods for learning and studying. Furthermore, learning is a long process, which has alternating periods of success and failure, so the process is mostly hard work characterised by fighting for enthusiastic participants. From our point of view because of this the participants can improve mostly individually or in small groups, starting from the point where they are. Since most of the participants have a very colourful school certification and knowledge, the optimal point where the learning process can start and the knowledge and learning methodology can be widened/developed have to be found. The people participating in the programme also understand that we are not operating as a "learning service" only, but also support their (re)integration. The program was very popular until the system of school leaving exams wasn't changed (a so-called "forward brought" school leaving exam could be taken before, so the candidate didn't have to take an exam from every subject in one time), so nowadays we rarely deal with some "students". This is not only because of the school leaving exam system change, but also because there is a bigger and bigger opportunity for continuing high school studies in penal institutions. However, it has to be taken into consideration that this is mostly ensured up to the 10th grade for prisoners and that the operation of 11th-12th grade is very rare in penal institutions. In the framework of our Change Programme we had a background school, where school leaving exams could be taken – so to speak in a civil environment. This was problematic every year, since prison service didn't really like to move their prisoners – especially to the civil environment. However, from our point of view this was definitely a step towards re-integration from the prisoners' point of view and a sensitization opportunity for the school leaving exam commission (which was formed by invited, outsider teachers and a designated school leaving exam president). The same can be said about the school's students, exam candidates, who unavoidably get into contact with a strange and scary phenomenon (transportation in handcuffs, armed guards).
- The programme gives a huge opportunity for mapping, developing individual learning ways.

### **Practical questions in helping work, in the relationship of helper-helped**

There are some important written or non-written principles, which define our relationship and communication with prisoners and ex-prisoners.

1. The helper always has to stand next to the client.
2. A certain distance keeping is also needed during the helping conversations. The helper cannot identify with the client thoroughly because then the helper actually moves away from the client, since he/she starts to think about personal problems and not about the client and his/her problem. Effacing borders between the helper and helped person is dangerous from several aspects, among others because in this way the helper won't be able to support the client appropriately and effectively.
3. The helper has to communicate accurately and constantly and show his/her borders relative to the client. A close relationship is important, but getting too close is hard to maintain and not quite operable, among others because it can cause the involvement of the intimate sphere and confusion for both parties. Being close to someone, but not too close is a delicate balance, which is hard to find and maintain and it is the helper's task.
4. One of the most important goals of the helping relationship is letting the other person speak his/her problems out, giving him/her an opportunity to raise his/her own questions, issues. The helper should avoid classification. The important things are not those that the helper is curious about (especially at the start), but what the other person would like to share with us. The client knows his/her problems much better, so he/she will share what is important for him/her, so it also has to be important for us.
5. People only start speaking when they find someone who listens to them. The skill of listening is one of the hardest tasks in helping work. The skill of listening is not a passive activity, but an understanding, active listening, which makes the other people even more open, enable him/her to bravely share and tackle the important problems of his/her life.
6. Creating a suitable atmosphere is very important. This is also the task of the helper. A suitable atmosphere means that the client compared to the possibilities feels the biggest safety and so opens up about his/her problems.
7. In the context of the helping relationship it is very important that the helper never gets morally outraged about the things that he/she heard about the client. This is always valid, even when the helper hears something which is extremely shattering. The helper has to act without prejudices in every situation, or at least has to endeavour to act without them (it means that every helper has to know his/her own prejudices, and has to be able to handle them). The helper always has to overcome his/her personal feelings, maybe revulsions, tactless curiosity. Anything can happen in any kind of situation – this is a valid thesis for helping conversations.
8. The helper does not participate in power struggles. He/she knows the possibilities of misunderstanding in the conversations. The helper knows that the complaints of the clients (prisoners and ex-prisoners) are desperate signs of a human wounded inside. He/she does not have to deal with these on the level of facts, but the task is to support them in finding some kind of way out.

9. The helper can not serve a foreign interest. He/she can help in the communication between people, can mediate between two people with the corresponding methods, but cannot function as e.g. the representative of prison service's interest. Naturally, he/she also does not represent the client's interest without criticism in front of others.
10. The helper has to know that the problems firstly mentioned by the client are not the most important ones. The helper has to unmistakably indicate this to the client, if he/she is willing to have further, deeper conversations.
11. In front of other people the helper can never talk about the things that the client has confidentially shared – this has to be self-evident. It is very important to make the clients experience that the things they told us concerning their lives, mistakes, failures and their confidential matters, which must have been a very hard thing to share, are not used against them, they never hear those thing back from a third, maybe fourth party. Obviously the crew, the professional group of co-workers, is an exception.
12. Humour as well as laughing can have a healing power. It can be and has to be used; obviously the helper has to pay attention that it never turns into taunt or cynicism.
13. According to our conviction it is indispensable for the helper to love life and people in general.

„What did you suspect, how was our world view?

It was positive, you tried to accept people as they were... You personalize everything, you don't use preconceived notions. I really like this, it helps a lot... A helped me a lot. I could talk about any kind of problems, things, opinions, feelings with A. There are only a few people like that... that I find a person who I feel like he is worried and concerned about me, and I couldn't really believe it. I have never counted on this. And he doesn't say that now leave me alone, it has nothing to do with me, like other people would say in other places, but they try to help. I don't know, they think that we can be more successful... if they try to help.”

(Excerpt from an interview made with a client of the organization)





## ROMANY MENTORING

Lenka Ouředníčková, RUBIKON Centrum (CZ)

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**Romany mentoring is implemented and provided by NGO RUBIKON Centrum** (formerly known as Association for Probation and Mediation in Justice) in co-operation with the Czech Probation and Mediation Service (PMS).

### I. Idea

Romany mentoring is intended for members of the Romany minority who have received and serve alternative sentences or measures (e.g. community service sentence, conditional sentence with supervision) and are therefore clients of the Czech Probation and Mediation Service (PMS). The aim of the scheme is to encourage clients to fulfill obligations related to serving the alternative sentence (measure) and to lower risks of re-offending and social exclusion. The scheme improves effective work with clients as it increases their legal awareness and ability to make informed decisions. The Mentor method is based on the inclusion of community in the process of offenders' social reintegration. The mentoring service is provided by Romany mentors: trained laymen, adults from the Romany community who have expressed an interest in helping other Romanies.

### II. Goals

- Improve the effectiveness of work with Romany clients of PMS who received (or could receive) or serve (or will serve) the alternative sentence or measure.
- Increase the number of Romany clients of PMS who fulfill the obligations related to serving the alternative sentence (measure) and therefore lower risks of their re-offending and social exclusion.
- Increase legal awareness of the members of Romany community and their ability to make informed decisions and solve their situation without risking (another) conflict with the law.

### III. Implementation

Romany mentoring is provided by Romany mentors (*further we will use the term “mentor (he)” meaning both mentor-man and mentor-woman*): an adult from the Romany community who has expressed an interest in helping another Romany. The mentors are chosen, trained and employed by RUBIKON Centrum. They are not professionals – they are trained laymen who completed the Mentor training of RUBIKON Centrum lasting 100 hours (60 hrs. of theory + 40 hrs. of practice). The theoretical part includes methodology of mentors' work, basics of the law, social work and effective communication, in the practical part the mentors work with the clients of PMS under the supervision. After the practical part the mentors pass the exam and receive a certificate. The qualification criteria for a mentor: he is a member of Romany



community, at least 18 years of age, has no criminal record and has completed the mentor training.

Mentors work as intermediaries between the PMS and the client (*further we will use the term “client (he)” meaning both client-man and client-woman*). The method of their work is based on motivating and guiding the clients as well as including the community in the process of offenders' social reintegration.

#### **Most common mentors' tasks:**

- Encouraging clients to fulfill obligations related to serving the alternative sentence (measure).
- Giving information about obligations ensuing from the sentence (measure) imposed and about the consequences of failing to fulfill them.
- Making house calls to clients.
- Assisting and supporting clients in their search for jobs, accommodation etc..
- Linking clients with other providers of professional services in the region.
- Accompanying clients to the PMS center.
- Assisting clients in communicating with the authorities.
- Assisting in settling debts (e.g. through repayment schedules).
- Helping the PMS to understand the Romany community.
- Co-operating with community service providers.

The mentors participate in monthly group **supervisions with a professional from RUBIKON Centrum** (supervisor) in order to discuss cases and solve possible difficulties. The supervisor guarantees the quality of the provided service in the region and assures the professional growth of the mentors.

A close cooperation between the mentors and the probation officers is essential for the administration of the alternative sentence/measure. It is very important to establish a professional relationship based on respect and equality between the Romany mentors and probation officers, with an open mind to new methods and approaches (which is also the task of the supervisor). The PMS officers choose suitable clients and they cooperate with the mentors during the whole case. The PMS staff evaluates every 2 months the effectiveness of the mentor interventions as well as the whole Romany mentoring scheme (standard evidence is used to monitor and increase the impact of the program).

#### Most common cases in which the scheme is used

The PMS requests mentoring assistance for clients:

- who have **difficulty co-operating** with the PMS or fail to respond to the PMS' call altogether. In such cases, clients may have alternative sentences or measures changed to imprisonment. Therefore, the mentoring service is seen as the client's last

resort, allowing him to get an explanation of what might happen and how he could avert the situation from someone with the same language and cultural background.

- with established contact with a probation officer who have **difficulty complying with the alternative sentence** rules or other conditions set by the court or public prosecutor.
- who do co-operate but **face a very high risk of social exclusion**. This includes, for instance, long-term unemployed clients, clients residing in socially excluded areas, juveniles, etc.
- PMS staff also use mentors when supervision by a probation officer is imposed under Act No. 218/2003 Coll. (Juvenile Justice Act).

#### IV. Key aspects

Romany mentoring has a positive impact in the field of crime prevention and social integration of the Romany minority because of its primary focus on lowering risks of social exclusion and re-offending of PMS's clients. The mentor work increases the client's social skills and boosts the client's self-confidence and social orientation. The mentor service influences the whole community - it increases trust in relevant authorities, increases socio-economic standards of families and increases the quality of family social ties.

The corner-stone of the Romany mentoring is the participation of the members of the same (Romany) community in providing the service. In the Czech Republic, Romany mentoring is a unique service in the field of crime and social exclusion prevention that uses the potential of the Romany minority. The success of the scheme is based on cultural, language and ethnic closeness between the mentor and his client. It enables the mentor to gain client's trust, communicate with him in his own language (both metaphorically and literally), effectively motivate him to fulfill alternative sentences or measures and link the client with other providers of professional services in the region. In the Czech Republic many barriers exist that obstruct the communication between the members of the Romany minority and representatives of the majority: distrust of Romany people in the "white" officials, their little legal awareness and esteem for education, prejudices on both sides etc. Romany mentors, as members of the same community and laymen standing aside the state institution structure, are able to break through these barriers and create the communicational "bridge" between both sides. They improve the knowledge of the Romany people about their rights and obligations within the state legal system and therewith help the PMS officers to orientate themselves in the Romany community, in relationships of its members and its system of values.

The success of the Romany mentoring stands and falls with the personality of the Romany mentor. Mentors are usually active individuals with a strong interest in helping the people of their own community. They are men and women of different ages and professions who are respected figures in the local Romany community and who often act as a positive model of social reintegration. When working with clients the mentors can rely on their deep knowledge of the people and relationships within the community, often they personally know the particular client and his family as well as his social background.

Romany mentoring also helps to increase the potential of the Romany community as it gives the Romany people, who haven't attained vocational education, the opportunity to participate in social work for their own community. During the mentor training they learn the basics of

law and social work, during their work with clients and supervisions they improve their skills and professionally and personally grow and improve their position at the labour market.

## **V. Organizational aspects**

The role of RUBIKON Centrum:

- Organize and administrate the realization of the whole scheme.
- Provide recruiting, selection and training of mentors, trainers and supervisors.
- Evaluate outputs, ensure and guarantee the quality of the provided service.

The role of PMS:

- Choose suitable clients.
- Cooperate with mentors during the whole case.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the mentors' interventions every 2 months.

When recruiting potential mentors (Mentor training participants) RUBIKON Centrum cooperates with the local PMS centers, municipal offices (Romany advisors, crime prevention managers), local Romany organizations and activists.

Mentor training consists of 60 hours of theory (which is provided by 2 trainers and usually divided into 3 three-day sessions, 20 hours each) and 40 hours of practice.

The Romany mentors work with clients in the field approx. 15 hours/month – this number is determined by the mentors' time capacity aiming to keep the quality of the service and prevent the burn-out syndrome.

The group supervisions for mentors are provided monthly by supervisors in every region. One supervisor works with approx. 8-12 mentors. The mentors are obliged to attend supervision once a month during the practical part of the training and once every 2 months after finishing the mentor training. Every 3 month the supervision is provided together with the PMS officers which is very helpful for maintaining the close cooperative relationship between the Romany mentors and the PMS officers.

## **VI. Short history of the realization**

The basic concept of the mentoring service has been inspired by the experience of the Danish Department of Prisons and Probation and was adapted by RUBIKON Centrum to the conditions of the Czech Republic in a pilot project in 2004-2005 in South and Middle Bohemia Regions.

In 2005-2008 a standard system was developed which was implemented and extended to other regions and cities in the Czech Republic. Until now 142 Romany mentors were trained in 9 regions of Southern, Northern, Middle, Eastern and Western Bohemia and in the capital of Prague and the city of Ostrava. The mentors cooperated with 29 PMS centers and they provided the mentor service to more than 2200 Romany clients of the PMS. According to the evaluation of the PMS officers, the long-term average success of the mentors' intervention

exceeds 50% (without the intervention of the Romany mentors, not less than 75% of the clients would not fulfill the obligations related to alternative sentences/measures and therefore the court would change the alternative sentence to imprisonment, which would increase the risk of re-offending and social exclusion of these clients).

In 2008 – 2010 the Romany mentoring was successfully applied to another target group – the Romany families in critical social situation from which a child could be sent to institutional care (a pilot project “Empowering of Family” implemented in 5 cities of the southern Bohemia region).

Currently there are around 50 active Romany mentors who cooperate with centers of PMS in 15 cities in 8 regions of the Czech Republic.

In June 2009 the Romany mentoring received a special mention of the Crystal Scales of Justice Prize during the annual meeting of the Justice Forum in Brussels. The prize is aimed at discovering and promoting innovative and effective practices in order to improve the operation of the public system of criminal justice in the Member States of the European Union and the Council of Europe.

In September 2011 Dr David Baxter from the Cranfield School of Management visited the Czech Republic to interview people who participate in the realization of the Romany mentoring (project leader, coordinator, Romany mentors, PMS officers) to investigate the success factors for innovation in the justice area (topics of interest included offender management, community crime reduction, and victim support). The Romany mentoring was chosen as one of the 4 case studies of this research: one in the Czech Republic, one in the Netherlands, and two in the UK (<http://www.steria.com/uk/cranfield-report>).

## **VII. Content of the Mentor Training Course**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. Rules
- 1.2. Introduction of participants and lectors
- 1.3. Participants' expectations
- 1.4. Introduction of the training

### **2. Mentor as client's guide**

- 2.1. Definition of roles and activities
- 2.2. Professional boundaries of co-operation with the client
- 2.3. Dealing with clients' personal data, documentation

### **3. The legal minimum**

- 3.1. Fundamentals of Criminal Law
  - 3.1.1. The concept of the offense, principles of criminal proceedings
  - 3.1.2. Types of sentences and protective measures
  - 3.1.3. Meaning and importance of alternative sentencing
  - 3.1.4. Philosophical background, mission and objectives of the Probation and Mediation Service, areas of activity
  - 3.1.5. Mission and objectives of the Prison Service, areas of activity
- 3.2. Introduction to the family law
  - 3.2.1. The issue of social protection of children

### 3.2.2. Foster care, obligations regarding care

## **4. Communication Skills**

### 4.1. Self-awareness

#### 4.1.1. Cultivation of characteristics that contribute to non-conflictual relations

#### 4.1.2. First contact with client

### 4.2. Relations Strategy

#### 4.2.1. Procedures to develop cooperation with the client

### 4.3. Communication

#### 4.3.1. Negotiation of short-and long-term goals

#### 4.3.2. Listening skill as a way to understand the client and the method of finding new approaches to problem solving

#### 4.3.3. Suggestions for change and change cycle

#### 4.3.4. The Art of asking questions

#### 4.3.5. Communication barriers

#### 4.3.6. Motivation of the client + support

#### 4.3.7. Working with clients' emotions

#### 4.3.8. Working with one's own emotions

#### 4.3.9. Looking back and the way forward

#### 4.3.10. Client's Problems

## **5. Journey from prison to everyday life**

### 5.1. Steps after release - probation officer for adults, shelters, office work

## **6. Preventing and solving debts**

### 6.1. Recommended solutions, arranging repayment schedules, contact with creditors

### 6.2. Seizure

## **7. Employment**

### 7.1. Job interview - preparation and process

### 7.2. Preparing CV and cover letter

### 7.3. Influence of the past - to talk or not to talk about one's criminal history

### 7.4. Advantages and disadvantages of undeclared work

### 7.5. Employment issues (employment, employment contract)

## **8. The basic pillars of social policy**

### 8.1. Social security, social support, social assistance

### 8.2. Benefits in material need: living allowance, housing supplement, extraordinary immediate assistance

### 8.3. Living and subsistence minimum

## **9. Cooperation with other organizations (Department of Social and Legal Protection of Children, Probation and Mediation Service, Prison Service, social curators)**

### 9.1. Social networking in the community and using of its resources for the development of client

## **10. Conclusion of the theoretical part of training**

### 10.1. Evaluation, feedback

## **11. Practical part**

11.1. Work with a client

11.2. Cooperation with other organizations, rules, definition of roles

## **12. Supervision of mentors' work and cases**

12.1. Group sharing of experience and individual work with each participant

# **VIII. The Mentor Scheme – Case Studies**

## **1. Erika**

Erika, who was sentenced to 280 hours of community service, is a mother of four. She only has a primary level of education and has spent her life in a difficult social situation, literally on the fringe of society. People in similar situations are hardly ever encouraged to be responsible and are usually unaware of the consequences of failing to respect official orders, summons, etc. They are unaware of their obligations towards the state, and they are unfamiliar with laws and regulations. They dread appointments with the authorities. Yet, as with other citizens, this ignorance or feelings are no excuse. Erika did not turn up at the PMS and faced the prospect of her probation being turned into imprisonment. Moreover, she did not stay at her permanent residence and the probation officer didn't know how to reach her. That's why he sought the assistance of a Romany mentor. The mentor, thanks to his knowledge of the Romany community and the local environment, located Erika's residence and made a house visit to her. He explained what would happen if she failed to work the hours of her community service and the consequences of this for her and her children. He accompanied her to an appointment with the probation officer and then to the institution where she was expected to serve her sentence. There, he helped to negotiate an acceptable timetable to allow Erika to take care of her children, as she was their only carer. His support made Erika understand the possible consequences of failing to fulfil the conditions of the alternative sentence and she started to serve it. The mentor continues working with the family and helps tackle its social problems as they arise. If the mentor hadn't stepped in, Erika would have probably ended up in prison and her children, who she normally takes good care of, in a children's home.

## **2. Markéta**

Markéta is a divorced mother of six; after her eldest son returned from reform school, his custody was awarded to his grandmother. Neither the children's father nor Markéta's current partner show any interest in the children. The family lives in inadequate conditions, both the mother and her partner are unemployed, and the family is dependent on social benefits. Moreover, the youngest daughter recently died tragically in a car accident. Markéta was convicted of repeatedly sheltering her eldest son when he escaped from reform school. The district court sentenced her to 280 hours of community service for the crime of corrupting the morals of a youth. Markéta didn't respond to the PMS' invitations to discuss where she would serve her sentence and did not read the mail sent to her. Therefore, a mentor who knew the client and her family background was contacted. The establishment of contact was an important breakthrough. Another major contribution was the information provided by the mentor to the PMS centre concerning the family's situation. Then he started working with



Markéta, explaining her sentence and especially what she could face if she chose to ignore it. The client did not want to serve her sentence where she lived, which was understandable in her situation. Therefore, the mentor made arrangements with the PMS to offer that she could serve the sentence in an NGO in the neighbouring city, which is admissible by law. Soon afterwards, Markéta started to perform her community service and stayed in contact with the mentor throughout. He advised her on dealing with both immediate and long-term problems. For instance, he arranged with a social worker for money to be deducted from Markéta's social benefits to pay for the children's school meals. Markéta served her sentence in two months' time. If a mentor had not been involved in Markéta's case, she would have certainly continued to ignore the PMS' invitations and calls and wouldn't have realized the consequences of not respecting the sentence. Without a mentor's input, the PMS wouldn't have learned anything about the client's situation, the tragedy she had suffered, or the reasons behind her refusal to serve the sentence where she lived. In that way, agreement would never have been reached. Then she would have been automatically ordered to serve the sentence at the place of her residence. She would have most likely refused to accept that and would have faced a 140 days' imprisonment. Meanwhile, her children would have stayed with relatives or would have been institutionalized...

### **3. Josef**

Josef lived with his divorced parents and a younger brother in a small town and had excellent marks until his 7th year of primary school. However, due to the difficult and worsening family situation he started to run away from home, roam about at night and drink alcohol. After completing primary school, he started three-year vocational training and planned to take the graduation exam to get rid of his family's influence, as he had less and less common ground with them. Yet he committed a theft. The court issued a conditional sentence with a probationary period of eight months and an obligation to pay compensation. The public prosecutor requested that the PMS centre help check if Josef fulfilled the obligation imposed. The PMS started working on the case in December 2005 and all consultations were geared towards giving Josef personal support, supporting his studies, handling conflicts in the family, and generally encouraging him to achieve his desired success. In May 2006, mentoring services were launched in Josef's region and he was soon assigned a mentor. The mentor visited him in his family setting and talked to his parents, too. He explained the circumstances of Josef's prosecution and the damages for which he was ordered to pay. Although the parents welcomed the mentor's interest, they refused to help their son. The mentor started working with Josef intensively, focusing on his future plans, supporting him in his determination to be successful in life, and at the same time emphasized the need to be responsible in work, school and relationships. Under the mentor's guidance, the boy got a job in a shop instead of proclaiming his vague intention "to borrow money somehow and then pay it back somehow". Josef was concerned about being able to continue with his studies, thinking he might not be able to afford it. Therefore, the mentor recommended a scholarship, helped him apply and eventually Josef was awarded the scholarship. Without the mentor, the whole story would probably have a different ending. The mentor helped Josef greatly especially with his studies, making a major contribution towards improving his chances in society. He helped the boy find his way and showed him possible ways of solving difficult situations, for which he lacked the support of his family or anyone around him. Josef passed the exams to complete his three-year vocational course and is now studying in a technical college. There are high hopes that he will not commit any more offences.



## Reintegration and Peer Mentoring

According to the experience with the Romany mentoring we have developed peer and reintegration mentoring. The principles of reintegration and peer mentoring are based on the principles of the Romany mentoring and on the experience with its realization. The aims of reintegration and peer mentoring are to assist people with criminal records in their acute difficult situations when they need a quick social stabilization and subsequent connection to work and debt counselling provided by the organization RUBIKON Centrum. The mentors are trained lay people who represent a significant psychological support and assistance for the clients. The needs of clients are connected particularly to dealing with problems arising after returning to freedom. The cooperation between the mentor and the client is based on an informal relationship. The client can ask for help in matters of employment, debt and housing or he can also ask for support during visits to an authority or various institutions or professionals. Many of our mentors are former clients who have the experience of dealing with release, therefore we called them PEER MENTORS. The practice of PEER MENTORING became successful since the mentors and clients have similar life experience. The peer mentors can better understand the situation of new clients, they can effectively motivate them and they can be "living" examples and role model. The peer mentoring is based on the idea of the so-called "expert by experience". It also fulfils one of the objectives of the organization RUBIKON Centrum which is to involve our clients into our activities. We pay attention to the quality of the provided services therefore our mentors as well as our peer mentors have to complete a training and pass final exams. A training course for reintegration and peer mentors is less extensive than the training for Romany mentors. The topics are similar – mentor as client's guide; the basics of employment and debts solutions; journey from prison to everyday life (including description of one day in prison); the basic pillars of social policy; cooperation with RUBIKON Centrum; difficult cases and needs of mentors. The mentors are obligated to attend regular supervision.

## IX. Conclusion

The aim of all kinds of mentoring is to assist people in their difficult situation. The cooperation between the mentor and the client is based on an informal relationship. The mentors should be able to better understand the situation of clients and they should effectively motivate them and also be a "living" example and role model. This relationship is in comparison to the relationships between our clients and professionals based on a different dynamics, therefore mentoring is an important part of our work with our clients.



## INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT OF THE (EX)CONVICTS

*Martina Špániková, Katarína Trubanová, KIC EDUKOS (SK)*

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Individual work with (ex)convicts is done inside as well as outside prison. Outside prison the clients are either ex-convicts released from prison or convicts serving an alternative sentence. The support of convicts inside prisons is possible within the framework of the cooperation with the prison staff in the so-called preparation for release departments or at the request of the client himself – mainly in writing.

The most commonly used forms of counselling in terms of the problems that concern (ex)convicts, are psychological counselling, counselling in the area of debt management, social-legal counselling in job search and career counselling.

In the framework of individual support it is suitable to develop various skills in the clients which will help them in the process of reintegration into life after release. These skills may be new to them or they may have lost them due to the imprisonment experience:

- the development or exercise of social skills – communication, assertivity, personal job interview, critical situations;
- the development and exercise of skills of written and phone contact – advertisements, formulation of written application for potential employers, phone job interview;
- the development and exercise of electronic communication skills – PC literacy, using the internet;

A common problem is insufficient financial literacy and indebtedness of the clients. The objective here is to teach the clients to plan their personal finances, use them effectively, manage their personal budget as well as ways of avoiding indebtedness, possibilities of solving indebtedness, mapping of debts, ways of communication with the creditors and the legal framework of executions.

The education of (ex)convicts in the area of financial literacy can be summarised in two main areas:

- *Household economics* – life securities and money, value scale (health, family, accommodation), income and work, payments and the financial market.
- *Indebtedness and counselling* - healthy and unhealthy indebtedness, the causes of indebtedness, kinds of obligations, the ability to discern creditors, types of debts and the consequences of non-payment.

### The methods and techniques of work in the context of individual guidance

In the framework of individual guidance of convicts various activities are implemented especially in the form of social counselling. In addition, various methods and techniques of

work are used to make this process more effective and successful. The most commonly used ones are the following:

The method of observation: a conscious elementary process of observation, an element of experimental reasoning. On the basis of the recorded phenomena a hypothesis is formed. Observation is based on three basic techniques:

- a) direct observation (which is most frequently used in the first phase),
- b) indirect observation,
- c) indirect observation by means of interview.

### **The methods of dialogue:**

**Case history of the social problem:** remembering, recalling, becoming aware, finding out the status quo and the conditions before the commission of the criminal act. The description of the state, a summary of data on development, environment and its influences, on the family in which one has lived. The purpose of case history is to provide basic information on the client and his/her problems. It is normally used in the first phase – the first contact with the client (family). A personal, family, work, social, health case history is used.

**Prognostics:** the prognosis is used at the beginning of the process of social work as a helping method without activity or interventions (the course of the state) with the use of the work of the social worker in cooperation with the client (social activity).

**Ecomap:** serves to capture the current relationships in the family, it represents an overview of possible socially tense relationships but especially shows the possible social sources of support which is very important in the process of creating the intervention program. It is to be elaborated together with the client (family).

**Genogramme:** is a graphic representation of intergenerational family relationships and provides a clear overview of relatively complicated relationships, connections and events by means of various symbols or signs.

**Social plan:** the processing of a solution to the problem situation with the client (family), a specific plan of help for the client in social collision. The proper plan is based on the problem situation (the external aspect of the problem), the internal aspect i.e. the lack of power on the part of the client to overcome or adapt to the changed conditions and finally the positive qualities of the client (the strengths of the members of his/her family) which can be activated in favour of the implementation and adaptation to the changed social conditions.

**The method of compensation (replacement) of inappropriate impulses:** its objective is the compensation of the missing impulses in the specific environment of the prison whose absence potentially disturbs the integrity of the client's personality. The effectiveness of this method is therefore determined by an appropriate combination of individual forms of work with the client (it is also implementable within the context of group work) using activities aimed at compensating (sublimating) their insufficient impulses. The activities will enable the client to direct his/her activities and change his/her social attitudes in a socially acceptable manner. For example, their objective is to find out who or what is the source of certainty or relative security in the close social network of the client. However, the lecturer has to make sure that his/her approach and the subsequent indecisiveness of the client will not manipulate the client.

**The method of strengthening of one's proper competences:** it is an analysis of the life style of the individual which is related to his/her value orientation. It is suitable if the parent understands the rights of the child i.e. that also the child has its rights, personal freedom and that everybody is the creator of one's life.

**The methods of support oriented towards self-realisation:** by means of self-realisation we reaffirm our identity and autonomy. It leads to internal satisfaction. Frustration results if one fails to satisfy one's self-realisation needs.

**Training:** is a characteristic method in the context of behavioural approaches. Its basic components are learning, repetition and practice of optimal communication, management of conflicts and assertivity. The clients train individually forms of effective communication with the counsellor. An example of such training is the practice of constructive quarrel. Its objective is to teach the partners to openly vent negative emotions, dissatisfaction, critical comments respecting certain rules. The communication then transforms into self-criticism, positive evaluation of the partner and at the end into a certain solution of the problem. The clients learn by means of this training a new constructive approach to solving conflicts.

## Exercises suitable for individual guidance of (ex)convicts during and after their imprisonment sentence.

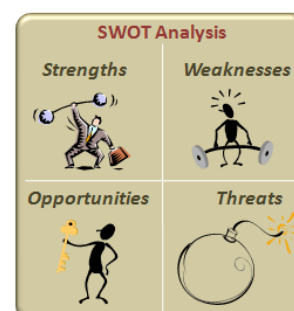
Work with (ex)convicts in the framework of individual guidance is related to certain elementary areas:

1. Getting to know oneself
2. My personal and social resources
3. Planning the future

## 1. GETTING TO KNOW ONESELF

### 1.1 Exercise - SWOT ANALYSIS OF THE PERSONALITY

*The objective of the exercise:* to become aware of one's own weaknesses and strengths, opportunities and threats in specific situations or stages of life of (ex)convicts; to create a basic strategy of future procedure with the objective to use one's own strengths and opportunities on one hand and eliminate the influence of the weaknesses and avoid the threats on the other.



**The personal SWOT analysis** is an comprehensive and quick method which deals with four aspects; specifically the weaknesses and strengths of the participant, opportunities and threats e.g. at the labour market or in any problematic life situation. The use of the method leads to a more real perspective on the current situation and to a clear overview of possibilities and the selection of strategies for the future.

By means of the SWOT analysis it is possible to find specific problems and risks of the examined object. It is also possible to find specific methods for the improvement of the current situation. The SWOT analysis is an ideal tool for a thorough self-reflexion.

The basis of the SWOT analysis is the identification of the various internal and external factors of the personality and their division into the following four categories.

- **Strengths** – internal qualities that positively influence the attainment of the objective;
- **Weaknesses** – internal qualities that negatively influence the attainment of the objective;
- **Opportunities** – external conditions that help in the process of attaining the objective;
- **Threats** – external conditions that make the attainment of the objective more difficult;

The basis of the SWOT analysis is a table for writing Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats, that the (ex)convicts are exposed to. This will enable them to highlight their strengths, deal with their weaknesses and use all appropriate opportunities.

This exercise will enable the participant to create a realistic analysis of the current situation and get a clear overview of the possibilities and strategies which seem to be perspective.

*The table of the personal SWOT analysis:*

**Peter**  
**My personal SWOT analysis**

Strenghts	Weaknesses

Opportunities	Threats


## 1.2 Exercise – Self-confidence

The objective of this exercise is to learn something about the formation of our self-confidence, factors which influence it and about how self-confidence influences our life, relationships and the overall satisfaction.

Exercise:

### *Objective memories of success*

Think about your life and choose a specific success which was according to you important. Maybe it boosted your confidence or influenced your overall orientation. This success may not mean anything for others but for you.

Consider: instances of creative success, instances of scientific, sport, household, family, business and school success or success in society, childhood or adulthood. List them in order quickly and objectively, give at least 5 examples:

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....
4. ....
5. ....
6. ....
7. ....

### *The connection between your qualities and your successes*

Return to your list of successes, consider them objectively and ask yourself which of your qualities lead you to this success. List three instances of success which make you feel the most happy and the quality thanks to which you were able to reach this success.

<i>Success</i>	<i>Quality</i>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

### 1.3 Exercise – the personal time line of one's life

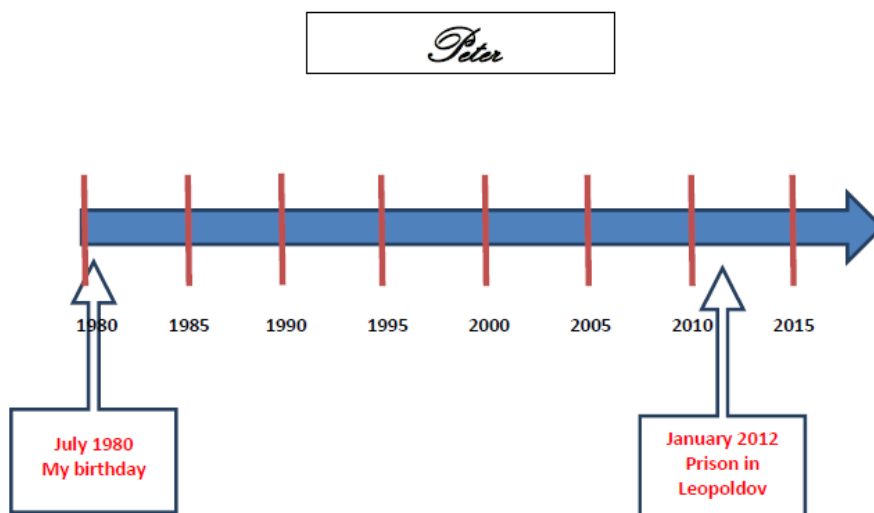
#### Time line

It is a graphic record, the representation of events in chronological order on a number axis. The time line can have the form of a column or a horizontal line. When creating the time line it is necessary to take into consideration how long the represented time period will be. Subsequently, it is important to choose a unit (year, decade, century,..) and determine its magnitude in centimeters.

The data on the time line must be represented in a clear and logical way. It is advisable to choose only short and concise words or pictural symbols for descriptions (it is then necessary to give the legend below the time line).

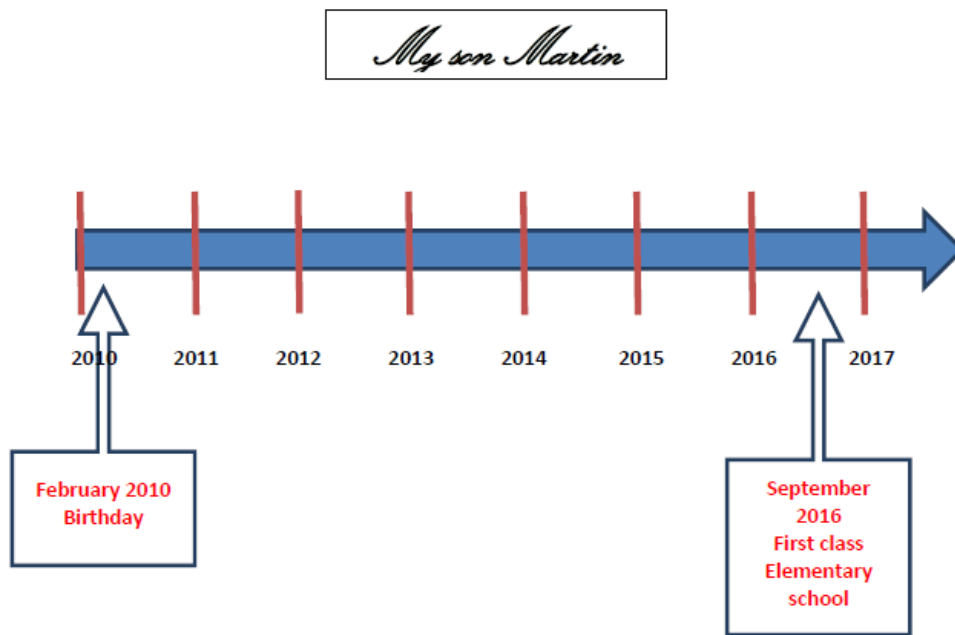
#### Instructions:

1. Think about the important milestones in your life, find at least 5 of them.
2. Draw a time line of your life on a piece of paper. Write important data into it. Below the time line give an explanation of what they mean.
3. Create a milestone timeline with all the basic milestones of your life.



4. Your closest ones are also part of your life – especially your wife/husband, child/children. Create a milestone timeline on which you will depict the basic milestones of the life of your wife/husband or child and focus especially on the important events in the period during which you were separated due to your imprisonment sentence.





## 1.4 Exercise – Anger and aggression

Anger and aggression are negative emotions which are usually a source of conflicts between people. Each of us has experienced these emotions or even hurt our closest ones or others many times. Anger and aggression are also the causes of many criminal acts.

Objective: to become aware of the seriousness and danger of anger and aggression; become aware of the fact that anger and aggression influence various levels of our personality (thoughts, bodily reactions, behaviour), learn to eliminate anger and aggression by means of various techniques.

### *Instructions:*

Try to answer the following questions. You will get to know your anger and aggression better in this way and the way they influence the various levels of your personality. Orientation in and understanding of this area will help you get these negative emotion under control.

### ANGER – AGGRESSION - VIOLENCE

What situations stimulate anger, aggression or violent reactions in me?

.....

.....

.....

What emotions and feelings do I experience in these situations?

.....

.....

.....

What thoughts do I have in my head in these situations?

.....

.....

.....

How does my body react to such situations? What is going on in the various parts of my body?

.....

.....

.....

What are my warning signals which can lead me to anger and violence?

.....

.....

.....

The strategy of eliminating anger and violent reactions – what can I do?

.....

A common discussion of the lector and the participant follows. Its objective is to make the participant become aware of what creates in him the emotion of anger and how to work with it.

## 1.5 Exercise – Empathy

Empathy is the ability to put oneself into the perspective of others in terms of thinking and feeling. It is not simple to be empathetic because we judge the behaviour of others especially according to our perception and experience. However, if one is able to listen attentively and perceive the other person and „read“ his/her bodily language, then one can be empathetic and understand better the other person. This ability can be developed by means of training.

Objective: to train by means of exercise the empathetic understanding of stories, situations and characters, to train the reading of non-verbal language (mimics, gestures,..), to think logically and commonly solve problems, reach agreements/compromises and accept the opinion of others.

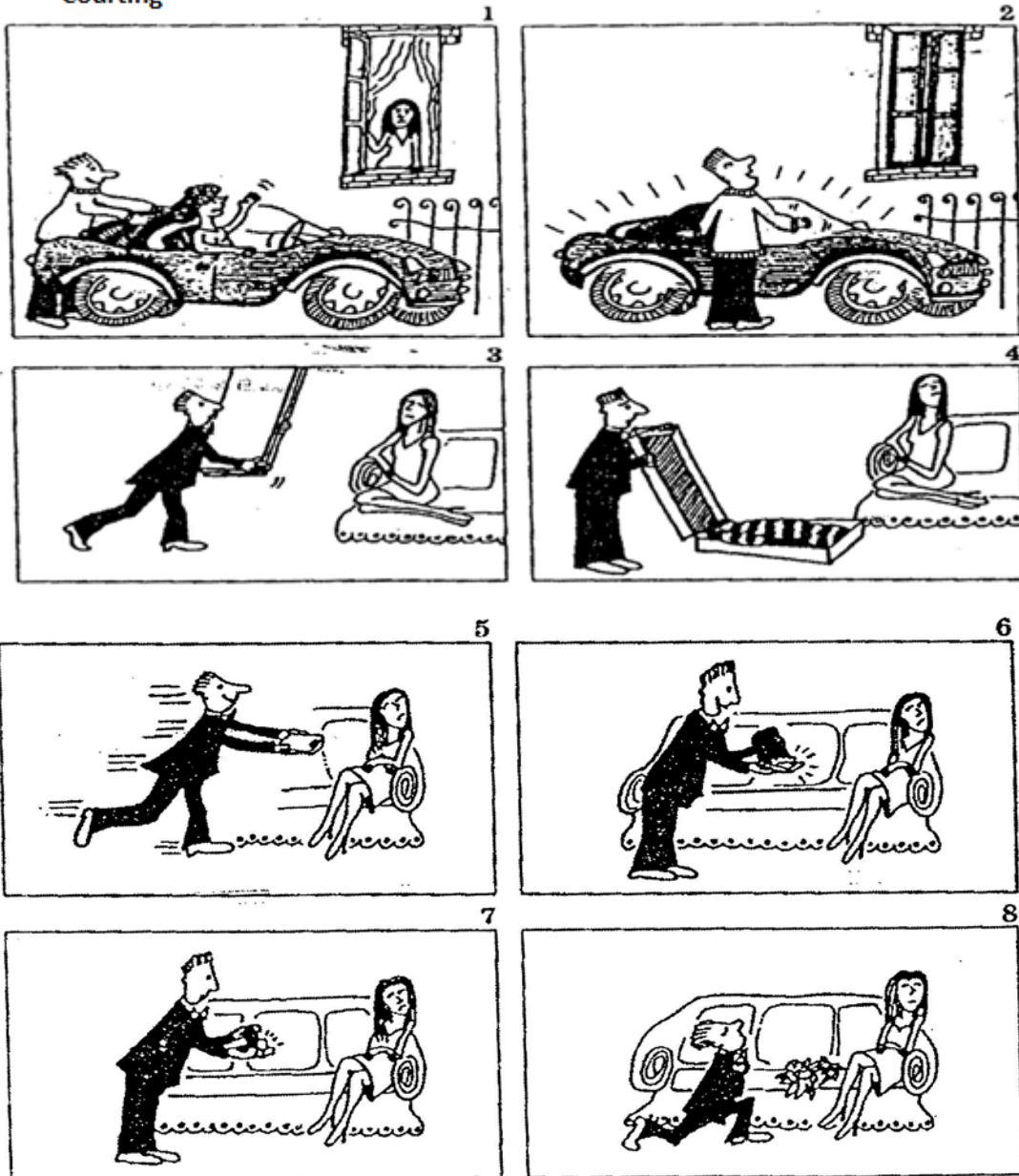
### *Instructions:*

1. You have a story in front of you, called „the courting“, depicted in eight pictures. However the order of the pictures is disrupted, they are not in the correct order. Your task is to emphatically put your self into the thinking and feeling of the man and the woman, train your empathy and organise the pictures into a logical order.

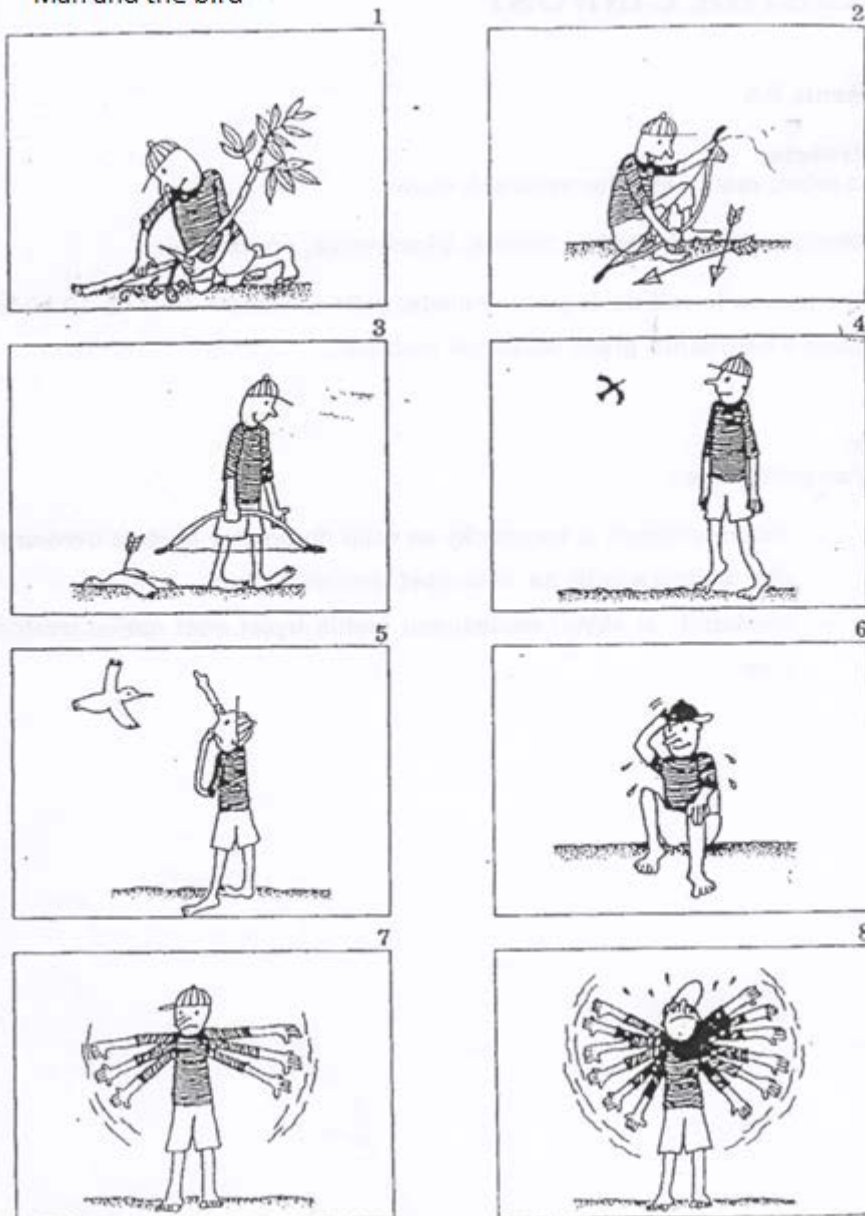
2. Explain and justify your order of pictures.

Follow the same instructions when working on the story „man and a bird“

Courting



Man and the bird



## 2. MY PERSONAL AND SOCIAL RESOURCES

It is indispensable for the (ex)convicts to become aware of their personal resources, family and social background. The exercises are focused on looking for and becoming aware of what can the (ex)convicts help in the process of their resocialisation.

### 2.1 Exercise – ecomap

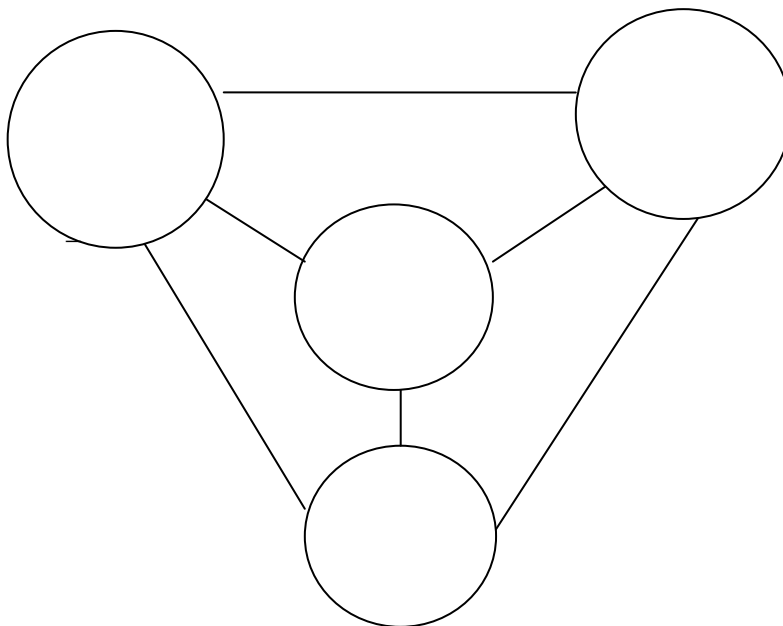
The ecomap serves to depict the relationships and influences that the examined individual is subject to in his/her social surroundings. We all leave our families with a different psychical and social „equipment“, various models of behaviour, messages, rules, secrets. However, in the course of one's life one meets other people who also form his/her so-called „social network“. These relationships can be positive as well as negative, especially in the case of

our target group these relationships are often problematic. Therefore it is very important to pay attention to relationships and influences on the client on his micro and mezo level. The better we can map our family the better we can understand ourselves, our closest ones and the better our relationships and life satisfaction can also get.

Objective: orientation in interpersonal relationships of one's immediate family as well as in one's broader social surroundings in order to better understand them and oneself.

#### Instructions:

1. on a piece of paper write in the middle a circle with your name according to the model below and gradually draw sufficiently big circles for each member of your family as well as the people with whom you come into contact. Write the name, age, job, interests eventually a brief characteristics into the circles.
2. Graphically represent the relationships between you and the depicted persons. It is possible to use the following types of lines: „gross line“ = a very strong relationships, „normal line“ = a good relationship, „broken line“ = you know about that person but don't contact him/her, „saw“ = a problematic or conflictual relationship. It is suitable to use arrows to further characterise the relationships e.g. an arrow directed from you to a certain person signifies a very strong relationship with that person. It is especially important to use arrows in the case of problematic relationships.
3. Draw also the relationships with the various members of your family and also between them and your acquaintances if they know each other.



#### RELATIONSHIPS:



### 3. PLANING OF THE FUTURE

#### 3.1 Excercise – the forming of the future

The objective is to learn to actively manage one's life, independently create opportunities for self-realisation and self-satisfaction.

## Life goals

To set one's goals is very important. When we try to reach a goal with clear ideas we have greater chances to attain it unlike the situation where we leave things to chance. It is therefore important to have a goal in our mind and at the same time stay open to opportunities which we encounter on the way.

Instructions – the procedure of the steps of planning:

1. The setting of the goal – it is necessary to do it at the beginning of the planning activities;
2. The elaboration of the list of alternative ways to attain the set goal – it is necessary to elaborate various alternatives of how to implement the given goals;
3. The development of judgements on which every alternative is based – flexible use of every single alternative in the interest of attaining the goal is determined by the inferences and presupposition on which these alternatives are based;
4. The selection of the best alternative – on the basis of evaluating the judgements on which every alternative is based;
5. The development of plans and the following of the chosen alternative – after the selection of a suitable alternative the planning of activities in the long as well as in the short run is done;
6. The implementation of the plans – the realisation of the plans, their re-evaluation.

The goal should be:

**S** - Specific

**M** - Measurable

**A** - Achievable/Acceptable

**R** - Realistic/Relevant -

**T** - Time Specific/Trackable

### 1. My goals:

\* short-term goal + time table

\* long-term goal + time table

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### 2. the searching for various alternatives of attaining the various goals according to the example:

*Objective:*

*Suitable alternatives of its attainment:*

*The evaluation of each alternative and the selection of an optimal solution:*

#### 4. Conclusion

Individual work with (ex)convicts is a natural part of the help for this target group in their momentary social situation. Its implementation is demanding in terms of time and personal capacity and demands erudite and socially mature experts capable of long-term cooperation with the client. This type of work creates pre-conditions for effective group work and at the same time has potential for the creation of a natural feedback. The most of the activities and procedures can be used in a universal way in working with the client during his/her imprisonment sentence in the environment of the correctional facility or after release or in the framework of the alternative sentences. The methodology of their implementation and impact on the client are, however, considerably different and dependent not only on the environment and the approach of the expert and the client, but to the same extent on the intensity of use and the continuity of individual work with the (ex)convicts in penitentiary and post-penitentiary care. In this regard its role is important as well as indispensable.

#### **CASE STUDY - Ján, 59 years old**

*Elaborated by: Katarína Trubanová*

In the year of 2009 Ján was released from the correctional facility of Ilava after serving seven years of prison time. He had been sentenced for the repeated criminal act of inflicting serious bodily harm. During his imprisonment sentence he behaved in a good way, he correctly fulfilled his daily regime. He was also employed during his time spent in prison. The professional social service was limited at that time. A pedagogue, assigned by the correctional facility, regularly worked with him. During his whole imprisonment sentence Ján was not systematically prepared for his release and an independent life afterwards. During this time the currency in Slovakia changed from the Slovak crown to Euro. His preparation for this change of currency was just one lecture in which all inmates were briefly informed about the new bank notes and coins. After his release a social guardian for adults started working with him at the Office of labour, social affairs and family in Dolný Kubín. She focused on securing the basic life needs for him – food, accommodation. The town of Dolný Kubín offered him accommodation in the form of a homeless asylum where a social worker started working with him.

#### **Social diagnostics:**

##### **Family case history:**

Ján comes from a full and orderly family. He is one of three siblings whereas his youngest brother tragically died in his childhood. Ján lived together with his parents in a family house in a commune near the town. During his imprisonment sentence his parents died. He did not take part in their funeral since his temporary release was not possible at that time.

##### **Health case history:**

Ján did not have any health problems in his youth. He had usual childhood diseases. At present he is in a very unfavourable state of health due to his long term abuse of alcohol – organic psychosyndrome, anemia, alcohol addiction syndrome, encephalopathy. He is strictly forbidden to consume alcohol and is on a strong medicament treatment.



**Personal case history:**

Ján completed his elementary education. He worked only for a very short time and actually spent 19 years from his life in various correctional facilities for riots, causing bodily harm. He is single and has one well-left daughter who lives in the Czech republic. However, his fatherhood was never acknowledged or the mother of the child never wanted Ján to prove his fatherhood. The daughter contacted Ján last year. However, their meeting did not end well when she visited him at a time when he was homeless, excessively consuming alcohol and he found himself in a bad psychical and physical state.

**Description of the problem:**

Ján started to consume alcohol at a relatively young age before reaching adulthood. When he was sober he acted correctly, was willing to help everybody, still had work habits and got on well basically with everybody. However, alcohol turned him into a conflictual person who was not able to keep rules and was aggressive. He easily got into conflicts with others and his attacks turned into physical assaults. As result, he was repeatedly sentenced for the criminal act of causing bodily harm.

**The consequences of the problem on the life of the client and his environment:**

During the years while Ján repeated served his time in prison the situation in his family changed. His parents died. The property which they left was sold by Ján's brother and part of the family heritage deposited on Ján's personal bank account. Ján had nowhere to return after his imprisonment sentence, he had no social background and security.

In cooperation with the Office of labour, social affairs and family in Dolný Kubín the town of Dolný Kubín provided him with an emergency accommodation. The heritage he inherited from his parents Ján used for the purchase of things necessary for everyday life. He also paid the fee for the nursing course, which he attended, from this money. After obtaining a nursing certificate the town offered him a work position in the Institution of nursing services. After a certain time he was entitled to get a social flat. He got an attick for which he procured the necessary equipement. He spent the rest of the money on everyday things. At that time Ján was content with his life. He had accommodation and work (he had been abstaining 2 years from alcohol). He formed a personal relationship with a colleague at the facility who had problems with alcohol. At first he resisted her influence but later failed and started to drink. He stopped fulfilling his duties at work and started acting irresponsibly. He got kicked out of work as well as got turned out of his flat for not paying the rent for one month. In this way he returned to his previous situation in life when he entered the system of social service after his release. The scenario of his life repeated itself.

On July 25th, 2016 Ján came into the Community center EDUKOS in a very bad state of health (at that time he had been living in the street for cca 3 weeks). During a regular social guidance dialogue he stopped talking, started to lose consciousness. The urgent medical aid was called and then he spent eight days in hospital. His present diagnosis is quite serious. The doctor stated that he came in the last minute and he has to stop drinking and change his life style if he wants to live.

**The plan of social work from the year of 2009**

After his release and his placement in the homeless asylum an individual plan for his personal development was created for Ján. Its priority objective was his successful reintegration into everyday life:

**1. The guidance of the client in the process of procuring elementary personal documents at the local authorities necessary after his release** – the visit of the Office of labour, social affairs and family – the social benefits, invalid rent.

**2. Institute of the separate recipient** – since it came out during the provision of social service that Ján had problems using the new currency and was not capable to manage his finances, the institute of the separate recipient was established in his case (this means that another person received his money and managed his personal budget). The social worker taught Ján and gradually lead him to financial literacy so that he would be able to manage his finances on his own.

**3. Social counselling** – elementary and special

**4. The protection of rights and interests protected by the law** – Ján took out a loan from the Post bank. After losing his job, he stopped paying his monthly instalments. Consequently his case was submitted to the execution bureau. An execution order was issued against which he with the help of his social worker filed an appeal. The regional court found out that the execution bureau acted against the law and therefore abolished the execution.

**5. The support of family contact and the renewal of family ties** – the relationship of the two brothers were very disturbed due to Ján's problems with the law. Gradually we helped Ján to renew his relationship with his brother who actually tried to support Ján in all respects. The relationship always got worse when Ján failed therefore it was also necessary to work with Ján's brother's motivation.

**6. Acquisition of digital competences** – since Ján is staying at the moment in a homeless asylum where he can only spend the night, the community center of EDUKOS has become for him „a safe haven“. Therefore, he searched for activities which he could do in our community center. He was encouraged to get involved in individual PC course. He had not had any experience with information technology. At the beginning he was quite worried and lacked confidence in this way. Gradually, he developed confidence and interest in using the internet. He became interested in music and learned to download music, search for various information on the web, etc.

**7. Involment in the activities of the community center EDUKOS** – as part of the support of a constructive alcohol-free life style we encouraged Ján to get involved in everyday activities of the community center EDUKOS related to its maintance. In this regard he recently co-organised and assisted in an overall reconstruction work of the facilities of the community center which included painting the premises, getting and re-arranging the furniture of the center, etc. Ergotherapy seems to have a stabilizing and positive effect on him.

### **Conclusion:**

Ján is, taking into account his past in which he served several imprisonment sentences, dependent on the help and guidance of another person in dealing with casual everyday areas of life. Despite several attempts of successful reintegration and independence, he has not succeeded. Therefore, in terms of our professional vocation, we need to continue in supporting and guiding him. By means of small steps we have gradually reached the point of self-help in certain areas. In case of Ján it is individual work which has relative to the future a long-term character with the perspective of life-long support.

## **MENTORING, INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT / TRAINING AND LEARNING PATHS**

*Paulina Kuczma, Slawek Foundation (PL)*

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Mentoring, coaching and tutoring are very popular terms in this decade. It's important to take a look at them and get to know how to differentiate one from the other. A mentor is someone who is a role-model for us. Mentors base their work on knowledge, skills and a good attitude. Therefore, they have to have this knowledge, possess particular skills and demonstrate a good attitude.

A coach deals with processes. He doesn't have to have knowledge. He helps to find the right way to achieve some goals using one's own skills, potentialities and resources using specific tools. Coaching derives from psychology, management and other related sciences.

A tutor (lat. protector) is a combination of a mentor and a coach. He is an expert who shares very specified knowledge and does it in a conscious and certain way as an individual support. He leads, motivates and inspires. In established relationships he diagnoses the potential of his client and indicates an individual development path in consideration of the client's needs.

By article 38 of the Executive Penal Code non-governmental organizations may participate in the execution of the penalty. The Slawek Foundation operates on this basis. The organisation was established nearly 20 years ago to help. Our target group are convicts, ex-convicts and their families. People who approach us are struggling with various problems. Each one has their own unique story and baggage of experience. It is impossible to develop one universal aid scheme in working with such people. Our approach is holistic. We try to help solve problems in every sphere of life. This requires individual work with the beneficiaries. As a result of our many years of activity, we have worked out several programs that fully support them in their successful return to freedom. Some of our beneficiaries come to us when they are still behind the bars. That is why some of our activities are aimed at preparing prisoners to leave the walls while they are still in prison. Those who have already left prison also come for help. They need other kinds of support. Also the convict's families come for help. We also support such people. We encourage prison staff (especially educators) to collect groups of people interested in our activities. We are not able to reach all those in need.

Those who want to participate in the programs we offer, just have to contact us. We try to reach as many people as possible. For our activities we are looking for volunteers among professionals. Here are the selected programs for individual, customized support: Mentoring, individual development / training and learning paths which we have in our offer.

### **INDIVIDUAL CONVERSATIONS**

Individual conversations is a program that has been in our offer for many years. We still get requests for meetings. This shows that there is a need for this type of activity. Prisoners have

a lot of difficulties and problems relative to their personal dilemmas of family life and difficult and intimate issues that they consider sensitive and extremely fragile. Many years of the Foundation's work with prisoners show that the condemned look for opportunities to share their difficult issues, their fears and concerns with people they trust. These are primarily persons who are not employees of the administration or co-inmates. Representatives of the Foundation, after receiving a signal of willingness to talk individually, reported by prisoners, conduct a conversation in a cell or other quiet place designated by the administration, offering advice in an environment of confidentiality. This is very important for the psyche of the prisoners – it helps them maintain their mental balance. On the one hand, the cell is a place of settling, a place of punishment. On the other hand, it is the only private space of the convict. Therefore, it gives a sense of confidence and security.

The program provides permanent help and can continue for many years. The talks often continue for many months after transferal to another prison. The Foundation also visits its beneficiaries in remoter prisons throughout the country. Often they maintain contact with the Foundation for many years after leaving the walls of prison and attend other programs. It happens that they become initiators of events.

The direct purpose of the program is not to subject the convict to moralization. Meetings rely primarily on regular conversations. The convicts often ask what life after release is like, what is happening now, what the weather is - they are interested in what we outside prison often do not pay attention to. They talk about everything and nothing. About seemingly insignificant things. Often this is limited to complaining about the administration of the unit or focusing on the ailments resulting from the punishment. Not always of course. It also happens that they discuss difficult topics, and the volunteer becomes their confidant. It does not come easy. It requires a long-term cooperation and trust. There are issues that are rarely addressed in prison. Everyone must be "hard" in prison. Wear a mask, sometimes even fight for survival. But this is the essence of this program - we are, we support, we help. The conversation becomes the basis for the diagnosis and further targeted interventions for the convicts.

The implementation of the program varies depending on the beneficiary. We can distinguish here two key groups: convicts who are just about to be released and those who serve long-term sentences. The first group fights with fear and helplessness. In this case, the conversations focus on supporting and eliminating the fear. During the conversation we find out about the convicts' problems which are waiting for them after their release and advise them on how to overcome them. We indicate where to get help after release. The conversations with the second group have a completely different nature. In this case the most important thing is to build hope, seek sense and maintain relationships.

Volunteers are people selected by the leader – Marek. To conduct this kind of conversation, the person has to be very empathic with well-developed social skills and good manners. At the same time volunteers have to have knowledge not only about the prison system but also a general understanding of life and encyclopedic knowledge. Combining it all, it's necessary to maintain some distance. One's own experience is extremely valuable, because there is nothing more important than one's own example. The use of the method of personal influence is one of the most valued in resocialization.

## GUARDIAN ANGEL

The project is aimed at inmates who are granted a temporary release. It follows after the individual talks program which has been in our offer for many years. Those who receive it during their sentence are taken care of by their "Guardian Angel". Many convicts despite obtaining permission to use the possibility of temporary release have no way to use it. In most cases these convicts have neither house nor any family or anyone close who could pick them up during the temporary release and take under own roof. It also happens that due to the long penalty the family and the close ones turn away from the convict so he/she stays alone with his/her problems. We assist in establishing contacts, rebuilding relationships and maintaining them by organizing temporary releases and the time spent during them. Mostly, these releases last for thirty hours or eight hours - occasionally. The "Guardian Angel" is present at all times with the convict. It also happens that the "Guardian Angel" accompanies a convict who because of a long sentence has not been outside of prison for 10, 15 or even 20 years. Implementing it in the modern world, the Foundation also seeks to provide such a convict during the release not only with care, but also with a room and board. Activities under this program allow these persons who would not normally get this chance but deserve it, to benefit from this release e.g. stay in touch with the world, people.

For various reasons the convicts do not exercise their right to temporary releases. This has, of course, far-reaching consequences – an increasing inability or fear of leaving prison, alienation and detachment from reality. Such situations also cause frustration and loneliness. Something which is familiar to us may be incomprehensible and frightening to the prisoner. In extreme cases it can even lead to depression and suicidal thoughts.

### OBJECTIVES:

- Assistance in first contact with freedom
- Organizing their time after release
- Providing support at a critical time in their lives
- Introduction into the contemporary world
- Renewal of family ties
- Providing a sense of security

When the prisoner leaving the prison walls knows the reality of the modern world, he can move around in this world. He knows where to turn for help (eg. The Slawek Foundation, the Centre for Social Welfare, Employment Office, etc.). He recognizes the importance of freedom and does not wish to return to crime. In addition, his family supports him in this because he has renewed his family relationship and brought it on good tracks. In this way, the program helps to smooth the return to freedom. The Guardian Angel picks up the sentenced person in the prison. Then they go to our socialization center in Mienia. On the way they report at the police station in Mrozy - near Mienia (this is a necessary condition - every sentenced person has been granted a temporary release is obliged to report at a police station). When the release comes to an end the Guardian Angel escorts the sentenced back to the unit.

## „FIRST AID”

This is a project addressed to people who come to us after release. It is an individual conversation. Interested people report at our office where they receive comprehensive assistance in dealing with various problems e.g. usually problems with a lack of housing and work. They mostly cause more difficulties and return behind bars. They often have problems with the law. There are pending proceedings against them. They have been refused their parental rights and have to pay alimony, bailiffs and deal with executions. Some of them struggle with addictions and need psychological support. Daily there are financial problems - debts, executions, unpaid loans and it is necessary to support them by increasing their financial literacy. Repaying debts and budget planning are equally important. In this regard we provide professional counselling, organize series of consultations and job placement programs with professional courses and internships. We also organize meetings with lawyers and psychologists. We provide legal as well as psychological counselling. When there is a need we also involve other professionals. We try to act comprehensively and help in filling out forms, directing our clients to the right places as well as providing support by means of a simple conversation.

It happens that similar consultations are provided by the phone. The convicts call us with different questions. They also write letters and we try to help everyone.

During the individual consultation, the beneficiary's needs are diagnosed. For this purpose, a question sheet has been developed. We called it an "individual needs plan".

Name .....  
Surname .....  
Father's Name .....  
Birth Date .....  
Children .....  
Age .....  
Adress .....  
Phone number .....  
ID card number .....  
nr PESEL .....  
Curator (name, phone number) .....  
Therapist (name, phone number) .....

### 1. Are you currently serving an imprisonment sentence?

- a. If yes, please specify the end date .....
- b. If no, what penalty were you sentenced for and when? .....

### 2. Education (please tick the right answer):

- a) incomplete basic
- b) basic
- c) middle school
- e) professional
- f) average
- g) higher professional (bachelor's degree, engineer)
- h) higher (master's degree)

**3. Are you currently unemployed?**

- a. yes
- b. no

If yes, how long? .....

**4. Do you have an apartment?**

- a. yes
- b. no

**5. Are you registered as a jobseeker?**

- a. yes
- b. no

**6. Are you currently learning?**

- a. yes
- b. no

If yes, in which type of school (please tick the right answer):

- a) secondary
- b) post-secondary
- c) college
- d) other.....

**7. Are you a disabled person?**

- a. yes
- b. no

If yes to what extent (please tick the right answer):

- a) considerably (I have a certificate of severe disability);
- b) moderately (I have a moderate degree of disability);
- c) slightly (I have a slight degree of disability);
- d) others (eg. I have a certificate of incapacity for work, issued before the age of my 16 years of age);



**8. Are you addicted to alcohol, drugs, gambling etc?**

a. yes

b. no

If yes, please tick the right answer:

a) I have done my therapy.

b) I am undergoing treatment.

**9. What is your professional experience?**

.....

.....

.....

.....

**10. What skills do you have?**

.....

.....

.....

.....

**11. What additional courses / vocational training did you do?**

.....

.....

.....

.....

**12. Where would you like to work (preferences)?**

.....

.....

.....

.....

NEEDS:	
HOME	
WORK	
SOCIAL CARE	
DOCUMENTS	

NEEDS:	
SPECIALISTS	
ADDICTIONS	
OTHER	

After the analysis, an individual plan of activities and needs is created in the form of a table:

Examples of tools for working with the client:

### **A list of „what if...”**

This is a list of assumptions, which support the coaching process. Samples of phrases:

If.....

Let's assume that.....

Suppose that .....

Imagine for a moment .....

Act now as if time has passed .....

Here are some sample questions:

1. If you could have anything, what would you really want?
2. If that were possible, how would it happen?
3. Suppose there would be no obstructions. What would the road look like?
4. If a solution could be found, what would it be?
5. For a moment, let's imagine your success. What it does it look like? What is it?
6. Act as if some time has passed and you've succeeded. How did this happen?
7. Suppose there are some possibilities. What could it be?
8. If someone could help you, who would it be?
9. If you could imagine for a moment that it succeeded, how did it happen?
10. If you had to learn something, what would it be?

### **Model SCORE**

The model helps in making changes, coping with difficult situations. Each model item represents the minimum amount of information that must be collected to carry out any change process. The coach talks about the following areas: symptoms, causes, outcomes, resources, effects. Below there is a table of the areas analyzed in this model. The advantage of this model is that you can start at any point and follow any way by going through the various elements of the model back and forth.

SYMPTOMS	CAUSES	OUTCOMES	RESOURCES	EFFECTS
What is the difficulty?	What is the cause of the problem?	What do you want to achieve?	Who can help you achieve this?	When you achieve the goal, what will change?
What would you like to change?	Where did the difficulty come from?	What is your goal?	What resources would you have to have access to?	What will you gain?
What is not working?	What caused this?	How is it supposed to be?	What would you need to achieve what you want?	What benefits will you get when you reach a goal / make a change?
What works well?		What is your vision?	What will you need to realize your vision?	
What's the problem?		How would you like it to be?	What beliefs would you have to change?	
			Which of your experiences might be useful?	

## **CASE STUDY**

### **General outline:**

Sławomir was born on September 17, 1991 in a small town in the south of Poland. Since childhood he has had educational problems. He had trouble concentrating and following established rules. He always explained this by a lack of understanding for them and a feeling of their meaninglessness. He has a basic incomplete education - he finished all classes but did not go to the exams. At the age of 14 he was sent to a youth educational center in connection with truancy and small crimes. He was sentenced to life imprisonment for theft and debt due to the non-payment of loans and alimony. Prior to being placed in the penitentiary he did not work, he was dependent on his father.

He experienced the separation of his parents. He puts all the blame for his troubles on them saying that the tension between them has contributed to all his bad behavior. He wanted to draw attention to himself. In addition, he argues that only at such moments his parents find a way to a dialogue which further motivates him to induce such situations.

### **Family situation:**

#### **A) Parents:**

Father: Waldemar, 48, professional education - confectioner, works in the shop as a fitter of household appliances;

Mother: Malgorzata, 47, primary education, cashier in the local store;

**B) Siblings:**

2 sisters: Anna, 32-year-old and Renata, younger - 21 years old;

**C) Interpersonal relationships in the family:**

The parents are divorced. The mother left for another city (when Sławek was 14) where he lives with her partner Robert and daughter Renata. Sławek lives with his father. The older sister Anna, lives with her husband and a child in a social apartment. The parents did not show any pathological behavior - no addictions, no violence. Renata is still learning. For this she gets a scholarship of 200 PLN per month. The mother does not keep in touch with her son.

**Health situation:**

Sławek is addicted to alcohol and cigarettes. Occasionally he also takes psychactive substances. He claims to have control over it. There are no major health problems - the results are within the limits of the norm. He has an innate deep visual defect. He does not wear glasses or lenses and his defect is still getting worse. He claims he does not need them.

In childhood (when he was 10 years old) he fell from a ladder in the playground. As a result of this, he was hospitalized for a long time. He also underwent leg surgery. He returned to full fitness. He does not feel any discomfort.

**Problems:**

Sławek is a type susceptible to addiction and the influence of others. Apart from drugs in his life, there was an episode related to gambling. Mostly, he played on "slot machines".

He has a child with whom he does not maintain contact. He claims it is not his child and does not want to maintain any relationship. Despite this, he recognized the child and did not demand genetic proof.

**Work plan:**

1. Renewal contact with family
2. Quitting consumption of alcohol
3. Quitting smoking of cigarettes
4. Budget management training
5. Completion of professional competencies
6. Changing attitudes
7. Obtaining his own apartment
8. Taking a job
9. Paying off debts
10. Focusing on health - change the attitude to the eye defect and take care of it

**The role of mentor:**

Slawek came to us accidentally. The first contact was made during the "Testimony" program. It was initiated by himself. He became our beneficiary. He participated in the individual conversation program because he needed someone to talk to. During these meetings and conversations we learned the story of Slawek and his problems. The mentor supported Slawek in his thoughts, directed his thoughts into the right direction, inspired him to work on himself and his life. It took nearly half a year to develop the plan. Slawek was initially reluctant to talk about himself and claimed that he did not need any help. During the conversations, he gradually revealed the details of his life. The mentor recorded everything he learned. At the right moment he presented his notes to Slawek. Then a breakthrough came.

The hardest thing to do was to persuade Slawek to contact the child. To this end, the mentor tried to initiate mediation and family therapy but Slawek refused. It's still a difficult topic for him. Unfortunately, he does not want to reveal the cause of the problem.

The mentor helped him to enter alcohol therapy. Slawek attended the group outside prison. He also effectively broke up with his tobacco addiction. He and his mentor sought to "substitute" Slawek's addictions. They found them in cycling and general sport.

The mentor arranged for him a course of budget management. He supported Slawek in contacting the creditors. He also supported him in passing the procedures and filling in the documents. It turned out that Slawek had a huge psychological barrier relative to the documents. He knew the procedures well but he could not "break through" and contact the debt collection company.

He was attending school all this time. By the time the plan was fully drawn up he had completed primary school. The mentor arranged for him a career guidance. In spite of low education and excessive demands, it was possible to find a job. Initially, it was a small office work. Over time, he received more tasks that required a lot of skills. He perfected himself in them. His employer was very pleased with him at the time. He decided to invest in him. As a result, he also had to undergo ophthalmic treatment - a prerequisite from the boss. As it turned out, Slawek was afraid of the doctor. He could not justify it. The prospect of promotion proved to be sufficient motivation.

In the meantime Slawek was released. He still carried out the plan with the support of a mentor. The first step in freedom was to become independent. Together with the mentor they filled out and submitted the documents for social housing. It was granted to him. Thanks to his promotion, he was able to live on his own. He began to pay off debts.

**Evaluation:**

Slawek is a pretty difficult case. He is very lost and needs attention of others. He feels neglected. He is susceptible to being influenced by others - he should be careful about the environment in which he is staying. Unfortunately, he can not select it correctly. Working with him was multi-faceted.

The most important thing was to set goals. Slawek had to rethink what he wanted from his life and set priorities. Our first task was to lead him in this.

He initiated the creation of the above work plan. His priority is paying off his debts. We organized a budget management course for him and we helped him establish a contact with the debt collection company. They signed an agreement under which the debt was divided into installments. The next step was to get a job. It was hard to find a job with such a low education. All the more, Sławek proved to be a rather picky customer on this issue. When the situation began to stabilize, it was time to expand his education. Sławek's employer co-financed his qualification courses, driving school and school fees. He attended therapy all the time in a specialized center.

We constantly monitored the implementation of the prepared plan. At every step he could count on our support. We helped him with formalities related to debt, therapy and social housing. He used our psychological consultations regularly.

Sławek is still visiting us. We are in constant touch. He paid debts, kept paying alimony. His attitude towards the baby has not changed, he is not in contact with him. He gave up his addictions and graduated from high school and passed A-level. He became a manager. As a result of changing his position and working at the computer, he began to wear glasses. He founded a family - has two children with a new partner. He does not visit family gatherings and avoids contact with old acquaintances.



# **CUSTOMIZED MORAL EDUCATION PROGRAM MENTORING, INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION / TRAINING TO FORGIVE**

*Stefa Kondrotienė, LPF “Garstyčios grūdas” (LT)*

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## **1. TARGET GROUP**

The learner is a convict and/or person released from detention facilities who has problems with non-forgiveness after he/she suffered harm caused to him/her and as a result stays in non-forgiveness, malice, revenge, hatred, frustration and so on.

The learner / convict should:

- have a desire to play an active role;
- be motivated to change and improve him/herself;
- be committed to experimentation and learning from others and their own mistakes;
- openly talk about their current situation no matter how negative it looks;
- not become completely dependent on the mentor;
- openly and boldly provide feedback to the mentor.

## **2. LEARNER’S SKILLS** (what the learner should be able to perform without help and assistance)

Before the training during individual consultations the already formed abilities of the learner /convict, knowledge and skills, that can be used in the training (learning) of the forgiveness process, should be identified. According to the collected information it is possible to agree on what tasks the learner can perform alone (without support) and in which tasks the learner will need assistance.

## **3. COMPETENCES ACQUIRED IN THE TRAINING**

In the training the learner acquires: interpersonal and social competences.

## **4. AIM OF THE TEACHER / MENTOR**

To help the learner / convict escape from unpleasant emotions and feelings and regain control of external and internal life.

## **5. OBJECTIVES OF THE TEACHER / MENTOR**

- 5.1 To develop proper moral values in the learner / convict;
- 5.2 To improve emotional state of the learner / convict;



5.3 To facilitate the process of socialization of the learner / convict;

## **6. APPLICATION OF METHODS AND TECHNIQUES**

Teaching methods are selected according to the learners' educational needs and peculiarities, as well as his/her learning difficulties;

- 6. 1 Individual consultations about forgiveness;
- 6. 2 Practical independent tasks;
- 6. 3 Discussions;
- 6. 4 Creation of the forgiveness plan;
- 6. 5 Rehearsing of the interview with the offender;
- 6. 6 Implementation of the forgiveness plan in practice;

## **7. USED FOR TRAINING**

- 7. 1 The Book "New testament".
- 7. 2 Individual tasks:
  - 7. 2. 1 Two perspectives for one situation;
  - 7. 2. 2 The offender's emotions and feelings;
  - 7. 2. 3 Two of your positions;
  - 7. 2. 4 Responsibilities + actions;
  - 7. 2. 5 Creating of the forgiveness plan;
- 7. 3 Tasks of the mentor:
  - 7. 3. 1 Rehearsing of the forgiveness act;
  - 7. 3. 2 Implementation of the forgiveness act;

## **8. LOCATION AND / OR ENVIRONMENT OF THE TRAINING**

- 8. 1 Education takes place in prison, i.e. in an enclosed area where an individual learning environment is created;
- 8. 2 Creation of an adjusted place in the classroom or in a separate office;

## **9. TEACHER'S / MENTOR'S HELP, ITS INTENSITY**

The assistance of the teacher / mentor is provided in the case of each session, individual task or task with a mentor.

Classes/activities are implemented once a week.

The coverage is 11-12 sessions of 50 - 90 minutes. General period of sessions is 3 months.

## 10. RESPONSIBILITIES OF AND REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MENTOR

### Responsibilities:

10. 1 To help the learner review his goals and achieve them;
10. 2 To discuss the expectations of the learner and the mentor himself;
10. 3 To select and use the necessary/appropriate counselling and other appropriate methods;
10. 4 To use all available resources to achieve the objective;
10. 5 To create an environment of confidence and self-esteem;
10. 6 To initiate the first meeting, to create the right environment;
10. 7 To agree on the rules of communication / counselling (when and how often the meetings will be held, but at least once a month, when you will communicate);
10. 8 To develop an individual education plan;
10. 9 To describe the progress of the learner during the entire program (what works, what does not, what should be changed and so on.);

### Requirements:

A mentor is a person who helps the learner discover self-confidence. He is a person who helps the learner understand that despite the darkness of the night, in the morning you will meet success. He helps people get to know themselves which often we do not.

10. 1 To be sincerely interested in people, try to meet them, to improve and promote them;
10. 2 To have a mature personality with good self-esteem and self-confidence;
10. 3 To have a life experience of interpersonal relations;
10. 4 To be a good listener;
10. 5 To be able and to be ready to solve problems and see them as potential for development;
10. 6 To be able to empathize with the situation of the learner and to respect different points of view;
10. 7 To be have experienced a non-forgiveness problem and have overcome it;

It is important to note that since the objectives of social mentoring are focused on the learner, he firstly gets huge comprehensive benefits. But this is not a one-way process, as it might seem at first sight. As the mentors themselves say this cooperation gives a lot of positive emotions. It is, above all, the possibility to help people of a similar fate and to realize their spiritual needs. On the other hand, this is an experience of new way of communication and the possibility to learn many new things.

## 11. PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE LEARNER

11. 1 The amount of tasks and their selection for the training of an individual learner / convict is adapted to the situation;

11. 2 The learners' achievements are evaluated according to the program objectives and tasks of the selected evaluation system and the individual learner's needs.

## **12. THE DIFFICULTIES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING**

12. 1 The following difficulties and / or problems may arise in the educational process:

- 12. 1. 1 Emotional instability;
- 12. 1. 2 Inadequate capacities and skills;
- 12. 1. 3 Unwillingness to come to the meeting /training;
- 12. 1. 4 Unfavourable health condition;

Therefore, the development of an individual education plan should clarify the possibility and probability of difficulties to arise.

## **13. INTRODUCTION TO THE TRAINING**

### **The relevance of forgiveness**

The forgiveness phenomenon has been an object of investigation for the last several decades. Educators, psychologists and even the exact sciences have been increasingly focusing on it. Furthermore, since ancient times the topic of forgiveness has dominated in many religions.

The first comprehensive study of forgiveness was made by a psychologist and professor of the University of Wisconsin, R. D. Enright and his colleagues (Beresnevičienė, 2004). A large database was first collected there. Recently an institute of forgiveness was founded by the professor which contains a lot of information about the topic of forgiveness.

The phenomenon of forgiveness was first analysed in religious literature and from old times forgiveness issues have been analysed in theological works. The religious conception first recognized forgiveness as a moral personality maturity. Ten years of empirical process of forgiveness and the practical results of forgiveness showed great influence of interpersonal mercy. Forgiveness was evaluated by a test of overcoming personal negative feelings and positive thoughts, emotions, behaviour and educational level. Other works demonstrate and extend these results and show that forgiveness is related not only with depression, but also with the positive psychological characteristics (Beresnevičienė, 2004).

The study of the phenomenon of forgiveness shows a positive impact on the development of moral values, psychological well-being and the socialization process.

Researchers explained that the victims who forgive their oppressors, recover physically and psychologically faster. In respondents the individuals who were ready to forgive and forgave, the healing process went quickly, and they healed completely. The researchers state that our brains are unable to forgive people who caused pain to us, unless we "cry out" all this pain, try to understand our offender's excuse, forgive him and decide at least partially to accept his remorse and show mercy to him. It is not so easy to forgive and

forget - our brains don't know how to do it. So a person can only continue learning to live without wishing evil to the one who did evil to you.

Convicts in their life experience many injustices, insults, humiliation which they carry like a great burden. This does not allow them to rise but with the time they feel more depressed and this feeling makes them stumble on the road of life. When a person with such a burden gets into prison, it usually transforms into a "box" which becomes a home to the convict. He thinks that this is the norm because everything around is the same, only the box's shape, color, elasticity or other characteristics are slightly different.

The training to forgive is necessary for convicts like clean air or water. It serves as a liberating force since their life history is overlapped with different shapes and depths of the negative whose consequences are non-forgiveness, hate and desire to revenge. Training for convicts is modeled with the help of a mentor, because they themselves are not able and do not want to climb so deep into their inner world which they do not want to show to anyone else. They do not want to, because they do not understand what to do with that. In the world of their souls and spirits non-forgiveness can occupy the highest position in the hierarchy of negative feelings. Therefore, a mentor has to help understand how the pyramid in which non-forgiveness occupies aggressively its top "position" was created.

This training is not intended for group sessions because it is very personalized and deeply penetrating. If the mentor wants to achieve the set goal which is to help the learner / convict escape from unpleasant emotions and regain control of the external and internal life, he/she must be patient, wise, empathetic with deductive thinking and spiritually strong. The forgiveness training (learning) process moves on to the spiritual level and this is not a standard psychologist's work. It is not enough for the mentor to be a good psychologist or a social worker. If the mentor is not a spiritual person, or if he is spiritually weak he could disappoint his student/client and the process will not achieve its objective.

Convicts in prison are not taught forgiveness or reconciliation, no matter whether they are victims or offenders. Each convict's business is to serve his sentence and get out of prison as quickly as possible. If he does not get into the rehabilitation center, the chances are very small that his way of life will change. So convicts come out of prison with a bigger burden and the vicious circle starts to turn again in the same direction but more deeply.

The prisoner like any other human being has a body, soul and spirit. If in the rehabilitation program an intervention is made only to one or two of them, this will not be a fully-fledged rehabilitation. We must rehabilitate the body and the soul and spirit of a person. It's like a table standing on three legs. If they are all healthy and have the correct length, the table will stand properly and will not fall down. But if only one leg is shorter, weaker, one day the table will fall down, because the other two legs cannot carry out the third leg's function.

#### 14. INDIVIDUAL CONSULTATION

The mentor should tell the learner at least one case from his life as an example so that the learner could emphatically experience what the mentor experienced. It does not necessarily have to be the same or similar to the case of the learner. It is important that the learner can understand where it all started and how it ended. The mentor also can tell the learner other people's stories of forgiveness, saying that it happened to another person with whom he is familiar.



After the story the mentor should develop a discussion about this exemplary case. The discussion could be about this: why this incident occurred; who is right and who is guilty; what injustice have one and the other person experienced; whether the offender had the right to do so; how the learner would behave in the case of one or the other person. In this way a more flexible and deeper relationship of trust with the students is built.

After such discussions the mentor should refer to the theoretical part below and ask the learner whether each item is understandable for him. If he has questions, it is necessary to clarify them.

The forgiveness process is an important motive - why you need to forgive.

Many people think that if they forgive the oppressor, this will somehow encourage the oppressor's cruelty or afflict themselves or it will offend the memory of the dead victims. An important fact is that to forgive does not mean to accept the violent behaviour of the crime. We need forgiveness for our own sake, for our health, our inner peace, for our emotional liberation from a painful past. Not to forgive means to decide to continue staying depressed, suffering, being sick and living in the past.

According to G.G. Jampolsky, "To forgive is to feel compassion, tenderness and concern, which our heart is always full of whatever the world looks at that time. To forgive is to find a way to your inner peace and happiness, the way to your soul".

Forgiveness is an active process of personal self-determination and one's will to act and the decision to obey God. The Lord does not propose to forgive. **He commanded to forgive.** God do not say to us: "It would be good if you finally forced yourself and began to forgive." No! In the bible Mk: 11,25 He says: "*When you stand praying, forgive, if you have fought against any: that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your sins*" and Mt: 6,15 "...and if you do not forgive people their sins, neither will your Father forgive your sins".

**Forgiveness is a human decision to obey God** and not to allow other people's behaviour and attitudes influence our own behaviour and attitudes. Nobody other than man himself decides his decisions. Even God cannot do this for him. Only the individual can decide from the heart to forgive or not to forgive and stay in anger. If you decide not to forgive, you will be forced to endure the terrible consequences of your non-forgiveness. Everybody can and must make a decision according to his mind and heart.

In spite of the fact that it is often difficult for us to make our decisions, God gave us such an ability. Even if everything inside is burning and the human feelings are screaming "NO!", a person may forgive anyway. If someone claims that he cannot forgive, it is not true. It would be more correct to say - "I do not want to forgive." It should be recognized that this is a difficult decision to make, which we would like to avoid. We can forgive in spite of the fact that we do not feel the forgiveness inside of us.

**Forgiveness is not a feeling** - it is an act. I wonder whether there is a man who actually "felt" that he must forgive. Trying to forget the wrongs, forgetting them does not mean that we have forgiven the perpetrators. Of course, with time memories about the event fade, but the time has not cured. God is able to heal the sick heart.

**To forgive does not mean to justify the behaviour of the offender.** The offender came to you and said, "Sorry, I was wrong", and you answered him, "Oh, this is ok" so this way you will let the bullies behave the same way and hurt you because you express that all is well and nothing happened. To make things right you should answer, "I forgive you". You show the bullies that you do not approve of their behaviour, but you are benevolent and forgive them their sins and will not take revenge on them for what they did to you.

**Forgiveness and trust are two different things.** To forgive does not mean to trust the offender. A drinking father was beating his teenager son for each small thing. The boy couldn't take this any longer and left the house. Later because of the street life he got into prison. You think the son should forgive his father and start to trust him again? No! It is, of course, necessary to forgive but the father lost his trust. Trust does not arise by itself. Trust has to be earned. So the son could let the trust for his father re-build. On the other hand you cannot forgive, if you know that you will have to comply with the offender's arbitrariness who has the right to insult and hurt you again and again. But if you realize that forgiveness and trust are two different things, you will realize that in this case forgiveness is possible.

**Forgiveness is not freeing from liability.** Many people think that if you forgive the oppressor, he will easily escape the punishment. I suggest you do not focus on this. We cannot exempt anybody from liability, it is not within our force. Only God can always and everywhere request somebody's responsibility.

**Non-forgiveness leads to spiritual stagnation.** If a person chooses non-forgiveness, he chooses sin. Ps. 66: 18-19 *"If I had an angry thought in my heart, the Lord would not have listened. But God heard - he listened to the voice of my prayer."* If you want the Lord to hear you - your prayers - forgive. The faithful people stop to grow spiritually because they have to deal with the same problems caused by their non-forgiveness.

**Research has shown** that a person who is disadvantaged, shut inside the deep injustice, is in reality affected by the anger or injustice that he feels and not the offender. Such restrictions are expressed in very different, even strange ways. To cope with such a condition where one is stuck in anger, the brain uses his vast resources which ultimately result in a dysbalanced brain activity and body functioning. In this case, the levels of stress hormones and blood pressure rise, even obesity may start to develop.

**Non-forgiveness is an obstacle.** Forgiveness should not be a one-time phenomenon. If there is a bad feeling inside of us against any person that provokes in us the desire to take revenge on him/her, if the pressure rises just because someone has crossed the threshold of our house, then this approach imprisons us in a secret desire to take revenge. If in your presence, someone mentions a person's name and you feel an inner tension, it is clear that



something is wrong. It's not about how often we think about the offender, but what happens in our heart when we think about him/her. You can remember this once a year, but then everything boils in you. This is nothing less than a rage that sooner or later will destroy you, your spirit and your body.

Grievance even may affect our ability to focus and create new memories. When we get hung up on our pain, our thoughts are formed as if in a haze and fat accumulates around our internal organs. And it is not only a metaphor (as it may look at first sight). One study has shown that a person who forgave his bullies even began to jump higher! Other studies have shown that people who fail to forgive (give up harm) view tasks that require physical effort as very difficult. If we do not forgive, we block our mind, emotions and physical condition. It is possible that the person who hurt us locked us into a cage. However, the decision to remain in it or leave it can only be made by ourselves.<sup>1</sup>

**Forgiveness as a life style.** It is impossible to forgive once, and then say: "The forgiveness problem is solved". You need to train yourself in forgiveness. You have to consciously surrender yourselves and your state of mind into God's hands instead of giving your bullies an opportunity and a right to control your state of mind and have domination over you.

**Wrong reaction in general is no better than wrong behaviour.**

However, **some people will never forget and do not forgive** - they remain permanently disadvantaged - victims sinking into sin. In such situations, such people have become victims and simply live with their wounds in the victim's position. This, of course, will inevitably affect their future relationships and understanding of themselves, so the wound can never heal. We need to forgive and remember only what we need to remember. Learn the lessons given by the harm: that we survived, have found something new, that we have become more patient and that we are doing something better.

## 15. PRACTICAL TASKS

According to the model of the family therapist T. D. Hargrave we will use four intermediate stations during the process of forgiveness.

The word "station" is used to emphasize that forgiveness is not a linear process when we move from one stage to the next, whereas the credibility of another person is difficult to restore and making the decision to forgive may drag on for very long. In this way, the hurt person can many times move between various intermediate stations. If the offender for one reason or another does not participate in the forgiveness process, then the first two stations which are collectively described as REHABILITATION remain in the forgiveness process. The last two stations, which are commonly called FORGIVENESS, should involve both sides – the victim and the offender. The last two stations can be postponed to a later date when there will be a possibility. It may also happen that this possibility will not appear. In that case this process can be carried out in a one-sided way.

**Developing competencies:** social interpersonal.

**Connection with others competencies:** it related to communication, entrepreneurship and learning to learn competencies.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://jezus.lt/news/1423/15/Mokslininkai-irode-atleidimo-galia/>



## REHABILITATION



**I. Topic:** "An attempt to understand the situation of being hurt".

**Methodology:** individual work, then individual counselling.

**Duration:** 50 min.

**Aim:** to show how important it is to look at the situation from the other (the offender's) side to get a clearer picture of the circumstances in which the harm was caused. This is very important in the

further process of forgiveness.

The first intermediate station - an attempt to understand.

To understand why an insult or injustice has happened, reflective study of the situation.

Try to look at the situation from the other person's (the offender's) perspective. It does not have to include everything. Perhaps it will be much easier for you to forgive if you look at just one aspect of the situation from the offender's perspective. If you are able to and you feel that you can review the whole situation, don't stop yourself and do it safely.

First of all, it should be recognized that there was an injustice and hurt. As long as you will not do it in your heart, probably in the further process you will lie to yourself and you will not be able to move beyond the second intermediate station. You also need to recognize that you are angry, because anger is normal in this case. In some cases, it may be that there was a feeling of shame and this must be also recognized. At this time, we start to realize how many emotions and how much energy is consumed in the repeated experiencing of the situation.

### PRACTICE

Individual task - Two perspectives for one situation

Duration - 30 min.

If the offender hardly understands the questions or phrases from the task, then the mentor has to explain each item in a row and help design the entire table. If the client can't imagine the situation, actions, causes and other specified items from the offender perspective, then the mentor should help him by asking and making interpretations. Then the client can choose from the submitted options. Particularly when he needs to answer the last point "the behavior and actions after a period of time", because such things cannot be fixed in the memory because of our willingness to forget and block them.

	From the perspective of the offender	From the perspective of the victim	Similarities or differences
Situational context / circumstances.			

Vision, understanding and acceptance of behaviour / actions			
The reasons why the oppressor afflicted the harm			
Behaviour, actions taken immediately after the harm			
Behaviour and actions after a period of time			

This table can be adjusted after the first filling if you have been somehow more forgiving to yourself and resentful to perpetrators. Correct, rewrite, adjust it until you will feel free and have a relieved heart, because there is nothing more you can change.

### Individual counselling



Duration - 20 - 25 min.

Discuss with the client what he/she has written down. Discuss it and argue as clearly as possible to understand the offender's and the victim's perspectives and their similarities and differences.

**II. Topic:** Understanding and identification with the offender

**Methodology:** individual work, then individual counselling.

**Duration:** 40-45 min.

**Aim:** to show how important it is to empathize with the offender's status and emotions, to get a clearer picture of what the offender felt and in this way demonstrate that the offender is vulnerable and has its own weaknesses.

**Second intermediate station -** understanding and identification with the offender.

- To understand how the offender felt when he was causing the harm and how he has been feeling ever since. Maybe he feels guilt or shame. Maybe he is thinking how to correct the mistake.

- To identify - to try to get into the perspective of how the offender felt, what encouraged him to such inappropriate behaviour.

If you feel safe and able to move beyond the evaluation of "good and bad", "guilty and innocent", you will exactly understand the offender's status and your status in the incriminating situation. When writing, be honest and do not lie to yourselves. Be critical and self-critical.

Trying to empathize with the emotions of the offender, you will not only find different feelings and emotions between the offender and the victim. If we see the offender as bad and despise him, we will not get better. Let's allow ourselves to identify with the offender and to feel as accurately as possible the feelings and emotions that you think he could have felt.

If in your case the offender has caused such a deep psychological wound that has left serious consequences for your future life and it still hurts you, then do it superficially, without touching the wound.

## What is the difference between feelings and emotions.

Discuss this topic in such way that the learner clearly can understand what feelings and what emotions are.

Emotions can be very different: fear, frustration, anger, resentment, confusion, aggression, joy, admiration, surprise and others.

Emotion is a subconscious reaction to any life situation. For example, from around the corner a big dog suddenly pops up and at the same time a person gets scared – his/her blood runs cold and he/she breaks out in a cold sweat and so on. Fear is an emotion. It occurs when a certain situation happens - a big dog suddenly jumped out from around the corner and the subconsciousness reacted automatically and activated the emotion of fear. The dog ran away and the fear slowly passed. And after an hour the person completely forgot the situation.

So, what is common for all the emotions? All emotions occur in response to some situations, cause certain sensations and go away when the situation is over.

Meanwhile, feelings have a completely different nature. They do not arise suddenly, last a long time and give a completely different experience. Well known **feelings** are: love, gratitude, devotion, respect and friendship.

Feelings are much more complex than emotions. Therefore, it is not so easy to understand them and to make them arise in ourselves and in another human being. True love and friendship are not born at once. At first glance we are able to love only the body or get the primary stimulus - sympathy, attraction. However, in order to love someone truly, we need to know him/her better and this requires time.

Thus, the feelings are constantly felt positive (or negative) feelings directed to a person, sometimes a collective or organization. Emotions on the other hand are internal positive (negative) charges toward a person. For example, the love for a close person is a constant concern and desire to do everything to make that person happy. This desire is constant,

although it may be more or less expressed. Or loyalty - this is a feeling of internal force, readiness to overcome all obstacles, temptations and challenges.

Emotion - this is a strong positive (negative) relationship with someone that you can feel at a distance, understand him from a half word, half glance and breathe and live with him in one flow.<sup>2</sup>

### PRACTICE

#### Task – Offender's emotions and feelings

Duration - 20 min.

With the help of your empathic abilities write what emotions and feelings the offender experienced in the four different periods.

This analysis is necessary for the client to better understand the offender's emotions, feelings and acts. The mentor should help the client understand when it was feelings and when only emotions. It would be appropriate to clarify the reasons for the offender's feelings and emotional change and how strong they have changed. If we find out the reasons it will be a serious basis for further development of the forgiveness process.

	Emotions	Feelings
Before the incident		
During the incident		
Right after the incident		
A longer period of time after the incident		

#### Individual counselling

Duration - 20 - 25 min.

Discuss with the client what he/she has written down. Discuss it and argue as clearly as possible to understand why the emotions and feelings of the offender were changing.

<sup>2</sup> <http://gyvenimo.lt/kuo-skiriasi-jausmai-nuo-emociju/>

## FORGIVENESS

### III. Topic: A chance for the oppressor to atone for his/her wrong doing



**Methodology:** individual work, then individual counselling.

**Duration:** 90 min.

**Aim:** to show what the consequences can be in the cases of forgiveness and non-forgiveness, that the hurt person has the possibility to choose what he wishes to do - forgive or not to forgive.

**Third intermediate station** – A chance for the oppressor to atone for his/her wrong doing

The victim gives the offender a chance to take responsibility and perform some action to restore confidence in him again.

Locked pain is actually true poison for the whole human personality: first of all for our mind, heart, and then finally relationships. We waste our energy carrying inside experienced pain. Over time, we become angry and resentful, we lose the joy and get angry at the surrounding people unrelated to the pain that we have experienced. By avoiding forgiveness, the past overtakes us. The feelings of the painful situation start to prevail in the present, depriving us of the opportunity to enjoy the present and to create a peaceful tomorrow.

After passing the two intermediate stations our perception that no one is perfect is changing and deepening.

### PRACTICE

Individual task - **Two of your positions**

Duration - 20 min.

Honestly evaluate the consequences of the revenge and forgiveness positions.

In this task the mentor should help the client clearly identify the real consequences of desire for revenge and forgiveness. He should become familiar with the client's environment, family and prospects as well as with the offender's if they have the need or the opportunity to meet more often. This is especially important if the offender is from a close environment.

	In the revenge position	In the forgiveness position
Your thoughts and emotions		
Your psychological health		
Your body health		
Your relationship with the offender		
Your relationship with your relatives.		

### Individual counselling

Duration - 20 - 25 min.

Discuss with the client what he/she has written down. Discuss it and argue as clearly as possible to understand what benefit or loss you will have in both cases.

### PRACTICE

#### Individual task **Responsibilities + actions**

Duration - 20 min.

Write down what responsibilities in your view the offender should assume and what actions should be carried out to implement them.

A mentor should only help but not identify the responsibilities for the client. The responsibilities which will be written by the client will show how deeply he feels injustice and how much hate lies inside of him toward the offender.

Responsibility assumed by the offender	Offender's actions related to the assumed responsibilities

### Individual counselling

Duration - 20 - 25 min.

Discuss with the client what he/she has written down. Discuss it and argue as clearly as possible to understand if the requirements are not too high and whether they correspond to reality.

**IV. Topic:** Open act of forgiveness.

**Methodology:** creating a rehearsing plan, rehearsing, then individual counselling.

**Duration:** 35 min.

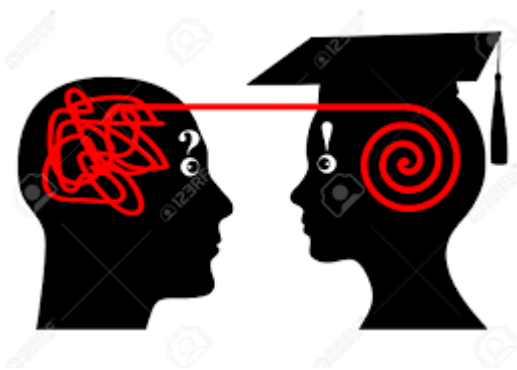
**Fourth intermediate station** - open act of forgiveness

Two people openly discuss what happened and agree to develop a relationship based on trust in the future.

Forgiveness corrects the past in the moment when the bitterness, resentment and sorrow disappear and are replaced by peace and joy, as a result of this one can create a bright future. The purpose of an open forgiveness act is to:

- regain a good emotional state;
- regain proper self-esteem;
- regain dignity;
- find a new and proper relationship with the offender;
- learn lessons;
- set new goals and move on.

### PRACTICE



#### Individual task - **Creating the forgiveness plan**

Duration - 15 min.

Plan at least two alternative plans of what you would like to discuss with the offender.

The mentor should only prompt and only help build a forgiveness plan. To adjust something what the client is trying to plan not properly. When the client himself creates such a plan he has to imagine everything how

it would look in reality. The big plus is that this plan will remain in his mind without much effort or learning. He will be able to "carry" this plan in mind and still improve or adjust it depending on the circumstances.

Scene 1 Talk Plan - when the offender shows a desire to restore relations and is willing to have a discussion.



Scene 2 Talk Plan - when the offender does not show the desire to restore relations and refuses to have a discussion.

For example - when the offender shows a desire to restore relations and is willing to have discussion:

Victim: Hello, "Algirdas".

Offender: Hello "Romas".

Victim: Maybe we could talk?

Offender: Yes, of course, we can.

Victim: I would like to talk about the incident, which happened.

Offender: Well, I'm listening.

Victim: Can we talk about it openly?

Offender: I do not know, let's try.

Victim: I tried to get deep into everything and understand why all those things happened and now I can see the situations in a different way and make other decisions.

Offender: It would be interesting to hear about it. Maybe you could share your thoughts.

Victim: I wanted to understand the circumstances in which the incident took place, and your emotions and feelings during the incident. I think it was tough for you, too.

Offender: Yes, really.

Victim: Now it is not so painful when I get deeper into the situation looking at it from your point of view. I admit that now I understand that my behaviour provoked such behaviour in you. But I also know that in spite of what I did, you could have behaved in another way. You could have chosen a different way to resolve the existing situation which perhaps would have been better and have not caused me so much harm.

Offender: I don't know, maybe...

Victim: Nevertheless, I forgive you all the wrongs you done to me. I want my heart and my mind to become free from grievances.

## PRACTICE

Individual tasks with a mentor - **Rehearsing of the forgiveness act.**

Duration - 20 min.

The client can perform a rehearsal according to his created forgiveness plans and ask one of the participants in the group to play the role of the offender. While talking with the "offender" the participant should express himself in a clear, consistent and understandable way. The client should be ready to sincerely implement his forgiveness act, no matter how the offender would react. Maybe the offender will be



confused and not know what to say and what to do but knowing the target the victim should tell the offender that he forgives him and should not hesitate or be alarmed by unforeseen circumstances. He/she should feel free to name his/her decision to forgive the offender and stand out with a lightened heart.

## PRACTICE

Individual task with the mentor - **Implementation of the forgiveness act.**

After the convict's release, the mentor should:

- keep in touch with the learner;
- maintain the motivation to implement the forgiveness act in practice;
- strengthen his resolve to forgive and to live free from the heavy burden that oppressed him till now.

A mentor should help the learner:

- find where the offender lives;
- contact the offender and make an appointment;
- plan the whole scenario from leaving the house and returning to the house;
- on the learner's request, he/she can go with him to the offender's house to support him and assist him if the events take a wrong turn.



After the implementation of the forgiveness act, regardless of how it ended up the mentor should discuss with the learner the whole process and its results.

If the implementation of the forgiveness act failed, do not get upset. Maybe God will give you another chance to do it.

You should assess what has already been done and what has been achieved. If the learner feels good and says he feels free, that he forgave and has no negative feelings and emotions, you should ask him what he feels. Feelings and emotions which he felt in non-forgiveness, should be replaced by opposite feelings and emotions. So the anger should be replaced with compassion and understanding; hate with love for the offender, revenge with peace, joy and trust in God, a sense of humiliation with a sense of dignity, low self-esteem with an adequate self-esteem.

When the sentenced person carries on to freedom other feelings, emotions and different understanding of life in forgiveness, he will never be the same as he was before. He will turn to the way which leads to peace, understanding, love, looking for true life of joy and fulfillment. He would like to share it with others and teach others the art of forgiveness.

When the convict in his soul and spirit does not carry non-forgiveness / revenge, his mind becomes free. Then he has the ability to develop appropriate future plans for his reintegration into society. He will be able to forgive:

- judges who sentenced him by imprisonment;

- police officers who caught him and put him into jail;
- people who left him;
- friends who betrayed or left him;
- the mother who has left him as a baby on the street to the will of fate;
- father, who taught him to drink alcohol;
- all those who in one way or another abused him.

He will not be afraid, will not avoid meeting them on the street and saying hello. It will be a double freedom after leaving the prison - the freedom of the body, the soul and the spirit.

## 16. USED LITERATURE

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Aliulis V. (Red.) (1972). New Testament. Vilnius – Kaunas

## CASE STUDY

### 1. GENERAL DATA

1. 1 Name - Rimas (name changed)
1. 2 Date of birth - 28 October, 1988.
1. 3 Place of birth - Vilnius
1. 4 Status - single
1. 5 Education - 8 classes
1. 6 The rehabilitation period in prison - 4 years
1. 7 Rimas is a convict who has a problem with non-forgiveness.
1. 8 The duration of the training is 3 months.
1. 9 His mother left him in the foster home right after she gave birth to him. As far as he can remember he can not forgive his mother and his entire life he has been creating plans to take revenge on her, maybe even to kill her.

Rimas has no desire to play an active role because he does not know what it feels like from the forgiveness perspective. In common sense Rimas has the motivation to change and to develop, and he also revealed that he is tired of thinking about taking revenge on his mother. He is not a closed person and tries to speak openly because he trusts specialists. He doesn't like to experiment, but seeing the mistakes of others he tries to learn from them.

Before applying this method a book was found in Rimas' personal stuff during a search with a variety of information. On one page there was a list of people who must to be killed. In the first place of this list was his mother and in the second was his cousin.

1.10 During the consultation Rimas said:

- how he hates his mother even though he had never seen her before;
- how he lives in permanent thinking about how and for what he hates her;
- what kind of revenge he is planning;
- that he has 11 brothers and sisters from whom he knows only a few because all of them including himself were left in a children home by their mother;

1.11 The agreement with the client to use the forgiveness method

Rimas has been informed of what we will try to achieve by applying this method and what influence it will have on his moral values, psychological well-being and the whole process of socialization.

It has been agreed that we will work until we will achieve the desired objectives.

1.12 Setting goals using the "Learning to forgive" method:

- Becoming free from distressing emotions and feelings and regaining control of the outer and inner life.
- Developing appropriate moral values, improving one's psychological state, thus facilitating the process of socialization.

## 2. APPLIED TEACHING METHODS

### 2.1 Individual counselling

During the consultations Rimas told his life story. He grew up in foster homes where he experienced neither love nor proper upbringing and nobody talked with him about such a thing as forgiveness at all. When he was 9 years old during the summer vacation he was placed with temporary tutors in France where he did not understand the language and suffered emotional - psychological shock. Since then, he started to stutter. He had never experienced any love. Always fighting for survival although sometimes he did not need to.

It was explained to Rimas why the motive of forgiveness is very important in the forgiveness process. When Rimas heard the news that if he forgives his mother it will not be an approval of her behaviour and forgiving her he will not hurt himself but on the contrary - he will raise himself above her level and be absorbed in deeper thought. It became clear that his mind lightened up, the light at the end of the tunnel showed and a huge burden dropped from his tired shoulders.

He has no need to be explained what will happen if he will not forgive because he has already known that for many years. Since Rimas decided to do everything possible not to suffer any more he has began to feel inner peace.

**Rimas thought that one must feel forgiveness.** When he heard and understood that forgiveness is his own act of will, self-determination and that nobody else but he can do it, he slowly started to think about these two aspects. Rimas finally realized that he personally can

take such a decision by his mind and his heart. He made this decision easily because he was terribly tired from non-forgiveness and suffering from the desire to take revenge.

**Rimas asked if he will be able to forget the pain afflicted by his mother.** After explaining what it means to forget the wrongs - forgetting them does not mean that you have forgiven you oppressor - he agreed and said that he will try to make this happen. Of course, with time memories about the event fade but the time does not cure completely. God is able to heal the sick heart. When forgiveness settles in the mind and the heart instead of hatred and revenge, you begin to feel pity and compassion and that person and the event will stop being the unpleasant past in your life story.

**Then Rimas had a question about who would punish his mother for such behaviour.** After hearing the news that his forgiveness will not release his mother from responsibility, Rimas took a deep breath and seemed that some inside barriers were broken. Rimas asked how he will know whether his mother received a payback. I explained that only God is a judge and if God will wish she will receive a payback on this earth. But it also may be that the punishment will be after death - eternal hell fire.

In the final stage of consultations Rimas raised the question **whether it will be enough if he will forgive his mother once**, believing that he will not succeed immediately to change his earlier thoughts and everything will turn to the previous state. He asked what to do when some hateful or revengeful thoughts rise again? Then I said to Rimas that it is impossible to change with one word "I forgive" all that we have lived for so many years. It is normal that over and over again the same thoughts, the same desires come back but your decision to forgive must to be higher and bigger for the whole thing. Every time he comes back to such a state of mind or thoughts he must remember what we talked about in this consultation that he has made the decision to forgive and to entrust his mother into God's hands. It's a long process and work with oneself. Everything is possible only without determining any time limits and planning when things will happen. Just do what you have to do in order to live in peace and joy because forgiving is like a life style. You must always forgive and for many times per day so just train your forgiveness and be free from the most distressing thoughts and slavery which is created by those thoughts.

## 2.2 Practical tasks

### REHABILITATION

Aim: to show how important it is to look at the situation from the other (the offender's) side to get a clearer picture of the circumstances in which the harm was caused. This is very important in the further process of forgiveness.

It is an attempt to understand why the mother has behaved in this way, reflective study of the situation and circumstances.

Rimas said what he knew about his mother's lifestyle. From Rimas' story, it became clear that the mother had problems with alcohol and then was a prostitute. Now after so many years, none of the children know about her life story. By unconfirmed data she has lived somewhere abroad for many years and probably leads the same life style. Rimas condemned his mother for her way of life and said how he was ashamed that his mother was such a person. Then we started to analyse from what the life his mother was leading could have started, what forced her to treat her children in such a cruel way. Rimas couldn't tell much because his grandfather died when he was three years old and he knows more from

his brothers and sisters than from his memories. It was known only that Rimas' parents had recently divorced because of her drunkenness and wretched lifestyle. All the children are from different fathers. She has been deprived of the maternity rights. The conclusion is that we cannot know from what started Rimas' mother's anti-social life and what were the reasons. According to this I suggested a simple solution - the Lord says /commands in the Bible: "If you want to do well and live a long life on this Earth, respect your father and mother." When Rimas heard this order he got surprised and expressed displeasure - "Why should I respect her if she did this to me?". I replied that I understood his surprise. I suggested to him to think that his mother could have done it even worse, that she could have killed him before or just after birth. On the other hand the LORD commanded not to love, but to respect. The Lord does not specify what mother you must respect. He does not say - respect only a worthy mother. He briefly and clearly states "... respect your father and mother ..." it means that regardless of what the parents are like and how good or bad they may behave they must be respected. Only, of course, it is to be added that "If you want to do well and live a long time on this Earth...".

Finally Rimas decided that it is better to listen to God and to do so as he commanded than to oppose his will.

## FORGIVENESS

### I PRACTICAL TASK "Two of your positions"

**Aim:** to find out what the consequences can be in the cases of forgiveness and non-forgiveness.

Rimas had to do the following practical task - honestly evaluate the consequences of the revenge and forgiveness positions.

	In the revenge position	In the forgiveness position
Your thoughts and emotions	Always thinking and creating plans about how to take revenge or even to kill	Peace, thoughts free from hatred and revenge
Your psychological health	No mental stability, constant tension, irritability	I am enjoying my life and freedom from these distressing thoughts.
Your body health	Stomach often does not digest, I have to take drugs, sometimes I feel pain in the solar plexus	All the ailments in the body go away
Your relationship with the offender	Arraignment, judgement, desire to look her in the eye. A reluctance even to meet her.	I respect my mother, because I want to do well
Your relationship with your relatives.	Provoke and encourage his brothers and sisters to take revenge on the mother	When talking about the mother with the brothers and sisters, I will advise them to forgive her and to talk about her as little as possible.

During individual consultations we discussed what the client wrote. We discussed and argued that the client could understand more deeply what benefits or losses he will incur in



both cases. He made clear that non-forgiveness has a disturbing effect on his health and lifestyle.

## **II PRACTICAL TASK - "Creating the forgiveness plan"**

It was appropriate to create the forgiveness act plan only for such a situation which is the most realistic. I proposed to draw up the forgiveness act plan by creating the following life situation "If I meet my mother" and she will be the same kind of person as described by those who knew her. Rimas immediately asked for help because this task seemed psychologically too difficult for him. However, starting to perform the task Rimas "caught" inspiration and needed just a little help or adjustment. After performing this task Rimas said that he felt fatigue and relief at the same time. We agreed during the next session to carry out a rehearsal of his forgiveness act plan. He noted that it was good that I told him this in advance and we agreed that it would be a great opportunity for him to prepare psychologically and maybe even to rehearse alone.

## **III PRACTICAL TASK - "Rehearsing the forgiveness act"**

At the beginning of the next session Rimas seemed a little embarrassed but said that he was ready to rehearse. His fears were fuelled by his distrust in his ability to do everything properly. I had to encourage him but I said that I would try to play his mother following the image that he described to me and what I created in my imagination. Rimas' reaction was that because of this, perhaps, he would be lost even more. At first we agreed that we would do things without any rush, we would take the time to develop it in compliance with the plan. In the beginning of the rehearsal Rimas got a bit stuck but then got into the role (because he probably rehearsed it alone) and everything went quite smoothly. After 10 minutes of rehearsal Rimas was red and sweaty. He fell on the couch like after a hard day's work. But at the same time he was glad that he got beyond this stage, proud of himself, and thanked that he had the opportunity to learn to forgive and create a new life without distressing thoughts of revenge.

## **Individual consultation - improving learning results**

During the consultation, we discussed everything that has been done and what has been achieved during the training. Rimas explained how he views his life without forgiveness as seen from today's perspective. He said that he believes he has achieved a lot and achieved his goal but knows that he will have to do it every day and the whole of his life. Rimas was convinced that faith in God has helped him a lot and if he were an unbeliever probably he would not be able to forgive. He understands that he does not have the full freedom from the state of mind, emotions and feelings which he lived in non-forgiveness but he is firmly determined to follow his will to live in forgiveness in relation to his mother.

## **2. NOTES / COMMENTS OF THE EXPERT**



This client's case was an extraordinary one and we needed to adapt the training according to the situation. This case does not have continuity because Rimas' mother is not in Lithuania, and he does not even know where to look for her. But all this did not prevent him from achieving the training's objectives. Rimas started and I think he will finish a) free from torturing feelings and emotions caused by non-forgiveness; b) recovery of internal and external control of his life. Rimas improved his psychological state which will facilitate the process of socialization after release. Specific moral values related to the parents and God started to prevail in his life. Rimas' self-esteem has increased and he feels dignity. So we can safely assume that the client will no longer be as he was. He began a new phase of his life - the life style of forgiveness.

