

personal transformation through higher education



Presenter : Arthur Huggins
Alexander Maconochie Centre



personal transformation through higher education



Presentation aim:

Explore transformational process when incarcerated students participate in higher education programs. (From a practitioner, rather than an academic, viewpoint.)

rephrasing.....

Q. How has engagement in higher education at the AMC helped change lives?

- Identify aspects of the transformational process.
- Examine the background of higher education facilitation in prisons.
- Identify common barriers to, & benefits of, higher education delivery in prisons.
- Examine some case studies which demonstrate transformation process.
- Ask the question; Can evidence based reporting of participation in higher education assist the effectiveness of transformational goals in prison inmates?

personal transformation through higher education

Let's start with a few questions in order to establish some workshop parameters.

Workshop participants?
Who is in the audience?

- How many here are currently involved in directly facilitating higher education to detainees?
- In prisons?
- As distance educators?
- Who is planning to deliver similar programs?

In the context of this presentation; What is higher education?
Probably anything above Certificate IV ? \geq AQF 5
Also specifically identified TERTIARY PREPARATION.



personal transformation through higher education

What is personal transformation?

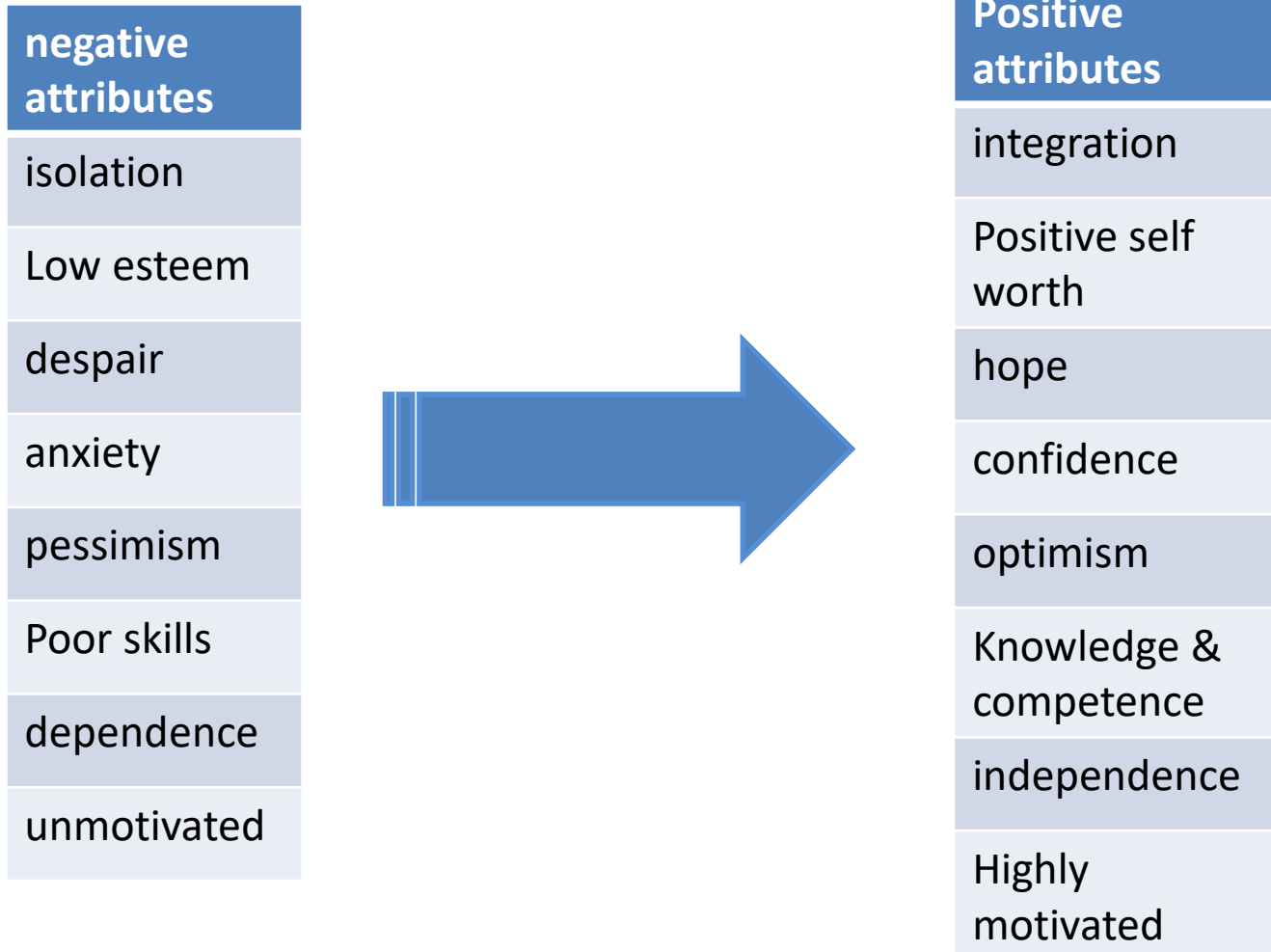
Change in Character?

Rehabilitation?

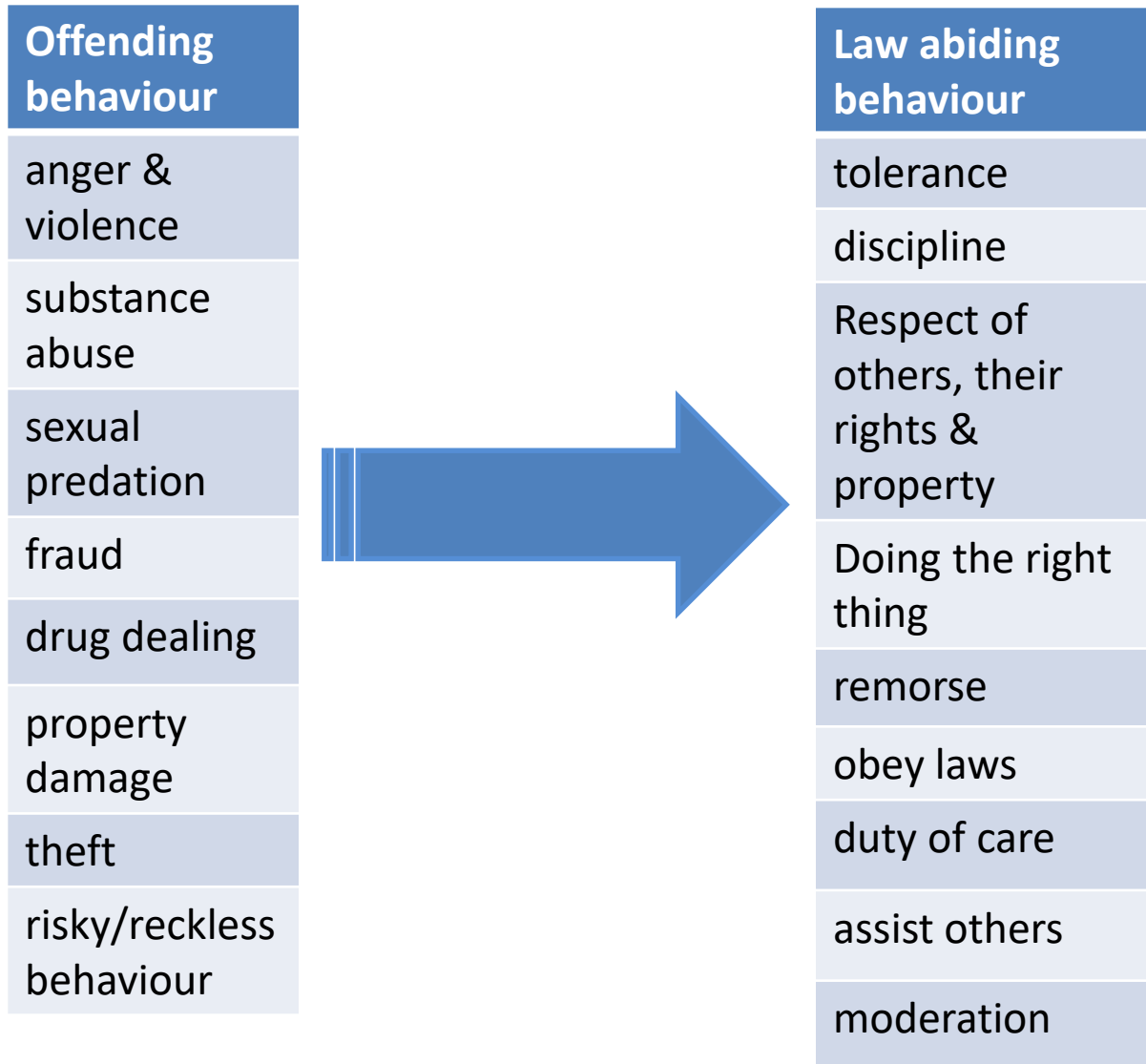
Addressing offending behaviour?

Addressing other factors?

Helpful to look at character attributes.



personal transformation through higher education



personal transformation through higher education



Consider the academic literature.....

- Benefits of prison inmates receiving education have been widely reported. Diseth *et al* (2008) - Nordic experience.
Callejo & Viedma (2007)-Spanish/ European experience for higher education.
- Inmates who attend education programs are less likely to return to custody. Duguid & Dawson (1998); Vacca (2004)
- Relatively recent comprehensive report from the UK Prisoners Education Trust following a survey of 343 respondents in the UK prison system.
Taylor (2014) , *Brain Cells* .

The above paper highlighted a number of factors which were positive with regard to higher education, including:

- ❖ Motivation to gain a university degree. (.....sense of pride.)
- ❖ Development of pro-social self identity. (.....desire to impress others)
- ❖ Identification of identity other than 'offender'. (....remove the stereotype)
- ❖ To use time productively and make prison experience a positive rather negative one.
- ❖ “.....a reason to wake up in the morning and breathe.”
- ❖ Increase in self-esteem and self-confidence.
(ie. most had to do with self-worth & purpose.)

personal transformation through higher education

COMMONALITY in literature ----- brief summary of findings:

There were common **barriers** to education, and particularly higher education, in prisons. These included:

- Interference from security issues.
- Receipt and dissemination of mail and resources.
- Lack of ICT equipment and connection to the internet.
- Access to literature and research materials.
- Providing appropriate tutoring time. (and on-hand tutors)



- Prisoner motivation has significant impact on outcomes.
- Prison education has major **benefits**, common to all jurisdictions.

personal transformation through higher education

The AMC experience:

- Commenced taking detainees in 2009.
- Initial offerings in general education and VET courses
- Only 2 detainees were initially involved in university distance education and that was carried over from previous jurisdictions (SA , NSW) transfer
- In 2010 a requirement for some sort of tertiary preparation pathway identified, and enrolment commenced – USQ TTP
- In 2011 first of AMC detainees applied for and gained entry into undergraduate and post graduate courses.
- By 2017 over 30 detainees involved either in TTP or university D.E.
- Some with very high levels of achievement.

Detainee *AB

Detainee *CD

Diploma of Business Administration						
COURSE	DESCRIPTION	TERM	UNIT	GRADE		GP
CMS1000	Communication and Scholarship	S2, 2016	1.0	A	Distinction	6.0
MKT1001	Introduction to Marketing	S3, 2016	1.0	A	Distinction	6.0
MGT1000	Organisational Behaviour	S1, 2017	1.0	A	Distinction	6.0
CIS1000	Information Systems Concepts	S2, 2017	1.0	#	Currently Enrolled	0.0
GPA = 18.0 / 3.0 = 6.00						
Tertiary Preparation Program						
COURSE	DESCRIPTION	TERM	UNIT	GRADE		GP
TPP7120	Studying to Succeed	S1, 2014	2.0	F	Fail	3.0
TPP7181	Maths Tertiary Preparation 1	S1, 2014	1.0	F	Fail	1.5
TPP7120	Studying to Succeed	S1, 2015	2.0	A	Distinction	12.0
TPP7181	Maths Tertiary Preparation 1	S1, 2015	1.0	B	Credit	5.0
TPP7182	Maths Tertiary Preparation 2	S3, 2015	1.0	C	Pass	4.0
GPA = 25.5 / 7.0 = 3.64						

personal transformation through higher education

Bachelor of Engineering (Honours)
Bachelor of Science
Majors Mechatronic Engineering/Computing

Detainee EF

COURSE	DESCRIPTION	TERM	UNIT	GRADE		GP
ENG1100	Intro to Engineering Design	S1, 2015	1.0	A	Distinction	6.0
ENM1600	Engineering Mathematics	S1, 2015	1.0	HD	High Distinction	7.0
ENG1002	Intro Eng & Spatial Sci Appls	S2, 2015	1.0	B	Credit	5.0
ENG1101	Intro to Eng Problem Solving	S2, 2015	1.0	HD	High Distinction	7.0
CIV1501	Engineering Statics	S3, 2015	1.0	B	Credit	5.0
ELE1801	Electrical Technology	S3, 2015	1.0	A	Distinction	6.0
ENM2600	Advanced Engineering Maths	S1, 2016	1.0	A	Distinction	6.0
MEC1201	Engineering Materials	S1, 2016	1.0	A	Distinction	6.0
CMS1000	Communication and Scholarship	S2, 2016	1.0	A	Distinction	6.0
ELE2103	Linear Systems and Control	S2, 2016	1.0	HD	High Distinction	7.0
ENG2002	Techn Sustainability & Society	S3, 2016	1.0	B	Credit	5.0
ENG2102	Eng Problem Solving & Analysis	S3, 2016	1.0	A	Distinction	6.0
MEC2402	Stress Analysis	S1, 2017	1.0	HD	High Distinction	7.0
STA2300	Data Analysis	S1, 2017	1.0	HD	High Distinction	7.0
MEC2301	Design of Machine Elements	S2, 2017	1.0	#	Currently Enrolled	0.0
MEC4406	Robotics and Machine Vision	S2, 2017	1.0	#	Currently Enrolled	0.0
CSC1401	Foundation Programming	S3, 2017	1.0	#	Currently Enrolled	0.0
ENG3003	Engineering Management	S3, 2017	1.0	#	Currently Enrolled	0.0

GPA = 86.0 / 14.0 = 6.14

This detainee qualified for both bursary and scholarship and a special international university award.

(*Golden Key International Honour Society*)

personal transformation through higher education

What is the **motivation** and what are the **benefits** of HE study?

- Current (S2- 2017) detainees studying higher education were asked to respond to a number of alternatives in respect to the above.

As you might expect there was a scattered distribution of responses as different individuals seemed to have commenced HE study for different personal reasons.

However some responses were common

All rated **PRIDE** in what they were doing, and **SENSE OF PURPOSE** highly (strongly agree) –consistent with '*Brain Cells*' study.

All rated **obtaining special privileges** or **studying to impress others** as low (strongly disagree) – inconsistent with '*Brain Cells*' study.

Building self confidence and **satisfaction of achievement** were across the spectrum of: disagree – strongly agree

For those that continued their studies, a common remark was that the study program was assisting in the stabilisation of their life while incarcerated.

personal transformation through higher education

more specifically:

Most important:

- Personal pride
- “Something I’ve always wanted to do”
- A step to something else.

Neutral:

- Qualification to get job
- Relief from boredom
- Clarifying thoughts.

Least important:

- Impress others (contrary to some literature)
- Obtaining special privileges



personal transformation through higher education



Personal reactions from detainees.....

To Whom It May Concern,

I participated in and completed the Tertiary Preparation Program (TPP) with distinction whilst incarcerated in the AMC. Then I commenced a Bachelor of Arts, getting really good grades in the first semester, a high distinction in Communications and Scholarship, and a distinction in an Introduction to English Literature unit. My participation in the university studies by distance education in jail has really boosted my self-esteem and mental functions ability. I know it will prove to be a key factor in my recovery from drug addiction and mental illness. I achieved these grades in university although I had not completed year ten as a youth. I am hoping to learn enough about writing, to produce published works and earn a living as well as develop insights about mental illness, drug addiction, jail and rehabilitation out in the community. My very great thanks go to Arthur Huggins and his education staff in the AMC, as well as Belinda the AMC librarian, for their support and encouragement. You are all doing a great thing. Now I am really a writer – who knew?

Recorded narration of prisoner experience



personal transformation through higher education

How do we measure transformation ?

- Personal feedback.
- Case notes: absence of negative behaviour – prevalence of positive behaviour → personal success.
- Progress to minimum security & positions of trust.
- Reintegration into the community and cessation of offending behaviour.



personal transformation through higher education

Where to from here?

I have no doubt that HE study is having a positive effect on transforming peoples lives for detainees in the AMC.

Do we need further evidence? Is it important? Do we further examine.....

- Behaviour changes while incarcerated?
- Behaviour when released; study and employment pattern when released?
- Perhaps a long term research paper for someone?

Questions & Discussion



References:

Callejo,J. & Viedma,A. [coord], (2007), Eurodesip: Diagnosis of State of Higher Education in Penal Institutions in Europe. *Education and Culture*. Socrates Grundtvig.

Diseth,A., Eikland,O-J., Manger,T. & Hetland,H., (2008), Education of prison inmates: course experience, motivation, and learning strategies as indicators of evaluation.

Clare Taylor, (2014), *Brain Cells*, Third edition listening to prisoner learners. Prisoner's Education Trust, UK.

Duguid,s.& Pawson,R. (1998) Education ,change and transformation: The prison experience. *Evaluation Review*, 22, 470-495.

Vacca,J.S. (2004) Education prisoners are less likely to return to prison. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 55, 297-305.