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Dimensions of desistance : a qualitative longitudinal analysis of different dimensions of the desistance process among long-term prisoners in the Netherlands

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APPENDIX I.

INFORMATION LEAFLET AND CONSENT FORM



Why this study?

I am interested in the experiences of long-term prisoners in the Netherlands. That is why I interview a group of long-term prisoners in the final stage of their sentence and I plan to follow them after they are released to see how they are doing.

What does participation mean?

Everything you say is confidential and no information will end up with prison staff, the Public Prosecution Office or to the Probation Service. After release, I will contact you a few more times to see how you are doing and to ask if I can interview you again.

Do I have to participate?

No, participation is completely voluntary. The choice is entirely up to you. If you choose to participate in the follow-up interviews, you will receive a monetary compensation for your time and effort.

How does it work?

The interview will take approximately 1.5 hours. With your permission, I would like to record the interview so I can transcribe your answers accurately afterwards. No one else will be able to hear your recorded interview except for me and maybe my supervisor or team member.

What happens to the information I give to you during the interview?

All information from you and the other participants will be used for the purpose of my research at the university. Your name will not be used in the report or in publications, so no one will be able to identify you when they read the report. We could even choose an alias name for you together.

Who can I contact if I have any questions?

My person of contact in this prison is If you have any questions, you can direct these to him/her. He or she will then pass your questions on to me. If you are released from prison and you have any questions, you can contact me directly via:

Jennifer Doekhie
Leiden University
prisonproject@law.leidenuniv.nl
071-527 5301

CONSENT FORM

The PRISON PROJECT is a scientific study carried out by Leiden University, Utrecht University and the NSCR. The aim of this sub study is to gain insight into the experiences of long-term prisoners in the Netherlands and their lives after imprisonment.

Data of long-term prisoners is being collected by:

- a) Conducting face-to-face interview, both in prison and after release
- b) Consulting registered data: criminal records, and prison data.

The data gathered for the purpose of this study will be handled with confidentiality and measures will be taken to ensure anonymity. Prison staff, police staff and other criminal justice actors will not be able to obtain this information.

I confirm that:

- I understand the purpose of the study
- The opportunity was given to me to ask additional questions about the study and these questions were answered.
- I give my permission to participate in this study
- I give permission to use a tape recorder to record the interview. This recording will only be used for transcribing the interview.
- I give permission to use my interview for research purposed; my name will never be used.

Name participant: _____

Signature: _____

Name interviewer: _____

Signature: _____

APPENDIX II.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE IN-PRISON

I. Intro

1. Oral review of informed consent (if not already signed)/ permission to tape.
2. Warm up questions: Age, place of birth, ethnicity, religion.
3. Describe yourself in 3 words:

II. Before imprisonment

How would you describe your living situation before prison?

- Who, where, how

Please tell me about your partner and child(ren)?

- Age, sex
- How often did you see them before prison?
- Living situation, care before prison
- Divorce/breakup because of prison?

What kind of work did you do? Lost your job?

Can you describe your use of alcohol and drugs before prison.

- Frequency/type of drugs
- Dependency/addiction

What was your first encounter with crime? First arrest?

Have you served any previous sentences before this sentence?

I'm trying to get a sense of who you were before entering prison.

How did you see yourself back then?

What were your ambitions before entering prison (this time)?

Before this imprisonment, what has been your high point? And your low point?

III. During imprisonment

Now I will ask you about your experiences in prison. I will start with some general questions and after that we will talk about your social contacts with people inside and outside of prison.

How did you experience your time in prison in general?

What does a 'good day' in prison look like? And a bad day?

What was your high point in prison? And your low point?

What was/is the hardest thing for you to deal with in prison?

- Freedom/restrictions/No contact with the outside world/dugs

What was the most positive thing about your time in prison?

How has your experience in prison been difficult/different from what you expected it would be?

- Expectations when entering prison

I would like to ask you some questions about your contacts with people inside and outside prison.

What were your relationships with other prisoners like?

- Who did you trust/provided support/made life harder?

What were your relationships with prison officers?

- How much impact did these relationships have on you?
- Any events/relationships with a lasting positive/negative effect?

What were you relationships with other prison staff (psychologist, pastor/priest) like?

- How much impact did these relationships have on you?
- Any events/relationships with a lasting positive/negative effect?

What contacts were you able to maintain with family members and others close to you during your imprisonment?

Who were the most significant/important people who came to visit you?

Please describe what these visits were like for you.

Parents

Did you stay in contact with your parents and how?

- Telephone calls/ visits / letters

How was it to keep in touch with your parents/mother or father during your time in prison?

- Difficult/supporting
- Did not want to have close contact/ parents did not want to have close contact
- Distance/too expensive/shame/prison is an evil place/visiting hours/hard to reach location

Did they come to visit? How did you experience these visits?

- Frequency, intensity, emotion

How has your relationship with your parents changed as a result of your incarceration?

- What do your parents think of the fact you are incarcerated? How do you feel about that?

- Do you think your parents will be there for you after your release? In what way?
- Do you expect that your parents will support you when you are released? If so, in what way?

Partner

Did you stay in contact with your partner and how?

- Telephone calls/ visits / letters

How was it to keep in touch with your partner during your time in prison?

- Difficult/supporting
- Did not want to have close contact/ she did not want to have close contact
- Distance/too expensive/shame/prison is an evil place/visiting hours/hard to reach location

Did she come to visit? How did you experience these visits?

- Frequency, intensity, emotion

How has your relationship with your partner changed as a result of your incarceration?

- What does she think of the fact you are incarcerated? How do you feel about that?
- How do you expect your relationship to be after your release?

Children

(When applicable) How did you experience visits from your children in prison?

- Frequency-intensity
- Father-child day
- Living situation and care
- Do you consider yourself a good father? Are there things you would have done differently?
- Future plans for children

Friends

How much have you kept in touch with your friends since you've been in prison?

- Who of your friends do you look up to?
- Have your relationships with friends changed and how?
- How much do you expect to be in touch with your old friends since you've been in prison?
- Do you expect to pick up your friendships where you left off? Why?

Where there any significant events in your life while you were in prison?

- Death, wedding, birth?
- When? Impact? Leave prison?

Drugs and alcohol

Could you tell me a little bit about drugs and alcohol in prison.

- Frequency & why
- Type of drugs/Dependency/treatment
- Ever got caught? Consequences?
- Do you expect to use after your release & why?

Education & Corrections

Now some questions about educational courses and other courses/treatments (corrections) in prison.

(When applicable) How did you experience educational courses during your time in prison?

- What courses?
- Were you encouraged to do these by anyone (who)?

To what extent were you given any specific preparation for release?

- What / when / how
- Help with housing/work/debts/addiction/psychological problems
- Participation voluntary?
- Role parole officer

How useful do you think they have been?

Looking back on your own experiences, are there forms of preparation that you did not get but which would have been helpful? Who should provide these?

Are there current forms of help/support which you need but are not getting? Why?

Should the process of release be handled differently?

How do you think you've changed during your time in prison?

- Characteristics
- Values
- Self image
- Cope with conflicts

IV. After

We're almost moving on to the questions about life after your release, but before doing so I'd like to know something about your conviction and how you look back on it.

You are convicted for

How do you look back on the crime and your trial?

When do you expect to be released? Parole?

Did you have home leaves? How were those like?

Where do you plan to live after your release?

- Who, where, how
- Long-term plans for housing
- If you don't know where you are going to live: what are you going to do to find a place to live? Do you expect any problems?

Do you have any plans for getting more education after your release?

- What kind of education? Why? What have you already done to make this happen?

What do you want to do to afford a living after your release?

- Types of work
- What kind of job?
- People who can help you find a job
- What is the role of the parole officer?
- Problems/obstacles in finding a job (because of criminal record)?

How do you think people will react when you will be released?

- Family, parents/employers/friends

How would you like to be treated?

- Do you think you will be labelled? Why?
- Do you think people will treat you differently if they know you were in prison? Why?

What worries you the most about life after prison?

What are you looking forward to the most about life after prison?

How do you see your life after prison?

- Do you think you will engage in criminal activity in the future? Why?
- What is the most important reason for you to 'quit crime'?
- Do you believe you can 'quit crime' on your own/by yourself?

What is your definition of success?

Do you think life happens to you or do you think that you can control your own fate?

Do you feel you control your own life?

What do you want to achieve in life?

- Personal goals
- Do you believe you can achieve this? How are you going to achieve this?
- Obstacles

Where do you see yourself in 5 years from now?

V. End

Are there any other important aspects of your life in prison that we have not covered?

Do you have any other questions?

APPENDIX III.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

POST-RELEASE²

Oral review of informed consent/ permission to tape record.
Describe yourself in 3 words:

First, I would like to hear from you what happened on the day of your release?

- Where did you go?
- What did you do?
- Was there anyone to meet you outside? Who?

How did you feel that day?

- How was it to be with other people/loved ones again?
- Was there anything different from what you expected it to be?

Did you have accommodation to go to?

- Previous home?
- Have you had difficulties with (finding) accommodation?

Where are staying now?

- Are you satisfied with your accommodation?

How has it been for you to be on parole?

Optional: supervision by the Probation Service

How do you feel about being supervised in your conditional release period?

- Ankle bracelet
- Conditions
- Added value?
- Parole officer

.....

2 The interview schedule for the two post-release interviews were similar, except for the question 'Where do you see yourself in five years from now?' in the interview held a year after release. Participants in the final interview were asked to answer this question in two parts: a positive future perspective ('What *would you like* to happen in the following chapters of your life?'), and a more negative, or feared, perspective ('What *could* happen in the following chapters of your life of which you do not want that to happen?').

I would like to get a sense of how you've experienced the external environment after being in prison for several years

Did you feel things had changed during your time in prison?

- Technology
- Mentality/morality

What changes had the most impact on you? Why?

How did people react when you were released? How did this make you feel?

- Family, parents/employers/friends

How were you treated? How was that different from how you expected to be treated?

- Do you think you are being labelled? Why?
- Do you think people are treating you differently, because they know you were in prison? Why?

Education & Income

Did you get more education after your release?

- What kind of education? Why?
- Who helped or encouraged you?
- Performance?

In the last interview you talked about doing..... to afford a living

How do you afford a living now?

- Types of work
- What kind of job? Paid/unpaid?
- People who helped you find a job
- What is the role of the parole officer?
- How hard has it been to find work (because of criminal record)?
- Are there any skills you've mastered in prison, that you can use now in 'normal' life?

If working now, do you think you are working below your level?

If not working now, what did you do to find a job?

- Job interviews / obstacles / motivation?

How do you find it to cope with the working life?

- Rules/discipline/authority

How do you think your imprisonment affected the way people think in relation to employing you?

- Has this been changing over time?

Drugs & Alcohol

Can you describe your use of alcohol and drugs immediately after release and now?

- Frequency/type of drugs
- Dependency/addiction
- Expectations from previous interview. Differently?

When applicable: You did some educational courses and other courses/treatments (corrections) in prison.

Now that you are out of prison, how useful have they been?

- Help with housing/work/debts/addiction/psychological problems
- Role parole officer / other organizations

Are there forms of preparation that you did not get in prison but which would have been helpful? Who should provide these?

After experiencing your own release, should the process of release be handled differently in your opinion?

I now have some questions about your relationships with family and people closest to you after you release.

Interviewer: first discuss expectations from previous interview.

Then ask following questions separately for parents, partner and friends.

Was your relationship the way you expected it to be after your release? Why (not)?

- How did this affect the relationship between the two of you?
- Who supported you?

How has this changed since your release until now?

- Stayed the same/improved/got worse?

Outside the family, who has provided you the most support?

Children

How is the relationship with your child(ren) since your release?

- Frequency-intensity
- Living situation and care
- Do you consider yourself a good father? Are there things you would have done differently?
- Future plans for children

Next, I was wondering if you still keep contact with people inside and outside prison.

Do you still have contact with other (ex)prisoners? How do you feel about these contacts?

Are you still in contact with other prison staff (psychologist, pastor/priest)?

- How did this relationship change after your release?
- How much impact does these relationships have on you?
- Any events/relationships with a lasting positive/negative effect?

The last time we talked about your experiences in prison. Now that you're released, I would like to ask you a little bit more about that.

How do you look back on your time in prison?

What was the most positive thing about your time in prison?

What has been the hardest part about adjusting to life outside of prison?

Is there anything you miss about prison?

How do you think you've changed during your time in prison?

- Characteristics
- Values
- Self image
- Cope with conflicts

How do you see yourself now?

How have the missed years affected your place in society?

What are your ambitions now? What are you trying to achieve (even on a daily basis)?

Since your release, what has been your high point? And your low point?

In our last interview, you told me the thing that worries you the most about life after prison, was

Do you still worry about that/what are you going to do about this/how did you resolve this?

You said you were looking forward the most to

How did that go?

Last time we spoke I asked you how you saw your life after prison?

- Is your life now the way you pictured it?
- Are you engaging in criminal activity? Why?
- What is the most important reason for you to 'quit crime'?
- Do you still believe you can 'quit crime' on your own/by yourself?

How worried are you to be back in prison in the next year?

What is your definition of success (now)?

What do you want to achieve in life?

- Personal goals
- Do you believe you can achieve this?
- How are you going to achieve this?
- Obstacles

Where do you see yourself in 5 years from now?

I. End

Are there any other important aspects of these first months of your life after prison that we have not covered?

Do you have any other questions?

APPENDIX IV.

CODEBOOK

Theme	Codes T1	Codes T2	Codes T3
<u>Social factors</u>	Housing Employment – legal/illegal Partner Alcohol before Drugs before Children before	Alcohol/drugs Contact inmates Contact children Contact parents Contact friends Partner Independent accommodation Difficulties finding work Work/daily activities Living situation Support from family Support outside family Education future Reaction others	Alcohol/drugs Contact inmates Contact children Contact parents Contact friends Partner Independent accommodation Difficulties finding work Work/daily activities Living situation Support from family Support outside family Education future Reaction others
<u>Identity</u>	Describe three words Identity before Goals before High point before Low point before Changed self Dealing with conflict Achieving goals Where in 5 years Meaning of succes	Describe three words Goals High point after release Low point after release Where in 5 years Fatherhood Changed self Role model others Appreciation from others Insight into self Value money Meaning of succes Future perspective	Describe three words Accept punishment Goals High point after release Low point after release No regrets Influence of past Where in 5 years – Where in 5 years + Fatherhood Changed self Role model others Appreciation from others Insight into self Value money Meaning of success Future perspective
<u>Individual factors</u>	Labelling Reaction others Feeling of control Definition success	Goal oriented behaviour Belief in self Feeling of control Labelling Saying no Definition success Obstacles	Goal oriented behaviour Belief in self Feeling of control Labelling Saying no Definition success Obstacles



Theme	Codes T1	Codes T2	Codes T3
<u>Criminal behaviour</u>	Expectation future crime Growing/dealing drugs Motivation crime Motivation quitting crime Disadvantages crime	Limit of crime Growing/dealing drugs Motivation crime Motivation quitting crime Disadvantages crime Criminal opportunities Chance future imprisonment Violent crime	Limit of crime Growing/dealing drugs Motivation crime Motivation quitting crime Disadvantages crime Criminal opportunities Chance future imprisonment Violent crime
		New conviction New imprisonment	New conviction New imprisonment
<u>Pre-release Future expectation</u>	Expectation living situation Living – long-term Expectation education Making money after Difficulties finding work Partner future Expectation support partner Expectation bond parents Support parents Future plans kids Expectation friendship Expectation drugs	-	-
	<u>Regarding crime</u> Expectation crime What needed to quit Quit on your own Obstacles		
<u>Experience of imprisonment</u>	Prison experience Good day prison Bad day prison High point prison Low point prison Hardest in prison? Most positive prison Other expectations Visitors Chance future imprisonment	Fear of prison Missing prison Chance future imprisonment Most positive prison Reflecting on imprisonment	Fear of prison Missing prison Chance future imprisonment Most positive prison Reflect on imprisonment Accept punishment
<u>Release preparations</u>	Phased re-entry Courses prison Education prison Help with re-entry Role parole Change process re-entry? Leaves	Change process re-entry? Courses useful	Change process re-entry? Courses useful

Theme	Codes T1	Codes T2	Codes T3
<u>Experience of parole</u>	Experiencing supervision	Ankle bracelet (EM)	Ankle bracelet (EM)
	Role parole	Experiencing supervision	Experiencing supervision
	Role parole officer	Role parole	Role parole
		Role parole officer	Role parole officer
<u>Post-release experiences</u>	-	Violating conditions	Violating conditions
		Experiences outside	Experiences outside
		Help external agencies	Help external agencies
		Obstacles	Obstacles
		Getting used to	Getting used to
		Changed world	Changed world

APPENDIX V.

FORMAT LIFE STORIES AND USED DATA SOURCES

Topics		Data sources		
		Interviews	Parole reports	Criminal records
Who is?	Age	x		
	Crime	x		x
	Sentence length	x		x
	Previous arrest / imprisonment	x		x
	Describe yourself in three words	x		
Background	Childhood	x		
	Entering crime	x		
	Transition to more serious crime	x		
Imprisonment	Experiencing imprisonment	x		
	Courses	x	x	
	Leaves	x	x	
	Visits	x		
	Promotion/demotion	x	x	
	Changed self?	x		
	Estimated risk at recidivism		x	
Pre-release expectations	Future criminal behaviour / criminal intentions	x		
	Goals (possible selves) / conventional aspirations	x		
	Other expectations	x		
First months out	Social factors	x	x	
	Supervision/ankle bracelet	x	x	
	Criminal behaviour?	x	x	x
	Motivation / Identity / achieving (conventional) goals	x	x	
One year after release	Social factors	x	x	
	Supervision/ankle bracelet	x	x	
	Criminal behaviour?	x	x	x
	Motivation / Identity / achieving (conventional) goals	x	x	
Future perspective	Five years from now?	x		
	Negative			
	Positive			

