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Justice-Involved Women and Redemptive Narratives: The Role of Personal Resources and Environmental Factors on the Desistance Process

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Justice Involved Women and Redemptive Narratives: The Role of Personal Resources and Environmental Factors on the Desistance Process.

Elizabeth Allen, LCSW, PhD.

University of Connecticut, 2017

The rate of incarceration in the United States is six to ten times higher than in countries with similar living standards. There are currently more than seven million Americans who are justice-involved. Women are the fastest growing sector, with more than one million women currently under some form of correctional supervision. Community reintegration after incarceration is challenging and the needs of women are specific and distinct, differing in intensity and multiplicity from men. Frequently, women's histories include poverty, abuse, and involvement with mental health and child service agencies which have profound implications for incarceration and reintegration. Therefore, all levels of criminal justice interventions, including reentry, must be gender-responsive and account for the personal, structural, and social contexts of reintegration. This research attempts to fill the gap in knowledge regarding the influence of personal resources and environmental factors on community reintegration for justice-involved women and decisions to desist or depart from criminal lifestyles.

Many of the theories guiding reentry are deficit based, account only for individual behavior, and fail to account for environmental influences on behavior. With approximately 708,000 individuals released annually from prisons, social workers must support community reintegration with interventions rooted in the social context in which they live. The current limited research on personal and environmental factors that influence successful reintegration with justice-involved women, exposes a gap in the literature. This study was designed to address

that gap by exploring personal resources and environmental factors associated with agency for desistance, anticipated desistance and redemptive narratives among incarcerated women.

This study provides an exploration of 141 incarcerated women in the northeast region of the U.S. in order to gain insight into the pathway towards desistance for women. The quantitative survey and qualitative narrative findings indicate that agency for desistance, anticipated desistance, and the *redemptive self* are correlated with personal resources and environmental factors, human capital, social support, identity, marginalized status and other factors for justice-involved women. This study adds to our understanding of the complex relationship between women involved in the justice system, their social environment and factors that support the creation of successful lives after incarceration.

Keywords: justice-involved women, personal resources, environmental factors, redemptive narratives, community reintegration and desistance process.

Justice-Involved Women and Redemptive Narratives: The Role of Personal Resources and

Environmental Factors on the Desistance Process.

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Justice-Involved Women and Redemptive Narratives: The Role of Personal Resources and

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to all the resilient women that I was privileged to work with during my social work career in corrections. I am honored to have been allowed to enter your world, to walk along on your journey, and that you incredibly strong women shared your wisdom and insights with me. You have taught me so much and I am honored and forever grateful. My hope is that my work gives all of you a voice, because the world truly needs to hear you.

Remember…. "We are abolitionists!"

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Introduction/Overview

This dissertation focuses on personal resources and environmental factors that impact justice-involved women, their community reintegration after incarceration, and the desistance process. The personal resources investigated in this study include, hope, empowerment, and self-efficacy. The environmental factors investigated in this study are neighborhood disorder and childhood poverty. This chapter introduces the topics of mass incarceration, pathways into crime and desistance, and lays the foundation for the research study.

Problem Statement

"Like Jim Crow (and slavery), mass incarceration operates as a tightly networked system of laws, policies, customs, and institutions that operate collectively to ensure the subordinate status of a group…."
-- Michelle Alexander (2012)

Mass incarceration has many unintended consequences and has led to a complexity of problems for individuals transitioning out of prison as well as for the communities to which they return (Petersilla, 2003; Travis & Visher, 2005; Western, 2006). Women are the fastest growing sector of the incarcerated population and comprise 14% of the total prison population (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2013). There are more than one million women under some form of correctional supervision in the United States (BJS, 2013). Justice-involved women are predominantly poor, young, educationally disadvantaged, unskilled, and unemployed at the time of their incarceration (Bloom, Owen & Covington, 2003). Nilsson (2003) found that women involved in the justice system had greater deficits in several areas of their well-being than men, and empirically connected these deficits to recidivism. Women's pathways into criminal justice often include histories of abuse, substance use and addiction (Bloom et al, 2003; Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998; Daly, 1992). Women report sexual or physical abuse as a child at rates 13 times as great as those for men (Messina, Burdon & Prendergast, 2009). Nearly half of

incarcerated women report a history of physical and/or sexual abuse, with nearly 70% (State and jail inmates) reporting a rape prior to their current incarceration (BJS, Selected Findings, 1999). The odds of women having a substance abuse/dependence disorder are 16 times as great as those for men (Salisbury & Van Voorhis, 2009). Additionally, 40.5% of women were diagnosed with co-occurring substance-use and mental health as compared with 22.9% of men (CASA, 2010). With a combination of their overwhelmingly marginalized status, and because women involved in the justice system frequently return to communities with limited resources (Petersilia, 2003, Richie, 2003); desistance from criminal lifestyle can be an uncertain course for women (Opsal, 2012; Richie, 2001).

Much research has been conducted about the pathways into criminal behavior so we now have a better understanding of the complex issues that potentially lead individuals *into* crime (Bloom, Owen & Covington, 2001; Salisbury & Van Voorhis, 2009; Sampson & Groves, 1989; Sampson & Laub, 1993; Skarðhamar, 2003). However, much less research has been done to increase our understanding of the complex pathways *out of* crime, or desistance. Reintegration into communities and pathways out of crime have been found to be more complex for women involved in the justice system than men (Gelsthorpe, Sharpe, & Roberts, 2007). *Reintegration* implies that these women were integrated within their communities prior to prison, yet most were socially excluded before prison, and time in prison potentially excludes them further (Carlen & Tombs, 2006; Nilsson, 2003). Therefore, desistance from crime should be contextualized by the marginalized status of women and the circumstances they experience. In 2011, there were approximately 708,000 individuals released annually from state and federal prisons (Guerino, Harrison, & Sabol, 2011), which translates to nearly 224 women released daily from prisons. There is a critical need to understand what supports reintegration and the process

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by which women change and move away from criminal lifestyles. This research attempts to fill that gap in knowledge.

Desistance from crime, similar to any change process, is not an event or an end result but a process (Bushway, Piquero, Mazerolle, Broidy, & Cauffman, 2001; Laub & Sampson, 2001, Maruna, 2001, Maruna, Immarigeon, & Lebel, 2004). It is understood that participation in criminal activity waxes and wanes over time (Glueck & Glueck, 1930, 1940, 1943; Maruna 2001) and moving away from criminality is not a steady, one-way progression (Bottoms, Shapland, Costello & Muir, 2004). Desistance has been identified as the most neglected area of criminal career research (Bushway, Thornberry & Krohn, 2003) and little is known about the underlying causal processes. Whether due to improved social ties – such as employment or relationships – or to a lack of criminal opportunity, persistent offenders have periods of inactivity in criminal behavior. Desistance is a complex termination process, and many researchers agree that looking for one effective intervention is futile; rather, an emphasis on "what helps" this process (Travis & Visher, 2005; Ward & Maruna, 2007) is needed. Maruna (1997) argues that any analysis of the process of desistance must focus on what will help sustain the state of criminal inactivity or "going straight." Therefore, an integrated theory of desistance is required with attention to both the aspects of structure and agency (Farrall, 2005; Farrall & Bowling, 1999; Gadd, 2006; Gadd & Farrall, 2005).

Purpose

The purpose of the current study is to better understand women involved in the justice system and the factors that will support their community reintegration and desistance from crime. Most of the research on the pathways perspective into and out of criminal lifestyles has been qualitative and informed by studies in subjects other than social work such as psychology,

addictions and criminal justice. This research draws greatly from literature on community reintegration in the era of mass incarceration. This research is distinct as it focuses on women, an understudied group of the justice-involved population in the United States. This study also adds to the knowledge base of desistance, another field understudied in criminal justice, and even more so in social work. Both empowerment and narrative theories are used as conceptual frameworks and to contextualize the findings.

This study has four aims: 1. To explore the role of the following personal resources: a) hope, b) empowerment, and c) self-efficacy on redemptive narratives, agency for desistance, and anticipated desistance for women; 2. To explore the role of the following environmental factors: a) childhood poverty, and b) disordered neighborhoods, on the above mentioned personal resources as well as the redemptive narratives, agency for desistance, and anticipated desistance for women; 3. To explore the extent to which identity and marginalized status of women will mediate these relationships; and 4. To identify additional factors that potentially influence justice-involved women, community reintegration, and the desistance process. This exploratory research was guided by the integration of two complementary literatures: social work and criminal justice, and seeks to frame the experiences of reintegration and the desistance process with a feminist lens.

My personal experience as a clinical social worker with incarcerated women, as well as the lack of research in this area influenced the decision to study this topic. A cross-sectional survey, and life-interview was used to gather information on personal resources and environmental factors, agency for desistance, anticipated desistance and redemptive narratives. The study included 141 incarcerated women in a northeast region of the U.S. to better understand community reintegration and factors associated with the desistance process.

Chapter One: Literature Review

Mass Incarceration in Historical and Social Context

"Jails and prisons are designed to break human beings, to convert the population into specimens in a zoo
– obedient to our keepers, but dangerous to each other." --Angela Davis (2003)

Over the past four decades, while illegal drug use in the United States was declining, the

"war on drugs" continued to be waged with vigor (Beckett & Sasson, 2004). This *war,* together

with stricter sentencing policies, such as the three-strikes laws, mandatory minimums and truth

in sentencing, has resulted in the United States incarcerating a greater percentage of its citizens

than any other country and more than at any previous historical period (Mauer, 2006; Travis &

Visher, 2005). The number of individuals incarcerated in either prison or jail, rose nearly 700

percent between 1980 and 2000 (Schmitt, Warner, & Gupta, 2010), and the majority were drug

related offenses (Mauer, 2006). The rate of incarceration in the U.S. is six to ten times higher

than countries with similar living standards; with only 4.6 percent of the world's population, we

possess 22.4 percent of its prison population (Gupta, 2013). By 2014, nearly seven million

Americans were justice-involved (BJS, 2016), exacting large tolls on individuals, families,

communities, and state budgets (Moran, 2014).

Racial and Ethnic Disparities

"They had for more than a century before been regarded as beings of an inferior order, and
altogether unfit to associate with the white race, either in social or political relations; and so far inferior,
that they had no rights which the white man was bound to respect; and that the negro might justly and
lawfully be reduced to slavery for his benefit." - Dred Scott Decision, 1857

The incarcerated populations in the United States are largely from the most

disadvantaged and marginalized segments of the population. Large racial, ethnic and class

disparities exist. In 2014, young Black males were incarcerated at a nearly ten times higher rate

than Whites, and three times greater than Hispanics (BJS, 2015). Unlike in the past, when going

to prison was an indicator of extreme deviance reserved for violent offenders, the *wars* on drugs and crime significantly lowered the threshold for incarceration, making incarceration an accepted part of life for many young, African-American and Hispanic individuals (Pettit & Western, 2004; Western, 2006). By the end of the 1990s, prison records were nearly twice as common as bachelor's degrees for Black men in their mid-thirties (Pettit & Western, 2004). While the number of justice-involved women is lower, since 1980 the rate of incarceration for women is nearly double the rate for men, and there are also apparent racial disparities.

Between 1998 and 2008, the arrests of women increased nearly 12 percent. In 2008, women accounted for nearly a quarter of all arrests, resulted in over 2.5 million women being arrested (Women's Prison Association, 2009). In 2014, African American women were more than twice as likely to be imprisoned as White women (109 and 53 per 100,000), and Hispanic women were 1.2 times as likely to be incarcerated (64 per 100,000) (The Sentencing Project, 2015). This increase is largely due to more punitive policies and practices of the justice system in regard to women's behavior (van Wormer & Bartollas, 2007), and a growth of reliance on physical isolation of criminals (Petersilla, 2003), and not in response to increased violence, criminal activity or crime rates.

Community Reintegration

Free?
They open wide the door
'You've done your time, you're free'
But I still feel locked and chained
Deep down inside of me.
- Anonymous (1982)

In 2010, prison releases exceeded admissions for the first time since the Bureau of Justice Statistics began collecting jurisdictional data in 1977 (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2012). Successful reintegration back into society and desisting from crime, requires individuals have the

ability to overcome numerous obstacles. Research has identified many factors that influence

successful transition from prison to community, including work history and job skills,

connections with family and friends, and resource assistance (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990; Laub

& Sampson, 2001; Nilson, 2003; O'Brien, 2001). However, because most research focuses only

on recidivism it is unknown which of these factors are the strongest influences on creating

successful lives (Visher & Travis, 2003). Both men and women returning to already

disadvantaged communities have many economic and social barriers. These barriers can

contribute to high recidivism rates. Previously fragile community resources may have been lost

as a result of incarceration (McIvor, Trotter, & Sheehan, 2009), and the risk of death for

individuals recently released is 3.5 times higher than for the general population (Binswanger,

Blatchford, Lindsay, & Stern, 2011). Earning a living wage within mainstream employment is

not easy for individuals who lack education, social connections and/or pro-social supports and

have criminal records. Examining recidivism without considering factors such as social support,

neighborhood characteristics or policy barriers paints an incomplete picture of the reentry

process.

The reality of mass incarceration and community reintegration is that many justice-

involved individuals will return to the same socially disadvantaged urban neighborhoods

(Holzer, Raphael, & Stoll, 2004; Lebel, 2012) in which they were arrested. When the area from

which justice-involved individuals are removed from and returned is concentrated, greater strain

is placed on these communities (Travis & Petersillia, 2001). The burden of mass incarceration

and community reintegration on marginalized communities is immense and greater than at any

other time historically.

Justice-Involved Women Characteristics. There are currently more than one million women under some form of correctional supervision in the United States (BJS, 2013). The war on drugs has had particularly devastating impact on women. In 1979, the ratio of women serving sentences for drug conviction was approximately one in ten (WPA, 2009). Compare this to one in three women by 1999 (Greenfield & Snell, 1999), and the effects of substance use and draconian drug laws are evident.

Justice-involved women are one of the most socially excluded and marginalized populations as the gender-, race- and class-based disadvantages intersect with their criminality status (Bloom et al, 2003; LeBel, 2012; Owen & Bloom, 1995; Richie, 2001). The fundamental themes and issues affecting many justice-involved women, such as sexism, racism, poverty, intimate-partner violence, sexual abuse and substance abuse are also societal issues (Covington, 2003). Belknap (2001) referred to female offenders as "the invisible woman." There are many documented differences between female and male drug abusers who are justice-involved. Arrests of women for drug-related violations increased 19% compared to 10% for men in the ten-year period from 1999 to 2008 (The Sentencing Project, 2013). Social policies, such as the Welfare Reform Act, Adoption and Safe Families Act and housing policies disproportionately involve women, and thereby have a greater negative influence on women transitioning into communities than men. Women's histories of poverty, abuse, and involvement with mental health and child service agencies have profound implications for incarceration and reintegration (Bloom, Owen & Covington, 2004; Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998; Daly, 1992). Additionally, research is needed that gathers contextualized data and captures the layers of Black women's lives who have been incarcerated (Christian & Thomas, 2009).

Although women in comparison to men, may have overall lower rates of recidivism, women with prior criminal activity and substance abuse have rates of rearrests and recidivism that are double that of males (Uggen & Kruttschnitt, 1998). Although both genders may experience similar obstacles to community reintegration, the post-incarceration experience of women is qualitatively different (O'Brien, 2001) because the social and economic marginality of women makes the effects of imprisonment even more devastating (Belknap, 2001; Richie, 2012). Richie (2012) posits that women with increased stigmatized social positioning including race, sexuality, class, age, and criminal background from marginalized communities are made increasingly vulnerable by the "prison nation." Therefore, marginalization is particularly relevant to research with justice-involved women because involvement with the criminal justice system interacts with their subordinated statuses and further marginalizes them (Christian & Thomas, 2009). All levels of criminal justice interventions, including reentry, must be gender-responsive, include a holistic perspective of women's lives, and account for the structural and social contexts of reintegration (Bloom, Owen & Covington, 2001; Covington, 2003; O'Brien, 2001; Richie, 2001).

Marginalized Status and Resources

Social Capital. There is difficulty in understanding social capital beyond vague definitions because there are numerous definitions found in the literature. Social capital is about the value of social networks, bonding similar people and bridging between diverse people (Dekker & Uslaner, 2001). Social capital refers to the benefits found in social relationships that help to foster self-esteem, self-efficacy and other traits that help individuals to cope with life stressors (Almedom, 2005). Social capital can be found in friendship networks, churches, schools, civic associations and neighborhoods. A central premise of social capital is the

collective value placed on social networks and their reciprocal relationships. It can be described as the accumulation of social resources, including social networks, social cohesion, and social support (Almedom, 2005). Recognizing that reentry is not solely about individuals but also about the communities to which they return invites comprehensive approaches that increase social capital and collective efficacy. "Concentrated incarceration in impoverished communities has broken families, weakened the social control capacity of parents, eroded economic strength, soured attitudes toward society, and distorted politics; even after reaching a certain level, it has increased rather than decreased crime" (Clear, 2007, p. 5). Issues that stem from incarceration and reentry that affect residents living in high-concentration communities include finances, stigma, identity and relationships (Rose, Michalsen, Wiest, & Fabian, 2008).

Mass incarceration exerts a disproportionate impact on marginalized groups. It is well established that these groups are overrepresented in prisons and among justice-involved populations. Furthermore, when they are released from prison, many of these individuals will reenter social environments that are potentially disruptive to their success (Petersilia, 2003; Travis, 2005; Visher & Travis, 2003). Social capital is the web of social networks in which we all live, and includes relationships with family, peers and community. Individuals who do not have positive supportive relationships, are more likely to engage in criminal activity (Travis, Solomon, & Waul, 2001). Andrews, Bonta and Wormith (2006) identified eight factors associated with rearrest. Two of these factors included association with antisocial people and lack of nurturing family supports. Additionally, pre-prison social disadvantages have been found to be correlated with the "gender pathway" into criminal justice for women (Daly, 1992). Farrall (2005) contends that supportive family relationships (either emotionally or practically) are one "of the most important ingredients of social capital for individuals in western societies" (p. 61).

Alternatively, even the *perception* of support has been found to motivate positive behavior and potentially transform relationships (Martinez, 2009). Because individuals are more likely to desist if influenced by informal social control through familial, vocational and/or community bonds (Petersilia, 2003), support networks are a crucial element of desistance practice. Rather than solely focusing on the healing of individuals, a nuanced approach is needed that will increase competencies while also developing social capital by strengthening access to positive support networks (Farrall, 2002). Building social ties and social capital for justice-involved women correlates with procurement of resources necessary for successful community reintegration (Bernard, 2015). Thus, social capital shapes levels of human capital.

Human Capital. Human capital includes skills, talents, and individual expertise. Studies of the social backgrounds and living conditions of individuals leaving prison have shown empirical evidence of deficiencies in central welfare domains such as work, education, economy and housing with offender populations when compared to general populations (Nilsson, 2003; Skardhamar, 2003). Women with fewer educational achievements, lower self-efficacy, and problems related to employment and financial assistance are significantly more likely to be incarcerated (Salisbury & Van Voorhis, 2009). In comparing samples of justice-involved women, Friestad and Hansen (2010) found that higher deficiencies in welfare (financial, education, employment, mental health and substance abuse) were correlated with lower perceptions of social status. Women report similar unemployment rates of men, and receipt of welfare prior to incarceration at rates nearly four times that of men (Greenfield & Snell, 1999). Although deficit-based, this approach highlights the unequal distributions of resources in society and raises consciousness to the connections between critical social factors and crime.

Employment has been found to increase self-esteem and self-worth (Rose et al, 2008) as well as reduce the risk of recidivism. Stable employment helps establish daily routines, the ability to provide for family, as well as instilling a sense of satisfaction in a job well done (Flower, 2010). Employment can positively affect the desistance process by helping to develop stronger attachments to pro-social supports, thereby fostering behavioral change (Sampson & Laub, 1993).

Women's successful reintegration from prison into the community is contingent, in part, upon their ability to support themselves financially, which is frequently a prerequisite for regaining custody of their children. However, if they were employed before entering jail it was in low-income jobs (Wilson & Anderson, 1997), with 37% of women inmates reporting earning less that $600 per month and 30% receiving welfare assistance prior to their arrest (Greenfield & Snell, 2009). Obtaining full-time employment with sufficient pay to live above the poverty level is a difficult task with low levels of academic attainment, training and experience. Although achieving stability may be a requirement for the success of reentering individuals there are many social barriers to overcome. Reintegration is complex and although many women may vocalize a desire for a successful reintegration process, few actually think they have the capability to desist (Burnett & Maruna, 2004). Burnett and Maruna (2004) posit that desire and intention simply are not enough.

The role of employment in desistance for women is debated. Although data from the 1970s were employed, Uggen and Kuttschnitt (1998) found that employment was not a significant factor in predicting involvement in illegal earnings, but did slightly reduce the risk of arrest for women. Investigating the role of employment in women successfully completing parole, Schram and colleagues (2006) found unemployed women to be more likely to fail parole

and be reincarcerated for a new charge or technical violation. Additionally, O'Brien (2006) found increased self-efficacy and more successful overall outcomes in women who were employed part-time or involved in vocational training. In a mixed-method study addressing gender difference in employment and crime, Giordano and colleagues (2002) found women who were both unmarried and unemployed were more likely to remain criminally involved after incarceration, even though employment stability was not a significant factor in recidivism. They concluded that social bonds formed through quality involvement in more than one prosocial institution potentially made it easier for individuals to change antisocial and criminal behaviors.

Critical to understanding the desistance process is understanding the significance of the relationship between *objective* changes, such as employment or family, and the *subjective* assessment of the value placed on these changes (Farrall, 2002). Building on this notion of behavioral change, Giordano and colleagues (2002) assert there is an intermediate step in the process where individuals create new identities for themselves, and begin to think of themselves in ways which are not congruent with criminal behavior. The social environment, such as employment, serves as a catalyst or change agent causing a turning point or "hook for change" and individuals "latch on" for continued desistance from crime. This reciprocal relationship framework between individual and environment links cognitive shifts and behavioral changes, and reinforces the importance of building processes that sustain lasting change and are more tangible than desire and good intentions. Therefore, environmental influences must be included in a theory of desistance as an individual may make internal subjective changes, but opportunities in the environment must be available for sustained change.

Conceptual Framework

It is well established that most criminal offenders will eventually stop offending (Laub & Sampson, 2001; Maruna & Farrall, 2004; McNeill, 2006); however, what is much less studied or established is *why* or *how* they stop. Desistance from crime is a process. It is poorly defined and understood as the research is fraught with inconsistencies in conceptual and operational definitions (McNeill, 2006). A key issue in desistance research is the "need to better understand the complex interrelationship between social and subjective factors in the desistance process" (Lebel, Burnett, Maruna & Bushway, 2008, p. 153). Many of the theories guiding reintegration are deficit based, account only for individual behavior, and fail to account for environmental influences on behavior. However, there is an interaction between individuals and environments upon release that contributes to the success or failure of community reintegration (Lebel, et al, 2008) for justice involved individuals. The complex desistance process "resides somewhere in the interface between developing personal maturity, changing social bonds associated with certain life transitions, and the individual subjective narrative construction which offenders build around these key events and changes. It is not just the events and changes that matter; it is what these events and changes *mean* to the people involved" (McNeill, 2002, p. 3).

Desistance. Desistance refers to a change in behavioral patterns from involvement in criminal activity to non-offending behavior. This process can vary in several ways. It can be an abrupt change or a slow, gradual decline and can be either early or late in a criminal career (Bushway, Thornberry, & Krohn, 2003). Desistance is defined in two phases; primary and secondary. Primary desistance is simply a crime-free gap at some point during the course of a criminal career. Secondary desistance involves not only the stopping of offending behavior, but also the incorporation of an identity transformation within the subjective state of the offender.

Research has found long-term desistance to involve identifiable and measureable changes in the personal identity of the individual where the ex-offender labels herself as a desister or ex-offender (Giordano, Cernkovich & Rudolph, 2002; Maruna, 2001).

Researchers have recently begun to reexamine the definition of desistance, expanding the definition to include the process in which individuals reach the final state of non-offending. The relationship between age and crime are dominated by three paradigms: informal social control theory, differential association theory, and cognitive/motivational theory (Travis & Visher, 2005). There are two models of desistance that focus specifically on the relationship between age, maturation and criminal activity; ontogenic and sociogenic (Maruna 2001; Travis & Visher, 2005). Ontogenetic or maturational theorists posit that the only significant factor in the process of desistance is age (Glueck & Glueck, 1940; Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990). Sociogenic theorists posit that the social processes are what influence desistance and occur as individuals age or mature, and these include social control, social learning and strain theories (Sampson & Laub, 1993).

Informal social control and life-course theories highlight the importance of marital attachment and job stability as key factors associated with desistance from crime for men (Sampson & Laub, 1993). In the process of building these positive attachments, individuals separate from previous relationships that may have contributed to delinquent acts. Social learning theories hold that the motivation to commit crimes is relatively constant across individuals and that attachment to others and commitment to conventional institutions produce conforming behaviors and lead to desistance (Farrington, 1992; Gottfredson & Hirshi, 1990; Warr, 2002). The rational choice theory, which is not generally supported (Snodgrass, Blokland, Haviland, Nieuwbeerta, & Nagin, 2001; Travis, Western, & Redburn, 2014), puts forth that

individuals weigh the costs and benefits of criminal and noncriminal opportunities and if negative consequences are found to be associated, individuals will not choose criminal acts. However, there are many debates regarding whether these apply to women since their sense of self, and self-worth are developed when actions lead to connections with others (Covington & Bloom, 2006; Covington & Surrey, 1997; Richie, 1996). Richie (1996), for example posits that women will often participate in crimes in order to preserve the affection of partners who are often violent or threatening. Covington and Bloom (2006) posit that desire for intimacy and connection is the guiding principle of growth for girls and women, therefore connection and relational needs should be a central theme for community reintegration.

The most fully developed theory of desistance includes a four-part "theory of cognitive transformation" (Giordano, Cernkovich & Rudolph, 2002). Emerging from symbolic interactionism and referring to the motivational models of desistance, this theory focuses on specific changes in personal cognition (Giordano et al, 2002) and self-identity (Burnett, 2004). Narrative theories, which emerged from qualitative research, stress the significance of subjective changes in the individual's self-identity. Most adults make sense of their lives through stories that provide their lives with purpose and meaning and/or justification for chosen paths (McAdams, 2013). Narrative research methodology allows for the possibility of examining the cognitive mediators between environmental influences and individual behavior (Maruna, 2001) as these self-narratives shape and guide individuals' future behavior in ways that are congruent with their created stories (McAdams, 1985). In order to explain cessation of criminal behavior, this theoretical approach emphasizes the importance of shifts in offenders' identities (Vaughn, 2007). Desistance theories must adequately measure these variations. The measurement of desistance should incorporate the nuances of this complex process rather than measure some

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arbitrary cut-off point (Bushway, Thornberry, & Krohn, 2003). Narrative studies offer a way to measure this change process.

Women and Desistance. Desistance (and its intricacies) is the least studied and understood concept in criminology (Farrall, 2002; Maruna, 2001, Maruna & Farrall, 2004). The negligible amount that is known has been gathered in studies with predominately male samples. Although women leaving prison are likely to have different and more complex needs than men (O'Brien, 2001; Gelsthorpe et al, 2007), gender differences in desistance are debated (Friestad & Hansen, 2010; McIvor, Murray & Jamieson, 2004; Sommers, Baskin, & Fagen, 1994; Uggen & Kruttschnitt, 1998). However, the social and economic marginality of women has been found to make the effects of imprisonment even more devastating than for men (Severance, 2004). Maruna (2001) found the narratives of women in his sample (only ten) to have only slight differences in comparison to the men. However, he went on to hypothesize that additional stigma attached to female offenders as a result of patriarchal societies is greater than for males. Not only must they cope with gender and sexual discrimination but they also have higher rates of substance abuse and trauma experiences, and lack of educational and vocational training (Belknap, 2001; Bloom, Owen & Covington, 2004; Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998; Daly, 1994).

Community reentry is challenging for both men and women, however, the intensity, multiplicity and specificity of their needs are very different (Covington, 2003). When comparing men and women with equally high levels of socioeconomic adversity, both groups estimated their social status similar to those in the general public without adversity, and women estimated their social status even higher than men (Friestad & Hansen, 2010). However, Friestad and Hansen (2010) identified a critical gender difference when they found that males had significant

relationships between anticipated desistance and welfare deficiencies, age, self-efficacy, social

status and previous incarcerations. None of these variables were significant for women. An

additional gender difference amongst offenders is the correlation between relationships and

criminal activity (Chesney-Lind, 1997; Owen & Bloom, 1995). After successfully transitioning

from prison to community women identified helpful factors that included relationships with

people who cared and listened, other supportive women, and safe environments (Galbraith,

1998). Furthermore, McIvor and colleagues (2004) argue for gender differences associated with

desistance as "a variety of factors may influence decisions to desist and these factors may differ

in their salience between men and women" (p. 187). Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that

reintegration into the community and the desistance process would not be gender-neutral.

It is not well understood how transitioning individuals fit into or restructure the

communities (Uggen, Manza & Thompson, 2006). When women were asked to identify

community risks for criminal justice involvement, these critical, gender-responsive components

were acknowledged: housing, physical and psychological safety, education, job training and

opportunities, community-based substance abuse treatment, economic support, positive female

role models, and community response to violence against women (Bloom et al, 2003). Because

gender is socially constructed, it is "about the reality of women's lives and the contexts in which

women live" (Covington, 2003, p. 70). Richie (2001) asserts, "The challenges women face must

be met with expanded opportunity and a more thoughtful criminal justice policy. This would

require a plan for reinvestment in low-income communities in this country that centers around

women's needs for safety and self-sufficiency" (p. 386). Covington (2002) states, "The gender

differences inherent in all of these issues – invisibility, stereotypes, pathways to crime, addiction,

abuse, homelessness, and relationships – need to be addressed at all levels of criminal justice" (p.

4). Our understanding of justice-involved women and designed interventions must be rooted in the social context in which they live.

Desistance and Personal Resources

Hope. Hope is defined as the perceived capacity to find routes to desired goals (pathways thinking), in conjunction with the motivations to use those routes (agency thinking) (Snyder, Anderson, Holleran, Irving, Sigmon, Yoshinobu, Gibbs, Langelle & Harney, 1991). Hope has been found to be an important predictor of successful abstention from crime in males after controlling for other well-known predictors such as age, previous criminal records and problems with drugs and relationships (Burnett & Maruna, 2004). Individuals with higher hope have consistently been found to display beneficial outcomes in all arenas of life (Snyder et al, 1991). Additionally, hope has been linked to a lower number of social problems experienced by individuals after release and was negatively correlated to the probability of reconviction (Lebel, et al, 2008).

A person with an adequate sense of hope and self-efficacy attempting to *go straight* may take advantage of positive social opportunities such as employment or marital attachment (Lebel, et al, 2008). Burnett and Maruna (2004) posit that hope plays an even more critical role in *going straight* than self-efficacy, as hope covers both "the will and the ways" (p. 395). However, they also found that as the number of problems individuals needed to contend with increased, the impact of hope shrank. Therefore, both elements may be crucial as individuals with self-efficacy will be more likely to make attempts at modifying their environment and demonstrate perseverance when encountering setbacks (Bandura, 1982).

Self-Efficacy. Perceived self-efficacy is the belief that individuals possess regarding their capabilities to influence events affecting their lives (Bandura, 1997). Lloyd and Serin (2012)

found the risk of re-offending to be significantly correlated with agency beliefs, in that higher agency was related to a lower risk of re-offending. Self-efficacy has been tied to educational strengths and negatively associated with prison admissions and risk factors such as financial and employment deficits (Salisbury & VanVoorhis, 2009), as well as increased earnings by illegal means (Uggen & Kruttschnitt, 1998). It therefore may be a key element for the pathway to desistance.

Self-efficacy influences how individuals judge their capacity to perform specific tasks. It is important to note that numerous previous studies have found a sense of self-efficacy a critical component for individuals to "make good" (Maruna, 2001; Burnett & Maruna, 2004; Rumgay, 2004). Maruna (2001) found narratives of active offenders to be five times more likely to lack language of agency when compared with narratives of desisting offenders. Perceived self-efficacy was a central theme for life stories of desisting offenders as they had a stronger sense of agency and of being in control of their life than those who failed to desist. Maruna (2001) posits that individuals who are successful in "making good" have discovered agency in enacting choices which enable them to resist and overcome criminogenic structural pressures. Additionally, Burnett and Maruna (2004) found a strong correlation between perceived sense of control over one's future and subsequent success at desistance.

In order to conquer the impact of powerlessness, one must possess confidence in her/his abilities and actions (Gutierrez, 1999). This author argues that when working with women to change their environment and situations, as well as any inquiry into the desistance process must account for the importance of power and powerlessness; as Gutierrez (1990) found this to be integral to the experience of women of color. Social problems have been found to be caused and/or exacerbated by the internal subjective state of individuals being released from prison

(Lebel, et al, 2008). In order for justice-involved women to maintain personal changes, regulate the events in their lives and successfully navigate the desistance pathway, an optimistic sense of personal efficacy will be required. The internal mindset and/or individual personal factors of justice-involved women may be important components of desistance however they are not sufficient. In addition to the internal cognitive change, external social events need to take place that encourage and sustain desistance. The reasons that individuals are able to desist from criminal behavior are coupled with issues of "structure and agency" and therefore both are needed (Vaughn, 2007).

Desistance and Environmental Factors

"We got evicted, and basically lost everything. We were living on the streets. Nowhere to sleep, nothing to eat………..There was no where [sic] to sleep. I was tired all the time. I wouldn't wish homelessness on anybody. That's why I think I help anybody I can in anyway [sic] I can. I will do without to help someone else." - Respondent #140

In the United States, race, place, and crime are inextricably linked (Peterson & Krivo, 2010). As individuals are recycled between prison and community the social disorganization of poor, disadvantaged communities is increased which results in higher crime rates in those communities (Petersillia, 2001). It is recognized that both individual changes and environmental changes are necessary. Desistance cannot be considered outside of the social context in which it occurs and not all environments are equally supportive of the desistance process.

Community and Poverty. Poverty rates are core measures of economic disadvantage in neighborhoods. Residents of marginalized neighborhoods have been found to have higher levels of depression and lower levels of trust than residents of more advantaged neighborhoods (Ross, 2000). Neighborhoods with signs of decreased social control and characteristics of disorder including noise, litter, vandalism, graffiti, drug use, and trouble with neighbors can negatively impact residents, even if they are not directly victimized (Ross, 2000). Communities with high

levels of disadvantage experience higher levels of violence, regardless of the race of the residents (Peterson & Krivo, 2010).

Social scientists have examined the cumulative effects of racial isolation and class subordination on inner-city African-Americans (Lewis, 1961; Wilson, 1987). Wilson (1987) argues that low-income communities became disadvantaged not solely by economic stagnation but as a result of profound structural changes. Marginalized communities suffer primarily from joblessness which is reinforced by social isolation. Factors associated with social dislocation are complex, rooted in historical discrimination and require comprehensive economic and social reform. Wilson (1987) posits that as neighborhoods experience an increase in unemployment and a decrease in the level of community organization or institutional investment, the urban poor become trapped, stop believing in their ability to overcome or succeed and are more likely to turn to illegal or deviant activities. Prisons became a place to incapacitate individuals who would otherwise be on the street and deter others (Western, 2006). The impact of mass incarceration shapes the lives of women, especially Black women, as high levels of incarceration leads to the absence of young men in the community (Travis, 2005), as well as a unique stratification within African American communities (Western, 2006). Community reintegration is complex and simply deciding to move away from criminal lifestyles is not sufficient. If the community environment is antagonistic to individual goals, avoiding crime will prove even more challenging.

Desistance and Narratives

Measuring desistance, like any on-going process, is difficult and frequently disputed (Kazemian, 2007; Laub & Sampson, 2001; Maruna, 2001; Piquero, Farrington & Blumstein, 2003). Although research into desistance has increased over the past 20 years, most explanations

remain exploratory. However, recent studies are moving towards a dynamic measurement,

(Bottoms, et al, 2004; Laub & Sampson, 2001; Maruna, 2001) and offer alternatives to

recidivism studies.

   Narratives. *Narrative* knowing is what we learn from stories (McAdams (2013).

McAdams (2013) posits that human beings are storytellers by nature and storytelling is

"sensemaking" (p. 55). Storytellers convey insight into why people engage in certain behaviors

as stories encode human intention (McAdams, 2013). Therefore, we look to narratives when we

seek to understand why a person does something. Stigmatized identities and deficit-based

narratives will not empower justice-involved women to create positive change in their lives

(Herrschaft, Veysey, Tubman-Carbone & Christian, 2009). Qualitative studies often reveal

narratives that include: poverty-stricken backgrounds, lifelong traumatic and abusive events,

serious mental illness and coping with self-medicating behaviors, lack of social supports,

dysfunctional intimate relationships, and difficulty providing for dependent children (Salisbury

& Van Voorhis, 2009).   These narratives highlight a multitude of additional issues faced by

justice-involved women related to race, class and gender which Bloom (1996) calls "triple

jeopardy." Women involved in the justice system need to recognize an opportunity to claim an

alternative self-identity in order to be successful in desistance (Rumgay, 2004).

   Redemptive Self. Most adults have unique life stories to tell and will make sense of

their lives through these stories. Stories provide lives with purpose and meaning, as well as

provide justification and motivation for the lives we have created and chose to lead. This story is

called the *redemptive* self (McAdams, 2013). Redemption is "a deliverance from suffering to a

better world" by transforming negative to positive or "putting the past behind" (McAdams, 2013,

pg. xiv). The concept of the *redemptive self* has been found to be an important contribution to

understanding secondary desistance as it depicts the narrator as exhibiting some control over their lives (*enhanced agency),* demonstrating a stronger sense of connection to others or community (*enhanced communion*), and possessing the desire to "give back" to society (*ultimate concern*) (Maruna, 2001). Additionally, Maruna (2001) posits that in order to desist from crime, justice-involved individuals "need to develop a coherent, prosocial identity for themselves……they need to account for and understand their criminal pasts (why they did what they did), and they also need to understand why they are 'not like that anymore'" (p. 7).

Maruna (2001) describes *making good* as the process of willful, cognitive distortion of finding reason and purpose in the bleakest of life histories, involving self-reconstruction. Comparing the narratives of persisters and desisters, he found that persistent offenders were less likely to voice control over their lives than desisters, and more likely for their lives to be determined by unpleasant pasts or to be victims of circumstance. In contrast, desisters perceived themselves as empowered to make changes, did not blame themselves for past mistakes and were able to *make something good* from their past difficulties. Those able to *go straight* were significantly more care-oriented, and focused on promoting the next generation as they sought to give something back to society as a sign of gratitude.

There is evidence that individuals who are successful in making good have "generative activities" that play a part in the individual's ability to create an alternative identity. The development of their new identity is what allowed them to accomplish "what she was always meant to do" (Maruna, 2001, p. 87). Identity has been found to be a strong predictor of desistance (Rocque, Pasick, & Paternoster, 2016). Although theories of desistance focusing on identity change have been empirically supported, there are some slight differences in how this occurs as well as the order of the identity transformation.

Identity Theory. There is much empirical evidence to support the argument that narratives and identity change are highly significant to the overall desistance process (Giordano, Cernkovich & Holland, 2003; Maruna, 2001; Paternoster & Bushway, 2009; Serin & Lloyd, 2009; Vaughn, 2007). Paternoster and Bushway (2009), Maruna (2001), and Giordano (2002) add to the knowledge base of identity theory, while disagreeing on some of the nuances. Maruna (2001) believes that rather than "knifing off" or "discarding" past criminal identities (Paternoster & Bushway, 2009), individuals actually reinterpret past identities into their current self-identity. However, Paternoster and Bushway (2009) disagree that "Willful cognitive distortions of the past aligning with the present" will be sufficient for desistance (p. 1107).

An additional debate includes the timing of these transformational events. Identity theory hypothesizes that opportunities or "hooks" (Giordano et al, 2002) occur *after*, and as a result of the identity change. Conversely, cognitive transformation posits that opportunities *preclude* the identity transformation, thereby fostering the replacement self. Regardless, the necessary internal changes will be understood in the narratives of justice-involved individuals and aid in our understanding of how individuals internalize criminal identities and create new pro-social identities for desistance. The labels of offender, criminal, felon or convict creates social exclusion (LeBel, 2012), which impacts the self-esteem of women and significantly affects their ability to reintegrate successfully (Pogrebin & Dodge, 2001). Justice-involved women need to create new, healthy narratives for themselves that incorporate their strengths and potential for change (Herrschaft et al, 2009).

A common theme explored and discussed in most identity theories is turning events. After experiencing life events or stressors, many individuals will experience a transformation marking a milestone or turning point (Tebes & Perkins, 1988). Turning points characterized by

Tebes and colleagues (2004) are emblematic of cognitive transformation, which is: (1) the recognition that coping with adversity has resulted in the emergence of new and desirable opportunities that previously were not possible, unavailable, outside of awareness, or not fully understood; and, (2) the reevaluation of the experience from one that was primarily traumatic or threatening in meaning to one that is growth-promoting (p. 771). However, these turning event experiences may impact individuals differently, as the event may result in one person desisting and an escalation in criminal behavior in another (Maruna, 2001). A potential difference between transitions is the involvement of religion. Giordano (2002) found women's transitions were more likely to involve religion than men's transitions. Therefore, these events need to be assessed within the context of the narrative as they are not universal.

Theoretical Framework

> I'm no longer accepting the things I cannot change………. I'm changing the things I cannot accept." -- Angela Davis

Empowerment. Many women enter prison disenfranchised and powerless in developing healthy, productive lives. Having failed to develop the basic social competencies in childhood, some women enter adulthood powerless (Wilson & Anderson, 1997). Powerlessness leads to denial of valued identities, social roles, and social resources that can limit self-determination (Pinderhughes, 1989; Solomon, 1976), as well as cause individuals to believe themselves to be deficient. Empowerment theory is based on a conflict model that assumes society consists of separate groups possessing different levels of power and control over resources. Empowerment encompasses feminist theory and efficacy theory, as well as ideas from political psychology. Empowerment theory complements desistance in that it integrates both individual change and societal change while also incorporating a strength-based perspective.

The foundation of the empowerment model in social work practice posits that social problems stem not from individual deficits, but rather from the failure of the society to meet the needs of all its members (Gutierrez, 1990). Empowerment practice in social work emerged from efforts to develop more effective and responsive services for women and people of color (Gutierrez, GlenMaye, & DeLois 1995) and includes a process of increasing personal, interpersonal, or political power so that individuals can take action to improve their life situations (Gutierrez, 1990). Thus, the goal of effective empowerment practice, in addition to social justice (Gutierrez & Lewis, 1999), is not simply coping or adaptation, but rather to increase the actual power of the client or community so that action can be taken to prevent or change the social problems (Gutierrez, et al, 1995).

Working with diverse women with histories of trauma, poverty, and societal oppression requires practice-based approaches that will increase personal and collective empowerment (East & Roll, 2015). Empowerment theory contextualizes human problems in a sociopolitical context that is oppressive to those most marginalized in society (Robbins, Chatterjee, & Canda, 2012). Because marginalized women are most represented in correctional systems, intervention models that take into consideration the complexities of gender, racism, economic oppression poverty and trauma (East & Roll, 2015) are needed.

Similar to empowerment practice, desistance-focused practice integrates both individual change and social change. Empowerment practice addresses three conditions with women: 1) alienation from self, maintained by stereotypes and objectification; 2) the double-bind situation of women, or contradictory societal messages about women; and 3) institutional and structural sexism (GlenMaye, 1998). Current theories of criminology, such as social control and rational choice, reflect the *individual fallacy perspective* and place responsibility solely on the individual

to correct identified *deficits*. In contrast, empowerment and desistance seek to place equal emphasis on both the individual and environment for supporting the process. Furthermore, empowerment and desistance are both a process as well as outcomes. Therefore, this author posits that empowerment is a crucial component in desistance.

Research Questions and Related Hypotheses

The following research questions and hypotheses are proposed:

1. How do personal resources (hope, empowerment, and self-efficacy) and environmental factors (neighborhood disorder and child poverty) relate to agency for desistance, anticipated desistance, and the redemptive self in justice-involved women?

   Hypothesis #1a: Justice-involved women with higher personal resources (hope, empowerment, and self-efficacy) and lower environmental disorder (neighborhood disorder and child poverty) will have a higher redemptive self.

   Hypothesis #1b: Justice-involved women with higher personal resources (hope, empowerment, self-efficacy) and lower environmental disorder (neighborhood disorder and childhood poverty) will have a higher agency for desistance.

   Hypothesis #1c: Justice-involved women with higher personal resources (hope, empowerment, and self-efficacy) and lower environmental disorder (neighborhood disorder and childhood poverty) will have higher anticipated desistance.

2. How effectively will self-identity (persistent offender and career criminal) and marginalization (ethnicity, poverty and education) mediate the effect of personal resources and environmental factors on the redemptive self, agency for desistance and anticipated desistance for justice-involved women?

Hypothesis #2a: The level of negative identities and marginalized status of justice-involved women will mediate the relationships between agency for desistance and the personal resources and environmental factors.

Hypothesis #2b: The level of negative identities and marginalized status of justice-involved women will mediate the relationships between anticipated desistance and the personal resources and environmental factors.

Hypothesis #2c: The level of negative identities and marginalized status of justice-involved women will mediate the relationships between redemptive self and the personal resources and environmental factors.

3. What other factors will be related with personal resources and environmental factors and the redemptive self, agency for desistance and anticipated desistance for justice-involved women?

Hypothesis #3a: Justice-involved women with higher incarceration rates will have lower agency for desistance, anticipated desistance and redemptive self.

Hypothesis #3b: Justice-involved women with earlier police contact will have lower agency for desistance, anticipated desistance and redemptive self.

Hypothesis #3c: Justice-involved women who are better able to visualize their future positively without criminal activity will have higher agency for desistance, anticipated desistance and redemptive self.

Hypothesis #3d: Justice-involved women with higher anticipated effort into being law-abiding will have higher agency for desistance, anticipated desistance and redemptive self.

Hypothesis #3e: Justice-involved women who reported increased effort on previous

attempts to go straight will have lower agency for desistance, anticipated desistance

and redemptive self.

Figure 1.1 diagrams the hypothesized model.

Figure 1.1: Diagram of hypothesized model.
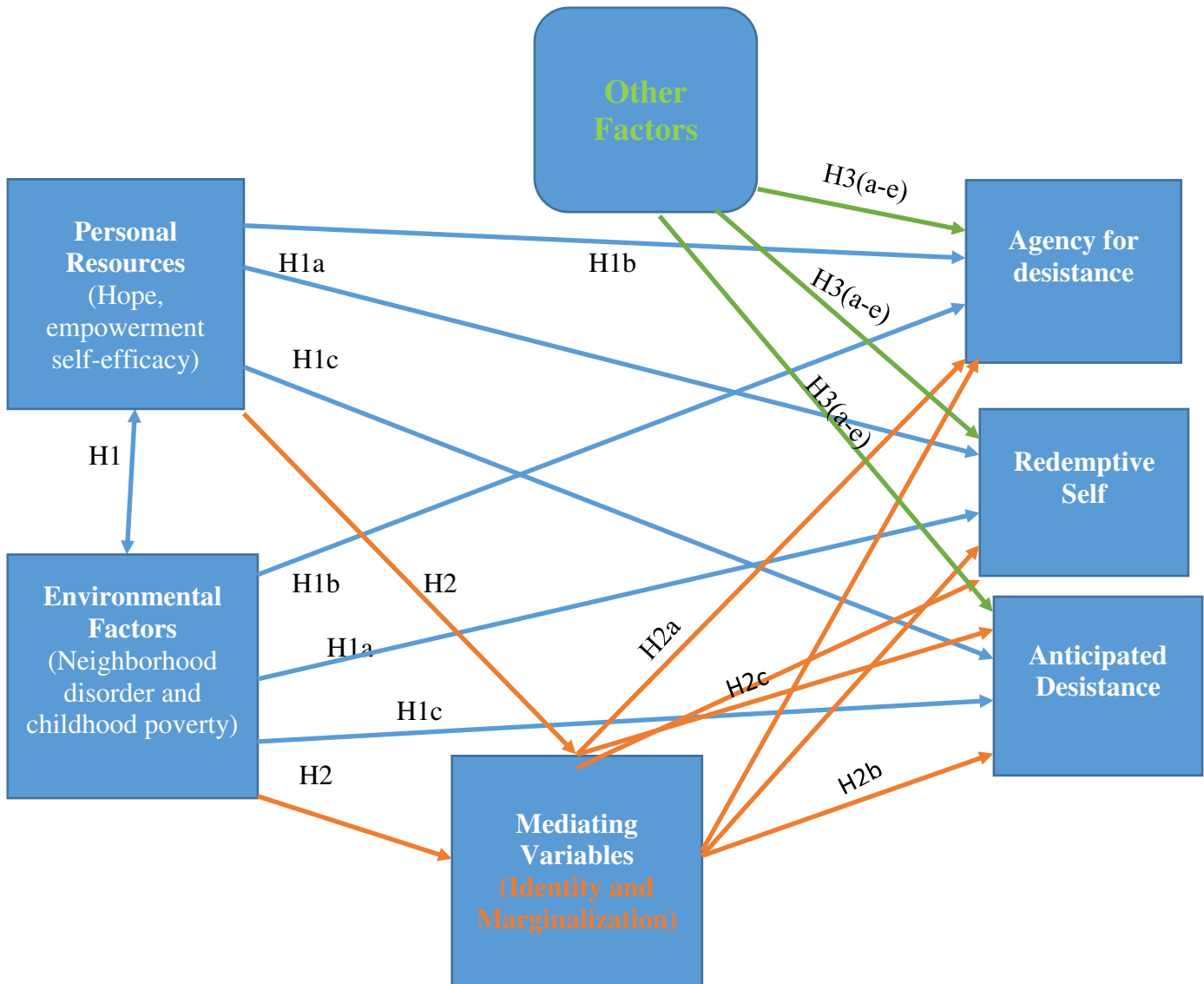
Summary

The current limited research on personal resources and environmental factors that influence successful reintegration and the desistance process with justice-involved women exposes a gap in the literature. This study was designed to address that gap by surveying and analyzing what personal resources and environmental factors are associated with agency for desistance, anticipated desistance and redemptive self among incarcerated women. Guided by social work and criminal justice literatures, the theoretical and conceptual frameworks of empowerment and desistance were used. This study has the potential to contribute to social work and criminal justice knowledge bases by expanding on the few studies on justice-involved women, community reintegration and the desistance process.

Chapter Two: Methodology

A cross-sectional survey was used to gather information from justice involved women in a state correctional facility in the northeast region of the United States. This chapter describes the research methodology. The following information is presented: (a) rationale for the research design, (b) sampling methods, (c) instrument, (d) data collection, (e) data analysis, (f) verification of reliability and validity, and (g) ethical considerations in this study.

Study Design and Rationale

This study used a cross-sectional survey design to gather information from justice-involved women about personal resources and environmental factors, agency for desistance, anticipated desistance and the redemptive self. According to Rubin and Babbie (2005), cross-sectional designs are appropriate for exploratory studies assessing the prevalence of a specific phenomenon, problem, attitude or issue and to identify relationships among hypothesized variables. This dissertation draws from identity, feminist and narrative theories and sought to clarify correlations of the variables suggested in the literature to impact community reintegration for justice-involved women. A range of control variables were utilized to isolate the influence of selected variables on participants' *redemptive self*, agency for desistance and anticipated desistance.

The study employed Dillman, Smyth, and Christian's (2009) survey design in constructing the instrument as well as to reduce error and maximize response rate. A traditional paper survey was chosen due to the lack of availability for computer-based surveys within the correctional facility. Additionally, since women are required to complete multiple assessments throughout the incarceration experience, including substance abuse and risk and needs assessments, as well as written requests for services within the institution, participants are

familiar and comfortable with completing questionnaires. Employing a self-administered survey in a face-to-face group session with incarcerated women was appropriate for collecting the data as it helped reduce the number of missing responses and allowed for the opportunity to clarify any confusion that respondents may have encountered. (see Appendix A for copy of information sheet).   Monetary incentives were not permitted by the Department of Correction and therefore not provided.

      Survey. The survey consisted of two parts; a closed-item survey questionnaire and a written life-interview consisting of four open-ended questions to measure the independent and dependent variables; personal resources and environmental factors, agency for desistance, anticipated desistance and redemptive self. Both parts combined required approximately one and a half to two hours to complete.

Sampling

      Setting and Participants. The institution utilized for this research was the only women's prison in this northeastern state and serves as both jail and prison (housing women both sentenced and pre-trial). Additionally, the researcher was employed within the Department of Correction and had access to facilities within the state. With new admissions and discharges, the population of incarcerated women changes daily and can range between 1,050 and 1,200. The criteria for selection in this study were any woman over the age of eighteen, who was housed within the institution and not serving a life sentence or residing in long-term restricted housing. Because processes associated with desistance cannot be measured on those just beginning criminal careers, an additional exclusion criterion was women incarcerated for the first time.

      Sampling Plan. The institution generates an alphabetized list of all current residents on a daily basis. Using a table of random numbers with a random start, the researcher systematically

selected every 40th female from the sampling frame in groups of approximately 30. This process

was duplicated nine times over five months with sampling frames that changed daily to include

all women, until target sample size was reached. Ultimately, 286 women were randomly

selected, 185 women agreed to participate, and a total of 150 incarcerated women completed the

survey. A power analysis using Cohen's table for effect size indicated a minimum sample size

of 128 respondents was necessary for a .05 level of significance and moderate effect size of .5

(Cohen's *d*) for ANOVA's with 2 *df's,* or 107 respondents for multiple correlation with up to

eight predictors with a medium effect size. Therefore, this sample size assumes a confidence

level of 95% with a Type I error of .05 and Type II error of .20 with a moderate effect size.

Expert review. Experts in correctional health care were recruited to provide feedback

and input in order to enhance content validity of the survey and life history instruments. These

six experts were current employees of the university correctional health care system and working

within the facility. Once this feedback was incorporated into the instruments, a pilot test was

conducted to assess approximate time and receive feedback from justice-involved women.

Pilot testing. In May 2015, two groups of women housed in the intake/assessment unit

were randomly selected for the pre-test. Retrospective interviews were helpful in adapting

reading and comprehension levels for the population as well as identifying errors previously

undetected. Initially, four women completed the instruments, one choosing not to complete the

written narrative. The provided feedback was incorporated into a new version of the

questionnaire and helped the researcher better clarify instructions as well as structure the writing

prompts for the concluding pilot-test group of four women. The pre-test sample included five

Caucasian and three African-American women, four sentenced and four unsentenced. The

educational levels of the pretest sample varied; one had only an eighth-grade education, and one

had completed 11th grade. The remaining women were high school graduates, of which four reported some college. Half of this sample of eight had been previously incarcerated five to seven times, three reported two to four previous incarcerations and one woman had previously been incarcerated more than eight times. These pretested women were not included in the final sample selection process for the research.

Instrument

Survey. The final version of the survey included 133 questions presented in a manner suggested by Dillman and colleagues (2009), with most salient questions in the beginning and demographics at the end. The survey was constructed of both measures from the literature and items constructed specifically for this study and required approximately 30 – 45 minutes to complete. The five preexisting and validated scales included: 1) Personal Agency for Desistance Questionnaire (Lloyd & Serin, 2012); 2) Empowerment scale (Rogers, Ralph, & Salzer, 2010); 3) Perceived Neighborhood Disorder scale (Ross & Mirowsky, 1999); 4) Self-efficacy scale (Sherer, Maddux, Mercadante, Prentice-Dunn, Jacobs, & Rogers, 1982); and 5) Adult Hope scale (Snyder et al, 1991). Psychometric properties of each of these instruments will be discussed below.

The survey began with the measure for anticipated desistance and asked participants to estimate their chances of avoiding crime upon release. The second question was a contingency question, as it prompted respondents (erroneously included in the sample selection) to identify themselves as first time offenders, who would then be thanked for their time and released to return to their housing unit. The vast majority of first-time offenders were excluded in sampling selection, however, women who had been incarcerated for many years, albeit their first incarceration, were assigned identification numbers that were much lower than numbers assigned

to new admits and therefore not overtly recognizable as first-time offenders within the alphabetized list. This question asked participants how much effort they had exerted into 'going straight' and avoiding crime on previous discharges. This excluded an additional eleven respondents who had agreed to participate from completing the survey.

Identity measures included questions to assess how strongly they identified with persistent offender, and if the woman they were *meant to be* included the label of career criminal. Participants were asked several questions regarding their past and future criminal activity, including: age at first arrest, number of previous incarcerations, length of criminal career, how frequently they were able to visualize their future positively without criminal activity, and the level of effort they anticipated into being a law-abiding citizen. Social capital measures included the support they felt they received while incarcerated, frequency of visitation and amount of pro-social supports. When the neighborhood disorder scale was completed, participants were asked to identify the zip code and/or the "name" of the neighborhood which they assessed in the scale, and to identify the racial composition. Demographic questions included age, ethnicity, income, employment, marital status and if they had children.

In addition to the closed-item survey questionnaire, the *redemptive self* was measured using a modified version of McAdams (1993) Life Story Interview. In an effort to promote a natural and comfortable setting, as well as encourage descriptive details, the written narrative was provided by participants in the form of a letter (or "Kite") to their best friend. Kite is the commonly used term that is assigned to the unsanctioned passing of notes between incarcerated women. Each participant was asked to write a detailed account of a "peak" experience or high point, a "nadir" experience or low point, and a "turning point" in their life. The final open-ended question asked participants to describe in detail where they saw themselves in ten years. The

writing structure included one lined sheet of paper per question and outlined the detailed sections to include in the written narrative, such as who was in the scene, what led up to the scene, what they were thinking and/or feeling during the scene, how the scene ended, and how this one scene fit into their life story.

Both the survey and life story narratives were provided simultaneously and women varied in their approach to completing both instruments. Many began writing the narrative scripts immediately after directions and clarifications were provided. Others would switch between the two instruments until completed. The quantity and completion time of the narratives varied greatly, ranging from twenty minutes to 120 minutes. (see Appendix B for copy of survey instrument).

Independent variables/Personal Resources

Hope. In this study, cognitive appraisal of goal-related capabilities and two interrelated components of agency and pathways were measured using The Adult Hope scale (Snyder et al, 1991). The 12-item scale with 2 subscales for agency and pathways used an 8-point Likert-type scale ranging from *definitely false* to *definitely true* to measure "a positive motivational state that is based on an interactively derived sense of successful (a) agency (goal directed energy) and (b) pathways (planning to meet goals)" (Snyder, et al, p. 287). Reliability of the instrument has been strong with Cronbach alphas from .74 to .84 and test-retest correlations of .80 or higher at 10-week and greater intervals.

Empowerment. Subjective feelings of empowerment were measured using the Empowerment Scale. The 28-item instrument included subscales in domains of self-esteem-self-efficacy, perceived power-powerlessness, optimism and control over the future, community activism and righteous anger used a 4-point Likert scale. Cronbach's alpha suggests a high level

of internal consistency with an alpha of .82. This measure of empowerment was developed from the perspective of consumer activists and previously used with homeless, mentally ill and adolescent populations (Rogers, Ralph, & Salzer, 2010).

Self-efficacy. Generalized self-efficacy, including (a) willingness to initiate behavior, (b) willingness to expend effort in completing the behavior, and (c) persistence in the face of adversity was measured using The Sherer Self-Efficacy scale (Sherer et al, 1982). The 23-item scale consisted of two subscales, general self-efficacy and social self-efficacy with adequate reliability (Cronbach a = .86 and .71, respectively) and measures expectancies in social skills or vocational competence. This measure has been previously used with individuals with mental illness, persons living with HIV, adolescents in immigrant families and also with Spanish samples. Respondents answered questions using a 3-point Likert scale ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. Higher scores indicated higher self-efficacy expectations.

Human Capital. Human capital was defined as economic value and employment skills and was measured with three questions. These included their employment and residency status prior to incarceration, and the amount of monthly income earned through illegal means.

Social Support. Social support was defined as the networks of social supports and was measured with three questions. These included their perception of level of support while incarcerated, the frequency of visitation, and the amount of pro-social supports in their home community. ***Pro-social supports.*** The amount of pro-social support was measured with one question that asked respondents to evaluate the level of peers in the community who were involved in criminal activity, and reverse coded.

Independent variables/Environmental factors

      Disordered Neighborhoods. Women's perception of order and disorder in childhood neighborhoods was measured using The Ross-Mirowsky Perceived Neighborhood Disorder scale (1999).   Neighborhood disorder refers to conditions and activities, major and minor, criminal and noncriminal, that residents perceive to be signs of the breakdown of social order. The index measured physical signs of disorder such as graffiti, vandalism, and abandoned buildings as well as social signs such as crime, people hanging out, drinking and using drugs. Women were asked to measure the neighborhoods in which they resided for the majority of their childhood using this 14-item Likert-type scale. The alpha reliability of the disorder scale is .916. All items were scored so that a high score indicated disorder.

      Childhood Poverty. Childhood poverty was measured with two questions related to the use of Section-8 housing and TANIF by parents during the respondent's childhood.

Dependent Variables

      Agency for Desistance. Perception of agency specifically toward desistance was measured using the Personal Agency for Desistance Questionnaire, a 12-item questionnaire created and used previously by Lloyd and Serin (2012). Respondents were asked to respond to questions regarding their sense of control over criminal activity and skills or supports they have acquired to support a crime-free lifestyle, on a seven-point scale ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*.

      Anticipated Desistance. Self-reported intentions to *go straight* or to continue in crime was measured using a 4-point Likert scale to the single question regarding the offenders' perception of their chances to successfully avoid crime in the future, as previously used by Friestad and Hansen (2010).

Redemptive Self. Narratives were measured with a modified version of McAdams' Life Story Interview. These narratives were content-coded by three independent coders and scored zero for the lack of redemption, and one for inclusion of redemption. Once redemption was coded, additional points could be earned for additional components of enhanced agency, enhanced communion and/or ultimate concern.

Mediating Variables

Identity. Identity was measured with two questions. How strongly they agreed with the label of persistent offender, and if they considered the identity of career criminal as the *woman they were meant to be*.

Ethnicity. Participants self-identified as White, African-American, Latina, Asian, or mixed.

Current Poverty. Experiences of poverty prior to incarceration were measured with the use of poverty proxies such as receiving cash assistance, Section-8 housing, Women and Children (WIC), food stamps or Social Security Income.

Education. Participants were asked to identify their level of education from "I haven't finished high school yet" to "I graduated from college."

Control Variables

The three control variables utilized in the regression analysis included age, length of criminal career, and marital status.

Age. Participants provided their current age.

Length of criminal career. Participants reported the total number of years and months they had been incarcerated over their lifetime. The variable "length of criminal career" was calculated from the age they were first stopped by police and arrested and their age.

Marital status. Respondents marital status was measured with six options ranging from *single, never married,* to *committed relationship-not living together.*

Additional Variables

Age at first arrest. How old the respondents were when first stopped by police and arrested.

Motherhood. Participants were asked whether they had children.

Likelihood of reunification. Using a five-point scale ranging from *not likely at all* to *very likely*, respondents reported their perception of the likelihood their minor children would live with them upon release.

Previous incarcerations. Respondents reported the number of times they had been previously incarcerated.

Previous effort to go straight. Respondents were asked about previous discharges from prison, and the amount of effort they felt they exerted into "going straight" and avoiding crime ranging from *no effort at all* to *100% effort.*

Law-abiding citizen. Using a five-point scale ranging from *no effort at all* to *100% effort*, respondents were asked to rate their anticipated level of effort into being a "law-abiding citizen" in the future.

Ability to visualize future. Respondents were asked about the frequency of visualizing themselves in the future living a happy, healthy life that did not include any criminal activity. The four-point scale ranged from *always* to *never*.

Spirituality. Respondents were asked about the likelihood they would pray to God (higher power) when going through a difficult or stressful situation, as well as seek support from

clergy or church members. These two questions used a five-point scale ranging from *not likely at all* to *very likely.*

Data Collection

After securing permission from the University of Connecticut's (UConn) Institutional Review Board (IRB# H14-227) in October, 2014, permission was requested of the Department of Correction (DOC) to conduct research with incarcerated females in their care. Permission from DOC was granted in April 2015. Recruitment included two potential points of contact with respondents, including notification of selection followed by a reminder notice for non-responsive participants. See Appendix F for materials sent to selected women.

Because data collection occurred in group settings, sample selection was completed in groups of 30. The first random sample of 30 women was selected in mid-May 2015, using a table of random numbers for a starting point and selecting every 40th individual from the daily population list. This process was repeated nine times between May and September 2015 utilizing the same method. The designated individuals were notified of selection via institutional mail that was hand delivered to housing units to ensure timely delivery. This first contact explained the research in detail and offered several options for data collection sessions. Participants were asked to select convenient dates and times they wished to be scheduled for group data collection sessions. In order to enhance confidentiality, an envelope was provided for selected dates and times to be returned. Several incidents occurred after sample selection which interfered with the notifications reaching several selected participants. Several women were transferred into a restricted housing unit following receipt of discipline infractions. Several women were transferred and housed in restricted statuses within the inpatient mental health unit and therefore unable to attend data collection sessions in an outpatient setting. Housing

movements and participants' statuses were monitored during the data collection months and

notifications were delivered when/if appropriate. Notifications, with adjusted dates and times,

were delivered when the women were released and living in unrestricted housing units. These

incidents impacted the response rate as an indeterminate number of the 286 sampled women may

not have ever received notifications. As previously mentioned, this institution is also a jail

setting, so several participants were released from court prior to selection notification being

mailed, or after receipt but before responses could be returned. (see Appendix C for copy of

notification letter).

Respondents were scheduled to attend a group session and placed on an outpatient

medical list that was posted in their housing unit. This list is what allowed them to leave the unit

when the researcher had the group announced over the institutional paging system. In addition to

generating this list of participants and announcing the group, the researcher called each

individual housing unit to request the group be announced and women be released so that they

could attend the group in the medical building. This was a crucial element to ensuring that

respondents were able to attend the session when scheduled. As is fairly routine in a correctional

environment, several incidents and issues occurred during data collection that resulted in

respondents not being allowed out of their housing unit to attend the data collection session as

scheduled. Therefore, the data collection sessions occurred over a five- month period (May 2015

– September 2015), rather than a few weeks as previously anticipated. Respondents were

scheduled and rescheduled as needed to include all randomly selected participants who agreed to

participate after the first and/or second contact. The investigator was previously employed and

recently retired from the institution and therefore was intimately knowledgeable of the

systematic workings and potential complications. This proved to be extremely helpful in

navigating the research project within the correction environment. The second contact was a reminder notice, sent out to non-respondents seven to ten days following the initial contact. (see Appendix D for copy of follow-up notification letter).

In the end, a total of 286 incarcerated women had been randomly selected and a response rate of 64.7% was reached with a non-response rate of 35.3%. The ethnicity of total sample, as identified by DOC and not necessarily reflective of self-identity was as follows: Caucasian 55.2% (n=158), African American, 27.9% (n=80), Latina, 15.3% (n=44), and one Asian, two American Indian and two with missing ethnicity identified. In May 2015, according to the Department of Correction website, the facility housed a total of 1054 women, 70% sentenced and 28% pre-trial. According to the department, the racial breakdown for the month of May 2015 is as follows: White 56%, African American 27%, Hispanic 15%, American Indian 0.47% and Asian 0.66%. Therefore, the randomly selected sample of respondents was nearly identical to the racial breakdown of the total institution population. Summary tables of the breakdown of sample selection and response rate by race reflect minimal bias and is shown below.

Table 2.1 *Representative Sample Selection by race*

Race	Apprx. Total (1054 in institution)	Total Selected (286 of institution)
Caucasian	*569* (56%)	158 (55.2%)
African American	*264* (27%)	80 (27.9%)
Hispanic	*134* (15%)	44 (15.3%)
American Indian	*34* (.47%)	2 (.07%)
Asian	*53* (.66%)	1 (.03%)
Missing		2

Table 2.2 *Response rate of sample by race*

Race	Total Selected (286 of institution)	Responded (% of total sample)	Non-response (% of total sample)
Caucasian	158	101 (63.9%)	57 (36%)
African American	80	57 (71.2%)	23 (28.7%)
Hispanic	44	25 (56.8%)	19 (43.1%)
American Indian	2	2	0
Asian	1	0	1
Missing	2	0	2

Response Rate and Potential Response Bias

The response rate (65%; 94% usable data) in this study is acceptable. With the highly

transient and dynamic population, it can be difficult for mail and/or notifications to be received

by both the participants as well as responses to the researcher. As previously mentioned, many

women selected to participate may have discharged from court prior to receiving the notification.

Multiple contacts, as advised by Dillman and associates (2009), helped to increase the response

rate. There were several respondents who after receiving their second reminder notification,

positively responded stating they had not received their first contact regarding selection.

Additionally, all contact communication stated that the research was for a doctoral dissertation

and would provide an opportunity for the women to have their voices heard on an important

topic. These may have been influential in encouraging individuals to participate. The findings

are limited in their generalizability as respondents were sampled from only one state institution

in the northeast. The only information known about the percentage of the sample who did not

participate in the survey was their ethnicity as identified by the Department of Correction. Due

to this lack of information, no conclusions were made about similarities or differences between those who responded and those who did not.

Missing Data. The scales were assessed for missing data, ranging from no missing in all five scales to participants skipping entire scales. Five participants skipped the anticipated desistance scale as it is believed that page two and three stuck together and they continued on to complete pages four through eight. Two participants skipped the empowerment scale and Perceived Neighborhood disorder scale for the same assumed reason. There were three participants who failed to respond to a majority of the scales and other questions and were consequently removed from analysis. The total 141 completed surveys produced a 94% usable rate.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) ver. 25 for Mac. Descriptive and frequency statistics were run on the total dataset for cleaning and to assess missing and incorrect data. Of the 150 completed survey materials, 141 valid responses were entered into analyses. Data were reversed-coded as instructed by scale designers for various questions on standardized measures and scores calculated for whole scales and sub-scales. The life narratives were analyzed and thematically content-coded by three independent coders and scored according to McAdams' (1992) coding framework. Demographic data, scores from standardized scales, and narrative scores (0-4) were entered into SPSS and preliminary bivariate analyses were conducted on demographic variables. Correlation was used to assess significant relationships between study variables measured by preexisting scales. See Table 3.5 for correlation matrix. Independent-samples t-tests were used ex post facto to assess any

significant differences in various dichotomous variables with respect to hope, empowerment, self-efficacy, neighborhood disorder and agency for desistance.

Hypothesis #1a: Justice-involved women with higher personal resources (hope, empowerment, and self-efficacy) and lower environmental disorder (neighborhood disorder and childhood poverty) will have higher redemptive self. Hierarchical multiple regression was used to assess the effect of personal resources and environmental factors on the redemptive self, after controlling for age, marital status, and length of criminal career.

Hypothesis #1b: Justice-involved women with higher personal resources (hope, empowerment, and self-efficacy) and lower environmental disorder (neighborhood disorder and childhood poverty) will have higher agency for desistance. Hierarchical multiple regression was used to assess the effect of personal resources and environmental factors on agency for desistance, after controlling for age, marital status, and length of criminal career.

Hypothesis #1c: Justice-involved women with higher personal resources (hope, empowerment, and self-efficacy) and lower environmental disorder (neighborhood disorder and childhood poverty) will have higher anticipated desistance. Hierarchical multiple regression was used to assess the impact of personal resources and environmental factors on anticipated desistance, after controlling for age, marital status, and length of criminal career.

Bivariate analyses were conducted to compute the Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient (*r*) to test the association between personal resources and environmental factors with dependent variables. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests were used post hoc to assess significant differences between group means with respect to hope, empowerment, self-efficacy, disordered neighborhood, agency for desistance and other variables. Additionally, logistical regressions were used to assess the impact of independent variables (hope, empowerment, self-

efficacy, neighborhood disorder, and childhood poverty) on whether narratives were condemnation or redemptive.

Hypothesis #2a-c. Self-identity and marginalized status of justice-involved women will mediate the relationship between agency for desistance, anticipated desistance and redemptive self and personal resources and environmental factors.

Hierarchical multiple regression was used to assess the mediating effect of identity (persistent offender and career criminal) and marginalized status (ethnicity, level of education and poverty) on the three dependent/outcome variables, after controlling for demographic variables such as age, marital status and length of criminal career. Baron and Kenny (1986) proposed a four-step approach in which several regression analyses are conducted and significance of the coefficients is examined at each step. Additionally, logistical regressions were used to assess the impact of independent variables (hope, empowerment, self-efficacy, neighborhood disorder, childhood poverty, social and human capital) and adding identity and marginalization measures, on whether narratives were condemnation or redemptive.

Figure 2.1 Mediation Model
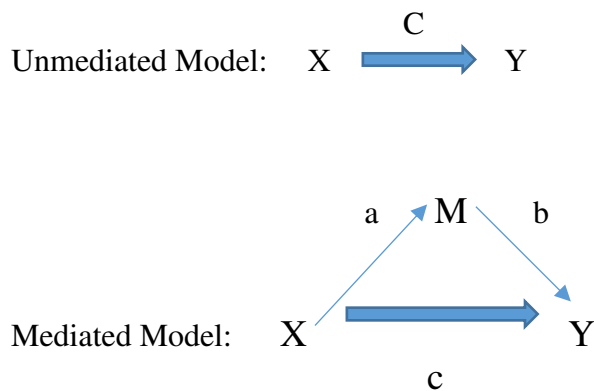
Unmediated Model: X ⟶ Y   C

Mediated Model: X ⟶ Y   a M b   c

Hypothesis #3a: Justice-involved women with higher incarceration rates will have lower agency for desistance, anticipated desistance and redemptive self.

Hypothesis #3b: Justice-involved women with earlier contact with police and first arrest will have lower agency for desistance, anticipated desistance and redemptive self.

Hypothesis #3c: Justice-involved women who are better able to visualize their future positively without criminal activity will have higher agency for desistance, anticipated desistance and redemptive self.

Hypothesis #3d: Justice-involved women with higher anticipated effort into being law-abiding will have higher agency for desistance, anticipated desistance and redemptive self.

Hypothesis #3e: Justice-involved women who reported increased effort on previous attempts to go straight will have lower agency for desistance, anticipated desistance and redemptive self.

Hierarchical multiple regression was used to assess the effect of various variables including previous number of incarcerations, age at first arrest, ability to visualize their future positively, anticipated effort into being law-abiding and previous attempts of going straight on the three dependent/outcome variables after controlling for demographic variables such as age, marital status and length of criminal career. Additionally, logistical regressions were used to assess the impact of independent variables (hope, empowerment, self-efficacy, neighborhood disorder, childhood poverty, social and human capital, identity measures and marginalization measures) and adding these other five factors, on whether narratives were condemnation or redemptive.

Verification

Validity/reliability. The internal reliability for all of the scales was calculated and found to be consistent with previous research. See Table 2.3 for psychometric properties of major study variables measured by preexisting scales. The reliability for the Hope Scale was found to be good with the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .810 and for each subscale .783 (agency) and

.681 (pathways). The Cronbach alpha coefficient for the Empowerment Scale was .777, subscales were found to have lower coefficients, self-esteem (.804), power-powerless (.636), community activism (.544), optimism-control over future (.256), and righteous anger (.471). The Sherer Self-Efficacy consists of two scales, general self-efficacy and social self-efficacy. Each subscale had good reliability with Cronbach's alpha of .847 and .589 respectively with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .838 for all 23-items. The internal reliability for the Perceived Neighborhood Disorder scale was high with Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .954 and for each subscale .941 (physical disorder) and .908 (social disorder). Lastly, the internal reliability for the Personal Agency for Desistance Questionnaire was fair with Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .765.

Table 2.3 *Cronbach's Alpha on Each Measure*

Measures	*a:* Current Study	*a:* Prior Studies
Hope Scale	.810	.74 - .84
Agency Subscale	.783	.62 - .92
Pathways Subscale	.681	.74 - .93
Empowerment Scale	.777	.82
Self-Esteem	.804	.41 -.79
Power-Powerless	.636	.43 - .69
Activism-Autonomy	.544	.41 - .68
Optimism-Control	.256	.42 - .78
Righteous Anger	.471	.40 - .73
Self-Efficacy Scale	.838	--
General Self- Efficacy	.847	.86
Social Self-Efficacy	.589	.71
Neighborhood Disorder Scale	.954	.916
Physical Disorder Subscale	.941	
Social Disorder Subscale	.908	
Agency for Desistance Scale	.765	--

Narratives

> "Narrative identities are stories we live by. We make them and remake them, we
> tell them and revise them not so much to arrive at an accurate record of the past as
> to create a coherent self that moves us forward in life with energy and purpose.
> Our stories are partly determined by the real circumstances of our lives – by
> family, class, gender, culture, and the historical moment into which we're thrown.
> But we also make choices, narrative choices" (McAdams 2006, p. 98-99).

This research included a series of written narratives collected from incarcerated women.

The *redemptive self* or the story of generativity was measured by a modified version of The Life

Interview (McAdams, 1993). Participants wrote responses to four open-ended questions: high

point, low point, turning point and where the respondents saw themselves in 10 years.

Individuals make sense of their lives through stories, reconstructing their past and imagining

futures in ways that provide justification and motivation for choices (McAdams, 2013).

Although many of the themes were similar throughout the narratives and included trauma, loss,

childbirth and struggles with addiction and reincarceration, the score was dependent on how the

story ended, or whether they found positive from negative, or moved from a negative emotion to

a positive one from the experience. Generative adults are able to see growth and progress

(McAdams, 2013) while less generative adults are not.

Two professionals together with the researcher, all seasoned correctional mental health

employees and CITI certified, were trained on McAdams' Life Interview Coding Scheme. In

January 2016, all three coders, blind to identifying information, achieved a Cohen's Kappa of 1.0

in a test of agreement for presence of condemnation and/or redemption scripts (0 or 1).

Although perfect agreement is rarely achieved (McHugh, 2012) it was crucial no errors were

made in the coding of presence or lack of presence of redemption as this was the baseline for

additional findings or coding (2-4) for enhanced agency, enhanced communion and ultimate

concern. The narratives that were provided by the pre-testers, and the excluded narratives from respondents who had identified as first-time offenders but had completed the materials, were used in the training and excluded from final analyses. The data provided below were randomly selected and are shared to provide examples and an outline for each of the narrative categories. (see Appendix E for copy of coding instructions).

Condemnation Script. Narratives that were scored as condemnation included themes of something *good* turning *bad* and/or a lack of personal agency. The condemnation narratives are the opposite of redemption narratives and contain excuses and/or justifications and were characterized by a sense of personal failure.

> I got pregnant – I felt excited – I used drugs – DCF took my baby – I felt like a loser – my crack cocaine addiction became worse – there was no stopping my habit – I began sleeping with multiple men for drugs and money – I lost family and friends – I became homeless – had nothing – I didn't care – I felt lonely scared and afraid – the judge sentenced me to 18 months – I thought he was being unfair – in jail they treat us like animals – I was thinking how I lost everything, my daughter and son, house, family and friends, but my drug-dealing BF is still there – hopefully I have time to get my thoughts straight.

> My daughter had seizures – doctors wouldn't listen to me – I felt helpless and inadequate – They finally listened to me – I felt vindicated and she stopped having seizures – She still has learning disability and challenges, but is doing things they thought she never would – they used my honesty against me – I told them I had addiction – they judged me; I had a really bad car accident – it changed my life – I relapsed – DCF involved – I began abusing pain meds – I got arrested – I felt desperate, helpless and hopeless – it was really hard to get my daughters back –But I got my daughters back – I relapsed again – I should have left them with my sister – I haven't been able to leave this accident and the damage it had done behind me—this prison is detrimental to a women's mental health and crippling to my spirit – I'd like to advocate for the female inmates in [State].

Redemptive Script. Narratives that were scored as redemptive contained themes of something *bad* turning *good*, and the protagonist was tragically optimistic about their life. These stories contained sequences that despite considerable pain and setbacks, they were able to continue to grow, make progress and/or get better over time. The narrator was able to make a

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clear distinction between their crime and their *true* selves and believed that the *bad* had to

happen in order to achieve a larger *good*. The following data provided were randomly selected

and are shared to provide examples for each of the additional redemptive narrative categories.

> Drugs took everything – prison helped me to find myself – I started the healing process –
> I am learning to deal with emotions here without drugs – I feel confident and determined.

> My mom died – my life has not been the same – I lived with my grandmother – I was
> forced to leave my grandmother's house and live with a mean aunt– no one loved me, I
> was all alone – I acted out in school…… I didn't want to be there - Finally, I was able to
> go back with my grandmother –It was the best thing that ever happened to me – I felt
> loved – no more fighting or acting out -- I felt supported and happy – I belonged ---
> school basketball team people loved me—I felt free – God on my side –I am worth
> something – I finished HS – I feel like I made my mother proud: I got pregnant – I felt
> happy – I knew my life had to change – my boyfriend wouldn't claim my daughter ---I
> met a guy who made my daughter his own --- I got married – but he cheated – I came to
> jail --- just because you are in jail if you have a goal – go for it.

Once all coders reached 100% inter-coder reliability on applying either a '0' or '1' to the

narratives, the training continued to the coding process for potential additional points for all

redemption scripts including *enhanced agency, enhanced communion* and/or *ultimate concern*.

As indicated in the literature, coders were trained to add these points conservatively and only if

there were clear connections and expressions by the participant these were direct results from the

negative experience. Coders were informed not to make any clinical inferences and/or

extensions beyond the written word. Additionally, these points were only given when

'additional' enhancement to self, interpersonal relationships and generativity for others was

evident and not simply the transformation from negative to positive. Independent coders reached

88% inter-rater reliability in the nine narratives provided for training purposes.

Enhanced Agency. Narratives that were scored an additional point for enhanced agency

contained one of four themes of agency including, self-mastery, status/victory,

achievement/responsibility and/or empowerment. The narrative was scored one point if the

transformation from negative to positive in the story led to an additional enhancement of

personal power or agency, if it built self-confidence, efficacy or personal resolve or provided the

protagonist with insight into personal identity.

> This is the beginning – I was mandated to a drug treatment program --- I gave it a chance --- I made a decision to turn my life over to a higher power – I have the capacity – I will be a better woman today --- I will go back to my grandmothers [sic] grave and show her that I did it.

> My mother was not there for me – I gave up my career for kids – I want to be to my kids what my mom was not; I came to prison – I am away from my children --- I am rebuilding my bond with my children and community; I was selling drugs to survive – but it destroyed my family --hardship of the journey is for my children – I began preparing for change – I could see how it effected [sic] them – I decided to live for my children.

> I got kicked out – I pressed forward to better myself – I saw it as a perfect opportunity to show myself that I could make it on my own. I had diligence and perseverance – my hard work paid off – my life story has more meaning now – nothing can stop me—this made me the person I am today – I would rather learn from the struggle – I have wisdom now because of that fact.

> My mom died – I ran away – my grandmother raised her – I am who I am today because I was raised by my grandmother, but I needed my mom – I had a crack addiction – came to prison – I had enough courage to leave my relationship –I have self-confidence – I have learned more about myself – I found the *real* me – I've been through enough in my lifetime – but I am determined to get back on my feet.

> I wanted to die –I came to prison – I found the will to live – I do not feel there is any true healing or rehab that goes on here – I realized I do deserve goodness – I am resourceful – I will do better and not self-sabotage – I will no longer isolate myself – I am grateful for the acceptance of defeat – I now have desire to live and never give up – I will never put myself in harms way again – this is the beginning of the rest of my life – it's not too late, get healthy mentally, physically and emotionally.

> Abused more in prison than my whole life – how did I withstand such tragedy? -- I was a victim of disaster – I thought it was my fate – I went to RHU and CDU – But I won the war – I am a new woman – it turned me into the girl I never thought I could be --- I owned my wrongs – my life is starting over for me – that voice has been heard –I look forward to my future because my present is filled with so much misfortune – I don't take life for granted -- I will make my presence known—this has opened my mind to new perspectives – I have established some goals – I thrive for better.

Enhanced Communion. The narratives that were scored an additional point for enhanced communion contained one or more of the four themes of communion including love/friendship, dialogue, caring/help and unity/togetherness. The protagonist believed they possessed something of benefit to offer. Communion manifests itself in the sense of being one with other organisms or expressed an inner need to be needed by others.

> I was alone, scared, angry and ashamed on the streets --- I came into prison broken --- But I built a sober network of women to use as support

> I want to be a substance abuse counselor --- I want to share stories to assist others to overcome adversity – I will be a valuable asset to my children and my community.

> I was homeless – I burned bridges with my family – I was filled with resentment, "pridefulness" [sic] and worthlessness --- I found forgiveness in my heart, I have remorse for others who cannot catch a break; I came to prison – I endured torment everyday – domestic violence – I had stupidity and unhealthy relationships – If I didn't come here – this is a life changing experience – I found humility, and began to love myself – I now have a greater relationship with my higher power – I have found me, and bettered myself, I needed to change.

> My mom died – I got pregnant – I stopped using – it was the best thing that ever happened to me – I stopped getting high – I have a strong bond with my daughter – she visits me in prison – I have the most beautiful relationship with my daughter – She makes me look at life differently –I now have a support system that I didn't have before.

> I no longer isolate myself – I focus on God – I am more social with positive people – cutting out negative people who put me down – I had no boundaries or balance in many areas – now I know I need to maintain healthy relationships and boundaries with friends and family – as well as my job.

> I was tired of seeing my mom cry – my family destroying my life – I didn't care who I hurt – I gave birth to my son – my future changed when I realized an unconditional love – I started going back to school --But I will make a difference making a statement to other incarcerated women – that life doesn't stop here – I will be active in my children's lives – I don't want them to imitate my life – make me change into my very own fairy tale – you know the one that girls dream about -- active in my children's lives, school, activities and hobbies

Ultimate Concern. The narratives that were scored an additional point for ultimate concern contained sequences of making the next generation better or expressions of concern

about making a lasting contribution, especially to future generations. Points for ultimate concern

were provided to narratives where the transformation from negative to positive involved

significant involvement in fundamental existential issues and the protagonist sought to give back

as a result of their negative event.

> Volunteer at soup kitchen and shelter – don't ever want to forget where I came from – help others that are in and out of prison – I want to be a substance abuse counselor.
>
> I came to jail – I want to open a day care for parents who cannot afford it – I want to help the poor -this has been my dream since I was little – I want to achieve it even if I've been in jail – I want to put this behind me – visit Africa and help them with their needs --fight for what I want – I crochet in prison – I may not be able to get a job because of my record – but I will run a shop with my crochet items – I want my shop to be very supportive for everyone.
>
> I want to give back to other women – I questioned God day in and day out – did I do this or is it God's chastisement – I attempted suicide – spent time in the mental health unit – those C/O's were wrong about me – I will make a difference – start a mental boycott – it is not our criminal activity that is our best asset - it is the breaking point that is one of our strongest assets.
> I hope to pass on my life experiences and knowledge to someone else --- hope it changes their lives so they never have to deal with what I have – make amends with those I've hurt - and give back – open a program for young kids whose parents are battling addiction.

After completing the training, and reaching high inter-rater reliability, the narratives were

divided among the three coders to be scored. Individual scoring sheets were utilized for each

narrative. Coders agreed to set aside any narratives about which they may be unclear or

uncertain on coding and these narratives would be collectively scored by all three coders prior to

analysis. This inter-rater reliability was extremely high during training, much higher than

achieved by McAdams with graduate students. The possible reasons for such high rates were

that all three coders were seasoned mental health clinicians with many years of experience with

justice-involved women. It is possible that this familiarity and professional insight into the

common themes shared by the participants supported the insight and understanding of the coders, leading to high inter-rater reliability.

When all three coders completed coding independently, there were a total of 12 narratives returned for re-evaluation. In the end, 12 were scored by all three coders resulting in 100% reliability for eight and 67% (2 out of 3) reliability for two narratives. Ultimately, there were two narratives scored differently by all three coders, including whether or not they contained redemption. Given the inability to interpret reliably, these narratives were excluded from final analysis. This resulted in 138 narratives being included in the analysis.

Ethical Considerations

Protection of human subjects. The approval of University of Connecticut Institutional Review Board was obtained for this study and served as the primary IRB approval oversight (IRB Protocol #H14-227). All participants were notified via the survey cover letter that their consent was voluntary and any potential risks were outlined in the information sheet. Estimated time of completion was noted in order to avoid unanticipated burden to the participants, as well as a varied selection of dates and times. See Appendix C for notification letter.

Privacy/confidentiality. The confidentiality and anonymity of participants was protected to encourage the participant's honesty and openness with the questionnaire. The questionnaire was based on a self-administered style and it did not contain any questions which would identify the respondent. Although respondents were identifiable in the group setting, once materials were sealed in an envelope it was not possible to link materials with any respondent. Verbal consent was obtained in group data collection sessions after the consent form was read. A signed consent form was not used as this would have been the only potential connection of respondents to the study. The research database was stored on a password-protected computer.

The completed copies of the survey were stored securely in a locked drawer and will be destroyed upon completion of the research project. Additionally, all lists of group sessions will be destroyed at the conclusion of the study.

Risks and inconveniences. There was no anticipated serious or lasting harm as a result of participating in the survey. A potential risk associated with participation was identified as women becoming upset after recalling events that occurred in their lives. Safeguards were put into place and participants were offered the option of being referred to speak with a qualified mental health professional, if necessary. Additionally, participants were notified via the information sheet that their consent was voluntary, refusal to participate would not affect them, and they did not need to answer any question that they did not want to or it caused them any discomfort.

Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the methodologies employed in this research. A cross-sectional survey design gathered information on personal resources and environmental factors, agency for desistance, anticipated desistance from currently incarcerated women. Life narratives were gathered with a modified life interview and scored for redemption and/or condemnation, and additional points. Multiple points of contact were made with randomly selected participants housed in a correctional institution for women in the northeast. A survey consisting of 133 questions was used to measure the independent and dependent variables in eleven hypotheses. Multiple points of contact, anonymity and a diverse option of data collection dates resulted in a 65% response rate, of which 94% of responses were usable.

Chapter Three: Results

This chapter describes and summarizes the results of statistical analyses conducted to assess the research questions and hypotheses stated in previous chapter. A sample of 141 participants out of 150 respondents was included in the analysis for this study. This chapter provides an overview of the results, including: (a) sample description, (b) personal resources, (c) environmental factors, (d), mediating variables, (e) findings related to each dependent variable, and (f) narrative descriptions.

Descriptive Statistics

Demographic characteristics. Table 3.1 summarizes the demographic characteristics of survey participants and control variables. The 141 respondents represented women incarcerated in a New England state of the United States. The majority of respondents spent their childhood in the state in which the prison was located, while a few spent their childhood in neighboring states. Approximately 51% of participants identified themselves as White, 19% identified as African American, 14% identified themselves as Latina, 13% identified themselves as "mixed," and 3% identified themselves as "other" including Native American, Indian and West Indian. Although no one identified as Asian, one respondent identified as Black, Latina and Chinese and this was recorded as mixed. As mentioned previously, the study participants reflected the ethnic proportion of incarcerated women from the sampled institution. The mean age of respondents was 37 (SD= 10.50) with a range from 19 to 59 years.

The plurality of the participants (48%) reported being single, never married, followed by divorced (22.7%), married (11.3%), living with partner, not married (9.9%), committed relationship, not living together (3.5%) and 1 respondent (.7%) identified as both widowed and separated. Respondents presented with a range of educational backgrounds. Nearly three-

quarters of respondents (74.5%) had at least a high school diploma or GED, with only one quarter (25%) reporting less than a high school education. Of the respondents, 32% reported some college, and 7% identified as college graduates. Similar to what has been found in the literature, the majority of the respondents (73.8%) had children, many of whom were still minors. When questioned regarding the likelihood they would be reunited with children upon release, 35.4% thought it "very likely" or "somewhat likely" and 24.9% thought it "not likely at all" or "somewhat unlikely." However, over 41% identified as either homeless or having no place of their own prior to incarceration, which supports the lack of necessary resources for stability, and/or family reunification in the community.

Table 3.1 *Participant Characteristics*

Variables	N	%
Ethnicity	**140**	**99.2%**
White	72	51.1%
African American	27	19.1%
Latina	19	13.5%
Mixed	18	12.8%
Other	4	2.8%
Age Range 19-59	**140**	*SD* **10.5**
Mean	37.44	
Median	35.00	
Marital Status	**137**	**97.2%**
Single	68	48.2%
Married	16	11.3%
Divorced	32	22.7%
Widowed	1	0.7%
Living with partner	14	9.9%
Committed relationship not living together	5	3.5%
Separated	1	0.7%
Education	**139**	**98.5%**
Have not finished high school	35	24.8%
GED/Diploma	50	35.5%
Some College	45	31.9%
Graduated college	10	7.1%
Have Children	**140**	**99.3%**
Yes	104	73.8%
No	36	25.5%
How likely your children will live with you	**139**	**98.6%**
Not likely at all	29	20.6%
Somewhat unlikely	6	4.3%
Not sure	7	5.0%
Somewhat likely	14	9.9%
Very likely	36	25.5%
Children are not minors	47	33.3%

Human Capital and social support. Table 3.2 provides the human capital and social supports of respondents. Human capital and social support have been found to influence both the pathways into criminal justice as well as the pathway out. As expected, respondents reported weak employment histories with the majority of participants (56%) reporting being either unemployed or working "off the books" prior to incarceration, and only 27% working full-time or 14.2% part-time. Residential statuses were also unstable with the plurality of respondents (41.1%) reporting not having a place to stay prior to incarceration. Further, 57.4% reported either some or all of their monthly income was obtained through illegal activity, while only 41.1% reported not obtaining any income illegally.

Social networks and pro-social supports influence both the experiences during incarceration as well as community reintegration. Respondents were asked to rate their level of support during incarceration and 33.4% reported feeling either "not supported at all" or "sometimes supported and sometimes not supported" as opposed to 66.7% who felt "somewhat supported" or "strongly supported." However, this level of support did not translate into visitation, as the majority of respondents (56%) reported never receiving any visits, while only 10% received visits several times weekly, and 32.7% reported visits either less than once monthly or a few times monthly. One respondent reported only a yearly visit. Similarly, the majority of respondents 67.3% reported that all, most or some of their peer supports were involved in criminal activity, and only 29.8% of respondents had no community supports involved in criminal activity, indicating a significant absence of pro-social supports. The following quotes are examples of human capital and social support as explained by respondents.

> "I was hired by the orthopedic group in (city) after just getting out of jail this was so
> good. It was the first time I paid all my bills on time I paid my rent on time I was so
> proud of myself for once being 54 years old. Everyone loved me and I was so happy. My

family was proud of me. My kids started to have faith in my again. I had the best co-workers." - High point of respondent #119

"Me basically hanging around people that be boosting [sic]. Me seeing things and continue [sic] to go shopping not thinking whats [sic] the out-come. Again friends and friends friends [sic] it a group of girls that does the boosting thing. We basically see who waits to go and make – money."
         - Events leading up to the low-point of respondent #134

Table 3.2 *Human Capital and Social Supports*

Variables	N	%
Employment, prior to incarceration	**137**	**97.2%**
Full-time	38	27.0%
Part-time	20	14.2%
Off-the-books	21	14.9%
Unemployed	58	41.1%
Amount of monthly illegal income	**139**	**98.6%**
All of it	25	17.7%
Some of it	56	39.7%
None of it	58	41.1%
Have your own place to live	**136**	**96.5%**
Rent	70	49.6%
Own	8	5.7%
Did not have my own place	37	26.2%
Homeless	21	14.9%
Level of support while here	**141**	**100%**
Not at all	17	12.1%
Sometimes yes/sometimes no	30	21.3%
Somewhat supported	32	22.7%
Strongly supported	62	44.0%
Frequency of visits while incarcerated	**140**	**99.3%**
Never	79	56.0%
Less than once a month	29	20.6%
Few times a month	17	12.1%
Several times a week	14	9.9%
Once a year	1	.7%
Pro-social Supports	**137**	**97.2%**
All involved in criminal activity	4	2.8%

Most involved in criminal activity	24	17.0%
Some involved in criminal activity	67	47.5%
None involved in criminal activity	42	29.8%

Identity and marginalization. As shown in Table 3.3, there were 67 respondents who identified as an ethnic group other than white. These sixty-seven women were additionally assessed for further marginalization including poverty and lack of formal education. Of the sixty-seven respondents, the majority (n=47) had also experienced poverty prior to incarceration. Nearly twice as many non-white respondents were lacking a high school diploma or GED when compared to white respondents, with only four of the ten women with college degrees being non-white. The majority of participants (85.1%) did not identify with the label of career criminal, 13 (9.2%) were not sure if they did or not, and surprisingly only four participants identified as a career criminal. The four respondents who identified as a career criminal shared few similarities and no patterns were evident. Contrast this to whether they identified as a "persistent offender," and nearly half of respondents (42.6%) either agreed or agreed strongly, while more than half (57.5%) disagreed or disagreed strongly.

> "When I committed my crime I wasn't thinking. I was on a drug induced auto pilot…. The scene ended with me locked up serving 16 years. This scene will never go away no matter how long I'm clean or how productive my life is. It will always be a part of my life…….." - Respondent #103

> "I thought that life was survial of fitness [sic] and since I had a record then this was the way I had to live to support my family there were no other options. I couldn't get back the life I once had." - Respondent #137

Current Poverty. Reported eligibility for state or federal benefits was used as a proxy to measure poverty prior to incarceration. 128 women (90.8%) indicated living in poverty, with the majority of respondents (81.6%) receiving State health insurance. And although it is well documented that housing instability is a critical factor for post-incarceration reintegration, only

65

17 women (12.1%) had previously received Section-8 housing. As previously indicated, nearly three-quarters of respondents (73.6%) had children, so it is not surprising that 44% received WIC benefits and 39.7% received TANIF. And although more than half of respondents reported being either unemployed or working "off the books" only 31.9% reported receiving unemployment benefits prior to incarceration. The eighth category in this variable was "other" and 22.7% indicated either SNAP/Food Stamps benefits or a history of Supplemental Security Income or Disability.

Childhood Poverty. Women who reported parents who had received either Section-8 housing or TANIF when they were children indicated a history of childhood poverty. One-quarter of respondents (n=36) indicated childhood poverty, of which thirty respondents were also living in poverty as adults prior to incarceration.

Table 3.3 *Marginalization, Identity and Poverty*

Variables	N	%
Marginalization		
Women of color	67	**100%**
Women of color & poor	47	70.1%
Women of color & no hs diploma	23	34.3%
Women of color, poor, uneducated	15	22.3%
Identity of Career Criminal	**137**	**98.6%**
No	120	85.1%
Not sure	13	9.2%
Yes	4	2.8%
Identity of Persistent Offender	**141**	**100%**
Strongly Disagree	40	28.4%
Disagree	41	29.1%
Agree	49	34.8%
Strongly Agree	11	7.8%
Poverty	**140**	**99.3%**
WIC	62	44.0%
TANIF – as adult	56	39.7%
Section-8 -- as adult	17	12.1%
Health Insurance	115	81.6%
Unemployment	45	31.9%
Other – SNAP, SSI, SSDI	32	22.7%
Current Poverty	**128**	**90.8%**
Childhood Poverty	**36**	**25.5%**
TANIF – as child	31	22.0%
Section-8 -- as child	12	8.5%

Justice Involvement. Participants were asked several questions related to their experiences with incarceration, past and future effort around remaining crime free, as well as spirituality. Table 3.4 shows that nearly half of all respondents (48.2%) had been incarcerated previously two to four times, 30 respondents (21.3%) reported five to seven previous incarcerations, and 20% had eight plus previous incarcerations. Only 13 respondents (9.2%) reported only one prior incarceration, and the mean age at first arrest was 21 (8.13 SD).

When asked to rate their level of effort into "going straight" and avoiding crime on previous discharges, 34.1% reported at least a 50% effort, while over half of respondents (56.1%) reported levels of 75% and 100% effort. Only 9.9% reported *NO effort at all* on previous releases. It is known that most incarcerated individuals will eventually return to the community, and this was reflected in the expected release dates of respondents; 70% were expected to be released in the next 6 months, 21.3% in one to three years, and only seven respondents reported three or more years left on their sentence. Additionally, there were two individuals expecting to be released in eight and nine months.

Last, when asked to look into their future and assess their level of effort at being a law-abiding citizen, the majority of participants (63.1%) reported 100% of effort, followed by 75% effort (21.3%), 50% effort (9.9%), 25% effort (2.1%), and three respondents (2.1%) reported no effort into being a law-abiding citizen upon release. However, these three respondents reported "always" being able to visualize their future positively without criminal activity which a majority (55.3%) of respondents reported. There were only three women who reported *never* being able to visualize their future positively, followed by 14.9% who reported *sometimes* and 27.7% *usually* being able to visualize their future positively. Interestingly, the three women who

reported never being able to see their future positively also reported intent of 100% effort (2) and

50% effort (1) into becoming law-abiding citizens upon release.

Anticipated desistance was measured with one question estimating their chance of

avoiding crime upon release. Over half (51.8%) reported chances as *very good*, followed by

40.4% *chances are good*, and only 7.1% estimated their chances as *poor*. Only one participant

(0.7%) rated her chances of avoiding crime as *very poor*.

Spirituality. Respondents were asked two questions regarding their religious or spiritual

practices when faced with difficult or stressful situations. These questions included the

likelihood they would pray to God (higher power) and seek support from clergy when

experiencing stressful of difficult situations. The majority of respondents (51.8%) were very

likely to pray during difficult times, although not likely or somewhat unlikely (49.6%) to seek

support from clergy.

> "Was arrested and (saved) taken to jail again. Lost everything but needed this wake up call to remind myself. I'm worth it. Let go of the past it could be worse. Just let go. Forgive. And move on. Do my best to change my ways. WAKE UP CALL!!" -- Respondent #88

> "I didn't want to die. I was in a bad neighborhood, copping drugs when I fell on my knees and cried, "Jesus, help me" Not even two minutes later, a cruiser pulled up and got me on a V.O.P. warrant." -- Respondent #85

Table 3.4 *Respondents' Criminal Justice Involvement and Spirituality*

Variables	N	%
Number of Incarcerations	**139**	**98.6%**
1	13	9.2%
2-4	68	48.2%
5-7	30	21.3%
8+	28	19.9%
Age at first arrest (11-48)	**135**	**95.7%**
Mean	20.91	**8.13 (SD)**
In past, effort into "going straight"	**141**	**100%**
No effort	14	9.9%
25% Effort	18	12.8%
50% Effort	30	21.3%
75% Effort	39	27.7%
100% Efforts	40	28.4%
Effort into being "Law-Abiding" Citizen	**139**	**98.6%**
No effort	3	2.1%
25% Effort	3	2.1%
50% Effort	14	9.9%
75% Effort	30	21.3%
100% Effort	89	63.1%
Estimate chances of avoiding crime upon release	**141**	**100%**
Very Poor	1	0.7%
Poor	10	7.1%
Good	57	40.4%
Very Good	73	51.8%
Pray during difficult times	**137**	**97.2%**
Not likely at all	10	7.1%
Somewhat likely	6	4.3%
Not sure	9	6.4%
Somewhat likely	39	27.7%
Very Likely	73	51.8%
Seek Clergy during difficult times	**137**	**97.2%**
Not likely at all	47	33.3%
Somewhat likely	23	16.3%
Not sure	16	11.3%
Somewhat likely	32	22.7%

Very Likely		19	13.5%

Findings Related to Personal Resources

Hope. Hope was measured using a cognitive model of hope (Snyder, et al, 1991). The respondents (n=137) mean score was 48.58 (SD=9.39) for total hope, and 23.36 (SD=5.77) for agency (goal directed energy), and 25.15 (SD=5.00) for pathways (planning to meet goals).

Hope was positively correlated with respondents' ability to visualize their future positively ($r=.330$, $p < .01$), future effort into being law-abiding ($r=.198$, $p < .05$), the likelihood of reunification with children ($r=.253$, $p < .01$), and human capital and social support, including: level of support during incarceration ($r=.314$, $p < .01$), frequency of visits during incarceration ($r=.261$, $p < .01$), residency and employment ($r =.232$, $p < .01$, $r=.253$, $p < .01$), and pro-social supports ($r=.255$, $p < .01$). Therefore, incarcerated women who had greater housing stability and employment prior to incarceration, reported greater support during incarceration with fewer peers involved in criminal activity, had higher hope, and were more likely to visualize their future positively and exert effort into being law-abiding.

Table 3.5 *Correlation Matrix for Hope*

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Hope	1								
2. Visualize future	.330*	1							
3. Law-abiding	.198**	.198**	1						
4. reunification	.253*	.098	.075	1					
5. Support	.314*	.211**	.125	.199**	1				
6. Visitation	.261*	.219*	.077	.097	.424*	1			

7. Housing	.232*	.063	.221*	.168	.247*	.251*	1		
8. Employment	.253*	.200**	.188**	.155	.185**	.095	.350*	1	
9. Pro-social supports	-.255*	.068	.121	.091	.302*	.090	.060	.153	1

Note. * Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
    ** Significant at the 0.05 level

Empowerment. Empowerment was measured with a standardized measure of empowerment with five subscales. Respondents (n=141) ranged between 65 and 104 with a M=83.83 (SD=8.80). The mean scores on the five subscales were self-esteem-self-efficacy M=29.26 (SD=4.16), power-powerlessness M=22.03 (SD=3.80), activism-autonomy M=19.66 (SD=2.54), optimism-control over future M= 11.99 (SD=1.97), and righteous anger M= 9.30 (SD=2.22).

Empowerment was positively correlated with ability to visualize future (r=.335, p < .01), and effort into being a law-abiding citizen (r=.190, p < .05). Empowerment was also correlated with human capital and social supports, including: level of support during incarceration (r=.223, p < .01), frequency of visits (r=.251, p < .01), residency, employment (r=.206, p < .05, r=.348, p < .01), pro-social supports (r= -.220, p < .01), and less illegal income (r=.212, p < .05). Empowerment was negatively correlated with current poverty (r= -.255, p < .01), number of previous incarcerations (r= -.231, p < .01) and length of criminal career (r= -.201, p < .05). Therefore, women who had higher human capital and social support, fewer incarcerations and shorter criminal careers and did not experience poverty had higher empowerment.

The relationship between hope and empowerment was investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. There was a positive

correlation between the two variables, $r = .545$, n = 137, p < .01, with higher levels of empowerment associated with higher levels of hope.

Table 3.6 *Correlation Matrix for Empowerment*

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Empowerment	1								
2. Visualize future	.335*	1							
3. Law-abiding	.190**	.198**	1						
4. Support	.223*	.211**	.125	1					
5. Visitation	.251*	.219*	.077	.424*	1				
6. Housing	.206**	.063	.221*	.247*	.251*	1			
7. Employment	.348*	.200**	.188**	.185**	.095	.350*	1		
8. Pro-social	-.220*	.156	.121	.302*	.090	.060	.153	1	
9. Illegal income	.212**	.158	.057	.165	.082	.215**	.242*	.341*	1

Note. * Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
    ** Significant at the 0.05 level

General Self-Efficacy. The Sherer Self-Efficacy Scale consists of two subscales, general self-efficacy and social self-efficacy. The general self-efficacy subscale ranged potentially from 17-85, respondents (n=136) had a mean score of 63.14 (SD=12.68) and ranged between 24 and 85. The social self-efficacy subscale ranged potentially from 6-30, respondents (n=135) had a mean score of 21.16 (SD=4.60) and ranged between 9 and 30.

General Self-efficacy was positively correlated with visualizing their future positively ($r = .404$, $p < .01$), efforts into being law-abiding ($r = .180$, $p < .05$) and the likelihood they believed to be reunited with children ($r = .242$, $p < .01$). General self-efficacy was also

correlated with human capital and social support, including: level of support during incarceration, ($r = .286$, $p < .01$), frequency of visitations ($r = .260$, $p < .01$), peers involved in criminal activity ($r = -.345$, $p < .01$), residency, employment and less illegal income ($r = .257$, $r = .313$, and $r = .270$ $p < .01$) and previous attempts to go straight ($r = .173$, $p < .05$). General self-efficacy was negatively correlated with number of incarcerations ($r = -.177$, $p < .05$), and current poverty ($r = -.317$, $p < .01$). Therefore, women with higher self-efficacy had improved human capital, social supports, and self-efficacy decreased with the number of previous incarcerations.

The relationships between general self-efficacy, hope and empowerment were investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. There was a positive correlation among the three variables; hope ($r = .551$, $p < .01$) and self-efficacy with higher levels of self-efficacy associated with higher levels of hope and empowerment ($r = .570$, $p < .01$). Social self-efficacy was also correlated with hope ($r = .390$) and empowerment ($r = .296$, $p < .01$).

A one-way between groups analysis of variance was conducted to compare the self-efficacy scores for White, African American and Latina respondents. There was no significant difference in scores for White respondents (M=60.76, SD=13.61), African American respondents (M=66.15, SD=10.59), Latina respondents (M=63.00, SD=11.21) and mixed (M=67.44, SD=13.29).

Table 3.7 *Correlation Matrix for Self-Efficacy*

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Self-Efficacy	1									
2. Visualize future	.404*	1								
3. Law-abiding	.180**	.198**	1							
4. Reunification	.242*	.098	.075	1						
5. Support	.286*	.211**	.125	.199**	1					
6. Visitation	.260*	.219*	.077	.097	.424*	1				
7. Pro-social	-.345*	.156	.121	.091	.302*	.090	1			
8. Housing	.257*	.063	.221*	.168	.247*	.251*	.060	1		
9. Employment	.317*	.200**	.188**	.155	.185**	.095	.153	.350*	1	
10. Illegal income	.270*	.158	.057	.019	.165	.082	.341*	.215**	.242*	1

Note. * Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
   ** Significant at the 0.05 level

Table 3.8 *Correlation Matrix of Study Variables Measured by Preexisting Scales*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Hope Scale	1									
2. Hope Agency Subscale	.892*	1								
3. Hope Pathways Subscale	.855*	.528*	1							
4. Empowerment Scale	.545*	.529*	.417*	1						
5. General Self-Efficacy	.551*	.604*	.337*	.570*	1					
6. Social Self-Efficacy	.390*	.373*	.304*	.296*	.298*	1				
7. Perceived Disorder	.021	.059	-.012	-.121	.076	-.079	1			
8. Physical Disorder	-.006	.036	-.039	-.129	.058	-.119	.957*	1		
9. Social Disorder	.042	.074	.010	-.107	.085	-.043	.974*	.865*	1	
10. Childhood Poverty	.078	.082	.060	.112	-.126	.017	.163	.136		1

Note. * Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
    ** Significant at the 0.05 level

Findings Related to Environmental Factors

  Neighborhood Disorder. Respondents were asked to evaluate their childhood

neighborhood. When asked to identify the ethnicity of residents in their childhood

neighborhood, the largest percentage (42.6%) of respondents identified it as mostly White,

followed by mostly mixed (39%). Only twenty-four respondents identified their childhood

neighborhood as mostly Black (12.1%) or mostly Latino (5.7%).   The two subscales of physical

order and disorder, and social order and disorder were added together to create a total perceived

disorder score. The respondents (n=141) for total perceived disorder ranged between 14-54,

M=28.64 (SD=11.82), with lower scores meaning less disorder, this is a rather high mean score.

The respondents (n=141) physical disorder totals were fairly high M=11.70 (SD=5.38) with six

as the lowest possible score. Similarly, respondents (n=141) on the social disorder subscale

scored fairly high M=16.94 (SD=6.86) with eight being the lowest score available. Ethnicity

was correlated with perceived disorder ($r = .280$, $p < .01$), indicating that non-white respondents

had higher neighborhood disorder than white respondents. Perceived disorder was correlated

with childhood poverty ($r = .167$ $p < .05$) and education ($r = -.230$, $p < .01$). We know that

individuals from marginalized communities are more likely to have police interaction and be

arrested, and this study found a negative correlation between neighborhood disorder and the age

that women were first stopped by police and arrested ($r = -.195$, $p < .05$). Lastly, women of color

also reported being first stopped by police and arrested ($r = -.229$, $p < .01$) at earlier ages than

their white peers.

Table 3.9 *Correlation Matrix for Environmental Factors*

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Neighborhood Disorder	1					
2. Childhood Poverty	.167**	1				
3. Education	-.230*	-.046	1			
4. Ethnicity	.280*	.119	-.104	1		
5. Age at 1st arrest	-.195**	-.046	.113	.229*	1	
6. Racial composition	.029	.066	-.048	.185**	-.136	1

Note. * Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
       ** Significant at the 0.05 level

A one-way between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of ethnicity on levels of neighborhood disorder, as measured by the Perceived Disorder Scale. Participants were divided by their identified ethnicity. There was a statistically significant difference at the $p < .01$ level in neighborhood disorder scores between ethnic groups: $F(4, 135) = 9.81$, $p = .000$. Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for Whites (M=23.44, SD=10.63), African Americans (M=34.81, SD=10.09) and Latinas (M=36.79, SD=8.53), indicated that White respondents reported lower levels of neighborhood disorder than the other two ethnic groups. Additionally, White respondents reported lower physical and social disorder than African-American and Latina women.

Although no correlation was found between neighborhood disorder and empowerment, there was a negative correlation between perceived disorder and power/powerlessness, a subscale of the empowerment scale ($r = -.265$, $p < .01$), as well as power/powerlessness and physical disorder ($r = -.214$, $p = .05$), and social disorder ($r = -.290$, $p < .01$), indicating that women who

perceived greater physical and social disorder in their childhood neighborhoods, scored lower on power/powerlessness subscale.

A one-way between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of racial composition of neighborhood on levels of disorder, as measured by the Ross Perceived Disorder scale. Participants were divided into the groups according to identified racial composition of childhood neighborhood. There was a statistically significant difference at the p < .01 level in overall disorder: $F (3, 136) = 41.64$, $p = .000$, as well as physical disorder: $F (3, 136) = 36.19$, $p = .000$, and social disorder: $F (3, 136) = 37.58$, $p = .000$. Therefore, respondents who spent the majority of their childhood in neighborhoods with predominately White residents experienced significantly lower levels of disorder, both physical and social disorder, then respondents from neighborhoods with predominantly Black, Latino or mixed residents.

Childhood Poverty. Childhood poverty was positively correlated with perceived disorder and social disorder in childhood neighborhood (r= .167 and r= .177, p < .05), and negatively correlated with the likelihood of reunification (r= -.249, p < .01).

Table 3.10 *Mean Scores of Independent Variables by Ethnicity*

Measures	Ethnicity	*M*	*SD*	*p-value*
Hope	White (n=69)	46.69	9.95	.000*
	African American (n=27)	48.04	7.81	
	Latina (n=19)	50.53	7.95	
	Mixed (n=18)	53.28	9.71	
	Other (n=4)	54.25	4.92	
Empowerment	White (n=72)	82.76	8.51	
	African American (n=27)	84.67	8.90	
	Latina (n=19)	81.84	7.90	
	Mixed (n=18)	88.78	10.28	
	Other (n=4)	85.50	5.07	
General Self-efficacy	White (n=71)	60.76	13.62	
	African American (n=26)	66.76	10.59	
	Latina ((n=16)	63.00	11.21	
	Mixed (n=18)	67.44	13.29	
	Other (n=4)	66.75	.50	
Social Self-efficacy	White (n=69)	21.26	4.50	
	African American (n=27)	21.89	4.71	
	Latina (n=17)	20.00	4.49	
	Mixed (n=18)	21.56	5.07	
	Other (n=4)	17.50	3.11	
Neighborhood Disorder	White (n=72)	23.44	10.63	.000*
	African American (n=27)	34.81	10.09	
	Latina (n=19)	36.79	8.53	
	Mixed (n=18)	31.67	12.38	
	Other (n=4)	28.75	13.62	
Childhood Poverty	White (n=72)	13	18.1%	
	African American (n=27)	8	29.6%	
	Latina (n=19)	9	47.4%	
	Mixed (n=18)	6	33.3%	
	Other (n=4)	0	0%	

Finding Related to Human Capital and Social Support

The relationships between human capital (employment, residence, and illegal income) and social support (level of support, visitation, and pro-social supports) were investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. There were positive correlations among the six variables, including employment and residency ($r = .350, p < .01$), illegal income ($r = .242, p < .01$), and support ($r = .185, p < .05$). Illegal income was correlated with residency ($r = .215, p < .05$), and pro-social supports ($r = .341, p < .01$). Women who had stable housing and employment experienced more support during incarceration, anticipated increased effort into being a law-abiding citizen and when in the community had less illegal income and more pro-social supports. Additionally, frequency of visitation was correlated with level of support ($r = .424, p < .01$), and residency ($r = .251, p < .01$).

Table 3.11 *Correlation Matrix for Human Capital and Social Support Measures*

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6
Employment	1					
Residency	.350**	1				
Illegal Income	.242**	.215*	1			
Support	.185*	.247**	.165	1		
Visitation	.095	.251**	.082	.424**	1	
Pro-social Supports	.153	.060	.341**	.302**	.090	1

Note. * Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
     ** Significant at the 0.05 level

Findings Related to Mediating Variables

Identity of Persistent Offender. The relationships between persistent offender identity and personal resources and environmental factors were investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. Women who identified as persistent offender had lower hope, ($r = -.175$, $p < .05$), hope agency ($r = -.241$, $p < .01$), empowerment, ($r = -.240$, $p < .01$), optimism ($r = -.186$, $p < .05$), self-esteem ($r = -.224$, $p < .01$), and activism ($r = -.197$, $p < .05$), and lower general self-efficacy, ($r = -.241$, n = 136, p $ < .01$), with lower levels of personal resources associated with stronger identification as a persistent offender. Identity of persistent offender was not found to have a statistically significant correlation with neighborhood disorder or either of the sub-scales. Additionally, identity as persistent offender was negatively correlated with amount of monthly illegal income ($r = -.339$, n $= 139$, $p < .01$).

Identity of Career Criminal. An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the personal resources and environmental factors for women who identified as a career criminal (or not sure) and those who did not identify as a career criminal. There were no significant differences in most resources, but there was a significant difference in amount of illegal income t $(133) = 1.75$, $p = .04$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = .33, 95% CI: -.043 to .703) was small (eta squared = .02). Identity of career criminal was negatively correlated with level of support during incarceration ($r = -.173$, n = 137, $p < .05$), effort into going straight on previous discharges ($r = -.216$, n = 137, $p < .05$), and ability to visualize their future positively without criminal activity ($r = -.388$, n = 137, $p < .01$). This indicates that women who felt less supported by friends and/or family during incarceration, and

exerted less effort on past discharges to go straight, either identified as career criminal or were uncertain about this identity. Women who identified as career criminal (or not sure) were less able to visualize their future positively.

Marginalization. Marginalization was negatively correlated with human capital and social support, including support during incarceration ($r= -.267$, $p < .05$), and employment ($r= -.319$, $p < .01$). Additionally, the individual variables of this constructed variable were also correlated with personal resources, environmental factors, human capital and social support. Level of education was correlated with empowerment ($r= .211$, $p < .05$), general self-efficacy ($r= .258$, $p < .01$), perceived disorder ($r= -.230$, $p < .01$), support during incarceration ($r= .258$, $p < .01$), pro-social support ($r= .199$, $p < .05$), and employment ($r= .269$, $p < .01$); and ethnicity was correlated with perceived disorder ($r= .280$, $p < .01$).

Poverty. Poverty was negatively correlated with personal resources including hope ($r= -.172$, $p < .05$), and general self-efficacy ($r= -.283$, $p < .01$). Financial deficits were also negatively correlated with human capital and social support including visitation during incarceration ($r= -.227$, $p < .01$), pro-social supports ($r= .185$, $p < .05$), and monthly illegal income ($r= -.207$, $p < .05$). Current poverty was positively correlated with childhood poverty ($r= .557$, $p < .01$), having children ($r= .309$, $p < .01$), and negatively correlated with the likelihood of reunification ($r= -.281$, $p < .01$). Therefore, women with experiences of poverty were mothers with lower hope and self-efficacy who received less visitation during incarceration. Additionally, they experienced childhood poverty, obtained more income illegally, had fewer pro-social supports and were less likely to believe they would be reunited with their children upon release.

Table 3.12 *Correlation Matrix of Mediating Variables*

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Persistent Offender	1						
2. Career Criminal	.091	1					
3. Marginalization	.050	.026	1				
4. Education	-.171**	-.106	-.713*	1			
5. Illegal Income	-.339*	-.135	-.081	.066	1		
6. Supported	-.046	-.173**	-.287**	.258*	.165	1	
7. Pro-social Supports	.134	.121	.203	-.199**	-.341*	-302*	1

Note. * Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
 ** Significant at the 0.05 level

Spirituality. Ethnicity and age were associated with praying during stressful times ($r = .181$, $p < .05$, and $r = .194$, $p < .05$), and older women were more likely to seek support from clergy during difficult times ($r = .242$, $p < .01$). There was a small, positive correlation between praying during stressful times and general self-efficacy ($r = .212$, $p < .05$), and seeking support from clergy ($r = .412$, $p < .01$).

Findings Related to Dependent Variables

Agency for Desistance. The Personal Agency for Desistance Questionnaire was constructed specifically for justice-involved respondents and ranged between 12 and 84. Respondents (n=135) scored between 35 and 84 with an agency for desistance mean score of 67.16 (SD= 10.27). Agency for desistance was correlated with anticipated desistance ($r = .556$,

p <.01), but not with redemptive self. Agency for desistance was correlated with personal resources including hope, empowerment and general self-efficacy (*r* = .435, *r* = .448, and *r* = .432, *p* <.01). Agency for desistance was correlated with all six measures for human capital and social support including support and visitation during incarceration (*r* = .197, *r* = .190, *p* <.05), pro-social supports (*r* = -.427, *p* <.01), employment, monthly illegal income and housing stability (*r* = .212, *p* <.05, *r* = .402, *r* = .267, *p* <.01). It was additionally correlated with previous effort to go straight (*r* = .244, *p* <.01), respondent's ability to visualize their future positively (*r* = .376, *p* <.01) and efforts into being law-abiding citizens (*r* = .288, *p* <.01). Agency for desistance was correlated with identity measures, including persistent offender identity (*r* = -.385, *p* <.01), and identity as career criminal (*r* = -.248, *p* <.01). Agency for desistance was also correlated with spirituality including likelihood to pray (*r* = .360, *p* <.01) and seek support from clergy (*r* = .339, *p* <.01).

A one-way between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of ethnicity on agency for desistance, as measured by the Personal Agency for Desistance Questionnaire. Participants were divided by their identified ethnicity. There was no statistically significant difference in agency for desistance scores between ethnic groups.

Anticipated Desistance. Respondents were asked to estimate their chances of avoiding crime when released from very poor to very good. The majority of respondents (51.8%) reported their chances as very good and only one respondent reported her chances as very poor.

Anticipated desistance was correlated with personal resources including hope, empowerment and general self-efficacy (*r* = .327, *r* = .335, and *r* = .414, *p* <.01). Anticipated desistance was correlated with ability to visualize future positively (*r*= .333, *p* < .01), and past effort into going straight (*r*= .288, *p* < .01) and effort into becoming law-abiding (*r* = .229, *p*

<.01). Anticipated desistance was correlated with human capital and social support including level of support (r= .303, p < .01), pro-social supports (r= -.419, p < .01), housing stability (r= .231, p < .01), and amount of illegal income (r= -.234, p < .01). Additionally, anticipated desistance was correlated with the identity of persistent offender (r = -.348, p <.01) and spirituality including likely to pray (r = .204, p <.05), and seek support from clergy (r = .252, p <.01).

Therefore, women who anticipated higher chances of avoiding criminal lifestyle had higher hope, empowerment, and self-efficacy, felt more supported during incarceration, and reported greater housing stability and less peers involved in criminal activity in the community.

Findings Related to Narratives

The qualitative data was used to measure the redemptive narrative. Narratives that did not contain a redemptive script were scored as zero, and narratives that did contain a redemptive script were scored as one. Redemptive narratives that included enhanced agency, enhanced communion or ultimate concern, could potentially receive one additional point for each. The range for narratives were zero to four. Of the 138 respondents, 69 (48.9%) were condemnation, and 69 (48.9%) were redemptive narratives. Redemptive narratives could also potentially be scored for additional movement within the narrative; 16 participants (11%) were scored two for redemptive script and enhanced agency, eight participants (5.7%) were scored for redemptive script and enhanced communion, sixteen (11%) were scored for ultimate concern, and only three participants (2.1%) contained redemption plus all three enhanced aspects and were scored as fours.

Table 3.13 *Narratives*

Narrative Type (score)	N	%
Condemnation (zero)	69	48.9%
Redemption (one)	69	48.9%
Redemption – Plus		
Enhanced Agency (two)	16	11.0%
Enhanced Communion (two)	8	5.5%
Ultimate Concern (two)	16	11.0%
Redemption plus all three (four)	3	2.1%

Narratives were positively correlated with hope ($r= .192$), hope agency ($r=.195$), empowerment ($r= .173$) and childhood poverty ($r= .206$) at the $p < .05$ level. Redemptive narratives were correlated with social support including frequency of visitation ($r= .221, p < .01$). Narratives were correlated with optimism including ability to visualize future positively ($r= .262, p < .01$), and effort into being a law-abiding citizen ($r= .182, p < .05$). Narratives were negatively correlated with identity as career criminal ($r= -.264, p < .01$). Therefore, women who anticipated increased effort into being law-abiding upon release, had higher hope, visitation frequency and increased ability to visualize their future positively and did not identify with the label of career criminal had higher narrative scores.

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the agency for desistance scores for condemnation and redemptive narratives. There was a significant difference in agency for desistance scores for condemnation narratives (M =64.40, SD = 10.80) and redemptive narratives (M= 69.45, SD = 8.97; $t (130) = -2.91, p = .004$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = -5.04, 95% CI: -8.47 to -1.62) was moderate (eta squared = .06). Women with redemptive narratives had higher agency for desistance.

Redemptive narratives. Of the 69 redemptive narratives, 46.3% (n=32) were White

respondents, 15.9% (n=11) were African American respondents, 20.2% (n=14) were Latina

respondents, and 15.9% (n=11) were either mixed or other respondents. Of the 69 redemptive

narratives 31.8% (n=22) strongly disagree with identifying as persistent offender, 26% (n=18)

disagree with identifying as persistent offender, 34.7% (n=24) agree with identifying as

persistent offender, and 7.2% (n=5) strongly agree with identifying as persistent offender. Fifteen

respondents received additional points for enhanced agency, ten received additional points for

enhanced communion and sixteen respondents received additional points for ultimate concern.

The three respondents who were scored a four (all additional points) were 37, 36, and 27 years

old. Two were of mixed ethnicity and one was Caucasian. Two estimated their chances of

avoiding crime as "poor" and one as "good". When asked about support during incarceration and

supports at home, two reported not feeling supported at all and one reported feeling sometimes

supported and sometimes not, and two reported all of their supports at home are involved in

criminal activity and one reported most are involved. These three women had been incarcerated

2-4 times, 5-7 times and 8+ previous incarcerations with lengthy criminal careers of 15 and 16

years.

> I was kicked out of program – but I didn't quit – I got my HS diploma – I felt happy and
> proud.

> My mom was an addict – She died when I was 9 ½ -- I ran away – the streets raised me –
> I had bad abusive relationship – I felt scared for my life –my family didn't want anything
> to do with me – I came to prison – it has been the best 3 years of my life – I am glad to be
> away from him – I found the *real* me.

> I got a 2nd chance at a job – I felt happy – I had support and friends – I relapsed – and I
> lost the job – I learned to take care of myself, learned not to isolate; I got out of jail –
> relapsed several times – went on a crime spree – I was reckless – I straightened up for 8
> months -- but then there was family stress – I went to therapy – I relapsed – I wanted to
> kill myself rather then [sic] go back – I finally accepted my fate –I started getting clean --
> - I came back to jail – my friends were disappointed – I thought 'enough is enough' – I

began to make changes – I began to handle problems and take psych meds for my moods – I am now concerned with getting healthy, mentally physically and emotionally.

I met a boy – got pregnant – I felt abandoned – my son was born – I was happy – then disaster hit – I came to prison – My life began to change – I learned from my mistakes before it was too late – I am beginning a new story – I am a new woman.

Condemnation narratives. Of the 69 condemnation narratives, 56.5% (n=39) were White respondents, 21.7% (n=15) were African American respondents, 7.2% (n=5) were Latina respondents, and 14.4% (n=10) identified as mixed or other. Of the 69 condemnation narratives, 23.1% (n=16) strongly disagree with identifying as persistent offender, 31.8% (n=22) disagree with identifying as persistent offender, 36.2% (n=25) agree with identifying as persistent offender, and 8.6% (n=6) strongly agree with identifying as persistent offender. The only four women who believed they were a career criminal had condemnation narratives.

I had a baby – DCF took my baby– I got my baby back – I haven't seen her in 10 years— I still beat myself up – I was lost and still am; I got clean for 10 years – I got pregnant – and met soul mate – I got married – and he died – I gave up – I would get high to numb the pain – then I came to jail.

 "I honestly think I'll be dead in 10 years. I would like to have a family with kids and be in a good space but I don't know how I can even picture myself in that way." (23 years old respondent)

"In ten years – I hope not to be around. I'm ready to take it down and go visit my loved ones, my mom, brother, dad and my baby. I will probably freeze to death this winter when I get out."

Table 3.14 Correlation Table of Dependent Variables and Independent Variables

	Narrative	Anticipated Desistance	Agency for Desistance
Personal Resources			
Hope	.192*	.327**	.435**
Empowerment	.173*	.335**	.448**
General Self-Efficacy	.110	.414**	.432**
Social Self-Efficacy	.117	.134	.086
Environmental Factors			
Perceived Disorder	.076	-.076	-.088
Childhood Poverty	.206*	-.113	-.019

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
* * Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Findings Related to Research Question 1

How do personal resources and environmental factors correlate with agency for desistance, anticipated desistance, and the redemptive self in justice-involved women? Analyses will be run for each dependent variable (agency for desistance, anticipated desistance and redemptive self) separately for each hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1a: Redemptive Self. Justice-involved women with higher personal resources (hope, empowerment and self-efficacy) and lower environmental disorder (neighborhood disorder and childhood poverty) will have higher redemptive self. The relationship between narrative scores and personal resources and environmental disorder was investigated using the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of assumptions. There were small, positive correlations between narratives and hope (r= .192, p < .05), hope agency (r=.195), empowerment (r= .173, p < .05), and visitation (r = .221, p < .01).

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the personal resources and environmental factors scores for condemnation and redemptive narratives. There was a significant difference in scores for condemnation narratives and redemptive narratives and personal resources, including; hope (M= 45.99 and M= 50.88), hope agency (M= 21.59 and M= 24.97), empowerment (M= 81.84 and M= 85.74), general self-efficacy (M= 59.44 and M= 66.19), and perceived disorder (M= 26.23 and M= 30.91).

Table 3.15 *Independent t-Test on Personal Resources and Environmental Factors*

Variable	Redemptive Narrative			Condemnation Narrative		
	M	*SD*	*t*	*M*	*SD*	*p*-value
Hope	50.88	8.19	-3.10	45.99	10.01	.00
Empowerment	85.74	9.19	-2.67	81.84	7.92	.01
General Self-efficacy	66.19	11.13	-3.19	59.44	13.20	.00
Social Self-efficacy	21.58	4.72	-1.32	20.54	4.37	.19
Perceived Disorder	30.91	11.59	-2.34	26.23	11.87	.02
Childhood Poverty						
Yes (n = 34)		N = 21 (30.4%)			N = 13 (18.8%)	
No (n = 104)		N = 48 (69.6%)			N = 56 (81.2%)	

Logistical regression was performed to assess the impact of personal resources and environmental factors variables on the likelihood that narratives would be condemnation or redemptive. The model contained six independent variables (hope, empowerment, gse, sse, perceived disorder, and childhood poverty). The full model containing all variables was statistically significant, $X^2 = 19.04$, *p* = .004, 6 *df* indicating that the model was able to distinguish between narratives that were condemnation and redemptive. The model as a whole

explained 18.4% (Nagelkerke R^2) of the variance in narratives, and correctly classified 67.2% of cases. Only one of the independent variables made a unique statistically significant contribution to the model (perceived disorder), recording an odds ratio of 1.04. This indicated that respondents who reported neighborhood disorder were one time more likely to have condemnation narrative than those who had less neighborhood disorder, controlling for all other factors in the model.

Additionally, logistical regression was performed to assess the impact of personal resources and environmental factors, as well as including the six measures for human capital and social support, on the likelihood that narratives would be condemnation or redemptive. This model contained twelve independent variables (hope, empowerment, gse, sse, perceived disorder, childhood poverty, and human capital and social support measures). The full model containing all variables was statistically significant, $X^2 = 23.87$, $p = .021$, indicating that the model was able to distinguish between narratives that were condemnation and redemptive. The model as a whole explained 24.4% (Nagelkerke R^2) of the variance in narratives, and correctly classified 66.9% of cases. Perceived neighborhood disorder was the only independent variables that made a unique statistically significant contribution to the model, recording an odds ratio of 1.04. This indicated that respondents who reported neighborhood disorder were one time more likely to have condemnation narrative than those who had less neighborhood disorder, controlling for all other factors in the model. Hypothesis 1a was supported.

Table 3.16 *Logistical Regression Predicting Likelihood of Redemptive Narrative*

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	P	Odds Ratio	95% C.I. for Odds Ratio	
							Lower	Upper
Hope	.01	.03	.06	1	.81	1.01	.95	1.07
Empowerment	.01	.03	.21	1	.64	1.02	.95	1.08
GSE	.03	.02	1.63	1	.20	1.03	.98	1.08
SSE	.06	.05	1.31	1	.25	1.06	.96	1.18
Neighborhood Disorder	.04	.02	4.36	1	.04	1.04	1.00	1.08
Childhood Poverty	-.86	.54	2.56	1	.11	.42	.15	1.22
Social Support								
Support	.01	.23	.00	1	.97	1.01	.64	1.59
Visitation	.24	.23	1.05	1	.31	1.27	.80	2.00
Pro-social Supports	.11	.30	.13	1	.72	1.12	.62	2.00
Human Capital								
Employment	-.14	.20	.46	1	.50	.87	.60	1.29
Residency	.40	.28	2.01	1	.16	1.49	.86	2.57
Monthly income	.06	.32	.04	1	.85	1.06	.57	1.98

Hypothesis 1b: Agency for Desistance. Justice-involved women with higher personal resources (hope, empowerment and self-efficacy) and lower environmental disorder (neighborhood disorder and childhood poverty) will have higher agency for desistance. The relationship between agency for desistance and personal resources and environmental factors was investigated using the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of assumptions. Agency for desistance was positively correlated with personal resources, including: hope ($r = .435$, $p < .05$), empowerment ($r = .448$, $p < .05$), and general self-efficacy ($r = .432$, $p < .05$). Agency for desistance was also correlated with human capital: employment ($r = .212$, $p < .01$), residency ($r = .267$, $p < .05$) and illegal income ($r = .402$, $p < .05$); and social support: pro-social supports ($r = -.427$, $p < .05$), level of support ($r = .197$, $p < .01$) and frequency of visitation ($r = .190$, $p < .01$). Agency for

desistance was not correlated with environmental factors, including perceived neighborhood

disorder or subscales, or childhood poverty. Therefore, women who had higher personal

resources had increased agency for desistance as well as human capital and social support.

Table 3.17 *Correlation Matrix for Agency for Desistance* (n = 135)

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Agency Desist	1										
2. Hope	.435*	1									
3. Empowerment	.448*	.545*	1								
4. GSE	.432*	.551*	.570*	1							
5. SSE	.086	.390*	.296*	.298*	1						
6. Support	.197**	.314*	.223*	.286*	.054	1					
7. Visitation	.190**	.261*	.251*	.260*	.114	.424*	1				
8. Pro-Social	-.427*	-.255*	-.221*	-.345*	-.045	-.302*	-.090	1			
9. Employment	.212**	.253*	.348*	.317*	.344*	.185**	.095	-.153	1		
10. Residency	.267*	.232*	.206**	.257*	.065	.247*	.251*	-.060	-.350*	1	
11. Illegal inc	.402*	.138	.212**	.270*	.044	.165	.082	-.341*	.242*	.215**	1

Note. * Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
 ** Significant at the 0.05 level

Hierarchical multiple regression was used to assess the ability of personal resources and

environmental factors to predict the value of agency for desistance, after controlling for age,

marital status, and length of criminal career. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure no

violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity and homoscedasticity.

Control variables were entered at Step 1, explaining 6% of the variance in agency for desistance.

After entry of the personal resources and environmental factors at Step 2 the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 44.3%, $F (15, 94) = 4.98$, $p < .001$. The personal resources and environmental factors explained an additional 38% of the variance in agency for desistance, after controlling for age, marital status and length of criminal career, R^2 change $= .35$, F change $(12, 94) = 5.35$, $p < .001$. In the final model, only hope, illegal monthly income and pro-social supports were statistically significant, with illegal monthly income recording a higher beta value (beta $= .255$, $p = .006$) than hope (beta $= .240$, $p = .026$) and pro-social supports (beta $= -.195$, $p = .046$).

Table 3.18 *Results of Hierarchical Multiple Regression: Agency for Desistance*

Predictor	R	R^2	ΔR^2	Beta	F
Step 1					
Control Variables	.25	.06	.04		2.35
Step 2	.67	.44	.35		4.98**
Hope				.24	
Empowerment				.21	
GSE				.07	
SSE				-.10	
Perceived Disorder				-.02	
Childhood Poverty				.02	
Supports				-.08	
Visitation				.04	
Pro-social supports				-.20	
Employment				-.02	
Illegal income				.26	
Residency				.10	

Note. N = 135. **p < .001.

Hypothesis 1c: Anticipated Desistance. Justice-involved women with higher personal resources (hope, empowerment, and self-efficacy) and lower environmental disorder

(neighborhood disorder and childhood poverty) will have higher anticipated desistance. The relationship between anticipated desistance and personal resources and environmental factors was investigated using the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of assumptions. Anticipated desistance was correlated with personal resources, including: hope ($r= .327$, $p < .01$), empowerment ($r= .335$, $p < .01$), and general self-efficacy ($r= .414$, $p < .01$). It was not correlated with environmental factors including perceived disorder and childhood poverty. Anticipated desistance was correlated with human capital and social support including: level of support during incarceration ($r= .303$, $p < .01$); residence ($r= .231$, $p < .01$); pro-social supports ($r = -.419$, $p < .01$), amount of income obtained through illegal activity ($r= -.234$, $p < .01$). Anticipated desistance was correlated only with education ($r= .216$, $p < .05$), but not ethnicity or current poverty.

Table 3.19 *Correlation Matrix for Anticipated Desistance* (n = 135)

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Antic. Desist	1										
2. Hope	.327*	1									
3. Empowerment	.335*	.545*	1								
4. GSE	.414*	.551*	.570*	1							
5. SSE	.134	.390*	.296*	.298*	1						
6. Support	.303*	.314*	.223*	.286*	.054	1					
7. Visitation	.076	.261*	.251*	.260*	.114	.424*	1				
8. Pro-Social	-.419*	-.255*	-.221*	-.345*	-.045	-.302*	-.090	1			
9. Employment	.145	.253*	.348*	.317*	.344*	.185**	.095	-.153	1		

10. Residency	.231*	.232*	.206**	.257*	.065	.247*	.251*	-.060	-.350*	1
11. Illegal inc	-.234*	.138	.212**	.270*	.044	.165	.082	-.341*	.242*	.215**	1

Note. * Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
      ** Significant at the 0.05 level

Hierarchical multiple regression was used to assess the ability of personal resources and environmental factors to predict anticipated desistance, after controlling for age, marital status, and length of criminal career. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity and homoscedasticity. Control variables were entered at Step 1, explaining 9% of the variance in anticipated desistance. After entry of the personal resources and environmental factors at Step 2 the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 36%, $F (15, 94) = 3.53$, $p < .001$. The personal resources and environmental factors explained an additional 27% of the variance in anticipated desistance, after controlling for age, marital status and length of criminal career, R^2 change $= .27$, F change $(12, 94) = 3.29$, $p = .001$. In the final model, only pro-social supports were statistically significant, with a beta value (beta $= -.253$, $p = .016$). Hypothesis 1c was supported.

Table 3.20 *Results of Hierarchical Multiple Regression: Anticipated Desistance*

Predictor	R	R^2	ΔR^2	Beta	F
Step 1					
Control Variables	.30	.09	.07		3.53**
Step 2	.61	.37	.27		3.71**
Hope				.09	
Empowerment				.13	
GSE				.17	
SSE				.02	
Perceived Disorder				-.03	
Childhood Poverty				-.12	
Supports				.16	
Visitation				-.16	
Pro-social supports				-.26	
Employment				-.14	
Illegal income				.02	
Residency				.16	

Note. N = 141. **p < .001.

Findings Related to Research Question 2

How effectively will self-identity, and marginalization mediate the effect of personal resources and environmental factors on the redemptive self, agency for desistance and anticipated desistance for justice-involved women? In order to test for mediation, a four-step analysis was utilized.

Hypothesis 2a: Agency for Desistance. Self-identity and marginalized status of justice-involved women will mediate the relationship between the personal resources and environmental factors and agency for desistance, anticipated desistance and redemptive self.

In step one, regression was used to assess the ability of personal resources and environmental factors, to predict agency for desistance for path c alone, after controlling for age, marital status and length of criminal career. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure no

violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity and homoscedasticity.

Control variables were entered at Step 1, explaining 6% of the variance in agency for desistance. After entry of the personal resources and environmental factors at Step 2 the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 39.6%, F (14, 95) = 4.45, p < .001. The personal resources and environmental factors explained an additional 31% of the variance in agency for desistance, after controlling for age, marital status and length of criminal career, R^2 change = .333, F change (11, 95) = 4.77, p < .001. In the final model, only hope, empowerment and pro-social supports were statistically significant, with pro-social supports recording a higher beta value (beta = .271, p = .006) than hope (beta = .221, p = .046) and empowerment (beta = .236, p = .037).

In step two, regression was used to assess the ability of personal resources and environmental factors, to predict identity measures and marginalization to test for path a. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity and homoscedasticity. The model was statistically significant for personal resources and environmental factors on persistent offender identity F (12, 117) = 2.71, p = .003, and marginalization F (12, 50) = 4.07, p < .001, not statistically significant for criminal career F (12, 117) = .81, p = .644.

In step three, regression was used to assess the ability of identity measures and marginalization, to predict agency for desistance, to test the significance of path b alone. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity and homoscedasticity. The model was statistically significant for identity measures, marginalization, and agency for desistance, F (5, 128) = 7.10, p < .001.

And finally, in step four, hierarchical multiple regression was used to assess the ability of personal resources and environmental factors, identity measures and marginalization, to predict agency for desistance, after controlling for age, marital status and length of criminal career. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity and homoscedasticity. Control variables were entered at Step 1, explaining 6% of the variance in agency for desistance. After entry of the personal resources and environmental factors, self-identity, and marginalization at Step 2 the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 52.2%, $F (20, 89) = 4.86$, $p < .001$. The personal resources and environmental factors, identity measures, and marginalization measures explained an additional 46% of the variance in agency for desistance, after controlling for age, marital status and length of criminal career, R^2 change = .522, F change $(17, 89) = 5.03$, $p < .001$. In the final model, only hope, pro-social supports, and identity as persistent offender were statistically significant, with a higher beta value for persistent offender identity (beta = -.239, $p = .008$) than hope (beta = .225, $p = .034$) and pro-social supports (beta = -.201, $p = .032$). Hypothesis 2a was supported.

Table 3.21 *Results of Hierarchical Multiple Regression: Agency for Desistance*

Predictor	R	R^2	ΔR^2	Beta	F
Step 1					
Control Variables	.25	.06	.04		2.35
Step 2	.72	.52	.41		4.86**
Hope				.23	
Empowerment				.18	
GSE				.05	
SSE				-.08	
Perceived Disorder				-.04	
Childhood Poverty				-.01	
Supports				-.09	
Visitation				.09	
Pro-social supports				-.20	
Employment				-.00	
Illegal income				.18	
Residency				.10	
Persistent offender Identity				-.24	
Career Criminal Identity				-.15	
Ethnicity				.04	
Education				-.05	
Current Poverty				.09	

Note. N = 135. **p < .001.

Hypothesis 2b: Anticipated Desistance. In step one, regression was used to assess the ability of personal resources and environmental factors, to predict anticipated desistance for path c alone, after controlling for age, marital status and length of criminal career. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity and homoscedasticity. Control variables were entered at Step 1, explaining 9% of the variance in anticipated desistance. After entry of the personal resources and environmental factors at Step 2 the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 36%, F $(14, 95) = 3.82, p < .001$. The personal resources and environmental factors explained an

additional 36% of the variance in anticipated desistance, after controlling for age, marital status and length of criminal career, R^2 change = .269, F change (11, 95) = 3.63, p < .001. In the final model, only pro-social support was statistically significant, recording a beta value (beta = .253, p = .012).

In step two, regression was used to assess the ability of personal resources and environmental factors, to predict identity measures and marginalization to test for path a. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity and homoscedasticity. The model was statistically significant for personal resources and environmental factors on persistent offender identity F (12, 117) = 2.71, p = .003, and marginalization F (12, 50) = 4.07, p < .001, not statistically significant for criminal career F (12, 117) = .81, p = .644.

In step three, regression was used to assess the ability of identity measures and marginalization, to predict anticipated desistance, to test the significance of path b alone. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity and homoscedasticity. The model was statistically significant for identity measures, marginalization, and anticipated desistance, F (5, 130) = 4.76, p < .001.

And finally, in step four, hierarchical multiple regression was used to assess the ability of personal resources and environmental factors, identity measures and marginalization, to predict anticipated desistance, after controlling for age, marital status and length of criminal career. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity and homoscedasticity. Control variables were entered at Step 1, explaining 9% of the variance in anticipated desistance. After entry of the personal resources and environmental factors, identity measures and marginalization at Step 2 the total variance

explained by the model as a whole was 43.9%, $F_{(20, 89)} = 3.48$, $p < .001$. The personal

resources and environmental factors, identity measures, and marginalization explained an

additional 35% of the variance in anticipated desistance, after controlling for age, marital status

and length of criminal career, R^2 change $= .348$, F change $(17, 89) = 3.25$, $p < .001$. In the final

model, only marital status, pro-social supports, and persistent offender identity were statistically

significant, with both pro-social supports and persistent offender identity recording the highest

beta values (beta $= -.284$, $p < .006$ and $< .004$) then marital status (beta $= -.205$, $p = .019$).

Hypothesis 2b was supported.

Table 3.22 *Results of Hierarchical Multiple Regression: Anticipated Desistance*

Predictor	R	R^2	ΔR^2	Beta	F
Step 1					
Control Variables	.30	.09	.07		3.53**
Step 2	.66	.44	.31		3.48**
Hope				.08	
Empowerment				.10	
GSE				.16	
SSE				.05	
Perceived Disorder				-.04	
Childhood Poverty				-.15	
Supports				.17	
Visitation				-.10	
Pro-social supports				-.28	
Employment				-.13	
Illegal income				-.05	
Residency				.18	
Persistent offender Identity				-.28	
Career Criminal Identity				.03	
Ethnicity				-.06	
Education				-.03	
Current Poverty				.07	

Note. N = 141. **p < .001.

Hypothesis 2c: Redemptive self. In step one, regression was used to assess the ability of personal resources and environmental factors, to predict redemptive self for path c alone, after controlling for age, marital status and length of criminal career. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity and homoscedasticity. Control variables were entered at Step 1, explaining 1% of the variance in redemptive narratives. After entry of the personal resources and environmental factors at Step 2 the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 13.7%, $F (14, 95) = 1.07$, $p = .39$. The personal resources and environmental factors explained an additional 13% of the variance in redemptive narratives, after controlling for age, marital status and length of criminal career, R^2 change $= .126$, F change $(11, 95) = 1.26$, $p = .258$. In the final model, only level of support while incarcerated was statistically significant, with a beta value (beta $= .246$, $p = .027$).

In step two, regression was used to assess the ability of personal resources and environmental factors, to predict identity measures and marginalization to test for path a. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity and homoscedasticity. The model was statistically significant for personal resources and environmental factors on persistent offender identity $F (12, 117) = 2.71$, $p = .003$, and marginalization $F (12, 50) = 4.07$, $p < .001$, not statistically significant for criminal career $F (12, 117) = .81$, $p = .644$.

In step three, regression was used to assess the ability of identity measures and marginalization, to predict redemptive narrative, to test the significance of path b alone. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity and homoscedasticity. The model was statistically significant for identity measures, marginalization and redemptive narratives, $F (5, 128) = 2.53$, $p = .032$.

And finally, in step four, multiple regression was used to assess the ability of personal resources and environmental factors, identity measures and marginalization, to predict redemptive narrative, after controlling for age, marital status and length of criminal career. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity and homoscedasticity. Control variables were entered at Step 1, explaining only 1% of the variance in redemptive narratives. After entry of the personal resources and environmental factors, self-identity, and marginalization Step 2 the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 24.6%, F (20, 89) = 1.45, p = .122. The personal resources and environmental factors, identity measures, and marginalization measures explained an additional 24% of the variance in redemptive narratives, after controlling for age, marital status and length of criminal career, R^2 change = .235, F change (17, 89) = 1.63, p = .073. In the final model, only childhood poverty and career criminal identity were statistically significant, with a higher beta value for career criminal identity (beta = -.327, p = .001) than childhood poverty (beta = .242, p = .022). Hypothesis 2c was not supported.

Table 3.23 *Results of Hierarchical Multiple Regression: Redemptive Self*

Predictor	R	R^2	ΔR^2	Beta	F
Step 1					
Control Variables	.10	.01	-.02		.373
Step 2	.50	.25	.08		1.44
Hope				.17	
Empowerment				.07	
GSE				-.01	
SSE				.03	
Perceived Disorder				.12	
Childhood Poverty				.24	
Supports				-.18	
Visitation				.22	
Pro-social supports				.05	
Employment				-.14	
Illegal income				-.00	
Residency				-.04	
Persistent offender Identity				.06	
Career Criminal Identity				-.33	
Ethnicity				-.01	
Education				.03	
Current Poverty				-.09	

Note. N = 138. **p < .001.

Logistical regression was performed to assess the impact of personal resources and environmental factors, self-identity, and marginalization on the likelihood that narratives would be condemnation or redemptive. The model contained seventeen independent variables (hope, empowerment, gse, sse, perceived disorder, childhood poverty, human capital and social support measures, persistent offender identity, criminal career identity, and marginalization (3). The full model containing all predictors was statistically significant, X^2 (17, n =118) = 49.07, p < .001, indicating that the model was able to distinguish between narratives that were condemnation and redemptive. The model as a whole explained between 34% (Cox and Snell R square) and 45.4%

(Nagelkerke R^2) of the variance in narratives, and correctly classified 78% of cases. As shown in Table 1, only two of the independent variables made a unique statistically significant contribution to the model (perceived neighborhood disorder and career criminal identity). The strongest predictor of redemptive narrative was perceived neighborhood disorder recording an odds ratio of 1.06. This indicated that respondents who reported perceived neighborhood disorder were seven time more likely to have condemnation narrative than those who did not experience neighborhood disorder, controlling for all other factors in the model. The odds ratio of .020 for career criminal identity was less than 1. Hypothesis 2c was only partially supported with the logistical regression.

Table 3.24 *Logistical Regression Predicting Likelihood of Redemptive Narrative*

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	P	Odds Ratio	95% C.I. for Odds Ratio	
							Lower	Upper
Hope	.05	.04	1.75	1	.19	1.05	.98	1.14
Empowerment	.01	.04	.02	1	.90	1.01	.93	1.08
GSE	.04	.03	1.74	1	.19	1.04	.98	1.10
SSE	.03	.06	.22	1	.64	1.03	.91	1.16
Neighborhood Disorder	.06	.03	5.59	1	.02	1.06	1.01	1.12
Childhood Poverty	1.25	.66	3.56	1	.06	3.47	.95	12.66
Social Support								
Support	-.13	.28	.22	1	.64	.88	.51	1.51
Visitation	.37	.28	1.76	1	.19	1.44	.84	2.47
Pro-social Supports	.29	.35	.66	1	.42	1.33	.67	2.65
Human Capital								
Employment	-.24	.24	.99	1	.32	.79	.67	2.65
Residency	.41	.32	1.62	1	.20	1.50	.80	2.80
Monthly income	.03	.38	.01	1	.32	1.04	.49	2.20
Identity								
Persistent Offender	-.18	.29	.37	1	.55	.84	.48	1.48
Career Criminal	-3.92	1.28	9.36	1	.00	.02	.00	.24
Marginalization								
Ethnicity	-.26	.18	2.03	1	.15	.77	.54	1.10
Education	-.28	.33	.71	1	.40	.76	.40	1.44
Current Poverty	-.14	.61	.05	1	.82	.87	.26	2.89

Findings Related to Question 3

What other factors will be correlated with personal resources and environmental factors and the redemptive self, agency for desistance and anticipated desistance for justice-involved women? Multiple incarcerations, age at first arrest, ability to visualize future positively without criminal activity, future efforts into law-abiding and previous attempts to go straight will also be correlated with personal resources and environmental factors and the three dependent variables.

Hypotheses 3a-3e: Agency for desistance. Partial correlation was used to explore the relationship between agency for desistance (scale) and the number of incarcerations, age at first arrest, ability to visualize future positively without criminal activity, past effort at going straight, and anticipated effort into being law-abiding, while controlling for age, length of criminal career and marital status. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity. There was a medium, positive, partial correlation between the ability to visualize the future positively without criminal behavior and agency for desistance, ($r = .36$, $p = .000$), small, positive, partial correlations between previous efforts to go straight ($r = .22$, $p = .025$), future effort into law-abiding behavior ($r = .25$, $p = .008$), and negative correlation between number of previous incarcerations ($r = -.208$, $p = .030$) and agency for desistance.

To test hypothesis 3a-3e, hierarchical multiple regressions were used to assess the ability of personal resources and environmental factors, multiple incarcerations, age at first arrest, positively visualizing future, future efforts into law-abiding and previous attempts to go straight to predict agency for desistance (scale), after controlling for age, marital status, and length of criminal career as covariates. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity and homoscedasticity. Control variables were entered at Step 1, explaining 6% of the variance in agency for desistance. After entry of the personal resources and environmental factors, and other factors at Step 2 the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 51.1%, $F(20, 89) = 4.64$, $p < .001$. The personal resources and environmental factors, and other factors explained an additional 45% of the variance in agency for desistance, after controlling for age, marital status and length of criminal career, R^2 change $= .448$, F change $(17, 89) = 4.79$, $p < .001$. In the final model, only hope,

monthly illegal income, visualization of future positively, and pro-social supports were

statistically significant, with monthly illegal income recording a higher beta value (beta = .252, *p*

= .005) than pro-social supports (beta = -.193, *p* = .049), hope (beta = .228, *p* = .029), and

visualization of future (beta = .187, *p* = .039). Hypotheses 3a-3c were supported for agency for

desistance.

Table 3.25 *Results of Hierarchical Multiple Regression: Agency for Desistance*

Predictor	*R*	*R²*	ΔR²	*Beta*	*F*
Step 1					
Control Variables	.25	.06	.04		2.35
Step 2	.72	.51	.40		4.65**
Hope				.23	
Empowerment				.16	
GSE				.02	
SSE				-.11	
Perceived Disorder				-.02	
Childhood Poverty				.02	
Supports				-.09	
Visitation				.03	
Pro-social supports				-.20	
Employment				-.04	
Illegal income				.26	
Residency				.08	
Previous Incarcerations				-.13	
Age at 1ˢᵗ arrest				.04	
Visualize future				.19	
Law-abiding				.14	
Previous attempts				.02	

Note. N = 135. **p < .001.

Hypothesis 3a-3e: Anticipated desistance. Partial correlation was used to explore the

relationship between anticipated desistance (Question 1) and the number of incarcerations, age at

first arrest, ability to visualize future positively without criminal activity, past effort at going straight, and anticipated effort into being law-abiding, while controlling for age, length of criminal career and marital status. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity. There was a medium, positive, partial correlation between the ability to visualize the future positively without criminal behavior and anticipated desistance, ($r = .31$, $p = .001$), and small, positive, partial correlations between previous efforts to go straight behavior ($r = .25$, $p = .008$), future effort into law-abiding behavior ($r = .19$, $p = .044$), and number of previous incarcerations ($r = -.191$, $p = .024$).

To test 3a-3e, hierarchical multiple regression was used to assess the ability of personal resources and environmental factors, multiple incarcerations, age at first arrest, positively visualizing future, future efforts into law-abiding, and previous attempts to go straight on anticipated desistance, after controlling for age, marital status, and length of criminal career. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity and homoscedasticity. Control variables were entered at Step 1, explaining 9% of the variance in anticipated desistance. After entry of the personal resources and environmental factors, and other factors at Step 2 the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 42.2%, $F (20, 89) = 3.25$, $p < .001$. The personal resources and environmental factors, and other factors explained an additional 33% of the variance in anticipated desistance, after controlling for age, marital status and length of criminal career, R^2 change = .331, F change $(17, 89) = 3.00$, $p < .001$. In the final model, pro-social supports were statistically significant, with a beta value (beta = -.280, $p = .009$). Hypotheses 3a-3e were supported for anticipated desistance.

Table 3.26 *Results of Hierarchical Multiple Regression: Anticipated Desistance*

Predictor	*R*	*R²*	ΔR²	*Beta*	*F*
Step 1					
Control Variables	.30	.09	.07		3.53**
Step 2	.66	.44	.31		3.43**
Hope				.07	
Empowerment				.09	
GSE				.09	
SSE				.02	
Perceived Disorder				-.02	
Childhood Poverty				-.12	
Supports				.15	
Visitation				-.17	
Pro-social supports				-.29	
Employment				-.15	
Illegal income				.02	
Residency				.13	
Previous Incarcerations				-.17	
Age at 1st arrest				-.14	
Visualize future				.16	
Law-abiding				.10	
Previous effort				.03	

Note. N = 141. **$p < .001$.

Hypotheses 3a-3e: Redemptive Self. Partial correlation was used to explore the relationship

between narrative (Life Interview) and the number of incarcerations, age at first arrest, ability to

visualize future positively without criminal activity, past effort at going straight, and anticipated

effort into being law-abiding, while controlling for age, length of criminal career and marital

status. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of

normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity. There was a small, positive, partial correlation

between the ability to visualize the future positively without criminal behavior and the narrative,

($r = .26$, $p = .006$), and future effort into law-abiding behavior ($r = .19$, $p = .044$).

To test 3a – 3e, hierarchical multiple regression was used to assess the ability of personal resources and environmental factors, multiple incarcerations, age at first arrest, positively visualizing future, future efforts into law-abiding, and previous attempts to go straight on the redemptive narrative, after controlling for age, marital status, and length of criminal career. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity and homoscedasticity. Control variables were entered at Step 1, explaining only 1% of the variance in redemptive narrative. After entry of the personal resources and environmental factors, and other factors at Step 2 the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 21%, F (20, 89) = 1.18, p = .290. The personal resources and environmental factors, and other factors explained an additional 20% of the variance in redemptive narrative, after controlling for age, marital status and length of criminal career, R^2 change = .199, F change (17, 89) = 1.31, p = .20. In the final model, only visitation was statistically significant with a beta value (beta = -.243, p = .033).

Table 3.27 *Results of Hierarchical Multiple Regression: Redemptive Self*

Predictor	R	R²	ΔR²	Beta	F
Step 1					
Control Variables	.10	.01	-.02		.373
Step 2	.47	.22	.05		1.26
Hope				.11	
Empowerment				.01	
GSE				.00	
SSE				.03	
Perceived Disorder				.07	
Childhood Poverty				.20	
Supports				-.12	
Visitation				.23	
Pro-social supports				.04	
Employment				-.14	
Illegal income				-.01	
Residency				-.00	
Previous Incarcerations				-.05	
Age at 1ˢᵗ arrest				.15	
Visualize future				.21	
Law-abiding				.14	
Previous effort				.01	

Note. N = 138. **p < .001.

Additionally, logistical regression was performed to assess the impact of personal resources and environmental factors, and other factors on the likelihood that narratives would be condemnation or redemptive. The model contained seventeen independent variables (hope, empowerment, gse, sse, perceived disorder, childhood poverty, human capital and social support measures, age at first arrest, positively visualizing future, previous attempts to go straight, future efforts into law-abiding and number of previous incarcerations). The full model containing all predictors was statistically significant, X^2 (17, n =112) = 46.79, *p* = .000, indicating that the model was able to distinguish between narratives that were condemnation and redemptive. The

model as a whole explained between 34.1% (Cox and Snell R square) and 45.5% (Nagelkerke R^2) of the variance in narratives, and correctly classified 74.1% of cases. Only four of the independent variables made a unique statistically significant contribution to the model (perceived disorder, childhood poverty, previous incarcerations and future efforts into being law-abiding). The strongest predictor of redemptive narrative was effort into being law-abiding, recording an odds ratio of 2.12. This indicated that respondents who anticipated higher efforts into being law-abiding citizen were twice as likely to have redemptive narrative than those who anticipated lower levels of effort, controlling for all other factors in the model. The odds ratio of .365 was less than 1, indicating that for every increase in number of previous incarcerations, respondents were .365 times more likely to have condemnation narratives. Hypotheses 3a-3e were partially supported for logistical regression only.

Table 3.28 *Logistical Regression Predicting Likelihood of Redemptive Narrative*

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	P	Odds Ratio	95% C.I. for Odds Ratio	
							Lower	Upper
Hope	-.01	.04	.02	1	.89	1.00	.93	1.07
Empowerment	-.02	.04	.22	1	.64	.98	.92	1.06
GSE	.03	.03	.96	1	.33	1.03	.97	1.09
SSE	.06	.06	.85	1	.36	1.06	.94	1.20
Neighborhood Disorder	.06	.03	5.37	1	.02	1.06	1.01	1.11
Childhood Poverty	-1.29	.66	3.93	1	.05	.28	.08	.99
Social Support								
Support	.18	.27	.42	1	.52	1.20	.70	2.01
Visitation	.47	.30	2.44	1	.12	1.60	.89	2.89
Pro-social Supports	-.00	.40	.00	1	.99	1.00	.46	2.18
Human Capital								
Employment	-.39	.26	2.53	1	.11	.68	.42	1.10
Residency	.44	.35	1.58	1	.21	1.55	.78	3.05
Monthly income	-.33	.37	.78	1	.38	.72	.35	1.49
Previous incarcerations	-1.01	.33	9.57	1	.00	.37	.19	.69
Age at 1st arrest	.01	.03	.13	1	.72	1.01	.95	1.08
Visualize future	.46	.37	1.59	1	.21	1.59	.78	3.26
Previous attempts	.10	.20	.25	1	.62	1.11	.75	1.65
Law-abiding	.75	.36	4.37	1	.04	2.12	1.05	4.28

Summary

This chapter provided the results from a self-administered survey investigating the factors affecting justice-involved women creating successful lives for themselves after incarceration. A description of the sample provided a wealth of information about respondents and their histories, and themes from the written life-interview narratives provided additional insight into justice-involved women. Findings related to personal resources and environmental factors supported

nine of the eleven proposed hypotheses. All three dependent variables: agency for desistance, anticipated desistance and redemptive self were correlated with personal resources (hope, empowerment, and self-efficacy), human capital, social support, identity, marginalization and a host of various factors including, number of previous incarcerations, the ability to visualize the future positively without criminal activity, previous attempts to go straight, efforts into being law-abiding, and spirituality. These findings offer significant insights into justice-involved women and add to the knowledge base of the desistance process.

Figure 3.1 *Results for Agency for Desistance*
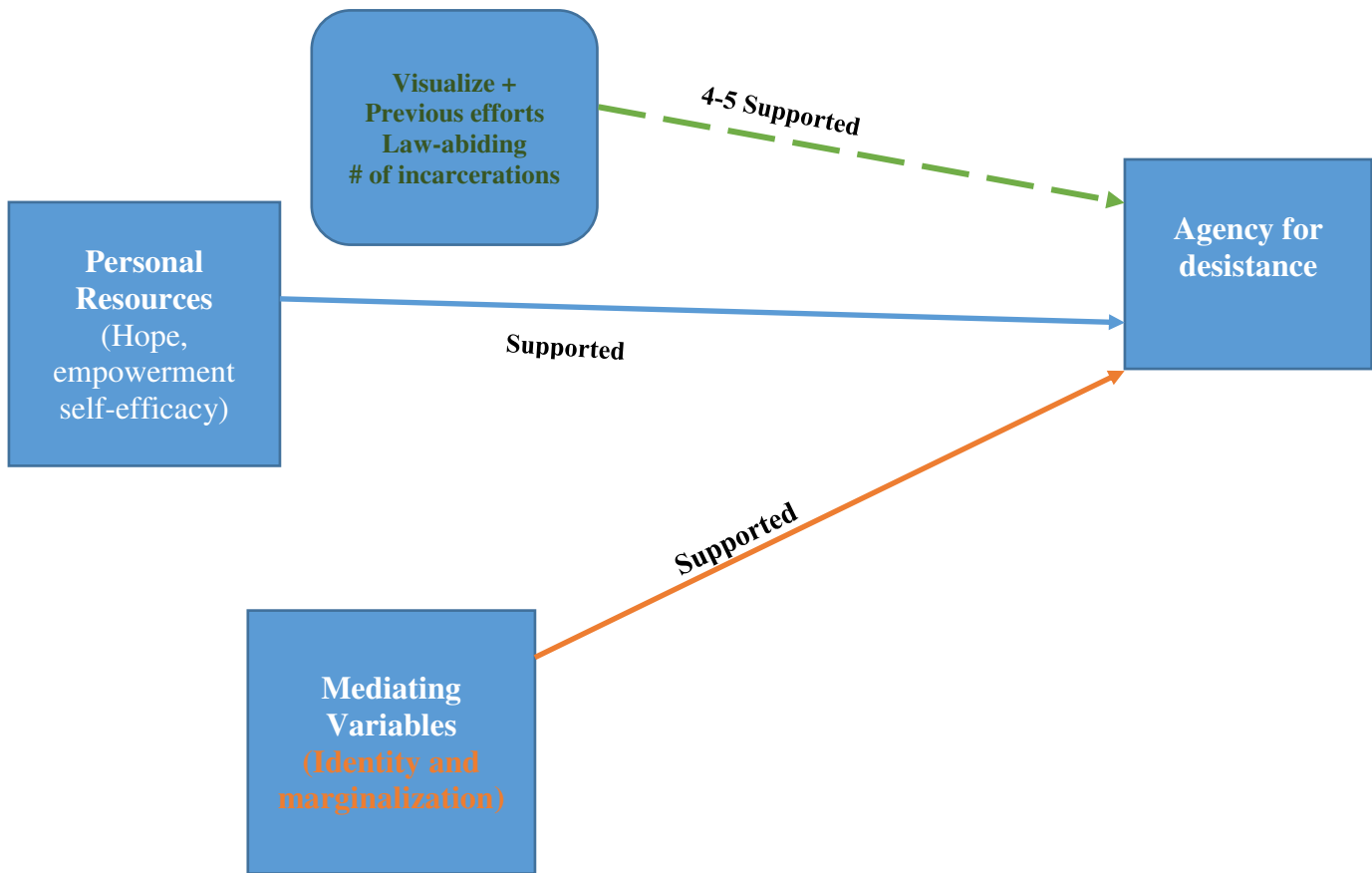
Note: Agency for desistance was not correlated with environmental factors, however was correlated with employment, housing stability, monthly illegal income, pro-social supports, and level of support and visitation during incarceration.

Figure 3.2 *Results for Anticipated Desistance*
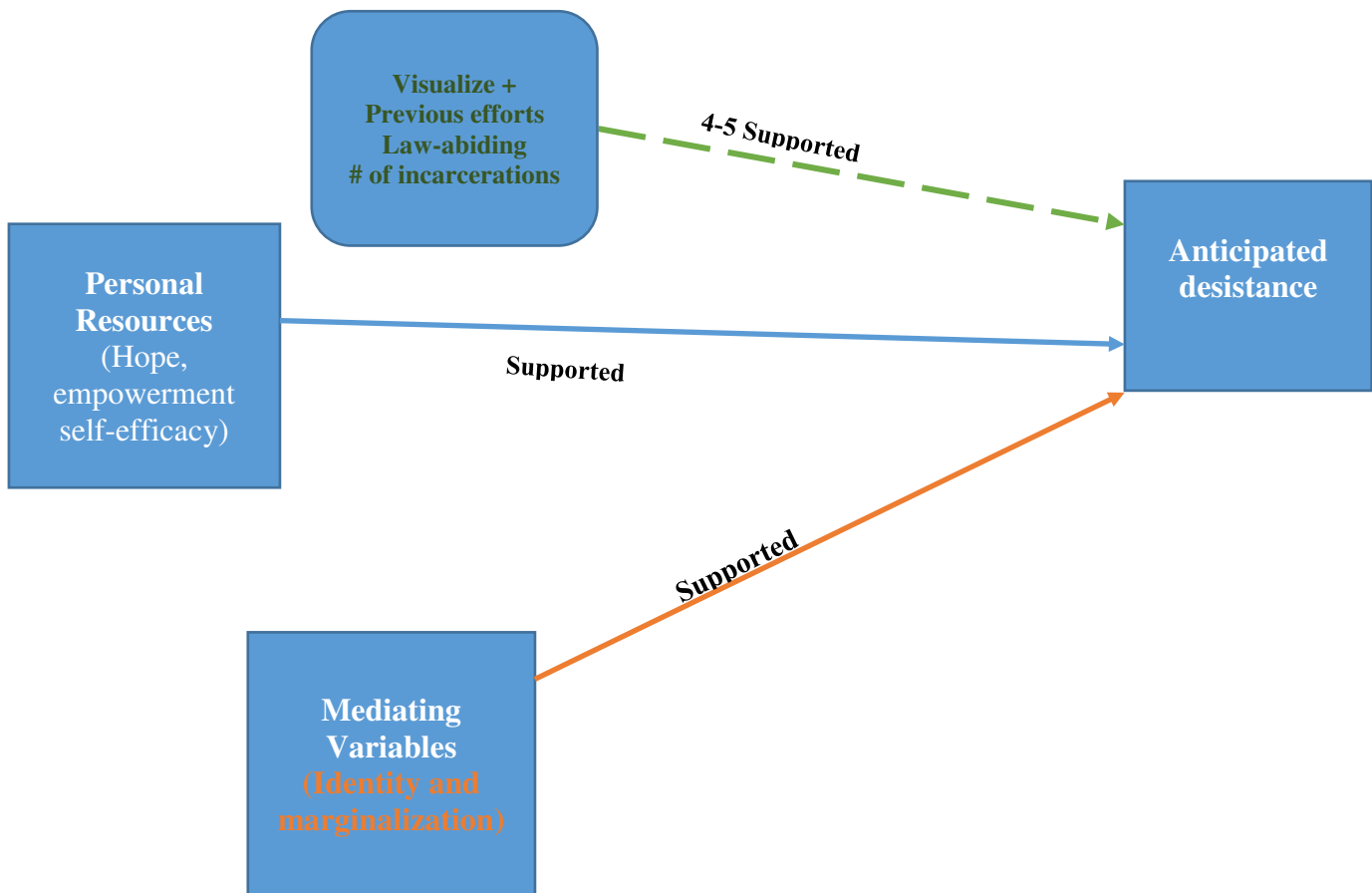
Note: Anticipated desistance was not correlated to environmental factors, however was correlated with support during incarceration, housing stability, monthly illegal income, pro-social supports and spirituality.

Figure 3.3 *Results for Redemptive Self*
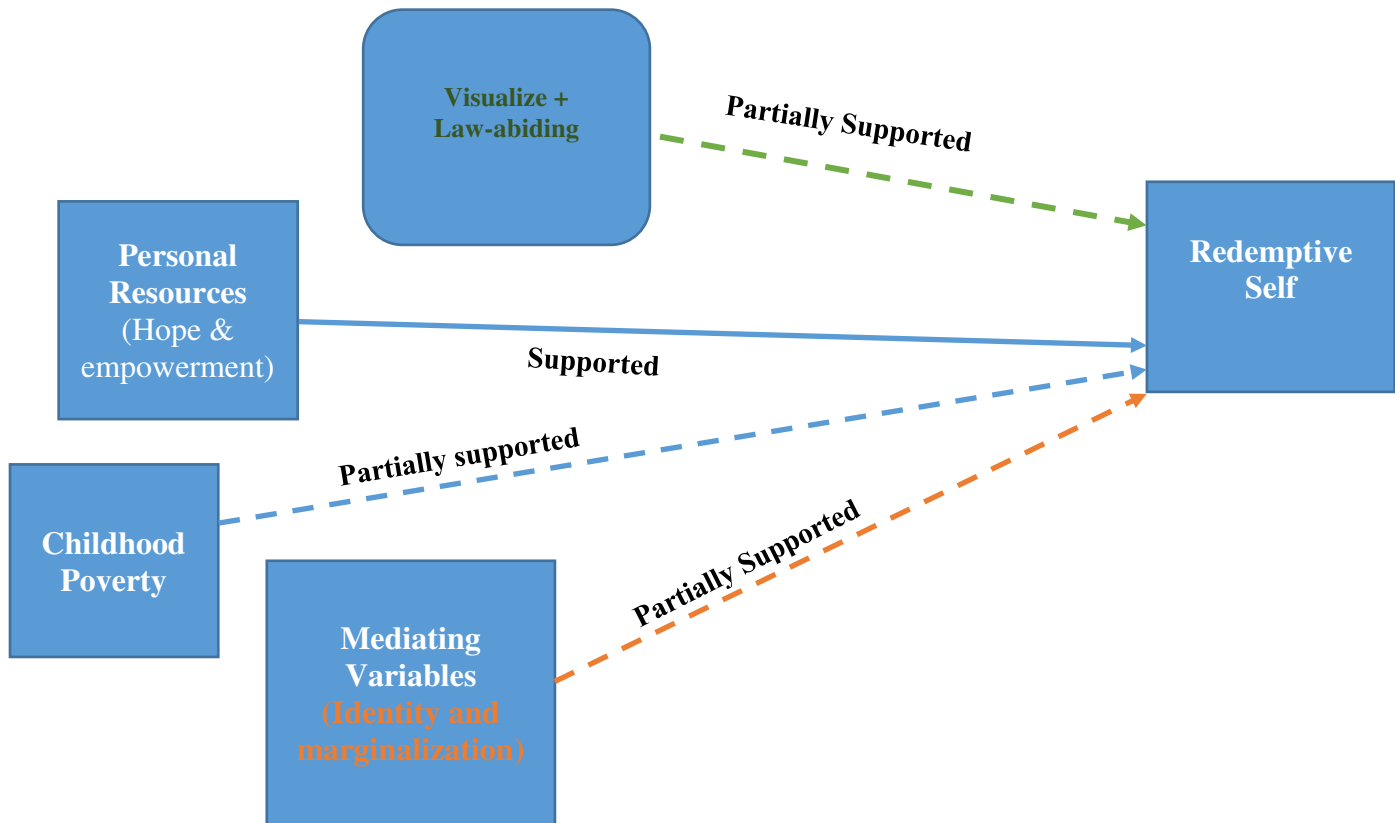
Note: Redemptive self was correlated with positively visualizing future and efforts into being law-abiding. Logistical regression models were statistically significant for all three dependent variables. Therefore, the independent variables were successful in predicting whether narratives would be condemnation or redemptive (0 or 1).

Chapter Four: Discussion

This chapter will summarize the results pertaining to four research questions and eleven hypotheses through a general discussion of: (a) justice-involved women, (b) personal resources, (c) environmental factors, (d) mediating variables, (e) additional factors, and (f) dependent variables. This chapter will conclude with a discussion of (g) criminal justice reform, (h) study limitations, and (i) future research.

Justice-Involved Women

The justice-involved women in this study are a relatively representative sample of the ethnic breakdown of the state correctional facility with 51% White (56% DOC), 19% Black (27% DOC) and 12% Latina (15% DOC). Demographic profiles of justice-involved women find most to be in their mid-thirties, single, never married mothers with young children, who lack vocational training and education necessary to be competitive in labor markets. In other words, the majority of justice-involved women are economically marginalized and face substantial challenges upon community reentry (O'Brien, 2001). The majority of respondents in this study were single, mothers, with a mean age of thirty-seven, and thirteen-year criminal career. Nearly 70% were due to be released back to their community within the next six months. With 25% of these women lacking a high school diploma or GED, more than half either unemployed or working off the books, and 41% reporting housing instability prior to incarceration, their economic marginality is evident. However, in spite of these challenges, these respondents continually strive to succeed (greater than half exerted 75%-100% effort in past releases), despite failed attempts (41% have five or more previous incarcerations), and remain hopeful for future success (greater than 90% anticipate at least 50% effort in future) with the ability to visualize their future happily and without involvement in crime.

Personal Resources

These results provide insight into justice-involved women and contribute to a better understanding of personal resources and environmental factors affecting community reintegration and the desistance process. The first research question asked whether the redemptive self, agency for desistance and anticipated desistance of justice-involved women were correlated with individual resources and/or environmental factors? The results indicate that personal resources, including hope, empowerment, self-efficacy, human capital and social support are correlated with these outcome measures.

Hope. This study found hope to be correlated with the other personal resources, human capital and social support. Additionally, hope was associated with the identity measures and all three dependent variables. The important role of hope in the process of desistance and its deterioration as a result of adverse social circumstances are persuasively documented (Burnett & Maruna, 2004). However, the reciprocal nature of hope remains questionable and further research that investigates the directional nature of this variable is needed.

Social cognitive theory posits individuals are proactively engaged in their development and through their actions are able to make things happen (Pajares, 2002). This study found hope to be correlated with optimism, both visualizing their future positively and effort into being law-abiding. Because reintegration poses many challenges and obstacles, and desistance is characterized by ambivalence and vacillation, hope is a critical factor (McNeill, 2009). Therefore, interventions that foster the proliferation of hope, before, during, and after incarceration are needed.

Empowerment. Maruna (2001) found empowerment to be the most distinguishing characteristic between persisting and desisting narratives. This current study found

empowerment to be significantly correlated with personal resources such as hope, self-efficacy, human capital and social support. Empowerment is linked not only to the internal transformation from criminal identity but also to self-efficacy. This study found empowerment to be correlated with optimism, both visualizing their future positively and effort into being law-abiding, and it declined with the number of incarcerations. These findings support the concept that empowerment remains a critical component of interventions for oppressed groups.

The Women's Prison Association's Institute on Women and Criminal Justice released a report in March 2009 profiling advocacy organizations that are mobilized and managed by women who were previously involved in the criminal justice system. It was reported that these groups were instrumental in identifying problems and solutions, speaking out on issues, bridging the gaps between prison and communities, supporting leadership and taking multiple routes to change (Villanueva, Nixon, & Pearson, 2009). This is a necessary aspect of supporting women in creating successful lives for themselves after incarceration.

Similar to empowerment practice, the individualized treatment approaches with justice-involved individuals must account for the social contexts that effect motivation and behavior without blaming individuals. Taking responsibility, and feeling competent and empowered are critical parts of the desistance process. Therefore, policies and practices need to be inclusive of those with lived-experiences rather than created by those on the outside and administered or inflicted on them. Those with lived experience need an outlet to share their learned wisdom so they feel they are valued and capable rather than in need of being *cured* by others. Approaches must encourage and respect the capacity of individuals to make choices and affect change for themselves.

Self-efficacy. Similar to empowerment, the interaction between self-efficacy and the environment predicts whether individuals encounter success or become apathetic and inactive (Bandura, 1997). This study found self-efficacy to be correlated with optimism, both visualizing their future positively and effort into being law-abiding, and general self-efficacy declined with the number of incarcerations. Additionally, self-efficacy was correlated with hope and empowerment, human capital and social support measures. Burnett (1992) found individuals who engaged in criminal activity often felt powerless to change their lives due to addiction, poverty, lack of skills or societal prejudice. Although individuals may vocalize being "sick" of prison or their lifestyle, they often feel they have no choice but to offend. Similar to Salisbury and VanVoorhis (2009), and Uggen and Kruttschnitt (1998), this research found a correlation between self-efficacy, education, employment and income from illegal activity.

Maruna (2001) found that rather than *burnout,* desisters needed to "charge themselves up" through realization that the past cannot be changed and no one is controlling the present but them. Enhanced agency is one of the categories scored additional points in a redemption sequence if transformation from negative to a positive led to increased personal resolve, agency self-confidence or efficacy. Similarly, this study found women who had increased efforts in the past to go straight had higher self-efficacy.

In her qualitative study with post-release women, O'Brien (2001) found women's efficacy to be potentially developmental or episodic. Women described previous incarcerations as turning points, or time used in self-reflection that would help create future determination. She also found that women developed self-efficacy as a coping mechanism to deal with the difficulties of incarceration experiences. In contrast, this study found general self-efficacy to decrease with the number of previous incarcerations and social self-efficacy to decrease with the

length of the length of criminal career. A key position for practitioners is to help individuals identify obstacles for change and then develop the capacity to overcome these obstacles. Treatment approaches need to acknowledge the individual needs of the justice-involved population and their experiences, while supporting the development of efficacy.

Human Capital. Although few in number, recent studies confirm the difficulty in overcoming complex challenges to obtaining and maintaining rewarding employment for justice-involved women. The pathways out of crime for women are complex and holistic, therefore gender-responsive approaches are needed. These approaches include educational and vocational training as well as employment assistance programs.

Women in the current study who had completed high school and/or attended college reported greater engagement in the work force and were less likely to be unemployed or working off the books. Women who were employed full-time or part-time reported less monthly income obtained through criminal activity. Additionally, this study found employment to be correlated with hope, empowerment, self-efficacy, agency for desistance and effort into being a law-abiding citizen. These findings highlight the importance of educational and vocational training and opportunities. Research has shown that recidivism rates can be significantly reduced by providing justice-involved women with state capital that supports economic needs (Holtfreter, Reisig, & Morash, 2004). Yet, employment prospects for most justice-involved women are typically low-wage jobs (Flower, 2010), and available vocational programs in correctional settings continue to focus on low-level, low-paying careers, such as cosmetology and food service, rather than technology-based enterprises that would prepare them for current employment demands. Programs and policies that support educational achievement and livable wage employment for individuals at risk of incarceration as well as those reentering community

remain critical factors for criminal justice reform. In addition to public capital such as child care, cash assistance, gate money, stable housing and access to quality healthcare, women also need assistance in creating supportive social connections within family and peer groups.

Social Supports. Previous research has found that maintaining strong family bonds during incarceration is associated with better post-release outcomes (Hairston, 1988, Martinez & Christian, 2009). This study found social supports to be correlated with hope, empowerment and self-efficacy, as women who reported greater levels of support and frequency of visitation had higher hope, empowerment, self-efficacy.   These findings highlight the lack of social supports typical for justice-involved populations, and their importance in supporting successful reintegration, as levels of support and visitation frequency during incarceration were correlated with housing stability and the ability to visualize future positively without criminal activity. Additionally, social support strongly contributed to all the regression models correlated with the three outcome variables.

Covington and Surrey (1997) found women's identities and actions to be heavily influenced by relationships with other people. The informal social support that women craft while incarcerated, has been found to help women successfully maintain pro-social identities when released (Schulke, 1993). This study found that women who reported higher levels of support and increased visitation while incarcerated were less likely to identify as career criminals. Therefore, correctional practice and policies need to assist and nurture familial and peer networks. Interventions for reentry must not focus solely on individual and personal change, but also must attend to the social and community contexts (Farrall, 2002) that surround and support justice-involved women before, during, and after reintegration.

Pro-social peers (or the lack of) have been linked to both, engagement in criminal activity as well as successful reintegration post-incarceration (Giordano, Cernkovich & Rudolph, 2002; O'Brien, 2001; Salisbury & VanVoohis, 2009). This study found pro-social supports to be linked to hope, empowerment and general self-efficacy, as well as educational levels and amount of monthly illegal income. Some needed policy changes include improved, less-expensive telephone calls, less restrictions on family visitations, including an expansion of correctional definitions of *family*, and increased access to transportation from poor communities.

The effects of incarceration on life chances are significant and therefore can be profound on those who already come from oppressed positions. Interventions must increase the social supports that are needed to achieve participation and inclusion in society rather than focusing on building individual capacity for change (Farrall & Bowling, 1999). Interventions that not only help bond existing relationships, but will also build and link additional resources need to be considered. Social workers need to provide education and safe space for women to begin to heal unhealthy relationships and connections. Social workers need to be involved in creating best-practices that will prevent incarceration and avoid separation from children and families, as well as best-practices that will foster successful reintegration.

Environmental Factors

"When the environment in which people live is nutritive, they flourish. There is a goodness-of-fit which facilitates growth, development, and realization of potential."
Pinderhughes (1983, p. 332).

Women of color in this study reported higher rates of neighborhood disorder in childhood. Women of color also reported being stopped by police and first arrested at an earlier age than their white peers. The decline of American cities, both socially and economically, throughout the 1970s and 1980s is well documented. And poor urban residents are more exposed to police scrutiny and arrest than suburban residents (Travis et al, 2014). Due to the neglect of

women's special needs as well as the lack of information regarding gender differences in prison experiences, women have suffered disproportionately from the impact of public policy (Bloom et al, 2004). Access to needed resources as well as the individual capacity to make use of those resources will determine levels of opportunity.

   Disorder Neighborhood. Increased incarceration rates are disproportionately concentrated in marginalized communities, characterized by high rates of poverty, unemployment and racial segregation (Travis et al, 2014). Respondents in this study used zipcodes to identify both their childhood communities and the communities they planned to return upon discharge. According to census tracking, these identified childhood neighborhoods had rates of residents living below the poverty line ranging from 23 to 37%. The percentage of female headed households in these neighborhoods ranged between 25 and 54%. And lastly, these neighborhoods had between 14 and 22% of residents without health insurance. Social disorganization theory (Bursik & Grasmick, 1993, Sampson & Groves, 1989) posits that place matters. Therefore, if women are to successfully return to communities and avoid rearrest, community conditions must change (Travis & Waul, 2003). Interventions must include community components in addition to individual ones.

   Contrary to a commonly held belief that relocation may be critical to successfully rebuilding lives, Maruna (2001) found most desisters to be successful in spite of environmental deficits. The history of marginalization of racial and ethnic minorities in the United States creates structural barriers to transformation that interact with internal change mechanisms (Veysey, Martinez & Christian, 2009). Most reentering citizens will need to find ways in which to be successful in their communities, therefore interventions that support and foster community enhancement are critical. Social workers are trained to see the connection between problems

affecting individuals as well as problems affecting larger numbers of people due to governmental policies. They also have important information regarding client needs and a distinctive view of social justice (Hoefer, 2005). Additionally, in the era of evidenced-based treatment and focus on cognitive-behavior therapy, social workers with knowledge of the interaction between person and environment, will be able to ensure CBT interventions account for this interaction and its impact on client's cognitions.

Childhood Poverty. The number of people in poverty in 2010 (46.2 million) is the largest number in the 52 years for which poverty estimates have been published. The criminal justice system has grown dramatically and is linked to concentrated poverty as well as the shift from welfare to workfare. Poverty is frequently carried into next generations, and this study found experiences of childhood poverty to be correlated with current poverty. Respondents who reported childhood poverty were found to have higher levels of social disorder in childhood neighborhoods and lower redemptive narratives. Women who reported childhood poverty rated their chances of reunification with children after prison lower than women who did not experience poverty. Social workers must challenge the social structures and attitudes that impede inclusion of reentering individuals. Many of the "privileged" in society maintain they merited their advantages, while the disadvantaged deserve their hardships, which makes resolutions to mass incarceration and reintegration efforts sluggish and controversial. Steps should be taken to address social and economic injustices that are entangled in generating criminal activity and complicate the desistance process. Strategies that will reduce on-going criminal behavior and support desistance must involve multi-systemic and multi-modal interventions.

Mediating Variables

The second research question inquired about variables that may mediate the relationships between personal resources and environmental factors and community reintegration and the desistance process. These mediating variables include identity and marginalization. This research found social supports and human capital to be correlated with women's identity, and all three dependent variables to be mediated by identity and marginalization.

Identity. Because we know that incarcerated women have high rates of addiction, trauma and mental illness, it is critical to gain understanding around how women are able to shed those concepts of stigma and began to create new healthy identities of themselves (Veysey, 2008). This study found self-identity to be correlated with optimism, both visualizing their future positively and effort into being law-abiding. Identification with the persistent offender label increased as the number of incarcerations increased. Women enter correctional institutions carrying a stigmatized identity, it is reinforced while in prison by the adversary interactions by correctional staff and policies, and then the stigma follows her into the community. Once she has a record of having been in prison and an inmate number has been attached to her name, she will be considered as "set apart; she has a stigma placed on her" (Goffman, 1961, p. 355). It is argued (Veysey, 2008) that the process of shedding negative identities requires a larger social context to sustain the more positive identity.

This study found respondents who had higher hope, empowerment and self-efficacy were less likely to identify as persistent offender and reported a higher level of effort into being a law-abiding citizen upon release. This aligns with Maruna's (2001) finding that secondary desisters avoid crime because they see themselves as fundamentally "good" despite criminal activity. If individuals, regardless of any positive behavior are forever viewed in light of only negative

behaviors, transitions will continue to be laden with barriers and extremely difficult to navigate.

The objectifying language of "offender" and "perpetrator" keeps individuals in categories of "unredeemed" and complicates an already difficult reintegration. Therefore, interventions that are strength-based, promote and support identity change are crucial. Interventions need to provide the basic resources that are necessary for reintegrating individuals to live in communities and acquire the tools and social supports necessary for identity shifts. Assisting justice-involved populations not only with needed resources but also with support for shedding stigmatizing labels will help support successful transitions. Interventions need to support a holistic reconstruction of self while social workers address individual, relational and contextual factors of individuals and environments (McNeill, 2009).

Marginalization. This study identified marginalized statuses of race, poverty and levels of formal education. Women in this study who experienced poverty prior to incarceration were more likely to have experienced poverty as children, and be mothers who believed it not likely to be reunited with children post incarceration. Current poverty indicators were linked to human capital and social support measures including frequency of visitations and illegal income. Poor women also had lower hope and general self-efficacy. Ethnicity was correlated with age of first arrests and education levels were correlated with identity of persistent offender.

When the quality of education and life opportunities vary so dramatically among neighborhoods segregated by race and class, structural inequalities exist and contribute to disproportionalities in poverty, unemployment and incarceration. Removal of structural barriers are crucial in order for women to successfully take advantage of the opportunities and offered services so they are less likely to engage in criminal activities. These finding highlight the additional barriers that women from marginalized statuses must overcome to successfully create

lives for themselves post incarceration. These fundamental structural injustices need to be addressed in order to appropriately address this social problem. These practice and policy interventions can be prison-based and/or community-based.

Additional Factors

The third research question inquired into other factors that would potentially correlate with the personal resources and environmental factors, redemptive self, agency for desistance and anticipated desistance for justice-involved women?

Optimism. An optimistic mindset about chances for successful reintegration has been correlated with actual desistance in males (Burnett, 2004, Lebel et al, 2008). The current study found both the ability to visualize the future without criminal involvement and anticipated efforts into being a law-abiding citizen to be strong contributing factors to the models and correlated with personal resources and outcome variables. In addition, this study found optimism (subscale of empowerment) to be correlated with agency for desistance and anticipated desistance. Agentic individuals must first visualize outcomes they have not previously experienced in order to extend effort toward achieving those outcomes (Bandura, 1989). Similarly, Maruna (2001) found desisters to possess positive expectations about their future. Because an optimistic mindset is an important precursor for desistance (Burnett, 2004, Lebel et al, 2008), correctional practices and policies need to encourage and support incarcerated individuals in the participation of educational or rehabilitative programming, as well as create environments that foster the notion of possibility, growth and change.

This study found optimism to decrease with the number of previous incarcerations and length of criminal career. Additionally, this study found agency for desistance and anticipated desistance to decrease as the number of incarcerations increased. If an optimistic mindset toward

successful reintegration leads to desistance, it is critical to create policies and practices that will provide jail-diversion as alternatives to incarceration in order to decrease incarceration and recidivism rates.

Previous Incarcerations. The current study found respondents with greater numbers of previous incarcerations and longer criminal careers had lower empowerment, general self-efficacy, agency for desistance and anticipated desistance, and were more likely to identify as persistent offender. These findings are aligned with the concept of repeated failure reducing self-efficacy among men with multiple incarcerations (Friestad & Hansen, 2010). The recycling of persons into and out of institutions negatively impacts both the marginalized communities as well as the individuals and families involved. However, 45% of State prisoners released between 1999 and 2004 returned to prison within three years (Pew Center on the States, 2011). Social workers need to advocate for sentencing reform as the experience of imprisonment and longer incarcerations do not deter future re-offending (Snodgrass et al, 2011). We also need to advocate to ensure that reliance on incarceration as an intervention, or holding place while resources are put into place is no longer tolerated as public policy.

Despite numerous reentry challenges, most inmates retain optimistic attitudes regarding their chance for successful reentry (Visher & Travis, 2003). The findings of this study, indicate that women with longer criminal careers and higher numbers of previous incarcerations had increased housing instability, lower employment rates and more monthly income obtained through illegal means. Although women are less likely to recidivate than men (Uggen & Kruttschnitt, 1998), the majority of women returning to prison results from drug involvement and related property crimes. Community support and drug treatment are crucial elements for successful reentry. Community corrections, alternative to incarceration programs, and reentry

programs must address the economic marginalization of women as well as the disease of addiction.

Spirituality. The experience of incarceration can be very stressful with a number of challenges that must be endured and adequately coped with. Many individuals adapt and cope with the difficulties they face while incarcerated by turning to spirituality. It is common for inmates to "find God" while coping with their jail time. This study found spirituality measures to be related to anticipated desistance, agency for desistance, pro-social supports and monthly income obtained through criminal activity.

Spirituality has been linked with desistance and illegal activity (Giordano, Longmore, Schroeder & Seffrin, 2008; Maruna, 2001) as well as predicting desistance for individuals with a history of alcohol and cocaine addiction (Bakken, DeCamp & Visher, 2013). Although not necessarily part of organized religion, the reliance on faith and spiritual beliefs was found to be a critical aspect for women managing themselves and the daily struggles of incarceration and the challenges related to transitions (O'Brien, 2001). Interventions that increase coping strategies during incarceration as well as while transitioning out into community are key, especially with individuals who have addiction and will support relapse prevention.

Dependent Variables

Many argue that the pathways into and out of crime differ for men and women (Bloom et al, 2001; Covington, 2003; McIvor, et al, 2004). Both desistance and women involved in the justice system are understudied. Desistance is an evolving multifaceted process (Maruna, 2001) and there is a lack of research on the dynamic interaction between individual and environmental factors. This interaction has been identified as central to the desistance process (Maruna, 2001; Giordano et al, 2002). Predicting future desistance is very difficult and relying solely on self- or

social-control is too simplistic. However, integrating both individual and environmental factors is much more promising and a concept not new to the social work profession.

Narratives. An individual's story develops within a larger social-historical context, which colors, shapes and constrains it in important ways (McAdams, 1985). Change can be challenging and unfurls as a process with numerous steps (Christian, Veysey, Herrschaft & Tubman-Carbone, 2009). Narratives have been found to be a particularly influential medium to understand this movement (Gadd & Farrall, 2004; Maruna, 2001; Vaughn, 2007). Opportunities are needed to help justice-involved women rework their stories and recreate narratives. Because hope and empowerment were found to correlate with redemption narratives, it is imperative that justice-involved women feel empowered to create change in their lives as well as have hope in their ability to create new stories for themselves. Social workers need to create and provide interventions that are rooted in empowerment and narrative theories for clinical practice with justice-involved populations.

Similar to redemptive narrative themes of good emerging from negative consequences, O'Brien (2001), found that women chose to make use of incarceration time by taking responsibility for decisions made, bolstering internal strength, resilience, and other external resources. This research showed that women who had more frequent visits during incarceration had higher redemptive narratives. This study also found women who visualized their future positively and anticipated efforts into being a law-abiding citizen had higher narratives, and that redemptive narratives were predicted by identity measures and marginalization. Therefore, external resources that include human capital and social support, must be integrated into approaches and practices. Micro level approaches include supporting women in their efforts to create new narratives and shed negative labels and stigma related to marginalization and criminal

justice involvement. Macro level approaches include supporting marginalized communities and promoting policy changes that address racial and economic injustice by leveling the playing field for returning citizens. Reliance on ecological perspectives and strength-based approaches allow the social work profession to effectively create working alliances with individuals, families and communities and to develop successful interventions and strategies.

Agency for Desistance. Fully understanding the nuances of the desistance process is hindered due to the lack of standardized measures. The critical internal mechanisms of the process are understudied (Lloyd & Serin, 2012). In an attempt to create measures for desistance, Lloyd and Serin (2012) hypothesized the interactional effect between hope and agency. This study found women who had higher hope, (and subscales, hope agency and hope pathways), empowerment (subscales, self-esteem, power/powerlessness and optimism), and general self-efficacy, had higher agency for desistance. Additionally, women who had higher human capital and social support and lower identification with persistent offender and career criminal labels had higher agency for desistance. These findings, as well as those previously mentioned, reiterate the importance of programs and policies that support the increase of human capital, social supports and other personal resources that will assist women involved in the justice system create successful lives for themselves after incarceration. Social work clinicians can successfully complete desistance-focused assessments, identify strengths and assist in the development of needed social networks to support this complex transition.

Anticipated Desistance. Broidy and Cauffman (2006), analyzing historical data from 500 female offenders, found social capital and personal agency to be implicated in desistance in ways that transcend gender and historical context. The current study found women who had higher personal resources and human capital and social supports had higher anticipated

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desistance. Anticipated desistance negatively correlated with the identity of persistent offender, therefore interventions must pay heed to the social and personal contexts of the change process, as well as the communities in which any obstacles to change may be situated.

A community response needs to be fashioned that will address the issues that negatively impact women's lives and increase their risks for incarceration. That includes community-based interventions found to help women successfully transition from prison to their communities, such as social capital, job training, education, substance abuse and mental health treatment, parenting programs, financial resources and safe environments (Galbraith, 1998).

Criminal Justice Reform.

"A theory of desistance is not a criminological luxury. By helping to elucidate some of the facets, a theory of desistance would enable criminal justice policies aimed at reducing offending to be 'fine-tuned' and for the element of these interventions which 'work' best to be more thoroughly understood (Farrall & Bowling, 1999, p. 254).

In 2015, President Obama was the first sitting president to visit a federal prison. With bi-partisan support, President Obama made aggressive steps toward criminal justice reform with particular attention to addressing the racial disparities in the criminal justice system. And following the death of a 22-year old man by suicide after his release, solitary confinement for the most vulnerable populations such as juveniles and the mentally ill was banned. Additionally, in October 2015, the Justice Department cut sentences of 6,000 non-violent offenders thought to be a harsh bi-product of the mandatory minimum era. By the end of his presidential term, Barack Obama had decreased the sentences for more federal inmates than his past eight predecessors combined. Motivation for these reforms come both from the exorbitant financial costs as well as the human and community costs inherent in our current policies and system.

Connecticut spent over a billion dollars expanding prison facilities between 1980 and 1995, and increased yearly spending by 1,300 percent from 1980 to 2006 (Department of

Correction, 2013). If Connecticut were able to reduce recidivism rates by 10%, the state could save approximately twenty million dollars annually (Pew Center on States, 2011). In 2004, Connecticut was seen as a "pioneer" on the cutting edge of reform when it became the first state to enact "justice reinvestment" reforms. However, this path was thwarted by a violent home-invasion by two parolees in 2007. Following this tragic incident, parole was halted which resulted in a prison population spike (Moran, 2014). Currently, the state's "Second Chance Society" (Governors bill #952, Ct House Bill #7104) was signed into law in July, 2015. This legislation reduces penalties for possession of drugs, establishes expedited parole hearings for nonviolent crimes and expedites pardons after completion of full sentence. Additionally, funding was made available for "I-Best" which is a model of intensive job-training, school-based diversion initiatives and reintegration efforts. This package of initiatives was designed to continue to reduce the already dropping crime rate, as well as assist with integration efforts. Research is needed that will inform policy-makers about both programming for inside prison as well as in lieu of prison, and in communities following prison. However, without a clear understanding of the desistance process, the needed reforms to criminal justice policies and practices will be insufficient (Farrall & Bowling, 1999).

In 2003, with an in-depth understanding of the cost of incarceration and human toll of imprisonment, Justice Anthony Kennedy told the American Bar Association, "Our resources are misspent, our punishment too severe, our sentences too long…..the more than two million inmates in the United States are human beings whose minds and spirits we must try to reach." McNeill (2006) advocates for correctional practices and policies be embedded in the understandings of the desistance process. The voice of the social work profession has been fairly silent on the social injustices that are entangled in mass incarceration of vulnerable populations.

In the current political climate, when discussions about criminal justice reform are copious and diverse, the social work profession needs to be involved in the development of a new criminal justice practice paradigm.

Recommendations for probation reform have been outlined by social worker Fergus McNeill (2004), and are transferable to reintegration interventions. These include, embedding interventions in understandings of desistance, desistance-supporting interventions that respect and foster agency and reflexivity; are based on respectful relationships; focus on social capital (opportunities) as well as human capital (motivations and capacities); exploit strengths as well as address needs and risks. McNeill (2004) also highlights the need for social workers to act as advocate for intervention approaches to be collaborative, involving the justice-involved individuals and communities in restorative and inclusive processes. The following normative principle has been outlined for new policy alternatives:

> *"Social Justice:* Prisons should be instruments of justice, and as such their collective effect should be to promote and not undermine society's aspirations for a fair distribution of rights, resources, and opportunities." (Travis, Western & Redburn, 2014, p. 23)

Study Limitations

"Walls turned sideways are bridges." Angela Davis

This study was exploratory in nature and was cross-sectional, therefore causal factors cannot be determined. The self–report nature of the self-administered survey was also a limitation. Social desirability bias may have been unavoidable with group data collection sessions, especially items related to past and future efforts toward *going straight*, available support systems and self-identity. The fact that responses were anonymous may have helped to guard against this bias. However, this may have introduced another limitation, insofar as

respondents were not able to be contacted for follow-up, to provide clarification or additional information if needed, or to evaluate actual outcomes after incarceration.

Although random sampling methods were utilized, the participants were 50% White with a mean age of 37. Future research would perhaps employ stratified sampling to ensure greater percentages of younger, African American and Latina women had an increased chance of selection. The target sample size was defined in the research proposal based upon sample size for the Pearson's correlation and multiple regression analyses, using the Cohen's (1992) definition of effect size. Ideally, a larger sample size was needed for some more sophisticated statistical analyses including structural equation model. The findings are also limited in the generalizability beyond a single state correctional facility in the northeast.

The self-reflection reports on childhood neighborhoods including their level of social and physical disorder may not be an accurate assessment of community disorganization experienced by participants, nor does it capture potential decline in communities over the years. Additionally, it is unknown if respondents planned on returning to those same childhood neighborhoods. Future analysis could potentially include secondary data regarding these identified neighborhoods to corroborate any findings.

The final and most significant limitation to the current study is the lack of an "actual" measure of how well women did upon release. An exact measure for desistance does not exist in this study, and therefore this study used the redemptive self, agency for desistance and anticipated desistance as proxies for the process of desistance. Future research should be longitudinal and have capacity for the researcher to contact respondents for follow-up after released from prison and in the community.

Future Research

        This study contributes to the desistance literature, especially with an all-female sample. Future research should be expanded to other regions and perhaps federal institutions. In order to support long-term changes for justice-involved populations, policies and practices need to be embedded in desistance theory and reflect the importance of both personal resources and environmental factors. This research suggests many areas for future inquiry including community interventions that support desistance, more in-depth exploration of identity, and the building of human capital and social support, in order to promote healthy reintegration. Future research is needed that adds to the knowledge base of successful identity transformation and improved measures of desistance. Because the perceived neighborhood disorder yielded such few significant findings, further research is needed to better understand the connection between environmental influences on identity, human capital, social support and the desistance process for justice-involved women. Additionally, the risk of maternal imprisonment has grown along with the rate of incarceration among women. Therefore, future research needs to investigate the ways in which child and family service agencies interact with justice-involved women and ways to support the desistance process while fostering family reunification.

        An additional area I would like to explore further is the qualitative data. A qualitative analysis of the narratives will provide a richer understanding of women's "lived experience." I would like to further investigate how the narratives of justice-involved women are related to the personal resources and environmental factors to better provide services and interventions for narrative reconstruction.

Summary

This chapter discussed the conclusion drawn from the data collected for this study. This study contributes to the empirical understanding of personal resources and environmental factors that impact community reintegration for women involved in the justice system. Suggestions for practice and policy reform were made based on the findings from this study as well as previous desistance literature and research. These findings highlight the expanded social work roles with justice-involved populations and need to be translated into social work practice at all levels. Social workers situated within state agencies, health and mental health agencies, educational and community settings need to engage clients effectively with practices that are empowering and strength-based and are aligned with the ethics and values of the profession. These implications for the social work profession, including practice, education and research are outlined in detail in the following chapter.

Chapter Five: Social Work Implications

"The cost of liberty is less than the price of repression." --W.E.B. DuBois

In spite of the limitations discussed in the previous chapter, and because there is currently a lack of formal social work input into correctional policies and practice, the current study has multiple implications for the social work profession.   This chapter discusses the implications for social work practice, research and education as understood from the study results and my practice experience in corrections.

Personal Experience

I began my work with justice-involved women in January, 1995. With my training and experience primarily focused on micro clinical practice, my goal for the first decade of my career was to provide the best mental health treatment possible to individuals and groups. As the years passed, and I witnessed women with strong resolve discharge back to their communities only to return again feeling disappointed and frustrated, I began to look beyond the individual and the micro level, and sought to understand the larger structural barriers impacting the community reentry process. Through their shared stories of struggle, optimism, hard work and disappointment, I heard success and progress loudly resonate. Yet, their dogged determination to create successful lives for themselves, and often times their children, seemed inadequate. Stories of insufficient resources, structural barriers and failing policies propelled me to shift the focus of my approach to a much broader, macro focus. Determined to look beyond individual responsibility, I sought to understand ways in which to integrate the strength and resolve I witnessed within the women, with an understanding of the external barriers that hindered their ability to successfully reintegrate into their communities and society. This research is my attempt to bridge the gap between individual and society, micro and macro; in hopes to once

again offer the best possible solutions to the women whose strength and resilience I have admired for more than twenty years.

Implications for social work practice

> "The fate of millions of people – indeed the future of the black community itself – may depend on the willingness of those who care about racial justice to re-examine their basic assumptions about the role of the criminal justice system in our society." --Michelle Alexander (2013)

More than ever, members of vulnerable populations are being arrested, incarcerated or entangled within the criminal justice system. Understanding the personal resources and environmental factors that support the desistance process will improve the ways in which social workers engage with these individuals, families and communities. This study is one of the few research studies focused on person-in-environment that aids community reintegration from a social work perspective rather than from criminal justice. Approaches to treatment that are rooted in deficit or medical models fail to holistically assess the critical interactions, and therefore may not be primarily supportive of personal resources and environmental factors. This study informs the literature on the complicated community reintegration process and offers suggestions to support individuals and communities, including increasing human capital, social supports and identity transformation.

Narrative redefinition can be a crucial part of individuals overcoming addiction and their recovery process (McIntosh & McKeganey, 2000). Social workers practicing in substance abuse treatment will undoubtedly work with individuals involved with the criminal justice system in some aspect. Empowering individuals to overcome stigma and shed negative identities should be an integral aspect of clinical practice with this population. However, this individualized approach is only a small part of assisting individuals on the pathway to sobriety and/or desistance. This individual transformation must be supported and sustained within a larger social

context (Veysey, 2008). The social work profession has a long tradition of understanding the interaction between individuals and their environment and other macro structures. Micro-practitioners working within mental health, substance abuse or family support services need to practice strength-based and empowerment practices. This approach will support individuals in creating and sustaining pro-social identities in spite of familial, institutional and societal structures not necessarily aligned with these individual changes.

As the rate of incarceration for women has increased, so has the risk of maternal imprisonment (Kruttscnitt, 2010). In 1978, one in 60 children by the age of 14 had a mother incarcerated, compared to one in 30 children born in 1990. Between 1991 and 2007, the number of children with a mother in prison more than doubled, reaching over 1.7 million with an 82% increase (Sentencing Project, 2007). The results of the current study support the involvement of children, as nearly three out of four of the women had children and nearly one in three were unsure, or thought it unlikely they would be reunited with their minor children following their incarceration. It has been found that the likelihood of reunification is diminished with each subsequent incarceration (Hairston, 1991b). This study found the number of women with less than four previous incarcerations were twice as likely to think reunification was *very likely* than women with five or more previous incarcerations. During incarceration, the contact between mother and child is potentially limited due to travel obstacles and costs, as well as relationship complications (Hairston, 1991). Social workers inside correctional systems and/or working within departments of children and family need to advocate for parenting programs both inside and outside of prison that support positive family engagement and relationships. Additionally, if appropriate, social workers should engage in family work and home visits in an attempt to repair damaged bonding and increase social supports and social capital.

The Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (ASFA) and PRWORA possibly impede the reentry process by creating additional barriers. Social work practitioners need to take an active role in implementing policy reform and encourage greater discretion for termination of parental rights, consistent with the safety and well-being of involved children. Furthermore, the findings provide recommendations to advance the social work practice, not only within forensic settings, but also for other secondary agencies, such as substance abuse, mental health, children and family agencies, probation and parole departments, and community work. In order to facilitate the development of bridging social capital within communities with reentering individuals, social workers need to engage in mediation and advocacy work at a community level.

The idea that "bad" people can become essentially good seems to contradict a fundamental belief of contemporary society (Maruna, 2001), indicating society's doubt that rehabilitation and reintegration can be successful. Contrary to a basic social work value that all individuals have the capacity for change, Western culture may have difficulty accepting that moral people often do immoral things, and prefer to keep those who commit crime classified as "unredeemable," in order to maintain distance (Maruna, 2001). However, this distance and exclusion can make it especially difficult for justice-involved individuals to reintegrate back into society, a society that is potentially unwelcoming. Therefore, desistance-focused practice needs strength-based approaches that do more than attend to the deficits and/or criminality of individuals (Gadd & Farrall, 2004). This approach implies that inclusion of what prisoners' value and identify as important contributors to their desistance success are needed. The social work profession understands better than most, the possibility for personal change and growth. And the knowledge of how personal resources and environmental factors contribute to the desistance process will help social workers best support individuals, families and communities

impacted by the justice system. Interventions must be fluid between micro and macro levels. Therefore, the social work profession can best lead the charge of engaging directly and more meaningfully with individuals, families and communities.

Implications for social work research

There is a lack of research regarding the change process of desistance and the impact that personal resources and environmental factors may have on this process. In order to improve reintegration efforts and social work practice, research is needed that enhances our understanding so that we may intervene in a way that guides women to this desistance process and supports and sustains individual change. Research is needed that investigates the effects of concentrated recycling on marginalized communities and the dynamics this creates which impact both the pathways into and out of prisons. Additionally, social workers need to spearhead research investigating successful techniques of supporting families before, during, and after incarceration.

Conducting research within correctional environments is not without challenges. However, corrections can provide a multitude of opportunities for researchers (Wakai, Shelton, Trestman & Kesten, 2009). With continued discussions around criminal justice reform, the social work profession needs to be an active agent in creating and implementing policy changes on micro, mezzo and macro levels. As states begin to implement changes in sentencing, probation and parole, programming and reintegration efforts, research is going to be needed that assesses the effectiveness of practice and policy reforms, both inside and outside of correctional settings. Because hyperincarceration disproportionately affects marginalized individuals, families and communities, no field of social work practice is exempt.

Smart Decarceration

"Racism is a moral catastrophe, most graphically seen in the prison industrial complex and targeted police surveillance in black and brown ghettos rendered invisible in public discourse." -- Cornell West

The collateral cost of mass incarceration has staggering human and economic costs. In 2015, the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare (AASWSW) announced 15 grand challenges for the Social Work profession. One of these challenges is smart decarceration and aims to develop proactive, comprehensive, evidence-based "smart decarceration" strategies. The goal of this grand challenge is to dramatically reduce the number of incarcerated individuals and enable the nation to embrace a more effective and just approach to public safety (AASWSW, 2015).

This research is politically well-timed and relevant to involve the social work profession in addressing policy reform efforts in criminal justice. Many states have made attempts to reduce identified restrictions that complicate the reintegration process, such as ban the box and other educational and housing restrictions. Continued efforts are needed, and social workers should be leading the implementation of practice and policy changes, to ensure they meet the needs of the vulnerable populations most frequently affected by hyper-incarceration. The social work profession is best situated to understand the complex interaction between person and environment, especially marginalized persons and disadvantaged communities. Research must continue to inquire about the impact of incarceration on individuals as well as the marginalized communities from both micro and macro perspectives.

The "egalitarian view" or "fairness model" of distributive justice posits that resources should be spread relatively evenly across the entire citizenry as a matter of right, and therefore is frequently an underlying assumption for social workers advocating for policy improvements. Therefore, no other profession is better positioned to assess the impact of social policy and advocate for policy reform than the profession of social work (Haynes & Mickelson, 2003).

Implications for social work education

"We must always attempt to lift as we climb." -- Angela Davis

In spite of the far-reaching implications of mass incarceration and vulnerable populations, few accredited social work programs offer a criminal justice curriculum. In 2015, according to CSWE's survey, there were only seven BSW programs offering a certificate in juvenile delinquency/juvenile justice (Annual Statistics on Social Work Education in the United States, 2015). And of the 291 MSW programs offering certificates, only one offers a certificate in forensic social work. In order to appropriately address community reintegration, social workers need to be educated and properly prepared for the cross-institutional and interagency partnerships needed for comprehensive approaches to criminal justice reform. However, in 2013, less than 3% of MSW students had a criminal justice or correctional field placements, and although this percentage has recently increased (Annual Statistics on Social Work Education in the United States, 2015), expanded student opportunities remain essential. In order to effectively address these gaps, social work programs will need to increase opportunities for students including; course offerings, policy reform, field placements and advocacy.

Considering the increasing numbers of incarcerated women with histories of substance abuse, trauma, health and mental health concerns, as well as a variety of psychosocial challenges, holistic approaches with integration of services are critical components for successful reintegration. Social work educators need to serve as conduits for linking public health agencies, community providers and correctional/forensic institutions to ease the reintegration process. However, with only 3.4% of programs (n=6) offering a concentration by field of practice in criminal justice or corrections, and only 5% of BSW students experiencing field placements in correctional settings (Annual Statistics on Social Work Education in the United States, 2015), the

profession will not be adequately prepared to address this daunting task. If the social work

profession is going to be able to adequately address hyperincarceration and criminal justice

reform, we will need many more appropriately trained and prepared professionals than the seven

MSW programs (3%) offering joint degrees in criminal justice and the one institution offering a

forensic social work certificate can train and prepare. This study may contribute to social work

education and knowledge by expanding on the personal resources and environmental factors

impacting the desistance process, and require integrated, holistic approaches for criminal justice

reform and smart decarceration. If we are to successfully decrease the number of individuals

imprisoned, there will be a dramatic increase in the need for community-based social services as

these marginalized individuals with low education levels, poor work histories, substance abuse

and trauma histories remain and/or return to the community. It will be critical that these services

are offered by trained social workers with an understanding that their criminal behavior is

embedded in a context of social and economic disadvantage.

Conclusion

"Prisons do not disappear social problems, they disappear human beings. Homelessness, unemployment,
drug addiction, mental illness, and illiteracy are only a few of the problems that disappear from public
view when the human beings contending with them are relegated to cages." --Angela Davis, (2003)

During 2010, prison releases (708,677) exceeded prison admissions (703,798) for the first

time since the Bureau of Justice Statistics began collecting jurisdictional data in 1977 (BJS,

2012). As the number of incarcerated women and community discharges increases, so does the

need to understand the complex interaction between individuals and their environment. This

research provides a better understanding of the complex interrelationship between personal

resources and environmental factors with justice-involved women and contributes to the

knowledge base of desistance research. Consonant with policy statements from the National

Association of Social Work (NASW) to champion the rights of society's most vulnerable

members, and the National Organization of Forensic Social Work (NOFSW) to advance social

justice, this study contributes to understanding the importance of including women's voices in

correctional and criminal justice reform.

The results of this study and recommended practice and policy changes will be shared at

both social work and correctional conferences and with administrations with the intention of

promoting lasting social change. This dissertation began with my rewarding career of clinical

practice with justice-involved women, which influenced my research focus. My experience as a

clinical forensic social worker makes me a better researcher. My goal in conducting and

disseminating this research is to help create a better correctional environment for women who are

incarcerated as well as contribute to needed reforms and smart decarceration.

"In ten years, I see myself settled down and successful. I want to go back to school to get
my degree to be a drug and alcohol counselor once I get my degree I want to get a job that will
enable me to help others that are struggling with addiction. I also want to have a stable home
and family environment for my son who will then be 12 years old. I want to be able to be there
for him again as a mother. I want to be involved in my families lives again and find success
which will make my parents proud but most importantly I want to be drug free. Also I want to
stay out of jail stay away from the law and be a productive member in society."
<div align="right">--- (Respondent #60)</div>

<div style="text-align: center">References</div>

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Information sheet Research Study

UCONN

UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

Principal Investigator: Dr. Nina Heller, PhD.
Student Researcher: Elizabeth Allen, LCSW
Study Title: Justice-Involved women and desistance

You are invited to participate in this research regarding justice-involved women. I am a doctoral student at the University of Connecticut, and am conducting this research as part of my course work. The purpose of this research study is to gather information to help gain a better understanding about how women, who are involved in the justice system are able to create successful lives for themselves after incarceration.

There are two parts to the research study. In the first part you will be asked to answer four questions about events in your life and how these events fit into your overall life story. You will be asked to write these stories down in the form of a "kite" to your best friend. It is expected this writing exercise will take approximately 1-2 hours. In the second part of this research, you will be asked to complete a survey questionnaire. It is anticipated this part will take approximately 30-45 minutes of your time.

Your participation will be anonymous and you will not be contacted again in the future. All of your written materials and your survey questionnaire will not be identified by your name, inmate number or any other traceable marker. Once you have completed all materials, you will seal all materials in an envelope and deposit it into a large box. This box will be closely monitored by the research staff at all times. The researchers will not be able to trace the data back to you once it has been collected and all study records will be kept locked in a secure location. At the conclusion of this study, the researchers may publish the findings, but findings will be in summary form and you will not be identified in any publications or presentations. You will not be paid for being in this study. Although the risks involved in participating in this research are considered minimum, it is possible that you may become upset after writing about certain events that occurred in your life. If this should happen, you will be provided the option of being referred to speak with a qualified mental health clinician if you feel it is necessary. You may not directly benefit from this research; however we hope that your participation in the

study may provide a voice for all the women involved in the justice system regarding the important process of transitioning from prison to community.

You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to be. If you agree to be in the study, but later change your mind, you may drop out at any time. Although we do not believe the survey questions will be upsetting to you, you do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to answer. There are no penalties or consequences of any kind if you decide that you do not want to participate.

Take as long as you like before you make a decision. I will be happy to answer any question you have about this study. If you have further questions about this project or if you have a research-related problem, you may contact me, Elizabeth Allen, LCSW at (860) 570-9323 or my advisor, Dr. Nina Heller at (860) 570-9174 or UConn-School of Social Work, 1798 Asylum Avenue, West Hartford, CT, 06117. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the University of Connecticut Institutional Review Board (IRB) at 860-486-8802 or The Whetten Graduate Center, Room 214 University of Connecticut, 438 Whitney Road Extension, Unit-12246 Storrs, CT 06269-1246. The IRB is a group of people who review research studies to protect the rights and welfare of research participants.

Thank you.

Appendix B

Survey Instrument

**Justice-Involved Women
And
Desistance
Survey**

I am interested in better understanding the needs and interests of women involved in the justice system.
YOU HAVE BEEN SELECTED TO PROVIDE INPUT TO HELP ME BETTER UNDERSTAND HOW WOMEN
ARE ABLE TO CREATE SUCCESSFUL LIVES AFTER INCARCERATION.
Your participation in this survey is both voluntary and important.
Your answers are **confidential and Anonymous**.

1. When released from York CI, how do you estimate your chances of avoiding crime?

    ☐ Chances are very good ☐ Chances are good ☐ Chances are poor ☐ Chances are very poor

2. In the past, when discharged from YCI (or another prison) to the community, how much effort do you feel you put into "going straight" and avoiding crime?

    ☐ NO effort at all ☐ 25% Effort ☐ 50% Effort ☐ 75% Effort ☐ 100% Effort

3. I consider myself to be a 'persistent offender'?

    ☐ Strongly agree ☐ agree ☐ disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

4. How often can you visualize yourself in the future living a happy, healthy life that does not include any criminal activity?

    ☐ Always ☐ Usually ☐ Sometimes ☐ Never

5. During **this** incarceration, how supported did you feel from family and/or friends in the community? (this could be emotional support, or financial support)

    ☐ Strongly supported ☐ Somewhat supported ☐ Sometimes yes/ sometimes no ☐ Not Supported at all

6. During **this** incarceration, how frequently did you receive visits from family and/or friends?

    ☐ Never ☐ Less than once a month ☐ A few times a month ☐ Several times a week

    6a. If you did **not** receive frequent visitation would you say the reason was because:

    ☐ You prefer not to have visits ☐ Nobody wanted to visit ☐ Transportation problems ☐ other

7. In the past, which programs were you involved with? Please check **ALL** that apply:

No Yes

☐ ☐ Section 8 Housing -as an independent adult

☐ ☐ Section 8 Housing -as a child your parents received

☐ ☐ Women and Children (WIC)

☐ ☐ Cash Assistance or TANIFF - as an independent adult

☐ ☐ Cash Assistance or TANIFF - as a child your parents received

☐ ☐ Health insurance

☐ ☐ Unemployment

☐   Other (specify) _____

8. What is your marital status?

☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐
Single   Married   Divorced   Widowed   Living with   Committed relationship -
(never married)   partner   not living together

9. Prior to **this** incarceration, did you have your <u>own</u> place to live?

☐   ☐   ☐   ☐
Rent   Own   Did not have my   homeless
                                            own place

10. When you think about "the woman you are *meant* to be" ~ does this include the label of "career criminal?"

Yes   No   Not sure

11. Thinking about the people <u>you</u> *choose* to hang around when home,… are **MOST** of your supports:

☐   ☐   ☐   ☐
ALL involved in   MOST involved in   SOME involved in   NONE involved in
criminal activity   criminal activity   criminal activity   criminal activity

12. When going through difficult or stressful situations, how likely are you to pray to God (higher power) for assistance?

☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐
Not likely at all   Somewhat unlikely   Not sure   Somewhat likely   Very Likely

13. When going through difficult or stressful situations, how likely are you to believe the situation to be due to the wrath of God?

☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐
Not likely at all   Somewhat unlikely   Not sure   Somewhat likely   Very Likely

14. When going through difficult or stressful situations, how likely are you to seek support from clergy or church members?

☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐
Not likely at all   Somewhat unlikely   Not sure   Somewhat likely   Very Likely

15. When going through difficult or stressful situations, how likely are you to question the power of God (higher power)?

☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐
Not likely at all   Somewhat unlikely   Not sure   Somewhat likely   Very Likely

16. When going through difficult or stressful situations, how likely are you to express anger toward God (higher power)?

☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐
Not likely at all   Somewhat unlikely   Not sure   Somewhat likely   Very Likely

Directions: Read each item carefully. Using the scale shown below, please circle the number that best describes YOU.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Definitely false	Mostly false	Somewhat false	Slightly false	Slightly true	Somewhat true	Mostly true	Definitely True

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8   I can think of many ways to get out of a jam.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8   I energetically pursue my goals.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8   I feel tired most of the time.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8   There are lots of ways around any problem.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8   I am easily downed in an argument.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8   I can think of many ways to get the things in life that are most important to me.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8   I worry about my health.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8   Even when others get discouraged, I know I can find a way to solve the problem.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8   My past experiences have prepared me for my future.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8   I've been pretty successful in life.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8   I usually find myself worrying about something.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8   I meet the goals that I set for myself

17. How old are you? _____ years

18. What ethnicity do you consider yourself to be? (check all that apply)

☐ White   ☐ African American   ☐ Latina   ☐ Asian   ☐ mixed   ☐ other_____

19. What is your educational background?

☐ "I haven't finished high school yet."   ☐ "I have my diploma or GED."   ☐ "I have some college."   ☐ "I graduated from college."

20. How many times have you been incarcerated?

☐ once   ☐ 2-4   ☐ 5-7   ☐ 8+

21. How old were you the **first** time you were stopped by the police **and** arrested? _____ years
    16a. What is the length of your criminal career? _____ years

22. Prior to **this** incarceration, were you employed:

☐ Full-Time   ☐ Part-Time   ☐ "Worked Off the books"   ☐ Unemployed

    22a. How much of your monthly income was obtained through criminal activity?
    ☐ ALL of it   ☐ SOME of it   ☐ NONE of it

23. Whether you are sentenced or unsentenced, when do you expect to be released from York?

☐ In the next 6 months ☐ In 1 - 3 Years ☐ In 3+ years

24. When looking into your future, your level of effort into being a "law-abiding citizen" is:

☐ NO effort at all ☐ 25% Effort ☐ 50% Effort ☐ 75% Effort ☐ 100% Effort

25. If known, please provide the zip code to where you will be going upon discharge from YCI: _____

26. Do you have children?   Yes   No   If you do not have children, please skip #27.

27. How likely do you believe it is that your children will live with you upon release?

☐ **Not** likely at all ☐ Somewhat unlikely ☐ Not sure ☐ Somewhat likely ☐ Very Likely

Directions: Read each item carefully. Using the scale shown below, please select the number that best describes *how much you agree or disagree* with each statement and put that number in the blank provided.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly disagree	disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly agree	agree	Strongly agree

1. _____ No matter what I do to try to stop committing crimes, I doubt I can.

2. _____ Things have been bad for me in the past, but I can turn things around if I really put my mind to it.

3. _____ Nothing can stop me from living a crime-free life if I want to.

4. _____ I feel helpless when I try to stop myself from committing crimes.

5. _____ No matter what, something always forces me to keep going back to crime.

6. _____ I'm in charge of whether I stop doing crime.

7. _____ Recently, I have learned how to stay away from crime.

8. _____ I have recently done things I never thought I'd be able to do that will help me stay away from   crime.

9. _____ There are people in my life who respect me for the steps I've taken to keep myself away from crime.

10. _____ When I am involved with good people who keep me away from crime, I feel like I'm part of something powerful.

11. _____ When I try to stop myself from doing crime, things always get in the way.

12. _____ I'm smart enough to be able to learn everything I need to help me live a crime-free life.

13. _____ I believe I can be good at going straight, just like I was good at getting what I wanted through crime.

14. _____ I have always had the ability to stop myself from committing crimes.

15. _____ Even when things are tough, I will still find a way to stay crime-free.

16. _____ I'm the only person who can stop me doing crime.

Directions: Below are several statements relating to one's perspective on life and with having to make decisions. Please fill in the number that is closest to how you feel about the statement. Indicate how you feel now. First impressions are usually best. Do not spend a lot of time on any one question. Please be honest with yourself so that your answers reflect your true feelings.

1	2	3	4
Strongly agree	agree	disagree	Strongly disagree

1. _____I can pretty much determine what will happen in my life.

2. _____People are only limited by what they think is possible.

3. _____People have more power if they join together as a group.

4. _____Getting angry about something never helps.

5. _____I have a positive attitude toward myself.

6. _____I am usually confident about the decisions I make.

7. _____People have no right to get angry just because they don't like something.

8. _____Most of the misfortunes in my life were due to bad luck.

9. _____I see myself as a capable person.

10. _____Making waves never gets you anywhere.

11. _____People working together can have an effect on their community.

12. _____I am often able to overcome barriers.

13. _____I am generally optimistic about the future.

14. _____When I make plans, I am almost certain to make them work.

15. _____Getting angry about something is often the first step toward changing it.

16. _____Usually, I feel alone.

17. _____Experts are in the best position to decide what people should do or learn.

18. _____I am able to do things as well as most other people.

19. _____I generally accomplish what I set out to do.

20. _____People should try to live their lives the way they want to.

21. _____You can't fight city hall.

22. _____ I feel powerless most of the time.

23. _____When I am unsure about something, I usually go along with the rest of the group.

24. _____I feel I am a person of worth, at least on an equal basis with others.

25. _____People have the right to make their own decisions, even if they are bad ones.

26. _____I feel I have a number of good qualities.

27. _____ Very often a problem can be solved by taking action.

28. _____Working with others in my community can help to change things for the better.

Directions: Read each item carefully. *Please take a few moments to focus on the neighborhood where you spent the **majority** of your childhood.* Once you have this "*childhood neighborhood*" set, go ahead and answer each item according to the following scale:

1	2	3	4
Strongly agree	**agree**	**disagree**	**Strongly disagree**

1. _____There was a lot of graffiti in my neighborhood.
2. _____My neighborhood was noisy.
3. _____Vandalism was common in my neighborhood.
4. _____There were lots of abandoned buildings in my neighborhood.
5. _____My neighborhood was clean.
6. _____People in my neighborhood took good care of their houses and apartments.
7. _____There were too many people hanging around on the streets near my home.
8. _____There was a lot of crime in my neighborhood.
9. _____There was too much drug use in my neighborhood.
10. _____There was too much alcohol use in my neighborhood.
11. _____I always had trouble with my neighbors.
12. _____In my neighborhood, people would watch out for each other.
13. _____The police protection in my neighborhood was adequate.
14. _____My neighborhood was safe.

Please provide the zip code of this childhood neighborhood _____ "Name" of neighborhood, if any _____

Were the residents of this childhood neighborhood:

☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐
MOSTLY Black   MOSTLY Latino   MOSTLY White   MOSTLY Mixed   Other/not sure

Directions: These questions are a series of statements about your personal attitudes and traits. Each statement represents a commonly held belief. Read each statement and decide to what extent it describes you. There are no right or wrong answers. You will probably agree with some of the statements and disagree with others. Please indicate your own personal feelings about each statement below by marking the letter that best describes your attitude or feeling. Please be truthful and describe yourself as you really are, not as you would like to be.

Mark:
        A If you **Disagree Strongly** with the statement
        B If you **Disagree Moderately** with the statement
        C If you **Neither Agree nor Disagree** with the statement
        D If you **Agree Moderately** with the statement
        E If you **Agree Strongly** with the statement

_____When I make plans, I am certain I can make them work.

_____One of my problems is that I cannot get down to work when I should.

_____If I can't do a job the first time, I keep trying until I can.

_____When I set important goals for myself, I rarely achieve them.

_____I give up on things before completing them.

_____I avoid facing difficulties.

_____If something looks too complicated, I will not even bother to try it.

_____When I have something unpleasant to do, I stick to it until I finish it.

_____When I decide to do something, I go straight to work on it.

_____When trying to learn something new, I soon give up if I am not initially successful.

_____When unexpected problems occur, I don't handle them well.

_____I avoid trying to learn new things when they look too difficult for me.

_____Failure just makes me try harder.

_____I feel insecure about my ability to do things.

_____I am a self-reliant person.

_____I give up easily.

_____I do not seem capable of dealing with most problems that come up in life.

_____It is difficult for me to make new friends.

_____If I see someone I would like to meet, I go to that person instead of waiting for him or her to come to me.

_____If I meet someone interesting who is hard to make friends with, I'll soon stop trying to make friends with that person.

_____When I'm trying to become friends with someone who seems uninterested at first, I don't give up easily.

_____I do not handle myself well in social gatherings.

_____I have acquired my friends through my personal abilities at making friends.

Appendix C
Notification Letter

Subject: You are invited to a research study "Justice-Involved women and desistance."

Dear Ms. _____   (# _____)   Unit: _____

You are invited to take part in a research study titled "Justice involved women and desistance". This study is being led by Elizabeth Allen, LCSW, and her research committee from the Department of Social Work at the University of Connecticut. The purpose of this study is to better understand how women are able to create successful lives after incarceration.

In this study, you will be asked to write a "kite" with answers to four questions about events in your life and how these events fit into your overall life story. You will also be asked to complete a survey questionnaire. You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to and your responses will be unidentified and no one will know the answers you provide. You will be free to withdraw from this study at any time during the group session. The research session should take approximately 2-3 hours and will be offered at several different times and days so you will be able to attend when it is best for you.

This study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board of the University of Connecticut. There are no risks associated with participating in this study. The survey collects no identifying information of any individual. All of the responses in the survey will be recorded without names. There are no penalties or consequences of any kind if you decide that you do not want to participate.

If you have any questions regarding the survey or this research project in general, please contact Elizabeth Allen, LCSW or her advisor Dr. Nina Heller at (860) 570-9174 or UCONN – School of Social Work, 1798 Asylum Avenue, West Hartford, CT. 06117. If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research participant, please contact the IRB of University of Connecticut at (860) 486-8802 or The Whetten Graduate Center, Room 214 University of Connecticut 438 Whitney Road Extension, Unit-1246 Storrs, CT 06269-1246.

Your participation is greatly appreciated. I hope you will be willing to share your ideas and time, in order to help me better understand the post-incarceration experience for women. Most of all, I hope that you will enjoy the group session and questionnaire and the opportunity to voice your thoughts about this very important process. Please indicate below which day and time you would be available to participate (please check all that apply) and return in the provided envelope:

_____ Monday, (Date) (time)   _____ Saturday, (Date) (time)   _____Friday (date) (time)

_____ Thursday, (Date) (time)   _____ Tuesday, (Date) (time)

_____ I wish to participate, however cannot attend one of these dates.

Elizabeth Allen, Doctoral Candidate, University of Connecticut
Advisor Dr. Nina Heller, Department of Social Work, University of Connecticut

August, 2014

Last week you were sent a notification that you were selected to participate in a research study about women involved in the justice system.

If you have already completed and returned this notice with your available dates, please accept my sincere thanks. If you are interested in participating, please select your available days and times and return in the provided envelope so your input can be included. I am especially gratefully for your help with this important study.

If you did not receive a notification, or if it was misplaced, please request a new one, and I will send a replacement.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Allen, LCSW
Doctoral student

UCONN - School of Social Work
1798 Asylum Avenue
West Hartford, CT 06117

Ms. Jane Doe #555333
201 W. Main Street
Niantic, CT 06357

Housing unit: __ _

Coding Instructions

Coding Narratives
Outline

Condemnation Script (McAdams, pg 183)

- Something good turns bad
- Good things do not happen to me
- Typically begin well and end badly
- A positive scene is followed immediately by a very bad or emotionally negative outcome
- Opposite of a redemption sequence
- "A fall from Grace"
- Marriage is wonderful → partner still wants a divorce (Pg. 187)
- Protagonists finally stands up to a bully and is wining the fight → Bully's friend beats up protagonist
- P is pregnant, happy →husband is killed in auto accident, P miscarries
- P receives a gift → gift is stolen
- Birth of beautiful baby →baby develops serious illness
- P feels pride at high school graduation →father says P looked fat crossing the stage
- The 'victim'
- Stories lack personal agency
- Attribute criminal involvement to poverty-stigma, and criminal peers
- Emphasis on making "big score"
- Sense of freedom that comes from no longer worrying about succeeding
- Objective of "winning the lottery" but not motivated by greed – desire to share the elusive big score – in effort and to fill with excitement, drugs and popularity
- An otherwise empty life characterized by a sense of personal failure
- Pawns with little or no control over their future

- *Excuse*: A speaker acknowledges a failure or offense but blames extenuating circumstances. Therefore, the person recognizes the behavior as negative but denies responsibility for the event. Examples include blaming drugs or alcohol, blaming one's friends, or blaming circumstances.
- *Justification*: A speaker admits responsibility but denies that the behavior is negative. To justify something is to make that behavior legitimate. Examples include denial of injury (no one got hurt), denials of the victim (they deserved it), and appeals to loyalty (I did it for the kids).
- *Refusals*: In a refusal, a person evades questions regarding offending. Examples include outright refusals to describe or account for offending behavior or else more subtle evasion tactics.

- *Reports:* A neutral admission of a failure event without describing the negative aspects of the action or offering any excuse/justification. Examples include straightforward explanations such as "we did it for the money" or "we did it because it was fun."

Redemption Script

The essential characteristic of redemption imagery is the movement in the story from a demonstrably negative to a demonstrably positive scene. We may call the negative or bad element of the sequence "A" and the positive or good element of the sequence "B". Thus:
A ---> B

- Something bad turns good
- Tragic optimism about their lives
- Something uniquely redeeming could come from criminal past
- Asserts the essential good of the narrator
- Despite considerable pain and setbacks, protagonists continue to grow, improve, make progress, move ahead, get better over time
- From negative emotion to positive emotion
- *Goodness* was once there – even if fleeting "Once upon a time I was good, but then bad things made me bad; life might have turned out much better had I not been victimized."
- *"good heart" or "good brain"*
- Clear distinction b/w crime and the true selves – psychologically distinguishing themselves from their crimes and from other criminals
- "it was the drugs"
- Exaggerated sense of self-determination, efficacy and hope for their future
- "comeback story"
- Bad had to happen in order to achieve larger good

In scoring a particular narrative account of an autobiographical scene for redemption, the coder must first determine the presence or absence of redemption imagery. If the scene contains redemption imagery, then it receives a score of +1, and the coder continues to look for the presence or absence of each of the three subcategories (enhanced agency, enhanced communion, ultimate concerns) in that particular scene. If the scene does not contain redemption imagery, then it receives a score of 0 and no further subcategory scoring is done for that scene. Thus, if the scene scores 0 for redemption imagery, all redemption scoring of that scene ends, and the coder moves to the next scene.

The coder must first determine if there is a negative A state, scene, or situation in the account. Negative scenes are often described in terms of the protagonist's emotional state --
- fear
- terror

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- sadness
- grief
- anguish
- guilt
- shame
- humiliation
- anger
- distress
- any of a large number of explicitly negative affective states.

Also relevant would be:
- physical pain
- injury
- sickness

Or the event itself is an especially negative one –
- death of a friend
- divorce
- major failure
- poverty
- addiction
- broken relationship
- being fired from one's job.

The coder should consider a negative A state to be established if the respondent describes a scene in which he or she experienced significant negative affect or pain or if the respondent describes a scene that itself is so negative that it would most assuredly produce negative affect or pain for most any person experiencing it.

The coder should be relatively conservative here. Minor setbacks (e.g., misplacing one's purse, waiting in line, getting a less-than-stellar grade on an exam) and mild negative states (e.g., feeling nervous at the beginning of a competitive event, feeling uncertain about one's skills, lacking direction in life) should not count for A. The event needs to be demonstrably negative. Especially negative scenes are often described in life story low points and turning points, but they can occasionally appear in most any kind of account, including even high points.

Once a negative A state has been determined, then the question of what, if anything, follows that state must be asked. For redemption imagery to be scored, the negative A state must lead to an especially positive scene or state. Positive states are often indexed by positive emotions, such as feelings of
joy
happiness
excitement
satisfaction

love, and the like.

 But they can also be indicated by certain especially positive cognitive results, such as: increased understanding of self-insight, and by descriptions of events that themselves would likely elicit positive feelings in most people (e.g., close relationships, victory, reconciliation, healing, growth, learning). The positive state of B that follows the negative A state does not need to be as positive as the A state was negative. For example, the death of one's father is a very negative scene. The fact that the father's death ultimately led to an enhanced feeling of self-confidence on the part of the respondent is definitely a positive outcome (B), even though its strength or robustness is less, in absolute terms, than the death itself. Or to put it simply, a very dark cloud can still leave a faint silver lining, and such a sequence would score for redemption. Therefore, redemption sequences occur when some kind of positive outcome follows a negative event, even if that positive outcome pails in comparison to the intensity of the negative event. Still, the B state **must be demonstrably positive**. The author must explicitly describe a state that involves positive emotional or cognitive resolution, or one that is itself so positive as to produce such a result in most people. The coder **should not make undue inferences** about what the respondent means. The respondent **needs to describe clearly a move from a negative A to a positive B.**

The movement from A to B can take one of two forms. A may cause B (in the respondent's view) or A may merely immediately precede B in time. In the first case, A leads to B by virtue of causation. A is the event or factor whose prior occurrence to B is the reason that B occurs. For instance, the death of one's spouse (A: bad) may cause a person to gain insight into his own life (B: good). Or a divorce (A) may eventuate in improvement of one's relationships with one's children (B). Or an especially painful delivery (A) produces a healthy baby (B). (Note the delivery did not have to be "painful" to eventuate in the baby, but the delivery itself still would be viewed as "causing" the baby to be born.) These events are **constructed as causal narratives;** B would not have occurred if A had not "caused" it.

In the second case, A need not cause B but merely precede B immediately in time. For example, a losing season (A: bad) is followed immediately by a championship season (B: good). Or a depressive episode (A) is followed immediately by winning the lottery (B). In these instances, the author is not trying to suggest that A caused B. Instead, A and B are juxtaposed in such a way that a very positive event follows on the heels of a very negative one. The **link is temporal, but not necessarily causal**. It is important to note that by "temporal," we are referring to chronological time in the plot of the narrative itself. B must follow A in the temporal scheme of the story. As an example of the contrary, consider a respondent who describes a bad experience in his life that occurred at age 30 and then proceeds to go back to incident in childhood that is contrastingly positive. Even though the positive event followed the negative one in the telling of the story, the positive event occurred in time long before the negative event occurred. Thus, such an account **would not code for redemption imagery**.

The content of A ---> B that makes up a redemptive sequence ranges widely. Common examples, though, fall into the categories of **sacrifice, recovery, growth, learning, and**

improvement. Below are examples of each of these five common types ("S" designates subject):

- **Sacrifice.** A character in the story willfully accepts or endures an extremely negative A in order to provide a benefit of B. Typically B is a benefit for another, though the self may also benefit. Thus, A is viewed as something of a sacrifice for the good inherent in B. Examples:

   pain of delivery ---> birth of beautiful baby

   difficult years working in a low-paying job ---> money saved enhanced child's education

S leaves husband because he wants her to have abortion, poverty ensues ---> joy of loving son

- **Recovery**. The person successfully obtains a positive state again after losing it, as in healing, survival, regaining, recuperating, etc. Typically, A is a physical (injury, illness) or psychological (depression, trauma) condition and B is the healing outcome. Examples:

   illness ---> cure

   depression ---> regained positive outlook on life

   near-fatal injuries ---> surprising recovery

   alcoholism ---> successful treatment

   severe anorexia ---> therapist "saved my life"

- **Growth**. A negative experience leads to psychological or interpersonal growth, fulfillment, actualization, strengthening, individuation, etc. Most often, B is a personal/psychological benefit that results for the person from the occurrence of A. Examples:

   death of father ---> brings family closer together

   injury ---> S learns to be self-sufficient

   S is lonely as a child ---> because of this S feels he/she more resilient as an adult

   unhappy employment situation ---> S quits and finds independence, fulfillment

   depression ---> initiated personality change

   panic attack ---> self-understanding

   failed love affair ---> S becomes more assertive

   mother's death ---> S feels closer to her now

   ran away from home, felt bad ---> S gained personal strength

   divorce ---> developed better relationships with children

   got fired from job ---> comes to see self as a "whole person"

   husband has affair ---> S feels enhanced "strength of ego"

   illness, radiation therapy ---> S experiences better self-understanding

   drugs, dereliction ---> S moves to new place, changes name, "got life together"

   uncle dies ---> S experiences greater empathy for others

   near-death experience ---> S sheds self-centered qualities

   illness forces S to end career ---> S takes up painting and finds the "love and passion" of life

   miscarriage ---> S now appreciates "the little things in life"

   S feels he is arrogant and hypocrite ---> S becomes humbler, happier

- **Learning**. A person gains new knowledge, wisdom, skills, etc. from a negative event. Whereas growth generally refers to psychological or interpersonal benefits, learning refers to benefits that are more instrumental and less concerned with issues of personal and interpersonal adjustment. Of course, the two types overlap somewhat. Examples:

    father is dying ---> father gives sage words of advice

    S is worn out at work, exhausting work load ---> S realizes life needs more balance

    family poverty means S cannot go to the prom ---> learns lessons about honesty, money

    severe criticism from co-workers ---> S becomes better employee

    frustrations on job ---> S learns patience

    tough neighborhood, fights ---> "but I learned a lot"

    near-death experience ---> learned to fear death no longer

    turmoil in school ---> S learns new perspectives

    mother-in-law hates S ---> S learns how to be a good mother-in-law as a result

    S is unhappy, quit school ---> S learns value of hard work to achieve goals

- **Improvement (and other).** This is something of a catch-all category for the many examples that do not fit into the four types about but in which a bad situation containing negative affect becomes a better situation containing positive affect. Examples:

    bad job ---> new, better job

    S experiences a period of chaos in life ---> S experiences happiest time in life

    infertility ---> a child is born (similar to recovery type)

    very bad marriage ---> very good marriage

    S experiences job insecurity, doubts ---> S wins award for excellence

    girlfriend is depressed about her family ---> S proposes marriage, which lifts her mood

    miserable about unemployment ---> stranger gives S a tip, which leads to a good job

    divorce, anger ---> S becomes successful in order to prove her own worth to ex-spouse

    hated school --> began liking it

    fight and injury ---> S becomes friends with his opponent

    S is a terrible student ---> summer reading program enhances confidence

    very bad year at college ---> S ends up getting grades of "A"

    S is terrified of public speaking ---> S improves speaking ability, experiences success

    husband is cold, distant ---> S gets help, counseling, marriage improves

    lonely, depressed ---> S experiences conversion to Christianity, feels ecstatic

    S drifts into drugs ---> S joins track team and gains direction and purpose in life, stops drugs

    unwanted pregnancy ---> S gets life focused, she becomes thankful for pregnancy

    S is stuck in low-level job ---> S gets promoted and becomes very successful

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The Subcategories: **Agency Enhancement, Communion Enhancement, Ultimate Concern**
Tedeschi and Calhoun (1995) write that three common positive results of posttraumatic growth are **(1)** improvements in self, **(2)** improvements in interpersonal relationships, and **(3)** enhanced spiritual or religious experiences. Employing Bakan's (1966) distinction between agency and communion as well as the language of Paul Tillich and other theologians, we have reformulated these three into the subcategories of

- **Enhanced Agency**
- **Enhanced Communion**
- **Ultimate Concerns.**

Enhanced Agency (McAdams, pg 69)
- Agency manifests itself in self-protection, self-assertion, and self-expansion.
- Agency manifests itself in formation of separations
- Four themes of agency are:
    - Self-mastery
    - Status/victory
    - Achievement/responsibility
    - empowerment
- Attaining victory or higher status
    - *Status/Victory* – The participant attains a heightened status or prestige among her peers, through receiving a special recognition or honor or winning a context or competition.
- Achieving instrumental goals in life
    - *Achievement/responsibility* – The participant reports substantial success in the achievement of tasks, jobs, or instrumental goals or in the assumption of important responsibilities. The participant feels proud, confident, masterful, accomplished, or successful in (a) meeting significant challenges or overcoming important obstacles or (b) taking on major responsibilities for other people and assuming roles that require the person to be in charge of things and/or people.
- Gaining new insight or understanding of the self
    - *Self-Mastery* – The participant strives successfully to master, control, enlarge, or perfect the self. A relatively common expression of the theme involves the participant's attaining a dramatic insight into the meaning of her own life. The participant may also experience a greatly enhanced sense of control over her destiny, in the wake of an important life event.
        - *After the death of his son* – man changes his "philosophy of life"
        - *A woman accepts the awful truth that she is indeed an alcoholic*.

- *Empowerment* – The subject is enlarged, enhanced, empowered, ennobled, built up, or made better through his or her association with something larger and more powerful

than the self. The self is made even more agentic by virtue of its involvement with an even more powerful agent of some sort. The empowering force is usually either (a) God, nature, cosmos, and so on or (b) a highly influential teacher, mentor, minister, therapist, or authority figure.

For **enhanced agency**, score +1 if the transformation from negative to positive in the story produces or leads to an **additional enhancement of the protagonist's personal power or agency, if it builds self-confidence, efficacy, or personal resolve, or if it provides the protagonist with insight into personal identity.** The author **must explicitly** state that enhanced agency was a result of the redemptive sequence

Enhanced Communion

- Communion manifests itself in the sense of being at one with other organisms
- Communion manifests itself in the lack of separations.
- Something of benefit to offer
- Having an impact on other people
- The four themes of communion are:
    - Love/friendship
    - Dialogue
    - Caring/help
    - Unity/togetherness
- *Caring vs. self-absorption and failures of caring* – Expressions of concern with the capacity to care for others ("a sense that includes 'to care to do' something, to 'care for' somebody or something, to 'take care of' that which needs protection and attention, and to 'take care not to do' something destructive" (E. Erikson, as quoted from Evans, 1967, p. 53). Its absence (scored minus) is reflected in overt failures of caring and in self-absorption.
- *Need to be needed* - Expression of an inner need to be needed by another or by others in general ("a gradual expansion of ego-interests and a libidinal investment in that which is being generated" [Erikson, 1968, p. 138]) scored plus. Denials of this need are scored minus.
- *Productivity vs. Stagnation* - Expressions of developing and growing through generative outlets (it "encompasses procreativity, productivity, and creativity, and thus the generation of new products and ideas" [Erickson, 1982, p. 67]. Rather than simply the performance of an occupation-related task, clear emotional investment and commitment must be involved. (For example, the mere reporting of working on a product is not scored here; however, if the statement includes expressions of affect regarding the work in progress, it becomes clear that there is personal and emotional investment in the task.) Productivity also involves the further growth and development of the formulated adult self (scored plus) rather than stagnation (minus). (e.g., premature fixation with no desire for further challenge or growth).

For **enhanced communion**, score +1 if the transformation from negative to positive in the story produces or **leads to an additional enhancement of the protagonist's personal relationships of love, friendship, family ties, and so on**. The author **must explicitly** state that the enhanced communion was a result of the redemption sequence.

These two subcategories -- enhanced agency and enhanced communion -- function as "bonus points" for redemption sequences. They are points that are added on to an account that already scores for redemption imagery. However, the coder should use the bonus points **sparingly**. The rule of thumb is that each of these two sub categories can be scored +1 **only if it is expressed as a direct result of the move from negative to positive states**. In other words, once an A --> B sequence has been detected (score +1 for redemption imagery), then the coder looks for additional benefits that go **beyond** the original redemptive move. For example, an account may score for redemptive imagery by virtue of a young man's move from drug addiction (A) to recovery (B). The "good" outcome is the recovery from drug addiction. If in addition to this good outcome, the young man **also experiences enhanced friendship or love, then the account gets an extra point for the subcategory of enhanced communion**. These two subcategories are value added. They enable the coder to give **occasional** extra points for accounts that provide multiple benefits or aspects to the good outcome (B) that follows the negative state (A). By contrast, an account in which a young woman's experience of loneliness (A) is followed by an experiences of deep-felt love (B) would not score for the extra point of communion enhancement because the actual move that makes for the redemptive imagery itself (which is, of course, scored) is itself a move from loneliness (no communion) to love (communion). There is nothing to "add" -- the redemptive imagery category capture it all. Thus, the subcategories of enhanced agency and enhanced communion are **only added** to the score when the minimal content that produced the redemptive imagery to begin with leaves behind other, associated content suggestive of additional agentic or communal benefits in B.

Ultimate Concern
- Seeks to give back
- Make next generation better
- *General concerns with generativity*- Expressions of concerns about making a lasting contribution, especially to future generations (including through creative products) or to care for them, should score plus; aversions to such conditions should score minus whenever more specific themes cannot be scored.
- *Children* – the care and nurturance (positive, scored a plus, negative scored a minus) for one's child. Also, sheer desires to have children score plus, whereas aversion to having children should score minus.

Ultimate Concern
- Enhanced spiritual or religious experiences

For **ultimate concern**, score +1 if the transformation from negative to positive involves **confrontation with or significant involvement in fundamental existential issues or ultimate concerns.** The event brings the protagonist face-to-face with death, God, and or religious/spiritual dimensions of life. A point is added for this subcategory because of our belief that redemptive accounts that include such content have a more powerful and personally meaningful quality to them than do other kinds of redemptive accounts.

Total Scores
The coder simply adds up the scores from the prime test and three subcategories for each scene account. Thus scores for a single scene range hypothetically from **0 to 4**. The **most common score**, by far, is 0. Total subject score is the sum of all scene scores.

The coding system for agency and communion is a conservative scheme. The scorer should not give a point (=1) for a given them in a given episode unless there is clear and explicit proof of the theme's existence in the episode. The scorer should be careful not to read anything into the literal description of the account. The scorer should avoid clinical inferences and extensions beyond the written word.

Maruna believes that desistance often depends on formulating a potentially *generative narrative of the self.* It must do 2 things – 1. Salvage a good self from the past, so as to suggest that one's life has not been totally wasted. 2. Narrative must integrate the person into a *productive and caring social niche for the future.*
.

ID: _____ Initials: _____

Condemnation Script   or   Redemption Script

Enhanced Agency –   Yes   or   No

Examples:

Enhanced Communion -   Yes   or   No

Examples:

Ultimate Concern -   Yes   or   No

Examples:

Total Score: _____

Concerns:

IRB Approval and Recruitment Materials

UCONN
UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

DATE: October 20, 2014

TO: Nina Heller, Ph.D.
Elizabeth Allen, LCSW, Student Investigator
School of Social Work

FROM: Jaci L. VanHeest, Ph.D. ͜ JLVH /ᴧᴧ
Chair, Institutional Review Board
FWA# 00007125

RE: Protocol #H14-227: "Justice-Involved Women and Redemptive Narratives: The Role of Hope, Self-Efficacy, Empowerment and Disordered Community on the Redemptive Self"
Please refer to the Protocol# in all future correspondence with the IRB.
Funding Source: Unfunded
Approval Period: From: **October 20, 2014** *Valid Through:* **September 25, 2015**
"Expiration Date"

At its meeting of September 25, 2014, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed the above-referenced research study and determined that modifications were required to secure approval. Those requirements have been met, and the IRB granted approval of the study on October 20, 2014. Enclosed are the validated information sheets, which are valid through September 25, 2015. **A copy of the approved, validated information sheet (with the IRB's stamp) must be used to consent each subject.**

The IRB found that the protocol meets the criteria for approval stated in 45CFR46, Subpart C, Section 306(a)(1)(2)(i) – Study of the possible causes, effects and processes of incarceration, and of criminal behavior, provided that the study presents no more than minimal risk and no more than inconvenience to the subjects. In addition, the IRB found that the protocol meets the criteria for approval stated in 45 CFR 46.304(a)(b) and 45 CFR 46.305(a)(1)(2)(3)(4)(5)(6)(7)(b)(c).

The IRB acknowledges that proof of approval from the Department of Corrections (DOC) IRB will be provided once it becomes available.

Per 45 CFR 46.117(c)(1), the IRB waived the requirement for the investigator to obtain a signed consent form from the subjects because it found that the only record linking the subject and the research would be the consent document and the principal risk would be potential harm resulting from a breach of confidentiality. Each subject will be asked whether the subject wants documentation linking the subject with the research, and the subject's wishes will govern.

Office of the Vice President for Research
Research Compliance Services
438 WHITNEY ROAD EXTENSION. UNIT 1246
STORRS, CT 06269-1246
PHONE 860.486.8802
FAX 860.486 1044
compliance.uconn.edu

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All investigators at the University of Connecticut are responsible for complying with the attached IRB "Responsibilities of Research Investigators."

Re-approval: It is the investigator's responsibility to apply for re-approval of ongoing research at **least once yearly**, or more often if specified by the IRB. The Re-approval/Completion Form (IRB-2) and other applicable re-approval materials must be submitted **six weeks** in advance of the expiration date noted above.

Modifications: If you wish to change any aspect of this study, such as the procedures, the consent forms, the investigators, or funding source, please submit the changes in writing to the IRB using the Amendment Review Form (IRB-3). All modifications must be reviewed and approved by the IRB prior to initiation.

Audit: All protocols approved by the IRB may be audited by the Post Approval Monitor.

Please keep this letter with your copy of the approved protocol.

Attachments:
1. Validated Information Sheets
2. Validated Recruitment Message
3. Validated Appendix A
4. Validated IRB-1
5. "Responsibilities of Research Investigators"

Information Sheet for research study

UCONN
UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

Principal Investigator: Dr. Nina Heller, PhD
Student: Elizabeth Allen, LCSW
Title of Study: Justice-Involved women and desistance

You are invited to participate in this research regarding justice-involved women. I am a doctoral student at the University of Connecticut, and am conducting this research as part of my course work. The purpose of this research study is to gather information to help gain a better understanding about how women, who are involved in the justice system are able to create successful lives for themselves after incarceration.

There are two parts to the research study. In the first part you will be asked to answer four questions about events in your life and how these events fit into your overall life story. You will be asked to write these stories down in the form of a "kite" to your best friend. It is expected this writing exercise will take approximately 1-2 hours. In the second part of this research, you will be asked to complete a survey questionnaire. It is anticipated this part will take approximately 30-45 minutes of your time.

Your participation will be anonymous and you will not be contacted again in the future. All of your written materials and your survey questionnaire will not be identified by your name, inmate number or any other traceable marker. Once you have completed all materials, you will seal all materials in an envelope and deposit it into a large box. This box will be closely monitored by the research staff at all times. The researchers will not be able to trace the data back to you once it has been collected and all study records will be kept locked in a secure location. At the conclusion of this study, the researchers may publish the findings, but findings will be in summary form and you will not be identified in any publications or presentations. You will not be paid for being in this study. Although the risks involved in participating in this research are considered minimum, it is possible that you may become upset after writing about certain events that occurred in your life. If this should happen, you will be provided the option of being referred to speak with a qualified mental health clinician if you feel it is necessary. You may not directly benefit from this research; however we hope that your participation in the study may provide a voice for all the women involved in the justice system regarding the important process of transitioning from prison to community.

You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to be. If you agree to be in the study, but later change your mind, you may drop out at any time. Although we do not believe the survey questions will be upsetting to you, you do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to answer. There are no penalties or consequences of any kind if you decide that you do not want to participate.

UCONN IRB
Approved On 10 7 0 14
Approved Until 9 25 15
Approved By JLVHAu

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Take as long as you like before you make a decision. I will be happy to answer any questions you have about this study. If you have further questions about this project or if you have a research-related problem, you may contact me, Elizabeth Allen, LCSW at (860) 570-9323 or my advisor, Dr. Nina Heller at (860) 570-9174 or UCONN – School of Social Work, 1798 Asylum Avenue, West Hartford, CT. 06117. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant you may contact the University of Connecticut Institutional Review Board (IRB) at 860-486-8802 or The Whetten Graduate Center, Room 214 University of Connecticut 438 Whitney Road Extension, Unit-1246 Storrs, CT 06269-1246. The IRB is a group of people who review research studies to protect the rights and welfare of research participants.

Thank you.

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Information Sheet for Participation in pre-test

UCONN
UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

Principal Investigator: Dr. Nina Heller, PhD.
Student Researcher: Elizabeth Allen, LCSW
Study Title: Justice-Involved women and desistance

Introduction

You have been selected to participate in the pre-testing phase for a research study. The goal of the study is to better understand how women are able to create successful lives after incarceration. The goal of the pre-testing phase is to make sure the questions asked are clear and understandable and to estimate about how long it will take for participants to complete all parts. This consent form will give you the information you will need to understand why this pre-testing is being done and why you are being invited to participate in the pre-testing phase. It will also describe what you will need to do to participate and any known risks, inconveniences or discomforts that you may have while participating. I encourage you to take some time to think this over and to ask any questions now or at any time. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to give verbal consent and you may keep a copy of this form, if you so choose. There are no penalties or consequences of any kind if you decide that you do not want to participate

Why is this pre-testing being done?

The purpose of this research study is to gather information to help gain a better understanding about how women who are involved in the justice system are able to create successful lives for themselves after incarceration. Your participation in the pre-testing phase will help to ensure that all materials and directions are clear and understandable. It will also help to assess the accurate amount of time that will be needed for participants to complete all materials.

What are the study procedures? What will I be asked to do?

There are two parts to the research study. In the first part you will be asked to answer four questions about events in your life and how these events fit into your overall life story. You will be asked to write these stories down in the form of a "kite" to your best friend. In the second part of this research, you will be asked to complete a survey questionnaire.

Page 1 of 2

What are the risks or inconveniences of the study?

Although the risks involved in participating in the pre-testing are considered to be low, it is possible that you may become upset after writing about certain events that occurred in your life. If this should happen, you will be provided the option of speaking with a mental health clinician if you feel it necessary.

What are the benefits of the study?

You may not directly benefit from this research; however I hope that your participation in the pre-testing will help make sure that all research materials are understandable so that others do not experience any difficulties when providing their answers. Your participation will also help to assess the expected amount of time so that participants will have a clear understanding about how much time is needed to complete the materials.

Will I receive payment for participation? Are there costs to participate?

There are no costs and you will not be paid to participate in this pre-testing phase.

How will my personal information be protected?

The following procedures will be used to protect the confidentiality of your data. All of your written materials and your survey questionnaire will **not** be identified by your name, inmate number or any other traceable marker. Once you have completed all materials, they will be destroyed and therefore not traced back to you.

You should also know that the UConn Institutional Review Board (IRB) and Research Compliance Services may inspect study records as part of its auditing program, but these reviews will only focus on the researchers and not on your responses or involvement. The IRB is a group of people who review research studies to protect the rights and welfare of research participants.

Can I stop being in the study and what are my rights?

You do not have to participate in the pre-test phase if you do not want to. If you agree to help with the pre-testing but later change your mind today, you may drop out at any time. Although I do not believe the survey questions will be upsetting to you, you do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to answer. There are no penalties or consequences of any kind if you decide that you do not want to participate.

Whom do I contact if I have questions about the study?

I will be happy to answer any question you have about this study. If you have further questions about this project or if you have a research-related problem, you may contact the principal investigator, Dr. Nina Heller at (860) 570-9174 or the student researcher Elizabeth Allen at (860) 570-9323. If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research subject, you may contact the University of Connecticut Institutional Review Board (IRB) at 860-486-8802.

UCONN IRB
Approved On 10/20/14
Approved Until 9/25/15
Approved By

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Subject: You are invited to a research study "Justice-Involved women and desistance."

Dear Ms. _____ (#_____) Unit: _____

You are invited to take part in a research study titled "Justice involved women and desistance". This study is being led by Elizabeth Allen, LCSW, and her research committee from the Department of Social Work at the University of Connecticut. The purpose of this study is to better understand how women are able to create successful lives after incarceration.

In this study, you will be asked to write a "kite" with answers to four questions about events in your life and how these events fit into your overall life story. You will also be asked to complete a survey questionnaire. You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to and your responses will be unidentified and no one will know the answers you provide. You will be free to withdraw from this study at any time during the group session. The research session should take approximately 2-3 hours and will be offered at several different times and days so you will be able to attend when it is best for you.

This study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board of the University of Connecticut. There are no risks associated with participating in this study. The survey collects no identifying information of any individual. All of the responses in the survey will be recorded without names. There are no penalties or consequences of any kind if you decide that you do not want to participate

If you have any questions regarding the survey or this research project in general, please contact Elizabeth Allen, LCSW or her advisor Dr. Nina Heller at (860) 570-9174 or UCONN – School of Social Work, 1798 Asylum Avenue, West Hartford, CT. 06117. If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research participant, please contact the IRB of University of Connecticut at (860) 486-8802 or The Whetten Graduate Center, Room 214 University of Connecticut 438 Whitney Road Extension, Unit-1246 Storrs, CT 06269-1246.

Your participation is greatly appreciated. I hope you will be willing to share your ideas and time, in order to help me better understand the post-incarceration experience for women. Most of all, I hope that you will enjoy the group session and questionnaire and the opportunity to voice your thoughts about this very important process. Please indicate below which day and time you would be available to participate (please check all that apply) and return in the provided envelope:

_____ Monday, (Date) (time)   _____ Saturday, (Date) (time)   _____ Friday (date) (time)

_____ Thursday, (Date) (time)   _____ Tuesday, (Date) (time)

_____ I wish to participate, however cannot attend one of these dates.

Elizabeth Allen, Doctoral Candidate, University of Connecticut
Advisor Dr. Nina Heller, Department of Social Work, University of Connecticut

UCONN IRB
Approved On 10/20/14
Approved Until 9/25/15
Approved By JLVH/hc

August, 2014

Last week you were sent a notification that you were selected to participate in a research study about women involved in the justice system.

If you have already completed and returned this notice with your available dates, please accept my sincere thanks. If you are interested in participating, please select your available days and times and return in the provided envelope so your input can be included. I am especially gratefully for your help with this important study.

If you did not receive a notification, or if it was misplaced, please request a new one, and I will send a replacement.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Allen, LCSW
Doctoral student

UCONN – School of Social Work
1798 Asylum Avenue
West Hartford, CT 06117

Ms. Jane Doe #555333
201 W. Main Street
Niantic, CT 06357

Housing unit: _____

UCONN IRB
Approved On 10/20/14
Approved Until 9/25/15
Approved By JWHler