

# Prisoner futures: Sensing the signs of generativity

**Mark Halsey**

Flinders University, Australia

**Vandra Harris**

RMIT University, Australia

## Abstract

In recent years, a small but critically informed literature has emerged which points to the link between opportunities to engage in generative acts and desistance from crime. This paper outlines the nature and limits of generative moments (conceived as the philosophy or practice of caring in non-violent and durable ways for self, other and future) with regard to the incarceration of a group of young males interviewed since 2003. Specifically, it poses the question of who or what it has been possible for these young men to care about within and beyond custody and highlights some of the factors which undermine generative concerns and actions. In concluding, the paper offers several ideas for enhancing generative opportunities within custodial environments.

## Keywords

generativity, prison, young men

## Introduction

In 1950, Erik H Erikson published a framework of human development outlining eight stages from infancy to late adulthood.<sup>1</sup> Each stage constitutes a period of crisis between competing paths or preoccupations – for example between intimacy/solidarity and isolation (young adulthood). Generativity is the seventh stage (middle adulthood) and involves the struggle against stagnation/self-absorption. The ‘virtue’ at the heart of this contest is *care*, or ‘a widening commitment to take care of the persons, the products, and the ideas one has learned to care for’ (Erikson, 1982: 67). Accordingly, we conceive of generativity as the commitment toward or practice of caring for self, other and future. For Erikson (1968: 138), failure to develop a caring stance toward future generations or

---

### Corresponding author:

Mark Halsey, Associate Professor, Law School, Flinders University, GPO Box 2100, Adelaide, South Australia, Australia 5001

Email: mark.halsey@flinders.edu.au

a concern to become a productive and/or creative member of the community, can lead to 'a pervading *sense of stagnation*, boredom and self-improvement'.

Since Erikson's original formulation and ongoing development of the concept, a large literature has arisen concerning the theory and practice of generativity in various contexts encompassing the Holocaust, homosexuality, education, religion, politics and war (De St Aubin et al., 2004; McAdams and De St Aubin, 1998). In criminological and penological spheres, generativity has only very recently emerged as a key analytical tool. Indeed, to quote from one recent source, the relationship between 'generativity and crime has never been *directly* explored in criminology' (Maruna et al., 2004: 134, emphasis added).

Work that examines the relationship between generativity and desistance from crime includes Barry (2006), McNeill and Maruna (2007), LeBel (2007), Healy and O'Donnell (2008), Walker (2010), and in greater depth, Maruna (2001, especially Chapter 6). Without invoking generativity per se, Liebling (2005) brilliantly analyses conditions favourable to the emergence of respected and humane selves within and following release from prison. We find, however, only one published paper specifically on generativity within custodial environments (Maruna et al., 2004). This work calls its readers to consider what prisons could become were they designed and operated in ways capable of giving real force to generative acts and dispositions. As Maruna et al. (2004: 133) write:

We contend that if the world of corrections were to become more of a *generative society* – that is, an environment in which generative commitments were modelled and nurtured, and opportunities for generative activities were promoted and rewarded – it would simply be more effective at reducing repeat offending.

This challenge strikes at the heart of the correctional enterprise. As institutions located at the difficult 'deep end' of criminal justice, prisons (particularly maximum security settings) radically reduce opportunities to care in non-violent and durable ways for self, other and future (but these are, ironically, the kinds of capacities most of us want in people released into our communities). In the main, and acknowledging that one prison can never be *precisely* like another, such environments tend – either by bureaucratic or sub-cultural design – to be places where displays of genuine concern and respect for others (especially the kind which bridges the staff/prisoner divide), or indications of the desire to shape one's future in ways disconnected from crime, can very quickly result in ostracism and/or ongoing physical or psychological violence for the duration of one's sentence.

In this article, therefore, we explore how young male prisoners<sup>2</sup> cope with the conditions of their incarceration and how this impacts on the process of personal legacy-making. To the best of our knowledge, young men serving time in prison have rarely if ever been asked to narrate the possible and actual generative dimensions of their lives, and to speak to the kinds of constraints and 'enabling niches' (Taylor, 1997) which impact the nature and intensity of generative desires and actions within and following repeat periods of incarceration. Accordingly, we focus on a range of interview excerpts that speak to the broad project of caring for self, other and future in custodial contexts.<sup>3</sup> Typically, statements to do with such things are made in a fairly cursory manner – as

dreamscapes yet to be filled with the reality of having 'made good' (Maruna, 2001). Regardless of their 'unformed' or even contradictory nature, we believe that such statements provide important windows through which to glimpse the range of hopes and fears young men in custody wrestle with, as well as who or what stands to help or hinder them in their efforts to cope with custody and perhaps desist from crime. In short, we believe the question of who or what it is possible to care about in prison is central to the development of the combination of human and social capital (see McNeill, 2009) likely to be relevant when these young men are permitted to step beyond the prison into the challenges posed by so-called regular life.

Importantly, we do not regard it as a problem that our participants are younger than the age range Erikson nominates as the primary period connoting the struggle between generativity and stagnation. Generativity is not and cannot be neatly confined to a particular stage of the life-course. Thus while Erikson posits generativity as characteristic of middle adulthood, 'the concerns of a particular stage [do not] exist only within the age limits that define the stage. All eight qualities exist with their opposites throughout life, each stage representing no more than the period when a particular struggle is dominant', and as such, generativity can be seen 'even in childhood' (Kotre, 1996: 8; also see Lawford et al., 2005). Indeed, if generativity is associated with an initial 'taking stock' of one's life or legacy, then (young) prisoners would seem to be well placed to engage with such a process. This is certainly something that incarceration is supposedly designed to produce – namely, the contemplative, more communally-minded, and therefore less 'risky' subject. In this article we are particularly alert to *signs of an emergent generativity* rather than sustained evidence of its realization (or what might be called a generative life). We want to show, in other words, that small if precarious generative moments do occur within (and beyond) lock-up and that these should be acknowledged, encouraged and strengthened by authorities.

McAdams and De St Aubin (1992) usefully distinguish between generative 'concern', 'commitment' (formulation of goals), 'action' and 'narration' (cited in Hofer et al., 2008: 3–5). All the excerpts given below reflect generative concern. However, we note that such concern manifests itself more commonly as doing good things for one's parents (caring for the past generation) or one's peers or siblings (caring for the current generation) as much as it entails doing right by one's children (caring for the next generation). Generative goals, on the other hand, are harder to identify in participant excerpts. This, we argue, is likely due to the uncertainty which pervades these young men's lives. Most have learned time and again not to plan too far ahead since the aspirations they have for employment, housing, education or intimate relationships tend, for various reasons, not to work out. In addition, prison life means surviving day to day and affords far less opportunity to plan in meaningful ways for the medium- let alone long-term future.

Examples of generative action, by way of contrast, can indeed be detected. Although spontaneous and infrequent they form important moments in each participant's larger (conscious or unconscious) effort to piece together a narrative of self-awareness and change. On this count, none of the young men speak in consistently generative terms about their life to date or their future. We do, though, relay excerpts that speak of deep regret for the harm caused to family and/or victims and which demonstrate a sense of familial or social obligation to make any and all efforts to desist from crime.

The remainder of the paper is divided into two sections. The first explicates the signs of generativity evinced by our participants and offers a brief commentary on each. *Generative signs* are conceived as concrete attempts to practice or narrate the experience of generative conduct – however small or disjointed these might appear. In the second section, we contrast generative signs against scenarios of stagnation. *Stagnation* is conceived as a diminution in the personal capacity or willingness to care for self, other and future.

## Generative signs

In the context of prison and post release, the generative signs of particular interest to us are those that signal either tentative or more definitive manifestations of a non-violent and socially approved sense of self. Our interest, to be clear, resides with the evolving (if sporadic) generative concerns and acts of (ex)prisoners – or, to put it another way, their precarious experiments in legitimacy and social competence. As such, we do not pretend that the narrative excerpts relayed below are concomitant with markedly transformed subjects – although on occasion this may well be what is in play.

Caring for others can be expressed through both concern and action. For prisoners, caring for loved ones residing beyond the prison can be extremely difficult and can come at great personal cost. One participant illustrated this by recounting a story about his efforts to care for his mother in the context of what he believed to be a scenario of ongoing violence:

[I was in prison and] I rang up Mum and she wasn't answering so I rang up one of my aunts and she said [Mum's] in the hospital... Dad come up and visited me about a fortnight after [and] told me the truth, that she got kicked in by her ex... And I flipped out... And then... I was hearing that Mum was getting full-on bad phone calls from [her ex]... Apparently she had to get facial surgery – plastic surgery on her nose\*... I feared for her life, really. And then [her ex] went around to my aunty[']s and [Mum] was there and he smashed her car up. And I'd just had enough. I thought, 'Fuck this.' I needed to go protect her. I wanted to hurt him... I just wasn't thinking right. Then I left [i.e. escaped]... I was going to hand myself in... [But first] I wanted to make sure she was all right... And I wanted to hurt him bad... because all I got really is my mum... If I was[n't] locked up, the assault] probably wouldn't have happened. I wouldn't have let it happen... I would have been with Mum... Even if it did happen... it would have got stopped... And I did feel powerless... I wanted to be there to protect her, and that's all I wanted to do... [But] we only got to [mentions town] then the car ran out of petrol... I was shattered... because I was on a mission... But then, when I was in the cells, I said, 'What the fuck am I doing?' I had, like, not even a year left... I just felt like an idiot... [I received] 18 months extra on the bottom [i.e. minimum]... and three years on top... So [in total I've now] got... three and a half [minimum] and I've got six and a half on top... (B)

[\*When he later read her medical file, this participant found that in addition to damage to her eye and nose his mother had also suffered a broken jaw and fingers.]

In interview, B's mother later corroborated that she was indeed in real physical danger. However, anticipating his reaction, B's family tried to protect him by keeping information about the situation from him which only added to his distress. This is consistent with Mills and Codd's (2008: 15) reflection that even when there is contact between a prisoner and his/her family, 'the family's ability to offer any emotional and moral support may be limited by a lack of privacy and insufficient time to discuss difficult issues. Serious issues may thus be concealed until after release'. B's identity as a young man and a son (of a single mother) requires that he defend his mother's safety ('If I was out there... I wouldn't have let it happen'), but his reality as a prisoner prevented this through physical confinement.

Of further importance here is B's sense of being needed – a significant component of generativity (Erikson, 1968: 138) – in so far as he perceived himself to be the only person capable of protecting his mother. Reinforcing this, B also recounted that his father (not the person who assaulted his mother) said he could not intervene because 'It's none of my business'. In escaping from prison, B prioritized social connectedness and expressing care for his mother who, from his perspective, has 'got no one else out there'. Thus generative concern was manifest in spite of B acknowledging the futility of his actions as a solution to his mother's circumstance, as evidenced in his receiving additional custodial time for the escape. Some might suggest that this represents misplaced generativity – where care results in *further* harm to self and family. We counter, however, that prison permits only a very limited array of generative opportunities and that this desire and willingness to 'risk all' for the health and safety of one's mother is a good example of generative concern.

Other kinds of custodial environments exist beyond the prison, including the transformation of everyday residences to suit the requirements of post-prison home detention. Far from being a liberating and much desired alternative to the prison proper, such environments can prove extremely testing given the strange blend of free persons (family members, friends, partners) and persons under sentence (see Martinovic, 2007). When one adds to this the surveillance and monitoring procedures imposed by community corrections, generative capacities and opportunities are often pushed to the margins of post-prison life.

[When I was at home I liked to go into the shed to work on cars]...[But] because I had a [Home D] bracelet... every time I went to the shed in the backyard, the beep would go off [and] the bracelet would send a signal to them [i.e. corrections], saying I was out of the [prescribed] range... So they would be ringing me, '[D], where are you?' 'I'm at home' 'Where were you?' 'I was in the shed'. And they said, 'No, you're banned from the shed. You can't go in the shed'. I said, 'I can't go in the shed? Listen, I'm doing work for people'. They said, 'Well, you'll have to do work out of the shed'... I was just helping people fix their cars... right on my property... And they wouldn't let me go in the shed... I was still classed as a sentenced prisoner, and it was strict. The only thing I was allowed to do was... go shopping once a week and go to work. That's it... [The Home D guy was saying] 'I'll put your arse back in gaol. What do you think of that?' I said, 'Do what you have to do'... And my father-in-law spoke to one [of them],... He goes... 'This is bullshit... [D's] doing the best he can out here. He's going to work... But after work he usually does stuff in the shed. As you can see, he's got cars around my house everywhere... And [you say] he can't go in the shed'.

And they said . . . 'That bracelet don't come off until he's on parole' . . . [T]hen I started to get in an argument with the missus [about driving]. She goes, 'You're going to get locked up'. I said, 'Well, . . . [h]ow am I going to get to work?' I said, 'You haven't got a licence'. I said, 'I'm not going to drag your dad, and his 72 years, out of bed, just to take me to work' . . . So I was looking for another job. Another foundry [job]. I found one around the corner . . . And [a little while later] my house phone rang, and my Home D officer goes, 'I've just spoke[n] to your [assigned work] supervisor. You haven't been to work for the last three days . . . What you got to say for yourself?' I said, 'Well, what can I say? . . . You've caught me out' . . . He goes, 'All right. You're grounded . . . til further notice' . . . So I told my missus, . . . 'Well, it looks like I'm going back in' . . . And then two of them came to my house. They said, '[D], you're going back in. Grab what you've got to grab' . . . So I only grabbed my wallet, my phone and I jumped the back fence . . . Then four days after, I ended up turning myself in . . . [I was charged with being] unlawfully at large . . . And I got charged for theft, because of the bracelet . . . If you look at . . . my past . . . this is probably the shittiest charge I've ever been in custody for . . . is a breach . . . [But at least] I turned myself in, and I told . . . the judge, the police . . . [my girlfriend's] pregnant, that's why I handed myself in. (D, who, prior to release on home detention had spent just seven weeks of the previous five years in the community)

This vividly portrays the way home detention punishes the very human inclination to (legally) improve one's lot in life for the sake of not only oneself, but those one resides with as well. For D, with a history of car-related offences, 'helping people fix their cars' constitutes a shift in focus that is both an act of engagement with others and a tangible move towards a long-term plan for earning a legitimate income, within the confines of a highly constraining day-to-day routine. Of further significance is the 'enabling niche' provided by his girlfriend and her family. They are part of, not exterior to, the correctional process since they must literally sign up to the rules and regulations of 'hosting' a prisoner in their home.

Ultimately, D's experience is a telling example of the tension between generative and degenerative forces. On the one hand, D's 'in-laws' work patiently with him to meet the strict conditions of his detention and attempt to balance this with his need for stimulation and engagement. On the other hand, this reservoir of support is actively undermined by the rigidity of his correctional order and those who enforce its conditions. In this way, generativity can be understood as a *circuit* that can be ignited by positive conditions or extinguished by negative ones. To extend this metaphor, community corrections officers may see themselves as circuit-breakers when they caution the client against negative or risky influences whilst the client may consider such actions as sometimes obstructing processes capable of sustaining generative aspirations.

Generative signs, as noted above, connote indications that persons are actively exploring ways they can care for themselves and others, *regardless* of whether these explorations are translated into action or consolidated with further or repeated generative attempts. A good example of the small, tentative steps that might be observed in this process can be seen in the following excerpt, in which F describes the act of being a 'legitimate' consumer as novel and transformative:

. . . I'm tired of getting locked up – just tired of . . . getting told . . . what to do . . . It's been happening for me for the last eight years . . . [W]hen I was out, I found a better life . . . Like,

when I was doing crime, I didn't have money in my pocket . . . I couldn't just go down the shop and buy a magazine or I couldn't just go to the shops and get myself a new phone or get what I wanted. I couldn't do that because I didn't . . . always have money . . . But when you work and when you live like a normal person, you can do those things because you've got the money there . . . And it's legitimate. And you feel better about it – that you're reading a book which you've earned – gone and worked at – like, worked – sweat for, actually worked for legitimate money . . . And it just feels a lot better than going and stealing something – stealing money and then going and buying something with that stolen money . . . Some people, in theory, who haven't had much – like, haven't done it [i.e. earned a legitimate income] very often . . . would say, 'No, it's just the same' . . . But when you really think about it, it does feel different because you're not watching over your back. You can sit there and read your magazine . . . and, like, think, 'They can't take this off me because I've paid . . . for it with my money, what I earned . . . myself, legitimately'. (F)

This passage is important because it seems to denote F's emerging shift in focus towards 'liv[ing] like a normal person'. This sense of being normal – and of this being something at once concrete and ephemeral – has arisen in a number of interviews and is a good example of 'cultural demand' and 'inner desire' combining to produce the *commitment* toward a particular goal (legitimate employment), taking *action* to realize that goal (being employed), and, perhaps most importantly, *narration* of significance of such commitment and action (understanding the personal and social meaning of such experience) (McAdams and De St Aubin, 1992 cited in Hofer et al., 2008: 3). Indeed 'practice' is precisely what is at stake here since it is the repetition of small, novel, acts that constitute the process of forming a new identity. A critical aspect of F's experiment with legitimacy is the visceral nature of the experience ('it just feels a lot better'). In addition, the 'reward' narrated here arrives in the form of a (temporary) suspension of the culture of suspicion traditionally attached to (ex)prisoners ('you're not watching over your back').

Significantly though, to be sustainable, this change must ultimately involve building the kind of relationships capable of reducing the social and economic marginalization experienced by these young men. Such a shift is critical to the development of generativity, since it is surely impossible for a person to care about self and other where feelings of isolation, powerlessness and helplessness endure. In the account below, A describes the change associated with his attempt to reshape his relationships, as demonstrated through the tangible act of giving a significant item to someone important to him:

P: Well, what changed [my attitude toward stealing] cars would have been . . . my little brother . . . [W]e actually bought him [an] LTD Fairlane . . . for his birthday . . . I was driving that for a couple of weeks before I [gave] it to him . . . And that probably changed [me] . . . [O]wning that car and giving it away made me feel, 'Why should I steal someone's car any more?' [I thought], 'No, I'll pay for this and I'll give it to my little brother for his birthday'. It's his, and if anyone stole that, I would've been real pissed off . . .

I: Can I ask you . . . was that car bought with money that you'd earned?

P: Yep . . . that felt excellent . . . 'Cause I was gettin' a pay cheque. I was actually putting a 100 bucks a week on it . . . And on his birthday, I signed the car . . . over to him, and he was rapt . . .

I: ... And so ... that's a different feeling I take it, than let's say, if you'd stolen the car and sort of changed the plates and then given it to him? ...

P: Yeah, ... this had meaning ... I worked for it. I paid for it. I worked and sweated for that car and then I gave it to him for his birthday ... It actually felt good ... Quite good. Stealing a car wouldn't have matched the adrenalin I got from giving my little brother the keys. (A)

Like F, A expresses surprise at his ability to achieve something he had not previously considered himself able to do. Having 'worked and sweated' in a job that permitted him a regular legitimate income he was in the novel position to give something significant to someone he cared about. The significance of the gift in this context is twofold: firstly, it reveals a willingness to surrender something which the giver himself greatly values, and secondly, it has a meaning that cannot be divorced from the past life of the giver, signifying both a connection and a break with a former (criminal) life. Giving up crime has convincingly been associated with 'giving something back' to others (McNeill and Maruna, 2007) and yet prisoners rarely have the opportunity to give of themselves in positive ways. Giving, after all, requires not only resources but also selflessness and altruism – two qualities which are seriously at odds with what has been termed 'prison's tedious circles of hypermasculine posturing' (Maruna et al., 2004: 137). Of course both F's and A's experiences occurred *outside* prison, and prison constitutes a locale unlikely to foster legitimate opportunities to earn the income needed to buy significant items.<sup>4</sup>

In some cases, it is possible to attribute the emergence of generative signs to triggers such as expressions of care by another person (especially a girlfriend), a significant event such as becoming a father, or a more solitary, internal process.

It's good that I got locked up for 18 months ... That's what [brought] me and [my girlfriend] closer together ... When I was out there, I was being an idiot 'cause I was on the drugs, and I'm not the same old person. I wasn't showin' her love, you know, and when I got locked up this time, I wrote her a few letters, and I've done her some poems, and she goes, 'You know, you've never done this for me before'. I said, 'Yeah, well, you know, you come in and seen me the day I got locked up in the cells, and you been here nearly every day for me since I been in here and that. It showed me how much you do love me' ... 'Cause I've never had a girl do that, come to my court cases and come and visit me all the time and write me letters. I've never had a girl do that, stand by my side in goal. I said, 'You're the only girl that ever done somethin' like that for me and that just proves me how much you love me'. So yeah, now, we really fell in love with each other, you know ... And her kids call me Dad, you know. They really love me, you know and like, yeah. (G)

G's account demonstrates how the discovery and acceptance of intimacy can provide a solid foundation for the emergence of generativity. The realization that his girlfriend would fight against the barriers erected by the prison was a revelation to G and led him to recognize that he 'wasn't showing her love' and to explore ways to do this. In short, this young man had something to lose and, therefore, something to fight for. On this theme, when asked why he thinks people re-offend and return to

prison, H noted that ‘when you get out... you think... you’ve got nothing, nothing – you’ve got nothing to lose, man, nothing at all to lose’, whereas people who have had a ‘good upbringing, family and stuff, they love their family, they don’t want to lose that, man’ and therefore do not reoffend (H). Put simply, finding oneself with something to lose changes the meanings of incarceration and the desire to do better when next released.

Parenthood is the archetypal expression of generativity. Becoming a father gave J a way to understand that his actions had tangible effects and could cause pain to others – specifically, to others in *his* family.

[Parenthood] made me think... different[ly]... Like I never thought about what [the] drugs... I was selling... could do to [people]. It made me... think, ‘Shit, what if one of my kids like...’, do you know what I mean? Like what if my partner was a customer and she was taking [the kids’] money to go buy drugs and that, do you know what I mean?... Like I started to step back a bit and – and that’s when I distanced myself from that kind of business like... and I didn’t really go out in the streets and see them any more because... I couldn’t cope with it, like do you know what I mean?... Yeah, I practically like didn’t want the karma... (J)

Becoming a parent permitted J to reconceptualize his identity around the responsibilities and obligations that arrive with caring for the next generation. Whereas in his earlier interviews J was detached from the impact of the drugs he sold, here he is beginning to feel distress at their potential impact on other families, signalling a concrete shift in attention from self toward ‘a more generalised group (e.g. family, community, society)’ (Stewart et al., 1988: 150). Unfortunately, in the context of a long custodial sentence, having children can also give rise to degenerative dispositions amongst imprisoned fathers since their capacity to ‘do’ fatherhood is fundamentally restricted to the devices of letter writing, brief phone calls, and occasional visits. It is of little surprise, therefore, that many prisoners feel deeply disconnected from the very children who may have initially inspired a generative outlook.

In a very different example, at 18 years of age F identified that significant change has to come from ‘within ourselves’ rather than from external sources:

Back then I didn’t really have any intentions to stop doing crime... I might have said I did, but... deep down, I knew I was still going to do crime when I’d get out... But these days, I’ve thought of it... It’s not worth it like it used to be. It’s just not worth it... When I was young... you would get locked up and you would get out and you would run amok and you’d get locked up again and get out and get locked up, get out, get locked up, get out, get locked up, get out. And there was nothing – nothing really there to stop us doing what we wanted to do... We just – whatever we wanted – done crime, stole – I don’t know, whatever... But these... days,... it’s more within ourselves... The workers we’ve got, they help us, but they only help us to a certain extent, probably about 10 per cent of what we really need to be helped. The rest of that – the rest is 90 per cent... and most of that’s in us... When you really think about it, that’s all they can do is that 10 per cent... and they just hit a brick wall and they can’t go no further... and the rest of – I don’t know, 80 or 90 per cent is up to you. (F)

In this scenario, the urge to cease offending starts to find its source in an internal locus of control rather than external expectations or constraints. F's comments also illustrate that the process of becoming generative must be worked at by the individual rather than simply being instigated from without (by, for instance, support workers, parole officers, or family members). The emerging agency described in this extract should, however, be seen in the context of a long line of programmes and support options that too often fall short of their mark for many (ex)prisoners. Despite such shortcomings, some young men do appear to forge moments of responsibility for self and commitment to others within a system that appears largely incapable of actively encouraging and supporting generative subjectivities.

The 'ten per cent' help that F mentions is particularly important at the point of transition from prison to 'community', when very concrete needs arise that cannot necessarily be resolved from inside the prison. H describes some of these needs as follows:

[The way] I look at it... I need to have something... good – a job that I enjoy... My own house... I want to be independent... I'm not independent in here. [And] I'm not... independent on the outside because I'm... never in my own place... So I need to have... my own place I go to... I don't want to lose that place... It was all right when I was younger... You make a cubby house – I mean, you don't want your mum to know about the cubby house, it's your cubby house. [Well now] I want to go and play in that cubby house [again], you know... [I] [w]ant a house and you don't want to lose your house, man. That's your own place you go to... you take girls to or take your friends to... That's your place. (H)

A place of one's own has long been seen as a symbol for freedom, agency and the capacity for creativity. The intense proximity and performance of the prison environment provides nothing that is genuinely one's own space, and certainly not a space to 'take your friends to'. For many of our interviewees this sense of being 'out of place' (Douglas, 2002: 44) is only exacerbated as they struggle to secure and retain housing after release. In any case, simply acquiring one's own place is not enough, since housing can be difficult to maintain for someone who has had little or no scope to practice responsibility for self and/or property in prison or prior to incarceration. Strategies for neutralizing the impact of friends who encourage re-offending, constructively addressing the demands associated with connecting and paying for household utilities, or becoming accustomed to parole conditions or employment demands also need to be more clearly thought through and engaged with – urgently in most instances. Fostering or supporting emergent generative practice in this way could be a tangible extension of reintegrative strategies during and immediately succeeding imprisonment.

## Stagnation

Where generative concern or action is continually prevented or suppressed, this is very likely to provoke prisoners to give up on such dispositions – in classic terms, stagnation may prevail over generative commitment. While it may be tempting to talk in terms of binaries, it is more helpful to see stagnation and generativity as scenarios on a continuum of possible subject positions<sup>5</sup> with few people residing firmly at one

point or another. Those who stagnate are not necessarily self-indulgent or self-absorbed, but they do tend to experience a pervading sense of meaninglessness since 'their lives are not having the positive impact on others that they wish they might' (McAdams and Logan, 2004: 17). As with other aspects of human development, the 'choice' between generativity and stagnation is less a conscious act than a mediated outcome of factors including environmental conditions and the weight of accumulated experience.

An important example of this is the lack of meaningful choice within custodial environments – a theme raised repeatedly by interviewees. If there is little one can control or make consequential decisions about, it is very difficult to become generative.

P: The routine is hard to get out of... They take all responsibilities off you. And when you get out you still think you've got no responsibilities whatsoever...

I: What's the biggest thing in here you can take... responsibility for?

P: The words coming out of your mouth... You can choose what you have for breakfast – a piece of toast or a bowl of cereal. You can choose what you want to drink – a cup of cordial or a cup of water. There's not many things. Like staff might say, 'Oh, you've got choices to do that or you've got choices to do that'... but if you asked the boys... 'What options do the staff allow you to do?', they'll say what I say. There's not many. I can't even come up with one... You can choose to go in the games room or not, but only after [a] certain time. It's very controlled... I ask the question every single day, 'Why do you want us to take responsibility for our actions when you don't allow us to?' (F)

F's closing question is a profound reflection on the paradoxes of custodial worlds. Far from placing these young men in a space where they can engage with normal issues and questions of maturation and development, they are deliberately placed in stasis, performing their incarceration as largely mindless, externally directed beings. Yet they are expected to develop compassion, maturity and an internal locus of control during this time, and to continue to manifest and strengthen these on their release.

On a more fundamental level, however, prisoners' relationships with staff feed into their identity and sense of connectedness or marginalization, and may undermine their ability to care for themselves, let alone others.

They throw away some peoples' letters... Like [you] put a request in to get... a new pair of shoes. You think, 'Why isn't it coming?', and you go and ask them and she says, 'You never put a request in'. And I said, 'Miss, I put it on the trolley the other day when you done room checks'. She says, 'It might have dropped off'. I say, 'Miss, you wheeled that trolley from that gate to your office, and nothing [fell] on the floor'... As soon as they say, 'You must have dropped it'... all you gotta do is say, 'Yeah, I might have dropped it', you know, like a dumb-fuck... If you try to debate [them], it's not worth it. So [you say], 'Yeah, I dropped it'. The next day you grab 50 or 60 request [forms] and... you put a request in every day. Then you get them coming back to you [saying], 'You're not allowed to put that much requests in'... I was walking around in shoes with no soles for a long time... weeks. (M)

This kind of disrespect is a fundamental assault on M's dignity and is a classic example of the way *prison too often punishes people not for their crimes but for being prisoners*. Another prisoner told of risks to his health:

And [the prison staff] just don't care, you know. Just simple things. Like I was asking for my puffer one day. He said 'You've got to put in the paperwork'. I said, 'I have'. He said, 'Too bad, you know. If you have an asthma attack, press the buzzer'. I said, 'Well, it's going to be a bit hard if I'm having asthma attack, you know'... (N)

These experiences do little to engender the sense of reciprocity that ideally underpins care for others and future generations. In part this raises the question of the generative status of prison officers or how the notion of punishment has expanded so far that prisoners are denied the fundamental dignity that must be at the core of a functional society. As Liebling (2005: 36) notes with regards to prisons, 'Any commitment to a set of principles should be inextricably linked to a set of beliefs about what sort of society we want. In practice, they seem to have become linked to a set of beliefs about "what works"'. Prison officers are centrally important to prisoners' lives and thus have a remarkable impact on prisoners' (de)generative capacities and opportunities. As Nelson Mandela (1995: 417) remarks, 'The most important person in any prisoner's life is not the minister of justice, not the commissioner of prisons, not even the head of the prison, but the warden in one's section'. Whilst some prisoners willingly acknowledge the good work of a few officers, they also know that many believe their role includes inflicting further punishment. It is an enormously powerful moment when youth workers or officers ascribe – through words, body language, action or inaction – a stagnant identity to those in their 'care':

P: The last two years, you know, I keep on getting people saying, 'Oh, you're just a bad cunt', you know. 'He won't learn', you know.

I: Who... has said that?

P: The Department [of Corrections]. The Department... The Department, you know... You know, the screws and that. You know, my girl and that, you know. (O)

Under such circumstances, it is remarkable that generative signs emerge or survive at all.<sup>6</sup>

## Discussion

The excerpts cited above capture the tentative signs of an emergent generativity linked to the intent to desist from crime or change one's ways. However, we acknowledge the precarious and fragile nature of such generative moments and that these young men are – by and large – devoid of the networks that would otherwise contribute to strong social and economic capital in their lives. We further acknowledge that what we call signs of generativity might equally be viewed as signs of rehabilitation. There is, of course, merit in such a claim. Our position, however, is that the experiments in social legitimacy,

competency and care cited herein occur *in spite of* not because of opportunities for rehabilitation offered (or denied) within and beyond custody. This is well illustrated by the following exchange which highlights one prisoner's willingness to voluntarily assume the mantle of teacher to a fellow prisoner the system seemed incapable of engaging.

P: [I]n juvie [juvenile detention] I used to watch over him [and I taught him], everything. You know, how to read, write... It made me feel good, you know?... [I]t encourages me to help someone else out because he can't read or write... [So] I'd say to him, you know, 'I'll teach you how to read and write... [I've already] taught [mentions another prisoner]'. He goes, 'Did you? Did you?' [I said], 'Yeah'. It just makes you feel better... when you're in here, you know what I mean?... So I want to change...

I: Why can't the system teach him?

P: They teach you, but they've got a lot of Aboriginals that are ashamed of that... They can't read or write... and don't want people knowing. (B)

Each research participant has through many years of interviews told of the ineffectiveness of programmes designed to 'reform' them and/or to prepare them for re-entry to the community. Accordingly, to look for signs of rehabilitation would have meant aligning ourselves to the administrative criteria by which (ex)prisoner progress is judged. By these standards, the 'signs of rehabilitation' would equate to such elements as participation in and completion of programmes, being prepared to snitch on other prisoners, abstaining from drug use, refraining from any and all emoting of anger, bitterness or resentment toward prison officers or others in positions of authority, and the like. These all have as their core aim the 'production' of a subject who will not interrupt the good management of the prison. This is quite distinct from working with prisoners in respectful, culturally aware and timely ways to afford them real opportunities to be valued members of society. To give one example, the young man who made the decision to escape from prison to protect his mother did not need to be 'rehabilitated' to so act. Instead, the desire to protect comes from a place not reducible to the logic or demands of prisoner rehabilitation.

Some might also question whether these are the best examples of generative concern and action to emerge from interviews. Our response here is that while – from the audience viewpoint – the examples cited might seem trivial, they nonetheless present as profound from the participants' perspectives. If anything, they speak to how genuinely rare are those opportunities for displaying concern for others within and beyond prison. Becoming generative is difficult in any context, but is especially challenging in institutions founded on the practice of sustained isolation of persons from 'normal' social networks, and the forced association of persons who would, under most other circumstances, most likely have little or nothing to do with one another. Under these conditions, prisoners are corralled into the frames of either hyper-self-reliance or hyper-dependency (Halsey, 2008b), and neither of these subject positions is consistent with generative opportunities or practices. As Erikson (1959: 139) writes, '... *all* institutions by their very nature codify the ethics of generative succession', thus prisons play

a critical role in the struggle between generativity and stagnation. We are under no illusion that prisons will somehow be dramatically transformed for the better in the immediate future. Any steps in a generative direction are likely to be small and will need to be carefully media managed. Having said this, we believe there are several ways prisons could enhance the generative capacity of (persistent) offenders.

Of primary importance is increasing prisoners' capacity to maintain relationships with family and significant others. We advocate, where possible, extending visit sessions (as currently happens only in a limited number of cases) since the cost and time of travelling long distances for a short visit constitutes a major barrier for some families.<sup>7</sup> The Alexander Maconochie Centre in Canberra provides an example of an attempt to address this issue, with half-day visit times, family barbecue areas, and a large, bright and open visiting space. It also has space dedicated to family or conjugal visits. Another idea that could be considered is video conferencing facilities in prisons to facilitate some kind of visual and visceral connection where significant others reside several hundred kilometres from the facility. Similarly, phone calls could be made more conducive to effective communication by increasing time limits (currently 10 minutes per call in many South Australian institutions), increasing subsidization of call costs, and providing privacy both during and after calls, thus improving the possibility of having meaningful conversations with significant others.<sup>8</sup> Finally, letter-writing – as the third key point of connection with people beyond the prison – could be supported, both by continuing to foster the development of prisoner literacy and through forms of assistance for prisoners who feel unable to express themselves in writing.

Other factors impact prisoners' connection with family. Chief among these is frequently moving prisoners from one facility to another. While there are procedural and security reasons for this, it is also important to foster continuity and stability in custodial life and relationships. The capacity for an institution to do this is likely to be reduced by such factors as overcrowding. This is certainly the case in South Australian prisons and is likely to remain the situation for some time in light of the 2009 abandonment of the New Prisons Project. Another potentially positive measure for enhancing prisoner well-being is employment. Most prisoners express the strong desire to work (or, at the very least, to be busy), and most prison managers we have spoken with believe that providing meaningful employment for more prisoners would enhance their capacity to run a 'good' prison. Earning and saving money in prison can enhance prisoners' confidence which in turn can assist their transition to the community and can facilitate the search for employment post release. After release, prisoners need money for clothes, food, transport (to interviews and work), accommodation and utilities. Importantly, prisoners know the difference between paying for these things as a result of one's own legitimate labour, and such things being illicitly gained or handed to them for 'free' (as welfare), if at all. We would argue that in spite of inevitable political fall-out, it is essential to pay working prisoners a wage commensurate with the standard rate in the general (non-incarcerated) population. Whilst we acknowledge the fact that the type of work traditionally available in prison is generally menial and repetitive, generatively speaking, some paid work is better than none at all, and we argue that these opportunities must be extended.<sup>9</sup>

Closely related to work is the issue of creativity and productivity – indeed these are regarded by Erikson as 'synonyms' for generativity (1965: 258). In this vein, permitting prisoners to create artworks or other goods can allow tangible expressions of

generativity (since art can outlive the self). Prisoner art has the potential to do many things, particularly if such works are permitted to be publicly displayed. Such exhibitions can help to overturn many of the stereotypes concerning who prisoners are and what they are (in)capable of. When considered in the context of other generative community-oriented acts (such as participating in fire-fighting and clean-up brigades), art can positively impact relationships between prisoners and 'everyday' citizens, and perhaps even diffuse some of the prejudices that lead to the (further) social isolation of prisoners after release (see for example Koestler Trust, 2010).

The potentially generative role of pets in prison is also something in need of further consideration. Very few prisons permit animals to be kept by prisoners. In South Australia, birds can be kept by some prisoners, particularly in the state's low security open perimeter facility. In a handful of Australian prisons, the 'Pups in Prison Program' permits a small number of prisoners to raise and train puppies which are eventually used to assist disabled persons in the community (see Assistance Dogs Australia, 2010). While there are a number of issues which would need to be countenanced, we believe there are strong arguments for extending this provision more broadly across the prison spectrum. One prisoner encapsulated the key generative dimension of pets by remarking,

I mean, a dog is a man's best friend... To me [an animal] just makes me feel heaps good, you know... you're lookin' after something, ... you're starting to take responsibility for things... Make you feel more happy, like you can do things in your life, you know what I mean? Like, ... if only for you that... animal would be dead, you know what I mean?... [S]ay, if you had that animal ever since it was little and it's like... fully grown, you know, you can make things grow, you know what I mean? (C)

Being responsible for the well-being of other living creatures is critical to the process of human development but this is a process all but expunged by the prison environment. Pets provide an opportunity to learn about the conditions and rewards of mutual dependence in a 'safe', achievable fashion. So much of what happens to prisoners is deficit-oriented, with various programmes (and officers) endlessly rehearsing prisoners' problems, their violent nature or tendencies, their lack of empathy, their unwillingness to take responsibility, and their destructiveness toward self and others. As C reflects, pets can position prisoners – often for the first time – as persons capable of nurturing and protecting another living being. This in itself can push these young men beyond the violent, untrustworthy or irresponsible sense of self so often rehearsed in their own minds or ascribed to them by staff or other prisoners.

In the post-release context it is important for community correctional staff to become more attuned to the often veiled generative concerns and commitments that accompany many self-directed departures from parole plans or court orders. These may take such forms as escaping from custody to defend or care for another, or breaching conditions of home detention to hold down a job or to provide for a partner and child. We would argue that many of these actions are attempts to negotiate the system of intense surveillance and monitoring in ways intended to keep the desistance process alive. Our suggestion here would be to radically increase the ratio of release workers to released prisoners so workers are given the capacity to deal with

clients as individuals. In order to be effective, community correctional officers need to be viewed by their clients as possible mentors or helpers instead of ‘screws in plain clothing’, as is generally the case.

Finally, evidence shows that the relationship between staff and prisoners is critical to fostering a generative prison environment. Some South Australian prisons report success in creating a positive and respectful environment, and this is to some degree reflected in prisoners’ assessments of such facilities.<sup>10</sup> Calling prisoners by their first name can be an important symbolic step in humanizing prisoners, both in terms of their own experience and in the minds of prison officers. Harder but equally important is to improve the ability of staff and prisoners to speak with each other on equal terms about their concerns – even about their views on crime and its causes, imprisonment, and the process and challenges of desistance. This is a two-sided endeavour that requires change in attitude by both groups in order that constructive, professional and supportive relationships become the norm rather than the exception.

## Conclusion

The narrative excerpts we have presented in this article arguably demonstrate the need to further explore the emergence, decline and impact of generative moments in the context of young men within and beyond prison. We have identified a range of instances where young prisoners express generative concern and engage, arguably, in generative acts (with varying success). In short, generative moments exist within custodial environments but much work needs to be done to understand how these feature (or are absent) in the larger project involving durable changes to self over the life course.<sup>11</sup> The interview extracts have also revealed, we believe, the disturbing ways in which prison restricts and often actively extinguishes nascent generativity. This is particularly concerning not only because prisoners are expected to emerge from the chrysalis of confinement as mature, responsible, generative citizens, but also because it demonstrates that prisons continue to be used as places for (additional) punishment instead of as the punishment itself (violating prisoners’ human rights).

Making progress on the stagnation/generativity continuum is very likely to depend on what is most valued by prisoners’ significant others (see Erikson, 1959: 51) and what is realistically possible for each prisoner to say, think or do whilst incarcerated. To date, persons nominated by young male (ex)prisoners in this study as important to them include parents, grandparents, siblings, girlfriends and, occasionally, close friends. These are the people whose standards and judgements matter to prisoners and yet these are also the people who find it difficult if not impossible to negotiate the deep divide between them and their loved one – a divide often distended by impersonal (bureaucratic, security driven) correctional routines and systems. One key effect of this degenerative situation is that each prisoner’s life story is slowly but surely set adrift from the life stories of those who matter most to them. In other words, prisoners and ex-prisoners become isolated and disconnected subjects rather than fully social people (fathers, brothers, grandsons, sons, friends, and so forth). This has implications for the subject who does time, the subject released from doing time, and the significant others who may hope to (re)connect with this subject at a particular moment, within or beyond custody. Like Maruna et al. (2004), we make no pretence toward the idea that

prisons could change into fundamentally caring or generative environments in the short term. We argue, however, that processes that deny prisoners the capacity to care for self, other and future in meaningful, durable and non-violent ways are guaranteed to produce a large cohort of repeat consumers of the carceral enterprise.

### **Acknowledgements**

Halsey and Harris express their sincere thanks to all persons who participated in interviews. Interview excerpts in this article have been drawn from the Australian Research Council funded projects DP0556471 and DP0984562. Data from the former project features in extensive fashion here. The original version of this paper was given by Halsey as a plenary for the Australian and New Zealand Critical Criminology Conference 2009, Melbourne, 8–9 July.

### **Notes**

1. For explanation and discussion of Erikson's eight stages see Erikson, (1965: 243–261) and Miller (1989: 182–189).
2. The 'effects of imprisonment' (Liebling and Maruna, 2005) are especially pointed for young males – a cohort at the centre of Halsey's longitudinal work since 2003 (see Halsey, 2006, 2007a, 2007b, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c, 2010; Halsey and Armitage, 2009). Nationally, at 30 June 2008, males aged 19 to 29 constituted over one in three prisoners (37%) and were incarcerated at twice the national average of males in all age groups (355 per 100,000 as against 169 per 100,000) (ABS, 2008).
3. The excerpts appearing in this article are primarily drawn from the 16 participants who, from a larger research cohort of 54 young men, have been interviewed most often since 2003 (up to six times, in accordance with their reincarceration). As at 1 July 2009, the members of this group of 16 were aged 19 to 24. Three received their first detention order at age 12, four at 13, eight at 14 and one at 16 (mean age at first detention = 13.5 years). Collectively, the 16 have amassed 28,626 custodial days across juvenile and adult facilities (range = 1058–2843 days, mean = 1789 days). Since commencing their first detention order they have variously spent 39% to 92% of their lives in such facilities. To give the most extreme example, since age 14 in August 2002, one participant – now just 22 years old – has lived only 198 of the last 2519 days out of custodial environments. Another, aged 23, has spent 83% of his time incarcerated since age 16 in 2001 (2843 custodial days or approximately eight years) and 708 community days. These are not continuous custodial days, vividly revealing the story of repeat incarceration and the generally very poor survival time for this group. Offences committed by this group include drug dealing and supply, illegal use of motor vehicles, serious aggravated criminal trespass, armed robbery, and aggravated assaults.
4. Prisoners permitted to work 'full time' earn up to \$50 per week (including the minimum weekly government allowance of around \$12). A 30 gram pouch of tobacco costs \$14.
5. Meek (2007) has insightfully discussed the concept of 'possible selves' in relation to prisons and parenthood.
6. We have little doubt that most prisons perpetuate de-generative 'moral climates' (Liebling, 2005), but we do not believe this to be a reflection of the intent of prison managers and staff, most of whom work within a range of constraints typified by low budgets, poor infrastructure and the broader expectations of an ever suspicious and punitive popular culture. We also know that some intervention or social workers have case loads of in excess of 150 prisoners whom they must monitor and assess for such things as programme readiness. As one prison social worker commented, '[A]s far as my role goes... [I'm responsible for] 170 prisoners... [including] life sentence prisoners' (Q, interviewed for DP0984562).

7. In Halsey and Harris' 2009 interviews, the managers of a number of prisons in regional South Australia reported providing flexible/extended visiting times for precisely this reason.
8. Calls made by prisoners cost \$3.80 for 10 minutes to mobiles and 33 cents for 10 minutes to landlines.
9. In a rare display of trust, one South Australian prison manager noted, 'If a prisoner comes up here, he'll go and take my car and fill it up [with petrol], you know? Now – a manager of another institution goes, "What the hell are you doing?" you know, and – so that's trust' (R, interviewed for DP0984562).
10. Asked which South Australian prison he'd prefer to serve time in, one prisoner responded,

Well, Cadell's [Cadell Training Centre] a good one, because that's a farm. And you're not locked in all the time, you're not locked in every day. You're working... [and you get] longer visits in there... If I could [choose where I] do my time, I'd do it at Mount Gambier... because they... call you by your first name, right, and they're [privately run] over there. You don't get treated like a piece of shit, you know? (O, interviewed for DP0984562)

11. This is explored to 2013 in the project 'Generativity in young male (ex)prisoners: caring for self, other and future within prison and beyond' (DP0984562, Halsey, Chief Investigator). The research examines the dynamics of generativity across five inter-related domains related to the lives of young male (ex)prisoners including: parenting/intimate relationships; familial/sibling relationships; work/job training; artistic/cultural endeavours; and contributions to community well-being.

## References

- Assistance Dogs Australia (2010) *Pups in Prisons and Community Programs*. Available at: [www.assistancedogs.org.au/pups-in-prison.php](http://www.assistancedogs.org.au/pups-in-prison.php).
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2008) *Prisoners in Australia*. Report No. 4517.0. Canberra: ABS.
- Barry M (2006) *Youth Offending in Transition*. London: Routledge.
- De St Aubin E, McAdams DP and Kim T (eds) (2004) *The Generative Society*. Washington DC: American Psychological Association.
- Douglas M (2002) *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concept of Pollution and Taboo*. London: Routledge.
- Erikson EH (1959) Growth and crises of the healthy personality. In: Erikson EH (ed.) *Identity and the Life Cycle: Selected Papers*. New York: International Universities Press, pp. 50–100.
- Erikson EH (1965) *Childhood and Society*. Ringwood: Penguin Books.
- Erikson EH (1968) *Identity: Youth and Crisis*. New York: WW Norton and Company.
- Erikson EH (1982) *The Life Cycle Completed: A Review*. New York: WW Norton and Company.
- Halsey M (2006) Negotiating conditional release: Juvenile narratives of repeat incarceration. *Punishment and Society* 8(2): 147–181.
- Halsey M (2007a) On confinement: Client perspectives of secure care and imprisonment. *Probation Journal* 54(4): 339–368.
- Halsey M (2007b) Assembling recidivism: The promise and contingencies of post-release life. *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 97(4): 1209–1260.
- Halsey M (2008a) Narrating the chase: Edgework and young peoples' experience of crime. In: Anthony T and Cunneen C (eds) *The Critical Criminology Companion*. Sydney: Federation Press, pp. 105–117.
- Halsey M (2008b) Risking desistance: Respect and responsibility in custodial and post-release contexts. In: Carlen P (ed.) *Imaginary Penalties*. Collumpton: Willan, pp. 218–251.

- Halsey M (2008c) Pathways into prison: Biographies, crimes, punishment. *Current Issues in Criminal Justice* 20(1): 95–110.
- Halsey M (2010) Imprisonment and prisoner re-entry in Australia. *Dialectical Anthropology* 34(2): Available at Advance Access: <http://www.springerlink.com/content/43q9g46135207576/fulltext.pdf>.
- Halsey M and Armitage J (2009) Incarcerating young people: The impact of custodial care. In: McNeill F and Barry M (eds) *Young People, Crime and Justice*. London: Jessica Kingsley, pp. 154–175.
- Healy D and O'Donnell I (2008) Calling time on crime: Motivation, generativity and agency in Irish probationers. *Probation Journal* 55(1): 25–38.
- Hofer J, Busch H, Chasiotis A, et al. (2008) Concern for generativity and its relation to implicit pro-social power motivation, generative goals, and satisfaction with life: A cross-cultural investigation. *Journal of Personality* 76(1): 1–30.
- Koestler Trust (2010) *Prison Art and The Koestler Trust*. Available at: [www.koestlertrust.org.uk](http://www.koestlertrust.org.uk).
- Kotre J (1996) *Outliving the Self: How We Live On in Future Generations*. New York and London: WW Norton and Company.
- Lawford H, Pratt MW, Hunsberger B, et al. (2005) Adolescent generativity: A longitudinal study of two possible contexts for learning concern for future generations. *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 15(3): 261–273.
- LeBel TP (2007) An examination of the impact of formerly incarcerated persons helping others. *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation* 46(1/2): 1–24.
- Liebling A assisted by Arnold H (2005) *Prisons and their Moral Performance*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Liebling A and Maruna S (2005) The effects of imprisonment revisited. In: Liebling A and Maruna S (eds) *The Effects of Imprisonment*. Cullompton: Willan Books, pp. 1–29.
- McAdams DP and De St Aubin E (1992) A theory of generativity and its assessment through self-report, behavioral acts, and narrative themes in autobiography. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 62: 1003–1015.
- McAdams DP and De St Aubin E (eds) (1998) *Generativity and adult development: How and why we care for the next generation*. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association Press.
- McAdams DP and Logan RL (2004) What is generativity?. In: De St Aubin E, McAdams DP and Kim T (eds) *The Generative Society* Washington DC: American Psychological Association, pp. 15–31.
- McNeill F (2009) What works and what's just? *European Journal of Probation* 1(1): 21–40.
- McNeill F and Maruna S (2007) Giving up and giving back: Desistance, generativity and social work with offenders. In: McIvor G and Raynor P (eds) *Developments in Social Work with Offenders*. London: Jessica Kingsley, pp. 224–239.
- Mandela N (1995) *Long Walk to Freedom: The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela*. Boston: Little, Brown.
- Martinovic M (2007) Home detention: Issues, dilemmas and impacts for detainees' co-residing family members. *Current Issues in Criminal Justice* 19(1): 90–105.
- Maruna S (2001) *Making Good: How Ex-convicts Reform and Rebuild their Lives*. Washington DC: American Psychological Association.
- Maruna S, Lebel TP and Lanier CS (2004) Generativity behind bars: Some 'redemptive truth' about prison society. In: De St Aubin E, McAdams DP and Kim T (eds) *The Generative Society*. Washington DC: American Psychological Association, pp. 131–151.
- Meek R (2007) The parenting possible selves of young fathers in prison. *Psychology, Crime and Law* 13(4): 371–382.
- Miller H (1989) *Theories of Developmental Psychology*. New York: WH Freeman and Company.

- Mills A and Codd H (2008) Prisoners' families and offender management: Mobilizing social capital. *Probation Journal* 55(1): 9–24.
- Stewart AJ, Franz C and Layton L (1988) The changing self: Using personal documents to study lives. *Journal of Personality* 56(1): 41–74.
- Taylor J (1997) Niches and practice: Extending the ecological perspective. In: Saleebey D (ed.) *The Strengths Perspective in Social Work Practice*. New York: Longman, pp. 217–227.
- Walker L (2010) 'My son gave birth to me': Offending fathers – generative, reflexive and risky? *British Journal of Social Work* 40(5): 1402–1418.