

Theory Manual

Mentor+ Mentoring Program for Justice-
Involved Youth



TABLE OF CONTENTS

About Mentor + Project	3
About the Mentor+ Theory Manual	3
I. OFFENDER REHABILITATION THEORIES.....	5
A. The Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) model	5
Relevance to Mentor+ Program	7
B. The Good Lives Model (GLM)	7
Relevance to Mentor+ Program	9
C. Desistance theories	11
Relevance to Mentor+ Program	12
D. Restorative Justice.....	13
Relevance to Mentor+ Program	14
II. PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORIES	16
A. The social learning theory	16
Relevance to Mentor+ Program	16
B. Ecological systems theory.....	17
C. Emotional intelligence	19
Relevance to Mentor+ Program	20
III. INTERVENTION TECHNIQUES	23
A. Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT).....	23
Relevance for Mentor+ program	25
B. Compassion focused therapy (CFT).....	26
Relevance for Mentor+ program	27
C. Motivational Interviewing.....	28
Relevance for Mentor+ program	30

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The Mentor+ Model

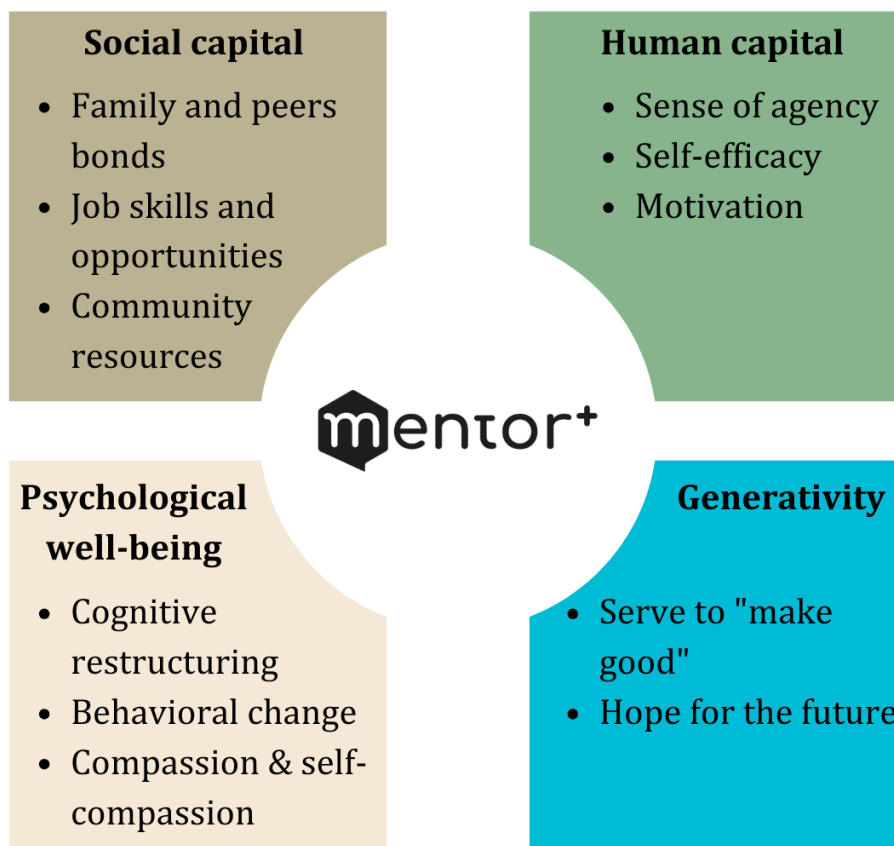


Figure 1. The Multi-Dimensional Approach of the Mentor+ Program: Fostering Positive Change and Well-Being in Young Offenders

About Mentor + Project

Mentor+ mentoring program aims to support young people to overcome “tempting stops” in a way that reduces their negative impact on their individual development (e.g. substance use, gang affiliations, theft, school dropout). The program aims at promoting self-awareness, self-efficacy, resilience, empathy alongside helping development of effective, positive decision-making processes (Albright et al., 2017; Schwartz & Rhodes, 2016;). It refers to a series of activities that are designed to address risk factors that have a high potential to cause a person to commit crime. More precisely, Mentor+ mentoring program targets youth in conflict with law and can take the form of individualized or group intervention, featuring educational programs, life-skills trainings, counseling as well as other activities that have the potential to support the psychological, emotional, and psychosocial development of the recipients of the intervention (Jolliffe et al., 2017; Besemer et al., 2017).

About the Mentor+ Theory Manual

This manual offers a more in-depth theory guide for the Mentor+ Program, as a tool to support program leaders grasp the theoretical underpinnings of the program. First, it presents the theoretical perspectives regarding offender rehabilitation and reintegration that were found to be relevant for sustaining the development and implementation of the Mentor+ program. Then, the psychological theories with particular importance for youth mentoring interventions are examined in detail. Lastly, the manual delves into a set of intervention techniques which are employed in the field or in practice.

A good understanding of these resources is also expected to guide program leaders in making decisions in case of unexpected changes without threatening the program’s integrity. It is intended to be used by program leaders in combination with the Mentor + Manual.



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I. OFFENDER REHABILITATION THEORIES

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A. The Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) model



One of the models that has been rigorously studied and provides a risk-need assessment that facilitates decision making in the field of criminal justice is the Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) model (Andrews, Bonta & Hodge, 1990; Bonta & Andrews, 2017).

Empirical research supports the basic assumption of this model, which proposes that effective offender rehabilitation should follow three general principles: risk (R); needs (N) and responsivity (R) (Andrews et al., 1990; Andrews et al., 2006). The **risk principle** states that the level of intervention should be matched to the offender's risk of re-offending. The **needs principle** asserts that criminogenic needs (those functionally linked to crime and offending, meaning factors directly relating to offending behavior that are amenable to change) should be the target of treatment programs. Finally, the **responsivity principle** points out to the importance of matching the intervention to the characteristics of the person.

The main object of the risk principle is to assess the young person's risk of offending or re-offending, depending on the case, in order to match their level of need for treatment (Bonta & Wormith, 2007; Bonta & Andrews, 2017). The risk factors are: history of offenses, level of education, personality, social networks, use of leisure time, substance use and abuse, family (history of offenders within the family, abuse, substance abuse, single parent households), pro-criminal attitudes and orientation (gangs, family and community values), socio-economic status, mental health (Bonta & Andrews, 2017). Risk factors can also be divided into two sections: dynamic and static (Andrews et al., 2006; Mulvey et.al, 2016). Static factors, such as history of criminal activity, should be taken into account as a valuable information for

intervention, however, it cannot be changed by intervention. On the other hand, dynamic risk factors such as education or substance use, can be influenced by various levels of intervention. The needs principle focuses on identifying and addressing these dynamic factors via suitable solutions (ex: low education - find opportunities for further education) (Andrews & Bonta, 2017). The identification and classification of risk factors in static and dynamic are important inasmuch as they have the potential to facilitate and inform the intervention (Vitopoulos et.al, 2012).

The Big Four	History of Antisocial Behavior	This includes early involvement in a number and variety of antisocial activities in a variety of settings (home and/or out of the home). Major indicators include being arrested at a young age, a large number of prior offenses, and rule violations while on conditional release.
	Antisocial Personality Pattern	This risk factor includes, for example, impulsive, adventurous pleasure-seeking, generalized trouble (multiple persons, multiple settings), restlessly aggressive, callous disregard for others
	Antisocial Cognition	This includes attitudes, values, beliefs, rationalizations, and a personal identity that are favorable to crime.
	Antisocial Associates	It includes both association with pro-criminal others and relative isolation from anti-criminal others. This risk factor is sometimes called “social support for crime.
The Moderate Four	Family / Marital Circumstances	The key to assessing both family of origin for young people and marital circumstances for older people is the quality of the interpersonal relationships within the unit (parent-child or spouse-spouse) and the behavioral expectations and rules regarding antisocial behavior, including monitoring, supervision, and disciplinary approaches.
	School / Work	This risk factor places a major emphasis on the quality of the interpersonal relationships within the settings of school and/or work.
	Leisure / Recreation	Low levels of involvement and satisfactions in anti-criminal leisure pursuits.
	Substance Abuse	The risk factor is problems with alcohol and/or other drugs (tobacco excluded).

The principle of responsivity offers guidance on how to provide treatment, suggesting that cognitive-behavioral and social learning approaches are the most effective in producing behavior change. According to Bonta & Andrews (2017), responsivity can be divided into two

dimensions: Internal and External. Paying attention to Internal Responsivity refers to matching the intervention to the clients' specifics (maturity, cognitive development, personality). In terms of External Responsivity, the intervention will have to take into consideration the environment (culture, neighborhood) in which the client lives.

Despite being considered the gold standard in offender rehabilitation, the RNR approach presents limitations as well, such as its focus on negative or avoidance objectives (e.g., reduce or avoid recidivism), poor integration of desistance factors, and lack of emphasis on human agency or motivation (Ward & Fortune, 2013; Taxman & Caudy, 2015; Ward, 2015; Ward, 2016).

Relevance to Mentor+ Program

The Mentor+ program recognizes the value of the RNR model and means to use this model as the structural backbone for the mentoring framework. Although there are some limitations of the model, RNR ensures a benchmark for procedures: identify the level of risk, attend every criminogenic need identified and respond based on the specificity of the person (age, mental health, motivation, etc.).

B. The Good Lives Model (GLM)



The Good Lives Model (GLM) is an inclusive, ample, strengths-based theory focusing on promoting personal goals while decreasing the risk of future violence and crime (Van Damme, et.al, 2022; Ward & Fortune, 2013). GLM takes into consideration two main areas of a person's life:

- I. Personal preferences, values, goals in order to identify the basic assumptions that govern a person’s life. Once identified and clarified, draws upon this view to motivate that person to live a better life.
- II. Abilities and resources to obtain primary goods in socially, law abiding ways.

GLM defines the term ‘**Primary Goods**’ as all essential activities, experiences or situations that are sought by a person, that benefits the person and increases the sense of happiness and fulfillment of the person (his/her needs are met). There are 11 primary goods (Ward, Mann & Gannon, 2007; Ward & Fortune, 2013):

LIFE (pursuing a healthy living and functioning)	KNOWLEDGE (seeking knowledge about oneself, other people, the environment, or specific subjects)	EXCELLENCE IN PLAY (striving for excellence and mastery in hobbies or leisure activities)
EXCELLENCE IN WORK (striving for excellence and mastery in work activities)	AGENCY (seeking independence and autonomy, making one’s own way in life)	INNER PEACE (experiencing freedom from emotional turmoil and stress)
FRIENDSHIP (sharing close and mutual bonds with other people, including intimate, romantic, and family relationships)	COMMUNITY (being part of / belonging to a group of people who share common interests, concerns, or values)	SPIRITUALITY (finding meaning and purpose in life; being part of a larger whole)
HAPPINESS (feeling good here and now)	CREATIVITY (expressing oneself through alternative forms; desire to create something)	

In the view of this specific model, attainment of primary human goods (needs) is associated with higher levels of wellbeing and failure to do so may lead to various psychological challenges (Ward & Maruna, 2007; Van Damme et.al, 2022; Ward & Fortune, 2013). Per se, individuals have an innate desire to fulfill their needs. Life is a journey in which individuals are constantly in search of attaining their primary goods. The order in which they rank these primary goods reflects their priorities and values (Ward & Maruna, 2007).

The attainment of the primary goods is realized by specific means that in GLM are referred to as secondary or instrumental goods (Ward & Fortune, 2013). These instrumental goods are those actions taken by a person in his/her pursuit of obtaining the desired primary good (need). As primary goods are in general universal for all people, and the difference is made by the way in which each person prioritizes these goods, the main point of intervention is related to the secondary goods, or the means chosen by the person to achieve these goals. Some of the means are adaptive, socially accepted and promote the well-being of a person. Other means are disruptive, socially unacceptable and affect the well-being of the person.

Within this model, dynamic risk factors are viewed as internal or external hurdles that block or otherwise frustrate attainment of primary human goods in personally meaningful and socially acceptable ways (Ward & Willis, 2016).

Relevance to Mentor+ Program

As a strengths-based perspective, GLM offers a complementary rehabilitation perspective to the RNR approach by focusing on both risk reduction and well-being enhancement. It attempts to capitalize on offenders' strengths by developing individuals' knowledge, abilities, opportunities, and resources in ways that align with their personal aspirations and core values (Ward & Fortune, 2013). By promoting treatment engagement, human agency, and desistance from crime, evidence suggests that the GLM framework is successful in overcoming key disadvantages of the risk-oriented management approach to offender rehabilitation (Ward, Yates, & Willis, 2012). Therefore, by incorporating GLM principles in the Mentor+ program, we expected to produce positive outcomes in reducing young people's chances of reoffending and boosting their psychological well-being.

The following principles of GLM, through various activities will be incorporated within the Mentor + program:

<p style="text-align: center;">Human Needs</p> <p>All individuals have fundamental human needs that must be met to lead fulfilling lives. These needs include physical, emotional, social, and psychological well-being.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Goals & Aspirations</p> <p>Setting and working towards meaningful goals and aspirations. Helping individuals identify and pursue positive life goals enhances motivation and provides a sense of purpose, contributing to their rehabilitation and desistance from crime.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Protective Factors</p> <p>Identifying and building upon Youth's strengths and protective factors. This includes their skills, competencies, positive relationships, and support systems</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Personal Agency Enhancement</p> <p>Refers to an individual's sense of control, autonomy, and ability to make choices. Our activities will empower youth and enhance their sense of personal responsibility and motivation</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Collaborations and Responsivity</p> <p>Underlines the collaboration between youth, mentors, service providers and the community. The Mentor + program is tailored to the unique needs and characteristics of the youth, taking into account cultural background, race, gender, sexual orientation, and other relevant factors (this is also part of the third R of the RNR model- Responsivity)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Social Integration</p> <p>Inclusion (integration and positive social connection). This principle sees the promotion of supportive relationships, community involvement, and participation in prosocial activities as crucial factors in the youth's desistance from crime.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Harm Reduction</p> <p>Be realistic, minimize the potential harm caused by identified risk factors, while still working towards positive change and reduced criminal behavior.</p>	

C. Desistance theories



Despite the lack of agreement on how to define and measure desistance from crime, it can be understood as the “the long-term abstinence from crime among individuals who had previously engaged in persistent patterns of criminal offending” (Maruna, 2001, p. 26).

Relatively recently, criminological research started to focus its attention on why some young offenders manage to desist from offending and do succeed in changing their lives (Baker, 2016). The desistance research suggests that factors associated with the cessation of offending are often different from those behind its onset, and that desistance should be viewed from a long-term perspective as a complex process involving lapses and relapses. As McNeill and colleagues (2012, p. 4) argue,

Studying desistance forces us away from static models of people as ‘offenders’, ‘criminals’ or ‘prisoners’ and encourages an understanding of change(s) in personal identities. It also brings to our attention the fact that today’s ‘young offender’ is more likely to become tomorrow’s ‘new father’ than tomorrow’s ‘habitual criminal’. As such, **it implies valuing people for who they are and for what they could become**, rather than judging, rejecting or containing them for what they have done.

Young offenders are a particular high-risk group, since once a young person is labeled and processed as an “offender”, they become more vulnerable to reoffending and further criminalization (McNeill, 2020).

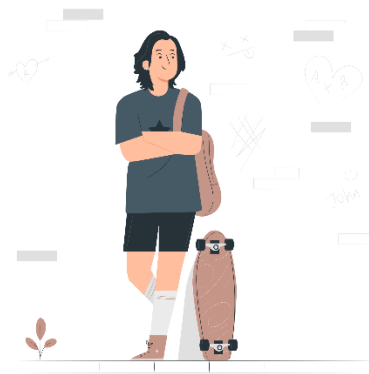
Desistance research has grown considerably over the past 30 years, accumulating findings across multiple studies that suggest, all in all “people are more likely to desist when they have strong ties to family and community, employment that fulfills them, recognition of their worth from others, feelings of hope and self-efficacy, and a sense of meaning and purpose in their lives” (Maruna & Mann, 2019, p. 7).

Relevance to Mentor+ Program

The practical implications of desistance theories for working with young people in conflict with the law are considered in the Mentor+ Program. First and foremost, desistance focuses on positive human change and development, helping to move away from the perception of ‘them and us’ and the negative consequences that such labeling can produce. Secondly, desistance places the person at the driving seat of the change process, respecting and fostering agency and self-efficacy. Moreover, desistance is about working with and through human relationships, recognizing the importance of creating significant family and community bonds. Finally, desistance literature is about discovering and developing people’s strengths and resources, either personal or social.

By developing a mentoring intervention for youth in conflict with the law, Mentor+ strives to make positive change in terms of increasing youth’s human and social capital (critical factors for sustaining desistance) and community involvement. The mentor is not an authority or expert inducing change in the individual, but a helper who will accompany and support the person through the change process, promoting motivation, bonding and investment in prosocial behavior and social responsibility. Social responsibility plays a significant role in the desistance process. Through social responsibility, Mentor + program refers to an individual's recognition and acceptance of their responsibility to contribute positively to society and abide by its norms and laws. In our vision, by developing a sense of social responsibility, youth will become more invested in prosocial behaviors and more motivated to make certain amends. Making amends can involve taking responsibility for their actions, demonstrating remorse, and seeking to repair the harm caused by their actions. (Here we make connections to restorative justice practices, making amend being a part of it. Through the activities youth will learn how to actively engage in repairing relationships, accept and address the consequences of their actions, both on self and others)

D. Restorative Justice



The primary goal of restorative justice is to provide healing, soothing ways of responding to crime, in a vigorous attempt to heal victims, offenders and communities from the harmful effects of crime, rather than deterring future offenses (Braithwaite, 2002). In a sense, it militates for the well-being of the person and the community as a protective factor against crime. The premise is: if restorative, healing ways are provided as a way of responding to crime, then the likelihood of crime decreases and the well-being of the person increases (Morris & Young, 2000; Bouffard, Cooper, & Bergseth, 2017). The importance of well-being has been highlighted by Deiner (2009), who described well-being as an overall evaluation of one person's quality of life. This evaluation has three main components:

- I. A positive cognitive appraisal of life
- II. The experience of positive emotions
- III. The experience of lower levels of negative moods.

The impact on appraisal of one's life has been documented by other theories as well (Boyatzis & Akrivou, 2006; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Peacock & Wong, 1990) and it has been directly linked to a person's sense of well-being. Experience of positive emotions and emotional regulation has been associated with lower levels of negative moods and increased well-being (Schutte, et.al, 2002; Sánchez-Álvarez, et.al, 2016; Bar-On, 2005). Therefore, well-being can be summarized as the extent to which a person has sufficient resources (material and interpersonal) to be safe, healthy and happy which in turn facilitates an increased sense of well-being and reduction of crime. This brief summary of well-being reinforces the principles of restorative justice and promotes its use in the field of criminal justice (Chitsabesan, et.al, 2006; Proctor, Linley & Maltby, 2009; Bono, et.al, 2019).

Although, personal cognitive appraisal and emotional regulation is crucial to creating a sense of well-being and hope (Magaletta & Oliver, 1999; Seligman, 2011; Kern, et.al, 2015), interpersonal and social factors are just as important contributing factors to one's well-being (Hobfoll, Stevens, & Zalta 2015; Chen & Bonanno, 2020). Access to health care, safety, financial stability, community supports, housing are some examples of social factors that have been found to be significant factor for a person's well-being as well as a significant deterrent of crime (Morrow, 1999; Farrington, et.al, 2016; Morgan & Haglund, 2009; Nilson, 2018).

Maruna (2016), a leading scholar on innovative paradigms for offender rehabilitation, has argued for a 'redemption-based justice model' that leverages the synergy between restorative justice and distance perspectives.

Relevance to Mentor+ Program

The Mentor + program , through its approach aims to utilize the aforementioned synergy of the Maruna (2016) proposed model, by acknowledging that youth in conflict with the law should be given opportunities to demonstrate remorse, take responsibility for their actions, and engage in efforts to make amends (as mentioned above). It encourages a shift from a purely punitive, reductionist approach to one that embraces the possibility of redemption while emphasizing inclusion and well-being.

II. PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORIES

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A. The social learning theory



Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977) expresses that humans learn by imitating what they see around them. As such, the premise of this theory is that children will imitate the criminal behavior to which they are exposed to, without realizing, at first, the unlawfulness of the behavior.

Bandura & Walters Social Learning Theory (1977) and Bandura Social-Cognitive Theory (1997, 1986, 2001) states that self-efficacy is a construct that is dynamic and can be developed through the existence of experiences of self-success, the success of others, positive feedback, and individual emotional state.

Relevance to Mentor+ Program

The four sources of self-efficacy can be developed through the mentoring process with an integrative and interactive model which has two main components, namely direct instruction (procedure, various specific instructions/skills training) and active learning / collaborative learning in the mentoring program and mentoring relationship (Carroll et.al, 2013; Aldosari, 2020). Practicing self-efficacy, maintaining positive connections with others, and having opportunities to overcome adversity, are linked with higher rates of resilience within individuals (Mann, et.al, 2015). These findings may show that self-efficacy fosters opportunities for youth to exert a higher level of control in various situations, which may induce a sense of mastery over their life. Steese et al. (2006) state that self-efficacy influences how

individuals perceive adversity, hence it can be concluded that self-efficacy supports resilience. By understanding the influence that self-efficacy has on resilience (Steese et al., 2006; Hart et al., 2016), the Mentor + mentoring model, can help promote a shift from a power and control model, to one that is client centered, thus enhancing youth resilience, decision making skills and desistance from crime (Maruna, 2001; McNeill, 2012).

B. Ecological systems theory



The Ecological Systems Theory, proposed by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979; 1999), is highly relevant to understanding and informing intervention programs for juvenile delinquency. In developing the Mentor + program, it is crucial to understand the influence played by multiple environmental systems on the young person's development, behavior, and well-being. It highlights the importance of considering various levels of influence, from immediate environments (microsystem) to broader societal factors (exosystem and macrosystem), in understanding and addressing the issue of delinquency among young people.

The ecological model provides an appropriate framework for understanding the interactions between various factors and facilitates the development of certain, specific recommendations for effectively interacting with the youth, their families and the community in which they live. If the Mentor + program is to successfully promote desistance, it must first assess the social ecology in order to accurately determine the risk factors (RNR) and utilize multiple and comprehensive intervention strategies in order to promote desistance from crime and well-being. Below is a short description of the layers that compose this system:

Microsystem: The microsystem refers to the immediate environment in which an individual interacts regularly, such as family, school, and peer groups. As such the Mentor+ program recognizes the critical role of these microsystems in shaping a young person's behavior. In order to be effective the Mentor + program will consider the influence of family dynamics, school environment, and peer relationships on delinquent behavior (see for example Big Four) and aim to improve these systems to support positive development (desistance) .

Mesosystem: The mesosystem involves the connections and interactions between different microsystems. A mentoring program (in our case Mentor+) informed by the Ecological Systems Theory acknowledges the importance of coordination and collaboration among various systems involved in a young person's life. This may include promoting communication between parents and schools, involving community organizations, and fostering positive relationships between different social contexts to create a supportive and cohesive environment for the child.

Exosystem: The exosystem refers to social settings that indirectly influence youth development, such as community resources, social services, and the legal system. Mentor + recognizes the impact of these broader systems on a young person's behavior and well-being. The activities used in the program may contain providing access to community resources, offering support services, and advocating for policies that address underlying risk factors for delinquency.

Macrosystem: The macrosystem encompasses the cultural, social, and economic contexts in which the young person lives. Mentor + recognizes the influence of broader societal factors on juvenile delinquency, such as socioeconomic disparities, cultural norms, and systemic inequalities (risk factors). Mentor + aims to address these systemic risk factors by promoting social justice, providing opportunities for skill development and education through the activities created in the program, and reducing structural barriers that contribute to delinquency through dissemination, networking and lobby.

Chronosystem: The chronosystem accounts for the influence of time and historical context on development. Mentor + program acknowledges the dynamic nature of individuals' lives and the changing environmental influences they experience. Accordingly, the Mentor + program

considers the impact of life transitions, historical events, history of trauma and developmental stages on delinquency risk and tailor the mentoring training and program accordingly.

C. Emotional intelligence



Over the past quarter century, research on emotional intelligence (EI) has flourished. Numerous theories, models and measures have been developed and there is substantial evidence that EI predicts important life outcomes in the areas of health, education, relationships and the workplace.

Salovey and Mayer, in their famous article published in 1990, created the first official definition of emotional intelligence: "the ability to monitor one's own feelings and those of others, discriminate between feelings, and use this information to guide one's thinking and behavior" (Salovey & Mayer, 1990, p.189).

Our emotional life can be viewed as a continuous exchange of information between the various systems of Ecological theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1999). Emotional intelligence can be seen as the filter between these systems. This filter works by:

- **Recognizing** emotions (own and others),
- **Understanding/consciousness** of the causes and consequences of emotions,
- **Labeling** emotions (as accurately as possible),
- **Expressing** emotions (preferably appropriately),
- **Managing/Regulating** emotions (especially those not expressed appropriately).

Due to the popularity of emotional intelligence, there is a growing awareness of the significance of the perception, understanding, use and management of emotions in individual actions and

group interactions (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2008). There is a documented relationship between poor emotional intelligence and juvenile delinquency (García-Sancho, Salguero, & Fernández-Berrocal, 2014; Castillo et.al, 2013). It has been clearly shown by the CBT model that thoughts, emotions and behaviors are linked (Lipsey, 2009; Vaske, Galyean, & Cullen, 2011). In consequence, developing emotional intelligence is paramount to the rehabilitation and inclusion of justice-involved youth.

Relevance to Mentor+ Program

Mood Meter is a tool developed by the Center for Emotional Intelligence at Yale University in the United States. It is designed to help people of all ages learn to recognize emotions (their own and others') and develop strategies for dealing with (managing, regulating, promoting) these emotions. This tool has the potential to give the youth within the Mentor + Project a “language” to express their feelings. (Brackett, Rivers, Reyes, & Salovey, 2012; Brackett, & Rivers, 2014.).

The Mood Meter is a square divided into four quadrants: RED-BLUE-YELLOW-GREEN, each representing a different set of emotions. These emotions are grouped based on level of pleasure and energy.

The Four Quadrants:

Red Zone (high energy, low pleasure): annoyed, irritated, worried, cranky, strung out, troubled, angry, panicked, stressed, anxious, etc.

Blue Zone (low energy, low pleasure): apathetic, bored, sad, miserable, depressed, exhausted, hopeless, saddened, disillusioned, desperate, etc.

Yellow Zone (high energy, high pleasure): pleasant, happy, joyful, hopeful, optimistic, focused, playful, excited, inspired, proud, etc.

Green Zone (low energy, high pleasure): calm, secure, grateful, content, loving, balanced, comfortable, carefree, serene, etc.

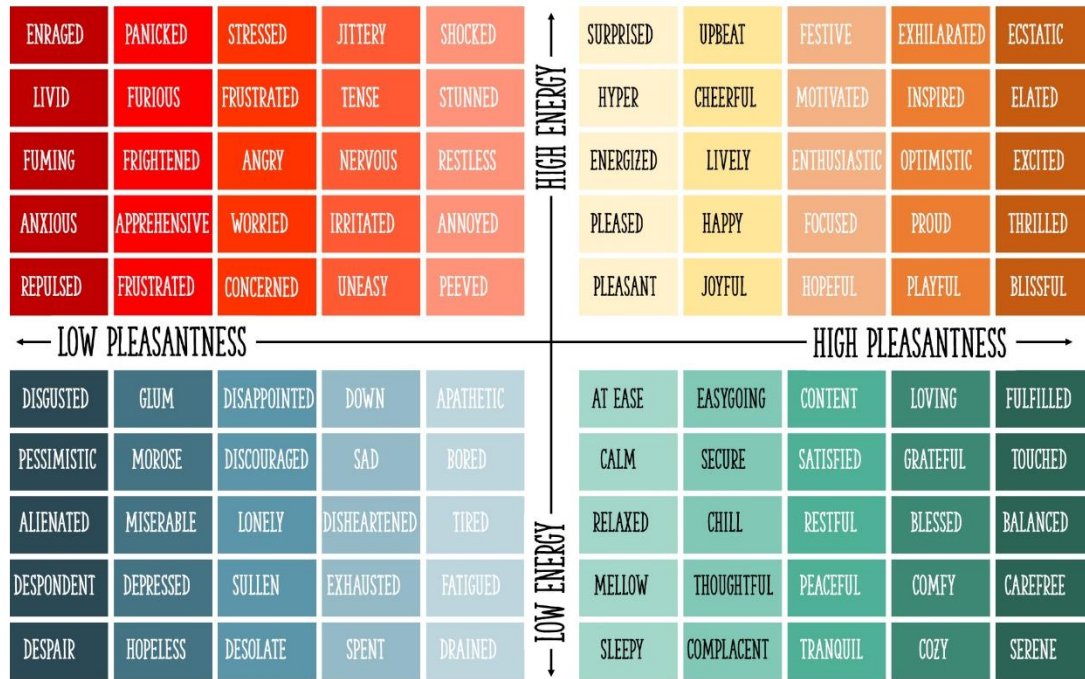


Figure 2. Mood Meter

II. MENTORING FOR YOUTH IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW

III. INTERVENTION TECHNIQUES

A. Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT)



A therapeutic intervention that is widely used in the criminal justice field (Landenberger & Lipsey, 2005) is cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). As one of the pillars of the RNR model (Clark, 2010), CBT techniques are used to develop the individualized intervention (e.g., targeting pro-criminal attitudes) after the level of risk is assessed and criminogenic needs identified.

As the name implies, CBT reflects the merging of two historical psychotherapy strands: behavior therapy and cognitive therapy. It is a structured, time-limited, problem-oriented therapeutic approach that has been applied to a wide range of disorders, including depression, anxiety disorders, personality disorders, and a variety of other focal problems (Thoma et al., 2015). With over 60 years of research and development focusing on building a strong evidence base, CBT has become a dominant force in psychotherapy in much of the world (Rice, 2015).

Different treatment approaches exist within the scope of CBT, including rational emotive behavior therapy, cognitive therapy, self-instructional training, problem-solving therapy, schema therapy, and the “third-wave” group of therapies most often associated with acceptance and commitment therapy. At their core, these approaches share a set of assumptions: 1) cognitive processes influence behavior; 2) cognitive processes may be monitored and modified; 3) the desired behavioral change may be affected through cognitive change (Dozois et al., 2019). The basic premise of CBT is that thoughts, emotions and behaviors are closely associated, and all of these factors have a decisive influence on a person’s well-being.

One of the most prominent figures in the field of CBT is Aaron Beck, the founder of cognitive therapy (Thoma et al., 2015). In general terms, Beck’s model holds that maladaptive cognitions

contribute to the maintenance of emotional distress and problematic behaviors. Cognitions occur at different levels: at the superficial level, *automatic thoughts* are those cognitions that flow rapidly in the stream of everyday thinking usually without consciousness (e.g., “I can’t do anything right”, while at the deepest level are *schemas* or core beliefs about the self, others, and the world (e.g., “I’m helpless”, “Nobody likes me”, “The world is a dangerous place”). The emphasis of therapy is, therefore, on examining and challenging the person’s dysfunctional thoughts and beliefs, and on establishing more adaptive ones, through the process known as cognitive restructuring or cognitive reframing (Beck, 2021). By means of changing these maladaptive cognitive patterns, it is possible to alter the emotional and behavioral functioning, leading to more appropriate, prosocial behavior.

Another figure that sits in the pantheon of CBT is Albert Ellis. The REBT (Ellis, 1964; Ellis, 1994) ABC model is a fundamental cognitive-behavioral therapy framework that helps to understand and analyze behavior by examining the connection between thoughts, emotions, and actions. The model is based on the premise that our thoughts (A) about a specific event or situation lead to emotional and physiological responses (B), which in turn influence our behavioral reactions (C). By identifying and challenging the underlying thoughts and beliefs, individuals can modify their emotional and behavioral responses.

The ABC model stands for:

A - Activating Event	B - Beliefs	C - Consequences
Refers to the specific event or situation that triggers an emotional or behavioral response. It can be an external event or an internal thought or memory.	These are the thoughts, interpretations, or beliefs that individuals hold about the activating event. Beliefs can be rational or irrational, influencing the emotional and physiological reactions	Consequences represent the emotional and behavioral responses triggered by the activating event and influenced by the beliefs. This includes the individual's emotional state, physiological reactions, and subsequent behaviors.

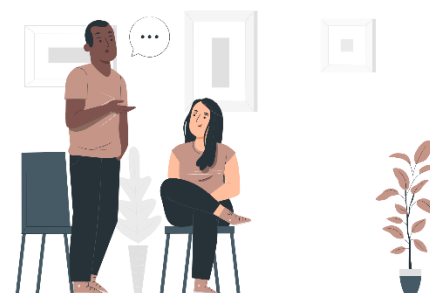
Ex: not being able to solve a exercise at school	I am a failure	Shame, self-criticism, anxiety, sadness, anger May lash out at colleagues in break, swear at the teacher
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Through the ABC model, youth will learn how to identify, and challenge irrational belief (lies, untruths about self and others, ex: The ABC model allows individuals to understand the cognitive processes that contribute to their emotional and behavioral reactions. By examining the underlying beliefs and challenging irrational or unhelpful thoughts, youth can develop more realistic and adaptive (advantageous) ways of interpreting events, leading to more positive emotional and behavioral outcomes.

Relevance for Mentor+ program

Incorporating CBT approaches into the training model is fundamental to initiating secondary-desistance change processes that link the restructuring of thoughts, feelings and behavioral patterns to the reorganization of one’s identity (Maruna, 2001). Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) approaches can be beneficial in promoting secondary desistance, which refers to the sustained cessation of criminal behavior after a person has already been involved in the criminal justice system (Maintenance in terms of Transtheoretical model of change). As mentioned before, CBT focuses on the connection between thoughts, emotions, and behaviors, aiming to address and modify maladaptive patterns of thinking and behavior that contribute to delinquency. Some of the ways in which CBT techniques incorporated in the Mentor+ program have the potential to support secondary desistance are: skills building (coping strategies and problem solving skills); relapse prevention and addressing risk factors through various cognitive restructuring methods (Lopez-Humphrey, 2018; Menon & Cheung, 2018) in order to change various maladaptive beliefs about self (ex: self-criticism) or others (overgeneralization ex: everyone is out to get me)

B. Compassion focused therapy (CFT)



Compassion focused therapy (CFT) is an increasingly popular therapeutic process (Gilbert, 2010; Gilbert, 2017). It is a holistic and integrative approach which aims to bring compassion to human suffering. According to compassionate focused therapy (CFT), people with high levels of shame and self-criticism can have enormous difficulty in being kind to others, themselves, feeling self-warmth or being self-compassionate (Gilbert, 2017). Also, a person's history of abuse, may be the core of his/her sense of shame and self-criticism (Andrews & Bota, 2010; Gilbert, 2005). People with these type of experiences can become very sensitive to threats of rejection, criticism and have the potential of becoming prone of attacking others and themselves. They start to see the world as a hostile place where compassion is perceived as weakness. As a result, it may become increasingly difficult for people prone to high levels of shame and self-criticism, to generate feelings of warmth, safety or contentment in their relationship with others and themselves (Gilbert, 2005; Gilbert, 2010). We, as humans, share a common need of developing positive regard about ourselves in the mind of our peers. When people feel neglected, devalued, abused, they tend to become vulnerable (they might be internalized) to shame, self-criticism (internalizing the criticism of others), and ultimately become susceptible to an overstimulation of the threat system (flight, fight, freeze responses) (Gilbert, 2017).

According to CFT (Gilbert, 2015), humans may resort to three emotion regulation systems: the threat system (protection); the drive system (motivation); the soothing system (pace and safety). The latter has a crucial role in facilitating engagement in close interpersonal relationships and the ability to soothe one another, thus being essential for the development and maintenance of compassion.

Relevance for Mentor+ program

Mentor+ mentoring program, recommends the training of self-compassion as a vehicle of compassion towards others. Compassion Focused Therapy (CFT) (Gilbert, 2005) emerged from developments within the CBT movement but stands out because of its evolutionary foundation and its focus on the promotion of compassionate motivation in individuals.

Youth who engage in delinquent behavior often struggle with emotional difficulties, such as anger, shame, guilt, and low self-esteem (Hofmann & Jeffries, 2022; Gold, Sullivan & Lewis, 2011; Gilbert, 2014; Braithwaite & Mugford, 1994). CFT (Gilbert, 2014; Gilbert, 2015) helps youth develop self-compassion and understanding towards their emotional experiences, promoting emotional regulation and reducing the likelihood of resorting to delinquent behaviors as a way of coping.

CFT emphasizes the development of compassion towards oneself and others. By fostering compassion, youth have the potential to gain a deeper understanding of the impact of their actions on others and develop a stronger motivation to engage in prosocial behaviors. This can contribute to reducing delinquency and fostering positive social relationships. Many youth involved in delinquent behavior experience high levels of self-criticism and shame, which can perpetuate a cycle of negative behaviors (Wang et.al, 2017; Jativa & Cerezo, 2014). For example, children who have grown up with a lot of criticism may be overly motivated to please others (low-resistance to peer pressure, gangs) in an effort to avoid criticism, and lack of self-assertion and a sense of independence; they are vulnerable to feelings of anxiety, loneliness and depression. Other children may develop more aggressive defenses; they are quick to anger and may threaten others if they are criticized (bullying, fights, etc.). CFT helps youth recognize and challenge self-critical thoughts and beliefs, fostering self-compassion and self-acceptance. By addressing these underlying emotions, CFT can break the cycle of shame and reduce the likelihood of engaging in delinquent behavior as a way of self-punishment (I am, worthless), self-judgements (I am bad) or seeking acceptance (I am unlovable) .

CFT provides youth with strategies and techniques to regulate their emotions effectively. By incorporating techniques such as mindfulness (Morley, 2018), emotional awareness, and emotion regulation, within the Mentor + program, youth can develop healthier coping mechanisms and reduce impulsive or reactive behavior. This can be particularly relevant in preventing or managing situations that may lead to crime.

CFT helps youth develop a positive sense of self and cultivate a compassionate and caring identity. Mentor + program through various compassion focused activities will help youth explore personal values, strengths, and goals. As a result, youth have the potential to develop a sense of purpose and meaning in their lives, which can serve as a protective factor against delinquent behavior.

CFT can help youth in conflict with the law, through compassion towards others, strengthen relationships with caregivers, mentors, and peers, fostering a sense of belonging and support (Neff, Rude, & Kirkpatrick, 2007). This increased compassion towards self and others will contradict/fight various distortions that may plague the inner dialogue of a youth (I am a failure, nobody loves me, all people hate me, nobody wants me, etc). These relationships can provide protective factors against delinquency and contribute to the overall well-being of the person (reduces self-criticism)

C. Motivational Interviewing



Developed by psychotherapists Stephen Rollnick and William R. Miller in the 1980s, Motivational Interviewing (MI) is an evidence-based approach for facilitating the process of change by helping clients to explore and resolve ambivalence. MI can be defined as

a collaborative, goal-oriented style of communication with particular attention to the language of change. It is designed to strengthen personal motivation for and commitment to a specific goal by eliciting and exploring the person's own reasons for change within an atmosphere of acceptance and compassion (Miller & Rollnik, 2013, p. 29).

The overall philosophy of MI is that people approach change with different levels of readiness, hence the therapist is viewed as a facilitator rather than an expert, assisting clients to become aware of the implications of change (Lundahl et al., 2010). MI's spirit or heart and mind set is characterized by the following elements: *partnership* - an active collaborative process between two experts (the therapist and the patient); *evocation* - eliciting what is already available in the person (resources, motivation and skills for change), *acceptance* - taking a non-judgemental stance towards the person, respecting the patient's autonomy and self-direction; *compassion* - actively pursuing the person's welfare and wellbeing in a selfless way, prioritizing his/her needs (Miller & Rollnik, 2013).

The practice of MI is guided by four core principles (Rollnick & Allison, 2004):

1. **Express empathy.** Following a person-centered approach, empathic listening is a fundamental principle of MI to build rapport and ensure that the practitioner understands what motivates the person, as well as the pros and cons of their situation.
2. **Develop discrepancy.** The practitioner should create and amplify a discrepancy between the person's most deeply held values and aspirations and their current problematic behaviors (e.g., explore ways in which current unhealthy behaviors conflict with the wish to 'be good'). This discomforting realization is viewed as a catalyst for change.
3. **Roll with resistance.** This principle emphasizes the need to open the space for the client's reluctance to make changes, respecting the person's own decisions, instead of arguing for change using defensive or aggressive counseling techniques.
4. **Support self-efficacy.** Supporting the person's confidence in their ability to change is recognised as critical to successful change efforts.

Standing as one of the most popular approaches to the treatment of alcohol problems (Rollnick & Allison, 2004), MI shows equivalent or better results than other treatments such as CBT or pharmacotherapy in reducing alcohol and drug use in adults (Burke et al., 2003; Hettema et al., 2005; Lundahl et al., 2010) and adolescents (Jensen et al., 2011). Studies also support the efficacy of this approach in the reduction of other health problems, including smoking (Gray et al., 2005), gambling (Lundahl et al., 2010), sexual risk behaviors (Fisher et al., 2006), and in favoring treatment and medication adherence (Swanson et al., 1999). There is also a growing body of theory and research suggesting that MI may be effective in treating psychological

disorders such as anxiety, depression, PTSD, suicidal ideation, obsessive-compulsive disorder, eating disorders, and problem gambling (Arkowitz *et al.*, 2015).

Relevance for Mentor+ program

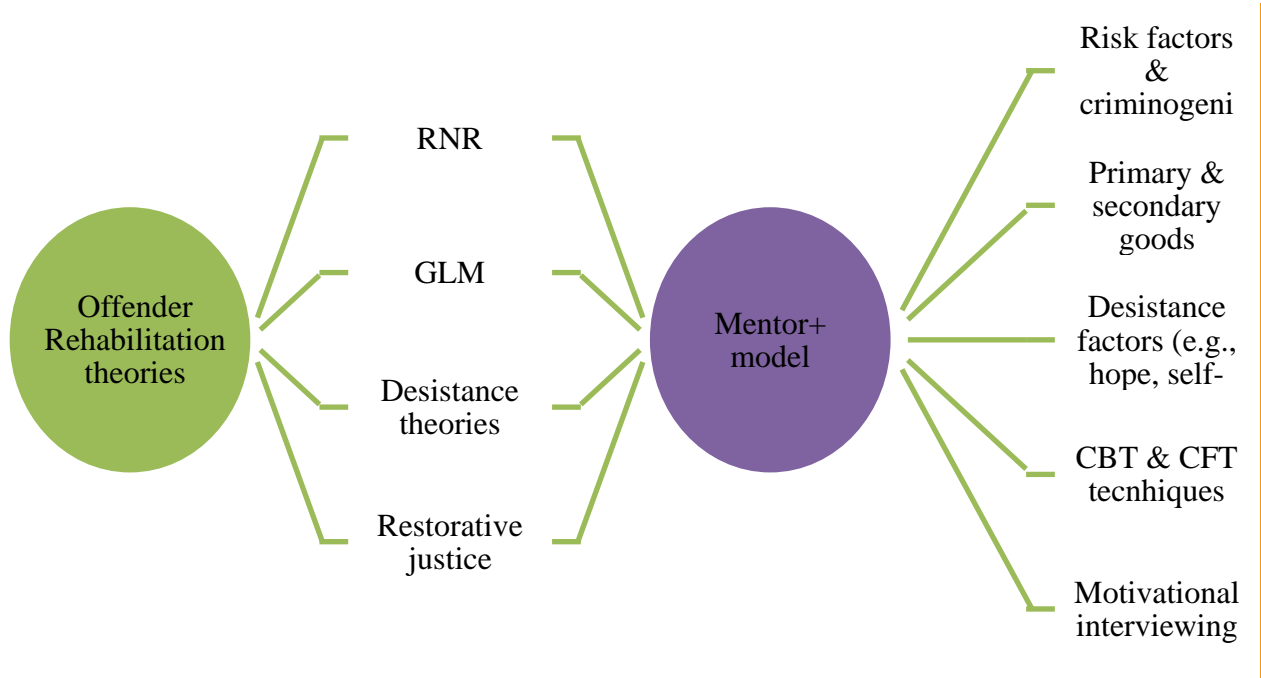
MI techniques combined with the Transtheoretical model of change provide a useful modality in determining: primary and secondary goods in the GLM (explained above), and find social, law-abiding means in obtaining these goals. From the RNR perspective, more specifically Responsivity principle, MI techniques can be used to determine and modulate how the individual interacts with the environment and may cover a range of factors and situations.

Within the mentoring relationship, MI can provide a safe and non-confrontational space to explore and understand ambivalence. The mentor may help youth examine the pros and cons of continuing their criminal behavior and the potential benefits of desistance. By exploring ambivalence, MI may help youth resolve conflicting feelings and motivations, leading to increased readiness for change.

By using MI techniques, the Mentor+ program, will assist youth to identify and strengthen intrinsic motivations for desistance. Through MI techniques and empathy, the Mentor + program hopes to connect youth with their own values, goals, and aspirations, with the final goal of enhancing their motivation to change.

Using MI techniques, the Mentor+ mentoring program, strives to help youth identify their strengths, skills, and past successes, and uses these as a foundation to build confidence in their ability to desist from criminal behavior. Within the mentoring relationship, the mentor and the youth collaboratively supports the development of a realistic plan for change and problem-solving any potential barriers, while constantly promoting and highlighting the importance of autonomy and self-efficacy in face of various levels of resistance using compassion and understanding.

Figure 3. RNR, GLM & desistance framework: reduce the risk of reoffending and promote desistance & well-being.



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