Strengths-Based Approaches to Reentry: Extra Mileage toward Reintegration and Destigmatization

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Abstract

Efforts to assist in the reintegration of prisoners back into society are typically either risk-based or need-based. An alternative philosophy for reintegration, strengths-based (or “restorative”) reentry, treats people returning from prison as assets to be utilized rather than threats. This paper explores the theory behind these efforts, drawing on one of the original formulations of this perspective in the work of the psychologist Albert Eglash. Eglash argues that the process of redemption requires more than just punishment or providing compensation to one’s victims, but involves individuals going a “second mile.” This “second mile,” which he calls “creative restitution” involves making up for one’s wrong-doing by working to help others, in particular other prisoners or those at risk of going to prison. We argue that these strengths-based efforts work primarily as a stigma management strategy. Individuals who have been punished for doing wrong can redeem their reputations through explicit involvement in help-giving behaviors and other efforts to contribute positively to society. This change in public perceptions can then lead to changes in the person’s own self-beliefs and self-identity. We conclude by exploring a new development in the strengths-based movement, which we describe as going a “third mile.” This involves more direct efforts at stigma reduction through activism on ex-prisoner issues on a political level. We argue that this is a natural next step in efforts towards destigmatization.

Key words: redemption, reentry, stigma
In the past decade, the reentry of persons from prison into the wider society has been recognized as among the most pressing issues facing the criminal justice system and indeed society in the United States and elsewhere (see e.g., Travis, 2005; Petersilia, 2003). The responses to this issue can broadly be divided into three primary groups: risk-based, need-based and strengths-based approaches. All seek to reduce the problem of recidivism among those returning from prison, but each takes a different approach. Risk-based approaches tend to focus on enhanced modes of supervision. Ex-prisoners are monitored more intensely, and behaviors deemed risky are not tolerated. Need-based approaches seek to provide support to former prisoners and help to guide them into treatment and care situations that can help them gain their independence. Frequently, so-called “reentry programs” will combine risk-based and need-based strategies (sometimes called using both “the carrot and the stick”), for instance, providing housing and therapeutic support while also restricting ex-prisoners’ movements and closely monitoring their behavior.

This paper will focus on an alternative approach that has been labeled a “strengths-based” approach or alternatively “restorative reentry” as it is based on principles fundamental to the restorative justice movement (see esp. Maruna & LeBel, 2003; Maruna, LeBel, & Lanier, 2003; Bazemore & Karp, 2004; Bazemore & Stinchcomb, 2004; Burnett & Maruna, 2006). As opposed to risk- or need-based interventions, the focus here is less on controlling or helping ex-prisoners and instead on treating them as individuals with talents and abilities to contribute to society. The difference is subtle but significant. Mimi Silber, co-founder of the exemplary strengths-based organization, Delancey Street in San Francisco, summarizes this distinction nicely: “Nobody makes the critical point: We need these people. The country is missing something because a huge bulk of its population is not a part of it. They have talents we need” (cited in Mieszkowski, 1998, p. 6). Strengths-based interventions recognize this by providing opportunities for individuals who have offended to make amends and make important contributions to their communities (Braithwaite, 1989).

The strengths-based strategy has emerged from a different starting point than risk- or need-based approaches, in that it has originated from the perspective of “success stories” themselves. That is, rather than beginning with an assumption about what others need, then testing the theory empirically with random controlled trials or other evaluation techniques, strengths-based theories have arisen from basic social scientific research on how individuals “go straight” or desist from crime “on their own” or outside of structured interventions (see Maruna, Immarigeon & LeBel, 2003). In “The Strengths Perspective in Criminal Justice,” Michael Clark (2005, p. 142) writes: “We’ve spent decades spinning and constructing interventions from our point of view (e.g., ‘This is what offenders need’).” Yet, as Mary McMurrant (2002, p. 5) and others persuasively argue: “A
different and potentially more useful perspective is to look at motivation to change from an offender’s point of view” (see also McMurran, Theodosi, Sweeney, & Sellen, 2008). This recognition has led to a series of proposals for desistance-led or desistance-focused approaches to reentry (see Farrall & Maruna, 2004; McNeill, 2003, 2006; Robinson, 2008), including our own (see Maruna & LeBel, 2003; Ward & Maruna, 2007). One of the consistent findings emerging out of the research on the lives of successfully desisting ex-prisoners is that successful reintegration often appears to involve an explicit investment in what developmental psychologists call “generativity” (see McAdams, Hart, & Maruna, 1998). That is, one of the characteristics that appears to best distinguish between successfully and unsuccessfully reformed ex-prisoners is the individual’s engagement in mentoring, parenting and other “generative” activities designed to “give something back” to others in his or her community (Halsey, 2008; Maruna, 2001; McNeill, 2003). This finding is the basis for reintegrative efforts that seek to put the returning prisoner in the position of a help-giver rather than a help-receiver.

In this paper, we will outline the core elements of the strengths-based or restorative model and the empirical rationale for why it should reduce recidivism. In doing so, we will draw in particular on the work of the psychologist Albert Eglash. Eglash (1977) has been widely recognized as the originator of the term “restorative justice,” yet his substantive contributions to that movement and to the psychology of criminal reform are sometimes overlooked. In particular, Eglash (1957, 1977) sought to broaden the understanding of restitution in the criminal justice system beyond direct acts of compensation to victims toward more abstract or “creative” ways that individuals convicted of crimes could redeem themselves. He argued that traditional forms of restitution or punishment may be enough to satisfy the needs of justice, but may not be enough to earn a person’s redemption. He argued that redemption involved going a “second mile.” Not just paying one’s debt (justice) but also demonstrating one’s worthiness for forgiveness by giving something back to the community. In particular, Eglash became interested in replicating the successful mutual-help model from groups like alcoholics anonymous into the criminal justice sphere. He argued that individuals formerly caught up in crime and the prison system could usefully become involved in counseling or supporting others in those circumstances or at risk of such involvement.

In what follows, we review the theoretical literature in criminology on why this might be an effective strategy for reintegration and recidivism reduction. In particular, we argue that the second mile is a useful strategy for both stigma reduction and shame management (see Ahmed, Harris, Braithwaite, & Braithwaite, 2001). We conclude by introducing a potential “third mile” approach whereby successfully reintegrated ex-prisoners go beyond such helping roles and become involved in direct activism around ending the stigmatization of other ex-prisoners.
What is Strengths-Based Reentry?

Returning prisoners face numerous challenges in the transition from prison. With very little financial or social capital, they need to very quickly find suitable housing, employment, and the sort of supportive social networks that all of us require in order to survive. Often released with only a meagre sum in gate money and no personal savings, ex-convicts struggle financially and have difficulty affording reasonable accommodation. Because of their time out of the workforce, they have trouble finding and maintaining meaningful employment. Ex-prisoners also face challenges in re-establishing family ties, and many struggle with addictions to alcohol and/or drugs and other mental health issues (Petersilia, 2003). All of these problems are thought to increase the likelihood of recidivism for released prisoners.

Underpinning many of these issues, however, is the issue of stigma. That is, perhaps the primary challenge facing the returning prisoner (and what makes him or her unique), is the need to prove him or herself to be worthy of forgiveness - the forgiveness of the wider society, of their own families, and of themselves. Without this forgiveness (or what Eglash terms “redemption”), we argue, there is little hope for finding a home or meaningful role in the prosocial world.

Strengths-based and restorative interventions can be understood as a form of stigma management or reverse “labeling” (Braithwaite, 1989). Whereas the “degradation ceremonies” of criminal justice (Garfinkel, 1956) act as a system for the labeling of individuals as “offenders” and are therefore implicated in the perpetuation of a criminal class (see e.g., the labeling theories of Becker, 1963; Lemert, 1951), strengths-based activities invert this process by allowing stigmatized individuals to prove themselves as more than their labels. In what Bazemore (1999) calls “earned redemption,” strengths-based practices treat offenders as community assets to be utilized “rather than merely liabilities to be supervised” (Travis, 2000, p. 7). The strengths model is premised both on a normative theory of justice based around restitution, and an empirical theory of criminal recidivism based on labeling theory or the “looking-glass” self-concept (Maruna, LeBel, Mitchell, & Naples, 2004). Normatively, in order for justice to be done, offenders need to help repair some of the harm caused by an offence (Johnstone, 2001). Additionally, though, there is an empirical assumption that engagement in this repair process will be rehabilitative for the returning individual.

The idea is that when individuals do something wrong (or have been punished on suspicion of doing so), we seek to “redeem ourselves” - that is, prove that we are more than our mistakes. We
seek to “make good.” These efforts, in turn, often trigger a level of forgiveness from both victims and the wider community, who recognize that the individual is not a “bad person” and should not be permanently excluded from society. This multi-stage interactional pattern can be thought of as the process of “redemption” or reputational “rehabilitation” (Maruna, 2001) and is common not just among humans around the world but can even be found among our evolutionary ancestors in the animal world (see esp. McCullough, 2008). This process is easiest to appreciate on the micro-level. So, for example, when Friend X insults another Friend Y, the insulted party will likely become angry and avoid Friend X or strike back in some way. If Friend X then apologizes and makes an effort to make up for the wrong, however, Friend Y is more likely to forgive X and the friendship will resume as usual. Although these principles provide the basic foundation for strengths-based work, the reparation process is much more complicated when it is mapped on to a social situation as complex as an ex-prisoner returning from prison. Indeed, there are few explicit, agreed-upon definitions of what a “strengths-based” or “restorative” approach actually involves in reintegrations practice, and therefore the terms are often employed inappropriately by interventions.

In his original formulation of what he calls “creative restitution” (or, later, “restorative justice”), however, Albert Eglash (1957, p. 619) laid out four loose principles for what differentiated restorative or strengths-based practices from traditional forms of restitution. In the article (which has now become a foundational text for the restorative justice movement), Eglash characterizes traditional restitution as follows:

a) It is a financial obligation
b) Its extent is limited
c) It is court-determined
d) It is an individual act.

On the other hand, according to Eglash’s formulation, creative or restorative restitution could be differentiated by the following characteristics:

1) It is any constructive act.
2) It is creative and unlimited
3) It is guided, self-determined behavior
4) It can have a group basis.

Eglash’s four characteristics remain a useful way of framing what is unique about strengths-
based approaches over a half-century later, and provide a means of distinguishing strengths-based approaches from, for example, traditional community service work or prison labor. We utilize his four characteristics in our review below.

1) Strengths work is constructive activity

Eglash (1957, p. 619) writes, “While punishment must be painful or uncomfortable, it need not be a constructive contribution. The essence of restitution, on the other hand, is a constructive effort, an offender giving something of himself.” Eglash notes that restorative acts have a “poetic justice” about them; they should produce visible “good” with tangible beneficiaries in the same way that one’s crimes involve clear harms with real victims. Strengths-based models are designed “to be focused on projects designed to meet community needs, build community capacity, and repair the harm caused by crime to affected communities” (Bazemore & Stinchcombe, 2004, p. 16). Dickey and Smith (1998, p. 35) write:

Probation and parole projects in which offenders visibly and directly produce things the larger community wants, such as gardens, graffiti-free neighbourhoods, less dangerous alleys, habitable housing for the homeless...have also helped build stronger communities, and have carved channels into the labour market for the offenders engaged in them.

This community service work is about more than breaking rocks. Rather than being designed to be punitive, strengths-based work is explicitly intended to be both enjoyable and rewarding. The idea is to “turn participants on” to the satisfaction of this sort of work and convert them to a new way of living. This cannot be done by subjecting them to the degrading or demeaning treatment of the chain gang, but might be possible by providing opportunities for challenging, intrinsically interesting tasks that could utilize and build upon the talents of the offender in useful, visible roles.

2) Strengths Work is Creative and Generative

Eglash (1957, p. 620) describes justice as “the first mile,” whereas, restorative justice, he argues, is explicitly about “going the second mile”:

The first mile is punishment, or reparations or indemnity or atonement. But the offender has not yet squared or redeemed the situation, making it good. Only a second mile is restitution in its broad meaning of a complete restoration of good will and harmony.
The primary example Eglash gives of this second mile is for individuals who have done something wrong to help turn around others at risk of ending up in prison themselves. This widespread phenomenon has become known as becoming a “professional ex-” (Brown, 1991) or a “wounded healer” (LeBel, 2007; Maruna, 2001; White, 2000). The wounded healer is one who shares his or her own experiences, wisdom, and hope with those less far along in the process of recovery or reintegration (see e.g., De Leon, 2000). Many prisoners and former prisoners express a desire to receive mentoring from formerly incarcerated persons who are “making it” in conventional society (e.g., Erickson, Crow, Zurcher, & Connett, 1973; Irwin, 2005; McAnany, Tromanhauser, & Sullivan, 1974; Richie, 2001; Sowards, O’Boyle, & Weissman, 2006). This helping role is similar to Anderson’s (1990, p. 329) description of the “mentor-protégé relationship” between “old heads” (or respected adult members of a community) and the neighborhood youth. Although it is impossible to measure the true extent of the wounded healer phenomenon as it relates to former prisoners, it appears that a substantial number choose to exit the “convict role” by helping others in an occupation such as a paraprofessional, lay therapist or counselor (e.g., Irwin, 2005; Maruna, 2001). Lofland (1969, p. 287) notes that this sort of helper/wounded healer career role “serves to make acceptable, explicable and even meritorious the guilt-laden, ‘wasted’ portions of an Actor’s life.”

3) Strengths Activities as Self-Determined, But Guided

Eglash (1957, p. 620) writes: “In punishment, a judge makes a decision and this decision is imposed on an offender. ... If the same technique is used in restitution, then restitution is no longer a creative act. Some of its growth value is lost.” Yet, Eglash is clear that “although restitution is a voluntary act, an offender needs guidance.” He writes, “Only a skillful guide can encourage a man to go a second mile. I suspect that the best guide is a man who has himself gone through it” (p. 621).

Whereas traditional community service is judicially ordered as punishment, strengths-based work is voluntarily agreed upon (Bazemore & Stinchcombe, 2004). Rather than coercing obedience, strengths-based practices are therefore thought to develop intrinsic motivations toward helping behaviors - what Michael Clark (2001) calls the difference between compliance and growth. This does not “grow overnight” though (Eglash, 1957, p. 621), it needs to be nurtured through practice and habituation. Volunteers become partisans of prosocial behavior through involvement with activities that utilize their strengths and promote their individual dignity. In the words of de Tocqueville (1835/1956, p. 197), “By dint of working for one’s fellow-citizens, the
habit and the taste for serving them is at length acquired” (for an empirical illustration of this theory, see Uggen & Janikula, 1999).

4) Strengths Activities and Esprit de Corps

In addition, as part of a helping collective (consisting of other wounded healers farther along on the road to recovery), the volunteer is thought to obtain “a sense of belonging and an esprit de corps” (Pearl & Riessman, 1965, p. 83). Eglash (1957, p. 621) writes: “In punishment, a man stands alone. But restitution is a creative act, and the way is open for group discussion.” Indeed, Eglash wrote widely about support groups for persons with criminal records modeled on the 12-Step Movement with titles like “Youth Anonymous” and “Adults Anonymous” decades before these sorts of interventions became fashionable internationally (see Eglash, 1958). This collective “mutual support” nature of strengths activities has very much remained a feature of these interventions since this time. White, Boyle, and Loveland (2004, p. 246) argue that “the centerpiece of all successful recovery mutual-aid groups is the process of sharing experience, strength, and hope.” Self-help group participants often emphasize that their expertise comes from “having been there too” (Humphreys, 2004, p. 15), and that they have valuable knowledge and skills gained from these experiences that can be shared with others to improve their lives (see e.g., Irwin, 2005, p. 178; Maruna, 2001). Cressey (1955, p. 118) argues that successful reintegration efforts need to foster a “we” feeling and a “strong sense of belonging to one group.” Similarly, in discussing recovery from substance use, White (2000) argues that wounded healers have an emotional identification or kinship with those they are helping. These strong bonds and the sharing of common experiences are thought to enhance the ability to establish rapport with other offenders (Cressey, 1965), and some mutual-help groups for former prisoners argue that only those who have undergone the experience are qualified to help (McAnany et al., 1974).

“Going the Second Mile” in Practice

The move from theory to actual practice for restorative interventions has been somewhat slow. Compared to risk-based and need-based strategies, “strengths-based” practices are few and far between and have received relatively limited attention in the academic literature (but see Erickson et al., 1973; McAnany et al., 1974). However, early examples of strengths-based interventions, such as the “New Careers Movement” (Grant, 1968; Pearl & Riessman, 1965), can be found, if largely outside of the criminological literature. The central premise of the New Careers Movement was that the disadvantaged (including, but not limited to, former prisoners) could be trained and placed in entry-level social service jobs that would take advantage of their life experiences as well
as their geographic, cultural, and functional similarities to other persons in need. This program involved training prisoners for “change agent” roles and utilizing formerly incarcerated persons as a manpower resource in correctional rehabilitation and reentry programs (Grant, 1968). The goal was “to transform receivers of help (such as welfare recipients) into dispensers of help; to structure the situation so that receivers of help will be placed in roles requiring the giving of assistance” (Pearl & Riessman, 1965, pp. 88-89). Although the original New Careers programs have largely disappeared today, the movement has had a lasting impact, fundamentally changing the way we think about professionals and clients in social work and even criminal justice.

Another organization frequently touted as a model of strengths-based reintegration is the Delancey Street Foundation in San Francisco (see e.g., Maruna & LeBel, 2003). Founded in 1971 by Mimi Silbert and former prisoner John Maher, Delancey Street has grown from an organization consisting of ten recovering addicts (and one criminal psychologist) living in an apartment to a thriving organization with 1,500 full-time residents in five self-run facilities, more than 20 businesses that double as training schools, and an annual operating budget of close to $24 million (Boschee & Jones, 2000; Mieszkowski, 1998). The program is self-supporting and has no professional staff. Instead, taking an “each one teach one” approach, residents teach and train newer arrivals then utilize these new skills to sustain the organization once the more senior residents “graduate” into private housing and independent careers. According to Silbert (1984, p. 46), “This process is much like mountain-climbing in a chain in which the person closest to the top is pulling everyone else along.” In doing so, Silbert says, residents “learn a fundamental lesson...that they have something to offer. These are people who have always been passive.... But strength and power come from being on the giving end” (Boschee & Jones, 2000, p. 11).

A newer strengths-based case study was provided by Burnett and Maruna (2006). They evaluated an innovative initiative that involved prisoners at HM Springhill Prison in the United Kingdom as “citizens advisors” at a Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB). Like many others around the country, this particular branch of the CAB was unable to meet the high level of demand on its service with the existing citizen volunteers. Consistently unable to handle the number of phone calls to its service each month, one of the bureau’s managers had the idea of approaching the local open prison to invite suitable prisoners to be trained as advisors. The initial idea was for a call centre to be based in the prison, but the CAB discovered that prisoners could apply for day-time release on temporary license, and therefore prisoner volunteers could work out of the advice bureau itself. The research found that the prisoner volunteers were quickly accepted and warmly appreciated by both fellow volunteers and the citizens who were seeking assistance.
Finally, one of the most interesting and important strengths-based initiatives to emerge in recent years is LIFERS, Inc, a prisoner-led group of men serving life terms at the State Correctional Institution at Graterford in Pennsylvania. In a recent article in The Prison Journal, the LIFERS Inc steering group (2004, p. 52) provide what might be the perfect encapsulation of the strengths-based idea:

Accepting the possibility that we could very well be destined to die in prison, we looked at how a life of meaning could be created given our circumstances. ... As men of conscience, with nothing to lose or gain personally, we felt a human responsibility to do what we could to attack this problem. ... LIFERS, Inc. reached the conclusion that we, from our unique position as former perpetrators, could offer the leadership necessary to prevent street crime and violence, saving lives in the process.

The LIFERS, Inc (2004, p. 60) statement mirrors Eglash’s argument from half a century earlier that they are obligated to go a “second mile” in their work to reduce crime: “It is not enough that offenders released from the Department of Corrections go on their way to live a successful life (the expectation of the rehabilitation model); they should be expected to produce positive tangible results that improve life in the communities they earlier destroyed.” Like Eglash, the LIFERS also advocate a mutual help perspective whereby prisoners and former prisoners are utilized as guides in the transformational process of others: “Transformed offenders have legitimacy among their pretransformed peers that established social workers, prison officials, and law enforcement personnel do not have” (p. 63). As a result, “the transformation process that begins with the self ends with the transformation of others.” (p. 64).

**Does Helping Really Help the Helper?**

At the heart of the strengths-based perspective is the “helper principle” that “those who help are helped most” (Gartner & Riessman, 1984, p. 19) or that “altruistic activity” is valuable both for the giver as well as the receiver of help (Toch, 2000). Although more research is needed to confirm these benefits, it is consistent with a smattering of research on help-giving behaviors and orientations in the literature around criminality (e.g., Maruna, 2001; Uggen & Janikula, 1999) as well as addiction recovery (e.g., Crape, Latkin, Laris, & Knowlton, 2002; Zemore, Kaskutas, & Ammon, 2004). The “helper principle” is also consistent with social scientific theory regarding planned change.

In his discussion of what he calls “retroflexive reformation,” Donald Cressey (1955) argues in favor of a social learning interpretation of this process: “In attempting to reform others, the [pris-
Oner/probationer] almost automatically accepts the relevant common purpose of the group, identifies himself closely with other persons engaging in reformation, and assigns status on the basis of anticriminal behavior" (p. 119). There is some evidence for this sort of a prosocial modeling impact as well in the criminological literature. McLvor (1998), for instance, found that individuals who viewed an experience of community service as “rewarding” had lower rates of recidivism than those who found it to be a punishment. This indicates that at least some individuals sentenced to community service can be “turned on” to this new experience and develop prosocial skills and orientations in much the same way that social learning theory would suggest that criminality is acquired (see also Uggen & Janikula, 1999).

However, there appears also to be a substantial role for labeling (and labeling theory) in explaining the impact of helping behaviors. In accounting for her findings in the community service research, for example, McLvor (1998) writes, “In many instances, it seems, contact with the beneficiaries [of their community service work] gave offenders an insight into other people, and an increased insight into themselves; ...greater confidence and self-esteem; ...(and) the confidence and appreciation of other people” (pp. 55-56). We argue that the latter elements of this formulation - the impact of helping activities on the views of others, as well as one’s own self-understanding - may be the key to the reformatory power of the helping role (Maruna & LeBel, 2003). That is, the primary function of the helper orientation, in our model, is its function as a means of stigma/shame management (see esp. Braithwaite, 1989; Ahmed, et al. 2001). As Bazemore and Stinchcomb (2004) argue, “only by taking responsibility for making things right with victims and victimised communities can offenders change either the community’s image of them or their perceptions of themselves” (p. 16, italics in original).

Research suggests that engagement with helping behaviors can send a message to the wider community that an individual is worthy of further support and investment in their reintegration and thus help formerly incarcerated persons shed the negative connotations of the “ex-convict” identity (Bazemore, 1999). For instance, in his substantial body of research on interpersonal forgiveness inside and outside of the laboratory, the psychologist Michael McCullough (2008) identified reparative acts as being among the most effective “signals” individuals can send out to indicate to others that they are worthy of forgiveness. McCullough addresses the creative restitution involved in restorative justice activities in particular in this regard. He concludes:

Although the restorative justice movement was created without reference to the principles of evolutionary psychology, no evolutionary psychologist could do much to improve upon this combination of ingredients for making forgiveness happen (p. 178).
When people are forgiven by those around them, they then may be able to forgive themselves and move on from the shame of wrongdoing or punishment. Maruna (2001) found that assuming the role of wounded healer allows one to rework "a delinquent history into a source of wisdom to be drawn from while acting as a drug counselor, youth worker, community volunteer, or mutual-help group member" (p. 117). The individual undergoes a process of re-labeling with a new prosocial identity replacing the self-beliefs of the "secondary deviant" (Lemert, 1951) brought on by stigmatization. The potential benefits of assuming such helper roles, then, would include a sense of accomplishment, grounded increments in self-esteem, meaningful purposiveness, and a cognitive restructuring toward responsibility (Toch, 2000).

Research supports these arguments as well for ex-prisoners (see LeBel, 2007; LeBel, Burnett, Maruna, & Bushway 2008). Quantitative studies of mutual-help groups have found that engaging in helping activities is related to better psychosocial adjustment and treatment outcomes (Crape et al., 2002; Roberts et al., 1999; Zemore et al., 2004), and higher self-esteem and feelings of self-worth (e.g., Hutchinson et al., 2006; Maton, 1988; Schiff & Bargal, 2000). Overall, general population surveys find that helping others is strongly related to one's psychological health and that "one does well by doing good" (Piliavin, 2003, p. 227).

**New Directions: Going the Third Mile**

William White (2000) has been one of the primary chroniclers of the long history of strengths-based activities among those recovering from addictions to alcohol and other substances. In books like Slaying the Dragon, White (1998) has provided an intellectual history for the role of the "wounded healer" and mutual-aid societies in the struggle with addiction in society over the last century. Recently, White (2001, p. 16) has identified the beginnings of what he refers to as the "New Recovery Movement." In this new development, recovering persons have moved "beyond their personal service work" as wounded healers and become "recovery activists," advocating on behalf of recovering persons as a group. According to White (2001), individuals in the New Recovery Movement have joined together "not in supplication but in service; not asking for something, but offering something; not advocating for themselves, but for others; not acting as individuals, but in communion; and not seeking solutions through formal institutions but through the community itself" (p. 6).

A parallel development has been taking place among ex-prisoner groups. Organizations like The Center for NuLeadership on Urban Solutions, All of Us or None, and the Women's Prison...
Association (WPA) seek to develop “a group of leaders equipped to craft solutions to the problems facing incarcerated and formerly incarcerated persons” (http://www.wpaonline.org/institute/wap.htm). These grassroots organizations provide a voice to formerly incarcerated persons and give them the opportunity to be engaged in attempts to change public policy. For example, All of Us or None is a national organizing initiative of formerly incarcerated persons and persons in prison. On its website and in its brochure, this organization states that, “Advocates have spoken for us, but now is the time for us to speak for ourselves. We clearly have the ability to be more than the helpless victims of the system” (http://www.allofusornone.org/about.html). In academia, a similar movement called “Convict Criminology,” largely consisting of ex-prisoner academics, have made important strides in changing the way in which crime and justice are taught and studied at the university level (see Jones, et al., 2009).

Although most of these groups are less than a decade old, an earlier wave of similar advocacy activity took place in the early 1970s in several US cities. For instance, McAnany and colleagues (1974, p. 8) explored a number of mutual help organizations consisting of former prisoner groups in Chicago. These groups formed “to bring about changes in criminal justice, and especially the correctional system...to inform the public about the inequities and irrationalities of the criminal justice system, and to politicize prisoners and ex-prisoners to seek political redress and system change through collective action.”

If Eglash’s “second mile” (the helper orientation of the “wounded healer”) is primarily an act of stigma management, as we have argued, then these forms of “reintegration advocacy” might be thought of as going a “third mile.” Whereas, helping behaviors primarily ease an individual’s own experience of stigma, the activist orientation seeks to confront the stigma against ex-prisoners more broadly by “breaking through social prejudice” (Siegel, Lune, & Meyer, 1998, p. 6). Rogers and Buffalo (1974, p. 105) refer to this type of stigma coping orientation as the “fighting back” phenomena (see also Gill, 1997; Jones et al., 1984; White, 2001). For instance, the organizers of the ex-prisoner group “All of Us or None” argue that: “It’s OUR responsibility to stop the discrimination, and to change the public policies that discriminate against us, our families, and our communities” (http://www.allofusornone.org/about.html). Likewise, in their Chicago research, McAnany and colleagues (1974, p. 27) found that the ex-prisoner groups were “formed to confront the stigma, which these prisonized persons were running away from.” Like the New Recovery Movement, these groups insisted that there is a “common bond” between all persons who are formerly incarcerated and that “helping the brothers’ was essential for continued group identity” (McAnany et al. 1974, p. 28). By providing a supportive community and a network of individuals with shared experiences, these groups can be interpreted as transforming an ostensibly individ-
Anspach (1979, p. 766) uses the concept of “identity politics” to refer to social movements that “consciously endeavor to alter both the self-concepts and societal conceptions of their participants.” In a similar vein, Kitsuse (1980, p. 9) proposed the concept of “tertiary deviance” to refer to the stigmatized person’s “confrontation, assessment, and rejection of the negative identity imbedded in secondary deviation, and the transformation of that identity into a positive and viable self-conception.” Collective action by groups of stigmatized persons to change laws and other social policies have been documented for persons with physical disabilities, gays/lesbians, persons with mental illness, persons with HIV/AIDS, and other disadvantaged groups (Anspach, 1979, Kitsuse, 1980). For example, Van Tosh, Ralph, and Campbell (2000) provide a history of the mental health “consumer movement,” which emphasizes the importance of activism in helping those with mental illnesses overcome stigma. These sorts of empowerment-oriented, proactive, and collective attempts to change public perceptions and create a more positive identity are increasingly being thought to be stigmatized persons’ “most effective and enduring route to reducing prejudice” (Major, Quinton, McCoy, & Schmader, 2000, p. 217; see also Herman, 1993; Parker & Aggleton, 2003; Sayce, 2000; Shih, 2004). A benefit of social activism over individualistic strategies such as concealment is that any improved treatment will spill over across a variety of situations and improve the lives of other similarly stigmatized persons (Goffman, 1963; Major et al., 2000).

Moreover, like the altruism of the “wounded healer” orientation, there may be discernible personal benefits for engaging in this sort of advocacy work. In research among other stigmatized groups, Wahl (1999, p. 476) found that “involvement in advocacy and speaking out are self-enhancing, and the courage and effectiveness shown by such participation help to restore self-esteem damaged by stigma” (see also Shih, 2004). In addition, like helping behaviors, becoming involved in advocacy-related activities can give meaning, purpose, and significance to a formerly incarcerated person’s life (Connett, 1973, p. 114). For example, Nicole Cook, a graduate of ReConnect - the Women in Prison Project’s advocacy and leadership training program for formerly incarcerated women, states that:

One thing I recognize as an advocate: people respect you more when they see you are not afraid to stand up for what you believe in....Now you have a chance to prove to yourself and to everyone else, that “I made it-I was incarcerated, I felt worthless, hopeless, and all the other negative emotions you go through when in prison”. To transform into a person who speaks out and advocates for other women, that’s awesome (Correctional Association of New York, 2008, p. 5).
LeBel's (forthcoming) research on a sample of over 200 ex-prisoners provides the most systematic evidence to date of the benefits of involvement in advocacy as a coping orientation for ex-prisoners. His survey research found that an activist or advocacy orientation is positively correlated with one's psychological well-being, and in particular their satisfaction with life as a whole. Moreover, he found a strong negative correlation between one's advocacy/activism orientation and criminal attitudes and behavior. This indicates that advocating on behalf of others in the criminal justice system may help to maintain a person's prosocial identity and facilitate ongoing desistance from crime.

**Discussion: Miles Ahead or a Step Too Far?**

The wider conversation about the reentry of large numbers of individuals from prison to society tends to focus on the risks this process entails and the plethora of needs that people in that situation have to minimally satisfy to ensure safe and successful reintegration. It is less common to think of reentry in terms of the contributions that people returning from prison can make to their communities and to the wider society. In this paper, however, we have outlined some reasons why this focus might be valuable for discussions of crime reduction and rehabilitation. Research suggests that there may be a link between engagement in helping behaviors, advocacy work and other strengths-based activities and reintegration (see esp. LeBel, 2007, forthcoming). Such engagement might reduce the stigma that ex-prisoners face and this stigma may be central to the recidivism problem (LeBel et al., 2008).

Strengths-based activities are, however, certainly not without their critics. Although, one might expect that no one could object to ex-prisoners helping other prisoners or otherwise trying to "give something back" to the community, research suggests that ex-prisoners trying to engage in these sorts of activities face a large number of obstacles (see esp. Farrant & Levenson, 2002). Due to risk considerations (see discussion in Burnett & Maruna, 2006), ex-prisoners are frequently barred from going back inside prisons as counselors, for instance, and can often be prohibited from working with young people or other at risk groups. Indeed, one of the restrictions most parolees face is a prohibition against talking to other former prisoners, which is a substantial impediment to mutual aid work.

When ex-prisoners seek to become activists/advocates on behalf of all ex-prisoners, of course, they face even greater resistance. Indeed, research suggests that those walking this "third mile" of social advocacy, often have more non-traditional views than the "wounded healers" of conven-
tional strengths-based organizations. For instance, Irwin (1980, p. 93) argues that many ex-prisoner self-help groups are “fundamentally conservative” organizations that tend to “avoid recommendations or strategies aimed at effecting broad or fundamental changes in society’s structures” (pp. 93-94). Certainly, mutual-aid groups like AA or NA are non-political and make no explicit efforts to change public opinion in their core work. On the other hand, in their study of former prisoner activist groups, McAnany and colleagues (1974, p. 26) found that most of the interviewees in these “third mile” organizations perceived the prison experience “as a basically unjust situation.” Indeed, many of the contemporary ex-prisoner advocacy groups align themselves with the wider prison abolition movement and some portray themselves as militant campaigners against a corrupt justice system.

To some critics, this “third mile” is a step too far. They argue that it is one thing for ex-prisoners to provide help and support to others to succeed within the system, but it is another for them to go about seeking to reform the system itself. In some cases, in fact, such activism might lead to a further backlash against ex-prisoners and may not be as effective as educational strategies around the problems of stigma (see Corrigan et al. 2002). Goffman (1963, p. 114) writes:

The problems associated with militancy are well known. When the ultimate political objective is to remove stigma from the differentness, the individual may find that his very efforts can politicize his own life, rendering it even more different from the normal life initially denied him—even though the next generation of his fellows may greatly profit from his efforts by being more accepted. Further, in drawing attention to the situation of his kind he is in some respects consolidating a public image of his differentness as a real thing and of his fellow-stigmatized as constituting a real group.

Indeed, in some ways, there are parallels between the rebellion of the active criminal and that of the critical reformer (see Maruna, 2001, chapter eight). Both believe the criminal justice system (indeed wider society) is largely unfair and in need of transformation. Thus, particularly militant or critical activism on the part of ex-prisoners might increase their stigmatization, leading some to believe they have not changed their ways.

There is an important difference between the active criminal and the ex-prisoner activist, however. Although both believe society is deeply flawed, the reformer has the requisite hope that transformation is possible, whereas the professional criminal decides the only way of beating a corrupt society is to join in its corruption. Therefore, although, “third mile” activists are consistent in their basic feelings about society, at the same time, they clearly have undergone a remarkable change in their self-identities and worldviews. This change - best understood as “hope” - may
be a product of personal redemption, and in that way it makes sense that “third mile” activism would follow “second mile” efforts to make amends for one’s actions 3).

Of course, only a relatively small cadre of individuals take part in “third mile” forms of activism. Most returning prisoners probably want little more than to “fit in” with mainstream society. To do this, many will conceal their past and strive for an identity as a normal citizen - a taxpayer, a good father, a worker, and so forth. These efforts at “passing” are in some ways the antithesis of the activist stance, which inherently involves some form of “coming out” (Jones et al., 2009; Siegel et al., 1998). However, both approaches share the same basic goal of stigma-reduction. The phenomenon of “coming out” as activists, therefore, is “considered an important device for social change because when it becomes common knowledge that ‘we are everywhere,’ by sheer numbers we cannot be oppressed” (Kanuha, 1999, p. 38).

Supporters of strengths-based reform efforts argue that reintegration is “a two-way street” (Maruna et al., 2003). If society is asking individuals to change their ways, it may be necessary for society to make changes as well. After all, there is a presumption in discussions of reentry and social inclusion that the process of reintegration basically involves taking “bad” individuals and re-integrating them into “good” society. Yet, society is of course imperfect, corrupt, and unjust in many ways - and prisoners know this better than almost anyone (except perhaps for their children and spouses).

To a degree, this will always be the case, and the ex-prisoner finds himself in the position of the central character in Walter Mosley’s (1997) brilliant novel Always Outnumbered, Always Outgunned -- a former prisoner who tries to live morally in a harsh, racist world. At the same time, it may make sense to think of the reintegration process as a process of concessions and atonement on the part of both former prisoners and the wider society. Former prisoners have been victimized themselves in many ways. They are frequently victimized by traumatic experiences in prison (e.g., abuse by authorities or other prisoners), and have very often suffered similar abuses in other state and non-state institutions prior to their incarceration. For this reason, Robert Johnson (2002) eloquently argues that reintegration requires “a mutual effort at reconciliation, where offender and society work together to make amends-for hurtful crimes and hurtful punishments--and move forward” (p. 328). Strengths-based approaches to reentry start from precisely this perspective with the goal of helping formerly incarcerated persons transform from being part of “the problem” into part of “the solution” for society’s many injustices. Eglash (1957) refers to this as a form of “poetic justice.”
[Notes]

1) Research on volunteerism outside of criminal justice populations suggests that volunteers are healthier, perform better in education, and have a stronger sense of civic identity than non-volunteers (Sabin, 1993; Shumer, 1994; Youniss, McLellan, & Yates, 1999). Volunteer work is also associated with an increased concern for social issues and future involvement in protests and political campaign work (Metz, McLellan, & Youniss, 2003).

2) McEvoy and Shirlow (2009) provide a fascinating case study of leadership and activism among ex-prisoners in the transitional context of Northern Irish society, where former prisoners have played an instrumental role in the peace process at every level of government. Although there are of course differences between these ex-prisoners (who experienced a form of political imprisonment during the armed conflict in Northern Ireland) and non-political ex-prisoners, McEvoy and Shirlow point out that there are significant potential lessons for former gang members and other alliances of ex-prisoner groups in the experiences of released prisoners in Northern Ireland.

3) Some organizations, such as The Fortune Society in New York City, engage in both roles, with ex-prisoners working as wounded healers counselling other prisoners, as well as doing advocacy and activism work to change laws restricting ex-prisoner access to jobs, for instance.

[References]


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社会復帰への長所基盤アプローチ
一再統合と脱スティグマ化に向けての更なるマイル--

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受刑者が社会に再統合するための支援のための努力は、典型的には、リスク基盤がニーズ基盤である。再統合のためのもう一つの考え方である、長所基盤の（あるいは、「修復的な」）社会復帰は、刑務所から戻ってくる人々を脅威ではなく利用すべき資産として取り扱う。本論文は、心理学者Albert Eglassの所説で初め定式化された、長所基盤のもの見方に拠りつつ、こうした努力の背後にある理論を探究する。Eglassは、償いのプロセスには、単なる罰や被害者への弁償ではなく、本人が「2マイル目」を進むことが含まれると主張している。Eglassが「創造的弁償」と呼、この「2マイル目」は、他者、とりわけ、他の受刑者や刑務所に行く自己の努力がある者を助けることで、自分の過ちを埋め合わせることを含む。私たちは、長所基盤型の努力は主として、スティグマを管理する手法であると主張する。過ちにより刑罰を受けた個人は、助成行動や、その他社会に積極的に貢献する努力に、明示的にかかわることを通じて、自らの名声を回復することができる。公的な認知に変化が生じることで、人の自己信念や自己アイデンティティの変化が生じる。私たちは、「3マイル目」の歩みと名づける。長所基盤の動きにおける新たな発展で、本論文を締めくる。「3マイル目」は、政治的なレベルにおいて、元受刑者の抱える問題に関する活動を行うことによる、スティグマ減少のための、より直接的な努力である。私たちは、この「3マイル目」を、脱スティグマ化に向けた自然な次の一歩であると主張する。

キーワード：償い、社会復帰、スティグマ