

SOCIO-HISTORICAL CONTEXTS, IDENTITY AND CHANGE:
A STUDY OF DESISTANCE FROM CRIME IN CHILE

Thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
at the University of Leicester

by
Carolina Villagra
Department of Criminology
University of Leicester

September 2015

Carolina Villagra
Socio-historical Contexts, Identity and Change:
A Study of Desistance from Crime in Chile

Abstract

Scholarly activity in the area of desistance from crime has developed considerably over the last years; nonetheless, most of this work has been carried out with samples from Western countries. This thesis intends to make a contribution to one of desistance's main underexplored areas, by exploring desistance processes among a group of Chilean formerly persistent male offenders, assessing the extent to which international evidence could be applied to this non-Western sample. Building upon the idea that desistance is better understood as a journey between offending to conformity, this thesis presents three positions in that continuum: the Current Offenders, Desisters in transition, and Desisters. It is found that existing knowledge is relevant to explain how Chilean former offenders transit out of crime, but it also reveals there are areas that are unique to this sample and might be related to differences in structural changes and socio-historical context. This thesis addresses that complexity by introducing three Desistance Pathways, which are particular dynamic configurations of structural and subjective factors that give rise to a certain sense of identity. Overall, this study provides a unique insight into desistance from crime in Chile, based on the analysis of the interplay between individual-level factors, social factors, structural changes and historical context.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to thank my parents, José Villagra and Juanita Pincheira, who promoted in me the commitment to a fairer society. Along with my family and friends in Chile, they provided the support without which it would not have been possible to undertake and finish this process.

I would like to thank my supervisor Carol Hedderman, for being the person who encouraged me to undertake the PhD and for the enlightened and generous guidance over the years. To Sam King who supervised this thesis in its final phase with a deep respect for the work, and whose support was fundamental in the successful completion of this thesis.

My gratitude to staff at Gendarmería, the Boards for Prisoners in Santiago, Valparaíso, Valdivia, and Concepción; the Prisons; the programmes of La Pintana, Estación Central, and ONG Forjamundos. Thank for facilitating access to data and respondents, and for the lucid conversations that enlightened various stages of this research.

My deep appreciation to the 73 men and women who participated in this research, for the generosity with which they shared painful chapters of their lives, but also dreams and hopes. Their stories were not only an indispensable collaboration for this research; they also affected me as a researcher and as a person. I hope that this work is a contribution to justice in Chile.

My gratitude to Joy, who proofread much of this thesis with professionalism and tremendous affection, giving an English voice to my Chilean interviewees. I also would like to thank my dear friends in the UK, Georgios, Pat, Ewa, Juan, Rona, Sefika and Aysee for being a constant source of support, advice, and joy.

Finally, I would like to give thanks to CONICYT through whose scholarship Becas Chile an important part of this PhD was financed.

List of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
List of Contents	iv
List of Figures	ix
List of Tables	x
Abbreviations	xi
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 The Context of this Research: the Chilean Setting	4
1.1.1 The prison system	6
1.1.2 Post prison support	8
1.2 Structure of the Thesis	9
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	11
2.1 What do we know about Desistance and how do we know it?	11
2.2 Theoretical Accounts for understanding Desistance from Crime	14
2.2.1 Maturation and developmental perspectives	15
2.2.2 Social factors perspectives	20
2.2.3 Desistance as the central object of study perspectives	23
Conclusion	29

CHAPTER THREE: CRITICAL ISSUES IN DESISTANCE RESEARCH	30
3.1 Definition and Operationalization of the Concept of Desistance	30
3.2 Crime-free Gaps and the Quest for ‘Genuine’ Desistance	32
3.3 Underexplored Areas in Desistance Knowledge	37
3.4 Factors Associated with Desistance	38
3.4.1 Social factors: employment and significant relationships	40
3.4.2 Subjective factors: from hope to identity change	44
3.5 The Interaction between Subjective and Social Factors	52
Conclusion	54
CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY	55
4.1 Research Design	55
4.2 Sampling Strategy	59
4.2.1 Eligibility criteria	61
4.3 Data Collection Methods	62
4.3.1 Designing the data collection instruments	63
4.3.2 Potential limitations of the data collection methods	67
4.4 The Fieldwork	68
4.4.1 The exploratory stage	68
4.4.2 The pilot stage	68
4.4.3 The fieldwork stage	72
4.5 Ethical Issues	74

4.6	The Achieved Sample	77
4.6.1	Sample characteristics	77
4.7	Data Analysis	79
4.7.1	Semi-structured interviews	79
4.7.2	Criminal records and self-report offending data	89
4.7.3	Integrated analysis of the three datasets	91
	Conclusion	94
	CHAPTER FIVE: SOCIO-HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE	95
5.1	Chile since 1939: Changes of a Developing Country	95
5.2	Experiences of School and Dropout	100
5.3	Early Experiences with the Criminal Justice System	104
	Conclusion	109
	CHAPTER SIX: ACTIVE OFFENDERS AND MEN TRANSITIONING TO DESISTANCE	111
6.1.	The Current Offenders: An Overview	111
6.1.1	Identification with a criminal lifestyle	113
6.1.2	A sense of lack of control over their lives	119
6.1.3	The impact of short sentencing	122
6.2	Men in the Transition to Desistance: an Overview	125
6.2.1	The desisting offenders	126
6.2.2	Desisters in transition in the community	130
	Conclusion	145

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE TRADITIONAL DESISTANCE PATHWAY	147
7.1. The Traditional Desisters: an Overview	147
7.2 The Last Prison Sentence: a Crucial Moment for Change	148
7.3 Discernment: A Review of Possible Lifestyles Choices	151
7.4 Deliberation: A Review of Available Options	156
7.5 Dedication: Commitment to a New Non-Criminal Identity	159
7.5.1 Changes in the use of language and external appearance	159
7.5.2 Finding the genuine self	161
7.6 Transitions to Longer-term Desistance	163
7.6.1 The need for diverse support	163
7.6.2 Building meaningful links with conformity	170
7.6.3 Participation in community activities	178
7.6.4 Internal processes	181
Conclusion	186
CHAPTER EIGHT: ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS TO DESISTANCE	188
8.1 The Stolen Youth: An Overview	188
8.1.1 Transitioning to adulthood behind bars	190
8.1.2 Life before imprisonment	191
8.1.3 Identity building in prison	193
8.1.4 Early moves towards change	198
8.1.5 Transitions to longer-term desistance	208

8.2	The Old School Thieves: An Overview	221
8.2.1	Being part of the Old School of Criminality	222
8.2.2	Criminal activity as a way of belonging	225
8.2.3	Departure from offending	227
8.2.4	Transitions to longer-term desistance	230
	Conclusion	236
	CHAPTER NINE: CONCLUSIONS	237
9.1	Overview of the Research	237
9.1.1	Social contexts and structural changes	240
9.1.2	Understanding desistance process as a continuum	243
9.1.3	Desistance pathways	244
9.1.4	Desistance as a means to social integration	246
9.2	Implications of the Findings	248
9.2.1	For theory and research	248
9.2.2	For policies and practice	251
9.3	Key contributions of this research	253
9.4	Further research	254
9.5	Concluding Words	255
	Appendices	256
	References	265

List of Figures

Figure 4.1: Analytical process for allocating participants to the offending–conformity continuum	93
Figure 5.1: The offending–conformity continuum.	107

List of Tables

Table 4.1:	Design of the interview schedule	65
Table 4.2:	Interviewees and the institution of contact	73
Table 4.3:	Participants at the time of the interview	78
Table 4.4:	Organisation of the coding system in NVivo10	84
Table 4.5:	Self-report data on recent offending	91
Table 5.1:	Three models of desistance	106
Table 6.1	Socio-demographic and offending trajectories features of Current Offenders	111
Table 6.2:	Socio-demographic and offending trajectories features of Men Transitioning to Desistance	125
Table 7.1:	Socio-demographic and offending trajectories features of Traditional Desisters	148
Table 8.1:	Socio-demographic and offending trajectories features of the 'Stolen Youth Pathway'	189
Table 8.2:	Socio-demographic and offending trajectories features of the 'Old School Pathway'	221
Table 9.1:	Comparison between educational achievement before and after prison	244

Abbreviations

CPR: Criminal Procedure Reform.

CET: Centres of Education and Training from the Prison Service.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

‘This was the first place where I was treated as a person; they called me by my name and called me ‘Mister’. That’s why I returned... I’m no longer ‘Juan the lame’, the criminal’.

This quote was part of the comments made by participants of a focus group I conducted in 2007, while researching on the challenges for social reintegration after imprisonment.¹ Our goal was to unravel the legal and procedural aspects that made social integration problematic. We had not focused on the subjective dimension of reintegration and that is why this comment, which referred to a meaningful experience this person had at the institution where he attended to expunge his criminal records, was so illuminating. Later it turned out to be a type of recurrent comment during the focus groups with former prisoners. They not only wanted to talk about obstacles, but also about the people and organisations that had supported them and more importantly, in their own actions to overcome problems. Two key findings of that research were that relational aspects of the provision of services seemed to be more significant for former inmates than the services, and that the potential role that former inmates could play in reintegration initiatives was not being fully acknowledged.

That comment and the ones that followed were the seed of this research. In 2007 and the following couple of years, the greater use of custody, the steep rise in prison population, the low use of early release mechanisms and the scarcity of rehabilitation programmes inside prison, were all part of one of the most critical moments of the Chilean prison system recent history (Consejo de Reforma, 2009; UDP, 2010). There was an imperative need to develop better

¹ This study (Villagra, 2008) was part of the Project ‘Strengthening of the Policies of Social Reintegration under the Human Rights Framework’, commissioned to the University of Chile by the Ford Foundation. Social Reintegration was understood as the process of return of inmates to society, similar to the terms re-entry in the United States, or resettlement in the United Kingdom.

rehabilitation and reintegration policies; however, there was not much local criminological research to draw upon in Latin America ² (OEA, 2009).

This doctoral research emerged out of the intersection of the academic and the public policy interests. My initial motivation was to explore how offenders ceased criminal activity, so that understanding could be used to inform criminal policies that supported social integration.

Having reviewed the main approaches that have influenced the study of the later stages of criminal involvement, the desistance perspective seemed more adequate to explore the nature of the process of change and the reasons and strategies through which former offenders decrease or stop criminal behaviour and sustain those changes in time (McNeill, 2006; Maruna, Immarigeon and LeBel, 2004). Furthermore, the desistance perspective is concerned with the social and subjective factors that seem more relevant in producing change and has formulated models of the social-subjective interaction (Bottoms, Shapland, Costello, Holmes and Muir, 2004; Bushway, Piquero, Boidy, Cauffman and Mazerolle, 2001, 2004; Farrall, 2002; Gadd and Farrall, 2004; Giordano, Cernkovich and Rudolph, 2002; Healy, 2010; Kazemian, 2007; LeBel, Burnett, Maruna and Bushway, 2008; Maruna, 2001; Massoglia and Uggen, 2007; Sampson and Laub, 2003; Vaughan, 2007).

In recent years, scholarly activity in the area of desistance from crime has developed considerably. Nonetheless, most of this work has been carried out with male samples from the United Kingdom, the United States, and other developed Western countries (Bersani, Laub and Nieuwebeerta, 2009; Kazemian, 2007). Theory and research on inhabitants of non-Western societies have been scarce, and the significance of current desistance knowledge on different societies cannot be assumed.

² This does not mean that criminality is a neglected subject; it means that criminology is not an established discipline within Latin American academia, which has been more concerned with earlier rather than later stages of criminal trajectories.

While it has been stressed that desistance cannot be considered outside the social context in which it occurs (Bottoms *et al*, 2004), only a small number of studies have explored desistance processes among different ethnic or cultural groups, and that research has been mostly referred to groups living in Western countries, as is the case with the studies of aboriginal offenders in Canada (Bracken, Deane and Morrisette, 2009), or about Indian, Bangladeshi, and Black people in England (Calverley, 2009).

This doctoral research intends to make a contribution in this vein, by developing knowledge of the processes of desistance from crime among Chilean formerly persistent offenders, assessing the extent to which international evidence could be applied to this non-Western sample. The research questions that guided this study were:

- 1) What it is known about desistance from crime and what are the knowledge gaps?
- 2) What are the methodological issues in desistance research in regards to the definition and operationalization of the concept, and comparative desistance research?
- 3) Which factors are associated with desistance from crime in former offenders?
- 4) How do subjective and objective dimensions of the process of desistance interact?
- 5) To what extent does international evidence apply to Chile?
- 6) What are the distinctive characteristics of the processes of desistance in Chilean former persistent offenders?
- 7) What policy implications follow from this?

It is expected that the findings would contribute to both the development of desistance knowledge in Chile and to shed light on the gaps of our current understanding of desistance in non-Western societies.

The following section discusses the context of this research, which is relevant to illustrate the reader with the key themes of the Chilean Criminal Justice System setting, themes that later will be resumed in the discussion of the findings.

1.1 The Context of this Research: the Chilean Setting

Chile, like most of the countries in Central and South America, has started processes of criminal reform oriented to modernise criminal legislation in order to meet the standards set out in international treaties and to reflect the principles of the Rule of Law. These processes were originally linked to the respect for human rights in the context of the return to democracy after the military dictatorships that ruled most of these countries between the late 1960s and 1980s (Riego and Duce, 2008).

The Criminal Procedure Reform (CPR hereinafter) was gradually put into operation in December 2000 until its full implementation in June 2005, and this was the most significant transformation in the history of Chilean justice. The new Criminal Procedural Code³ established an adversarial system of justice that replaced the inquisitorial system based on the Penal Code of 1906 (Ministerio de Justicia, 2005).

The CPR substantially improved the access to justice, the protection of victims and witnesses, and the criteria and efficiency for criminal prosecution in a democratic State, as the percentage of prosecuted cases that ended in a criminal conviction grew considerably since the implementation of the reform (Consejo de Reforma, 2009; Ministerio Público, 2009; Ministry of Justice and Vera Institute, 2005). All these improvements were accompanied by an enormous investment in the stage of penal prosecution (Ministerio Público, 2009).

However, that level of development and investment was not equal across the penal system. Experts agree that one of the main deficiencies of the Chilean

³ By the Act 19.696 of the year 2000.

Criminal Justice System is the absence of legislation governing the execution of sentences⁴; in fact, an example of this is that the stage of execution of sentences is ruled by a regulation and not by a law⁵ (Consejo de Reforma, 2009; Eurosocietal, 2015). Before 2013 the Chilean penal system offered a very limited range of sanctions, as apart from prison, there were only three forms of suspended sentence, namely, conditional remission, night detention, and probation. The first two were mostly imposed on first-time offenders for car traffic offences; while probation was served in the community under the supervision of a probation officer, and was conferred upon individuals without previous criminal record who had committed an offence whose restrictive sentence would range between two and five years. In December 2013 the Act 18.216 of the year 1983 that regulated the 'alternative sanctions' was replaced by the Act 20.603 of suspended sentences that expanded the number of community sanctions and strengthened probation by introducing specialised and intensive supervision. Nonetheless, probation in Chile can still be considered an emergent scheme.

Therefore, the fact that more crimes were being prosecuted and ended in a criminal conviction, the overuse of custodial sentences after the reform, and that a number of modifications to the criminal law were made as part of a tightening in the penal response, resulted in an exponential increase in the number of people convicted to prison that led Chile to hold the highest imprisonment rate in South America at 323 inmates per 100,000 inhabitants in 2010 (Alvarez, Marangunic and Herrera, 2007; Consejo de Reforma, 2009; Salinero, 2012; Walmsley, 2011). The implementation of the reform thereafter, both in prison and post release, is underdeveloped and lacks an institutional framework.

⁴ 'Juez de ejecución de penas' in the Spanish version, which refers to a judge that supervises the incarceration and post-incarceration stages.

⁵ The Prison Regulations established in the Decree N° 518 of the year 1998.

1.1.1 The prison system

Gendarmeria de Chile⁶ is the public service dependent on the Ministry of Justice, in charge of managing the penal institutions, ensuring the effective compliance with custody and community sentences determined by the courts, and providing effective rehabilitation and resettlement programmes (Gendarmería, 2009).

According to data of 2009, most inmates were single and had children, around 40 per cent were younger than 30 years old, 84 per cent had not completed school, around half of the male population was convicted for a property crime while a similar percentage of the female population was convicted for drug-related crimes, and over 60 per cent reported using drugs before imprisonment (Gendarmería, 2010).

The programmatic supply of prison rehabilitation services is grouped into psychosocial, educational and work activities. Historically, the budget allocated for rehabilitation programmes has been exceedingly low, and although it tripled between 2007 and 2009, it still was only 2.4 per cent of the total Prison Service budget (Gendarmería, 2010). By 2009 the programmatic supply was extremely limited, for example, drug treatment programmes only covered 2 per cent of the population, work training was available for 5 per cent of the population and only 1.4 per cent of inmates were working with a contract⁷. Education had a greater coverage with around 30 per cent of the total prison population engaged in educational activities (*Ibid.*). A Prison Commission of Judges informed their concern to the Senate that around 70 per cent of the prison population spent less than nine hours of the day out of the cells, without participating in any productive activity (Maldonado, 2009).

⁶ Created by the Organic Law, Decree Law 2.859 of the year 1979.

⁷ These activities are developed in the Centres of Education and Training (CET hereinafter) existing in most of the big prisons. Inmates who want to engage in education and training activities have to fulfil several requirements that are difficult to meet.

There are four types of early release schemes⁸, which are considered ‘part of the social reintegration activities, that give progressive levels of freedom to inmates’ (Gendarmería, 2009). The percentage of inmates granted with early release permissions has decreased dramatically during the last decades, going from 51 per cent in 1995, to 7 per cent in 2000, 3.4 per cent in 2009, to 1.24 per cent in 2011 (Gendarmería, 2011). Studies on this issue indicate the main reasons for this decrease are a more risk-averse approach to judicial decision-making, and the use of limited technical criteria by practitioners in charge of the final decision (Espinoza and Viano, 2008). There is a form of Parole⁹ within which stringent requirements¹⁰ are difficult to meet; in fact, in 2009 only 1 per cent of the prison population was on Parole (Gendarmería, 2010).

By 2009, the explosive increase in the prison population and the decrease in the granting of early release permissions and Parole, led to a critical situation of overcrowding, deplorable living conditions, excessive and unnecessary use of force and physical abuse, and lack of policies oriented to support inmates’ rehabilitation and resettlement, as reported by the Inter American Commission of Human Rights and the Supreme Court of Judicial Prosecution (UDP, 2010). In 2010, two dramatic events worsened the overall prison situation. In February, a massive 8.8 Richter earthquake resulted in material losses that widely exceeded the annual infrastructure budget of the Prison Service ¹¹ (Gendarmería 2010). In December, the worst tragedy in the Chilean prison history occurred, as 81 inmates died in the fire of San Miguel prison, and several others were left severely wounded (UDP, 2011). This event was

⁸ These are the sporadic, Sunday, weekend, and daily permissions, described in the Art. 96 of the Prison Regulations.

⁹ Parole is not the most accurate translation for this mechanism; it would be more precise to translate it as ‘conditional freedom’, and to mention that parolees get only administrative supervision. It was set by the Decree Law 321 of the year 1925; involving the Tribunal of Conduct of each prison, the Courts of Appeals, and the Regional Secretary of the Ministry of Justice.

¹⁰ For example, the requirements for applying to parole, are: a) to have served half or two thirds of the prison sentence, depending on the crime, b) to have behaved properly during time in prison, c) to have attended job training programmes, d) to have attended educational programmes. Offenders convicted for offences of most concern to the public are excluded.

¹¹ The Prison Service reported losses equivalent to around £27,000,000 while its annual budget for infrastructure was around £26,000.

extensively covered by the media, having a huge impact in the public opinion who witnessed cases as the first-timer young man who was serving a short prison sentence for street sale of counterfeit music compact discs. The fire also caused a string of riots and hunger strikes along several prisons in the country, and a maximum alert was enacted in 88 prisons by the end of 2010 (El Mercurio, 2010).

1.1.2 Post prison support

It is estimated that more than 20,000 people were released from Chilean prisons in 2010 (Gendarmería, 2010), the vast majority only after full completion of their prison sentence, as described earlier. Former inmates have the right to expunge their criminal records¹² by fulfilling a voluntary process consisting in the monthly signing of a record book for a period of two years for those with one criminal record, and five years in the case of recidivists (Gendarmería, 2011). A study of 2007 showed that former prisoners used this mechanism very little, because they consider it too lengthy and bureaucratic (Martínez, 2008).

The National Board for Prisoners¹³ is the official institution in charge of this process, as well as of providing support to parolees and former inmates who voluntarily request it (Gendarmería, 2009). In 2012 there were eight branches located in the main cities of the country, which offered individualised psychosocial intervention, and training for around 600 people (Gendarmería, 2014). In addition to the Boards for Prisoners of the Prison Service, a small number of non-governmental organisations, trusts and volunteer organisations provide spiritual, economic and family support to an extremely reduced number of former inmates (Martínez, 2008).

Overall, it became apparent that the Chilean system provided few conditions for supporting prisoners while in prison, and an even more limited support once they return to their communities. The focus of this research on the prison population was based on the fact that by 2009 most common criminality was

¹² Law Decree 409 of the year 1932.

¹³ Created by the Law Decree N 542 of the year 1943.

dealt with using imprisonment. Those convicted to community sanctions were mainly first-timers in petty property crime or car traffic offenders who received a suspended sanction because they had no previous criminal records and had a network of social, familial, and employment support. Understanding how, even under these conditions some former inmates managed to stay away from crime and rebuild their lives, was the challenge guiding this research.

1.2 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is structured into nine chapters. Chapter two and three begin by providing a comprehensive review of the literature, aimed at understanding what we know about desistance from crime, and how that existing evidence has been developed, identifying the critical methodological issues and underexplored areas in desistance research.

Chapter four provides a thorough outline of the methodology used in this study, discussing the research design rationale, the procedures, and the ethical considerations undertaken to conduct the study at a high methodological level. It outlines the working definition used in this study, which informs decisions for the sampling strategy, the data collection design, and the data analysis framework. The chapter provides an account of the fieldwork, a characterisation of the achieved sample, and finishes by describing of the rationale and stages of the data analysis process. Chapter four concludes by presenting an early model of how participants could be distributed along the offending-conformity continuum.

Chapter five presents an analytical overview of the unique historical and cultural contexts in which participants have lived, which is a crucial dimension for exploring desistance in a non-Western society. Based on this socio-historical understanding, building upon the early model of distribution along the offending-conformity continuum presented in Chapter Four, and informed by theoretical models of desistance, this chapter concludes by presenting a theoretical and empirical model of the three positions of participants in the offending-conformity continuum, namely, Current Offenders, Desisters in Transition, and Desisters.

Chapter six to chapter eight discuss the three positions in the offending-conformity continuum, analysing each position in relation to the literature, and the social and structural contexts that are unique to the Chilean context. Each one of the chapters presents an integrated framework of analysis of the offending and desisting journeys of the Chilean respondents.

Chapter six presents the first two positions in the continuum. It begins with the Current Offenders, discussing the similarities of their narratives with those presented in the literature, examining the extent to which drug addiction and structural factors such as short imprisonments could played a role at their persistence in offending. Then Chapter six discusses the Desisters in Transition, who seem to be at early stages of prosocial change although still not fully disconnected from the criminal lifestyle.

Chapters seven and chapter eight introduce three Desistance Pathways. Chapter seven presents the analysis of the Traditional desisters, who are committed to a crime-free identity after undergoing processes of change which are similar to those described in the literature. Chapter eight is concerned with the Stolen Youth and the Old School, two desistance pathways that diverge from the findings reported in the literature, foremost in issues related to identity change, and structural factors connected to sentencing and cultural changes.

Finally, Chapter nine presents an overview of the main research findings, their implications for theory, policy and practice, and the key contributions of this research.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Recent scholarly activity in the area of desistance from crime has developed considerably and significant knowledge has been produced concerning how and why individuals cease offending. While there remain gaps in knowledge, much is known about the factors associated with desistance among formerly persistent offenders. It is worth noting from the outset that much of this work has emerged from the United States, the UK and other Western countries, and this necessarily forms the basis of much of the literature review to follow. This chapter provides a comprehensive review of the literature, including an analysis of different methodological approaches. The relevance of this information for Chile and other Latin American countries cannot be assumed, but it is necessary to review these findings before examining the unique contours of the Chilean context and exploring how this existing knowledge might be applied to an unexplored context.

First, a brief contextualisation of the history of the study of desistance is presented, which leads to a review of existing criminological theories that have aided understanding desistance, beginning with those with a rather individual perspective to those with a stronger social component. Second, research that has been specifically developed to explore desistance will be reviewed. These are studies that are considered to be the foundation of the desistance literature as they depart from the criminal career research in the conceptualisation of the phenomenon, their aims and the methods used.

2.1 What do we know about Desistance and how do we know it?

Criminology has had a history of interest in the study of the onset and persistence in criminal behaviour. Indeed, the prospective longitudinal studies, which were initiated during the mid-twentieth century in the United Kingdom and North America aimed to understand the involvement in crime over time, have provided most of the available evidence of these dimensions of criminal careers. Foundational studies are the 'Unravelling Juvenile Delinquency Study'

initiated in the 1930s in the United States by Eleanor and Sheldon Glueck (Glueck and Glueck, 1951), the data from which was further analysed by Robert Sampson and John Laub (Sampson and Laub, 1993; Laub and Sampson, 2003), and 'The Cambridge Study on Delinquent Development' in the United Kingdom, initiated by Donald West in 1961 and later led by David Farrington (Farrington, 2003).

The subjects of these studies were working-class school boys, who by their late adolescence and early adulthood had either never offended, engaged in persistent deviant behaviour, stopped offending or, most commonly, began but then reduced criminal activities (Farrall and Calverley, 2006). By the early 1980s, criminologists were challenged to explain why male patterns of crime throughout the life course showed similarities across populations. The typical pattern displayed a sharp increase in early adolescence, a peak at around 19 years old, and a steady decrease in the 30s. This is known as the 'age-crime curve', which has been largely studied within criminal careers research in Western countries (Bartusch, Lynam, Moffitt and Silva, 1997).

Criminal career research relies on a quantitative methodology to study the longitudinal sequence of offences committed by the same individuals over a period of time (Farrington, 1997), focusing on four dimensions of the age-crime curve: the onset of criminal activity, frequency, seriousness, and duration of criminal involvement over time (Bushway, Thornberry and Krohn, 2003; Farrington, Jolliffe, Hawkins, Catalano, Hill and Kosterman, 2003). When studying the later stages of criminal careers, the main interest has been on the fraction of the population who continue to offend later into adulthood, but who will mostly still abandon criminal activity by their early 30s (Laub and Sampson, 2001; Farrington, 2003).

A full explanatory understanding of desistance is limited by the methods used in criminal career research. Longitudinal studies are generally concerned with statistical data about people over time, and their focus on aggregate data allows for analysis of the impact of factors such as age, gender, or criminal history. However, dynamic individual-level differences such as personal motivation,

agency, and other subjective factors are neglected (LeBel *et al*, 2008). Furthermore, within these studies the moment people stop offending is a fixed measurement. Consequently, desistance is conceptualised and operationalized as an event (Piquero, 2004).

A number of implications are derived from this methodological approach to desistance. First, the use of numerical data for making estimations of people's lives makes social processes appear like rigid events (Farrall, 2003), missing the complexities which are at the core of human behaviour, and as such they fail to reflect the dynamics of subjective and social processes. Second, the use of binary measures to classify people as desisters (or persisters) implies the idea that individuals can reach a complete status, an assumption that leaves out possibilities of behavioural change, and impedes the understanding of the nuanced nature of human conduct. There is also the problem of 'false desistance' (Sampson and Laub, 2003; Soothill *et al*, 2009), when static binary measures are used as outcomes. This classifies desisters as individuals who do not appear in official records for reasons such as incarceration, living abroad or even because they are dead (Sampson and Laub, 2003; Soothill, Fitzpatrick and Francis, 2009). Third, in order to conduct quantitative analyses of changes in criminal trajectories, longitudinal research makes cut-offs (Sampson and Laub, 2003), that is, artificial timeframes that reduce the chances to observe complex processes, as the evidence suggests that intermittencies, setbacks and relapses are part of criminal behaviour (Burnett, 2004; Meisenhelder, 1977; Piquero, 2004). Finally, a caveat that is at the basis of the evidence from longitudinal studies relates to the sampling. Virtually all criminal career evidence has been drawn from male samples in Western countries (Kazemian, 2007), which have been extracted from particular groups within a society, who also lived in specific socio-historical epochs (Haines, 1999). These features of the sampling make evidence unlikely to be compared across genders, cultures and historical periods.

A new body of research was required to provide explanations and answers to the growing areas of enquiry, and to reduce the gaps in desistance knowledge that criminal career research could not. By the late 1990s a number of British

and North American criminologists started to address desistance from crime as an object of study by itself, questioning whether it was better to study it as a process rather than as an event, exploring the reasons why people stop offending and the psychosocial processes underlying this change (see for example, Bottoms *et al*, 2004; Farrall, 2002; Gadd and Farrall, 2004; Giordano *et al*, 2002; Healy, 2010; LeBel *et al*, 2008; Maruna, 2001; Sampson and Laub, 2003; Vaughan, 2007).

This new perspective of desistance research, contrary to criminal career research, is not so concerned with final outcomes as with the nature of the process of change, focusing on why and how former offenders decrease or stop their involvement in criminal behaviour, and why and how they sustain this change in time in front of various obstacles (McNeill, 2006; Maruna *et al*, 2004). This research tends to have a strong qualitative component; it is sometimes retrospective, cross sectional, and focuses on individual trajectories rather than aggregate statistical patterns. Common to this type of research are in-depth interviews and case studies, using narrative and life-stories analysis as methodologies that permit enquiry into the nuances, complexities and richness of the human experience, understanding the dynamics of the process of change from the person's own perspective. Research from this perspective tends to focus on samples of ex-offenders at different points in the process of criminal abandonment, so they can build on their accounts retrospectively while providing a good source of information of their lives after they stop committing crimes. As a rather emergent perspective there are a number of methodological challenges yet to be addressed, such as integrating quantitative and qualitative methods in order to move beyond exploratory and descriptive studies. More theoretical debate is also needed as theories of desistance have implications for parole, probation, and reintegration policies (Maruna and Farrall, 2004).

2.2 Theoretical Accounts for understanding Desistance from Crime

It is widely acknowledged that most offenders reduce or stop criminal involvement at around the age of 30, and a number of theoretical accounts have provided explanation for this. Maturational and developmental

perspectives (Cusson and Pinsonneault, 1986; Glueck and Glueck, 1951; Hirschi and Gottfredson, 1983; Moffitt, 1993; Shover, 1983, 1996) searched for variables in the individual that could provide explanation of the termination of criminal careers. Another group of accounts (Akers, 1990; Laub and Sampson, 2003; Meisenhelder, 1977; Sampson and Laub, 1993; Warr, 1998) addressed the social factors that could explain why desistance took place. Yet, desistance appeared to involve more than the presence of certain attributes, conditions, or the occurrence of life events. Most of these theories were not originally developed to explain desistance from crime. More research and suitable methods were needed to elucidate how social and subjective factors interacted, the role the individual, and the nature of the dynamic process of desistance from crime. Hence, a third group of accounts emerged which focused specifically on desistance (Bottoms *et al*, 2004; Giordano *et al*, 2002; Healy, 2010; Maruna, 2001).

2.2.1 Maturational and developmental perspectives

Maturational accounts posit aging as a central concept, that is, people stop offending as they grow old. Glueck and Glueck (1951) present the idea of 'maturational reform', meaning the accomplishment of a 'stage of physical, intellectual, and affective capacity and stability, and a sufficient degree of integration of all major constituents of temperament, personality and intelligence to be adequate to the demands and restrictions of life in organised society' (Glueck and Glueck, 1974: 170 cited in Laub and Sampson, 2003: 26). In this view, aging is understood as maturity, a stage that will naturally arrive in people's life with the passage of time (Morizot and LeBlanc, 2007). Therefore, persistent offending could be explained as a lack of maturity and desistance as an expected event to happen in the life of most offenders (Laub and Sampson, 2003).

There are some issues that arise from this stance. First, maturity is a rather ambiguous concept (Shover, 1996) that is portrayed by Glueck and Glueck as a stage where a number of attributes and components of different sorts converge. The inaccuracy of this concept makes it highly subjective and difficult to

operationalize, and it might also be argued that a moral stance underlies this ideal notion of a 'grown-up' person who fulfils social standards. Second, by exclusively relying on maturity as the outcome of aging and the explanatory factor for desistance, factors such as family support, life opportunities, reflective processes, and other mechanisms by which people reached this stage of maturity are neglected.

Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) developed the concept of criminal propensity, an invariable trait directly associated with low self-control, which is built early in life and remains stable over time. Thus, individuals who did not develop an appropriate level of self-control in early childhood are prone to become involved in criminal behaviour. Furthermore, they claim that the consistency of the age-crime curve across different social and cultural conditions proves that offenders do not play an active role in desisting from crime. It is just that the likelihood of reoffending diminishes over time due to changes in opportunities and 'to the fact that the organism inevitably ages' (1990: 141).

The fact that maturational approaches regard human behaviour as unaffected by life events, that their explanations are built heavily on a small number of variables, and that they do not consider underlying mechanisms or reasons to understand the termination of offending, raises serious questions about the explanatory scope of maturational accounts in the understanding of desistance from crime (Farrall and Calverley, 2006; Laub and Sampson, 2003). Both self-control and maturity are constructs composed of personality traits, which psychological research has showed to be influenced by life events, experiences and structural factors. It has also been suggested that traits should be tested in long-term longitudinal studies to assess their effect on desistance from crime (Morizot and LeBlanc, 2007). The idea of desistance as an universal, normative process expected to occur in all offenders' lives contradicts evidence that suggests that adult life events and social bonds influence the patterns of stability and change in criminal behaviour, and that the person usually plays an active role in producing those changes (Bottoms *et al*, 2004; Maruna, 2001; Sampson and Laub, 2003). By asserting that sooner or later all offenders will abandon crime, but failing to provide explanations for the reason why,

maturational accounts present a deterministic point of view with risky interpretations for policy implications, such as that desistance cannot be promoted or assisted as it depends on the passage of time.

A different perspective of the age-crime distribution is offered by developmental accounts, which search for the correlates of desistance in biological, psychological, cognitive, or physical factors (Laub and Sampson, 2003). Gove (1985) analysed contemporary sociological theories such as control, labelling, and conflict, in the light of evidence of stability of the age-crime distribution across socio-cultural contexts. Drawing upon the fact that developmental factors such as psychological drive, physical strength, or need for stimulation peak at the same time as deviant behaviour, and that they also decline rapidly by the 30s, Gove concluded that while social factors might influence early stages of desistance, there are a group of developmental factors which are more powerful explicators of desistance. While his analysis of sociological theories of crime is logical, he did not test his ideas empirically, thus his statements are speculative. Nevertheless, Gove's work is relevant as an initial effort to examine what maturational accounts took for granted. While people age, there are a number of processes taking place that can have an influence desistance which might have a differential impact throughout a criminal trajectory. His work was also an invitation to test those ideas and to update and reformulate sociological explanations in the light of the emerging evidence on desistance from crime.

From a different angle, Moffitt (1993) proposed a dual taxonomy of offending for bringing together two contradictory aspects of the age-crime curve. Despite the continuity of offending behaviour over age, its prevalence also shows dramatic changes over age. Moffitt argued that this phenomenon is explained by the existence of two qualitatively distinct types of offenders, each one with a unique aetiology, life-course persistent (LCP) and adolescent-limited (AL) offenders. LCP offenders are a small group who experience onset in antisocial behaviour early in childhood due to deficits in their neuropsychological, relational, and academic development. These 'antisocial dispositions' affect every aspect of their lives until adulthood, making them less likely to desist from crime.

According to Moffitt, it is neither the traits nor the criminogenic environment per se which account for their persistent offending, but a constant process of reciprocal and cumulative interaction between both. AL offenders are a much larger group composed of people with no childhood history of antisocial behaviour who engage in delinquency only during adolescence. Their behaviour is situational; therefore, when reinforcements and contingencies change the vast majority of AL offenders will stop committing crime. Indeed, desistance prior to the transition to adulthood is expected for this group.

Moffitt's work is regarded as a pioneering effort to theorise about desistance in the 1990s (Farrall and Calverley, 2006). Nonetheless, it has been criticised for the use of taxonomies and predictions that, according to Sampson and Laub (2003, 2005), are limited in explaining real-world offending and group heterogeneity. Studies that have used typologies (for example, Burnett, 1992) have demonstrated that the complexity of offending behaviour cannot be reduced to categories, and that groups seem to be more multifaceted and less clear-cut than those proposed by Moffitt. Moreover, the prediction of adult behaviour on the basis of variables assessed in childhood or adolescence has been questioned (Laub and Sampson, 2003; Morizot and LeBlanc, 2007). Moffitt's notion of antisocial dispositions seems rather deterministic, failing to acknowledge that life events in early adulthood can have a crucial role in subsequent desistance from or persistence in crime.

Psychological and behavioural changes over the life-course have a central place in developmental accounts. Shover (1983) studied changes in criminal behaviour among a group of 36 formerly imprisoned property offenders, using official data and conducting interviews. Shover (1983: 210) argued that temporal and interpersonal contingencies that go along with aging 'can have a significant influence on peoples' lives, redirecting them to conventionality'. Shover observed that for most of the men in his sample, their late 30s and early 40s came with significant changes in self-perspective. Men reassessed their lives and usually considered their criminal pasts as futile. Aware that they had reached the middle of life, they started valuing time in a different way, reallocating priorities and allowing new goals to enter their lives. They had

become tired of the negative consequences of criminal lifestyles, and modified their decision-making processes, taking fewer risks and eventually turning away from crime. These changes were partly motivated by a meaningful relationship with a woman, obtaining a job, or both. Shover pointed out that despite the great resolve and motivation that characterised these men, the passage through prison extensively undermined their social capital. While the exploratory nature of his study precludes generalising from his findings, the work of Shover made remarkable contributions that are up-to-date with current debates. First, Shover highlights the psychology of change in the context of criminal trajectories. Drawing on criminal career concepts, he proposes the existence of a public and objective career and a less visible subjective career 'which includes changes in identity, self-concept, and the framework employed to judge oneself and others' (Shover, 1983: 208). He claimed that those psychological elements can be crucial for people trying to modify their lives, and their identification may open promising possibilities for practitioners. Second, Shover noted that the age-related changes that bring about desistance are very similar to the changes that most non-offenders experience around their 40s. This is a relevant consideration for setting out a desistance research framework which should be, first, a study of human processes, instead of being solely a criminological enquiry.

Rational choice accounts regard desistance as a consequence of a decision or a rational reassessment of the costs and benefits that crime brings to a person's life (Akers, 1990). From this perspective, Cusson and Pinsonneault (1986) explored the reasons underlying the decision taken by 17 Canadian ex-robbers to give up crime. They explained that aversive experiences after committing a crime, fear of prison, or the anxiety of leading a criminal lifestyle, were all relevant factors in their decisions to abandon criminal involvement. Similarly, Cusson and Pinsonneault (1986: 73) concluded that the decision was 'generally triggered by a shock of some sort, by a delayed deterrence process, or both', proposing a decision-making explanatory model. Following a trigger, offenders reappraise their life goals and then voluntarily and autonomously decide whether to continue offending or not. Their findings have been regarded as speculative since they were based on a very limited sample (Laub and

Sampson, 2003). Nevertheless, subsequent studies have lent some support to the idea that desistance can start with a rational decision after a person analyses the costs and benefits of offending (see Leibrich, 1996). This decision does not occur in a vacuum. Rational choice accounts assert that when people reach the point of reassessing their lives, they look back into their past and project to the future, converging with the idea of reassessment proposed by developmental approaches.

2.2.2 Social factors perspectives

One of the first researchers to stress the relevance of strong social bonds to conventionality was Meisenhelder (1977), who explored the processes of 'exiting' from criminal careers among 20 non-professional male property offenders, finding that their main motivations to desist were avoiding reincarceration and a desire to settle down to lead conventional lifestyles. According to his analysis, the deterrent effect of prison leads people to a more profound process of reappraisal where the potential rewards of a conventional lifestyle appear desirable. In this analysis, 'an intentional and meaningful decision' (1977: 325) is crucial at the beginning. Successful exiting requires the actor to develop meaningful bonds with the conventional social institutions such as family, friends and employment, which support desistance by restraining their opportunities to be involved in criminality.

Building on Hirschi's social control theory (1969), and based on the reanalysis of the full data of one of the more influential studies in criminological research (Glueck and Glueck, 1951), that followed the trajectories of 500 juvenile male delinquents born in the late 1920s up to the age of 70, Sampson and Laub (1993) developed the 'Age-graded theory of informal social control'. This theory was built around three main themes: first, informal social controls such as family and school mediate structural contexts and explain delinquency in childhood and adolescence; second, there is a strong continuity in antisocial behaviour from childhood to adulthood; and third, regardless of prior individual differences, informal social control in adulthood explains changes in criminal behaviour over the life span. It seems that traits and experiences in childhood are relevant for

understanding the stability of criminal behaviour, but it is the interaction between the individual and social institutions such as marriage, employment and the military during adolescence and adulthood which can account for changes in criminal trajectories towards conformity in adult life.

On a second analysis based on newly collected data through detailed life-history interviews with 52 men from the original 500, Laub and Sampson (2003) emphasised the role of human agency, claiming that social bonds are the result of dynamic interactions between human agency, life events, and historical contexts. They proposed a revised version of their 1993 theory, the 'Life-Course Perspective' which 'attempts to link social history and social structure to the unfolding of human lives, (and also) attempts to explain continuity and change in behaviour over time by linking past events and experiences to the present' (Laub, Sampson and Sweeten, 2006: 314). Social control institutions such as school, marriage or parenthood, as well as life events can modify the bond that individuals hold to society at determined points of their lives. Crime involvement is more likely to occur when this bond is weakened or broken, while desistance is the result of a cumulative and gradual process of building up social investments and strong attachments to conventional roles. In this revised version of the theory, less value is given to childhood experiences compared with the weight that the relationship between agency and life events seems to have in adulthood. Moreover, Laub *et al* (2006: 322) argued that 'strong informal social control, highly structured routine activities, and highly purposeful human agency are the causal elements explaining desistance from crime in adulthood, independent of a history of antisocial behaviour'. Laub and Sampson (2003) asserted that despite their similar troubled childhood backgrounds, desisters seemed to differ from persisters in their ability to change their routines and to adapt in front of similar life events.

The life-course perspective, the idea that desistance can emerge from the building up of social investments, presents a number of valuable insights for desistance research, such as highlighting the relevance of the then underexplored factors of agency and its relation to social capital. It has been criticised because of its potentially biased sample in which participants were

chosen from reformatory schools with no comparison groups, and having being born after a World War when employment, marriage and the military had a different social meaning. In spite of that Laub and Sampson (2003) were also some of the first to stress the relevance of analysing findings in a broader historical context, as macro social factors such as economic crisis and social reforms can shape different patterns of stability and change in criminal trajectories. Taking into account the features and ways in which societies change and the impact these changes can have on offending behaviour is still a challenge for desistance research (Farrall, Godfrey and Cox, 2009).

Associations with delinquent peers are one of the most significant correlates of offending in adolescence (Farrington, 2003; Huizinga, Wylie and Espiritu, 2003; Loeber, Farrington and Stouthamer-Loeber, 2003; Morizot and LeBlanc, 2007). It has been argued that breaking from delinquent peers can influence desistance, and this can happen after a person makes an assessment of the benefits and risks these associations bring to one's life (Akers, 1990). Warr (1998) challenged Sampson and Laub's (1993) proposal that marriage aids desistance because it represents a strong conventional bond to society, instead arguing that marriage impacts upon peer associations. Warr applied social learning principles to test the impact that life-course transitions, specifically marriage, have on the decline of crime due to the changes in social networks that it brings about. Warr analysed data from 1,725 participants aged 15-21 and 18-24 corresponding to the fifth and sixth wave of the National Youth Survey (NYS), a longitudinal study about conventional and deviant youth behaviour developed in the United States of America in the late 1970s. Warr concluded that marriage promotes desistance from crime by disrupting previous patterns of peer-association, reducing the time exposed to delinquent peers, and diminishing both the motivation and the means of individuals to engage in criminal behaviours. Warr's ideas converged with Laub and Sampson's theory on the idea that marriage influences desistance, as it is a way of forming social bonds that promote conformity, pointing out that this is particularly certain for males since they are more prone to deviance. By forming bonds with a female, who are less likely to offend, men also build prosocial attachments. The sample was aged 15-24 years, which raises questions about whether participants were

too young to provide a complete picture of the role and meaning of marriage in their lives. This consideration makes Warr's (1998) findings not fully comparable with Laub and Sampson's study (2003), whose participants were assessed at different points of their lives over four decades. It might be argued that a longer timeframe might be needed in order to assess the long-lasting impact that marriage can have on desistance. Nevertheless, Warr's assumption that marriage might be more beneficial for men than for women has received support from studies that have included women in their samples (Leverentz, 2006). It should be noted that 'marriage' may have different meanings in different contexts.

2.2.3 Desistance as the central object of study perspectives

The studies conducted by Meisenhelder (1977) and Shover (1985) can be considered pioneering works in the emergent field of desistance research, as they challenged criminal career methodologies by opting for a more qualitative and dynamic approach to the phenomena, marking the beginning of desistance being studied on its own, as a dynamic process where the person's social and subjective dimensions play a central role. This pioneering work was then developed further by academics such as Giordano *et al* (2002) whose study of gender, crime and desistance was the base for the theory of cognitive transformation, a distinctive desistance study among the first addressing gender issues.

From a symbolic-interactionist perspective, Giordano *et al* (2002) analysed whether factors such as marital attachment and job stability predicted desistance for women as well as for men. Although they used both quantitative and qualitative methods, they stress that an unstructured life history narrative 'provides a close-in perspective on mechanisms through which actors indicate that changes in life direction have been accomplished' (2002: 991). They followed-up a cohort comprised of 127 serious adolescent female delinquents of a state-level institution in Ohio and a similar group of males, between 1982 and 1995 finding that, overall, males and females showed more similarities than differences in their responses. Neither males nor females considered

developing a rewarding career as an attractive opportunity for change, and only a few would consider stable employment as one. Concerning marital bonds, findings suggested that it is the partner's normative orientation, not the tie itself, which matters for desistance. Gender differences did appear in motivations for change. For males, prison, prison treatment, and family in general were found relevant in their desisting processes, while females were more likely to refer to religious experiences and parenting.

They observed that four different but interrelated types of cognitive transformations were present in criminal behavioural change. First, 'openness to change', involves a rational and emotional shift from a stage when change is not considered, to one where change is possible and desired by a person. Second, the individual's receptive disposition towards opportunities may represent motives for prosocial change, which are incompatible with their previous lifestyle. Third, the individual envisions a 'replacement self' that appears attractive and feasible, such as being a responsible worker or a loving partner. Finally, the individual questions his own views about criminal activities, which results in an identity transformation whereby the person 'no longer sees these same behaviours as positive, viable, or even personally relevant' (Giordano *et al*, 2002: 1002). They propose an 'agentic view of desistance' in which cognitive shifts, identity transformations, and the individual's role in the process of change are the three key factors for understanding desistance, especially in the early stages. The results of this study and the model of change proposed were noteworthy contributions at a time when social control explanations prevailed. The model of cognitive transformation stresses the active role of individuals in their own processes of change who, instead of being affected by external events, select from the environment those factors that are significant enough to provoke a change. This means that traditional 'hooks for a change' such as stable employment or marriage, might not be equally meaningful for everyone.

A milestone study in desistance research was conducted by Maruna (2001), with the aim of exploring offenders' subjective worlds and outlining a phenomenology of desistance. He mainly used narrative methods to study a

subsample of the first wave of the Liverpool Desistance Study, comprised of 30 probationers who were trying to desist from crime and 20 who were actively offending. While all participants shared similar criminogenic traits, backgrounds and residence in criminogenic environments, the analysis of their narratives suggested the existence of two distinctive scripts. The 'condemnation script' (Maruna, 2001: 75) found in the narratives of persistent offenders were characterised by a self-perception, solely in terms of deviance, as determined to offend, a sense of powerlessness to change behaviour and a view of themselves as victims of circumstances. When asked to identify relevant turning points in their lives, most persisters remembered only childhood experiences linked to abuse or fatalistic situations they regarded as enduring experiences. Their scripts showed few signs of agency or hope, and when they did express some optimism about the future, it was attributed to random chance or luck. By contrast, the 'redemption scripts' Maruna (2001: 85) found in the narratives of desisters showed an optimistic self-perception and a sense of personal control over their destinies, seeing themselves as good people who had committed mistakes which have actually made them stronger. Desisters attempted to turn their troubled pasts into something positive and valuable, wishing to be productive and to give something back to society, particularly to their communities and the next generation, a meaningful integration that Maruna calls 'making good' (2001: 87). Moreover, desisters aspired to make a contribution to the lives of people in conflict with the law by using their own experience as a 'wounded healer' (Maruna, 2001: 102). Overall, in their narratives desisters developed 'a logical, believable, and respectable story about who they are' (Maruna, 2001: 86), to convince themselves and to show others they are good people and they are reformed. Maruna concluded that themes of productivity, achievement and accomplishment distinguished best the narratives of desisting from active offenders.

The analysis of these narratives also revealed that in order to sustain behavioural change, despite the numerous life obstacles and opportunities to reoffend, a 'fundamental and intentional shift in a person's sense of self' was required (Maruna, 2001: 17). This suggests the existence of phases in the desistance process, an idea that Maruna and Farrall (2004) explored further

when drawing on Lemert's notion of primary and secondary deviance, and proposed similar categories for desistance. Consequently, primary desistance would be a crime-free period, while secondary desistance is the maintenance of a non-criminal lifestyle over time. Maruna's study made a significant contribution to desistance research, fundamentally by bringing the subjective world of offenders to the front. His findings suggested that a number of psychological factors (such as hope, self-efficacy, agency, generativity, and reflexivity) might be crucial for understanding how people who have dealt with similar backgrounds and criminal environments can transition through strikingly different routes into or out of criminality. His later work with Farrall (Maruna and Farrall, 2004) on primary and secondary desistance opened two lines of research enquiry, as some researchers are interested in the factors involved in the early stages of desistance (Healy, 2010; Bottoms *et al*, 2004), while others are more concerned in understanding the mechanisms by which people sustain this abstinence from crime.

The Sheffield Pathways out of Crime Project (Bottoms *et al*, 2004; Bottoms and Shapland, 2011), part of the wider The Social Contexts of Pathways in Crime project (SCOPIC, 2003) is one of the first studies to extensively examine the earlier stages of desistance from crime. The Sheffield Project is a four year follow-up prospective longitudinal study of 113 persistent young male offenders belonging to socially disadvantaged backgrounds, aged around 20 years old, who were serving a prison or a community sentence (Bottoms and Shapland, 2011). Interestingly, desistance is not conceptualised as total cessation of offending, but as a gradual, hesitant process between criminality and conformity, where crime-free gaps are worthy of exploration. It is also stressed that desistance research has to include the social context where it takes place, as 'opportunities, cultural views, self-identity, friends and the activities of social control agents [are] all likely to play their part' (Bottoms *et al*, 2004: 377).

During the first three years of follow-up, most participants did not succeed at desisting. This is an intriguing finding as, in the first wave of interviews, 56 per cent of respondents expressed a genuine and firm intention to abandon crime (Bottoms and Shapland, 2011), consistent with what Burnett (2010) called 'the

will and the ways of becoming an ex-offender'. This suggests that the desire to abandon crime is necessary but insufficient to achieve desistance, as it also requires real opportunities to realise the desire of change. Indeed, the Sheffield study's findings suggested that the strongest predictor of both future reoffending and desistance was the individual's perception of the obstacles to desist. Having the capacities and skills to start and maintain desistance appear to be crucial, especially among socially marginalised youth (McDonald, Webster, Shildrick and Simpson, 2011). Over time, the mean number of standard list offences per year in the Sheffield study sample declined, falling from 8.0 in the year before the first interview to 3.8 over the period of the research (SPOOCS, 2003), which was considered an indicator of early desistance in such a persisting sample. Taking these findings together, Bottoms *et al* (2004) conclude that the study of crime-free gaps, along with the exploration of agency, the strategies young offenders use to deal with obstacles, and the sources of social capital that are available for them, would lead to a better understanding of the initial stages of processes of change.

The Sheffield Study researchers propose a theoretical framework for the study of desistance, based on five key concepts: 1) programmed potential, which are characteristics such as age, gender and past behaviour, that provide an idea of how the individual will behave in the future; 2) social structures, such as employment, which may enable or constrain the individual action; 3) culture and habitus, which are the beliefs, values, and habits shared by individuals within a culture; 4) situational contexts, that offer insights about how specific situations may influence desistance processes; and 5) agency, which relates to the individual's own understanding of their behaviour. Bottoms *et al* (2004) suggest a general process of five stages for understanding how desistance may occur in practice: 1) a triggering event leads to 2) the decision to try to change, which 3) promotes in the offender thoughts about him or herself in a different way, 4) which allow the offender to take action towards desistance, 5) action that will need to be sustainable over time. This later stage is fundamental as it can bring about secondary desistance. There are numerous conclusions emerging from the Sheffield Study, among which is a deeper understanding of the earlier stages of desistance, a 'stumbling' phase when individuals are usually still

deemed to be offenders, though they might be attempting to abandon crime. These findings stress that desistance should be conceptualised in a more nuanced way, and that understanding how people manage to transition from criminality to conformity has intriguing implications for policy and practice.

In another study interested in early stages of desistance, Healy (2010) explored how subjective factors interact with social context to produce change and the underlying mechanisms that account for a shift from offending to conventionality. The sample was composed of 73 Dublin male probationers aged 18-35, with at least two convictions. Healy (2010: 5) conceptualises desistance as a process usually consisting 'of a gradual reduction in the frequency, severity and versatility of offending', operationalizing as early or primary desisters (62 per cent of participants) those who had not offended for the previous month, and long-term or secondary desisters (38 per cent of participants) those who had not offended for the previous year. Overall, Healy (2010: 70) found that criminal cognitions 'were the most significant factor in both primary and secondary desistance, particularly during the initial stages of change'. Age, early age at onset, and criminal thinking styles were the most important predictors of primary desistance and, when compared to active offenders, primary desisters had started criminal involvement at an earlier age, were older when interviewed, and most importantly, were 'significantly less likely to support pro-criminal attitudes, to anticipate future offending, or to evaluate crime as worthwhile' (Healy, 2010: 67). Healy also found that the problems offenders perceived as relevant were not associated with desistance. Zamble and Quinsey (1997) had addressed this issue in their study of the dynamics of recidivism, finding that both recidivists and non-recidivists experienced similar problems. However, the way of assessing and dealing with those problems could be differentiated between the two groups, as non-recidivists perceived fewer problems and were capable of dealing with them more effectively.

The results of this study resonate with those from Burnett, (2000), Giordano *et al* (2002), LeBel *et al* (2008) and Shover (1996), with respect to the role that the individual's subjective stance plays, in this case, in the early stages of change.

Healy (2010) suggests that 'temporary' and 'permanent' desistance (primary and secondary respectively) might be studied separately since a different set of psychological factors appears to be relevant to each of them. While these assertions might be useful, these findings should be observed with caution for two reasons. The operationalization of a primary desister as someone who has not offended for one month, offers an extremely short time-frame that might be disguising a crime-free gap. A second reason is that three standardised scales were used to assess psychological factors, a methodological strategy that allowed a very detailed account of them, which in part may explain the relevance of psychological above social factors in the results.

This group of studies set out relevant insights for methodological decisions in this doctoral research. Desistance is better understood as a process, which suggests the use of qualitative approaches that explore both social and subjective dimensions of the human experience, using tools which allow the understanding of how people have built meaning in their lives, and how they explain their decisions, motives and aspirations. This search for meaning would in part explain the influence that social factors such as marriage, employment and other significant relationships have had in people's lives, which need to be integrated within the analysis of the broader socio-cultural context where desistance takes place. Indeed, this doctoral research aims to make a significant contribution regarding cultural context.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the main theoretical accounts that have contributed to our current understanding of desistance from crime, presented in an historical perspective that allows for observing the evolution of the way of thinking about desistance in recent decades.

There are a few critical issues in desistance research that are worth addressing theoretically before developing the present study further, and they are mainly related to the definition and operationalization of the concept and its implications for research, all of which are discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER THREE: CRITICAL ISSUES IN DESISTANCE RESEARCH

This chapter discusses some key research issues, including: the problem of definition and operationalization of the concept of desistance, and the debate about crime-free gaps and genuine desistance. The chapter then moves to discuss a central concern in this doctoral research, namely, the under researched non-Western contexts. Having set out the critical issues this chapter then moves on to review the evidence about the factors associated with desistance from crime in former persistent offenders, concluding with some notes on the dynamic interaction of these factors in order to produce change.

3.1 Definition and Operationalization of the Concept of Desistance

Over the last two decades, different studies have provided a great variety of definitions of desistance, mostly formulated pragmatically and conditioned by the study methods, the data used, the samples, and the unit of analysis. It is not uncommon to find studies in which definitions are too general, unclear, or are unaccompanied by an operational definition. In other cases, a definition is provided which uses terms such as 'termination', 'cessation', 'ending' and 'desistance' interchangeably although they suggest somewhat different things about the permanence of the change and whether it has already occurred (a fixed point) or is a process.

Trying to distinguish between the use of the term desistance implying the event of termination, from the one implying an ongoing process, Laub and Sampson (2001: 11) proposed the first to be used in reference to the specific moment when criminal activity stops, and the latter to be understood as 'the causal process that supports termination of offending'. Maruna and Farrall (2004) disputed this definition for confusing the causes of desistance with the process itself. A decade after that first attempt, little agreement has been reached concerning how desistance should be defined. Indeed it has been argued that a single definition would not help in overcoming the critical issues of desistance research (Kazemian, 2007).

Following a criminal career stance, Uggen and Kruttschnitt (1998) addressed desistance as a binary state, suggesting that behavioural desistance is a shift from a state of offending to a permanent state of non-offending. Likewise, Farrall and Bowling (1999: 253) described desistance as 'the moment that a criminal career ends'. These definitions are most useful when quantitative measurements are employed. Furthermore, binary measures assume that pathways to desistance are linear and straightforward, and that they reach an outcome, hindering a deeper understanding of behavioural changes (Healy, 2010).

By contrast, some researchers have preferred to address desistance as a process of progressive reduction (of frequency, severity, variety) in criminal activity, a conceptualisation that might be useful for both qualitative and quantitative research. Morizot and LeBlanc (2007: 50) regarded desistance as 'the dynamic process characterised by a progressive decline in offending versatility', while Loeber and LeBlanc's definition (1990: 407) addressed the qualitative aspects underlying the decrease in offending, as 'the processes that lead to the cessation of crime, either entirely or partially'. LeBlanc and Frechette (1989) claimed that before reaching desistance, offenders tend to reduce the frequency, severity, and variety of offending, a conceptualisation that implies a stage of complete non-offending as the final outcome. In a similar vein, Bushway *et al* (2001: 500) defined desistance as 'the process of reduction in the rate of offending from a nonzero level to a stable rate empirically indistinguishable from zero'. One of the problems with defining and operationalising desistance as reductions in offence severity and frequency, especially in studies based on official information, is that deceleration and reduction of offending severity may be explained by reasons such as crime-free gaps, incarceration, or even death. By neglecting this possibility, people who are not desisting can be counted as desisters, a methodological issue that has been called 'false desistance' (Sampson and Laub, 2003; Soothill *et al*, 2009).

Finally, some researchers have opted for defining desistance according to criteria of subjective order, such as Meisenhelder (1977: 319) who defines

desistance as a 'successful disengagement from a previously developed, and subjectively recognised, pattern of criminal behaviour. (...) Exiting occurs when the offender subjectively feels that he has abandoned criminal behaviour for some more or less significant period of life'. This definition opens at least two controversial issues: the meaning of a 'successful disengagement', which can have a number of interpretations and the measurement of a 'more or less significant period of life'. Nevertheless, the definition introduces the role of individual agency and self-awareness, and sets out the requirement of having a history of criminal behaviour to be considered as desister or not. In a similar vein, but reducing the vagueness of Meisenhelder's definition, Maruna (2001: 26) argued that 'desistance might more productively be defined as the long-term abstinence from crime among individuals who had previously engaged in persisting patterns of criminal behaviour'. This definition also sets the history of previous persistent offending as a criterion, but long-term abstinence would need further operationalization. In a more practice-focused definition, McNeill (2006: 45) addressed desistance as 'the change processes involved in the rehabilitation of offenders', a broad definition that engages with the problematic use of the term rehabilitation and its variety of definitions and practices (Hedderman, 2007). The lack of agreement on basic criteria for understanding desistance from crime brings a number of problems for the growing research on desistance, which might generate disparate results that impede comparing findings, making it harder to draw conclusions about desistance (Kazemian, 2007; Maruna, 2001).

3.2 Crime-free Gaps and the Quest for 'Genuine' Desistance

While there is a degree of agreement on the advantages of conceptualising desistance as a process rather than a static event (Bottoms *et al*, 2004; Bushway *et al*, 2001; Bushway, Brame and Paternoster, 2004; Ezell, 2007; Kazemian, 2007; Maruna, 2001; Maruna and Farrall, 2004; McNeill, 2006; Sampson and Laub, 2003), Bushway *et al* (2001) claimed this agreement is mainly theoretical as most studies continue to measure desistance as an event. In order to overcome this inconsistency, Bushway *et al* (2001) proposed to measure desistance as changes in offending rates rather than focusing on

offending itself. However, identifying patterns in offending can also be problematic, as evidence from criminal career studies suggests that patterns of offending are characterised by their intermittency (Piquero, 2004: 103), which means that people may stop offending for given periods of time and then return to commit further offences (Farrall *et al*, 2009; Kazemian, 2007).

Research from a desistance perspective has provided evidence for the idea of intermittency and offers a different interpretation of those findings. In the Oxford Study of Recidivism, Burnett (1992) followed a cohort of 130 adult male property offenders for ten years from prison to the community, in order to understand the factors that promote or hinder recidivism after imprisonment. Burnett found that desistance is a highly ambivalent process characterised by indecision, changes in commitment and reversals of decisions, all of which are constituent parts of the process of desistance, and that the nature and changeability of these ambiguities are worth studying as they can provide important highlights of the process of reform (Burnett, 2000; 2004). Likewise, researchers from the Sheffield Desistance Study (Bottoms *et al*, 2004) followed a group of 113 young adult male offenders aged 19-22 at the beginning of the study. They found that 'crime-free gaps', are expected to occur within the oscillating progression from criminality to conformity that usually takes place in the transition from adolescence to adulthood. They also claimed that crime-free gaps must be a crucial part of the analysis of the dynamics of desistance, especially during the difficult early stages of desistance.

The idea that pathways to desistance are not straightforward but, rather, faltering progressions involving step backs, crime-free gaps and fluctuations, is as important as it is controversial in the study of the topic. It has theoretical and methodological implications. Differentiating crime-free gaps from complete cessation from crime, and determining whether desistance has occurred, is highly problematic in the context of available evidence (Mulvey, Steinberg, Fagan, Cauffman, Piquero, Chasin, Knight, Brame, Schubert, Hecker and Losoya, 2004). A number of criteria have been proposed to overcome this difficulty, namely: establishing a given follow-up time, conducting statistical

comparisons between desisters and non-offenders, and relying on subjective assessments.

The measurement of time in the desistance process is a highly contested issue. It might be argued that decisions on the extent of the follow-up are arbitrary, as even more than a decade might be insufficient to know whether an offender has desisted (Farrington, cited in Soothill *et al*, 2009). In a more radical stance, some researchers claim that is not possible to know if a person has truly desisted from crime even after that person is dead (Bushway *et al*, 2004; Piquero, 2004). These arbitrary cut-offs bring about problems such as false desistance, when a person is classified as a desister just because researchers do not have information of new criminal activity, which may be due, for example, to re-imprisonment (Bushway *et al*, 2004; Sampson and Laub, 2003).

If time is not a fully reliable criterion to assess if an offender is making a pause or properly desisting, this may be improved with statistical analysis of the desistance process. Bushway, Nieuwbeerta and Blokland (2011) explored how long it takes an offender to resemble a non-offender, in a study aimed at providing further understanding in terms of their offending rate. They used criminal background checks of a representative sample of offenders convicted in the Netherlands in 1977 and contrasted it with data from a non-offender comparison group. They found that, at some point in their lives, most offenders will resemble non-offenders in terms of their risk of conviction, and that timeframe will heavily depend on the age of that conviction and on the number of previous convictions. In this vein, younger first time offenders will take ten years to resemble non-offenders, older first time offenders will take between two to six years, and those with more than four previous convictions will resemble non-offenders only after a minimum of 23 years. These results raise awareness of how persistent criminal backgrounds still appear relevant to people's lives even after two decades of a crime-free lifestyle, a significant finding to take into account when studying desistance in people with a long history of criminal involvement.

From a different perspective, Healy (2010) and Maruna (2001) have argued that the length of the crime-free gaps is not entirely useful for understanding the nature of crime-free gaps, nor is the measurement of reconviction risk, since adopting either of these two criteria could obscure the dynamic processes people experience. They proposed that subjective assessments could be of more use to elucidate offending intermittencies from desistance. Meisenhelder (1977) defended the idea that it is only the offender who can tell whether he or she has abandoned crime or not, based on their subjective stance. However, relying only on this criterion might be unreliable, as respondents might tend to provide a socially desirable response.

Leibrich (1996: 284) provided a different perspective on the issue of subjective assessment. In her study she originally defined desistance as 'not having offended since last conviction'; however, the 48 per cent of participants reported having committed some less serious or less frequent offending, but they considered themselves as desisters. Consequently, Leibrich (1996: 285) changed the desistance definition in this study for 'not having committed the same or as serious an offence since the last conviction'. Supporting the notion that the individual's subjective stance is crucial for identifying whether desistance has taken place or not, Giordano *et al* (2002: 2012) claimed that the 'desistance process can be seen as relatively complete when the actor no longer sees these same criminal behaviours as positive, viable, or even personally relevant'.

Maruna and Farrall (2004: 28) proposed an alternative criterion with their notions of primary and secondary desistance. While the first is a crime-free period, secondary desistance is distinctive as the criminal abstinence has been sustained in time, the former offender has found purpose outside criminal activity, and their change is sometimes recognised by others in a 'de-labelling process'. Healy (2010: 38), in her study of 73 male probationers in Ireland found evidence to support this line of thought, finding that secondary desisters present 'a repository of personal and social resources, including optimism, determination, good problem-solving abilities and strong social support networks'.

The identification of two stages within the desistance process opens the debate about the utility of researching each of them. Those more concerned with early stages of desistance (Healy, 2010; Bottoms *et al*, 2004) argue that it is crucial to understand how offenders 'on the threshold of change' (Healy, 2010: 35) progress towards conformity or remain in offending, and the psychosocial dynamics underlying that process. Maruna and Farrall (2004) claimed that understanding how former offenders are able to sustain crime-free behaviour, despite their problematic contexts, may move the desistance debate from descriptive assertions to fuller theoretical accounts. According to Maruna (2001), this understanding is especially valuable when studying individuals who were previously engaged in persistent patterns of criminal activity. Thus, the frequency, intensity and seriousness of previous offending that are required for considering a person as a persistent offender, are also a matter of methodological interest. The answers are unclear, indeed, Farrington (2007) claims that discriminating between crime-free gaps and genuine desistance is one of the main challenges of the desistance research agenda.

Finally, it is worth proposing a caveat concerning the lifestyles of people who might be considered desisters in a study. Shover (1985) showed that people in his study, despite having stopped offending, did not lead lives that one can consider as fully reintegrated into the mainstream society and continued developing activities on the borderlines of illegality. Similar notions have been reported in a number of qualitative studies which have found it difficult to establish pure categories of desisters and persisters, since part of both groups reside in a grey area where the limits of conventional and criminal activities are not so clear (see for example, Healy, 2010; Maruna, 2001; McIvor, Murray and Jamieson, 2004). In the Cambridge Study of Delinquent Development, a measurement of 'life success' indexed by nine criteria involving accommodation, work, cohabitation, drug use, mental health and being free of offences and convictions for the last five years, was included (Farrington, Coid, Harnett, Jolliffe, Soteriou, Truner and West. 2006). In desistance research, it might be misleading to refer to 'successful desisters' as that concept might limit notions of success only to being crime-free.

3.3 Underexplored Areas in Desistance Knowledge

Given the relative infancy of desistance as a field of study, a number of areas are under-studied or unexplored, although it is inaccurate to call them gaps when the state of research in the field is still emerging. As has been highlighted here, the vast majority of desistance research has been carried out with male offenders living in developed Western countries. Consequently, theory and research on females, minority ethnic groups and inhabitants of non-Western societies have been scarce, the latter being of interest for this research.

The analysis of desistance from crime requires the understanding of the dynamics of the social structures, cultural views and expectations, traditions, and values that might affect and shape people's behaviours (Bottoms *et al*, 2004; Farrall *et al*, 2009). These arguments appear to be particularly relevant when studying non-Western samples of offenders, as wider social and cultural contexts in which processes of reform take place are underexplored areas in desistance research.

A small number of studies have explored the processes associated with desistance among different ethnic or cultural groups, and that research has been mostly referred to groups living in Western countries, as the studies of aboriginal offenders in Canada (Bracken *et al*, 2009), Indian, Bangladeshi, and Black people in England (Calverley, 2009), and adolescents that migrated from the Former Soviet Union to Germany (Zdun, 2011). Phillips and Bowling (2003) argued that debates about ethnic minority groups should progress towards developing a multidimensional approach that considers broader social forces that might affect the experiences of being a minority within a complex socio-cultural context, an idea in line with the notion of 'cultural criminology' proposed by Ferrell (1999). In the case of Zdun's study (2011) the emphasis was placed on how migration might have an impact on desistance from crime as it represents breaking with former antisocial peers.

The migration of minority groups has attracted research interest, especially in the case of the United States, where Hispanics are a concern in policy research

(Pew, 2011; Passel and Cohn, 2008). Studies that have addressed aspects of desistance from crime in adolescents living in the United States have included few cases of Hispanics in their samples (see for example, Hughes, 1998; Sweeten, Bushway and Paternoster, 2009). The exception is the longitudinal Pathways to Desistance Project, whose aim is to identify predictors of desistance in a sample of 1,354 youths, both male and female, aged 14-18, of whom 73 per cent were Black or Hispanic (Mulvey *et al*, 2004). Although their initial findings have been analysed, they had not reported anything related to ethnic minorities (Mulvey, 2011).

This doctoral research is not concerned with finding ethnic attributes that can account for differences on desistance, but it is concerned with the potential socio-cultural features that can be distinctive of Chilean offenders. These findings would contribute to both the development of desistance knowledge in Chile and to shed light on the gaps of our current understanding of desistance in non-Western societies. Although this study explores a unique and un-researched context, it is important to consider what we already know about factors associated with desistance.

3.4 Factors Associated with Desistance

The discussion concerning the factors and correlates of desistance presents some controversies (Laub and Sampson, 2003). One of the debates surrounding this issue is whether factors associated with desistance are similar to those implicated in the onset of criminal behaviour, and it is possible to identify two positions in the literature (Kazemian, 2007). The first position considers that the variables that explain the onset of offending and those that explain desistance are similar. Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) argued that criminal propensity is an explanatory variable capable of differentiating those who offend from those who do not, and since criminal propensity is a dispositional trait established early in life remaining invariant across time, it would explain both onset and desistance from crime. From a more nuanced stance, differential association accounts indicate that associations with delinquent peers exert a strong influence in criminal involvement during

adolescence (Morizot and LeBlanc, 2007) and they can also play a role in criminal abandonment later in life, albeit with the mediation of additional processes such as rational assessment (Akers, 1990). From a social learning perspective, it is argued that if association with delinquent peers is a central variable for explaining engagement in deviant activities, a reduction of the time spent and exposure to delinquent peers can account for the decline of criminal activity, a reduction that can be a consequence of the development of new prosocial bonds such as marriage (Warr, 1998).

The second position asserts that criminogenic factors associated with onset and those involved in desistance are different. Uggen and Piliavin (1998) created the concept of 'asymmetrical causation' to explain how the causes of involvement are different from those promoting the movement away from crime. Bottoms and Shapland (2011) go further to suggest that a series of entirely different processes are required to desist from crime. It seems that different factors may be relevant at different times during the process of desistance, which is linked to the idea of the gradual nature of the process, where early and later stages can be identified (Healy, 2010; Kazemian, 2007; Maruna, 2001; Maruna and Farrall, 2004; Sommers, Baskin and Fagan, 2004).

Identifying the factors and correlates of desistance was part of the initial efforts of understanding the phenomenon. Today, it is known that factors per se do not account for change, they are complementary and not exclusive (Bottoms *et al*, 2004) and it seems that some interactions between subjective and social factors bring about desistance, under certain circumstances, time, cultural contexts, and so on. Pathways out of crime are multiple (Laub and Sampson, 2003), and too complex to disentangle (Healy, 2010). For these reasons the division between social and subjective factors might appear artificial, but a critical review of how factors have been addressed through research is a necessary reflexive exercise to understand how we know what we know now.

3.4.1 Social factors: employment and significant relationships

Longitudinal datasets from criminal career studies have suggested that employment and marriage were the major correlates of desistance from crime (Farrall and Calverley, 2006). Qualitative research has enriched the understanding of the reasons that make these two social institutions relevant to desistance.

From a social control perspective, individuals decrease their offending behaviour when they develop significant bonds to conventional institutions such as employment (Sampson and Laub, 1993). In the analysis of the work histories of men in their study, Laub and Sampson (2003) found two attributes of employment that were relevant to reduce offending. While job stability increased both formal and informal social control, making desistance more likely, a commitment to work promoted conventional ties between workers and employers, fostered exchange of social capital, reduced criminal opportunities, altered previous routine activities linked to offending, and provided opportunities to exercise new pro-social identities. On a revision of this argument, Wright and Cullen (2004) found that the quality of the peer affiliations that can be built in workplaces accounted for reductions in offending, as differential association with prosocial colleagues could break previous criminal networks, making the workplace 'a social domain in which learning can take place' (2004: 200).

Some aspects of employment appear to bring about changes in personal identity. Meisenhelder (1977) in his study of former property offenders found that a meaningful and stable job that provided a good income made desistance more likely. As such, employment offers the place and social resources for building a non-criminal social identity, acting as 'an investment in the conventional world' (Meisenhelder, 1977: 327). Likewise, Giordano *et al* (2002) found that employment was associated with desistance when it offered possibilities for individuals to redefine their self-conceptions as offenders, assisting identity change.

It seems that employment is more likely to have an impact on offending behaviour in adulthood rather than in adolescence. Graham and Bowling, (1995) studied life transitions from childhood to adulthood in a sample of self-reported offenders aged 14–25, and they did not find empirical evidence to link employment and desistance. They argued that participants still had not completed a maturational process - indeed, males were still under a strong influence of peers. These results resonated with those of Uggen (2000) who explored whether work was a turning point for men from the National Supported Work Demonstration Project in the United States, concluding that participating in work release programmes was a turning point for those aged 26 or more, but not for the younger men in the sample. In a study of employment and reoffending in a sample of 250 male parolees in Texas, Tripodi, Kim and Bender (2010) found that getting a job after release did not have a significant impact on the likelihood of reincarceration over time. Nonetheless, employment had an impact on the duration of the crime-free periods. That is, unemployed parolees reoffended at almost double the rate than employed parolees, suggesting that decreases in the frequency of reoffending can be seen as good indicators of motivation to changes.

Early findings from criminal career research indicated that ‘marriage’ was related to desistance. However, it is now understood that it is not the legal status of marriage, but the quality and attributes of the relationship which make it meaningful and which account for changes in criminal behaviour (Cusson and Pinsonneault, 1986; Farrall and Bowling, 1999; Meisenhelder, 1977; Mischkowitz, 1994; Soothill *et al*, 2009). Indeed, Weaver (2013) defines meaningful relationship as one that requires the commitment of the two partners and a mutual involvement in a common project.

From a social control perspective (Sampson and Laub, 1993), it is the progressive growth of social bonds that marriage can bring to a person’s life which account for reductions in criminal activity. A significant relationship with a prosocial woman can produce significant changes in a man’s daily routines that break with previous offending habits, and it can assist change in self-

perceptions by introducing the former offender to new friends and conventional members of the partner's family (Laub and Sampson, 2003).

From a social learning perspective, Warr (1998) supported the relevance of social bonds endorsed by Sampson and Laub (1993). Drawing on data from the National Youth Survey in the United States in the late 1970s, Warr concluded that marriage promotes desistance by disrupting previous patterns of peer association, reducing the time spent with delinquent peers, and diminishing both the motivation and the means to engage in criminal behaviour, which in turn promotes conformity, especially in the case of males. Shover (1983) found that an important and common factor of change in criminal trajectories in his male sample was a good quality relationship with a woman. Elaborating this idea further, Laub, Nagin and Sampson (1998) introduced the concept of a 'good marriage' to refer to the kind of relationship that produces a progressive and cumulative positive impact on an individual. This idea of gradual investment in relationships that create social capital and, therefore, promotes desistance has been addressed elsewhere (see Bushway *et al*, 2004; Healy, 2010; Laub and Sampson, 2003).

Significant relationships can provide opportunities to exercise new, meaningful identities - such as being a responsible partner or father - that progressively replace the criminal identity and become sufficiently important to maintain abstinence from offending (Maruna, 2001). Horney, Osgood, and Marshall (1995) examined the role of local life circumstances in criminal behaviour change in over 600 serious offenders in Nebraska, finding that men who lived with a wife were less likely to be involved in offending. They argued that a significant relationship may represent a meaningful achievement the offender would not risk losing. Likewise, Leibrich (1996) found among participants in her study that the most commonly cited reason for deciding to go straight was the fear of losing a relationship.

It seems, nonetheless, that the impact of significant relationships on desistance varies depending on the life stage of the person. Ouimet and LeBlanc (1996) interviewed 428 young males from the Juvenile Court of Montreal, finding that

cohabitation was positively associated with crime among participants aged 18-21, while cohabitation supported desistance for men aged 22 and older. Ouimet and LeBlanc concluded that cohabitation at the age of 18 might be an indicator of impulsiveness rather than maturity. Different findings emerged from a reanalysis of data from the Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development by Theobald and Farrington (2011), who found that those who married at 18-24 years old reduced their reoffending compared with those who married aged 25 or older. When childhood risk factors were compared between the two groups, Theobald and Farrington (2011) found that those who married later came from broken homes, used drugs and maintained delinquent associations, a lifestyle which might be difficult to change by marrying later in life.

Employment and significant relationships have both been associated with reductions in reoffending and desistance from crime in several studies. Overall, it seems that relevant attributes of both social attachments are their quality, the opportunities they provide to learn and exercise new pro-social identities, their links to conformity, and the progressive relational investment they require to be sustained over time. Ultimately, employment and significant relationships 'encourage desistance by increasing an individual's stock of social capital' (Farrall, 2004: 60), a key aspect of the analysis as social capital has been precarious in most offenders' lives and debilitated further by imprisonment. It has been suggested that the effect of these social institutions is enhanced when they occur at the same time, which Giordano *et al* (2002: 1013) named the 'respectability package'. It is noteworthy that social attachments are by no means mere external opportunities that happen in a person's life without their active participation. While employment and significant relationships can have differential impacts depending on individuals' age, background and subjective factors such as maturity, motivation, and openness to change (LeBel *et al*, 2008), it seems that it is more relevant how meaningful those social bonds are for a person and the extent to which they represent strong motives for starting to change (McNeill, 2009).

3.4.2 Subjective factors: from hope to identity change

Over the last decade there has been an increasing interest in the study of the subjective factors involved in desistance, hence growing evidence is available. Nonetheless, this type of research presents some shortcomings that are worth mentioning. As subjective factors are constructs, they cannot be accurately described, subsequently impacting the way they are conceptualised. It is not uncommon that definitions of the same concept vary among studies and on occasions definitions are not even provided (Healy, 2010). In psychological assessments there are possibilities of misinterpreting or simply confusing one subjective factor with another, as the boundaries are diffused and most of the times subjective factors are closely related. Additional limitations emerge from the use of available methods such as retrospective tools which are at risk of reinterpretation or intentionality attribution, as noted by Farrall and Bowling (1999). Having noted that from the outset, evidence of subjective factors involved in desistance are presented in five sections: hope, self-efficacy, and motivation; cognitive transformations; agency; emotions; and changes in identity.

Hope, self-efficacy and motivation

These factors are usually mentioned as features of the psychological dispositions of offenders who succeed in changing their lives. Burnett (1992) found that participants who declared themselves to be optimistic about non-offending while in prison tended to behave accordingly while in the community. Similarly, Maruna (2001) found that narratives of desisters were characterised by a distinctly optimistic sense of control over their future and strong beliefs about their own self-worth. From a different perspective, Martin and Stermac (2010) assessed hope in relation to criminal offending among a sample of 100 females and males imprisoned in Canada. Using standardised scales they found that inmates with lower hope were at higher risk of reoffending. Moreover, the risk was greater among those with low agentic thinking and low perceived self-efficacy and motivation. These findings resonate with those from Maruna (2001), in regard to the active offenders in his sample whose narratives were

characterised as lacking in hope for the future, and having an ever-present sense of fatalism. It seems that a positive, optimistic stance is a promising start for change. However, it seems that it takes more than optimism to sustain change.

LeBel *et al* (2008: 570) defined hope as 'the perception of successful agency related to goals and the perceived availability of successful pathways related to goals'. This is an interesting definition as it stresses that hope is not only about optimism, but also about the means to achieve that goal. This notion relates to Snyder (1994 in Arnau, Rosen, Finch, Rhudy and Fortunato, 2007) who claimed that agency and pathways are interrelated dimensions of hope which, in turn, is similar to the concept of self-efficacy, defined by Bandura (1997 cited in Brezina and Topalli, 2012: 1042) as 'the belief that one can perform well at a given task or endeavour, a belief based on judgements that individuals make about their own capabilities'.

Several studies have suggested that even a firm determination to desist from crime can be accompanied by low trust in the person's own abilities, reducing the likelihood of success (Bottoms and Shapland, 2011; Giordano *et al*, 2002; Shover, 1996). Zamble and Quinsey (1997) found that coping strategies were the factor that distinguished those who sustained desistance from offenders in face of similar problems. Apparently, hope on its own is insufficient to bring about change, agency and self-efficacy are also required to develop coping strategies. Burnett (2010) emphasised this idea, claiming that significant changes in life are more difficult to achieve by people who cannot modify their material circumstances, no matter how optimistic and hopeful they can be. She asserted that the will to desist among prisoners might be rapidly weakened upon release by the number of challenges they have to deal with, such as social exclusion and mental illness.

Research on probation has arrived at similar conclusions. Probationers in Leibrich's study (1996) needed strong motives to go straight and also 'a way of doing so', by which they meant strategies for developing new prosocial networks, and receiving support for problems such as drug addiction. Farrall

(2002) divided a sample of probationers into three groups according to their degree of optimism and motivation to abandon crime, finding that not all the optimists desisted. In fact, some confident and optimistic probationers persisted 'against their own predictions' (Farrall, 2002: 176). Farrall argued that individuals need to build social capital in order to perform their motivation and capacities. Indeed, further findings in this matter have stressed the potential benefits of working with parolees and probationers' motivation (Walters, Clarks, Gingerinch and Meltzer, 2007), and discussions have moved the focus towards the notion of 'readiness to change', emphasising that besides motivation, individuals need to be prepared to transform their lives and that requires additional abilities and capacities to achieve change (Day, Howells, Casey, Ward, Chambers and Birgden, 2009).

It seems that the conventional orientation of these self-perceived abilities also matters. Brezina and Topalli (2012) argued that criminal self-efficacy – the confidence in one's own abilities and capacities towards criminal aims - might be related to reoffending and reductions in intentions to desist from crime in persistent offenders. Hope, self-efficacy and motivation are necessary but insufficient to achieve desistance. The way a person perceives his or her own abilities and capacities has to be linked with the possibility to make changes in the context of structural constraints.

Cognitive transformations

Gove (1985) was among the first researchers that explored cognitive shifts and crime desistance. Building upon the work of psychologists such as Erikson and Jung, Gove applied principles of the psychology of maturation to criminal change research, proposing that individuals transition from childhood to adolescence through five stages, similarly as offenders progress towards conventionality: 1) shifting from self-absorption to concern for others; 2) progressively accepting societal values and behaving accordingly; 3) becoming more comfortable with social relations; 4) acting in a way that increasingly reflects concern for others in the community; and 5) becoming more concerned with the meaning of life. Gove's theoretical model of cognitive progressions

(1985) resonates with the notion of generativity from Maruna (2001), who found that a distinctive feature in discourses of desisters was the concern for others, transitioning from self-absorption towards being 'other-centred' and moved by the desire to 'give something back', especially to children and people in conflict with the law.

An influential theory that proposes that varied cognitive transformations exert differential influences along the desistance process is that proposed by Giordano *et al* (2002), which was outlined earlier in this chapter. It is cited again here, as the relevance of an initial open state of mind is consistent with the process of self-reassessment been described in qualitative studies (Healy, 2010, Leibrich, 1996; Maruna, 2001; Meisenhelder, 1977; Shover, 1996; Sommers *et al*, 2004). These processes of revision, of assessing what matters in life, appear to be critical in the earlier stages of change. Meisenhelder (1977) found that avoiding reincarceration was one of the main motivations to desist among offenders in his study, as the deterrent effect of prison might foster a more profound process of reappraisal where the potential rewards of leading a conventional lifestyle and 'settling down' appear desirable. Similarly, Shover (1996) found that unpleasant experiences in criminal activity sometimes triggered a decision to stop offending. However, the decision was not purely rational as it was accompanied by intense affective and moral elements. Shover (1996: 297) concluded that 'people chose to go straight when life began to have a better meaning for them, and when they began to have something of value that was too precious to risk losing. This could be material things or relationships or social status, or a sense of integrity and self-respect'. Likewise, participants in Leibrich's study (1996) mentioned that losing something that was valuable in their lives was a strong motivation for deciding to stop offending, a decision that was usually preceded by a process of 'reassessing what mattered in life to them' (Leibrich, 1996: 289).

Healy (2010) also found that a re-appraisal of past behaviour allowed change and facilitated the progression towards desistance, which resonates with the psychological explanation provided by Maruna and Matravers (2007). They argued that change starts at the level of self-narrative, when people could

explain their lives to themselves and to others through a credible history that is only possible after a self-assessment of goals and priorities that would help them move on towards a different self. It appears that cognitive transformations, self-identity changes and agency are closely connected (Laub *et al*, 2006).

Agency

Hough (2010) considers that one of the main contributions from desistance studies to criminological research is having emphasised the central place of individuals due to their 'agency or capacity of exerting control over their lives' (Hough, 2010: 16). As an example, one of the most important modifications in theories of desistance is the inclusion of human agency as a key concept in Laub and Sampson's understanding (2003) of how life events and historical contexts interact with social bonds to produce change.

Despite the attention it has received, definitions of agency remain vague (Healy, 2010; King, 2013) and sometimes the concept is used indistinguishably from those of cognitive transformation and motivation (Laub *et al*, 2006). The theoretical and methodological implications of this lack of definitions make it necessary to use the concept more precisely (Bottoms *et al*, 2004).

Dietz and Burns (1992) argued that all human beings hold a certain degree of agency, 'an ability to be effective through the exercise of power; an intentionality or consciousness about an action; a lack of constraints so it is possible to choose which rules to implement; and the ability to be reflexive about the consequences of an action' (1992: 192). This conceptualisation appears rather idealistic in the face of evidence that suggests that agency can be constrained, by both subjective and structural factors (Farrall and Bowling, 1999). Bottoms *et al* (2004: 375) note that the exertion of agency can be limited by a 'lack of self-awareness and lack of full contextual awareness', as human beings are not necessarily fully conscious of their personal potentials and limitations. Laub *et al* (2006) recall the concept 'situated choice' from Sampson and Laub (2003) to address the fact that even intentional decisions are

mediated by structural constraints. Therefore, agency should always be understood within the sociocultural structures where it is performed.

Interestingly, even within structural constraints, agency 'has the element of projective or transformative action' (Laub *et al*, 2006: 323), an aspect of the dynamics of agency and structures that has been addressed by a number of researchers, such as Emirbayer and Mische (1998: 963), who also introduce the notion of time in human agency, as 'a temporally embedded process of social engagement, informed by the past, but also oriented toward the future (as a capacity to imagine alternative possibilities) and toward the present (as a capacity to contextualise past habits and future projects within the contingencies of the moment)'. In a similar vein, Evans (2002), proposes the concept of 'bounded agency', which refers to the idea that both social components and temporal influences of past experiences in the present are relevant for envisioning the future in young people in England and Germany who were experiencing processes of transition. Findings from Laub and Sampson (2003) also appear to support Emirbayer and Mische's notion of transformative agency, as they found that agency facilitated the progressions towards a 'new sense of self -identity as a desister from crime or, more aptly, as a family man, hard worker, and good provider' (2003: 146).

The notion of agency as having a projective dimension connects with two crucial elements for desistance: the sustainability of changes in time, and the prosocial orientation of those changes. It seems that changes are more likely to endure when offenders perceive changes in their lives as a product of their own actions (Uggen and Kruttschnitt, 1998), and they are fulfilling enough to promote prosocial behaviour (Christian, Veysey, Herrschaft and Tubman-Carbone, 2009). Ultimately, agency interacts with social structures facilitating the person to envisage alternative new selves as a non-offender; hence, agency and identity change are closely related.

The role of emotions

Desistance, as a difficult and ambivalent process, cannot be exempt of emotionality. Emotions have been introduced in desistance research in the last few years (see for example, Giordano, Schroeder and Cernkovich, 2007; Morizot and LeBlanc, 2007). In fact, it has been claimed that desistance might have an 'emotional trajectory' (Farrall and Calverley, 2006: 108). Shame is one of the emotions that has received more attention in its relation to desistance. Leibrich (1996) found that respondents mentioned shame as both the main cost of offending, and the main reason for desisting from crime. Participants reported the experience of shame in the form of public humiliation, personal disgrace, and private remorse. Leibrich (1996) concluded that when social support and acceptance were available, each of these forms of shame could promote desistance to a certain extent. This means that excessive amounts of shame might obstruct the efforts to desist. LeBel *et al* (2008) take Braithwaite's concept of reintegrative shaming to suggest that a person who feels regret for his criminal acts, but has preserved his or her sense of internal worth, is more likely to desist. Contrarily, stigmatising shame degrades both the act and the person, reducing the chances of the latter to respond positively to rehabilitative efforts. These findings suggest that shame can support desistance when it has not undermined positive aspects of identity and it is oriented towards reintegration. Conversely, an excessive amount of shame, especially without support, can hinder the chances of going straight and even increase the likelihood of reoffending.

Changes in identity

There is an extensive body of research that supports the idea that profound changes at the level of identity are required to sustain change over time, so the individual does not recognise himself as an offender anymore (Giordano *et al*, 2002; Laub and Sampson, 2001; Maruna, 2001; Maruna *et al*, 2004; Shover, 1996; Sommers *et al*, 2004; Vaughan, 2007). Laub and Sampson (2001) suggest that desisters in their study changed their identities, transforming their sense of maturity and responsibility. Likewise, Giordano *et al* (2002) found that

stigma is turned aside only when the person develops a new identity that is incompatible with their previous criminal identity. Sommers *et al* (2004) add to this argument by suggesting that identity change that is supported by significant others facilitates integration into conventional networks, which in turn provide opportunities to make this new identity stable and incompatible with previous criminal activities.

From that perspective, a true desister would be a person who, after holding a criminal identity, does not see himself or herself as an offender anymore, but as a completely changed person. Nonetheless, this kind of requirement to assess genuine desistance is not fully shared by Bottoms *et al* (2004), who claim that a significant lull in the course of a criminal career would be sufficient to consider a former offender is desisting. Bottoms *et al* (2004) point out that people in their sample made efforts to find valuable aspects of themselves despite their troubled contexts. Hence they might have not changed their identities completely, but they had managed to take the positive aspects of themselves to the forefront, in a conventional and meaningful way.

It seems that changes in identity need to be socially validated by others, what Meisenhelder (1977: 329) called certification. He described this as an informal process of 'social verification of the individual's reform', deemed to be the last stage of a successful exit from a criminal career (Meisenhelder, 1982). Similarly, Maruna and Farrall (2004: 28) argued that secondary desistance could take place when the person's change is 'recognised by others and reflected back to him in a 'de-labelling process''. This entails a feedback process between the individual and significant others, in which social reinforcements increase the person's desire to achieve and sustain change, as described by Sommers *et al* (2004).

Outside desistance studies the concept of identity is highly controversial, and the idea that identity is a unified and inherent human attribute is deemed out-dated (Hall, 2000). According to the theory of psychosocial development of Erikson (1994), a successful resolution of the sequential crisis that individuals have to overcome throughout childhood and adolescence, leads individuals to

develop their identity by early adulthood. Erikson (1994) proposed that around the age of 18, most adolescents should have developed a sense of having a valuable place in society, which in turn allows them to commit to others and to society. From a cultural perspective, Larrain (2000) claimed that identity results from a process of social construction in which cultural, material, and social elements interact. Identity is cultural as individuals define themselves in terms of shared categories whose meaning is culturally defined. It is material as individuals symbolically project themselves in objects such as their bodies, clothes, house, children, or work, and it is social as identity always involves others, either as those who are references or those from whom to differentiate. Personal identity requires the existence of others, the society and the culture to develop and, therefore, to be transformed.

3.5 The Interaction between Subjective and Social Factors

With the current knowledge of desistance processes it is clear that the relationship between subjective and social factors cannot be fully disentangled (Kazemian, 2007; Healy, 2010). Nonetheless, this should not be an impediment to exploring the dynamics of desistance. Indeed, Vaughan (2007) proposes that research efforts should be oriented to overcoming the methodological issues that impede a proper study of the interaction between social and subjective factors in desistance research. In this vein, LeBel *et al* (2008) recommend exploring the combined subjective-social model in two possible ways. First, when each of the factors have an independent impact on desistance, that is, both are necessary but they do not determine or relate to each other. And second, when subjective and social factors are closely related so the existence of one can have an indirect impact on the good outcome of the other. Nevertheless, having reviewed the main desistance studies, the dynamics between social and subjective factors seem to be much more complex than the models proposed by LeBel *et al* (2008), as King points out (2013: 317) 'the exact configuration and interaction of individual and structural factors is uncertain'. Ultimately, this issue is related to the sociological and philosophical discussion of the relationship between agency and structure. Farrall and Bowling (1999: 261) were amongst the first to connect this discussion with

desistance research, arguing that 'the process of desistance is one that is produced through an interplay between individual choices, and a range of wider social forces, institutional and societal practices which are beyond the control of the individual'. Consequently, instead of the identification of isolated factors, the call is for integrated models of desistance.

One of the first attempts to develop a dynamic model addressing the agency and structure debate in desistance was the Theory of Cognitive Transformation (Giordano *et al*, 2002) described earlier in this chapter. One of its key arguments is that in the interaction of cognitive transformations with opportunities to change 'the actor creatively and selectively draws upon elements of the environment in order to affect significant life changes' (2002: 1003), a notion of 'the individual' that challenged the prevailing theories of that time. Likewise, Bottoms *et al* (2004) proposed an interactive framework for understanding desistance composed of five key concepts: programmed potential, social structures, culture and habitus, situational contexts, and agency. Bottoms *et al* (2004: 372) opened a new angle on the discussion of agency and structures by asserting that structures such as employment are 'social arrangements external to the individual which enable or limit action by that individual'. Indeed, the interactive framework sheds light on the role that society through its structures can have on 'shaping trajectories of desistance', a role that, according to Farrall (2009: 5), was in 'empirical and theoretical shadows'.

Over the last five years or so, new theoretical discussions and empirical research have stressed the need to include structures as key elements in understanding the dynamic nature of desistance in the broader sociocultural context, the institutions and organisations, and 'the character and nature of a society at a particular time' (Farrall *et al*, 2009: 83). Macro-level structures and meso-level influences such as decade, country, foundational social institutions, economic situation, security policies, among others, should all be an integral part of contemporary explanations as to why people stop offending in a given time, country, and culture (Farrall, Bottoms and Shapland, 2010; Farrall, Sharpe, Hunter and Calverley, 2011).

Conclusion

This chapter discussed some conceptual and research issues, particularly the definition and operationalization of the concept and its implications for research. The chapter then moved onto addressing an under area of desistance knowledge, arguing that the factors and structural influences of the processes of desistance from crime inhabitants of non-Western contexts are unknown and need further exploration, representing a central concern in this doctoral research.

After revising the critical issues of desistance research, the chapter moved on to address the knowledge that has been produced by research, reviewing the key debates about the factors associated with desistance from crime in former persistent offenders, including the discussions about the interaction between social and subjective dimensions of desistance. Giordano *et al* (2002), Vaughan (2009), and Shapland and Bottoms (2011) have provided models of change in desistance from crime that attempt to integrate the different stages involved in a process that seems to end in identity change. Nonetheless, more recent research suggests the need of including structure influences in the explanation of desistance from crime. Having reviewed both the critical issues and the specific factors known to be involved in desistance, it becomes apparent that the first step for outlining the research design is to adopt a working definition of the concept of desistance.

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the methodology used in this study and it is divided into seven sections. It starts with a detailed discussion of the methodological decisions involved in the research design. The second section describes the sampling strategy, the eligibility criteria, the sample size, the role of gatekeepers and an audit of the access to the sample. The third section addresses the design of data collection instruments, discussing how interviews, criminal records and self-reports were used in this study. An account of the fieldwork is presented in the fourth section, describing its three stages and the research lessons taken through the process. The fifth section discusses the ethical considerations observed during the entire process of design, empirical work and data analysis, to move on to the characteristics of the achieved sample, described in the sixth section. Finally, a detailed account of the rationale and stages of the data analysis process concludes this chapter.

4.1 Research Design

The aim of this research is to develop knowledge and understanding of the processes through which a Chilean sample of adult former persistent offenders desisted from crime. The research questions are:

1. What it is known about desistance from crime and what are the knowledge gaps?
2. What are the methodological issues in desistance research in regards to the definition and operationalization of the concept, and comparative desistance research?
3. Which factors are associated with desistance from crime in formerly persistent offenders?
4. How do subjective and social dimensions of the process of desistance interact?
5. To what extent does international evidence apply to Chile?
6. What are the distinctive characteristics of the processes of desistance in Chilean former persistent offenders?
7. What policy implications follow from this?

While the literature review in Chapters Two and Three addressed the first four questions, this chapter begins by considering the implications of that review in the design of the empirical component of this study that will address the remaining two questions. It must be stressed from the outset that ethical considerations were included at every stage of this research design, as recommended by King and Liebling (2008) and Maguire (2000), in a reflexive process that informed every methodological decision.

The first decision informed by the literature review was to adopt a desistance rather than a criminal career perspective to provide the best possible answers to the research questions and to achieve the aim of this study. As noted in the previous chapters, criminal career research measures desistance as an event (Piquero, 2004), employing quantitative longitudinal studies which are concerned with statistical estimations about people over time, and while their focus on groups allows one to control stable differences across individuals, dynamic individual-level differences such as motivation, agency, or cognitive changes are neglected (LeBel *et al*, 2008). However, this presents social processes as rigid events (Farrall, 2003), missing the complexities that are at the core of human behaviour (Bryman, 1984).

In contrast to criminal career research, studies from a desistance perspective are not so concerned with final outcomes but with the nature of the process of change. From a qualitative perspective, desistance research focuses on why and how former offenders decrease or stop their involvement in criminal activity. Qualitative approaches also allow for exploration of why and how they sustain behavioural changes over time and in the face of obstacles (McNeill, 2006; Maruna *et al*, 2004). This perspective proposes to understand desistance as a process, exploring both the subjective and the social factors that might be involved in it, emphasising the subjective meanings of life events, rather than on the events *per se* (Bottoms *et al*, 2004; Bushway *et al*, 2001; Farrall, 2002; Giordano *et al*, 2002; Healy, 2010; LeBel *et al*, 2008; Maruna, 2001; Sampson and Laub, 2003; Vaughan, 2007).

Adopting a desistance perspective implies the utilisation of a qualitative design. As Bryman (2004) observes the qualitative research tradition is aligned with the idea that the complexities of social life are better viewed as processes and that knowledge is not something that exists independently from people, and, therefore, it cannot be collected but constructed in a dynamic process of data production. Some desistance researchers advocate the use of follow-up, prospective longitudinal qualitative designs (Bottoms *et al*, 2004; Sampson and Laub, 2003) which offer rich opportunities to observe changes in offending trajectories as they occur and permit observations in a wider time span compared to cross sectional designs. While it is hoped that the current study will form the basis of a longitudinal study in the longer term, temporal and budgetary constraints mean that it has been designed to stand alone as a cross-sectional study. Cross-sectional design involves gathering information from a sample at one specific point in time. Studies using this design tend to be retrospective and look at individual trajectories through the use of interviews, case studies, and life-stories as these methods permit approaching the nuances, complexities and richness of the human experience (Bryman, 2012). While Massoglia and Uggen (2007) argued that the production of qualitative data does not allow for generalisation of the results, the exploratory nature of this study and the research questions set do not call for generalisation.

The subsequent methodological decisions for this study were informed both by what the literature on desistance says, but also by the gaps in such knowledge. A largely unexplored area in desistance research is that related to populations of diverse socio-cultural contexts, as existing evidence has been produced from studies conducted mainly in male samples of developed, post-industrialised Western countries (Bersani *et al*, 2009; Kazemian, 2007). This knowledge gap posed significant challenges for this research, which is concerned with desistance from crime in a sample from a developing country located in an area that is not traditionally considered part of Western society. It was particularly important to sample carefully, and to develop research instruments and fieldwork techniques that were culturally appropriate. The most critical issue in desistance research is the lack of agreement on a definition of the concept, which in turn affects its operationalization and the subsequent methodological

decisions for undertaking a study. In this study it was required to have a clear definition, capable of operationalization, before making further research design decisions.

The current study draws on the desistance literature rather than criminal careers research by defining desistance as a process not an event and regarding that process as nonlinear but involving backward as well as forward steps and fluctuations (Bottoms *et al*, 2004; Burnett, 1992, Burnett, 2004). The conception of desistance adopted also takes account of the conclusion that desistance may involve a reduction either of frequency, severity, and/or versatility of criminal activity (Bushway *et al*, 2001; LeBlanc and Frechette, 1989; Loeber and LeBlanc, 1990; Morizot and LeBlanc, 2007), but that the possibility of 'false desistance' (Bushway *et al*, 2004; Sampson and Laub, 2003; Soothill *et al*, 2009) needs to be allowed for by adopting Maruna and Farrall's (2004) distinction between primary and secondary desistance, so that the study focuses on voluntary abstinence from offending.

The second step was defining the length of the abstinence, since there are diverse follow-up periods in desistance studies, ranging from one month (Healy, 2010) to 11 years (Farrington and Hawkins, 1998). Acknowledging that any cut-off is arbitrary, but also considering that evidence on recidivism has shown that most reoffending occurs after the first 12 months following a sentence or release from prison (Lloyd, Mair and Hough, 1995), completing a period of one year of non-offending after the last prison release was considered a sign of desistance in this study.

Opting for one year of voluntary abstinence was also related to the question of who should be studied. As this is the first study of this type in Chile, it seemed reasonable to explore the pathways of those who, having a history of criminal involvement, had maintained such involvement (so called 'persistent offenders') and those who had overcome the threshold of change and had performed strategies to maintain desistance over time (although finding primary desisters was expected).

In summary, the working definition of desistance was: a process of voluntary abstinence from offending which has been sustained for at least one year after the last prison release, in people with a history of criminal involvement.

4.2 Sampling Strategy

The criteria for eligibility were set around the main components of the operational definition of desistance: history of criminal involvement, and abstinence from offending for at least one year after the last prison release. Overall, this was purposive sampling, as participants were not randomly but strategically sought to fulfil criteria that made them relevant to the research objectives (Bryman, 2004). The first criterion was the history of criminal involvement that addresses the issues of type of offences committed and operationalization of criminal involvement. While Kazemian (2007) makes an interesting theoretical point when claiming that a threshold of serious level of previous offending is required to avoid documenting trivial behaviour, two limitations were derived from this idea: serious offenders might be a hard to reach population, and they might not represent most persistent offenders. Most Chilean inmates have been convicted for property crimes, hence it was deemed reasonable to focus on those offences that are mostly represented in the prison population. Offenders convicted exclusively for sexual abuse and domestic violence only were excluded from this study on the grounds that they were atypical. Within Chilean criminal justice regulations, two prison sentences should indicate that an individual has a history of criminal involvement as prison sentences are given to recidivists who have usually received a couple of community sanctions. Within this criterion of two prison sentences and drawing upon evidence of the age-crime curve, a minimum of 25 years old was established and no upper age limit was set.

The second criterion was related to the voluntary abstinence from offending for at least one year after the last prison sentence. Identifying whether the abstinence was voluntary was not possible to do in advance, therefore two steps were taken to increase the chances of finding the people needed. First, official records were checked to ensure that no further criminal convictions

occurred after completing the last prison sentence at least 12 months ago. However, as discussed earlier, relying only on criminal records can be misleading. Therefore, as recommended by Meisenhelder (1977) and Maruna and Farrall (2004), a subjective criterion was introduced. This involved searching for indicators that the person was making an effort to desist. Two indicators were found to be useful in this regard: being in the process of expunging criminal records; and participating or having participated in a programme of support for former inmates in the community.

Having decided the basic eligibility criterion for potential desisters, the question of whether a reference group of active offenders was needed emerged, and it was decided to include such a group. From a theoretical point of view, desistance journeys should be seen as occurring on an offending-conformity continuum (Bottoms *et al*, 2004), and it is crucial to understand how people transition through that continuum. Moreover, regarding desistance-only studies, Maruna (2001: 37) argued that ‘without contrasting these findings with a comparable sample of active offenders, one cannot isolate which aspects of self-concept are directly related to desistance. (...) Without such comparative research, one cannot know for certain what subjective changes matter the most in ‘going straight’’. Although referring to subjective factors only, this assertion remains valid for both subjective and social factors, as well as the dynamics of the desistance process. The second set of decisions concerned choosing the criteria for selecting this reference group. As advised by Doctor Deirdre Healy and Professor Shadd Maruna in 2011¹⁴, active offenders are usually found in potential desisters samples. Supplementing that possibility, a group of people who had been recently re-imprisoned should allow for the representation of those in a more active position in the continuum of offending.

¹⁴ Given the similarities of their research with the one I was designing, I asked both academics for guidance in the matter of selecting participants, to which both accepted. I met them in October 2011 in Dublin and Belfast.

4.2.1 Eligibility criteria

For being considered potential desisters, individuals should:

1. Be male or female aged 25 or older;
2. Have completed at least two prison sentences;
3. Have no further official record of reoffending at least one year after the last prison release;
4. Be expunging criminal records¹⁵, participating or having participated in a reintegration programme.

For being considered part of the reference group of potential persisters, individuals should:

1. Be male or female aged 25 or older;
2. Have completed at least two prison sentences;
3. Be re-imprisoned for a new offence during the three months prior to the interview.

It must be stressed at this point, that the criteria described above were used as a sampling device to identify ‘potential’ desisters and persisters. As discussed earlier, relying only on criminal records is potentially misleading as those currently in prison may be committed to desistance and those in the community may be persisting. Consequently, it is incorrect to assume that people found in the community are actually desisters and those in prison are active offenders. This initial differentiation was part of a sampling strategy that started as broadly as possible to maximise the chances of including individuals representing different positions in the offending-conformity continuum. Indeed, evidence from qualitative desistance studies suggests that rather than belonging to a pure category, individuals transition in areas where the limits of desisting and persisting are not always clear (see for example, Healy, 2010; Maruna, 2004; McIvor *et al*, 2004). With this in mind, the analysis was ultimately conducted on the understanding that a single overall sample of potential persisters and

¹⁵ This process was explained in the Introduction chapter.

desisters had been achieved. The extent to which the results confirmed this assumption is discussed in the analysis.

4.3 Data Collection Methods

The data collection methods were chosen in order to provide rich answers to the research questions and also, to gain a further understanding of those areas which represent critical issues in desistance knowledge. As well as being informed by the findings of previous studies and the theoretical literature, their design was informed by methods used in previous studies.

Two qualitative methods have been described as the most adequate to explore people's lives: focus groups and interviews (Bryman, 2012). As this study is concerned with individual perspectives, adopting a focus group method was not considered appropriate. Individual, semi-structured, one-to-one interviews were chosen as the most appropriate method, particularly for offering two advantages because they have the potential to capture rich individual accounts (Bryman, 2004) and because they enable the researcher to gently guide the conversation towards areas already known as relevant for the studied topic, to vary the way of conducting the interview either by adapting the wording to the level of comprehension of the respondent or accommodating the sequence of questions (Fielding and Thomas, 2008). Moreover, conducting interviews in a one-to-one mode can help building and enhancing rapport with the respondent (King and Wincup, 2008). For these reasons they have been used in a number of desistance studies (see for example, Sampson and Laub, 2003; Maruna, 2001; Healy, 2010; Farrall, 2002; Calverley, 2009).

Interviews were supplemented with information from criminal records and an offending self-report activity. Criminal records reflect the actions that have been formally recorded by the Criminal Justice System (Francis, Soothill and Fligelstone, 2004). In Chile the systematic recording of criminal data only started in 2005 after the full implementation of the Criminal Procedural Reform. Before that date, data was recorded in paper files, containing numerous inaccuracies, particularly in terms of times. This is the reason why criminal

records in Chile are not accurate for historical accounts but they can present a more precise account of the situation in force ¹⁶. Acknowledging these limitations, criminal records were used to create a combined account of the offending history of participants based on their interviews and the official data recorded, filling some gaps in participants' histories, and to cross check offending activities during the last 12 months with the self-report.

One aspect in which this research is concerned are variations in offending frequency, severity, or versatility, which are difficult to measure using criminal records as they only register those activities detected by the criminal justice system, providing a reduced picture of the offending involvement. Therefore, a self-report tool of offending activities was included in the set of data collection instruments, following Healy (2010) and Maruna (2001). While issues of self-protection and social desirability can affect the accuracy of self-reports, the precision of the information was not the main aim of this tool, but obtaining a richer account of the respondent's experiences with offending opportunities. As Horney (cited in Nee, 2004: 11) argued, self-reports can 'fill in substantial gaps in our knowledge about criminal activity such as motivation, decision-making, circumstances and methods used'. In this context it seemed necessary to introduce the technique of 'triangulation', described by Denzin (1970: 300) as the 'combination of methodologies in the study of phenomena'. Triangulation can produce a much better picture of the criminal offending history of respondents, as suggested by King and Liebling (2008).

4.3.1 Designing the data collection instruments

The design of data collection instruments involved the interview schedule, the offending activities self-report, a database, and the background information form.

¹⁶ Before 2005 the use of pre-trial detention was extensive and deadlines were not set. In this way, a person could have been sent to prison and remain there for years. By the time the sentence was dictated, most of it could have been accomplished already and then the criminal record might differ in years of real time from when the crime was committed.

The interview schedule was designed in two stages, the first was informed by the theoretical and empirical literature; and the second stage took place after the pilot interviews when modifications of form and content were introduced, all of which is described in the Pilot Stage section of this chapter. The theoretical review informed the five broad dimensions for desistance exploration: social capital background, criminal history, desistance from or persistence in crime, present life and attitudes towards offending, and perspectives about the future. As shown in Table 4.1, the specific questions asked to reflect these broad dimensions were heavily influenced by the approaches and findings of a number of previous empirical studies, but particularly those conducted by Burnett (2000); The Sheffield Pathways out of Crime Study (2004); Calverley (2009); Farrall and Calverley (2006); Healy (2010); Maruna (2001); Sampson and Laub (2003); and Wilkinson (2009). The final version is shown in Appendix One.

Table 4.1: Design of the Interview schedule

QUESTIONS AND REMINDERS	REFERENCES
Social capital background	
<p>Q: Can you tell me about your childhood?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Sources and quality of the social bonds. ✓ Family: people who reared you; parents' occupation; family norms; experiences. ✓ Neighbourhood: features, experience. ✓ School: last course approved; qualifications; experience of attending school / drop out. <p>Q: Can you tell me about your life as an adolescent?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Sources and quality of the social bonds. ✓ Friends and lifestyle. 	<p>Calverley, 2009: building up a picture of the desisters' past life, experiences of growing up in their family, and friends.</p> <p>Giordano <i>et al</i>, 2002: parents' socioeconomic status and occupations; size of the family of origin; parental supervision; attachment to family in adolescence; attachment to school; school achievement.</p> <p>Sampson and Laub, 2003: quality of the social bonds; sources of formal and informal social control.</p> <p>Wilkinson, 2009: description of important childhood / adolescence scene that stands out as significant.</p>
Criminal History	
<p>Q: Can you tell me about the first time you got involved with the justice system?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Age; circumstances; drug or alcohol use; reactions. ✓ Self-explanations; techniques of neutralisation. ✓ Emotions related to the event; feelings about the victim(s). <p>Q: Can you tell me about the subsequent times you were sentenced as an adult?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Types of offences; number of prison convictions; total time spent imprisoned. ✓ Self-explanations. ✓ Overall impact of imprisonment in their lives. 	<p>Burnett, 2000: their characteristic behaviours, responsibility for their own actions.</p> <p>Calverley, 2009: early experiences of getting into trouble with the law.</p> <p>Healy, 2010: number of previous convictions, offence type, sources of support, and participants' perception of the role of criminal justice agencies.</p> <p>Warr, 1998: peer relations in transition to adulthood.</p>
Desistance from Crime / Persistence in Crime	
<p>Potential desisters</p> <p>Q: Can you tell me about the time you have been away from prison?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ When, how, reasons. Self-explanations. ✓ Main supporters and influences. ✓ Self-belief in stopping offending, sense of control. ✓ Obstacles for maintaining desistance. ✓ New opportunities to commit an offence and strategies to manage temptations. 	<p>Burnett, 2000: checklist of obstacles. Individual's expectations about their future likelihood of offending.</p> <p>Farrall, 2002; Calverley, 2009: what was helping desisters staying out of trouble; anyone or anything that would help?</p> <p>Farrall and Calverley, 2006: emotional aspects of desistance trajectories.</p> <p>Farrall, 2002; Healy, 2010: perceived obstacles to desist from crime.</p> <p>Maruna, 2001: themes of agency; accounts of change; accounts of persistence.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Self-identity. <p>Potential persisters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Reasons and motivations for persisting. ✓ Family / partner / friends' position about offending lifestyle. ✓ The good and the bad things about offending. ✓ Interest in desisting; efforts; reasons for failure in desisting. ✓ Belief in change; they know people who have changed. 	<p>SPOOCS, 2003: how they spent their time, their relationships with their families, girlfriends and mates, drug use and alcohol use; agency.</p> <p>Wilkinson, 2009: positive and negative influences on their life story, single person, group or organisation; support services they have accessed.</p>
Present Life and Attitudes towards Offending	
<p>Q: Can you tell me about your present life?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Identity. ✓ Employment, family life, partner, leisure time. ✓ Main influences in their current life. ✓ Friends; colleagues; neighbours. ✓ Parenthood and motherhood. ✓ Everyday activities. ✓ The role of offending in the present. 	<p>Burnett, 2000; Farrall, 2002: how they perceive themselves, beliefs and attitudes.</p> <p>Calverley, 2009: building a picture of their current life, feelings about stopping offending and life in general.</p> <p>Giordano <i>et al</i>, 2002: job stability, attachment to spouse, and attachment to children.</p> <p>Healy, 2010: attitudes towards offending.</p> <p>Sampson and Laub, 2003: quality of the social bonds; sources of formal and informal social control.</p>
Perspectives of the Future	
<p>Q: How do you feel about your future?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Dreams, ambitions, goals, and plans. ✓ Sense of control over their destinies. ✓ Visualisation of life in one and in five years. 	<p>Farrall, 2002; SPOOCS, 2003 and Calverley, 2009: hopes and plans for the future.</p> <p>Healy, 2010: conventionality of future plans.</p> <p>Maruna, 2001: imagine your life in ten years, themes of generativity.</p> <p>Wilkinson, 2009: plans for the future; explore ideas about a positive and a negative future.</p>

The Offending Activities Self-report was a tool designed to measure criminal involvement undetected by the Criminal Justice System or not reflected in criminal records, which occurred in the 12 months prior to the interview. It was composed of the index of the most common offences in Chile (Ministerio del Interior, 2009). Participants were asked to tick a box in case they had committed any of those offences in the last month, last six months, and the last year. It was requested that they reply as honestly as possible, but to refrain from mentioning any serious offence such as homicide, rape, or sexual abuse that might require the researcher to report them to the police. This tool is shown in Appendix Two.

The information recorded in the Criminal Records included the types of offences committed, number and length of convictions, time spent in prison, last prison sentence, and date of the last prison release. The combined information was used to create a database that is shown in Appendix Three.

The Background Information Form was used to register basic demographic information. This form is shown in Appendix Four.

4.3.2 Potential limitations of the data collection methods

Interviews, the main data collection tool in this study, present some shortcomings. There is an issue of accuracy for using interviews to address events that occurred a long time ago. When people are asked to recall past events, their responses may be biased by a number of factors, forgetfulness being one of the most important. For example, people may tend to believe that events occurred more recently than they did, which is called the 'forward telescoping effect' (Loftus and Marburger, 1983: 114). In order to reduce this distortion in memories, Nee (2004) suggests the use of memory enhancing techniques such as to start asking about their present life rather than going straight to their childhood or past experiences, as people recall better when asked to begin in the present and work backwards. Brennan, Chan, Hini and Esslemont (1996) suggest the use of general and/or personal landmark events that help respondents to set periods of time and retrieve emotions.

4.4 The Fieldwork

The protocol for conducting the study was based on a number of considerations, such as the nature of the gatekeepers, issues of confidentiality and anonymity, and logistics. This protocol can be divided into three phases:

1. Exploratory Stage: November 2011 – February 2012
2. Pilot Stage: 23rd of March - 10th of April 2012
3. Fieldwork stage: 16th of April 2012 - 28th of December 2012

4.4.1 The exploratory stage

This stage consisted of informal meetings with gatekeepers in prison, after-prison programmes and community-based organisations, with the aim of assessing the feasibility of the study and the viability of finding people who fulfilled the eligibility criteria. Gatekeepers were informed about the aims of the study, the sources of funding, and how the results were expected to be used. This stage produced positive outcomes as these conversations provided relevant insights for the development of a feasible fieldwork programme.

4.4.2 The pilot stage

The aim of this stage was to test the adequacy of the set of instruments of data collection and the logistics of the interview process through a small-scale application of the interview schedule with prisoners and former prisoners.

Sampling criteria for the pilot interviews

Respondents in a pilot study should be 'comparable members of the population from which the sample for the full study will be taken' (Bryman, 2012: 264). Therefore, eligibility criteria were similar to those of the intended sample: males and females, aged 25 and older, with a minimum of two prison sentences completed; some in the community and some in prison.

Following Nee (2004: 4) who suggests that 'using the offender as an expert' can result in great benefit for the quality of data collection, I opted for conducting the first pilot interviews in the male prison 'Colina 2' with the assistance of an inmate I knew from the collaborative work we do from the University of Chile, who volunteered for helping in the recruiting process. For identifying potential participants in the community, I contacted the Board for Former Prisoners in Santiago, where practitioners provided a list of potential participants.

A total of eight people were interviewed in the pilot stage, six in prison and two in the community. They were aged 28 to 50 years old and had been mainly convicted for property crimes.

The Interview Procedure

The pilot interviews started after the ethical approval by the University of Leicester and the permission of the Prison Service in Chile were granted on the 8th and the 16th of March 2012 respectively.

All participants were fully informed by the researcher about the nature and aims of the study, and that they would be part of the pilot stage. The Informed Consent Form was read aloud by the researcher, and then signed by respondents. A preliminary version of the interview guide was used, asking questions that addressed the five areas described earlier in this chapter. The background information form was completed at the beginning of the interview in the first three cases, and at the end of the interview in five cases. The Criminal Activities Self-Report was only applied to the two participants in the community. All participants were asked for feedback about the interview process as a whole, the way they felt, and if they had any suggestions for improving the protocol. Participants were given \$3,000 pesos (around £4) as a form of appreciation for their time. After the entire interview process concluded, criminal records were requested from the Prison Service, reviewed and the important information was registered in the database. Interviews lasted between 70 to 99 minutes, were audio recorded and transcribed later.

Changes made in the light of results from the Pilot Stage

Overall, the pilot interviews were conducted without difficulties and the main aim was achieved as important lessons were drawn that helped to shape the definitive version of the data collection methods and the logistics of the interview protocol. Nonetheless, some modifications were made to the informed consent form and the interview schedule as a consequence of the pilot study.

The Informed Consent Form needed to be simpler and to include information that was asked for by respondents. Three modifications were introduced:

- a) A clearer identification of the researcher, including the affiliation to the University of Chile to reassure participants that the study was not being conducted by agents of the Criminal Justice System.
- b) A more explicit statement of the source of funding of the research.
- c) An explicit statement of the anonymity of the information discussed in the interview.

Regarding the Interview Schedule, the overall scheme of interview worked well; nevertheless, some improvements were made. The first dwelled too much on childhood memories and onset circumstances, leaving less time for the remaining and more critical areas of enquiry. This issue could be explained in part because I initially asked questions about childhood and onset first. Changing this by asking respondents to introduce themselves was a better starting point for them to tell their story in the order they preferred and also provided insights into aspects of their current self-identity. The number of questions devoted to childhood and adolescence was also reduced.

Two themes emerged that had not being foreseen in the initial guide. Older interviewees made a number of references to the dictatorship in Chile (1973-1990) as the historical context that marked their childhoods, making connections between events that occurred around that time - such as the closure of public schools - and their onset in offending. While historical questions were not introduced as they might have forced or biased the

responses, those references suggested that paying attention to the impact that historical moments had on respondents' accounts and the way they included them in their biographies was relevant. A second theme that appeared repeatedly was the mental and physical consequences of their involvement in criminal activities. Participants told stories of accidents, gunshot wounds, stabbings, and the stigma associated with those physical marks, along with their stories of mental health issues. As a result, a question about the physical and mental consequences of imprisonment and criminal activity was introduced into the final interview scheme.

In relation to the logistic aspects of the interview protocol: the two main lessons learned in the Pilot Stage that were later crucial for the main study related to scheduling interviews, and getting the right atmosphere in which to conduct each one.

Regarding scheduling: on average, the entire interview protocol took around two hours; the lapse between the first contact with a potential participant and the actual interview was around a week; a break of at least half an hour between interviews was needed in order to take some notes, to refresh, and to prepare the setting for the next interview. All this information was useful to plan a realistic timetable for the empirical work, which was expected to last between seven and ten months.

The pilot interviews demonstrated the importance of building rapport and approaching the interview process as one of mutual collaboration. One of the most striking aspects of the pilot stage was that participants were very collaborative and made insightful comments and suggestions on the process as a whole. Perhaps given the sensitivity of some of the issues discussed, it was natural that respondents often became quite emotional in the course of the interview. It was essential to reserve a few minutes at the beginning to say simple and warm words of appreciation for accepting being part of the study, and to provide information to reduce anxieties about being questioned and even judged. After the interview, all participants said it was a positive experience and some said they felt 'lighter' after discussing topics they rarely or never talk

about. Dickson-Swift, James and Liamputtong (2008: 29) say that by participating in a study some people 'are able to talk about matters that they might not otherwise have a chance to in everyday life or to anyone else. People feel that at last someone listens to their vulnerable stories and for many, this gives them a chance to 'put it all together''. The pilot stage confirmed this claim, but also reinforced the initial idea that the core element for producing good quality data was taking a position as a researcher where the respondent's perspective was important; and all safeguards should be taken for them to feel safe, respected, valued and trusted.

4.4.3 The fieldwork stage

Gaining access to participants

Research collaborations were established with the Chilean Prison Service, two community-based municipality programmes, an NGO and the Catholic Church. The contacts that were developed through the Prison Service added an unplanned geographical dimension to the study, as it meant that interviews were conducted in the three most populated cities in Chile and one medium-sized city in the south of Chile. This added further diversity to the sample. The municipalities are the only two, out of 345 in Chile, that offer specific support to inmates. Hence, it was important to obtain research participants through these organisations.

Table 4.2 shows the list of institutions that were contacted in this research and the number of respondents obtained from each one.

Table 4.2: Interviewees and the institution of contact

Type of institution	N° males	N° females	Total
Official Criminal Justice System			
Prison Service			
1. Male Prison of Santiago Sur	11		11
2. Female Prison of Santiago		8	8
Post Prison Service			
1. Santiago	8	0	8
2. Valparaíso	5	1	6
3. Concepción	4	1	5
4. Valdivia	5	2	7
Community-based organisations			
Municipality of La Pintana	8	5	13
Municipality of Estación Central	1	0	1
Catholic Trust Paternitas	1	0	1
NGO Forjamundos	1	1	2
Total	44	18	62

Sampling at this stage was conducted in two waves. The first one, between April and November 2012, took place in the community in search of potential desisters. As described in the research design section, active offenders were expected to emerge while interviewing potential desisters. Although that was the case in this study, only a few cases emerged and most of them had reduced significantly the frequency and seriousness of offences. Hence, by November 2012 I sought interviews with recently reincarcerated people to ensure the sample included a number of participants who were likely to be closer to the persisting position of the offending continuum. The fieldwork ended on the 28th of December of 2012. Overall it lasted nine months and the costs were close to the initial budget planned after the pilot stage.

4.5 Ethical Issues

Ethical considerations were a fundamental aspect of this research, especially considering that this was the first desistance research conducted in Chile and there were no previous experiences to observe or previous work to build upon.

This study raised a number of ethical issues, particularly as it was concerned with a population considered vulnerable. Although the concept 'vulnerable' can be problematic to define (Liamputtong, 2007), offenders and former offenders are considered vulnerable as they belong to a highly stigmatised population, and because participation in this study required that they referred to sensitive areas of their biographies and disclosed personal information. As researchers are responsible to 'ensure that the physical, social and psychological well-being of an individual participating in research is not adversely affected by participation in the research' (BSC, 2011), I began by ensuring that the research design followed the ethical guidelines laid out in the Code of Ethics of the British Society of Criminology (BSC, 2011), and in the Framework for Research Ethics provided by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC, 2010). Overall, this research design was based on the British Society of Criminology's general principle that suggests that 'researchers should ensure that research is undertaken to the highest possible methodological standard and the highest quality in order that maximum possible knowledge and benefits accrue to society' (BSC, 2006: 1) and the first principle of the Framework for Research Ethics of the Economic and Social Research Council suggests that 'research should be designed, reviewed and undertaken to ensure integrity, quality and transparency' (ESRC, 2010: 2). In the following discussion, how this was accomplished is discussed in relation to the sampling stage, design of the interview protocol, and design of protocols of data protection.

The main ethical issue foreseen at the sampling stage was that potential participants could feel upset for being contacted because of their criminal history, or felt obliged to take part in the study. Therefore, it was crucial to develop strategies to: a) ensure the proper identification of people who fulfilled the eligibility criteria to avoid making unnecessary contacts; and b) making an

appropriate first contact so potential participants felt safe and free to accept or reject participation in the study. The collaboration of practitioners was crucial. The study was presented to the staff of every institution involved, which subsequently enabled access to the sample.

After the University of Leicester granted the ethical approval on the 8th of March 2012, the Chilean Prison Service granted an official permission on the 16th of March 2012, which included:

- 8.1.4 Access to the criminal records of participants under a strict protocol, as they are protected by the Decree Law 645 of the year 1925;
- 8.1.4 Access to the Female Prison, the male prisons of Colina 2 and Santiago Sur, and to the Local Boards for former Prisoners;
- 8.1.4 Use of an office or appropriate room for interviewing.

A specific strategy was agreed with each one of the other institutions, which included gaining access to participants and arrangement of a place for interviewing. In both the Prison Service and the other institutions, the first contact was always made by a practitioner who provided general information about the study, usually saying something like 'there is a female psychologist interviewing people who have been imprisoned. The study is not related to this service, and I wonder if you would like to talk to her'. Surprisingly, most of the people contacted accepted having a first talk, in which I explained the aim of the study and the nature of the requested participation, and if accepted, we set a date for the interview.

In relation to the interviewing process, there were two main ethical considerations at this stage. First, ensuring the informed and voluntary participation of respondents, as the ethical guidelines of the BSC (2011) and the ESRC (2010) firmly stress. For that purpose an informed consent form was prepared in simple words but containing all the relevant information for participants to decide whether to accept or decline taking part in the study. It was important to reflect on the amount of information to be discussed with

participants (Ward and Willis, 2010) and also to include warnings of potential upset participants might experience by talking about sensitive topics (Dickson-Swift *et al*, 2008). Informed consent forms of similar theses were reviewed, with the one provided by Maruna (1999) being particularly insightful. The first version of the informed consent form was improved after the pilot stage. It was always read aloud by the researcher before participants signed the two copies. One copy was given to the participant and the researcher kept another copy.

Second, it was essential to ensure that locations for interviewing safeguarded confidentiality and participants' well-being. Most interviews were conducted in the privacy of the offices provided by the institution, with one exception in which it was agreed to conduct the interview at the participant's business.

Finally, there were ethical concerns in the design of the protocols for data protection. The ESRC (2010) in its third principle states that 'the confidentiality of information supplied by research participants and the anonymity of respondents must be respected'. To guarantee the anonymity of respondents, their full names only appeared in the informed consent, which was always kept separated from the transcript and related documents. A unique code only known by the researcher was assigned to each respondent, which identified all the documents associated to the participant and replaced the name in the database. Pseudonyms were used in the transcripts, and quotes presented in this thesis. All information that could identify respondents was replaced or deleted from the transcripts. All information provided in paper by the Prison Service was destroyed immediately after the relevant information had been extracted and filed in a computer database. Additionally, and since part of the interviews were transcribed by two colleagues, transcribers were requested to sign a legal document where they promised not to disclose, under any circumstance, any of the details, stories, or identification of the participants, and to delete all the files related to the interviews that they might have in storage.

4.6 The Achieved Sample

The sample consisted of 62 participants: 44 men and 18 women, although for the reasons explained further, the current discussion focuses on the interviews with the 44 men.

4.6.1 Sample characteristics

The average age of the 44 male participants was 41 years old, over half of them were in a stable relationship, three quarters were parents, almost three quarters had worked in the last 12 months, and they had attained 8.5 years of formal education. They all have an extensive history of criminal involvement, with an average onset at around 13 years old, six prison convictions, and ten years of imprisonment. Those interviewed in the community had not returned to prison for over six years, with a range of one to 40 years, and most of them had no further criminal records.

An overview of the socio-demographic and offending history features of males interviewed in the community and those interviewed in prison is presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Participants at the time of the interview

	Community	Prison	Total
<u>Age</u>			
Age range	27-73	25-54	25-73
Average Age	42.45	36.64	41
25-35	12 (36.3%)	4 (36.3%)	16 (36.3%)
36-45	11 (33.3%)	5 (45.4%)	16 (36.3%)
46-55	5 (15.2%)	2 (18.1%)	7 (15.9%)
56-65	3 (9%)	0	3 (6.8%)
66-75	2 (6%)	0	2 (4.5%)
<u>Relationship status</u>			
Single	12 (37.3%)	7 (63.5%)	19 (43.1%)
Girlfriend	5 (15.1%)	0	5 (11.4%)
Cohabitant	13 (39%)	3 (27%)	16 (36.3%)
Married	3 (9%)	1 (9%)	04 (9%)
<u>Formal education</u>			
Average No. of years	9	6.4	8.5
Illiterate	2 (6%)	0	2 (4.5%)
Primary education incomplete	7 (21.2%)	7 (63.6%)	14 (31.8%)
Primary education complete	2 (6%)	1 (9%)	3 (6.8%)
Secondary education incomplete	8 (24.2%)	2 (18.1%)	10 (22.7%)
Secondary education complete	14 (42.4%)	1 (9%)	15 (34%)
<u>Employment status</u>			
Worked in the last 12 months	31 (93.9%)	1 (9%)	32 (72.7%)
Working / before last prison	25 (75.7%)	0	25 (56.8%)
<u>Offending history</u>			
Average age of declared onset	14	11.9	13.6
Number of prison sentences	5.2	7.8	5.9
Total number of months in prison	126.3	80.9	114.9
	(range 12-264)	(range 6-169)	(range 6-264)
Length of offending trajectories	21.7 years	24.7 years	22.5
Months since last prison release	79.4	n/a	

4.7 Data Analysis

This section presents an account of the process of the analysis of the interviews, self-reports and criminal records. As mentioned in section '4.2 Sampling Strategy' of this chapter, theoretical and empirical criteria were set to maximise the likelihood of finding individuals at different stages of the offending-conformity continuum. That sampling strategy allowed for the obtaining of a broad spectrum of behaviour, ranging from those who had ceased offending for decades to those still actively offending. Then, one of the main challenges of the analysis was to gain a deeper understanding of both the nature of the offending trajectories of these men as a unique single sample of potential persisters and desisters, and also of each one of their particular biographies.

Data was produced through three instruments: semi-structured interviews, self-report offending data, and criminal records, resulting in information of a varied nature. While self-report and criminal records data provided information more easily recorded in a database, interviews produced a substantial amount of rich information that required a variety of qualitative analysis techniques to pass from raw to manageable and meaningful data. In addition to the data collection tools, a research notebook was kept for writing ideas, links with theory, as well as an account of the day-to-day events of the fieldwork, and this material has also been used during the analysis.

4.7.1 Semi-structured interviews

The analysis of the interviews can be categorised into five stages, each of which is discussed in turn below.

Stage one: organising and preparing the data

Each interview lasted between twenty and 148 minutes, producing around 70 hours of material.¹⁷ All 62 interviews were audio recorded, then fully transcribed, and then each one was read through while listening to the audio again, in order to ensure the accuracy of each transcript as a 'fundamental first step in data analysis' (Dickson-Swift *et al*, 2007: 337). During the initial readings I wrote analytical memos that initially were descriptive, but became more analytical and served as a reliable source for tracking back the flow of my ideas about data and how ideas developed. I created a version of an Excel database, in which each participant was identified by a code known only by the researcher, where demographic and criminal history information obtained from the interviews, self-reports, and criminal records was registered.

Stage two: open coding

Silverman (2011) suggests that qualitative analysis can begin by doing an intensive analysis of a small amount of data, a route I followed by selecting four interviews, two women and two men. Each of these transcripts was read carefully using an open code system (Strauss, 1987), highlighting excerpts that seemed relevant to the research questions (Ryan and Bernard, 2003), and making notes in the margins of the transcripts. After the intensive first reading of four interviews, I developed a 'listening guide' (Wertz, Charmaz, McMullen, Josselson, Anderson and McSpadden, 2011) containing six broad nodes covering the five areas of the interview guide¹⁸: 1) social capital background, 2) criminal history, 3) desistance or persistence in crime, 4) present life and attitudes towards offending, 5) perspectives on the future, and 6) an open node for interesting material that did not fit in the previous codes. Then I followed this with the identification of general themes within these nodes. This open coding allowed for the development of initial hypotheses regarding desistance processes and the extent to which they might relate to existing theory. Issues of

¹⁷ Around 50 hours corresponded to men's interviews and around 20 hours to women's.

¹⁸ The final version of the Interview Schedule is shown in Appendix One.

gender, age, and the impact of experiences with the Criminal Justice System emerged as relevant at this stage as they did not appear to fully correspond with existing findings.

Stage three: primary cycle of coding

The main technique used at this stage followed Wertz *et al's* (2011) recommendation that interview transcripts should be read repeatedly, first approaching the main themes, the tone, and then progressing to the details, until reaching an integral understanding of participant's narratives. The analysis began with the sub-sample of women in response to the fact that in most desistance studies women are usually discussed in reference to men and not as subjects of studies themselves. Each interview was read a number of times, reviewing the coding process frequently to reach an integral understanding of the constructs. This process was done with the 18 transcripts of interviews with females, along with the examination of their criminal records and self-report data, and analysis of the literature on females. It was apparent that the richness and complexities of their persistence and desistance trajectories were sufficient to devote an analysis on its own. After careful discussion with my supervisor, it was decided to focus on males for purposes of this thesis. Part of the material produced in the study of females has been used elsewhere (Villagra, 2014).¹⁹

Consequently, I concentrated on male respondents, reading the interviews in small series. For example, I selected three interviews from the older men, starting with one, trying to grasp the sense of the life he was presenting. I highlighted key sections and made notes, coding the text in big chunks, to finally write a short paragraph with my impressions about the key aspects of the interview. This included the motives and circumstances of his criminal onset; features of his criminal involvement; turning points to desistance; important people he referred to; motivations to desist; features of his identity; and anything that seemed odd, striking or unexplainable from his story. Then I

¹⁹ A paper with the early results of the study of female desistance was presented at the Conference for doctoral students of the 'Groupe Européen de Recherche sur les Normativités', at the University of Sheffield, September 2013, and then published in a compilation of papers from the conference (Shapland, 2014).

proceeded to read the second interview, then the third, assessing shared features and differences. Then I chose a different set of respondents and proceeded in a similar way, also assessing common and particular themes in sets of respondents. I proceeded similarly with several series until this had been completed for the 44 interviews. This process took several months, in which the 'listening guide' became a coding list containing both a deepening of the theory-based codes and new codes that emerged from the analytical reading. An example of the latter was the code 'religiosity' that encompassed interviewees' several and varied mentions of God, the support of the church, religious conversion in prison, and everyday spirituality.

Some of the themes that started showing an impact on shaping participants' desistance trajectories were consistent with existing findings, such as education and work training; employment opportunities; support from people and institutions; self-belief; agency; and positive attitudes towards conventional lifestyle, among others. Nonetheless, some themes appeared to be unique to this sample, such as historical references to the dictatorship in relation to their onset and persistence, the impact of the Criminal Procedure Reform, particularly related to short sentencing, and issues related to identity change. It became very clear at this stage that there was not a unique pathway through which my participants desisted from crime. Indeed, five trends became apparent at this stage. It seemed that for a group of men in their early forties finding a partner, forming a family, engaging in a stable job and identifying with conventional roles facilitated the processes of desistance, similar to what has previously been described in the literature (Giordano *et al*, 2002; Laub and Sampson, 2003). Nonetheless, some of the older participants, although no longer involved in criminal activity, seemed to have maintained their identity as thieves that they formed in an epoch within which respect and honour were the main values of the criminal culture. There were also some participants in their forties who had received harsh sentences in their late-teens and early-twenties, and whose desistance processes seemed to be more related to understanding and adapting into a new world. There were also some interviewees who were making efforts to make a departure from their peers, drug habits and criminal activities, but still had not reached a more stable position within the

conventional society. Finally, there was a group of participants who seemed to feel as though they belonged to part of the criminal world and who were not really pursuing significant changes in their lives. By the end of this stage and after an average of three readings of each interview, I transferred onto the next stage of coding, as a more systematic approach was needed since the themes progressively expanded and the provisional hypotheses became increasingly complex.

Stage four: axial coding

Neuman (1997: 424) argued that axial coding 'reinforces the connections between evidence and concepts (...) the connection between a theme and data is strengthened by multiple instances of empirical data'. Following Neuman (1997) I re-analysed the entire data, developing links between the themes, reorganising the coding system, and formulating new questions or reformulating existing questions. A key tool used to aid this stage of coding was NVivo10, a Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Software (CAQDAS), one of the advantages of which is that 'unlike the human mind, [it] can maintain and allow the organization of evolving and potentially complex coding systems into such formats as hierarchies and networks' (Saldana, 2009: 4). All the transcripts were imported to NVivo10 and coded according to the list of themes developed in the previous stages. However, as Neuman (1997) anticipates, this stage involved an entire reorganisation of the coding system.

As the process of reanalysis evolved through the detailed study of pieces of empirical data such as excerpts and quotes, some nodes showed a stronger relation with theoretical concepts. An example of this was the node of 'agency' that, consistent with the discussion presented in the literature review, was initially described broadly as a 'capacity to exert control over their lives' (Hough, 2010: 16), containing an 'element of projective or transformative action' (Laub *et al*, 2006: 323). The analysis of empirical data suggested, however, that agency had empirical manifestations that were not as broad as the theoretical concept and seemed to take the forms of self-mastery, status or victory, achievement or responsibilities, and empowerment, as described by McAdams (2002). This

proved to be a useful framework for organising nodes of subjective factors that were not clearly connected before.

A number of new, more explicatory nodes emerged from this reorganisation. In this regard, some parts of the empirical data showed consistency with the theory. Nonetheless, other parts of the empirical data did not fit strictly with the theory, and new nodes had to be created that captured the analytical richness of that data. Table 4.4 shows the final list of codes used in the coding process. This is not a hierarchical list and it does not illustrate the evolution of the analytical process, its aim is to present how nodes were organised around the five areas established theoretically at the research design stage and the data-driven nodes. The evolution of the coding organisation as the connections between concepts and evidence developed are illustrated with some examples after the table.

Table 4.4: Organisation of the coding system in NVivo 10²⁰

1. Social Capital Background (Childhood and adolescence)	
1.1	Family
1.1.1	Mother
1.1.2	Father
1.1.3	Others
1.2	School
1.2.1	Overall experience
1.2.2	Dropout
1.3	Experiences
1.3.1	Positive
1.3.2	Abuse
1.3.3	Neglect
1.4	Neighbourhood
2. Criminal History	
2.1	Onset
2.1.1	Age
2.1.2	Reasons, circumstances
2.1.3	Reactions
2.2	Prison Experiences
2.2.1	Current sentence

²⁰ Nodes are those numbered 1 while 1.1 and 1.1.1 are child nodes.

	2.2.2 After prison
	2.2.3 Support while imprisoned
	2.2.4 Last sentence
	2.2.5 Lasting impact
2.3	Maintenance
3. Desistance	
3.1	Previous Attempts
	3.1.1 None
	3.1.2 Failed by drug use
	3.1.3 Just intentions
	3.1.4 Job related
3.2	Shame and Remorse
3.3	Agency
	3.3.1 Self-mastery
	3.3.2 Status / Victory
	3.3.3 Achievement / Responsibilities
	3.3.4 Empowerment
	3.3.5 Other forms
3.4	Cognitive Transformations
	3.4.1 Visualisations of alternative selves
	3.4.2 Reparation, give something back
	3.4.3 Being at peace with oneself
	3.4.4 Generativity
	3.4.5 Self-assessment
	3.4.6 Positive attitudes towards change
3.5	Hope, Self-Efficacy and Motivation
3.6	Identity Change
	3.6.1 Prosocial changes
	3.6.2 Changes
	3.6.3 Self-definitions
3.7	Rational Decision
3.8	Attitudes against crime – prosocial
3.9	Ambiguity, intermittencies
3.10	Reasons for offending
3.11	Rituals of passage, certification
3.12	Obstacles, challenges
3.13	Solidarity
3.14	Turning points
3.15	Coping strategies
3.16	Sources of support
3.17	Motivations
4. Persistence	
4.1	Criminal attitudes
4.2	Neutralisation techniques
	4.2.1 Appeal to higher loyalties

	4.2.2	Condemnation of the condemners
	4.2.3	Denial of the victim
	4.2.4	Denial of injury
	4.2.5	Denial of responsibility
4.3		Do not believe in change
4.4		Self-centred
4.5		Turning points for persistence
4.6		Pessimism, lack of control, fatalism
	a.	Antisocial identity
	b.	Deterioration
5. Present Life		
5.1		Social bonds
	5.1.1	Mother
	5.1.2	Friends
	5.1.3	Extended family
	5.1.4	Neighbours
	5.1.5	Children
	5.1.6	Partner
5.2		Emotions
5.3		Relationship with justice
5.4		Everyday activities
5.5		Employment
6. Future		
6.1		Attitudes, emotions, dreams
6.2		Plans
6.3		Not imagined
7. Traumatic Experiences		
7.1		Sexual abuse
7.2		Torture
7.3		Death
7.4		Violence
7.5		Being a survivor
8. Drugs and Alcohol		
8.1		Attitudes
8.2		Milestones
9. Employment History		
9.1		Has never worked
9.2		Work in prison
9.3		Work in the community

10. Other	
10.1	Criminal records
10.2	Historical references
10.3	Criticism of society and the criminal justice system
10.4	Best and worst moments in life
10.5	Gratitude for being interviewed

In the table above, nodes one to six are theory-based according to the areas covered in the Interview Schedule (see Appendix One). However, it became clear that some nodes would necessarily evolve during the analysis. For example, the node 'school' was expected to be rather descriptive, as theory indicates that low school attainment is a high-risk factor for delinquency (Farrington and Welsh, 2007). Nonetheless, 'school dropout' emerged as a prevalent theme among respondents, who elaborated on the circumstances that preceded their disengagement from school, the social reaction, and their sense of loss as a deeply painful experience that was, for many, a milestone in the transition towards deviance. Likewise, the node 'prison experience' was created, as it is known that imprisonment impacts on desistance processes (Maruna and Toch, 2005). The data showed the complexity of the node, then it was necessary to include child nodes addressing different angles of the prison experience, such as the current prison (for those who were incarcerated at the time of interview), the lasting impact of cumulative imprisonment and, interestingly, the last prison sentence. For some participants, their last prison sentence was a milestone, as an interaction between opportunities, cognitive changes, and support by prison staff promoted early movements towards conventional change. It was also identified in the literature review that identity change was described as one of the desistance indicators most researchers agreed on. However, data was not fully supportive of this theoretical idea. It seemed that there were other forms of identity change that were not necessarily prosocial, or did not involve a complete new identity, but still appeared to play a role in abandoning criminal activities. It was necessary to explore the data beyond the theoretical framework to understand if desistance could occur

without full modifications at the level of identity, a process within which the node 'self-definitions' was illuminating.

Nodes seven to ten, although not fully disengaged from theory, were mainly data-driven. Initially, traumatic events were coded within the node 'childhood and adolescence experiences', but soon the narratives showed they were not isolated episodes that occurred in some lives, but were common to the entire sample. While the traumatic experiences at early age had a lasting impact far into adulthood, participants underwent several and diverse forms of trauma throughout their lives, some of which were pivotal for decision-making and identity changes that shaped trajectories of desistance and persistence. 'Drugs and alcohol' and 'employment history' were also considered nodes on their own, as their nature and meaning appeared to be crucial for understanding why some participants desisted while others persisted.

One of the main results of this last stage of coding was that the distinction between persisters and desisters vanished, giving place to more nuanced positions in the offending-conformity continuum that could be empirically justified and related to theoretical knowledge. In addition, there were nodes that appeared relevant along participants' narratives, as those shown from 10.1 to 10.5, whose explanatory potential was to be discovered beyond the axial coding, when the analysis of the narratives was interpreted in the context of the historical, social and economic epochs in which these men had lived.

Stage five: integrative analysis

This qualitative analysis required the examination of a number of sources, such as the last three National Census to observe the evolution of the socio-demographic trends related to marriage, education, employment, and religion, and the extent to which participants belonged to given portions of the Chilean society. I also reviewed documents that conducted historical analyses of periods that participants highlighted in their narratives, for example: the migratory movements in the 1940s and 1950s; the economic crisis in the early-1980s; analyses of the impact of the last three massive earthquakes on the

national development and the cities where participants lived; the evolution of drug use in Chile; analysis of vulnerable neighbourhoods in Santiago; justice and human rights in the dictatorship; and the creation of specialised institutions, among others. Criminal statistics of the last two decades were reviewed, along with analysis of the impact of the Criminal Procedure Reform, examination of changes in sentencing in the last three decades, and the passing of new acts and legal studies.

Altogether, there was an extensive analysis of the historical, social and economic context in which participants had lived, which enriched the interpretation of the narratives and the identification of factors that had impacted on their persistence and desistance pathways. This analysis was key to understanding the social structures and cultural aspects that could have shaped participants' behaviours (Bottoms *et al*, 2004), and how these social structures find their dynamic expressions in 'ways of doing and being' in a given culture (Farrall *et al*, 2009: 83). As a result, the findings discussed in Chapters Four to Seven are grounded in a multi-level analysis that proposes a view of desistance pathways as the interplay between individual-level factors with meso-level influences and macro-level structures (Farrall *et al*, 2011). By conducting the analysis in that way, these desistance pathways show the uniqueness of this sample.

4.7.2 Criminal records and self-report offending data

Both official and self-report data were utilised in the research in order to obtain a full picture of the offending and desisting trajectories of the participants. While acknowledging the limitations in regard to each set of data, drawing upon both can help in exploring 'official' and 'behavioural' desistance respectively (Uggen and Kruttschnitt, 1998), and their use in this research provided a triangulating framework for the exploration of desisting trajectories that were deepened with the analysis of the interviews.

Criminal records

In their study of continuity and change in long-term crime patterns of chronic offenders, Ezell and Cohen (2005) found that arrests measured in periods closer together in time showed greater stability than when measured in longer periods. In the current study, due to the wide age range of participants, criminal records covered a long timeframe that actually showed variations in frequency, seriousness, and nature of the crime-free gaps, a deeper understanding of which was to be found in participants' narratives. In the examination of criminal records of the 11 men interviewed in prison, attention was placed on indicators of deceleration and de-escalation of offending, since the literature warns these phenomena can indicate on-going desisting processes, but can also be the result of unrecorded offending or false desistance (Bushway *et al*, 2004; Sampson and Laub, 2003; Soothill *et al*, 2009). This examination showed that nine of the 11 recently re-imprisoned participants had been frequently offending at least during the year prior to the interview. Nevertheless, two men diverged from these trends, as their criminal records showed deceleration and de-escalation of offending, and crime-free periods of up to five years. The analysis of their interviews was key, as they explored the nature of these crime-free gaps and reductions in offending, and whether they corresponded with desistance processes or with false desistance.

Offending Self-reports

From the 33 men interviewed in the community, 11 self-reported having committed at least one new offence in the preceding year, as shown in table 4.5:

Table 4.5: Self-report data on recent offending

Case	Offence	Last month	Last six months	Last year
1	Theft	X	X	X
2	Theft. Crack cocaine use		X	
3	Alcohol, cocaine use	X	X	
4	Theft		X	
5	Theft		X	X
6	Drug use			X
7	Drug use			X
8	Burglary			X
9	Minor wounds		X	
10	Theft	X	X	X
11	Drug use		X	

Eight men (cases one to eight) self-reported indictable offences like thefts of clothing, heavy drug use²¹, and a domestic burglary, while three men (cases nine to eleven) self-reported actions unlikely to be prosecuted because of their nature or the amount stolen. The analysis of self-report data was crucial for exploring whether some of these apparent desisters were actively offending but had not being caught. Further analysis of their interviews would explore the nature of their reoffending.

4.7.3 Integrated analysis of the three datasets

The triangulation of the analysis of criminal records, self-report data, and interviews proved to be an effective strategy to overcome the deceptiveness of establishing nominal distinctions ‘between desisters and persisters’ (Burnett, 1992: 196), and to explore the rich nuances of the journeys towards desistance, as discussed in section ‘4.1 Research Design’. So far, this analysis suggested

²¹ The use of drugs is not penalised; however, cultivation, possession, carriage and distribution of drugs are crimes, according to the Act. 2000 promulgated in 2005.

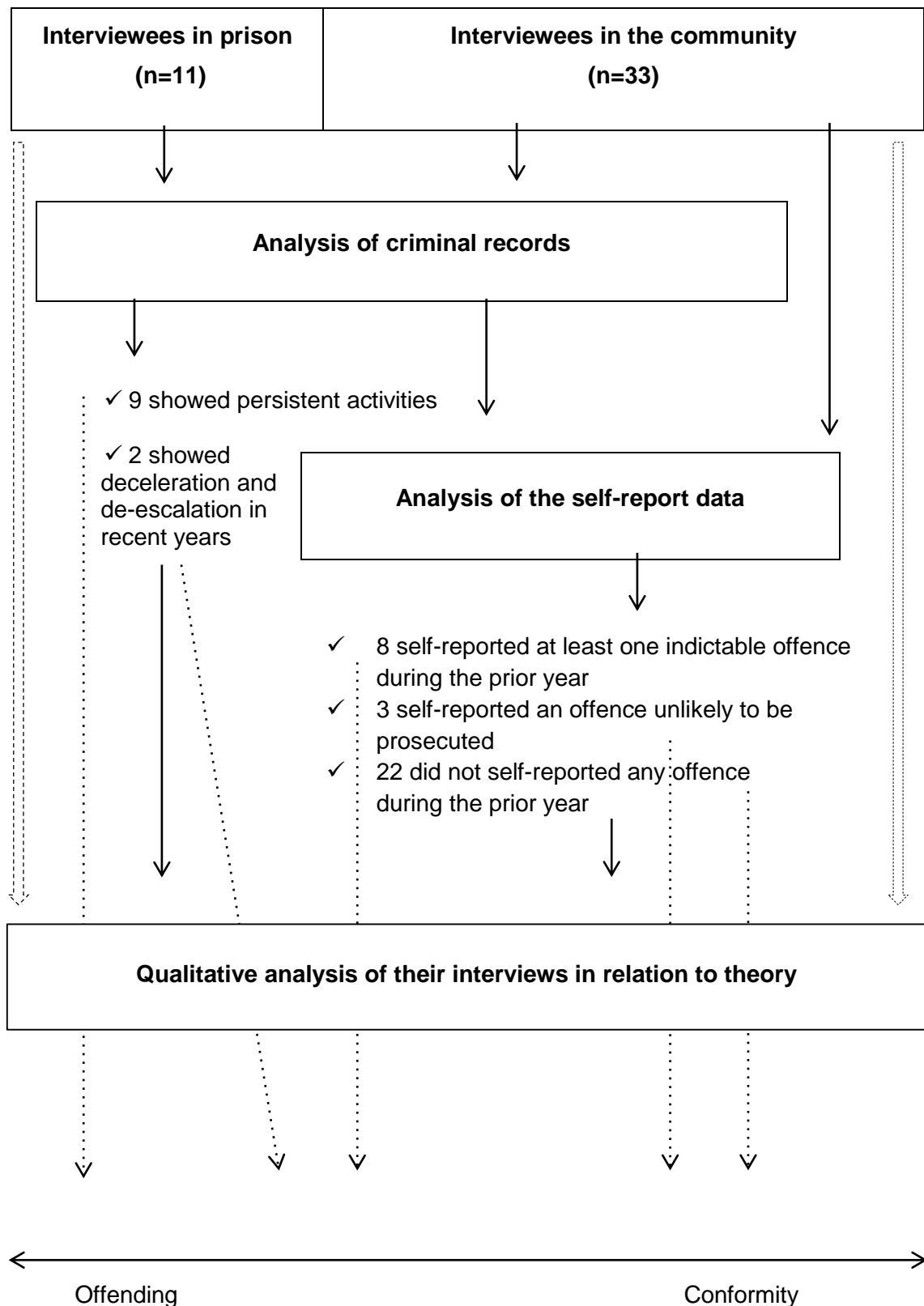
that participants could be allocated within three main positions in the offending-conformity continuum. Closer to the offending end of the continuum there were nine men whose criminal records displayed patterns of persistence, and their narratives showed that their scripts were mostly self-centred, with little evidence of generativity, high presence of attitudes supportive of deviant behaviours, and a sense of a lack of control over their lives, all themes consistent with those described as persisters (Laub and Sampson, 2006; Maruna, 2001).

In a mid-point position there were two men who were imprisoned, whose criminal records suggested deceleration and de-escalation. Their narratives showed a growing concern for others; prosocial identity change; and displays of agency directed towards conventional aims, all of which seemed more consistent with early desisters' narratives (Healy, 2010; King, 2013). In addition, there were eight men in the community who self-reported indictable offences, and while their narratives showed movements towards change, they were still not fully committed to a prosocial identity. Obstacles related to drug use and limited employment opportunities, and a low sense of self-efficacy seemed to be hindering desistance progress (Burnett, 2010).

Closer to the conformity end there were three men interviewed in the community who self-reported offences unlikely to result in a criminal conviction. Their narratives suggested they had undergone changes in their tolerance towards low-level offences, resonating with Paternoster's (1989) claim that these types of modifications in moral evaluation help frame actions supportive of desistance in early stages. Twenty-two men, all of them interviewed in the community who had not reoffended according to their criminal records and self-reports, appeared to be desisters.

Figure 4.1 illustrates the analytical process described above that produced a configuration of positions on the offending–conformity continuum.

Figure 4.1: Analytical process for allocating participants to the offending-conformity continuum



The examination of criminal records, self-report data and narratives aided the development of an early model of how participants were distributed along the continuum. Nonetheless, the dynamics of factors that would permit us to understand the positions in the continuum and how they could be located in the broader esplanade of the desistance processes needed a higher level of qualitative analysis. That is, incorporating the historical perspective and the cultural contexts in which participants have lived in order to develop a 'meaningful and appropriate interpretation of what has been observed' (Bazeley, 2013: 81).

Conclusion

This chapter provided an account of the research design rationale, the procedures, and the ethical considerations undertaken to conduct the study at a high methodological level and to provide solid answers to the research questions. Informed by the literature review, this research design adopted a qualitative approach, understanding desistance as a process. Acknowledging that the right selection of collection tools is key for understanding the nature of the subject studied, criminal records, a self-report tool and semi-structured interviews were used to maximise the chances of producing good quality data.

Participants were selected through a purposive sampling procedure that sought people at different positions in the offending–conformity continuum. A total of 44 males were interviewed. This data was analysed through qualitative techniques, which were integrated with the analyses of criminal records and self-report data. As a result of this analytical process, men were allocated to three positions in the offending-conformity continuum.

A particular challenge of this study that explores desistance in a non-Western society is the understanding of the context of the research, not only the current but also the historical and the cultural contexts in which participants have lived, which constitutes the uniqueness of this sample. These elements are discussed in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER FIVE: SOCIO-HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

All men in this study were born, raised and have lived all their lives in Chile, Latin America, in a social, economic, and political context different to the countries where most desistance studies have been carried out. Participants were born between 1939 and 1987, which means that they have lived through noticeably different epochs of the history of Chile, a developing country that has gone through rapid social, economic and political changes in the second half of the last century. These changes brought about modifications in access to education and the labour market, two social institutions associated with desistance from crime (Laub and Sampson, 2003), and also substantial modifications to the Criminal Justice System. In order to determine whether and how the processes of desistance in Chile differ from those covered in existing studies, it is important to have a broad understanding of the dynamic historical and sociocultural contexts in which participants have lived (Bottoms *et al*, 2004). These contexts are discussed in the first three sections of this chapter. Based on this understanding and building upon the allocation of participants to three positions in the offending-conformity continuum presented in section '3.7 Data Analysis' of the Methodology chapter, the fourth section analyses the narratives of participants in reference to the main models of desistance. This chapter concludes by presenting a theoretical and empirical model of the pathways towards desistance from crime.

5.1 Chile since 1939: Changes of a Developing Country

In the decades after the World's Great Depression, the Chilean economy recovered through strategies of industrialisation, increasing employment opportunities and producing changes in the population by promoting migration from rural to urban areas (Ffrench-Davies, 2010). Although six years of education were compulsory since 1929 (Inzunza, 2009), until the late 1950s many families did not send their children to school, particularly those living in rural areas. This was partly because of the long distances and a lack of public transport but also because they could not afford the loss of the child's labour and the cost of transport. As a result all of the older men in this sample -those

over 55 years old- were either illiterate or had attended school for less than four years:

- Miguel: I felt pity for my parents, really, the enormous sacrifice of my dad, tremendous sacrifice made. We were ten children, and other families had 12 and 14 as well. So I got used to arriving with something for the house, because of the need.
- CV: And back in those days, did you attend school?
- Miguel: Yes, I went to the school and I did my first studies. And I learned to read faster than my brother; I don't know, I had this thing... I began to teach my sister and brother, my older siblings, I taught them... I liked it, I liked it. But in those days there weren't opportunities like now, for example, to request a loan, or to apply for a scholarship, none of those things, there was nothing, no.

The excerpt above illustrates a feature of those times. Families were large and, with no State support and the subsequent economic struggle they faced to bring up their children, this resulted in school abandonment for many children. When Miguel said he got used to arriving home 'with something' he meant stolen food or essentials, a frequent reference in the narratives of older men. Furthermore, those who were part of the migratory movements of the 1940s and 1950s, aimed at improving the economic conditions of rural families, experienced dramatic changes in their circumstances that paradoxically worsened their overall situation. This situation is exemplified in Bernardo's narrative of the period after arriving at a big city in the early 1960s, when he was around ten years old:

- Bernardo: We went round knocking rubbish bins over, ... at this time of the evening the rubbish bins are out, we went through them collecting bread. And the most common theft was from bars or restaurants, which in those days were poorly lit. When the drunks came out and fell over, we went through their pockets but we never hurt anyone who was blind drunk, we just took the opportunity that the person was drunk. ... And begging, we begged.

CV: So you belonged to a group of street children...

Bernardo: That's right, on the street. And we went about looking for opportunities, in those days it wasn't well-lit as I've told you, there were businesses that hung their fruits outside, the bananas... we ran past and grabbed them. We stole things like that but we didn't go around breaking windows to steal a radio, no, no... We were scared, during those years the youth was lily-livered... We weren't harmful.

The excerpt above illustrates that for most of the older men in this sample, onset of offending was related to survival needs. Detached from school and living a street life, the lines between extreme poverty, begging and offending were often blurred.

By 1965, the State provided eight years of compulsory education (Inzunza, 2009), and improvements in other social areas meant that by the end of the 1960s the State had been modernised, reaching a rather stable economy. This situation had a dramatic turnaround in 1973 with the military coup, one of the milestones of recent Chilean history (Ffrench-Davies, 2010). The dictatorship appears as an onset-related theme in several interviews, as most of the older men had experiences with the police that nowadays would be recognised as torture²² and imprinted on them criminal labels at very early ages. Others referred to the dictatorship as the timeframe for the long periods of unemployment their families endured, which prompted them to dropout of school and steal as a means to bring money into their houses. A few men also narrated the loss of relatives and the consequences it brought to their families:

Renato: I was a delinquent since I was very young, I mean, not a delinquent but someone who had to behave badly for his family. Why? We were nine brothers altogether; my mom left us alone when we were all kids... I cannot judge her, she's still my mom, but my brothers can't stand her, because we were hungry, we had a hut where the rain passed straight through and we got

²² According to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment of the United Nations, 1987. A few testimonies are described in Chapter Seven.

all wet... but there we were, the nine brothers together...

CV: And your father?

Renato: My dad was killed in 1973; the military killed him. Then my mom met her current husband and she opted to live with him so she left, and we were left on our own.

The excerpt above demonstrates the impact that the loss of a parent can have in a vital trajectory, as the murder of Renato's father triggered a tragic family situation that facilitated his onset of offending to provide for the house, underpinned by a strong belief that he was responsible for his siblings.

The military dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet (1973-1989) brought about two major changes in Chilean society: first, the enduring social impact of the death and disappearance of thousands of citizens who were victims of crimes against humanity, and second, the worsening of income distribution and poverty due to the implementation of a neoliberal economic system. French-Davies (2010:10) argues the economic change worked in the interests of the wealthier section of Chilean society 'at the expense of medium and low income sectors'. After the election of 1989 that replaced the dictatorship with a democratic government, a number of reforms in the areas of health, employment, and justice were developed to democratise the State and to reflect the principles of the Rule of Law (Riego and Duce, 2009). Nevertheless, despite the marked improvements in the quality of life resulting from these reforms, which placed Chile at the highest human development index in Latin America (UNDP, 2009), the country has the highest income and social inequality index among the countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD, 2013).

Social inequality is apparent among this study sample in two key areas, employment and education. In terms of employment, 73 per cent of men (n=32) from the total sample had worked during the prior 12 months, 50 per cent (n=23) were working at the time of the interview, while around 16 per cent (n=7) had never worked in their adult life. When compared with the national labour

participation rate²³ of 74.2 per cent in 2011 (World Bank Data, 2013), the sample's annual statistic is only slightly lower. Nevertheless, significant differences emerge when observing the quality of employment. None of the men had worked with a contract, and they had usually performed jobs in the informal labour market such as gardeners, labourers, guards, painters, plumbers, open market salesmen, and similar trades which match with the definition of vulnerable employment by the World Bank (World Bank Data, 2013). Vulnerable employment accounted for 24.4 per cent of total employment in Chile in 2008, and it can be concluded that all men in this sample who have worked (over 90 per cent), have done so in vulnerable circumstances of employment, which is overrepresented in this sample.

One of the reasons for the unstable and precarious employment history of participants was their low level of educational achievement. At the time of the interview, men in this sample had completed an average of eight years of school, which is considerably lower than the expected 12 years for the general population in developing countries (OECD, 2013). Considering that around half of the sample (n=23) pursued further studies while in prison, the level of educational attainment in childhood was two years lower. In fact, around four per cent (n=2) never attended school, and almost 90 per cent (n=38) had not completed school, and most abandoned it while in primary education. Altogether, these figures show that most participants were detached from the school system before the age of 14, which is around the same time as their declared age of onset of offending. Indeed, weak bonds to school have been identified as strong indicators of delinquency (Sampson and Laub, 1993). Although this is similar to existing research, the particular socio-economic context of Chile's history may have contributed to this.

²³ Percentage of male population aged 15 and older who are working or searching for a job (World Bank Data, 2013).

5.2 Experiences of School and Dropout

A striking aspect of the childhood narratives of most men is that while most participants (n=33) enjoyed attending school and kept fond memories of those years, they still dropped out. From their adult perspectives, school disengagement represented a relevant loss in their lives, claiming that it placed them in an unequal position in society and constrained their life opportunities. While this may be partly due to the retrospective nature of these narratives, the data still show a relation between the socioeconomic context, education and delinquency. Unravelling the causes behind school abandonment, traumatic events such as the death of, or the abandonment by, one parent or carer, domestic violence, economic struggle, and street socialisation appeared as the most prevalent themes.

Around a third of the men in this sample lived with at least one of their parents during their childhood, while the other two thirds lived in a variety of circumstances such as institutions, with different relatives, with carers, and so on, and most (n=31) experienced chronic domestic violence. A small number of men (n=5) defined themselves as orphans, as they had never met either of their parents, some were abandoned by their mothers during their very early childhood (n=10) and others (n=7) lost one of their parents or close relatives through dramatic deaths, such as suicide or murder:

Boris: I went to school, I mean, my dad sent us to school, but we bega... I mean, we cooked with firewood, we had no bath, we attended school all dirty, and I felt ashamed to go to school because I smelled of smoke... We didn't have a mother who took care of us, washed our clothing, I mean my dad provided, we had food, but not... there was nobody at home waiting for us when we arrived from school, who helped out with homework; he arrived late, drunk, stinking of alcohol...

In the excerpt above, Boris narrated the circumstances after the sudden death of his mother when he was aged 12, which triggered his father's alcoholism and

neglect of his children, preceding Boris's school and home abandonment. Similarly, Osvaldo pointed out the loss of his brother as the milestone of his involvement with offending peers:

Osvaldo: We were six brothers and sisters... I'm the youngest and my older brother was very protective of me, more than anybody, although he was an offender... Not me, I didn't know any of that, I studied, I was the spoiled child of the family! ... I was around 12 years old when my brother was murdered... He was stabbed by four people, and for me that was something that hit me; I was destroyed. They came to comfort me and everything... I got their condolences and all... and I started to get together with them, because there was no one who... nobody else took care of me.

Interestingly, despite being an offender, Osvaldo's brother tried to keep him away from the street life and promoted his school attendance. Nevertheless, as described in the excerpt above, it was among the sons of drug dealers – referred to by Osvaldo as 'them' - where he found the solace he needed and did not find in his family, and with whom he started offending shortly after the murder of his brother. Like Boris and Osvaldo, many men recalled the feelings of isolation and abandonment in their childhoods, having very little support or people to turn to:

Ignacio: My dad was the breadwinner, but then he lost his job, he started drinking, so my mom took over. Then she became hungry for money, we all had to go to the streets and I was just a kid at that time; we were all in the streets and if we couldn't bring money, we had to steal... you had to arrive home with money, it was a rule. ...

CV: You seem very emotional remembering school...

Ignacio: It's that I think in childhood it's your mom and dad who have to worry about the life of the kid, or the teachers. How is that child living? Because if I was a teacher and I saw a child at school that always carries money and is also very collaborative, but skips lots of lessons and has bad grades, well... something is happening. I

took things to school, lots of things and I was 12 years old, 11, and nobody ever asked my mom anything.

The excerpt above exemplifies the frustration expressed by many men for not having someone who cared for them, who was attentive to the changes in their lives, or who offered some advice when necessary. In many cases, the neglect of these children was due to situations of domestic violence, sometimes they were expelled from their houses, or they resorted to the streets as a strategy for avoiding the violent atmosphere at home, as Samuel recalled his experience at the age of ten:

Samuel: I preferred not to be in school or at home, because I knew that at home I wouldn't have anything to eat, that was one thing, and the other was that my dad was there and he beat me... my dad was an alcoholic and when he arrived he hit me for no reason, we could be having dinner, he grabbed a plate and threw it over my head... And that's what affected me, many times I preferred to run away just to not be at home, because I saw the pain of my mother too, the suffering.

This quote from Samuel describes one of the ways through which many participants began a street life, progressively disengaging from school and from their families, and finding the acceptance and recognition they needed among the new friends they met in the streets, which highlights the strong influence of peers in the onset of crime (Warr, 1998). Usually, these new associations entailed the use of drugs and alcohol, a definitive factor in completing their disengagement from school:

Francisco: My dad worked, but he liked drinking and he assaulted my mom... I saw her suffering, washing other people's clothes... so one day I told her 'mom I'm going to the city centre to clean cars', and I returned with money for her. And I began to hang out with other boys, sniffing neoprene, offending... Once I had \$5,000 pesos and I gave them to my mom, she

bought a lot of stuff and she even got some change!
With \$1,000 pesos I had a lot of friends!

Francisco's excerpt exemplifies how domestic violence, economic struggle and the resignation of family members, facilitated the beginning of a street life away from sources of informal social control, which altogether were circumstances that acted as the catalysts to the onset of offending, similarly to what has been described in the literature (Laub and Sampson, 2003; Maruna, 2001). Being a teenager, making new friends and all the stimulating things taking place on the streets made school unappealing for many of these young men. Then, by the age of 15, most men (n=32) were living or spending considerable time on the streets, using drugs and alcohol, and actively offending.

5.3 Early Experiences with the Criminal Justice System

While there is a degree of overlap between the times participants dropped out of school and became involved in offending, there are some differences in the interpretation of the motives for the latter. All participants had been mainly involved in property crime, but while the older men referred more to economic survival needs as reasons for their onset, the younger men mentioned money as a means to obtain drugs, good clothes, and other symbols of status among their peers, as illustrated above in Francisco's quote.

The first experiences with the Justice System were also different between the older and younger participants, as these contacts took place in significantly different epochs of the Chilean Justice System. If, for the older men, their first contacts with the Criminal Justice System consisted of a string of short violent police detentions, for the younger, the first contacts involved several stays in young offenders' institutions that were created in 1980 along with the National Service of Childhood²⁴ to take over the responsibility for dealing with juvenile offenders. Raúl, aged 25, provides an overview of his trajectory in adolescence:

²⁴ It is a government agency, collaborative of the judicial system and dependent on the Ministry of Justice, responsible for the protection of rights of children and adolescents, as well as supervising young offenders.

Raúl: I started to be detained when I was a child.
 CV: What was your first arrest?
 Raúl: To the COD²⁵ Pudahuel... no, that time it was for theft. Back then they used to take you there as a measure of protection, as I was drinking on the streets. They took me to the COD, then I escaped, then I fell again but because of a robbery, I escaped again, then I wasn't arrested, no, no, I was arrested in Maipú and taken to the youth prison in Santiago. Then I was arrested again, for a violent robbery I think, I was there like three months, and I was released. Then I fell to Tiempo Joven, I was there for two months, two months and a half, for a robbery I guess. Then to Buin I think. They asked me: 'you wanna stay?'. Nooo, I didn't want to stay so I left, then I was arrested again, five days, then no more, then to the adult prisons.

The excerpt above illustrates the several interventions that the Juvenile Criminal System made in Raul's life, apparently without much success. The excerpt also reflects the chaotic nature of the experiences for these young men at the time and the impact that lifestyle had on them. By the time they reached the age of 18, over 86 per cent of participants (n=38) had been arrested a number of times, and most of the younger participants had been institutionalised in protection and young offenders' institutions. Along with a street life and school dropout, these young men's circumstances brought about a rapid weakening of the connecting structures and social bonds which are crucial at this stage of the socialisation process (Sampson and Laub, 1993; Laub and Sampson, 2003). Most of them were sentenced under the adult law and sent to prison shortly after turning 18 years old.

5.4 The Journey towards Conformity

So far, participants might appear as a homogeneous group as it became apparent that they shared a number of socioeconomic background features, experienced similar stressful early life experiences such as traumatic losses,

²⁵ COD is the acronym for Centre of Guidance and Diagnosis institution belonging to the National Service of Childhood in a time when there was not a specialised law for young offenders.

street socialisation, and school dropout, and, by the age of 18, most had already been in contact with the Criminal Justice System. However, when shifting the observation from these general patterns to their individual lives, this apparent homogeneity disappeared as large variations both in their personal experiences (family formation, employment, education) and offending trajectories (patterns of arrests, criminal convictions, reasons for persistence) were observed. This is consistent with Ezell and Cohen's claim (2005: 257) that variations in criminal patterns during adulthood 'cannot be simply argued as the long-term consequences of childhood propensities'. Indeed, participants made their transitions to adulthood in strikingly different ways and it appeared that significant relationships, family formation, employment opportunities, and experiences with the Criminal Justice System shaped their trajectories.

Building on the analysis of their narratives, criminal records, and self-report data, individuals were allocated to three broad positions along the offending–conformity continuum as described in Chapter Four (See Figure 4.1). Subsequently, having achieved an understanding of each one of their particular lives as well as of the entire sample (n=44) in a socio-historical context, these positions were analysed in reference to the desistance literature.

As discussed in Chapter Two, diverse theoretical approaches place different emphasis on the factors that might explain desistance; nonetheless, recent theorisations have stressed the relevance of the interaction between structure and agency in bringing about change. Weaver (2014) proposes that the models delineated by Giordano *et al* (2002), Vaughan (2007), and Bottoms and Shapland (2011) to explain that interaction, are broadly compatible and therefore useful for comparative purposes. These three models, as summarised in table 5.1, were used as analytical references:

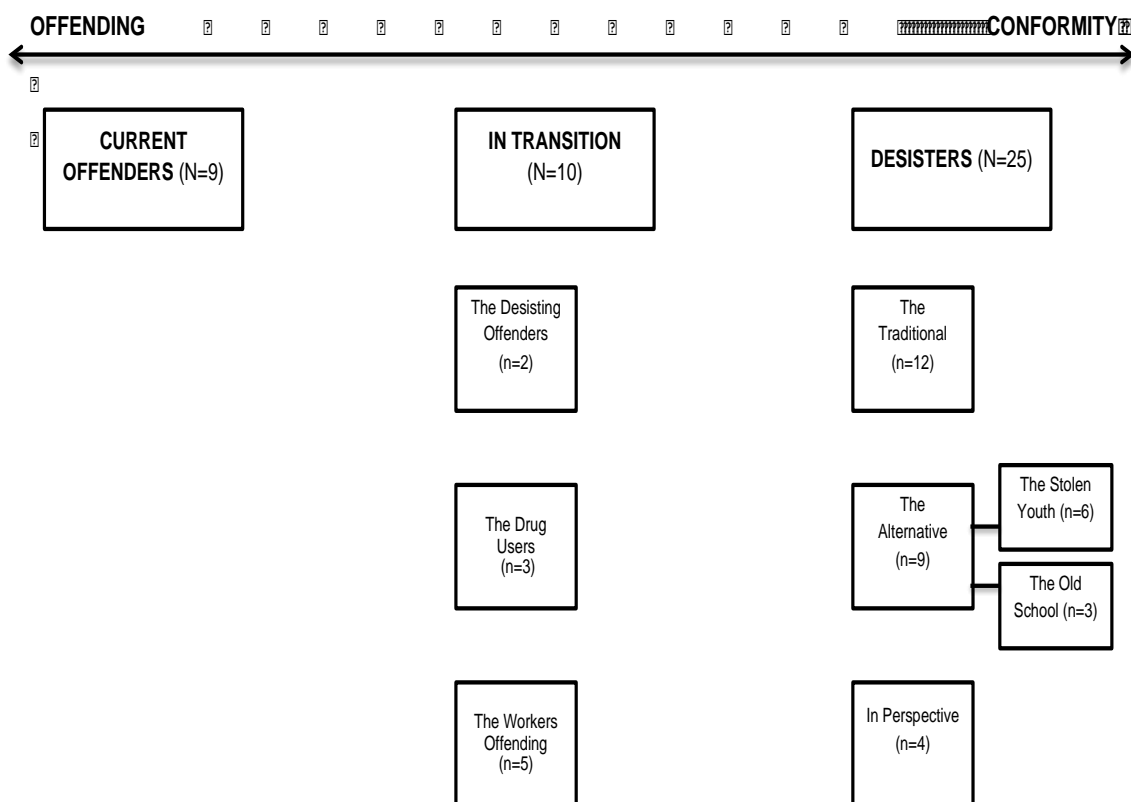
Table 5.1: Three models of desistance

Giordano <i>et al</i> (2002)	Vaughan (2007)	Bottoms and Shapland (2011)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. General cognitive openness to change 2. Exposure to 'hooks for change' 3. Availability of an appealing and conventional self 4. Reassessment of attitudes to deviant behaviours 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discernment: review of possible lifestyle choices 2. Deliberation: review of pros and cons of various options (a comparison of possible selves) 3. Dedication: commitment to a new non-criminal identity 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Current offending is influenced by a triggering event 2. The wish to try to change 3. Begins to think differently about himself and surroundings 4. Take actions towards desistance 5. Attempts maintenance – the individual may encounter obstacles, temptation or provocations which trigger relapse 6. The individual finds reinforcers 7. Realizes crime-free identity as a non-offender

Weaver, 2014: 10

A central feature across the three models of desistance is that the last stage is achieved when the individual is committed to a non-criminal identity. Whereas the idea that individuals can achieve a stage of complete desistance is contentious, as discussed in Chapter Three, the evidence suggests the existence of 'a series of sequential phases that individuals progress through on their journey to becoming a 'desister'' (King, 2013: 64). This idea of a process whose phases move towards a stage of non-criminal identity was the key reference to analyse the extent to which the Chilean empirical data showed consistency with desistance evidence. The result of this analysis is represented in Figure 5.1. It must be stressed that these positions are not fixed or exclusive, but reflect the particular dynamic configuration of structural and subjective factors that give rise to a certain sense of identity.

Figure 5.1: The offending–conformity continuum



As shown in Figure 5.1, nine men were classified as Current Offenders. Their narratives showed three salient themes which were particular to this group: identification with antisocial lifestyle; an overall sense of lack of control over their lives; and self-centred motivations and a low level of reflection about the impact of their offending activities. All of these are features that have been associated with narratives of persisters (Laub and Sampson, 2003; Maruna, 2001).

Ten men were allocated as In Transition towards desistance. Serin and Lloyd (2009) propose the concept of a 'transition stage' to refer to the 'gradual changes in behaviour, perspective and attitude that somehow bridge the disconnection between the once-active offender and now-desisted offender' (Serin and Lloyd, 2009: 351). Leibrich (1993) develops the concept of 'curved desistance' to indicate the period when desisting participants in her study had ended serious criminal involvement yet still committed minor offences. The

notion of a 'grey area' in desistance comes from the study by Maruna *et al* (2004a: 223) where they found participants that 'could not be categorized as either 'desisting' or 'persisting' but were rather in the grey area somewhere in between'. Drawing upon Turner's liminal theory that explains how individuals exist 'betwixt and between' two social worlds, Healy (2010: 35) suggests that during the liminal stage individuals build a new identity by taking distance from their previous selves, although they are still not fully integrated into the new, conventional world. These ideas of a transitional stage in the desistance journey seem consistent with the ten men who appeared to have started the desisting journey but were still not fully committed to a crime-free identity, either behaviourally, morally, or emotionally.

Twenty-five men were considered as Desisters, a position containing three distinctive pathways: The Traditional Pathway and two Alternative Pathways. There was also a group found to have unique characteristics that categorised them as Desisters in Perspective. The Traditional Pathway comprises twelve men whose desistance processes had striking similarities with those described in the existing models of desistance, mainly achieving significant changes at the level of identity, one of the aspects many researchers concur on (Bottoms *et al*, 2004; Giordano *et al*, 2002; Laub and Sampson, 2001; Maruna, 2001; Maruna *et al*, 2004; Shover, 1996; Sommers *et al*, 2004; Vaughan, 2007). The name of the pathway is taken from the resemblances between the processes of these men and the models of reference.

While important changes at the level of identity are key aspects in the evidence and of those in the Traditional Pathway, not all of the desisters in this sample had gone through them and these experiences are encompassed in The Alternative Pathways. Six men within this pathway had managed to stay away from crime after having been sentenced to prison for up to twenty years when they were around 18 years old. These long imprisonments precluded them from the opportunities to experience parenthood, marriage, or work, which Uggen, Manza and Behrens (2004) indicate are adulthood markers that signal the successful transition to adulthood, and which have also been identified as crucial for desistance (Laub and Sampson, 2003). The fact that they had spent

all of their twenties and part of their thirties in prison had a huge influence in the development of their adult identities. Therefore, their desistance challenges were mostly related to survival and adaptation in a conventional world that was totally new for them. This pathway was named The Stolen Youth as the idea that their best years were 'taken' from them by the Criminal Justice System is reiterated in their narratives. Three men of the Alternative Pathways defined themselves as thieves from The Old School of crime, belonging to a generation when crime was a trade that followed procedural rules and moral standards that validated them in their social contexts. They felt proud of their solidarity, the respect they showed for human life, and the social meaning they found in their criminal activities. Although they had not offended for many years, they still felt strongly related to this old criminality.

The four Desisters in Perspective had completed their last prison sentence between 18 and 40 years ago, and were interviewed as they fulfilled the inclusion criteria. Nonetheless, they were not included in any of the desistance pathways because of potential methodological biases. The accounts of the times they offended and how they desisted were blurred, and it seemed that elements of intentionality attribution (Farrall and Bowling, 1999), and cognitive rationalisations (Weaver and McNeill, 2010) were present.

Conclusion

This chapter provided a glimpse of the main social, economic, and political changes in Chile during the last six decades, suggesting the influences they had in participants' life-stories during their early years. The vast majority of participants lived in situations of poverty, in socially excluded areas where the increasing neoliberal development did not reach all citizens equally. Moreover, most participants lived in houses with high levels of domestic violence, and experienced traumatic events that deepened the instability in their lives.

Despite the increasing access to education through recent decades, most participants left school at approximately the age of 12, at around the same time they became involved in offending. A likely indication of the evolution of the

economic development of the country is that the older men usually started offending because of serious economic needs at home, while most of the younger men did so as part of the lifestyle of their peer groups. Their low level of educational achievement seems to have played an influence in their precarious employment history later in adulthood. Changes in the Criminal Justice System are also reflected in their narratives. The older participants were vulnerable children in a country where protection services were unavailable and children on the street were treated with the rigour of adult criminal law, under the rule of the Pinochet dictatorship. The modification in the way the State dealt with youth deviance, that is, through the creation of a specialised service, is revealed in the younger participants' accounts of the several, yet unproductive, stays in institutions for young offenders. Then, by the time they reached the legal age of criminal responsibility, the majority of participants had had several contacts with the Criminal Justice System and shortly after most were sentenced to adult prisons.

Their adult offending trajectories of persistence and desistance, nonetheless, showed large variations. Their positions in the offending-conformity continuum were analysed in reference to three widely used models of desistance that propose the existence of sequential stages that progress to a non-criminal identity. Five positions were identified, Current Offenders and men In Transition to Desistance (Chapter Six), the Traditional Pathway (Chapter Seven), and The Stolen Youth and The Old School that conform the Alternative Desistance Pathways (Chapter Eight).

CHAPTER SIX: ACTIVE OFFENDERS AND MEN TRANSITIONING TO DESISTANCE

This chapter is concerned with two positions of the offending-conformity continuum. The first section discusses the Current Offenders, whose high identification with criminal lifestyles and associated subjective features showed consistency with existing literature on persistence in crime. Drug addiction appeared to be one of the factors that accounted for sustaining their criminal activity. This is associated with the cumulative impact of short imprisonments, which appeared to have affected their abilities to overcome drug addiction and deal with aspects of personal and social life that are relevant for moving towards conformity. The second section discusses participants who are In Transition towards desistance, a heterogeneous group of men who appear to be in the early stages of change. Nevertheless, their efforts to integrate into the conformist society are hindered by issues of addiction, unstable employment, low self-confidence to conduct themselves in the conventional world, and lack of social certification.

6.1. The Current Offenders: An Overview

*Prison, prison... I wouldn't like to say this but prison
is the second home of... a criminal.*
Simón

At the time of the interview, most current offenders were single, as a group they had achieved an average of six years of formal education, none of them had worked or participated in any kind of community activity in the months prior to their last prison sentence, and the majority reported having an ongoing drug or alcohol dependency. Regarding their criminal histories, they had an average age of onset at around the age of 12, had been mainly convicted for property crimes, and they had spent from less than a year to over fourteen years in prison. These features are shown in Table 6.1:

Table 6.1 Socio-demographic and offending trajectories features of Current Offenders²⁶

Name	Age	Relationship	N children	N years of formal education	Age of onset	N prison sentences	Last prison sentence	Total N months in prison	Working	Community participation	Current oh / drug use
Raúl	25	cohabitant	0	4	8	4	burglary	45	no	no	yes
Diego	25	cohabitant	1	8	13	3	robbery	18	no	no	yes
Hernán	32	single	1	5	14	10	theft	100	no	no	yes
Fabián	36	single	0	11	17	4	theft	6	no	no	yes
Rodolfo	37	single	2	1	12	10	robbery	150	no	no	no
Felipe	40	single	3	3	10	11	violence	18	no	no	yes
Fernando	41	single	6	12	12	10	theft	120	no	no	yes
Victor	49	single	2	6	12	13	bike theft	139	no	no	no
Simón	54	married	3	4	10	10	vehicle theft	169	no	no	no
	37,67			6	12	8,33		85			

Few desistance studies have included references of persistent offenders in their samples, although Maruna (2001) and Laub and Sampson (2003) are notable exceptions. Maruna (2001) characterised the scripts of persisters in his study as having a self-perception solely in terms of deviance, a sense of powerlessness to change their behaviour, and a view of themselves as victims of circumstances. Little evidence of agency or optimism was found in their scripts, which have an emphasis on consumption of drugs and money. Overall, the narratives of Current Offenders in this study strongly resonate with Maruna's findings and, as mentioned, they are characterised by identification with a criminal lifestyle and a sense of lack of control over their circumstances and future.

²⁶ Similar tables will be presented for each pathway. The names are pseudonyms. Information on Relationships status, N° of children, Age of onset, Work, Community participation, and Current use of alcohol and/or drugs was obtained from the interviews. The information in three items related to prison was obtained from Criminal Records. The N° of years of formal education was calculated in reference to the last school course completed, the maximum being 12. The Total N° of months in prison was calculated combining information in the criminal records and interviews. Working and Community participation represented whether the participant was working at the time of the interview, or before entering prison.

6.1.1 Identification with a criminal lifestyle

Overall, Current Offenders in this sample showed beliefs and attitudes supportive of their criminal lifestyle, deeming property offending as their job and prison as their 'second home'. A striking aspect of their interviews is that all introduced themselves as offenders, such as 'I'm Felipe, and I'm an ordinary offender, as all of us. I'm a person like all of us who are inside this prison'. Or: 'I'm Fernando, inmate of the Penitentiary who is here for several thefts. What else can I tell you? That I'm patiently waiting for my freedom next January'. While there was the contextual element of having been interviewed in prison, their introductions implied a certain resignation, an undifferentiated position among the multitude of prisoners with whom they lived.

Moreover, Current Offenders devoted a significant portion of the interview describing their criminal activities and prison stories, suggesting their self-perceptions revolved around offending values and lifestyles. Overall, the resignation sense and the criminal self-perceptions, echo the 'condemnation scripts' distinctive of persisters in Maruna's study (2001). They narrated these stories from a self-centred viewpoint that disregarded others, particularly their victims, as illustrated in the following excerpt:

Diego: The moment you are there, performing the offence, yes you feel nervous; but then, you arrive home and you just don't care, you don't care at all because you're at your house.

Similarly, Raúl described his interests:

Raúl: When I'm outside I like watching TV, the animals, the Discovery Channel and all that. I'm not so much into cartoons, but I do like movies, being with my partner, that she is there right next to me, taking care of me, being with her, caressing her. Beyond that point, I don't care about nobody at all.

These excerpts illustrate the absence of interest Raúl and Diego showed beyond their more immediate and self-centred needs, indicating a reduced level of empathy (Bottoms and Shapland, 2011) and a lack of concern for others (Gove, 1985). The analysis of these elements should consider the broader context of the places where they lived, where drug dealing, high levels of violence and limited action from the State configure scenarios of low levels of social cohesion and collective action, and reduced opportunities for young people to engage in community life (Manzano, 2009).

Indeed, a relational and an internal factor appeared to be contributing to criminal identification. The first was related to the fact that most of those who conformed the Current Offenders' close relationships were engaged in offending and drug use; therefore, their social network validated offending lifestyles. The internal factor was the lack of personal agency that transpired in their stories, in which external powers such as God or 'drugs' had outlined their destinies.

Relationships that support offending lifestyles

Desistance research has shown that having a good quality relationship is associated with desistance from crime, especially from the late 20s (Sampson and Laub, 1993; Shover, 1983). While the majority of Current Offenders had widely surpassed the age of 30, most were single, some mentioned the difficulty of finding a partner as they had to change their location periodically to avoid the police, while some had separated because their spouses got tired of their addictions and constant detentions. Those in a relationship had partners who were either involved in offending, or tolerant and supportive of their lifestyles:

Raúl: Now I was living with my partner in M. neighbourhood. On top of everything I live next to the drugs... well, in my own house they deal drugs, not my partner, no... but they sell drugs there. (*Silence*) Well, my partner too, once in a while she deals on the street.

The excerpt above illustrates how usual it is for some men to live in environments where most people offend. In Raúl's case it was his partner, his partner's family and even the neighbourhood that were related to drug dealing, a situation that contributed to his difficulty to overcome his drug addiction. He described their everyday activities:

- Raúl: I do everything, everything, everything, all sorts of thefts, robberies, houses, cars...
- CV: By your voice tone and body expression I can tell that you enjoy stealing...
- Raúl: Yes, yes, the houses, break into the main bedroom, steal jewellery, the plasma television, looking for money, cash, sometimes there're guns inside the houses, and well, all sorts of expensive electrical appliances, digital cameras, mobiles, everything!
- CV: And what are your motivations?
- Raúl: I steal to keep on getting stoned, when I run out of money I talked to my wife's nephew who's also a drug addict and we go to steal whatever we can take, a purse, a bag, a mobile, anything really. We got on a bus and we return with money, mobiles, and goods... I stole for money, that's it, that's it; I stole for money!

In this excerpt, Raúl confirmed that offending was part of the routine activities he performed with relatives, also showing a sort of fascination for material goods. Maruna *et al* (2004b: 279) argued that much criminal activity 'is maintained by rewards that are extrinsic (status, riches) or fleeting (the buzz of a drug)', which seemed to be the case for Raúl and others who emphasised the expensive lifestyle they could sustain by offending, which is also enjoyed by their families and spouses:

- Simón: My wife is used to the idea that I come to prison from time to time. What happens is that she's been with me for such a long time that she also has this mentality, I mean, she's not a criminal, no, but she has the same mind I have, maybe influenced by me because I've taught her a lot, to survive these bad times for example. I've always been a criminal interested in family life, and because of that I need that my wife is at home, I have

to produce money to provide her with what she needs, her stuff, so she's not looking somewhere else, or looking for a job where she can meet a new man ... And she likes this lifestyle, going to restaurants, nice cars, travelling, she has never told me to stop or something.

Simón had been married for over thirty years and reported having a good relationship from which three children were born. While his story might seem as contradicting the idea that a good quality relationship promotes desistance, it resonates with Giordano *et al's* (2002) assertion that more important than the relationship itself it is the prosocial orientation of the partner for understanding the dynamics that support or refuse the offending activities of a spouse. As seen in the excerpt above, Simón's partner had accepted his activities and, apparently, his numerous imprisonments have been events for which they prepared in advance.

Stories that lacked personal agency

A relevant aspect of identity is the way in which people make sense of life events. One intriguing finding is that almost all men in the study sample survived an extreme incident that put their lives at risk. While desisters usually construed these events as a wake-up call or opportunity to make life changes (as described in Chapters Seven and Eight), Current Offenders interpreted similar events as bad luck, or as a message of reassurance of their lifestyles, as illustrated in Fernando's account:

Fernando: The Lord saved my life here when some inmates tried to kill me. I was unconscious, I had a spear wound here, a broken leg here, I was dead and everybody believed that. It was an intentional attack but I didn't die. The Lord gave me another chance... because I like what I do. The Lord told me 'you've been faithful to me in jail; I'll give you life as a gift when you leave this prison'. I understood: free will, I can do whatever I want with my life. One day the Lord said to me: 'look out that your good deeds exceed your evil deeds. The

one who rescues souls is wise'. I thought: I also rescue souls. The Lord taught me to have life, and the only way to have life is when there is good and evil, otherwise there is no life. ... I've realised nobody has been able to kill me, until today, supposedly I should be dead, but the Lord says: 'no, nobody touches that one'. ... My mission here is to save souls, if there's one soul to save, I'm there to rescue it, and if I have to go to the hell, to the Penitentiary, which indeed is hell, I go there and rescue a soul. And if I have to go to heaven, because for me streets are heaven, I go.

CV: Your mission is to save souls wherever you are...

Fernando: Regardless of what I do. ... I like what I do, I like teaching, because now I teach, I teach the young fellas. Also, how many young women have I taken out from clubs? I take them out; I rescue them and tell them: 'look, instead of doing what you do, I'm going to teach you something that won't discredit you so much as a person'. Then I take them to the shops, I buy them the tools to take the alarms out and I teach the girls how to put goods in the body...

CV: What you're telling me is that you take these girls out of the sex trade to take them to a different world, shoplifting?

Fernando: Yes. Without hurting anyone, that's the bottom line, as I do believe in God.

In the excerpt above, Fernando provided a detailed account of his process of thinking and behaving after suffering the homicide attack. He elaborated how he rewarded God's protection and the gift of a new chance, by embarking on the moral mission of saving souls. Removing women from the sexual trade and introducing them to the property offending trade was in Fernando's view a way of upgrading women's honour. This position of a saviour seems to provide him a respected position in the criminal world, echoing to the idea of criminal self-efficacy described by Brezina and Topalli (2012).

The idea of God as a supreme force that commands and saves them was recurrent theme among Current Offenders. While most had a Catholic upbringing, six of them approached the Evangelic church and three of them had

lived in the Evangelic sections over their last prison sentences²⁷. Maruna, Wilson and Curran (2006) argue that the religious conversion narrative in prison serves as a shame management and coping strategy as it 'creates a new social identity to replace the label of prisoner or criminal, imbues the experience of imprisonment with purpose and meaning, empowers the largely powerless prisoner by turning him into an agent of God, provides the prisoner with a language and framework for forgiveness, and allows a sense of control over an unknown future' (Maruna *et al*, 2006: 161). What was found among these offenders was that Evangelic conversion, while helping men in building a new identity and providing more meaning to the prison experience, seems to be related with gaining a sense of control over their current lives, also serving as a coping strategy for dealing with drug addictions and issues of personal safety.

While interviewing Diego, one of the youngest men in the sample, he repeated the idea of 'feeling better' in prison, and when enquired about that feeling, he replied:

- Diego: Yes, I do. I guess the Lord is giving me another chance, I didn't listen to my family, they told me to quit the drugs, quit offending, that I should work, and I didn't listen. So I thank God for having me here because now I can quit drugs. Although there're drugs inside if I wanted to use.
- CV: And in these three months you've been here, have you used them?
- Diego: Not at all, I entered prison and I entrusted myself to the Lord.
- CV: And what is the Lord going to do that yourself or your family haven't done before?
- Diego: I don't know, I cannot explain well, the Lord is almighty and he can change a man's life, I know people who were changed by the Lord.

²⁷ In Chilean prisons, Evangelics live in separated sections, which are known for their distinctive order, cleanliness, and non-violent atmosphere. Aspirants to live in these sections have to undergo a trial period to demonstrate their genuine interest in the religion.

The excerpt above suggests that Diego, in a desperate search for staying away from drugs, surrendered to the power of the Lord. It is noteworthy that he did not know anybody who had desisted from crime outside the sphere of religion, which was the case for many Current Offenders, some of whom did not know anybody who had desisted from crime. Instead of empowering, the conversion narrative seems to weaken these men's agency as they put the control of their lives into the Lord's hands. It is not argued that Evangelic conversion *per se* acted as a debilitating force, the argument here is that Current Offenders who had recently converted were still overwhelmed by a number of obstacles such as drug addictions that overtook their coping abilities, which in turn impede individuals' ability to make changes and desist from crime (Zamble and Quinsley, 1997).

6.1.2 A sense of lack of control over their lives

Related to the idea that only an external power can change their lives, Current Offenders' narratives contained two outstanding elements: a sense of determinism, and a pessimistic outlook of the future, all of which configure a strong sense of powerlessness, or lack of control over their current and future lives:

Fernando: Recapping, the reasons that made me an offender are first, that my mom kicked me out of the house; second, that my aunt didn't open the door for me to enter that night. Those are the two main reasons that turned my life into criminality.

The excerpt above illustrates the idea of determinism, as Fernando states that two quite specific events that occurred around three decades ago defined who he became, an offender. Besides the actions of others, another commonly cited source of determinism was drug use from an early age:

Fabián: I sat on the third grade at high school and I had problems at home, so I decided to work, parking cars on the streets. I put studies aside, because I started

smoking pot, going to parties, arriving late at home. At that point my deterioration as a person started, I got stuck to crack cocaine, and that is a permanent addiction, the person looks awful, begins to sell their things and take things from home, I reached that end, and although I regret that, then I began going to prison again and again.

Although Fabián listed the situations and circumstances that seem to have influenced his drug addiction and involvement in offending, he narrated his story as if those were events that happened independently of his own actions and decisions, as sequential steps of an inevitable circle of offending and imprisonment. This idea of determinism strongly resonates with Maruna's finding (2001: 75) that active offenders in his sample 'saw their life scripts as having been written for them a long time ago', usually locating turning points in early childhood.

Likewise, the Current Offenders saw their lives as immobile and spoke about themselves in static terms, as when Fabián refers to 'deterioration' and 'permanent addiction' underlying a notion of irreversible harm, of the 'damaged and wasted' life described in Laub and Sampson's persisters (2003: 190). Closely related to this is a very limited sense of agency, another feature of Current Offenders' narratives, as illustrated in the following excerpts, when Raúl and Felipe are asked for their thoughts about the immediate future and their plans after release:

- Raúl: I'd like to be completely changed; it's my dream... To change a bit... change in the way of not using drugs anymore, I don't want to use drugs anymore....
- CV: Do you think you will achieve that?
- Raúl: Hopefully God wills it. I think the solution is to be admitted, it's not easy, it's not something you can do overnight, I like the booze and I like drugs. I don't know, I don't know. Hopefully God wills.
- CV: I feel you do not have much confidence you will quit using drugs...
- Raúl: Yes.

- CV: Maybe later? How do you imagine yourself when you're 30?
- Raúl: I don't know. I wish not in prison... otherwise, in a hospital or dead. I'm going too fast.

In the excerpt above, Raúl started firmly by saying he would like to be 'completely changed', but his words weaken and he finished his reflection wishing not to be dead soon, suggesting that he was not capable of making the necessary changes in his life to avoid that dreaded outcome. Paternoster and Bushway (2009) formulated the concepts of 'possible self' and 'feared self' to describe how individuals envision their future selves if they introduced modifications in their lives and if they continued offending, respectively. The deterrence effect of the 'feared self' that is observed in desisters, was not sufficient for him to prompt transformative actions, mainly because Raúl felt condemned to drug addiction, similarly Felipe articulated that:

- Felipe: I want to work; I'd like to work. I don't know, going to the south, yes I would go to the south. Or I'd search for a job here in Santiago, but it's harsh not going back to the same...
- CV: You're implying you'll be back to your same old habits?
- Felipe: Yes. The routine leads you there, the habits, everything. And the desire to smoke, when you have some money you get some booze, and then your tummy starts aching because you want to smoke and you'll relapse. You'll be back to the same.
- CV: You mean using drugs or offending?
- Felipe: Well, the drug is one part, you can be... ok, you smoke some crack cocaine and then when it's gone, you want to smoke more. It's then when you go out to steal anything you find, sell it and smoke more, and then again. Until they catch you and you're back to prison. And you're back here again.
- CV: You don't seem very optimistic about the future...
- Felipe: Not at all! Maybe attending the church, trying that the Lord changes us, working for a while but I've done that so many times with no results... Only the Lord, I think that's it. I know the Lord has taken a few fellas out of the drugs, because I've been in several

rehabilitation centres and nothing has happened to me. You're always the same, rehabilitated for a while, a couple of months, and then you're out again, your friends... It's difficult.

Felipe's words illustrate the reiteration of ideas present in most Current Offenders' narratives, such as that only the Lord can change a person, that drugs and imprisonment are part of an inescapable circle, and that in any scenario they will be back to that circle. These findings echo the idea that active offenders feel they are 'doomed to a life of crime and punishment' in the work of Maruna (2001: 79), as they feel hopelessness about finding themselves in prison and caught by drug addictions again. They usually mention their unsuccessful previous efforts to quit drugs, as when Felipe says 'I've done that so many times with no results', referring to a number of actions he had embarked on but which had been ineffective to achieve his aims. These antecedents have affected his sense of self-efficacy, understood as 'the belief that one can perform well at a given task' (Bandura, 1997 cited in Brezina and Topalli, 2012: 1042), and his sense of hope, as explained by LeBel *et al* (2008: 570) as 'the perception of successful agency related to goals and the perceived availability of successful pathways related to goals'.

Felipe's excerpt illustrates the close association between hope, self-efficacy and agency, and how a damaging relationship between these three subjective factors can contribute to persistence in crime. Nevertheless, there are structural factors that can influence an individual's perceived efficacy, as noted by Bottoms *et al* (2004) who argued that agency can be limited by a lack of full contextual awareness. It is proposed that recent changes in sentencing, such as the introduction of short sentencing for petty property crime, had a significant impact in the evolution of current offenders, having a negative impact on their agency.

6.1.3 The impact of short sentencing

Laub and Sampson (2003: 188) found that one of the most salient features of persistent offenders in their study was 'the exorbitant amount of time served in

jails and prisons'. Analysis of their criminal history data show that on average Current Offenders had spent significantly less time in prison (85 months) than desisters (156 months). However, Current Offenders had the second highest number of prison sentences (8.3), only surpassed by The Old School Thieves who are over twenty years older than the group of Current Offenders. This information suggests that Current Offenders have served more yet shorter prison sentences, when compared with the overall sample.

A possible explanation for this resides in modifications to the criminal law in the last decade that introduced imprisonment for recidivists committing thefts of less than 20 pounds when the offender is a recidivist, modifications that have led to more people being sentenced to prison for minor offences and for very short periods of time (Salinero, 2012). The analysis of criminal records showed that Current Offenders, either individually or as a group, concentrated the highest number of short prison sentences, as short as several sentences of 21 days. This situation has had a direct impact on individuals trying to pursue changes in their lives, as in Chilean prisons, inmates serving sentences of less than a year are usually ineligible for applying for education, training or early release permissions. Indeed, research has shown the largely negative impact that short prison sentences can have on people's lives by disrupting their social networks of support (Social Exclusion Unit, 2002). Furthermore, short prison sentences can impede pursuing rehabilitation aims within prisons (Hedderman, 2008).

Armstrong and Weaver (2010: 9) propose that it is not a single sentence but the 'cumulative effect of doing many short sentences' which account for the negative impact of short-term imprisonment, which affects the ability of individuals 'to deal with drug and alcohol issues, strengthen family relationships, and become employable'. Sampson and Laub (1993) identified three main pathways that take offenders away from crime. Two of them are strong bonds to work, and strong bonds to a spouse, which have been exactly the kind of bonds affected by short imprisonments among Current Offenders. Overall, findings in this study resonate with the evidence described above, as the overall life situation for most Current Offenders in this study has been progressively

deteriorated by short stays in prison that have disrupted emergent efforts to study, work, or strengthen relationships. Two representative cases of offenders who have been trying to move towards desistance for some time, but have been affected by short imprisonments, are addressed in the following section.

6.2 Men in the Transition to Desistance: an Overview

At the time of the interview, men in Transition to Desistance were aged 27 to 47, the majority were single, half of them were working while half were unemployed, and most were not participating in any community activities. Most reported using alcohol or drugs. They self-reported offending onsets ranging from the age of nine to the age of 25, as a group they had spent an average of eight years in prison distributed throughout several sentences, and they had been back in the community for just over a year. These features are shown in table 6.2.

Table 6.2: Socio-demographic and offending trajectories features of Men Transitioning to Desistance

Name	Age	Relationship	N children	N years of formal education	Age of onset	N prison sentences	Last prison sentence	Total N months in prison	Months since he left prison	Working	Community participation	Current oh / drug use
Arturo	27	cohabitant	0	10	17	3	theft	78	16	yes	yes	yes
Danilo	27	cohabitant	1	6	13	12	theft	75	n/a	no	no	yes
Juvenal	30	single	0	12	17	2	robbery	57	17	yes	no	yes
Gaspar	32	cohabitant	2	15	21	3	robbery	50	16	no	no	no
Samuel	37	single	0	11	10	6	theft	50	n/a	no	no	yes
Camilo	39	single	3	12	25	10	theft	12	12	no	no	yes
Francisco	41	single	1	11	15	7	theft	152	23	yes	no	yes
Pedro	41	single	0	6	13	10	robbery	264	12	yes	no	yes
Ignacio	44	single	6	8	9	19	theft	180	12	no	yes	yes
Enrique	47	cohabitant	2	12	20	7	theft	36	19	yes	yes	yes
36,50				10,30	16	7,90		95,40	15,88			

The analysis of the interviews of participants In Transition showed high heterogeneity among their experiences with crime and the reasons why they still have not ceased offending completely. All of them shared the common feature of being in the process of building a conventional identity. Those in prison were probably at the beginning of the process while those working were likely to be in a much more advanced stage, but all were bridging the gap between ‘the once-active offender and now-desisted offender’ (Serin and Lloyd, 2009: 351). The analysis will start with those Desisters in Transition that were imprisoned, to follow with those Desisters in Transition already managing in the community.

6.2.1 The desisting offenders

Two of the men interviewed in prison, Danilo and Samuel were included as Desisters in Transition, as the exploration of their criminal records showed sustained deceleration and de-escalation in offending, which seemed to be explained by their efforts to make prosocial changes. Indeed, the analysis of their narratives showed elements of identity transformation.

Danilo was a 27-year-old man serving a 41-day prison sentence for attempted theft (shoplifting). He started offending at the age of 13, and by the age of 20 he was sentenced to five years in prison for a violent robbery. At around the middle of that sentence he resolved to make purposeful use of the years he still had to spend incarcerated. He enrolled in school and in several training courses, being granted with Sunday furlough and at around the third year in prison he was granted with parole as he obtained a job as a temporary worker. He described the job as 'too tiring and poorly paid', but he stayed because he 'wanted to change'. During that period, he was sentenced for a theft he committed before the age of 20. Astonishingly, his parole was revoked and he had to return to prison to serve almost another year.

- Danilo: I was working and they called me for this pending case, and sentenced me to 61 days. And I had to leave my job and return here. On top of that, my parole was revoked, despite the fact that the case was too old... I was complying with everything they've asked me to do. Unfortunately they revoked my parole and I was only nine months away of completing parole... so those nine months plus the 61 days, I had to go back to prison for 11 months! I returned, served my time, was released, and kept on offending.
- CV: Why did you keep on offending if you had been working and making strong efforts to abandon criminality?
- Danilo: Because... I was complying with everything they requested, I was upset because they took everything away from me, I was making a huge effort, all my time here I was behaving properly, I worked, I learned a lot

of things. I felt all those efforts were in vain. Others just leave prison and keep on offending.

The excerpt above illustrates the profound disappointment Danilo experienced at that time. From the perspective of the models of desistance, it can be argued that Danilo had reached the third stage of cognitive changes by Giordano *et al* (2002), as despite the fact of his previous belonging to offending groups, he had been open to change and ready to engage with the 'hooks for change' represented by prison school and training. Without previous work experience, he remained employed for over eight months, despite the fact that being a worker is considered shameful within the offending culture in Chile (Cooper, 2002). It is arguable that he found being a worker to be the 'appealing and conventional replacement-self' (Giordano *et al*, 2002: 1001) that was consistent with his intentions of staying away from crime. Indeed, during this time he met the girlfriend with whom he later formed a family and had a child. From the perspective of Vaughan (2007) he, perhaps, was between the stages of discernment and deliberation, reviewing possible choices and lifestyles. Furthermore, it is likely that he, after taking actions towards desistance, was at the fifth stage of Bottoms and Shapland's model (2011), attempting to maintain the changes he had already embarked on. The fact that after explaining all the efforts he was making he remarked that 'others just leave prison and keep on offending' suggests he was establishing distance from others – those who reoffend - and from his own past, a process that has been described in early stages desistance (King, 2013a; Paternoster, 1989).

The quote above also suggests that Danilo felt like a victim of an act of unfairness from part of the Criminal Justice System, a feeling that is legitimate considering that an inmate can have access to education and training in prisons only based on demonstrable efforts and extremely good behaviour. Furthermore, by 2008 – the year he was granted with parole - less than 2 per cent of the prison population was granted with parole. This situation deeply affected Danilo's legitimation of the Criminal Justice System and, therefore, of his compliance with the law. Upon release in 2010, he worked as a salesman

and was imprisoned for attempted theft²⁸ (shoplifting), spending 133 days imprisoned in 2011 in three separate sentences, and 82 days in 2012 in two separate sentences:

Danilo: I've tried to stop many times, mainly because of the harm I suffer and my family suffers too. Indeed, now I'm making an effort, again, so I can go out and find a job, I wish some doors could open and I could be someone in life, someone different. I don't see myself the rest of my life in prisons, stealing, hurting others. Because sometimes, even if we don't want to, we hurt others... I mean we hurt our families just by being here; they have to come over, they're registered by the prison officers and sometimes they're victims of the abuse of power of the prison officers, they take advantage that we are inmates, and our families have nothing to do with that, it's not their fault that we are here. That's why I want to make changes so I don't hurt my family anymore, my wife, my kid, and my mother.

The excerpt above illustrates Danilo's preoccupations and motivations to desist, a growing awareness of the needs of his family and concern for others, a distinctive feature of would-be desisters (Maruna, 2001; Serin and Lloyd, 2009). Nonetheless, while he refers to a future in which he is not an offender or a prisoner, he still does not have a clear picture of who he will be, he just visualises himself as 'someone different'.

Samuel was a 37-year-old man who is serving a three-month prison sentence for an attempted non-domestic burglary:

Samuel: I had been outside for over four years, almost five...
And I had to return now for a theft... 100 days.
CV: What did you do during those five years?
Samuel: I worked, I learned to work in ceramic floors,
plumbing, electricity; prison taught me all of that.

²⁸ This is a sentencing modification introduced in recent years that is controversial as it penalizes the 'attempt'.

- CV: And why did you reoffend if you had been working for so long?
- Samuel: Because many times money wasn't enough, you know? I have to pay bills, water, electricity, public transport, and it's so expensive. You won't charge your bus card with \$1,000 pesos, no, for my work I have to move around the city and money is just not enough.

In the excerpt above, Samuel mentioned the trades 'prison taught' him, referring to the training he enrolled into when he served a ten-year prison sentence for accumulated robberies and thefts, at the age of 25. Besides training, Samuel enrolled in prison school, upgrading from three to ten years of formal education, one of the reasons for which he was granted with parole around 2008 and from that moment he alternated between periods of work and periods of unemployment, and (as opposed to his self-reporting), he had also been imprisoned for shoplifting, spending 180 days in prison in 2010, and 50 days in 2011. While there is deceleration and de-escalation in offending, he acknowledges that his engagement in crack cocaine use is the factor that triggers offending in order to obtain money. These are moments for which he appeals for help from the Evangelic Church he participates in. Like Danilo, Samuel elaborated on the suffering this last prison sentence had brought into his life and especially into his mother's. Overall, the story of Samuel is about a constant fight with drug use, while at the same time he had managed to stay away from offending most of the time, resorting to the Church, his mother, and his employers to help to sustain his efforts to desist, all actions that help to support his own agency.

Both Danilo and Samuel seem to have been intending to lead their lives into a conventional pathway by searching for courses of action such as studies and work that could sustain their desistance efforts (King, 2013a). Nevertheless, their desistance processes are far from completion, lacking the required external reinforcements that are crucial for a commitment to a non-offending lifestyle (Giordano *et al*, 2002; Vaughan, 2007). But probably the most relevant element in these two cases is that their setbacks have been penalised with

short-term imprisonments, as short as 21 days, for an offence – attempted theft
- that most countries manage in the community or just with fines.

6.2.2 Desisters in transition in the community

Everything has been new for me, and it's been tough, tough, all the new things about this world, the youth, the roots, everything; everything. Because one has different customs, a different lifestyle... I struggle waking up early in the morning, subduing to an employment, keeping to a schedule, I struggle; I really do... I expunged my criminal records and I've complied with the rules, but sometimes there are setbacks; you have to keep it going, persevere, I'm perseverant but it doesn't mean that's not difficult for me.
Arturo

Eight of the 33 men interviewed in the community were found to be in transition towards desistance. The themes mostly discussed by them were cognitive transformations, especially positive attitudes towards change, self-reassessment, and identity changes, reasons to desist from offending, and crime-free gaps, relapses and ambiguities.

As discussed in Chapter Four, men in this 'transition stage' seemed to be experiencing the 'gradual changes in behaviour, perspective and attitude that somehow bridge the disconnection between the once-active offender and now-desisted offender' (Serin and Lloyd, 2009: 351). A distinctive example of this bridging process of the transitional stage is the language they used during the interviews, which combined self-affirmations of the intended new identity with prison jargon and an overall prevalent use of the present tense when referring to criminal-related issues:

Pedro:	I'd like to form a family, to fight for something; I've never done something like that. It's difficult to live a worker's life, though; we call them 'mugs' because the mugs work, we don't.
CV:	You still say 'we'...
Pedro:	Those words stay with you; there were so many years...

The excerpt above illustrates a form of the use of present tense, as when Pedro referred to those who do not work, he is referring to offenders and inmates. By contrast, the use of the past tense has been documented as a feature of desisters' narratives (Farrall and Calverley, 2006) and, moreover, Giordano *et al* (2002: 1031) state that stories produced by 'complete desisters' generally contain a 'flawless use of the past tense'. Pedro shed light on the issue of the 'incomplete desisters' when he stated that 'words stay with you' after so much time belonging to a criminal world. This aspect is at the core of those In Transition as, while they had achieved some conventional aims such as staying away from prison for much longer, studying, working, or avoiding opportunities to offend, they had not reached a fuller position into a non-offending lifestyle, and still struggle with drug addiction, unstable employment, and with a lack of emotional and behavioural repertoires to conduct themselves in the conventional world.

Effort and struggle: it takes time to desist

As a group, the Desisters in Transition had been involved in offending from the age of ten and up to thirty years, and they had been released from prison for an average of only 15 months. In fact, none of them had been out of prison for more than two years. Being involved in offending activities for long periods and from an early age can create 'ingrained habits' that are difficult to break (Bottoms and Shapland, 2011: 69). Moreover, persistent (ex) offenders usually lack previous conventional experiences to draw on and pursue their desisting efforts (Giordano *et al*, 2002). This seemed to be the case of the eight Desisters in Transition who were facing the challenges of trying to live a conventional life:

Ignacio: I'm illiterate in a number of matters, the Civil Registry for example... so much that I didn't... Very recently I registered in the National Health Service; I'm uneducated in those terms.

The excerpt above illustrates the disconnection between Ignacio and the ordinary world in which most citizens live since, until very recently, at the age of 44, he had not before enrolled for a basic State benefit such as the health

service. The case of Ignacio is not isolated; research in Chile has shown that the majority of inmates leave prison without updated identification and without being enrolled in basic services, since they do not see the need to do so (Villagra *et al*, 2011). But the fact that Ignacio began to appreciate the utility of public services, and that he actually registered in official systems, are milestones that break with his previous history as a marginalised citizen. The considerable effort involved in doing things they were not familiarised with was a common theme in narratives of the men In Transition:

Gaspar: Things haven't been easy at all, no. I had never searched for a job before, I had never done what I'm doing now, waking up early in the morning...

In the excerpt above Gaspar highlights features of the working life that represent big challenges for men who had never worked in their adult lives. Searching for a job, waking up early and being punctual, and keeping a job despite low payment, are all signs that these men mentioned to corroborate their commitment to a crime-free lifestyle, especially for men who had been involved mostly in acquisitive offences, as described in this excerpt from Juvenal's interview:

Juvenal: I don't feel I belong to the criminal world any longer.
CV: How can you tell that?
Juvenal: In everything, the fact that I'm working, that I'm doing a sacrifice to earn some money. I feel that I don't belong; I don't belong anymore.
CV: So you wouldn't define yourself as...
Juvenal: As an offender? Now? Nooo.
CV: How would you define yourself now?
Juvenal: As a person of effort, I would say. That would be the basic word to describe who I am. A person of effort, because what I'm doing is a big effort.
CV: Among all the efforts you've described, what's been the most difficult?
Juvenal: Working... working so much for so little money. ... You get used to a lifestyle in which you want an expensive pair of trainers, you go and get them. Now if I want an expensive pair of trainers I've got to think

about it twice, or more, and buy a cheap pair because money is tight. It's such a big fight against pleasures, luxuries...

In the excerpt above Juvenal stressed the effort he was making. Being 'a person of effort' seems to help in defining a new identity that is the opposite to that of the offender who gets 'easy money' from stealing, a recurrent theme among these men. Apparently, money obtained with sacrifice acted as a subjective reward that helped in building a new sense of self-esteem, which echoes the emotions Farrall and Calverley (2006) described as present in middle stages of desistance. There seems to be a moral component in the 'world of effort' versus the 'world of pleasures and luxuries' Juvenal mentions. When asked how he had managed to control those desires, he replied:

Juvenal: Staying at home with my brother. We're working together now so I feel more in control around him; but my old friends, none, zero.

The excerpt above suggests that employment for Juvenal has served some of the functions of a turning point, as it marks a difference between his past and present, and provides supervision (Laub and Sampson, 2003). Nevertheless, it seems that outside the structured routine of working activities, Juvenal lacks a prosocial structure of activities and still faces temptations, which he avoids by keeping indoors with the brother with whom he works. Bottoms (2006) developed the concept of diachronic self-control to refer to the actions exerted by individuals to avoid the temptation of offending. It seems that diachronic self-control was one of the main strategies used by men in transition to desistance:

Ignacio: I mean, I don't feel in total control of my life yet; I've asked Miss L. here that she has to tell me off if I go to Puente Alto, she told me I have to find someone to go with me, so I told my Pastor that I had to go there for some administrative paperwork, and we talked, we discussed how to avoid situations like they offer me drugs in Puente Alto...

Like Juvenal, Ignacio has turned to significant people for the support he needs to feel more in control of his life. While Juvenal and others have the support of relatives, Ignacio had searched for help outside the family networks as most of them were involved in offending. Miss L. is the psychologist at a reintegration programme and the Pastor is an evangelic leader that offered his house for Ignacio to live in while recovering from his drug addiction. In regard to both, Ignacio spoke extensively about temptations and how to be prepared to face them. He continued:

Ignacio: It has been very difficult to get out of offending and off drugs, as I've been into drugs for so many years, in fact I'm still fighting, I'm still fighting drugs, I cannot go to given places, visit some parts of the city, and that makes me feel horrible. In given circumstances and places there's a risk I totally give up...

The excerpt above illustrates Ignacio's awareness of the parts of the city he had to avoid. For most Desisters In Transition, there was a vast number of people and places to avoid in order to remain crime and drug-free, and sometimes they had to move across the country. Pedro, a former violent robber and burglar, was residing in the north of Chile where drugs are more accessible and cheaper than in the rest of the country. Around the time he turned 40, he started experiencing a deep feeling of discomfort with his lifestyle, realising that he had lost many years of his life in prison, that he had not shared time with his mother, and dreading the possible future he would have if he continued that route, echoing the idea of the feared-self by Paternoster and Bushway (2009). The process of self-reassessment Pedro experienced has been described as one of the initial steps towards desistance in a number of studies (Cusson and Pinsonneault, 1986; Leibrich, 1996; Meisenhelder, 1977; Shover, 1996), and in his case, this process and the fear of ending up dead at the hands of drug dealers, encouraged him to leave the north and return to his city of birth where his mother resides:

CV: What has been the hardest part since you returned?
Pedro: The fight against the drug, it's difficult, because I have no help, I'm on my own. Well, God helps me... But it's been the drugs, all of them, for me they're all the same, a temptation. Even alcohol because when you drink, you feel like smoking as well, that's why I don't drink. I fight against that, I don't smoke, I don't do drugs, nothing at all. If you go to my neighbourhood, they'll tell you straight away that I've changed; they've seen the change... I wasn't like this before.

In the excerpt above Pedro highlighted the idea of fighting a solo battle. Moreover, the fight was more related to addiction than with offending, a shared experience among those experiencing Desistance in Transition:

Arturo: I feel stomach cramps and I'd like to get my hand into my stomach... So I opted for living far from where I used to live, you see? Far away is another life, another environment, I've got no friends there, nobody at all, my only friend is God so I speak to him, I go to the attic and spend time on my own, alone, alone.

This excerpt of Arturo, like most Desisters in Transition, suggests that while they seem to be reflective over their actions and the people and places to avoid, they also experienced deep levels of social isolation.

Overall, the narratives of these men reflect that the transitional stages of the desistance journey can be quite inhospitable. These men did not want to return to the people and places where they used to belong, but they still did not have the replacement networks in the conventional world to commit to. As Shapland and Bottoms (2011) assert, the development of prosocial bonds is gradual and non-offending identities take time to integrate into a new self, a process that was particularly problematic for those who had drug issues.

Funding a drug habit

While nine of the ten men in this group admitted to using alcohol and/or drugs, only three were classified as 'drug problem offenders' according to the definition by Bottoms and Shapland (2011: 72) as 'someone 'who either admits to be dependent on drugs (of any kind) or taking hard drugs and regard them as problematic'. What it is problematic about their drug use is the association with offending. Camilo was released from prison a year prior to the interview and relapsed into drug use as soon as he returned to the community. Then he lived on the streets and reoffended, committing thefts for the first few months. At the time of the interview he had been clean from drugs for several months as he was living in a therapeutic community:

Camilo: I'm a person who's had many problems with drugs, and that's why I've offended to get money to buy drugs... Now I'm trying to go ahead, I searched for help, I've tried to get out of this system for much time, because stealing was just a means to get the money for drugs, I never chose an offending lifestyle, my problem are the drugs. You read my criminal records and you could see that I've only been in prison for silly thefts.

Indeed, in Camilo's criminal record there are over 30 sentences over the course of a decade, for thefts and 'minor thefts' (an indictable offence, usually shoplifting under the legal value of thefts, punishable with fines), which illustrates how difficult it has been for Camilo to overcome the relapses, unemployment periods, reoffending, and short sentencing. Furthermore, over that decade he lost his family due to his drug addiction, going as he says 'from being a father of family, to being an addict':

Camilo: I want to change my life; I don't see myself as an offender, despite of all those criminal records. ... I'll be a drug addict all my life, if you ask me how firm I feel about relapsing in drugs, I'd say 50%. But if I manage to stay away from drugs, I can tell you I'm 100% sure I won't reoffend.

As the excerpt above illustrates, it seems that the current problem for Camilo is not desist from crime but overcoming the drug use that has penetrated into his self-definition and identity. When he refers to change his life he means returning to being a family man, as his narrative suggests he never felt like an offender, but offending was a means to fund his drug use. The conflict with drug use and identity, where offending is one of the several costs or consequences of addiction, is observed in the three 'drug-problem offenders':

CV: What has been the most difficult part of being back to the community?

Arturo: A lot of stuff... like, avoiding drugs, crack cocaine and cannabis, and alcohol although I don't see myself as an alcoholic but I do consider myself a drug addict.

Ignacio: I can state, not 100% sure but I can state that offending is over, stealing is over, why not 100%? Because the drugs are not over, and that's my risk, drugs take me to steal.

Healy (2010) found that early desisters who reoffended were usually those with financial problems and drug addictions, which seems to be the case for these three men who, having embarked on desistance journeys before, usually relapsed into drug use first and then into offending to fund their drug habits. The fact that they identify themselves as drug addicts, not offenders, highlights the need to tackle addiction first. However, the scarcity of drug treatment programmes in the community and in the public health service makes the situation particularly difficult for those trying to desist from addictions. These three men have shown a particularly strong will and personal resources to resist the temptation of drugs, plus the social isolation of refraining from old friends and places.

Re-offending: a necessary step to desist?

A crucial aspect for understanding the transition towards desistance was exploring how individuals explain re-offending to themselves and to others. In the case of offending in the early days upon release, most agreed it was understandable and necessary due to the precarious economic situation in which they leave prison, many times on their own, without money, without a job, and without a support organisation to resort to. Juvenal was in this situation and since he needed to buy some clothes and pay for accommodation, he decided to do 'what I knew':

Juvenal: The fourth night after my release, I entered a house and I was very lucky so I felt tempted to keep on burglary because of my good luck... But then I reconsidered and since I didn't want to go back to prison, I took the money I got from the burglary and with that money I could start my paperwork, go to the Civil Registry to expunge my criminal record, get my official certificates, and started searching for a job.

An interesting aspect of the excerpt above is that Juvenal decided to follow a different pathway this time and used that money obtained illegally to fund his conventional project. The idea of making a move towards desistance after getting funding from offending was not unusual among Desisters in Transition, which in a way highlights the fact that they have faced the challenges of the conventional world with strategies from the offending world in their effort to bridge both worlds. Francisco presents a different angle of the first days upon release:

Francisco: I've been with the intention of stability for a long time... Working in the last prison sentence helped me a lot, I worked almost a year there and brought my money; that money was the reason I didn't get into trouble again, because from previous prisons... you left penniless, you just have to find a way...

The excerpt above illustrates a quite simple point: leaving prison with funds prevents or at least delays inmates from reoffending, as research has shown that even strong determination to refrain from crime can be undermined without the required economic means (Burnett, 2010). Although Francisco had committed shoplifting during the months prior, he differentiated the latter shopliftings from the 'anxious, desperate' thefts committed when inmates have no money upon release, and he further explained:

Francisco: It's difficult, I mean, I try to get myself out of trouble, otherwise my mom would be alone, my son on his own... But, but I've made a few mischiefs in the meantime. Because you know, in the street you have to pay for everything from your own pocket, you have to go shopping, you have to put food on the table every day, this and that.

CV: What do you mean by mischiefs?

Francisco: Thefts. But not big thefts, small thefts to save myself for a while, petty thefts, it's not that I'm going to make a big robbery or anything. For me they have been... at my age they have been the last resource, the last thing to hang onto. Because I have other resources, small jobs with the fellas here, on the weekends they call me and allow me to work parking cars... so offending is the last resource, after thinking very well every detail, as I told you I'm not in a position now... Now I have to be careful, that's why I've been in the streets for so long.

To understand better this excerpt it should be noted that former inmates, due to their working history and their criminal records, can only apply to unstable and low-paid employment, especially in the first months after release. With a high cost of living, most Chileans have to resort to loans to complement their salaries (SBIF, 2013), so the emphasis Francisco gave to the idea of paying is realistic. Besides the contextual circumstances, this excerpt illustrates the characteristics of the decision-making processes of Desisters in Transition when faced with opportunities to reoffend, one consequence of which is taking more calculated risks. It seems that a reflective process takes place (Healy, 2010), in which the deterrent effect of prison lifestyle, from which they grew tired of (Burnett, 1992;

Shover and Thomson, 1982; Shover, 1983), has an effect on the ways of acting. Desisters in Transition were more aware of their age and the devastating consequences than new imprisonments could have on them (Cusson and Pinsonneault, 1986). Furthermore, they also showed growing concerns for the wellbeing of others (Maruna, 2001), such as when Francisco said that a new period of imprisonment would leave his mother and son on their own. Although he did not have stable employment, it is interesting that he perceived these 'small jobs' as valuable opportunities to pursue his intentions to change, an ability that Giordano *et al* (2002) and Rungay (2004) identified as relevant to pursue identity change and fulfil possible new identities.

Overall, it seems Francisco and most of these men experienced the tension between the past identity from which they were departing, the crime-free future they were aspiring to and their sometimes complicated present circumstances, a tension that has a potential transformative action for desistance (Paternoster and Bushway, 2009):

CV:	Do you still feel like an offender?
Francisco:	Nooooo! Not at all, because I've avoided a lot of things, good opportunities at hand. I'd rather go into a supermarket and take some things there; those bastards have so much money... it is like a drop in the sea.

In the excerpt above, Francisco suggested the shift in the nature of offending and the fact that he had evaded opportunities, are subjective indicators to identify himself as a non-criminal person. Francisco also suggested that in a 'scale of wrongfulness', shoplifting is not only seen as a harmless act but almost as something justifiable. Indeed, it was found that the denial of injury was a technique of neutralisation commonly used to justify Desisters in Transition's on-going offending. Sykes and Matza (1957: 666) developed this concept to explain that 'most delinquents justified their deviant acts through rationalisations seen as valid by them but not for the legal system or society at large'. In the denial of injury individuals evaluate their behaviour, distinguishing

different degrees of wrongfulness in their acts, and ultimately questioning whether any real harm was done:

Enrique: I've reoffended with thefts, just theft, money that is not from... no person is hurt basically. For example, in a supermarket, the cash till is open; I take the money and go. Sometimes in big restaurants or bars, staff leaves the cash tills open so it's just taking the money, nothing else... Nobody suffer any harm.

In the excerpt above Enrique stated there was no damage involved when the offending act is not directed towards a person. For some Desisters in Transition the fact that they shifted from violent robberies and burglaries - offences that usually involve people - to shopliftings is interpreted as a significant step in abandoning crime. Acts that result in physical harm to people, such as sex offences, were deemed the most harmful. Therefore, as men in this sample had been mainly convicted for property crimes, they positioned themselves in the less harmful position of the scale:

Arturo: I've always said this is a materialistic, not a humanistic country. Why? Because we stole properties, material stuff, but we never did any harm to a human being, like killing or raping. And rapists get a lot of chances, thousands of chances! And one goes 10, 20, 30 years in prison!

In the excerpt above Arturo was not justifying an on-going offence but, from the times he was actively offending, a second use of this technique of neutralisation, which can be interpreted as a way of reconstructing biographies, so individuals create a positive memory of them when offending that is more consistent with their current self-concept, and promotes a sense of self-worth (Mischkowitz, 1994). In this vein, Maruna (2001: 144) argued that, contrary to the belief that justifications harden criminal attitudes, 'the acceptance of neutralizations might even be the first step in a softening process', while Maruna and Copes (2005) argued the positive self-concept promoted by neutralisations can make persistence less likely.

The denial of injury was a mechanism used more by those in transition who, despite recognising their responsibilities in their criminal actions, also appeared intent on preserving a good image of themselves that is more consistent with their current self, by denying the harm done. From a psychodynamic point of view, denial is an ego defence that can help in keeping a healthy mental functioning, especially after loss and trauma, as denial is 'an unconsciously operative ego defence by which an individual reduces psychic distress by repudiating the awareness of a painful, external reality' (Freud, 1946 in Akhtar, 2009: 73). In this way, a certain level of denial over those aspects of offending which are more threatening to the current self might avoid paralysation and promote efforts to desist.

An optimistic stance for the future

Desistance research has shown that an optimistic stance is distinctive to those who succeed in their efforts to desist (Farrall and Calverley, 2006), playing a relevant role in the early stages of change (Burnett and Maruna, 2004). Indeed, despite the ambiguity, the drug relapses and the reoffending, Desisters in Transition were characterised as having an optimistic view of their future and for visualising better versions of themselves. But, importantly, they were actively searching courses of action that could shorten the distance between their present circumstances and the situation they aspired to achieve (King, 2013a):

- Pedro: I want to change, for me, my mom, that's the reason... that's my motivation.
- CV: Change from being burglar to what?
- Pedro: To a normal person. Like people here, not like the people in the world I used to live; we used to say that people here are mugs, the workers are mugs.
- CV: And what do you need to stay away from crime?
- Pedro: Employment.

In the excerpt above Pedro made an illuminating statement. He wanted to belong to the conventional world, be 'a normal person', but he was fully aware that the only course of action for achieving that was employment, and being a

worker was the ultimate step to renounce the criminal world. Indeed, stable employment was deemed by Desisters in Transition as the crucial element for cementing their pathway to desistance.

Part of the optimism shown by these desisters was founded in the support they were receiving from relatives, partners, the church and other organisations. For most of them it was the first time they had received so much support, but it was also the first time they had searched for it or had accepted it:

- Ignacio: I've tried to stop offending before but it hasn't worked; now it's different.
- CV: Why is it different now?
- Ignacio: Because I've got more support. When they sent me over here I didn't like it in the first place because I don't like paperwork, no, I'm reluctant to all that; but then Miss L. started talking to me and I felt like returning here, I started enjoying the talks... Miss L. has been a pillar for me, she has helped me a lot, a lot, Miss G, Miss F. too. They're people who don't know you but trust you. That's what's needed, people who believe that you want to go ahead, who trust you. ... And in my house, the Pastor and his wife, they trust me, support me, and help me.

The excerpt above highlights the active role that Ignacio had taken to overcome the difficulties he was facing with his drug addiction and subsequent risk of offending. This time, differently to previous times, he had accepted help from official organisations but he had also looked for the right people that supervise and reinforce their actions towards desistance (Bottoms and Shapland, 2011). His actions resonate with the definition of human agency by Emirbayer and Mische (1998: 963), as 'a temporally embedded process of social engagement, informed by the past, but also oriented toward the future and toward the present'. In fact, in this process of 'de-labelling' (Maruna and Farrall, 2004: 28), from being an addict and offender, that he was experiencing with the support of the municipality and the church, he found motivations to launch further actions oriented to the well-being of him and others:

Ignacio: Sometimes I feel sad and ashamed when I remember things... It hurts to realise that I've damaged so many people, and now I'd like to help, maybe it won't be the same person, maybe I won't go and say: 'I'm sorry', no, no, maybe not that way, but maybe helping people who are in the same situation I was, or even worse, try to give them a word of inspiration, try to talk to them, to give them what I expected to receive. Maybe they need that... maybe they need what I needed. So that's what I want, to help.

The excerpt above illustrates that Ignacio, like most Desisters in Transition, had recently found sources of agency and communion with the society, feeling they could make a contribution to 'this world', a key aspect for secondary desistance to take place (Maruna and Farrall, 2004). Most Desisters in Transition had embarked on activities filled with a generative meaning:

Enrique: I'm studying theology because I want to learn more and teach young people how not to fall as low as I felt, not to follow the path I did, I'd like to be an example for other people, for young people for instance. ... In the future I'd like to improve my workshop and hire more people like me, ex prisoners who want to change.

Enrique had already hired a couple of former inmates in his workshop, with the intention to give something back to society, through people who had been in conflict with the law. Similarly, Gaspar explained that:

Gaspar: I chose to study Drama to express how I feel and to teach, to teach those who haven't had the opportunity to analyse society, as it really is... what is wrong with education, with the laws, with abortion; through the theatre you can represent it all.

The two excerpts above illustrate the shift from a self-centred to an other-centred stance, to show and act with concern for others, a distinguishing feature in narratives of desisters (Maruna, 2001). As has been shown, most Desisters in Transition had made significant progress in their journeys towards conformity.

Nonetheless, some were still trapped by addictions and financial preoccupations and some had still not fully identified with a non-offender identity. It is argued that a significant factor explaining their incomplete journeys is that while they had advanced in a number of aspects, they were still not socially included as meaningful members of society:

Arturo: I don't want to be a nobody, I want to be a citizen fully reintegrated to the society, leaving aside all the bad stuff and walk with my head high. ... Nowadays I'm physically and mentally deteriorated because of the drugs, it affects me, I feel uncomfortable... I thought I could have a dog, plant a tree, and I did, it's my everyday fight, my everyday fight, my fight and I fight against many things, every day, every single day...

The excerpt above illustrates that desistance seems to be something wider than just abstaining from offending, involving legal, moral, psychological, and more importantly, a strong social aspect of integration (McNeill, 2012).

Conclusion

This chapter addressed the first two positions in the offending-conformity continuum. The Current Offenders were those closer to the offending end, although their position does not necessarily mean they had never tried to make changes in their lifestyles. Indeed, most of them – except the two older men – reported a long-dated addiction to crack cocaine that they had tried to overcome, unsuccessfully. These failed attempts to quit drugs have had a progressive effect of deterioration that undermined their sense of self-efficacy, their interpersonal relationships and the chances of gaining access to prosocial opportunities. Drug addiction seems to be one of the factors that accounted for sustaining their criminal activity. There was a macro-level influence that appeared to have affected these participants' abilities to overcome drug addiction and deal with aspects of personal and social life. This was the cumulative impact of short imprisonments, that were introduced in sentencing

guidelines during the last decade, and which were oriented to display tough punishment to petty property offences.

Those who featured as Desisters in Transition showed an empirically interesting angle of the theoretical proposals of desistance from crime perspective, as this stage depicts men who seem to have started journeys towards conformity but were still struggling with ambivalence, drug use relapses and reoffending. In fact, two of them had been recently re-imprisoned. All of them showed receptive attitudes towards change, had undergone processes of self-reassessment in which they challenged their lifestyles, showed concern for the impact these produced in their families, and had experienced changes at the identity level, all of which suggest they were at early stages of desistance (Giordano *et al*, 2002; Healy, 2010; King, 2013a; Vaughan, 2007). Furthermore, they had displayed high levels of agency by selecting from their contexts those opportunities that could lead them to progress in conventional aims, such as enrolling in education and employment courses in prison, working in the community, and performing strategies to avoid reoffending. Nevertheless, they were still struggling with drug addiction, unstable employment, and a lack of emotional and behavioural repertoires to conduct themselves in the conventional world. It seems that a key element that was still missing in the desistance process of those who had been in the community for a while, was that their change still had not been certified by others, one of the requisites to progress to secondary desistance (Maruna and Farrall, 2004) and for social integration (McNeill, 2012).

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE TRADITIONAL DESISTANCE PATHWAY

This chapter analyses the processes of change of 12 men, which seem to have started while they were serving their last prison sentence. Cognitive transformations appear to have progressively interacted with opportunities and significant relationships that altogether promoted identity changes that were subsequently consolidated into a non-criminal identity. The similarities of the stages of their processes with those described in the literature led to labelling this pathway as 'Traditional'. In what follows, this pathway is described using the stages of the models of desistance described in Chapter Four (Bottoms and Shapland, 2011; Giordano *et al*, 2002; Vaughan, 2007).

7.1. The Traditional Desisters: an Overview

I had never worked before, so the experience of working in prison helped me a lot... then I got parole... I was just beginning with my girlfriend but things were different with her (...) I started controlling me because then it wasn't just me... it was a commitment... We started working together... She was awarded some funding; she's always been like that, hard-working, her family too, they have helped me... Now I have a totally different environment.
Alejandro

At the time of the interview, Traditional Desisters were aged 28 to 51, the majority were in a relationship and had children, were working either in paid employment or informally, and were participating in community activities. Although most of them had had a problem with alcohol or drug use at some point in their lives, only two men were still striving to fully recover from addiction. They self-reported starting offending at around the age of 13, had spent an average of almost ten years in prison distributed over several sentences, and they had been back in the community for around four years – ranging from a year up to 12 years. These features are shown in table 7.1.

Table 7.1: Socio-demographic and offending trajectories features of Traditional Desisters

Name	Age	Relationship	N children	N years of formal education	Age of onset	N prison sentences	Last prison sentence	Total N months in prison	Months since he left prison	Working	Community participation	Current oh / drug use
Agustín	28	partner	0	12	14	2	robbery	84	27	yes	no	no
Matías	29	cohabitant	1	11	12	13	robbery	85	12	yes	yes	no
Alejandro	30	partner	0	12	16	2	burglary	96	12	yes	yes	no
Mariano	30	partner	0	12	17	2	theft	96	23	yes	no	no
Osvaldo	31	partner	1	11	13	5	theft	118	14	no	yes	no
Boris	32	cohabitant	1	12	12	3	robbery	80	62	yes	no	yes
Rodrigo	34	single	0	12	12	3	robbery	150	12	yes	yes	no
Sebastián	34	single	1	12	14	2	theft	88	72	yes	yes	yes
Marcos	42	cohabitant	1	12	21	2	robbery	86	31	yes	yes	no
Alfonso	43	married	1	7	12	3	robbery	116	60	no	yes	no
Rolando	47	cohabitant	1	1	10	6	homicide	180	144	yes	no	no
Gastón	51	single	1	10	12	6	theft	138	112	yes	yes	no
35,92				10,33	13,75	4,08		109,75	48,42			

7.2 The Last Prison Sentence: a Crucial Moment in their Processes of Change

The majority of Traditional desisters identified their last prison sentence as the moment when their process of change began, suggesting that it was at this time that they became more aware of the economic, emotional, personal, and family costs associated with a criminal lifestyle and the losses produced by spending time in prison repeatedly. This growing sense of awareness seemed to have prompted reflective analyses. For some men the analysis took the form of an evaluation of what was worthy in their lives, scrutinising their situation in relation to their pasts and their possible futures, as illustrated in the following excerpt:

Rodrigo: Back in those days I had no responsibilities, I lived my life, the moment... Well, all my friends went to prison, even now several of them are still in prison but I lost all contact with them... Then I *realised* that all that time we were doing no... the years imprisoned... maybe I *realised* that those things meant nothing, maybe I told myself the tale that I was smart, but then I *realised* that kind of lifestyle had no value. Then I thought all the 'smart guys' are locked up, and the mugs are free living a nice life because they've achieved good things, a house, a car, and I thought we were locked

up, and what did we have? Nothing. [...] If I kept myself in that prison section I was going to die. Within the years I could have made a name, a status as a criminal, but what about my life?

It is interesting how Rodrigo repeatedly used the past tense of the verb 'realise' (which was intentionally put in italics), as several Traditional desisters did, suggesting he reached a point of consciousness as a result of an internal conversation in which his lifestyle choices were scrutinised. This process of self-reassessment has been described as one of the initial cognitive changes towards desistance, in which the individual reviews different lifestyles (Cusson and Pinsonneault, 1986; Farrall and Bowling, 1999; Leibrich, 1996; Maruna, 2001; Meisenhelder, 1977; Shover, 1996; Sommers *et al*, 2004), and it is consistent with the stage of 'discernment' described by Vaughan (2007). By realising the differences he had with the young, irresponsible version of himself as a young offender, Rodrigo took a moral distance from his criminal past, which then seemed futile, especially when compared with the accomplishments of the men he once looked at in a derogatory way. King (2013a) claimed that individuals in early stages of desistance tend to distance themselves from their past offender identities in order to begin building their new narratives. Indeed, it was from that position of growing clarity that Rodrigo considered his future, arriving at a crossroads: he could become an infamous criminal, but at a high cost.

The tension between the past identity, the present circumstances and the imagined future has been described as a source of potential transformative action (Rumgay, 2004). Paternoster and Bushway (2009) explain this tension as produced by the deterrent effect of the 'feared self', which is a possible version of the self if the individual does not introduce changes in his lifestyle. For Rodrigo, both being a recognised criminal and death were on the horizon of possible selves. Nevertheless, the question 'what about my life?' is a key counterpoint that suggests there was an existence beyond offending in which he might be interested. Overall, this last part of Rodrigo's excerpt illustrates how he might have started to move from a stage where change was not considered, to one where change was possible and desired, a shift inherent to 'openness to

change', the first stage in the theory of cognitive transformation (Giordano *et al*, 2002).

A second source of awareness for Traditional desisters was a growing unease with the prison lifestyle that led to the process of self-reassessment to begin. This is illustrated in the case of Marcos, a former sporty teenager who developed a physical strength that was his tool of self-defence later in prison. Being the 'tough guy' required a constant display of aggressiveness, being in a state of heightened alert and gaining enemies, all of which created a scenario he started to resent:

Marcos: I was living under death threats all the time. I decided not to be involved in more problems, and I tried to be the man I used to be, but it was difficult as I wasn't that young guy anymore, I mean, I couldn't resume sports, but I thought I could resume some parts of my life, try to fix it up, working, re-arranging my life.

While there is evidence of the deterrent effect a prison lifestyle can have over individuals (Burnett, 1992; Shover and Thomson, 1992; Shover, 1983), in this case it seems that a more profound process of reappraisal had been taking place, as it resulted in a clear resolution. There are two interesting aspects of this excerpt that reflect the dynamic and emotional components that might be present in early stages of change. First, there was a wish to try to change that was then translated into an intentional decision (Bottoms and Shapland, 2011). Marcos purposefully began cutting off his involvement in prison conflicts and re-arranging his life, echoing Meisenhelder's contention (1977: 325) that 'an intentional and meaningful decision' was crucial for men undergoing the first stages of change in prison. Indeed, Marcos' decision was also deeply meaningful as it connected his current self with a previous version of himself, the sporty young man before getting involved in offending. Aware that the passage of time had affected his physical skills, he searched for dimensions of his past self that he could re-arrange into a newly configured identity. It is remarkable how Marcos, although in his late thirties and serving a ten-year sentence in a violent prison, appeared hopeful of the possible outcomes of his

decision. As some evidence suggests, early hopes are involved in initial phases of the emotional trajectories of desistance (Farrall and Calverley, 2006), playing a key role in early stages of change (Burnett and Maruna, 2004).

A third source of awareness for Traditional desisters while in prison was a growing concern for the wellbeing of significant others. In many cases awareness started with individuals' own pain for being away from their families, as Gastón who remembered arriving as a 'messy guy' to his last prison sentence, 'but I saw my mother's suffering... and I didn't want to complete all my time in that prison, it was so dangerous'. For most, these feelings were rather new, despite having been imprisoned several times before, as Boris recalled, 'I suffered a lot for my dad, my sisters; I remembered them all the time... Christmas, New Year, and I was still there on my own'. It seems that Traditional desisters started assessing their selves and their circumstances from a new, more mature perspective (Bottoms and Shapland, 2011), showing an increased preoccupation for their families and children and shifting from a self-centred to an other-centred mind-set, all of which have been linked with the initial stages of processes of change (Gove, 1985; Maruna, 2001).

7.3 Discernment: A Review of Possible Lifestyles Choices

While their wishes of being close to their families and their emotional pain grew, there was still a great distance between their current and their desired situation. Those feelings seem to have influenced their decision-making process, as they actively searched for 'alternative courses of action that could facilitate moves away from crime' (King, 2013a: 155). Like Marcos, Boris and Gastón made the 'intentional and meaningful decision' (Meisenhelder, 1977: 325) that appeared to be needed at this stage, as illustrated in the following excerpt:

Boris: I said 'I have to do something'. [...] I was serving the second year, I left the clique where I lived, I started praying, asking God for help, and I started attending church. Then I started working in cleaning, and then I started studying... I had to have my mind busy. After that I applied to the work unit, and I was lucky

because I love food and I was accepted at the kitchen!
They paid me, and I forgot I was in prison as my mind
was always busy and I was always doing something.

The fact that Boris decided to leave the clique where he lived was a milestone in a subsequent string of decisions to move away from a criminal lifestyle. Indeed, working acted as a means to release anxiety and to structure his routine activities (Laub and Sampson, 2003). It is interesting that his movements gradually evolved from internal actions, such as praying, to more structured conventional activities within prison, such as registering in formal work, which resonates with the claims of the theory of cognitive transformation (Giordano *et al*, 2002). That is, that individuals mark a progression towards desistance when they pass from a general openness to change, to performing an active role in selecting from the environment those elements that are significant enough to provoke a change in them:

Gastón: I started learning a few things; I started attending workshops, the shoemaking workshop... And there I found friends who supported me, they used to say 'Hey Gastón, stop taking pills, stop those habits! Your mom comes to visit you, and she can't see you like that'.

As the excerpt above illustrates, these workshops not only provided Gastón with opportunities for learning, but also offered a relational context that supported and reinforced his early desistance movements. From the cognitive transformation perspective, these workshops would be 'hooks for change' as they acted as catalysts for sustaining and fostering transformations. However, as Giordano *et al* claimed (2002: 1001), it is not the hook itself, but 'some combination of availability and readiness that is most likely to produce a change in criminal involvement'.

A relevant aspect at this point is the nature of these 'hooks for change' in the Chilean context. As described in the Introduction Chapter, educational and work opportunities in Chilean prisons are extremely scarce and inmates who want to apply for a place in school, workshops or employment have to fulfil a number of

requirements, such as outstanding good behaviour. This suggests that, given the actual low availability of 'hooks', some subjective factors were strong enough to compensate for that scarcity. Indeed, the analysis of the narratives of Traditional desisters suggested that a positive attitude towards change was one of the most prevalent subjective factors while they were serving their last prison sentence. This positive attitude probably played a role in assisting individuals to perceive these hooks as attainable, relevant, and meaningful. That is, to perceive them as valuable opportunities to transform their circumstances, and later, as Rumgay (2004) claimed, fulfil possible new identities.

A striking aspect of the interaction between educational and work activities and participants' subjective stance, is that they underwent significant emotional, cognitive, and relational transformations during their passage through them, even when individuals applied just for utilitarian motives such as getting an early permission. Marcos, whose story will be analysed in detail later, applied for a place at the workshops where he learnt craftwork, and five years later he was the head responsible for the Centre of Education and Work (CET hereafter) at his prison. When he was asked for the reasons behind his application, he replied 'because I had heard that after a while they reduced your sentence just for being there, and I wanted to have my sentence reduced'.

The argument here is that the interaction between a given subjective stance and the availability of external opportunities can produce powerful transformations, even when an explicit intention to leave the criminal lifestyle is not so clear and when hooks for change are scarce. It can be argued that men who enrolled in these activities (regardless of their deeper motivations) were approaching the stage of discernment (Vaughan, 2007), although it might also be that they were still considering returning to a criminal lifestyle upon release. These activities were successful in their role as hooks for change, as they aided individuals in making cognitive connections relevant to persevere in their efforts (Giordano *et al*, 2002). However, a given set of attitudes and motivations were equally important for individuals to take advantage of these 'potentially life-changing social bonds' (King, 2013a: 318).

Other subjective factors were relevant for Traditional desisters at this stage, particularly improved self-efficacy. Before the digital recorder was on, Matías said that part of his determination to change was related to the fact that he discovered abilities and skills he never suspected he had, and when asked to elaborate further on that during the recording he replied:

Matías: I discovered that in prison... I realised that inside the units there were only riots, evil looks, knives, blood, and all that. So one day I took the initiative to stand on a table, I called everyone, I don't know what they thought, but I stood on there and said: 'hey guys, the children's day is coming, nothing good is going on here, so I want to gather some money to celebrate our children here; we can do raffles, championships, whatever it takes'. It was something that came out of nothing! Basically because I wanted to get out of that place, I wanted to do something positive, and I also wanted the Prison Service to see that I wasn't part of all that was going on in there, that I was tired and wanted to make a change.

Afterward, Matías organised a number of activities in prison, discovering a leadership dimension that he used and strengthened as a community leader after release. He evoked the diminished sense of self-worth that had accompanied him while growing up as an orphan, institutionalised from a very young age and disengaged from school in primary education, and how succeeding in these early efforts of doing something positive in prison and making it visible for others, increased his perception of self-efficacy.

Self-efficacy has been found to be relevant in early intentions to desist (Bottoms and Shapland, 2011), as a strong belief in one's own capabilities to achieve given tasks increases self-confidence, agency and hopefulness (Farrall and Calverley, 2006). Snyder (2002) conceptualises hope as a goal-directed thinking process composed of agency thinking and pathways thinking. That is, individuals' motivation and commitment to reach goals interacts with the perceived availability of pathways to canalise that motivation and attain those

goals, respectively. Some aspects of this goal-directed thinking are illustrated in this excerpt:

- Osvaldo: You have two roads in prison, one are the courses, the library, school, all those things you have to enrol in.
- CV: Why do you 'have' to enrol in them?
- Osvaldo: You start thinking that you will be released one day, and you can't leave with the prison mentality, so you have to improve yourself. And that's what I did, when I was in the fourth year of my sentence I changed the side, I said to myself: 'you have to learn how to speak because you'll know educated people', so I also wanted to be educated, I started reading a bit, enrolling in workshops I learned how to use a computer... I had to learn how to behave in the outside world, because I knew I was not going to be in prison forever.

Osvaldo, increasingly aware of prison release, imagined an improved version of himself capable as accomplishing the challenges of freedom. However, in order to reach that desired state he had to carry out substantial transformations in the way he had been living so far. The excerpt illustrates how agency and pathways thinking helped to direct his actions towards his goal of becoming an educated, well-spoken man. One aspect of early narratives of desistance is that individuals begin to think differently about themselves and their surroundings (Bottoms and Shapland, 2011), searching for conventional selves that are appealing enough to replace their current selves (Giordano *et al*, 2002), and which are attainable through the pathways available. In the following years, Osvaldo completed three years of secondary school and the reason he could not finish the fourth year was that he was granted parole. However, it was in this period when his motivation interacted with structural opportunities, that he could compare between two possible selves and chose the ways to attain the one he preferred, the one of 'the courses'.

For Traditional desisters, enrolling in educational and working activities in prison provided the contexts to rehearse a more conventional self. Indeed, a distinctive

element in Traditional desisters' prison experiences is that 11 pursued adult studies, upgrading their educational attainment from an average of 7.5 to 10.3 years, while all of them also worked while serving the last prison sentence. However, having been involved in criminal activities for a long time, indecision and ambiguity were frequently present, which resonates with Burnett's (2000) assertion that desistance is characterised by lapse and vacillation. Exploration of the stage of deliberation is key to understanding the changes in the level of commitment Traditional desisters experience throughout the process of change.

7.4 Deliberation: A Review of Available Options

Vaughan (2007) argued that once individuals have analysed the different lifestyle choices available, they progress towards a stage where the possible selves associated to those lifestyles are compared to produce a deliberation of who one wishes to be. This comparison is rational but also emotional and involves the reaction of others. As has been elaborated so far, during their last prison sentence Traditional desisters underwent processes of reassessment that prompted them to consider different courses of action to attain the changes they deemed necessary to move away from crime. All of them either worked or studied, and it was while participating in these activities that deliberation was more prominent than at any other moment.

As stated above, the case of Marcos will be analysed. He applied for a place in the prison workshops with the belief that his sentence would be reduced as a result. Once inmates are admitted into a workshop or at school, they are transferred to special units for workers and students only, where the living conditions are considerably better and riots and violence are far less frequent than in the regular units. For Marcos, as well as for most respondents, this improvement in their overall living conditions was highly valued, as they felt safer, at ease, and more content. It seems that being in a context that was more consistent with their aspired conventional selves and with others who were pursuing similar goals was a key source of support and encouragement for their desistance purposes.

The dynamics of living in the special units and working at the CET brought about emotional and relational benefits for Marcos and these acted as reinforcers of his prosocial choices (Bottoms and Shapland, 2011). As a form of recognition of his achievements, Marcos was given the responsibility of the room, which meant he had to organise the everyday activities of the people working there and by doing this job he found he had a good approach to people and he could be respected:

Marcos: When I was appointed as the head of the room, I used that opportunity to take some ex-roommates to the CET, so they could earn a bit of money... they were glad of accepting my suggestion. The money was little, but at least you got some money. You could pay for your own stuff, eat a bit better, especially when you have no family visiting you.

His family had been reducing the number of visits they made over the years and he presumed it was for economic reasons: 'families go to visit and they have to take you food, sometimes they take you what they don't have at home', so he took advantage of his new situation to 'reduce the weight' on his family's shoulders, which turned out to be a successful strategy to attract more family visits:

Marcos: For me it was nice when, I mean, it's not nice being there, but it was nice when I could receive my visits with something, a cold soft drink, an ice cream; they had been waiting for hours outside in those queues! So when you have something to treat them, then they go to visit you in a different mood. Those things changed the meaning of being there.

Marcos undertook a detailed analysis of the potential reactions and feelings of his family in view of the new circumstances, a crucial aspect of deliberation (Vaughan, 2007). Following Farrall and Calverley's (2006) argument regarding the emotional trajectories of desistance, it seems that Marcos progressed from just feeling happier to feeling better about himself and be hopeful, experiencing rewards that improved his self-esteem and, presumably, his thinking about the

future. Burnett (2010) claimed that inmates require 'the will and the ways' to succeed in their desistance efforts, and working at the CET was a useful way to obtain the material support for inmates when they were released:

Marcos: At the CET the work was not very well paid, but it was paid and part of that money goes to a saving account, so when you're released you can take that money. When I was released, I had been working at CET for a while, so that money was very useful when I was outside.

Bottoms and Shapland (2011: 70) argued that 'money is central to the process' for persistent offenders whose crimes produce income, as the case of all participants in this study who had been involved in property crimes from a very young age. In this regard, the importance of enrolling in paid working activities in prison served a number of functions – such as, learning to earn money through legitimate means, changing attitudes towards money, providing actual economic resources to improve their situation in prison, and managing the initial days after release – can be seen for the Traditional desisters:

Matías: I worked for five months in my last prison sentence, I earned money, and part of it had to go to a saving account, so I used that money when I was released. My mom is a shopkeeper as well, so she lent me some money and I gathered a fund to buy some goods. So I started working, I started selling kites and I worked, and worked, and worked, but I also started seeing money, and more money. So I liked that life system, I knew that if I worked hard, I would see results, money, I could pay for food, for my clothes, pay my bills, so I liked it, I really did. It keeps you busy; you have a lot of things to do.

As illustrated in the excerpt above, the argument presented so far contends that education and working activities in prison were successful hooks for change, and enrolling in these initiatives was also a significant turning point for Traditional desisters, as they created 'opportunities for social support and

growth; bring change and structure to routine activities; and provide opportunity for identity transformation' (Laub and Sampson, 2003: 148).

7.5 Dedication: Commitment to a New Non-Criminal Identity

Dedication, following Vaughan (2007: 394), is the third stage of the internal conversation in which individuals 'must regard their new identity as incompatible with ongoing criminality' and from which a conventional commitment can emerge after a new ordering of priorities. For many Traditional desisters, the early steps in this reordering of priorities involved undertaking changes in the way they dressed and spoke to resemble 'normal', a word frequently used by them as opposite to 'offender'. These normalising changes resonate with the fourth type of cognitive transformation that involves a reassessment of the attitudes towards criminality (Giordano *et al*, 2002). Commitment to an emergent conventional identity involves changes in both internal and external factors, and Traditional desisters found ways to produce these changes in prison and later in the community.

7.5.1 Changes in the use of language and external appearance

The use of criminal jargon is an integral part of prison lifestyle. Hence, for some men their increasing involvement in conventional activities also implied breaking with that language:

Matías: The initiatives I led in prison made me a kind of leader. For example, I had to elaborate on our projects in front of the Captain; I couldn't present myself in front of him and talk using prison jargon, no. I had to arrive presentable and speak properly, so they could see that what I was saying was real.

As the excerpt illustrates, Matías sought attaining credibility in his new role as a prosocial leader in prison, and that meant he had to achieve a level of consistency between the nature of his projects, his appearance and his

language. Others highlighted that the modification in the use of language reflected changes in their process of thinking:

Rolando: I didn't talk like this before, I was just swearing all the time, I mean, I was thinking of doing bad things all the time.

It is interesting how Rolando related swearing with 'bad things', by which he meant offending. These language changes were not easy for some men and many of them had to learn how to speak as a non-offender. Sebastián explained the obstacles he had to overcome when he continued studying soon after he left prison:

Sebastián: I started attending a school for adults, and I tried to get along, but I had never studied, I mean, I studied when I was a child, but it was a while since that. I didn't know how to relate with normal people, I mean, people who are not offenders. [...] I had to change my t-shirts and start wearing long sleeved t-shirts so people couldn't see the cuts in my arms... I also tried to speak better; I still find it hard because there are so many words I don't know. I've tried to change, the clothing for instance, I don't wear trainers anymore because... me, I mean, is like... mmm. All these things about wearing trousers, shoes, shirts, or speaking properly, they're all tools to manage in society. I had to change them all, because if I wanted to get on in this society, I had to change it all, so I had to learn, unlearn, I mean, getting out of the habits of the criminal culture and learn this other culture of being normal, of doing paperwork, of queuing, of doing everything normal people do.

The excerpt above suggests that difficulties in speaking are related to their disengagement from school at an early age and that they did not complete the process of language socialisation at a formal educational institution, acquiring a street and later a criminal socialisation in the use of words. Sebastián, likewise Matías, suggested that along with speaking, changes in appearance are

relevant for self-construction. These changes in the external appearance resonate with the active role agents have to assume to facilitate the de-labelling process for secondary desistance (Maruna and Farrall, 2004).

7.5.2 Finding the genuine self

Interestingly, while the way they introduced themselves to others – the appearance - was relevant to make their commitment to change apparent. For Traditional desisters, commitment was also discernible by internal feelings that indicated this time that their commitment was real and definitive.

Rolando: My desire was to steal, to steal, to steal, the first chance to put a foot in the street I would steal. [...] Inside of me there was a desire for women, drugs, carrying guns, money, good clothes, that kind of life, showing off, totally fake. [...] Now that I work, some people envy me, I've had some problems with people from my work, sometimes I've had to be strong and then I think if I go to prison, who's going to help my family? So now I see it, now I think, I think. Before there was no concern, it was me, me, first me, then me, I didn't know God, I didn't care about anybody... like an animal only interested in getting high.

In the excerpt above, Rolando made an emphatic difference between his previous self and the current one, which seemed to be more reflexive and caring. Indeed, the moral distance seemed to be larger than it was at earlier stages of desistance. Rodrigo recalls the astonishment of the prison officers who witnessed his transformation from a violent inmate to one who was 'working for God':

Rodrigo: I got into the religious unit and we painted the room, we put glasses on the windows, we fixed the toilets, we implemented a praying area, imagine all the comfort we had, living in a room where there was a kitchen, a shower. We used to impose respect, but then we were respected because of who we were.

Rodrigo's excerpt suggests that a new set of values was in place, assisting identity change and self-reconstruction. While at the discernment stage, Traditional desisters discovered previously unknown skills that promoted options for conventional lifestyles. At this stage the commitment to a more consolidated non-criminal identity brought about a deeper awareness of a 'true self' as someone good and with a purpose (Maruna, 2001), as the following excerpts illustrate:

Sebastián: I really believe I was a good person, I mean, I've always been good, it happens that I stole, but I never tried to hurt anybody.

Gastón: God has saved me from death... Look at everything I've had to overcome! And in prison, all the things I had to undergo... I could have died in prison, horrible things could have happened to me, but God had got this life saved for me.

These excerpts show that self-reconstruction requires, first, reconciliation with the past identity, as in the case of Sebastián when he defined his offending acts as circumstances which did not affect his core self as a good person; and second, a reinterpretation of the past in a purposeful way, as when Gastón implied that he was meant for something better. These elements of the self-reconstruction are similar to those described by Maruna (2001: 87) in desisters' 'redemption scripts', who instead of denying their pasts reinterpreted them in such a way that it was 'a necessary prelude of a productive and worthy life'.

These reconstructed identities also need external recognition (Rumgay, 2004). While in prison their efforts were acknowledged by officers, inmates, and relatives who witnessed their evolution as students and workers, Traditional desisters still had a long way to prove their commitment to a conventional lifestyle after release. It has been described how most inmates want to go straight upon release, but only those who also have the appropriate support succeed in their efforts (Burnett, 2004), as a key problem in desisting pathways

is, as Shapland and Bottoms (2011: 272 emphasis in original) highlighted, 'moving from *contemplating change* to *achieving change*'.

7.6 Transitions to Longer-term Desistance

As a group, Traditional desisters had typically been back in their communities for around four years. After prison release, most returned to live in the same disadvantaged areas and, although with improved levels of employability, most of them still had to work in unstable and low-paid occupations, continuing to need support for an array of issues related to those obstacles. As Rumgay (2004: 411) rightly points out 'the stresses associated with poverty, residence in disadvantaged, possibly dangerous neighbourhoods, parenthood and problematic interpersonal relationships, are unlikely to disappear merely because the offender has committed herself to a pro-social identity'.

The mechanisms through which they had succeeded in desisting were not easy to disentangle, but the analysis suggested that a dynamic mixture of external support (from their partners, families and organisations), and internal processes (based on constant reflectiveness, motivations oriented towards conformist aspirations, legitimisation of the social norms, and finding a source of communion with the wider society) altogether collaborated in the strengthening of agency and the development of a sense of achievement that was distinctive to the Traditional desistance pathway.

7.6.1 The need for diverse support

All Traditional desisters highlighted the significance of people and organisations that helped them throughout the process of desisting. Although they had an overall optimistic outlook and felt in control of their lives, there were still some obstacles that were mainly related to economic struggle, unstable employment, stigma, and psychological issues related to alcohol and drug abuse. Consequently, Traditional desisters needed different types of support at different times in their desisting processes, their partners, families, the Post

Prison Service, and community- based organisations being the most cited sources of support.

Financial support

Financial support, especially during periods of unemployment, was the most cited need among Traditional desisters, as exemplified in the case of Boris, who had been back in the community for over five years, only finding unstable jobs as a labourer. He had a long history of alcohol abuse that he was constantly struggling with. In fact, in the last episode of drinking he suffered an accident that prevented him from working for a few months. He needed multiple sources of financial support during that time:

- Boris: My wife is working three times a week, and she has two daughters who are not mine but I'm responsible for them, the Municipality helps me every other month with food, nappies for my daughter, and \$10,000 pesos which is something... My sisters help me every month as well... but I want to return to work.
- CV: Have you had some other difficulties?
- Boris: No, the main one is being unemployed because in the little house we have with my wife we have a bit of everything, and we have love. Now that my daughter is ill I've had to borrow money, I have to return it by the end of the month.

Then, Boris proceeded to say he had received offers to deal drugs in his neighbourhood, which he refused as the mere idea of leaving his daughter deterred him. However, the well-being of his daughter and the imperative need for money to feed her and buy her basic supplies had sometimes tempted him into shoplifting:

- Boris: I feel I'm not going to reoffend, but I've felt tempted sometimes, when I've been broke, I've felt like going into a supermarket and take some chicken breasts for my daughter, some meat... but those sorts of things, for the house, food... detergent, nappies... I've felt like that, yes. Maybe one day I'll be so broke that I'll have

to do something like that, but for the house because I cannot permit they are hungry. The baby has to eat every day, she has to have milk, formula, nappies; we need things too, but thank God we always have at least some rice and eggs, thank God.

This excerpt quite dramatically illustrates that the obstacles Traditional desisters have to deal with when back in the community are linked to poverty, for which the State responds through limited assistance. They had endured this economic instability with the determination that emerged from their commitment to a new life for them and their families, and with the help of a variety of family and community sources.

Overcoming the stigma of being a former prisoner

The re-entry literature has widely documented that stigmatisation is one of the main obstacles for the reintegration of former inmates back in their communities (Petersilia, 2001). Indeed, as addressed earlier, one of the first steps Traditional desisters took, as part of the commitment to a new identity, was changing their external appearance to disengage from the clothing and jargon associated with offenders. However, it seems that more subtle signs of stigma existed even after years of staying away from crime. Expelled from his parents' house at around the age of 12, Alfonso found solace in a group of older neighbours who committed street offences, and as his belonging to that lifestyle grew over two decades of criminal involvement, so too did their prison tattoos and scars, which he used to show off proudly. Nonetheless, being in the community for five years and trying to be 'a normal citizen', these marks acted as external reminders of the life he used to have:

Alfonso: Sometimes I can't believe the things that happen in the underground. Sometimes people stand in front of me, well-off people in front of me, and I've seen how they hide their purses... Now that I'm totally changed, I'm not doing anything wrong, they look at me and move. I feel dreadful... because of my face... all those things sadden me.

The discrepancy between who they felt they were and how they were treated by people brought intense feelings of frustration, injustice, and emotional pain. Indeed, some Traditional desisters felt pulled back by this discrepancy between their advances and the societal reaction (Maruna and Farrall, 2004), which sometimes re-labelled them as offenders.

Boris: I completed my sentence in 2006; since then I haven't been back to prison. ... In these six years the only problems I've had were with the police, because as they knew me, they approached me in the street yelling 'your ID!' and I'm like 'I don't care' because I'm not afraid. But according to them, it's disrespect to the police so I've been detained for not showing my ID, once they even sent me to the judge but the judge released me straight away. I explained to him that the police had never approached me in a respectful way... Only for the fact that I was, that I had been, that I had a criminal record they feel they can treat you not as a person but as an animal...

Overcoming alcohol and drug misuse

All Traditional desisters had a problematic consumption of alcohol or drugs at some point in their lives. Some men started at a very early age while others engaged in drug use in their teenage years, and for most, alcohol and drug abuse continued in their adulthood. Furthermore, some of their previous efforts to desist seem to have been hindered by the use of highly addictive drugs such as crack cocaine. Alfonso recalls the several times when deterred by the fear of prison he decided to stop offending, but these decisions lasted only a few days 'because it asked me for more... the body asked me for money to get drugged'. Alfonso had sought assistance from therapeutic communities a few times, but it was the mutual commitment to stay away from drugs made along with his wife which marked the beginning of both leaving offending and drug addiction behind.

Sebastián had been in the community for four years and has been clean from heavy drugs for two years, although he still smoked cannabis occasionally, a

shift he considered positive as he felt in control of the habit. The first two years after release he had to deal with his addiction to crack cocaine, until he turned to a priest:

Sebastián: I asked him for help, I wanted to change, to rehabilitate from my addiction, to change, to resettle into the society for good. On top of that my daughter had already been born. So from 2010 until now I'm in a therapeutic process and that was the point when I really could change.

CV: You mean that from 2008 to 2010 you were still involved in offending...

Sebastián: Not 100% because I worked too, I worked in a supermarket for a while, but I kept on using drugs, and when I run out of money I stole, and I worked too. But it was the drug that was the main obstacle to make progress, to stop offending and make progress.

This excerpt illustrates that quitting addiction was a milestone for Traditional Desisters, as being clean and lucid allowed them to be consistent in their aspirations, as they elaborated. It was discussed how Rolando recalled his offending years as erratic and impulsive, 'behaving like an animal only interested in getting high'. Actually, he used several types of drugs during his offending life, but it was his heavy dependence on alcohol that was the most difficult to overcome. Indeed, he had always been a property offender, but it was under the effect of alcohol that he got involved in the homicide that sent him to his last prison sentence in 1992. After three years of medical treatment, to which he was encouraged and accompanied by his wife, he overcame his alcoholism and start his own small business at the open market.

There is evidence that overcoming drug addiction is crucial for desistance (Schroeder, Giordano and Cernkovich, 2007). In the case of some Traditional desisters, the decision to enrol in treatment and complete it might be considered a turning point in their processes of change (Laub and Sampson, 2003). Addiction treatments allowed detachment from the label of 'addict' some of them had and that was also heavily linked to the label of 'offender'.

Therapeutic contexts also provided supervision and monitoring, but also support for others who had been through similar situations and, most importantly, they allowed for the emergence of their new identity, in all these examples, as good parents, and husbands as well.

Nonetheless, living in neighbourhoods where drugs are dealt, provides a constant temptation to use drugs. Gastón had struggled with his drug addiction for ten years, although he had been clean of drugs for the last two. He lived in an area of drug dealing and some of his neighbourhood friends were involved in the trade, hence he had to use a number of diachronic self-control strategies to avoid invitations (Shapland and Bottom, 2011). He identified his participation in church as key for overcoming drug addiction and crime:

Gastón: Well, I feel integrated in the society, because I gave myself the chance, and well, God also gave me the opportunity to change. He gave me the courage to keep on going, against obstacles, tumbles, and I've known how to stand up again. But sometimes I need the support of a psychologist because there're some things you cannot talk to anyone. [...] I've been in drug treatment centres, you see? But I want to move on because this thing with the drug, it's a constant battle.

The excerpt above highlights two issues, the first being that drug addiction can remain as a threat even when the temptations to reoffend have disappeared. As addressed in Chapter Five, drug misuse was one of the main reasons men In Transition towards desistance could not progress to a stage of commitment to a conventional identity, as the addict identity played a strong role in impeding the construction of new narratives.

This latter point connects with the second issue, the importance Traditional desisters attached to the act of talking as a means of reducing emotional distress, but also as a way to craft their new narratives. Some men had never talked about the many times they felt overwhelming feelings of integrating into the conformist society, for reasons such as having a partner who was not related to offending, because of shame, or trying to hide their pasts from their

new bonds, especially children. Alfonso voluntarily attended a local programme that provided former prisoners with practical advice in legal and employment issues, emotional support, and opportunities for participation in community activities:

Alfonso: I'm at this place because once all the doors closed for me, and I arrived to this place, to this community, and I met this friend M. (a social worker), he studied my case, that I came with problems, that I had nowhere to go, and I arrived to this place and they opened a door for me. I'm grateful to the people here, because they're good people, I feel comfortable here, I've found trust, because not even with my family I can talk about the things at my heart... Every time I arrive here, I feel lighter, I can vent my sorrows, I feel trust, and I can really show what's in me. I trust them; I can't lie when they asked me how I'm doing. M. has accompanied me to the court, some doors are opening. Thanks to M. and the other social worker as well, because they took my case. ... If someone ever listens to this, I'd tell them they have to trust, that they can solve their problems and they can rely on someone, talk through their problems, analyse what's going on, leave fears behind, address why they are in alcohol or drug misuse, and have the trust as I had here, where I can talk because they gave me a chance, an opportunity to imagine I'm starting my life all over again, as a child, you see? I can tell them that they can achieve something.

Alfonso mentioned a number of ways in which he has felt supported, that strongly resonate with evidence from studies of desistance in probationers, such as having someone they could trust and respect (Leibrich, 1993), receiving practical advice (Farrall, 2002), addressing drug and alcohol misuse, and identifying problems the practitioner and the desister can work through together (McCulloch, 2005). The excerpt suggests the significance that establishing a relationship based on mutual trust with a practitioner had for Alfonso, in what seems to have been a highly emotional process that he kept hidden from his family.

7.6.2 Building meaningful links with conformity: family formation and employment

Family formation

It has been frequently identified that ‘offenders desist at around the same time they start to form significant life partnerships’ (Farrall *et al*, 2009: 81). Most Traditional desisters were in stable relationships, either with a partner, cohabiting, or married, which were relevant to promoting and sustaining their desistance efforts. These relationships seemed to serve functions of informal social control (Sampson and Laub, 1993; Soothill *et al*, 2009), introducing changes to the men’s everyday lifestyles that reduced the exposure to criminal opportunities (Warr, 1998). But, the deep reasons why Traditional desisters stayed with these partners, and why these relationships seemed so constructive in their lives, resided in a profound commitment to their spouses who had made an investment of trust in them when nobody else did.

Marcos: She’s the strength behind everything I have; she gave me my freedom because if she hadn’t appeared in my life they would have never granted me with parole. She approached the social workers, even without an appointment, she had a job, she had a son; nevertheless, she gave me part of her time, just to take care of my things! She’s always been there; I can’t disappoint her.

Marcos met his wife in prison when she accompanied a friend who was visiting a relative. Marcos had been working for five years, but without family or friends waiting for him outside, he did not have real motivations to accelerate his release, which changed substantially when they started a relationship and she helped him to get parole and received him in her flat upon release.

Osvaldo was already outside when he met his partner, and while he was striving to desist, he was still offending:

Osvaldo: I met my girlfriend, I mean my partner, but she was normal, healthy, she studied at the university, and I was... still with my things. Her parents discriminated me, but she never left me alone. Thank God she's been with me and she's the foundation of my change and my future plans. And when I knew she was pregnant... oh, I had asked God for a child so many times, to change, to motivate myself. Now I have my daughter and my partner, and I don't want to lose them under any circumstance. She was totally committed to me, despite everything. I feel I have to pay her back now that we have a daughter.

These excerpts are examples of a story many Traditional desisters lived: how someone who loved them, trusted them and 'fought' for them even in inauspicious circumstances helped consolidate their efforts. The role of these women should not be overlooked, as they were actively involved in shaping the prosocial nature of these relationships, showing interest and trust in men who belonged to worlds which were quite different to theirs. In these examples, men stayed firm in not offending because they had a strong commitment to their partners, which in turn made their commitment to desist even stronger, echoing the idea of desistance as a relational enterprise proposed by Weaver (2012). It seems these relationships provided a generative context to exercise new, prosocial identities as fathers and husbands that replaced the previous identities (Maruna, 2001).

Boris: Now I'm only addicted to my daughter! ... Some people congratulate me for my change, some others laugh at me because they think I'm a mug. I prefer that they laugh because I enjoy my freedom, my family, I don't want to leave my daughter alone, that something happens to me and I have to return to prison... women get tired of their husbands in prison, they seek for support in other men and... another man taking care of my daughter? No. She's my entire life, I have to be with her no matter what.

In this excerpt, the analogy of paternity replacing the satisfaction of drugs clearly illustrates how the father role appeared more appealing for Boris than the addict role, and reinforced the value of staying in a good relationship with his partner by non-offending.

While research concurs on the idea that it is not the marriage, *per se*, but the quality of the relationship which accounts for desistance (Cusson and Pinsonneault, 1986; Farrall and Bowling, 1999; Laub and Sampson, 2003; Meisenhelder, 1977; Mischkowitz, 1994; Shover, 1983; Soothill *et al*, 2009), there is discrepancy regarding the relevance of the social orientation of the partner. Giordano *et al* (2002) contend that the partner's prosocial orientation is significant, but Leverentz (2006) disagrees as she found that desisting women in her study related to men who had histories of drug use or criminal involvement, yet these partnerships were supportive of their efforts to desist.

As illustrated in the cases above, the prosocial orientation background of the partner was crucial for some Traditional desisters, but it was not the general rule as a couple of men had wives with criminal pasts. Nevertheless, these wives were also transforming their own lives and it seemed that the decision to desist strengthened when it was part of shared goals with their partners. Not offending was not an end in itself, but a necessary step to achieve what they aspired to in their lives together.

Matías: We're applying for a State house because now we live in an encampment, so we're working hard to move forward. She's been such a fundamental support... she's my partner; she goes with me wherever I go. She used to be part of the same world I belonged, she was an offender for years, she went to prison, was released, and never ever was involved in anything again. She was working at the open market, but she had no support from anybody, so we met, we were both in similar circumstances, and here we are, supporting each other.

Matías met his wife shortly after being released, and they developed a strong connection by sharing the painful memories of the neglect and abuse they experienced in their childhood that had led them to being isolated from family and social networks as adults. This was in contrast to Alfonso, who met his wife over two decades ago while he was a street snatcher and she was a drug dealer, activities they continued to perform while raising the family.

Alfonso: When I arrived home [upon release], everything was over, she quitted what she was doing, and everything was over, over, never again.

CV: How was that?

Alfonso: Because I came as a changed person from prison, I didn't want to be involved in more problems; I didn't want to steal anymore. When I changed I made her a promise and she promised back... I promised her to change, and she said she was going to support me, so she was not going to deal drugs anymore; she promised that, she kept that and never sold drugs again.

For Matías and Alfonso their relationships were supportive and beneficial, and the fact that their partners had a criminal background was crucial as it provided 'a strong basis of shared experiences and mutual understanding' (Leverentz 2006: 488) that reinforced the projects they had embarked on.

Overall, a meaningful relationship with a woman with whom they developed a strong commitment was more important for Traditional desisters than the previous criminal orientation some of their partners had. These relationships recall the idea of a good marriage by Laub *et al* (1998), as they produced a progressively positive impact on men, promoting investments in conventional pursuits, strengthening social capital, and offering opportunities to rehearse and consolidate new prosocial identities, as much desistance research has shown (Bushway *et al*, 2004; Healy, 2010; Laub and Sampson, 2003; Maruna, 2001).

Sustainable Employment

At the time of interview, nine out of 12 Traditional desisters were in employment, all had worked in the prior year, and the three unemployed men were searching for a job. Most of them had worked as gardeners, carpenters, house painters, cleaners, and labourers, occupations that can provide good but unstable incomes. Four men had achieved steadier job conditions as traders at open markets, mainly selling clothes and household items, holding a licence to work.

Employment was for Traditional desisters, the main tool for sustaining their commitment to a conventional life and avoiding reoffending. The acquisition of new routines that were incompatible with those of the offending lifestyle limited criminal opportunities (Laub and Sampson, 2003), and reduced the exposure to offending peers (Warr, 1998), as illustrated in the following excerpt:

Osvaldo: I leave my house at 7 am and I arrive home at 6:30, 7 pm, tired of working all day, I get a shower, eat something, and a few things before going to bed. The next day I go to work again, so I have no time to go out and meet those old friends.

In addition, the value of employment for Traditional desisters also resided in the quality of the relationships developed in the work place:

Marcos: I have no friends; I mean I don't have a group of friends to hang around. The friends that I have, yes I could say friends and I mean my co-workers, because one spends basically more time at work than at home. At work I share, sometimes we even share lunch if someone doesn't bring anything to eat.

The excerpt from Marcos shows how the workplace provided a structure that facilitated the development of bonds of collaboration, and the symbolic context for language transformation where criminal peers were replaced by 'co-

workers', echoing the idea of the work place as a setting for prosocial learning (Wright and Cullen, 2004).

Earlier in this chapter it was described how Marcos decided to make a significant shift in his life, hoping to 'fix it up'. Besides providing the opportunities to exercise the employability skills developed in prison, employment offered him a context to return to what he considered his true self, the former friendly sports guy, now in the shape of a co-worker sharing lunch, an activity of cooperation so distant from the aggressiveness he had to display in prison.

Matías discovered his potential as a positive group leader while in prison but, more importantly, he had the ability to choose the type of employment in which he could make full use of these prosocial abilities.

Matías: I'm a shop-keeper now and I gathered a group of people from the open markets and I organised them to apply for the 'Hope Funding'. I heard about that fund so I gathered responsible people, and we're working together, we're materialising our projects after the Fund gave us a loan. ... And people from the open market like me now, now we're doing activities all the weekends so we can gather some money for the 'small cash box'. Look, we are 21 people and we are divided into four groups, we all have to pay fees for the loan, every Sunday. So if one of our partners cannot pay, we take money out of the small cash box to cover the fee for him. And that's why we organise raffles and things like that, in case one of us needs help from the group.

These excerpts illustrate how the interaction between employment and individual agency fostered exchange of social capital, offering new meanings to their lives, and providing opportunities to exercise new pro-social identities (Laub and Sampson, 2003; Maruna, 2001).

For some Traditional desisters, the significance of employment was also related to internal satisfaction and generative aspirations:

Sebastián: Currently I'm working at the open market but on Wednesdays I go to the young offenders prison with Father N. where I'm a kind of mentor, I talk to the young guys. I have a good rapport because of my past, they accepted me, they tell me their problems because I understand them, I know how to speak to them, I use the same jargon, I know what it's like to be inside, I know what they've been through. I also tell them about the outside world, how to manage here, how gorgeous the women are! And we laugh. I really want to keep on working in these prisons, I really want to help, to keep on helping, because of everything I had to go through. ... My intention is to recycle everything I lived, so I can study and use all my bad experiences to help others.

The excerpt above resonates with the idea of 'wounded healer' (Maruna, 2001: 104), in which individuals aspire to turn bad experiences into something good, making 'a lasting contribution' and leave 'a positive legacy' to people who have been in similar circumstances. Indeed, working as a volunteer – a role that is not as common in Chile as in the UK - was a recurrent idea among Traditional desisters:

Alfonso: I've talked to the psychologist here and I've asked him, how can I pay you back for all the support you've given me? I can help you with the people who are going through the same things I did, drugs, alcohol, that's what I offered.

Alfonso had received support from a programme for former offenders in his community, and what is interesting about this excerpt is how he wanted to be an actor in the delivery of the programme, not just a passive receiver of help, which resonates with the concept of solidarity from Weaver (2012), where responsibilities that are shared through reciprocity rather than those in subsidiarity seem to have a more powerful influence in desistance.

Employment and productive activities also provided the context for consolidating new identities. Boris, for instance, compared how being a worker and managing with a monthly income reflected his change: 'I consider I'm such a changed person now. ... Now I've got so little money and do so much with it!'. This excerpt suggests that Boris also accepted the constraints of a non-offending lifestyle, a marker of dedication to a non-criminal identity (Shapland and Bottoms, 2011). Indeed, becoming a proper worker in the community was a point of no return for reasons grounded in the Chilean criminal culture: real criminals do not work for others, only 'mugs' would do that (Cooper, 2002):

Sebastián: My first work was at a supermarket, I worked there for a while, I learned quite a lot of things, and I met people, normal people I would say. That was another environment, I started getting involved in it and I thought 'if I'm already here, I can't go back to stealing'. Because when you steal you're an offender, and when you start working and then go back to prison you're another thing. Because the worker... I mean working, betraying, and a few other things, if you do any of them, they will disrespect you in prison.

The excerpt above describes how a worker who returns to prison would get the same status as a traitor within criminal culture, which highlights how meaningful the decision of Traditional desisters to become workers was and how employment was a means to connect with the world of 'normal' people, echoing Meisenhelder who claims that employment serves as an 'investment in the conventional world' (1977: 327).

For most Traditional desisters, stable employment and a significant relationship enhanced the impact on desistance when they occurred together, resonating with the idea of the 'respectability package' in Giordano *et al* (2002: 1013):

Marcos: I was so lucky to meet my wife and I thought 'I'm going to be better off now', and now I'm even better with my kid. Now I'm expunging my criminal records and it's getting easier to apply for jobs. Previously I had to wait until someone I knew could offer some job

on behalf of me and I had to accept any job they offered. Not now, because now I introduce myself in a job place and I say 'I'm a carpenter'.

As described before, Marcos had a strong attachment with his wife, who had been extremely supportive, encouraging his efforts to progress in work, accompanying him to the criminal record expunging monthly control, providing part of the family income, and so on. The birth of their daughter was a pivotal event in Marcos's life and a strong motivation to keep on improving himself as the father of a family and a worker. Ultimately, for many Traditional desisters employment and a significant relationship increased their 'stock of social capital' (Farrall, 2004: 60).

7.6.3 Participation in community activities

More than in any other pathway, Traditional desisters had been engaged in community activities related to local organisations, sports clubs, and church, (some catholic but mostly evangelical). Only a few studies have explored the role of religion in desistance (Giordano *et al*, 2008), yet drawing on general studies, the link between religiosity and well-being has been documented. Lim and Putman (2010) analysed the association between religiosity and life satisfaction, concluding that it was not the theology itself, but the participatory nature of the social bonds built in church that account for the sense of satisfaction in individuals. This idea resonates with McNeill's (2012) notion of tertiary desistance, which refers to the sense of belonging to a community, in this case a moral community:

Rodrigo: When I left prison I went to a house of praying to praise the Lord, and I met many new brothers in faith and they welcomed me, regardless of who I'd been before, they valued me for who I was then, so I started praying and travelling the country, and they invited me to a radio programme and I worked six months at the radio delivering God's message. [...] A few months ago they gave me the responsibility of the programme, so now I lead it and I created a team of

brothers who work with me. So I can see how God is helping me in the spiritual life.

This fascinating quote describes several of the functions that churches serve in assisting reintegration processes in Traditional desisters. The evangelic church was Rodrigo's first point of reference in the difficult days after release, where he found emotional and practical support from 'brothers' who offered him a job that presented an available and appealing replacement self (Giordano *et al*, 2002). This subsequently provided a rapid opportunity to substitute the label of 'inmate' for that of 'preacher' and later to being 'responsible for the radio programme'. After only a year since he left prison, Rodrigo belonged to this moral group through which he also felt belonging to the wider society as a community agent.

Rodrigo's excerpt also emphasised a feature of relationships with people and organisations that was highly valued by Traditional desisters: the non-judgemental approach, as when he evoked how he was welcomed, or when he argued that it is not the person but their evil acts which need to be rejected. Sebastián recalled how a priest, who knew him since he was a troubled teenager, welcomed him when he asked for help. The fact that these forms of religiosity despise the acts, not the person, seem to have helped in the construction of their new conventional narratives, and is consistent with the self-definitions provided by Traditional desisters, in which offending actions did not define their true beings.

Another way in which participation in church supported the construction of new identities, was by promoting the acquisition of capacities that improved reflexivity. Many participants said that they learned to analyse people and their circumstances while they attended church, even if it was for short periods of time. Gastón for example, declined invitations to sell drugs as he wanted to set a good example as a representative of the evangelical church. This certainty of having to do the right thing was not limited to offending but had extended to other areas of his life, as illustrated in the following excerpt:

- Gastón: I sell different products, creams, gloves in winter, now they're selling CDs of traditional music, but no, I don't sell that stuff.
- CV: Why not?
- Gastón: Because they're pirated. It's almost nine months that I got my legal permission, because it takes almost a year between the application and the moment you have to start paying taxes.
- CV: Why did you feel like starting this process? You had been working for years as a street vendor...
- Gastón: Well, the opportunity emerged to have legal permission. And I took it.

By having a licence, Gastón still had to work on the street. However, the licence was the external certification that he was a legal vendor, that he paid taxes and the police could not confiscate his goods. The decision to apply for a licence and sell only legal items seemed to be rooted in his aspiration of becoming a full citizen. For Gastón and others, the moral sense provided by religion aided in the respect of and compliance with the norms, through increasing reflectiveness and self-control:

- Osvaldo: I attended church for a while, I learned a few valuable things there, taking decisions and reflecting on them, taking drastic decisions, for example quitting drugs because I had to think of the consequences of my drug addiction. One day I might have no money to buy it, so what then? I would have to take a gun and do something to get drugs, and what happens with my daughter then?

This excerpt illustrates the impact on desistance of 'the ability to be reflexive about the consequences of an action', one of the definitions of agency by Dietz and Burns (1992: 192). Sustaining a job, forming a family, and participating in community activities intensified the commitment to desistance as they increased their participation in conventional roles and relationships (Rumgay 2004). They were also sources of social certification (Meisenhelder, 1982) that aided the process of de-labelling, being the kind of 'sources of agency and communion in non-criminal activities' that can turn primary into secondary

desistance as desisters 'find meaning and purpose outside crime' (Maruna and Farrall, 2004: 28).

Interestingly, for some Traditional desisters being a consumer was a marker of achieving the status of citizens. When Alfonso elaborated on his current situation, he said 'I've got papers and all, I've got severance payments, and I've got debit cards and all'. Or, in the case of Marcos, whose first answer to the question 'how do you imagine yourself in five years' time?' was 'I'll be more in debt!' and then laughed. Applicants need to produce evidence that they earn money through legitimate ways to be entitled to debit cards, or to apply for a bank loan, something that would not have happened while they were offending. While this might appear odd, statistics show that in Chile the average level of personal debt is extremely high (Banco Central, 2013), and some claim that indebtedness is the only way for working classes to achieve conventional goals such as having a house, as salaries are too low and the welfare system focuses on assisting extremely poor people. Being in debt was for some, a meaningful way to feel they were participating in the dynamics of the wider Chilean society.

7.6.4 Internal processes

In their narratives of change, Traditional desisters usually highlighted the fact that they now reflected before acting, as a capacity developed over time. Reflectiveness played a relevant role at the initial stages of desistance, but also at the maintenance stage. Although Traditional desisters seemed strongly committed to conventional lifestyles, some acknowledged having moments of ambivalence they overcame through self-assessment:

Rolando: There's a ghost, always there, sometimes I'm brushing my teeth and I look in the mirror... Do you remember the way you used to be? How are you now? So I talk to myself, maybe it's better that way, so I don't go back to reoffend. So I make my self-assessment, because if you don't assess your life, nobody will come to do that for you, yes or no?

The excerpt above shows that even after 12 years away from prison, Rolando still compared his previous and current selves, and, while not explicitly declared, his quote suggested he had moments of temptation for reoffending, which is not surprising as they are an inherent part of desistance processes (Burnett, 2004). What is relevant is to understand how Traditional desisters overcame those moments of doubt, and their narratives showed the relevance of an ongoing internal conversation, by which they constantly analysed their choices, assessing their achievements and the risk of losing them through reoffending, somehow similar to the notion of ‘enhanced *internalized control*’ (Giordano *et al* 2002: 1001, emphasis in original). Their commitment to a prosocial life, through employment and family formation, was maintained by both internal motivations and long-term goals (Serin and Lloyd, 2009) which strongly resonates with the concept of human agency by Emirbayer and Mische (1998: 963), as ‘a temporally embedded process of social engagement, informed by the past, but also oriented toward the future (as a capacity to imagine alternative possibilities) and toward the present (as a capacity to contextualise past habits and future projects within the contingencies of the moment)’. Traditional desisters seemed to maintain desistance through a dynamic interaction of sense of achievement and long-term aspirations.

Sense of achievement

Traditional desisters showed high levels of agency, especially in its form of achievement, understood as the feeling that the person had succeeded in different tasks, aims or assuming responsibilities (McAdams, 2002). Feelings of personal pride and a sense of achievement have been described as featuring ‘strongly towards the end of the desistance process’ (Farrall and Calverley, 2006: 123). McNeill (2012) claims they are also ways of discovering agency, as illustrated in the following excerpt:

Matías:	I’m outside the criminal world, totally outside.
CV:	What makes you feel so confident about it?
Matías:	All the efforts I’ve done to reach the place I’m now, everything I’ve undergone... Too much humiliation, I don’t want to have anything to do with that anymore.

[...] The will of going ahead is strong, of being someone else, that will keeps me fine, willing to stay away. [...] Look, I started with a tiny piece of fabric selling things in the street; now I have a tent with iron frame, a platform, everything, I only need a small van, I think I'll have it within a year. But I think I've achieved a lot in the year I've been out.

The excerpt above illustrates the journey Matías undertook, from the humiliations of being a prisoner to success as a self-employed trader. Osvaldo also highlighted his accomplishments as a worker and a father, ultimately showing he was a good man entitled to be treated respectfully:

Osvaldo: What makes me feel capable? Everything I've achieved now. I've achieved working, having my daughter, I've bought my things with my own work, I've achieved to be trusted by my family... And I want to show my partner's family that I'm a decent guy, that I can be responsible, and that I can provide my daughter with everything she needs; actually, they've never bought anything for her, there's been no need.

The sense of achievement was also found as an expression of agency linked to the transformation of their futures:

Rolando: Now I know that if I steal, the suffering will be double... Because I have achieved a lot, what I, my goal is to be well, economically, psychologically, well in every aspect, that's my idea, to progress, to advance into the good things, the bad things no, I take the good things, what's useful for me.

The excerpt above illustrates one of the reasons most frequently mentioned by Traditional desisters to remain firm with their decision to desist, namely, having a 'peaceful life', not having to endure the procedures of the Criminal Justice System, and enjoying the freedom of walking free as an ordinary citizen:

Gastón: I live a better life now. Well, I could have loads of money, but I would live in fear. Not now, now I pass in

front of police officers, with my suitcase and all, and I say 'good morning, officer', even to prison officers if I see one. 'Mister', 'gentleman', that's how they call me now; and I couldn't even look at them before.

Alfonso: Now I pass by the police and I don't feel paranoid anymore, I pass by as any other regular citizen, as I was integrated, as any other person.

These excerpts highlight that the peaceful life was deeply related to their aspirations of being integrated into society 'as any other person'. Most Traditional desisters have conformist aspirations such as having a more stable job, or a bigger family house. These conformist goals resonate with the idea of 'normalcy' present in the last phase of the emotional trajectories of desistance which, besides the sense of pride and achievement described above, is characterised by feelings of trust and belonging (Farrall and Calverley, 2006).

Longer-term aspirations: future-oriented planning

In order to achieve these conformist aspirations, Traditional desisters took actions such as attending training opportunities, saving money and so on, showing markedly future-oriented narratives:

CV: How do you see your life in a year?
Matías: I see myself well, I wish I have a shop by this time next year, a van, I hope we get the State house this year. Maybe we'll get the house next year... I mean, having a small house, a small car, feeling more stable, without debts, but overall, I see myself well.
CV: You told me about your main aim, which is having a shop. But you also told me you will enrol in some training so you can have some additional income if things don't go as expected with the shop. It looks to me that you have a plan B.
Matías: Pfff, a plan B, a plan C, of course! I have to think about my future, I have to visualise my future, I can't stay at the same place, passive, as I told you the last winter was rough and I hardly made some money. I

have bills to pay and if the shop keeps on going as last winter I'll be broken for sure. So I have to manage ways to produce money and keep on going.

This excerpt shows Matías's optimistic stance about the future, based on the accomplishments he already achieved, but also in a multi-action plan in which a number of attainable, legal strategies were included. Traditional desisters made good use of the support they received and they also considered options of help in the future, not in a subsidiary way, but as an additional resource to achieve their goals:

Rodrigo: I look to the future and I see all the possibilities I have to get help and achieve things, but it's not something that will arrive overnight, you have to plan yourself into the future. [...] I don't think something is impossible, but everything takes its time.

As exemplified in the excerpt above, most Traditional desisters imagined a better life for them and their families. However, some older men also shaped their present life in order to leave a better legacy to future generations:

CV: How do you imagine your life in ten years?
Gastón: Better. For instance, you know I've got a granddaughter, so I opened a saving account for her, as a surprise. ... So I put \$200,000 pesos there and I don't touch that money. I told my daughter that I was the representative of my granddaughter in the bank, and that the money was there for her to make good use of it when she's older. Then I'm looking at the future, a better future for my granddaughter, because my daughter is already married, and I didn't give her the best I could, I should have given so much to my daughter... so I'm going to give that to my granddaughter.

The excerpt above illustrates Gastón's generative concerns (Maruna, 2001), but also his intention to repair the damage done to his daughter by the actions of his past life. This reflects a stance found in most Traditional desisters: they

actively searched for available ways of improving their lives and the lives of others.

Conclusion

This chapter discussed the Traditional Desistance Pathway, including which factors and stages correspond with existing desistance models. Traditional desisters contextualised the process over a long time period, where the identifiable beginning was during their last prison sentence and extended up to several years after their release into the community. A growing unease with prison lifestyle, questions about what is important in life, and a new concern for the well-being of significant others were three interrelated sources of awareness that provoked processes of self-reassessment in prison. This was the first of a series of cognitive transformations in which Traditional desisters started thinking about the future and searched for available and meaningful courses of action to achieve the aspired changes. Prison school and prison work were key external opportunities in which all Traditional desisters enrolled, overcoming the difficulties of obtaining and keeping a place in Chilean prisons. These activities produced powerful individual transformations and acted as turning points at early stages of change.

A set of internal factors such as improved self-efficacy, increased confidence, agency, hope, and goal-directed thinking were key in the processes of discernment and deliberation that took place in the last stages of prison and initial times after release. Early commitment to non-criminal identity once in the community required a profound change in the search for their genuine self, and was reinforced by the development of bonds to conventionality such as forming a family and obtaining a job.

Transitions to long-term desistance required dynamic interactions between external support from their partners, families and organisations in order to overcome financial problems, drug and alcohol use, and the stigma of being a former prisoner, and internal processes based on constant reflectiveness, motivations oriented towards conformist aspirations, legitimization of the social

norms, and participation in meaningful activities that acted as a source of communion with the wider society. Altogether, these factors collaborated in the development of a sense of achievement that was distinctive of Traditional desisters.

This interaction between internal and external factors that initiated and sustained processes of change, followed similar stages as those described in the desistance models of Giordano *et al* (2002), Vaughan (2007), and Bottoms and Shapland (2011), all of which reach a point of identity change. Traditional desisters were in an advanced stage of consolidation of a prosocial identity that was mainly built around conventional roles as fathers, husbands, workers, or community leaders. The extent to which existing models of desistance apply to all desisters in this sample and whether identity transformation is the final stage in desistance journeys, are the main concern of the following chapter.

CHAPTER EIGHT: ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS TO DESISTANCE

This chapter is concerned with two desistance pathways that diverge from the traditional findings related to identity change reported in the literature. The Stolen Youth is composed of six men whose desistance processes seem to have been highly influenced by the lengthy prison sentences they served throughout their twenties and thirties, and whose desistance challenges were less related with identity change and more with adaptation into a world that was new for them. The Old School pathway is composed of three men who abandoned crime as a form of rejection of the new criminality, and as a response to the emotional demands of their loved ones. Nonetheless, they defined themselves as thieves from a criminal generation which is now gone.

8.1 The Stolen Youth: An Overview

*Prison took everything away from me, despite
the fact that I had all that I needed in there,
TV, clothes... Prison took away my most
valuable things, my freedom,
my life... my youth.*
Alberto

At the time of interview, the Stolen Youth were aged between 33 and 54, most of them had partners and children, were working and had diverse levels of community involvement in both formal and informal activities. Their last release ranged from just over a year, to more than seven years ago. They had been sentenced to lengthy prison sentences of up to twenty years when they were aged around 18–20, most of which were served consecutively providing an average of over 15 years spent in prison. These features are shown in table 8.1:

Table 8.1: Socio-demographic and offending trajectories features of the ‘Stolen Youth Pathway’

Name	Age	Relationship	N children	N years of formal education	Age of onset	N prison sentences	Last prison sentence	Total N months in prison	Months since he left prison	Working	Community participation	Current oh / drug use
Nelson	33	cohabitant	1	10	7	2	robbery	150	22	no	yes	no
Alberto	40	single	0	12	10	2	robbery	167	26	yes	no	no
Renato	41	single	2	9	8	2	robbery	240	15	no	yes	no
Gonzalo	42	cohabitant	1	9	9	5	robbery	180	42	yes	yes	no
Antonio	43	cohabitant	2	12	14	2	robbery	240	35	yes	no	no
Octavio	54	cohabitant	1	12	15	3	robbery	240	89	yes	no	no
	42,17			10,67	10,50	2,67		202,83	38,17			

One of the research questions this thesis aimed to shed light on the extent to which desistance evidence was applicable to a Chilean sample. As it was rather unexpected to find participants who had served such long prison sentences consecutively, the analysis of this group entailed the challenge of finding studies whose participants had served similar prison sentences. This task was not simple, as most desistance research has been largely based on probationers or former inmates who had served shorter prison sentences.

By the time of the analysis only one available study fitted this requirement, Appleton’s research on 37 discretionary life sentence British offenders (2010). With a mean total length of imprisonment of around 16 years, her sample was comparable to the Stolen Youth in terms of length of custody. Nevertheless, two substantial differences made comparisons problematic. The first was the offence for which the prison sentence was imposed, as most of Appleton’s lifers were convicted for homicide, while all the Stolen Youth were convicted for robbery. The second was the quality of the post release supervision, since most participants in Appleton’s study were released on license under a carefully prepared plan, while most Stolen Youth left prison after full sentence completion without any preparation for release. Later, a study from the United States was available which was concerned with the role of transformation narratives in desistance among 67 lifers who had been convicted for homicide and had been released on a parole scheme (Liem and Richardson, 2014). Notwithstanding the differences, both studies served as enlightening references for this analysis.

It is worthy to mention at the outset, that this pathway shows an angle of the punitivism towards property crime in Chilean legislation. All the Stolen Youth were convicted for robberies equivalent to street robbery with use of threat or force in England and Wales, where sanctions range from 12 months and up to seven years of imprisonment (Crown Prosecution Service, 2014). In Chile, both crimes can be punished with prison sentences between five and 20 years, while simple homicides can be punished with three to five years of prison (BCN, 2013).

8.1.1 Transitioning to adulthood behind bars

Between the ages of 20 and 30 a complex process of transitions mark the passage from adolescence to adulthood, as young people leave school and families of origin to start their own family, work, and housing careers (McDonald, 2011). During this process of differentiation, individuals make decisions that can have long-lasting impacts on their lives and which are crucial for the emerging adult identity to consolidate (Shapland and Bottoms, 2011). These decisions involve areas such as educational attainment, employment, family formation, parenthood, and civic participation, which Massoglia and Uggen (2007) call 'adult status markers' that signal a successful transition from youth to adulthood. Research suggests these adult status markers are bonds to conventionality that can divert criminal trajectories (Laub and Sampson, 2003), and within which the critical timing is in the twenties, the stage of life when the fastest deceleration of offending occurs, even for persistent offenders (Piquero *et al*, 2007).

It is argued that men in the Stolen Youth pathway had little time to start these transitions in mainstream society and had to resolve their maturational crises in prison. Long-term imprisonment in such a critical developmental stage affected their identity building, as they were relationally and contextually forced into criminal socialisation, suffering the progressive loss of conventional bonds with the external world.

8.1.2 Life before imprisonment

The Stolen Youth self-reported offending onset between the age of seven and 15. Then by late adolescence they had all disengaged from school and were spending a significant part of their time in the street. By the age of 20, all Stolen Youth had been to prison and most of them had already received a long prison sentence:

- Nelson: I started stealing a few bits of food, maybe at the age of seven, essentials, I don't know, some pieces of bread.
- CV: When was your first contact with the justice system?
- Nelson: When I was 18, but I had been doing some stuff for a while... When I was 15 I met a guy who was a burglar and I said to myself 'this is the real deal' and I followed him and the rest. Is not that they induced me, no, you decide whether you do it or not, nobody forces you... so we broke into the house of this TV presenter, do you know him? That was my first big crime. ... I served over 12 years in custody, five years first; I left on January and by February I was back in prison with a new conviction of seven years... That was just a month!

The excerpt above illustrates Nelson's short involvement in criminal activity followed by imprisonment between the ages of 19 and 30. Like Nelson, Octavio served two long prison sentences with a short intermittency between them, but both evoked experiencing them as one long sentence. When Octavio recalled the few months that separated the first ten-years' prison sentence from the second one, he said 'it was like when a turtle takes his head out of the water to breathe'. The other Stolen Youth served their sentences consecutively, having few memories of the lives they had before imprisonment, as Renato who recalled the period when his single mother abandoned him and his eight siblings:

- Renato: I can't tell you much about my youth, but I can tell you that between the ages of eight and 17, the ten years I offended I did my best so my siblings and I were not

hungry all the time. ... I spent all my youth in prison, I was 21 years in prison, I fell when I was 17, almost 18 years old. From that point onwards it was like... like I left the light and I entered a dark place.

Having spent a small part of their younger years in freedom, the Stolen Youth had few opportunities to experience love, form families, work, or participate in community activities. Experiencing loving relationships appeared to be one of the aspects they resented the most, as they had few if any romantic experiences before prison, in the words of Gonzalo: 'I only met two girls... yes, let's call them girlfriends'. There were two exceptions, Antonio and Renato. Antonio was the only one who sustained a relationship with the girlfriend he had at the age of 20, with whom he had two children throughout two decades in prison, an exceptional situation among men in this study. Renato also had a short relationship with a woman and had two children in peculiar circumstances, as he explained:

Renato: I had a woman but she left me. I told her I had nothing to offer, only sadness... She was poor, so I preferred that she ate that food with my sons instead of taking it there for me.

CV: You have sons? May I ask you how you met your ex-partner?

Renato: Yes I have two sons, they were made in prison; we call them 'little bricks'. One of my mates told me he had a cousin who wanted to meet an inmate, so she went to meet me, she liked me, I liked her, we dated and I didn't touch her out of respect. One day she told me 'I want you to give me a child' and I asked her for a child as well and that's how my first son was born.

The excerpt above shows a fascinating angle of prison culture worth analysing elsewhere, but which is described here as it illustrates that even with the opportunity to meet a woman, relationships in prison can be instrumental and unconventional. Renato did not sustain that relationship and Gonzalo, Nelson, Alberto and Octavio did not have any further intimate contact with a woman until they were released in their 30s and 40s, representing cases of long deprivation

of heterosexual relationships, described by Sykes (1958) as one of the pains of imprisonment.

There is an extensive body of research supporting the idea that long-term imprisonment can have enduring physical, psychological, emotional, and relational consequences (Cohen and Taylor, 1972; Jewkes, 2005). Sykes (1958: 77) identified four more pains of imprisonment which he describes as 'deprivations and frustrations that pose profound threats to the inmate's personality or sense of personal worth': the deprivation of liberty, of goods and services, of autonomy, and of security. Men of the Stolen Youth pathway had to undergo the process of becoming adults in a totalitarian institution where the antisocial culture was omnipresent and these deprivations and frustrations were part of the everyday, having to build their identity in that mandatory context.

8.1.3 Identity building in prison

According to the theory of psychosocial development (Erikson, 1959), in late adolescence and up to the very early twenties, individuals have to establish the basis of their identity by overcoming the role confusion crisis that enables the development of intimate bonds with others through long-term commitments. These crises are social in nature, being highly influenced by the interaction with peers with whom different roles are rehearsed in the search for a more definitive way of being. This is a time in which narratives are powerful tools for organising and providing a sense of meaning to life experiences (Bruner, 1994), being the basis for individuals to create their identity (Riessman, 2008), and crucial to upholding 'a coherent prosocial identity' (Maruna, 2001: 7) in desistance processes.

Narratives cannot be understood outside the wider historical and social context where they are built. Except for Nelson, all Stolen Youth entered prison in the late 1980s, the last years of the military dictatorship when the inquisitorial justice system was still in full force. In prison terms, those were years of dramatic breaches of human rights, disproportionate use of pre-trial detention, low standards of protection for defendants and a general absence of

accountability (De la Barra, 1998). Most Stolen Youth stayed months and even years in pre-trial detention before knowing their definitive sentences. Some recalled being in a state of powerlessness and confusion, while others remembered what seemed to be delusional experiences that probably acted as psychological forms of survival, as in the account of Gonzalo who spent around three years in pre-trial detention:

Gonzalo: I was thinking about ways of killing myself. One day I did something I don't usually do, looking up to the sky and here comes the funny part, I saw it blue, deep blue, but really blue, navy blue and I was like 'what's going on?' and some weird white clouds appeared, the kind of clouds you don't see now, and they passed by and I felt I'd found a meaning in life and I said 'this is beautiful!'. Then I saw myself between four walls and I said 'this is not beautiful... but someday I'll leave this place, today I'm born again, I have to live under the rules of prison, this will be my life'. But I still didn't know all the years they'd put on me... they gave me 15 years and I thought 'this is it; I'll never leave this prison alive'.

After the period of uncertainty, receiving long sentences at such a young age seems to have induced a state of hopelessness where the only future possibility to anticipate was death:

Renato: When I entered prison I knew I might not go out alive, so I started drinking, fighting, that was my world, other inmates told me 'you're not leaving prison anymore'. ... I had to share with men serving two life sentences, they would never leave prison, and they had no interest in rehabilitation, no ambitions. And I had to live with them, in their world, although they told me I was not the type of guy to be there... I feel I was not the kind of person that goes to prison.

The excerpt above illustrates how disruptive imprisonment was for the foundations of conventional identity building (Jewkes, 2005), breaking with the required temporal consistency that allows for integrating one's past, present

and future into a narrative (Bruner, 1987) that is, itself, the process of identity development in adulthood (Maruna (2001). Following Matza (1964), and drawing upon a body of research that suggests that juvenile delinquents are not heavily committed to delinquent values and norms (Shapland and Bottoms, 2011), it can be argued that men of the Stolen Youth pathway might have not developed a criminal identity by the time they entered prison. Nevertheless, as Renato said they *had* to live together with threatening offenders and adapt to *their* world.

The inhumane prison conditions and the extensive use of solitary confinement seem to have had a great impact on most of the Stolen Youth who spent even months in isolation for disciplinary purposes. Antonio recalled eating on the floor and next to the place for defecating, Octavio resented the minimal opportunities for interaction with others, and all of them had painful memories of physical and psychological abuse that deeply undermined their sense of control and self-worth, echoing research on solitary confinement that has demonstrated that psychological consequences can be devastating, even in the long-term (Arrigo and Bullock, 2008).

Outside of solitary confinement, the Stolen Youth recalled living with a constant feeling of defencelessness and fear for their safety. Many slept with a knife under their pillow as risks of attacks of all types were ever present since they had to live in a 'prolonged intimacy with other men who in many cases have a long history of violent, aggressive behaviour', as Sykes (1958:77) described the deprivation of security. As prison life became increasingly unbearable, these young men employed techniques of emotional survival such as fragmenting their worlds: the prison reality, the time of the visits, their past life. The recurrent use of metaphorical expressions to describe their years in prison as living in a bubble, watching a movie or a reality show, hints the alienation they endured over those years:

Nelson: You create some friendships; I mean you try to make friends... So you start sharing stories of the love life you had outside, because you really live on

memories, nothing more, memories of situations you lived with your girlfriend... and then you start kicking the orange tree, the idea is to keep a conversation, to keep your soul alive.

CV: Excuse me, what is 'kicking the orange tree'?

Nelson: Lying! That's what it means. Making up memories... maybe those memories were real, but not 100%, let's say 50% real and the rest... do you understand? For example, I met an inmate and I tell him that I met a girl, and that part is true, but then you start making up details, like you took her to a fancy hotel, things like that. Or you say that you stole a huge amount of money and you really took \$10,000 pesos, you see? You can't be inferior, you always have to show a superior status, those are the things you live in prison, there's envy, manipulation, and the weak of mind are eaten by the strong of mind.

The excerpt from Nelson suggests that presenting an imaginary world where he was successful, respected and loved might have counteracted the situation he was living in prison, a mechanism of emotional survival described by Sykes (1958: 80) as the psychological withdrawal 'into fantasy based on fond memories of the past'. In those early years, visits were the only real connections with the outside world:

Renato: You start your prison life until the day of the visit. And there you are, crying and your visitors cry as well, and then... you have to return to your real life. Because when you're in prison your real life starts at 5 pm, which life? Being in prison. At the time of the visits you forget you're in prison, but when the visitor leaves, you return to your reality 'ah! I'm an inmate.' And then it becomes a routine.

CV: Who visited you during those years in prison?

Renato: My family visited me twice in 21 years... but because I asked them not to go so they didn't suffer.

The excerpt above exemplifies a recurrent phenomenon for most of the Stolen Youth, whose visits became less frequent as the years went by, because relatives died or got tired of the prison visit routines:

Octavio: You got into the prison system and the visits are like... mmm, how can I describe it? Like watching a movie, that's the visit. How long does it last? I turn on the TV, put a film on, how long am I entertained? An hour, hour and a half until the credits appear on screen. But the visit is over, and the inmate had to pass through the bars and return to his reality, and that reality is what he has to live for the remaining six days of the week until the next visit. I lived immersed in that 'inside world' as I didn't have many visits. I locked myself inside that world, but there was some fun, the fights... Have you watched a reality show? When your world shrinks everything is exacerbated, the discussions, the sexuality; in prison is the same, it's like the world within a bubble, but that bubble is everything for you, it's your universe, your friendship core, your world, your life is in that world, and that keeps your mind busy.

Octavio's excerpt illustrates one of the strategies used by the Stolen Youth to cope with their growing isolation. As expected within the psychosocial development crisis (Erikson, 1959), they started developing more intimate bonds with others, inmates in this case, as bonds with people from the outside world increasingly extinguished:

Octavio: There's this theme of the anti-values that the person accepts and accommodates in his mind, so all those who don't steal are mugs and the one who steals is clever, then the clever one lives at the expenses of the mugs, and the mugs work but the clever one doesn't because the clever one takes away what the mugs earn by working. And then the person really gets into these anti-values, a table of values belonging to the criminal world, not to the society, and they live according to that table of values. And well, I internalised all that.

This quote demonstrates how prison provided the context, the language, the values and the codes of behaviour for them to be inescapably socialised into

the criminal world. In all the Stolen Youth's accounts of prison life there were episodes of extreme violence, rape, conspiracy, threats, and so on. It was not fully clear whether they were victims or perpetrators, suggesting their masculinity and identity building in prisons were shaped by strategies of self-defence (Evans and Wallace, 2008) and power relationships (Jewkes, 2002). Overall, the excerpts above exemplify the variety of forms through which these young men were stripped of their individuality, being subjected to dramatic changes that resonate with the idea of mortification of the self that total institutions produce in inmates who, despite initial reactions, finally adapt to the system (Goffman, 1963).

8.1.4 Early moves towards change

The last years of imprisonment were increasingly hard to cope for all Stolen Youth, as feelings of isolation, exhaustion of prison life and fear of death grew, along with the anxieties associated with the anticipation of release (Appleton, 2010; Cusson and Pinsonneault, 1986; Shover, 1983). As would be expected to occur at around the age of 30, the Stolen Youth went through processes of self-assessment in which they evaluated their lives and thought about the future (Giordano *et al*, 2002; Gove, 1984; Leibrich, 1996; Meisenhelder, 1977), as illustrated in Alberto's words:

Alberto: I'm 40 years old, I was released when I was 38, but I think the process started when I was around 36, just the initial moves, because I started getting the meaning of life, I don't know, maybe I matured.

By contrast to Traditional desisters, for whom 'change' meant transforming their offending selves, the Stolen Youth usually meant transforming their lives into something different to what they had lived in prison. The Stolen Youth were willing to live what they called a 'normal life' after release, feeling their criminal days were behind them as the last time they had actually committed a crime was at least a decade ago.

Being aware of the remaining time to complete their sentences produced a discrepancy between their internal desires and their external circumstances. The 'initial moves', then, were searches for opportunities that could reduce that discrepancy, either by shortening the remaining time in prison or by improving their quality of life. Antonio recalled enrolling in school as a means to reduce his sentence:

Antonio: I was focused on myself, having a good time, but when I started relating more with professionals, attending workshops, educational activities, I don't know, you start seeing that you are able to do other types of things, that you can produce, collaborate, that you could help your family...

The excerpt above shows several angles that illustrate the early steps towards change taken by the Stolen Youth. While Antonio's ultimate goal was just leaving prison earlier, he chose formal education as a legitimate means to accelerate his release. In that environment he discovered abilities he did not know he had which were of a generative type, such as 'produce, collaborate, and help'. Furthermore, these discoveries occurred as he 'started relating more with professionals' in educational activities. This might indicate that cognitive transformations were taking place and Antonio, as for all the Stolen Youth, actively selected the favourable relational and environmental elements to pursue changes (Giordano *et al*, 2002).

Antonio's excerpt also highlights the relevance of constructive relationships acquired in their context of isolation from the outside world. All Stolen Youth emphasised the importance that a dedicated person had during their last years of prison, by offering new, non-criminal perspectives, assisting the shift from a self-centred position towards a more generative one (Gove, 1985), and helping them in the process of rebuilding their narratives, similar to Appleton's findings (2010).

For Alberto these people were a former robbery peer and a teacher; for Antonio, some classmates and a teacher; for Renato, a prison officer; for Gonzalo and

Octavio a new relationship with God; and for Nelson, a girlfriend. These relationships had two main interrelated features: they were reciprocal and collaborative in the sense proposed by Weaver (2012), and they promoted agency through empowerment, as described by McAdams (2002).

Relationships that fostered awareness and change

As Bottoms *et al* (2004: 375) discuss, agency can be limited by a 'lack of self-awareness and lack of full contextual awareness'. Having experienced processes of 'disculturation' (Goffman, 1963) and being socialised in the prison culture, it might not be surprising that the Stolen Youth had a limited awareness of their personal potential and their place in the broader social context. Alberto, Antonio, and Renato underwent relational processes through which they progressively developed awareness of their abilities and capacities, which in turn promoted a greater sense of control over their lives and facilitated the emergence of agency.

Alberto reported having found a meaning in life within which an important place was devoted to his parents. He found a former robbery friend, who was now an artist in prison, and after a few invitations Alberto was persuaded to join him:

Alberto: I started visiting him almost every day and I engaged with the painting stuff and I liked it, then at night I reflected on ways of helping my family and selling paintings appeared as a good way. So I painted on glass and on canvas and when my family visited me I passed them the paintings so they could sell them and earn some money.

Known as a troublesome inmate, Alberto had to overcome several administrative barriers to visit his friend who was living in a section for workers, which he happily did as he reported finding a source of calm and joy in painting and having a different type of conversation. Through painting he found a viable means to help his parents financially, reducing the dissonance between who he was (a burden to his parents) and who he wanted to be (a good son). His friend

appeared to be committed to this relationship as he provided Alberto with materials to start painting and taught him some techniques, acting as a positive role model:

Alberto: The fact that he was a bad guy, he used to be a big boss, and then I saw him painting, using his time in other sort of stuff, I felt like doing the same. ... I started moving away from the problems, in a way I wanted to change my life.

The excerpt above suggests that witnessing a positive change in someone Alberto once admired as an offender empowered him to pursue his own aspirations. Weaver (2012: 400) suggests that observing change in a credible person, especially if that person once ‘mirrored’ their behaviour ‘and has since changed’, promotes a positive identification. Alberto kept on painting and enrolled in school, where he encountered a new source of encouragement:

Alberto: When a female teacher arrived we attended school every day. One day she approached me and asked me ‘what are your plans?’ and I replied ‘I’m studying’ and she said ‘I know, but what for? Because you’ll be released one day, what are you going to do outside?’ and I said ‘I don’t know’. And from that point onwards I felt like I engaged in a system of change because I felt she noticed me and believed in me, she believed in me, trusted me, and she told me ‘I’m going to help you’ and she handed me study guides so I could prepare the classes, and I did, I read and I engaged in that.

This excerpt illustrates the relevance of professional and collaborative relationships for those wishing to make changes (Appleton, 2010; Weaver, 2012). The fact that the teacher offered concrete help, to which Alberto replied positively, shows the reciprocity and committed nature of a relationship focused on the development of competencies, an outcome that strengthened his sense of achievement:

Alberto: So when I completed the first year it was such a triumph for me, some of my mates had to retake the course but they kept on attending school, so I felt like I prompted that they looked at life more seriously, I mean, some people need help.

As Alberto's involvement with the educational environment grew, a series of additional changes took place. Once a part of groups of tough guys, he became a positive leader who gathered and encouraged other inmates to attend school, so those who used to be his gang mates were then his classmates. Toch (2000: 270) states that prisoners can benefit from participation in altruistic activities, gaining a sense of accomplishment and increasing their self-esteem, like Alberto, whose completion of a year of school after over two decades of being disengaged from education, fulfilled a personal challenge and promoted generative motivations that provided a sense of purpose.

Earlier in this chapter, an excerpt from Antonio highlighted the positive outcomes out of collaborative relationships in prison school. Later he felt the need to replicate those actions with younger generations of inmates. Along with another inmate and a teacher, they organised successful recreational, educational, and sports activities, even creating a library that connected him with the outside world through newspapers and the radio:

Antonio: I heard that eight out of ten children of inmates go to prison as well, I mean! I said to a friend 'you know? If we keep on doing what we are doing, we can change the story. And if we manage to make our voice noticeable to the government we can reduce that number, I don't know, five out of ten and that would make a difference...

The excerpt above shows Antonio's generative motivations (Maruna, 2001), an empowered outlook and a growing awareness of the broader social setting where they as inmates were located, which seemed to have been developed through conversations with his new school mates and through the performance of educational activities, as suggested in the following excerpt:

Antonio: I realised the economic system is involved. If they were really interested in solutions, they wouldn't build more prisons, but more factories, more schools, I mean, preparing these young guys, providing training and securing a job after release. ... We created a newspaper and I wrote something with the title '10 years in prison or 10 years of education?' and the teacher asked me why that title and I said 'you have me here 10 years doing nothing but you can have me outside studying, improving myself. Perhaps I'll have to wake up early and do some things I don't like but in the long-term you'll have a proper citizen'.

Antonio's excerpt resonates with Weaver's (2012: 397) claims that 'it is through reflexive deliberation on their social situations and the range of available actions that people exercise agency to reproduce or change their circumstances'. Weaver's notion of reflexivity, as a co-produced good of the relationships that promote desistance, was also found in the case of Renato, who had some of the toughest prison experiences of all, including long stays in solitary confinement, prison transferrals, and an homicide attempt. His family only visited him twice in over 21 years, and despite having a relationship from which two sons were born, he had not met them:

Renato: I spend one year doing absolutely nothing, seated in the prison yard until one day I came across a Sergeant I knew from the time he was a corporal. He used to advise me, he used to tell me I should stop behaving as I did. So when I returned to Prison C. he was there and one day he took me out of the section and asked me to work at his office. I gained three times the enemies I had as they thought I was an informer.

CV: How was that Renato? After 18 years being a troublesome inmate, what happened that in the last years you started doing these things?

Renato: Because I was not the same man. When the Sergeant took me to work at his office I quitted the weed, the booze, even the cigarettes... He did me a good deed, he told me 'I'll bring your son', the son who's five years old now. And he took my son there, I had no

idea until they call me for the visits and I thought it was a mistake because I had no visitors, so I saw the officer with my son. Would you believe me that I had never cried before? That day he made me cry and he changed my mind, from that moment he changed my mind because of what he did. I told him 'officer, I'm so grateful that I'll give you my rehabilitation in return for what you've done for me', and we shook hands.

This is a short excerpt taken from a long reflection Renato presented about the relationship he developed with the prison officer. As mentioned, Renato was in such a state of abandonment and loneliness that the demonstration of care and trust by the prison officer was a milestone for Renato and this had powerful transformative consequences.

Gonzalo and Octavio did not refer to one specific person, but to the role of religion during their last years of imprisonment, as they approached the Evangelic church and became genuine believers and participants:

Octavio: I can tell you something that is good in prisons and works: churches, I had that contact in prison and it changed me quite a lot, and that's the part of the story I want to tell you before we finish, because it's very important. When I got tired, tired of all the stuff, I had just arrived from the fourth solitary confinement... they had sent me to a new prison, again, and I had to start anew, everything anew, again. I started attending the Evangelic church; I think it is the one with the greatest incidence in changes, the faith, approaching God, accepting Jesus in your life and accepting the changes in your values, getting rid of those false paradigms, those anti-values, and returning to the real values, real and genuine, because that's what religion gives you and I'm basically talking about the Evangelic religion. Many have changed because of religion; I've seen it, it's a good method of rehabilitation, I mean, the best rehabilitator for me, I really mean it, is Jesus. In my case, religion had a great influence.

Octavio described earlier how he internalised the values of criminal lifestyle and lived accordingly during his first years in prison, enduring the consequences of being a troublesome inmate. He had narrated an event that was particularly humiliating for him, during the last time he was in solitary confinement, when the dissonance between who he was (naked, in a new prison, starting from zero), and who he aspired to be (a man living a calmer life) was more intense. Maruna *et al* (2006: 170 citing Lifton, 1961) claimed that individuals are more receptive to religious ideologies 'when their self-identity is questioned, placed under strain, or threatened with annihilation', which seems to have been the case for Octavio. Apparently what worked for him was that the Evangelic Church offered the timely possibility to disengage from those criminal values and a re-orientation of his behaviour and beliefs, while he was cognitively open (Giordano *et al*, 2002) and willing to make that shift as his internal dispositions were active ('approaching God') and receptive ('accepting Jesus'). It seems that religion allowed him to renew contact with something genuine inside of him ('return to the real values').

Overall, relationships with the reformed offender, the teacher, the classmate, the prison officer and God, served a crucial function as they helped to reduce the dissonance between their current selves and their aspired selves by encouraging processes of reflexive deliberation that aided identity rebuilding and promoted agency. During the last few years before release, the Stolen Youth started changing their behaviours and ways of thinking, discarding their old criminal values. This separation from their old social roles resonates with the first phase of the tripartite model of social transitions by Turner (1970 in Healy, 2010: 35) in which individuals are 'on the threshold' of change, transitioning towards new social roles.

Surviving outside prison walls

Although these relationships had such a positive impact on the Stolen Youth, it should not be forgotten that long-term imprisonment was a massive disruption of their life course that extensively undermined their human and social capital. Following Jewkes (2005: 370), imprisonment was not only a restriction of liberty,

as these men were also 'stripped of their fundamental sense of being'. None of them received preparation for release or left prison under any supervision scheme, having to rely on relatives and friends for accommodation, food supply, and even for moving through the city. Most entered prison in the late 1980s and returned to live in the community in the 2000s, where everything was new for them:

Octavio: I spent 21 years and a half in prison. When I entered, there was one underground line, the yellow buses, now we have several lines and a completely different public system of transport, all the modernity. I got into prison in an era when Chile was totally different to what we see now, so I was released into a very different world.

Octavio's excerpt exemplifies what all accounts of the Stolen Youth's life upon release evoked, the astonishment of the changes in the city and in society, reiterating expressions such as 'new world', 'new life' or 'being born again'. They strived for understanding and adapting into a society that was radically different to the one they knew, and whose social rules they barely remembered. This adaptation involved behavioural, emotional and relational challenges, as Renato explained:

Renato: I still wake up scared every morning, I hear a car and I get scared, I hear a whistle and I get frightened. I wake up thinking they are calling for the morning count. Because I still think it's a dream that I'm where I am. ... Thank God it is not so intense now although in the morning I still look at the window to check the bars, and when I don't see the bars I feel better. I still get lost in the streets, whenever I have to go out someone has to go with me, even my kids know better than I do! My mom as well, she realises so she asks if I need company and I say yes.

This excerpt illustrates the extent of the consequences of long-term stays in a total institution that subjects individuals to structured and compulsory patterns of life that disregard their autonomy (Goffman, 1961). Paradoxically, their

strategies for adapting to the outside world included locking themselves in, and emotional withdrawal:

Octavio: I got to work straightaway and I locked myself, and my world became my partner and I, we lived in one room, and the world was the two of us, and our aim was 'to stand the pot' the next day, and work and work and work.

Participants recalled the time after release as emotionally exhausting mainly due to the need to adapt to contextual changes. Gonzalo returned home to find that his former working sister was then selling drugs and his former peers thought he was willing to offend again, to which he replied by setting a strict set of behavioural rules, including quitting smoking, drinking, and not going out:

Gonzalo: I couldn't alter the norms I had imposed for myself, because if at some point I altered what I had decreed for myself I would have been back in prison by now and not for 15 years, perhaps a life sentence. Why? let's say you were in charge of the money and of course you wouldn't like that money to be stolen so you would have a gun and would try to shoot me, but I'm faster than you and I'd shoot you first. Result? Robbery and homicide, I'd be covered in years.

This excerpt exemplifies what all Stolen Youth lived upon release, experiences that challenged their lack of emotional regulation and behavioural repertoire to conduct themselves in a world whose social rules were different from prison, where they lived for years under total dependence on the decisions of others, unable to make choices (Sykes, 1958). As they were used to being treated and responding with violence, they were afraid of their own reactions and assumed a radical position by locking themselves at home, escaping from people related to offending, moving away from situations they perceived as risky, like Alberto who said 'now I don't even want to take a stick as I can hurt someone, I avoid all those things'. These strategies are consistent with those of diachronic self-control observed in would-be desisters (Shapland and Bottoms, 2011). Nonetheless, these self-imposed regimes could not prevent drug use relapses

and a few episodes of reoffending, all of which are expected to occur in early stages of desistance, as research has informed. Despite that, they all reported being clean from drugs for at least one year and away from prison for at least 15 months and up to seven years, both relevant achievements they attained through the processes that will be described in the following section.

This process of social withdrawal resemble the beginning of the liminal period, the second phase of the tripartite model of social transitions by Turner (1970 in Healy, 2010: 35), when individuals 'distance themselves from their past selves and begin to construct desirable new identities', a stage of considerable personal transformation.

8.1.5 Transitions to longer-term desistance

Earlier in this chapter it was argued that long-term imprisonment imposed at an age when individuals resolve the identity crisis (Erikson, 1959) deeply affected that process and also precluded them from experiencing the social transitions that mark the passage from youth to adulthood, and which naturally occur around the twenties (Massoglia and Uggen, 2007). The highly disruptive experience of lengthy imprisonment hindered the production of narratives capable of providing meaning to their lives, as their personal stories lost pieces, missing the continuity and the sequencing that are vital to sustain identity (Bruner, 1987).

They faced community life upon release with diminished human and social capital, and as much as they had dreamed of freedom, they had to withdraw from social life as a strategy for adaptation and survival. Nevertheless, the Stolen Youth searched for explanatory frameworks to make sense of their lives, viable ways to create bonds and commitments with conventional others, sources to fulfil their needs of social approval, of being part of something bigger than themselves, of attaining a positive contribution to society, and to pay back to those who helped them. All these elements configured a long and complex process that promoted and maintained prosocial changes, and was an on-going process for most of them.

Building explanatory frameworks

One of the first tasks the Stolen Youth had to undertake in order to build their new selves was to find meaningful frameworks through which to interpret the experiences they underwent during their lengthy imprisonments. Interestingly, despite the appalling times they lived through, they presented quite optimistic and constructive explanations, as illustrated in the following excerpts:

Gonzalo: Being imprisoned taught me to value life. Life is beautiful and valuable as it comes. I learned to survive, to fight against whatever adversity comes.

Antonio: Perhaps imprisonment helped me to have a positive stance in life. I lost it all after so many years locked up, so I appreciate very everyday things like going to the market. Having spent 20 out of my 40 years in prison made me more sensitive, I guess people believe you become harder but not, in those circumstances you yearn for the most trivial things, I don't know, the affection of your mom.

These excerpts show how Gonzalo and Antonio chose to learn positive lessons out of adversity, a feature that has been described among desisters (Maruna, 2001). This can be linked to the notion of post-traumatic growth (Tedeschi and Calhoun, 2004) in which individuals tend to appreciate life more after critical experiences:

Renato: I saw people burning alive, entire rooms burning. I believe God... there is no other explanation than God. He's keeping me alive for a reason... they tried to kill me a few times, I was stabbed right in the middle of my chest, I could have died, and two months later I appeared again. ... I think God maybe says 'I have this guy alive for a reason'.

CV: Can you imagine any reasons?

Renato: I think he has me here with the purpose of being an instrument, help people... being an instrument so they

don't have to go through all the things I had to go through. I have to be that instrument. ... I have always been like that; I like helping the most vulnerable, since I was a child that I've been like that. My mom says I've always been good.

Renato chose a religious framework to interpret his life-threatening experiences in prison, creating an empowering and generative purpose that made his existence full of meaning, being an instrument through which God works for the vulnerable. Renato also goes back to his childhood to find the good things about him, to reconnect with the 'good guy' he has always been, which seemed to make his framework more powerful as his mission was rooted in his early days:

Octavio: After all that I've survived I hope that at the end of my days people say 'this guy... he maybe screwed it all up at the beginning, but at the end he was a good person... That sentence is good for an epitaph: 'a good person, he was a good person'.

As these excerpts illustrate, the Stolen Youth went back to their past to make sense of their current selves, as it has been described in narratives of desisters (Maruna, 2001). This search for meaning was also future-oriented, as they questioned their mission in life, or how they would like to be remembered, resonating with the concept of agency as 'a temporally embedded process of social engagement, informed by the past, but also oriented toward the future and toward the present' (Emirbayer and Mische, 1998: 963). Nelson exemplifies this process:

Nelson: I have a sister but she was sent to an orphanage as well. I just met her recently because I started relating with my family, and I started searching for a family life as I wanted to build a family and rebuild the bonds that... because I was about to start building my own family and I didn't want my kids to have broken bonds, I wanted them to meet their grandma, their auntie.

This excerpt shows how Nelson, tried to recover some of the lost pieces in his biography by going back and repairing his own broken bonds so he could

provide his children with a better version of a family. He was attempting to build a consistent narrative and to fulfil his generative motivations as well (Maruna, 2001).

Most of the Stolen Youth tried to reconnect with significant aspects of their pasts to gain an understanding of their life in a broader perspective. The Stolen Youth were willing to create new, intimate bonds with others and some of them achieved it through a long-term commitment such as forming a family (Erickson, 1959).

Developing long-term commitments

Once the Stolen Youth reconciled with their pasts, they could begin to rehearse and adopt new roles mainly centred on the family. Renato elaborated how fatherhood helped him in building a new self:

Renato: Nobody. I was nobody. As the society says, I was an annoyance, because I was nobody. ... Now I think I'm someone, I'm a person, I'm a... I'm a father now, because father is not who conceives but who plays with his kids, is with them so the kids can feel the warmth of his presence. Now that I'm here I feel those emotions and I feel good about myself, going with my kids to the park... I feel like a person now, not like a piece of shit. ... In my remaining bits of life, I'd like to be someone so nobody can point me with the finger. They can say 'he was a criminal but now he's rehabilitated and look how smiley he walks with his kids by their hands'. That genuine smile in my face soothes me, gives me more strength so I can be with my sons, go to work, get up early in the morning, come over here, all those things lift me up as a person and I want to take the best of it.

The excerpt above illustrates the different ways in which fatherhood can have a positive impact on someone who is trying to rebuild his life. In Renato's case, the role of 'father' brought about positive emotions of feeling better about himself, an emotion associated with progression towards desistance (Farrall and

Calverley, 2006). The adoption of a conventional social role can help replace old, criminal-related roles (Maruna, 2001), as Renato illustrated when saying he went from being a 'nobody' to being a 'person', in his case exemplified through the 'father' role. Furthermore, fatherhood also encouraged him to adopt a positive stance, to think about the future and take responsibility over his generative concerns (Healy, 2010). But, it was not just being a father but also behaving like one, assuming an active role that promoted new habits incompatible with offending such as waking up early to work and showing others that fatherhood has 'rehabilitated' him. Being a father in the public eye served also as a social certification of change that reinforced his desires to achieve and sustain change (Sommers *et al*, 2004).

While Renato had to undertake this role alone, other Stolen Youth were forming families in the context of a relationship with a partner they regarded as the most important person in their lives:

Gonzalo: I have a beautiful woman who knows how to deal with me... the life I had was rough, so she has helped me and I try to be more delicate with her. She gave me my son who makes me smile and cry, he dances in the morning and that makes me happy. I think those are the things that push me every day and release the pressure inside me, the pressure of my past life.

This excerpt suggests Gonzalo's partner had helped him with the emotional constraints he faced upon release and that they were working on a more tender way to relate to each other. His son provided him with the opportunity to practice the role of a responsible father, which gave him a strong sense of achievement, reducing the weight of his former criminal self (Healy, 2010).

Antonio: Having a good woman is crucial, a good woman is the one who loves you, is there for you, but when the time comes she will be the first to tell you to stop if you're screwing it up, even if you don't like to hear that, a woman who stops you when you're going fast, that's a good woman for me.

For Antonio, who had been with his wife for over two decades and emphasised her significance throughout the interview, a 'good woman' sets limits, provides structure, and promotes reflexivity. For Nelson, a valuable feature of his relationship was the fact that they both shared troubled backgrounds, so that mutual understanding strengthened their commitment and sense of self-worth:

Nelson: I thank God because my wife lived the same things I did, she doesn't have family support, and she lived in a reform house. She's not an offender at all; she was there for protection as her family abandoned her. She endured tough events, degrading experiences for a woman, from her dad... you can imagine. For those reasons I strongly feel I have to support her and live the process with her. We understand each other. On top of that she values me, and that's the beauty... when you're valued you feel like fighting.

The fact that forming significant life partnerships was central for instigating changes supports a well-documented finding in desistance research. The reasons why their partners aided change are found beyond the traditional explanations from the social control theory (Sampson and Laub, 1993) or the social learning perspective (Warr, 1998). It seems that these relationships were mutually satisfying (Shover, 1983), because they offered opportunities to exercise new, meaningful identities (Maruna, 2001), being reciprocal, collaborative, and promoting reflexivity (Weaver, 2012). The Stolen Youth's accounts of their relationships suggested a high level of commitment by both parties, which facilitated the emergence of shared projects. Altogether these loving relationships provided an emotional basis of understanding where the Stolen Youth searched for assistance and guidance, echoing the 'empowering force' described by McAdams (2001).

Searching for ways of social certification

Beyond the borders of their families, the Stolen Youth had to work hard to prove to others that their change was genuine, as it usually happens with individuals whose social resources have been significantly reduced by long-term

imprisonment (Appleton, 2010). Moreover, Maruna and Farrall (2004: 28) claimed that societal reaction is one of the requirements for primary desistance to become secondary desistance, that is, that others recognise the person's change and 'reflects [it] back to him in a de-labelling process'. This social certification was significant for all the Stolen Youth, as Renato illustrates:

Renato: There are two types of rehabilitation, the one of working, and the personal rehabilitation. ... I walk with my forehead up, wherever I go people greet me 'Hi mister Renato', and I feel good, in the morning when I go to work, people greet me, they know where I came from, I don't hide my past, I prefer to go with the truth. In my neighbourhood everybody tells me they thought I was going to be a bad guy after 21 years and a half in prison.

It was discussed earlier how the role of father served Renato as a certification of change, but this excerpt also suggests that basic gestures such as being called 'mister', were interpreted as demonstrations of social acceptance at a more integral level, of him as a person including his past as an offender. Renato repeated throughout the interview that many people expressed their astonishment to find that he was normal after 21 years in prison, echoing the idea of 'social rehabilitation' as 'the informal social recognition and acceptance of the reformed ex-offender' (McNeill, 2012: 15). Indeed, Renato formulated the idea of the two forms of rehabilitation, suggesting that 'the personal rehabilitation' involved walking the streets with pride, an opposite stance from that of the social withdrawal most of the Stolen Youth adopted in the early days after release.

Alberto: I feel supported, they consider me now, and they value my opinion. My family first and here, at this municipality the practitioners listen to me, they consider me; they value me as a person... that makes me feel good.

CV: You didn't have that before?

Alberto: Not at all, they looked at me as a criminal.

The excerpt above confirms the relevance for the Stolen Youth of being legitimated and valued as a person, which helped them in dealing with the stigma of being an ex-prisoner. The effects of social certification were built over time in an active interaction between individuals and their significant others. Appleton (2010: 160) found that as acceptance and trust by conventional circles grew, individuals' motivations were strengthened, 'as were their social and personal identities as non-criminals', and this was the case for the Stolen Youth, for whom the support of others represented a source of commitment to maintaining change.

Being part of reciprocal relationships

It has been argued throughout this chapter that the Stolen Youth faced freedom with weakened personal and social resources as a result of long-imprisonment. It is unlikely that they could have coped with obstacles without external support and, while they recognised their own efforts, they also acknowledged the diverse support received from friends, relatives, and institutions such as NGOs, a Municipality, and churches.

Shortly upon release, Antonio opened a shop in his house with the help of his wife, his brother, a friend, his father, and his mother-in-law, all of whom collaborated to put the shop together. He interpreted these forms of support as acts of faith that infused him with the self-belief that he would succeed in his business:

Antonio: The fact that people believe in you, for example, my mother-in-law went into debt to buy a machine... If people don't believe in you, they don't do those sorts of things. ... I've always been respectful, people respect me as well, here the neighbours, they were all so happy when I opened this shop. Honestly, at the beginning I think most of them bought here just to support me, and still some of them can buy somewhere else but they come here.

The shop prospered until some young guys broke-in, as he recalled:

- Antonio: I was destroyed, thinking how all the effort... My brother told me 'it's not the stolen goods what hurt you, it is your self-respect'. It took me two years to have this place working; I started selling loose cigarettes! What my brother implied in his comment was 'how many times you did the same! Now it was your turn, now you know how it feels to be on the other side of the coin'. That was my interpretation. I closed the shop for two months anyway, I was angry, furious, thinking of sending everything to the... and do what I did best.
- CV: And what was that you do best?
- Antonio: Crap. I mean, they disrespected me, my brother was right it was my self-esteem... I talked to my brothers and they told me that I had fought and achieved a lot, and they were right, I couldn't give up at that point, I couldn't go back to prison. This life is normal, while rehabilitating these things are markers, make you reconsider everything.

Like Antonio, most of the Stolen Youth or their relatives were victims of crimes, events that pushed their new selves to the test. The excerpt above is a short quote from a long description Antonio provided of the impact this event had on him, the thoughts and emotions he had while being robbed, how he refrained himself from attacking these young men as his family was in his mind all the time. Nonetheless, this episode provoked profound doubts in Antonio, who questioned whether the route he had chosen was correct. His wife and his brothers accompanied him in this process, as when Weaver (2012) claimed that the reflexive deliberation produced in reciprocal relationships encourages agency in a structurally transformative sense. Indeed, as a result of a couple of months of reconsidering his life choices, Antonio decided to follow the 'normal' route and reopened the shop because he could not dare to put his family project at risk.

Most of the Stolen Youth had no family available so they approached institutions in search for support:

Nelson: I've received support from the Mormon Church, a lot. ... Indeed, I've got the jobs because of them; they have also supported us with financial issues. ... I think it's unlikely that I reoffend because I feel committed and supported by many people. This place, some friends, and especially my wife, so I know things cannot be that bad. ... I think one day I'll have to pay back, somehow, and for me it means I don't commit the same mistakes I did, perform my best efforts. Maybe those people want to see me well; I can be a testimonial in the future for people who will experience the same things I had gone through.

In the excerpt above, Nelson highlighted the idea of commitment to institutions and people who had supported him and his family, but not in a unidirectional way as he suggested that they probably want the best for him. Again, this idea of reciprocal relationships empowered him to persevere, a common theme amongst the Stolen Youth's accounts:

Renato: I've received a lot of support, from the municipality, from my mom. ... I want a different life, to be someone in life, that my kids are someone in life. I believe I'm doing this for my kids and people who are supporting me, I guess it's important for them to say 'look, this guy rehabilitated because we helped him, we opened some doors and he took the opportunities, and now he is someone in life'. That's what I want.

As illustrated in the excerpt above, the Stolen Youth were not passive 'receivers' of support but they assumed a commitment to the institutions and people who helped them by offering to stay away from crime. The fact that most of the Stolen Youth identified their difficulties and actively searched for ways of solving them via churches, NGOs, or Municipalities, is consistent with Healy's finding (2010) that secondary desisters are willing to search for help to cope with their problems. Another aspect of these reciprocal relationships is that they promoted generative actions, as when Nelson pictures himself being a testimonial for

others, or when Renato declared that his efforts were devoted to a better future for his children.

Some of the Stolen Youth, who had been in the community for longer, had found ways to canalise their generative motivations, as for Gonzalo, who embraced the Evangelic religion in the last years of imprisonment and then volunteered as a preacher in prisons:

Gonzalo: I don't have an income for preaching, things work differently with God as he finds a way to reciprocate what you do for him. For instance, a friend says 'Gonzalo, you're always wearing the same shoes, the Lord sends you these shoes', and I say amen. ... I've been in that situation, I've been in prison and I know how it feels. I know that some offenders don't want to be offenders and some addicts don't want to be addicts.

For Gonzalo, being an Evangelic preacher in prison allowed him to pay back the support received when he was an inmate. But ultimately, this social role acted as a source of communion in two senses: participating in relationships that produce love, joy, friendship, and a sense of belonging (Lim and Putnam, 2010; McAdams, 2001); and finding a purpose outside criminal activity (Maruna and Farrall, 2004).

Aiming at a 'normal' future

As discussed throughout this chapter, the Stolen Youth transitioned to longer-term desistance through integrating their pasts into their lives in a conventional way, developing committed relationships to others that facilitated their integration to society. These accomplishments were reflected in their aspirations for the future which, consistent with the desistance literature, showed an emphasis on family rather than on material goods (Shover, 1996), a concern for others rather than being self-centred (Gove, 1985), and valuing conventional aspects of an ordinary life (Appleton, 2010; Healy, 2010). When asked how they imagined their lives within five years, they responded:

Octavio: With my partner we set the goal of having our own house within a few years. We're saving money, but just recently because we're paying a drug treatment for my partner's son... Buying the house, having a better car, a more stable place for working with my business, a little more solvent economic situation, and nothing more, that's it... I left behind those criminals' dreams of traveling across the Caribe.

In the excerpt above, Octavio marked a distance between the exotic dreams he had as a young robber and the current shared projects with his partner, which were conventional and similar to the aspirations of most Chilean middle-class families. Nelson, the younger of the Stolen Youth, replied:

Nelson: Playing with my daughter, taking her to a park, to the school. Those details are annoying for some people, so they pay a school bus, but not me, that will be a source of joy. ... Maybe I don't have big dreams, but I do aspire to have a steady job with a fixed contract, with a job and stability things will get better.

Nelson's quote illustrates the family-oriented inclinations of his goals, but it also exemplifies one of the main concerns of the Stolen Youth, which was to improve their employment situation either by having a fixed contract or by having better working conditions, as Antonio elaborated:

Antonio: I'd like to be better, with a bigger shop. My children will grow up and leave, so my wife and I will be on our own and I long for that. I have several plans, for example now I pay taxes, so in a year's time I'll be entitled to apply for a loan, I could apply for a loan! So depending on the loan, I'd improve my shop. This is my option and my stance now: generating, producing, but not all the time because I enjoy my family life during the weekends, on Sundays we eat together, clean the house, we sleep until the time we want.

In this excerpt Antonio pointed out conventional aspirations related to employment and family, strengthening the idea that all of the Stolen Youth were

actively directing their lives towards 'normalcy', as Farrall and Calverley (2006) described the last stage of the emotional trajectories of desistance. But Antonio also stressed the possibility of applying for a loan since he paid taxes and could make use of his status as a citizen to interact with the market. Being not only part of their families, but also part of society as a 'normal citizen', was a prevalent aspiration among the Stolen Youth, as read in the words of Renato:

Renato: The future, I see it well thank God. I'm a person who deserves to be there in the society, I deserve to be given an opportunity... what I did was bad, but it doesn't make me a bad person.

The excerpt above suggests that Renato, despite having found purpose in conventional activities and being acknowledged as a reformed person by others, which theoretically matches the notion of secondary desister (Maruna and Farrall, 2004), was still struggling with social integration. He referred to society as something distant, 'there', where some people deserve to be while others not, including himself in the latter.

These issues open the discussion about the quality of life after release from lengthy imprisonments, and the extent to which desistance is related to social integration, which McNeill (2012) discusses within the concept of tertiary desistance. Compared with Traditional desisters, the Stolen Youth emphasised much more the need for being part of society as legitimate citizens, which is probably related to the fact that they were outside the normal socialising experiences of family, employment, community life, even missing some historical events that marked the collective experiences of Chileans. Adaptation into this society seemed to be the main challenge for the Stolen Youth, even after years away from prison. A different angle of desistance and integration in society is presented in the following section.

8.2 The Old School Thieves: An Overview

...That's my way of being and is the way of being of the old robber, because I always say 'I am a thief, but with the old mentality'. There were rules of life within the canons of crime and it was respectable, but not today; nowadays crime is out of control.

Ramón

The three men comprising this pathway defined themselves as thieves from the 'Old School' of criminality, although they had not been involved in criminal activities for between five and 20 years. Compared with the overall sample, these participants were older, had the lowest educational level and the longer times of total imprisonment as they had served an average of 18 years distributed across several sentences over a 30-year span. At the time of the interview, they were all living with their partners, and two of them were working and actively involved in community activities. These features are shown in table 8.2:

Table 8.2: Socio-demographic and offending trajectories features of the 'Old School Pathway'

Name	Age	Relationship	N children	N years of formal education	Age of onset	N prison sentences	Last prison sentence	Total N months in prison	Months since he left prison	Working	Community participation	Current oh / drug use
Ramón	50	cohabitant	2	4	9	20	theft	200	60	no	no	yes
Bernardo	59	married	1	0	12	6	robbery	216	144	yes	yes	no
Miguel	68	married	2	4	14	4	robbery	232	240	yes	yes	no
	59			2,67	11,67	10		216	148			

Ramón is a 50-year-old man, recently unemployed. He located his onset at the time of the military coup when he stole to help his family, but then his thefts grew, involving trucks of food that he shared with his neighbours and, in doing so, he became an appreciated character in his community. He recalled the satisfaction of those days, sharing with people in need, emotions that he had not found in the conventional society to which he has tried to integrate since his family asked him to stop offending almost a decade ago.

Bernardo is a 60 year old, self-employed craftsman and prisoner spokesman. Abandoned by his mother at the age of two, he was raised by an adopted grandfather who was killed when Bernardo was aged ten, a traumatic event that he pointed out as the beginning of his life on the streets, committing petty offences to later become a non-domestic burglar. After his last prison release he was elected prison representative, a voluntary job he had been doing for over a decade, and in which he is recognised.

Miguel is a 68 year old, self-employed locksmith and craftsman. He marked the beginning of his criminal life at the age of 18, after purchasing an old German safe box with which he practised how to open. He became a famous offender in his city for breaking into houses of rich people, and for some notorious prison escapes given his locksmith skills. Because of this reputation, he was interviewed on a national TV programme, an event that he pointed out as the milestone for putting his abilities to the service of conventional aims.

8.2.1 Being part of the Old School of Criminality

‘The Old School’ refers to an historically located criminality²⁹, which had its own set of rules based on a code of ethics founded on honour - being a reputable man whose offending acts showed respect towards family, peers, his neighbourhood and, most importantly, to human life. This meant they would not commit any offence that could put peoples’ lives at risk, so they planned their crimes, acted sober and never carried guns.

Ramón: Going out and stealing money, that’s acceptable. Never fail the norms, build your curriculum, and respect others. There were some things you couldn’t go wrong, for example you couldn’t be a snitch, or going to the house of a colleague and steal, or taking another thief’s wife. What is acceptable is to be... In my criminal records I don’t have any homicide, wounds, nothing of that sort, only thefts.

²⁹ Cooper (2002) documented a similar kind of criminality in Chile, which decline began by the late 1990s.

In the excerpt above Ramón describes part of the ethics of the Old School, but he also implied that criminal activity was an area of development, a career in which honourable behaviour helped with building a 'curriculum vitae', as in the words of Bernardo:

Bernardo: So the curriculum you build over the years works in your favour, I was voted as spokesman because of everything I knew, everything I had been through, and because I hadn't committed any crime that would tarnish my curriculum as a criminal. For example, if I had a conviction for a sexual offence, they wouldn't have chosen me as spokesman, because the lads would have been ashamed to have a representative who had been sentenced for a sexual crime...

This excerpt builds on the notion of respectability within criminal activity, suggesting the existence of different types of offenders, as Bernardo elaborated further:

Bernardo: The true criminal steals to survive, out of necessity; sex offenders are only interested in it. ... There's a rule amongst the inmates that we can't stand this type of crime, for us it's unacceptable, we don't understand them, we don't see them as ill, society can consider them as being ill according to the research which is done. But we simply view it as wickedness. ... It makes us mad that these people give us all criminals a bad reputation.

In this excerpt, the reiterative use of the pronoun 'we' and the emotional involvement in Bernardo's words make his identification with criminality apparent, introducing the notion of 'us', the criminal world, and 'them', the conventional society, as Ramón also did:

Ramón: If we think about the mentality of a bastard who rapes a girl, a boy, any person, using force... that person doesn't belong to the criminal world. He doesn't belong let's say, to your world of the society, nor to

our criminal world. And he doesn't have the right to belong.

This separation of worlds seems to be rooted in their childhood, as school disengagement, street life, and poverty, among other factors, traced a route of social exclusion which was deepened by early contacts with the Criminal Justice System, as Bernardo and Ramón recalled:

Bernardo: I've had this stigma since I was young. ... We went round knocking rubbish bins over... I started to get to know prisons at the age of 12 or 13. At that time they detained us... in those days you went to prison.

Ramón: (*the police officer*) took me to the police station. There he hit me, I was just a kid but he hit me, he put electricity on me... and then it was as... from there it was like I don't know... (*long silence*). Like the way I could hurt them was making mischiefs... And he sent me to prison! I was like ten years old. ... That was a blow for me ... I think that... (*silence*) that beating by this police marked me and I decided to fight against them in that way, as a rebellion.

CV: What you're saying is that episode confirmed...

Ramón: That I belonged to this world, the criminal world. ... It made a mark on me.

The excerpts above suggest that the criminalisation of social vulnerability and the timing of their first contacts with the prison system might have influenced their identification with the criminal world from an early age. This is consistent with research that suggests that deprived young men are more likely to be subjected to official interventions by the Criminal Justice System which, in turn, increases the likelihood of involvement with the penal system in adulthood (Gatti, Tremblay and Vitaro, 2009), as interventions may 'trigger exclusionary processes that have negative consequences for conventional opportunities' (Bernburg and Krohn, 2003: 1287).

8.2.2 Criminal activity as a way of belonging

The Old School increased their criminal involvement over the years, developing what they considered a career in offending that provided them with several internal rewards such as the satisfaction of being accepted by others, and feeling capable of doing a good job:

- Miguel: I went crazy when things turned out fine; I arrived home with trolleys full of food, everything that's needed in a house; money as well. My siblings loved me, they said I wasn't selfish and I stole for all of us. If I had stolen for me only I would have been rich, owning pieces of land, but I didn't because we all were poor so I had to steal for everybody.
- CV: All in all you were around 30 years offending...
- Miguel: Yes, yes, I didn't know how to do anything else, I knew how to steal and I had to do it right, see? No guns, no kicking doors, no shoots, what for?

The excerpt above illustrates some of the values that seem to have reinforced the persistence in criminality of the Old School, such as humbleness, generosity and solidarity, and through which they achieved a respected status in their communities:

- Ramón: During the military coup there was money but there wasn't anything to buy, just nothing, and things started to run short at home. Trucks full of fruits passed to the port and we started stealing the trucks, we hung from the trucks and threw the load down, and we gathered so much fruit that we started distributing it to the people. Our leader, I don't know, the guy we followed was Robin Hood, and we really liked him, we felt good, we felt good. After a while it wasn't just trucks but shops, we took boxes of food, we stole a car and filled it up during the curfew. ... We stole and we gave away... I felt so good because I helped really poor people. ... And that's everything I needed to live, I never needed luxuries, I never used fancy clothes, it wasn't my intention to fill my pockets,

but sharing. ... You get used to it, that's it, if I do it well, why should I stop?

While, in this excerpt, Ramón emphasised the gratification and fulfilment found in criminal activities, he also linked the meaning of his thefts with the broader historical social context of the dictatorship, 17 years during which all forms of social participation were dramatically reduced. In these macro-social conditions, criminal activity was one of the few available ways of social belonging for men like the Old School. Indeed, in the excerpts above, Miguel and Ramón questioned why they would stop performing a purposeful activity which they were good at, resonating with the notion of criminal self-efficacy by Brezina and Topalli (2012), which contends that offenders who feel confident in their abilities in criminal activity are less likely to desist from crime. Self-efficacy, as discussed in the literature review, can influence decisions and encourage actions, and it is closely linked to agency, both concepts that should be understood within the social structures in which individuals reside (Farrall *et al*, 2010). The following excerpt from Bernardo illustrates this argument:

Bernardo: I don't think that I'm a stupid person but I didn't have the opportunity to study, perhaps I could have turned out a different human being, I could have served society. I have tried to do my best as far as possible. ... In prison I always stood up for the weakest. If I hadn't been a criminal, I would have been a person working with the prisoners; I don't know, a social worker, something like that.

While the Old School made a career out of offending, one might wonder about their relationships and family formation, as these appear as influential factors for desistance (Laub and Sampson, 2003). These three men had long-term relationships with women with no previous relationship with criminality, with whom they had children. They made it clear that their wives met them as thieves and had been always aware of their criminal activities.

Ramón: I've got two kids, the oldest lives with his partner and they have three gorgeous kids. My wife has set things

right, she's done the work, not me. I've been a mere spectator, because I haven't been there. But she did a good job; she did a good job. It's been difficult for her though, she's a woman of effort, organised. I think the only mistake she's committed in her life was falling in love with me... If she had opted for someone different, she would be better by now. But... she didn't want to. And she has endured this and has waited.

In the excerpt above, Ramón highlighted the efforts his wife had made to conduct the family towards a more conventional direction. Furthermore, none of the Old School's children followed a criminal pathway, they all completed their studies, worked, and some of them had formed their own families. Their wives stood by them for decades and, while at the beginning this situation resonated with the description Cusson and Pinssoneault (1986: 79) offered of their respondent's wives, as 'real Penelopes', waiting faithfully for their husbands throughout all the years of their imprisonment', later it was found that the three Old School wives seemed to have been extraordinarily strong women who brought up families on their own in difficult times.

8.2.3 Departure from offending

Two themes appeared as salient in their accounts of their decisions to stop offending: the rejection of the new criminality, and the requirement to respond to the emotional needs of their families. The Old School seem to have undergone a crisis of the social identity they had forged for decades, as new forms of criminality that started emerging in the 1990s challenged the figure of the honourable thief:

Miguel: You found some guys in prison doing 20, 25, 30 years for three street robberies and it turned out that they stole a pair of boots, little money a poor guy had in his pocket, and on top of that they stabbed him! There's no profit in it, how on earth would you consider robbing someone for a bit of money if you know the sentence you can get. I started rejecting all those things. You became aware of all that, we talked about

it with my friends; we were a different category. ... The new guys were arrogant and liked showing off, guns, knives, no, no, no! Those are the things that make you go away, they think they can compete with you but they have no abilities, nothing. So you start rejecting those things.

In this excerpt, Miguel clearly illustrated the rejection of the values of the new generation of young offenders, which were so conflicting with those of honour and respect upon which the Old School of crime was founded. The questioning of the integrity of the new criminality may have been part of a larger process of reassessment which takes place at early stages of change (Healy, 2010; King, 2013). Apparently, the reorganisation of priorities that resulted from the self-assessment made them more receptive to the emotional requests of their families and more willing to respond to them, as illustrated in Ramón's account:

- CV: Ramón you've said that the only thing you knew how to do well was stealing, so I'm trying to imagine why you stopped?
- Ramón: Because of the family, they wanted a change, late, but they wanted a change and I wanted to please them as well. I look back and I realise that I lost many years of raising my kids, of knowing my own kids... and I'd like to amend, even though it's late. ... I missed all the important things in my kids' lives; I'm enjoying my grandchildren now, I try to live with them what I didn't live with my own sons. I was in prison when my kids were born... the oldest one has that anger against me and he lets me know it all the time and that hurts me... a lot.

Ramón's words expressed an interesting paradox because, while he was proud of being a thief of the Old School of crime, he also became more conscious of the impact of that lifestyle on his family, and, aware of the irrecoverable loss of quality time with his sons, he tried to make amends through his grandchildren. Choosing to refrain from offending in order to protect the familial aims and not because of a desire to make changes in his criminal life resonates with the

notion of normative compliance by emotional attachment (Bottoms, 2001). Similar family interests were present in Bernardo's words:

Bernardo: In order to take my place in society I learned a trade while I was in prison and I carried out this trade outside and because of it I was able to help my family... Fortunately, my daughter hasn't turned out to be a criminal like her father, she lives with her partner who works and is a sound person. And my grandson is eight years old and he lives with me... but he's going to go to live with his mum so that she can bring him up. I don't want him to... (*He cries*)

In this excerpt, Bernardo started describing the relationship with his grandson and how he tried to prevent the boy from suffering what he had to endure as a child. Indeed, the three Old School Thieves showed strong generative concerns for young people in general and for their grandchildren in particular, concerns that were sources of motivation for staying away from reoffending, as Maruna (2001) and Appleton (2010) have found. It seems that these relationships were too valuable for them to risk losing them (Leibrich, 1996; Shover, 1996), and that they had invested in these new 'relational commitments' in the sense discussed by Weaver and McNeill (2010: 48), which implies assuming responsibilities with the other that are not compatible with offending. Indeed, Bernardo stressed that he produced legal income for supporting his family through a trade learnt in prison.

In the case of Miguel, his well-known criminal trade played a crucial role in turning his life into a conventional one. Shortly after his last prison release in the 1990s, Miguel featured on an episode of a national TV programme that documented his fame as a specialised robber and escapist. They had prepared a real case for Miguel to prove his abilities, a safety box belonging to a very rich man, which had been closed for 15 years due to a loss of keys:

Miguel: The TV programme showed me opening a safe box and then walking with the sea behind... You know that all that made me go straight? Because my self-

esteem lifted and I said to myself, mmm, maybe I'm wrong. I remember they put a safe box in front of me, I was surrounded by all these TV people and I opened it in front of them all, and they were like 'Miguel, that's awesome' screaming hugs, applauses and all that. ... Then all those things made me think that I could do things in a different way and put my... I hadn't had business cards, I had to have some and put my name there, and below my name: 'craftsman in wood and locksmith'. After the TV report, people went to my house to request works.

In a previous excerpt, Miguel explained how his rejection of the new criminality had grown over time. Nonetheless, he did not take any actions to move away from it, despite his discontent, which suggests that he was in an emergent stage of openness to change (Giordano *et al*, 2002). In the excerpt above, Miguel pointed out that the TV programme was a milestone for him to 'go straight', and it seems that was the case as it acted as a powerful 'hook for change' (*Ibid.*) that offered viable ways to put his abilities to the service of alternative aims (Burnett, 2010). But, what seemed to be significant for Miguel was that the programme allowed him to create a new public label as 'craftsman in wood, and locksmith' that certified that his behaviour changed, but not his ethics. He did not knife-off his past in order to transform his identity (Laub and Sampson, 2003), but he actually included his criminal past as the distinctive feature of his current self. Bernardo identified the trade learnt in prison as a key factor for integrating into society, while keeping a strong bond to the criminal world, as a prison spokesman. This element that played such a crucial role in Miguel and Bernardo's trajectories, was missing in Ramón's account.

8.2.4 Transitions to longer-term desistance

In order to sustain change, the Stolen Youth had to overcome opportunities to reoffend, maintain and strengthen sources of legal income, obtain trust and recognition by others, and develop bonds that increased their integration in the community. Even after years out of prison, chances to reoffend were always present, which they initially turned down with 'willpower'. Bernardo elaborated

further by saying: 'you begin to get used to being on the street and I can be of more help to people being outside than in prison', while Miguel added: 'it's nicer when I finish my work and they ask 'how much is that, mister Miguel?'. These excerpts suggest that their new social roles provided a sense of usefulness and recognition that made them more appealing than their previous roles as offenders, helping them to sustain change even in the face of opportunities to reoffend. Furthermore, in their jobs as locksmith and prisoner spokesman they found sources of purpose and meaning outside crime (Maruna and Farrall, 2004), as illustrated in the following excerpts:

Bernardo: I spent many years as a prisoner and I got hit a lot. I was inside during Pinochet's rule, so we didn't have a spokesman on the street because he would have died, they wouldn't have accepted that. When I got out we were in democracy, so I dared to do it although the Police couldn't stand me because I defended the imprisoned, but I'm not scared of them. It's not about courage; it's about asking for the prisoner's rights to be respected. When a judge condemns is to serve a sentence, one year, two years of prison, but not to beatings. The judge doesn't say: this prisoner should be beaten once a month or twice a week.

The excerpt above shows how Bernardo transformed the knowledge and experience gained throughout his years as a prisoner into skills to exert a role related to social justice, a value he had always pursued. This process resonates with Maruna's claim (2001) that desisters have usually turned bad experiences into something positive, which is apparent in Miguel's excerpt:

Miguel: I turned myself, I turned all the bad things, I transformed them into good service, you see? I've earned more, I've won trust, people already know that Miguel is the only one who does the work well, big companies in this region call me to open safe boxes, vaults. Those things helped me to turn myself, instead of doing wrong, doing good, presenting my services. I have my bills from the Bank State, of all the Banks, well off people come to my house to pick me up so I work, many people have supported me.

This excerpt builds on the argument that these new roles were meaningful enough to sustain change, but it also emphasises the part of public recognition in the 'de-labelling process' (Maruna and Farrall, 2004: 28). Having been thieves from the Old School who were proud of their honourable behaviour, being trusted because of their respectability in the conventional world was crucial. Bernardo spoke of several episodes that suggested he was valued among groups advocating prisoners' rights, while Miguel talked about the warmth he constantly received in public, the market, and other places he used to visit. In recent years, desistance debates have questioned the quality of the integration of desisters into their communities (McNeill, 2012), as now desistance is understood to be more than just behavioural change, also implying greater levels of social inclusion (Farrall *et al*, 2010). This element is crucial to comprehend why three men within the same desistance pathway were in such different situations.

Besides their jobs as locksmith and spokesman, Miguel and Bernardo were active community leaders. Miguel dedicated a significant part of his time working with young people, both in his neighbourhood and as a volunteer in prison. He offered some reflections from these experiences:

Miguel: I realised that we really need, I mean what's missing now in Chile are education and employment opportunities. It was my own experience... I like when people interview me because I always provide a ray of hope, it's not that the young man is a lost case; we all deserve to have chances in life. ... When I started with this business and I felt the support... that was so important, so I know we have to support these young lads who're leaving prison.

Then, he elaborated further on the reasons young people persist in offending and proposed forms of approaching the problem:

Miguel: They lack love, that's it, love is one of the most important things a human being can have, when a person is rejected, rejected, rejected, hearing things

like 'you're never going to change, you'll always be the same bastard, useless thief, screwing it up'... I'm sorry Miss for using these terms, but you have to understand how things are... Those people will never succeed, but if you say 'look at your craftwork! You're really good at it!' You see? If someone commits a mistake you don't have to demean that person, all the opposite, you have to encourage them, you have to tell them 'hey, you're a nice guy, you're young and clever, stop messing around, don't risk your life for nothing'. That's how we do it in prison, encouraging people to change, not putting our feet on their heads.

It is interesting that Miguel proposed forms of approaching young offenders consistent with a strengths-based approach for desistance (Burnett and Maruna, 2006; Pattoni, 2012), highlighting the positive aspects of people and promoting hope. Similarly, Bernardo argued that providing real opportunities is crucial for helping offenders, as he had done by training and selling craftwork from young men from the prisons he visited:

Bernardo: I learnt to work in this kind of craftsmanship, apart from helping the young people it has helped me pay my expenses for my travel. ... What's more, I give work to the prisoners so they come out with a profit. I buy them at a cheaper rate, let's say I pay them \$1,000 pesos for a mirror and then I sell them in \$3,000 pesos. The bottom line is that I help the people that work there and I help myself too.

The excerpts above illustrate that Miguel and Bernardo are believers in human change. Furthermore, they were actively involved in initiatives designed to help young offenders and prisoners to make prosocial changes, by providing emotional support and employment opportunities to earn a legitimate income, as discussed elsewhere (Shapland and Bottoms, 2011). They pointed out that they had used their own experiences to inspire their acts and by doing this they have been certificated as actors making positive contributions to their communities, in a similar way as the 'wounded healers' found by Maruna (2001: 12). They expressed satisfaction with their lives, which seemed to be related to

the fact that they had found conventional activities that allowed them to fulfil their generative and solidary motivations. Ramón, however, presented a different perspective:

- Ramón: I've tried, I've tried, I've fought, I've been humiliated... sometimes I think I can't stand it any longer and I'm going to fall again, not because I haven't changed, I changed, but the system doesn't allow you...
- CV: How can you tell you have changed?
- Ramón: Because I haven't been involved in anything for so many years... Because what I did was going against the regime, against the dictatorship... but there's no dictatorship, no military rule anymore...

This excerpt illustrates that, even after years away from crime and prison, Ramón still had not found a comfortable place in society, a replacement role that could provide him the gratification he obtained from offending activity, which he interpreted as a form of fighting against authority at the time of the dictatorship. By contrast to Bernardo and Miguel who were self-employed, he had had to rely on the dependent labour market in which criminal records are an impediment for obtaining a job, and maybe this employment instability reduced his sense of control over the chances of reoffending. Interestingly, Ramón recognised changes at the behavioural level but still lacks the social certification of that change, resonating with Bottoms *et al*'s claim (2004) that identity transformation might not be a requisite for desistance:

- CV: I notice Ramón that during the entire interview you've referred to yourself as a thief, but at the same time you haven't offended for a decade. Do you still feel like an offender?
- Ramón: Of course, how do you change your basis overnight? You can't, you can't change your basis. It's not that I fe... well, I lived in that world and I feel as such. I'm a thief because... I mean that was my world. And I'm still a thief because the society doesn't accept me. It doesn't accept me as a normal person, they will always look at my records and they will look at me as a criminal, or a thief, they will look at me like ... Is not that I don't feel fine here, is that... how can I say it?

that internal need of sharing, either things that I had stolen or just sharing the satisfaction... I don't feel it at this side. I just don't feel it, or I haven't learned to feel it maybe... I haven't learned. And that's the difference.

In this rather self-explanatory excerpt, Ramón confirmed that, despite his behavioural change, his identity as a thief remained unchanged. Then he proceeded to address some of the reasons that could explain this apparent contradiction, reasons that might help in understanding the differences between his desistance journey and those of Bernardo and Miguel. It seems that identity changes do not progress without the societal reaction that recognises behavioural change and de-labels the former offender (Maruna and Farrall, 2004: 28), illustrated when Ramón said 'I'm still a thief *because* society doesn't accept me'. Ramón recalled the rewards and sense of achievement obtained from his criminal activities, feelings he still had not found, or learnt to enjoy in mainstream society. Overall, Ramón had not found a meaningful and purposeful activity outside crime that fostered a sense of belonging to the conventional world, and therefore, the societal reaction of certification had not occurred, all requisites for secondary desistance to take place (Maruna and Farrall, 2004), and which were present in Miguel and Bernardo's accounts.

Farrall *et al* (2010) have argued that desistance also has to do with the inclusion of individuals in normalising activities in their societies - such as working, volunteering, or engaging in community roles - and it seems that Ramón remained socially excluded from the relevant activities in his community and society in general. Maybe one of the reasons Ramón had managed to stay away from prison during all these years was because he had strongly invested in relational commitments (Weaver and McNeill, 2010). In his family, he had played a relevant role in the upbringing of his grandchildren and the care of his younger son who was diagnosed with a developmental disorder. Nonetheless, despite the gratification he obtained from exerting this role within his family, he also seemed very frustrated. These cases highlight the need for incorporating social integration and inclusion as fundamental aspects of desistance from crime.

Conclusion

This chapter discussed two desistance pathways that diverge from the more traditional findings reported in the literature, and that are better understood when aspects of the Chilean Criminal Justice System and criminal culture are included in the analysis.

The Stolen Youth is composed of six men whose pathways towards desistance seemed to have been influenced by their experiences of serving lengthy prison sentences throughout their twenties, a decade in which most offenders desist from crime, but also a life stage with an extraordinary potential for transformation. It is argued that by enduring the transition from youth to adulthood in custody, these men were precluded from developing crucial conventional bonds such as forming a family or having a satisfying job, and spending a significant part of their young adulthood in prison deeply affected their identity building and consolidation. Their desistance challenges were less related with identity change and more with survival and adaptation into a world that was new for them, It is claimed that the reason the Stolen Youth spent so much time in prison was related to the punitive sentences for violent property crime in the Chilean Justice System.

The Old School pathway is composed of three men who defined themselves as thieves from a criminal generation which is now gone. They seem to have desisted partially as a form of rejection from the disrespectful values towards human life and violent forms of the new criminality, and partially as a response to the emotional demands of their loved ones.

CHAPTER NINE: CONCLUSIONS

This research aimed at developing knowledge of the processes of desistance from crime among Chilean formerly persistent offenders, assessing the extent to which international evidence could be applied to this non-Western sample. This chapter begins by presenting an overview of the main research findings, of which the implications for theory, policy and practice are then discussed. Following this, the key contributions of this research are outlined. Recommendations for future research conclude the chapter.

9.1 Overview of the Research

Three main tasks were undertaken to achieve the research aims: first, to carry out a critical review of the literature to understand how existing evidence has been developed; second, to design and conduct an empirical study in Chile; and third, to analyse the data with the aims of developing an understanding of the processes of desistance from crime of this sample, assessing their consistencies with existing evidence, and more importantly, their peculiarities.

Chapter Two presented the evolution of criminological thinking about desistance from crime. It is noted that while the empirical knowledge has grown swiftly, there are still underexplored areas such as studying how offenders abandon criminal activity in cultural contexts different from the United States and the United Kingdom. It is argued that including the socio-cultural dimensions of the contexts where desistance takes place enriches our knowledge.

Chapter Three deepened the understanding of the literature by examining the main factors correlated with desistance and how within the dynamic interaction between the social and subjective factors resides the understanding of how change is produced. It was pointed out that the models of desistance by Giordano *et al* (2002), Vaughan (2009) and Bottoms and Shapland (2011), have offered frameworks for understanding the dynamics of subjective and structural factors, concurring that desistance is achieved when individuals

develop a non-criminal identity. Having set the theoretical esplanade, Chapter Three concluded by discussing key methodological issues such as the implications that the use of varied definitions and operationalizations of the concept of desistance have on research, for example, for measuring crime-free gaps and distinguishing them from on-going desistance processes.

Building upon this theoretical and methodological understanding, Chapter Four described the methodology of this empirical study, which was a significant challenge as no previous research on adult desistance had been conducted in the country or in Latin America by 2009, and this remains the case in 2015. This study adopted a desistance perspective and used a broad working definition of desistance as voluntary abstinence from offending, for at least a year, of individuals over 25 years old with a history of criminal involvement. The achieved sample of 44 males was identified through official institutions and community organisations, and selected through a purposive sampling procedure that also included active offenders. Data collected through interviews, criminal records and self-report data was analysed through combined qualitative data strategies that allowed the development of an early model of how participants located along the offending – conformity continuum.

The third task was to develop understanding of the processes of desistance from crime of this sample, assessing their consistencies with existing evidence. This exceeded significantly the expectations set at the outset of this research in 2009, a time when desistance research could still be considered as emergent. Based on those circumstances, the original sample and the research questions were broad. Nonetheless, by the time of the analysis, desistance research had established a sound body of research that had produced vast literature. While this is good news for the advancement of our general knowledge, it is not that good for the comprehension of how and why offenders desist from crime outside the United Kingdom and the United States, as research in other contexts has not grown in a similar proportion as it has in those countries.

The analysis of data in this thesis followed Farrall (2010) *et al's* recommendation of considering 'social structures (and the implications of

change in structures)' (2010: 546) in producing desistance processes. One of the peculiarities of this sample is that participants had lived through noticeably different epochs of the Chilean history, in which relevant structural changes have taken place. The findings discussed in Chapters Five to Eight are grounded in a multi level analysis that proposes a view of desistance pathways as the interplay between individual-level factors with social and structural influences (Bottoms *et al*, 2004; Farrall *et al*, 2010; Farrall *et al*, 2011).

Chapter Five laid out: a) the socio-historical framework that linked participants' biographies with the main changes in economy, politics, access to education, labour market, and the Criminal Justice System that occurred from 1939, the year of birth of the oldest participant. It was observed that older men in the sample lived in times of low economic development, limited access to formal education, extremely reduced social support for handling problems of child vulnerability, and a Criminal Justice System that dealt with juvenile delinquency in the same way as adult criminality. Their motivations to begin to commit thefts were related to subsistence needs, for example, obtaining food and basic goods. Younger men of the sample lived their childhood and early youth in a country with better economic development and democratic progress, in which the State provided formal education of 12 years, and specialised institutions for the management of problems linked to deviance had been created. While economic need was also a reason to get involved in crime, the younger men tended to engage in violent crimes against property usually associated with consumption of crack cocaine, a substance that entered Chile towards the end of the 1990s. Despite having lived in different epochs, all participants dropped out of school early and this education disengagement acted as a strong form of social exclusion, having a subsequent negative impact on several conformist opportunities later in life. However, while participants' early biographies appeared to be similar, their adult trajectories, the transition towards which is a critical time for identity building, diverged significantly in social and criminological terms.

Chapter Five also laid out: b) a theoretical and empirical model of the pathways towards desistance from crime among Chilean offenders. Building on the idea

that desistance processes go through sequential phases (King, 2013) in an offending - conformity continuum (Bottoms *et al*, 2004) within which the last stage is characterised by the commitment to a non-criminal identity (Bottoms and Shapland, 2011; Giordano *et al*, 2002; Maruna, 2001; Vaughan, 2007). Chapter Five concluded by presenting a theoretical and empirical model of the pathways towards desistance from crime among Chilean offenders. Chapters Six, Seven, and Eight discussed the five positions identified within this continuum; however, at this point four salient findings were presented.

9.1.1 Social contexts and structural changes

One of the rationales for undertaking this research was the idea that knowledge of desistance from crime in 'different contexts' was limited. However, over the course of the research, the concept of context evolved to include structures and structural changes as 'time-differentiated variations in forms, social and cultural expectations, and in ways of doing and being' (Farrall *et al*, 2009: 83). The fact that participants were born between 1939 and 1987, and lived through noticeably different epochs of the Chilean history, called for an understanding of their biographies in the context of the rapid structural changes that characterised the last five decades in the country. Building on that analysis, two structural changes appeared as relevant for understanding how participants built their offending trajectories and, therefore, how they departed from criminal activity.

The first one was the changes in economic development that resulted in growing access to social goods, such as education. The particular socio-economic context in Chile's history of the second half of the last century seemed to have contributed towards shaping distinctive forms of delinquency. The second was the changes in the Criminal Justice System, which refers to both the recent major shift from an inquisitive to an adversarial justice system via Criminal Justice Reform, and the changes in local criminal policies that are aligned with the international increase of punitive approaches to crime (Farrall *et al*, 2010). These changes have aided the rise of a risk agenda that promotes reactive and punitive responses to crime, for example, by increasing the overall

use of imprisonment and short imprisonment for petty property crime and newly created criminal figures, such as attempted theft.

The impact of these two structural changes was more apparent when contrasting the older with the younger participants. The older desisters in this sample, most of whom identified with the 'Old School' of criminality, had the lowest educational level and the most traumatic experiences with the Criminal Justice System agencies. They built their identity around the values of honour, generosity and solidarity that characterised the thieves of those days, who enjoyed a respected status in their communities. These 'ways of doing and being' (Farrall *et al*, 2009: 83) can only be fully understood in the context of the economic recession and the dictatorship. While the younger participants lived in epochs of economic growth, their trajectories of persistence and desistance reflected more the impact of the changes in the Criminal Justice System, in particular, the cumulative negative effect of serving several short-terms of imprisonment.

These findings also relate to the structure-agency discussion, in particular how structures can either enable or constrain individual decisions and actions (Bottoms *et al*, 2004; Farrall *et al*, 2010). The rise of a risk agenda has brought to prison offenders that would have probably been dealt with in the community, most of them young and not necessarily heavily involved in criminality. Besides all the common effects of imprisonment in people, findings in this research suggest that short imprisonments constrain agency by reducing the prosocial opportunities available for people in both, prison, and the community. When discussing the cases of 'the desisting offenders', they both appeared to have embarked on prosocial changes. Nonetheless, the zero tolerance against technical breaches to parole, and the disproportionate penal response to attempted offences had held back their progression and limited their possible courses of action. On the other hand, long imprisonment is by nature a considerable constraint, such that, as discussed in Chapter Eight, this exerted profound damages on the identity building process. Long-term imprisonment seems to be even more devastating in the 20s and 30s, probably delaying processes of desistance that would have taken place earlier.

There were structures that enabled individual actions. I argue that the broader access to education acted as an enabling force, although it does not appear to be explicit, as such. The educational achievements of participants did not reflect the progressive increase in State educational coverage in the last half of the past century. In fact, most participants dropped out of school at around the age of 12. Nonetheless, broader access to education also involved prison settings. Most of those who desisted from crime enrolled in educational opportunities while serving their last prison sentences, and while this was an individual decision, the availability of prison schools acted as ‘hooks for change’ (Giordano *et al*, 2002), as a structure that mediated individual decisions, resonating with the idea of ‘situated choice’ by Laub *et al* (2006). The following table illustrates the progression in the average number of years completed in regular school, and then in prison school.

Table 9.1: Comparison between educational achievement before and after prison

Pathway	School achievement	Prison education
Traditional Desisters	7.5	10.3
Stolen Youth	8.5	10.6
In Transition	7.4	10
Current Offenders	5.6	6
Old School	2.6	2.6

As observed in table 9.1, Traditional Desisters, the Stolen Youth, and Desisters in Transition improved their average educational achievement between two and three years. Current Offenders showed only a slight improvement, and that was because only one out of nine of them enrolled in school, while the Old Schools did not show any educational achievement improvement as they were in prison in an era where education programmes were almost non-existent.

A similar situation occurred in relation to training and employment opportunities in prison, in which a similar percentage of desisters participated in their last prison sentences. Overall, both educational and employment opportunities acted as sources of social control, reduced criminal opportunities, improved the quality of peer associations, improved the sense of self-efficacy, and provided the contexts for envisaging alternative new selves. Ultimately, these social structures interacted with agency facilitating identity change, and improving the chances of employability after prison.

9.1.2 Understanding desistance process as a continuum

Chapter Five presented a theoretical and empirical model of the pathways towards desistance from crime in Chilean offenders. In methodological terms, the strategy of using an integrated set of data collection tools was useful and insightful for gaining a better knowledge of the nature of the crime-free gaps, deceleration and de-escalation in offending activity, as well as of how people transition through that continuum, all of which cannot be fully understood based on one source only.

The active offending position in the continuum provided a reference to identify those factors that were more relevant to desist from crime. In this vein, three elements emerged strongly. First, their distinctive social isolation, as their social networks were reduced to their closer family and criminal associates, and they had virtually no participation in any dynamic of the mainstream society, either through work, or community activities. Second, a dependency on drugs or alcohol that seemed to be one of the main factors accounting for persistence in criminal activity, and, third, a personal narrative focused on the past and present, in which they were passive victims of external forces.

The transitional stage showed that the middle phases of the desistance journey can be quite inhospitable, that it can take significant time to transit through, and that it is a moment in which support is critical. Desisters in Transition experienced a different type of social isolation as they were departing from the criminal world without having yet, the experiences, the social networks, or the

relationships in the conventional world to which they were approaching. Most were still fighting drug addictions, and many times their behavioural changes had not been socially certified yet. Altogether, they still had not built a personal narrative as their identities were still shifting between the offending self and the conventional aspired self.

The position closer to the conformity end of the continuum required, then, to solve issues of addiction and stigma, to build meaningful links to conformity through family formation, employment and participation in mainstream social dynamics, and to develop a meaningful and integrated personal narrative in which they were active agents of their lives oriented to the future. Overall, these findings correspond to the existing literature; however, there are points of departure from the existing evidence.

9.1.3 Desistance pathways

The Desistance Pathways, understood as a particular dynamic configuration of structural and subjective factors that give rise to a certain sense of identity, are at the core of this research interest as they illustrate the extent to which existent evidence on desistance from crime applies to this Chilean sample.

Overall, the factors identified as relevant for desistance in this study are similar to those described in the literature: the strength and quality of bonds to sources of informal social control such as education, employment and marriage (Bersani *et al*, 2009; Laub and Sampson, 2003), interactions with prosocial co-workers (Wright and Cullen 2004), reduced associations with peers engaged in offending (Warr, 1998), opportunities to exercise new, conventional roles (Maruna, 2001), relationships that create human and social capital (Bushway *et al*, 2004; Healy, 2010), and overcoming drug addiction (Schroeder *et al*, 2007). The most salient subjective factors were in line with those reported in the literature as well: expressing an optimistic stance for the future (Burnett, 1992; Maruna, 2001), an increased sense of self-efficacy (LeBel *et al*, 2008), a growing concern for others (Maruna, 2001; Serin and Lloyd, 2009), constant

reflectiveness (Giordano *et al*, 2002), a sense of control over their lives (Maruna, 2001), and agency (Bottoms *et al*, 2004; Laub and Sampson, 2003).

The analysis of the individual processes of change showed a sequence consistent with that outlined by the models of desistance proposed by Bottoms and Shapland (2011), Giordano *et al* (2002) and Vaughan (2007); however, not all desisters reached a stage of commitment to an identity as a non-offender.

Two findings are relevant in this discussion. The first is that most desisters marked the last or latest prison sentences, or the last stages of a lengthy prison sentence, as pivotal moments for their processes of change to begin. Traditional Desisters referred to a growing awareness of the cost of criminal lifestyle, the Stolen Youth to an exhaustion of prison life, fear of death, and anxieties associated with release from prison after lengthy imprisonment, and the Old School to a rejection of the new criminality. These feelings brought about processes of self-reassessment as those described elsewhere (Giordano *et al*, 2002; Healy, 2010, Leibrich, 1996; Maruna, 2001; Meisenhelder, 1977; Shover, 1996; Sommers *et al*, 2004). What is distinctive in this finding is that the idea that prosocial change can start in prison has received little empirical and theoretical attention.

The second finding relates to identity change, as data in this study was not fully supportive of the theoretical idea that identity change is an unequivocal indicator of desistance. The Traditional Desisters appeared to be in advanced stages of consolidation of prosocial identities built around conventional roles as fathers, husbands, workers, or community leaders. Nonetheless, for the Stolen Youth desistance involved adaptation into the conventional world that was unfamiliar for them. I argue that having served lengthy prison sentences in a developmental stage where identity was still in formation, forced them into a criminal socialization, impacting negatively on their conventional bonds. The Old School primarily abandoned crime as a form of rejection of the new criminality, while they still defined themselves as thieves from a more respectful criminal generation, and this respectability was consistent with the new roles of community leaders two of them were playing. Overall, these findings suggest

that in order to undertake and eventually complete a process of identity change, individuals, first, had to have committed to a criminal identity from which they wanted to depart and, second, that the new potential identities are profoundly consistent with their self-definitions. Larraín (2000) claims that identity is cultural as individuals define themselves in terms of shared categories whose meaning is culturally defined. Therefore, personal identity requires the existence of others, the society and the culture to develop and, therefore, to be transformed. I argue that the process underlying identity building and change are under-researched and poorly theorised, and that introducing a cultural perspective could enrich this debate.

9.1.4 Desistance as a means to social integration

Findings in this study suggest that desisters can sustain changes over time when their new identities or their new roles find a meaningful place to be exerted within the broader context in which they live. This occurs when others 'de-label' former offenders (Maruna and Farrall, 2004) and socially certify their new identities and roles (Meisenhelder, 1977), which is consistent with the notion of secondary desistance (Maruna and Farrall, 2004).

Farrall *et al* (2010: 548) propose the notion of a 're-qualified citizen' as an individual who is engaged with social and economic life, through participation in activities that reflect their inclusion in the broader society. Desisters in this study showed a distinctive engagement in key activities of social inclusion such as employment, consumption, or community life; however, what seemed to be a particularly meaningful area of social participation for Chilean desisters was that of religiosity. Within the evangelical framework, God despises the acts but not the person, which seem to have aided in the construction of their new conventional narratives, as past offending actions did not define their true beings. Desisters highlighted the role that the Evangelic Church performed in their processes of identity change at different times, the non-judgemental approach of church members being one of the most valued attributes. This echoes Lim and Putman's assertion (2010) that the participatory nature of the social bonds built in church accounts for a sense of satisfaction in individuals,

and with McNeill's notion of tertiary desistance (2012), which refers to the sense of belonging to a community, in this case, a moral community. These emergent findings do not claim for generalisation, as there are extremely few studies that have explored the role of religion in desistance (see for example, Giordano *et al*, 2008), so it is not possible to draw comparisons. Nonetheless, what seems to be interesting in terms of comparative research, is that the process of citizen re-qualification might require an active participant that selects those areas of social inclusion that are culturally meaningful. While Chile is a country traditionally acknowledged as Catholic, Evangelic churches have progressively attracted more supporters, especially among the poorer sections of society (Latinobarómetro, 2014), having also a strong presence in prisons (GENCHI, 2014). Evangelic authorities claim that one of the reasons behind the growing support of their beliefs among vulnerable populations is that they offer support in areas where the State has limited or non-existent presence, such as drug treatment or local participation (Radonich, 2012).

Overall, desistance from crime is closely linked to social inclusion. Indeed, Current Offenders were socially isolated and Desisters in Transition still had not found that meaningful role that validated them as members of the mainstream society.

There is also a temporal dimension involved in the idea of social inclusion, as the new role or roles became meaningful when individuals believed that they were making a contribution to the current and future lives of others by exerting those roles. Their aspirations for the future were rather conventional and illustrated the shift from being an offender (social exclusion) to having a 'normal' life, being a good father, a good worker, a provider for the family, or a church participant (social inclusion). This is consistent with evidence that suggests that desisters' aspirations are usually generative (Gove, 1985; Maruna, 2001; Shover, 1996).

However, the relation between social inclusion and desistance is not linear and it seems that different aspects of desistance processes can be time-differentiated, an idea that is illustrated by referring to those Desisters in

Perspective mentioned in Chapter Five. These four desisters were not included in the final analysis for methodological reasons. Nonetheless, what is noteworthy about these four cases is that although they had been officially away from crime for up to four decades, they were still linked to the Criminal Justice System as offenders because of their criminal records. As described in Chapter One, the expunging of criminal records is not automatic, it has to be initiated exclusively by the person concerned. The motivations for starting such a lengthy process were mostly generative: they needed a clean criminal record for a loan to buy a house, to start a musical project, and because their grandchildren wanted to join a branch of the military (one of the requirements is that no one in the close family holds a criminal record). These four men had not reoffended, they had formed families, had worked, and had participated in their community, nonetheless, their civic reintegration (Uggen *et al*, 2004) was not completed and the criminal records could still affect up to two subsequent generations in the family. These cases illustrate how different aspects of desistance occur in different times, resonating with the idea that desistance should be understood as part of a bigger process of reintegration to the society, which comprises not only the absence of offending, but the psychological, moral, social, and, in these cases, the legal rehabilitation of individuals (McNeill, 2012).

9.2 Implications of the Findings

9.2.1 For theory and research

Overall, findings in this thesis suggest that standard theoretical models are limited in their capacity to explain how desistance processes occur in reality. There is a need to include aspects of the social contexts in which change takes place, as well as the relational dimension of desistance in the analysis of how people transition out of crime and into a conventional society.

The contexts of change

This study provides a unique insight into delinquency and desistance from crime in one particular country, based on the analysis of the interplay between individual-level, social factors, structural changes and historical context. This is a theoretical contribution to desistance research given the scant attention to 'the potential impact of social-structural differences –in different countries and different decades- on opportunities for and processes of desistance' (Farrall *et al*, 2010: 547). Furthermore, this is a groundbreaking theoretical contribution to the desistance debate in Chile as it is the first study conducted in the country.

But, there is a second theoretical implication related to the context, that is not so obvious, and it involves the prison as a context for change. There is an extensive body of research that has shown the negative effects of imprisonment on the physical, psychological and social well-being of those who experience it (Sykes, 1958; Liebling and Maruna, 2005), as well as in their reintegration prospects (Petersilia, 2001; Visser and Travis, 2003). In a similar vein, desistance research has drawn attention to the obstacles imprisonment poses, for example, to develop desistance-focused work (Farrall, 2010). While these are irrefutable statements, it has been pointed out that the subjective changes that can occur in periods of incarceration have been 'largely ignored' in the desistance literature (Kazemian, 2015: 8).

Findings in this research confirm that internal changes can occur while individuals are imprisoned, but they also suggest that these changes are more likely to be desistance-oriented when accompanied by timely external support, which for many participants took the form of opportunities for learning, training, working, or developing in-prison community activities. Importantly, the argument presented here is not a defence to the use of prison as a means to promote change, is rather a call to recognize that in the contemporary context of increasingly punitive approaches to crime, more people are being incarcerated (Walmsley, 2013). In this context, it is imperative to develop an understanding of the entire range of effects of imprisonment on the processes of positive human change than can inform criminal policy decisions, as it is equally

important to understand what kind of practices aid and support inmates' internal changes. Research and theorisation on desistance from crime of former prisoners is needed, especially about the issues of 'long termers'.

The relational nature of desistance

One of the most solid findings in this thesis is that desistance is a distinctively relational process. Far from the idea that behavioural change can occur 'spontaneously' without the influence of others (Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1990), every change, whether it be behavioural, moral, or emotional, that desisters in this research experienced was mediated by others to varying extents.

The most influential relationship along the Desistance Pathways – except for the Old School - was their partner. The argument that marriage (nowadays also cohabitation and significant relationships) is a key factor in desistance from crime has been well documented by a variety of perspectives, but has been conceptually dominated by theories of social control (Sampson and Laub, 1993) and social learning (Warr, 1998). While findings in this research endorse those theoretical claims, they do not fully explain the role these partners played in the desistance processes. For desisters in this study, these relationships seemed so constructive in their lives as they were grounded on a profound commitment to their spouses, who made an investment of trust in them when nobody else did. These relationships evolved into reciprocal and collaborative partnerships that provided emotional containment and understanding, acting as an empowering force that facilitated the emergence of shared projects. These findings are better explained by a recent theorisation that deems desistance as a relational enterprise (Weaver, 2012). Desisters' ultimate motivation was to achieve that shared project, and abandoning crime was part of the necessary steps to do so. As Weaver (2013a) proposes, a relationship that is meaningful requires the commitment of the two partners in a common project.

This theoretical framework helps explain the significance of social relationships that played a role in desistance processes, namely, practitioners in prison settings and in the community, and members of churches. Desisters in this

study attached high value to practitioners who worked from a non-judgemental approach, helped them in identifying and solving problems, grounded in a collaborative relationship of reciprocal trust. These findings strongly resonate with Weaver's claims (2013a: 13) that relations characterised by subsidiarity and solidarity are more influential in supporting desistance by developing a 'sense of we-ness'.

While in the United Kingdom there is research and theory on the role practitioners can play in encouraging desistance in probation contexts (Farrall, 2002; King, 2013; McNeill, 2009; Rex, 1999), this is not the case in Chile and countries of Latin America, where probation is an emergent scheme. While this study shed light on the topic, research on the role of practitioners in prison and in the new probation schemes is needed.

9.2.2 For policies and practice

Findings in this research indicate that criminal justice policies can support and promote desistance through interventions that stimulate the development of human agency. Three implications are discussed presently.

Encouraging desistance: the practices with offenders

A distinctive feature between active offenders and desisters was that the latter had developed meaningful stories to understand the past and present, and to face the future (Maruna, 2001). Desisters built their stories with the help of others, a practitioner, an inmate, a priest, a partner, a co-worker, and so on. Currently, in Chile, in the field of interventions with offenders there is a tension between a more traditional approach and the trend inspired by evidence-based practices that is popular among policy-makers, and that has resulted in the introduction of managerial strategies, risk assessments, and emphasis on interventions with demonstrable results. These practices have reduced the available time for practitioners to talk with offenders in less structured formats, as now they have to deal with assessments, results, and provide interventions that are highly structured.

The relationships between practitioners and offenders are crucial for developing human capital, aiding with the building of the narratives of change. This work is particularly crucial for encouraging early stages of change in prison, and for supporting their integration into society and in the community upon release. While evidence-based practices can be constructive, these cannot be implemented in the absence of collaborative relationships of mutual trust between practitioners and offenders that are the foundation of effective desistance-focused interventions, as Kazemian and Travis suggest (2015: 357) ‘working *with* offenders and not *on* offenders’.

Education and employment policies in correctional settings

The fact that those who improved their educational achievement and acquired employability skills were more successful at desisting, suggests relevant implications for correctional settings in Chile. Education and employment opportunities in prison played a relevant role in supporting early stages of change, having lasting positive effects on human capital. Nowadays, there are 20 Centres of Education and Training (CETs) operating at a national level, in which only 1 per cent of the total penal population is involved (Arévalo, 2014). It seems sensible to think that spaces that improve the quality of life within prisons, reduce violence, promote prosocial change, and even reduce social exclusion should be increased.

Community reintegration policies

Most of the findings in this research have implications for social and criminal justice policies that promote interventions within prisons that are respectful of human rights, that promote a better quality of life, and that ultimately, foster the development of human and social capital to increase the chances of desisting from crime and integrating into society. Great individual progress can be achieved in prison. Nonetheless, that can be easily undermined when inmates face the challenges of returning to disadvantaged neighbourhoods where drugs and criminal opportunities are easily available, and sources of legal income are

reduced. The call here is to promote the dialogue between the knowledge of desistance processes and policies oriented to the reintegration of formerly incarcerated individuals into society.

The Pathways outlined in this thesis revealed a particular configuration of subjective factors and social influences at a given historical time, in a given context, which produced a sense of identity in relation to offending and conformity. The Pathways are dynamic by nature and the fact that they were built retrospectively allowed me to infer the critical times in the process of change, the type of support that would be more adequate, and so on. This does not mean that each Pathway has a corresponding type of intervention, on the contrary, the argument presented here is that desistance from crime is a highly individualised process. These pathways are better understood as theoretical frameworks that can guide the understanding for planning interventions that support behavioural change and efforts to desist after prison.

9.3 Key Contributions of this Research

An adequate assessment of the value of this research should acknowledge, first, its main limitations, which are mainly related to methodology. First, the cross-sectional design of this research implied that participants were interviewed once about events of their pasts, without follow-ups, and the pathways were created retrospectively. While this was the most appropriate design for doctoral research, it has the shortcomings typical of cross-sectional designs, such as a limited scope of time and issues of reliability of accounts built retrospectively (Kazemian and Farrington, 2005). Second, the sample size and the fact that it was composed by incarcerated and formerly incarcerated males only, preclude any generalisations being inferred to wider populations of Chileans or Latin Americans.

Having said that, this thesis makes a significant contribution in two key respects. The first is the Chilean discourse around criminality. As it has been mentioned, criminology does not exist as an academic discipline in Chile, although issues of crime have been wisely analysed by social scientists.

Nonetheless, these analyses usually make use of foreign theories. This thesis contributes to the need to create a theoretical body based on local empirical research, while using the solid background of the criminological research tradition. By providing empirically based evidence, this thesis aims to inform criminal policy discussion with reference to offender practices, sentencing, and reintegration policies.

The second scenario is the broader field of comparative desistance research, in which three theoretical and methodological contributions are seen. First, this is a pioneer study that addresses one of desistance's main underexplored areas, namely, samples from non-Western societies. While it was concluded that existing knowledge was relevant to explain how Chilean former offenders transitioned out of crime, it was also revealed that there are areas which are unique to this sample and are related to structural differences with the mainstream societies where most desistance research has been conducted. This is, indeed, a second type of contribution that supports the methodological claim of including structures and structural changes in desistance research. Different results would have been produced if this research had been conducted assuming an individual-level framework only. Including a socio-historical perspective allowed developing knowledge that is grounded on a comprehension of 'time-differentiated variations in social forms (...) and in ways of doing and being' (Farrall *et al*, 2009: 83), highlighting the uniqueness of this particular sample.

9.4 Further Research

While this research has provided new insights in desistance research, it has certainly opened more areas of enquiry. However, first, further research should include methodological improvements. Longitudinal and prospective designs would allow for observing the processes related to desistance as they unfold over time, leading to more rigorous theoretical claims (Farrall, 2014; Shapland and Bottoms, 2007). Such designs would also have implications for practice, as it would facilitate identifying periods when specific interventions that support efforts to change are critical (Kazemian, 2015). Further research should include

individuals with varied experiences with the Criminal Justice System, such as those who have served or are serving community sanctions, and individuals identified through non-official stakeholders.

Several areas for further research have been highlighted along this chapter, and then at this point the suggestions will focus on three topics. First, there is an entire area for further research on prisons and the practices that encourage prosocial change in correctional settings. Second, the impact that changes in sentencing and in criminal policies have on desistance processes, especially short sentencing and long terms. And third, more comparative research is needed to gain more understanding of how different structures and structural change affect the ways offenders manage to move away from crime in the contemporary punitive society.

9.5 Concluding Words

The aim of this research was to develop further knowledge in the field of desistance from crime, addressing one of its least studied areas, namely, how the phenomenon unfolds in a different socio-cultural context. While this thesis concluded that much of the evidence is applicable to the Chilean context, this thesis also sheds light on aspects that require further research and theorising, as they are not fully explained by available arguments.

This thesis provides an early analytical and theoretical framework to explore desistance, which includes historical and structural factors. Although this framework emerged from the Chilean study, I argue that it might be used to analyse samples of different societies. Adding complexity to the analysis will open new areas of exploration that in the future might change the way in which we think and work with offenders.

Appendices

Appendix One:	Interview Guide
Appendix Two:	Offending Activities Self-Report
Appendix Three:	Database
Appendix Four:	Background Information Form
Appendix Five:	Informed Consent

Appendix One: Interview Guide

Social Capital Background

Can you tell me about your childhood?

- Family (person(s) who reared you; background of parents; parent's occupation; family norms; how was to be part of your family?)
- Neighbourhood (how was it like to grow up in the place you did?)
- School (what course was the last you approved? How was attending school for you? Did you enjoy attending school? What qualifications did you get?)
- Do you have any special memory about your childhood that you would like to share with me?

Can you tell me about your life as an adolescent?

- Friends: Who were your friends at that time?
- Lifestyle: What kind of things did you enjoyed doing? Did you try any drug at that age?
- Do you have any special memory about your adolescence that you would like to share with me?

Criminal History

Can you tell me about the first time you got into trouble with the justice?

- How old were you? Were you acting on your own or with somebody else? Were you using drugs or alcohol at that time? What was the reaction of your family? What was the reaction of your friends?
- Why do you think you became involved in these activities? Explore for techniques of neutralisation
- Can you remember how you felt in that time, while you were offending? How did you feel at that time about the victim(s)?
- Check for age and offence at first detention by police; age and offence at first conviction (alternative sanction and prison conviction)
- Can you describe me a typical incident where you were involved in offending in your adolescence?

Can you tell me about the subsequent times you were sentenced as an adult?

- What kind of offences did you commit?

- Can you describe me a typical incident where you were involved in offending?
- How many times have you been sent to prison? Total time spent imprisoned?
- What do you think were the reasons for you to keep on offending?
- Sources of support while imprisoned
- How long has it been since you left prison for the last time?
- Impact of imprisonment in your life (family, personality, life as a whole; positive and negative outcomes; physical and mental consequences).

Desistance from Crime / Persistence in Crime

Potential desisters:

Can you tell me about the time you have been away from prison?

- How did you stop offending? And why (do you think) you stopped offending?
- Who / what have been your main supporters?
- Do you think you are able to stop offending completely?
- What are the good and the bad things about not offending?
- Is there anything that makes you more difficult to refrain yourself from offending?
- Have you faced an opportunity to commit an offence during the last time?

How have you managed those opportunities?

- Do you think you are different from people who offend?
- What are the main differences between the person you were in the time you were committing crimes and the person you are now?

Potential persisters:

- Have you ever tried to stop offending?
- Why (do you think) you continued offending?
- What is your family / partner / friends position about your lifestyle?
- What are the good and the bad things about offending?
- Is there anything that makes you more difficult to refrain yourself from offending?
- Do you think you are able to desist?
- Do you know people who have desisted, after being an offender?

Present Life and Attitudes towards Offending

Can you tell me about your present life?

- Explore the areas of employment, family life, leisure time
- Who are the main influences on your life at the moment?
- Influence of your partner in your actual life.
- Do you keep the same friends as a teenager?
- Parenthood and motherhood experience (explore whether children were expected, planned, desired; what is the role of their children in their lives; how does s/he foresee their future)

Future

- How do you feel about your future?
- What are your dreams? What are your ambitions and goals?
- How do you imagine yourself within 1 year? Within 5 years?

What has been the highest point in your life? What has been the lowest point in your life? Is there anything you would have expected me to ask you and I did not? Is there anything not covered in the interview that you would like to comment?

Appendix Two: Offending Activities Self-Report

Please answer to these questions as honestly as possible. Refrain yourself from informing of any serious offence that might force me to report you (homicide, rape, sexual abuse).

This questionnaire will be seen only by me and eventually, by academics at the University of Leicester, England. I will not add any information that might link these answers with your person.

Have you committed any of the following offences during the time indicated?

Mark with an X, only if you DO have committed any of the offences listed:

Offence	Last month	Last 6 months	Last year
Theft			
Armed robbery			
Aggravated burglary			
Shoplifting			
Car theft			
Domestic burglary			
Non domestic burglary			
Injuries			
Drug use			
Drug trafficking			
Forgery or/and handling of stolen goods			
Other (which one?)			

Appendix Three: Database

General information

- Year of birth / age
- Relationship (single, with girlfriend, cohabitant, married, separated/divorcee, widow)
- N° of children
- Religion
- Accommodation (at the moment of the interview / before prison; with whom; in own / rented / shared house / institution)

Education

- Last course approved at school (last course approved when they first attended school)
- Enjoyed school? (yes / no)
- Reasons for dropping school
- Last course approved (in case of adult education, specifying if the studies were undertaken in prison or prison-related institutions)
- Total N° of years of formal education

Offending history

- Detailed criminal record (as shown in the official data: year, offence, sanction)
- N° of criminal convictions (as recorded in the criminal record)
- Declared age of onset (self-report as this information is not available in official records)
- Age of 1st detention (self-report as this information is not available in official records)
- Age of 1st prison sentence (self-report as this information might not be available in official records, or it can be inaccurate)
- N° of prison sentences (number produced after triangulating self-report and official data. Self-reports were needed in cases of interviewees whose criminal record was not accurate before 2005)
- Type of criminal activities (information produced by triangulating self-report and official data)

- Offence of the last prison sentence (self-report and/or official data, depending on the particular case)
- Maximum time spent free between prison sentences (Self-report)
- Total N° of months spent in prison (number produced after triangulating self-report and official data)
- N° of months since he left prison
- Expunging criminal record (yes / no. If yes, N° of months)
- Date of the last unrecorded offence (Self-report)
- Length of offending trajectory (from the age of declared onset to date, in case of prison group; from the age of declared onset to the age when they started or finished? the last prison sentence)

Employment

- Formal, informal, unemployed (at the time of the interview or before going to prison)
- Has ever worked? (yes / no)
- Work history (main activities performed, time of duration, etc.)
- Working at the moment, or before prison? (yes / no)

Community participation

- Resettlement programme (whether he was or is part of any programme focused on offenders or former offenders)
- Community participation (whether he is part of any activities in the community, such as sports, religion, social, etc.)
- Current drug and / or alcohol use (yes / no. Mention if it is abusive)
- Health problems associated with criminal activities (mental or physical problems derived from performing offences, their time in prison, etc.)

Appendix Four: Background Information Form

First name		
Age		
Gender	F	M
Area of residence at the moment		
Marital status	single cohabitant married separated / divorced widow	
Do you have any children?	Yes (N°, gender & ages)	No
Do you belong to any religion?	Yes (which one?)	No
Last course approved at school		
Working at the moment?	Yes, details	No (why?)
In not working, what was your last occupation?		
Are you expunging your criminal record?	Yes (for how long)	No (why?)
Are you participating in any reintegration programme	Yes (which one?)	No (why?)

Appendix Five: Informed Consent

Informed Consent Form

My name is Carolina Villagra and I am a graduate student at the University of Leicester in England. I am conducting a research project into the lives of people who have been imprisoned. This project is not sponsored by the police, the prison system, or any other criminal justice agency.

Participants will be asked to describe some parts of their life story, experiences with the criminal justice system, and answer a number of short questionnaires. You will be asked to tell your life story in the most honest possible way, but you will not be asked to provide any specific details regarding other individuals or serious criminal offences in which you have been involved.

The interview is completely confidential. Although the interview will be tape recorded and then transcribed, neither your name nor any other identifiable characteristics will appear in the transcript. Your name will only appear on this consent form, and this will be kept separate from your interview tape and transcript. You will be given a copy of this consent form.

Your participation in this project is completely voluntary. You are free to decline to answer any questions or to stop the interview at any time. There might be some emotional risk of participation in this study. You may feel some stress in sharing personal information with a stranger. If that is the case, I will make sure you feel as comfortable as possible and you do not need to proceed addressing a topic that makes you feel extremely sad or embarrassed.

The entire interview will last two hours at the most. I highly value your willingness and the time you will spend being interviewed. Your story, your opinions and comments are very important for this research. Every person who participates in this study will receive \$3000, which will be paid in cash once the interview is finished.

If you have any questions about this research project, please feel free to ask during the interview or contact Carolina Villagra on xxxxxx, which is the telephone number of my office at the University of Chile.

I declare that I understood what was read to me and I consent to participate in this study.

Signature

Date

References

- Akers, R. (1990) 'Rational Choice, Deterrence, and Social Learning Theory in Criminology: the Path not Taken' *The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* **81** (3): 653-676.
- Akhtar, S. (2009) *Comprehensive Dictionary of Psychoanalysis*, London: Karnac Books.
- Alvarez, P., Marangunic, A., and Herrera, R. (2007) 'Impacto de la Reforma Procesal Penal en la Población Penal Carcelaria del País' [Impact of the Criminal Procedure Reform in the Penal Population of the Country], *Revista de Estudios Criminológicos y Penitenciarios de Gendarmería de Chile* [Journal of Criminological and Penitentiary Studies of Gendarmería] **11**: 117-133.
- Appleton, C. (2010) *Life after Life Imprisonment*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Armstrong, S. and Weaver, B. (2010) *What do the Punished think of Punishment? The Comparative Experience of Short Prison Sentences and Community-based Punishment*, Research Report N° 04/2010, The Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research.
- Arnau, R., Rosen, D., Finch, J., Rhudy, J. and Fortunato, V. (2007) 'Longitudinal Effects of Hope on Depression and Anxiety: A Latent Variable Analysis' *Journal of Personality* **75** (1): 43-64.
- Arrigo, B. and Bullock, J. (2008) 'The Psychological Effects of Solitary Confinement on Prisoners in Supermax Units' *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* **52** (6): 622-640.
- Banco Central (2013) *Encuesta Financiera de Hogares: Metodología y Principales Resultados* [Household Financial Survey: Methods and Main Results]. Available at: http://www.bcentral.cl/estadisticas-economicas/financiera-hogares/pdf/Resultados_EFH_2011-12.pdf. Accessed 20/03/2014.

- Bartusch, D.; Lynam, D.; Moffitt, T. and Silva, P. (1997) 'Is Age Important? Testing a General versus a Developmental Theory of Antisocial Behaviour' *Criminology* **35** (1): 12-48.
- Bazeley, P. (2013) *Qualitative Data Analysis. Practical Strategies*, London: Sage.
- Bernburg, J. G. and Krohn, M. D. (2003) 'Labelling, Life Chances, and Adult Crime: the Direct and Indirect Effects of Official Intervention in Adolescence on Crime in Early Adulthood' *Criminology* **41** (4): 1287–131.
- Bersani, B., Laub, J. and Nieuwbeerta, P. (2009) 'Marriage and Desistance from Crime in the Netherlands: do Gender and Socio-Historical Context matter?' *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* **25**(1): 3-24.
- Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional [National Congress Library] (2013) *Condenas [Sentencing]*. Available at: <http://www.bcn.cl/ecivica/poderestado/>. Accessed 10/12/2013.
- Bottoms, A. (2001) 'Compliance and Community Penalties' in A. Bottoms, L. Gelsthorpe and S. Rex (eds) *Community Penalties: Changes and Challenges*, Cambridge: Willan Publishing, 87-116.
- Bottoms, A., Shapland, J., Costello, A., Holmes, D. and Muir, G. (2004) 'Towards Desistance: Theoretical Underpinnings for an Empirical Study' *The Howard Journal* **43** (4): 368-389.
- Bottoms, A. and Shapland, J. (2011) 'Steps towards Desistance among Young Adult Recidivists' in S. Farrall, R. Sparks, S. Maruna and M. Hough (eds) *Escape Routes: Contemporary Perspectives on Life after Imprisonment*, Oxon, New York: Routledge, 43-80.
- Bracken, D., Deane, L. and Morrisette, L. (2009) 'Desistance and Social Marginalization: The Case of Canadian Aboriginal Offenders' *Theoretical Criminology* **13** (1): 61-78.
- Brennan, M., Chan, J., Hini, D. and Esslemont, D. (1996) 'Improving the Accuracy of Recall Data: A Test of Two Procedures' *Marketing Bulletin* **7**: 20-29.

- Brezina, T. and Topalli, V. (2012) 'Criminal Self-efficacy: Exploring the Correlates and Consequences of a Successful Criminal Identity' *Criminal Justice and Behavior* **39** (8): 1042-1062.
- British Society of Criminology (2011) *Code of Ethics*. Available at: <http://www.britsoccrim.org/docs/CodeofEthics.pdf>. Accessed on 11/3/2011.
- Bruner, J. (1987) 'Life as Narrative' *Social Research* **54** (1): 11-32.
- Bruner, J. (1994) *Realidad Mental y Mundos Posibles: Los Actos de la Imaginación que dan Sentido a la Experiencia*, [Mental Reality and Possible Worlds: Acts of Imagination that make Sense of Experience], Barcelona: Gedisa.
- Bryman, A. (1984) 'The Debate about Quantitative and Qualitative Research: a Question of Method or Epistemology?' *British Journal of Sociology* **35** (1): 75-92.
- Bryman, A. (2004) *Social Research Methods, Second Edition*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bryman, A. (2012) *Social Research Methods, Third Edition*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Burnett, R. (1992) *The Dynamics of Recidivism*, Report to the Home Office. Chapter 10: Summary and Implications, Document issued by the author.
- Burnett, R. (2000) 'Understanding Criminal Careers Through a series of In-depth Interviews' *Offender Program Report* **4** (1): 1-15.
- Burnett, R. (2004) 'To Reoffend or Not to Reoffend? The Ambivalence of Convicted Property Offenders' in S. Maruna and R. Immerseon (eds) *After Crime and Punishment: Pathways to Offender Reintegration*, Cullompton: Willan Publishing, 152-180.
- Burnett, R. (2010) 'The Will and the Ways of Becoming an Ex-Offender' *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* **54** (5): 663-666.

- Burnett, R. and Maruna, S. (2004) 'So Prison Works, Does It? The Criminal Career of 130 Men Released from Prison under Home Secretary, Michael Howard' *The Howard Journal* **43** (4): 390-404.
- Bushway, S., Piquero, A., Boidy, L., Cauffman, E. and Mazerolle, P. (2001) 'An Empirical Framework for Studying Desistance as a Process' *Criminology* **39** (2): 496-515.
- Bushway, S., Thornberry, T. and Krohn, M. (2003) 'Desistance as a Developmental Process: A Comparison of Static and Dynamic Approaches' *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* **9** (2): 129-153.
- Bushway, S., Brame, R. and Paternoster, R. (2004) 'Connecting Desistance and Recidivism: Measuring Changes in Criminality over the Lifespan' in S. Maruna and R. Immarigeon (eds) *After Crime and Punishment: Pathways to Offender Reintegration*, Cullompton: Willan Publishing, 85-101.
- Bushway, S., Nieuwbeerta, P. and Blokland, A. (2011) 'The Predictive Value of Criminal Backgrounds Checks: do Age and Criminal History affect Time to Redemption?' *Criminology* **41** (1): 27-60.
- Calverley, A. (2009) *An Exploratory Investigation into the Processes of Desistance amongst Minority Ethnic Offenders*, Doctoral Dissertation, Keele University, England.
- Christian, J., Veysey, B., Herrschaft, B. and Tubman-Carbone, H. (2009) 'Moments of Transformation: Formerly Incarcerated Individuals' Narratives of Change', in B. Veysey, J. Christian and D. Martínez (eds) *How Offenders Transform their Lives*, Cullompton: Willan Publishing, 12-29.
- Cobbina, J. (2010) 'Reintegration Success and Failure: Factors impacting Reintegration among Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Women' *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation* **49** (3): 210-232.
- Cohen, S. and Taylor, L. (1972) *Psychological Survival: the Experience of Long-Term Imprisonment*, New York: Pantheon Books.

- Consejo de Reforma Penitenciaria [Council for Prison Reform] (2009) *Recomendaciones para una Nueva Política Penitenciaria [Recommendations for a new Penal Policy]*, Unpublished work document.
- Cooper, D. (2002) *Criminología y Delincuencia Femenina en Chile*, Santiago: Lom Ediciones.
- Crown Prosecution Service (2014) *Crown Prosecution Service Sentencing Guidelines*. Available at: [www.cps.gov.uk/legal/s_t_u/sentencing_manual/robbery](http://www.cps.gov.uk/legal/s_t/s_t_u/sentencing_manual/robbery). Accessed 10/07/2014.
- Cusson, M. and Pinsonneault, P. (1986) 'The Decision to Give up Crime' in D. Cornish and R. Clarke (eds) *The Reasoning Criminal: Rational Choice Perspectives on Offending*, New York: Springer.
- Day, A., Howells, K., Casey, S., Ward, T., Chambers, J. C. and Birgden, A. (2009) 'Assessing Treatment Readiness to Change in Violent Offenders' *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* **24**: 618-635.
- De la Barra, C. (1998) 'Adversarial vs Inquisitorial Systems: the Rule of Law and Prospects for Criminal Procedure Reform in Chile' *Southwestern Journal of Law and Trade in the Americas* **5**: 323 – 364.
- Denzin, N. (1970) *Sociological Methods: a Sourcebook*, Chicago: Aldine.
- Dickson-Swift, V., James, E. and Liamputtong, P. (2007) 'Doing Sensitive Research: What Challenges do Qualitative Researchers Face?' *Qualitative Research* **7** (3): 327-353.
- Dickson-Swift, V., James, E. and Liamputtong, P. (2008) *Undertaking Sensitive Research in the Health and Social Sciences: Managing Boundaries, Emotions and Risks*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dietz, T. and Burns, T. (1992) 'Human Agency and the Evolutionary Dynamics of Culture' *Acta Sociologica* **35** (3): 187-200.
- Eaton, M. (1993) *Women after Prison*, Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

- Economic and Social Research Council, ESRC (2010) *ESRC Framework for Research Ethics*. Available at: www.esrc.ac.uk. Accessed 20/05/2013.
- Edin, K. and Kefalas, M. (2005) *Promises I can keep. Why Poor Women put Motherhood before Marriage*, Berkeley: University of California Press.
- El Mercurio (2010) *Agitación en Penales obliga a Gendarmería a decretar Alerta Nacional [Unrest in Prisons forces Gendarmeria to Enact Maximum Alert]*. Available at: <http://www.emol.com/noticias/nacional/2010/12/11/452173/agitacion-en-penales-obliga-a-gendarmeria-a-decretar-alerta-nacional.html>. Accessed 10/11/2010.
- Emirbayer, M. and Mische, A. (1998) 'What is Agency?' *The American Journal of Sociology* **103** (4): 962-1023.
- Erikson, E. (1994) *Identity and the Life Cycle*, London: Norton.
- Espinoza, O. and Viano, C. (2008) *El Desafío de la Libertad. Proceso de Concesión de Beneficios Intrapenitenciarios para la Reinserción Social [The Challenge of Freedom: Process of Granting of Reintegration Permissions]*, Santiago: Editorial Ril.
- Eurosocietal (2015) *Ejecución de la Pena Privativa de Libertad: Una Mirada Comparada [Execution of Custody: A Comparative Look]*. Available at: <http://eurosocietal-ii.eu/es/showbiblioteca/2833>. Accessed 14/03/2016.
- Evans, K. (2002) 'Taking Control of Their Lives? Agency in Young Adult Transitions in England and New Germany' *Journal of Youth Studies* **5** (3): 245-269.
- Evans, T. and Wallace, P (2008) 'A Prison within a Prison? The Masculinity Narratives of Male Prisoners' *Men and Masculinities* **10** (4): 484-507.
- Ezell, M. (2007) 'The Effect of Criminal History Variables in the Processes of Desistance in Adulthood among Serious Youthful Offenders' *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice* **23** (1): 28-49.
- Ezell, M. and Cohen, L. (2005) *Desistance from Crime: Continuity and Change in*

Long-term Crime Patterns of Serious Chronic Offenders, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Farrall, S. (2002) *Rethinking What Works with Offenders: Probation, Social Context and Desistance from Crime*, Cullompton: Willan Publishing.

Farrall, S. (2003) 'J' accuse: Probation Evaluation-research Epistemologies. Part One: The Critique' *Criminal Justice* **3** (2): 161-179.

Farrall, S. (2004) 'Social Capital and Offender Reintegration: Making Probation Desistance Focused' in S. Maruna and R. Immarigeon (eds) *After Crime and Punishment: Pathways to Offender Reintegration*, Cullompton: Willan Publishing, 57-180.

Farrall, S. (2009) 'Explorations in Theories of Desistance. Societal-level Approaches to Reform' *Theoretical Criminology* **13** (1): 5-8.

Farrall, S. and Bowling, B. (1999) 'Structuration, Human Development and Desistance from Crime' *British Journal of Criminology* **9** (2): 153-268.

Farrall, S. and Calverley, A. (2006) *Understanding Desistance from Crime*, Berkshire: Open University Press.

Farrall, S., Godfrey, B. and Cox, D. (2009) 'The Role of Historically-embedded Structures in Processes of Criminal Reform. A Structural Criminology of Desistance' *Theoretical Criminology* **13** (1): 79-104.

Farrall, S., Bottoms, A. and Shapland, J. (2010) 'Social Structures and Desistance from Crime' *European Journal of Criminology* **7** (6): 546-570.

Farrall, S., Sharpe, G., Hunter, G. and Carverley, A. (2011) 'Theorizing Structural and Individual-level Processes of Desistance and Persistence: Outlining an Integrated Perspective' *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology* **44** (2): 218-234.

Farrington, D. (1997) 'Human Development and Criminal Careers' in M. Maguire, R. Morgan and R. Reiner (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Criminology*, Second edition, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

- Farrington, D. (2003) 'Key Results of the First Forty Years of Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development' in E. Thornberry and M. Krohn (eds) *Tacking Stock of Delinquency: An Overview of Findings from Contemporary Longitudinal Studies*, New York: Klumer/Plenum, 137-183.
- Farrington, D. (2007) 'Advancing Knowledge of Desistance' *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice* **23** (1): 125-134.
- Farrington, D., Jolliffe, D., Hawkins, J., Catalano, R., Hill, K. and Kosterman, R. (2003) 'Comparing Delinquency Careers in Court Records and Self Reports' *Criminology* **41** (3): 933-958.
- Farrington, D., Coid, J., Harnett, L. Jolliffe, D., Soteriou, N., Turner, R. and West, D. (2006) *Criminal Careers and Life Success: New Findings from Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development*, Home Office Research Findings N° 181, London: Home Office.
- Farrington, D. and Welsh, B. (2007) *Saving Children from a Life of Crime*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ferrell, J. (1999) 'Cultural Criminology' *Annual Review of Sociology* **25**: 395-418.
- Ffrench-Davies, R. (2010) *Economic Reforms in Chile: from Dictatorship to Democracy*, Second edition, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Fielding, N. and Thomas, H. (2008) 'Qualitative Interviewing', in N. Gilbert (ed) *Researching Social Life, Third Edition*, London: Sage, 245-265.
- Fleisher, M. and Krienert J. (2004) 'Life-course Events, Social Networks, and the Emergence of Violence among Female Gang Members' *Journal of Community Psychology*, **32** (5): 607-22.
- Flood-Page, C., Campbell, S., Harrington, V. and Miller, J. (2000) *Youth Crime: Findings from the 1998/1999 Youth Lifestyles Survey*, Research, Development and Statistics, Home Office: UK.

- Francis, B., Soothill, K. and Fligelstone, R. (2004) 'Identifying Patterns and Pathways of Offending Behaviour: New Approaches to Typologies of Crime' *European Journal of Criminology* **1** (1): 47-87.
- Gadd, D. and Farrall, S. (2004) 'Criminal Careers, Desistance and Subjectivity: Interpreting Men's Narratives of Change' *Theoretical Criminology* **8** (2): 123-156.
- Gatti, U., Tremblay, R. E. and Vitaro, F. (2009) 'Iatrogenic Effect of Juvenile Justice' *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry* **50** (8): 991–998.
- Gelsthorpe, L. and Sharpe, G. (2007) 'Women and Resettlement' in A. Hucklesby and I. Hagley-Dickinson (eds) *Prisoner Resettlement. Policy and Practice*, Cullompton: Willan Publishing, 199-223.
- Gendarmeria de Chile (2009) *Memoria 2008, Programas y Acciones de Reinserción [Memory of 2008: Programmes and Actions for the Reintegration]*, Santiago: UNICRIM.
- Gendarmeria de Chile (2009a) *Memoria 2008, Programas y Acciones de Reinserción [Memory of 2008: Programmes and Actions for the Reintegration]*, Santiago: UNICRIM.
- Gendarmeria de Chile (2010) *Memoria 2009, Programas y Acciones de Reinserción [Memory of 2009: Programmes and Actions for the Reintegration]*, Santiago: UNICRIM.
- Gendarmeria de Chile (2011) webpage, www.gendarmeria.cl
- Gendarmeria de Chile (2014) webpage, www.gendarmeria.cl
- Giacomello, C. (2013) *Mujeres, Delitos de Drogas y Sistemas Penitenciarios en América Latina, [Women, Drug Crimes and Penal Systems in Latin America]*, Consorcio Internacional sobre Políticas de Drogas [International Drug Policy Consortium]. Available at: [http://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/64663568/library/IDPC-Briefing-Paper Women-in-Latin-America SPANISH.pdf](http://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/64663568/library/IDPC-Briefing-Paper-Women-in-Latin-America-SPANISH.pdf). Accessed 15/11/2013.

- Giordano, P., Cernkovich, S. and Rudolph, J. (2002) 'Gender, Crime and Desistance: Toward a Theory of Cognitive Transformation' *American Journal of Sociology* **107** (4): 990-1064.
- Giordano, P., Schroeder, R. and Cernkovich, S., (2007) 'Emotions and Crime over the Life-Course: a Neo-Meadian Perspective on Criminal Continuity and Change' *The American Journal of Sociology* **112** (6) 1603-1661.
- Giordano, P., Longmore, M., Schroeder, R., and Seffrin, P. (2008) 'A Life-course Perspective on Spirituality and Desistance from Crime' *Criminology*, **46** (1): 99-132.
- Giordano, P., Seffrin, P., Manning, W., and Longmore, M. (2011) 'Parenthood and Crime: the Role of Wantedness, Relationships with Partners, and SES' *Journal of Criminal Justice* **39** (5): 405–416.
- Glueck, S. and Glueck, E. (1951) *Unravelling Juvenile Delinquency*, Harvard: University Press.
- Goffman, E. (1961) *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patient and Other Inmates*, Anchor Books.
- Gottfredson, M. and Hirschi, T. (1990) *A General Theory of Crime*, California: Stanford University Press.
- Gove, W. (1985) 'The Effect of Age and Gender on Deviant Behavior: a Biopsychosocial Perspective' in A. Rossi (ed) *Gender and Life Course*, Aldine Transactions.
- Graham, J. and Bowling, B. (1995) *Young People and Crime*, Research Study 145, Home Office: Research and Statistics Department.
- Haines, K. (1999) 'Crime is a Social Problem' *European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research* **7**: 263 – 275.
- Healy, D. (2010) *The Dynamics of Desistance: Charting Pathways through Change*, Cullompton, Devon: Willan Publishing.

- Hedderman, C. (2007) 'Rediscovering Resettlement: Theory, Policy and Research' in A. Hucklesby and I. Hagley-Dickinson (eds) *Prisoner Resettlement. Policy and Practice*, Cullompton: Willan Publishing, 9-25.
- Hedderman, C. (2008) *Building on Sand: Why expanding the Prisoner State is not the Way to 'Secure the Future'*, Centre for Crime and Justice Statistics, King's College of London.
- Hirschi, T. (1969) *Causes of Delinquency*, Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Hirschi, T. and Gottfredson, M. (1983) 'Age and the Explanation of Crime' *The American Journal of Sociology* **89** (3): 552-584.
- Hope, T., Wilder, E. and Watt, T. (2003) 'The Relationships among Adolescent Pregnancy, Pregnancy Resolution, and Juvenile Delinquency' *Sociological Quarterly* **44** (4): 555-576.
- Horney, J., Osgood, W. and Marshall, I. (1995) 'Criminal Careers in the Short Term: Intra-Individual Variability in Crime and its relation to Local Life Circumstances' *American Sociological Review* **60** (5) 655-673.
- Hough, M. (2010) 'Gold Standards or Fool's Gold? The Pursuit of Certainty in Experimental Criminology' *Criminology and Criminal Justice* **10** (1): 11-22.
- Huizinga, H., Wylie Weiher, A. and Espiritu, R. (2003) 'Delinquency and Crime: Some Highlights from the Denver Youth Survey' in E. Thornberry and M. Krohn (eds) *Tacking Stock of Delinquency: An Overview of Findings from Contemporary Longitudinal Studies*, New York: Klumer/Plenum, 47-92.
- Hunt, G., Joe-Laidler, K. and MacKenzie, K. (2005) 'Moving into Motherhood: Gangs, Girls and Controlled Risk' *Youth and Society*, **36** (3): 333-373.
- Inzunza, J. (2009) *La Construcción del Derecho a la Educación y la Institucionalidad Educativa en Chile [The Construction of the Right to Education and the Educational Institutions in Chile]*, Programa EPE, FACSO, Universidad de Chile.

- Jewkes, Y. (2002) *Captive Audience: Media, Masculinity and Power in Prisons*, Cullompton: Willan Publishing.
- Jewkes, Y. (2005) 'Loss, Liminality and the Life Sentence: Managing Identity through a Disrupted Lifecourse' in A. Liebling and S. Maruna (eds) *The Effects of Imprisonment*, Cullompton: Willan
- Kazemian, L. (2007) 'Desistance from Crime: Theoretical, Empirical, Methodological, and Policy Considerations' *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice* **23** (1): 5-27.
- Kazemian, L. (2015) *Straight Lives. The Balance between Human Dignity, Public Safety, and Desistance from Crime*, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, University of New York.
- Kazemian, L. and Travis, J. (2015) 'The Imperative for Inclusion of Long Termers and Lifers in Research and Policy' *Criminology and Public Policy* **14** (2): 355-395.
- King, S. (2013) *Desistance Transitions and the Impact of Probation*, London: Routledge.
- King, S. (2013a) 'Early Desistance Narratives: A Qualitative Analysis of Probationers' Transitions towards Desistance' *Punishment and Society* **15** (2): 147-165.
- King, R. and Wincup, E. (2008) *The Process of Criminological Research in Doing Research on Crime and Justice*, Second edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- King, R.D. and Liebling, A. (2008) 'Doing Research in Prisons' in R. D. King and E. Wincup (eds) *Doing Research on Crime and Justice*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 431-451.
- Kreager, D. Matsueda, R., and Erosheva, E. (2010) 'Motherhood and Criminal Disadvantaged Neighborhoods' *Criminology* **48** (1): 221-258.
- Larrain, J. (2000) *Identity and Modernity in Latin America*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

- Laub, J.H., Nagin, D., and Sampson, R. (1998) 'Trajectories of Change in Criminal Offending: Good Marriages and the Desistance Process' *American Sociological Review* **63** (2): 225-238.
- Laub, J.H. and Sampson, R.J. (2001) 'Understanding Desistance from Crime' in M. Tonry (Ed.) *Crime and Justice: A Review of Research*, vol. 28, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Laub, J.H. and Sampson, R.J. (2003) *Shared Beginning, Divergent Lives: Delinquent Boys to Age 70*, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.
- Laub, J.H., Sampson, R.J. and Sweeten, G. (2006) 'Assessing Sampson and Laub's Life-Course Theory of Crime' in F. Cullen, J.P. Wright and K. Blevins, (eds) *Taking Stock: The Status of Criminological Theory*, London: Transaction Publishers.
- LeBel, T., Burnett, R., Maruna, S. and Bushway, S. (2008) 'The "Chicken and Egg" of Subjective and Social Factors in Desistance from Crime' *European Journal of Criminology* **5** (2): 131-159.
- LeBlanc, N. and Frechette, M. (1989) *Male Criminal Activity from Childhood through Youth*, New York: Springer.
- Leibrich, J. (1996) 'The Role of Shame in Going Straight: A Study of Former Offenders' in B. Galaway and J. Hudson (eds) *Restorative Justice*, New York: Criminal Justice Press, 283-302.
- Leverentz, A. (2006) 'The Love of a Good Man? Romantic Relationships as a Source of Support or Hindrance for Female Ex-Offenders' *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* **43** (4): 459-488.
- Liamputtong, P. (2007) *Researching the Vulnerable: A Guide to Sensitive Research Methods*, London: Sage.
- Liem, M. and Richardson, N. (2014) 'The Role of Transformation Narratives in Desistance among Released Lifers' *Criminal Justice and Behavior* **41** (6): 692 – 712.

- Lim, C. and Putnam, R. (2010) Religion, Social Networks, and Life Satisfaction' *American Sociological Review* 75 (6): 914-933.
- Lloyd, C., Mair, G., and Hough, M. (1995) *Explaining Reconviction Rates: a Critical Analysis*, Home Office Research Studies N° 136, London: Home Office.
- Loeber, R. and LeBlanc, M. (1990) 'Toward a Developmental Criminology' *Crime and Justice* 12: 375-473.
- Loeber, R., Farrington, D. and Stouthamer-Loeber, M. (2003) 'The Development of Male Offending: Key Findings from Fourteen Years of the Pittsburg Youth Study' in E. Thornberry, and M. Krohn (eds) *Tacking Stock of Delinquency: An Overview of Findings from Contemporary Longitudinal Studies*, New York: Klumer/Plenum, 93-136.
- Loftus, E. and Marburger, W. (1983) 'Since the Eruption of Mt. St. Helens, has anyone beaten you up? Improving the Accuracy of Retrospective Records with Landmark Events' *Memory and Cognition* 11(2): 114-120
- MacDonald, R., Webster, C., Shildrick, T. and Simpson, M. (2011) 'Paths of Inclusion, Exclusion and Desistance: Understanding Marginalised Young People's Criminal Careers' in S. Farrall, R. Sparks, S. Maruna, and M. Hough (eds) *Escape Routes: Contemporary Perspectives on Life after Imprisonment*, Oxon, New York: Routledge, 134-157.
- Maguire, M. (2000) 'Researching "Street Criminals"' in R. D. King and E. Wincup (eds) *Doing Research on Crime and Justice*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 121-152.
- Manzano, L. (2009) *Violencia en Barrios Críticos [Violence in Conflictive Neighbourhoods]*, Santiago: Ril Editores.
- Martin, K. and Stermac, L. (2010) 'Measuring Hope: Is Hope Related to Criminal Behaviours in Offenders?' *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* 54 (5): 693-705.

- Martínez, F. (2008) *Diagnóstico de la Asistencia Post Penitenciaria en Chile* [Diagnosis of Post Prison Assistance in Chile], Santiago: Editorial Ril.
- Maruna, S. (1999) *Redeeming One's Self: How Reformed Ex-Offenders make Sense of Their Lives*, Doctoral Dissertation, North-western University, England.
- Maruna, S. (2001) *Making Good: How ex Convicts Reform and Rebuild their Lives*, Washington: American Psychological Association.
- Maruna, S. and Farrall, S. (2004) 'Desistance from Crime: A Theoretical Reformulation' *Koelner Zeitschrift fur Soziologie und SocialPsychologie* **43**: 171-194.
- Maruna, S., Immarigeon, R. and LeBel, T. (2004) 'Ex-offender Reintegration, Theory and Practice' in S. Maruna and R. Immarigeon (eds) *After Crime and Punishment: Pathways to Offender Reintegration*, Cullompton: Willan, 3-27.
- Maruna, S., Porter, L. and Carvalho, I. (2004a) 'The Liverpool Desistance Study and Probation Practice: Opening the Dialogue' *Probation Journal* **51** (3): 221-232.
- Maruna, S., LeBel, T., Mitchell, N. and Naples, M. (2004b) 'Pygmalion in the Reintegration Process: Desistance from Crime through the Looking Glass' *Psychology, Crime and Law* **10**: 271 – 281.
- Maruna, S. and Toch, H. (2005) 'The Impact of Imprisonment in the Desistance Process' in J. Travis and C. Visser (eds) *Prisoner Reentry and Crime in America*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Maruna, S., Wilson, L. and Curran, K. (2006) 'Why God is often Found Behind Bars' *Research in Human Development*, **3** (2 & 3): 161-184.
- Maruna, S. and Matravers, A. (2007) 'N = 1: Criminology and the Person' *Theoretical Criminology* **11** (4): 427-442.
- Massoglia, M. and Uggen, C. (2007) 'Subjective Desistance and Transition to Adulthood' *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice* **23** (1): 90-103.
- Matza, D. (1964) *Delinquency and Drift*, New York: Wiley.

- McAdams, D. (2002) *Coding Autobiographical Episodes for Themes of Agency and Communion*, Foley Center for the Study of Lives. Available at: http://www.sesp.northwestern.edu/docs/Agency_Communion01.pdf. Accessed 7/10/2011.
- McIvor, G., Murray, C. and Jamieson, J. (2004) 'Desistance from Crime: is it different for Women and Girls?' in S. Maruna and R. Immarigeon (eds) *After Crime and Punishment: Pathways to Offender Reintegration*, Cullompton: Willan, 181-197.
- McNeill, F. (2006) 'A Desistance Paradigm for Offender Management' *Criminology and Criminal Justice* **6** (1): 39-62.
- McNeill, F. (2009) 'What Works and What's Just?' *European Journal of Probation* **1** (1): 21-40.
- McNeill, F. (2012) 'Four Forms of 'Offender' Rehabilitation: towards an Interdisciplinary Perspective' *Legal and Criminological Psychology* **17** (1): 18-36.
- McNeill, F. and Weaver, B. (2010) *Changing Lives? Desistance Research and Offender Management*, Report N° 3/2010, Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research, Glasgow School of Social Work.
- Meisenhelder, T. (1977) 'An Exploratory Study of Exiting from Criminal Careers' *Criminology* **15** (3): 319-334.
- Meisenhelder, T. (1982) 'Becoming Normal: Certification as a Stage in Exiting from Crime' *Deviant Behaviour: An Interdisciplinary Journal* **3**: 137-153.
- Michalsen, V. (2011) 'Mothering as a Life Course Transition: do Women go Straight for their Children?' *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation*, **50** (6): 349-366.
- Ministerio del Interior [Ministry of Domestic Affairs] (2009) *Encuesta Nacional Urbana de Seguridad Ciudadana [National Urban Survey of Public Safety]*. Available at: http://www.seguridadciudadana.gob.cl/files/00_enusc_2008_total_pais_v2.pdf. Accessed 17/12/2009.

- Ministerio de Justicia [Ministry of Justice] (2005) *Reforma Procesal Penal [Criminal Procedure Reform]*, Santiago: Gobierno de Chile.
- Ministerio de Justicia and Vera Institute of Justice [Ministry of Justice and Vera Institute of Justice] (2004) *Analizando la Reforma a la Justicia Criminal en Chile: un Estudio Empírico entre el Nuevo y el Antiguo Sistema Penal [Analyzing the Reform of Criminal Justice in Chile: an Empirical Study between the New and the Old Penal System]*, New York: Vera Institute of Justice.
- Ministerio Público [Office of the Public Prosecutor] (2009) *Segunda Cuenta Pública Fiscal Nacional [Second Public Account of the Public Prosecutor]*. Available at: <http://www.fiscaliadechile.cl/cuentaspublicasministerio/2009/index.html>. Accessed 23/12/2009.
- Mischkowitz, R. (1994) 'Desistance from a Delinquent Way of Life?' in E. Weitekamp, and H. Kerner (eds) *Cross-National Longitudinal Research on Human Development and Criminal Behaviour*, Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 303-327.
- Moffitt, T. (1993) 'Adolescence-Limited and Life-Course-Persistent Antisocial Behaviour: A Developmental Taxonomy' *Psychological Review* **100** (4): 674-701.
- Morizot, J. and LeBlanc M. (2007) 'Behavioural, Self and Social Control Predictors of Desistance from Crime' *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice* **23** (1): 50-71.
- Mulvey, E. (2011) *Highlights from Pathways to Desistance: a Longitudinal Study of Serious Adolescent Offenders*. Available at: <http://www.desistance.info/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/pathwaysus.pdf>. Accessed 9/08/2011.
- Mulvey, E., Steinberg, L., Fagan, J., Cauffman, E., Piquero, A., Chasin, L., Knight, G., Brame, R., Schubert, C., Hecker, T. and Losoya, S. (2004) 'Theory and Research on Desistance from Antisocial Activity among Serious Adolescent Offenders' *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice* **2** (3): 213-236.

- Nee, C. (2004) 'The Offender's Perspective on Crime: Methods and Principles in Data Collection' in A. Needs and G. Towl (eds) *Applying Psychology to Forensic Practice*, Oxford: BPS Blackwell.
- Neuman, W.L. (1997) *Social Research Methods – Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (3rd edn), London: Allyn and Bacon.
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, OECD (2013) Chile. Available at: <http://www.oecd.org/chile/>. Accessed 1/11/2013.
- Organización de Estados Americanos, OEA [Organisation of American States] Espinoza, O. y Villagra, C. (2009) *Desarrollo de Metodología Estandarizada para la Evaluación de Programas de Reinserción Social orientados a la Disminución de la Reincidencia Delictual en Países de Latinoamérica*, Propuesta de Proyecto de Estudio [OAS, *Development of Standardized Methodology for the Evaluation of Social Reintegration Programmes aimed at Reducing Criminal Recidivism in Latin American Countries, Proposal of a Study Project*], unpublished document.
- Ouimet, M. and LeBlanc, M. (1996) 'The Role of Life Experiences in the Continuation of the Adult Criminal Career' *Criminal Behaviour and Mental Health* **6** (1): 73-97.
- Passel, J. and Cohn, D. (2008) *U.S. Population Projections: 2005 – 2050*, Pew Research Center: Social and Demographic Trends, Pew Hispanic Centre, available in <http://pewhispanic.org/files/reports/85.pdf>. Accessed 7/08/2011.
- Paternoster, R. (1989) 'Decisions to participate in and desist from Four Types of Common Delinquency: Deterrence and the Rational Choice Perspective' *Law and Society Review* **23** (1): 7-40.
- Paternoster, R. and Bushway (2009) 'Desistance and the 'Feared Self': towards an Identity Theory of Crime Desistance' *The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* **99** (4): 1103-1156.
- Pattoni, L. (2012) *Strengths-based Approaches for working with Individuals*, Institute for Research and Innovation in Social Sciences, Glasgow.

- Petersilia, J. (2001) *When Prisoners come Home: Parole and Prisoner Reentry*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Pew Hispanic Center (2011) *Census 2010: 50 Million Latinos: Hispanic account for more than Half of Nation's Growth in Past Decade*, Pew Hispanic Research. Available at: <http://pewhispanic.org/files/reports/140.pdf>. Accessed 7/08/2011.
- Phillips, C. and Bowling, B. (2003) 'Racism, Ethnicity and Criminology: Developing Minority Perspectives' *British Journal of Criminology* **43** (2): 269-290.
- Piquero, A. (2004) 'Somewhere between Persistence and Desistance: the Intermittency of Criminal Careers' in S. Maruna and R. Immarigeon, R. (eds) *After Crime and Punishment: Pathways to Offender Reintegration*, Cullompton: Willan, 102-125.
- Piquero, A., Farrington, D. and Blumstein, A. (2007) *Key Issues in Criminal Career Research: New Analysis of the Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rex, S. (1999) 'Desistance from Offending: Experiences on Probation' *Howard Journal of Criminal Justice* **38** (4): 366-83.
- Riego, C. and Duce, M, (2008) *Prisión Preventiva y Reforma Procesal Penal en América Latina, Evaluación y Perspectivas [Pre-trial Detention and Criminal Procedure Reform in Latin America, Evaluation and Perspectives]*, Santiago: Centro de Estudio de Justicia de las Américas.
- Riessman, C. K. (2008) *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*, London: Sage Publications.
- Rumgay, J. (2004) 'Scripts for Safer Survival: Pathways out of Female Crime' *The Howard Journal* **43** (4): 405-419.
- Ryan, G. and Bernard, H.R. (2003) 'Techniques to Identify Themes' *Field Methods* **15**(1): 85-109.
- Saldana, J. (2009) *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*, London: Sage.

- Salinero, S. (2012) '¿Por qué aumenta la Población Penal en Chile? Un Estudio Criminológico Longitudinal' [Why is the Penal Population growing in Chile? A Longitudinal Criminological Study] *Lus et Praxis* **18** (1): 113-150.
- Sampson, R.J. and Laub, J.H. (1993) *Crime in the Making: Pathways and Turning Points through Life*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Sampson, R. and Laub, J. (2003) 'Life-Course Desisters? Trajectories of Crime among Delinquent Boys Followed to Age 70' *Criminology* **41** (3): 555-592.
- Sampson, R. and Laub, J. (2005) 'A General Age-graded Theory of Crime: Lessons Learned and the Future of Life-Course Criminology' in D. Farrington (ed) *Integrated Developmental & Life-Course Theories of Offending: Advances in Criminological Theory*, New Brunswick, London: Transaction, 165-181.
- Schroeder, R., Giordano, P. and Cernkovich, S. (2007) 'Drug Use and Desistance Processes' *Criminology* **45** (1): 191-222.
- SCOPIC (2003) Social Context of Pathways in Crime. Available at: <http://www.scopic.ac.uk/>. Accessed 10/12/2009.
- Serin, R. and Lloyd C. (2009) 'Examining the Process of Offender Change: the Transition to Crime Desistance' *Psychology, Crime and Law* **15** (4): 347-364.
- Shapland, J. (ed) (2014) *Desistance, Social Order and Responses to Crime: Today's Security Issues*, Antwerpen: Maklu.
- Shapland, J. and Bottoms, A. (2011) 'Reflecting on Social Values, Offending and Desistance among Young Adult Recidivists' *Punishment and Society* **13** (3): 356-282.
- Shover, N. (1983) 'The Later Stages of Ordinary Property Offenders Careers' *Social Problems* **31** (2): 208-218.
- Shover, N. (1996) *Great Pretenders, Pursuits and Careers of Persistent Thieves*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

- Shover, N. and Thompson, C. (1992) 'Age, Differential Expectation and Crime Desistance' *Criminology* **30** (1): 89-104.
- Silverman, D. (2011) *Interpretation of Qualitative Data: Methods for Analysing Talk, Text and Interaction*, London: Sage.
- Social Exclusion Unit (2002) *Reducing Reoffending by ex Prisoners*, Report of the Social Exclusion Unit, United Kingdom.
- Sommers, I., Baskin, D., and Fagan, J. (2004) 'Getting out of the Life: Crime Desistance by Female Offenders' in M. Pogrebin (ed) *About Criminals; A View of the Offender's World*, SAGE, 322-359.
- Soothill, K., Fitzpatrick, C. and Francis, B. (2009) *Understanding Criminal Careers*, Cullompton: Willan Publishing.
- Strauss, A. (1987) *Qualitative Analysis for Social Sciences*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Superintendencia de Bancos e Instituciones Financieras, [Superintendency of Banks and Financial Institutions] SBIF (2013) *Nivel de Endeudamiento en Chile [Level of Indebtedness in Chile]*. Available at: <http://www.sbif.cl>. Accessed 20/08/2013.
- Sweeten, G., Bushway, S. and Paternoster, R. (2009) 'Does Dropping out School means Dropping into Delinquency?' *Criminology* **47**(1): 47-91.
- Sykes, G. (1958) *The Society of Captives: a Study of a Maximum Security Prison*, New ed. 2007, Oxford: Princeton University Press.
- Sykes, G. and Matza, D. (1957) 'Techniques of Neutralization: a Theory of Delinquency' *American Sociological Review* **22** (6): 664-670.
- Tedeschi, R. and Calhoun, L. (2004) 'Posttraumatic Growth: Conceptual Foundations and Empirical Evidence' *Psychological Inquiry: An International Journal for the Advancement of Psychological Theory* **15** (1): 1-18
- Theobald, D. and Farrington, D. (2011) 'Why do the Crime-Reducing Effects of Marriage vary with Age?' *British Journal of Criminology* **51** (1): 136-158.

- Tripodi, S., Kim, J. and Bender, K. (2010) 'Is Employment Associated with Reduced Recidivism?' *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* **54** (5): 706-720.
- Uggen, C. (2000) 'Work as a Turning Point in the Live Course of Criminals: A Duration Model of Age, Employment, and Recidivism' *American Sociological Review* **65** (49): 529-546.
- Uggen, C. and Kruttschnitt, C. (1998) 'Crime in the Breaking: Gender Differences in Desistance' *Law and Society Review* **32** (2): 339-366.
- Uggen, C. and Piliavin, I. (1998) 'Asymmetrical Causation and Desistance from Crime' *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* **88** (4): 1399-1422.
- Uggen, C., Manza, J. and Behrens, A. (2004) 'Less than an Average Citizen: Stigma, Role Transition and the Civic Reintegration of Convicted Felons' in S. Maruna and R. Immarigeon (eds) *After Crime and Punishment: Pathways to Offender Reintegration*, Cullompton: Willan Publishing, 261-293.
- United Nations Development Programme, UNDP (2009) *Human Development Report 2009*. Available at: http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_2009_EN_Summary.pdf. Accessed 15/12/2009.
- Universidad Diego Portales, UDP [University Diego Portales] (2009) *Informe Anual sobre Derechos Humanos en Chile [Annual Report on Human Rights in Chile]*, Santiago: Salesianos Impresiones.
- Universidad Diego Portales, UDP [University Diego Portales] (2010) *Informe Anual sobre Derechos Humanos en Chile [Annual Report on Human Rights in Chile]*, Santiago: Salesianos Impresiones.
- Universidad Diego Portales, UDP [University Diego Portales] (2011) *Informe Anual sobre Derechos Humanos en Chile [Annual Report on Human Rights in Chile]*, Santiago: Salesianos Impresiones.

- Vaughan, B. (2007) 'The Internal Narrative of Desistance' *British Journal of Criminology* **47** (3): 390-404.
- Villagra, C. (2008) *Hacia una Política Post Penitenciaria en Chile, [Towards a Post Prison Policy in Chile]*, Santiago: Editorial Ril.
- Villagra, C. (2014) 'A long Journey towards Social Inclusion? How Chilean Women desisted from Crime after Three Decades of Offending' in J. Shapland (ed) *Desistance, Social Order and Responses to Crime: Today's Security Issues*, Antwerplen: Maklu, 29-46.
- Villagra, C., Espinoza, O. and Martínez, F. (2011) *Volver a Confiar: Caminos para la Integración Post Carcelaria [Trusting Again: Roads for Post Prison Integration]*, Santiago: Universidad de Chile.
- Visher, C. and Travis, J. (2003) 'Transitions from Prison to Community: Understanding Individual Pathways' *Annual Review of Sociology* **29**: 89-113.
- Walmsley, R. (2011) *World Prison Population List, Ninth Edition*, International Centre for Prison Studies.
- Walmsley, R. (2013) *World Prison Population List, Tenth Edition*, International Centre for Prison Studies.
- Walters, S., Clarks, M., Gingerich, R. and Meltzer, M. (2007) *Motivating Offenders to Change: A Guide for Probation and Parole*, U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections.
- Ward, T. and Willis, G. (2010) 'Ethical Issues in Forensic and Correctional Research' *Aggression and Violent Behaviour* **15**: 399-409.
- Warr, M. (1998) 'Life-Course Transitions and Desistance from Crime' *Criminology* **36** (2): 183-215.
- Weaver, B. (2012) 'The Relational Context of Desistance: Some Implications and Opportunities for Social Policies' *Social Policy and Administration* **46** (4): 395 – 412.

- Weaver, B. (2013) 'Desistance, Reflexivity and Relationality: a Case Study' *European Journal of Probation* **5** (3): 71-88.
- Weaver, B. (2013a) *The Importance of Social Relations in Personal Change*, Scottish Justice Matters, 12-13.
- Weaver, B. (2014) 'Control or Change? Developing Dialogue between Desistance Research and Public Protection Practices' *Probation Journal* **61** (1): 8-26.
- Weaver, B. and McNeill, F. (2010) 'Travelling Hopefully: Desistance Research and Probation Practice' in J. Brayford, F. Cowe and J. Deering (eds) *What Else Works?: Creative Work with Offenders*, Cullompton: Willan Publishing, 36-60.
- Wilkinson, K. (2009) *The Doncaster Desistance Study*, Hallam Centre for Community Justice, Sheffield Hallam University.
- World Bank (2013) *Data from Chile*. Available at: <http://data.worldbank.org/country/chile>. Accessed 11/11/2013.
- Wright, J.P. and Cullen, F. (2004) 'Employment, Peers and Life-course Transitions' *Justice Quarterly* **21** (1): 183-205.
- Jewkes, Y. (2002) *Captive Audience: Media, Masculinity and Power in Prisons*, Cullompton: Willan Publishing.
- Jewkes, Y. (2005) 'Loss, Liminality and the Life Sentence: Managing Identity through a Disrupted Lifecourse' in A. Liebling and S. Maruna (eds) *The Effects of Imprisonment*, Cullompton: Willan Publishing.
- Zamble, E. and Quinsey, V. (1997) *The Criminal Recidivism Process*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Zdun, S. (2011) 'Immigration as a Trigger to Knife off Delinquency? Desistance and Persistence among Male Adolescents from the Former Soviet Union in Germany' *Criminology and Criminal Justice* **11** (4): 307-323.