

## **The Good Lives Model: Aligning Risk Reduction with Promoting Offenders' Personal Goals**

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### **Abstract**

*In this paper we provide an overview of a relatively new, strength-based model of offender rehabilitation, the Good Lives Model (GLM), which focuses interventions on offenders' personal interests and normative commitments. From the perspective of the GLM, correctional programs should aim to increase individuals' awareness of their core values and assist them to translate this awareness into concrete intervention plans. It is argued that if this is done with one eye on offenders risk profiles it is possible to reduce risk by building the competencies needed to achieve personally more fulfilling lives. The paper finishes with a brief case study that is intended to convey the GLM's twin focus on offenders' well-being enhancement and risk reduction and management.*

**Key Words:** Good Lives Model - Offender Rehabilitation

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## Introduction

In the current correctional and forensic climate practitioners, especially psychologists, tend to approach the assessment and rehabilitation of individuals on probation or in prison from a risk oriented, technological perspective. From the viewpoint of a risk perspective, the primary aim is to deliver empirically supported, structured interventions to reduce or eliminate crime related dynamic features of the offender and his or her environment (Andrews & Bonta, 2010). Ultimately, the intention is to make the community safer by persuading individuals who have committed serious crimes to control their offence related cognitions, emotions, and actions. According to this perspective, science identifies the techniques that result in reduced offending and the job of the practitioner is to apply these technologies in a reliable and valid manner. This is aided by the use of detailed treatment manuals and intensive training and ongoing supervision in the science of intervention. Values are considered to play an important, although secondary, role in ensuring that interventions are implemented in ethically acceptable ways; making sure there is no physical or emotional abuse, serious neglect or blatant violations of offenders' legal rights. However, the engine of behavioural change is thought to be located in the techniques discovered by empirical research and grounded in factual knowledge. Values are seen as an overlay, essentially moderators of interventions rather than integral components of them.

While the reduction of offending through the employment of empirically validated techniques is an important and socially responsible goal, in our view it misconstrues the fundamental nature of offender behaviour change and desistance (Evans, 2012; Laws & Ward, 2011). In essence, the rehabilitation of offenders involves two key tasks: (a) *normative task*: where practitioners set out to help individuals think about what would constitute a "good life" for them and in the process of this self-reflection, identify their personal core value commitments; (b) a *capability-building task*: this involves the acquisition of internal and external resources/capacities that are needed to implement good lives plans in ways that respect personal priorities and also reduce the risk of reoffending. The outcome of these two processes is hopefully the construction of a more adaptive narrative or practical identity (Laws & Ward, 2011; Maruna, 2001).

Practice values are reflected in norms that outline obligatory standards or ideals thought to result in human benefits (or harms) such as well-being enhancement, increased autonomy, and the reduction of suffering. They inform professionals about the outcomes or experiences they should be seeking to achieve with clients and which ones they should try to avoid. In brief, (a) values are evident in the definitions of risk assessment and the goal of crime reduction: to assess the probability of harmful outcomes occurring and to reduce the amount of harm; (b) intervention targets such as increased empathy, emotional control, or social functioning are underpinned by values; (c) fundamentally, the concept of narrative identity that resides at the heart of the change and desistance process is essentially a value laden idea as it contains personal ideals and guides self-evaluation; (d) every correctional practitioners' professional conduct is guided by specific codes of practice that regulate the ethical, relationship building, and knowledge related aspects

of their work. In essence every professional action of correctional practitioners is underpinned by different types of values, and more fundamentally, both their and offenders self-conceptions are laden with normative commitments of one type or another (Ward & Maruna, 2007).

If you accept the above argument then it is apparent that the process of assisting offenders re-entry is an evaluative and capacity building process, and importantly, should be so. The *capacity building* part of correctional interventions should draw from empirical research and robust theoretical frameworks concerning the etiology of offending, what constitutes effective practice, and how best to work with communities to facilitate re-entry and social integration. The *evaluative component* involves a diverse range of norms stipulating such things as what constitutes good relationships, “non distorted” beliefs and attitudes, healthy emotional management, appropriate and normal sexual fantasies and drives, and adaptive problem solving. At a more abstract or personally integrative level, an intervention plan can be viewed as a plan for living that spells out an offender’s goals and the strategies required to both reduce risk and promote a more fulfilling and prosocial life. As we will argue later, such a plan should also help individuals construct self-narratives that reflect their personal priorities and values. Once the value-laden nature of offender rehabilitation is acknowledged, then it becomes apparent that the appropriate level at which to engage offenders is at the level of personal agency and meaning. This reflects a stance that acknowledges the harm they have done, accepts the possibility of redemption and change, and creates a respectful dialogue about how best to balance their personal interests with those of the community. Formulating cases purely in terms of risk factors, psychological and social deficits, psychological mechanisms and so on misses this level and runs the risk of treating offenders as objects rather than subjects of lives. In our view, strength based frameworks such as the Good Lives Model (Ward & Maruna, 2007) are well positioned to incorporate the evaluative and capacity building components of offender rehabilitation.

The Good Lives Model (GLM) is a strength oriented rehabilitation theory responsive to offenders’ particular interests, abilities, and aspirations. Rather than being preoccupied with risk management, it suggests practitioners develop intervention plans (good lives plans), which help offenders acquire the capabilities to achieve personally meaningful goals. In this paper we briefly outline the dominant model of offender rehabilitation, the Risk-Need-Responsivity Model (RNR-Andrews & Bonta, 2010) in order to provide a context for the GLM. We conclude that while the emphasis on risk assessment and management evident in this model is a necessary feature of crime reduction, its implementation often suffers from a negative and somewhat reductionist orientation. By way of contrast we present a strength based rehabilitation perspective, the GLM and discuss its assessment and practice implications. The GLM explicitly states that both well-being enhancement and risk reduction should guide intervention. Furthermore, it asserts that an effective way of reducing the risk of recidivism is by assisting offenders to formulate their personal priorities (primary goods or core values) within a good lives plan that translates these

abstract values into lifestyles that bestow meaning and purpose to offenders while also lowering their potential for reoffending.

## **Theories of Offender Rehabilitation**

A rehabilitation theory constitutes a framework theory or conceptual map that should possess the resources to guide practitioners in all aspects of their work with offenders. It is not a treatment model or an etiological theory (i.e., a specification of the causes of crime), although it does contain some general assumptions concerning etiology and outlines guidelines for intervention in the light of these assumptions and overarching normative principles (Ward & Maruna, 2007). More specifically, a good theory of correctional/forensic rehabilitation will display the following six features: First, a good theory will be comprehensive and cover all aspects of intervention and treatment currently thought to be important, and supported by practice experience and empirical research. Second, the *general* nature of offending behavior and relevant variables will be elaborated, such as the relationship between dynamic risk factors and offending. Such general etiological explanations should take account of the fact that offenders are a heterogeneous group with multiple problems being the norm. Third, a sound rehabilitation theory should specify the broad aims of rehabilitation. For example, the aim of rehabilitation may be social reintegration or simply the prevention of further offending. It would also outline how the rehabilitative aims relate to the causes of offending. Fourth, a good theory would outline the proposed change mechanisms at work in the rehabilitation process. For example, the elimination of criminogenic needs, the development of alternative strategies for achieving rewarding outcomes, or the successful engagement with desistance factors such as an offer of employment. Fifth, a rehabilitation theory ought to specify the attitudinal, motivational and relational aspects of treatment and provide guidance on how to manage the therapeutic alliance and issues relating to the process of practice. It would also integrate the content and process of treatment. Sixth, it should be possible to identify the central ethical and philosophical values embedded in the rehabilitation theory.

Over the past twenty to thirty years, offender rehabilitation models have focused almost exclusively on risk management. During this time the predominant, and most eminent, risk reduction approach has been the Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) model. At its core the RNR has three central normative theses based on extensive empirical research: (1) individuals who are higher *risk* should receive more resources (i.e., interventions, treatment programs) than lower risk individuals; (2) correctional interventions should target *criminogenic needs* (dynamic risk factors) which are causally related to the individuals criminal behavior; and (3) interventions should be tailored and *responsive* to individual offenders' learning style, ability, and motivational factors (Andrews & Bonta, 2010; Andrews, Bonta, & Hoge, 1990).

While the RNR approach has played a crucial role in the development of the field of offender rehabilitation, in our view it is time to consider broadening the scope of our intervention efforts to include a wider range of goals and services (Lösel, 2010). Despite being viewed as the gold standard in offender rehabilitation for quite some time now there are strengths and weaknesses of the RNR approach, which have been discussed at length elsewhere (e.g., see Ward & Maruna, 2007; Ward, Yates, & Willis, 2012). In brief, limitations of RNR type programs are that they are based on negative or avoidance goals (i.e., the aim is to reduce or avoid reoffending, to eliminate personal risk factors etc.), are poorly integrated with desistance factors (variables that promote non offending lifestyles), do not engage individuals at the level of agency and their core values, are insufficiently motivating, and because of their focus on risk factors and technology, underplay the importance of the therapeutic relationship in the change process (Ward & Maruna, 2007). In a recent talk Lösel (2010) stated that it is important to view crime as a public health, education, welfare, and economic issue, as well as a criminal justice issue. He further proposed that effective offender interventions needs to move beyond the ‘technology’ of the program to include factors such as personal and social resources and personal relationships. Such programs would therefore integrate a broader context and range of services than is typically seen in current RNR programs. It is important to note that there are limitations in the way the RNR is implemented in some jurisdictions that have little to do with the model itself. However, the deep assumptions and core values of the RNR are such that it is difficult to incorporate the rights, interests and capabilities of offenders into intervention plans. Relatedly, it is often hard to motivate offenders when the key task is to reduce offending; the chance at a better life is thus viewed as a consequence of this reduction rather than a primary goal as well.

Strengths-based perspectives are increasingly being viewed as viable supplements, or even as alternative approaches, to traditional offender rehabilitation initiatives. Such perspectives are called “strength-based” because they (a) seek to establish capabilities in ways that align with individuals core interests and values, and (b) they attempt to capitalize on offenders’ strengths (e.g., mechanical abilities). Whereas the more traditional risk management approaches tend to concentrate on identifying and changing dynamic risk factors or “criminogenic needs”, strength-based approaches reduce risk of recidivism through developing an individual’s knowledge, abilities/skills, opportunities (i.e., internal and external capabilities) and resources (see below-Laws & Ward, 2011; Ward & Maruna, 2007).

As stated above, during strength-based assessments, assessors seek to discover individuals’ personal aspirations and core values, and their areas of existing skills and strengths. Alongside the common goal of reducing their potential for further offending, the goal of a strength-based approach is to also help them to obtain the necessary psychological and social resources to achieve personally meaningful outcomes.

The Good Lives Model (GLM) is an alternative approach to the RNR that explicitly incorporates the three principles of risk, need, and responsivity. However, it also has the ability to integrate

additional intervention components which are often inadequately incorporated by the RNR model, such as the development of the therapeutic alliance, increased agency (e.g., self-direction), and the motivation to commit to treatment and to a future that includes desistance from criminal behaviour (Ward, 2010). Thus, although the RNR and GLM are not necessarily mutually exclusive models, there is a shift in emphasis shifts from a risk avoidance focus, as in the RNR, to a *dual* concentration on enhancing offender well-being as well as reducing and managing risk of reoffending.

The GLM is an approach that allows for the shift in emphasis flagged as being necessary by Lösel (2010) and can contribute towards the further development of effective rehabilitation approaches. The GLM provides practitioners with a *practice framework* to guide offender case management and treatment. and is increasingly being applied internationally in a range of offender treatment programs (Purvis, Ward & Willis, 2011). Early evidence indicates that GLM is effective in overcoming some of the key limitations of the risk management approach to offender rehabilitation, through such factors as enhancing treatment engagement, promoting desistance, and increasing attention to environmental contexts (Ward, Yates, & Willis, 2012). Preliminary research is providing evidence for the underlying assumptions of the GLM (Barnett & Wood, 2008; Bouman, Schene, & de Ruiter, 2009; Willis & Grace, 2008; Willis & Ward, 2013) and demonstrating that incorporating the GLM principles is associated with positive outcomes in sexual offending interventions (Gannon, King, Miles, Lockerbie, & Willis, 2011; Lindsay, Ward, Morgan, & Wilson, 2007; Ware & Bright, 2008; Whitehead, Ward, & Collie, 2007) and with other populations such as forensic mental health clients (Barnao, Robertson, & Ward, 2011). We will now describe the GLM in more detail

### **The Good Lives Model**

Ward and Stewart first proposed the GLM as a strengths-based approach to offender rehabilitation in 2003, and since then, it has been further developed by Ward and his colleagues (e.g., see Laws & Ward, 2011; Ward & Gannon, 2006; Ward & Marshall, 2004; Ward & Maruna, 2007; Yates, Prescott, & Ward, 2010). As the model is particularly responsive to offenders' interests, abilities, and aspirations it encourages practitioners to develop intervention plans that will assist offenders in obtaining the necessary capabilities and accessing the relevant internal and external resources to achieve personally meaningful goals. While allowing for individuals to achieve goals that are personally meaningful to them, intervention plans concurrently take into consideration issues of public safety and risk reduction (Purvis, Ward & Willis, 2011).

There are a number of underlying assumptions underpinning the GLM. One of the key assumptions is that all individuals have similar basic needs and aspirations for their life. One of the central responsibilities of parents but also the wider community (e.g., teachers) is to assist each individual to obtain the necessary skills and tools to successfully live a 'good life'. The

term ‘good’ in the title refers to prudential or self-regarding goods rather than moral, social, or knowledge related goods. Inherent in the GLM’s emphasis on an individual’s life values is the importance placed on offender agency, and as such, the capacity to critically evaluate goals and their associated values, to form plans that embody these goals (and values) and to engage in activities that are intended to realise these plans. Within the GLM framework, criminal behaviour is understood as resulting from individuals utilizing maladaptive strategies, often due to the lack of appropriate internal and external resources, to obtain what they value in an antisocial manner (Ward & Stewart, 2003). From the GLM perspective, offenders are people like us in that they are actively seeking to achieve their life values through whatever means is available; the difficulty being that their approaches are often counter-productive, ineffective and socially unacceptable.

The GLM perspective advocates for rehabilitative approaches that will ensure offenders are provided with the knowledge, skills, opportunities, and resources necessary for them to achieve their life goals in a manner, which will not cause harm to other people. The GLM also recognizes that offenders may require different levels of *scaffolding* in order to acquire the skills they need to develop and implement a personally meaningful and prosocial life plan (Ward, 2010).

There are three sets of hierarchical concepts contained within the GLM: general assumptions or concepts which relate to rehabilitation aims, etiological assumptions which consider factors contributing to the onset and maintenance of offending, and practical implications arising from the first and second sets of concepts. Each of these three sets of concepts is described more fully below.

### **General Concepts**

As the GLM is grounded in the ethical concept of human dignity (see Ward & Syversen, 2009) and universal human rights it emphasizes the concept of human agency. In the GLM, there is an important distinction made between *primary* and *secondary goods*. In brief, primary goods are outcomes, states of affairs, or experiences that individuals seek for their own sake, and that are likely to result in elevated levels of well-being. While secondary or instrumental goods represent particular means to achieve primary goods; for example, working as mechanic is a way of achieving the primary good of mastery at work. Ward and colleagues initially proposed ten classes of primary goods based on their analysis of psychological, social, biological, and anthropological research (e.g., Ward & Brown, 2004; Ward & Marshall, 2004). However, following research by Purvis (2010), the goods of excellence of work and play have more recently been divided to produce eleven classes of primary goods (e.g., Ward & Gannon, 2006; Ward, Mann & Gannon, 2007). The eleven classes of primary goods therefore are (Ward & Gannon, 2006, p. 79):

- 1) life (including healthy living and functioning)
- 2) knowledge
- 3) excellence in work (including mastery experiences)
- 4) excellence in play including mastery experiences)
- 5) excellence in agency (i.e., autonomy and self-directedness)
- 6) inner peace (i.e., freedom from emotional turmoil and stress)
- 7) friendship (including intimate, romantic, and family relationships)
- 8) community
- 9) spirituality (in the broad sense of finding meaning and purpose in life)
- 10) pleasure
- 11) creativity

An underlying assumption of the GLM is that all individuals, to some extent, strive to obtain these primary goods, and there is a threshold below which the level of goods obtainment should not fall if they are to achieve acceptable levels of well-being. However, due to individual differences in values, abilities, and life experiences there is variability in how individuals prioritize the level of importance of each specific primary good and this becomes important when practitioners are working with offenders. Practitioners need to ensure they identify individual's personal motivations and ascertain how each person prioritizes the 11 primary goods (Ward, 2010). In order to achieve this it is important to explore the *practical identities* an individual has. Korsgaard (1996) describes the concept of practical identity as providing "a description under which you value yourself and find your life worth living and your actions to be worth undertaking" (p.101). Most individuals have multiple practical identities they draw on in different contexts, for example, within family (e.g., the roles of parent and partner/spouse), work (e.g., psychologist or car mechanic), and leisure (e.g., soccer player or chess player). An individual's sense of identity emerges from their basic value commitments and the goods they weight most highly as they strive to achieve their conception of a 'good life'. According to the GLM, individuals' various practical identities all influence their decision-making and subsequent actions.

As mentioned above, the GLM also takes into account instrumental or *secondary goods*. These are the means by which individuals seek to obtain their desired primary goods (Ward, Vess, Collie & Gannon, 2006). For example, an individual completing a mechanics apprenticeship (secondary good) might fulfil the primary goods of knowledge and excellence in work, whereas joining a sports team or cultural group (both secondary goods) might help someone to obtain the primary goods of friendship or relatedness. Participation by individuals in prosocial activities is seen as being incompatible with dynamic risk (criminogenic) factors. When considering individual's degree of criminal activity, the GLM concept of instrumental or secondary goods is a key element as it is assumed that their offending behaviour was a maladaptive or inappropriate attempt to secure their desired primary goods (Ward, 2010). Interventions need to be designed



with this in mind through the detection of the overarching primary goods and establishing means by which these can be achieved without causing further harm to others.

Another key distinction between risk management and strength-based approaches is evident when the types of goals that are produced for each are considered. Avoidance goals are characterized by undesirable states or situations and tend to be associated with negative reinforcement (i.e., avoidance of aversive states such as criticism or punishment is reinforcing). Historically avoidance goals have been associated with risk management approaches. For example, a common avoidance goal for sexual offenders is not sexually reoffending. In contrast strength based perspectives have focused on the development of approach goals, which are associated with positive reinforcement (i.e., their attainment is reinforcing) and are represented by preferred states or situations, such as obtaining a job.

As a strength-based approach, the GLM directly targets approach goals while avoidance goals are indirectly targeted. This means that sexual offenders may hold goals of living positive and prosocial lives with appropriate social and intimate relationships. In the process of attempting to achieve their approach goals they would simultaneously be striving to reach the goal of not reoffending sexually. The benefits of focusing on approach goals are that they provide individuals, and practitioners, with clearer guidelines about how to achieve avoidance goals. Approach goals are specific about what the individual needs to do in order to reduce their chances of being subjected to an undesirable or aversive state such as punishment or social criticism. For example, a child sex offender who establishes a relationship with an adult should be in less danger of feeling lonely and this, in turn, should mean he would be less likely to seek out inappropriate sexual relationships with children.

### **Etiological Aspects of the GLM**

The GLM outlines two primary routes to the onset of offending: one direct and the other indirect (Ward & Gannon, 2006; Ward & Maruna, 2007). The direct pathway refers to individuals' active attempts (often implicitly) to directly obtain primary goods through their criminal behaviour. In these instances the connection between the primary good and criminal behaviour is clear. For example, an individual whose environment offers inadequate social opportunities or who lacks good social skills to attain the good of intimacy with another adult, could instead engage in criminal sexual activity in order to try to obtain this good. The indirect pathway refers to instances when individuals attempt to obtain one or more primary goods in maladaptive ways (particularly if there is conflict between them), which then creates a ripple or cascading effect. The ripples or cascading effects are usually unexpected and contribute to criminal activity occurring. For example, if conflict arises between the pursuit of the goods of intimacy and autonomy this might result in a relationship break-up, which might subsequently contribute to an individual feeling lonely and upset. An individual may then cope with these negative emotions by using maladaptive coping strategies including alcohol consumption which, in specific

circumstances, could lead to a loss of control and the individual subsequently engaging in some criminal behaviour (Ward, 2010).

The RNR concept of criminogenic needs is included within the GLM framework and conceptualized as internal (e.g., psychological- impulsivity) or external (e.g., antisocial associates) obstacles, which can interfere with individuals' capacity to achieve their desired primary goods. For example, impulsivity might obstruct self-regulation or the exercise of agency, while poor emotional regulation might prevent the achievement of inner peace (emotional equilibrium). Each of the primary goods can be linked with one or more criminogenic needs (Ward & Maruna, 2007). Examples of the linkages between primary goods and criminogenic needs include: 1) Agency – impulsivity, 2) Inner peace - emotional dysregulation, 3) Happiness - deviant sexual preferences (pleasure), 4) Knowledge - offence supportive beliefs and attitudes, 5) Excellence in play - deviant sexual preferences, 6) Excellence in work – unemployment, 7) Spirituality - offence supportive beliefs and attitudes, 8) Community - antisocial associates, 9), Relatedness - intimacy deficits, 10), Creativity – possibly unemployment/ offence supportive beliefs and attitudes and 11) Life - drug and alcohol abuse.

There are two ways risk reduction can occur during intervention. First, the establishment of the internal and external capacities needed to achieve a primary good (or more broadly, implement a good lives plan) in socially acceptable and personally fulfilling ways, can *directly* alter criminogenic needs. For example, learning the skills necessary to become a carpenter could make it easier for an offender to develop concentration and emotional regulations skills, thereby reducing impulsivity, a criminogenic need. Second, the reduction of risk can occur *indirectly* when an offender is strongly motivated to work hard in treatment because of his involvement in projects that personally engage him. For example, an individual might work hard at overcoming his substance abuse problems because he is keen to attend a mechanic training course. In actual practice, offender good lives plans both directly and indirectly impact on dynamic risk factors.

According to the GLM there are four main types of difficulties offenders' can experience in their efforts to obtain primary goods. The difficulty rests not with the primary goods the individual is trying to achieve but rather arises from the problematic strategies they utilize to achieve them (Ward, 2010). Via the direct route to offending, a common strategy that causes offenders difficulty is the use of *inappropriate secondary goods* to achieve primary goods. For example, with reference to the example given above, an individual's engagement in sexually abusive behaviours may represent a maladaptive attempt to achieve the primary good of friendship or relatedness. The second difficulty that often exists is a *lack of scope* in an individual's good life plan, whereby important primary goods are excluded. This can result in an imbalance whereby one or more components of their life (e.g., employment, social life) are significantly underdeveloped. Third, when *conflict* emerges in the pursuit of goods, this can contribute to acute psychological stress and/or unhappiness. This can be a particularly important issue when there is a lack of coherence in the ways goods are sought; that is, when the individual seeks

primary goods via strategies that are uncoordinated and therefore create multiple points of interference. A good example of conflict between the ways primary goods are sought is when an individual attempts to maintain good relationships with his (single) friends by partying through the night and by doing so causes significant problems in his marital relationship. Lack of coherence can result in feelings of frustration and/or cause harm to an individual and subsequently result in a life which seems to lack purpose or meaning (Ward & Stewart 2003). Two types of coherence are considered in the GLM framework; that of horizontal and vertical coherence. Horizontal coherence refers to the extent to which primary goods are related to each other in a logical manner; high horizontal coherence would be associated with low levels of conflict existing between the primary goods being sought. Vertical coherence refers to the extent to which primary goods are translated into specific ways of living that make it likely a person will achieve them; thus the coherence refers to the realization of an abstract primary good into a series of actions that reflects it. A good example of vertical coherence is when the primary good of excellence in work is translated into a specific occupation that reflects an individual's level of ability and vocational interests. Finally, individuals may lack the *internal* (e.g., skills or knowledge) and *external* (e.g., supports, resources, employment opportunities) *capacities* to implement or adapt their life plan and may, therefore, fail to achieve their desired primary goods in a prosocial manner, within their current environment.

## **Intervention**

Within a GLM framework, the aim of intervention is to encourage the successful implementation of a good lives plan (centred around certain primary goods) in order to enhance an individual's psychological wellbeing and reduce their chances of further offending (Ward & Brown, 2004). To achieve this, the GLM supports the development of skills, knowledge and resources for capacity building. When applying the GLM, the process begins with an assessment, which maps out offenders' good lives conceptualizations by identifying the values they placed on various primary goods. There are two approaches used in achieving this: the first involves asking increasingly detailed questions about offenders' core commitments in life and what they value most in their daily activities and experiences, while the second involves identifying the underlying goals and values apparent in individuals criminal behaviour.

Ward (2010) provides a summary of the five phases of GLM guided assessment and intervention (e.g., see Laws & Ward, 2011; Ward, Mann & Gannon, 2007; Ward & Maruna, 2007 for a more detailed description). *Phase one* of interventions with offenders using the GLM framework involves identifying the social, psychological and material aspects of their offending including their level of risk (Including stable and acute dynamic risk factors- criminogenic needs) and their social, physical and psychological resources (e.g., substance use, housing, and financial situation, personality patterns such as impulsivity) at the time of their offending and in the past. The

*second phase* identifies the positive function of offending through exploration of the primary goods directly and indirectly associated with the criminal activity. The third phase involves identifying core practical identities and their associated primary goods or values to assist with the development of a life plan. For example, a person may take pride in being able to successfully plan robberies. This activity clearly involves the primary good of knowledge, and its embodiment in his lifestyle may result in the adoption of a practical identity as an “expert” offender. Once an offender’s conceptualization of what constitutes a good life is understood, future-oriented secondary goods can be identified collaboratively which will assist individuals in achieving their desired primary goods in socially acceptable ways. In the above example, other ways of tapping into the offender’s self conception as a planner and thinker will be explored. *Phase four* involves fleshing out the details from the previous phase including secondary goods that will help with translating primary goods/values into a way of functioning and living their good life. This information is used to subsequently develop a good lives plan (GLP). A useful GLP should describe in a graduated, stepwise fashion the various phases and transitions required for the offender to acquire the psychological and social capabilities necessary to obtain the primary good(s) in question. The devil is in the detail and a practically useful GLP should include information about specific training options, support groups, skill groups and so on that are needed for the offender to successfully translate a new, abstract identity, into a flesh and blood person. For example, returning to the above example, the offender could enter a program for people who have not graduated from high school to prepare for study at a university level. The choice of subjects to be studied and the qualification undertaken should directly line up with his preferences, abilities, and broader interests. As part of understanding offenders’ behaviour it is important to also take into account the context within which the behaviour occurred and the environment within which the individual is likely to function in the future including considering the social, psychological and material resources that will be available to assist them in attaining their primary goal/s (Ward, 2010). The *fifth* and final stage involves developing a detailed, concrete GLP that is comprehensive (i.e., covers the major primary goods and the various domains of a person’s current and anticipated environments). It should also incorporate the internal and external conditions required to accomplish a plan and which revolves around the offender’s core goals/values and practical identities. Practical steps are then identified to put the plan into action including the required resources/supports to achieve it. The plan is driven by the values, goals and identities of the offender. The practitioner should assist with the form of the plan while balancing other relevant and pressing considerations such as the ethical entitlements of victims and the safety of the wider community.

As stated above, within the GLM framework, interventions are ‘wrapped around’ an offender’s core values and identities (e.g., that of employee, partner, father) to assist them in attaining primary goods, in socially acceptable ways, while simultaneously address criminogenic needs/risk factors. The GLM, therefore, addresses criminogenic needs/dynamic risk factors directly and indirectly (see above) through the application of cognitive behavioural techniques and social interventions, which are used to assist the offender in acquiring the necessary

competencies to achieve their plan. Interventions may involve a range of strategies intended to improve individuals' skills and knowledge (e.g., problem solving skills, social skills, stress management, learning to challenge dysfunctional thoughts etc.), and maximizing their social supports and external resources. The focus therefore is on increasing agency, individual psychological well-being and maximizing opportunities which will assist offenders in living a more prosocial life (Ward & Gannon, 2006).

The GLM can be incorporated into existing offender treatment and intervention programs. Ward, Mann and Gannon (2007) outlined a group-based application of the GLM based on seven modules typically incorporated into current best-practice sexual offender treatment programmes based on CBT principles: establishing therapy norms, understanding offending and cognitive restructuring, dealing with deviant arousal, victim impact and empathy training, affect regulation, social skills training, and relapse prevention. For example, consistent with the GLM notion that dynamic risk factors can be viewed as maladaptive mechanisms for acquiring primary goods, the link between various modules and the associated primary goods were highlighted. The overarching good of knowledge can be gained through assisting offenders to understand how their thoughts, feelings, and actions contribute to their offending as part of the understanding offending and cognitive restructuring module. The overarching goods of friendship, community, and agency can be addressed as part of the social skills training module where the individual offenders' good lives plan informs the nature of the interventions provided. For some offenders, who place high value on intimate relationships, intensive therapeutic work is likely to focus on intimacy and relationships, while for those who value other primary goods such as excellence in play and work over the good of friendship, basic social skills training will likely suffice.

### **Case Vignette**

We would like to end the paper by briefly describing the application of a GLM derived intervention plan to the case of a high-risk sex offender. This is a composite case based on several offenders the authors have worked with rather than that of a single individual.

Dave is a 32-year-old man serving a 7-year prison sentence for sexually violating his 12-year-old stepdaughter. He is of Maori descent (indigenous New Zealanders) and has become increasingly interested in his cultural heritage and family ties. On assessment Dave was evaluated as moderate-high risk for further sexual offending and displayed a number of stable dynamic risk factors: deviant sexual preferences, poor emotional self-regulation (he often had difficulty managing his anger and experienced frequent episodes of extreme irritability), impaired general self-regulation (he had trouble planning ahead and organizing his life), substance abuse (he used alcohol to cope with his feelings of despair and anger), and offence supportive beliefs and attitudes (e.g., believed he was entitled to have sex with his stepdaughter

because he was “head of the family”). Dave revealed in his assessment that he was talented at carpentry and recently had developed an interest in training as a carpenter.

Alongside this interest in carpentry Dave wanted to learn more about his family history and Maori culture.

Dave’s intervention team identified *creativity* and *community* as his overarching primary goods and designed an intervention program centred on these core values. The treatment unit Dave attended was based within a prison that had excellent facilities for teaching carpentry (good of creativity) and Maori cultural practices (good of community). Dave good lives intervention plan was constructed with these primary goods in mind, along with the list of his dynamic risk factors. The intention was to help Dave undergo some of his training as a carpenter and to seek further training and work in this domain when he was released from prison in about 2 years time. Dave was given access to expert tuition in working with wood and undertook classes in Maori cultural knowledge and practices alongside his sex offender therapy modules. Dave’s core practical identity, based on the overarching goods of creativity and community belonging, was that of a skilled tradesman working within a Maori cultural tradition. In order to have increasing access to potentially dangerous tools and advanced training Dave needed to demonstrate improvements in his ability to control his anger and alcohol abuse. Furthermore, the various carpentry-training tasks helped him to improve his concentration and planning skills, strengthen his general self-regulations skills, and reduced his impulsivity. He was also more motivated to work on these problems when attending therapy sessions because he could see their relevance for his carpentry training. Furthermore, exposure to Maori knowledge and prosocial male role models assisted Dave to gradually change his self-centred and sexist attitudes and helped him to appreciate his obligations to others. The gradual improvement in his carpentry skills and deepening cultural knowledge in turn motivated him to become more emotionally competent, and socially more accomplished. In this example, the positive, strength based nature of Dave’s good lives plan made it easier to engage him in the difficult tasks of reflecting on his past abusive actions and his various dynamic risk factors. Importantly, the risk factors were partially reduced by seeking to increase the skills required for Dave to become a competent carver: that is, his level of risk was lowered by establishing competencies and skills that (approach goals) he really wanted to acquire. In addition, as stated above, there was also an indirect influence at work because Dave’s s strong commitment to his training motivated him to work harder on aspects of his therapy he previously tended to avoid or disengage from.

## **Conclusions**

In this paper we have provided an overview of a strength-based model of offender rehabilitation, the Good Lives Model, which focuses intervention on offenders’ personal interests and normative commitments. From the perspective of the GLM, correctional programs should aim to increase individuals’ awareness of their core values and to assist them to translate this awareness into concrete intervention plans. If this is done with one eye on offenders risk profiles it is possible to reduce risk by building the competencies needed to achieve personally more fulfilling lives. Moreover, the process of learning to reflect on core commitments and their relationship to

more fulfilling and meaningful lives serves to increase individuals self management skills, or capacity for agency. In turn, when inevitable problems recur in offenders' lives, they should find it easier to take a step back and ask (a) what are the threats to my GLP? (b) what adjustments are required to effectively overcome the current problems? and (c) what resources do I need and where can I find them?

On a final note, turning around a life involving crime is no easy task and requires the provision of relevant and adequate levels of social and psychological resources from the community as well as a determination to change from offenders. It seems pretty obvious to us that it is easier to persuade individuals to seek less harmful lives if they have a reasonable chance at achieving more fulfilling ones.

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