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The CBT Program "Thinking for a Change"and its Impact on Offenders

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Abstract

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Forensic Psychology MS, Walden University, 2014

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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

General Studies –Criminal Justice with a specialization in Law and Public Policy

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Abstract

One of the major problems that the United States criminal justice system faces regarding corrections is an exceedingly high rate of recidivism. The state of Ohio has been highly proactive in trying to address this issue with its Thinking for a Change program. This dissertation seeks to analyze the effectiveness of this program in terms of reducing recidivism. The central research question that this dissertation asks is how effective the program has been in helping offenders to become more aware of their thoughts, and in reducing their outward criminal behaviors. The study utilized a qualitative narrative design. The method of analysis was that of a largely phenomenological-narrative analysis approach to extrapolate key conclusions related to the Thinking for a Change program in the lives of the participants following their respective periods of incarceration. The theoretical construct used to underpin this study is the Self-Efficacy Theory by Bandura, which is a direct extension of his earlier Social Learning Theory. The data collection process was conducted through personal interviews with thirty former offenders from a Midwest community based correctional facility. The findings were that offenders can be taught to address their personal issues and outward actions with the use of such behavioral modification programs. The implications for positive social change are that offenders have a means by which they can rebuild their lives, and the larger community is protected from further criminal activity.

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Dedication

The greatest woman that I have known throughout my life and the woman who has taught me so much, my grandmother, Sue Baker. I cannot begin to say thank you enough for all your guidance and wisdom that you placed upon me in my life. This dedication is too you because of what you instilled within me. I love you with all my heart and I miss you dearly. Rest in Peace Grandma!!

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I would like to thank my family as they have truly been by my side during this entire academic process and this dissertation research project. Their patience has been truly appreciated. In addition, I always wanted to please my family and I was not going to let you guys down. Furthermore, Michelle, thank you so much for everything, I cannot express how much I love you and how much you have influence me throughout our relationship. I appreciate you more than you will ever know.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Alignment

According to the U.S. Bureau of Justice, recidivism occurs at a rate of more than 76 percent for state prisoners, and approximately 45 percent for inmates released from federal prisons, which has caused a chronic overcrowding problem (USBJ, 2016). This impacts the ability of prisons to offer meaningful and effective rehabilitation programs, limiting prisoner access to existing programs designed to help prisoners prepare for the transition to society (Simon, 2015). Overcrowding undermines the effectiveness and provision of rehabilitation programs in North America and throughout the world, which contributes to high rates of recidivism (PRI, 2017). Lorain/Medina CBCF in Ohio, like the prison system in Ohio as a whole, has responded to this problem with an initiative rooted in cognitive behavioral therapy. The program, Thinking for a Change, was the case utilized in this research.

How effective was Lorain/Medina CBCF 's Thinking for a Change program in reducing recidivism? It was a self-perpetuating dilemma: The lack of male presence and guidance in the home was a strong causal factor for heightened rates of incarceration and recidivism (Akkeson et al., 2012; Londt, Kock, & John-Langba, 2017). This thesis drew on Bandura's self-efficacy theory and the ability of individuals to overcome obstacles (1994). The methodology involved questioning former participants from Lorain/Medina CBCF in Thinking for a Change. Recidivism confronts society with a self-regenerating cycle of violence, crime and death. Giving prisoners an effective means of preparing for release was an important factor in their successful social reintegration (James, 2015).

Background

      The problem of recidivism and prison overcrowding represent significant problems for the criminal justice system and prisons throughout the U.S. (Coughlin et al., 2005). A literature review has shown that a positive correlation exists between programs designed to help prisoners prepare for reentering society and a reduction in recidivism (Coughlin et al., 2005). A 2005 article in the *Journal of Experimental Criminology* provided an analysis of Ohio's CBT-based program, Thinking for a Change, including an explanation of why Thinking for a Change has proven successful in reducing criminal behavior (Coughlin et al., 2005). Additionally, a 2013 article published by the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction described how the teaching of problem-solving skills and rational thinking through Thinking for a Change produced positive social interactions among prisoners. This initiative and other behavioral modification approaches have shown that training prisoners to become more aware of their thoughts and negative impulses helps reduce recidivism.

      Yet while there was ample literature supporting the assertion that in-prison therapy programs help prisoners avoid reoffending after release from prison, there was relatively scant comparative evidence to support the assertion that Thinking for a Change was more effective than other CBT-based approaches. The available literature also shows a preference for research findings that affirm the results of proven effective programs, and for dismissing or overlooking "null" or ambiguous findings (Feucht & Holt, 2016). This study attempted to expand on the Self-Efficacy Theory by describing how people have the ability to overcome obstacles in life if they have a foundation that could help them build confidence, emphasize positive behaviors, and provides them with a skill set that boosts self-esteem and reinforces positive behaviors. Offenders who were lacking in self-efficacy often do not have the confidence to complete

programs, a factor which was also indicated by the high percentage of offenders who do not have a high school diploma (Hall & Killacky, 2008). They frequently display negative and self-destructive social behaviors and exhibit poor self-motivation.

For the Kentucky Department of Corrections, changing from a highly punitive system to one focused on behavioral change proved a radical change, but a highly effective one. Kentucky initiated a Thinking for a Change program in its prison systems beginning in the 2000s, a substantial change that almost immediately yielded positive results. From 2006 to 2008, the state experienced a 5 percent drop in recidivism (Chamberlain, 2011). The success of Thinking for a Change led to other innovations that helped former prisoners make a successful transition to society. In Northern Kentucky, a new program that provided essential needs and assistance with housing established a continuum for prisoners who had experienced success with Thinking for a Change. These kinds of success encouraged prisoners to translate positive behavior into new ways of developing personally, and of helping others. Thus, the literature revealed not only benefits of behavioral therapy that go beyond recidivism, but also ways of extending the positive aspects of Thinking for a Change into new ways of helping former prisoners. A comparative view of Lambert et al.'s (2007) article and the Kentucky case study revealed the potential of Thinking for a Change on multiple levels.

Problem Statement Overview

This study was concerned with the economic and social costs of recidivism, a problem with serious consequences for society and implications concerning the viability of the United States' prison system. Prisoners who reoffend upon being released create residual problems that affect their families and the criminal justice system as a whole. The larger problem this study addressed concerns children growing up without fathers, and the likelihood that this factor will

contribute to their becoming criminal offenders without the influence of fathers who have been rehabilitated through in-prison programs like Thinking for a Change.

Purpose Overview

The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of the Thinking for a Change program in reducing recidivism rates among former prisoners. A comparative study of psychodynamic therapy, which focused on past psychological traumas, versus cognitive behavioral therapies such as Thinking for a Change, may provide new insights into whether offenders benefit more from dealing with current stimuli and existing problems. The documented successes of offenders who have undergone cognitive behavioral therapy proved its effectiveness in reducing recidivism rates. However, there were opportunities to compare these successes/success rates to a deeper psychological examination of the prisoner's thought processes, emotional traumas and personal motivations. It presented an opportunity to support or call into question the position that "the correlates of criminal behavior were based on present situations and (pose) a current risk," and that "approaches that were focused on the here and now have greater implications to reduce delinquent behavior" (Latessa et al., 2009, p. 14-7).

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this dissertation was based on Albert Bandura's (2000) self-efficacy theory, an extension of social learning theory. This study expanded on the self-efficacy theory by describing how prisoners have the capacity to overcome obstacles in life if given a foundation that could help them build confidence, emphasize positive behaviors, and learn skill sets that boost self-esteem and reinforces self-affirming behaviors. Offenders who lack self-efficacy often do not have the confidence to complete programs of any kind, which was indicated by the high percentage of offenders who do not have a high school diploma (Hall &

Killacky, 2008). They frequently display negative and self-destructive social behaviors and exhibit poor self-motivation.

One important aspect of social learning theory was that individuals learn from the community around them. This was especially meaningful for prisoners, whose behaviors were heavily influenced by environmental factors. Social learning theory contends that young people learn to take part in crime the same ways that they learn to conform to evident behavioral norms, which takes place through exposure to other individuals (JRank.org, 2017). "Other than one's own prior deviant behavior, the best single predictor of the onset and the continuance or desistance of criminal and delinquent activity was differential association with conforming or law-violating peers" (Akers, 2010, p. 112). Personal reinforcements and punishments also teach juveniles to "conform" by normalizing criminal behavior. Social learning theory relates to the study and research questions by providing an explanation for the cognitive acquisition of criminal behavior and the tendency to continue exhibiting such behavior (i.e. recidivism). Like their native environments (i.e. neighborhoods/communities), criminal behavior was also reinforced in prison, particularly in a punitive environment.

Nature of the Study

A narrative qualitative study of the effectiveness of Lorain/Medina CBCF's Thinking for a Change program, educational opportunities, and an account of resources offered by community partners provided a detailed picture of what was and what was not effective in helping prisoners transition into society.

The methodology for this thesis was based on a 2006 study of more than 200 probationers, an analysis which showed a significant reduction in recidivism over a period of 26 months (Lowenkamp et al., 2006). A qualitative analysis of recidivism rates for the subjects of

this study covered a span of two years, from the time of release of each prisoner who was involved in Thinking for a Change.

Assumptions

This study proceeded on the assumption that recidivism was caused by negative personal associations, lack of access to rehabilitative programs in prison and the ability of cognitive behaviorally based programs like Thinking for a Change to mitigate recidivism rates. This assumption was made in order to extrapolate the relevance of factors that impact the causes of criminal behavior, and personal capabilities that enable its modification.

Scope

This study focused on the effectiveness of Lorain/Medina CBCF's Thinking for a Change cognitive behavioral therapy program as a means of reducing recidivism rates among offenders. It took place in Ohio and focused on the effects of Thinking for a Change in former offenders from the Lorain/Medina CBCF. It was restricted to those who took part in the program.

Delimitations

The scope of this study required that certain potential factors be left out. It was presumed that at some point in the future, such a study will incorporate feedback from friends and family members of offenders who have participated in Thinking for a Change. Additionally, the perspectives of parole officers and social workers were not captured in this study, despite their involvement with former offenders.

Limitations

As previously discussed, qualitative data for this study was collected via correspondence and person-to-person interviews with former Lorain/Medina CBCF prisoners who took part in

the Thinking for a Change program. The efficacy and credibility of this thesis depended on the ability to reach these individuals and on their willingness to participate and talk candidly about their experiences. Additionally, it was acknowledged that the individuals interviewed constituted a representative though limited field of inquiry, which could potentially cast doubt on the validity of any conclusions that were reached. It was anticipated that future studies might include data gathered from additional sources, which could help build a more well-rounded picture.

Significance of the Study

This study closed a gap in the current literature and enhanced the field of study in corrections by determining the significance, or lack thereof, of CBT programs. It will helped shed light on the effectiveness of Thinking for a Change in altering negative behavior associated with recidivism after release from Lorain/Medina CBCF.

Why this Study was needed

This study was needed to shed new light on how to reduce recidivism rates, alleviate problems from prison crowding and mitigate other problems with the prison system. It was the contention of this study that cognitive behavioral programs offer a means for achieving those goals.

Problem Statement in Detail

Significant research pointed to the usefulness of approaches that boost ex-offenders' perceived self-efficacy in reducing recidivism rates (Casey, Day, Vess & Ward, 2012). Major rehabilitation paradigms such as Relapse Prevention (RP), the Good Lives Program (GLP), and the Transtheoretical Model (TTM) of behavior change all rely on self-efficacy as a central concept (Casey, Day & Howells, 2005; Miner, Marques, Day & Nelson, 1990; Ward, Laws. & Hudson, 2002; Ward, Mann & Gannon, 2007; Wilcox, Donathy, Gray & Baim, 2017). Indeed, in

their review of TTM research as applied to offender populations, Casey et al. (2012) concluded that self-efficacy was "a fundamental requirement" (p. 56) for effective offender change. Yet, the mechanisms by which self-efficacy operates in the lives of ex-offenders after a self-efficacy-based CBT intervention were insufficiently understood and remained largely a matter of theory. By eliciting narratives of how participants in the Thinking for a Change program have realized new patterns of reasoning and decision-making, as well as the times and contexts in which the program has failed to have an impact, this study offered fresh insight and promoted a more critically nuanced appraisal of self-efficacy based interventions.

The Problem Statement

Recidivism was one of the most persistent problems faced by America's overcrowded prison system. According to the U.S. Bureau of Justice, recidivism occurred at a rate of more than 76 percent for state prisoners, and approximately 45 percent for inmates released from federal prisons (USBJ, 2016). Overcrowding impacted the ability of prisons to offer meaningful and effective rehabilitation programs, and limited prisoner access to existing programs designed to help prisoners prepare for the transition to society. Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), which sought to help prisoners reintegrate through behavior modification, has proven to be a partial solution to recidivism in the Ohio prison system and was the subject of this dissertation.

It was a self-perpetuating dilemma: The lack of male presence and guidance in the home was a strong causal factor for heightened rates of incarceration and recidivism (Eastin, 2003). In fact, more than 1 million children come from families with an incarcerated parent (USBJ, 2016). These children were eight times more likely to enter the juvenile justice system if one parent was incarcerated than were children whose parent, or parents, were not incarcerated (USBJ, 2016). Recidivism confronts society with a self-regenerating cycle of violence, crime and death. Giving

prisoners an effective means of preparing for release was an important factor in their successful social reintegration.

The Larger Problem This Research Addresses

A literature review has shown that a positive correlation exists between programs designed to help prisoners prepare for reentering society and a reduction in recidivism. A 2005 article in the Journal of Experimental Criminology provided an analysis of Ohio's CBT-based program, "Thinking for a Change," including an explanation of why Thinking for a Change has proven successful in reducing criminal behavior. Additionally, a 2013 article published by the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction described how the teaching of problem-solving skills and rational thinking through Thinking for a Change produced positive social interactions among prisoners. This initiative and other behavioral modification approaches have shown that training prisoners to become more aware of their thoughts and negative impulses helps reduce recidivism.

Why this Problem Needs Addressed

While there was ample literature supporting the assertion that in-prison therapy programs helped prisoners avoid reoffending after release from prison, there was relatively scant comparative evidence to support the assertion that Thinking for a Change was more effective than other CBT-based approaches. The available literature also showed a preference for research findings that affirmed the results of proven effective programs, and for dismissing or overlooking "null" or ambiguous findings (Feucht & Holt, 2016).

How the Research focused on the Gap in the Research-based Literature

Therapists/counselors and the prisoners' social/environmental factors represented two variables that pertained to this problem area. The ability of the therapist counselor to

communicate effectively with the prisoner and the likelihood that social factors may contribute to recidivism operated similarly in preventing the former prisoner from returning to previous destructive habits.

Consequently, there was a paucity of "no effects" studies which, though not contributing to the case for CBT in preventing recidivism, nevertheless help paint a larger picture that could be used to adapt and improve existing programs (Feucht & Holt, 2016). Furthermore, there appears to have been a wider range of available literature on the effectiveness of CBT among juvenile offenders than was the case with adult offenders. This study sought to close the gap in the literature by studying inmates who have completed Ohio's CBT program at the Lorain/Medina CBCF, measured their successes or failures, and produced a more robust picture of the relationship between Thinking for a Change and recidivism rates.

There was also a tendency in the literature to categorize CBT programs as effective only when they show a high level of reduction in recidivism, as in the case of Whitehead and Lab's study (1989). Another problem with some of the available literature was an orientation toward CBT programs that targeted what were classified as "high-risk" or serious offenders, and for whom there tends to be a greater chance for improvement in terms of recidivism than with low-risk offenders.

Purpose in Detail

This study addressed the connection between recidivism rates and the effectiveness of Ohio's Thinking for a Change program. The purpose of this study was to use qualitative research to develop a better understanding of the known and potential benefits of cognitive behavioral therapy. The focus of this particular study was Ohio's Thinking for a Change program at

Lorain/Medina CBCF, which was an in-prison therapeutic initiative that had proven effective at reducing offender recidivism and reducing associated problems with Ohio's prison system.

The Wider Research Problem

Hope for Discovery from Conducting the Research

This study aimed to discover new ways of implementing cognitive behavioral therapy within prisons as a way to help prisoners cope with thoughts that might lead to destructive behaviors.

Direct and Logical Link of Purpose and Problem

The direct logical link to this study's purpose was manifest in the difference in recidivism rates between offenders who participate in cognitive behavioral therapy in prison, and those who do not. Studies have shown that prisoners who do not take part in such counseling, or who were involved in offender-led programs, recidivate at a higher rate than those who get involved in a program such as Thinking for a Change. The fact that prisoner recidivism occurred in Ohio at a nearly 40 percent rate stated the case, and provided logical support, for the purpose of this study (Pew Center, 2011).

Direct and Logical Link to the Research Questions

Research Questions

There were three primary research questions. The research questions were answered by focusing on a narrative qualitative approach. This study sought to answer research questions aimed at revealing the reason for gaps in the body of relevant literature concerning the long-term effectiveness of cognitive behavioral therapy-based programs.

The Research Questions

The three research questions investigated inmate experiences with Thinking for a Change, how Thinking for a Change helped prisoners avoid recidivism, and how it helped prisoners transition back into society. The questions were:

1). How did inmates' experiences with Thinking for a Change expand our understanding of cognitive behavioral therapy in a correctional setting?

2). To what extent was Thinking for a Change effective in helping prisoners avoid recidivism, and what does it tell us about the efficacy of cognitive behavioral-based therapeutic approaches?

3). In what ways did Thinking for a Change help prisoners transition to society, and what did this particular approach reveal about how former prisoners avoid becoming recidivists?

How Each Question was Answered

Research questions were answered by focusing on a narrative qualitative approach. This study sought to answer research questions aimed at revealing the reason for gaps in the body of relevant literature concerning the long-term effectiveness of cognitive behavioral therapy-based programs. A qualitative rather than quantitative approach was pursued because it was not possible to demonstrate, in quantitative terms, the impact that the CBT program had on offenders' cognitive processes. The narrative, qualitative approach allowed the researcher to elucidate rich examples of change in cognitive process and behaviors, as reported by respondents, and to evaluate the fit between such cognitive and behavioral shifts and outcomes (i.e., recidivism or lack of recidivism).

Theoretical Framework

Theorist/Theory Influences for this Study

The theoretical framework for this dissertation was based on Albert Bandura's (2000) self-efficacy theory, which was an extension of social learning theory. This study expanded on the self-efficacy theory by describing how prisoners have the capacity to overcome obstacles in life if given a foundation that could help them build confidence, emphasize positive behaviors, and learn skill sets that boost self-esteem and reinforces self-affirming behaviors. Self-efficacy was an important aspect of this study because it involved the ability of study subjects to use what they learn in CBT in their lives after release from prisons. In other words, how effectively did study subjects apply the lessons learned from Thinking for a Change and did their self-efficacy prevent recidivism.

Theories Prompting Research Questions

Ohio's Thinking for a Change program consisted of 22 individual lessons designed to impart important skills that aided the individual in behavior modification. These included social skills, listening skills, and learning to ask purposeful questions, as well as more complex techniques aimed at redirecting modes of thinking (Lowenkamp et al., 2009). A detailed study of Thinking for a Change provided new insights into how listening, individual interaction, and interrogative skills individually support a cognitive behavioral approach. For example, certain individuals benefitted more from developing good listening skills than from learning to ask good questions. Additionally, there were opportunities to learn more about the program from prisoners who developed coping skills through Thinking for a Change several years after their release from prison.

How the Theory Relates to the Study and Research Questions

Bandura's (2004) theory of self-efficacy related to Thinking for a Change and cognitive behavioral therapy in general in its assertion that individuals have the ability to determine their own fate by controlling their thoughts and impulses. As such, this theory closely parallels the rationale behind the Thinking for a Change program.

Nature of the Study

The Key Concept Being Investigated

A qualitative approach was selected for this study because rich, detailed evidence was essential in determining whether Thinking for a Change was effective in reducing recidivism rates. Each subject's responses were compared and analyzed, and conclusions extrapolated. The nature of this study involved real individual behavioral and socio-economic problems and the impact of cognitive behavioral therapy and behavior modification to help released offenders make good decisions at work, act responsibly when it comes to money, avoid temptations, and adjust to the problems and frustrations that come with day-to-day living.

This problem needed to be addressed because there was need for an in-depth, substantive study of cognitive behavioral therapy programs and their effectiveness in causing offenders to resist patterns of thinking that lead to criminal behaviors. Statistics indicated that former offenders benefit from Thinking for a Change and other cognitive behavioral therapies were readily available. Yet a review of the relevant literature showed that there was a relative lack of studies offering a detailed view of why, specifically, such tactics seemed to work. This study, then, was important for "fine-tuning" cognitive behavioral approaches so that they benefitted offenders of all genders and from all ethnic and socio-cultural backgrounds.

The literature did not provide a clear picture of interventional programs that did not have a clear record of success. Nor was there a substantial body of literature dealing with programs that showed ambiguous results, which would have been helpful in drawing comparisons with programs with unambiguous rates of success (Feucht & Holt, 2016). Furthermore, there was not a significant body of evidence addressing the success of cognitive behavioral therapy programs in preventing recidivism among low-risk offenders. The consequent lack of clarity and ambiguity concerning which offenders could benefit the most from behavioral therapy made it difficult to determine whether the skills taught in Thinking for a Change were as helpful to low-risk offenders as they were to high-risk prisoners. The research problem that underlined this study sought a more substantive understanding of how Thinking for a Change benefitted offenders by examining how specifically it helped offenders avoid recidivating after release.

What Guides the Research Design

A narrative qualitative design was selected because candid and detailed responses from study subjects were vital to understanding how Thinking for a Change did or did not affect their lives. This research study was guided by a need to qualify the effectiveness of cognitive behavioral therapy among former offenders. This required a means of acquiring substantive information from individuals who have been through the Thinking for a Change program. Thus, former participants need to be questioned about their experiences in prison and how the program altered their behavior, or not, and how effective it was in helping them modify their thought patterns and impulses.

Value of the Ideas or Theories

The ideas considered in this study were valuable because a substantive understanding of how Thinking for a Change, and CBT in general, impacts offender recidivism rates has important

social implications. This study also aimed to fill a knowledge gap concerning how the effectiveness of Ohio's Thinking for a Change program compared to other modes of cognitive behavioral therapy. While it was contended that many variations of behavior modification therapy have proven successful, it was unclear precisely how Thinking for a Change compared to other programs in helping prisoners learn new cognitive strategies for avoiding negative thoughts and avoiding a return to the justice system (Lambert et al., 2007). While it was clear that CBT was effective at reducing recidivism, it was an aim of this study to determine which aspects of Thinking for a Change were more (or less) effective than methods employed in other programs. Additionally, there was a lack of knowledge concerning the effectiveness of an early application of CBT in a prisoner's length of incarceration compared to when it was introduced later in a prisoner's sentence.

Self-efficacy has come to be understood by researchers on recidivism as "a fundamental requirement" for effective offender change (Casey et al., 2012, p. 56). By the 1990s, self-efficacy theory helped lay the foundation for the Relapse Prevention (RP) approach that showed early promise in treating certain highly recidivist populations, such as sex offenders, and became a focus of rehabilitation programs (Miner et al., 1990; Ward et al., 2002, p. 318). Self-efficacy was likewise central to the Good Lives Program (GLP) approach that has come to supplant the focus on RP among many theorists and researchers of recidivism reduction (Ward et al., 2007; Wilcox et al., 2017, p. 121), and it was one of four variables central to the influential Transtheoretical Model (TTM) of behavior change (Casey et al., 2005). Indeed, in their review of TTM research as applied to offender populations, Casey et al. (2005) concluded that self-efficacy was "perhaps the important variable in terms of the assessment of intermediate outcomes and predicting future success" in modifying behavior and decision-making (p. 160). Intriguingly, self-efficacy has also

been demonstrated to play a role in recidivism rates in a very different way: by *promoting* repeat offenses, where offenders experience a sense of self-efficacy as part of a "successful criminal" identity (Brezina & Topalli, 2012). This suggested that enabling offenders to experience positive self-efficacy through non-deviant activities and types of 'expertise' may be essential to stemming recidivism among certain types of offenders who view themselves as 'capable criminals.'

In short, the evidence suggested that self-efficacy played a central and multivalent role in an offender's road to either rehabilitation or recidivism. Equally important, it has come to be accepted as a critical variable—perhaps *the* critical variable—in multiple approaches to rehabilitation, over the past several decades. Given the centrality of self-efficacy as a concept in the recidivism research, it was important to gain better purchase on its role and functioning in specific rehabilitation programs and in the real lives of ex-offenders, as they set about making decisions that lead them either toward or away from reincarceration. Performing this type of detailed research on a specific program should serve both to sharpen our understanding of the tools and concepts central to rehabilitation efforts, while broadening the empirical base on which theories of rehabilitation continue to develop.

Rationale for the Selection Design

Given the centrality of self-efficacy studies to rehabilitation theories and approaches, this study rooted itself within that tradition, seeking to better understand the discrete role played by self-efficacy in behavioral interventions and behavior change among ex-offenders. Despite its centrality to the rehabilitation literature, the relationship between self-efficacy and rehabilitation remained incompletely understood. Therefore, several features became paramount in the study design. First, it was important to locate a specific program focused on attempts to boost participant self-efficacy, within a broader CBT approach. Second, a qualitative methodology was

chosen in order to allow rich insight into way that program participants experienced its effects and the ways they have implemented its self-efficacy training in their own decision making—or, conversely, how they failed to do so. Through a quantitative research design, it would be possible only to say whether or not the program correlated with enhanced self-efficacy in participants' self-reports, and whether or not enhanced experience of self-efficacy correlated with reduced rates of recidivism. It would not, however, be possible to identify the mechanisms by which the program's interventions were manifested in participants' experience and decision-making; the way participants experienced the limits to program efficacy; the conditions under which they chose to value alternate (deviant or criminal) forms of self-efficacy, or the moments when they found their best attempts at incorporating program lessons thwarted by objectively insurmountable barriers. The narrative-based, qualitative design of this study allowed insights such as this to emerge. Finally, it was key to the study design to focus on a program that had already been subjected to significant research, as was the case with Thinking for a Change (Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, 2013; Coughlin et al., 2005).This allowed for a more critically nuanced and empirically robust understanding of a single program's efficacy and functioning and facilitate further theorization on the role of self-efficacy in CBT interventions meant to reduce recidivism.

From Whom and How the Data was Collected and Analyzed

Data was collected through interviews with former offenders from the Lorain/Medina CBCF. Narrative analysis was used to extrapolate key conclusions concerning the effectiveness of Thinking for a Change in their lives after prison.

Operational Definitions

Key operational terms used in this study included recidivism, self-efficacy, and cognitive behavioral therapy.

Key terms Used in the Study

Cognitive behavioral therapy was a well-supported term in the relevant literature, a definition that described the psychotherapeutic process by which an individual's cognitive patterns and behavioral inclinations were modified. Much of the literature framed it within the context of a form of problem-solving aimed at helping people solve problems through a counseling regimen. There was considerable source material on this therapy approach as a strategy for helping offenders reenter society without resorting to old, negative actions.

Recidivism was the tendency of a prisoner to reoffend. Cognitive behavioral therapy, which was the basis of this study, was a form of psychotherapeutic treatment that sought to alter patterns of behavior by using cognitive strategies. Thinking for a Change was a cognitive behavioral program that sought to effect changes in a criminal's behavior.

Self-efficacy was a key concept that reflects and highlights the benefits of cognitive behavioral therapy in former offenders. Recidivism, referring to the tendency of a convicted criminal to reoffend, was a core concept and definition with great significance for this study.

Assumptions

Things Assumed to be True, that were Not Verified by the Current Study

This study proceeded on the assumption that recidivism could be reduced on a long-term basis through cognitive behavioral modification therapy. This assumption was made in order to extrapolate the relevant factors that impact the causes of criminal behavior, and personal

capabilities that enable its modification. Ultimately, the effectiveness of using cognitive behavioral therapy to alter thought patterns produced by external stimuli was not possible to verify, though it was assumed to be true. It was possible to verify that a former offender has or has not recidivated, though the mental impulses that determine such an outcome could not be scientifically verified.

Why the Assumptions were Necessary in the Context of the Study

This assumption was necessary in order to clarify that this study was concerned with demonstrable outcomes, meaning whether an offender who has gone through the Thinking for a Change program has recidivated. Cognitive behavioral therapy itself was concerned with reshaping mental processes, the extension of which was the modification of physical behavior.

Scope

What was Taken into Consideration in this Study

This study covered the recidivism of offenders from the Lorain/Medina CBCF prison system - participants of Ohio's Thinking for a Change program - over a period of two years following their release from incarceration. The study of the subjects' experiences was based on the belief that the cognitive behavioral therapy known as Thinking for a Change could help modify these individuals' behavior and prevent them from recidivating.

Samples, Data, Interpretive Schemes

This study was concerned with the experiences of former offenders who were incarcerated at the Lorain/Medina CBCF because it was directly concerned with why they had or hadn't been able to avoid recidivating after release. To that end, friends, family members and other individuals were not included in this study in order to derive a solid baseline of data related directly to the study's purpose and research questions.

Transferability

The potential for transferability in this study was limited because the information gathered was concerned with a tightly specified area of inquiry and analysis. However, there was the possibility that the outcome of this study might be expanded upon by researchers who expand into other impact areas, such as family, co-workers and friends.

Delimitations

As the nature of this study was centrally concerned with whether offenders involved in cognitive behavioral therapy programs recidivate, it did not incorporate the impact of such a program on those close to former offenders, such as friends and family members. As well, the influence of criminal justice officials and others involved with the rehabilitation of former offenders was not captured, as it too was beyond the scope of this thesis. Perhaps further study of this matter might take into account the wider social implications of recidivism and the ability of programs like Thinking for a Change to mitigate its effects.

Limitations

Weaknesses or Gaps in the Study

The efficacy and credibility of this thesis depended on the ability to reach these individuals and on their willingness to participate and talk candidly about their experiences. It was acknowledged that the individuals interviewed constitute a representative though limited field of inquiry, which could potentially cast doubt on the validity of any conclusions that were reached. However, it was assumed that future studies may take this approach a step farther and incorporate data gathered from additional sources, which could help build a more well-rounded picture of this study. Efforts to reduce the impact of these limitations included questions that covered as broad a range of relevant subject matter as possible in order to capture as much data

as possible concerning cognitive behavioral therapy and its impact in various aspects of each subject's life after prison.

Biases that Might Have Influenced this Study

Questions as to the credibility/believability of offender responses could create an intrinsic bias. It was conceded that interview subjects might be inclined toward less than candid responses about how successfully they have avoided getting into trouble again once they reentered society. There might have been incidents that, though not leading back to prison, constituted a manifestation of impulsive violence, and so, amounted to a failure of cognitive behavioral therapy to alter their way of thinking.

Steps Taken to Reduce the Impact of Limitations

Given the potential for a credibility bias, I assured study subjects that their responses would in no way reflect badly on their ability to reintegrate into society after release. In this way, I hoped to encourage honest and substantive responses that shed new light on the issue of recidivism. My aim was to convince interview subjects that their responses would be used discreetly and in confidence, part of a scientific study rather than some covert means of holding them accountable for indiscretions they may have committed. It was particularly important to draw conclusions between the recidivism rates of offenders studied and recidivism rates in general.

What this study Does not Do that Could Legitimately be Done

This study did not include qualitative data from probation officers, social workers, friends and family members of former offenders who had been through the Thinking for a Change program. Their input could, potentially, have provided a more expanded and thorough understanding of how CBT impacts the way these individuals behave and react to stress factors.

It was presumed that similar studies may pursue a line of inquiry with a broader subject group in order to better understand how CBT affects everyone involved.

Inherent Problems in Research Methodology

The passage of time may have narrowed the field of subjects, or perhaps rendered some less able or willing to respond in detail. Inarticulate subjects might have made it difficult to gather useful responses and thereby hamper interpretation and analysis. A lack of some broader context, a possible result of a narrow field of subjects, might have had a limiting effect on this study, which could have caused some to question its credibility.

Significance of the Study

How this Study Fills a Gap in the Present Literature

This study closed a gap in the current literature and enhanced the field of study in corrections by determining the significance, or lack thereof, of CBT programs. This study also aimed to fill a knowledge gap concerning how the effectiveness of Ohio's Thinking for a Change program, as implemented by the Lorain/Medina CBCF, compared to other modes of cognitive behavioral therapy (Lambert et al., 2007). Seen in a broader context, it was likely that this study aided in the study of methods aimed at addressing chronic problems in the nation's prison system. In other words, did Thinking for a Change and other forms of CBT work and in what ways did they help reduce recidivism, and alleviate related problems, such as overcrowding.

How the Profession Benefits

This study benefited my profession by providing a better understanding of how cognition impacts behavior, an important point insofar as it held psychological repercussions for rehabilitating offenders. As previously discussed, America's prison and criminal justice systems have for many years suffered from an inability to deal with overwhelming numbers of offenders

and repeat offenders. The capacity of a cognition-based, problem-solving approach to help remedy the problem has for too long been overlooked, or summarily dismissed as unwieldy or insufficiently punitive. The benefit of this study lied in its ability to show that offenders who took part in Thinking for a Change learned to "think differently" and, consequently, act differently.

Impact of Study for Social Change

This study's ability to demonstrate the efficacy of CBT had implications for positive social change. Offenders attempting to reintegrate into society have long struggled to avoid falling back into old patterns and being reincarcerated. This has contributed to a broadly held social stigma that tends to demonize individuals who have done time behind bars, regardless of circumstances or personal inclinations. Making a clear and demonstrable connection between psychotherapy and a reduction in recidivism rates could help reduce such preconceptions and make it easier for prisoners to found jobs, a place to live and succeed in their social relationships. However, given that psychotherapy was an inexact science, one that many Americans regard with suspicion, it was important to establish a clearly consequential relationship between CBT and a successful reintegration into society.

Summary and Transition

Summary and Key Points in Chapter One

Chapter one of this study concerned the effectiveness of Ohio's Thinking for a Change program, a cognitive behavioral therapy intervention program aimed at preventing recidivism through a thought-altering modification approach. Statistics indicated that Thinking for a Change and other such strategies hold vast potential for preventing prisoners from returning to crime, and for developing social skills that could help them prepare to deal with difficult situations without

resorting to criminal behavior. This study aimed to determine which aspects of cognitive

behavioral therapy were most effective, and how they could be customized to better meet the

needs of individual offenders. These points were the subject of subsequent chapters.

Pointing Ahead

In subsequent chapters, I discussed in more detail the crafting of interview questions and

the how subjects were identified and sought for involvement without biasing or influencing their

responses. Anonymous background information on each participant was offered to provide a

baseline of background data upon which to construct basis for analyzing and interpreting their

responses. The need for a nuanced line of inquiry was reflected in the details concerning

respondents and their experiences beyond prison.

Chapter 2

Introduction

Problem and Purpose

Recidivism is one of the most persistent problems faced by America's overcrowded

prison system. Based on U.S. Bureau of Justice statistics, recidivism occurs at a rate of more than

70 percent for state prisoners, and approximately 45 percent for inmates released from federal

prisons (USBJ, 2016). The country's penal facilities have long been seen as mere warehouses

that 'store' offenders and segregate them from the rest of society, without offering them the

rehabilitative tools and support needed for successful reentry to society (see, e.g., Irwin, 2005;

Phelps, 2011; Wacquant, 2006; and see Reiman & Leighton, 2016, p. 14, quoting then-

presidential candidate Barack Obama on the need to reduce "prison warehousing"). Recidivism

contributes to prison overcrowding, which, in turn, limits the ability of prisons to provide

effective rehabilitation, setting up a vicious cycle (Phelps, 2011).

The picture of recidivism has been by no means uniform, however, and a number of

states were currently implementing programs designed to stem recidivism. One such program,

Thinking for a Change, or "T4C," is currently utilized at select facilities in Ohio like the

Lorain/Medina CBCF. Designed by the National Institute of Corrections, T4C is a cognitive

behavioral therapy (CBT) intervention that has demonstrated promising results (Golden, 2002;

Golden, Gatchel, & Cahill, 2006; see also Landenberger & Lipsey's (2005) meta-review of CBT

programs for offenders). The goal of this dissertation was to use the rich data yielded by

qualitative study in order to provide new insight into the program's effectiveness, with particular

emphasis on the promise of boosting self-efficacy among offenders.

Organization of the Literature Review

Chapter two proceeded as follows. First, it provided a brief overview of the major sections of the literature review, as well as the search strategy used to gather material for each section. Next, it addressed the central theoretical framework upon which the study relied, namely Albert Bandura's (2000) theory of self-efficacy, and presented research that applied this theory in various contexts. Attention was paid to key findings that supported the present research, as well as debates and controversies in the field. Next, literature related to the methods used in this study were reviewed. Finally, the chapter presented a summary of related research on prisoner rehabilitation, the use of cognitive-behavioral therapy in correctional contexts, and the existing research on the T4C program, in order to situate the present research and the contributions it sought to make to the scholarly literature.

Literature Search Strategy

Summary of the Content of the Literature Review

This literature review focused on the potential of CBT and, in particular, boosting self-efficacy, as a way to offer prison offenders new strategies for decision-making and self-control upon their release, thereby lowering recidivism rates. The specific therapeutic intervention it studied was the Thinking for a Change (T4C) program, as implemented within Lorain/Medina CBCF. The material reviewed was divided into three major sections: theoretical framework, methodology, and related content.

In searching for peer-reviewed materials for discussion of the theoretical framework, the following keywords and strings were used: Bandura; self-efficacy; self-efficacy AND behavior change; self-efficacy AND prisoners; self-efficacy AND offenders, self-efficacy AND prison rehabilitation. Central databases for this part of the discussion included Academic Search

Complete, PsycARTICLES and PsycINFO. In searching for peer-reviewed materials related to the methodology employed in the present study, PsycARTICLES and PsycINFO databases were searched for the following keywords and strings: narrative methods; narrative methods AND prison research; narrative methods AND prison offenders; qualitative methods AND prison research; qualitative methods AND prison offenders. For the final discussion, a broader search strategy was employed. Key words and strings (including cognitive behavioral therapy AND prison; cognitive behavioral theory AND corrections; cognitive behavioral theory AND offenders; cognitive behavioral theory AND rehabilitation; self-efficacy AND prison; self-efficacy AND corrections; self-efficacy AND offenders; self-efficacy AND rehabilitation; "Thinking for a Change" AND prison; "Thinking for a Change" AND corrections; "Thinking for a Change" AND offenders; "Thinking for a Change" AND rehabilitation) were searched both in the psychological databases PsycINFO and PsycARTICLES, as well as in the broader social sciences database SocINDEX, and the Criminal Justice Database. Supplementary data was sought in the Bureau of Justice Statistics (2016) database.

Theoretical Framework Literature Review

Theory Upon Which Study was Based

The theoretical framework that informed this literature review was based on Albert Bandura's (2000) self-efficacy model, which was an extension of social learning theory. For Bandura (2000), self-efficacy functioned as a set of related perceptions that the individual forms concerning his or her ability to do and follow through on actions and behaviors. As such, self-efficacy reflected the individual's sense of personal ability to determine the course of events that impact his or her life and maintain control over the ways in which such events were understood and accepted by others (Bandura, 2000). Bandura (2000) held that anyone, regardless of

background or social orientation, has the ability to exert self-efficacy and to improve it. Thus, the theory rests on a self-empowering ethos of optimism and self-actualization, making it a desirable framework in which to view programs for any type of behavioral change.

Source of the Theory

Bandura's model of self-efficacy originated in a 1977 article, in which he suggested that, during any therapeutic intervention, "expectations of personal efficacy determine whether coping behavior was initiated, how much effort was expended, and how long it was sustained in the face of obstacles and aversive experiences" (p. 191). In other words, the success of a therapeutic intervention hinged on the individual's sense of himself or herself as capable of effecting change and adopting new forms of behavior when obstacles arise. The self-efficacy model quickly gained adherents. For instance, a 1979 article applied Bandura's model to test subjects in a competitive environment with tasks involving motor functioning and found it to be predictive (Weinberg, Gould, & Jackson, 1979). The model has since been applied to an extremely broad array of behavioral research, from changes in exercise and dieting (Marcus, Selby, Naiura, & Rossi, 1992; Povey, Conner, Sparks, James, & Shepherd, 2000), to blood donation (Giles, McClenahan, Cairns, & Mallet, 2004), to teacher development (Pfitzner-Eden, 2016), to breastfeeding (Blyth, et al., 2002).

Major Theoretical Propositions

According to Bandura (2000) self-efficacy forms based on four sets of experiences or input:

- mastery experiences, which were experiences with previous attempts to carry out a desired action or behavior, and could include notable failures as well as successes, since failures also influence the individual's sense of his or her capabilities;

- vicarious experiences, which come from observing the relative successes and failures of others who attempt the desired action or behavior;

- verbal persuasion, which was input from others concerning the individual's capabilities and which (when the other was a trusted or significant other) could have marked impact on the individual's own, perceived self-efficacy; and

- physiological and affective states, which have to do with the physical or psychological states that were produced when the individual attempts the desired action or behavior. For instance, feeling one's own manual dexterity when repairing a car may provide a sense of accomplishment, or even an endorphin boost, which would, in turn, function to boost the individual's sense of capability (Pfitzner-Eden, 2016; Bandura, 2000).

Hence, while it was relatively straightforward to measure the strength of an individual's self-efficacy beliefs with regard to a particular sphere of action, it was far more complicated to measure the experiences and input that were pivotal to the individual in strengthening self-efficacy. As discussed further below, this insight droves the qualitative approach undertaken in the present study, which among other things sought to understand why and how heightened self-efficacy occurs among offenders as a result of their exposure to the T4C program.

Rationale for the Choice of Theory

Thinking for a Change was rooted in a principle of therapeutic practice which asserted that most, if not all, people could be made cognizant of their thoughts and behavioral inclinations and use that heightened awareness to make corrective changes to their behavior (Landenberger & Lipsey, 2005). Studies in other fields of behavior made specific connections between self-efficacy and coping styles, meaning that one's approach to coping with negative thoughts and avoiding negative behaviors were directly related to self-efficacy (e.g., Devonport & Lane,

2006). These concepts go to the heart of the T4C program, which sought to help prisoners achieve stronger insight into their own thinking patterns and change the mental responses they have to problems or conflict situations, thereby helping them alter troubling patterns of behavior (Clark, 2010). Offenders' ability to sustain what they learn well beyond prison and into later life speaks to concepts such as coping efficacy and outcome efficacy, which serve to round out the conceptual apparatus that Bandura established.

How the Selected Theory Relates to Study

T4C represents a relatively straightforward application of the theory of self-efficacy, by communicating in down-to-earth terms and making relatable the idea that cognitive restructuring and an increased sense of personal capability could have a transformative effect on offenders after their release from prison. The present study asked how T4C helps prisoners' transition to society and avoid recidivism. By applying a qualitative, narrative approach, rather than simply measuring perceived self-efficacy and its correlation to outcomes, it offered new opportunities to study the 'inner mechanics' of self-efficacy in behavioral change, potentially offering insights that would help refine and channel applications of CBT and self-efficacy theory in prison populations and beyond.

Analysis of Theory Application

Prior research provided a strong basis for believing that programs such as T4C which aimed to boost offenders' own perceived self-efficacy was essential to the larger goal of rehabilitation and reduction in recidivism rates. According to a National Institute of Justice (2016) study that tracked CBT programs in prisons nationwide, such programs reduced recidivism by an average of 33 percent (National Institute of Justice, 2016). More specifically, researchers have concluded that self-efficacy was key to positive behavioral change among ex-

offenders (Casey, Day, Vess & Ward, 2012, p. 56). The concept was at the heart of the Relapse

Prevention (RP) approach that showed early promise in treating certain highly recidivist

populations, and it was also central to the Good Lives Program (GLP) approach that supplanted

RP (Ward, Mann & Gannon, 2007; Wilcox, Donathy, Gray & Baim, 2017, p. 121), as well as to

the Transtheoretical Model (TTM) of behavior change (Casey, Day & Howells, 2005).

Rehabilitation was far from unachievable, and the evidence points to the particular value of self-

efficacy-based approaches. The present study followed this substantial body of research and

sought to advance that research by focusing on prisoners' own experiences, narrated in their own

words, of the behavioral changes they achieved (or failed to achieve) after exposure to a CBT

program focused on achieving a greater sense of self-efficacy.

Content Literature Review

Historical Perspective of Literature Review

From its inception, the U.S. corrections system nurtured a strong rehabilitative ideal

(Phelps, 2011; Cullen & Gendreau, 2000). However, the 1970s witnessed what was often termed

the "punitive turn" (Phelps, 2011, p. 33), motivated in part by a 1974 article that systematically

reviewed rehabilitation programs and outcomes and concluded that "the rehabilitative efforts that

have been reported so far have had no appreciable effect on recidivism" (Martinson, 1974, p.

25). The author of that article retracted his main argument several years later, concluding that

certain rehabilitation strategies did in fact seem to work if carried out in the right settings

(Martinson, 1979). Nevertheless, the thesis that 'nothing works' gained enormous traction,

overturning a longstanding commitment to correctional rehabilitation. According to Cullen and

Gendreau (2000), the popularity of the 'nothing works' idea may have reflected the political

turbulence of the 1970s and rising suspicion of government, which fueled mistrust of

rehabilitation programs on both the left and the right (2000, p. 122). According to scholars of race and the prison system, it may also have been a reaction to "the civil rights and Black Power activism of African Americans in the 1960s and 1970s [as whites] sought to regain and maintain control through the carceral state" (Thompson, 2013, p. 24). By the 1990s, the new mistrust was reflected in dramatic rollbacks in rehabilitative programming (Phelps, 2012), and over the last two decades the ideal of rehabilitation has progressively been reduced to "reentry-related life skills programs" (Phelps, 2011, p. 33). Over the same period, incarceration rates have soared (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2016; Chung, 1999-2000; Vaughn, 1993), and prisons have in many states been relegated to a 'warehousing' model (Reiman & Leighton, 2016; Phelps, 2011; Wacquant, 2006; Irwin, 2005). Although scholarly sources that identify discrete connections between prison overcrowding and rehabilitation were scant, advocacy groups saw a clear connection (e.g., Penal Reform International, n. d., stating that overcrowding "compromises the provision and effectiveness of rehabilitation programs, educational and vocational training, and recreational activities"); and scholars of corrections practices suggest that incarceration in overcrowded, non-rehabilitative facilities was itself was both harmful to incarcerated individuals and itself a cause of further crime (Mastrobuoni & Terlizzese, 2014, p. 24; Haney, 2006). In sum, these findings frame the signal importance of identifying rehabilitative strategies that work, not only to reduce recidivism, but, in turn, to reduce overcrowding.

How the Literature was Related to the Problem Statement

As it happens, rehabilitation never completely disappeared from correctional horizons in the U.S. (see Phelps, 2012, on regional variation in prison practices), and it may be making a comeback elsewhere, including some surprising quarters. According to Mastrobuoni and Terlizzese (2014), "even Correction Corp. of America (CCA), the largest private prison firm, has

recently announced a change in its business model, committing to 'play a leadership role in reducing recidivism...planning to expand the company's prison rehabilitation programs, drug counseling and its prisoner re-entry work in cities around the country' (p. 2). In their own study of offenders in Italy, a country that has experienced a 'punitive turn' similar to that of the U.S., Mastrobuoni and Terlizzese (2014) found that every year spent at a rehabilitative prison versus a traditional one reduced recidivism by 10 percent, with even stronger findings among those prisoners who were shunted to a rehabilitative facility due to overcrowding, rather than being selected to be sent there (pp. 1, 24). Rehabilitative effects were particularly robust among offenders who commit primarily economic crimes, driven by necessity, as well as those who received treatment early on (Mastrobuoni & Terlizzese, 2014, p. 24).

The current study focused on the U.S. program Thinking for a Change, or TC4, as employed at the Lorain/Medina CBCF. TC4 is a cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) based approach that focused on boosting offender self-efficacy. Prior study of CBT-based rehabilitative programs, and T4C in particular, have shown promising results (Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, 2013; Landenberger, & Lipsey, 2005; Coughlin, Cosby, & Landenberger, 2003). Nor was this surprising, given that cognitive behavioral interventions were considered a first-line approach to a wide variety of mental illnesses and thinking distortions (e.g, Hoffman, et al., 2012) and to reducing criminogenic thinking patterns and recidivism (e.g., Lipsey, Landenberger, & Wilson, 2007). Self-efficacy, in particular, has been shown to be key to behavior change across a variety of settings, as reflected by studies spanning several decades (e.g., Pfitzner-Eden, 2016; Giles, McClenahan, Cairns, & Mallet, 2004; Blyth, et al., 2002; Povey, Conner, Sparks, James, & Shepherd, 2000; Weinberg, Gould, & Jackson, 1979). Within the field of prisoner rehabilitation, specifically, self-efficacy theory was central to the Relapse

Prevention (RP) approach, which showed promise in treating certain highly recidivist populations, such as sex offenders (Miner, Marques, Day & Nelson, 1990; Ward, Laws. & Hudson, 2002), as well as to the Good Lives Program (GLP), another influential model of prisoner rehabilitation (Wilcox, Donathy, Gray & Baim, 2017; Ward, Mann & Gannon, 2007). Self-efficacy was also one of four key variables on which the Transtheoretical Model (TTM) was based, and when TTM was applied to offender rehabilitation, researchers found that self-efficacy was a "fundamental requirement" of behavior change (Casey, Day, Vess, & Ward, 2012, p. 56) "perhaps the important variable in terms of the assessment of intermediate outcomes and predicting future success" in modifying behavior and decision-making (Casey, Day & Howells, 2005, p. 160). In an additional, ingenious study, Brezina and Topalli (2012) demonstrated that when offenders experienced positive self-efficacy through criminal activities, they were more likely to reoffend—a finding that suggested, conversely, that by linking self-efficacy to the experience of living as a law-abiding citizen, it might be possible to enhance rehabilitative outcomes. In sum, a new moment seems to have arrived for rehabilitation in the field of corrections, and CBT and self-efficacy based approaches show particular promise and, accordingly, merit ongoing attention and study.

Themes and Trends Discovered in the Literature Review

Unfortunately, little was known of the mechanisms by which self-efficacy functions to produce positive outcomes in prisoner rehabilitation. Moreover, as the study by Brezina and Topalli (2012) suggested, self-efficacy was a value-neutral tool: when linked to the experience of success in criminal behaviors, it arguably encouraged repeat offenses. This finding heightened the importance of understanding the modalities by which self-efficacy functions to discourage recidivism. However, while there was good reason to suspect that the self-efficacy model at the

heart of T4C had merit (Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, 2013; Landenberger, & Lipsey, 2005; Coughlin, Cosby, & Landenberger, 2003), current studies were better at demonstrating correlations than explaining how self-efficacy could become linked to the positive experience of living as a law-abiding citizen and avoiding repeat offenses. This followed the general trend in self-efficacy studies across a broad range of disciplines and behavioral domains (e.g., Pfitzner-Eden, 2016; Giles, McClenahan, Cairns, & Mallet, 2004; Blyth, et al., 2002; Povey, Conner, Sparks, James, & Shepherd, 2000; Weinberg, Gould, & Jackson, 1979), which tended to establish correlation without producing rich data on causal mechanisms.

Therefore, this study placed emphasis on narrative analysis as a tool for understanding how offenders used and incorporated the insights from CBT and self-efficacy and harnessed them for the purposes of positive behavior change. Narrative approaches have allowed researchers to contribute to our understanding of a number of types of behavior and behavior changes (Alsinic, et al., 2015; Christensen & Elmeland, 2015; Moulding, 2015; Thornhill, Clare, & May, 2010; Sandberg, 2013; Presser, 2009). In particular, narrative approaches offer a useful way of linking the individual's self-understanding (through, e.g., narratives of self and personal change, turning points, 'journeys,' and support) to broader social contexts, through the incorporation of community and social science narratives in the stories that respondents offer. (Alsinic, et al., 2015; Sandberg, 2013; Presser, 2009). By adopting a narrative approach, the present study hoped to illuminate how, why, and under what conditions, T4C made the most impact on reduction in recidivism and how offenders incorporated material from T4C—as well as how rehabilitation prospects were affected by broader narratives to which offenders may be exposed, including correctional narratives of whether rehabilitation was even possible.

Trend One. In 1974, an article reviewing the efficacy of correctional rehabilitation programs posed the provocative question, "What works?" (Martinson, 1974). Although the article ultimately highlighted lack of scholarly certainty more clearly than it did the failure of rehabilitative attempts, its pessimistic conclusions translated into a slogan that came to be widely repeated in public discourse, namely: *Nothing works*. Hence the appearance of Martinson (1974) was often taken as a watershed moment in the decline of the rehabilitative ideal in U.S. corrections work " (Phelps, 2011, p. 33). The following discussion reviews scholarly literature concerning loss of faith in rehabilitation as a legitimate aim of corrections work. These findings provided vital context to the central research question of the present study and revealed that the loss of the rehabilitative ideal was never as extensive or complete as 'Nothing works' suggested. Equally important, the discussion offered a snapshot of the discursive context in which rehabilitative programs such as Thinking for a Change (T4C) were carried out. Thus, the possibility was raised that offenders' own narratives of T4C and their struggles to lead more normative, crime-free lives was affected by common attitudes and rhetoric concerning the very possibility of rehabilitation.

For any study of rehabilitation programs, it was vital to understand the context in which rehabilitative efforts were situated. Although it was an old article, Martinson (1974) was vital to understanding this context, because it was often cited as a watershed piece that facilitated the decline of the "rehabilitative ideal" in U.S. corrections work (see also Phelps, 2011, reviewed further below). In "What works?—questions and answers about prison reform," Martinson argued that prison reform efforts were undermined by lack of empirically-based knowledge of the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs. In this article he condensed findings from a systematic review of the rehabilitation literature which he undertook with colleagues for the

State of New York. All relevant studies that met the standard criteria for social science research were included in this review, which excluded works only on methodological grounds (e.g., their sample sizes were too small, or they drew conclusions that were not well founded in the data presented). Martinson concluded, first, that there was little empirical evidence for the claim that educational and vocational skills training lead to better outcomes for ex-offenders, including lower recidivism rates. This finding held true whether programs focused on academic learning or practical skills. Martinson likewise found little empirical evidence for the claim that therapeutic programs (such as one-on-one counseling, group therapy, and so on) or medical interventions (including plastic surgery meant to boost self-esteem) yielded better outcomes for ex-offenders. Finally, he argued that not enough evidence exists to assess the effectiveness of revised sentencing and custodial or parole conditions. In sum, Martinson (1974) argued, the more than 200 studies reviewed offer "very little reason to hope that we have in fact found a sure way of reducing recidivism through rehabilitation" (49). This finding helped to contextualize the research questions, because it marked what was known as the "punitive turn" in incarcerations, out of a sense that "nothing works." Particularly given that the present research sought to understand prisoners' own narratives, it was important to be aware that the program functions against a background of low expectations for the viability of rehabilitation efforts.

Martinson (1979). In a second article by Martinson (1979) four years later, the researcher sought to rebut the way his original piece had been characterized by the slogan "nothing works" and he withdrew his own characterization of rehabilitative efforts as "impotent" (254). Instead, he argued, the evidence suggested that various types of rehabilitative programs, ranging from education to therapy, were not intrinsically helpful or harmful on their own; instead, the effectiveness of their outcome depended on the context in which they were delivered. So, for

instance, educational programs delivered to juvenile offenders in group homes showed little

evidence of help, while educational programs delivered to juvenile offenders in juvenile prisons

do in fact show promise in reducing recidivism, or "reprocessing rates" (254-55). Although this

article was much less well known that Martinson's "What works?" piece from 1974, it was

important for two reasons. First, because it indicated how difficult it was to interpret results

concerning rehabilitative programs. Second, it suggested that the dominant narratives

surrounding rehabilitation programs were always liable to be less nuanced than the empirical

record. The piece informed the research questions by suggesting that the relationship between the

T4C program and the prison contexts in which it was delivered should be considered, and

emphasizing that, whenever possible, it was important to compare the findings to research

conducted not simply on similar programs, but similar programs delivered in similar contexts.

Sundt, Cullen, and Applegate (1998). In this article, Sundt, Cullen, and Applegate (1998)

sought to replicate a landmark survey (conducted in 1986 and published in 1990) evaluating

public attitudes towards prisoner rehabilitation. As with the earlier survey, Sundt, Cullen, and

Applegate (1998) wanted to know whether public attitudes reflected the decisive turn away from

rehabilitative approaches that was noted in both scholarly discourse and the press. The first

survey suggested that public faith in rehabilitative efforts remained robust, despite the punitive

turn. However, in the decade since its publication, the authors note, public "tough on crime"

efforts had notably increased. Writing in 1998, the authors found that public support for

rehabilitation has declined meaningfully since the first survey. However, much of the American

public continued to view rehabilitation as a legitimate goal in prison work, and rehabilitative was

particularly favored for young offenders and non-violent offenders. This research offered

additional, vital insight into the evolving public and corrections contexts in which T4C was

carried out. It also offered important ideas concerning issues to look for in prisoner narratives.

For instance, did prisoners themselves take on the attitude that younger offenders were more

likely to be rehabilitated and make more legitimate targets for programming? Did older offenders

worry that "old dogs couldn't learn new tricks"? And did they make the same differentiation

between violent and non-violent offenders? Or did they maintain hope for rehabilitation for

themselves and their prison peers, regardless of type of offense?

Phelps (2011). Phelps (2011) responded to the broad, public understanding of a "punitive

turn" in corrections by reviewing U.S. state prisons in order to found out whether this rhetorical

shift was matched by shifts in actual practice. She noted that a number of changes in the laws on

sentencing, including mandatory minimum sentences, sentencing guidelines, and habitual

offender laws (i.e. "three strikes") have led to soaring incarceration rates over the decades since

Martinson's (1974) so-called "nothing works" article was published. The increase in

incarceration rates was accompanied by the adoption of more punitive forms of punishment,

including the use of chain-gangs and Supermax facilities. Both phenomena were reflected,

meanwhile, in a decisively more punitive set of rationales concerning the goals of incarceration.

Where once American penal studies and criminology emphasized rehabilitation as a central goal

of corrections work, since the 1970s there was a sharply increased focus on using prison

sentences to incapacitate individuals and to create an atmosphere of deterrence. Despite these

notable shifts, little attention was paid to actual prison practice. Through a review of U.S. prison,

with particular attention to budgeting, staffing, and programming, Phelps (2011) found that there

was a definitive lag between the onset of the new punitive ideology and a noticeable shift in

prison practices. Clear reductions in programming aimed at rehabilitation did not occur until

1990, and even after 1990, the change in prison practice has constituted a shift in focus rather

than abolishment of rehabilitative efforts. In particular, rehabilitative programming has come to focus primarily on practical life skills, rather than more global therapeutic efforts. This article provided much-needed context for the research questions, because it suggested, first, that practices on the ground in prisons often differ from academic and public discourses and ideologies; and second, that the T4C program was notable because of its more holistic, cognitive-therapy based approach, rather than its focus on attainment of life skills alone.

Lynch (2000). Lynch's (2000) research comprised an ethnography of agency workers in a parole office in central California. Although it was focused on the context of parole rather than prison, it offered key context for the present research, because it focused specifically on the discourse and rhetoric that agency workers used around the concept of rehabilitation. Similar to other studies, Lynch (2000) found that the people involved in parole work at this office did not reject the rehabilitative ideal; instead, they continued to believe that reform was an important goal of corrections work in general and parole operations in particular. However, they lacked the institutional support, in terms of budgets and programming, in order to put reform ideas into practice in a steady way. As a net result, attention became focused on the individual and his or her capacity to be reformed, rather than on agency's effectiveness in delivering tools and support needed to avoid reentry to the criminal justice system. The article helped to refine the goals of the research questions by suggesting that it was important to notice, in prisoner narratives, how they saw the balance of responsibility: for instance, did they believe that only they could achieve their own rehabilitation, or that recidivism was evidence of a 'flawed' personality? What were their expectations of institutional support as they transition to civilian life? And were these expectations being met?

Robinson (2008). Robinson (2008) explored the narratives surrounding rehabilitation in the context of the English and Welsh penal systems. In contrast to the U.S., the idea of rehabilitation enjoyed broad legitimacy, and Robinson (2008) argued that this legitimacy had to do with the evolution of specific rationales concerning the purpose of rehabilitation. Specifically, she identified three key rationales, which she identified as utilitarian, managerial, and expressive. Utilitarian rationales for rehabilitation have had a long history in criminology. However, previously focus was placed on the utility of rehabilitation for offenders. Currently, in England and Wales, the benefits for society as a whole were emphasized: "it was no longer offenders themselves who were seen as the main beneficiaries, but rather communities and potential victims (p. 432). Managerial narratives showed a utilitarian component, with the emphasis placed on concepts of risk management, while expressive narratives reflected and gave voice to the social expectation that offenders will take responsibility for their crimes. While a comparative approach was beyond the scope of the present research, this article was useful because it described a range of socially available narratives of rehabilitation that may be reflected in respondents' own accounts. Specifically, it suggested the researcher should be alert to suggestions that the T4C program was useful either for the offender, society, or both; to language that suggested such programs were a way of managing the risk of further re-offenses; and to narratives that suggested participation in T4C reflected the need to take responsibility for one's crimes.

Cullen, Lutze, Link, and Wolfe (1989). In 1983, as more punitive attitudes were overcoming public support for rehabilitation, Cullen, Lutze, Link, and Wolfe (1989) set out to determine whether, or to what extent, prison guards continued to embrace rehabilitation as a legitimate goal of corrections work. To this end, they surveyed 250 prison guards employed in

the southern U.S. Their findings suggested that most corrections officers viewed the primary

goal of their work as custodial. Indeed, more than 75% of survey respondents agreed with the

statement that "keeping inmates from causing trouble was my major concern" (p. 37).

Nevertheless, the researchers also found that a substantial number of guards continued to nurture

some aspect of the rehabilitative ideal. Thus, despite the large number of respondents who saw

"keeping inmates from causing trouble" as their chief concern, a majority also *rejected* the idea

that their job was not to 'rehabilitate inmates' but to 'keep them orderly'" (p. 38, emphasis

added). A full 70 per cent agreed that offering treatment to prisoners was as important as

punishing them (p. 38). The article offered important context for the present research, because it

suggested that the on-the-ground reality of prison life could be very different than public

perception. It also suggested that, in analyzing prisoner narratives, it was important to remain

alert to issues of perceived support for the T4C program beyond the professionals involved in the

program itself (e.g., among prison guards and parole officers).

   Lipsey and Cullen (2007). Lipsey and Cullen (2007) addressed the issue of rehabilitation

and the punitive turn by conducting a review of meta-analyses of correctional strategies and their

effects on recidivism rates. The researchers found that, although the scope and approach of meta-

analyses varied a good deal, their findings remained highly consistent. With the rise of 'get

tough' approaches to crime and the decline of the rehabilitative ideal, corrections work focused

increasingly on punitive measures and 'warehousing,' or custodial approaches. However, in their

review of meta-analyses, Lipsey and Cullen (2007) found that supervision (custodial) approaches

and punitive sanctions did not show marked effects in curbing recidivism and that, in some

cases, they fostered rather than reduced recidivism. Rehabilitative programs, by contrast, showed

a consistent positive effect in curbing recidivism. This provides much-needed context for the

research questions, because it demonstrated that, despite the rise of the 'northing works' rhetoric, well-planned rehabilitative programs did in fact help offenders return to civilian life and avoid further criminal behaviors. The researchers also found that the effectiveness of rehabilitative programs varied widely, depending on their context and application, although further research was needed to understand why some programs work better than others. This, too, suggested the importance of the present research, which sought to understand what aspects of the T4C program helped offenders most, why they help, and where the program (or other sources of support) were lacking.

Trend Two. The following section reviewed literature indicating broad support for cognitive behavioral approaches to a wide array of psychological disorders. Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), which emerged as a technique in the 1970s, relied on a fundamental strategy of identifying problematic beliefs and cognitive patterns, offering new cognitive 'scripts' to replace ones that were a source of problems in patients' lives, and activating behavioral change (Sudak, 2012, p. 99). The present research questions focus on a cognitive behavioral intervention into thinking strategies that were widely understood to be criminogenic. As such, the usefulness of CBT for treating depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, or other specific mental illnesses was not directly at issue. However, the broad support for CBT's efficacy across a wide variety of treatment contexts lays the foundation for the study's reliance on the Thinking for a Change (T4C) program and sets up the next discussion, which involves the use of CBT in treating incarcerated populations.

Butler, Chapman, Foreman, and Beck (2005). Butler, Chapman, Foreman, and Beck (2005) offered a summary of 16 methodologically rigorous meta-reviews of the scholarship concerning the efficacy of cognitive behavioral therapy for treating various psychiatric

diagnoses. The review indicated that cognitive behavioral treatment, as compared to control conditions, offered significant promise in the treatment of depression, anxiety, panic disorders, PTSD, and social phobias. With regard to depression in adults, specifically, cognitive behavioral treatment proved slightly more effective than pharmaceutical antidepressants. Its effectiveness in treating marital problems, facilitating anger management, and chronic pain were less pronounced but still statistically significant. There were also indications that CBT could alleviate symptoms of two particularly treatment-resistant conditions, eating disorders and schizophrenia; however, these effects were shown only by studies with no control groups. Thus, there was robust evidence that cognitive behavioral interventions were effective across a wide range of psychiatric disorders. Mental illness was rife among prisoner populations. While the present research involves study of a program targeted to problem-solving and social skills, rather than treatment of specific psychiatric disorders, the review by Butler, Chapman, Foreman, and Beck (2006) offered support for the idea that CBT was an efficacious approach overall.

Hoffman et al. (2012). Hoffman et al. (2012) provided robust evidence for the general efficacy of cognitive behavioral therapy for a range of mental illnesses and conditions. Here they reviewed a representative sample of 106 meta-analytic studies (selected from an initial field of 269) and assessed their findings concerning the impact of cognitive behavioral interventions on an extremely wide and varied group of disorders. They found cognitive behavioral approaches to be particularly efficacious in treatment of anxiety, bulimia, anger management issues, stress, and physical symptomology with a psychological basis. In 11 studies, cognitive behavioral approaches were directly compared to other forms of psychological treatment, and it emerged as the more effective remedy in seven of those; in none of these 11 studies did another approach outperform the cognitive behavioral intervention. Intriguingly, while the authors specifically

looked at the impact of cognitive behavioral approaches on criminogenic thinking patterns and distortions, this was not one of the whereas where CBT was most distinguished. However, this may speak to the difficulty of curbing criminal thinking and behaviors overall, rather than to the inapplicability of cognitive behavioral approaches. The authors also noted the disappointing fact that none of the meta-analytic reviews they identified looked at the usefulness of cognitive behavioral therapy for low-income populations and people of color. Given the disproportionately poor, non-white composition of prison populations, it would have been useful to have data concerning CBT's relative efficacy in treatment of these subgroups. Nevertheless, this comprehensive review provided further justification for the decision to study a cognitive behavioral program.

Maude-Griffin, et al. (1989). In this study Maude-Griffin, et al. (1989) explored the efficacy of cognitive behavioral interventions in controlling addiction to crack cocaine, a notoriously treatment-resistant substance abuse problem. The research compared the efficacy of cognitive behavioral treatment to participation in twelve-step groups such as Narcotics Anonymous. A total of 128 study participants were randomly assigned to either twelve weeks of cognitive behavioral therapy or attendance at a twelve-step group. Participants were assessed on intake and at 4, 8, 12, and 26 weeks. Findings suggested that participants who received CBT treatment were far more likely to refrain from further crack cocaine use than those assigned to the twelve-step program. However, it also appeared that for certain subsets of the population, twelve-step programs might be more effective. The study provided further evidence that cognitive behavioral therapy was a robust treatment modality with a wide range of applications. Moreover, while the T4C program that was the focus of the present research did not specifically target addiction, the incarcerated population has high addiction rates, including to crack cocaine,

and criminal offenses were often related to drug use and procurement (see, e.g., Center on

Addiction, 2010). Thus, it was possible to hypothesize that the increased self-control and anger

management that T4C sought to facilitate may offer better coping tools for participants who also

suffer from drug addictions, and that any subsequent reduction in recidivism may be related to

diminishment of drug abuse. It was important, when analyzing respondents' narratives, to remain

attuned to potential knock-on effects of T4C participation that relate to control of drug abuse.

Tolin (2010). Tolin (2010) noted that while cognitive behavioral therapy was understood

to have broad efficacy in treating a range of mental illnesses, meta-reviews concerning its

efficacy did not always clearly indicate how it compared to other forms of therapy. In this meta-

review, therefore, Tolin (2010) limited the included studies to ones in which cognitive behavioral

intervention was benchmarked against another, legitimate form of psychotherapeutic treatment

(rather than, for instance, control groups receiving treatment by medication alone, or no

treatment at all). In all, 28 articles based on 26 separate studies met this inclusion criterion. The

findings suggested that, with regard to anxiety and depression, cognitive behavioral therapy was

more effective than psychodynamic therapy, though interpersonal and supportive therapies had

indistinguishable outcomes. The greater effect size of cognitive behavioral interventions was

magnified by researchers' adherence to protocols, which Tolin (2010) rated after direct

discussion with authors of the reviewed studies. Although the results were not unequivocal,

Tolin (2010) concluded that with regard to anxiety and depressive disorders, CBT should be

"considered a first-line psychosocial treatment of choice" (p. 710). Mental illnesses such as

anxiety and depression were widespread in offender populations (see, e.g., Varney, 2014).

Although the Thinking for a Change program was targeted to criminogenic cognitive patterns,

rather than to specific mental illnesses, this study provided further backing that cognitive behavioral interventions were broadly effective and might assist participants on multiple levels.

Sudak (2012). Sudak's (2012) review of the state of current research suggested that the efficacy of cognitive behavioral therapy for treating depression was extremely well-documented. In fact, studies suggested that it worked as well or better than antidepressants at relieving even severe episodes of chronic depression. Moreover, when cognitive behavioral interventions were combined with use of antidepressants, relapse rates were cut in half. Writing in 2012, Sudak noted that these findings were recently confirmed by a meta-analytic study "that determined that patients who respond to acute phase CBT treatment alone for acute depression have a 61% chance of complete recovery relative to patients treated with medication alone, who have a 39% chance" (p. 99). Given that some severely depressed patients do not respond to treatment with pharmaceuticals, the robust and long-term effects of CBT intervention appeared even more important. The Thinking for a Change program did not emphasize use of cognitive behavioral therapy for the treatment of depression, per se. However depression, along with other mental illnesses, was rampant among incarcerated populations (see, e.g., Varney, 2014). Thus, this offers additional insight into the multifaceted potential of cognitive behavioral therapy, while also raising the possibility that some of T4C's influence might be due to the potential of new and positive cognitive scripts to relieve underlying mental illnesses.

Driessen and Hollon (2010). Driessen and Hollon (2010) added to the body of evidence suggesting that cognitive behavioral therapy worked in treatment of even acute depression and that, if implemented correctly, could function as an alternative to use of antidepressant pharmaceuticals. Two specific findings stand out in their meta-review of the evidence. The first was that, rather than weakening over time, the effects of cognitive behavioral interventions

appear to strengthen over time—a finding that articulates with, for instance, the results in Maletzky et al. (2002), which suggested that success rates for sexual offenders treated through a cognitive behavioral program became more pronounced over each successive five-year period of the study. Given the high dropout rates for study participants after the first five years in Maletzky et al. (2002), it seemed possible that the effects they identified were the product of self-selection, with participants who remained in the study representing a subgroup that was less likely to reoffend. However, the work of Driesen and Hollon (2010) suggested that the prophylactic effects of cognitive behavioral interventions might in fact increase over time. A second finding of particular interest in Diresen and Hollon (2010) was the fact treatment with cognitive behavioral interventions as compared antidepressant medication appears to be particularly useful for unemployed patients and those who have undergone a series of challenging life events. Since both characteristics were true of incarcerated populations more or less by definition, this finding was particularly noteworthy in the context of the present study. However, this result was tempered by the fact that antidepressant medicines appeared to be the more effective treatment option for depressed patients who have comorbid Axis II disorders, which include, e.g., antisocial, borderline, and narcissistic personality disorders. Hence the picture was complex.

Ultimately, however, studies of the efficacy of cognitive behavioral approaches for treating the general population were not used here to frame the research questions directly. Rather, they were evidence of the general robustness of cognitive behavioral approaches in treating a wide variety of mental illnesses and disordered thinking. Considered in this light, Driessen and Hollon (2010) buttressed the case for examining a cognitive behavioral intervention and underscored the specific possibility that the intervention's positive effects may actually increase, rather than decrease, over time. This makes appealing, intuitive sense, given that new

patterns of cognition were liable to become easier and more routine to implement with practice, potentially even forging new neural networks in the brain over time as Vaske, Galyean, and Cullen (2011) suggested.

Otto and Deveney (2005). Otto and Deveney (2005) reviewed the research concerning use of cognitive behavioral therapy in treating panic disorder. Robust evidence suggested that cognitive behavioral interventions could provide relatively rapid relief, and that its prophylactic effects could persist over a long term. In addition, cognitive behavioral treatments emerged as cost-effective versus alternatives, and as a non-medical intervention, it had few side effects. One of Otto and Deveney's (2005) most salient findings was that social context played an important role in predicting how well the positive effects of cognitive behavioral interventions persisted over time. Although the context was different than the issue addressed in the present research (i.e., cognitive behavioral approaches to curbing criminogenic thinking patterns and reducing recidivism) the insight concerning social context was one that should be considered, particularly given the fact that offenders may well be entrenched in networks of relationships that foster continued criminogenic thinking. Overall, Otto and Deveney (2005) provided further evidence that cognitive behavioral interventions were efficacious across a wide variety of mental health context. Additionally, the work suggested that, in reviewing offenders' own narratives, attention to be paid to interactions between treatment effects and social context.

Hofman and Smits (2008). Hofmann and Smits (2008) assessed the efficacy of cognitive behavioral treatment of adult anxiety disorders, using a quantitative literature review. There was a vast literature suggesting the efficacy of cognitive behavioral interventions for a wide range of mental illnesses and forms of disordered thinking. However, as the authors here note, one weakness in the literature was the relative paucity of randomized studies with the control group

receiving a placebo. Hence, they limited their review to placebo-controlled trials. Their findings offered strong evidence of the utility of cognitive behavioral approaches for treating adult anxiety; however, they also found significant room for improvement in the application of CBT and suggested that a particularly promising strategy may be to supplement cognitive behavioral interventions with pharmaceutical treatment to enhance patients' ability to learn and retain CBT strategies. Overall, this study contributed to the firm support for the efficacy of cognitive behavioral approaches across a wide variety of therapeutic contexts; however, it also demonstrated the fact that much information was still missing from our understanding of CBT's effects.

Borkovec et al., (2002). In Borkovec et al., (2002), the efficacy of cognitive behavioral approaches to generalized anxiety disorder were tested. Study subjects were randomly assigned to one of three conditions: treatment through applied relaxation and self-control desensitization techniques; treatment through cognitive behavioral therapy; or treatment via a combination of the first two approaches. Outcomes were then evaluated over the course of two years. Intriguingly, no statistically significant differences among the three treatment approaches emerged, providing a contrast to the large balance of evidence suggesting that cognitive behavioral therapy should be considered as a first-line treatment approach. An additional finding offered important insight and possible support concerning the framing of the present research. Namely, across all three conditions, where interpersonal problems (as measured by a standard and well-verified scale) persisted at the close of treatment, they correlated negatively with treatment efficacy at successive assessment points. Consequently, the researchers concluded, the efficacy of cognitive behavioral approaches might be heightened by including interpersonal objectives in the treatment. Thus, while this article did not offer firm support for the idea that cognitive-behavioral

approaches were generally superior to other forms of psychotherapeutic intervention, it did lend credence to the importance of targeting interpersonal behaviors—one of the foundational treatment objectives in the present research framework—even where other underlying symptomology was addressed.

Seidner and Wagner (2006). This study by Seidner and Wagner (2006) was notable chiefly because, once again, it identified a context in which cognitive behavioral treatment did *not* appear clearly superior to a rival psychotherapeutic approach. Specifically, Seidner and Wagner (2006) performed a meta-analytic review of eight published studies in order to compare the efficacy of two widely-used approaches to the treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder: cognitive behavioral therapy and EMDR (eye movement desensitization and reprocessing). Neither approach proved to have statistically significant advantages over the other, and there was not enough evidence to suggest which moderator variables (if any) could predict when one approach might be better-suite. Although the focus of this paper ranged fairly far from the research questions in the present study, it acted as an important reminder that, although cognitive behavioral interventions have received wide approbation in the scholarly literature, there remain a great many subtleties to the contexts in which it was used, the problems addressed, and variables, including context, which may affect its efficacy. This made the following discussion, concerning the use of cognitive behavioral treatments for incarcerated populations all the more important.

Trend Three. This review began by considering the rise of a very public, national discourse suggesting that 'Nothing works' in rehabilitation, leaving punishment and 'warehousing' (Reiman & Leighton, 2016; Phelps, 2011; Wacquant, 2006; Irwin, 2005) as, supposedly, the only legitimate aims for corrections work. It then moved on to a consideration of

the broad evidence for the efficacy of cognitive behavioral interventions in a wide variety of

mental health treatment contexts, suggesting the credence and credibility of targeting a CBT-

based program in the present study. The following section united these two, disparate discussions

by reviewing the substantial evidence for the idea that something did, in fact work, at curbing

recidivism: cognitive behavioral approaches.

Andrews et al. (1990). In this seminal article, Andrews et al. (1990) reviewed the

literature on psychological treatment of offenders and formulated a set of principles for effective

treatment known as risk-need-responsiveness. Risk reflected the idea of triaging offender

populations and delivering the most intensive services to those at highest risk of ongoing

criminal activity. Need reflected the importance of targeting of what were known as

"criminogenic needs," such as family support and antisocial behaviors. Thus, effective treatment

included "changing antisocial attitudes, feelings, and peer associations; promoting [family

bonds]; promoting identification with anticriminal role models; increasing self-control and self-

management skills; replacing the skills of lying, stealing, and aggression with other, more

prosocial skills . . .; and generally shifting the density of rewards and costs for criminal and

noncriminal activities (Andrews et al., 1990, p. 375). Responsivity reflected the importance of

delivering services that were matched with the population's needs; cognitive and behavioral

approaches were seen as particularly fruitful in this respect. Based on their meta-review of

studies, the authors found that rehabilitative services offered on the basis of these principles

yielded a significantly greater reduction on recidivism rates than generalized services offered in

which the qualities of risk-need-responsibility were not evident. Meanwhile, criminal sanctioning

showed a net negative effect. These findings held true across both juvenile and adult populations,

across a wide variety of settings. The research not only refuted the 'nothing works' principle, but

it offered concrete insights into the most effective rehabilitative strategies. It also framed the importance of the research goals of the present study, since T4C was a cognitive behavioral program that reflects both needs (i.e., it does not offer generalized treatment for non-criminogenic psychosocial needs) and responsivity (i.e., it was based on a cognitive-behavioral model). The extent to which it reflected the principle of risk was elucidated in the course of the research.

Dowden and Andrews (2000). Writing in 2000, Dowden and Andrews noted that the risk-need-responsivity formulation articulated by Andrews et al. (1990) received robust support in the scholarly literature over the decade after it was published. However, insufficient research had been completed into the effects of the risk-need-responsivity model on offender rehabilitation. Here, through meta-analysis, they found that both need and responsivity showed positive associations with reduction in recidivism among violent offenders, although the effect of risk was not statistically significant. When combined into a scale, moreover, the resulting variable showed the most robust association with reduced recidivism. The article provided further evidence that programs such as T4C merit close attention and suggested it was important not only to document correlation but to attempt to determine the impact of specific program attributes on the behaviors of ex-offenders, as this research proposes to do.

Woessner, et al. (2017). Building on the risk-needs-responsivity paradigm of Andrews, et al. (1990), Woessner, et al. (2017) studied the relationships among therapeutic interventions targeted to specific risk factors, prison climate, and recidivism. Their original sample included 185 male offenders (both violent and sexual offenders) who received an average of 32 months of treatment in a therapeutic facility. Of the 185 original participants, researchers were able to track 92 ex-offenders until four years out, in order to measure recidivism rates. Treatment effects

differed among the risk factors (which included pro-criminal attitudes, antisocial personality patterns, empathy, and anxiety/neuroticism). Appreciable reduction in pro-criminal attitudes and anxiety-neuroticism were observed, while antisocial personality patterns decreased for violent offenders but not sexual offenders. Empathy remained unaffected. Despite the appreciable diminishment of key criminological risk factors, however, no statistically appreciable reduction of recidivism was found. However, the researchers suggested this may have to do with methodological issues, such as the repeated use of self-measurement instruments. The study introduced a note of caution with respect to the goals of the current research; however, it also suggested that more holistic forms of measurement such as narrative analysis may help researchers to 'get at' relationships between treatment and recidivism that could not be captured through more traditional approaches.

Henning et al. (1996). Henning, et al. (1996) conducted a study of the efficacy of cognitive behavioral therapy for curbing recidivism among offenders who received treatment in a medium-security state facility. The test group included 55 male offenders who voluntarily agreed to take part in the treatment program, with a control group of 141 male offenders, incarcerated in the same prison, who did not receive treatment. The program targeted the type of cognitive distortions that appear highly associated with propensity to offend, such as displacement of blame, self-justificatory or "victim" thinking, and perception of the need to be dominant in social relations. The researchers found robust evidence of program effects. Nearly 71% of control group members reoffended, whereas just 50% of respondents who received treatment did. Moreover, the effects were particularly robust when measured in terms of mean time before re-offense, potentially suggesting that even where CBT treatment does not 'cure' recidivism, it may act to delay the time of next offense, resulting in fewer overall offenses and a net social gain.

This was one of numerous studies of this type that documents a significant association between CBT interventions and reduction in recidivism rates. As such, it provided foundation for the present study's research questions, which focused on offenders' own narratives and perceptions of how one cognitive behavioral program, T4C, helped them to avoid further offenses upon their return to civilian life.

Pearson, et al. (2002). "The Effects of Behavioral/Cognitive-Behavioral Programs on Recidivism" by Pearson, et al. (2002) offered important support for the idea that cognitive behavioral treatment works in stemming recidivism. Once again, the research comprised a meta-analysis. The article was based on a systematic review of research into treatment programs offered in a wide range of correctional settings, from jail and prison to probation and parole. A total of 69 studies were reviewed. Analysis yielded a robust statistical relationship between cognitive-behavioral approaches and reduced propensity to reoffend. Notably, while there was a statistical correlation between all programs and reduced recidivism rates, the association was clearest with regard to cognitive-behavioral over standard behavioral approaches. In particular, so-called "Reasoning and Rehabilitation" approaches were shown to be most effective. Such programs emphasized the development of social and cognitive skills in a cognitive-behavioral context. Thus, the research suggested the importance of programs such as T4C, which used cognitive-behavioral interventions to help offenders modulate their cognitive and emotional responses to stressful situations, in which they might be likely to respond with anger or violence. However, once again this study indicated statistical correlation without shedding insight into the specific mechanisms by which offenders gain the ability to conform to the norms of civilian life without recourse to crime or violence. The research goals of the present study attempted to build

on research such as this by using offenders' own narrative to discover how the T4C program affects their ability to cope.

Lipsey, Landenber, and Wilson (2007). Writing in 2007, Lipsey, Landenberger, and Wilson noted that studies of cognitive-behavioral interventions consistently demonstrated the utility of such approaches. Prior research found that reductions in recidivism were, on average, 20-30% greater among offenders receiving CBT treatment as compared to control (non-intervention) groups, indicating that CBT interventions comprised one of the strongest documented tools for curbing the propensity to reoffend. As the authors noted, there was also a strong theoretical basis for the utility of CBT approaches. "One of the most notable characteristics of criminal offenders was distorted cognition—self-justificatory thinking, misinterpretation of social cues, displacement of blame, deficient moral reasoning, schemas of dominance and entitlement, and the like" (Lipsey, Landenberger, & Wilson, 2007, p. 4). Cognitive-behavioral approaches relied on the idea that such distorted cognitive patterns were learned, rather than innate, and could therefore be modulated with therapeutic interventions that targeted cognitive distortions, providing new cognitive scripts and helping offenders to practice them.

In this article, Lipsey, Landenberger, and Wilson (2007) sough to refine previous findings by identifying the treatment and program variables that showed the strongest correlation with positive outcomes. To this end, they reviewed 58 studies, selected from an initial group of over 3000 journal articles and reports, including studies that specifically addressed the T4C program. The variables whose effects they attempted to isolate include: participant characteristics; amount of CBT (as hours of therapy per week and total program hours); quality of the CBT program; other program characteristics, such as the setting for treatment and which

cognitive patterns were targeted; and the nature of the CBT program (i.e., the program brand, such as T4C or Reasoning and Rehabilitation, or the program's status as a generic CBT-based intervention). Quality of programs mainly reflected the extent of researcher involvement, which was assumed to reflect how strictly program protocols were adhered to.

Consistent with earlier findings, analysis showed a mean increase of 25% in effect size for offenders receiving treatment, as compared to control groups. There was some difficulty isolating the effects of specific program variables, given the format in which prior research was presented. Nevertheless, Lipsey, Landenberger, and Wilson (2007) found that three factors independently correlate to effect size: participant characteristics (specifically, the risk level of offenders who received treatment); program quality, as measured through the presumed adherence to protocols; and the presence of specific program features. With regard to the last variable, the researchers found that programs targeting anger management and interpersonal problem-solving were associated with better outcomes, as compared to, e.g., emphasis on victim impact, which showed little independent utility. Finally, the researchers conclude there was no particular value to any one program brand over others, or to branded programs over generic CBT interventions. This research offered a strong foundation for the goals of the present study, since T4C was a CBT intervention that specifically targets anger management and interpersonal problem-solving skills. Moreover, it suggested that the evidence on CBT's utility was so well documented at this point that it was important for research to go beyond documenting correlations between CBT intervention and reductions in recidivism, in order to explore the inner workings of CBT programs, so as to offer insight into how such programs could be refined and made more consistently effective. This was what the present research aimed to do.

Maletzky et al. (2002). Sexual offenders represented an important subset of criminal offenders and a critical target for interventions given the resistance of many types of sexual deviance to treatment. Maletzky, et al. (2002) performed a significant, longitudinal study of 7,275 sexual offenders in order to track the usefulness of cognitive behavioral interventions for curbing propensity to reoffend. Study participants, as grouped into 5-year cohorts, were followed over the course of 25 years. Among the variables used to gage rehabilitation/recidivism were completion of a specific cognitive behavioral program; presence or absence of ongoing sexually deviant behaviors, according to self-reports; sexual arousal at deviant or improper images; and any formal charges for a new offense, whatever the outcome of the case. Not surprisingly, it became increasingly difficult to follow study participants over time; nevertheless, a full 62% of participants were tracked for at least the first five years. Study participants who opted out of the program before completion showed markedly higher rates of reoffending. Offender type emerged as another major predictor of treatment failure, with homosexual pedophiles and rapists proving particularly resistant to positive effects of the intervention. However, many other sexual offender types showed improvement across the dependent variables, and researchers noted that improvements grew more pronounced with every successive five-year period after completion of the program. Given the high failure rates of sexual offender treatment, the study provided exceptional evidence that that cognitive behavioral approaches could work with incarcerated populations, and thus it strengthens the case for framing the current research around the Thinking for a Change cognitive-behavioral program.

Lispey et al. (2001). Lispey, et al. (2001) offered one of the first meta-analytic studies to demonstrate that cognitive behavioral interventions were effective in reducing recidivism. Their systematic review comprised analysis of 14 rigorous studies. Results suggested that cognitive-

behavioral programs had real utility in stemming re-offenses, and that the best-run programs could achieve sizable reductions. Unfortunately, it was not possible on this basis to conclude what, exactly, constituted best practices for such programs—an issue that would later be addressed by Lipsey, Landenberger, and Wilson (2007), who conducted their own meta-review to determine the program and client profile variables that best correlated with lowered rates of recidivism (see below). An additional methodological difficulty arose in connection with the fact that many of the most rigorous studies available were conducted in the context of demonstration programs; thus, they did not necessarily reflect the outcomes that would be achieved in 'real world' settings. (This was also an issue confronted by Lipsey, Landenberger, and Wilson [2007], who used researcher involvement to gage conformity to program protocols.) Despite methodological difficulties, the findings of Lipsey, et al. (2007) provided a strong foundation for the present research goal of exploring one cognitive behavioral program for offenders in depth.

Zlotnick, Johnson, and Najavits (2009). This study by Zlotnick, Johnson, and Najavits (2009) strayed from the central goals of the present research, but it helped to round out the overall picture of the utility of cognitive behavioral approaches in treating prison populations. Zlotnick, Johnson, and Najavits (2009) conducted a randomized, controlled pilot study comparing two treatment approaches for female prisoners who have PTSD and histories of substance abuse. One group received treatment through the Seeking Safety cognitive-behavioral program, which consists of 180-240 hours of individual and group therapy over the course of 6-8 weeks. The control group received treatment-as-usual. Rather than recidivism alone, the researchers evaluated outcomes in terms of PTSD symptomology; overall distress, as measured by the Subjective Units of Distress scale; psychopathology; and violent and nonviolent offenses. Their findings suggested that both treatment approaches were effective at reducing these

undesirable outcomes, as measured once at three months after release, and once at 6 months. However, the behavioral cognitive intervention showed significantly more promise over time at reducing PTSD symptomology and substance abuse. These findings suggest that behavioral cognitive interventions could facilitate positive changes in ex-offenders' lives beyond the question of reduced recidivism.

Vaske, Galyean, and Cullen (2011). Given the consistent evidence that cognitive behavioral interventions could help offenders manifest new behaviors and avoid reoffending, Vaske, Galyean, and Cullen (2011) explore the possible biological changes in the brain that may underlie such findings. As they not, criminology has been slow to adopt the robust evidence of brain plasticity that comes from neuropsychological research, even though the science of brain plasticity offers strong support for the idea that rehabilitation was possible. In this regard, the researchers suggest that cognitive behavioral approaches were likely to foster new neural networks in key whereas of the brain related to social, problem-solving, and coping skills. A review of the scientific literature suggested that cognitive behavioral interventions that foster pro-social skills were likely to produce heightened functioning in these key whereas of the brain. While their findings went well beyond the scope of the present research, they offered important support for the efficacy of CBT programs.

Trend Four. At the heart of efforts to treat offenders and curb recidivism through cognitive behavioral interventions was the concept of self-efficacy. Forged in the late 1970s by Albert Bandura (2000), the self-efficacy model suggested that individuals were best able to effect change in their lives when they have a firm sense of their own ability to implement those changes and, more generally, to shape the events that impact their lives and affect the way those events were understood. Bandura (2000) based his model on the idea that any individual,

regardless of their social background or situation, had the ability to improve their own sense of self-efficacy and thus bolster the possibility that they will effectively change undesirable behaviors. This made it a very attractive concept, in theory, for the field of correctional rehabilitations; and, in practice, scholars of rehabilitation have deemed self-efficacy to be a "fundamental requirement" of behavior change among incarcerated populations and ex-offenders (Casey, Day, Vess, & Ward, 2012, p. 56). Self-efficacy was at the heart of the T4C model, and thus findings concerning its utility was central to the framing of the research questions. Before reviewing the evidence concerning the application of self-efficacy to correctional rehabilitation, however, the chapter first reviewed samples of an extensive literature—stretching from the late 1970s, when Bandura's self-efficacy model was first published in a peer-reviewed context— which suggested the importance of strong feelings of self-efficacy in curbing a wide spectrum of non-criminal behaviors.

It was useful to begin with a restatement of tenets central to Bandura's (2000) concept of self-efficacy. As noted previously, the individual's sense of ability to shape the events that shaped his or her life was formed through four distinct forms of input. Mastery experiences constituted the first of these, including experiences of both success and failure in attempts to carry out a desired behavior change. Second, the statements that others made concerning the individual's capacity to effect behavior change would impact that individual's sense of self-efficacy. These forms of input were grouped as "verbal persuasion." Third, self-efficacy was shaped by the emotional and physical states (including ease or anxiety; comfort or discomfort; etc.) the individual experiences during attempts to put a new behavior into actions. Finally, vicarious experiences that come from watching others attempt a new action or behavior could impact one's own sense of self-efficacy. As ingredients of self-efficacy, these constitute

important elaborations on the central research questions, which seek to identify how T4C promotes self-efficacy among participants. These constituent elements likewise suggested the importance of the narrative form of inquiry suggested here, since there were a complex number of intertwined experiences and inputs that may yield—or fail to yield—a heightened sense of self-efficacy and resulting behavior change.

Weinberg, Gould, and Jackson (1979). Following just two years after Bandura's first major exposition of the self-efficacy model in 1977, Weinberg, Gould, and Jackson (1979) tested whether the construct helped to predict performance during a competitive physical activity. Specifically, 60 test subjects, equally split between men and women, were randomly assigned to compete in a leg-endurance task against a study confederate under one of two conditions: first, where advised that their competitor was a varsity-track athlete; and second, where advised that their competitor had recently suffered a knee injury. Notably, the operationalization of self-efficacy leaves something to be desired in this trial, since Weinberg, Gould, and Jackson (1979) assume that self-efficacy was a straightforward result of self-comparison to another individual (while, in fact, an individual with a high sense of self-efficacy could well maintain that sense while facing a superior competitor). Nevertheless, the research represented a first attempt to approximate how expectations of performance, as a 'rough and ready' indicator of self-efficacy, could shape outcomes. Their findings supported the relevance of Bandura's self-efficacy construct, with subjects in the high-self-efficacy condition outperforming those in the low-self-efficacy one. Moreover, self-efficacy predicted how subjects would perform after an initial failure. Although this experimental design was fairly far removed from real-world contexts, it offered an initial glimpse of the robustness of self-efficacy as a predictor of performance at new

behaviors—the construct that underlies the T4C intervention that was the focus of the present research.

Taylor and Betz (1983). In 1983, Taylor and Betz ventured a more ambitious application of the self-efficacy construct, studying its potential role in career indecision. For this undertaking, they forged their own self-efficacy instrument, based on self-reported expectations with regard to 50 separate tasks and behaviors related to making career choices. They then studied how the scaled results of the instrument correlated with measures of career decisiveness or indecision (based on a scale developed by other researchers) among a total of 346 subjects. In this test, low perceived self-efficacy with regard to the tasks necessary to make vocational choices emerged as a strong predictor of career indecisiveness, and vice versa. Among other things, this finding was significant, because it suggested that it was not enough to possess the necessary tools to implement actions and behaviors; rather, the individual must possess a mental image of competence in using those tools. Moreover, the study was one of a number of pieces of research that helped, early on, to expand the importance of the self-efficacy construct beyond laboratory conditions to prediction of actual behaviors and behavior change in complex life situations. Thus it helped underscore the importance of self-efficacy to present research.

Edell et al. (1987). Edell, et al. (1987) applied the self-efficacy concept to participant outcomes in a weight-loss program. This study, which included 52 male and 95 female subjects, was noteworthy because it includes both self-efficacy (measured by subjects' estimates of confidence at success and expectations of weight loss) and self-motivation (measured by a pre-existing inventory) as potentially predictive variables. The present study was attempted to determine whether self-efficacy and self-motivation would predict outcome in an intensive weight loss program. Together, self-efficacy and self-motivation accounted for more than 32% of

the variation in weight loss outcomes. More importantly, perhaps, researchers found that, while self-efficacy had a statistically significant correlation with weight loss outcomes, self-motivation did not. Thus, the research suggested that self-efficacy and self-motivation were separately functioning constructs; and, in this test of behavior change, self-efficacy proved the more powerful predictor of outcomes. Thus, Edell, et al. (1987) added to the evolving literature on self-efficacy and provide further support for the goals of the present research.

Dennis and Goldberg (1996). Dennis and Goldberg (1996) provided further insight into the value of self-efficacy to one of the most difficult behavior changes to undertake: dieting. In a study of 54 women enrolled in a nutritional/behavioral weight loss program, self-efficacy measurements allowed them to identify two relatively equal groups of participants at the outset: "assureds," who had higher confidence in their ability to lose weight, as well as higher overall self-esteem and lower levels of depression; and "disbelievers," who, conversely, started the program with lower levels of weight-loss self-efficacy, lower self-esteem, and higher rates of depression. By completion of the program, members of the assured group had lost significantly more weight than disbelievers. Moreover, participants who converted from disbelievers to assureds by the end of the program (based on a repetition of self-efficacy measurements at completion) lost twice as much weight as those who remained in the disbelievers group. It was impossible to analogize the behavior changes involved in maintaining a legal and legitimate lifestyle with any other specific behavior change. Nevertheless, the evidence concerning the importance of self-efficacy to weight loss was important, since dietary changes were involved in multiple aspects of a person's life (social life, work life, cultural norms, etc.) and notoriously difficult to implement. Hence, Dennis and Goldberg (1996) contributed an important source of

support for the research questions that guide the present study, applying self-efficacy to recidivism.

Povey et al. (2000). Povey et al. (2000) once again employed self-efficacy in a medium-sized (N=287) study of behavioral change related to weight loss. Specifically, they compared the predictive value of two separate constructs, self-efficacy and perceived control. Where self-efficacy was a largely internal phenomenon, reflecting the individual's sense of competence and capacity to effect choices and influence outcomes, perceived control mixes internal and external factors, reflecting the degree to which the individual believe outcomes were actually under their control. Results suggested that self-efficacy has consistently more predictive value with regard to achieving multiple aspects of dietary change than does perceived control. Thus, Povey, et al. (2000) added to our extensive understanding of the importance of self-efficacy, and it suggested, moreover, that self-efficacy was central to behavior change, irrespective of whether the individual believes they were the ones who control the situation. This finding appears particularly useful when considering behavior change among ex-offenders, who may well feel that multiple aspects of their lives were no longer under their control.

Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, and Postorelli (2003). In this 2003 study, Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, and Pastorelli measured multiple factors influencing career expectations among a group of 272 children, in order to develop a statistical model of how these influences interact. The resulting model suggested that children's self-efficacy and academic aspirations exert a profound, direct effect on their career expectations. Socioeconomic status, by contrast, exerts influence only indirectly, through two intervening variables: parents' self-efficacy and academic aspirations, which in turn impact children's self-efficacy and academic aspirations. Moreover, while children's perceived self-efficacy emerges as a key determinant of career

expectations, their record of academic performance does not. This study adds to the significant body of evidence concerning the value of self-efficacy not only to behavior change, but to the individual's adoption of goals and directions. It further framed the importance of the focus on self-efficacy in the lives of ex-offenders, by suggesting that self-efficacy could—in some contexts—have more impact on outcomes than either socioeconomic status or one's record of achievement.

Giles, McClenahan, Cairns, and Mallet (2004). Research by Giles, McClenahan, Cairns, and Mallet (2004) applied the self-efficacy construct to the issue blood donation. Given that blood donation was a fairly contained and straightforward behavior this study may not, at first glance, appear to add much to the case for the centrality of self-efficacy to achieving major, complex behavioral changes. Nevertheless, the results were striking. A survey of 100 undergraduate students revealed that self-efficacy was central to the intention of donating blood, explaining a full 73% of variance. Moreover, the findings of Giles, McClenahan, Cairns and Mallet (2004) reveal that the predictive value of self-efficacy in this context outweighs the predictive value of either past behaviors or self-identity. Once again, self-efficacy emerged as more important than constructs that might typically be assumed to predict an individual's ability to effect specific behaviors. Of particular importance, given the study of ex-offenders, self-efficacy may work to 'overcome' past behaviors and identity, suggesting that by enhancing a person's perceived self-efficacy may help them achieve a break with the behaviors and identities that have defined them to that point.

Blyth et al. (2002). In this application of self-efficacy to the issue of breastfeeding, Blyth, et al. (2002) found that once external variables, such as physical non-production of milk, were controlled for, breastfeeding self-efficacy emerged as a significant determinant of the duration of

breastfeeding behaviors. Thus, they suggest, self-efficacy could enhance outcomes in healthcare situations. In addition to further demonstrating the utility of self-efficacy to effecting a wide variety of new behaviors, their work was instructive because it shows the centrality of self-efficacy to *persistence*, even where significant external obstacles and complications might arise.

Pfitzner-Eden (2016). Pfitzner-Eden (2016) reviewed the developing body of research that suggested a teacher's self-efficacy relates directly to performance outcomes of both teachers and students. Additionally, the researcher followed two groups of student teachers in order to model the separate effects of the four sources of self-efficacy input described above: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological and affective states. Results suggest that mastery experiences represent the strongest predictor of teacher self-efficacy, and that the three remaining factors all contribute—in varying ways, depending on context—to the formation of mastery experiences. In addition to helping elaborate the theoretical model of self-efficacy, Pfitzner-Eden (2016) identify an important potential drawback to programs, such as T4C, which seek to enhance self-efficacy in one context (prison life), so that it could be applied in a successive context (life post-incarceration). This suggested an important elaboration of the central research questions: What constitutes a mastery experience in the context of T4C? And do mastery experiences achieved within the framework of the program translate to successive mastery experiences in post-incarceration behaviors and decision-making?

Trend Five. There was a conundrum at work in the scholarship of self-efficacy and prisoner rehabilitation. On the one hand, researchers such as Casey, Day, Vess, and Ward (2012) describe self-efficacy as a "fundamental requirement" of behavior change among offenders (Casey, Day, Vess, & Ward, 2012, p. 56), while Casey, Day, and Howells (2005) suggest it was "perhaps the important variable in terms of the assessment of intermediate outcomes and

predicting future success" (Casey, Day & Howells, 2005, p. 160). However, the body of peer-reviewed research documenting the relationship between enhanced self-efficacy and positive outcomes in both prison and both-prison settings was highly uneven. Much of it revolves around health self-efficacy (an example of which was included here). Yet important gaps remain, and the picture of self-efficacy's utility was not unequivocal, as the following review suggested.

   Brezina and Topalli (2012). One of the most convincing applications of the self-efficacy construct to the corrections context revolves around the *positive* sense of self-efficacy that could become associated with criminal behaviors. As Brezina and Topalli (2012) point out, there was no necessary connection between self-efficacy and normative behaviors, and individuals could also develop a sense of self-efficacy through their involvement in crime. In order to help develop this avenue of inquiry, Brezina and Topalli develop a model of criminal self-efficacy that includes offenders' self-assessments of their relative success as criminals; factors such as high financial gains that may enhance criminal self-efficacy; and the relationship between perceived criminal self-efficacy and future intentions. Combined qualitative and quantitative analyses suggest that criminal self-efficacy correlates negatively with offenders' intentions to become law-abiding. The work offers critical insight into whether and how programs targeted to enhancing self-efficacy might act to curb recidivism. Chiefly, it indicates the potential importance not only of helping offenders develop alternative cognitive scripts to criminogenic ones, but of helping disrupt the experiences of mastery and competence that offenders derive from criminal behaviors.

   Laferriere and Morselli (2015). Similar to Brezina and Topalli (2012), the study by Laferriere and Morselli (2015) originated in the insight that positive self-efficacy could attach to criminal 'skills' and behaviors. Laferriere and Morselli (2015) administered a survey to 212

inmates in order to elicit information concerning the coordinates of self-efficacy as identified in the theoretical literature, including mastery experiences related to criminal behavior; social persuasion cues that boost the individual's sense of criminal competence; vicarious leaning experiences through association with other criminals; physiological and affective states associated with criminal behaviors; and indicators of 'success,' such as the financial gains from past offenses. Consistent with findings on self-efficacy in normative contexts, their results suggest that criminal qualifications, authority, and strength of crime-related earnings were significant elements in the formation of positive criminal self-efficacy (with age, education, noncriminal earnings, and relative criminal earnings also playing significant roles). The study offers insights of great relevance to discussions of self-efficacy and recidivism, and it suggested that in evaluating the utility of the Thinking for a Change program, it may be useful to consider the extent to which T4C helps to disrupt positive criminal self-efficacy, in addition to building a sense of self-efficacy around pursuing a crime-free life.

Miner, Marques, Day, and Nelson (1990). Miner, Marques, Day, and Nelson (1990) offer one of the first applications of learning theory and the self-efficacy construct to the challenge of curbing recidivism. Specifically, they present initial findings from a comprehensive Relapse Prevention program offered to sex offenders in the California state prison system. A comparison of 50 sex offenders in the treatment condition and 48 sex offenders in a control group (no treatment received) suggested that participants in the Relapse Prevention program evinced significantly higher levels of willingness to accept responsibility for their criminal sexual behaviors and life circumstances. As assessed upon release from incarceration, members of the treatment group were significantly less likely to become aroused by criminal/deviant sexual situations; scored significantly higher on an instrument measuring ability to cope with high risk

situations; and demonstrated fewer cognitive distortions surrounding their criminal sexual behaviors. Over time, the group in the treatment condition also demonstrated a small but statistically significant decrease in recidivism rates. Unfortunately, it was not possible to disentangle the specific role that enhanced self-efficacy played in these outcomes, since—although the self-efficacy construct lies at the heart of the Relapse Prevention approach—Miner, Marques, Day, and Nelson (1990) did not assess self-efficacy as a discrete independent variable. However, their research helps to establish a baseline understanding that interventions centered on self-efficacy could help to curb both criminogenic intents and behaviors, even among sex offenders, a population that was often considered to be particularly immune to rehabilitative efforts.

Lee, Uken, and Sebold (2007). Research by Lee, Uken, and Sebold (2007) similarly offers its insights concerning self-efficacy in an indirect fashion. In "Role of self-determined goals in predicting recidivism in domestic violence offenders," the researchers present findings from a study of 88 men who were convicted of battering their intimate partners and ordered to take part in a treatment program focused on setting goals and seeking solutions to interpersonal problems. Follow-up at one year after treatment yielded a 10.2% rate of reoffending among program participants, with participation accounting for 58% of variance in recidivism. A theoretically-informed analysis of the findings suggested that a combination of goal specificity and goal agreement between partners predicted self-confidence in the individual's ability to follow-through on goals, and that this self-confidence correlated, in turn, with reduced recidivism rates. While the researchers use the term "self-confidence" rather than self-efficacy, the two constructs were remarkably similar. Hence the research functions to indicate the promise of enhanced self-efficacy for curbing the propensity to reoffend. Notably, the program studied by

Lee, Uken, and Sebold (2007) combined measures to enhance self-confidence with pragmatic problem-solving skills, a combination that was also present in the Thinking for a Change program.

Wright (1993). Wright (1993) explores factors predicting positive behavioral outcomes within the prison setting, rather than the antecedents of reduced recidivism post-incarceration. However, the findings bear relevance to the topic, since they suggest that opportunities for education and the achievement of new skills correlate positively with the individual's propensity to adjust in a healthy fashion to prison life (avoiding, e.g., violent or criminal situations while incarcerated). Meanwhile, the number of opportunities for offenders to experience self-efficacy correlate inversely with the number of behavioral problems prison-wide. Unfortunately, Wright (1993) does not expand his model or provide follow-up research to suggest whether these patterns continue post-incarceration, translating to reduced propensity to reoffend in individuals, and fewer crimes in communities where ex-offenders reside. Nevertheless, the research helps to build an overall picture of the importance of self-efficacy to promoting positive behaviors among offenders.

Majer, Plaza, and Jason (2016). Cessation of substance abuse was an important determinant of whether ex-offenders could avoid further run-ins with the criminal justice system as they return to civilian life. Here, Majer, Plaza, and Jason (2016) explore the concept of abstinence self-efficacy (confidence in one's ability to abstain from use of illicit substances) and its role in curbing substance use among ex-offenders upon their release from prison. Specifically, the researchers measured the relationships among social support for abstinence, self-efficacy, and substance use among a sample of ex-offenders. Notably, they conclude that while social support for abstinence was an important predictor of sobriety, its effects were mediated through

the construct of abstinence self-efficacy. Thus, the study adds another dimension to our understanding of the importance of self-efficacy to positive outcomes for individuals post-incarceration.

Loeb, Steffensmeier, and Kassab (2011). Loeb, Steffensmeier, and Kassab (2011) investigate the utility of self-efficacy in promoting positive health-related behaviors and outcomes among older male inmates. Through a survey of 151 male inmates aged 50 years and older, the researchers sought to elucidate the utility of health-related self-efficacy in predicting health-promoting behaviors, health-monitoring behaviors, and overall health (as self-reported). The data reveal a strong, statistical correlation between self-efficacy and all three desired outcomes. Similar to Wright (1993) these findings were limited to outcomes with the prison setting, rather than beyond it, and they do not speak directly to propensity to reoffend. However, they offer an important potential strategy for promoting desirable health behaviors and outcomes in the prison setting, where public health represents a significant and ongoing challenge. They likewise add to the overall picture concerning the utility of self-efficacy for promoting positive behaviors among offenders.

Russell and Walsh (2011). Research by Russell and Walsh (2011) interjects a cautionary note concerning the utility of self-efficacy for curbing recidivism. In the juvenile justice system, offenders were sometimes assigned to participation in wilderness programs, rather than to custodial detention, in hopes that the wilderness experience will promote positive new skills, attitudes, and behaviors. Russell and Walsh studied a small cohort of adolescents (N=43) who were mandated by the Minnesota state courts to complete one such program. Data for participants was collected upon program intake, at program completion, and at 6 months after completion; data for a control sample that received no wilderness experience was collected at

similar intervals. The researchers predicted that participation would foster enhanced self-efficacy, resilience, and hope, and that these factors would in turn foster lower rates of recidivism. Their findings showed sizable increases in both self-efficacy and hope for the future among participants, as compared to the control group (with resilience measures yielding no statistically significant difference). However, these increases in self-efficacy and hope did *not* predict better probationary status or reduced propensity to reoffend at sixth months out. With regard to these outcomes, there was no significant difference between the treatment and control conditions. It was tempting to speculate part of the program's failure in facilitating better outcomes may be due to the extreme disjuncture between the wilderness/adventure setting and the routine life situations to which participants returned. It was not clear how experiences of mastery and competence achieved in the first setting would translate to the other. This, in turn, raises important questions concerning the applicability of self-efficacy experiences achieved in the prison settings to post-incarceration life, and it may be useful to probe this issue among T4C participants.

Dhami, Mandel, Loewenstein, and Ayton (2006). The work of Dhami, Mandel, Loewenstein, and Ayton (2006) introduces a final cautionary note. The researchers surveyed offenders in both U.S. and U.K. prisons, asking them to predict their future success at avoiding further criminal offenses after their release. Additionally, they prompted U.K. prisoners to compare their ability to manage life after incarceration to that of an 'average' prisoner. For both populations, they collected information on key variables, such as age and type of offense, that have high predictive value concerning propensity to reoffend. Their findings suggest that both U.S. and U.K prisoners greatly overestimated their future success at establishing a crime-free life, given their actual likelihood of reincarceration as based on predictor variables. The U.K.

prisoners who received the second prompt were, moreover, systematically viewed themselves as less likely to re-offend than other prisoners**.** The researchers note that the frustration that arises when prisoners meet with realistic conditions after their release has important implications for corrections work. Their findings serve to highlight, moreover, the important differences between optimism and self-efficacy. The latter was based on mastery experiences concerning relevant behaviors and skills, not simply on general self-esteem or a (potentially false) positive assessment of one's life chances. In pursuing the present research, it was important to distinguish among these conditions.

Justification for Themes and Trends Discovered in the Literature Review

Beginning in the 1970s, the rehabilitative ideal began to erode in national discourse concerning the role of prisons. By the 1990s, mounting suspicions that 'Nothing works' yielded sizable cuts to prison budgetary allocations for rehabilitative programming and staff (Phelps, 2011). Nevertheless, the on-the-ground reality of corrections has remained complex, and—particularly given the variation of corrections practice by state—numerous programs and approaches have been tried over the ensuing decades. Although research into rehabilitative approaches has no doubt suffered, as part of the 'penal turn' in corrections, at this point there exists a substantial body of evidence suggesting that at least one approach to curbing recidivism does in fact work: cognitive behavioral interventions (e.g., Henning, et al., 1996; Lispey, et al., 2001; Pearson, et al., 2002; Lipsey, Landenberger, & Wilson, 2007). The present research sets out to found how one cognitive-behavioral intervention called "Thinking for a Change" and implemented within the Lorain/Medina CBCF, impacts offenders' lives and facilitates (or fails to facilitate) their ability to lead lives free of crime post-incarceration. The efficacy of cognitive behavioral approaches in a wide variety of treatment contexts has been extensively documented.

CBT works by targeting distorted and counterproductive cognitive 'scripts' and replacing them with normative and productive ones. In the context of work with offenders, cognitive-behavioral programs such as T4C help offenders to identify and replace criminogenic patterns of thought, such as misinterpretation of social cues, displacement of blame for one's actions, and schemas of dominance (Lipsey, Landenberger, & Wilson, 2007). An important subset of this work was the attempt to boost participants' perceived sense of self-efficacy, which has been found central to effecting a broad spectrum of behavioral changes, including complex ones, such as dieting and weight loss, as well as more specific ones, such as blood donation. Indeed, although comparison studies have not been conducted in correctional settings, in other contexts self-efficacy demonstrated greater value in predicting desired behavioral changes than identity, motivation, social background, or even perceptions of whether the behavior change was within one's field of control. Within correctional settings, specifically, researchers have called self-efficacy a "fundamental requirement" of behavior change (Casey, Day, Vess, & Ward, 2012, p. 56) and suggested that it was "perhaps the important variable in terms of the assessment of intermediate outcomes and predicting future success" in modifying behavior and decision-making (Casey, Day & Howells, 2005, p. 160).

Synthesis of what was Known about the Themes, Trends, Controversies, and What Needs Studied

Although research suggested that cognitive-behavioral programs such as Thinking for a Change were an important means of curbing recidivism (even among populations such as sex offenders, who were considered highly resistant to rehabilitative approaches), relatively little was known concerning the "how" of offender success at leading more normative and crime-free lives. The vast majority of studies on the subject use quantitative data to draw correlations between

cognitive-behavioral interventions and recidivism rates. In such studies, complex factors such as the integrity of program implementation must be reduced to relatively simple measures, such as extent of researcher involvement (see, e.g., Tolin, 2010) and scant data has been gathered reflecting ex-offenders' own experiences in attempting to implement new cognitive scripts. Similar gaps remain in studies of self-efficacy as, for instance, research by Pfitzner-Eden (2016) concerning teacher self-efficacy suggested; although four forms of input have long been considered key to formation of positive self-efficacy, until Pfitzner-Eden (2016), almost no research focused on the relative contributions of these four factors, or how they might interact. Similarly, social context was generally understood to be a powerful influence in both cognitive-behavioral and self-efficacy-based approaches. With regard to CBT, social context could serve either to bolster or undermine the individual's attempt to implement new cognitive scripts. Meanwhile, at least two forms of social input were central to the model of self-efficacy formation and behavior change: verbal cues from others, which serve either to support or detract from the individual's sense of competence at implementing new behaviors; and observation of other individuals in a person's social context who demonstrate mastery of the desired behaviors (Bandura, 2000). Yet in the context of corrections research, although social context was routinely cited as key, almost no evidence exists to suggest how social context contributes to the efficacy of new cognitive scripts and/or formation of self-efficacy.

Synthesis of Articles Related to Research Questions

Research into rehabilitation and recidivism was ever-evolving and incomplete, and there was no doubt that further quantitative studies were needed to bolster the case that 'something works.' However, the present study adopts a narrative approach in order to fill in critical gaps concerning the mechanisms by which ex-offenders achieve, or fail to achieve, change in their

lives post-incarceration. By systematically assessing offenders' own narratives of experience with the T4C program and choices they have made since their release, the present study aims to crack open the 'black box' of behavior change and identify the ways that new cognitive scripts and tools for self-efficacy actually function in ex-offenders' lives. The approach adopted here will allow the researcher to address vital questions, such as the real-world problems and barriers in a correctional setting that may undermine the integrity of program delivery. What do prisoners see as the most vital tools and lessons they take away from T4C, and how do these compare to program objectives and protocols? How do social input and modeling in the correctional context serve to support or undermine program goals? How do these same variables operate in life after incarceration, and could experiences of mastery achieved in the correctional setting translate to post-prison life? What types of problems, choices, barriers, or dilemmas emerge as important turning points where participants experience themselves either implementing or failing to implement lessons from T4C? What forms of support do they believe might have helped them to better implement new skills and goals? How do social narratives of crime and rehabilitation interact with participant attempts to implement and live what they have learned through T4C? By soliciting and analyzing participants' own narratives, the present study hopes to forge a complex picture of the factors that affect how programs such as T4C become incorporated into offenders' lives, and to map these findings onto patterns of success or failure at avoiding re-offending.

Most Significant Findings to Justify Study

An objective review of the scholarly literature suggested it was time to dispense with the rhetoric that 'Nothing works' to rehabilitate criminal offenders. Cognitive behavioral approaches consistently demonstrate significant effects in curbing recidivism, and while the research on self-efficacy in correctional contexts was highly uneven, in general the construct shows exceptional

promise as a key to behavior change. Although certain classes of offenders, particularly rapists and pedophiles, remain resistant to programmatic interventions, well-targeted interventions could reasonably be expected to curb recidivism rates among most other classes of both violent and non-violent offenders; and where full desistance from crime was not achieved, such interventions could foster a longer interval until next offense. However, in making a full transition away from the discourse of 'Nothing works', it was important to move beyond documenting statistical correlates of reduced recidivism rates through pilot studies and meta-analyses. It was necessary to begin to explore, realistically, how rehabilitation programs function, on-the-ground, in correctional settings and in the complicated lives and decision making of ex-offenders. Unfortunately, a certain amount of methodological breadth must be sacrificed, in order to explore programs with this type of focus and depth. Nevertheless, such research was needed to produce the type of insight into rehabilitative programming that will contribute to more grounded theoretical models and to the refinement of programs and implementation.

Synthesis of Articles of what was Known or not Known in the Discipline Related to the Study

Critics of cognitive behavioral interventions and programs to boost self-efficacy will no doubt point to the fact that even when such efforts were effective, the gains were by no means sweeping or comprehensive. Lipsey and Cullen (2007) found that rehabilitative programs show consistent efficacy at curbing recidivism, while supervision and punitive approaches do not demonstrate such efficacy and could actually increase recidivism in some contexts. Yet, as the meta-analysis by Lipsey, Landenberger, and Wilson (2007) suggested, cognitive behavioral interventions—which were considered to be the most efficacious—at best reduce recidivism by 30% over control groups who receive no treatment. One of the glaring gaps in the literature was

the lack of effort to quantify what such reductions mean in concrete terms, balancing the expenses of rehabilitative programming against the gains in terms of avoided future incarceration as well as community impact. Unfortunately, it was beyond the scope of the present study to propose such an accounting. That said, by generating detailed insight into the real-world, on-the-ground functioning of one rehabilitative program that was documented to have significant efficacy (see, e.g., Lipsey, Landenberger, & Wilson, 2007), this study aims to generate insights that could improve the efficacy of programs such as Thinking for a Change and thereby maximize their anti-recidivist effects. This would make a substantial contribution not only to the literature on correctional rehabilitation, but to the literatures on cognitive behavioral interventions and programs to boost self-efficacy more broadly.

How this Study will Fill in a Gap in the Literature

By analyzing the narratives of ex-offenders concerning their experiences with Thinking for a Change, the present study hopes to generate new insight into how offenders actually integrate cognitive behavioral programming into their lives, and to elucidate a more nuanced set of factors that influence whether they were able to do so successfully. This approach potentially could serve to address one of the most significant gaps in the literature, which was the lack of insight into how programs function in real-world contexts, and the mechanisms by which they actually effect (or fail to effect) change. Hopefully the findings of the present research could be used to refine models of behavioral change among offenders and to promote the improvement of rehabilitative programming and implementation.

Methodology Literature Review

Literature Review of Related Methods and Chosen Methodology

In their study of individuals who were recovering from episodes of psychosis, Thornhill et al. (2010) employ a narrative approach because, by eliciting patients' own stories of mental illness and recovery, they gain access to the construction of meaning that lies at the heart of the recovery process. Such narratives, they reason, could also "offer important clues as to how they (and others) had facilitated the recovery process" (p. 181). Ex-offenders were by no means subject to such cataclysmic psychological changes as individuals in recovery from psychotic episodes. Nevertheless, they confront a monumental life transition, out of an institutionalized existence defined by their status as offenders and toward a new life that, hopefully, will allow them to avoid reoffending. Programs such as Thinking for a Change offer important cognitive scripts, conceptual tools, and problem-solving skills that could be incorporated into new meanings and behaviors. By tapping offender narratives of their experiences with T4C and attempts to integrate it into their post-incarceration lives, we may similarly gain important, real world clues concerning the process by which they desist (or fail to desist) from crime. A thematic approach to analysis was employed (Kohler, 2005, p. 2), in order to identify major and recurrent themes that emerge from respondents' own accounts and then, finally, connect them back to theories of behavioral change among offenders.

Narrative analysis takes a number of forms. The approach used in the present research was thematic, meaning that the data was culled from major and recurrent themes that emerge from respondents' own stories and accounts. As Kohler (2005) suggested, in thematic analysis, emphasis was placed "on the content of a text, 'what' was said more than 'how' it was said" (2). In a thematic narrative analysis, "investigators collect many stories and inductively create

conceptual groupings from the data. A typology of narratives organized by theme was the typical representational strategy, with case studies or vignettes providing illustration" (Kohler, 2005, p. 2). Narrative methods have a longstanding place in criminology; however, within criminology, they were often focused on sources of crime and deviance rather than rehabilitation. For instance, Presser (2009) suggested that researchers who use narrative within criminology were primarily interested in "that sequence of events, culminating in crime" (p. 178). Moreover, she proposes that "narrative criminology positions the narrative itself, as opposed simply to the events reported in the narrative, as a factor in the motivation for and accomplishment of crime and criminalization" (Presser, 2009, p. 178). In other words, she sees the ways that offenders tell stories about themselves and the situations they confront as playing a role in the commission of crimes. However, as a foremost researcher using narrative methods in the field of criminology, she does not contemplate that narratives may also play a role in how offenders experience rehabilitation and implement the tools and strategies learned in rehabilitative programs. The following review, therefore, ranges at times beyond criminology in order to generate insight into how narrative approaches have been marshaled in the social sciences, with particular reference to behavior change.

In her 2009 article, "The Narratives of Offenders," Presser notes that "use of offenders' 'own' stories has a venerable tradition in criminology" (178, citing Bennett, 1981). However, she believes that criminologists have not embraced narrative and its methodological potential fully, limiting themselves to treating offenders' narratives as straightforward records or data concerning the individual's motives and intents. Instead, she proposes, narrative should be looked at as a primary way that individuals make sense of the world—as an essential part of the mental map that the individual carries and which helps determine their actions by, for instance,

framing actions as desirable or undesirable. "Through narrative we forge a sense of coherence that experience lacks" (Presser, 2009, p. 180). In this regard, she cites Bandura's learning theory, as it suggested that the anticipation of a consequence—the imagination of it as part of an internal narrative—may have far more effect on an individual's behavior than do real consequences (Presser, 2009, p. 184, citing Bandura, 1973). Collective stories, moreover, help to guide individual ones. For instance, war stories help to enshrine the notion of "certain violence as good" (Presser, 2009, p. 185), thereby enabling the individual to narrate him or herself as a good protagonist when committing acts that would otherwise be seen as heinous crimes.

Sandberg (2013) offers insight into the application of Presser's (2009) work, through the analysis of the 'manifesto' of Anders Breivik, a Norwegian mass murderer who killed 77 people over the course of two attacks in 2011. Breivik's manifesto was a long, rambling tract that "justifies what [Breivik] was about to do by constructing a coherent life-story and self-narrative leading up to the attacks. However, in order to do this, he relies heavily on social narratives and the texts of others" (Sandberg, 2013, p. 73). As such, Sandberg (2013) suggested that by analyzing Breivik's own narrative the researcher could get at the actual cause of his crimes and his own sense of agency, but in a way that reads agency as both a personal product and one "conditioned by culture and context" (p. 80). While the present study does not go so far as to adopt Presser's (2009) or Sandberg's (2013) conception of narrative as the "cause" of behaviors—or behavior change—their work illustrates how important it was to attend to the words and narratives that offenders adopt when they speak about themselves and about their journeys toward change. Moreover, their theoretical insights provide an important reminder that offenders were operating within larger narratives—including, for instance, social narratives concerning whether rehabilitation and change was possible for offenders.

Uses of narrative methodology that were closer to the one adopted in the present study could be found in studies of recovery—including recovery from mental illness or addiction. For instance, Thornhill, Clare, & May (2010) use a narrative approach when studying individuals' recovery from episodes of psychosis. They chose a narrative strategy, "since it allows for a focus on the construction of meaning and it was the breakdown of shared meanings which, at least in part, defines psychotic experience. It was also anticipated that the way the individual narrated their experience would offer important clues as to how they (and others) had facilitated the recovery process" (p. 181). Their findings suggest that it was important not simply to track the treatment approaches that were used, correlating approaches with outcomes, but to study individuals' own accounts of the process of change (in this case, adopting strategies that promote mental health and avert psychosis). Likewise, the present study aims to go beyond a finding that programs to boost self-efficacy could have positive effects for offenders and reduce recidivism, in order to understand, from offenders' own accounts, why and how self-efficacy plays a positive role as they move toward a narrative of themselves as law-abiding citizens.

Christensen and Elmeland (2015) offered even greater insight into how narrative could be used in a study such as the present one. Their focus was on how former heavy drinkers recover from alcoholism. In particular, they were interested in the fact that individuals use different strategies in the recovery—some opting to work through Alcoholics Anonymous, while others achieved sobriety through personal change. Other researchers have focused on these different strategies at the group level, research that could yield valuable group-level data, but which could not explain how individuals accept and use various strategies of recovery, incorporating those strategies into an understanding of their own life trajectories. Instead, therefore, Christensen and Elmeland (2015) focused on the narratives that recovering alcoholics offer about their own paths

towards change, thereby eliciting insight into "how different types of treatments and methods for overcoming heavy consumption/misuse influence and shape people and their views of their own pasts, presents and futures" (p. 246). In particular, the researchers focused on how research subjects described "turning points" in their recovery, in order to understand how broad strategies of recovery, such as involvement in AA, were woven into actual, individual cases of change (Christensen & Elmeland, 2015). This comes very close to the approach of the present study, which elicits offenders' stories of involvement in the T4C program, stories that incorporate insight into how they understand the tools of self-efficacy offered to them, and how they incorporate those tools into their lives as ex-offenders.

Similarly, Moulding (2015) uses narrative to explore women's recovery from eating disorders. This was a subject with particular resonance for the present study, because the prognosis was often considered poor for long-term behavioral change among people with eating disorders (Moulding, 2015), just as the prognosis for long-term change among ex-offenders was often considered poor. In order to gain insight into how personal change was achieved, Moulding (2015) conducted in-depth interviews with 14 women who had recovered from eating disorders. Like Sandberg (2013) and Presser (2009), Moulding (2015) values narrative approaches because they shift emphasis away from the purely internal, psychological elements of behavior change, to how respondents incorporate cues from their social world and personal contexts into their recovery. In grouping her findings, Moulding (2015) finds three key themes to be of particular importance: recovery as a journey; turning points, which resonates with Christian & Elmeland's (2015) research into recovery from alcoholism; and transforming relationships. These, in turn, offer valuable insight into themes that may arise in offenders' stories of rehabilitation. This was not to suggest that all paths to recovery and/or rehabilitation offer similar themes. However, the

social and psychological barriers that offenders may face—such as shame, being or feeling ostracized by family, or social expectations that they will not be able to change—may by similar to those faced by, for instance, recovering alcoholics or people recovering from eating disorders. Thus, studies such as Moulding's (2015) offer important clues as to themes to be alert for when analyzing the narratives of ex-offenders attempting to establish new lives and refrain from criminal activities.

Alisic, et al. (2015) used narratives to study how children recover from trauma. Their methodology was noteworthy in that, rather than studying subjects' stories to look for important themes, they use software to analyze the number of times certain words in certain categories appear and thus merge the generally qualitative approach of narrative methods with a quantitative strategy. Although this was not an approach adopted in the present research, Alisic et al. (2015) adopted an important understanding of narrative and its importance in personal change, noting that in the process of recovery, narratives could become, "a vehicle for making meaning of an event, sharing experiences with others, and recruiting social support." In other words, the stories that people tell about their recovery (or, for the present study, their rehabilitation) may not simply be ways of making sense of things to themselves; they may also play a role in how individuals represent themselves to others, seek connection, and elicit support—all of which were important points to attend to in analyzing data from the present study. Alisic, et. al. (2015) offered another valuable methodological insight, because they seek to compare the narratives of parents and children concerning children's recovery from trauma. It was beyond the scope of the present study to compare how others close to offenders understand their rehabilitation and the importance of self-efficacy in that process. However, the insights

generated by the comparative narrative approach adopted by Alisic et al. (2015) may well point the way to further research on the role of self-efficacy in offender rehabilitation.

Conclusion to the Literature Review

Most Significant Findings Justifying the Study

In the 1970's, public attitudes towards prisoners and corrections work took a so-called punitive turn. Faith in the rehabilitative ideal eroded, and prisons came increasingly to be regarded as mere warehouses for 'storing' offenders and segregating them from the rest of society, without offering tools for rehabilitation and, ultimately, reintegration to civilian life (see, e.g., Irwin, 2005; Phelps, 2011; Wacquant, 2006). However, a more balanced and pragmatic approach to corrections was reemerging, driven in no small part by robust and consistent findings that certain types of programming—chief among these, cognitive behavioral interventions—could significantly reduce recidivism rates. While the role of self-efficacy in curbing recidivism was less well studied, broad evidence from across an array of contexts suggested that self-efficacy may be *the* key factor to effecting significant and lasting behavioral change. The foregoing frames the importance of program such as Thinking for a Change, which seek to curb recidivism by offering problem-solving skills and competencies and new cognitive scripts to replace criminogenic ones. The present study sought to go beyond measuring recidivism rates among program participants to understanding, through ex-offenders' own narratives, how they have integrated Thinking for a Change into their lives post-incarceration and the factors that have facilitated or inhibited their success in leading crime-free lives.

Summary of What was Known and Not Known Related to this Study

Much was known concerning the utility of programs such as T4C for curbing recidivism rates. However, extremely little was known concerning the mechanics and dynamics of this

effect, or the factors that limit program success. What do prisoners see as the most vital tools and lessons they take away from T4C, and how do these compare to program objectives and protocols? How do social input and modeling in the correctional context serve to support or undermine program goals? How do these same variables operate in life after incarceration, and could experiences of mastery achieved in the correctional setting translate to post-prison life? What types of problems, choices, barriers, or dilemmas emerge as important turning points where participants experience themselves either implementing or failing to implement lessons from T4C? What forms of support do they believe might have helped them to better implement new skills and goals? How do social narratives of crime and rehabilitation interact with participant attempts to implement and live what they have learned through T4C? And what role does a competing sense of criminal self-efficacy play in ex-offenders' attempts to lead more normative, crime-free lives? This was the type of question that the present research hoped to 'get at' through analysis of ex-offender narratives.

Summary of how Study Fills a Gap in the Literature

One of the most significant gaps in the literature that this study potentially could fill concerns competing forms of self-efficacy. As persuasively argued by Brezina and Topalli (2012), as well as Laferriere and Morselli (2015), the persistence of criminal behaviors may well result in part from the generation of criminal self-efficacy. The current literature largely assumes that programs such as T4C could foster new forms of self-efficacy among participants. However, it ignores the possibility that these new experiences of self-efficacy may conflict with deeply entrenched feelings of competence, confidence, and ability to determine outcomes—i.e., self-efficacy—that derive from the individual's history within the criminal realm. By eliciting offenders' narratives of T4C and their attempts at behavior change, this was one of the first

studies potentially to address the issue of competing self-efficacies among formerly incarcerated individuals.

Transition

As the above makes clear, the goals of the present research rely heavily on its methodological approach. By eliciting and analyzing prisoner narratives, the researcher aims to generate critical new insights into the functioning of programs such as T4C and limits to their functioning, without having to flatten relevant phenomena into easily measured and coded constructs. It was hoped that, through this grounded, narrative approach, findings will emerge that could enhance the efficacy of rehabilitative programming may even help to refine the theoretical models upon which such programs were based.

Chapter 3

Introduction

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to generate new insights into the potential of the Thinking for a Change (T4C) cognitive behavioral program to reduce recidivism rates among ex-offenders from the Lorain/Medina CBCF. Recidivism was a thorny issue, with rates of reoffending topping 70 per cent among individuals released from state prisons and reaching 45 per cent among those released from federal ones (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2016). Since the 1970s—as discussed in-depth in Chapter 2—numerous scholars, political commentators, and corrections professionals have viewed recidivism as an intractable problem, suggesting that attempts at rehabilitation were futile. Yet, even at a point when the nation was most enthralled by the doctrine of 'nothing works' (Martinson, 1974; Phelps, 2011), the rehabilitative ideal never completely disappeared from U.S. corrections. For instance, a survey of prison guards in 1983 revealed that, while guards viewed their primary task as custodial, they also rejected the idea that rehabilitation was *not* part of their job (Cullen, Lutze, Link, & Wolfe, 1989, p. 37). Currently, moreover, the pendulum was swinging back, so that:

> …even Correction Corp. of America (CCA), the largest private prison firm, has recently announced a change in its business model, committing to 'play a leadership role in reducing recidivism...planning to expand the company's prison rehabilitation programs, drug counseling and its prisoner re-entry work in cities around the country.' (Mastrobuoni & Terlizzese, 2014, p. 2).

A rich and growing body of scholarship, meanwhile, demonstrated that certain approaches to rehabilitation could significantly curb rates of reoffending. CBT programs figure

prominently here, with repeated studies suggesting that offenders who receive CBT-based interventions were 20-30% less likely to reoffend than those who do not (Lipsey, Landenberger, & Wilson, 2007, p. 4), and that among those who do recidivate, the time to next offense was significantly longer among populations exposed to CBT interventions than ones who were not (Henning & Frueh, 1996). Among CBT programs, moreover, so-called "Reasoning and Rehabilitation" approaches such as T4C show the most promise (Lipsey, Landenberger, & Wilson, 2007; see also Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, 2013; Landenberger, & Lipsey, 2005; Coughlin, Cosby, & Landenberger, 2003).

Given that there was increasing recognition of the utility of well-planned rehabilitative programs and that the scholarship lays a strong foundation for the importance of CBT-based strategies, this was an ideal time to pursue research that generates new insights into what works and how. The present study aims to make its own discrete contribution to the literature, but not by pursuing fairly conventional strategies such as, for instance, applying T4C to understudied offender populations, altering elements of the program, or strictly controlling the conditions under which the program was offered. Instead, it employs a methodological strategy that was rarely applied in this context: narrative approaches.

Not surprisingly, the vast majority of peer-reviewed studies of interventions such as T4C take the form of quantitative analyses. Specifically, they tend either to employ an experimental design (i.e., looking for statistically significant variation in outcomes between sample populations that receive treatment and ones that do not, as in Henning & Frueh, 1996) or to take the form of quantitative metanalyses (see, e.g., Lipsey, Landenberger, & Wilson, 2007). Anecdotally, the emphasis on quantitative approaches has been driven both by the need to document, as rigorously as possible, the idea that 'something works,' as well as the tendency of

corrections institutions to favor programs backed by hard data when prioritizing needs and making budget allocations.

However, now that rigorous, experimental studies and meta-analyses have repeatedly demonstrated the utility of CBT-based interventions, new forms of inquiry may be called for. Specifically, it was important to go beyond documenting *correlations* between rehabilitative programs and reductions in recidivism rates, in order to understand, in a full and integrative fashion, how positive outcomes were achieved. How do ex-offenders recall and understand the lessons of the T4C program? What ones have stayed with them over time, and what allows them to activate these lessons in crucial, real-life situations? How do they experience new forms of self-efficacy linked to law-abiding lifestyles, and how valuable do these new forms of self-efficacy feel, relative to elements of 'criminal self-efficacy' (Laferriere & Morselli, 2015; Brezina & Topalli, 2012) they may also experience? What have the key turning points been in their journeys towards either reoffending or establishing law-abiding lives? And what social factors (peers, family, institutional resources, etc.) have served either to support or undermine the new coping skills, cognitive scripts, and normative forms of self-efficacy that the T4C program sought to nurture? How do participants understand public narratives of recidivism, and where do they fit themselves into these broader stories? By eliciting and analyzing ex-offender's own narratives, this research hopes to generate a more complex and grounded understanding of how T4C actually works, and why it fails—findings that could ultimately be used to reassess and refine CBT-based programming for offenders and perhaps even suggest new lines of inquiry into the role of self-efficacy in promoting behavior change more generally.

Research Design

At the broadest level, this study was concerned with the social and economic costs of recidivism and the toll that it takes on families, communities, and the criminal justice system. The research design has been devised to generate new insights into one form of rehabilitative programming—cognitive behavioral interventions and, specifically, T4C—that repeatedly has been demonstrated to help in stemming the propensity to reoffend. As such, the research findings ideally will contribute to the strengthening of T4C programming within the Ohio prison system (and potentially beyond), making a small but meaningful contribution to the issue of recidivism. Moreover, the humanist design inherent in narrative approaches accords with the problem statement's concern for multiple levels of social wellbeing.

Type of Qualitative Methodology

The design fits squarely within the narrative branch of qualitative approaches. Interestingly, narrative methods have long been central to criminology, although within that discipline, they have primarily been used to detect and classify etiologies of crime and deviance, rather than to elucidate processes of change and rehabilitation (Presser, 2009). More recently, researchers within a number of social science disciplines have applied narrative methods to the task of understanding a wide range of behavioral changes and psycho-social transformations, from battling addictions (Christensen & Elmeland) and eating disorders (Moulding, 2015), to the process of recovery after exposure to trauma (Alsinic, et al., 2015) or even a psychotic break (Thornhill et al., 2010). One of the things that makes narratives so useful, was that they could show how multiple levels of social organization (e.g., individual; family; formal institutions; and broad social discourses) intersect and interact in the individual's experience (see Alsinic, et al., 2015; Sandberg, 2013; Presser, 2009). That could be particularly useful in studies like the

present one, where institutions (e.g., prisons, parole agencies) were deeply involved in respondents' lives and respondents tend to be keenly aware of broad social discourses concerning their 'place' in society.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher's role was limited to data collection (collection of respondent narratives) and analysis. However, in order to elicit detailed and meaningful narratives, the researcher must establish enough of a rapport with the participant to gain his trust. As noted below, respondent narratives were solicited via a range of media; however, when the researcher recorded participant narratives by phone or in person, he came close to playing the role of a participant-observer and his presence and demeanor could affect how much information respondents offer, or what kind. Moreover, the narrative approach required the researcher to take on a central role in data analysis—e.g., determining which elements of respondents' stories were most important; discovering and grouping themes that emerge across multiple respondent narratives; etc. (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Thus, substantially more bias may have been introduced to the findings than would be the case with a project based on numerical surveys.

Setting and Sample

Respondents were recruited from among a sample of ex-offenders who served time in a medium-security prison, Lorain/Medina CBCF, and participated in the Thinking for a Change (T4C) program while there. The researcher began with a list of 240 such individuals who had been out of prison for approximately two years. The sample mimicked the racial makeup of the statistics reflected in the T4C program.

Using an online random number generator, the researcher initiated contact with 30 members of the list at a time, until a sample size of 30 willing participants in the racial

percentages reflected by T4C was reflected. It was important to note that this stratified sample reflected the percentages of the races found in T4C and not in the racial percentages of the public or of other treatment programs.

Data Collection Procedures

Even two years after release, the lives of some ex-offenders may be chaotic (for instance, some may be in transitional housing or shelters [McKernan, 2018]); their access to transportation and/or computers may be limited; and some may not in fact be fully literate. Therefore, the researcher needed to offer a variety of ways respondents could offer their narratives: by having a conversation with the researcher, over the phone or in person; by using their smartphones and making audio recordings of themselves responding to a set of prompts set by text, mail, or email; or by responding to prompts in writing, via email or handwritten letter. Clearly, this variation was less than ideal and could potentially introduce an additional source of bias to the research. However, given the population being studied, it was vital that the researcher make it as easy as possible for individuals to participate. In conversations via phone or in-person, the researcher generally limited himself to the same set of prompts that other respondents may receive via text or email. In cases where self-recorded or written narratives turned out to be extremely short or lacking in detail (because the researcher was not present to offer follow-up prompts), the researcher attempted to elicit additional detail through a follow-up phone conversation. When that was not possible, he would move to the next randomly-generated number on the list and attempt to recruit an additional participant.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was an iterative process. All oral and handwritten narratives were transcribed. The researcher then read through the transcripts a first time, noting important themes

and narrative elements (e.g., characters, turning points, tensions) that emerge, highlighting the relevant text and typing extremely brief, single-phrase descriptions of them into a spreadsheet. He then identified common themes and narrative elements that emerged in multiple respondent narratives, as well as striking 'outlier' comments that revealed substantially different viewpoints and understandings. Before composing his findings, the researcher returned to the original transcripts, this time reading all the evidence for a particular theme or element 'across' the set of narratives. He then challenged himself to question whether the pieces of evidence from different narratives actually spoke to a similar enough phenomenon to be grouped together. When necessary, he excluded examples that no longer seem to fit with the emergent theme/element. Findings comprised a review of common themes and narrative elements that emerged through this process, along with counter-examples, where relevant. Effort was made to contextualize each of these themes or elements, using knowledge of the T4C program; on-the-ground conditions in the prisons where they were offered; the organization of the Ohio criminal justice system; well-documented issues common to ex-offenders, and so on.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness of the data was established by several means. First, for a narrative analysis, 30 respondents was considered a significant amount. By contrast, for instance, it was notable that some narrative researchers publish peer-reviewed articles based on one rich narrative alone (see, e.g., Sandberg, 2013). Because the researcher would continue to gather respondents until all narratives contain a rich description from each respondent's view, it was possible to identify themes and narrative elements that repeat with frequency and were therefore robust indicators of common issues. The researcher analyzed respondents' stories in light of his own substantial knowledge of the criminal justice and prison systems, the concerns of incarcerated

individuals, and the T4C program. This will allow him to go back and probe, where appropriate, aspects of respondent narrative responses that do not have the ring of veracity. Alternately, these findings could be reported along with the reasons for questioning their credibility. Finally, the researcher triangulated his findings with the rich scholarship on prisoner rehabilitation.

Protection of Participant's Rights

The researcher reviewed a statement of the project, its purpose, and participants' rights (including the right to discontinue participation at any time) with each respondent before enrolling him in the study. Signed statements of informed consent were gathered at the time each participant was enrolled. No inducements were made in order to encourage participation; nor will the choice to participate affect, in any manner, the terms of a respondent's parole or be reported to any office or officer. Moreover, in keeping with the confidentiality practices described in the next paragraph, the researcher did not share any information concerning respondent narratives, until his findings were in a format suitable for preliminary review by his academic committee (or, later, presentation and peer review).

Full confidentiality was assured. On enrollment, each participant name was matched with a number, and from then on, any information related to that respondent was identified only by number. (An electronic file matching names and numbers were password protected, and the researcher was the only individual who had the password.) Any demographic information collected was used to present a demographic overview of the sample population, never to present the 'demographic profile' of a particular participant. If, in the presentation of his research and findings, the researcher wished to quote a passage from a respondent narrative that contained potentially identifying details, the researcher either a) omitted the details and used brackets to signify the omission; b) substituted generic information for specific details (e.g., the class of a

felony rather than the specific name of the felony); or c) substituted fake details of a similar nature, when the details were not critical to the meaning of the narrative (e.g., hair or eye color). Complete confidentiality was assured except in the highly unlikely event that, in the course of offering their story, a respondent makes a truly credible threat of self-harm or harm to others.

No remuneration was offered for participation in the study. However, the researcher explained that by offering their most frank and honest narratives, participants potentially was helping to improve T4C and similar programming.

Presentation of Results

Results were chiefly reported in narrative form, as an organized discussion of the themes and narrative elements that recur and how they relate to one another. However, certain findings were also be reported in tabular form, in order to give the reader a brief, comprehensive overview of, for instance, the demographic profile of respondents, the frequency with which key themes and narrative elements occurred, and similar data that lent themselves to tabular presentation.

Research Design

Restatement of Research Questions

The research questions were as follows:

1) How do inmates' experiences with Thinking for a Change expand our understanding of cognitive behavioral therapy in a correctional setting?

2) To what extent was Thinking for a Change effective in helping prisoners avoid recidivism, and what does it tell us about the efficacy of cognitive behavioral-based therapeutic approaches?

3) In what ways did Thinking for a Change help prisoners transition to society, and what does this particular approach reveal about how former prisoners avoid becoming recidivists?

Central Concept

Three concepts/phenomena were central to this study. The first was recidivism, a term used widely in the literature that means the tendency of an ex-offender to reoffend. It was intriguing that no such term exists to describe the tendency of the ex-offender to return to and maintain a law-abiding life. Because criminological research was primarily concerned with deviance, it may be the case that its central concepts and terminology do not adequately represent the full spectrum of intentions and outcomes for offenders.

Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) represented a second term central to this study. Although CBT did not emerge as a codified approach until the 1970s, it has since gained enormous traction as a psychotherapeutic approach (Sudak, 2012, p. 99). CBT proceeded by, first, beliefs and cognitive patterns that the individual(s) in treatment relies on, but which cause difficulty in his or her life (Sudak, 2012). Often these take the form of statements concerning the way the world works, the intentions of others, or the abilities of the individual. In the context of treating offenders, certain specific, criminogenic thinking patterns were targeted, such as self-justificatory thinking, which allows the offender to justify criminal behavior; misinterpretation of social cues, which could lead to conflict and violence; displacement of blame, such as reasoning that the 'deck was stacked' against one; and "schemas of dominance and entitlement," by which the offender sees life as a zero-sum game, in which the most important thing was to get ahead however possible—since presumably this was the way others were behaving too (Lipsey, Landenberger, & Wilson, 2007, p. 4). CBT next offers individuals

new cognitive 'scripts' to replace problematic ones, and it helps the individual become aware of problematic thinking and prompts them to practice relying on the new, more normative scrips, so that these become incorporated as automatic forms of thinking (Sudak, 2012). In this manner, CBT aimed ultimately to create behavior change, as decisions and actions increasingly follow the new, more positive scripts that therapy provides. The Thinking for a Change (T4C) program was based on the CBT model.

Self-efficacy represented a final concept central to the present study. In the late 1970s, social psychologist Albert Bandura (2000) introduced the concept of self-efficacy and suggested that it was central to motivation and behavior change; it has since become a major field of research in and of itself. Unlike self-esteem, a sense of self-efficacy does not reflect a global, positive evaluation of oneself; rather it was a measure of the individual's sense of being able to determine the course of their lives, make changes, master new skills, and shape the way they were viewed by others. As a result, researchers tend to speak of specific types of self-efficacy, in specific domains of practice, such as "dieting self-efficacy" (Povey, et al., 2000) or "teacher self- efficacy" (Pfitzner, 2016). The model was based on the idea that any individual, regardless of social background or situation, has the ability to improve their own sense of self-efficacy and thus bolster the possibility that they will effectively change undesirable behaviors (Bandura, 2000). This makes it an attractive concept in rehabilitative work, and some scholars of rehabilitation view the achievement of heightened self-efficacy as a "fundamental requirement" of behavior change among incarcerated populations and ex-offenders (Casey, Day, Vess, & Ward, 2012, p. 56). Scholars such as Laferriere and Morselli (2015) and Brezina and Topalli (2012) have proposed models of "criminal self-efficacy," by which re-offending may be guided in part by the offender's sense of competence as a criminal. This study sought to establish, in

part, the extent to which T4C helps ex-offenders establish self-efficacy around the skills and behaviors needed to live a law-abiding life.

Best Research Method

The present research was solely qualitative. The vast majority of studies concerning the usefulness of CBT-based interventions for offenders were quantitative, taking the form either of controlled study/experiments or quantitative meta-analyses. There was a logic to this emphasis on quantitative work, given that policy-makers and prison administrators want to see 'hard data' concerning the efficacy of an approach in order to fund or implement it. Given that, at present, there was solid quantitative evidence that CBT-based interventions could reduce recidivism rates by 20-30% (see, e.g., the meta-analysis by Lipsey, Landenberger, & Wilson, 2007), this study uses a qualitative approach to facilitate a deeper understanding of how such programs work, and what factors facilitate or undermine ex-offenders' attempts to integrate the lessons from CBT-based programs into their lives.

Grounded theory allowed the researcher to move from a class of observations to the generation of a theory concerning how their nature or operation (Creswell & Poth, 2017). In the present study, however, the theoretical framework has been supplied by previous research, and the goal was to gain additional insight into the mechanisms by which previously theorized phenomena (such as CBT and self-efficacy) operate. Phenomenology was called for when the researcher sought to grasp the essential nature of a human experience or other social phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2017). It would be appropriate if, for instance, the present research sought to discover what being incarcerated *means* to offenders. It was far less useful when, as here, the goal was to understand mechanisms of change. Ethnography involves studying an entire cultural group over an extended time, usually through participant observation, and

understanding the shared meanings and values that structure their group life (Creswell & Poth, 2017). If the goal of the present study were to understand the shared life of a group of prisoners or jail guards within one prison, ethnography might be the right approach. However, to better understand the functioning of the T4C program, it was necessary to study ex-offenders who no longer interact within a single community, making an ethnography inappropriate. The case study was the option that may come closest to facilitating the present research. In a case study, the researcher studies a single, bounded social unit and uses it to illustrate a specific hypothesis or principle (Creswell & Poth, 2017). While this approach might generate insight into the issues framed by the present research, it would be pragmatically difficult, since it would require sustained access to all the participants in a T4C program over a significant period of time. Moreover, the present research was concerned primarily with how the T4C program operates after release, and how ex-offenders were able to incorporate its lessons into their lives outside prison (or why they were unable to). Therefore, a case study approach was not chosen.

Justification for Research Method

The present study used a narrative approach to generate insight into how cognitive behavioral interventions such as Thinking for a Change operated within the lives of ex-offenders as they attempt to live law-abiding lives after their release from prison. It placed special emphasis on whether and how program participants gain and benefit from new feelings of self-efficacy related to a law-abiding life. In other words, a *process* lied at the heart of the research, more than an outcome, and this differentiates it from research that sought to determine statistical correlations between rehabilitative programming and recidivism rates.

Like all processes, the one that lied at the heart of the present research was one that could be told as a story, with a beginning state; a journey of attempted change, along with turning

points, central characters, complications, hurdles overcome, etc.; and a provisional end point. (The end point was necessarily provisional, since maintenance of a law-abiding lifestyle was an ongoing process. However, the provisional end point of the story for purposes of the study was whether, at two years after release, respondents had reoffended; believe they had mastered a law-abiding lifestyle; or continued to struggle with choices related to recidivism). The process-based nature of the evidence made narrative analysis extremely attractive, since the approach allowed the researcher to probe these stories from the respondents' viewpoints, and to compare how various respondents' stories have unfolded. A narrative approach also gave the researcher an opportunity to understand the complex ways that key phenomena (e.g., family, peer networks, parole officers, job opportunities) interweave with the respondent's attempts to put lessons from rehabilitative programming into practice.

Role of the Researcher

Researcher's Role Defined

The researcher's role was probably best classified as observer-participant. However, there was a strong caveat. In traditional observer-participant studies, the researcher takes part in activities central to the phenomenon under study. For instance, he might take part in a T4C program, attending all meetings along with the offenders enrolled in the program. In the present study, however, the researcher's participation was limited to the process of eliciting narratives from ex-offenders. In doing so, he inevitably will affect the course of the narratives to some extent, and in this sense he was not merely an observer. In all other senses, however, the researcher should be considered an observer.

Researcher's Role in Data Collection

As noted above, the researcher played a significant role in data collection. It was important to keep in mind that the ex-offenders who participated were nearly all still involved with the criminal justice system to some extent (i.e., they were under the supervision of parole officers). As a result, they may be very wary of speaking openly about their experiences with the T4C program and/or their challenges in leading law-abiding lives after incarceration. Additionally, prisoners tend to form strong bonds while incarcerated, and as one component of this, they were reluctant to share personal information with people who did not share these bonds. The rapport and trust that the researcher was able to establish with these ex-offenders was essential to gaining their honest stories.

Personal or Professional Relationships Between Researcher and Participants

The researcher had no professional relationship, past or present, with participants in the study. The only personal relationship between the researcher and respondents was the temporary relationship that arises in the course of talking with them and involving them in the process of disclosing their personal narratives. As a net result, the researcher had no formal or informal power over participants. However, it was critical to convince participants that no information they disclosed was shared with individuals such as parole officers, who do have significant power over their lives. Participants' confidentiality was completely respected, except in the extremely unlikely event that a participant disclosed credible plans to harm himself or others. In the letter of informed consent that participants signed, this one exception to complete confidentiality was explained.

Researcher Biases

In any qualitative inquiry, it was important to manage researcher bias as much as possible. Because the researcher had extensive experience with, and understanding of, the criminal justice system, there was a danger that he would fall back on preconceived understandings, either when speaking with respondents and eliciting their narratives, or when interpreting the data. In order to manage this potential source of bias, the researcher first prepared a document to guide elicitation of participants' narratives. This was necessarily a loose document, since the goal was to prompt the participant to tell a story and to let them tell that story as fully as possible, without guiding them. However, by preparing a central series of prompts beforehand, the researcher will have time to critically review them and attempt to ensure that they reflect the purposes of the study rather than any preconceived biases. In all communication with participants, the researcher attempted to maintain a neutral and trustworthy demeanor. He was positive in all personal aspects of the interaction (e.g., greetings, expressions of thanks for participating), but once participants began telling their stories, he tried not to make comments—positive or negative—concerning the information that the participant disclosed, and endeavored to use neutral phrases, such as "uh-huh" or "I get it" to encourage the participant to keep talking, rather than interjections that could betray personal approval or disapproval. Biases were easier to control when it came to interpretation of the data, because at that stage, emphasis was placed on finding the patterns that emerge from reading and analysis of the group of narratives that have been gathered. The researcher used the process of "bracketing" to avoid drawing conclusions or connections before he had systematically explored the data.

Applicable Ethical Issues

Many, if not most, of the potential respondents for this study had economic difficulties. Therefore, no financial inducements were used to solicit participation. Not only would such inducements be unfair to those who did not have the opportunity to participate, but they might very well skew the information collected, since participants might be motivated to 'tell a good story' to get the financial reward, rather than motivated intrinsically to relay a more honest narrative. The only inducement that was used was to explain to potential participants that the findings of the study could be used to modify and improve rehabilitative programs such as the one they took part in. It should not be underestimated how powerful a motivation this could be for people in the criminal justice system, since they often feel their voices were not heard or considered when planning programming for them. Of course, the motivation to tell their story in order to change/improve programming could itself skew results. However, the research was based on the assumption that there was natural variation in respondents' attitude to the program—i.e., that those who value the program highly, those who have strong criticisms, and those who fall somewhere in between will all be equally motivated to share their experiences. Finally, it should be noted, that the simple opportunity to tell one's story about *any* aspect of life during and after prison could act as a healthy incentive to offenders. By definition, they were a population we marginalize socially and keep out of sight; the opportunity to speak freely about their lives was therefore often a welcome one in my experience.

Setting and Sample

Location of Data Gathering

Data was gathered in several ways and at various locations, depending on the needs of participants. Two years after incarceration, life was still fairly chaotic and stressful for some of

the ex-offenders from whom I gathered data. (For instance, they were looking for work; they were in transitional housing; they were encountering family/marital problems and stressors; etc.) Given this, the goal was to be as accommodating as possible concerning the manner in which data were gathered. Initial contact was made via letter with follow-up phone calls. All calls were made when the researcher was alone (so as not to compromise confidentiality) and from a single number (the researcher's cell phone). Respondents had the option of offering their narratives through a one-on-one interview; over the phone; or via electronic means or handwritten documents. Where respondents were willing to meet face-to-face, which was the optimal condition, the researcher worked with the respondent to determine the most suitable location where privacy could be offered. Meetings might take place at the respondents' home, the researcher's office, or in a quiet, neutral location, such as a park, where it was not difficult to maintain distance from other people. When respondents offered to provide their narratives via telephone, the researcher made sure to arrange the conversation at a time when he could be alone in his office, in order to ensure privacy and minimize the potential for disruptions. Participants also had the option to provide their narratives in the form of voice recordings—i.e., as MP3 files that most cellphone users could easily make using their smartphones. Finally, respondents could submit written narratives via email, fax, or traditional mail. For all correspondence via email, including the submission of electronic voice recordings, the researcher set up a unique email account used solely for purposes of the present research. Faxes forwarded directly to this email account as well.

Population for Study

The population comprised ex-offenders, drawn from Lorain/Medina CBCF, who participated in the Thinking for a Change (T4C) program before their release. The first selection

criterion was length of time since release, which ranged from 21 to 27 months—in other words, approximately two years since their release, with a three-month leeway on either end of that period. All members of the population were male. In future studies, it would be ideal for similar studies to be conducted with female ex-offenders and/or for comparative studies of male and female ex-offenders to be pursued, since the two populations face distinct challenges both during incarceration and after release. However, male offenders outnumber female prisoners by more than ten to one in Ohio prisons; for instance, in 2015, Ohio prisons housed 4,430 women with sentences greater than a year (Sawyer, 2018a), compared to 47,803 men (Sawyer, 2018b), and these numbers mirror the gender disparity found in incarceration rates nationwide (Wagner, 2010). This made it both urgent and expedient to study avenues for rehabilitation among male offenders. Additionally, all participants were functionally fluent in English, a criterion that was assessed by the researcher during initial contact. Unfortunately, this meant that a substantial segment of the ex-offender population was under-represented in the present study, since Hispanic individuals have the second highest incarceration rates in Ohio by race/ethnicity (Prison Policy Initiative, 2010). This was simply a practical limitation, given that the researcher did not have the Spanish-language fluency to collect and interpret data in Spanish, or the resources to hire translators or research assistants. As a result, it was a limitation that needed noted in the findings.

Another important selection criterion related to mailing address. Formally, all parolees must provide current addresses to their parole officers and update this information whenever it changes. In practice, however, the ex-offender population has great difficulties with housing (McKernan, 2018), and many members of the population may not have a stable mailing address. This was complicated by the fact that, based on anecdotal evidence, many members of the

population also switch phones or lack phone service frequently—e.g., through loss or theft, in order to take advantage of free phone plans for low-income individuals, or because they could not pay their bill for the month. (Somewhat ironically, those members of the sample who have already re-offended and been reincarcerated may be the easiest to locate and ensure continuity of contact with.) In initial contact with potential respondents, the researcher attempted to ascertain whether the individual had a stable mailing address he accessed regularly, to ensure he could be contacted if, for instance, his phone number no longer worked. Finally, all individuals needed to be recorded as having completed the T4C program. (Criteria for completion, such as how many sessions may be missed, might differ by prison. As part of background research, the researcher ascertained what the criteria were for completion within each prison's program.) A number of other demographic criteria were recorded but were not be used to select participants, including nature of offense, years spent incarcerated in last sentence, years spent incarcerated overall, age, race/ethnicity (as self-identified by respondent), and religion.

Sample Determination

In narrative inquiry, small sample sizes were routine. As Creswell and Poth (2017) noted, "[n]arrative research was best for capturing the detailed stories or life experiences of a single life or the lives of a small number of individuals" (p. 55). In this light, a sample size of 30 represented a fairly ambitious goal for narrative studies. The nature of the subject matter, however, made this larger-than-usual sample size important. As has been discussed, the goal was not to replicate the type of statistical associations that other researchers have found between participation in interventions such as T4C and reduction in recidivism rates. Nevertheless, corrections workers and prison administrators comprise one of the natural audiences for this study, and such individuals typically value findings that were demonstrated through robust data,

making it important to strive for as large a sample size as pragmatically possible. On the other hand, unlike many narrative studies, the goal of this research was not to collect evidence concerning the entire life history of an individual. When that was the goal, researchers may spend hours with each individual and collect extensive materials beyond the interview, such as family albums; birth and marriage certificates; diaries, and the like (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Here, rather than entire, detailed life histories, the goal was to collect more contained stories of returning from prison and attempting to establish a law-abiding life. The amount of time it took to collect (and later analyze) each participant's narrative was therefore be greatly reduced, and additional (documentary) materials were not collected from or about respondents.

Based on similar, peer-reviewed studies that used narrative methods to explore complex behavioral changes and responses to new life situations, a sample size of 30 emerged as an ambitious but appropriate one. For instance, in a narrative study of individuals recovering from psychosis, Anderson (2010) used a sample size of nine, reflecting an attempt to produce more robust findings than could be generated based on the narratives of one or two individuals, balanced by the intensity of the subject, which required prolonged time speaking with subjects. In her work on women recovering from eating disorders, Moulding (2015) collected 14 personal narratives, while in their work on recovery from alcohol abuse, Christensen and Elmeland (2015) collected 42. This range suggested that 30 represented a significant, but not unachievable sample size, one that balanced the desire for robust findings with the demanding nature of narrative inquiry and the richness of the data it produced for analysis.

Sampling Methods

Although the present research used a qualitative approach only, a stratified sampling strategy was employed. Given the restrictions that already existed in the sample population (e.g.,

women were excluded; individuals without English proficiency were excluded), the researcher determined that a sampling strategy was desirable, in order to maximize the likelihood of reaching a representative sample of the population. The initial population was generated from lists of individuals who completed the T4C program while incarcerated at the target prisons and who were released within the 21-27 month period discussed above. These names were then entered into a spreadsheet, alternating names from Prison 1 and Prison 2, so that odd numbers attached to all names from the first prison, and even numbers to all names from the second. Using numbers generated from Random.org (a free random-number generator offered online), the researcher then randomly ordered the list, and initiated contact with the first 30 individuals on the randomized list. Some potential participants were excluded from this initial sample, due to lack of either English proficiency or a stable mailing address, because they declined to participate, or because the quota for their race was filled.

The researcher then proceeded down the randomized list until a full complement of 30 participants in the correct racial groups were reached and proceeded to collect the narratives of these 30 individuals. It was anticipated that there were further exclusions from this initial sample. For instance, an individual might agree to participate but never found time to provide a narrative. Likewise, some narratives might be so incomplete, either after follow-up, as to represent a non-response. As these exclusions arose, the researcher moved down the randomized list and continued to initiate contact until—ideally—a full sample size of 30 personal narratives was achieved. As described immediately below, however, 30 was an aspirational number. If the researcher reached saturation before 30 narratives were collected, a smaller sample size would result.

Sample Size

In quantitative methods there exist well-defined methods for determining what an adequate sample of a population would be. In qualitative studies such as narrative-based inquiries, however, a certain amount of judgment on the part of the researcher was required to determine a sample's adequacy. The concept of saturation became important here. Generally, saturation was said to have been reached when the researcher saw certain themes and concepts occurring in the data over and over, and no new themes or concepts seem to be emerging. "Most researchers follow this pragmatic approach to theoretical saturation, ceasing further data collection and analysis, when it seems likely that to continue would be almost futile" (Floor & Wood, 2006, p. 156). For the purposes of the present study, based on pragmatic considerations as well as comparison to similar, peer-reviewed inquiries, 30 narratives were selected as an ideal, aspirational sample size. However, given the specifics of the population and the difficulties that were encountered in recruiting participants and ensuring follow-through, the researcher realized it might not be possible to collect 30, detail-rich narratives. In that case, the researcher had decided to cease collection of new narratives when, on review of the data already collected, it appeared that the saturation threshold has been reached.

Participation Eligibility

The initial sampling frame was established by a list of approximately 240 ex-offenders provided to the researcher by the Lorain/Medina Community Based Correctional Facility. The Lorain/Medina CBCF will formulate the list for the researcher, based on its records, including only those individuals who 1) served time in one of the two prisons targeted for this research; 2) were released from one of those facilities within a period of 21-27 months before the start of the research; and 3) participated in the Thinking for a Change program during their incarceration at

Lorain/Medina CBCF. All potential participants were on parole, a status that enabled the release

of their names to the researcher for the purposes of the study. Because the targeted prisons

housed men only, all members of the lists provided to the researcher could be assumed to be

male. With respect to gender, the gender identity of participants as determined by the

Lorain/Medina CBCF was relied on when establishing the sampling frame. This raised the

possibility that the pool of potential participants may include a small number of transsexual

individuals who identify as women. There was no doubt that transsexual offenders face distinct

problems both within the prison system and upon release. However, they will have experienced

the same correctional setting and T4C intervention as other members of the sampling frame.

Thus, their unique perspectives would only add to the richness of the data and should not be

grounds for exclusion. Through initial contact by mail and telephone, the researcher excluded

members of the sampling frame who did not speak English with a high level of proficiency; who

did not have a stable mailing address; and/or who could not commit, for whatever reason, to

following through with the study.

Characteristics of Sample

After the researcher received the list, he entered all names into a spreadsheet, alternating

names from the two prisons as they were entered, so that ex-offenders who served time in Prison

1 were assigned odd numbers, and ex-offenders who served time in Prison 2 were assigned even

numbers. Because the population may not be evenly divided between Prison 1 and Prison 2, the

researcher created dummy entries to make up for any "shortfall" and complete the even/odd

listing. Using an online random number generator, the researcher then randomized the list and

began seeking enrollment in the study by contacting the first 30 names from the randomized set

of entries, discarding any dummy entries and continuing on to the next valid name. As discussed

above, certain members of the sampling frame were excluded after initial contact because they were not sufficiently proficient in English, according to the researcher's judgment, to make collection of a personal narrative feasible; they did not have a stable mailing address that they check on a regular basis, in case their phone service was interrupted or their phone number changed; and/or they refused participation or did not appear able to follow through. As members of the sampling frame were excluded, the researcher moved down the list and contacted the next name entered on the randomized listing. Similarly, if participants proved unable to follow through as the study proceeded, the researcher continued down the list in the fashion, in an attempt to gather a full complement of 30 participants who were able to see the project through. Thus, the sample represented the first 30 members of the sampling frame, contacted according to this process, who met the inclusion criteria; agreed to take part in the study; and followed through to provide (either through an interview or by submitting their own responses to a series of written prompts) a personal narrative of their experience with the T4C program and their attempts to implement its lessons and lead a law-abiding life after their release.

Based on the inclusion criteria, all members of the sample were male ex-offenders released, within the last 21-27 months, who were proficient in English and had a stable mailing address. Given the nature of the offender community, the sample was liable to skew younger than the general population, though age was not be used as a selection criterion. Due to the English proficiency requirements of the present study, the sample population underrepresented Latino/Hispanic offenders, who represent the second most frequently incarcerated group by race/ethnicity in Ohio's prison system (Prison Policy Initiative, 2010). In other respects, the randomization process ensured maximum representation of backgrounds and viewpoints from among the 240-person sampling frame.

Finally, it was important to note that the researcher found it difficult, within the timetable established for collection of narratives, to reach a full complement of 30 participants. For this reason, among others, it was crucial that initial analysis of the narratives proceed concomitant with the recruitment of new participants. If this initial analysis suggested that saturation had been reached with respect to key concepts and narrative elements, even though 30 narratives had not been gathered, the researcher would complete the project using the smaller sample size.

Participants Identified, Contacted, and Recruited

The researcher applied for permission within the Lorain/Medina CBCF, where he has contacts based on extensive work experience, to conduct a study among graduates of the Thinking for a Change (T4C) cognitive behavioral intervention at two of the state's prisons for men. The Lorain/Medina CBCF conducted its own human subjects review, in order to assure that the study comports with its standards. Because the participants were parolees, the Lorain/Medina CBCF had the power to grant permission to contact them. However, participation was in no way be linked to their parole status.

Provisionally, researchers within the Lorain/Medina CBCF reported that approximately 240 ex-offenders match the profile generated for the study's sampling. Once permission was granted to proceed with the study, the researcher received a full listing of these names, along with contact information. He then proceeded to randomize the list, using the procedure described above, and contacted the first 'batch' of 30 potential respondents. Initially, the researcher sent a letter discussing the goals of the research; describing the process that was used to collect participants' narratives; and asking recipients for their help. He then followed up through telephone calls, in order to assess introduce himself, describe the study, and ask for their help. During this initial conversation, the researcher also identified whether participants met the

selection criteria and determined their willingness to participate. As individuals were removed from the sample pool, the researcher then moved on to the next names on the randomized list.

Before soliciting any narratives, the researcher enrolled each new participant by having them sign a statement of informed consent. This statement made it clear that participation, or lack thereof, will have no bearing on the individuals' parole status, and that participants were free to leave the study at any time. In line with the general strategy of data collection, the researcher offered multiple ways for participants to grant their consent: by meeting in person to review and sign the letter; by receiving it in the mail, along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope, and signing and returning it; by receiving it via mail, fax, or email and signing and returning it via fax or as a scanned document (PDF) via email; or, with permission of the Lorain/Medina CBCF, receiving it as an attachment to an email or text and returning it with a statement of consent that constituted an 'electronic signature.' (Rather than presenting all these options at once, the researcher talked with each participant in order to gage their comfort level with various media. Given the stressors that ex-offenders typically encounter in their daily lives, it was extremely important that the researcher make each step of the research process as simple and comfortable as possible for each participant.)

Once a participant had signed the letter of consent and was officially enrolled in the study, the researcher worked with him to determine the best way for him to offer his narrative (through a phone or in-person interview; by making a voice recording via smart phone and emailing the MP3 file to the researcher; or by making a written statement, either by electronic means or traditional letter). The researcher then kept in touch with each respondent, offering gentle reminders and helping to find ways around any potential roadblocks to participation

Data Collection

Data Collection Instruments

Two data collection instruments were used. The first was a demographic profile, which took the form of a brief series of questions that could be administered in the space of ten minutes or less. Some of the data, including an informant's age and the offense for which he was incarcerated, was included as part of the initial list of potential participants from the Lorain/Medina CBCF. As participants were recruited, the researcher manually entered the information from the Lorain/Medina CBCF into the respondent's demographic profile. (In line with confidentiality procedures, no names appeared on the demographic profiles; instead, each was coded with the participant's randomized number.)

The Lorain/Medina CBCF also kept statistics regarding offenders' race/ethnicity and religion; however, responses to these two items were solicited from respondents themselves. This was important for two reasons. First, the way one self-identified by race or ethnicity could change over time or according to context. For instance, a non-Spanish speaking individual of Latino descent may choose simply to identify as 'white' when incarcerated but may disclose Latino heritage in a more informal setting. Self-identified religious affiliation may also change according to context; moreover, many inmates undergo religious transformations while incarcerated, so that data collected upon incarceration may no longer reflect the individual's religious identification. Additionally, each participant was asked what type of housing he had (alone, with family, in a transitional facility or shelter, etc.); what offense he was presently incarcerated for, if he has already returned to prison; whether he was working and what type of work he has or was looking for; marital status; and highest educational level completed (or what degree was being sought if the participant was presently a student).

The second data collection instrument used was a semi-structured interview format consisting of several main prompts, each with a series of smaller prompts nested under them. The goal in narrative inquiry was to elicit or provoke each participant's story concerning the studied issue or event—i.e., in this case, the road from participation in T4C to life after incarceration and attempts to establish a law-abiding lifestyle. One of the most important features of the narrative method was that it allowed each individual to describe the important features of the story as he or she sees it, allowing these features to weave in and out of the tale in accordance with the participant's own experience. Therefore, it was important to help put the participant in a storytelling frame of mind, rather than asking them to proceed down a list of questions, as in more structured interview or survey work. Accordingly, the first and most 'wordy' part of the instrument was a statement describing the importance of telling this story, much as they might to a trusted friend—or to an acquaintance who was currently in prison and wanted to learn more about their experience with the T4C program. This statement also emphasized, once again, the confidentiality of participants' stories, advising them to feel free to talk about highs and lows, challenges and conflicts, ways the program has helped them and ways it has not.

This second, narrative instrument was broken into three parts. Participants were asked to tell: 1) the story of the program; 2) the story of their adjustment to life after incarceration; and 3) the story of the future they currently envision for themselves. Breaking the instrument into parts in this fashion should make it easier for participants to order their thoughts and help avoid a situation where they feel overwhelmed by the task. Nested under each of these main narrative prompts was a series of smaller prompts meant not as an exhaustive list of what the participant must include, but as a spur to thinking about what they might include in their stories. Such prompts will include, for instance, notable events, places and people; turning points; thoughts or

concerns they remember having at important moments; changes in their thinking or behaviors over time; barriers and attempts to overcome them; etc. These prompts will also, as noted below, incorporate items that speak to the participant's sense of self-efficacy. The researcher's interest in self-efficacy was also reflected in the third major prompt—i.e., the story of the future they envision for themselves—which by its very nature speaks to a sense of being able to achieve desired outcomes. The researcher reviewed each narrative as it was produced or sent to him and follow-up with the participant by phone in order to clarify issues that remain unclear or to gain more detail concerning particular aspects of their narratives.

Legal and/or Historical Documents

The Lorain/Medina CBCF provided data for several items in the demographic profile, including the respondent's age, the facility in which he was last incarcerated, and the offense for which he was last incarcerated. These statistics were routinely gathered for purposes of reporting at both the state and federal levels; thus, there was good reason to believe they were accurate. Additionally, the researcher reviewed written materials concerning the administration of the T4C program at each site. These included materials used to guide program leaders as well as any handouts or materials supplied directly to participants. After reviewing materials, the researcher spoke with the program leaders/instructors at each site to verify and check that procedures remained the same and to find out how rigidly they were adhered to. For instance, it was important to know how many hours of programming an inmate were required to attend in order to complete the program and how many hours they were allowed to miss for various reasons. Between the written materials and review with program leaders, it should be possible to determine, with substantial accuracy, how the program was carried out at each site.

Sufficiency of Data Collection Instruments

The research questions seek to ascertain the efficacy of the T4C program for helping offenders transition to a productive and law-abiding life after incarceration. The goal was to understand not simply *whether* participants in the T4C program were able to avoid re-offending, but the mechanisms by which the program helped them to establish lives free of crime. As part of this, the study aimed to shed light on the role of self-efficacy in curbing recidivism.

The main data collection instrument (the set of narrative prompts) yielded a rich, robust, and unique data set for addressing these issues. Storytelling was not merely a central human activity; it was a central feature of the prison setting. Repeating humorous anecdotes, describing unusual incidents, talking about things that happen in various program settings or recounting actions taken by guards or administrators—all these were stock parts of how prison life proceeds, and how individuals establish their place in social circles under stressful circumstances. This was by no means to imply that all ex-offenders were avid storytellers. However, narrative was a form that many were able to relate to. Moreover, the population in question comprised individuals who often feel marginalized by mainstream society; as a result, they could be eager to tell their stories to people who will pay attention. For all these reasons, the researcher believed that the narratives of participants should shed important light on the issues under study.

Additionally, the narrative form had the advantage of integrating key individuals, institutions, settings, and events into a unified data source. When a complex experience was probed using a structured survey or interview instrument, it could be difficult to probe the way that variables interact in the experience of people; in some cases, of course, the researcher did not even know, going in, what type of interactions to expect. By eliciting the narratives of ex-offenders, the researcher gained a more robust understanding of how key variables interact.

Moreover, because the form was open-ended and did not dictate, beforehand, which themes and narrative elements were of interest, as common themes and elements begin to emerge across multiple individuals' stories, they offered robust evidence that these matters were particularly important in understanding of how rehabilitative programming helps—or fails to help—ex-offenders gain purchase on new, law-abiding lives.

History of the Published Instrument Used as a Basis for Data Collection

Both data collection instruments were developed by the researcher. However, in shaping the narrative prompts for the second instrument, the researcher relied in part on a published instrument developed by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995) for measuring the overall self-efficacy of an individual. Sullivan (2011, p. 119) suggested that "Determining validity could be viewed as constructing an evidence-based argument regarding how well a tool measures what it was supposed to do." He stated that validity could be established by the response process, or how the subjects responded to the instrument, the relationship to other variables, the content description, and any assessment that was appropriate after the administration of the instrument (for example, if the respondents were taking a class, did they pass, and so on).

Sullivan (2011) also pointed out that if the instrument needed to be modified for use in a current study, it should be modified and the description of how the modification was done should be presented in a transparent fashion, with enough detail that readers understand any limitations that developed as a result of the modification. In the case of the instrument used in this study, the General Self-Efficacy Scale, the authors (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, n.d.) stated that "in most cases it was necessary to add a few items" when using the scale, in order to cover specific information investigated by the study. Further, in describing their development of the GSE, the authors related how to make modification of the scales so as to not invalidate the validity of the

instrument, provided the modifications were done following the guidance of Schwartzer and

Fuchs (1995). Schwartzer and Fuchs (1995) reported that modifications should fall within the

"If/then" model for statements considering outcome expectations and confidence statements for

items measuring self-efficacy. The authors of the scale designed it to be flexible, and modifiable

for different situations (Schwartzer & Fuchs, 1995). The instrument has been modified within the

guidance provided by the authors and as such remains valid.

The General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE) used ten items to gage the respondent's own

perceived sense of self-efficacy, defined as "the belief that one could perform a novel or difficult

tasks, or cope with adversity—in various domains of human functioning" (Schwarzer, 1992).

These items were as follows:

1) I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough.

2) If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want.

3) It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals.

4) I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events.

5) Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations.

6) I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort.

7) I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities.

8) When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions.

9) If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution.

10) I can usually handle whatever comes my way (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995).

Typically, the GSE was self-administered, with individuals ranking their agreement with

each statement on a scale of 1 (Not at all true) to 4 (Exactly true) (Schwarzer & Jerusalem,

1995). The authors further suggest that the GSE could productively be combined with statements

measuring more specific types of self-efficacy (such as healthcare self-efficacy, academic self-efficacy, etc.) (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, n. d.).

The present instrument made use of the GSE, by selectively combining elements of the ten statements into prompts for each of the three narrative sections that participants were asked to address. Participants might or might not choose to highlight these issues in their stories. However, the prompts contained constructs whose validity was well-tested and verified across many contexts, which should enhance the validity of any responses that picked up on the GSE-related prompts. The three-part form of the narrative instrument was also designed to help promote the validity of responses regarding self-efficacy. In traditional use of the GSE, the individual would be asked to self-report their perceived self-efficacy, using the scale, at two different points—typically before and after a specific process or event. This allowed researchers to gage the effect of that process or event on self-efficacy. In the current study, it was not be feasible to administer the scale at different points in time (e.g., before participation in T4C, after participation in T4C, immediately after release from prison, two years after release). However, by including GSE-based prompts under each of the three narrative segments, the instrument provoked reflection on perceived/projected self-efficacy in the past, present, and future. This, in turn, allowed the researcher to draw conclusions concerning changes in self-efficacy over time.

Appropriateness of Data Collection Instruments

The GSE was tested across an exceptionally wide range of cultural contexts. The instrument was first developed in German in 1979 and has since been translated into 26 other languages (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, n. d.). Peer-reviewed studies have suggested its utility and content validity across a wide number of contexts, including in China (Zhang & Schwarzer, 1995), in Russia (Schwarzer, Jerusalem, & Romek, 1996), and in cyberspace (Schwarzer,

Mueller, & Greenglass, 1999). Comparative studies have assessed the instrument as used in Germany, Spain, and China (Schwarzer, Bäßler, et al., 1997); in China, Indonesia, Japan and Korea (Schwarzer, Born, et al., 1997); and across 13 European, East European, and Asian nations (Schwarzer & Born, 1997). Hence there was good evidence that the scale offers a valid and reliable measurement tool across a wide range of contexts.

Content Validity of Data Collection Instrument

For a discussion of content validity of the instrument, the reader should refer to the section *History of the Published Instrument Used as a Basis for Data Collection*, earlier in this chapter.

Context Specific Issues to the Population Regarding the Instrument

In working with ex-offenders, it was important to bear in mind that respondents come from a range of educational and socioeconomic backgrounds and possess varying levels of language proficiency. As a result, it was a good idea to use simple, very clear language for all verbal and written communication/prompts. Because the GSE was developed in 1979 (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 2017), the language could sound antiquated and confusing. Consider, for instance, item number five: "Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations" (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995). In the framework of the present study, this prompt might better be conveyed by speaking of "tools and creativity" rather than resourcefulness, and speaking of "new situations I didn't expect" rather than "unforeseen situations." To help ensure that the language of all verbal and written prompts were conveyed in language suitable for the study population, the researcher shared them with four individuals: two ex-offenders, who will not be participants in the study, and two corrections officers who work daily with offender populations.

Their feedback was integrated in order to make the verbal and written prompts as straightforward and natural as possible.

Self-Developed Collection Instruments Content Validity

In part, content validity was established through use of items from the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE), which has been well-tested and widely used across multiple studies in many cultural contexts, as well as in online formats (please see discussion above). They were reworded where necessary, in order to make them suitable for the population being studied here. This was important because educational attainment is generally lower among prison populations than among the general public (Wolf Harlow, 2003). However, the prompts reproduced the original meaning as closely as possible, and four additional reviewers (two correctional officers and two ex-offenders who do not participate in the study) were asked to review the wording to ascertain whether the wording was appropriate and reflects, to their understanding, the original meaning.

Content validity for the narrative prompts as a whole was established by several means. First, the researcher will triangulate the instrument with peer-reviewed research on narrative methods to ensure that the key elements of narrative were reflected and presented in a way that accords with the work of other researchers. Second, the researcher will review the draft instrument with two ex-offenders who were not among potential respondents. These key informants were familiar with the population sampled and the language used in prison life. Thus, they were able to help the research avoid misleading or ambiguous cues and ensure that the language used was at an appropriate level for the projected respondents. After these consultations, the researcher will revisit and revise the instrument, attempting to maintain as neutral and objective an outlook on the work as possible. (For instance, it was critical to avoid

any questions that might lead the respondent to answer in a specific way that would help to support a specific outcome). Finally, the researcher will review the next-to-final draft with two correctional officers who were familiar with the Thinking for a Change program. The goal in this step of the review was both to ensure that the instrument appears well-formulated and to ensure that it does not accidentally stray into areas that were inappropriate.

Using these methods will give a great deal of attention to credibility and authenticity (Whittemore, Chase, & Mandle, 2001). Other criteria that could be used to judge a qualitative work were the completeness, appropriateness, and credibility of the responses (Eisenhart and Howe, 1992); the voice, and sharing (Lincoln, 1995); the consistency (Lincoln & Guba, 1985); the descriptive validity (Maxwell, 1992, 1996); triangulation (Whittemore et al., 2001), and fittingness of the responses (Sandelowski (1986, 1993).

Information Collected for Each Research Question

Two data collection instruments were used to address the three primary research questions:

1) How do inmates' experiences with Thinking for a Change expand our understanding of cognitive behavioral therapy in a correctional setting?

2) To what extent was Thinking for a Change effective in helping prisoners avoid recidivism, and what does it tell us about the efficacy of cognitive behavioral-based therapeutic approaches?

3) In what ways does Thinking for a Change help prisoners transition to society, and what does this particular approach reveal about how former prisoners avoid becoming recidivists?

The instruments used were administered at different phases of the research. The brief, demographic questionnaire was administered during initial phone contact (or soon thereafter, if a respondent does not have time during the first conversation to respond.) The first instrument did not address the research questions directly. Rather, it comprised a brief demographic profile, engineered so it could be completed in the space of approximately ten minutes. The demographic instrument provided important background information that was considered in formulating individual prompts for further information, as well as potentially helping the researcher to discern patterns in the data. (Please see extended discussion below under "Analysis.") The instrument also had a secondary purpose: to allow the researcher to identify whether a respondent had adequate facility with English to offer a rich response on the narrative portion of the interview. For this reason, the demographic profile was conducted with willing participants during the first phone contact or as soon thereafter as possible.

The second instrument comprised the set of narrative prompts meant to elicit a detailed story of a respondent's experience with the program, transition to life post-incarceration, and sense of the future. Analysis of these narratives comprised the main material used to address the research questions. As discussed above, it was of utmost importance that respondents be given room to produce the narrative in a format they found comfortable. The researcher first sought to elicit the narrative in an interview format, either in person or by phone. However, where this posed logistical or other challenges, respondent was invited to respond to the narrative prompts by recording their stories independently via a smartphone, or in writing, and sharing these results with the researcher. As a result, the length of each interview/narrative may differ, as will the time frame for the collection of narratives. However, the researcher sought to collect the initial narrative at some point within the first two weeks after completion of the demographic profile. If

no results were forthcoming after that time, the researcher initiated contact with the next potential respondent on the randomized list. After an initial narrative was collected, the researcher reviewed it within 48 hours and, where additional probing was warranted, contact the respondent to ask follow-up questions. This process took a half hour or less of additional time and was completed within a week.

The discussion above laid out detailed information concerning the recruitment strategy. Based on an initial sample of approximately 240 ex-offenders supplied by the Lorain/Medina CBCF, the researcher created a randomized list and began by contacting the first 30 individuals on that list. As soon as a participant was excluded (either because they were unwilling to participate or because they were insufficiently proficient in English), the researcher moved on to the next name on the randomized list. If it proved impossible to collect a narrative within two weeks of completion of the demographic questionnaire, the researcher moved on to the next name on the list (without precluding the possibility that the initial respondent's narrative was collected eventually). In this manner, the researcher was able to collect 30 narratives. However, peer-reviewed narrative analyses often proceed with as few as 10-15 cases, and sometimes even less. Therefore, 30 was viewed as an aspirational target.

How Participants Exit the Study

After collection of the narrative and/or follow-up where needed, the researcher sent the respondent a letter thanking him for participation in the study, reiterating the goals of the study, and offering contact information so that the respondent could contact the researcher with any questions (or, if so desired, to offer additional information or reflections). The letter also offered links to Internet sites where the respondent, if interested, could access information concerning research on rehabilitation and rehabilitation, as well as cognitive behavioral therapy. Finally, the

letter ended with an affirmation of how important the respondent's views were and assurances that they were treated with the great attention and care in the analysis. The letter was also be sent as an attachment to a text, via cell phone, and by email to those participants with active email accounts.

Follow-up Procedures for Participants

After the thesis was complete, the researcher sent a second follow up letter offering to mail a copy of the thesis to those respondents who wished to see it. No other follow up procedures were anticipated.

Data Analysis

Types of Data Collected

The demographic profile and the narrative results must be discussed separately. The demographic profile consisted of the following items:

- respondent's contact information (stable mailing address, phone number, and email address for those respondents who actively use email)

- age

- racial/ethnic self-identification

- religion, including:

    o does he identify with a religion and which one if so

    o how important was faith in his life (as self-described)

- whether he was working or looking for work, and what type of work he was engaged in or seeking

- primary source of income

- type of housing (owned, rented, public housing, shelter or transitional housing, or living with family or friends)

- highest educational level attained (or what degree was being sought if respondent was presently a student

- the facility in which he was incarcerated when he participated in Thinking for a Change

- the approximate time frame (which months of which year/s) of his participation in T4C

- the offense for which he was incarcerated at that time

- length of formal sentence

- length of sentence served, and

- if respondent has been reincarcerated:

  o where he was serving his present sentence

  o what offense he was presently incarcerated for

  o length of current sentence and time already served.

Regarding this last item: it could not be assumed that all respondents had successfully transitioned. Two years out, it was reasonable to expect that a sizable number of potential respondents was reincarcerated. However, it seems particularly valuable to include the stories and voices of such respondents in the study.

Two of the items on the demographic profile were used as something along the lines of 'independent variables' to differentiate the narratives and help shape definitive analysis of results: the place of incarceration at the time the respondent participated in the T4C program and time frame in which he participated. This was crucial, since different patterns may emerge with

regard to the specific program in which the respondent participated. If starkly different patterns appear with respect to different institutions or periods in which the program was offered (e.g., with different staff), the researcher will return to contacts at the facilities for deeper background concerning program administration. This allowed the researcher to draw conclusions as to why the program proved to be more effective in one setting than the other.

Items such as age, religion, and racial/ethnic self-identification were used to track the success of the sampling strategy at returning a relatively diverse sample. As noted previously, because it was important to work with respondents who have a high degree of facility with the English language, Latino/Hispanic respondents were under-sampled. Additionally, it was important to recognize that respondents were, to a significant degree, self-selected (i.e., an ex-offender must decide whether to respond to the invitation to share his narrative). Thus, for instance, older or unemployed respondents with more time on their hands may be more likely to respond than others; those with stable housing situations may be better situated to respond to and complete the project; and so on. While it was not be possible to correct for under-sampling of any specific group, any notable patterns of under-sampling were noted as limitations. Moreover, they raised important questions to be considered for further research, such as how best to tap into a specific group.

Additionally, of course, it was possible that definite patterns will emerge along the lines of variables such as age, religion, or type of offense. However, this study was not set up specifically to gage the role of such variables in transition to a law-abiding life, or how they might interact with programs such as Thinking for a Change. Thus, it would be inadvisable to make firm conclusions concerning their roles in facilitating specific outcomes. Nevertheless, there were important ways these variables played a role in data collection and analysis. First, the

researcher made sure to review responses to the demographic instrument before conducting

verbal interviews or before reviewing written or recorded narratives that respondents have

submitted. So, for instance, if a respondent had noted a particularly strong role for religion in his

life but did not elaborated on this in his narrative, the researcher followed up with individualized

probes.

Second, of course, if a strong pattern emerged from the data—e.g., notably better results

among older ex-offenders than younger ones—the researcher circled back to the published

literature in the Findings and Discussion. Such patterns articulate with more general trends in

recidivism and thus raise questions concerning the magnitude of the effect that the Thinking for a

Change program has itself had in participants' lives. It was also be fruitful to probe the

implications for further iterations of the program. For instance, in the given example, it may

suggest that specific iterations of the program be tailored to specific age groups.

Finally, questions concerning offenses and sentences were useful in all the above

respects. They provide potential material for individualized prompts either in a direct interview

or in follow-up with respondents who have written or recorded their own narratives. (Length of

sentence may be particularly valuable to probe in this respect, to see whether the length has some

effect on the offender's sense of self-efficacy at the outset of the program.) They may well

suggest patterns that could be triangulated with previous research concerning, for instance, type

of offense and propensity to reoffend. And, finally, they may provide fruitful background when

considering suggestions as to how future iterations of the program should be structured.

In order to capture patterns based on demographic information, a very basic coding

scheme was used. First, the researcher collapsed demographic information into sensible

categories, based on results. This was a form of attribute coding, as described by Saldaña (2009,

p. 55). For instance, consistent income ranges will likely emerge from the responses. Self-ranked level of religiosity should yield results that could be grouped along an informal scale from no religious interest to pronounced religious involvement. The researcher enlisted a colleague to review these categorizations for their sensibility, based on given results. The final categories were listed in tabular form with the number of respondents that correspond to each category.

Next, each narrative was ranked in two basic ways:

1. As a binary yes/no to the question of whether the respondent has been reincarcerated;

2. As a numerical value from 1-3 reflecting the respondent's sense of self-efficacy, with 1 reflecting low expression of self-efficacy overall; 2 representing neutral sense of self-efficacy; and 3 reflecting a firmly expressed sense of self-efficacy. These rankings were generated for each of the following portions of the narrative:

   a. At the time of participation in the program;

   b. In the period of return and readjustment to life outside of prison;

   c. In the narrative portion concerning the respondent's sense of his future.

These numerical rankings were then be cross-tabulated with the categories established based on demographic profile (e.g., facility in which respondent participated in T4C; income; religiosity; age; length of sentence). This allowed for visual identification of any clearly occurring patterns. Again, however, because this was not a quantitative study and because variance in the sample populations could not adequately be ensured, no attempt was made to 'test' the robustness of such associations statistically. Rather, as described above, they provided material for discussion and, where appropriate, triangulation with the existing literature on recidivism.

The second data collection instrument went to the heart of the narrative inquiry. The instrument began with a broad statement, encouraging the respondent to share his story of participation in the Thinking for a Change program. This statement will make clear that the interview was not meant to be a structured question and response, and that the respondent should feel free to respond in whatever order feels most natural, and to include whatever anecdotes or impressions they like. The open-ended nature of narrative inquiry could be frustrating, since it does not lend itself to results that were consistent in length or format. By the same token, however, it was more likely than other methods to yield results that were particularly rich in detail and that may lead to unexpected yet important insights.

In order to make the task less daunting to participants, the instrument prompted respondents to offer three narratives as part of the larger whole: 1) their story of participation in the program; 2) their story of adjustment to life after incarceration; and 3) the story of the future they currently envision for themselves. Underneath each of these sections, the instrument offered prompts/suggestions of information that might inform their story. These included prompts concerning settings (e.g., the actual space where the program took place; the larger facility; the housing where they were living at the time of their initial transition to life after incarceration); characters who proved to be important to their story, either in positive or negative ways; important turning points (e.g., moments they found themselves applying lessons from the program—or found themselves unable to); their sense of self-efficacy (using prompts modeled after items on the GSE); sources of support; and barriers and attempts to overcome them.

The narratives were collected verbally (and recorded). In these cases, the researcher used prompts as needed to spur respondents on to further recollection and reflection. Narratives needed not highlight every element included in the prompts. However, prompts concerning

perceived self-efficacy were shared in all cases, unless the respondent speaks to the issue independently. Additionally, the researcher reviewed the demographic profile of the respondent before each verbal interview. These provided source material for additional, personalized prompts where needed. For instance, if a respondent had identified as being committed to a religious practice, the researcher might ask him to reflect on whether or how his faith had played a role in a particular part of the story. Again, however, the goal in narrative inquiry was to elicit the respondent's story, and the method allowed each respondent to guide that story as he sees fit. Thus, it was more important to help put the participant in a storytelling frame of mind— including, e.g., allowing for what at first hearing may seem like digressions—rather than asking them to proceed down a formal list of questions. In the end, even seeming 'digressions' could provide rich and valuable insight into the respondent's experience with the program and transition to life after incarceration.

Sorting/Coding of Data

All coding of the narratives was manual. As Saldaña (2009) prescribed, the first cycle of coding took place as narratives were collected (p. 17). In this first round of coding, the researcher sought to identify key statements and story segments that spoke to:

- How the respondent had understood and applied (or found it challenging to apply) the cognitive-behavioral lessons of the Thinking for a Change Program;

- How the respondent's sense of self-efficacy had grown or diminished as a result of the program, and in conjunction with other barriers or forms of support encountered; and

- The events and decisions that had enabled the respondent to maintain a law-abiding

  lifestyle, or that had steered him back towards criminal behaviors (whether these were

  behaviors for which he has been incarcerated again or not).

The coding process reflected what Saldaña (2009) terms descriptive, emotional, and in

vivo coding (pp. 70-87). However, it also comprised what may be termed 'narrative coding'—

i.e., seeking key story elements, such as character, setting, and turning points. No attempt was

made at this point to formulate answers to the research questions; rather, the attempt was to

immerse in the data and understand each narrative on its own terms. In addition to establishing

the framework for successive cycles of coding, this first exploration of the data allowed the

researcher to more accurately determine whether follow-up was needed, and if so, what probes

should be used.

After the first cycle of coding, the researcher selected two particularly rich and detailed

narratives, produced copies with any identifying details blacked out, and showed them with

trusted informants. He then met with these informants (who were not themselves respondents) to

see whether they agree with the researcher's identification of key statements and story segments,

allowing the researcher to make adjustments before the next cycle of coding. The second cycle of

coding was used to identify and reorganize the major categories and themes that have emerged.

Software for Data Analysis

Coding was accomplished through the use of NVivo software. Maguire and Delahunt

(2017) recommended using a well-organized process and combining manual analysis with data

organization in Word or Excel. NVivo facilitated that process and allowed the data to be

organized and downloaded into Word or Excel. The process followed the six-phase process

described by Braun and Clarke (2006). While the Braun and Clarke process was designed for

manual use, it was readily adaptable for use with NVivo. The researcher first became familiar with the data, generated initial codes, searched for themes in the responses, reviewed the themes, defined them, and wrote up the results. NVivo could be utilized with all of these steps (QSR, 2018). However, in the first step, becoming familiar, the researcher studied the response data and jotted down notes on general impressions, both of each respondent and of the material as a whole (Braun & Clark, 2006). This was an important part of familiarizing one's self with the data.

In the next step, organization began as the data was reduced into what Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 3355) refer to as "small chunks of meaning". The researcher could download audio tapes or transcribed interviews into NVivo. The researcher and the software then processed the text. In the next step, patterns that seem to capture responses to research questions were highlighted in the search for themes. Some of the codes previously identified actually grouped together into certain themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). At every step, the researcher reviewed the materials to clarify that the themes and codes seemed to be consistent and to make changes if necessary. At this point the response documents were scanned into Microsoft Word if they have not already been entered.

Once the themes were organized, they could be defined. It was helpful to do a thematic map at this point to be able to visually see how everything was linked; this would also help anyone who was triangulating the materials. In the last step, all of the findings were synthesized and the results were written up.

The use of NVivo in qualitative analysis has been defined in the manufacturer's media library. The manufacturer asserted that the process was based on the method prescribed by Braun and Clark (2006). The manufacturer reported that the data analysis process using NVivo was divided into two phases, preparation and processing. In the preparation phase, the research

reviewed the research questions and imported them into NVivo. Next, transcripts or records were input or imported into NVivo. The manufacturer recommended reading transcripts and writing summary memos to be linked to the transcripts (QSR, 2018).

NVivo also has a journaling module. In the next step of the process, the memos were reviewed, the research journal was created, and the researcher noted the key issues that were beginning to emerge from the interviews. The initial coding strategy was developed based on the key issues emerged from the interviews. In the final step of preparation, the researcher opens a transcript, opens the module for coding stripes, and reviews what has already been coded (if anything). The researcher then either selected text and dragged it into the coding area, or selected the text, selected code from the ribbon, and activated the coding process (QSR, 2018).

In the analysis phase, the researcher continued coding, reviewed the coding results for broad topics, and created Word Clouds to see a visual representation of the text. The software could be used to rearrange nodes. The data could then be explored using what NVivo refers to as 'coding queries,' which could be used to explore and solidify relationships between the codes. From this point the data was summarized and entered into the research journal, and the researcher produces the write-up (QSR, 2018).

Treatment for Discrepant Cases

Discrepant data was of particular use to the researcher. In attempting to understand how a program works for various participants, it was important to identify shared experiences and assessments. But it was equally important to note where there were, for instance, particular successes or particular critiques of the program's effects. When such 'outlier' narratives were identified, the researcher will pay particular attention to several things. First, the respondent's background was reviewed to see if there was some way in which he differs notably from other

members of the study (e.g., length of sentence or level of education attained). Second, the narrative was scrutinized for events and situations—either positive or negative—outside of the program's reach that may have affected the respondent's experience in a significant way.

Trustworthiness

Credibility

The researcher's own experience with incarcerated populations was important here, since it would allow him to identify and probe story elements that do not 'ring true.' The goal, obviously, was never to challenge the story that the respondent relates. However, despite assurances that responses were entirely confidential and would in no way affect a respondent's parole or incarceration, there was no way to avoid the fact that incarcerated individuals often feel they must tell people in positions of authority what they want to hear. Even subtle cues or questions may prompt them to speak more candidly about a particular issue, or reassure them that the researcher appreciated their frankest statements and was not seeking to judge them. This tone could be set even in the initial collection of demographic information by maintaining a neutral but open and supportive tone. In some cases, it helped simply to reiterate that the researcher was interested in what does not seem to work about the program as well as what does.

The sampling strategy was designed to allow a high level of saturation for narrative methods. Thus, although it might not have been possible, ultimately to reach the target of 30 complete narratives with the correct racial mix, the researcher persisted in recruiting until he begins to see distinct patterns of repetition emerging in responses, indicating that saturation was near to being reached. Self-reflection was a crucial part of the coding process, and the researcher regularly check his own interpretations and sought to ensure that his interpretations were true to

the data (i.e., that he was not subconsciously 'reading into' the data trends or patterns that he wishes to see).

Transferability

Thick description was key to the generation and presentation of findings. The term thick description was popularized by anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973), who reflected on the perceived difficulties of analyzing culture in an 'objective' fashion. Geertz's response makes clear that culture was not actually mysterious: "Though ideational it does not exist in someone's head; though unphysical was not an occult entity" (Geertz, 1973, p. 6). Instead, what the researcher did was immerse in a culture until even the seemingly strange facets of it begin to make sense—for instance, it was possible to tell when a gesture was made in a straightforward way, and when it was made ironically.

This research did not aspire to describe an entire culture. However, it was based on deep familiarity with prison life and drawn from the narratives of ex-offenders, many of which were rich in detail and reflection. Once saturation was achieved, the researcher immersed in this series of narratives until the voices of the individual respondents feel familiar and the points of commonality and difference among the narrative emerge with clarity. Like culture, the experiences of being incarcerated, attending rehabilitative programming, and transitioning to life after incarceration were not mysterious. They were shared events that offenders and ex-offenders generally spend a great deal of time reflecting on, both individually and with one another. Thus, thick description offered the possibility of understanding these experiences as a system, with certain regularities and certain stark deviations from the norm. These patterns then became the basis for findings and conclusions.

Dependability

After final coding of the narratives and delineation of key themes and narrative elements,

the researcher selected five of the most forthcoming and self-reflective respondents and ask them

whether they would be willing to discuss his general findings and let him know if they ring true.

While there may of course be variation in respondent reactions, this form of respondent

validation could shed light on moments where the analysis had strayed considerably from their

experience and prompt reconsideration. Additionally, of course, there exists a voluminous, peer-

reviewed literature on recidivism and cognitive behavioral interventions. After coding, the

researcher will revisit this literature to see where the research findings accord with previous

studies. Where stark discrepancies emerge, the researcher will seek evidence of reasons for these

discrepancies, contributing both to the validity of the findings and the richness of the discussion.

Confirmability

Reflexivity was key to every stage of a research endeavor such as this. First, the

researcher reflected on his own experiences with incarcerated populations and rehabilitative

programming. This was not a way to set up expectations concerning what the data will yield, but

just the opposite—to be able to set aside his own expectations and encounter the data in a 'fresh'

way. By identifying these experiences beforehand, moreover, the researcher was better situated

to check himself in the process of coding and counter any tendencies to read into the data

confirmations of his own experience and biases.

Intra- and Intercoder Reliability

The recursive strategy for coding was designed to ensure intra-coder reliability: by

revisiting the data in two cycles of coding, the researcher was able to rule out themes or instances

of themes that initially seemed to emerge from the data. Additionally, the researcher maintained

connection with two ex-offenders who participated in T4C but would not serve as respondents in the present study, as well as two correctional officers who were familiar with T4C. After the initial round of coding, the researcher shared two coded transcripts (identified only by a number and with any potentially identifying information stripped out) with these individuals and sought input: did they agree with the themes the researcher believed were emerging? Did they see other themes that he missed? This interaction with knowledgeable others helped to sharpen successive rounds of coding.

Protection of Participant's Rights/Ethical Issues

Formal Steps of Protection

The process of institutional review of research involving human subjects was rooted partly in the discovery, following World War II, of Nazi 'medical experiments,' that had been carried out on individuals with no power to refuse ("IRBs: A brief history," n. d.). Within the American context, specifically, the realization of the abuses perpetrated against a group of largely poor and uneducated African American men in the decades-long Tuskegee syphilis study added impetus to calls for systematization and reform of the institutional review process ("IRBs: A brief history," n. d.). Now all institutionally-affiliated research that involves human subjects requires the researcher to undergo a rigorous review by an Institutional Review Board (IRB) to ensure that any potential for harm was identified, weighed against potential gains, and minimized. This includes entirely non-invasive research, such as interviews or collection of personal narratives, since even such seemingly innocuous forms of research could potentially leave participants feeling that their privacy has been violated, or that painful emotional issues have been stirred up.

Because prisoners represent a particularly vulnerable population, special protections apply to their involvement in research under federal policy. According to the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) of the Health and Human Services (HHS) administration, "prisoner" was defined broadly for these purposes to include anyone who was "involuntarily confined or detained in a penal institution" (OHRP, n. d.). Hence, the definition includes prisoners incarcerated in state prisons, not only federal ones.

Protections for prisoners were so stringent that:

- the exemptions that generally apply to certain types of research involving human subjects do not apply to research involving prisoners;

- in order to approve research involving prisoners, the IRB must found that the proposed research falls into one of the permissible categories of research, and make six other findings [not typically required];

- the institution must certify to OHRP that an IRB has reviewed the proposal and . . . receive OHRP authorization prior to initiating any research involving prisoners;

- the IRB must include a prisoner or prisoner representative, and meet a membership requirement concerning the number of IRB members not associated with a prison involved in the research. (OHRP, n. d.)

In fact, while the Secretary of HHS was able to waive informed consent for research involving human subjects in certain emergency situations, that option was not available for research involving prisoners (OHRP, n. d.).

Institutional Permissions

The present study was uniquely situated with regard to human subjects review, because it was being conducted in tandem with a rehabilitative program that obtained authorization to conduct research to include, "voluntary participation in surveys and interviews by program participants and former participants," so long as the research protocols—including confidentiality procedures—outlined in the application were met. Hence, in order to proceed, the researcher had to pass a review by the Lorain/Medina CBCF. As part of this review, it was stipulated that the researcher must not offer any incentives for participation; must protect confidentiality of participants from other institutional actors, including both the Lorain/Medina CBCF and parole officers; must present findings in such a way that it was not possible for a particular participant to be identified; and must affirm the voluntary nature of the research as well as privacy protections both verbally and in writing—in "simple, straightforward language"—as part of the recruitment protocol and prior to beginning research.

Recruitment Materials Ethical Concerns

The initial letter sent to potential participants made it clear that participation was entirely voluntary, and that the goal was simply to better understand programs such as Thinking for a Change and how to improve them going forward. Additionally, the strict confidentiality of the process was outlined: although all verbal interactions was recorded and transcribed, only the researcher will know which respondents offered which data, and results of the study was shared and presented in such a way as to make it impossible to identify individuals. Moreover, the letter stated that no one other than the researcher would know whether a potential participant accepts or declines the invitation to participate. The letter made it clear that participation could be ended at any time for any reason, and it was entirely up to the respondent what information he was

comfortable sharing. All of this was reiterated in the first telephone contact with potential

participants. Finally, at every stage of data collection (demographic profile; narrative instrument;

and follow-up), the researcher emphasized that participation was voluntary, that confidentiality

was absolute, and that respondents should only share the information they were comfortable

sharing. All of these communications were worded as simply as possible, and respondents were

asked at each step whether the information was clear and if they had any questions. The

researcher was diligent in all materials and communications to make clear how much the

participant's contribution was appreciated.

Data Collection Ethical Concerns

The right of the respondent to refuse or terminate participation at any point was absolute.

No attempt was made to pressure participants to divulge information, even in 'soft' ways—for

instance, by implying that without further information the contributions they have already made

will not be usable. If a respondent terminated participation after the data collection had begun,

they were thanked sincerely for the time and contributions they have donated to the project thus

far, and they were sent a follow-up letter thanking them for their participation and providing the

researcher's contact information should they have any further questions or concerns.

There were two potential adverse consequences of participation. The first had to do with

pressures on the respondent's schedule and time. Ex-offenders were likely to have multiple

complications in their daily lives. For instance, they might be working long hours at low-wage

jobs, seeking stable housing, negotiating difficult family situations, or etc. For this reason, the

data collection process had been structured to give the respondent maximum flexibility as to how

to provide his narrative, even at the cost of consistency in responses. The second potential

adverse consequence related to the possibility that the data collection process would stir up

feelings of disappointment or anger at the difficulties and barriers the respondent has faced in the transition to life after incarceration and attempts to maintain a law-abiding lifestyle. For this reason, the researcher compiled and maintain a list of several key advocacy and social service organizations in the area that serve ex-offender populations. If the researcher noted distress at any stage of the data collection process, these resources were offered. If the distress or anger reached such a level that it was difficult to collect the data, the researcher terminated the participation as graciously as possible, thanked the respondent sincerely for his time, and made sure that the respondent receives the resource list along with the thank-you letter sent at the end of the process.

That said, narrative researchers often note that many people who have faced difficult situations gain a sense of satisfaction at sharing their stories. Prison life was itself very story-based, as inmates share stories to build friendships and alliances, illustrate problems with 'the system,' and to seek and offer advice. It was not unreasonable to believe that many respondents will found it satisfying or even enjoyable to share their own accounts, particularly if they feel valued throughout the process of participation, and if they know that the data they provide was used to, hopefully, improve the provision of services to future offenders.

Agreements

Permission to conduct the study and gain access to lists of potential respondents was granted via the Lorain/Medina CBCF, as previously discussed. Individual respondents were not be asked to sign letters confirming their willingness to participate. This was out of respect for the fact that ex-offenders may be wary of signing documents for individuals they do not know personally. However, when the demographic profile information was collected (in person or via telephone), the researcher began by reiterating the privacy protections that have been built into

the data collection process and then specifically ask the respondent to confirm that they were willing to participate in the study. Because (as the respondent was reminded) these interactions were recorded, there was a recorded, verbal record of agreement to participate.

Data Treatment

Data was confidential. As each participant was enrolled, he was assigned a number in the researcher's files. Only one master list of names, research numbers, and contact information was retained. This was kept in two formats: a password-protected spreadsheet maintained on the researcher's personal computer, and in hard copy, kept in a locked filing cabinet. In all documents that result from data collection, the individual was indicated by the appropriate number, rather than a name or initials. When raw data was shared with others (e.g., to promote inter-coder reliability), all identifying details was blanked out in the documents. Finally, in presentation of the results, information will either be shared in the aggregate, or according to the assigned individual research number (e.g., "Respondent 4a"). Where quotes or stories from respondent narratives were shared, all identifying information was redacted or else, where redaction was not feasible, changed to protect the respondent's identity.

As noted, the researcher was the only individual who will have access to the master list of respondent names, assigned research numbers, and contact information, and the privacy of this material was strictly guarded. Data dissemination avoided disclosure of any potentially identifying details, or combination of details. Raw data was retained for a period of five years, after which both hard copies and electronic copies was destroyed. This will allow the researcher the flexibility to write and publish for an adequate period of time, after which the project was terminated.

Conflict of Interest

No incentives to participate were offered. The only incentive was the opportunity to share one's personal story and, potentially, to contribute to improving the provision of similar services to others in the future. Because the researcher does not work in the prisons from which the lists of potential participants was drawn, and does not work as a parole officer, there was no direct conflict of interest. However, simply by virtue of educational attainment, respondents may perceive a power differential. The researcher attempted to alleviate any such perceptions by being courteous and respectful throughout the process, and by engaging respondents without using academic language or jargon.

Pilot Study

No pilot study was conducted. The instrument that was being utilized was being utilized in a qualitative manner and as a prompt for narrative responses; it was not being analyzed quantitatively. As a result, a pilot study would be pointless and would not be within best practices for qualitative investigations. Further, the respondents were drawn from a pool of ex-offenders who have already completed the program. Additionally, research permissions were covered under the original institutional review board requirements obtained for the program, which included consent to participate in studies as part of program participation. Thus, it would be infeasible to launch a separate pilot study. Nor would it be sensible to do so in this context, since the goal was to collect reflections on the program and its aftermath among a sample of program participants/ex-offenders approximately two years after their release.

Presentation of Results

Results were primarily be shared in narrative form, identifying and discussing key themes that emerge from the data in turn and relating these to the research questions. Modest use of

tables was also be made. If demographic information, such as place of incarceration, age, religiosity, or etc., correlated strongly to the effects of the program as described in respondent narratives, the numerical breakdowns of such correlations were provided in tabular format in addition to the narrative. Additionally, if a particularly complex theme or themes emerge from respondent narratives, the researcher will make use of tables to provide snippets of the narratives that led to consolidation of the theme(s).

Summary

The perception that 'nothing works' in correctional rehabilitation was slowly eroded, thanks largely to a steady stream of research documenting that certain interventions do in fact work—chief among them, cognitive-behavioral interventions such as the program Thinking for a Change (T4C). The present study sought to make a novel and important contribution to the literature by applying a methodology that has not been widely used in this context: the narrative approach. To be sure, there were certain drawbacks to pursuing a narrative methodology. Chief among them was the inability to provide additional, numerical support for the efficacy of cognitive-behavioral approaches. However, given the state of the literature, it was arguably a good point to move beyond demonstrating statistical correlations with reduced recidivism and towards a deeper understanding of what aspects of the program work and do not work—and why. By eliciting rich, detailed stories of respondents' experiences with the program, and in their transition life after incarceration, the research gained a more holistic picture of how T4C operates in the lives of offenders and ex-offenders. It was able, moreover, to identify some of the complex ways that program participation interacts with other barriers and forms of support that participants encounter.

  The next chapter provides the findings. First, it reviewed the research questions, delving

into the purpose and formulation of each, and addresses the research process used to address

them. Next it provides an overview of the research setting, the demographics of the sample

population, the data collection and analysis processes, and an overview of results. The chapter

then provides a systematic description of the results of the process of coding respondents'

narratives, including major ideas and themes that emerged, as well as the utility of discrepant

cases. Finally, it reconnects these findings to the research questions, pointing the way to the

study's conclusions.

Chapter 4

Introduction

Goal of Study

The goal of this study was to determine how effective the Thinking for a Change program is in reducing recidivism rates among former prisoners. The three research questions that were defined earlier were designed to investigate inmate experiences with Thinking for a Change, how Thinking for a Change helps prisoners avoid recidivism, and how it helps prisoners transition back into society. The questions are:

1). How do inmates' experiences with Thinking for a Change expand our understanding of cognitive behavioral therapy in a correctional setting?

2). To what extent is Thinking for a Change effective in helping prisoners avoid recidivism, and what does it tell us about the efficacy of cognitive behavioral-based therapeutic approaches?

3). In what ways does Thinking for a Change help prisoners transition to society, and what does this particular approach reveal about how former prisoners avoid becoming recidivists?

Research Process

The research process, in the end, was much more fluid than it had been planned to be. COVID-19 not only changed the research process to some degree but it made it both desirable and necessary to develop a plan to use CBT in a more efficient manner to bet able to educate inmates who might be retained for a fairly short period of time due to this (or any other) pandemic.

During the course of the research it was clear to the researcher that some of the respondents had been helped by CBT much more than others. Realistically, a respondent who is able to verbalize that being able to work past other people's behaviors will help him, is more likely to be a success than someone who is still saying they did not think the program is important, or that they are 'only in for not paying child support.' The CBT program is designed to give ex-offenders a leg up as they are dismissed from the institution and re-enter society. Part of this needs to be the ability to recognize what they have done, and what they could be doing better. Similarly, respondents who just repeat that the program is too old to do any good will get little benefit from the program they have already essentially decided that the program is too old to do them any good.

A question as simple as "Who was in there with you?" from the narrative interview can provide an insight into the respondent's personality and approach to life, post-CBT. Consider the difference between the respondent that states there was a "strange mix of characters" (Respondent 28) versus the response "some good, others were liars, hoes, and fake people," (Respondent 18). Respondent 2 commented that there were "men who had problems like mine," suggesting that the respondent may have absorbed the lessons of CBT.

Overview

No pilot study was conducted. The instrument that was being utilized was being utilized in a qualitative manner and as a prompt for narrative responses; it was not being analyzed quantitatively. As a result, a pilot study would be pointless and would not be within best practices for qualitative investigations. Instead, two ex-offenders reviewed the interview materials, as did two corrections officers, in order to determine if the materials were both pertinent and likely to be understood by the participants. Further, the respondents themselves

were drawn from a pool of ex-offenders who had already completed the program so they should have understood the materials.

Summary of the Setting

Data was intended to be gathered in several ways and at various locations, dependent on the needs of participants. The goal was to gather information from ex-offenders approximately two years after release from incarceration. During the two year period, it would not be unexpected to find that life was still chaotic and stressful. After incarceration, ex-offenders might still be looking for work; they might be in order leaving transitional housing, they might have family problems; mental health problems may have presented, in part because of the stress. The goal of the research was to be as accommodating as possible in the data gathering process.

Summary of the Demographics

The population for the study was comprised of ex-offenders from the Lorain/Medina CBCF. Each of the ex-offenders had participated in the Thinking for a Change (T4C) program before their release. It should be noted that several of the participants were back in CBCF by the time the interviews took place, however. This is because the selection criteria was 21 to 27 months after release, which gave enough time that some individuals had already faced recidivism and were back inside the unit.

Although there were females at the institution (Lorain/Medina CBCF, 2020), the decision was made to study only male members of the population for this initial study.

Summary of the Data Collection

The respondents had the option of offering their narratives through a one-on-one interview; over the phone; or via electronic means or handwritten documents. While the

optimum condition was to meet face to face, the researcher needed to follow social distancing guidelines. Thus, it was not possible to conduct interviews face to face. In some local areas, even public buildings and parks were closed. Rather than attempting to accommodate a constantly evolving medical safety protocol, respondents were asked to give their narratives via telephone, or in the form of voice recordings—i.e., as MP3 files that most cellphone users could easily make using their smartphones.

Summary of Data Analysis

The primary coding, was accomplished through the use of NVivo software. Manual coding followed a similar process. Maguire and Delahunt (2017) recommended using a well-organized process and combining manual analysis with data organization, which was followed in this research. The Braun and Clarke (2006) research process was developed for manual coding but it readily adaptable for use with NVivo. The analysis steps include the researcher:

1. Becoming familiar with the data;

2. Generating initial codes;

3. Searching for themes in responses;

4. Reviewing themes;

5. Defining the themes;

6. Producing the write-up for the results (QSR, 2018).

Summary of Evidence of Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness of the data was established by taking several approaches to the data. A narrative analysis occurred until rich description was possible. Themes and elements were identified, and analyzed in the perspective of the researcher. The researcher also triangulated his findings with the rich scholarship on prisoner rehabilitation. Another issue of trustworthiness

relates to replicability. If any independent individual studied the responses and reached the same conclusions, then the research is trustworthy. While it is believed this study is trustworthy, the real test of trustworthiness will occur as subsequent researchers

Summary of Results of Study

The research identified five trends: offenders' own narratives of T4C and their struggles to lead more normative, crime-free lives will be affected by common attitudes and rhetoric concerning the very possibility of rehabilitation; CBT relies on a fundamental strategy of identifying problematic beliefs and cognitive patterns, offering new cognitive 'scripts' to replace ones that are a source of problems in patients' lives; responsivity reflects the importance of delivering services that are matched with the population's needs; self-efficacy suggests that individuals are best able to effect change in their lives when they have a firm sense of their own ability to implement those changes; and opportunities for education and the achievement correlate positively with the individual's ability to adjust to a healthy life in prison.

Pilot Study

Conduct of the Pilot Study

N/A

Impact of the Pilot Study on Main Study

N/A

Setting

When the research was planned, COVID-19 had not yet debuted. Once the virus became a problem, changes had to be made to the data gathering process. COVID regulations limited the amount of personal contact that could take place and the locations in which the interviews could be held. The initial contact was still made by the introductory letter, and the follow-up was still

done with phone calls. All of the calls were made when the researcher was alone so that confidentiality was not compromised. The calls were made from the researcher's cell phone so that a single phone number was used. This protected both the researcher and the potential respondent(s). . Respondents were also allowed to submit written narratives via email, fax, or traditional mail, but none chose to do so.

Respondents were recruited from among a sample of ex-offenders who served time in a medium-security prison, Lorain/Medina CBCF, and who participated in the Thinking for a Change (T4C) program while there. The researcher began with a list of 240 individuals who had been out of prison for approximately two years. The sample mimicked the racial makeup of the statistics reflected in the T4C program.

Perhaps the biggest problem, however, related to a combination of lack of privacy with everyone 'locked down', and the inability of the researcher to see the respondent face to face and draw out how the respondent really felt. After the COVID crisis began, too many people were confined to home. At times, even the researcher found it very difficult to achieve any real level of privacy. Thus, there is the possibility that if the researcher and the respondents had met face to face, and been able to actually talk face to face about what the respondents were feeling, that the results would have varied. As it was, in at least one interview the researcher believed that the respondent was trying to 'say something without saying something,' but would not confirm or deny that there was more he wished to say.

Demographics

Participant Demographics and Characteristics Relevant to the Study

The population was comprised of ex-offenders, drawn from Lorain/Medina CBCF, who participated in the Thinking for a Change (T4C) program before their release. The first selection

criterion was length of time since release, which ranged from 21 to 27 months—in other words, approximately two years since their release, with a three-month leeway on either end of that period. All members of the population were male, although the respondents were asked if they identified as male, a sociological difference. All of the respondents identified as being male.

Additionally, all participants were functionally fluent in English, a criterion that was assessed by the researcher during initial contact. Unfortunately, this meant that a substantial segment of the ex-offender population might have been under-represented in the present study, since Hispanic individuals have the second highest incarceration rates in Ohio by race/ethnicity (Prison Policy Initiative, 2010). This is simply a practical limitation, given that the researcher does not have the Spanish-language fluency to collect and interpret data in Spanish, or the resources to hire translators or research assistants. As a result, it was a limitation that needed to be noted in the findings. Another important selection criterion related to mailing address. Formally, all parolees must provide current addresses to their parole officers and update this information whenever it changes. In practice, however, the ex-offender population has great difficulties with housing (McKernan, 2018), and many members of the population may not have a stable mailing address.

The sample population mimics the racial percentages reflected by T4C. The sample does not necessarily reflect the racial percentage of the population but rather only of T4C. A number of other demographic criteria was recorded but was not be used to select participants, including nature of offense, years spent incarcerated in last sentence, years spent incarcerated overall, age, race/ethnicity (as self-identified by respondent), and religion.

Number of Participants From Whom each Type of Data Were Collected

Respondents were recruited from among a sample of ex-offenders who served time in a medium-security prison, Lorain/Medina CBCF, and who participated in the Thinking for a Change (T4C) program while there. The researcher began with a list of 240 individuals who had been out of prison for approximately two years. The sample mimicked the racial makeup of the statistics reflected in the T4C program. Using an online random number generator, the researcher initiated contact with 30 members of the list at a time, until a sample size of 30 willing participants in the racial percentages reflected by T4C was reflected.

Location, Frequency, and Duration of Data Collection for each Instrument

Data was gathered in several ways and at various locations, depending on the needs of participants. Two years after incarceration, life was still fairly chaotic and stressful for some of the ex-offenders from whom the researcher planned to gather data. (For instance, the ex-offenders may be looking for work; they may be in transitional housing; they may be encountering family/marital problems and stressors; etc.) Given this, the goal was to be as accommodating as possible concerning the manner in which data was gathered. Initial contact was made via letter with follow-up phone calls. All calls were made when the researcher was alone (so as not to compromise confidentiality) and from a single number (the researcher's cell phone). Participants also had the option to provide their narratives in the form of voice recordings—i.e., as MP3 files that most cellphone users could easily make using their smartphones. Finally, respondents could submit written narratives via email, fax, or traditional mail. For all correspondence via email, including the submission of electronic voice recordings, the researcher set up a unique email account used solely for purposes of the present research. Faxes were forwarded directly to this email account as well.

How Data were Recorded

When respondents offered to provide their narratives via telephone, the researcher made sure to arrange the conversation at a time when he could be alone in his office, in order to ensure privacy and minimize the potential for disruptions. Respondents were also allowed to make audio recordings of themselves responding to a set of prompts set by text, mail, or email; or by responding to prompts in writing, via email or handwritten letter. In cases where respondents might choose to record or write responses, no other recordings were necessary. For all other respondents, the respondent's conversations with the researcher were recorded using cellphone technologies. The verbal recordings were subsequently transcribed and the transcriptions were checked against the recordings for transcription errors. By recording calls in this manner, it was a relatively easy process to transcribe them into a written format.

Variations from Data Collection Plan

Respondents had the option of offering their narratives through a one-on-one interview; over the phone; or via electronic means or handwritten documents. Where respondents were willing to meet face-to-face, which was the optimal condition, the researcher worked with the respondent to determine the most suitable location where privacy could be offered. Meetings were to take place at the respondents' home, the researcher's office, or in a quiet, neutral location, such as a park, where it was not difficult to maintain distance from other people, for privacy's sake. This plan was forced to be modified, however, when Covid-19 requirements were levied and meeting in public areas was no longer a viable option. At this point the majority of the respondents simply spoke on the phone with the researcher. The researcher confirmed the respondent's responses with the respondent to ensure he had understood what they were saying.

Unusual Circumstances Encountered in Data Collection

COVID-19 became a problem and the data gathering process had to be adapted to COVID regulations. The initial contact was still made by the introductory letter, and the follow-up was still done with phone calls. All of the calls were made when the researcher was alone so that confidentiality was not compromised. The calls were made from the researcher's cell phone so that a single phone number was used. This protected both the researcher and the potential respondent(s). The researcher confirmed the respondent's responses with the respondent to ensure he understood what they were saying, and also that he had written the comments correctly. Later in the process, the researcher also listened to the recordings to ensure that nothing had been omitted or misconstrued. The verbal recordings were subsequently transcribed and the transcriptions were checked against the recordings for transcription errors.

Findings of the Interviews

Interview 1

When asked who was in jail with him, and what they were like, at first he merely replied "inmates." Later, he indicated that there was a fairly broad assortment of personalities and characters. He was asked to tell about a time he found himself putting the lessons to use while he was still in the community correctional facility, or at least to discuss a time that he had tried to put these lessons to work. He replied, "every day in this place." He indicated that there were "more than a few stupid and crazy people" to deal with. He expressed his gratitude for the T4C Program's helpfulness in providing him with tools for dealing with difficult interpersonal relationships.

Adjustment to Life After Incarceration

The researcher inquired about the respondent's use of the program's techniques when he was outside the facility and whether or not it worked. He replied that he made use of the things he learned in T4C "by applying it to everyday problems." He says he unfortunately has no support and that his family was not actively encouraging nor were they passively supporting him. He still states he perceives that he has no barriers to overcome and is seeking to reintegrate with the community at-large.

The Future

The respondent said "my release was my turning point" and went on to indicate that returning to everyday life itself changed his outlook in general. Optimistically, he foresees his conviction as not being a barrier to employment. He gave the program a perfect mark and specifically the point of helpfulness because the program "supplied tools to help cope with stupid people." He thinks that the program improved his sense of self-efficacy in a major way. Quite surprisingly, however, he was unable to list any helpful factors aiding him in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle after his being released and did not seem to be cognizant of any hindrances. He identified his biggest takeaway from the T4C Program as gaining an understanding "that people who don't think clearly before they act make really f***ed-up decisions." The Respondent was unable to come up with any further comments about how the T4C program has helped him. His youth, educational status, lack of further educational goals, and his vocational goal may indicate an undisclosed language issue, but it was impossible to clarify if this was the case.

Interview 2

When asked who was in jail with him, and what they were like, he replied that they were "men who had problems like me." The respondent was asked to tell about a time he found himself putting the lessons to use while he was still in the community correctional facility, or at

least to discuss a time that he had tried to put these lessons to work. He responded, "There were several situations like when I had screwed-up badly before by saying or doing something, but this time I didn't do things the same way. I thought about it first because I recognize what happened other times was happening again."

Adjustment to Life After Incarceration

The researcher asked Respondent 02 about his use of the program when he was outside the facility and whether or not it worked. "It worked when I was disagreeing with a family member," he replied. He went on to explain that he went to great effort to control his emotions and avoid becoming unmanageably angry. He says that currently, he has only his family's support. When asked what barriers he needs to overcome to remain on the outside, he immediately and emphatically cited "alcohol and anger." He plans to practice anger management skills, avoid situations wherein he would tend to consume excess alcohol or get involved in emotionally charged situations. He has no plans to attend any 12-step programs (e.g. AA, NA) at this time. He rated the program's effectiveness at seven out of 10, stating, "The program can really help you if you believe in it."

The Future

The Respondent's turning point when he got out of CBCF was simply "just understanding that I did not want to live like that." He doesn't feel that his level of education is a barrier to becoming gainfully employed, however he does perceive his conviction as being a problem. He thinks the program's tools were useful in helping him deal with the pressures of reintegrating with society because he learned to think before acting. He firmly believes that the program impacted his sense of self-efficacy in a positive way. The researcher found him unwilling to discuss any other specific factors other than anger and alcohol that could steer him back towards

criminal behavior rather than in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle on the outside. His main takeaway from the T4C Program was stated as, "Just being able to think with a clear head and make rational decisions has kept me out of a lot of trouble."

Interview 3

The researcher attempted to draw out Respondent 01 about his use of the program when he was outside the facility and whether or not it worked. The respondent was not particularly forthcoming, however he affirmed that the T4C has been useful to him in terms of self-awareness regarding antisocial behaviors and "things that make people mad at me." He says he has the support of his family and several doctoral level mental health professionals, however he denies having discussed the T4C Program with them. When asked about barriers to his remaining outside of incarceration, he noted that while most of his was supportive of him, there were many who were ambivalent, and some who actively tried to sabotage his efforts to remain free. He was reluctant to comment on specifics of his efforts to deal with the unsupportive members of his family, saying only that he trying to "work hard" to deal with them in a positive way. He rated the T4C Program seven out of 10 stating, "It helped me think differently and honestly."

The Future

The respondent's turning point came shortly after he got out of CBCF when he came to the realization that he needed to change things in his life if he wanted a better future. He strongly believes that it is only his conviction that makes it more difficult to get and maintain employment. The respondent thinks the program's tools were not useful in dealing with these types of pressures, because of his unspecified mental disabilities. He thinks that the program impacted his sense of self-efficacy slightly and states, "It's a little bit better because I realize that I can change." He talked about "staying with family" being a helpful factor in maintaining a law-

abiding lifestyle once he got out. His main takeaways from the T4C program are active listening and talking skills.

Interview 4

When asked who was in jail with him, and what they were like, he generally classified them as being "idiots" and "obnoxious" and went on to say that their actions made for a heinous living environment. To summarize his remarks on this, he basically said that being surrounded by idiots who are developing a severe maladjustment to society didn't mean that he had to follow suit.

Adjustment to Life After Incarceration

The researcher asked Respondent 04 about his use of the program when he was outside the facility and whether or not it worked. The respondent generalized and cited that his success with using the skills taught by the program was dependent on two factors, his own level of skill (developed by practice) and the personality of the others involved in the situation. He says he has strong family support and declined to specify any barriers to remaining on the outside. He did, however, state that being in the facility itself strongly promoted his desire not to return to incarceration. Overall, he rated the program as being only four out of 10 points stating, "This program has helped in that I helped myself." He noted that the encouragement intrinsic to the program was the best feature.

The Future

The respondent's turning point, in his view, was actually not after he got out of LM CBCF but while he was in the T4C Program itself. It was there that he had his epiphany about his behavior not needing to be the same as others around him behaving badly, even if they were in the majority. The respondent denied the notion that his education was a barrier to employment

stating that he "plenty of ways" to get and maintain a job. He thinks the program's tools were not useful in that particular respect. He does not think that the program significantly impacted his sense of self-efficacy but again stated that it encouraged him to help himself. He talked mainly about his family support as being a strong factor in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle after his release. His main takeaways from the T4C were that his life and actions were, and had always been, his own to manage. Secondly, he reiterated his determination not to "follow the crowd", citing past failures from "hanging with idiots."

Interview 5

When asked who was in jail with him, and what they were like, at first he responded vaguely, "I don't know, all kinds of people." Later he added, "Some were a real pain in the ass." The respondent was asked to tell about a time he found himself putting the lessons to use while he was still in the community correctional facility, or at least to discuss a time that he had tried to put these lessons to work. He replied, "I learned to be patient," referring to certain difficult people lodged in the same dorm.

Adjustment to Life After Incarceration

The researcher attempted to draw out Respondent 05 about his use of the program when he was outside the facility and whether or not it worked. He referred only to his general improvement in terms of patience. When asked if the T4C Program helped him to help himself, he indicated that while it was a useful program in general, he did not feel any more empowered to help himself. He rated the T4C Program as five out of 10, arguing that the program was mediocre and saying that it could be better. He says he has support of his family and his AA sponsor, both of which feel that programs like T4C are useful. The respondent states "other alcohol and drug users" as being barriers to overcome and credits his AA sponsor and meetings

as being instrumental in helping stay outside.

The Future

The respondent's turning point when he got out of LM CBCF was "dealing with the world while being sober". He feels that neither his education level nor his conviction are barriers to employment as he was already employed. Further expounding, he expressed no confidence that the program's tools would be useful in dealing with this type of pressure, initially declining to justify his beliefs. When the researcher reiterated his question about the reason for the respondent's beliefs about this aspect of the T4C Program, he replied "I don't know. I just feel that way. I can't see any of these things helping to get a job, but maybe it could help someone keep a job." He does actually think that the program impacted his sense of self-efficacy in a positive way. He talked about his improved level of patience as being a major factor in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle once he got out. His main takeaways from the T4C Program were that he had been using minimization and needed to "use good sense". He added, "I will work on that in the future."

Interview 6

When asked who was in jail with him, and what they were like, he merely replied, "Just inmates, I guess it takes all kinds."He was asked to tell about a time he found himself putting the lessons to use while he was still in the community correctional facility, or at least to discuss a time that he had tried to put these lessons to work. He only answered, "They make us use these lessons every day. Sometimes they work and sometimes they don't."

Adjustment to Life After Incarceration

The researcher attempted to draw out Respondent 06 about his use of the program when he was outside the facility and whether or not it worked. His answer portrayed generalized

situations he encounters. He says that he tried "thinking for a change" and, "It works well." Unfortunately, the respondent says that he does not feel as though he can help himself any better than he did before entering the T4C Program. He cites his ADHD, related difficulty with comprehension, lack of appropriate medical help (e.g. prescription medication) without which he feels that he will not be able to lead a more normal life. Most of his support comes from his AA sponsor who also believes that programs like T4C are helpful. The respondent sites that "everyday life" as the biggest barrier to remaining on the outside. To help himself cope, he frequently attends AA meetings and is active in his church. Overall, he rates the T4C program as scoring seven out of 10, stating simply, "It has helped me."

The Future

The respondent's turning point when he got out of LM CBCF came in his third week when he realized that there was genuine help available in the community. He does not look upon his education as a barrier to employment, but says of having a felony conviction, "It's tough out there," stating that many employers won't hire felons. He thinks the program's tools were useful in dealing with the pressures of maintaining employment and life in general. He believes that the program impacted his sense of self-efficacy, remarking it "got stronger." He credits his decisions to take the AA program seriously and become active in church as being helpful factors in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle once he got out. His main takeaway from the T4C Program is learning the skill of active listening.

Interview 7

When asked who was in jail with him, and what they were like, he vaguely indicated that there were a wide variety of people there. He was asked to tell about a time he found himself putting the lessons to use while he was still in the community correctional facility, or at least to

discuss a time that he had tried to put these lessons to work. He indicated that he tried to put the lessons into use immediately, but met with limited success.

Adjustment to Life After Incarceration

The researcher attempted to draw out Respondent 07 about his use of the program when he was outside the facility and whether or not it worked. The respondent related that he had not tried to apply the lessons themselves directly and had given up hope of any direct application. He went on to say that the T4C program was generally not useful, but it didn't necessarily have to be that way, stating "the books are not up to date". He says he has the support of his friends and family, but their feelings were much like his in that they generally believed that the material used to teach the program was too old to be effective. When the researcher asked about any barriers with the respondent remaining on the outside and plans to overcome them, he identified issues with getting and keeping a job. He seemed to lack a coherent plan to resolve these issues indicating that he would "just keep trying." Overall, he gave the T4C Program only one point out of 10. He reiterated that the program was "not up to date."

The Future

The respondent's turning point when he got out of LM CBCF was when he realized that he had a strong desire to avoid future incarceration. Despite the low rating he gave the T4C Program and his issues with the material being "out of date," he thinks the program's tools were useful in helping him deal with the pressure of the barriers to remaining on the outside, but declined to give a specific reason. He does, in fact, think that the program impacted his sense of self-efficacy positively as he feels that it is now "larger." He was evasive in describing situations that would steer him back toward criminal behaviors rather than maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle, but he did state, "I'm just gonna mind my own business and look for a job." His main

takeaway the T4C Program was learning active listening skills.

Interview 8

When asked who was in jail with him, and what they were like, he replied, "other people, just other people," and began to mutter unintelligibly. He never gave any further coherent answers on this particular question. He was asked to tell about a time he found himself putting the lessons to use while he was still in the community correctional facility, or at least to discuss a time that he had tried to put these lessons to work. The respondent reports having used the skills taught in the T4C Program, whether or not they worked, once when he phoned home. He was able to avoid an argument with a family member on a controversial subject, which had often been a problem before.

Adjustment to Life After Incarceration

The researcher attempted to draw out Respondent 08 about his use of the program when he was outside the facility and whether or not it worked. He explained that it was similar to the phone call he made home. He had better relationships with family and friends and fewer arguments. It was a similar story regarding his relationships with his co-workers. He found the T4C Program useful because, "I think before I do things," he said. He says he has the support of friends, family, but most of all his (unspecified) job. His biggest barrier to overcome in avoiding a return to incarceration is, in his words, "idle time." The respondent focuses on his job and works long hours to this end. He gave the T4C Program 10 of a possible 10 points because, he said, "It got me thinking. I never used to think this much before."

The Future

The respondent's turning point when he got out of CBCF was when he decided to get married and open a small business. He thinks the program's tools will be useful handling the

associated pressures, citing that mindfulness that he has found. He believes that the T4C Program impacted his sense of self-efficacy positively in that it was greater. He talked about keeping busy as a crucial factor in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle and avoiding future incarceration. When asked about his main takeaway from the T4C Program, he reiterated, "I think before I do things."

Interview 9

When asked who was in jail with him, and what they were like, he replied "some very retarded people who irritated me." He was asked to tell about a time he found himself putting the lessons to use while he was still in the community correctional facility, or at least to discuss a time that he had tried to put these lessons to work. "I tried thinking for a change in order to not flip out in this stressful environment."

Adjustment to Life After Incarceration

The researcher attempted to draw out Respondent 09 about his use of the program when he was outside the facility and whether or not it worked. He cited a successful incident wherein his neighbor became argumentative, but the respondent was able to deescalate the situation using the cognitive strategies and active listening skills that he had learned. He went on, however, to deny that the T4C Program made him feel like he could help himself, citing his "toxic environment" as being a negating factor. He says he has the support of his family and mental health professionals but has never discussed the T4C Program with them. Other than the aforementioned "toxic environment", the respondent denies having any other barriers to overcome, but states that he "keeps busy" to "stay out of trouble." He rates the T4C Program five points out of ten citing the receptiveness of the individual in the program to the information provided.

The Future

The respondent's turning point when he got out of LM CBCF was his return to his extended family and children. He cites his conviction as being a major factor in making it difficult to get and maintain employment, but denies that his educational level is a significant factor. He thinks the program's tools were only somewhat useful, because each person's situation is different in so many ways. He denies having any belief that the T4C Program impacted his sense of self-efficacy. He talked about "being with my family and kids" as helpful factors in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle once he got out. He cites active listening skills as being his main takeaway from the T4C Program.

Interview 10

When asked who was in jail with him, and what they were like, he replied, "They were mostly good people and none were too bad. I've been in places with worse people." He was asked to tell about a time he found himself putting the lessons to use while he was still in the community correctional facility, or at least to discuss a time that he had tried to put these lessons to work. He cited an incident wherein fellow T4C Program participants were arguing with a staff member.

Adjustment to Life After Incarceration

The researcher asked Respondent 10 to tell about his use of the program when he was outside the facility and whether or not it worked. He stated that he commonly uses the active listening techniques with his children. When asked if he felt that the T4C Program made him feel like he could help himself, he replied, "Yes, it showed me how to think for myself." The respondent says that he has the support of his family and friends, and that they seem to feel that programs such as T4C are useful. The respondent identified the most significant barrier to overcome that made it difficult for him to remain on the outside as being himself (as his "own

worst enemy"), but that the thinking skills taught by the T4C Program were helpful in avoiding self-sabotaging behaviors. He rated the T4C Program six points out of 10, stating, "It really opened up my eyes."

The Future

The respondent's turning point when he got out of LM CBCF was when he realized that he just wanted to better himself instead of being a convict for the rest of his life. He doesn't see his level of education or conviction as being major factors in getting and maintaining employment. He thinks the program's tools were useful and effective in helping him deal with that type of pressure because he is succeeding vocationally. He does consciously think that the program impacted his sense of self-efficacy by allowing him identify the fact that he actually had self-efficacy all along, as opposed to the helplessness of his previous fatalistic thought patterns. He talked about "just trying to do better for himself and his family" as being helpful factors in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle on the outside. The respondent cites his main takeaways from the T4C Program as being his "good guy stance" and active listening skills.

Interview 11

When asked who was in jail with him, and what they were like, he identified them as "distrusting women" and "nobody I would hang with on the outside." He was asked to tell about a time he found himself putting the lessons to use while he was still in the community correctional facility, or at least to discuss a time that he had tried to put these lessons to work. He related that by using the methods taught to him in the T4C Program, he reached the following conclusion, "It made me realize that drugs are not for me anymore. I need to put positive efforts into action and follow through with them."

Adjustment to Life After Incarceration

The researcher asked the respondent was about his use of the program when he was outside the facility and whether or not it worked. He explained that sometimes the teachings of the program were too aggressive to the point where they backfire, saying "The program made me want to go out and use. They push you too hard to stay sober." However, the respondent says that he got a feeling of empowerment from the T4C Program. He stated that, I realized that I'm the only one who can help me." He says he has the support of his family and sponsor who believe that programs such as T4C are useful. The main barrier to staying on the outside the respondent must overcome is the old friends around him that he used to use drugs with. He stated that he tries to stay away from them as much as possible. The respondent gives the T4C Program a rating of five points out of 10 which he ascribes to the willingness of the participants to go along with the program, saying "I just have to want it," referring to the skills to help himself.

The Future

The respondent's turning point when he got out of LM CBCF was when he realized that he didn't want to do drugs anymore. He cites his conviction as being the main barrier to getting and keeping jobs, saying "My drug conviction has cost me jobs," but thinks the program's tools were useful, because he is now more mindful of his actions. Not surprisingly, he thinks that the program improved his sense of self-efficacy and states, "I think it got better because it taught me to think before acting." He talked about in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle and said, "I don't want to go to prison or wind up dead. I have more support on the outside and I can do this." His main takeaway from the T4C Program is, "Think before you react. I'm not invincible. All good things come to an end."

Interview 12

When asked who was in jail with him, and what they were like, the respondent replied, "a lot of 'gossip people' " He was asked to tell about a time he found himself putting the lessons to use while he was still in the community correctional facility, or at least to discuss a time that he had tried to put these lessons to work. He cited a time when he was on the phone with his significant other, had an argument, and realized how handle it and talk differently.

Adjustment to Life After Incarceration

The researcher attempted to draw out the Respondent 12 about his use of the program when he was outside the facility and whether or not it worked. The respondent said that he learned how to handle the "irritating gossip people" calmly. When asked if the T4C program made him feel like he could help himself, he responded, "Yes, it helped me by teaching various alternatives and ways to handle stressful situations." He currently has the support of his friends and family who believe that programs like T4C are useful. He says he has the barriers of stress, exposure to drug users, and staying sober to overcome. He counts on his job, family, and sober friends for support. He rates the T4C Program six out of 10 stating, "It helped me but there is no guarantee that I will continue to use the same methods as I learned."

The Future

The respondent's turning point when he got out of LM CBCF was, in his words, "I came to the realization that I do not enjoy the life of incarceration." He feels that it is his conviction that makes it difficult to find and maintain employment. He thinks the program's tools were only marginally useful because "they don't actually fix the problems and those problems may never go away." Further, he does not think that the program impacted his sense of self-efficacy and states, "I was well educated and knew how to live a normal life. I knew the consequences

before I got locked up." He talked about the embarrassment of being incarcerated and becoming more humble as helpful factors in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle on the outside. The respondent's takeaways from the T4C Program were "learning to be a better person" and "not to live his previous lifestyle."

Interview 13

When asked who was in jail with him, and what they were like, the respondent characterized them as being "drug addicts and alcoholics." He was asked to tell about a time he found himself putting the lessons to use while he was still in the community correctional facility, or at least to discuss a time that he had tried to put these lessons to work. He cited an example where a fellow program participant began to argue with him. The respondent attempted unsuccessfully to use techniques taught to him in the T4C Program but he says, "It did not work for me because the other person was really aggressive."

Adjustment to Life After Incarceration

The researcher attempted to draw out the respondent about his use of the program when he was outside the facility and whether or not it worked. The respondent stated that he had successfully used T4C Program techniques on the outside in situations similar to the one he cited having while incarcerated and participating in the program. He says that the T4C Program has helped him feel like he could help himself, but when the researcher pressed the respondent for an explanation of the reasons or ways in which this happened, the respondent emphatically declined to provide further information. He says he has the support of family and friends, but they have expressed no particular faith in programs like T4C. The respondent identifies the barriers he has to overcome as being drugs, alcohol, and "bad friends." He rates the T4C Program as being four

out of 10 and states, "The program is only as good as the participant's willingness to use the information and techniques."

The Future

The respondent's turning point when he got out of CBCF was "being able to go out and do with I want with no restrictions." He cites his conviction as the most important reason that he has difficulty getting and keeping employment. He thinks the program's tools for dealing with these types of pressures are useful if and when he chooses to use them. He does not think that the program impacted his sense of self-efficacy in any significant way. He talked about keeping to himself as being an important factor in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle once he got out, again citing potential exposure to drugs, alcohol, and "bad friends." The respondent's main takeaway from the T4C Program is active listening skills and when to use them.

Interview 14

When asked who was in jail with him, and what they were like, the respondent noted that there were various types of people, including his former spouse. He was asked to tell about a time he found himself putting the lessons to use while he was still in the community correctional facility, or at least to discuss a time that he had tried to put these lessons to work. The respondent cited a situation wherein he was arguing with another program participant. He deescalated the situation using techniques learned in the T4C Program and walked away rather than continuing to argue.

Adjustment to Life After Incarceration

The researcher attempted to draw out the respondent about his use of the program when he was outside the facility and whether or not it worked. His response was vague, stating that he used T4C Programs in daily life when interacting with other people. He says he has the support

of his family who believe that programs such as T4C are useful because they can see the difference in his behavior. The barrier this respondent needs to overcome to stay on the outside is exposure to drugs and users. He says he thinks of his family in his efforts to overcome the temptation of drugs.

The Future

The respondent's turning point after he got out of CBCF was getting back to his family. He states that when he is with them, he does not feel like the kind of person who would commit a crime. The respondent feels that it is only his conviction, not his education, that prevents him from getting and keeping employment. When asked if the T4C Program gave him the tools to deal with this pressure, his answer was affirmative but qualified. He stated that they only worked for him when he also felt the motivation to change. The respondent thinks that the program impacted his sense of self-efficacy in a positive way and stated, "I am more aware now." He talked about his feelings for his family and how he wants to change for their sake as well as his own being the most helpful factors in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle in his efforts to stay on the outside. The respondent's main takeaway from the T4C Program as stated by the respondent is, "Honestly, I've learned to think before acting on my impulses."

Interview 15

When asked who was in jail with him, and what they were like, he merely said "fake". He was asked to tell about a time he found himself putting the lessons to use while he was still in the community correctional facility, or at least to discuss a time that he had tried to put these lessons to work. He generalized his example as being how to react when someone is being disrespectful toward him.

Adjustment to Life After Incarceration

The researcher attempted to draw out the respondent about his use of the program when he was outside the facility and whether or not it worked. The researcher notes that the respondent began answer the narrative questions in a peculiar way from this point forward as though someone were listening to him and he didn't want them to know the information. "It's the same as I just told you," he said. When asked if he had support and what they thought of programs like T4C, he replied, "Yeah, we do.". When the respondent was asked about what barriers he would have to overcome, "Oh yeah, there's a lot of that back home. A lot of people do." The researcher interprets this to mean drugs, alcohol, and substance abusers.

The Future

The respondent was asked about his turning point when he got out of LM CBCF and he talked about being on the outside and seeing his family. When asked about his conviction or whether educational level were barriers to employment he replied, "Both of them do." He thinks the program's tools were useful in dealing with those types of pressures and when asked how, the respondent replied, "I'll know for sure when the time comes." When asked if that the program impacted his sense of self-efficacy, he said, "That would be great." The researcher interpreted this as meaning that the respondent has greater sense of self-efficacy. When asked about helpful factors in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle once he got out, the respondent replied, "My family is fine, thank-you." The researcher interprets this as a citation of family as a factor. His main takeaway from the T4C program is how to react to and communicate with other people. It should be noted, however, that this interview, more than any other, seemed to require interpretation rather than being straight forward.

Interview 16

When asked who was in jail with him, and what they were like, he referred to them as "liars, hoes, thieves, and junkies". He was asked to tell about a time he found himself putting the lessons to use while he was still in the community correctional facility, or at least to discuss a time that he had tried to put these lessons to work. The he cited multiple instances with a staff member who seemed to be judgmental. The respondent was able to interact with the staff member without being anti-social, angry, or provocative.

Adjustment to Life After Incarceration

The researcher attempted to draw out the respondent about his use of the program when he was outside the facility and whether or not it worked. Rather than citing a single example, he said, "I began to use T4C Program skills without consciously trying. It started to become natural." He says he has the support of his mother and, to an extent, his peers. The respondent stated that about half of them believe programs such as T4C are useful He stated that certain people, places, and things, especially those linked to drug use, were the barriers he had to overcome in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle on the outside. He said that talking to people who have successfully become clean and sober made it easier to overcome those barriers. The respondent rated the T4C Program as being eight points out of 10. He cites his acquired ability to use the skills taught in the program and that they had improved his life in certain areas.

The Future

The respondent's turning point when he got out of LM CBCF was when he noticed how much better his life had become because of using the skills taught in the T4C Program. He believes that both his lack of education and his conviction make it difficult to find and maintain

employment. He thinks the program's tools were useful in dealing with these types of pressures, because he used them naturally and felt more hope than pressure which he ascribes as a result. He thinks that the T4C Program has vastly impacted his sense of self-efficacy in a positive way, saying that it was much greater. He talked about the skills taught in the T4C Program as being helpful factors in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle on the outside. The respondent's main takeaways from the T4C Program is are skills for communicating with others and for reacting to anger.

Interview 17

When asked who was in jail with him, and what they were like, he indicated that there were a variety of inmates but looked irritated as the researcher inquired as to the personalities of the other inmates while the respondent declined to elaborate further. He was asked to tell about a time he found himself putting the lessons to use while he was still in the community correctional facility, or at least to discuss a time that he had tried to put these lessons to work. The respondent indicated that when his patience was tested every day, he used meditation.

Adjustment to Life After Incarceration

The researcher attempted to draw out the respondent about his use of the program when he was outside the facility and whether or not it worked. He merely indicated that he used meditation as he did when he was incarcerated. The respondent denied that the T4C Program helped him feel like he could help himself and stated that he already had common sense. He says he has the support of his parents, children, girlfriend, and sponsor who, he states, do not believe programs such as T4C useful. The respondent denied that there were any barriers to overcome in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle on the outside and stated that his most recent conviction was for failure to pay child support. He rated the T4C Program three points out of 10 and said, It has

helped me refresh some common sense."

The Future

The respondent's turning point when he got out of LM CBCF was when he started to

receive job offers. He believes that neither his education nor his conviction make it difficult to

find and maintain employment. He thinks the program's tools were not useful in dealing with

these types of pressures, because he denies having any such pressures. He does not think that the

program impacted his sense of self-efficacy and stated that it remained the same. He talked about

the support of his parents, children, girlfriend, and sponsor as being helpful factors in

maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle on the outside. The respondent's main takeaways from the

T4C Program were active listening skills and meditation.

Interview 18

When asked who was in jail with him, and what they were like, the respondent implied

that there was a wide variety of people there. He was asked to tell about a time he found himself

putting the lessons to use while he was still in the community correctional facility, or at least to

discuss a time that he had tried to put these lessons to work. The respondent states that he

thought about what he was going to do before he did it so he wouldn't get into trouble.

Adjustment to Life After Incarceration

The researcher attempted to draw out the respondent about his use of the program when

he was outside the facility and whether or not it worked. The respondent bluntly and repeatedly

refused to provide an answer. He did say that he feels more able to help himself having been

through the T4C Program because he can think about the problems he faces before acting rashly

out of frustration. He says he has the support of his family, friends, sponsor, and NA mentor, but

has not discussed with them whether they believe programs such as T4C are useful or not. The respondent feels that finding employment was his biggest barrier to overcome in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle on the outside, but states that he is putting in extra effort searching for a job. He gives the T4C program five points out of 10 and cited that it was the teacher's knowledge of the subject matter that made the program worthwhile.

The Future

The respondent's turning point when he got out of LM CBCF was when he realized that he didn't want to be incarcerated again. He believes his conviction is the main factor that makes it difficult to find and maintain employment. He thinks the program's tools were somewhat useful in dealing with these types of pressures because he can only change what he does, not the way others decide to see him. He thinks that the program impacted his sense of self-efficacy positively and states that it is "larger". He talked about the support he receives from family, friends, his sponsor, and his NA mentor as being a big factor in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle on the outside. The respondent's main takeaways from the T4C Program are active listening skills giving proper feedback.

Interview 19

When asked who was in jail with him, and what they were like, the respondent said, "They was all nice." He was asked to tell about a time he found himself putting the lessons to use while he was still in the community correctional facility, or at least to discuss a time that he had tried to put these lessons to work. He cited an incident wherein another T4C Program participant tried to take the respondent's food. He thought first and responded calmly to the other individual and the incident was resolved successfully.

Adjustment to Life After Incarceration

The researcher attempted to draw out the respondent about his use of the program when he was outside the facility and whether or not it worked. He cited a certain time when he almost got into a fight he thought about what to do and was able to successfully resolve the conflict by conversing with the other individual. He feels that the T4C Program has made him feel like he could help himself because it helps him think better. The respondent says he has "a lot of" support from family, friends, and others. He said that they believe programs such as T4C are useful. He faces no barriers to overcome in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle on the outside. The respondent gave the T4C Program seven points out of 10 because the program did a fair job of helping him with self-improvement specifically in the area of cognitive skills, mostly thought processes.

The Future

The respondent's turning point when he got out of CBCF was when he changed his way of thinking about everyday life and difficult situations that he encounters. He believes neither his education nor his conviction make it difficult to find and maintain employment. He thinks the program's tools were not necessary in dealing with these types of pressures, because he denies having any such pressures. He thinks that the program impacted his sense of self-efficacy positively stating that he has "more". He specifically denied that there were any particular helpful factors in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle once on the outside, although he previously cited that he had a significant degree of support from family, friends, and others. The respondent's main takeaways from the T4C Program are thinking in general and thinking before reacting to a provocative situation.

Interview 20

When asked who was in jail with him, and what they were like, the respondent characterized the people as "real gangstas". He was asked to tell about a time he found himself putting the lessons to use while he was still in the community correctional facility, or at least to discuss a time that he had tried to put these lessons to work. He was successfully able to deescalate a conflict with another program participant which almost became a physical altercation. The respondent felt that the other individual had made disrespectful remarks but was able to clear the air with a conversation.

Adjustment to Life After Incarceration

The researcher attempted to draw out the respondent about his use of the program when he was outside the facility and whether or not it worked. He vaguely indicated that there were incidents on the outside similar to the one he cites as occurring during the T4C program, but declined to provide further details. He feels that the T4C Program has made him feel like he could help himself, specifically in the area of self-restraint versus impulsive action. The respondent says he has the support of family, but he has not discussed with them whether or not they believe programs such as T4C are useful. He faces the barriers of living and working in bad neighborhoods, as well as difficulty "making the right choices" to overcome in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle on the outside. His efforts in this regard include mindfulness and self-awareness. The respondent gave the T4C Program a rating of 5 points out of 10, stating that some of the material and methods were useful and some of them were not.

The Future

The respondent's turning point when he got out of LM CBCF was stated as being when,

"I got my head right." He believes that his conviction is that main factor that makes it difficult to find and maintain employment. He thinks the program's tools were useful in dealing with these types of pressures, because they helped him deal with them rationally instead of impulsively. The respondent does not think that the program impacted his sense of self-efficacy and specified that he knew his own capabilities prior to entering the T4C Program. He talked about a decrease in impulsive actions as being a helpful factor in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle on the outside. The respondent's main takeaways from the T4C Program are thinking skills and self-restraint.

Interview 21

When asked who was in jail with him, and what they were like, he referred to the people as being "my dudes". He was asked to tell about a time he found himself putting the lessons to use while he was still in the community correctional facility, or at least to discuss a time that he had tried to put these lessons to work. The respondent that there were several instances wherein he used the T4C Program skills in controlling his anger.

Adjustment to Life After Incarceration

The researcher attempted to draw out the respondent about his use of the program when he was outside the facility and whether or not it worked. He indicated that it was similar to how he used the skills and techniques on while incarcerated, but that they seemed to be less effective on the outside. The respondent stated emphatically and repeatedly that the T4C Program did not make him feel like he could help himself. The respondent says he has good support from his family and that their beliefs about programs such as T4C being useful or not are mixed. He faces the barrier of background checks to overcome in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle on the outside. To overcome this barrier, he focuses on his qualifications for the job and is upfront about his convictions. The respondent gave the T4C Program a rating of five points out of 10 because

the skills and techniques he learned proved to be of limited use and effectiveness.

The Future

The respondent's turning point when he got out of LM CBCF was when he felt that he realized that he could think clearly and rationally. He believes that neither his education nor his conviction make it difficult to find and maintain employment. He thinks the program's tools were not useful in dealing with these types of pressures, because they didn't actually make any problems go away. He very decidedly does not think that the program impacted his sense of self-efficacy at all. He talked about the good support from his family as being a helpful factor in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle on the outside. When asked about events and decisions that have helped him in this regard, he cited that thinking clearly has been a big help. The respondent's main takeaways from the T4C Program are anger management and thinking skills.

Interview 22

When asked who was in jail with him, and what they were like, the respondent characterized the people as "my boys". He was asked to tell about a time he found himself putting the lessons to use while he was still in the community correctional facility, or at least to discuss a time that he had tried to put these lessons to work. The respondent insisted that he "never did" use the lessons T4C Program while in the program.

Adjustment to Life After Incarceration

The researcher attempted to draw out the respondent about his use of the program when he was outside the facility and whether or not it worked. Similarly to when he was in the T4C Program, he insisted that he "never ever even thought about it", and laughed.

He feels that the T4C Program has not made him feel like he could help himself when asked

why he thought was so, he only replied "cuz it's stupid". The respondent says he has the support

of his family and his sponsor, but denies having talked to them about whether or not they believe

that programs such as T4C useful. He faces the barriers to overcome in maintaining a law-

abiding lifestyle on the outside. When asked what he does to try to overcome the barriers, he

replied, "What do you mean? You can't get around background checks," and began to snicker.

The respondent gave the T4C Program rating of minus one points out of 10 and when asked by

the researcher why he did so, he again replied "cuz it's stupid" and began to laugh again.

The Future

The respondent's turning point when he got out of LM CBCF was not a topic he was

willing to discuss, and when the researcher pressed him for an answer, he said, "I didn't have

one!" He believes that neither his education nor his conviction have made it difficult to find and

maintain employment despite citing background checks as being a barrier. He thinks the

program's tools were not useful in dealing with these types of pressures, because there are no

tools to solve the problems. Uncharacteristically, he stated that the program impacted his sense of

self-efficacy in a positive way and said it was "larger". He denied the existence any helpful

factors in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle on the outside. The respondent's main takeaway

from the T4C Program is active listening skills.

Interview 23

When asked who was in jail with him, and what they were like, he indicated only that

they were people who had issues similar to his own. He was asked to tell about a time he found

himself putting the lessons to use while he was still in the community correctional facility, or at

least to discuss a time that he had tried to put these lessons to work. The respondent cited an

example wherein he phoned home and had a discussion with his former spouse and was able to

think clearly and avoid arguing with her.

Adjustment to Life After Incarceration

The researcher attempted to draw out the respondent about his use of the program when he was outside the facility and whether or not it worked. He merely indicated that the methods and skills work, but only on those occasions wherein he consciously chose to use them. He feels that the T4C Program has made him feel like he could help himself, but indicated that the inspiration to want to change, make efforts to change, and seeing results were crucial in overcoming a feeling of general helplessness. The T4C Program gave him the necessary impetus to start the process. The respondent says he has the support of his family and former spouse. In his discussions with them, they indicated a belief that programs such as T4C are useful and that they saw a change in him. The barriers that he faces to overcome in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle on the outside are friends and neighbors who are involved in the substance abuse culture. The respondent gave the T4C Program rating of seven points out of 10 because it provides good information.

The Future

The respondent's turning point when he got out of CBCF was when he realized that he had been humbled by the experience of the T4C Program. He believes his conviction, much more than his education, makes it difficult to find and maintain employment. He thinks the program's tools were useful in dealing with these types of pressures, because he is able to think clearly and move forward through the frustration. He thinks that the program impacted his sense of self-efficacy positively in that he is more aware of it and his thoughts in general. He talked about just staying focused on his family as being a helpful factor in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle on

the outside. The respondent's main takeaways from the T4C Program are active listening skills and the concept of listening before speaking.

Interview 24

When asked who was in jail with him, and what they were like, he indicated only that they were people who had issues similar to his own. He was asked to tell about a time he found himself putting the lessons to use while he was still in the community correctional facility, or at least to discuss a time that he had tried to put these lessons to work. The respondent cited an example wherein he phoned home and had a discussion with his former spouse and was able to think clearly and avoid arguing with her.

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Interview 25

When asked who was in jail with him, and what they were like, he stated only that, "The other residents were a strange mix of characters." He was asked to tell about a time he found himself putting the lessons to use while he was still in the community correctional facility, or at least to discuss a time that he had tried to put these lessons to work. He stated that using active listening skills has prevented potential arguments on many occasions.

Adjustment to Life After Incarceration

The researcher attempted to draw out the respondent about his use of the program when he was outside the facility and whether or not it worked. He merely stated that he was capable of thinking things through before he participated in the program, but that the active listening skills he learned worked on the outside in a similar manner to how they did on the inside. He reports having no particular feeling about whether or not the T4C Program has made him believe that he

was more able to help himself and has never even thought about it. The respondent says he has the support of his family but has not discussed with them whether or not they believe programs such as T4C are useful. He faces the barrier of finding employment to overcome in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle on the outside and states, "It's hard to find a good job." He feels that self-employment may be the answer he seeks and says, "I'm making my own company." The respondent gave the T4C Program mixed reviews rating it one point out of 10 on some aspects, but a full 10 points on others and implied that the information, methodology, and presentation were hit-or-miss across the board.

The Future

The respondent's turning point when he got out of LM CBCF was getting off probation. He believes that his education is only problem in that his conviction ended his education for employment in an unspecified medical field, thus making it difficult for him to find and maintain employment. He thinks the program's tools were marginally useful in dealing with these types of pressures, but noted that they were nothing that he did not already possess. He does not think that the program impacted his sense of self-efficacy stating that it is the same. He talked about his family's support as being a helpful factors in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle on the outside. The respondent's main takeaway from the T4C Program is active listening skills.

Interview 26

When asked who was in jail with him, and what they were like, he merely responded that there were plenty of people, they were 'just' other people. He was asked to tell about a time he found himself putting the lessons to use while he was still in the community correctional facility, or at least to discuss a time that he had tried to put these lessons to work. Again, he was not forthcoming; he responded bluntly that there was not a single time that he put what he had

learned to use.

Adjustment to Life After Incarceration

The interviewer attempted to draw out Respondent 30 about his use of the program while he was still in the facility, or a time that would not work. However, even though he was asked again to talk about a time after he got out and tried to use the lessons he learned, he would not respond. He did say that he did not think the program helped him feel like he could help himself, because "I don't' care about it." He says he has no support now, no one to talk to, and that they do not believe that programs like this one are useful. Still, he felt there were no barriers to overcome in staying outside, because "I don't have any." When asked to rate the program on a scale of one to 10, with 1 being useless and 10 being really helpful, he still rated the program as a 10, even though he had "never used it, but it seems as though it might be helpful."

The Future

The Respondent did not feel there was a 'turning point' when he got out of CBCF. He did not feel that lack of education was a barrier to getting work, nor that having a conviction made it more difficult to get work. He didn't know if the program's tools were useful, "because I haven't had to use it". He does not think that the program impacted his sense of self-efficacy at all. He completely declined to talk about what has helped him maintain a law-abiding lifestyle once he got out, but said that if he had to give a real lesson that he had learned from the class, it would be the skill of active listening.

Interview 27

When asked who was in jail with him, and what they were like, he stated only that, "The other residents were a strange mix of characters." He was asked to tell about a time he found

himself putting the lessons to use while he was still in the community correctional facility, or at least to discuss a time that he had tried to put these lessons to work. He stated that using active listening skills has prevented potential arguments on many occasions.

Adjustment to Life After Incarceration

The researcher attempted to draw out the respondent about his use of the program when he was outside the facility and whether or not it worked. He merely stated that he was capable of thinking things through before he participated in the program, but that the active listening skills he learned worked on the outside in a similar manner to how they did on the inside. He reports having no particular feeling about whether or not the T4C Program has made him believe that he was more able to help himself and has never even thought about it. The respondent says he has the support of his family but has not discussed with them whether or not they believe programs such as T4C are useful. He faces the barrier of finding employment to overcome in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle on the outside and states, "It's hard to find a good job." He feels that self-employment may be the answer he seeks and says, "I'm making my own company." The respondent gave the T4C Program mixed reviews rating it one point out of 10 on some aspects, but a full 10 points on others and implied that the information, methodology, and presentation were hit-or-miss across the board.

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The respondent's turning point when he got out of LM CBCF was getting off probation. He believes that his education is only problem in that his conviction ended his education for employment in an unspecified medical field, thus making it difficult for him to find and maintain employment. He thinks the program's tools were marginally useful in dealing with these types

of pressures, but noted that they were nothing that he did not already possess. He does not think that the program impacted his sense of self-efficacy stating that it is the same. He talked about his family's support as being a helpful factors in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle on the outside. The respondent's main takeaway from the T4C Program is active listening skills.

Interview 28

When asked who was in jail with him, and what they were like, but he merely replied "I'll tell you that later," but gave the same answer every time the researcher brought up the question. He was asked to tell about a time he found himself putting the lessons to use while he was still in the community correctional facility, or at least to discuss a time that he had tried to put these lessons to work. He laughed jovially and again offered to tell the researcher about such an incident later. Further questioning on the part of the researcher yielded similar results. The respondent was mercurial throughout the interview, waxing on about some things and dancing around others.

Adjustment to Life After Incarceration

The researcher attempted to draw out the respondent about his use of the program when he was outside the facility and whether or not it worked. He made vague inferences that he used the lessons frequently and his answers only became more generalized as the researcher pressed him further. He feels that the T4C Program has made him feel like he could help himself by teaching him how he could better interact with others in everyday life.. The respondent says he has strong support from his parents and that they believe programs such as T4C are useful. He was asked about what barriers he had to overcome in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle on the outside. His response was a long tirade about finding a job whereby he could earn enough money to pay bills, child support, and generally afford to live. His plans for dealing with the

unemployment barrier were succinctly stated as, "I'll just keep looking for a good job." The respondent gave the T4C Program a rating of 10 points out of 10 and said, "This program is very helpful if you are open minded about changing the way you live your life."

The Future

The respondent's turning point when he got out of LM CBCF was when he understood his ways of using controlled substances (e.g. self-medicating, avoiding dealing with problems, et al) and how he was progressing in terms of his own betterment. He believes his conviction makes it difficult to find and maintain employment and that his education really didn't affect his employability. He thinks the program's tools were not useful in dealing with these types of pressures because they covered a wide variety of topics matching his situation. He thinks that the program impacted his sense of self-efficacy positively and stated, "It's larger. I have a better understanding about handling situations." He talked about the strong support of his parents as being a helpful factor in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle on the outside. The respondent's main takeaways from the T4C Program are active listening skills, and situational awareness.

Interview 29

When asked who was in jail with him, and what they were like, he merely responded that there were plenty of people, they were 'just' other people. He was asked to tell about a time he found himself putting the lessons to use while he was still in the community correctional facility, or at least to discuss a time that he had tried to put these lessons to work. Again, he was not forthcoming; he responded bluntly that there was not a single time that he put what he had learned to use.

Adjustment to Life After Incarceration

The interviewer attempted to draw out Respondent 30 about his use of the program while he was still in the facility, or a time that would not work. However, even though he was asked again to talk about a time after he got out and tried to use the lessons he learned, he would not respond. He did say that he did not think the program helped him feel like he could help himself, because "I don't' care about it." He says he has no support now, no one to talk to, and that they do not believe that programs like this one are useful. Still, he felt there were no barriers to overcome in staying outside, because "I don't have any." When asked to rate the program on a scale of one to 10, with 1 being useless and 10 being really helpful, he still rated the program as a 10, even though he had "never used it, but it seems as though it might be helpful."

The Future

The Respondent did not feel there was a 'turning point' when he got out of CBCF. He did not feel that lack of education was a barrier to getting work, nor that having a conviction made it more difficult to get work. He didn't know if the program's tools were useful, "because I haven't had to use it". He does not think that the program impacted his sense of self-efficacy at all. He completely declined to talk about what has helped him maintain a law-abiding lifestyle once he got out, but said that if he had to give a real lesson that he had learned from the class, it would be the skill of active listening.

Interview 30

When asked who was in jail with him, and what they were like, he merely responded that there were plenty of people, they were 'just' other people. He was asked to tell about a time he found himself putting the lessons to use while he was still in the community correctional facility,

or at least to discuss a time that he had tried to put these lessons to work. Again, he was not forthcoming; he responded bluntly that there was not a single time that he put what he had learned to use.

Adjustment to Life After Incarceration

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Results

Discrepant Cases/Nonconforming Data

When interviewing respondent 15, the researcher attempted to draw out the respondent about his use of the program when he was outside the facility and whether or not it worked. The researcher noted that the respondent began to answer the narrative questions in a peculiar way from this point forward as though someone were listening to him and he didn't want them to know the information. "It's the same as I just told you," he said. When asked if he had support and what they thought of programs like T4C, he replied, "Yeah, we do.". When the respondent was asked about what barriers he would have to overcome, he comment "Oh yeah, there's a lot of that back home. A lot of people do." The researcher interpreted this to mean drugs, alcohol, and substance abusers but noted that his interpretation could just as easily be incorrect. Had there been additional time, this respondent might have been removed from the case study. However, due to time limitation and the reality that the respondent's opinion was of value, this was not done.

Tables and Figures

Table 1. Basic Demographics

Respondent	Time Incarcerated (yrs.)	Age	Age of 1st Conviction	Race
1	.50	28	18	H
2	4.00	55	19	B
3	4.00	38	16	B
4	2.00	52	24	W
5	.50	46	24	B
6	.58	47	45	W
7	9.00	32	18	W
8	6.00	33	18	W
9	4.00	27	13	Mixed BW
10	13.00	55	18	B

11	.33	37	37	H
12	5.00	39	13	H
13	.58	20	19	W
14	3.50	35	26	W
15	14.50	44	24	W
16	.50	26	26	W
17	.25	20	20	W
18	8.00	44	19	B
19	2.50	27	19	W
20	4.00	49	30	W
21	4.00	45	24	B
22	.50	28	26	B
23	.33	46	18	W
24	1.00	32	26	W
25	1.00	48	21	W
26	4.50	37	19	W
27	.50	23	18	W
28	.66	27	26	W
29	3.00	47	19	B
30	2.00	27	22	W

Figure 1. Living Status of Respondents
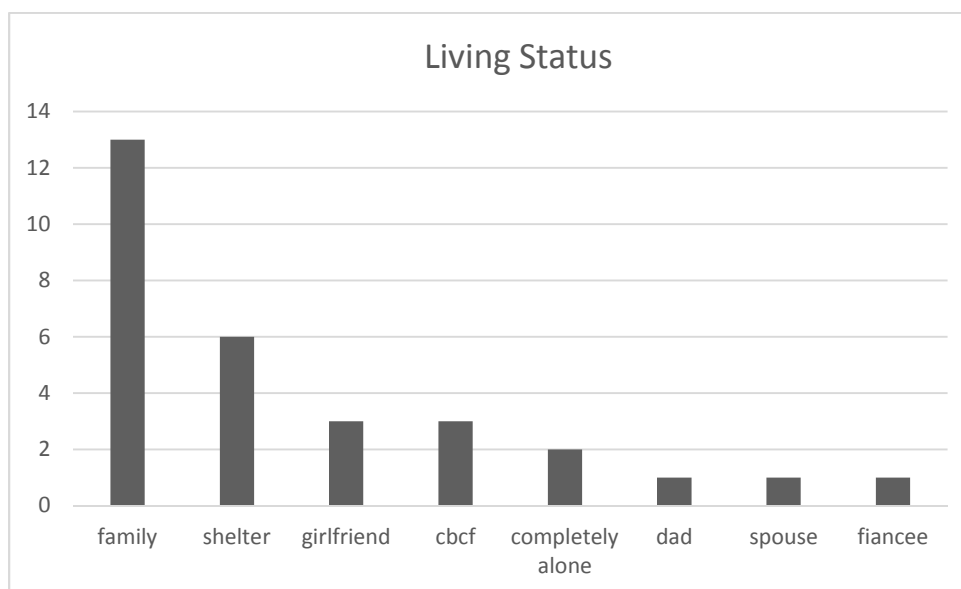
Figure 1 shows the living status of the respondents.

When the entire narrative, including the demographic was considered, the most frequently used words were Time, Program, Respondent, T4C, Years, Jail, Prison, Sentenced, Spent, and CBCF (Figure 2). The terms had weights of 254, 246, 209, 158, 96, 90, 90, 90, 88 and 87 respectively.

Figure 2. Bar-coded Word Frequency Respondent Data, Full Data
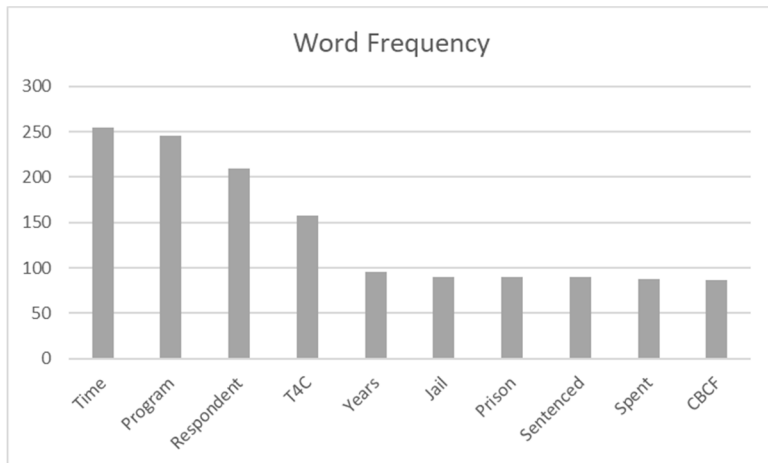
Figure 3. Bar-coded Word Frequency Respondent Data, Narrative Data Only
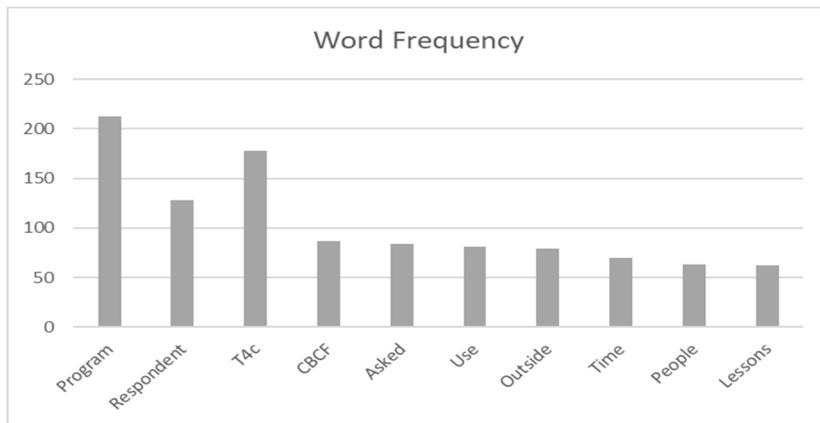
When the narratives without the demographic were considered, the most frequently used words were Program, T4C, Respondent, CBCF, Asked, Use, Outside, Time, People, and Lessons

(Figure 3). The terms had weights of 213, 128, 178, 87, 84, 81, 79, 70, 63, and 62 respectively.

respectively.

Figure 4. Comparison of Top Ten Words in Both Lists
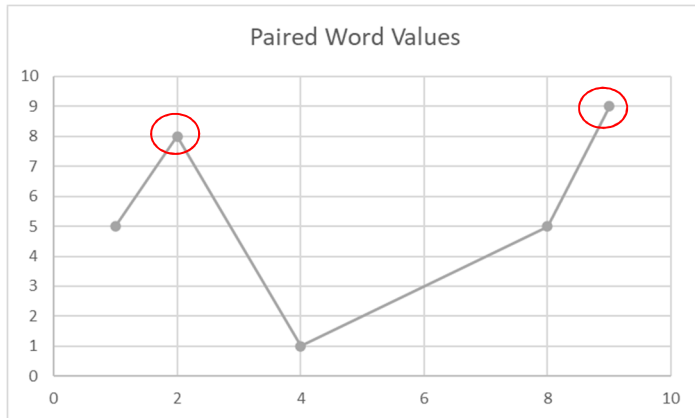
Five words appeared on both lists of top ten most utilized words: Program (1,5), T4C (2,8), CBCF (4,1), Respondent (8, 5), and Time (9,9) where the first number is position in the full data, and the second number is the position in the Narrative data. These positions suggest that T4C and Time have the most overall meaning in the comparison of top ten words, as illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 5. Cluster Analysis (Word Cloud) Using Entire Dataset of 30 Respondents

The next set of data, this time illustrated through NVivo, gives perspective of the use of all the terms from the 30 respondents. The full set of data extracted from the full set of narratives, was utilized. The query was run, and the results were viewed in terms of a cluster analysis. The results are shown in figure 5. Word clouds are a very visual way to present data, particularly textual data, and they are becoming increasingly more important in a time in which social media is vital to communication.

Figure 6. Cluster Analysis (Word Cloud) Using Narrative of 30 Respondents

The second word cloud analysis included the narrative only. The results showed that 'T4C' and 'CBCF' were the most important terms, followed by 'asked', 'like' and 'use', replicating the results found in figure 3. The visual representation of the narrative responses emphasizes the items that the respondents found to be of importance: 'education', 'think' (or

thinks), to be 'useful', and to be 'helped'. It appears clear that the respondents found it important to be 'asked' about how they felt about what had occurred to them as a result of the T4C program.

Figure 7. Word Tree – Root T4C (Thinking for a Change)
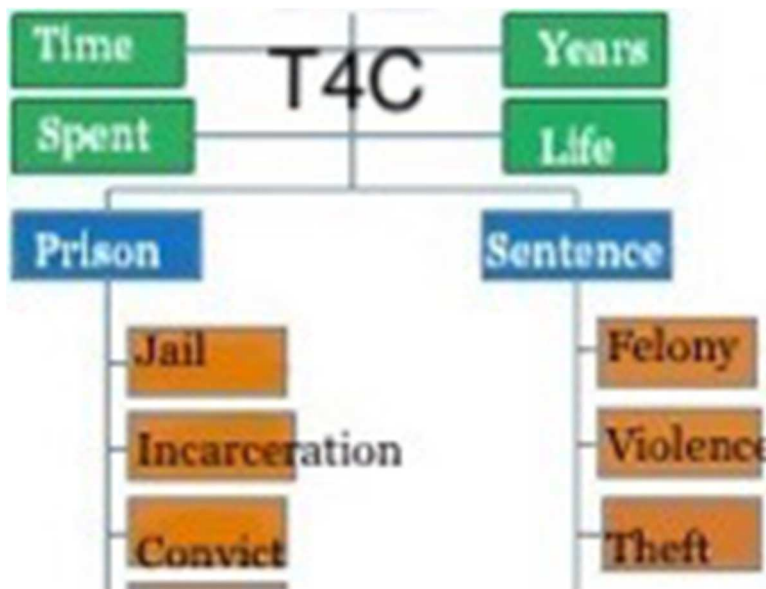
In the Word Tree, the concepts most closely linked with T4C in the experience or understanding of the respondents were 'time', 'spent', 'years', and 'life'. The association is clear: ex-offenders associate the T4C program with the time spent in 'prison' (the second tier of the tree), and the 'sentence' is associated with the 'years' of the individual's 'life'. Prison can be considered 'jail' and/or 'incarceration' by the offender or 'convict', while the sentence is associated by the respondents with a 'felony', with 'violence' and 'theft'.

Figure 8. Manual Analysis of Root Tree
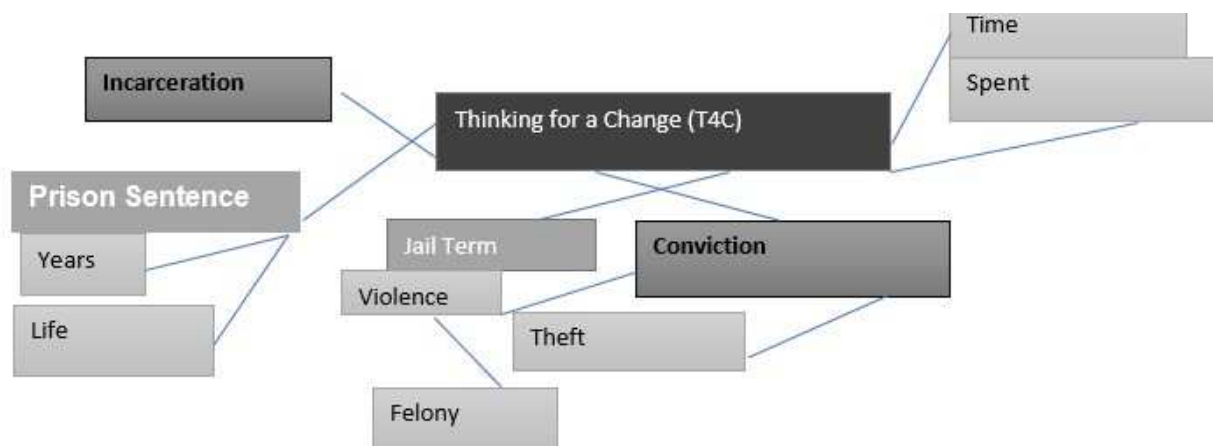
       This is a case where it is clear of the importance of T4C and the concepts that surround it, in the mind of the ex-offender, but not necessarily of the *reason* for the importance of the program. The most likely interpretation is presented in figure 8 below. This root map was produced using a manual analysis. T4C as root word connects to Prison Sentence and Jail Term that signifies conviction, incarceration and crimes such as violence and theft. The current study is on recidivism, which directly relates to, and is measured by, the Prison Sentence and Jail Term.

Figure 9. Analysis of Word Tree II, Related to Respondent Perspectives

In the figure above, the respondent concentrates firsts on their behavioral activities or behavioral patterns. All of these items can be considered behavioral responses. This portion of the analysis suggested that the respondents had an overall emphasis on behavioral changes, meaning that the respondent is primarily studied in terms of behavioral responses.

Figure 10. Analysis of Word Tree II, Related to Respondent Perspectives (Diagram)

Respondent					
CBCF					
Thinks	**Believes**	**Says**	**Finds**	**Identifies**	**Makes**
Cites	**Wants**	**Feels**	**Realizes**	**Behaves**	**Makes**
Reiterates	**Gets**	**Uses**	**Keeps**	**Reacts**	**Plans**
Rates	**Argues**	**Denies**	**Issues**	**Decides**	**Changes**
Lives	**Narrates**	**Pressures**	**Efforts**	**Keeps**	**Uses**

In this root word analysis, the root word is related to the program of T4C. It can be used to study the impact of therapeutic programs on behavioral changes. The general categories of programs are divided into four categories: lessons, facility, family, and work. Figure 11 illustrates the root words related to the program and the supporting qualities. Figure 11 is a graphic representation of the word tree that is presented in Figure 12. Lessons are useful; they teach skills. They are correctional in that they correct behaviors that were negative or were missing. Lessons help provide an education. The facility of CBCF that encompasses the program of T4C provides a place to live, and the lessons to change one's lifestyle. There are people who can help, but there are also people who cause life to be quite a challenge. The facility is a place, and it is a place for active doing, being, and learning.
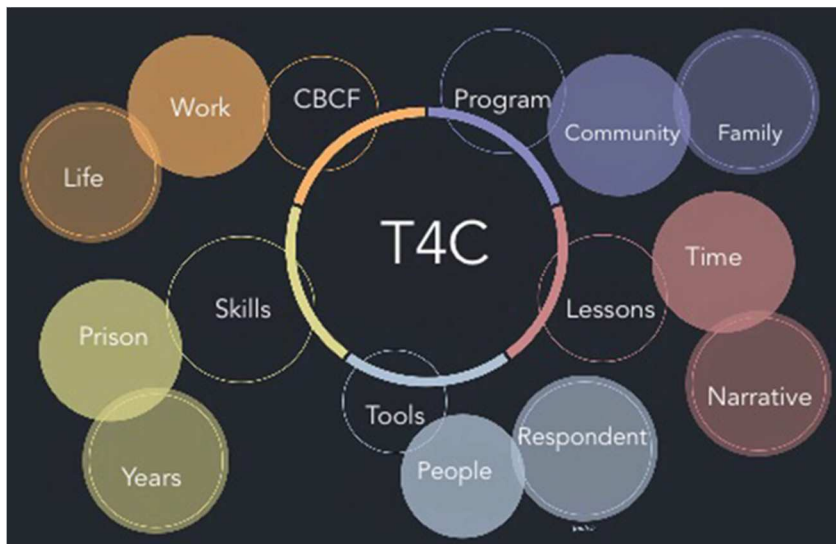
Figure 11. Analysis of Word Tree III, Related to the Program (T4C)


Figure 12. Narrative Words

Figure 13. Mind Map T4C

The mind map in figure 13 puts T4C firmly in the core of the case for changing behaviors at CBCF. The next level of importance includes the tools that the respondents learn from T4C, the lessons they learn about living lawful lives, and the skills they will need to do so. T4C overlaps all these categories, and bridges CBCF and the programs that ex-offenders need to learn better skills and survive outside without becoming recidivists. Skills inform the individual's time in prison, which can be years. With time to use T4C to build skills, there is little excuse for the respondents to at least not try to learn these life lessons, taking time and enriching the narrative of the ex-offender's lives.

Figure 14. Mind Map II: Incarceration
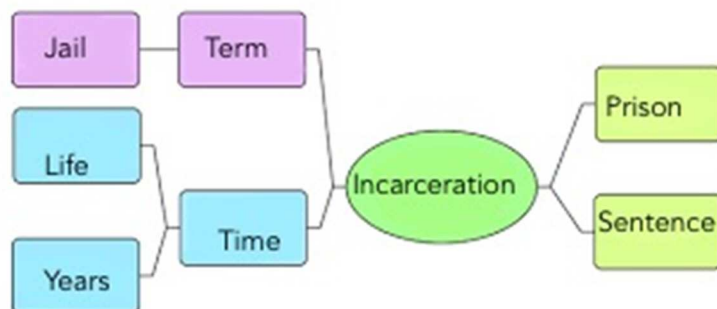
In figure 14, 'incarceration' is the central theme. Branching off of the incarceration node are two separate concepts. The first is that of 'prison' and a 'sentence'. The second is that 'terms' take 'time'. Further nodes reveal that the respondents realize that the time can be years, but can also be life. Another possible interpretation is that even when the ex-offender is released, they are still under a life sentence of sorts: people do not let them forget their incarceration, they may lose part of their rights, and acquiring gainful employment will forever be difficult. The final node links time, term, and jail term in a holistic understanding of changes that will now be part of the ex-offender's life.

Figure 15. Node Hierarchy - Narrative
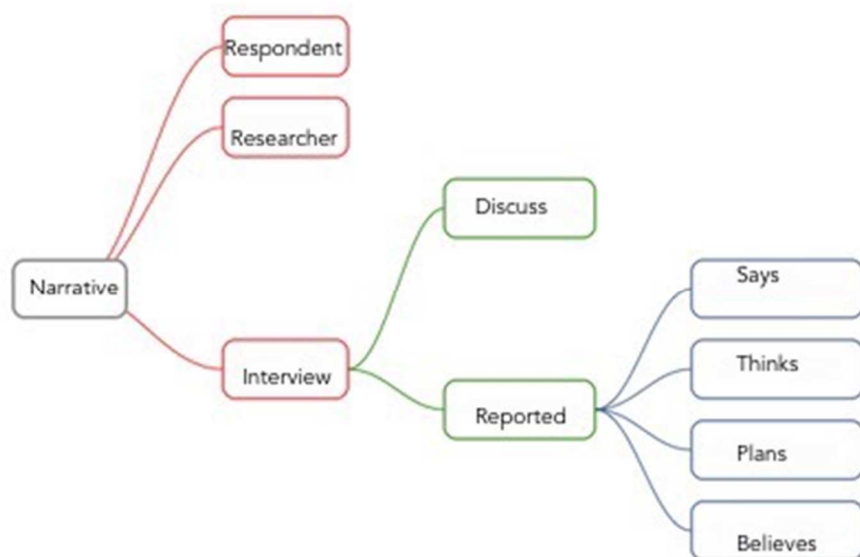
Node Hierarchy II is organized in the same fashion as Node Hierarchy I. However, it reviews the connections as the respondent and the researcher discussed 'time'. In this hierarchy, time can refer to 'years' 'spent' or given in the 'sentence'. The sentence could be in 'jail' or in 'prison'. The textual responses to the prison node are interesting: the individual in this case 'lived' 'outside' of the 'facility' and while he 'tried', prison resulted from his actions.

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Figure 16. Node Hierarchy - Time
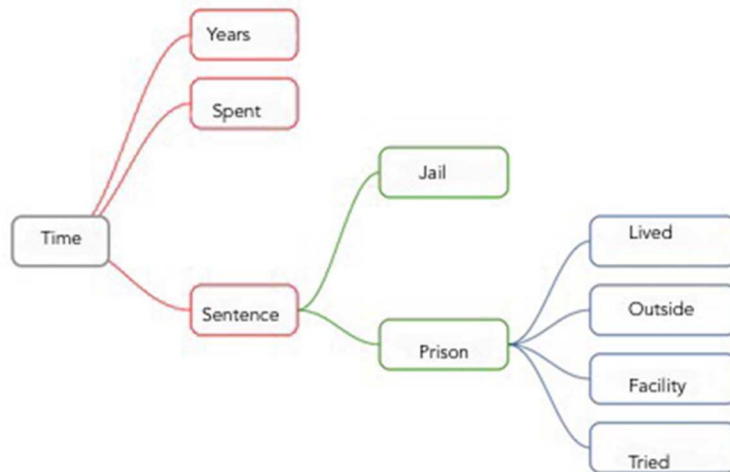
Figure 17. Racial Comparisons: Percentage Sentenced Versus Percentage of Population
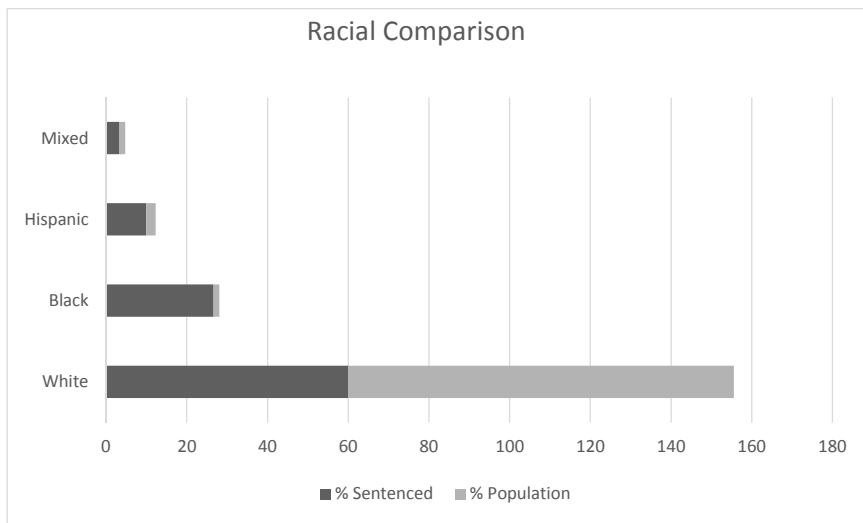
The race of the respondents is of interest. The racial breakdown in the Medina County

Ohio area is 95.6% White, 1.5% Black, 2.3% Hispanic, and 1.4% Mixed (United States Census,

2020). However, the racial makeup of the population studied (which reflects the inmate

population in the centers under study) is quite different. In the study, there is 60.% White,

26.6%Black, 10% Hispanic, and 3.33% Mixed.

Data Analysis

Process of Moving From Coded Units to Larger Representations

The first step was to take the transcription of the interviews and transfer them into two forms: a narrative, and a data record. It appeared that several of the respondents did not feel comfortable talking in their living situation. Further, many of the responses were very brief, to the point that they were stilted. Thus, it was helpful to do a data analysis by hand (with the assistance of Excel) in addition to NVivo, since the researcher could think back to the interviews and remember cues that might otherwise have gone unnoticed. The information already presented in this chapter was gathered through manual data analysis and the use of Excel. The steps to the data manipulation and NVivo analysis process are summarized below.

Several major themes emerged. Very few of the individuals lived alone, with only one respondent actually living alone and not in a shelter. Of the 30 respondents, three were either living in shelters already, or planning on living in a shelter. One lived alone, and the remainder lived with family or a girlfriend. Twelve of the respondents were working, the remainder were looking for work. Three respondents were married, one was married but separated, one had a fiancé, and the remainder were single or unmarried (although they may have had girlfriends). In terms of education, only two of the men were in school, and one of those was working on a high school diploma.

Codes, Categories, and Themes that Emerged

The remainder of the respondents were not in school, although one had a bachelor's degree. Exactly half of the respondents had been sentenced for additional crimes. Thirteen of the respondents expressed a religious preference; one commented that it was inappropriate to be asked about his religion in the context of the research, and the remainder did not feel that religion

had a big impact on their life. Most of the participants seem to have a negative impression or opinion of the other people in their pod or dorm. In terms of adjustment to life after incarceration, the respondents were reluctant to tell about a time after they got out of prison that they tried to use the lessons they had learned. They were more open when asked to tell about a time they put the lessons to use while they were still in the community corrections facility. A small majority of the respondents felt that the program helped them feel like they could help themselves. Almost universally, the respondents felt that education, or lack of it, was not a barrier so much as the conviction itself was a barrier for successful living after release. Most of them also felt that the program gave them tools that they could use to deal with pressure. The majority felt that their self-efficacy improved.

The majority of the respondents declined to talk about the decisions or events that have helped them to live a law-abiding lifestyle after incarceration, or that steered them back to illegal activities. However, when asked to give one or two lessons they learned that helped them, the vast majority responded, with nearly half the respondents citing active listening as the most important lesson and the other half saying that learning to stop and think before acting was a key lesson for success.

Qualities of Discrepant Cases and Factoring into Analysis

The NVivo analysis began with a word frequency query to list the most frequently occurring words or concepts in the responses from the ex-offenders. In order to analyze word frequency using NVivo, the most commonly used words were identified. These results were used to identify various themes in a variety of illustrations, and to compare different files in the collection. In order to analyze frequency, the researcher entered the data in NVivo, clicked 'explore', 'word frequency', and 'selected items.' In this particular case the default value of 1000

display words was utilized. When the entire narrative, including the demographic was considered, the most frequently used words were Time, Program, Respondent, T4C, Years, Jail, Prison, Sentenced, Spent, and CBCF. The terms had weights of 254, 246, 209, 158, 96, 90, 90, 90, 88 and 87 respectively. The terms are graphically illustrated in the figure below. The complete word list included 1,237 words.

Hsiung (2010) suggested that negative cases or discrepant cases can actually be used to expand theory, because if the negative case can be explained, the general theory is actually strengthened. Discrepant data can also be used as a key or flag to data that needs to be pursued in further investigation. This data can also serve as mediators of others' perceptions.

Evidence and Trustworthiness

Implementation and Adjustments to Credibility Strategies

Credible strategies that were implemented included provided information to 'train' the respondents in how to answer the questions, cross-comparing answers between the respondents, validating the information with respondents to ensure it was correct, and finally publishing the results so that others can read the information and compare it with their experiences. The researcher's own experience with incarcerated populations was important in this analysis, since it allowed him to identify and probe story elements that do not 'ring true.' The goal was not to challenge the things that the respondent related. One key point is that even if the researcher did not challenge a single story from respondents, a certain number of them were going to use stories to try to impress the researcher. It is a prison phenomenon that despite assurances that responses are entirely confidential and will in no way affect a respondent's parole or incarceration, some individuals are still going to tell people in positions of authority what they want to hear. Even subtle cues or questions may prompt them to speak more candidly about a particular issue, or

reassure them that the researcher appreciates their frankest statements and is not seeking to judge them.

Implementation and Adjustments to Transferability Strategies

Thick description was key to the generation and presentation of findings. Geertz (1973) made the term 'thick description' popular as he sought to describe the value of providing a qualitative analysis when combined with difficulties of other term thick description was popularized by anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973), who reflected on the perceived difficulties of analyzing culture in an 'objective' fashion. Geertz's response makes clear that culture is not actually mysterious, when he comments that even though culture is an idea it is not related to the occult. Instead, he points out that when someone (including a researcher) invests themselves in a culture, it becomes possible to study it enough that the bits and pieces of the phenomena make sense. It becomes possible to honestly analyze when a gesture is made in a straightforward way, and when it is made ironically.

The point of the current research was not to describe a culture. However, the researcher needed to be familiar with the cultures of prisons, as well as the culture of crime. By understanding both of these cultures it was possible to more carefully understand the nuances of what the respondents were saying, and to understand the narratives of the ex-offenders, many of which were rich in detail and reflection. The researcher immersed in the series of narratives until the voices of the individual respondents felt familiar and the points of commonality and difference among the narrative emerged with clarity. Thick description offers the possibility of understanding these experiences as a system, with certain regularities and certain stark deviations from the norm. These patterns then became the basis for findings and conclusions.

Implementation and Adjustments to Dependability Strategies

The research framework allowed the researchers to learn respondent opinions about the treatment program. In return for respondent opinions, the researchers could determine where tradeoffs could be made between what was available to future users, and which parts of the program needed to remain in implementation. The researcher sought to increase dependability by taking the narratives, after final coding, and delineating the key themes and narrative elements. The researcher then selected five of the most reflective respondents, and asked them if they would be willing to go over his findings and discuss with him their feelings as to whether or not the findings appeared to be true.

There were variations in the respondents' reactions, but this form of respondent validation was planned to shed light on moments where the analysis strayed considerably from their experience and prompt reconsideration. After coding, the researcher reviewed literature on self-efficacy, cognitive behavioral interventions in prison, and recidivism to determine where the research findings accorded with previous studies. Where stark discrepancies emerged, the researcher sought evidence of reasons for these discrepancies, contributing both to the validity of the findings and the richness of the discussion.

Implementation and Adjustments to Consistency/Confirmability Strategies

Narratives provided by the respondents drove the study. Thus, conclusions reached by the researcher were based on the narratives of the respondents, and the researcher's impression of these narratives. While all of the respondents had varying opinions, there were indeed commonalities, which have discussed at length in other areas of this paper. Using the process of reflection is a key to every stage of a research project such as this one. In this research, the researcher reflected on his own experiences with incarcerated populations and rehabilitative

programming. This was not a way to set up expectations concerning what the data will yield, but just the opposite—to be able to set aside his own expectations and encounter the data in a 'fresh' way. By identifying these experiences beforehand, moreover, the researcher was better situated to check himself in the process of coding and counter any tendencies to read into the data confirmations of his own experience and biases. By ensuring that the researcher's own experiences and biases are recognized, but kept in check, confirmability is increased.

Summary

Answers and Findings to Research Question 1

The following responses to the research questions are presented:

Q: How do inmates' experiences with Thinking for a Change expand our understanding of cognitive behavioral therapy in a correctional setting?

A: The responses given by the inmates show that the inmates can indeed absorb the materials needed to educate themselves into thinking before acting.

The ex-offenders who participated in this program show some very deep understanding of how they ended up where they are, and what it will take to remain on the outside. Some the reactions were extremely heartfelt. One ex-offender stated that "I don't want to go to prison or end up dead. I have more sober support on the outside. I can do this. I need to think before I react. I'm not unstoppable, and all good things will come to an end." Bluntly, this offender realized that his choices were to change, or die. He is attempting to take the lessons learned in T4C and develop a newer, healthier life. Another commented that "I have decided to let this lesson influence me in a good way. I let the embarrassment of being here humble myself and to show myself that I can be a better person and that I do not need to live the lifestyle that I was

living. I learned that I am tired of incarceration and do not want to allow myself to do anything that could potentially get me back into this, or any type, of facility." Cognitive Behavioral Thinking in a correctional setting clearly gives the inmate tools to change their life; the question is whether or not they will utilize these tools over the long term.

Answers and Findings to Research Question 2

Q: To what extent is Thinking for a Change effective in helping prisoners avoid recidivism, and what does it tell us about the efficacy of cognitive behavioral-based therapeutic approaches?

A: One of the respondents commented that "I would have to want to change." No educational program can force a change of heart. However, for prisoners who truly desire to change, cognitive behavioral-based therapeutic changes offer a great deal of hope. Exposing inmates to this possibility may help them increase self-efficacy, develop hope, and encourage self-introspection.

There were a wide variety of respondent responses to the efficacy of cognitive behavioral-based therapeutic approaches. While some of the respondents did say that they did not experience an improvement in self-efficacy, many of them did. One respondent pointed out that "even though it stayed the same, I knew what I was capable of, and how to communicate better depending on how the person reacted." The majority of the respondents who commented stated that they ended up with a better understanding of how to handle challenging situations. One responded commented, however, that "Things stayed the same. I was well educated and I already knew the consequences of my behavior before I got locked up." This comment suggests that there is an additional form of motivation that some offenders are lacking, and that a CBT

class did not affect their decisions. The other possibility, of course, is that they might have gotten into much more difficulties had they not had this class.

Answers and Findings to Research Question 3

Q: In what ways does Thinking for a Change help prisoners transition to society, and what does this particular approach reveal about how former prisoners avoid becoming recidivists?

A: Thinking for a Change helps prisoners transition to society largely by teaching them to stop and think before saying something or doing something! This program taught the respondents to "think," to "not act so much on impulse," to use "active listening," and to "think with a clear head and make rational decisions." Perhaps the most heartfelt response is : "I don't want to go to prison or end up dead. I have more sober support on the outside. I can do this. Think before you react. I'm not unstoppable, and all good things will come to an end."

Nearly all of the respondents mentioned that they had support at home, or in their family. Although some of them seemed to feel a little silly talking about their families, it is significant that nearly all mentioned their support systems. One of the unanswered questions, of course, is what will happen to the individuals who do not have this support, or who are moving out of prison into a homeless shelter. Thus, it will be important to build support into the lives of these less fortunate individuals.

Answers and Findings to Research Question 4

N/A

Answers and Findings to Research Question 5

N/A

Conclusion

Chapter Four gave a general overview of the findings and discussed the implications of COVID-19 on the process of education in incarceration. The research steps were discussed, and the implications of the population, sample size, demographics, and data collection and analysis were discussed. The narrative coding process was reviewed, as well as the departure from the original coding plan that was caused by the development of COVID-19. Major themes were introduced.

In general, the respondents had a low level of education and educational support but reported a fairly high level of support from family or spouses. The measures of central tendency for the time incarcerated reflect a mode, or most often represented, time of .5 years, or six months, in Table 1 above. The average sentence over the group of 30 respondents was 3.341 years behind bars, while the median was 2.25 years. In the median, one half of the respondents were above 2.25 years; the others were below. The average age of the respondents was 37.13 years, and the average time to gain a first conviction was 22.1 years. In general, total time behind bars was relatively low, and the average time of first conviction was higher than the researcher expected. The average age of the respondents was also higher than expected. However, there were several longer-term repeat offenders.

The research process began with an investigation into the literature surrounding the use of cognitive behavioral therapy programs used in the development of anti-recidivism programs. Scholarship laid the foundation for the use of CBT-based strategies in fighting recidivism, as well as for evidence-based practice and the potential for a new series of 'best practices'. In

addition to providing a background of support for a position on the approach to COVID-19 in jails and prisons, the study aimed to make contributions to the literature in terms of applying T4C to understudied offender populations. The current research was not based on an experimental design which looks for statistically significant variation outcomes, but on qualitative analysis that concentrated on the perceptions of the participants. The goal was not to determine if 'something' worked but rather to gather participant perspectives on what worked and how it worked, as well as the benefits that participants perceived the program can provide. The research endeavored to gather perspectives from the participants on what the positive outcomes of the programs were, as well as how they were achieved.

One of the keys to successful CBT programs was to actually achieve success in translating the 'book learning' to an application in real-life situations. One of the questions in this study was to ask how the participant was able to take what they had learned in the program and apply it 'in real life.' The answers to this question varied widely, and ranged from 'I didn't learn anything' to 'there was nothing to apply' and 'this has helped a great deal.' As the description of the narrative coding will discuss, some of the respondents reported lessons that stayed with them over time, and even described particular situations that activated the memory of the lessons and how to apply them in a stressful real-life situation.

The impact on self-efficacy was explored, especially relative to elements of 'criminal self-efficacy' (Laferriere & Morselli, 2015; Brezina & Topalli, 2012) . And, while some of the participants were able to cite what they considered to be turning points in their experiences working towards a law abiding life, others simply did not see a benefit to the program. A surprising number of the families, spouses, and parents indicated to the ex-offender that they could see a difference in him, and believed that the program was partly responsible for this

positive difference. By analyzing the ex-offenders' narratives, the intent was to determine what worked in T4C, and what parts failed in the view of the inmates or ex-inmates. The research provided some very clear recommendations for programs of the future.

The next chapter will provide a review of the purpose and nature of the study, how and why the study was done, and a summary of the findings. The findings are interpreted, and the conclusions to research questions one, two, and three are presented. Limitations of the study are discussed, as well as recommendations for the future. Implications for social change are considered. The researcher's reflections related to this study are presented, and the study is concluded. Chapter Five will conclude the research with the conclusions of the materials and recommendations not only for future research, but also for changes in public policy or operational changes that would make life more productive for those who are incarcerated and who participate in CBT programs.

Chapter 5

Introduction

Purpose, Nature, and Reason for Conducting Study

The purpose of this case study research was to generate insights into the potential of the Thinking for a Change (T4C) cognitive behavioral program to reduce recidivism rates among ex-offenders from the Lorain/Medina CBCF. In theory these results would then be transferable to other prison settings. In particular, the goal was to better understand the benefits of cognitive behavioral therapy by using qualitative research methodology. Qualitative research methodologies provide a richer background and understanding of the issues that do quantitative methodologies. Quantitative methodologies tend to concentrate on how much something occurs, while qualitative methodologies allow a concentration on how something develops, what develops, and how people think about it. In this research, the concentration was on an in-prison therapeutic initiative that has proven effective at reducing offender recidivism and reducing associated problems with Ohio's prison system, and sought to collect thoughts and impressions from the ex-offenders regarding the program.

Overview, Issues, and Research Questions

The study was conducted to determine the opinions of ex-inmates on the adequacy of the Thinking for a Change (T4C) cognitive behavioral program, in an effort to design changes that would reduce recidivism rates in similar programs in the future. In theory these results would then be transferable to other prison settings. The study aimed to determine new ways that cognitive behavioral programs could be implemented in prison in order to help prisoners cope not only with the actions of others, but with their own thoughts that might lead to inappropriate behaviors.

There is a difference in the rate of recidivism between individuals who participate in cognitive behavioral training, and those who do not while they are in prison. Those who participate generally have a lower rate of recidivism than those who do. Ohio has a lower rate of recidivism than many areas and they believe that the program Thinking for a Change is part of the reason.

Narrative qualitative study of the individuals who have graduated from Thinking for a Change is sought in order to determine not only effectiveness of the cognitive behavioral therapy-based programs, but specific reasons that the program may work (or fail to work). Three questions were developed to pursue this line of inquiry.

1). How do inmates' experiences with Thinking for a Change expand our understanding of cognitive behavioral therapy in a correctional setting?

2). To what extent is Thinking for a Change effective in helping prisoners avoid recidivism, and what does it tell us about the efficacy of cognitive behavioral-based therapeutic approaches?

3). In what ways does Thinking for a Change help prisoners transition to society, and what does this particular approach reveal about how former prisoners avoid becoming recidivists?

A qualitative rather than quantitative approach was selected because it would not be possible to demonstrate, in quantitative terms, the impact that the CBT program had on an offender's cognitive processes. Through qualitative inquiry the ex-offender can be asked to describe the process of T4C, and changes that developed in their lives.

Summary of the Findings

Keeping offenders from re-offending is quite a challenge. Addressing the types of crimes that they have committed is paramount. Of even more importance is the need to address why

they committed the crimes in the first place. Analysis of the information provided by respondents shows that there are two presiding reasons for offending. The first is bad decision-making and difficulty getting along with others; the second is to get money for drugs or narcotics. Not all of the respondents gave the type of felony that they had been convicted of. But of the ones that did, four reported being convicted of felony threes (F3), and four reported being convicted of felony fours (F4). Twelve of the respondents reported being convicted of felony fives (F5). In the Ohio system of justice, the lower the number of the felony, the more severe the conviction.

Interpretation of the Findings

Conclusions of Research Question 1

This question asks *How do inmates' experiences with Thinking for a Change expand our understanding of cognitive behavioral therapy in a correctional setting*? The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) reflects that 70% of the arrests are White and 27% are Black (US Bureau of Justice, 2020), mimicking the statistics from Medina more closely. It should be noted that OJJDP does not track Hispanic or Mixed races; although they do track American Indian and Asian. Both the Medina center and the OJJDP reflect a far higher incarceration rate for Blacks (26.6-27%) than for Blacks as a percentage of the population (2.3%). Similarly, Whites make up 95.6% of the Medina County Ohio population, but only 60% of the center population, a rate that is even lower than the national arrest percentage of 70%. This is a statistic that would be worth checking with the center to ensure that the study population does indeed reflect the center population. If it does, then this study supports the national suspicion that Black arrest rates are wildly disproportionate. While this is not the main goal of the research, it is certainly an important point given the national climate in 2020, and one which has far reaching social implications.

Ironically, this finding may be one of the most important findings of the research, because it supports the contention that arrest proportions for Blacks are highly disproportionate. Whether Blacks are being targeted, or whether they are economically disadvantaged to the point that drug abuse and crime are unacceptably high and result in disproportionate arrest and conviction, the issue cannot be overlooked . This concept must be considered not only in terms of the efficacy of CBT to provide skills for community reentry, but also for use in public policy adjustment.

Conclusions of Research Question 1

This question asks *To what extent is Thinking for a Change effective in helping prisoners avoid recidivism, and what does it tell us about the efficacy of cognitive behavioral-based therapeutic approaches*? The researcher attempted to draw out the respondent about his use of the program when he was outside the facility and whether or not it worked. The researcher noted that the respondent began to answer the narrative questions in a peculiar way from this point forward as though someone were listening to him and he didn't want them to know the information. This was progress; the respondent was able to determine that the individuals who were around hm would not be interested in his opinions, or might make fun of him. "It's the same as I just told you," he said. When asked if he had support and what they thought of programs like T4C, he replied, "Yeah, we do.". When the respondent was asked about what barriers he would have to overcome, he comment "Oh yeah, there's a lot of that back home. A lot of people do." The researcher interpreted this to mean drugs, alcohol, and substance abusers but noted that his interpretation could just as easily be incorrect.

The respondent was asked about his turning point when he got out of Lorain/Medina CBCF and he talked about being on the outside and seeing his family. When asked about his

conviction or whether educational level were barriers to employment he replied, "Both of them do." He thinks the program's tools were useful in dealing with those types of pressures and when asked how, the respondent replied, "I'll know for sure when the time comes." When asked if that the program impacted his sense of self-efficacy, he said, "That would be great." The researcher interpreted this as meaning that the respondent has greater sense of self-efficacy. When asked about helpful factors in maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle once he got out, the respondent replied, "My family is fine, thank-you.". The researcher interprets this as a citation of family as a factor in success for maintaining a law-abiding lifestyle. The respondent's main takeaway from the T4C program is how to react to and communicate with other people. It should be noted, however, that this interview, more than any other, seemed to require interpretation rather than being straight forward.

Man of the respondents have no degree, are not in school, and have no further educational plans. While one of these respondents supported the program, one was actively negative about the 'dated' feel of the program, and the another simply declined to answer. However, one of the younger respondents felt the program was helpful even though he rated it negatively. The majority of the respondents felt that the program had helped them in one way or another, and asserted that they were already seeing benefits to the program in how they interfaced with others.

Conclusions of Research Question 3

This question asks *In what ways does Thinking for a Change help prisoners transition to society, and what does this particular approach reveal about how former prisoners avoid becoming recidivists?* Perhaps the first transition point is that regardless of whether or not the offenders have ever completed any academic endeavors before, they are required to complete the

T4C program and receive a certification. They earn a sense of self-satisfaction and self-worth. The majority of the offenders find that the materials they learned in class can be used on the outside, to help them get along with people that they encounter. Many of them now plan to get their GED "some day"although there is little intent to gain other types of education. One example was Respondent 17. He was 20 years old the first time he was sentenced to prison or jail. He has not been sentenced for another crime since his last release. When asked who was in prison with him, and what they were like, he referred to them as "liars, hoes, thieves, and junkies". He was asked to tell about a time he found himself putting the lessons to use while he was still in the community correctional facility, or at least to discuss a time that he had tried to put these lessons to work. The he cited multiple instances with a staff member who seemed to be judgmental. The respondent was able to interact with the staff member without being anti-social, angry, or provocative.

The researcher attempted to draw out the respondent about his use of the program when he was outside the facility and whether or not it worked. Rather than citing a single example, he said, "I began to use T4C Program skills without consciously trying. It started to become natural." He says he has the support of his mother and, to an extent, his peers. Talking to people who have successfully become clean and sober made it easier to overcome drug and alcohol barriers. The respondent rated the T4C Program as being eight points out of 10. He cites his acquired ability to use the skills taught in the program and that they had improved his life in certain areas. The respondent's turning point when he got out of LM CBCF was when he noticed how much better his life had become because of using the skills taught in the T4C Program, but he does understand that both his lack of education and his conviction make it difficult to find and maintain employment.

Conclusions of Research Question 4

N/A

Conclusions of Research Question 5

N/A

Limitations

Limitations to Trustworthiness

Limitations for the research depended upon researcher's ability to form rapport with the respondents and the willingness of the respondents to work with the researchers. This was interfered with by Covid 19. Further, the individuals interviewed constitute a representative though limited field of inquiry, which could potentially cast doubt on the validity of any conclusions that are reached.

Elo et al. (2014) suggested that when dealing with a qualitative study, trustworthiness included the credibility of the study the dependability of the results, the conformity, and the authenticity. According to Elo et al., every phase of the study must be scrutinized to ensure that these factors are present, even the preparation, organization, and final reporting. One of the problems is that there is more information available relating to quantitative analysis, that one qualitative analysis. Qualitative analysis can be reduced to what is analyzed, versus what can be created. In this research, a number of mind maps were created, to illustrate the overall process. Conceptual maps, such as the ones created for this project, can illustrate what is occurring and what is important more than the actual text does. They are simply easier to understand when the data has been collected and coded, so that correspondence is easier.

Recommendations

Recommendations for Future Research

CBT programs should be expanded to all corrections facilities in the United States, as part of a standard achievement program. Drawing inmate attentions to the personal benefits the program can bring to themselves may be one way to get inmates to participate more fully, rather than presenting the program as a way to 'improve'. Further, as more statistics become available on program successes, inmates should be given ready access to these materials. Presenting inmate success stories may be one way to garner inmate attention as well; as one respondent put it, "People who don't think clearly before they act make really fucked up decisions." While this may be a very blunt statement, inmates tend to be blunt, and they may well respond to this type of promotional materials. As another respondent put it, "No education and a conviction. This is hard to overcome." Every inmate who is released needs to have a set of tools to develop a new reality, and CBT offers that possibility.

Recommendations for future study need to embody the context not only of criminal justice actions, but of sociology actions and the development of alternatives to incarceration and imprisonment. The need is to, at a minimum, consider imprisonment as a way to enforce a maximum learning period, rather than to use it for punishment. Active and concentrated learning, in a number of contexts, should be the priority for individuals who are incarcerated for drugs, child support violations, white collar crimes, and even various types of assault. Consideration must also be given to treatment of drug and alcohol conditions, as well as to anyone who has dual diagnoses. By addressing inmates holistically, there is an opportunity to improve the individual's life from a systemic point of view.

Implications for Social Change

Implications for Tangible Improvements

The research identified four trends that inform the possibility of successful rehabilitation and thus the reduction of recidivism. Each of these trends is important in providing inmates with the skills that they will need to heighten their self-understanding and to avoid re-incarceration. First, offenders' own narratives of T4C and their struggles to lead more normative, crime-free lives will be affected by common attitudes and rhetoric concerning the very possibility of rehabilitation. In prisoner narratives, how they see the balance of responsibility and how they expect the institution to provide support in transition back to 'real life' will make the difference between success and failure.

Next, cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) relies on a fundamental strategy of identifying problematic beliefs and cognitive patterns, offering new cognitive 'scripts' to replace ones that are a source of problems in patients' lives, and to activate behavioral changes. Cognitive behavioral treatment offers significant promise in the treatment of depression, anxiety, panic disorders, PTSD, and social phobias. There is evidence that cognitive behavioral interventions are effective across a wide range of psychiatric disorders. Mental illness is high among prisoner populations. As a program targeted to problem-solving and social skills, rather than treatment of specific psychiatric disorders, gives CBT an efficacious approach overall.

The third trend is that responsivity reflects the importance of delivering services that are matched with the population's needs. Cognitive and behavioral approaches are seen as particularly fruitful in this respect. Rehabilitative services offered on the basis of these principles yielded a significantly greater reduction on recidivism rates than generalized services. In

particularly, using the offenders' own narratives help show the inmate how the T4C program can improve their ability to cope.

The fourth trend is that the concept of self-efficacy, developed by Bandura (2000), suggests that individuals are best able to effect change in their lives when they have a firm sense of their own ability to implement those changes and to shape the events that impact their lives and affect the way those events are understood. Any individual, regardless of their social background or situation, has the ability to improve their own sense of self-efficacy and thus bolster the possibility that they will effectively change undesirable behaviors. Helping prisoners understand that they can use this insight to develop better personal interactions is a huge benefit of the program.

Finally, the fifth trend shows that opportunities for education and the achievement of new skills correlate positively with the individual's ability to adjust to a healthy life in prison. The research helps to build an overall picture of the importance of self-efficacy to promoting positive behaviors among offenders. At the same time, stopping the abuse of substances is an important determinant of whether ex-offenders can avoid further run-ins with the criminal justice system as they return to civilian life. Social support for abstinence is an important predictor of sobriety, but its effects are mediated through the construct of abstinence self-efficacy.

While this research identified trends in the outcomes of current programs, it should be possible for further research to establish processes or educational programs that will lead to tangible improvements to individuals, communities, organizations, institutions, cultures, or societies. With large numbers of the American population incarcerated, hundreds of thousands of children left parentless for the duration and families left rudderless, it is time that the corrections system make the leap from corrections to interventions, and from punishment to education. By

changing the emphasis from payment or retaliation to learning and development, change will occur in society. Those who are incarcerated will be able to take lessons home to their families, and improve the overall outlook for the future for untold numbers of children.

Methodological, Theoretical and Empirical Implications of Study Relating to Positive Social Change

The theoretical framework for this dissertation was based on Albert Bandura's (1977, 2000) self-efficacy theory, which is an extension of social learning theory. The study was essentially based on his theory of self-efficacy, which describes how people have the capacity to overcome obstacles in life if given a foundation that can help them build confidence and emphasizing positive behaviors, as well as learning skill sets that can boost self-esteem and reinforce self-affirming behaviors. In this study, offenders are the prime applicants of self-efficacy theory. Offenders who lack self-efficacy often do not have the confidence to complete programs of any kind, which is indicated by the high percentage of offenders who do not have a high school diploma (Hall & Killacky, 2008). Offenders frequently display negative and self-destructive social behaviors and exhibit poor self-motivation. The question becomes how much of their behavior is learned from others, and how much is from a lack of self-efficacy.

Social learning theory posits that individuals learn from the community around them. This is especially meaningful for the treatment of prisoners, whose behaviors are heavily influenced by environmental factors. Social learning theory contends that young people learn to take part in crime the same ways that they learn to conform to evident behavioral norms, which takes place through exposure to other individuals (Government of Ontario, 2018). "Other than one's own prior deviant behavior, the best single predictor of the onset and the continuance or desistance of criminal and delinquent activity is differential association with conforming or law-

violating peers" (Akers, 2010, p. 112). Personal reinforcements and punishments also teach juveniles to "conform" by normalizing criminal behavior. Social learning theory relates to the study and research questions by providing an explanation for the cognitive acquisition of criminal behavior and the tendency to continue exhibiting such behavior (i.e. recidivism). Just as native environments (i.e. neighborhoods/communities) reinforced criminal behaviors, criminal behavior is also reinforced in prison, particularly in a punitive environment.

Recommendations for Practice of Positive Social Change

The first step in the practice of positive social change in relation to the subject of study is to acknowledge that change is needed. Until this simple fact is acknowledged, there can be no change. It can be difficult to track what happens to the incarcerated once they are discharged, either into a community program or back into their families. However, in order to see what actions the prison took that were beneficial, tracking needs to be done. Whether a check in each year is made mandatory, or whether governmental databases are linked and given the capacity to 'follow' ex-offenders, a change needs to be made.

One possibility might be a cash stipend for participation. This could encourage ex-offenders to stop into a social welfare office once yearly, where they could authorize a background check to determine if they had remained lawful. The individual could be asked to answer a short series of questions similar to the ones in this research, in order to determine what works, and what does not. One way or another, some type of longitudinal study needs to be developed to determine which approaches work, and which do not.

Reflection of the Researcher

Reflections on Researcher's Role and the Research Process

There *is* hope. Interfacing with the respondents provided the researcher with practical experience not only in conducting research, but in learning to work with a very wide variety of individuals who were ex-offenders in the prison system. The key to many of our social ills appears to be actually paying attention to the opinions and expenses of the individuals who have actually lived them. Over the years there have been many efforts at reducing recidivism, but this research marks one of the first times that the true experts on efficacy of an intervention or treatment were considered.

I spent the majority of my childhood living in a very sheltered family. We never discussed issues of drugs, gangs, alcohol, or poverty, and I never faced them as a child or teen. Both parents were in the home. As a young adult, I had to ask my parents if we had enough money when I was growing up, in order to gain a retrospective context of my life. My parents hid all of these stressors very well from me and from my siblings. As far as we knew at the time, mom and dad LOVED boxed macaroni and cheese, and gave us cooked oatmeal or grits every day because they were tasty, warm, and good for us. We loved foods like meatloaf, stir fried chicken, and spaghetti with just a smattering of meat in the sauce. As an adult, I can see the priceless gift my parents gave us: love, stability, and security. The men in this study have not been able to do this. They have been separated from their families by their actions and subsequently by their imprisonment. Most of them do not have problems solving skills or rational thinking ability when they are sentenced to prison; the few that have these skills still were not able to overcome their environment and addictions. Ohio's CBT-based program, "Thinking for a Change," has been proven to be successful in reducing criminal behavior, and in

so doing, offers a chance for a normal life for family members of these offenders and ex-offenders.

The Thinking for a Change program can be used across the United States. It is adaptable to differing cultures and levels of education. It is designed to help the offender to learn to stop, think, and then proceed. Indeed, many of the individuals who participated in research that is the subject of this report were able to learn and carry out new ways of thinking and responding. Sometimes, the respondents were able to understand *how* they should be responding, even in cases where they were not able to carry through.

This research was instrumental in my ability to understand that people do not necessarily commit aberrant acts voluntarily. Many of them do so because they do no know better, or they do not know how to control their actions or their thinking. By participating in programs such as Thinking for a Change, they learn new patterns of behavior and of thinking, and can develop new ways of addressing problems, ways that operate on the side of the law and not on the side of criminality.

During the research, it was important to get the respondents to talk, but not to lead them. It was a difficult dance, but it was very important not to lead the participants. Instead, prompting the participants to respond allowed them to provide their thoughts and feelings, rather than providing feedback that they thought might impress me. This helped to keep the data 'clean' or without my personal biases.

Conclusion

Conclusion to the Work and the Message from the Dissertation

A positive correlation exists between programs designed to help prisoners prepare for reentering society and a reduction in recidivism. Ohio's CBT-based program, "Thinking for a

Change," has been proven to be successful in reducing criminal behavior. Adults, even incarcerated adults, can be taught problem-solving skills and rational thinking. This program can be used not only to prepare the inmate for reentry into society so that they are more aware of thoughts and negative impulses, and thus reduce recidivism, but also to produce social interactions among inmates that are more likely to be positive and less likely to be violent. This program should be implemented in wider variety through the United States.

Certainly more research would benefit inmates and would help decrease the rates of recidivism. While the current research has provided a number of insights into a cognitive behavioral program and its recidivism rates among ex-offenders, there is a great more research that should be conducted. The difference between private and public prisons should be explored, as well as potential differences between the responses of male and female prisoners to the program. It is important to potential participants to emphasize health and wholeness, rather than mental illness and inadequacy.

A long-term research follow-up program should be designed in order to measure the efficacy of this program over a number of years. It is important to determine how long the benefit of the program will last, whether it is a short-term benefit or a long term one, and whether or not the types of benefits change. Recidivism is very hard to track (NIJ, 2008). By designing a long term research program, it would also be possible to help the state organizations develop a system of recordkeeping that would make long-term tracking easier. By establishing a consistent vocabulary and developing consistent measurements and benchmarks, a more accurate measure would be possible, and it would be possible to determine exactly how much benefit is achieved from cognitive-behavioral programs.

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