



**ICPA 2024
Annual Conference**

Enabling Desistance: Beyond Recidivism
1-6 September 2024, Singapore

HARNESSING TECHNOLOGY FOR DESISTANCE:

**FACILITATING SUCCESSFUL
REINTEGRATION**



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INTRODUCTION

- Desistance based approach for long term change
- Why technology matters for desistance and reintegration
- Explore technology's role in supporting a desistance - based approach
- The way forward
- Conclusions and Questions

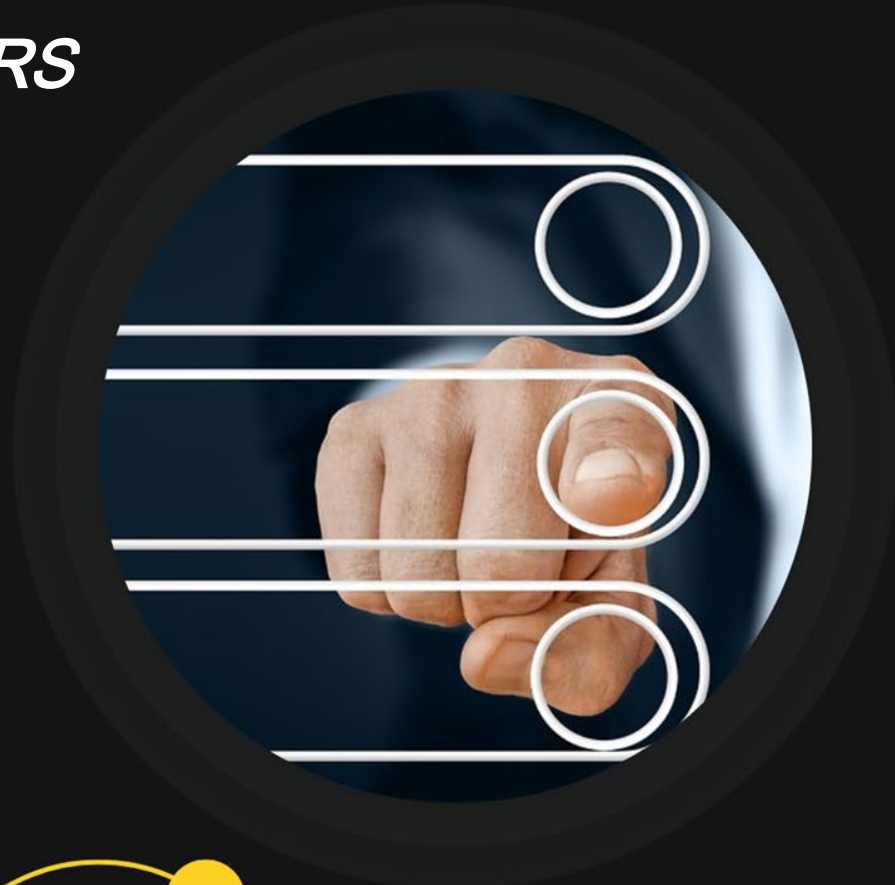


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WHY TECHNOLOGY MATTERS FOR REINTEGRATION

- Technology underpins modern society ; permeating nearly every aspect of life
- Technology is not just a tool; it's a lifeline to employment , social connections , and access to essential services
- Re- entering a world that has advanced digitally means preparing for life after prison with the right skills and habits to succeed
- Digital literacy is a foundation for successful reintegration



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THE PRINCIPLES OF DESISTANCE THEORY

Definition of Desistance: The process of ceasing to engage in criminal behaviour

Key Principles:

- **Personal transformation** and a **shift in self - identity** are key elements in desistance.
 - **Accountability** and **positive self - image** are important for individuals to **take ownership** of **personal actions** and focus on **growth**.
 - **Desistance depends** on **building social capital**, establishing **connections** with family, community, and support systems.
 - **Access to opportunities** is **essential** for **reintegration**
- 

HOW DOES THIS TRANSLATE INTO PRISON SERVICES

Requires **transformative change** in Prisons :

- a significant **shift** in **mindset** , **practice** , and **operating** models.

Needs a **shift** in focus **from control** to **care** :


- from one size fits all to **meeting individual needs**
- from institutionalisation to **empowerment**
- from isolation to **integration**



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HOW CAN TECHNOLOGY HELP?



Access to services and interventions is currently **constrained** by space, time, location, and resource

Individuals are **missing out** on **opportunities** to maintain family connections, access to learning and skills development, healthcare, therapy and programs

Providing **access** to technology can help **overcome** these **constraints** by **offering** more **opportunity** to access information, services, and supportive interactions with others



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LOOK OUTSIDE

Technology is an essential tool for well-being and personal growth in modern society.

- Proactively **managing** our physical and mental health
- **Manage** learning, personal development, skills development and **career growth**
- **Stay connected** to social and community networks
- **Access** to **opportunities**, employment, housing, resources, community and government services



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TECHNOLOGY TO SUPPORT HEALTH, GROWTH & CHANGE

- **Tools for physical and mental health** ,
 - E.g., Woebot , Calm, telehealth for a range of healthcare services in Prison
- **Journaling and reflecting tools** :
 - Helps **process the past** and **visualise a future beyond prison** , e.g., Day One, Word processors



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TECH FOR LEARNING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Online Learning Platforms

Access to education and vocational training, e.g., FutureLearn, Coursera, Khan Academy and Linked In Learning

Tech - Based Programs

Aim to provide learners with modern skills, particularly in digital literacy and tech - related fields, to enhance employability post - release e.g., PEP, Code 7370, 4000

Virtual Reality

A game - changer for vocational training, emotional and behavioural therapy and re - entry preparation in prisons

Self - Driven Learning

Acquiring new skills and knowledge through access to digital content and tools, e.g., ebooks, videos, digital apps, and digital productivity tools



FACILITATING CONNECTION THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

- Digital communication tools – e- messages , voice , and video enable access to maintain supportive relationships that play a vital role in the desistance process.
- Social collateral is essential in facilitating a smoother transition back into society, help finding employment , housing , and accessing social services .
- Community ties help individuals feel more connected and valued, reducing feelings of isolation and marginalisation.



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PERSONALISATION and AGENCY

- **Desistance Theory** recognises that the journey away from crime is **deeply personal** and **varies** from **individual to individual**
- It **requires** a more **personalised approach** to rehabilitation, where **individuals** are seen as **active agents** in their **own change**
- **Technology** provides an **opportunity** for **personalised service experience**. It gives people more **choice**, more **control** and more **flexibility** than before
- It **enables individuals** to **actively engage** in their **personal journey** of **rehabilitation** and **successful reentry** back into society



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TRACKING PERSONAL JOURNEYS, FOSTERING POSITIVE SELFMAGE

- Encourage individuals to **tell their own stories** , **reflect** on their **personal journey** , and **share narratives** that support their growth toward **positive identities**
- Storytelling and Narrative - Building Tools:
 - By actively **constructing new narratives** , people can **shift** their **self - perception** from offenders to individuals with a **future - focused vision** , e.g., Storybook Dads , Stretch Digital
- Creative Platforms for emotional expression:
 - Allow individuals to **express themselves creatively** , which is linked to **improving self - worth** and **developing new skills**



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EVIDENCE OF PROGRESS, DATA DRIVEN TRACKING

Goal setting and progress tracking apps

- *Provides a way for individuals to **set realistic goals** and **monitor their personal and vocational growth**, clear **evidence of progress** (from To - do lists to Way of life app, e.g., Changing Lives app PBNl)*

Digital rehabilitation portfolios

- *It's possible to **track and document progress** over time, including **achievements**, **reflections**, and **personal development milestones***

Using data to measure growth

- ***Prisoner Digital Platforms** can **track and analyse data** related to individual progress, **offering both individuals and staff measurable insights** into behaviour change*
- ***Data - driven insights** can be **shared with parole boards**, **mentors**, and **community supporters** to provide a clear picture of the individual's readiness for reintegration*



THE WAY FORWARD...



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COLLABORATIVE APPROACHES



Importance of Partnerships:
Justice agencies, community
organisations, academics
and tech developers



Co- Creating Solutions:
Involving individuals with lived
experience



Contextual Relevance:
Designing interventions that meet
diverse needs



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ACCESSIBILITY AND CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

Accessibility for all competency levels :

- The technology must be **user - friendly** and **inclusive**
- **Ensure** that educational and training **tools** are **adapted** for **varying literacy levels** , offering **audio - visual options** , **translation services** , and **simplified interfaces** for those who may not be tech-savvy.

Culturally tailored resources:

- Digital tools should incorporate content that is **relevant and culturally sensitive** , recognising the **diverse backgrounds** of justice-involved individuals.
- For example, platforms can integrate **language learning apps** and **culturally aware** rehabilitation modules to **ensure inclusivity**



DATA PRIVACY & SECURITY



Critical Considerations:
Protecting user data and
privacy



Regulations:
Adhering to data protection
laws



Building Trust:
Ensuring secure and ethical
use of technology



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CONCLUSION

- Digital literacy is a foundation for reintegration
- Embrace technology to support transformation and positive change
- The cost of complacency
- What needs to happen?
 - Person - centric service model
 - Define the markers for success (rehabilitation)
 - Acceptance of a controlled internet access model
- Change through collaboration



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ANY QUESTIONS?

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**THANK
YOU**