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Societies and Desistance: Exploring the Dynamics of Desistance in England and Israel

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

When ex-offenders desist from crime, they do so within a given society, with its own unique cultural values and norms; typical ways of interacting with friends and acquaintances; social attitude towards crime and offenders; and its own way of doing justice. This is a rather obvious statement; nevertheless, studies of desistance to date have scarcely explored the role of wide contextual factors in processes of desistance. Furthermore, there is a dearth of comparative cross national studies that explore variations in desistance processes across societies, and thereby shed light on the influence of contextual factors. In this thesis, I begin to address this gap by exploring the role that cultures and social structures may play in shaping the dynamics of desistance. In particular, I undertook a cross national comparative study of desistance processes in England and Israel; two countries with different social-political systems and distinct cultural attributes. I employed a mixed methods approach which involved interviewing men who were desisting from crime and were supervised in the community, in each country; a statistical comparison into their use of time and space; interviews with people who worked with (ex)offenders; and a comparison of the broad social, economic, political, and cultural conditions in each country, which involved an analysis of data from the European Social Survey. The overarching objective was to develop insights

about processes of desistance and the role of contextual or broad social factors in affecting them.

Based on the data collected, I identified how contextual factors structured the pathways out of crime in each country; interacted with identity and agency; and gave rise to variances in the dynamics of desistance. Overall, I argue that desistance processes were shaped by the cultural and social contexts which enveloped them, such that external and internal mechanisms of these processes were 'oriented' in particular ways and in accordance with contextual factors. Throughout the thesis, I draw a thread between contextual factors, the social conditions in each country, and identity and agency, to illustrate how this 'orientation' takes place. In conclusion, I propose a contextual framework with which to conceptualise the influence of broad social factors on desistance from crime. This study provides new insights into the role of contextual factors in processes of desistance and the underlying mechanisms involved in these processes. It is hoped that the findings will assist future researchers to understand cultures and social structures and their input when studying desistance from crime.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Setting the scene

I have met a few yoga teachers who have said: where your eyes go, your body follows. If, in a standing pose, you stretch to the right and your eyes gaze to the right, then your body will stretch further in that pose. At a later stage of my yoga practice, I learned that this saying alludes to the yogic practice of cultivating subtle awareness of life, and became acquainted with several of its other variations. One of them is: where your attention goes, life flows. A lot of what I did in this study was to notice where the focus of attention was in England and then in Israel (in regards to a myriad of issues) and notice how life unfolded for individuals who were no longer offending. Scholarly exploration into how and why people stop offending – referred to as desistance from crime – have considered the role of internal mechanisms involved in these processes, such as motivation to stop and cognitive transformation (Farrall et al., 2014; Giordano et al., 2002); self-schemas in processes of desistance (Maruna, 2001); optimism and pessimism about the future (Bottoms & Shapland, 2011; LeBel et al., 2008); and change in individuals' preferences (Paternoster & Bushway, 2009; Vaughan, 2007). Criminologists have also considered external factors

associated with desistance, such as employment and relationships (Sampson & Laub, 1993). Desistance from crime is commonly conceptualised as a process and attributed to an interaction of external and within-individual factors (LeBel et al., 2008; Farrall, Bottoms & Shapland, 2010). Over the years, scholars have delved into the roles of internal and external factors, seeking to account for how desistance processes unfold, and what prompts them.

Yet, the lens through which criminologists have drawn insights and developed theories have been coloured by certain cultural understandings and assumptions, as well as being limited by the time and place that these studies were undertaken in (see Elonheimo et al., 2017). A somewhat forgotten aspect about desistance have been that these processes are situated within a broad social context which may shape the social conditions in which individuals live, as well as an individual's perceptions and actions (although see Calverley, 2013; Finestone, 1967; Österman, 2018; Savolainen, 2009). That is, when a given individual stops offending, they do so within a given society, which has certain views about crime and offenders; certain laws and ways of justice; certain architectural designs of criminal justice buildings; certain cultural values, norms and routines; a certain cultural heritage; displays a certain attitude in regards to families; and has distinct ways of interacting with friends and acquaintances. Studies of desistance have scarcely accounted for the role of such contextual

factors in possibly affecting the way individuals 'grasp' their current life circumstances and exercise agency, nor has the academic community sufficiently considered how different social environments could shape (or even alter) the role of external factors (such as relationships) in desistance.

Existing literature, which compares desistance processes across gender and ethnic groups, has alerted criminologists to the fact that variation between groups of desisters is evident, and has proposed that these variations are associated with the role of broad social factors, which can impact different groups of people in different ways (for example, Calverley, 2013; Finestone, 1967; Leverentz, 2006; Österman, 2018; Reisig et al., 2007). For example, some scholars have argued that romantic relationships can be conducive to desistance among men (Sampson & Laub, 1993). However, in the case of women desisters, Leverentz (2006), for example, found that romantic relationships (at times) hindered their desistance efforts, while independence from a romantic partner had empowered their desistance process. Leverentz (2006) proposed that socially constructed gender roles account for this difference from male desisters. A very small number of studies have sought to compare the dynamics of desistance across nations and, in so doing, uncover how these processes unfold differently or similarly under different social systems (Shapland, Farrall, & Bottoms, 2016a). This gap in knowledge, in turn, limits scholarly understanding of desistance, and criminologists face difficulty in explaining these processes

in a more universally applicable way (Shapland, Farrall, & Bottoms, 2016a). In particular, the dearth of comparative work raises a question regarding the external and internal mechanisms identified thus far by scholars: would these still work in the same way if there were changes to the social conditions surrounding the desister?

I sought to begin to fill this gap in knowledge by exploring the extent to which cultures and social structures have an impact on desistance, if at all. In particular, I undertook a cross-national comparative study of desistance processes in England and Israel; two countries with different social-political systems and distinct cultural attributes. The comparative mixed methods approach I employed involved interviews with men who were desisting from crime and were supervised in the community (probationers); a statistical comparison of their use of time and space; interviews with people who worked with (ex)offenders; and a comparison of the broad social, economic, political, and cultural conditions in the two countries, which involved an analysis of data from the European Social Survey (ESS). The study was the first of its kind in criminology, both in terms of its key objectives and the methods utilised. The overarching objective was to draw further insights into processes of desistance and begin to uncover the role of contextual or broad social factors in affecting them. That is, I sought to alternate the place of desistance while holding steady the method of investigation in the two countries and, in so doing, learn more about the

mechanisms involved in these processes and review the factors identified thus far.

It became clear at the start of this study that to understand how people stop offending in two different societies, I needed to – as the yogic saying of where your attention goes, life flows suggests – identify where the focal of attention was, both in the narratives of my participants and in the 'cultural scripts' of each society. Each country was inclined to highlight different aspects in regards to issues relating to crime, offenders, rehabilitation, families, friends, childhood, money, success or failure, ideal life, and social support. Identifying how each society understood these issues (Nelken, 2010) – the 'stories' or 'cultural scripts' they constructed around them and where the focus of attention was in each cultural script – was significant in uncovering why the social life emerged the way it did, and how processes of desistance unfolded for English and Israelis participants.

I seek to convey another important aspect of this study by the yogic saying above; namely, when one focuses their attention on one thing, then other things are 'out of focus' and are less 'sharp' in one's field of vision (see also, Zehr, 1990). However, these things (which are out of focus) could still (sometimes) 'be there.' For example, when I watch a movie at home, I am preoccupied with the plot, while other things – my worries, the presence of a radiator, and what it feels like to sit on the couch – fall into the

background of my awareness. The focus of my attention is suggestive of my present moment experience; yet, at the same time, my body *is* sitting on the couch, and if my focus of attention were to change, I would become aware of how it felt to sit on the couch. While I found that the two societies shared common aspects in their social life – for example, I found that both countries were concerned with the risk of offenders reoffending – the intensity of focus of attention varied between the two. England, for example, exemplified a heightened preoccupation with risk of reoffending and this had meaningful implications for the way the social life was structured and the way participants in this study experienced and engaged with their efforts to desist. It would be misleading to say that there was no risk paradigm in Israel; rather, there was a greater preoccupation with national security in Israel and less so with the risk that people with convictions may pose. This variation of 'social attention' had implications for the way buildings were designed, the way laws and regulations around offenders were formed, and affected self-conceptualisations of participants in this study.

An important point to highlight here is that when I identified an attribute about the social life of one country, I did not intend to suggest that this attribute was absent in the other country; rather, I intended to suggest that it might emerge differently, or less intensely, and that differences in the focus of attention shaped the social life and interacted with desistance processes

of individuals in each group. The same point applies to the comparative analysis I provide at the phenomenological level; that is, an aspect experienced by individuals in one country was not completely absent in the other, but appeared in a different way and at a different level of intensity. For example, English participants talked about childhood experiences and how these affected them, but Israeli participants gave greater weight to childhood experiences and, especially, the role of their parents in 'causing' their offending behaviour. Hence, both groups talked about childhood experiences, but each group emphasised different aspects in their narratives. The comparative lens and variance in 'social attention' uncovered the role of cultures and social structures in shaping both internal and external mechanisms related to these processes, thereby addressing an important gap in knowledge.

In discussing the findings, I illustrate how a theme was more or less pronounced in each country, why this was the case, and its implications for understanding the dynamics of desistance. In conclusion, I argue that desistance processes are shaped by (and interact with) the cultural and social contexts which envelopes them, such that external and internal mechanisms in these processes are 'oriented' in particular ways, in accordance with five key contextual factors that emerged. These are:

1) Cultural scripts;

2) Social climates;

3) Shared values and norms;

4) Social interactions and encounters; and

5) Distinct cultural characteristics.

These five factors provide a contextual framework within which to understand the influence of cultures and social structures on desistance and with which to account for variances and similarities across societies and cultures. I propose that research into desistance should situate these processes within their wider social context and the thesis concludes with some thoughts about the design of future desistance studies.

1.2 An outline of the thesis

In the next chapter, I introduce the notion of desistance from crime and critically review studies in the field. In particular, I consider the epistemological heritage of these studies on scholarly understanding of how and why people stop offending and clarify why it is of value to undertake cross-national comparative research in the field. In Chapter 3, I take a closer look at theories that account for desistance and which informed this study. Furthermore, since I sought to reexamine earlier findings in the field, I turned to additional sociological theories which helped me think 'outside the box' of known factors and correlates of desistance, and provide a meta-sociological framework for this study. In Chapter 4, I outline the methodology employed; address methodological issues and 'weakness'

relating to the comparability of the samples; and discuss ethical considerations. I liken cross-national collection of data to sailing, and highlight some challenges which shaped this journey and the data produced.

In Chapters 5 and 6, I turn to compare the cultures and broad social factors in England and Israel. In particular, Chapter 5 provides an overview of the two cultures and depicts distinctive social attributes that shape everyday life. I also compare data from the ESS relating to shared social attitudes in England, Israel, and Europe, such as a tendency towards conformity and sense of closeness to the community. Following the same framework, in Chapter 6 I explore how the two criminal justice systems were mobilised and the social climates around offenders and desisters in each country. Furthermore, I provide a more detailed description of supervision in the community and compare the assumptions underpinning each approach of offender supervision. I suggest that England and Wales saw a decline of the 'rehabilitative ideal' and a growing dominance of risk management, managerialism, and 'what works' approaches, while Israel saw an expansion of the 'rehabilitative ideal' alongside the introduction of 'what works' approaches. Thereafter, I turn to summarise trends in crime and justice in each country, before undertaking a brief analysis of data from the ESS relating to social attitudes to crime and justice.

In Chapter 7, I begin to draw on the interviews with participants to explore how contextual factors interacted with desistance processes. This chapter discusses supervision in the community and I draw a thread between theoretical views underpinning rehabilitation, the social context of offender supervision, narratives of participants, and agency. I propose that English participants (who were subject to a managerial and risk adverse social climate) experienced greater 'excess' of supervision requirements which they described as stifling their efforts to (re)integrate and a source of negative stigma. In contrast, Israeli participants (who were not subject to the same social climate) did not express a sense of restriction, and were less concerned with the labelling aspect of supervision. However, the more entrenched treatment culture in the Israeli Probation Service was woven into Israelis' conceptions of their personality and impacted their engagement with their rehabilitation. In Chapter 8, I delve into self-perceptions and identities of participants, and compare how they conceptualised their past offending and desistance from crime. I explore how the 'design' of an 'offender-label' in each society interacted with participants' sense of identity and agency. I argue that the construction of identities (which were situated within distinct cultural understandings of 'offenders') varied between the countries and, in accordance with this, descriptions of how participants sought to desist (what actions they sought to undertake) varied.

Chapter 9 explores the 'how' of desistance; that is, the 'steps' participants described taking in their efforts to desist and their experiences in each country. I pay particular attention to employment opportunities in England and Israel and examine social norms in the employment market, as well as participants' descriptions of responding to obstacles. I illustrate how each social climate shaped participants' sense of identity, agency, and opportunities in the community. I highlight the key role that social encounters and interactions played in either reinforcing or overwriting a sense of stigmatisation and in structuring opportunities. In Chapter 10, I compare the roles of families of origin, families in formation, and peers. The comparison uncovered that variance in cultural values relating to families had shaped the type and quantity of social ties that each group had throughout their criminal career and in their efforts to desist. For English participants, a common thread was an experience of reconnecting after a period of disconnect from family members, while withdrawing from peers. For Israeli participants, a common theme was a shift of attention to pre-existing ties which remained more 'intact' throughout their criminal career. I discuss issues relating to rebuilding trust and ties; motivation and the influence of cultural views around parenthood; and peer avoidance and romantic relationships.

In Chapter 11, I compare how, where, and with whom participants spent their time. This analysis is based on time-space budget surveys conducted

during the interviews and the objective was to gain further insight into the interaction between the individual and their environment. I revisit some of the findings discussed in earlier chapters and offer further explanations for the differences in the dynamics of desistance. The comparison suggests English and Israeli participants responded to similar obstacles (such as employment and peer association) in different ways. I highlight that Israelis had a greater reservoir of 'good company', which impacted their experiences of desistance, opportunities in the employment market, and the role relationships played in their lives. In contrast, the experience of English participants suggested a more isolated desistance process and I linked this variance to certain cultural and social attributes in each country. Furthermore, I illustrate how religious traditions operated at a macro level and encouraged certain behaviours and choices amongst Israeli participants, regardless of their level of religiosity or whether they kept to religious customs.

In Chapter 12, I propose that the variances in the dynamics of desistance between English and Israeli participants were 'tell-tale signs' of underlying similarities. In particular, by providing a summary of findings, I locate the key contextual factors which operated across the two countries and shaped the social conditions and internal mechanisms related to agency. Overall, I argue that desistance processes were shaped by (and interact with) the social contexts which envelope them, such that external and internal

mechanisms in these processes were 'oriented' in particular ways, in accordance with five main contextual factors. In conclusion to this study, I offer a contextual framework with which to understand the influence of cultures and social structures on desistance processes and with which to account for variances and similarities across societies and cultures. Furthermore, I respond to earlier studies and theories discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 and provide concluding thoughts about the design of desistance studies. I note that research into desistance should situate these processes within their wider social context.

Chapter Two

OFFENDING, DESISTANCE AND LESSONS FROM COMPARATIVE STUDIES

Desistance from crime refers to the cessation of offending by a person who had previously engaged in persistent offending (Maruna, 2001). Academic studies of desistance stem from a broader interest in criminal careers and how offending fluctuates throughout an individual's life. Since the 1990s, an interest in why and how people stop offending spread, and desistance from crime became a field in its own right. In this Chapter, I introduce the study of desistance from crime – the development and growth of the field – and critically consider the influence of its epistemological heritage of academic understanding into how and why people stop offending. I start by introducing the concept of offending over the life-course, before describing the development of desistance studies and key studies in the field. I then describe the main factors and correlates highlighted in existing desistance studies. I conclude the section with the argument that previous research in the field faces a difficulty in providing a unified explanation of desistance processes across groups of people and across countries.

I continue the chapter with a discussion of the value of comparative research in desistance and outline studies that examined differences across gender and ethnicity. I suggest that insights from these studies have alerted criminologists to the idea that both 'cultural meanings' (of, for example, families, social roles, and 'moral restoration') and social-structural factors can influence an individual's behaviour and choices in processes of desistance. I raise the question of whether there is a more refined way of conceptualising the known drivers of desistance. Lastly, I turn to discuss the existing (and very small in number) cross-national studies of desistance. The overall aim, herein, is to sketch the development of the study of desistance and clarify how, in light of how academics have studied the field and what they have discovered, it is of value to undertake further comparative work across countries.

2.1 Where did the study of desistance come from?

Around the 1950s, longitudinal studies into offending over the life-course gained momentum. These studies, which originated from North America and the United Kingdom, tracked the development and change of criminal behaviour from childhood and, onwards, into adulthood (Shapland, Farrall & Bottoms, 2016a). Of interest was to explore how criminal behaviour — or what is commonly referred to as 'criminal careers' — fluctuates throughout a person's life and to explain why change takes place

(Elonheimo et al., 2017). Farrington (1992, p. 521) describes a 'criminal career' as a 'longitudinal sequence of offences committed by an individual offender'. The word 'career' does not necessarily imply that a person offends to earn a living; rather, the term describes a period of time in which an individual engages in a sequence of offences, whereby the involvement in crime is a significant 'occupation' or 'undertaking' (Farrington, 1992). Approximately thirty years after studies into criminal careers gathered momentum, puzzling patterns emerged and scholars vigorously debated patterns of offending and, especially, the transition into adulthood (for example, Glueck & Glueck, 1950; Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990; Loeber et al., 1991). Indeed, findings suggested that, for most offenders, the late 20s are marked by a decline and cessation from previous delinquent behaviour that began in early adolescence (Moffitt, 1993). For example, the Cambridge Study in Delinquency is a prospective longitudinal study that began in 1961 and followed more than 400 boys from South London into the mid-1980s and onwards (Farrington, 1995). The findings identified a robust relationship between age and rates of crime, where male offending reached a peak at age 17 and started to decrease at the age of 23 (Farrington, 1995).

A succinct way to summarise what Farrington (1995) and other life-course criminologists found is that crime is 'a young man's game'. Hence, criminal behaviour is commonly practised by men during young adulthood,

and when these men reach adulthood, most of them refrain from further offending (Moffitt, 1993). Furthermore, official rates of crime in other westernised countries suggest the same patterns of offending and age are evident (Hirschi & Gottfredson, 1983). By the early 20s, the number of active offenders substantially decreases by 85%, and by the age of 28, most of those who engaged in crime desist from offending (Moffitt, 1993, p. 675).

Such a distinct pattern prompted academics to explain the cessation of offending in a way which conforms with the crime-age distribution (Hirschi & Gottfredson, 1983). Perhaps most famously, Moffitt (1993) explains the age-crime relationship by proposing a distinction between two types of individuals who offend: 1) adolescence-limited delinquents, who stop offending in early adulthood and; 2) life-course persistent, who continue to offend into adulthood. Moffitt (1993) proposes that the reason young adults desist from further offending is because of a healthy adaptation to changing social roles that accompany adulthood. Moffitt (1993, p. 690) argued that as 'more legitimate and tangible adult roles become available' to young adults, these individuals 'gradually experience a loss of motivation for delinquency as they exit the maturity gap'. Theories that propose a relationship between age, maturity, and crime are often referred to as maturation theories. Another example of a maturation theory is Shover and

Thompson (1992) who proposed that 'age and minimal success in crime' reduces inclinations to continued offending.

The minority of individuals who continue to offend into adulthood are often described as 'persistent offenders' (Moffitt, 1993) or 'chronic offenders' (Farrington, 1995) and their offending style is characterised as more versatile (Farrington, 1995; Moffitt, 1993). Moffitt (1993, p. 684) argues that in the case of persistent offenders, there is a 'constant process of reciprocal interaction between personal traits and environmental reactions to them,' which develops into antisocial behaviour and permeates all domains of young and adult behaviour.[1] While some academic literature has suggested that the causes of offending are invariant across age (see Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1983), or have implied that persistent offenders are 'set' (in a sense) within their criminal behaviour (see Moffitt, 1993), other academics have argued that criminality and criminal behaviour is not a 'fixed' characteristic and is subject to change (see Glaser, 1964). Indeed, as longitudinal studies (both qualitative and quantitative) suggest, the cessation of offending is not reserved to the young man who is 'tired of playing games'; rather, persistent offenders who continue to offend in adulthood 'can and usually do desist' (Shapland, Farrall & Bottoms, 2016b, p. 284). The termination of criminal careers by both adolescence-limited and persistent offenders can involve a period of transition, with a reduction

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[1] It is important to note that many reproductions of Moffitt's work do not support her model (see for example Ezell & Cohen, 2005).

in offending (Bottoms *&* Shapland, 2011); and occasions of 'zigzag' and ambivalence (Burnett, 2004).

2.2 Desistance research

With a growing interest in the termination of criminal careers, academics were increasingly interested in the dynamics of these processes, and in what is often referred to as *desistance* or *desistance from crime* (see for example, Bottoms & Shapland, 2011; Farrall et al., 2014; Giordano et al., 2002; LeBel et al., 2008; Maruna, 2001; Sampson & Laub, 1993; Uggen & Kruttschnitt, 1998). The word '*desistance*' refers to 'refraining from' or 'ceasing' an action, or a series of actions, in this case offending (Shapland, Farrall & Bottoms, 2016a). The concept and definition of desistance had posed challenges to scholars aspiring to study it, as this occurrence or process is not identical amongst individuals or transparent to an observer (Bushway et al., 2001; Maruna et al., 2004), an issue I address in Chapter 4. I only note here that distinguishing between breaks or 'lulls' in offending and between 'real' desistance is a key difficulty in trying to operationalise desistance (Maruna et al., 2004). Research in the field has often focused on either 'official desistance', which looks at whether a person had any further criminal convictions and/or self-reported offending; and/or 'behavioural desistance', which focuses on the transition and a decrease (but not necessarily the cessation) of offending (Uggen & Kruttschnitt, 1998). While 'official desistance' emphasises whether an individual or individuals

commit an action that is illegal, the latter examines the internal and external controls that are related to why and how individuals stop offending (Uggen & Kruttschnitt, 1998).

Commonly, research on desistance from crime involves longitudinal cohort studies, which track individuals and change over time (for example, Blokland & Schipper, 2016; Sampson & Laub, 1993; Uggen & Kruttschnitt, 1998). Other studies focus on self-narratives of people with convictions, in which they describe change in their life retrospectively and/ or the ongoing process of refraining from crime (for example, Calverley, 2013; Healy, 2014; Leverentz, 2006; Maruna, 2001; Weaver, 2015). Some studies offer a combination of both methods, focusing on narratives and tracking change over time (for example, Bottoms & Shapland, 2011; Burnett, 1992; Farrall et al., 2014; Giordano et al., 2002; Paternoster et al., 2016). Next, I briefly outline some of the key studies of desistance which have influenced our understanding of these processes and are relevant for the purpose of this study. The objective of this exercise is to provide an overall description of key work and types of studies in the field, while the theories that were developed from these studies are discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

Key studies

In 1939, Glueck and Glueck (1950) undertook a longitudinal study of delinquency and identified a sample of 500 delinquent white men (ages 10 to 17) in the US from correctional schools, as well as a comparable sample of 500 non-delinquent men from public schools. Sampson and Laub (1993) later re-analysed the data with the aim of investigating continuity and change in offending over the life course. Sampson and Laub's (1993) study found that desistance from crime was associated with change in external circumstances of the individual, mainly employment, enlisting to the army, getting married, and becoming a parent. The findings led them to argue that desistance is associated with exogenous events that take place during the transition to adulthood. In particular, through external factors (such as employment) an individual develops positive social bonds to society which, in turn, can act as 'turning points' and a catalyst for desistance from crime (Sampson & Laub, 1993).

What was unique at the time when Sampson and Laub (1993) developed their theory is that they provided a framework with which to understand *both* continuity and change in criminal behaviour over the life-course, regardless of past criminal behaviour and criminal propensity. However, there are limitations to both the theory and the research on which it is based. The sample was 'composed entirely of white male offenders who matured into adulthood during the 1950s' and, consequently, the ability to

generalise from the findings is questionable (Giordano et al., 2002, p. 991). As Giordano et al. (2002, p. 991) note, it remains a question whether the theory and findings can capture the experiences of female or minority groups, or of offenders in a more 'contemporary social and economic landscape'.

Giordano et al.'s (2002) Ohio Life-Course Study explored how people narrate their desistance processes and 'accomplish' these processes of change by undertaking a longitudinal study along with in-depth interviews of participants. Interviews were undertaken in 1982, with a follow up interview in 1995. Unlike Sampson and Laub's study, their research included both male and female participants of different ethnicities, all of whom lived in the US. The findings suggested that desistance processes involve 'cognitive shifts' and that these shifts were essential in explaining behavioural change (Giordano et al., 2002). Giordano et al. (2002) argued that it is not only external factors that are important to desistance processes, rather, while social opportunities and other structural factors are a catalyst for change, agency, and how an individual moves towards or resonates with opportunities, is a crucial part in understanding desistance.

Burnett's (1992; Burnett & Maruna, 2004) Oxford Study of the Dynamics of Recidivism intended to supplement research focused on social-structural variables that impact desistance (such as romantic relationships and

employment) and examine how individuals 'make sense' of changes in their social circumstances. Starting with a sample of 130 male property offenders in the UK, shortly before their release from prison, Burnett (1992) and Burnett and Maruna (2004) undertook three waves of interviews in 1992, 1994, and 2004. While Burnett and Maruna (2004) found that social factors – such as previous criminal records, employment, drugs, and marital status – were significant predictors of offending behaviour, the probability of a reconviction depended, in part, on internal variables. Mainly, the level of hope and self-efficacy held by the participants was a powerful indicator of a reconviction and long term outcomes of refraining from crime (Burnett & Maruna, 2004). Yet, these internal factors were influenced by the individual's circumstances upon their release, such that dire circumstances reduced optimism regarding one's ability to 'go straight' or desist (Burnett & Maruna, 2004).

Maruna's (2001) Liverpool Desistance Study explored phenomenological aspects of desistance and sought to identify cognitive adaptations and self-schemas that helped ex-offenders maintain desistance. He interviewed 55 men and 10 women, which included a group of desisters and a comparable group of persisters (Maruna, 2001). While the narratives of participants were retrospective accounts of past events, the study was not a retrospective one and sought to uncover how individuals were actively 'making good' and maintaining desistance in the face of structural obstacles

(Maruna, 2001). Maruna's (2001) in depth exploration provided insights into multiple aspects of the inner dynamics of desistance. In particular, narratives of desisters involved a reworking of a 'chaotic' delinquent history, often tangled with the criminal justice system, into one which helped ex-offenders 'make sense' of their past and find a redeemable value in their history and future (Maruna, 2001). While the desisters in his sample attributed onset and continuity of offending to environmental factors, they described being in control and responsible for their present and future in overcoming obstacles (Maruna, 2001). Successful desistance, Maruna (2001, p. 150) suggests, is the fading away of the external factors that had led the individual to past problems and the reemergence of the 'I', assuming control and self-determination over their present and future, aspiring to 'accomplish something, and leave a positive legacy'.

Bottoms and Shapland's (2011; 2016) Sheffield Desistance Study is a longitudinal study, which combined both qualitative and quantitative methods. Young adults with a history of persistent offending were recruited at the 'peak age' of criminal offending with the aim of observing the 'personal and social processes operating' when there is generally a reduction in offending in the early twenties (Bottoms & Shapland, 2011, p. 48). Since the study commenced in 2001, it has provided a more contemporary understanding of the dynamics of desistance in early adulthood, than other longitudinal studies in the field (for example

Sampson & Laub, 1993). Bottoms and Shapland (2016) undertook a series of four interviews at intervals of 9–12 months, with 113 male in the UK, as well as examined official criminal records and self-reported offending. The study found that desistance typically occurred gradually (rather than abruptly), where many offenders reduced their frequency of offending with time (Bottoms & Shapland, 2011). Bottoms and Shapland (2011) noted that financial difficulties and an emotional 'pull' towards offending were the main obstacles mentioned by participants. Furthermore, (supporting the findings of Giordano et al., 2002 and Burnett and Maruna, 2004), Bottoms and Shapland (2011, p. 66) found that perceptions about one's current circumstances and a sense of self-efficacy were related to participants' views about their future offending and actual desistance or persistence. The study shed light on how participants had to 'negotiate a new way of living, breaking with the habits' and highlighted that this 'negotiation' interacted with the social contexts in which participants lived and the ways available to them to desist (Bottoms & Shapland, 2011, p. 70).

Between the late 1990s and 2013, Farrall (2002) and colleagues (Farrall et al., 2014) undertook a longitudinal study of the dynamics of desistance or persistence amongst almost 200 men and women on probation in England and Wales. The study involved both qualitative and quantitative methods with six sweeps of interviews, starting while participants were probationers (Farrall et al., 2014). In common with Bottoms and Shapland, one of the

distinctive characteristics of this study was its emphasis on exploring the impact of both social structures and the role of agency in these processes. The study found a constant interaction between individual agency, conditions in the past, possible opportunities in the future, and specific circumstances in the lives of individuals, including those which are shaped by social policies (Farrall et al., 2014). Farrall et al. (2014) argue that the availability of legitimate identities (into which a would-be desister can imagine themselves becoming) has an influence on how desistance processes unfold. Both an individual's agency and wider social factors interact in producing an outcome and shaping the trajectory of desistance processes (Farrall et al., 2014).

In addition to the studies above, the last decade and a half has seen an increase in studies exploring narratives of offenders and ex-offenders, as a way to better understand these processes (for example, Calverley, 2013; Healy, 2014; Halsey, Armstrong & Wright, 2016; Ronel, 2006). Furthermore, there has been a recent academic interest in individuals that are desisting from specific offences or desistance processes of groups of people, such as those addicted to drugs (for example, Van Roeyen et al., 2016) and sex offenders (for example, Laws & Ward, 2011). Developments of the last decade suggest that there is an increase of specification into the study of desistance processes — an interest in identifying how these processes are experienced by different groups and in uncovering the

subtleties of the mechanisms involved (Shapland, Farrall & Bottoms, 2016b).

The majority of the studies mentioned above originated from the US and UK and, while the increasing popularity of the topic propelled more research in other countries, the UK and US featured chiefly as distributers of desistance research. Longitudinal studies in the two countries had vastly contributed to scholarly understanding of the dynamics of desistance over time. Sampson and Laub (1993) offered an explanation as to why different life-phases are associated with desistance, and Giordano et al. (2002) uncovered how social variables, which are often related to age, interact with cognition in processes of change. Farrall et al. (2014) explored in further depth how social factors operate to shape the pathways out of crime and alerted criminologists to the role of social context in influencing choices and actions. Burnett explored the 'hearts and minds' (2004, p. 152) of individuals during reintegration, which has been immensely valuable in making sense of ambivalence and in understanding what Maruna (2001, p. 45) referred to as the spectrum between being a desister and a persister. Bottoms and Shapland (2011) gave criminologists a closer glimpse, with their shorter follow-up intervals, of what happens while individuals negotiate their desistance in early adulthood, the obstacles they face, and changes in their lives. Maruna's (2001) comparison of narratives offered criminologists a better insight into change and identity of desisters and

sociocognitive processes involved in maintaining desistance. In short, longitudinal studies informed the academic community about how offending and desistance vary over *time,* and narrative exploration illuminated further how change is undertaken at the individual level, in the face of one's social circumstances. All of these studies informed the design and focus of this study and are discussed alongside the findings (when applicable). Next, I describe factors and correlates that emerged from (and have been highlighted by) studies into desistance.

2.2 The 'why' and 'how' of desistance

Employment, romantic relationships, and peers are regularly highlighted in criminological literature as factors associated with desistance. Although these factors are socioeconomic, the role of agency and internal mechanisms involved are given attention in the literature as well. Next, I discuss both socioeconomic and individual factors related to processes of desistance and elaborate on individual processes in further detail in Chapter 3.

2.2.1 Employment

Employment is commonly highlighted in desistance literature, since scholars (such as Sampson & Laub, 1993) propose that a job can strengthen the social bond an individual has with society and, thereby, act as a catalyst for desistance. Stable employment is said to help ex-offenders develop

'normative' social bonds and, as these social bonds grow stronger, individuals are less inclined to undertake actions that would risk and 'break' them (Sampson & Laub, 1993). Within this theme, employment is viewed as an informal social control mechanism, which can reduce offending (Sampson and Laub, 1993; also see Horney, Osgood & Marshall, 1995). Furthermore, some scholars suggest that employment is an activity which structures individual's use of time and, thereby, curbing time with peers and engagement in delinquent behaviour. For example, Osgood et al.'s (1996) study found that employment provided their participants with a daily 'structure' and reduced time in unstructured activities, which leaves time for criminal acts and can be conducive to continued offending.

In exploring the effects of employment further, Uggen's (2000) research suggested that there is a link between age and the effects of job opportunities. In his experimental study, Uggen (2000) provided jobs to people with criminal convictions and examined the effect over a follow-up period that ranged between 18 to 36 months. The findings suggested that those over the age of 26 were less likely to reoffend when they were provided with a job (Uggen, 2000). In contrast, employment opportunities had little effect on self-reported offending and arrest for younger participants in their teens or early twenties (Uggen, 2000). Further research into the effects of employment on crime indicates that job stability (how long a person held a job) and the attachment an individual has to a

particular job is another factor that can affect desistance (see for example Benda, 2005; Giordano et al., 2002; Uggen, 1999). Benda's (2005, p. 339) study, for example, found job satisfaction to be a key aspect in 'maintaining longevity in the community without crime or parole violations' for their male participants. Benda's study provides further support to Giordano et al. (2002) who proposed that, although environmental factors can be conducive to desistance, the manner in which individuals move towards and engage with social opportunities, is a crucial part in understanding desistance (Giordano et al., 2002). Maruna's (2001) study highlights that desisters found occupations or social roles that provided them with a sense of empowerment and narrated their previous lives as leading them to their current path. Maruna notes:

'going straight, therefore, does not seem to be about the defiant rebels turning into diligent working stiffs. Instead, defiant rebels are able to find social roles or occupations that can provide them with the same sense of empowerment and potency they were seeking (unsuccessfully) through criminal behaviour.'

Maruna (2001, p. 121).

Another reason employment had caught the attention of criminologists is because it provides would-be desisters with an alternative social identity that they can move towards (see for example Farrall, 2005; Giordano et al., 2002). Repeated friction with the criminal justice system diminishes job opportunities and ex-offenders are often left with what Uggen and Blahnik (2016) referred to as a 'sticky label' that can present a considerable obstacle

for desisters. The negative impacts of criminal convictions on job opportunities have been explored in multiple countries. For example, Kurtovic and Rovira (2016) undertook a comparative study of obstacles to reentry into the labour market in Spain and the Netherlands. Their study suggests that exclusion from the employment market was shaped by the laws and policies in the country, as well as by social attitudes towards (ex)offenders and the role of probation agencies in assisting individuals in each country. In cases where legal social avenues are less available to a desister, stopping to offend and developing a non-offending identity is, unsurprisingly, less appealing and more difficult to maintain (Farrall et al., 2014). As noted, Burnett and Maruna (2004; also see LeBel et al., 2008) and Bottoms and Shapland (2011), for example, found that perception about one's current circumstances, a sense of self-efficacy, and hope for the future correlated to participants' views about their future offending – the belief about their ability to refrain from crime – and actual desistance or persistence.

2.2.2 *'Good' and 'Bad' people on the road out of crime*

Love

The role of romantic relationships and families in formation in desistance processes has been extensively researched. While some studies have looked at marital relationships (see Theobald & Farrington, 2009), others explored the effects of cohabitation and romantic partners more broadly (see

Leverentz, 2006; Savolainen, 2009). In both cases, the overall findings are mixed. Blokland and Nieuwbeerta's (2005) study examined the criminal career of 4,615 people in the Netherlands for a 60-year period. Their study found that those who were married for a longer period had the least chance of being convicted (Blokland & Nieuwbeerta, 2005). Sampson and Laub's (1993) study found that individuals who had entered into a stable marriage, as well as those who became parents, were significantly more likely to desist from crime and proposed that a 'good' marriage had the potential to provide a 'causal force' that will, over time, inhibit crime. Furthermore, Sampson and Laub (2005) suggested that a marital bond can provide supervision, monitoring, a change in routine activities, and opportunity for social support and growth. However, not every marriage will provide a preventive effect on offending – early marriages that are cohesive have a stronger preventive effect (Laub, Nagin & Sampson, 1998).

Similarly, Theobald and Farrington (2009) found that a reduction in criminal offending followed marriage. Yet, the effect of marriage on convictions varied across different age groups (Theobald & Farrington, 2009). Marriage was correlated with a significant reduction in convictions for only early (age 18-21) and mid-range (age 22-24) marriages, but not for later marriages (Theobald & Farrington, 2009). As with employment, Laub, Nagin and Sampson (1998, p. 237) emphasised that change in criminal behaviour does not result from marriage alone; rather, desistance is the

'response to an enduring attachment that emerges from entering into' a marital bond.

Giordano et al. (2002, p. 1012), who explored the effects of romantic relationships for both men and women, did not find a romantic partner to be a strong predictor of desistance. The authors argued that criminologists ought to consider the stability of the marriage and the meaning that it had for different individuals to understand the impact of romantic relationships on desistance (Giordano et al., 2002). Other scholars, such as Warr (1998), argued that a romantic relationship was not the main factor leading to a reduction in offending. Rather, marriage affects the relations that one has with peers and that peer association is the central factor that affects criminal behaviour (Warr, 1998). Marriage, Warr (1998, p. 199) suggests, 'disrupt[s] or dissolve[s] relations with friends, including delinquent friends', which causes a person to stop offending. However, Warr's (1998) study does not shed light on whether change in peer relations precedes or follows marriage and Warr acknowledges that the timing of this causal factor is unclear.

Similarly, a study by Simons et al. (2002) found very little support for Sampson and Laub's proposition that the social bond with a romantic partner curtails criminal behaviour. Rather, they suggest that a caring romantic relationship is associated with a decrease in involvement with

criminal peers, which is correlated to a decrease in criminal behaviour (Simons et al., 2002). As a way of bridging over the ongoing disagreements regarding romantic relationships, Bottoms and Shapland (2011, p.114) proposed that a romantic relationship can aid the motivation of an individual to desist. Yet, they note, instead of hypothesising about whether it is the disengagement from peers or the social bond of the romantic relationship that is responsible for change, a better way to understand the mechanisms involved is 'within a unified theory of normative influence[s]' (Bottoms & Shapland, 2011, p. 114).

The effects of marriage and romantic relationships has been studied across several countries – including the US (for example, Laub, Nagin & Sampson, 1998); England (for example, Theobald & Farrington, 2009); the Netherlands (for example, Blokland & Nieuwbeerta, 2005); Spain (for example, Cid & Marti, 2012); Finland (for example, Savolainen, 2009); and Australia (for example, Brown & Ross, 2010). Although some support has been found as to its effect, the evidence is not definitive and the picture that emerges is complex. It is worth mentioning that some of these studies used older data, which raises questions about the shifting patterns of marriage, cohabitation, and family structures and how social change can have an impact on desistance (see Farrall, Godfrey & Cox 2009). Furthermore, research into romantic relationships has mainly focused on

male offenders and, thus, raise questions about how it may vary for females (an issue addressed later in the chapter).

Children

Little evidence is found in criminological literature that supports the effect of having children on desistance. For example, Warr (1998) investigated whether the presence of children in the home relates to association with peers and a reduction in offending. His findings suggest that it is marriage, not the presence of children, which curbs time spent with peers and, thus, offending (Warr, 1998). As part of a large scale longitudinal study, Blokland and Schipper (2016) examined the effect of children on offending in the Netherlands. Their findings suggest that there is a greater reduction in crime in cases where individuals were married and became parents, as opposed to those who were divorced or single parents (Blokland & Schipper, 2016). However, they note that a reduction in offending was not significant and that the beneficial effects of parenthood 'wane with time' (Blokland & Schipper, 2016, pp. 156-157). It is important to keep in mind that research which has examined the effects of parenthood has not always had data on whether the participants were living with their children, or qualitative information on the nature of the relationship with their children (Julie, Patrick & David, 2012).

Peers

As implied above, criminological literature has highlighted the negative effects of associating with delinquent peers on desistance from crime (see Osgood et al., 1996; Warr, 1998; Simons et al., 2002). Bottoms and Shapland's (2011, p. 69) study found, for example, that 'continued identification with delinquent friends predicts later recidivism'. Giordano et al. (2003, pp. 310-311) noted that, during the time participants sought to desist, the majority appealed to a sense of agency – believing they were 'less susceptible to peer pressure' – and described themselves as having a strong will in the face of social temptations to drugs and re-offending. A smaller subset of their sample had chosen to 'isolate themselves from any type of peer contact' as they were worried about the possible negative influences of social interactions (Giordano et al., 2003, pp. 310-311).

The issue of '*isolation*' when an individual wishes to desist has been mentioned in other studies (see Bottoms & Shapland, 2011; Calverley, 2013). Schinkel (2015) argues, for example, that in desisting from crime in the UK, individuals may recreate some aspects of their imprisonment and isolate themselves from social interactions, which can pose an emotional challenge to desistance. Indeed, although continued involvement with peers correlates with continued offending, empirical work suggests that, in trying to avoid peers and desist from crime, there are negative implications associated with isolating oneself. Nugent and Schinkel (2016) propose that

isolation had led their participants to feel a sense of hopelessness and posed further difficulties in developing a non-offending identity in the UK.

2.2.3 Emerging factors

Given the increase of desistance research in the last decade, it would be (somewhat) remiss to end this section with the factors mentioned above. A literature review suggests a more complex picture of transitioning out of crime and, for this reason, I turn to mention a few other factors, which are relevant to this comparative study. Additionally, and excitingly, I discuss factors for which comparative research can deepening our understanding of. These are: stigma and social labelling; social capital; and families of origin. A discussion of these factors was woven in the review above; however, it is worth directing the reader's attention and elaborating on these factors further, as they may be essential for understanding the dynamics of desistance.

Research on desistance suggests that to understand change in identity, choices, and actions of ex-offenders, we need to pay attention to the effect of stigma and the role of social labelling on those wishing to desist (see Maruna et al., 2004). As mentioned above, a criminal history substantially curtails the ability of ex-offenders to rebuild prosocial identities and desist. Uggen, Manza, and Behrens (2004) note that the enduring stigma of a conviction restricts ex-offenders in relation to a myriad of social issues,

including work opportunities, housing and parental rights, as well as isolating ex-offenders from their communities. In addition, Halsey, Armstrong, and Wright (2016) compared findings from research undertaken in the US, Australia, and England and found a theme which ran across all three groups – ex-offenders expressed a fatalistic outlook on their lives, which was fuelled by a sense of stigmatisation and alienation from society. Indeed, the research literature indicates that labelling and stigma is a central factor in desistance, as it shapes obstacles and the social identities available to ex-offenders (see Farrall, 2005; Farrall et al., 2011), and possibly the coping mechanisms involved in the routes out of crime (see LeBel, 2008). Social labelling and stigma are constructed within societies (Becker, 1973; Goffman, 1991) and, currently, there is little insight into different types of stigma and labelling within a given society and how the different types of labelling can shape processes of desistance and the experiences of ex-offenders.

Another factor that 'reappears' across desistance studies is the effect of social capital when ex-offenders embark on change – whether social capital is accumulated through governmental bodies (see Best & Laudet, 2010; Farrall et al., 2014; Kurtovic & Rovira, 2016; Österman, 2018) and/or through families of origin or other people known to the desister (see Calverley, 2013; Farrall, 2004). Studies that have considered the role of social capital suggest that greater social capital can help to link ex-

offenders with social opportunities in the routes out of crime (see Best &

Laudet, 2010; Calverley, 2013; Farrall, 2004; Farrall et al., 2014; Kurtovic

& Rovira, 2016; Osterman, 2015). These studies (especially Calverley's

2013 comparative study of desistance processes amongst different ethnic

groups) imply a 'smoothing influence' of social capital in rebuilding one's

life, a variable which may emerge differently across countries and cultures.

Farrall (2004) found that families of origin in England and Wales assisted

ex-offenders in finding employment when they first reintegrated into the

community. Yet, these pre-existing social bonds, such as families of origin,

can assist desistance, but can be a double edge sword. In particular, these

pre-existing social bonds can be a source of self-efficacy and motivation to

desist (see Cid & Marti, 2012; Weaver, 2015); a link to social capital that

can assist desisters in finding employment opportunities (see Farrall, 2004);

or a source of shame and an obstacle to reentry in case of a relapse (see

Calverley, 2013); or a source of strain when a family member is involved in

drugs or crime (Weaver, 2015).

In short, the literature on offending and desistance suggests that common

patterns exist across people and countries in how and why people desist

from crime. However, the epistemological basis of the knowledge of

factors and correlates is largely based on studies with older samples,

examining desistance processes of white males in western countries

(Elonheimo et al., 2017). It can be useful, therefore, to critically reflect on

the commonly mentioned key factors and correlates and consider the role of other factors identified in literature. How might social capital and social labelling, for example, drive the efforts to desist, influence identities, and explain the dynamics of employment opportunities? An enriching way to uncover the mechanisms involved is by undertaking comparative studies. Comparative studies highlight variance and similarities amongst groups of desisters in different or similar social conditions and, thus, unpack the mechanisms that impact the pathways out of crime. Additionally, comparative studies can provide criminologists with a more refined understanding of the drivers that shape desistance processes. Next, I turn to explore what comparative studies to date have taught us about the dynamics of desistance processes.

2.3 Comparing desistance

Increasingly, studies have compared how people stop offending across groups. Some of these have looked at how desistance processes vary between men, women, and ethnic groups (for example, Calverley, 2013; Giordano et al., 2002). Other studies have evaluated the effect of neighbourhoods and, hence, compared offending behaviour across different locations (for example, Leverentz, 2012; Wikström, Treiber & Hardie, 2011). It is rarer to find comparative research that examines how desistance processes have varied across different times in history (but see Farrall, Godfrey & Cox, 2009). Next, I review existing literature of comparative

research with the objective of drawing out lessons that can be learned about the dynamics of desistance.

2.3.1 Gender

Uggen and Kruttschnitt's (1998) study evaluated whether factors identified by Sampson and Laub, such as marriage and employment, are equally important in affecting the offending trajectories of women. The answer, they propose, depends on the 'domain of behaviour under consideration' (Uggen & Kruttschnitt, 1998, p. 358). For example, prior drug use and history of crime increased the risk of rearrest for both men and women, however, this increase was more than twice as large for women (Uggen & Kruttschnitt, 1998). In addition, Uggen and Kruttschnitt's (1998) findings indicate that a romantic relationship was less conductive to desistance for women than it was for men. Similarly, Benda (2005) and Bersani et al. (2009) found that a caring romantic relationship did not reduce criminal involvement for women as it did for men. These studies suggest that structural differences and differences in the social roles between the sexes explain variance in the effect of romantic relationships. Bersani et al. (2009) noted that there is a higher probability of women marrying a spouse who is involved in crime, than of men marrying a woman with a criminal history. Bersani et al. (2009) propose that this difference, in turn, diminishes the effects of marriage on criminal behaviour.

Leverentz (2006), in her qualitative study, sought to 'dig deeper' into the mechanism at work in romantic relationships and desistance processes for women by investigating how social context impacted women and men differently. Her findings suggest that marriage plays a different role for each group: for men, this relationship often 'creates an interdependent system of obligation and restraint', which can constrain criminal involvement (Leverentz, 2006, p. 461). However, it is more difficult for women to achieve the same interdependent system, particularly if women return to high crime areas with a high number of male offenders (Leverentz, 2006). An important finding of Leverentz (2006), for the purpose of this study, was the role that macro and meso level factors (such as gender roles) played in processes of desistance for women. Leverentz argues:

'*Finally, another important difference for female ex-offenders is that a conscious avoidance of romantic relationships may be necessary or beneficial for them to successfully desist from crime and redefine their lives as law-abiding people. This is an important twist on social-bond theories and reminds us of the importance of gender dynamics in offending and in romantic relationships. Here, it is precisely the absence of one particular social bond that is necessary for a woman's successful reentry. It is not (only) that there are not any marriageable men for the women to marry but that they need to assert their independence from all men and all romantic relationships. This also may suggest that personal agency is more important than social bonds or that other types of social bonds are more important for women than romantic relationships.*'

Leverentz (2006, p. 484)

Leverentz's findings raise a question: can scholars interested in desistance be confident that the factors and correlates found in previous research would still 'stand' when the social and structural conditions are different?

2.3.2 Ethnicity

Studies exploring how desistance processes may vary across groups further highlight the role of contextual factors in influencing processes of desistance. For example, Reisig et al. (2007) examined the potential conditioning role of social context on recidivism of released prisoners in Florida (US). The study found a relationship between inequality and reconviction of black men (Reisig et al., 2007). In particular, a history of incarceration and criminal records had a more pronounced damaging impact on black men when they exited prison, as well as reducing the odds of successful reentry, compared with white men (Reisig et al., 2007). Reisig et al., noted:

'Prisoners are not released into a social vacuum, but instead reenter communities with differing levels of economic inequities that potentially constrain their ability to pursue conventional lifestyles.'

Reisig et al. (2007, p. 427)

Likewise, the 2002 research by Piquero et al. into criminal offending amongst whites and nonwhites suggests that ethnicity relates to the ability of an individual to accumulate social capital, and in cases of diminished

social capital, it can be a 'breaking point' that contributes to continuity of criminal offending. Another interesting finding of Piquero et al.'s (2002) study is that marriage was a contributing factor to criminal behaviour amongst nonwhites, while this was not the case for white respondents. They proposed that adult institutions, such as marriage, have different *meanings* across groups and, as a result, may vary in their impact on individuals. It is important to note that Piquero et al.'s (2002) sample of nonwhites was composed of African American, Hispanics and, what they referred to as 'others'. Nonwhites were grouped together and their findings, thus, pose a difficulty in fully explaining and identifying variance across the groups. That said, we can still learn something interesting from this study – that is, the cultural meaning of socio-economical institutions (for example work or marriage) can vary between groups, which can have an impact on continuity and change in criminal behaviour (see also Farrall, Godfrey & Cox, 2009).

Cross-cultural comparisons

The studies by Reisig et al. (2007) and Piquero et al. (2002) indicate that there is value in looking critically at cultural variables that may shape the dynamics of desistance and in investigating how variance in social conditions and social meanings relate to how individuals desist from crime. Two examples that strengthen this argument are Finestone's (1967) and Calverley's (2013) qualitative findings, which unpacked the role of culture

and social structures in shaping the dynamics of desistance. Finestone's (1967) study into the reintegration and recidivism of Italian and Polish offenders, interviewed 54 released men and compared the post-prison adjustment period in the community for each group. Finestone's (1967, p. 578) key interest was to identify 'structural and cultural features of each ethnic community' which influenced their adjustment period. For Italian desisters, legitimate employment was key in signalling to the community their ability to change and 'grow up', and was key in their reintegration (Finestone, 1967). In contrast, legitimate employment and the concept of 'growing up' did not, in itself, assist Polish desisters in gaining access to other normative social roles in the community. Finestone (1967, p. 585) found that returning to the Polish community was characterised by 'rigid moralism', which was absent in the Italian community, and uniquely shaped the challenges Polish ex-prisoners faced – that is, what they 'had to do' when facing their own community upon reintegration. In contrast, the more tolerant attitude of the Italian community meant that Italians found it less 'gruelling' when they sought 'non-deviant social roles' in their community (Finestone, 1967, p. 581). In short, Finestone made a link between cultural attributes and how these attributes interacted with the post-prison experience of individuals as they sought to refrain from crime. Unfortunately, studies such as these are not common and some time had passed since Finestone's (1967) study.

Calverley (2013, p. 39), in his study of desistance processes amongst Bangladeshis, Indians, and black Britons in London, interviewed 34 men who persistently offended but were 'consciously attempting to avoid any further offending'. The study examined the impact of social structural components on desistance and how these processes varied amongst the different ethnic groups. In addition, Calverley investigated the processes they all *shared* in common by looking at issues such as the role of families, friends, cultural values, religion, and opportunities in the work force. He found, for example, that families of origin had an active role in affecting the desistance processes of Bangladeshis and Indians; while, for black Britons, the family was far less involved. Familial involvement, although assisting in some cases, was not always regarded as positive, as it intensified a feeling of shame in case of a relapse. A key conclusion from Calverley (2013, p. 139) was that while the processes of desistance were broadly similar amongst the three groups, 'the socio-structural and socio-cultural differences between them affected how, when and where these mechanisms operated which, ultimately, shaped the direction of the pathways they endeavoured to take'. The studies by Calverley and Finestone are exceptional in their cultural contribution to processes of desistance. However, their studies were undertaken in one country and, hence, all groups acted within one overreaching social context.

2.4 The lessons of comparative studies

What have we learned from the comparative studies reviewed above? As the literature on desistance continues to advance, there is evidence that the *meaning* of things – such as marriage (see Farrall, Godfrey & Cox, 2009), 'moral restoration' (Finestone, 1967), families (Calverley, 2013; Cid & Marti, 2012), social roles and expectations (Leverentz, 2006), and employment (Finestone, 1967) – can vary amongst different groups and, when these variables vary, there can be variance in the dynamics of desistance. Exploring and further understanding variance and similarities can uncover which aspects are more or less prominent in shaping these dynamics across different groups and how desistance processes unfold within comparable social conditions. Furthermore, variance and similarities can tell criminologists more about which aspects are 'fixed' across groups and cultures, or shared in common in desistance processes.

Another reason it was worth describing these studies is that they suggest that contextual factors give way to *a pattern*, which possibly influences *individual behaviour and choices* in processes of change. Comparative research is an excellent way to uncover the nuances of how inequality, discrimination, stigma, social roles, types of employment opportunities, laws, and more (perhaps even the weather), can have an impact on people's lives. Currently, there is a limited number of cross-national comparative studies of desistance (Shapland, Farrall & Bottoms, 2016a). This gap in

knowledge poses a challenge in identifying how various factors drive the pathways out of crime and reduces the ability of criminologists to offer a more accurate and unified theory of desistance (Shapland, Farrall & Bottoms, 2016a). It is this gap that this study aims to address (at least partly) and, in the next section, I turn to discuss cross-national comparative studies in criminology: what types of research have been undertaken and what we know from cross-national comparative desistance studies.

2.5 Cross-national research

Cross-national comparative research has typically compared criminal justice agencies, laws, and criminal justice practices, such as sentencing and punishment (for example, Cavadino & Dignan, 2006; Roberts, 2004). Many of these studies have been undertaken by legal scholars, evaluated policy, and often hold a legal lens or address implication for policies, while less attention was given to how these policies relate to individuals' experiences (although see an edited book by McNeill & Beyens, 2013). Comparative studies in criminology have also typically explored trends in crime and victimisation across countries and these studies often employ quantitative measures (for example, Karstedt, 2015; Van Dijk, Mayhew & Killia, 1990). Cross-national comparative research into criminal careers has increased in the last decade or two and these studies typically employ, again, quantitative measures (for example, Blokland & Schipper, 2016; Elonheimo et al., 2017). Although more scarce, there are some cross-

national comparative studies that directly explore desistance. For example, Savolainen's (2009) study into the application of Sampson and Laub's (1993) theory in the US and Finland, compared recidivism amongst 1,325 men. A key aspect of this study was to explore the social context around work, marriage (and cohabitation), and parenthood in each country and its impact on desistance processes. Savolainen (2009) found that cohabitation and parenthood was associated with a greater reduction in offending rates for participants in Finland, than for those in the US. Savolainen (2009) proposed that policies which support the formation of families were more accessible in Finland and parents received greater social support than in the US. This, in turn, helped Finnish participants refrain from crime (Savolainen, 2009). The overall findings of Savolainen's study suggest that each country and the institutional policies in place had implications for the obstacles, support and avenues open to desister (Savolainen, 2009).

Österman (2018) has recently undertaken a fascinating cross-national qualitative study that looked at women's reintegration in Sweden and England, and explored how the two penal systems and the structural arrangements in each society shaped the dynamics of desistance of women ex-offenders. Österman (2018) interviewed 24 women who had repeated friction with the criminal justice system in each country and found that English women faced more barriers than Swedish women. In particular, English women faced more barriers in terms of housing, employment and

to leaving their criminal past behind, because of the different welfare and penal systems in each country (Österman, 2018). The Swedish model offered more structural support to women desisters in the form of, for example, an option to relocate away from criminal networks, thereby reducing the risk of getting caught up in a cycle of crime; and a more readily available access to calming benefits, than was the case in England (Österman, 2018). Overall, the Swedish model offered greater opportunity for social inclusion of women who desisted, which had impacted her participants' sense of self worth and differed from the English experience (Österman, 2018).

The two studies described above are particularly relevant to this study, albeit Österman (2018) findings were only available upon the completion of this study and, unfortunately, such cross-national comparative studies are very rare. The most extensive literature review the academic community has in the field of cross-national desistance focuses on criminal behaviour throughout the life-course, some of which was described earlier in this chapter. Given what is known about desistance processes, and the qualitative data emerging from one-nation comparative studies, it seems invaluable to undertake further cross-national research into the dynamics of desistance and the roles of social structures and culture in these processes. Comparative research can act as a flashlight into the mechanism that

impact the pathways out of crime and help to refine the way criminologists have been conceptualising the key drivers of desistance.

2.6 Conclusion

It is debatable whether scholars interested in desistance can be confident that the factors and correlates found in previous studies would still 'stand' when the social and structural conditions are different. Is there a more reliable way of conceptualising the known drivers of desistance? Studies comparing gender and ethnicity suggest the meaning of things, such as marriage and employment, can vary amongst different groups of people and, when these variables vary, there can be variance in the dynamics of desistance. Comparative research also suggests that structural conditions give way to a pattern, which can influence individuals' avenues to desistance, behaviours and choices. The findings from comparative research inspire further comparative investigation of desistance processes, which can help to unpack the mechanisms involved and refine the way criminologists have conceptualised the key drivers of desistance.

The empirical work discussed above has provided important insight into how and why people stop offending. However, there remains a shortage of comparative studies investigating how desistance processes vary across countries and cultures. It is this gap I aim to begin to address. The studies discussed herein informed the design and focus of this study; yet, due to the

dearth of cross-national studies and since leading studies were largely based on older samples of white males, primarily in North America and the UK, I critically reflect on the known factors and correlates of desistance throughout the thesis.

Chapter Three

DEVELOPING A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR COMPARATIVE RESEARCH

The key findings of desistance studies were discussed in Chapter 2. In this chapter, attention is paid to the theories that have emerged in the field and informed this study. I begin by outlining central theories in desistance and briefly assessing their benefits and drawbacks for a comparative understanding of desistance. The theories discussed are: social control and age-graded informal social control; theory of cognitive transformation; the theory of the feared self; the theory of internal narrative; 'making good'; early stages of desistance; and structural and individual-level processes. I argue that to understand how and why individuals desist in different legislative, cultural, social, and economic contexts, there should be a broad and flexible theoretical framework that allows for a critical evaluation of earlier theories, and one which considers the distinct characteristics of that place and that time.

Then, I offer an approach for a comparative investigation of variations and similarities of desistance processes across countries by turning to methodological frameworks proposed by Karstedt (2001) and Nelken (2007). Furthermore, I draw on sociological theories and concepts that address the dynamics of individual behaviour within a given society; namely, Bourdieu's theory of practice, Foucault's late work in 'The History of Sexuality', and Giddens' theory of structuration. While there are other sociological concepts that informed the study and data analysis – such as labelling (Becker, 1973; Goffman, 1991) and the presentation of the self (Goffman, 1959) – the three sociological theories noted above provided a robust framework within which to understand individuals' experiences within a given context. Lastly, the chapter concludes with a discussion of how the sociological theories are brought together to compare and understand desistance processes in cross-national comparative research.

3.1 The 'how' and the 'why' of desistance

In accounting for the 'how' and the 'why' of desistance, theories often stress either the role of internal factors in causing change (Paternoster & Bushway, 2009), external factors (Sampson & Laub, 1993), or point to an interaction between the two (Bottoms & Shapland, 2011). When emphasising internal factors, scholars often point to experiences of individuals, perceptions, emotions, and how individuals frame or narrate desistance (for example, Vaughan, 2007). When stressing external factors,

scholars often discuss the role of social structures – that is, informal and formal institutions, and various aspects of social life (Bourdieu, 1977; Giddens, 1984). Formal institutions in societies are established institutions that are communicated to the public through official channels, such as laws and criminal justice agencies (Helmke & Levitsky, 2004). Informal institutions commonly refer to socially shared rules which are known, are communicated between individuals, and are socially enforced outside of official political channels (Helmke & Levitsky, 2004). For example, although not strictly prohibited by law, Israelis avoid driving on a Shabbat in areas that are highly religious, as a way of respecting Jewish heritage, despite one's own personal belief system. In cases where an Israeli 'breaks the rule', he or she will face the angry retaliation of ultra-orthodox people in the area.

The difficulty with highlighting either external or internal factors in desistance is that emphasis on social structures constructs the individual as passively reacting to larger social forces and overlooks an individual's circumstances (Farrall & Bowling, 1999). Alternatively, overemphasising human agency in desistance processes could run the risk of relying on what respondents say, while not giving sufficient attention to the wider social and economic processes that individuals may undergo, which they may not be fully aware of, or are able to express (Farrall & Bowling, 1999). The tendency to emphasise one factor or the other, in academic discourse, is of

particular interest to this study, since it seeks to attend equally the role of agency and social structures in desistance processes. Next, leading theories in desistance are outlined and attention paid to whether they emphasise internal or external factors, and the drawbacks and benefits of the theories for a cross-national understanding of desistance.

3.1.1 Social control and age-graded informal social control

A central concept in social control theories is that deviant behaviour is more likely when a person's 'bond' to society is weak or broken, while strong ties to social institutions – such as to schools, work, and family – are argued as reducing criminal behaviour (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990; Sampson & Laub, 1993). Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) general theory of crime, for example, argued that a strong bond to society acts as a form of social control that restrain deviant or criminal behaviour. Yet, Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990, p. 87) add that it is not only the social bond to society that can restrain criminal behaviour, but the extent to which a person has lower or higher self-control which determines whether a person is more or less 'vulnerable to the temptations of the moment'. Individuals with lower self-control are portrayed by Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) as more vulnerable and as having a higher propensity for crime. Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990, p. 89) note:

'*In our view, lack of self-control does not require a crime and can be counteracted by situational conditions or other properties of the individual.*

At the same time, we suggest their high self-control effectively reduces the possibility of crime – that is, those possessing it will be substantially less likely at all periods of life to engage in criminal acts.'

Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990, p. 89)

Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) social control theory implies a continuity or stability of deviant behaviour throughout a person's life, by proposing that persistent offending is the result of 'criminal propensity' and low self-control. Sampson and Laub (1993) critiqued Gottfredson and Hirschi's theory as being non-developmental and neglecting the changes that a person undergoes throughout the life-course. Instead, Sampson and Laub (1993) proposed the age-graded informal social control theory, which integrates the notion of an individual's bond to society with the notion of life transitions at different ages. At the time of its publication, Sampson and Laub (1993) offered a fresh theoretical framework to understand both *continuity* and *change* in criminal behaviour over the life-course, regardless of past criminal behaviour and criminal propensity – an aspect that classical criminological theories then lacked. Their theory proposed that informal social ties – the bond that a person has to society – are important over an individual's life-course and that, for each age, there are different informal social control and ties that a person can develop, which curb criminal behaviour (Sampson & Laub, 1993). Sampson and Laub (1993) explain desistance as the result of enduring social attachments that evolve over time, such as getting married, becoming a parent, and starting a new job.

Sampson and Laub (1993, p. 8) note that there are two central concepts to the life-course dynamics: 1) *trajectory*, which refers to 'long-term patterns of behaviour that are marked by a sequence of transition', such as worklife, marriage, parenthood, and criminal behaviour; 2) and *transitions*, which are marked by life events and evolve over a shorter life span. The cessation of offending is attributed to a dynamic process of interlocking trajectories and transitions; that is, life events and patterns of behaviour that evolve over the longer or shorter term, which generate both continuity and change in a person's life (Sampson & Laub, 1997). Abrupt changes in one's life are referred to as 'turning points' and these turning points, such as parenthood and employment, are said to modify long-term patterns of behaviour (trajectories) and redirect one's path (Sampson & Laub, 1993; 1997). While turning points may be abrupt, and lead to radical change for some individuals, for many others, change evolves over time and, therefore, cannot be reduced to a single event (Sampson & Laub, 1996).

Sampson and Laub (1993) add that the influence of turning points[2] can vary amongst individuals, such that life transitions do not impact all persistent offenders the same way. For example, getting married may be the start of a social bond that will evolve into a strong social tie, which will be conducive to desistance, while for another, getting married may not have

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[2] On turning points see Carlsson (2016) who raises questions about the concept.

the same effect (Sampson & Laub, 1997). The development of social bonds are described in this theory as akin to an investment process; they do not arise fully formed and strong, but grow and strengthen over time (Laub, Nagin, & Sampson, 1998). Furthermore, the more these social ties grow, the greater the incentive for avoiding criminal behaviour, since more is at stake by offending (Sampson & Laub, 1993; 1997). Sampson and Laub (2005) later modified their theory to include 'human agency' as a factor that impacts change. They note that one's perception of their past and future were important factors in desistance (Sampson & Laub, 2005). In particular, they note that desisters engaged in 'transformative action', in which they experienced a development in their identity toward 'a family man, hard worker, and good provider' (Sampson & Laub, 2005, p. 37).

However, while they attributed agency a role, agency is a component that *accompanies* change from criminal behaviour and remains underdeveloped and somewhat in the background. For example, Sampson and Laub (2005) note that desisters experienced change in their identity towards becoming a 'family man', but do not consider the identity that the offender has left behind (see, Farrall, 2005), or how the new identity had to be negotiated and evolved within particular social settings (Bottoms & Shapland, 2011). Consequently, formal and informal social institutions remain front-and-centre in accounting for crime and desistance in Sampson and Laub's theory. The age-graded informal social control theory adds to our

understanding of the relationship between an individual's ties to society, the influence of social factors, and desistance. However, the theory provides only a partial explanation of what causes individuals to desist. Sampson and Laub's theory implies an over-reaching 'normative effect' of social bonds through the army, marriage, parenthood, and work. However, the theory does not address whether, beneath this surface, there are other personal and social mechanisms that could drive social bonds and desistance; for example, a wish for social inclusion and social availability of opportunities within a given society could possible shape the social bond an individual has to society. Although less overt and more difficult to empirically investigate, delving deeper into the mechanisms underlining social bonds can tell criminologists more about what drives these processes, especially when these processes are considered more globally.

It seems that Sampson and Laub's theory may pose problems for researchers seeking to understand how processes of desistance operate amongst different groups and in different countries. As mentioned in Chapter 2, Sampson and Laub's sample was composed entirely of white males who matured into adulthood during the 1950s in the US, which raises questions about the ability to generalise the findings in more contemporary and global settings (Giordano et al., 2002). Another important limitation of Sampson and Laub's theory is its emphasis on social structural factors, while little attention is paid to the role of agency in these processes

(Giordano et al., 2002). The theory does not address one's internal commitment towards formal and informal social control, or towards various turning points. Indeed, Vaughan (2007, p. 390) wondered 'how the agent originally submitted to these forces and why they remain enthralled by them?' The theory constructs the individual as passive – submitting to social forces – which depict desistance as a process of getting 'caught-up' in a normative lifestyle (Vaughan, 2007).

3.1.2 Theory of cognitive transformation

Giordano et al.'s (2002) theory of cognitive transformation emphasises the role of agency in setting changes in motion and sustaining desistance, while paying attention to the influences of social factors on individuals. The theory proposes that there are 'cognitive shifts that occurs during behavioural change and are an integral part of the desistance process' (Giordano et al., 2002, pp. 991). Giordano et al. (2002) outline four interlinked cognitive transformations where the first one is individuals' openness for change. Giordano et al. (2002, p. 1001) then describe a cognitive change that relates to 'the reciprocal relationship between [the] actor and [the] environment.' In the second phase, social opportunities (such as being offered a job) are viewed as types of 'hooks' that become a catalyst for change (Giordano et al., 2002). By 'hooks for change', Giordano et al. (2002) refer to elements in one's environment (such as employment and spouse) and proposes that these external opportunities

increase an individual's recognition of the desirability for change. The authors emphasise that it is not only social opportunities that are a catalyst for change, but an individual has to move towards, and resonate with, the opportunities they are presented with (Giordano et al., 2002). Hence, an agent plays a role 'in creatively and selectively appropriating elements in the environment' to provide them with hooks for change (Giordano et al., 2002, p. 992).

The third cognitive transformation occurs when the individual can *imagine* a change in their identity, and can conceptualise a 'replacement self' that can supplant the current identity (Giordano et al., 2002). The fourth type of cognitive transformation involves change in the individual's own view of their past deviant behaviour, in which the behaviour is no longer seen as positive, or even personally relevant (Giordano et al., 2002). Giordano et al. (2002) note that, throughout these four phases, 'hooks' are important for facilitating cognitive transformation and behavioural change, as they shift the meaning and desirability of criminal behaviour. Yet, by and large, the theory portrays social or external factors as a catalyst for change, rather than proposing that there is something about these external factors that facilitates change (Giordano et al., 2002).

The theory of cognitive transformation incorporates both social factors and agency in explaining desistance, and does so to a greater extent than

Sampson and Laub. By assigning significance to how agents resonate with their social environment, the theory offers flexibility in how to view and study factors that are involved in processes of change (Giordano et al., 2002), which can be useful for comparative purposes. However, the theory does not provide an explanation as to why a person opens up to change, or chooses to make a change in the first place. For Sampson and Laub, change is mainly initiated by 'turning points' that take place in a person's life; the theory of cognitive transformation, on the other hand, does not shed light on this issue.

3.1.3 The theory of the feared self

'The feared self' sets out to explain what causes a person to pursue desistance in the first place, and the factors that initiate this process (Paternoster & Bushway, 2009). Paternoster and Bushway (2009) propose a distinction between one's current 'working identity' and the kind of person that one wishes to be – 'one's possible self.' Committing crime is part of a person's working identity, and remains the 'locus of commitment' as long as, by and large, the benefits outweigh the costs (Paternoster & Bushway 2009, p. 1105). Gradually, the offending working identity becomes less satisfying when a person perceives failures and dissatisfactions in their current life, as well as anticipating future failures and dissatisfactions (Paternoster & Bushway, 2009). Paternoster and Bushway (2009, p. 1105) describe possible dissatisfactions from an offending lifestyle as follows:

'These failures include a sense that being an offender is no longer financially beneficial, that it is too dangerous, that the perceived costs of imprisonment loom more likely and greater, and that the costs to one's social relationships are too dear.'

Paternoster and Bushway (2009, p. 1105)

These dissatisfactions eventually merge with one's working identity and this is when an agent begins to develop a wish to change; to be someone else (Paternoster & Bushway, 2009). Hence, the feared self – what a person does not want to become – is a source of motivation to initiate intentional self change (Paternoster & Bushway, 2009). The theory suggests that there is a period of reassessment by the agent, which is coupled with a worry about a possible bleak and undesirable future (Paternoster & Bushway, 2009). This leads to intentional self-change which, in turn, leads to a shift in identity, 'a break from one's past', which brings with it 'a change in one's preferences' and behaviour (Paternoster & Bushway, 2009, pp. 1105-1106). The concept of breaking away from one's past is also suggested by Sampson and Laub (1993) who described an aspect of 'knifing-off' one's past when an individual desists from crime.

The feared self shares similarities with rational choice theory, which depict the offender as an agent who weighs the costs and benefits of crime (Clarke & Cornish, 1985). Rational choice theory suggests that in desistance

processes, an individual 'begins a renewed evaluation of alternatives' and that this process begins as a result of 'aversive experiences during the course of offending' (Clarke & Cornish, 1985, p. 173). Changes in personal circumstances – such as age and marital status – and change of the neighbourhood context in which offenders operate – such as changes of policing – encourage individuals to abandon their criminal behaviour in favour of an alternative lifestyle (Clarke & Cornish, 1985).

Although sharing some similarities with rational choice theory, Paternoster and Bushway (2009) consider, in greater breadth, the notion of an offender's reassessment of their life by emphasising the role of identity and an individual's perceptions of their own circumstances. Paternoster and Bushway (2009) suggest that an agent's hopes and goals are constrained by the social context and the environment in which they live. Hence, what a person can imagine becoming (and eventually becomes) is dependent on social and environmental factors. Unlike Giordano et al. (2002), they argue that the agent accesses these social opportunities only *after* (rather than during) they intentionally decide to change (Paternoster & Bushway, 2009). Hence, the theory of feared self implies it is the agent that propels the desistance process.

3.1.4 Theory of internal narrative

Vaughan's (2007) theory of internal narrative supplements the feared self theory by adding an emotional component to the thinking, reflective, agent. Vaughan (2007) argues that criminological theories do not sufficiently address how an agent perceives their current circumstances and are able to be reflexive and deliberate in response to their current circumstances, and commit to a course of action (Vaughan, 2007). Vaughan's (2007) theory holds that to understand desistance, it is necessary to understand the 'ultimate concerns' of the individual, which are subject to change, and to direct individuals' choices and actions. An individual may re-assess their commitments to a course of action through the process of internal conversation (Vaughan, 2007). When an individual has a desire to desist, a discrepancy surfaces between their criminal past and their desire to 'go straight' (Vaughan, 2007). An agent addresses this discrepancy by engaging an internal conversation; a process of deliberation, which transforms into a self-narrative that enables the agent to reconcile the past, present, and future (Vaughan, 2007).

Internal conversations involve an internal 'act' of discernment and moral conversations with oneself, in which the agent (re)evaluates their choices, the things that are most relevant to them (ultimate concerns) and then chooses the most appropriate course of action to further their concerns (Vaughan, 2007; Farrall & Bowling, 1999). This process of re-assessment

can be provoked by social factors and events that are external to the individual, such as a new job or a potential partner (Vaughan, 2007). However, Vaughan (2007, p. 393) notes that the social environment only operates *through* the social agent, rather than '*on*' agents.

Vaughan (2007) proposes three phases to this process. In the first phase, the agent deliberates and reviews possible choices (courses of action) against concerns they have – which have been dominated by crime, until now (Vaughan, 2007). For change to take place, a pre-requisite is willingness, by the agent, to consider different options, other than crime (Vaughan, 2007). The first phase leads to the second where the agent reviews 'the pros and cons of potential courses of action' (Vaughan, 2007, p. 394). What emerges then is a self conceptualisation of who one is and who one wishes to be (Vaughan, 2007). The process of evaluating the pros-and-cons is not purely rational; rather, 'emotional commentary often helps to clarify whether a putative course of action is really appropriate' (Vaughan, 2007, p. 394). Furthermore, this process often involves considering other people's reactions and their feelings towards one's choices (Vaughan, 2007). Finally, once a course of action is decided, what follows is dedication – that is, dedication to the new commitment the agent has made (Vaughan, 2007).

Although the theory of internal conversation does not sufficiently address the ambivalence that ex-offenders can experience (Burnett, 2004), Vaughan

provides a useful theory with which to compare the internal description of desisters across countries. In particular, the theory directs the researcher's attention towards how ultimate concerns and moral conversations may resemble or differ across cultures and groups of people and direct commitments. Attention to this, in turn, can highlight cultural aspects that influence agency and identity in these processes.

3.1.5 'Making good'

While Vaughan, and Paternoster and Bushway, offer theories that describe the reflexive agent when they initiate processes of change, Maruna (2001) identifies self schemes that ex-offenders sketch as they maintain desistance. In particular, Maruna (2001) identifies common self conceptualisations amongst desisters and how individuals narrate desistance in the face of structural obstacles. Persistent offenders who desisted expressed a self-narrative which utilised what Maruna referred to as a 'redemption script':

'*The redemption script begins by establishing the goodness and conventionality of the narrator – a victim of society who gets involved with crime and drugs to achieve some sort of power over otherwise bleak circumstances. This deviance eventually becomes its own trap, however, as the narrator becomes ensnared in the vicious cycle of crime and imprisonment. Yet, with the help of some outside force, someone who 'believed in' the ex-offender, the narrator is able to accomplish what he or she was 'always meant to do.' Newly empowered, he or she now also seeks to 'give something back' to society as a display of gratitude.'*

Maruna (2001, p. 87)

In explaining their involvement in crime, desisters in Maruna's study turned to their past and to factors rooted in their social environment as the cause of their offending (Maruna, 2001). In particular, they sought to achieve some power over their bleak circumstances and, consequently, got 'caught up' in a cycle of crime and imprisonment (Maruna, 2001). The criminal past is recast 'as the necessary prelude to some newfound calling' which led them to their current pro-social and non-offending identity (Maruna, 2001, p. 9). Self-schemas of desisters also involved pointing to an external force (such as another person) that assisted them in their efforts to refrain from crime (Maruna, 2001). There is also a continuity of identity expressed by desisters in the process of change, in which the individual starts off as 'good' and as a 'non-offender' who has lost their way, but found their way back and re-establishes their 'true self', which then becomes the reason for their desistance (Maruna, 2001, p. 87). Furthermore, desisters expressed self-determination and a sense of responsibility over their present and future (Maruna, 2001). Successful desistance, Maruna (2001, p. 150) suggested, is the fading away of the external factors that had brought forth problems in desisters' lives and a reemergence of the 'I', assuming control and self-determination over their own present and future. Maruna (2001, p. 151) describes this process as 'making good', as it involves 'taking control over one's life and using that life to contribute, accomplish something, and leave a positive legacy'. It is

'making good' by finding a reason and a purpose despite the 'dire and bleak' realities of the agent's life (Maruna, 2001).

'Making good' intends to *supplement* desistance research and theories that emphasise external and structural factors in processes of change, rather than provide an alternative theory that favours the role of internal factors (Maruna, 2001). The theoretical insights drawn from these self-schemas direct the researcher's attention towards change in identity, and how the refraining from offending is maintained. Such focus is useful for comparative efforts, as it emphasises how the past and the future are narrated by individuals to explain how they are 'going about' desisting. Hence, similarities and variances in how the past is recast and the present is narrated across cultures can tell a researcher more about attributes related to identity and desistance.

3.1.6 Early stages of desistance

Bottoms and Shapland (2011) place emphasis on agency, but view it as interacting with wider social-structural factors in the early stages of desistance. The authors offer an interactive model of the early stages of desistance, in which a person's criminal history and habits interact with the potential of fresh opportunities, such as employment and developing positive social ties (Bottoms & Shapland, 2011). Bottoms and Shapland's (2011, p. 70) theoretical framework draws attention to how an agent needs

to 'negotiate a new way of living, breaking with the habits' and how this 'negotiation' continuously interacts with the social contexts in which one lives. Their theory and findings support those of Sampson and Laub and proposes that social factors, such as unemployment and delinquent peers, can impact criminal behaviour, over and above past criminal convictions (Bottoms & Shapland, 2011). Giordano et al.'s theory of cognitive transformation is also supported by their findings, which suggest that the manner in which an agent approaches their obstacles or 'hooks for change' is significant in the early stages of desistance (Bottoms & Shapland, 2011). Indeed, Bottoms and Shapland (2011) highlight the role of internal mechanisms, such as self-perception and a sense of self-efficacy, and their role in influencing an agent's intention to desist and how they approach obstacles.

The interactive theoretical model proposed by Bottoms and Shapland (2011) considers the current social conditions in which those wishing to desist act; how these can interact with the agent; and how desistance processes are negotiated accordingly. Such a theoretical framework is particularly useful for comparative studies. For example, a criminal justice discourse that highlights a government's obligation to help offenders reintegrate by providing access to social support could offer a different pathway out of crime than one that highlights the benefits of offenders undergoing cognitive change. The social context in each case is different

and the theoretical model, herein, is flexible for the purpose of comparing how social factors that are distinct in each case interact with individuals in processes of desistance.

3.1.7 Structural and individual-level processes

In a similar way to Bottoms and Shapland (2011), the theoretical framework proposed by Farrall et al. (2011) underlines the interaction between individual-related factors and social-structural factors in processes of desistance. When considering the influence of the social context, Farrall et al. (2011) propose that it is important to also consider macro-level and meso-level influences that interact with the individual desisting in their everyday life. An individual's agency and choices are in interplay with wider social forces, 'which are beyond the control of the individual' (Farrall et al., 2011, p. 224).

The theory suggests that there are several key elements to pay attention to in desistance processes (see diagram in Appendix I). First, an individual moves from the past into the future such that there is a person – an identity of the self – that is projected into the future (Farrall et al., 2011). In particular, the agent's day-to-day life involves the action of 'projecting the self' to the future and reflexive consideration of their concerns, hopes, and wishes (Farrall et al., 2011). The theory considers existential aspects of desistance and suggests that a common feature (but not all inclusive) is a

period of reassessment of the things that are important to the individual (Farrall et al., 2011; also see Farrall & Bowling, 1999) and then a 'remaking' of the self (Farrall, 2005). Farrall (2005, p. 372) suggests that desisting is not merely the action of no longer offending, but desisters negotiate their 'transition from being an offender to being ex-offender', and 'remake' or rebuild their social identity. Here, 'successful desistance entails developing a sense of what the future may hold for the individual and a sense of how this future can be realised' (Farrall, 2005, p. 367). The process of remaking is influenced by external factors and opportunities (such as familial ties and employment), which interplay with creating a new sense of self (Farrall, 2005). The person that the desister *can* become in the future is influenced by the 'availability of legitimate identities', as well as by factors associated with one's past, which may influence the availability of opportunities (Farrall et al., 2011).

The next important element in their theory is the influence of 'situational contexts' (Farrall et al., 2011). Here, there are influences of specific social policies on the would-be desister, and their previous experiences in the criminal justice system (Farrall et al., 2011). Farrall et al. (2011) propose that there is constant interaction between the individual's agency, conditions in the past, possible opportunities in the future, and specific circumstances in the lives of individuals, including those specific circumstances shaped by social policies. Hence, this theoretical framework

also looks at broader 'macro-level' influences that are, either, 'broadly unchanging', 'slowly changing', or 'rapidly changing' (Farrall et al., 2011, p. 226). Broadly unchanging influences refer to factors that are not changing or slowly changing, such as social institutions and the concept of crime (Farrall et al., 2011). Slowly changing macro-level influences refers to, for example, economic conditions, social values, acts of parliament, and changes in the notion of fatherhood (Farrall et al., 2011). Lastly, rapidly changing influences refer to 'shocks to the system' which change the social landscape and life within that situational context, such as the influence of 'economic recession on employment prospects' (Farrall et al., 2011, p. 227).

Farrall et al. (2011) and Bottoms and Shapland (2011) provide a useful framework for a comparative lens, as both offer a way to evaluate how specific social conditions can impact the pathways out of crime. In both theories, transitions throughout one's life (which may have implications for desistance) are not only affected by social bonds – as suggested by Sampson and Laub – but are more complex and are in interplay with broader social conditions and policies.

3.2 Thinking about comparative research in criminology

After reviewing the theories above, and their utility in aiding comparative exploration, and in light of the objectives of this study, a theoretically informed approach should be offered which would aid this cross-national endeavour. It is proposed to undertake a conceptually-nuanced approach towards desistance research so as to: 1) offer a helpful method of undertaking research (especially comparative) in the field; and 2) provide a framework that allows for a deeper understanding of the mechanisms involved in desistance processes. I draw from the theoretical and methodological perspective proposed by Karstedt (2001) and Nelken (2004; 2007; 2009; 2010) which highlights distinct characteristics of each place at that time (Karstedt, 2012), as well as focusing on the meaning attributed to social concepts (such as families and 'being an offender') in England and Israel (see Nelken, 2007). The two authors advise taking account of such characteristics so as to understand how the appearance, or absence, of distinct characteristics relate to the way individuals desist (Karstedt, 2012; Tilly, 1984).

Karstedt (2001; 2012) notes that cross-cultural criminological inquiry can follow two general strategies: 1) a multi-dimensional concept of culture and; 2) a 'culture complexes' strategy (or a singular cultural traits concept).

The first approach seeks testable variables, using extensive, often quantitative research strategies (Karstedt, 2001). The second strategy holds that 'differences between cultures are shaped by a specific *characteristic* or singular cultural trait, that pervades the total cultural pattern; it is present in one type of culture, but absent in others' (Karstedt, 2001, p. 290). This strategy explores distinct characteristics in each of the cultures and compares the differences between the two (Karstedt, 2001). Culture is viewed as an overarching frame for values and patterns of actions by individuals, which may be, in turn, 'salient for the crime-culture relationship' (Karstedt, 2001, p. 291). Typical concepts that may vary between cultures can include religion, machismo, or morality, and research strategies tend to explore these issues qualitatively (Karstedt, 2001). Having said that, it is important to remember that when researchers seek characteristics for comparison which help to explain the 'influence of culture', they assume a degree of homogeneity in values, beliefs, and shared meanings amongst groups of people (Karstedt, 2012). Hence, researchers assume that the variance between the cultures is higher than the variance *within* a given culture (Karstedt, 2012).

Nelken (2007; 2010) provides another useful framework to approach comparative research in criminology, as well as pointing to possible biases that may arise in such studies. He proposes that to successfully understand other systems of criminal justice, 'we must avoid attributing to them

intentions on the basis of what we imagine they should be doing' (Nelken, 2009, p. 293). Nelken (2009) proposes to question the meaning of concepts (such as rehabilitation) and how the meaning of these concepts may shift when doing comparative research. As Nelken notes, 'comparative criminal justice involves not only comparing objects of inquiry but also differences in the way of constructing such objects' (Nelken, 2007, p. 142). Nelken (2007, p. 144) offers three methodologies with which to approach comparative research in (law and) criminology: 1) the 'behavioural science' approach, which sets out to test and validate explanatory theories of crime and social control; 2) the 'interpretivist' approach, which aims to 'show how the meaning of crime and criminal justice is embedded within a changing, local and international, historical and cultural context'; and 3) the 'policy researchers' approach, which learns from practices, rules, and ideas of criminal justice in other jurisdictions. I have combined the two latter approaches to direct the methodology of this study, with particular emphasis on an 'interpretivist' approach.

An 'interpretivist' approach provides a helpful methodology for comparing the context and meanings attributed to various social factors across countries (Nelken, 2007). The researcher examines distinctive characteristics in the discourses and practices of a given system and seeks to understand the inner meaning of social 'facts' (Nelken, 2007). Furthermore – and for the purpose of this research – the researcher seeks to

understand how the way individuals desist also 'resonate[s] with other aspects of its culture' (Nelken, 2007, p. 140). The approaches of both Karstedt and Nelken aid the objectives of this study by providing a theoretically informed (criminological) framework with which to engage with contextual factors that are distinct in each place and time. I propose that criminologists would benefit from a more nuanced approach which takes account of distinct characteristics of the place and the times in which these processes occurs. Such an approach can, in turn, direct criminologists on how they ought to approach the influences of social structures in these processes.

My theoretical stance views agency and social factors as interacting in processes of desistance, and draws from all the theories discussed above to understand how these processes unfold and how they compare. While Karstedt and Nelken informed my approach to contextual factors within a given society, their frameworks offered less insight into individual experiences within different contexts. The questions that remain are how to approach my stance that agency and social factors are in an ongoing interaction, and how to understand an individual's experiences and actions within a given society? In answering these questions, I turn to sociological theories which account for the interplay between an individual and their social life. Criminological theories of desistance are commonly based on sociological frameworks, for example, Bottoms and Shapland and Farrall

and colleagues drew heavily from Bourdieu's theory of practice. I have chosen to develop my own meta-sociological theory as it helped me think 'outside the box' and assisted in a reexamination of earlier findings in the field.

3.3 A theoretical framework for understanding the individual and their social life

Sociological theories have traditionally distinguished between social structures and agency, and attributed the causes of behaviour and social life to either one or the other (Mouzelis, 2008). That is, when sociologists explain behaviours, individual or collective change, social patterns, or societal development, they traditionally assert either that structural mechanisms in society (for example, economic institutions, criminal justice systems, religion, or cultural practices) shape an individual's behaviours, or that agency (for example, actions, perception, emotions, behaviours, and choices) prompt individual change or shifts in social patterns (Maton, 2008; Mouzelis, 2008). Attempts to bridge or reconcile this divide ask how the 'outer' social world and the 'inner', individual world, can interact and shape each other (Maton, 2008). By bringing sociological theories that reconcile the divide between the 'outer' social world and the 'inner', individual world, I address three issues in this study: 1) how to understand (and analyse) a given society; 2) how country-related characteristics

interact with individual behaviour; and 3) correspondingly, the role of agency in acting, 'being', and choosing within a given structure. The underlying theoretical stance here holds that there is an independent *existential reality*, and that events and institutions are *socially constructed* (Stones, 1996, pp. 26-38). I suggest that there is no contradiction in accepting both views, as factors (such as institutions and events) may have a reality of their own, while these same factors are understood subjectively and can be socially reproduced, in accordance with a subjective understanding of reality (Stones, 1996). As Stones (1996, p. 32) notes, it is the aim of the realist social scientist 'to get as close as possible to being able to recreate' the particular 'ways' of the social world.

Next, I draw from Bourdieu and Giddens to develop a comparative understanding of desistance processes and outline some of the problems that Bourdieu's theory pose. These problems are addressed by incorporating Foucault's theory into some aspects of Bourdieu's theory, and, thus, a short description of Foucault's power-knowledge theory is provided. While there are other sociological concepts that informed this study (such as labelling and the presentation of self in everyday life), Bourdieu, Giddens, and Foucault underpin the theoretical approach of this study.

3.3.1 Pierre Bourdieu's theory of practice

The 'theory of practice', developed by Pierre Bourdieu in the late 1970s, sought to explain how social interactions, everyday life, individual perceptions, and behaviours are placed within a wider social context (Jenkins, 2002). It was a chief aim of Bourdieu to reconcile the dichotomy in social science between the role of agency (i.e. behaviours, perceptions, emotions, actions, etc.) and structures within a given social system – i.e. economic institutions, political institutions, criminal justice systems, etc. (Maton, 2008). There are two elements in Bourdieu's theory which make it attractive for the purpose of my research: 1) the theory provides the means with which to empirically investigate and analyse the social world (Jenkins, 2002); and 2) Bourdieu asserts that culture is *embodied* within an agent, rather than 'in the mind' of an agent, in explaining what produces behaviours (Jenkins, 2002, p. 98). For Bourdieu, the social life exemplifies three concepts – habitus, field, and doxa – and it is the *relationship* between these three concepts that produces behaviour. Each concept will now be outlined in turn before a general discussion of the theory and the challenges that the theory pose is conducted.

Habitus

The habitus is the main concept in Bourdieu's theory. He describes it as an ongoing process that can engender individual and collective 'thoughts, perceptions, expressions, actions' (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 95). The habitus is

also limited by 'historically and socially situated conditions' (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 95). Bourdieu defines the habitus as follows:

'In short, the habitus, the product of history, produces individual and collective practices, and hence history, in accordance with the schemes engendered by history. The system of dispositions – a past which survives in the present and tends to perpetuate itself into the future by making itself present in practices structured according to its principles.'

Bourdieu (1977, p. 82)

Hence, the habitus is an ongoing process in which societies and individuals engage in actions and recreate the history that shapes their behaviour and choices (Bourdieu, 1977). Furthermore, the conditions that influence an individual's choices are not entirely of one's own making (Maton, 2008), an issue that is discussed below in more detail. For Bourdieu, an individual's actions are based on their interpretation and perception of their social world and, hence, it matters how individuals interpret the objective reality (Bourdieu, 1977). Individuals also have 'a system' of dispositions towards certain behaviours, while there are constraints, demands, and opportunities in the social field in which they act (Bourdieu, 1977). In short, there are three main assumptions that underline Bourdieu's concept of the habitus:

1. An individual is structured by the habitus (and being structured is dependent on one's past, family, education etc.);

2. An individual is involved in structuring the habitus (the individual takes part in shaping the present and future); and

3. An individual has the property of being a form of 'a structure' (that is, the individual has a system of dispositions that has a pattern and which is interlinked with one's action).

In other words, the habitus is a process whereby individuals engage in actions that shape their environments, as well as a process that influences an individual's perceptions and actions (for more see Bourdieu, 1977; Maton, 2008).

The Field

At the heart of Bourdieu's theory is the relationship between the habitus and the field (Maton, 2008). If the habitus refers to behaviours or one's practice, the field refers to the social space in which actions are taken (Bourdieu, 1977). The field establishes a particular type of physical and social environment (Bourdieu, 1977) and there can be, for example, a religious field, an economic field, and a criminal justice field. Each field has its own logic, and people hold different structural positions in it and perceptions of it. The logic (or the 'rules') of the field is applied differently for different individuals, depending on their social position in it (Bourdieu, 1977). This means, for example, that in the 'field of medicine', the social position of doctors is different to that of the patient. Consequently,

Bourdieu holds, the 'social rules' that are common in the field of medicine (for example, the clothes you wear and how you act) varies between individuals. The field plays a role in providing the context in which an individual can act (Bourdieu, 1977). This context is in constant relationship with one's interpretations and disposition, such that a person's choices and actions draw from both the social conditions of the field and from their own history and subjective interpretation of events (Bourdieu, 1977). Hence, the field and the habitus shape and reproduce each other – reproducing the conditions of the field and, at the same time, reproducing one's habitus (Bourdieu, 1977).

Bourdieu compares the field to a football game whereby each player has a position, a role, and they can move within the boundaries of their role. In this sense, there is an element of classification in a field and, thus, in the social life and for actors (Bourdieu, 1977). By classification, Bourdieu suggests that one player holds a position of, for example, goalkeeper, while the other, for example is a midfielder; the goalkeeper has resources and capital that fits with that position, while the midfielder has more, less, or other resources. The concept of the field, thus, introduces the notion of power relations as an underlying element in Bourdieu's theory. The relationship between the players can be one of equal power, domination, or subordination, and the position of the individual or institution is determined by access to goods or resources – i.e. capital (Bourdieu, 1977). In this

game, Bourdieu proposes, people try to accumulate capital so as to further their position and, as a result, the field is a social arena of struggle over access to specific resources (Bourdieu, 1977; also see Jenkins, 2002). Bourdieu (1977) distinguishes between four types of capital:

1) Economic capital, such as money, land, and employment;

2) Social capital, such as various kinds of valued relations with significant others;

3) Cultural capital, which mainly refers to legitimate knowledge, such as education; and

4) Symbolic capital, such as prestige, social class, and social honour.

Doxa

The relationship between the field and the habitus leads us to Bourdieu's concept of the doxa:

'… that is to say, when there is a quasi-perfect correspondence between the objective order and the subjective principles of organisation (as in ancient societies) the natural and social world appears as self-evident. This experience we shall call doxa…'

Bourdieu (1977, p. 164).

Doxa refers to a collective and individual's knowledge of the social life of the field, which they automatically accept as self-evident and undisputed, and this knowledge, in turn, contributes to the reproduction of that social

life (Bourdieu, 1977). The doxa is shaped by both the field and the habitus and, hence, is shaped by past experiences, position in the social field (capital), and social classifications into groups, based on one's level of power (Bourdieu, 1977). Furthermore, the doxa is intuitive and unconscious; that is, actors internalise the range of practices that would be appropriate in one particular field and are socially 'pre-disposed' to act that way (Bourdieu, 1977). In a similar vein, Goffman's (1959, p. 45) analysis of the presentation of self in everyday life proposes that when an individual presents the self to others, 'his performance will tend to incorporate and exemplify the officially accredited values of the society'. An individual will readjust or underplay aspects of the self which 'are incompatible with an idealised version of himself and his products' (Goffman, 1959, p. 56).

Bourdieu (1977) holds that people only reflect and think about their actions when there is a conflict between the objective and subjective order – when objective factors do not match the individual's subjective understanding of the social life. An external force can come into the field and create a crisis (lack of harmony between the habitus and the field), which may cause people to, then, reflect on their circumstances (Bourdieu, 1977). However, when all else is equal, people act intuitively out of their habits and out of their understanding of their environment (habitus and field) and embody the culture in which they act (Bourdieu, 1977). Furthermore, because people tend to accept the social context with no or little thought, people's

actions reinforce and reproduce the same rituals, 'rules', and knowledge that fostered such fields and behaviours in the first place (Bourdieu, 1977). Consequently, non-reflective behaviour by individuals (the doxa) sustains power relationships and allows them to be repeatedly reinforced (Bourdieu, 1977; also see Deer, 2008). According to the theory, those who have more capital in the field remain the dominant group by holding sway over reproducing the social life as is (see Bourdieu, 1977).

That said, Bourdieu (1977) proposes that, although actors behave and make choices unconsciously, actors have strategic goals and try to better their condition in the field. However, this strategic behaviour is dependent on, and shaped by, those who hold power and on the institutions *which reproduce the conditions in the field* (see, Bourdieu, 1977, pp. 166-168). This, in turn, sustains the relationship of dependency between those who hold capital and those who do not (Bourdieu, 1977). In short, although individuals have a purpose when undertaking an action, Bourdieu's theory diminishes the individual's ability to act independently by placing those with capital as the social actors who create and reproduce the objective conditions of the field (Bourdieu, 1977). Hence, the actor's actions are heavily shaped by objective conditions and structure, and change is difficult to achieve (Deer, 2008). Bourdieu places structure 'above' agency and, thus, undermines the ability of the theory to reconcile subjective and objective factors (Deer, 2008, p. 124). Bourdieu's response to this problem

is that the habitus is flexible and does not automatically leads to certain type of practices, yet, the habitus is also limited, as he maintains (Mouzelis, 2008).

The manner in which Bourdieu constructed the non-reflective agent, coupled with his view of power, poses three main problems in adopting his theory: the problem of *power*, the problem of *independent action*, and the problem of *change*. In the problem of *power*, as noted, Bourdieu places those in power as the actors who create the objective conditions of the field and the knowledge about the social life (doxa), which then determines and reproduce the habitus. Consequently, Bourdieu depicts social structures as more prominent in determining an individual's behaviour. This issue leads to the second problem of *independent action* – how can an individual have agency if their practice is determined by structural conditions and capital? The theory of practice constructs the individual as acting without thought, which diminishes the explanatory power of a thoughtful individual that carries out an action. As Jenkins (2002) notes, it is difficult to see where conscious deliberation and awareness is placed in the theory of practice and, therefore, how one can intervene in their own personal history in a meaningful way. Finally, since people and institutions reproduce the objective reality, social or personal *change* is difficult to account for. Although the concept of the field asserts struggle and strategic action, the field and the positions of individuals in it should remain static if it is

merely a response to the doxa and a reproduction of the current conditions (Mouzelis, 2008).

3.3.2 Michel Foucault: moving in a post-structuralist direction

In this section, a solution is offered to the challenges Bourdieu poses by incorporating Foucault's view of power-knowledge, while maintaining Bourdieu's overall approach to understanding behaviour. Foucault's (1978, pp. 92-93) late work in 'The History of Sexuality: The Will to Knowledge' describes power as dispersed across every member of society, such that there is a 'multiplicity of force relations' of power. Power is produced and shaped from one moment to the next and by all individuals (Foucault, 1978). Thus, Foucault suggests that there is no one institution where power 'presides'; power is not 'held' in one location, or by dominant groups, and then exercised over others (Foucault, 1978). Rather, people struggle or confront power, and thereby have the ability to transform, strengthen, or reverse it (Foucault, 1978). In so doing, it is not only power that is reshaped, but also the social discourse. In Foucault's (1978) view, discourse results from power, as well as serving to shape power; that is, discourse is an instrument through which power is produced, transmitted and/or undermined, hindered, and exposed.

Foucault (1978) provides a case study of the discourse around sexuality that changed between the 17th and 19th century. At the beginning of the

17th century, there was little secrecy surrounding sexual practice, yet, by the 19th century, discourse around sexuality took the form of 'silence'. As secrecy and silence became the main discourse in the 19th century, conversations and expressions of sexuality were 'confined' to the home, and discussed mainly in relation to reproduction (Foucault, 1978). Foucault (1978) argues a change in discourse acted as a tool of repression, by influencing the way people 'approached' it and, in this sense, the discourse shaped individual and collective behaviour. For Foucault, power, discourse, and the construction of social conditions are exercised with an aim; however, these aims are not necessarily the result of an individual's decision (Foucault, 1978). What Foucault identifies is a pattern created by discourse and power which shapes people's behaviour; yet, at the same time, *all individuals* can play a role in undermining or reproducing discourse and power. Furthermore, Foucault advises to look at the influence of that power, rather than attempt to find those who control it, as Foucault notes:

'... there is no power that is exercised without a series of aims and objectives. But this does not mean that it results from the choice or decision of an individual subject; lead us not to look for the headquarters that presides over its rationality; neither the caste which governs, nor the groups which control the state apparatus...'

Foucault (1978, p. 95).

Hence, the issue of how power is distributed is set aside for Foucault (Mouzelis, 2008), rather, the focus becomes the function of power in society – what it creates and the aims that it serves (Foucault, 1978). Power has the faculty of movement and creates a pattern which, in turn, creates 'strategy' (Foucault, 1978). Strategy refers to a pattern of discourse that has a function in society. The function or effect of that pattern is described by Foucault (1978) as 'relations serving' – it serves X (an unknown) for the power-knowledge pattern between individuals, and, as a result, constructs the social life. Foucault rejects the view that power-knowledge relations are a dynamic between 'strong' and 'weak' individuals by saying that relations of power are not static, but constantly in flux, while everyone plays a role in transforming them (Foucault, 1978). In this way, Foucault allows for broader social and individual change to take place. Note, however, that Foucault is concerned with discourse analysis, but not with the meaning that this discourse has for the individual – how the discourse is interpreted by individuals (Stones, 1996; Mouzelis, 2008). By adopting Foucault's theory, the theoretical framework moves slightly from a structuralist stance towards a post-structuralist one, in which the subject (individual) is not the centre of investigation (see Mouzelis, 2008, p. 24).

How is Foucault helpful?

Incorporating Foucault's theory, as described in the History of Sexuality (vol. 1), offers a way to avoid framing power relationships as automatically

shaping individuals' behaviour, and opens up a possibility that individuals take an active role in mirroring the social pattern, shaping structures, and transforming the social discourse. In Foucault's view, individuals act within a context, or a discourse, and this discourse shapes social life. However, individuals have the freedom to reinforce, resist, or shape power in their daily life and, thus, generate change. Hence, by adopting Foucault's theory, it is possible to overcome the problem of social and individual change that Bourdieu poses. However, the difficulty with adopting Foucault's framework is that, as Mouzelis (2008) notes, post-structuralist theories set aside the subject and, as a result, there can be a critical description, but it will not provide an effective explanation for the individual's actions. That said, a post-structuralist lens can be useful for a comparative study which seeks (along with other objectives) to capture social patterns, 'cultural scripts', and discourses of social institutions within a given society, and their role in desistance processes.

3.3.3 Giddens' theory of structuration

In a similar way to Bourdieu, Giddens (1984) offers a theory that reconciles sociologists' dichotomy between the subjective and objective social life (Mouzelis, 2008). For Giddens (1984), individuals and society are developed by the same mechanisms and both reproduce patterns in each other: specifically, actions by knowledgeable agents reproduce structural mechanisms in society and structural mechanisms reproduce knowledge

and action by individuals. The reason why Giddens' theory is useful for the current research, in addition to Bourdieu and Foucault, is that (while Bourdieu provides a useful theory with which to understand *behaviour* and Foucault provides a framework with which to understand social patterns) he provides a useful framework with which to *interpret people's experiences and narratives* within a given society.

Unlike Bourdieu, Giddens (1984) views the individual as a knowledgable agent and as knowing a great deal about the conditions and consequences of their actions in everyday life. His theory attributes complexity, knowledge, and reflectivity to an individual (Giddens, 1984). Yet, an individual can hold unconscious motives and be unaware of all the outcomes of their actions, which then produces unintended consequences (Giddens, 1984). Thus, and in short, Giddens (1984) views individuals as: 1) knowledgeable, which means that they largely understand what they do and the consequences of their actions; and 2) as doing what they are doing for a reason that is not external to them – their reasons are not because of some outside force that 'determines' their actions. Giddens (1984) agrees with Bourdieu that there can be constraints on an agent's actions that stem from the social world and structures an individual's life. Giddens (1984) further adds that constraints made by social structures imply wants and wishes of agents and, thus, imply purposive conduct. As Giddens notes:

'First, constraints do not 'push' anyone to do anything if he or she has not already been 'pulled'. In other words, an account of purposive conduct is implied even when the constraints limiting courses of action are very severe.'

<div align="right">Giddens (1984, p. 308)</div>

Giddens (1984) holds that the individual has 'wants', even if one's range of actions is constrained and, further, these 'wants' are influenced by the history of the agent and prior experiences, as also suggested by Bourdieu. The theory holds that people draw on past experiences, and are able to reproduce the same social 'characteristics in the wider context'. However, people do not reproduce these characteristics in a mechanical fashion, but in a reflective manner (Giddens, 1984, p. 299). Indeed, Giddens (1984) proposes that people and collectives intentionally act and interact based on what they perceive and what is meaningful to them. However, as noted, although the agent is reflective, and has the ability for voluntary action, Giddens maintains an influence of social context in shaping one's behaviour:

'All action occurs in contexts that, for any given single actor, include many elements which that actor neither helped to bring into being nor has any significant control over. Such enabling and constraining features of contexts of action include both material and social phenomena.'

<div align="right">Giddens (1984, p. 346)</div>

An example of how the social context can impact on individuals is Becker's (1973) concept of labelling. Becker notes that behaviours or classes of acts:

'*may or may not be thought deviant by any of the various relevant audiences that view them. The difference in definition, in the label applied to the act, makes a difference in what everyone, audiences and actors alike, does subsequently*'

Becker (1973, p. 181).

Hence, in line with Giddens, Becker (1973) suggests that social labelling can influence an individual's perception and subsequent action. A main concept in Giddens' theory is the 'duality of structure' (1984), in which agents reproduce structural properties in society and, at the same time, these structural properties provide the context which shapes actors' lives. That is, social structures are constructed and maintained by people, while providing the context which influences agency. Giddens' structuration theory offers two types of methodologies with which to undertake social research – institutional analysis and analysis of strategic conduct (Giddens, 1984). Institutional analysis treats properties (or features in social life) 'as chronically reproduced features of social systems', which means that the researcher ought to look at patterns and reproduced rules that structural systems create (Giddens, 1984, p. 288; Stones, 1991). On the other hand, analysis of strategic conduct places emphasis on the ways which 'actors

draw upon structural properties in the constitution of social relations', which entails looking at actors' perceptions, experiences, and interpretations of the social world and their interactions with others (Giddens, 1984, p. 288).

Analysis of strategic conduct gives primacy to analysing the narratives of an actor, as they express it, and in their capacity to act (Stones, 1996). As this study draws from Giddens to understand in greater depth individual experiences and descriptions within a given country, it is analysis of strategic conduct that is of interest here. The knowledgeability of the actors is framed in a particular narrative and holds a specific meaning for the agent (Stones, 1991). This particular meaning and narrative is dependent on the wants and desires of the individual, which is shaped by the culture and context (Stones, 1991).

3.4 Bringing sociological theories together to understand desistance

The sociological theories described above help to conceptualise how the inner world of individuals interacts with objective factors and social patterns, which can shape (and sometimes constrain) individuals' actions. Bourdieu's framework is suited for this study because it provides a useful way to explain individual behaviour, in particular structural settings.

Different structural settings can hold different meanings, which possibly have an impact on desistance processes. For example, his theory provides a framework with which to understand how agency is exercised in an 'Israeli-type' of social exclusion, as opposed to an 'English-type' of social exclusion, given the different conditions of the field. Giddens' theory complements Bourdieu by providing a richer theoretical framework with which to understand the inner world of individuals. Giddens urges social analysts to pay attention to individuals' experiences, conscious and unconscious motivations, the ways in which individuals' experiences are narrated, and how all of these relate to the outer world. Foucault's theory is less helpful in explaining individual behaviour. That said, Foucault provides a useful framework with which to understand the complexity of the social world, of power relationships (Stones, 1996), and a framework with which to describe social discourses and patterns.

In short, Bourdieu and Giddens provide the main framework for this research and so individuals are seen as being shaped by past experiences and their own knowledgeability, and interpretations and perceptions of their circumstances. Furthermore, the objective conditions are viewed as fields (or different fields) in which individuals hold a position, have more or less capital, and try to better their conditions by accumulating more capital. These fields interact with the habitus and construct the social world individuals live in. Thus, I take the view that desistance takes place in

relation to formal institutions, the employment market, patterns of informal behaviour, and moral values (Farrall, Bottoms, & Shapland, 2010). However, the habitus and the fields are not *determined or automatically shaped* by these 'power structures'. Foucault's theory is incorporated in this theoretical framework and, hence, the stance here is that power is dispersed across everyone and there is no one institution, or dominant group, that holds power over others. Rather, power is dispersed and, as people confront power, they have the ability to transform, strengthen, or reverse it. Individuals are seen as reflective and independent agents, as suggested by Giddens, and (in following both Bourdieu and Giddens) attention is placed on interpreting perceptions, experiences, and the complex inner world of individuals within a society.

3.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I described criminological theories that informed this study. Age-graded informal social control considers how social mechanisms operate to impact continuity and change in offending. However, the theory provides a partial account of desistance, as it pays little attention to personal and other social factors which possibly impact these processes. The theory of cognitive transformation pays greater attention to agentic factors in desistance and, thereby, balances Sampson and Laub's overemphasis on social factors. Furthermore, the theory of cognitive transformation offers greater flexibility than Sampson and Laub in

conceptualising how processes of desistance unfold in different countries. The theory of the feared self offers an explanation of how this process is initiated, and provides a schema that can be examined in different countries. The theory of internal narratives directs the researcher's attention towards the role of 'ultimate concerns' across cultures. The theoretical insights of 'making good' directs the researcher's attention towards change in identity and maintaining desistance in different cultures. In particular, exploring how the past is recast and the present is narrated across cultures can uncover similarities and variance related to identity and desistance. The theoretical frameworks of Bottoms and Shapland, and of Farrall et al., offer a comparative lens within which to evaluate how specific social conditions can impact the pathways out of crime.

I argued that to understand how, and why, individuals desist in different countries, it is helpful to adopt a more nuanced approach which considers distinct characteristics of that place and time. I draw from a theoretical and methodological perspective proposed by Karstedt and Nelken, which highlights distinct characteristics of each country and the 'meanings' attributed to various social concepts. Finally, I have proposed a meta-sociological approach that reconciles the analytical division between objective and subjective factors, by turning to Pierre Bourdieu's theory of practice; Foucault's late work in 'The History of Sexuality; and Giddens' theory of structuration. Bourdieu provides a helpful framework with which

to understand the social life within a given country and its influence on behaviours and choices of individuals. Foucault provides a helpful framework with which to sketch social patterns and discourses. Giddens provides a helpful lens with which to understand an individual's narratives and interpretations of their social life.

Chapter Four

HIGH WATERS AND PLAIN SAILING

OF CROSS-NATIONAL RESEARCH

There is a consensus amongst sailors which goes: you cannot fight the sea *and* win, the sea *always* wins. The best a person can do is to wisely co-create a journey with the sea, and hope to reach their destination safely. A detailed plan was devised for this study, and the circumstances co-created the data collected. Throughout this process, I sought to steer the study to a desirable destination. In this chapter, I outline the methodology employed for this study, and offer an approach for comparative research. I start with a brief overview of the research design and ethical considerations, before elaborating in more detail on the methods. I mainly discuss the access secured in each country and the fieldwork undertaken, and sketch the sampling criteria and key characteristics of the sample. I then describe the interviews undertaken with experts, and outline the measures employed during the interviews with probationer participants. Subsequently, I detail the method used for a comparative analysis of the data and the way I sought to convey the findings. Throughout the chapter, I reflect on various aspects that influenced this cross-national endeavour, and highlight some challenges and benefits which shaped this journey and the data produced.

4.1 An overview of research design

This is a comparative mixed methods case study of desistance processes in two countries – England and Israel. As discussed in Chapter 2, cross-national comparative desistance studies are scarce, and there is little insight into how desistance processes operate in different cultures, countries, or for distinct groups of people. England (and the UK more broadly) is the European 'home' of desistance research. Alternatively, Israel, which is based on the English criminal justice system (see Chapter 6), but displays differing cultural attributes, has produced little research into processes of desistance. The similarities and differences between the countries (discussed in Chapters 5-6) made the prospect of an enquiry into how these processes vary or correspond particularly appealing. In particular, friendships, relationships, and families in Israel are considered 'close-knit' and people may interact informally, more often than in England (see Chapter 5). These cultural attributes are coupled with a slow-moving criminal justice system that seeks to treat psychological reasons that lead to offending behaviour (see Chapter 6). England, on the other hand, is more known for its traditions, good manners, and more clearly defined social rules (see Chapters 5). These cultural attributes are coupled with a swift criminal justice system preoccupied with managing risk (see Chapters 6).

A key question I sought to answer was the extent to which cultures and social structures shape processes of desistance and the pathways out of crime. The overarching objective was to draw conclusions on how differing cultural, social, political, economic, and criminal justice factors interact with agency as individuals desist. There were five research questions which directed this study:

1. How does the subjective experience of desistance vary between those living in Israel and England?

2. What is the role of culture in shaping the context in which desistance takes place?

3. In what way(s), and how, does interaction between an individual and the wider structural and cultural context(s) in each country influence the actor's desistance process?

4. What do the differences and similarities between each country tell us about the influence of structures on desistance?

5. How should criminologists studying desistance from crime approach the influence of structures in these processes?

Accordingly, two types of comparison were undertaken: 1) *narratives and desistance processes* of adult persistent offenders, who were on probation and wished to stop offending in England and in Israel; and 2) *the social, economic, political, cultural etc., conditions* in the two countries which (possibly) structured routes out of crime. In undertaking these comparisons,

both qualitative and quantitative methods were employed. These methods included:

1) In-depth semi-structured interviews with probationers in each country;

2) Collection of time-space budgets of probationers during the interviews and analysis of data for statistically significant differences;

3) Semi-structured interviews with experts working with (ex)offenders in each country;

4) Two-day shadowing sessions in a CRC in the north of England and a probation service in central Israel;

5) My own observations of each country; and

6) Analysis of data from the European Social Survey (ESS) and review of official statistics in each country;

Since one of the aims was to understand and convey two differing cultures, I used my experience of living in each country to provide insights into the social context. As a researcher, I was in a privileged position of having lived in both countries, while remaining an outsider of both (to an extent). I was born and raised in Israel, however, it seemed (to myself and others) that my 'ways of being' and mannerisms differed from the mainstream. My lived experience was that of a 'dim identification' to the Israeli national and cultural identity, which intensified since childhood as I left high school; I

did not enlist in the military service and spent more than seven years abroad. I lived in Australia during my undergraduate degree and then England during my MSc and PhD studies. I am an international student; an outsider, living as an insider; adopting the English ways of living, while not sharing the history, a right to vote, or an English accent. Nelken (2007) notes that 'explicit' comparative studies face special complexities since they demand sensitivity and flexibility of the researcher's 'way of thought'. In this case, I had a complex relationship with both countries – I did not experience a firm sense of belonging, but knew that I was a part of both – which allowed me to observe social matters with sensitivity and flexibility, from the point of view of an outsider who intimately knows the inside.

In short, multiple methods were employed and they provided different viewpoints from which to understand how probationers negotiated desistance in each country. The data from the ESS and the interviews with experts were used deductively to better understand the overall context in which probationers lived and I employed inductive measures to understand the experiences and perceptions of probationers. While all these methods and viewpoints - drawn from experts, the ESS, observations, and interviews with probationers - were informative in answering the research questions, the chief objective was to analyse the subjective experiences of probationers, from their own point of view. I was particularly interested to explore whether contextual factors are assimilated by individuals, as well

as expressed by them, in answering the research questions. For this reason, when I explored how these processes compare, the viewpoint of probationer participants, drawn from the semi-structured interviews, was privileged over any other viewpoint, drawn from any other source of data. Narratives of probationer participants were the primary source from which I sought to understand the broader social context in each country and their negotiation of desistance.

In the first phase of this study, a comparative analysis of the social structural conditions in each country was undertaken, which explored the following topics:

1) Criminal justice processes in each country;

2) Peak age of offending and desisting;

3) Geography and population;

4) Economy and employment;

5) Marriage and divorce rates;

6) Recent history of each country; and

7) Cultural values of each country, such as conformity, traditions, benevolence, religion, frequency of meeting with close ones and more.

The latter topic was a quantitative comparison drawn from the European Social Survey (ESS) and Schwartz's statistical model of universal human

values (see Chapter 5). This data was analysed prior to the fieldwork, and the findings were compared with the qualitative findings throughout the research. This method is referred to as s*equential explanatory strategy*, characterised by analysis of quantitative data before a collection of further qualitative data in the second phase of the study (on *sequential explanatory strategy* see Creswell, 2009, p. 211). In case of discrepancy between probationer participants' descriptions of their own values, and the social values of the general population, indicated by the ESS, I gave primacy to probationer participants' descriptions of their own values in my analysis and interpretation of findings. This is because the quantitative data and the deductive analysis (see section 4.8) provided insight into the *overall* values of each society and the *overall* context in which participants lived. However, I acknowledged that participants' views could vary, and I was interested to understand how the values conveyed by my participants and their perceptions directed *their* choices and shaped *their* narratives (see below for more on inductive and deductive analysis).

Time-space budgets data was collected and analysed during the second phase of the study (discussed below), and I used a *concurrent triangulation approach*, whereby both quantitative and qualitative data was collected simultaneously and the findings compared (see Creswell, 2009, p. 213). To deepen my understanding of the issues offenders faced in each country, I interviewed people who worked with (ex)offenders, such as mentors, ex-

offenders, probation officers, treatment providers, and those who worked in non-profit organisations. I refer to these participants as *experts* because I sought people who witnessed the obstacles desisters face; sources of support; the ways desisters interacted with their family, peers, and community; and change in identity in desistance processes. These were not experts in the sense that they were specialised in 'how' and 'why' people stop offending. Rather, their expertise was drawn from their experience – throughout their work and lives, these people observed or experienced the specific issues (in each country) that offenders and desisters 'came up against'. One of the main aims of these interviews was to help me devise the interview schedule for desisters, based on their experience and the specific themes that experts highlighted in each country. I interviewed 10 experts, 5 in each country. During that time, I undertook a day-long shadowing of the daily work in probation services in each country.

The second stage of the study involved in-depth semi-structured interviews with adult ex-offenders who had been through the criminal justice process and experienced either imprisonment, or some form of supervision in the community (or both), but who were actively trying to desist whilst on probation. I adopted a similar approach to Calverley (2009) where the aim was to interview people *as they negotiated their desistance process* and were, thus, in the midst of it; rather than narrating how they opted out retrospectively (with the biases associated with recall). Participants were

recruited from a community rehabilitation company (CRC) in the north of England and the Israeli Probation Service. I achieved a sample of 30 probationers – 15 participants from each country.

4.2 Ethics and high waters

As part of the study, I sought ethical approval from the School of Law at the University of Sheffield. The ethics application invited me to consider various aspects of the research, including informed consent from research participants; the risks of causing psychological and/or physical harm to potential participants and how to mitigate those; preserving anonymity; and outlining data storage plans. In this section, I addressed the difficulties faced regarding the procedure of gaining informed consent; engaging with potential participants and avoiding causing psychological harm; and preserving anonymity while writing the findings.

In the ethics application, I sought to verbally collect informed consent, and avoid asking participants to sign a form with their names and details. I argued that the participants of this research would have extensive experience with criminal proceedings and that a consent form could hinder the ability of the researcher to build trust and rapport. The ethics committee approved my request, and soon after I sought the same approval from the CRC and the Israeli Probation Service, to mirror the fieldwork in both countries. I recruited the support of the English CRC to avoid signed forms,

however Israel insisted that one was provided. I sent my Israeli gatekeeper an informed consent template, which followed the university's requirements, but he rejected the document and emailed an alternative template. The difficulty was that the Israeli template did not comply with the university's requirements and asked a couple of personal details that were, in my view, unnecessary. For example, the Israeli form did not include whether participants understood the aims of the study, as the generic university template suggested, whilst asking participants to detail their place of residence and personal Israeli ID number.

I wanted to avoid asking Israeli participants to sign two consent forms (one drawn by my gatekeeper and one drawn by me), which had led to prolonged discussions between us, where I was notified that his template was the final version. The matter was resolved when the Israeli Probation Research Committee – upon reviewing my application and unaware of any disputes – rejected the template suggested by my gatekeeper. The committee had the same concerns I mentioned earlier and, eventually, I used my original signed consent template and mirrored the practice in England. This story exemplifies a difficulty comparative research can face; social institutions within a given society prefer to do thing their way and, in comparative studies, the 'things' and the 'ways' do not always match. Mirroring the fieldwork in two or more countries requires additional effort on the part of the researcher to persuade all relevant parties to a specific

course of action. All participants in this study agreed to sign a consent form, which was handed out at the start of the interview, along with an information sheet and a verbal account of the study.

The next issue I sought to address to keep this research ethical was to minimise any potential physical or psychological harm to potential participants. While no direct harm would be caused to probationers by the interviews, I recognised that unpleasant memories and upsetting issues may come up during the interviews. With this in mind, participants were given an information sheet prior to the interview, which prepared them to the type of questions asked. The information sheet was handed to potential participants by their probation officers and, again, by me at the start of the interviews. Furthermore, in England, I had a phone conversation with participants prior to the interview, where I explained what to expect. I was advised during the fieldwork in Israel not to phone participants to avoid unintended actions that would be 'un-therapeutic' to their desistance efforts. My gatekeeper was worried I might say something that was not in line with the therapeutic values of the probation services before potential participants signed the consent form, especially since I was not trained as a social worker. For this reason, I refrained from phoning potential participants prior to the interview in Israel. It is my understanding that the Israeli Probation Service does not normally allow access for researchers

with no employment history in the probation service or training in social work.

I clarified to participants, before and during the interviews, that they could withdraw their participation at any moment, and this would have no impact on them. It was also made clear that they could stop or pause the interview, or chose to not answer specific questions. I planned to employ several measures in case I sensed reluctance, including asking if they wanted to stop, take a break, or skip a topic. However, my participants were forthcoming, cooperative and, especially after listening to the interviews before analysis, I was grateful for their willingness to share. There were three unusual instances, however, worth mentioning here. In the first, a participant in England preferred not to elaborate much in his answers, and mentioned that he felt shame about his offending. I did not pressure or probe for answers, and there were certain issues we avoided. During the interview, I gently asked if he felt comfortable in continuing and reminded him that he could stop at any time with no repercussions. However, he said he wanted to continue. Another minor instance in England was when another participant, who was very cooperative throughout the interview, told me he preferred not to answer a specific question. While I suspect that in the first instance, the participant would have been as 'guarded' and shy if another person would have conducted the interview, I sensed that in the

second instance, the participant might have answered the question if I were a man.

In Israel, a participant who clearly indicated he wanted to participate displayed a very suspicious attitude towards me at the start of the interview. When we began, he asked many questions about my motives for this study. His demeanour was more 'pushy' than other participants, but I sensed he wanted to know more about my underlying intentions and was trying to 'shake things up' before he felt comfortable enough to trust me. I asked several times whether he wanted to continue the interview and reminded him there would be no repercussions if he withdrew, but he said he wanted to continue. This interaction only lasted approximately 10 minutes, during which time I decided to continue and not end the interview. There was a clear moment where I noticed a 'shift' – where I passed 'a test' – and we began the 'real interview'. The Israeli participant then opened up and we had a productive interview. An attitude of distrust and of 'shaking things up' was not a foreign experience to me because I had experience of interviewing youths in prison and working with youths at hostels, where distrust and friction with the criminal justice system is often coupled with that unique time of adolescence.

Another issue I had to consider during my ethics application was how to ensure my safety. Interviews with probationers were undertaken only in the

offices of the probation service and CRC, such that there were people around in case of a problem. In addition, before and after each interview in England and Israel, I texted my primary supervisor to indicate I was OK. Finally, in keeping with the ethical requirements, I made sure the identity of my participants was anonymised. I informed participants that their anonymity would be preserved by changing their names and any identifiable markers. Data from the interviews was stored in a USB stick without additional information, in a locked drawer, in a locked room. Initially, when writing the findings, I mentioned my participants' occupation in the quotes. But, upon the advice of my supervisors, I anonymised or refrained from describing the occupation of my participants. Anonymising the type of occupations presented a challenge to the study, as I considered them to be informative to the analysis and discussion of findings. I should note that information about the participants' occupations was preserved in the original transcripts, however, the description in this thesis is anonymised.

4.3 Negotiating access and undertaking fieldwork

As I was interested in how individuals negotiated or 'steered' their desistance process within each national context, I was looking for individuals who were transitioning out of crime, or were already maintaining a non-offending state. Supervision in the community is a time when an individual is restricted within the confines of society; they have

'freedoms', but are not yet entirely free agents within society (Cohen, 1985; Duff, 2001; Ward, 2010). The 'spaces' of supervision in the community are suitable locations from which to seek participants who have 'freedoms' to take actions towards (re)building their life in the community, but are still negotiating their (re)integration after a conviction. For this reason, the Israeli Probation Service and English CRCs were identified as the most suitable sites from which to recruit participants.

In England, a CRC in the north was identified as a suitable site from which to recruit a sample. Living and researching around one area in England meant I could develop greater insight into the local issues desisters could face, and helped to save resources and time. However, the English probation service was undergoing privatisation during the time of the fieldwork (see Chapter 6) and probation officers were overburdened by shifting responsibilities and change. This impacted the availability and time probation officers could dedicate to this research and, consequently, I recruited participants from only one town in the north of England. I visited two CRC offices in England, introducing myself and presenting the aims and requirement of the research. I negotiated this access through the chief executive of the CRC, who then assigned a team manager as my gatekeeper. The process of securing access in England was a smooth one. The University of Sheffield had close ties with local offices in the north of England, which assisted in developing mutual trust. My meeting with the

chief executive of the CRC was pleasant and friendly; they opted to give me access, and we quickly agreed on a plan from that moment onwards. The team manager (my English gatekeeper) assigned four probation officers to help recruit participants, two of whom were available to help me during the fieldwork. The two probation officers helped identify potential participants, and I recruited the efforts of another probation officer during the fieldwork.

I asked probation officers to make initial contact with potential interviewees and help recruit participants, since they had developed rapport with the probationers, while I was a 'stranger'. I instructed the probation officers on what to say and provided them with an information sheet to give to potential participants. Then, in cases where probationers in England showed an interest, I either called them to set up an interview or, more often, contacted potential interviewees alongside their probation officer to set up an interview that followed immediately after the time of their meeting with the probation officer. Prior to the interviews, potential interviewees were given another information sheet detailing the aims of this research and the meaning of their volunteering. Throughout the fieldwork in England, I conversed with probation officers about potential participants and whether specific individuals fitted the study criteria which helped to ensure I was recruiting the 'right' participants. Out of the English probationers identified as fitting my criteria, I suspect the majority agreed

to participate when asked by their probation officer, but I am not sure of this exact number. Since my fieldwork in England was only undertaken in one office, I did not have a large pool of potential participants and, so, I waited for the arrival of new probationers, or decided to see how well some probationers were doing before recruiting more participants. I did have a few last-minute cancellations; one participant asked to meet earlier than planned; some participants were late for the interview; and one participant arrived too early. However, last minute changes were not too disruptive or problematic as I spent full days at the probation office.

Gaining access to the Israeli Probation Service was a slower and more complex process. I did not know anyone who worked there so I contacted an Israeli friend who referred me to a probation officer, who eventually placed me in touch with my gatekeeper – an executive manager in the Israeli Probation Service. The process of securing access then commenced and was more demanding than England. It was slower, and the future of whether I would secure access was somewhat concealed. Looking back, it was interesting that my experience of engaging with the Israel Probation Service was similar to my participants' own descriptions (see Chapter 7). I had multiple meetings with my gatekeeper, both on Skype and in person in Israel. It took longer to gain my gatekeeper's trust; he was inquisitive and sought further clarification on multiple issues relating to the study and who I was. I was asked to write a research proposal, which my gatekeeper

reviewed and sent back with corrections, questions, and clarifications. After the fourth draft, he agreed on a research proposal and it was sent to the Israeli Research Committee at the probation service for review. As I was redrafting the proposal, and having Skype meetings with my gatekeeper, it was unclear whether there was interest in this study and what the next step would be after writing the proposal. Finally, I gained the trust of my gatekeeper, recruiting their support and that of the Israeli Probation Research Committee, and from that moment I had a clear and detailed grasp of how to move forward.

In Israel, I sought to restrict the fieldwork to one area to minimise within-group variability and mirror the access secured in England. I successfully restricted the fieldwork to one area – the centre of Israel – and recruited participants from five offices. It was decided, without much of my input, that I would recruit from five offices to avoid imposing too much of a burden on one office. However, access to multiple offices provided access to more potential participants who fitted my criteria, and, at the time, I did not know I would collect data only from one office in the north of England. I had a meeting with the managers of the different offices prior to the fieldwork and later visited the five probation offices in Israel, introduced myself, and presented the aims and requirement of the research. All the probation officers who assisted my study were provided with an information sheet to distribute to potential participants.

The fieldwork in Israel was more 'focused' and limited in time. During the first week of November 2015, I flew to Israel for a week to undertake shadowing and interviews with experts. During the Christmas break in 2015, until mid-January 2016, I undertook in-depth interviews with 15 probationers in Israel. Before arriving in Israel, I coordinated with the probation service and my gatekeeper the recruitment of potential interviewees. After mid-January 2016, I interviewed probationers in England until late-April 2016. Interviews in England were 'stretched-out' in time with the aim of achieving a comparable sample with Israel (as much as possible).

As noted, I negotiated access to the Israeli Probation Service through a probation executive manager who acted as my gatekeeper, and assisted me throughout the process of applying for access. The Israeli Probation Service executive manager was also involved in the fieldwork process, and acted as my main gatekeeper to setting up the fieldwork, recruiting participants, and negotiating fieldwork with the five office managers. I believe that securing access to the Israeli Probation Service might not have been possible without the help of my gatekeeper, and without finding a person inside the institution who was willing to vouch for the research. That said, the fieldwork in Israel was organised by my gatekeeper to a large extent and, therefore, I had less opportunity than in England to have informal

conversations with probation officers about potential participants and oversee the process of collecting data. Hence, I had less freedom to shape various aspects of the fieldwork, or 'steer' data collection in Israel. For example, I had less opportunity to oversee the interview scheduling and, although I asked to have at least two hours between appointments, this was not always the case. In one instance, a participant was 25 minutes late, which meant I only had half an hour for the interview before he had group therapy for which, it was made clear to me, he could not be a minute late. In this case, I did not complete the time-space budget and citizenship section of questions.

The probation officers and office managers in Israel were given a detailed account of the research requirement, and they identified suitable potential interviewees in accordance with my criteria. As in England, Israeli probation officers, having already established rapport with the probationers, made initial contact with potential interviewees and helped recruit participants. I instructed the probation officers on what to say and provided information sheets for potential interviewees. I have no knowledge of probationers who rejected the invitation to participate in Israel, nor did I have any way of knowing. In one case, a participant did not show up – twice – but we rescheduled for the third time and the interview took place. In one case, an Israeli participant had a medical emergency in the days prior to the interview, but he was motivated enough to participate that we

rescheduled the interview to a later date. The way access was sought and obtained in each country contributed to my understanding of the dynamics in each probation service and, more broadly, the 'character' of each criminal justice system. As Molloy (2015, p. 471) insightfully notes 'the affordances inherent in the process of seeking access [are] as enriching in and of themselves'.

4.3.1 Further thoughts on the tides of fieldwork conditions

Access to research participants and collection of qualitative data can be frenetic and chaotic (Molloy, 2015). To borrow Molloy's (2015, p. 468) words again 'when you get in [the field], it will be serendipity and not tenacity that gets you there'. The social conditions under which the data were collected requires some attention as it ultimately influenced the data collected. England was experiencing a substantial change to the supervision of offenders as part of the Transforming Rehabilitation initiative (see Chapter 6). Work with medium- and low-risk offenders was delegated to CRCs which were created in June 2014 (Ministry of Justice, 2013b) and the fieldwork was undertaken precisely when this transformation took place. Some probation staff were relocated to a new office, which broke the contact I had with one of my gatekeepers during the fieldwork. The uncertain times of change in the CRC made me more circumspect about asking probation officers to volunteer more time, and I increasingly worried about being able to reach a sample of 15 participants.

In Israel, there was an escalation of violence[3] related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that started in September 2015 until the first half of 2016. Additional safety measures during the fieldwork were undertaken during that time by Israeli security and myself. The 'national mood' and conversations with people related to this research (including the interviewees) were clouded by those violent events, which occurred frequently during the time of the fieldwork. For example, I asked Avi (pseudonym), an Israeli participant, about obstacles to desistance. The word 'obstacles' in Hebrew can also translate to 'difficulties' or 'hardships' in English. Avi said everything in life was difficult, even walking down the street was difficult and anxiety inducing, for fear of being stabbed for political reasons. Despite multiple challenges, it was possible to achieve the main aim of the fieldwork, which was to reach a sample of more than 10 participants who were negotiating their desistance in each country and were as comparable as possible.

4.4 Sampling criteria and identifying suitable participants

As noted in Chapter 2, desistance refers to the cessation of offending by a person who had previously engaged in persistent offending (Maruna, 2001;

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[3] Referred to as "Stabbing Intifada" in international media or "Intifada of the Individuals" in Israeli media.

Shapland, Farrall, & Bottoms, 2016a). As straightforward as this definition sounds, this 'happening' – the stopping of offending – is tricky to observe and operationalise (Maruna, 2001). It implies a distinct state of 'permanent end of an offending career' (Bushway et al., 2001, p. 492), yet, since desistance involves the absence of an event, it is only by observing its absence retrospectively that a researcher can be empirically confident a person had completely stopped offending (Bushway et al., 2001; Maruna, 2001). A person could later resume offending and, hence, 'the stopping' reflects a 'lull' in between offences, rather than a permanent cessation (Bushway et al., 2001; Maruna, 2001; Maruna et al., 2004).

Another problem with such a definition, as Bushway et al. (2001) observed, is that it limits academic exploration to the final state of non-offending and provides a misleading impression that people reach that state in the same way. Differences in *how* people stop offending can 'convey important descriptive information about the circumstances surrounding desistance' and aid a more accurate understanding of these processes (Bushway et al., 2001, p. 493). Therefore, and to be able to 'catch' and sketch the mechanisms underlying desistance from crime, it is better to view desistance as a process, rather than a distinct state with a final destination (Bushway et al., 2001). In addition, to reiterate from Chapter 2, desistance is not typically an abrupt occurrence and individuals may move back and forth between offending and stopping, or display a reduction in frequency

or severity (Bottoms & Shapland, 2011; Kazemian, 2007). This being the case, individuals do not (commonly) fall into neat categories of desister or persister (Maruna, 2001) and exploring how individuals negotiate desistance – whether these individuals are in between 'lulls', display a reduction in offending, or a state of non-offending that they maintain – requires a more flexible definition that better mirrors the dynamics of life (see Farrall, 2004, p. 63).

A helpful definition was suggested by Maruna (2001, p. 26) who defined desistance as 'the long term abstain from crime amongst individuals who had previously engaged in persistent patterns of criminal offending'. This definition pulls focus away from *transitioning* into being a non-offender and emphasises the *maintenance* of non-offending in the face of obstacles (Maruna, 2001). Hence, the definition emphasises *how* individuals maintain desistance in the face of challenges, and frames this maintenance as an ongoing process (Maruna, 2001). Maruna's (2001) definition is helpful for this study, however there is an aspect of this definition I must underscore. Namely, I sought to explore how an individual, who stopped and wanted to remain stopped, opted or 'went about' desisting in different or similar ways, given the social conditions that surrounds them. Here, motivation to desist and taking actions towards that aim are key aspects of that stopping (see examples of studies with a similar approach: Calverley, 2013; Healy, 2014). For the purpose of this study, desistance was understood as a

process (rather than a distinct state with a final destination) and was operationalised as abstaining from crime coupled with motivation to desist. Yet, I acknowledged that it is a process, whereby an individual could fluctuate between offending and stopping. In this study, an emphasis was placed on how individuals negotiated their desire to stop or remain stopped, within a given social context, and how they sought to maintain a non-offending state in the face of obstacles.

To locate individuals who are 'negotiating desistance', I formed a theoretically-informed sampling criteria which assisted in the identification of potential participants. Another central aspect which directed the sampling criteria was to recruit a sample that was as comparable as possible between the two countries. While keeping these two objectives in mind, probation officers were invited to see if any of their clients met the following criteria:

1) Male over 18 years old;

2) A minimum of two previous convictions;

3) These previous convictions were not <u>exclusively</u> for motoring offences;

4) Have grown up or spent more than 10 years in either the UK or Israel;

5) Individuals who described themselves as actively trying to desist from crime; and

6) Individuals who were progressing well in terms of desistance.

To compare desistance processes, it was essential that participants had a criminal history from which they had desisted. Therefore, I sought adult individuals with more (but no less) than two previous convictions and individuals who were describing themselves as consciously avoiding any further offending (for similar sample criteria see Calverley, 2009, p. 76). Including both male and female participants in the study would have produced more within-group variability and, thus, more difficulty of comparing one country with another. I chose to focus only on adult men to minimise variance, especially considering the modest number of female offenders in Israel, which would have made them harder to find. Another aim of the sampling criteria was to avoid interviewing people with a 'specialised' type of offending, which may undergo a substantially different process of desistance, compared to the majority of individuals in the criminal justice system. I sought to gain a broad picture of desisting amongst those who frequently encounter the criminal justice system in each country, while preserving group homogeneity as much as possible. For those reasons, I avoided recruiting individuals with only motoring or sex-related offending, as this would have introduced more factors to compare when analysing desistance processes across the two samples.

Unlike criteria 1 to 4, criteria 5 and 6 are subjective. Here, probation officers were asked to consider whether they thought individuals in their caseload had stopped offending and were progressing well in terms of desistance. I knew these criteria were somewhat vague and relied on the subjective assessment of probation officers, which can be open to bias. Calverley (2009, p. 81) shared similar sampling criteria notes that 'the probationers may have deceived or duped their probation officers as to their sincerity with regards to staying away from crime'. In response, I undertook the same measures as Calverley (2009, p. 81) and attempted during interviews to assess the motivation and commitment of participants to desist by asking whether they had stopped offending and whether they thought they would be able to maintain it. All my participants said they had stopped offending and 24 (12 participants in each country) said they were confident they would be able to maintain their desistance. One English participant, who was addicted to heroin, said he now smoked weed. The sample I collected fitted the sampling criteria and reflected two groups who were situated somewhere between transitioning out of crime and already maintaining desistance; rather than a sample in their early stages of desistance, which could involve offending and greater fluctuation between offending and desistance (see Bottoms & Shapland, 2011). Another risk of subjective criteria is that probation officers may under-assess the progress of some probationers, which would exclude potential interviewees from being identified by probation officers while preferring others.

Furthermore, the subjective assessment of 'progressing well' may be influenced by the social discourse and 'cultural framing' around offending and desistance in each country. This means probation officers may suggest potential interviewees that fit within a distinct cultural understanding of desistance from crime, which can vary between countries. Cultural interpretations of what it 'looks like' to progress well in terms of desistance did, indeed, vary between countries. It seemed that for English probation officers, an individual who 'did well' was one who was highly motivated and complied with the conditions of supervision *most* of the time, if not always. 'Doing well' for Israeli probation officers required motivation as well, but involved a display, by the individual, of undertaking a significant internal change and of 'doing the work' as Israeli probation officers recite, in term of undergoing therapy and addressing the individual issues that had led to their offending. Although these differing cultural interpretations meant that probation officers proposed potential interviewees based on dissimilar concepts of 'doing well', I found these differences were informative to the study, rather than presenting a fundamental challenge. In both countries, my participants wished to have a life 'free of offending' and 'negotiated' their stopping, which was an essential feature I sought in the sample. Furthermore, as explored in Chapter 8, it was within these two cultural frames of 'who looks like a desister', that my participants made their efforts to desist and undertook actions.

Inviting probation officers to suggest participants within their own cultural interpretation had unveiled the person my participants 'needed to be' to 'signal' to themselves and others that they were, indeed, desisting. Hence, how probation officers in each country engaged with the notion of 'progressing well' emerged as a finding which aided the comparative efforts, rather than hindering them. Overall, the research design was conducive towards identifying and recruiting probationers who were consciously avoiding any further offending and were taking actions towards that aim across the two cultures. The input of probation officers was necessary and valuable for the research design and for saving resources and time. Relying solely on my own assessment as to whether an individual was doing well or not would not have been a better, or more accurate, way of seeking out participants. It was decided not to attempt to match with any additional sampling criteria – such as age, age of onset, number of previous offences, offence type, sentence type, and length of criminal career. I was not looking to make predictions regarding offending, and placing such restrictions on a small-scale study would have done more harm than good in reaching its aims. Furthermore, arguably, there is a fine line between aiming to achieve a comparable sample and 'masking' national differences – such as laws, rates of offending, and type of criminal careers – by introducing more sampling restrictions.

4.5 Sources of data and sample characteristics

In-depth semi-structured interviews with those identified by the probation staff as desisting from crime was the principle source of data for this study. As noted earlier, the inductive analysis drawn from these interviews and the viewpoints of probationers were given priority over any other source of data. Furthermore, in this study, I approached these interviews as a key source from which to draw insights about participants' processes and to understand the social context in which participants sought to maintain their desistance. The interview questions aimed to investigate as many areas associated with desistance as possible – family, employment, peers, motivation, views of self and criminal past, stigma, community, time-space use, and more – while also allowing participants to bring up issues they saw as important. Thirty interviews with probationers (in each country) were completed and analysed. Probationer participants in this study included both those who had been released from prison or a closed facility, such as an Israeli hostel (11 English and 8 Israelis) and those sentenced in the community (4 English and 7 Israelis).

Of the Israeli participants, all probationers were Jewish-Israelis; one participant was ultra-orthodox; 10 were Jewish-Israelis from a Safaradi[4] background; 4 Jewish-Israelis were from an Askenasi[5] background; and 1

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[4] Safaradi background in this thesis refers to a generational background that is traditionally associated with Eastern Jewish communities of West Asia and the area.

[5] Askenasi background in this thesis mainly refers to a generational background that is associated with Jewish communities originating from Europe and Eurasia.

participant had emigrated to Israel more than 10 years ago from a western country. The sample was, by-and-large, homogenous and there was no substantial inclusion of minority groups (such as Russian Jews, Ethiopian Jews, or Arab Israelis). Of the English participants, 14 were white English and 1 was black English. Hence, also in this case, the sample was, by-and-large, homogenous. It was not my intention to seek a sample with no substantial variance in terms of minority group members in each country, it emerged coincidentally. This coincidence was an additional advantage to the study as the relative homogeneity of the sample helped minimise within-group variability.

Between each country, differences in the average age of the participants was of particular significance – the average age of Israeli participants was 47, while the average age of English participants was 32 (see Table 4.1 below). Interestingly, the peak age of offending and desistance in each country appears to differ by 15 years as well. Indeed, the peak age of offending in Israel is 35-39, with an apparent reduction in offending, typically, between mid-to-late forties (Fogel, 2006), while the peak age of offending in England is 17-18 and a reduction in offending is apparent in the late 20s to early 30s (Social Trends, 2009). The type of offences varied between English and Israeli participants, and reflected those who typically engage with the criminal justice system in each country (see Table 4.1). Four Israeli participants were addicted to or engaged in gambling (which is

illegal in Israel), while none of the English participants reported this issue. Those with a gambling addiction had, mostly, come into contact with, or played a role in, organised crime (broadly defined) and had a background of offences related to violence, prostitution, drugs, and theft. Nine English participants and 5 Israelis were addicted to drugs and/or alcohol. The background of offences of both English and Israelis who had substance misuse was, mostly, property-related offences, violence, and drug-related offences (such as possession).[6]

Table 4.1: Average age and last conviction

	England	Israel
Average Age	32	47
Harassment	1 (7%)	0
Property-related offences	9 (60%)	5 (33%)
Breach of restraining order	1 (7%)	0
Violence or possession of a weapon	2 (13%)	3 (20%)
Domestic violence	0	2 (13%)
Drug-related	2 (13%)	2 (13%)
Public disorder	0	1 (7%)
Recklessness	0	1 (7%)
Motor-related	0	1 (7%)

Overall, and across the samples, there were 9 English participants and 9 Israeli participants that struggled with addiction and had been convicted for offences related to their addiction. For 5 English participants, alcohol or

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[6] Information about past convictions was drawn from the interviews and discussions with probation staff.

drug abuse included a previous history of violence, and for 2 English participants, a history of domestic violence (see Appendix III). Four Israeli participants had a history of domestic violence in addition to other offences. As shown in Tables 4.1,[7] in terms of index offences, 1 English participant was convicted for harassment; 9 were convicted of property-related offences; 1 was convicted of a breach of restraining order; 1 was convicted of violence; 1 was convicted of a breach of order for non-compliance after a conviction of violence; and 2 were convicted of a drug-related offence. In Israel, 5 were convicted of a property-related offence; 2 were convicted of a drug-related offence; 3 were convicted of violence or possession of a weapon; 2 were convicted of a domestic violence-related offence; 1 of a public disorder offence; 1 convicted of recklessness; and 1 Israeli participant was convicted of a motor-related offence. Vito, the Israeli participant who was convicted of a motor offence, was included in this study because of his lengthy criminal career which included multiple convictions and incarcerations related to violence, organised crime, and prostitution.

Six Israeli participants reported that they were older than 25 when they first offended or when they first got into trouble with the law, while 9 Israeli participants said they were 18 or younger. In contrast, 14 English participants said they were 17 or younger when they first got into trouble

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[7] There is another Table in Appendix III that outlines pseudonym names of participants and their corresponding offending history; age; sentencing status; and country.

with the law and one English participant said he was 21. Out of the 15 English participants, 14 experienced a sentence of imprisonment in their past, compared with 13 Israeli participants. Overall, Israeli participants had longer offending histories than English participants. The average length of an offending career amongst Israeli participants was 24 years, compared with 19 years amongst English participants. These offending years, however, included periods of lulls in-between offending and time spent in criminal justice agencies. For 7 Israeli participants, their offending careers spanned over 30 years, while none of the English participants had an offending career that lasted over 30 years. Only Thomas, an English participant, had an offending career of approximately 29 years. For 8 English participants, their offending spanned over 20 years and only 1 English participant, compared with 3 Israeli participants, had offended for less than 10 years. These differences could be due, in part, to the lengthy criminal justice process in Israel, which might have 'stretched out' participants' involvement with the criminal justice system (see Chapter 6).

At the time of the interviews, both groups had substantial offending histories and contact with the criminal justice systems. Furthermore, the majority of participants were imprisoned in their past. Out of 15 English participants, 14 were recently released from prison and were supervised in the community following their imprisonment, compared with 6 Israeli participants. The remaining 9 Israeli participants were either sentenced in

the community, or were awaiting their sentence while being supervised in the community. This difference is related to how justice is 'appropriated' and delivered in each country, as detailed in Chapter 6. In both countries, the majority of participants were seeking to 'shrug-off' an offending background, after a lengthy offending career and a history of imprisonment(s). Yet, there were interesting differences between the groups in terms of participants' own sense of having (or not having) an 'offending identity'. As discussed in Chapter 8, English participants assumed 'offending identities' to a greater degree (and consistently across the group), while Israeli participants varied in terms of 'how fully' they adopted 'offending identities' and whether they adopted one at all. This variance amongst Israeli participants did not appear to be linked to the length of offending careers or the type of offences. There were, for example, Israeli participants with lengthy offending careers, which started in young adulthood, who did not fully assume 'offending identities', while there were others who did.

4.5.1 Comparable samples

There are 4 issues I address in this section: differences in the average age of participants; how varied the sample was in terms of types of offences; within-group variability; and limitations of the research in terms of what can be said about processes of desistance. As discussed in Chapters 6 and 7, the Israeli criminal justice system typically stretches the criminal process

over a substantially longer time than England. It is possible that the Israeli justice process also, then, delayed the age of desistance. In addition, Israeli men normally spend 3 years of military service at the age of 18 (see Chapter 5), which could delay the age of offending and desistance and partly explain this variance. It is also important to note that offences or convictions during the military service are *not* part of the national (police and prisons) data records in Israel. Hence, it could be the case that a greater number of Israeli people offend during the ages of 17-18 than is known in offical national statistics. The diagram below (in Hebrew) shows the peak age of offending and desisting in Israel, drawn from Fogel (2006, p. 11). The horizontal axis indicates the age group and the vertical axis indicates the rates of offending per 10,000 people. The purple colour identifies offending amongst men, while blue identifies women.
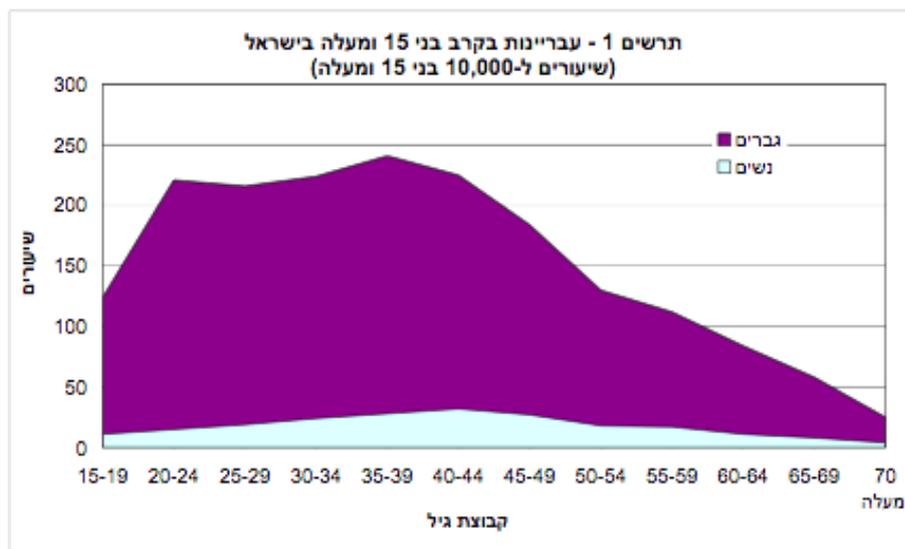
Another issue to consider is the cultural variance in social exceptions around maturity and adulthood. To 'grow up' in England involves 'embarking independently' and cutting ties from family members more so than in Israel. Israelis commonly live with their parents at least until they complete mandatory military service and Israeli families continue to be involved in a person's 'growing up' later in life more than in England. It might be that these cultural differences have implications for factors related to offending and desistance, for example timing of maturity and adulthood[8], families in formation, and financial assistance throughout a criminal career.

Social differences, the military service, in addition to a slow-moving criminal justice process, can at least partly explain why the average age of Israeli participants is older. Regardless, it is beyond the scope of this study to explain *why* there are such differences in terms of age. What is relevant here is that a comparative exploration suggests that differences in peak age of offending and desisting in each country may be related to social factors – such as the criminal justice process, military, and social norms. Having 2 sample groups with a significant variance in the average age would, at first glance, suggest that my samples are not comparable, since the probationers in one country may be at a different phase of their lives and desistance than participants in the other country. However, considering the differences in patterns of offending in each country, it would not be accurate to propose

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[8] For example, the English participants tended to have children at an early age, which deviated from the national average, while Israeli participants with a history of offending tended to have children at an older age than the national average, or did not have children at all.

that I picked two different sampling groups during distinct phases of desistance processes. Rather, it is more probable that, in contrast to trends in other western countries, I found an Israeli sample that was at a similar 'exit point' and 'desistance phase' as English participants, which, in the Israeli case, is at a later age.

Next, when seeking characteristics for comparison to help explain the influence of culture, there is an underlying assumption of a degree of homogeneity in values, beliefs, and shared meanings amongst groups of people (Karstedt, 2012). Hence, there is an assumption that variance *between* the cultures examined is higher than the variance *within* a given culture (Karstedt, 2012). The English sample was more homogeneous and displayed a similar type of offences within the group, mostly related to property offences. Israel, on the other hand, was more diversified in terms of offence-type than England and displayed a greater within-group variability. In terms of between-group variability, my sample reflected those who typically encounter the criminal justice system in each country, which varies between each country. The Israeli sample had fewer property-related offences than the English sample; more domestic violence-related offences; and more English participants were on licence post-incarceration than Israelis (see Appendix III). That said, the samples had an equal number of participants with an addiction related to their offending and sought to address their addiction to maintain desistance (see Chapter 8).

Given the differences between the two groups (especially in terms of age and offending histories) and since there is no comparable sample of offenders or of those who have long desisted, it is not possible to make causal explanatory statements about processes of desistance. The conclusions drawn herein are primarily comparative (while taking into account the differences in the two samples) and I do not seek to make original statements about how desistance takes place. The findings shed light on the experiences and perceptions of participants — who had stopped offending and wished to remain stopped — and how these compared across social contexts. The focus of this study primarily uncovers the link between macro factors and participants' experiences, perceptions and interpretations of negotiating desistance, across two cultural contexts. Relatedly, it is important to note that participants' narratives should not be construed as narratives of desistance; rather, these were narratives of individuals who were negotiating and maintaining their desistance. These narratives show how this negotiation is similar or differs between the countries, rather than being indicative of how desistance takes place.

4.6 Interviewing experts

To gain a deeper understanding into the processes involved for Israelis and English offenders, I talked with 10 experts who worked with offenders and ex-offenders in England and Israel (5 in each country). I sought these

participants by contacting charities by email and using a snowballing method. These interviews were mostly undertaken in a face-to-face setting, however, 2 Israeli interviews and 1 English interview were conducted via video on Skype. I could not find a comparable sample of experts in the 2 countries. In England, I recruited experts who were working in active charities and voluntary organisations aiming to address the social issues (ex)offenders face. I also recruited ex-offenders who had gone on to work with (ex)offenders. These organisations, and ex-offenders working with (ex)offenders, were not common in Israel and, instead, I found organisations that offered psychological and/or cognitive behavioural treatment, aimed at rehabilitation by addressing individual-related characteristics. In the end, I mostly talked with treatment providers and probation officers in Israel.

Dissimilarities in the types of experts was related to how each country viewed the problems offenders face and how individuals desist from crime. People (meaning experts and other stakeholders in the field, such as probation service personnel, academics, and the voluntary sector) in England seemed to be more concerned with 'indicators' that would suggest a person is likely to get caught-up in the criminal justice system and the social support individuals require to successfully desist from crime (for example, housing, employment, and social acceptance). People in Israel were more concerned with childhood experiences that caused a person to

not 'develop properly' and with providing an 'aspiring desister' with the 'right' emotional and cognitive tools to 'handle' life, without resorting to illegal or deviant behaviour. Conversations with Israeli experts provided insight into psychological issues related to offending and desistance, yet they provided me with little understanding of social issues ex-offenders face. For example, I learned how familial relationships can assist or hinder ex-offenders in terms of therapy, but learned little about familial bonds in Israel and their involvement throughout their offending and desistance. As a result of the comparative nature of this study, information about social issues was of interest, and I sought to overcome this challenge by interviewing a non-Israeli who worked with offenders and ex-offenders in Israel. That expert was outside the common discourse in Israel around reasons for offending, and had insight into the social issues Israeli ex-offenders face.

I utilised an interview schedule during the interviews with experts (see Appendix II), which covered the following topics:

1) The main reasons for offending and reasons for desistance;

2) The main obstacles to desistance;

3) How ex-offenders overcome obstacles;

4) Factors which help ex-offenders avoid further offending;

5) Cultural values, social views of offending and desistance, and stigma;

6) Resources available in each country;

7) Familial involvement; and

8) Change in identities.

It was not my initial intention to analyse these expert interviews; rather, my intention was to prepare myself for the fieldwork, devise an interview schedule, and use their insights to complement the data from English and Israeli participants. However, the striking differences in the interviews in each country emerged as a finding, and the first clue into the differences between the countries I could not ignore.

4.7 Interview measures with probationers

I needed to adopt an approach that was flexible, and which would help participants feel comfortable sharing their experiences, while also remaining focused on the research questions. My interview approach was drawn from phenomenological interviewing which sought to uncover the 'lived experiences' of participants; their subjective understanding of it; and the meanings they attached to various aspects of their lives (Seidman, 2013). After detailing the goals of the research to the interviewees, I asked some introductory questions about their life and town, which allowed for a more unstructured (get-to-know-you) conversation, before a more detailed interview schedule. Flexibility and time for unstructured conversation were

important, particularly because there is little research into desistance processes in Israel.

The methodological approaches of earlier studies in the field, and *where* these studies were predominantly undertaken, determined the 'tool-box' with which I embarked on this study. Despite the insights drawn from the interviews with experts, I arrived in Israel with a research 'tool-box' that was developed, mostly, in the UK. This made me wonder to what extent the interview schedule would be useful in uncovering the experience of desisters in Israel? Would I find the same issues, the same factors, if my tool-box was more 'Israeli adapted' or 'internationally adapted'? Are there more or other factors that I am less aware of? For this reason, I thought it was a good idea to loosen my grip of the 'tool-box' during the interviews and allow participants to lead the discussion. Especially in Israel, I was concerned with talking about the topics Israeli participants raised, despite not being completely certain how these topics related to the research questions at the time. I sought to be careful and avoid assuming that processes in Israel were identical to those elsewhere and, thus, employed a flexible interview method that was concerned both with asking theoretically-informed questions and talking about the issues that participants raised independently.

I found it challenging to address all the interview questions during each interview. My interview schedule touched on multiple topics. It was two pages long with a 10 point font and 1.2 line spacing. It included two sections of structured questions which required me to change the open and flexible discussion to a more structured one. Juggling the interview schedule, with each participant's particulars, and with a wish to allow room for my participants to 'lead' the interviews, was not always compatible with time limitations. In some cases, I did not have time to ask all my questions, however when I later analysed the data I saw participants answered more questions than I thought. The interviews in England usually ranged between one hour to one hour and 45 minutes and, in Israel, the interviews were usually longer in duration, commonly between one-and-a-half to almost three hours. Israeli participants were more 'chatty' and it seemed like the roles of 'interviewer' and 'interviewee' were not something Israelis were interested in keeping. For example, more than English participants, Israelis sought my advice on life matters and asked personal questions.

The following topics were explored in the interviews with probationers (also see interview schedule in the Appendix II):

1) Past offending and involvement with the criminal justice system;

2) Descriptions of change and identities;

3) How participants are 'going about' desistance;

4) Obstacles and avenues to desistance;

5) Community, family, and friends;

6) Time-space use (budget);

7) Participant's view of their future and past;

8) Participant's view of probation; and

9) A battery of questions relating to citizenship values.

At the end of the interview, interviewees were asked a battery of questions relating to citizenship and were requested to indicate whether they agreed, disagreed, or had no opinion towards several statements. In addition to the topics mentioned above, interviewees were asked to recount their activities during two days in a week – a week day and one day during the weekend (see Farrall et al., 2014; Wikström et al., 2010). English participants were asked about a typical Wednesday and a typical Saturday, while Israeli participants were asked about a typical Wednesday and a typical Friday.[9] Interviewees were asked to detail their typical activities from 6am until 5am the next day; where they were at the time; and who else was there.

Interviewing is an active process that involves reciprocal interactions between subjects, which has the potential to impact what kind of data will be produced (Ryen, 2011; Seidman, 2013). My status as an interviewer was relevant to the interviews and, ultimately, to the data that was produced (see Molloy, 2015; Noaks & Wincup, 2004). I was a woman interviewing men,

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[9] In Israel the weekend starts on a Friday and, thus, the days studied were readjusted accordingly.

and had the status of being 'a foreigner' in England and, to a lesser extent, in Israel. I was also privileged to be studying at a university and abroad; I had no past of criminal offending, and, most likely, I encountered crime far less often than my participants. I considered these differences in terms of our social identities, how it might influence the how participants engaged in the interviews, and how I might understand their experiences (see Ryen, 2011). Additionally, I was aware I was talking to individuals who had a great deal of experience in criminal justice institutions, could be distrustful of people in criminal justice spaces, and might see me as having some sort of authority (Noaks & Wincup, 2004). I wanted to avoid any possible impression of this, and provide participants with a sense of ease and build rapport. In Israel, I was aware my appearance might have given an impression of a social worker[10], with whom they frequently had personal contact throughout their involvement in the criminal justice process. Despite being repeatedly invited (as an act of generosity) by Israeli probation staff to use their offices and sit in their office chairs, I changed the seating arrangements before each interview and quickly clarified in the interviews that I was independent of the organisation.

In England, it was easier to convey that I did not work for a criminal justice organisation because of my inherent national difference, which they heard through my non-British accent. Although cross-national and cultural

[10] Many of the social workers in Israel were women and at a similar age to myself.

interviewing may pose communicative obstacles to building rapport (see Ryen, 2011, pp. 337-338), it seemed to be less of a challenge to establishing rapport with English participants because I possessed attributes that were different from the people they normally encountered in criminal justice settings. I did not face difficulties in building rapport with participants in either country (although, of course, building rapport was easier in some instances than in others). I adjusted the way I presented myself and dressed to fit with what would be most helpful for the interviews in each country. However, although I 'tweaked' my appearance and behaviour in accordance with each country, I saw it as important to authentically connect with my participants and find the ways in which I could deeply relate to and understand their experiences.

All interviewees gave their consent to being audio recorded and signed a consent form at the start of the interview. As part of ensuring that my research remained ethical, I ensured participants' accounts were not later misrepresented in my writings. The status of a researcher provides one with sway over the focus of the research and the interpretation of the findings, and, in this sense, the relationship between interviewer and interviewee is not an equal one (see Becker, 1966; Dupont, 2008). I paid attention to possible personal biases and prejudice which could influence the interview process (as well as later analysis and writing) and engaged in as much self-reflection throughout the study as possible. To counter any possible bias, I

adopted Nelken's approach of questioning my assumptions and the meaning of concepts, as described in Chapter 3.

4.8 Data analysis and writing

I sought to draw out conclusions and undertake multiple layers of analysis – particularly attending to the implications of broader factors on desistance, individual processes, and the interaction of both. To achieve this, I turned to thematic analysis and identified patterns using an interpretative (or latent level) approach (see Braun & Clarke, 2006; Nelken, 2007). Thematic analysis allows for an organised, yet flexible, approach, as the method 'is not wed to any pre-existing theoretical framework' and is useful in investigating rich, detailed, and complex sources of data (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 9 and p. 5). A key strategy in thematic analysis is to 'capture something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set' (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 10). An interpretive or latent approach seeks to capture underlying ideas and conceptualisations that shape 'the semantic content of the data' (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 13; also see Nelken, 2007, p. 144). Both the differences and similarities between the countries were of interest in informing the analysis, and I was looking to compare and contrast the mechanisms of these processes for both groups.

The data were analysed both deductively and inductively. In particular, the comparison of countries, including the ESS; time-space budgets; data collected about the social and criminal justice conditions in each country; and interviews with experts, were analysed deductively, while the interviews with probationers were analysed inductively. Throughout the analysis, I gave primacy to the narratives and experiences of probationers in order to understand how their processes compared in each country. In regards to the time-space budget questions, the data was coded in SPSS by one-hour intervals (see Farrall et al., 2014; Wikström et al., 2010). Percentages of time spent in each type of activity were then calculated and multiple t-tests were undertaken to investigate whether any differences were statistically significant (see Farrall et al., 2014). The data drawn from the time-space budgets was useful in drawing conclusions about the dynamics of desistance for each group and to augment the qualitative data. Due to space limitations, the analysis of answers to the citizenship questions were not included in this thesis, but I plan to publish the findings in a future article.

In a similar way to Calverley (2009, p. 101), the data was analysed both deductively and inductively. First, I wished to explore how various social factors in each country resonated with similarities and differences in processes of desistance between each group (see Karstedt, 2001). Asking participants questions about social issues helped to uncover patterns across

each case study, which were then coded deductively in accordance with topics of interest related to the research questions. In addition, I wished to explore patterns in desistance processes distinct in each country and this data was analysed inductively (see below).

The interviews with experts were re-listened to, sometimes on several occasions, and *all* themes mentioned by experts were noted for later analysis. Analysis of the interviews with experts was a preliminary step towards identifying relevant themes desisters may face; preparing the interview questions with probationers; and to identifying themes that would prepare me for the interviews with probationers. Before the interviews with probationers, I analysed the conversations with experts, which included noticing the main themes; noticing shared social discourses of experts in each country; and recording insights (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Dey, 1993). Following the interviews with probationers and the completion of the fieldwork, a more systematic thematic analysis of data was undertaken. All recorded interviews with probationers were transcribed verbatim (by me). Some quotes from experts were transcribed verbatim during the final analysis phase. I printed and divided the transcripts and additional data into two groups – English and Israeli – and began by reading through the data to get a 'feel' for emerging patterns and issues of potential interest (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Thereafter, I started generating initial codes in a systematic fashion related to the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I coded the data deductively according to each topic of interest (e.g. identity, employment, supervision, peers, family, and romantic relationships), which became different chapters in the thesis. After the data were coded under a topic of interest, I began reading through the coded data multiple times, identified key themes, and marked interesting issues (see Dey, 1993). Transcripts of both Israeli and English participants were analysed in the original language. I followed Braun and Clarke (2006) who described the analysis process as involving a constant moving back and forth between the coded data and the analysis produced during that time (see also Dey, 1993). Writing was an integral part of analysis which began at an early stage and continued throughout the analysis process (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

After continuous reading and collating codes into potential themes, each emerging key theme was written on a card. On each of these cards I wrote key words or phrases of narratives of participants (inductive analysis). There were two groups of cards (for each country), such that the same theme may have appeared twice, once for each country. I then began the process of identifying differences and similarities between the two countries at the inductive level. The cards were a useful way of mapping the data and drawing links between distinct parts of the whole (see Dey, 1993), as well as being helpful in defining and naming the themes (see

Braun & Clarke, 2006). The interview transcripts of each country were coded and recoded simultaneously, separated by each country. I was looking for similarities and differences between the groups and the ways in which participants opted out of crime shared either distinct or similar characteristics.

When deciding on which themes to explore, I followed the main topics discussed by probationer participants; that is, the themes that emerged in the inductive analysis. I was interested in conveying the experiences of the research participants according to the patterns and emphasis that emerged in their narratives (see Dey, 1993). However, I later sought to turn to existing literature to gain a greater criminological understanding of these processes. Linking the findings to known literature helped to move towards my key aim of investigating the extent to which the experiences of desistance differed from, or confirmed, theories of desistance (see Calverley, 2009, pp. 102-103). While criminological literature aided this study, I refrained from interpreting the data in a way which complied with preexisting theoretical frameworks in cases where it seemed the theories did not 'fit' the data. Instead, I modified or responded to earlier literature (discussed in Chapters 2, 3, and 12), based on the empirical data generated. I was diligent throughout my analysis not to ascribe meaning without careful consideration of my own disposition, and aimed to offer the reader

the stories shared by participants in the way they were relayed to me, while respecting the incredible trust and openness displayed by participants.

Part of my role as a researcher was to act as an 'adopter' and make it possible to relay experiences in a way that is loyal to the 'feel' of what it is like to desist in each country. I wished to convey to the reader an accurate impression of people and places. It was no easy task to write about two countries in a way that would both elucidate the processes in each country and draw out the key comparisons. I gave thought to how best to translate the narratives of Israeli participants to English in writing the findings chapters. I aimed to translate the narratives as close as possible to Hebrew (even if it resulted in 'broken English'), while making sure participants' descriptions and the 'spirit' in which words were exchanged would be clear to the reader. Israeli participants had a greater number of hand gestures and vocal expressions that were challenging to convey in writing. Also, I had to be attentive to the cultural symbols expressed by English participants and their meaning, which did not come naturally for me (see Ryen, 2011).

There are two topics I do not discuss in this thesis and these are: the role of the army in Israelis' offending and desistance; and narratives about police practice in each of the countries. In regards to the army, I found that the majority of Israeli participants reported that they either had problems 'fitting in' and remaining for the full three years of mandatory army

service. In some instances, troubles during the army period included committing offences and being subject to the army legal system (N=6). Some Israeli participants also noted that they did not serve in the army (N=6). Out of the six who did not serve in the army, one Israeli did not enlist due to a weight problem and the other because he did not live in Israel during that time. Three Israeli participants underwent the mandatory three years army service and did not report having troubles during that time. The reason I did not include the army as a topic was because it did not illuminate much on the *differences* between English and Israeli participants in terms of *desistance*. Having served or not in the army, or experiencing troubles during that time, was not a significant factor which had shaped Israelis' efforts to find employment or rebuild their lives, for example. I suspect that if the Israeli sample was younger in age, the army would have emerged as a more substantial theme for comparison. For example, it might be the case that younger ex-offenders in Israel are asked about their time in the army during a job interview more often than older ex-offenders in Israel, which could be an impediment in the employment market in cases they had troubles during that time, or in cases they did not serve in the army. I do plan to draw on the data I have for the purpose of publishing an article about the army and desistance processes amongst Israeli participants.

In regards to police practice in each country, Israeli participants noted that since they decided to desist from crime, the police viewed it as an opportunity to collect intel about former associates, hoping participants would be more inclined to talk upon their exit from crime. Israeli participants mention this as an obstacle in their efforts to desist. I did not directly ask Israeli or English participants about their experience with police personnel and it only came up in some interviews with English participants. Because of the lower relevance this theme had for understanding the experiences of each groups in supervision settings and the limited data I had, I have decided not to include it in the thesis.

4.9 Summary

The plan was to undertake a comparative mixed methods study of desistance processes in two countries – England and Israel. The objective was to explore how individuals opted or 'went about' desisting in different or similar ways, given the social conditions that surrounded them. An English CRC and the Israeli Probation Service were the spaces from which I drew the main sources of data. I devised a sampling criteria and a plan to help reach a sample that was as comparable as possible between the two countries. I argued that the research design was conducive towards identifying and recruiting probationers who were consciously avoiding any further offending, and were taking actions towards that aim across each culture. The fieldwork was broadly mirrored in the two countries, even as

the 'high waters' rattled the devised plan. The samples drawn were different in terms of age and offences type, however, I argued that the two samples were broadly similar in terms of their 'desistance phase' and that they were comparable. The offending patterns in Israel show that Israelis typically offend and desist at a later age than in England. Although Israeli participants were older than their English counterparts, they were at a similar 'exit point' and 'desistance phase' as English participants.

The data drawn from probationers, experts, the ESS and official statistics all aided in providing both a broad and a detailed insight into processes of desistance. Multiple topics were explored, including (but not limited to) identity, employment, families, romantic relationships, peers, and time-space use. Deductive and inductive analysis was undertaken and my primary interest was to compare and contrast the mechanisms of these processes for both groups.

Chapter Five

A COMPARATIVE REVIEW OF

COUNTRIES AND CULTURES

In this chapter, I explore the social context in England and Israel, and depict distinctive social features shaping everyday life in each country. I touch on numerous themes, while other more specific descriptions of cultural attributes and social patterns are woven in the findings in later chapters. I begin by framing the concept of culture, for the purpose of this study, and outlining the chapter. I continue with a general discussion of each country, including a description of relevant history of the two societies. I then review the economic conditions and household structures, before turning to a comparison of cultural values and analysis of data from the European Social Survey (ESS). I conclude the chapter with a discussion of the main similarities and differences between the two societies.

A collection of socio-structural factors are discussed herein and, amongst these, there are several themes that were particularly meaningful in shaping the context for participants in this study, some of which I revisit in later chapters. In particular, data from the ESS and the descriptive discussion highlights that English culture is more oriented towards keeping to

traditions than Israeli culture. I share my experience of visiting the bank in Yorkshire to argue that there is a greater tendency in England to 'systematise' how things are done, while there is greater flexibility in daily social interactions in Israel. In addition, religion plays a more prominent role in Israeli daily life, and provides a thread that connects both religious and non-religious individuals, as well as shapes Israelis' social identities. Furthermore, Israel is a child-oriented society, and families keep in close contact throughout a person's life. Compared with the UK, Israel has higher marriage rates, lower divorce rates, and a greater number of households with two partners and a child. Lastly, unemployment rates are similar in the two countries, but, inequality is greater in Israel and poverty rates are double those in the UK.

5.1 Framing culture and outlining the chapter

I situate the notion of culture, and of the social life, primarily in accordance with Bourdieu's (1977) concept of the field (i.e. the social space in which actions are taken) and the doxa (i.e. collective and individual knowledge of the social life of the field, which contributes to the reproduction of that social life — i.e. habitus). Furthermore, in common with Bourdieu (1977) and Giddens (1984), I view social practices as a system of symbolic codes which signify culture and specify which behaviours are 'acceptable' (or in accordance with the social life) and which behaviours are 'best avoided' (also see, Williams, 1958). Individuals' understanding of symbolic

codes are drawn from both formal and informal systems within a given society and individuals can act with or without knowledgeability (Giddens, 1984; also see Alexander & Smith, 1993; Bourdieu, 1977; Helmke & Levitsky, 2004).

Within this framework, I turned to examine prevalent ideas; ways of life; 'commonplace' understandings; attitudes; practices; ways of speech and common expressions as symbolising culture (Bourdieu, 1977; Giddens, 1984; also see Nelson, Treichler & Grossberg, 1992; Wierzbicka, 2006; Willis, 1977). In addition, I am concerned with countries and societies as inhabiting a particular space which holds distinct features, such as a certain climate and architecture of office buildings. As Samuels (1978, p. 30) noted, each country holds certain 'things-in-their-place' which shapes individuals' existential experience. England and Israel have their own economies, political systems, geography etc., and I was interested to learn how factors such as these might interact with individuals who wanted to desist from crime and shaped their identity (see Giddens, 1984, pp. 6, 282-283; Godkin, 1980, p. 74; Samuels, 1978).

In sections 5.2 and 5.3, I provide a broad description of distinctive attributes in England and Israel by turning to literature from cultural studies; linguistics; history; politics; economics; population; and official statistics. Furthermore, to convey the 'atmosphere' in each country, I

incorporate my experience of living in Israel and England to the discussion. Thereafter, I outline the official statistics I collected prior to the fieldwork on the economic conditions and household structures in each country.[11] I then turn to the statistical analysis of the ESS of cultural variance between the countries, which I undertook prior to the fieldwork. In particular, I examine the attitude of respondents in relation to their sense of closeness to the community; how often they meet with friends and family; religion; helping others; a sense of direction in one's life, and more.

5.2 Bound with contrasts in England

England is part of the UK of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and is traditionally described as the 'green and pleasant' land, approximately 967 km (600 miles) in length and 437 km (271 miles) wide and surrounded by water (World Atlas, 2017). The UK is composed of four countries: England, Wales, Northern Ireland, and Scotland, which vary from each other but have remained connected over the years and influenced each other's politics and social life (Colley, 1992). In the 1700s, Great Britain was mainly composed of English, Scots, Welsh, and Irish, which came from various settlements and, thus, multiculturalism is a feature that symbolises life in the UK, dating back centuries (Oakland, 2002). Customs, accents, and behaviour in England (and the UK more broadly) vary

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[11] After the fieldwork I revisited the data and sought newer statistics, which I added herein (when appropriate).

noticeably and regions are set apart by dozens of regional accents, and minor linguistic variations (Oakland, 2002; Storry & Childs, 2003).

The long-standing multiculturalism is partly the result of England's imperialism throughout history, where the concept of 'an English way of life' was exported to other countries around the world (Kumar, 2010). Even today, English laws and 'ways of life' can be found in other countries, such as Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South America, South Africa, (Kumar, 2010; Aughey, 2012), and Israel. Moreover, the exportation of English values is linked to a sense of national pride and national identity in achieving something much wider than the UK; in rooting English laws in other nations around the world (Kumar, 2010). Hence, a sense of nationalism in England is historically linked to something that is also *outside* its borders, outside the countries that form Britain, to something that is also 'out there' around the world; where other people speak 'our' language and adopted 'our' ways of life (Aughey, 2012; Kenny, 2012; Kumar, 2010).

Over the centuries, the social fabric of the country has altered vastly, especially in the aftermath of the Second World War when the British government encouraged immigration from Caribbean and South Asian countries to occupy work vacancies (Christopher, 2002; Julios, 2012; Weedon, 2011). The UK saw immigration from, for example, West India,

Pakistan, China, and Poland which had made the country even more multicultural than it was before 1945 (Christopher, 2002; Julios, 2012; Oakland, 2002; Weedon, 2011). The immigration resulted in a change in the social fabric of the country and, along with globalisation and Europeanisation, brought forth anxiety regarding Britain's national identity and raised a need to redefine 'Englishness' or 'Britishness' (Bond et al., 2010; Christopher, 2002; Kenny, 2012; see also Kumar, 2010). In joining the European Union (1973), Britain indicated a willingness to incorporate and work with other European values, a choice which stood in contrast to the traditional role of England as 'an exporter' of values (Bond et al., 2010; Kumar, 2010; see Hobolt, 2016 about Brexit). Public debates regarding leaving the European Union are linked to an underpinning discomfort around choosing to realign with broader European values which did not always match British or English values (Hobolt, 2016). Welsh, Scottish, and English people increasingly define themselves according to their own individual nationality, rather than use an inclusive term such as 'British' and what has emerged is a form of 'English–British confusion' (Aughey, 2012; Bond et al., 2010; Kumar, 2010; Oakland, 2002).

Englishness and 'being English' is associated with the idea of keeping certain traditions and specific mannerisms and, despite changes to the social fabric over the years, keeping to traditions (and preserving continuity) is a noticeable feature in English society (Aughey, 2012; Storry

& Childs, 2003). The Crown, monarchy, and the Church of England, for example, provides national unity across the country and symbolises English values (Julios, 2012). During the Second World War, the Church of England symbolised English heritage and national character, a deliberate reminder, Grimley (2007) argues, that was intelligible to both churchgoers and nonchurchgoers. Grimley (2007) further notes that the Church of England played a central role in 'the articulation of the idea of national character in the first half of the twentieth century' and had shaped the political, legal, and cultural landscape of the country. That said, the Second World War saw a declining number of people involved with churches (Grimley, 2007) and the influence of Christianity (specifically Protestantism) on culture and politics declined over the years (Colley, 1992). However, while religious traditions in England (like a Sunday roast with one's family) may have reduced in their frequency, there remains reverence to keeping traditions, mannerisms and preserving continuity (Storry & Childs, 2003).

Through my Mediterranean lens, there also seems to be a cultural emphasis on keeping to a procedure; that is, the *way* things are done are held in high esteem, sometimes higher than the things themselves, that are '*being done*'. For example, when I first arrived at Sheffield I had a meeting with Adam,[12] a representative of my bank. At the start of our meeting, he showed me a

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[12] Pseudonym.

two minutes video which explained what would happen in the meeting and what the bank representative would say. What followed was an exact replica of what was described in the video and, when I asked questions, there was little more he could say. Perhaps led by insurance worries, I wondered as I walked out of the bank feeling like I had a meeting – not with a person – but with a procedure. There seems to be a *system* to the way things are done in the UK, even in small matters such as inquiring about lost property on a train and queuing for the bus – *how* one inquires and *how* one waits for the bus have implications for the manner in which people respond to you, whether they are helpful and smile or not.

I found that this cultural attribute departs from Israeli culture in a way that was informative to this study. There is greater emphasis in Israel on getting the 'things' (e.g., matching a lost property with the person who lost it) *done* and the 'system' or the procedure around *how* to do so can change in accordance with what seems more conducive to the person in charge, at that moment in time. Hence, 'the how' in England tends to fall in to a system and remain more stable across circumstances, while 'the how' in Israel is more flexible, not always certain, and an instrument to get to a specific destination. I reveal now that this cultural difference of *flexibility* in Israel and *systemisation* in England is apparent in the criminal justice systems (see also Robinson, 2016) and the employment markets.

As a foreigner living in England, I became acquainted with several key features of everyday life: conversations about the weather, spending time at the pub, and a national passion for sports. Visiting 'the pub' for a drink is a common leisure activity in England (Oakland, 2002; Storry & Childs, 2003, p. 150) and identification with sports teams (with games sometimes shown in pubs), serves to enhance regional identification between cities in the UK. Scholars of cultural studies, such as Aughey (2012) and Kenny (2012) argue that identification with sports teams serves to enhance an already existing cultural feature in England that is bound up with contrasts – 'the way we are English' in contrast to 'the way they are English'. Kenny (2012, p. 158) notes 'the national 'us' is often defined against a 'them' who represent a very different kind of English sensibility and politics'. While the use of sport to express one's regional identification may be apparent in other countries as well, national identity in England is highly bound up with inner contrasts, such as north and south, what was then and what is now, Labour or Conservative, and significantly, Englishness has been traditionally bound with class (see Aughey, 2012, p. 394). Along with internal contrasts, national identity is also defined against various external 'others' that are viewed as a threat and, in recent years, discussions over Brexit have been fused with political debates about the threat of 'others', outside the borders, finding their way into the country and harming it (Henderson et al., 2016; Kenny, 2012).

Broadly speaking, people in England can be described as holding an intuitive sense of fairness, tolerance, and keeping good relations by distance, reservation, and a 'live and let live' attitude (Aughey, 2012; Kenny, 2012). English people are inclined to prefer 'the correct' course of action in any given situation, and what underpins it is a shared view that there is a 'good' and 'bad' way of acting, which could be deduced by 'good thinking' or rational thought (Wierzbicka, 2006). Wierzbicka (2006, p. 72), a linguistic suggests that English character exemplifies:

'*A more rational, more procedural, more reason-based approach to human life… An ethics of right and wrong is an ethics in which the choice between good and bad is seen as something that can be decided by reason, by good thinking, and something that can be interpersonally validated – like science.*'

Wierzbicka (2006, p. 72)

To summarise, England (and the UK more broadly) has a long history of multiculturalism and there are internal contrasts among various groups of citizens, with different accents and 'sensibilities'. Over the years, the fabric of the country has changed and, with that, a sense of national identity was reshaped. Generally speaking, English people show reservation and a rational way of thinking that is apparent in everyday interactions. Furthermore, English culture exhibits reverence to traditions and, as I argued above, a tendency to systematise how things are done.

5.3 A tangled life in Israel

A discussion on Israel entails a discussion of Judaism since the country was formed with the intention of providing Jewish minorities that were dispersed across the world, with a state of their own. Jewish values are thus rooted in Israeli culture and, in some respects, the two concepts are interchangeable. In 1948, the State of Israel was formed and occupied a highly contested small piece of land, 290 miles (470 km) in length and 85 miles (135 km) in width, with a beach that runs across it (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2015). There are four main attributes that join Israelis together and, simultaneously, bring inconsistency and conflict in society: religion and ethnicity; liberalism; nationalism; and the Holocaust, which took place during the Second World War (Barnett, 1999).

First, as noted, Israel was formed with the intention of providing 'a home' for all Jewish minorities that were (and are) dispersed in various countries (Ya'ar, 2002). I will not address the question of 'who is a Jew?', which is a complex topic debated for years (Barnett, 1999; Bentwich, 1964) – suffice to say that Zionism points to Judaism as a complex relationship between one's religion and nationality (Yadgar, 2011). Furthermore and for further clarification, for those born Jewish[13], and are not particularly attached to a piece of land, it is a complex relationship between religion and ethnicity or

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[13] To be born Jewish means you have a Jewish mother, although this issue is debatable as well, partly because Nazi Germany considered people who were born to a Jewish father as Jewish.

identity (Yadgar, 2011). For example, a person can assume a Jewish identity and practice some religious traditions, anywhere in the world, while being an atheist. Or for example, a person can resist all mentioning of religious practices and God and still be considered by others and themselves as Jewish. The concept of 'being Jewish' is a sort of identity that cannot be shrugged off easily; it can be ascribed to a person as a 'fact' and wherever you go and whatever you do, you are *also* Jewish. The implication thereof is that a Jewish person often carries upon their shoulders the history of the Jewish people and a tie to Jewish religion and traditions.

Judaism and religion play an inseparable role in everyday life in Israel, as there is no separation between state and religion, and various religious norms are embedded within its laws and everyday life (Barnett, 1999; Ya'ar, 2002; Yadgar, 2011). For example, all public institutions, whether owned by the government (such as prisons) or not (such as airlines); events venues; many restaurants and more, observe Kashrut[14] and/or the Sabbath[15] (Ya'ar, 2002). Another example of the key role of religion is that marriage and divorce are regulated by religious laws and all civil matters related to marriage are delegated to the religious courts (Bentwich, 1964; Hacker, 2013; Lavee & Katz, 2003). Indeed, although a liberal and democratic

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[14] Observing Kashrut means that you adhere to Kosher food, and separate milk products from meat, for example.

[15] Keeping the Sabbath involved not working between Friday after sunset to Saturday after sunset.

state, religion plays a dominant role in people's lives and maintaining a good relationship between individualistic liberalism and Judaism can be challenging, to say the least (Barnett, 1999).

Another distinctive component of Israeli culture is nationalism and a vivid memory of the Holocaust, which emerged from the exclusion and persecution of the Jewish community in European Christian society prior to and during the Second World War (Barnett, 1999; Klar et al., 2013). The national narrative holds a collective memory of the Holocaust, 'anti-Semitism, discrimination and persecution' (Ya'ar, 2002, p. 351). Israelis are periodically reminded by government officials, family members, friends, and the media that the danger of anti-Semitism (which lay outside Israel's borders) is always looming and that Israel is the only 'truly' safe place for Jewish people (Klar et al., 2013; Ya'ar, 2002). After an attack on a Kosher[16] supermarket in France 2015, the Israeli Prime Minister, Binyamin Netanyahu, said during a mass demonstration in Paris that Israel would welcome European Jews with 'open arms' if they wished to emigrate to Israel (Beaumont, 2015), thereby suggesting a safety for Jewish ethnicity that the country can provide and cannot be guaranteed outside its borders. There is an inherent paradox about life in Israel – Israelis assert that the Holocaust happened because Jews did not emigrate to Palestine during the

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[16] Food or beverages that can be consumed by Jewish people since they hold to a certain standard.

Second World War, while they are also quite mindful that Israel is one of the least safe place for Jews today (Klar et al., 2013).

Life in Israel involves frequent wars related to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and a continuous sense of threat from Arab States that surround and partly envelop the country (Ya'ar, 2002). National security and public protection are central in politics, public debate, and the media (Ya'ar, 2002), which had given an unwavering priority to the input of the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) in public institutions and everyday life (Klar et al., 2013). For example, police stations are equipped with paramilitary gear and schools are trained for war conditions or another national emergency. There is mandatory military service at the age of eighteen for both men (three years) and women (two years), which brought forth a distinct social identity, where citizens also take part in a broader national aim of public protection and the role one played in the army can be a source of pride or shame (also see, Lavee & Katz, 2003). While my description above – emphasising on national security coupled with a religious heritage – implies that traditional and 'survival' social values are embedded within its culture, there is an overall democratic regime, large secular population, and high socio-economic development, which invited western values into the culture (Ya'ar, 2002).

Israeli people are stereotypically described as being 'c*habar*' (a type of cactus in Hebrew) – hard with thorns on the outside, but soft and sweet on the inside. Particularly, Israeli people tend to talk *dugri* (Hebrew for talking straight to the point), which can be described as bold and sincere speech towards colleagues, acquaintances, and close ones (Kopelman & Rosette, 2008). Amongst Israelis, frank confrontations, the show of negative emotions, and voicing opposing opinions are more common and signal care and concern about the issue discussed (Kopelman & Rosette, 2008; Wierzbicka, 2006) – thereby, they give the impression of a 'Chabar.' Based on my own experience, Israelis are more expressive with their display of emotions and opinions (even if these are negative), compared with English people who are more reserved with their ways of speech and display of emotions.

Amongst Israelis, *chabar* is used to describe an Israeli who is either more or less linked to his or her national identity, or the number of generations that his or her family were in Israel. It is a young immigrant society, composed of people originating from the Middle East, North Africa, Eastern and Central Europe, the UK, and the United States (Ya'ar, 2002; Weiss, 2014). Furthermore, each immigrant group maintains different social practices and cultural attributes and thus, in a similar way to the UK, Israel is culturally diverse and inner tensions or 'inner distinctions' often arise (Herzog, 2006; Weiss, 2014; Yuchtman-Yaar, 2005). What joins the

majority (but not all) of the Israeli population is the concept of 'being Jewish', which fosters broad acceptance across different ethnic groups; yet, encourages tension towards foreigners and those who are not Jewish.

There are three notable examples of inner tension in Israel: first, Israel holds a complex relationship with its Arab minority, which is politically and socially disadvantaged in most respects, especially in terms of education, work, and income (Herzog, 2006) and which is overrepresented in the criminal justice system (see Statistical Abstract of Israel, 2014b). Secondly, there is inner tension between ultra-Orthodox Jewish Israelis and non-Orthodox; or, as sometimes referred to by ultra-Orthodox Jews, between believers and 'sinners'. Lastly, there is inner tension between Jews who immigrated from western countries – Ashkenazim – and Jews who emigrated from West Asia and the surrounding area – Sephardim (Yadgar, 2011; Yuchtman-Yaar, 2005). Since the inception of Israel, the diversity between ethnic and religious groups brought an ongoing struggle over the 'genuine' nature of the country and its identity (Talmon, 2013). Talmon (2013, p. 57) described the struggle with a touch of cynicism and 'drama': '*is it [Israel] to be western or eastern, secular or religious, 'purely' homogeneously Israeli, or rather articulating its wealth of resources from the diversity of diaspora[?].*' Yuchtman-Yaar (2005) describes Israeli culture as a hybrid of eastern and western influences; as having a Mediterranean nature, but a western 'preference', while there is an ongoing

negotiation – a constant push-and-pull – between Mediterranean and western attributes in the society.

For example, Israel may develop economic ties with western countries, while deepening its Middle Eastern social culture (Talmon, 2013; Yuchtman-Yaar, 2005). I observed another example of an eastern-western-hybrid in a little humous street restaurant in Tel Aviv with no menus in 2015, where the waiter turned to me and said: 'nu?' (which is a hurry-up word in Hebrew and, in this context, asked what I wanted to eat). To my right, were two Haredi men (ultra-Orthodox Jews) talking about traditional roles of married men and women while one of them was giving me an angry glance for not wearing proper attire. This description highlights the eastern components of the country. On the other hand, it was summer and I visited Israel right before the internationally-renowned LGBT parade that takes place annually in Tel Aviv, where people come from all over the world to participate – a description which highlights its western components.

Sabbath dinner (or Friday-night-dinner) with one's immediate and extended family is a long-standing Jewish tradition that, among other things, represents 'togetherness' (Beck & Goldberg, 1998; Marks, 2004). Indeed, Israeli families keep a close relationship amongst themselves, while food is the centre around which people gather (Lavee & Katz, 2003; Talmon,

2013). Efraim Sidon, a satirical writer, amusingly conveys the role of parents in an Israeli child's life:

'*What does an Israeli child have in his life? His parents and his parents and his parents, and his parents. And day and night they chase him, breathe down his neck and follow in his tracks… Because they will find him everywhere… Twenty-two years old or twenty-five, thirty years old, or fifty. There is no escape from his worried parents. Even if he lands on the moon or flies to Mars, they will follow him with a cake and warm clothes…*'

(Efraim Sidon as cited in Scharf, 2014, p. 203, my translation)

Close and frequent contact with family members, especially parents and siblings, is maintained throughout a person's life in Jewish culture and, at the age of eighteen, when mandatory military service begins, parenting involvement often becomes more intense (Azmon & Izraeli, 1993; Scharf, 2014). Israel is characterised as having traditional familial patterns and a collective attitude, which highlights sensitivity to others and obligation to one's family and society (Scharf, 2014). Scharf's (2014) study into the relationship between children and parents (before, while, and after military service) found that Israeli parents prefer a proximal parenting style which expresses closeness, warmth, and extends beyond childhood and into adulthood. However, Scharf (2014) found that Israeli parents tend to promote autonomy and independence alongside the continuation of involvement and closeness.

To summarise, a central component in Israeli society is the inseparable role of religion from everyday life and, while it is a source of inner tension, it is also the glue that unites the majority of Israelis. Israeli culture denotes a mix of eastern and western influences and everyday life involves both a modern liberal 'feel', on the one hand, and traditional (close-knit) social engagements on the other. The centrality of family and parental involvement over the course of a person's life is another distinct cultural characteristic in Israel. In addition, the collective memory of the Holocaust; the ongoing sense of threat; and popular public debates regarding national security has lent priority to the IDF's[17] input in public institutions and everyday life. In the next section, I compare the economy, poverty, and equality in the two countries before turning to compare marriage, divorce, and the number of single parents in each country.

5.4 Economy, equality, and household structure

After the Second World War, the Labour Government in Britain nationalised key industries with the intention of creating a welfare state (Oakland, 2002). However, in the 1980s and 1990s the government denationalised most of the state industries and returned them to private ownership – amongst these were the housing industry (1980s), British Airways (1980s), gas, water, and electricity supplies (1980s), and railways and road transport which were privatised in the 1990s (Christopher, 2002;

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[17] Israeli Defence Force.

Oakland, 2002; Storry & Childs, 2003). Indeed, the British economy has moved in a neo-liberal direction since the 1970s, as have other advanced nations during that time (see Christopher, 2002; Storry & Childs, 2003). During the 1980s, the Conservative Government restricted social benefits (see Farrall & Hay, 2010) and substantially minimised the manufacturing industry, such that work involving mining and steel had almost disappeared in the UK (Christopher, 2002). This change to the economy has impacted the daily lives of people in Britain, particularly in the north of England (including Yorkshire), Wales, the West Midlands, and Scotland, that were traditionally dependent on these industries (Christopher, 2002). Manual labour and employment in the manufacturing sector of the economy declined significantly and levels of inequality rose in the country (Christopher, 2002; Storry & Childs, 2003).

Similarly to England, the Israeli economy has moved towards privatisation, the free market and neo-liberalism since 1985, a shift which gained momentum in early the 2000s (Metzer, 2014). This change encouraged a different social life in Israel, which was traditionally associated with 'the Kibbutz' – a collective of socialist community settlements based on agriculture (Sosis & Ruffle, 2003). People in the Kibbutz live together, share meals, and care for children and each other, while working to advance their own community and country (Sosis & Ruffle, 2003). In 2003, the Israeli finance minister lessened the government grip on the economy

and introduced changes in three main areas: (1) Privatising social services and state enterprises; (2) abolishing institutionally-funded pensions and exposing them to the open capital market; and (3) tightening the eligibility for welfare benefits and social services care (Metzer, 2014).

The recent economic crisis in 2008 marked a more challenging time for the UK than Israel. In the UK, unemployment rose for both university graduates and non-graduates alike, wage rates were downward adjusted, and part-time work (which is often accompanied by instability and insecurity) became increasingly popular (OECD, 2014b). While the economy in the UK has recovered since 2013 and employment rates are now higher than pre-recession levels (OECD, 2014b; OECD, 2017a), Brexit had introduced further economic uncertainty. Compared with other European countries, including the UK, Israel recovered relatively quickly after the last economic crisis and employment rates began to improve in 2011 (ICBS, 2015; Metzer, 2014).

According to The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), in 2014 (prior to the fieldwork undertaken for this study) unemployment rates in Israel were 5.9%, lower than in the UK which stood at 6.9% (OECD, 2014a). In 2016 (during the fieldwork), the UK caught up with Israel and unemployment rates improved in both countries – 4.7% and 4.4% of the labour force were unemployed

respectively (OECD, 2017a). Likewise, the Human Development Index indicates that the employment to population ratio in 2015 was higher in Israel (60.8%) than in the UK (59.3%), but it seems the differences between the two countries are not substantial (United Nations, 2016, p. 238).

Income inequality in the UK is only slightly less than in Israel, by 0.04 points (OECD, 2014c), and there are higher poverty levels in Israel and a rising cost of living (Metzer, 2014; Weiss, 2014; also see United Nation data). That is, income inequality is slightly higher in Israel and poverty rates are double the rates of the UK (OECD, 2014c; OECD, 2017b), while severe material deprivation rates in the UK are below the European Union average, suggesting a smaller number of persons are deprived than in other countries in Europe (ONS, 2013a). In 2015, 14.013%[18] of households in the UK were receiving social benefits, compared to 5.327% of households in Israel (OECD, 2017c). The gross domestic profit (GDP) per capita in 2015 in the UK was 38,658, higher than that of Israel which had a 31,671 GDP (United Nations, 2016, p. 234). In short, unemployment rates are similar in both countries; Israel has higher poverty rates; however, there are no significant differences between the countries in terms of their human development, as they both indicate a high index development.

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[18] The per cent is calculated out of the Gross Domestic Profit (GDP) of the country.

The Department for Work and Pensions found that in 2013, 22% of households in the UK earned more than £1,000 per week, while 2% earned under £100 a week (Burke et al., 2014). Out of the general population, only 1% of white British people earned under £100 a week, while 3% of black or black British people earned the same (Burke et al., 2014). Furthermore, 22% of white British people earned more than £1,000 a week, while 16% of black or black British people earned the same, thus suggesting inequality in earnings among ethnic groups (Burke et al., 2014, p. 35).

In comparison, the Israeli National Insurance Institute (INII) indicated that, in 2013, a greater number of ultra-Orthodox Israelis (52.1%) were living under poverty, compared with 13.6% of non-Orthodox Israeli-Jews (INII, 2013, p. 32). Poverty rates amongst ultra-Orthodox Israelis are higher than the poverty rates of Arab-Israelis, which stood at 47.4% in 2013 (INII, 2013, p. 32). Yet, as the data above indicate, there are far more Arab-Israelis living under poverty than Israeli-Jews (INII, 2013). This gap in earnings is related to, amongst other reasons, the typical number of breadwinners in ultra-Orthodox Jewish communities (Metzer, 2014). Men in ultra-Orthodox communities traditionally pray or are involved in religious work while women work and maintain a prominent role of caring for children, which means that women are not able to develop a high earning career and the family's income often remains relatively low (Cohen, 2011; Herzog, 2006).

In terms of inequality in education, income, and health, the coefficient of human inequality in the UK in 2015 was 7.8, while Israel had a coefficient of 12.9, suggesting higher inequality in Israel in respect of these issues (United Nations, 2016, p. 206). In particular, 2.8% of the population in the UK experience educational inequality, compared with 8.4% in Israel, and income inequality stands at 16.2% in the UK, compared with 26.4% in Israel (United Nations, 2016, p. 206). In both countries, a lower number of women participate in the labour market than men, however, the gap in participation is slightly greater in the UK – 11.8%, compared with 10.5% in Israel (United Nations, 2016, p. 214). This variance could also be attributed to the lower participation of ultra-Orthodox Jewish men in the Israeli labour force. Furthermore, the higher cost of living and poverty rates in Israel might encourage more women to seek employment.

Since the 1970s, both the UK and Israel have seen a decline in marriage rates, which was most likely influenced by a socio-behavioural change and a growing preference for cohabitation over marriage (Nahir, 2014; ONS, 2014a). Marriage rates in Israel in 2011 (6.6 per 1,000), were higher than the UK (4.5 per 1,000) and divorce rates were lower in Israel than the UK, standing at 1.7 and 2.1 per 1,000 persons respectively (United Nations, 2013, pp. 803, 806). Data from the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics (ICBS, 2015b, p. 1) indicates that from 2004 to 2013, the number of

families in Israel has grown, and approximately half of them, in 2013, consisted of two parents and children up to the age of 17. Furthermore, in 2013, only 6% of all families in Israel were single parents with children up to the age of 17 (ICBS, 2015b, p. 1). In contrast, the most common family type in the UK in 2014 'was a married or civil partner couple family without dependent children' (ONS, 2015, p. 3). The number of single parents was comparatively higher in the UK in 2014, standing at 25% of all families (ONS, 2015, p. 5). Data from the United Nations (2016, p. 214) shows that the adolescent birth rate in the UK in 2015 was higher than Israel, standing at 14.6 per 1,000 women aged 15 to 19, compared with 9.7 per 1,000 women in Israel.

5.5 Cultural variance

Background

In this section, I report findings from round six (2012) of the ESS about the social attitudes and values in each country on numerous issues. I analysed the data prior to the fieldwork, and sought to learn about the values of each society (as a whole) and the social contexts in which my participants lived. In particular, I sought similarities and variance in how often English and Israeli respondents met with friends and family members; their sense of closeness to their community; religious inclinations; and to compare cultural attitudes and values about life and how they sought to live it. The analysis was comprehensive and I describe herein the findings that were

most relevant for the purpose of this study. The ESS included questions from Schwartz's model of universal human values, which specifies a set of ten values (such as, tradition, hedonism, conformity and more) to compare across cultures, and the analysis of these has aided in further understanding how the two societies relate or differ (Schwartz, 2003; see also Boer & Fischer, 2013). Nine out of the ten values are discussed herein so as to limit the discussion to values which were directly relevant to this study.

Prior to the fieldwork, both England and Wales were potential avenues for recruiting participants as the two countries share a criminal justice system. Therefore, I recoded the ESS data to separate England and Wales (N = 1989) from the other countries in the UK, and placed them as one group, while maintaining Israel as another group (N = 2508). Northern Ireland, Scotland, and other countries in the survey were also grouped together and I refer to this group as Europe (N = 50176). I mainly used two types of statistical tests – crosstabs and one-way ANOVA test. A crosstab (or cross-tabulation) is a useful test with which to examine the relationship between two categorical variables, and helped uncover how each group of countries answered the questions posed in the ESS (see Field, 2009). Then, I turned to one-way ANOVA tests to see whether the differences in the (average) mean of answers in each country were statistically significant. Specifically, one-way ANOVA tests compared the mean answers of the three groups of countries to determine whether any differences in the mean answer was

statistically significant and, thus, less likely to be due to chance (see Field, 2009). In the case of Schwartz's model of social values, I only used a one-way ANOVA test. The questions asked in the ESS were tested as dependent variables while each group of countries acted as an independent variable. In the analysis of Schwartz's model, I provide the mean difference between the groups. This was calculated by combining the scores of my chosen value and then subtracting the overall mean of all the groups. In some instances, the mean difference appears as a negative value because it was subtracted by a bigger number, depending on the size of the overall mean. The scoring mechanism used to combine the survey items followed a syntax provided to ESS survey data users which was drafted by Simon Schwarz and is available at: https://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/docs/ methodology/ESS1_human_values_scale.pdf. In the description of the findings, I included the results for Europe, however I do not discuss or rely on Europe much since my primary focus is on comparing England and Wales and Israel and because their sample size is larger than the two countries.

Analyses

Since both countries are multicultural, I was interested in whether respondents from England and Wales and their Israeli counterparts expressed similar attitudes towards tolerance of differences. The universalism value proposed in Schwartz's model refers to individuals'

attitudes towards understanding another; broadmindedness; equality; unity with nature; and overall 'tolerance and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature' (Schwartz, 2003, p. 268). There were three questions in the ESS which measured Schwartz's definition of universalism and these asked how much it was like them (on a scale of one to six):

Chart 1: Universalism

1) Important that people are treated equally and have equal opportunities;

2) Important to understand different people; and

3) Important to care for nature and environment.
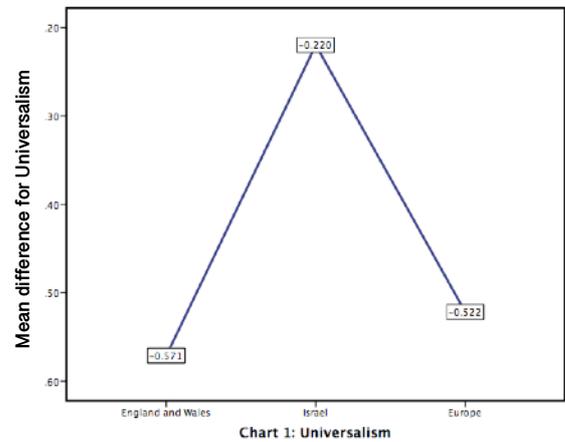
Chart 1 illustrates the mean difference score of each group in regards to the universalism value (referred to as 'mean difference of universalism' on the left-hand side).[19] The y-axis represents the mean difference score of answers, while the x-axis denotes the type of group. The ANOVA test suggested that respondents from England and Wales reported greater universalism than Israelis. Thus, English respondents were more inclined to assert that it was like them to show understanding, tolerance, equality towards people, and care for nature (as shown in chart 1). The variance

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[19] All of the charts in this chapter display the mean difference score of each group

between the two countries was statistically significant (F = 276.104; p<. 000) with a mean difference of -.35217.

The descriptive comparison also suggested that religion played a more prominent role in Israel and less so in England and, thus, I turned to the ESS to see whether more
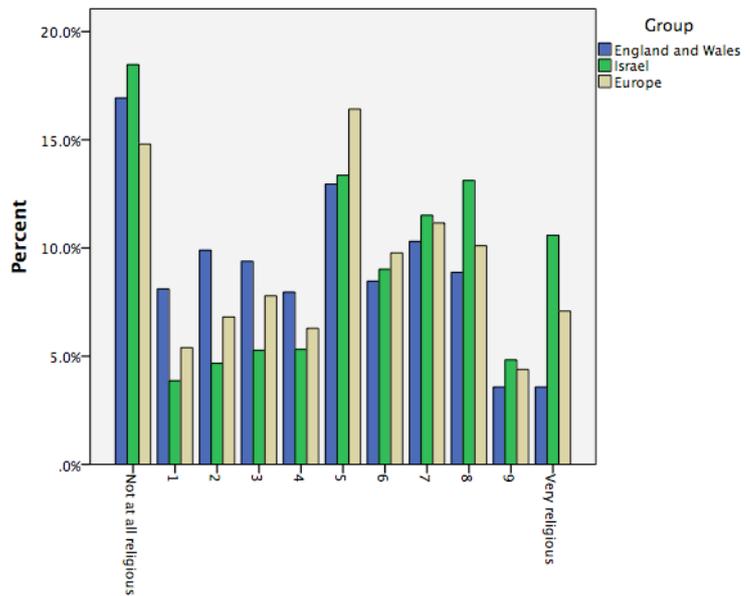
Graph 1: How religious are you

respondents in Israel regarded themselves as religious than in England. When respondents were asked: 'how religious are you?', a greater number of respondents in Israel were at the extreme end of the scale and more Israeli respondents considered themselves as very religious (see Graph 1). Graph 1 indicates that 28.5% of Israelis considered themselves as being between 8 and 10 on the religious scale, while 16.1% reported the same in England and Wales and 21.7% in Europe. On the other side of the scale, 27.1% of Israelis reported being between 2 to 0 (not at all religious), compared with 34.9% in England and 27% in Europe. The ANOVA test indicated that this difference was statistically significant and that fewer respondents in England $(F(1961) = 51.592;$ Mean = 4.14; p< .000) stated

they were religious than in Israel (F(2485) = 51.592; Mean = 5.06; p< . 000).

Differences between the countries in terms of religion sparked my interest in respondents' general sense of freedom to live life as they choose. However, there was no

Graph 2: Free to decide how to live my life
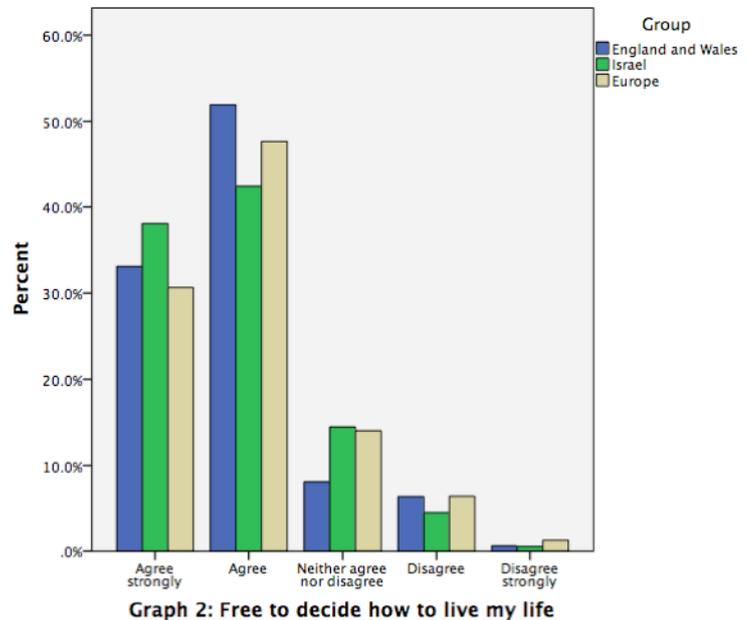
statistically significant difference between the two countries. The majority of respondents, both in Israel (F(2474) = 36.184; Mean = 1.87; p< 1.000) and England and Wales (F(1986) = 36.184; Mean = 1.89; p< 1.000), either agreed or strongly agreed that they were free to decide how to live their life (as shown in Graph 2). The findings imply that while religion plays a greater role in Israel, and a greater number of Israeli respondents were at both extremes, there is no statistically significant difference in a sense of constraint over one's life and decisions. However, when analysing these findings, it is important to consider whether religious practices (such as keeping Kosher food in public spaces) are more readily acceptable and adopted by the majority of Israelis. In this case, religious aspects may

shape one's life and choices, but not be seen as 'going against' one's freedom to choose.

The ESS included two questions that measured Schwartz's (2003, p. 268) value of conformity, which he defines as restraining actions and impulses that could violate social expectations or norms and are likely to harm or upset others. The first question asked respondents how much the following statements were like them:

Chart 2: Conformity

1) Important to do what is told and follow rules; and

2) Important to behave properly.
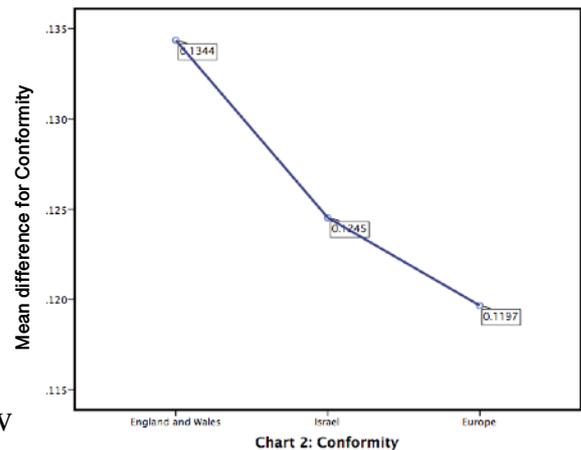
The analysis suggests that there was no statistically significant difference in the mean difference answer of the two countries (F = .260; mean = .00983; p<.938) and that respondents in both countries similarly saw it as important to conform and restrain actions that would violate social expectations (see Chart 2). However, in terms of attitudes towards tradition, another human value in Schwartz's Model, England and Wales showed a greater orientation towards traditional values than Israel. Schwartz defines tradition as acceptance of the customs, holding respect for cultural traditions and to

being moderate (Schwartz, 2003, p. 268). The ANOVA test suggests that respondents in England and Wales thought, to a greater degree, that it was important to accept customs and traditions of their culture (F = 32.260; p<.000) with a

Chart 3: Tradition

mean difference of -.11568, from Israeli respondents, as shown in Chart 3.
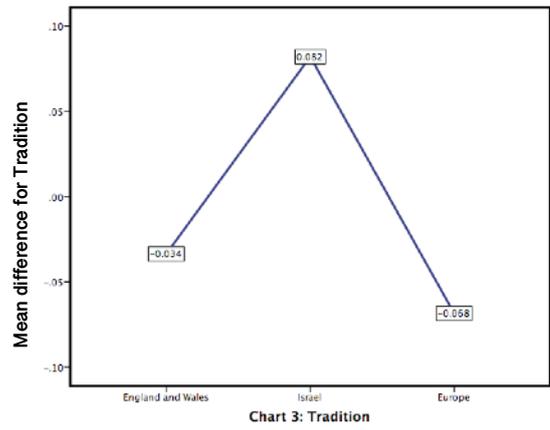
I was also interested to learn how sociable individuals in each country were in their daily lives, and how often they met friends and family members. I suspected that Israeli respondents would report greater sociability, however, the social customs in England of visiting the pub and watching sports can also encourage sociability. Respondents were asked how often they meet with friends, relatives, or

Graph 3: How often socially meet with friends, relatives or colleagues
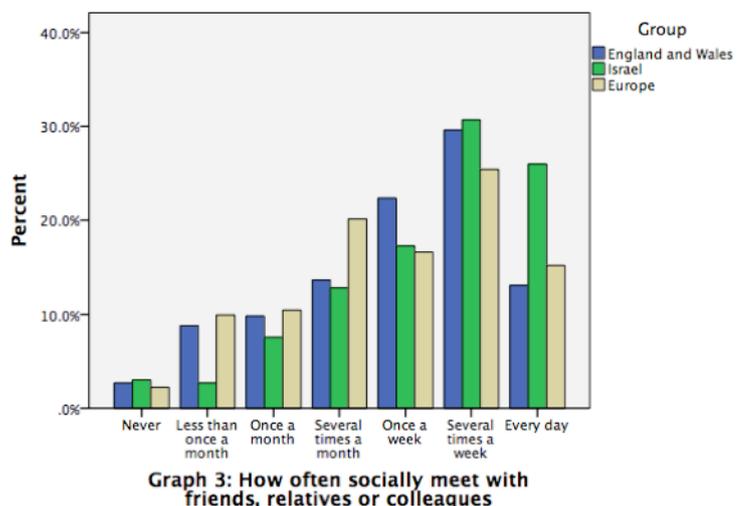
colleagues from 1(never) to 7(everyday), as shown in Graph 3. There was a statistically significant variance between the two countries where Israeli

respondents (F(2503) = 156.006; Mean = 5.35; p< .000) reported meeting friends and family more often than respondents in England and Wales (F(1986) = 156.006; Mean = 4.85; p< .000) and Europe (F(49862) = 156.006; Mean = 4.76; p< .000). As shown in Graph 3, 42.7% of respondents from England and Wales indicated they met several times a week or every day compared with 56.7% of Israeli and 40.6% of Europeans (p< .037).

However, when respondents were asked how many people they could discuss intimate and personal matters with, respondents from England and Wales indicated they had more people with whom to share than Israeli respondents (see Graph 4). The difference was statistically significant (F = 30.281; p< .000). A crosstab indicates that respondents in England and Wales most commonly stated they had between 4-6 people (28%) to discuss intimate and personal matters with, followed by 3 people (21.2%); while the most common answer in Israel was either 3 (21.5%) or 2 people (21%). Furthermore, more respondents in Israel reported having no-one, or only one person, to discuss intimate and personal matters with

Graph 4: How many people with whom you can discuss intimate and personal matters

than was the case in England and Wales. That said, it is unclear what respondents in each country considered intimate and personal matters to be. It could be that respondents from Israel and England and Wales had a different cultural understanding of what intimate and personal matters were, which could explain differences in their answers.

To better understand the dynamics of social relationships in each country, I tested Schwartz's value of benevolence, which refers to a cultural attitude of helping other people, taking responsibility, and as preserving 'the welfare of people with whom one is in frequent personal contact' (Schwartz, 2003, p. 268). Respondents were asked whether the two following statements were 'like them', on a scale of 1 (very much like me) to 6 (not like me at all):
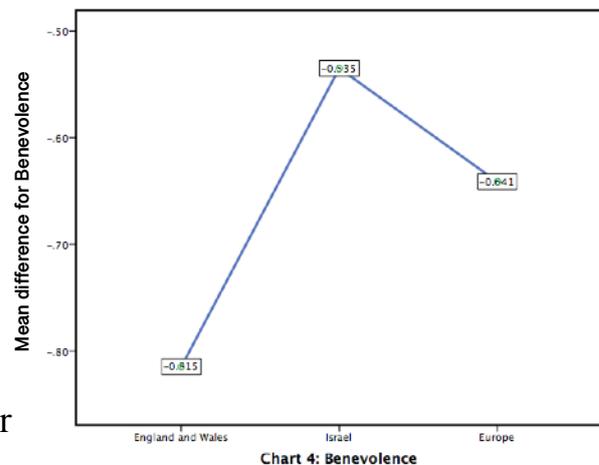
Chart 4: Benevolence

1) Important to help people and care for others' well-being; and

2) Important to be loyal to friends and devote to people close.

The analysis suggests that respondents in England and Wales are more benevolent than Israeli respondents (F = 100.258; p<.000), with a mean difference of -.27998, as shown in Chart 4. However, there was a difference

in the answers to the two questions. In England and Wales, respondents thought it was more important to help people and care for others' well-being (F = 68.389; p< .000), with a mean of 1.93, compared with a mean of 2.07 in Israel. However, there was no difference in the mean answer regarding the importance of being loyal to friends and close ones (F = 15.653; mean = 1.85; p< .994).

A greater number of Israeli respondents (F(2431) = 118.251; Mean = 2.72; p< .000) indicated that they felt closer to people in their local area than respondents in England and Wales did (F(1980) = 118.251; Mean = 2.40; p< .000). In Israel, 61.5% of respondents either 'agreed strongly' or 'agreed', compared to 49.6% in England and Wales and 63.1% in Europe (as shown in Graph 5). Furthermore, a greater number of

Graph 5: Feel close to the people in local ...
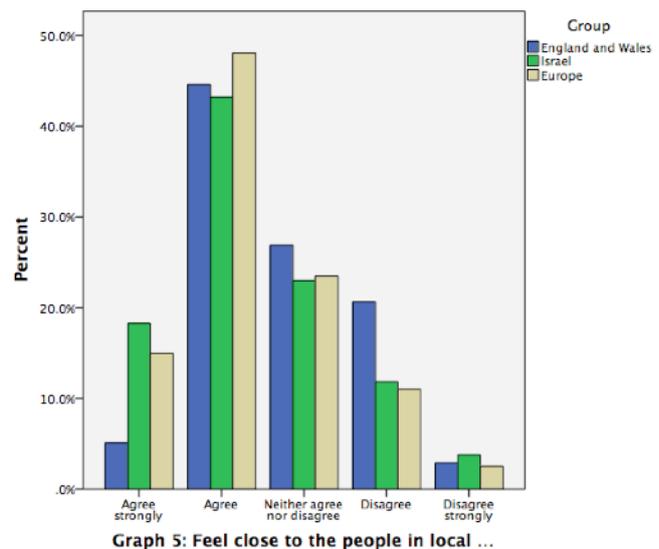
respondents in England and Wales (23.5%) either 'disagreed' or 'disagreed strongly' with that statement, compared with 15.5% in Israel and 13.5% in Europe. Europe (F(49624) = 118.251; Mean = 2.38; p< 1.000) showed a higher sense of closeness to the community than Israel, but the variance was not statistically significant.

In addition to the issues above, I was interested to learn more about attitudes towards pursuing life goals in each society. Schwartz's (2003, p. 268) value of self-direction refers to choosing one's own goals, having independent thought and action, creativity and curiosity. An ANOVA test suggests that respondents in England and Wales attribute greater importance towards
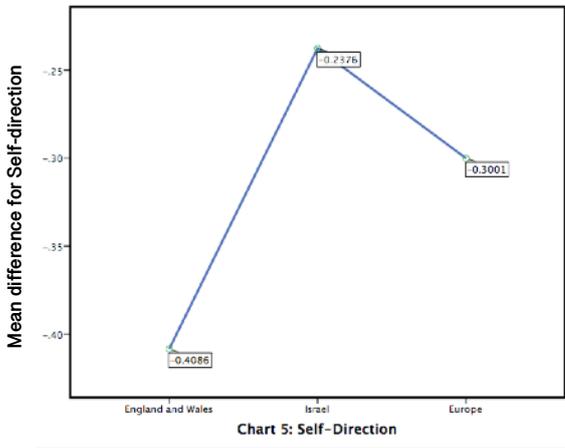
Chart 5: Self-Direction

self-direction; choosing their own goals and independence (F = 28.353; p<. 000), with a mean difference of -.17101 from Israeli respondents, as shown in Chart 5. In addition to Schwartz's value, I examined whether respondents thought they had a sense of direction in their lives. The data from the ESS indicates that Israeli respondents (F= 24.731; p< .000) expressed a greater sense of direction than respondents from England and Wales (see Graph 6). The mean answer in Israel was

Graph 6: Have a sense of direction in your...
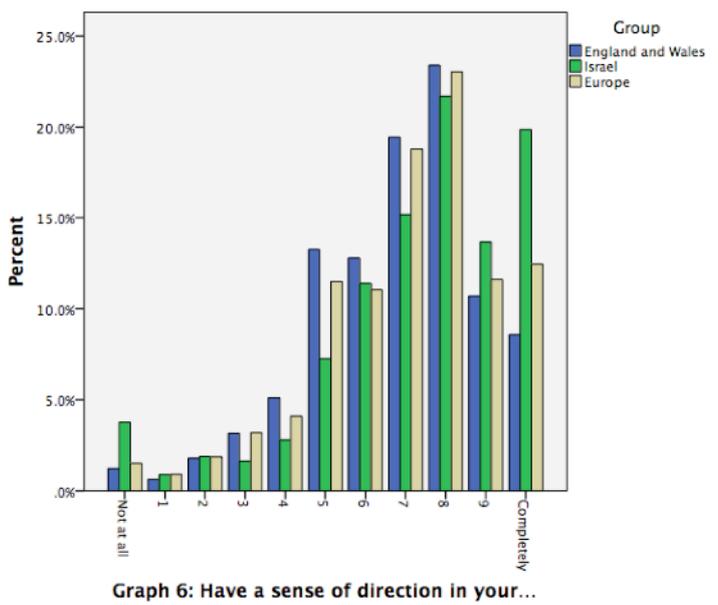
7.27, compared with 6.82 in England and Wales and 6.99 in Europe, while the differences across the three groups were statistically significant (F= 24.731; p< .000). The answers are spread out, however, in England and Wales, 19.3% ranked number 9 or 10 on the scale of a sense of direction in their life, compared with 33% in Israel. Furthermore, almost 20% of Israeli respondents answered 'completely', compared with 8.6% in England and Wales. In Europe, 12.5% answered 'completely' to this question, thus also implying a greater sense of direction than England and Wales.

Respondents in the two countries also expressed a different attitudes towards achievement, which is described by Schwartz (2003, p. 268) as ambition towards personal success and demonstrating competence in accordance with social standards. Respondents were asked whether it was important to show abilities and be admired; and important to be

Chart 6: Achievement

successful and that people recognised achievements. The analysis indicated that Israeli respondents were more oriented towards personal success and personal ambition than those in England and Wales (F = 352.461; Mean difference = .57322; p<.000), as shown in Chart 6.
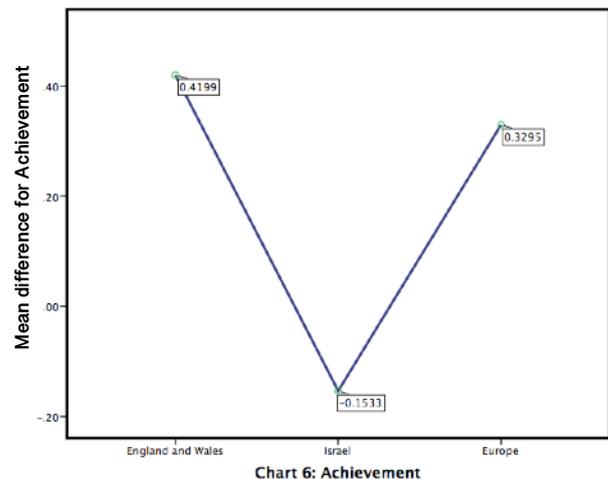
Israeli respondents also expressed a greater materialistic attitude than respondents from England and Wales. Schwartz (2003, p. 268) defines the value of power as valuing social status and prestige; wealth; control or dominance; and preserving one's public image (Schwartz, 2003, p. 268). Respondents in the ESS were asked whether it was important to be rich, have money and expensive things, and important to gain respect from
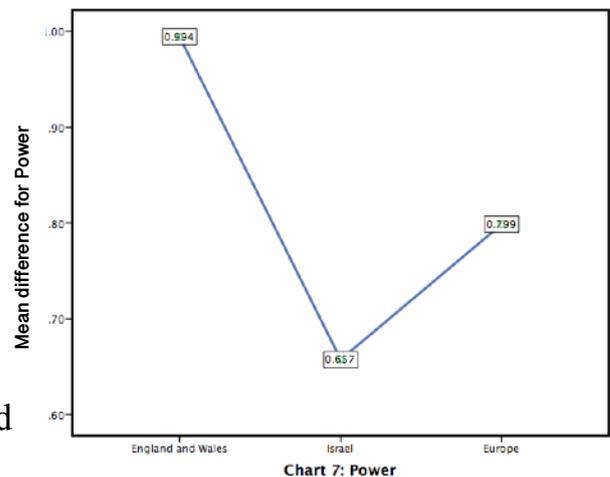
Chart 7: Power

others. As shown in Chart 7, Israelis scored higher on the power value compared with English and Wales respondents (F = 73.566; Mean difference = .33700; p<.000). In short, success (especially material) and being recognised as successful was valued more by Israelis than respondents from England and Wales.

Israel and England and Wales also differed in their attitudes towards Schwartz's concepts of stimulation and hedonism. Stimulation refers to a social tendency towards excitement and having a varied and exciting life (Schwartz, 2003, p. 268). Respondents were asked whether it was important to try new and different things in life; and important to seek adventures and have an exciting life (on a scale on 1 to 6). As shown in Chart 8, more respondents from England and Wales reported that it was

important to them to seek a varied and exciting life, which was a statistically significant difference than Israeli respondents' (F = 7.956; Mean difference = -.12096; p<.000).

Chart 8: Stimulation
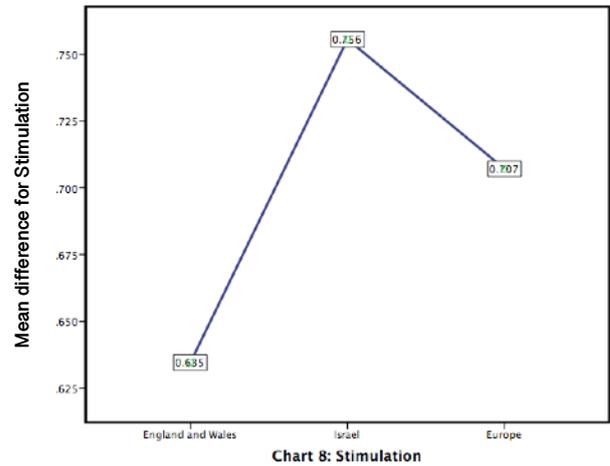
Next, hedonism refers to personal pleasure, enjoying life, sensual gratification, and self-indulgence. As shown in Chart 9, the ANOVA test suggests that Israeli respondents reported a greater tendency towards hedonism than respondents in England and Wales; asserting that it was like them to seek personal pleasure (F = 51.198; Mean difference = .29139; p<.000).

Chart 9: Hedonism
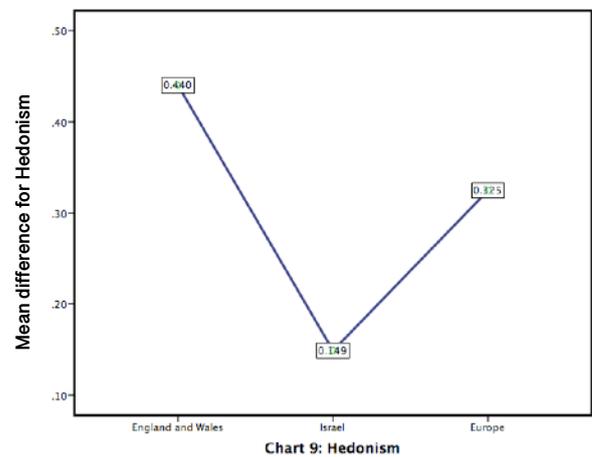
Summary of findings from the ESS

Table 5.1 provides a summary of the main difference and similarities between the two groups of interest of this study – England and Wales and Israel. Respondents in England and Wales reported a greater orientation towards accepting customs and traditions of their culture than Israeli respondents (tradition in Table 5.1) and greater tolerance towards understanding others and equality (universalism in Table 5.1). Furthermore,

a greater number of respondents from England and Wales thought it was important to be helpful, responsible, and to preserve the welfare of others (benevolence in Table 5.1). Respondents from England and Wales also reported it was more like them to choose their own goals, have independent thought, and creativity (self-direction in Table 5.1), and they valued a varied and exciting life (stimulation in Table 5.1) more than Israeli respondents.

Table 5.1: Summary of cultural values

Cultural Values	Higher Score	Similar Attitude	Lower Score
Tradition	England and Wales		Israel
Benevolence	England and Wales		Israel
Universalism	England and Wales		Israel
Self-Direction	England and Wales		Israel
Stimulation	England and Wales		Israel
Hedonism	Israel		England and Wales
Achievement	Israel		England and Wales
Power	Israel		England and Wales
Conformity		✔️	
Religion	Israel		England and Wales
Free to decide		✔️	
Meet with friends and family	Israel		England and Wales
Discuss personal matters	England and Wales		Israel
People in local area	Israel		England and Wales
Sense of direction	Israel		England and Wales

However, Israeli respondents valued personal pleasure (hedonism in Table 5.1) more than respondents from England and Wales and thought personal and material success, along with social recognition of being successful, was

important (achievement and power in Table 5.1). Respondents in both countries thought it was important to restrain one's actions and impulses which could violate social expectations (conformity in Table 5.1), yet similarly reported that they were free to decide how to live their life (free to decide in Table 5.1). Indeed, it seems that the two countries share a similar attitude with regard to these issues, despite the greater degree of religiosity reported by Israeli respondents (religion in Table 5.1). Israeli respondents also reported having a greater sense of direction in their lives than respondents from England and Wales (sense of direction in Table 5.1). A greater number of Israelis reported meeting with friends and family on a weekly basis and that they felt closer to people in their local area (meeting with friends and family and people in local area in Table 5.1). However, more respondents from England and Wales stated that they had people to discuss intimate matters with (discuss personal matters in Table 5.1).

5.6 Summary

It is a tangled life in Israel – that is, there are multiple factors that tie together and pull in different directions. Three noticeable characteristics in Israel are the constant push-and-pull between Mediterranean and western values; the role of religious values in impacting everyday life for all Israelis; and the dominance of the army in the public domain. Furthermore, serving in the army is a 'rite of passage' during adolescence years when parents often become more involved in a young person's life. Life in Israel

involves an ongoing friction between ultra-Orthodox and the non-Orthodox and between different ethnic groups, as well as frequent wars and a sense of threat. What joins the majority of Israelis together is a sense of a 'Jewish identity' with a history of persecution and a sense of threat because of one's ethnicity.

Inequality in Israel between different segments of society is greater than the UK, where ultra-Orthodox and Arab-Israelis earned far less than Jewish-Israelis. Furthermore, poverty rates are higher and double those in the UK, while unemployment rates are similar in the two countries. Household structures in Israel typically include two parents and a child, compared with England and Walsh which had a lower number of dependent children in a typical household. In addition, Israelis report being more social, meeting friends and family members more often, as well as expressing a greater sense of closeness with their community.

A notable characteristic in England and Wales is an appreciation of keeping to tradition and customs, supported by the analysis of the ESS. Everyday life in England and Wales seems to 'fall into a system', where the manner in which something is done is more organised and stable across different circumstances. In a similar way to Israel, life in the UK is characterised by inner contrasts, and national identity involves comparing oneself against another British-person, who represents a different type of British

sensibility. Social distinctions are made within England between north and south, what was then and what is now, Labour or Conservative, and different classes. Both the UK and Israel are multicultural and have to 'coexist' or 'strike a balance' between different groups of people; however, the analysis of the ESS suggests respondents in England and Wales value tolerance and equality towards people to a greater degree than Israeli respondents, which may provide some insight into how different segments of society interact in each country (that is, whether social interactions are more moderate, as in England, or more 'heated' as in Israel).

Chapter Six

A COMPARATIVE REVIEW OF CRIME

AND JUSTICE

Crime and justice in England and Israel make for an interesting topic for comparison. Israel is based on the English model of criminal justice but, as the social context and political climate vary between them, two different paradigms of justice have emerged over time. There are particularly compelling contrasts in the views around why individuals offend, rehabilitation, and how individuals desist from crime, and also how these issues relate to the delivery of justice in each country (for an in depth discussion of cultural attitude towards offending and desistance see Chapter 8). In this chapter, I explore how justice is mobilised in each country and the social context created for offenders and desisters. I start with an overview of the social climate around crime and justice in each country, a topic that has been addressed frequently in British literature and is only briefly reviewed here. I argue that, while England and Wales saw a decline of the 'rehabilitative ideal' and a growing dominance of risk management, managerialism, and 'what works' approaches, Israel saw an expansion of the 'rehabilitative ideal' alongside the introduction of 'what works' approaches.

Thereafter, I turn to critically compare central aspects of each criminal justice system, namely, discretion in the courts and sentencing; swiftness of criminal justice processes; privatisation of prisons and probation services; and rates of imprisonment. In particular, I note that Israeli judges have greater discretion in sentencing and the court process is slower than the process in England and Wales. Following that discussion, I provide a more detailed description of supervision in the community and compare the approaches in each country, the assumptions that underpin each approach, and interpret the language used in official documents.

I note that policy in England and Wales provides a utilitarian justification for the rehabilitation of offenders, underpinned by a wish to protect the public and reduce the associated costs, while Israel frames rehabilitation as a medical practice by professionals that is a 'public good' because it reduces reoffending, which has a utilitarian underpinning as well. I turn to official statistics to summarise the trends in crime and justice in each country, before turning to a brief analysis of data from the European Social Survey regarding respondents' attitudes towards crime and justice in each country. The analysis indicates that Israeli respondents are worried less about becoming a victim of violence or burglary and express a greater feeling of safety after dark. Israeli respondents also expressed a stricter

attitude towards obeying the law and a more punitive attitude to sentencing, while expressing lower levels of trust in justice.

6.1 Social climates

The penal system in England and Wales had experienced continuing changes over the second half of the twentieth century and I only discuss some of the central changes herein. In the late 1970s, two processes occurred almost simultaneously in England and Wales – the legitimacy of rehabilitation came under serious doubt and worry about crime increasingly dominated the political and public sphere (Bottoms & McWilliams, 1979; Robinson, 1999; Raynor, 2008). The 'individual treatment model' that marked correctional settings before the 1960s had been criticised for being theoretically faulty, capable of injustice, and ineffective in reducing recidivism, all of which had questioned the legitimacy of rehabilitation and brought a decline in the 'rehabilitative ideal' (see, Allen, 1959; Bottoms & McWilliams, 1979; McNeill, 2014; Robinson, 1999; 2014; Ward & Maruna, 2007).

Concerns about the effectiveness of rehabilitation were raised by Martinson (1974) whose work was interpreted as suggesting that 'nothing works' with offenders, which brought a gust of pessimism and undermined patient-led criminal justice policy in prisons and probation (Burnett & McNeill, 2005; Loader, 2006; Robinson & Crow, 2009). The treatment model (patient-led

criminal justice policy) was based on the assumption that both the causes of and the 'cure' for crime can be discovered and treated, thereby relieving society of crime (Raynor & Robinson, 2005). However, this assumption was criticised for giving insufficient consideration to social and structural factors that are associated with crime and for tying treatment and rehabilitation to justice and sentencing, which raises moral problems and can result in injustices (see Bottoms & McWilliams, 1979; McNeill, 2014).

However, rehabilitation work did not disappear completely from criminal justice settings and the emergence of a neo-classical perspective in political discourse, which prompted the view that offenders are rational actors, brought a renewed optimism to reducing recidivism (Robinson, 1999). The 'nothing works' cry led to the question of 'what works?' where proponents argued that rehabilitation was not given a fair trial and proposed an evidence-based approach in rehabilitation work (Raynor & Robinson, 2005; Ward & Maruna, 2007). Slightly different looking and more closely aligned to 'what works' and an evidence-based paradigm, rehabilitation in criminal justice settings was reshaped to the new political and social context (Robinson, 1999). The search for 'effective' practice opened the door for cognitive-behavioural programmes in criminal justice settings, often referred to as Offending Behaviour Programmes (OBPs), and welcomed the rise of the Risk-Need-Responsively Model (RNR) as an

approach to work with offenders (see Bonta & Andrews, 2007; Raynor & Robinson, 2005).

The development of OBPs saw the adaptation and application of psychological explanations for crime into a cognitive behavioural approach aimed at facilitating change, where the offender is seen as an active agent who is *responsible* for their behaviour and an active participant in their own rehabilitation (Robinson & Crow, 2009). Commentators critique these programmes for having a 'one-size-fits-all' 'quality' which can disregard the particular circumstances surrounding each individual case; the complex process that individuals may undergo; and for masking the power relations that inform criminalisation (see Kendall, 2004; McNeill et al., 2012; Robinson & Crow, 2009). Furthermore, although the 'what-works' paradigm saw a re-emergence of rehabilitation and renewed optimism about 'effective practice', this occurred alongside a more punitive penal policy guided by managerialism (Burnett & McNeill, 2005). At the heart of managerialism, Robinson (2016, pp. 34-35) notes, is the idea and practice of *systemisation* where sanctions and measures that serve the needs of the penal system become legitimised, 'firmly embedded and taken-for-granted'.

Around the same time as rehabilitation was reshaped in England and Wales, concerns about crime rates were highlighted in political discourse (especially around the 1980s), which gave rise to a penal policy based on

'just dessert', deterrence, and retribution (Cavadino & Dignan, 2006; Garland, 2001; Loader, 2006). Longer prison sentences became more popular and community sanctions were seen by the public as a 'soft' option (Farrall, Bottoms, & Shapland, 2010). England and Wales also saw a rise in the 'risk agenda', which sought to primitively detect, evaluate, and categorise risk to protect the public from future harm (Farrall, Bottoms, & Shapland, 2010). With time, protecting the public and managing risk became increasingly embedded within criminal justice practices and the two concepts showed a growing influence over the manner in which rehabilitation was delivered (McNeill & Beyens, 2013; Raynor, 2008; Raynor, Ugwudike, & Vanstone, 2014; Robinson, 2016). As Robinson (1999, p. 429) identified, rehabilitation and the risk agenda are two concepts that both complement and compete with each other in the development of criminal justice policy and work with offenders in England and Wales

In 2014, the Ministry of Justice introduced 'Transforming Rehabilitation', an innovation which signified another extensive reform to the work with offenders in England and Wales. The innovation sought to implement the following:

1) Introduce 'through the prison gate' resettlement services that offers continuous support from custody into the community;

2) Extend statutory supervision to all offenders sentenced to less than 12 months in custody;

3) Privatise the Probation Service and delegate the work with offenders categorised as medium and low risk to private companies; and

4) Develop a new national public sector probation service that works with offenders categorised as high risk.

(Ministry of Justice, 2013, pp. 6-7).

The overreaching aims of the innovation and the underlying rationale that prompted this change are discussed below in more detail. I briefly mention here, however, that the Ministry of Justice introduced this change to lower recidivism rates, lower the costs carried by the criminal justice system, and in search of effective practice of 'offender rehabilitation' (Ministry of Justice, 2013).

In contrast to the paradigm shifts in England and Wales, crime was less prominent in the political discourse in Israel during the second half of the twentieth century and was (perhaps still is) overshadowed by political discussions around the Arab-Israeli conflict (Hassin & Horovitz, 2012; Weiss, 2001). Indeed, political and public debates about crime and justice are less frequent in Israeli media, politics, and criminal justice institutions than in England and Wales. Furthermore, a critical examination of criminal

justice institutions is less popular in academic discourse[20] in Israel and, instead, academic discourse is concerned with the manner in which offenders can be rehabilitated and how to deliver treatment. While I point to existing literature in Israel, I rely on my own observations to frame the social climate around crime, punishment, and rehabilitation, as the majority of the literature is not up to date, nor does it discuss the subject matter in depth.

I argue that, in contrast to England and Wales which saw a decline of the 'rehabilitative ideal', Israel saw an expansion of the 'rehabilitative ideal' alongside the introduction of 'what works' approaches. In particular, the view that the causes of crime can be treated and 'corrected' through psychological means did not lose its appeal in Israel and broadened to include cognitive behavioural components in treatment and interventions, inspired by a 'what works' paradigm. Furthermore, the risk agenda had not shaped criminal justice interventions in Israel, yet. Israel, thus, remained more focused on the offender (rather than protecting future victims) and more reliant on the treatment (or correctional) model of offender rehabilitation, which views the offender as having little insight into their problems and seeks to undo the causes of crime by way of treatment (see Burnett & McNeill, 2005; Raynor & Robinson, 2005).

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[20] See Healy (2016) for a similar observation about academic discourse in the Republic of Ireland.

Compared with England and Wales, the penal system in Israel underwent far fewer changes. Throughout the 1970s and into the 1990s, prisons in Israel were seen as an effective institution to reform offenders, but in 1998 (following a committee's recommendation assigned by the Israeli government in 1981), prisons were classified as a place where punishment was 'carried out' and as an unsuitable institution for rehabilitation (Timor, 2011). However and somewhat paradoxically, as cognitive behavioural approaches became more popular around the world, the end of the 1990s saw an increase in programmes aimed at rehabilitation in Israeli prisons and probation settings, some of which draw from a cognitive-behavioural paradigm (Bialer & Peled, 2011; Hovav, 2012; Timor, 2011).

The 'misalignment' between government reform and criminal justice practices exemplify a typical aspect in Israeli justice; that is, criminal justice practice is more 'messy', less systematised, and policies are not always executed in the way intended. Healy's (2016) discussion on the evolution of probation supervision in the Republic of Ireland identified that the absence of a formal management structure that oversees the response to offenders had contributed to the stability of probation practice over the years. Innovations in probation practice were mainly brought forth by proactive criminal justice actors and the system, as a whole, underwent less change than England and Wales did (Healy, 2016). In a similar way to the Republic of Ireland, Israel is less managerial than England and Wales and

there is less coordination across different agencies in the country. A similar trend may take place in Israel as in the Republic of Ireland, where innovations in criminal justice settings are brought forth by personnel 'on the ground', which can explain why the system remained more flexible and more stable over the years, compared with England and Wales.

Alongside the growth of programmes aimed at rehabilitation, there was a growing public concern in Israel around criminal justice response to sex offenders, which received attention towards the end of the 1990s (Shechory, Ben David, & Hovav, 2010). Political debates around how to protect the public from sex offenders and the effectiveness of the current response legitimised monitoring sex offenders, assessing 'dangerousness' in criminal justice settings and developing 'effective' psychological treatment (Shechory, Ben David, & Hovav, 2010). It is through this door – public worry about sex offenders – that the risk agenda and monitoring practices 'sneaked in' to the Israeli criminal justice system. However, a political agenda of managing risk and monitoring offenders has not (yet) extended to other types of crime, and does not drive policies and practices in the Israeli criminal justice system as a whole.

At the start of my fieldwork in the fall of 2015, I was informed by an office manager in the Israeli Probation Service that the government would be introducing a new system of categorising offenders according to their level

of risk (high, medium, or low) in 2016. Oddly, however, the new approach does not categorise offenders by the severity of risk or risk of reoffending. Rather, I was informed by the probation manager that the risk level is determined by the amount of work (i.e. time and effort) and resources required of the probation service or officer to rehabilitate them. It seems that the focus of this new approach remains on offenders, the resources they require, and the efficiency of the probation services, rather than arising out of a wish to manage risk of future victims. In some respects, this change is troubling, partly because the label of risk is tied to 'how much work' or treatment an individual is 'in need of' to rehabilitate. It is a system that is dependent on professionals' views of individuals' characteristics, that are not necessarily related to offending behaviour, to evaluate how much effort it will take to 'change' and thus rehabilitate an offender. This view can open the door to the categorisation of risk in accordance with anti-social behaviour or ways of thought seen as 'not-appropriate-in-Israel', which may be intrusive and can raise moral problems related to the power dynamics (see Kendall, 2004; McNeill, 2014; McNeill et al., 2012). It is unclear at the moment how this policy may have changed the reorganisation of the probation services, and it raises questions about the impact of the policy on the experience of probationers and public attitude toward them.

The response to crime in Israel can be delivered by way of punishment, or by way of treatment and supervision in the community which aims to 'correct' the offender, or (because 'systems' in Israel tend to be more 'messy' and flexible) by a mix of the two. The latter two approaches hold an underlying assumption that public protection is delivered by treating and reintegrating the offender in the community (see Weinstein, 2017), while less restrictions and prohibitions are placed on the offender's behaviour, as a way of protecting the public, as in England (see Österman, 2018). That said, Hassin and Horovitz (2012) argue that the general trends in the west of 'just dessert' have been increasingly influential in Israel and that there are signs of 'law and order' policies emerging. Hassin and Horovitz (2012) point to changing patterns of sentencing and increasing punitive attitude amongst judges and other criminal justice actors. Contrary to Hassin and Horovitz's observation, Israel has also seen an increase of therapeutic community courts and therapeutic approaches in courts, prisons, and probation settings (see Adult Probation Service, 2017; Bialer & Peled, 2011; Hovav, 2012; Timor, 2011).

6.2 Comparing Criminal Justice Systems

In this section, I describe the courts, prison systems, and community rehabilitation companies in England and the adult probation service in Israel. Instead of overburdening the chapter with details, I highlight themes relating to both criminal justice systems and themes which relate to the

narratives of participants in this study. These are discretion of criminal justice actors, speed of justice, and privatisation of criminal justice institutions. Thereafter, I expand on the work with offenders in the context of supervision in the community and compare the approaches in the two countries.

6.2.1 Discretion

Both countries have an adversarial judicial system, however, unlike England and Wales, there is no jury system in Israel and, in some cases, there is more than one judge who oversees the proceedings (Bensinger, 1982; Bentwich, 1964; Oakland, 2002). Judges in England and Wales have sentencing guidelines that structure judicial discretion and facilitate similar aims in sentencing; these tie patterns of reasoning while leaving some room for judicial discretion (Ashworth, 1998; Roberts, 2011; Wasik, 2008). Over the years, judicial discretion in England and Wales has 'narrowed' as the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 urged judges to follow definitive guidelines in sentencing, rather than only taking them into consideration (Roberts, 2011).

On the other hand, there is wider judicial discretion in the Israeli courts and, before 2012, there were no sentencing guidelines that directed judges (see Korn, 2003). Instead, judges exercised individual judgment while relying on the Israeli Sentencing Law (1977), which outlines appropriate

sanctions and a statutory maximum for each offence (Korn, 2003). In 2012, the Israeli Knesset[21] amended the Sentencing Law (1977) and introduced more structured sentencing guidelines with the aim of producing greater consistency in sentencing outcomes (Ben-Zvi et al., 2014). The amendment required judges to set an appropriate minimum and maximum in each individual case brought to the court before guilt is determined, while they are also free to deviate from that range in cases where they have good reason for doing so (Ben-Zvi et al., 2014). Hence, judges in Israel determine an appropriate minimum and maximum of sentence in each individual case – in consultation with the Sentencing Law (1977) – and are permitted to deviate from the range which they, themselves, determined for reasons that often relate to: 1) severity of offence; 2) or perceived 'rehabilitative value' in deviating from that range (see Ben-Zvi et al., 2014, pp. 13-14). Although the sentencing guidelines introduced in 2012 suggest a move towards a more structured sentencing practice, judicial discretion and an individualised approach prevails in Israel and marks the court process which, as Roberts (2011) notes, can lead to greater inconsistency in sentencing, as well as opening the door to discrimination (see Fishman & Rattner, 2006 on discrimination in Israel).

A judge or lay magistrates can impose a range of sanctions in England and Wales and Israel, ranging from imprisonment, suspended sentences, probation, community orders, fines, or any combination of these; however,

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[21] Knesset is the Israeli national legislature chamber.

unlike England and Wales, there are no indeterminate sentences in Israel (Korn, 2003; ONS, 2010; Padfield, 2006; Sebba, 2013). Prisoners in Israel are automatically eligible for parole after one-third of time served (Korn, 2003), while prisoners in England and Wales may be eligible for parole at different points of their sentence (Padfield, 2006).

6.2.2 Swiftness and discretion

It is probably safe to assume that, generally speaking, criminal justice systems around the world prefer to be efficient rather than inefficient. England and Wales, however, exhibits greater 'urgency' than Israel for delivering justice in a swift and efficient manner. In 2012, the Ministry of Justice published a White Paper titled 'Swift and Sure Justice: The Government's Plans for Reform of the Criminal Justice System'. The paper set out to tackle delays and inefficiencies in the criminal process and to minimise the time between the commission of an offence to sentencing (Ministry of Justice, 2012a). In 2011, it took approximately five months from an offence to sentence in England and Wales (Ministry of Justice, 2012a, p. 13), a far quicker timeframe than the Israeli criminal justice process.

There are no official public data in Israel on the average length of time between the commission of an offence to sentence. However, in 2014 the media published a declaration by the Israeli Minister of Law and

Sentencing to end the 'torture' to citizens and defendants carried out by the tardiness of the Israeli courts (see Fridson, 2014). The minister promised to decrease the time taken to try a person in court to a maximum of three-and-a-half to six months (Fridson, 2014). It is unclear, however, how long it took the Israeli courts to try a person before the minister's declaration, how long the criminal process takes as a whole, and whether the Israeli courts have become more efficient since 2014. It is important to note that the minister's promise extends only to the point of determining guilt or innocence (see Fridson, 2014), and I did not find literature indicating there is a political agenda to shorten the timeframe between an indictment to trial or from guilt to the sentencing procedure.

According to an Israeli Probation Service manager, judges in Israel have discretion during sentencing, and they can use it to informally defer or postpone a sentence. Judges are more inclined to do so in cases where they believe there can be rehabilitative consequences to delaying sentencing and, in such cases, set a court date for sentencing (and/or to evaluate a person's progress) in the future.[22] During that time, individuals who have been convicted spend their time with the Israeli Probation Service where they receive treatment and, before the next court date, a probation officer in charge of a case prepares a progress report to advise the judge about a sentence.[23] For example, a probation officer can advise that the offender

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[22] From conversations with probation service manager during fieldwork.

[23] From conversations with probation service manager during fieldwork.

spends more time with the probation service for the purpose of therapy and rehabilitation; or advise a prison sentence in case the probation officer is less optimistic about the chances of rehabilitation; advocate for probation in addition to prison; or report that the individual has done exceptionally well with the probation service.[24]

The judge relies on the review of a probation officer to then determine a sentence and, thus, there are 'intermediate cases' in the Israeli courts where the probation service starts to administer a sanction or a measure before the judge sets a sentence. In this manner, rehabilitation and sentencing are tied in these cases and the future of the offender – as I was told by a probation service manager – may change in accordance with one's progress in terms of therapy. Legally, judges have no jurisdiction to compel a person to undertake therapy, but in practice, judges use their discretion to postpone the next court date, encourage therapy and see how a probationer progresses.[25] It is important to stress that unlike some European countries where there is legislation concerning a delay of sentencing for the purpose of rehabilitation (see Durnescu, 2011), the measure discussed here is informal and does not follow specific legislation.

I was told by Israeli Probation Service personnel that the range of time that the court normally postpones a sentence for is between six to 12 months;

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[24] The examples are drawn from the sanctions imposed of Israeli participants in this study.

[25] From conversations with probation service manager during fieldwork.

however, after speaking to probationers, I suspect that in some instances it can be longer. As discussed in Chapter 7, before the judge declares a sentence, probationers in Israel are in a sort of 'liminal stage' where their future is unclear and progress in therapy is elevated in importance. Linking sentencing to rehabilitation, as Rotman (1994) pointed out, could lead to a disproportionate sentence where the punishment administrated is beyond what is deserved and raises moral problems related to consent and authoritarian treatment, an issue I explore in section 6.2.4 of this chapter and in Chapter 7. Furthermore, it was these moral issues and injustices that underlined some of the criticism towards the 'rehabilitative ideal' in England and Wales in the 1970s (Bottoms & McWilliams, 1979).

6.2.3 Privatisation and prisons

The HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) is an executive agency of the Ministry of Justice responsible for delivering prison and supervision of offenders across England and Wales. As prisons and the supervision of offenders are run in part by private companies, HMPPS also commission 14 private sector prisons (out of 120) and Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs), which replaced the Probation Trusts in 2014 (NOMS, 2014a). The National Probation Service (NPS) works with those categorised as high risk offenders, while delegating the work with those categorised as medium and low risk to CRCs spread across the country (NOMS, 2014a). In 2009 in Israel, privatisation was declared by the

Supreme Court as undercutting basic human rights and Israeli law, which brought to a close any debate around privatising prisons in Israel (Harding, 2012). Traditionally, all prison services were managed by the Israeli Army (Israeli Defence Force), but in 2008 the Israeli Prison Service (IPS), a national organisation, overtook the responsibility for all prison facilities throughout the country. There are 32 incarceration facilities in Israel, 21 of which are for criminal offenders, including one prison for young men under the age of 18 and another prison for women, all of which are within the jurisdiction of the IPS (IPS, 2014c; IPS Statistics, 2013).

The prison population in England and Wales has seen a dramatic growth and almost doubled between the years 1993 to 2012 (NOMS, 2014d). A report by the HM Chief Inspector of Prisons in 2014 unveiled (once again) the grim conditions in prisons and noted that the pressure on public prisons is high, especially since HMPPS reduced the running costs of public sector prisons by 4% in 2014. The continuing political pressure to reduce costs contributed to an overcrowded prison population and played a crucial role in the deterioration of safety in prisons (HM Inspector of Prisons, 2014). HM Chief Inspector stated that adult male prisons are becoming more violent every year and self-inflicted deaths and self-harm have increased since 2005 (HM Inspectorate of Prisons, 2014). In 2016, there were 324 deaths in male prisons (an increase of 44 deaths from the previous year) and an increase of 24% for reported self-harm, which suggests that self-

harm is rising within the prisons at an alarming rate (HM Inspector of Prisons, 2017, p. 20).

Unfortunately, there is no autonomous inspection agency in Israel that produces annual reports of prisons conditions, nor did the country sign the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (Harding, 2012). Since the end of the 1950s to 2010, there has been a rise of 1,180% in the number of prisoners in Israel (Timor, 2011). However, since the 1980s there has been a consistent drop in incarceration rates, which is partly attributed to a reduction in the number of Palestinian prisoners (Korn, 2003). Korn (2003) notes that there was an increase in Israeli citizen prisoners in the 1980s and 1990s, while there were no major changes in sentencing structure or legislation that directly explain the rise.

The Human Development Index indicates that imprisonment rates between the years 2002-2013 were far higher in Israel than in the United Kingdom – 223 per 100,000 people in Israel and 148 per 100,000 people in the United Kingdom (United Nations, 2014, p. 204). The vast majority of those imprisoned in 2013 (more than 1,800 people) in Israel were sentenced for up to four to five years and under 100 people were sentenced to 20 years or more (IPS Statistics, 2013). Furthermore, in 2013, most persons in adult Israeli prisons were between the ages of 22 to 44, with a more noticeable decrease in the age of imprisonment after the age of 45 (IPS Statistics,

2013). In England and Wales, the average custodial sentence has increased from one year and nine months in 1998 to approximately two years in 2008 (ONS, 2010, p. 124) and half of the adult prison population in 2013 were between the ages of 25 to 39, with a more noticeable decrease after the age of 50 (Berman & Dar, 2013, p. 9).

6.2.4 'Zooming in' on supervision in the community

It is difficult to draw clear boundaries around the concept of supervision, as its practices and aims vary across countries and, thus, its exact meaning is vague (McNeill & Beyens, 2013). For example, supervision can refer to a sanction that is implemented as a way to divert from prison, or to indicate a licence period after a person has been released from prison; supervision can be imposed as a way of monitoring offenders with the aim of public protection, or for the purpose of providing support and treatment with the purpose of rehabilitation, or as a form of non-custodial punishment, or all of the above (McNeill & Beyens, 2013). Hence, the word 'supervision' can be used as an umbrella term for a wide range of interventions and, thereby, mask the objectives of supervision practice and the underlying assumptions across countries.

The meaning of supervision indeed varies between England and Israel and, in this thesis, I use the word supervision to refer to prison diversion; authoritarian treatment; supervision for evaluation and advising the courts;

electronic monitoring; urine samples; 'drop-ins'; 'paying-back' to the community with unpaid work; release on licence; post-prison supervision; and more. Next, I describe supervision of offenders in each country and situate the values that underpin rehabilitation practices and interventions (see Ward & Maruna, 2007, p. 34). Furthermore, I provide an example of official discourse by interpreting the language used in official documents by the Ministry of Justice and then by the Israeli Probation Service.[26]

England

Supervision in England and Wales has changed much over the years (Burnett & McNeill, 2005; Raynor, 2008; Robinson, 2014; Robinson & Raynor, 2005). For decades, one-to-one work and the 'supervisory relationship' marked supervision practice, yet changes in the political and social climate (described above) continuously marginalised the relationship between probation officers and those supervised during the 1980s (Burnett & McNeill, 2005). As the relationship changed, the definition of practitioners also changed from 'probation officers' – that are there to befriend and provide assistance for a testing period – to 'offender managers' (Herzog-Evans, 2013). Herzog-Evans (2013) notes that this change signaled a shift in attention from the practical help a probationer may require towards managing an offender's behaviour and implied a move towards managerialism. Furthermore, Herzog-Evans (2013) notes that the

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[26] It is important to note that the Israeli Probation Service is composed of an adult and a youth service, and, in this thesis, I explore and discuss the Adult Israeli Probation Service only.

change in the definition of practitioners signifies the greater emphasis placed on risk of further offending and the personal responsibility on those supervised to avoid further offending (Herzog-Evans, 2013). It is worth noting, however, that a recent study by Robinson et al. (2014) found that although risk had become embedded in the culture of supervision in England and Wales, it had not displaced practitioners' view that offenders need a tailored approach whereby the relationship between the manager and probationer is the main tool to help them refrain from crime.

In March 2014, the Offender Rehabilitation Act came into effect which (amongst other things) extended statutory supervision after the completion of the licence period for all those sentenced for two years or less (NOMS, 2014b). As noted above, this was part of the Transforming Rehabilitation initiative and the statutory supervision aims to extend the scope of rehabilitation to recidivist offenders that are often imprisoned for short periods, but have no social support upon release (Ministry of Justice, 2013). As the Ministry of Justice notes, the objective is to 'reach as many offenders as possible with our rehabilitative services, and especially those most likely to reoffend' (Ministry of Justice, 2013, pp. 8-9). Transforming Rehabilitation is described by the Ministry of Justice as a 'fresh' approach to rehabilitation where the delegation of work to private companies would encourage efficiency and where the payment by results would facilitate effective practice in reducing the high recidivism rates of offenders

(Ministry of Justice, 2013, p. 3). There are two overarching chief aims to the Transforming Rehabilitation initiative – reducing reoffending and protecting the public. The reasoning underlying reducing reoffending is described as follows:

'Reoffending rates are too high. Whilst we continue to tolerate so many offenders passing through the justice system and going on to commit more crimes, we are in fact tolerating more victims, greater cost to the taxpayer and further damage to communities. Our reforms are designed to break the cycle of crime.'

Ministry of Justice (2013, p. 9)

In the quote above, the Ministry of Justice frames the need to transform rehabilitation as arising from the high rates of recidivism; the continuing high costs of the criminal justice system; and out of a need to protect future victims from crimes (Robinson, 2016). What is less apparent in this framework is humanitarian language around rehabilitation and support as being a 'social good' on its own merits; rather, the language used implies utilitarian justification of protecting the public and reducing costs in the long term. The report further emphasise the importance of public protection:

'Reducing reoffending is one of the best ways to protect the public. When fewer convicted criminals go on to commit further crimes, there are fewer victims of crime as a result. But we also need a system which has a particular focus on protecting the public. We have been clear that as we work to tackle reoffending rates, we will not take risks with public protection.'

Ministry of Justice (2013, p. 20)

As Garland (2001) observed, the justification for rehabilitation has shifted from focusing on the offender towards protecting potential future victims, and the report certainly implies a focus on potential future victims (also see Robinson & McNeill, 2004). The change in focus was also exhibited by the increase of intensity of supervision in England and Wales in the past few decades and the rise of an 'information society', which broadened the ways individuals are monitored (Farrall, Bottoms, & Shapland, 2010; McNeill & Beyens, 2013).

In recent decades, the number of adult offenders supervised in the community in England and Wales has rapidly grown by 93% between the years 1993 and 2008 (NOMS, 2014d, p. 5). This increase can be attributed in part to the government's objective, in 1984, to lessen the crisis in prisons by applying non-custodial sentences to as many offenders as possible (Raynor, 2008). Furthermore, the mandatory supervision period introduced by Transforming Rehabilitation is likely to widen the net of those experiencing supervision in the community further (Robinson, 2016). In contrast, there was a slight increase of 10% in Israel between the years 2005 and 2014 in the number of people directed to (by the courts for evaluation or for evaluation and treatment) and supervised by the Israeli Adult Probation Service (Weinstein & Ben-Simhon, 2014, p. 453).

In addition to an underlying theoretical stance which implies utilitarian justifications to rehabilitation, the Transforming Rehabilitation initiative invited CRCs to re-conceptualise practices that would produce the desired aims of rehabilitation and public protection. That is, the Ministry of Justice did more than delegate the work that involves monitoring and rehabilitation of offenders to private companies; it also provided these companies with some freedom regarding the design and implementation of rehabilitation or rehabilitative measures. As noted in the report:

'*The delivery of offender services has historically focused too closely on process rather than the impact on offender rehabilitation. We want to incentivise providers to innovate and to make best use of approaches and services that have demonstrated they can work to reduce reoffending. We will remove unnecessary bureaucracy and increase the scope for professionals in our proposed new structure to use their discretion to focus on delivering the support and services needed to turn an individual away from crime. Providers will be freed to do what works to rehabilitate offenders, and incentivised to deliver real results with part of their contract payment dependent on reducing reoffending.*'

Ministry of Justice (2013, p. 13)

Thus, the Ministry of Justice has intentionally 'stepped back' and granted leeway to private companies to implement their own approach to rehabilitation. It seems that the government is making 'a bit of a mess' of the previous system with the intention of incentivising private companies to implement an approach that would 'work best'. In short, it can be said that supervision in England is mobilised by two key objectives that both

compliment and challenge one another: one is concerned with public protection, managing offenders, reducing risk and monitoring; and the other is concerned with reducing re-offending and rehabilitation (see Robinson, 1999; 2016).

Israel

There are two unique features to the Israeli Probation Service: first, it functions under the authority of the Ministry of Social Welfare and Labor, rather than the Ministry of Justice, and secondly, probation officers are trained social workers with a minimum of a bachelor degree in social work (Hassin & Horovitz, 2012, p. 334; Hovav, 2012; Weinstein, 2017). The probation service in Israel was first based on the British Probation of Offenders Act of 1907 and the traditional treatment (or correctional) model (see Raynor & Robinson, 2005) – that had dominated England and Wales in the 1940s-60s – heavily influenced probation work in Israel (Weiss, 2001).

In particular, Israeli probation is characterised by a 'tailored approach' to each probationer or 'treatment recipient', as they are sometimes referred to in Israel (see Weinstein, 2017), with the aim of rehabilitating offenders by way of addressing their 'psychological deficiencies' with psycho-dynamic or cognitive behavioural treatment (see Hovav, 2012). The approach in Israel implies an underlying theoretical stance grounded in positivist thought and depicts offenders (to a greater extent than England) as passive

agents who are shaped by circumstances and the probation services as the professionals able to help offenders address their problems (see Raynor & Robinson, 2005). Within this framework, the reasons for criminal behaviour are rooted 'somewhere inside' the person, and it is by addressing the reasons that caused offending that rehabilitation can then take place. Hence, less attention is given to external obstacles to reintegration since interventions are more concerned with the past, rather than on the 'crime-free' future probationers may be seeking (see Farrall, 2004; Farrall & Maruna, 2004).

In an official document by the Israeli Probation Service 'Rehabilitation in Light of Authorisation', Weinstein (2017, p. 3) notes that the responsibilities of the adult probation services are to provide '*psychosocial assessments, diagnoses, supervision, treatment and rehabilitation services to those involved in criminal acts: accused, suspects, and victims over the age of 18 referred by the law enforcement system*'. In the diagnosis phase that takes place either before or after a verdict, the service provides an assessment of:

1. *'The criminal behaviour in the context of the whole set of personal circumstances, and examination of personal traits, functioning and relationships;*
2. *The extent of the responsibility for the criminal behaviour;*
3. *Motivation and strength to change; and*
4. *Prospects for rehabilitation versus the risk of repeat harming/ offending'*

<div align="right">Weinstein (2017, p. 5)</div>

The language used in this official document is oriented towards assessing 'who the offender is', 'diagnosing' personal traits, the issues they face, and providing them with treatment. The word 'diagnose' denotes a medical lens through which to view offenders and rehabilitation and, among the responsibilities outlined in the first quote, one word (*supervision*) has a managerial context, while the other five suggest a medical practice by professionals. Furthermore, since supervision in Israel is primarily for the purpose of therapy, not every offender is 'eligible' to go through the probation services; rather, the assistance of the probation service is more appropriate where a person has been diagnosed as having a 'potential to change' and, thus, be rehabilitated.

As illustrated in the second quote, the probation service diagnose the criminal behaviour, personal responsibility, motivation and strength to change, and the prospects of the offender changing. The prospect of change, in turn, informs the probation service about the risk associated with the offender spending time in the community. In contrast to England and Wales, which extends supervision in the community to an increasing number of offenders, the Israeli Probation Service is more 'selective' in its decision to intervene – that is, to provide therapy while supervising. It is important to note that while supervision in the community in Israel is, in many cases, described as an alternative to punishment, it can also be

assigned in addition to punishment or for a period of supervision after imprisonment, with the aims of rehabilitation, reintegration, and/or supervision. It is further noted in the official document that the chief objective of the Israeli Adult Probation Service is to minimise:

'*The risk to society by adapting and recommending correction and detention alternatives to the justice system; to rehabilitate, supervise and reintegrate offenders into the community, and to steadily reduce recidivism rates.*'

<div align="right">Weinstein (2017, p. 3).</div>

Similarly to England, Israel is concerned with public protection, however it seems that the focus in Israel remains on rehabilitating the offender, which is seen as a 'public good' because of the prospect of reducing reoffending, thereby achieving utilitarian aims. Arguably, it is this logic – the prospect of reducing reoffending – which in turn justifies delivering rehabilitation by an authoritarian treatment in Israel.[27] Authoritarian treatment seeks, as Rotman (1994) identified, compliance and moulding the offender (including patterns of thoughts and behaviours) by way of coercion. The Israeli probation services describes the relationship between authority and rehabilitation as follows:

'*Probation Officers work towards achieving the rehabilitation processes under their authority and [the] use of this authority serves as a very significant factor in the rehabilitation process.*'

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[27] Further indication of this point can be observed in Hovav (2012, p. 19) and Adult Israeli Probation Service (2017) papers that discuss authoritarian treatment as a legitimate approach in Israel.

Hence, as the quote above suggests, the use of authority is overtly described in Israel as an important tool through which change is encouraged amongst probationers. In Chapter 7 I argue that approaching probationers with psychological pressure to change (in addition to the tardiness of the justice process) resulted in a more pronounced 'shift' in the 'persona' participants presented to the probation service and had impacted the way participants viewed themselves and what they thought they ought to do to desist.

Alongside the official criminal justice agencies in Israel, there are private organisations (some of which are non-profit) which assume some of the responsibility for diagnosing, supervising, treating and/or working with offenders. Some organisations have hostels throughout the country that work with particular offending populations, such as those with sexual offences, drug addiction, youth, and those with domestic or intimate-partner violence offences (Hovav, 2012; Weinstein & Ben-Simhon, 2014). In 2006, electronic monitoring was introduced in Israel for prisoners released on licence or as a substitute for a prison sentence (Shohan et al., 2011). The benefits of electronic monitoring are associated in Israel partly with the reduced costs of placing offenders in prison; the overcrowded prison conditions; and reducing the negative impact that prisons can have

on individuals (Shohan et al., 2011). This change, Shohan et al. (2011) argues, is part of a general trend in western countries of managerialism of the penal system. However, although I would agree with Shohan et al. that electronic monitoring reflects a move towards 'managing offenders' in the community, it seems that the underlying philosophy of probation work in Israel draws attention away from managing risk and towards 'treating' the underlying reasons for offending. It is this theoretical stance that propels supervision interventions in Israel and, thus, also provides insight into its development over time.

6.3 Trends in crime and justice

In this section, I outline data drawn from the police and the courts pertaining to types of offences and types of convictions in England and Wales and Israel. As a result of discrepancies in data gathering in each country, measurements, definitions of crimes, and the limited data available to the public in Israel, I did not include the victim survey in England and chose to compare trends in crime during identical (or almost identical) years.

In 2013, the police reported a decrease of 7% in crime in England and Wales, compared with the previous year, and a 38% decline in crime rates since 2002 (ONS, 2013b, p. 4). As illustrated in Table 6.1, in 2013, approximately 49.6% of all recorded crimes in England and Wales were

property offences, which includes theft and handling of stolen goods, offences involving a vehicle, and burglary, but excluding fraud and robbery (ONS, 2013b, p. 12). Crime involving *violence against another person* in 2013 accounted for 16.1% of all recorded crimes in England and Wales, while 1.4% of recorded crimes were sexual offences (ONS, 2013b, p. 12). Most violent offences were assault with an injury, which accounted for 51.9% of violent offences; followed by assault without an injury (48%) and finally homicide (ONS, 2013b, p. 12). *Public order offences* in England and Wales (which include affray with low levels of violence) accounted for 3.5% in 2013 and '*crimes against society*' (which refers to drug-related offences) accounted for 5.6% of all recorded crime (ONS, 2013b, p. 12).

Similarly, 40% of recorded crimes in Israel in 2013 were *property offences*, however, *public order offences* accounted for 30%, a much higher rate than England and Wales that same year (Statistical Research Division, 2013, p. 50). Public order offences in Israel can include threats, affray, assault against judicial authority, violating the entry law to Israel, and trespassing (ICBS, 2010; Statistical Research Division, 2013). In some cases, a public order offence can be regarded as violence or ancillary violence (ICBS, 2010; Statistical Research Division, 2013). *Violence against a human life* accounted for 13% in Israel in 2013; followed by *crimes against morality* which accounted for 7% of police recorded crime (and includes offences related to prostitution, drug use, drug trafficking, and possession of drugs

not for personal use); and, lastly, 1% of recorded crimes were *sexual offences* (Statistical Research Division, 2013, p. 50). Between the years 2003 to 2008, the number of property crimes declined in Israel by 26% (ICBS, 2010 p. 4), while violent offences increased by 11% between the years 2012 to 2013 (Statistical Research Division, 2013, p. 51).

Table 6.1: Recorded crimes England and Israel

England & Wales: Type of Offences	England & Wales: Recorded Crime	Israel: Type of Offences	Israel: Recorded Crime
Property crime	49.6%	Property crimes	40%
Violence against another person	16.1%	Violence against a human life	13%
Sexual offences	1.4%	Sexual offences	1%
Public order offences	3.5%	Public order	30%
Crimes against society	5.6%	Crimes against morality	7%

As illustrated in Table 6.2, the majority (35%) of convicted adults in 2007 in Israel were convicted for *public order offences*; followed by *violence against a human life* which accounted for 17%; and 15% were convicted of *property offences* (ICBS, 2010, p. 5; also see Statistical Abstract of Israel, 2014a). *Crimes against morality* accounted for 12% for all adult convictions in Israel, while 3% of adults were convicted for *fraud,* and 18% were convicted for *other offences*[28] (ICBS, 2010, p. 5; also see Statistical Abstract of Israel, 2014a). In contrast, the most common offence for which people (of all age groups) were convicted in England and Wales in 2008

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[28] It is not clear what type of conviction are included in the category of 'other' in Israel.

was *theft and handling stolen goods* – 31% of males and 52% of females, as shown in Table 6.2. For males, the second most common conviction was *drug* related at 22%, followed by *violence against a person* at 16% of all conviction (ONS, 2010, p. 132). Lastly, 16% of both males and females were convicted for '*other*' offences which includes fraud and forgery and motoring offences (ONS, 2010, p. 132).

Table 6.2: Conviction rates England and Israel

England & Wales: Conviction Type	England & Wales: Conviction Rates	Israel: Conviction Type	Israel: Conviction Rates
Handling stolen goods		Property crimes	15%
Male Female	31% 52%		
Drug offences for male only	22%	Crimes against morality	12%
Violence against a person for male only	16%	Violence against a human life	17%
Fraud, forgery and motoring offences for both male and females	16%	Fraud	3%
—	—	Public order	35%
—	—	Other offences	18%

In 2012, the conviction rates in Israel stood at 88.6% of all criminal cases brought to the court, a decline from 2010, which had a conviction rate of 90.8% (Statistical Abstract of Israel, 2014b). Conviction rates in England and Wales in 2012 stood at 82.6%, a noticeable increase of 17.3% since 2002 (Ministry of Justice, 2013a, p. 45). Furthermore, in 2008, 91.9% of adult convicted offenders in Israel were males (Statistical Abstract of Israel,

2014b), compared with 76% of convicted males in England and Wales that same year (ONS, 2010, p. 132). As shown in Table 6.3, out of those convicted of crime in Israel in 2014, 52.4% were Jewish-Israelis and 42.4% were Arab-Israelis, of which 39.3% were Muslims (Statistical Abstract of Israel, 2014b). Arab-Israelis compromise less than 20% of the population in Israel (ICBS, 2014b) and, hence, are overrepresented in the criminal justice system. In 2013, the largest ethnic group imprisoned in England and Wales was white and accounted for 88.3% of prisoners, as shown in Table 6.4 (Berman & Dar, 2013, p. 11). The second largest group was Asian or Asian British which accounted for 5.8%, followed by Black or Black British which accounted for 2.8% (Berman & Dar, 2013, p. 11).

Table 6.3: Ethnicity in Israel CJ

Israel: Convicted Rates Among Ethnic Groups	
Jewish-Israelis	52.4%
Arab-Israelis	42.4%
Muslims	39.3%

Table 6.4: Ethnicity in E&W CJ

England & Wales: Ethnic groups in the prison	
White	88.3%
Asian or Asian British	5.8%
Black or Black British	2.8%

Known re-offending rates in 2012 in England and Wales within five years of release from prison (since 2008) stood at 53.2% (Ministry of Justice, 2012b, p. 32), a higher figure than Israeli prisoners released in 2008 which stood at 41.3% (Berman and Walk, 2015, p. 4). Prisoners in Israel that were released early on licence in 2008 had a reoffending rate of 28.2% within five years, lower than those who served their full sentence, who had a re-

offending rate of 47.1% (Berman and Walk, 2015, p. 7). In England and Wales, prisoners released early on licence had a reoffending rate of 39.2% within one year (Ministry of Justice, 2012b, p. 61). Prisoners in Israel who were released early to a rehabilitative hostel had a re-offending rate of 10% within five years of release (Mizrahi & Tal, 2010, p. 8). The re-offending rates of those released to a rehabilitative facility in Israel could be partly explained by selection bias where ex-offenders who were chosen by criminal justice actors to spend time in a rehabilitative hostel were more likely to desist than those who were not chosen.

6.4 Public views around crime and justice

In a similar vein to Chapter 5, I analysed data from the ESS round five (2010) for a better understanding of public views towards crime and justice. Round five was chosen because it had a greater number of questions on criminal justice matters than round six. I start by looking at respondents' feelings of safety and fear of crime, before turning to explore their views about sentencing and public trust in justice.

Feeling of safety after dark varied considerably between England and Wales and Israel, as illustrated in Graph 1. Respondents in Israel (F(2264) = 191.660; Mean = 1.74; p< .000) reported a greater feeling of safety walking after dark compared with both England and Wales (F(2090) = 191.660; Mean = 2.13; p< .000) and Europe (F(47453) = 191.660; Mean = 2.07; p< .000). Amongst Israeli respondents, 41.7% reported feeling 'very

safe', compared with 22.8% in England and Wales. Round six (ESS, 2012) indicated a similar attitude among respondents where 44% in Israel (F(2498) = 203.207; Mean = 1.73; p< .000) reported feeling 'very safe', compared with 25.2% in England and Wales (F(1965) = 203.207; Mean = 2.08; p< .000) and

Graph 1: Feeling of safety of walking alone in local area after dark

24.4% in Europe (F(49471) = 203.207; Mean = 2.06; Israel p< .000; England and Wales p< 1.000).
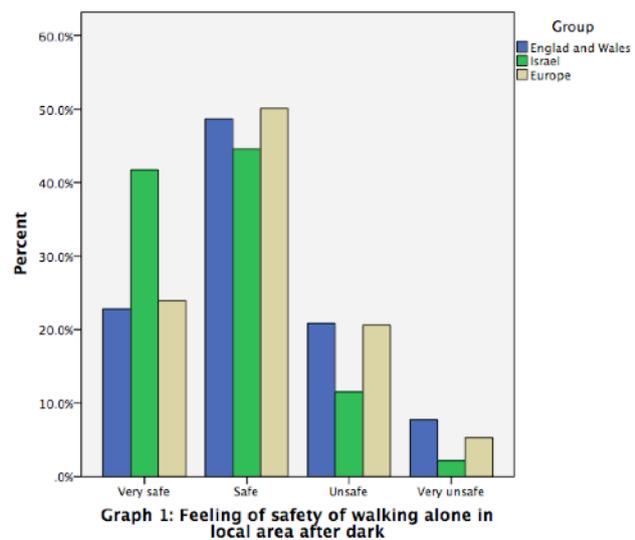
English and Welsh respondents were also more worried about becoming a victim of a violent crime. In round five (2010), 60.1% of the respondents in Israel stated they 'never' worried about becoming a victim of a violent crime compared with 48.2% in England and Wales and 46.4% in Europe (as illustrated in Graph 2). The variance between the two countries was statistically significant with a mean of 3.28 in England and Wales (F(2109) = 52.076; p< .000) and 3.41 in Israel (F(2215) = 52.076; p< .000).

Graph 2: How often worry about becoming a victim of violent crime
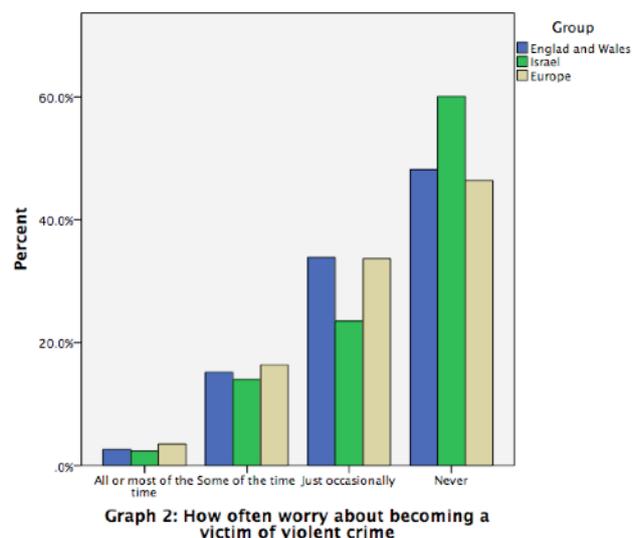
Israeli respondents were also less worried about their home being burgled (F(2279) = 31.985; Mean = 3.18; p< .000) than English and Welsh respondents (F(2108) = 31.985; Mean = 2.99; p< .000). As shown in Graph 3, the majority of respondents in England and Wales reported that they thought about their home being burgled 'just occasionally' (37.4%) or 'never' (34%), while 52% of Israelis reported 'never' being worried or worrying about it 'just occasionally' (21.5%). In short, the analysis suggests a clear difference in fear of crime between the two countries, where Israeli respondents reported less worry of becoming a victim of violence or burglary and a greater feeling of safety after

Graph 3: How often worry about your home being burgled
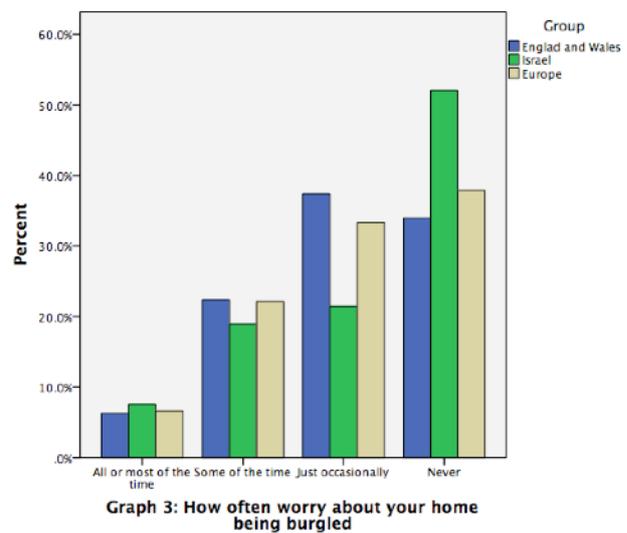
dark. One factor which may partly explain this difference is that Israelis may be more preoccupied with the ongoing Israeli-Palestine conflict than with crime. Furthermore, as discussed in Chapter 5, Israeli respondents reported a greater feeling of closeness to people in their local area, which can contribute to a feeling of safety. Alternatively, Israeli respondents may be inclined to put on a 'brave face', more than respondents in other counties.

When asked whether respondents agreed that all laws should be strictly obeyed, 75.8% in England and Wales 'agreed' or 'agreed strongly' compared with 77.5% in Israel (see Graph 4). Furthermore, a one way ANOVA test indicates that the variance between the two countries was statistically significant, and that Israeli respondents were more likely to state that laws should be strictly obeyed (F(2203) = 41.344; Mean = 1.98; p< .000), compared with English and Welsh respondents (who had a mean of 2.21).
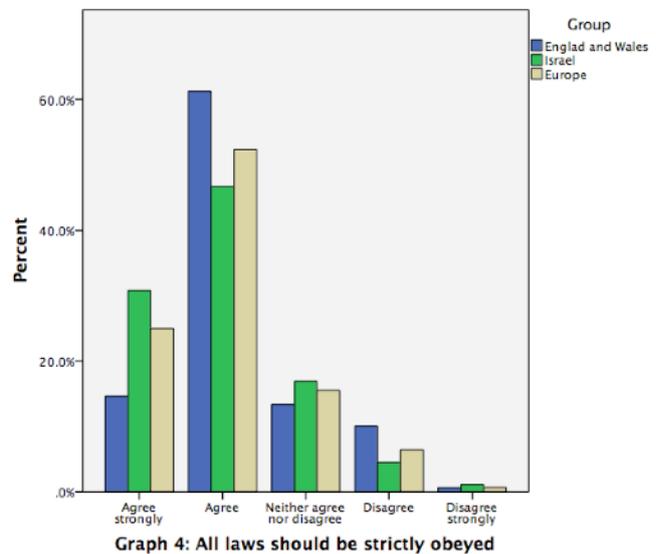
Graph 4: All laws should be strictly obeyed

The attitude between the countries also differed in terms of whether 'doing the right thing sometimes means breaking the law'. In England and Wales, 57.2% 'agreed strongly' or 'agreed' with that statement, compared with only 29.2% in Israel (see Graph 5). Also, 40.6%
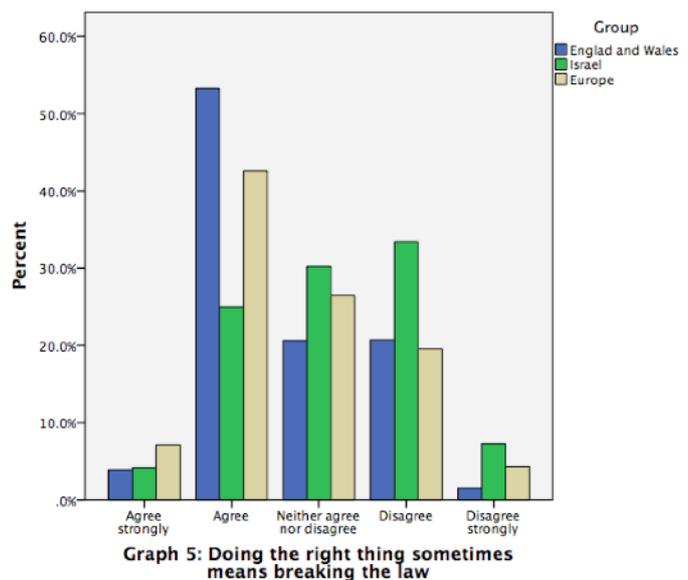
Graph 5: Doing the right thing sometimes means breaking the law

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in Israel 'disagreed strongly' or 'disagreed' with that statement, while only 22.2% in England and Wales reported the same. The variance between the two countries was statistically significant with England and Wales (F(2033) = 198.905; p< .000) having a mean answer of 2.63, compared with 3.15 in Israel. Thus, in short, Israeli respondents expressed a stricter attitude towards obeying the law and a stricter attitude towards when it is acceptable to break the law (as summarised in Table 6.5 below).

Attitudes to sentencing in 2010 indicate that respondents in both England and Wales and Israel preferred 'harsher' sentences than they thought were given in those years (see Graph 6).

Graph 6: People who break the law much harsher sentences
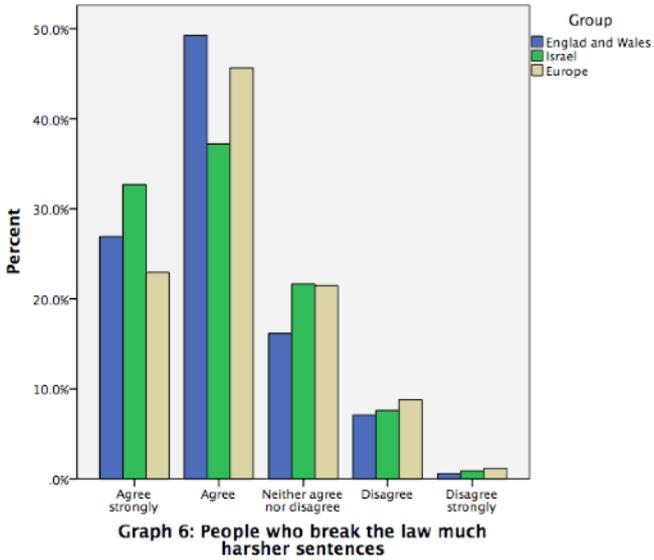
When asked whether people who break the law should be given much harsher sentences than they are these days, 76.2% in England and Wales either 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' with that statement, compared with 69.9% in Israel and 68.6% in Europe. A one-way ANOVA test suggests that the variance (F= 42.672; p< 1.000) and differences in the mean answers (2.05 in England and Wales and 2.07 in Israel) were not statistically significant.

However, when asked about appropriate length of prison sentence, Israelis chose a longer sentence than English and Welsh respondents. In round five, respondents were first asked about an appropriate sanction for a 25 year old man who was found guilty of house burglary for the second time. Respondents who chose a prison sentence were then asked about the appropriate length of the sentence, as
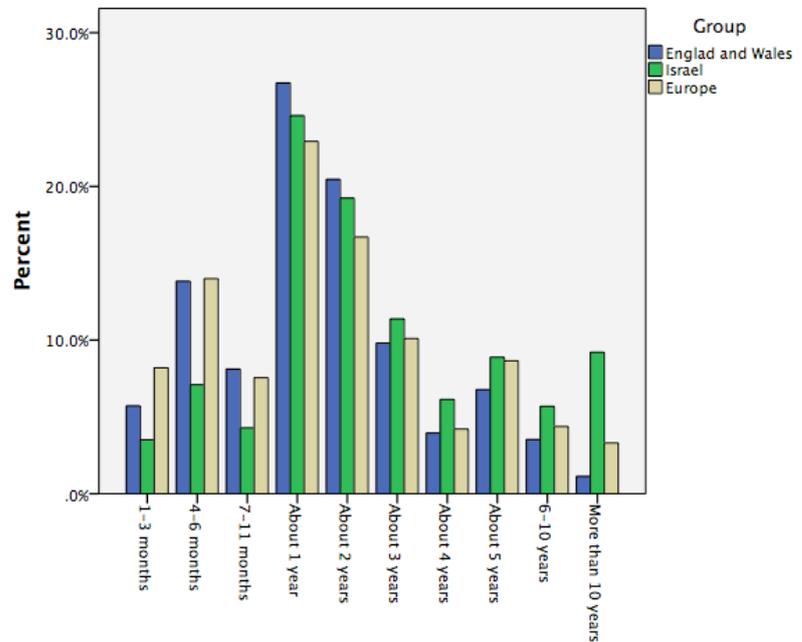
Graph 7: How long should he spend in …

illustrated in Graph 7. The pattern of answers indicates that Israel is $(F(1565) = 101.411;$ Mean = 5.51; p< .000) chose a longer sentence in this case, a statistically significant difference compared with England and Wales $(F(1418) = 101.411;$ Mean = 4.50; p< . 000). In particular, 9.2% of
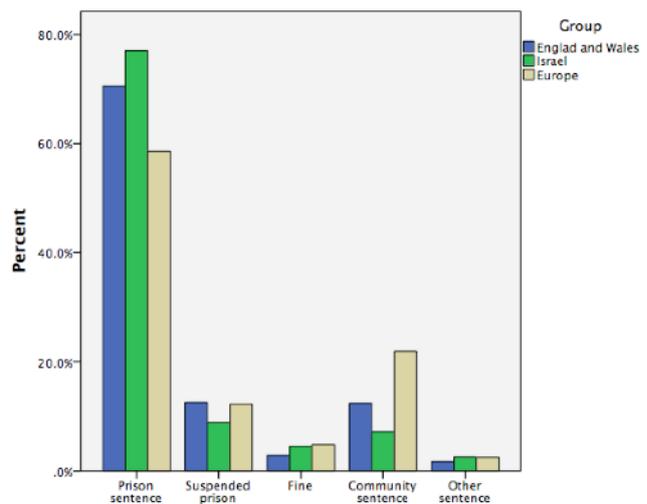
Graph 8: Which sentence: 25 year old male, house burglary, second time

respondents in Israel agreed that the man should spend more than 10 years

in prison, compared with 1.1% in England and Wales and 3.3% in Europe. In short, Israeli respondents exhibited a more punitive attitude than England and Wales, as indicated in Table 6.5. As shown in Graph 8, 70.6% in England and Wales (F(2059) = 209.299; Mean = 1.62; p< .004) and 77.1% in Israel (F(2193) = 209.299; Mean = 1.49; p< . 004) preferred that the young man would be given a prison sentence, over a suspended prison sentence, a fine, a community sanction,

Graph 9: I generally support how the police…
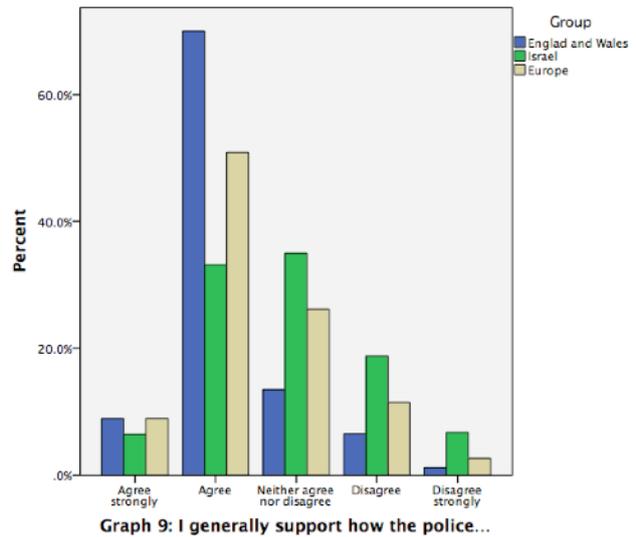
or any other sentence. Both countries displayed a harsher attitude than Europe (F(46055) = 209.299; Mean = 1.97; p< .000), where 58.6% chose a prison sentence as an appropriate response.

Israel demonstrated lower levels of trust in justice compared with England and Wales (also see Jackson et al., 2011). When asked whether respondents supported how the police

Graph 10: Courts doing good or bad job in country
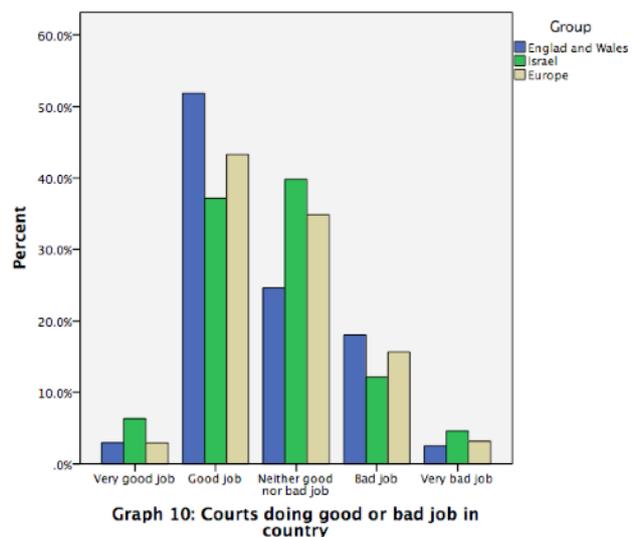
acted, 78.9% in England and Wales (F(2094) = 288.865; Mean = 2.21; p< .

000) 'agreed strongly' or 'agreed', while only 39.6% in Israel ($F(2190) = 288.865$; Mean = 2.86; $p< .000$) stated the same. Europe ($F(46611) = 288.865$; Mean = 2.48; $p< .000$) had a lower level of support than England and Wales (59.7%), yet a higher mean answer than Israel (see Graph 9). In addition, as shown in Graph 10, 54.9% of respondents in England and Wales thought the courts were doing a 'very good job' or 'good job' (with only 3% choosing 'very good job'), compared with 43.5% in Israel. However, the variance between Israel ($F(2146) = 7.442$; Mean = 2.71; $p< . 068$) and England and Wales ($F(2011) = 7.442$; Mean = 2.65; $p< .068$) is neither considerable nor statistically significant.

Table 6.5: Summary of cultural views

Cultural views	Higher Score	Lower Score
Feeling of safety	Israel	England and Wales
Compliance	Israel	England and Wales
Retributive	Israel	England and Wales
Longer sentence	England and Wales	Israel
Trust in justice	England and Wales	Israel

6.5 Conclusion

A person who offends in England and Wales does so within a social climate that is concerned with the possible risks one poses, managing one's behaviour, and delivering justice in a way that is cost efficient, effective, and swift. Alternatively, if one were to offend in Israel, a more circumspect process would commence; where a judge would have greater discretion and

one's potential to be rehabilitated would, in some cases, be assessed. In the 1970s, a paradigm shift took place in England and Wales where concerns about crime rates began to rise and the legitimacy of rehabilitation came under serious doubt. A more punitive criminal justice emerged which led to an increase in the prison population and contributed to a growing crisis in prisons. The country progressively turned to criminal justice practices that were considered effective in reducing offending and, in 2014, the government delegated the supervision of many offenders to private companies to alleviate the costs and continue the search for the most effective way of reducing reoffending.

Influenced by the trends in England and Wales and other western countries, Israel has seen an increase of cognitive behavioural approaches towards the end of the 1990s, both in prisons and probation settings. However, as the 'rehabilitative ideal' did not lose its appeal in Israel, avenues for offender rehabilitation 'stretched' and broadened rather than transformed, as in England. Supervision in England is concerned with monitoring offenders, reducing reoffending and providing support, while supervision in Israel is focused on undoing the causes which led to offending behaviours. In this chapter, I have narrated the context of responding to offenders within each criminal justice system and discussed the assumptions and views that underpin each social framework. Furthermore, I have reviewed the trends in crime and compared public attitude to crime and justice. The analysis of

ESS data suggests that Israeli respondents worry less about crime than English and Welsh respondents; express a stricter attitude towards obeying the law and when it is acceptable to break the law; show a more punitive attitude to sentencing; and express lower levels of trust in justice.

Chapter Seven

NEGOTIATING SOCIAL

(RE)INTEGRATION IN CRIMINAL

JUSTICE SETTINGS

The joke goes that the husband is the head of the family, but the wife is the neck, directing the head where to look. I am not a fan of the joke, but I use it here because it perfectly summarises this chapter if, instead of husband, we say *probationers* and, instead of wife, we say *criminal justice settings*. A comparison suggests that each context of offender supervision framed the problems which each country sought to solve and directed (i.e. acted as the neck of) probationers (i.e. the head) in terms of how to (re)integrate to society. In this chapter, I compare supervision in the community in each country and draw a thread between the social context of offender supervision, narratives of probationers, and the manner in which participants sought to engage with their supervision. Furthermore, I explore how probation work and theoretical views underpinning rehabilitation in each country had an impact on participants' social identities, and on how they sought to undergo their time during supervision favourably and successfully.

I begin by sketching the architecture of a Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) in the north of England and an Israeli Probation Service office in central Israel, as well as outlining key aspects of probation work in the two jurisdictions. I then examine the impact of each social context on participants' narratives and on how they sought to (re)integrate. Lastly, I compare the type of support participants reported receiving during their time in supervision. I conclude that English participants experienced greater 'excess' of licence conditions which they described as stifling their efforts to (re)integrate, and a source of negative stigma which limited their civic freedoms. In contrast, Israeli participants (who were not subject to the same intensity of supervision and managerial culture) did not express a sense of restriction and were less concerned with the labelling aspect of supervision. However, the emphasis of the Israeli Probation Service on treating 'psychological deficiencies' of offenders and the more entrenched treatment culture resulted in a more pronounced 'emotional adaptation' in the 'persona' participants presented to the probation service. Furthermore, I argue that underlying assumptions underpinning probation work in Israel directed participants' attention towards their character, while the context of supervision in England directed participants' attention towards their behaviour.

7.1 Setting the scene for probation work: through the researcher's eyes

7.1.1 Monitoring the licence in England

I noticed a small sign on the building, indicating the presence of a CRC as I opened the door and walked into the reception area. There were chairs and corner tables in the reception area and some clients sitting, waiting for their appointments. *Clients*, *service users* and *offenders* were terms I frequently heard used by probation workers in England to refer to probationers. Right above the heads of the probationers were posters on the wall, advising those in the welcome area about places offering help in cases of addiction, victimisation, violence, depression, and more. The posters and the terms used to describe probationers implied that they were perceived as receivers of services (or 'service users') and acceptable recipients of advertising (see also Phillips, 2014). I approached Neal[29] in reception; he was sitting in a small room behind glass, which separated him from the other people in the room while allowing him to see and engage with people when necessary. As he already knew who I was, he handed me a sheet of paper to sign-in with my name and time, along with a highly valuable security chip.

First, I left the welcome area and waved my chip by the entry doors to the general probation-work space. To my right was another door which led to a

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[29] Pseudonym.

separate space with several rooms, where probation officers met with service users. Another wave of a chip was required for that. The meeting rooms were, in a way, 'neutral' as they were dedicated for appointments and separated from the day-to-day of probation officers' work. Appointments rooms are usually equipped with two armchairs, a coffee table and a phone, and probation workers have the chip which can access the room, along with a panic button in case of trouble. Phillips (2014), in his examination of the architecture of CRCs, argues that interview rooms are a separate space where risk is managed and, in these spaces, probation officers can 'set the scene' for the meetings. Furthermore, Phillips (2014) found that the overall design of CRC offices conveys the power differences between probationers and probation workers. Although I agree, it is worth mentioning that having a separate space where work with probationers is undertaken (rather than, for example, probationers meeting probation workers at *their* desks) may also imply that the probationer is, to some degree, responsible for what they bring into that room and happens in that work space – a space that is separated, but also dedicated and 'neutral' for meeting probationers. In particular, the neutrality of these rooms indeed conceals the 'backstage of probation work', as Phillips (2014) suggested, but invites a designated location where probationers can bring their issues and engage as active actors.

I turned left, away from the interview rooms, and walked up the stairs to the main office where probation workers usually sit. Waving my chip again, I entered a spacious room with many desks, which probation workers shared and service users have no access to. I walked past the chocolate and cookies area; passed probation staff working at their desks; passed a poster outlining the group programmes delivered by the CRC; and reached my contact person. Some people were working at their computers, making calls, or chatting to other colleagues about a case – seeking another's input.

A key role of probation officers' work in England is to *monitor compliance with the licence.*[30] If probationers do not comply (which does not necessarily mean they have offended; they might not have shown up for a meeting, for example) then they may be recalled to prison for 28 days.[31] *Discretion* is a powerful aspect that accompanies their role – probation workers have some discretion as to whether to recall a person and how punitive or gradual their response is in any particular situation (also see Collins, 2007).

I was interested to learn what, if at all, was the role of therapy in English supervision and the CRC. In the shadowing session I learned that probation officers in England are not (strictly) counsellors; rather, their work requires

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30 Relayed from conversations with Probation Officers during the shadowing session in England.

31 Relayed from conversations with Probation Officers during the shadowing session in England.

empathy, mutual respect, understanding, and negotiation with clients.[32] The job of a probation officer is to motivate, engage, direct, and reach an agreement with the probationer, which involves making a plan together for intervention.[33] There is a coercive element – a threat of sanction – if a person does not comply with supervision (see also Phillips, 2014). The required monitoring of offenders and increasing emphasis on addressing risk can at times conflict with the role of a probation officer as provider of advice and assistance in getting access to help (Farrall et al., 2014; McNeill, 2009; Robinson, 1999).

A key difference between English and Israeli probation work was that probation officers in England were involved in getting probationers access *to* help, rather than *being* a source that provides therapy – that *is* that help (see also Shapland et al., 2012).[34] The work of English probation officers, as described to me, reminded me (to a greater extent than Israel) of Duff's (2001; 2003) concept of probation work. Duff (2001; 2003) proposed that probation officers would act as a link, a mediator, between the probationers and the community or avenues they can turn to while serving a sentence in the community. This point is also exemplified by the posters on the wall that provide information about where probationers could find access to help. That said, over the years, probation work had reduced its work with

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[32] Relayed from conversations with Probation Officers during the shadowing session in England.

[33] Relayed from conversations with Probation Officers during the shadowing session in England.

[34] Relayed from conversations with Probation Officers during the shadowing session in England.

the community (see Bottoms, 2008) and there is a growing trend in England to outsource services, as also suggested by the growing role of the third sector in criminal justice settings (Tomczak, 2014). In this sense, probation settings are, thus, a '*hub*' that links probationers to help in the community or to Offending Behaviour Programmes (OBPs) while probation workers monitor compliance with supervision and encourage reintegration by befriending, motivating, and assisting (McNeill, 2009).

Another key element to the work of supervision was that probation officers address obstacles to desistance, including employment, housing, attitude(s), thinking, and behaviour – all of which are seen as factors ('criminogenic needs') that may increase the risk of re-offending.[35] Probation services and CRCs in England offer OBPs which are often based on Cognitive Behavioural Treatment (CBT) and these were called, for example 'Think First' group programme, or 'Victim Awareness'. These programmes typify 'a relatively straightforward and quick route to the implementation of effective practice in the short to medium term' (Robinson & Crow, 2009, p. 111) and at the time of the interviews, English participants were not compelled to participate in a group as part of their supervision.

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[35] Drawn from conversations with probation officers during the shadowing session in England.

7.1.2 Probation is therapy in Israel

The Israeli Probation Service is usually located in a building that houses other governmental offices, such as the Employment Centre, or the Ministry of Interior. People may attend these offices for reasons ranging from seeking social benefits, renewing a passport, or attending group therapy in the probation service. Hence, when a person walks in-and-out of the building, the reasons for being there is not immediately clear and, in the case of probationers, it is easier to conceal any association with criminal justice matters when visiting probation, compared to England where the building was solely reserved to the CRC and criminal justice agencies. While my fieldwork in Israel involved several probation offices, I describe only one here. This probation office was in a building inside a mall, and as security measures in Israel are more visible, I had to pass a security guard a similar number of times as I waved my chip in England. First, I was stopped by a security guard as I entered the mall. Then, to get to the government offices, there was a queue – similar to the ones found at airports – where I reached another guard who asked me why I was there and if I had anything for self-protection, except for my 'killer eyes', he added. As he added that comment, he brought a drop of informality – with his informal social interaction – in a sea of security measures checks. I answered no and passed through. In front of me was a lobby desk with three guards and a metal detector. I raised my head to read through a large sign with all the different offices in the building and their corresponding

floors and waited in line to pass through the metal detector. A guard, in a government uniform (this time) searched my bag and cleared me to pass through.

I went up the elevators and turned right to the Adult Probation Office where there was a lobby in the welcome area, next to a reception office, which was separated by a glass front. There was no need to sign in my name and there was no need for a chip as there was no separation of space between (work with) probationers and probation workers. I could move freely within that space in Israel whereas in England I had to have a chip to have freedom of mobility. The security measures in Israel suggest a central focus on national security; yet, once a person successfully passes all the guards and all precaution measures – once a person was 'in' – there was no further attempt to restrict mobility. The architecture of the offices in England imply that potential for 'danger' lies with visitors and probationers – a 'danger' to be contained and managed. On the other hand, the security measures in Israel imply that 'danger' is *external* to probationers and that they are included in the group of people which ought to be protected. Perhaps the constant wars and conflicts and emphasis on broad national security are factors which fostered a more inclusive architecture in Israeli probation settings.

Although there were chairs and a coffee table in the lobby, I did not see people sitting there as often as in England, and the service was divided into rooms – offices – where each probation officer works; often sharing a room with another. There were no posters on the walls as in England, but there were photos depicting a sentence or an emotion with a picture next to it. Like other probation offices in Israel, this office had a respectable spot on the wall dedicated to the 'voluntary' work of the probation service and 'thank you' cards and photos sent by various organisations for the unpaid-work community sanction. As I searched for my contact person, I heard chatter around me; probation officers leaning on door frames and talking about a case. I saw some probation officers working in their rooms, while others had their door closed. Perhaps they were meeting patients. *Patients* is a term commonly used by Israeli probation workers to refer to probationers and the sharp difference from *service users* or *offenders* in England crystallises the place of probationers in each criminal justice policy (see Shapland, Farrall & Bottoms, 2016b, p. 290). In Israel, probationers are framed as a population to be treated and helped by a professional who can help 'heal' those with problems or deficiencies, while in England probationers were framed as service users to be provided with assistance to 'turn their life around' and bearing greater responsibility over their lives.

Unlike the offices in England, when a probationer has an appointment or attends group therapy, they are not completely separated from the office's work-flow and the chatter of probation work around, and there is no dedicated space for meetings with probationers; rather, one-to-one appointments took place in the rooms of probation officers. While this difference implies that probationers in England are seen as active actors – sharing responsibly for their reintegration – in Israel it implies that the focus was on the work of probation officers, and that they are the ones with the knowledge and ability to help offenders (re)integrate. Key roles of probation officers in Israel are to evaluate dangerousness, receptiveness to rehabilitation, and provide treatment[36]. As noted in Chapter 6, receptiveness to rehabilitation refers to the assessment or stance of the probation officer regarding the likelihood that an offender 'can be' rehabilitated and suggests that offenders in Israel are divided into two groups: those who are seen as 'treatable' and those who cannot be reformed (for a discussion on 'distinguishing' types of offenders see Kendall, 2004, p. 55; also see Robinson and Crow, 2009). Those who are deemed as irredeemable are often subject to a more punitive reaction from the criminal justice system (Kendall, 2004; Robinson and Crow, 2009) and do not receive access to the assistance of the Israeli Probation Service.

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[36] From conversation with a probation service manager during the shadowing session.

In recent years, because of funding difficulties, individual (one-to-one) treatment in the Israeli Probation Service became scarce and treatment is mainly delivered through group therapy, which is ongoing with no start or end date.[37] Group therapy may involve a psychodynamic style (a more traditional style in Israel) or be informed by cognitive work and akin to CBT, and it is up to the discretion of the probation officer to decide which style they prefer and how to deliver therapy.[38] Only a small number of patients receive one-to-one treatment, and it is reserved for cases in which the probation officer believes it is necessary.[39] More commonly, 'a treatment recipient' is allocated to a group and it is then the responsibility of the group manager to take care of their treatment process and any challenges that they might face, such as finding employment[40].

Group programmes in Israel have different names to those in England which are based on the 'types' of offenders or offences. These may include: domestic violence group, violent parents group, street violence group, property offenders, sex offenders, cannabis users, and more (Weinstein, 2017, p. 6). Referring to a group as 'Think First', as in England, implies an aim – thinking before acting – that the programme is seeking to achieve, while the names in Israel imply a type of offence and a wish to match

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[37] From conversation with a probation service manager during the shadowing session.

[38] From conversations with probation service manager [gatekeeper] during fieldwork.

[39] From conversation with a probation service manager during the shadowing session.

[40] From conversation with a probation service manager during the shadowing session.

appropriate treatment to people who engage in such behaviours. Treatment by the probation service is not necessarily limited to offence related problems (criminogenic needs) and, although not supported by legislation, the probation service aims to provide treatment for as many issues as they believe the probationer faces.[41] For example, if they believe a probationer faces problems with romantic relationships, then they aim to address this issue as well. A widespread view amongst Israeli probation officers was that they have the greatest influence over a person to be receptive to therapy and encourage change before sentencing.[42] This '*liminal stage*' (discussed in Chapter 6) that Israeli participants faced, raised the problem of *dubious expertise,* where the exercise of professional power extends (not only to providing treatment, but) to influence decisions about justice and sentencing (McNeill, 2014).

7.1.3 The hearts of probation workers

In addition to Nelken's (2010) suggestion to examine the aims of each criminal justice agency, policies, the meaning of concepts, and their underlying assumptions, I found it useful to ask: how do probation workers in each country perceive themselves and describe their work? If criminal justice actors and institutions looked at themselves in a 'professional mirror', what would they see, and how would they describe their

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[41] Several sources throughout my fieldwork and shadowing session.

[42] Several sources throughout my fieldwork and shadowing session.

reflection? Similarly to Graham (2016), who examined how practitioners support desistance and individuals with multiple and complex needs, I sought to pay some attention to the professional identity that probation workers gestured in each country.

Graham (2016) found that practitioners in criminal justice settings draw their sense of professional identity from their work of seeking to provide help, and less so from the organisation for which they worked. Graham's insight was particularly relevant in the case of probation workers in England who were in the midst of an organisational change. During my fieldwork (and as the organisation they belonged to changed) English probation workers held to their professional identity of wishing to help probationers in the form of assisting them to 'get back on their feet' and stay away from the criminal justice system. They sought to do so while within the confines of their resources, and while keeping to the policies and rules directed by the government. The same was true for Israeli probation workers; in their ways of speech and discourse, I saw people that wanted to help probationers. The form of help in Israel was by way of assisting them to 'get a handle' on the *reasons* that brought them here in the first place. In both countries, a desire to help was evident when I interacted with probation workers; yet the help offered, and the expectation of how probationers should 'engage back', varied in accordance with practitioners' views of their role, the policies in place, and the assumptions underpinning

rehabilitation in each country. In addition, the underlying assumptions around 'how we help', and the professional identity of probation workers, shaped how probationers engaged back, perceived themselves, and negotiated their reintegration within each criminal justice setting.

7.2 Laying the groundwork for probationers' narratives

Over the next two chapters I introduce the participants and provide the reader with relevant background. Further information about past offending can be found in Appendix III. Of key interest herein is how participants narrated their experiences and engagement with supervision so as to learn more about the impact of each social context on participants as they wished to desist. Before doing so, however, it is important to note that the probationers I interviewed differed in terms of three key characteristics: age, employment, and relationship status. As discussed in Chapter 4, the average age of participants in England was 32 at the time of the interview, compared with an average age of 47 amongst Israeli participants.

Furthermore, as illustrated in Tables 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3 (also see Appendix III), participants varied in terms of their employment and romantic relationships status: namely, out of 15 Israeli participants, 12 were employed at the time of the interview, while 3 were unemployed. Out of the Israelis employed, 8 participants were self-employed and 4 participants

were employees. In contrast, out of 15 English participants, only 4 were employed and 11 were unemployed and out of those employed, 1 was self-employed and 3 were employees. In terms of romantic relationships, 4 Israeli participants were single at the time of the interview; 10 were in a long-term relationship; and 1 person had embarked on a relationship recently. In contrast, 11 English participants were single and 4 were in a long-term relationships.

Table 7.1: Employment Status

Employment	England	Israel
Employed	4	12
Self-employed	1	8
Employees	3	4
Unemployed	11	3

Table 7.2: Relationship Status

Relationship Status	England	Israel
In a relationship	4	11
No relationship	11	4

These personal and social differences between the two groups had bearings on how participants sought to engage with supervision; however, in reviewing the findings presented here, it is wise to show caution and not overestimate the role of these three socio-economic factors in explaining

variance in the narratives amongst the two groups. The overreaching findings of variances and similarities in the dynamics of desistance unfold, topic-by-topic, in the upcoming chapters and a clearer picture is then revealed to the reader. Next, I describe the experience of each group of probationers as a whole (in each country), while acknowledging that not all experiences were shared amongst all English or all Israeli probationers, or experienced to the same degree. However, I chose to compare the group as a whole (in this chapter) because I am seeking to explore the *pattern* with which criminal justice is delivered and the *pattern* with which individuals who wish to desist experience and engage with supervision; a framework drawn from Foucault's (1978) late work (see Chapter 3).

Table 7.3: Employment & Relationship Status

Status	England	Israel
Employment and a romantic relationship	1	9
Employment and no romantic relationship	4	3
Romantic relationship and unemployment	3	2
No romantic relationship or employment	7	1

7.3 Narratives of 'the burden' of supervision

In both countries, supervision was described as a 'burden' and participants expressed pains associated with their supervision experience; however, the type of 'burden' and pain varied between the countries. English participants described supervision as an inconvenience and overwhelming at times or, as Kevin said: '*[A] weight on your shoulder.*' Commuting for a quick appointment, police checks of curfew, and restrictions on mobility, were commonly mentioned reasons why supervision was experienced as a 'burden.' Ian, for example, described his supervision as overwhelming: '*Five times a week at probation, a piss test, home visits, blah blah blah blah blah. It's too much overload, for someone who just sat in prison for years. Don't know what to do.*' Aidan, an English participant, commented on the inconvenience of quick appointments with his probation officer and expressed a 'pain of probation' identified by Durnescu (2011) – an experience of deprivation of time:

'They're more of a hindrance than helping me at the minute… only because I can come here three times a week. Come in sit down, "Are you all right?" "Yeah." "Any issues?" "No." "See you next week." That's it, do you know what I mean?'

Similar to the experience of English participants, Durnescu (2011) noted that probationers in Romania discussed the difficulties associated with reorganising their daily routine around a sanction; the costs and loss of time associated with commuting to appointments; and a sense of strain for

having to notify a probation worker in cases of travel or change in circumstances.

Israeli participants commonly attended group therapy once a week and/or some participants had to complete unpaid work. In conversations with both groups, I learned that English participants had a greater quantity of conditions attached to their supervision and were required to notify their probation officer in case of travelling to another city or change in employment status, which were additional requirements that Israeli participants did not have. This difference could be related to the managerial context in England, which, it seems, contributed to participant's sense that a central feature in their lives was that they were a person under supervision. Furthermore, English participants noted that for their remaining time under supervision, they were limited in their ability to engage with society (a theme developed later in the chapter and in Chapter 11). In contrast, such a theme did not come up for Israeli participants.

For example, Owen discovered that he would remain on licence a year longer than he had expected (because of the Transforming Rehabilitation initiative) and was particularly upset about the licence conditions and described them as '*another year of punishment*', which would hold him back from moving forward from his history of crime – especially because Owen decided to wait until the completion of his licence conditions to look

for work (see Durnescu, Enengl, & Grafl, 2013, p. 28 on the pains associated with the 'punitive bite'; see also Hayes, 2017). Owen said:

'Because if I get a job these probation officers want to ring the employers which for me is a no-no. I don't think it's right. So, I'm not planning to work till my licence is over. [DS: you'd rather…]. I'd rather not. Yeah… I was quite against the licence because, if I leave my area I got to tell the probation, if, say I want to stay with a family member out of this city, I got to ring probation, they got to phone the police in a different area and they got to tell the police I'm coming into that area.'

For Owen, the licence conditions were another obstacle to overcome on his way of rebuilding his life (see also Farrall et al., 2014, p. 151). Nimi, an Israeli participant, also waited for his supervision to end before looking for work, but for different reasons. While Owen was concerned with the labelling and restricting aspects of the licence, Nimi had a new baby at home, a court date for the completion of unpaid community work, and not enough time. Nimi said:

'I can't look [for work] right now. I'm doing SGP [Service for the Good of the Public] work from morning to noon. I need to be at home, help at home with the woman. How will I work? So my wife, in the meantime, works.'

Nimi was the only Israeli participant who describe the licence conditions as holding him back from a 'normal life' and, across the whole Israeli group, there were far fewer participants who expressed the pains of deprivation of time described by Durnescu (2011) or Farrall et al. (2014). In contrast, Owen was not the only English participant who described the licence

conditions as an obstacle or holding him back from rebuilding his life. Thomas, for example, was worried that the licence might have a negative impact on his ability to sustain his current employment, which he saw as crucial to his desistance:

'*I had to tell him [my boss] that I still got probation. [DS: oh right]. And I have to see him today. I told him yesterday, he didn't seem very happy… I don't want him to think that I'm a criminal. Obviously, if I'm coming to probation, I kinda.*'

There were two main themes to the narratives of English participants regarding how the supervision presented an obstacle and held them back. First, there was a worry amongst English participants of negative labelling and negative social attitude, which underlined their descriptions of why the licence hindered their efforts to desist. This theme is apparent in the narratives from Owen and Thomas. For Nimi and other Israeli participants (as also argued in the Chapter 9), worries of negative social attitude was less prevalent (though not completely absent).

The second theme in English narratives was that there was an overall sense that their life would 'properly commence' only *after* they completed the supervision period. Max said, for example: '*You know, hopefully, I'll finish me licence and then start me life properly, yeah. I got quite a long time till my licence is finished.*' The 'waiting' for the completion of supervision signified a 'liminal stage' English probationers experienced, in which they

were *in* the community, but were waiting to be 'received back' (see Maruna, 2011b on the concept of being 'received back'). English participants thought that this – full civic engagement – would be more possible after the completion of supervision; an endeavour that may prove challenging in terms of employment opportunities in England, as reviewed in Chapter 9.

In contrast, Israeli participants described themselves as already settled within a life (to a greater or lesser extent) while supervised. For example, when I asked Avi how he felt about his current life, Avi answered: '*Satisfied. God bless.*' Avi then described being settled within a life trajectory with a stable job, a partner, and a hope to have children of his own. Also, when I asked Asaf how he thought his life would change in the next year, he replied: '*This year? This? No, my life won't change. The same, more or less. But I have plans, business plans.*' In contrast, English participants commonly brought up the topic of supervision and mentioned completing it in the upcoming year or more. In short, compared with English participants, Israelis were to a lesser extent 'waiting' for the completion of their licence to embark on their life, whether they were employed (like Thomas above) or not; described less pains associated with reorganising their lives; and were less worried that their licence conditions would induce stigma. However, as detailed next, Israeli participants looked forward to the completion of their licence; were anxious about the court

review of the probation officer; and highlighted the length of the criminal justice process as a 'burden.'

Some Israeli participants described the mandatory group therapy as a 'heavy undertaking' or punishment. For example:

Shay: '*When they told me to participate in a group [therapy], I didn't want to, at first. I saw it as punishment. I still see it… like, I understand I'm paying for something I did, when I'm here [in group therapy]. I don't see it as, umm, fun, because sometimes it's difficult to come here.*'

Shay then described moments of arguing with others and the 'emotional intensity' of these sessions and continued and said: '*slowly, slowly I started to relax and understand that I need it [therapy]. Like, the fact [that] I got up and freaked out is because I still need it.*' It is interesting to note that Shay described the groups as a type of punishment, while describing his resistance to it as an indication that he needs group therapy. Although Shay said he needs therapy, he also clarified:

'*This group, I might complete it and they'll say attend for your fun.[43] I won't come. Because, because, because I do feel I'm here because I did something. And if I finished what I deserve, I won't be here.*'

In Healy's (2012) study of the experience of probationers in Ireland (which is based on a welfare system and resembles Israel more than England and

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[43] The word 'fun' is used frequently in Hebrew and does not mean Shay expected the group therapy to be 'fun.'

Wales), participants spoke positively about the probation-funded programmes they attended; whether these were counselling, related to education, and those which involved leisure-based activities. Healy's description departed from the experience of Israelis and this difference could, in part, be because of the emphasis of the Irish Probation Service on programmes that provide social support, such as help with skills for employment and education (see Healy, 2012, p. 384), compared with an emphasis in Israel on addressing the reasons for offending. Maruna (2011a) describes how a focus of psychologists in prisons on an offender's past, along with less regard to the future the prisoner wished to move towards (or recognition of one's achievements), was a source of discord between practitioners and prisoners.

None of the English participants described a similar narrative to Israelis in regards to the OBPs; rather, English participants described them as either helpful or unhelpful. In the next example, Owen said he did not 'get much' out of probation, but found the Respectful Relations course he had undertaken during his time under supervision as helpful:

'Yeah. Umm, that Respectful Relations course, yeah. Umm, probation no, Respectful Relations yeah. Umm, how to control me anger and to walk away from a situation. To realise when I get in a situation and how to get out of a situation. Whereas before I don't give a toss, if someone were speaking badly about me I'd crack em, sort of thing.'

Max, who participated in a restorative justice programme while in prison, thought that the programme had 'awakened' him to the impact of his offending on his victims and had a positive impact on his motivation to desist (on restorative justice and desistance see Claes & Shapland, 2016). Max thought restorative justice was a more useful programme than the Victim Awareness course he undertook in the CRC. Max said:

'*Yeah I think more people should definitely do that, yeah. See, the victim awareness courses here, I-I can't see you get much from it, myself. But, I can see getting more from restorative justice, that one. [DS: yeah?]. I think you would definitely get more from that then you would any other course.*'

Max also said that he was 'taken aback' when he learned how much inconvenience and pain his burglary caused the victim, whom he faced for the first time during his imprisonment. While English participants described the courses as either useful or not useful, Israeli participants mainly displayed a narrative of seeing them as the consequences, or a punishment, for their offence and expressed an 'emotional adjustment' in the 'persona' they displayed towards the probation service or described focusing more on their character and past offending. The differences in the two countries is related to how probation workers and criminal justice actors sought to help probationers and I explore this issue next by detailing the types of engagement that each probation service 'asked' for and how participants sought to engage with each 'ask'.

7.4 Engaging with justice

As described above, a key role of probation work in England is to monitor the licence and English participants experienced greater 'excess' of licence conditions (for similar finding between Sweden and England see Österman, 2018). Thus, a key feature that appears to be 'required' or 'asked' of probationers was *'formal'* compliance with the conditions (Robinson & McNeill, 2008). Similarly to Rex (1999), I found that English participants sought to portray themselves as doing well towards their probation officers – as motivated and as keeping to the licence conditions (examples below). Yet, a comparison suggests that English participants had more 'room to manoeuvre' in terms of how they chose to 'present' themselves emotionally to their probation worker (compared with Israelis). That is, English participants could be (and express to their probation worker) greater or lesser motivation to desist and, as long as they kept to the conditions, they would be 'legally okay'.

In contrast, the Israeli Probation Service sought out a more emotionally demanding engagement with participants in their efforts to desist, and 'asked' that they would have a desire to undergo psychological change. In order to fulfil this requirement, and convey such an impression, some Israeli participants sought to put up a certain 'front' towards the probation service, which suggested they were emotionally engaging and 'being rehabilitated' (examples below). Israeli participants had less freedom and

agency in regards to how 'deeply' to emotionally engage (or convey engagement) with supervision. To borrow Goffman's (1959) theoretical framework, there was greater discrepancy between the *front stage* (what participants displayed towards probation workers and how they engaged) and *backstage* (what participants thought and felt), in the case of some Israeli participants.

Furthermore, in cases of greater discrepancy, participants engaged in concealment and had underplayed attributes in their personality that were thought of as incompatible with an idealised version of what a desister (who emotionally engages with treatment) 'looks like.' Amongst all Israeli participants, greater attention was placed on the *performance* and *impression* they left upon probation workers of their *character* and *emotional* engagement, while English participants gave greater attention to the *behaviour* they displayed and sought to signal to the probation worker that they were complying with their supervision.

To illustrate these findings, I elaborate on each theme in turn. First, there was a greater experience of 'excess' of licence conditions by English participants and an emphasis by probationers to keep to the licence conditions. In their narratives, English participants highlighted that they were following the conditions and the managerial rules and regulations. Luke described himself as doing well partly by succeeding in following the

conditions and, thus, not ending up in prison: '*But I'm sticking to it, I'm sticking to me conditions. I haven't been recalled yet.*' English participants also stressed that they were making sure they followed the conditions and did not – even by accident – miss an appointment or break the conditions. For example:

Max: '*So if I forget an appointment, which I might genuinely forget it, then I can get recalled back to prison for 28 days, which is a bit harsh, really. So I always make sure I know when me days, me time, so I make sure I'm always here early. Like today I was here at [DS: Yeah!] haha 20 to 12, goddamn.*'

A comparison suggests that the managerial focus in England on monitoring licence conditions directed a participant's attention towards *criminal justice*-related matters and appointments in their daily lives. On the other hand, some Israelis described adopting a certain attitude – 'lowering their heads'; or not fighting or insisting on things – as a way of undergoing their time at probation 'favourably', thereby avoiding a future with the justice system and formally complying with their supervision. For example:

Yehuda: '*The systems [CJ agencies/Probation] "play with you". Okay, Yalla*[44]*, [I] lower down – lower the head down a little.*'

Ichik: '*Because I know – from the laws in the country; the regulations – I know in advance that I lost. So if I'll go to the corner, here [in the corner], I can gain. Let them think what they will.*'

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[44] Hebrew and Arabic word for 'come on', intending to suggest that Yehuda is 'playing along.'

When Ichik said that he had 'lost' he was referring to a feeling of losing his personal convictions and views of what things should 'be like', when he confronted probation workers in the past. Ichik's 'inner world' and views are 'hidden' from the probation service (as he said: '*Let them think what they will*') and a more pronounced *front stage* and *backstage* was created in his case.

In the *front stage*, an 'agreeable persona' that 'plays along', as Yehuda said, and exhibits a more ideal performance of a desister emerged. This involved communication techniques of withdrawing, sitting quietly, and creating strategic ambiguity, which aims to convey engagement with the supervision (Goffman, 1959, p. 69). As noted in Chapter 5, Israeli respondents under the ESS scored lower on the human value of '*self-direction*' and Israeli culture, more broadly, thought it was less important (and like them) to choose their own goals, and having independent thought and action. This difference in human values from England can partly explain the more limited sense of agency that Israeli participants experienced in supervision settings and the broad social legitimacy of placing limitations on independent thought.

The more entrenched treatment culture in Israel directed participants' attention towards (and 'filled their minds' with thoughts of) how to present their character towards the probation service. In other cases – where Israeli

participants did not describe a discrepancy between their inner feelings and outer display – participants described focusing more on their past offending and personal characteristics (compared with English participants). For Roei, who received one-to-one treatment in the probation service for his addiction to stealing, his psychological condition was a main concern to him. Roei said:

'*Through the conversations [with my probation officer] I understood that there's a problem here. He didn't tell me 'Don't go steal'. The conversations, with time, brought me to think about making a change… I don't know, through the conversations I understood that I was broken. Yes, yes, I understood. I understood that something was wrong.*'

Roei placed emphasis on his character and expressed the feeling that there was something 'wrong' with him. Furthermore, Roei highlighted his psychological issues *over and above* complying with the licence conditions of not reoffending. While some Israeli participants expressed withdrawing and the emergence of the 'agreeable persona' (such as Yehuda and Ichik), or facing their 'inner problems' (such as Roei, Eyal, and Vito), other Israeli participants (such as Shay and Avi) said they were 'more open' to receive help and therapy from probation, this time around. Avi said:

'*No [I didn't get anything] last times [I was in probation], because I never loved probation officer[s]. I never loved these places. I had a view that it's an establishment and I should be careful from them. Now, yes [I get from probation]. I don't think that way [anymore] which is already good. So I allow myself to express myself more… I come here, listen to people [in group therapy], I hear, empathise, sometimes not. To sit an hour and a half*

and not get up, not smoke, not leave, that's also something I didn't [have before today].'

I would like to draw the reader's attention to when Avi mentioned that he allowed himself to express himself more in group therapy. Avi's words suggest he previously 'held back' from expressing his 'inner world' in supervision settings. For Kobi, getting a sentence in the community and the confidence a probation officer displayed towards him while he was assessed in prison, was described as an opportunity:

'*They [CJ agencies] always saw me as [should be behind] a lock and key. They didn't see me as [something to be] corrected for [a normal] life. If it was the judges, probation services, if it was the… Then the probation service told me: "Listen, we are sending a probation officer for the [evaluation of the] severity of the punishment." They didn't even talk about a community [sentence]. And then comes Mia[45]… She told me: "Listen, I see you lack motivation… So I'm going to fight for you. What you do with that is yours." I said, I'm going for broke.'*

Kobi had undergone multiple imprisonments throughout his life and told me he never really wanted to stop his drug use and crime in the past. Furthermore, he described criminal justice agencies as seeing him as someone who should go through the route of punishment, rather than be '*corrected for [a normal] life*', as he said. The sense of being 'selected' as someone that can be 'corrected' had contributed to his self-esteem, his hope in his ability to change, and had helped him see what he could become. However, it is important to consider whether *not* being 'selected' in the past

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[45] Pseudonym.

had lowered his confidence in his ability to stop offending and inhibited desistance. For Kobi, how criminal justice actors 'saw him' influenced his perception on his ability to desist and fed into his sense of identity, which extended beyond his criminal behaviour.

Narratives of other Israeli participants suggested that they too placed focus on the opinions of other criminal justice actors of their character. While this theme was not completely absent in the narratives of English participants, the yoking of punishment with rehabilitation in Israel had raised concerns amongst Israeli participants regarding the views of criminal justice actors of their personal character – that is, their overall views beyond their offence. For Boaz, a description of how he thought the judges perceived him was offered as an explanation for why he got a 'lighter' supervision:

'*They [the judges] saw who we are talking about [saw who I was]. They looked at the offence, first. [Then,] they looked [at] who it was about and then they looked what it was about. Two different worlds in a law perspective. In a law perspective. And then they immediately understood that grief was made here [the sentence was too harsh].*'

Vito had a lengthy criminal career that spanned more than 30 years and an intense gambling addiction. He sought the help of the Israeli Probation Service in accessing therapy, but they were not willing to get involved in Vito's case because, he said, they thought he was lying to get a lighter sentence. Vito thought that there was no awareness back then regarding

gambling addictions and, as a result, the probation service did not believe his intention to desist. Vito said:

'*[Back] Then, they didn't recognise [gambling addiction] and didn't accept what I said [that I need help]… The court set me with an evaluation of a probation officer, back then, when the probation service didn't want to talk to me. Their [probation] report was the most negative, the worst in the world. That I'm a criminal, that I'm this, I'm that. Nobody understood why I was shouting [for help].*'

Vito's case exemplified an obstacle associated with the administration of rehabilitative measures in Israel in a selective manner. Biases can arise as a result of assessing offenders and separating them into those who are deemed as fit for rehabilitation and those who are not (McNeill, 2014). An underlying narrow concept that probation is therapy excludes other roles that the probation service may play to assist desistance and, importantly, may serve to deepen negative labelling. Reformation, as Maruna (2001, p. 158; see also Maruna, Lebel, & Mitchell, 2004) identified, is not something visible or objective; rather, it is 'a construct that is negotiated through interaction between an individual and significant others in a process of 'looking-glass rehabilitation.' Until ex-offenders are formally and symbolically recognised as 'success stories,' their conversion may remain suspect to significant others, and most importantly to themselves.' The practices by Israeli criminal justice agencies raises questions about those interactions and the impact of selective practices on self-perceptions of

offenders, as well as the influence of selective practices on the construction of stigma in society at large.

7.4.1 A brief reflection and a prelude to forthcoming chapters

Unpacking the manner in which each country 'designed' a different type of 'offender label' revealed how labelling shaped participant's actions, identity, and the overall dynamics of their desistance. As argued above, English participants expressed an 'excess' of conditions and saw them as interfering with their desire to (re)build their lives. Furthermore, English participants thought their time under supervision hindered their efforts to desist by contributing to, and making public, a negative stigma of being 'a criminal', as Thomas said. In addition, English participants (the majority of whom did not have a job) described their life as revolving around criminal justice agencies (see also Chapter 11) and their sense of identity – who they are now – was of someone less socially (re)integrated (compared with Israelis) and on the periphery of society, waiting to be 'received back'. A curtailed sense of social (re)integration of English participants, compared with Israelis, is a key variance in this study, which comes into view (and is further explored) in the upcoming chapters, when I discuss employment opportunities, familial dynamics, and how participants spent their time. Furthermore, the English stigma and overall pattern of social exclusion that participants experienced informed them on how to perceive themselves and *how* to (re)integrate and desist.

For Israeli participants, a different pattern of social stigma emerged, which had, in turn, directed their efforts to (re)integrate and desist in a different way from English participants. As noted above, views around rehabilitation which underpin probation practice in Israel had directed participants' attention towards their past offending, their 'criminal tendencies' and/or gave rise to an 'agreeable persona' that (emotionally) engaged with therapy. It seems that while English participants indicated that the life they wished for and who they were trying to become was stifled, restricted, overwhelmed, or could not 'show-through' because of the conditions and stigma associated with a conviction; Israeli participants were less restricted, were more (re)integrated socially (in terms of employment) and were less concerned with the labelling aspect of supervision. However, Israeli participants expressed they had a problem which resides in their personality and extends beyond their association with the criminal justice system (a theme developed in Chapter 8). The views of Israelis – which were influenced by the Israeli 'design' of labelling – were woven into their sense of identity and shaped the manner in which they sought to desist; namely by directing their attention towards changing their attitude to life and undergo a 'meaningful' change. This was an inclination which departed from English participants in some respects.

7.5 Unpaid work in the community

Some Israeli participants (such as Eyal, Mattan, Nimi, and Itay) were required to undertake unpaid work in the community, which included assisting at a senior centre, an arts workshops, and working at a second-hand shop. Unpaid work in the community is referred to as Service for the Good of the Public (SGP) in Israel and was commonly referred to as *volunteering* by practitioners and, to a lesser extent, by participants. The Israeli probation offices showed pride in their SGP programmes and outreach links and this was immediately clear from the large posters outlining the outreach programmes on the wall of every probation office I visited. Israeli participants described unpaid work in a more positive light than group therapy. For example, Itay said:

'I... my punishment was to volunteer. Well, not punishment... I was sentenced to do community service... So that's what I ended up doing on Thursdays for five hours... So it was fine because I was able to take time off work during the time that I was volunteering... And I enjoy working in the senior centre. It was actually nice, I made friends there, sons and elderly.'

Unlike group therapy, which was narrated in a more punitive light, the notion of SGP as punishment was minimised by Itay. Durnescu, Enengl, and Grafl's (2013) comparative review of the experience of probationers across Europe which found that community service orders were situated somewhere between an educational measure and punishment amongst their participant. Furthermore, the authors found that probationers most

commonly regard it as a worthwhile experience that helped them develop new skills and increased their prospects of getting a new job. Eyal, an Israel participant, was eager to start his community sanction because it meant he would work with communities in need at his home town, with people that faced similar challenges to him, when he grew up:

'*As a result of court I got a punishment – "punishment" [a tone minimising the notion of punishment]. Punishment of SGP. It's public service, only to the needy. And yes, it is to work with communities and it excites me… And in Hod Hasharon, my [home] city. Yes, so I quite want to start.*'

Eyal expressed a motivation to 'give back' to disadvantaged communities and found the prospect of working with people who were disadvantaged (as he was in childhood) exciting and meaningful (see Maruna, 2001). It is important to mention that the way unpaid work is structured in Israel avoids creating the impression of 'offenders doing punishment'. The participants were not marked by a piece of clothing (such as a bib, for example), which can act as a symbol of 'paying back' to the community; rather, community orders in Israel offered a way to (re)integrate and redeem oneself while not standing out as someone who was 'paying back' (see Maruna & King, 2008). For example, Mattan said it was easy to conceal his community sanction from other people and his daughter and to reconstruct this activity as volunteering for altruistic reasons and civic participation for the good of the public. Mattan said:

'Now, for example, in the SGP… I used to get back from work in the transport. Instead of dropping me off at home I'd ask him [the driver] if he can drop me off at the workshop, where I did my service. So, first time, second time, people on the ride asked me: "What, what are you doing there?". "I volunteer here," I told them. "I volunteer here – help them." [Work colleagues:] "Ah, well-done, well-done." It's really like that! Yes. Now also my daughter, I used to get there, say on a Friday morning, I used to go with my daughter and she doesn't really know why. So as far as she's concerned we are going to help. She's happy. Yes, an experience like that.'

7.6 Narratives of support

In this section, I explore the kind of support participants reported receiving from the probation service and the CRC. I noted above that English participants described supervision as an inconvenience or hindrance, however, the majority also recounted that it was of value to them that there was someone there in case they had a problem or needed to reach out. For example Aidan, who earlier described probation as a hindrance, also talked about the support he got from his drug worker in the CRC:

'I know I can phone in, any problems, any issues, I can phone in and say "listen." I mean, say I got up one morning and I did think I'm gonna have some drugs today. I know I can be on the phone and say, "I thought this, this is not what I want." Do you know what I mean?'

A common theme amongst English participants was to describe the 'pains of probation' but to clarify that they would still like to have 'a chat' with their probation worker or have someone to contact in case they needed help. Kevin, for example, said: *'It can be a weight on your shoulder…*

[But] I'd still want these appointments with my supe… with probation worker and like people in jobs and that.' Also Leo said:

'I mean this is a kind of support in a way. I been coming here for a year, so I know quite a few of the staff, haha. And sometimes I just come in, have a natter, tell 'em what's been going off or not been going off. And, I mean, that's sometimes takes a weight off your shoulders.'

Ian, who felt overwhelmed by the requirements of his licence, talked about his relationship with his probation officer several times during the interview and described their relationship as positive and a source of motivation to desist (see also Burnett & McNeill, 2005; Healy, 2012; Rex, 1999). Similarly, Thomas described a relationship based on respect with his probation officer, which he thought was helpful. He said:

'He's [probation officer] just there for me if I need anything. He talks to me like a human being, umm. Kinda think he's got a bit of respect for me and vice versa.'

Another theme that emerged for some English participants such as Ian, Max, Billy, and Kevin was that they 'distinguished' their probation officer as being 'one of a kind' and going above and beyond what probation officers normally do (for a similar theme see Rex, 1999). In the next example, Kevin distinguishes between probation officers who usually act in accordance with the institution and his 'own' probation officer:

'My probation worker, Ray, is good. I've learned from him. But what he tells you is not probation. What probation tells you he doesn't tell you… he's like, he trusts me and tells me: "You all right; you look good; you can do it." None of this probation shit.'

Thus, Kevin described his probation officer as distinct from the institution and his narrative suggests that active encouragement by his probation worker contributed to a sense of legitimacy of Ray's role and motivated his efforts to desist (McNeill, 2009; McNeill & Robinson, 2012). Damien, Aidan, and Hugh highlighted the role of the drug worker and drug counselling in supporting them. What was significant to these participants was that the drug worker underwent similar experiences to theirs. For example:

Hugh: *'I did have a drug worker who was actually on drugs and I really, really connected with him and listened, do you know what I mean. Which is… that's because he knows; he's been there, you know what I mean, he's been that.'*

English participants also highlighted that their probation officer was giving them a 'good chance' to rebuild their life, despite the associated fluctuations of their desistance efforts. Luke said: *'He's had talks with me. He's given me a good, he's giving me a good chance actually.'* In particular, participants mentioned that their probation officer demonstrated flexibility – a style that was not too harsh – which they described as giving them the 'room to manoeuvre' which they needed to get on a non-offending path. Ian said:

'I stayed out [of prison], luckily, because of Tom [probation officer]. Tom had a period of three-weeks off on holiday. Right? I didn't have one breach till he goes off on holiday, and one breach after him coming back from holiday. In that three weeks I had my first second and third, final, chief executive warning. Lucky enough Ray comes back the next day and like "Whoo, why has he got all of them?"

Furthermore, English participants said a previous harsh supervision style that some of them experienced in the past was unhelpful. Luke said, for example:

'Because my ex-probation officers kept recalling me. Six times recalling in one year… Back to prison for 28 days… Umm, he used to just peww recall and then he'd ask questions later. But it's too late, I already been in prison a month. So he should have never have worked like that.'

Both Ian and Luke described the use of discretion and greater leeway with regards to recall decisions as beneficial for the successful completion of their licence conditions. As Collins (2007) argued, a graduated response to recall can help increase compliance, while a swift and strict one is a costly response to a breach where, often, the probationer is not clear as to why they were recalled. In short, the 'human element' of how probation workers engaged with English participants and the relationship with one's probation officer was highlighted as valuable (see Farrall, 2002; Farrall et al., 2014) and enhanced the legitimacy of probation officers in participants' eyes. Indeed, as McNeill and Robinson (2012, p. 129) argued, the relationship with one's probation officers 'constitutes the prime site within which [the]

legitimacy [of probation] is negotiated.' Farrall et al.'s (2014, p. 124) longitudinal study into the long-term impact of probation supervision found that the sample who had high levels of impact from supervision was the same sample that reported receiving practical advice, support, and someone to talk to from the probation services. Furthermore, conversations with probation workers influenced how probationers 'came to see themselves' and assisted them in their efforts to desist (Farrall et al., 2014, p. 124).

English participants in this study talked more about their relationship with their probation officer, or a probation worker, than Israeli participants. The reason may be because of the greater opportunity English participants had to meet with their officer in a one-to-one format, while Israeli participants predominantly attended group therapy. It seems that the social climate around offender supervision in each country had structured the type of relationships participants had with probation staff in each country. Similarly to Österman (2018), I found that criminal justice practices produced different narratives about the legitimacy of probation staff and that a sense of legitimacy was shaped by the type of social interactions participants had with criminal justice representatives.

When I asked about the direct assistance my participants received from their time with probation, both Israeli and English participants commonly answered they did not get much or anything from probation (see also

Calverley, 2013; Farrall, 2002; Shapland, Bottoms & Muir, 2012). However, in adopting a comparative lens, *actions* by probation officers played a role in narratives of support by English participants (also see Farrall, 2002 on direct and indirect assistance) and they reported greater social assistance, compared with Israeli participants. Some English participants mentioned getting assistance from a career advisor; help with a CV; help in seeking out employment training; and receiving bus passes from probation officers. For Billy, these bus passes helped him get training for employment:

'I did an electrician course. She [probation officer] got me on the electrician course and she gave me 10 bus passes to get there. So, not all [probation officers] do that.'

During the fieldwork, I noticed that the English CRC provided more practical assistance to participants related to social reintegration, compared to the Israeli Probation Service. Seemingly, the majority of Israeli participants had no need for practical assistance as they had a job. However, a more accurate description of the Israeli case is that the majority of them (if not all) turned to avenues in the community to find employment – which proved to be a more successful avenue – while the Israeli Probation Service was not narrated as an avenue for assistance with employment. When I asked Israeli participants about the helpfulness of probation, a main theme that came up was probation as helpful or potentially helpful in terms of providing them with a positive court review.

Nimi, who was sentenced to supervision in the community and unpaid work, said: '*Listen, it's, they're harsh [here] but they just want you to succeed in life… No, she helped me with a court recommendation and that's it.*' Also Shay was chiefly concerned with a good court review when I asked him about what he gained from probation: '*I know they can help me with a good court review, which is important to me.*'

As discussed in Chapter 6, the Israeli courts can informally postpone a sentence and then rely on the review of a probation officer in determining a sentence at a later stage, while the individual spends time at the probation service. In those 'intermediate cases' my participants were in a 'liminal stage' where their future was unknown and the chief concern was what sort of review they would get from their probation officer. Indeed, as the future of some of the participants was not entirely clear and the threat of prison or a harsher punishment was looming, it is not surprising that a good court review was elevated to a principal theme in the narratives of Israelis, with regards to the helpfulness of probation workers. Another example is Nadav, who was completing his licence conditions while waiting for a sentence (which is dependent on the review of the probation officer). Nadav said: '*I'm trying to somehow see and get along with the lawyer and probation officer, Dalia. And with all of that [the offences], they submitted a report about me, they see I'm a good person.*' Nadav hoped that he would get a sentence of SGP or public work.

Avi, who had a lengthy history of imprisonments and had gradually changed his life (over the last several years), said he had refrained from crime for the past two years and was particularly anxious about a good court review for an offence he committed more than two years ago:

DS: '*Is there anything that may, you may foresee, make it difficult for you [to desist]?*'
Avi: '*Rattle me? Umm yes, the [criminal] case that I handle, like, in court. God forbids, God forbids I'll get in prison. Yes, no doubt, of course.*'

Durnescu's (2011, p. 538) study explored the experience of probationers with a suspended sentence in Romania and his participants commonly expressed a sense of 'tremendous threat' of imprisonment in case they failed to comply with the licence conditions. Durnescu (2011) insightfully noted:

'*… offenders' motivation for adhering to the conditions of probation is not stimulated by the desire for a better life, or for a new and prosocial lifestyle, but rather by a fear of a worse punishment. The way probation supervision is constructed seems to encourage the offender to 'play the system' and not to engage in a profound and constructive process of social and psychological change. What kind of relationship might a probation counsellor hope to have with a probationer when a significant part of his practice is based on threats?*'

(Durnescu, 2011, p. 542).

To increase their chances of getting a good review – and in line with the entrenched treatment model in Israel – participants (as noted earlier) turned

their attention to personality-related characteristics they displayed and at times altered the presentation of the 'self' towards staff. Healy's (2012, p. 387) study indicated that in cases where judges postponed a sentence for rehabilitative purpose, probationers 'frequently adopt[ed] the appearance of compliance to mask their disengagement from the treatment', which had undermined the legitimacy of probation workers in the eyes of the probationers and deterred honest engagement.[46] Furthermore, this theme – appearance of emotional compliance – is augmented in the case of Israelis because of the overall tardiness of the criminal justice process. Israeli participants mentioned that they underwent a long criminal justice process and described it as 'Shahevet'. Shahevet is a Hebrew word for something that gets dragged-on for a long period (something that one drags and carries along). Yehuda, for example, said:

'*All this thing [community sanction] dragged because [of] the preoccupation of the court system that spreads a year and a half. And every factor, you know… Bureaucracy and 'shahevet' which is one of the leading characteristics of this country… Hostel and then "let's see" and then a little probation and probation officer…*'

Also Eyal talked about a lengthy court process:

'*And I did this trial [for] four years, until now. [DS: until now? four years?]. There was a trial, it was four years, was, yes. And up to now, thank*

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[46] It is beyond the scope of this study to address the topic of legitimacy in supervision settings, however it is worth noting that themes related to compliance, the legitimacy of probation staff in the eyes of probationers, and the 'fluidity' of legitimacy in different social contexts (see McNeill & Robinson, 2012) are worth reviewing comparatively in light of the findings.

God, no more [criminal] records were collected [no more indictments].
Story.'

Comments about a lengthy criminal process were not solely focused on the courts and probation, but were made in regards to the whole process. For example, Itay said: '*It's quite a lot of stages until you get to the probation services. You get arrested and time goes by and you get indictment.*' Also Boaz complained: '*[They] arrested me, released me, three years later the indictment arrives.*' This experience stood in contrast to the experience of English participants, where (as discussed in Chapter 6) the criminal justice process places an emphasis on swiftness and efficiency.

While the main focus of Israeli participants was a helpful court review, some participants described benefits from therapy, or from the opportunity for a sentence in the community. As we saw earlier, Kobi described a sentence in the community as an opportunity to 'get his life together' and desist. Itay and Mattan talked about the reintegrative experience of community sanction orders and Roei who had one-to-one therapy sessions with his probation officer thought that the conversations were helpful to understand his 'inner problems.'

7.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have drawn a thread between the context of supervision in each country and participants' experiences and engagement with their

supervision (and of criminal justice settings more broadly). It was highly informative to situate this experience within the broader social-structural contexts and the patterns with which justice was delivered. I described a CRC in England so as to sketch how a managerial culture that views probationers as responsible agents and 'risk holders' is illustrated by the architecture and contrasted against an Israeli architecture which implied a treatment culture, where probationers are patients (yet included in the group that ought to be protected). The narratives of English participants indicated that emphasis was placed on monitoring compliance with conditions, and probationers sought to follow the conditions with particular care. There was an overall sense amongst English participants that their life would 'properly commence' after completing supervision; that the conditions were an inconvenience and, at times, an obstacle to overcome. In this sense, participants' time under supervision was experienced as a 'liminal stage' that preceded full civic engagement and held them back from the future they hoped to move towards.

A shared sense of social identity amongst English participants was that of someone that was less socially (re)integrated (compared with Israelis) and on the periphery of society. Furthermore, far fewer participants were employed and in a relationship, which could have contributed to an overall sense of being excluded from full civic engagement (a theme explored further in Chapters 9-10). Israeli participants, as well, experienced

supervision as a 'liminal stage' as their future and sentence was unknown; however, they did not express that they were 'held back' from engaging in their life as integrated members of the community, while supervised. Rather, Israelis expressed a sense of threat because of their 'liminal stage' and – as a result of the entrenched treatment culture – indicated a more pronounced 'emotional adjustment' in the 'persona' they presented to the Israeli Probation Service. Indeed, some Israeli participants described group therapy as 'punishment' and negotiated the identity that they displayed towards the probation staff.

It seems that while English participants indicated that their desired future was stifled and restricted because of the conditions and stigma associated with a conviction, Israeli participants were less restricted, were more (re)integrated socially, and were less concerned with the labelling aspect of supervision. However, Israelis described themselves as having a problem which resided in their character and extended beyond their association with the criminal justice system (as explored in Chapter 8). For English participants, the aspect of 'a good relationship' with their probation officers was highlighted and described as helpful and of value. Emphasis was placed on the ability to have a chat with one's probation officer and the patient and flexible attitude that their probation officer displayed. With regards to the support Israeli participants received, a 'good' court review was a key theme, which is explained by the 'liminal stage' some

participants experienced awaiting their review. The manner in which participants directed their efforts to desist within these two penal contexts and in each society is explored in the forthcoming chapters.

Chapter Eight

NARRATIVES AND IDENTITIES

In the previous chapter, supervision in the community served to exemplify how the social and political context interacted with participants' reintegrative process. In this chapter, I delve further into some of the themes explored in Chapter 7, and compare how participants conceptualised their past offending and desistance from crime. The objective was to draw conclusions about the construction of identities in processes of desistance when the cultural attitude around offenders varies. I start by comparing participants' narratives of past offending, outlining shared 'cultural scripts', and the social 'design' of an 'offender-label' in each country. I then explain how these were woven into participants' self-perceptions and sense of identity.

Thereafter, I turn to narratives of desistance from crime, and explore how their sense of identity informed *how* participants sought to desist. The comparative lens on narratives of offending and desistance uncovered how identity is conceptualised and constructed in each society, as well as unveiled some of the key mechanisms driving participants' agency to 'become' a desister. In particular, I found that the construction of identities (which were shaped by 'cultural scripts' in each country and situated within

distinct cultural understandings of 'offenders') were associated with participants' descriptions of the path they sought to take to desist (the 'how' of desistance). Furthermore, emerging out of an 'offender label' and assuming a non-offender one was conditioned by the 'social design' of that label – that is, a sense of identity and one's actions and choices varied in accordance with how each society cultivated labels around offenders and non-offenders (or desisters). Throughout the chapter, I identify and discuss several desistance theories and frameworks, which were discussed in Chapters 2-3. In particular, I discuss the theory of internal narratives, the feared self, structural and individual-level processes, 'making good', and maturation theory.

8.1 Narratives of offending

Giddens (1991, p. 54) proposed that self-identity is 'not to be found in behaviour, nor – important though this is – in the reactions of others, but in the capacity to keep a particular narrative going'. For Giddens, a *story* that a person supplies about him or herself serves to integrate experiences and construct an ongoing sense of identity, with which a person identifies (Giddens, 1991). Participants were asked to describe their first offence, past offending, and their involvement with the law throughout their lives. The manner in which each group framed their past offending was indicative of how they saw themselves, integrated their past into the 'self', and sought to 'move' into the future. All the English participants said the first time they

got in trouble with the law was at a young age, commonly between the ages of 10 to 15, and their first involvements were partly framed as being 'young and stupid'. For example, Hugh said:

'Umm. First, first, first [as if trying to recall]. Ha, I was 10 year old. Yeah, it [was] only just a messing about, a game, you know what I mean. We went down to a river, and ended up, because there were a few lads, you know what I mean, we ended up on a boat, and messing about, it wasn't our boat, you know what I mean… But since then it's been like shoplifting and stuff like that, you know what I mean. To feed my drug habit.'

Luke highlighted that his first involvement with the law was 'kids causing trouble'. He said: '*Ah, first time I was about 13 years old. Umm we were causing trouble like kids do. A lot of vandalising. Somebody's* car.' The narrative of being 'young and stupid' seemed to convey that: 1) they were 'messing about', like other kids their age did; and 2) because they were young they were not concerned about the consequences. English participants commonly described their offending as getting worse with time, and the response of the criminal justice as increasingly punitive, as they got older. Ian, for example, said:

'I progressed from that [shoplifting] to doing house burglaries and eh… obviously I went, it was a process, it wasn't just that to that. Umm but that's what I ended up doing, burgling people's houses… And I know that going back [to prison]… it gets worse and worse every time I've gone back it's gone worse, to prison.'

Prolonged offending was described by English participants as getting caught up in a cycle (see also Maruna, 2001). For example, Luke said:

'Then I started committing more serious offences, like burglary. To buy drugs. From the age of 14, I was committing burglaries to bag cannabis. And the offences got more serious as the drugs got more serious. Got to a point where I was committing crime for heroin and crack cocaine. So, yeah and I've been going around in circles ever since. Prison. Getting out, more crime, more drugs. Back to prison.'

In the case of Israeli participants, any question about a first offence and past offending quickly turned into a conversation about their childhood, which they narrated as shaping 'who they are' and their problems. For example, I asked Eyal about his first offence and involvement with the law and he answered:

'I was a serial tangler with the law. All the time. All the time. I didn't have the intention or, like. I had a probation officer at the time, but I always kept on getting in trouble. There was nothing at home. Because they say everything starts at home. Starts and ends at home. From there [home], actually, I went out. There [at home], there was no warmth, no love, no food, no nothing. There was no type of... In my perception, a home is a bad place. Today it's not [bad], of course. It was a place that was not good to be in. There was violence, there was... there wasn't, all the basic needs of people. The [my] mum passed-away when I was young, we lived in a Moshav [village], I was 8.'

As the quote above suggests, Eyal (like other Israelis) quickly associated a discussion about past offending to turmoil in his life, familial dynamics, and experiences in childhood. A shared story that was described by Israelis, especially by Eyal, Asaf, Boaz, Kobi, Avi, Roei, and Shay was growing up in a home that had no warmth, attention, or love; experiencing domestic violence at times; growing up in poverty (with no food or clothing); and/or

that there was some other trauma in their childhood. Similarly to Maruna's (2001) finding, these stories about their external circumstances served as an explanation for later problems and their offending. For example, Avi from Israel, who shared a similar offending history to Luke, from England (see above), said:

'Umm I wasn't born in Israel… Came here at the age 4. Little kid, difficulties with language, don't know, adjustment, mentality, you know. You need to start everything from the start, because it's unfamiliar and unknown. And, that's it. I found warmth, in the past, that I didn't find at home. I found it outside with friends…'
DS: *'And since then, did you have incidents with the law?'*
Avi: *'Yes, of course, of course. Then I started smoking grass, at a very young age. And after a year or two I started using hard drugs and was considered a junkie. And that's how the chain of events of my life unfolded, you know – prison, out, prison, out, drugs, offences. That's it.'*

Compared with English participants, who turned to their young age to convey that they were 'being silly', some Israeli participants (N=8) who began offending in their teens (Eyal, Avi, Boaz, Asaf, Shay, Nimi, Roei, Kobi) narrated their young onset as indicative or 'proof' that they had a troubled childhood. For example, Kobi shared:

'Heroin, cocaine, and hash, I started at the age of 13. I knew what it was. Cigarettes already at age 10. I stole, from the shop, he had a shop, with cigarettes. The chain of events of my life came from [my] childhood. I only understood it at age 52, throughout the years, when I grew up… When I was young, until age 5, mum told me that [my] dad was 'sick on me' [loved me] in 'levels' [very much]. And since I was 5 and up [older] he changed towards me, and she didn't knew why either. Eh, [he changed] in terms of warmth, love, hugs, I didn't have that there [with my father]… I didn't have the warmth, attention, listening… And I had to be a dominant figure and I

got that attention and warmth by going out to the neighbourhood and I became dominant in the neighbourhood.'

As Maruna (2001) identified, Kobi sought to achieve some sort of power over his bleak circumstances and described doing so by spending time in the 'streets' and committing crime. Both Kobi and Avi mentioned they spent time in the 'streets' and sought attention from other delinquent peers *because* they did not get what they needed from home. In this way, they attributed their offending to their upbringing, their parents, and the home. As Eyal said earlier: '*Because they say everything starts at home.'*

Eyal's words raise the question of who are the 'they' he was referring to? The experts I conversed with in each country held different views about offending at a young age. Kim, an English expert, thought: '*a lot of people, as you know, they all start committing crime when they're young, and some people grow out of it*'. Also, Oliver mentioned about offending at a young age: '*Some people make mistakes, you make a mistake.'* Experts in Israel, who were mostly treatment providers (see Chapter 4), highlighted problems in childhood and 'youthful messing-about' as a sign of 'unhealthy development' and as an indication of later problems and offending. For example, Belle (an Israeli expert) talked about the causes of offending: '*They [offenders] were left with insufficient parental care, I mean, [that insufficiently] responds to their emotional needs. Umm, they search after excitements or seek a sense of belonging so they hang-out and develop*

relationships with outcasts.' Belle's description corresponded to the themes Kobi and Avi highlighted in their narratives. There were different social discourses around why people offend in each country (as discussed further below) and the focus of Israeli experts on the role of parents as partly responsible for offending explains the more critical attitude towards delinquency at a young age in Israel, amongst both participants and experts. In particular, as some Israeli participants expressed, offending at a young age was framed as 'indicative' of 'something being wrong' and of later problems.

On the other hand, narratives of experts in England suggested a more 'tolerant' attitude towards 'making mistakes' at a young age. These 'shared understandings' in each country seem to provide the framework and language with which participants situated their actions (Giddens, 1984; 1991; see also Goffman, 1959) and explain why English and Israeli participants answered questions about their past offending differently.[47] It seems that a social label of 'being troubled' was more readily assigned to Israeli youth who offended, then was the case in England. Furthermore, an early (and somewhat 'fixed') label in Israel had sharpened participants' experience of being 'troubled' or an 'outsider', to use Becker's (1973)

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[47] Another explanation to entertain is whether differences related to *age* played a role in this variance. That is, are older desisters more inclined to critically view their childhood as indicative, than younger desisters? Further research is needed to determine the role of age. However, an emerging factor that more clearly accounts for this difference pertains to the different social attitudes in each country that directly corresponded to the narratives of participants.

words (although see below how Israeli participants negotiated an 'outsider' identity).

Israelis were not alone in turning to past experiences or external circumstances – including childhood and familial dynamics – to explain their offending. For example, Kevin talked about his father (who had been in-and-out of prison throughout his life) and questioned the impact this had on him:

'*… when you're a kid everyone wants to be like their dad, don't they? So when you see that you think ah that's big and clever, how do I do that…? I'd say it's his fault, what you reckon? I say it's his fault I am like I am, no?*'

Ian also talked about his upbringing and absent mother as he was trying to make sense of how this had a role in leading to his offending, and the stress he felt today as he was desisting. Another example was Billy who shared traumatic experiences in his childhood and thought it played a role in shaping who he was and his negative attitude towards the police:

'*When my mum used to get beat up by my dad, she used to phone the police [and] they won't be in quick… used to beat her up with a baseball bat, properly put her in hospital. Police didn't do all. Never did all. I come from them reasons, you know what I mean?*'

While English participants framed external circumstances as shaping their lives, some of them (N=8) voiced judgment about their past choices or continuing offending (especially in cases of reoffending after abstaining); a

theme which was uncommon in Israelis' narratives. Richard, for example, thought that the lack of support he received when in school and his abusive mother had played a key role in his offending: '*It's the stuff that you outlive, that always has an impact later in life.*' However, he repeatedly mentioned in the interview that other people in his neighbourhood had gone '*another way*' or '*gone straight*' when they grew older, yet he kept getting in trouble. Leo said:

'*I mean I carry issues, baggage, call it what you will, umm of some kind. So I should have been able to deal with, without resorting to what I did umm… I mean, my brother lived the same life I had and he never did what I did. So. He went about it in another way. I mean that caused him his own problems, but eh yeah, yeah, I didn't go about it the right way. umm umm, so, haha [cynical laugh] another regret, ah, yeah.*'

English participants displayed greater judgment about the choices and actions they did in the past, compared to Israeli participants. This tendency could be linked to the greater emphasis in the English penal system on offenders as rational actors, and as holding greater personal responsibility for their actions (as implied in Chapter 7), while Israelis, who lived within a treatment penal context, have shown less judgment and a lower sense of responsibility over their past. As some English participants voiced critique, they all mentioned external factors they thought were responsible for getting them into repeated trouble. These commonly included: Addiction, mental health issues, a negative experience that they did not respond to well (such as a divorce), and financial difficulties. Owen, an English

participant, described his offending as related to his relationship with alcohol, describing it as 'his demon':

'Yeah, a lot of it. A lot of my getting in trouble with police, a lot of it is alcohol related, a lot of it, which is why I don't drink so much, I used to drink quite a lot, back, years ago, now I tend not to. It's my demon.'

In contrast, Israeli participants described their reoffending as a continued expression of their past experiences, which had brought about emotional and personality-related reasons for their reoffending. That is, Israelis 'turned inwardly' to explain how their personality traits (which were shaped by their upbringing) were the cause of their offending and reoffending. For example, Avi described 'his essence' as selfish to explain his drug addiction and offending: *'I, my essence is selfish. I'm a junkie; a junkie is only for himself, you know, he doesn't see anyone. I need to leave my cave and see other places.[48] That's also a difficulty.'* If we compare Owen's and Avi's descriptions, Owen described his troubles with the law as alcohol-related, while Avi talked about his addictive behaviour and offending as linked to an ingrained characteristic he viewed as negative – selfishness. In the next example, Hugh pointed to his drug use as leading to his offending. Like other English participants who were addicted to a substance (N=9), Hugh asserted that if he overcame his addiction, he would not offend again:

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[48] By 'leaving the cave' and seeing other places Avi intends to suggests that he should stop focusing only on himself.

'It's all focused around the drug use and once you deal with [the] drug use, then everything else seems to fall into place, do you know what I mean? Yeah, yeah. It's all around the drug use. So you take away the drug use and you don't need to shoplift anymore, or you don't need to commit crime for the drug use. So. Yeah.'

Avi, in contrast, described a period in his life where he stopped using drugs, but had continued to offend, hoping he could still sustain himself this way, but without his harmful addiction. However, as Avi fell back on drugs, he later came to the conclusion that he needed to stop offending as well and address his 'essence' (i.e. his personality):

'I thought, you know, that I can be without the drugs but continue my way of life [crime]. But it doesn't work. I tried to be "clever", as you say. But it doesn't work, there is no half-pregnancy here, it's either-or [drugs and crime or no drugs and no crime].'

This difference – Israeli participants 'turning inwardly' to personality traits, compared with English participants who identified a specific (often external) obstacle in stopping their offending – was not only common amongst participants with an addiction-related offence. Eyal, for example, turned inwardly to explain how his constant sense that something was lacking in his life was an obstacle in stopping, and had prompted him to seek money in illegal ways: *'But yes, it exists in me, it exists in me, the, it comes from childhood. Yes, a need. I always feel like I'm lacking, lacking something, lacking something and try to complete it by stealing.'* In

contrast, Ian talked about his need for money as something that had tempted him to reoffend in the past:

DS: 'S*o how does it work out for you financially? How do you…?'*
Ian: '*Not very good. This is where I started coming into being a criminal again, you know what I mean, the depths of despair. I get no more because I know I got people now that will help me out and that, if need be. But back then when I was a young kid and it was just gone then. If I didn't have no money, and that was my thought process –* "*if I need some money, it's no matter where it's coming from, I'm taking it.*"'

In describing the variance between the two groups, I do not intend to suggest that English participants did not turn inwardly to make sense of their addiction and offending. Rather, I seek to describe how each group framed their continuing involvement, which aspects were highlighted in their narratives, and how these themes were woven into their sense of identity and – as I discuss later – the ways they sought to desist.

To conclude, participants in both countries talked about past experiences and getting 'caught up' in crime and the criminal justice system. For English participants, it was a mix of negative experiences in their past and the silly mistakes that accompanies youth which fuelled this cycle. Within English narratives, a youthful 'messing about' grow into something more serious as they grew older and they got caught in a cycle that was difficult to break. Furthermore, all English participants mentioned external factors in their description of past offending. In contrast, Israelis placed greater focus on experiences in childhood in their narratives, voiced less critique of

their past behaviour, and framed troubles with the law when they were young as denoting an 'unhealthy development' which brought them to offend. Israeli participants described their reoffending as a continued expression of their past experiences and, to an extent, the concept of 'growing out of crime' was 'less available' in the Israeli social discourse. English participants had, to a greater extent, considered the notion 'growing out of crime'; or, (more to the point), *not* 'growing out' of crime.

8.1.1 Cultural scripts, labelling and self-perceptions

Previously, I briefly noted that discourses around early onset in each country were 'synchronised' amongst participants and experts in each country. Indeed, themes highlighted in participants' narratives exemplified shared '*cultural scripts*' around what leads to offending, and how people stop offending. Commonly, experts in Israel attributed the causes of crime and persistent offending to the home and childhood experiences, and crime was explained as 'not developing properly during childhood', mainly because their parents were not able to support them; give sufficient care; set proper boundaries; or that some traumatic event happened in their childhood. For example, Keren[49], an Israeli expert, said:

'*What I think is the most-most basic [factor that leads to offending] is life circumstances. If someone's parents are divorced. To begin with, the economic conditions are difficult; a prominent character in the family, someone he was very attached to (it can even be his grandma), passed*

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[49] The names of all the experts in this thesis are pseudonym.

away, exactly when he starts puberty. Suddenly, [let's] say, he doesn't have an authority figure. Umm 'Aliah' [immigration]… I also think that it's very important, to what extent the parents – as figures, or significant figures in his life – to what extent they are also authoritarian, frequently there, set boundaries, or to what extent… I think it's very significant.'

As discussed in Chapter 5, Israel is a child-oriented society and much emphasis is placed on the child-parent relationship. It seems fitting that within such a cultural context, both participants and experts (such as Keren) highlighted the role of parents in offending. Israeli experts further thought that because of a 'troublesome development', offenders lack the 'right tools' to 'deal' with life and consequently solve obstacles and difficult emotions by offending. For example, Yarden said:

'These actions [offending] are motivated by two things. One is emotions that [are] built-up – frustration and anger and bitterness and stifling helplessness of "I don't have a way to save myself now". And secondly, which is in my view the significant difference [from people who don't offend but have these emotions], is lack of behavioural and cognitive tools.'

Experts' discourse around why people offend in England revolved around '*indicators*' that can, in turn, suggest that a person might 'end up' in the criminal justice system. For example, Kim said:

'People might have limited opportunities. Lack of education or they may have been hypermatic behaviours at schools and they become excluded and, you know, it's a whole cycle… So I suppose people offend for different reasons and I think it's different for each person, isn't it?'

Experts in England talked about problems that people who offend may have; some of which were social, economic, related to one's family, or personal. For example, Emily said:

DS: '*So from what you see and learned, why do you think people, umm, offend in the first place?*'
Emily: '*That's a really difficult one. Cause it can be a lot of different reasons… So are they in an area of poverty or deprivation. Umm, so that might be area where the employment rate is, umm, very few people are in employment, a lot are on benefits. Umm, unfortunately in areas such as that there's always a link with crime being committed in areas such as that. And also, substance misuse. It tends to be areas of poverty where substances have more predominately been relied on… People who, see there is no one factor, it's a collective of factors so, the things that we look at are the areas of deprivation, family circumstances. So that's whether the family has been involved in crime or a lack of family support, or a lack of family support network. Individuals who have been marginalised…*'

Furthermore, there was a shared view amongst English experts that, while people may face multiple problems, it is the failure of support and services of official governmental bodies to address these problems that *eventually* leads to offending. Emily said:

'*So if there were communities, that role was taken by statutory bodies. Now there is no money for statutory bodies, but that role has been taken from the community. So nobody is doing it now and people fall through the net. So it's all gone a bit awry.*'

The economic shifts that the United Kingdom experienced in the last 70 years (briefly discussed in Chapter 5) were perhaps sharper and more rapid than in Israel and could have brought greater collective attention to social issues and a collective sense of social deprivation. In particular, the

noticeable withdraw of governmental bodies in providing social assistance since the 1980s could have contributed to a widespread discourse around the role of the British government in crime. In contrast, there is a widespread concept in Israel – used by experts (as well as academics) – referred to as '*offending behavioural patterns*'. This concept extends beyond illegal activities and incorporates the way a person acts in their everyday life – for example, behaviours one exhibits while waiting in a queue at the postoffice; or the way a person engages with their significant others. Within this concept, certain characteristics or behaviours are seen as signifying 'offending patterns'. For example, Yarden noted:

'*Until they undergo a significant rehabilitation, okay? Which is therapy. Until they go through that and understand and go deep into the issue, and go back in their life and see patterns of ev-ery-thing… And then they start to see patterns, [they] understand that it [their problem] is not [just about] one issue [offending], [they] understand the things behind it…*'

Hence, the 'cultural script' around offending (and desisting) in Israel places emphasis on factors that are related to one's patterns of behaviours and extends beyond offending. This theme and views around offending (expressed by Yarden) were also identified in the Israeli Probation Service, discussed in Chapter 7. Interestingly, in the narratives of Israelis (but not English), participants described character traits and the appearance of 'common offenders' and compared themselves to their description of what offenders are 'usually like.' That is, Israeli participants had sketched an 'offender-type' and, while doing so, they 'classified' their offending and

described how they matched or departed from that description. For example, Boaz described some features which 'mark' offenders:

'Instantly you see it, instantly you see it in his body language. That's the first [thing] – body language. After he opens his mouth, [you see it] in his vocabulary, what [kind of] Hebrew he speaks to you. There's Hebrew and there's Hebrew. Understand? [DS: Hmm]. When you look at his way of dress, there's etiquette [style] of dress amongst offenders… There's etiquette [style] of cars. Because only offenders buy those cars. You understand? These are transparent things, you don't need to study a PhD to know he's an offender. Also a stupid [person] instantly knows. In a second, he just opens his mouth. Understand?'

Following a description of distinguishing features of offenders in Israel, participants commonly compared themselves to their own classification. Mattan, in the next example, explains how he is not like other offenders because he is not an offender 'in essence':

'Look, I'm not a classical case of an offender. There are, what's called, offenders. You can look at it in two ways: Someone who broke the law, offender; or someone who is an offender in their conduct, in their way of life, in their character. Understand? All those criminal families [organised crime], all those arshim [chavs], all those who are regarded… that their behaviour is also like that. So it all depends where it comes from. [Whether] It comes from an inner place, from my character [which is] offender-like and I don't give a shit about anyone. Or [whether] I did actions, or I do actions that are considered illegal by law.'

Indeed, there was a common theme amongst Israeli participants that offenders are a type of person with specific patterns of behaviour, and that this offender-characteristic also 'permeates' various aspects of that person's life and persona. Hence, the widespread view amongst experts that

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offending extends beyond illegal actions and into one's character was a theme that Israeli participants engaged with and a concept that was woven into their sense of identity. As Mattan described it: '*It comes from an inner place, from my character [which is] offender-like and I don't give a shit about anyone.*' Mattan then recounted how upset he gets when he sees a person throw litter on the pavement, seeking to convey that his character was different from a person that has 'offender-like characteristics' and does not care about littering. Similarly to Mattan, other Israeli participants shared this theme, as they distinguished themselves from (or identified with) what they viewed as 'an offender', in one way or another. In the next example, Asaf stressed that he never saw himself as an 'outsider' or an 'offender'; rather, the way he chose to approach life was not always legal:

'*The chain of events? Umm look, I'll tell you. I never saw myself as umm, you know, there's umm, there's people who are, like, 'outsiders.' Like, I never saw myself as, like, that this was my direction in life and that's it. Like, not right and not left. But it [crime] was always my solution to all sorts of things.*'

Becker's (1973, pp. 9-10) theoretical framework of labelling is grounded on the notion that people who are labelled as deviant share in common the experience of being labelled as 'outsiders'. Becker (1973) notes that the extent to which someone is an 'outsider' can be a product (or an enterprise) of society and the individual themselves, and can vary from case to case. The narratives of Israelis indicate that their sense of having an identity of an 'outsider' or of 'offender' was negotiated with their description of

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'offender-like character'. Israeli participants could 'play' with the concept of *offender* in their narratives and self-conceptions because offenders, in Israel, did not strictly refer to someone who broke the law, but to someone with certain characteristics (as suggested by experts and the context of supervision discussed in Chapter 7). In particular, for some Israeli participants, descriptions of 'offender-character' served to 'shrink' or 'shrug off' sentiments around being 'an outsider' and helped them integrate their past, primarily by saying one of two things: that their character was different from 'offender-like' character; or that they do not identify with the common 'cultural script' around offenders, as in Asaf's case above.

On the other hand, some Israeli participants described themselves as having, as Boaz said '*a library of records*', or as getting in trouble with the law regularly (as Eyal mentioned he was a '*serial law tangler*'), or defined themselves as 'big-time criminals'. Vito, for example, repeatedly mentioned he was a '*criminal*' and expressed shame over some offences (perhaps partly because I was a woman), which he described as not fitting with his personality (his 'mentality'): '*I was a big criminal. I can drive you crazy [with stories] until Sunday… It requires courage to tell a girl, sitting [in front of you] that I... I'm ashamed. Why? It [the offence] doesn't fit my mentality.*' Differences in self-perceptions amongst Israelis regarding their 'offending identity' was not primarily dependent of the length of involvement with the criminal justice system, since narratives around one's

identity varied amongst Israelis with comparable involvement. Rather, it seems that the '*cultural script*' was a more prominent driver which Israelis engaged with. Furthermore, a comparison suggests that self-perceptions around one's identity (and the way participants perceived their past) played a role in shaping how participants in each country sought to desist (discussed below).

In the case of English participants, they did not express the same narratives around 'offender character' and did not negotiate their self-identity against a 'fixed' view of 'who' is an offender. Rather, a more prevalent theme amongst English participants, which seems to help them reconcile with the past was to mention that, really, they are a good person (see also, Maruna, 2001). In particular, English participants highlighted that they had done wrong, but they were a good person that went about life the wrong way. For example, Aidan said: '*But yeah I have eh… I'm a good lad really but I had it up down up down up down eh. But now, I'm done, I finished, I had enough. [DS: yeah?]. I'm finished.*' Similarly, Richard said: '*Because I'm not a bad person. I do it [helping others] for anybody. I do anything for anybody. But fair enough I've done wrong in life, but because I've done wrong in life.*'

8.2 Narratives of desistance

8.2.1 Reflecting on life

A shared theme amongst participants in both countries was that they indicated engaging in a process of (re)evaluation of their life and expressed change in what mattered to them, wanting to move towards a 'different life.' Vaughan (2007) refers to this process as *internal narratives* where the agent engages in moral conversations and (re)evaluates their choices and ultimate concerns. In particular, English participants expressed that they were thinking about things differently (now), which they commonly framed as being part of their growing up. For example, Jack said:

'But like I said before, I weren't bothered, you know what I mean. [DS: Yeah]. I weren't bothered what happened that, what I were doing, now I am. It's like, like I don't know. I'd like to think I'm grown up now, you know what I mean. So. Yeah.'

As Jack mentioned, English participants said that while previously they were not concerned with the consequences, they were now attuned to them. Owen succinctly expressed it as *'before I just never cared, I never cared what anybody thought, I just didn't care'.* But now – especially as they began to think of things differently – participants expressed a concern over the influence of prolonged offending over their lives. Luke, for example, said: *'If I go back to that life, I won't live for much longer with the amount of drugs I used… I weighed nine stones that's it. Only a year ago. Now I'm 13 1/2 stones so I look a lot healthier.'* In addition to a desire to avoid the

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criminal justice system, English participants were concerned with the influence of their offending on other people in their life (see also Vaughan, 2017). For example, Aidan became concerned with the effects of his drug use on his child at school:

'And eh I don't [know] if it's because I'm getting older and my children are older, they go to big school soon, my youngest, and kids can be awfully mean. I don't want your dad this and your dad on drugs and… I don't want none of that for her. And I just don't want it to myself no more.'

The narrative of English participants also exemplified themes of the theory of the feared-self in which they expressed dissatisfactions with their current life (the present-self), coupled with worries about a bleak and undesirable future (Paternoster & Bushway, 2009), as Luke's words suggested. Furthermore, English participants described wanting certain things in their future, and that offending or returning to drug use, alcohol, or crime, would jeopardise what they *now* wanted (see also Bottoms & Shapland, 2011; Hunter & Farrall, 2017; Sampson & Laub, 1993). The next quote from Ian illustrates these themes:

'What happens is, you grow and start seeing things from others people's perspective, point of view. You still have that mindset, I know I can go and kick someone's door off, for instance. To you, who never done it, it sounds alien, that's disgusting, whatever. That's the way it used to be, whereas now I'm thinking of people, the kids that are in the house and rah-rah. My girlfriend, me mum, and what's gonna happen to me, me health problems, and. Just you start thinking more of what might be, rather then you just need to… What's gonna happen if I get locked up and me mum going to lose me, going to lose me house and all that stuff.'

Israeli participants also described engaging in internal narratives, as suggested by earlier quotes. In particular, Israelis described reflecting on their past; the manner in which the past shaped them; (re)evaluated their current lives; and expressed a change in what mattered to them. In the interview, Kobi said that the time he spent with his young niece had changed his feelings about his life – that now he wished to spend more time with his family, and not get caught up in trouble again. As in the case of English participants, Israelis highlighted the role of meaningful relationships in their lives, in their process of change and efforts to desist (see also Hunter & Farrall, 2017; Weaver, 2015; Weaver and McNeill, 2015).

Other Israeli participants, similarly to Kobi, described a change in what mattered to them and a change of 'focus', where they directed greater attention towards other people in their lives. For example, Nadav said that he no longer looked for the 'mess' (i.e. excitement) and wanted to focus on his 'home life' and family: '*I don't do drugs, I don't drink, I look for my corner with my kids and grandkids. I have a woman at home.*' Like English participants, Israeli participants were concerned with the impact of continued offending on their life and expressed themes identified by theory of the 'feared-self' (Paternoster & Bushway, 2009). For example, Boaz and Ichik describe a grim future if they had continued:

Boaz: '*So you deteriorate. Deteriorate-deteriorate-deteriorate and reach a point where that's it; either 20 years in [prison] or you get out of [crime].*'

Ichik: '*I could have been here, in this country, a great offender in the world and I didn't want it. Really, because I would have ended my life either by an explosive, an explosive device in the car, or I'd be shot. So I don't need that.*'

In short, narratives of both English and Israeli participants about desistance included thoughts about their own life; a change in preferences; and possible negative consequences if they had continued to offend.

8.2.2 The 'how' of desistance

Earlier in the chapter I described how participants in each country framed their past offending and noted that both groups turned to external circumstances to describe how these shaped them and lead to their repeated offending. However, I argued that participants' sense of identity, views of their past offending, and self-perceptions varied and matched the 'cultural scripts' in each country. In narratives of desistance from crime, participants in both countries displayed, as Maruna (2001) identified, the emergence of the 'I'; that is, a sense of agency and self-determination over their present and future (see also LeBel et al., 2008). In addition, narratives about desistance and what participants thought the 'I' ought to do to desist was influenced by their sense of identity, which was informed by their views of their past. Furthermore, narratives of desistance varied in accordance with 'cultural scripts' in each country; shared cultural 'dreams' of a 'normal'

life; and (as is illustrated in Chapter 9) the social conditions surrounding them. Importantly, a comparison suggests that emerging out of an 'offender label' and assuming a non-offender one (within a given society) is conditioned by the pattern or 'social design' of that label – that is, a sense of identity and one's actions and choices varied in accordance with how each society cultivated labels around offenders and non-offenders (or desisters).

Following up from the discussion of internal narratives above, the process of (re)evaluation was highlighted by English participants as linked to 'growing up', or getting older and 'losing' time. For example, Leo (age 44) said: '*I can't tell you what changed, really, to be honest. Just that I just had enough… I just thought, you're getting older, there's not much time left so. Time is the most precious commodity, it is.*' Shover's (1983, p. 211) study of desistance amongst older property offenders found that most men took 'stock of their lives' and became 'acutely aware of time' lost as they got older. Shover (1983) notes that another prison sentence would not only deprive them of time in society, but expropriate their remaining years and diminish opportunities to accomplish something else (see also Hunter & Farrall, 2017). Thomas, an English participant in my study, said:

'*Well, I don't want to go back to that life. I want a normal life where I got family round me and friends round me and I'm not in-and-out of police stations and probation officers so. I'm 41 now, I need to grow up now and get me self sorted out.*'

In his study, Shover (1983, pp. 210-211) argued that there were 'age-related changes in the expectations of likely criminal success held by ordinary property offenders' and, as the men aged, they gradually viewed their past behaviour and self as 'foolish' and as providing them with limited value in the future. The age-related change, Shover (1983, pp. 210-211, 216) argues, symbolised a 'turning point' in their lives. Both English and Israeli participants talked about getting older and 'growing up.' For example, Kobi noted earlier that 'only now', as he got older, had he realised the impact that the past had on him. However, the description of desistance as an act of 'growing up' was highlighted in England, and there was far less evidence of age-related changes (and narratives around growing up) amongst Israeli participants. A noticeable difference between the two groups was that English participants framed desisting as involving an aspect of growing up and becoming a 'sensible', responsible adult, while such narratives were almost fully absent in the case of older Israelis. Thomas, in the example above, had repeated throughout the interview that he needed to 'grow-up' and this statement was something I heard other English participants say, so I asked him what he meant:

DS: '*What does it mean to 'grow up'?*'
Thomas: '*It's act like an adult. Eh, because the things I used to do, I used to get up just to, like boysters, like childish umm, just grow up in your head and act like a proper adult, and not misbehaving all the time and get in trouble like kids do, you know what I mean?*'
DS: '*Okay and an adult, to be an adult here is to…*'

Thomas: *'Be sensible, like live a normal life. [DS: Okay]. That's what I want now. I messed about too much. In-and-out of prisons. Like I said I got me family now, I got me little boys, I wanna be there for them, I wanna be a good role model for them, rather than in-and-out of prison.'*

In Israel, Kobi (age 52) talked about not acting like a kid: *'In fact, I decided to get myself together. But I had a red light, signaling to me too much, [it's] enough; "Kobi, you are not a kid, enough Kobi you are not a kid".* However, needing to 'grow up' and become an adult, as a description of assuming a pro-social identity of a desister, was far less identifiable in Israeli narratives. In contrast, Israeli participants highlighted changing their approach to life, changing their ways of living, 'getting themselves together', or changing attributes within themselves. In the next example, Vito (age 65) describes how he changed his 'crooked ways':

'Because I didn't go to work as a kid. I went to do 'combinations[50]', to bring money. Now that I have no need[51] in it [doing 'combinations'] umm, everything fell asleep [stopped]. I didn't do nothing [refers to crime]. And I try, to this day, not to do 'combinations' and not to look after fantasies. I live with what I have, that's the truth.'

Similarly to Vito, other Israeli participants described desisting by turning over a new leaf, readjusting their approach and learning to be satisfied with what they have got. Avi (age 50), for example described his efforts to desist:

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[50] 'Combinations' is an Israeli slang which refers to getting things, such as money, in crooked or not straightforward ways. These crooked ways can signify both legal and illegal activities.

[51] Vito talks about an emotional need to do 'combinations.'

'Difficult, difficult, very difficult. Maybe to you it's obvious to stand in line at the post office or at the bank. But okay, like. I also used to get there and want to push, I wanted to have… You know, standing in a line.'
DS: *'So learning to stand in [a] line.'*
Avi: *'[I] Learn how to stand in [a] line. [I] Learn. And to accept [a] 'no', [you/we] learn.'*

Avi, here, described changing his offender-like behavioural patterns that experts highlighted. To desist, Israeli participants highlighted undertaking a meaningful change and/or undertaking a complete or extreme change. By a meaningful change I intend to suggest that they said that they had to 'work on themselves' or undergo internal change. Boaz, for example, described going on a road that leads to self-change and internalising that new road. Eyal, for example, said he had developed an inner voice that helps him avoid further troubles: *'I have this inner voice that tells me "no, no." I developed some inner voice. I don't know how to call it. It makes me agonise when I make a mistake.'* In the next quote, Kobi described a meaningful change he underwent in his efforts to desist:

'Like, I did the change. That change is significant and I'll tell you [about it]. The people I've hurt by stealing, I went and asked forgiveness… That [was] saying goodbye to dad in the cemetery, the fun that you had from him. That [was] to sit with family, sit with the [my] partner, open up to her about how you're feeling.'

Turning 'inwards' to describe the change one is undergoing was not only apparent in the case of Israeli participants, but it was highlighted as the main vehicle through which they sought to desist. In England, Hugh for example, told me about having to deal with many emotions and pains from

the past that he had previously blocked out with drugs. He said: '*And lately ahh, my emotions, phew God. Really, because I never dealt with em, they all come back at the same time, hit me [exhales loudly] God.*' Also, Max expressed that he needed to learn to deal with adversities differently:

'*I split with my wife and I took that quite bad. You know, for using drugs again, and obviously, that led to me doing all the things now, what have you, so. But I've learned now to deal with them things differently, so. Hopefully, I won't go back to prison anyway.*'

In the case of English participants however, turning inwardly and undergoing a meaningful change was not framed as the main vehicle through which they sought to desist. That said, both concepts that were highlighted by participants – 'growing up' (England) and undergoing an internal change (Israel) – involve attuning to oneself, turning inwardly, and asserting self-determination and control over one's future behaviour and actions. Furthermore, a comparison suggests that a key mechanism here was assuming self-determination in developing a pro-social identity (as Maruna has suggested), rather than strictly (or predominantly) a turning point narrated around an age-related change (as Shover has suggested). That is, the Israeli case implies that both groups shared a similar aspect to their desistance process – self-determination – without necessarily needing to frame it as related to age or maturity. Furthermore, the finding herein implies that self-determination over one's future was a mechanism that was shared in common between the two groups in their effort to desist, which

manifested for both younger age groups (such as the English case) or older age groups (such as the Israeli case).

Indeed, an emerging sense of agency over their future and desisting from crime was a key theme shared in common amongst English and Israelis. See for example the following four descriptions of participants from each country:

Luke (England): '*Yeah, deep down I know it's all down to me to change. Nobody can, umm, do it for you, you got to do it yourself. So no matter who I speak to, whenever I go out or commit a crime that's down to me.*'

Avi (Israel): '*Again, it all starts and ends with you. I very much believe that. I don't see anything else. True that the environment can support, can help, can harm, but I think it all starts and ends with you.*'

Max (England): '*The only thing that could make it difficult [to stop offending] is meself. So. If I don't attend appointments and stuff like that, which I do [attend] all the time. I do of course, I do what I'm told.*'

Ichik (Israel): '*The rules, I understood and did soul-maths[52] with myself and understood that these moves [that I do], the way I behave, I'm only losing. So I need to change my pose, change attitude. There's no other way. I collected myself with both hands.*'

Some Israeli participants described an extreme or complete change in one way or another – including the way one talks and dresses – and cutting the things that linked them to 'that world' – including people and places, and

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[52] Soul-math' is a phrase in Hebrew that refers to a process of introspection and calculation of what is good and bad in one's life and soul.

'offending patterns.' In the next example, Asaf (aged 42) talked about an extreme change:

'*Ummm, one of the realisations I had is, if you want to change your life, umm, the change needs to be done in an extreme way, like. You can't change a part of you and not another. It doesn't work. You need to change life in an absolute way. Like, from the things, the-the-the way you dress, the way you talk, the music [you listen to], the simple things. Things that… that's the things that link you to that world. It's the people, the places you hang out that you go to, the way you talk, the way you dress, the car you drive, shoes you wear. The things, everything, like, you need to change – you. Umm.*'

Indeed, it seems that Asaf sought to 'relinquish' aspects associated with an 'offender identity' described earlier in the chapter. In the next example, Avi described 'cutting ties' with certain environments and changing his patterns of behaviour: '*I cut myself [away] from friend, from [my] environment, from lots-lots. I'm talking to you about the most personal [things], my habits, patterns of behaviours, lots-lots. Again every time.*' In the forthcoming chapters, I describe how English participants (like Israelis) sought to 'break' from their past (see also Paternoster & Bushway, 2009; Sampson & Laub, 1993) and habits (Bottoms & Shapland, 2011) in order to overcome obstacles to desistance. Yet, I outlined the narratives of Israelis about breaking from their past here because these were described as the means through which they adopted a pro-social identity, rather than framed as obstacles to overcome.

Dreaming of a 'normal' life

Another difference that emerged between English and Israeli participants was that English participants sought additional or new things as part of their desistance – such as, a job, a new place to live, a relationship, renewing relationships with their children (explored in the forthcoming chapters). In contrast, Israeli participants, the majority of whom were already employed and in a relationship, talked about learning to be satisfied with what one has (as noted earlier) and turning over a new leaf. For example, Ichik said:

'*But I can tell you that today, bless God, it's behind me, I didn't fall off my legs, I'm set in life. You understand? I'm set, I have everything I need and all is okay. So, how do they say, I turned over a new page [leaf].*'

In contrast, English participants expressed a wish for a 'normal life' and a wish to start taking steps towards that. In the following example, Hugh described what he meant by a 'normal' life (see also Shapland & Bottoms, 2011):

Hugh: '*Trying to build… Build my life back up. Just a normal life, you know what I mean. That's all I want, a normal life haha.*'
DS: 'A *normal life. What's a normal life?*'
Hugh: '*That's exactly, haha, what's a normal life* [DS: *'Haha'*]*. But you know what I mean. Just a wife, kids, a job, a house. Stuff that makes me happy. You know what I mean, that's all I… But you got to work for them things. So, you know what I mean, you got to put the effort in.*'

In the narratives of English participants, a normal life was framed as something that would signal to themselves (and perhaps to others) that their life was 'sorted', such that various aspects in their life were settled and they were acting and looking like other 'proper' non-offending people around them. English participants gravitated towards a shared normative aspiration in society and, in a way, sought to fulfil the 'English dream' (see also Bottoms, 2013; Bottoms & Shapland, 2016; Shapland & Bottoms, 2011). Israeli participants discussed the shared 'Israeli dream' as well, however, while English participants described the 'English dream' or a 'normal life' as something that is, by and large, *feasible*, several Israelis (N=4) described 'missing out' on the 'Israeli dream' or aspects of that 'Israeli dream'. Harsh realities aside, (for only a moment), the possibility of achieving their aspiration was feasible in the minds of English participants and they could imagine themselves living a 'normal' life.

Indeed, in common with earlier studies in desistance, English participants (and Israelis, as discussed later) identified a 'future self' which informed their desistance process and shaped the path they sought to move towards (Farrall, 2005; Farrall et al., 2011; Hunter & Farrall, 2017; Giordano et al., 2002). Hunter and Farrall's (2017, p. 13) study further adds that the ability to imagine or project a future self is central in directing one's actions in cases of opportunities to reoffend. As Farrall (2005, p. 367) noted, 'successful desistance entails developing a sense of what the future may

hold for the individual and a sense of how this future can be realised'. The narratives of both English and Israeli participants suggested that concepts around a future self was informed by the 'availability of legitimate identities' and 'collective hopes and aspirations', as Illustrated in Appendix I (Farrall et al., 2011, p. 226). In the case of English participants, they sought to move towards the 'English dream' and a 'sensible adulthood' that is ingrained in society. Another study by Healy (2014, p. 886) found that the ability to imagine a future to which desisters can approach was 'an important mechanism behind agentic action' and this had incentivised her participants to take action and pursue valued goals. In cases where the imagined identity was less valued by the individual, the incentive to take actions towards desistance and resist criminal opportunities reduced (Healy, 2014; see also King, 2013).

As noted, for a minority of Israeli participants (N=4) an appeal for the 'Israeli dream' was framed as less feasible and as something that their years of offending had cost them. Israelis did not talk about wanting 'a normal life'; rather, they saw themselves as either already 'settled' within a life (to which they directed attention), or having already 'missed-out' on the 'Israeli dream' and in need of readjusting their approach to life and 'working' with what they got. As noted in Chapter 5, Israel is a child-oriented society and, accordingly, a key aspect of the 'Israeli dream' was 'building a home' and enjoying their time with their grandchildren. In the

next example, Eyal (age 49) reflected on his life thus far and expressed feeling a missed opportunity to build a home and have grandkids:

'*For me, everything started at a late age. Relatively. I didn't build a home right. Not, not… It's things like, you know, I see friends, from my class, that walk the 'straight path', they built a home and some are grandparents even. Me-me, in that thing, I feel I missed out.*'

English participants also remarked on lost time and mentioned social bonds (such as relationships and jobs) they had lost. For example, Aidan (age 38) talked about losing his partner during his last drug spell and said: '*You know, just a waste. I mean, the stuff that I liked to do eh, I could [have]… like… [quit] 20 year ago, you know what I mean? Ah, eh, stupid.*' Yet, Israeli participants expressed a lower feasibility towards being able to reach the 'Israeli dream' and a feeling of exclusion from a common Israeli lifestyle. A leading factor that can explain this variance is the gap in the average age of participants. Furthermore, another factor that appears to influence this sense of missed opportunities was the type of 'cultural dream' or 'collective hopes and aspirations' in each country. Having grandchildren at age 49, like Eyal's friends, requires an early start, for example. Hence, the perceived feasibility of shared dreams determined the extent to which participants could imagine themselves living like others in their society. A lower feasibility resulted in a feeling of a missed opportunity and a sense of exclusion. Greater feasibility pointed to a more coherent social identity to which participants aspired to and a 'feasible

inclusion.' However – and it is an important however – despite a sense of missed opportunities, all Israeli participants referred to a non-offending future self to which they sought to move towards (Giordano et al., 2002), mainly in terms of their character attributes and approach to life (as discussed above). Furthermore, in the upcoming chapters I illustrate that emerging out of an 'offender identity' (or the confines of a negative social label) was more accessible and feasible to Israeli participants, than to English participants.

8.3 Conclusion

In this chapter I have explored narratives of past offending and desistance from crime, while focusing on the construction of identity in society and how self conceptualisation was woven into processes of desistance. Descriptions of past offending in Israel quickly turned to a discussion about childhood development and past experiences, which were framed as shaping their lives. Although English participants also discussed childhood experiences and external factors which led to their offending, they were more inclined to frame their initial engagement with the law as 'causing trouble like other kids do'. I explored this difference by comparing views of experts in each country and found that descriptions around why people offend were 'synchronised' amongst participants and experts in each country and marked part of a shared *cultural script*. I argued that these *'cultural scripts'* provided the *language* with which participants framed

their past and the means with which they understood their identity. Furthermore, I argued that social views around offenders in Israel served to 'enlarge' the concept of *offender* to include personal characteristics that were not solely related to illegal behaviours, and I explored how this influenced their narratives of desistance and how they understood their past.

A comparison further suggests that views around past offending had played a role in informing participants of their efforts to desist. Participants in both countries engaged in internal narratives, in which they (re)evaluated their lives and expressed change in what mattered to them, as well as exemplified narratives proposed by the theory of the feared-self. In narratives of desistance from crime, participants in both countries expressed self-determination and agency in their efforts to desist. I argued that assuming self-determination was a key factor, over and above narratives around age and maturity. Yet, narratives around desistance and what participants thought the 'I' ought to do to desist varied in accordance with the shared 'cultural scripts', shared 'cultural dreams' and a sense of what the future might hold. I argued that emerging out of an offender label was conditioned by the 'social design' of that label and while English participants sought to act like a 'sensible' adult, Israelis sought to undergo a meaningful change and readjust personal characteristics they thought they

possessed. I revisit the topic of identity in the forthcoming chapters, in light

of findings related to employment, relationships, and use of time.

Chapter Nine

EMPLOYMENT, STIGMA, AND

LEAVING CRIME BEHIND

In this chapter, I explore participants' efforts to 'reemerge' as law abiding citizens and move beyond their offending history. I give particular attention to employment, social interactions related to employment opportunities, and finance, to draw conclusions about how contextual factors impact desistance processes. I turned to Bourdieu's (1977) concept of the field to conceptualise social opportunities for employment and income as 'an arena' – i.e. 'field' – which can shape an individual's perceptions and actions. I start by discussing the two social climates around employment and criminal convictions and compare participants' narratives of their experiences within each one. Thereafter, I turn to compare the 'steps' participants described taking in their efforts to overcome obstacles, as well as discussing avenues in the community.

The comparison underscores how social norms in England of checking past convictions had substantially hindered the efforts and motivation of participants to desist. Furthermore, the manner in which each society 'welcomed' participants – which was shaped by laws and social attitude –

had implications for a participant's sense of identity and ability to move beyond negative stigma. In contrast to England, there was a greater sense of social (re)integration amongst Israelis; however, this experience varied in accordance with the 'social encounters' participants experienced during their efforts to desist. The findings also suggest that Israel has greater bridging social capital, which was key in helping Israelis find out about employment opportunities; alas, informal social opportunities were far less prevalent in England.

9.1 Societies, policies and their 'bite'

It is worth reiterating at this point that unemployment rates are similar in both countries and that Israel has higher income inequality and poverty (see Chapter 5). Yet, out of 15 Israeli participants, 12 were employed at the time of the interview. Out of those employed in Israel, 8 participants were self-employed and 4 participants were employees. In contrast, out of 15 English participants, only 4 were employed and 11 were unemployed. Out of those employed, 1 was self-employed and 3 were employees (see Appendix IIII for Table). In Chapter 8, I suggested that the 'English dream' English participants envisioned was narrated as a feasible possibility, and that they could imagine themselves moving towards that life (Farrall, 2005; Giordano et al., 2002). This narrative stood in contrast to some Israeli participants who expressed a missed opportunity from the Israeli 'cultural dream'. In both countries, participants sought to 'remake' themselves as

law abiding citizens, and it was clear that the wider 'field' of employment opportunities (or the arena where social interactions pertaining to employment took place) had shaped participants' perceptions and actions (Bourdieu, 1977).

The objective of this section is to convey how each social climate around employment opportunities (the 'employment field') impacted participants' experiences of their place in society, before turning to explore how participants acted in the following section. As English participants reported taking the steps towards their imagined future, the social context was less 'welcoming' (than was the case in Israel) and had stifled their efforts to move beyond the label of an offender. The comparison underscored the extent to which the social context in England 'pushed' participants to the periphery of society and brought upon them a sharper experience of social exclusion than was the case for Israeli participants. Central to the social context in England is the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974), which was created for the purpose of supporting the overall reintegration of people with convictions(ROA, 1974). The act (amended in 2012) designates a timeframe, after which a conviction can become 'spent' (ROA, 1974) and is no longer required (in most circumstances) to be disclosed when applying for, for example, employment, some educational courses, or insurance (ROA, 1974).

In most cases, a potential employer can ask a person to disclose any *unspent* convictions and, if they consider hiring that person, take these convictions into consideration (ROA, 1974). For a conviction to become spent, a period of time needs to pass, and that varies in accordance to the type and length of the sentence imposed (ROA, 1974). For example, a custodial sentence of more than 6 months has a buffer period[53] of 4 years for adults, before the offence is considered spent. A custodial sentence of more than two-and-a-half years has a 7-year buffer period and a custodial sentence of more than 4 years is *never* spent. Potential employers commonly ask applicants to 'tick a box' when applying for a job to indicate whether they have any criminal convictions. A potential employer can also undertake a background check through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), which was commonly referred to by my participants as a CRB check (Criminal Record Bureau), an earlier term. Background checks disclose information to potential employers about any past criminal convictions which are unspent.

Taken together, the availability of background checks, along with the length of time a person has to wait until a conviction is spent, rendered the majority of English participants socially disadvantaged when they sought to desist. A conviction had impacted on participants in an assortment of ways, including accessing housing and employment, for a good number of years

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[53] A 'buffer period', which was introduced by the amendments made in 2012, refers to the range of time that needs to pass in England and Wales before a conviction can be considered spent.

(see also Henley, 2015). Billy, for example, described the restricting circumstances he faced when he applied for a job at a store:

'And then this woman phoned me up and said: "It came to [our] attention that you told [us] about your criminal record." And they said "We're just waiting for head office", or something. And they said "No, they couldn't have me", because I've got a criminal record... All me others have been spent by now, but there was one. Obviously this one now, wasn't spent. So. It's so long, it's 10 years until it's spent. So if I wait 10 years until it's spent – ha!'

Henley (2015, p. 57) refers to such impediments as 'collateral consequences which often extend well beyond any sentence imposed by the courts'; impediments which add an 'additional layer of 'punishment'' and 'clog' legal reintegration. English experts and participants highlighted that potential employers commonly ask about past convictions before they have a chance to meet or engage with the candidate. Nick, an English expert, described the disclosure of a criminal record as a label:

'Whether that label is being 'offender' or equally as a 'drug user' or equally having a 'mental illness' it's a massive barrier. They all trigger risk assessments when you go for a job. And that's massive, because there are hundreds, thousands [of] people going for that same job. Is that HR[54] department gonna take a risk on you?'

As part of a 'Ban the Box' campaign in England, charities (such as Unlock) approached potential employers and asked them to delay any questions about previous convictions to a later stage, preferably after the interview.

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[54] Short for Human Resource Department at any given job.

Oliver, an English expert, noted that while some potential employers agreed to delay questions, it remains a challenge to foster a change in social attitudes from one that is more welcoming towards ex-offenders. In particular, Oliver thought that people with convictions are often, somewhat automatically, rejected in the employment market and that the United Kingdom is 'obsessed' with checking past convictions, compared with other European countries. He said:

'*Spain, France, and Sweden didn't look at criminal records in such a focused and almost obsessed way. So bringing it back to the UK, I think we're in a position where socially we – to use your phrase – we socially value criminal records within society. So, whether it be employment, whether it be insurance, all these different areas where we believe a criminal record is a value in making decisions… Employers and others are addicted to using criminal records and looking at people's pasts.*'

The shared social attitude in England that 'people with convictions are inherently risky', as Henley (2015, p. 57) phrased it, had contributed to a widespread cultural norm of background checks and disclosure of past convictions, which poses a substantial barrier to ex-offenders in regaining their full civic rights (see also, Maruna, 2011b; McNeill & Beyens, 2013; Padfield, 2011; Robinson, 2014). Kim, an English expert, said: '*You paid your dues, you go through the system, but actually the slate isn't clean because you come out with a conviction. So you're again that one step behind.*' Furthermore, a comparison with Israel (discussed below) calls attention to the *methodical* or *systematic* manner in which criminal convictions are checked in England – in most cases, when a person applies

for a job or housing (for example), they are asked about a criminal record and their background is checked. The widespread and somewhat 'predictable' social practice of 'averting from risk', gave rise to a shared experience of social exclusion amongst the *whole* group of English participants; a theme which departed from the shared experience of Israelis. English participants had a fair understanding of the cultural norms and the laws regarding background checks and collectively thought that potential employers would tend to 'skip over' their job application. For example, Hugh said:

'*So there are barriers in the way, you know what I mean? But as soon as you declare it, you know what I mean, it just put a stop to it… They don't see your personality, it's all on paper, ain't it really? If you manage to get an interview, you get your chance to put things in perspective, to put your personality forward. Let them see you kinda thing.*'

In line with previous studies in the field, undertaken in multiple countries (for example, Farrall et al., 2014; Healy, 2014; Kurtovic & Rovira, 2016; Uggen, Manza, & Behrens, 2004), participants mentioned that their criminal records and the DBS checks were hindering their ability to secure employment. Like Hugh, Max thought his criminal conviction seriously held him back from moving forward and said the last time he got out of prison, it took him 13 months to find employment. Repeated contact with the criminal justice system diminished job opportunities for English participants and they expressed a 'sticky' offender label that accompanied their social lives (Uggen & Blahnik, 2016). For example, Ian said:

'I don't think people generally believe that [I've desisted]… The way I look at it [is like] a heroin addict. Once a heroin addict, you're [labelled as] always a heroin addict. People look at me like that – once a burglar always a burglar. That's how people look at it. Not to me, it's not [like that].'

Ian described an overall rigid social attitude which marked him out from the mainstream he wished to belong to (see Braithwaite, 1989; Goffman, 1991; Maruna et al., 2004). Goffman (1991, p. 7) proposed that the 'failure' of being accepted back to society caused the labelled individual 'if only for moments, to agree that he does indeed fall short of what he really ought to be'. The difficulties participants faced with finding employment was often accompanied by other financial difficulties and difficulties related to accommodation. Luke, for example, whose circumstances were less fortunate than other participants (in terms of housing), was dismayed by the challenges he faced every time he was released from prison. I asked Luke if anybody helped him in his efforts to desist, and he reflected:

'I have tried to find work in past. I never really had any help. I can't think of ever getting a job, you know, through somebody helping me. Nobody helped me get work, or accommodation. I mean, they release me from prison, homeless, every time, release me to the streets. Even after a two-year sentence. I mean, they have 12 months to find somewhere for me, to get out to. But release me onto the streets e-v-e-r-y t-i-m-e. Is there any wonder we are going around in circles? So, I was released on to the streets 4 months ago and I have somewhere to live now, that I had to find. So, no, I wouldn't say I've had any help.'

Earlier studies have highlighted how homelessness, unemployment, and an overall negative perception about one's current circumstances can bring a

sense of fatalism; pessimism; reduce self-efficacy; and motivation to desist (Bottoms & Shapland, 2011; 2016; Burnett & Maruna, 2004; LeBel et al., 2008). Bottoms and Shapland's (2016) study found that re-offending was best explained by participants' extensive criminal records and actual or perceived circumstances related to 'going straight' and employment. Correspondingly, the Oxford study of the dynamics of recidivism found that the accumulation of social impediments 'have a direct and powerful influence over one's ability to go straight' and that a feeling of stigmatisation and pessimism with regards to the future predicted reconviction (LeBel, Burnett, & Maruna, 2008, p. 154). Indeed, in the past, Luke tried to desist from crime, but returned to his drug addiction and offending when his past employer discovered his criminal record[55] and his hopes for the future were 'crushed.' Luke said:

'They said they didn't want to sack me but they had no choice, so… yah well, if I would [have] declared [it] in my application I would never have got the job. [DS: Yeah?]. Definitely! There is no way they would've employed me if I would [have] declared [my] criminal record… But I went the wrong way about it, you know, once I been sacked, I shouldn't have, I shouldn't have just said "fuck it" and got back on drugs and started committing crime. I should never have done that. I should've just gone off me arse and found another job, that's what I should've done.'

Halsey, Armstrong, and Wright's (2016, p. 16) comparative analysis explored the 'lived experiences of those positioned between desperation and infraction'. They (2016, p. 9) suggest that 'fuck it' moments (as

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[55] Luke did not disclose the criminal record in the interview with his employer.

described by Luke) signify 'concrete demonstrations of people attempting – through crime – to temporarily overturn the precariousness of their situation through returning to a realm in which their agency can be actioned.' In other words, the 'kicking back' and going back to drugs which Luke described, signified a regaining of a sense of self-control in the face of hopelessness, which stemmed from the obstacles to reintegration (Halsey, Armstrong, & Wright, 2016). Luke, in a similar way to other English participants, expressed a difficulty with 'changing his story' and moving beyond his convictions, as Joe (an English expert) described it. Thus, although the future that English participants wished to move towards was framed as a feasible possibility in Chapter 8, the social climate was not conducive towards (or aligned with) their intention to desist.

Goffman (1991) and Becker (1973) emphasise that societies determine the degree of stigma that a group of people experience. As illustrated next, the comparison suggests that the social climate in England was more conducive to stigmatisation and – as was also illustrated in Chapter 8 – participants internalised an 'outsider' label more 'fully' than was the case for Israelis.[56] In contrast to English participants, a restricted sense of rejoining society was not a shared theme amongst Israeli participants and an 'offender label' could (more easily) be shrugged off. In contrast to the laws in England, it is illegal in most cases to ask a person about criminal

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[56] See Harvey (2001) on variance in the impact of stigma amongst groups.

convictions in the Israeli employment market (IGP, 2016). Companies or organisations that should have access to a person's criminal history (such as governmental agencies) are authorised to approach the police and request a background check (IGP, 2016). However, it is not clear to what extent workplaces with access to background checks do, indeed, use such access. As I implied in Chapters 5-6, the day-to-day practice in Israel does not always correspond to laws and regulations, and the way people act in the 'employment field' – as a field of social interactions (Bourdieu, 1977) – varies in accordance with what seems most appropriate to the person in charge, at that moment in time.

Based on the interviews, I concluded that Israelis might be asked about their criminal record, despite it being illegal to do so. In such cases, potential employers may ask for a document that is referred to as 'Tehodat Yosher' ('integrity certificate'), which details past involvement with the law. To respond to the pressure from potential employers that request 'Tehodat Yosher', the Israel government issued a revised format of the document (ISP, 2016). In the revised format, past convictions appear only on the second page of the file, while the first page (which does not disclose any information about criminal convictions) appears as though it is the full document, without any pages missing (ISP, 2016). Hence, a person can hand out the first page only, thereby giving the impression that this is the whole document and that they have no convictions (ISP, 2016). The

solution suggested by the Israeli government was based on the assertion that a person has a right to privacy and that one's history should not be grounds for bias in the employment market (ISP, 2016). Needless to say, the comparison indicates that the socio-political attitude in Israel is very different from the one held and endorsed by the British Government.

I concluded from the interviews that, on some occasions, potential employers may *not* ask about a criminal record during a job interview, and that this was particularly the case for Israeli participants who were recommended for employment by an acquaintance. Potential employers in Israel may also undertake informal background checks by approaching a third person, as Mattan's story exemplifies below. It might also be the case that a person will continue to work without interruptions in a job that requires no previous criminal convictions by law. A key theme to draw attention to is that it is unclear what will happen in any given case, and that the social interactions amongst Israelis (in relation to employment and a criminal conviction) were not consistent or systematic, as was the case in England. Rather, the employment 'field' in Israel exemplified a 'messy' pattern.

The narratives of Israeli participants suggest that their sense of social (re)integration and stigmatisation varied to a greater degree than was the case for English participants, and varied in accordance with the events

(social interactions) they encountered upon their efforts to desist. Furthermore, the 'messier' and inconsistent social context in Israel meant participants had a greater degree of freedom in navigating their own desistance efforts, an advantage English participants did not have (within a more systematic social pattern of disregarding people with convictions). In particular, with the process of 'remaking' themselves (see Farrall, 2005), Israelis had a greater degree of flexibility in how to pursue employment and expressed a greater sense of agency and empowerment over (re)building their social lives. Indeed, compared with English participants, who shared an exclusion narrative across the group, Israelis relayed different stories of venturing to earn a living, had pointed to their own resourcefulness in desisting, and mentioned the different avenues which were available to them (see below).

The availability of avenues was linked to other resources the participant had (such as family and friends); 'coincidental' opportunities; their own personal views about the impact of a criminal conviction; and their appearance. A drawback of flexible social conditions was that opportunities were not equally dispersed amongst the group, and Israelis were more vulnerable to social prejudice which was unrelated to their offending history.[57] Asaf thought that the way he looked helped him get credit from the bank to open his business:

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[57] That said, this obstacle is not unique to people with convictions in Israel and may be a common experience in many countries.

'There's also the issue of appearance, I think. Which is fine, I came out fine. It's easier to get credit or what[ever] if you come in like me and knows how to talk, compared with someone whose – sorry I'm not racist or something – [compared with] someone who's black or something.'

Only one Israeli participant was adequately informed about their legal rights regarding criminal convictions and employment; that is, that he was not required to disclose his past convictions to potential employers. Perhaps unsurprisingly then, narratives of Israelis participants about the impact of a criminal record varied. In particular, six Israeli participants clearly stated that a criminal record would not hinder their current or future employment. Ichik, for example, thought he was 'in charge' of his future employment:

'Criminal record? Criminal record? On me it did not impact because I didn't want to be employed by the government. Me, all my life, I was independent[58], I was the house owner[59]. So, as far as I'm concerned, criminal record [or] no criminal record, for me, it did not matter.'

Nimi, who was unemployed, thought his criminal convictions would not pose an obstacle since he intended to seek employment through friends who were aware of his past (once he completed his community sentence):

'Yes, [the fact that] you know people compensates for that [criminal record]. The fact they have… Let's say, I'll tell you, we go downstairs to a place that [makes] money. [They'll ask:] "You did the army? Bring me

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[58] Independent is an Israeli term for self-employed.

[59] 'House owner' sometimes refers to 'being the boss' in this context.

your criminal records and no, I don't want [you]." But if you know the person and they know you then there's no problem – "come, work."

In Nimi's case, he was not aware that it was illegal in Israel to ask about past criminal convictions and preferred to turn to friends to secure employment. Four Israeli participants clearly stated that there could be situations (or were) in which their criminal record would hinder employment opportunities, as they were not aware of their rights. In the next example, Shay explains why he avoided applying for jobs, and preferred self-employment because of his criminal past:

'*Criminal record, listen it's, like, something that haunts you all [your] life… I didn't get to a point of sending someone a CV or sending some company, how do you call it, integrity certificate or something like that. I didn't try because I'm aware of my situation.*'

Hence, some Israeli participants thought the criminal conviction presented an obstacle and expressed a sense of exclusion, similar to the one expressed by English participants. Another factor which brought a sense of exclusion amongst Israelis was believing they were 'less employable' because of their *age* and criminal background; a theme that emerged only for Israelis. Nadav thought that '*when you get older, [it's] very difficult to get jobs. Except as a guard,*[60] *security, maybe.*' However, working as a security guard in Israel often requires a weapon licence, which Nadav could not get

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[60] In Israel there are usually guards at front doors of public places, such as malls and universities.

because of his criminal record. Also, Vito thought no one would want to employ him because of his age and criminal record:

'*Now, take a person that got released from prison. Good. I'm sick, I'm 65, I'm a criminal. Who needs me at work? Antizhan[61] such as that? Who needs me? Who would offer me work? I always went to work privately.[62] Why? No one wanted me.*'

Narratives around one's age brought a sharper experience of social exclusion to some Israeli participants and they expressed 'falling short' (as Goffman phrased it) from the 'normative' and desirable social standard in society. It is in these cases that the experiences of Israelis shared a greater 'emotional commonality' with the experience of English participants of social exclusion. For Israelis, it was not only a label of 'deviant' that cultured their sense of exclusion, but it was having to find a way to sustain oneself financially without a background of employment and skills, embarking on a non-offending path at a later stage of their lives.

A theme shared in common amongst Israelis (regardless of their views around the impact of a record) was that they voiced a preference towards self-employment and turning to friends to overcome obstacles to (re)integration, an issue explored in the next section. A desistance related obstacle Israeli participants discussed was that – similarly to English

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[61] Yiddish for 'old thing.'

[62] A Hebrew phrase for self-employed.

participants – they faced financial difficulties, and that was despite being employed. For example, Yehuda was self-employed, but had to move back to his parents after his last conviction, as he could no longer afford to live independently and had incurred debt from the criminal process (lawyer, court etc.). Eyal, who worked at his brother's company, described his financial difficulties and said they were presenting an obstacle for him in his efforts to desist:

'*Financial-financial-financial. Difficult. Difficult when there's no money. It's not pleasant when you want, just [for example], to fuel [your car] or buy food and you don't have enough [money]. Yes, there are situations like these and you work and earn well and that and still I get difficulties. Understand?*'

As noted in Chapter 5, Israel has higher income inequality and poverty rates than England. Kobi lived at a post-prison hostel that offered therapy for the purpose of the reintegration of formerly imprisoned drug addicts into the community. He also worked as a supervisor of a team of domestic repairs (handyman) at a company, but sought to complement his earnings with a second job. Like Eyal, Kobi described his financial predicament as an obstacle:

'*Are [there] things that make it difficult for me today? Look, I'll tell you. [I am] 52. I didn't save money… Today, the money I earn, I'll include you in how much. I will get to 5200 [Shekels, 1038 GBP] a month. Relatively it's still not much. But if I go in also to work at the second job in the mornings I can add 2000-3000 [Shekels] a month, if it's a full month.*'

In addition, six Israeli participants reported being in debt now or in the past because of their offending. Lee-El, an Israeli expert, explained how offenders in Israel got into debt and what happened when they desisted:

'So there are those who get to [collect] a sum of debt, umm, I would have died twice-and-a-half from that [debt]… It could be from gambling, gambling, [government] debt collectors, and all sorts of these [things], something that added and added. Fines that weren't paid. A lot [of people] on the issue of employment can't work in an organised place [with a paycheck] because of the debt collectors and then their paycheck is seized [by collectors]. So they prefer to work [somewhere] without a paycheck, so they'll have something left.'

Nadav, for example had significant financial debt:

'The court verdict after 18 months [was] to pay 35,000 [7,058 GBP] and then I'm clean from all the debts I had. I have debt, around, 400,000 [80,669 GBP].'

To briefly review how the social contexts and narratives of participants compared between the countries, there was a more systematic pattern in England of favouring the disclosure of a criminal record for (in many cases) years after the completion of a sentence, while the laws in Israel did not favour disclosure. In England, there was a widespread tendency to 'disregard' people with convictions in the employment market, resulting in an amplified sense of social exclusion and marginalisation amongst participants, which was narrated as a key challenge in desistance. On the other hand, a sense of social exclusion in the employment market was not a shared theme amongst Israelis, but was an irregular experience, which (at

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times) related to age. The analysis suggests that the differences were linked to the 'messier' pattern that Israel displayed; in particular, lack of clarity regarding the laws and inconsistent patterns of social interactions amongst potential employers and participants had influenced participants' perceptions. Both groups of participants expressed facing financial difficulties that challenged their efforts to desist, and for Israeli participants this sometimes involved facing debt.

9.2 Avenues and obstacles to employment and finance

In the previous section, I discussed the two social climates around employment with a criminal conviction and compared narratives relating to participants' sense of 'place' or 'role' in society. This section pays attention to how participants responded to obstacles and sought to 'remake' their social identities as law abiding citizens. In Chapter 8, I suggested that English participants thought that 'growing up' was central to their desistance and that they expressed a wish of having a 'normal' life, with a proper job, family around them, a romantic partner, and friends, doing things they enjoy. English participants expressed normative aspirations (see also Bottoms & Shapland, 2016; Shapland & Bottoms, 2011) that were shared in common with their society. At the top of their 'wish list' was to find a job or a source of income and, at the time of the interview, the

majority of English participants were persisting in applying for jobs. Some participants hoped to increase their chances by bringing their CV up to date and meeting a career adviser in the CRC. The most readily available avenue for English participants was to sign up with an agency to find employment; yet opportunities offered through agencies are often temporary and unstable. Charlie recounted:

'*So all I really had since I come out of prison are agency work because they're a bit more lenient [with a criminal record disclosure]. But it's not permanent, it's just a temporary, temporary jobs. Ever since. Yeah it's not good.*'

English participants hoped that by being temporarily assigned to work at a company, and by looking for work through an agency, they could secure more stable employment in the future. A key theme in the narratives of English participants was to display *persistence* and *perseverance*; that is, persistence in seeking employment and pursuing the 'normal life' they hoped to live, hoping that at some point a potential employer would 'give them a chance'. Max, who was looking for a job, talked about his past employer (the last time he came out of prison) as an example of one who was open minded and said that he sought to find another employer that would give him a chance. Max said: *'So she, yeah, was more open minded to it so I got lucky with that one, you know what I mean?'* As a result of the overall belief that potential employers were likely to disregard their

application, English participants thought that finding a job would require finding an employer who was understanding of their situation. Hugh said:

'*So it's like finding someone to give you a chance, kinda thing, who knows about your situation, to gives you that chance… But it's finding that person who's willing to give you a chance, do you know what I mean? And that can be quite difficult.*'

There was a shared hope amongst unemployed English participants that once they succeeded in finding a job – getting a 'foot in the door' – it would then become easier to secure employment in the long term. Max explained: '*Yes, to get that initial foot in the door, at first, it's quite hard. But once you have done, obviously it made things a little easier.*' It seemed that the underlying factor which propelled their persistence and perseverance – despite the less than welcoming social climate – was that a job, any job, would help them escape their current impediment and signal (to themselves and others) that they were 'moving forward' and beyond an offender label (Bushway & Apel, 2012; Maruna, 2012). Ian, who thought the burglar label would stick with him, said:

'*[Of] All [the] people that come through [the] agency, they picked me [emphasis on me] to go full-time, because I was saying to Ryan [probation officer], even ringing me five minutes before the shift and I'd get there, so they thought oh, we want him then.*'

Another avenue that four English participants pursued was training for a specific trade, either in prison or in the community. For example, Jack

undertook an electricians course in prison and was currently working part-time with the hope to get more days and a stable contract in the future. Also, Hugh undertook a professional course in prison, but could not find a job in the field. Billy wanted to undertake a plumbing course in the community, however he could not afford the costs of the course and hoped he could raise the money in the future. In contrast, (as implied above), seven Israeli participants sought to overcome obstacles to finding employment and the negative label associated with a criminal past by seeking to be self-employed. For example, Roei went back to renovation of houses and Asaf, Hai, and Avi opened businesses after prison. Asaf explained why he sought self-employment:

'Like, in prison I asked what will be when I get out? What will I want to do? And I had several ideas, all sorts, like… I was released. I can't, now… Look, I was never an employee, a worker. Only when I was little [young], really. I, like, not used to it, someone now will come and tell me clean here, do here. It's a bit problematic. Also in terms of money, a person needs to live. You can't really live here from a paycheck of 5000 [1000 GBP] Shekels… And then, by luck, a store next to my house became available [to buy].'

The narratives in the previous section suggested that some Israeli participants (such as Shay) turned to self-employment to avoid the possible negative impact of a criminal record. It was interesting to find that this avenue was more popular amongst Israelis, especially since the social climate in England was more stigmatising. In Chapter 5, I reported that English respondents scored higher on the social values of '*self-direction*';

that is, the ESS suggested that English respondents gave higher importance to choosing one's own goals, independence, and independent thought. Yet, a comparison suggests that more Israelis sought independence in terms of employment and Asaf's quote suggests a deliberate avoidance of having an employer that would 'tell him what to do'. It is my assertion that Asaf's narrative does *not* reflect an exceptional view amongst Israeli ex-offenders. How, then, does it fit with the findings in Chapter 5, and the tendency amongst Israelis to seek self-employment? One possible explanation is that Israeli participants were less willing to experience social rejection, such as the widespread experience amongst English participants. For example, since Shay was fired from his previous job at a store (because of his criminal record), he reported that he was only seeking to be self-employed.

Furthermore, I suspect that another central contributing factor is the higher Schwartz (2003) value of seeking achievement, material success, and being recognised as successful by others – an aspect that some Israeli participants experienced through their offending; namely, through gambling, drug dealing, and illegal businesses. '*Achievement*' and '*power*' were two broad cultural values in Israel which might have encouraged some participants to seek self-employment and a role that 'distinguished' them as 'doing well.' For example, Asaf thought that what he was doing now – running a cosmetic store – and what he did back then – selling drugs – was essentially the same thing; except it was legal and incurred a lower income.

Asaf said: '*I think I have the abilities and willingness and talent to succeed in a normal world… There's no difference Dana. No difference. If today I'll call Dana and bring her hashish[63] [or] bring her a bag of cosmetic care products. For me? No difference.*'

In contrast, only two English participants, Charlie and Damien, tried to overcome their obstacles by seeking self-employment. More often, English participants who thought that they would be disregarded in the employment market, said they were overcoming this obstacle by not declaring their criminal record in job applications, otherwise they asserted they would never find a job. This thereby placed them at a risk of further conviction. For example:

Thomas: '*I sat [met] with an agency, not a job interview, but [to] set up with an agency. But everyone that I've filled in the form has said, "Have you got a criminal record?", "Have you got spent convictions?"[64] So I lied on it, I said "I didn't have." And some I did, I told the truth. But I never heard nothing [long silence]. Nothing straightaway but I've got, there was something… with truck driving. But I got that [other opportunity], the same time as I got this job that I got now. Two jobs come at once.*'

In some cases, having a criminal record did not interrupt Israeli participants' current employment. Ichik, Yehuda, Boaz, and Itay (three of whom were imprisoned or spent time at a hostel and were self-employed) continued the profession that preceded their last conviction. Itay, who was not self-employed, noted that his work was not negatively affected because of his short custody and throughout his community sentences:

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[63] Drugs.

[64] Note that Thomas mentioned being asked about 'spent convictions' in addition to unspent ones, which he did not need to declare.

'Yeah, I had that job for many years, before, I was in, eh, here [probation] and I had legal problems, I had a job. It didn't really affect. Nobody at work really knows what happened, so hmm, it's just, this… I have continued my job as usual, it didn't affect my job.'

One of the reasons that Itay's job was not negatively affected was because no one in the Israeli probation services was required to disclose his conviction to his employer and he was able to continue without interruptions (as his time in custody was minimal). Another interesting example is Ichik, who was an electrician and a driver and returned to work throughout the years after his imprisonments. Under Israeli law, Ichik's second job required no history of criminal conviction (Israeli Ministry of Justice, 2016), however he did not face any interruptions on his return to work:

'For my job, [a criminal conviction] could have an influence if I'd asked for the licence after my imprisonment. Since I got [the licence] before [all] my imprisonments, they can't take it off my hands.'

As the examples above suggest, the social bonds of Israelis to employment (Sampson & Laub, 1993) did not always break and the social conditions were favourable towards continuation of previous employment. This stood in contrast to the majority of English participants who had no employment continuity throughout their offending career, even in the case of Richard who had a history of offending, but was never imprisoned. However, as mentioned earlier, Israeli participants faced financial difficulties, and some

had accumulated substantial debts. To overcome this hardship, Israeli participants sought the help of their family and/or declared bankruptcy and, as Lee-El mentioned earlier, preferred cash-in-hand type of work. Difficult financial conditions – especially debt – were framed by Israeli participants as undermining their motivation to desist. Nadav's narrative illustrates an experience of 'falling short' of the social conventions, shame (Goffman, 1991), and a fragile motivation to desist:

'*Every day I get up and think how to get the money, to pay the next bill. So today I call my brother and then my son and then my daughter and I'm ashamed. Although I gave them [money] all my life, but that does not mean they need to give me [money]. They also have a life, they need to sustain [themselves]. At some point I do it because I have no choice, but it stings my heart, it's not something a father should do… and if I'll have to pay 1200 [Shekels] a month and finance, rent, electricity, and water. I won't be able to stand it, I will lower to the bottom and then I'll have to go in illegal ways and I don't want that.*'

Nadav expressed what Burnett (2004) described as ambivalence with regards to future offending, which was propelled by his financial obstacle and sense of shame. His narrative reflects a push-and-pull between fully accepting and fully rejecting 'conventional' values (Burnett, 2004) when he found it increasingly difficult to sustain himself financially as a law abiding citizen. Another theme that Nadav's story captures was the greater reliance of Israeli participants on family and friends in their desistance efforts (compared with English participants), a theme I turn to next.

9.2.1 People as avenues

Compared with England, family and friends were a more readily available avenue for employment in Israel. Avi, who faced poor housing and debt when he first desisted, turned to a family member to find a job:

'I had to work with relatives… Like, my nephew that will employ me, at the beginning. So I'll have, so I'll get used to the idea of what is an employee, what is an employer, what is authority, what is a person [that is] telling you do this-do that… I owed money and had to set aside [pay the government] from what I got. And I used to get 6000 Shekels [1201 GBP] and out of that 2000 [to the government, 400 GBP]. Where is my living [costs]? Where? I did it.'

While Israelis considered their family and friends as key avenues for employment, and as a source of income, English participants gave greater weight to the role of social agencies.[65] The difference could be related (in addition other reasons described below) to the rapid economic changes that the United Kingdom experienced throughout recent years (compared with Israel), which could have brought a greater collective attention to the role of governmental bodies and social agencies in assisting citizens. Apart from Billy and Aidan (who sought employment through their family) and Richard and Owen (who sought employment through their friends), English participants primarily described persisting in applying for jobs to overcome unemployment. A comparison between the two countries suggests that Israel has greater 'bridging social capital' than England, which refers to the

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[65] As was implied in Chapter 7 when English participants viewed the CRC as an avenue for help with employment.

ability of linking people together, that are not alike in some socio-demographic sense, such as different ethnic groups, class, or education style (see Coleman, 1988). This type of social capital and the greater propensity of linking different social groups together increases information exchange between people about various opportunities, such as job opportunities (Hawkins and Maurer, 2010; Szreter and Woolcock, 2004).

Several reasons could explain why Israel exhibited greater 'bridging social capital'; first, Israel is a small country with a mandatory military service (see Chapter 5), both of which can foster 'weak ties' between people across the country (see Granovetter, 1973). Additionally, as argued in Chapter 5, Israelis are more expressive with their display of emotions and opinions, even if these are negative (Kopelman & Rosette, 2008; Wierzbicka, 2006) and can interact informally or even 'rudely', as suggested in Chapter 7. When considering the 'employment field', this expressive attribute adds an 'ingredient' of informality to social interactions and, perhaps, could ease the development of social ties with acquaintances.

England, on the other hand, is larger in size and no longer has mandatory military service. People are more reserved (Aughey, 2012; Kenny, 2012) and might, as a result, develop relationships with acquaintances or 'strangers' less quickly. While it was noticeable that English participants who had the assistance of family or friends mentioned fewer obstacles in

finding employment, accomodation, or help with addiction, Israelis showed a more distinct pattern of turning to family, friends, or acquaintances as part of the desistance process and in overcoming social obstacles (the role of families is explored in Chapter 10). Ichik relayed how his friends were involved when he first came out of prison:

'*The good friends? Of course. They accompanied me [physically and emotionally], the good friends, yes. They came to visit when I was in prison, lent me money when I needed, supported me even in help with their own home, when I needed to sleep there or something like that. They supported me. [They] Were in all sorts of court sessions with me, offered help in all directions. Like family. For me friends are like family.*'

In addition to friends, eight Israeli participants mentioned reaching out to acquaintances at various stages. In particular, Kobi and Mattan secured employment with the help of a 'stranger', who then become a friend. Kobi, who worked in a low-waged (cash-in-hand) type of work, had a client who introduced him to a stable job opportunity:

'*I got to the hostel on the first day. On the second day I started working… I worked for 8 months in cleaning. In the meantime I checked here, checked there [for work]. Here, actually, in the inner city. And then a friend [that works] in a school, [he] told me: "Kobi, you are a character, charismatic, your work should not be here. You should work for us in the school." They invited me for a talk.*[66] *Like, [the employer] offered [me a job], he [the boss] talked there [in the interview]. I went to the interview… 10 minutes, he tells me to start working the next day.*'

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[66] Kobi was invited for an interview.

It is important to note that Kobi mentioned working as a driver throughout his offending career of burglary and in-between imprisonments and, hence, probably had fewer gaps in his employment history, in case his employer inquired. Also, Mattan provided an amusing example of a coincidence of circumstances that had landed him a great job, with the help of a person he met while off-roading[67] during the weekend:

'*We met in the field… He was off-roading and he told me "why are you driving alone, it's dangerous, forbidden to trail alone… [something could happen and] God forbids… who will know where you're thrown." I told him "yes, I have no one to trail with and that". He tells me: "you do have, come [trail] with us." That's it, and we became friends. He's a manager at a company… and he recommended me to the job… Then when they summoned me for an interview, I sat with my manager who knows another [one of my] friend[s] from the off-roading sphere.*'

Mattan talked about *two* friends: One who was a friend he met while off-roading, who referred him to that job, and another who was a friend of Mattan's interviewer from the jeep off-roading and spare car parts milieu. At the time of the interview, Mattan was not aware they shared another mutual friend, an interesting issue I turn to next.

Both Mattan's and Kobi's stories exemplified the dynamics of engaging with acquaintances in Israel and (and in conjunction to that) how the higher levels of 'bridging social capital' played a role in informing and 'paving the way' for both in finding a good and stable job. Their stories imply that,

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[67] Off-roading was Mattan's hobby and refers to driving a vehicle on unsurfaced roads and in nature.

even without having family and friends that can assist with employment (i.e. social capital), it is relatively easy in Israel to develop social ties that could lead to employment. Kobi, for example, had little social capital, but developed ties that provided him with assistance. This theme highlights the benefit of 'weak ties' in desistance processes and the importance of considering their strength in any given society (Granovetter, 1973). The 'strength' of an interpersonal tie is measured by a 'combination of the amount of time, the emotional intensity, the intimacy (mutual confiding), and the reciprocal services which characterise the tie' (Granovetter, 1973, p. 1361). A weak tie was an avenue for participants, as it acted as 'a bridge' to social opportunities (Granovetter, 1973); an avenue that was substantially more widespread in the case of Israeli participants. Nadav, for example, turned to his brother's friends to find employment: '*I have friends of [my] brothers, there are friends of the family that I talked with… I'm now negotiating with these people, see what they want. If it works out it's would be great.*'

Being recommended for a job by another person had aided the interview process, and generated trust between Israeli participants and potential employers, as in the examples above. Furthermore, the second reason why Mattan's story was intriguing was because it exemplified the relative availability of informal background checks in Israel and the role of weak

ties in building trust. Next, Mattan described his interview process and how his employer turned to a third party to seek information about him:

DS: '*So you didn't have a problem getting a job. [Was the] Criminal conviction an obstacle for you?*'
Mattan: '*Eh, no-no I wasn't asked [about a criminal record]. I guess they also see who they have business with. Understand? I got that work through a recommendation of someone who works there. Coincidentally, my manager, we have a common friend that we didn't know about. So when he [employer] heard I worked with spare parts [of vehicles] in the past, when I was there for an interview, he asked me where I'm from, what I did. [I said:] "I was in the spare parts field." Then he [potential employer] told me: "Ah, from the spare parts business" and that-and-that-and-that. And then he didn't say anything to me. He asked his friend, who is a mutual friend between us, if he knows me [the friend told the potential employer:] "Of course I know the person, great person, talented person, a gold person." That paved my way, also without tests without anything.*'

In Chapter 8, Mattan described how his identity was different from that of 'an offender's' and, as the social conditions were more 'welcoming' in Mattan's case, he did not experience a distinct sense of rejection in the employment market, as English participants commonly experienced. It was, thereby, relatively easier for Mattan to 'shrug off' an offender label and establish himself on a new path. Another theme that Mattan's story brings forth is the relative difficulty of being completely anonymous in Israel, while anonymity can be more easily achieved in England. If a person is financially able (and chooses) to move to another city in England that is far enough from where he or she used to live, they can more easily cut ties with people from the past and from people that know something about their past. Kirk's (2009) study on the causal impact of place of residence on the

likelihood of recidivism found that moving away had, indeed, lowered the likelihood of re-incarceration. One English participant, Damien, sought to move away to cut ties with the memories and social relationships in his past: '*Well, to think about what I've done, what I've lost, and that's the reason I did move away.*'

The greater potential for anonymity in England makes it more possible to 'block' the flow of information – create a sort of 'information barrier' – between a person and their past, at least at an informal level, prior to official background checks. In contrast, it is easier to informally seek out information about other people in Israel and undertake 'informal background checks'. Moving to a different area in Israel means that you are not moving too far away from people's knowledge about your past. As Numi, an Israeli expert, explained:

'*I imagine it's hard [for ex-offenders] to be completely anonymous in Israel. To be, totally-totally without, umm, someone figuring something out about you. And I don't just mean looking you up. Like, I can figure stuff out about anyone. I can search them on Facebook, I can search them on like court history… I can do that. But I'm saying informal, not on the computer. Just people talking. I think you can find out about people. I think people got this. It's a small country, there's only so many places to go, or so many places you can afford to live. Right? Like, you can't go so far.*'

Interestingly, in the case of the participants in this study, acquaintances and friends helped establish trust between a potential employer and employee, which made questions about a criminal history 'redundant', to an extent. In

other words, weak ties and the availability of informally collecting information about another enabled social opportunities and trust amongst strangers, rather than acting as a source of exclusion from the employment market, in the case of this study. Compared with 12 Israeli participants who sought the help of friends, weak ties and/or family to find employment, five English participants did the same. In particular, Thomas ran into his old employer who then employed him again and two participants sought to ask friends for employment. For example, Richard said:

'*Luckily enough, I work for a friend, you see, I known him for many years. And he's got his own business now… I asked him if he had a bit of work for me. And he's like, I'll let you know in a couple weeks. And he rang me and said I got a bit more work for you. Because I've worked for him in the past.*'

The analysis suggests that in the case of English participants, those with a drug addiction had fewer social ties to assist them in the community, since their social network was predominantly composed of other drugs users (which they were now wishing to avoid) and there was less bridging social capital in England. Best et al.'s (2008, p. 264) study into recovery and desistance amongst those addicted to substances highlights 'the importance of developing appropriate support systems for drug users who achieve abstinence'. In particular, Best et al. (2008) discuss the important role of emotional support, social encouragement from a positive peer network, and linking former addicts with social opportunities in the community. Former addicts who did not have social support when they refrained from addiction

were found less likely to sustain desistance and/or abstain (Best et al., 2008; Best et al., 2016). In contrast to their English counterparts, Israeli participants had more resources in the community to desist, and it appears these informal type of resources were central in their ability to assist, both in the case of English and Israelis; alas, informal social opportunities were far less prevalent in England.

Overall, the comparison illustrates how variance in social capital and cultures, alongside variance in the laws and social attitude, were driving factors in the desistance processes of participants. Israelis had more social ties that linked them with employment opportunities, as well as an easier time developing new social ties. Furthermore, participants' experiences and interactions with others had influenced their sense of identity and sense of being either stigmatised or 'welcomed' in society. Variance in the perceptions of Israeli participants' in regards to employment with a conviction contrasted to the 'steady' sense of exclusion from the employment market (and society) in England. The social context in England acted like a stream of water that steadily flowed in one direction and 'pushed' participants away from social (re)integration, while the inconsistent and 'messy' social conditions in Israel – although limiting and excluding at times – offered participants greater opportunities to re-emerge as law abiding citizens.

9.3 Concluding remarks

In this chapter, I considered employment and social interactions around employment opportunities as a 'field' in which participants made an effort to develop a law abiding social identity (Bourdieu, 1977). The comparison was valuable in uncovering how individuals interacted with their social environment, the impact of contextual factors, and the mechanisms which drove how desistance unfolded in the two countries. In the first part, I outlined the social contexts in each country around employment with a criminal conviction and compared participants' perceptions and experiences in each distinct social context. Following this, I compared how participants reported interacting with their environment in their efforts to desist and how they sought to overcome obstacles. The broader social context – particularly, social norms, values, and policies – played a key role in paving the pathways of participants. A shared factor which shaped the experiences and actions of participants was how '*welcoming*' each social context was. Flexible social conditions and higher levels of social capital – as was the case in Israel – introduced a greater degree of freedom in navigating one's desistance efforts, and provided a greater chance for participants to 'shrug off' stigma and be welcomed. On the other hand, a systematic social pattern of disregarding people with convictions – as was the case in England – had reproduced a consistent experience amongst participants which impeded (re)integration and reproduced the label they were seeking to move beyond.

Chapter Ten

(UN)INTERRUPTED FAMILIES, ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS AND PEERS

Leo: '*I think you need people to, you know, have some kind of a… not an interest in you but, you know, someone who makes the effort for you. Yeah. Yeah, definitely helps.*'

Families of origin, families in formation, and peers are the three topics explored in this chapter. The key findings are threaded throughout the chapter and reveal, in greater depth, the experiences of desisters in different cultural settings. While English and Israeli participants shared much in common with regards to the three themes above, some interesting differences emerged. For English participants, a common thread was an experience of reconnecting, or wishing to reconnect, after a period of disconnect, while withdrawing from peers. For Israeli participants, it was a shift of attention to pre-existing ties which remained more 'intact' throughout their criminal history. I start the chapter by comparing the involvement of families of origin in the desistance processes of participants. I conclude that cultural values relating to the role of families

influenced the type of support, involvement and familial supervision *over and above* the geographical proximity of family members.

Then, I turn to discuss narratives about parenting and financially providing for one's family and highlight how, in the aftermath of criminal justice interventions, English participants experienced a sharper 'break' of relationships; a 'break' which they sought to mend and fuelled their motivation to desist. Furthermore, I suggest that the role of 'the provider' in Israel had presented obstacles to participants' desistance processes, a theme absent from English narratives. Thereafter, I compare narratives relating to peers and desistance, and find that while English participants commonly expressed an active and continuous effort to avoid negative social interactions and peers, this continuous effort was not highlighted in the narratives of Israeli participants. Rather, Israelis saw social interactions with peers as a 'test' of the degree of internal change they underwent. Lastly, I focus on the role of romantic relationships and suggest that spending less time with peers and placing greater attention on romantic relationships was a shared narrative amongst Israeli and English participants; however, Israelis expressed a change in their preferences towards pre-existing ties, rather than describe a new social bond which was associated with their change in preferences (as English participants did), which raises questions in regards to earlier studies in the field.

10.1 Families 'getting involved' in desistance

The majority of participants in both countries described their families of origin as supporting them emotionally, financially, and/or providing them with general assistance in their effort to desist (to a lesser or greater extent). It was noticeable that in cases of greater familial involvement, participants (in both countries) had a 'smoother' reintegration process and mentioned fewer obstacles. A recent report by Farmer (2017) on the importance of familial ties had highlighted the benefits of families in assisting prisoners during their sentence and in rehabilitation. Farmer (2017, p. 7) suggested that 'good family relationships are indispensable' and their continuity throughout the criminal justice process is key in reducing reoffending. Cid and Marti (2012, pp. 613-614) has referred to these social bonds as 'returning points', which are 'pre-existing rather than new social bonds' and suggests that a wish to compensate for the supportive role of a pre-existing relationship encouraged Spanish desisters to sustain their change.

The value of relationships in desistance processes (familial or not) are also emphasised by Weaver (2012, p. 405; 2016) who proposes that desistance is a 'co-production' between the reflexive individual and one's relational world with others. Particularly, desistance was the means through which an individual maintained valued relationships, which became incompatible with continued offending (Weaver & McNeill, 2015, p. 2; see also Gadd 2005; Gadd & Farrall 2004). These relationships are often found outside

the criminal justice system (Weaver & McNeill, 2015) and, for the participants in this study, a pre-existing familial social bond upon their reintegration provided a 'hook for change', an alternative life to move towards (Farrall, 2005; Giordano et al., 2002; Weaver, 2016), and practical assistance which had made their intention to desist more attainable.

Thirteen English participants said they received practical assistance from their family of origin in the form of accommodation, financial assistance, advice, and/or general support. For example, Max's father helped him move to new accommodation, and Ian's grandmother provided financial assistance when he could not afford his rent. Aidan lived with his grandmother and assisted in her care, which enabled him to collect social benefits. Hugh was living with his mother and described her as playing a central role in helping him overcome addiction and supporting his desistance, mainly by providing a helpful sort of supervision. Hugh said:

'I'm staying at me mums at the moment so I'm only paying a bit of board… She takes care of me money for me, do you know what I mean. I gave me bank card, that's it. I don't have no money. Just in case I do get a temptation, do you know what I mean, to go and buy some drugs. Which I haven't so far, but you never know.'

The involvement of Hugh's mother included an agreed upon form of informal social control, which helped him avoid temptations and overcome addiction (Sampson & Laub, 1993). Similarly to Hugh's case, Kobi

describes how his sister helped him overcome addiction by 'taking matters into her own hands' and blocking his access to peers:

'Tova, that's my sister, my right hand, the one with the kid, she broke the [SIM] cards [on my mobile phone] and said to me: "Say 'congratulations'!"… [I had] all, the whole world in that phone. I told her: "I love you." I stood up, kissed her on the forehead and placed a new [SIM] card. This current phone [has] only normative[68] [normal people]. Listen good – only normative [on my phone].'

The actions of Kobi's sister were a type of informal social control that was not agreed upon and came as a surprise to Kobi; however, he welcomed it and was grateful for her intervention. Similarly to Cid and Marti's (2012) findings on desistance processes in Spain, the care and involvement of family members contributed to Kobi's and Hugh's overall sense of self-efficacy and confidence in their ability to desist, despite the obstacles they faced – a shared theme I found amongst other participants in both countries.

The value of familial involvement raised my interest with regards to the geographical proximity of family members, and whether this factor played a role in shaping the type of familial involvement in each country. Calverley's (2013) study found that living in close proximity to one's family of origin helped to produce familial supervision, which was beneficial to participants' desistance processes. While my findings support

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[68] 'Normative' is an English word but it is used in Hebrew as a slang. It refers to people who do not offend.

Calverley's conclusion, informal social control – because of the close proximity of a family member – was a more common theme amongst English participants, while familial supervision in Israel was less dependent on the proximity of one's family. Rather, I found that familial supervision in Israel was dependent, to a greater extent, on participants' 'emotional relationship' to family members, as well as informed by Jewish values, regardless of geographical proximity to their family of origin (see below).

In contrast to Israeli participants, a greater number of English participants lived in close proximity to their family of origin (N=4 and N=10 respectively). English participants who lived within walking distance (N=7), or who lived with family members (N=3), reported spending more time with them, than English participants who lived further away (N=2).[69] Furthermore, English participants who lived in close proximity to family described greater involvement of family members in their efforts to desist, than other English participants. Proximity of family members was a factor which English participants raised to account for why their family was involved or not. For example, Luke described the lack of involvement by his family in his desistance efforts as related to their geographical distance:

'They're in me life, my family, I speak to me mum on the phone umm. But other than that I don't spend much time with my family… Because I don't

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[69] For three English participants it was less clear whether they lived within walking distance from family members or in very close proximity.

live near them. If I lived near me mums house, I'd probably be there every day.'

Luke was the only participant who raised geographical proximity to account for the *lower* involvement of his family, and it is important to keep in mind that there may be other contributing factors which he may have preferred not to mention. More commonly, English participants offered geographical proximity as the reason why they engaged with their family frequently and to account for familial involvement. Thomas, for example, said that spending time with his cousin who lived nearby helped him avoid boredom and temptations: '*Mainly it's me cousin, me and me cousin are together all the time at the moment, he lives right around the corner from me, eh, we just play Xbox together. Go for a couple of games of pool together.*'

In contrast, Israeli participants discussed the involvement of their family in their lives without relating it to their geographical proximity. Compared to English participants, three Israeli participants lived within walking distance of their family of origin and one Israeli participant lived with family members. Seven Israeli participants did not live in close proximity.[70] Although more Israeli participants lived further away from their families, owning a car was more common amongst Israeli participants and thus they had a greater degree of mobility than English participants. Furthermore,

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[70] For four Israeli participants, the distance from their family members was unclear.

Shabbat dinners is a regular Jewish tradition which draws family member together, often once a week or fortnight, regardless of their distance.

Avoiding family members, or choosing to engage with them less, was expressed by Israeli participants (N=3) when they thought their family had a negative influence on them or said that they were disappointed with them. Shay, for example, did not live in close proximity to his family, but kept in touch (including visiting) on a regular basis and occasionally worked with his father. However, Shay avoided Shabbat dinners and holiday dinners as he described getting upset with his father, who was violent towards him when he was younger, and framed Shabbat dinners as '*places I still [at the moment] don't want to be'*. Asaf said he had cut all ties with his family as he felt that they did not support him while he was in trouble with the law:

'*No, family, no. There's nothing. They all 'turned their backs' on me, including my brother, including my mother, including everyone. I include everyone. I'm not in touch with them in a very disappointing way. It hurt me in a way that… passh[71]… You don't know how much.*'

Hence, geographical proximity was not framed as a factor which determined the extent and type of familial involvement in Israeli participants' narratives. I suspect that Israeli participants were more willing to openly express disappointment from their family of origin (than English participants) and that English participants offered proximity as a reason for

[71] A vocal expression of something of 'great magnitude.'

familial involvement because it was a 'cooler' and less emotional way of describing the relationship. However, I also suspect that part of the difference in the narratives is because of the emphasis of Jewish culture on familial gatherings and involvement in one's life, also in cases where a person lives far away – or as Efraim Sidon noted in Chapter 5: on the 'moon' (Lavee & Katz, 2003; Marks, 2004; Scharf, 2014; Talmon, 2013). In contrast, it seemed that English families (which were based on Protestant traditions of individualism) engaged in lower levels of familial involvement in desistance processes, in particular in cases where a participant's family lived further away.

In both countries, when familial involvement was more readily available, participants expressed that it provided them with greater motivation to desist (see also Cid & Marti, 2012; Weaver, 2016). In the case of England, Leo said:

'Well the family helps and the fact [is], if I didn't have that – them – I don't think… Maybe I wouldn't have [stopped]. And just people, you know, who go out of their way to help you and you know, you think time to, you know, time to change.'

For Eyal, from Israel, a wish to not disappoint his brother played a central role in his decision making and behaviour (more below). Eyal explained:
'Like, my brother, he's important to me. He helped me, he employs me… I need him in my life.' English participants mostly turned to female figures –

sister, mother, grandmother – for practical and emotional support, while Israeli participants commonly turned to male figures for practical support, while emotional support was described by participants as being provided by *both* male and female figures. Kevin from England, for example, turned to his mother for help with employment, and Owen turned to his sister with any problems he had. Owen said: '*Me sister helped me a lot, me older sister. She, since mum passed, she like took over as mum sort of thing. Funny, anything wrong you need, you go to me sister, instead of me mum.*' In Israel, Shay, Avi, Eyal, and Nadav turned to male family members when they sought employment (described below) and, in the next example, Yehuda described his brothers and parents – especially his father – as assisting him emotionally and practically throughout the whole criminal process:

'*My older brother helped me with [getting] a lawyer. Went, came with me to court and that. My little brother, you know, I talk to him, strengthen me here, strengthen me there.[72] [The family] say: "We're with you, come here, come for Sabbath" and that… I had a period of [requiring an] escort[73] for two months straight, where my dad came to pick me up every morning from the hostel[74]… They were involved.*'

As discussed above, while the narratives of English participants suggested that the majority received assistance in one form or another from a family member and that this assistance made (re)integrating into the community

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[72] 'Strengthen me' refers to providing emotional support and encouragement.

[73] Yehuda required someone to accompany him as part of his licence conditions when he stayed at a rehabilitative hostel.

[74] A hostel for violent offenders with a domestic violence conviction.

less 'vexing[75]', a comparison suggests that Israeli family members were better socially and economically positioned to assist participants, especially with finding employment. Practical assistance from Israeli family members was, at times, more substantial, or directly 'solved' the problem of finding employment. Eyal, Avi, and Kobi, described familial help as placing them on a different (non-offending) path. For example, Eyal's brother employed him at his company and loaned him money to buy a house in his brother's neighbourhood. Eyal said:

'*The family decided to reach out. It didn't come from me. Like, I got help for the first time in my life. Significant help. They helped me purchase the house… The family decided to reach out and place me on this path. Like, the same brother that I work for, he's a very well off person. A working man, with a serious company. [He] Decided to help me and take me [put me] to work. And, in fact, so far it proved itself.*'

In six cases, the parents of Israeli participants were no longer alive and those participants turned to their siblings, extended family, partners, and friends for practical and emotional assistance. In Chapter 9, I argued that turning to friends was a more common avenue in Israel because of greater bridging social capital. However, in light of the lesser number of parents alive, I wondered whether this could provide an alternative explanation as to why a greater number of Israelis turned to friends. The sample of this study is small and further comparative research is needed; however, I

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[75] For example, in the previous chapter I mentioned the challenges – homelessness and unemployment – that Luke described. Luke had no family to turn to for practical assistance and his reintegration experience contrasted to other English participants, such as Aidan, who lived with his grandmother and assisted in her care, which allowed him to collect social benefits.

propose that the number of living parents can only partly explain why Israeli participants more commonly turned to friends for employment than English participants. First, not having parents is not enough to account for why reaching out to friends emerged as a more accessible, more popular, and a more profitable avenue amongst *all* types of Israeli participants (i.e. those with parents and those without parents). That is, turning to friends emerged as an avenue amongst Israelis participants even in cases a parent or both were alive – for example, Kobi, Nimi, and Hai. Nimi, for example, who was 27 with two parents and many siblings, opted to turn to friends for employment (as we saw in Chapter 9). Nimi described his family as supportive, but preferred to 'make it on his own':

'*Of course, [the family] hugged me with both hands. Ensconced me, like. [They] Said: "Come, we're with you in any way you choose, just don't choose the road of crime… You want to study? Come, we'll help you; want this? We'll help you." I said: "I don't need help from anyone. I'll get myself sorted on my own."*'

The research findings could have found that Israeli participants were more disadvantaged in that they had fewer people to turn to than their English counterparts, but it did not. Amongst six Israeli participants with no parents, two reported turning to friends for help and the remaining four turned to cousins, siblings, immediate family, and partners. It is indeed possible that not having parents provided an additional incentive for six participants to turn to friends and, thus, I raise it as an additional reason.

10.2 Rebuilding trust and rebuilding ties

Bottoms and Shapland (2016) suggest that in early stages of desistance there can be a degree of rapprochement with one's family of origin, following the strain caused by a history of offending. I found a similar theme amongst both English and Israeli participants (who were at a later stage of desistance than respondents in the Sheffield study); that is, the criminal history negatively affected the relationship and participants described a loss of familial trust which they sought to repair. Six English participants mentioned that their family of origin showed overt disapproval at their involvement in crime and past re-offending. In particular, the families of Ian and Charlie had commented disapprovingly on their offending yet provided assistance during their offending 'spells' as well as in times they abstained. Simon had lost contact with his family because of his offending and convictions, and Owen's relationship with his family had suffered, but had become closer again when he 'signaled' his desistance. For Billy, familial disapproval also meant a loss of trust and assistance:

'Because I was out last time [for] 12 months [and] my family didn't think I was doing anything really, offending. But I was, I was doing it every day. And then I went back to prison… They said: "Oh, I thought you weren't re-offending." And they didn't send me money at all no more. Just left me in prison to rot, basically. Giving me nothing.'

Billy had since regained his family's trust and said that spending time with his girlfriend – whom they knew and liked – had helped convince them he

was abstaining from crime. English participants commonly described regaining trust with time and sustained good behaviour. Additionally, there was an element of 'signaling' desistance to family members – by displaying a contrast from their previous behaviours – which was a theme shared in common with Israeli participants. Leo explained how he regained familial trust with time:

DS: '*How did you regain that trust?*'
Leo: '*Just from, umm, well they know when I'm using because they can tell, so. Just, you know, time goes on and they saw I was going to be all right and I kept at it and I was making some progress so, yeah, that changed the attitude, yeah.*'

The concept of 'signaling desistance' has been discussed in the criminological literature with regards to the symbolic gestures that ex-offenders can do to convey to criminal justice agencies and the community that they are transitioning from the status of an 'offender' to the status of a 'desister' (Bushway & Apel, 2012; Maruna, 2012). In both countries, regaining familial trust and cultivating relationships involved an element of 'successful signaling'. In a similar way to Leo, Eyal in Israel described regaining trust by his actions and behaviours:

'*There [with family], there, work is needed. Because close people, people who are close, those you really care about being seen differently in their eyes, they also lost some kind of trust along the road, throughout time [they] gave up and that. Towards them, like, it's more important to oneself to show them you've changed.*'
DS: '*And how do you show them?*'

Eyal: '*With actions. Only with actions. Not by talking because words, words don't give [do] magic... It's getting up in the morning, conducting [yourself] right in every respect. It's being all right, just being all right.*'

Maruna (2012, p. 78) advocates for the benefits of rituals or ceremonies in overcoming negative offending stigma. Drawing from sociologists such as Goffman (1966), Maruna (2012) notes that one's performance (offending or a marriage ceremony) and receiving credentials (i.e. criminal record or marriage certificate) is a social practice which signifies one's social position in society. With family members, participants expressed that the 'performance' they delivered was an important element, which assisted in rebuilding trust, as well as an element which signified their current status of being a desister (Goffman, 1966; 1991).

For both groups, rebuilding trust (along with reconnecting with children in the case of England, as discussed below) was part of 'making good', as Maruna (2001) identified, for their past offending and trouble they caused. This theme is further illustrated in Chapter 11 when some English participants noted they wished to assist family members in need and be of value. Regaining trust meant that English participants had reconnected with their family after a loss of contact, or had increased the amount of time they engaged with family members. Until recently, Owen was 'banned' from his sister's pub because of his past behaviour and alcohol addiction. However, since regaining his sister's trust, he had frequently visited her at the pub for lunch. Owen said: '*If I turned up to me sister's pub before, she was like:*

"OUT! Out-out-out!" Now I can go and I can go and have lunch there and sit there and yeah. So it's a big difference.'

In Israel, a loss of trust because of offending history did not always entail a 'break' of the social bonds with one's family of origin or one's children or romantic partner. Kobi, for example, said that his family was distressed at his drug use; however, unlike Billy who described a period of 'disconnection' from his family and their assistance, Kobi's family remained involved during his offending and imprisonments and placed ample pressure on him – in the form of threats – to desist.[76] Kobi's family was 'vocal' during his imprisonments, threatening to stop any financial assistance unless he participated in group therapy. Kobi said: '*[The threats] didn't talk*[77] *to me; the threats didn't scare me.*' A difference to highlight between Billy and Kobi (who were involved in similar types of offending) is that Billy's family responded to his offending by 'cutting him off'; an act of exclusion, which created a sharper 'disconnect' between them. On the other hand, Kobi's family sustained contact and resorted to pressure and threats.

Calverley's (2013) study found that the desistance processes of British Indians, in particular, often involved families' direct intervention aimed at

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[76] However, Kobi reported a loss of relationship with his older brother, as his brother's career in the army and his own past involvement in crime had damaged their relationship.

[77] Meaning that the threats did not influence him.

stopping the offending behaviour. The strategies they used were either inclusive or exclusionary that 'abandoned' the participant and a central social feature which directed Indian families as seeking to preserve social prestige and positive reputation in their community (Calverley, 2013). Compared with the cultural context of Indian families, Israeli families were less anxious about keeping prestige and avoiding social shame; rather, greater emphasis amongst Israeli families was placed on keeping the familial bond and remaining involved in each other's lives.

An experience of 'disconnection' or 'exclusion' from one's family of origin, children, and partners was a theme that reoccurred and *characterised* English experience. In contrast, the 'bond' of Israeli families remained more 'intact' throughout participants' offending careers, and this included ties with one's children and partners. While the strategies of Israeli families were forceful at times, they were more inclusive by keeping the familial bond more intact throughout the offending career, compared to English families. Kobi's example further implies that the strategies of Israeli families resembled reintegrative shaming (Braithwaite, 1989; 2003) to a greater extent than was the case in England. In particular, Israeli families were inclined to condone offending behaviour while gesturing – clearly – that there was an open door to welcome him back, hoping he would 'walk through'.

Other than regaining familial trust, both groups described spending more time with their family, their partners, and their children (when applicable) and investing in those relationships, than they did before. A key difference between the two groups was that English participants (N=8) more commonly described a loss of connection and reconnecting or a wish to reconnect with family members (including children and, in one case, a partner), while this theme was less prevalent in Israel. Max, for example, said that he got back in touch with his father who he now saw regularly, as well as reconnecting with his cousin and spending weekends with his nephews and nieces. Thomas, for example, said that he recently reconnected with his cousins and spent the majority of his free time with them: '*I met a few cousins now. I haven't seen 'em for years but I'm [long silence] bringing me family circle back slowly. I really don't have much family, I'm just on me own so. I've got some cousins now. Some mates.*' Thomas visited his cousin and her family for a Sunday roast: '*They live near me… just go out and have a Sunday dinner and that and help 'em with their house, just try and catch up really.*'

Israeli participants more commonly talked about directing their attention towards their family and cultivating existing relationships. Nadav said, for example: '*Today, my grandkids, see what they do to me… Every free time they have they call me – "Grandpa, when are you coming [to visit]?" Come-on, what do we live for?! Just for that.*' This was the case also for

participants who had no children or grandchildren. For example, Eyal described spending more time with his siblings and at home with his partner and Kobi described spending more time with his nephew.

More Israeli participants were in a romantic relationship at the time of the interview and they described directing greater attention to their relationships when they desisted (see Appendix IIII for Table). Furthermore, in the case of Israeli participants, an offending history and criminal justice interventions did not always 'break' their social ties. As a result of these differences, Sampson and Laub's (1993) notion of turning points was less applicable in Israel and did not explain the shared experience across the two societies: Israeli participants expressed a shift in their 'ultimate concerns' (Vaughan, 2007) and how they resonated with their social bonds (Giordano et al., 2002), rather than highlight the development of a social bond as a turning point. For both groups, spending more time with family, children, and partners was related to spending less time with peers and avoiding old offending-related habits (see also Bottoms & Shapland, 2011; Warr, 1998). In addition, participants in both countries described cultivating ties with families as being part of 'moving away' from their previous life and old identity, as they were seeking to assume a different role (see also Farrall et al., 2011; Sampson & Laub, 2005).

In Calverley's (2013, p. 121) study, black and dual heritage offenders had less familial support and these ties were weaker, compared with Bangladeshi and Indian participants. Families of black and dual heritage offenders were more fragmented and geographically dispersed than the two other groups (Calverley, 2013). Calverley (2013, p. 122) observed that for black and dual heritage participants, the desistance process became more 'individualised' – it was a process of personal motivation and determination, in contrast to a 'collective project' that involved one's family of origin. Narratives of Israeli participants did not highlight a clear theme of a 'collective project' of desistance processes as in Calverley's (2013) study. However, since the social ties amongst Israeli families were stronger when Israeli participants embarked on their desistance, I found that their process was less 'individualised' than the desistance process of English participants. Narratives of English participants were primarily concerned with their own motivation to desist and a wish to rebuild 'broken ties' with family members (as illustrated below). In the aftermath of criminal justice involvement, the starting point of English participants was, hence, more alone than was the case for Israeli participants. This point was particularly clear when English participants expressed a wish to reconnect with their children.

10.2.1 Reconnecting with children: Parenting and providing

The difference between cultivating existing relationships (in Israel) and reconnecting with one's family (in England) is underscored in discourses around children. Amongst 15 English participants, 10 had children and amongst 15 Israeli participants, 12 had children.[78] A greater number of English participants (N=7) described being estranged from children and a greater number of English participants (N=5) sought to reconnect with their children, than was the case for one Israeli participant who did not wish to reconnect with his child[79]. Hugh, for example, said he tried to reconnect with his 15-year-old daughter: '*I don't see her, but I'm trying to get back in touch with, develop a relationship, trying to… trying to make up for my mistakes.*' Also Thomas expressed a keen wish to reestablish his relationship with his sons throughout the interview:

'*Me little boys, yeah. I know I messed up last time I went with 'em, but I want them back in me life… Like I said, I ain't got much family, but I got 'em two little boys. So I want them in me life. And obviously I can't do that when I'm in jail.*'

In addition to a wish to reconnect, English participants more commonly than Israelis mentioned their children as providing them with motivation to desist. Thomas said: '*I got me two little boys eh I got to think about them,*

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[78] Both English and Israelis had children around similar ages. Despite being 15 years older on average, Israelis commonly had young children who needed daily care.

[79] In one other Israeli case, it is unclear whether the participant was estranged from his child.

I'm no good to them in-and-out of prison. So, they inspire me as well, they give me courage to keep behaving me self.' It was the hope to reestablish a relationship and play a positive role in their children's lives which was a common narrative for motivation to desist amongst English narratives (compared with Israelis) and it exemplified participants' wishes to act responsibly in their lives (Bottoms & Shapland, 2016). Simon said:

'*I need to be at certain places, I need to be a role model, a good example for them, for their place in society. I don't want them taking that, that bag, that bag all my life, because obviously it plays a part on it.'*

Two English participants mentioned that they were also worried that their children were starting to understand (as they grew older) why they were away and what prison 'meant'. For example, Owen said:

'*Yeah, me little girl [is saying:] "Where dada-where dada?" And I'm telling her I'm at work and I'm at prison. It's not nice is it? Because she's only gonna be small for so long, she's starting... If I go to prison again she's at the stage where she's understanding, she'll know. It's time to not drink, [to] not get into bother.'*

For Israeli participants, being a positive role model and acting responsibly related to a concern about their role as financially providing to their children, or related to their lack of their ability to provide since they had desisted from crime. Interestingly, Israelis' wish to be a 'better father' was not framed as giving them motivation to desist; rather, at times it presented an obstacle which hindered their motivation. For Nadav, who had no source

of income, his role as 'the provider' was framed as an obstacle which hindered his motivation to desist, as described in Chapter 9. Nadav said: *'I have to hold the home,[80] I have to hold the kids, I need here-I need there. She [partner] wants, now, a[nother] child, the woman. And all of that are a quantity of expenses. I don't know what to do.'* Also, Eyal was worried about his ability to financially support his partner and her teenage daughter. Eyal said:

'Part of the problem is that I have a partner that doesn't, so much, 'gets up in the mornings'… [To] Provide her with [basic] needs, food and stuff like that. So sometimes it's a type of difficulty… She try, though, she's not successful.'

Hence, the concept of 'able to provide' – especially to one's children – had the potential to turn into an obstacle to desistance when the normative means were not available or were seen as not enough in Israel. For four Israeli participants, narratives around the ability to financially provide extended beyond their children and partner and included a concern about their ability to provide to the wider family. For example, Hai talked about not being able to contribute money to his father's funeral:

'When I was released [from prison] I was released without money-without money. You don't have money, you don't have… [My] dad passed away [soon after] so my brothers participated [financially] in the funeral and you[81] don't have [something] to give, you have nothing to give. So that's also part umm… The funeral of your dad and you can't give [any money].'

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[80] The term '*hold the home*' refers to financially supporting the household and family members.

[81] Refers to himself.

Bottoms and Shapland (2016, p. 115) noted that desistance from chronic property offending, as in Hai's case, often entailed a loss of income. Narratives of both English and Israeli participants suggested that desisting from crime indeed entailed a loss of income and that this challenge may become especially difficult when they were offered illegal opportunities to make money (Bottoms & Shapland, 2016). While this was an obstacle in both countries, worries about being able to financially provide (to both children and other family members more broadly) was highlighted in Israeli narratives and absent amongst English participants.

In Chapter 5, I noted that Israeli culture places greater emphasis on material success. The narratives of Israelis herein suggests that the ability to financially help others is a social symbol indicative of one's 'standing' and material success. Desisting amongst Israeli participants entailed a loss of income and, thereby, a reduced ability to assist another person in case of need. As participants (especially those with a gambling addiction such as Nadav) gained material success through their offending, by desisting they 'became' a person who *needed* financial help, rather than the one who was able to *provide* help, which brought a sense of shame in some cases. Hence, the social value of being more materialist in Israel had influenced sense of identity and motivation in the dynamics of desistance.

10.3 Families of origin and obstacles

A familial obstacle that English participants raised (especially for four of them) was the negative impact of a family member on them, especially family members who were involved with drugs and/or crime and/or had a negative effect on them in the past. Hugh and Aidan, who both had a family member addicted to drugs, mentioned that staying in touch with them while trying to abstain was an ongoing struggle. Hugh said:

DS: '*Are there any other obstacles that make it difficult?'*
Hugh: '*My brother. My brother… We clash and bounce off each other… I can't say: "Stay away from me", do you know what I mean? Which I'd like to, but I can't, you know what I mean. But, umm, I guess the next step is getting him clean. Trying to get him clean enough from drugs. Hopefully.*'

For Kevin, his father's involvement in crime throughout his life was described as negatively influencing him and making it harder to desist (on fathers who desisted and sons see Halsey & Deegan, 2012). However, Kevin thought that the way his father's life unfolded had caused him to reevaluate his own future and he mentioned he was worried about 'ending up' like his father: '*He's still going to prison, thinking that he's a big man, you know, he's clever, 46-years-old. If I'll never learn now, I'm never gonna learn.*' The involvement of a family member in drugs and/or crime also reduced the ability of that family member to support the participants or be involved in their lives. For some English participants (especially for three of them), the lower involvement of a family member and a sense of

absence had distressed them as they were desisting and seeking to develop social relationships. For example, Ian talked about his mother and brother moving to another country when he was young:

'*See, when me mom and me brother went to another country, that told me that no one cared, so I didn't care, you know what I mean? Well obviously they do, she me mum and all that, I get that now, she just went to a better life and whatever.*'

Ian expressed that he was finding their absence and lack of support challenging today, as he was desisting. Furthermore, as noted earlier, a history of crime had contributed to familial tension (Bottoms & Shapland, 2016) and it was more common amongst English families to 'curb' the amount of support and practical assistance they provided participants, than was the case for Israelis. In cases where families 'curbed support', resettlement was a more challenging endeavour. For example, Billy's mother agreed to accommodate him upon his release from prison for no more than two days, which did not satisfy the conditions set by the probation and prison authorities. Billy said: '*My mum didn't want me there, because all the trouble that I caused, at my mum's house and that.*' Billy did not describe his family as particularly helpful during his desistance process and recounted the challenges he faced in finding accommodation when he was released from prison.

An addiction to drugs or gambling by a family member was not raised as an obstacle by Israeli participants. However, Roei thought that his siblings' involvement in crime had encouraged his offending and sought to avoid spending time with them. Roei said: '*My family does support stealing. Not everyone, [let's] say one-two [family members]… it gave me legitimacy to continue.*' As mentioned earlier, for Shay, keeping in close contact with his family during Shabbat dinners and holidays was described as an unhelpful practice which could hinder his desistance, as he found it aggravated him. Another obstacle experienced by some Israeli participants (especially three participants) was that the greater involvement of one's family in their life was sometimes experienced as an 'over-involvement' which jeopardised the happiness they sought as well as desistance. This was the case especially for Eyal; although familial assistance was particularly significant in his case, it came with greater familial expectations, intervention, and pressure. A quarrel between Eyal's romantic partner and his siblings resulted in familial pressure to end his relationship. Eyal said:

'*Look, everybody has their own life; everybody build their own nuclear [new] family and that. But still, they're a type of supervision… All their involvement in my romantic relationship… So now there's intervention of my family to cut that relationship.[82] And what is that? I don't know what to do… But they, like, you know, because my brother helped me buy the house and that, so I have a difficulty now to go and say: "Go to hell." Like, what are you intervening, like, this is mine, this is my partner. Like, what are you…? That's the difficulty. I'm torn.*'

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[82] By the word 'cut' Eyal suggests that there is an intervention to break up the relationship.

Hence, the greater involvement of Eyal's family had turned into an obstacle when their expectations of his personal life were not compatible with his desires.

10.4 'Bad company'

Participants in both countries thought that being around people that were involved in crime and/or drugs could hinder their efforts to desist and reported avoiding some people. The discourse of English participants around staying away from 'bad company' was commonly framed as requiring an active, intentional and *continuous effort*; a discourse that was not highlighted in the narratives of Israeli participants. A worry amongst English participants was that spending time with peers would weaken their motivation and lead to the use of drugs and/or alcohol and crime. For example, Max said he needed to do two things to maintain his desistance:

'So as long as I stay away from that [drugs] and I stay away from certain people, I'm all right. So, that's, yeah. I know that anyway. I know I need to stay away from them people and obviously the heroin as well.'

Luke, like several other English participants, mentioned that he was pressured by old acquaintances to re-offend, which he experienced as an obstacle to his motivation (see also, Hunter & Farrall, 2017; Bottoms & Shapland, 2011; 2016). Luke said:

DS: '*Are there any obstacles that makes it difficult for you to stay out of trouble?*'

Luke: '*Yeah there're some people, friends, old friends, they can, they can try and turn you into something. Somebody offered me, ehhh, a job yesterday. I just said I'm not interested. I didn't listen to the details but, somebody wanted me to drive for them. Obviously it would have been, it would've been stolen goods. But I didn't even hear him out. I said "I'm not bothered, I don't do all that, I'm normal". So he asked me if I knew anybody else. And I said "no". So yeah, you'd get people like that. Quite often people might say, or they might ask you if you could get something for them, cheap. So things like that, yeah, I think it can make you think... I just tell them I don't get stuff, I don't do all that. I'm normal.*'

In line with earlier studies in the UK, opportunities to earn money, suggested by peers, was mentioned as an obstacle by participants in this study (Bottoms & Shapland, 2011) and they described their desire to avoid any harm to their current life and social relationships as assisting their abstention (Hunter & Farrall, 2017; Paternoster & Bushway, 2009).

For seven English participants (Aidan, Luke, Leo, Hugh, Max, Thomas, and Billy), the main issue was to avoid people who were associated with drugs so as to not fall back to their addiction and crime. Five participants (Richard, Charlie, Owen, Jack, and Simon) thought that they were more likely to get into trouble if they spent time with some people, as they tended to 'act stupid' around them. For other English participants, it was a mix of both issues. Spending time (or wishing to spend time) with non-offending people was framed by four English participants as 'not criminals', 'working people', 'grown ups', or friends with families. Thomas, for example, said: '*If I want some friends, I want them to work,*

work all the time and just meet them on a Friday night for a couple drinks.'

In the next example, Jack talks about a group of friends he started spending time with after his release from prison. Jack described spending time with them as less likely to get him into troubles:

'But they obviously just work and that, and they don't, like, they don't go into prison for violence and that, just me, anyway. So if I knock about, obviously I knock about with 'em, there's is less chance of getting in trouble as well. [DS: Hmm]. If you knock about with people who get arrested then you go to prison.'

Similarly to Giordano et al. (2003, pp. 310-311) who found that the majority of their participants appealed to their sense of agency – believing they were 'less susceptible to peer pressure' now that they were motivated to desist – some English participants noted that they had made up their mind to desist and not 'give-in' to peer pressure. For example, Luke said:

'So, it's not hard when you made your mind up not to commit crime. Quite easy actually. Nobody can force you to do anything.' Also, Richard noted*: 'I'm a self-controlled person. I can say now. When people are on drugs and all that, cocaine and all that… I won't touch any of it.'*

Appealing to a sense of agency as a way of overcoming peer-related obstacles was a shared narrative amongst both groups. For example, in Israel, Ichik said: *'I know [how] to choose for myself, the good, [choose] what's good for me.'* Giordano et al.'s (2003, pp. 310-311) study on changes in friendships over the life course in the US, found that the majority of their sample maintained they were less susceptible to peer pressure while a

smaller group of participants had chosen to 'isolate themselves from any type of peer contact'. A choice to isolate oneself was driven by a worry about negative influences and insecurities about their ability to avoid peer pressure (Giordano et al., 2003, p. 310). In Chapter 11, I illustrate how English participants were inclined to spend time alone, socially withdrawing and isolating themselves from most social interactions (similarly, see Bottoms & Shapland, 2011; Calverley, 2013), while Israeli participants preferred to avoid old acquaintances without isolating themselves from other social interactions.

For the purpose of this chapter, it is important to note that Israeli participants reported avoiding old acquaintances, cutting ties, avoiding clubbing or partying, and described 'reshaping' how they spent their time (similarly to English participants). However, Israeli participants were less socially isolated and more commonly interacted with people who were not family members (see Chapter 11). Moreover, Israelis were more concerned with what to do if they ran into an old peer, rather than choosing to socially withdrawal so as to avoid peers (as English participants did). In similar ways to English participants, Israelis avoided peers because they were worried that it would lead them back to crime, drugs, or gambling. Eyal said:

DS: '*Are there people that you used to see but now avoid seeing?*'

'Yes-yes. Lots. People that are still in the field of offending, drugs, that-that-that. No, of course not, I don't contact them. I cut ties totally. People from the past, like, places, things that reminds me my history, I try and avoid them. Because I know how much I'm weak there. I know… There is always a pull there [with friends] to the negative.'

Five Israeli participants (Vito, Boaz, Eyal, Avi, and Kobi) framed staying in touch with old acquaintances as akin to a test of one's own strength of character; a 'test' which they preferred not to face as they feared they would 'fail' it. For example, Vito said:

'There are people that I try not to get close to [where they are] and not be tested on some things. I don't want to stand that test. Call it running away [from one's problems]. Maybe it is running away. I'm not afraid of it. I don't want to stand the test. Understand?'

Kobi avoided that test by pretending an old acquaintance had confused him with someone else:

'Last week I walked through [the street] from home, at 8:00 in the morning. Someone passed by me, stops in front of me [and say:] "Kobi". I keep walking. "Kobi-Kobi-Kobi." It's me, it's my name [but] I keep walking. He follows me. "Kobi, what's with you? What, you don't want to say good morning?" [Kobi answers:] "Sorry, which Kobi are you talking about?" He said to me: "You're not Kobi Bason?" [Kobi answers:] "No, soul,[83] you have a mistake."

The idea of *intentionally* avoiding peers – even when running into a peer (as in Kobi's example) – was framed more commonly by Israelis as 'running away' from one's problems, while *intentionally* avoiding peers in

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[83] 'Soul' is a general nickname in Hebrew for anyone, like 'honey' in English, or 'duck' in Yorkshire.

England was frame as a legitimate endeavour of those wishing to desist. As noted in Chapter 8, 'cultural scripts' around offending in Israel view a lack of cognitive and emotional tools to 'deal with life' as leading to offending. Within this framework, if an individual had attended to their personality-related problems (which had caused their offending), they could overcome peer-related obstacles (such as temptation). This framework is different than the one in England which more commonly describes peer avoidance as a choice participants made *so as to* desist; that is, a choice that would *lead to* their desistance.

Hence, desistance does not come out of avoidance behaviour in Israel; rather, it comes out of a personal inner change. As Vito's quote (above) suggested, inability to face peers signified avoidance from 'facing' one's inner problems that cause peer temptation. Indeed, when asked about peers, the central narrative of Israelis was what to do if they faced old peers and they discussed their emotional strength. In contrast, English participants placed greater emphasis on how to avoid running into peers and avoid moments that would cause temptation (for example, in Chapter 11 I mention that English participants sought to avoid the city centre area so as to remove social environments that could lead to trouble). Avi explained how he 'faced' the problem of old peers:

'I will sit, talk to him. I believe much in facing [what life brings to you]… I came out now from the Probation Service, saw him downstairs. What do

you do in the face of him? I had that [moment]. "How is it going? All good brother? What with you? How do you feel?⁸⁴ [Acquaintance said:] How are you? What, you [been] clean since [then]?" [Avi answers:] "Yes, brother, yes."

Avi further described overcoming the challenge by 'taking charge' of the direction of the conversation: '*The important [thing] is that you take the control of the conversation to you, from the start. You approach [it] with the knowledge that you are steering [the conversation].*' Hence, while narratives around peers and bad company were broadly similar in both countries, cultural scripts around offending and desisting had implications for how participants 'oriented' themselves emotionally and behaviourally in overcoming peer-related obstacles.

10.4.1 Focusing on romantic relationships and peers

Spending less time with peers and placing greater attention on one's romantic relationships was a shared narrative amongst Israeli and English participants in their desistance process, a theme supported by previous studies in the field (for example, Bottoms & Shapland, 2011; Farrall et al., 2014; Giordano et al., 2002; Sampson & Laub, 2005; Simons et al., 2002; Theobald & Farrington, 2009). In the case of English participants with no romantic partners (N=11), the majority (N=9) avoided spending time with peers by social withdrawal (similarly see Bottoms & Shapland, 2011). Hence, for these nine participants, avoiding peers was not associated with a

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⁸⁴ Both Avi and the acquaintance talk to each other. Unclear who said what.

romantic relationship, but it was a conscious choice to avoid social interaction (see Chapter 11). Ian, Damien, and Billy who had partners but no children, reported spending their free time with their girlfriend, which had reduced the amount of time they spent with peers. In the next example, Billy described spending time with his partner and family as helping him overcome obstacles associated with peers:

DS: '*How are you overcoming this issue [peers]?'*
Billy: '*I just don't hang around with them people. And just [hang around] with her [partner] and my mum and that.*'

Similarly, Nimi (an Israeli participant) expressed that his partner 'brought him into something' – a lifestyle – which made him forget about his previous life:

'*When you get into something you forget about what was. Understand? It's not difficult to get out of it. So my wife brought me into something and made me forget about that something [else].*'

Billy and Nimi were both in their late 20s and support Warr's (1998) premise that romantic relationships curb time spent with peers. However, as Giordano et al. (2003) argued, it seems that agency and self-conscious intentions are an important factor in these processes. Similarly to Weaver's (2016) findings, an offending lifestyle was no longer compatible with a relationship participants valued and – in both countries – participants mentioned the key role of their relationship in their desistance process. For

example, Avi, like other Israeli participants (N=8), highlighted that his romantic relationship provided him with the emotional support he needed to desist:

DS: '*Was there something that helped you [desist]?'*
Avi: '*Today I can tell you that my partner, new, is something that gives me a lot of strength. A lot of strength. I'm not shy to say that a lot is because of her. The drastic change started in the [last] one-and-a-half, two years – since the day I'm with her. There [at that moment], I understood that it's enough [with crime].'*
DS: '*And how did she help?'*
Avi: '*In everything. In her being, in her giving, in her listening, in being there for me… In every aspect of my life.'*

More commonly than Nimi's and Avi's narratives, Israeli participants expressed an intentional shift in their attention to an existing romantic relationship and highlighted that they were more concerned with it these days. Furthermore, Israeli participants were concerned with the harm they would cause their loved ones if they continued to offend and the negative consequences that might unfold (Paternoster & Bushway, 2009; Sampson & Laub, 1993; Weaver, 2016). For example, Roei said that he had recently started thinking about the consequences that crime would have for his partner and child: '*During the theft I didn't think about them, what could happen to them. How, for example, if I'll be in prison, what would happen to [my son] Ben? What will happen to the wife?'* Roei expressed a shift in his preferences and 'ultimate concerns' to an existing social bond and thus provided further support to both Vaughan's (2008) and Paternoster and Bushway's (2009) theoretical frameworks of desistance, which emphasise

the role of agency in these processes; specifically in relation to romantic relationships.

10.5 Conclusion

A reoccurring theme throughout the chapter was that English participants embarked on their desistance process with fewer and weaker social ties, while the pre-existing social relationships of Israeli participants remained more intact throughout the criminal justice process and acted as hooks for change that were more readily available. Broadly speaking, participants in both countries expressed that the relationships in their lives provided them with motivation to desist; practical assistance; contributed to their sense of self-efficacy; structured their time and; provided them with a future to desist towards. English participants described making the effort to rebuild positive ties, while avoiding negatives influences and peers. English participants also sought to reconnect with their children and mend broken relationships, a theme that was less common in Israel, as their relationship with their family of origin, romantic partners, and children remained more intact.

However, Israeli participants mentioned that inability to financially provide for their children and the wider family had hindered their motivation to desist, a theme which might have been propelled by an emphasis in Israeli culture on material success. In regards to families of origin, the variance

between the two countries indicated that the strength of pre-existing ties and cultural values regarding the role of families could have an impact on familial intervention over and above their geographical proximity. Both English and Israeli participants thought that being around people that were involved in crime and/or drugs could hinder their efforts to desist and reported avoiding old acquaintances. However, while narratives around peers were broadly similar in both countries, cultural scripts around offending and desisting had implications for how participants 'oriented' themselves in regards to peer-related obstacles.

Chapter Eleven

COMPARING THE TEMPORAL AND SPATIAL DYNAMICS OF DESISTANCE

In the poem Four Quartets, T.S. Eliot described *all time* – the past, present, and future – as eternally present. He points out that the time an individual spent in the past, and the time he or she will spend in the future always exists – in one way or another – in 'time present.' In this chapter, I explore activities undertaken by participants in England and Israel in their 'time present', which – using T.S. Eliot's reflection – is emblematic of their past and the future they sought. Namely, I analyse time-space budget surveys which were collected during the interviews and compare how participants spent their time, where, and with whom. The objective was to learn more about the social lives of participants and uncover patterns of behaviours (or activities) of each group, thereby illuminating the dynamics of desistance in each country.

The comparative method herein had scarcely been utilised in criminology, and the analysis yielded further insight into the interaction between the individual and their environment. I begin with a brief discussion of time-space budget research in criminology and the methodology employed,

before proceeding to summarise the findings. Thereafter, I draw a thread between the patterns that emerged and the role of social factors in each country by turning to the narratives of participants. I suggest that English and Israeli participants responded to similar obstacles in different ways; in Israel, the response to obstacles leaned towards sociability, while English participants preferred to stay in home settings. I suggest that differences in the weather, cultural scripts, social capital, and the lower reservoir of 'good company' are factors that can explain the more isolated experience of English participants, compared with Israelis. Another key finding that emerged was that religious traditions operated at a broader social level and encouraged certain behaviours and choices amongst Israelis, regardless of their level of religiosity or whether they ascribed to religious customs.

11.1 Time-space budget research in criminology and methodology of study

Time-space budget research involves a collection of data about how participants spend their time and where, and a quantitative analysis of the data (Gershuny, 1989). This method is particularly useful for investigating the relationship between the environment and an individual's behaviours, choices, and actions (Wikström, Treiber, & Hardie, 2011), and to uncover patterns of behaviours (activities) of groups of people (Gershuny, 1989). Gaining further insight into these issues was of particular interest to this

study, and the method presented a novel approach with which to explore desistance. Indeed, it had scarcely been utilised in criminological research. Amongst the existing studies, Wikström et al. (2010) turned to time-space budget to investigate the effect of social environments in crime causation. In particular, they sought to draw a causal link between the factors an individual is exposed to at a particular location and the actions individuals undertook in particular spaces (Wikström et al., 2010; Wikström, Treiber, & Hardie, 2011; also see Hoeben, Bernasco, & Weerman, 2014). Another study by Farrall et al. (2014) employed this method to compare the time and space use of desisters and persisters; thereby, they sought to unveil the dynamics of criminal careers. Drawing from both studies, I sought to conceptualise each country as a distinct space (or 'field') with its own 'social logic' (or 'doxa') – a social milieu in which participants' agency takes action (Bourdieu, 1977). Since time remains an invariant unit of analysis (Gershuny, 1989) across the two countries, a comparison of behaviours can provide further insights into the overall patterns with which desisters acted when the social conditions differed.

During the semi-structured interviews, I asked participants in both countries to recount their past activities during two days of the week – one day during the week and one day during the weekend. English participants were asked to recount a typical Wednesday and a typical Saturday, while Israeli participants were asked to recount a typical Wednesday and a typical

Friday.[85] A total of 29 participants took part in this survey; that is, 15 English participants and 14 Israelis, since one Israeli participants had to leave the interview early (see Chapter 4). I asked participants to describe what they did during these days; who they did it with (or who else was there); and where they were in a 24-hour interval, starting from 6am until 5am the next day (see Farrall et al., 2014).

I found that asking participants to relay time use during the semi-structured interviews allowed for a more expansive discussion about their lives, people in their lives, and the spaces they inhabited. This additional information was invaluable in understanding the differences and similarities that emerged, a benefit that is perhaps less available to studies that use written time-space diaries (that are then handed back to the researcher). However, an obstacle came up when, at times, participants did not remember what they did during those days (see Shapland, Farrall, & Bottoms, 2016, p. 286), in which case I asked what participants normally did. This obstacle, however, did not diminish insights into the overall differences and similarities between the two countries which were uncovered by comparing the shared habits and activities of each group.

The data was later coded in one hour intervals and percentages of time spent in each type of activity, place, and people around were calculated (see

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[85] In Israel the weekend starts on a Friday and, thus, the days studied were adjusted accordingly.

Farrall et al., 2014; Wikström et al., 2010). I combined variables that were related in terms of their activities, places, and people into one variable, so as to create a smaller data set for analysis. For example, I combined the variable *one's own home* with a *family member home* to one variable called '*home*'. I also combined, for example, time spent at a *methadone lab* and time spent at the *CRC/probatio*n as one variable called '*CJS agency*'. A detailed list of time-space use before the variables were combined can be found in Appendix V. Next, a t-test was undertaken to investigate whether any differences were statistically significant; that is, differences in terms of their *activities*, the presence of *others* and their *locations*.

I was not interested in causation or attempted to explain whether a particular variable (such as time spent with family) proceeded or followed participants' intention to desist (see also Farrall et al., 2014, p. 184). Not only were such inferences beyond the reach of this study, I was more interested in the interaction between the social life and the individual, and what the overall patterns of behaviours suggest about the 'how' of desistance – its dynamics – when the environment differs, which is the focus of this study. In the next section, I outline the findings and then proceed in the following section to explain variances and similarities while relying on the narratives of participants.

11.2 Daily lives of participants

The sample as a whole spent 30% of their time sleeping and 26% in resting activities,[86] such as watching television, playing computer games and reading the news (see Table 11.1). Working (including travel time) accounted for 13% of the whole sample and family-related activities – such as sharing meals, caring for children, and visiting family – accounted for 14% of their time. Table 11.2 indicates that the majority of participants' time was spent at home (67%), followed by work (12%), and other public space (10%).

Table 11.1: Activities in England and Israel

Activity	Frequency of hours	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Asleep/in bed	438	30	8	33
'Down time'	374	26	28	95
Working	188	13	14	62
Family activities	201	14	15	48
Religious practices	30	2	2	65
Sporting event/ exercise	25	2	2	67
Visiting friends	24	2	1	97
CJS related activity	14	1	1	98
Socialising	32	2	2	100
Total	1326	92	100	
System missing	114	8		
Total (with system missing)	1440	100		

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[86] Referred to as 'down time' in the Table 11.1

Table 11.2: Where time was spent in England and Israel

Where	Frequency of hours	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
At work	177	12	13	13
At Home	968	67	73	87
CJS agency	9	1	1	87
Public space	149	10	11	99
At a religious venue	20	1	2	100
Total	1323	92	100	
System missing	117	8		
Total (with system missing)	1440	100		

Table 11.3 outlines the variance between the two groups in terms of the *activities* they undertook. The first, and less surprising difference, was that Israelis spent more time working (23%) than English participants (5%). Farrall et al. (2014) reported that their sample spent 9% of their time working or commuting to work; hence, their sample spent more time working than English participants in this study. Research into time use in Israel of the general population found that Jewish men spent an average of 19% of their time working (Gross & Swirski, 2002, p. 22), a little less than the Israeli sample. Yet, the data in Gross and Swirski's (2002) study was collected in the late 1990s and working hours could have changed throughout the years.

Israelis also spent less time sleeping (28%) than English participants (38%) and a series of t-tests indicates that differences in time spent *working* and time spent *sleeping* were statistically significant (p= .001 and p= .000

respectively). Earlier studies indicate that the English sample in this study spent the same amount of time asleep as the general population in the UK (Lader, Short, & Gershun, 2006, p. 15; also see Farrall et al., 2014).[87] English participants spent more time in 'resting' or 'down time' activities

Table 11.3: Comparing Activities

Activities	England	Israel	Total
Asleep/in bed	38%	28%	33%
Working	5%	23%	14%
'Down time'	36%	21%	28%
Family activities	16%	15%	15%
Religious practices	0%	5%	2%
Sporting event/ exercise	2%	2%	2%
Visiting friends	1%	3%	2%
CJS related activity	1%	1%	1%
Socialising	1%	4%	2%
Total	100%	100%	100%

(36%) than Israelis (21%), which included relaxing at home; watching television; watching sports; or playing computer games (see Table 11.3). Israelis reported similar resting activities, yet were less inclined to play computer games or watch sports, and were more inclined to report watching the news. The difference in types of resting activities could be because of the age difference, cultural norms, and the greater emphasis in Israel on national security. A t-test indicated that differences in the amount

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[87] There is no available data on the sleeping patterns of Israelis citizens.

of time spent resting was statistically significant with a p value of p= .002. Overall, the data suggests that English participants spent less time at work and spent more time resting or sleeping compared with Israeli participants, and that the differences between these groups in terms of working, sleeping, and resting activities were statistically significant.

Table 11.4 outlines *where* participants reported spending time. The vast majority of English participants' time was spent in 'home settings'[88] (85%); a higher percentage than was found by Farrall et al. (2014), in both samples of desisters (71%) and persisters (66%). Also, my sample spent more time in home settings than the general population in the UK, who reported spending 70% of their time at home and 27% of their time away from home (Lader et al., 2006).[89] In contrast, Israeli participants spent 61% of their time in home settings, a difference which was statistically significant with a p-value of .000. While this difference could be because of more Israeli participants working outside their homes, it is worth noting that Israeli participants reported undertaking more activities in public spaces (14%) with their family or friends than English participants (9%), although differences in the use of public spaces was not statistically significant (p= . 239).

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[88] Which included their home, a family member home, or a friend's/partner's home.

[89] The discrepancy from earlier studies could be because of the way the data was recoded; particularly, the variable 'home' included one's own home, a family member home, or a friend's/partner's home.

Table 11.4: Comparing where time was spent

Where	England	Israel	Total
At Home	85%	61%	73%
At work	5%	22%	13%
CJS agency	1%	0%	1%
Public space	9%	14%	11%
At a religious venue	0%	3%	2%
Total	100%	100%	100%

When I asked participants what they did – what *activity* they had undertaken (Table 11.3) – slightly more English participants (16%) reported a family-related activity (such as visiting family members in their home), compared with Israeli participants (15%). English participants frequently said they were visiting family members or spending time at home with their family, sharing activities such as eating or watching television (9% compared with 1% of Israelis).[90] In contrast, when I asked *who* else was there when they were undertaking any type of activity (Table 11.5), 45% of Israeli participants reported undertaking daily activities with family members, compared with 33% of English participants. A t-test indicates that differences in terms of *who* else was there were not statistically significant between the groups (p= .222). Israeli participants more often relayed eating meals with family members during the weekend, or sharing meals outside the home during the week (5% compared with 1% of English participants),[91] or undertaking another shared activity, such as

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[90] See Appendix V.

[91] See Appendix V.

walking or shopping with family. Hence, while the activities of English participants leaned towards visiting family at their homes, Israelis more commonly undertook various activities alongside family members and spent time with them outdoors.

Table 11.5: Comparing with Who

Who	England	Israel	Total
On my own	53%	37%	45%
Family	33%	45%	39%
Friends	8%	6%	7%
Work colleagues	3%	10%	6%
Other religious people	0%	2%	1%
Other people I don't know at all	3%	<1%	1%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Israeli participants reported spending slightly more time on child care (3%) compared with English participants (2%).[92] This difference makes sense as more Israeli participants were in touch with their children and were living with a partner, than were English participants (see Chapter 10). Gross and Swirski (2002) found that married Israeli men spent 2% on childcare in their daily routine; more time than UK respondents of the general population who spent about 1% on child care (Lader, Short, & Gershun, 2006). Table 11.5 indicates that English participants spent more than half of their time (53%) on their own, compared with 37% of Israelis' time use. Since more Israelis were in a relationship and within family-like settings,

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[92] See Appendix V.

this difference is less surprising. However, it is important to note that a theme which characterised English participants' efforts to desist was to distance themselves from negative people or temptations and, related to that effort, was an inclination to spend more time on their own. Although differences in time spent alone were not statistically significant (p= .089), in the next section I propose that this difference was meaningful to the lived experience of participants and indicative of factors that shape the dynamics of desistance.

Israeli participants also engaged in religious routines (5%), while no English participant reported the same (Table 11.3), a difference which was statistically significant (p= .043). Religious activities were either practiced alone, with family members (mostly at home during the weekend), or with other religious people (in religious venues).[93] More English participants spent time in criminal justice related activities then did Israelis; however these differences were not statistically significant (p= .608). For English participants, these activities included going to the CRC to meet with probation staff (1%) or visiting the chemist for drugs (1%),[94] while in Israel they involved unpaid work in the community or attending group therapy (see Chapter 7). In the two days picked for the survey, *none* of the Israeli

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[93] It is worth noting that women (i.e. participants' partners and daughters) are not allowed to enter the prayer area in a synagogue. In this manner, going to a religious venue in Israel was not necessarily a familial activity with one's partner and/or daughter, but would be for a father and son.

[94] See Appendix X.

participants reported spending time at a criminal justice agency, as indicated in Table 11.4. This differences could be because of the weekday picked for the survey; however, it is worth pointing out that unpaid work in the community was not undertaken in a criminal justice or health location, and since Israelis reported having fewer appointments with the probation service, and the vast majority of them did not report visiting the chemist, the time-space findings may support the experiences of English participants of greater 'excess' of supervision-related activities. In Chapter 7, I suggested that English participants described their supervision and appointments as 'excessive', while such a theme was absent for Israelis, who described paying greater attention to other aspects of their lives, which were unrelated to their entanglement with the criminal justice system.

To better understand the possible influence of types of supervision on desisters' lived experiences, and the dynamics of desistance, further comparative study is needed, which explores the patterns of probationers' engagement with criminal justice agencies and how these patterns, in turn, influence resettlement, social identity, and the 'how' of desistance. In the next section, I elaborate on the central findings above by turning to the narratives of participants and analysing individual level experiences; in particular, I give attention to socialising and staying at home; peer avoidance behaviour; employment and criminal justice activities; time

spent with family; and the role of religion. I draw a thread between contextual factors in each country and patterns of participants' activities.

11.3 Reflecting on socialising, isolation, employment, and criminal justice settings

Israelis reported spending more time working, engaging in religious traditions, and undertaking activities *with* family members, while spending less time at home settings, compared with English participants. English participants were more inclined to report visiting family members at their homes and the majority of their time was spent in resting activities at home settings and, more than Israelis, on their own. English participants frequently reflected back on their daily activities and described them as 'not doing much', noting that a central activity throughout their week was related to supervision, a narrative which was highlighted in England, but not in Israel. For example, Leo said: '*I haven't really been doing that much to be honest. Got a lot of appointments because I'm, obviously, coming here [CRC] umm.*'

Another example was Ian who said: '*But if someone asked me [what I'm doing these days], probation it [would] be one of me things [that I'm doing], on a day-to-day thing. "What do you do?" [I'd say:] "rah-rah, probation", you know.*' Since a greater number of English participants were

unemployed, it stands to reason that they reported spending more time in resting activities and placed greater attention in their discourse to their daily obligations, which were criminal justice-related. For example, Max said:

'I do me, me course, thinking first course. Umm after that not much really, probably just looking for jobs and what have you. That's about it really… I go to the chemist and… because I'm on methadone, because I'm using that so. Eh yeah. My day is not enough. To be honest, yeah, I don't do a great deal through the day. Most of me time I spend on the Xbox and what have you.'

Another theme that emerged in English narratives was to spend time on their own and keeping their mind 'occupied' with 'down time' activities as a way of avoiding peers and other temptations. Hugh, for example, said:

'Lately I been wanting to stay in, do you know what I mean. In the house kinda thing. I don't want to go to town on my own, because of the temptation. Because I don't want to be bumping into people, who I know, who are on drugs, because of the temptation.'

To avoid people and temptations, English participants said they were keeping busy with work (N=3), spending more time with family and their partner (N=9), or staying home watching television or playing computer games (N=8).[95] Thomas said:

'I'm getting up doing 12 hour shifts, coming back around 7-8 o'clock at night, get in the shower and just sit in me flat play on me computer or me

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[95] The description overlapped amongst some participants.

Xbox, or watching a bit of telly. I'm not bothered with getting out now, because I'm working, I'm busy. But when you're not working, you got nothing to do all day. So you kinda like, phew, talk with me old people and… that a way, it leads to a bad road then.'

While employment was narrated by Thomas as 'occupying his mind' and helping him avoid old habits (Bottoms & Shapland, 2011), the majority of English participants did not work and had more time to account for in their efforts to keep occupied. Billy, who was unemployed, spent the majority of his time with his girlfriend, watching television and doing housework. Aidan, who lived with and cared for his grandmother, described spending his days with his family:

'I don't really go out, socialising, to places but I ain't really got money for that anyway, but I'm never been one for that anyway… Apart from coming here [CRC], and the chemist and walking me dogs, eh, being around me family and watching a bit of telly, that's it. That's really. But I'm not bored, I enjoy it, you know.'

Both English and Israeli participants described directing their attention elsewhere – family, relationships, or other activities; however, a description of turning to spend more time in home settings – ensconcing oneself – was highlighted in English narratives, but not Israelis. In a similar way to English participants, Israelis sought to 'keep busy' to overcome desistance-related obstacles, and this commonly involved spending time working or with one's family and partner, as the time-space budgets and Chapter 10 suggest. However, in contrast to English participants, Israelis sought to 'keep busy' partly by socialising or being outdoors. For example, Vito

expressed a dislike of being alone as he was worried about getting bored, which he saw as something that would hinder his desistance. Vito said:

'I look for myself, something to do all day. Go eat dinner with a girl, with a few couples, with friends, alone. Doesn't matter. Whoever, whatever. I try to get back as late as possible. I live my life alone.'

In addition, Vito (and Boaz) socialised during the day as part of their efforts to find employment or a legal income. Hence, socialising and being outdoors was described by Vito as the means through which he overcame obstacles to desistance and temptations to gamble again – a theme which emerged for both employed and unemployed Israeli participants. For example, Nadav who was unemployed, described his days as empty and expressed, similarly to English participants above, that he was looking to 'fill time' until he found a job. To fill his days, Nadav noted that he had recently started to spend more time with his new friends at a kiosk[96] for coffee, during the week: *'Those [people] who sit in kiosks and drink coffee and that…There's nothing other than that, that I need to go here-there.'*

Gambling *outdoors* is probably less common than drug selling in both England and Israel, which can explain why Israelis with a gambling history were less worried about spending time outdoors. Yet, Kobi, who had a drug addiction (and worked six days a week), also made the effort to spend time

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[96] Some Kiosks in Israel offer coffee and usually have a place to sit.

outside, usually going out to the city centre for coffee, on his own or with his girlfriend:

'Until 08:00[97] [in the morning] I [watch] television.[98] 08:00 I go out to the city for coffee. Sit in the city. If there are no errands [to do], I'm only in the city for the city. And with the girlfriend, because I got nothing to do. I don't have kids. I don't have anyone I'm supposed to go shop [for], organise myself [for].'

In short, participants in both countries sought to keep busy to overcome obstacles to desistance; yet, Israeli participants were more inclined to socialise or be with other people they knew and outdoors as a way to overcome boredom, rebuild their life, and seek out a legal income, while English participants preferred indoor activities and to stay in home settings. Since more Israelis were employed, they might have been more willing to spend money on outdoor activities (although, this explanation would not support Nadav's case who was unemployed and in debt).

It is unclear whether English participants would have shown a similar patterns of socialising outdoors as Israelis had they had an income; as Aidan said above, he had no money for socialising. On the one hand, this study uncovered the dynamics of desistance in a country – Israel – where finding employment with a criminal conviction was more accessible to participants (see Chapter 9). On the other hand, there seemed to be a theme

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[97] The hours were written in military time for reasons of clarity and convenience.

[98] Kobi was used to waking up at 05:00 in the morning in prison and found it difficult to break the habit.

which ties together Chapters 9, 10, and 11 and that is that similar obstacles that each group faced were met by two different responses. For example, boredom, unemployment, and financial difficulties were followed by an effort to socialise in Israel (as in Vito's and Nadav's cases above), which took place alongside greater access to social capital, which could lead to employment. Meanwhile, obstacles to boredom, employment, and financial difficulties were followed by staying indoors (partly to save money), registering with an employment agency, and avoiding 'outdoor temptations' by English participants.

An issue to consider is that the lenses through which participants viewed socialising and being outdoors could have been coloured by the cultural scripts and cultural attitude in each country. In Chapter 8 I proposed that Israeli participants described their reoffending as a continued expression of their past experiences, which had brought internal (or personality-related) reasons for their reoffending. Hence, Israelis 'turned inwardly' to explain how their personality traits were the cause of their reoffending. As argued in Chapter 10, within this framework, if an individual had attended to their personality-related attributes, they could overcome peer-related obstacles (such as temptations). Conceptions about what it takes to desist could have shaped Israelis' attitude in regards to socialising and spending time outdoors (in the city centre, as in Kobi's example). The social context in England places more emphasis on avoiding risk and, in turn, the findings in

Chapters 10 and 11 imply that English participants made an intentional and ongoing effort to manage peer-related risks (along with saving money), which entailed spending more time in home settings, away from external negative influences. In short, cultural conceptions about what it takes to desist in each country could have shaped participants' attitudes towards socialising and peer avoidance behaviour amongst each group. It was within each discourse that participants framed their challenges and chose which activities to undertake to desist (Bourdieu, 1977; Foucault, 1978). Another factor to consider is whether differences in the weather, which is warmer and less rainy in Israel, could explain the greater outdoor activities amongst Israelis.

Kobi's quote above also stood in contrast to Hugh, who wished to avoid the town centre because of temptations. English participants described 'the town' – the town centre – as an area where their peers mostly spent time and where they were more likely to run into old acquaintances. For example, I asked Max whether there were areas he avoided:

'*There are areas I try to avoid, yeah. Like for example you know the town multiplex over there? I try to avoid that area over there, because that's a lot of drugs over that area there… So I walk around it…. For obvious reasons, so I don't bump into old acquaintances that might lead me straight to… back to using drugs and what have ya.*'

The town centre was 'marked' as 'risky' for its higher drug use, violence, and greater chances of running into old acquaintances. Another example is

Owen who avoided the area for its violence: '*And I don't go to town, town's trouble.*' [DS: '*Yeah?*']. *Yeah. People wanting to fight all the time and stuff and yeah. I don't mind a good fight meself haha, that's why I stay away.*' In cases where English participants (N=4) lived near the town's centre, most remarked (N=3) that they frequently ran into old acquaintances because of their proximity. Leo was in the process of moving to a new home, away from the town centre, largely to avoid peers. Other English participants expressed a similar wish to Leo, or had said that moving away had helped them avoid peers. Billy remarked that moving to an area that was far enough by foot (walking distance) from his old friends helped him overcome the associated obstacles.

Israeli participants did not mention a centre of town or another type of condensed public area as 'risky'; rather, the places Israeli participants avoided were more dispersed and some Israelis gave more attention to the memories these places elicited.[99] Avi avoided places where he had used drugs, namely a spot along the beach that is popular for teen drug use, but is detached from public shops. Avi also avoided night clubs, saying: '*I don't go there. Clubs I used to go – I don't go… I reduced, I reduced.*' Boaz, for example, avoided certain stores, streets, or businesses in which people he knew worked. Kobi said he chose not to live in his home town, which was where his mother resided:

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[99] Avoiding places because of negative memories was not unique to Israelis. For example, Aidan said he was careful to avoid places that would trigger memories and thereby a desire for drugs.

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'I choose to stay in Tel-Aviv, because I got nothing to look for in Rosh-Pina [town]. Industrial quiet.[100] Places, stuff and people – places that you used to hang around, people that you hang around with – these are things that you were accustomed to doing.[101] Places you used, where you used. What do I have to look [there]?'

In short, both English and Israelis sought to avoid some places, old habits, and peers; English participants commonly pointed to the centre of town as a place to avoid, while the avoidance behaviour of Israelis was more dispersed. One explanation for this difference was that Israeli participants were dispersed across the centre of Israel and, because of that, pointed to multiple areas they avoided, while English participants lived in one town in the north and, resultantly, pointed to *one* area to avoid. However, if this was the case, I believe I would have found that Israelis pointed to a specific area in each of their towns or cities (such as an area around shops). Instead, it was difficult to find a common thread characterising the geographical areas Israelis mentioned. I suspect a better explanation could be related to the architecture of the cities and towns in each country. It could be that England has a more condensed centre of town, and residential areas around the centre, while shops and centre-like areas in Israel may be more dispersed. However, further research is needed to determine the exact difference and the extent of its influence.

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[100] Industrial quiet refers to a deliberate 'self-made' quiet that is manufactured by an individual, rather than a quiet that occurs naturally.

[101] Kobi refers to things he was in the habit of doing.

11.4 Time with family and the mark of religion

Amongst the 12 English participants who did not live with a family member, eight reported visiting family members throughout the week and during the weekend. Visiting family members in their homes accounted for 9% of English participants' time, compared with 1% of Israelis' time (see Appendix V). Charlie, for example, reported visiting his parents for lunch and dinner on a daily basis, adding: '*Stop me being bored. I'm trying to keep busy, keep occupied. I think while I'm around them, just conversation and stuff so it's good for me.*' As Charlie's case suggests, English participants visited family as another way of 'keeping occupied', saving money, and (re)building familial bonds, especially in cases where these bonds were previously disconnected. Four English participants also mentioned they were providing assistance to a family member in need. For example, Ian said: '*I need to go to [my partner's] grandma… She's blind, make her [a] sandwich for breakfast. We go from her grandma to her mum which literally lives around the corner. Sit with her mom for a bit blah blah blah blah.*' Also Leo said:

'*See if she [mum] needs anything, because… I mean, I don't live far off from here, from me mum… So I'll go over there and, if she needs something from the shop I'll get it or any jobs she wants doing umm. You know. Because I like being close to her, cause she me mum and she needs me.*'

For these participants, being needed or assisting a family member perhaps fostered a sense of belonging – of establishing one's role within the family

– as they were (re)building ties. Leo's narrative also supports Cid and Marti's (2012) study who found that Spanish desisters expressed a desire to 'give back' to their family for the years of offending.

Spending time with family was a way in which participants in both countries sought to spend time in 'good company', in addition to the other roles families can play. Indeed, the role of 'good company' was a theme that emerged in Chapters 9, 10, and 11 and was highlighted by the comparative lens of this study (as well as implied in Charlie's quote above). Family members and pre-existing social bonds acted as an avenue to which English participants turned for their company and practical assistance. The same was true for Israeli participants – they leaned on family members for practical assistance and their company. Yet, for English participants, 'good company' primarily came in the form of family members,[102] while Israelis described greater reservoirs of 'good company' in the form of family and friends, with which they had spent time with, some of whom were also an avenue for employment. Furthermore, it seems that having a greater reservoir of 'good company' – which may be partly because of the greater social capital in Israel – were central features which influenced the way desistance processes unfolded.

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[102] Although, less commonly, it came in the form of friends. For example, in Chapter 10 I noted that Jack sought to spend time with friends he believed would not lead him into trouble with the law.

The time-space budget indicated that Israeli participants tended to undertake activities *with* family members (45% compared with 33% of English participants) or partners, and to be outdoors during the week day, while time in 'homes settings' (61% compared with 85% of English) was reported to be mostly during the weekend. Avi said he frequently had lunch (outside) with his partner on Wednesdays (as well as other days during the week). Ichik said he often met a family member (such as his brother) or a friend for lunch at a restaurant before he started work. In addition, as noted above, Israeli participants talked more about spending their time caring for their children (3% compared with 2% English). For example, Roei describes his week as 'days of childcare', around which his life revolves. Roei said:

'*At 16:00 the child returns from kindergarten. We bring him home for, like [for] half an hour and either go to the mall or a trip, if [it's not] cold. If it's not cold we walk with him [outside]. [We] Get back, [at] about 19:00 home. Honestly, mostly, our preoccupation is with the kid. He doesn't leave me. Grabs me in the foot, say, half kidding, but not letting go… and towards 20:30-21:00 he's [the kid] asleep and also me, already, a-third-asleep and at 22:00 already go to sleep. It's a day, like, of a routine with a kid.*'

As fewer English participants were living with their children, a more common routine was to visit them at another location for a set period of time, especially during the weekend when their children were not in nursery (kindergarten)/school/work. Richard, for example, said: '*I seen my son last weekend… So, he's fine. [DS: You spent some time together?].*

Yeah, spent some time, had a wrestle with him and what not.' For Israelis, visiting family during the weekend was associated with the Jewish tradition of the Shabbat[103] and other religious activities, which accounted for 5% of their time (Table 11.3). Four Israeli participants said they engaged in daily and/or weekly religious *routines* (such as praying) and nine Israelis said they took part in religious *traditions* (such as lighting candles for Shabbat).

Religion – as a variable – shaped participants' use of time in the morning, evening, and weekends. For example, Yehuda prayed in a Synagogue at the start (6am) and at the end (8.30pm) of each day and Avi prayed at home each morning. Avi said: '*Get up, shower, get back, pray… That's my hour that I'm with myself, like that. Drink my coffee, kids get up, make them breakfast.*' For three Israeli participants (Avi, Yehuda, and Boaz), it was their faith which led to their daily practices of praying and/or going to the synagogue. But for other Israelis, religious traditions had shaped their time use regardless of whether they had 'practised' their faith[104] and – more importantly – regardless of whether they had faith.[105] Sullivan's (1998) study into the time use of religious and non-religious Jewish Israelis found an overall conformity towards cultural traditions of Judaism amongst both non-religious and religious respondents. In this study, I similarly found that

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[103] Shabbat is a Hebrew word for Saturday and symbolises a day of rest. It starts on Friday evening during sunset when there are three stars in the sky.

[104] Non-practising participants were those who believed in God but did not practise the ascribed Jewish observances.

[105] To recap from Chapter 4, only one Israeli participant was ultra-Orthodox.

religious traditions had shaped the daily lives of Israeli desisters regardless of their level of religiosity.

For example, 11 Israeli participants discussed 'preparing for Shabbat' during Friday afternoons, which commonly involved shopping, cooking a lot of food, and cleaning one's house and oneself. Preparing for Shabbat stems from the religious custom of 'keeping the Shabbat', in which a person refrains from most activities – working, cooking, driving, etc. – and spends time resting, often with one's immediate family. The Shabbat starts around sunset on Fridays and ends at sunset on Saturdays; interestingly, participants who were not 'keeping the Shabbat' also reported preparing for it on Fridays afternoon. For example, Shay, who did not keep the Shabbat, described his Friday afternoon as preparing for Shabbat and rushing back home before sunset:

'I go shopping, you know, for Shabbat… umm prepare food for Shabbat umm and always for Friday. I'm a [type of] human being – I'm always late, I'm always stressed, everything with me is at the last minute, so they[106] always see me get back to the village like at sunset, a minute to Shabbat, like.'

In this regard, Jewish traditions in Shay's case had brought forth a certain activity on Friday and encouraged a certain 'temperament' to that activity – rushing back home before sunset – amongst someone who was a non-

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[106] By 'they' Shay refers to his neighbours. However, Shay was not directly talking about his neighbours; rather, the use of the word 'they' sought to convey what it would 'look like' if anyone witnessed his Friday routine.

practising Jewish Israeli. I found that religion had impacted other participants in similar way to Shay, and had a greater impact on Israeli time use, than was the case for English participants. For example, Boaz liked to cook every Friday to prepare food for Shabbat. He described shopping for Shabbat as an important activity he looked forward to every week:

DS: '*[You go] Shopping?*'
Boaz: '*For Shabbat! [using an 'of-course' tone]. What do you buy for Shabbat? [DS: 'What?'] Meat, chicken, fish, wine. For Shabbat.*'
DS: '*Until when, did you say?*'
Boaz: '*Shopping is an experience, it takes more than two hours. Because you take it as an experience. Deliberately, deliberately you extend it, enjoy it… It's about two hours.*'

Not all participants placed as much emphasis on food as Boaz, however preparing for Shabbat was an ingrained concept and raised eyebrows when I inquired further, as they expected I would know what it entailed. This ingrained concept was mentioned not only by those living with family, but extended to participants living alone, such as Vito and Kobi. Kobi did not have children, or a partner he lived with, nor did they report inviting family for a Shabbat dinner at his hostel. Also, Kobi did not keep the Shabbat, but said that on Friday(s) he bought food and organised his room at the hostel for Shabbat:

'I work until 15:30, get back, get home, organise my room for Shabbat.[107] I prepare myself, prepare the equipment I need for the evening. Umm, if I'm invited to dinner, there're a lot of invites, I became a VIP.'

For eight Israeli participants, preparing and 'welcoming' Shabbat on a Friday evening was done alongside other religious activities, such as Kiddush[108] and going to a synagogue. Yehuda visited the Mikveh[109] often on Fridays with other religious people. Yehuda said: '*[I] Go to the Mikveh. There're some [people] that go [on] Friday[s]. There are some [people] that go every day. Friday is customary, like that, that you sit in the Mikveh… It's to become holy, like that.*' Another example is Avi's routine on Friday: '*Get ready for Shabbat, everything needed for Shabbat. [I make sure] That we'll have dinner, that we'll be clean, [then I] shower, go pray, get back, do Kiddush, keep the Shabbat.*' Itay, who was unsure about his faith, sometimes visited the synagogue with his son on Friday afternoons. Itay said: '*After that I cook for Shabbat, you know, I make food… And Friday sometimes we go to the Bait-Knesset [Synagogue] with my son and then have a Shabbat dinner.*'

Shabbat dinners (on a Friday night) with one's family (including extended family at times) was another common theme amongst Israelis (Sullivan, 1998; Talmon, 2013). Similarly to Sullivan (1998), I found that Shabbat

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[107] In keeping with the Shabbat tradition, getting clean and organised is part of the routine and, in this way, relates to Kobi's description of attending to his room.

[108] A brief ceremony or blessings recited over wine and candles to sanctify the Shabbat and Jewish holidays.

[109] Mikveh is a type of bath used for the purpose of a ritual aimed at purifying.

dinners in Israel were narrated as a 'festive' activity. For example, Nadav said:

'Kiddush at my son's. I do [the Kiddush]. All the family – my wife, my divorcée, my daughter, my son, my grandkids, the parents of my son's wife [in-laws], her [daughter in-law's] brothers. All the family, sits [in the] table, around 15-16 people around the table, [we] do Kiddush, sit, laugh and that.'

Inviting a guest – a non-family member or another family member that does not usually attend – was mentioned by a few Israeli participants in regards to Shabbat dinners. For example, Boaz – who described his partner and children as 'diplomatically avoiding' going to visit their family for Shabbat because they enjoyed their quiet time – said they invited guests (family or not) at times. Also, Avi noted that sometimes they welcomed friends for Shabbat dinners. Vito, who did not have Shabbat dinners with family members, mentioned he was frequently a guest that others (friends and neighbours) invited.

The central conclusion I seek to draw attention to is that religious traditions operated at a broad social level and encouraged certain behaviours, choices, and experiences amongst Israelis, which had structured their time-space use. It is also worth reviewing what I did *not* conclude from the data: I did not conclude that religious traditions brought about routines that were directly conducive to desistance, nor did I conclude that religion was woven within participants' narratives of desistance. Indeed, causality was

not explored herein, nor did I examine the role of religion at an individual phenomenological level. Rather, what I propose is that religious traditions acted as an overreaching *structural* mechanism that 'reached down' to individuals' lives and shaped time use within a given culture. The comparison suggests that religious traditions had a pronounced impact in the case of a country with heightened affinity to religion in the political and social realm (see Chapter 5). Furthermore, this 'reaching down' to individuals had bearings on familial ties, one's activities, and emerged as a factor which impacted the overall dynamics of desistance for Israeli participants. For example, there was a tendency to return home or be around one's home and cook before the Shabbat begins, even amongst those who did not keep the Shabbat.

Criminological literature about religion had considered the influence of religious values on informing the criminal process (Applegate et al., 2000; Miller & Hayward, 2008), or focused on the influence of one's spiritual beliefs on desistance (Bakken, Gunter, & Visher, 2013; Johnson & Jang, 2010). For example, Schroeder and Frana (2009) studied the role of religion as an emotion-coping mechanism in desistance efforts. In Israel, Morag and Teman (2017) studied the influence of religious rehabilitation programmes in prison on desistance processes. Ronel and Ben Yair (2017) turned to Judaism to offer a lens through which to understand criminal behaviour (at the individual level), view punishment (at the social level),

and suggest rehabilitation approaches (at the individual level). To the best of my knowledge, research into religion in mainstream criminology had not yet considered the broader social level influences of religious traditions on criminal careers, including its influence in cases where individuals are *not* religious. In light of the findings herein, it could be informative to consider and explore this topic further.

Time-space use on Sundays was not part of the survey; however, I asked English participants whether they had a Sunday roast or a family meal over the weekend. Six English participants said they shared a weekend family meal compared with 13[110] Israelis and this was more commonly done on a Sunday than a Saturday. For example, Charlie said: '*Well it was a common thing to do. Like, a big Sunday dinner for the whole family. Like a Sunday roast. It is in our family but I don't know about everyone else's.*' Sharing a meal on Sunday or a Sunday roast is a custom with religious roots in Christianity (Brown, 2014); however, English participants did not report any other religious activities in conjunction with these meals.

Billy and his partner commonly invited Billy's mother and his partner's son for a Sunday dinner, and Aidan had a Sunday dinner with his mother, stepfather, grandmother, and sister, and noted his family was close. Thomas went to his cousin for a Sunday dinner and spent the afternoon there.

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[110] One Israeli participant (Hai) did not participate in the time-space budget and Vito had a Shabbat dinner with friends.

Thomas said: '*Yeah she said you should come every Sunday. So I been there for the last five Sundays now. I just turn up. Her husband goes to rugby… When her husband comes back we have tea.*' English participants continued to visit family members during the weekend as they did throughout the week and mentioned having tea over the weekend, which involved sharing a meal. Another weekend activity that was more common amongst English participants was to watch sports. Thomas, for example, watched football with his cousin at a pub on Saturday and said he went to the pub especially if it was sunny:

'Bec*ause football is normally in the afternoon, so if you go to a pub and watch it, have a game of snooker, football will be on telly. Then go back and have some tea and get ready for the same again Sunday.*'

For Aidan, Billy, and Luke it was an activity done on their own. Luke said:

'*Watch TV, Saturday morning TV, I like to watch football. And Final Score. So I'm watching sports on and off through the afternoon. Six o'clock tea on a Saturday. I stay up and watch football on a Saturday night so, I probably go to bed at around midnight.*'

In short, both English and Israeli respondents spent time with family members during the week and weekend. English participants commonly visited family members, while Israelis spent more time with their family outdoors. A factor which was associated with when and where Israelis met with family members was related to the Jewish traditions, and more Israelis reported sharing a family meal during the weekend. I suggested that

religious traditions acted as an overreaching structural mechanism that 'reached down' to individuals' lives and shaped time use among Israeli participants regardless of their level of religiosity, while this theme was absent in the case of English participants.

11.5 Conclusion

One of the benefits of using time-space budget research in a cross-national setting was the insight gained into the social lives of participants and how cultural aspects 'translated' into factors which shaped the day-to-day of desistance. In this chapter, I explored how participants spent their time, where, and with whom, with the aim of uncovering patterns of activities of each group. I conceptualised each country as a distinct social context which interacted with participants' agency and shaped their daily lives (Bourdieu, 1977). I found that English participants spent more time sleeping, in resting activities, and in home settings, a difference which was statistically significant from Israeli participants. Israelis spent more time working and outdoors. These findings were less surprising in light of the more welcoming social context towards employment with a criminal conviction in Israel and the overall employment rates of Israelis (discussed in Chapter 9); however, I also argued that Israeli participants showed a tendency to spend more time outdoors and socialising regardless of their employment status or financial conditions, while English participants preferred to stay in home settings.

For Israelis, socialising outdoors was a way to overcome obstacles related to desistance, while English participants sought to overcome these same obstacles by spending time indoors and socialising mainly with family members. I suggested that the weather and cultural conceptions about what it takes to desist in each country could have influenced peer avoidance behaviour amongst each group and, thus, where they sought to spend their time. Furthermore, as argued in Chapter 9, socialising in the case of Israelis emerged as a profitable avenue for employment opportunities, as the country displayed greater social capital. The overall comparison in Chapters 9, 10, and 11 indicates that the greater access Israelis had to developing social relationships had a central impact in shaping their desistance processes; Israelis had a greater reservoir of 'good company' in the form of family and friends, which was a key avenue to social opportunities and how their time was spent. In contrast, English participants sought to spend time primarily with family, which provided them with 'good company' and practical assistance.

The data indicates that English participants spent more time on family-related activities – visiting family members – while Israelis reported doing activities with family members. Time spent with family in Israel was also associated with the Jewish tradition of Shabbat dinners and they reported undertaking other religious activities in conjunction with the Shabbat.

Interestingly, religious traditions operated at a broader social level and encouraged certain actions and choices among Israelis regardless of their level of religiosity. These findings bring attention to the role of religious traditions in shaping desistance processes, especially in countries or cultures with heightened affiliation with religion. English participants reported sharing meals with family members during the weekend, yet a more popular weekend activity was to watch sport, either on their own or in the company of others. Lastly, the time-space budget data suggests English participants spent more time in criminal justice locations than Israelis. It is unclear whether these findings are because of the days picked for the survey, or whether they are indicative of a theme. In Chapter 7, I argued that English participants experienced a greater 'excess' of supervision appointments and commitments (than Israelis) and framed their time and life as revolving around criminal justice matters, a narrative which was absent for Israelis.

Chapter Twelve

UNDERLYING SIMILARITIES DISGUISED AS DIFFERENCES? A CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING DESISTANCE

In this study, I have explored differences and similarities in the dynamics of desistance between English and Israeli participants. In reviewing the findings, it became clear that the variances which emerged were 'tell-tale signs' of underlying similarities; that is, they were indicative of wider contextual factors that operated in processes of desistance in both countries and shaped the social conditions and internal mechanisms related to agency. In this chapter, I outline the contextual factors I have identified and provide a framework to understand the influence of cultures and social structures on desistance. Furthermore, I propose that these contextual factors help to understand variances and similarities across the two societies. I begin by sketching the mainstream criminological discourse around desistance and reiterating the main objectives of this study. I then offer a key conclusion on the role of cultures and social structures in processes of desistance and outline this study's contribution to knowledge.

I conclude that desistance processes are shaped by the cultural and social contexts which envelop them, such that external and internal mechanisms in these processes are 'oriented' in particular ways, in accordance with five contextual factors.

I then outline a contextual framework for desistance research, before turning to consider how to conceptualise desistance processes in a more universally applicable way. While so doing, I summarise the findings and respond to earlier studies and theories discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, and illustrate how contextual factors were driving mechanisms in the dynamics of desistance. I consider topics related to identity and agency; employment; age; relationships and peers; and criminal justice input. I argue that research into desistance should situate these processes within the wide social context and provide concluding thoughts about the design of desistance studies. Finally, I discuss the limitations of this study and describe the type of generalisations that can be made from the findings.

12.1 'Closing the circle': The start and end point of this study

Over the years, criminologists have explored key mechanisms underpinning desistance processes and proposed theoretical frameworks to explain how these processes commonly unfold. Research in desistance became more specialised with time, as academics investigated desistance

processes of different groups of offenders (Shapland, Farrall, & Bottoms, 2016), such as desistance amongst different ethnic groups (for example, Calverley, 2013), and for different types of offences, such as desistance from sex offending (for example, Laws & Ward, 2011). In so doing, these studies brought insight into variance amongst different groups and alerted criminologists that mainstream theoretical frameworks do not always work in the same way for different groups of desisters (for example, see Leverentz, 2006 on gender and social bonds). These studies, along with other comparative research (see Chapter 2), pointed to additional factors that shape desistance, some of which are related to broad social factors (Farrall, Bottoms, & Shapland, 2010; Shapland, Farrall, & Bottoms, 2016). However, the 'unveilings' of comparative and specialised studies had not received as much popular attention as other studies and their insights into the role of broad social factors remained, relatively speaking, in the background of criminological knowledge around desistance.

There remain certain shared ideas in criminological discourse about the dynamics of desistance and the mechanisms underpinning them. To crudely generalise, popular criminological discourse commonly attributes the desistance process to an interaction of social and within-individual factors (LeBel et al., 2008; Farrall, Bottoms, & Shapland, 2010), whereby an individual – occasionally after a period of reevaluation of their ultimate concerns (Farrall, 2005; Vaughan, 2007) and often prompted by worries

about a bleak future (Paternoster & Bushway, 2009) – has a wish to desist. A motivation to desist is accompanied by a shift in the individual's preferences (Giordano et al., 2002; Paternoster & Bushway, 2009; Vaughan, 2007) and the individual commonly expresses a desire to attain normative aspirations (Shapland & Bottoms, 2011). During this phase, social opportunities, such as employment and romantic relationships, serve as 'hooks' for change, available avenues to which an individual gravitates and through which intends to 'make' a change (Bottoms & Shapland, 2011; Farrall et al., 2014; Giordano et al., 2002; Sampson & Laub, 1993). Criminologists commonly hold that external factors (such as employment) can strengthen the social bond an individual has to society (Sampson & Laub, 1993), provides would-be desisters with an alternative identity, and an opportunity to make a change, which is conducive for further refraining from crime (Farrall, 2005; Giordano et al., 2002).

In searching the desistance literature, I noticed that employment and romantic relationships (and related issues, such as peer avoidance) were popular variables which scholars sought to investigate (for example, Benda, 2005; Blokland & Schippe, 2016; Bottoms & Shapland, 2011; Cid & Martí, 2012; Farrall et al., 2014; Kurtovic & Rovira, 2016). Variations in terms of the effect of employment on desistance were commonly attributed to age (Uggen, 2000), the quality of employment opportunity (Benda, 2005; Uggen, 1999), or how the opportunity resonated with the individual – i.e.

the individual's sentiments towards that job (Giordano et al., 2002). Academics have often stressed that desistance involves agency and motivation and a sense that legal (re)integration is possible, or else that process could be curtailed (Bottoms & Shapland, 2011; 2016; Burnett & Maruna, 2005; Farrall et al., 2014).

It was further proposed by some scholars that the role of employment is influenced by macro and meso level factors[111] and the broad social context (such as criminal justice policies and the economy), which in turn structures social opportunities and individuals' understandings of, for example, work and their sense of self (Farrall et al., 2011). Yet, criminologists know little about how such broad factors interact with agency and shape behaviours and identity in these processes (Farrall, Bottoms, & Shapland, 2010). In this study, I identified important macro (as well as meso level) factors and uncovered how these interacted with social opportunities and agency, thereby addressing this gap. In particular, through a comparative lens, I examined the impact that cultures and social structures had on shaping social environments and their influence on identity and internal mechanisms in processes of desistance (see below).

Another popular discourse in desistance literature is that an individual's self schemas about past offending – which identify environmental factors

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[111] See Appendix I.

as the cause of his or her offending – are transformed into a sense of self determination over one's future and a redemption script of how an individual can 'make good' for their past (Maruna, 2001). At a certain point, the individual experiences a cognitive shift, whereby past habits and an 'offender identity' is no longer compatible with the individual's sense of self (Giordano et al., 2002). The desister 'assumes' another identity; that of, for example, a 'family man', a 'working man' (Sampson & Laub, 2005), or 'wounded healer' (LeBel, Richie, & Maruna, 2015) and the previous identity that 'pulled' the individual towards an offending lifestyle becomes irrelevant (Giordano et al., 2002). At times, academics have attributed this process to maturation and the social opportunities that become available with age (Moffitt, 1993; Shover & Thompson, 1992). The individual is said to commonly experience a 'knifing off' or a break from their past (Sampson & Laub, 1993; Paternoster & Bushway, 2009); in particular, the individual spends less time with peers and more time with their partner and family (Sampson & Laub, 1993; Warr, 1998) and their activities are often more structured – in work locations, for example – than they were before ceasing to offend (Osgood et al., 1996).

The increase of research in the field had identified additional factors which intertwine with the process described above. For example, some scholars identified social capital as a pivotal source that impacts the dynamics and success of desistance (Best & Laudet, 2010; Calverley, 2013; Farrall, 2004;

Kurtovic & Rovira, 2016). These studies mainly highlighted how social capital relates to a change in an individual's external circumstances, provide practical support, and is associated with desistance; but they have paid less attention to how this aspect is generated by contextual factors, as well as how identity is shaped by greater or lesser levels of social capital. Relationships with others, including families of origin, were also identified as impacting (and at times co-creating) desistance (Calverley, 2013; Weaver, 2015). Research on desistance had commonly situated the role of relationships as a social bond that develops *after* a criminal justice intervention and alongside an individual's wish to desist (although see Hunter, 2015). However, the role of relationships that remained more intact throughout a criminal career had attracted less attention from criminologists.

Labelling and stigma were also highlighted as key factors that could negatively impact on an individual's effort to desist (Burnett & Maruna, 2004; Lebel et al., 2008; Maruna et al., 2004; Uggen & Blahnik, 2016). Stigma was commonly discussed in terms of its effect on available avenues to desist, obstacles, and its limiting effect on available pro-social identities available for ex-offenders (Farrall, 2005; Farrall et al., 2011; Maruna et al., 2004; Padfield, 2011). It was further highlighted that stigma can induce social exclusion and isolation (Halsey, Armstrong, & Wright, 2016; Uggen & Blahnik, 2016) and impact self-conceptualisation and hope for the future

(Burnett & Maruna, 2004; Maruna et al., 2004). As the academic literature discussed the various factors that contribute to negative stigma and its impact (Maruna et al., 2004; Uggen, Manza, & Behrens, 2004), stigmatisation was commonly viewed as having an overreaching negative impact which could be identified across societies.

In this study, I illustrated how a label is situated within a particular society and culture, with its own distinct ideas of 'shoulds and should nots', as well as illustrating how contextual 'ingredients' cultivated different labels across the two societies (see below). At the start of this study, I knew little about how variance in stigmatisation might interact with identity and possibly drive the 'how' of desistance. Upon completion of this study, the comparative lens elucidated the manner in which a given society generates a certain pattern of stigma, and how an individual's self-schemas and behaviours vary in accordance with a 'social design' of particular labels (Becker, 1973; Goffman, 1991). In short, this study highlighted the collective experiences of labeling amongst groups of individuals in each country and drew attention to how these experiences were structured by contextual factors (see Maruna, 2017). Next, I turn to discuss the findings of the study in more detail before providing a summary of findings.

12.1.1 Closing the gap in desistance research

The summary above suggests that scholars have commonly considered internal mechanisms (such as identity transformation) or external mechanisms (such as the influence of social bonds, opportunities, and stigmatisation). However, it seems less attention has been paid to the broader social (economic and cultural) contexts in which these internal and external mechanisms were situated. Similarly, the academic community has not sufficiently accounted for the role of contextual factors in possibly shaping (and interacting with) the internal and external mechanisms identified in these processes. The lens through which criminologists have drawn insights from and developed theories had been coloured by certain cultural understandings and assumptions, and was also limited by the times and places that these studies were undertaken, which raises questions regarding the mechanisms identified thus far: would these popular understandings still stand in case of a change to the social conditions surrounding the desister? Can further insight be drawn by alternating the *place* of desistance, while holding steady the *method* of investigation? In this study, England was a country where the patterns of desistance were more familiar to criminologists, while Israel served as an alternative context with which to explore desistance and, thereby, challenge and support the known and popular discourse of desistance.

A key question I sought to answer was the extent to which cultures and social structures have an impact on desistance, if at all. The short answer was: desistance processes were shaped by and interacted with the cultural and social contexts which enveloped them, such that known external and internal mechanisms of these processes were 'oriented' in particular ways, in accordance with contextual factors. The personal journeys of participants, who were situated between transitioning out of crime and maintaining their non-offending state, implied that the wider social context was inseparable from the way desistance processes unfolded (and at times unfolded differently) in each group. By situating these processes within their wide context, the dynamics of desistance and the underlying mechanisms – as well as variances and similarities between the groups – became clearer and could be (more accurately) identified.

By undertaking a comparison, and situating these processes within their cultural and social contexts, this study has contributed to the understanding of the role of macro and meso level factors and their impact on internal and external mechanisms in desistance processes. Furthermore, this study uncovered interactions between contextual factors and social and agentic mechanisms, provided insight into why variance may emerge between groups, and challenged some popular assumptions about these processes. The findings also highlighted the importance of addressing structural factors which impact desistance from crime (Farrall et al., 2014; Maruna,

2017). Furthermore, the insights drawn can inform criminologists about how to approach cultures and social structures when studying processes of desistance.

The overall findings suggest that variances between England and Israel were indicative of overarching contextual factors that operated in processes of desistance and, in this chapter, I outline these overarching factors and reflect on what can be learned about the dynamics of desistance processes more globally. Next, I propose a contextual framework which ties the impact of cultures and structures to the dynamics of desistance. In particular, I identify five contextual factors which threaded across and through the role of employment, peers, and relationships (et cetera), and across and through processes related to agency, cognition, and self-perceptions (et cetera). I propose that researchers can better account for the mechanisms underpinning desistance by identifying these factors within their own society or culture studied. These contextual factors structured the pathways and avenues out of crime and intertwined with agency and how participants sought to desist; how they responded to obstacles; and how they used their time. These were:

1) Cultural scripts;

2) Social climates;

3) Shared values and norms;

4) Social interactions and encounters; and

5) Distinct cultural characteristics.

It is possible that this list is not exhaustive, and it is important to keep in mind that I have identified these factors in the two countries studied, while further cross-national research might identify additional factors or find that these factors operated differently. Yet I propose that it provides a helpful framework through which to understand the role of contextual factors. *Cultural scripts* refers to any 'story' a given society constructs around a given issue; for example, a story (ideas and assumptions) about why people offend and ideas about a normative lifestyle. *Social climates* refers to the current social conditions of a given society and the overall social ethos that surrounds individuals. This social climate is linked to a myriad of factors, such as laws and regulations related to crime, the social position of offenders in society, the response to crime and the way justice is delivered, economic conditions, and governmental support of citizens (see also Bottoms & Shapland, 2011; Farrall, Bottoms, & Shapland, 2010; Farrall et al., 2011). This category refers to both formal structural mechanisms that are reproduced by the state (such as laws and regulations) and to informal social patterns of a given society (such as the overall attitude of potential employers to ex-offenders).

Closely related, *shared values and norms* refers to both widespread attitudes *and* to behaviours by groups of people, regarding issues such as

risk, families, money, children, etc. (see also Farrall et al., 2011). Unlike social climates, which focuses more broadly on the attitude and ethos of a given culture or society, this aspect refers to both the attitude and the widespread manner in which people act and thereby 'reproduce' these attitudes (Bourdieu, 1977). *Social interactions and encounters* refers to the type and quality of social experiences that desisters 'brush against' and the typical pattern of social engagement within a given society. *Distinct cultural characteristics* (see also Karstedt, 2001; 2012) refers to an attribute in the social life which is unique to that given culture, such as a high affinity with religion and habits related to religion, or a social tendency to systematise the social life.

I propose that each of these contextual factors had operated in processes of desistance in both countries and shaped the social conditions and internal mechanisms related to agency. These factors operated *together* to create an overarching context in which desistance processes took place and had shaped the pathway out of crime for my participants. Furthermore, variance in each of these five factors can help account for why key mechanisms (that were previously identified in criminological discourse as underpinning desistance) operated differently across the two groups. It is important to note that the interviews with probationers were my primary source of data and, since this was the case, the proposed theoretical framework is primarily based on the inductive analysis drawn from the interviews with

probationers. Furthermore, I encourage other researchers to give more weight to participants' narratives of their own values and perceptions of the social context, rather than favouring insights drawn from other sources. This is because, participants' experiences, interpretations, and perceptions of the world around them are key in understanding how individuals assimilate and act within a given social context.

A theme which threaded across the desistance processes of both groups was an act of – or an attempt at – re-emerging as law-abiding citizens by way of gravitating towards socially acceptable aspirations, all the while shrugging off a label. However, what one re-emerges *from,* and the actions 'necessary' to do so, were socially and culturally 'designed' and varied in accordance with the five contextual factors noted above. For example, a distinct cultural characteristic in Israel was the greater role that religion played in the political and social sphere. This distinct cultural characteristic had brought a culturally embodied system of dispositions – habitus (Bourdieu, 1977) – amongst Israeli participants and influenced familial relationships and how participants used their time. To date, desistance studies have operationalised religion at the individual level and considered the influence of individual's belief on desistance; yet, studies have not conceptualised religion as a broad social factor and explored its impact amongst a whole group of people, regardless of their level of religiosity.

In the next section, I review the findings and explain the role that these five factors played in shaping the dynamics of desistance in England and Israel. Furthermore, I discuss how these factors can account for variance and shed light on scholarly understanding of these processes more globally. I do so by considering earlier theories of desistance and discussing their applicability across the two countries. The following sections are divided by popular topics in desistance literature, rather than by the five factors outlined above. This is because the five factors are inextricably wedded; that is, they worked together (in conjunction with each other) and it would be more helpful to demonstrate how these factors had intertwined to shape the internal and external mechanisms in popular desistance literature. Not all of the findings are reiterated herein; rather, I provide a summary of findings to illustrate how the five contextual factors were key drivers in desistance processes and how, by accounting for them, the dynamics of desistance could be better understood.

12.2 Situating desistance within the contextual framework

12.2.1 Identity and agency embedded in society

In this section, I consider theories of desistance and how cultural scripts generate a distinct pattern of labelling, to which participants in this study responded and through which they framed their sense of identity. I propose

that cultural scripts emerged as a central factor in the construction of identities and can account for variance in how individuals seek to desist, how they frame their obstacles and choose to overcome them. Moreover, I note that the social encounters and interactions that individuals may experience during their effort to desist could have the potential to overturn or reinforce a negative label (see also Maruna, 2001).

The themes that did not vary in accordance with cultural scripts and social encounters between the two countries were that both groups appealed to their sense of agency and self-determination over their future as part of their process (Maruna, 2001); expressed a worry about a bleak future (Paternoster & Bushway, 2009); and a cognitive shift in their preferences and ultimate concerns (Farrall, 2005; Giordano, 2002; Vaughan, 2007). I found that the theoretical framework of Paternoster and Bushway (2009) applied in both countries; thus, a history of offending brought dissatisfaction about participants' current circumstances (the present self) and that this dissatisfaction was coupled with worries about a bleak and undesirable future.

Both groups also expressed the view that continued involvement with the criminal justice system would negatively affect their relationships (as mostly expressed by Israeli participants) or would further diminish a potential to reconnect, mostly, with children (as mostly expressed by

England participants). Hence, for both groups, worries about a bleak future and worry about hindering relationships they valued was present in their narratives (Vaughan, 2007; Weaver, 2015). In contrast to Shover's (1983) proposition that change in attitude is related to age, an expression of worry was evident in both groups regardless of their age and the narrowing of opportunities associated with getting older. It seems that Paternoster and Bushway's (2009) and Vaughan's (2007) theoretical frameworks held also in the case of an older group of desisters and, as this study suggests, opportunities related to age were not narrated as prompting motivation to desist amongst older offenders in Israel, as maturation theories would suggest.

The social design of a label

A feature which was central in the narratives of both groups was that they turned to past external circumstances to explain their offending and expressed self-determination over their present and future, as proposed by Maruna (2001). Interestingly, the comeback of the 'I' and sense of agency (Maruna, 2001) was applicable to both groups; that is, it was applicable regardless of whether a country assigned greater rational choice to offenders' actions (as in England), or whether the country viewed offenders as being shaped by their upbringing, to a greater extent (as in Israel). However, there were also meaningful differences between the groups; namely, I identified that variance in cultural scripts around offending and

desisting in each country had brought variance in the conceptions of the 'I' in each society. These different conceptions, in turn, led to different narratives about 'how' to desist and cultivated participants' views on what their obstacles were, how to overcome them, and their sentiments towards peer avoidance.

Furthermore, these cultural scripts had designed and appropriated labels of offenders and desisters and shaped how participants understood their past and reoriented themselves towards the future. In particular, the cultural script in Israel placed emphasis on the psychological causes of offending, which were framed as rooted in one's past, and as emerging out of a lack of emotional and cognitive tools to 'handle' life. In contrast, the cultural script in England attributed multiple indicators as (possibly) leading to involvement with the criminal justice system and assigned greater responsibility to the failure of support and services of official governmental bodies to address social disadvantage. Also, cultural scripts around delinquency varied and were framed in Israel as a sign of 'unhealthy development', while such behaviours could, more readily, be framed as 'a mistake' in England. In their effort to desist, the action participants saw as part of their desistance varied in accordance with each cultural script: Israelis sought to undergo a meaningful internal change and readjust personal characteristics, while English participants sought to act like a

'sensible' adult and address their criminogenic needs, such as unemployment, drug use, and mental health.

In a way, each framework of thought and labels constructed had to be 'peeled off', or transformed into something else, and the way this transformation 'had to' take place was appropriated in accordance with each cultural script. An additional contextual factor which had a marked impact in shaping both internal and external mechanisms of 'peeling off' an offender label was the social interactions and encounters participants (in both countries) were exposed to when they sought to desist. This factor determined the social avenues available to desist, the present identity participants developed, and also shaped their sense of social position in their society. Variance in this contextual factor (between the countries and amongst Israeli participants) produced different self-perceptions and self-schemas about their present identity. Chapters 7 and 9 illustrated how English participants reported experiencing a greater number of social interactions that were suffused with a steady reminder of having a conviction and of presenting a social risk. In sharp contrast, Israelis were more likely to experience social interactions that did not regularly remind the participant of their criminal past. Furthermore, the social interactions in Israel were inconsistent and this broad social pattern was seen alongside variance in Israeli participants' sense of social (re)integration and stigmatisation.

Israel presented an intriguing example of the impact of social interactions, because the cultural script was potentially more negatively labelling of the individual's personality, yet the comparison indicates that Israelis experienced less stigmatisation than English participants when they sought to exit crime (see Chapters 7-9). The overall desistance process of Israelis compared with the experiences of English participants suggests that social interactions upon 'going straight' had the power of overwriting and transforming a negative label and was a key feature which shaped identities. As Maruna (2001) recognised, identity and self-perceptions are interlinked and negotiated through social interactions.

The patterns of social interactions in each country were structured, to a great extent, by the social climates and shared values and norms. The greater exclusion of English participants was generated by laws and was amplified by the systematic norm to check a criminal history. In contrast, the social-political context around convictions and employment in Israel, along with the 'messier' social life, brought an opportunity for social interactions that were socially inclusive. Future studies in desistance could benefit from considering the quality and type of social interactions desisters are exposed to in their efforts to desist. Social interactions, I argued, were shaped by cultural scripts, climates, and norms. Another issue that future studies could consider is whether, as the findings suggest, a lack of clarity

about past convictions in social interactions can mitigate adopting 'an offender' label, since the desister has a better avenue to experience social interactions that are not informed by their past.

12.2.2 Considering employment as a social bond

I found that the five contextual factors – cultural scripts; social climates; social interactions and encounters; shared values and norms; and distinct cultural characteristics – were significant in structuring the role of employment, available opportunities to desist, and perceived (in)ability to legally (re)integrate. This study provided an opportunity to observe what it would be like if discrimination in the employment market was less severe and if ex-offenders were more able to 'blend in the crowd' (so to speak), without disclosing their criminal past. The literature around desistance highlighted the hardships that ex-offenders face to legally (re)integrate; not only in the UK (Padfield, 2011), but in other countries, such as the US (Uggen & Blahnik, 2016) and in Europe (Kurtovic & Rovira, 2016). In particular, research notes that negative stigma and perceived inability to legally rejoin society hinders both motivation to desist and an individual's ability to maintain desistance (Bottoms & Shapland, 2016; Farrall et al., 2014; Halsey, Armstrong, & Wright, 2016; LeBel et al., 2008; Maruna, 2011b; Padfield, 2011; Uggen & Blahnik, 2016).

Employment is commonly operationalised as a social bond variable that is conducive towards desistance (Sampson & Laub, 1993), but the findings herein highlight that it was not only the action of finding a job that assisted in developing a social bond to society. Rather, it seems that a sense of social bond was generated by a combination of factors: namely, employment opportunities and what the wider social climate and social interactions *communicated* to participants regarding their role in society. That is, wide contextual factors *communicated* whether – regardless of participants' employment status – their social position was either that of an 'outsider' or part of society (Becker, 1973). I found that it was this communication which, in turn, generated a sense of social bond or exclusion in both countries, mainly by influencing agentic factors related to self-conceptions and interacting with choices and behaviours available within each social climate (see Chapter 9).

The social climate in England was systematically exclusionary and the group, as a whole, expressed a greater sense of being on the periphery of society, along with greater inability to legally (re)integrate, than was the case for Israeli participants. The social climates, the norms and the social encounters had all communicated to English participants that legal (re)integration to society (by way of employment) would be *despite* of their criminal record. In contrast, contextual factors in Israel communicated that rejoining society would take place *regardless* of their criminal past. I

propose that future studies could benefit from considering what the social climate communicates to desisters to understand variance in the social bond an individual develops to society. Furthermore, in addition to variables such as age and job quality (Uggen, 1999; 2000), it is worth exploring whether types of social communication could possibly cause variance in terms of their effect on maintaining desistance.

Another issue to note is that the social bond of Israelis to employment did not always 'break', as the social conditions were more favourable towards continuation of previous employment. Some Israeli participants reported employment continuity during their troubles with the law, or in between periods of imprisonment, or even noted that they worked while offending (see Chapter 9). This stood in contrast to English participants who had no employment continuity throughout their offending career, even in the case of a participant with no history of imprisonment. Hence, the theoretical framework of employment as a turning point (Sampson & Laub, 1993) did not apply well in the case of Israeli participants, and did not account for the role of employment in *both* countries. That said, in Chapter 11, I mentioned that participants expressed a benefit to 'occupying their minds' with work as it helped them refrain from old habits.

Social capital

In accordance with earlier studies, I found that greater social capital helped to link participants with social opportunities in the routes out of crime (see Best et al., 2016; Calverley, 2013; Farrall, 2004; Kurtovic & Rovira, 2016). Weak ties, at times, acted as 'a bridge' to social opportunities (Granovetter, 1973) and the informal nature of these weak ties in Israel (i.e. outside a criminal justice agency) could have amplified Israelis' sense of belonging to (and participating in) society. Bridging social capital was a distinct cultural characteristic that Israel displayed which shaped the dynamics of desistance for Israelis. It could very well be that criminal justice agencies or organisations could increase social capital and thereby opportunities in the community, albeit that there were no examples of this occurrence in this study.

One proposition to entertain is that in countries where there is greater informal social interactions, weak ties, or bridging social capital, desisters are more likely to express a greater sense of social integration and development of a social bond to society. Conversely, participants in societies with less access to weak ties or social capital, alongside greater social exclusion, might experience higher levels of alienation and isolation from the society. This proposition is supported by Calverley's (2013) study which found that British Indian families exhibited greater social capital and, at times, the whole community was involved in assisting desisters in

finding social opportunities. In contrast, black British men – who had less familial intervention or social capital – underwent a more individualised desistance process which was more isolated. However, further research is needed to explore how such cultural differences influenced the bond individuals have to society.

Employment and shared values

The ESS was helpful in pointing to where the social values in Israel differed from England and explaining differences in terms of attitudes to employment. For example, Israeli respondents in the general population scored higher on the cultural values of '*achievement*' and '*power*'. I suggested in Chapter 9 that these values encouraged some participants to seek self-employment, and a job that would signal to society that they were 'doing well.' Furthermore, these two cultural values in Israel could be associated with the more pronounced feeling of failure when participants could not contribute money to those around them who were in need, which, in turn, influenced their motivation to desist (see Chapter 10). In short, variance in the shared values between the groups was related to variance in the behaviour of participants and differences in participants' motivation to sustain desistance.

12.2.3 Considering age

The two countries offered somewhat odd and compelling groups for comparison, as there was a 15 year age gap in the peak age of offending and desisting in each country (see Chapter 4). The well-known and reliable age-crime curve that identifies a reduction in offending during the mid-twenties was not applicable in the case of Israel, since offending and desistance commonly takes place well into adulthood (Fogel, 2006). Maturation theories, which highlight the role of age and maturity as a 'turning point' and offer an age-related explanation as to why offenders make a change (Moffitt, 1993; Shover, 1983; Shover & Thompson, 1992), were not applicable in Israel either. That is, I could not link desistance processes across the two groups as being related to age.

Instead, there were other shared mechanisms that underpinned participants' desistance process (as outlined above) and a key shared theme was that a wish to desist was framed as involving self-determination (Maruna, 2001), over and above narratives around age. Although both English and Israeli participants talked about getting older, a description of desistance as related to age was highlighted in England and there was less evidence of age-related changes in the narratives of Israeli participants (attitudinal or biological). I identified in Chapters 7 and 8 that the tendency in England to highlight 'growing up' and acting 'sensibly' was associated with the country's social values and scripts around adulthood; around being a

'grown up'; and around offending at a young age. Such findings raise the question of whether the role of age in desistance processes is more culturally and socially constructed than previously thought. The findings of this study imply that it could be the case, but more research is needed to answer this question, along with further exploration as to why the data suggest that the peak age of offending and desisting differs between the countries. Further cross-national research into the age-crime relationship is also needed. Earlier studies in the field, which were predominantly undertaken in the US and UK (Greenberg, 1985), could have masked the (possible) effect of social-cultural factors on the age-crime relationship. Given the discrepancies in the narratives between the groups, I believe it could be beneficial to re-examine age related explanations of desistance and scholarly assumptions based on the invariant thesis proposed by Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990). The older age of desisters in Israel also supports the contention that change and desistance can indeed take place amongst older offenders (Shapland, Farrall, & Bottoms, 2016a).

The age difference between the samples presented a challenge during the analysis and interpretation of findings; in particular, it was unclear whether some differences in the experiences of participants were due to differences in age or were primarily driven by other factors. I suggested in Chapter 9 that desisting at an older age in Israel had aggravated participants' sense of social exclusion. Also, Israeli participants sensed that they missed an

opportunity to take part in the shared cultural 'Israeli dream', while English participants expressed that they could still, potentially, take part in the shared 'English dream', a difference which could be related to age, in addition to other factors (see Chapter 8). There were also variations in how participants spent their time, and whether participants' parents were alive and involved in their lives, while variations in the ages of participants' children were not substantial. Amongst these, the most notable implication of age was that desisting at an older age seemed to amplify a sense of social exclusion and was narrated as an impediment to (re)integration in the case of Israeli participants (see Chapter 9). Israelis believed they were 'less employable' because of their age and criminal background, which generated a sense of 'falling short' from the normative and desirable social standard in society (Goffman, 1991).

12.2.4 Considering relationships and distinct cultural characteristics

Bottoms and Shapland (2011) advised that we conceptualise romantic relationships as forming part of broader normative influences which could be conducive towards desistance, rather than arguing about the direction of causation and direct impact of romantic partners on, for example, peer association (see Warr, 1998). In light of the findings herein, I would like to echo Bottoms and Shapland's (2011) proposition and suggest that a helpful way of conceptualising relationships – all relationships – is in terms of their

overall role as 'good company', which could interact with agency and identity and be associated with desistance processes in an assortment of ways, including time use, opportunities in the community, and impacting individuals' 'ultimate concerns.' Preoccupation with the direct effect of relationships as causing one thing or the other, or as developing before or after a motivation to desist emerges, overemphasises their potential roles as a turning point (see Sampson & Laub, 1993). This, in turn, poses difficulties in explaining desistance processes, not only across countries, but amongst different groups of offenders within a single nation who are involved in romantic relationships, such as white collar offenders (see Hunter, 2015).

The findings in this study suggest there is an *interaction* between motivation to desist, a shift in preferences, and the social ties the individual has, or has developed, during this phase, in the case of both countries. I found that participants in both groups expressed that spending time with family, children and partners was associated with their intention of avoiding 'bad habits' and spending less time with peers (see for example, Bottoms & Shapland, 2011; Farrall et al., 2011; Osgood et al., 1996; Sampson & Laub, 1993; Warr, 1998). Participants also described an internal shift in their preferences and 'ultimate concerns' (Vaughan, 2007) and that their current wishes were incompatible with an offending lifestyle (Hunter & Farrall, 2017; Weaver, 2015; Weaver & McNeill, 2015).

Another theme shared in common in the two countries was that participants described a process of rebuilding trust and of 'mending' pre-existing ties. Here, relationships were an arena where participants sought to signal their desistance and 'make good' for the past (Maruna, 2001; 2012). A common description amongst English participants was of reconnecting to family members, or wishing to reconnect after a period of disconnect. In contrast, Israelis more commonly described a shift of attention to pre-existing ties, which remained more 'intact' throughout their criminal history. As a result of this difference, Sampson and Laub's (1993) notion of turning points was less applicable in Israel and did not explain the shared experience across the two societies: Israeli participants had social bonds that remained more intact throughout their criminal career and they were less likely to highlight the development of a social bond as a turning point. Rather, Israelis more commonly expressed a shift in their attitude towards relationships (Giordano et al., 2002) and noted they had engaged with them more.

However, in the case of English participants who were in a relationship, these respondents expressed that their relationship was conducive to their desistance and played a role in structuring their time and habits (Warr, 1998). Hence, it seems that Sampson and Laub's theoretical framework worked better in the case of a society (England) in which participants experienced a sharper break of social ties because of involvement in crime.

Studies that investigate desistance in cultures where there is less 'breakage' of social bonds could consider whether the dynamics of desistance show variation from social bond theories, which emphasise external factors as conducive to desistance. It is also worth mentioning that criminologists know little about variance in the influence of relationships that remained more intact throughout a criminal career versus the influence of relationship which 'broke' and are 'mending' or 'new.'

Reservoirs of 'good company'

I turned to the concept of 'good company' as I found it was an inclusive term that addresses the various roles and influences that people – including family, romantic partners, friends, weak ties, and the community – played in the lives of both English and Israeli participants. In this section, I briefly outline some of the roles that 'good company' played; in particular, in providing practical assistance; as people to spend time with and avoiding bad habits, and in linking participants with opportunities in the community. First, similarly to Farrall's (2004) findings, I found that in cases of greater involvement of families of origin, participants (in both countries) reported fewer obstacles (see Chapters 9 and 10). Having a valuable pre-existing social bond had provided participants with practical assistance (Calverley, 2013; Farrall, 2004), motivation, and self-efficacy (Cid & Marti, 2012), and informal social control (Calverley, 2013; Sampson & Laub, 1993). Yet the extent to which families could provide practical support was influenced by

how well the family was economically positioned, which varied between the countries.

Variances in the role of families of origin was also related to cultural values around families in each society (see Chapter 10): for example, it was more common in England to curb familial assistance because of the loss of trust and negative experiences from years of offending. In contrast, fewer Israeli families had curbed assistance; rather, Israeli families tended to express disapproval alongside a greater intention to intervene throughout a criminal career. I proposed in Chapter 10 that this difference was associated with shared social values and norms relating to families in Israel, which are more involved in each other's lives and the popularity of Shabbat dinners (a distinct cultural characteristic), which had implications for the type and frequency of familial involvement in participants' desistance processes.

The impact of contextual factors on familial dynamics was further underscored when I examined my findings alongside Calverley's (2013) study. Calverley found that a central social feature which directed Indian families' involvement was seeking to preserve social prestige and positive reputation in their community, a theme which emerged from the shared values unique to British Indians and had implications for their experience of desistance. In particular, this shared value at times resulted in exclusionary intervention strategies by family members, in which the

family sent the desister away from their homes and communities, while seeking to help him desist (Calverley, 2013). Furthermore, I found that social values regarding families had implications for their involvement over and above the geographical proximity of family members. Fewer Israeli participants lived in close proximity to their family of origin, yet the engagement of participants with their family – whether it was characterised more by curbing assistance and distance or applying pressure to change – was largely shaped by the overall shared values and norms within each society or culture.

What such findings bring attention to is the importance of accounting for social values and distinct cultural characteristics within a given culture. Indeed, habits related to Jewish traditions and religion had an impact on Israeli participants' lives and had shaped familial dynamics and their roles, regardless of participants' level of religiosity or affinity with Jewish traditions. Familial values, religion, and related traditions were a distinct contextual factor which explained the role of families and variance between England and Israel. In light of this, operationalising distinct cultural characteristics as variables in the design of future desistance studies seems to be a worthwhile strategy to consider.

Participants in both countries described romantic relationships, families, and friends as contributing to their efforts to desist by having someone to

spend time with; thereby participants sought to 'keep busy' and overcome desistance-related obstacles (see Chapters 10 and 11). For English participants, 'good company' primarily came in the form of family members, while Israelis described a greater reservoir of 'good company' in the form of family and friends, with whom they had spent time with. Furthermore, the greater reservoir in the case of Israelis was also related to the greater number of avenues they had to employment opportunities and, as a result, their greater sense of social (re)integration.

In contrast, I found that the experience of English participants was more isolated, with a sharper sense of dissonance from society, which could have been because of a combination of factors: the lower reservoir of 'good company'; lower social capital; differences in the weather; stigmatising social encounters; and the input of the exclusionary social climate. In addition, I proposed that the lenses through which participants viewed socialising and being outdoors could have been coloured by the English cultural script and the social climate which placed more emphasis on averting risk (Chapter 11). This social attribute was seen alongside participants' intentional and continued efforts to manage peer-related risk, which entailed spending more time in home settings, away from external negative influences. Hence, contextual factors could have influenced the reservoir of relationships participants had in each country, avenues to desistance, self-perceptions, and how to address peer-related obstacles.

Peers

Narratives around peers shared notable similarities in the two countries; namely, both groups reported spending less time with peers and avoiding and cutting contact with them. Participants in both countries thought that being around people that were involved in crime and/or drugs would hinder their efforts to desist and reported avoiding some people and places. These findings were aligned with earlier studies in the field which suggested that desistance processes commonly involve peer avoidance and a reduction of peer association (Bottoms & Shapland, 2016; Calverley, 2013; Farrall et al., 2014; Sampson & Laub, 1993; Simons et al., 2002; Warr, 1998). Also, as mentioned earlier, spending less time with peers and placing greater attention on one's romantic relationships was a shared narrative amongst both Israeli and English participants who were in a relationship (Bottoms & Shapland, 2011; Farrall et al., 2014; Giordano et al., 2002; Sampson & Laub, 2005; Simons et al., 2002; Theobald & Farrington, 2009). Yet while these tendencies were shared across the two societies, there were also puzzling differences in how participants in each group understood peer avoidance and the manner in which they sought to avoid peers.

As noted above, contextual factors brought forth a shared understanding of peer avoidance behaviour which varied between the two groups; in particular, the social climate in England placed emphasis on managing

offenders' behaviour and there was a social norm of averting risk. Interestingly, English participants sought to act in a similar way to the social pattern of their country, by making a continued effort to manage peer-related obstacles and avoiding risk (Chapters 10 and 11). In contrast, the discourse in Israel encouraged the view that successfully overcoming peer-related obstacles depended on participants 'internal strength' and 'internal change'. In accordance with this discourse, Israelis (while they also framed avoiding peers as a legitimate endeavour) expressed an additional sentiment in which encountering peers represented a test to one's strength of character and as indicative of their progress in terms of their internal change. Hence, the variance in narratives was compatible with the contextual factors in each country, whereby participants 'oriented' themselves emotionally and behaviourally in regards to peer-related obstacles. Future studies may consider how desisters may act in a way which reflects the same social attitude and social patterns they are exposed to.

Children, motivation, and contextual factors

The hope to reestablish a relationship with children and play a positive role in their lives was a more common narrative of motivation to desist amongst English participants, and it exemplified participants' wishes to act responsibly (Shapland & Bottoms, 2011). Interestingly, Israelis' wish to be a 'better father' was not framed as giving them motivation to desist; rather,

at times it presented an obstacle which was framed as hindering their motivation to refrain. The notion of 'being able to provide' – especially to one's children – had the potential to turn into an obstacle in Israel when the normative means were not available, or were seen as not enough amongst participants (Chapter 10). It seems that shared values and norms around fatherhood (see Farrall et al., 2011) and, perhaps, the continuity of social ties with children during offending, had impacted experiences around motivation to desist and the role of children. The findings imply that beliefs that participants had about a relationship – which were situated within cultures – brought forth variance in their impact on motivation to desist.

12.2.5 Insights on the input of supervision

Supervision in the community could be conceptualised as a political expression of culturally-shared ideas about crime and justice. Through the supervision settings in each country, culturally-shared ideas were expressed and reproduced, which brought forth shared experiences and shared ways in which participants sought to be 'a probationer' (Bourdieu, 1977). It has long been acknowledged that views underpinning rehabilitation inform and structure the type interventions used (Raynor & Robinson, 2005; Ward & Maruna, 2007); the legitimacy of probation staff in the eyes of the probationers; and effects the relationships and compliance (Burnett & McNeill, 2005; McNeill, 2009; McNeill & Robinson, 2012; Robinson & McNeill, 2008). Studies in the UK have explored services and support

provided in supervision settings (Shapland, Bottoms, & Muir, 2012); inquired about the quality of assistance (Robinson et al., 2014); and have explored the long term impact of probation work (Farrall et al., 2014). There have been several studies that have compared the experiences of probationers across Europe and these have found common themes amongst probationers, as well as suggesting that there are some differences (Durnescu, 2011; Durnescu, Enengl, & Grafl, 2013; Healy, 2012, 2014; King, 2013; Robinson & McNeill, 2016).

This study had contributed to the understanding of how theoretical assumptions underpinning supervision (and the interventions based on these assumptions) impacted experiences and the engagement of participants, as well as shaped identities in criminal justice settings. By comparing two contrasting methods of supervision, I have drawn insights into how contextual factors interacted with agency and brought distinct experiences of (re)integration. Furthermore, I described how the manner in which interventions were implemented had shaped the relationship between probationers and staff, and illustrated how the architecture of criminal justice settings served to convey and reinforce each cultural framing of offenders. In what follows, I discuss the lessons that can be learned from the comparison undertaken which may be applicable more globally.

The first lesson to note is that views around rehabilitation – which emerged from the cultural scripts and the social climates and underpinned probation practice – had directed participants' attention towards different aspects of their (re)integration and brought corresponding experiences and behaviours. The objective in England to reduce reoffending by managing behaviour and by emphasising compliance with the conditions was seen alongside participants' evaluation of their success by their ability to keep to their conditions and an experience of 'excess' measures of supervision. In contrast, the treatment model in Israel and the court practice was seen alongside a more visceral experience of supervision, whereby participants gave attention to responding to personality-related characteristics they had and the 'persona' they displayed to the probation service.

These differences of attention relate to the second insight drawn: the 'performance' participants said they delivered at each supervision settings varied in accordance with the *social demands* – what was 'asked' of the probationers – and in accordance with wider contextual factors. English participants were keen to highlight their behavioural compliance, while Israelis highlighted their emotional compliance with supervision (or lack of thereof). In both cases, however, there was an element of 'performance' and of 'performing well', which signified and signalled their current status of being a desister (Goffman, 1966; 1991; Maruna, 2012). Furthermore, each contextually-constructed social demand about how to 'do well' in

supervision (see Chapters 4 and 7) was woven into participants' sense of identity and acted as a barometer through which participants measured their success and negotiated their 'desister identity'. For example, beliefs about offenders in the Israeli probation services were evident in participants' description of who they were (or were not) when they addressed their personal characteristics and the supervision context in England generated a sense amongst participants that supervision was the axis on which their lives revolved – that they were 'a person on probation'.

Each social demand and supervision context were also a decisive factor in the type of stigma from which participants negotiated their escape from and communicated to participants how society viewed them. English participants thought their time under supervision had contributed to (and helped to make public) a negative label of being 'a criminal'. Israelis expressed that they had an inherent problem which resided in their personality and extended beyond their association with the criminal justice system; or, alternatively, they discussed and negotiated the manner in which they differed from a 'normal offender.' In so doing, the supervision context not only gave rise to different senses of selfs between the groups, but had structured the manner in which participants sought to desist and shed the label constructed. A central similarity to note here is that participants in both groups equally adopted the discourses they were subject to by the criminal justice intervention and society at large. Future

studies exploring desistance and (re)integration might consider how (ex)offenders exemplify (or carry out) shared values and cultural scripts they are exposed to in desistance processes.

12.3 Key arguments and the approach to desistance research

Throughout this chapter, I have outlined and reiterated the importance of cultural characteristics, contextual factors, and their role in desistance processes in this study. I believe it was a worthwhile exercise, because previous studies in the field have scarcely accounted for contextual factors both in terms of their design and analysis of findings. Bottoms and Shapland's (2011) theoretical framework proposed to consider the current social conditions in which those wishing to desist act and how these may interact with individuals. Farrall et al.'s (2011) theoretical framework proposed that broad macro factors interact with the individual desisting in their everyday life and shape the dynamics of desistance. I found that both of these theoretical frameworks were helpful in understanding the dynamics of desistance across the two countries and cultures, as they focused on the interaction between the individual and their environment. On the other hand, theoretical frameworks which emphasise social factors over and above agentic-related factors were less useful when the social conditions varied. Theoretical frameworks which focused on agentic-related changes in processes of desistance were more easily applied to both

groups and variations were accounted for by situating these internal processes within their wider social context.

In this study, I have unpacked the manner in which macro and meso level factors shaped the dynamics of desistance in England and Israel and contributed to the pool of knowledge by identifying key contextual factors that shaped both internal and external mechanisms associated with desistance processes. It was by identifying contextual factors that a better understanding of the underlying mechanisms in desistance processes has emerged. To date, criminologists have operationalised desistance by looking at internal mechanisms that underpin these processes – such as factors related to identity transformation and behaviours – or explored external mechanisms that impact individuals – such as employment opportunities and social capital. Although these studies were informative, desistance scholars had largely neglected the social context in which both internal and external mechanisms are situated, the contextual factors which shape identity transformation, habits, and behaviours, and the social context where social bonds are created, severed, and mended.

I am left wondering how research and scholarly understanding of desistance could possibly change if academics were to identify contextual factors and consider them in the design of their studies? I believe the approach to desistance may focus more on the interaction between

contextual factors, social conditions, and agency; that is, the approach might place greater focus on the manner in which contextual and external conditions are assimilated by individuals, as well as expressed by them. Furthermore, I suspect that it might be insufficient to study contextual factors and write about differences and similarities in the dynamics of desistance. To increase our knowledge of contextual factors in desistance processes, future researchers would benefit from considering, in greater depth, how contextual factors shape identity and 'orient' agency. It seems particularly important if scholars wish to avoid creating a dichotomy between wider social processes and individual processes in criminological understanding.

12.4 Limitations and generalisations

In Chapter 4 I addressed methodological issues related to this study. Principally, I discussed the comparability of the two samples; differences related to age and stages of desistance; and the influence of the fieldwork conditions on the data produced. I noted that it is not possible to draw causal explanatory statements about processes of desistance and that the findings are primarily comparative, with a focus on the experiences and perceptions of the participants across societies, thereby uncovering the role of macro factors in their effort to negotiate desistance.

In conclusion to this study, it is important to highlight that there are potential difficulties in interpreting the data, given the differences across the two samples, especially in regards to differences in their average age. For example, during the analysis, I wondered whether the greater continuity that Israeli participants experienced in the employment market was due, in part, to differences in their average age, especially if these participants had a late onset and employment history prior to a conviction. Throughout the study, I had to reflect on such issues; critically examine multiple influences; and be careful in the interpretation of data. I advise the reader to do the same. I offered conclusions that were based on careful consideration and deduction, in an effort to draw out mechanisms that were *shared* across each group. In the case of employment continuity, there were Israeli participants that were working whilst offending, even if their troubles with the law began during their early teens. I could not ignore that there were other mechanisms operating and that these mechanisms were key in shaping the experiences of participants in the employment market. In particular, the social climate in each country influenced the experiences of participants differently and social capital was mobilised in Israel in a way that was more conducive to employment.

In the remaining of this section, I address other limitations and discuss; the 'price' of casting a wide net in research studies; the difficulty in capturing

cultures; the sample and the extent to which generalisations can be made; and the problem of focusing on the comparative aspect of desistance.

First, in trying to understand how cultures may play a role in desistance processes, the research method involved casting a very wide net, with the aim of collecting as much data as possible on as many issues as possible, so as to examine how a collection of factors operated interdependently and interacted with agency. Casting a wide net meant I had to explore multiple themes simultaneously, which, in turn, left limited resources and time to delve into each theme in depth. Given the very nature of PhD research, and the required focused argumentation, not all of the themes which emerged could be covered in sufficient depth or were included in this thesis. For example, undertaking this study required an understanding of the overall economic conditions in each country; however, because of the wide net cast, there was less time to explore the role of economic conditions beyond the comparison and analysis provided herein, and there is room to explore this issue further. For example, how may economic conditions relate to variation in self-employment between the groups? An argument could be made that this study was overreaching and had explored multiple issue, while scratching the surface of other issues.

I hold firm to the view that the wide net approach was a preferable method of investigation, especially since there is a dearth of comparative studies in

the field. In particular, an argument could be made that it is wise to first cast a wide net which could *then* direct future research on variables of interest on which to narrow their focus. In short, the exploration of multiple factors came at a price, related to the breadth with which each topic could be explored; however, the methodological approach provided the opportunity to uncover how various parts intertwined and impacted upon desistance.

Relatedly, a word of warning for future comparative researchers: one of the struggles of capturing the role of broad factors was that, at times, I sensed that there was 'something in the air' – a cultural characteristic which influenced desistance processes – but it was difficult to pinpoint what it was exactly. In the instances I could conceptualise the elusive cultural factor, it remained difficult to substantiate that this abstract theme was associated with desistance and acted as a mechanism, let alone articulate it in words and be confident it would stand up to academic scrutiny. It was not possible to fully capture or draw a link between *all* of the cultural influences and examine how *all* of these intertwined; rather, the analysis herein offered the cultural characteristics which were 'catchable', while refraining from discussing factors that could not be substantiated.

Another issue to consider is that the sample of participants was small and the extent to which generalisations can be made from this exploration about

processes of desistance in other countries. To generalise would mean that the insights I have drawn in England and Israel would also hold true elsewhere and in other time periods (Payne & Williams, 2005). An ability to draw conclusions about key mechanisms that shape desistance processes in more universally applicable terms is a desirable aim of this study, however there are limitations on the ability to generalise the findings (see also, Williams, 2000). I chose to make moderate generalisations about the influence of cultures in each country, which was informed, in part, by the size of the sample and the number of cultures under investigation. In this chapter, I have concluded what (in light of the findings) academics can learn about desistance processes more globally; yet, rather than seeing these conclusions as sweeping statements that would hold true across different cultures, it is time to 'pick up' the findings herein and test them further to see how these hold in other places and time periods (Payne & Williams, 2005). Hence, the generalisations made herein are propositions to be tested (Payne & Williams, 2005).

Lastly, it is worth noting that focusing on the comparative aspect meant I discussed similarities and differences at the expense of relaying the full stories of how desistance processes unfolded in each country. That is, a focus on comparative themes made certain issues that participants experienced less relevant for the purpose of analysis. An example of that is my decision not to include Israeli participants' discussions on the negative

role the police played in their efforts to desist (see Chapter 4). I did so because of the lower relevance it had for comparative purposes. Another example is that if I were to only write about desistance processes in Israel, I would have been inclined to focus on variation in the sense of social exclusion and discrimination in the employment market. However, since the exclusion of English participants was far more pronounced, further exploration into this issue might not have provided additional insight into the role of cultures.

12.5 Summary

In this chapter, I argued for the inclusion of contextual factors in desistance research and proposed a framework with which to consider the roles of cultures and social structures in processes of desistance. Furthermore, I reviewed earlier theoretical frameworks and illustrated how contextual factors had shaped and 'oriented' the dynamics of desistance, while reflecting on how scholars may conceptualise these processes in a more globally applicable way. Principally, I have discussed how identity and the 'how' of desistance could be shaped by cultural scripts and social climates, as well as other factors, and suggested that social interactions had the potential to overwrite or reinforce a negative label. I then considered the role of age and its interaction with contextual factors, which raised the question of whether the impact of age is more culturally constructed than previously identified. I also considered the role of relationships and

proposed that a more helpful way of conceptualising their role is as 'good company', which interacts with agency and could impact desisters in an assortment of ways, including time use, opportunities in the community, and 'ultimate concerns'. Furthermore, I discussed how different views around peer avoidance, which were shaped by contextual factors, can help to explain behaviours and time use. I then outlined insights from the comparative exploration of supervision in the community and described how views underpinning rehabilitation could shape (re)integration and identities of desisters.

By undertaking a wide comparison of the known factors and drivers associated with desistance processes, this study uncovered the role of cultures and social structures in desistance and their impact on both internal and external mechanisms related to these processes. Additionally, this study has provided insight into the causes of variance between groups of desisters, and has challenged some popular assumptions in criminological discourse about these processes. I concluded the chapter by discussing the limitations of this study and the ability to generalise the findings; particularly, I discussed the costs of casting a wide research net, the difficulty with capturing cultures, and the implications of focusing on comparable themes. There is still much to learn about contextual factors and their impact on the dynamics of desistance. I only 'scratched the surface' herein and I sense that each theme that emerged should be

explored in further depth. I hope that criminologists' interest in the role of contextual factors will gain momentum to provide insights into how to address structural factors which impact desistance from crime.

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∗ *Post imprisonment probation* is an umbrella term used here for a range of types of supervision in the community. The conditions attached to this type of supervision can be part of licence conditions and/or conditions set during sentencing.

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Appendices

Appendix I

Diagram of structural and individual level-processes in desistance/persistence

Source: Farrall et al., 2011
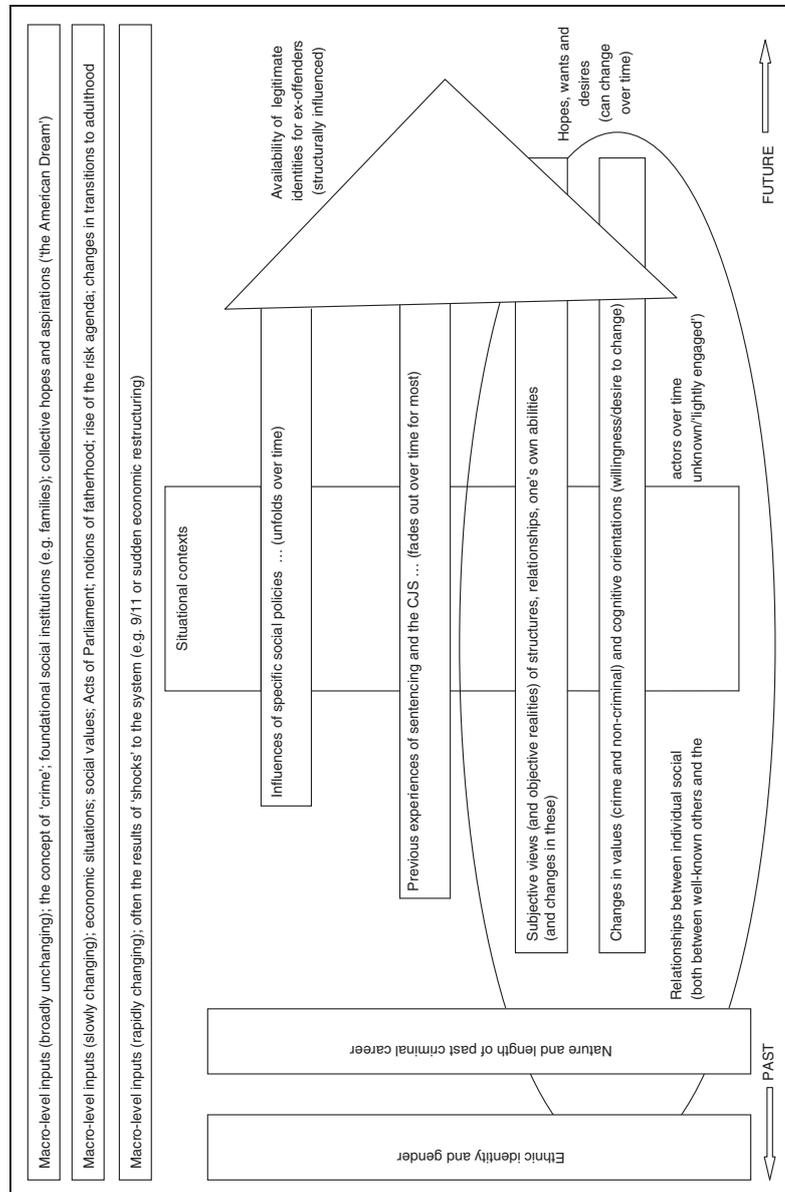
Appendix II

Interview schedules for experts and probationers

Experts Interviews

1. Tell me a bit about what you do?
2. Tell me about how you: (1) came to take part in UserVoice/Unlock/etc'?; (2) came to work here?
3. From what you see, why do you think people start to offend?
4. In your view, why do people stop offending?
5. From what you see, which things facilitate/prevent offending in England and Wales/Israel?
6. What are the obstacles they face when trying to stop?
7. Tell me about Israel/England and Wales? (as related to the criminal process)
8. Are there any obstacles that the criminal justice system can sometime pose?
9. Tell me about the cultural values of Israel/England?
10. I'm interested in why/how social values affect people who want to stop offending, or affect the degree to which people stop. Are there any questions I should ask that will help me understand that better?

Participants Interviews

Current life

1. Tell me a little about yourself? [descriptions and evaluations]

| Employment | Finances | Partner | Wider family (esp. mother/father) |
| Drink | Drugs | Friends | Army (served in? experience of?) |

Where do you live? (Can you tell me 3 good + bad things about where you live?)

How are you different **now** from when you **started** probation/license? How do you feel about these changes?

Involvement in the CJS

1. Can you tell me the story of when you first got in trouble with the law, what happened?
2. How old were you?
3. Can you give a description of what you have been in trouble with since then? Why?
4. Have you tried to stop offending in the past? What happened that time?
5. Would you say you have stopped offending (or are *stopping*)? If so, how long have you been stopped/been *stopping*?
6. Why do/did you want to stop offending?
7. Has anyone or anything really made you want to stop offending?
8. Are there any activities or anything you did recently that made you feel good about having stop offending?

9. What have been the good things about staying out of trouble?

10. How do you feel about having stopped/*starting* to stop?

11. Do you think you will be able to stay offended? Why?

12. Could/Has anyone (or anything) help you stop offending? Who? How? Why?

13. Looking back to when you <u>were</u> involved in crime, how do you feel about that period of your life now?

14. Would you say that you felt proud about having stopped/*stopping*?

15. Two parallel worlds?

16. Would you say that having a criminal conviction will seriously hold you back?

Obstacles and Avenues to Desisting

1. Is there (or were there) any obstacles that made it hard for you to stay out of trouble?

2. How did (or are) you overcoming these?

3. How are things going with each of these now?

4. What has been solved? How? By whom?

5. What did you do to help solve these problems? Have these problems recurred?

6. Did someone else do anything to help? (inc. people you don't know well)

7. Has anyone tried to put *pressure* on you to stop offending (or to continue)?

8. Is there something that helps (or will help) you stop/*start* to stop?

9. Are there things you think you are going to have to do to stop/*start* to stop?

10. Are there things that you think you might need to give up to stop/*start* to stop?

11. What would your life look like if you stopped completely?

12. When in your life would you say you've been happiest?

Community and 'sense of self'

1. How do you describe yourself to a stranger [or to someone you had just met]?

2. How would you say others see you?

3. Do other people in the area know you have been in trouble? What effect does/has this have on you?

4. Has anyone in your local community tried to help you stop? Tell me about what happened? How did you feel?

5. What do you think <u>you</u> need to do to prove to others that you have stopped/are *stopping*?

6. How is your family involved in you stopping?

7. Has anyone been really helpful? Who? What happened?

8. Has anyone been really unhelpful? Who? What happened? What did you do about it?

Time use

1. I'm also interested in how people spend their time these days. Could you tell me about a typical Wednesday? Time you got up; how/where/with whom? What did you spent your day doing? What have you done in the evening?

2. Could you tell me about a typical Saturday (England)/Friday (Israel) too?

3. Are there any places where you used to go to but which you now try to avoid? Why do you avoid these places?

4. Are there any people where you used to see but which you now try to avoid? Why do you avoid these people?

5. Would you say that you're spending your time differently these days since you stopped/started to stop?

6. If so, how do you feel about this?
7. How do you feel about your life generally now?

The future
1. How do you think your life will change over the next 1 year … 3 years?
2. What are your ambitions: during the next 6 months? After that?
3. Is there anything that might make it hard for you to stop offending/or stay stopped?
4. How will you deal with this?

Probation
1. Did you learn anything as a result of being on probation? What? Has it helped you to stay out of trouble?
2. Did the probation officer say/do anything that will help you stay out of trouble in the future? What? How help?
3. Did you get helpful advice from your officer? Examples.

Citizenship
I'm interested in some of your wider opinions and beliefs…
How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about being a citizen? If you feel strongly about these, say so.

Some people say…
1. People should not rely on the government, they should take responsibility for themselves.
2. It does not really matter if you lie when dealing with states officials.
3. Being a citizen is about becoming involved in your community (by community we mean the people who live around here in your neighbourhood).
4. Being a citizen is about 'giving back' to your country.
5. The government does not listen to people like me.
6. People should obey the law.
7. People should accept that others have a right to be different
8. Local government officials don't really care about what happens to people like me.

Have you done any voluntary work recently?
Have you voted in the past two years (local/national elections)?
Are you registered to vote?

Appendix III

Summary of details about the participants

Name	Country	Age at time of interview	Offence at time of interview	Sentence status	Previous offence type
Charlie	England	32	Harassment	Suspended sentence	Threat; grave bodily harm; assault
Luke	England	36	Burglary	On licence	Mainly burglary and theft related offences
Billy	England	27	Burglary	On licence	Burglary; assault; arson
Richard	England	26	Breach of restraining order	Community order	Domestic violence, motor related offence; theft; possession of drugs with intent
Damien	England	34	Burglary in dwelling	On licence	Burglary; theft
Owen	England	38	Assault	On licence	Car theft; drink driving, domestic violence; assault
Simon	England	27	Breach of order for non-compliance	On licence	Common assault; shoplifting; threatening behaviour.
Ian	England	24	Burglary	On licence	Burglary; burglary dwelling; theft
Max	England	37	Burglary dwelling	On licence	Mainly burglary and theft
Thomas	England	41	Burglary dwelling	On licence	Burglary; public disorder; theft

Name	Country	Age at time of interview	Offence at time of interview	Sentence status	Previous offence type
Leo	England	44	Burglary dwelling	On licence	Mainly burglary and theft related offences
Jack	England	23	Possession of cannabis	On licence	Mainly violence and fights related offences
Kevin	England	25	Distribution of class A Heroin	On licence	Burglaries; burglary dwelling; handling; criminal damage; theft; holding a weapon
Aidan	England	38	Multiple shop thefts	Community order	Stolen goods; possession of drugs; assault; theft
Hugh	England	30	Acquisition	Suspended sentence	Acquisition
Shay	Israel	25	Violence	(Un-offical) postponed sentence	violence
Yehuda	Israel	39	Intimate partner violence	Post custody probation (from a rehabilitative facility)	Violence; property damage; drugs; domestic violence
Ichik	Israel	46	Domestic violence	Post imprisonment probation*	Threats; violence; domestic violence; property damage
Hai	Israel	42	Burglary	Post imprisonment probation*	Theft; burglary; domestic violence
Avi	Israel	50	Breaking-and-entering (stealing)	(Un-offical) postponed sentence	Drug possession; violence; theft; threats; domestic violence.

Name	Country	Age at time of interview	Offence at time of interview	Sentence status	Previous offence type
Itay	Israel	49	Public disorder	Community order	Public disorder offences
Nadav	Israel	49	Drug possession with intent to sale	Post imprisonment probation*	Gambling; violence
Mattan	Israel	48	Theft and drug possession	Community order	Violence
Nimi	Israel	28	Violence	Community order	Violence; theft
Vito	Israel	65	Motor related offence	Post imprisonment probation*	Illegal prostitution businesses; violence; gambling; theft; fraud
Kobi	Israel	52	Drug trading	Post imprisonment probation*	Theft; breaking-and-entering; drug trading
Roei	Israel	44	Theft	(Un-offical) postponed sentence	Theft
Eyal	Israel	49	Acquisition	Post imprisonment probation*	Mainly acquisition
Asaf	Israel	42	Recklessness	Post imprisonment probation*	Drug distribution; theft; violence
Boaz	Israel	52	Holding a concealed weapon	Community order	Violence; theft; gambling related offences; drug distribution

Appendix IIII

Employment and relationship status

Table 7.1 Employment Status

Employment	England	Israel
Employed	4	12
Self-employed	1	8
Employees	3	4
Unemployed	11	3

Table 7.2 Relationship Status

Relationship Status	England	Israel
In a relationship	4	11
No relationship	11	4

Table 7.3 Employment & Relationship Status

Status	England	Israel
Employment and a romantic relationship	1	9
Employment and no romantic relationship	4	3
Romantic relationship and unemployment	3	2
No romantic relationship or employment	7	1

Appendix V

Detailed list of activities, where, and with whom participants spent time

Detailed list of activities

Activity	England	Israel	Total
Asleep/in bed	38%	28%	33%
Commute to/from work	<1%	3%	2%
At work (office based)	0%	9%	4%
At work (not office based)	4%	10%	7%
Housework	3%	4%	3%
Child care	0%	1%	<1%
With children (relaxing)	1%	1%	1%
With children (housework help)	1%	1%	1%
Religious practices	0%	5%	2%
Sporting event/ exercise	2%	2%	2%
Relaxing at own home	29%	19%	24%
Relaxing at other's homes	2%	0%	1%
Visiting friends	1%	3%	2%
Visiting family	9%	1%	5%
Family meal/tea	1%	5%	3%
Visiting partner	0%	<1%	<1%

Activity	England	Israel	Total
Domestic shopping (groceries)	<1%	3%	1%
Personal shopping (clothes etc)	2%	<1%	1%
Health care	1%	0%	<1%
Doing 'nothing much'	3%	2%	2%
Socialising	1%	4%	2%
Bail/probation visit/ meeting	<1%	0%	<1%
Attending probation	1%	0%	<1%
Community service	0%	1%	<1%
Looking for work	1%	2%	1%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Detailed list of where participants spent time

Where	England	Israel	Total
At work (office based)	0%	9%	5%
At work (not office based)	4%	10%	7%
At home	74%	57%	66%
At friend's house	1%	2%	1%
At family member's house	7%	3%	5%
At shops	0%	<1%	<1%
At hospital/clinic	1%	0%	<1%
In bar/pub	2%	1%	2%

Where	England	Israel	Total
In public space	5%	8%	6%
In public space (nature)	1%	0%	<1%
Commuting	1%	4%	2%
At religious venue	0%	3%	2%
At sports ground	<1%	1%	1%
In town centre/local shops	1%	1%	1%
At gym/sports centre	<1%	0%	<1%
CJS agency offices	1%	0%	<1%
At partner's house	3%	0%	2%
Restaurant/cafe	0%	4%	2%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Detailed list of who else was there

Who	England	Israel	Total
On my own	53%	37%	45%
Immediate family	10%	8%	9%
Wider family	2%	5%	4%
My children	0%	3%	1%
Friends	8%	6%	7%
Work colleagues	3%	9%	6%
Other religious people	0%	2%	1%
Other commuters	0%	<1%	<1%

Who	England	Israel	Total
Other people I don't know at all	2%	<1%	1%
With partner	21%	29%	25%
Flat mates	1%	0%	<1%
Animals (e.g., dogs)	1%	0%	<1%
Total	100%	100%	100%