Desistance

Session 1.
Why people stop offending?

Expectations & Clarifications
Who are we?

- Name
- Short bio
- Expectations from this workshop
House rules !!!

- Respect for the views of others
- Telephones on flight mode
- Give everyone space and time to express their opinion/make a contribution – don’t laugh at each other !!!!
- Punctuality
- All questions are valid- we don’t know what we don’t know!
- Active listening
- Participate
- Have Fun !!!!
What is desistance?

• Is the long term abstinence from criminal behaviour among those for whom offending had become a pattern of behaviour

• Is stopping from offending and staying stopped
Review of the main desistance theories

- Not one but many
- In common – answer the question – why stop?

- ‘Age crime curve’ – ‘maturation reform’ – biological changes, social transitions and life experiences
- Decision – decision to give up/motivation
- Relational element – relation between the individual and society – engagement and attachment with society – bonds – school, peers, employment, marriage, parenthood
- Changes in self-identity – ‘coherent, pro-social identities …’
- Cognitive transformations – four parts: openness to change, exposure to ‘hooks for change’, ‘replacement of self’ and changes in the way actors view offending behaviour
- Changes in the situational context or in the routine activities
- Recognition and belonging – togetherness
The film
58 cents

• Watch the film – 15 minutes

• In small groups identify (6 min.):
  – Theories that explain Jean’s desistance
  – The ‘hooks for change’
  – What could a probation officer do to facilitate desistance?

• Presentations and debate
Conclusions

• Desistance is a difficult and complex process
• It is also highly subjective and individualized
• Individual, social and situational factors play important roles
• Desistance should be understood in the relational context
Questions?

Thanks.