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Guarding, guiding, gate opening Prison officer work in a Norwegian welfare context

Terje Emil Fredwall, PhD, Associate Professor, University of Agder, Norway

INTRODUCTION

Anne A is a prison officer, and for years, she has been working behind the walls – in low-security and high-security wings, with remand and sentenced prisoners. She says:

We are there fifty per cent in order to keep an eye on them, to ensure that they stay here [in prison]. The other fifty per cent we are trying to help them. They may be drug users or have other problems, and it's just as much our duty to help them as to watch them. And when we help, this contributes to security just as much as a locked door or an alarm.

The professional work of prison officers is complex and multi-faceted (Arnold, Liebling, & Tait, 2007; Fredwall, 2015b; Johnsen, Granheim, & Helgesen, 2011; Liebling, 2011; Liebling, Price, & Schefer, 2011; Mjåland & Lundeberg, 2014; Nylander, 2011). In a Norwegian context, the officers are on the one hand to deprive convicted persons of their liberty, as well as to keep remand prisoners where the court or prosecuting authority has decided that they should be. On the other hand, they are expected to take care of, support and motivate the prisoners during their prison stay, as well as to lay a foundation for rehabilitation and change, reintegration and improvement of living conditions (Norwegian Ministry of Justice and the Police, 2000, 2008). Prisons, in the words of Ben Crewe (2007, p. 123), thus become “a potent symbol of the state’s power to punish and its failure to integrate all its citizens into its systems of norms”, and the confinement could be staged as an opportunity for doing something about this failure. A growing body of studies, however, indicates how challenging this task of integration and rehabilitation could be, describing how the time in high-security prisons also may leads to social stigmatisation, causes both physical problems and psychological sufferings, increases the chance of relationship challenges, and often deteriorate the prisoner’s financial situation (Hammerlin, 2015; Kolind, 1999; Liebling & Maruna, 2006; Smith, 2006).

In this chapter, I will offer some observations and reflections on imprisonment, welfare services and prison officer work in Norwegian high-security wings. Based on a reading of two key policy documents, I will first show that the political and professional leadership of the Norwegian Correctional Services position high-security prisons as arenas of welfare-oriented work. The ambition is that the door into prison also should be a way out to heightened welfare and a life without crime. I will then turn to Anne A, one of the prison officers whom I interviewed for a larger study on professional ethics (Fredwall, 2015b), describing how she encourages the prisoners to make use of the prison's health services and educational facilities and how she tries to help them to get a job and/or a proper housing to go to after release. Both the leadership and the prison officer are thereby highly concerned with welfare services and the period after prison release, but they have different reasons for the importance of this. While the two key documents primarily express an expectation that the offer of welfare services will yield a gain – measured in recidivism rates, Anne A regards the enabling process primarily as a benefit for the prisoner as an individual. And while Anne A emphasizes the importance of giving the prisoners an opportunity to live good and meaningful lives, with themselves and others, after release, the social utility is used as the primary reason in the policy documents. In the final part of the chapter, I will locate these differences within what I will term a transformational and a guiding officer ideal (Fredwall, 2015b, pp. 366-395), appending some short reflections concerning the values represented by each of these ideals.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

The first of the two key policy documents, selected for analysis in this chapter, is the White Paper *Punishment that works – less crime – safer society* (Norwegian Ministry of Justice and the Police, 2008). This document, which was the first White Paper on the subject of Norwegian Correctional Services for a decade, is partly a descriptive account of the activities of the Correctional Services, and partly a normative approach focusing on the future direction of penal implementation policy desired by the Ministry. Thus, it could also be read as an instruction to the Norwegian Correctional Services.

The second key document is *The Norwegian Correctional Services' strategy for professional activity* (Norwegian Directorate for Correctional Services, 2004). According to the Directorate (2004, p. 2), important reasons for issuing the professional strategy included creating a common professional identity for all employees and establishing good support for decision-making in relation to further professional development.

Further, I will draw on the qualitative interview material collected for the study *Murer og moral (Walls and Values)* (Fredwall, 2015b; see also Fredwall, 2015a). During a period of about one and a half years, between January 2009 and August 2010, I interviewed nineteenth prison officers in Norwegian high-security wings (which is the highest security level normally adopted in Norway) about their everyday work and their reflections on the officer role. We talked about good work moments and the challenging days, time pressure and security, discretion and rules, humour, boundary setting and belief in change. In the course of these interviews, we often touched upon welfare-oriented services as well as challenges relating to the prisoners' living conditions, but it is first in this chapter that these topics are the main focus in my research. The interviews lasted between two and three hours and were later fully transcribed and analysed.¹

For the purposes of this chapter, the prison officer whom I have named Anne has been selected as case due to her clearly-marked focus on the future in her role description. In the interview, she expresses a clear attention to the inmates' future, on how things will be for them when they are released from prison. At the same time she is concerned with the present: with showing care, helping and enabling in the actual circumstances of the prisoners during their time in prison. This type of role understanding was also expressed by other officers I interviewed, but Anne's descriptions and reflections were presented with a clarity and animation that make them particularly suited to the topic of this text. According to Bent Flyvbjerg, the value of case studies are by some scholars labelled as arbitrary or a method of producing anecdotes, but as he argues (with a quote from Hans Eysenck): "Sometimes we simply have to keep our eyes open and look carefully at individual cases – not in the hope of proving anything, but rather in the hope of learning something" (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 224). In this chapter, I follow Flyvbjerg in his recognition of case studies' closeness to real-life situations and wealth of details.

In the end of the chapter, I will place her role interpretation, as it is described here in the text, along with the descriptions presented in the two policy documents, within what I have identified in *Walls and Values* as different moral ideals for the officer role in Norwegian high-security prisons (Fredwall, 2015b, pp. 365-395). In the study, I identify altogether five such moral ideals,² basing the identification on

¹ Quotes from key documents and interviews are translated from Norwegian by the author.

² Two of these ideals will be presented in the final part of this chapter. The other three ideals are *the order-protective ideal*, *the correctional ideal* and *the supportive ideal*. In short, *the order-protective ideal* is characterized by values such as control, order and predictability. The position of having a stable and orderly existence in the prison wing is here viewed as being valuable in itself. *The correctional ideal* is characterized by the expectation that the officers practice their role with a conscious intention of transmitting a set of values, attitudes and skills to the inmates, while *the supportive ideal* is characterized by the values of care,

descriptions presented in three key policy documents issued by the leadership of the Norwegian Correctional Services, in a recruiting brochure from The Prison Staff Academy (which trains all prison officers in Norway) and through interviews with nineteenth prison officers and five members of the Admission Board (which is responsible for interviewing and selecting applicants for prison officer training). In this ideal-typical analysis (Weber, 1949, pp. 90-92), a moral ideal is understood to be a picture of a better or higher way of performing in the role of a prison officer (see: Taylor, 1992, p. 16). Anne's role interpretation, as presented in this chapter, can be located within a guiding officer ideal, whilst the descriptions given by the political and professional leadership, can be located mainly within a transformational officer ideal.

THE POLITICAL AND PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP - BETTER OUT THAN IN!

As already noted in the introductory chapter, a core feature of the Scandinavian welfare state is a clearly expressed understanding and expectation of a public, collective responsibility for health and care, education and social security for all legal residents in the country (Halvorsen & Stjernø, 2008). In my view, it is also reasonable to read Norwegian high-security prisons into this type of welfare state framework. This is apparent not least in the White Paper, in which prisons are explicitly tied to a public welfare responsibility. Indeed, the primary task of the Correctional Services is to enforce remand orders and sentences in a manner that reassures society. "The Norwegian Correctional Services", the Ministry (2008, p. 8) emphasizes in the White Paper, "shall implement penalties in such a way that new offences do not occur during the penal implementation". This task is regarded as particularly important in the case of "acts of such severity or extent" that the court has determined imprisonment (Norwegian Ministry of Justice and the Police, 2008, p. 19). However, incapacitation is, still according to the Ministry, far from enough to protect public safety. At some point the prisoners will be released, and the best way of preventing the loss of health and life, saving society from large costs, and creating a safer society, is through rehabilitation and improved reintegration into society after release. In fact, the key issue is to get inmates into a rehabilitation track during the course of the sentence – irrespective of its length: "The goal", writes the Ministry (2008, p. 7), "is punishment that works – that reduces the likelihood of new crime. ... The punishment must be of a nature that recidivism is reduced":

If the penalty is to work, reintegration work must be satisfactorily planned and addressed. It matters less how good the Norwegian Correctional

support and autonomy. The officers are here challenged to see each inmate as fellow human beings that the officers – within the framework of the imprisonment – have a moral responsibility for (Fredwall, 2015b).

Services is in its rehabilitation work, if released prisoners are not followed up after the end of the penal implementation. ... The objective of the Norwegian Correctional Services' professional activity is a convict who has served the sentence, is drug-free or has control of his drug use, has a suitable place to live, can read, write and do basic mathematics, has a chance on the labour market; can relate to family, friends and the rest of society, is able to seek help for any problems that may arise after his release, and can live an independent life. The Government considers that a good point of departure on release increases the probability of inmates succeeding in living a life without crime (Norwegian Ministry of Justice and the Police, 2008, pp. 9-10).

The last two sentences of this quote originally formed part of the professional strategy, a document which establishes a clear rehabilitation framework around the execution of sentences. The mission of the Correctional Services, it is emphasized here, is "to provide a better chance for those who have taken a wrong path": "Once the sentence has been served, the convict should be better equipped to face a life without crime. *Everything* we do should be measured up against this. The sentence is to be a turning point" (Norwegian Directorate for Correctional Services, 2004, p. 4).

In other words, everything a prison officer does – every conversation, each activity and any provision that is established in the prisons – is to be measured up against this principle: that the prisoner should be better equipped on release than at the time of committal. In this way, considerations of reoffending and rehabilitation legitimate the work training and cultural arrangements, the educational provisions and interaction between inmates and officers. And as such, important threads are woven between welfare work and the role of a prison officer. The prison stay should have an impact on the inmates, offenders are to be rehabilitated, lives are to be changed – and within this task, the officers are referred to as the very "backbone of the work of change and reintegration that is carried out in the prisons" (Norwegian Directorate for Correctional Services, 2004, p. 8). This significance relates particularly to the system of personal contact officers, which since 2002 has included all the prison officers in Norway. Here, the personal contact officers were given a responsibility to follow up individual prisoners during their time in prison, and they were instructed to assist the inmates with their sentence plan, to help them in their approaches to the Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV), and to support and motivate them to work constructively during their time in prison (Norwegian Directorate for Correctional Services, 2002). In this way, the work of the contact officer constitutes an important part of the prison officer role.

The professional strategy was issued in 2004. The following year, the Soria Moria Declaration – a government manifesto by the Norwegian governing coalition parties – introduced a social reintegration guarantee, which subsequently was clarified and laid out in the White Paper (Stoltenberg's 2nd Government, 2005, p. 68; Norwegian Ministry of Justice and the Police, 2008, pp. 173-189). This social reintegration guarantee was meant to provide inmates with help in accessing the rights that they already have as Norwegian citizens, such as adequate housing, educational opportunities, help with accessing the work market, treatment for physical ailments, and help with their drug addiction. It represents the intentions that the government recognises an obligation to help convicted persons to access the rights they already possess as Norwegian citizens, but, as the Ministry (2008, p. 174) emphasizes, the reintegration guarantee is political in character, not legal. The public bodies that otherwise exercise this responsibility in society, are responsible for “carrying out their services in relation to the convicted persons in such a way and such place that they can have a reasonable opportunity to make use of them”, whilst the Correctional Services is to ensure that this can happen (Norwegian Ministry of Justice and the Police, 2008, p. 174). In this way, the Ministry (2008, p. 8) points out, crime policy is “insolubly connected with” welfare policy. And furthermore, the reason given for this work – as in the rest of the White Paper – is primarily anchored in recidivism and social utility. A punishment that works, the White Paper says, entails that the offender reduces or ceases criminal actions as a result of the punishment:

The responsibility of the Norwegian Correctional Services can well be described with the slogan chosen by its Swedish counterpart [Kriminalvården]: “Better out than in!” (Norwegian Ministry of Justice and the Police, 2008, p. 183).

Reduced recidivism demands many different measures. It is necessary both to do something about the living conditions and to offer measures *that help transform the convicted persons themselves* (Norwegian Ministry of Justice and the Police, 2008, p. 11, my italics).

Both an improvement in living conditions and behaviour influence should assume a key role during the execution of a prison sentence. It is important to form an overall picture of the inmate and to direct rehabilitation initiatives in accordance with this. ... Given the right measures at the right time for the right participant, it is possible to limit the risk of reoffending (Norwegian Ministry of Justice and the Police, 2008, pp. 78, 68).

It is reasonable to regard both the social reintegration guarantee and the formulation of the Correctional Services' professional goals as an attempt to ensure that other public bodies in the welfare state should take a greater responsibility for the convicted persons' living conditions. It can also be regarded as an emphasize of the import model, a way of organising prison work that means that those public bodies that are responsible for these services outside prison walls also have a responsibility for them within the prison (Norwegian Ministry of Justice and the Police, 2008, pp. 22, 33, 174-175). It can further be read as reinforcing the principle of normality: the ambition that life inside the prison will resemble life outside as much as possible (Norwegian Ministry of Justice and the Police, 2008, pp. 22, 108-109), as well as the notion that condition of confinement should be viewed in relation to the general standard of living in the country as a whole (Jewkes, 2015). It can be interpreted as a recognition of that personal contact officer work does not always function in accordance with its intention: that staff work rotas, sickness and holidays can complicate regular meetings between officer and prisoner, and that it is challenging for officers to maintain an adequate overview of the complex and comprehensive field of welfare provision – to mention but a few aspects (Fredwall, 2015b, pp. 261-364). And finally, it expresses an understanding of the complex web of circumstances surrounding each individual (Nussbaum, 1999), a web of circumstances which for many prisoners can relates to poor psychological health, lack of employment and housing before committal, a low level of education, interrupted schooling, and/or drug addiction (Bukten et al., 2011; Hetland, Eikeland, Manger, Diseth, & Asbjørnsen, 2007; Revold, 2015).

In the wake of the parliamentary consideration of the reintegration guarantee, a service market was introduced into many prisons in 2010. These service markets are a physical meeting place at which the prisoners themselves were intended to have direct contact with representatives of the various public bodies. The following year a number of so-called reintegration coordinators were employed and given the responsibility of leading these markets and coordinate the collaboration between the various professional groups. The coordinators, however, were not intended to work individually with the prisoners (Norwegian Directorate for Correctional Services, 2012; Falck, 2015).

The personal contact officers' responsibility for informing, conversing with, guiding and motivating prisoners regarding their release, is therefore still a very important element of the prison officer role.

ANNE A - THE PRISON OFFICER WHO BECAME TIRED OF SAYING NO

Anna A is one of these personal contact officers, and in the interview I conducted with her, she articulated a role interpretation that in my view could be understood as a guiding officer ideal (more about this ideal later). For her, the most meaningful moments at work are essentially those connected to welfare-oriented work: to situations in which she experience that she has “managed to sort something out”, as she puts it. After a while, and for this reason, she applied to the prison governor to work as much as possible with the convicted persons. This was a well-thought-out choice, she explains: “It was not satisfying just to lock and unlock doors. I never much enjoyed the work in the remand unit”, she says, elaborating this phrase by referring to what she meant was a limited scope of action. At the end of the day, she would reflect on what she had achieved during the hours at work, and generally the answer revolved around refusals, escort duties and to lock and unlock doors:

At that time there weren't any toilets in the cells, and they [the inmates] said to me: “I want the toilet”. That was the only chance they had to see another human being. “No, there's a queue for the toilet now, so you'll have to wait. There are four others before you”. You ran and unlocked the door, and then they didn't want to go back in. They walked as slowly as they could in the hope of getting to speak with someone else in the corridor. “No, go in, you have to go in there”. So you were very no-oriented when you got home. And I was so very tired of saying no. So I thought: “I've got to do something else, something that's more valuable. Otherwise I won't be able to cope with this”.

In the convicted prisoners unit it was different. There, she explains, she had the opportunity to contribute to “putting something together” for the prisoners: something in relation to the dreams and desires that they spoke of for their lives. And in this wing, she was able to do something that could have an impact on their future – not just there and then during their prison stay, but after their release as well. She says:

We [prison officers] work year after year, but we very rarely encounter anyone who stands there and is pleased about the work we're doing: “Yee, that's great”. The exception is if you've put something together for someone. You can see it is working. We've sent them off for drug addiction treatment. They've got somewhere to live. We've found them a job. They have got help. You have at least managed to get a result in that respect. And that, I believe, is something we need as human beings.

According to Anne, the work thus becomes meaningful if she has the opportunity to carry out tasks that engage her, that interest her, and at the same time that mean something for the prisoners' future. This dimension of meaning is also other-oriented. By means of her work with the convicted persons, she can see that her contribution makes a difference to how life can be after release. She has been able to "do something for someone", as she puts it, and this makes the work itself important and interesting, meaningful and rewarding.

In this way, Anne's interpretation of the role as a prison officer is highly related to welfare provisions as health care and education. The heart of this work lies, as I interpret it, in revealing opportunities and to motivate the prisoners to put in an effort themselves. It's a matter of pointing to the positive aspects, to let them realize that life is not over even though they have been given a custodial sentence, Anne says. She refers here to a talk she regularly has with the prisoners for whom she is the personal contact officer: "You are perhaps only 22, and you've got the whole of your life ahead of you. And even though you've had a bad time up to now, you don't need to have a bad time for the rest of your life," she might say to them – before continuing: "But you have to do something yourself. We can't work magic, like everything will turn into happiness for you. But you can make a start yourself. You can begin to look to the future – after release".

Thus, Anne wants to be an involved enabler, a gate opener who makes people aware of their opportunities. One way in which this can happen, is by being present. She can sit down for a chat about this and that, she can attempt to find out how people are coping, and she can point to positive aspects of their lives. She can also encourage them to do something constructive about their confinement. Many prisoners have a drug addiction, health problem or both, and during their stay in prison they can be given an opportunity to do something about this. "Over the years we have brought new life to many people", she says. "They have come in – and we have a pretty strong health service here – and they've received medical help and supervision".

Many of the inmates also lack education, and the prison can provide an opportunity for them to get a craft certificate, complete their schooling, or begin higher education. This, she explains, seems over and over again to do something for their self-esteem and self-understanding (see also: Hetland et al., 2007; Manger, Eikeland, & Diseth, 2008). According to Anne, many prisoners gain a new focus: They experience that they can move into another role than as a criminal or an inmate; they can be a student as well, a man who gains a craft certificate, a woman who can get herself a job. This kind of activity can make the prison stay

easier to deal with, and it can provide them with hope and new prospects, Anne says:

We have had so many people here who have gained basic study qualifications when they leave. And suddenly a whole new world has opened up for them. They've suddenly got many opportunities. They can become just like every other student, with a study loan and a student flat. "Then you no longer have anything to do with prison life any more", when I suddenly say this – "now you can move wherever you like, now you can call your mother and say 'I'm now starting at the university', How would that be?". "No, she would faint". "Yes, it'll be fun when she faints" (laughs). "Really, is it true? Can I?" "Yes, you can" – I don't think they would ever in their wildest fantasies have believed that they could.

A central part of Anne's work, as she describes it, is therefore related to giving them hope, making their prison stay as meaningful as possible, and motivating them to make use of the welfare services in prison. At the same time it relates to their practical everyday life after release: to motivating and helping them to make sure that they have a job and/or an adequate housing after the end of their sentence. "You've sat down and listened to their stories, heard what they desire, what they've dreamed of", she says. "After all, most of them in here are dreaming of a better life when they get out – even though they perhaps won't manage it. But it's a matter of trying to put something together that relates to their dreams, to their desires."

At the same time, she relates this closely to the work of maintaining control, order and security in the prison. This becomes apparent when she describes prison officers who do a poor job. In her opinion, such officers try to spend as much time as possible sitting in the duty room. They indicate that they are tired of the prisoners. They have little time, avoid conversations with the inmates, don't keep their promises and say no to most things – without giving any reason. This kind of behaviour is a problem, she says. Not only does it demonstrate a lack of respect for colleagues ("everyone else has to make up for what they really out to be doing"). It also indicates little respect for the prisoners as human beings, it has an impact on the convicts' quality of life, and it affects prison security. If the staff don't get to know the prisoners, and if the prisoners do not "get the feeling that you have their interests at heart", Anne claims, these officers will be more vulnerable if any fighting or conflicts arise on the wing. She says:

The day on which there is real trouble, if the person in question is out on the wing, he's the first one they'll get. They've no relationship with him. They've got nothing. All they know is that he says "no". But those of us who've helped them, we'll be protected.

The growing literature about security, order and staff-prisoner relationships emphasizes that order and control are to a considerable degree based and dependent on the relations between staff and inmates. Such relationships, it is claimed, are at the very heart of the prison system, in which control and security "flow from getting that relationship right" (Great Britain, 1984, p. 6; see also: Sykes, 1958; Sparks, Bottoms, & Hay, 1996; Crawley, 2004; Liebling et al., 2011). The way in which prison officers communicate with the prisoners, how they handle the regulations, and the extent to which the prisoners feel respected and fairly treated, is stressed as extremely important – not only for security, but also for the prisoners well-being (Arnold et al., 2007; Liebling & Arnold, 2004; Liebling, Durie, Stiles, & Tait, 2006; Johnsen et al., 2011) and the officers' ability to get their job done in an adequate manner (Sparks & Bottoms, 1995; Sparks et al., 1996). As Alison Liebling puts it: "Staff-prisoner relationships – or the way prison staff use their authority – contribute disproportionately to prisoner evaluations of the fairness of their treatment":

What made one prison different from another was the manner in which prisoners were treated by staff, how safe the prison felt and how trust and power flowed through the institution. Prisoners' well-being was to a large extent a consequence of their perceived treatment (Liebling, 2011, pp. 533-534).

Such perspectives are, in my understanding, also apparent in Anne's narratives of everyday experiences as a prison officer. She is concerned with helping the prisoners within the situation in which they find themselves – here and now, during the prison stay, as well as motivating, enabling and advising them in their use of welfare services. The manner in which she interacts with the prisoners, the tone in her actions, and her willingness to contribute in a constructive manner, can, according to Anne's descriptions, in this way make a difference in terms of care, respect and security. The main perspective for creating positive relationships with the prisoners is other-oriented, but order and control within the wing is also deeply tied to the empathy and care, recognition and respect she shows towards the prisoners.

DIFFERENT IDEALS, DIFFERENT VALUES

The descriptions Anne gives of an everyday-life in a Norwegian high-security wing are apparently close to the emphasis found in the professional strategy and the White Paper: the focus on improving prisoner's living conditions. As noted in the introduction to this chapter, there are, however, also important differences. The White Paper and professional strategy present considerations towards social utility and recidivism as the primary reason for improving the living conditions, while Anne emphasizes the significance that education, employment, housing and contact with family can have for the lives *of the prisoners themselves* – here and now, as in the future after release. Her work is thereby not primarily a matter of ensuring that the prisoners will live a crime-free life after imprisonment; value is attributed to those individuals she meets and has a relation to inside the prison: that they are given the opportunity to have a good and meaningful life after the prison stay. In this sense, the opportunity for inmates to learn a trade or earn an education is primarily not seen as an instrument for living a law-abiding life; instead, it is seen to have value in and of itself. And interacting with the prisoners is meaningful not only because it leads to less crime or increased prison security; it has a value in and of itself.

In my view this constitutes two different ways of interpreting the role of the prison officers in a welfare-oriented framework. In the following, I will attempt to locate these two approaches within what I in *Walls and Values* have identified as a guiding and a transformational ideal for prison officers (Fredwall, 2015b).

However, let me first dwell on some of the expectations that the two ideals have in common. Both ideals are emphasizing that the primary responsibility of the prison officers is to ensure that inmates are kept where they are supposed to be. If a prisoner escapes, it may threaten the public's perception of safety, threaten the security of the society, and/or reduce the public's trust in Correctional Services. Another important common trait is the expectation that the officers must have a certain ability to balance things in order to do an adequate job. The profession of prison officer is here presented as a persistent balancing between too much and too little: the officers should have the ability to show concern for others' situations, yet not so much that it comes at the cost of security; they can be personable, yet not in a manner that the inmates can use against them later; they can be humorous, yet not tactless or flippant; they can be trustworthy, yet not naïve; tolerant, yet not without boundaries; friendly, yet not buddies. The expectations placed on the prison officers to guard and to balance are therefore something that characterizes each of the two ideals (Fredwall, 2015b). The

difference lies in how the officers are challenged to combine these characteristics with other values and attitudes.

Anne's interpretation of her role, as presented in this chapter, can be located within a guiding officer ideal (Fredwall, 2015b, pp. 385-388). This ideal is characterized first and foremost by the way the representatives combine a future-orientation with the everyday-life in prison wings (right here, right now). Within this ideal, the officers are encouraged to serve as conversation partners and guides to the prisoners towards release. The utility to society is not the primary reason for showing care, in giving help or in making arrangements for work, education or housing. Instead, the attention is on the prisoners' future, on how life will be for them when they are released: if, for example, they will have an education or a job to go to. At the same time, the importance of the present is emphasized. Getting to know the prisoners, talking with them and listening to them, is viewed as important, since the inmates – within the framework of their prison stay – are to have as good a life in prison as possible. This means, amongst other things, that the officer is to set boundaries when necessary, yet showing care and helpfulness as often as possible.

In this way, the individual is placed in the centre; the prisoners are to be regarded as fellow humans for whom the officers carry a moral responsibility for – and autonomy is seen as an important value. Representatives of this ideal carefully emphasize that the prisoners themselves must first want to receive the help and assistance that officers can offer them. Interaction with the prisoners is here seen as a benefit in and of itself, but is given a clear secondary meaning in that the officers may gain insights into how they should relate to and guide the individual inmates. Through conversations and personal presence, through care and recognition the officers may be able to sow a seed of optimism for change: that it might in fact be possible to do something about how life has been so far.

The descriptions given by the political and professional leadership, as presented in this chapter, can mainly be located within a transformational officer ideal (Fredwall, 2015b, pp. 388-390). This ideal is partly characterized by the desire to change the prisoners' course of life and living conditions in order to contribute to less crime, and partly of the view that the officers are to be the decisive and initiating agent in this process of change. It is strongly stressed within this ideal that the officers are to prepare the prisoners to live a law-abiding life after release from prison. Such measures may have an effect on recidivism, and it is therefore important that the prisons offer work experience and education, cultural arrangements and recreational activities to the inmates. Within the framework of

imprisonment, representatives for this ideal value and legitimize programs that have a measurable effect on the likelihood of recidivism. There are, however, at least two different approaches within this ideal. Representatives of the first approach – a society-centered one – are mostly concerned that the change process will contribute to a safer society, improved protection of society (since the individuals do not commit new crimes) and a strengthened social economy (since crime generates certain costs to society). Whether the change seen within an individual will lead to the inmate living a better and more meaningful life after release, is regarded as less important. Representatives of the second approach – an individual-centered one – are mostly concerned with the significance the process of change has for the individual prisoner. While these representatives also stress that bringing change to the inmates will work toward building a safer society, better protection for society and a strengthened social economy, they also emphasize that improving the prisoners' living conditions in order to live a future, law-abiding life, is primarily in the best interest of the individuals themselves. In my interpretation, it is the society-centered transformational ideal that is most strongly expressed in the White Paper and the strategy for professional activity.

CLOSING REMARKS

The differences between these two officer ideals, a guiding and a transformational approach, raise important moral questions about the legitimation of the role of prison officers and the welfare-oriented work within high-security prisons. Does it form part of the officer's role to change people for the better, to improve them, to correct their values and attitudes? Where are the moral boundaries to be drawn for how far officers should go in terms of doing "something about the living conditions and [...] offer measures that help transform the convicted persons themselves", as the White Paper puts it (Norwegian Ministry of Justice and the Police, 2008, p. 11)? Is it possible to improve the conditions of confinement without strengthening the idea of an expanded use of prisons (Giertsen, 2015; Mathiesen, 2007)? These questions are complex and requires much further investigation and discussions, but in this preliminary contribution, Anne A's descriptions provide, in my view, an important and engaging insight into how she, as a prison officer in a Norwegian high-security context, is motivated by and attempts to resolve the difficult task of supporting, influencing and enabling in an institutional context of control, asymmetry and deprivation of liberty.

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