

Freedom Behind Bars

Therapeutic Communities in Prisons

Care NZ
established 1954



A duty of care

- Care NZ Ltd, operating arm of NSAD founded in 1954
- National provider with community based services from Auckland to Christchurch
- Treaty of waitangi



Care NZ and TC's

- 1971 Aspel House
- 1990 NSAD Marton - 40 beds



TC's in prisons

- 1997 first prison based TC at Arohata women's prison
- A second 20-bed unit was established at Ohura and later moved to Waikeria men's

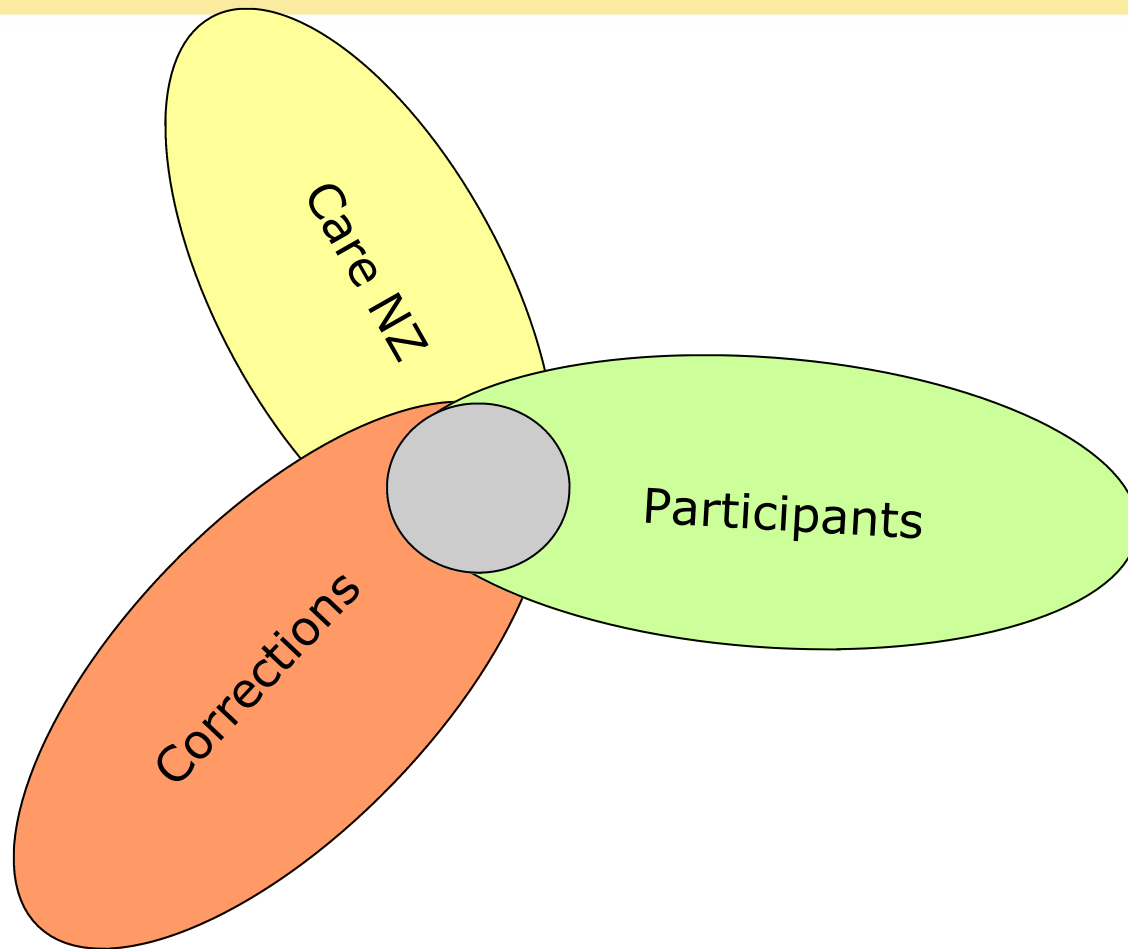


Effectiveness recognised

- In 2006 the first 60-bed unit was established in Christchurch
- Followed by 2 more 60-bed units at
 - Hawkes Bay
 - Rimutaka
 - And a 40-bed unit at Springhill Correctional facility



TC is partnership



Creating a prison TC

The Christchurch DTU

- 60 single cells in a big open square
- Participants are sentence-planned to attend but may choose not to
- We had to meet each other on new ground
- Only the TC philosophy could work here



Brave new world

- Old roles and relationships were challenged
- A big ask of officers and prisoners
- A new level of complex relationships



Corrections

There are many challenges to working in a prison environment. The clients we work with are not only involved in trying to address their Alcohol or drug use but they have to survive in a prison environment.

We have seen this in our unit where the gangs see this as a potential cash cow. They have a captive audience of clients and often venerable people that they can intimidate and extort not only money but services.

Because our main focus is safety and security programmes people may see this as an obstacle to addressing offending. There is also the different way officers work that has to be understood.



The programme

- 6-month programme
- 3 hierarchical phases of 8 weeks
- All work done in and by community
- Old behaviours and thinking are challenged and pro-social behaviours are celebrated
- All community members are subject to community rules – counsellors, corrections, prisoners



Whanaungatanga



It won't happen overnight ...

(3rd time round)

...Time to walk the talk! I thought it was going to be harder but, with encouragement from the staff and actually listening to what I was being told ... and the biggest thing: I stopped fighting it.



Sad statistics

- Some say up to 80% of crime is fuelled by AOD

In our unit

- 40 - 60+% Maori or Pacific men
- 70+% co-existing mental health issues
- Approx 60% have disclosed historic sexual abuse



It takes time to engage

Engagement as process

- Resentment/curiosity
- Boundary testing – “Can I be safe here?”
- Growing commitment
- Separation anxiety – “Now what?”



A tough place to grow

- We ask for the 'unaskable'
- A new definition of safety – From isolation to community
- Holding the tension of the unknown

These are very courageous men



A day in the life of a TC

- We begin in community
- Phases meet for education and therapy groups
- We attempt joint decision making
- “Bring it to group”



What we have to work with

- The desire of most guys for change
- A team of passionate counsellors
- Support from corrections officers
- Tikanga Maori tutors
- We have a big garden
- Carving and art rooms
- Outside speakers



Challenges

- High recidivism ratings – 70% RR
- Poly-substance use
- Sabotage
- After-care
- It's a tough place to grow
- For some it's a matter of life or death



Huge potential

- Graduates as mentors
- These are early days
- TC traditions are becoming established
- Initial reports are encouraging
- Changing lives on the outside



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