Post-Secondary Education: A Bridge Out of Criminality

A portfolio submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education (Education for Change – Social Justice Education)

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Abstract

This project portfolio provides a proposed educational program for women transitioning out of criminality. By providing criminalized women with access to post-secondary education, this program seeks to remedy the injustice that has been served to many women who were marginalized and victimized before being criminalized for their crimes of survival. The program is based on the premise that recidivism rates are reduced when criminalized women are provided with post-secondary education that in turn leads to secure employment that provides a living wage. This portfolio includes a literature review that explores correctional education in Canada and how it serves, or fails to serve, female inmates. The literature review seeks to describe the "typical" female inmate and her needs, the reasons why governments provide inmates with education, the reasons why inmates participate in education while incarcerated, and the type of educational programming that is available to female inmates in Canadian prisons. In addition, this portfolio contains a website that delves deeper into issues of gender in the criminal justice system and concludes with a video describing my research and proposed program. The program proposal contained in this portfolio includes a General Education (GNED) roadmap that demonstrates the efficacy of a program based on GNED courses and includes a sample lesson and a culminating assignment.

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Although my fingers may have typed this work, it is the product of many. It is my sincerest wish that this work can help our community to grow and support more women in realizing their worth and potential.

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Chapter 1: A Bridge Out of Criminality

When the blinders of privilege are removed and the existence of injustice and suffering can no longer be denied, our sense of humanity calls on us to respond. Teaching in a correctional facility removed my blinders and led me to see the unjust treatment criminalized women receive from many in society and the criminal justice system. Most women who enter the criminal justice system were initially victims, and the failure of the criminal justice system and social welfare agencies to adequately support them after their victimization put them at risk of entering into criminality. My students' stories shook me and led me to question the efficacy of social services and the justice system in Canada and called upon me to seek out a solution. Since "education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world" (Mandela, 1990), I hope that the following educational program will serve to remedy some of the injustice that exists in the lives of marginalized and criminalized women while also assisting women to acquire skills and knowledge that they can use to reintegrate into society.

Through the educational program that comprises my portfolio, criminalized women will be helped two-fold. First, through the program women will acquire skills and knowledge from post-secondary education that will improve their job prospects and permit them to function more fully in non-criminalized society. Second, the program will empower women to engage in dialogue with non-criminalized students. This dialogue will improve their communities by shining light on the inequities within society and countering societal beliefs about those who are criminalized. The program proposed in my portfolio is a college-level program that would be delivered in local community colleges to women transitioning out of incarceration (criminalized students) and other non-criminalized students. Through this program, students would earn General Education (GNED) elective credits that could be applied to many college programs and

would lead to meaningful work. The program would utilize GNED courses as they cover themes related to life as an individual and as a member of society; the program would address issues related to coping and survival needs and help criminalized women to develop skills to overcome these needs. At the same time, non-criminalized students in this program would benefit from learning with the criminalized women as they would develop awareness about the inequitable issues women face, so, as future workers, they can be more empathetic when working with marginalized and criminalized people.

Research for this program is based on available academic literature, as consultation with criminalized women, correctional community stakeholders, and educators was not possible. Therefore, before post-secondary institutions seek to implement this program, they are advised to consult with the stakeholders within their communities to ensure that the needs of women and the community would be met through it.

Portfolio Tasks

Several tasks are included in my portfolio to demonstrate the need for improved educational opportunities for criminalized women and to provide evidence as to the usefulness of the program. In addition, a reflection of learning is included to demonstrate the personal growth I obtained from the research process: The portfolio tasks include:

1) Literature Review
2) Website: a collection of research and reflection on the treatment of criminalized women in the criminal justice and education systems.
3) Program Outline: an outline of details for the program including the following sub-tasks.
    a) GNED Road Map
    b) Sample Lesson

    c) Culminating Assignment

4) Collage: an arts-based reflection on the learning that I gained from the research experience.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Background

The correctional system existed in Canada well before Confederation. The system has been altered many times throughout history in response to societal pressures. At its core, the system has sought to be a mechanism for ensuring justice was served, wrong-doers were punished, and citizens were kept safe (Correctional Service of Canada, 2009). The manifestation of these goals has changed throughout history to include ideas about the rehabilitation of prisoners. There has been an increase in the incarceration rate of women, especially racialized women, since 2003 (Osazuma, 2015). This increase indicates that the needs of women are not adequately met by society or the correctional system despite the numerous changes that have been implemented to improve the effectiveness of corrections in Canada.

In Canada, those convicted of crimes can be sentenced to incarceration within correctional facilities which are maintained either by the federal or provincial governments. Regardless of where inmates are housed, two of the primary mandates for both federal and provincial correctional systems are to protect public safety and to assist inmates in becoming law-abiding citizens (Correctional Service of Canada, 2015; Government of Ontario, 2018). Educational programming is offered to offenders in correctional facilities as a means of enabling the correctional system to meet its mandate of rehabilitating offenders.

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this literature review is to explore the findings of research focused on who female offenders are, and the circumstances that bring them into the correctional system. Also, consideration of why an increased incarceration rate of females is indicative of a problem greater than the “moral failings” of the individual offender will be included. This consideration

will guide the analysis of how successful correctional education is as a tool for rehabilitation of female offenders currently, and how correctional education could be honed to serve females better in the future. Additional areas of focus will include the reasons why governments provide inmates with education while incarcerated; the reasons why inmates participate in education; the types of educational programming that are available in custodial facilities; and the degree to which these programs meet the rehabilitative needs of offenders, specifically female offenders. There are a variety of correctional approaches utilized by different criminal justice systems around the world. Each system offers a wide array of educational programs to its inmates. In this review, the literature that will be examined will focus on correctional education programs in Canada.

Through the information collected from the review of available literature on female corrections and correctional education, the following research questions will be addressed:

1) Who are female offenders?
    a. Demographic information
    b. What are the commonalities in life experiences that female offenders share?
    c. What types of crimes do they generally commit?
2) Why do governments provide offenders with educational programming?
3) Why do offenders participate in education while incarcerated?
4) What types of educational programming are available to inmates in prison?
5) Are there areas within correctional education that need improvement, so inmates' rehabilitative needs are better met?

For this review, several sector-specific terms will be used and are defined here. Any institution that houses inmates or offenders for correctional rehabilitation will be considered a

correctional facility. The terms offenders and inmates will be utilized interchangeably to refer to individuals convicted of a crime and sentenced to a custodial sentence. Educational programs will generally be defined as non-credit academic upgrading classes and academic classes that are offered for credit in secondary, vocational, and post-secondary programs. Academic needs are the deficits in knowledge or skills that prevent inmates from fully participating in academics and the workforce. Rehabilitation needs will be defined as the "factors in inmate lives which have been linked to criminal behaviour" (Correctional Service of Canada, 2014, para 1), and rehabilitation is the act of becoming a law-abiding citizen (Correctional Service of Canada, 2015; Government of Ontario, 2018).

Significance

The cost of housing and rehabilitating federally incarcerated inmates is quite high. In 2015/2016, the total expenditure for the Correctional Service of Canada was $2.4 billion, which means that is costs approximately $116 000 to house a federal inmate for one year (Government of Canada, 2017). In the current climate of economic restraint, some taxpayers, as well as taxpayers associations, demand proof of responsible funding and could question this expense.

While Canada's crime rate has remained relatively stable since 2012, the female incarceration rate has continually trended upward (Statistics Canada, 2019). The global trend of female incarceration is shown in Osazuwa's (2015) work where she notes "that women are the fastest-growing prison population worldwide, and this trend proves no different in Canada" (p. 5). This increase not only puts a strain on the resources of the correctional system, but it also has a significant impact on incarcerated women, their families, and society. Although there is emerging research available about the lives of female offenders and their families, due to the population's small size compared to male populations, this research is limited. The limited

understanding of the female offender population means that women are often made recipients of programs and security measures that are best suited for men, not women. As a result,

> [t]he ability of [Correctional Service Canada (CSC)] to meet its responsibility for federally sentenced women has been eroded by trying to fit a small, diverse [and] relatively low-risk group of women with multi-faceted needs into a system designed for a large, more homogeneous, and high-risk population" (Public Safety Canada, 2003, p.1).

The CSC's inability to provide programming for the unique needs of female offenders points to the need for criminologic research to be dedicated to understanding who female offenders are, their life experiences, and what brought them into criminality. This information would provide unique insight into their needs, and how specific programming could help address them.

Who Are Female Offenders?

On average, incarcerated women are "younger, more likely to be single, less likely to have a high school diploma, and more likely to be unemployed than women in the Canadian population" (Mahony, 2011, p. 56). Over half of the female offender population are under the age of thirty-five. Half of the women in prison do not have a high school diploma, and only 12 percent of the population completed some post-secondary education (Mahony, 2011). Low education levels contribute to difficulty in becoming employed – two-thirds of women in prison report lengthy bouts of unemployment (Cook, Smith, Poister Tusher & Raiford, 2005). Lack of access to meaningful employment, in turn, contributes to many offenders living in poverty. In fact, a significant number of women within the prison population have incomes (whether from employment or social welfare) that are below the poverty line (Batchelder & Pippet, 2002; Osazuma, 2015; Solinas-Saunders & Stacer 2017; Wesley, 2012). In addition, many women in prison are mothers. Osazuma (2015) found that three-quarters of incarcerated women are

mothers of minor children (Osazuma, 2015). Often these women are single mothers (Cook, 2015, Leigey, & Reid, 2010 & Osazuma). While the majority of female prisoners are White, racialized women are overrepresented in prisons. Between 2008 and 2003, the female incarceration rate rose 7.1 percent. Shockingly, during this time the Office of the Criminal Investigator (2013) found that the number of "Caucasian offenders decreased by 466 people, the Aboriginal community saw an increase of 793 people, the black community saw a 585 person increase, and the Asian community saw a 337 person increase" (p. 6). The discrepancy in incarceration rates quite clearly confirms that there is a problem with the overrepresentation of racialized women in Canadian correctional facilities. While racialized women are more at risk of incarceration the demographic factors of all incarcerated women point to a group of women who are marginalized and most vulnerable in society.

Another layer of vulnerability that cloaks these women is their experiences of victimization. In fact, being a survivor of a traumatic event is perhaps the strongest unifying characteristic shared by female inmates. One study found that "99 percent of inmates had experienced trauma in their lives" (Cook, Smith, Poister Tusher & Raiford, 2005, p. 120). In her research Osazuwa (2015) found that violence and abuse begin to plague many women starting in childhood:

> 61 percent of women who have been incarcerated reported childhood abuse, and more specifically, 67 percent reported having been sexually abused as children, and as adults, 58 percent reported being abused, 81 percent reported being victims of physical abuse, 48 percent reported having been sexually abused, and 82 percent reported emotional abuse (p. 7).

Violence committed against these women was predominantly by men, and, most often, by men known to them. The extent of violence experienced by women is seen as a symptom of our paternalistic society (Comack, 1996). Echoes of colonization further endanger Indigenous women who are "3.5 times more likely to be victims of violence" (Wesley, 2012, p. 5). More Indigenous women report being sexually abused as children than non-Indigenous women and also indicate more severe incidents of spousal abuse (Wesley, 2012). The sad reality is that almost all female offenders were victims before they became criminalized.

Along with high rates of victimization, mental illness is common in the female offender population. In 1991, 22 percent of the population were prescribed psychiatric medication (Haywood, Kravitz, Goldman & Freeman, 2000), a number which ballooned to nearly 63 percent in 2013. There is a strong link between victimization and the development of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). In studies, 50 percent of female inmates were found to meet the criteria for PTSD (O'Keefe, 1998; Zlotnick, 1997). Victims of childhood abuse tend to be more susceptible to PTSD – the rates of PTSD in inmates is very similar to the rates of inmate reported experience of childhood abuse. In addition to PTSD, women in prison are likely to suffer from other mental illnesses. The CSC reports that "80 percent of incarcerated women meet the criteria for some current mental disorder [... notably] 76 percent have alcohol and substance abuse disorders, and 44 percent have anxiety" (Office of the Correctional Investigator, 2018).

Examination of the characteristics of the female offender population highlights several areas of social inequity that exist in Canada. Women who are young, racialized, poor, uneducated, unemployed, and single parents have less access to economic and social capital. Thus, they have limited resources to utilize to provide for themselves legitimately and to get ahead. As Comack (1996) observes,

> their troubles, in many ways, emanate from their particular locations within society that is capitalist, racist and patriarchal. [These experiences are], in many respects, the same as those experienced by women collectively in our society […] Nevertheless, there is one factor in particular which stands out: the centrality of abuse in the [lives of women who come into trouble with law] (p. 12).

When issues related to the impact of abuse and mental illness are added to women's lives, resources become fewer, and life becomes harder. Women turn to stealing or prostitution in order to afford the costs of food and housing, and they use substances to help them to cope with the trauma of the violence they have experienced in life. Thus, the criminal acts committed by women are done to survive and cope (Balfour & Comack, 2014; Comack, 1996; Leigey & Reed 2010). Rarely do their actions pose a physical threat to the general public. Senator Pate critiques the efficacy of criminalizing women for their survival crimes and notes that "who is labelled a criminal (or "criminalized") and imprisoned is usually determined by the relative privilege or lack thereof of those involved and the circumstances of the act – who does what, to whom, in what context – rather than the actual risk to public safety or likelihood of harm" (Pate, 2018, p. 1). If public safety is not threatened by the choices women make to survive or cope with their circumstances, why are they being criminalized. It seems that more harm than good arises from Canada's current response to female criminality.

While social and financial supports should be provided for vulnerable populations, periods of fiscal austerity have resulted in cuts to social services and the limiting of access to social welfare, pushing very vulnerable people into situations in which they must fend for themselves by whatever means possible. In Pate's (2018) observation, that "in every province and territory, social assistance payments are so inadequate that women end up criminalized for

doing what they must to support themselves and their children" (p. 1), she connects the dots between poverty and female criminality. In Ontario, this shift in care was seen in the 1990s when Premier Harris' government cut back on social welfare programs while also creating welfare policies guided by ideologies that painted all welfare recipients as being potential cheats in need of monitoring rather than individuals genuinely worthy of support. Reduction in support coupled with increased surveillance negatively impacts vulnerable populations the most (Osazuwa, 2015). Many women who access welfare receive inadequate funding and therefore feel compelled to supplement their income through illegal activities (Osazuwa, 2015). This illegal activity comes with a heightened risk of being caught and criminalized because women are already being surveilled because of their involvement in the welfare system. The shift away from a supportive welfare state to a punitive welfare state traps women. They must choose to live in a cycle of poverty or become criminalized when attempting to escape poverty. In either case, women lose.

Female criminality in Canada. The criminal justice system is both a product of society and a tool utilized by society to maintain control of the status quo. It serves paternalistically and misogynistically to surveil, discipline, manage, correct, and punish women who deviate from lifestyles expected of "good women" (Balfour & Comack, 2014). Historically, criminal justice systems have sexualized female delinquency and criminalized female survival strategies (Chesney-Lind & Pasko, 2003). Although there have been more women appointed to the bench and elected into government recently, their voices and influence tend to be stifled by the chilly climates of their workplaces. Backhouse (2003) explains that in fields traditionally dominated by men there are numerous "'environmental' factors that privilege and empower white, heterosexual males within" (p. 183) the workplace while silencing opinions of those who

threaten to disrupt the status quo. Therefore, even though there are more female lawmakers, few feel empowered to push for changes to the legal system. As a result, the interests of women continue to be marginalized by laws that do not reflect the female experience.

The Canadian Crime rate is "17 percent lower in 2018 than a decade earlier in 2008" (Moreau, 2019, para 1). Even though women make up a small portion of the incarcerated population – 21 percent in 2011 – their population has risen by 30 percent in the last decade (The Office of the Criminal Investigator, 2018). While the media and proponents of tough on crime tactics point to this statistic with alarm, they raise alarm about the incorrect issue. Although the crime rate is rising, the crimes women commit are non-violent and, in most cases, do not cause direct harm to the public. In fact, women are most likely to be charged with a property offence – namely, theft under $5000 (Balfour, Gillian & Comack, 2014). The startling rise in the female crime rate is symptomatic of Canada's capitalistic and patriarchal society that limits the choices women have in their lives. While some women have social power, the vast majority of women do not. Living with a lack of power is especially true for Indigenous women who find themselves further constricted by the colonial structures in Canadian society. Therefore, a woman's choice to commit crimes can be seen as a result of limited social power and limited life-choices. Since "social power is unevenly distribute[d] along a number of different axes – most notably, of class, gender and race, "choice, as a result, is never free or open" (Comack, 1996, p. 31). The criminal justice system's response to female criminality shores up conditions that permit injustice and discrimination to feature prominently in the lives of women.

Criminalizing women often serves to re-victimize women in situations that arise from the social inequities and abuse with which they live. In general, women do not commit many violent offences; they are charged with violent crimes at "about one-fifth the rate for males" (Kong &

AuCoin, 2008, p. 3). At the same time, women are more 20 percent more likely to be the victims of violent crime than men (Perreault, 2015). In the rare instances in which women commit violent crimes, their acts of violence are usually committed to defend themselves from assaults committed by their partners. In a study of inmates serving life sentences for violent offences, 98 percent of women report having been abused by a partner (O'Keefe, 1998). Furthermore, in cases in which women commit domestic murder, most report a history of victimization at the hands of their deceased partner (Leigy & Reed, 2010). While the justice system attempts to protect women, for many, especially Indigenous women, the protection provided is often inadequate, so they must defend themselves. Pate (2018) notes that when a woman forcefully protects herself with a weapon "she will commonly face the full, often disproportionate, weight of the law" (p. 1). Minimum sentencing requirements do not take into account the differences in physicality between men and women. Women are often physically weaker than men, so the use of a weapon is often required to provide an adequate defence to violence inflicted by a man. By ignoring these differences and imposing gender-neutral minimum sentences upon women, women are treated within the justice system more harshly than men, and in a sense, are punished for being victims.

Conditions in Correctional Facilities

Although correctional facilities are meant to reduce the liberty and freedom of offenders as part of their punishment for wrongdoing, some of the conditions and practices within facilities seem more punitive than necessary. In being so punitive, the correctional environment detracts from the rehabilitative purpose of prison systems. Cook, et al. (2005) explains how the prison environment can "compromise supportive environments for [female] inmates. For example, security practices adapted from use in facilities for men (e.g., […] strip-search procedures, […]

sudden loud noises to call inmates to attention) may trigger post-traumatic stress symptoms" (p. 122) in female inmates. Furthermore, security measures and security classification procedures minimize the amount of access women have to different programs that are offered in the system (Brennan, 2014; The Office of the Criminal Investigator, 2018). When women enter the correctional system, they are assessed for security risks based on assessment tools designed for men, which leads many women to be inaccurately classified as high-risk offenders and housed in higher-security facilities that may not provide all CSC's rehabilitative programming (Wesley, 2012). In fact, the over-classification of women is cited as one of the major reasons why Indigenous women are unable to access culturally specific programming (Mann, 2009). Since many correctional workers view criminalized women as inmates rather than people, compassionate care sometimes seems non-existent within the walls of custodial facilities.

Correctional Education

In order to meet its mandate to rehabilitate offenders, the correctional system must provide offenders with opportunities to examine and challenge their beliefs and life choices. Offender rehabilitation and desistance is a gradual process of shifting toward a law-abiding lifestyle. This process involves both internal and external factors that change offenders' perceptions of self and their life opportunities, which in turn, alters offenders' behaviour (Szifris, Fox & Bradburya, 2018). It is widely accepted that providing inmates with education while incarcerated serves as a significant influencer in offender desistance and rehabilitation (Hall, L., 2015).

What programs are offered. When considering the impact of education on inmate recidivism, one must consider the programs that are offered to inmates before an investigation can be made into what program improvements are required. The main educational programs

offered in Canadian correctional facilities focus on upgrading skills and the acquisition of a high school diploma or its equivalent. In fact, inmates entering into the system with less than a Grade 12 education are required to participate in education, which is offered for free (Correctional Service of Canada, 2017). As well, inmates can take literacy programs and English (or French) as second language training. Inmates with a Grade 12 education may take part in optional vocational training and post-secondary education. If offenders elect to take post-secondary courses and trade certifications, they are required to pay the associated tuition costs unless an exception is made by the Correctional Service of Canada (Correctional Service of Canada, 2017; Monster & Micucci, 2005).

Another avenue for education and career development is work placements in CORCAN (Correctional Service Canada, 2018). Although women do not have as many options within CORCAN as their male counterparts, they are still able to develop some job-related skills. Depending on the region, different programs exist. Women can train in horticulture and hairstyling. There are also limited opportunities to work in a silkscreen shop and a telemarketing company (Gillis, 1999, p. 38). When female vocational and employment opportunities are compared to the CORCAN opportunities that are available to men (construction, plumbing, autotechnicial, etcetera) (Correctional Service Canada, 2018), the vocational opportunities for incarcerated women appear restrictive and sexist.

While CSC programming assists with academic and workplace skills needs, it also assists with “increasing social responsibility and enhancing effective interpersonal relations” (Monster & Micucci, 2005, p. 179). One particularly interesting program that is offered to female inmates is the Keys to Family Literacy Program that links literacy topics to parenting topics and

eventually leads women to write their own children's literature. This is an interesting program that serves as an exciting hook for female inmates (Correctional Service of Canada).

Indigenous offenders are offered engagement courses that provide cultural teachings and ceremonies that are led by Elders. Through these programs, offenders develop their identities and life-management and interpersonal skills. The courses are levelled to the assessed risk of reoffending. Minimal-risk offenders receive 12 sessions while high-risk offenders receive 56 sessions. In the Self-Management program, offenders work to identify personal strengths and to develop goal-setting and coping skills. Indigenous programming is still developing but is working towards addressing the specific needs of Aboriginal women (Correctional Service Canada, 2014).

The Walls to Bridges program (W2B) is an innovative program that offers university classes in federal penitentiaries that involve an equal number of incarcerated and non-incarcerated students who learn collaboratively throughout the term. W2B provides incarcerated women the chance to earn post-secondary credits to which they would typically not have had access. Additionally, W2B challenges stereotypes community members may have about criminalized people and helps offenders to build support networks outside the custodial facility. In this program, the offender does not need to pay to participate. The success of the W2B program "is evident through the high rate of post-secondary students at the institution: 32 of the 124 students participating in post-secondary courses nationally are doing so from Grand Valley Institution for Women [W2B program]" (The Office of the Correctional Investigator, 2018, p. 72).

Benefits of Correctional Education

Benefits to society. Perhaps the most significant benefit correctional education offers society is that inmates who have participated in education while incarcerated are less likely to re-offend (Esperian, 2010; Hall, L. 2015; Stephens, 2015; Stephens, D. J. & Ward, C. S., 1997; Thompson & Harm, 2000). In Stephens' (2015) review of research educational programming in prisons, he noted that "in the 97 articles, 83 (85%) reported documented evidence of recidivism control through correctional education" (Stephens, 2015, para 19). In their study, Stephens and Ward (1997) found evidence that the type of education an inmate receives also appears to be important, and that it would be advantageous to offer more access to higher education rather than less. They determined that inmates who had only earned a high school education while incarcerated were 30 percent more likely to be reincarcerated within three years compared to inmates who had earned a four-year post-secondary degree. When these findings are coupled with the notion promoted by the Canadian correctional system that the threat to society posed by offenders is lessened through schooling, society benefits from increased safety when offenders participate in education. Therefore, governments offer educational programming to inmates as it has proven to improve public safety through the reduction of recidivism.

Furthermore, society benefits from reduced correctional expenditures when inmates participate in education. The funding of correctional education reduces the budgetary needs of facilities for several reasons. When inmates participate in work-related education, such as co-operative education, there is a slight reduction in personnel costs, as inmates are not paid the same amount as regular workers (Batchelder & Pippert 2002). Also, the products created in vocational classes can be sold, and profits returned to the system, which further reduces budgetary costs. Additional cost reductions are created when the recidivism rates drop. Esperian (2010) argues that since "the effect of education on recidivism has been well demonstrated, and

even small reductions in reoffending can have a significant impact" (p. 332) when applied to a large population, offering education in correctional centers generates cost-savings. Correctional education reduces the cost of corrections, which means the money that was earmarked for the system can be diverted to other areas that will benefit society in different ways. The cost savings that occur due to correctional education programming is an additional reason governments elect to offer inmates education.

Benefits to the offender. Another recipient of the benefits of correctional education is the inmate population. Participating in education provides inmates with skills that they are lacking. Lack of education is a strong predictor of criminality due, in part, to the diminished job availability for non-schooled individuals. Illiteracy rates and low academic ability levels are endemic in correctional facilities. Education provides offenders with assistance in literacy, numeracy, and job readiness skills. Improving literacy and numeracy skills enables offenders to function more fully in society both in personal and employment areas. In a study of former Canadian inmates who were correctional education students, 71 percent of participants were employed (Boulianne & Meunie, 1986). Although this statistic is dated and references a small study population, continued research indicates acceptance amongst researchers that correctional education students are more employable than their counterparts who did not participate in education (such as Hall, 2015). Increased employability is a decidedly good benefit of participating in education which motivates inmates to participate in programming.

Beyond this, education can provide inmates with increased self-esteem. Involvement in courses and the successful completion of coursework provides inmates with a sense of pride – especially when previous attempts at education have not proven fruitful (Boulianne & Meunie, 1986). Education offers inmates exposure to alternate worldviews and an opportunity to explore

how differing worldviews connect with their own. This is “relevant to a person’s self-understanding – education broadens people’s horizons and helps their understanding of themselves and their place in the world” (Szifris, Fox, & Bradburya, 2018, p. 50). As inmates interact with course material, they begin to transform their self-image and esteem. In the classroom, they can momentarily shed their ‘offender identity’ and become students. They begin to see themselves as someone different from their past and can see the possibility of moving beyond their past mistakes. Inmate-students believe participating in education is viewed as a tool for self-improvement and a means for forging and forming a new identity (Hall & Killacky, 2008; Szifris, Fox & Bradburya, 2018).

An additional benefit of correctional education is that inmates may gain awareness of previously undiagnosed learning disabilities. Researchers estimate that “30-50 percent of all inmates have a learning disability compared to 3-15 percent of the general population” (Koo, 2016, p. 214) which seems to point to issues of a broken school system that fails to identify learning disabilities in students. Re-entering the education system as an adult in prison puts inmates in contact with educators who can provide learning strategies to overcome suspected learning disabilities in classroom and workplace tasks. Providing strategies and diagnosis (for those inmates provided with testing) also assists inmates in developing better self-esteem. A diagnosis provides offenders with a reason for learning struggles. When supplied with learning strategies that ease learning, offenders begin to recognize the fallacy of their previously held beliefs that they were stupid and lazy (Learning Disability Association of Ontario, 2015). The success achieved through access to special education is empowering.

Another benefit of correctional education is that the school provides inmates with a safe place to pass the time (Boulianne & Meunie, 1986). The safe space that the classroom offers

inmates allows them to have a sense of escape as they can separate themselves slightly from prison culture (Szifris, Fox & Bradburya, 2018). “Educational activities relieve the boredom of prison” (Stephens, 2015) while also providing inmates with the chance to interact with each other as learners rather than inmates (Szifris, Fox & Bradburya, 2018). The classroom environment becomes a safe and supportive place for pro-social modelling and positive socialization to occur (Szifris, Fox & Bradburya, 2018). The opportunity to escape boredom and the stressors of prison culture make the correctional classroom appealing to offenders.

Motivation for Prisoner Participation in Education

Although the benefits of education serve as a motivator for offender participation, identifying key motivators that entice offenders into education can help make educational programming more attractive to inmates. One of the most significant motivators is success. Inmates indicated the “ability to care for self and loved ones and taking care of one's responsibilities was a strong indicator of success” (Hall & Killacky, 2008, p. 305). Education can provide inmates with the skills and knowledge required to be employable upon release (Batchelder & Pippert 2002). Since “most women in jails are also mothers who were the sole supporter of their children before being jailed” (Pate, 2018, p. 2), providing opportunities to develop employment skills and assistance locating employment is helpful for both the woman and her children. Employment provides inmates with the ability to meet personal and familial financial needs through legitimate means. Many inmates are pulled into crime out of necessity. Participating in education to gain knowledge and skills that lead to eventual employment is a powerful motivator. As one offender stated, education that led to “a full-time job when I got released, for me, meant having a normal life” (Correctional Service of Canada, 2013). Depending on the needs of inmates, their initial involvement in education involves upgrading

and obtaining a general equivalency diploma. Offenders enrolled in these programs indicate that they are motivated to complete the programs, as they are required for admittance into vocational training that they believe will lead to better employment prospects post-release (Batchelder & Pippert, 2002; Hall & Killacky, 2008). Future success and employment serve as strong motivators for offender participation in education.

Another source of motivation to participate in education while in prison is family. Offenders note that they want to be seen in a positive light by their families. Enrolling and succeeding in education serves as an avenue to impress family because offenders are seen as working toward positively changing themselves (Szifris, Fox & Bradburya, 2018). Offenders with children tend to enroll in education partly "to show their children that being in school was a good thing" (Hall & Killacky, 2008, p. 309). Hall and Killacky (2008) further identified that every inmate in their study indicated that they had regret for disappointing family and loved ones with their past choices to be involved in crime and to drop out of school. Involvement in education while in prison was viewed as a good way to redeem oneself and to impress family.

Although women may have found themselves in trouble with the law due to difficulties involved with being sole-providers for their families with limited life-choices, being a mother also serves as a protective factor against recidivism. While separation from family due to incarceration does have negative implications for both mothers and their children, the hope of reunion pushes women to participate in programming that will improve their ability to reintegrate successfully upon release (Thompson & Harm, 2000). The impact of both the reasons women commit crime and the fact that many are mothers is seen in their lower recidivism rate. Female recidivism is 15.4 percent lower than the male rate of recidivism due in part to the motherly need to care for their children (The Office of the Correctional Investigator, 2018).

Women have the desire to "improve family relationships [which motivates] former prisoners to stay out of prison to continue parenting, thus resulting in reduced recidivism" (Thompson & Harm, 2000, p. 63).

Offender Needs and Program Deficiencies

Differentiated instruction. Although inmates have access to numerous different programs, research notes that the balance of the programs is focused on left-brain learning styles, as much of class content that is delivered in ways that suit left-brain learners. Crocker, Bobell, and Wilson (1997) explain that class content is taught through lecture, discussion, and written tests. The security protocol of the correctional facilities may restrict how educators present material, but the unbalanced presentation of material disadvantages numerous inmates. Crocker, Bobell, and Wilson (1997) examined a population of female offenders to ascertain their preferred learning style. They found that the majority of offenders were kinesthetic and tactile learners. Their research also found that, while in prison, very few students were taught in their preferred learning style. They compared their finding to Helene Hodges' work on the learning styles of high school dropouts because they noticed that many of the offenders enrolled in correctional education were returning to education after dropping out of high school. Their research produced similar results to Hodges', which found that most dropouts have strong tactile abilities and kinesthetic abilities (Crocker, Bobell & Wilson, 1997). To be effective, correctional education should include "small learning groups, student discourse, scaffolding, differentiated instruction, use of technology, and brain-based learning" (Lugo, 2018). To better serve the offender population and increase their ability to succeed and maintain motivation in education, educators and correctional staff must work together to increase the use of kinesthetic and tactile learning opportunities in correctional facilities.

Special education. As noted earlier, the prison population has an unusually high number of individuals with learning disabilities. Koo (2016) notes that with up to 50 percent of all inmates entering the penal system with learning disabilities, it is extremely important that they receive the special education supports they require to be successful in education and work. Supports for inmates with learning disabilities are crucial, but since many inmates enter into the system without formal diagnoses, it is difficult for educators to provide the necessary accommodations. Often educators rely on information from old student records, which may contain dated information or little information at all (Correctional Service of Canada, 2017). It is therefore suggested that upon education intake, all inmates be tested so that educators can properly plan to meet the needs of the inmate (Koo, 2016). Providing educators with specialized education on learning disabilities will help them to better address the high needs of the offender population (Hall & Killacky, 2008). This instruction will assist educators in determining how to provide differentiated student-centred instruction for their students through the integration of manipulatives and technology (Lugo, 2018). Since inmates interact with non-educational staff throughout the day, Koo also suggests that all correctional workers be required to take learning disability training, so that they can respond appropriately to inmates' educational needs outside of class time.

Furthermore, inmates must be provided life skills training to manage their learning disability upon release (Koo, 2016). Learning strategies to function in society and knowledge about the required accommodations that must be provided for individuals with exceptionalities can help offenders better advocate for themselves on the outside, thus increasing the likelihood that they will reintegrate into society successfully.

Inmates perceived program relevance and usefulness. Perhaps the greatest need that offenders have is to be provided with educational programming that they feel would lead to a lifestyle where non-criminal choices are more rewarding than criminalized choices (Hall & Killacky, 2008). Many offenders enroll in education in order to obtain greater knowledge, skills, and qualifications. By earning qualifications and knowledge, offenders hope to become more employable upon release. However, according to Myer and Fels (2013), "there is a void between what is decidedly offered as necessary and what the [inmates] themselves identify as relevant and are passionate to learn more about as they prepare for re-entry into their communities" (p. 299).

Although the CSC provides inmates with vocational training, it appears that this training is somewhat ineffective in preparing inmates for the workforce. Currently, the CSC appears to train inmates for professions that are either outdated or for which there may be limited opportunities for employment upon release (Szifris, Fox & Bradburya, 2018; Zuro, 2018). Gillis (1999) suggests that "the relative lack of employment and vocational programs for female offenders [lies in] the traditional view of a woman as 'guardian of home and family'" (p. 37) which push towards training women for 'traditional' jobs. Since most women are single parents (Haywood, Kravitz, Goldman & Freeman, 2000), it would seem more advantageous for women to be presented with vocational training for higher-paying, in-demand careers. The Auditor General suggests that "Correctional Service Canada should develop and implement a women's employment strategy that includes certification of marketable skills in order to better prepare women for future employment" (Fraser, 2003, p. 17) and that the CSC should ensure that programs are kept relevant to the job market. Canada's Federal Prison Ombudsman, Ivan Zinger, argues that the skills that are taught in federal institutions are outdated and are therefore not

proving valuable for inmates. He believes that more 21st-century skills must be taught and that Correctional Service Canada (through CORCAN) "should try to offer inmates more opportunities to work towards a Red Seal trade while in incarcerated" (Burke, 2017). The importance of correctional education leading to employment is highlighted in a study of a program in the United States that specified that vocational training must be consistent with actual post-release employment opportunities in the State (Lugo, 2018). The study found that inmates who completed programs that followed this specification were 20 percent less likely to re-offend. The difference in the recidivism rate is due in part to the fact that vocational education led to well-paying jobs (Lugo, 2018). Creating educational programming that is relevant and provides inmates with an ability to compete for meaningful employment is extremely important for the system's ability to recruit and maintain students.

Another area that appears to be lacking in correctional education is training in information communication technology. This type of training will protect inmates from the digital divide which is the term used to describe how people are disadvantaged when they lack access to the internet and its large body of knowledge (Barreiro-Gen & Novo-Corti, 2015). For security reasons, inmates are not provided with access to the internet. Since the internet and its associated technology change so quickly, being unable to work with the technology while in prison means that inmates often leave prison with obsolete digital knowledge (Barreiro-Gen & Novo-Corti, 2015). Although there is a duty to maintain security within the prison, educators should develop ways of teaching current computer technology skills so that offenders are not disadvantaged upon release.

Perhaps the most glaring deficiency in Canadian correctional education is the lack of access offenders have to affordable post-secondary education that will lead to employment.

While a high school diploma is positive, research shows post-secondary education as being more beneficial to offender reintegration into society (Dubois, 2016; Stephens & Ward, 1997). This is because post-secondary education leads to better employment that makes criminality look less appealing or necessary. With the exception of the W2B program, offenders are required to pay for post-secondary education which is extremely expensive. The CSC should look to create a funding model that permits charities to pay for offender tuition, so more inmates can participate in post-secondary education.

Career guidance. Coupled with the need for relevant programming is the need for quality career guidance. It is very difficult for ex-offenders to find careers due to the employment discrimination experienced by those with criminal records. There are many sectors that certain offenders are barred from working in (Ontario Human Rights Tribunal, n.d.). As such, offenders must be provided with good education and career planning guidance, so they leave prison with realistic employment plans. Bennet and Amundson (2006) note that current programming fails to prepare offenders for the instability that exists in the labour market. They suggest that educators should coach offenders in adopting growth-mindsets and flexibility while stressing the importance of having alternate plans to respond to forced career changes. Some offenders feel that without this assistance, they are sentenced to repeat criminal behaviour because there are released into the same place that they started (Myer & Fels, 2013). However, one offender mused about how transformative it would be if good guidance were given: “imagine coming here, finding out what your passion is, being sentenced directly into an educational institution, counselled, and put right into a job” (Meyer & Fels, 2013, p. 304). Other women discussed that finding a well-paying job would assist in keeping them out of jail (Comack, 1996). Career guidance is one of the keys to an offender’s successful reintegration into society.

Interpersonal and parenting skills. Although the CSC's Family Literacy Program provides women with support in developing their literacy skills and attitudes, the program does not address other parenting issues like communication, discipline, and child development. This void in programming is a great injustice to women and their families as it impairs women's ability to parent confidently, effectively, and safely upon release (Thompson & Harm, 2000). Separation of children from their mothers causes great harm to both the children and their mothers. Children of incarcerated parents are "likely to suffer from behavioural and emotional problems and are at greater risk for poor academic performance, drug and alcohol use and self-esteem issues" (Wilson, Gonzalez, Romero, Henry & Cerbana, 2010, p. 115). Mothers, on the other hand, navigate depression, and feelings of regret, inadequacy, and anxiety during their separation from their children. Although incarcerated mothers long to reunite with their children, they fear the reunion too, as many have not developed the coping skills and parenting knowledge needed to parent effectively (Thompson & Harm, 2000). Therefore, the failure of the CSC to provide in-depth parenting education is harmful as parenting classes are necessary for assisting women in reintegrating back into society and breaking cycles of familial violence (Green, Haney and Huratdo, 2000).

In the United States, the Parenting from Prison (PFP) program seeks to remedy issues related to parental incarceration and gaps in parenting skills. PFP challenges negative parenting beliefs and incorrect knowledge about child development and provides women with more effective parenting strategies. While the course has a large emphasis on developing communication, discipline, and problem-solving skills related to parenting, these skills can be used in other areas of the women's lives. The PFP program has an impact on women's alcohol abuse, which may indicate that improved self-esteem and the development of more effective

parenting techniques lessened some life stressors and the need for women to turn to alcohol to cope (Thompson & Harm, 2000). Canadian women and families would be better served if the CSC provided educational programming related to parenting and the development of interpersonal and life management skills.

Aboriginal programming. CSC's Aboriginal programming shows some promise, but it lacks diversity which makes the program irrelevant to certain groups, specifically the Metis and Inuit (Wesley, 2012). "Each group has a unique background, offence and need characteristics which require different modes of intervention in the delivery of correctional programs and services" (Mann, 2009, p. 14). Thus, by providing a general program to a diverse group, many are not receiving the help they need. The additional barriers of security classification and limited program availability further reduce the number of inmates who are able to participate in Aboriginal programming each year.

Institutional barriers. Perhaps the biggest limiters to correctional education are institutional barriers that make participation in correctional education a less than ideal learning experience. Lack of access to materials and resources such as the internet and stapled handouts makes learning tedious. Students must rely on access to institutional libraries to access printed material which is often out of date. Or they rely on instructors to supply internet research which they creatively bind without staples. This can make research very difficult. Furthermore, the constant threat of institutional lockdowns creates an atmosphere of uncertainty around class schedules and course completion. Stress from incarceration and negative opinions of other inmates and staff about education can tax student motivation to continue pursuing education (Kilty & Lehalle, 2018). Institutional barriers are not impossible to overcome, but

acknowledgement of their existence and creative planning can help students to be resilient when barriers impede on their learning.

Future Research

Although researchers have begun focusing their gaze on the criminalized female experience, there is still a need for researchers and governments to consider who these women are and how best to serve the needs of this complex population. Largely absent from studies are the voices of criminalized women themselves. Thus, research and policies created based on this research remain deficient with regards to vital information about what women feel their needs are and how their needs can be best met. While numerous studies indicate the positive impact education has on reducing recidivism rates amongst offenders, very few consider the unique needs of the female offender from her point of view. The United Nations recognizes that "criminal justice systems routinely overlook the specific needs of these women and girls" (Penal Reform International, 2013, p. 3) who often arrive in jail due to discriminatory practices, addiction, and/or victimization (Penal Reform International, 2013). Rather than continuing to push women to the margins, they should be invited into research and policy creation conversations, so their experiences and needs are centralized within research, and in turn shape policies and curriculum so criminalized women can be provided with the best possible educational programming.

Another area of research that should be expanded upon is how institutions can better serve offenders with special needs. This need is identified in research, but little practical advice on how to meet the needs of this population is supplied. Researching ways that institutions can provide identification tests and modified programming that meets the needs of the learner but also maintains the safety of the facilities would be beneficial to front-line workers and offenders.

In addition, conducting job market research to identify the skills and workplace knowledge that are in demand will ensure that the education provided in correctional institutions will assist offenders in being employable upon release. Updating curriculum and vocational training to ensure that they include 21st-century skills is extremely important. Providing frontline educators with practical solutions that incorporate 21st-century skills and information communication technology skills is necessary. Research must consider how this can be done without putting the security of facilities at risk. Also, providing updated information on the employment rate of correctional education participants and their rates of recidivism is needed to determine if the programming in facilities is meeting the rehabilitative needs of the inmates – current statistics in this area are dated.

Currently, criminalized women are provided with access to high school education, but they are provided with few affordable options for obtaining post-secondary education while incarcerated. While access to secondary education is positive, it does little to help lift women out of the state of need that initially set them on the trajectory to criminalization. Access to well-paying employment comes from increased knowledge and specialized skill development obtained from post-secondary training. Therefore, future correctional education research should look into ways that post-secondary institutions can provide innovative educational opportunities for criminalized women.

Finally, the constraints that exist within the correctional system must be considered when creating new educational programs. The relatively small population of female inmates located in very few areas in the country makes it difficult for institutions to provide robust course offerings. This challenge is seen in the CSC's difficulties in providing offenders access to its own programming. A remedy to this difficulty may lie in the transitional programming and ideas of

community network building found in the W2B program. Research should examine the role education can play in transitional homes to better assist criminalized women in integrating back into society while also providing structured access to post-secondary education plans that will continue after their release into the community.

Conclusion

Similarities of experience can be seen in the lives of criminalized women both inside and outside of prison. In both locations, they are marginalized, silenced, and largely ignored. Perhaps what is most disturbing about the correctional system is that rather than rehabilitating women and providing them with better life opportunities, the system's male-centric policies and programs exacerbate the issues that brought women into criminality in the first place. Failure to address the issues of trauma and learning deficits that impact the ability of women to live, learn, work, and thrive locks women into the same cycle of poverty and despair that led them into criminality. Furthermore, the lack of access to educational and vocational training lessens women's ability to find meaningful employment that enables them to support their families upon release. The criminal justice system is returning women to society in the same or worse condition they were in before incarceration. Moreover, curriculum that does not encourage the sharing of criminalized women's experience limits society's awareness of issues within society that marginalize and criminalize women.

It would not be possible to create one program that would address all the barriers to rehabilitation that women face, but a program that opens up post-secondary learning opportunities and fosters ongoing dialogue between the marginalized and non-marginalized would have rehabilitative impact on many. As such, programs should provide women with choices that place them on an educational path that will lead towards the acquisition of academic

and vocational skills and meaningful employment while also raising community awareness about societal inequities. Thus, research will be conducted to create a W2B inspired college-level program that will be delivered in a non-custodial setting to women transitioning out of incarceration (criminalized students) and other non-criminalized students. Through this program, students would earn General Education (GNED) elective credits that could be applied to many college programs and lead to meaningful work. The program would utilize GNED courses as they cover themes related to life as an individual and as a member of society; the programs would address issues related to coping and survival needs and help women to develop skills to overcome challenges. An additional benefit to this program would be that the involvement of non-criminalized students in this program would raise awareness in the community about the inequitable issues women face, so future workers could serve the community more empathetically while also pushing to create social change.

Research into correctional education is important, as it will improve the type of education that is provided to criminalized women. Better education provides women with improved opportunities to make changes in their lives and to become law-abiding citizens. Also, it empowers marginalized women to voice their concerns and share their experiences with others in order to transform society from punitive to supportive, which is positive for society as a whole. Education has transformative powers. As one inmate stated, “Can you imagine? What would happen if instead of going to prison, [criminals] were sentenced to education?" (as quoted in Myer & Fels, 2013).

Chapter 3: Creating the Tasks

The completion of the portfolio tasks was guided by the research from my literature review and the advice of Dr. Lori Chambers, who pushed me to seek out more information about the lives of criminalized women so that my work gained more depth. Dr. Chambers' encouragement led me to create a website that outlines my growth in understanding of the issues that criminalized women. I combined the insight from this experience with the knowledge gained from my work experience as a former prison educator and college instructor to create the Phoenix Program. The course material contained in this portfolio were modified from the course material that I adapted or created in past conflict resolution courses that I delivered. Finally, the reflective learning collage in my portfolio was created using information from my journal and records of communication. I analysed my records to locate the themes of experience I had throughout the process and looked for a creative way to represent each of them. The resulting collage visually depicts the challenges and triumphs of my experience.

Chapter 4: Website and Program Description

Website

I created the following website to chronicle the marginalizing experiences women face within society and the criminal justice system. The themes discussed in this website demonstrate that women are disadvantaged in society and are more vulnerable to criminalization because of patriarchal structures in society. Much of the work discussed on this website highlights the intersectionality of oppression that is experienced by women – particularly those who are racialized, poor, and/or from the LGBTQ+ community – and questions the existence of equality and justice within the criminal justice system.

This website was created to raise awareness within the community about the injustice that exists both in society and the criminal justice system. Through this awareness, it is hoped that the community will support endeavours that assist women out of criminality. In particular, it is hoped that the community will come to support the program proposed through this portfolio project. Within the website is a link to a video that explains my research and the program that arose from it. The website can be accessed through https://questioningjustice.weebly.com/

Program Proposal

Program Title:	Phoenix Program
Credential to be Awarded:	Full course credit per course completed (maximum of 4 credits)
Length of Program:	1 year (2 semesters)
Required Resources	• Partnership with Correctional Services and Transition Homes • A coordinator and counsellor designated as responsible for the monitoring of women in the program • Instructors with Walls to Bridges training • Funding to pay for partial tuition (2 free courses per student),

Program Description

The Phoenix Program is a part-time program comprised solely of GNED that will be offered to women transitioning out of criminality. This program will provide the Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCTU) with a unique way to meet its mandate of providing "people with high-quality education and a solid foundation of relevant skills and training" (Government of Ontario, 2019, para 20) while also assisting the Ontario Correctional Services and the Correctional Service of Canada in meeting their mandates to rehabilitate offenders (Correctional Service of Canada, 2015; Government of Ontario, 2018). The Phoenix Program will open the doors to a marginalized population that has historically been denied access to post-secondary education, thus improving the lives of women and providing them with a pathway out of criminality. At the same time, the program has the potential for improving the community as Phoenix students will contribute to their academic colleagues' knowledge of society.

Considering the institutional barriers that interfere with program delivery and the turnover that is seen in female institutions, the proposed program will be delivered in the community. Students enrolled in the program would be housed in transition homes within the community, and they would have access to support off-campus from housing staff and probation and parole officers and support from college counsellors and staff while on-campus. Although this program was originally planned to be modelled after the Walls to Bridges, lack of research confirming that women would be comfortable with classmates knowing their criminalized past has moved the program away from this plan. In order to protect participants' privacy and shield them from any negative treatment due to their criminalized pasts, only the program coordinator and the college social counsellor assigned to the area would know the women's criminalized statuses. Phoenix students could choose to divulge their previously criminalized statuses, but it would not be a requirement. Instructors would be trained in the Walls to Bridges program in order to create an environment that is supportive of Phoenix students, but they would not be privy to information about their students' backgrounds.

The Phoenix Program is meant to supportively introduce women into post-secondary education while allowing them the freedom to decide on their program route in Year 2 rather than choosing a program at the application stage. While all post-secondary education is beneficial in the reduction of recidivism rates (Stephens & Ward, 1997), enrolling in university can be costly and time prohibitive since tuition costs in university are higher and the programs tend to be longer. College programs are quicker and open the doors to many well-paying jobs. Therefore, this program would be delivered by provincial colleges. Since many criminalized women have been out of the workforce, they may not have access to funds to pay for their program participation. Therefore, creating a funding model that provides participants with one

free course per semester can make the program attractive and accessible. Free tuition can be funded through community fundraising and government grants. Students wishing to take an additional course would be required to access funding through OSAP or an alternative funding source.

Students enrolled in this program would be part-time students who are permitted to enrol in up to three courses of their choice from a list of any General Education (GNED) courses offered at the college, plus one mandated compulsory GNED course. Since the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) requires that college graduates complete three to five GNED courses throughout their program to diversify their learning, building an academic bridging program based on GNED courses makes sense (2009). GNED courses offer pathways into all college programs and through articulation agreements with universities, these pathways extend into university programs upon graduation from college programs. The pathways into college programs are explained in the GNED Map that follows later in this report. The GNED courses fit into five different areas: Arts in Society, Civic Life, Social and Cultural Understanding, Personal Understanding, Science and Technology (MCTU, 2009). Courses that fall under the GNED umbrella include Indigenous Culture, Workplace Health and Safety, Entrepreneurial Exploration, Nutrition and Healthy Living, Environmental Science including many more (Georgian College, 2020; Sault College, 2017; Seneca College, 2020). Each of these course areas assists in filling the void that exists in education provided within the jail (Hall & Killacky, 2008; Myer Fels, 2013). In addition, all college programs must ensure that graduates possess the Essential Employability Skills (ESS) necessary for their ability to function well in their employment positions. While there are six categories of ESS, communication is heavily weighted in importance. Therefore, colleges must include one to two communications courses as

graduation requirements for their diploma programs (Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities, 2009). It is therefore advisable for students who wish to enroll in a subsequent program to enrol in a Communications course as one of the final courses in the Phoenix program, as it will help to reduce the student's workload in the future. While students are free to choose courses that interest them, some guidance should be given to students who plan to take more than two GNED courses and have a program that they wish to take in the future, as some programs have required GNED courses that must be taken. Guidance will ensure that they do not take a course that cannot be applied to their program later.

One required course that all Phoenix students would be required to take would be a Conflict Resolution course. This course was chosen as a required course because the research indicated that many inmates identify interpersonal skills related to conflict resolution as being an area in which they have a skill deficit (Thompson & Harm, 2000). This course helps students to conceptualize conflict while also developing skills to resolve it. Conflict resolution is also a course that many students enrolled in policing and social service programs take. Therefore, the class discussions between Phoenix students and other students could challenge student assumptions about society and the conditions that they believe create intergroup and interorganizational conflicts. Again, Pheonix students do not need to divulge information about their pasts, but in classroom discussions, students can provide different perspectives around societal structures and cause positive community changes like the changes seen in traditional Walls to Bridges programs. This course will culminate in a community-based learning project where learners will create a project that could be used to address a conflict found in the local community. This project will require all students to consider multiple perspectives surrounding

the conflict. Thus, Phoenix students can share insight that counters other students' stereotypical assumptions without needing to openly divulge their pasts.

GNED MAPs

There are numerous pathways a Phoenix student can take after completing the Phoenix Program. The following maps show three routes into different college programs that participants would be able to enter after completing the Phoenix program. To demonstrate the transferability of the program throughout the province, three different colleges and programs have been chosen for these maps: Culinary Management at George Brown College, Anishnaabemowin and Program Development at Georgian College, and Motive Power Technician – Advanced Repair at Sault College. The Conflict Resolution course is unique to Georgian College, but it is a GNED course that could be easily brought into the different colleges if an equivalent course does not exist.

George Brown College

Culinary Management

This program will provide graduates with real-world kitchen experience and an understanding of important trends such as the use of local foods, nutrition, and growing international influence. This program prepares students for entry into employment within the culinary industry (George Brown, 2020, para 1).

Phoenix Program **GNED** **+ COMM Credit**	Conflict Resolution GNED Choice 1 GNED Choice 2 COMM Choice 3
Semester 1 Courses	Baking and Pastry for Cooks* Culinary Foundations* Culinary Essentials* Theory of Food 1 Emergency First Aid/Heartsaver CPR (weekend course) Café Production* Fundamentals of Butchery* Introduction to Service and Menu Development* Sustainable Chef* Mathematics of Hospitality Communications Course ← COMM Choice 3 General Education Course ← Conflict Resolution *Seven-week courses

Semester 2 Courses	Culinary Principles* Culinary Concepts* Theory of Food II Career Preparation* Foods of the World* Nutrition Fundamentals from a Culinary Perspective Food, Beverage and Labour Cost Control *Seven-week courses
Semester 3 Courses	Field Placement Hospitality Leadership and Communication Marriage of Food and Wine General Education Course 
Semester 4 Courses	Industry Mentor/Externship Human Resources* Marketing* General Education Course  *Seven-week courses

(George Brown College, 2020)

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Georgian College

Anishnaabemowin and Program Development

This program prepares students for a variety of language-related careers, including teacher of Anishnaabemowin as a second language, translator, language consultant, language specialist or storytellers. Students may find employment in school boards, communities, government agencies, educational facilities and more (Georgian College, 2020, para 2).</td></tr>
<tr><td>Phoenix Program

GNED

+ COMM Credit</td><td>Conflict Resolution
GNED Choice 1
GNED Choice 2
COMM Choice 3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Semester 1 Courses</td><td>History of Anishnaabemowin
Writing Systems
Verbs and Nouns
Language in the Home
Indigenous Heritage, Tradition and Culture
Anishnaabemdaa 1 (Lab)
Communications Course
General Education Course

COMM Choice 3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Semester 2 Courses</td><td>Kinoomaadwin 1
Language in the Community
Verbs and Nouns 2
Anishnaabemowin Resources 1</td></tr>
</table>

	Anishnaabemdaa 2 (Lab) Communications Course (selected by student) General Education Course ← Conflict Resolution
Semester 3 Courses	Language Preservation and Revitalization Anishnaabemowin Resources 2 Language Placement 1 Language in the Workplace Anishnaabemowin Structures Anishnaabemdaa 3 (Lab) General Education Course ← GNED Choice 1
Semester 4 Courses	Language in the Natural Environment Language Placement 2 Anishnaabemowin Program Development Interactive Anishnaabemowin Kinoomaadwin 2 Anishnaabemdaa 4 (Lab) General Education Course ← GNED Choice 2

(Georgian College, 2020).

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Sault College

Motive Power Technician – Advanced Repair

This program is designed to prepare graduates to analyze, diagnose and solve various motive power system problems using advanced knowledge of automotive, truck/coach and heavy equipment vehicle operation, components and their interrelationships. Students will learn how to disassemble and assemble components to required specifications by applying workshop skills and knowledge of shop practices. Program graduates are qualified for entry-level work in the repair trades (Sault College, 2019, para 11).</td></tr>
<tr><td>Phoenix Program

GNED

+ COMM Credit</td><td>Conflict Resolution
GNED Choice 1
GNED Choice 2
COMM Choice 3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Semester 1 Courses</td><td>Basic Electricity
Engines
Motive Power Information Technology
Work Practices
GNED (Global Citizenship)
Basic Communications ← COMM Choice 3
Global Citizenship (GNED) ← GNED Choice 1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Semester 2 Courses</td><td>Automotive Suspension
Automotive Vehicle Systems Maintenance</td></tr>
</table>

	Brakes Electrical II Fuel Systems Fluid Power Systems Heavy Duty Vehicle Systems Maintenance Motive Power Drive Train Systems Truck Coach Chassis and Suspension Systems Truck Coach Vehicle Systems Maintenances Motive Power Environmental Technology
Semester 3 Courses	Automotive Alternate & Conventional Fuel & Emissions Electricity/Electronics Hydraulic Brake Systems Internal Combustion Engines II Mobile Refrigeration Parts and Service Personnel General Education Course 
Semester 4 Courses	Air Brakes Systems Automotive Drive Trains Diesel Alternative & Conventional Fuel & Emissions Electricity/Electronics II Heavy Duty Drive Trains

	Suspension Systems Motive Power Work Experience (Optional) General Education Course 

(Sault College, 2017)

Lesson Plan

Lesson 2: Conflict Styles		
Class length: 3 hours	Prerequisite work: Students will have completed: Lesson 1 Basics of Conflict *What Is Your Conflict Management Style* worksheet	
Learning Outcomes At the end of the class, students will be able to: • Identify and explain the Five Conflict Management styles • Explain the benefits and negatives to each style		Assessment Student Journal
		Materials: Conflict Styles PowerPoint Chart paper, tape, and markers (enough for 5 groups)

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">• Recognize their preferred conflict management styles
• Begin to explore how to move between styles to resolve different conflicts</td><td>Key Terms
BATNA
Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement
WATNA
Worst Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement</td></tr>
<tr><td>Time</td><td colspan="2">Task</td></tr>
<tr><td>Introduction

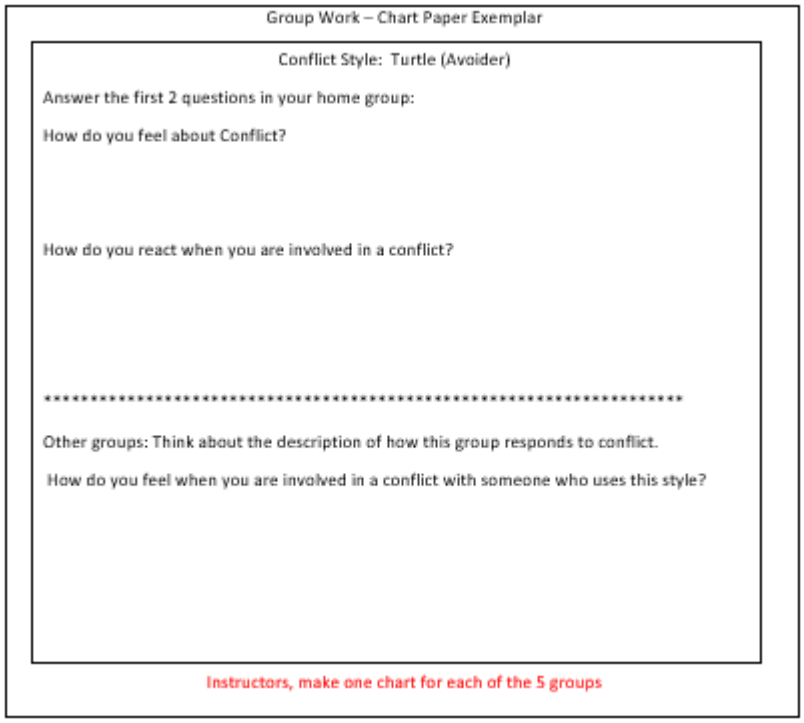
10-15 minutes</td><td colspan="2">Instructor: Write on board
Student Quick Write:
1) How would you respond to the following conflict?

You and your roommate have not kept up with housecleaning, so your apartment is a little gross. Your roommate is having friends over tomorrow and he tells you to clean up the kitchen and bathroom. He has cleaned the living room already. You are annoyed because most of the dishes in the sink are his.

2) How would you respond to the following conflict?

You and your roommate have not kept up with housecleaning, so your apartment is a little gross. Your landlord has come over to fix your fridge and is angry about the mess of the apartment. He indicates that he will not renew your lease if the apartment is not cleaned. He indicates that he will be checking the condition of the</td></tr>
</table>

	apartment in two days. You are annoyed because most of the mess is your roommate's, but your roommate is away for the week and not there to assist with cleaning. THINK - PAIR – SHARE Instructor: • Examine the various responses and pointing out the are patterns of responses to conflict in the class. • Prompt students to discuss how conflict styles can change based on who is involved in the conflict • Outline Learning Objectives for the lesson
Group Work 60 minutes	Instructor: • Direct students to go to specific corners of the room (students will be grouped according to the results of their assessment results: Owls, Foxes, Sharks, Turtles, Teddy Bears. Chart Paper setup is shown below)

	 • Students will work through the chart paper questions re: their preferred conflict style (10 minutes) • After 10 minutes, groups will rotate to each station to fill in answers about how they feel when they encounter conflict with each different learning style. The groups will have 5 minutes at each station. • Upon returning to their home group, students will review the notes left from other groups noting what other people find difficult about handling conflict with their style
Break 10 minutes	
Lecture	Instructor:

40-50 minutes Small Group Discussion 10-15 minutes	• Deliver lecture following PowerPoint slides, call upon student groups to provide insight into their specific conflict management styles (they can reference personal experiences and information from their chart paper) Students to return to home group to discuss: • How can someone get you to work toward a Win-Win resolution that is peak up in a conflict? **Owls: How can someone make you feel comfortable accepting a Win/Lose -Win/Lose resolution if time does not permit a Win-Win resolution?
Break 10 minutes	
Group Share 10 Minutes Conclusion 10 minutes	Students • Members will share their answers to the small group question Instructor: • Clarify concepts and outstanding questions re: course content • Assign homework
Extra task (if needed)	Have students work through the quick write scenarios assigning conflict styles to different conflict players (ex. Roommate 1 (Avoider), Roommate 2 (Accommodator), Landlord (Shark)
Homework: Student response journal submitted in the following class (See below)	

Conflict Resolution: Journal # 2

Personal Conflict Management Style

And

Healthy Relationship Article Reflections

Due: At the beginning of the next class

This is your second of four journals that reflect on the content covered in class. This reflection should be a minimum of 700 words and will be written in APA format. Please refer to the Cites and Sources link located on Blackboard to assist with proper formatting. You will also find a template for basic APA papers in the assignments area. You can use this template to ensure your title page and running head are set up properly. You will **print** this journal and submit it at the beginning of next week's class.

***ATTACH THE ASSIGNMENT'S RUBRIC TO YOUR SUBMISSION

This reflection will be a brief reflection about your views on your conflict management style. You are asked to describe:

Conflict Management Style

1. The result of Conflict Management Style Assessment: Were you surprised by the result of this assessment? Why or why not?
2. What are the strengths of this management style? What are the weaknesses? Have you seen these strengths or weaknesses play out in conflicts you have had?
3. If you are working towards a Win-Win solution, how can you move yourself to a more compromising style of conflict management (give two solutions)?

   **If you already have a Compromising or Collaborative Management Style, what are two strategies you could use with a person with either an Avoiding or Competing Management Style?

Journal # 2 Rubric					
	Sophisticated 100-80%	Competent 79-70%	Competent 69-60%	Not yet competent 59-50%	No evidence Below 50%
Explanation about assessment results	Explanation is thorough and complete (all questions answered). It provides appropriate examples that adds clarity to the explanation	Explanation is complete (one questions may not be answered). Examples are given but the explanations may not be clear OR only one example is provided.	Explanation is brief (not all questions are answered). An example is given but the explanation is not entirely clear. (or) An example is absent, so the explanation is unclear	Explanation is vague (many questions not answered).	None provided or explanation was extremely unclear
Depth of analysis	Reflection goes beyond the assignment to explore the implications of arguments in original ways	Reflection fully meets the parameters of the assignment but does not exceed them.	Reflection does not address some aspects of the assignment.	Reflection does not address aspects of the assignment.	Reflection not provided
Mechanics	Paper is clean and appropriately formatted. There are virtually no spelling or grammatical errors No errors in APA formatting	There are a few minor formatting, spelling or grammatical errors. A few minor errors with APA formatting.	There are a number of formatting, spelling and grammatical errors. Numerous errors with APA formatting	Paper is unacceptably sloppy and poorly formatted.	No evidence of editing or formatting present.

*Instructors wishing to use this rubric are advised to print landscape orientation

Lesson PowerPoint

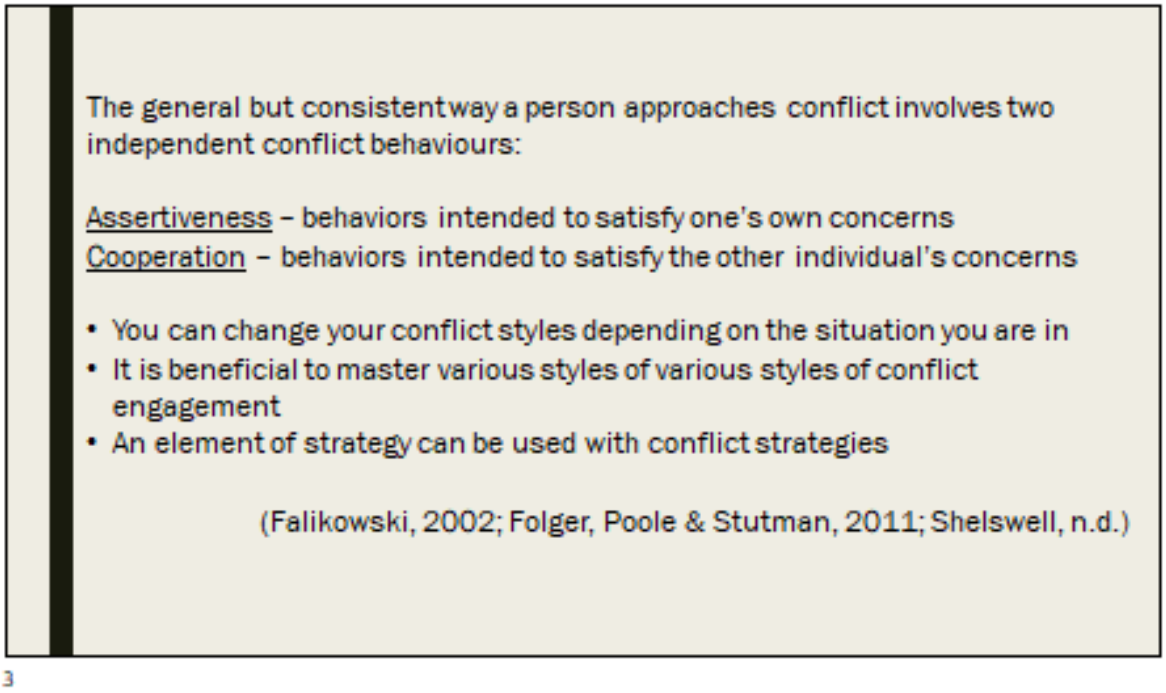
CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLES

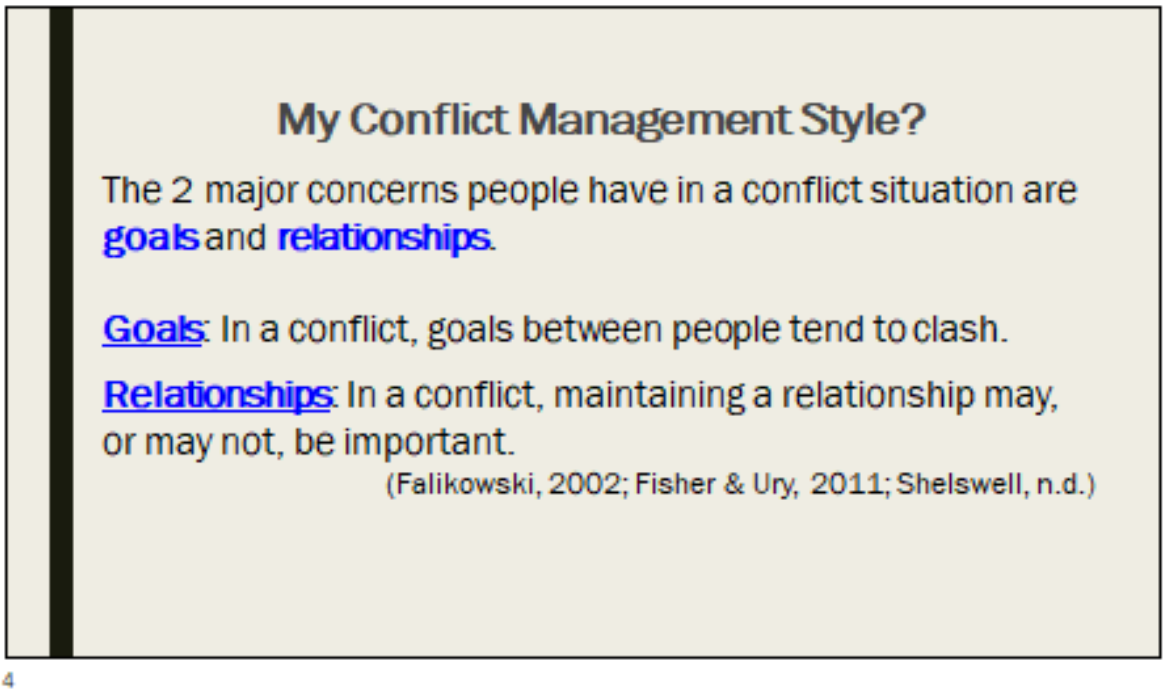
1

What are Conflict Styles?

(Cameron, 2015)

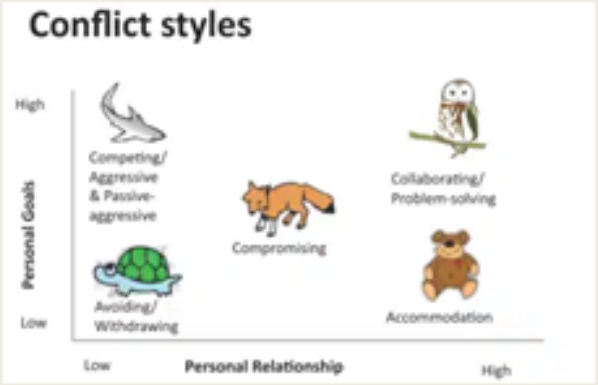
2


The general but consistent way a person approaches conflict involves two independent conflict behaviours:
Assertiveness – behaviors intended to satisfy one's own concerns
Cooperation – behaviors intended to satisfy the other individual's concerns
• You can change your conflict styles depending on the situation you are in
• It is beneficial to master various styles of various styles of conflict engagement
• An element of strategy can be used with conflict strategies
(Falikowski, 2002; Folger, Poole & Stutman, 2011; Shelswell, n.d.)
3


My Conflict Management Style?
The 2 major concerns people have in a conflict situation are goals and relationships.
Goals: In a conflict, goals between people tend to clash.
Relationships: In a conflict, maintaining a relationship may, or may not, be important.
(Falikowski, 2002; Fisher & Ury, 2011; Shelswell, n.d.)
4

Five Conflict Management Styles

Each style considers the two major concerns people have in conflict: **goals** and **relationships**.



(Falikowski, 2002; Fisher & Ury, 2011; Shelswell, n.d.; Teaching Public Speaking, n.d.)

5

Competing Shark (or forcing)

(Pixar, 2003)

- Place high value their own **goals** and little value on their **relationships**.
- Does **not** hesitate to use **aggressive** behaviour.
- **Unconcerned** with **feelings** and needs of others.
- **Uncooperative**, autocratic and authoritarian.
- Creates Win-Lose situation: shark **needs to win**; therefore others must lose.

(Falikowski, 2002; Fisher & Ury, 2011; Shelswell, n.d.)

6

Competing Shark (Continued)

Appropriate to use when:

- Conflict involves personal differences that are difficult to change.
- Fostering relationships is not critical.
- Others will take advantage of non-competitive behaviour.
- Conflict resolution is **urgent!**

(Star, n.d.)

(Falikowski, 2002; Fisher & Ury, 2011; Shelswell, n.d.)

7

Avoiding Turtle (or withdrawing)

- **Give up** their personal **goals** and **relationships**.
- Choose to **ignore** conflicts rather than resolving them.
- **Avoid** or **delay** confrontation.
- Permit people to walk all over them.
- Create Lose-Lose situations, by leaving conflicts alone.

(Falikowski, 2002; Fisher & Ury, 2011; Shelswell, n.d.)

8

Avoiding Turtle (or withdrawing)

Appropriate to use when:

- Personal stakes are **not high**, or the issue is **trivial**.
- Confrontation will **hurt** a working **relationship**.
- Time constraints demand a delay

(Falikowski, 2002; Fisher & Ury, 2011; Shelswell, n.d.)

9

Accommodating Teddy Bear

- Highly value **human relationships**.
- **Ignore** their own goals.
- Give into others.
- Create Win-Lose situations; Teddy Bear **loses – others win**.

(Falikowski, 2002; Fisher & Ury, 2011; Shelswell, n.d.)

10

Accommodating Teddy Bear (continued ...)

Appropriate to use when:

- Maintaining a **relationship** is more important winning the conflict.
- **Time** is **limited**.
- **Harmony** and **stability** are valued.

(Falikowski, 2002; Fisher & Ury, 2011; Shelswell, n.d.)

11

Collaborating Owl (problem confronting)

- Highly values relationships **and** personal goals
- Views conflict in a positive light
- Seeks to create solutions that see both sides get what they want while protecting peoples' feelings.
- Takes a long time to resolve conflict

(Falikowski, 2002; Fisher & Ury, 2011; Shelswell, n.d.)

12

Collaborating Owl
(problem confronting)

Appropriate to use when:

- Maintaining **relationships** is **important**
- Peer conflict is involved.
- **Trying to merge differing perspectives.**
- **Time** is **not** a concern.

(Kelahalan, 2019)

(Falikowski, 2002; Fisher & Ury, 2011; Shelswell, n.d.)

13

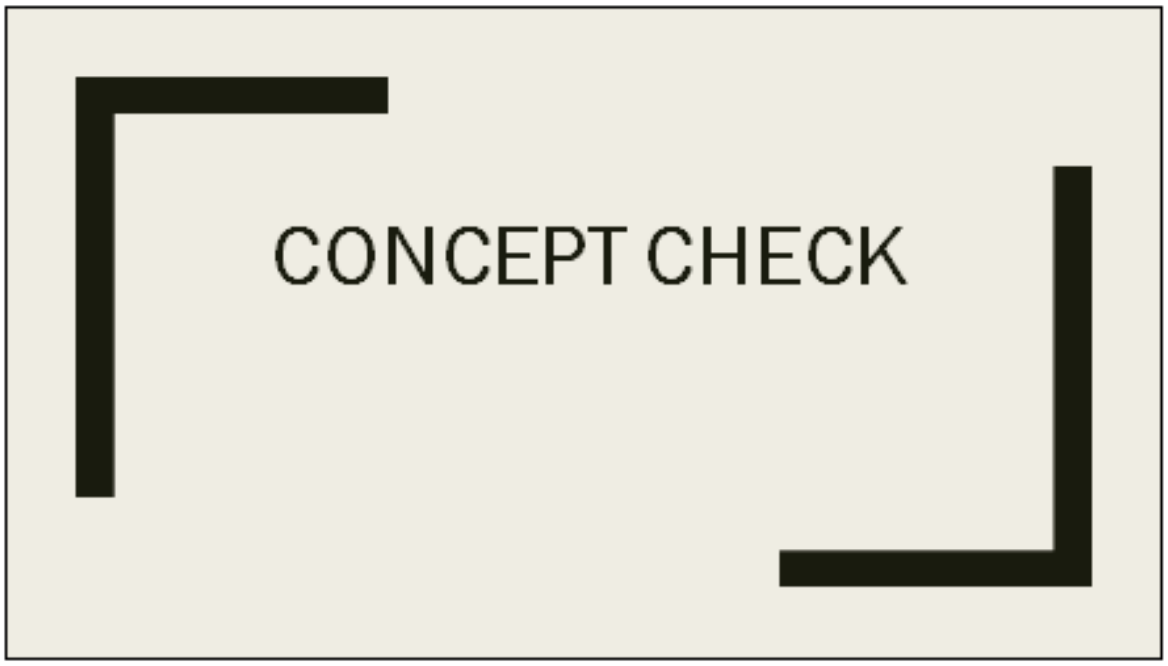
Compromising Fox

- Concerned with **goals** and **relationships**.
- Resolves conflict through concession(s).
- **Forfeits some of their goals** while persuading others to do the same.
- Creates Win-Lose or Lose-Lose situations.
- Maintains relationships and resolves conflict(s) **quickly**.

(Falikowski, 2002; Fisher & Ury, 2011; Shelswell, n.d.)

14


Compromising Fox
Appropriate to use when:
Conflict involves important and complex issues with no clear and simple solutions.
All conflicting people are equal in power.
There are time constraints.
(Falikowski, 2002; Fisher & Ury, 2011; Shelswell, n.d.)
15


CONCEPT CHECK
16

Concept Check

Which of the "Five Conflict Management Styles" is **NOT** concerned with the feelings and needs of others:

a) Shark
b) Turtle
c) Fox
d) Owl

(Falikowski, 2002; Fisher & Ury, 2011; Shelswell, n.d.)

17

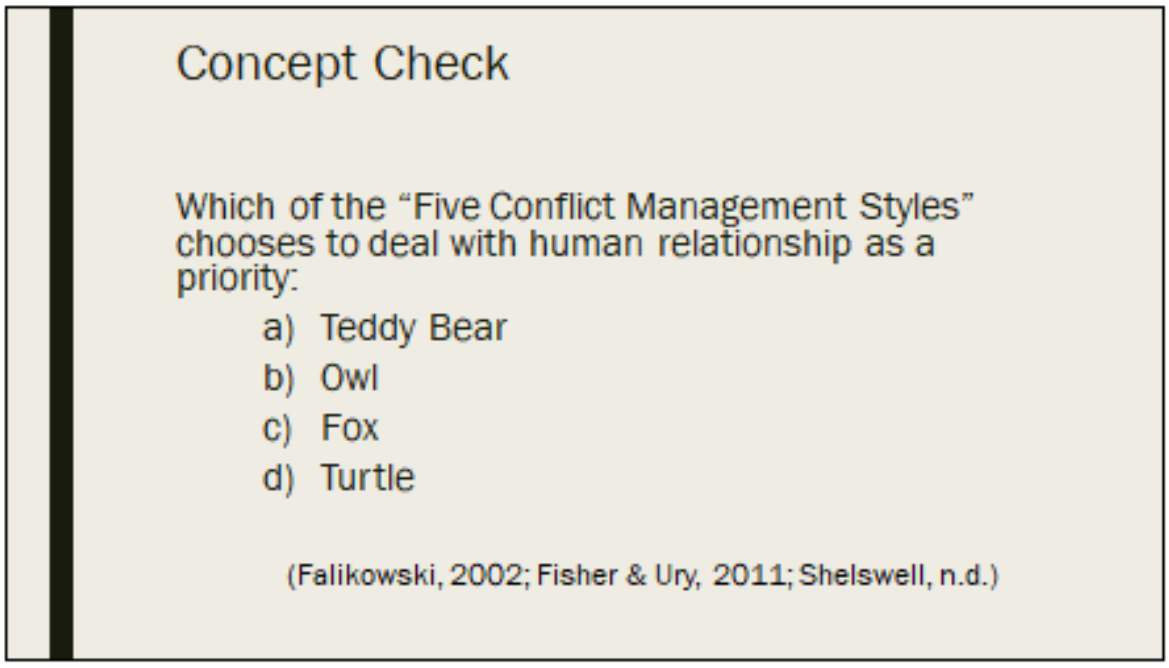
Concept Check

Which of the "Five Conflict Management Styles" chooses to ignore conflicts rather than resolving them:

a) Teddy Bear
b) Owl
c) Fox
d) Turtle

(Falikowski, 2002; Fisher & Ury, 2011; Shelswell, n.d.)

18


Concept Check
Which of the "Five Conflict Management Styles" chooses to deal with human relationship as a priority:
a) Teddy Bear
b) Owl
c) Fox
d) Turtle
(Falikowski, 2002; Fisher & Ury, 2011; Shelswell, n.d.)
19


DYSFUNCTIONAL CONFLICT STYLES
20

Avoiding/Accommodating Conflict Communication:

- Impulse to avoid initiating conflict or give in too quickly
- People "Gunny-sack" feelings until they blow up and conflict gets out of control

Occurs because:

- People have a bad history of dealing with conflict
- They aren't concerned with resolving the issue
- Believe that conflict is abnormal and the sign of a bad relationship

(Folger, Poole & Stutman, 2011).

21

Competitive Conflict Communication

- Often have an escalation effect and the conflict remains in the differentiation stage (are concerned only of winning
- People tend to mock, make threats, hit, walk away

Typical cycle

1. Conflict fueled by unresolved grievance that colours current conflict
2. Conflict initiated by competitive messages that indicate "I am right and you are wrong!"
3. Cycle intensify because of win-lose focus
4. Outcome usually Win-Lose
5. Loser holds onto loss as an unresolved grievance that affects future conflicts

(Folger, Poole & Stutman, 2011).

22

Passive-Aggressive

- People impose their will on others by using communication that looks like avoidance or accommodation but is actually carried out with the intention to harm. Still focus on "I Win – You Lose"
- People tend to spy, spread lies, backstab, deny there is a problem

Typical cycle

1. Belief that conflict is bad and should be avoided
2. Because we avoid conflict, experiencing one makes us nervous
3. Because we are nervous, we put off trying to resolve it
4. Rather than confront the other party, we go around the person's back to resolve the problem our way
5. If we get our way, the behaviour is confirms and the cycle starts again

(Folger, Poole & Stutman, 2011).

23

FUNCTIONAL CONFLICT STYLES

24

Functional Conflict Styles

Compromising Conflict Style

- Find a mutually acceptable solution

(no one totally wins or loses)

Process:

1. Determine the needs of all parties
2. If everyone has a legitimate claim, examine the outcome to determine if all cam claim = share of claim
3. If dividing the claim works, give each involved his or her share

Collaborating Conflict Style

- Find a mutually satisfying agreement that ends the conflict for good (Win – Win)
- Integrative behaviours (co-operation, collective action…) and the same end-goal

Process:

1. Parties clarify their points of view
2. Commit to goal of Win-Win but are flexible with solutions
3. Strive for mutual understanding
4. Implement mutual understanding by honouring agreed upon solution

(Folger, Poole & Stutman, 2011).

25

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26

Culminating Activity

Conflict Resolution Final Project

Work 20% of Final Grade

Project Summary:

In a group of 3-4 people, you will make a presentation about a conflict that recently occurred or is occurring in your community. The presentation will communicate your group's assessment of the conflict and its suggested solution to the conflict. Your solution must be balanced in meeting the needs of all parties. to demonstrate how parties of the conflict can work through the conflict cycle to arrive at a solution.

Mandatory Elements

1. Description of the conflict:
   Provide a brief description of the conflict using terms and concepts from this course where appropriate (i.e. the arena of conflict, etc.).

2. Analysis of the conflict:
   Identify key parties involved in the conflict and what their underlying needs and interests are.

3. Description of the conflict dynamics and conflict cycle to date:
   Explain how the conflict arrived at its current state and what (if any) attempts have been made to resolve the conflict in the past. Consider the conflict climate. Be sure to reference terms and concepts from this course where appropriate (i.e. Differentiation, Face-saving, etc.)

4. A BATNA and WATNA for both sides of the conflict

5. Determine a realistic solution that meets the needs of all parties:
   Brainstorm multiple solutions and explain why the final solution is the most balanced

6. A written copy of the presentation information will be submitted in a report that follows APA guidelines.

7. 2-3 references related to the conflict and or conflict resolution strategies

**Please note that you are not to speak with parties involved in this conflict, as you are not certified mediators. Instead, conduct your research using information about the conflict that is available to you (news reports, newspaper articles, personal experiences that are similar to the conflict).

Presentation

Groups will share their presentations with the class. Presentations should be informative and be presented in an interesting way. Presentations may include multimedia, a skit, or other innovative means of presenting. Your presentation will be a minimum of 20 minutes in length.

Marking Scheme			
Evaluation	**Group Mark**	**Maximum Mark**	**Description**
Content		**/10**	Communication: ✓ PowerPoint, report & presentation effectively communicate research findings on the conflict and possible conflict resolution strategies. Description of the conflict: ✓ Brief description of the conflict ✓ Reference to terms and concepts from this course Analysis of the conflict: ✓ Key parties identified ✓ Underlying needs and interests of each party explained. Description of the conflict dynamics & conflict cycle: ✓ Conflict history explained ✓ Conflict climate explained ✓ Reference to course terms and concepts (i.e. Differentiation, Face-saving, etc.) BATNA and WATNA : ✓ Positions for all parties are logical Proposed solution: ✓ Solution is realistic ✓ Solution is balanced and as close to Win/Win as possible ✓ Logical explanation for solution being chosen over other options ✓ Where a WIN/WIN solution is not possible, groups will explain why their solution is the as balanced as possible under the circumstances of the conflict.

Research, Formatting and Mechanics		**/6**	✓ Ideas and facts about the issue are validated by at least 3 sources. ✓ Legitimates sources uses (no Wikipedia, blogs etc.) ✓ All sources will be cited in APA format in the text (in-text format) of your PowerPoint and report and then on a reference page slide. ✓ ½ point deducted for each spelling, grammar, punctuation, and formatting error.
Presentation Effectiveness: Engagement, Clarity, Flow and Organization		**/4**	✓ Uses a variety of relevant materials to support topic and engage fellow students learning (video clips, slide visuals, etc.) (4 points) ✓ Presentation is well organized having a logical flow (opening, introduction, closing thoughts) ✓ Power point slides: font type and size consistent. (.5 points)
Total		**/20**	.
Comments:			

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Although my project answers some questions about how educators and post-secondary institutions can better assist women in transitioning out of criminality, it also points to other areas that need to be researched. One area that needs to be investigated more is how the Walls to Bridges program can be modified for college content. For this to occur, an individual interested in running this type of programming would need to secure Wall to Bridges facilitator training, so they have a clearer idea of how the original program runs. This knowledge would help future researchers to create modifications to the program that includes college content but closely reflects the original Walls to Bridges design.

Next, the program proposed in this portfolio should be shared with community stakeholders and women with lived experience in the correctional system. This consultation would allow for gaps in programming to be identified and any problem areas to be remedied. In these consultations, researchers should include non-criminalized women who have accessed or are accessing shelter services. Research has shown that abuse and victimization often lead women into criminality and that financial dependency on an abuser locks many victims into abusive relationships. There may be some efficacy in opening the program to women within the shelter system who are at risk of becoming criminalized. Assisting women in finding ways to become more financially independent through education while also providing wraparound care that protects their safety diverts women from criminalization or re-criminalization.

Finally, there must be a concentrated effort put into educating the public about criminalized women's realities. Opening society's eyes up to the suffering criminalized women face and the lack of choice in their lives may create more openness in the community to support

this program. Without community support, accessing the funding needed to implement this program will prove difficult.

Chapter 6: Reflection on Learning

My portfolio project and my work in the Master of Education (M.Ed.) program provided me with many insights into the injustice that exists in the world and has fanned my desire to be involved in social justice education pursuits and to have my work utilized by colleges in Ontario. At the same time, the research process has led me to learn a lot about myself. My research journey was challenging and culminated in a product that was very different from my original vision. Although my project is finished, I still find myself asking questions and looking at my research from different angles which causes me to wonder if my research will ever truly be done.

When I first began my endeavour in research, I naively thought the process would be easy and straightforward. I believed that my previous experience teaching in prison gave me a pretty good idea of how my research should proceed and how my end-product would look. The research process taught me that, like life, research is not predictable. Thus, rigid plans do not work, and preconceived ideas can constrict the process. While I thought the process would be linear and quick, I found myself backtracking on my original plans when I discovered something new about the criminal justice system that had previously been shielded from my view because of my privileged position in society. My supervisor, instructors, and classmates encouraged me to dig deeper into societal issues so that I could understand marginalization from multiple perspectives. I came to understand that in order to truly remedy marginalization, solutions needed to consider the intersectionality of experience. My new knowledge required that I reject my initial product plans, as they did not adequately address the issues that prompted me to enrol in my M.Ed. program and take on a portfolio project. When I learned about the Walls to Bridges program, I was inspired to incorporate it into my project, as it aligned with my new Freirean understanding of social justice education. A program that permits problem-posing model

education rather than a banking model of education allows the oppressed to question and reshape society through dialogue (Freire, 1993). This is the type of program that I wanted to create.

Since I wanted to create a program that incorporated the voices of the population that would be involved in the program, my project needed to go through the Research Ethics Board (REB) review. While the experience was interesting, I found it frustrating and much longer than I expected. Once I had REB approval, I ran into difficulty locating research participants. The delays in beginning my research caused me to feel like I was spinning my wheels. Although I desired to collaborate with criminalized women while creating the program, I came to realize that consultation was not feasible within the timeframe of my program. Therefore, it has rolled into a new task that I will approach in my lifelong learning plan. I hope that by building partnerships with community colleges the program can be fleshed out further and consultations with criminalized women will occur. I suspect that some of the difficulty that arose with finding research participants stemmed from the fact that my work was about a theoretical program. More buy-in may be achieved if the theorized program has the backing of an institution that indicates a desire to move it from theoretical to practical.

My research journey also showed me that research can be a very lonely experience. While I was supported by many people, my research area was not one that touched the lives of my friends and family. Therefore, they did not understand my motivations or reach out to find out more about my research. Yes, I had questions about how I was progressing, but friends and family did not seem truly interested in hearing the details of my work. In times when my research was hard, I found it harder to push through because I did not have someone to talk through my research. My work felt very much like a solitary venture. In my moments of doubt, reconnecting with my passion for the project was helped when I re-read my literature review. Re-

reading my work caused me to feel pulled back to my research and my end goal. In my gut, I knew that I was doing important work. While remaining committed to a vision was important for my motivation, so too was finding a community to connect with over my research. I found that connecting with my supervisor and other M.Ed. students helped me to feel validated in my work and in my capabilities. There were numerous times in my journey when I was tempted to abandon my portfolio to follow the different learning experiences available within the course route. However, chance meetings and discussions with my mentors and colleagues kept me committed to my portfolio. If I had kept to my introverted ways and solitary approach to working, I might have given up on my portfolio, which I believe would have created regret later in life. Therefore, I learned that a balance must be created in my work. Solitary work is important but remaining connected to a community helps to maintain motivation and also provides opportunities to be challenged to modify and improve.

The following collage is meant to illustrate the learning experience I had in completing my M.Ed. portfolio assignment. There is a legend included to help the viewer decipher the meaning of my collage.


My Research Journey
THE GRASS ISN'T GREENER on the OTHER SIDE.
THE GRASS IS GREENER where you WATER IT.
REB
Time slipping by as I spin my wheels...
When thee builds a prison, thee had better build with the thought ever in thy mind that thee and thy children may occupy the cells. ~ Elizabeth Fry
Education is freedom.
Paulo Freire

Legend			
	My purpose: to help criminalized women access post-secondary education in order to escape criminality.		I realized that blind research is not always ideal. I needed to become aware of my intrinsic bias, in order to conduct research that is truly just.
	My passion that pulled me toward my goal.		Learning of the Walls to Bridges program helped me to conceptualize a post-secondary program that was socially just.
	My supervisors, instructors, mentors, and classmates. They helped connect me back to the pathway toward my purpose		Inability to locate participants required a different approach to completing my portfolio tasks.
	Hazards to completing my work: children, lack of expected research, pandemic.		My end goal and anticipated finish line.
	Refusal to enter the “easier” non-research based path to my M.Ed.		Although my portfolio is done, my research journey is not. The end of my M.Ed. is the key that opens my next journey.
	Distractions that tempted me to abandon the portfolio route, such as the course work route, or simply abandoning my M.Ed.		My nest research journey, that is not fully articulated but is now open for me to explore.

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