



SUPPORTING DESISTANCE IN PRISON

By Correctional Research Branch



Spot a new aspect of desistance?

RELATIONAL DESISTANCE (Tertiary Desistance)

Recognition by others that one has changed
Sense of belonging to a community



Support can come from:

Prison Staff & Inmates
Family & Friends
Community
Society

Why is relational desistance important for you to know?

International research found that offenders faced **struggles when desisting** and **support from others mattered to them**^{1,2}:



Individuals need a supportive and caring environment to desist

Individuals think and behave according to what we perceive of them

Individuals hope others can recognise their efforts and change

What can we do?



Provide a listening ear and motivate them

Recognise their potential and provide positive appraisals

Affirm the positive changes they made

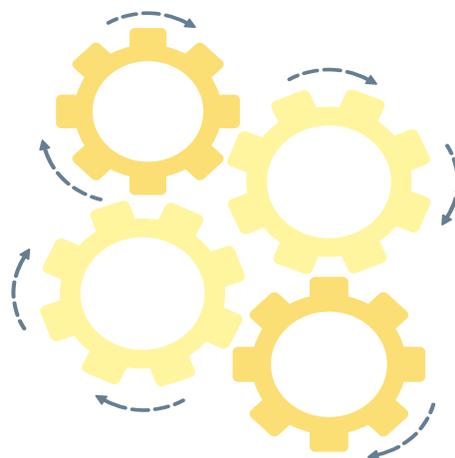
Providing inmates with **social support during incarceration** plays a crucial part in sustaining their **long-term desistance**.



How are you supporting relational desistance in your work?

When was the last time your inmates shared with you about challenges they faced?
How did you respond?

What are some positive changes you have seen in your inmates recently?



Where in your daily work can you facilitate opportunities to develop your inmates' potential?

When was the last time you shared a positive appraisal with your inmate?
How did that impact them?

What actions were helpful to support your inmates?

Do share your experiences with your co-workers!

¹Nugent, B., & Schinkel, M. (2016). The pains of desistance. *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, 16(5), 568-584.

²Nixon, S. (2019). "I just want to give something back": Peer work in prison. *Prison Service Journal*, (245), 44-53.