



# GOOD PRACTICES

Partner: Skill Up

Practice's title: **NAUSICAA PROJECT**



Including **Chess** As a **Re-education Up-Skilling** tool

## Summary

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# 1- BACKGROUND AND SCOPE

## 1.1 Background

*Where does the practice come from? What is the context in which the practice was created and experimented first?*

Citizens, after the experience of detention, encounter in the first phase of reintegration a number of problems related to material, relational, social and individual needs. For many, imprisonment causes a rupture in personal life and in the social and family context. An inmate leaving prison has to face and overcome new challenges related to the difficulty of being accepted back into society, building new relationships and the near impossibility of finding regular housing or work. The concrete needs of reception, resources and support for housing and work are closely combined with the importance of the relational dimension, with the need for dialogue and communication, which do not seem to find an answer in the services currently available on the territory. Prison is increasingly a container of exclusion and social marginality. Prisoners often have deficits at the level of personal information tools and relational and social competence in the use of the territory's resources and in the orientation towards its opportunities. This situation may reoccur upon release, affecting the chances of recidivism. The legal provisions provide for specific competences of the public services (state and municipal) in the field of assistance to the offender and in the subsequent reintegration phase. The scarcity of resources, especially in terms of personnel, does not allow the implementation of concrete actions to make the regulatory dictates effective and to really support people in re-integration paths.

For several years, the local reality of Parma has known important experiences of cooperation between the territory and prison institutions, aimed at the

socio-occupational reintegration of prisoners or people who have experienced imprisonment.

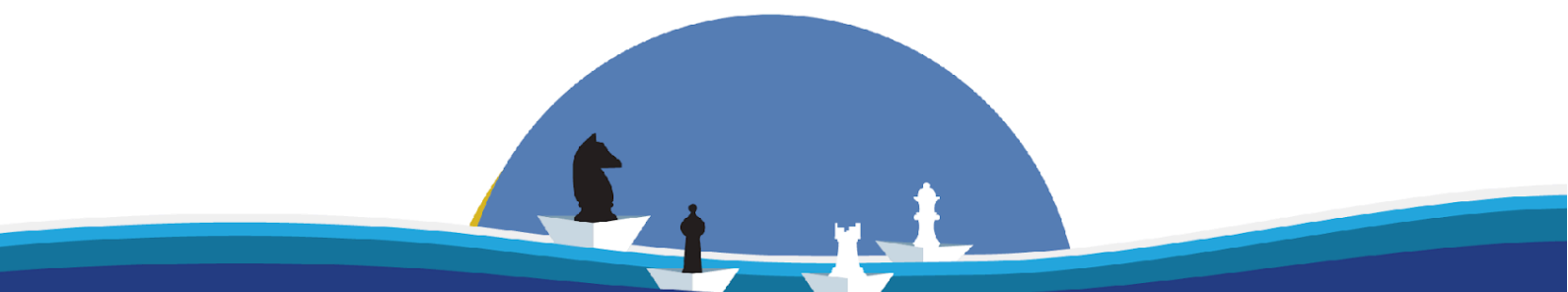
Associations and social cooperatives have long been active in creating reintegration pathways that avoid the risks of exclusion and marginalisation, favouring the promotion of citizenship rights and facilitating the relationship between the penal sphere and the territory; a group of these realities is working, in cooperation with Forum Solidarietà, on the 'Centro Servizi Carcere' (Prison Service Centre) project with the aim of designing and achieving pathways to meet the needs of those who, after the end of their imprisonment, experience serious problems with their social reintegration.

Out of this collaboration, the A.LI. Association was established in April 2002. - Accoglienza per le libertà - Coordinamento territoriale volontariato e cooperazione - oltre la cultura della pena. With the Nausicaa Project, which makes reference to operational experiences gained by third sector realities in other cities (e.g. Coop. Articolo Tre in Milan), the A.LI. Association promoted an initial intervention in relation to the problems outlined, in the hope that it could become a factor of promotion and awareness, in a logic of connection and communication between the inside and the outside: between the prison institution and the surrounding territory.

## 1.2 Main subject

*What is the main subject at the heart of the practice? What are the themes developed in the practice?*

The aims of the practice are the social reintegration of people who live or have lived the experience of imprisonment, offering support and opportunities to reconnect with the social context, enhancing the resources of the territory and



promoting collaboration and joint planning between public bodies: voluntary associations and social cooperatives.

The project aims at reducing the risks of marginalisation, social exclusion and recidivism, through the promotion of citizenship rights and the development of an aid intervention achieved in a logic of connection between prison and territory.

## 1.3 Target

*What's the intended target group of the practice? Are there primary and secondary beneficiaries? (eg.: other teachers as primary beneficiaries and adult learners as secondary beneficiaries, or viceversa).*

The main target of the practice described are trainers, tutors and educators.

## 2- OUTLINE OF THE PRACTICE

### 2.1 Description

*Please describe the activities contained in the practice. If possible, try to divide them in Learning Units. Also, define how long the training practice will last (1 to 4 hours).*

The project achieved interventions at different times and stages.

#### **Before release from prison**

- interview, meeting with the person: at the request of the inmate about to be released from prison, meeting with the Association's volunteers aimed at getting to know the personal situation, needs and problems, to discuss life plans and needs with reference to the first period of release from prison. Duration: 3 hours.
- Identification of reintegration paths: initiation of a dialogue and discussion with the detained person, which can lead to a comparison of his/her expressed needs and expectations with the realistic possibilities and opportunities that exist in the area, with reference to regulatory, bureaucratic and service organisation constraints/resources, defining a path of actions that can actually be implemented in the first period of freedom. Duration: 3 hours.
- Initiation of contacts with public and private services in the area: presentation of the situation, discussion of the planning and preparation of any necessary reception actions, with a view to preventing the emergency.
- setting up of a network of contacts and collaborations inside and outside the Penitentiary Institute (Management, Penitentiary Police Commander, Educators), (CSSA Social Workers, Municipality Desk) in order to achieve the common objective of facilitating the social reintegration of the detained citizen, through
- a wide and correct information inside the prison on the Accompaniment Service (objectives, modalities, etc.) so as to enable interested inmates to apply for a meeting with the volunteers (e.g. posting of information posters in

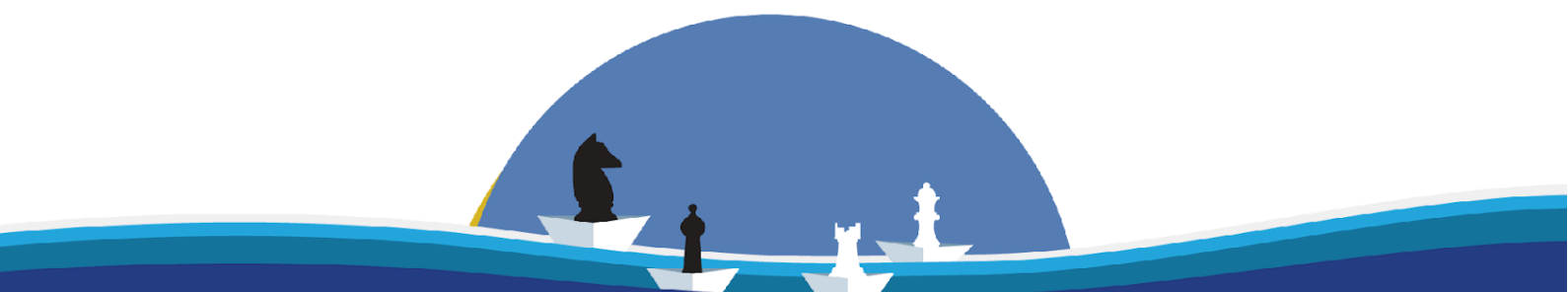
the sections, preparation of information material to be made available to the various operators inside the prison)

- information exchanges, enabling volunteers to gather useful information about people for a better definition of the projects.

**After prison:** implementation and development of the action of accompanying people to the territory and its opportunities, through the setting up of a Listening and Orientation Centre, intended as a specific meeting and welcoming space, which can operationally support the volunteers' action aimed at:

- meet the person released from prison, verifying together the development of the agreed programme and the outcome of the contacts made, offering relational support for a possible clarification and redefinition of possible paths to autonomy, in the light of experiences, contacts and the evolution of life paths, etc;
- offer information with respect to the city and daily needs, helping the person to orient themselves strategically in the use of resources (mapping of the territory and creation of a constantly updated database with reference to social, reception, health, educational and training services, job opportunities, etc.)
- develop an accompanying action, accompanying the person in the various contacts with the area's services with an action aimed, according to need, at personal support, at facilitating access to services: help with paperwork, managing waiting times, mediation, learning social skills, etc;
- to receive documentation on regulations, practices, prison and punishment issues, experiences and innovative paths achieved in other cities and all the information that may facilitate reintegration paths, to be made available to volunteers and to all those who wish to learn more about these issues;
- promote social research and discussion with institutions and public and private services in the area, in order to identify specific orientation, support and mediation paths to support people in their search for housing and job opportunities.

The **Listening and Guidance Centre** worked through the volunteers who refer to it, to promote responses to the needs of listening, information, orientation, facilitation



of paths, contact and accompaniment towards the competent social services of those in need of structured social projects.

The Listening and Guidance Centre is an open meeting place and reference point also for former prisoners who are in the area for various reasons and who have not had the opportunity to contact the project volunteers in the phase preceding their release, and for volunteers and citizens interested in learning more about prison, detention and reintegration issues.

## 2.2 Aim/goal

*Please describe the aim(s) and goal(s) of the practice: what are the objectives that the practice wants to reach?*

The objective is to achieve a "service of accompaniment to the territory" aimed at all those, Italians and foreigners, who are leaving or about to leave prison, to develop actions to support individual paths of life and autonomy in this very critical phase and in the subsequent period of reintegration outside, overcoming a logic of intervention only emergency type, coordinating the action of the Association's volunteers, who already work both inside the prison.

The Service of accompaniment to the territory is also designed for those who leave prison benefiting from semi-freedom, art. 21 or custody to the Penitentiary Social Service.

## 2.3 Learning Outcomes

*What learning outcomes are expected from the practice in order to consider it successful? What will the participant learn? How will the training help their behavioural competences?*

The project worked, in particular, on the development of interpersonal skills, on which the participants gained a good level of learning. Among these we highlight the following:

### **KNOWING HOW TO TAKE RISKS**

The relational dimension does not guarantee safe, short-term results, but sets in motion mechanisms of thought and action that can generate significant dynamics with positive repercussions on the management and realisation of work. Taking risks means knowing how to bet on the relational dimension in order to create a better quality of the working environment, without this giving absolute certainty of the expected results. Building positive stimuli and stimulating, through the personal proposal, the dimension of relationships aimed at creating a shared well-being is a dimension in which to invest on a daily basis.

### **KNOWING HOW TO TOLERATE FRUSTRATIONS**

The relational perspective and the work perspective are also very much intertwined at this level: to such an extent that failures at work can be experienced as personal. Dealing with frustrations may not be so easy for everyone (personality building) and requires reading tools provided by the environments to which one belongs. Supporting people in the face of failure (which may be real and may also have caused harm) is necessary, so that there are regulatory and accompanying aspects geared towards improving professionalism. Frustrations may originate from the work sphere related to one's role/task/responsibility, failure to fit into the workplace, contact with colleagues or superiors, the person himself/herself who may feel inadequate/out of place/unrealised.

### **BEING OPEN TO CHANGE**

Being open to change: with respect to one's own professional role and with respect to the relationships put in place and built over time. Maintaining availability means not closing oneself off or becoming fossilised in one's own positions, but trying to take into consideration all the variables (professional/relational) that influence work processes so as not to be 'displaced' by possible changes.

## 2.4 Training Approach

*What kind of training/teaching methodology is implemented in this practice? Is there a literature/bibliography (not mandatory)?*

Methods used:

- **planning**, by constantly implementing the actions implemented, in order to promote effective pathways to respond to emerging needs, with particular attention to the most marginalised and least approached by the services;
- development of **network** actions, by offering advice and assistance to ex-prisoners or those on the way out, in finding and using local resources, and in properly accessing existing public and private services, through an action that can already start in the period preceding release from prison.
- **observation**, by paying constant and particular attention to the detection of needs, to the identification of the "problematic nodes" existing in the reintegration paths, to the action of stimulation and proposal towards the competent institutions so that they fully perform the post-prison assistance functions;
- **experimental character**, developing frequent checks on the results obtained, in order to avoid any negativity and emphasise the positive aspects.

### 3- TOOLS

*Which tools and materials are necessary for this practice to be implemented/to be successful?*

Working methodology for volunteers.

The Project is promoted by the volunteers of the A.LI. Association, who have been working for years on prison and justice issues, operating in aid and assistance paths both within the prison of Parma and in the city area. The Project intends to promote solidarity and even greater attention of the voluntary world towards these issues.

The assumptions referred to in the social action and intervention are as follows:

- The relationship and dialogue with the person. From the perspective of the recognition of citizenship rights, through active listening and clarification with respect to the resources and opportunities of the territory, the intention is to foster the elaboration and development of the person's "own goals", of his or her life project and of his or her autonomous personal growth within the territory. The project therefore intends to connote this relational dimension and attention to the person, availing itself of the collaboration and operation of volunteers who, through direct personal experience or work in the field, have acquired in-depth knowledge of the prison's problems.
- Work on the territory. Activating and enhancing the formal and informal public and private resources, in a logic of knowledge and attention towards the existing services, of communication and exchange, of common planning, while respecting their specificities.
- Orientation and accompaniment. Realised in a dimension of promotion of the resources, skills and knowledge of the beneficiaries, not as passive recipients but as persons competent to decide on problems and solutions that concern them; support and accompaniment, if necessary, in accessing and using the area's resources, with support from both an operational and relational point of view.

- Training. Volunteers working on the project, whether working inside or outside the prison, are committed to permanent training courses, which encourage reflection and confrontation on personal methods of meeting and communication, of reading needs and of operational intervention, in order to share, while respecting personal peculiarities, a common working methodology.
- Coordination. It is fundamental to promote, for the volunteers involved in the project, a team work methodology, which allows for the comparison of projects on situations and the operational coordination of interventions.

## 4- OBSERVATIONS

*This space can be used for all comments and observations, including what you couldn't fit in the previous sections of the template.*

Emotional competences developed with the practice: Social skills.