

AN ASSISTANCE OF PODANÉ RUCE WHILE DEALING WITH A SITUATION AFTER THE END OF A PRISON SENTENCE

**Mgr. Anastázie Bohanesová; Mgr. Kateřina Nina Červinková;
Bc. Michal Ošťádal**

Společnost Podané ruce, o.p.s.

A parole represents both hope and fear of the unknown for many convicted people. This is an issue especially for those convicted who have been condemned a longer sentence. The biggest problem is insecurity caused by a world which have changed during their prison time – sometimes more and sometimes less, but it is always new and unfamiliar in some regards. It is a world that they often enter with hope, unrealistic expectations and carefreeness. A convicted man who has been imprisoned already for two years now expressed a main problem with the following words: *‘What rubs you out in a jail is that you don’t have any worries. You care about nothing. But it gets nuts once you’re out. You don’t know that world anymore.’*

In order to prevent return to the society from being such a big unknown for a person restricted on freedom, there are programmes in the Czech Republic which target on people restricted on freedom and those who are released after their prison sentence. One of the main aims is to prepare a person restricted on freedom for leaving a jail in a case of both suspended and unsuspended sentence. The most important task is to draw up a plan that is focused on the first 48 hours immediately after leaving a prison, but the plan can include a longer time period as well. It is in the first place a convicted person who works with the plan, the person is thus aware of issues which are crucial after his / her leaving prison in regard of social security and in regard of securing others, potentially risk situations. One possibility of how to support a person with a suspended sentence is to use a probation and resocialization programme that intensively, purposefully and in the long terms works with such person. We are going to briefly introduce the Probation and Resocialization Programme and present a short case history in the following lines.

The Probation and Resocialization Programme is intensively in touch with probation and mediation officers in Olomouc region (but also in other regions, if necessary) and their common aim is a high-quality support, assistance and control of people with suspended sentence. A worker of the Probation and Resocialization Programme

is also the first contact person and the first person with whom a person released from a prison communicates and cooperates if he / she has to cooperate with the Probation and Mediation Service. This worker maps an overall situation of a client and informs him about all services provided by the company Společnost Podané ruce o.p.s. and remains in a position of a client's communication worker. The main aim is complexity of services which are covered by this worker. If a client fits in a target group of the Probation and Resocialization Programme, he / she cooperates with the worker in the field of resocialization after prison release (clients with a suspended release) or in the field of stabilization of social areas (clients with a suspended sentence). A worker and a client can focus on problems with accommodation, job possibilities, debts and also family relationships. Workers of the programme are also interested in their clients' leisure time activities. The worker's task is to map all social areas of a client's life and to be helpful while dealing with all matters related to them. The aim of the programme is to lead a client towards stabilization of his social field, a field of social and family relationships and also towards a better balance while returning to the society from a prison. Cooperation between a worker of the programme and a client is intensive – they meet once a week for 2 hours which leads to an efficient and brisk solution of a contract given by a court, the Probation and Mediation Service or the client himself. A team

consists of both a social worker and a therapist which is very useful for complex issues that often arise in the Probation and Mediation Programme.

We would like to share with you a story of Mr. H. as an example of a good practice. He entered the programme in May 2018 since he had been suspendedly released in spring. Mr. H. had managed to gain a promise of both work and flat after his release. He is in debt, but he had started to work on his debt situation with an assistance of a social curator before he entered the Probation and Resocialization Programme. Thanks to problems that Mr. H. managed to deal with himself or with help of other services or his family, it was possible to focus on his personal issues in the context of resocialization and renewal of relationships which was the most important task for the client in that moment. His contracts in the programme were to continue being a teetotaller, stabilization of a relationship with his former mate (with whom he has two children) and reconnection with his children. Another client's issue was how to deal with a situation after being released from a prison. Mr. H. spoke about alienation and insecurity he felt towards both his social environment and close people. He started to work on the fore mentioned issues with a worker – a therapist – of the Probation and Resocialization Programme. An enhancement therapy was used as a

method of cooperation. Development of cooperation can be divided into three parts. The first part focused on stabilization and anchoring of a present situation. This part included dealing with demands in a new job, meeting new colleagues and bonding with them, renewal of relationships with his social surroundings and working on establishment of work-life balance. The second part dealt with finding an effective communication way with an ex-partner, a way of contact with children, dealing with current problems and finding more active manners of spending leisure time. In this part, Mr. H. also focused on a relationship and communication with his mother. The third part was about deepening of understanding of all fore mentioned topics and realization of client's behaviour patterns and thinking in such situations.

Mr. H. managed to stabilize himself in his social surroundings during our cooperation. Within a half of a year, his debts will be payed and communication with a former mate has become significantly more stable once custody of children was arranged. Mr. H. now sees his children nearly every day as he spends his free time with them. Twice or three times a month, the kids are in his place from Friday to Sunday. He gained more security in maintaining his abstinence. According to his own words, the most significant success was coming to terms with feelings of alienation. With a feeling that he does not

belong among 'normal' people. Thanks to all these achievements, Mr. H. is thinking about finding a new partner, reconstruction of his place and about active planning of his close future.

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CONTACT

Mgr. Anastázie Bohanesová
vedoucí centra/sociální pracovnice
Společnost Podané ruce o.p.s.
Práce s klienty v konfliktu se zákonem
Opletalova 1, 779 00 Olomouc
E-mail: bohanesova@podaneruce.cz