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UNDERSTANDING THE ADULT CORRECTIONAL EDUCATION STUDENT: A  
REVIEW OF INHIBITING FACTORS, MOTIVATING FACTORS, AND EFFECTIVE  
INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES FOR THE CLASSROOM

A MASTER'S THESIS  
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY  
OF BETHEL UNIVERSITY

BY  
KAYLA A. LARSON

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE DEGREE OF  
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BETHEL UNIVERSITY

UNDERSTANDING THE ADULT CORRECTIONAL EDUCATION STUDENT: A  
REVIEW OF INHIBITING FACTORS, MOTIVATING FACTORS, AND EFFECTIVE  
INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES FOR THE CLASSROOM

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June 2019

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### **Abstract**

In efforts to understand how to motivate adult learners within the correctional education setting, educators must be aware of the inhibiting and motivating factors that either hinder or improve student self-efficacy. While there are numerous factors that influence each, this study provides a focused lens to spotlight the major components of both the inhibiting factors being psychological hindrances, goals, and negative learning environments as well as the motivating factors being future aspirations, a sense of normalcy and goals for a better life for adult learners within the prison walls. These factors are then utilized in creating and executing effective instructional strategies that will continue to build student motivation, self-efficacy, and self-confidence. Building a respectful environment, employing motivational interviewing tactics, building self-regulated students, and guiding towards release plan goals are the essential skills to be implemented by teachers within adult correctional education in order to build a strong sense of motivation within students.

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## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

### Background Information

More than 9.8 million people around the world live behind bars. Prisoners behind bars continue to retain their right to an education during their incarceration (Delaere et al. 2013). Within the United States, over two million people are incarcerated and the high rates of recidivism create revolving doors in prisons throughout the country. A study conducted in 2012 found that on average, it costs taxpayers \$31,268 per prisoner per year (Iarussi et al. 2016). A culmination of studies conducted on the recidivism rates of offender's show that roughly sixty percent of ex-convicts return to jail at least one or more times after release. The U.S. Department of Education states that approximately seventy five percent of inmates released from prison will commit an additional offense within three years (Hall & Killacky 2008).

Nuttall (2013) found that fifty-four percent of young offenders who do not have a diploma or complete a GED program while in prison returned to jail within three years. The rates at which individuals are incarcerated are astounding and deserves attention. Various solutions to prevent recidivism and assist the inmates currently incarcerated must be considered and seriously contemplated. Education has continued to be the foundation for reducing recidivism and offering the opportunity at new life the inmates currently incarcerated and those soon to be released. Several studies have confirmed that prison-based education has had a positive effect on reducing recidivism and providing inmates with more opportunity than ever before. Nationwide, over seventy percent of those entering state correctional facilities have not completed high school or a high school

equivalency program. Of these seventy percent, roughly sixteen percent have never had high school education at all (Hrabowski et al. 2002).

Gordon and Weldon (2003) studied the recidivism rates as compared to correctional education participation. Of the inmates who earned their GED while incarcerated, only four percent were rearrested as compared to the national rate of sixty five percent. When the first penitentiary opened in 1790 in Philadelphia it was envisioned as place of penance. This penitentiary was viewed as the first modern prison while crime was seen as a result of exposure to a corrupt world; the solution-communication with God. Every aspect within this first prison, including education, was designed to bring penance that resulted in purity and personal reform. Meditation Bible study, isolation, and silence was a regular environment for the inmates of this time (Iarussi et al. 2016). Over time, common practices within the prison walls have changed. Education and building job related skills in inmates has become a priority and isolation and silence have been pushed aside as the “old way” of corrections. Correctional education continues to positively influence the management of inmates as when occupied by academic and vocational programs, there is less time to get into trouble or act out due to idleness. Participation in educational programs also leads the inmates to a better sense of self. Self-esteem may increase and carry over to others therefore creating positive role models throughout the correctional facility. It is the intent that this positive sense of self continues upon release and creates an easier transition to society leading to a lower level of frustration and optimistically a lower rate of recidivism (Tewksbury & Stengel 2006). Furthermore, Muth (2004) outlines how educational programs positively influence the psychological wellbeing of inmates, reduce the number of rule infractions, and work



towards facilitating a culture of respect thus allowing the inmates to create personal motivations for success (as cited in Tewksbury & Stengel, 2006). It is because of the continually researched and proven conviction that education plays multiple positive roles in the lives of inmates while incarcerated that the motives for participation must be understood on a deeper level.

### **Definition of Terms**

- **Self-efficacy:** personal judgement of own abilities, the capacity to bring a desired result to fruition (Pam, 2013)
- **Controlling teaching behavior:** behaviors that ignore students' perspectives and have an authoritarian and pressure order to direct students to a preconceived way of thinking, feeling and behaving (Ryan & McCabe, 1993)
- **Perceived control:** the perceived control over outcomes that often tie to internal and external controls (Schunk, 1991)
- **Learned helplessness:** a disturbance in motivation, cognition, and various emotions that has since resulted from previous experience uncontrollability (Schunk, 1991)
- **Intrinsic motivation:** learning behavior based on personal interest and pleasure in the activity itself (Delaere et al., 2013)
- **Normalization:** the feeling of being a normal person instead of a prisoner and breaking free from prison routines (Hamili et al., 2017; Manger et al., 2010)
- **Push factors:** emerging from the need to get away from prison routine (Manger et al., 2010)

- **Avoidance posture:** seeking new social constructs and contacts as well as avoiding the environment deemed unpleasant (Delaere et al. 2013; Parson & Langenbach, 1993)
- **Goal oriented learner:** learners that believe education has an instrumental value and use it to accomplish goals such as professional advancement (Hamili et al., 2017)
- **Micro goal orientation:** no explicit definition stated, however from the literature I infer that micro-goal orientation is a more internalized and self-oriented goal related to a person's aspirations and hopes
- **Meso goal orientation:** no explicit definition stated, however from the literature I infer that meso-goal orientation may be defined as a goal related to a learned trait
- **Performance goals:** seeking favorable judgments or the hope to avoid negative judgements of one's competence (Sachs, 2010)
- **Motivational interviewing (MI):** an evidence based collaborative conversation style intended to enhance individual's intrinsic motivation and commitment to change (Iarussi et al. 2016, p. 42)

### **Guiding Questions**

When looking at correctional education, it is important to understand the importance the programming may play on the lives of the inmates. It is because of the validity of the educational programming and the proven effects it plays on recidivism that many students participate. However, is it safe to make the assumptions that students are solely participating in correctional educational programming because of the chance at reducing recidivism? What role may the mandated literacy programs play on offender

motivation and willingness to participate? There are many questions that come to life when thinking about the correctional education setting and the offenders that are participating, their motives, their fears, and how to effectively teach a population such as this. Thus, the primary focus of this study was to determine:

- i. What major inhibiting factors inhibit offender motivation within correctional education?
- ii. What are the most significant motivating factors for offenders participating in correctional education?
- iii. What instructional strategies would prove most effective in teaching offenders in the correctional education setting?

The research questions for this study were primarily focused on creating an educational environment that was conducive and positive for most students within the correctional environment. Not all inhibiting and motivating factors will apply to each student and not all instructional strategies outlined will be effective for all students. It is important to understand that each offender's motives may be individually driven and not fit within the overarching statements made, however a vast number of studies that surveyed inmates throughout the world were analyzed to compile the following data.

### **Rationale**

As prison populations and the number of inmates with low levels of educational qualifications and insufficient basic skills remain, correctional education will remain a critical need to those incarcerated. Many have recognized prison education and training as a pivotal piece to the rehabilitation and social reintegration of inmates because of the

opportunities that education is able to provide to the students (Roth et al., 2017).

Although reducing recidivism is an important component to correctional education, determining its effectiveness was not the purpose of this literature. It is necessary to look past the numbers of recidivism rates and begin to consider what may effectively contribute to the success of students in the correctional education programs.

Understanding what deters inmates from participating in education allows educators, and other staff within correctional facilities, an opportunity to change the minds, in inherently the lives, of many individuals. Understanding the motivating factors for education participation permits the utilization of such factors in the classroom and perhaps other areas of the facility. Comprehending the positive and negative factors for inmate motivation allows for the continual improvement of correctional education and therefore continues to improve inmate opportunity for success.

## CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

### **Inhibiting Factors**

Inhibiting factors for students in adult correctional education may be viewed as the factors that influence their aversion for participation and motivation. These factors have the ability to hinder success and change within these adult learners. Understanding the inhibitors within students and how to effectively change their point of view allows educators the opportunity to transform student outlook and effort.

### **Psychological Hinderances**

The desire to participate in correctional education programs does not always come naturally to incarcerated adult learners. Many experience a variety of emotions and aversions when it comes to beginning an educational career again. These adult learners bring with them low academic self-efficacy beliefs that are often based on negative past experiences in education (O'Neill & Thomson, 2013). These students in correctional education were once young adults who left a high school without graduating and now find themselves in a very different environment within a correctional facility where they are, in some cases, mandated to attend an educational program. Generally, the adult correctional population has been poor, unskilled, unemployed or underemployed. To further complicate this notion, a majority of the students in correctional education experience or have once experienced learning difficulties. It has been estimated that forty percent of adult and youthful offenders have disabilities whereas the general population (non-incarcerated) is only estimated to have around ten percent (Feller, Kastner, & Whichard, 2000). Additionally, prison populations, unlike society, have a greater

proportion of minorities thus creating a highly multiethnic and multicultural population (Gathright 1999). It is a culmination of these factors that lead these individuals to have a sense of animosity towards education. The pairing of low academic self-efficacy with a skill-set insufficient to navigate an academic environment that is contrary to previous beliefs can lead these adult students in correctional education to a state that lacks motivation and persistence to succeed as well as task avoidance. If a student believes they will encounter a great deal of difficulty in the accomplishment of a task, they inadvertently face difficulty in the comprehension of materials and again further their low sense of self efficacy for learning. An observed failure, or fear of a situation as a whole, may lower self-efficacy and deter a student from attempting or working on a task all together (Schunk 1991).

## **Goals**

Academic persistence in adult learners, and specifically adult students in correctional education, is a complex paradox. The duration of incarceration can play a large role in student motivation and extended participation in correctional education. Studies have shown that inmates with short sentences find it less lucrative to begin an educational program compared to those with a longer sentence (Manger et al. 2010). These individuals may be continuing to view education with a negative perception and do not understand that education can be continued after release and therefore deem it an elusive goal. Low skilled adults that participate in educational programs often express their primary goal to be obtaining their GED and high school level academic skills and are more interested in the various credentials to be obtained than the knowledge necessary to obtain the goal. The credentialed goals now lead to further anxiety and

apprehension due to the value of the goal being higher than the belief in their ability to achieve the goal thus creating a high-stakes environment (Bong & Skaalvik 2003; Kasworm 2008). More specifically, master-avoidance goals have been linked to low self-efficacy in students and the adult learners that hold such goals are more likely to give up all together if they fail to achieve the goal or feel as though they are falling behind. These feelings of inadequacies and failure can lead to further shame and self-doubt (Bartholomew et al. 2018). If students feel the sense that little progress is being made it may lower student motivation and self-efficacy if there is not an alteration made to task approach. Students are not motivated to attempt what they view as impossible or unattainable and therefore will often times not persist. Self-efficacy beliefs are again interfering with a perceived capability to learn and employ skills necessary to attain a valued outcome (Schunk 1991).

### **Learning Environment**

The academic environment and a student's perception of the type of teaching behavior can play an immense role in the lack of motivation for these adult students in correctional education. Controlling teaching behaviors has the ability to undermine student motivation when they result in the impeded internalization of values of an action (Deci & Ryan, 2000; De Meyer et al., 2014). Controlling teaching behaviors can be easily defined as behaviors that ignore students' perspectives and have an authoritarian and pressure order to direct students to a preconceived way of thinking, feeling and behaving. When students experience a controlling teaching environment, it has been suggested that the students' basic psychological needs are thwarted. This type of environment pushes the student to conform their behavior to fulfill the teacher's expectations and over time

causes the student to doubt in their abilities and gain a feeling of rejection from the teacher. When these behaviors by teachers are perceived by students in adult correctional education settings, the students may engage in the coping mechanism known as challenge avoidance where the student will withdraw and avoid any chance at success or failure. The fear of failure and being criticized by the teacher in front of peers will increase the image that students are not valued as a person. These notions discount a student's sense of self-worth and ultimately sense of self-efficacy and inhibit academic success (Bartholomew et al. 2018).

To further understand the adult correctional education environment and the way that it impacts a student's self-efficacy, the idea of perceived control must be understood. Perceived control is a term that can be defined in a wide variety of ways that generally speaks to the perceived control over outcomes that often tie to internal and external controls. Many inmates within the adult correctional facility can acquire the notion of learned helplessness, a related construct. This idea involves a disturbance in motivation, cognition, and various emotions that since resulted from previously experienced uncontrollability (Schunk 1991). This psychological state now needs to be factored in when considered voluntary and involuntary participation within a correctional education setting. Of the correctional education programs within the United States, only twenty percent have a mandatory literacy program meaning inmates that do not have a GED or high school diploma are forced to participate in programming. Students within these mandate literacy programs and researchers alike have attempted to argue that unless students want to learn, achievement will not occur (Moos 1973). Students in correctional education will often attempt to utilize this notion and draw a connection to learned



helplessness in order to avoid participation and success within the program. Contrary to popular belief and wishful thinking by the students, academic achievement was not significantly different between mandatory participation in literacy programs (Ryan & McCabe 1993).

### **Motivating Factors**

Motivating factors in adult students within correctional education may be viewed as the factors that influence a student's willingness to participate and be successful within education. These factors have the ability to drive success and change within these adult learners. Understanding the motivating factors within students gives educators the opportunity to modify instruction to best fit the wants and needs of each student.

### **A Future Influenced by the Past**

Motivation is a vital piece to the understanding of a student's level of engagement, satisfaction and achievement in a learning environment. Due to the importance of motivation within adult education, attention must be paid to the factors that inhibit student motivation and what creates motivated actions within learners; more specifically within a correctional education setting. The students that reside within the correctional facilities often face varying challenges as compared to the 'traditional' adult-learner. When inmates first begin in correctional education programs, many of the inhibiting factors come with them. The students bring with them their baggage, their ideas of unachieved goals, and negative views of the educational environment. However, motivation can change as inmates advance in their coursework. Although students may have initiated their education with negative connotations, motivations evolve and bring

positive motivators to light (Manger et al. 2010). Intrinsic motivation, that which is driven by internal reward, serves as a driving force for inmate participation in educational programs (Hall & Killacky 2008). Knowles et al. (1998) characterized intrinsic motivation of adult learners more specifically in stating that the internal motivation was in terms of personal achievement and self-esteem. A 2004 study conducted in Kentucky had inmate students self-report their motives for education program participation. The number one answer was “to feel better about myself” totaling 49.1% of students. The most prevalent response to “what motivates the inmate to attend school” was “to increase one’s self esteem”. The study also outlines how each response showcased a foundation in bettering one’s self and position within society (Tewksbury & Stengel, 2006, p.19). A similar study was conducted in 2008 with the desire to uncover what motivates inmate students to attend classes. The idea of success was most prominent as it influenced a student’s study habits, motivation to attend classes, and ideas of future education. Majority of respondents noted that the ability to care for themselves and their loved ones was a true mark of success; that they were motivated by impressing their family members. The inmate population in this study recognized success as a set of behavioral characteristics that included motivation, which brought the students into the classroom and continues to keep them there. As the correctional education environment creates a more positive future for both student and their families, it is not uncommon for the adult learner to also be driven by regrets of the past. Although a desire for success is leading the way, the motivation to participate and continue to give effort within correctional education can be tied to the inmate’s regret of past events that led to their dropping out of

school and/or incarceration. The motivation to now fully apply oneself to their education is a product of missed opportunity of their past (Hall & Killacky, 2008).

### **A Sense of Normality**

The motives behind adult learners can be influenced by a great number of things. The motives of adult learners within correctional facilities are influenced specifically by a very different set of conditions. The idea of normalization greatly impacts inmate motives as they wish to gain a feeling of being a regular person rather than being a prisoner (Halimi et al. 2017). Attending class fulfills the feeling of normalization as they are doing an activity that millions of others outside of the prison walls are performing and it is perhaps a task that brings them back to a different part of their life outside of being incarcerated.

This sense of normalization also flows into a deeper concept of avoidance posture that has been discovered to be unique to the inmate population and different from the mainstream adult education environment. This avoidance posture suggests that inmates participate in correctional education programs to not only avoid the feelings of prison life, but to avoid the negative stimuli of other inmates throughout the facility and various features of their current environment that are viewed as undesirable (Parsons & Langenbach, 1993). Theories suggest that inmates in the adult correctional education programs are more motivated by the attempt to break free from prison routines than by the actual activity of seeking and desiring education itself (Manger et al. 2010). On the other hand, these adult learners continue to be motivated for positive social reasons such as meeting new people that may constructively influence their lives (Rothes et al. 2017).

Avoidance postures, and the approach to education that is inherently suggested, stems from a further concept known as push factors. These push factors, as stated by Gambetta, were useful in the illustration of how inmates were influenced to act in a way that was independent of their awareness or future purpose (as cited in Manger et al. 2010). The students that begin an educational experience because of push factors, such as avoidance posture and normalization, may initially have low motivation, but change their motivation due to positive experiences within the classroom (Manger et al. 2010). Skaalvik et al. (2003) believed that although students within the adult correctional education setting begin their education due to what may be viewed as 'negative' motivations actually provide teachers with a platform to help the student lead more 'positive' motives forward (as cited in Manger et al. 2010). However, it should be noted that some research suggests that the idea of avoidance postures, participating in education to simply avoid the feeling of prison life, plays a more modest role in inmate motivation (Delaere et al. 2013). Additional studies suggest that although avoidance posture is a factor in inmate motivation, it plays less of a role than other intrinsic motivating factors (Parsons & Langenbach 1993). Despite normalization and avoidance posture not being the most prominent motivating factor in adult correctional education, each are of value to note because they are one of the few motivating factors that are explicitly unique to the correctional education setting and inmate students.

### **Goals for the Future**

A motivational theory outlines three types of motives for adult education; one being goal-oriented learners. Houle and Maggioncalda stated that these goal-oriented learners use education as a means to accomplish various social and personal goals (as

cited in Hamili et al. 2017). Halimi further defined goal orientation during a study where prisoners' motives to education participation were analyzed. Micro goal-oriented motives were the most common response from the inmates totaling to 67.5% having identified at least one micro goal as the reason for educational participation. The top micro goal-oriented motives were identified as "wanting to obtain a diploma or certificate" totaling to 54.7% and "allows me to make future plans" totaling to 40.2%. Meso goal-oriented motives acquired 47% of inmate votes as their reason for participation in educational programming (Halimi et al., 2017, p. 12-14). Manger et al. (2010) again identified goal orientation as one of the top three motives for inmate educational participation and further defined goal orientation where the participation of a student is seen as a means to a particular end. Numerous studies have since continued to identify goal orientation as a motive to adult learner participation in education therefore solidifying the need to further understand the goals students are creating and how they create a sense of motivation.

Previous researchers have found that when the value of a goal is higher than a student's belief in their ability to achieve the goal a high-stakes environment is created (Bong & Skaalvik 2003; Kasworm 2008). It is because ideas such as this that the types of goals that create motivation in adult learners must be further analyzed and understood. An attractive and positive goal, paired with the belief that the goal is attainable, motivates learners (Schunk 1991).

Previous research by Dweck and Elliot 1983; Dweck 1986 outlined two broad kinds of goals, learning goals and performance goals. A learning goal seeks to increase understanding or mastery whereas performance goals seek favorable judgments or the hope to avoid negative judgments of one's competence. Students that adopt learning

goals are found to engage more deeply and partake in a more self-regulated learning experience, have higher levels of intrinsic motivations and perform better despite various challenges that arise. Sachs (2001) noted in their research that performance goals were not relevant for adult learners as the adult learners would be working towards master-oriented motives rather than for the affirmations of their peers (Remedios & Richardson 2012). Goal setting is a vital cognitive process that inherently affects motivation as students are likely to attain a sense of self-efficacy upon attainment of a goal. The goal also incites commitment and engagement in the tasks that are necessary to achieve it. The sense of self-efficacy is then continued as the students observe progress and are inherently becoming more skilled (Elliot & Dweck 1988). Because the student's sense of self-efficacy continues to improve, motivation is sustained within the student. Despite the motive of the goal, when a student is moving toward accomplishment, a sense of confidence is being developed which continues to further support motivation and effort but also build a student's belief in their ability to achieve the goal (O'Neill & Thomson 2013). Through the process of goal setting, a student's self-efficacy improves and the student is more likely to continue to showcase persistence in their educational endeavors. It has been suggested that students with higher self-efficacy beliefs are able to more effectively cope with cognitive demands and perceive learning tasks to be interesting and valuable (Komarraju & Nadler 2013). It is because of these suggested links that one may accurately assume that goal setting not only leads to a student's higher self-efficacy beliefs, but also acts as the natural progression to creating intrinsic motivation in students within adult correctional education.

### **Instructional Strategies**

Upon understanding and recognizing the inhibiting and motivating factors that influence students in correctional education, educators are better prepared to model instructional strategies that will prove effective. The instructional strategies outlined are aligned with the needs of the students and provide the best opportunity for students to build motivation and self-efficacy in their educational environment.

### **A Respectful Environment**

Creating a learning environment that students feel comfortable and confident in is a vital component to being a teacher. This same concept applies when working with adult learners in correctional education; the students still want to feel respected and encouraged by their teacher within an environment that is safe from judgment. The physical environment should be a place where learners feel at ease. Not only should the behaviors of the teacher and students be positive, but the room should fit the adult learners that reside within it. Furnishings and equipment should be adult sized and comfortable. The décor throughout the room should also showcase an adult-like environment (Moeller et al. 2004). If an environment is childish or not fitting for the adult learners, the sense of normalcy and tranquility will be lost. The relationship between teacher and student can often be challenging in a correctional environment as the boundaries must be clearly defined and remain extremely professional and often somewhat closed off. This, however, does not imply that the relationship and dialogue between the two parties cannot be respectful and encouraging.

### **Motivational Interviewing**

Motivational Interviewing (MI) is often a strategy utilized within a correctional facility that focuses on building confidence, independence, engagement and self-responding learners. The teaching approaches that surface during motivational interviewing are approaches upon therapeutic techniques and psychotherapy. MI, when utilized as a teaching strategy, is a way to build a non-judgmental, collaborative and constructive dialogue between teacher and student thus creating a respectful learning environment. People are motivated by those they respect, therefore a supportive and respectful relationship between student and teacher is truly vital for the success of students (Wells et al. 2014). As MI tactics have been shown to be an effective means of building a respectful relationship between student and teacher, it is important to understand how to instill such strategies in the classroom. Miller and Moyers (2006) organized the MI strategy into eight stages for learning. The first stage involves the teacher promoting the idea of an effective working relationship. Next, counseling skills such as asking open ended questions and statements of affirmation are incorporated. The third stage is where the first direct component of MI is introduced, directing language to a positive behavior change.

Amrhein et al. (2003) defined this schema more deeply in saying that the teacher should be reinforcing student statements that are moving toward change while also employing such behaviors as this will lead to a higher likelihood of students following suit. The fourth stage is a continuation of the previous as it introduces the skillset that is necessary to obtain and build a change in client talk. Stage five teaches how to roll with resistance, such as emphasizing personal choice, using reflective statements, and reframing. The sixth stage includes transitioning to what is coined as a 'change plan'.



Teachers must assess student readiness to move from building the motivation and commitment to change to developing a plan for change. Stage seven moves to the solidification of the change plan. Finally, stage eight, involves the skill of understanding when MI is the effective means or when other methods are a more appropriate approach to developing a respectful environment that is furthering student learning (Iarussi et al. 2016). A student's perception of a teacher's level of respect and friendliness connect to a student's level of satisfaction, confidence, effort and overall motivation (Bartholomew et al. 2018). When a student's motivation, and overall academic success, can be so greatly influenced by the type of learning environment instilled by the teacher, it is vital that the environment and relationships within the classroom and respectful and appropriate for an adult learner.

### **Self-Regulation to Self-Efficacy**

Motivational interviewing strategies, although effective for building a respectful learning environment, can be utilized to assist students in becoming more responsible and self-regulated learners. When students are unaware of their behaviors, they are inadvertently blocking their learning. If teachers confront students that are in this mindset, the destructive effects worsen. Students in correctional education often showcase un-mindful situations thus inhibiting their learning, motivation, and overall self-efficacy. Teachers should continually be acting and utilizing various MI strategies to help each student uncover their own personal reasons for participating in education without impinging their own perspectives. When the adult student feels a sense of ownership and volition in their educational motives, this can result in the enhancement of a student's motivation to learn (Wells et al. 2014).

Developing the ability to self-regulate inherently comes with the ability to problem solve and think on a deeper level. Due to the connection between the strategies and the desired outcome of a self-regulated learner, it is important that teachers are encouraging students to use deeper learning strategies such as critical thinking and elaboration. Teachers must continually reinforce the efforts and achievements that students accomplish as a way to continually build a student's sense of self confidence and self-efficacy (Terry 2006). Additionally, it has been found that, of those influences of the instructor, providing regular feedback to students and requiring daily student reflections are strategies that have been proven to have the greatest outcome on student efficacy and academic persistence. (O'Neill & Thomson 2013). These various instructional strategies can prove effective in building student self-regulation and are additionally effective mechanisms for improving self-efficacy, motivations, and performance (Komarraju & Nadler 2013).

### **Prison to Pavement**

In 2018, there were nearly 1.5 million inmates incarcerated under the state or Federal correctional authorities in the United States. Of these 1.5 million inmates, at least 95% will be released from prison at some point and nearly 80% will be released under parole supervision (Hughes & Wilson 2019). The questions then arise of how ready are these individuals to reintegrate into society? Their journey towards reentry begins the day they become incarcerated. The opportunities provided to inmates while within correctional facilities are continually geared towards bettering the individual's life and preparing them to do better. Education plays a major role in this journey; the teachers

play a pivotal part. Teachers must implement instructional strategies and learning models that are relevant for the inmate's life upon release.

Tewksbury and Stengel (2006) investigated the importance of programming within correctional education environments. This study found that skills viewed as “life skills” were ranked to be least important to inmates, however basic math, writing, and spelling were rated the most important and most practical skills to be taught. Although this may seem contradicting to the notion of preparing students for reentry, it actually further proves the value of education and the basic skills being taught to these adult learners. Academic students are more likely to perceive writing skills, literature, spelling, public speaking, and history as very important. Most commonly cited as ‘very important’ are the basic academic skills of math, reading, and the social interaction skill of listening (Tewksbury & Stengel 2006). Student engagement is more closely tied to relevance, relatedness, and practical application (O’Neill & Thomson 2013).

Educators within correctional education must also expand on these ideas of teaching basic skills and discuss course objectives and learning criteria with each student individually. As adult learning is often on an individualized basis, overarching objectives will not build or heighten student motivation. The course objectives should be in relation to a students’ overall academic and employment goals. Teachers should to provide students will the skills and tools to establish various supports to follow up on the needs the student may have even after educational programming and training. The relevance of a student’s goals and aspirations upon release will greatly impact their level of motivation while in correctional education.

It is vital that teachers ask students about their personal interests and, more specifically, their career plans. This information may be used to develop meaningful learning opportunities and activities that fit the desires of each student and engage student interest on a personal and meaningful level (Terry 2006). This is not to say that all instruction should be solely based on a student's career aspirations, but the basic skill instruction can be made more meaningful and relevant when tied to future plans. Additionally, autonomous motivation may be promoted when adult learners begin to grasp the meaning of education and its alliance with other goals and values provided by the learner when further paired with a sense of choice in their life after prison (Rothes et al. 2017).

The Office of Vocation and Adult Education continued to build on this concept in saying that correctional education should not only focus on the basic skills, but the job and life skills that will undoubtedly enhance opportunities for employment and reaching the individual potential that each student possess. The National Alliance supported this claim in saying that instructional programs should create and implement a school to work transitional system (Moeller et al. 2004). Ultimately, in order for students to learn the basic skills necessary for life after prison along with skills necessary to obtain a career that will lead to a better life, students need to know what they want and create steps on how to get there. A sense of direction is important for the students as they can work to achieve or maintain several goals. As previously noted, goal setting is believed to be an important cognitive process that affects motivation. Students are more likely to experience a sense of self efficacy when attaining it and are more apt to make a

commitment to attempt it. Self-efficacy becomes sustainable as student goals continue to be met and skills continue to be improved (Schunk 1991).

## CHAPTER III: APPLICATION MATERIALS

### Who and What?

Educating adult learners within a correctional facility can be challenging. There are many factors that play into a student's self-efficacy, self-confidence, and willingness to participate and give effort in the classroom. By conducting research and understanding the inhibiting factors and various motivational factors that influences a student within a correctional education setting, creating instructional strategies best suited for the population became possible. Without the understanding of what deters and drives students within the prison walls, it would be near impossible to create instructional tools and tips for teachers to utilize.

The instructional strategies tied to this literature review are intended to be utilized by those individuals who teach in a controlled and secured environment, specifically corrections. However, the tools outlined may also benefit other populations of adult learners. Information such as this is useful for all those working and educating within a secured environment because the offenders do not always divulge their reasons for participation or resistance. The educators in this environment need insight into the minds of their students if the students themselves are not willing to share. The information outlined is pertinent and vital for those working with adult learners in correctional education. Many training materials and instructional strategies are not geared specifically at the individuals in prison, but at adult learners as a whole. It is because of this that the instructional materials, and literary review, found within this thesis are of great importance and value to educators within correctional education.

### **PD Material and Research Connections**

The application materials within this thesis have been created to be utilized as professional development and training material for educators within correctional education or those who wish to learn more about the students within these controlled environments. These training materials took the form of a visual presentation and verbal elaboration. There were no actual instructional materials created as each teacher works with a group of individuals who have different motivators, inhibitors, and aspirations upon release that creating overarching instructional materials would not benefit the masses. On the flip side, giving all educators a general understanding of tools and ideas that would benefit their students, once individualized to suit each individual student, creates a more lucrative outcome for student success and motivation to participate in education.

The visual presentation begins with an outline of the inhibiting factors that influence student motivation. A student's previous baggage such as low academic self-efficacy, experienced learning difficulties, and a belief of the inability to accomplish a task can seriously diminish a student's motivation and confidence in the classroom (O'Neil 2013; Feller, Kastner & Whichard 2000; Schunk 1991).

Next, the presentation shows how students setting unattainable and unrealistic goals can create a learning environment that is too 'high-stakes' and can cause great stress and lack of persistence in a student (Manger et al. 2010; Bong & Skaalvik 2003; Kasworm 2008). The final inhibiting factor outlined is the negative learning environment that can be created by controlling teaching behaviors. Such behaviors force students to conform to one way of thinking, feeling, and behaving thus thwarting student

psychological needs and bringing on avoidance behaviors (Bartholomew et al. 2018; Ryan and McCabe 1993). Once educators are exposed to students inhibiting factors, student motives are discussed.

Although not a comprehensive list of motivators for students in correctional education, the literature reviews outline three large factors that influence student motivation and self-efficacy. Students within the correctional education setting are often motivated by regrets from their past and the opportunities that were once missed because of a lifestyle lived. Students reflect on decisions made and wish to improve themselves in order to provide for their families upon release and to create a better foundation for themselves within society (Tewksbury & Stengel 2006). Students' pasts are often a driving force for a better future; educators must understand this and be able to effectively incorporate this knowledge into instruction. External motivators, although not prominent motivators and often viewed as negative influences, are unique to the correctional students.

External motivators, also known as push factors, guide students through various programs that assist students in feeling a sense of normalcy. Students employ various avoidance postures and normalization characteristics as they wish to feel like a person, not a prisoner (Hamili et al. 2017; Parsons & Langenbach 1993). Despite push factors and external motivators losing effectiveness over time, they provide educators with a platform to lead students to more positive motivating factors such as intrinsic motivations.

The final motivating factor showcased for educators of adult correctional education is goal setting. The basic cognitive action allows students to set their sights on



an aspiration, work towards progress and inherently heighten their motivation and persistence as goal attainment is reached. Whether the goal be to attain a diploma or certification or create better opportunities for the future, progress made incites commitment, engagement, and a higher belief in one's own ability (Manger et al 2010; Elliot & Dweck 1988; Schunk 1991).

Coupling the inhibitors and motivators to classroom instruction positions educators to begin making a difference in adult correctional education student's perceptions and efforts in education. Understanding what deters and drives the students is vital in understanding how to effectively teach them.

The professional development materials provide a multitude of instructional strategies that, when used effectively, will lead students to a motivated and persistent state of learning. Creating an environment that is well suited for adult learners is necessary to set the stage. The physical environment should have furniture, décor, and reading materials that are fit for adults. Not only should the physical environment be appropriate for adults, but the relationship between teacher and student should be as well.

Teachers must maintain a positive and respectful relationship and have an encouraging line of communication between the two (Moeller et al. 2004). To further build on a positive line of communication between teacher and student, strategies such as Motivational Interviewing (MI) have proven effective in the correctional environment. MI serves an extremely intentional purpose in building confidence, independence, engagement, and self-responding learners. The strategy is additionally used to create non-judgmental, collaborative, and constructive dialogue between a teacher and a student (Wells et al. 2014). The professional development materials outline the eight steps in

employing MI in the classroom setting. It begins with the teacher promoting the idea of an effective working relationship and continually asking open ended questions and giving statements of affirmation. This will allow students to feel as though they have a voice and it is being heard in a positive manner; contrary to controlling teaching behaviors that stifle the feeling of individuality and importance. Teachers should then direct language to a positive language change and employ such behaviors themselves to promote a following. As each student has different challenges and needs in the adult correctional education setting, such language change will be individualized to each student's basic needs. Teachers continue through MI by now introducing the skill-set that is necessary for the student to build change; again, this will fit the needs of each student.

Understanding that each student will not follow along smoothly through the eight stages is important, roll with the resistance. Ensuring a focus on personal choice and reflective statements will build self-regulation in the student and build their self-confidence as they begin to see success and changes in behaviors and feelings. Continual assessment of student readiness to proceed from the building motivation to committing to a change plan is the next important step for an educator. Understanding that some students may take longer to progress through the stages than others is a key piece of implementing MI. The final steps of the MI instructional strategy are to set a plan with the student to change their previous behaviors and know when to utilize the MI versus varied strategies. When implemented correctly and on an individual basis with students, the relationship between student teacher become stronger as they are working together to create a difference in the life of the student (Miller & Moyers 2006). The teacher is building and affirming the actions of the student and recognizing the progress and

changes they are making in their life. Controlled teaching behaviors and negative perceptions of an educational setting may be broken as the level of respect and friendliness rise between teacher and student. Student perception on teacher's level of caring and respect directly connects to the level of student satisfaction, confidence, and overall motivation in the classroom (Bartholomew et al. 2018). Strategies such as MI assist in bringing these perceptions to a positive place. The final strategy outlined in the professional development materials discusses how to make instructional materials relevant to the students. Majority of the men within a correctional facility will be released back into society, it is therefore important to create learning models directly connected to life upon release.

Ensuring instruction in the basic math, writing, and spelling have been deemed most important to the offenders upon their release (Tewksbury & Stengel 2006). When instructing on materials such as this, outlining the course objectives and learning criteria with each student allow them to make personal connections and ties between the instruction and their lives thus creating personal importance. As students begin to draw personal connections between instruction and their lives, the creation of realistic and attainable goals becomes a factor. Students should be setting goals and tracking their progress toward attainment. Additionally, educators should be asking students about their personal interest and career plans upon release and create materials that are relevant to the student's future plans (Rothes et al. 2017).

Overall, it is important for the educators to understand where the students are coming from and what they are bringing into the classroom with them. Beyond their previous knowledge, each student brings with a set of inhibitors, motivators, and

aspirations for life after prison. It is the job of the educator to mold the inhibiting factors into motivational pieces that build on student self-efficacy and push students to do better and be better than they were before.

## CHAPTER IV: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

### Summary of Research

Understanding adult learners within correctional facilities, and the various beliefs they bring with them into the classroom, has the capacity to change the way the students learn and the way the teacher educates. With 9.8 million people around the world living behind bars, the ideas of educating these adult learners suddenly become relevant and required (Delaere et al. 2013). In efforts to understand students that enter the classroom, educators must grasp the inhibiting factors that each student embraces. These inhibitors are an important component to comprehend as the students often bring with them low academic self-efficacy beliefs due to previous experiences in educational settings that further hinder educational success (O'Neill & Thomson 2013). Students also create credentialed goals that are solely focused on the attainment of a certification or diploma and become too 'high-stakes' for students to be successful (Bong & Skaalvik 2003; Kasworm 2008). A lack of confidence in abilities takes over and further affect student motivation and persistence in the classroom. Furthermore, as students carry with them their previous baggage of educational experiences and the sense of unfulfilled goals, the undesirable environment of prison creates a student unwilling to participate and unenthusiastic to change (Schunk 1991; Moos 1973). Educators must move past the inhibiting factors that influence student motivation and self-efficacy beliefs and find the motivators that drive and encourage students to be successful and persistent.

Though students in adult correctional education have a great number of factors that motivate them, this literature review focuses on those most vital and prevalent to the correctional environment. Numerous studies showcased students in correctional

education reporting their top reason for participation in education to be rooted in bettering themselves and their position within society (Tewksbury & Stengel 2006). The recognition of past mistakes and the desire to be better takes precedence to the negative factors influencing student motivation.

Students also carry with them a desire to avoid negative stimuli within the prison walls and therefore begin education with a negative motivator, but soon transition to more positive and intrinsic motivators such as goals outside of prison and a more successful life upon release (Gambetta 1987; Manger et al. 2010; Rothes et al. 2017). As the educators begin to take each inhibiting and motivating factor into thought, curriculum that is sensitive to each aspect may begin to be developed. A learning environment suited for adults, various student-teacher relationship building techniques, self-reliant students, and goals for a lifelong success become the focal objectives to guiding students to a position of success and motivation in their (educational) futures (Miller & Moyers 2006; Moeller et al. 2004; Terry 2006; Wells et al. 2014).

### **Research Limitations**

One limitation of this study is that we did not conduct research on a focus group of inmate students, but rather gathered varied research on diverse types of inmate students from around the world. This could potentially impose inconsistencies in findings as we were unable to take into account baseline demographic information, personality disorders, the crimes of the inmates, or the laws and state statutes that focus on education in the residing countries and states. Each of these elements have the potential to influence what motivates students in adult correctional education. Aspects such as offender crimes, personality disorders, and educational disabilities all have the power to alter the social

interactions of the students and whether they have the means or motives to work towards future workplace goals. An additional limitation of this study is that not all research outlined was geared to the correctional education student, but adult learners as a whole. Literature was limited in the specific field of adult correctional education and came from one main publication cite which could have created a biased baseline of research. Majority of research used was within a ten year timeframe however, some literature was utilized outside of this timeline as it was still relevant and no new information had since been published. There is a gap in research when it comes to adult learners and how to build their self-efficacy; specifically how to build the motivation and self-efficacy of a student within a correctional or secured setting.

### **Implications for Future Research**

Correctional education as a whole is a field that requires further research to understand best practices for teaching such a population. Although this study covers multiple inhibitors and motivating factors that influence student motivation, not all are covered or known from the research that has been conducted. Additional studies in specific states or countries providing statues and laws would provide clarification on mandated student motives and volunteer participation. Further research with focus groups in consistent minimum, medium, and maximum facilities may result in suggested improvements for instruction in the specific custody levels thus providing more specific and better suited strategies for the outlined populations. Related studies that research the specific inhibiting factor of previously negative educational experiences for students now in correctional could outline specifically what the individuals viewed as negative in the public school systems and the reasons that guided them to dropping out or not

participating. Determining or gaining insight into such convictions may lead to suggested amendments to the public school system that could assist to decrease the number of public education drop-outs. A study such as this would create an immense improvement to the support and betterment of correctional education as it now has the potential to assist in the prevention of public education dropouts.

### **Conclusion**

This specific study was guided by three important questions that attempted to not only give insight into the students within correctional education, but to provide methods in which to effectively provide instruction to such an audience. Each inhibiting factor, motivating factor, and instructional strategy must be considered not only individually, but as a whole in order to create a truly motivated and self-regulated student.

Three major inhibiting factors were outlined that impact motivation of the adult learners within a correctional setting. Psychological hindrances and the previous experiences that each student carries with them has the authority to negatively alter the level of engagement and motivation. Student goals are set in an unrealistic and unattainable fashion thus leaving students feeling as though no progress is being made and they are incapable of success. The learning environment in which students reside also greatly influences the level of motivation a student possesses. When learning environments are belittling, either physically or emotionally, student's stimulus greatly decreases.

Motivating factors are the important pieces that educators must cling tightly to as providing instruction. These are the keys to a student's level of engagement and care. Regrets of the past is a powerful motivating factor as it is an emotional stage that a



student must reach independently, but has the power to invoke a self-desired sense of change. Finding a feeling or normality within the prison walls is a motivating factor that is overtly unique to the student in a correctional setting. Having a sense of the ‘outside world’ and not feeling institutionalized can be enough for some students to remain engaged and motivated in the classroom. Setting goals for the future is the motivating factor that students within a correctional setting often avoid until they truly feel ready to create a change in their life. It the idea of looking forward, past the prison walls, and envisioning life after incarceration that can act as an enormous motivator to students ready to become rehabilitated and build a better life form themselves and their family members.

Understanding and effectively utilizing the inhibitors and motivators of students in a correctional setting is an important factor in creating effective instructional strategies that may be used in the classroom. Building a respectful learning environment gives students a sense of pride. Implementing motivational interviewing tactics assist educators in creating self-regulated students that are able to create a plan for change independently of outside influences. Finally, educators must make instruction relevant to an adult learner. Keeping instruction applicable to life after prison will give students skills that may be used outside of the school house.

It is the hope that by understanding what deters students in correctional education specifically, educators would be able to guide the motivators to more positive intrinsic motives and create instruction that best suits the needs of each student. There is not one model of curriculum that is going to guide each correctional education adult learner to a state of motivation and success, but having a deeper understanding of deterrents and

driving forces allows the opportunity to build on self-efficacy beliefs and give students a chance at a better life upon their release and reintegration into society.

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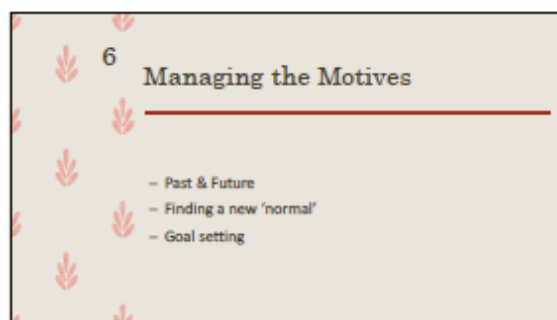
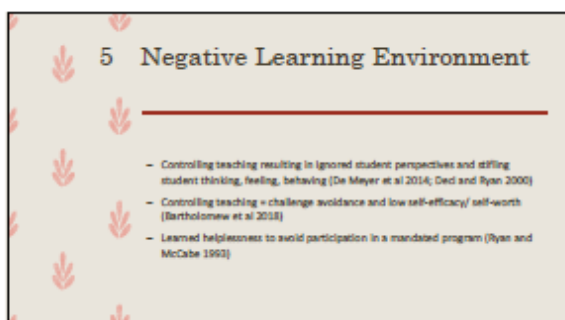
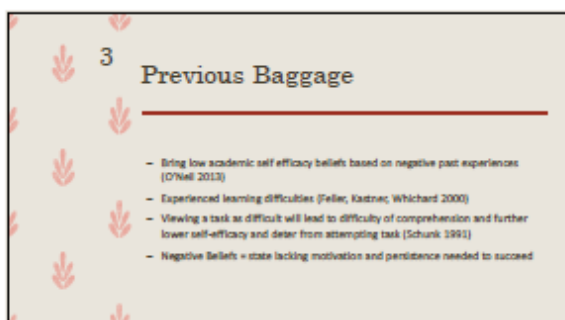
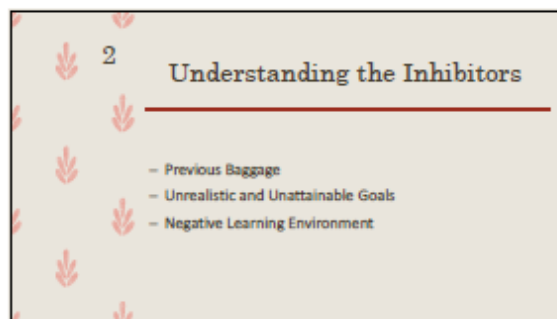
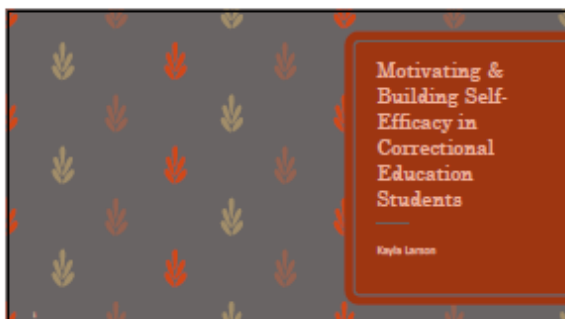
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## Appendix A





## 7 An Influential Past

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- Consider their baggage- be conscientious
- Regret of past events and missed opportunity
- Desire to care for loved ones marks success in a meaningful way
- Wish to improve self-esteem and a foundation to better their position in society (Newkberry and Stengel 2006)

## 8 Normality

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- Push Factors such as: (external motivation)
  - Wanting to feel like a person, not a prisoner (normalization) (Hartill et al 2017)
  - Avoidance postures (Jungenbach and Parsons 1991)
- Push factors give you a platform to lead positive motivation forward
- Not most prominent motivators, but specific to correctional students

## 9 Goals for a Better Life

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- Top Goals set by inmates (Manger et al 2000)
  - Attainment of diploma or certification
  - Opportunity for a future
- Progress made on a goal incites commitment, engagement, and higher beliefs in ability (D'Elia and Dweck 1988)
- Goal attainment = higher motivation, heightened persistence and improved self-efficacy (Schunk 1991)

## Instructional Strategies

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How to help students in the classroom

## 11 Setting the Stage

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- Physical environment suited for adults
  - Furniture
  - Decor
  - Books
- Positive and respectful relationship between student and teacher (Moeller et al 2004)

## 12 Motivational Interviewing (MI) Strategies

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- Understanding what MI is and its purpose.
  - Focuses on building confidence, independence, engagement and self-empowering learners. It utilized as a way to build a non-judgmental, collaborative, and constructive dialogue between a teacher and a student (Wells et al 2014)
  - Used as an effective way to build relationships within the classroom setting

13 MI Step 1-8

(Miller and Moyers 2006)

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**Stage One:**  
Teacher promotes ideas of effecting working relationship.

14 MI Step 1-8

(Miller and Moyers 2006)

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**Stage Two:**  
Ask open ended questions and give statements of affirmation

15 MI Step 1-8

(Miller and Moyers 2006)

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**Stage Three:**  
Direct language to a positive behavior change. Teacher reinforces student statements and guides toward change while employing such behaviors themselves to promote a student following

16 MI Step 1-8

(Miller and Moyers 2006)

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**Stage Four:**  
Introduce the skillset necessary to build a change in the way the client talks

17 MI Step 1-8

(Miller and Moyers 2006)

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**Stage Five:**  
Roll with the resistance. Put a focus on personal choice, reflective statements and reframing

18 MI Step 1-8

(Miller and Moyers 2006)

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**Stage Six:**  
Assess the students readiness to move from building motivation and commitment to change to developing a plan for change

## 19 MI Step 1-8

(Miller and Moyers 2006)

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**Stage Seven:**  
Solidify the change plan with the student

## 20 MI Step 1-8

(Miller and Moyers 2006)

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**Stage Eight:**  
Know when MI is the effective tool to be utilizing with students or when others would be more appropriate to developing a respectful environment (Iarussal et al 2016)

## 21 Wrapping up MI

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- The perception of a teachers level of respect and friendliness connects to the students level of satisfaction, confidence, effort and overall motivation (Bartholomew et al 2017)
- The weight this plays makes strategies such as MI so vital for the correctional education setting

## 22 Self-Regulated Students

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- Provide the feeling of ownership and volition, it results in the enhancement of student's motivation to learn (Wells et al 2014)
- Self-regulation is deeply connected to critical thinking and elaboration. Continually reinforce the efforts and achievements students accomplish thus building their self-efficacy and self-confidence
- Provide regular feedback to students and require daily student reflection to further improve self-efficacy and persistence (O'Neill and Thomson 2013)

## 23 Life Outside the Fence

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- Make your strategies and learning models relevant to the prisoners life upon release
- Basic math, writing, and spelling were rated most important and the most practical skills to be taught (Twiskbury and Stengel 2006)
- Engagement is closely tied to relevance, relatedness, and practical application (O'Neill and Thomson 2013)
- Outline course objectives and learning criteria with each student, let them see the big picture and make the personal connections

## 24 Life Outside the Fence cont.

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- Provide students with the tools and the skills to establish support groups to follow up on the needs of the student needs
- Have students set goals and continually track progress. Conference with students about these goals to ensure they're realistic and attainable
- Ask about their personal interests and career plans and make attempts to create materials specific to this for the students (Flothes et al 2017)
- Student self-efficacy becomes sustainable as student goals continue to be met and skills continue to be improved (Schunk 1991)

## 25 Tips for the Classroom

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- Understand and recognize students previous struggles
- Ensure students have attainable goals
- Have a learning environment suited for adults that employs mutual respect
- If able, ask students what is motivating them. Force them to think about why they should try harder. Use the motives for educational benefit

## 26 Tips for the Classroom

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- Create GOAL sheets for students
- Have bi-weekly conferences to show your interest in the student's success and check on their progress
- Give students regular feedback and affirmations, continue to motivate them
- Provide a mixture of group and individual instruction. Make the whole group instruction relevant to all students and incorporate various job skills as able
- Have various resources for outside job and educational opportunities available in the classroom

## 27 Works Cited

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## Appendix B

Talking points for PD Materials:

Inhibiting Factors Slides:

- Previous Baggage- **Slide 3:**
  - Previous baggage is the emotional beliefs, negative connotations, and potential dislike based on previous experiences that each student brings with them
  - Further elaborate on low academic self-efficacy as being the belief that they themselves cannot be successful in a classroom
  - Learning difficulties may be learning disabilities or challenges that each student faced in a classroom setting
  - Viewing tasks as more challenging than they truly are because a lack of understanding
  - How does all this impact learning? This brings in a negative attitude and starts the educational journey on a negative note
- Unrealistic and Unattainable Goals- **Slide 4:**
  - Unrealistic and unattainable goals are those that create high stakes environments and are not set in a realistic time frame
  - Goals can feel elusive and the goal is not for betterment, but for a credential thus putting too much pressure on the learner
  - Not seeing progress=not feeling accomplished
- Negative Learning Environment- **Slide 5:**
  - Negative learning environment can range from the physical environment, negative peers, and controlling teaching behaviors inflicted by educators
  - Learned Helplessness=having gone through life so long without having to do things on their own or for themselves brings on a “poor me” attitude and can inhibit student motivation

Motivating Factors Slides:

- An Influential Past- **Slide 7:**
  - Take into account what they are coming into the classroom with and attempt to be accommodating or understanding
  - They may feel a great deal of regret for actions- this could provide an opportunity for change
  - Caring for loved ones is something that can be utilized greatly to show value in education as education = more opportunity = better career = better salary = ability to care for family
  - Education is rewarding. It is as simple as that. A student will feel accomplished when they begin reaching their educational goals
- Normality- **Slide 8:**
  - Understand the push factors. They are just what they sound, what is pushing the student from the outside. Are they avoiding the feeling or

- prison life? Are they searching for a “normal” feeling? The push factors give teachers the opportunity to guide to positive motivators.
- Not the strongest, but specific to a correctional setting so they are still important to understand
  - Goals for a Better Life- **Slide 9:**
    - Understand the top goals set by inmates- attaining a diploma and opportunity for a future. The significance of this is large as it shows the wish for better opportunity.
    - Making progress helps build student engagement, so make them track their progress.

#### Instructional Strategies Slides:

- Set the Stage – **Slide 11:** Make the physical environment fit for an adult- because that’s what these students are despite their functioning level or their actions
- Motivational Interviewing – **Slide 12-20:** focus on building confidence, independence, engagement and self-responding learners. This is an effective way to build relationships in the classroom setting as it shows the students that you think they can handle situations on their own
  - 1: Promote a working relationship- this can be done while maintaining boundaries. Be professional with the students
  - 2: Keep things open ended, this gives the students a better opportunity to give detailed answers
  - 3: Direct a positive behavior change by giving positive reinforcing statements to students. If they do something good, tell them!
  - 4: Begin introducing students to the skillset necessary to build change in the way that they speak. This may consist of various grammatical introductions, communication skills, etc. These may go outside the range of ABE, but are important to the overall abilities of a student
  - 5: Roll with resistance. This is not going to be a smooth road for all students. Focus on the personal choice that students have and reflect with them. Make them an active part of this journey
  - 6: Assess student readiness to commit to change. This is going to be a piece that the instructor will need to gauge as they progress through MI and understand the steps as well as understand their students. This should be personal for each learner
  - 7: Create a plan to change with the student- this will make it more “real” and solidify the actions
  - 8: Know when this will and will not work. It is not going to be the appropriate approach for everyone
- Wrapping up MI – **Slide 21:** Students need to feel that you truly respect and can maintain a friendly demeanor with them. This will impact their confidence and effort

- Self-Regulated Students – **Slide 22:** Give students choice, volition, and the opportunity to make decisions for themselves. This will enhance their motivation to learn as they will feel as though they are doing it at their will, not yours.
- Life outside the Fence – **Slide 23-24:** Instruction needs to be relevant for these students. They are (in most cases) going to be released, so how can we continually better prepare them? Basic skills, work skills, communication skills, and critical thinking are large concepts that will be useful to them upon release. Goal setting, tracking, and incorporating and recognizing personal interest will also act as a positive transition to release
- Outline Overall Tips for the Classroom – **Slide 25-26**