

## 7 The Centers

Our communities need PCJ Centers. These would be places which are both safe and inviting, wherein those who know that they need help in order to function in harmony with their neighbors can turn *voluntarily*, or where those who have been deemed by their neighbors to be unmanageably destructive can be compelled to reside *until* (and only until) they are able to function non-harmfully, without ceaseless intervention.

PCJ Centers should be centrally located and scaled to answer the needs of a given community. For example, in a city, a center might be designated for a give neighborhood, whereas in rural areas, one might serve a county. These centers, above all, should be made representative of the areas they serve. They should be anchored to, and act as anchors, to their respective communities. Each center should be *owned* by its community and managed by a *cooperative trust*<sup>1</sup> comprised primarily of residents or those able to satisfy residents that their interests are exclusively in line with those residents whom they serve. Wherever possible, the professionals employed by such centers should be from the communities they serve, or failing this, should move to these communities and

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<sup>1</sup> Such a trust should be bound by a charter to ensure that the Center, all financial interests invested in, and all proceeds derived from, are used in strict compliance with PJ principles and the common good of the specific community, its individual members, and the greater society at-large. In most respects its charter should resemble that of a charitable trust, but there are various ways in which it would necessarily diverge, in for instance, the fact that it might be that dividends derived from Center business activities may be doled out to community members as the possibility and utility arise. The specifics of how such a trust should be organized and assembled are beyond the scope of this paper and call for further elaboration.

become active members of them outside of their official capacities. Thus, we arrive at the name *Positive-Cooperative Justice*, in that inclusivity in management, community involvement, and ownership would all be regarded as fundamental aspects of the model. Furthermore, there would be an emphasis on fostering cooperation and mutuality in the areas of just outcomes, treatment, community and personal development.

Centers would operate as a mix of non-profit and community co-op business models.<sup>2</sup> The primary treatment and residential services could be funded through

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<sup>2</sup> The concept herein being labeled as a community co-op is one which the author has found no specific examples of in the literature. This may be a unique formulation, meriting additional elaboration as a business model in its own right. In brief, the idea being suggested here, is that regardless of any investments or contributions made, members of the geographically defined community in question would be given equal stake in ownership of this business and its resources without any attached obligations or liabilities. Shares would be forfeit upon leaving the community and granted upon joining it. Some other sort of investment-based shares could also be issued, but these would have to be less than sufficient to create the potential for a controlling interest, these could perhaps be bonds, rather than shares. Effectively, there could be a certain number of shares in existence at all times which mirrors the number of people in the population, and is reflexive to its growth or shrinkage at all times. All goods and services provided by this business would be available to community members equally. Goods in particular could perhaps be provided to community members at cost, or cost adjusted for overhead, or otherwise at some discounted rate which applies to all members, in some cases there might also be some giveaways. Service offerings would be provided on sliding scales based on the individuals' ability to pay, and in many cases for free, outside of any donations of time, money or wares the member might voluntarily make.

As the primary functions of the business (i.e. treatment, housing, education and so forth) are likely to cost a substantial amount of money, until such time as a break-even point is reached, most of the revenues would go into operating the business. In the long-run however, there is the potential that the business will become profitable. At this point, surplus funds should first be reinvested into things which will be of benefit to the community as a whole, and perhaps, toward expansions of the model into other communities. The profits beyond those which are put to such purposes, should be distributed to community residents in the form of dividends. Management should be based on some standard framework compatible with the community's justice and economic needs, but should include a democratic component wherein aspects which effect the community at-large are voted upon, or wherein

a mix of tax revenues, grants, sliding scale pricing for the various available services, on and offsite housing and amenities paid by those with the means to pay, and various goods and services which can be produced by people residing in otherwise working at the center or its subsidiary and sister community partnered businesses.<sup>3</sup>

### Primary Services

These centers would offer both residential and outpatient, state-of-the-art treatment for addictions and impulse control disorders, such as those which lead to violent outbursts, anti-social, or destructive sexual behaviors, as well as things which lead to more personal problems, such as gambling addictions, chronic unemployment, homelessness and so forth. Essentially these would be the go-to places for both mental health treatment and growth, and for learning the skills needed to become economically stable and socially functional, or to improve one's lot in these areas. They would aim to prevent the destructive behaviors we currently label as crimes and address their underlying causes, as well as act as

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democratically selected committees of representatives and experts are formed and consulted in such matters. No private funds should be allowed in campaigns for elected positions.

<sup>3</sup> In general, centers should assess the local business environment with an eye to whatever is lacking in the local business environment and could be helpful to either serve the community or bring in revenue from other communities to boost the local economy. They should also focus on business models which are conducive to creating meaningful work and opportunities for community members to develop marketable skills in the event that they should choose to move on from community employment into other businesses or self-employment. Generally speaking, centers should avoid choosing business models which would compete with already existing locally owned businesses, unless there are circumstances wherein the local community funds that some such business is being operated in a way which is not good for the community. Naturally, business models should also adhere to PCJ standards and not engage in destructive activities.

places where those who are actively destructive can be effectively managed, or where those who need help with aspects of day-to-day living can get the assistance they need. At the same time, they would be of high enough quality to attract paying customers from both outside and within the community for the available treatment options, wellness services and learning opportunities.

## Work

For those who are required to stay on-site, or submit to any kind of community imposed restrictions (geographical or otherwise), there would also be ample opportunity on-site to do meaningful work to make reparations for harms they have done to others, both on a fully voluntary basis and wherever required to do so in conjunction with decisions reached through the community mediation processes surrounding harms done.<sup>4</sup> Unlike penal institutions, the emphasis, as

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<sup>4</sup> This point will be elaborated upon in a future paper detailing the possible operations of a PJ centered arbitration and mediation system based on civil law, which under PCJ principles would come to replace criminal courts. In brief, these should be proceedings which involve all effected parties and ensure that all are given equal representation (as opposed to the mere right to representation which may be of grossly unequal quality and means which is afforded under criminal law) wherever harms have occurred. These proceedings should be focused on finding remedies for all relevant issues. So for example, the community and the person directly harmed would most-often have separate areas of concern which need to be addressed, and therefore would be represented though separate counsel throughout proceedings. Likewise, cases are likely to arise wherein the loved ones of a person who has come under community scrutiny, and that person themselves, might have differing needs and levels of responsibility to be worked out. These too could require separate representation. In this light, it might be found that various parties have various responsibilities which need to be attended to, and so, the findings of any such proceeding might come to include not only things that the person being held directly responsible for a given issue might have done in the instance which brought intervention to bear, but that there might also be things which were done to that individual by others, relevant to those harms being considered, which also need to be addressed. Similarly, it could be found that the community might shoulder some responsibility toward the persons

stated above, should be on providing opportunities for *meaningful* work. This means that those basic upkeep functions of the facility, such as cooking and cleaning, should be more of an *option* for those who can find satisfaction in such work, and perhaps be split up into part-time positions, allowing workers time for other vocations and studies. Individuals should also be encouraged to keep up after themselves and thereby minimize the need for support staff. Things such as individual laundry and so forth should be done by the individual, with assistance and encouragement from social work staff wherein personal hygiene issues are present. Training for market demanded jobs should be available, but also, as suggested above, the Center itself should aim to provide various products and services both of the sort needed directly by the community and the sort which can bring in revenue streams from outside. To whatever extent possible, residents should be employed in such work. That said, residents who are already gainfully employed at the time of entry should be allowed to whatever extent possible to continue to work at their current job if they so choose, and so long as there is no conflict with so doing with whatever remedies have been decided through arbitration, mediation, or in the case of those who have self-selected for residential treatment, counsellor recommendations. In those cases, where there

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harm. Since things which produce destructive outcomes tend to have a web of causes, any such proceedings could result in various kinds of binding and non-binding contractual agreements.

There is a great deal which needs to be worked out for a fully functional model, but among the things which need to be addressed are ways in which objectivity on the part of decision makers can be ensured in those situations where mutual agreements are unable to be reached. There also need to be considerations built-in to ameliorate those situations wherein a person has been wrongly held responsible for some harm, either at the outset, or in result of the proceedings of PCJ. Above all, such decision-making bodies should aim to produce no harm, and to generate solutions which are workable for all those effected by inter-personal harms done.

are active concerns for on-going harms which might arise in the context of the individual being transported back and forth and allowed to work at the jobsite, efforts should be made to see if the individual can do some kind of work from the Center grounds. If all else fails, treatment providers should aim to work with the individual, her employers and any potential go-betweens such as friends or family of the person under treatment to try to arrange for extended leaves of absence with the possibility of return at the conclusion of the current crisis.

### Shared Spaces

In addition to spaces for living, treatment, classes and so forth, there should be some number of community common areas for recreational activities, sports, artistic endeavors, performances and entertainment. Except under circumstances which prevent safety in tangible ways, all residents should be able to access such common areas and attend events. Similarly, there should be areas for various forms of dining, including cafeteria type spaces closer in line with those in non-institutional settings, but also places where friends and family can dine more formally, or cook together.

### Onsite Resources

All residents and members of the community at large should be able to access resources for education and artistic self-expression as well as self-guided learning and research onsite, more or less equally (notwithstanding any specific active security issues). There should be for example a well-stocked library, internet access (filtered or supervised if deemed necessary), art studios with a full spectrum of freely available media, music instruments and audio-video

production equipment, stages and spaces for public presentations. Along similar lines, each center should include resident, and community tended gardens, including at least edibles, but probably also decorative plants. These features are important both for the proven therapeutic benefits of artistic self-expression and in-turn, that benefit itself on reducing destructive behaviors.

In conjunction to the availability of research materials, artistic media, and gardening spaces, classes should be made available on these subjects on-site, as well as workshops and opportunities for learners to interact with experts and other well-seasoned amateurs and laypersons in various fields. At the same time, formal education at all levels, from basic education, thru to graduate level collegiate studies as well as in-demand or otherwise meaningful vocational studies should be accessible through the center. Furthermore, all such educational opportunities should be equally available to all community members, whether or not residing at the center. Students should pay for classes on a sliding-scale basis based on their means to pay.

In addition to the typical sorts of educational opportunities outlined above, in furtherance of developing the core emotional and social skills associated with the PCJ model, centers should offer classes and workshops on subjects such as emotional and social intelligences, Nonviolent Communication (NVC), the Alternatives to Violence Program (AVP), secular addiction recovery and support groups along the lines of the Rational Emotive Therapy based Self-Managed Addiction Recovery Treatment (SMART recovery) program. As well as things such as entrepreneur education and resources, especially as they apply to the PCJ co-op model, economics both for practical application and awareness of community

issues, civics, and any other subjects which the community and its people need or can otherwise benefit from.

## Security

Security within the facility should be handled on a basis of graduated levels of restriction between various levels or layers of access. Certainly there should be no weapons allowed anywhere on the facility, except maybe by authorized personnel during emergency situations (i.e. nobody should be allowed to carry anything during the regular operation of the facility). In more restricted areas, access to potentially dangerous objects would be more and more limited. The question of how paraphernalia of various sorts should be kept out of this place or that is however up for debate. It is possible that airport style checkpoints could be used, but these could be too severely off-putting toward those who might otherwise benefit from or provide benefit to center pursuits to justify their use. Some balance between pragmatic security measures and maintain and inviting atmosphere must be struck. In any case, there should be no overly-institutional or oppressively styled and outfitted rooms or cells. Every space within the facility should be designed and outfitted to accommodate a person's basic human need to feel at-ease and afford access to means for creative expression and the like. Heavily restricted residents should be allowed to access less restrictive areas with more direct supervision or security escort as much as possible.

Less restricted residents and visitors should be able to access the more restricted areas and interact with any more heavily restricted residents, as appropriate, and with whatever level of supervision is needed to ensure the safety of all involved in



such activities. Also, wherever and to whatever extent possible residents should be able to gain access to, or reside in, areas which are private or semi-private wherein security remains a legitimate safety concern. Security in all cases should be used only for purposes of promoting a *reasonable expectation* of safety, never as a punishment.

To cope with the security issues that might arise either in dealing with residents with active behavioral problems, or members of the community who might threaten individuals with whom they are angered, rather than isolate the individual in question, wherever and whenever possible such individuals would be accompanied by sufficient social work/security personnel to address such problems. Such personnel should be physically able and well trained to handle potentially violent situations, but should also be able to communicate effectively and constructively with the various people whom they would come in contact with in the course of duty. Such persons should be able to handle their own emotional reactions well and be skilled in de-escalating potential conflicts among those they serve, which would include simultaneously the person under direct supervision, and the community members with whom they interact. In-short they should be social workers who are also good bodyguards.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> This is not without precedent, as some European prisons already have guards who are cross-trained to act as effective social workers and who are charged with working directly with a small number of inmates on a day to day basis, helping them to structure their daily activities and so forth. In these settings the guards are given a handful of inmates whom they are responsible for during their shifts and are encouraged to develop a personal relationship with each individual, effectively acting as mentors or life coaches for those they supervise. For less troubled or threatened individuals residing in PJ centers, a more or less identical approach would be appropriate. For those who are higher-risk, the proportions might be reversed, i.e. one resident might be accompanied by a

It can also be assumed that some number of those who wind up in situations which would call for PCJ services, will be already socially isolated. To this end, it will be crucial to draw in volunteers from the community who are willing to share their time and energy to socialize with, and to create opportunities and space for such interactions to occur. So, in addition to any supervisory and treatment duties of staff, every effort should be made to connect both residents and other PCJ service takers to a variety of ongoing opportunities to join or re-join the community at large. In and of itself, this positive action to promote socialization and belonging should help to reduce the likelihood of further or on-going destructive behaviors or reduce the impact thereof.

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handful of social worker-guards, or some combination of social workers and guards. While such a scheme might seem to potentially create more of a burden on resources than simply housing larger numbers of inmates with smaller numbers of under-trained guards (or so-called corrections officers), the likelihood is that by being more selective in how supervision is dealt out to among center residents and the community at large, a great deal could be saved in the long-run. Our current system tends to cycle those people with the greatest potentials for destructive behaviors back and forth between the community and prisons, allowing them to gradually spin completely out of control until they cause sufficient damage to require more and more drastic restriction. This is foolish and cost creating-both in dollars and human life. PJ would instead seek to directly address destructive behavioral patterns and situations in-action, and work to eliminate or mitigate the underlying factors, thus allowing resources to be spent wisely and cost-effectively. By handling things in this manner, it can be assumed that the number of personnel needed to work with a given number of troubled community members should gradually shrink (perhaps quite rapidly after some indeterminate introductory period), as the community as a whole moves from a given level of interpersonal dysfunction to greater peace and prosperity. So, as with various other aspects of PCJ it can be gathered that initially costs will run high, but over time, as the system works, they will be reduced until negligible.

## Isolation

Isolation, as in the sense of seclusion or alone-time should not however be completely eliminated. One thing the Quakers did have right in their ideas surrounding the institution of solitary confinement, is that people *can* benefit from both as individuals and social creatures from some level of solitude. The area where the idea went astray was in making it imposed versus self-selected isolation. When a person is simply thrown into such a situation, or otherwise encouraged to withdraw into his or her own shell, the effects can be devastating and even debilitating. However, if a person wants some alone time for self-reflection, meditation, or creative concentration, the effects can be rejuvenating and beneficial both personally and socially (Hanson, 20xx). For this reason, there should be afforded to all members of the community, both center residents, and non-residents, places conducive to such activity, so long as a person is not considered an active threat to themselves.

## Drug and Alcohol Use and Abuse

Specifically, how addictions should be dealt with within PCJ center premises is a bit beyond the scope of this paper. However, there are various possibilities and a particular—though perhaps novel approach which could potentially be incorporated into such locations arises in the context of the present discussion. Prisons and current treatment centers fully restrict the use of drugs and alcohol, yet, in both settings, some number of people continue to abuse substances on a surreptitious basis. Both types of facilities tend to respond to this with punishments when such activities are detected, within punitive institutions, either taking away privileges, or putting individuals in more restrictive housing or

solitary confinement, or in the case of treatment center, kicking people to the curb. These are dysfunctional responses to dysfunctional behaviors. Such responses are clearly not in line with what PCJ aims to do and should not be entertained in this framework. One possibility which arises in this context, though it runs into potential problems under current laws, is allowing supervised and regulated use at some level. With legally prohibited drugs, one workaround might be to use substitutes which are legal, for example some prescriptive narcotic in place of heroine.

The key would be that any drug or alcohol use permitted on the PCJ campus would be administered clinically, or in some kind of sterile and loosely unappealing setting, which emphasizes more directly the actual act of use, over the environmental or social adjuncts which typically go along with such use. So, while alcohol use is commonly relegated to bars, homes, or in some cases parks, porches or door stoops, requiring one to go to a clinic to take a dose might reduce some of the appeal to the act of drinking. The same case might be made for the use of drugs, which might typically be procured and used in dilapidated houses, at parties, in bars, in back-alleys, or in parks. In that, even while such places may possess some inherent lack of appeal, they still confer some quality of an atmosphere conducive to use. Research has shown that mere exposure to such environments--even in virtual reality- acts as a trigger for the impulse to use drugs (note: there was an article on this either in Scientific American Mind, or the Regular Scientific American magazine at some point in the past few years).

After the individual has used a given amount of a drug, further attention might be given by staff, volunteers, or more generally by the environment to the

deleterious effects of the use of the substance though this should be done only as appropriate or necessary. For example, the social drinker who exhibits no major behavioral problems under the influence of alcohol might be left alone, where the problem drinker might be given some appropriate and purposefully functional amount of feedback in relation to their condition in the moment. Such attention could similarly be given as a person crosses certain thresholds of use, so, for example, past a certain number of drinks the person administering the alcohol might engage the drinker in conversation about what is motivating him or her to drink more.

As a major component of PCJ will be helping people learn to function well in social settings, under the above proposed model, once a person has used whatever amount of a substance they choose to, they would be allowed to go wherever they want within the facility. The only exceptions to this policy should center on whatever restrictions might normally be imposed upon such persons for legitimate and active security concerns, or any active security or health concerns which might necessitate temporary quarantine. However, adequate attention should be given by staff to ensure that any areas in which fellow users might congregate while under the influence are kept sufficiently interspersed with people who are able to supervise and interact with intoxicated people as appropriate to minimize the social reinforcing effects associated with substance abuse.

The key issues to be considered here are that once people are living outside of the community center, it can be assumed that they would have opportunities to abuse substances and go wherever they choose while in states of intoxication,

and that even if it is possible to force a person to stop using substances while under direct supervision, there is nothing to stop people, other than themselves, from doing so once on their own in the community. It is well understood that even a significant portion of people who want to break addictions sometimes relapse. Rather than insisting upon the impossible goal of teaching all addicts lifelong abstinence and hoping against hope for this tactic to magically work if all of a sudden we find the right way to enforce it, PCJ would acknowledge that there is wisdom in teaching people how to function better while intoxicated, and how they might begin to regulate their behaviors, and perhaps their addictions, if not perfectly, at least better.

### Precedents and Potential Models

While at first blush, many of these ideas might seem lofty or even utopian, none of them are unprecedented. To begin with, many of the features being suggested here mirror, or otherwise build upon, what are already being employed variously by private addiction treatment centers, mental health hospitals, and prisons in various quarters of Europe, in particular Scandinavian countries and Germany. In certain cases, some of our own prisons and community supervision programs already contain various and sundry of the elements discussed here. To this date, however, each existing solution has its shortcomings when compared to what has been herein proposed under the moniker of PCJ. The model employed in Denmark, for example, is practically as described here, with the exception of the fact that the facilities are still in some visibly identifiable senses prisons, they are still not typically central to the communities they serve, and they still require one to break the social contract to get services. In the U.S., we simply give better

treatment to those who can afford private care, and we often divert certain classes of those who have been convicted of crimes to better facilities or programs than we do the majority. Much of this latter set of divisions, to this day, centers on race, class, and prejudices toward those whose dysfunctional behaviors fall into certain categories. However, in some areas diversion from the criminal system into solutions such as Outward Bound, drug courts, or Restorative Justice may reflect the growing dissatisfaction with the results of the punitive system.

### Financial Concerns: Costs and the Benefits Which Might Offset These

The chief objection which one might expect to be employed against this new paradigm for handling societal ills is that it sounds expensive. When looking at the sheer number of people incarcerated currently and running out the numbers, simply warehousing people as we do today is in itself an expensive proposition, averaging around \$35k a year per inmate (see appendix 1). However, this commonly reported figure is just the tip of the iceberg and when we factor in the various other costs associated with keeping a person locked away, they numbers leap to a staggering \$479,304.35 per inmate per year (see appendix). A short-sighted retort to the various recommendations made throughout this paper might take one of the above numbers and try to simply add to it the additional costs of professional clinical treatment, facilities upgrades, education, additional staff and training requirements and so forth. However, as discussed in greater detail in appendix 2, and covered in brief in the above discussions, there are good reasons to expect that in the long run, the overall costs of doing PCJ versus criminal justice will be substantially less and potentially negative, or that is to say *profitable* for

the effected communities and nation as a whole, in ways much more meaningful and universally beneficial than the bittersweet if not unsavory boost to GDP which a narrow set of profit takers extract from the punitive system.