Offender Programs Report

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Offender Substance Abuse Report

CORRECTIONS • COURTS • TREATMENT • LAW

Education

Socratic Pedagogy, Critical Thinking, and Offender Programming

by Peter Boghossian

Researcher: What is justice?

Inmate 6: Standing up for what you believe in.

Researcher: What if you believe weird stuff? Like one of those lunatics who wants to kill Americans? Or what if you're a pedophile?

[*a 20-second silence*]

Inmate 6: I think if you can stand on your own two feet and not care what anyone else thinks about you, and you're willing to fight for it and die for it or whatever, that makes you a man. Whether it's right or not.

Researcher: So being a man would mean to be resolute in your beliefs no matter what? What if you're in the military, like in Rwanda, and you're told to butcher all these people, and you have this skewed idea of loyalty. And you stand up for what you believe, for your country or tribe or whatever, and you just start butchering civilians? Hutus or Tutsis or whoever. Is that just? Does that make you a man?

Inmate 5: Yeah, good point. It happened in Nam [Vietnam].

Inmate 4: What are you saying? That justice isn't standing up for what you believe in?

Researcher: I'm not saying; I'm asking. What is justice? [Inmate 6] said it's standing up for what you believe in. But is it really standing up for what you believe in? Don't you have to believe the right stuff, then stand up for that? No?

Inmate 6: Yeah, maybe. Maybe.

The Socratic Method

A growing body of educational, philosophical, and even popular literature has emerged that explains the Socratic method (Boghossian, 2005; Garlikov, 2003; Strong, 1997) and its epistemological and educational ambitions (Abbs, 1994; Phillips, 2001; Vlastos, 1971, 1994). Unfortunately, there is almost no literature on the use and analysis of the Socratic method in the context of correctional education. This absence is significant, because educational interventions either designed around the Socratic method or that use the Socratic method as an adjunct pedagogy may have the potential to be more effective and less expensive than the two foremost cognitive treatments, Moral Reconation Therapy (MRT) and Reasoning and Rehabilitation (R&R), in improving the critical thinking and moral reasoning of inmates (Boghossian, in press).

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Practice Notes

Say It Three Times and It Must Be Evidence-Based Collaboration: Part One (The Problem)

by Frank Domurad

Huzaifa Parhat is a free man. A member of the ethnic Uighar Muslim minority in Western China, he was held as a terrorist and enemy combatant in Guantanamo Bay, along with 16 of his countrymen, until his release in Bermuda in June 2009. He received his day in court a year earlier before a three-judge panel of the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. The justices ruled that the Pentagon's claims that its accusations had to be factual simply because they had been repeated in at least three secret documents were totally insufficient to warrant Parhat's continued detention. So dumbfounded were the judges by the prosecution's assumption that the court would just trust its assertions of guilt without presenting solid evidence, they turned to Lewis Carroll,

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MRT focuses on reasoning and making the reasoning process explicit (Little, 2000, 2001; Little & Robinson, 1988; Little et al., 1999), and R&R focuses on teaching cognitive skills to offenders by changing underlying thoughts and attitudes that lead to criminal behavior (Fabiano et al., 1991; MacKenzie & Hickman, 1998). This focus on reasoning, in turn, is important because faulty reasoning/thinking often leads to criminogenic behavior (McGuire, 1995), since many offenders have difficulties with problem solving, reasoning, and understanding the most appropriate solutions to problems (Porporino et al., 1991). There is an urgent need for less expensive treatments that can target difficulties in reasoning as well as or better than these two methods.

There is almost no literature on the use and analysis of the Socratic method in the context of correctional education.

The purposes of this article are to analyze and explain Socratic conversations with prison inmates and to identify the critical thinking core elements most evident in these Socratic discussions. To achieve these aims, we will break down and examine four transcriptions of Socratic conversations with inmates in order to show how each conversation fits a Socratic template. At the end of each conversation, I explain briefly which of the six core elements of critical thinking are most apparent. I begin, however, by examining the Socratic method as practiced by the historical Socrates, and then by providing a definition and an explanation of critical thinking.

Five Stages of the Socratic Method

Historically, the Socratic method, found in the Platonic dialogues (Cooper, 1997), dates back more than 2,500 years. In these dialogues, the historical Socrates engages participants by going through several conversational stages. The stages Socrates uses are:

1. Wonder;
2. Hypothesis;
3. Elenchus (refutation and cross-examination);
4. Accept/reject the hypothesis; and
5. Act accordingly (Dye, 1996).

In the first stage, *wonder*, Socrates asks a philosophical/moral question, such as:

- "Why obey the law?" (*Crito, Republic*);
- "What is it to be virtuous?" (*Apology, Meno*);
- "What's worth dying for?" (*Apology, Crito*);
- "When is punishment justified?" (*Gorgias, Crito*);
- "What's the best life to lead?" (*Republic*);
- "Should you harm a bad man?" (*Republic*); or

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Worth Reading

by Stacy Calhoun*

The Leeds Evaluation of Efficacy of Detoxification Study (LEEDS) Prisons Project: A Randomized Controlled Trial Comparing Dihydrocodeine and Buprenorphine for Opiate Detoxification

by Laura Sheard, Nat Wright, Hany El-Sayeh, Clive Adams, Ryan Li, and Charlotte Tompkins
4(1) Substance Abuse Treatment, Prevention, and Policy (2009): 1–11

Opiate dependence is a major problem in the United Kingdom. The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction reported that opioids were the primary drug most reported among all clients entering treatment in 2006 to 2007. Many individuals dependent on opioids become involved in the criminal justice system at some point in their lives. In the United Kingdom, these individuals are typically offered some kind of pharmacological intervention when they enter prison, such as an opiate detoxification regime.

A wide variety of agents, such as methadone, dihydrocodeine, buprenorphine, lofexidine, or clonidine have been prescribed at the discretion of prison clinicians. To date, there have been very few studies that have evaluated the effectiveness of medications for opiate detoxification in a prison setting. Thus, there is not a strong evidence base for selecting one medication over another. The most commonly used drug for opiate detoxification in the prisons at the time of this study was dihydrocodeine. Recent Department of Health guidelines, however, now recommend buprenorphine or methadone for prisoners requesting an opiate detoxification regime.

In an earlier study, the authors compared buprenorphine and dihydrocodeine for opiate detoxification in the community and found that participants were more likely to achieve abstinence from illicit opiates at the completion of detoxification with buprenorphine. The authors wanted to see whether this outcome would be replicated in a prison setting as well.

Methods. The study was conducted at Her Majesty's Prison Leeds in the North of England. This is a category B local remand prison where the prisoners are those who do not require maximum security, but for whom escape needs to be made very difficult. The prison accepts over 6,000 adult male prisoners per year.

Male inmates who have a current history of illicit opiate use (confirmed by a urine test taken at the first assessment) are offered a detoxification regime upon arrival. Those who were going to remain in custody at the prison for at least 28 days and who had a desire to receive detoxification services were invited to participate in the study. Inmates were not eligible to participate if:

1. They had any contraindications to dihydrocodeine and buprenorphine;
2. There were coexisting acute medical conditions requiring emergency admission for hospital care;
3. They were currently undergoing detoxification from other illicit drugs; or
4. They had been previously randomized into the trial.

Inmates who were willing to give informed consent after receiving the participant information sheet were randomized to either daily sublingual buprenorphine or daily oral dihydrocodeine. Recruitment took place from July 2004 to July 2005. After the first five months of the trial, it became evident that the researchers would not meet their recruitment goal if they did not think of a way to improve enrollment into the study. So the research team decided to provide an incentive of five pounds, which was credited to the inmates' phone accounts. The recruitment rate did increase shortly after the researchers implemented this change, but the rate fluctuated somewhat throughout the rest of the recruitment phase.

Interventions. Study participants in the dihydrocodeine group received their supply of dihydrocodeine (a 30-milligram oral tablet preparation) once daily and took it in four doses divided throughout the day. Participants in the buprenorphine group were dispensed an eight-milligram, a two-milligram, or a 0.4-milligram sublingual tablet preparation under daily supervised consumption. Reducing regimes were within a standard regimen of not more than 20 days and were at the discretion of the prescribing doctor. The total dose administered over 20 days was 96 milligrams of buprenorphine and 6,660 milligrams of dihydrocodeine.

Measures. Information was collected on background history, demographic details, and the use of opiates from the participants' prison medical records. The primary outcome for this study was abstinence from illicit opiates at five days post-detoxification, as determined from a Sure Screen multi-panel drug test. The secondary outcomes measures were:

- Serious and adverse events;
- Early study withdrawal;
- Inappropriate use of prescribed medication; and
- Service utilization.

The research team also obtained abstinence status and service utilization at one, three, and six months post-detoxification. They experienced a significant loss to follow-up as a result of the high turnover of prisoners at the institution. If an inmate was still at the prison at the time of the follow-ups, data was extracted from the prison's clinical notes. If the inmate had been transferred, the research team contacted the other prisons to get this information. If the inmate had been released to the community, an attempt was made to obtain this information through the local community drugs service or general practitioner's (GP's) record. The research team did not have much success reaching those in the community with the addresses and phone numbers that had been provided at the study entry.

Participants. Approximately 64% of the eligible men approached agreed to participate in the study. A total of 90 men were enrolled in the study, with 42 assigned to the buprenorphine group

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and 48 to the dihydrocodeine group. The mean age of the men participating in the study was 30 years, and they had on average used opiates for about nine years. There were no significant differences between the two groups.

Results. Approximately 70% of the participants gave a urine sample at the end of their detoxification regime. Some of the reasons why 30% of the participants did not provide a urine sample included:

- Being released before their urine sample was due (20%);
- Being transferred to another prison (4%); and
- Not completing their detoxification regime (6%).

The findings show that a higher proportion of the buprenorphine group tested negative for opiates than the dihydrocodeine group at five days post-detoxification.

The research team had trouble following up with the clients after they were released to the community, and the follow-up rates steadily decreased at each follow-up point. At one month, the follow-up rate was 73%; at three months, it was 61%; and at six months, it was 29%. Nevertheless, they found no significant differences between the two groups in terms of testing negative for opiates, service utilization, and adverse events. In fact, there were no serious adverse events reported throughout the study.

Conclusion. The results of the study were similar to those of the researchers' earlier study set in a community drug treatment program, in that buprenorphine appeared to be more effective in helping the participants to achieve abstinence from illicit opiates. Thus, the results provide further validity to the current guidelines, which do not recommend dihydrocodeine to be used for detoxification. Even though buprenorphine appears to be more effective than dihydrocodeine, the fact that there were no significant differences between the two groups during the one-, three-, and six-month follow-ups suggests a need for some kind of maintenance after the detoxification regime. But also, since a recent survey highlighted the potential of buprenorphine abuse in UK prisons, further research is needed to see whether the other pharmacological treatments would be more effective and less likely to be subject to diversion in a prison setting. ■

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the author of *Alice in Wonderland*, and his whimsical verse, "The Hunting of the Snark" to express their displeasure. They compared the government's position to that of the Ship Captain in the poem, who sought to convince his skeptical crew that they had actually landed on the island of the mythical Snark by trumpeting, "I have said it thrice: What I tell you three times is true" (Glaberson, 2008, p. A1).

Collaboration

In many respects, efforts at collaboration in community corrections and criminal justice are akin to going on a Snark hunt. While statements concerning the necessity of collaborating and the rewards to be reaped from its practice abound, concrete examples of research-driven practices that consistently produce desired outcomes are few and far between. To take but one prominent example, in 2004 in a seminal National Institute of Corrections document on evidence-based practices (EBP), a group of probation and parole's most distinguished experts incorporated collaboration as one of three core elements in their "integrated model," alongside evidence-based principles and organizational development. In answer to their own question, "Why collaborate?" they presented an enticing image of achievement that was hard to resist for those seeking to implement EBP in their organizations and jurisdictions. The experts argued that the collaborative process "results in greater achievements than would be attained by one organization working alone." They found that "engaging stakeholders in change efforts helps eliminate barriers, increases opportunities for success, enriches the change process ... and creates a shared vision that supports the system change efforts" (Crime and Justice Institute, 2004).

As inspiring as such an encomium to the virtue of collaboration might be for practitioners, it inadvertently violates one of the integrated model's most basic tenets: namely, that objective research trumps subjective opinion (and thus, that just simply saying something is so, no matter how often it is repeated, does not necessarily make it true). In a recent article summarizing the scholarly literature on collaborative public management, including criminal justice, Mark McGuire noted that there were only a handful of studies that had actually measured collaboration's impact on program outcomes. Nonetheless, "the general assumption in much of the public management literature is that collaboration is a positive factor to be pursued by managers" and "in and of itself must be desirable" (McGuire, 2006, p. 39). Two other scholars, working within the private sector, reached an even blunter conclusion, when they wrote that "in the last thirty years the range of 'programs' designed to increase communication and teamwork has been dizzying, and in many companies has resulted in nothing more than heightened cynicism" (Hecksher & Foote, 2006, p. 479). The simple fact of the matter is that solid empirical studies documenting the success of collaborative efforts, whether in the public or the private domain, are few and far between.

Continuity

So what keeps everyone in corrections and criminal justice coming back to collaboration as a way of doing business in general and of doing evidence-based practices in particular, even in the face of such dismal prospects? There is actually a push-pull mechanism at work. The push comes in the form of money and legitimacy. In today's world of grant funding in criminal justice, very few proposals will even be considered by the likes of the Department of Justice or large private foundations unless they have some "collaborative" component. No submission and no organization can be considered to be legitimately "evidence-based" unless it is willing to bring multiple stakeholders to the table. As for the pull, it arises from the conviction that solving apparently intractable problems such as poverty, health care, and crime "requires different mechanisms that are more flexible, more inclusive, and more adaptable and operate with greater speed than those of conventional government organizations" (McGuire, 2006, p. 34).

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Known as “wicked problems” among scholars, these are issues with no clear solutions, whose very complexity suggests that they can be addressed only in increasingly collaborative organizational structures (McGuire, 2006, p. 34).

According to Chris Huxham, one of the nation’s leading scholars on collaboration, it is this potential to solve problems of true social and human import, what he labels “collaborative advantage,” that accounts for the continued attraction of collaboration in public and private circles. Summarizing over two decades of research, he concluded that “to get the real *advantage* out of collaboration ... something has to be achieved that could not have been attained by any of the organizations acting alone” (Huxham, 2003, p. 403). He contended that it was this desire for a unique type of resolution to wicked problems that stood as “a useful ‘guiding’ light for the purpose of collaboration” (Huxham, 2003, p. 403). He argued that issues such as crime prevention and crime reduction “have ramifications for so many aspects of society that they are inherently multi-organizational” and that there was no hope of resolving them outside of the context of collaboration (Huxham, 1996, p. 4).

What Huxham did not forget, however, in contrast to so many public and private advocates of collaboration, was that the promise of collaborative advantage also comes with a high price tag, a cost that he labeled “collaborative inertia.” “The output from collaborative arrangements often appears to be negligible or the rate of output to be extremely slow,” he wrote. “Even where successful outcomes are reported, stories of pain and hard grind are often integral to the success achieved” (Huxham, 2003, p. 403). For Huxham and scores of other scholars, it is inertia and not advantage that is the “normal” course of events of collaborative endeavors.

Collaborating Effectively

One of the primary reasons why collaboration is so difficult to do properly is that in most practitioners’ minds it is viewed as just another form of cooperation. People and organizations work together all the time to perform specific tasks and to achieve collective goals. Sometimes this work is done in discrete organizational units, and sometimes it consists of representatives from multiple units and organizations, but its focus is almost always on dealing with problems whose parameters are well understood and whose solutions can be clearly defined. It is only when wicked problems are to be addressed that this mechanism of cooperation proves inadequate, often with serious consequences.

The National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, the so-called 9/11 Commission, described the potential (and in its case, lethal) consequences of confusing cooperation with collaboration in its discussion of “lost opportunities” for preventing the worst criminal act perpetrated in this nation’s history. It observed that those persons and organizations in charge of intelligence gathering and analysis failed to “connect the dots” prior to the September 11 attack not because there was insufficient information to unravel the plot, but because the best that was expected of each of them was sporadic cooperation rather than consistent collaboration. “When agencies cooperate, one defines the problem and seeks help with it,” noted the Commission. “When they act jointly [collaborate], the problem and options for action are defined differently from the start. Individuals from different backgrounds come together in analyzing a case and planning how to manage it” (National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, 2004, p. 400).

Researchers are very clear that simple cooperation will never be capable of achieving collaborative advantage. It is not an effective means for confronting those wicked problems, such as changing offender behavior and reducing recidivism, which continue to plague the practice of law enforcement and criminal justice in this country. Most scholars agree that “cooperation and collaboration differ in terms of their depth of interaction, integration, commitment, and complexity, with cooperation falling at the low end of the continuum and collaboration at the high end” (Thomson and Perry, 2006, p. 23).

Cooperation and collaboration differ in depth of interaction, integration, commitment, and complexity, with cooperation at the low end of the continuum and collaboration at the high end.

Unlike cooperation, collaboration is a process with which most practitioners have little daily experience. They therefore continually underestimate the demands that it can make on their time and resources and are tempted to embrace it as a silver bullet, a “strategy for addressing all problems” or “simply to avoid conflict” (Imperial, 2005, p. 311). As a result they tend to do more harm than good, frustrating themselves and their staff and giving collaboration a bad reputation as just another “flavor of the day” emanating from the rarified atmosphere of the executive wing. In the words of Huxham:

> [T]here is one hard and fast conclusion from the research. This is that making collaboration work effectively is highly resource consuming and often painful. My strongest piece of advice to practitioners, therefore is ‘don’t do it unless you have to’ ... [U]nless the potential for real collaborative advantage is clear, it is generally best, *if there is any choice*, to avoid collaboration (Huxham, 2003, pp. 421–422).

The Risk of Collaboration

What makes collaboration such a risky proposition for most public managers is that they are often forced to proceed on the premise that ignorance is bliss. Whereas they possess immense knowledge about bureaucratic cooperative processes, such as making deals or scratching backs, they are usually left to their own devices concerning collaboration. At most, they are given a few words of encouragement by their superiors and told that working together with their colleagues across divisional and organizational lines will be good for them, their agency, and most of all, their careers. Being natural skeptics, however, most managers suspect that collaboration is harder and more dangerous than it seems. They intrinsically understand that,

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despite their best intentions, their fate can easily be that of the Snark-hunting Baker in Carroll's poem, who knew that if he ever truly encountered a Snark, it could easily turn out to be its murderous version, the Boojum, and that, therefore, he would "softly and suddenly vanish away" (Carroll, 2009).

Thomson and Perry argue that before people can have a reasonable hope of managing collaboration, they need to know what it is and how it works. They must understand that it is a complex construct and process that requires both intensive knowledge and preparation and constant maintenance and nurturing in order to succeed. In looking into the research on the "black box" of collaboration, Thomson and Perry identified five variable dimensions that public managers must master and control to be effective leaders of collaborative groups:

1. *Governance*. Structuring how the group will *jointly* make decisions about rules determining its behavior and relationships, as well as developing a process for monitoring and accountability;
2. *Administration*. Developing some kind of bureaucratic process that will move the group from governance to action by marshalling its resources and coordinating its activities;
3. *Autonomy.* Balancing the intrinsic tension between the *self-interest* of the individual participants and the *collective interest* of the group so that each player will continue to contribute while refraining from taking undue advantage of others when the opportunity arises;
4. *Mutuality.* Creating a "win-win" problem-solving technique that emphasizes the interdependence of action and addresses the inherent conflicts between differing interests; and
5. *Trust and Reciprocity.* Establishing a common belief among the participants that each will make a good-faith effort to abide by commitments, be honest about intentions and motivations, and avoid the temptation of "free riding" (Thomson & Perry, 2006).

Needless to say, it is probably a rare occurrence for any public sector manager, especially in corrections and criminal justice, to be schooled and trained in this entire collection of collaborative skills. More often than not, they tend to bring to the table bureaucratic experiences that might be germane to the structural dimensions of governance and administration, but which are hopelessly inadequate in dealing with the dynamics of autonomy, mutuality, and trust and reciprocity.

It is the lack of trust and reciprocity often found in existing personal working environments that makes managers so suspicious of exhortations to "collaborate."

Indeed, it is the lack of trust and reciprocity often found in existing personal working environments that makes managers so suspicious of exhortations to "collaborate" in the first place. According to Vangen and Huxham, while the majority of practitioners whom they have interviewed in the public and private sectors over the years acknowledged that "trust is an essential ingredient for successful collaboration," those same persons usually "perceive a lack of trust in their own collaborative situations" (Vangen & Huxham, 2003, p. 8). In government in particular, the growing politicization and intolerance among the public and elected officials for any type of "failure" on the part of well-intentioned public actors, especially in the cases of wicked problems such as health care, fiscal responsibility, and crime, have torn apart the webs of mutual expectations that are the foundation of trusting relationships.

Moreover, the recent explosion in demands for increased accountability through mechanisms such as "pay for performance" or "performance management systems"—even though almost every experimental observation of groups has shown that competitive reward systems are bad for collective performance and that more equal rewards work better—has only increased internal tensions and weakened even the most basic instincts for cooperation among managers and line staff (Heckscher, 2007). As Charles Heckscher, one of the foremost experts on business collaboration, has concluded, "[W]hen employees are fearful, they draw back from risk and are less willing to share, more apt to protect their position and hoard their knowledge" (Heckscher, 2007, p. 267). In effect, employees in such a situation return to the culture and environment that they know best from experience: the traditional bureaucracy.

Research and Information

Traditional bureaucracies cooperate, for the most part, through the informal exchange of favors. One manager has gone out of her way to assist a colleague in another division by bending the rules a bit or by temporarily lending staff to help in a particular project. In the process, she has earned a chit that someday will be redeemed when the need arises. It is this "greasing of the wheels" of the bureaucratic machine that prevents it from freezing and collapsing under the weight of its own rigid rules and regulations. "Greasing" adds a degree of flexibility and contingency, required to deal with an unpredictable world, to a system that is constructed to maximize rationality and predictability.

When this system is strategically challenged or threatened, however, such as is occurring in corrections and criminal justice with repeated demands for the abandonment of traditional ways of doing business for the sake of the collaborative processes embedded in documents such as the integrated model of EBP, existing networks of trust and cooperation break down in predictable ways. Staff asked to participate in multidivisional or cross-organizational teams on a regular basis now work in environments for which existing job descriptions do not apply. In turn, managers whose personnel now report as much to their colleagues as to themselves lose all sense of how to hold personnel accountable to what is the most important measure of all in the managers' eyes: the achievement of those unit goals upon which the managers' careers depend. The result is a sense of

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mutual confusion and powerlessness in which "employees at all levels retreat to the safety of their defined jobs, put their heads down, and hope they can survive the turmoil around them" (Heckscher & Foote, 2006, p. 481).

The irony becomes that the more that correctional and criminal justice leaders seek to impose "collaboration" on unprepared managers and staff, without paying close attention to the research concerning collaboration's difficulty, its complex mechanisms, its skill levels, and its demand for an intensive commitment of time and resources, the greater the chance that they will brew a concoction so noxious that it can even harm or destroy their existing capacity to undertake even simple cooperation. There are sound psychological reasons why this might be so. Maccoby and Heckscher have discovered in organizations attempting a transition toward collaborative processes in order to achieve strategic goals that there exists a key barrier to change in terms of motivational patterns linked to types of personality. Managers and staff whom they describe as bureaucratic personalities and professional specialists have never been motivated by either transformational visions or calls to interact with colleagues for the sake of the common good. Instead these types of individuals seek the protection of functional autonomy provided by the values of deference and security institutionalized in hierarchical bureaucracies. They are most comfortable in work environments where jobs are concretely defined and where chains of command are unquestioned. When these verities are challenged, whether rhetorically or practically, they interpret these actions as a direct threat to their status and well-being and resist accordingly, often in a very emotional way. No longer able to trust others in a world of unfamiliar and unpredictable expectations, they withdraw into a shell of self-protective, calculating individualism that makes even traditional, bureaucratic cooperation difficult, if not impossible. "The top of the organization has traditionally found its satisfaction in creating visions, but the rest have been asked to be conscientious, autonomous craft workers in defined spheres," Maccoby and Heckscher (2006) concluded; "they are less moved by dramatic and coherent strategies. Many efforts have run aground on this reef of misunderstanding" (pp. 474–475).

Synergy and Change

This sense of personal and collective insecurity that every effort at organizational change always engenders has been needlessly exacerbated by the discourse currently in vogue that is used to distinguish collaboration from hierarchy. Heckscher (2002) has noted that the literature on teamwork, networks, and other peer-to-peer systems has tended to place collaborative and bureaucratic practices and processes in irreconcilable conflict. This has been especially the case in popular treatises, the very ones that are the most accessible to practitioners, where collaboration has been praised as transformational, modern, progressive, and even revolutionary, while bureaucracy has been pilloried as hidebound, backward, traditional, and even reactionary. So heated have such discussions become at times that managers and staff have felt compelled "to take sides" in a war whose stakes they rarely comprehend.

Such a tense and stressful environment obviously enhances natural motivational and personality inclinations to protect one's position and to avoid all forms of compromise for fear of suffering unknown, but certainly deleterious, consequences. It precludes the recognition, as the research clearly shows, that no organization really exists without some operational mix of hierarchy and collaboration to conduct its business. The question is not whether the two can coexist, but what constitutes the structure and process of their relationship. Too much bureaucracy can prevent an organization from approaching its wicked problems in a flexible and adaptive manner; too much collaboration can easily devolve into an unstructured, chaotic morass where resources and commitments cannot be sufficiently marshaled and coordinated to achieve strategic goals and purposes. It is only when the proponents of bureaucracy and collaboration come to understand that they share a common fate within an organization that such internecine warfare has any hope of being brought to a satisfactory conclusion for the participants involved and the public they serve.

One of the best examples where a productive synergy between bureaucratic procedure and collaborative process works to deal with a wicked problem is air traffic safety. In 1934, three aircraft manufacturers (Martin, Douglas, and Boeing) submitted to the U.S. Army prototype models of a new bomber for testing. Boeing, which was nearly bankrupt and had only previously produced fighters for Navy aircraft carriers, swept the evaluations. On the day of the test of its Model 299, Major Ployer P. Hill sat at the pilot's controls. He had never flown the 299 before, and shortly after takeoff, the plane fell from the sky and burst into flames upon impact, killing two crew members, including Hill. A subsequent investigation attributed the accident to pilot error. Being unfamiliar with the airplane, Hill had neglected to release the lock on the elevator, which allows the plane to nose-up or nose-down. The word on the street was that the Model 299 was "too much airplane for one man to fly."

Boeing knew, after it delivered 12 Model 299s to the Second Bombardment Group at Langley Field, Virginia, that further incidents would be fatal to its cause and probably to the future of the firm. To deal with the situation, the bombers' pilots came together and realized that the problem was not the airplane, but the men who flew it. The machine was simply too complex for any one person's memory to operate safely, and action had to be taken to ensure that nothing was overlooked during takeoff, in flight, and before and after landing.

The rest was history, as the phrase goes, and the pilot's checklist became standard operating procedure in both military and civilian aviation, significantly reducing the risk of accident and death as a result (Schamel, 2009). Today no commercial airliner takes off without the crew's first

No organization really exists without some operational mix of hierarchy and collaboration to conduct its business.

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going through a long list of procedures required by Federal Aviation Administration rules and regulations. This story is an example of the so-called "dead hand" of bureaucracy working at its best to tame the complexity of the human mind in order to achieve a highly important strategic goal: protecting the flying public's safety.

Anticipating the Unexpected

But as it turned out, bureaucratic rules and regulations by themselves proved insufficient to anticipate all the unexpected variables that threatened the well-being of the men, women, and children in the back of the plane who entrusted their lives to cockpit crews sitting in the front. While such written procedures were more than sufficient for imposing consistency on faulty human memory, they were woefully inadequate in instances where human judgment was required to deal with rapidly changing circumstances, such as an emergency during flight. In the 1970s, the Ames Research Center at NASA explored the relationship of human factors to aviation accidents. It discovered that over 80% of fatal commercial airline accidents were not caused by the usual culprits of equipment failure, poor weather, or the technical incompetence of the crew. Instead, the most significant factor in a great many accidents was poor management of available resources by the flight deck crew. Working from a bureaucratic perspective that the problem resided in a "general erosion of the captain's authority in the cockpit," the airline industry initially enhanced training to improve crew discipline and respect for command and tightened up procedures to deal with "any situation." Despite all of these efforts, accident statistics remained stable. The traditional bureaucratic pattern of authority and obedience proved incapable of solving this wicked problem.

In conjunction with a major airline, two managerial researchers, Robert R. Blake and Jane S. Mouton, proceeded to design a series of experiments concerning in-flight crises that have no "correct" answers. They selected only captains to participate, and after repeated simulations involving various heart-pounding scenarios, they discovered that while the traditional pattern of authority-obedience decision making ensured neither insubordination nor panic by crew members, it produced a poor *quality* of solutions. Second and third crew members constantly turned to the captain afterwards and said, "If you had consulted us, we could have given you information that would have enabled you to take a better action than the one you took." One captain after another began to realize that their conventional bureaucratic behavior precluded the use of available resources because their colleagues in the cockpit were not given the opportunity to provide valuable input.

The experiments demonstrated that "when a captain centralizes authority in himself, he in effect shuts out information that others are capable of contributing" and ignores the fact that "one key to increased safety is to keep the crisis situation open to interaction, not to shut it down" (Blake & Mouton, 1985, pp. 2–3). Even worse, the exercise of the conventional wisdom of command and control by the person at the top meant a confirmation of the life experiences of other crew members, in which they simply waited for a command from the captain before acting, no matter how risky they knew the situation was becoming. When Blake and Mouton used their findings to retrain over 5,000 flying personnel from domestic and international carriers and the military in the techniques of collaborative interaction, they reduced the number of flight failures by 50% a year for three consecutive years (Blake & Mouton, 1985, pp. 2–3).

Collective Mind

What these scholars were trying to institutionalize into the bureaucratic organizational environments of the aviation industry was a culture of the "collective mind." Originally described by the social psychologists and business management experts Weick and Sutcliffe in their study of high-reliability organizations (Domurad, 2002), collective mind refers to "a pattern of heedful interrelations of actions in a social system" (Weick & Roberts, 1993, p. 357), whereby acting individuals participate "with an understanding that the system consists of connected actions that they represent and that other individuals in the system represent" and that "all actions represented by all parties in the system are interconnected to one another" (Solansky & Beck, 2009, p. 857).

In a fascinating piece of experimental research seeking to determine the conditions under which governmental agencies might best collaborate to confront the wicked problem of cyber-terrorism, Solansky and Beck (2009) argued that "the essence of collective mind is to coordinate tasks and capabilities carefully" (p. 853). They found that "the presence of a collective mind increases the likelihood that public sector representatives recognize and form beliefs that collaboration is necessary" and that "aggregates of representatives were more likely to actually collaborate with one another in addressing these cyber-terrorism threats when more shared the belief of collaboration necessity" (p. 853). In other words, without the development of a collective mind both within and across public agencies, the chances of collaboration decreased dramatically.

The dilemma is that the weight of historical experience, familiar social cognitive patterns, and just plain old-fashioned political muscle almost inevitably advantage bureaucratic structures and individualistic value systems over collaborative processes and heedful thinking. Little opportunity and even fewer resources are usually available in most traditional hierarchical organizations to build the infrastructure required to conduct true collaboration, alongside of and in conjunction with informal cooperation and the dictates of command and control. What needs to happen, in the words of Heckscher (2007), is to move "the associational realm out from the shadows and into an equal relationship with hierarchical systems" (p. 28). Otherwise, practitioners will be left with an empty rhetoric about collaborating to achieve strategic goals that will in the long run, for all the reasons discussed above, do more harm than good.

Opening Our Eyes

When Lewis Carroll (2009) was once asked to explain the Snark, he responded, "Some children are puzzled with it. Of course you know what a Snark is? If you do, please tell me." As correctional and criminal justice professionals become ever more serious about confronting important issues that have long plagued their field, such as offender behavior, recidivism, reentry, and disproportionate minority contact, they can no longer afford the luxury of blissful ignorance regarding collaboration. Just as, in the case of Huzaifa Parhat, saying it thrice did not

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make it so, so too, simply bringing stakeholders around a table again and again to "work together" to solve a strategic challenge will not achieve collaborative advantage. Too much is at stake for us to continue down this potentially destructive path. If the research is crystal clear about anything, it is that collaboration, when properly understood and practiced, can indeed be an indispensible organizational mechanism for dealing with our wicked problems. But first we must be willing to listen to what the research tells us about how best to use rather than abuse this invaluable tool. We must, in effect, do evidence-based collaboration.

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- "What is justice?" (*Republic*) (Cooper, 1997).

Questions are asked in order to further define the idea in question; i.e., Socrates seeks definitions for the terms about which he inquired, starting with general questions and systematically narrowing the inquiry.

In the second stage, *hypothesis*, responses to the question are offered by one or more participants. If we use a sample question from above, "Should you harm a bad man?" several responses could follow, such as, "Yes, because it will teach him a lesson," or "No, because you could get caught." Possible responses to the question "What's worth dying for?" could be, "Nothing," or "Respect," or "Honor." This second stage is fairly straightforward. Only the response in question is addressed; there is no evaluation of the response.

The third stage, *elenchus* (or *elenchos*), is at the heart of Socrates' practice. Through discourse (sometimes referred to as "cross-examination") Socrates offered counterexamples to the hypotheses of his interlocutors. For example, if the question being examined was, "Should you harm a bad man?" and the hypothesis or response was, "Yes, because it will teach him a lesson," then a possible counterexample to this response would be, "But what if harming a bad man makes him a worse man? What if the lesson he learns is to become angrier, more bitter, and more resentful? Like a lot of the guys on this cell block. Should you still harm a bad man?" This is a counterexample because it provides an example or instance that may make the hypothesis offered false.

The *elenchus* has several related purposes. One purpose is to examine whether the entire set of beliefs (or a particular belief) held by the participants is mutually consistent. According to Carpenter (1999), "By highlighting inconsistency, the elenchus would force its participants to sharpen and refine their moral concepts" (p. 7). Carpenter goes on to write, "[I]t would show the interlocutors the inadequacy of their ordinary moral training, and it would teach them the extent to which their ordinary moral beliefs are unstable and are in need of radical revision" (p. 7). Question and answer and counterexamples are the defining characteristics for this stage of Socratic practice.

At this juncture in the conversation, the counterexample is either accepted or rejected. Continuing with our example from above, possible responses to whether a bad person ought to be harmed are, "Are you kidding me? If he becomes worse, then he deserves it. Next time he'll think twice," or "Yeah, maybe you're right, but he has to be harmed nonetheless. You have to harm him because if you don't, then you'll lose respect."

This interchange segues into the fourth stage, *accepting or rejecting the hypothesis.* If the counterexample is accepted, then the discussion goes back to the second stage, and another hypothesis is

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elicited (Dye, 1996). For instance, the counterexample would be accepted by someone who said, "Yeah, you're right. But maybe you should harm a bad man for other reasons, like letting other bad men know that you're not to be messed with." Alternatively, the counterexample could be rejected by both parties, who agree that it was neither necessary nor sufficient to undermine the hypothesis. If the counterexample is rejected, then the hypothesis is accepted as being "provisionally" true. If there are other counterexamples that could show the hypothesis to be false, then Socrates returns the discussion to stage three. After this process of examining claims has been exhausted, then one can *act accordingly*: namely, one can act on the findings of one's inquiry. Hence we have a "formula" and a working definition for the Socratic method that was practiced in the Platonic dialogues by Socrates.

What Is Critical Thinking?

Critical thinking is characterized as the cognitive process of forming reasoned and reflective judgments about what to believe or what to do (Facione, 2000, p. 4).

As noted above, two successful cognitive behavioral programs, MRT and R&R, both aim to improve the reasoning and critical thinking abilities of inmates, but it is not immediately evident what reasoning and critical thinking are, and how they are defined. (R&R uses the term "critical thinking.") (Ross & Fabiano, 1991).

While it is certainly true that these concepts are difficult to define, this does not mean that there are no adequate definitions. The largest and most comprehensive study to date on critical thinking and reasoning was published in 1990 by the main professional organization for philosophers in the United States, the American Philosophical Association (APA). While there is no evidence that the creators of MRT or R&R had access to this study, it is clear that the language and the referents are the same, and that the concepts detailed in this study provide a clear explanation about what qualities in inmates MRT and R&R wish to improve.

The study used a Delphi technique to reach consensus about the definition of critical thinking. A Delphi technique has a fairly simple methodology. Facione (1996) best explains the Delphi technique methodology as it was used in this APA study:

> A central investigator organizes the group and feeds them an initial question. [In this case it had to do with how college-level critical thinking should be defined so that people teaching at that level would know which skills and dispositions to cultivate in their students.] The central investigator receives all responses, summarizes them, and transmits them back to all the panelists for reactions, replies, and additional questions ... [T]he central investigator summarizes the arguments and lets the panelists decide if they accept them or not. When consensus appears to be at hand, the central investigator proposes this and asks if people agree. If not, then points of disagreement among the experts are registered (p. 8).

In a research project that lasted approximately two years, the APA chose its panel of experts from among "forty-six men and women ... in the United States and Canada. They represented many different scholarly disciplines in the humanities, sciences, social sciences, and education" (Facione, 1996, p. 7). Moreover, all 46 scholars were "widely recognized by their professional colleagues to have special experience and expertise in [critical thinking] instruction, assessment, or theory" (APA, 1990, p. 4).

At the end of the study, the experts came to a consensus about what critical thinking and reasoning are, how critical thinking can be defined, and what its core elements are. (Definitions of the core elements can be found in Appendix A at the end of this article.) The report describes, defines, and details the ideal critical thinker and lists the core elements of critical thinking. (The APA report does not make reference to how critical thinking can be taught; it only states what critical thinking is.) The following is the consensus statement regarding critical thinking and the ideal critical thinker:

> We understand critical thinking to be purposeful, self-regulatory judgment which results in interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and inference, as well as explanation of the evidential, conceptual, methodological, criteriological, or contextual considerations upon which that judgment is based (APA, 1990, p. 3).

Breaking this definition down may make it clearer. Critical thinking is judgment that is purposeful and self-regulatory. This judgment then results in interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and inference of evidence, concepts, methods, criteria, and contexts.

The APA's (1990) *Delphi Report* also went on to detail what it termed central or core critical thinking skills. The consensus among the experts was that critical thinking has six core elements:

1. *Interpretation:* Comprehending and expressing meaning or significance;
2. *Analysis:* Identifying the intended and actual inferential relationships;
3. *Evaluation:* Assessing logical strength;
4. *Inference:* Drawing reasonable conclusions;
5. *Explanation:* Stating the results and justifying one's reasoning; and
6. *Self-regulation:* Monitoring one's cognitive activities.

Each of these elements of critical thinking corresponds to some part of the consensus statement of critical thinking given in the APA's (1990) *Delphi Report*. (A further breakdown of these elements can be seen in Appendix B.) These six categories are considered to be core or central categories that the ideal critical thinker would possess.

Socratic Conversations Analyzed

The following transcribed conversations are from a mixed methods research study conducted at Columbia River Correctional Facility in Portland, Oregon in 2003 (Boghossian, in press). The educational intervention, called *Introducing Socrates*, was attended by 10 inmates, Monday through Thursday, for two hours each day. The class was structured in 30-minute segments, using a 25-on/five-off timetable: i.e., every 30 minutes, a new question was examined. The purpose of the study was to evaluate the effectiveness of a new Socratically based curriculum on raising inmates' critical thinking and moral reasoning skills and on identifying early indicators for treatment compliance (e.g., whether inmates enjoyed their treatment and were engaged by it).

In the four conversations that follow, I ask inmates an open-ended question,

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drawn primarily from the Platonic dialogues (Plato's works), and then I use the Socratic method to guide them through a process of systematic examination of their responses to those questions. The purpose of this process is linked to the purposes of the study: to teach inmates how to engage ideas, how to increase their critical thinking and moral reasoning ability, and ultimately how to decrease criminogenic needs and thereby decrease recidivism. At the end of each conversation, I show briefly how the conversation elicited or strengthened one or more of the six core elements of critical thinking.

Finally, the following Socratic conversations were chosen because each illustrates a slightly different aspect of the Socratic method. The first conversation matches strictly, and even formulaically, individual comments to stages of the Socratic method. It is a good conversation for understanding a "by the book" Socratic discourse. The second conversation shows "horizontal learning," or how inmates learn from each other and not just from the facilitator (Boghossian, 2002). The third conversation shows that dialogues do not have to end in personal or communal revelation to be successful. The fourth conversation shows that through the Socratic method inmates can reinforce what they already know.

Conversation 1: What Is It to Be Virtuous?

In the following dialogue, we see the application of each stage of the Socratic method:

> **Researcher:** What is it to be virtuous? ...
>
> **Inmate 1:** My ultimate thing in my life is to always be true to my family and the people I call friends. To hold that above *all* else. And if I call a person my friend, you know, that takes it to a whole new level.
>
> **Researcher:** What if one of your friends comes to you and says, "Dude, I've gotta dispose of this dead body. You've gotta help me"?

Here we see the first three stages of the Socratic method. It begins in *wonder*, with an initial question. In this case, that question is, "What is it to be virtuous?" A *hypothesis* is then offered: "To be true to my family and the people I call my friends. To hold that above *all* else." This is the statement or the thesis that becomes targeted for refutation. Next, there is an attempt at an *elenchus*, a statement or series of statements presenting a "what if" or counterexample. In this example, however, the "what if" statement was not sufficient either to secure agreement with further premises or to make the inmate reevaluate his initial response. Because I could not get the inmate to agree to what I thought was an eminently reasonable premise, I could not secure agreement with further premises, and I could not get him to agree that the hypothesis that he offered was suspect:

> **Inmate 1:** Hey, it's simple for me, right, wrong or indifferent. If I'm calling them my friend, what do we gotta do? Where do we gotta go?

At this juncture another inmate targeted the hypothesis by offering his own counterexample:

> **Inmate 2:** [*to Inmate 1*] What if he says, "Dude, we gotta go rape this girl? Look, I need you to hold this girl down while I rape her."
>
> **Inmate 1:** [*to Inmate 2*] You're on your own, brother.
>
> **Inmate 2:** [*to Inmate 1*] But he's your friend.

This was an effective counterexample because it showed the limits of friendship while calling into question the initial hypothesis. Inmate 1 did not revise his hypothesis at this juncture but clarified what he meant:

> **Inmate 1:** Still. If I'm gonna call a person a friend, first of all, I know he's not gonna go out and rape no girl. I'm gonna make sure when I choose someone as a friend it's not gonna happen like that [*snapping*]. I look to my life to find a couple of friends throughout my whole life. And to be that they'd have to share some of the same virtues I hold.
>
> **Researcher:** So if somebody does come to you and ask you to do something like this, then they're not really your friend?
>
> **Inmate 1:** No.
>
> **Researcher:** No? Is that right? Friends don't ask friends to dispose of dead bodies for them.
>
> **Inmate 9:** You don't know none of our friends.

This last comment was, perhaps, a reason why my initial "what if" was not effective. It is far from my life situation for anyone to ask me to dispose of a dead body, but it is not far from their life situations. This is also a good example of why one can not learn the Socratic method by using "stock" or "canned" examples. What works in one context or in one conversation may not work in another.

What follows is an outstanding illustration of a counterexample. It was this example that was effective in causing a reevaluation of the initial response, and Inmate 1 finally called his hypothesis into question. What was most interesting about this development, however, was that this was not my example. Inmate 5 gave a far more effective counterexample, and even made my pedestrian example seem anemic. I was at a loss regarding in what direction I could move the conversation and what proposition I could offer either to call into question the hypothesis immediately or build a case against it by securing agreement to further premises. Moreover, this exchange also provides an example of how a Socratic teacher knows that students are learning how to examine ideas by making effective counterexamples: It becomes clear when other students apply what they have been learning:

Inmate 5 gave a far more effective counterexample, and even made my pedestrian example seem anemic.

> **Inmate 5:** What if your best friend was married to your sister, and in a rage he killed her? Then he said, "Hey, look, brother, I screwed up big-time. I need you to go help me bury this body."
>
> **Researcher:** Boy, talk about what's one instance of a thing, that's really better than I could have ever done.

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This counterexample, offered by Inmate 5, ultimately dissuaded Inmate 1 about the truth of his hypothesis. The conversation went on to more directly focus on the question of virtue. There was no final agreement about what virtue is and how it relates to friendship.

This example illustrates a Socratic way to examine ideas, through the systematized process of question and answer that seeks to cast doubt on claims to moral knowledge. It illustrates the examination of ideas by showing a transparent and easy-to-use process. Finally, while these examples may seem remote or even alien, they are not out of the arena of life possibilities for the men in this group. With any luck, none of the inmates will ever be in the position to decide whether they will help their friends dispose of a dead body. If this situation, or one like it, does arise, however, both this conversation and this way of subjecting moral decisions to a critical thinking process may prove to be invaluable.

Conversation 1: Critical Thinking Core Elements

The two critical thinking core elements most evident in this dialogue are *evaluation* and *inference*. The first core element, evaluation, is seen in subsequent responses to the initial claim, and particularly in Inmate 5's response regarding burying one's sister. Discrete examples of inferences can be seen throughout the dialogue, especially with regard to the relevant assent to propositions at each stage of the discourse (e.g., when clarifying the demands of friendship). Throughout the discourse, inmates drew "reasonable conclusions" that allowed the conversation to proceed with new, set, or established conditions. These conclusions then formed the basis for assent to further propositions, in which evaluative judgments were once again brought to bear (e.g., the scenario of raping a girl or telling the researcher that he does not know any of their friends).

Conversation 2: What Is the Best Life to Lead?

In the beginning of this conversation, nine of the 10 inmates believed that the type of life Mother Teresa led was morally equivalent to the type of life led by Adolf Hitler. By the end of the discussion, there was an agreement that not all lives are morally equivalent:

Researcher: What's the best life to lead?

Inmate 5: To die with all your goals accomplished.

Researcher: Then one must have set one's sights too low.

[*Inmates talk among themselves.*]

Researcher: Are there certain types of lives that are better than other types of lives? Can we all agree that the life of Mother Teresa is better than the life of—

Inmate 4: Hitler.

Researcher: Yeah, Hitler.

[*Nine inmates respond "no"; one says "yes."*]

At this point in the discussion, it is important to note that the inmates provided the example. I did not offer Hitler's life as an example of a bad life; in fact, it did not occur to me to suggest such an extreme example. This is important because the inmates were evaluating whether or not there is a way to make a judgment about moral equivalency, and their interest was amplified because it was *their* example that they were defending—not that of the researcher. They had a vested interest in defending their claim:

Researcher: No? We can't agree to that?

Inmate 7: Bullshit.

Inmate 2: It depends who we're asking.

Inmate 3: It's biased because it's your opinion and your opinion is always biased.

Researcher: Is the life of the tyrant the best life?

Inmate 2: Depends.

Researcher: If you ask a warlord if he's a warlord, he'll say no. If one really is a tyrant, one will never refer to oneself as a tyrant.

Inmate 9: True.

[*Inmates nod in agreement.*]

Researcher: How do you make a judgment about what's right or wrong?

Inmate 2: Common sense.

Inmate 7: What about morals?

Researcher: I hate to plug it, but don't you have the process now [the Socratic method], counterexample, instances of a thing that make statements false, and if you can think of them, then it's probably not the best idea?

Inmate 10: Which is a kind of common sense.

Researcher: Yeah, codified or formalized.

Inmate 5: What's the justification for being a tyrant?

Researcher: Well, my question is, is there a way to step outside and say, hmm, bad to be a tyrant, good to be this. You said common sense, but [*indicating various participants*] his common sense is different from his, and from his, and from Hitler's.

Inmate 9: True.

Researcher: OK, well, maybe there's not a best type of life to lead, but isn't leading certain types of lives better than leading other types of lives?

Inmate 9: No.

[*Nine inmates shake their heads to indicate "no."*]

Researcher: You don't think so? Like [Inmate 4] said the other day, you don't think it's better to be kind to somebody than to be mean to them?

Inmate 7: No.

Researcher: I can't even get you guys to agree to that?

[*Nine inmates say "no"; one says "yes."*]

The next comments exemplify responses from people who have been steeped in the Socratic process. There is a series of counterexamples and counterexamples to those counterexamples. An additional point to note about the discourse thus far is that five of the inmates were actively participating. What this dialogue does not show, however, is the development of prosocial modeling (Barton & Osborne, 1978; Boghossian, 2005; Rex & Crosland, 1999); the other inmates were extremely attentive to the conversation, nodding their heads and indicating support for the comments of others. By the end of the conversation, eight of 10 inmates have participated, but the discourse itself stands as a Socratic model for all the inmates:

Inmate 3: Isn't it false to walk through life lying? Even if you don't like that person just to make them feel

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better? Why not just be the way you are to every person?

Researcher: And what if you're a nasty bastard to everybody?

Inmate 1: Isn't it better to be raised rich than poor?

Researcher: It's certainly better to not be raised hungry.

Inmate 7: But doesn't adversity build character?

Inmate 2: Would you rather be spoiled and full or starving and mean?

Researcher: Aristotle says you can't even talk about being virtuous until you have the basics: food, shelter, clothing. Unless you have food, shelter, and clothing, the whole concept of being good doesn't make any sense.

Inmate 5: Survival.

Researcher: Exactly. If you're starving, then of course you're gonna steal.

Inmate 5: That goes with everything.

Researcher: OK, so then we can agree that the beginnings of a good life are food, shelter, and clothing.

[*All the inmates nod or say "yes."*]

Inmate 2: Survival is everything.

Researcher: OK, so why can't we then construct another tier above that, and say food, shelter, clothing is on the bottom of our edifice, our foundation, then the next level is ...

Inmate 4: Self-respect.

Again, here the inmate provided the response. Inmate 4 was not told that self-respect was an intrinsic good, and that a life with self-respect was better than a life without self-respect. He generated this example entirely on his own:

Researcher: Yeah, or to be a nice guy, or to have a reasonable job, or good friends, or whatever.

[*The inmates talk among themselves.*]

Researcher: OK, so then we can say that there are certain types of lives that are better than others.

Inmate 5: Yeah, I guess so.

They arrived at this conclusion by force of reason and by reasoning from their experiences. I wanted the conversation to continue with a Socratic question that morally compared the life of Adolf Hitler to Mother Teresa, but unfortunately, time ran out. Inmates were not *told* that certain types of lives were better than others, but *they arrived at this conclusion* through directed questions. After the discussion, if asked whether one type of life is better than another, they would undoubtedly respond "yes" and would mean it.

Conversation 2: Critical Thinking Core Elements

The two critical thinking core elements most evident in this dialogue are *evaluation* and *explanation*. This can best be seen in the dialectical exchange among Inmates 3, 1, 7, 2, and the researcher; in particular, participants were able to assess the strengths of claims made by both the researcher and their peers and to articulate coherent and pertinent responses to those claims. Each question was responded to with another relevant question, and each response deepened and further challenged the initial hypothesis—walking through life lying, being raised rich rather than poor, adversity building character, and being spoiled and full rather than starving and mean. All demonstrated strongly the ability to assess the logical strength of a claim. Finally, these articulate and salient responses also comport thematically with the broader discussion, further indicating that at each stage of the discussion, inmates are engaged in the ongoing process of evaluation.

Conversation 3: Was Jesus Clever?

A common misunderstanding of Socratic practice is that it necessarily ends in a personal revelation, or that the initial question is solved to everyone's satisfaction. Not all discussions end with inmates experiencing moral clarity or experiencing moral and intellectual growth, but not all must in order for the treatment to be considered successful. Depending on the individuals involved and the persistence of the teacher, there may be no resolutions to questions. The following is an example of an unresolved conversation with one of the inmates during the five-minute break in day three of the treatment:

Inmate 6: You made a comment about Jesus needing to be clever.

Researcher: I was asking, was Jesus clever?

Inmate 6: He chose to die. He was God incarnate. His purpose was to be the sacrificial lamb for all sinners.

Researcher: OK, so would you consider Him a greater man for having made that sacrifice?

Inmate 6: Absolutely.

Researcher: OK, so what if the lesser men around Him were actually clever and prevented Him from achieving that mission?

Inmate 6: The lesser men didn't want Him to achieve His purpose.

Researcher: Yeah, but if the lesser men, who were clever, prevented Him from achieving His purpose, then couldn't you say that the virtue that He should have had was cleverness because that would have enabled Him to achieve His purpose? I mean it couldn't have been a sacrifice unless He chose it, and in order for Him to have chosen it, He had to have the possibility of choosing otherwise. Therefore, He could have not chosen it and failed.

Inmate 6: He achieved His purpose.

Researcher: Could He have failed, or was He destined?

Inmate 6: He could have failed. He had a choice.

Researcher: So then He might have needed cleverness to increase the likelihood of success.

Inmate 6: Go back and read Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

Researcher: That doesn't answer the question.

The inmate later told me that he had been thinking about that conversation for two weeks. When asked if he had come to any new conclusions, he said that he was not sure. So while the discussion did not end conclusively with an agreement on whether Jesus needed to be clever or whether cleverness is a virtue, the conversation did morally, philosophically, and intellectually engage the inmate.

It is important to note that lack of a definite resolution does not mean that the discussion was useless, or that it would translate into moral ambiguity, or that the treatment was a failure. Part of what it means to have a successful treatment is to get inmates to think about and engage critically these sorts of questions and

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ultimately translate this thought process into moral action. The process of thinking about these questions and leading more examined lives may not just have the practical consequence of decreasing recidivism. *The act of moral engagement is itself a type of transformation*, or evolution, with profound implications for making choices about the sort of life one leads. Even if there is no definitive answer to moral and philosophical questions, the examined life is worth living, and an enormous body of corrections literature points to the fact that a reflective and contemplative life is less likely to lead to criminal behavior (Blud & Travers, 2001; D'Zurilla & Goldfried, 1971; Freedman et al., 1978; Porporino & Fabiano, 2000).

An enormous body of corrections literature points to the fact that a reflective and contemplative life is less likely to lead to criminal behavior.

Conversation 3: Critical Thinking Core Element

The critical thinking core element most evident in this dialogue is *interpretation.* Certainly Inmate 6 thought about, clarified, articulated, and defended his beliefs about a subject for which he had a great deal of passion. But moreover (perhaps as an initial condition for exhibiting these core components), he displayed a moderate degree of interpretation at each stage of the brief conversation, comprehending and expressing meaning or significance in the researcher's objections and comments. This process was most evident in the middle section of the dialogue, where he responded, "The lesser men didn't want Him to achieve His purpose." This response indicates that he is both following the dialogue and finding or constructing meaning in the researcher's responses.

Conversation 4: Can a Greater Man Be Harmed by a Lesser Man?

Socratic conversations may not change or even challenge people's beliefs, but rather, reinforce what is already known. This outcome does not detract from the treatment either, and, depending on participants' interest in the subject, may still be engaging. For example, the following is the transcription of a conversation that took place on day three:

> **Researcher:** Can a greater man be harmed by a lesser man?
>
> **Inmate 7:** Only physically.
>
> **Researcher:** What about morally? Pure virtues [relating to an earlier discussion]. In a moral arena, can a greater man be harmed by a lesser man?
>
> **Inmate 7:** No.
>
> **Researcher:** What if the greater man is a completely virtuous man, but he's just not that smart? But the lesser man is a very clever, manipulative, and devious man? Can not the lesser man harm the greater man?
>
> **Inmate 2:** If he was clever, wouldn't he be the greater man?
>
> **Researcher:** Is being clever a virtue?
>
> [*All the inmates nod or say "yeah."*]
>
> **Inmate 3:** To be truly virtuous, one would have to exhibit *some* standard of cleverness.
>
> **Inmate 8:** Yeah, we're surrounded by that every day.
>
> [*Inmates talk among themselves.*]
>
> **Inmate 7:** A lesser man can hurt a greater man physically, but a greater man, who's virtuous, can not be hurt any other way by a lesser man.
>
> **Inmate 9:** Yeah, the lesser man has no ammunition. He has nothing.
>
> **Inmate 2:** Yeah, physically he's able to hurt you, only then.
>
> **Researcher:** So now that we've examined this, we can have more confidence in our belief that a lesser man can not harm a greater man.

In this conversation, while there was an agreement about the initial claim, the fact that other questions were generated from the inquiry shows that five of the 10 inmates were engaged. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that this conversation took place on day three. From our previous conversations on days one and two, I can state with a high degree of confidence that inmates would never have arrived at this conclusion at an earlier point in the treatment.

Conversation 4: Critical Thinking Core Elements

The critical thinking core elements most evident in this dialogue are *analysis* and *inference*. Inmate 2 infers that cleverness makes one a greater man. (Note that inferences do not have to be logically necessary; they merely need to be reasonable or sensible conclusions that follow from given premises.) Inmate 3 adds support while refining the claim in his next response: "To be truly virtuous, one would have to exhibit *some* standard of cleverness." This exchange demonstrates that the participants have drawn reasonable conclusions both from the initial question presented by the researcher and from the responses of their peers. Furthermore, analysis can be seen in the participants' ability to identify the inferential relationships throughout the dialogue. Again, this process is most clearly seen in the succinct exchange between Inmate 2 and Inmate 3.

Applying the Socratic Method

Hopefully, through reading the analysis and explanation of these conversations, correctional educators will gain a better understanding of the application of the Socratic method and how it can improve inmates' critical thinking skills. While there is an enormous corpus of correctional, educational, and even philosophical and psychological literature documenting the importance of learning how to think critically and reason morally, it is unfortunate that the Socratic method is not employed more frequently to achieve these goals within the context of correctional education. (Socratic conversations may also provide a welcome relief from formulaic curricula found in some existing treatments and interventions). Ultimately, it is my hope that Socratic pedagogical elements can be incorporated structurally into the

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curricula and the learning objectives of existing correctional educational programs and that correctional educators can add Socratic techniques to their daily lessons to foster inmates' critical thinking skills.

Appendix A
Core Critical Thinking Elements: Definitions

Interpretation: "To comprehend and express the meaning or significance of a wide variety of experiences, situations, data, events, judgments, conventions, beliefs, rules, procedures, or criteria" (APA, 1990, p. 13).

Analysis: "To identify the intended and actual inferential relationships among statements, questions, concepts, descriptions, or other forms of representation intended to express beliefs, judgments, experiences, reasons, information, or opinions" (APA, 1990, p. 14).

Evaluation: "To assess the credibility of statements or other representations which are accounts or descriptions of a person's perception, experience, situation, judgment, belief, or opinion; and to assess the logical strength of the actual or intend[ed] inferential relationships among statements, descriptions, questions, or other forms of representation" (APA, 1990, p. 15).

Inference: "To identify and secure elements needed to draw reasonable conclusions; to form conjectures and hypotheses; to consider relevant information and to educe the consequences flowing from data, statements, principles, evidence, judgments, beliefs, opinions, concepts, descriptions, questions, or other forms of representation" (APA, 1990, p. 16).

Explanation: "To state the results of one's reasoning; to justify that reasoning in terms of the evidential, conceptual, methodological, criteriological, and contextual considerations upon which one's results were based; and to present one's reasoning in the form of cogent arguments" (APA, 1990, p. 18).

Self-regulation: "Self-consciously to monitor one's cognitive activities, the elements used in those activities, and the results educed, particularly by applying skills in analysis and evaluation to one's own inferential judgments with a view toward questioning, confirming, validating, or correcting either one's reasoning or one's results" (APA, 1990, p. 19).

Appendix B
Critical Thinking Core Elements: Subcategories

Element	Subcategories
1. Interpretation	Categorization
	Decoding Significance
	Clarifying Meaning
2. Analysis	Examining Ideas
	Identifying Arguments
	Analyzing Arguments
3. Evaluation	Assessing Claims
	Assessing Arguments
4. Inference	Querying Evidence
	Conjecturing Alternatives
	Drawing Conclusions
5. Explanation	Stating Results
	Justifying Procedures
	Presenting Arguments
6. Self-Regulation	Self-examination
	Self-correction

From the American Philosophical Association Delphi Report (APA, 1990, p. 12)

Socratic conversations may provide a welcome relief from formulaic curricula found in some existing treatments and interventions.

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