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**Rethinking the Prison Cell:**

**Developing Aspects of Self-Identity for Incarcerated Women Through Spatial Design.**

Master's Thesis

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## Dedication.

For my wonderful mother, who I can never thank enough, for her love and care.  
For all the dreams she has helped me live.

For my dearest brother, for being a friend, a helper and a source of encouragement.

To room 418, for being a place of peace, when I needed it the most.

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## Abstract

Modelled to exert discipline, power and control, the criminal justice system has historically been regarded as a system that is gender insensitive, in terms of its structures, protocols and routines. Therefore, not accommodating the needs of female inmates both emotionally and physically. The sense of powerlessness related to the struggle and need for self-definition in penal institutions is an overlooked yet important aspect in how inmates associate with themselves, their environment and the people around them. The thesis addresses the gap that lies between the admission of a female inmate into a prison institution and the importance of the prison cell to support their transformative capacities as human beings up until their release. The methods of data collection that the thesis used included observations, face to face interviews and use of questionnaires. The information was then recorded through photo taking and audio recording. The results from the interviews were then transcribed and an open coding thematic analysis was done to identify the prominent themes within the responses given. The thesis concluded with the proposal to create a new prison cell design concept. Through the creation of three distinct phases; phase 1: reflection, phase 2: Transformation, phase 3 : Integration. A creation of transformative spaces that promote self-controlled actions as part of acknowledging the importance of forming positive relations with the spaces inmates occupy as one of the key elements for a successful prison to community model for the inmates. After serving time, the expected result is that the inmate can be able to successfully transition back to the community with a much better chance at easing into the positive aspects of themselves and their community.

**Key words: Female inmates, Incarceration, Self-identity, Spatial design.**

## Introduction

What do the objects you have say about you? How does the space you spend most time in positively support who you are? The onset of this thesis was a desire to understand the relationship between our self identities, the spaces we occupy and the objects we accumulate in these spaces. It was quite interesting to see how the objects people had in their personal spaces formed extensions of themselves; who they were, what they liked and at times, where they were from. During the research, it became evident that the objects people had in their spaces helped them hold on to memories, express themselves and most importantly, created a sense of security and comfort to the participants when interacting with the space. As an overall observation, the freedom of expression seemed to be a key feature in helping people identify with the spaces they occupied through accumulating different objects in their personal spaces.

At this point, knowing that the freedom of self expression in spaces people spent most time in seemed to be an important feature, more so with the female participants during the interviews conducted, there came the idea to understand how people in places of restricted or limited freedom expressed their individuality within the spaces they occupied. With this direction, there was no better place to turn this search to, than the prison environment. A place where one is denied parts of themselves, ripped off who they were in the past and somehow given a new identity to relate with. At the same time, confined to a minimalism of self expression and liberty of choice.

My main focus then became the female inmate, since as a result of understanding the importance of objects to the female participants in the first part of my research, there was need to extend the same interest in understanding how then, in a place where the individuals are not allowed personalized items or objects in the spaces they occupy, spatial design could be used to fill the void, as a way to address this space that has long been associated with trauma and stigma from people who serve time. Focusing mainly on the prison cell, where most inmates spend most of

their time in.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, looking at the impact this has on an inmate and re-thinking the use and design of this space without undermining their sense of individuality or authenticity.

The specific category of incarceration that the thesis addresses will be pre-trial detention. Pre-trial detention, in legal terms, refers to the detaining of an accused person in a criminal case.<sup>2</sup> In many cases, owing to a lack of alternatives or prior to their case being presented before a court of law.<sup>3</sup> The lack of alternatives being for instance; they cannot afford to pay a stipulated sum of money as bail, and in other cases, as a result of a denial of release under a pre-trial detention statute.<sup>4</sup> For some people who have unstable sources of income, coming up with bail fees that have been set so high may be unattainable which leads them to spending time in prison for longer periods than expected.<sup>5</sup> At times, for crimes which they are not guilty of. An alternative that may be only accessible by certain groups in society, leading to unfair outcomes for poor individuals who are unlikely to receive jail time for the crimes they have committed. There is also a lack of alternatives of pre-trial detention in law and also in practice, leading to pre-trial detainees being held together with those who have been convicted of crimes, which may negatively affect their outcome.<sup>6</sup>

The majority of the prison buildings globally are also designed and constructed to fit the majority male population.<sup>7</sup> In many cases brought about by correctional building structures and their design and operational protocols which are created to host individuals who are a high security risk, while most women who are incarcerated are in prison for committing non-violent crimes.<sup>8</sup> This thesis therefore proceeds from a recognition of the environmental inadequacy of prison environments in regards to incarcerated women. The present introduction describes the focus of the research and key issues concerning self-identity defined here as “ a representation of key aspects of self .” It also introduces the topic of female incarceration in correctional facilities. The

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<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Justice. Example of a Daily Prison Schedule. [www.vangla.ee](http://www.vangla.ee)

<sup>2</sup> <https://definitions.uslegal.com/p/pre-trial-detention/>

<sup>3</sup> Penal Reform International. <https://www.penalreform.org/issues/pre-trial-justice/issue/>

<sup>4</sup> [law.yourdictionary.com/pre-trial-detention](http://law.yourdictionary.com/pre-trial-detention)

<sup>5</sup> Townhead, Laurel. Quaker United Nations Office. Women in Prison and Children of Imprisoned Mothers Series. Pre-trial Detention of Women and its Impact on their Children, February 2007

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

<sup>7</sup> Van den Bergh, Brenda. World Health Organization: *Imprisonment and Women's Health: Concerns about Gender sensitivity, Human Rights and Public Health*. July 2017

<sup>8</sup> Ibid



incentive and interest of this thesis has largely been influenced by the need to change the female prison narratives that have long been characterized by trauma and victimization while at the same time, making prominent the need to recognize the ever-changing aspects of the ‘self’ that is, one's sense of “ who I am and what I am.” The latter especially in the spaces that we occupy and how this can be transferable for positive change in the female prison environments. This is then followed by a definition of the problem, relevance of the topic, research questions and an overview of the research.

With this understanding, the thesis seeks to identify in what ways spatial design can be used to extend our transformative capacities as human beings, into the spaces we occupy and spend most time in. In this case, using spatial design to help the inmates find a way to express their individuality and transformation.

#### *Problem statement and relevance of the topic*

Incarcerated persons, just like the general public outside prison have different individual identities. However, even with this realization, female inmates with inherently different needs and individual offending histories are in most cases held together.<sup>9</sup> In addition to this, the small number of incarcerated women end up having fewer prisons dedicated to them since as already mentioned, most prison facilities and routines are built to cope with the majority male prison population, resulting in women being imprisoned further away from their homes.<sup>10</sup> Oftentimes causing complications as well as putting a strain on their relations in regards to sustaining their family ties, more so if they have children who depend on them.<sup>11</sup> With few female prisons, this may mean the use of unfair classifications and regimes during their time in prison, since inmates who are awaiting trial (in pre-trial detention) may be held together often for long periods of time, with inmates who have been convicted of crimes.

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<sup>9</sup> Townhead, Laurel. Quaker United Nations Office. Women in Prison and Children of Imprisoned Mothers Series: Pre-trial Detention of Women and its Impact on their Children. February 2007

<sup>10</sup> Van den Bergh BJ, Gatherer A, Fraser A, Moller L. World Health Organization: Imprisonment and Women's Health: Concerns about Gender sensitivity, Human Rights and Public Health. July 2011

<sup>11</sup> Townhead, Laurel. Quaker United Nations Office. Women in Prison and Children of Imprisoned Mothers Series: Pre-trial Detention of Women and its Impact on their Children. February 2007

When we think about spaces that affirm our existence as human beings, each unique and authentic, we think about our homes and the places we spend most time in. For inmates, this space is inside a prison cell, cage-like interiors with the least aesthetic consideration and heavy vandal resistant furnishings. But do these spaces really support their individual transformative aspects? In the transition from prison to community models that do not involve architecture and spatial design in the consideration of their planning to help inmate transition, this topic seeks to understand how this gap can be filled with the creation of a harmonious co-existence and positive experience between space and person and how this may impact wholesome personal development. The project emphasis being the importance of role transitions to support changes in the self in habitable spaces for female inmates.

## *Research questions and overview*

The following main research question(s) are identified:

1. How can spatial design be used to help female inmates maintain aspects of themselves, supported by the spaces they inhabit?
2. How can we transfer the personal qualities we have with our intimate objects to the spaces without personalized objects? In this case, the prison cells?

The thesis will first look at the history of discipline and punishment as documented by the French philosopher, literary critic and historian, Michel Foucault. In his book *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of Prison*. Refining how the idea of punishment and incarceration came to be, how it translates to other areas of society and the role this plays on the self. It is also important since it helps understand and reflect on the history of punishment in regards to the past, present and the possible future, while on the other side of the spectrum, seeking to understand how the inmates come to terms with their past, how they cope with their present experiences and how they can be supported to reach towards better individual futures.

After this overview, the thesis will then seek to understand the states of female incarceration and their pathways to crime, the struggle with self-definition for inmates, by looking into psychological impacts of incarceration on inmates and how interaction with a space impacts personal experiences. Lastly, it will look at how we can rethink the concept of the prison cell as a way to promote a healthy transition for the inmate which in the long run may help cultivate a positive relationship with themselves and give them confidence to approach society after their release. Considering the research on self-identity and how it is affected by incarceration is sparse, this thesis seeks to think about this topic in a way that allows access to conversations about a future of incarceration where the prison cell acts as a correctional, self-improvement space that does not deprive its users of their ideals of self or better yet, improves their concepts of self. As another entry of interest, this thesis can also be a contribution to promoting the need for transformative space making in helping inmates adjust to incarceration through creating an

emphasis on designing crime specific institutions as opposed to hosting all the confined individuals in the same conditions despite the crime committed.

# 1. Methodology

Composing this chapter began with a reflective examination of myself, investigating the question of the consumption of interior objects and self-identity, meaning making and how the various aspects of our identities and experiences we bring to the spaces we inhabit shape our experience with that space. This was an important step in helping to create a foundation for the research that was extended to further participants.

The second stage employed the use of qualitative data collection methods; one on one interviews and use of questionnaires in the form of email exchanges where a physical meeting was not possible. There was also record keeping through audio recording the face to face interviews, and photo taking in the home visits carried out to gather information on the consumption of interior products/objects and self-identity. In the structured interviews, the questions were prearranged and sent via email to the respondents.

## 1.1 Stage 1: Observation- curiosity of the self

My understanding of the importance of self-identity was brought into perspective from a personal point of interest and curiosity about how we consciously and at times subconsciously extend parts of ourselves, to the personal spaces which we inhabit, through the personal objects we acquire or hold on to. For a while, I became my own research subject to try to understand why I had the objects I had and what meaning each item had, that enabled the spaces which I inhabited to feel like an extension of myself.

All this was influenced by a relocation from living in Estonia where I had stayed for almost a year to a move in Iceland where I was set to stay for two months. While in Iceland, I noticed a detachment between myself and my immediate surroundings. That is, the room which I occupied. It felt different, like I was physically present but the space I inhabited said nothing about me, where I was from, what I liked. I began observing what had changed within and without my awareness and presence in an attempt to get to the point of entry of the formation of

the difference I felt. Aside from being in a different place geographically and meeting different people.

Being of Kenyan origin and coming from a place with an entirely different cultural and societal background, I decided to explore my surroundings some more by searching for Kenyans living in Iceland and started to engage and spend time with them. While visiting their places of residence, I noticed one recurring theme; they all had material objects<sup>12</sup> that reminded them of home. They had carried with them parts of their past that they linked to their present lives. They had something familiar, objects that they attached meaning and memories to. The exact things that I had left back in Estonia, displayed in my place of residence. I had carried none of the things that made me feel like the space I lived in was mine, or my home. This was what formed the difference.

I moved back to Estonia after the two month period with a deeper curiosity where I continued the research on self- identity and how we use objects to help us identify with the spaces we inhabit. I met a couple of people who were interested in this finding and so I started conducting interviews, and had open conversations with the interviewees, sometimes ending up in interesting debates. As I went along conducting the interviews, three key aspects appeared that I found strikingly interesting. First, during these discussions with the participants, who were both male and female, the female interview participants seemed to be more inclined towards exposing the objects they attached meaning to. For instance; objects that had memories of a relative or something that was aesthetically what they thought was a representation of who they were or where they were from. Unlike the male participants who seemed to be more interested in having just a good coffee maker or a camping cup.

Secondly, another aspect that was revealed was that the freedom to be able to customize one's own space played a huge part in the ability to imprint part of who they were to themselves and what they liked in the spaces they inhabited. Thirdly, the aspect of time. This played an important role in determining the amount of objects one accumulated over a period and what they accumulated, as an expression of who one was, where they were from and what they liked.

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<sup>12</sup> The word object(s) in the thesis is used to mean a physical item which a specific action or feeling is directed

After this observation, I turned the perspective inwards again. I began studying the objects in my flat in Tallinn, whereby my roommate and I had totally different objects exhibited/displayed in our personal spaces and at a glance, one would notice that we had two very different ways that we chose to customize our personal surroundings. Which brought us to late night conversations about why we had the things we had in our personal spaces.

However, she seemed to be collecting more objects obtained from her new country of residence since she was going to reside in Estonia for only a few months (4 months) and as a result, she was collecting memories. I, on the other hand, had more objects from my home country Kenya, since I was going to be staying in Estonia for a much longer time (2 years). We found out that both of us had subconsciously created our own little extensions of parts of ourselves and our lives through what we publicly displayed, or displayed to each other. An even more interesting point to note was that while she seemed like she was collecting memories, I on the other hand was holding on to memories. Two different processes were happening in the same shared room at the same time. The reason we however, were able to do this was because we had a location, or a room to attach these representations of our personal features or details of self. In the long run, creating a space that we felt like we belonged in/to in our own different ways.

## 1.2 Stage 2: Data Analysis

### Part 1 : Self identity and its relation to objects

The interview conducted in this case had 9 participants, of which 5 identified as females and 4 identified as males. The recruitment of participants was done through simple random sampling, which is a selection technique in which a subset of individuals is chosen from a larger set or population and each member of the population has an equal chance of being included in the sample.<sup>13</sup> The setting for the interviews conducted in this part of the research took place in the interviewee's homes. The interview conducting time was a minimum of 1 hour and a maximum of 6 hours. The time spent was dependent on how long the participant(s) had inhabited their space and discussions that came thereafter regarding the objects they had accumulated.

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<sup>13</sup> Sampling ( [www.stat.yale.edu](http://www.stat.yale.edu) )

The collection of data was through audio records of the conversations and taking of photographs to document the kind of objects which had meaning to them. Thereafter, the objects were listed down, and categorized in relation to the time they had lived in these spaces.

An analysis of the objects found;

<b>Time</b>	<b>List of objects found</b>
0-5 months (Temporary stay)	<p>Flag of the new country of residence.</p> <p>Collection of souvenirs like postcards which were displayed on the walls.</p> <p>Gifts from friends in the new country of residence.</p> <p><b>Overall: Collection of memories</b></p>
5 months -1 year (Semi-permanent stay)	<p>Flags from their home country.</p> <p>Stuffed animals handed down from their grandparents. She has been with this for 28 years.</p> <p>‘ I feel safe whenever I am around it’</p> <p>Rocks that one travelled with from their home country to Estonia, placed on display to help them have a physical memory of home.</p> <p>A guitar, part of this object's importance was the time the owner had spent with it. He mentioned that he would be okay anywhere in the world as long as he had his guitar by his side.</p>



	<p>‘ I have marks on my fingers from this guitar, that way, we are one...’</p> <p>A camping cup- holds memories with friends and family from their adventures back home.</p> <p>A coffee maker from their home country, he travels with it wherever he goes.</p> <p>Bags with prints from the home country that remind them of home and the culture.</p> <p><b>Overall: Holding on to memories</b></p>
More than 1 year (Permanent stay)	<p>A lot of objects displayed, the space becomes an extension of the inhabitants personality and likes and there is a balance between the collection of memories and the need to hold on to memories.</p> <p>The objects included ;</p> <p>Items like artworks displayed which were collected from various parts of places they have been.</p> <p>Some of the objects displayed are gifts from loved ones and each item has a story of its own.</p> <p>Self -portraits on the walls</p> <p>Photographs on the walls</p> <p>At this point there is meaning attached to even bigger objects like pieces of furniture</p> <p>The space almost becomes like a sort of</p>

	personal museum of the life of the person inhabiting it.  <b>Overall: Collection and holding on to memories</b>
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Table 1: A table showing the list of objects acquired and displayed in a space in relation to time .

Source : Author (2020)

### 1.3 Stage 2: Findings and Conclusions

Memories, personal space and time were the main important factors that were found to create an atmosphere for the participants to express themselves in their spaces through the objects they owned and as a result making them experience these spaces in a more personal and homely way. Interestingly, the female interview participants seemed to have a much more desire to acquire more objects that they attached meaning to unlike the male participants who either had one object they felt was very close to them. For instance, the guitar and the camping cup.

The longer one stayed in a place, the longer one accumulated objects, slowly extending the representations of themselves onto the spaces they occupied. For the ones who stayed in places that had previous owners, the observation was that such spaces had layers of self-identities represented. Clusters of items from one person who was a previous occupant were layered with items from the new occupant, creating a sort of meeting point or clash of identities and in these spaces, there was a struggle with feeling a sense of belonging.

Linking this with the literature presented, there was a strong connection between how people chose to progressively attach a feeling of safety and freedom of self expression in their private spaces. These objects supported parts of who they were and extending them to their spaces

enabled a smooth transition into a new space, curating a positive personal experience especially if they were going to spend a much longer time in the inhabited space.

Females	Memories	Personal space	Time
Collected more objects. Attached meaning to most things.	Give meaning to things.	Makes one more comfortable to express themselves.	The more time spent in a space, the more it changed, had more things to it to accommodate who they were, who they were becoming.

Table 2: A summary of the main themes derived from the research

( Deliverables to help with the design concept development )

Source: Author (2020)

## 1.4 Stage 3: Data Analysis

### Part 2: Understanding the prison environment

Since the probability to visit Tallinn Prison in Estonia or Halden prison in Norway for observation of the spaces was not a success, due to the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 early spring, the research adopted an alternative of understanding the spaces and space relations through conducting interviews with people who have previously been involved with prison institutions either as inmates or as staff. In the beginning, there were 6 interviews sent out to participants, most of who previously worked within the Tallinn prison system. However there were only 2 questionnaires that received responses and 2 face to face interviews were conducted. Totalling the number of interviews to 4.

In the face to face interviews conducted, the questions did not follow a strictly structured format making the interview more of an open conversation. The responses were audio recorded with permission from the interviewees. The first participant was a former inmate of Tallinn prison and the other, a former employee of the *Estonian Ministry of Justice*. The remaining 2 interviews were conducted in the form of questionnaires. One participant being the professional architect who was part of the team that built the new Tallinn Prison (completed in 2018) and the other interview completed by an individual from the *Estonian Academy of Security* with structured questions sent out via email and the responses received via the same channel.

Since it was difficult to find female interview participants, who had formerly been convicted, the male former inmate acted as a good source of information towards understanding the experience of incarceration since the spaces and routines serve no special treatment for either gender (as stated by the interview participant from the *Estonian Academy of Security*).

The first interview conducted in the beginning of the research about prison environments was the open ended interview between myself and the former inmate from Tallinn prison. We talked about his life before prison, in prison and after. The scenes that took place before the interview got to the formal part set a tone for the rest of the conversation. At first, when we were beginning, he took medicine in the form of a tablet, and out of curiosity, I asked what it was for. He then went ahead and told me that he had Attention Deficit and Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD) which was diagnosed 3 years after serving his time in prison. He was in prison for the possession of drugs and being a drug dealer. He would previously self-medicate with amphetamines which helped him calm down whenever he had an episode, without knowing that he had an underlying condition. Looking back at his life, he figures that having ADHD was what made him have a drug use and addiction problem in the first place and prison did not help him counter the emotions he felt:

1. By not affording him the privacy he needed to be alone when dealing with emotions or when anger had gotten the best of him.  
‘ Sometimes I wanted to cry but I had to wait until I was all alone, or say that I am going to smoke in the bathroom but instead spend that 1 minute smoke time to cry. I would do the same if I wanted to pray too, and at times I felt guilty for praying to God in the toilet.’

2. Not being able to receive frequent visits from people who were close to him.

‘ From the moment you are captured and taken to prison, you are treated as an object and that is what you will be, just someone’s job, until you leave.’ He said, with a heavy tone in his voice.

3. He was locked up with strangers who sometimes had their own issues, resulting in built up tension between the two parties. In one occasion, he explains that;

‘You can feel the tension, almost physically, that we hate each other. I already made an arrangement in my head, I am going to take this metal bowl and I am going to smash his face when he is asleep.’

With a smile on his face, he said that luckily before this happened he made an application to get transferred because he told the prison staff that his staying there with this person was not going to end well.

With the second face to face interview, the former employee with the Ministry of Justice who was responsible for the rehabilitation department mentioned that spatially, the conditions that mostly affected both the inmates and the staff was that the windows were not openable, making it hard for them to have the control of indoor air quality. The feedback received from the questionnaire sent out to the participant from the *Estonian Academy of Security* also created a better understanding of how prison environments that host both male and female inmates work. For instance;

1. ‘Forbidden items are listed in the Prisons’ Rules of Procedure 64 1 p1. There are no differences between male and female inmates. Although, in solitary confinement, a female inmate is allowed to have sanitary pads, which are forbidden for male inmates (Prisons’ Rules of Procedure 60). Things that are not allowed in prison are placed into a warehouse. The prisoner will get his /her things back when he’s / she’s released from prison. It doesn’t matter if the person is convicted or arrested (waiting for the trial).’

2. 'A prisoner who is waiting for his / her trial is allowed at least 1x a month a short term visit with relatives, friends etc. One visit lasts up to 3 hours (in practice it's around 1 – 1.5 hours). A prisoner has unrestricted right to receive visits from his or her criminal defense counsel, representative who is an advocate, minister of religion or a consular officer of his or her country of nationality, and with a notary for performance of a notarial act. Visits shall be uninterrupted. Long term visits are allowed at least once in 6 months. A long term visit lasts 24 hours.'
3. 'Prisoners shall be allowed at least one hour of walk in the open air daily. The yard depends on the prison's architecture. Prisoners who are in single cells have nothing in their walking yards. Convicted inmates who live in open sections (cell doors are open up to 10h a day) have one large yard, where there is an opportunity to engage in sports (doing body weight exercises like chin-ups, dips etc.).'


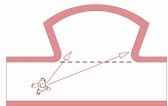

With the prison architect, a response given that most prison institutions may not adhere to is that 'What should be kept in mind – it is not the environment that serves as punishment , but the isolation from society.'

The feedback received from all the interviews was then transcribed and then an open coding thematic analysis was done to identify the prominent themes within the responses given. This entailed coding all the data before pointing out two major themes, namely;

1. Spatial - Space and People
2. Relationships - People and People

The themes were then grouped into identified sub-themes related to each.

Themes	Sub-themes	Perceptions
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<b>Spatial</b>	<b>Privacy</b>	Need for privacy is important for the inmates to maintain a sense of autonomy.
		
	<b>Clear sight lines</b>	Dark corners should be avoided
		
	<b>Availability of courtyards</b>	Important both for the staff and the inmates. The inmates in Tallinn Prison are allowed one hour walks everyday in the yard.
		
	<b>Security</b>	Needs to be ensured both to the inmates and the staff. The same amount of security

	<b>Good space plan/ Design</b>	<p>is offered both for the female department and the male department.</p> <p>Ensures good operation</p>
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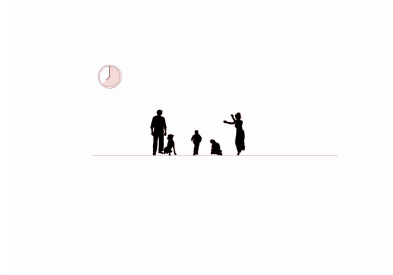
<b>Relationships</b>	<b>Visitation time/Visiting hours</b>	<p>1-1.5 hours visits, one day every month for the general population. Long term visits occur once in 6 months.</p>
		
	<p><b>Relationships between staff and inmates</b></p> <p><b>Prison institutions should encourage rehabilitation rather than punishment</b></p>	<p>Formal relationship, not much socialization</p> <p>‘...It is not the environment that serves as punishment but the isolation from society...’</p>

Table 3: Open coding thematic analysis for the interviews

Source: Author (2020)



### 1.5 Stage 3: Findings and Conclusions

At first, getting the interviewees for this part of the research was challenging as most of the current workers in prison are not allowed to take part in interviews without prior permission, for instance in Estonia, from *The Estonian Justice Ministry*. However, this barrier was overcome by finding people who were previously working in Tallinn Prison.

From the interview responses, it seemed that the deliverables to create a habitable space for the inmates and staff working in prison institutions which were most important were the experiences, both spatial and in terms of the relationships between the people inside the prison environments and links with the outside too. Themes that supported the design proposal and concept.

#### Relationships

Space and People	People and People
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Table 4: Summary of key themes

( Deliverables to help with the design concept development )

Source : Author (2020)

## 2. Punishment: A Brief History of Imprisonment

The turning points of change in understanding the idea of punishment over the centuries has been quite fascinating. This section looks into the book *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*.<sup>14</sup> An analysis that explores the changing forms of punishment and its history, from the late 1700s through to mid 1800s, by the French philosopher, literary critic and historian, Michel Foucault.<sup>15</sup>

Foucault begins with a narrative on the forms of imprisonment in the 18th Century, where torture upon the subject was the main motive of the ritual of punishment (Foucault 1975,3-10) . He describes it as a public event, a social function, with the body of the offender acting as the major recipient of penal repression, and the act of torture for a crime committed, as the public spectacle. Some crimes, he adds, like murder and treason would be punishable by hanging, which was done publicly and acted as a somewhat theatrical spectacle. Foucault further explains the goal of the spectacle which was to show the horrors that would befall anyone who tried to commit the same crime through the pain inflicted on the body through corporal punishment, for instance; whipping and flogging and being drawn to the gallows with a cart leading to an eventual execution of the condemned person. All these, he says, culminated to the ideal concept of the crime befitting the punishment.

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<sup>14</sup> Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, New York, Vintage Books, 1975

<sup>15</sup> GradeSaver 'Discipline and Punish: The Birth of The Prison Summary.' Accessed 19th May 2020

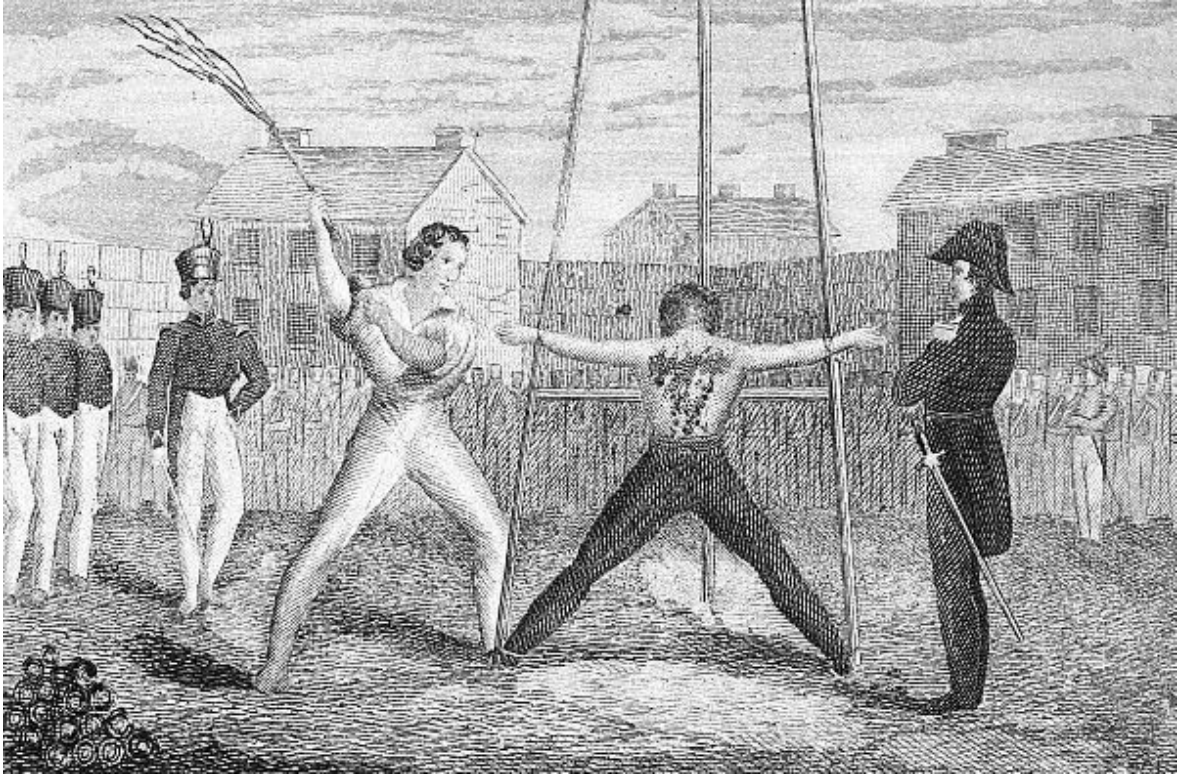


Figure 1: Flogging, in Punishment as a spectacle. 18<sup>th</sup> Century, Victorian punishments

Source: Pinterest.com

## 2.1 A reduction of the ‘thousand deaths.’

From the tortured, dismembered and amputated body, Foucault mentions that there then came a certain discretion in the infliction of pain from as early as 1762 - (Foucault, 12-14). He describes that a hanging machine was tried out in England, for the execution of Lord Ferrer, an English nobleman following his conviction for murdering his steward. Then following that, in 1792, the guillotine, a device used to behead a person convicted with an offense, was introduced in France. This device, he mentions, was considered a better way to eliminate pain to the offender by reducing death to an instantaneous event, as opposed to the severity of the latter which involved a public display of the tortured body. With the guillotine, no torture was added to the body in advance, death became a thing that lasted only a moment. Foucault points out that the law felt at

this point, that one death per condemned man seemed fair enough. Contact between the justice system (the law), the executioner and the condemned man was reduced to a mere second.

He later points out that, the new ethic of legal and quick death was however still attracting the public who came to view the punishment of the offender and so to create less of a spectacle, the guillotine was placed inside prison walls so as to make it inaccessible to the public. The executions then started taking place in secret and those found speaking about it would be prosecuted. Foucault mentions that this was to ensure that the executions no longer became public spectacles but instead, a secret between the law and those it chose to condemn.

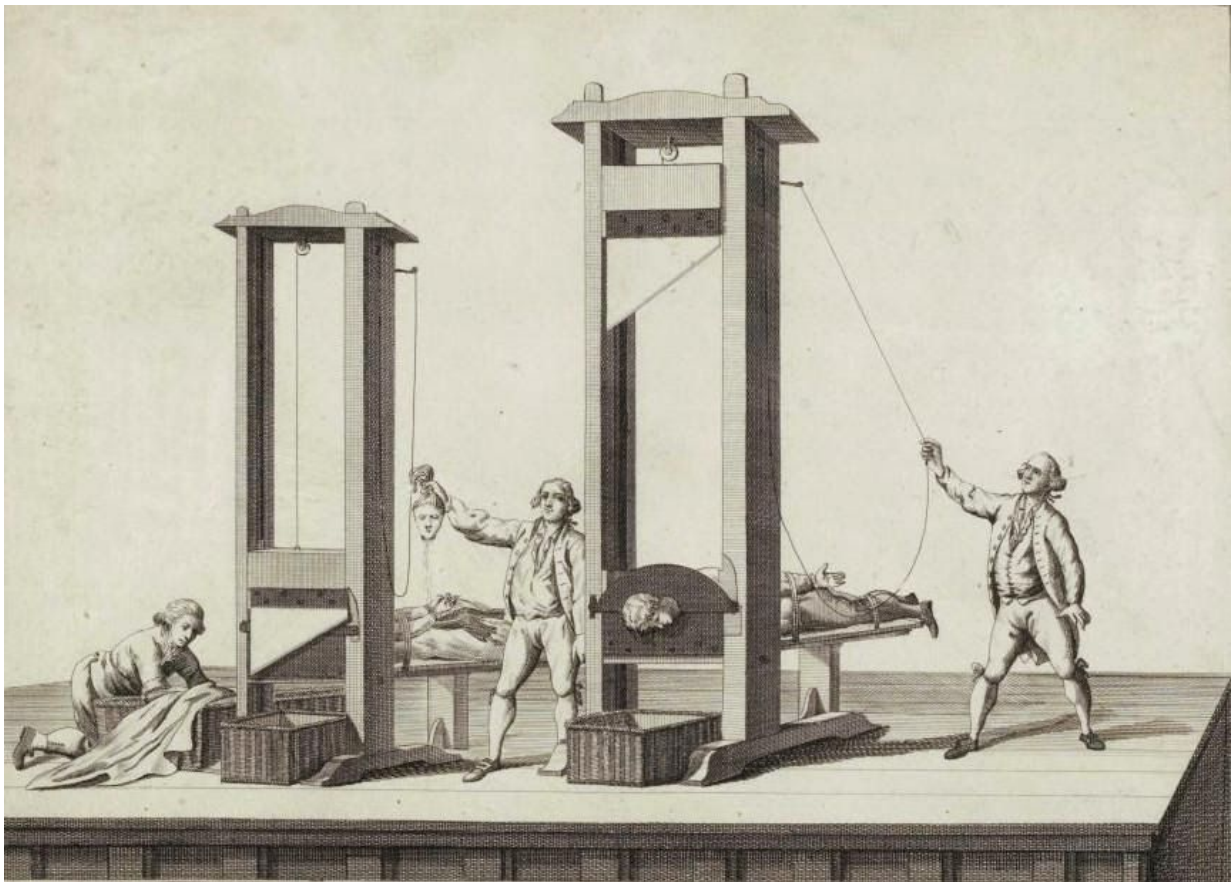


Figure 2: Guillotine, Musée de la Révolution française

Source: Wikipedia

## 2.2 The Prison introduced as a filter system

Later, in the beginning of the 19th century, there came institutional transformations (Foucault, 13-17). The concept of punishment was reorganized, and the idea of public execution considered inhumane and slanderous especially to the body governing the execution of punishments, observes Foucault. The justice system no longer took responsibility for the violence that was bound up with its practice. Leading to the idea of punishment which he describes had a much 'higher' aim; to help the criminal reform, but through a system of suspended rights. For instance; the right to privacy and freedom of movement. The concept was imprisonment, which he explains acted to accommodate the idea of 'treating' the criminal by making them pass through a system where hopefully, they contemplated their actions and changed, ready to become model citizens once they left the institution. At this point, Foucault describes a -symbolism of punishment leaving the normalized domain of the public and everyday perception and entering that which existed in thought, that of the abstract consciousness. In Foucault's words, 'its effectiveness is seen as resulting from its inevitability not from its visible intensity.'

Before, the immediate implementer of the pain that was inflicted to the prisoner as a result of their crime was the executioner but with the new system, he points out that an army of professionals came in to replace the executioner. From doctors to psychologists, psychiatrists to guards, priests and educationalists, who he explains acted as a support system for the law to ensure the individuals caught up in that system and the society at large, that 'the body and pain were not the ultimate objects of its punitive actions.'

Therefore, from this point on, punishment, as analyzed by Foucault (25-28), became the most hidden part of the penal process and moved from the visible intensity of the body as the major target of enforcing the law to a form of punishment that acted on the life of the criminal, his thoughts, his will, his freedom, way of living and not too far-fetched to suggest, the soul. Through the documented psychological implications this form of punishment had to its recipients.



## 2.3 Spatial control: Birth of the Panopticon

In 1791, Jeremy Bentham, an English philosopher and social reformer proposed a model for prisons and a system of control through a type of institutional building called the Panopticon.<sup>16</sup> Foucault explains the principle on which it was based ; the cells lining up the hub where the observation tower was, and solid walls in between the cells that prevented any communication between the inmates. A small window at the back of the cell was used to illuminate the subjects for guards to observe movements. Foucault states that this concept would provide control through isolation for the offenders and constant surveillance, ‘its effectiveness is seen as resulting from its inevitability.’ Discouraging crime through the certainty of punishment, and not the horrifying spectacle of public punishment. In my opinion, the prison therefore was introduced to act as a filter system. Separating the presumably bad for the society and putting them far away from the presumably good.

Onwards in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a few prisons were built based on the panopticon principle especially in the United States, for instance; the Western Pennsylvania and the Virginia state prison.<sup>17</sup> Both of them showed some influence from Bentham’s panopticon layout but failed to embody its whole concept of ease of inspection from the central point as the former had such thick walls and the cells so dark.<sup>18</sup> The environment described put prisoners in such severe conditions especially in solitary confinement, with several successful prisoner escapes and few prisoners showing any signs of being reformed.<sup>19</sup>

If it so happens that this system killed, or wounded the criminals detained, then it was not to be considered as a glorification of the strength of the justice system and as Foucault puts it, ‘ as an element of itself that is obliged to tolerate, that it finds difficult to account for.’ In the past, Foucault mentions that the shame of the criminal act was distributed equally between the executioner and the criminal. In the new system, the conviction itself marked the offender with

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<sup>16</sup> Furlong, Gillian. "Designs for a Panopticon Prison by Jeremy Bentham: Section of an Inspection House; Plan of Houses of Inspection; Section Plan, C. 1791." In *Treasures from UCL*, 136-39. London: UCL Press, 2015. Accessed April 28, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1g69xrh.46](http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1g69xrh.46).

<sup>17</sup> Banks, Cindy. *Punishment in America: A Reference Handbook*. California, ABC-CLIO, inc., 2005, Pg. 52

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

the negative sign, he alone was to carry the shame.<sup>20</sup> An idea that therefore shifted the publicity to the trial, and thereafter, to the sentence. The justice system kept a distance from the act, as punishment became the most hidden part of the penal process.<sup>21</sup>

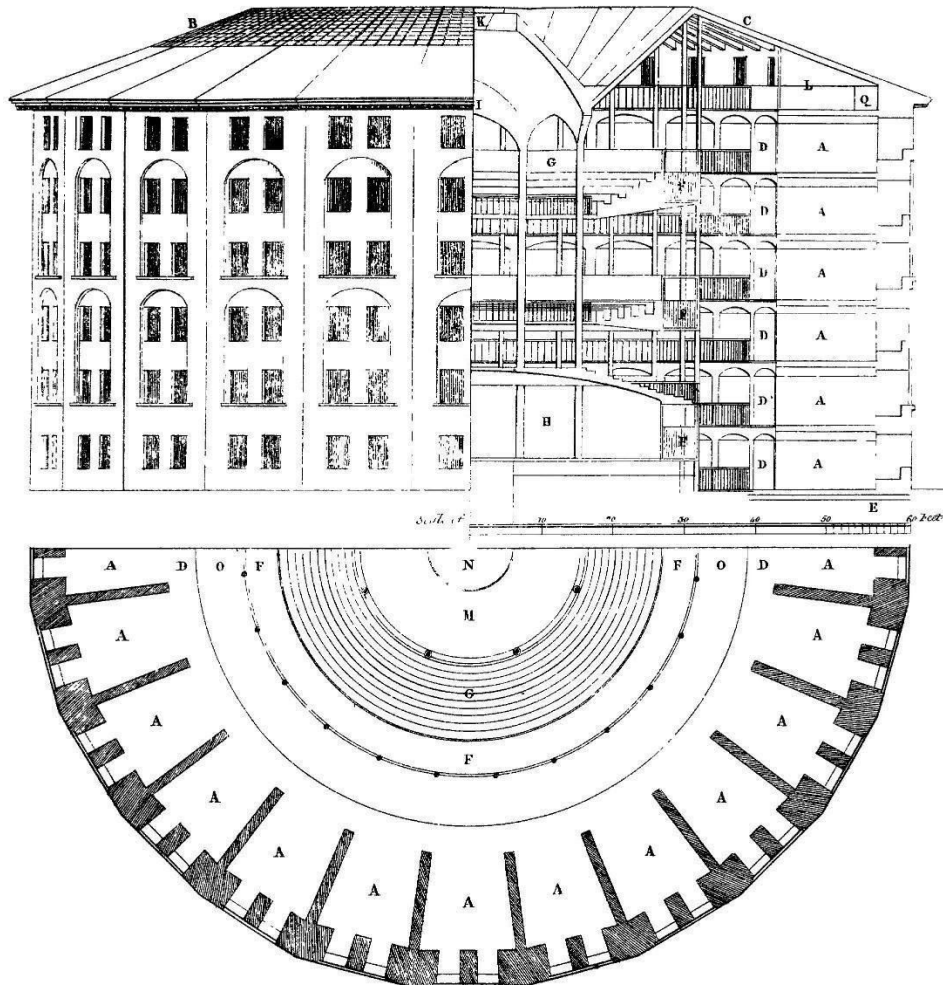


Figure 3: Panopticon Design by Jeremy Bentham, 1791

Source: Wikipedia, Image by unknown.

<sup>20</sup> Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, New York, Vintage Books, 1975

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

At this point, to steer clear of the one-sided observation, I would like to briefly mention the contribution of Foucault's work to feminist scholarship, where his work on *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* has been greatly critiqued and the issues he pointed out, revisited. His seemingly gender-neutral position on the idea of gender and its role in the play of power has been seen as a one sided approach in the magnitude to which the approaches and degrees of discipline are exercised on the body.<sup>22</sup> The foundation of knowledge in norms which put the two genders under review (male and female), into a single universal model, one that is based within the masculine foundation and in which women are forced to conform or 'fit' in is regarded as an issue that needs to be exposed and addressed in the current times.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> King, Angela. The Prisoner of Gender: Foucault and the Disciplining of the Female Body. *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 5(2), 29-39. March 2004.

<sup>23</sup> Howe, Adrian. "Prologue to a History of Women's Imprisonment: In Search of a Feminist Perspective." *Social Justice* 17, no. 2 (40) (1990): 5-22. Accessed April 30, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/29766538](http://www.jstor.org/stable/29766538).



### 3. Women Imprisonment: Status of Female Incarceration and its Psychological Impacts on Inmates

With the background given above of punishment and its change in form over the centuries, it is my understanding that; in the 18th Century pain was inflicted solely on the body of the offender, followed by the decline of corporal punishment in the 19th and 20th Century. Which introduced the concept of institutionalization of crime, resulting in punishment being in between the body and the soul. The question further on is; where are we now and what could our future be like?

Traces of the previous centuries can still be seen in modern day ideals of punishment. A personal observation is that the equivalent of masks designed with holes cut for the eyes and mouth can now be translated as the use of solitary confinement in some prison institutions. The former was directly used on the subject, the body as the recipient of torture while the latter, on the subconscious of the subject, a shift of punishment from the body as the sole recipient to the mind.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Foucault, Michel. Discipline and Punish: *The Birth of the Prison*, New York, Vintage Books, 1975



Figure 4 (left): Prisoners in the 18th and early 19th Century covered in hoods to limit their perception of their surroundings.

Figure 5 (Right): A comparative case of what is used now in solitary confinement which somehow is no different to the past. Just that in this case now, the whole body and mind of the prisoner is immersed in the agony.

Source: Pinterest.com, Images by unknown

At the high end of the spectrum, there is also an immense risk of self-harm and suicide vulnerabilities which are always elevated in jail and prison environments.<sup>25</sup> Incarcerated females as compared to male inmates and women in the general population outside prison are also observed to experience a higher rate of medical and mental health conditions as most of them are evidenced to have had a past experience with domestic, childhood or sexual abuse.<sup>26</sup> As already mentioned, women form a vulnerable group, where they also are at a higher risk of inflicting harm to themselves or committing suicide and with the extreme nature of prison environments, this complicates their way of coping with how they feel about their circumstances.<sup>27</sup> Punishment

<sup>25</sup> Glaze E. Lauren, James J. Doris, Bureau of Justice Statistics, NCJ 213600, *Mental Health Problems of Prison and Jail Inmates 1*, 2006.

<sup>26</sup> Glaze E. Lauren, James J. Doris, Bureau of Justice Statistics, NCJ 213600, *Mental Health Problems of Prison and Jail Inmates 1*, 2006.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

is therefore still being made to linger in the mind of the incarcerated through tough prison conditions and feelings of helplessness.

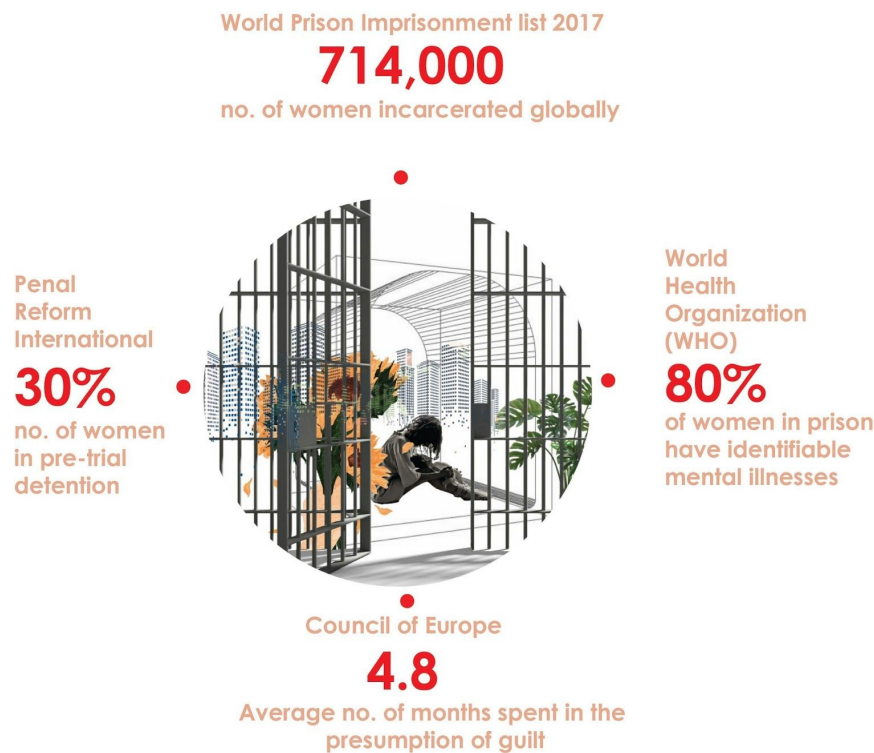


Figure 6: Statistics in the cases of women in prison

Image Source: Author (2020)

In 2017, the World Female Imprisonment list showed that there were more than 714,000 incarcerated women and girls in prisons all around the world, with the number increasing by more than 50% as opposed to the male prisoner population that had increased by 20% since around the year 2000.<sup>28</sup> Statistics show that the last 3 decades have seen the spike in the rate of incarcerated women rise to nearly double the rate of men on a global scale.<sup>29</sup> While looking at

<sup>28</sup> World Prison Brief: Institute of Criminal Justice. *World Female Imprisonment List*. November 2017

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

the female pathways to crime, those who are convicted of crimes mostly come from marginalized and less advantaged backgrounds which are more often than not, characterized by trauma histories of violence, sexual and physical abuse and unlike a larger population of the male prisoners, female prisoners tend to be convicted for nonviolent offenses.<sup>30</sup> The issues of gender inequity and insensitivity are therefore factors that have made women in prison to constitute a special group over the years within prison institutions.<sup>31</sup>

To briefly shift the focus to the pre-trial detention of women, there is a growing number of evidence suggesting that people who are held in pretrial detention are more likely to have worse outcomes not only in their court cases, but also in their lives.<sup>32</sup> With conditions that are often more restrictive as compared to those of convicted prisoners, pre-trial detainees in some institutions end up at risk because they are held together with hardened criminals who are likely to inflict harm on them.<sup>33</sup> Convictions of the innocent, emotional stress, physical and psychological trauma, incarceration with hardened criminals among others, are just some of the effects that come about due to serving time in pre-trial detention.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Van den Bergh, Brenda. World Health Organization: *Imprisonment and Women's Health: Concerns about Gender sensitivity, Human Rights and Public Health*. July 2017

<sup>31</sup> Van der Bergh, Brenda. Plugge, Emma. Aguirre, Isabel. *Prisons and Health. 18 Women's health and the prison setting*. euro.who.int

<sup>32</sup> Vera Evidence Brief. Justice Denied: The Harmful and Lasting Effects of Pretrial Detention. April 2019.

<sup>33</sup> Townhead, Laurel. Quaker United Nations Office. *Women in Prison and Children of Imprisoned Mothers Series. Pre-trial Detention of Women and its Impact on their Children*, February 2007

<sup>34</sup> Input to OHCHR on the causes and human rights implications of over-incarceration and overcrowding, and ways to remedy such situations, including alternatives to detention and other relevant good practices or experiences, 2014.

## Closed Prison A- High security

B- Pose a risk to the public but for whom escape still needs to be made difficult.

C- Those who cannot be trusted in open prison conditions but who are unlikely to try and escape.

**Pre-trial detainees**

## Open Prison

Those who can reasonably be trusted not to try to escape. They in some occasions are also eligible for a home leave.

Figure 7 : Prison types and where most pre-trial detainees fall

Image Source: Author (2020)

The length of pre-trial detention varies from country to country, with the Council of Europe having an average of about 4.8 months in prison for an individual in the presumption of guilt.<sup>35</sup> A considerably long time of a neglected, yet global human rights crisis.<sup>36</sup> The United Nations has also recognized the overreliance on holding individuals in custody prior to trial as a critical human rights problem.<sup>37</sup> Especially with the chance that the person in detention is innocent of the crime they are assumed to have committed.

Aside from the mental impact that pre-trial detention has on the female, they also have a unique set of challenges when some of them are the primary caregivers of minor children.<sup>38</sup> With 77% of mothers having been reported to live with their children before being involved with the

<sup>35</sup> Council of Europe, Pre-trial Detention Assessment tool. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal>

<sup>36</sup> Townhead, Laurel. Quaker United Nations Office. Women in Prison and Children of Imprisoned Mothers Series. Pre-trial Detention of Women and its Impact on their Children, February 2007

<sup>37</sup> Townhead, Laurel. Quaker United Nations Office. Women in Prison and Children of Imprisoned Mothers Series. Pre-trial Detention of Women and its Impact on their Children, February 2007

<sup>38</sup> Glaze E. Lauren, Maruschak M. Laura, Bureau of Justice Statistics, NCJ 222984, Parents in Prison and Their Minor Children 2 .2008.

criminal justice system, as opposed to 26% of men.<sup>39</sup> With a comparison to the general women population outside prison, incarcerated women tend to be unmarried and single parents to dependent children.<sup>40</sup> It may be a single person in pre-trial detention, but the impact is felt not just on them but also on their families and people around them while at the same time, they have possibilities of losing their jobs and their homes.<sup>41</sup> Such a physical and emotional separation may take a toll on both the children and their mothers and for women with trauma histories, the controlling and restrictive prison environment can trigger a traumatic memory, and bring about a reaction that can be perceived by staff as perverse and disruptive.<sup>42</sup> The offences that also end in women being incarcerated are also more often than not, non-violent, drug or property related crimes while at times they become victims of the crimes they have committed for instance; if they have been coerced to buy drugs for their partner.<sup>43</sup> A sad narrative of the paths that most female inmates take before being incarcerated; from victimization to criminalization.

While it may seem attractive to dwell on the issues that influence the patterns regarding female pathways to crime, for instance; histories of victimization, mental health issues and drug abuse, it is also important to shift this focus into one that addresses the problem from perspectives of feminist scholars. Some feminist scholars warn of the extent to which such a portrayal may have potentially negative consequences for the women involved while leading to women's offending being associated to particular types of female pathology.<sup>44</sup> As a result, sustaining traditional stereotypes of a problematic category of woman. While in theory I do agree with such a standpoint, I also see the importance of addressing such issues especially with professionals in the built environment, which may shine a light on the risks of women in prison and work on prison designs from that understanding, in order to create spaces that do not magnify or trigger

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<sup>39</sup> Glaze E. Lauren, Maruschak M. Laura, Bureau of Justice Statistics, NCJ 222984, Parents in Prison and Their Minor Children 2 .2008.

<sup>40</sup> Kruttschnitt, Candace, and Rosemary Gartner. "Women's Imprisonment." *Crime and Justice* 30 (2003): 1-81. Accessed April 29, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/1147696](http://www.jstor.org/stable/1147696).

<sup>41</sup> Vera Evidence Brief. Justice Denied: The Harmful and Lasting Effects of Pretrial Detention. April 2019.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> World Health Organization - Regional Office for Europe.

<http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/health-determinants/prisons-and-health/focus-areas/womens-health/10-things-to-know-about-women-in-prison>

<sup>44</sup> Kruttschnitt, Candace, and Rosemary Gartner. "Women's Imprisonment." *Crime and Justice* 30 (2003): 1-81. Accessed April 29, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/1147696](http://www.jstor.org/stable/1147696).

traumatic memories to the users. Institutions being designed to hold female inmates should therefore take into consideration the backgrounds of the women involved and work towards finding spatial solutions to aid the inmates in being part of their own 'healing journey'.

In addition to this discussion, an individual's self esteem and their perceptions of self like personal value may be diminished due to the emotional experience of feelings that they are under surveillance.<sup>45</sup> Progressive prison design projects should acknowledge the need to recognize the role gender plays in offending, while keeping in mind that the pathways of women to acts of offending or criminal conducts are very different and delicate from pathways of men. To offer the same programmatic and structural elements may therefore not properly address the unique needs presented by both categories.

### 3.1 The struggle with self-definition for inmates in correctional institutions

When one is detained, they are discharged from the role and the familiar capacity to alter their movements and a right to make their own decisions, to a sudden realization of their inability to change even the slightest thing like the space around them. Everything changes, from how they dress, the people they talk to, what time they have their meals, what personal belongings they carry and so on. A model that limits the ability to nurture compassion and trust.<sup>46</sup>

Individuals who serve time in prison are at risk of being exposed to the depersonalizing and stigmatizing effects of the prison institutions.<sup>47</sup> Together with the negative way the community at large perceives them from serving time, the idea of being imprisoned therefore becomes part of a larger crisis with which the inmates have to also come to terms with.<sup>48</sup> All these while accompanied by the distress, feelings of shame and disbelief associated with struggling to associate with the offence they have been charged with.<sup>49</sup> The concept of self therefore, is at times lost in the structured and institutionalized system of prison environments resulting in the

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<sup>45</sup> Haney, Craig. *The Psychological Impact of Incarceration: Implications for Post-Prison Adjustment*, 2001

<sup>46</sup> Kruttschnitt, Candace, and Rosemary Gartner. "Women's Imprisonment." *Crime and Justice* 30 (2003): 1-81. Accessed April 29, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/1147696](http://www.jstor.org/stable/1147696).

<sup>47</sup> Paterline, Dr & Orr, Douglas. *Adaptation to Prison and Inmate Self-Concept*. Journal of Psychology and Behavioral Science. 4. 10.15640/jpbs.v4n2a6. December 2016

<sup>48</sup> Rowe, Abigail. *Narratives of self and identity in women's prisons: stigma and the struggle for self-definition in penal regimes*. Punishment and Society. 2011

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

birth of an institutional self, which leads to outwardly composed and well-adjusted individuals who are boiling in frustration, rage, disorientation, helplessness and fear.<sup>50</sup> In the long run, creating negative implications during post-prison adjustment.

A further look into this also emphasizes that; in correctional settings, the process of being incorporated into the prison system may surround the inmates so intensely with external limits, rules, regulations and routines that their internal structures of control may fail to develop altogether, especially in the case of younger individuals.<sup>51</sup> Craig Haney, an American social psychologist and professor at the University of California, Santa Cruz points out that; the strict prison system may render some of the inmates so reliant on the external institutionalized constraints that they steadily and eventually lose grip on the potential to form their own internal supports that may help regulate themselves and direct their actions and decisions when need arises.<sup>52</sup> Haney also adds that; in the event that these external structures are taken away, extremely institutionalized people may find that they are no longer able to regulate their conduct when confronted with a situation that requires them to hold back from situations and things that are in the long run harmful or self-destructive.<sup>53</sup> Causing them to eventually fail to adjust to the world outside prison when the external supports or structures they were used are no longer available.

In addition to this, learned helplessness<sup>54</sup>, which in psychology is defined as a mental state in which a subject, once exposed to forced aversive stimuli remains passive and unable to respond to negative situations despite their ability to change them, has also been associated with extended exposure to experiences with prolonged adaptations to environmental conditions that they cannot control.<sup>55</sup> It is important to note at this point that; for one to reach the highest stage of morality, to themselves and their surroundings, it has to first be accompanied by a recognition of the

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<sup>50</sup> Haney, Craig. *The Psychological Impact of Incarceration: Implications for Post-Prison Adjustment*, 2002

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Nolen L. Jeannette, *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Learned Helplessness, 2011

<sup>55</sup> Evans, Gary W., and Janetta Mitchell McCoy. "When buildings don't work: The role of architecture in human health." *Journal of Environmental psychology* 18, no. 1, 1998



individual.<sup>56</sup> A curation of an understanding of who they are and a cultivation of internal supports that eventually help one cope with the stimuli in the environment around them.

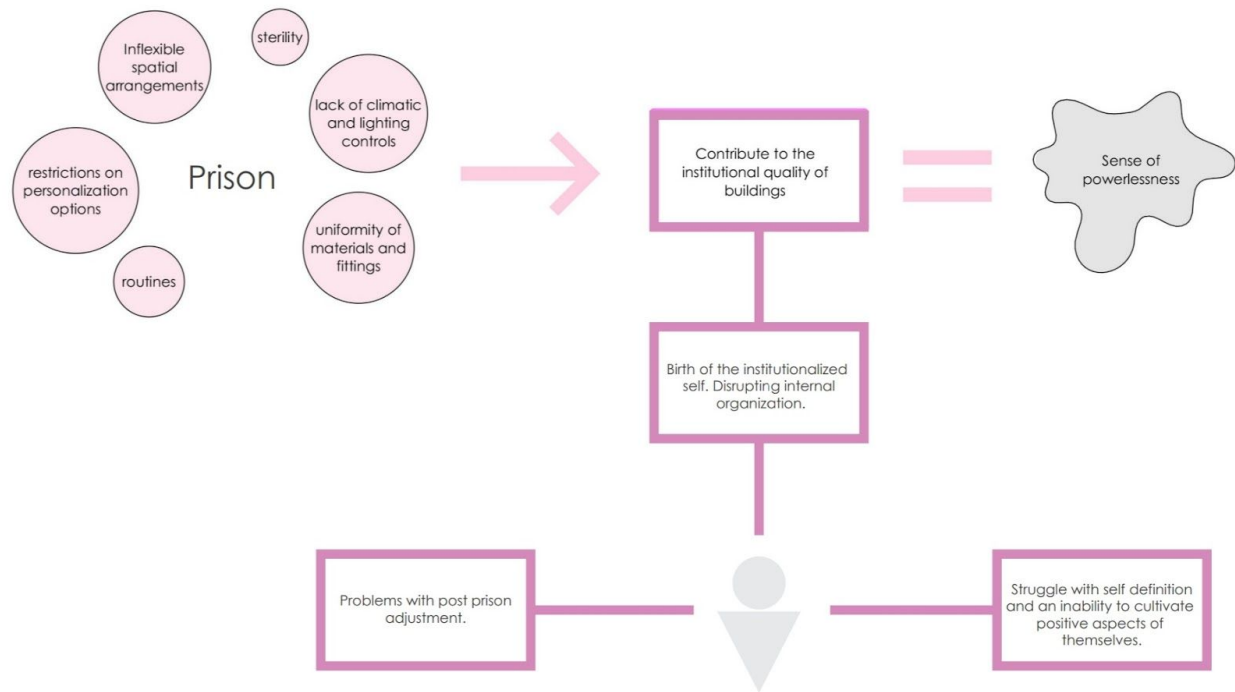


Figure 8: Factors resulting to a sense of powerlessness

Source: Author (2020)

At this point, I wish to reflect upon the degree to which a person who is held in the presumption of guilt (pre-trial detention) processes the information and adjusts to a life in prison, at times for unknown periods. Should this person also be denied his freedom of individuality?

<sup>56</sup> Stoops, J. Dashiell. "The Institutional Self." *International Journal of Ethics* 23, no. 2 (1913): 193-203. Accessed May 1, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/2376932](http://www.jstor.org/stable/2376932).

### 3.2 Psychological impacts of incarceration on inmates

To answer the previous question posed in the negative means to acknowledge the detrimental effects that incarceration has on most of the people who go through prison institutions. Anxiety, delusions, depression, claustrophobia, suicidal tendencies, substance abuse, feelings of panic, post-traumatic stress reactions, diminished sense of self-worth and hyper vigilance are just some of the psychological impacts that the prison environment has on inmates, once they leave the system to go back to the society they left behind before being incarcerated.<sup>57</sup> However, incarceration does not necessarily mean that everyone who goes through the prison environment must become negatively impacted, disabled or psychologically harmed by the experience.<sup>58</sup> Some are able to live through it but on the other hand, few people are completely unaffected by the encounter. More often than not, individuals who are incarcerated often bear long-term effects from having been the recipients of deprivation and pain and at the same time, atypical patterns both in terms of their interaction with others and with their ways of living.<sup>59</sup>

Engaging with conversations with a former prisoner of Tallinn prison and reading on blog posts from a prisoner who has been wrongfully convicted<sup>60</sup> has provided an insight into how many different kinds of people live in the prison institutions. From drug abusers to the wrongly convicted. The ones who crime is a way of life to the ones with psychiatric problems. It is possible that the mentally ill ones are disproportionately represented in the prison environment since their conditions may not be given precedence once they are taken in.<sup>61</sup> Understanding this creates an urgency to interrogate the gap between the theory of providing therapy sessions as a way to try and rehabilitate prisoners and the actual practice of it in a space that is mostly not conducive to practice what is taught.

Studies have shown that physical aspects in an environment for instance; access to daylight and air, furniture settings, indoor wall colours and use of more natural materials other than the usual

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<sup>57</sup> Tomar, Shivani ,The Psychological Effects of Incarceration on Inmates: Can we Promote Positive Emotion in inmates? April 2013, Vol.16, No.1

<sup>58</sup> Haney, Craig. The Psychological Impact of Incarceration: Implications for Post-Prison Adjustment, 2002

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Case Byron, The Pariah's Syntax, Notes from an Innocent Man, September 2013

<sup>61</sup> Adams, Kenneth. "Adjusting to Prison Life." *Crime and Justice* 16 (1992): 275-359. Accessed May 1, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/1147565](http://www.jstor.org/stable/1147565).

concrete and steel employed by most prison institutions and creating spaces that the inmates can also use to meditate and exercise if need be, all play a role in the mood and emotions of the inmates.<sup>62</sup> Drawing on inspiration from some of the world's most humane prisons,<sup>63</sup> it is possible to create good relationships between the staff and the inmates while at the same time using architecture to preserve human dignity through providing spaces that are as habitable and adaptable as possible while still continuing to ensure security and safety of the inmates and the staff.<sup>64</sup>

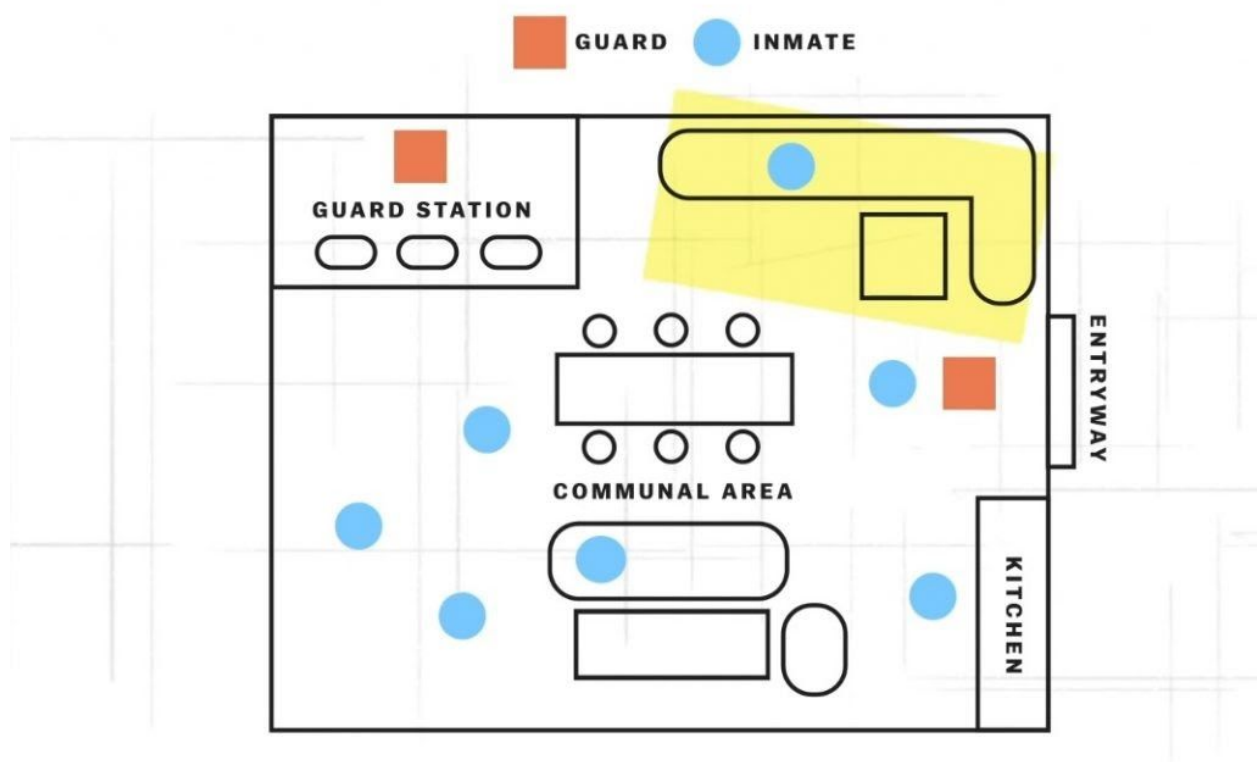


Figure 9: Halden Prison, Norway. Interaction between staff  
and inmates within the space

Source: [ideasranking.com](http://ideasranking.com)

<sup>62</sup> Wener, Richard. Can Correctional Environments be Humane? A case for evidence and value based design, 2018

<sup>63</sup> Gentleman Amelia, Inside Halden the Most Humane Prison in the World, The Guardian, May 2012

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

An example of how this relationship can be compromised can be seen through the 1971 Stanford Prison Experiment. A social psychology experiment conducted by American psychologist Philip G. Zimbardo and co-authored by Haney which demonstrates the power of the prison environment to shape human behaviour, often to the harm of both inmates and the staff. The experiment used a simulated arrest of the individuals who participated as inmates who were then taken into the simulated jail that had been made in the basement of Stanford University.<sup>65</sup> The outcome of the six day experiment which had to be ended prematurely due to the adverse turn it took was a show of how the emotional wellbeing of even psychologically healthy individuals could become compromised when placed in a prison-like environment.<sup>66</sup>

Before the experiment, there was an interview conducted of all the people who had responded to the advertisement and during the interview, a number of psychological tests were administered. The candidates were analyzed and the ones who seemed to have any form of psychological problem, issues with drug abuse or mental disability were eliminated until there was a final sample of 24 people from over 70 people who had responded in interest.<sup>67</sup> After only a few days, the individuals playing the role of the guards became sadistic and the ones who played the role of the prisoners became depressed and showed signs of extreme stress.<sup>68</sup> Concluding that indeed, any total institution, or a simulation of such could deprive people of their positive human qualities and make them cruel towards each other.<sup>69</sup>

The experiment goes to show how delicate human emotions can become when confined in restrictive environments leading to a need for ways to help mitigate such situations or even prevent them from happening. Therefore, it is important that social and mental support programs and resources are made available to inmates for the immediate, short, and long-term periods. There needs to be an emphasis on modified prison conditions through creatively engaging the

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<sup>65</sup> The Stanford Prison Experiment : A Simulation Study of the Psychology of Imprisonment conducted August 1971 at Stanford University by researchers: Philip Zimbardo, Craig Haney, W. Curtis Banks and David Jaffe.

<sup>66</sup> McLeod, Saul. The Stanford Prison Experiment. Updated January 2020

<sup>67</sup> The Stanford Prison Experiment : A Simulation Study of the Psychology of Imprisonment conducted August 1971 at Stanford University by researchers: Philip Zimbardo, Craig Haney, W. Curtis Banks and David Jaffe.

<sup>68</sup> Tomar, Shivani ,The Psychological Effects of Incarceration on Inmates: Can we Promote Positive Emotion in inmates? April 2013, Vol.16, No.1

<sup>69</sup> The Stanford Prison Experiment : A Simulation Study of the Psychology of Imprisonment conducted August 1971 at Stanford University by researchers: Philip Zimbardo, Craig Haney, W. Curtis Banks and David Jaffe.

ideals of space and experience. Designs that not only focus on aesthetics but also ones that seek comfort and functionality that in the long run may support the theoretical rehabilitative programs provided by the respective institutions. Creating opportunities for the built environment to come up with alternative design concepts that revolve around self-expression while giving the inmates a space that motivates them to work on themselves in preparation for their reentry into society. At the same time, to ensure continued successful post-prison adjustment, new programs need to be established as a preparation for release, either during initial re-integration or during transitional periods after incarceration for instance; during parole.<sup>70</sup>

### 3.3 Interaction with space and personal experience

Our personal involvement with a space may lead to our minds creating narratives of the spaces we interact with and form impulses that make us experience various emotions. For instance, what lies behind our reaction to this and that space and our response to the built environment around us? Whenever one enters a space, the cells in the brain's hippocampal region are usually busy working to navigate and store spatial information in the form of cognitive maps.<sup>71</sup> Some spaces make us uncomfortable to be in while some make us feel safe and calm. In regards to the former, one consequence of being in a space that makes us uncomfortable is that our hearts may begin to beat faster and we may start taking in more breaths than normal.<sup>72</sup> This is due to the fact that the hypothalamus, a small region in the brain that is responsible for functions like regulating body temperature, emotional responses and hormones begins to give adrenal glands information about

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<sup>70</sup> Haney, Craig. The Psychological Impact of Incarceration: Implications for Post-Prison Adjustment, 2002

<sup>71</sup> Small Ideas for Your Home and Apartment. Neuro-Architecture How Interior Design and Our Mood Connected. July, 2018.

<https://www.smalldesignideas.com/neuro-architecture-how-interior-design-and-our-mood-connected.html>

<sup>72</sup> McLeod Saul, What is the Stress Response? 2010

<https://www.simplypsychology.org/stress-biology.html>

the release of adrenaline and cortisol, the hormones from the stress system making our senses become more acute.<sup>73</sup>

The adrenaline works in the short term, while cortisol is long term and too much stimulation to the stress hormones may lead to negative effects to our overall health and wellbeing as it is linked to causing feelings of depression.<sup>74</sup> There is certainly no universal response to a single space and the responses one gets while interacting with a particular space may vary from one individual to another. In the same way our personalities are different, so is our perception and interaction with the spaces we occupy and how we perceive factors like colour in a room.<sup>75</sup> A room that is dimly lit, with dull colours may offer more satisfaction to one person while at the same time repel another, the same goes to a brightly lit room with colours that are bold or more pronounced.

Visual design elements and principles like line, shape, movement, form and texture are important yet underutilized features when it comes down to the design of prison cells. Taking this scenario back to the case of a prison environment, the initial attitude and response of an inmate to a space when they first encounter it may differ from their subsequent reactions. Over time, some of them get accustomed to their situation, adjust and move on with life just fine while some of them struggle with adapting to the environment even after the space has become routine and familiar.<sup>76</sup>

To aid in a more positive experience in such instances, spatial design can come in through the manipulation of colours, textures and shapes of rooms as a trigger for experience.<sup>77</sup> An incline towards breaking the norm that is in angularity and plainness can be adopted in order to create an atmosphere that can help mitigate the stressful prison environment, offering positive impact on the inmates at an emotional level, as an opportunity to reduce stress and be life enhancing for the users of the space.

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> T.M Pollard, *Physiological Consequences of Everyday Psychosocial Stress*, 1997.

<sup>75</sup> Fider, N.A., Komarova, N.L. Differences in color categorization manifested by males and females: a quantitative World Color Survey study. *Palgrave Commun* 5, 142 (2019).

<sup>76</sup> Wener, Richard. *Can Correctional Environments be Humane? A case for evidence and value based design*. 2018

<sup>77</sup> Kopek, Dak. *Health and Well-being for Interior Architecture*, 2017



Figure 10: Example stimuli used to determine the preference of curved objects in architecture.

#### A comparison of contours (curvilinear and rectilinear)

Image Source: pnas.org

A 2013 study by researchers led by psychologist Oshin Vartanian at the University of Toronto at Scarborough found that curvilinear spaces were perceived by participants as more pleasant than rectilinear ones.<sup>78</sup> He explains that exposure to curvilinear contours activates a brain area (the anterior angular context) that is responsible for cognitive functions for instance empathy, reward anticipation and ‘the emotional salience of objects.’<sup>79</sup> The results of the study the psychologist and his team conducted suggested that the contours and curvilinear shapes had a well-established effect on people’s aesthetic preference which could be transferable to architecture.<sup>80</sup> A personal observation is that; curved surfaces are also less likely to harm someone on contact and also associate one with a feeling of movement, an interesting feature that may help a design break away from the monotony of angularity and rectilinear features, when implemented in a space.

<sup>78</sup> O. Vartanian, G. Navarrete, A. Chatterjee et al. Impact of contour on aesthetics judgement and approach-avoidance decisions in architecture. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 2013

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

Mindfulness based approaches have also been used in arts therapies as a way to aid one in assessing safety in a present moment and bring one's attention to their immediate environment as a way to help with the process of self-regulation.<sup>81</sup> Self regulation in definition is used to describe a person's capacity to adapt the self as necessary to meet demands of the environment<sup>82</sup> through adapting methods like self monitoring and reflecting thinking, among others.<sup>83</sup> Approaches that are mindfulness based for instance; bringing attention to the body boundary, immediate environment and internal experience all have meditative components that are used in helping treat trauma victims.<sup>84</sup>

In the case of female inmates, as seen in the discussion, a majority of them have gone through instances in their childhood and adulthood where they had an encounter with physical or sexual abuse, traumatic memories that may be re-triggered by being locked up in small dark spaces with little control over anything around them causing them to go through devastating emotional and mental reactions.<sup>85</sup> This therefore makes the experiences with the harsh living conditions difficult and unbearable for them, setting a stage for the development of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) during and after incarceration.<sup>86</sup> Through adopting mechanisms that inspire self-regulation and negate feelings of stress in small spaces like prison cells, elements and objects in one's surrounding can be used to create breaks in the space and encourage positive self reflection .

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<sup>81</sup> Schaewe, Lisa. Review - Mindfulness and the Arts Therapies: Theory and Practice, 2014.

<sup>82</sup> L.Laranjo. Participatory Health Through Social Media, 2016.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Schaewe, Lisa. Review - Mindfulness and the Arts Therapies: Theory and Practice, 2014.

<sup>85</sup> Glaze E. Lauren, Maruschak M. Laura, Bureau of Justice Statistics, NCJ 222984, *Parents in Prison and Their Minor Children* 2 .2008.

<sup>86</sup> Deveaux, Mika'il. (2013). The Trauma of the Incarceration Experience. Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review. 48. 257-277.



### 3.4 Well-being and privacy

One key feature that acts as a support for self reflection and provides opportunities for solitude and the time to work on one's internal experience is the availability of personal space which affords individuals with a moment of privacy.<sup>87</sup> The process of changing the habits one was used to in a less restrictive environment before incarceration into one that seems to watch every move you make without allowing you the freedom of choice can be somewhat daunting and difficult to adjust to. As a consequence, this may result in a person reacting in a situation out of sheer anxiety, discomfort and an agitation from lack of freedom to express their desires.<sup>88</sup>

The creation of a space that echoes social resonance is good for the development of social interactions and social inclusion but at the same time providing privacy when needed is important in order for one to preserve their autonomy,<sup>89</sup> the capacity we have in which we make decisions for ourselves without any interference from others.<sup>90</sup> According to Patricia Brierley Newell, a researcher from the department of psychology at the University of Warwick, Coventry, privacy is 'a voluntary and temporary condition of separation from the public domain.'<sup>91</sup> Involuntary social contact with others leading up to a lack of privacy may result in increased stress and an aggressive attitude towards those around us, often identified as a link between stress and distress.<sup>92</sup>

In the 24/7 environment of a prison, even minor ambient conditions can become significant problems and sometimes these conditions are anything, but minor.<sup>93</sup> In these total institutions, people lose control of the most basic aspects of their lives, especially in connection to person-environment relations, such as levels of privacy that they otherwise expect, deserve, and are taken for granted.<sup>94</sup> Privacy is an important psychological need because it provides individuals

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<sup>87</sup> Kopek, Dak. Health and Well-being for Interior Architecture, 2017

<sup>88</sup> Wener, Richard. Can Correctional Environments be Humane? A case for evidence and value based design. 2018

<sup>89</sup> Henkin, Louis. "Privacy and Autonomy." *Columbia Law Review* 74, no. 8 (1974): 1410-433. Accessed May 1, 2020. doi:10.2307/1121541.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Brierley N. Patricia Perspectives on Privacy. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*. June 1995, Volume 15, Issue 2.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Wener, Richard. Can Correctional Environments be Humane? A case for evidence and value based design. 2018

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

and groups in society with a preservation of autonomy which enables self-government, a release from role-playing, and a time for self-evaluation and for protected communication.<sup>95</sup> At the very least, if inmates cannot be afforded privacy in their spaces by providing for single person occupation in the cells, we should then aim to design these shared spaces in such a way that they reshape how the inmates relate to each other and offer a sense of control and safety.

### 3.5 Conclusion: Designing for self-controlled actions in small spaces

When designing prison environments, it is important to look into creating an environment that still supports self-controlled actions. The idea of changing the concept of this small space into one that at the very least improves the quality of the time spent inside prison cells can be a step towards shaping better individuals who interact with these spaces while living rewardingly with themselves and others. One of the fundamental measures that may aid counter the stigmatization of an incarcerated female that may live long after their time in prison is by calling on an urgent need to create conducive prison environments that aid change the narratives. Exposing, addressing and disrupting the normalized values in which women are forced to 'fit' in a system based on masculine foundation and principles. At the same time, educating the public on the importance of community involvement in aiding an open minded approach towards creating radical societal changes from a negative fabric that envelopes the perception of women in crime to one that understands the importance/circumstances of the background stories of these individuals.

De-emphasizing a model of power and control which historically has been the way that prison environments operate into one that instead uplifts the trust and compassion of the users is also an important direction to go spatially. Reducing the permanent mark of the stigma of incarceration that may live with the individual post incarceration as a result of being confined in these small spaces. With the background and understanding that the idea of self-identity changes when exposed to various things, the process of transformation therefore implicates the lived experience

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<sup>95</sup> Westin, Alan. Privacy and Freedom. New York: Atheneum Press, 1967

of identities.<sup>96</sup> A process that involves constant reconstruction and reinvention while also looking at it from a broader perspective of ethical search for how the self can be able to exist rewardingly with others.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Elliott, Anthony. Routledge Handbook of Identity Studies, 2011

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.



## 4. Design Proposal

This chapter considers the possible idea of encompassing not just the visual outlook of the cell designs, but also the reformative intent behind it and the experience of being exposed to it. It flows from the proposition that the design of prison institutions which host the female population should allow the inmates to slowly get back a sense of control in the spaces they occupy. During the period of their sentence as opposed to staying in the same spaces until their sentencing period ends.

It begins by; reflecting individual lives, filled with personalized experiences through individualized spaces. Inspired by the importance of keeping individuality in our stories and aspects of ourselves. Giving the inmates a chance to extend the transformative capacities we have as human beings into these spaces that they spend most of their time in. As one is moving through the different spaces or stages of imprisonment, they go through different positive experiences. In a way, going through the story, and in this case, through a changing narrative.

### 4.1 The Concept

Through a synthesis of the research done from the research on the consumption of objects and self-identity, what was observed was the importance objects have in creating statements of self-identity in personal spaces which in turn enabled the participants to positively relate with their spaces. Further helping create meaning and a sense of belonging inside a space that is occupied by an individual over a period of time. From this understanding, a question was posed that formed the basis of the beginning of the design process. Is it possible to spatially lay out aspects that support the positive features of who we are? The question came about when trying to develop a way through the supporting literature and research done, in which the idea of self-identity could be represented in an environment where the individuals who occupy prison

cells are not allowed personal belongings inside their spaces. This then created a need to give the space the qualities of personal objects and the experiences associated with these objects as documented in the data analysis in stage 2, under self-identity and its relation to objects and the results from the interviews in stage 3, understanding the prison environment.

Through;

- Reflecting the interchangeable qualities of objects in the spaces
- The ability to attach memories
- Giving the user the freedom of expression in the space.
- Showing progress through time
- Provision of privacy

Therefore, translating the results of the research into proposing a new prison cell design concept that focuses on developing aspects of self-identity through the designs. Resulting from an understanding that self-identity is an ever changing process, and so should the space one spends most of their time in. Allowing for growth and the accommodation of the changed self. The concept of the prison cells was divided into 3 phases of transmission; **1st phase**, **2nd phase** and **3rd phase**. A plan seen as an opportunity for every individual to go through the institution in a process that encourages them to regain their self confidence and control. Progressively encouraging the development of a positive quality of life during the period of sentencing.

Phase 1	Reflection	A processing of emotions. Encouraging a stillness needed for introspection.
Phase 2	Transformation	Formation of relationships. Connecting the past, time spent in reflection and the future in terms of slowly gaining back their social control.

<b>Phase 3</b>	<b>Integration</b>	Promoting social connectedness and more freedom of choice, the balance between routines and formation of relationships to prepare one in re-joining the community.
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Table 5: Phases of the new typology

Source: Author 2020

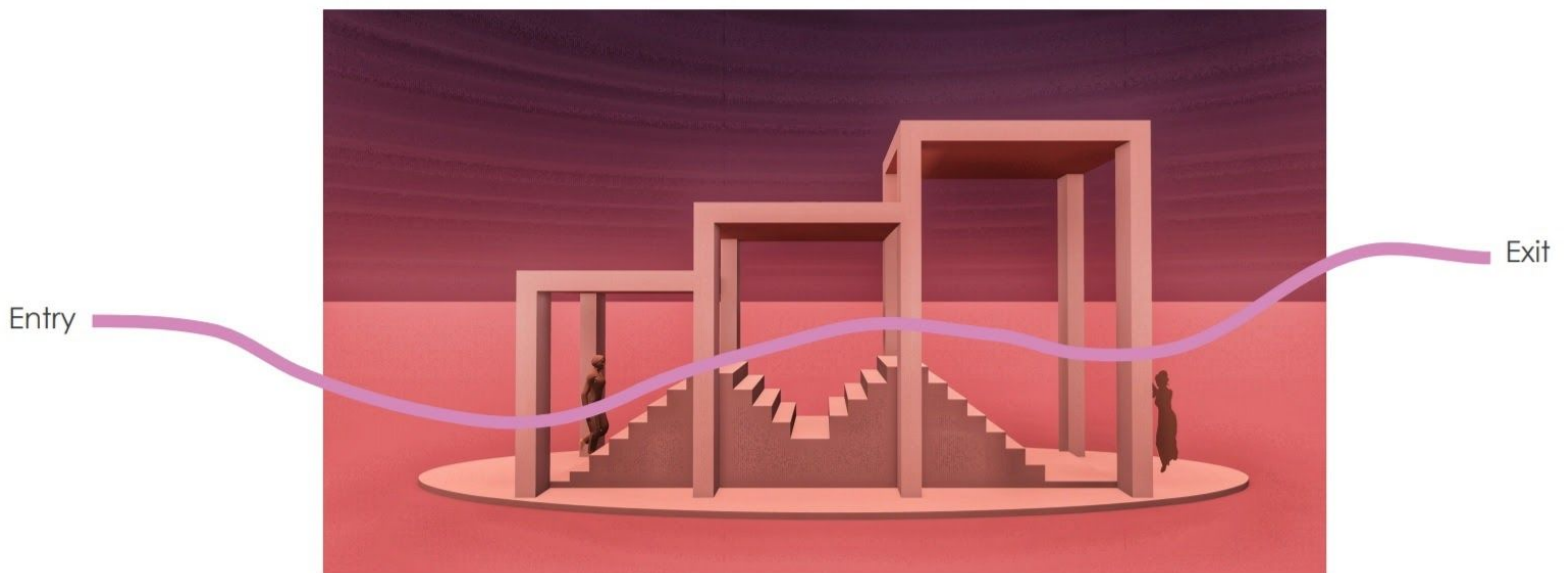


Figure 11: The abstract impression of the idea: Phase 1,2 and 3.

Source: Author (2020)

The design begins with a review of overall cell dimensions as the inmate gets closer to being released from prison. Where the spaces become more normalized as a way to prepare the inmate to life outside prison. For instance, the floor space layouts increase in size; 8m<sup>2</sup>, 10m<sup>2</sup>, 12m<sup>2</sup> to create spatial rewards and a change of space as one transitions from one space to the other.

The idea of the three phases is such that; as one moves from one phase to the other, they slowly acquire spatial rewards, in terms of size, customization, freedom to have personal objects and interaction with others. Beginning from a smaller space on entry and progressively moving towards a wider space as one gets closer to the end of their sentencing. Privacy as a basic need is also emphasized in all the three phases and a progressive freedom in control over elements like artificial lighting in a room. Ample natural light in the 3 phases is also ensured in order to help incarcerated women who have trauma histories to be able to feel safe and comfortable. On a broader scope, the 3 phases slowly encourage integration with others as a way to build up control over relationships and use their internal support system in decision making. The transmission phases involve the creation of spaces that disrupt the permanence of the objects and furnishings as one progresses through the spaces. Eventually creating transformative spaces that allow for new memories to be formed instead of perpetuating monotony and permanence.





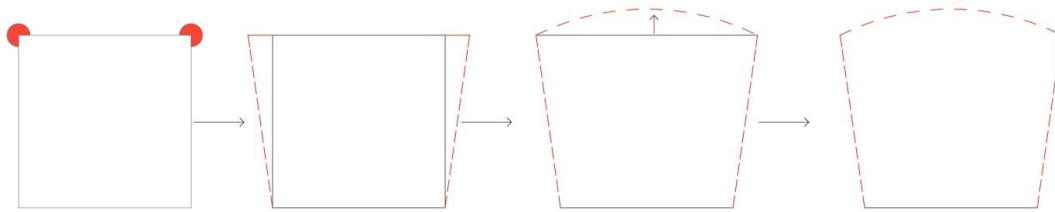


Figure 11: Introducing a break from the angularity associated with traditional prison cells.

Source: Author (2020)

Then it moves on towards breaking the rectilinear forms associated with traditional prison cells, from the understanding of the curvilinear form and its involvement in the perception of space and development of emotions.<sup>98</sup> The adaptation of the curvilinear forms comes with linking the soft features to positive associations with a space which include calmness, peacefulness and relaxation. The design works on disrupting the rectilinear forms that represent the common cell design structure through engaging with and contrasting the flat lines and forms.

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<sup>98</sup> O. Vartanian, G. Navarrete, A. Chatterjee et al. Impact of contour on aesthetics judgement and approach-avoidance decisions in architecture. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 2013

## 4.2 Phase 1: Reflection- 8m<sup>2</sup>

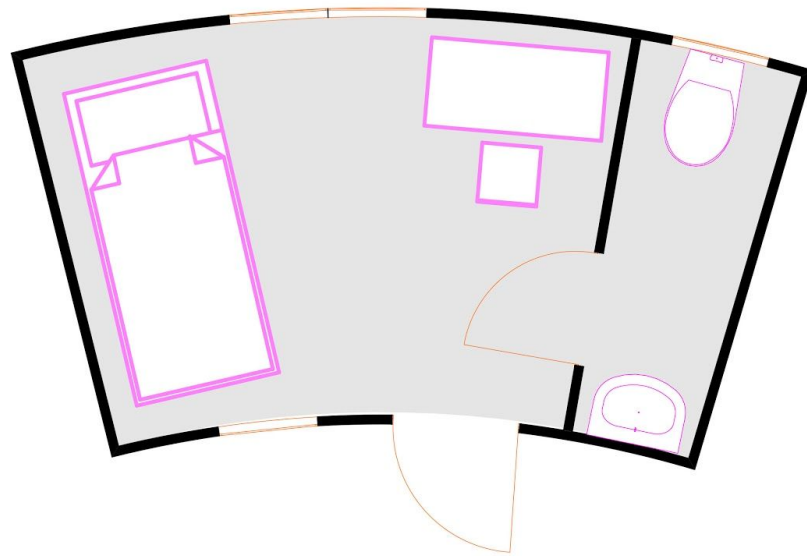


Figure 15: Floor Plan for the cell design in the 1st phase.

Source: Author (2020)

A simple cell design, the smallest of the three whose purpose is to allow the inmate who has just been incarcerated to be able to adjust to the new environment. There is ample light provided in the room and a small window opening on the length of the external door to allow for observation. The doors open towards the outside for security and emergency purposes.

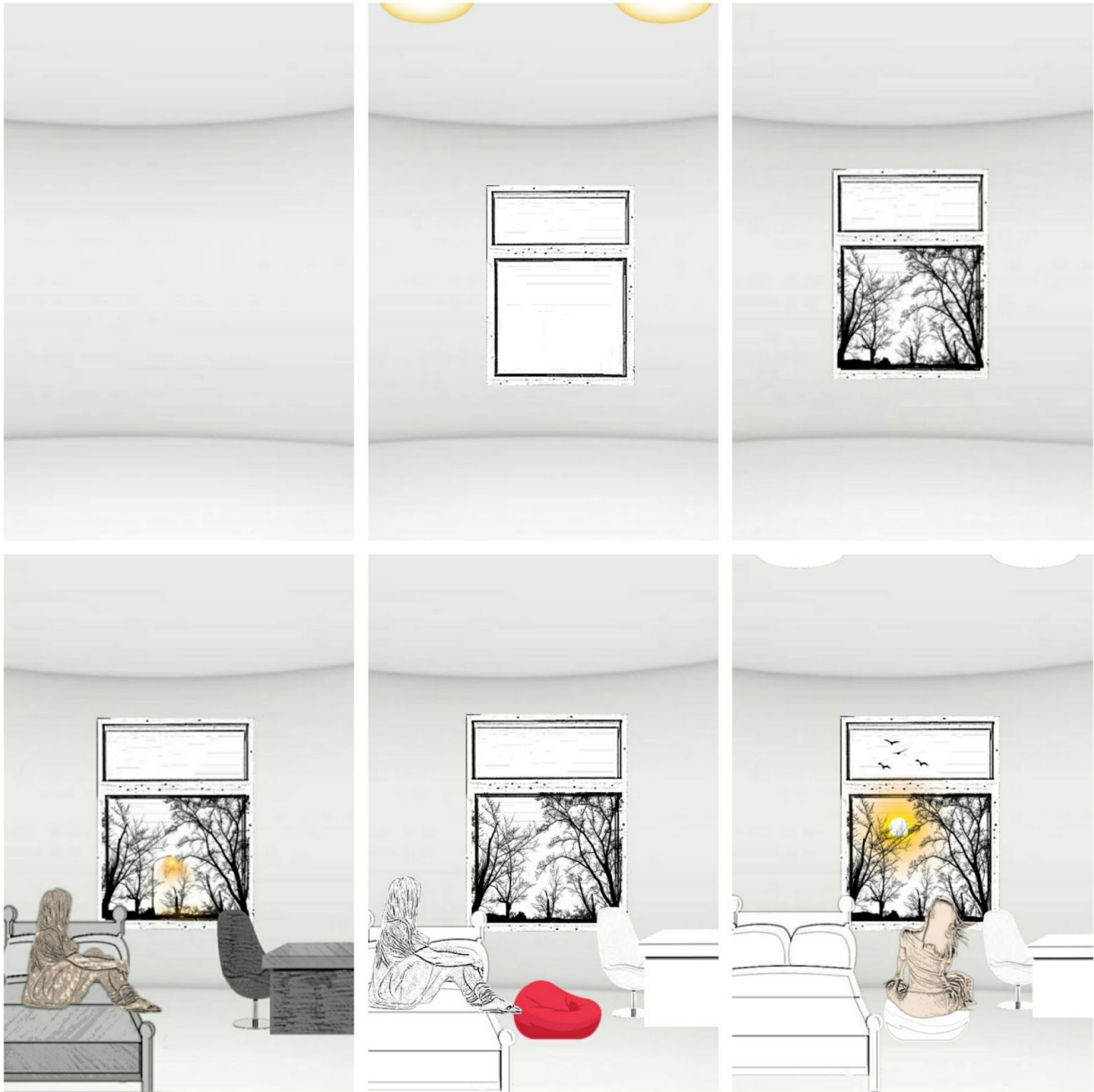


Figure 16: Phase 1 visual narrative

Source: Author (2020)

The furniture in this phase is fixed and allows little personalization. There is however a moveable bean bag that can be used for comfort while sitting on the floor as they observe the views on the outside. The large window on one side of the wall allows the inmate to interact with

the outside from the comfort of their space. Meant for meditation and time alone, the stillness of the space encourages contemplation and introspection. Which if cultivated, encourages bringing attention to the users immediate environment, body boundary and to their internal experience which supports working towards creating self-awareness.<sup>99</sup>

**Furniture type:** Fixed

**Light fixtures:** Controlled externally by the staff

**Special features:** The availability of an indoor toilet as opposed to a shared one.

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<sup>99</sup> R. Laury, Mindfulness and the Arts Therapies: *Theory and Practice*, London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2014, P. 101

### 4.3 Phase 2: Transformation-10m<sup>2</sup>

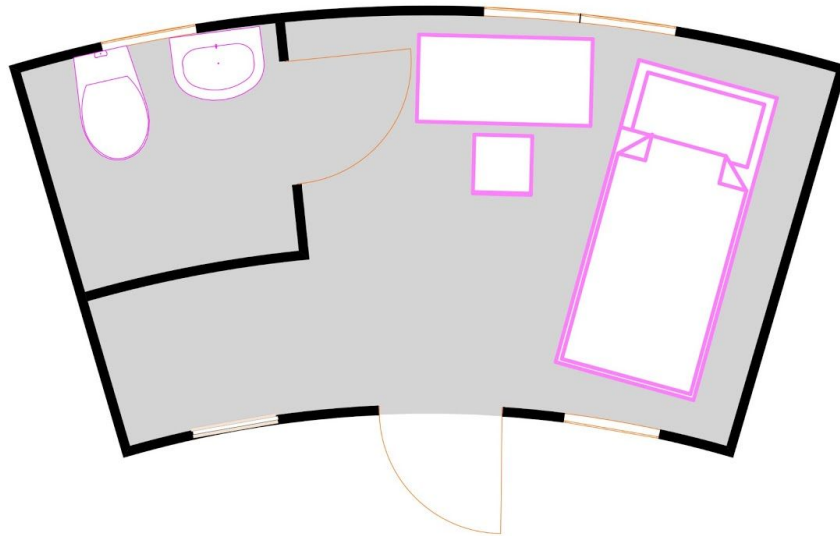


Figure 17: Floor Plan for the cell design in the 2nd phase

Source: Author (2020)

In this phase, the inmates start acquiring objects and a sense of personalization of the space. The objects are movable and at this point, they are allowed to have personal items on the walls. They also slowly start having a sense of responsibility in their spaces through taking care of their indoor plants, if one wants to have any and cleaning also becomes part of their responsibility. In this phase also, there is the introduction of storage facilities for personal items as this space prepares them for the next phase by slowly introducing accumulation of objects that are important to them.



Figure 18: Phase 2 visual narrative

Source: Author (2020)

**Furniture type:** Movable

**Light fixtures:** The inmates now have control over use of artificial lighting

**Special features:** The availability of an indoor toilet as opposed to a shared one and the sense of freedom to begin customizing the space.

#### 4.4 Phase 3: Integration- 12m<sup>2</sup>

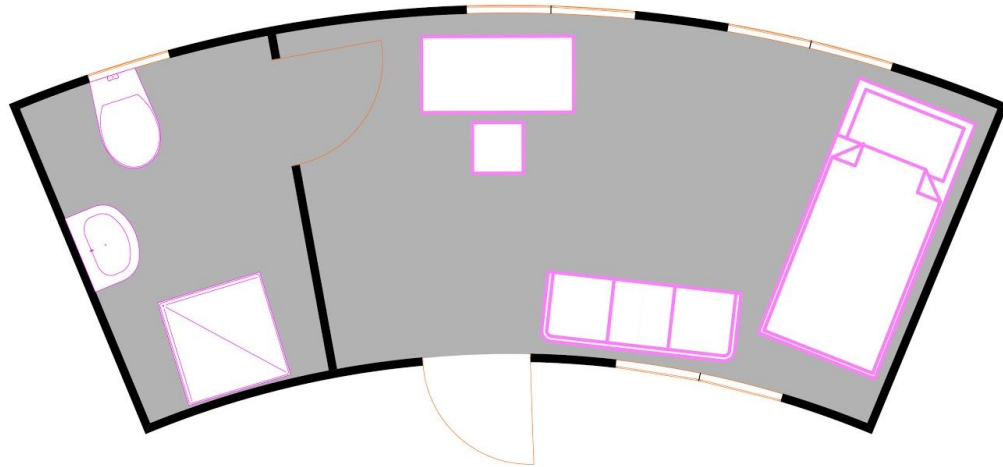


Figure 18: Floor Plan for the cell design in the 3rd phase

Source: Author (2020)

In phase 3, which is also the final stage and the largest of the 3 phases, the user of the space is able to customize the space by moving objects around, for instance the furniture available and having personal lockers for storage . They are also allowed to have visitors in these spaces and part of the object they accumulate is from their families and friends. The familiarity of the objects may be useful in preparing them to rejoin their families once they are released.



Figure 19: Phase 3 visual narrative

Source: Author (2020)

They can also have more furniture to accommodate their friends, cleaning their own space and they may choose to have indoor plants to take care of as an extension of the sense of responsibility acquired from the second phase. Indoor games are also allowed in this phase as a



way to also create social connectedness and a fun time with their visitors. This third phase is especially important for incarcerated women who have children as it allows play time in the spaces and interaction with their children and families inside the spaces, instead of dedicated visitors rooms.

**Furniture type:** All furniture is movable

**Light fixtures:** The inmates have control over use of artificial lighting

**Special features:** The availability of an indoor toilet and bathroom, guests are allowed in their spaces, indoor games can be played with friends and family. More social interaction.

## 4.5 Spatial map.

The main importance of these phases is to allow the transformative capacities of each individual to be supported as one goes from one phase to the other. The design also attempts to summarize an overview of how these phases of the cell could work in an overall prison environment and how the inmates would interact with other spaces and people.

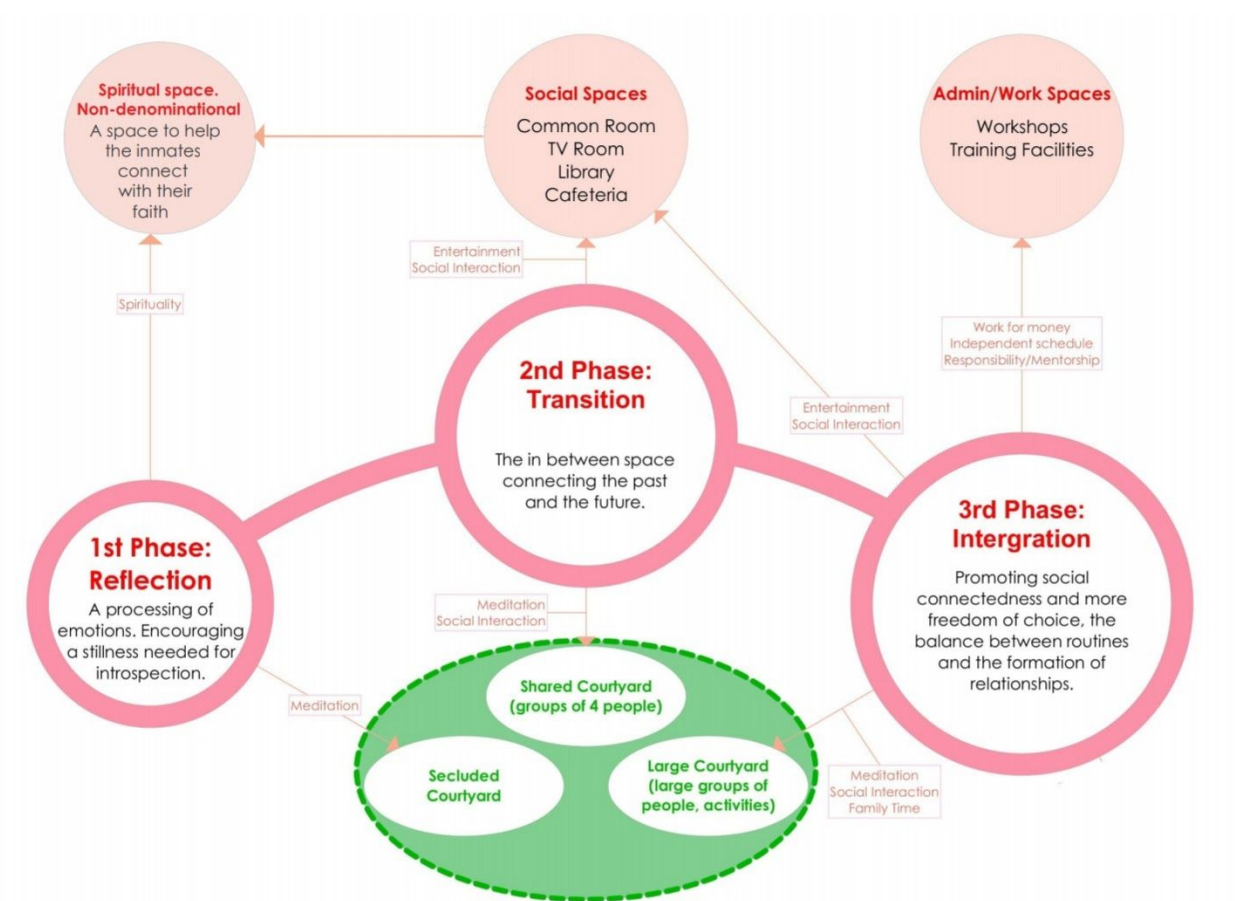


Figure 21: A sample spatial map of the interactions and experiences in relation to the spaces.

Image source: Author (2020)

The spatial map explains the interaction between the spaces and its occupants (space-people) and the interaction between the inmates and other people (people-people). The proposed space transitions are not experienced equally. The design concept lies in the proposition that, a new prison cell design concept that focuses on developing aspects of self-identity through the difference in experience with the transition of spaces may help the inmates foster better relationships with themselves and the people around them in preparation for successful re-entry back to society.

Phase 1: Reflection- 8m<sup>2</sup>, Phase 2: Transformation- 10m<sup>2</sup>, Phase 3: Integration- 12m<sup>2</sup>.

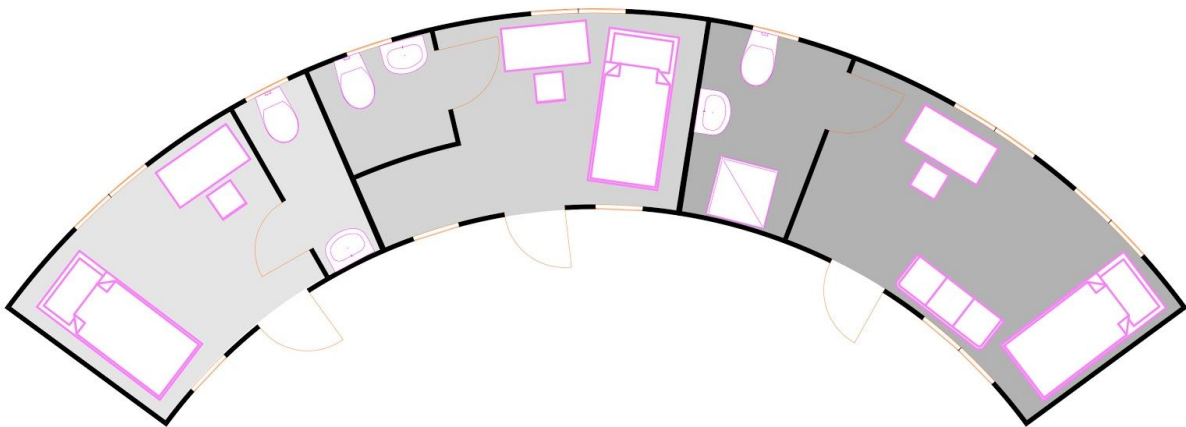


Figure 20: All 3 Phases.

Image Source: Author (2020)

Overall, the 3 cell design phases work to give the inmates their freedom of choice slowly as they progress towards completion of their sentence. It also works towards ensuring that the ones who are wrongfully convicted do not suffer the agony of living in uninhabitable spaces. Helping maintain to an extent their self-controlled actions which they deserve. From a phase that encourages introspection and self-regulation, to one that finally gives them more social freedom while outwardly extending their interactions. Seeking to reduce the agony of incarceration as much as possible through the transformation spaces. As supported by the literature reviewed, the process of transformation supports the lived experience of identities when there is possibility of constant renewal and reconstruction and an integration of the self living rewardingly with others.

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<sup>100</sup> Elliott, Anthony. Routledge Handbook of Identity Studies, 2011

## CONCLUSION

As mentioned in chapter two where the thesis looks into the history of punishment by Michel Foucault in his book *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, the concept of imprisonment was seen as a way to ‘treat’ the wrongdoers who were meant to come out on the other side as reformed individuals once they served their time. This however, did not successfully work out because then, punishment moved from the body of the offender, into the subconscious. Many years down the line, there has been a change in rehabilitative programmes, length of sentences, other alternatives to incarceration for instance; the use of ankle bracelets in countries like the Netherlands, but very little has changed in terms of the length of time most inmates spend locked inside prison cells and how these experiences affect the mental and psychological state of the inmates. How then can we help improve the image of our times and set it apart from that decades ago?

When we think about spaces that affirm our existence as human beings, each unique and authentic, we think about our homes, the spaces that make us feel at home or the places we spend most of our time in. For inmates, this space is inside a prison cell, cage-like interiors with the least aesthetic consideration and heavy vandal resistant furnishings. At the onset of this thesis, it was mentioned that incarcerated persons, just like the general public outside prison have different individual identities. The main contribution of this thesis has been in highlighting the role that spatial design has in transformative space making and how that can be applied in prison cells to support self-controlled actions in a space that has long been characterized with toughness and stigmatization for those who serve time.

The thesis concludes with a design proposal that is an attempt at changing the experience inside a prison cell, speculating how else prison cells can function to support individual self-identities, and acknowledging their effort to improve by spatially rewarding them with spaces that highlight their potential for transformation as they serve their sentencing period. From the first phase, which is a phase for reflection and introspection to the second phase, transformation, which links

the experiences they gained from the first phase and gives them a sense of responsibility that prepares them for the third and the last phase, a phase of integration. Where they are now afforded a much more active state of being, through interactions and customization of their spaces. Stressing on constant reinvention through looking inwards and supporting the human nature to live rewardingly with others within and without the prison environment, ultimately supporting the continuity of the self through the spaces and ensuring that they are motivated to use their internal organization as opposed to taking on the outwardly composed external structure adopted by the model of power and control that is emphasized in penal institutions.

As an implication for future research, the wake of the global COVID-19 pandemic in the spring of 2020 has seen most inmates being discharged from prison before completing their sentencing periods. Most of these inmates, the ones who need direct or indirect supervision may not have been due for release but because of the pandemic that caused worldwide devastation, they were prematurely released. Future research can look into how prison institutions can be able to adjust to mitigate global pandemics that may disrupt the process of reform while providing safety for both the incarcerated and correctional professionals during emergency situations.

As a final remark, a good spatial design strategy may not be able to change the amount of time inmates spend in prison, but through it, we can advocate and impact positively the quality of the experience in the time spent in prison institutions. Ensuring that the support given in helping one better themselves and adjust to their surroundings enables the concept of punishment not to linger in their minds long after incarceration. As a consequence, highlighting spatial design not just as a privileged practice to only those who can afford it, or those who seem deserving of it, but also to those in society who may be in need of it but don't often get it.

## KOKKUVÕTE

Käesoleva töö teises peatükis, mis käsitleb karistamise ajalugu Michel Foucault' teosest "Valvata ja karistada. Vangla sünd" lähtuvalt, toon esile asjaolu, et vangistust nähakse kurjategija "ravimisena". See tähendab, et pärast karistuse kandmist peaks ta vanglast väljuma uuenenud inimesena. Paraku pole see nägemus teostunud, sest vangistatus kandub hiljem üle kurjategija kehalt tema alateadvusele. Viimaste aastate jooksul on viidud ellu muudatusi nii rehabilitatsiooniprogrammides, karistusaja pikkustes määramises kui ka alternatiivsete vangistusviiside kasutamises, näiteks pahkluu-võru kasutamine Hollandis, kuid vähe on muutunud ajas, kui palju veedavad kinnipeetavad aega lukustatud vangikongis ning kuidas see ruumikogemus mõjutab nende psühholoogilist olekut. Tekib küsimus, kuidas saaksime parandada ajast ja arust pärit tingimusi?

Kui mõelda ruumide peale, mis inimese unikaalset ja autentset olemasolu toetavad, meenub kodu või muud ruumid, mis panevad inimese koduselt tundma ja kus me enim aega veedame. Kinnipeetavate jaoks on see ruum vangikong, mille interjööris on vähe mõeldud esteetiliste vajaduste, kuid palju vandaalikindla mööbli peale. Käesoleva kirjatöö alguses tõin välja, et vangistatud inimestel on, samamoodi nagu ülejäänud rahvastikul väljaspool vanglat, erinevad individuaalsed identiteedid. Selle magistritöö suurim panus on olnud rõhutada disaini tähtsust transformatiivse ruumi loomisel ja uurida, kuidas seda rakendada ning toetada enesearengut ja isetegevusi ruumis, mis mõjub kinnipeetavatele karmi ja stigmatiseerivana.

Töö kulmineerub disainilahendusega, mis üritab muuta vangikongis viibimise kogemust, spekuloides ka erinevate viiside üle, millega toetada individuaalseid identiteete ning tunnustada kasutajate pingutusi ruumis, mis rõhutab nende võimekust areneda karistuse kandmise ajal. See toimub alates esimesest etapist, kus toimub refleksioon ja eneseanalüüs, kuni transformatsioonini, mis ühendab esimese etapi kogemused ja annab inimestele vastutuse, mis

omakorda valmistab neid ette integratsiooniks. Siis on neil võimalik olla aktiivsemas rollis ja isikupärastada või suhestuda oma ruumiga, mis rõhutab pidevat enesearengut sisekaemuste kaudu. See toetab inimloomust nii vanglas kui sealt väljas olles, et jätkata oma elu motiveerituna ja kasutada oma sisemaailma, vastupidiselt välisele jõu- ja võimustruktuurile, mida karistusasutused esindavad.

Tulevastele uuringutele avaldab kahtlemata suurt mõju ülemaailmne Covid-19 haiguspuhang 2020. aasta kevadel, mille tõttu on paljud kinnipeetavad ennetähtaegselt vabastatud. Enamikku neist, kellel on siiski vaja otsest või kaudset järelvalvet, poleks ennetähtaegselt vabastatud, kui poleks laastavat pandeemiat. Edaspidi võiks uurida, kuidas saab vanglainstitutsioon ülemaailmse pandeemia korral kohaneda, et leevendada selle mõju, mis võib häirida uuenemise protsessi, pakkudes samal ajal nii vangidele kui töötajatele turvatunnet.

Lõpetuseks märgin, et hea ruumiloomestrateegia ei pruugi mõjutada seda, kui kaua aega kinnipeetavad vangis on, kuid selle kaudu saame propageerida ja positiivselt mõjutada kvaliteetset vanglakogemust. Toetades enesearengut ja oludega kohanemist, on pärast reaalset vangistust võimalik karistuse mõttest kiiremini vabaneda. Järelikult, kvaliteetne ruumiloome on ühiskondlikult vajalik praktika mitte ainult maksejõulistele ja privilegieeritutele, vaid eelkõige neile, kes seda vajavad, kuid selleni ise ei jõua.



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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Example of a prison schedule

#### Tallinn Prison example of a prison schedule

06:30	 <b>Wake-up</b>
06:30–06:45	Morning exercises, personal hygiene and making the beds
06:30–07:15	Leisure time for prisoners who are not engaged in work during that period
06:30–07:15	Telephone calls
07:15–07:45	Breakfast (food is served in cells)
07:45–08:00	Leisure time for prisoners who are not engaged in work during that period
07:45–08:00	Telephone calls
08:00–08:30	Morning roll-call (roll-call takes place in cells)
08:20–08:30	Escorting the prisoners to work and school
08:30–19:00	Walks by prison wards
08:30–12:30	Leisure time for prisoners who are not engaged in work or studies during that period
11:45–12:00	Arrival from school
12:30–13:00	<b>Lunch (food is served in cells)</b>
13:00–17:00	Leisure time for prisoners who are not engaged in work or studies during that period
13:20–13:30	Escorting the prisoners to school
14:00–17:00	Telephone calls
16:20–16:30	Escorting the prisoners from work to prison ward
16:30–16:45	Escorting the prisoners from school to prison ward
17:00–17:30	Supper (food is served in cells)
17:30–20:00	Leisure time for prisoners who are not engaged in work during that period
17:30–20:00	Telephone calls
20:00–20:30	Evening roll-call (roll-call takes place in cells)
20:30	 <b>Time of retiring.</b>

## Appendix B: Interview Participants.

1. Former inmate of Tallinn prison
2. Former employee of the Ministry of Justice. Worked with the rehabilitation department of the former Tallinn prison.
3. Former nurse and later head of the medical department at Tallinn prison.
4. Kaarel Kraus- Estonian Academy of Security
5. Ivo Kitsing - Estonian Academy of Security
6. Prison Architect –Kalle Roomus

## Appendix C: Structured Interview Questions

Architect.

1. What do people living and working in prison need most in the spaces they spend most of their time in?
2. Describe how the building of a prison is different than any other built environment work.
3. How do you think architecture and the interior design of a prison can be used to enhance the well-being of the inmates and the staff working there?
4. What restorative features in terms of the new building of Tallinn prison have been put in place to enhance the well-being of the inmates and the staff?
5. What are some of the spatial needs the inmates and staff have?
6. How did you translate the needs of these people into the design?
7. What are some of the differences and similarities in construction between the female and the male wings of the Tallinn prison?
8. In your opinion, should prisons that hold female inmates be any more different in construction than the ones that hold the male population? Please describe why?
9. Putting safety, economy, and ease of operation aside when it comes to the construction of prisons, how can architecture play a role in correctional facilities and impact positive values and experiences?

10. Please describe your view on solitary confinement as a way of punishment in the modern day world.

Former Inmate.

1. Please describe to me the conditions of your imprisonment and how the experience was.
2. How long were you in prison for? Did you spend your time in one or more prisons or departments of the same prison? How did they differ?
3. How do you think or feel that the experiences with being incarcerated have affected your values towards life and society at large?
4. How often did you spend time outdoors during the day?
5. Did you receive visitors often? Where did you meet them?
6. How was your relationship with the guards and the staff?
7. What would you have loved to have been different with your experience?
8. How did you experience privacy in the prison? Did you have moments of time alone?
9. I understand that you became converted into a Christian when you were still in prison, what made you have this transition?

Security.

1. Against the daily prison schedule of the inmates above, how is/was your schedule as compared to theirs when working at the prison?
2. What personal effects are female inmates allowed to have? Where do they place them, when are they taken away and when are they given back? Is it the same with pre-trial detention inmates and convicted inmates? If not, what are the differences?
3. What personal effects are male inmates allowed to have? Where do they place them, when are they taken away and when are they given back? Is it the same with pre-trial detention inmates and convicted inmates? If not, what are the differences?
4. How many visiting days and hours can the inmates in pre-trial detention get?



5. How many visiting days and hours can the convicted inmates get?
6. What is the most common reason/ crime committed by female inmates who end up in prison?
7. What is the maximum time one can spend in pre-trial detention before they are either convicted or let back to society?
8. How much time do the inmates spend in the outdoors? What they do there, what kind of restrictions are applied in yards?
9. Seeing as the prison is built as a restrictive environment, do you (the staff) also somehow feel confined working in the prison environment?
10. Do the staff also have places for rest or privacy? Please describe what they look like and what they contain?
11. Describe what the inmate-guard relationship is like. I.e. do you have periods during the day when you and the prisoners interact other than when they need to be escorted in and out of prison for work?
12. Is there use of solitary confinement? In what cases is it used and how often is it used?
13. Are the inmates in single or double sharing cells?
14. Does the security level differ when it comes to guarding the female inmates as opposed to the male inmate population?

Ministry of justice/ medic.

1. Describe your experience with working at the prison.
2. What do the prisoners and the staff need to be adjusted in the spaces they occupy?
3. How different are the needs for the female prisoners as opposed to male prisoners?
4. How often do the inmates get therapy sessions and mental health checks?
5. What changes happened in the prison work from when you started to when you left?
6. Do the inmates in pre-trial detention stay in the same prison cells as the ones who have been convicted of crimes?
7. What kind of departments are there in Tallinn prison? I.e closed, open prison types
8. How has working within a prison environment affected your values towards life and society at large?
9. How often are the prisoners allowed to spend time outdoors?

10. Against the daily prison schedule of the inmates, how is/was your schedule as compared to theirs when working at the prison?
11. What are some of the things that may trigger traumatic experiences in the prison environments to vulnerable inmates? For instance, the ones who have experienced violence or sexual abuse pre-imprisonment?
12. Do you think that gradually changing the prison environment for instance more flexibility in what is allowed in the rooms, a little more space and privacy, more visiting hours as they approach the end of serving their time can help them with adjusting once they get back to society? In other words, normalizing the space gradually to mimic the home environment.