Nordic correctional policies, values, methods and practice – what are they – and can and should they be transferred to the US?

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The normal objections...

- We are a heterogenous society, Norway is homogeneous.
  - Not true. Approx. 40% of the inmates in Halden prison comes from approx. 35 different nations.

- There is so much more mental illness in US prisons.
  - Not true. 90% of the inmates in Norwegian prisons have mental health issues.

- We can’t replicate Halden prison in the US, we can’t afford to build such a facility.
  - Partly true. But you don’t have replicate the facilities to pick up the best bits and pieces. The best parts are free; treating people humanely and with respect and dignity, apply the concept of dynamic security. Setting new goals and expectations, train people differently.

- You don’t have gang problems in Norway.
  - Partly true. But communication and mediation has proven to work also in this context.
1. The overall picture of NCS
Norwegian Correctional Service (NCS)
- some quick facts

2017-figures;

• 5.265.000 population in Norway
• Total capacity
  • 4.127 (theoretically) all prisons (remand and convicted inmates)
    • 6000 sentenced to prison
    • 3300 in remand
• Total rate of imprisonment - 69,1/100.000
• 4.600 FTE in NCS (prison, probation, HQ)
• Average wage cost pr FTE/year – NOK 683.000,- (USD 80.000,-)
Serving conditions in Norway

• Max. security prisons (incl. open-ended detention)
• Low security prisons (incl. half-way houses)
• Section 12 sentence (in an organisation other than correctional)
• Electronic bracelet sentence
• Community sentence
• Drug program with court control
• Probation
Serving conditions –
max. security prisons - some examples

• 60 min. visit per week (visitors to be approved by the prison)
• 20 min. telephone call per week (monitored)
• Letters (controlled)
• Private effects (limited numbers and types)
• Searches, metal detectors, urine samples, drug dog
• Escorts, camera surveillance, listening devices

Challenge → Institutionalized
2. The turning point
Late 1980’s and early 1990’s

- A lot of drugs in the prisons
- Many inmates with psychiatric problems
- High residivism
- Several riots
- Escapes were not uncommon
- 2 murders on correctional officers (1989, 1992)
- Limited interaction between officers and inmates
Need for change – something had to be done

3. The solution
Need for change – something had to be done

- "Tough on crime"
- A more humane approach

- Individual level
- Contact officer
- Future plan

- Systemic level;
  - Core values
  - New organization
"From guard to also be a social worker “

From the White Paper No. 27 (1997-98):

“It will be a development of the traditional correctional officer role. They shall contribute to helping the inmates to live a life without crime. “
Also in the US?
Consequences for the correctional officers

- Must be able to discuss criminal activities, change strategies and desistance with the inmates
- Must be able to plan and monitor the implementation of sentences
- Must have good knowledge about the opportunities in the correctional system
- Must be able to connect opportunities and individuals
- Must be able to contribute in general to the professional development of the Correctional Service
NCS, University College:

→ 2 year fulltime college education

Contact officer
- motivator
- role model

Security
- guard duty
- searching (body, cell)
- conflict resolution

Leisure
- participate in leisure activities
- organize social events

Cognitive program instructor

What does a prison officer do?
A varied and challenging career

Subjects like;
Ethics, Psychology, Criminology, Law, Human rights
4. The next step
"Punishment that works – lesser crime - safer society."

- More focus on reintegration and the reentry to society
- The cooperation between the authorities and agencies responsible for the inmates

(Presented by 4 ministers)
Principles for NCS

2 of the 5 principles:

• A humanistic approach to people
• Normality

Purpose:

Safety of society  Rehabilitation/Reintegration
• The punishment is the restriction of liberty.
• The inmate is not deprived of any other rights, i.e. he/she has the same rights as other habitants in Norway.
• No-one shall serve their sentence under stricter circumstances than necessary for the safety of the society.
• Life in prison shall resemble life in the community as much as possible.
5. Halden prison
Halden prison – Norway
«Punishment that works – change that last»
Some figures – Halden prison

- Planning started in 2000. Original project was in 2004 decided to be revised and reduced.
- Construction time, May 2007 – March 2010
- Operational, March 2010
- Building cost and inventory; 1,3 billion NOK (150 Mill. USD)
- Inmates
  - total of 252 (262) – Norway’s second largest prison
  - males only
- Staff – correctional services – 290
- The ”import model” – additional staff – approx. 50
Some figures – Halden prison

- Average sentence = 6.5 years
- Average age = 37 years
- Nationalities = 37
- Major offence categories (convicted and remand):
  - Drugs (38%)
  - Homicide (13%)
  - Rape (11%)
  - Sexual offences (9%)
  - Theft/Robbery (8%)
Halden prison

“An iron fist in a silk glove”

27,500 sqm buildings
150,000 sqm area within the wall
150,000 sqm area outside the wall
Normality and Humanity– Architectural

- A miniature society
- Provide a positive influence and prepare for life outside the walls
- Separate buildings – everyday movement
- Daylight
- Facilities divided into “public” and ”private functions” with various expressions
- Creating the interior as little alienating as possible
- Designed to meet inmates and staff in a friendly non-authoritarian way.
Principle of normality
Cell

10 Sqm, Private toilet/shower, No bars
Principle of normality

This:  Or this:
Green space improves mental health, well-being

Researchers found exposure to green space improved well-being both immediately and over time.
Principle of normality

Evidence-based approaches continue to be the cornerstone of efforts proven effective in correctional settings to prevent relapse and recidivism.

MENTAL HEALTH AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT IN JAILS
Man-made surroundings have a substantial impact on inmates’ mental condition

By Dr. Elizabeth Falcon
Visiting house
"An overall strategy is that the art in Halden Prison should be in a humanistic tradition, and to represent care without being preachy. Art should be in dialogue with the inmates and staff."
Unit A

- 56 Inmates
- Reception unit
- "Non-complying unit"
- Restrictions
- (Retreat)

(Based on the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola)
Unit A

Content:

- Custody handbook
- Screening/mapping (BRIK and other tools – giving input to the process with future plan)
- Information about Halden prison
- Social skill work
- Arts & crafts
- Training/Exercise
- Stress management
- Anger management
Level 1

20 cells

Activity and exercise rooms

8 cells
Unit B and C

- 84 Inmates in each unit
- Primarily convicted, but also pre-trial (remand)
Work and school
Unit O

- Half-way house
- Ordinary school or work
- 24 inmates
Culture building
The holy room
Gymnasium (and concert arena)
Unit Y – The activity centre
Unit Y – The activity centre

- Activities for all inmates in units B and C
- First prison in Norway to integrate:
  - Work
  - Education
  - Cognitive programme activities
  - Labour & welfare services
  - Library
  - Service centre

In the same building, giving opportunities for new and improved cooperation
Workshops/work options

Examples:

- Carpentry and Furniture production
- Car maintenance/repair (garage)
- Art work
- Assembly
- Sound recording/music studio
- Cleaning
- Laundry
- Landscaping
- Kitchen/food production
- Librarian
- Religious services assistant
- Media production and Print shop

→ Application
Educational subjects

Examples:

• Primary school
  • (if necessary)

• Vocational training:
  • Building and construction/carpentry
  • Design and crafts
  • Technical and Industrial production
  • Restaurant and food processing
  • Electricity and electronics

• Specialization in General studies:
  • Math, physics, science, etc
  • University admissions certificate

• Courses:
  • Language
  • Music
  • Media and communication
  • Sports and physical training
  • Information technology

• Regional college/University studies
  • Facilitation, if possible

• DFS (”internet for inmates”)
Halden Prison
«A complete provider of knowledge and opportunities»

Some examples:

- Mapping and assessment system (BRIK)
- Implementation of the pre-trial handbook
- Extensive use of personal contact officer
- Motivational Interviewing
- Cognitive behavioral programs, for example
  - Basic programs (Anger, Stress)
  - Substance abuse
  - Sexual offenders
  - Parenting skills
- Future plan/Individual plan
- Social skill work (miljøarbeid)
- Work (both skilled, unskilled and very basic activities)
- Education (all levels, variety of subjects)
- Culture and leisure time
- Interdisiplinary drug abuse teams & wings
- Restorative justice
- Service centre
- Family liason service – protecting the childrens needs as dependants
6. The inmate, his needs and resources
The inmate – who is he?

- 60% problems in upbringing (financially, housing, substance abuse, physical or sexual abuse)
- 30% contact with the child welfare services before age 16
- 30% had family in jail
- 40% only elementary school
- 70% unemployed
- 30% homeless when committed in prison
- 40% below poverty line
- 30% mental disorders/problems
- 50% one or more chronic somatic health problem
- 60% substance abusers
- 50% have children

90% mental disorders

(2014, South-Eastern Norway Regional Health Authority)
Resettlement strategy

- Inmate
- Social network
- Work/social support
- Victim
- Debt counselling
- Housing
- Health
- Substance abuse
- Education
- Social network
We can not achieve our goals alone…

*The Norwegian “import model”*

- **Landlord services**  (Public Construction and Property Management Agency)
- **Educational services**  (Østfold County)
- **Health services**  (Halden Municipality)
- **Dental services**  (Østfold County)
- **Library services**  (Halden Municipality)
- **Religious services**  (Church of Norway)
- **Labour and welfare services**  (The Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration)
- **Substance abuse services**  (Østfold County Hospital)
- **Psychiatric services**  (Østfold County Hospital)
The advantages are:

- A better continuity in the delivery of services – the offender will already have established contact during his time in prison.

- Involvement from the community with the prison system – more and better cross-connections and an improvement of the image of prisons and offenders.

- These services are financed by the different agencies, not the correctional service, as the services are part of the rights of any inhabitant of Norway.
7. The concept of Dynamic Security
Security

• Static security

• Organisational security

• Dynamic security
Dynamic security

- The dialogue between inmates and officers
- Humanism, respect, trust
- Prevention vs. detection

Results:
- Increases security on a systemic level
- Increases security on a personal level
- Creates a platform for cooperation, joint future planning, et.c.

Believed to have an effect not only on inmates, but also on correctional officers
Dynamic security
Why treat inmates humane?

Different perspectives;

• Principal one;
  • Human rights ("All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights")

• But also pragmatic ones;
  • We are releasing your future neighbor ("What works")
  • HSE concerns for prison staff
HSE concerns for prison staff

Officer safety

More research is necessary to identify ways to reduce the risks inherent to the profession and improve CO perceptions of safety.
HSE issues for staff;

"Believed to have an effect not only on inmates, but also correctional officers"

He paused. “But then again, my second point would be,” he said, “if you treat people badly, it’s a reflection on yourself.” In officer-training school, he explained, guards are taught that treating inmates humanely is something they should do not for the inmates but for themselves. The theory is that if officers are taught to be harsh, domineering and suspicious, it will ripple outward in their lives, affecting their self-image, their families, even Norway as a whole. Kristoffersen cited a line that is usually attributed to Dostoyevsky: “The degree of civilization in a society can be judged by entering its prisons.”
Health & Safety for Correctional Staff in the US

Correctional Officers and Domestic Violence: Experiences and Attitudes
Colby Lynne Valentine, Karen Oehme, and Annelise Martin

Prison horrors haunt guards' lives

You treat other people like you treat convicts."

Significantly higher than other occupations and twice as high as military veterans.
Bertsch and Jackson are convinced that their quest to treat prisoners like human beings jibes well with their state’s conservative goals: Be nice. Be fiscally responsible. Be a good neighbor. “The most I can do with the Legislature,” Bertsch tells me, “is get them to understand that incarcerating more people is not a good investment. If we had the same incarceration rate as Norway, we would have the resources to do a really good job with the people in our system.”

“I’m not a liberal,” she adds. “I’m just practical.”
Since the 2015 tour, North Dakota’s prison system has begun implementing some changes in the spirit of what was learned in Norway rather than replicating a Norwegian prison.

For example, Jackson said, the prison system has reduced the number of maximum-security inmates in solitary confinement at any one time. Minimum-security inmates start wearing street clothes before their release and are allowed out of prison to be in the community, she said.

While it might be too early to see the results in the data — and it might be difficult to prove cause and effect — prison staff members have already seen a positive change in the attitude of inmates, she said.
Connecticut

Cheshire Correctional

Programs - Workshops & Activities Compendium

Truthful • Respectful • Understanding • Elevating
For young adults incarcerated in the state of South Carolina, being in prison might start to look a whole lot different.

As result of a partnership with the Vera Institute of Justice, the South Carolina Department of Corrections is adopting the Restoring Promise Initiative, an effort to make prison a rehabilitating experience that prepared young people ages 18 to 25 to reintegrate into the community once their sentence is served. South Carolina will be the latest state to adopt this practice, joining the Connecticut Department of Correction and the Middlesex Sheriff’s Office in Massachusetts, which have already implemented Restoring Promise in their own facilities.
8. The progression model
Sentence progression
Leave of absence (furlough)

• Part of the sentence progression
• Necessary to get adjusted to “the outside world”
• Important as a motivational factor
• Also from maximum security prisons

• Figures (2017) include both high and low security prisons:
  • 30,725 furloughs
  • 19 did not return as required
  • 99,93% returned as required
9. The Summary
Does it work, does it change inmate behaviour?

• Aggression and physical violence between inmates is rare.
• Agression from inmates against staff is rare.
• Physical violence from inmates against staff is close to non-existing.
• Recividism is lower than in many other countries.

• Caused by:
  • The focus on humane treatment and dynamic security?
  • The prison facilities and outdoor areas?
  • The level of activity (work, education, leisure time)?
  • A combination of the above?
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Updated recidivism figures

Andel første gjøring i ny dom til kriminalomsorgen fordelt etter straffegjennomføringsform. Løslatte og iverksatte dommer i frihet i årene 2010 - 2014

25% in prisons after 5 years
Want to know more about Halden prison?

- Documentary «Breaking the Cycle» (2017)
Thank you for your attention!
Any questions?