Damaged Lives and Troubled People:

The challenges of inclusion and Integration

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TE WHARE WĀNANGA O TE ŪPOKO O TE IKA A MĀUI

Exclusion & Embrace: Prisoner Rehabilitation, Reintegration and Reconciliation, St John's Church, 23rd June 2011

My interest in excluded people

- **Social background**

- **Work with offenders as a probation officer**

- **Research into problem drug use and social exclusion**

- **Time in prison ....(doing research!)**

Who should be in prison?

- **Prison should be reserved for a tiny minority of any population:**

    - **- those people who pose a <u>serious risk</u> to others in terms of violence, physical, sexual or emotional abuse**

- **Aim to keep the prison population to around 50 – 80 for every 100,000 in society**

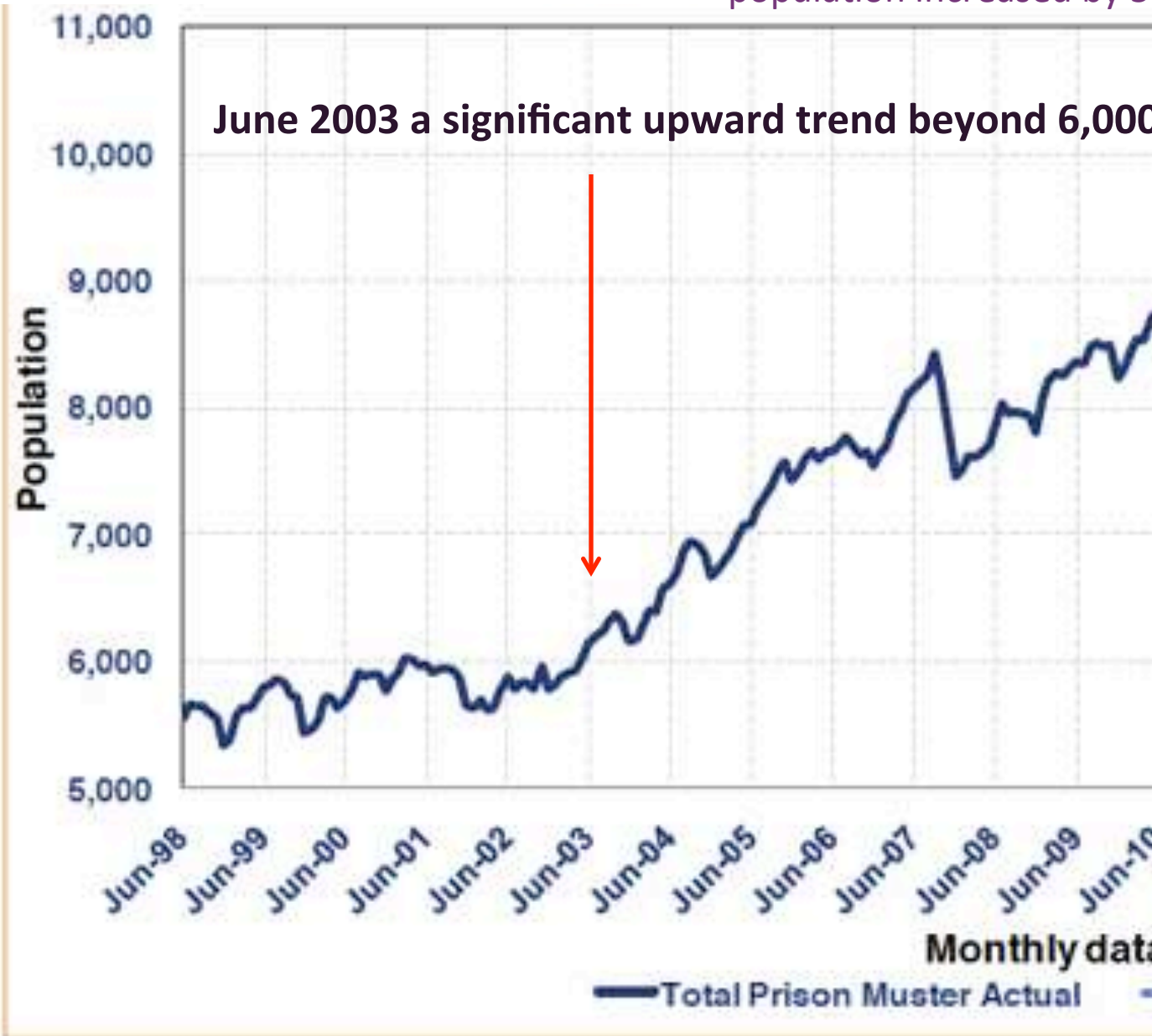- **Could expect the proportion of 'dangerous' people to be fairly similar between societies**

Proportion of people incarcerated –global insight

Portugal	102	10,830
Netherlands	100	16,416
France	96	59,655
Belgium	93	10,002
Italy	92	55,057
Germany	89	73,203
Norway	69	3276
Finland	64	3,370
Denmark	63	3,448

	Prison (per 100,000 pop.)	Total Prison Population
USA	756	2,293,000
Latvia	288	6,548
Estonia	259	3,467
Lithuania	234	7,866
NZ	199	8784
Czech	182	18,901
Spain	160	73,787
UK	151	82,240
Bulgaria	134	10,271
Romania	123	26,350

NZ prison trends

Between 2000 -2010 the prison population increased by 53%

June 2003 a significant upward trend beyond 6,000 begins

Total Prison Muster Actual

TOTAL CRIME

From 2004 as prison rises sharply the downward trend in recorded crime ends

- Point here is that understanding what reduces crime is highly complex and not fully understood.
- Certainly prison has little to offer in terms of it's claim to reduce recidivism

Recorded Offences per 10,000 population

Year

Fiscal Year	19951996	19961997	19971998	19981999	19992000	20002001	20012002	20022003	20032004	20042005	20052006	20062007	20072008	20082009	20092010
Recorded Offences	475,154	482,831	465,834	455,552	432,354	424,286	436,315	447,146	426,149	396,018	426,469	426,593	426,690	442,540	441,960
Recorded per 10,000 Population	1,281.7	1,285.2	1,223.9	1,189.0	1,124.4	1,096.7	1,114.5	1,121.3	1,050.4	963.4	1,025.4	1,014.2	1,004.0	1,031.9	1,018.4

Troubled people, damaged lives – their own fault?

- **It is not so much because they committed a lot of crime they have become troubled people with damaged lives**

- **It is largely because they are troubled people with damaged lived they have committed a lot of crime.**

- **Crime will made their situation much worse, and prison serves only to further brutalise, damage and diminish.**

- **Most people who are chronic recidivists have had a severe disadvantage before they begin criminal careers**

What is the prisoner profile? A UK perspective

8 out of 10 prisoners poor writing skills*

13 out of 20 prisoners have poor numeracy skills*

1 in 2 prisoners have poor reading skills*
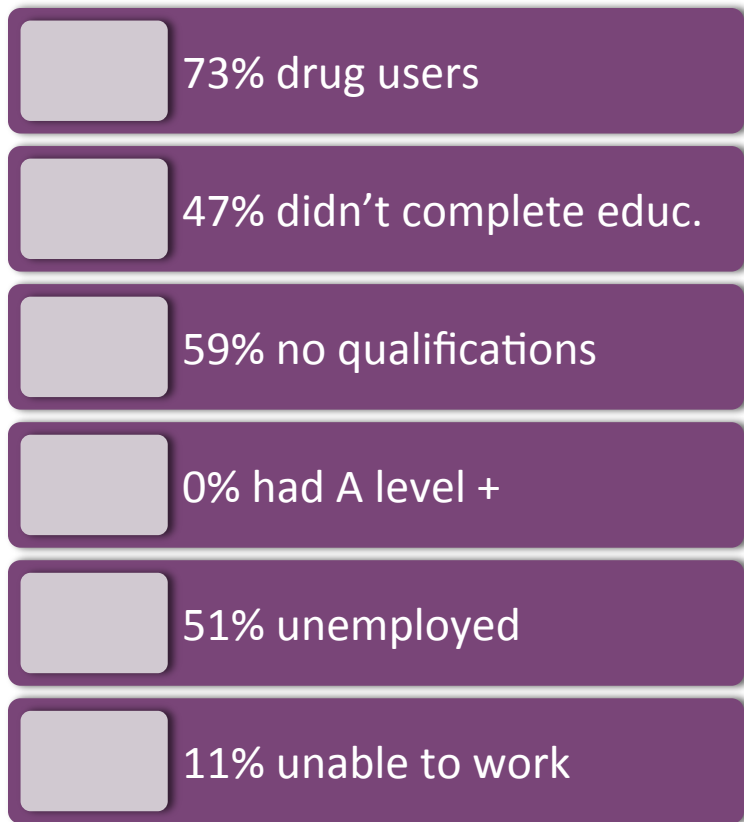
60-70% used drugs before prison

70% suffer from at least two mental disorders
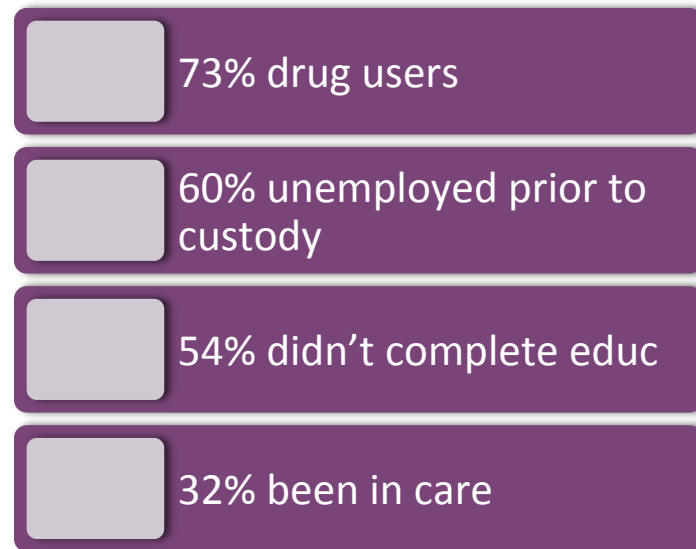
1 in 5 males, 1 in 3 females have attempted suicide

Over 30% become homeless as a result of prison

*below the level of an 11-year-old child

UK Social Exclusion Unit 2002 Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners

Prisons – Silos for the broken?

73% drug users

47% didn't complete educ.

59% no qualifications

0% had A level +

51% unemployed

11% unable to work

73% drug users

60% unemployed prior to custody

54% didn't complete educ

32% been in care

Survey of 529 male prisoners in 2000

(Bullock T 2003 HORS 267)

Survey of 1884 males in 2000 who had recently been sent to prison.
(Liriano & Ramsay 2003 HORS 267)

Prisons are dominated by people who:

- can't read or write
- have mental health problems
- Have alchol drug problems
- have learning difficulties
- are isolated from family
- are vulnerable
- have no or few qualifications
- have limited work experience
- lack work and social skills
- who have been excluded from school
- who have been looked after by the state as a child

At each life event prisoners have often endured disruption, disadvantage, difference, dislocation and discrimination which damages, isolates and excludes them.

Many end up in an excluded sub-society, labelled, stigmatised and stranded. Their plight is made made considerable worse by prison. Their chances of requalification and reintegration in society are limited.

Access opportunities, support and actively engage in society

independence

housing

employment

relationships

education

family

stigma

EXCLUDED SOCIETY

disruption   disadvantage   difference   dislocation   discrimination
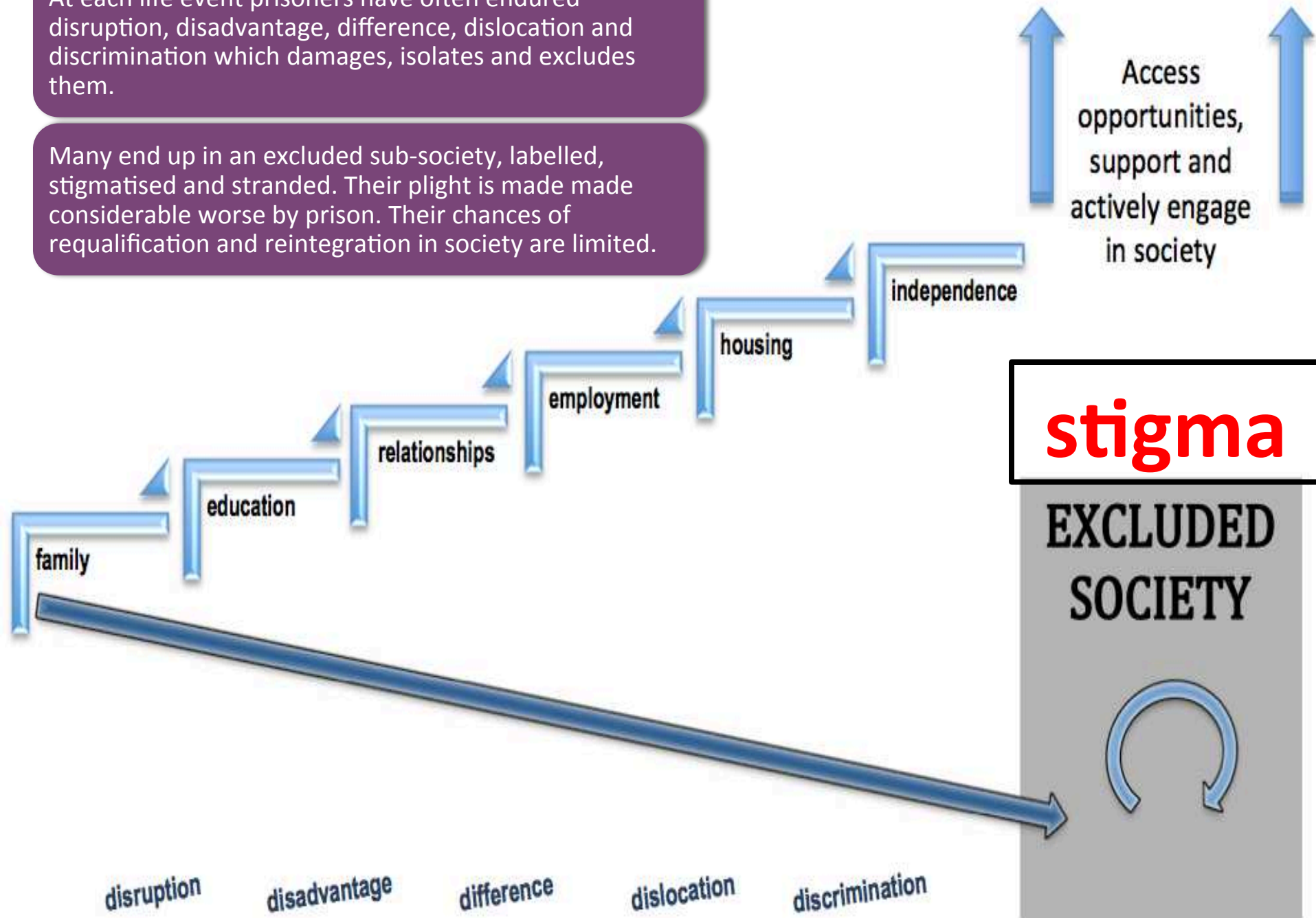
Do the crime - should do the time!

But then what?

- With disqualification there must be for all (apart from some extreme cases) opportunity for requalification

- Requalification - important as a matter of individual justice, but also in the self interest of the wider community.

- Creating ghettos of unwanted, demonised and disqualified people who have no access to mainstream NZ society may make some sections of society feel good, (like lynchings did in the USA) - but it shameful upon any advanced democratic society. Ultimately it leads to more crime not less.

- Prison silos and ghettos in society will result in more entrenched and divided communities who neither connect, care or understand the world the other occupies – a dangerous scenario.

Voices from NZ Prisoners

[Prison] 'is about being stagnant. It is a lock down environment. When you aren't locked down you have violence, gangs and boredom to deal with……...You come here to rot'

[Prison] 'is a breeding ground for crime, learn more ideas here to become a better criminal'

'It's really hard to think positively here. All prison is good for is learning more about crime'

'The environment [outside] has to be different – they have no money and just do what they know best [when released] – they can earn money through crime. So they need more incentives jobs and family'

Need and Desire for Change

[In prison we need….]

'Lots of programmes, education, writing and counselling'

'Help with employment and skilling up'

'Programmes have got to happen and begin inside, once you are released it's too late, they wont want to know'

'A prison that has activities for physical, mental and spiritual all need feeding……. It should address the socio-economic work….. It needs to begin here [in prison] and carry on outside'

Help with integration

'Give prisoners the tools to get back into the real world, confidence to go to work, and get reintegrated into the community'

'You can't get a job with a criminal history. My ideal prison would have someone that helps you. Someone who acts a go-between'

'Keep inmates closer to their family – the natural habitat is to build family in prison and you end up with criminal connections and gangs'

'Have good transition and follow up in the community and in church'

Summary of Challenges

- Lack support
- Lack personal resources and skills
- Have little or no 'healthy' lifestyle to return to or recall
- They have learnt bad habits
- They have learnt alternative survival strategies
- They have been damaged further by prison
- Lack social capital and need new social networks
- Isolated
- Unemployable

Diverse Range of Needs

Befriending- listens, understands, cares, consistent & reliable

Access to rewards and benefits in non criminal networks

Help developing confidence, esteem, coping with stress appropriately

Forgiveness, acceptance AND boundaries

Routine, purpose and structure

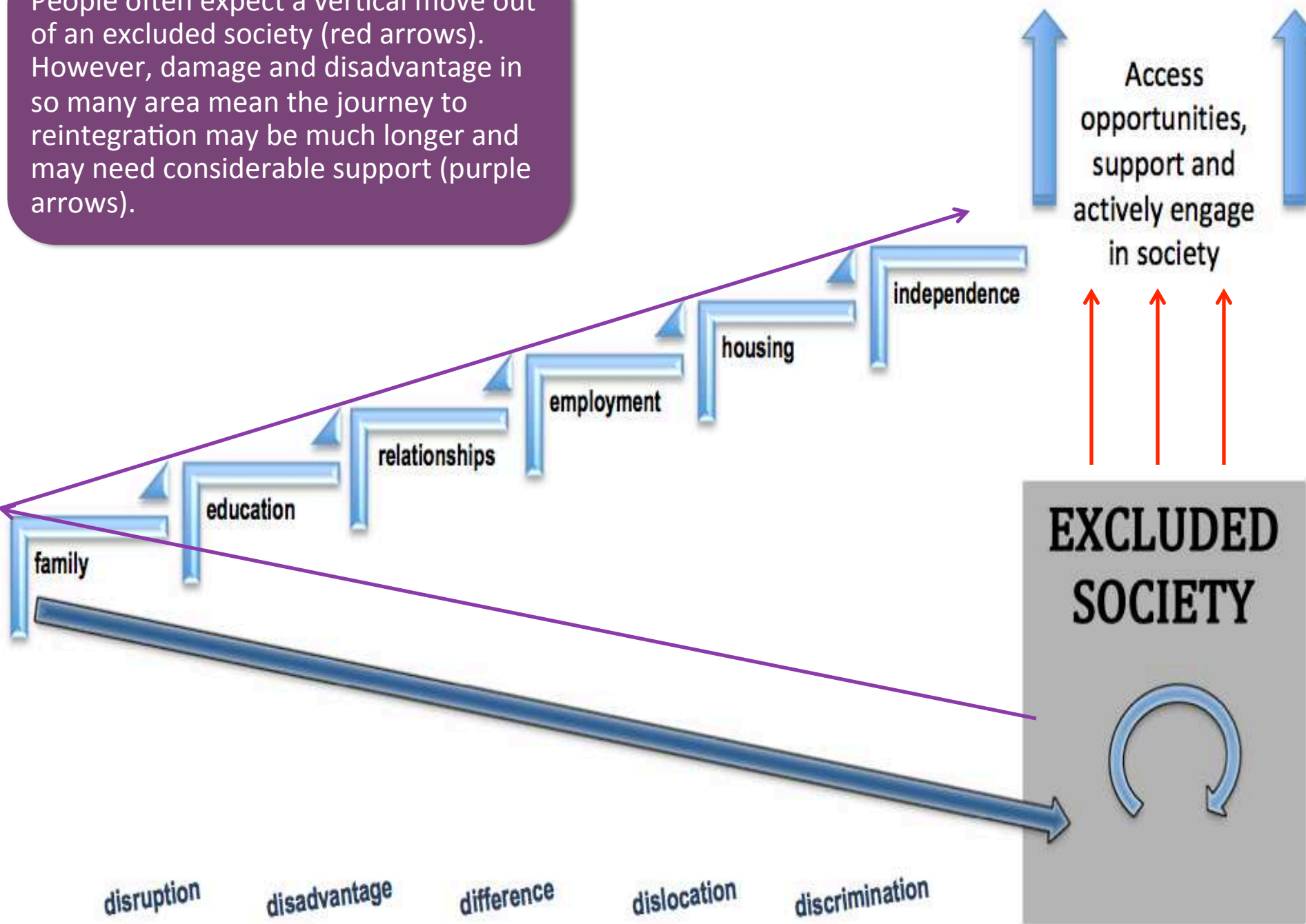Long term commitment – no hit and run

Education

Employment

Stable Housing

Skills development

People often expect a vertical move out of an excluded society (red arrows). However, damage and disadvantage in so many area mean the journey to reintegration may be much longer and may need considerable support (purple arrows).

Access opportunities, support and actively engage in society

independence

housing

employment

relationships

education

family

EXCLUDED SOCIETY

disruption   disadvantage   difference   dislocation   discrimination

Caution and Realism

- Not going to be sorted over night
- Might not be sorted over months or years
- Some maybe so damaged, entrenched they might make little or no progress
- Getting personally involved can at times lead to frustration, exhaustion and disappointment
- Issues are multi-facetted: personal, cultural and structural
- Getting involved on a personal level shouldn't be undertaken lightly
- Some may be better suited to get involved at a structural or cultural level

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