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## **“I should have been a security consultant”; The Good Lives Model and Residential Burglars**

### **Abstract**

Understanding of the potential ‘rewards’ that residential burglars gain through their offences has largely been confined to monetary return, thus overlooking the possibility that offenders obtain other ‘goods’ from their criminal activities. By illustrating how burglars could be attending to various lifestyle deficits through crime, the paper reveals indicators for case management, rehabilitation and desistance. The Good Lives Model (GLM) is employed as a framework to explore the ‘primary human goods’ attained through residential burglary. The paper concludes with suggestions to encourage desistance by challenging the authenticity of the goods burglars seek to fulfil or remedy through criminal behaviour.

### **Keywords**

Residential Burglary, The Good Lives Model, primary human goods, rehabilitation, desistance, offender interviews

### **Introduction**

Drawing on findings from 30 semi-structured interviews with convicted residential burglars in England, this paper explores the numerous lifestyle goals, in addition to material reward, that residential burglars achieve or assuage through the conduct of their crime. The paper utilises the Good Lives Model (GLM), which has been a notable development within offender rehabilitation over the past decade, in an attempt to explicate and understand the aetiology and continuance of offending. Thus far, the GLM has largely been applied to sex offenders, and so this study presents a rare and important opportunity to explore its application and relevance to property offenders. Indeed it has been stated that ‘sexual offenders are far from being the only group for which GLM case management practices can be applied’ (Purvis, Ward and Shaw, 2013: 4). To this end, the paper seeks to make a vital contribution to the scant empirical case studies that currently exist.

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Research on residential burglars has tended to focus on offenders' interaction with the physical environment through target appraisal and modus operandi (for example, see Bernasco and Nieuwbeerta, 2005; Nee and Meenaghan, 2006; Rengert and Wasilchick, 1989; Snook et al, 2011). The emergent consensus has been that residential burglars are, in the main, rational, discriminating and skilful in the execution of their offences. This body of research has provided useful insight to the decision-making processes of offenders, and often culminates in practical recommendations that draw upon situational crime prevention techniques to counter the visual cues that signal to an offender that a target presents an attractive proposition. However, the perception of what comprises the considerations of offenders has become narrowed over recent years as successive studies have increasingly focused on target appraisal through the lens of a risk–reward dichotomy. Limiting offender decision-making to a duality of concerns neglects a range of phenomenological considerations that also influence the cognitive process, resulting in a rather rudimentary and 'sterile view' (Jacobs, 2010: 514) of offender reasoning. For example, as I have argued previously, in addition to the bounded rationality that informs decision-making, burglars engage a self-constructed moral compass to ameliorate cognitive dissonance and dampen internal conflicts (see Author, 2014).

The present study took an inductive approach to exploring the self-reported rationales and rewards that burglars gained from their offences. Following thematic analysis, it became apparent that aside from seeking rewards in the form of material gains, residential burglars were satisfying other needs and ambitions through their criminal activity. These findings resonated with elements of The Good Lives Model<sup>1</sup>. As such, the GLM has been used as a framework to analyse interview findings with the dual purpose of advancing understanding of offender motivation, and considering the extent to which the principles of the GLM are relevant, and can be applied to property offenders.

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<sup>1</sup> The author would like to thank Rebecca Clark for early discussion about the GLM and its applicability to the case management of property offenders.

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## **The Good Lives Model**

The Good Lives Model (GLM) is a positive-psychology approach to rehabilitation that aims to equip offenders with the resources, both internal and external, required to live ‘a good life’; one that is socially acceptable as well as personally fulfilling and meaningful (Ward et al, 2011). While it has largely been applied to the case management of sexual offenders, it is claimed that ‘in its most basic form the GLM is a model of healthy human functioning and can therefore be applied to anyone’ (Purvis, Ward and Shaw, 2013: 5). The GLM is often referred to as ‘strength-based’ (for example see Ward and Maruna, 2007: 110), because it seeks to build capabilities in alignment with an individual’s values and interests, and attempts to capitalize on an offender’s existing abilities (Ward and Fortune, 2013). In this respect it has been conceptualized as an alternative approach to treatment models that arguably focus on the management and reduction of dynamic risk factors, ‘criminogenic needs’, such as the risk need responsivity (RNR) model, dominant in countries such as Canada, Australia, England and New Zealand. Proponents of GLM argue that it improves upon the RNR approach of offender management (see Andrews and Bonta, 2010; Ward and Fortune, 2013), to create one that recognizes that offenders need to be sufficiently motivated to desist from crime (Ward and Stewart, 2003). In this way the GLM asserts that the most effective way to reduce harm to the community is ‘through the enhancement of an offender’s skills and capabilities and actively working toward the achievement of healthy pro-social goals, rather than the avoidance of negative ones’ (Purvis, Ward and Shaw, 2013: 40).

Underscoring the GLM is ‘its emphasis on the achievement of happiness (i.e., a life characterized by emotional well-being)’ (Purvis, Ward and Shaw, 2013: 37). Stemming from this is the belief that all human beings are inclined to seek certain types of experiences or acquire certain lifestyle attributes. Analogous to Mertonian theory in some respects, underpinning the GLM is the presumption that criminal behaviours occur when individuals lack the internal and/or external resources to obtain their goals and meet their needs through legitimate means. Merton’s social structural strain theory is well versed but what it neglects,

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remedied somewhat by general strain theory, is an appreciation and articulation of the qualitative lifestyle attributes that accompany monetary security to achieve happiness and well-being.

Deci and Ryan (2000) posit that all humans, irrespective of cultural heritage, seek three fundamental and basic psychological needs; relatedness, competence and autonomy. Further, highlighting the intrinsic nature of these primary needs, and a disjuncture with cultural-structural strain, Arnhart has termed them ‘natural desires’ because they are ‘so deeply rooted in human nature that they will manifest themselves in some manner across history in every human society’ (2008: 29). The GLM similarly assumes that individuals are naturally predisposed ‘to act in the pursuit of a range of biological, psychological, and social goals’ (Laws and Ward, 2011; Purvis, Ward and Shaw, 2013). Such ‘primary human goods’ (PHGs) are requisite for societal beings to establish social networks, to survive and reproduce. In essence, PHGs are experiences, attributes and activities that are sought ‘for their own sake’ and are likely to increase well-being (Ward and Maruna, 2007: 113).

### **The GLM and Primary Human Goods**

Drawing on social, psychological, biological and anthropological research evidence, Ward and Maruna (2007) claim that there are at least ten groups of primary human goods that ‘are likely to appear in some form on any list generated’ (p.114). These are: Life (healthy living and physical functioning); Knowledge; Excellence in work and play; Agency; Inner peace; Friendship; Community; Spirituality; Happiness, and Creativity. Whilst the tendency has been towards further disaggregation of primary goods (e.g. Purvis, 2010, divides the goods of excellence in work and play to create eleven classes of primary goods), some of these categories do present some overlap, as well as some ambiguity, and as Ward and Maruna (2007) recognize, one doesn’t need to be ‘wedded’ to these specific groupings. Since the GLM has evolved and developed substantially over the past decade, there have been several iterations of it. As such, for the heuristic purposes of this analysis, the model presented by

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Purvis, Ward and Shaw (2013: 37-48) is utilized in this paper. They settle, drawing upon empirical evidence (cf. Purvis, 2010), on 11 distinct PHGs; 1) Life, 2) knowledge, 3) excellence in play, 4) excellence in work, 5) excellence in agency, 6) inner peace, 7) relatedness, 8) community, 9) spirituality, 10) pleasure, and 11) creativity. In presenting this categorisation, it should be noted that PHGs often represent a multitude of nuanced smaller constituents. For example, as Ward and Brown (2004: 247) assert by way of an example, ‘the primary good of relatedness contains the sub-cluster goods of intimacy, friendship, support, caring, reliability, honesty, and so on.’

Offending, according to proponents of the GLM, relates either directly or indirectly to the pursuit of certain primary goods and occurs as a result of flaws in an individual’s life structure or outlook. Willis et al (2013) outline four key flaws that can contribute to offending behaviour, recognising that often these occur concomitantly. One of the most straightforward flaws is the use of *inappropriate or harmful means* to obtain primary goods. In the context of residential burglary, an individual might seek out the primary good of ‘knowledge’ by learning how to overcome target hardening measures such as sophisticated locks or double-glazing. A second flaw is to have a *lack of scope* so that the focus is overly narrow or precludes the achievement of other goods. For example, an individual might pursue ‘pleasure’ leaving little time for achieving the goods of ‘relatedness’ or ‘community’. Another flaw is when an individual experiences *conflict* between valued primary goods and/or in the instrumental means of securing them. For example, attempting to secure ‘excellence in agency’ by stealing money could conflict with satisfying ‘inner peace’. A final flaw is a lack of *internal and/or external capacities* to attain primary goods. This could include a lack of knowledge or skills such as cognitive reasoning, which limits employment opportunities.

In addition to primary goods, the GLM outlines secondary goods. Whereas primary goods are attributes and outcomes sought for their own sake in the pursuit of happiness and well-being, instrumental, or secondary goods, can be conceived of as the means to achieve primary

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goods. In other words, secondary goods are the activities individuals undertake in pursuit of PHGs and the attainment of their life goals. Ward and Fortune (2013) provide the example of working as a mechanic as a means of achieving the primary good of excellence in work, and Willis et al. (2013) suggest sports and hobbies as a prosocial way to achieve the primary good of excellence in play.

## **Methodology**

The study used a range of methods to gain insight into an increase in burglaries from the perspective of recently active burglars in ‘Northern City’, England.<sup>2</sup> This paper focuses on the findings from semi-structured interviews with 30 convicted burglars. The author was employed at a large Probation Trust at the time that the study took place, and the participants were drawn from the Trust’s caseload in May 2010. Key to being included in the sampling frame was a conviction for burglary dwelling between 1 August 2007 and 31 December 2009. Participants were selected using non-probability sampling, stratified by age and number of burglary convictions. Initially the individual’s Offender Manager was contacted to discuss the study, and if they felt it appropriate, they were requested to ask the individual if they’d be willing to take part in an interview. Information sheets and consent forms were provided to the Offender Manager. This proved to be an effective method of recruitment and the majority of those selected from the sampling frame agreed to the interview – only those that were soon to complete their community order declined. Fifteen of the interviews took place in the community (13 at probation offices and two at probation-managed ‘approved premises’) and fifteen interviews took place with incarcerated offenders in two different prisons. All interviews were conducted face to face. Twenty of the interviews were audio recorded with the prior written permission of the interviewee (and prison where relevant), and

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<sup>2</sup> Residential burglary had been increasing in Northern City since June 2008 with a slight, and temporary, decline in February 2009. In 2008/2009 there were 23,719 recorded burglary offences; an increase of 2178 (10 per cent) compared to the previous 12 months.



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fully transcribed verbatim. Hand-written notes were taken for the remaining interviews as the request to take an audio recorder into one of the prisons was declined.

### ***Participants***

The 30 interviewees had a total of 353 burglary dwelling convictions in the four years prior to interview, with a further 212 burglaries taken into consideration ('TIC'd') at court. This amounted to 565 burglary dwelling offences officially recorded for this cohort; an average of 19 per offender. However, self-reported estimates of the number of burglaries that each interviewee had committed in their lifetime inferred that the official figure was grossly conservative. Three individuals declined to answer (incidentally with convictions for five, 15 and 17 residential burglaries respectively). The individual estimates provided by the 27 participants, amounted to 3394 residential burglaries. Although caution should be used when taking these estimates at face value, it indicates the experiential credentials of these burglars.

The research was inductive and the interviews explored a broad range of topics including target selection, items stolen, perceived reasons for the onset of criminal behaviour and possible avenues for desistance. Following thematic analysis, it became apparent that aside from seeking rewards in the form of material gains, residential burglars were satisfying other needs and ambitions through their criminal enterprise. These findings are analysed below drawing upon the Good Lives Model of offender rehabilitation as a framework. The analysis utilises direct quotations following the thematic analysis to illustrate the perspective of burglars.

### **Findings: Applying the Good Lives Model to residential burglary**

Whilst historically the primary use of the GLM has been in the treatment sector (Purvis, Ward and Willis, 2014) it has gained momentum as a structured approach to offender case management in recent years, particularly with sex offenders (Barnett and Wood, 2011; Gannon et al, 2011; Purvis et al, 2011; Ward and Fortune, 2013), but the principles of the

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GLM are also finding relevance for the rehabilitation and treatment of other groups such as violent offenders (Whitehead et al, 2007) and young offenders (Wainwright and Nee, 2014). Using the GLM PHGs as a framework, the paper now turns to considering the ability of the model to account for the aetiology and continuance of offending by residential burglars, thus ascertaining its utility in the case management of offenders. Each of the PHGs are examined in turn, defined in accordance with the GLM literature and then applied to the empirical findings from the present study. In some instances the lack of fulfilment of a particular good appears to underpin the aetiology of the offence, whereas in other instances, it is the pursuit of the good that apparently contributes towards the participant’s criminal activity.

### ***Life***

*Life*, as a primary human good, ‘incorporates all of the physical needs and factors that are important for healthy living and physical functioning: food, water, shelter, a physically healthy body, and so on’ (Purvis, Ward and Shaw, 2013: 41). The fulfilment of this PHG entails being a physically healthy person with a high standard of living circumstances, something that the majority of the participants in this study would largely not be assessed as satisfying. Characterizing the lives of many of the men were chaotic and unstable family backgrounds, poor or non-existent school attendance followed by the sheer ennui of low paid routine employment, or, more commonly, long stints of unemployment. As such, residential burglary was viewed as an instrumental means of obtaining money to secure fundamental ‘life’ goods such as accommodation and basic subsistence. All of the burglars reported being unemployed whilst committing the majority of their offences, and, as such, obtaining money, and quickly, was the self-reported primary motivation for all of the burglars in this study except one.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> One interviewee stated that the only motivating factor for the one burglary he was convicted of was to assist an associate in a revenge attack on the victim. It was reported that there was no intent to remove items from the property.

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The reason I went to jail was because I needed money, I didn't have a job or anything like that. I was stressed through having no money so I just decided on going out [burgling].

It was hard when I was growing up; there was eight of us and there wasn't much money in the house. My dad used to smoke weed and as we got older we started smoking it as well. I wanted nice stuff like everybody else had; they all had nice trainers and things. (Interview 16)

I was [...] hanging about with people that were on drugs and stuff. My benefits stopped and I had no money at all. I had to get something... money, from somewhere. (Interview 17)

Systematic structural exclusion and lack of prospect overshadowed the majority of participants' lives. Stable accommodation was not common, and the majority used drugs and had done so since being a teenager thus undermining their healthy living and physical functioning. The lives of these men were unanchored from basic foundations of stable, secure and safe living standards.

### ***Knowledge***

The PHG of *knowledge* in the GLM relates to the acquisition of information that is important to the individual. This could either be through possession of a deep knowledge of a few specific topics of particular interest, or it could be obtaining a breadth of knowledge on multiple topics (Purvis, Ward and Shaw, 2013). Whilst knowledge is normally satisfied by activities such as vocational pursuits, acquiring a new skill, studying or undertaking training, the findings in this study suggest that residential burglars could be fulfilling it through their offending behavior. Prior research has found that burglars draw upon a range of cognitive skills and possess a 'specialist knowledge' drawn from experience that enables them to identify both opportunities and potential risks (Wright et al, 1995: 52). Furthermore, through

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their offences they acquire expert ability which enables them to quickly scrutinise large amounts of information and reach an informed decision based on the available evidence. In this way Nee and Meenaghan (2006: 935-936) claim burglars operate using ‘the same bounded, almost habitual decision-making processes that all experienced individuals use to navigate quickly and effectively around their world’ becoming what they term ‘a rational ‘expert’ agent’. As the burglar’s career develops, the time-consuming cost-benefit analysis of potential risks and rewards is replaced with précised ‘rules of thumb’ based on prior learning and experience (Cornish and Clarke, 1985: 100; Nee and Meenaghan, 2006; Snook et al, 2010). Recognising this accrual of knowledge, Cromwell (1991: 291) argues that ‘just as an architect looking at a house notes its functional, technological, and aesthetic qualities, burglars perceive it in terms of its vulnerability to break-in and potential for gain’. Over time burglars develop what Bourke et al (2012) describe as ‘offence scripts’; refined behavioural patterns that reflect the automation of information processing and related decision-making. A number of the offenders regarded themselves as ‘experts’ in burglary and described the knowledge and skill required to successfully burgle a house and avoid being apprehended. It was perceived as an ‘art’ to be able to overcome obstacles and security hardware, to complete the task quietly and methodically, and to remain undetected.

Further supporting the findings from previous research that burglars generate ‘skill and expertise’ from experience (Ibid: 936), the burglars described drawing upon trial and error to hone their abilities:

You try something and if it doesn’t work out then you try something else. I’ve had [the police] say to me “we know you have committed that burglary” - they have no evidence but I have a sort of a signature style. (Interview 14: Age 21)

Expertise has been defined as the ‘manifestation of skills and understanding resulting from the accumulation of a large body of knowledge’ (Chi, 2006: 167). It is clearly related to the accrual of information and an erudite familiarity with the task at hand.

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### ***Excellence in play***

The PHG *play* recognizes that human beings seek out enjoyment in their everyday lives, expressed in a desire to engage in leisure activities, whether structured or not into games or events (Purvis, Ward and Shaw, 2013). For some, the loss of regular play activity clearly contributed towards their lack of fulfillment:

I lost my contract at [football club] because I failed a drug test, I was only 17. I was gutted, but that’s life... When I was a kid I did karate as well, I went to Canada for a world competition - I got my black belt when I was 13. I’ve done sport all my life. Football has been my main one - I’d play football all day everyday if I could.  
(Interview 14: Age 21)

This particular interviewee described once having a promising sporting career but a failed drugs test at the age of 17 signalled the end of his sporting endeavours. He then began burgling houses for money to buy drugs, estimating he’d done 20-30 burglaries and only targeted ‘posh areas’; interestingly focusing on a specific location that was known to have famous sports personalities residing there.

### ***Excellence in work***

The good of *excellence in work* refers to the need of individuals to be ‘meaningfully employed in a role that provides mastery experiences and challenges that are matched to one’s level of functioning’ (Purvis, Ward and Shaw, 2013: 43). Successfully engaging in work activities can be a source of pride, skill development and/or satisfaction. Importantly, this primary human good has both an intrinsic value, in that it is fulfilling in its own right, and an instrumental value whereby accomplishments are fulfilled with the aim of a specific purpose such as a salary increase or a promotion (Ibid.).

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In 1986 Hirschi asserted that ‘the criminal career does not appear to be a career of increasing skill and sophistication but the reverse, a career that starts with little of either and goes downhill from there’ (pp.115-116). This conclusion has come under rising challenge and scrutiny in more recent years and there is now a strong body of evidence to suggest that property offenders, and in particular residential burglars, develop a commitment to burglary akin to a career and demonstrate a breadth of technical skill through ‘professional’ experience (for example, Bennett and Wright, 1984; Cromwell et al, 1991; Nee and Taylor; Nee and Meenaghan, 2006; Wright and Decker, 1994). However, despite the growing body of research that presents the residential burglar as an expert in their ‘trade’ (e.g. Nee and Meenaghan, 2006), there have been no studies to date that have explored the views of residential burglars in relation to their own sense of professionalism and excellence in work. As outlined above, some offenders were quick to assert the knowledge that they had acquired in residential burglary, and this was clearly a source of pride. Somewhat illuminating for this PHG, all of the interviewees were unemployed at the time that they committed the majority of their offences, and many reported leaving secondary school with few or no qualifications, highlighting a lack of social achievement and related criminogenic need (Andrews and Bonta, 2010).

Some burglars zealously described their ability to circumvent sophisticated target hardening measures, and were keen to describe methods that they had developed throughout the course of their criminal career. This involved developing the ability to dismantle double-glazing (windows and patio doors), being resourceful by using tools and equipment found nearby and being able to complete the offence at pace. For most individuals, there was a discernible sense of achievement and satisfaction taken from accomplishing a burglary. It is here that the quotation used to entitle this paper becomes of particular relevance. The particular individual estimated that he had committed more than 300 burglaries, but convicted for just six, clearly alluded to mastery experiences when he asserted:

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I could be an expert on security. I should have been a security consultant because of what I know. There's a guy on the telly, he's an ex-burglar giving advice. I could do that [...] I don't like burglary but because I was good at it I did it. (Interview 12: Age 42).

It would appear that for some burglars the offence was instrumental in furnishing the primary good of knowledge. As such, it is argued that burglars could be substituting the sense of accomplishment and legitimate knowledge with the mastery they have developed in house burglary. It was common for the participants to refer to burglary as 'grafting', thus linguistically implying that burglary is being equated to paid employment. Burglars referred to 'learning the trade' and 'tricks of the trade' and becoming a 'professional'. This was a recurrent theme throughout the interviews and supports the work of Scarr (1973) who claimed that many burglars chose burglary as their 'job' to gain status. One interviewee stated that his 'day job' was burglary, and some perceived it as being akin to other trades:

You learn a lot of tricks of the trade. It's like building, paving, plastering – some can do it faster than others. I'm good with my hands. (Interview 10: Age 21).

I don't know how you learn [to burgle]. Your job is what you do and you're good at it – it's the same for me. I've just learnt it. (Interview 14: Age 21).

The same individual went on to refer to the money made from burglary as 'wages'. These findings add weight to an emergent theoretical understanding of residential burglars substituting licit employment with burglary and seeking to become experts in their field. Furthermore, this reverence for professional status impacts upon the approach adopted by residential burglars. Similar findings have been reported by Shover (1971) who found that burglars perceived burglary to be an 'occupation'. A desire to obtain professional status in their 'work' and be regarded as an expert demonstrates that some burglars clearly derived a sense of satisfaction from their offences by being perceived (either by themselves or others)

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as accomplished, skilled and expert. There is a need for more empirical research in this area to ascertain why residential burglars strive for professional status and seek recognition for their skill and expertise via criminal behaviour.

### ***Excellence in agency***

The good of *agency* refers to the desire for individuals to be able to make up their own mind and have a level of independence, free from interference from others. It encompasses ‘the desire human beings have to formulate their own goals and seek ways to realize them in actions and activities of their own choice, and accommodates an adult’s need for autonomy, self-directedness, personal power, control and mastery’ (Purvis, Ward and Shaw, 2013: 43). The self-directive nature of burglary provides for freedom and agency by enabling the offender to self-govern when and how they access funds. Burglars also achieve autonomy through the finances that they gain. In a reversal of this, a lack of agency came from not having paid employment and resulting financial independence. For example, for one burglar gaining employment was instrumental to his rehabilitation and going straight because it provided him with agency and autonomy:

I don’t want to go back to jail, I’ve got two kids. I just want the best for them and just want to be there for them. I don’t want to be going in and out of jail [...] The main thing for me now is getting a job [...] I don’t want to go out and burgle or commit any crimes. All I need to do is keep my head high and look for work now; sometime soon I will get work.

The individual here is reflecting on and asserting his need for financial independence through meaningful employment in order to provide for his two children.

However, the pursuit of agency through burglary is in conflict with the constant threat of incarceration and the denial of liberty. To rectify this, burglars often see prison as an



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‘occupational hazard’; an inescapable by-product of the criminal career. The dissonance between the agency offered by burglary and the continuing threat of imprisonment is an obvious target for rehabilitation work.

### *Inner peace*

The PHG of *inner peace* refers to ‘emotional self-regulation’, the ability to ‘achieve a state of emotional balance’, and ‘the capacity to manage aversive emotions (Purvis, Ward and Shaw, 2013: 43). The individuals in the present study were found to employ strategies of moral relativism to juxtapose their offence with that of others in an attempt to make it appear less serious. Through the development of complex moral codes burglars are able to navigate cognitive dissonance and dampen internal conflicts (Author, 2014). For example, using the neutralization technique ‘denial of victim’ some participants asserted that the victims they targeted had ample wealth and so this justified their criminal behavior:

I got nicked up in ‘Affluent Area’<sup>5</sup> because I used to think they were rich and I was poor and to me that justified it. I didn’t feel as bad, they have millions anyway.

(Interview 14: Age 21)

I would go for richer houses. I don’t do council ... When I said that to my Probation Officer she said I was trying to justify what I was doing, but that’s the way I see it.

(Interview 17: Age 39)

In a similar vein, the participants were unified in their condemnation of other burglars who targeted homes in which there were elderly residents:

I do tend to stay away from the old people’s houses. It’s the elderly isn’t it, I wouldn’t do that. (Interview 12: Age 42)

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I went in a house once and an old woman was up in her bed. I felt like a tramp, I’ve never felt so bad in all my life. I just walked down stairs and shut the door behind me. I never took anything. Seeing her there it made me feel horrible. (Interview 17: Age 39)

Sykes and Matza (1957: 665) outlined that offenders ‘often draw a sharp line between those who can be victimized and those who cannot’ and that certain social groups are not considered ‘fair game’. In the present study, the elderly were considered to be ‘off limits’ to the majority of domestic burglars.

Such codes of practice that burglars apply in order to justify their actions can be interpreted as an attempt to delimit the negative impact on their inner peace and happiness. Through a process of ‘self-exoneration’ (Wortley, 1986: 21) or ‘moral self-transcendence’ (Katz, 1988: 10), offenders attempt to convince themselves that they are in fact relatively moral. This enables them to continue offending without having to re-evaluate their perception of themselves and disturb their inner peace. Again this presents a clear opportunity for rehabilitation work; by harnessing the discord between partaking in criminal activity and the desire to absolve oneself of guilt, rehabilitative work can unpick these tensions and assist the individual to resolve them.

### ***Relatedness***

The primary good of relatedness refers to:

[T]he ‘close, caring, mutual relationships that adults establish with an intimate partner, family members, and close friends. The activities that constitute the good of relatedness include personal disclosure, communication, support, sexual activity, physical contact, honesty, spending time together, sharing interests, mutual emotional caring, and equality, just to name a few (Purvis, Ward and Shaw, 2013: 44).

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In terms of 'relatedness' it is well versed through theories such as differential association that established criminals tend to consort with procriminal companions (Andrews and Bonta, 2010) that serves to promote the transmission of values that are favourable to violation of the law (Sutherland, 1947). A number of the participants described how friendships were forged with criminal associates from an early age and how this provided an environment conducive to motivating, justifying and enjoying criminal activities. But it is important to remember that individuals have agency and criminal behavior is not inevitable, as one interviewee stated:

I started going about with different sorts of people because all my friends where working in the day. That's how it really started. I don't think it was the people that I had met - everyone makes their own choices and I knew [what] I was doing [...] was wrong. I was enjoying it and it ended up being my life. (Interview 14: Age 21).

### *Pleasure*

Pleasure in the GLM refers to 'hedonic pleasure seeking, which is essentially healthy self-indulgence and gratification' (Purvis, Ward and Shaw, 2013: 44). The participants in the present study revealed many instances where this good in particular was being fulfilled through criminal behavior and the resulting financial gain. For some, the proceeds of burglary facilitated an indulgent lifestyle usually characterized by expensive clothes, recreational drugs and alcohol and an autonomous existence free from the constraints of routine and repetitive labour. Findings from ethnographic studies have largely concluded that the majority of burglars are driven by material profit (Cromwell et al., 1991; Maguire and Bennett, 1982; Reppetto, 1974). As outlined above, obtaining money, and quickly, was the self-reported primary motivation for all of the burglars in this study except one. As one offender attested; 'everyone wants a house and a car, you're always chasing the dream' (Interview 12: Age 42) inferring the similarity of offenders with the majority of society, for

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most of the burglars, they were looking for a lifestyle that transcended the mundanity of the everyday humdrum.

Aside from subsistence, the money was used for a variety of different purposes but a prominent one exposted was to support a modus vivendi that was otherwise beyond the individual's means. Katz (1988) has previously outlined how criminality can be seductive in its capacity to provide offenders with a means of 'self transcendence' by which they can overcome the tedious routines of everyday life. The days merged into one continuous blur for some of the burglars in the present study, punctured only by the highs of illicit drug taking, or numbed by excessive alcohol use. The absence of sensory stimulation propagated a thirst for hedonic pleasures satiated only by criminal activity and its spoils. The desire for money for those participants was to maintain what was described as a 'fast', 'expensive', 'partying' lifestyle that could not be sustained through legitimate means, inferring a self-perception of relative deprivation rather than absolute. Money generated by burglary was used to buy 'nice clothes', 'new trainers' or to spend on 'fashion':

I did it for the money, the lifestyle. To buy alcohol, go to parties, clubbing. Nothing else.  
(Interview 21: Age 21)

Money; I needed it for everything - clothes, beer, just my lifestyle really. (Interview 9: Age 24)

Really it's all for a party life, they [burglars] can stay in different hotels every night of the week. It's a celebrity life, that's what it feels like when you are doing it. Sometimes you can go out all week and won't make any money but other times you can go into someone's house and find two or three grand in a draw or something, a safe in a bedroom [...] the age range of burglars is 18-21 and they're just wanting to live the highlife. (Interview 14: Age 21).

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However, for others it wasn't the proceeds of burglary that provided exhilaration but rather the crime itself. Burglary was experienced as an avenue for exuberance and pleasure seeking, providing a 'buzz' for offenders. They described their 'adrenalin is pumping', their 'heart racing' or they found it 'exciting'. One individual stated: 'I used to get butterflies and it felt good. You never knew what you might find' (Interview 7; Age 25). Another outlined that he got an 'adrenalin rush' from doing burglaries whilst the occupants were in the house. The pursuit of hedonic thrills through transgression was used to counter an otherwise mundane lifestyle characterized by boredom and the banality of unemployment and a lack of prospects. Below a sample of extracts from the interviews evoke the seductive aspects of crime;

I was enjoying [burglary] and it ended up being my life; living the highlife, it's a way of living. (Interview 14: Age 21)

All crime you get a buzz from (Interview 22: mid-twenties)

The lads that I hung around with some of them were on drugs - some of them just got off on doing a burglary (Interview 17)

The 'buzz' derived from finding a suitable target and executing their offence could override material wants, and for some even became 'addictive'. For example, one of the older participants described the habitual nature of foraging for opportunity despite no longer requiring the monetary reward.

I got to a point where I had money in my pocket and drugs and would be walking down the street and I would see a house. I wouldn't want anything but I would still go over and burgle the house. I don't know why I did it, just a really bad habit. I got a buzz from doing it, I was addicted to it. [...] Even now when I'm walking down the street I just look at the opportunity [...] around me. (Interview 12: Age 42)

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The same individual went on to describe the adrenaline rush experienced when committing relatively high-risk burglaries when the occupant was at home:

[...] it's better when [the house is] empty but it didn't bother me if they were in bed or not, I just had to be quiet. The adrenaline rush that I used to get when they were in bed was *unreal*.

This suggests criminogenic need related to a lack of prosocial pursuits and recreational activities that provide the individual with a fulfilling outlet.

The remaining categories of goods '*Community*', '*spirituality*' and '*creativity*' do find some salience for residential burglars but were not as explicitly pursued or achieved through the conduct of the participants' criminal activities. For example, Katz (1988: 8) argues that 'as unattractive morally as crime may be, we must appreciate that there is genuine experiential creativity in it as well', and this was reflected in some of the more imaginative or resourceful ways in which burglars would go about committing their crimes. Illustrating a creative performativity, one burglar described how he would wear a high visibility jacket to avoid suspicion: 'people don't look at you if they think you are working. I've known lads to smash a window at a house and people look and just think that you're fixing it' (Interview 14: Age 21). In a similar vein, he described how other burglars would utilise clothing to divert suspicion:

I remember speaking to a man in prison and he used to go out and burgle houses in a suit. If someone is walking down the street in a suit the last thing you're going to think is that they are going to burgle. (Interview 17, Age 21).

The paper now turns to a discussion of how the GLM can be incorporated into case management in order to encourage the fulfilment of primary goods through prosocial and legal means.

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### **The GLM, Case management and desistance**

The Good Lives Model encourages practitioners to focus on educating a broad spectrum of potential rewards that an individual experiences when they commit an offence. This information has direct treatment implications that focus on assisting an offender to identify and recognize the role their criminal behaviour is playing in the fulfillment of PHGs. This leads to the possibility of assisting offenders to secure the primary and secondary goods that are important to them in a prosocial way. The GLM approach to rehabilitation suggests practitioners develop intervention plans, 'good lives plans' (GLP), which help offenders acquire the capabilities to achieve personally meaningful goals (Ward and Fortune, 2013). Essentially, GLPs provide a roadmap for working toward the dual aims of the GLM; enhanced well-being and reduced risk. Importantly, intervention plans are dynamic in that they are refined as treatment progresses and as individuals build strengths and competencies to satisfy primary goods. Willis et al (2003) have outlined a set of overarching guidelines for incorporating the GLM into a treatment program and examples of the process of identifying priority goods through clinical interview can be found in Yates et al (2010). Consistent with the GLM's focus on individual agency, the intervention planning process should be one that is collaborative and in which clients actively participate in setting treatment goals as well as achieving them.

The GLM ultimately has two overarching goals; to enhance well-being and reduce risk of offending (Ward et al, 2012). It is argued that by doing the former, the latter is in part also achieved. Purvis et al. (2013) advance two ways in which risk reduction can occur. First, internal and external capacities needed to achieve a primary good in a socially acceptable and personally fulfilling way, requires identification and nurturing. As they identify by way of an example; 'learning the skills necessary to become a wood carver will make it easier for an offender to develop concentration and emotional regulations skills, thereby reducing impulsivity, a known criminogenic need in sexual offenders'. It is clear that the burglars that participated in this study were fulfilling lifestyle attributes and primary goods through the

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means of residential burglary. This finding opens up important avenues for future rehabilitative work and the pursuit of desistance.

However, consistent with the centrality of agency within the GLM framework, the impetus and commitment for change must come from the individual. This was reinforced by the participants in this study:

It doesn't matter how many people sit there and tell you [...] you can do better but if you don't want to change... You have to want to change yourself or you are never going to change. (Interview 14: Age 21)

[P]eople and thugs my age, they aren't worth talking to really. They can only help themselves if they want to. Its down to them, you can give them advice and help but it's what they do with it after you have given it to them. I think the more support you get the better it is for you (Interviewee 12: Age 47).

In essence, the aim of treatment within the GLM is to assist individuals to obtain primary goods in prosocial and nonharmful ways. Practitioners work with the offender to develop a 'good lives plan' that attends to the fulfilment of primary goods, overcomes flaws, and reduces their risk of recidivism. The GLM focuses, therefore, on developing the capacity, skill and opportunity of the individual to live a fulfilled and meaningful life. In contrast to a predominantly risk based model of offender management that has dominated probation practice in recent years (Andrews and Bonta, 2010; Ward and Fortune, 2013), the GLM acknowledges that offenders need to be sufficiently motivated to desist from crime by having legitimate opportunities to fulfil their primary needs and achieve their goals. It is claimed that it has a 'twin focus'; promoting good lives while also reducing the risk of recidivism (Ward and Brown, 2004). Framing treatment requirements around approach goals has been claimed to be more engaging than focusing on deficits or avoidant goals (Ward and Maruna, 2007).



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The findings from the present study highlight the ways in which a burglar’s self-constructed schema is instrumental in driving, motivating and justifying moral and legal transgressions. As Maruna and Ramsden (2006: 132) have highlighted ‘although the correctional system has become adept at breaking down deviant self-justifications, the system does less well at the more challenging task of helping clients develop new, positive life scripts for themselves’. It is in this respect that the GLM provides a useful framework within which to instigate and maintain the transition to a good life free from crime. Applying the GLM to burglars enables us to understand that they are fulfilling some of these goods through burglary, in a way that other types of crime might not facilitate. In addition to achieving the goods above, burglars employ tactics to delimit the harmful impact on goods such as ‘inner peace’, thus explaining the need for techniques of neutralization. The role of the GLM in offender rehabilitation is to assist the offender to desist from crime ‘by building the competencies needed to achieve personally more fulfilling lives’ (Ward and Fortune, 2013: 29).

## **Conclusion**

Sutherland (1947: 9) asserts that ‘criminal behaviour is an expression of general needs and values [but] it is not explained by those general needs and values since non-criminal behaviour is an expression of the same needs and values.’ This supports the GLM that starts with the foundational position that criminals are no different to law-abiding citizens in regard to their primary needs, but that they have, for one reason or another, sought to fulfill them with illicit activities. Whilst further work is required to address the etiological drivers of residential burglary, there is promise in the GLM as a framework for rehabilitation for this particular cohort of offenders. By examining residential burglary through the core concepts and principles of GLM, it becomes clear that rehabilitative efforts should focus on developing the capacity, skill and opportunity of the individual to live a fulfilled and meaningful life. Furthermore, a fruitful direction for this strengths-based model is its ability to challenge the authenticity, or at least the temporality, of the goods burglars accumulate through their offences. By illustrating that burglars are fulfilling a number of lifestyle deficits when

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committing residential burglary, the empirical findings provide vital indicators for desistance programs.

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