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Analysis of Criminal Thinking

Lăcrămioara BĂLAN [1]

[1] Lecturer PHD Stefan cel Mare University from Suceava, Faculty of Law and Administrative Sciences, Department of Law and Administrative Sciences, lacramioara.balan@usm.ro
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Abstract: *Responsible individuals lead a lifestyle characterized by professional activity, fulfilling their obligations, and being considerate to society. For what they achieve, they gain auto-respect and others respect them. Criminal urges arise and usually disappear in the absence of a conscious choice from the individuals. A thought about an act that poses a social danger is eliminated because it does not fit their views of life. For a criminal, though, extreme anger, rage, and revenge are automatic responses to things not working in his life.*

Keywords: *criminal thinking patterns, motor and mental hyperkinesia, the fear of death, chronically angry, criminal pride, avoiding defeat.*

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Criminal thinking patterns

Criminality is a social fact that affects the interests of society, therefore it is necessary to identify, analyze, and explain the conditions and circumstances that determine or facilitate the engagement in a behavior considered abnormal or immoral by most people.

Responsible persons lead a lifestyle that includes labor and the completion of tasks. They display consideration for their peers. They display self-esteem and have respect for others for their accomplishments. Criminal urges arise and usually disappear in the absence of a conscious choice from the individuals. A thought about an act that poses a social danger is eliminated because it does not fit their views of life. For a criminal, though, extreme anger, rage, and revenge are automatic responses to things not working in his life.

Energy

The offender is extremely energetic. From early childhood, according to parents' and teachers' reports, he shows higher motor activity than the average youngster. When parents or teachers restrict the physical activities of a delinquent child, he reimburses by becoming tremendously active mentally. A delinquent child is most commonly hyperactive both mentally and physically.

In adulthood, his thinking is still fast, continuous, and intense, and as time passes, the mental flow gets more organized into illusions and patterned designs, the complexity of the "modus operandi" grows, as well as the sphere of criminality.

The criminal is a sprinter and not a marathon runner. As he ages, his intensity is amazing (Howitt, 2018).

Although the criminal has immense physical and mental energy, he does not share the range of activities associated with rational living.

Criminals tend to get tired when they encounter circumstances when they must do things they do not want to do. If, however, they could act according to their desires, their intensiveness immediately becomes present and noticeable, and even continues after the job is done. The emotional energy reservoir seems almost limitless.

Fear

The criminal's fears are persistent, intense, and "pervasive" throughout his entire life.

Fear is so present and ubiquitous, even from a young age, that it seems almost all experiences are closely related to it. Fears measured in

"minutes of fear per day", related to the possibility of being caught for a particular offense are the most numerous. Apart from these, there are two main categories: fear of harm or death and angst of failure or insufficiency.

Criminals profoundly and permanently fear death. They go through life as if there were no tomorrow.

Their anxiety about dying is so strong that they consider as threats a great variety of things coming from more or less viable sources. They may fear water, heights, and natural phenomena such as lightning, bugs, or enclosed spaces. Some criminals may even fear driving cars.

In close connection to the fears mentioned above are concerns of illness and physical pain. Criminals tend to avoid medical doctors. When something is physically wrong with him, the criminal becomes frightened to a much greater extent than the actual severity of the illness. Many offenders believe that being disabled or disfigured is worse than death. This fear of harm is so strong in some situations that it prevents them from carrying out normal everyday acts.

Quite commonly they also fear darkness. Some criminals, starting from childhood, show various levels of anxiety regarding supernatural beings, such as phantoms, spirits, or monsters, even leaving the lights on while sleeping at night. An important amount of these anguishes tend to last beyond childhood and it is very interesting that they exclude some crimes because of these fears.

The type of fear that is the least tolerated is the fear of being judged by people or about certain events. There is an enormous fear of being worthless forever.

The offender displays a high level of sensitivity in defining others' attitudes towards him. Wherever they find themselves, they are susceptible to what others think; fearing whatever might threaten their image of self-worth.

The offender is disturbed by things out of his control and sees the experiences that lack intensity and do not boost his emotions or energy as compromises.

Another great fear is the fear of the "zero-state". The "zero-state" represents the lowest possible level that can be reached in terms of self-image. This particular state makes it impossible for him to function, with the strongest effect compared to other fears. It is an all-encompassing state of mind, leading the criminal to think he has been completely unsuccessful, experiencing a sense of worthlessness, hopelessness, and uselessness (Yochelson & Samenow, 2004).

The "zero state" is characterized by three main facts: certainty about the lack of value, a strong belief that everybody sees him as worthless, and permanency, in which the criminal is, convinced that things will stay the same.

In such moments, the anxiety escalates to extreme levels. At some point, it seems to him as though there is no escape, and he cannot fathom that tomorrow could bring any relief.

The criminal thinks that this certain state is permanent, making it almost unbearable for him. The "zero-state", nevertheless, does not lead to suicidal intentions unless he sees himself as a bad person, as well as a worthless one.

Anger

One of the most common human emotions is anger. Offenders experience anger frequently and intensively. This affects them alongside others.

The offender is constantly angry - even while walking down the road. Anger regularly simmers inside the criminal even if there are times when it becomes visible in the outside.

The offender responds with anger to whatever does not meet his wishes. Verbal expression can range from sarcasm to intense anger.

When he has something planned, he does not accept anything interfering. If someone introduces a deterrent, he becomes angry, although he may not show it. The offender may even feign anger if it will help him achieve his goal. If, however, he is not taken seriously, then the anger shown to persuade develops into a potentially dangerous state.

The criminal reacts with anger in a wide variety of cases. The criminal gets rid of people to make his own way. Attacks and attempted intimidation occur anywhere - at home, at school, with friends, and at work. When anger does not solve anything and the criminal does not succeed in doing what he planned, he might enter into a "zero state".

The only way to avoid entering a "zero state" is to try to regain authority.

The criminal understands that anger impairs his effectiveness and increases the level of the risks involved. Therefore, when committing the crime, he plans it meticulously and keeps his emotions in check to minimize the impact of his rage.

Rage reactions are prominent when the criminal experiences boredom. If they are deprived of the excitement that gives meaning to their

life, it builds frustration and a sense of annoyance which can trigger intense emotional responses.

He craves excitement and a display of power. Eventually, anyone who "crosses the path" of the criminal can become a target for his anger. In fact, the criminal's desire for intense emotion is so deeply ingrained in him that he becomes consumed by it, constantly seeking new emotions and experiences. Living without this constant rush of heightened feelings feels like a sacrifice he is unwilling to make.

Pride

In its broadest sense, pride is a mindset experienced by someone who has accomplished something significant through sustained efforts, typically hard work and, perhaps ability.

Criminal pride is an inflated sense of self-importance. It's the idea that one is superior to others, even if it is clear one is not. This sense of pride manifests itself throughout the life of the criminal in every aspect. As a child, they display an attitude of being "above" everyone else, dismissing household chores as beneath them. At school they feel entitled, believing they are better than their peers and thus exempt from responsibility. In the workplace, they make demands that exceed their actual skills and qualifications.

They may find working jobs beneath them, stating that jobs are for "suckers" and „slaves", or they may consider they are "above" certain types of employment.

Criminal pride is rooted in the desire to take what one wants, outwit others, and emerge victorious, regardless of the cost. For such a person, any role other than the one at the top is seen as beneath them - nothing short of extraordinary will do. The criminal will stop at nothing to maintain the lifestyle they believe they're entitled to, even if it means living above their means. They must have the largest apartment, no matter how astronomical the rent or how burdensome the cost. Often, they manage to maintain this lavish facade, finding ways to live according to their desires, rather than their actual resources. The offender prides himself on his "modus operandi" in crime, which is an indicator of the "success" of his crimes (Howitt, 2018).

Pride in the long run only promotes crime. This is often not noticeable and thus, the criminal may appear as being quite modest.

Despite its outward humility, criminal pride is steadfast, anchored in a self-crafted image of strength and complete self-determination. This unyielding posture is upheld in the face of adversity, remaining intact even amid the hostile or punitive judgments of others.

This rigidity stems from the deep fear and despair of the "zero state" - the terrifying prospect of becoming nothing. Pride is a state that must be constantly upheld, for to let it slip would mean falling into the abyss of insignificance.

Criminals tend to refuse to submit to any authority or structure because doing so would threaten to erase their identity. They must always be on top, dominating every contest. If a situation isn't inherently competitive, they will turn it into one. For them, winning is not just the goal; it is the means of survival. Maintaining and strengthening this pride is crucial to their relic.

Sex

The criminal child often exhibits a desire to appear older, a tendency that becomes particularly evident in their early sexual behaviors, where power dynamics play a significant role. Even though it may seem unlikely, the delinquent child may seek out sexual experiences and sensual gratification as a form of control. From adolescence onward, many young offenders develop a need to dominate a partner. Their goal is less about intimacy than conquest—achieving control and ownership. Once this objective is realized, however, their interest tends to wane.

Even in long-term relationships, power and control remain central for a criminal. They view their partner as property—something to be maintained and controlled. As long as the relationship aligns with their desires, everything seems to be functioning well. In such relationships, the criminal seeks dominance over even minor decisions. If the partner ever asserts their autonomy or claims any rights, they risk being silenced or removed altogether.

Criminals see themselves as being irresistible to possible sexual partners, believing to be universally esteemed, treasured, and desired sexually. In his mind, anyone who gazes upon him will inevitably be drawn to him, unable to resist his charm.

The offender often gravitates toward older partners, although he does not restrict his sphere of interest by any means to this category. Early on, they seek older partners to project an image of maturity. Later, if this pattern continues, it reflects the desire for a partner who will fulfil his needs. If they encounter a solitary partner with insecurities, and longing for companionship, they may manipulate them into a subservient role, effectively controlling them.

Always number 1

"I wanted nothing less than to always be number one, on top, like a king, to be a man" confesses a criminal. Avoiding defeat is an imperative concern within the mindset of a criminal. Whether in everyday real-life situations or within the realm of fantasy, the need to emerge victorious is a constant.

Aiming for the win, the criminal succeeds imminently in spoiling things for others. Whether they win or lose, criminals show no sportsmanship. In victory, they brag and belittle those who lost. If he does not win, he finds faults in the rules, the arbiters, the location, or the other participants.

Criminals insist on being the dominant voice in a conversation. In fact, they do not seem to understand how to take part in a discussion. Regardless of who they speak with, topics are always viewed from a single perspective and have only one solution. The criminal believes he knows everything and everyone must acknowledge him and recognize his authority. He refuses to take into account other's opinions, aiming to dominate the conversation and to ascertain his own perspective on the matters.

He already considers himself at the top of everything, and therefore there is no need to prove anything to anyone.

The emotional side

The emotions, the "soft side" of the "cold-blooded" criminal reveals itself in various situations in his life.

Almost all criminals display an intense emotional attachment to their mothers, elevating them to an almost sacred status. It has been observed it is common to see tattoos among criminals that either mention the word "mom" or feature a various reference to their mother. The most common answer given by a criminal when asked about the most significant person in his life is, "my mother".

In spite of this, the criminal's deep affection for his mother does not prevent him from continuing a lifestyle that brings her distress and heartbreak. One moment, he may show respect for her, and the next, he may lash out at her verbally or even physically. The mother must not stand in his way and intervene in his intentions. The guardian who was once hurt by an offspring driven by emotions is often honoured by the criminal child only after death (Philbin & Philbin, 2009).

The criminal may be particularly sentimental towards his children. He may leave his household, though his bonds with his offspring usually

stay strong. It is amazing how the criminal cares deeply for his children and displays, at the same time, signs of irresponsibility. Most criminals want their children to grow up to become law-abiding citizens. They brag about a child who excels in school. Nevertheless, even though the criminal claims he will stop at nothing for his offspring, and perhaps truly believes it, his actions ultimately end up harming them due to his irresponsibility.

Many criminals form strong attachments to pets or various animals, sometimes going to extremes to save one.

Criminals may also often be similarly sentimental towards the vulnerable, whether they are babies, children, the elderly, or the physically infirm.

Criminals may also display artistic sensibility in the form of various talents and aptitudes. Some are skilled painters, poets, or writers or they often dabble with music from childhood.

The "soft side" in a criminal, even if it persists over time, is not straightforward functional.

Sentimentality never eradicates underlying criminal patterns of thinking or behavior. In fact, it often contributes to their reinforcement. The acts of generosity, benevolence, aptitudes, or even artistic talents add to his self-image, fostering the belief that he is, at heart, a good person.

Religion

Most criminals are exposed to religious ideas and dogma. While genuine religious sentimentality may arise in their lives, they often end up using religion for self-serving purposes.

Many young delinquents refer to intense representations of hell and live in constant terror of implacable retribution for their crimes. These children often seek to reach a condition of complete purity. They dread that even the smallest mistake could condemn them to eternal damnation in the fiery pit. In an effort to stay "clean", many of them embrace the strictest possible form of religion (Turvey, 2012).

However, the religious beliefs of adult criminals rarely evolve outside the limits of the simplistic patterns they first encountered in childhood. The criminal often fails to develop conceptual thinking.

This being stated, his approach to church and his perspective of God is transforming according to his desires. He may ask God for forgiveness tonight while planning tomorrow's murder (Yochelson & Samenow, 2004).

Going to church represents a therapeutic remedy for the conscience of a criminal.

He may even ask God for forgiveness for a crime he is planning to commit. However, this occurs quite seldom, as the criminal considers whatever he does to serve a higher purpose. He may even ask for God's blessing while planning an offense. Thus, the doctrinal aspect is transitory. Most commonly, the criminal asks for God's help to prevent him from being caught. If he is arrested, he is likely to pray to escape, pledging to change his ways, or he may justify his actions by stating: "It was God's wish". By this, he declines to recognize his incapacity and frustrations. By shifting responsibility to God, he seeks to absolve himself of accountability. Subject to the outcome, God becomes either a scapegoat or a saviour.

Behavioural Inconsistence

The inconsistencies in a criminal's behaviour are glaringly obvious. Contradiction is a standard component of criminal thinking processes.

The contradictions in demeanour and conduct are evident in all aspects of the life of the criminal. For instance, he may deeply adore his mother, yet he may bring her significant anxiety (Howitt, 2018).

One of the main features of the criminal is the dual state: he is both trustworthy and a deceiver. He displays sincere, momentary intentions, which are lost at the expense of the continuous desire for adrenaline and excitement. His honesty is ephemeral due to a series of competing cravings. The desire for "deviation" is downright imperative.

The criminal does not have a consistent view of himself either. He dives from the heights of pride to the abyss of the "zero state". At one moment is all-powerful and better than others and in the next, he is an obvious "nothing" to everyone.

Uniqueness

The criminal thinks his thoughts are unique. His faith in his unicity is a way of overcoming delicate moments in his life.

The criminal's sense of uniqueness is expressed in every aspect of his life. At school, he looks down on his colleagues. He thinks of himself to be the embodiment of every woman's wishes. At work, the criminal believes that while others need guidance and instructions, he is already capable of performing the job better than those already in the role. Overall, the criminal's self-perception consists of an idea of absolute superiority. To consider guidance would mean the diminishing of his unicity and his status. Even help consistent with his objectives may be rejected because he

considers it "advice" and he believes he needs none, convinced that he knows everything (Philbin & Philbin, 2009).

The criminal doesn't just want to be number one in everything, he wants to be unique, and this aspect has wider significance. As he wants nothing less than being number one it leads to the refusal to defer to another individual or system, because that means losing his identity.

Singleness

He lives a private, secret life, a situation that makes him feel unique, powerful, and protected.

From childhood, the criminal shows solitary tendencies by separating himself from the world around him. The young offender's familial ties lack trust, warmth or openness. He is also distant and covert from his peers in school, including in the learning process, and teachers find it difficult to communicate with him. Even when he appears sociable, when he engages in socializing he acts fundamentally different from average youth.

Criminals tend to avoid revealing anything about themselves. Those around them rarely truly know them. Criminals are manipulative and deceitful. They do not disclose their intentions, because it might be an opportunity for them to object or somehow intervene. Moreover, he would feel vulnerable, fearing someone could exploit his exposure. Keeping secrets is crucial for his durability. Beyond the need for secretiveness in his criminal activities, the criminal believes that without secrets, he would be diminished as a person (Turvey, 2012).

Criminals are not warm or tender individuals. They believe that expressing emotions such as care or kindness makes them weak and vulnerable.

The criminal perceive relationships between people as "transactions", in which he tries to give in exchange as little as he can. The world he lives in is divided into what benefits him and what is against him.

Anything that comes between the criminal and his aim - facts or persons – is categorized as "against" the criminal. One individual may fall into a different category – "pro" or "against".

They may have associates, but they never have friends. One can be considered a friend, but only for as long as he is useful to the criminal.

When the criminals get together, they each seek their action. Their association, if any, is primarily based on crime. Exploitation characterizes these relationships that the criminal calls "friendships".

Deception

For the criminal, deception is essential and justified. He practices and develops deceit.

Alongside deceit, chronic lying is prevalent. One of the most common features of a criminal is the deceptive character. Criminals were often perceived as "unable" to tell the truth (Yochelson & Samenow, 2004).

Initially, he lied deliberately, experiencing fear and hesitation. But over time, deceit became second nature. The mindset of the criminal implies the necessity to lie.

Deceipt evolves into a second nature of the criminal, making it difficult to discern between truth and fiction. A lie leads to another and so it is said that lies cover other lies.

The criminal can realize what is right and what is wrong when it comes to laws and morals. He knows the difference between truth and lies, believing that only what is convenient for him at the time actually matters. He does not think of himself as a criminal, despite his offenses, he also does not consider himself a liar, even though deceit is part of his daily routine. In his mind, both crime and lying are simply aspects of life. He lies not out of malice but as a necessary means to promote himself and achieve his goals.

The question that remains unanswered, or perhaps has too many answers, is this: what constitutes the most severe punishment for a criminal? Is it the punishment as a just sanction for the crimes they have committed, or the punishment for their deep-seated behavioural deviations and macabre desires, where their sense of happiness and fulfilment lies in killing? Are they victims in their own right? Should we feel pity or only hatred? The answer depends on your perspective... If you are the sibling of a victim you will have a different answer from that of a parent of a criminal, a psychiatrist, or a priest. Each perspective comes with a distinct interpretation for justice and punishment.

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