

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE



WOULD YOU MEET THE TEENAGER
WHO KILLED YOUR SON?
DAVE DID.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

If you had a chance to meet the person who burgled your house or mugged you, what would you do?

Imagine being able to speak directly to someone who has committed a crime against you. Imagine having the chance to ask those important questions and hear what they have to say for themselves. Imagine being able to tell them the effect the crime has had on you, your life, and your family.

Some people find the idea of meeting or being in contact with the person who committed a crime against them a strange one. But many victims of crime have chosen to meet the criminal through a process called Restorative Justice (RJ).

“For me, restorative justice turned the tables and I don’t feel like a victim any more. I’m in control now.”

Daughter of a murder victim

RJ gives victims a chance to explain to offenders the real impact of their crime, to get answers to their questions, and, sometimes, an apology. It gives victims a voice and the chance to play a part in preventing others from becoming a victim of crime. It can be part of repairing the damage and can help the victim to move on.

RJ also provides a way for offenders to face up to their actions, understand the impact it has had on others and, where possible, make amends. In this way, RJ can help stop offenders from re-offending.

“Restorative justice was my turning point. When I realised what effect my crimes had on other people, I felt ashamed and embarrassed.”

Ex-burglar

HOW IT WORKS

RJ is voluntary for both the victim and offender and only takes place if a trained RJ facilitator decides that it would be safe and suitable.

RJ can be done in different ways. Sometimes it's appropriate for a victim and offender to meet face-to-face, other times they can communicate by passing messages back and forth through a trained facilitator.

The key thing is that it helps both the victim and the offender.

Before a meeting can take place:

- the offender **must** accept responsibility for the crime
- **both** the victim and the offender must be willing to participate
- an RJ facilitator must decide it's safe for both the victim and offender to be involved in the process.

A trained facilitator will prepare both the victim and offender ahead of the meeting and during the meeting will guide the participants in a conversation about the crime and its impact. The facilitator makes sure that both victim and offender get a chance to speak and that the victim is comfortable throughout the meeting.

RJ activities can be used for any offence and can take place at any stage of the justice process. Among others, the police, probation services, community organisations, local authorities and Police and Crime Commissioners all provide RJ services.

The [Restorative Justice Council](#) (an independent charity) is the membership body for restorative practice. They have members across England & Wales and set the national standards for RJ. These standards ensure the safety of those taking part in RJ.

The [Victims' Code](#) explains what support and information victims of crime can expect, from the moment they report a crime to after a trial has finished, and includes an entitlement for all victims of crime to receive information about RJ.

FIND OUT MORE

To find out more about RJ, join the '[What would you do?](#)' debate and watch the stories of victims who **have** met their offender in an RJ conference.

For further information about RJ services in your local area visit www.police.uk to contact your local Police & Crime Commissioner's office or get in touch with the Restorative Justice Council at enquiries@restorativejustice.org.uk

WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/WHATWOULDYOU DO.RJ