WHAT IS RESTORATIVE  
JUSTICE? FREQUENTLY ASKED

**RJ brings those harmed by crime and those responsible for the harm into communication** with each other, enabling everyone affected by a particular incident to play a part in repairing the harm and finding a positive way forward.

RJ offers those harmed by crime an opportunity to be heard, to **ask questions** of the person who has caused the harm, to **explain the impact** that the offence has had on them and to have their say in how the person who has caused the harm can make amends for the harm caused.

RJ has a proven, significant impact in supporting those harmed by crime to move on with their lives after crime. 85% of people harmed who have participated in Restorative Justice would recommend it to others.

For those who have caused the harm, RJ provides an opportunity to **face the consequences** of their actions, **recognise the impact** that their offending behaviour has had on others and where possible, **make amends**.

In this way, RJ has the potential to help rehabilitate and support the harmer in addressing their offending behaviour. It also has the potential to **motivate the harmer to change**, which may prevent further crime happening in the future.



# QUESTIONS

**What happens if I change my mind?**

You can change your mind at any time throughout the process.

**What happens if one party doesn’t want to communicate with the other?**

RJ has to be voluntary for both those who have been harmed by crime and those who have caused the harm; if the other party decides they do not want to communicate with you, our team will talk to you about what other support you might want.

**What if I don’t want to meet face-to-face?** We will arrange another way for you to communicate.

**Will this affect the sentence given to the person who has caused the harm?**

If a case goes to court, then sentencing is always at the discretion of the Judge. RJ is not an alternative to sentencing. The Judge is the only person who can decide on the appropriate sentence for the crime that has been committed.

**If you would like to find out more or speak to the RJ service in West Yorkshire, you can contact us on:**

**Telephone:** 0800 783 1550 (free phone number)

**Email:**

RJWestYorkshire@restorativesolutions.org.uk

HAS CRIME

HAD AN IMPACT ON YOUR LIFE?



**When you’re ready Restorative Justice (RJ) can help**

RJ is a service for anyone who has been affected by crime, whether you have been harmed or you have caused the harm, our service is there to help you move forward.

For more information, call (free) or email us:

**0800 783 1550**

**RJWestYorkshire@restorativesolutions.org.uk**



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HOW CAN

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE HELP ME?

**For some people who have been affected by crime it helps them to explore why the crime happened.**

Evidence shows that most people who take part in a Restorative Justice process come away feeling satisfied, because it has allowed them to have their say and to be heard.

RJ can enable those harmed by crime to move on and to feel less fearful of crime in the future. Plus, by hearing about the impact of their offence, it can allow those who have caused the harm an opportunity to think about what they can do to change.

If you decide you would like to try RJ, when you are ready, the process will provide opportunities for:

* Those harmed by crime to have their voices heard
* Those who have caused the harm to get a greater understanding of the impact of their offence
* Questions to be asked and answered
* Decisions to be made about what will happen in the future

This may help to prevent the same thing happening to someone else.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

**If you would like to find out more, contact us on the number or email provided. A Lead Practitioner from our team will then contact you and arrange to meet with you to talk through what has happened.**

If you feel that you would like to communicate with or meet with the other party, we will try to arrange this.

Both parties have to agree and the person who has caused the harm has to accept responsibility for the harm they have caused, otherwise we can’t move forward with RJ.

Both parties also have to agree how RJ will happen and our Practitioner needs to be sure that everyone involved in the RJ process is doing so for the right reasons.

If the person who has caused the harm accepts responsibility (or pleads guilty if the case is going through the courts) and agrees to engage with the RJ process, the timing of any communication or meeting will be led by the harmed party.

The service is free of charge and is completely confidential and impartial.



# THE MEETING

**If all parties agree that it’s right to arrange a meeting then we will arrange that. Both parties can bring someone with them for support (i.e. a family member or a friend).**

The meeting will be guided by our Practitioner. It will be held in a neutral, safe place and during the meeting everyone will get to have their say about what happened.

If another type of communication is more suitable, we will help with that. That might be by an exchange of letters or by a Practitioner meeting with all parties individually, to pass on what has been said by one party and obtain the response of the other.

Where any further support is needed, the RJ service will provide you with further information.

HOW CAN RJ BE A

POSITIVE EXPERIENCE

FOR HARMERS?

**RJ can be helpful for those who have caused harm because it enables them to understand the impact that their actions have had. It gives them the chance to listen and to answer any questions the person they harmed might have.**

They have an opportunity to make amends for the harm caused and this might include dealing with the issues in their life that led them to commit the crime.

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