

# Restorative justice

[Law](#), [Justice](#)



Other than the conventional Criminal Justice process there is a new way to handle crime called the Restorative Justice program. This program exists only in certain cities throughout the United States. The Restorative Justice program has the purpose to reduce crime. This program has many steps, and during the course of the process has the purpose to set things right between the criminal offender and the people affected by the crime that occurred. A crime committed does harm to many others not just the immediate victim. This paper explains the Restorative Justice Process and identifies how had effects that went beyond harm to the immediate victims in a case studied. Also, reflects how the Restorative Justice Process benefited the victims and offenders. In addition, this paper describes how Restorative Justice Process differs from contemporary criminal justice processes.

### Restorative Justice Process

The Restorative Justice Program process starts with victim support, which supports the victim immediately following the crime with things such as crime scene cleanup and repairs. Volunteers aid the victim throughout the entire process to give support to them the whole time. Restorative Justice Program conferences are usually facilitated by two members and attended by the offenders that committed the crime, all the people harmed by the crime committed and the individual support groups of both the offender and the victim (Ness, 2009).

The offender has to exceptresponsibilityfor his or her action and involvement in the offense. The facilitator keeps the victim informed with what is happening with the investigation. If all parties agrees to a restorative circle,

will meet each other with the facilitators at a central location for convenient of everybody. The victim may or may not wish to attend the restorative circle process (Ness, 2009). There are non-communication processes as well which provides support for the victim, provides victim awareness, and also knowledge to all regarding the restorative communication.

This process provides both short term and long term support to not only the victim, but also the offender. Supporting the people who will be helping the offender turn his or her life around and be a productive member of society (Ness, 2009). In order for offenders to have these options, they have to own up to the crimes they committed. If they do not then they will have to go to the court system and face a judge to answer for the crimes they committed, and the judge will determine their punishment. These punishments can vary from incarceration, rehabilitation centers, and even boot camps (Ness, 2009).

#### Case Studied

On one seemingly normal afternoon, David with another offender, decided to break into Mildred house, and whether or not the residents were present they knocked on doors. They knocked on one door, and as expected there was no answer resulting in the young men choosing this house to burglarize. Upon entry, the two quickly searched the house for items, which are easy to carry and sell. Upon their exit, they left with the loot without regard for the residents or how they felt once they returned to discover the break-in (Ness, 2009).

This case showed not only how the victim harmed or affected by the crime, but also showed how the victim's family had an added burden placed on them because of the crime committed. The victim's daughter and son-in-law made many extra trips across town to check on the wellbeing of their family member. With a busy schedule with their children, the increasing demands was hard on their family. Also, Members of the community were affected by this crime (Ness, 2009). Once news of the break-in spread, members of the community feared for their wellbeing, and safety of their property. Children of the community got scared and feared the bad people (Ness, 2009).

#### Restorative Justice Results

David, one of the offenders, got ordered to pay the victim restitution and agreed to take place in the restorative program and was able to make things right between him and the victim. He successfully completed the program and rejoined his baseball team, went on to attend college, and coach a little league team. David eventually became a facilitator of restorative circles (Ness, 2009). Mildred was able to feel safe in her own home again thanks to her family and support groups through the restorative justice system.

The support groups helped check on her and fix her house back after the break in and her family checked on her on a daily basis. She agreed to meet with David and discuss what happened. The community benefitted by being able to feel safer, and that this will not happen again by the same people (Ness, 2009)

#### Contemporary Criminal Justice Process

In the contemporary criminal system, there would have been a different outcome and the process involved. The contemporary system would have taken the statement from the victim and pursued the people responsible. Once they located the people responsible, they would be arrested, questioned, and sent to trial to answer for what they did.

The criminal justice system would have then sentenced them to what the judge thought was fair. Then people responsible would have served their time and possibly returned to population with an above average chance of going back to jail. Also, the victim would not have received any retribution such as payments for what they took and messed up (Ness, 2009). The restorative justice system allows for a full circle of help for all parties involved and tries to solve the problem of crime one case at a time.

## Conclusion

This paper illustrated what restorative justice does. It provides insight to the entire community about their neighborhoods strengths and weaknesses as a community. It allows offenders to take full responsibility for their actions by paying their debt to the community, and also helps offenders as the victims too. Contemporary justice allows suspects to contest allegations. If a prosecutor can prove guilt, the offender got sentenced and only punished in accordance with the laws.