



REMEDY

Restorative Stories

A Collection of Case Studies and
Reflections VOLUME 9

By Remedy: Restorative Services

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A Collection of Case Studies and Reflections

By **REMEDI: Restorative Services**

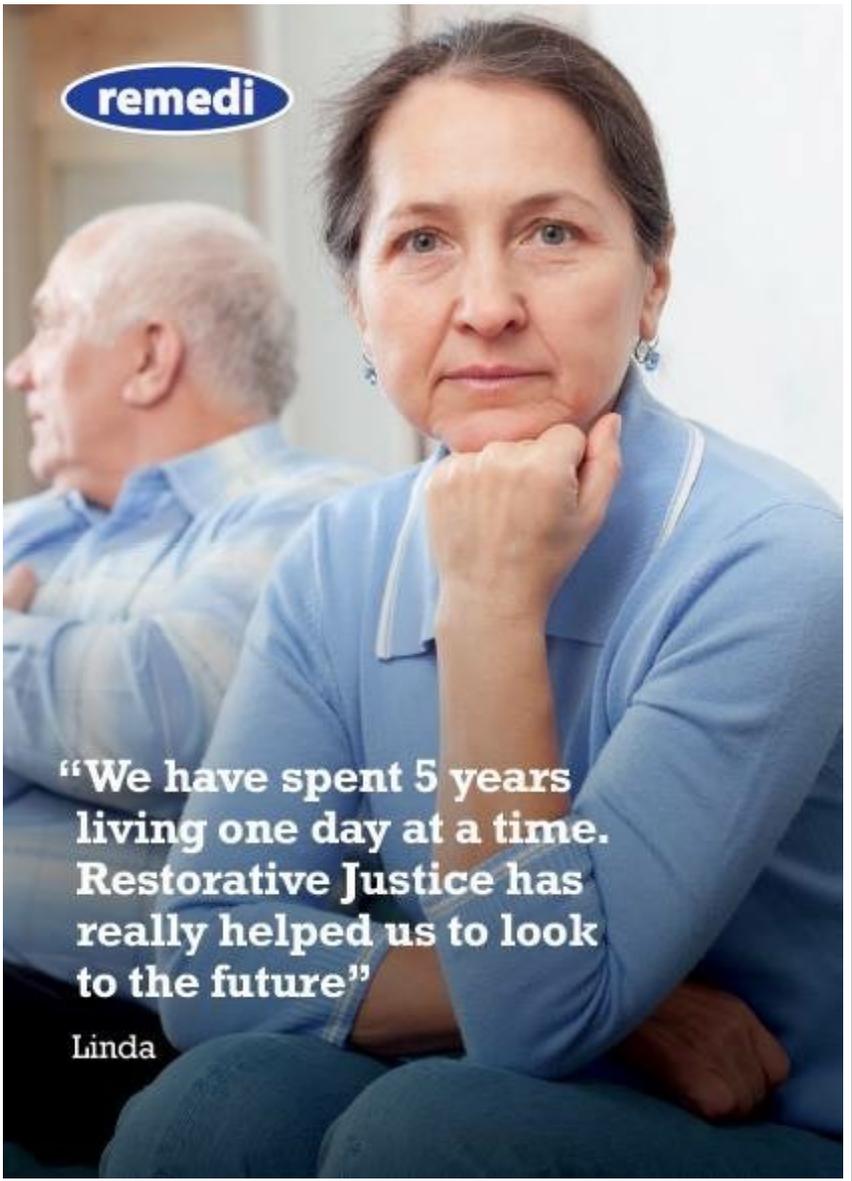
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The purpose of this publication is to gather together reflections drawn from our team of Restorative Practitioners across the UK. Reproduction of any of the contents by documented permission only

Remedi

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www.remediuk.org



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**“We have spent 5 years
living one day at a time.
Restorative Justice has
really helped us to look
to the future”**

Linda

OFFICE:**WEST MIDLANDS**

The offender had committed a Burglary in Birmingham. This offence was admitted at crown court as part of the offender's admittances for the C3 programme. The case involved one offender and one victim in the RJ process.

The case came from a C3 programme officer who was supporting the offender. Three months of preparation were undertaken with the officer, and a direct was facilitated in a police station with two practitioners present.

During preparation, the victim expressed that he personally had experienced minor impacts. He was a minister of a church and wanted to complete the direct to give guidance and forgiveness to the offender. The offender completed numerous preparation sessions, expressing high levels of nerves and guilt, requiring support from the practitioners. The direct meeting was very positive. The offender shed many tears and expressed his remorse. The victim was very kind, asking the offender to forgive himself. The victim spoke of not wanting to minimize impacts of burglary but allowing the offender to know he was personally doing well. The meeting ended with a prayer from the victim for the offender. The victim stated in feedback, 'I really appreciate the RJ method. I think it helps the offender process through these things, giving them an alternative method to just prison. It is a good balance of justice and mercy'. The offender stated, 'he feels huge relief and positive. He stated he was very grateful for the victim, and he will never forget the meeting'. The intense kindness the victim offered, and the sharing of a prayer between them both, was something very powerful and emotional to see.

PRACTIONER/S: Nicole Mclean and Samantha Atkinson

OFFICE:**WEST MIDLANDS**

The offender had committed a Burglary in Birmingham. The victims were not home during the offence. This offence was admitted at crown court as part of the offender's admittances under the C3 programme. 1 offender and 1 victim were involved in the RJ process.

The case came from a C3 programme officer who was supporting the offender. Over 2 months of preparation was undertaken, and a direct was facilitated in a police station with a practitioner and the C3 officer present.

During preparation, the practitioner prepared for the victim for emotion, but she maintained she was unlikely to get emotional. The offender was nervous, but explained he knew what he wished to say to the victim after working with the practitioner and supporting C3 officer.

During the direct meeting, the offender became very nervous, struggling with words. He was assisted by the officer and practitioner. The victim said she could see he was very nervous but sincere. When discussing the impacts on her children and wanting to give the offender a second chance, the victim became visibly emotional, having to take a moments break. In the end, the victim got the answers to her questions and was very reassured by the offender's responses. She said she will go home and tell her children he is sorry. The level of emotion in the meeting stood out to the practitioner, as through preparation the victim had discussed how unlikely emotion was. Too, the offender who knew what he wanted to say, became overwhelmed with emotion and struggled for words, but yet, they both still walked away with positive feedback on how they feel the meeting helped them both, and smiles on their faces.

PRACTITIONER/S: Nicole Mclean

OFFICE:

WEST MIDLANDS

Robbery involving two young offenders and a young victim. The victim and her family wanted to speak to the offenders and their parents to make sure this didn't happen again.

Direct meeting between the victim's family and one of the offender's held at a local police station

During the direct the offender explained that he used to be bullied at his previous school, and this was why he committed the offense; to avoid becoming the victim of bullying again. The two families discussed the support that the offender was receiving to address his behaviour. The victims were glad to hear that he was receiving help from a school counsellor and support from his extended family; and wished him all the best in moving on from the offense.

Both the offender and his mum were very grateful for the opportunity to do restorative justice. The offender said that the victims have must have an 'open heart', as they weren't sure they would be so kind and understanding if the roles were reversed.

PRACTIONER/S: Sam Atkinson and Beth Mercer

OFFICE:**WEST MIDLANDS**

Burglary - community case – The offender had broken into a shared house that was student accommodation. Two of the victims wanted to talk to the offender directly.

Due to Covid the direct meeting was held on Teams between the two victims and the offender

After quite a few preparation sessions a direct meeting completed. The meeting went really well and the offender surprised himself by how well he was able to express his remorse and explain his situation at the time. The victims accepted his apology and took the opportunity to explain the impact the offence had on them; especially the victim who was last to leave the house as she felt a lot of guilt for something that was not her fault. The offender manager was also present on the call and thanked everyone for taking part as it has hopefully helped both sides of the offence.

Feedback:

“We’re happy we’ve taken part. It has helped give us some closure and give the offender a human story. Thank you it was well organised.”- Victims

“This helped prove that I can take on challenges. I have been getting more and more nervous but once the meeting started it all disappeared. Happy I did this; I hope the victims got the answers they needed and this helps them.”- Offender

PRACTITIONER/S: Samantha Atkinson

OFFICE:

WEST MIDLANDS

A fight broke out at school involving 1 boy and 3 other boys, Mum of the victim was really upset by what had happened and wanted to talk to the boy's parent. This case study involves the victim and his Mum, 1 offender and his Mum.

Initial Assessments done over zoom with both parties which followed by a prep over the phone and the direct over the phone by doing a 3 way call.

When I got the referral I started work on it promptly and got the initial assessments done within a couple of days, both parties wanted a direct meeting and the boy wanted to apologise to the victim and his Mum was also keen to participate.

Within 5 days of receiving the referral the direct was completed over the phone, both boys and their Mum's had a conversation to talk about what happened and the offender's Mum was also extremely apologetic. A verbal outcome agreement was discussed between the boys involved to prevent a situation like this occurring again.

This piece of work shows even within the current circumstances directs can be facilitated that doesn't involve a lengthy process which also lead to further directs. All participants had their say and were pleased with the process.

Victim's Mum feedback states, "I think it went great, it was good to hear from the O's Mum and know we are on the same page."

PRACTIONER/S: Shannan Bhandal

OFFICE:

WEST MIDLANDS

Violence against the person, 2 people (neighbours), direct in person.

Initial Assessments completed with victim and offender followed by a direct.

Victim and offender engaged really well, as this was just before the second lock down we were able to go to see both to do their initial assessments. It was clear that they both wanted to get the issue sorted as soon as possible so a direct was followed immediately after.

This piece of work shows not all cases need continuous preparation sessions before a direct, as it was neighbours their issue was minor and they wanted to get things cleared with the goal to move on. The direct went smoothly and both felt it was handled and carried out in a great way and were happy it was not pro-longed.

Offender feedback states, "Thank you, previously I felt like we were going backwards but now I feel we are going forward because of this process".

Victim feedback states, "SB has been supportive and brilliant. Thank you".

PRACTIONER/S: Shannan Bhandal and Naomi Goseley

OFFICE:

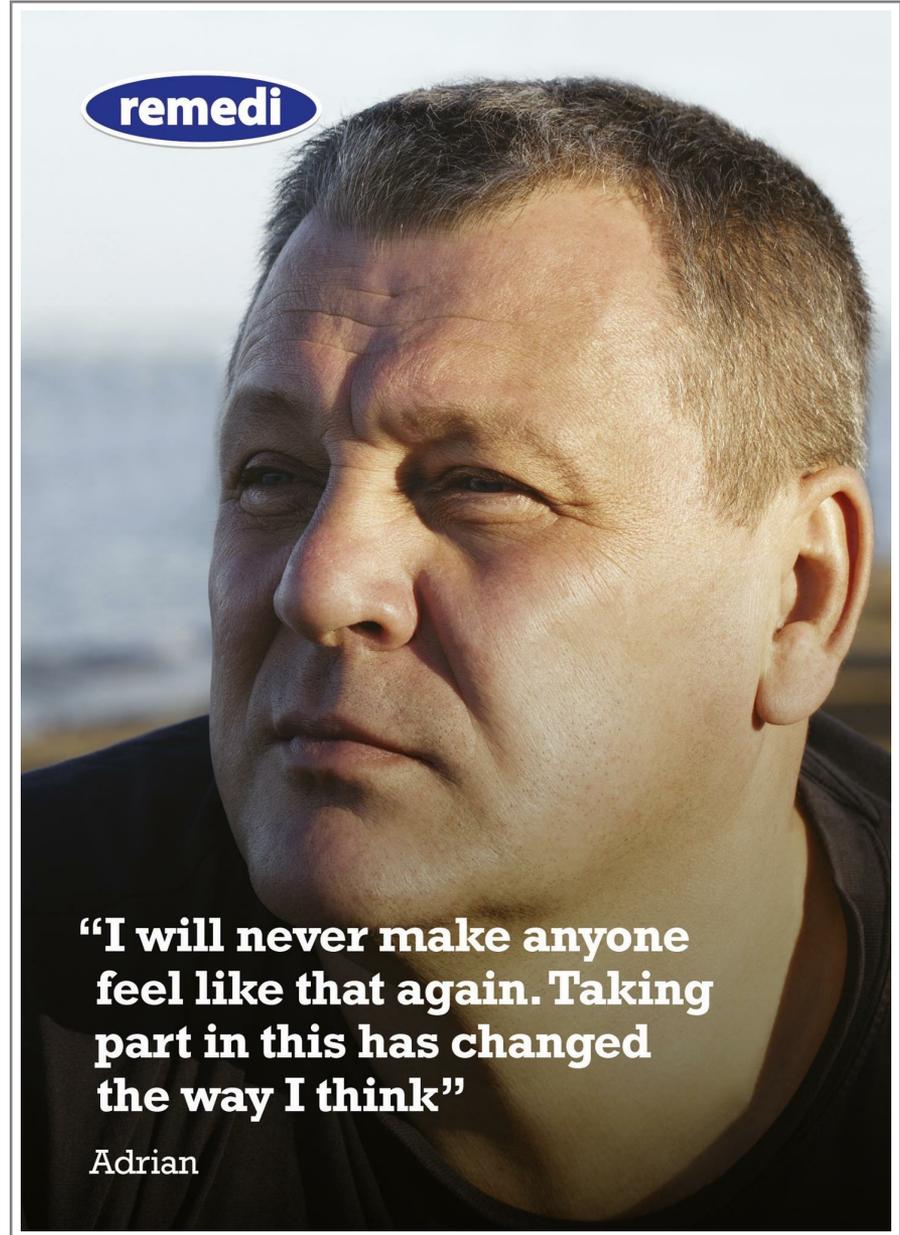
STOCKPORT (YOUTH)

The victim and her friend had just come to Manchester to start university. It was their first night out going for a drink and they were attacked by the two girls and the group of males with them and a bag was stolen.

I spoke with both victims and began working with the two girls who had been charged. The boys will appear in court in February. One of the perpetrators is currently pregnant and did not want to engage in direct but was happy for me to pass on apology and circumstances around the offence.

Impact on victims was significant and the offence(s) came through as robbery despite the assault that also took place. One victim was concussed, the other had a cracked rib. Doing victim awareness with the young person who is currently 6 months pregnant remotely was challenging and she did not engage well at first. On the phone the perpetrator disclosed the circumstances around her life at the time and she gave me permission to share what was going on in her life with victims and an apology. They appreciated being given more context about the offence and that it did help them hearing this. One victim wanted me to tell her they hope she gets the help she needs now. Due to their experiences the perpetrators are on the CEASE programme. Both perpetrators accepted responsibility for what they had done whilst working with me and one has recently written a detailed letter to victims which I will pass on. Upon hearing a letter has been written one of the victims is prepared to speak with her over the telephone.

PRACTIONER/S: Vanessa Mukembo



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**“I will never make anyone
feel like that again. Taking
part in this has changed
the way I think”**

Adrian

OFFICE:

WEST MIDLANDS

The case was a neighbourhood dispute and the victim had reported the offenders for harassment. There was 1 victim and 3 offenders initially referred in.

After assessing the victim and having a lengthy chat about restorative justice, the victim decided that a face-to-face intervention was not for her. However, she wanted to pass a message on to the offenders. This was facilitated and the offenders had their chance to respond to the victim.

The neighbourhood dispute had begun after the offenders were arrested after police had seized multiple cannabis plants from their home. When the offenders returned to the cul-de-sac, they had assumed the victim had “grassed” and made threats that they were “going to cause harassment” to them. Practitioners spoke with the victim who felt that the most appropriate way of communication with the offenders at this point was to not have any contact at all. The victim said that she would like them to contact their neighbourhood community officer if there were any problems in future, and for any messages to be passed through professionals. After assessing the offenders, practitioners updated them with the messages from the victim. They said that they wanted to be civil and are happy with the suggested method of communication. Practitioners updated the victim who was happy with the result of the restorative justice.

PRACTITIONER/S: Natasha Buckham/Beth Mercer

OFFICE:

WEST MIDLANDS

The offence was an assault between two elderly neighbours. The offender had overheard the victim talking about him with other neighbours in regards to his hedge. The offender then assaulted the victim when they crossed paths at the corner shop. The locations included phone calls and the victim's property.

The victim and his wife were visited and an assessment was completed. Both the victim and his wife wanted to have a direct meeting with the offender. They wanted to shake hands and move forwards from the incident.

After completing the assessment with the victim and his wife, it was clear that the incident had shaken them. They were hopeful to meet with the offender to apologise for the conversation he had overheard and hopefully move forwards from the incident. Their expectations were managed as they were made aware that the offender may refuse to take part in the restorative justice process. The offender was called on his mobile the day after the victim's had completed their assessment. Unfortunately, the offender did not want to continue with the restorative justice process. However, he was happy to hear what the victim had to say in a pre-agreed message in case this situation arose. Two indirects were delivered to the offender via verbal shuttle.

PRACTIONER/S: Natasha Buckham

OFFICE:**WEST MIDLANDS**

- Assault with injury
- Victim and his mother and father, offender and his mother

Direct conference via telephone. Outcome agreement drawn up between parents and victim and offender, to stop any issues from happening in the future as the assault had stemmed from a comment on social media.

The victim and offender previously ended their friendship, blocking each other on social media. The parents wanted to know if there were any issues then their children would let them know and it wouldn't escalate again. The victim's mother explained the impact the assault on her son had on her. The offender understood this, apologising and commenting that he hadn't thought about it from a mother's point of view. He also acknowledged the stress he'd put on his own parents.

Feedback from offender: "It opened my eyes to the impact, I was put in the victim's shoes and realise how they felt. I won't ever be doing anything like that again. I want to get my head down and make my parents proud."

Feedback from offender's mother: "It went really well. I'm glad there's an end to it now. It's a weight that's been lifted. The fact we got to meet over WhatsApp video was really reassuring and Vicky and Amanda made us feel at ease."

Feedback from victim and his family: "You're doing a wonderful job it is a really good thing. Thank you for all your help."

PRACTIONER/S: Vicky Jackson/Amanda Priest

OFFICE:

WEST MIDLANDS

- Racial hate crime that had spiralled into a neighbourhood dispute
- 2 victims and 3 offenders
- Birmingham, West Midlands

Direct telephone conference between 5 parties and 2 practitioners. Outcome agreement created between myself and Amanda and the involved victims and offenders.

There had been ongoing issues between the neighbours and the reported hate crime was a small part of it. When completing the initial assessments with victims and offenders, it was evident they all wanted to move on and find a way forward.

5 outcomes were created prior to the direct, which were then talked about point by point in the direct which enabled conversation and harm to be repaired and prevented.

Feedback from the victims: “The whole experience was helped by having two practitioners who were very very good. We couldn't have had the communication, and have it go so calmly, without Vick and Amanda. I'm happy to resolve issues between ourselves now and I understand their point of view. You've both done a good job and stopped the stress.”

Feedback from the offenders: “The process was really good and positive; we are happy it has opened the door for communication as that was never possible before. It has been facilitated really well and we really appreciate your time.”

PRACTITIONER/S: Victoria Jackson and Amanda Townsend

OFFICE:

DERBYSHIRE

A post court referral was received for a theft offence. The offender stole the victim's handbag.

The work completed in this case involved indirect shuttles and a letter exchange. In agreement with the victim, the offender wanted to take time writing a letter to the victim as they wanted it to be truthful and authentic.

This case started with the offender writing a letter to the victim, it was agreed with all parties that this is how the process would start. When they had completed the letter, the offender then heard how the offence has impacted the victim.

The offender found writing the letter to be therapeutic and beneficial as they often avoid their emotions however sitting and writing this letter made them think about it all and how they felt and the impact that it had on the victim.

Once the victim heard the offender's letter, it gave insight into the life the offender was living and reasons as to why the offence had happened.

Feedback from the victim:

"I took part in RJ because of the potential positive impact it could have for myself and the offender." "I appreciated the offer of RJ and the fact that the offender took the time out to write to me."

PRACTIONER/S: Laura Esty

OFFICE:

DERBYSHIRE

This was a Youth Out of Court Disposal case for malicious communication. The Offender had sent threatening and abusive messages to the Victim.

The Victim asked that a direct meeting take place via Zoom. This would enable the Victim to meet the Offender however, they felt it would be less pressure and stress compared to them being in the same room. Preparation work was done with both parties prior to the direct meeting.

The direct meeting took place via Zoom. Initially both parties started the meeting without their cameras on to enable them to feel more comfortable. Both parties were able to talk through what happened and have the opportunity to explain their views as to what happened prior to the incident. The Offender apologised for their behaviour. They spoke about moving forward and both accepted that if they saw each other they would be civil with each other and see if they can repair their relationship. Towards the end of the meeting they both felt comfortable turning their cameras on. After the meeting both parties said that they were really happy as to how the meeting went and that they thought it had gone better than they expected. Both were confident they would be able to move forward and hopefully in time become friends again.

PRACTIONER/S: Suzanne Artuch

OFFICE:

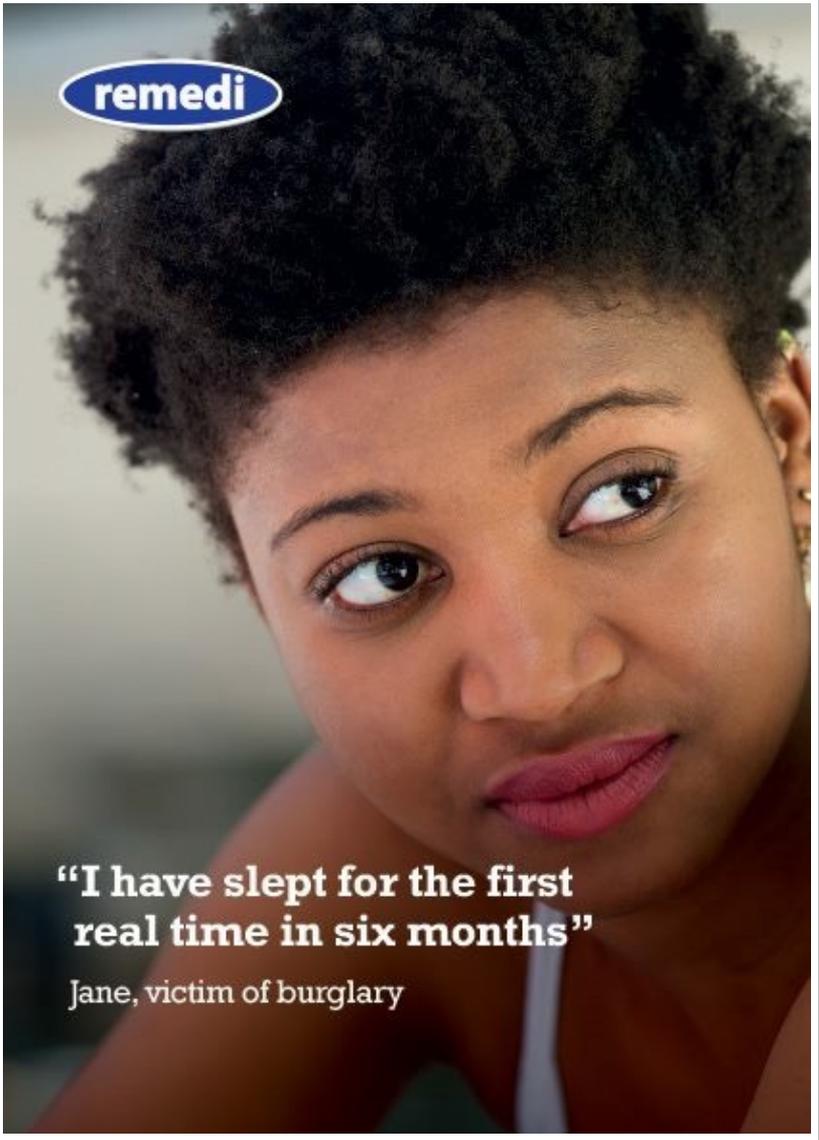
MANCHESTER (Youth)

Young person was sentenced for 6 robberies

I completed 3 VA session with this YP, who decided he did not want to meet with the victims but was happy to write letters to his victims to explain that he was sorry

The young person was given a RO for 6 robberies. When I originally spoke to the young person, he wanted to meet with the victim but unfortunately his parents wouldn't give consent for this. He was however adamant that he wanted to apologise as he felt like his actions didn't define him as a person and truly regretted what he had done. We completed a victim awareness session talking about the impact to the victim and indirect victims and his contributions to the session were amazing. When it came to the letters, he explained he would like my help and support in doing this, we arranged a video call and he managed to write the letter by himself with very little prompts from me. After completing the letter, he explained to me that he felt like a massive weight had been lifted and that he felt proud of himself.

PRACTIONER/S: Stephanie Tighe



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**“I have slept for the first
real time in six months”**

Jane, victim of burglary

OFFICE:

HUMBERSIDE

This case was referred to us from the Police for work under The Together Families Project. The victim and offender were mother and daughter. Daughter was autistic and mum found it difficult to manage her when she got angry and violent. Conflict in the house was frequent and often violent.

Together we discussed what triggered the incidents, how it affected each member of the household. Frank and honest discussions were had regarding how each person felt and what they wanted life in the house to look like. We then worked through the troubled family's workbook over a number of weeks.

As a result of the work we did, the number and severity of incidents drastically fell. Both mum and daughter had an appreciation of each other's feelings. They started acting as a team rather than working against each other. Both were receptive to the project and employed some of the strategies from the project. Daughter understood the impact she was having on everyone in the house when she kicked off and stated she had learned to think before she acted, mum realised that she needed to sometimes take a step back to stop incidents from escalating and revisit the issue later when things had calmed down.

Feedback from mum – "Thank you, the troubled families project has been an amazing help, I'm really pleased. Doing this project has helped me understand that sometimes I need to step back when things start kicking off and remain calm. My daughter has taken on board what you said and she has started to think before she acts. I was elated the other day when things began to escalate between us and I asked her to go to her room and she did, without any argument!"

PRACTIONER/S: Gary Herbert

OFFICE:

HUMBERSIDE

2 People involved in this case, the offence type was robbery. The offender kicked the door in and pointed a gun at the victim (the gun was an imitation). The offender told the victim to empty the till and also put some tobacco in the bag.

The victim wanted to receive a letter, which the offender wrote in prison. The victim had a few questions after the letter and the offender replied by a further letter. The victim had a few final questions which the offender answered and I passed back to the victim.

The victim was very happy with the letters she received and although she felt the process had not helped with all her fear from the incident as feels that may never go away, but she does feel she had piece of mind after engaging in RJ and she can move on.

Due to the pandemic I was unable to meet the offender in person, so Natasha in the prison dealt with this side and she said he was very positive about the process and very happy with the outcome.

I thought this case was great to be able to get a good result for both parties despite the challenges the pandemic presented.

Feedback

Victim: 'I got my questions answered and I feel that now a line can be drawn under it for all involved'

Offender: 'It was positive, because I got to see both sides. I got to see a different perspective and to hear back from them, which was shocking but also eased my mind to get a good response'

PRACTIONER/S: Jamie Russell & Natasha Lacey

OFFICE:

HUMBERSIDE

This case was referred to us from the Police for a Community Resolution, after the offender had been causing harassment towards the victim and her children, assaulting the children on a few occasions and making rude remarks to the family. The victim wished for the intervention in the hope this would all stop.

Both parties agreed they did not want to meet face to face and that they would like this work to be carried out in an indirect manner, we passed communication between all involved, based on what they would like to happen in the future.

Initially the offender stated the children bothered her, claiming what she did was in retaliation to this, but agreed she would like the tension between herself and the family resolved.

The victim described how she was becoming fearful for her children playing out, in case the offender bothered them, but did not feel she wanted to keep them inside due to this. The victim wanted the offender to stay away from her family, so the children could safely play out and that no remarks were made towards them when the offender saw them.

After a discussion with the offender, she agreed that her behaviour towards the family was unacceptable and that she will make efforts to not continue this behaviour, she would just ignore them if she saw them or if she felt they were trying to wind her up. The offender apologised to the victim, and the children for any harm she had caused to them. The victim and her family appreciated the apology and were content that they would not bother the offender if she did not bother them.

This case was an example of how an apology and taking responsibility for actions can help ease the tension and put a stop to ongoing bad feeling between all parties.

PRACTIONER/S: Yasmin Gray

OFFICE:**CHESHIRE**

This case was an ongoing neighbour dispute between two joining neighbours who participated in community mediation. Some of the main issues reported were around the touching of bins, crossing the line on their shared drive and parking issues. One participant felt the other was doing a range of things to purposely cause a nuisance. There had been a significant demand put on local policing with constant reports made.

I carried out multiple sessions over the phone with both participants. We worked through what the issues were for each of them, how it was affecting them and what could be done from each participant to be able to gain an understanding of the others thoughts and feelings. Communication was then done in a safe controlled way through myself as a practitioner.

I believe this work should be celebrated because since both parties participated in mediation there has been no more reports made to the police. Both neighbours worked together to find their own solution on what form of communication suits them best moving forward. One participant expressed that mediation made her feel more empowered and as a result has made her less anxious. The other participant explained how they felt better now they had an outcome and felt happy things were moving on. She also fed back how it was nice to speak to someone who was very friendly, it was all dealt with nicely and there was no sense of blame being passed.

PRACTITIONER/S: Jodie Brunt

OFFICE:

CHESHIRE

The offender was using drugs and socialising with people whom he owed money to. He was stealing pedal bikes for a quick sale. A young victims bike was stolen shortly before Christmas. It was an expensive bike and his only form of transport.

The offender felt embarrassed by his behaviour and wanted to apologise. We contacted the victims mother who agreed to hear his message and indirectly offered one back. She explained that Christmas is already a stressful time and her son had to use all of his money towards replacing the bike. Her message was relayed through Remedi.

The victim told us –‘I've not heard of RJ before but it's a wonderful idea. It's such a good thing for both sides. Victims feel left in the dark and they don't get asked later on and the offender is being held accountable emotionally not just criminally. Would definitely recommend it’. It was the first time the offender had ever heard messages from a few different victims so providing him with a first hand account of the impact of his offending.

PRACTIONER/S: Julie Woolvine

OFFICE:

DERBY (YOUTH)

Attempted robbery of phone on victim (female)

Rang victim to discuss RJ with them and formed a victim impact statement together, this was shared in Victim awareness work with the young person. Young person wrote a letter of apology, which was accepted by the victim.

The RJ process has allowed the victim to express how the offence impacted her, which within the VA sessions, allowed the young person to reflect on his offence. He expressed he had been coerced into committing the robbery – and was told by an elder that he would be hurt if he didn't commit the offence. With consent from appropriate adult the young person chose to include this in his letter of apology, as he wanted the victim to know. The victim told me to thank him for the letter. She said that she feels she can now put the offence past her and move on in a different city.

PRACTITIONER/S: Shannen Sara Merwick

OFFICE:

MANCHESTER

The offender deliberately drove his car at the victim. The victim was knocked over and sustained serious injuries.

I completed an assessment with the offender who said he was nervous, but that he would be willing to engage in direct RJ. The offender gave consent to pass this message across to the victim. The victim was pleased the offender wanted to apologise but he politely declined direct RJ.

Two shuttle messages were passed between the victim and the offender. Although the victim declined the opportunity for direct RJ, he was grateful that the offender has reached out and made that step.

The offender was disappointed that the victim declined RJ, however he was happy with himself that he'd tried to make amends, despite his nerves.

PRACTIONER/S: Grace Phillips



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**“Every victim of every
crime should get the
chance to choose if RJ is
something you want”**

Cathy, victim of arson

Thank you to all of our colleagues and service users

