



# Restorative Prisons

Reflections on  
Practice

Volume 3

By Remedi: Restorative Services

# **Restorative Prisons**

A Collection of Case Studies and Reflections  
on Practice : Prison Based Services

*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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**“I wish I’d had chance  
to do this in my teens. I  
might not have ended  
up here. It changes your  
thinking”**

Robert serving 4yrs

**LOCATION:****HMP Lowdham Grange**

Mentoring support was provided to a prisoner at HMP Lowdham Grange who had recently transferred into the Establishment.

An initial assessment and support plan were completed in collaboration with the prisoner as well as five support sessions. The support sessions focused on improving his well-being, addressing his substance misuse issues and reconnecting with family.

The prisoner engaged positively with the mentoring support offered. After completing his initial assessment, together we outlined a support plan of the areas he felt he needed help with. With his consent, I made referrals to the Substance Misuse team, Offender management Unit, and mental health department. He has begun working with all these departments to help him move forward. He advised that he has recently struggled with his mental health but since working with his mental health worker and our regular phone calls he has been able to share his thoughts and problems which has helped him. He initially struggled to settle on the wing he was moved to but after we discussed his feelings and options he has settled on the wing and has been happy to stay there and thus remained located there. He has been able to reconnect with his brother and stated that through our discussions he was able to look at things from his brothers' point of view and then was able to apologise. At the end of working together he reflected that he found our support invaluable and he would recommend our service to others within the Prison.

**PRACTITIONER/S: Becky Baumber**

**LOCATION:****HMP LOWDHAM GRANGE**

I worked with a service user who was new to the establishment to complete an initial assessment. The service user then completed six support sessions working on the needs identified.

A support plan was completed which included work focusing on communication, challenges, mental health and employment. The service user engaged with support and his main aims were to settle into the prison, feel safe and overcome any challenges he may face, which he recognised to be substances.

I feel the service user was very open and honest throughout the support and enjoyed working with Remedi and having regular phone contact. The service user acknowledged the challenges that he may face whilst in prison recognised the ways to overcome these challenges. The service user also recognised the skills and knowledge needed to be able to communicate when necessary about his mental health and specific needs.

When the final review was completed the service, user scored lower than the initial assessment which highlighted his progress. When going through the evaluation form, he stated that he has enjoyed the support from Remedi and feels that it has helped him settle into the prison. He also explained that he felt most of his support needs had improved.

**PRACTIONER/S: Hollie Orton**

**LOCATION:****HMP LOWDHAM GRANGE**

An initial assessment was conducted with a service user who was new to HMP Lowdham Grange. Initially the assessment outcome was medium risk. However, it soon became clear that this individual had severe needs and needed support around his mental health.

After the assessment, a mentoring assessment and support plan was completed which highlighted specific needs such as communication, learning difficulties, and vulnerable to bullying. Support sessions were facilitated, and work includes money management, relationships, coping with lockdown and working with other agencies such as education and the mental health team.

On completion of the assessment and numerous welfare sessions with this individual it became apparent that the service user was very vulnerable. I decided to assess him as high risk. The service user engaged incredibly well and appears very honest about his difficulties in custody. Various agencies within the establish have been informed and all referrals have been made. The service user is engaging with all the support offered. I am currently supporting with needs around relationships, and how he views his close relationships and what they mean to him.

**PRACTIONER/S: Julie Ashmore**

**LOCATION:****LOWDHAM GRANGE**

Mentoring support provided to a prisoner at HMP Lowdham Grange.

An initial assessment and support plan have been completed working with the service user, as well as eight support sessions. Support sessions have focused on improving their well-being, addressing their substance misuse issues and increasing their self-esteem.

The service user experienced several difficulties during support however, they maintained positive engagement. They have been open about some of the challenges faced and experiences during their life so far. They were able to reflect on areas they wish to change, where things have gone wrong and then put together a plan on how to address this. They have created a daily routine to help get through the day, especially during lockdown in the prison with little time outside. They are embracing exercise, reading, religious beliefs and craft activities to fill time with purposeful activities and positive distractions. Overall, motivation and eagerness to work with Remedi has been fantastic.

**PRACTIONER/S: Becky Baumber**



**LOCATION:****HMP LOWDHAM GRANGE**

A service user was transferred into the prison and completed an initial assessment and was assessed as being high risk. The service user explained they often use violence due to not feeling able to communicate what their needs are and to resolve issues.

A mentoring assessment and support plan were completed which identified low self-esteem and lack of confidence. Over the course of time with regular welfare checks and support sessions the service user did open up. Work was completed around their feelings using the feelings race resource and the relationship window.

The service user initially engaged respectfully and appeared open and honest about the struggles and challenges faced at the prison. The service user was able to link that their relationships are predominately poor, this was done using the relationship window. The service user explained this is the first time they have felt safe at the prison and is also applying for education and work. Remedi have worked closely with professionals in the prison and as a result the service user feels ready and more confident to deal with issues.

**PRACTIONER/S: Julie Ashmore**

**LOCATION: HMP DONCASTER**

Aggravated burglary with intent – dwelling

I first began work with this man in March 2020. When I met him he took no responsibility for his offence. Since then, after lots of challenging discussions, he has now completed the Restorative Choices Programme and is working towards a possible RJ intervention.

When I first assessed this man he refused to take any responsibility for his offence. Throughout my time working with him he has had a few issues in custody which has forced things to be very stop-start. In November he decided he really wanted to give it a go and started working through our in-cell RCP pack over the phone.

We had lots of challenging conversations and the pack took around 7 weeks to complete. The time spent was definitely worth it. In the workbook this man accepted 10/10 responsibility for his crime and now understands that he made the choice on the night of the offence.

In his feedback he stated “Rebecca has shown me that I have choices and there isn’t always only one answer. I am so thankful she phoned me that day and stuck with me the whole time.”

I have sent the official report to his Offender Manager who is over the moon with the progress he has made, so much so we are now discussing a potential RJ intervention with the victim! Very happy with this work and what this man has achieved.

**PRACTIONER/S: Rebecca Fairfax**

**LOCATION: HMP DONCASTER**

The offences which were two burglaries took place in Sheffield and there were two victims involved.

To date the offender with my support has completed the restorative choices programme in-cell via telephone. The offender has also completed indirect restorative justice with one of his victims.

This offender, in particular I believe, has gained a lot from restorative justice and the work he completed to date. At the beginning of our work the offender was particularly remorseful for one particular offence but did not demonstrate as much remorse for the second victim.

Having completed the program the offender was able to see the impact of his actions on both victims equally. When we reached out to the victims for communication it just so happened that the victim which the offender was least expecting to hear from responded with a very uplifting and forgiving letter. The victim thanked the offender for not taking sentimental gifts belonging to their children and acknowledged the pressure the offender was under whilst committing the offence. The offender responded to the victim apologising for his actions and explaining even though he was under pressure his actions were wrong and he would never do it again.

When asked at the end of the programme what he took away the offender stated that 'he could see how his victims feel and why not to do it again,' as well as stating the programme gave him 'the chance to think a lot about his actions.'

**PRACTIONER/S: Christine Dalikeni**



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**“I have been in and out of prison for the last 25 years. This RJ thing was the hardest thing I’ve ever done”**

Tony

**LOCATION: HMP DONCASTER**

Dangerous driving, 1 offender, 3 victims, West Yorkshire.

MO from OS. Completed initial assessment, RCP (in-cell and phone support), referral for RJ.

The O had wanted to explore V work further from the RCP in-cell pack where they showed remorse but wanted to understand more.

Throughout our work I challenged the O discussing wider impacts of their offence on all involved; the impact after the offence etc. The O said they had not considered how far this may have reached, including that the V's had lives before the offence. This impacted the O as they had not considered what was going on for the V at the time of the offence, only the impact the offence had.

Our work continued for multiple weeks, including attempting RJ and co-working the case with another organisation. Unfortunately, this could not go ahead and had to be shut down. We continued the support as this emotionally impacted the O, I supported them to see they had done all they could at the time and we did further victim work by exploring the many reasons people may not take part. This helped the O to see how far they had come since working with me and gaining more of an awareness/ understanding of the impact crimes can have on all involved (feedback sent to DR and NB).

**PRACTITIONER/S: Phillippa Norton.**

**LOCATION: HMP DONCASTER PRISON**

Theft from a vehicle (emergency worker). South Yorkshire. 1 Offender and 1 Victim.

Referral from community to complete assessment with offender. Support offender over the phone with RJ and RCP completion and provided emotional support throughout where they were struggling.

Throughout our engagement the offender disclosed personal experiences of being a victim, highlighting a level of empathy towards their own Victim's in their case. When we found out the victim was interested in RJ the offender was really happy and wanted to write a personal letter. They explained this is one of the offences that has stuck with them as it was theft from an emergency workers vehicle (ambulance). The offender discussed how guilty and embarrassed they felt about the offence and that just because they had an addiction, they knew this was no excuse for what they did.

Telephone support was provided which empowered the offender to complete the letter themselves when initially they did not have the confidence to do so. Upon completing the letter, they sent it to me for me to read asking for feedback. The letter was a truly emotive one which suggested deep remorse and victim empathy; someone who was truly sorry. When I explained I had sent the letter to the community practitioner ready for them to pass to the victim, the offender was happy. This is still an ongoing case (E153); victim has replied, and offender will be receiving update soon.

**PRACTIONER/S: Phillipa Norton & Louise Fretwell.**

**LOCATION:****HMP LOWDHAM GRANGE**

Murder (offender is currently on remand and has not yet been convicted). Received a self-referral from this man for RJ. He wanted to communicate with indirect victims of the offence. This was an elderly couple whose garden the offence took place in.

The offender was contacted via in-cell phone. I completed an assessment and this man was deemed unsuitable for RJ due to being on remand. We agreed that he can complete the in-cell RCP workbook as this will not interfere with his case. We agreed to look at RJ once he has been sentenced in December.

When the offender was originally contacted he was really struggling to come to terms with the fact that the offence was witnessed by an elderly couple and their granddaughter. He wanted to do RJ so he could apologise for what they witnessed. I explained this is not possible until he has been sentenced but he can complete the in-cell RCP programme. He is still in the process of doing this but says without having this work to complete he doesn't know where he would be.

I have contacted him weekly to support him with this and conduct a welfare check. I recently referred him to mental health due to severe anxiety and night terrors and he is now receiving support for this. He stated "I cannot believe how much you have supported me and not judged me for what happened, I am so glad I put the app in because you have really helped me."

**PRACTIONER/S: Rebecca Fairfax**

**LOCATION:****HMP DONCASTER**

The offence for which the offender is currently serving life imprisonment for is conspiracy to murder. The offence took place in Nottingham and there were several co-defendants and two direct victims.

To date the offender had completed the Restorative Choices programme and wishes to complete restorative justice at a later date.

This offender has engaged with Remedi to complete the Restorative Choices programme to a very high standard, identifying not only his direct victims but also the community who have been affected by the offence.

The offender through working on the programme booklet has been able to recognise the daily impact his offence has had on many lives. The offender has explained that the Restorative Choices programme has given him the opportunity to reflect back on why he committed the crime and the neutralisations he made following the offence.

The offender wishes in the future to reach out, to the family of his victims and explains that he thinks every day of the family of his victims and how they must feel.

What has been most impressive to see is the offender's motivation to get others on his wing to engage in the programme by explaining to them what he took from the work he did with Remedi. The offender works tirelessly on the wing to explain to others what the Restorative Choices programme entails and works with staff in Remedi to put forward other offenders who he believes would benefit from the programme just like he did.

**PRACTIONER/S: Christine Dalikeni**



**LOCATION:****HMP DONCASTER**

Arson and Hate Crime.

Referral from POM. Restorative Choices Programme was completed and initially the offender did not want RJ. However, once completed and trust was built, they decided they wanted to consider RJ.

Initially offender wanted to look at the offence for 'awareness', to try to help them to understand their offence and the impact this may have had on the victim. It was clear from the work the offender completed that this offence had a significant impact on them.

There was a long history between victim and offender and a lot leading up to this offence. Upon completion of RCP and the report review, the offender decided, 'I would like to consider a referral for Restorative Justice'. This was something I did not think would be an option, however they decided they trusted the process so far and wanted to see if RJ would be an option.

This case is comprised of two named (potentially other indirect) victims. Due to the history between one of the victim and offender, one of the indirect victims was approached but ended up being the main direct victim by mistake.

Considering RJ was not even an option to us now progressing with this case, I consider this a success with how we work with the men and the trust they put in us/Remedi to deal with the case sensitively, properly, and carefully.

**PRACTIONER/S: Phillippa Norton.**



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**“I have shut off how much pain I caused because I was ashamed by it. I took part in this because I needed to confront it if I’m ever going to try and put my life back together”**

Harry, Assault

*Thank you to all of our colleagues and service users*

