

REMEDI

Restorative Stories

A Collection of Case Studies and
Reflections VOLUME 19

By Remedi: Restorative Services

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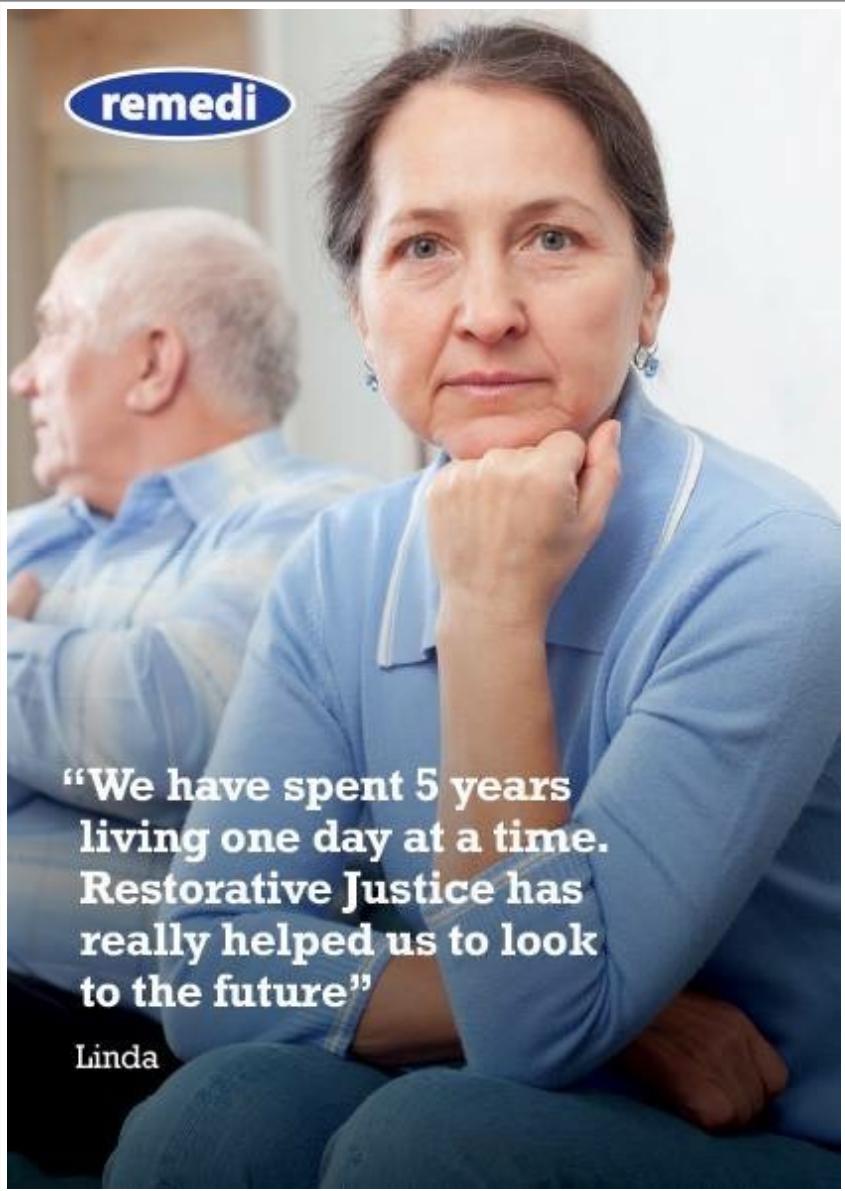
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The purpose of this publication is to gather together reflections drawn from our team of Restorative Practitioners across the UK. Reproduction of any of the contents by documented permission only

Remedi

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

Linda

OFFICE: GREATER MANCHESTER

The offence type for this month's case was an assault with injury against a constable. I've had this case since January due to challenges gaining access to speak with the offender within custody.

The offender was really keen to take part in the RJ process as she felt her time within prison had helped her to reflect on her actions. Because of this she wanted to apologise and explain to victim she was in a better place.

The constable involved wanted to make sure the offender was out of the area the offence happened in as he expressed concerns for her well-being living there. In addition to this, he wanted to explain that he was just doing his job and wanted to make sure she got home safely to prevent her from harming herself.

It was reassuring during prep sessions knowing that each party would answer the questions each other had. Knowing they'd both get what they wanted out of Restorative Justice made me adamant to get the direct done.

Within the direct neither party needed to answer any questions as they felt they got everything from one another's non-interrupted time. The victim was happy to hear she had since moved area and was no longer offending. The offender apologised and expressed that she hasn't and doesn't want to offend anymore.

Hearing both victim and offender wishing each other well at the end of the call was really rewarding, I felt like the case couldn't have closed on a more positive note. Within the offender's evaluation she thanked more for my help and explained how beneficial it was to her to hear the victim's side of things.

PRACTITIONER/S: Megan Gough

A neighbour dispute had arisen between a couple and their older neighbour. The incidents reported to the police had escalated between the two parties over the last three years and had resulted in the older neighbour reporting the couple for noise complaints, and their dog roaming off-leash around the neighbourhood.

The couple wanted direct, face-to-face RJ, but the older neighbour was fearful and preferred the practitioner passing messages. A message was passed from the older neighbour to the couple, and another returned. However, after this, the couple wouldn't compromise on having direct RJ, and opted to discontinue RJ any further.

Whilst the older neighbour was disappointed the couple would not engage any further in RJ, she did still consider the process worthwhile. As it showed she had tried to repair her relationship with her neighbours; and she had been given the chance to speak about her experience with someone who would listen and was supportive. She got emotional at times, and was reassured by having a space to discuss how the event had made her feel, and how she had felt unsafe in her house as a result. She also reported appreciating being signposted for victim support services, which she felt optimistic about. With some reassuring, she had reached out to them for further support before the case was closed, and was waiting to hear back.

PRACTITIONER/S: Gabrielle Mathews

OFFICE:**Greater Manchester**

This offence was an armed robbery of a bank which involved the use of a knife. There were several victims involved and who have been offered RJ – two of whom are engaging with us and are happy to work towards a direct meeting with the offender.

I am currently doing preparation work with the offender and both victims around how the meeting would work, what they would like to say and what they expect the other party to say.

The offender has completed her custodial sentence and has requested RJ through her Community Offender Manager. She would like to use RJ as an opportunity to communicate her remorse to the victims. She wants to apologise to them for her actions, show how she feels about the offence and demonstrate that she has turned her life around and is looking forward to living the rest of her life free of offending-behaviour.

This case stands out to me because the offence was committed in 2016 and despite the fact the offender has now completed her custodial sentence, she is keen to do RJ for the benefit of the victims that were harmed by her offence.

The victims are engaging in the process and are looking forward to meeting with the offender to discuss the offence and to enable both parties to move forwards.

PRACTITIONER/S: Sophie Nelson

OFFICE:**Greater Manchester**

Victim was assaulted in a shop after being thought to have stolen when leaving the shop. His mother was present for the assault. The victim (15 years old) sustained a dislocated shoulder and continues to struggle with mental health as a result of the offence.

I met the victim and his mother in person on multiple occasions with the support of an interpreter. This allowed them to talk freely about the impacts of the offence. I researched support for the family as normal routes of support for them are not readily accessible due to language barriers.

Throughout my work with the family, they have given me feedback of how grateful they are for my help. They initially felt that RJ wasn't for them but then changed their minds. As I worked with them, they began to trust me and opened up. The victim expressed that he just wanted to keep his mother safe. They decided that they would go ahead with RJ, and agreed to a shuttle message for the offender.

We weren't able to proceed with RJ in this case, but I was able to signpost the family and find them appropriate support given the language barrier. The mother was very surprised that this Arabic speaking charity is in Manchester. I showed her how to translate the website and she was very happy.

When first given this case, I was a bit apprehensive due to the need of an interpreter but I am quite proud of myself for how I have navigated this and been able to give the family the support they need.

PRACTITIONER/S: Laurel Halliwell

OFFICE:**Greater Manchester**

Victim's home was vandalised, and threats of violence made against him. The victim and their family were all in the property at the time of the vandalism, the offender had thrown a brick through the downstairs living room window. The victim and his family are currently still experiencing anxiety.

I have had multiple contacts with the victim, enabling and building the victim's confidence to participate in a direct RJ. Initially the victim had serious concerns regarding a face-to-face RJ, however after further contact, the victim gained the confidence he needed to proceed.

The victim is indirectly related to the offender, and the issue that led to the offence is extremely challenging. The victim and offender's nephew was recently murdered, this tragedy caused a serious family break down, which in turn led to the offence.

Both parties were initially doubtful whether RJ could help, however the victim and offender are now posed and almost fully prepared for the direct RJ meeting, after regular contact and support, again both parties voicing their gratitude for the service Remedi has provided.

The murder trial has just begun, adding further additional stress to the victim and offender, both parties are hopeful that a positive outcome can be achieved through RJ, which will enable the family to unite in their distress. Both the victim and offender have stated they would not have been able move forward without RJ process.

PRACTITIONER/S: Dean Othman

OFFICE: **West Midlands**

Burglary, 1 offender and 1 victim.

Work completed with both victim and offender, the victim had questions for the offender which were answered through an indirect shuttle process.

The victim had many questions for the offender, such as was his house targeted? Did he see his children or him before? Will he be back? The victim felt extremely effected by the burglary and needed his questions answered. The offender was eager to answer any questions the victim had and provided an answer to all questions. The answers were then delivered back to the victim through a shuttle process.

This piece of work shows shuttle communication is also affective, the offender's feedback states, "RJ makes you think about the Victims and how their feeling and this is the first time I've had to think about it", the victim's feedback states "I am happy I got answers to my questions and I am now able to move on". This feedback shows how impactful the shuttle communication has been for both parties.

PRACTITIONER/S: **Shannan Bhandal**

OFFICE:**South Yorkshire**

Young male first time offender, taken to Rotherham A&E by police because of injuries after being arrested for drunk and disorderly. He spat at three female nurses attempting to assess and treat him.

Sentenced for assault of three emergency workers, with 12-month Community Order and unpaid work.

Offender volunteered for indirect restorative justice process with all three nurses and member of public following a victim awareness session with REMEDI practitioner. He wrote a letter of apology and explanation. This was delivered to all four victims remotely. He received two verbal messages and two letters back.

The offender was very motivated to account for his behaviour and send sincere apologies to the victims. He suffers with mental health problems, exacerbated by the lockdowns and turned to drink to manage his feelings.

Engaging in Restorative Justice strengthened his resolve to give up drink and recommence exercise and boxing. Receiving understanding responses from the three nurses was particularly meaningful to him as his mother was a nurse and he felt ashamed of his behaviour. Despite starting a new job and competitive boxing and lengthy delays in hearing from the nurses, he was eager to see the process through and respond reflectively at each stage.

The three nurses were surprised to hear about Restorative Justice and eager to engage. They experience offending behaviour regularly at work and making the decision to call the police is hard, leaving them with feelings of guilt. To hear directly from the offender about what happened, why, his mental health and how he is getting on subsequently was meaningful for all three nurses. Also having the opportunity to let him know how they felt was significant, particularly for the recently qualified nurse for whom this behaviour is still relatively new.

PRACTITIONER/S: Aglaia Barraclough



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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:**South Yorkshire****Possession of substances**

When we started working together MK was in a hotel and the Responsible Officer was concerned MK was getting back into negative associations and habits. MK eventually chose to stop working with me as MK felt that we had reached a point where they felt comfortable and stable.

When I started working with MK it was a last attempt. The Responsible Officer had not had contact in weeks and wasn't aware of the individuals contact number.

Through our work together MK registered with the Property Shop and moved into temporary, but individual accommodation.

We then worked together to set up direct debits for the property and a direct debit to pay off debt, to increase likelihood of getting a property with the council.

Due to this work & location move MK rekindled more positive associations and began to feel settled, and making habits for MK and their future

During our time working together and MK's more positive attitude MK began engaging with other services, including mental health services. MK then registered with the local doctor and pushed for the mental health support that was needed and got a medication/support review.

PRACTITIONER/S: Emily West

OFFICE:

South Yorkshire

The case surrounds three linked cases of shoplifting for three different shops and the one same offender.

I had completed some victim awareness work with the offender who had then expressed interest in completing some Restorative Justice work with the victims. I contacted all three victims separately and they all agreed to complete direct phone call interventions with the offender.

When conducting the victim awareness work with the offender from the start he expressed his remorse for his actions towards the victims. He spoke in-depth about his situation at the time and how this had impacted his thoughts and feelings that day, and how this led to him committing his offence. He continued to express that he wanted the staff in the stores he was involved with, to know he was sorry and that he was seeking help for his drug addiction.

All victims were very understanding on the offender's circumstances and appreciated his honesty about his drug abuse and believed this was his first step needed in order to make a positive change moving forward.

PRACTITIONER/S: Freya Hindley

OFFICE:

South Yorkshire

Public Order Offence – “I recently lost a grandparent, and was struggling to cope with life, this resulted in me turning to alcohol and my life spiralling out of control. I had been walking through the park, I just flipped, and ended up assaulting an old man.”

Offender attended a victim awareness session after a referral from a probation officer during which he explained how remorseful he was and before I could even start to conduct my session he stated, “I want to write a letter of apology to my victims.”

“I took part in this process as I felt extremely remorseful for my actions that day and should never have acted the way I did. I had been going through a lot. I recently lost my grandfather and had separated from my partner, whom I had children with and was struggling to cope with life in general, so I turned to drink, to which my life spiralled out of control even more. I was walking back through the back when I saw someone who I thought had a camera on his head, which turned out to be a head torch. I ended up being abusive and assaulting one of the neighbours that came to assist.”

Victim stated “Thank you Louise for contacting us. It was a very scary day for us and something that you don’t expect to happen. Myself and my wife were just strolling through the park ,as we do almost every week. I am pleased to receive his letter of apology and do hope he continues to get the support that he needs to move forward. He seemed really genuine from reading his letters and hearing what you had to say.”

PRACTITIONER/S: Louise Fretwell

OFFICE:

South Yorkshire

The offender in this matter was a neighbour of a ‘student’ house where a party was taking place. The offender was angry at the excessive noise and went to the party assaulting party goers and threatening others with a firearm.

The offender went to prison but after undertaking a Remedial course in restorative work, realised the error of his ways and wished to engage in Restorative Justice.

One victim responded emphatically, and this shows the positive impact on both their lives engaging in this restorative process.

From the victim : “**All I really want to do is relate to you. See, when I got the letter from the police telling me about your conviction, I checked out your Facebook page.**

It was weird. I didn't see a violent, drug-fuelled maniac, I saw a man with a lot of love.

A month ago my dad died at 57 years old - alcoholism. He suffered it my entire life, it made him mean, violent.

In a few Facebook pictures I've seen you show more love to your son than I ever saw from my father.

So, I guess, all I really wanted to say, as a son who's seen this story before, for the sake of your son, your wife, for your own sake, please give it a rest with the drugs. Don't live a life in and out of prison. Don't die early.

Be the good man you are without the drugs, be the better man you can be without the drugs, be the loving father you are.

I hope your sentence goes swiftly and I wish you a speedy recovery.”

PRACTITIONER/S: Mark Winrow

OFFICE: **South Yorkshire**

This case involved the offence of theft (shoplifting) from Asda Store, Sheffield in 2018. Committed by a lone female and was observed by security via CCTV.

The offender was referred by CRC for a victim awareness session, which was conducted over the telephone. Offender engaged well and requested Restorative Justice intervention with the victim. Motivated offender referral form sent to RJ hub to create CMS case. Worked with offender to prepare letter of apology.

The offender was using drugs heavily at the time of the offence and felt ashamed, guilty, and embarrassed by their behaviour and is very motivated not to reoffend again and really wanted to apologise.

The victim was happy to receive a letter of apology from the offender. The offender wrote a letter apologising for their behaviour.

Feedback from the victim - **“Receiving the letter of apology has been a positive experience. It's a good thing that the offender realised the impact of their behaviour on others and to realise the effect it has on people's lives. It is nice to hear that the offender has now turned their life around and I hope that they continue to do well in their future.”**

Feedback from the offender – **“I would like to thank the practitioners; Salli and Louise for helping me and making this possible. You have been so nice, supportive and helpful throughout and I am very grateful to have had this chance to say how sorry I am**

PRACTITIONER/S: Salli Goddard

OFFICE: **West Midlands**

This case was referred into Remedi by West Midlands Police. The case type was a conditional caution for a Hate Crime offence; more specifically, homophobic language. The victim involved is a police officer. The offender involved was the person who alerted the emergency services to an assault in her home.

Both the victim and the offender completed an assessment each via WhatsApp. Both parties then attended preparation sessions where the meeting was structured to suit the nature and flow of the conversation. A direct intervention was then completed at Wolverhampton Police Station.

This particular case was unusual as the offender is a professional in her mid-30's who'd never been in trouble with the police before. It was clear that she felt deep remorse and regret for her actions after discussing the offence in her initial assessment. The victim, who is a police officer, was intrigued by the RJ process and stated that after being offered it as an option by a colleague, she jumped at the chance to take part. This was because she found the process intriguing and stated it's unfair that officers are verbally abused when they are just trying to help people. The victim said it was nice to speak with the offender when she was sober and to hear what she had to say, rather than issuing and caution and closing the case. The victim discussed the impact that the offender's words had on her and explained how unfair it feels to be degraded and judged on the way she looks when she had responded to a distress call from the offender herself. Both parties disclosed in their evaluations that the meeting was a very positive experience and they stated they would definitely recommend the process to others.

PRACTITIONER/S: **Natasha Buckham**

OFFICE:**West Midlands**

- Shop theft
- One victim, one offender
- Birmingham

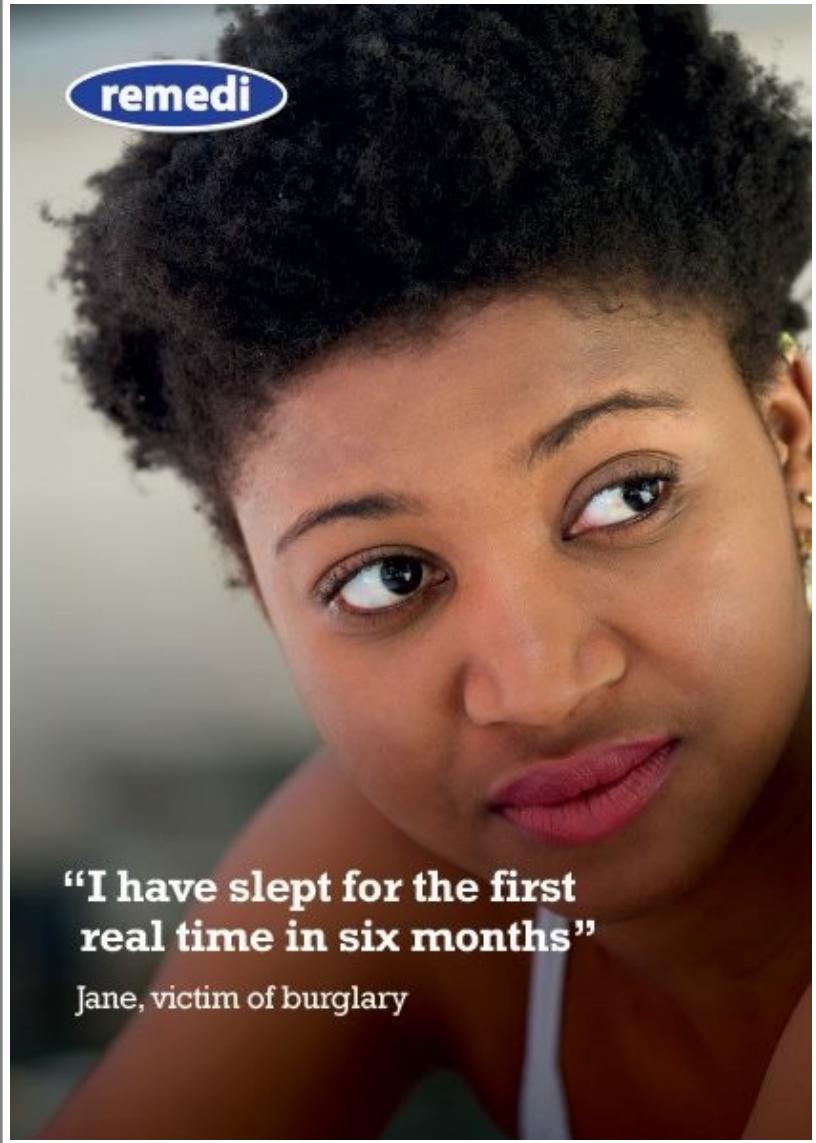
Prep work carried out with offender who wrote a letter to the store manager. She wanted to read this out so she could get all her points across and of course, apologise. Direct completed with parents present.

The direct went extremely well and the victim was pleased to hear that the offender had thought about her actions, and about the wider impact of her actions. The offender, although visibly nervous, gave a full apology for actions and showed remorse and reflection of her actions.

When speaking to the victim after the direct, she stated that she could clearly see the victim was embarrassed about her actions and could tell she'd put a lot of thought into what she wanted to say. The victim stated that the offender was respectful and was pleased that the offender's parents were involved as it's good for them to see their child taking responsibility.

The offender stated that she found the RJ process to be quite scary, but she stated she knew it was the right thing to do. The offender said she felt supported by me and Amanda, and she that she felt safe throughout the process. The offender, along with her parents, agreed that the process has helped the offender know she needs to stand up for herself and say no to things that she knows are wrong.

PRACTITIONER/S: Vicky Jackson



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

Jane, victim of burglary

OFFICE: **West Midlands**

Police Referral- 1 Offender, 1 Victim

- Spoke with both Offender and Victim, completed initial assessment
- Both happy to start RJ process and expressed their concerns and why they think RJ is the best method
- Victim and offender both want to engage in RJ to resolve issues amongst each other
- Indirects passed through emails/phone call

I spoke with both victim and offender. They both had a lot of differences that needed to be worked on so things could be better for both. Victim asked for indirect process as she feels like she needs to have her message sent through to offender. Offender gave a indirect message for victim which made victim feel pleased about RJ, and said she finally thinks offender has realised right from wrong. Both have had the opportunity to communicate through shuttle indirect and have their differences put aside without matters escalating.

PRACTITIONER/S: Zara Ahmed

OFFICE: **HumberSide**

One male offender Threats to kill (Possession offensive weapon in a public place), two male victims.

Victim awareness session referred via Offender Manager at CRC. Workbook sent out to offender, followed up with a telephone session. Session covered subject including thoughts and feelings, acceptance responsibility, and impact on others.

Offender engaged in the session really well and identified how his actions before the event impacted the seriousness of it. Offender has made small changes to his behaviours and how he reacts to situations.

PRACTITIONER/S: **Lindsey**

OFFICE:

Humberside

The offence type was an assault PC. Police were called out to a property where the offender was refusing to leave. Eventually the offender was taken away by the police and paramedics when he lashed out and assaulted the officers.

When I spoke to the offender he was incredibly remorseful about what happened, he could not remember anything about what happened and only found out what he had done when he was told the police. The officer who was assaulted was happy to engage in RJ and receive a letter.

I was very pleased that this case went to RJ as I felt that it would really help the offender with his mental health if he got the chance to apologise to the officer. I scribed the letter for the offender over the phone. Although he did not remember very much about the offence he still wrote a good letter.

The officer was pleased to receive the letter from the offender and it was good to hear he was doing better.

Feedback:

Offender: "I felt really bad about what happened and wanted them to know how sorry I was".

Victim: "It was good to receive the letter and nice to hear that he is trying to fix issues he has been battling against.

PRACTITIONER/S: Jamie Russell

OFFICE:**HumberSide**

The perpetrator was referred to us from our colleague in HMP Humber after he had committed a Burglary. He wanted to engage with RJ after reading the victim impact statement from the couple and feeling great remorse about his actions.

Whilst engaging with us, the perpetrator was focused on helping the victims and wanting to help them feel safe again in their home. He wrote a letter to the victims and was open to any questions they may have had that would help them move on from the incident.

The perpetrator was honest about what led him to offend, but made sure throughout the process he was focused on doing this for the victims and not for himself. He felt great remorse after hearing their victim impact statement and felt strongly about being able to communicate to the victims that he would not come back to their address again. He wanted to apologise for his actions and offer the victims the opportunity for communication. The victims were very pleased to hear that he had wanted to apologise and were happy to learn the steps he is taking to get himself on the right path and limit the chance of him committing anything further again. They were happy to receive the letter from him and appreciated the opportunity to be able to communicate the impact of his actions on themselves.

Due to the restrictions with the pandemic this case was worked by both myself and Natasha, whom was able to speak with the perpetrator in custody. I think this case is a great example of how working well as a team, with our colleagues in prison has really helped us continue to deliver a great RJ service throughout the pandemic.

PRACTITIONER/S: Yasmin Gray and Natasha Lace

OFFICE:**HumberSide**

This case was referred to Remedi by the police. The victim was the recipient of road rage incident and the offender has chased the victim in his vehicle and caused her to stop. An argument ensued and the offender kicked the victim's car causing damage.

I worked restoratively with the victim and the offender. The victim was upset that her car had been damaged and wanted the offender to pay for the damage. I spoke with the offender and ascertained he was willing to pay for the damage which he later did.

The offender initially blamed the victim for the incident stating that he believed she had hit his vehicle then driven off. It later transpired that the victim had not hit his vehicle and there was no damage. We discussed his options at all stages of the incident and he conceded that despite his initial thoughts he could have made different choices which would not have put the victim or himself in danger and he reflected that he had jumped to conclusions and had terrified the victim by his actions. We discussed the impact he had on the victim, how terrified and fearful she was due to him. The offender without being prompted asked that I pass on his apology to the victim and that he would pay for any damage. He later paid the garage direct for the damage. I passed on the offender's apology which had a massive impact on the victim.

Victim feedback:

"I think this has been a really good process, the apology meant more to me than the money (for repairs).

I'm happy with how it's gone, he has put things right and the apology was the icing on the cake, I was not expecting it."

PRACTITIONER/S: Gary Herber

OFFICE: Derbyshire

This case was referred by the Youth Offending Service for an offence of criminal damage and common assault. The offence was between a Grandparent (Victim) and Grandchild (Offender).

Both parties were called to discuss RJ and explore what had happened from their perspectives and what they were hoping to get out of the RJ process. Both parties agreed to a direct meeting via video conference and preparation was undertaken separately beforehand.

When the Offender engaged it was clear that they were remorseful for what had happened and explained there are other issues ongoing. The Offender was able to explain what had happened from their perspective in the direct video call and listened to how the offence had impacted the Victim.

The Offender explained they did find it difficult to open up in the call due to struggling with emotions however, the Victim explained they felt hopeful.

Feedback from the Victim:

“I am very happy and satisfied with the service.”

“You have done and helped more than others have.”

“The work that has been done with us has helped so much, thank you.”

PRACTITIONER/S: Laura Esty

OFFICE: Derbyshire

This case was referred by the Youth Offending Service in respect of an incident of assault and criminal damage. The Victim and Offender were parent and child and both parties were extremely keen for this matter to be dealt with via RJ.

A direct meeting was facilitated between Victim and Offender. This was a lengthy meeting whereby both parties were able to open up and talk about their feelings and talk about the incident, as well as other issues that have been happening in the home.

The meeting was lengthy and it was clear that both parties had a lot that they wanted to discuss. After the meeting both parties explained that they felt the meeting had been really successful and had given them both the opportunity to feel heard and to allow them to agree a new way for them to move forward.

After the meeting I spoke with the Victim who informed me that the Offender has really changed since the meeting and has been the nicest he has ever been to her, even making the Victim dinner for when she gets home from work, which is something that has never been done before.

The parties are continuing to receive support from other agencies but have both said that they feel that after the meeting this has given them a new focus on their relationship.

PRACTITIONER/S: Suzanne Artuch



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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

