



REMEDY

Restorative Stories

A Collection of Case Studies and
Reflections VOLUME 21

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

The Circle, Rockingham Lane, Sheffield, S1 4FW

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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

- Shop theft
- One victim, one offender
- Birmingham

Prep was completed with both victim and offender in order to facilitate a meeting whereby the victim could discuss the impacts and the offender could apologise

The direct meeting went amazingly. In previous prep, the offender had been noticeably shy and embarrassed of her actions. She had written a letter that she wanted to read out to start, offering her apology and explaining she now understands the impacts of her actions. The victim really appreciated this and after the meeting stated that being involved with the process left her with a good feeling. The offender said that completing the meeting lifted a weight off her shoulders, she regretted her actions and felt better for being able to apologise. The offender also bought a beautiful bunch of flowers to give the victim, to which the victim was incredibly grateful for.

PRACTIONER/S: Amanda Townsend

OFFICE:**West Midlands**

This case was referred into Remedi by Birmingham CRC. The case was a burglary offence, and the offender was in custody. The burglary was committed by two offenders, however only one offender was caught and charged. The victim was a female living alone in Birmingham.

After assessing both victim and offender, the victim decided that she did not want to speak to the offender directly, as she didn't want him to see her face. He was able to pass on a letter for her which she accepted.

The victim wanted to hear what the offender had to say via a letter. The offender showed clear remorse and was happy to do this for the victim. In his letter, he apologised for what he did and stated his regret. He explained that he had been drinking and it was an opportunistic offence, and she was not targeted by him. The victim stated that the letter made her feel better and it was nice that the offender was trying to alleviate any anxiety.

PRACTIONER/S: Natasha Buckham

OFFICE:

West Midlands

Stolen goods from the company Offender worked for. Pallets containing £12000 worth of champagne and £8000 worth of whiskey were loaded and taken in a white transit van.

Offender wanted an indirect letter and shuttle. Therefore, we worked together to create a letter of apology. Offender and Victim were constantly updated on the process and spoken to weekly.

This case took longer than hoped to as I was not able to get in contact with the company. However, overall, it made the offender really think about what he had done and gave him the opportunity to take full responsibility and express that in a well-written letter. The offender felt like a weight had been lifted off his shoulder and was more than happy to finally move on with the guilt. In all the prep that I completed with the offender, he engaged well. The victim in this case was the individual that investigated the criminal offence through cameras, he offered to take the letter on behalf of the company and send it over to those whom it would benefit. The company were happy with the letter overall and wished the offender all the best.

PRACTIONER/S: Georgia Snelling

OFFICE:**West Midlands**

Theft from a vehicle: the victim's wife was awoken by the sound of their car being broken into. She shouted for her son who went down and apprehended the offender until the police arrived.

The case came from CRC and the offender was really eager to write the victims a letter of apology. He spent a fair amount of time writing out his letter and wanted the victims to know how sorry he was for what had happened.

The offender put a lot of time and effort into writing a letter to the victims, going out to buy new ink for his pens so he could ensure it was as neat as possible. He wanted to explain that at the time of the offence, he was homeless and experiencing severe side effects from his medication, which caused him to act the way he did. He was extremely remorseful, and regretted his actions, which was expressed well within the letter.

Upon calling the victims, they declined to receive the letter, but were happy to have the offender's apology relayed to them. They really appreciated him saying sorry and were happy he had taken responsibility.

Although the offender would have preferred them to read the letter, he was happy he got to apologise to the victims, and that he could now move on from what had happened. He said it was like a weight had lifted off his chest and thanked me for all the support I had offered.

PRACTITIONER/S: Katie Smyth

OFFICE: West Midlands

This case involved two families living next door to each other. Two offenders involved were a mother and her son, and the two victims were the couple living next door. The offences were Public Order offences and an attempted criminal damage.

Remote methods of working were undertaken for both victims and offenders over what's app video and the telephone. Also, the offenders were visited at their home to complete the assessment as English was their second language, so they preferred this method to fully understand the process.

Once the initial assessments were completed with both victims and offenders, it was apparent that both parties were very unhappy with their situation and wanted the conflict to stop. Although victims and offenders were keen to engage, they preferred for communication to be via an indirect method. To this end, shuttle messages were passed from victims to offenders and then an outcome agreement was shared and agreed between both parties. This outcome agreement was able to provide both parties with a reference for the future of how they would like to live peacefully next to each other. The victims commented that their involvement in RJ has 'helped move things forward for us' and they were grateful for the support. This case highlighted how a brief intervention can have a positive impact on a victim and improve their outlook.

PRACTITIONER/S: Kim Charles

OFFICE:**West Midlands**

The offence was an assault. An assault on the victim, an ambulance service staff member, took place following an emergency service call from the offender's mother, for the offender. The victim, the youth offender and her supporting mother were all involved in the process.

Victim preparation was done via remote methods and in person with the offender. The young offender was between foster placements, struggling with her mental health, and continuing to be involved in further incidents. Work involved liaising with the social services heavily, until practitioners were happy to proceed with a direct.

From the offset, the victim knew what he wished to voice, with an additional inspiring goal of helping the offender learn. The offender knew she wished to apologise, but preparation was needed to ensure a calm meeting. The direct meeting took place after two months of work.

In the meeting the victim was able to explain his role, his aim of helping people, how he felt from the offence, and his hopes for the future. The offender experienced some nerves, but with the appropriate support she was able to apologise, explain her mental health state and feelings on the day, and express regret.

The offender commented, 'I am glad I got to say sorry, I think it went well'. The victim commented, 'the communication was spot on. There were no delays, and everyone was good after the meeting'.

The meeting was inspiring to practitioners, as the victim gave the offender mental health guidance, and they shared personal life experiences. At the beginning of the process practitioners were presented with a very shy youth offender who was dealing with outside challenges, nevertheless with preparation, and the kindness of the victim, they were able to have a very beneficial conversation.

PRACTITIONER/S: Nicole Mclean and Georgia Snelling

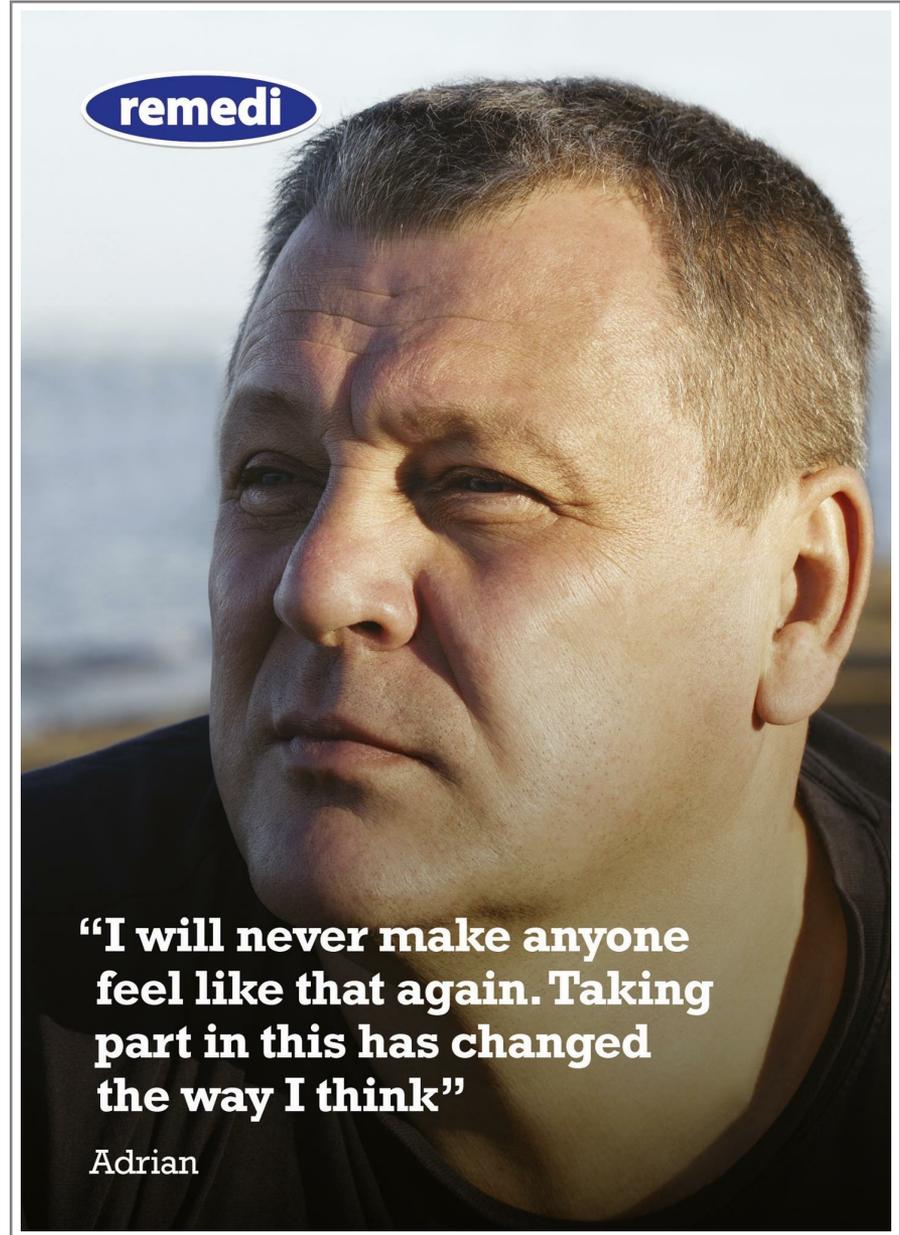
OFFICE:

Nottinghamshire (Youth)

The YP agreed to complete a victim awareness session on knife crime with me and also completed a poster to gift to the school as direct reparation

I spoke to the school to gain their views for the OOC panel and they said they would be really happy to accept a poster from the young person which they could use in their PSHE lessons. During the victim awareness session, the young person demonstrated very good awareness in terms of victim impact and how knife crime can affect the community. I spoke with him about creating a poster for school about what he had learnt and he said he would be happy to. He took incredible care whilst creating the poster and wanted it to be perfect so school could use it. He did a brilliant job and school were really pleased with the effort he had put into it when we handed it to them.

PRACTIONER/S: Ellie Crutchley-Macleay



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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:

Humberside

Shop theft victim awareness session of which the person on probation referred himself via his offender manager after completing a victim awareness session for another crime. This case involved one person on probation and one victim who is the manager of a major supermarket in the community.

Victim awareness session delivered in person as this person on probation had a number of shop thefts. We finished the session with a recorded video from the manager of a major supermarket chain (local store) who explained the impact shop theft has on the store and the community.

This piece of work seemed to make a big impact on the person on probation. He had a number of shop thefts on his record from over the years.

He said: I never realised the impact of taking even the smallest things of value can have on the store and employees job security. Hearing the impact has really opened my eyes and made me think of the bigger picture to the employees and the community.

PRACTIONER/S: Lindsey

OFFICE:

Rotherham (Youth)

Actual Bodily Harm Case:

There were two YP who were issued with a YCC.

Victim impact statement taken and views represented in Panel.

Victim awareness work was carried out with both YP, and the victim impact statement shared.

One of the YP agreed to meet directly with the victim and his mum to apologise

Both the YP and victim used to be friends,

The victim, in this case, suffered with a broken arm which resulted in him having surgery. While speaking to the victim's mum she expressed that she does not want the boys to ever be friends again as she felt the YP was a bad influence.

The young person completed a victim awareness session, and we went through the victim impact statements. While speaking about the offence, and how it affected the victim, the YP expressed remorse. We discussed RJ and he offered to meet both victim, and his mum, to say sorry, he wanted the mum to know he was not a thug and had turned his life around.

After discussions with the case manager, we agreed to meet at a local park, where we found a private spot on the grass, and set out chairs to social distance.

When we were all sat, I explained GDPR and spoke to both boys about not recording the conversation, both said they were not. We started by explaining why we were here and the victim's mum agreed to speak first about how the incident had affected her son and family. The YP listened and made good eye contact, he followed on to say he was sorry and how he would do things differently.

The case manager spoke about the work carried out by the YP, and I spoke about the Victim Awareness Session. We spoke about how things had escalated to the point of the incident with both boys agreeing that they had acted on other parties becoming involved. We spoke about the future and how to avoid confrontations, and also about protecting themselves from criminal activities, and consequences in their future.

After 30 min the boys asked if they could step away and speak with each other privately and we all agreed they could do that, and we could see them sitting on a bench and chatting.

After about 20 min I approached the boys to ask if they were ok, and to wrap up the meeting, Both boys were smiling and said they were glad they had met and cleared the air.

I did a de-brief and all parties said they were feeling good, I informed them that would ring after the weekend to do an evaluation, thanked them for coming and both myself and Joanna left them with the Victim's mum who said she will walk with them for 10 min.

During a phone-call to complete evaluations the victim's mum said

" I cannot thank you enough. Before this happened, my son looked up to the YP, and when we arranged to meet, I did not want them to ever be friends again. After the incident I used to have nightmares, after watching the video footage. When we met though, I saw a different boy to my nightmares.

It was good to see that he has faced up to things. He said he is getting his head down and sorting his life out, and I am hopeful that this is the turning point for him, and my son looks up to these notions.

Before the meeting, when you said he was sorry, I didn't quite believe you, but seeing him, and speaking with him, I now know that he is genuine.

My son said after the meeting "he is getting his head down now mum, and that's what I need to do too".

We feel that RJ has been a fantastic experience and it was really good to be listened to. I feel that you guys really know what you're doing, and want the best for everyone.

The Police are all about punishment, social services are about protecting the kids, but you guys look forward, and help to give everyone a chance to turn things around, and move on.

I would recommend a direct meeting to anyone, if only to be heard and have people understand what you have gone through."

During evaluation the YP stated

" The direct meeting was good

I felt relieved that it was over, and we can move on. It felt good to show them that I have changed my ways and am now putting my head down and getting on with my future".

PRACTIONER/S: Tracey Reynolds

OFFICE:

Derby (Youth)

I am currently working with a young person who is fulfilling his reparation hours, at the beginning of his hours with me he was very difficult to engage and avoided completing his sessions. However, after the first session with me he began to open up and I began to realise his home life was very hectic and created a lot of chaos for this young person.

During our first session together, we decorated plant pots which will be donated to a local care home. The young person carefully painted each one with a base colour and allowed them to dry, which in the very hot weather did not take long. He then created patterns and decoration on the top of this base coat.

This session was constantly interrupted by siblings and his mum, this became frustrating for the young person. He asked that the next time I come could the session take place at his girlfriends house, I explained that this would need to go through his case manager and risk assessed.

Whilst working with this young person he asked if there was anything we could do for a local school, they are currently creating a memory garden for a pupil who lost their life to cancer this year. I thought this was a lovely idea and suggested we created a bird table for this, he loved this idea and began to flow with what kind of decoration he would like to include on it. I am in the process of finding out the pupils name so I can have a small plaque created to put on the bird table once it is finished.

PRACTIONER/S: Rachel Wright

OFFICE: Derby (Youth)

Direct between son and mother. Offences were assault and criminal damage within the family home, whereby son has complex needs and became overwhelmed when mum sanctioned him by taking phone away.

I completed a victim awareness session with the young person. He was able to recognise the impact his actions had, but he had not spoke to mum about the offence since it took place. Because he feels 'out of control', he feels guilt and shamed for the harm he caused mum. Mum agreed in the following session for me to facilitate a direct meeting over the phone.

Mum was able to raise how the offence impacted her physically, emotionally and financially and felt she was listened to by her son. He was able to explain how it makes him feel, when he causes harm to her. Mum said that she does not blame him, as he has ADHD/ODD and she knows he finds situations difficult. She said she wants to help him however she can, they both agreed in this meeting that exploring therapy may help him. This was passed on to the case manager.

PRACTITIONER/S: Shannen Sara Merwick

OFFICE:**Derby (Youth)**

Direct between daughter and mother who received Youth Restorative Disposal. Offences were assault and criminal damage within the family home, whereby daughter has complex needs and became overwhelmed when mum sanctioned her. The incident began when daughter attempted to self-harm and mum tried to restrain her.

I completed a victim awareness session with the young person. She has autism/ADHD/epilepsy and struggles with trusting professionals. She was able to highlight the impact her actions can have – but is aware that she struggles to control her actions at times, due to her needs. I facilitated a healthy discussion with mum and daughter r.e help and support she is getting and further support she would like from the doctors/CAMHS etc.

We also explored the Chimp Paradox and now daughter is able to understand her 'reactive' part of her brain. She was a visual task and she really benefited from it.

Mum was able to raise how the offence impacted her and she felt listened to by her daughter. They have a brilliant relationship and despite daughter's needs are able to communicate really well.

PRACTITIONER/S: Shannen Sara Merwick

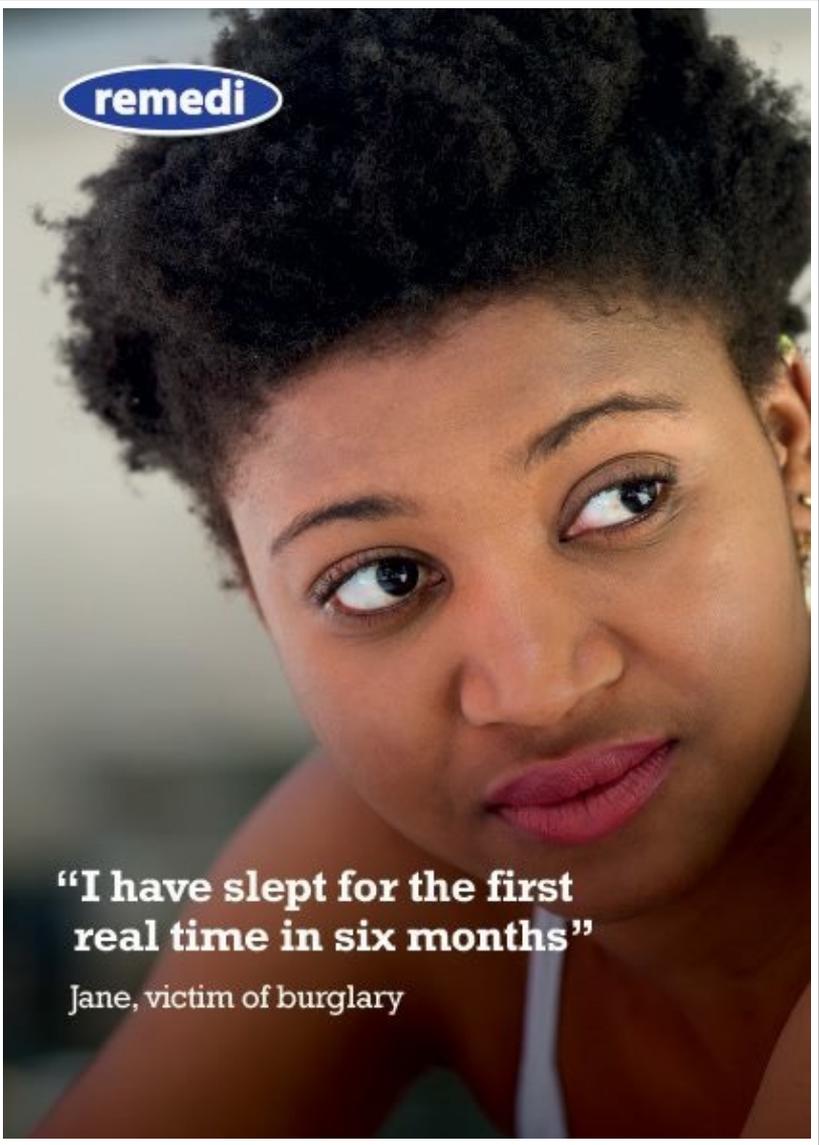
OFFICE:**Stockport (Youth)**

A group of five girls went to what they assumed was an abandoned building and began smashing things. The building was actually in use and a small business was based there and staff were on site and could see on the security cameras what was happening.

Two of the young people took part in a direct telephone call with the victim.

The victim has described getting a phone call from her sister in law who was on site and very distressed. She was watching the girls with hockey sticks and wooden batons smashing the doors and windows. The victim explained this was the fifth time they've had this happened and the police have told them their building is vulnerable and they need to move. They have watched the abandoned school opposite be vandalised inside and out and since this incident staff are on high alert and don't attend site on their own due to feeling unsafe. They've spent a large amount of money on security which they couldn't afford to and installed further CCTV. These two girls felt very guilty and acknowledged the harm done to them and victim. They spoke on the phone and the girls apologised. The victim had a lot of compassion for them as she has a daughter the same age and accepted their apology. The girls felt less guilty after and felt they would think things through more. The victim was impressed by the care taken to arrange and facilitate the phone call and really felt this had given them the opportunity to realise what they had done. She felt because they are young this will impact them and she knows they have learnt from this.

PRACTIONER/S: V.J.Mukembo



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

Jane, victim of burglary

OFFICE: Derbyshire

This case was referred to Remedi by the Youth Offending service for Restorative Justice. The offence was common assault between Victim (Parent) and Offender (Young Person).

Direct communication was facilitated with both parties using telephone conferencing. Both parties were able to openly express how the offence made them feel and what happened from their perspectives, using communication methods they were both comfortable with.

During the telephone conference, the Victim was able to hear and understand how the offence happened from the Offenders perspective and understand the way things had escalated from their point of view and vice versa.

During the telephone conference, it appeared clear that both parties wanted to work towards improving their relationship however at times, the Offender explained they found it hard to vocalise this to the Victim therefore a second telephone conference was arranged to discuss this further.

On the second telephone conference, I could hear things appeared to be more positive between both parties and they had been discussing working to improve their relationship following on from the first telephone conference. Both parties agreed that they were going to try and continue with this in hope that their relationship improves and upon calling to follow up, it appeared this is happening.

Victim Feedback: "Thank you for all of your help and being so patient."

PRACTITIONER/S: Laura Esty

OFFICE: Derbyshire

This was a referral from the Youth Offending Service for Restorative Justice, for an incident of assault in which the Victim and two Offenders were young people.

The Victim was happy for the matter to be dealt with via RJ and the main need for them was for all the parties to agree how they were going to move forwards from the crime. This work was carried out remotely and all discussions took place over the telephone.

The Victim did not wish to meet with either of the parties directly but did wish for communication to be passed on via ourselves. After working with both Offenders, they expressed their remorse to the Victim for the incident and wanted to provide reassurance that if they were to see each other again, they would not approach each other.

The Victim, after hearing from both Offenders explained that they felt safer and felt less anxious should they see each other in the future.

This was an extremely positive piece of work, which enabled the Victim to share their thoughts and feelings and feel safer and more confident moving forwards, using remote methods in which they were most conformable with.

PRACTIONER/S: Suzanne Artuch

OFFICE:

Derbyshire

Remedi received this referral to provide Restorative Justice in a case of malicious communications and messages. Both parties wished to take part in a direct meeting in the community.

Preparation was completed with both parties to hear what had happened from their perspectives and discuss what they wanted to share and gain from the direct meeting. Further preparation work was completed until both parties and I felt it was suitable to meet directly.

The meeting went ahead in a neutral venue, adhering to all Covid guidelines. Both parties explained that they were happy with the outcome of an agreement regarding how to move forwards and address each other in the future.

The referrer in the case explained they were 'really impressed with Remedi's involvement in this case'.

PRACTIONER/S: Natasha May

OFFICE:**Humberside**

The perpetrator was referred by Natasha in HMP Humber, after committing an offence of Burglary, during which the occupants of the house came face to face with the offender in their home. He felt great remorse about his actions and wanted to offer the victims the opportunity for RJ.

The perpetrator engaged really well with me and Natasha, a few letters were passed between the victims and offenders. The victims were able to ask all the questions they had, they really appreciated the apology letter and felt reassured that the perpetrator would not target their home again.

The perpetrator was really open in his communication about why he did what he did, how sorry he was and the steps he is taking to ensure he does not commit further offences. The victims said that they felt a lot better after hearing from the perpetrator, especially after they had caught him during the Burglary, which they said was quite a shock to them. However, they found it reassuring to hear he would not be targeting their home again and that he was so sorry for his actions. They initially were slightly unsure if RJ would be for them, but after the few letters facilitated between them and the offender they really felt they had got something positive from it and were really pleased to learn all the offender was doing to try and make sure he stayed off drugs and wouldn't do anything similar in the future. I think this piece of work is a great example of how individuals can get a great deal from the RJ process even if initially they are unsure if it is for them.

PRACTITIONER/S: Yasmin Gray and Natasha Lacey.

OFFICE:**Humberside**

The offence involved two people (one victim and once offender) and was a wounding with intent and the offence occurred in Cleethorpes.

A victim awareness session was undertaken with the offender and he said that he would be interested in engaging in RJ. Contacted the victim and they were happy to receive a letter, I wrote a letter with the offender which I passed back to the victim.

Unfortunately, in this case, the victim never got back in touch with me to give any feedback about the letter or a response, despite my attempts to get in touch with them.

However, the offender was happy with his victim awareness session and felt he had got something from doing the process despite not getting a response.

Feedback:

Offender: "Gave me more of an understanding of the impact and those around it"

PRACTIONER/S: Jamie Russell

OFFICE:**Humberside**

The offence is blackmail and was referred to Remedi by probation. The offender wanted to apologise to his victims, of which there were 12. The offender had used a fake persona on dating sites to gain the trust of his victims and then blackmailed them later for money

We worked with the offender getting him to think of the potential consequences of his actions, whom he had affected and how. We probed his reasons and motivation for doing RJ. Having been satisfied we set about tentatively contacting and engaging with the victims involved.

This was a very sensitive case. We managed to engage with 6 of the 12 victims and worked with them to ascertain their needs. Messages were passed back between all parties involved and the offender later wrote a letter to his victims apologising for what he did, explaining why he did what he did and tried to reassure his victims that what he did would not happen again. He also explained that he recognised and understood the harm he had caused. He informed them he was working hard to rehabilitate and re-invent himself.

Victim feedback:

1. After doing RJ I feel reassured I can finally move on and put this behind me, thank you.
2. It was nice to read, I appreciated his letter. I hope he does not fall in with the wrong crowd again and gets himself into a better place. Doing RJ has given me closure and I have found it very meaningful, thank you for all you have done.

Offender feedback:

I found restorative justice useful, it helped me break things down so I understood them and made me realise just how much I have affected my victims.

Practitioners: Gary Herbert / Jamie Russell

OFFICE:**Manchester (Youth)**

This YP was referred through to me for carrying a knife within the community and school. He had taken it to school and hidden it behind a staff car. When asked about why he carried the knife he gave some insight into him feeling scared of people in the community.

We have completed a lot of work around weapons and how to stay safe in the community. We worked on some relationship activities and identified who are positive and negative influences in the YP's life.

When the young person started working with me, he was very understanding of what he had done and seemed to recognise some of the dangers. After some work around weapons, self esteem and relationship circle, the young person really gained a better understanding of the consequences of his actions and was able to explain what changes he needed to make to ensure he continues making good choices in the future. The feedback from him and mum was extremely positive and the young person no longer carries a knife. Mum has reported that he now builds tree houses and makes dens with new friends and seems more confident in the community without having to carry a knife.

PRACTIONER/S: Charlie Davison



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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

