



REMEDY

Restorative Stories

A Collection of Case Studies and
Reflections VOLUME 32

By Remedy: Restorative Services

Restorative Stories

A Collection of Case Studies and Reflections

By **REMEDI: Restorative Services**

© Remedi

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

www.remediuk.org

Office: Manchester (Youth)

This young person took a knife into school as she was feeling threatened. Nobody was harmed and nobody else was involved. She was moved out of school and into a different one and referred to Remedi for Early Intervention sessions to raise awareness of what could have happened. This young person was extremely vulnerable due to her upbringing.

After the initial assessment we came to the realisation that this was self-defence and she didn't understand the consequences. It also came to light that she was having problems with older men bothering her online, so we decided to dive into that also and look at ESafety and what she can do to keep herself safe. After we had worked on the knife crime and victim work, we did a session on ESafety.

This young person has had a difficult upbringing and experienced domestic Violence for many years of her life, she hasn't had a very good relationship with her mum and didn't feel like she could confide in her for support. This resulted in her looking online for people to talk to and not looking out for dangers. The young person explained to me that men had tried to speak to her in the past, so I decided to do a full session based on keeping safe online. After an intervention session based on ESafety and explain about grooming and how to spot the red flags when speaking to new people online and how to realise who may not be real. After the intervention sessions had finished and the evaluation forms were being filled out, the young person pointed out that she has learnt lots about online safety and has been using it in her day-to-day life and looking out for signs of someone who may not be a real person. I feel like this piece of work should be celebrated as this young person now is safer online and has more understanding of grooming and explained that she could spot the signs of someone that she would not have noticed before.

Practitioner: Ellie Lightfoot

Office: Sheffield (Youth)

The young person had committed numerous burglaries as part of an organised group. He is on a youth rehabilitation order with the youth justice order. He had indicated he wanted to communicate with the victims. Several victims had agreed to take part in restorative justice processes and in this case the views have been represented to the young person.

The young person had agreed to meet with the victim however he decided at the last minute not to take part so instead the victim impact statement had been read to the young person with the view to keep working towards a direct process.

The victim in this case explained their home was attempted to be broken into by the young person, this had happened in the daytime whilst they were at work. They had come home to find the entrance to their home had been attempted to be forced open. The victim said they had been worried since the incident and feared that it could happen again, with concerns the property was still being watched. The victim wanted to talk to the young person about this but also wanted to try and understand the young person's motivation for this type of lifestyle and by meeting the young person wondered if this might help them stop offending.

As the young person said they would meet with the victim, I set up the meeting however the young person decided at the last minute that he could not do it, so the meeting was cancelled. Instead, I represented the victim's views and we discussed how the victim had been affected. The young person explained he was sorry and understood how they might feel and wanted them to know that he will try to gain to meet with them. I fed this back to the victim and explained that I would be doing some work with him and if they were happy, we could try to set the meeting up again. The victim explained they were happy to try again as they wanted to help the young person by taking part in a direct meeting when the time was right.

Although I was disappointed that a direct meeting did not happen, I also understood from this process that more work in preparation for the young person will be needed in order for the direct meeting to happen. This will mean further preparation for the young person with the support of the youth justice CHAMS worker who has agreed to work with me and the young person to develop some strategies to help with the anxiety the young person has around meeting the victim.

Practitioner: Martyn Ellis.

Office: Stockport (Youth)

The offence was sexual assault in January and is a Bolton case – both victim and perpetrator are 15/16 years old. Victim has ADHD and an anxiety disorder and had been very vulnerable and distressed following the assault and struggles to engage with support for her mental health.

Work around consent with the young person. Joint victim visits to mum and victim. Preparation work with victim & offender. Meetings with case managers to advise of work completed and risk management completed. Enhanced supervisions with manager and permission obtained from both parents.

Myself and the Bolton practitioner at the time (Robbi) had arranged for the direct to go ahead on 30th March. This unfortunately did not go ahead due to victim unable to manage her anxiety on the day. I worked to re-engage victim, communicating directly with her instead of via mum this time. I maintained contact with young person and introduced a new practitioner and re-arranged the direct. The victim feedback: “It was a positive experience and I've got closure. I know it won't be awkward if I see him in the future now. He was genuine because he looked me in the eye. I know he won't do it to anyone else. I can tell the work has been done with him around consent.” The young person feedback: “It went well. I felt relieved after and she accepted my apology. It's good to get it off your chest. I feel a lot happier now. Upon updating the case manager who hadn't had a case of her go to direct RJ before, she felt the outcome was absolutely amazing and that she was impressed with both the victim and Sam's bravery, and us for pursuing this and working so hard.”

Practitioner: V.J.Mukembo

Office: Humberston

This case was referred to us by an Offender Manager after an offence of Burglary in the victim's home, whereby the whole family were present at the time of the offence. The offender felt great remorse about her actions and was really motivated to engage in Restorative Justice.

The person responsible for the offence was eager to engage in Restorative Justice in any method that the victim would be happy with. The victim felt they would be open to indirect RJ work so a letter was completed from the offender to the victim.

From initial contact, the person responsible for the offence seemed very eager to engage in RJ, they were really disappointed in their actions and were very keen to be able to try and apologise. They were especially conscious that the family were present at the time of the offence and did not want them to be fearful in their home or of the offender and the offender really wanted to be able to communicate this to the victim and their family. The victim was happy with the communication from the offender, they were satisfied that the letter covered all they needed to know and happy with the apology, they did not feel they needed to meet with the offender after reading the letter as this covered any information they could have asked from the offender. This is a great example of how a detailed letter can offer great insight for victims and offer them the opportunity of detailed communication with the offender without meeting with them if that's not something they are comfortable with. The letter was also able to be read to all members of the family that were present at the time of the offence.

Practitioner: Yasmin Gray.

Office: HumberSide

Youth Community Resolution – Assault with injury. Involving one victim and one offender from the same household.

Meetings with both parties to discuss the impact the incident has had on them, followed by Offender engaging in some victim awareness work. This led to a direct meeting between both parties to discuss the impact on everyone in the household and how both can take steps to move forward.

This has been an excellent referral from the police. Both parties were fully aware of the referral and what it involved at the time of me making contact. Both engaged in this process fully committed and willing to work together to help each other move forward in a positive way.

Victim wanted offender to understand the impact their actions have on the full household.

Offender stated they are wanting and willing to work with us to change their actions.

The work has been delivered both remotely and in person, this was a good mix and made the sessions more flexible for all involved.

Practitioner: Lindsey A

Office: HumberSide

Youth community resolution involving one victim and one offender. Police referral for work with young person around victim awareness leading to RJ.

Delivered victim awareness workbook, along with some selected activities from the together family's pack. This combined the focus on both dealing with anger and how their actions impact others. Direct meeting with both parties and agreed actions for moving forward.

Both parties engaged really well and we all entered this work knowing that changes will take time and it is very much a work in progress situation.

From a Practitioner point of view, I feel I have given the tools which can confidently be used in future situations when conflict may arise.

Feedback from Offender: The sessions have made me understand my own triggers and also how things can quickly develop into serious situations.

The sessions have also helped me understand how to deal with my anger, how to act when things are good and not so good. It has made me think about how I can walk away from a situation before it gets any worse (take myself out of a room for example).

The work has been delivered both remotely and in person, this was a good mix and made the sessions more flexible for all involved.

Practitioner: Lindsey

Office: HumberSide

Two people involved in this case, the case was a public order offence and it was in Grimsby.

The offender was a teenager who was intoxicated and had been verbally abusive to women on the street. The offender very much wanted to apologise to the victim and show that it was not who he really was, the victim was happy to receive a letter which the offender wrote.

The offender was very remorseful about what happened, he could not remember what happened that night and was very upset when he found out how he behaved. The offender would have been open to meeting the victim however the victim wanted to do the RJ process through a letter the offender wrote the letter by himself with minimal input from myself and it was a very well written letter.

The victim was very happy with the letter that the offender wrote and really wanted me to pass on her thanks to the offender which I did.

Feedback:

Offender Mother: 'It's been a good process.'

Victim: 'I just want to thank him.'

Practitioner: Jamie Russell

Office: South Yorkshire

Offence in this matter is that of criminal damage to a stained-glass window at a pub when two friends were play fighting in the beer garden. The police attended and after establishing the facts both parties agreed to a community resolution with RJ and wanted to offer an apology to the landlord.

Once contact was made with both parties and the facts were established, the victim stated that the pub was a listed building, and therefore needed the window replacing as it was part of the historic features, this would come at a cost of £200.

The reimbursement was facilitated with an apology over the phone after the money had been transferred from the offender to the victim.

Both parties agreed together to complete the RJ intervention over the phone once the money was transferred, they agreed that this was the most appropriate and proportionate way to receive the payment and apology for the actions of that evening, the offender fully accepted responsibility and the licensee did not wish to criminalise the person responsible.

If the matter had gone to court the offender would have been convicted the licensee would have to have made a statement and been available to attend court if required and any compensation would be delayed, going through the court process. In short this was a 'quick fix' for all concerned. With a satisfactory outcome for all concerned.

Victim Feedback:

' I am pleased that this was dealt with out of court, swiftly and smoothly by Remedi, I received the payment and a verbal apology from the person responsible, Thank you for your support with this process'.

Offender Feedback:

' Thank you for supporting me in repaying the costs for the window, I am pleased that I didn't have to go to court, it was settled through Remedi amicably and quickly, relieving me of any further worry'.

Practitioner: Mark Winrow

Office: West Midlands

The offence was historic sexual abuse. A male in a trusted position had sexually abused a male child, around 40 years ago. A police station direct meeting took place with the now adult victim, the offender, and the probation officer and 2 practitioners who had supported the case throughout.

Preparation took place over two years, considering lock-down. Preparation through the years continually assessed motivations and risks, with a multiagency approach. Much preparation was back and forth to answer questions, to lessen the need for these consuming the end meeting, allowing for a more restorative impact-based meeting, and remorse-based direct.

The meeting began with the victim expressing a lifetime of impacts. He explained his reasons for wanting restorative justice and had chance to ask remaining questions. The offender had time to express his remorse, the full responsibility he takes, and the work he has done since to rehabilitate.

After an emotive and restorative meeting, all commented how they felt what had been needed to be said, had been. Following the direct the victim said he wanted to 'have my say to the most relevant person.' 'I got out of it what I was hoping to achieve'. 'It was the right thing to do. I felt a sense of trepidation before it happened, but that feeling went away when I walked into the room and I felt in control.'

The offender said, 'at times I was anxious but you managed it really well. I felt it served its purpose and helped the victim'. 'It reinforces the feelings that I could never do it again as I understand the impacts more'. Overall, it was extremely powerful to support this process to the end, and great to hear that after an emotive journey, all felt restorative justice achieved what it set out to.

Practitioner: Nicole Mclean and Amanda Townsend

Office: West Midlands

This case involved two victims and one offender in the West Midlands. The offence was Criminal damage and a Public Order offence.

Assessments and preparation work were undertaken face to face for both parties as they felt more comfortable discussing the issues this way. The final direct meeting was held face to face at a Police station.

This offence involved the offender being verbally abusive towards the victims on their doorstep and committing criminal damage to their property whilst intoxicated. Both victims were quite severely impacted by this offence and felt fearful that they would bump into the offender again. The victims expressed how they had asked for Restorative Justice so that they could feel safe again.

During the direct meeting the offender was keen to express her remorse and how disgusted she felt with her behaviour. The victims asked the offender some questions about the offence and why she did it, which she was able to answer. The offender was also able to give the victims some background information about herself, which allowed them to feel more informed.

The victim's gave the following feedback 'We feel a lot better and glad we gave her a second chance. We had never heard of RJ before but I think the service is brilliant. RJ gives the right people a second chance.'

'We got answers to our questions and have peace of mind if we were to bump into her. RJ has taken a lot of pressure off us by talking about it and you (pracs) have been so helpful.'

Practitioner: Kim Charles and Georgia Snelling

Office: South Yorkshire

The victim was driving her car on a terraced road with parked vehicles on either side allowing only one vehicle through at any one time. The offender was driving in the opposite direction, came head on with victim's vehicle. An argument followed between both parties as to whom should give way. This resulted in racial comments before both parties left the scene.

Victim stated that they would like to receive a letter of apology from the offender. Offender also agreed to participate in the RJ process, The practitioner supported the offender in writing the letter. This was then passed on to the victim.

After the letter was delivered and discussed with the victim they said:

'This has been fantastic. The idea of taking this to court seemed over the top. By taking part in restorative justice, I have got an understanding of what the lady was feeling at the time, and how she is feeling since the incident, and her apology was totally what I wanted and needed to hear'.

'To have the letter from her gives me comfort that she has reflected on what she said and did and makes me feel totally at ease now. This has been the best possible outcome for me Thank you'.

The offender said

'I now realise that after engaging with Remedi and the RJ process that although what may be acceptable in my country is not acceptable in the UK, I need to look at my behaviour and attitudes towards others'.

Practitioner: Mark Winrow

Office: Cheshire

Two neighbours with entrenched conflict over each other's land.

This was a police referral. Both parties wanted different things from each other. Party 1 wanted Party 2 to remove a makeshift bridge from over a ditch which runs between each other's land also Party 1 wanted Party 2 to plant two trees as he is being accused of chopping the trees down. Party 2 denies chopping the trees down and said he just wanted Party 1 to know that he was going to clean out the ditch and that he would not remove the bridge or plant the two trees.

I went to see both parties separately, and then on to see each of them with their requests.

A direct did not take place because of the risk and I feel it would have been detrimental to both parties to go through a face-to-face mediation as I observed both as being very stubborn and very angry.

Victim A feedback: 'Thank you for passing on my requests. Even though this hasn't gone any further, I am happy not speaking to him.'

Victim B feedback: 'We've known each other many years so nothing is going to change now. Thanks for your help, it was nice meeting you.'

Practitioner: Diane Williams

Office: South Yorkshire

Community referral from the Police. Case involved two people who felt harassed. The parties were involved in a minor RTC, both parties were attempting to exchange details the offender's language and tone made the victim feel harassed and vulnerable.

Apology passed from the offender to the victim remotely as resulted by all involved.

This case was a referral from South Yorkshire Police. Both parties fully wanted to engage with Restorative justice to help communication on both sides there were some reservations and strong feelings as there is still involvement with insurance companies.

Victim Comments:

" I really appreciate REMEDI being involved. The Police offered me this service, and I was really pleased you called. I do feel better knowing the other person has said sorry. I did feel at the time like the situation could have escalated which made me feel very vulnerable, which isn't a nice feeling at all. The other person has said sorry and I can move on now. Thank you for your time and letting me know what has been said."

Offender Comments:

" I can understand how he might have felt, I was just saying it as I thought. I didn't think the other person was affected as much as he was by my actions, I was frustrated at the time and reacted as I saw it ok at the time but knowing that the other person felt like that has made me rethink my actions. Thank you for passing on my apologies to the other person."

Practitioner: Danielle Griffiths.

Office: South Yorkshire

Male neighbours racially abusive towards each other. Offence of Racially Aggravated Public Order, three service users involved, two males and one female. Outcome was no prosecution, South Yorkshire Police referral to Remedi for Community Resolution with Restorative Justice. The case was allocated to Salli and Tracey, where upon contact was made with the three parties involved and assessments completed in person, two indirect shuttle messages delivered, and a direct restorative justice meeting completed.

Male service user feedback – **‘I did not want this to go to court, as I feel that he needs help and support, not punishment, however I wanted this behaviour to stop. As neighbours, we were friends at one point, we would talk and make food for each other. I am so glad that this service is available it has enabled us to talk about how we feel and that our children had felt scared. The conversation with him with your support allowed us to express that we want to be able to live in peace, as we are neighbours and for my wife and children to feel safe at home and in the garden. It went well, felt good to clear the air, a fresh start and was nice that it ended in handshakes and fist bumps’.**

Male service user feedback – **‘I can’t thank you enough! Thank you! I know I keep saying it over and over, I am so sorry for what I did. I couldn’t remember much from that night I had been on medication for an injury and had drunk alcohol, I had been feeling lonely. I watched the CCTV and was so ashamed of my behaviour. I couldn’t stop thinking about how it must have made them feel and I really wanted to apologise. It was good to be able to apologise in person with you being there. Up until that day I had been using a different entrance to my home so not to go past their home, I did not want to worry them. The meeting ended with smiles and laughs it was so good to talk. Thank you!’.**

Practitioners: Salli Goddard and Tracey Reynolds

Office: Cheshire

This was a case of fraud between an electrician and a customer who had a good working relationship prior to the offence. The offender promised work that he could not fulfil due to a drug addiction.

- Restorative awareness session with offender
- Preparation of both sides
- 2 indirects – 1 shuttle, 1 letter
- A face to face direct

I really enjoyed working on this case because both victim and offender were really restorative. The victim was very understanding and never wanted to call the police in the first place because of their friendship. The offender was extremely remorseful and had overcome a great deal of obstacles. He said if it wasn't for her calling the police, he wouldn't have had the opportunity to get clean and face his past. It was great for them to be able to meet up, discuss what happened and where they both are today. The victim was particularly interested in seeing the progress he'd made.

Offender feedback - 'You're a lovely person who came across very warm and kind. You put me at ease and were very professional. You put confidence in me that I could do it, and I'm really grateful I did go through with meeting her.'

Victim feedback - 'I took part in RJ because it's important for people who've committed an offence to be able to talk with the person they've harmed and be able to give answers and explain themselves. I'm very behind it as a process.'

Practitioner: Kayleigh Simmonite

Office: South Yorkshire

Public order offence. Both parties are neighbours and there were escalating incidents of shouting and threats.

They had lived next door to each other for 7 years, with the last 6 years being very positive, including walking the dog together, sending presents to kids for birthdays and Xmas and supporting each other with personal challenges.

The relationship deteriorated after the victim walked the dog with other neighbours and didn't include the other party. This led to shouting and swearing, throwing rubbish in the victim's garden, and throwing this directly at them, which resulted in it hitting them in the face. This escalated to further abuse and shouting over the fence.

This case was referred by SYP resulting in a direct intervention and victim awareness session and support/signposting for the offender.

This was a referral received from South Yorkshire Police involving a Public Order offence of two neighbours, the case was co-worked with the officer in charge, I established early on that one of the parties would need some additional support from myself, I completed my assessments with all parties involved and they both agreed to take part in a Direct meeting to resolve the conflict. The officer in charge of the original case wanted to support and work closely with Remedi to help resolve the matter.

I worked hard with both parties to build an affective and positive relationship, this allowed me to move forward with the Direct intervention and in return both parties communicated effectively with each for the first time as they used to be really close friends & neighbours.

Victim Comments: "Remedi with the assistance of the officer in charge have helped me to move forward and resolve this ongoing dispute. I didn't think speaking to the other party would help as things have been so bad for so long, thank you Remedi for everything I feel like I can use my garden again."

Offender Comments: "Thank you Remedi, I'm glad that this dispute has been resolved, it has taken a lot of worry away from me and I now feel like I am less anxious in my own home and garden"

Practitioner: Danielle Griffiths

Office: South Yorkshire

Community SRJ referral for low level harassment from the police. The parties involved were two neighbours and have a shared access to the rear of the properties in Sheffield. The incident had been ongoing for several months and both wanted to reach a resolution in order to move forward.

Both parties were spoken to, establishing what they wanted to get out of the RJ process in order for them to move on with this ongoing incident. They both agreed after talking it through that they wanted to try and re-establish a relationship with each other allowing them to become neighbourly again.

This case was a referral from South Yorkshire Police. The case was sensitive, both parties wanted to engage with Restorative justice to help communication on both sides, there were some reservations and strong feelings when I initially contacted them.

This case was co worked with another practitioner, we both worked hard with all involved to develop trust and understanding to allow us to support them with this ongoing incident, this involved many phone calls with all involved as well as the officer in charge of the case. We spent a lot of time listening to each party to get a clear understanding of the events leading up to this point, which would allow effective communication and relieve any further stress or emotional damage being done as this involved a child.

Victim Comments: " I really appreciate REMEDI being involved with us. Although there have been a few other incidents it's good to know that actually, we both want the same thing and can now communicate with each other. Thank you for listening and helping us."

Offender Comments: " I just want to feel safe at home and get on with my life. I want to say thank you to Remedi for your support in this process, you listened to me without judgement and remained professional from start to finish."

Practitioners: Danielle Griffiths and Salli Goddard.

Office: West Midlands

This case involved one victim and one offender who are neighbours. The offence was assault without injury and harassment.

Both the victim and offender completed their initial assessments via video calls and preparation work was undertaken on the telephone. Liaison with the referrer and outside agencies was also completed to gain a better understanding of the issues.

Having spoken with both parties it was apparent that a lot of misunderstandings had occurred. However, both the victim and offender wanted the same thing; to put the past behind them and get on with their lives. Following the assessments and some supervision on the case, it was decided that a direct meeting would not be suitable due to some personal circumstances of one of the individuals. Therefore, I worked with both the victim and offender to deliver shuttle messages which communicated their main objectives. Following this process both said they were happy with the outcome and would recommend RJ to others. The offender commented 'You've (practitioner) been fantastic and very understanding of the situation.'

This case has highlighted to me how indirect processes can have a positive impact and allow both parties to move forward.

Practitioner: Kim Charles

Office: Derby (Youth)

A young person in Derby City was given a referral order for taking his mother's car without consent.

I completed multiple VA sessions with the young person, which led to a calm meeting with his mum whereby the impact was discussed, and a direct piece of reparation was gifted.

The young person has ADHD and other learning needs, which meant that sessions had to be kept short so that he could engage well. On our final session together, the young person wanted to create a piece of direct reparation to give to his mother as an apology gesture. I took the young person to the local garden centre, whereby the young person chose his mothers favourite, white plant. After this, the young person painted the plant pot with nice messages such as 'number 1 mum'. When we returned home to give the plant to his mother, she became very emotional and hugged her son. She said that she has never been given a thoughtful gift by her son, and that it was such a nice gesture. After this, we sat down and had a chat about the offence, and mum explained the impact that the offence has had on her. The young person sincerely apologised and reassured his mum that this will never happen again and now he realises the impact that his actions can have on other people.

Practitioner: Lily Loan

Office: Derbyshire

This case was referred to Remedi by a partner agency and was in relation to theft offences.

The work undertaken involved indirect communication. The offender heard the victim impact statement written by the victim and how their actions affected the victim and wider community. After hearing this the offender explained they now realise how their behaviour could have caused harm and explained it encouraged them to reflect.

The offender was interested to hear how their behaviour affected the victims and the wider community, as they explained they had never considered this before. The offender was open and honest throughout the process and spoke about the circumstances around their offending behaviour.

The offender expressed that they hope that if they were ever to find themselves in the same circumstances again, they hope they would take the time to think of the impact it could have.

Feedback from the offender: “You were easy to speak to and non-judgmental.”

Practitioner: Laura Esty

Office: Derbyshire

This was a youth referral for Restorative Justice in relation to an assault offence.

Upon initial contact with the Victim, they wanted indirect communication with the Offender. Due to the Offender's needs, the work completed was done so by working with partner agencies. The Offender was happy to engage in order to move forwards from the offence and communication between the parties was exchanged.

This was a great piece of work, allowing both parties to indirectly communicate with each other to try to repair their relationship and the harm that was caused.

Feedback from the Victim – I took part in RJ so that the issue could be resolved amicably and so that I could let the Offender know that I don't blame them and that I am always there for them. It was nice to hear from the Offender and know that they are getting the help they need.

Practitioner: Suzanne Artuch

Thank you to all of our colleagues and service users

