**Can I say No to RESTORATIVE JUSTICE?**

**Yes**. To participate in RJ, you must do so voluntarily and acknowledge that you are responsible for your actions and the harm you caused. You may stop RJ at any point and return to the criminal justice process.

Reasons to stay involved with RJ are having the opportunity to speak with the person you harmed to find out how the harm affected them and to come to an agreement to repair the harm that you caused.

**Can I bring someone with me to a RESTORATIVE JUSTICE meeting?**

**Yes**. RJ meetings aim to give everyone an opportunity to speak and be heard. The meetings often work better if there are people to support you. The RJ facilitator can discuss with you who to invite. The person affected by the harm also has the chance to bring someone for support.

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**RESTORATIVE JUSTICE**

Salt Spring Island

***What you need to know.***

**For Responsible People**

(often referred to as ‘offenders’)

 

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**What are the steps of RESTORATIVE Justice?**

1. **Intake and assessment.** A case is referred to us (e.g. by the RCMP) then our coordinator assesses whether it’s appropriate for RJ. A team of facilitators are then assigned.
2. **Preparation**:  The facilitators meet with everyone involved separately to find out more and prepare everyone to meet each other in a joint meeting called a *dialogue*. We offer support to people who have been harmed to help them deal with the harm they have experienced and to prepare to tell their story. We support those who have caused harm to take responsibility for the harm they have created and understand what led to their actions.
3. **Dialogue**: Our team facilitates a dialogue meeting to help everyone understand what happened, why it happened, and to talk about how the harm can be repaired. Every situation is unique, and it is up to the people involved to decide the best way to make things right. An *agreement* is developed by consensus.
4. **Agreement follow-up**: The person who caused the harm completes the terms of the agreement within the time frame agreed upon. We update the person affected by the harm. No criminal record will remain with the person who caused harm except a note indicating they have successfully completed the RJ process.

**What is RESTORATIVE JUSTICE?**

Restorative Justice **(RJ**) is part of the B.C. Ministry of Public Safety & Solicitor General. It provides an alternative to the retributive court system. When crime or conflict occurs, the RJ process looks at the harm that has been done and finds ways to compensate those harmed and heal the relationship between people and with the community.

RJ emphasizes **healing**, **repairing relationships** and **repairing harm** by

* addressing the needs of the person affected by the harm
* holding the person who caused the harm accountable for their actions
* involving the community in the justice process
* providing an opportunity for everyone affected by the harm to talk about what happened, the effect it had on them and what can be done to repair the harm

RJ processes value **accountability**, **safety**, **dignity**, **belonging**, **respect and connection.**

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