
“Restorative justice: the evidence”

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- Reviewed research on RJ in U.K. and abroad
 - Based on 36 direct comparisons to “conventional criminal justice
 - Most face-to-face forms of RJ included had trained police as facilitators
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Offending:

- Substantially reduced repeat offending for many offenders
 - More consistently with violent crimes than less serious crimes (except burglary)
 - More than prison for adults, as well as prisons for youth
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Victims

- Reduced victims' post-traumatic stress and related health risks and costs

“Crime victims who receive RJ do better, on average, than victims who do not....”

“RJ reduces stated victim desire for violent revenge against offenders.”

Satisfaction & costs

- RJ provided both victims and offenders more satisfaction than criminal justice.
 - Reduced costs of justice when used as a diversion from criminal justice
 - May reduce costs of health care because of reduced victim trauma
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“...when victims willing meet offenders face to face, they obtain short-term benefits for their mental health by reduced post-traumatic stress systems (PTSS). This may, in turn, reduce their lifetime risks of coronary disease...as well as reducing health costs paid by taxpayers.”

Getting to justice

- “The evidence shows that when diversion to RJ is available, many more offenses can be brought to justice than when it is not.”
 - “Diversion from prosecution to RJ substantially increases the odds of an offender being brought to justice.”
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In short

- “The evidence for RJ is far more extensive and positive than it has been for many other policies that have been rolled out nationally.”
 - “Even if RJ had no effect on crime, it may still be a useful strategy if it helps victims.... On the grounds of helping victims...the evidence for RJ is compelling.”
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Why does RJ work?

Some suggestions

- Victims' justice needs are met:
 - Information
 - Story-telling
 - Involvement
 - Vindication
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For those who have offended

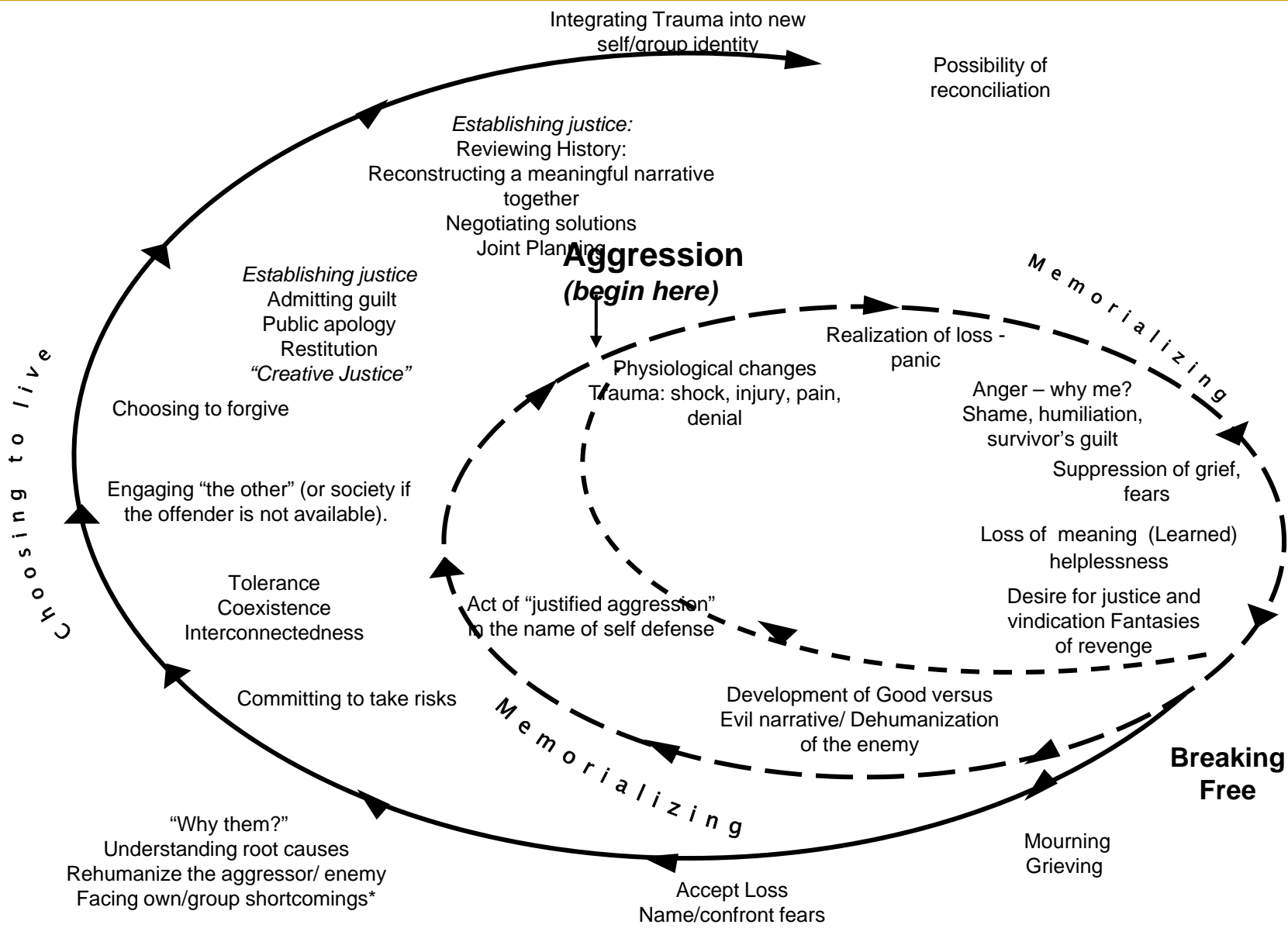
- Challenges their perceptions of justice and victimization

*“All violence is an effort to do justice,
or undo injustice”*

-Dr. James Gilligan

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- May break the victim/aggressor trauma cycle





Trauma Healing Journey: Breaking the Cycles

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- Manages and works constructively with shame
 - Restores honor, respect
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- Encourages empathy
 - Provides understanding of impact of behavior
 - Challenges “neutralizing strategies”
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- Redirects “neural pathways”

“The most fundamental revelation of this new discipline [neural science]: we are wired to connect.”

Daniel Goleman, Social Intelligence

A Restorative Community?

- “...a restorative community would employ graduated sanctioning of its offenders, using restorative solutions first and then increasingly coercive solutions for those who persist in harming others.”
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- “Among neighbourhood police, RJ could become the tool of first resort for responding to matters when they are called in by citizens.”
 - “Their operating framework could shift from the recent emphasis on such questions as “Was any law broken here?” or “Is the evidence sufficient to charge anyone with a crime? To...preventative policing.”
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Changing questions:

- Who has been hurt?
 - What are their needs?
 - Whose obligations are these?
 - What are the causes?
 - Who has a stake in this situation?
 - What is the appropriate process to involve stakeholders in an effort to put things right?
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