



SEXUAL ASSAULT & RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Surviving Trauma

More than half of our population will experience trauma at some point in their lifetime. Persons experiencing trauma, in the form of assault, or otherwise, react differently, but most everyone experiences significant distress. Three effective ways for assault/trauma victims to begin healing the effects of resulting distress are through :

- * Support
- * Education
- * Communication

Restorative Justice as a Healing Process

Support ~ Restorative justice programs provide support by elevating the importance of the victim in the criminal justice process and by allowing for their increased involvement in and focus on repairing the harm done.

Education ~ Restorative justice programs recognize and bring awareness to community responsibility for social conditions that contribute to violent behavior.

Communication ~ Restorative justice programs provide voluntary, safe environments for effective dialogue between victims, families, offenders, and the community so effects of a crime can be healed.

Restorative Justice and Reduced Trauma ~ Crime victims and survivors who met with the offender had 1/3 of the symptoms of trauma after six months as victims who did not, according to a British study in 2006.

Restoring Justice in Violent Crimes

Sexual assault and violent offenses are mediated by specially trained and qualified practitioners, who in consultation with other trained professionals, plan a program that focuses on repairing harm done to the victim, providing a direct avenue of accountability on the part of an offender, and restoring balance to the community.