

THE RESTORATIVE REVIEW



The monthly newsletter of the Hartford Community Restorative Justice Center

QUESTIONS ABOUT FORGIVENESS

WHAT'S NEW

UPCOMING EVENTS
.....

QUOTE OF THE MONTH
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COMMITTEE UPDATES
.....

FORGIVENESS

CoSA

We are looking for folks interested in participating in a Circle of Support and Accountability. You could be a part of a crucial and transformative process for someone reentering the community post-incarceration.

Don't worry if you haven't been through the training - staff at the center can get you prepared! If you're interested, please reach out to center staff or respond to this email.

Upcoming Events

Community Coffee

Fridays, 10-11am

Hartford Justice Center

Community coffee is a fun, low-stress way to stay engaged with the community here at the center. And who can say no to free coffee?

Game Night

Thursday, May 2nd, 4:30pm

We always have a blast playing games and hanging out. If you haven't made it to a game night yet, this is your chance! Join staff, transitional housing residents, and other volunteers for snacks and games at the Justice Center.

Community Conversation: Forgiveness

April 18th 5:00pm

The Justice Center is participating in Public Philosophy Week by hosting a community conversation about restorative justice and forgiveness. Facilitated like our practitioner circles, it's a place to gather and talk about the big subjects that influence our work. See page 3 for more.

Vermont RJ Volunteer Conference June 7th Lake Morey Resort

Get it on your calendars. The biggest gathering of RJ volunteers in the state is taking place on June 7th. We'll share more information as soon as it's available.

GLAD RAGS April 27th & 28th 10am-2pm

We regularly have a crew of folks volunteering at the annual Glad Rags sale in Woodstock, VT at the Masonic Temple. Proceeds help support the center, so go find some fun pieces for a great cause! See pictured - CJC folks at previous Glad Rags sales.



Quote of the Month

“Forgiveness may be appropriate as a social action in many different contexts: when someone has knocked into us in a crowded street, after an accident, if a precious mug has been broken. The ‘I’m sorry—Don’t worry, not a problem’ routine springs naturally into place in these situations and often it is a momentary response and a highly forgettable incident. Where forgiveness begins to be called into question is when the injury is more serious, the consequences more long lasting, and/or the injurious action more clearly against normal and expected behaviour in society.”

– Joanna Shapland –

“Forgiveness and Restorative Justice: Is It Necessary? Is It Helpful?”
Oxford Journal of Law and Religion, Volume 5, Issue 1, February 2016,
Pages 94–112,



Board & Committees

Look at what the board committees are working on, and see if you'd like to get involved! There are plenty of interesting projects that could use your help.

Housing

The Housing Committee is reviewing the program contract for housing and talking about expectations for program participants.

Marketing & Development

The Marketing & Development committee is working on plans for summer and fall fundraising and awareness-building events.

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

The DEI committee is collecting equity data and working on a language access plan for clients who may not speak English.

April 18th

The Justice Center is participating in Public Philosophy Week by hosting a community conversation about restorative justice and forgiveness. Facilitated like our community of practice circles, it's a place to gather and talk about the big subjects that influence our work. If you enjoyed the community of practice circle, this is a great next step. This event will be open to the public, so please invite folks you think would be interested. As we reflect and prepare for this conversation, it felt timely to include this piece published in our Feb 2023 newsletter.

Forgiveness

The concept of forgiveness takes a complex role in the work we do. As we work with folks who have both caused harm and been harmed, it's important to ask how and where forgiveness plays in.

When many of us picture the ideal outcome of an RJ process, we picture a moment where the harm has been repaired and where both parties - harmed and responsible - move forward carrying less weight and less pain. Is forgiveness necessary to reach that moment?

A study performed by the Alberta Restorative Justice Association through a series of interviews with RJ practitioners, Victim Services, police, government officials, and individuals who were harmed by crime indicates that one of the main reasons harmed parties don't participate in RJ processes is the belief that it requires forgiveness ("Voice and Choice", ARJA 2018). They want closure, but they don't want that closure to necessitate forgiveness.

This raises important questions: how do we work to find closure without forgiveness? Is that possible? How does this understanding of forgiveness inform our practice?