



*Why me?*

Transforming lives through  
Restorative Justice

# A strategy for change



## About Why me?

Why me? is a national charity who promote awareness of and access to Restorative Justice.

Why me? runs campaigns, conducts research, lobbies the Government, and supports organisations that deliver Restorative Justice. We also support people to access Restorative Justice in their local area. We work closely with our Ambassadors, a group of people who have been harmed by crime and have gone through the Restorative Justice process. We support them to share their experiences, amplifying their voices to both support their healing and spread the word about the power of Restorative Justice.

*"Why me? represents far more than an organisation to me; it is a beacon of hope and resilience for countless individuals, and the work it does resonates deeply with my own values and beliefs. The dedication of the team, the heartfelt care that underpins each program, and the unwavering commitment to advocacy are genuinely inspiring. I hold immense respect for each member of the team and for the thoughtful, impactful work you all contribute to, day in and day out. Every story of healing, every act of support, and every step towards advocacy you take has a ripple effect that transforms lives and communities."*

*- Sheldon, Why me? Ambassador*

### Our vision

Our vision is to see Restorative Justice at the heart of a compassionate, equitable, and effective Criminal Justice System.

### Our mission

Our mission is to promote awareness & increase understanding of Restorative Justice, to advocate and enable its wider use and to serve as a community hub for everyone working, or with an interest in Restorative Justice.

*"Why me? is a diamond in advocating at the national level on behalf of local services, and bringing the sector together."*

*- RJ Commissioner, OPCC*

## Our history

Why me? was formed after Peter Woolf met Will Riley, someone who he had burgled and assaulted, in a Restorative Justice meeting in prison. This meeting transformed Will's recovery, and turned Peter away from a life of crime. Will then set up Why me? with Peter's help, to enable other people affected by crime to experience the benefits of Restorative Justice.

## Our community

Why me? are a small but mighty team, supported by a wide network of people who help us to achieve our mission. We work with a number of volunteers ranging from experienced Restorative Justice facilitators, to people who enable the day-to-day running of our organisation. Our board of Trustees provide a wealth of expertise and guidance to the organisation.

One of Why me?'s foundational aims is to embed the experiences of people who have been through the restorative process in our work. We have a group of Ambassadors who have all been through Restorative Justice after being harmed by crime, who share their stories to help spread the word about RJ, and help inform our strategic planning of future activities. We could not do the work we do without the ongoing support of our entire network, our funders and our strategic partners across the sector.

## About Restorative Justice

Many people impacted by crime never get the chance to have their say, with the court process leaving them retraumatised and without an opportunity to get their questions answered. Getting the opportunity to have a dialogue with the person that harmed them can be transformative in their healing. This can be done through a safe and managed process called Restorative Justice.

Restorative Justice allows some of the harm to be repaired. It is a chance for meaningful justice, tailored to the needs of everyone involved. The process has an 85% satisfaction rate for victims of crime, reduces reoffending by up to 27% and saves £14 for every £1 invested in it. It is a common sense approach that can change the lives of the people who go through it. However, despite the clear benefits, the vast majority of victims of crime still don't know that Restorative Justice is an option. It is Why me?'s mission to change that.

## Our strategy

As experts, enablers and change makers, we have 5 key strategic aims to reduce harm from crime and conflict:

**To ensure that everyone affected by crime or conflict is aware of Restorative Justice (RJ), its benefits, and how to access it.**



This means we will empower our Ambassadors to share their experiences of RJ, develop public-facing communications campaigns, amplify RJ Week, deliver training sessions, support the communications of other organisations and capture the stories of people who have been through the process.

**To develop and champion both proven and innovative ways that RJ can be more effectively used in the criminal legal system.**



This means we will run pioneering projects on areas where people struggle to access RJ, develop and share Good Practice Guides, identify and prove the value of underutilised ways RJ can be implemented in the justice system and increase referrals and sector capacity.

**To become the nation's most used and trusted source of information and advice on RJ in the criminal legal system.**



This means we will share unique and informative resources on our website, send out a weekly newsletter sharing news, thought-leadership blogs, events and upcoming opportunities, and run a national RJ helpline to answer questions about RJ and support people to access it locally.

**To lead on campaigning for policy changes and their implementation to make RJ a legal right and accessible to everyone affected by crime.**



This means we will be a spokesperson for the restorative sector, representing their views directly to policy leaders and decision makers, respond to Government consultations, and advocate for the needs of people affected by crime.

**To become a trusted and valued community hub for the Restorative Justice sector.**



This means we will unite the sector, bringing them together through our forums, gathering their views through consultations, encouraging services to amplify their successes and challenges, and offering a platform for connection and information sharing.

## Our foundational aims

- To amplify the voices of people with lived experience of Restorative Justice.
- To be an effective, sustainable and well-run organisation.
- To ensure our work always champions the benefits that Restorative Justice can bring both to victims of crime, and people who have committed crime.

Our values	How we work together	How we work with others
 <b>Restorative</b>	<p>We embed restorative principles into our culture and daily practice, using circles and check ins to ensure everyone feels heard. We recognise secondary trauma and prioritise our team’s wellbeing.</p>	<p>We champion restorative approaches across the justice system, advocating for healing, dignity and rehabilitation. We create safe spaces for people affected by crime.</p>
 <b>Compassionate</b>	<p>We foster a culture of care, flexibility and respect. We recognise the emotional demands of justice work and use wellbeing practices, reflective spaces and trauma-informed approaches to support our team.</p>	<p>We promote approaches that build understanding and support healing. We advocate for a system that understands the overlap between harmed and harmers.</p>
 <b>Effective</b>	<p>We are a small charity striving to make a big impact. We set clear goals for growth, measure our success by demonstrating real change and continually streamline our processes.</p>	<p>We use evidence, learning and feedback to ensure our work delivers meaningful benefits for the communities we serve, focusing on approaches that create lasting impact.</p>
 <b>Collaborative</b>	<p>We work openly and inclusively through daily communication, regular team meetings and shared decision making. Staff, trustees and volunteers all contribute to shaping our strategy and direction.</p>	<p>We partner with services, charities and the wider justice sector to amplify impact. We share learning, convene collaborative spaces and strengthen practice through training.</p>
 <b>Empowering</b>	<p>We encourage staff and volunteers to grow, develop skills and take on new opportunities. We value lived experience and support our Ambassadors to share their stories and shape our work.</p>	<p>We equip victims of crime, people who have caused harm and practitioners with the knowledge and tools to access and advocate for Restorative Justice.</p>
 <b>Innovative</b>	<p>We stay curious, agile and willing to try new approaches. We test ideas, learn quickly and adapt based on what works, enabling us to lead the way in restorative practice.</p>	<p>We pioneer new areas of restorative work, challenge punitive norms and explore how restorative justice can support people affected by all types of crime and conflict.</p>

# Why are we needed?

## **1. Most people still don't know what Restorative Justice is or how it works**

Awareness of Restorative Justice remains low across the general public, victims of crime and within the justice system. Many people who could benefit never get the chance to take part because they simply don't know it exists. Why me? plays a crucial role in raising awareness, challenging misconceptions, and making Restorative Justice visible and understood.

## **2. Restorative Justice gives people harmed by crime a voice they rarely get elsewhere**

Traditional justice processes often leave people who have been harmed feeling sidelined. Restorative Justice offers them the chance to ask questions, explain the impact of the crime and regain a sense of agency. Why me? advocates to strengthen the victims' voice and campaigns to ensure that those opportunities are safe and available to all victims of crime.

## **3. Access to Restorative Justice is still a postcode lottery**

Provision across England and Wales is inconsistent and often excludes marginalised groups. Why me? works to close these gaps, working to ensure that Restorative Justice is available to everyone, whatever the crime, and wherever they live.

## **4. The justice sector needs a strong, independent voice pushing for system and culture change**

Restorative Justice doesn't embed itself, it needs champions. Why me? influences policy, shapes national conversations and campaigns so that Restorative Justice is valued, understood, and properly resourced.

## **5. The Restorative Justice sector needs a unifying voice to bring people together**

Restorative Justice work is often fragmented, with services, practitioners and stakeholders operating in silos. Why me? plays a unique role as the sector's connector, bringing together victims, people who have caused harm, practitioners, policymakers and services to promote a joined-up, people-centred approach, recognising we are stronger working together.

## Get in touch

Why me? values partnership working. If you are interested in supporting us to deliver our mission, please get in touch.

[Sign up to our newsletter](#) to stay up to date with our latest work.

### Find out more



[www.why-me.org](http://www.why-me.org)

### Get in touch



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[@whymeuk](https://www.instagram.com/whymeuk)



[@Why me? UK](https://www.linkedin.com/company/why-me-uk)