

Creating Pathways

Restorative Justice News

Notes from the Coordinator

I would like to thank the volunteer restorative justice facilitators of Boulder County Sheriff's Office for their hard work, enthusiasm, creativity and belief in this work and this program. Their dedication to both allowed us to serve 37% more victims, offenders and community members through the conferencing process last year than in the previous year. According to our surveys we were also able to increase participants' level of satisfaction in the conference process. Wonderful work by a group of wonderful volunteers.

Lesly



I heard the following story on Morning Edition as I drove to work the other day and felt a sense of wonder and respect for the man in this story. While this was not a formal Restorative Justice process, a very natural restorative experience occurred between the two men in this interview. I have great appreciation for the many people, the

world over, who quietly take such courageous stands everyday in the wake of their personal suffering.



*The weak can
never forgive.
Forgiveness is
the attribute of
the strong.*

Ghandi

Morning Edition, February 8, 2008. Seven years ago, Hector Black's daughter was murdered after she surprised an intruder in her Atlanta home.

"We learned what happened in bits and pieces," Black says.

Patricia Ann Nuckles had come home, where her attacker was hiding in a closet, hoping to jump out the back window and escape. But she opened the closet door. The man tied her hands behind her back, Black says.

Nuckles told the man that he needed to get help with his drug habit, her father says. ... "He asked for sex and she said, 'You'll have to kill me first.' And so he did," Black says.

"We were all just devastated. Nothing like this had ever happened. I mean we'd known death, but not like this. I'd never been in favor of the death penalty, but I wanted that man to hurt the way he had hurt her. I wanted him to hurt the way I was hurting."

Black says he wanted to know "what kind of a monster would do a thing like this."

He went on to learn that the man, Ivan Simpson, was born in a mental hospital. "When he was about 11 years old, his mother took him and his brother and sister to a swimming pool and said that God was ordering her to destroy them. The two boys escaped, but Ivan Simpson "watched while his mother drowned his little sister."

Black and his wife went to the district attorney's office to ask that Simpson's life be spared. "He was quite upset when we told him that we did not want this man killed," Black says.

Black read a statement in court saying, "I don't hate you, Ivan Simpson, but I hate with all my soul what you did to my daughter."

Black looked into Simpson's eyes. "The tears were streaming down his cheeks," Black says. Before he was led away, Simpson apologized twice for "the pain that I've caused," Black says.

Black says he couldn't sleep that night "because I really felt as though a tremendous weight had been lifted from me.... and that I had forgiven him."

Produced for Morning Edition by Katie Simon

Volunteer Spotlight

Linda has served as a volunteer for Boulder County Sheriff's Office in two different capacities for over 17 years. She began her work with the Sheriff's Office as a Victim Advocate in 1991. She has worked with the Restorative Justice program as a facilitator since the inception of the program in 2000. Linda also volunteers for a circle of support and accountability here in Boulder County. She is a person who is completely dedicated to the communities in which she lives and works. Thank you Linda for supporting so many people in this county. You bring richness and compassion to a world that could use more of both.

The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.

Ghandi

