**Postcard responses: Dialogue 3**

**Summary**

**I came today because . . .**

We asked this question to pick up on the motivation behind attendance. Perhaps not unexpectedly given the topic, there seems to have been proportionately more people attending from academic (students and staff) and practice (social work, family group conferencing) backgrounds than in the earlier dialogues. However, in line with the all these events, there is a clear interest in RJ and a wish to learn more about it. The high reputation of the speakers was also a draw to some of the respondents.

**What I want say is . . .**

We asked this to pick up on points of view about the issues under discussion although again, several writers used it as an opportunity to reflect on the event, mostly very positively. Where there are concerns e.g. about gender balance or representation of other voices, these are noted and understood. It is to be hoped that critics will appreciate that the dialogues should be judged in terms of the whole series, in which different voices will indeed be heard.

**What I want to suggest is . . .**

This section was intended to pick up on specific action points on RJ in Scotland. Although this was again used by some to offer feedback on the event itself, what does emerge very clearly is an as yet unmet need for more information about RJ especially in terms of the practice implications, and more discussion.

**The question I would like the SUII RJ events to address is . . .**

This section made space for respondents to influence planning across the dialogues and especially the work to prepare for the deliberative conference / summit in the autumn. Again, as in other dialogues there was an assumption by some respondents that there was already an 'RJ model' for Scotland rather than that it is in formation.

Three points emerge very clearly from the responses to this section:

* as before, there were questions about RJ in theory and practice, indicating a substantial shortfall in basic knowledge: this needs to be addressed somehow both within academic networks and across practice and community interests
* the need to think about how to apply theoretical insights to practice
* the need to engage with the political establishment as an essential step in taking RJ forward in Scotland.

**Answers (each participant has a unique reference number)**

**I came today because . . .**

[1] I wanted to gain an understanding on how RJ affects offenders

[2] I was interested in finding out more about RJ in Scotland

[3] My PhD topic is based in this

[4] I am a student at Edinburgh University

[5] The line-up was great. I have read plenty of Tony Ward but never heard him until now

[6] I am a practice educator (independent) with a student places in criminal justice team

[7] I am very interested in the potential benefits of RJ

[8] interested in process of personal and relational change. I have co-ordinated many family conferences but no restorative conferences

[10] Interested in RJ

[11] I was interested in state of RJ in Scotland

[12] I wanted to know more about RJ

[13] Wanted to hear more about Tony Ward 'good lives' linking to RJ

[14] I have an interest / passion for criminal justice/RJ change and options

[15] I have concern that the legitimacy of RJ is not accepted by policy makers

[16] to enhance my knowledge

[17] interest in RJ (personal) creative, informative

[18] my interest in developing RJ and the esteemed panel

[19] of my interest in RJ , and an excellent panel of speakers

[20] I am an accredited RJ practitioner and PhD student in RJ and interested in any discussion re RJ

[21] I came to the 1st event and I wanted to learn more about RJ

[22] I am involved in family group conferencing - interested in the wider uses of restorative practices

[23] I am a family group conference coordinator with a background in youth justice

[24] I'm interested in how RJ practice might be applied in Scotland and how it's / it's not shaping CJ practice and contexts

[25] I wanted to learn more about RJ in practice and how it could be applied within Scotland

**What I want say is . . .**

[1] I have gained some understanding of RJ and its effects on offenders

[2] Very interesting presentations and insights - good balance of theory and lived experience

[3] great insight by leading names

[4] today was very informative - thank you

[5] the embedding of RJ is contingent on a change in the political context in Scotland

[6] very interesting and informative day

[7] Today's inputs were brilliant thought provoking and inspiring!!

[8] the event offered ideas - practical, moral and scientific

[11] There was only men speaking and no discussion

[12] excellent panel

[13] aims of RJ process do get superceded by multiplicity of unmet needs for clients in YJ settings

[14] more learning - more practical solutions not just academic theories!

[15] the development of a theoretical framework for RJ/desistance is essential to improve outcome for society in its widest sense

[16] it was excellent

[17] I found the seminar very informative

[18] excellent inputs - lots of food for thought

[19] I really liked the venue and having a tea break and excellent speakers! I also like that the structure of the events change as we go along- keeps it fresh! Excellent networking opportunities as well. Thanks for all the work you put into these.

[20] one of the best most thought provoking seminars I've been to recently

[21] public dialogue on RJ

[23] restorative practice needs to be part of a whole cultural change and a collective response. Focus needs to shift from retribution.

[24] it was a really useful well paced, thought provoking event.

[25] a varied and interesting look at RJ and desistance

**What I want to suggest is . . .**

[3] having such seminars more often

[5] participation of MSPs/MPs at these events

[7] that a victim's experience of RJ is discussed by them

[8] ensure that RJ is explored in pre-qualifying training for social work

[9] more focus on practice - great academic presentations - require to be linked more to practice however

[11] To change the balance of talks and discussion, plus break up academic contributions

[12] that the dialogues should target practitioner on the ground

[13] programmes of RJ need to be structured so time scales meet overall process of change in work with client

[14] examples/evidence right and wrong -more networking events

[16] get the message out to CJS social workers

[18] let's do it!

[19] any way we can get the Scottish Government involved/interested?

[20] more of the same

[21] next event to be more dialogically symmetric

[24] It would have been useful to have discussion with other participants.

[25] make the video from Peter available for use if possible

**The question I would like the SUII RJ events to address is . . .**

[2] What is the model for RJ in Scotland and will it be available everywhere.

[3] to what extent are the abolitionist element in the RJ system in the UK?

[4] here was no mention of gender being an issue. Would RJ not be handled differently for females who are ex-offenders that may be in jail for crimes committed against an abusive partner?

[5] how to measure RJ 'effectiveness' and capture all its complexity

[7] how can we ensure that RJ remains voluntary and independent of the CJ system (which I think it should be)?

[8] how to work this into the ecology of a ? relationship to support them in good transitions

[9] how its embedded in policy / legislation

[11] how RJ can support re-integration beyond desistance

[12] someone from the Scottish Government e.g. MP [sic] (Justice Department) to be involved

[13] is RJ the catalyst for change or the outcome of change? or both?

[14] how can we better target domestic violence/ relationship breakdown? pre and post conviction?

[15] how is RJ practice being 'sold' to policy makers/legal framework e.g. court/ children's hearings

[18] how do we translate this into practice

[19] the active implementation of RJ practices in Scotland

[20] how to influence policy makers and governments to create restorative communities

[21] I would like to know more about the dynamics that are present/fostered during RJ sessions/conferences. I believe it is of vital importance to focus on the communicative dimension.

[22] restorative - political - e.g. management and practice approach (e.g. development in Leeds)

[23] To engage Scottish Government and judiciary in dialogue. Why are we further behind other countries in RJ?

[24] with whom does RJ work or not work? Are there pre-requisites to engaging in an RJ process? How effective is it with 'high risk' offenders? Is a capacity for empathy required and how do you measure this?

I'd have liked more opportunity to consider practice responses to this content for the Scottish context.