


A Spectrum of Victim Involvement

Participation in restorative justice (RJ) is voluntary for everyone, and can be done in many ways. Below are some examples of how victims might want to participate in the process, but this list is not exhaustive and a victim may choose some combination of them or come up with new options. Victims can change their mind, stop or pause the process, at any time.

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- **No involvement:** the victim consents to the offender participating in RJ, and requests no further contact from the RJ agency.
 - **Possible involvement:** the victim wants to test the waters before committing to RJ, e.g., by having RJ staff communicate with the offender and report back to the victim; writing letters back and forth with the offender; RJ staff recording a video of the offender talking about the offence or answering a question of the victim, then viewing the video with the victim, etc.
 - **Indirect or partial involvement:** rather than participate in a full dialogue with the offender, the victim wants to engage in one or more of the following:
 - Make a request of the offender (e.g., financial restitution, donation to charity, community service, answers to questions, reflections, future commitments, etc.) that someone will put forward on their behalf
 - Write letters or engage in some other form of information sharing with the offender
 - Have an RJ staff member or volunteer contact/meet with them at certain points in the RJ process, e.g., regular updates re: the offender's progress throughout the process; after the dialogue to advise them how it went; when the offender completes the agreement; etc.
 - Write a statement that an RJ staff member or volunteer can read at the dialogue on their behalf
 - Send someone to meet the offender on their behalf (e.g., a friend or family member, victim services worker, RJ volunteer, member of the community who had a similar experience, etc.)
 - Have an informal, facilitated conversation/meeting between them and the offender at some point before or after the RJ dialogue
 - Be in a separate room from the offender during the dialogue, e.g., having the facilitators bring information back and forth between them (similar to "shuttle mediation"), using Skype from a different location, etc.
 - Have a limited role, e.g. listen to the dialogue and not speak; decide in the dialogue how much they want to say/hear; stay for part of the dialogue; etc.
 - A victim healing circle (without the offender) along with an RJ staff member or volunteer, friends, family, victim service worker, other supporters (e.g., their counsellor), etc.
 - **Full involvement:** the victim wants to participate in preparation work, the dialogue, and all follow-up after the dialogue until the case is complete and closed.