



**CRIMINAL JUSTICE RESEARCH**

# **Defining and Measuring Success**

San Diego Restorative Justice &  
Restorative Practices Summit

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# Why Is Evaluation Important?

- Are you doing what you think you are doing?
- Does the program or intervention work?
- Does the program work for everyone equally?
- How make best use of limited resources?
- Funders want to fund what works...

# Evaluation of Restorative Practices

- Not a program - but a philosophy and practice organizations use to “restore” the harm caused by criminal behavior
- The process is focused on healing the victim (i.e., individual, family, and/or community)
- Restorative programs or interventions embody the values of restorative justice (e.g. peer juries, victim-offender mediation, peace circles)
- Evaluation helps understand what and how well the practices were implemented and what impact they had on the victim and offender

# Knowing Your Goals and Deciding How to Operationalize Them

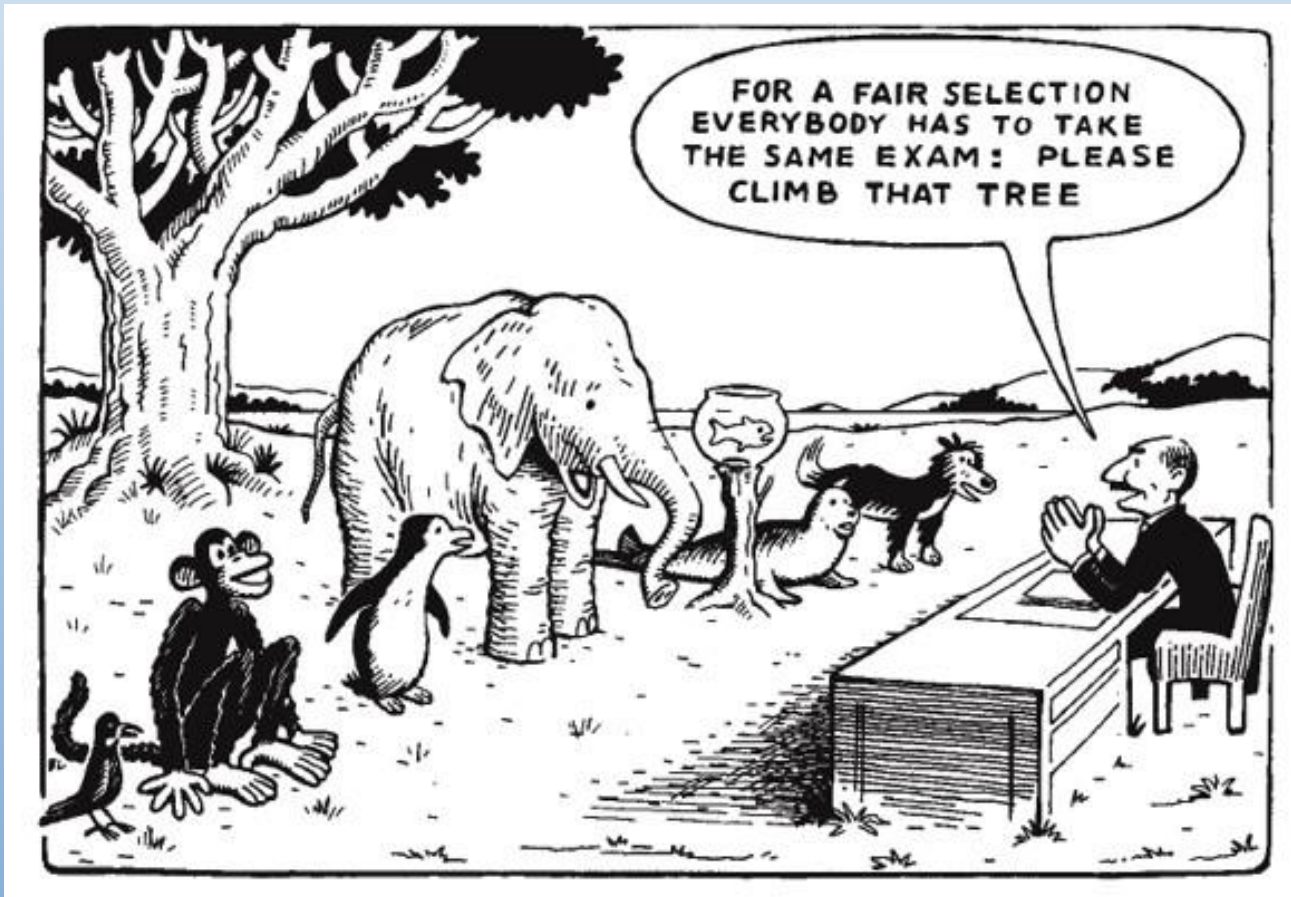
- Repair harm
- Restore relationships
- Build community
- Reduce recidivism
- Offer alternatives to incarceration
- Hold offender accountable
- Improve victim experience
- Save taxpayer dollars

# Four Common Outcomes of Restorative Justice

- Victim Satisfaction
- Recidivism
- Offender Satisfaction
- Restitution Compliance

Latimer et. al. (2005)

# One Size Doesn't Fit All...



# Process Evaluation

- Process evaluation plays a larger role in the evaluation of restorative justice practices vs evaluating programs
- Document what type of restorative justice practices were implemented and to what degree
- Document how the restorative justice practices were implemented?
- Capture who was involved, their roles, and their opinions

# Impact Evaluation

- What are the outcomes you want?
  - Recidivism, restitution, increased responsibility, improved victim satisfaction with the justice system
- How do you operationalize them?
  - How do you define recidivism?
- How can you measure those outcomes in a reliable and valid way?
  - Are there validated tools that measure changes?
- How do you account for client engagement/drop outs?
- Is the intervention cost-effective?



# Different Ways to Capture Data

- Surveys
  - Satisfaction surveys from victims and offenders
- Interviews
  - More time consuming and expensive but in-depth
- Validated tools
  - K. Burke's tool to measure the five components of restorative justice
- Archival data
  - Restitution paid, new criminal acts
- Observations
  - Rate facilitator skills
- Focus groups

## Example of how to measure restorative justice

- Five-Point scale to measure the five components:
  - Offender Involvement and Experience of Justice
  - Victim Involvement and Experience of Justice
  - Victim-Offender Relationship
  - Community Involvement and Experience of Justice
  - Future Problem-Solving through Restorative Justice

Burke, K. (2013)

# Restorative Justice Research References

- Latimer, J., Dowden, C. & Muses, D. (2005). The Effectiveness of Restorative Justice Practices: A Meta-Analysis. *The Prison Journal*, Vol. 85, No. 2, 127 – 144.
- Bergseth, K., & Bouffard, J.A. (2007). The long-term impact of restorative justice programming for juvenile offenders. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 35, 433- -451.
- Burke, K. (2013). An Inventory and Examination of Restorative Justice Practices for Youth in Illinois. Chicago, IL: Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority.
- Adler School Institute on Public Safety and Social Justice; Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights. (2011). *White Paper on Restorative Justice: A Primer and Exploration of Practice Across Two North American Cities*.

“We live in a world in which we need to share responsibility. It's easy to say, 'It's not my child, not my community, not my world, not my problem.' Then there are those who see the need and respond. I consider those people my heroes.”

“As human beings, our job in life is to help people realize how rare and valuable each one of us really is, that each of us has something that no one else has--or ever will have--something inside that is unique to all time. It's our job to encourage each other to discover that uniqueness and to provide ways of developing its expression.”

- Fred Rogers