

# **Restorative Justice as Storytelling**

by Lana Leonard

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SEDONA, Ariz., USA -- Restorative justice is an ancient healing art with storytelling at its core. It is experiencing a renaissance today as a response to victims' rights activism, overcrowded prisons, community policing movements, and high recidivism rates among juvenile offenders. Restorative justice views crime as an offense against a person rather than the state, aiming to repair the harm. Personal storytelling makes it possible.

Picture a circle of people impacted by a crime, gathered to tell their stories in a place of safety and respect. Their assignment: Define the harm, and create an agreement on how to repair it. Elders and community members with special experience or expertise might be among them. All agree to follow guidelines of safety and respect, truth telling and cooperation and have received training in how to listen deeply.

**[SNIP – End of preview.]**